

The Wizard of Oz

The Wizard of Oz, motion picture about a girl from rural Kansas who travels to a magical land, based on the 1900 novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum. Released in 1939, this Academy Award-winning box office hit film is one of the most-watched films in motion-picture history. Judy Garland stars as Dorothy Gale, who is caught in a tornado after a run-in with a disagreeable neighbor, Miss Gulch (played by Margaret Hamilton). The twister carries her off into the air, along with her house, some cows, a neighbor still busy at her knitting, and Miss Gulch riding her bicycle. Then Gulch transforms into a witch, and it becomes clear that Dorothy isn't in Kansas anymore. The house lands in Oz, a magical land inhabited by Munchkins, fairies, witches, and flying monkeys among other unusual creatures. A good witch advises Dorothy to follow the Yellow Brick Road and seek out the powerful Wizard of Oz, who can tell her how to get home again. In her travels she meets and befriends a scarecrow, a tin woodsman, and a lion, each of whom hopes that the Wizard can cure his own special malady. The jolly group is pursued by the powerful Wicked Witch of the West, whom they must ultimately confront.

Director

Victor Fleming
King Vidor

Cast

Judy Garland (Dorothy)
Ray Bolger (Hunk, Scarecrow)
Bert Lahr (Zeke, Cowardly Lion)
Jack Haley (Hickory, Tin Woodsman)
Billie Burke (Glinda)
Margaret Hamilton (Miss Gulch, Wicked Witch)
Charley Grapewin (Uncle Henry)
Clara Blandick (Auntie Em)
Pat Walsh (Nikko)
Frank Morgan (Professor Marvel, The Wizard, Guard, Coachman)
The Singer Midgets (Munchkins)
Mitchell Lewis (Monkey Officer)
Terry the Dog (Toto)

Awards

Academy Award for Best Music—Original Score (1939): Herbert Stothart
Academy Award for Best Song (1939): Harold Arlen—Music, E.Y. Harburg—Lyrics, for the song 'Over the Rainbow'
Selected for Registry by the National Film Preservation Board (1989)

Trivia

Actor Shirley Temple was originally slated for the role of Dorothy, but Judy Garland was chosen after Temple's studio, Fox, refused to let Temple work for MGM. However, the studio did make Garland wear a blond wig and heavy, 'baby-doll' makeup, and she played Dorothy in an exaggerated fashion. When intermediate director George Cukor was hired to replace the film's first director Richard Thorpe, he got rid of the wig and most of the makeup and told her to just be herself.

Actor Frank Morgan plays Professor Marvel, the gatekeeper of the Emerald City, the cab driver of the horse of a different color, the Wizard's guard, and the Wizard. His face was also reportedly used as the projected image of the Wizard.

Actor Buddy Ebsen was originally cast as the Scarecrow but switched roles with actor Ray Bolger, who was slated to play the Tin Woodsman, since Bolger wanted the role that his childhood idol Fred Stone had performed on stage in 1902. However, Ebsen suffered from a severe reaction from inhaling the poisonous aluminum powder used for the tin makeup and soon left the picture, though his voice can still be heard in the song 'We're off to see the Wizard.' The makeup was changed from aluminum powder to aluminum paste for actor Jack Haley, who was next in line for the role. Haley developed eye infections, again due to the aluminum, but was able to complete the role. Other dangerous effects for the cast included the Witch's explosive entrances and broom rides, which resulted in severe burns for actor Margaret Hamilton and her stunt-double.

The coat worn by Professor Marvel was found at a used clothing store by the costume department. By bizarre coincidence, the flamboyant jacket was discovered to have once belonged to L. Frank Baum, the author of the Oz books.

The many-colored horses in Emerald City palace were colored using Jello crystals. Their scenes had to be shot quickly before the horses could lick the substance off.

Director Victor Fleming was reassigned to shoot *Gone With the Wind* (1939) toward the end of this film's production, and director King Vidor finished the film, directing the black and white Kansas sequences.

Quotes

Dorothy: "Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."

Wicked Witch: "I'll get you, my pretty, and your little dog, too!"

Wizard of Oz: "Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain."

Dorothy (activating the magic ruby slippers): "There's no place like home. There's no place like home!"

Take a stroll down the Yellow Brick Road with *The Wizard of Oz: The Official 75th Anniversary Companion*! This collectible book written by Jay Scarfone and William Stillman features previously unpublished imagery, film secrets such as the inspiration behind the film's realistic tornado, why Dorothy's shoes were ruby-colored and much, much more! The wait is over! The *Wizard of Oz* game is now live on Facebook. Build your own Munchkinland and lead Dorothy down The Yellow Brick Road in the fully immersive 3D environment! <http://bit.ly/VtUSzJ>. 2K. The *Wizard of Oz* musical is an enchanting revision of the all-time classic. Developed from the ever-popular MGM screenplay, it contains the beloved songs from the Oscar-winning movie score, all the favourite characters and iconic moments, plus a few surprises along the way, including new songs by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber. Leading the company are Australian musical theatre legend Anthony Warlow as the Wizard and Professor Marvel, and leading ladies Lucy Durack as Glinda and Jemma Rix as Miss Gulch and The Wicked Witch of the West. Rising star Samantha Dodemaide plays the coveted role o