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The Wizard of Oz (1939 film)

The Wizard of Oz is a 1939 American musical fantasy film produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Widely considered to be one of the greatest films in cinema history,^[5] it is the best-known and most commercially successful adaptation of L. Frank Baum's 1900 children's book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.^[6] Directed primarily by Victor Fleming (who left production to take over the troubled production of *Gone with the Wind*), the film stars Judy Garland as Dorothy Gale alongside Ray Bolger, Jack Haley, Bert Lahr, Frank Morgan, Billie Burke and Margaret Hamilton with Charley Grapewin, Pat Walshe, Clara Blandick, Terry (billed as Toto) and Singer's Midgets as the Munchkins.^[7]

Legendary for its use of Technicolor, fantasy storytelling, musical score and memorable characters, the film has become an icon of American popular culture. It was nominated for six Academy Awards, including Best Picture, but lost to *Gone with the Wind*. It did win in two other categories: Best Original Song for "Over the Rainbow" and Best Original Score by Herbert Stothart. While the film was considered a critical success upon release in August 1939, it failed to make a profit for MGM until the 1949 re-release, earning only \$3,017,000 on a \$2,777,000 budget, not including promotional costs, which made it MGM's most expensive production at that time.^{[3][8][9]}

The 1956 television broadcast premiere of the film on the CBS network reintroduced the film to the public; watching it became an annual tradition and, according to the Library of Congress, it is the most seen film in movie history.^{[6][10]} It was among the first 25 films that inaugurated the National Film Registry list in 1989.^[11] It is also one of the few films on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.^[12] The film is among the top ten in the BFI list of the 50 films you should see by the age of 14.

The Wizard of Oz is the source of many quotes referenced in contemporary popular culture. Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf received credit for the screenplay, but uncredited contributions were made by others. The songs were written by Edgar "Yip" Harburg (lyrics) and Harold Arlen (music). The musical score and the incidental music were composed by Stothart.

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The Wizard of Oz



Theatrical release poster

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Produced by	Mervyn LeRoy
Screenplay by	Noel Langley Florence Ryerson Edgar Allan Woolf
Based on	<i>The Wonderful Wizard of Oz</i> by L. Frank Baum
Starring	Judy Garland Frank Morgan Ray Bolger Bert Lahr Jack Haley Billie Burke Margaret Hamilton

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	Charley Grapewin
Music by	Herbert Stothart
Cinematography	Harold Rosson
Edited by	Blanche Sewell
Production company	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
Distributed by	Loew's Inc. ^[1]
Release date	August 25, 1939
Running time	101 minutes ^[2]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$2.8 million ^{[3][4]}
Box office	\$3 million (original release) ^[3] \$23.3 million (unadjusted, re-releases) ^[4]

Plot

Dorothy Gale lives with her Cairn Terrier dog Toto on the Kansas farm of her Aunt Em and Uncle Henry. Toto bites witchy neighbor Miss Almira Gulch, who then obtains an order for Toto to be euthanized. She takes Toto away on her bicycle, but he escapes and returns to Dorothy, who decides to run away from home to save her dog.

They meet Professor Marvel, a kindly fortune teller who uses his crystal ball to make Dorothy believe that Aunt Em may be dying of a broken heart. Dorothy races home, arriving just as a powerful tornado strikes. Locked out of the farm's storm cellar, she seeks shelter in her bedroom. Wind-blown debris knocks her unconscious and the house is sent spinning in the air. She awakens to see various figures fly by, including Miss Gulch, who transforms into a witch on a broomstick.

The house lands in Munchkinland in the Land of Oz. Glinda the Good Witch of the North and the Munchkins welcome her as a heroine, as the falling house has killed the Wicked Witch of the East; only the witch's legs and the ruby slippers on her feet are visible. Her sister, the Wicked Witch of the West, arrives to claim the slippers, but Glinda transports them onto Dorothy's feet first. The Wicked Witch of the West swears revenge on Dorothy for her sister's death, then vanishes. Glinda tells Dorothy to follow the yellow brick road to the Emerald City, where she can ask the Wizard of Oz to help her get back home.

On her journey, Dorothy meets the Scarecrow, who wants a brain, the Tin Woodman, who desires a heart, and the Cowardly Lion, who needs courage. Dorothy invites them to accompany her to the Emerald City, where they can ask the Wizard to help them too. Despite harassment from the Witch they reach the Emerald City and are eventually permitted to see the Wizard, who appears as a large ghostly head surrounded by fire and smoke. He agrees to grant their wishes if they prove their worth by bringing him the Witch's broomstick.

As the four (plus Toto) make their way to the Witch's castle, the Witch sends her winged monkeys to capture Dorothy and Toto. At the castle, the Witch realizes that Dorothy must be dead before the ruby slippers can be removed. Toto escapes and leads her three friends to the castle. They ambush three guards, don the guards' uniforms and march inside to locate Dorothy. The Witch and her guards chase them through the castle and surround them. When the Witch sets fire to the Scarecrow, Dorothy tosses a bucket of water at him and it also splashes the Witch, who melts away. The guards rejoice and give Dorothy the broomstick.

Back in the Emerald City, as the Wizard stalls in fulfilling his promises Toto pulls back a curtain and exposes the "Wizard" as a middle-aged man speaking through a microphone. He denies Dorothy's accusation that he is a bad man but admits to being a humbug. He then gives the Scarecrow a diploma, the Lion a medal and the Tin Man a ticking heart-shaped watch, helping them see that the attributes they sought (brains, heart, courage) were already within them. He then offers to take Dorothy and Toto home in his hot air balloon.

As Dorothy and the Wizard prepare to depart, Toto jumps off and Dorothy goes to catch him so the balloon leaves with only the Wizard. Glinda appears and tells Dorothy the Ruby Slippers will take her home. Following Glinda's instructions, Dorothy taps her heels together three times and repeats, "There's no place like home".

Dorothy wakes up in Kansas surrounded by her family and friends. Everyone dismisses her adventure as a dream but Dorothy insists it was real and says she has learned there is no place like home.

Cast

- Judy Garland as Dorothy Gale
- Frank Morgan as Professor Marvel/The Wizard of Oz/the Doorman/the Cabby/The Guard
- Ray Bolger as "Hunk" / Scarecrow



Judy Garland as Dorothy Gale and Terry The Dog as Toto



The Wicked Witch of the West (Margaret Hamilton) menacing Dorothy



Dorothy with Glinda, the Good Witch of the North

- [Jack Haley](#) as "Hickory" / [Tin Man](#)
- [Bert Lahr](#) as "Zeke" / the [Cowardly Lion](#)
- [Billie Burke](#) as [Glinda](#)
- [Margaret Hamilton](#) as [Miss Almira Gulch](#) / [The Wicked Witch of the West](#)
- [Clara Blandick](#) as [Auntie Em](#)
- [Charley Grapewin](#) as [Uncle Henry](#)
- [Pat Walshe](#) as the [Winged Monkey King](#)
- [Terry](#) as [Toto](#)
- [Mitchell Lewis](#) as the [Winkie Guard Captain](#) (credited only in the [IMAX version](#))
- [Adriana Caselotti](#) as the voice of [Juliet](#) in the [Tinman's song](#) "If I only had a heart" (uncredited)^[13]

Production

Development

Production on the film began when [Walt Disney's](#) *[Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs](#)* (1937) showed that films adapted from popular children's stories and fairytale folklore could still be successful.^{[14][15]} In January 1938, [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer](#) bought the rights to [L. Frank Baum's](#) [hugely popular novel](#) from [Samuel Goldwyn](#), who had toyed with the idea of making the film as a vehicle for [Eddie Cantor](#) who was under contract to the Goldwyn studios and whom Goldwyn wanted to cast as the Scarecrow.^[15]

The script went through a number of writers and revisions before the final shooting.^[16] [Mervyn LeRoy's](#) assistant [William H. Cannon](#) had submitted a brief four-page outline.^[16] Because recent fantasy films had not fared well, he recommended that the magical elements of the story be toned down or eliminated. In his outline, the Scarecrow was a man so stupid that the only employment open to him was literally scaring crows from cornfields and the Tin Woodman was a criminal so heartless he was sentenced to be placed in a tin suit for eternity; this torture softened him into somebody gentler and kinder.^[16] His vision was similar to [Larry Semon's](#) [1925 film adaptation](#) of the story in which the magical elements are absent.

Afterwards, LeRoy hired screenwriter [Herman J. Mankiewicz](#), who soon delivered a 17-page draft of the Kansas scenes and a few weeks later, a further 56 pages. [Noel Langley](#) and poet [Ogden Nash](#) were also hired to write separate versions of the story. None of these three knew about the others, and this was not an uncommon procedure. Nash delivered a four-page outline, Langley turned in a 43-page treatment and a full film script. He turned in three more, this time incorporating the songs that had been written by [Harold Arlen](#) and [Yip Harburg](#). [Florence Ryerson](#) and [Edgar Allan Woolf](#) submitted a script and were brought on board to touch up the writing. They would be responsible for making sure the story stayed true to the Baum book. However, producer [Arthur Freed](#) was unhappy with their work and reassigned it to Langley.^[17] During filming, [Victor Fleming](#) and [John Lee Mahin](#) revised the script further, adding and cutting some scenes. In addition, [Jack Haley](#) and [Bert Lahr](#) are known to have written some of their own dialogue for the Kansas sequence.



Ray Bolger



Bolger as the scarecrow



The Cowardly Lion, Dorothy, Scarecrow, and the Tin Man were the film's main characters.

The final draft of the script was completed on October 8, 1938, following numerous rewrites.^[18] All in all, it was a mish-mash of many creative minds, but Langley, Ryerson, and Woolf got the film credits. Along with the contributors already mentioned, others who assisted with the adaptation without receiving credit include: Irving Brecher, Herbert Fields, Arthur Freed, Yip Harburg, Samuel Hoffenstein, Jack Mintz, Sid Silvers, Richard Thorpe, Cukor and Vidor.^[15]

In addition, songwriter Harburg's son (and biographer) Ernie Harburg reported:^[19]

“ So anyhow, Yip also wrote all the dialogue in that time and the setup to the songs and he also wrote the part where they give out the heart, the brains, and the nerve, because he was the final script editor. And he – there was eleven screenwriters on that – and he pulled the whole thing together, wrote his own lines and gave the thing a coherence and unity which made it a work of art. But he doesn't get credit for that. He gets lyrics by E. Y. Harburg, you see. But nevertheless, he put his influence on the thing. ”

The original producers thought that a 1939 audience was too sophisticated to accept Oz as a straight-ahead fantasy; therefore, it was reconceived as a lengthy, elaborate dream sequence. Because of a perceived need to attract a youthful audience through appealing to modern fads and styles, the score had featured a song called "The Jitterbug", and the script had featured a scene with a series of musical contests. A spoiled, selfish princess in Oz had outlawed all forms of music except classical and operetta, and went up against Dorothy in a singing contest in which her swing style enchanted listeners and won the grand prize. This part was initially written for Betty Jaynes.^[20] The plan was later dropped.

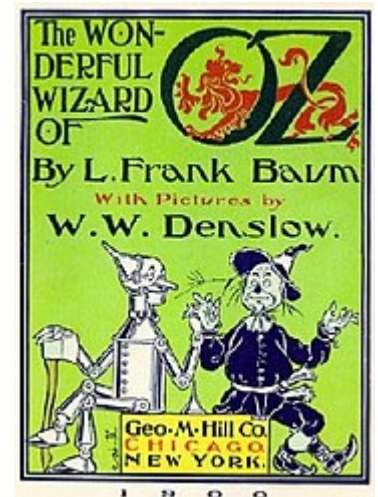
Another scene, which was removed before final script approval and never filmed, was a concluding scene back in Kansas after Dorothy's return. Hunk (the Kansan counterpart to the Scarecrow) is leaving for agricultural college and extracts a promise from Dorothy to write to him. The implication of the scene is that romance will eventually develop between the two, which also may have been intended as an explanation for Dorothy's partiality for the Scarecrow over her other two companions. This plot idea was never totally dropped, but is especially noticeable in the final script when Dorothy, just before she is to leave Oz, tells the Scarecrow, "I think I'll miss you most of all."^[21]

In his book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Baum describes Kansas as being "in shades of gray". Further, Dorothy lived inside a farmhouse which had its paint blistered and washed away by the weather, giving it an air of grayness. The house and property were situated in the middle of a sweeping prairie where the grass was burnt gray by harsh sun. Aunt Em and Uncle Henry were "gray with age". Effectively, the use of monochrome sepia tones for the Kansas sequences was a stylistic choice that evoked the dull and gray countryside. Much attention was given to the use of color in the production, with the MGM production crew favoring some hues over others. Consequently, it took the studio's art department almost a week to settle on the final shade of yellow used for the yellow brick road.^[22]

Casting



Bert Lahr as the Cowardly Lion



Interior title plate of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the popular 1900 novel by L. Frank Baum

LeRoy had always insisted that he wanted to cast Judy Garland to play Dorothy from the start; however, evidence suggests that negotiations occurred early in pre-production for Shirley Temple to be cast as Dorothy on loan from 20th Century Fox. A persistent rumor also existed that Fox in turn was promised Clark Gable and Jean Harlow as a loan from MGM. The tale is almost certainly untrue, as Harlow died in 1937, before MGM had even purchased the rights to the story. Despite this, the story appears in many film biographies (including Temple's own autobiography). The documentary *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Making of a Movie Classic* states that Mervyn LeRoy was under pressure to cast Temple, then the most popular child star, but at an unofficial audition MGM musical mainstay Roger Edens listened to her sing and felt that an actress with a different style was needed; a 50th anniversary documentary for the film suggested that Temple, then 10-years-old, was slightly too young for the part. Newsreel footage is included in which Temple wisecracks, "There's no place like home", suggesting that she was being considered for the part at that time.^[23] A possibility is that this consideration did indeed take place, but that Gable and Harlow were not part of the proposed deal.



Garland won the role of Dorothy despite substantial competition.

Actress Deanna Durbin, who was under contract to Universal Pictures, was also considered for the part of Dorothy. Durbin, at the time, far exceeded Garland in film experience and fan base and both had co-starred in a 1936 two-reeler titled *Every Sunday*. The film was most notable for exhibiting Durbin's operatic style of singing against Garland's jazzier style. Durbin was possibly passed over once it was decided to bring on Jaynes, also an operatic singer, to rival Garland's jazz in the aforementioned discarded subplot of the film.

Ray Bolger was originally cast as the Tin Man and Buddy Ebsen was to play the Scarecrow.^[18] Bolger, however, longed to play the Scarecrow, as his childhood idol Fred Stone had done on stage in 1902; with that very performance, Stone had inspired him to become a vaudevillian in the first place. Now unhappy with his role as the Tin Man (reportedly claiming, "I'm not a tin performer; I'm fluid"), Bolger convinced producer Mervyn LeRoy to recast him in the part he so desired.^[24] Ebsen did not object; after going over the basics of the Scarecrow's distinctive gait with Bolger (as a professional dancer, Ebsen had been cast because the studio was confident he would be up to the task of replicating the famous "wobbly-walk" of Stone's Scarecrow), he recorded all of his songs, went through all the rehearsals as the Tin Man and began filming with the rest of the cast.^[25]



Ebsen's first makeup test as the Tin Man.

Bert Lahr was signed for the Cowardly Lion on July 25, 1938; the next month, Charles Grapewin was cast as Uncle Henry on August 12.

W. C. Fields was originally chosen for the title role of the Wizard, a role turned down by Ed Wynn as he thought the part was too small, but the studio ran out of patience after protracted haggling over Fields' fee. Wallace Beery lobbied for the role, but the studio refused to spare him during the long shooting schedule. Instead, another contract player, Frank Morgan, was cast on September 22.

An extensive talent search produced over a hundred little people to play Munchkins; this meant that most of the film's Oz sequences would have to already be shot before work on the Munchkinland sequence could begin. According to Munchkin actor Jerry Maren, the little people were each paid over \$125 a week (equivalent to \$2,200 today). Meinhardt Raabe, who played the coroner, revealed in the 1990 documentary *The Making of the Wizard of Oz* that the MGM costume and

wardrobe department, under the direction of designer Adrian, had to design over 100 costumes for the Munchkin sequences. They then had to photograph and catalog each Munchkin in his or her costume so that they could correctly apply the same costume and makeup each day of production.

Gale Sondergaard was originally cast as the Wicked Witch. She became unhappy when the witch's persona shifted from sly and glamorous (thought to emulate the wicked queen in Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*) into the familiar "ugly hag". She turned down the role and was replaced on October 10, 1938, just three days before filming started, by MGM contract player Margaret Hamilton. Sondergaard said in an interview for a bonus feature on the DVD that she had no regrets about turning down the part, and would go on to play a glamorous villain in Fox's version of Maurice Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird* in 1940; Margaret Hamilton played a role remarkably similar to the Wicked Witch in the Judy Garland film *Babes in Arms* (1939).

According to Aljean Harmetz, the "gone-to-seed" coat worn by Morgan as the wizard was selected from a rack of coats purchased from a second-hand shop. According to legend, Morgan later discovered a label in the coat indicating it had once belonged to Baum, that Baum's widow confirmed this, and that the coat was eventually presented to her. But Baum biographer Michael Patrick Hearn says the Baum family denies ever seeing the coat or knowing of the story; Hamilton considered it a concocted studio rumor.^[26]

Filming

Richard Thorpe as director

Filming commenced October 13, 1938 on the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio lot in Culver City, California under the direction of Richard Thorpe (replacing original director Norman Taurog, who filmed only a few early Technicolor tests and was then reassigned). Thorpe initially shot about two weeks of footage (nine days in total) involving Dorothy's first encounter with the Scarecrow, as well as a number of sequences in the Wicked Witch's castle such as Dorothy's rescue (which though unreleased comprises the only footage of Ebsen's Tin Man).

Ebsen replaced by Haley

According to most sources, ten days into the shoot Ebsen suffered a reaction to the aluminum powder makeup he wore though he did recall taking a breath one night without suffering any immediate effect. He was hospitalized in critical condition and subsequently was forced to leave the project; in a later interview (included on the 2005 DVD release of *The Wizard of Oz*), he recalled the studio heads appreciated the seriousness of his illness only after seeing him in the hospital. Filming halted while a replacement for him was found. No full footage of him as the Tin Man has ever been released – only photographs taken during filming and makeup test photos. His replacement Jack Haley, simply assumed he had been fired.^[27] Author and screen-writer George MacDonald Fraser offers an alternative story, told to him by Burt Lancaster's producing partner, Jim Hill, that Ebsen had refused to be painted silver and was fired.^[28]

George Cukor's brief stint

LeRoy, after reviewing the footage and feeling Thorpe was rushing the production, adversely affecting the actors' performances, had Thorpe replaced. During reorganization on the production, George Cukor temporarily took over under LeRoy's guidance. Initially, the studio had made Garland wear a blond wig and heavy "baby-doll" makeup, and she played Dorothy in an exaggerated fashion; now, Cukor changed Garland's and Hamilton's makeup and costumes, and told Garland to "be herself". This meant that all the scenes Garland and Hamilton had already completed had to be discarded and reshot. Cukor also suggested that the studio cast Jack Haley, on loan from Fox, as the Tin Man. To keep down on

production costs, Haley only rerecorded "If I Only Had a Heart" and solo lines during "The Jitterbug" and "If I Only Had the Nerve"; as such, Ebsen's voice can still be heard in the remaining songs featuring the Tin Man in group vocals. The makeup used for Haley was quietly changed to an aluminum paste, with a layer of clown white greasepaint underneath to protect his skin; although it did not have the same dire effect on Haley, he did at one point suffer an eye infection from it.

In addition, Bolger's original recording of "If I Only Had a Brain" had been far more sedate compared to the version heard in the film; during this time, Cukor and LeRoy decided that a more energetic rendition would better suit Dorothy's initial meeting with the Scarecrow (initially, it was to contrast with his lively manner in Thorpe's footage), and was rerecorded as such. At first thought to be lost for over seven decades, a recording of this original version was rediscovered in 2009.^[29]

Victor Fleming, the main director

Cukor did not actually shoot any scenes for the film, merely acting as something of a "creative advisor" to the troubled production and because of his prior commitment to direct *Gone with the Wind*, he left on November 3, 1938 when Victor Fleming assumed directorial responsibility. As director, Fleming chose not to shift the film from Cukor's creative realignment, as producer LeRoy had already pronounced his satisfaction with the new course the film was taking.

Production on the bulk of the Technicolor sequences was a long and exhausting process that ran for over six months, from October 1938 to March 1939. Most of the cast worked six days a week and had to arrive as early as 4:00 a.m. to be fitted with makeup and costumes, and often did not leave until 7 pm or later. Cumbersome makeup and costumes were made even more uncomfortable by the daylight-bright lighting the early Technicolor process required, which could heat the set to over 100 °F (38 °C). Bolger later said that the frightening nature of the costumes prevented most of the Oz principals from eating in the studio commissary;^[30] the toxicity of Hamilton's copper-based makeup forced her to eat a liquid diet on shoot days.^[31] It took as many as twelve takes to have Toto run alongside the actors as they skipped down the yellow brick road.

All of the Oz sequences were filmed in three-strip Technicolor.^{[15][16]} The opening and closing credits, as well as the Kansas sequences, were filmed in black and white and colored in a sepia-tone process.^[15] Sepia-toned film was also used in the scene where Aunt Em appears in the Wicked Witch's crystal ball.

In Hamilton's exit from Munchkinland, a concealed elevator was arranged to lower her below stage as fire and smoke erupted to dramatize and conceal her exit. The first take ran well, but in the second take the burst of fire came too soon. The flames set fire to her green, copper-based face paint, causing third-degree burns on her hands and face. She spent three months healing before returning to work.^[32]

King Vidor's finishing work as director

On February 12, 1939, Fleming hastily replaced Cukor in directing *Gone with the Wind*; the next day, King Vidor was assigned as director by the studio to finish the filming of *The Wizard of Oz* (mainly the sepia-toned Kansas sequences, including Garland's singing of "Over the Rainbow" and the tornado). In later years, when the film became firmly established as a classic, Vidor chose not to take public credit for his contribution until after the death of his friend Fleming in 1949.

Post-production

Principal photography concluded with the Kansas sequences on March 16, 1939; nonetheless, reshoots and pick-up shots were filmed throughout April and May and into June, under the direction of producer LeRoy. After the deletion of the "Over the Rainbow" reprise during subsequent test screenings in early June, Garland had to be brought back one more

time to reshoot the "Auntie Em, I'm frightened!" scene without the song; the footage of Blandick's Aunt Em, as shot by Vidor, had already been set aside for rear-projection work, and was simply reused.

After Hamilton's torturous experience with the Munchkinland elevator, she refused to do the pick-ups for the scene in which she flies on a broomstick that billows smoke, so LeRoy chose to have stand-in Betty Danko perform the scene, instead; as a result, Danko was severely injured doing the scene due to a malfunction in the smoke mechanism.^[33]

At this point, the film began a long arduous post-production. Herbert Stothart had to compose the film's background score, while A. Arnold Gillespie had to perfect the various special effects that the film required, including many of the rear projection shots. The MGM art department also had to create the various matte paintings for the background of many of the scenes.

One significant innovation planned for the film was the use of stencil printing for the transition to Technicolor. Each frame was to be hand-tinted to maintain the sepia tone; however, because this was too expensive and labor-intensive, it was abandoned and MGM used a simpler and less expensive variation of the process. During the reshoots in May, the inside of the farm house was painted sepia, and when Dorothy opens the door, it is not Garland, but her stand-in, Bobbie Koshay, wearing a sepia gingham dress, who then backs out of frame; once the camera moves through the door, Garland steps back into frame in her bright blue gingham dress (as noted in DVD extras), and the sepia-painted door briefly tints her with the same color before she emerges from the house's shadow, into the bright glare of the Technicolor lighting. This also meant that the reshoots provided the first proper shot of Munchkinland; if one looks carefully, the brief cut to Dorothy looking around outside the house bisects a single long shot, from the inside of the doorway to the pan-around that finally ends in a reverse-angle as the ruins of the house are seen behind Dorothy as she comes to a stop at the foot of the small bridge.

Test screenings of the film began on June 5, 1939.^[34] *Oz* initially ran nearly two hours long. LeRoy and Fleming knew that at least 15 minutes needed to be deleted to get the film down to a manageable running time; the average film in 1939 ran for just about 90 minutes. Three sneak previews in Santa Barbara, Pomona and San Luis Obispo, California, helped guide LeRoy and Fleming in the cutting. Among the many cuts were "The Jitterbug" number, the Scarecrow's elaborate dance sequence following "If I Only Had a Brain", reprises of "Over the Rainbow" and "Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead", and a number of smaller dialogue sequences. This left the final, mostly serious portion of the film with no songs, only the dramatic underscoring.

One song that was almost deleted was "Over the Rainbow". MGM had felt that it made the Kansas sequence too long, as well as being far over the heads of the target audience of children. The studio also thought that it was degrading for Garland to sing in a barnyard. LeRoy, uncredited associate producer Arthur Freed and director Fleming fought to keep it in, and they all eventually won. The song went on to win the Academy Award for Best Song of the Year, and came to be identified so strongly with Garland herself that she made it her theme song.

After the preview in San Luis Obispo in early July, the film was officially released in August 1939 at its current 101-minute running time.

Special effects, makeup and costumes

Arnold Gillespie was the special effects director for the film. The tornado scene was especially costly. Gillespie used muslin cloth to make the tornado flexible after a previous attempt with rubber failed. He hung the 35 feet of muslin to a steel gantry and connected the bottom to a rod. By moving the gantry and rod, he was able to create the illusion of a tornado moving across the stage. Fuller's Earth was sprayed from both the top and bottom using compressed air hoses to complete the effect.^[35]

The Cowardly Lion and Scarecrow masks were made of foam latex makeup made by makeup artist Jack Dawn, who was one of the first makeup artists to use this technique.^{[36][37]} The actor who played Scarecrow was left with permanent lines around his mouth and chin from his mask. It took an hour each day to slowly peel the glued-on mask from Bolger's face.^[38] Margaret Hamilton received severe burns on her hands and face when there was an accident with the fire while filming her exit from Munchkinland. Hamilton was wearing her green makeup at the time, which was usually removed with acetone due to the toxicity of its copper content. In this case, due to Hamilton's burns, makeup artist Jack Young removed the makeup with alcohol instead to prevent infection.^[38] The Tin Man's costume was made of leather-covered buckram and the oil used to grease his joints was made from chocolate syrup.^[39] The Cowardly Lion's costume was made from real lion skin and fur.^[40] For the "horse of a different color" scene, Jell-O powder was used to color the white horses.^[41] Asbestos was used to achieve some of the special effects like the witch's burning broomstick and the fake snow that covers Dorothy as she sleeps in the field of poppies.^{[42][43]}

Music

The film is widely noted for its musical selections and soundtrack. The music was composed by Harold Arlen, and the lyrics were written by Yip Harburg, both of whom won the Academy Award for Best Original Song for "Over the Rainbow". The song was ranked first in two lists: the AFI's 100 Years...100 Songs and the Recording Industry Association of America's "365 Songs of the Century".

MGM composer Herbert Stothart, a well-known Hollywood composer and songwriter, won the Academy Award for Best Original Score in recognition of his original score.

Georgie Stoll was associate conductor and screen credit was given to George Bassman, Murray Cutter, Ken Darby and Paul Marquardt for orchestral and vocal arrangements (as usual, Roger Edens was also heavily involved as an unbilled musical associate to Freed.)

The songs were recorded in the studio's scoring stage before filming. Several of the recordings were completed while Ebsen was still with the cast. Therefore, while he had to be dropped from the cast due to illness from the aluminum powder makeup, his singing voice remained in the soundtrack (as noted in the notes for the CD Deluxe Edition). In the group vocals of "We're Off to See the Wizard", his voice can be heard. Haley spoke with a distinct Boston accent, thus did not pronounce the *r* in *wizard*. By contrast, Ebsen was a Midwesterner, like Garland, and pronounced it. Haley rerecorded Ebsen's solo parts later.

Deleted songs

Some musical pieces filmed were deleted in the editing process.

The song "The Jitterbug", written in a swing style, was intended for the sequence in which the group is journeying to the Witch's castle. Due to time constraints, the song was cut from the final theatrical version. The film footage for the song has been lost, although silent home film footage of rehearsals for the number has survived. The sound recording for the song, however, is intact and was included in the two-CD Rhino Records deluxe edition of the film soundtrack, as well as on the VHS and DVD editions of the film. A reference to "The Jitterbug" remains in the film: the Witch remarks to her flying



Herbert Stothart conducts the MGM Studio Orchestra for *The Wizard of Oz*, which was recorded at the MGM studios.

monkeys that they should have no trouble apprehending Dorothy and her friends because "I've sent a little insect on ahead to take the fight out of them."

Another musical number cut before release occurred right after the Wicked Witch of the West was melted and before Dorothy and her friends returned to the Wizard. This was a reprise of "Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead" (blended with "We're Off to See the Wizard" and "The Merry Old Land of Oz") with the lyrics altered to "Hail! Hail! The Witch is Dead!" This started with the Witch's guard saying "Hail to Dorothy! The Wicked Witch is dead!" and dissolved to a huge celebration of the citizens of the Emerald City singing the song as they accompany Dorothy and her friends to see the Wizard. Today, the film of this scene is also lost and only a few stills survive, along with a few seconds of footage used on several reissue trailers. The entire audio still exists and is included on the two-CD Rhino Record deluxe edition of the film soundtrack.^[44]

In addition, a brief reprise of "Over the Rainbow" was intended to be sung by Garland while Dorothy is trapped in the Witch's castle, but it was cut because it was considered too emotionally intense. The original soundtrack recording still exists, however, and was included as an extra in all home media releases from 1993-onwards.^[45]

Song list

- "Over the Rainbow" – Judy Garland as Dorothy Gale
- Munchkinland Sequence:
 - "Come Out ..." – Billie Burke as Glinda, and the Munchkins
 - "It Really Was No Miracle" – Judy Garland as Dorothy, Billy Bletcher and the Munchkins
 - "We Thank You Very Sweetly" – Frank Cucksey and Joseph Koziel
 - "Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead" – Billie Burke as Glinda (speaking) and the Munchkins
 - "As Mayor of the Munchkin City"
 - "As Coroner, I Must Aver"
 - "Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead" (Reprise) – The Munchkins
 - "The Lullaby League"
 - "The Lollipop Guild"
 - "We Welcome You to Munchkinland" – The Munchkins
- "Follow the Yellow Brick Road/You're Off to See the Wizard" – Judy Garland as Dorothy, and the Munchkins
- "If I Only Had a Brain" – Ray Bolger as the Scarecrow, and Judy Garland as Dorothy
- "We're Off to See the Wizard" – Judy Garland as Dorothy, and Ray Bolger as the Scarecrow
- "If I Only Had a Heart" – Jack Haley as the Tin Man
- "If I Only Had a Heart" (*original recording*) – Buddy Ebsen as the Tin Man
- "We're Off to See the Wizard" (Reprise 1) – Judy Garland as Dorothy, Ray Bolger as the Scarecrow, and Buddy Ebsen as the Tin Man
- "If I Only Had the Nerve" – Bert Lahr as the Cowardly Lion, Jack Haley as the Tin Man, Ray Bolger as the Scarecrow, and Judy Garland as Dorothy
- "We're Off to See the Wizard" (Reprise 2) – Judy Garland as Dorothy, Ray Bolger as the Scarecrow, Buddy Ebsen as the Tin Man, and Bert Lahr as the Cowardly Lion
- "Optimistic Voices" – MGM Studio Chorus



Lobby card with still of deleted musical number "Hail! Hail! The Witch is Dead!", sung upon the return to the Emerald City



Garland singing "Over the Rainbow"

- "The Merry Old Land of Oz" – Frank Morgan as Cabby, Judy Garland as Dorothy, Ray Bolger as Scarecrow, Jack Haley as the Tin Man, Bert Lahr as the Cowardly Lion and the Emerald City townspeople
- "If I Were King of the Forest" – Bert Lahr as the Cowardly Lion, Judy Garland as Dorothy, Ray Bolger as the Scarecrow and Jack Haley as the Tin Man
- "The Jitterbug" – Although this song was removed from the final film, it is still available on some extended edition CDs.^[46]

Underscoring

Extensive edits in the film's final cut removed vocals from the last portion of the film. However, the film was fully underscored, with instrumental snippets from the film's various leitmotifs throughout. There was also some recognizable popular music, including:

- Excerpts from Schumann's "The Happy Farmer", at several points early in the film, including the opening scene when Dorothy and Toto are hurrying home after their encounter with Miss Gulch, when Toto escapes from her, and when the house is "riding" the tornado.
- An excerpt of Mendelssohn's "Opus 16, #2", when Toto escapes from the Witch's castle.
- An excerpt of Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain", when Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion are trying to escape from the Witch's castle.
- "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree", when Dorothy and the Scarecrow discover the anthropomorphic apple trees.
- "Gaudeamus Igitur" during the Wizard's presentation of awards to the group.
- "Home! Sweet Home!", in part of the underscore of the closing scene, at Dorothy's house in Kansas.

(The above list is excerpted from the liner notes on the Rhino Records collection.)

Release

The film's first sneak preview was held in San Bernardino, California.^[47] The film was previewed in three test markets: on August 11, 1939, at Kenosha, Wisconsin and Cape Cod, Massachusetts,^{[48][49]} and at the Strand Theatre in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, on August 12.^[50]

The Hollywood premiere was on August 15, 1939,^[49] at Grauman's Chinese Theatre.^[51] The New York City premiere, held at Loew's Capitol Theatre on August 17, 1939, was followed by a live performance with Garland and her frequent film co-star Mickey Rooney. They continued to perform there after each screening for a week, extended in Rooney's case for a second week and in Garland's to three (with *Oz* co-stars Ray Bolger and Bert Lahr replacing Rooney for the third and final week). The film opened nationwide on August 25, 1939.

Re-releases

Although the 1949 reissue used sepia tone, as in the original release, beginning with the 1955 re-issue, and continuing until the film's 50th anniversary VHS release in 1989, the opening Kansas sequences were shown in black and white instead of the sepia tone as originally printed. (This includes television showings.)^[52]

The MGM "Children's Matinees" series rereleased the film twice, in both 1970 and 1971.^[53] It was for this release that the film received a G rating from the MPAA.



A memorial commemorating the film's world premiere at the Strand Theatre in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin on August 12, 1939

For the film's then-upcoming 60th anniversary, Warner Bros. Pictures released a "Special Edition" on November 6, 1998, digitally restored with remastered audio.

In 2002, the film had a very limited re-release in U.S. theaters, earning only \$139,905.^[54]

On September 23, 2009, the film was rereleased in select theaters for a one-night-only event in honor of its 70th anniversary and as a promotion for various new disc releases later in the month. An encore of this event was released in theaters on November 17, 2009.^[55]

An IMAX 3D theatrical re-release played at 300 theaters in North America for one week only beginning September 20, 2013, as part of the film's 75th anniversary.^[56] Warner Bros. spent \$25 million on advertising. The studio hosted a premiere of the film's first IMAX 3D release on September 15, 2013, from the newly remodeled TCL Chinese Theatre (formerly Grauman's Chinese Theatre, the site of the film's Hollywood premiere) in Hollywood. It was the first to play at the new theater and served as the grand opening of Hollywood's first 3D IMAX screen. It was also shown as a special presentation at the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival.^[57] This re-release grossed \$5.6 million at the North American box office.^[58]

In 2013, in preparation for its IMAX 3D release, the film was submitted again to the MPAA for re-classification. According to MPAA rules, a film that has been altered in any way from its original version must be submitted for re-classification, as the 3-D conversion fell within that guideline. Surprisingly, the 3D version received a PG rating for "Some scary moments", although no change was made to the film's original story content. The 2D version still retains its G rating.^[59]

The film was rereleased on January 11 and 14, 2015, as part of the "TCM Presents" series by Turner Classic Movies.^[60]

Television

The film was first shown on television on November 3, 1956, by CBS, as the last installment of the *Ford Star Jubilee*.^[61]

Home media

The film was released multiple times for the home-video commercial market (on a limited scale) on Super 8 film (8 mm format) during the 1970s. These releases include an edited English version (roughly 10 minutes, and roughly 20 minutes), as well as edited Spanish versions of the classic. Also, a full commercial release of it was made on Super 8 (on multiple reels) that came out in the 1970s, as well, for the commercial market.^[62]

The film was among the first videocassettes (on both VHS and Betamax format for the 1980 release) by MGM/CBS Home Video in 1980;^[63] all current home video releases are by Warner Home Video (via current rights holder Turner Entertainment). The first LaserDisc release of it was in 1982, with two versions of a second (one from Turner and one from The Criterion Collection with a commentary track) for the 50th anniversary release in 1989, a third in 1991, a fourth in 1993, a fifth in 1995 and a sixth and final LaserDisc release on September 11, 1996.^[64]

In addition to VHS (and later, LaserDisc), the film has been released multiple times during the 1980s on the Betamax format, beginning in 1980 simultaneously with the VHS release.^[65]

The film was released for the first and only time on the CED format in 1982 by MGM/UA Home Video.^[66]



This lobby card for the 1955 re-release carried a then-contemporary image of Garland.

Outside of the North American and European markets, the film has also been released multiple times on the Video CD format since the 1990s in Asia.^[67]

The first DVD release was on March 26, 1997, by MGM/Turner and contained no special features or supplements. It was re-released by Warner Bros. for its 60th anniversary on October 19, 1999, with its soundtrack presented in a new 5.1 surround sound mix. The DVD also contained a behind-the-scenes documentary, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Making of a Movie Classic*, produced in 1990 and hosted by Angela Lansbury, which was originally shown on television immediately following the 1990 telecast of the film; it had been featured in the 1993 "Ultimate Oz" LaserDisc release. Outtakes, the deleted "Jitterbug" musical number, clips of pre-1939 *Oz* adaptations, trailers, newsreels, and a portrait gallery were also included, as well as two radio programs of the era publicizing the film.

In 2005, two DVD editions were released, both featuring a newly restored version of the film with an audio commentary and an isolated music and effects track. One of the two DVD releases was a "Two-Disc Special Edition", featuring production documentaries, trailers, various outtakes, newsreels, radio shows and still galleries. The other set, a "Three-Disc Collector's Edition", included these features, as well as the digitally restored 80th-anniversary edition of the 1925 feature-length silent film version of *The Wizard of Oz*, other silent *Oz* adaptations and a 1933 animated short version.

The film was released on Blu-ray on September 29, 2009, for its 70th anniversary in a four-disc "Ultimate Collector's Edition", including all the bonus features from the 2005 Collector's Edition DVD, new bonus features about Victor Fleming and the surviving Munchkins, the telefilm *The Dreamer of Oz: The L. Frank Baum Story*, and the miniseries *MGM: When the Lion Roars*. For this edition, Warner Bros. commissioned a new transfer at 8K resolution from the original negatives. The restoration job was given to Prime Focus World.^[68] This restored version also features a lossless 5.1 Dolby TrueHD audio track.^[69]

On December 1, 2009, three Blu-ray discs of the Ultimate Collector's Edition were repackaged as a less expensive "Emerald Edition", with an Emerald Edition four-disc DVD arriving the following week. A single-disc Blu-ray, containing the restored movie and all the extra features of the two-disc Special Edition DVD, also became available on March 16, 2010.

In 2013, the film was re-released on DVD, Blu-ray, Blu-ray 3D and UltraViolet for the 90th anniversary of Warner Bros. and as part of its 75th anniversary.^{[56][70]}

Also, multiple special editions were released in celebration of the film's the 75th anniversary in 2013, exclusively by both Best Buy (a SteelBook of the 3D Blu-ray) and another version that came with a keepsake lunch bag released by Target stores.^{[71][72]}

Reception

The film received much acclaim upon its release. Frank Nugent considered the film a "delightful piece of wonder-working which had the youngsters' eyes shining and brought a quietly amused gleam to the wiser ones of the oldsters. Not since Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* has anything quite so fantastic succeeded half so well."^[73] Nugent had issues with some of the film's special effects, writing, "with the best of will and ingenuity, they cannot make a Munchkin or a Flying Monkey that will not still suggest, however vaguely, a Singer's Midget in a Jack Dawn masquerade. Nor can they, without a few betraying jolts and split-screen overlappings, bring down from the sky the great soap bubble in which Glinda rides and roll it smoothly into place." According to Nugent, "Judy Garland's Dorothy is a pert and fresh-faced miss with the wonder-lit eyes of a believer in fairy tales, but the Baum fantasy is at its best when the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, and the Lion are on the move."^[73]

Writing in *Variety*, John C. Flinn predicted that the film was "likely to perform some record-breaking feats of box-office magic," noting, "Some of the scenic passages are so beautiful in design and composition as to stir audiences by their sheer unfoldment." He also called Garland "an appealing figure" and the musical numbers "gay and bright."^[74]

Harrison's Reports wrote, "Even though some persons are not interested in pictures of this type, it is possible that they will be eager to see this picture just for its technical treatment. The performances are good, and the incidental music is of considerable aid. Pictures of this caliber bring credit to the industry."^[75]

Film Daily wrote:

Leo the Lion is privileged to herald this one with his deepest roar—the one that comes from way down—for seldom if indeed ever has the screen been so successful in its approach to fantasy and extravaganza through flesh-and-blood... handsomely mounted fairy story in Technicolor, with its wealth of humor and homespun philosophy, its stimulus to the imagination, its procession of unforgettable settings, its studding of merry tunes should click solidly at the box-office.^[76]

Not all reviews were positive. Some moviegoers felt that the 16-year-old Garland was slightly too old to play the little girl who Baum originally intended his Dorothy to be. Russell Maloney of *The New Yorker* wrote that the film displayed "no trace of imagination, good taste, or ingenuity" and declared it "a stinkeroo,"^[77] while Otis Ferguson of *The New Republic* wrote, "It has dwarfs, music, Technicolor, freak characters, and Judy Garland. It can't be expected to have a sense of humor, as well – and as for the light touch of fantasy, it weighs like a pound of fruitcake soaking wet."^[78] Still, the film placed seventh on *Film Daily's* year-end nationwide poll of 542 critics naming the best films of 1939.^[79]

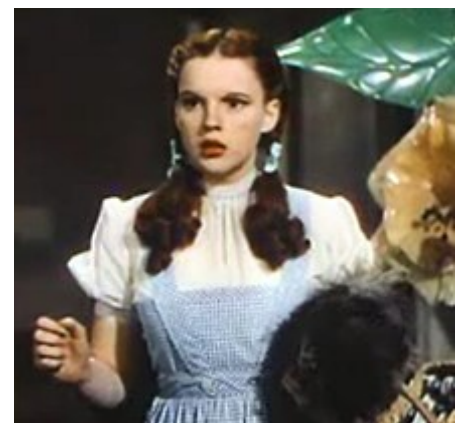
Legacy

Roger Ebert chose it as one of his Great Films, writing that "*The Wizard of Oz* has a wonderful surface of comedy and music, special effects and excitement, but we still watch it six decades later because its underlying story penetrates straight to the deepest insecurities of childhood, stirs them and then reassures them."^[80]

Writer Salman Rushdie acknowledged "*The Wizard of Oz* was my very first literary influence" in his 2002 musings about the film.^[81] He has written: "When I first saw *The Wizard of Oz*, it made a writer of me."^[82] His first short story, written at the age of 10, was titled "Over the Rainbow".^[82]

In a 2009 retrospective article about the film, *San Francisco Chronicle* film critic and author Mick LaSalle declared that the film's "entire Munchkinland sequence, from Dorothy's arrival in Oz to her departure on the yellow brick road, has to be one of the greatest in cinema history – a masterpiece of set design, costuming, choreography, music, lyrics, storytelling, and sheer imagination."^[83]

On the film critic aggregator site *Rotten Tomatoes*, the film has an approval rating of 98% based on 111 reviews, with an average score of 9.4/10. The site's critical consensus reads, "An absolute masterpiece whose groundbreaking visuals and deft storytelling are still every bit as resonant, *The Wizard of Oz* is a must-see film for young and old."^[84] At *Metacritic*, which assigns a normalized rating to reviews, the film received the maximum score of 100 out of 100, based on 4 reviews, indicating "universal acclaim",^[85] which, as of August 2017, is matched only by five other films.



Dorothy in Munchkinland

Box office

According to MGM records, during the film's initial release, it earned \$2,048,000 in the US and Canada and \$969,000 in other countries throughout the world, resulting in total earnings of \$3,017,000. While these were considerable earnings, the high production cost, in association with various distribution and other costs, meant the movie initially recorded a loss of \$1,145,000 for the studio.^[3] It did not show what MGM considered a profit until a 1949 re-release earned an additional \$1.5 million (about \$16 million today). However, for all the risks and cost that MGM undertook to produce the film, it was considered at least more successful than anyone thought it would be. According to Christopher Finch, author of the Judy Garland biography *Rainbow: The Stormy Life of Judy Garland*, "Fantasy is always a risk at the box office. The film had been enormously successful as a book, and it had also been a major stage hit, but previous attempts to bring it to the screen had been dismal failures." Finch also writes that after the success of the film, Garland signed a new contract with MGM giving her a substantial increase in salary, making her one of the top-ten box office stars in the United States.^[86]

Awards and honors

Academy Awards

Awards				
Award	Date of ceremony	Category	Recipient	Outcome
Academy Awards ^[87]	February 29, 1940	Best Picture	<u>Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer</u>	Nominated
		Best Cinematography, Color	<u>Harold Rosson</u>	
		Best Art Direction	<u>Cedric Gibbons</u> and <u>William A. Horning</u>	
		Best Effects, Special Effects	<u>A. Arnold Gillespie</u> and <u>Douglas Shearer</u>	
		Best Music, Original Score	<u>Herbert Stothart</u>	Won
		Best Music, Original Song	"Over the Rainbow" Music by <u>Harold Arlen</u> ; Lyrics by <u>E.Y. Harburg</u>	
		Academy Juvenile Award	<u>Judy Garland</u> For her outstanding performance as a screen juvenile during the past year. (She was jointly awarded for her performances in <i>Babes in Arms</i> and <i>The Wizard of Oz</i>).	Honorary

American Film Institute lists

The American Film Institute (AFI) has compiled various lists which include this film or elements thereof.

- AFI's 100 Years...100 Movies – No. 6
- AFI's 100 Years...100 Thrills – No. 43
- AFI's 100 Years...100 Heroes & Villains:
 - Wicked Witch of the West – No. 4 villain
- AFI's 100 Years...100 Songs:
 - "Over the Rainbow" – No. 1

- "[Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead](#)" – No. 82
- [AFI's 100 Years...100 Movie Quotes](#):
 - "Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore." (Dorothy Gale) – No. 4
 - "There's no place like home." (Dorothy) – No. 23
 - "I'll get you, my pretty – and your little dog, too!" (Wicked Witch of the West) – No. 99
- [AFI's Greatest Movie Musicals](#) – No. 3
- [AFI's 100 Years...100 Cheers](#) – No. 26
- [AFI's 100 Years...100 Movies \(10th Anniversary Edition\)](#) – No. 10
- [AFI's 10 Top 10](#) – No. 1 [Fantasy film](#)^[88]

Other honors

- 1999: *Rolling Stone's* 100 Maverick Movies – No. 20.^[89]
- 1999: *Entertainment Weekly's* 100 Greatest Films – No. 32.^[90]
- 2000: *The Village Voice's* 100 Best Films of the 20th Century – No. 14.^[91]
- 2002: *Sight & Sound's* Greatest Film Poll of Directors – No. 41.^[92]
- 2005: *Total Film's* 100 Greatest Films – No. 83.^[93]
- 2005: ranked among the top ten of the [BFI list of the 50 films you should see by the age of 14](#).^[94]
- 2007: *Total Film's* 23 Weirdest Films – No. 1.^[95]
- 2007: *The Observer* ranked the film's songs and music at the top of its list of 50 greatest film soundtracks.^[96]

Differences from the novel

Roughly 40 identifiable major differences exist between the original book and the MGM interpretation.^{[97][98]}

Sequels and reinterpretations

The film was dramatized as a one-hour radio play on *Lux Radio Theatre*, which was broadcast on December 25, 1950, with Garland reprising her earlier role. In 1964, a one-hour animated cartoon called *Return to Oz* was shown as an afternoon weekend special on NBC. An official 1972 sequel, the animated *Journey Back to Oz* starring [Liza Minnelli](#), daughter of Garland, was produced to commemorate the original film's 35th anniversary.^[99]

In 1975, the stage show *The Wiz* premiered on Broadway. It was an [African American](#) version of *The Wizard of Oz* reworked for the stage. It starred [Stephanie Mills](#) and other Broadway stars and earned a number of [Tony Awards](#). Its financing was handled by actor [Geoffrey Holder](#). Its inspired revivals after it left the stage and an unsuccessful [motion picture](#) made in 1978, starring [Diana Ross](#) as Dorothy and [Michael Jackson](#) as the Scarecrow.

In 1985, [Walt Disney Productions](#) released the live-action fantasy film *Return to Oz*, which starred (and introduced) [Fairuza Balk](#) as a young Dorothy Gale.^[100] Based loosely on *The Marvelous Land of Oz* (1904) and *Ozma of Oz* (1907), it fared rather poorly with critics who were unfamiliar with the *Oz* books and was not successful at the box office, although it has since become a popular [cult film](#), with many considering it a more loyal and faithful adaptation of what L. Frank Baum envisioned.^{[101][102]}

In 1995, Gregory Maguire published the novel *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, which was adapted into the wildly successful Broadway musical *Wicked*. The story describes the life of the Wicked Witch of the West and other events prior to Dorothy's arrival.

For the film's 56th anniversary, a 1995 stage show also titled *The Wizard of Oz* was based upon it and the book by L. Frank Baum. It toured from 1995 to 2012, except for 2004.

In 2005, The Muppets Studio produced *The Muppets' Wizard of Oz*, a television film for ABC, starring Ashanti as Dorothy, Jeffrey Tambor as the Wizard, David Alan Grier as Uncle Henry, and Queen Latifah as Aunt Em. Kermit the Frog portrayed the Scarecrow, Gonzo portrayed the Tin Thing (Tin Man), Fozzie Bear portrayed the Lion and Miss Piggy portrayed all the Witches of the West, East, North and South.

In 2007, The Sci-Fi Channel released the three-part miniseries *Tin Man*, a science fiction continuation starring Zoey Deschanel as DG.

Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice wrote a stage musical of the same name, which opened in 2011 at the West End's London Palladium. It features all of the songs from the film plus new songs written by Lloyd Webber and Rice. Lloyd Webber also found Danielle Hope to play Dorothy on the reality show, *Over the Rainbow*. Another production opened in December 2012 at the Ed Mirvish Theatre in Toronto.^[103] A reality TV show, also titled *Over the Rainbow*, found a Canadian girl, Danielle Wade, to play Dorothy.^{[104][105]} The Canadian production then began a North American tour in September 2013.^[106] An Australian tour will begin at the Lyric Theatre, Queensland Performing Arts Centre in November 2017, followed by a season at the Capitol Theatre, Sydney beginning December 2017.^[107]

An animated film called *Tom and Jerry and the Wizard of Oz* was released in 2011 by Warner Home Video, incorporating Tom and Jerry into the story as Dorothy's "protectors".^[108] A sequel titled *Tom and Jerry: Back to Oz* was released on DVD on June 21, 2016.^[109]

In 2013, Walt Disney Pictures released a spiritual prequel titled *Oz the Great and Powerful*. It was directed by Sam Raimi, and starred James Franco, Mila Kunis, Rachel Weisz and Michelle Williams. It was the second film based on Baum's *Oz* series to be produced by Disney, after *Return to Oz*. It was a commercial success and received a mixed critical reception.^{[110][111]}

In 2014, now-defunct independent film company Clarius Entertainment released a big-budget animated musical film, *Legends of Oz: Dorothy's Return*,^[112] which follows Dorothy's second trip to Oz. The film was a box office bomb and was received negatively by critics largely for its plot and unmemorable musical numbers.

Cultural impact

Regarding the original Baum storybook, it has been said that "*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is America's greatest and best-loved home grown fairytale. The first totally American fantasy for children, it is one of the most-read children's books ... and despite its many particularly American attributes, including a wizard from Omaha, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* has universal appeal."^[113]

The film was one inductee of a group of 25 films that inaugurated in 1989 the National Film Registry list,^{[11][114]} based on at least it being declared by the Library of Congress as the most viewed film on television syndication.^[10] In June 2007, the film was listed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.^[115] The film placed at number 86 on Bravo's 100 Scariest Movie Moments.^[116] In 1977, Aljean Harnetz wrote *The Making of The Wizard of Oz*, a detailed description of the creation of the film based on interviews and research; it was updated in 1989.^[117]

Ruby slippers

Because of their iconic stature,^[118] the ruby slippers worn by Judy Garland in the film are now among the most treasured and valuable film memorabilia in movie history.^[119] The silver slippers that Dorothy wore in the book series were changed to ruby to take advantage of the new Technicolor process. Adrian, MGM's chief costume designer, was responsible for the final design. There are five known pairs of the ruby slippers in existence.^[120]

After filming, the slippers were stored among the studio's extensive collection of costumes and faded from attention. They were found in the basement of MGM's wardrobe department during preparations for a mammoth auction in 1970. One pair was the highlight of the auction, going for a then unheard of \$15,000 to an anonymous buyer, who apparently donated them to the Smithsonian Institution in 1979. Of the four other pairs, one sold for \$666,000 at auction in 2000, and another pair was stolen from the Judy Garland Museum in Grand Rapids, Minnesota.^[121] On September 4, 2018, the FBI announced that the slippers have been found in Minneapolis, MN.^[122]



An original pair of the ruby slippers on display at the Smithsonian Institution

Another, differently styled pair unused in the film was sold at auction with the rest of her collections by owner actress Debbie Reynolds for \$510,000 (not including the buyer's premium) in June 2011.^[123]

Impact upon LGBT culture

See also

- List of films considered the best
- Political interpretations of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*
- Wizard of Oz festival
- Dark Side of the Rainbow
- The Wizard of Oz*, the 2011 stage musical

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External links

- Official website (<http://thewizardofoz.warnerbros.com>)
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 - *The Wizard of Oz* (<https://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=wizardofoz.htm>) at [Box Office Mojo](#)
 - *The Wizard of Oz* (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_wizard_of_oz_1939) at [Rotten Tomatoes](#)
 - The [Judy Garland Museum](http://judygarlandmuseum.com) (<http://judygarlandmuseum.com>)
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