

Irene Dunne

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FIRST LADY OF HOLLYWOOD

WES D. GEHRING

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This is the first full-length biography of Irene Dunne, one of the most versatile actresses of Hollywood's Golden Age. A recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors award in 1985, Dunne's acting highlights include five Best Actress Oscar nominations, occurring in almost as many different genres: the Western Cimarron (1931), the two screwball comedies Theodora Goes Wild (1936) and The Awful Truth (1937), the romantic comedy Love Affair (1939), and the populist I Remember Mama (1948). Her other memorable films include My Favorite Wife (1940), Penny Serenade (1941), Anna and the King of Siam (1946), and Life with Father (1947). After delving into Dunne's childhood and early acting forays, the book reveals details about key events in her life and career, including a difficult, bi-coastal marriage. The author also examines Dunne's pivotal roles on stage and in film, her movement among the genres of melodrama and screwball comedy, her ties to director Leo McCarey, and her post-war film career. Gehring's research and insightful analysis shed light on what made Irene Dunne so unique and her performances so memorable. Includes 16 pages of photos.

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