

## **Casablanca at 75**

### **Art/Bks/Film**

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### **The iconic Hollywood movie still draws praise, 75 years after it opened in World War II Photo: Original ad featuring Casablanca stars Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart**

By [MATTHEW WILLS](#) for JSTOR Daily, Nov 26, 2017 In what is perhaps the most iconic Hollywood movie, an improbable American nightclub owner in Morocco retorts to the sinister Nazi, “there are certain sections of New York, Major, that I wouldn’t advise you to try to invade.” The stiletto-thin Nazi is played by Conrad Veidt, an anti-Nazi actor who actually left Germany to get his Jewish wife away from the Nazis. The American—who, when asked his nationality says, “I’m a drunkard”—is played by Humphrey Bogart. His club, Rick’s Café Américain, is where everyone goes in Casablanca, including the famed resistance leader Victor Laszlo and his wife Ilsa Lund, who just happens to be Rick’s former lover. Complications ensue… Seventy-five years ago, when *Casablanca* premiered in a certain section of New York, the United States had already been at war for almost a year. The movie had originally been scheduled for release in the summer of 1943, but the Allied invasion of North Africa starting on November 8, 1942, inspired Warner Brothers to release the movie early, in time for Thanksgiving. *Casablanca* went on to win the 1942 Academy awards for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Screenplay. There are a lot of myths about the making of this movie, most notably that it was an “happy accident,” a haphazard production that just happened to cohere in a commercial success. Nonsense, argues Gary Green, who notes that the [movie’s production was no messier than other famed films of the era](#), including *Gone With the Wind* (which ran through three directors before it was done). […]  
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