

Slapstick Comedy (AFI Film Readers)



From Chaplins tramp to the Bathing Beauties, from madcap chases to skyscraper perils, slapstick comedy supplied many of the most enduring icons of American cinema in the silent era. This collection of fourteen essays by prominent film scholars challenges longstanding critical dogma and offers new conceptual frameworks for thinking about silent comedys place in film history and American culture. The contributors discuss a broad range of topics including the contested theatrical or cinematic origins of slapstick; the comic spectacle of crazy technology and trick stunts; the filmmakers who shaped the style of early slapstick; and comedys implications for theories of film form and spectatorship. This volume is essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the origins and continued importance of a film genre at the heart of American cinema from its earliest days to today.

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