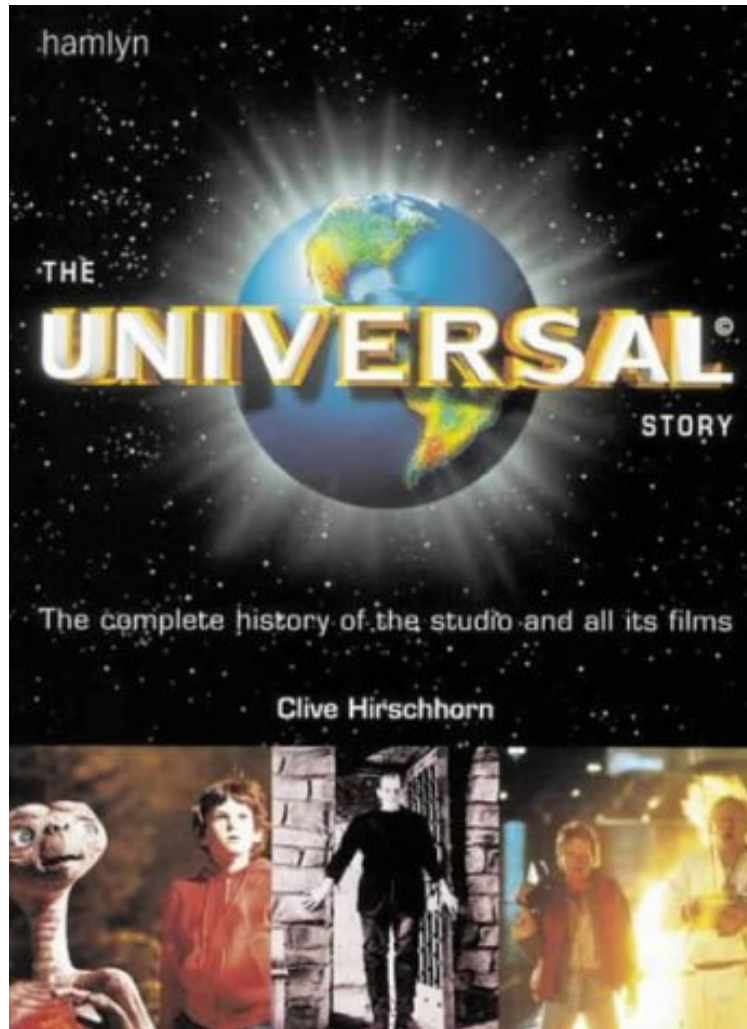


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# The Universal Story: The Complete History of the Studio and All Its Films

Clive Hirshhorn

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**Clive Hirshhorn : The Universal Story: The Complete History of the Studio and All Its Films** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Universal Story: The Complete History of the Studio and All Its Films:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great read!By Anne M. ReardonBought as gift. Son loved it.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book and delivered in record timeBy HyperGreat Book!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A book I regularly return to.By James R DonaldA very comprehensive look at every major Universal Studios release from the 1910's to the 1990's. Clive Hirshhorn brings a sound knowledge and a sense of humor to his reviews.

They sent chills down your spine with *Dracula*; made you laugh with *Abbot Costello* and cry with *ET*; and nearly scared you to death with *The Birds*, *Jaws*, and *Jurassic Park*. Universal Studios' phenomenal success didn't come easily, and theirs is a tale worthy of a movie itself. Founded in 1912 by the legendary Carl Laemmle, Universal struggled hard in the early days to compete with its rivals, finally succeeded in the 1920s, and then began a roller coaster of ups and downs that climaxed in the new millennium with its status as a true industry leader. The major players included directors Hitchcock, Ford, Scorsese, Stone, and Lee and actors De Niro, Pacino, Streep, and Sarandon. Through an analysis of each movie, from the golden silents to *Schindler's List*, the exciting history of one of the world's greatest studios comes alive.

From *Publishers Weekly* Film and theater critic Clive Hirschhorn tells the stories behind two major motion picture studios that epitomized the Golden Age of Hollywood in *The Columbia Story* and *The Universal Story*; he studies the works of these studios' tycoons and chronicles each film made, with numerous pictures and facts. Each year of the companies' existences is displayed showing the movies produced and reviews of the major films of that year. All the films that earned or were nominated for an Oscar appear in a timeline at the end of each book with specific award distinctions for the studio, from Columbia's *It Happened One Night*, *Tootsie* and *The Shawshank Redemption* to Universal's *Dracula*, *ET* and *Jaws*. These two volumes stand as excellent references for the powerhouses of American film. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* The resurgent popularity of independent filmmakers in recent years makes it easy to forget the colossal movie-making empire created by the original Hollywood mega-studios, of which Columbia Pictures and Universal Studios are prime examples. Hirschhorn (formerly film and theater critic for the *London Sunday Express*), who pioneered the glossy, lavish studio history with his groundbreaking *The Warner Bros. Story* (*LJ* 3/1/80), here offers revisions of two works published in the 1980s, maintaining their exceptional quality. The logistical dilemma of how to cram into a volume of manageable size photos and critiques for every film produced by a studio since the silent movie era (over 3000 for Universal) is cleverly overcome by the judicious use of tiny arrows to match text with illustrations, omitting captions as well as cast and production credits. Hirschhorn's virtuoso command of cinema history and the motion picture industry is demonstrated throughout, a typical example being his critique of *His Girl Friday*, in which he relates the film to the original Broadway play, identifies the overlapping dialog technique as having been borrowed from an earlier Frank Capra film, and provides an articulate and entertaining critique of the plot. Not only are there a multitude of black-and-white photo stills, but they are especially well selected and capture the films' mood and impact. In addition to the main, year-by-year section featuring the films, there are excellent narrative histories of each studio. Highly recommended for all libraries and essential for cinema collections. Richard W. Grefrath, Univ. of Nevada Lib., Reno Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Clive Hirschhorn is the author of *'Gene Kelly, a Biography'*, *'The Films of James Mason'* as well as *'The Warner Bros. Story'*, *'The Hollywood Musical'* and *'The Columbia Story'*. He was the film and theatre critic for the *Sunday Express*.