



A Splurch in the Kisser: The Movies of Blake Edwards (Wesleyan Film)

By Sam Wasson

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With one of the longest and most controversial careers in Hollywood history, Blake Edwards is a phoenix of movie directors, full of hubris, ambition, and raving comic chutzpah. His rambunctious filmography remains an artistic force on par with Hollywood's greatest comic directors: Lubitsch, Sturges, Wilder. Like Wilder, Edwards's propensity for hilarity is double-helixed with pain, and in films like *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Days of Wine and Roses*, and even *The Pink Panther*, we can hear him off-screen, laughing in the dark. And yet, despite those enormous successes, he was at one time considered a Hollywood villain. After his marriage to Julie Andrews, Edwards's *Darling Lili* nearly sunk the both of them and brought Paramount Studios to its knees. Almost overnight, Blake became an industry pariah, which ironically fortified his sense of satire, as he simultaneously fought the Hollywood tide and rode it. Employing keen visual analysis, meticulous research, and troves of interviews and production files, Sam Wasson delivers the first complete account of one of the maddest figures Hollywood has ever known.

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Editorial Review

Review

“With this title, Wasson fulfills the goal of the ‘Wesleyan Film’ series, which aims to produce books that are ‘rigorous, critical, and accessible both to academics and to lay readers with a serious interest in film.’ The study is a pleasure to read, primarily because the author is a fan and intimate with the details of the thematic content and style of Edwards’s films. ... Recommended (for) lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.”—S. Vander Closter, *Choice*

Review

“Sam Wasson has undertaken nothing less than the critical resurrection of Blake Edwards, whose 40-film career, by turns good, great, bad, but never indifferent, has been ridiculously underrated by the critical establishment. Wasson very readably displays the scholarly background, writing skills, historical sophistication and balanced judgment to succeed in his objective. One hopes this impressive work will inspire a splurge of revivals and retrospectives of this more than intermittently hilarious filmmaker.” (Andrew Sarris, film critic, *The New York Observer*)

“Reading Wasson’s book is like having a couple of beers with your friend, the Blake freak. I was continually amazed at the exacting nature of the descriptions of shots and sequences and the intelligence of the analysis that grows out of them.” (Ed Sikov, author of *Mr. Strangelove: A Biography of Peter Sellers*)

About the Author

SAM WASSON is currently working on a book about *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*. He lives in Los Angeles.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jennifer Burritt:

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