KINONIK

TICKETS

INHERIT THE WIND (1960)

DIRECTED BY STANLEY KRAMER

WEDNESDAY November 18th 7PM

SATURDAY November 21st 2pm / 7pm

16mm • 2 hr 8 min



On Friday the 13th the American sky closed for four hours and people slept on terminal floors. That night the Transportation Secretary stood in the White House and dropped anchor: "I want $50 billion." By Saturday his story had changed. The anchor hadn't, and the thirty billion already on the table started to look like a bargain. The Speaker said no investigation was needed to see the need for more money. Saturday the cancellations kept coming, more than fifteen thousand in two days, and that night in Dallas, where this play premiered, Love Field shut until morning… but no one has said why.

In 1925 a few businessmen in Dayton, Tennessee, huddled at the drugstore and planned a crisis: recruit a young teacher, have him arrested for teaching evolution, watch the world come to town. Boy howdy, did it come. The Monkey Trial was a promotion before it was a principle; Inherit the Wind is its legend, co-written by a blacklisted man under a false name. For the 1960 opening Dayton declared a Scopes Trial Day, traded its "Read Your Bible" signs for welcome banners and brought Scopes back as guest of honor. The town knew a good show, and at least it sold hot dogs. Kramer's show is a prizefight. Spencer Tracy and Fredric March admired each other and fought for every frame, March fussing with props through Tracy's speeches, Tracy answering with small reactions that dragged the camera right back, until one day the crowd on set applauded Tracy before March had finished the take. Between them Gene Kelly, gliding through every scene without a single dance step, plays the reporter who came to watch a town put an idea on trial.

We set this film on the slate back in September, two months before anyone grounded anything, and it turns out it has flown before: in December 1960 Trans World Airlines chose it to test a new idea, movies at thirty thousand feet. Our print is no. 18 of United Artists' early 16mm run and comes from the Academy, whose own rules once made its screenwriter ineligible for an Oscar. In 1959 Kramer called it the last of a trilogy of provocations after *The Defiant Ones* and *On the Beach*. Little did he know the sequel would cost fifty billion dollars.

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