

## ...The best picture ever made?

A pretty big question, to be sure—yet more and more one hears this opinion wherever previewers have seen "A Star is Born".

They come out in unabashed awe of the Judy Garland performance. You hear the words, "Academy Award". They speak of James Mason as though discovering him for the first time. They search their memories for a screenplay as inventive and imaginative as Moss Hart's. They re-affirm the artistry of director George Cukor.


They've been so thoroughly entertained in such unprecedented fashion that they seem to find it part of the continuing delight to discuss this experience until every wonder is ex-

plored. Like the music of Harold Arlen and Ira Gershwin—or the unusual and dramatic new use of Technicolor—or the superb taste of the CinemaScope photography. Long after the theatre has gone dark for the night, individual players are singled out, touches remembered, scenes re-lived.

Here then is a new motion picture so far beyond the ordinary as to cause excited speculation among the screen's histori-

ans. Certainly there has been nothing like it before—we can only wonder if its like will ever come along again.

The best picture ever made? We confidently leave the answer to your own good judgment.

Warner Bros. 

WARNER BROS. PRESENT

# JUDY GARLAND ★★ JAMES MASON



CINEMA SCOPE and TECHNICOLOR

ALSO STARRING

JACK CARSON · CHARLES BICKFORD

WITH

TOM NOONAN · MOSS HART ·

DIRECTED BY

GEORGE CUKOR

6 NEW SONGS BY  
HAROLD ARLEN AND IRA GERSHWIN

PRODUCED BY SIDNEY LUFT

MUSICAL DIRECTION  
BY RAY HEINDORF

A TRANSCONA ENTERPRISES PRODUCTION

PRESENTED BY  
WARNER BROS.



STARTS FRIDAY!

MADISON

*Detroit Free Press, 9/28/54*

To the  
highest  
heights.

There has  
been no  
performance  
like this  
Judy Garland  
performance  
and no  
picture like  
'A Star  
Is Born'

WARNER BROS. PRESENT

**JUDY GARLAND**  
**JAMES MASON**  
**"A Star is Born"**

**CINEMA**SCOPE

TECHNICOLOR • STEREOPHONIC SOUND

ALSO STARRING

JACK CARSON • CHARLES BICKFORD

**Starts Friday!**

**MADISON**



Detroit Free Press, 10/1/54

# A Star is Born



STORY BY  
BARRY GREEN  
AND  
DAVID GREEN  
SCREENPLAY BY  
THE MAN WHO  
LET HIM  
IT'S A NEW WORLD  
OF MUSIC AND  
ROMANCE  
AND THE  
MAGIC OF LOVE  
AND THE  
LIFE OF  
LOVE



We believe  
there hasn't been  
before, even once, such  
a performance by  
a motion picture star,  
such perfection  
in motion picture  
entertainment!

PRESENTED BY WARNER BROS.

## JUDY GARLAND AND JAMES MASON

WITH JACK CARSON CHARLES BICKFORD  
TECHNICOLOR CINEMASCOPE

PRODUCED BY  
TIM MOHRAN

SCREENPLAY BY  
MORRIS RABBIT

DIRECTED BY  
GEORGE CUKOR

PRODUCED BY  
GEORGE CUKOR

STORY BY  
BARRY GREEN

STARTS TODAY

DOORS OPEN  
10:45 A.M.

MADISON

SHE'S SUPERB IN 'A STAR IS BORN'

# Judy Garland Is Magnificent

BY J. DORSEY CALLAGHAN

Free Press Drama Critic

Hollywood's bent toward lavish spectacle and sumptuous production justifies itself, I think in Warner Bros. "A Star Is Born," currently showing at the Madison.

The story is one that Hollywood should, by all means, do well, for it is about the shining city itself. In the unfolding of the story, which by the way is one of the best, color and the wide screen are used not as an end in themselves, but as a natural adjunct to the play.

A happy result is that color is abundant and beautiful but does not intrude. And the spec-

tacle is employed as a means to further the tale.

"A Star Is Born" is a far step from the "loud, lovely and labored" school of movie production, and is a masterful contribution to the theater, by any and all counts.

\*\*\*

ITS FINEST contribution, though, is in the real artistry that Judy Garland brings to the role of Esther Blodgett. There is, it is true, much of Judy in it, but that is as it should be.

One may examine a long tally of movies before recalling a passage to compare for

pathos with the scene in Judy's dressing room when she realizes that her beloved is a lost soul.

Of course, it is the "laugh, clown, laugh" thing, but it becomes very much more than a routine in Judy's hands. As a matter of fact, this excellent actress reaches right to the heart more than once during the play.

\*\*\*

AND A WORD to the viewer who prides himself on his tough hide . . . better take a fresh grip on yourself in preparation for Judy's last, magnificently simple line. It's more than likely to bring the brine to the eye.

Spectaclewise, the production number, "I was Born in a Trunk," is worthy of especial mention. The techniques of modern art are applied, but with an astonishing freedom of motion.

James Mason gives his usual well-tailored British account of the role of the has-been actor who rises to final heights. The evening, however, belongs lock, stock and barrel to Judy.

The story, as should be well remembered by one and all, is of a charming ne'er-do-well film actor who brings the aspiring young singer to stardom.

\*\*\*

JUDY, AS THE aspiring youngster, follows the pathway to glory as pointed out by the actor, a fellow named Norman Maine. As her star rises, his declines, and he finally loses his contract and is shunned by one and all.

His descent into the depths reaches a scene in early sessions of the police court on a charge of drunk driving, and it is from that point on that he moves toward the great finale.

The picture lasts a good three hours, but I, for one, did not begrudge a minute of it.

*Detroit Free Press*  
10/2/54

# Detroit News, 10/2/54

**'STAR IS BORN' HER GREATEST**

## Triumph Is Won by Judy Garland

By AL WEITSCHAT

Judy Garland has come back.

The plaudits of the movie millions are drowning out memories of the mental anguish and physical suffering that blacked out for four years the career of the little girl with the big voice and happy personality.

Academy Award talk is buzzing and with good reason. Judy's performance in "A Star Is Born," showing at the Madison, is her greatest. In emotional impact alone it ranks as one certain to find a place on the "Oscar" nomination list next spring.

This is a CinemaScope and Technicolor remake of the 1937 Janet Gaynor-Fredric March hit. It has been modernized and con-

verted into a musical to take advantage of Judy's voice, and it runs more than three hours because of the added production numbers.

### UP FROM NOTHING

A dynamic intensity clings to every moment of Judy's role as Esther Blodgett, the obscure band singer who hitches her wagon to a movie star, Norman Maine. She marries him after achieving fame, but her love isn't enough to salvage his own fading career and addiction to drink.

From James Mason also comes some of his finest acting as the hapless Maine, who had tasted the glory of Hollywood success to the full and proved no match for the humiliation and shattered pride that befall the has-been.

Judy reaches her peak in a

scene in which she pours out to Charles Bickford, as her kindly producer, the anger, pity, and agony that spring from her inability to help the man she loves. There isn't a dry eye in the house when this outburst ends.

### TRAGIC END

Handkerchiefs are busy, too, when Mason, having overheard his wife turn a deaf ear to the producer's suggestion that she cut him loose, tricks her into

### "A STAR IS BORN"

Produced in CinemaScope and Technicolor and released by Warner Brothers. Directed by George Cukor. Screen play by Moss Hart based on a script by Dorothy Parker, Alan Campbell and Robert Carson. At the Madison Theater.

Judy Garland—James Mason, Jack Carson, Charles Bickford, Tom Noonan, Lisa Loring, Amanda Blake, Irving Bacon, Hazel Sherman, James Brown.

singing in the kitchen while he goes for a rehabilitating swim at their beach house, and then calmly walks to his death in a sea burnished by the setting sun.

Jack Carson as a calloused press agent; Tom Noonan as a musical friend who remains loyal to Esther in her troubles; and Lucy Marlow as a hammy starlet serve effectively in the chief supporting roles.

Judy is heard in four new numbers. "The Man Who Got Away" is already becoming popular. "Somewhere There's a Someone" is the inspiration for an amusing bit of mimicry. "Got to Have Me With You" and "Long Face Lost" are other tunes in a rather ordinary score. Some old favorites, including "Melancholy Baby," are received enthusiastically.

### BEHIND THE SCENES

The film offers revealing glimpses of modern production methods on the sound stages, and also some seamy facets of life in Hollywood. CinemaScope embellishes certain broad scenes, but for the most part its chief contribution is nothing more than a larger picture.

Judy Garland is unforgettable here. The world is again at her feet, to do with as she pleases.





# New York Times, 10/11/54

## \$6,000,000 AND 2½ YEARS TO MAKE IT!

"It is impossible to review 'A Star is Born' as other films are reviewed. It is more than 'super-colossal' and all other stupendous adjectives!"

—LOUELLA PARSONS



## JUDY GARLAND • JAMES MASON

### 'A Star is Born'



PRESENTED BY WARNER BROS. in **CINEMASCOPE** • **TECHNICOLOR** • **STEREOPHONIC SOUND**

ALSO STARRING

JACK CARSON CHARLES BICKFORD

WITH TOM NOONAN

PRODUCED BY SIDNEY LUFT

SCREEN PLAY BY MOSS HART • GEORGE CLUNY

DIRECTED BY MICHAEL CURTIZ

MUSICAL DIRECTION BY MAX YERGENSON

PRESENTED BY A TRANCONA ENTERPRISES PRODUCTION WARNER BROS.

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY

HAROLD ARLEN

AND A CAST OF

THE GREATEST

THE MAN THAT GOT AWAY

IT'S A NEW WORLD

BETTER HAVE ME GO WITH YOU

WE'RE A NIGHT IN HERE FOR

SOMEONE AT LAST

LOVE THAT LONG AWAY

**TOMORROW 8:30 A.M.** CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCES AT BOTH THEATRES

**PARAMOUNT AND VICTORIA**

FORMAL PREMIERES TONIGHT 8:30 P.M. AT BOTH THEATRES!

Guest of Honor **JUDY GARLAND**

...AND JUST ABOUT EVERY CELEBRITY IN TOWN WILL BE THERE!

TELECASTS FROM BOTH THEATRES  
OVER WABC-TV (7) 8:00 TO 8:30 P.M.

## The Screen: 'A Star Is Born' Bows

**Judy Garland, James Mason in Top Roles**

**A STAR IS BORN**, screen play by Moss Hart, based on the Dorothy Parker, Alan Campbell, Robert Carson story play; from a story by William A. Wellman and Robert Carson; music and lyrics by Harold Arlen, Ira Gershwin and Leonard Gershe; directed by George Cukor; produced by Sidney Luft for Warner Brothers, at the Paramount and Victoria.

Kathleen Haggitt.....	Judy Garland
Norman Maine.....	James Mason
Libby.....	Jack Carson
Oliver Kyles.....	Charles Bickford
Destry McCaslin.....	Tom Noonan
A Starlet.....	Larry Marlow
Swann.....	Amanda Blake
Graves.....	Irving Bacon
Libby's Secretary.....	Glenn Sherratt
Glenn Williams.....	James Brown
Miss Marcham.....	Lotus Robb



James Mason and Judy Garland appearing in "A Star Is Born"

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

THOSE who have blissful recollections of David O. Selznick's "A Star Is Born" as probably the most affecting movie ever made about Hollywood may get themselves set for a new experience that should put the former one in the shade when they see Warner Brothers' and George Cukor's remake of the seventeen-year-old film. And those who were no more than toddlers when that classic was starting floods of tears may warm themselves up for one of the grandest heartbreak dramas that has drenched the screen in years.

For the Warners and Mr. Cukor have really and truly gone to town in giving this hackneyed Hollywood story an abundance of fullness and form. They have laid it out in splendid color on the smartly used CinemaScope screen, and they have crowded it with stunning details of the makers and making of films. They have got Judy Garland and James Mason to play the important roles that were filled with such memorable consequence by Janet Gaynor and Fredric March in the original. And they have fattened it up with musical numbers that are among the finest things in the show.

And a show it is, first and foremost. Its virtually legendary account of the romance of an actress headed for stardom and an actor headed downhill would have very little force or freshness in this worldly wise day and age if it weren't played within the lush surroundings of significant performance and fancy show. So it is a buildup of this that gives grandeur and background to the poignance of this film, which was put on with fanfare last evening at the Paramount and Victoria Theatres.

The whole thing runs for three hours, and during this extraordinary time a remarkable range of entertainment is developed upon the screen. There is the sweet and touching love

story that Moss Hart has smoothly modernized from the neat synthesis of Hollywood legends, which went into the original.

It is the story of a vocalist with a dance band who catches the bleary, wistful eye of a top-notch male star, now skidding on the downgrade, and gets his help toward motion-picture fame. It is the story of their marriage and their struggle to hold fast to the fragile thing of love as fame and failure divide them—and of the husband's sacrifice at the end. This is the core of the drama, and it is brilliantly visualized.

No one surpasses Mr. Cukor at handling this sort of thing, and he gets performances from Miss Garland and Mr. Mason that make the heart flutter and bleed. Such episodes as their meeting on the night of a benefit show, their talking about marrying on a soundstage under an eavesdropping microphone, their bitter-sweet reaching for each other in a million-dollar beach bungalow, their tormenting ordeal in a night court—these are wonderfully and genuinely played.

What matters that logic does not always underlie everything they do? What matters that we never really fathom Mr. Mason's flamboyant Norman Maine? There is a credible enactment of a tragic little try at love in an environment that packages the product. It is the strong tie that binds the whole show.

But there is more that is complementary to it. There is the muchness of music that runs from a fine, haunting torch-song at the outset, "The Man That Got Away," to a mammoth, extensive production number recounting the career of a singer. It is called "Born in a Trunk." Miss Garland is excellent in all things—

but most winningly, perhaps, in the song, "Here's What I'm Here For," wherein she dances, sings and pantomimes the universal endeavors of the lady to capture the man. Harold Arlen, Ira Gershwin and Leonard Gershe are the authors of the songs.

And there is, through it all, a gentle tracing of clever satire of Hollywood, not as sharp as it was in the original, but sharp enough to be stimulating fun. Charles Bickford's calm and generous producer is a bit on the idealized side and Jack Carson's disagreeable press agent is not as vicious as he's supposed to be. But the sense of an artificial milieu wraps the whole thing, as in cellophane—all in colors that fill the eye with excitement.

It is something to see, this "Star Is Born."

Crowds of enthusiastic on-lookers swirled around the Paramount and Victoria Theatres last night to attend and watch the gala activities surrounding the premiere of "A Star Is Born." Miss Garland made an appearance at the Victoria and later arrived at the Paramount for the showing of the film.

The glare of flood lights and popping of flash-bulbs provided customary background for the event which was "covered" by television cameras, radio broadcasters, Armed Forces Overseas radio, press and newsreel photographers. The sidewalks in front of the two theatres were carpeted in the traditional red velvet and searchlights sent shafts of light high in the sky over Broadway.

The audiences at both theatres were made up, to a large extent, by notables from many fields. As they arrived, Martin Block, the master of ceremonies, and George Jessel greeted them.

# Detroit Free Press, 10/15/54

## Detroiters Acclaim "A Star is Born"



"Excellent—  
wonderful  
movie... want  
more of same!"

Elsie Smallwood,  
3038 Garland



"Wonderful  
show—Judy  
Garland better  
than ever!"

Trudie Gleich,  
12901 Rutland



"Overall, picture  
was wonderful!  
Garland tops!"

Charles Patricia,  
8928 Isham



"One of the  
best pictures  
I've ever seen!"

Council Gargle,  
619 E. Kirby



"I think it is  
the greatest  
picture I have  
ever seen!"

Florene Rabinovitz,  
3005 Elmhurst



"Very  
wonderful  
show!"

Marvin Gell,  
18960 Fenmore



"Color, directing  
and music  
lovely!"

Mrs. W. L. Fry,  
1584 Pierce, S'ham.



"A very good  
show... Judy  
was very good!"

Patricia Keahk,  
6559 Horatio



"I'm partial to  
Judy—the  
picture was  
wonderful!"

Dr. Earl E. O'Keefe,  
119 W. Lafayette



"Sound and color  
very good— out  
of this world!"

Del Durie,  
4829 Asland



"Excellent  
entertainment  
...completely  
satisfying!"

Lorne Putnam,  
126 Puritan, H.P.

WARNER BROS  
PRESENT

## "A STAR IS BORN"

Starring  
JUDY GARLAND · JAMES MASON

CINEMASCOPE  
TECHNICOLOR

Now!

Continuous Performances!

MADISON



"Everything  
dazzles—  
acting,  
writing,  
direction,  
music!

And when

Judy caresses a

tune—that's magic!" **WALTER WINCHELL**



Never, never can you forget the girl  
who became a star—and a woman—  
at the same moment!



**WARNER BROS.**  
PRESENT

**JUDY  
GARLAND**

**JAMES  
MASON**

**"A  
Star  
is  
Born"**

**CINEMASCOPE**

& TECHNICOLOR STEREOPHONIC SOUND

**JACK CARSON CHARLES BICKFORD**

**TOM NOONAN ROSS HART SIDNEY LUTT GEORGE CUNOR**

**HAROLD WILLEN & IRA GERSHWIN A TRANSPIRA ENTERPRISES PRODUCTION**



Coming  
Wednesday

**State**

Starting  
Wednesday

# Ann Arbor News, 1/25/55



*"It is impossible to review 'A Star Is Born' as other films are reviewed. It is more than 'super-colossal' and all other stupendous adjectives!" — LOVELLA PARSONS*

*Never, never can you forget the girl who became a star—and a woman—at the same moment!*

**\$6,000,000  
AND  
2½ YEARS  
TO MAKE  
IT!**

*"A brilliantly staged, scored and photographed film worth all the effort!" — LIFE MAGAZINE*

WARNER BROS. PRESENTS

## JUDY GARLAND ★ JAMES MASON

# "A Star Is Born"

TECHNICOLOR **CinemaScope** STEREOGRAPHIC SOUND

ALSO STARRING JACK CARSON • CHARLES BICKFORD • TOM NOONAN • MISS HART • SIDNEY LUTT • GEORGE CLUNY • HAROLD ARLEN and MA GEHRING • A TRISTAR ENTERPRISES PRODUCTION • A WARNER BROS. PRESENTATION

STARTING  
**WEDNESDAY**

Due to Extreme Length Please Note  
UNUSUAL TIME SCHEDULE

HOME OF CINEMASCOPE  
**State**

Dial  
**NO 2-3136**

Shows Daily  
1:00, 3:40, 6:25, 9:15  
Feature Starts at  
1:05, 3:45, 6:35, 9:20

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Weekday Matinees ..... 35c  
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Children ..... 50c