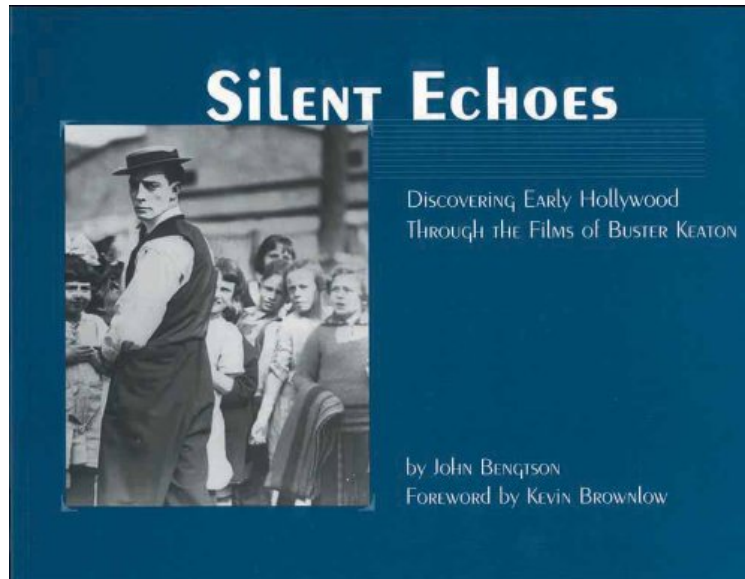


# Silent Echoes: Discovering Early Hollywood Through the Films of Buster Keaton

John Bengston

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**John Bengston : Silent Echoes: Discovering Early Hollywood Through the Films of Buster Keaton** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Silent Echoes: Discovering Early Hollywood Through the Films of Buster Keaton:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Must For Any Buster Keaton Fan By E. Hunter Hale Having travelled to Cottage Grove, Oregon for the 90th anniversary screening of Buster Keaton's masterpiece THE GENERAL I had the opportunity to tour the very spots where much of this classic was staged and photographed. John Bengston's SILENT ECHOES was a major help in finding the spots and understanding what scenes were done in those spots. Much of the train photography was done in a section close to the hotel that Keaton and company stayed in that had two layers of tracks so that the train being photographed could be followed with a second train with the camera. The continual moving camera shots used in THE GENERAL give it a very modern feel as in today's films the camera is seldom stationary. This book is interesting not just for THE GENERAL material but also for giving one insights to how and where Keaton's classic shorts and other features were done. Great detective work on Bengston's part. A must for any serious fan of Buster Keaton

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. These books are all so great, I wish he'd write a bunch more of ... By Scott Charles This time, the magnificent author and historical detective, John Bengston, turns his eye onto the works of Buster Keaton. The results, as could be predicted, are astounding. This book is one of a trio of books addressing the works of Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, and Harold Lloyd. These books are all so great, I wish he'd write a bunch more of them, perhaps on Harry Langdon or Roscoe Arbuckle.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. great location book By Mike Di If you like Buster Keaton, like looking for movie locations and live in LA, this book is for you. I got the first two covered and have used this book while on vacation in LA to search out BK's filming sites. The detail in this book is amazing. What's also amazing is after all the changes LA has undergone over the last 90 years or so, you can still find the same fire hydrants and

light posts still there. My only gripe is that the book is in chronological order by movie. So unless you make some notes beforehand, you could be in downtown LA, then drive up to Chatsworth, turn the page and see something you missed downtown. One other warning, some of the neighborhoods BK filmed in were a lot safer back in 1925. My brother and I didn't have any problems and I felt pretty safe. But then again, he's a state trooper! I also bought this author's books on Chaplin and Lloyd. The Chaplin one is just as good. I haven't been back to LA since I got the one on Lloyd. Please Mr Bengtson, write one on Laurel Hardy!

*Silent Echoes: Discovering Early Hollywood Through the Films of Buster Keaton* is an epic look at a genius at work and at a Hollywood that no longer exists. Painstakingly researching the locations used in Buster Keaton's classic silent films, author John Bengtson combines images from Keaton's movies with archival photographs, historic maps, and scores of dramatic then and now photos. In the process, Bengtson reveals dozens of locations that lay undiscovered for nearly 80 years. Part time machine, part detective story, *Silent Echoes* presents a fresh look at the matchless Keaton at work, as well as a captivating glimpse of Hollywood's most romantic era. More than a book for film, comedy, or history buffs, *Silent Echoes* appeals to anyone fascinated with solving puzzles or witnessing the awesome passage of time.

From *Library Journal* Buster Keaton ranks as one of the foremost clown princes of Hollywood. As a child, Keaton learned his craft as one of vaudeville's Three Keatons, where he was the target of knockabout comedy so rough many observers considered it a form of child abuse. Sadly, personal problems, alcoholism, and a lack of business acumen caused Buster to lose artistic control over the making of his films in later years, and he was reduced to taking bit roles in "Beach Party" films. Knopf (theater, Univ. of Michigan) offers a timely, academic appreciation of the great stoneface, examining why Keaton's films intrigued surrealists and intellectuals such as Salvador Dalí, Federico García Lorca, and Luis Buñuel. (One of Keaton's final appearances was in a short film scripted by Samuel Beckett.) Knopf also does an excellent job of tracing the vaudevillian roots of Keaton's stunts and gags. On the other hand, Bengtson's *Silent Echoes* shows more than 100 sites from early Keaton films, comparing the film view with the scene as it exists today. (Unlike other silent film figures, Keaton preferred natural settings for his pratfalls. As a result, his early films offer a wonderful view of early Hollywood landmarks that are, like some of Keaton's films, now lost to posterity.) This dedicated bit of detective work will be of great interest to Hollywood and urban historians. Although the definitive history of Keaton's life and career has yet to be written, both books will nicely supplement the collections of libraries that already own earlier studies, like Keaton's *Wonderful World of Slapstick*, Marion Meade's *Buster Keaton: Cut to the Chase* or Tom Dardis's *Keaton: The Man Who Wouldn't Lie Down*. Not to mention Kino on Video's ten-volume *The Art of Buster Keaton*. Recommended for all academic and large public libraries and specialized film collections. A Stephen Rees, Levittown Regional Lib., PA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.