

# Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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## **Citizen Kane.**

Lebo, Harlan (Author)

Apr 2016. 368 p. St. Martin's/Thomas Dunne, hardcover, \$27.99. (9781250077530). 791.43.

When Welles arrived in Hollywood in 1940, his work on stage and radio had already earned him a reputation as a genius, but at 24, he lacked experience making movies. So when RKO awarded him a contract with unparalleled creative control and the unprecedented right to the final cut, everyone predicted a spectacular failure. Of course, Welles proved them all wrong, and 75 years after its release, *Citizen Kane* is still recognized as a masterpiece. But there was a time when the fate of the film was in doubt. Film-scholar Lebo has conducted painstaking research, combing through voluminous interviews as well as production reports, memos, budgets, drafts of the script, news accounts, and critiques. In great detail, he recounts Welles' collaboration with noted scriptwriter Herman Mackiewicz; the great cinematographer Gregg Toland, whose technical breakthroughs gave the film much of its visual interest; and the excellent cast of first-time film actors. Lebo also reveals how gossip columnists Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons, along with the William Randolph Hearst organization, attempted to thwart *Citizen Kane's* distribution but couldn't prevent rave reviews.

— *Ben Segedin*