



Moneywood: Hollywood in Its Last Age of Excess

William Stadiem

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As wild and sexy and over the top as the decade it brings to life, author, William Stadiem, tells the inside story of Hollywood producers in the 80s.

From hits like *Beverly Hills Cop*, *Top Gun* and *Batman* to flops like *Heaven's Gate*, *Howard the Duck* and *Leonard Part 6*, Hollywood was never more excessive than it was in the 1980s. In this, the *Moneywood* era, the purse strings were not controlled by reasonably consenting adults but by pop culture cowboys who couldn't balance their own checkbooks. What they *could* do was sweet talk the talent, seduce the starlets, snowball the Japanese and slither out of Dodge when the low grosses trickled in. Their out of control lifestyles and know-nothing, raging narcissistic personalities make the original brutal studio heads like Sam Goldwyn and Jack Warner seem like Oxford dons. Yet, for all their flops, these Scoundrels of Spago turned Hollywood into a Big Business that was catnip to Wall Street. They were The Producers, and they were way beyond anything Mel Brooks could dream up.

The *Moneywood* cast of characters includes:

- Simpson and Bruckheimer; Guber and Peters; Eisner/Katzenberg/Ovitz:** An unusual fresh take on the usual subjects.
- Ray Stark**, the wizard of Holmby Hills, the most powerful producer of the 80s.
- Mario Kassar and Andy Vajna**, the *Rambo* boys, who went from making wigs to making blockbusters.
- Menahem Golan-Yoram Globus**, the Israeli schlockmeisters who proved that every star had a price.
- David Begelman**, the embezzler, gambler and sex addict who was rewarded for his sins by getting to run both Columbia and MGM.
- Roland Betts**, the aristocratic Silver Screen Partners founder and former Yale frat-mate of George W. Bush who was a master at playing the Reagan White House card.
- Giancarlo Parretti**, the Italian cannery worker who bought MGM, with a little help from his (Sicilian) friends.
- David Puttnam** The high-toned English advertising whiz who was supposed to raise the Hollywood bar, but ended up barred from Hollywood.

Moneywood is the ultimate expose of the real hit men of Hollywood's go-go decade.

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Nancy Gump:

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