

# Cosmetics Company Legend Dies

■ **Obituary:** Max Factor Jr., inventor of waterproof mascara, developed makeup for stars. He was 91.

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Max Factor Jr., the father of waterproof mascara and long-lasting lipstick who invented makeup for movie stars and then brought it to everyday women, has died at his West Los Angeles home. He was 91.

Factor, who died Friday night of heart failure, turned the company created by his father—a Russian Jewish immigrant who once made wigs for the family of Czar Nicholas—into the first international cosmetic giant before selling it in 1973.

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# FACTOR: Cosmetics Company Legend Dies

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His legendary contribution to the movie industry earned him a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and a distinguished service medallion from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in 1959 for making cosmetics that met the critical eye of ever-improving film technology.

"Max Factor was probably the man most responsible for the image of makeup," said Maurice Stein of Burbank, owner of one of the world's largest suppliers of cosmetics, skin and hair products to the entertainment industry. "That goes for the so-called 'housewife' of the '50s to the professional woman of the '90s. What was created by him on the screen became the look one decade at a time for the general public."

Recognized as one of the world's greatest "noses," perfume was his primary passion.

"If he was out at a club or a party, he would know every scent the women were wearing," recalled his son, Donald Factor, 61. "He gloried in being able to make a scent that women would love and that would make people love the women."

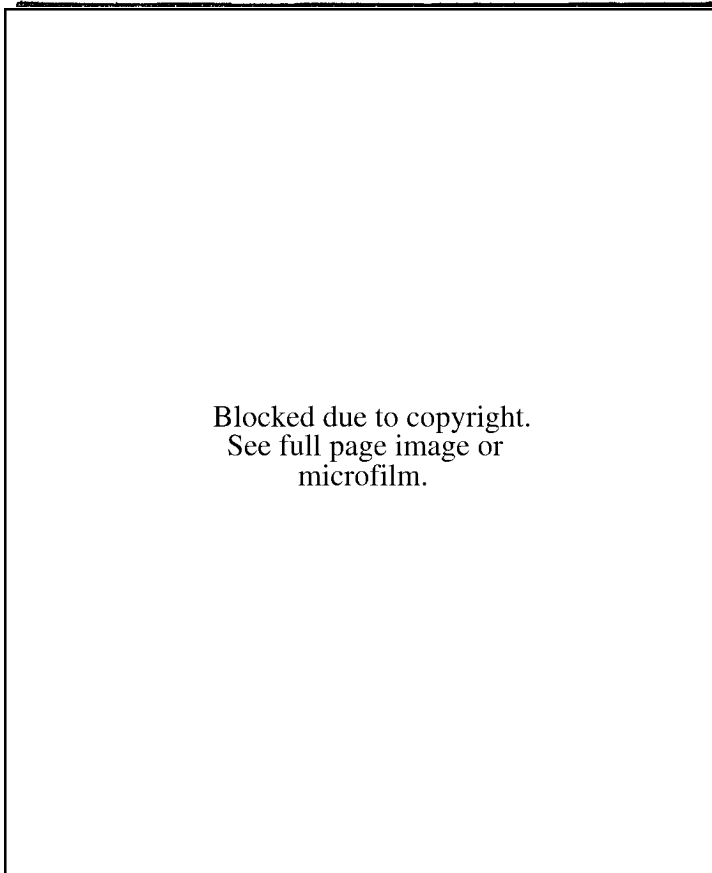
Born in St. Louis in 1904, Factor spent almost his entire life in Southern California, throwing parties each summer at his cabana in the Beverly Hills Hotel. Buildings bearing his name at Cedars-Sinai Hospital and UCLA mark his generous philanthropy.

The Max Factor Beauty Museum features toupees worn by John Wayne and Fred Astaire, attractions such as a rubberized kissing machine that tested lipstick under 20 pounds of tension, and "The Beauty Calibrator," a mass of metal bands around a mannequin's head that helps measure a woman's face. Built in 1928, the Max Factor Building is one of the city's most famous landmarks.

Although the museum is scheduled to close next weekend, Factor's creations endure.

Naimie Ojeil, owner of a North Hollywood beauty supply store, said he still sells Factor's "Pan-Stik" foundation created almost half a century ago. "It's as good as anything made now," he said. "And their Pan-Cake, their special effects products . . . you could talk about it for days. He will not be replaced."

Max Factor Sr. was a barber who launched his career in America upon arriving just in time for the



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Associated Press

In a 1950 photo, Max Factor Jr. tests a lotion formula on a model. The 91-year-old cosmetics legend died of heart failure Friday night.

1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. He took the family west four years later, setting up shop in Los Angeles' theater district, where he made wigs for stage stars—even adding hair to horses' tails when necessary.

The sign outside the shop read: "Max Factor's Antiseptic Hair Store. Toupees made to order. High grade work," according to a 1995 book, "Max Factor's Hollywood: Glamour, Movies, Make-Up," by Fred E. Basten, Robert Salvatore and Paul A. Kaufman.

The fourth child and second son of Max and Esther Factor, Max Jr. was born with the name Francis but changed it in 1938 when he took over the burgeoning business after his father's death. He began working for his father by age 7, mixing potions in the laboratory, making deliveries, and eventually serving as an extra in hundreds of silent films so he could collect the

actors' wigs and bring them back to the shop.

"The whole family worked, but he was the creative force behind the company," Duny Cashion, his business manager for 43 years, said Saturday. "He was like a little genius."

"Just 'out of necessity, he invented things. They'd come to him and say, 'Look, we've got a new film process and [the old makeup] looks terrible.' And he'd get in the lab."

First, Factor and his father converted greasepaint that was used on-stage into subtler products that worked for the screen. For monochromatic, black-and-white films, the Factors mixed natural colors to make cheeks and lips look realistic. In 1935, they brought the world "Pan-Cake" to keep actors' faces from looking green on Technicolor.

At first, many people didn't know what to make of the products.

"While on location in Cuba, during very hot weather, house guests of Mary Pickford stoie into her refrigerator and ate the cold cream," Salvatore, who died recently, told The Times in 1990. "They thought it was dessert."

Among the company's early clients were Charlie Chaplin and cowboy star Tom Mix, who initially refused to wear makeup because he considered it "too sissy," according to the book. The Factors created Norma Shearer's "Marie Antoinette" ringlets, the strawberry blond curls of Billie Burke's Glinda the Good Witch from "The Wizard of Oz" and the hairpiece worn by Rudolph Valentino in 1924's "Monsieur Beaucaire."

Their first contract to do all of a film's makeup and hair was "Vogues of 1938."

"Every makeup artist used Max Factor [products]. They had what we needed and perfected what we wanted," recalled Howard J. Smit, 85, who started in the movie business in 1938 as a makeup assistant on "The Wizard of Oz" and later ran the makeup artists' union.

"With every change in the type of film, the Max Factor company came up with the makeup that was compatible," said William J. Tuttle, 84, who headed the makeup department at MGM studios for two decades.

"When we changed from Technicolor to Eastman color, which everyone uses now, they came up with something new," said Tuttle. "It was almost a daily routine of making color makeup tests. They kept coming up with a new series of colors. They were on top of it."

An appointment book still kept at the beauty museum shows that on June 7, 1934—a typical day—Fredric March, Ronald Coleman, Katharine Hepburn, Marlene Dietrich and Joan Crawford all came to the salon for wig fittings or beauty treatments.

Actress Fay Wray, now 88, who personally picked out the wig she wore in the 1933 thriller "King Kong" from the Factor store, on Saturday recalled Max Jr. as a man with "a lot of energy and enthusiasm."

Wray said that when Factor made her up for "Dr. X," a 1932 Warner Bros. horror film—one of the first color pictures—he had a particularly difficult task.

"They had to use so much light on the set that you almost melt. It

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was very hot, abominably hot," she said. "That gave the makeup people a stronger responsibility to keep it from running off you. They had to watch it very carefully."

It was Factor, according to his associates and several experts, who took makeup out of stars' dressing rooms and into the drugstore. Many believe he coined the word "makeup," eventually launching "Society Makeup," the first cosmetics line for ordinary faces.

"Up to then, you bit your lips and pinched your cheeks," Salvatore, the former curator of the Factor museum, once told *The Times*.

"The company started as a movie makeup company. There was no such thing as retail makeup. Nice girls didn't wear makeup," said Amy Fisher, an archivist for Procter & Gamble, which bought the Max Factor line as part of a \$1-billion deal with Revlon in 1991. "Max Factor took makeup from the screen to the street."

The legacy lingers.

"He created so many things that we still use today," said Fiona Vallejo, the resident makeup artist at Barney's New York in Beverly Hills.

"The Pan-Stik is really an amazing item, and I'm sure many women are thankful he came up with that idea," Vallejo said. "It hides a lot of flaws."

**B**esides Pan-Cake and Pan-Stik, Factor created Tru-Color Lipstick in 1940 and Color Fast Lipstick in 1954. He made camouflage makeup for the Marine Corps in 1946 and unveiled a line of men's cologne and aftershave in 1952. Along the way, he introduced liquid makeup, the first refillable mascara wand and the first nonallergenic lipstick color.

The products reached Australia as early as the 1930s, and by the mid-1940s, the company was advertising Pan-Cake in Spanish in layouts featuring actresses Lana Turner, Rita Hayworth and Judy Garland. In 1950, when Max Factor introduced its World of Beauty makeup line, the company had 10,000 employees and sold products in 101 countries, according to the 1995 book.

A World War II-era magazine ad featured Veronica Lake and the slogan, "Makeup in seconds. Look lovely for hours." In 1971, the

company unveiled Ultra Lucent Waterproof Make-Up, designed "to stay on perfectly under all conditions—even an underwater swim."

David A. Koslow, who was the vice president of the U.S. division of Max Factor, remembered his old boss as "a very nice, gentle, personable guy, not in the mold of today's wheeler-dealers," who spent most of his time at the McFadden Place laboratory mixing perfumes rather than at the Highland Avenue salon and store.

In the 1960s, Max Factor became the top cosmetics seller in chain drugstores and one of the first companies to put merchandise on store shelves, rather than behind a special counter, a company source said, adding that sales went up 600% in one year.

After Max Factor Co. had gone global, Koslow recalled, a new marketing employee suggested that the company end its special service to film studios.

"[Max's brother] Davis Factor, who was the business head of the company, said: 'We don't, make much money in that anymore, but the studios depend on us. As long as they want it, we'll continue to make it,'" Koslow recounted. "A guy could get fired for saying that in today's world."

Max and Davis Factor sold the company in 1973 to Norton Simon Inc. for \$480 million, and it changed hands several times before being acquired by Procter & Gamble four years ago. The line remains an international powerhouse—and a household name.

The Art Deco beauty museum, originally intended as a temporary exhibit during the 1984 Olympic Games, draws about 1,000 visitors a week. Though its long run will end June 15, some of the artifacts will be housed in the Hollywood Entertainment Museum.

**F**or many people, Max Factor is not a man, but a lipstick, an eye shadow, a brow pencil or a blush.

"He's one of the most famous men in the world, but people don't know he's a man," Cashion laughed. "Who else has a product named after him? You could go to Botswana, and they know Max Factor."

Married for 37 years to Milly, Factor had two sons, Donald and

Mark. After his wife's death in 1970, Factor remained single, dining on Mondays at the Friar's Club with the likes of the late George Burns and making the rounds to legendary L.A. spots such as Chasen's and the Bistro. A racehorse owner, he frequented Santa Anita, Hollywood Park and Del Mar.

He disliked traveling and instead spent vacations at the Beverly Hills Hotel or in Malibu.

A shy, unpretentious man, his closest friends were not the stars who sat with him but the busboys, maitre d's and waiters in between, Cashion said. He kept employees on the payroll long after they had stopped working, because they were like family. When he was mugged once in the 1960s, a friend remembered, Factor talked the desperate man out of taking his wallet, then walked him to a nearby hotel and bought him dinner and two nights' stay.

He would sit in the front seat next to his chauffeur and open doors for himself.

"He made me feel like one of the family," said Bruce Luchsinger, who has worked for Factor since 1992.

"I think that came from the fact that he started out with next to nothing. He had the perspective of a normal, working-class person trying to make a go of it in the world," Luchsinger added. "He never lost sight of that."

Factor had been plagued by heart problems for the past decade, surviving two surgeries, and had been extremely ill for the past six months, according to his physician, Dr. Rexford Kennamer. He died at his home Friday, with Cashion and son Donald by his side.

"The last thing I said to Max, I said, 'This is Duny, and I'm taking care of the store.' He squeezed my hand very lightly. He knew it was me," Cashion said softly. "It was very peaceful. He had been very, very close to death for about a week. At the very end, he just kind of fell asleep."

Besides Donald and Mark, Factor is survived by a half brother, Sidney, who lives in Beverly Hills, and grandchildren Andrew and Alyssa Factor.

Funeral services will be Monday from noon to 2 p.m. at Hillside Cemetery in Los Angeles. Donations can be made to the Devereaux Foundation, P.O. Box 1079, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.