

## Genius of the System

*Thomas Schatz*

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#530359 in Books 1990-03-24 1990-03-24Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF #  
1 #File Name: 0679728856 | File size: 44.Mb

**Thomas Schatz : Genius of the System** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Genius of the System:

In *The Genius of the System*, Thomas Schatz recalls Hollywood's Golden Age from the 1920s until the dawn of television in the late 1940s, when quality films were produced swiftly and cost efficiently thanks to the intricate design of the system. Schatz takes us through the rise and fall of individual careers and the making and unmaking of movies such as *Frankenstein*, *Casablanca*, and Hitchcock's *Notorious*. Through detailed analysis of major Hollywood moviemakers including Universal, Warner Bros., and MGM, he reminds us of a time when studios had distinct personalities and the relationship between contracts and creativity was not mutually exclusive.

From *Publishers Weekly*"In this original, monumental survey of Hollywood's film studios from 1920 to 1955, Schatz, in contrast with the directorial theories of Andrew Sarris and other film historians, describes the creative give-and-take and the symbiotic accord between creators and front offices," wrote PW. Photos. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal*Several other histories of Hollywood's studio system have already been published, including Robert Stanley's *The Celluloid Empire* (LJ 5/15/78), Douglas Gomery's *The Hollywood Studio System* (LJ 1/86), and Ethan Mordden's *The Hollywood Studios* (LJ 5/15/88). All these books have some value, but

Mordden and Schatz win top honors. Larger libraries should purchase both books, as they complement each other. Mordden's primary interest is aesthetics; Schatz's is business. Mordden's writing is sometimes brilliant, while Schatz's is only good, but Schatz has obviously done a lot of research, and he puts it to good use in a very readable book. John Smothers, Monmouth Cty. Lib., Manalapan, Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. There was much to criticize in the Hollywood system, and much to marvel at. But one can't do either without the means to make sense of it. This book provides that. (Elizabeth Kendall, The New York Times Book )Brings the pace and confusion and inspiration of filmmaking to life...Schatz has made a lasting contribution to film history. (Directors Guild of America Newsletter)