

ANDREW WEISS GALLERY



C.S. BULL

Born: 1896

Died: 1979

Nationality: American

Clarence Sinclair Bull, along with George Hurrell, virtually invented celebrity portraiture as we know it today, capturing with rare artistry a breathtaking roster of stars in brilliant and often surprising ways. His magical and dream-like photographs (in particular his collaboration with Greta Garbo whom he photographed almost exclusively from 1929 until 1941) became the classic images of Hollywood and were instrumental in fixing the essential look of a star and in setting standards of beauty.

Bull's days at MGM included 200 of his enduring portraits of such legendary film stars as Clark Gable, Joan Crawford, Katharine Hepburn, Hedy Lamarr, Gary Cooper, Elizabeth Taylor, Vivian Leigh, Spencer Tracy, Ava Gardner, Grace Kelly, and, of course, Greta Garbo. His accomplishments also include winning four Academy still photography exhibition awards.

Bull was born in Sun River, Montana in 1896 and studied with the great Western painter Charles Marion Russell. His early interest in photography took him to Hollywood in 1918 where he was hired as an assistant cameraman at Metro Pictures. He shot stills of the stars during the production breaks, and when Goldwyn merged with Metro in 1924, he became head of the MGM stills department, and remained at MGM for the rest of his career. He passed away in 1979.