



T. Lawrence Larkin

In Search of Marie-Antoinette in the 1930s

Actualités. Annonce de parution

T. Lawrence Larkin, *In Search of Marie-Antoinette in the 1930s*. Stefan Zweig, Irving Thalberg, and Norma Shearer, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019

In Search of Marie-Antoinette in the 1930s follows Austrian biographer Stefan Zweig, American producer Irving Thalberg, and Canadian-American actress Norma Shearer as they attempt to uncover personal aspects of Marie-Antoinette's life at the French court in the late eighteenth-century and to dramatize them in biography, cinema, and performance for public consumption during the 1930s. The first chapter establishes the core subject as an inquiry into the respective contributions of Zweig, Thalberg, and Shearer in formulating an "objective" or "authentic" image of "Marie-Antoinette." The three chapters that follow examine in some detail how Zweig pursued research and drafted the psychological biography at his Salzburg home, Thalberg acquired film rights to the best-selling book and fought the censors to preserve the more sensational aspects of the screenplay at the Culver City studio, and Shearer worked closely with a new producer to give the script a strong romantic angle and to perform the character of the queen on the sound stage. The professionals' research standards and strategic objectives are weighed in the formulation of a new myth at once sensitive to the historical record and suited to the leisure market.