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Edith Head: The Fifty-Year Career Of Hollywood's Greatest Costume Designer



Synopsis

All About Eve. Funny Face. Sunset Blvd. Rear Window. Sabrina. A Place in the Sun. The Ten Commandments. Scores of iconic films of the last century had one thing in common: costume designer Edith Head (1897–1981). She racked up an unprecedented 35 Oscar nods and 400 film credits over the course of a fifty-year career. Never before has the account of Hollywood's most influential designer been so thoroughly revealed; because never before have the Edith Head Archives of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences been tapped. This unprecedented access allows this book to be a one-of-a-kind survey, bringing together a spectacular collection of rare and never-before-seen sketches, costume test shots, behind-the-scenes photos, and ephemera.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I suppose any book documenting Edith Head's 50 year career in Hollywood is better than nothing, but this one doesn't even try to be in depth. It is a disappointment on a number of levels. This coffee table book is part biography of Edith, part fashion bio of the costumes she made for films, part gossip dropper of the lives on the people she worked with. Don't be fooled by the book's height or size. You aren't getting your money's worth as most of the pages are "filler." I purchased this book back in January, but held back posting a review until I finished reading it. I kept hoping, thinking, the book would improve. But the longer I examined it, the more faults I found with it. Firstly, Edith's name is linked to over 1000+ films; of that 500 or so, she personally designed and costumed herself. From that, we get only a scant 100 or less films. Also, for reasons I can't fathom, we are shown pictures

from films Edith had nothing to do with (where she received name credit, but didn't actually design the costumes for). While it's necessary, of course, to address the Givenchy and "The Sting" controversies, among others, it's a waste of space to include pictures of costumes she didn't design. Compounding this problem is the many, many, many of the costumes are described and not shown. With the exception of 3-6 films, most films are allotted only 1 or 2 pictures. In addition, most of the shots are publicity shots and don't always show the costumes at their best angle to be able to study and admire the craftsmanship Edith put into making them. Then, we come to pictures of Edith. There are 20+ (I counted) pictures of her sketching or looking at sketches.

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