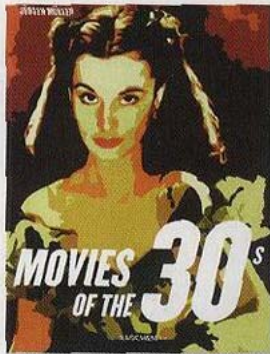


Movies Of The 30s

Life begins at thirty

Edited by Jürgen Müller (Taschen, £19.99)

IN AMERICA, A public wracked by the Depression looked to the stars for comfort; and the stars — Jimmy Stewart, Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Greta Garbo — didn't disappoint. Neither did timeless blockbusters like *Gone With The Wind*, kitsch classic *The Wizard Of Oz* and the original *King Kong*. In Europe, a handful of all-time masterpieces were forged (*L'Atalante*, *La Grand Illusion*, *M*) and, closer to home, Hitchcock made his greatest English films (*The 39 Steps*, *The Lady Vanishes*). Meanwhile, genre filmmaking came of age, from horror (with the classic Universal cycle) to the western (*Stagecoach*) to comedy (*Duck Soup*). It was undoubtedly quite the decade, and Taschen's now-familiar mix of luminous artwork and informed, accessible criticism does it full justice. A hefty volume, it's not for reading on the Tube, but can grace any movie-literate coffee table with pride — a decent Christmas present for the discerning film buff. **Graham Taylor ★★★★★**



"Mmmm... enormous stilton"