

## **In the Land of Mink-Lined Pools: Hollywood Films about Hollywood**

Shortly after arriving out west, the witty screenwriter Ben Hecht began referring to Hollywood as “The land of mink-lined swimming pools and plastic palm trees.” Not to be outdone, the equally witty Dorothy Parker noted that “The only ‘ism’ Hollywood believes in is plagiarism.” The two were by no means alone in their lowly assessment of the world’s film capitol. William Faulkner called Hollywood “a place where a man can get stabbed in the back while climbing a ladder.” And then there was Fred Allen, who claimed “You can take all the sincerity in Hollywood, place it in the navel of a fruit fly and still have room enough for three caraway seeds and a producer's heart.”

When it comes to having a jaundiced view of the movie industry, nothing and no one is more jaded – or funnier – than Hollywood itself. And when Hollywood makes films about Hollywood . . . watch out!

“In the Land of Mink-Lined Pools” highlights eight films Hollywood made about itself; cinematic arrows drawn from a quiver of satire:

1. **“What Price Hollywood?” (1932):** The original *A Star is Born*, starring Constance Bennett, directed by George Cukor.
2. **“The Star” (1952):** Bette Davis in a tour-de-force as a washed up star looking to make a comeback.
3. **“Day of the Locust” (1975):** Donald Sutherland stars in the classic Nathaniel West novel about a 1930s art director trying to make a star out of Karen Black.
4. **“Once in a Lifetime: (1932):** From a play by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman. A satire about “voice culturists” invading Hollywood at the dawn of the talkies.
5. **“What Makes Sammy Run?” (1959):** From what many consider the greatest Hollywood novel of all, Sammy Glick is the ultimate industry hustler.
6. **“Hollywood Blvd.” (1936):** Extremely rare; a scathing exposé of the effect that gossip and scandal sheets have on the lives and careers of Hollywood stars.
7. **“Make Me a Star” (1932):** A comedy with feeling about a young man who comes to Hollywood intent upon becoming a star. Stuart Erwin and Joan Blondell.
8. **“The Bad and the Beautiful” (1952):** Kirk Douglas as a ruthless studio executive looking to revive his career. With Lana Turner, Walter Pidgeon and Dick Powell.