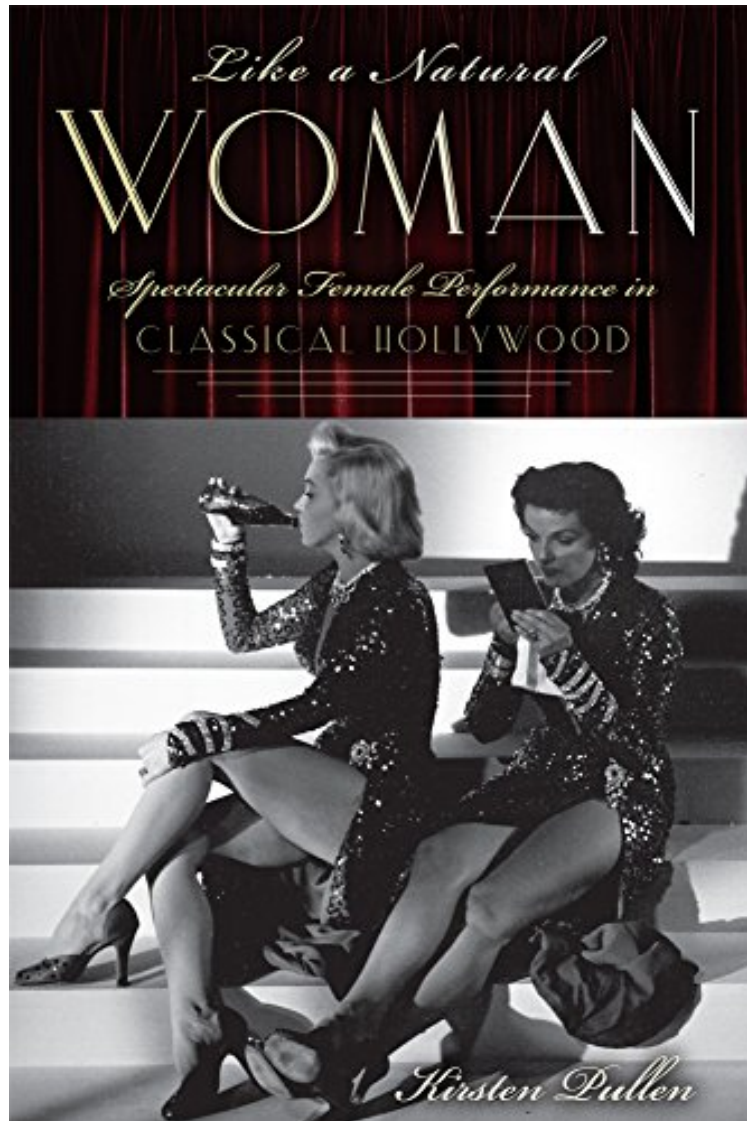


(Library ebook) Like a Natural Woman: Spectacular Female Performance in Classical Hollywood

Like a Natural Woman: Spectacular Female Performance in Classical Hollywood

Professor Kirsten Pullen

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Professor Kirsten Pullen : Like a Natural Woman: Spectacular Female Performance in Classical Hollywood before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Like a Natural Woman: Spectacular Female Performance in Classical Hollywood:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By kpullen124 My dad thinks this one is the best. 2 of 7

people found the following review helpful. DisappointingBy LAWI had very high hopes for this book, but it is over-written and under-researched. Take, for example, the chapter on Jane Russell, Pullen, chooses to focus on two of Russell's less successful films, GENTLEMEN MARRY BRUNETTES and (the underrated) THE FUZZY PINK NIGHTGOWN, while completely ignoring Russell's wonderfully "natural" performances in FOXFIRE, THE TALL MEN (both 1955) and THE REVOLT OF MAMIE STOVER (1956). If you want to learn more about the actresses Pullen examines in this book, do what she did: Google them and then catch their films on TCM. It'll be much more satisfying than reading this book.

Bathing beauty Esther Williams, bombshell Jane Russell, exotic Carmen Miranda, chanteuse Lena Horne, and talk-show fixture Zsa Zsa Gabor are rarely hailed as great actors or as naturalistic performers. Those terms of praise are given to male stars like Marlon Brando and James Dean, whose gritty dramas are seen as a departure from the glossy spectacles in which these stars appeared. Like a Natural Woman challenges those assumptions, revealing the skill and training that went into the work of these five actresses, who employed naturalistic performance techniques, both onscreen and off. Bringing a fresh perspective to film history through the lens of performance studies, Kirsten Pullen explores the ways in which these actresses, who always appeared to be playing themselves, responded to the naturalist notion that actors should create authentic characters by drawing from their own lives. At the same time, she examines how Hollywood presented these female stars as sex objects, focusing on their spectacular bodies at the expense of believable characterization or narratives. Pullen not only helps us appreciate what talented actresses these five women actually were, but also reveals how they sought to express themselves and maintain agency, even while meeting the demands of their directors, studios, families, and fans to perform certain feminine roles. Drawing from a rich collection of classic films, publicity materials, and studio archives, Like a Natural Woman lets us take a new look at both Hollywood acting techniques and the performance of femininity itself.

"This well-researched and detailed study of female performance in classical Hollywood cinema and its persistence and ubiquity in modern celebrity culture is (almost!) as entertaining as the films and stars discussed."