

# American MASTERS

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WNET NEW YORK

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## press information



AMERICAN MASTERS  
is produced for PBS  
by Thirteen/WNET  
New York

THIRTEEN/WNET NEW YORK'S *AMERICAN MASTERS* CHRONICLES THE 85-YEAR HISTORY OF A PROGRESSIVE MOVIE STUDIO IN A NEW FIVE-PART SERIES, *YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS: THE WARNER BROS. STORY*, PREMIERING SEPTEMBER 23, 24 and 25 AT 9 P.M. (ET) ON PBS

Directed, Written And Produced By Award-Winning Filmmaker And Film Critic Richard Schickel. Executive Produced and Narrated By Clint Eastwood.

Their only bankable movie star was the four-legged hero Rin Tin Tin. But in April 1923, four visionary brothers from Youngstown, Ohio officially incorporated their new motion picture company, which would eventually grow into the media empire Warner Bros. By the end of the decade, Warner Bros. hit it big with the sound of *The Jazz Singer*, the gangster personas of Edward G. Robinson and James Cagney, the kaleidoscopic escapism of Busby Berkeley, and their lurid melodramas of taboo and defiance. Their legendary films became a microcosm of America's cultural and social history, mirroring – often challenging – the values and attitudes of the period in which they were produced.

The colorful 85-year legacy of Warner Bros. is documented in an unprecedented series, *You Must Remember This: The Warner Bros. Story*, a presentation of *AMERICAN MASTERS*. The five-hour film is a Lorac production in partnership with Warner Bros. Entertainment and premieres nationally, September 23, 24 and 25 at 9 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). Award-winning filmmaker and film critic Richard Schickel is the director, writer and producer. Clint Eastwood is the executive producer and narrator.

“I think it’s wonderful and fitting that Richard Schickel, who produced his first big series *The Men Who Made the Movies* for public television in 1973, is returning to public television with this project – the epic and historic and thoroughly juicy Warner Bros. story,” says Susan Lacy, Creator and

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Executive Producer of *AMERICAN MASTERS*, a five-time winner of the Emmy Award for Outstanding Primetime Non-Fiction Series.

The film is the centerpiece of a year-long celebration of the studio's 85th anniversary. A companion book of the same title, written by Schickel and George Perry with an introduction by Eastwood, will be published worldwide this September by Running Press.

Through movie clips, rare archival interviews, newly photographed material, and insightful on-camera discussions with talent such as Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, George Clooney, Warren Beatty, Clint Eastwood, Sidney Lumet, Jack Nicholson, and many others, *You Must Remember This* gives us the history of 20th century America on the big screen. Each episode focuses on a specific period in the studio's momentous history: the silent movie days and the development of sound, the Depression, World War II, the advent of television, the onset of new technologies, and the broadening and diversification of media companies in recent years.

In the 1930s and '40s Warner Bros showed the country holding itself together under terrible economic and societal pressures, then celebrating its triumphs over evil in the war years. Film classics such as *The Maltese Falcon*, *Key Largo*, *Casablanca*, *Now, Voyager*, *Mildred Pearce*, and *To Have and Have Not* portrayed the era with palpable realism.

Throughout the 1950s, '60s and into the '70s, the studio fought the looming threat of television with new technologies, new sensibilities and the launching of a new breed of movie star. *You Must Remember This* tells the studio's story from Cinerama and Eastman Color to *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and through some of Hollywood's most magnificent stars – John Wayne, James Dean, Warren Beatty, Elizabeth Taylor, Doris Day, and Jane Fonda.

By the next decade, Warner Bros. was again the hottest, most adventurous studio in town, right back where it had been in the 1930s and '40s. Breaking new ground with the music documentary *Woodstock* and Oscar-winning films such as *All The President's Men*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *The Exorcist*, and *Batman*, the studio moved toward the 21st century, capturing the

imagination of a new generation of audiences. From *Dirty Harry* to *Harry Potter*, Warner Bros. created a string of blockbuster productions that thrilled spectators around the world while the excitement of *The Fugitive*, the complexities of *Reversal of Fortune* and the edginess of *The Matrix* also led the way to a new Hollywood establishment that includes Clint Eastwood, George Clooney and Julia Roberts.

*AMERICAN MASTERS* is produced for PBS by Thirteen/WNET New York. To take *AMERICAN MASTERS* beyond the television broadcast and further explore the themes, stories, and personalities of masters past and present, the companion Web site ([www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters)), created by Thirteen/WNET New York, offers interviews, essays, photographs, outtakes, and other resources.

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