



# I Thought We Were Making Movies, Not History (Wisconsin Film Studies)

*Walter Mirisch*

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This is a moving, star-filled account of one of Hollywood's true golden ages as told by a man in the middle of it all. Walter Mirisch's company has produced some of the most entertaining and enduring classics in film history, including *West Side Story*, *Some Like It Hot*, *In the Heat of the Night*, and *The Magnificent Seven*. His work has led to 87 Academy Award nominations and 28 Oscars. Richly illustrated with rare photographs from his personal collection, *I Thought We Were Making Movies, Not History* reveals Mirisch's own experience of Hollywood and tells the stories of the stars—emerging and established—who appeared in his films, including Natalie Wood, John Wayne, Peter Sellers, Sidney Poitier, Steve McQueen, Marilyn Monroe, and many others.

With hard-won insight and gentle humor, Mirisch recounts how he witnessed the end of the studio system, the development of independent production, and the rise and fall of some of Hollywood's most gifted (and notorious) cultural icons. A producer with a passion for creative excellence, he offers insights into his innovative filmmaking process, revealing a rare ingenuity for placating the demands of auteur directors, weak-kneed studio executives, and troubled screen sirens.

From his early start as a movie theater usher to the presentation of such masterpieces as *The Apartment*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *The Great Escape*, Mirisch tells the inspiring life story of his climb to the highest echelon of the American film industry. This book assures Mirisch's legacy—as Elmore Leonard puts it—as “one of the good guys.”

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