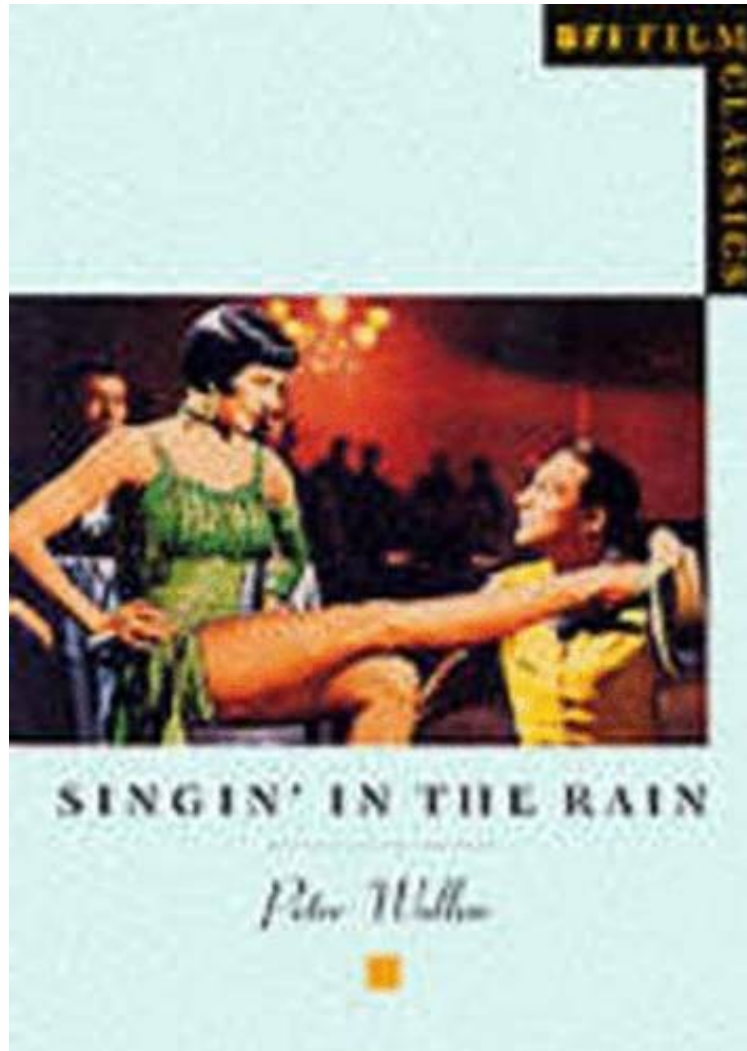


[FREE] Singin' in the Rain (BFI Film Classics)

Singin' in the Rain (BFI Film Classics)

Peter Wollen

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#1740466 in Books British Film Institute 1992-12-27 2008-01-22 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.52 x .23 x 5.391, .30 Binding: Mass Market Paperback 72 pages | File size: 29.Mb

Peter Wollen : Singin' in the Rain (BFI Film Classics) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Singin' in the Rain (BFI Film Classics):

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. What a Glorious Feeling! By Michael Samerdyke This is a terrific book on what is probably the best American musical film. Wollen captured me when he compared Kelly's solo dance in "Rain" to a dance in "Cover Girl," something I had long thought, but had never seen anyone mention in print. Wollen does a fine job showing how the movie fits into Gene Kelly's career and the development of the movie musical. He also has some eye-opening stuff on how "Singin' in the Rain" nearly ran afoul of the Hollywood blacklist. Even if you've seen the movie many times, you'll probably learn something about it in Wollen's book that you

didn't know before. I did. 0 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Good Start But Crashes Fast and Hard By Dash Manchette Not being a fan of dance, I never had a real interest in seeing *Singin' In the Rain*. But a couple weeks ago, it was playing on the big screen and a friend wanted to go see it. We went, and I am very glad I did. The movie was not merely better than I would have thought, it was way, way better. I walked out of the theater totally blown away by what I had seen. Being a (semi-) fan of these BFI books (why do I keep reading these things?), I picked it up and gave it a go. Unfortunately, it just is not that great. The initial sections work, discussing Gene Kelly's career in dance and providing an excellent discussion of how he wanted to incorporate dance seamlessly into the context of a storyline. Typically until this point (and this was my conception of dance movies), the dancing existed as a break from the drama. In *Singin' In the Rain*, the dance is incorporated into the drama itself, so that it flows naturally and freely as the action of a character. The first section also does an excellent job of breaking down Kelly's solo dance in the rain, providing a detailed review of exactly what went into it. The book then goes disastrously, pathetically, but all-too-familiarly wrong. In discussing Kelly's career, and Hollywood in general, during the years when the United States finally took hard Communism in the movie business seriously, we readers are treated to the typical garbage of how horrible it all was for the performers, how unfair it all was, how mean and nasty those anti-Communists were. Not a word that communism was a violent, totalitarian ideology. Not a word that communism was not merely another belief system among many that was jostling for position within our political system but was instead intent on destroying that system to implement its nightmarish reality. Not a word that many in Hollywood were die-hard adherents of that monstrous belief system. Not a word that those whose careers were damaged or destroyed were guilty as hell. Instead, we have to put up with reading about how Kelly's wife did, for some time, believe in Soviet Communism and also that someone had to vouch for her character so that she could work again. No word that these two, belief in Soviet Communism and being of good character, are mutually exclusive. Just one example of many presented here. Does the Left ever stop lying? No, it does not. And this book just keeps it going. Past that point, this book simply becomes unforgettable. It left no impression on me. Maybe after eating half a rotten egg, I just could not stomach the rest.

Forty Years after it first appeared, *Singin' in the Rain* remains one of the best loved films ever made. Yet despite dazzling success with the public, it never received its fair share of praise from the critics. Gene Kelly's genius as a performer is there for all to see. What is less acknowledged is his innovatory contribution as director. Peter Wollen has finally done justice to this landmark film. In a brilliant shot-by-shot analysis of the famous title number, illustrated by specially produced frame stills, he shows how skillfully Kelly binds the dance and musical elements into the narrative, and how he successfully combines two distinctive traditions within American Dance, tap and ballet. Scriptwriters Betty Comden and Adolph Green, and indeed Kelly himself, were all under threat from the McCarthyism which menaced Hollywood at this time. The ethos in which the film was conceived could not long survive in the era of blacklisting. Wollen argues convincingly that *Singin' in the Rain* was the high point in the careers of those who worked on it.

.com Peter Wollen's remarkable treatment of *Singin' in the Rain* approaches the film from many different angles. Wollen sees the movie as an important contribution to the history of modern dance, a representative example of the 1950s musical, a significant comment on American McCarthyist policies, and a work that is at once a collaborative effort and the product of Gene Kelly's creative genius. As Wollen develops these points, he also provides a shot-by-shot analysis of Kelly's *Singin' in the Rain* number, perhaps the most famous dance sequence in any movie musical. Wollen concludes his revelatory book by talking about *Singin' in the Rain* as part of American mythmaking. He also provides an excellent annotated bibliography that will lead you to further reading on the filmmakers, the genre of the musical, and even the rudiments of tap dancing! About the Author Peter Wollen teaches film at the University of California, Los Angeles. His most recent feature film is *Friendship's Death* and for television *Images of Atlantis*. His latest critical collection is *Raiding the Ice-box: Reflections on Twentieth Century Culture*.