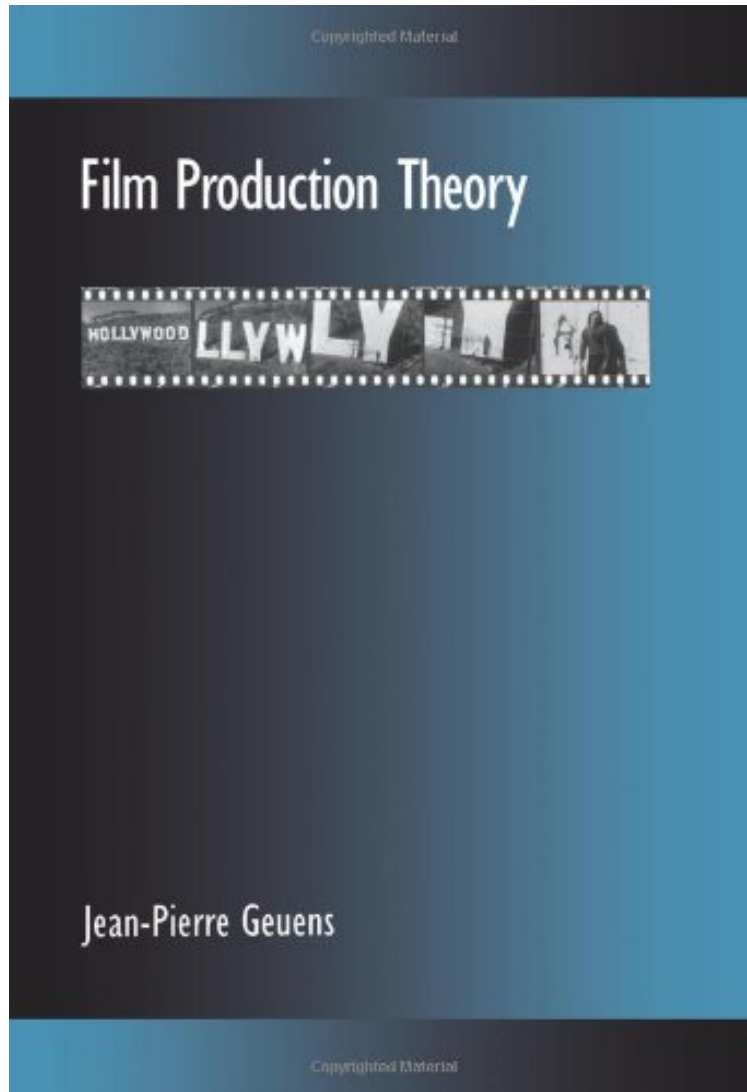


(Free download) Film Production Theory (SUNY Series Cultural Studies in Cinema/Video)

Film Production Theory (SUNY Series Cultural Studies in Cinema/Video)

Jean-Pierre Geuens

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Jean-Pierre Geuens : Film Production Theory (SUNY Series Cultural Studies in Cinema/Video) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Film Production Theory (SUNY Series Cultural Studies in Cinema/Video):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Creativity Makes a ComebackBy transargonautGeuens' knowledgeable essays on film production tackle something that many other production books sidestep: the "Why?" aspect of the filmmaking process. Indeed, he does not go into great technical depth regarding equipment, instead

favoring an approach that addresses the intentions and consequences of stylistic choices. This book is divided into chapters that each focus upon one production aspect: lighting, editing, directing, etc. These chapters consist of critiques of the decisions made by particular filmmakers in addition to well organized problematizations of film theory relating to the examples. There is no "final word" provided in these sections; conflicting philosophies of film are at times presented side-by-side in a thought-provoking manner. The author has set himself to taking the Hollywood system--indeed, any "cookie cutter" style--to task, and in my opinion, he has succeeded in asserting the primacy of a film's ultimate artistic value. Perhaps most importantly of all, this book is inspirational; how refreshing it is to be reassured that just because an individual artistic style has not yet been presented to the public does not mean that we should not be true to ourselves and pursue our visions with alacrity. 11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A remarkable study of film from the side of production.

By Nate Film Production Theory is an exciting and important book. Most importantly, the book outlines what is at stake aesthetically and philosophically in what appear to be merely technical considerations that enter into the making of film. Unlike many other works that focus upon the finished product, or, upon the personalities behind the product, Geuens's book focuses upon the techniques of cinema, with an eye to clarify what are the assumptions about the nature of cinema that are implicit in those techniques. For example, with respect to screenwriting Geuens points out that the standardized approach to screenwriting, in which dialogue is the most prominent feature and camera movement and angles are for the most part deliberately left out, implies that film is about story first and image second and also implies a less than fully collaborative relationship between writers and directors. Of course some writers and directors do collaborate very effectively -- but in doing so they are going against a trend that is implicit in the mainstream traditions of filmmaking, traditions that make it difficult for filmmakers to, say, let images and settings be the impetus for a creative and improvisational approach to telling stories. In addition to screenwriting, Geuens gives very helpful and detailed analyses of the nature of film school, the techniques of directing and lighting and cinematography and sound and editing. In all this, he is not simply aiming to criticize the way films usually get made, or the techniques that get applied to filmmaking, but primarily to show that such techniques pretend to be the best and only professional way to do things when in fact there have been remarkable films made differently and with far different results. In fact, the first few chapters of the book are attempts to understand why and how the "Hollywood system" came to be what it has become, what impact it has had culturally, and along the way to consider and highlight paths that were never or rarely taken. Sometimes Geuens can get a bit heavy handed and he is certainly not without his own strong views, but the book as a whole works to open up and clarify and illuminate the process of filmmaking. He is extremely well read in philosophy and critical theory and film theory, and draws upon ideas from people like Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze and many others, but never simply in the form of obscure name dropping. His references to such thinkers almost never fail to be both extremely helpful on the nature of film and quite clear in its summary of the often obscure thoughts of difficult philosophers. The book is both an exceptional guide for the aspiring filmmaker and a powerful complement to works of film theory that focus on the product rather than the process. I consider the book the most important book on film I have read in a very long time, and can't recommend it highly enough. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Inspiring, Compelling, Revolutionary!

By Andre Ali Seewood It is simply one of the most inspiring and novel books ever written about film production: Jean-Pierre Geuens' FILM PRODUCTION THEORY. This is not a "how to" book, it is a book that raises strategic questions about what we perceive as standard filmmaking practices and accepted aesthetic (professional) norms. What Geuens sets out to do is to open the potential filmmaker's mind to alternate ways of "skinning the cat" or alternate approaches to filmmaking from various significant aspects: screenwriting, composition, staging, sound, editing and even direction. The book is literally a testament to the benefits (and the pain) of thinking differently- of going against the grain and standing your ground. Geuens reveals the real reason anyone should go to film school and it is not to make a delightful reel of your work that imitates hollywood production values and conceits... He reminds us that what we love about certain filmmakers was born from those particular individual's unwillingness to conform- to challenged the pre-existing notions; so therefore this book inspires you to challenge, to explore, to take risks and more importantly to appreciate the risks and challenges taken by others. It is the kind of book that could be read simultaneously with any "standard" required film production book. Geuens repeats the rules and then reveals to you how others have broken the rules and still made provocative, groundbreaking and classic work. For graduate students, Geuens puts various thinkers (Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Derrida, Nietzsche and Bazin) to great use and allows their thoughts to be easily understood in the context of film production. For the practicing (struggling) filmmaker, Geuens renews your faith in the differences between your work and "hollywood", your work and the conventional, the unique experiences of your soul and the "system". The light that permeates Geuens work is that he forces you to decide whether you are trying to really make films or trying, "to use filmmaking to secure the easy life." (pg. 256) All in all this was a compelling, thoroughly engaging and necessary read for anyone interested in film, film studies, film production and film criticism.

Integrates contemporary film theory into the teaching of film production, presenting alternatives to the standard Hollywood model of filmmaking. Most serious film books during the last twenty years have focused on theoretical

issues, film history, or film analyses, leaving production to the side. This text, however, appropriate for film production courses, fills that void, opening the production process to pertinent, argumentative notions and incorporating material from Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Derrida, among others. Although Geuens covers screenwriting, lighting, staging, and framing, among other production issues, he avoids the strictly vocational or "professional" approach to film teaching currently applied to most production courses. Geuens reevaluates what cinema could be, to revive its full powers and attend to the mystery of the creative process. To counter Hollywood's normative machinery, he suggests taking back from the professionals important notions they have arrogated for themselves but rarely act upon: artistry, passion, and engagement. "This is a sharply observed, altogether brilliantly written study. I like the originality, the daring, and the sweep of Geuens' argument. As a theorist on the subject of film production, Geuens ranks with such critical thinkers as Baudrillard and Metz in his astute analysis of the field." -- Gwendolyn Foster, author of *Captive Bodies: Postcolonial Subjectivity in Cinema* "Not only is the study of film production significant, but Geuens' study, *Film Production Theory*, is very significant, specifically as a kind of mentoring text for aspiring directors, actors, producers, and technicians. After reading this book, I feel like going out to a non-soundstage location and shooting my own film!" -- Paul Matthew St. Pierre, Simon Fraser University

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About the Author: Jean-Pierre Geuens teaches film in Los Angeles.