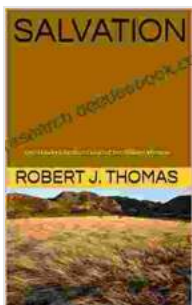


One Hundred and Ninth on the Call Sheet! The Enigmatic Role of Jess Williams in Western Films

In the vast panorama of Western films, countless actors have left their indelible mark, embodying the rugged and adventurous spirit of the Wild West. Among them, Jess Williams stands out as an enigmatic figure, a character actor whose presence on the silver screen often signaled a touch of wry humor or unpredictable menace. While he may not have been the leading man in every production, Williams's contributions to the genre were significant, adding depth and authenticity to countless stories.

Early Life and Career

Born in 1899 in Cabool, Missouri, Jess Williams grew up on a farm and developed a keen interest in horses and the outdoors. After serving in the army during World War I, he pursued a career in show business, initially working as a stuntman and a member of the B.F. Keith vaudeville circuit. In the early 1930s, Williams began to appear in feature films, primarily in supporting roles.



SALVATION: One-Hundred-Ninth in a Series of Jess Williams Westerns (A Jess Williams Western Book 109)

by Robert J. Thomas

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
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Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled

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The Westerns

Williams's first major foray into Westerns came in 1935 with *Westward Ho*. Over the next four decades, he would appear in over 100 Westerns, playing a wide range of characters from lawmen to outlaws, soldiers to settlers. Among his most notable roles were:

- **Bart Bass in *Red River* (1948):** A ruthless cattle baron who clashes with John Wayne's Thomas Dunson
- **Doc Grayson in *Dodge City* (1939):** A crooked gambler who is ultimately exposed by Wyatt Earp
- **Tumbleweed in *The Magnificent Seven* (1960):** A wizened old prospector who provides comic relief

A Unique Presence

While Williams rarely played the protagonist, his characters were always memorable. He possessed a lanky, angular physique and a piercing gaze that could convey both amusement and menace. His drawling voice and wry delivery added to his enigmatic persona. Williams often brought a touch of realism to his roles, drawing upon his own experiences with horses and the outdoors.

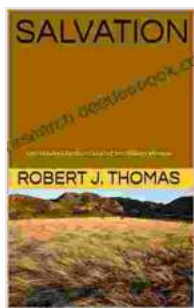
A Hundred and Ninth on the Call Sheet

Despite his numerous appearances, Williams was often relegated to the lower rungs of the call sheet. He was content with this, however, understanding that even small roles could make an impact. In fact, Williams embraced his position as the "hundred and ninth" actor, recognizing that it gave him the freedom to experiment and create memorable characters without the pressures of stardom.

Legacy

Jess Williams passed away in 1976, leaving behind a legacy of over 300 film and television appearances. While he may not have been a household name, his contributions to the Western genre were immense. His enigmatic presence, wry humor, and authentic performances added depth and color to countless films.

Jess Williams may have been a hundred and ninth on the call sheet, but his impact on Western films cannot be underestimated. His ability to create memorable characters, even in supporting roles, made him a vital part of the genre's tapestry. Through his performances, Williams captured the spirit of the Wild West, bringing to life an era where adventure, humor, and danger were intertwined.



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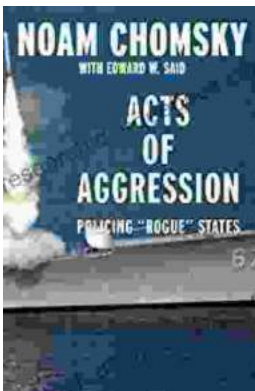
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