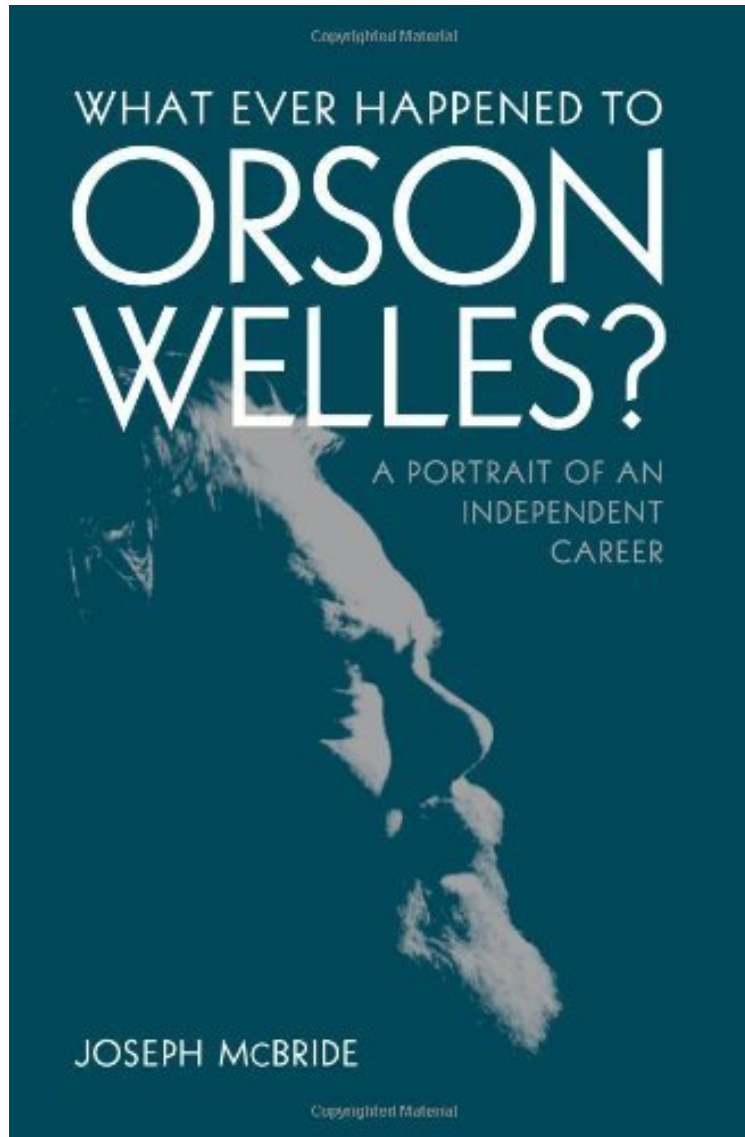


## What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?: A Portrait of an Independent Career

*Joseph McBride*

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**Joseph McBride : What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?: A Portrait of an Independent Career** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?: A Portrait of an Independent Career:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Essential Welles Reading By Michael Dempsey Joseph McBride spent some 30 years being involved as an actor in Orson Welles' still-in-limbo movie, "The Other Side Of The Wind." Thus, he is in a unique position to deliver a thorough report on its sadly checkered history, and he more than delivers.

He also puts paid to the trite, false notion that Welles spend his final years idling on trivia or diddling with commercials. This book provides a detailed explanation of just what he was doing in so many media and how explosively creative he remained. The reports on his woes as he tried repeatedly to raise completion funds for these many projects, which now exist (if at all) in fragmentary form, are disheartening, but they are balanced by McBride's portrait of Welles' unconquerable spirit despite the stunning array of obstacles he faced. McBride likewise drives a stake through the heart of the so-often uttered theory that Welles had some pathological fear of completion, which is allegedly why so many of these projects remained unfinished at his death. The truth is significantly more complex, as this book shows. Despite the author's association with Welles, he hasn't written a hagiography; there's plenty in this volume about the great man's less than admirable attributes and behavior. But McBride makes it abundantly clear that Welles was, in all likelihood, American and perhaps world cinema's greatest, most creative filmmaker to date. There are many books about Welles in print ("Oh, how they'll love me after I'm dead," he reportedly commented in a mordant vein), but don't think that this abundance makes this one unnecessary. It's, in fact, indispensable reading for anyone who knows or cares about the work of Orson Welles -- and that means anyone who knows anything in a serious way about movies.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. very enlightening  
By Kay  
I have been a fan of his for years and years. Of several books I've read about him I think this is the best. I haven't had time to finish it yet but I do like the way the author gives his reason for leaving America and filming in Europe is that Americans/Hollywood were so suppressed at the time. Every discription of him so far has been very enlightening.

14 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and informative  
By Sean G. Graver  
While I might be biased because a many parts of this book included stories about my father, Gary Graver, this is not something you want to miss out on if you have any interest in Orson Welles or the inner workings of the Hollywood movie industry. I knew Orson when I was a young boy and teenager during the time my father worked with him, but my memories are nothing compared to the vivid details and thoroughness of Joe's writings. This book taught me a lot about a man whom I admired and feared. He was rather scary from the perspective of a ten year old, but he often took time to have me sit with him while he taught me card tricks. I am so grateful that these stories are now available for everyone to read. Thank you Joe for your commitment in documenting what no one else ever has and sharing these wonderful stories.

At the age of twenty-five, Orson Welles (1915–1985) directed, co-wrote, and starred in *Citizen Kane*, widely regarded as the greatest film ever made. But Welles was such a revolutionary filmmaker that he found himself at odds with the Hollywood studio system. His work was so far ahead of its time that he never regained the wide popular following he had once enjoyed as a young actor-director on the radio. *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?: A Portrait of an Independent Career* challenges the conventional wisdom that Welles's career after *Kane* was a long decline and that he spent his final years doing little but eating and making commercials while squandering his earlier promise. In this intimate and often surprising personal portrait, Joseph McBride shows instead how Welles never stopped directing radical, adventurous films and was always breaking new artistic ground as a filmmaker. McBride is the first author to provide a comprehensive examination of the films of Welles's artistically rich yet little-known later period in the United States (1970–1985), when McBride knew and worked with him. McBride reports on Welles's daringly experimental film projects, including the legendary 1970–1976 unfinished film *The Other Side of the Wind*, Welles's satire of Hollywood during the "Easy Rider era"; McBride gives a unique insider perspective on Welles from the viewpoint of a young film critic playing a spoof of himself in a cast headed by John Huston and Peter Bogdanovich. To put Welles's widely misunderstood later years into context, *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?* reexamines the filmmaker's entire life and career. McBride offers many fresh insights into the collapse of Welles's Hollywood career in the 1940s, his subsequent political blacklisting, and his long period of European exile. An enlightening and entertaining look at Welles's brilliant and enigmatic career as a filmmaker, *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?* serves as a major reinterpretation of Welles's life and work. McBride clears away the myths that have long obscured Welles's later years and have caused him to be falsely regarded as a tragic failure. McBride's revealing portrait of this great artist will change the terms of how Orson Welles is understood as a man, an actor, a political figure, and a filmmaker.