

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS (1944)

About the Film

Meet Me In St. Louis is a beloved 1944 MGM musical directed by Vincente Minnelli, starring Judy Garland in one of her most iconic roles. Set in St. Louis during the year leading up to the 1904 World's Fair, the film follows the Smith family through four seasons of joy, heartache, and ultimately, love.

The Story

The film chronicles a year in the life of the Smith family at 5135 Kensington Avenue in St. Louis. As the city prepares for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (the 1904 World's Fair), the family navigates romance, growing pains, and the possibility of having to leave their beloved home.

The Cast

- **Judy Garland** as Esther Smith - The second-oldest daughter who falls in love with the boy next door
- **Margaret O'Brien** as "Tootie" Smith - The mischievous youngest daughter, whose Halloween adventures and emotional scenes became legendary
- **Mary Astor** as Mrs. Anna Smith - The patient and loving mother
- **Leon Ames** as Mr. Alonzo Smith - The well-meaning but sometimes oblivious father
- **Lucille Bremer** as Rose Smith - The eldest daughter, navigating the complexities of courtship
- **Tom Drake** as John Truett - The charming boy next door

Musical Numbers

The film features several songs that have become American standards:

- **"The Trolley Song"** - Esther's exuberant song about meeting John Truett on the trolley

- **"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas"** - The poignant song Esther sings to comfort Tootie
- **"The Boy Next Door"** - Esther's romantic ballad about her feelings for John
- **"Skip to My Lou"** - The lively party song
- **"Under the Bamboo Tree"** - The charming duet performed by Esther and Tootie

The Seasons

The film is structured around four seasons, each bringing its own mood and events:

Summer 1903

The film opens with the Smith family going about their daily lives, introducing us to each character and setting up the romantic tensions between the older daughters and their suitors.

Autumn 1903

Halloween brings one of the film's most memorable sequences, as Tootie and her friend Agnes embark on mischief. The autumn section also features the famous trolley sequence.

Winter 1903

The Christmas section features the iconic "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" scene, one of the most emotionally powerful moments in the film, as well as the dramatic snow people scene.

Spring 1904

The film culminates with the opening of the World's Fair, bringing resolution to the family's dilemmas and romantic subplots.

The 1904 World's Fair

The Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis was one of the largest world's fairs ever held. The film's climax at the fair showcases the wonder and excitement of this historic event, with its illuminated buildings and festive atmosphere symbolizing hope and new beginnings.

Production Notes

- Filmed in glorious Technicolor, the film showcases some of the most beautiful color cinematography of the 1940s
- The Arthur Freed Unit at MGM produced the film, the same team responsible for many of Hollywood's greatest musicals
- Director Vincente Minnelli and Judy Garland began their personal relationship during filming; they married in 1945
- Margaret O'Brien won a special Academy Juvenile Award for her performances in 1944, with this film being a highlight

How to Play Bingo

As you watch the film, mark off each event on your bingo card when you see it happen. The first person to complete a line (horizontal, vertical, or diagonal) wins!

Enjoy the show and have a wonderful time with Meet Me In St. Louis!