

(Webmaster's note: *As a senior, Charlie Kaufman performed in his high school's production of Play It Again, Sam on Nov. 13-15, 1975. Charlie won the lead role of Allan Felix, a mild-mannered film critic who seeks advice from the persona of Humphrey Bogart. He wrote this article about the experience, for his yearbook. Thanks to Dave for research and scans.*)

--In Loving Memory of Humphrey Bogart--

"Play It Again, Sam" was a most exciting and rewarding experience. You see, looking the way I do, I've always been cast in macho roles, for more than obvious reasons. Directors constantly type-cast me in roles such as Stanley Kowalski, Othello, Bill Sykes, Emperor Jones, etc. It got so discouraging after a while. "Why can't I play Elwood P. Dowd or the voice of Mr. Magoo?" "Sorry kid, you're too manly, too much gusto, but, I've got a great opening in a Tarzan movie ..."

Then, one day while I was crushing beer bottles--full ones--with my feet, one of my friends mentioned auditions for "Play It Again, Sam." "Any big brawny males in the cast?" I asked doubtfully. "No," my friend answered, "But try out, it's not going to kill you."

So, I did. I don't know what Mike Jones saw in me but he cast me as a divorced, frustrated, puny, oversexed twirp. I was ecstatic, but, there was no time for gaiety. Immediately I set out to work destroying my body. Of course I couldn't shorten my hulking 6'5" frame but a special trench was dug on the stage that made me appear 5'4". Naturally I wore sunken cheek make-up and a fuzzy wig over my golden locks. My voice became a perfectly affected effeminate, nasal twang and I WAS Allan Felix.

At last, my dream had come true; I wasn't a victim of my machismo physique. I was able to free myself, to be short ... to be somebody!

Charles Stuart Kaufman



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