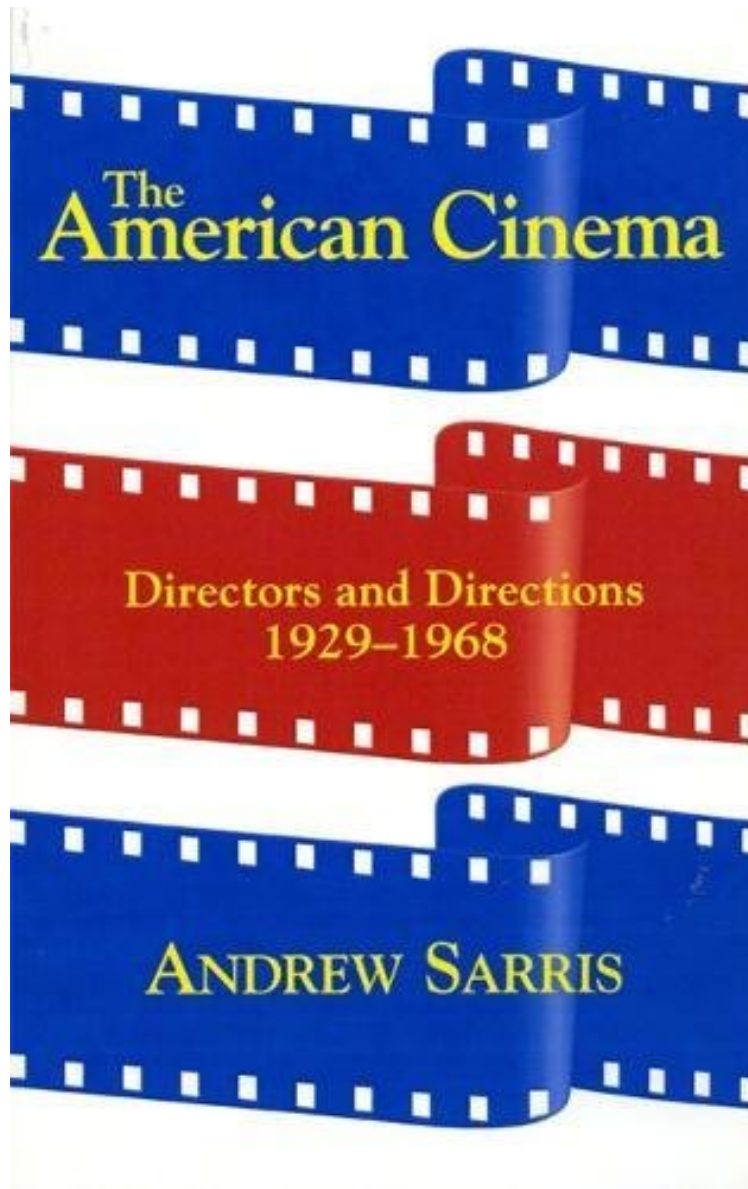


The American Cinema: Directors And Directions 1929-1968

Andrew Sarris

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Andrew Sarris : The American Cinema: Directors And Directions 1929-1968 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The American Cinema: Directors And Directions 1929-1968:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. For those who are not aware of the old masters (and a few losers) this is a fine book for film study By Stereo Nut This book is a classic and was a Christmas present for a relative who is

a film freak. It covers American film directors and their films/film careers through 1968. Welles, Von Sternburg, John Houston, etc. Most of the directors worked in black and white first. For those who are not aware of the old masters (and a few losers) this is a fine book for film study. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By manakhemiaok2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. They Might Be Giants By Gerry Robinson Read this many years ago and am planning to re-read it. The part about the tension between the material and the artist never made much sense and Sarris never applied it during his movie reviewing career. We all read it because it was a touchstone on what to watch and a tool for organizing your thinking about films and what separates a good director from a great one. You can pretty much find the bad ones on your own. The fight between Sarris and Pauline Karl enriched film criticism. They were equally matched great critics. There will never be another pair like them or as illuminating as they were. David Deby and Anthony Lane apparently no longer work at the New Yorker and the magazine isn't saying why. I called the magazine to inquire and never received a return call. I'm discovering Roger Ebert's writing after years of thinking he was a jerk on television. Anybody worth reading that I'm overlooking?

The auteur theory, of which film critic Andrew Sarris was the leading American proponent, holds that artistry in cinema can be largely attributed to film directors, who, while often working against the strictures of studios, producers, and scriptwriters, manage to infuse each film in their oeuvre with their personal style. Sarris's *The American Cinema*, the bible of auteur studies, is a history of American film in the form of a lively guide to the work of two hundred film directors, from Griffith, Chaplin, and von Sternberg to Mike Nichols, Stanley Kubrick, and Jerry Lewis. In addition, the book includes a chronology of the most important American films, an alphabetical list of over 6000 films with their directors and years of release, and the seminal essays "Toward a Theory of Film History" and "The Auteur Theory Revisited." Over twenty-five years after its initial publication, *The American Cinema* remains perhaps the most influential book ever written on the subject.

.com Since its publication in 1968, *The American Cinema* has been the manifesto of the auteur theory. Written by Andrew Sarris, the theory's chief advocate, the book traces the history of movies by examining the careers of more than 200 film directors. Covering everyone from D.W. Griffith to Francis Coppola, Orson Welles to Roman Polanski, Sarris argues that directorial greatness is marked by a personal style and consistency of excellence that can be traced throughout a career. Sarris's commentary is sometimes worshipful, sometimes acrid, but almost always quotable. Alfred Hitchcock is "the supreme technician of the American cinema." John Huston coasted "on his reputation as a wronged individualist with an alibi for every bad movie." Stanley Kubrick holds "a naive faith in the power of images to transcend fuzzy feelings and vague ideas." Michelangelo Antonioni makes films so pessimistic and alienating that Sarris dubs him "Antoniennoi." You may not agree with all of Sarris's assessments, but this book provides the best possible opportunity to consider auteurism, an approach to cinema that, in an age that reveres Scorsese, Spielberg, and Tarantino, seems more relevant than ever. The book closes with an essay called "The Auteur Theory Revised," Sarris's attempt at a definitive theoretical statement. --Raphael Shargel From *Library Journal* This 1968 volume is probably the bible of the auteur theory of filmmaking, i.e., that the director's vision is what shapes film history. Though LJ's reviewer found some of Sarris's conclusions "furiously debatable," this nonetheless is an "invaluable reference book and a major contribution to film literature" (LJ 12/15/68). Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. The Week, Kenneth Turan's *The Book List*, 7/4/14 There is no overestimating the impact critic Andrew Sarris had on serious filmgoers This book is an essential work of film criticism.