



The satirical, comedy farce, **Some Like It Hot** (1959) is one of the most hilarious films ever made. The film is a clever combination of many elements: a parody of 1920-30's gangster films with period costumes and speakeasies (*illegal bars during prohibition*), and romance in a comedy with one central joke – mixed up identities, reversed sex roles and cross-dressing. In fact, one of the film's major themes is disguise and masquerade - e.g., the drag costumes of the two male musicians, Joe's disguise as an impotent millionaire, and Jerry's happiness with a real wealthy, yacht-owning retiree.

It's also a black and white film (reminiscent of the early film era) filled with non-stop action (e.g., the initial car chase), and reminiscent of Marx Brothers' comedies. This extremely funny film was advertised with the tagline: "The movie too HOT for words" - vaguely referring to either sex, jazz or the costumes.

It was released at the end of the repressive 1950s at a time when the studio system was weakening, the advent of television was threatening. Director-producer Wilder challenged the system with this gender-bending (*men dressed as women*) and risqué comedy, unembarrassed vulgarity, free love, parodies of sexual stereotypes (bisexuality, transvestism, androgyny, homosexuality, transsexuality, lesbianism, and impotence), sexy costuming for Marilyn Monroe, an outrageous and steamy seduction scene aboard a yacht, and a mix of serious themes including abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, and murder, among others.

This great film received six Academy Award nominations including Best Actor (Jack Lemmon), Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best B/W Cinematography, and Best B/W Art Direction/Set Decoration - with its sole Oscar awarded for Best B/W Costume Design. Unfortunately, it was competing against one of the biggest winners in Oscar history - Ben Hur .

Adapted from: <http://www.filmsite.org/some.html>