Sturges, Preston (1898-1959) Encyclopedia Article

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After a childhood abroad, a stint in the army, and a turn as an inventor creating kiss-proof lipstick, in 1929 Chicago native Preston Sturges staged his first Broadway play. From that nearly accidental debut, he fashioned a career in Hollywood's "Golden Age" that film critic Andrew Sarris calls "one of the most brilliant and bizarre bursts of creation in the history of the American cinema." Hired as a writer in 1932, by 1940 Sturges became the first screenplay author to direct his own script when he penned and directed *Christmas in July, Remember the Night,* and Academy Award winner, *The Great McGinty.* By 1944 he had secured his lasting legacy with signature romantic comedies: *The Lady Eve* and *Sullivan's Travels* (both 1941), *The Palm Beach Story* (1942), and *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (1944). Sturges was hailed for his brilliance in studio publicity and for his movies' eccentric, visionary critiques of American society.

Further Reading:

Harvey, James. *Romantic Comedy in Hollywood from Lubitsch to Sturges.* New York, A.A. Knopf, 1987.

Jacobs, Diane. *Christmas in July: The Life and Art of Preston Sturges.* Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992.

Rozgonyi, Jay. *Preston Sturges's Vision of America: Critical Analyses of Fourteen Films.* Jefferson, North Carolina, McFarland, 1995.

Sturges, Preston. *Preston Sturges.* New York, Simon & Schuster, 1990.