



Mae West

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The statue of libido

In terms of celebrity icons, few attained the highest levels of fame and controversy as rapidly as Mae West. Labeled a "pornographer" by censorship boards, she was also one of 1930s Hollywood's most lucrative box-office draws (causing Variety in 1933 to label the star "as hot an issue as Hitler"). Nicknamed by critic George Jean Nathan "the Statue of Libido" and paid homage to in the title song of Cole Porter's musical Anything Goes, her voluptuous image and signature platinum blond air became recognizable worldwide and for decades beyond her prime years of fame in the 1930s. In fact, even by the 1960s when the Beatles wanted to use her image on the cover of their Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album, those long-haired icons of a new generation were required to deliver a handwritten plea to the icon (which they dutifully did), since West herself always objected, as she said, to belonging to any "lonely hearts club."

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About the Series:

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About the artist:

Dominique Mainon is an author, screenwriter, and filmmaker living in Laguna Beach, California. She is a frequent contributor to magazines and genre studies books.

About the author:

James Ursini has co-written and co-edited eleven books with Alain Silver; Ursini and Silver are considered two of the foremost authorities on the subject of film noir. Among Ursini's most notable works is the successful Film Noir Reader series. He has also contributed articles to various film magazines and has supplied the DVD commentary for numerous classic film noirs. He has a doctorate in motion pictures and has lectured on filmmaking at colleges in the Los Angeles area.



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