

[FREE] Movies of the 40s (Midi)

## Movies of the 40s (Midi)

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**From Taschen : Movies of the 40s (Midi)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Movies of the 40s (Midi):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Another Superb Picture Book In This Excellent Series By John Howard Reid When reviewing a previous book in this outstanding series, I was criticized for concentrating on the attractiveness of the illustrations and neglecting the text. Frankly, I see these books as containing such a wealth of beautiful stills, the text is most definitely a secondary consideration. If you must know, the text is not always 100% accurate, the result of (1) trying to compress a large amount of information into a very small space; (2) a Germanic rather than an American way of interpreting facts; (3) a reliance on European rather than American sources and press reports. Some readers may also find the selection of movies chosen for inclusion somewhat odd, although this particular volume has far fewer surprises than other titles in the series. The surprises on this occasion are not so much in the inclusions as the exclusions. Making a comparison with my own book, MEMORABLE FILMS OF THE

FORTIES, the first omission I noticed was "The Picture of Dorian Gray", which presumably does not currently enjoy the same cult status in Europe as it does in the U.S.A. In fact, no Albert Lewin at all. No Maria Montez either. Therefore no "Cobra Woman". No "Yankee Doodle Dandy" in the main text either, although it does have a small still in the addenda. No Sherlock Holmes, but Basil Rathbone is represented by "Bathing Beauty". No Errol Flynn at all! No Bob Hope. No "Tree Grows in Brooklyn". No Alice Faye, no Bing Crosby, no Fred Astaire. No Ronald Colman, Ginger Rogers, Susan Hayward, John Farrow, Elia Kazan. The list goes on. However, it could well be argued that the 1940s presented such abundant cinema riches, it would be impossible to make a selection that would delight everyone. Many of my personal favorites are so handsomely presented in this book, it's a highly valued acquisition.

A trendsetting decade in world cinema The 40s were the decade of the movies. With the world at war, directors served up propaganda and escapist entertainment to the massed moviegoers of the pre-television age. Yet in many countries, there was also a parallel tendency towards greater realism. In Italy, for example, the spirit of the resistance culminated in the neorealist movement, which inspired the world's moviemakers with masterpieces such as De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* (1948). In Hollywood, the 40s were probably the most creative phase in the studios' history. Never before had the Dream Factory brought such compellingly edgy and experimental films to the silver screen. The most seminal work of the decade was *Citizen Kane* (1941); Orson Welles's extravagantly original debut anticipated the expressive visual style that would come to typify film noir—the genre of "dark movies," populated by romantic antiheroes and femmes fatales, that still represents the essence of cinema for many passionate movie buffs. In the atmospheric black-and-white universe of noir, Rita Hayworth, Ava Gardner, and Lauren Bacall became timeless erotic icons, while Bogart—following *The Big Sleep* (1945)—was the very quintessence of cool. While these movies bore witness to the cracks in America's facade, another genre was busily reconstituting the nation's identity. In the films of John Ford, the Western came back with a vengeance, Monument Valley embodied America's incomparable grandeur, and John Wayne (*The Duke*) was a natural aristocrat of the wild frontier.

About the Author Jürgen Müller studied art history in Bochum, Paris, Pisa, and Amsterdam. He has worked as an art critic, a curator of numerous exhibitions, a visiting professor at various universities, and has published books and numerous articles on cinema and art history. Currently he holds the chair for art history at the University of Dresden, where he lives. Müller is the series editor for TASCHEN's *Movies* decade titles.