

Profile

20th Century-Fox wishes on a star, Haley's comet

He is spoken of as multitalented, dedicated, part of the new breed, very professional and, perhaps, a renaissance man. He is John Joseph Haley Jr., president of 20th Century-Fox Television and a second-generation member of the entertainment industry.

His credentials include an Emmy, two Peabodys and three Silver Lions, awarded by the Venice TV Festival.

The bearded, 41-year-old Jack Haley was named to his post last fall. He took over officially Jan. 1, following the termination date of Bill Self, who had asked that his contract not be renewed. Between that first announcement and his taking office, Mr. Haley was married to Liza Minelli.

"He was born a film buff," said his father, the renowned Jack Haley of Broadway ("Good News," "Follow Through," "Take a Chance") and of Hollywood ("Poor Little Rich Girl" [with Shirley Temple] and "Wizard of Oz" [with Judy Garland, the mother of Liza Minelli]).

Mel Stuart, a Wolper producer-executive colleague of Mr. Haley's, declared: "Jack is a gentleman in every sense of the word. He has a rare quality in this business; he's never envious or jealous of someone else's success—a refreshing attribute here where so many people feel they can't be a success unless someone else is a failure. Jack never felt the need to aggrandize himself."

Art Wild, a Paramount publicist who worked with Mr. Haley in the making of "Norwood" in 1968, emphasized the casualness and lack of temperament of the director of that Hal Wallis-produced, Paramount-released musical that was filmed on location in the desert north of Los Angeles: "The rest of us would go to a rather expensive restaurant to eat dinner on an expense account. Jack and a couple of others would go over to the local hamburger place and have a great time talking and eating and laughing. He is that kind of guy, no pretensions."

Dennis Stanfill, chairman-president of Fox, who is Mr. Haley's boss, noted the other day that Fox went after Mr. Haley for the job; Mr. Haley did not seek it. "After considerable and thorough searching," Mr. Stanfill says, "Jack Haley Jr. emerged as the man most qualified. He was experienced in television, with a keen sense of showmanship. He was innovative and very much attuned to today's entertainment audiences. He is popular with creative people and respected throughout the industry."

That's the man. How about his accomplishments? The Emmy was won in



John Joseph (Jack) Haley Jr.—president, 20th Century-Fox Television Division. b. Oct. 25, 1933 in Los Angeles. Attended Children's Professional School and Mount St. Michael Academy, both New York; B.S. (English), Loyola University, Los Angeles (after one year at Fordham University, New York), 1956; graduate studies in cinema arts at the University of California and University of Southern California, both Los Angeles. Captain, U.S. Air Force (photographic officer), 1957-59. Producer, supervising producer. VP in charge of all live entertainment, senior VP, Wolper Productions, 1959-70; director, Paramount Pictures, Columbia Pictures, 1970-73; director of creative affairs. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1973-74; president, Fox Television, Jan. 1, 1975—. m. Liza Minelli Sept. 15, 1974.

1967 for best direction in music or variety show; the show was *Movin' with Nancy*, a Nancy Sinatra special that had three Emmy nominations and that included in its cast Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., and Frank Sinatra himself. The Peabody came in 1962 for the 39-episode *Biography* series, and again in 1967 for *Hidden World*, a *National Geographic* special on insects. The Silver Lions, from the Venice TV-film festival, were for two segments of Mr. Haley's *Hollywood and the Stars* series (one in 1964 on Kim Novak; the other in 1965 on James Cagney, George Raft, and Edward G. Robinson as film gangsters) and again in 1967 for *Hidden World*.

Mr. Haley's first theatrical feature movie was "Norwood", released in 1970 by Paramount, starring Glen Campbell, Kim Darby and Joe Namath. And the following year, he directed "The Love Machine" for Columbia Pictures; this one starring John Phillips Law, Dyan Cannon and Robert Ryan.

And then came "That's Entertainment." This MGM feature, really a documentary, is made up of highlights of over 100 MGM musical features produced between 1929 and 1958, and has resulted in over \$12 million in rentals since it was released in May last year. In that one, Mr. Haley is the triple-threat man; he is producer, writer and director, having worked for over two years selecting the clips to be shown and persuading still active film notables (Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire among others) to narrate the bridges that tie the musical scenes together.

Mr. Haley knows well that he is in a "deliver-or-be-damned" seat at Fox. The Fox 1974 annual financial profit and loss statement showed that revenues from TV program production are down by over \$400,000 from the year before (\$26,954,000 compared to \$27,392,000). Fox has two shows on the air at the present time: the long running *M.A.S.H.*, now in its fourth year on CBS, and *Karen* on ABC which opened Jan. 30. Fox has three pilots in the sweepstakes for the 1975-76 season: *Cheerleaders*, a half-hour comedy for NBC; *Swiss Family Robinson* (in association with Irwin Allen), a 60-minute adventure series for ABC, and *Adventures of the Queen*, a 60-minute drama for CBS, with Irwin Allen as executive producer.

What does Mr. Haley see for the coming new season? Well, at the moment everything is at sixes and sevens, he said, repeating what almost everyone in TV is saying now. At issue is the question of family viewing for the first hour of prime time. "I suppose," Mr. Haley said, "that it's logical in terms of responsibility to viewers to protect children. But what then is an adult theme? Is *All in the Family* only for adults? I'm sure Norman Lear would hasten to say no."

"The government says the responsibility belongs to the networks, but I can't help but think that a great deal of that responsibility should belong to the adult members of the family. They can look at a program and judge the content and, if it's too violent, don't let their kids watch it." Almost as an afterthought, he added: "The networks say they want family shows, but they continue to buy police shows."

Mr. Haley, therefore, continues to sit in the middle of two worlds, the world of TV and the world of feature movies. "They're not too dissimilar," he said the other day. The play's the thing. He tries to stay in both, and sometimes he finds himself in the middle—as in 1970 and again in 1974 when he produced the annual Motion Picture Academy Oscar show for TV. That apparently is where it is today in Hollywood, according to Mr. Haley: movies and TV.