



Runaway Romances: Hollywood's Postwar Tour of Europe

Robert Shandley

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In the 1950s and early 1960s, America imagined itself young and in love in Europe. And Hollywood films of the era reflected this romantic allure. From a young and naïve Audrey Hepburn falling in love with Gregory Peck in *Roman Holiday* to David Lean's *Summertime*, featuring Katherine Hepburn's sexual adventure in Venice, these glossy travelogue romances were shot on location, and established an exciting new genre for Hollywood.

As Robert Shandley shows in *Runaway Romances*, these films were not only indicative of the ideology of the American-dominated postwar world order, but they also represented a shift in Hollywood production values. Eager to capture new audiences during a period of economic crisis, Hollywood's European output utilized the widescreen process to enhance cinematic experience. The films—*To Catch a Thief*, *Three Coins in the Fountain*, and *Funny Face* among them—enticed viewers to visit faraway places for romantic escapades. In the process, these runaway romances captured American fantasies for a brief, but intense, period that ended as audiences grew tired of Old World splendors, and entered into a new era of sexual awakening.

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