

MOVIES

*The Apartment*

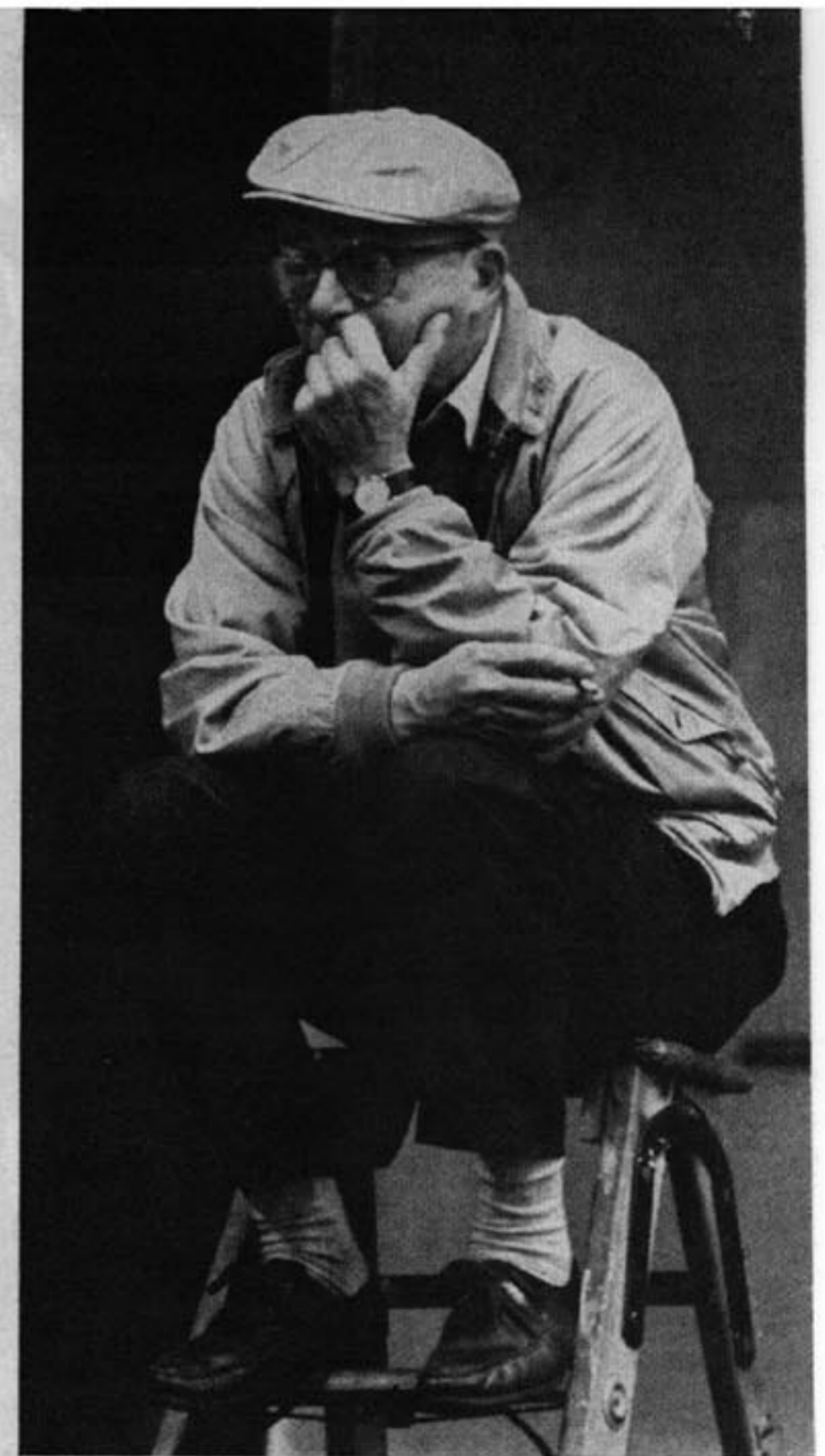
# THE WILDER TOUCH

The director explains his zany method for relaxing actors



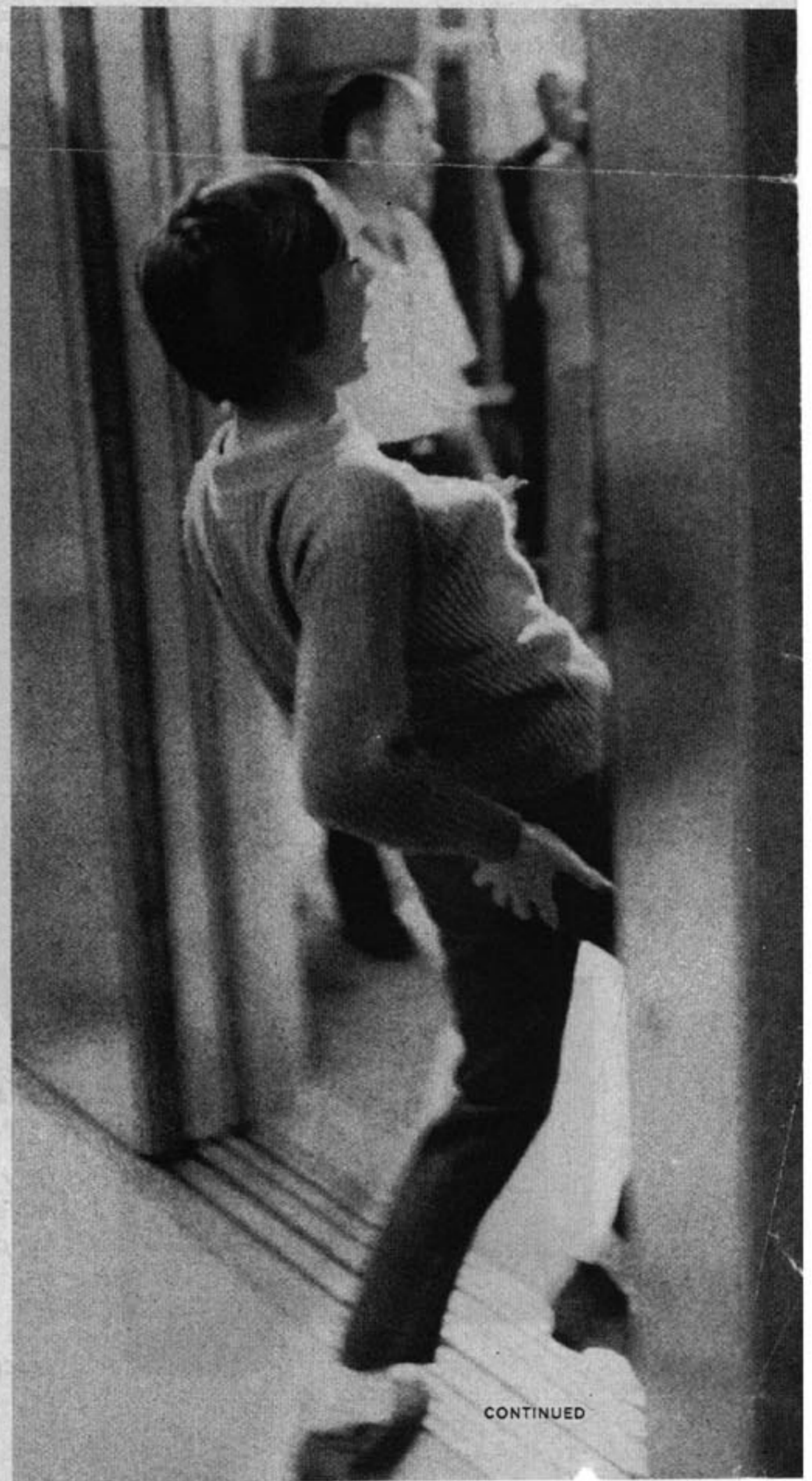
The meditative little man on the stepladder is Director Billy Wilder, grand maestro of the mad and merry movie. His latest, *The Apartment*, released by United Artists, is just now opening even as the country is still chuckling over his last, *Some Like It Hot*. These films, Wilder explains, were produced by application of the Wilder "method." In making *The Apartment* he used it on two of the most accomplished clowns in films, Shirley MacLaine and Jack Lemmon. The Wilder method is no kin to the sober, soul-searching Stanislavsky acting method, as is shown in these pictures for which Wilder has written the captions. Wilder's method is a combination of gags, familiar slaps, games with sweater sleeves—anything that will keep his actors calm, loose and laughing.

The result shows in his films as "the Wilder touch," a mingling of gentle comedy, hilarious slapstick, and daring efforts to test the limits of good taste. His plot for *The Apartment*, for instance, is outrageous: a young man zooms up in a big insurance company because he happens to have a midtown apartment which he can lend to his bosses for their casual flirtations. This is a subject that cries for the utmost in deftness and taste and how well Wilder has managed can be questioned. But there is no questioning that, at its best, his film is very funny.



*"Thinking lofty thoughts [explains Wilder] there is no better place than on a ladder. But someone might move the ladder."*

*"I must have said something terribly funny to Jack Lemmon [says Wilder]. Maybe it was something like good morning. It is a well-known fact that I am a terribly funny man. But Jack isn't laughing because he has to—he is just being courteous."*



*"Ah the opportunities that come your way in the motion picture business—and this is only a rehearsal. Shirley MacLaine is an elevator operator. I am demonstrating what one of the passengers does to her in passing. She is overacting a little."*

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