



Stars and Stardom in French Cinema

Ginette Vincendeau

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French cinema is second only to Hollywood in the number of its movie stars who have emerged to achieve international fame. France is, in fact, arguably the only country other than the United States to have an international "star system." Yet these glamorous and charismatic stars differ from their U.S. counterparts in that they maintain more freedom to control their own images and often straddle both mainstream and auteur cinema. Ginette Vincendeau, a leading authority on French cinema, analyzes the phenomenon of French film stardom and provides brilliant in-depth studies of the major popular stars of the French cinema: Max Linder, Jean Gabin, Brigitte Bardot, Jeanne Moreau, Louis de Funès, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Alain Delon, Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Juliette Binoche. This volume analyzes these stars' images and performance styles in the context of the French film industry, but also in relation to national culture and society. In the country where Brigitte Bardot and Catherine Deneuve have modeled for Marianne (the effigy of the Republic) and left-wing politicians have held up Jean Gabin as a role model, Vincendeau examines the unusual relationship between French film stars and national identity. Ginette Vincendeau is professor of film studies at the University of Warwick. She is the author and editor of a number of books on cinema.

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