

Film Follies: The Cinema Out of Order

Stuart Klawans

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Stuart Klawans : Film Follies: The Cinema Out of Order before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Film Follies: The Cinema Out of Order:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A feast of wit and erudition By Carl J. Bromley A feast of wit and erudition. Klawans, one of America's finest film critics, basically invents a new genre here, "The Film Folly". Klawans writes affectionately about this cinema of excess and over-exuberance - the world of Von Stronheim's Greed, Griffith's Intolerance and Carax's Lovers on the Bridge - mixing the insight of the sharpest critic and social historian with the sly whimsy of a coming of age narrative. We are reminded of why Klawans has such critical staying power, why there are devoted legions of Klawans afficianados out there - he has the temper of a lefty aesthician mixed with the humor of a Woody Allen. Sometimes one wonders when the jokes end and when the film criticism begins with Klawans. That's why is the jewel of American contemporary film criticism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing By A Customer I was really looking forward to this book when I read Mr. Klawan's excerpt in Newsweek, but I have to say that the book disappointed me more often than not. The author seems determined to show us how educated he is by drawing parallels between these out-of-control films and the history of popular culture in the world society. All that really does is detract from his main throughline. The best passages were the ones regarding "Cleopatra" and "Apocalypse Now". The rest were interesting, but most of the time I was lost. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fun book By P. Mulloy This is an old book but Klawans is a perceptive and interesting authors who is always an enjoyable read.

Outlining a history of film going too far, of seeming madness and wasteful extravagance, this text examines films that are cinematic landmarks and monuments to directors' hubris, from Griffiths' "Intolerance" to Coppola's "Apocalypse Now" and Carax's "Les Amants du Pont-Neuf". The text explores the changing conditions of the industry under which figures such as L'Herbier and Lang, von Sternberg and Ophuls got their hands on the full apparatus of studio production, while behaving as individual artists. It questions the shape of film history from the viewpoint of these pictures and relates the notion that a failed work of art may be more glorious than a success.

From Publishers Weekly A film critic for the Nation, Klawans is usually concerned with the subtlety and nuance of new movies. Here he looks at extravagant "follies," his term for overweening, ruinously expensive spectacles like Griffith's Intolerance, Lang's Metropolis, Selznick's Duel in the Sun and Coppola's Apocalypse Now. Each of these monuments to directorial hubris, he contends, both reflected significant changes in the film industry and precipitated them. Klawans places each within a larger field of cultural history: thus Metropolis reflects European fears of America's aggressive, post-WWI modernity and the threatening specter of the "New Woman"; the many problems that plagued the productions of Cleopatra and Duel in the Sun echo a larger struggle between individual expression and an increasingly rigid system of mass-market production. "Follies" they may be, but Klawans argues persuasively that such films?too large, too ambitious, too new to achieve coherence in their time?actually broadened the boundaries of filmmaking and changed our understanding of "the symbolic function of movies." He also traces the ancestry of such films to the eclecticism and spectacle of world's fairs, Wagnerian music-drama and 18th-century amusement parks. This sweeping, richly detailed history is occasionally mired in the minutiae of budget revisions, cast changes or obscure biographical details. But in its structure and scope, Klawans's tale of film follies is very much like the fairs and festivals that fascinate him?highly ambitious, original, full of disparate ideas, a large cast of characters and a sense of wonder. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Klawans, film critic for the Nation, looks at those over-the-top, beyond-extravagant films that are the consummate creation of one person. A "film folly" is not only overly ambitious but ruinously expensive to make, destroying careers and studios. It is an act of hubris or megalomania on the part of its creator, and the logical development of story line or characters isn't this type of film's strong point. Klawans examines some examples of this genre, among them Intolerance, Greed, Metropolis, Duel in the Sun, Fitzcarraldo, Cleopatra, I Am Cuba, and Apocalypse Now. Proceeding chronologically, he considers not only the film itself but the circumstances in the film industry at the time that made its creation possible. Aside from an overemphasis on the influence of Richard Wagner in the first third of the book, what Klawans has to say is interesting and far from dry. Recommended for academic and larger public libraries.?Marianne Cawley, Charleston Cty. Lib., SC Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. Klawans, film critic for the Nation, looks at those over-the-top, beyond-extravagant films that are the consummate creation of one person. A "film folly" is not only overly ambitious but ruinously expensive to make, destroying careers and studios. It is an act of hubris or megalomania on the part of its creator, and the logical development of story line or characters isn't this type of film's strong point. Klawans examines some examples of this genre, among them Intolerance, Greed, Metropolis, Duel in the Sun, Fitzcarraldo, Cleopatra, I Am Cuba, and Apocalypse Now. Proceeding chronologically, he considers not only the film itself but the circumstances in the film industry at the time that made its creation possible. Aside from an overemphasis on the influence of Richard Wagner in the first third of the book, what Klawans has to say is interesting and far from dry. (Library Journal) A film critic for the Nation, Klawans is usually concerned with the subtlety and nuance of new movies. 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