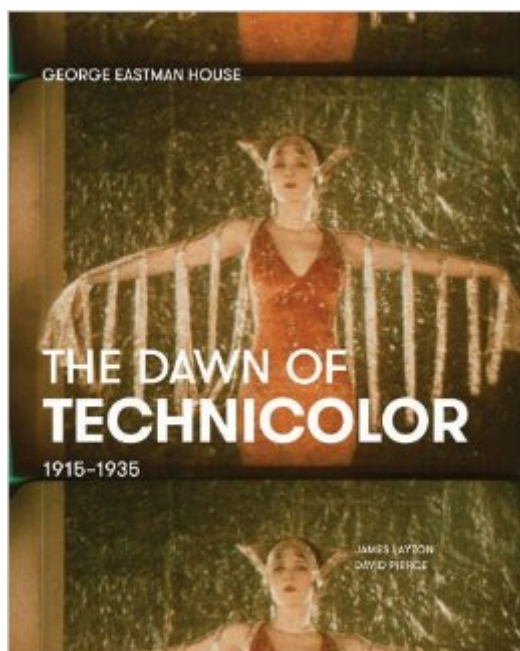


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The Dawn Of Technicolor: 1915-1935



Synopsis

Published to coincide with Technicolor's centennial in 2015, *The Dawn of Technicolor* recounts the beginnings of one of the most widely recognized names in the American film industry, reconstructing the company's early years from a wealth of previously unavailable internal documentation, studio production files, contemporary accounts and unpublished interviews. Following its incorporation in 1915, Technicolor developed a series of two-color processes as necessary steps toward full-color photography and printing. Despite success in the laboratory and in small-scale production, the company was plagued by repeated disappointments. With the support of patient investors and the visionary leadership of Herbert T. Kalmus, Technicolor eventually prevailed against daunting odds to create the only commercially viable color process for motion pictures. *The Dawn of Technicolor* investigates these vital make-or-break years, as the firm grew from a small team of exceptional engineers into a multimillion-dollar corporation. The authors chart the making of pivotal films in the process, from the troubled productions of *Ben-Hur* (1925) and *The Mysterious Island* (1926-29), to the early short films in Technicolor's groundbreaking three-color process: Walt Disney's animated *Flowers and Trees* (1932) and the live-action *La Cucaracha* (1934). The book spotlights the talented engineers and filmmakers associated with Technicolor and the remarkable technical innovations that finally made color films practical, changing the film industry forever. Lavishly illustrated with more than 400 reproductions, it includes a comprehensive annotated filmography of all two-color Technicolor titles produced between 1917 and 1937.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Considering the resources lavished upon this book, it's actually a major disappointment. It's two greatest apparent assets - the opulence of its production and the authors' access to Technicolor's vast corporate archive - in fact lie at the heart of the book's shortcomings as a serious work of film history. They lay their cards on the table in the Introduction that "'The Dawn of Technicolor' is not a systematic account of the films made in Technicolor. The company, the personnel, and the technology are the focus...Many films are mentioned only in passing; in-depth discussion of key titles is limited to films important as turning points in the production or acceptance of color". And they're true to their word! Pages and pages (and pages) are devoted to the comings and goings at the executive level of the Technicolor Corporation, their dealings with other companies (and precisely how much money changed hands), the intricacies of the technology they were developing (and how much it all cost), how much Herbert Kalmus' investment portfolio was worth in 1929, and so on and so on and so on; in immense and fatiguing detail. This wouldn't matter if one didn't so rarely get a sense that the authors ever tore themselves away from the mountain of correspondence, notebooks, patents and contracts they were immersed in long enough to just occasionally sit down and actually watch some of the films that were the end result of all this industry. Take the case of Ludwig Berger's 'The Vagabond King' (1930), for example.

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