Thalberg, Irving G. (1899-1936) Encyclopedia Article

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Contents

Thalberg, Irving G. (1899-1936) Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Thalberg, Irving G. (1899-1936).....3

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Irving Grant Thalberg may have been the most influential motion picture executive of his time. "The Boy Wonder," as he was called, was an expert in knowing what the public wanted and how to get it to them under budget. As head of production for Metro Golwyn Mayer (MGM) he oversaw countless productions during his tenure, including *The Big Parade* (1925) and *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935) although *The Good Earth* (1937) was the only picture for which he ever received on-screen credit as producer.

Despite suffering from a weak heart his entire life, Thalberg was a classic workaholic. After their marriage in 1927, he personally oversaw the career of his wife, actress Norma Shearer. Thalberg was often quoted as saying, "Credit you give yourself is not worth having." The Thalberg Award, given by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, is named for him.

Further Reading:

Flamini, Roland. *Thalberg: The Last Tycoon and the World of MGM.* New York, Crown Publishing, 1994.

Marx, Samuel. *Mayer and Thalberg: the Make-Believe Saints.* New York, Random House, 1975.

Thomas, Bob. *Thalberg: Life and Legend.* New York, Doubleday, 1969.