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Eleanor Powell: A Bio-Bibliography (Bio-Bibliographies In The Performing Arts)

Eleanor Powell
A Bio-Bibliography
Margie Schultz



Synopsis

Eleanor Powell began her notable career at age 12, with an appearance at a supper show at an Atlantic City hotel. As a teenager, she moved to vaudeville and Broadway, where producers insisted that the classically trained dancer study tap. With minimal training, she became the queen of tap dancing in the 1930s and 1940s, with MGM casting her in some of the best-loved musicals of all time. This book details her life and career. A concise biography overviews the principal events in the life and work of Eleanor Powell. The chapters that follow are devoted to her work in particular media, such as film, radio, and television. Each chapter contains entries for her productions, which provide cast and credit information, plot synopses, criticism, and excerpts from reviews. Appendices provide additional information about her life, and an annotated bibliography summarizes the many writings by and about her.

Book Information

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"This volume is exceptionally detailed and well researched. The author provides an excellent introductory biographical sketch and follows it with a chronology, an annotated list of plays and personal appearances, and extensive filmography, and lists of radio and television appearances. This bio-bibliography will be of interest to admirers of the work of Powell. It also provides students of film history with insights into the politics, financial manipulations, and personalities that existed in the

golden age of Hollywood."-ARBA 95?This volume is exceptionally detailed and well researched. The author provides an excellent introductory biographical sketch and follows it with a chronology, an annotated list of plays and personal appearances, and extensive filmography, and lists of radio and television appearances. This bio-bibliography will be of interest to admirers of the work of Powell. It also provides students of film history with insights into the politics, financial manipulations, and personalities that existed in the golden age of Hollywood.?ARBA 95

MARGIE SCHULTZ is a free-lance writer and performing arts historian, whose books include *Ann Sothern: A Bio-Bibliography* (1990) and *Irene Dunne: A Bio-Bibliography* (1991), both published by Greenwood Press. Her many articles have appeared in such diverse publications as *Hollywood: Then and Now*, *Classic Images*, *Show Music*, *Art Beat*, *Barbie Bazaar*, and *Miller's Price Guide and Collector's Almanac*.

Not what I expected, as it's not written in narrative form, but fascinating in its own right.

The written content is very comprehensive but the presentation woefully lacking, especially in a volume offered at this price. There is a single photo, of terrible quality. The text looks as if it were typed on an old manual typewriter. The binding, a cheap-looking slick bright green (NOT what is pictured on the website), would be more suitable for a kids' book from K-Mart. The publisher says the book is now printed only when a copy is ordered, and that they have no control over quality. If you are interested in an exhaustive review of the career of Eleanor Powell and don't care how the volume looks, you will probably be happy with this book.

This type of book is more like a research paper than a biography of a major star, and one of the great dancers of the period. The Bio is a dry review of who she was and what movies she performed in, but lacks any of the material that makes her a living woman with feeling and talent. It would have been good for a graduate paper for an MA degree, but not much more. Any one can compile facts. The secret of a great biography is the making of the subject come to life. Even as a MA study, I would only give it a B-.

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