

OSCAR WILDE ON SCREEN



Week Seven

Ideal Husbands

Welcome to *Oscar Wilde on Screen*

Week Seven

In 1895, Oscar Wilde staged two of his most famous and revered plays. In April of that same year, he was arrested for gross indecency and thrust into investigations and trials that would lead to his imprisonment, exile and early death.

At the remove of over a century, it's difficult to parse how compressed a sequence of events it was. Oscar reached the pinnacle of his career, the height of his fame and the beginnings of his downfall within weeks.

As we've talked about over the weeks, it can be difficult to entirely separate the tragic arc of Oscar's life from the work. In the case of *An Ideal Husband* (this week) and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (next week) it's worth doing.

Yes, there are resonances with real life and, as always, the hard irony of Oscar's illumination of the hypocrisies that would soon turn on him.

But these are extremely well-crafted, deeply perceptive and very funny plays that, with good reason, have been adapted on multiple occasions, for television and film.

Earnest is, perhaps, the better known of the two – so it's also worth taking the time to appreciate *Husband* on its own merits.

Blackmail, political corruption, honour and the lost thereof.

Now that's a night at the theatre.

FILMS WEEK SEVEN

An Ideal Husband (1947)

Dir. Alexander Korda

An Ideal Husband (1969)

Dir. Rudolph Cartier

An Ideal Husband (1980)

Dir. Viktor Georgiev

An Ideal Husband (1999)

Dir. Oliver Parker

An Ideal Husband (2000)

Dir. William P. Cartledge

An Ideal Husband (2018)

Dir. Johnathan Church