



# George Christy



Mae West starred as "Tira" in 1933's *I'm No Angel* which saved Paramount Pictures from bankruptcy and broke box office records. She and Bette Davis, (at right) who played "Helen Bauer" in the 1933's *Ex-Lady*, also a box office hit, are among the many in *Dynamic Dames: 50 Leading Ladies Who Made History*. Another great collection, like *Forbidden Hollywood*, published by Running Press.

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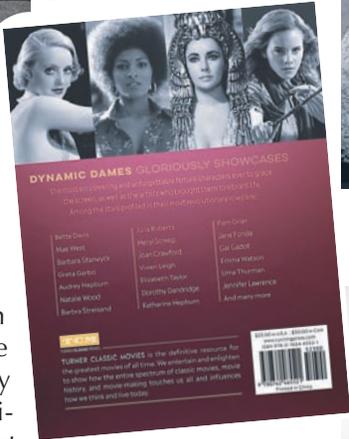
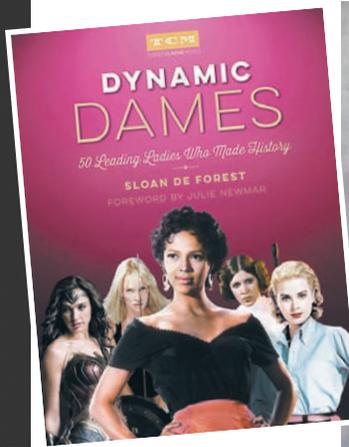
Dorothy Dandridge stars as "Carmen Jones" in the 1954 *Carmen Jones*



Jane Fonda stars as "Cat Ballou" in 1965's *Cat Ballou*



Myrna Loy stars as "Nora Charles" in the 1934, *The Thin Man*



Uma Thurman as "the Bride" in *Kill Bill, volumes I and II* (2003-2004)



Charlize Theron stars as "Imperator Furiosa" in 2015, *Mad Max: Fury Road*

Bison Archives

How did author Sloan De Forest decide on the criteria for choosing the women of power in film that she tallies in *Dynamic Dames: 50 Leading Ladies Who Made History*?

"kickass and deadly women, I wanted *Dynamic Dames* to inspire women, not psychopaths. Women who are strong, heroic and moral in their own unconventional ways."

wrote her own material. She was an entirely self-made institution. And not shy about announcing it. Her screen credit in *I'm No Angel* reads, 'Story, Screen Play, and All Dialogue by MAE WEST.' It was the biggest box-office hit of her career. Along with the films of Marlene Dietrich, *I'm No Angel* saved Paramount Pictures from bankruptcy during the bleakest years of the Depression," informs De Forest.

Sloan's breakdown:

- Their independence.
- Their ability to think for themselves.
- Standing against the opposition.
- Breaking boundaries for other women.

Included in the Pre-Code Bad Girls chapter are Mae West, Clara Bow, Norma Shearer, Bette Davis, Barbara Stanwyck, Josephine Baker.

Mae West sparked our memory bank to an afternoon when we interviewed Mae at her Ravenswood apartment in Hollywood.

"Here are women who are not holding out for a hero, but who are their own hero.

"I wanted the list to be diverse, with the characters having strong women behind them," says Sloan.

She invited us to sit beside her. Usually interview subjects prefer a space apart. She gently took my hand in hers and led it to the naked left bosom inside her ivory satin gown.

"Now you really know me," was her comment.

The Who and The Who in the list fill the chapters for Pre-Code Bad Girls, Ladies Who Laugh, Women of Mystery, Fatal Femmes, etc.

Not your archetypal noir femme fatal, but rather 'Fatal Femmes' meant to highlight and empower women as

Mae was one of the world's biggest stars during the mid-1930s and the highest paid woman in the United States.

"Mae acted, sang, and

Many of Mae West's myriad quotes are of legendary status:

- "Too much of a good thing can be wonderful."
- "Is that a gun in your pocket, or are you just glad to see me?"
- "When I'm good, I'm very good, but when I'm bad, I'm better."

In the book's foreword, Julie Newmar, the devilishly funny Catwoman in the classic *Batman* TV series, writes, "while it may have been whispered that Bette Davis was less than beautiful, it made no dif-

ference. She used her eyes to force your attention. Her physical carriage star-lighted any space she inhabited."

She long ago decried, "Old age ain't no place for sissies." Also, let's not forget, "When a man gives his opinion, he's a man. When a woman gives her opinion, she's a bitch."

A wealth of photographs and insights impress in this

keepsake collection of Hollywoodiana.

Other remarkably talented women include: Audrey Hepburn, Katharine Hepburn, Ingrid Bergman, Meryl Streep, Charlize Theron, Pam Grier, Uma Thurman, Emma Watson, Jennifer Lawrence.

Not to be missed.

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