Robert Wise was the consummate professional. In his long and varied career he directed more than 40 films, won four Oscars and the DGA Lifetime Achievement Award. In a selection of rare shots, we remember him as he would have liked—on the set working with actors.


(Above) The director at work on Odds Against Tomorrow (1959).
GOING DOWNTOWN: Robert Mitchum plays a Nebraska lawyer and Shirley MacLaine is a dancer from Greenwich Village in Wise’s adaptation of the Broadway play Two for the Seesaw (1962).

PULLING THE STRINGS: Wise was so skilled with actors he could coax a good performance from puppets. He works here with Julie Andrews (center) and the von Trapp kids in The Sound of Music (1965).

ONE OF THE BOYS: Wise hanging out on the set with Robert Mitchum (left) and a young Robert Preston in the noir western Blood on the Moon (1948).

ROCKY I: Wise directs Paul Newman in his first film role as the boxer Rocky Graziano in Somebody Up There Likes Me (1956) with Pier Angeli as his wife.
MEAN STREETS: Wise shows Natalie Wood how to get the most out of the moment as she mourns the death of her lover Richard Beymer in West Side Story (1961). Wise directed with choreographer Jerome Robbins.
NOT GUILTY: Susan Hayward gets some legal advice from Wise on the set of *I Want To Live* (1958). Based on a real-life murder case, the film was nominated for six Oscars with Hayward winning for best actress.

ON HIS KNEES: Audrey Totter begs her husband Robert Ryan, with an assist from Wise, to give up the fight game in The Set-Up (1949); (right) James Cagney and Wise on location shooting Tribute to a Bad Man (1955). The film was Wise’s big-sky western shot in CinemaScope and Technicolor.