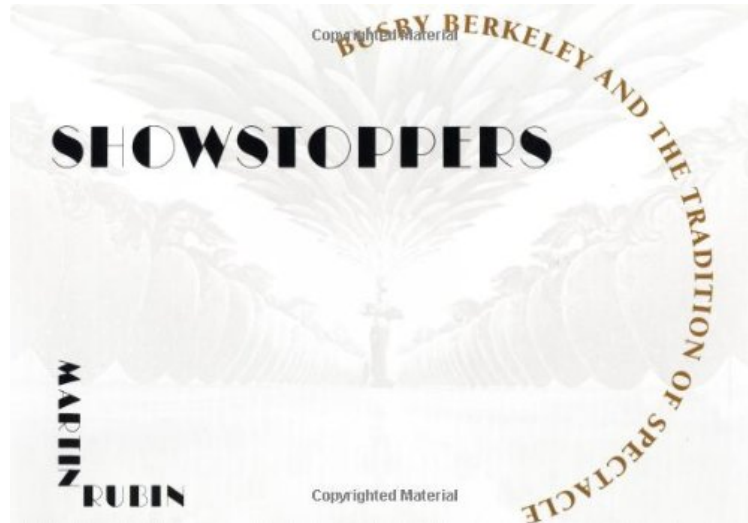


[DOWNLOAD] Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle

Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle

Martin Rubin

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Martin Rubin : Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A Busby Berkeley Spectacular! By A Customer
The "Berkeleyesque" dance number is one that "depends on sheer spectacle, on the deployment of hordes of chorus dancers in a grandiose setting." Ever since I became aware of Busby Berkeley's spectacular musical productions during a film history course in college 20 years ago, I've longed for a comprehensive look at his films and career. Showstoppers is the Berkeley Bible! Showstoppers is divided into three parts, the first of which describes Berkeley's inimitable style, the elements that distinguish his work from others, and it's roots. Part II looks at his Broadway theater career during the second half of the 1920s. The meat of the story is presented in Part III, comprising 3/4 of the book, which describes in 7 chapters his cinema career spanning from 1930 to 1962. Each of his films is examined and includes references to the photos which are presented in two groups. Showstoppers contains 248 pages of text plus 62 pages of production still photos of Berkeley's numbers. Although the black and white photos are not enlargements of actual frames from the films, they depict real sets and actors and, in some cases, show production equipment not visible in the film such as camera tracks in one instance. They are professionally lit, well printed and the captions informative. I highly recommend this book to any Berkeley buff, film fan, or lover of the musical spectacle on film.

The first major analyses of Busby Berkeley's career on stage and screen. Showstoppers emphasizes his relationship to a colorful, somewhat disreputable tradition of American popular entertainment: that of P.T Barnum, minstrel shows, vaudeville, Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show, burlesque, and the Ziegfeld Follies. Rubin shows how Berkeley absorbed the declining theatrical tradition during his years as a Broadway dance director and then transferred it to the new genre of the early movie musical. With lively prose and engaging photographs, Showstoppers explores new ways of looking at Busby Berkeley, at the musical genre, and at individual film.

Impressive and admirable. . . "Showstoppers" is film scholarship and analysis of a very high order. From the Back Cover The name Busby Berkeley, creator of the dances for films such as 42nd Street, Babes in Arms, and Million Dollar Mermaid, is synonymous with the spectacular musical production number. Films, television commercials, and MTV videos continue to use "Berkeleyesque" techniques long after Berkeley himself and the genre that nourished him have faded from the scene. The first major analysis of Berkeley's career on stage and screen, Showstoppers emphasizes his relationship to a colorful, somewhat disreputable tradition of American popular entertainment: that of P. T. Barnum, minstrel shows, vaudeville, Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show, burlesque, and the Ziegfeld Follies. Rubin shows how Berkeley absorbed this declining theatrical tradition during his years as a Broadway dance director and then transferred it to the new genre of the early movie musical. With lively prose and engaging photographs, Showstoppers explores new ways of looking at Busby Berkeley, at the musical genre, and at individual films. Appropriate for both specialists and general readers, Showstoppers is an exuberant study of a figure whose career, Rubin notes, "provides an extraordinarily rich point of convergence for a wide range of cultural and artistic contexts". About the Author Martin Rubin was Film Program Director of New York Cultural Center and an Associate Director of the San Francisco Film Festival. He has taught at the State University of New York at Purchase, Wright State University, and the University of California at Santa Barbara. His articles on film have appeared in the Village Voice, Movie, Film Comment, Persistence of Vision, and Velvet Light Trap.