



# Majestic Hollywood: The Greatest Films of 1939

*Mark A. Vieira*

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1939 was a watershed year. The Great Depression was barely over; economics, politics, and culture braced for war. There was a lull before the storm and Hollywood, as if expecting to be judged by posterity, produced a portfolio of masterpieces. No year before or since has yielded so many beloved works of cinematic art: *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Gunga Din*, *Only Angels Have Wings*, *Destry Rides Again*, *Beau Geste*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Stagecoach*, *Ninotchka*, *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, *Dark Victory*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *The Women*, and of course, *Gone With the Wind*.

*Majestic Hollywood* showcases fifty films from this landmark year, with insightful text on the cultural significance of each movie and entertaining plot descriptions. Also included are stories from the legendary artists who made the films: directors William Wellman and John Ford; cinematographers Arthur Miller and Lee Garmes; actors Judy Garland, Rosalind Russell, Ray Milland, Sir Laurence Olivier, and Olivia de Havilland.

This world of entertainment is illustrated by rarely seen images. Made during the most glamorous era in movie history, whether scene stills, behind-the-scenes candid, portraits, or poster art, the photos are as distinctive, evocative, and powerful as the films they were meant to publicize. Presenting the best of these images and the stories behind them, this book is a cavalcade of unforgettable films from 1939: Hollywood's Greatest Year.

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