

Simone Signoret

In what may be the most in-depth study yet published of a film star's body of work, Susan Hayward charts the career of Simone Signoret, one of the great French actresses of the 20th Century. Signoret- who won an Oscar in 1960 for her performance in Room at the Top- was a key figure in French cinema for 40 years. But it is not so much her longevity that impresses, as it is the quality of work she produced as her career progressed. She started out as a stunningly beautiful woman, winning major international awards five times for her roles, and yet was only moderately in demand during those years. From the 1960s onwards, when her looks began to decline significantly, Signoret was in greater demand, and produced most of her output. She insisted on playing roles consonant with her real age, and often chose to play roles that portrayed her as even more ugly than she had become. Simone Signoret: The Star as Cultural Sign is a remarkable achievement, a labor of love from one of the world's leading scholars of French cinema.

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