

# Some Like It Wilder

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## SOME LIKE IT



## WILDER

The Life and Controversial Films of  
**BILLY WILDER**

GENE D. PHILLIPS

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One of the most accomplished writers and directors of classic Hollywood, Billy Wilder (1906–2002) directed numerous acclaimed films, including *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), *Sabrina* (1954), *The Seven Year Itch* (1955), *Witness for the Prosecution* (1957), and *Some Like It Hot* (1959). Featuring Gene D. Phillips's unique, in-depth critical approach, *Some Like It Wilder: The Life and Controversial Films of Billy Wilder* provides a groundbreaking overview of a filmmaking icon. Wilder began his career as a screenwriter in Berlin but, because of his Jewish heritage, sought refuge in America when Germany came under Nazi control. Making fast connections in Hollywood, Wilder immediately made the jump from screenwriter to director. His classic films *Five Graves to Cairo* (1943), *Double Indemnity* (1945), and *The Lost Weekend* (1945) earned Academy Awards for best picture, director, and screenplay. During the 1960s, Wilder continued to direct and produce controversial comedies, including *Kiss Me, Stupid* (1964) and *The Apartment* (1960), which won Oscars for best picture and director. This definitive biography reveals that Wilder was, and remains, one of the most influential directors in filmmaking.

## 作者介绍:

### Review

"Phillips intertwines Wilder's life story, drawn from archival records and his interviews with Wilder, with his films, providing a plot synopsis, quotes, anecdotes, and mildly interesting trivia for each film."—Library Journal

"Phillips presents Wilder in accurate detail and sets many legends to rest. He understands and analyzes each project with support from his copious research, countless interviews with those who knew and worked with Wilder, as well as an interview with the grand master himself. . . . He goes beyond the surface and deep into the complex mind and soul of the famous film director. . . . This book is, in my view, definitive."—Vincent LoBrutto, author of *Martin Scorsese: A Biography*

"Wilder often clashed with the strict production codes and national conservatism in order to present lively characters and plots that were out of the ordinary. He left behind a rich legacy and the reputation for being a master at his craft."—Vincent LoBrutto, author of *Martin Scorsese: A Biography*

"Phillips, who interviewed Wilder several times, has mastered the voluminous correspondence between Wilder and his antagonists and collaborators, which reveals a hidden history of studio filmmaking that often contradicts the myths."—DGA Quarterly

"Some Like it Wilder is an absolute must for any fan of film history or for film history collections in general."—Wisconsin Bookwatch

"[Phillips] tells the story of this iconic filmmaker's journey from being a writer who escaped Nazi controlled Germany to becoming an Academy award-winning director."—kydirect.net

"Wilder's life story, told before, is very usefully updated here. Recommended."—Choice

"Featuring Gene D. Phillips' unique, in-depth critical approach, *Some Like It Wilder: The Life and Controversial Films of Billy Wilder* provides a groundbreaking overview of a filmmaking icon. . . . This definitive biography reveals that Wilder was, and remains, one

of the most influential directors in filmmaking"—Turner Classic Movies

"The real trick is to keep the narrative interesting, and Father Phillips is certainly up to the task, so much so that his book has recently been touted on the America Movie Classics cable television network—surely a promotional coup for the University Press of Kentucky. Wilder's life story told many times before is here usefully updated."—J.M. Welsh, Literature/Film Quarterly

"Some Like It Wilder: The Life and Controversial Films of Billy Wilder paints both a comprehensive and affectionate portrait of Wilder. . . . The work remains and speaks for itself, but this book will give anyone interested in Wilder a fresh insight into how it got made."—Pretty Clever Films

### From the Inside Flap

Although his career spanned fifty years and included more than fifty films, Austrian-American film director Billy Wilder (1906--2002) may be best known for the legendary shot of Marilyn Monroe's dress billowing over a subway grating in *The Seven Year Itch* (1955). This "shot seen round the world" is representative not only of Hollywood's golden era of cinema but also of one of its most prolific and brilliant directors. Wilder, whose filmography includes such classics as *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), *Sabrina* (1954), *Witness for the Prosecution* (1957), and *Some Like It Hot* (1959), is often remembered for his versatility, biting wit, and passion for challenging social and moral conventions.

Author Gene D. Phillips departs from the traditional biography in *Some Like It Wilder: The Life and Controversial Films of Billy Wilder*, offering new insights into the acclaimed director's professional and private life. In preparation for the book, Phillips conducted personal interviews with Wilder and other key players from the legendary director's life and times. Phillips's unique combination of analysis and biographical detail brings Wilder to life, as both an artist and man.

Phillips traces Wilder's path from Berlin, where he worked as a scriptwriter for one of the city's largest studios, to Hollywood, where he would quickly establish himself as a premier film director. Forming a partnership with writer-producer Charles Brackett, Wilder directed the classic films *Five Graves to Cairo* (1943), *Double Indemnity* (1945), and *The Lost Weekend* (1945), which earned Academy Awards for best picture, best director, and best screenplay. During the 1960s, Wilder continued to direct and produce controversial comedies, including *Kiss Me Stupid* (1964) and *The Apartment* (1960). *The Apartment* brought Wilder another round of Oscars for best picture, best director, and best screenplay.

Wilder's maverick approach and independent artistic vision pushed boundaries and ensured his legacy as one of the Hollywood greats. Sharply written, *Some Like It Wilder* serves as a comprehensive companion to Wilder's films, offering a personalized and heartfelt account of the life and genius of this compelling director.

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