



The Story of Film

Mark Cousins

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A new edition of the most accessible and compelling history of the medium published, with an updated foreword by the author to accompany his 15-hour feature documentary

Film critic, producer, and presenter Mark Cousins' history shows how filmmakers are influenced both by the historical events of their times, and by each other. He demonstrates, for example, how Douglas Sirk's 1950s Hollywood melodramas influenced Rainer Werner Fassbinder's despairing visions of 1970s Germany and how George Lucas' *Star Wars* epics grew out of Akira Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress*. *The Story of Film* is divided into three main epochs: silent (1885–1928), sound (1928–1990), and digital (1990–present), and within this structure films are discussed in chapters reflecting both the stylistic concerns of the filmmakers and the political and social themes of the time. As well as covering the great American films and filmmakers, the book explores cinema in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia, and South America, and shows how cinematic ideas and techniques cross national boundaries. Avoiding jargon and obscure critical theory, the author constantly places himself in the role of the moviegoer watching a film, asking *How does a scene or a story affect us, and why?* In doing so, he gets to the heart of cinematic technique, explaining how filmmakers use lighting, framing, focal length, and editing to create their effects. Clearly written, and illustrated with more than 400 stills, this book is essential reading for both film students and the general moviegoer.

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