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The Shining (BFI Film Classics)



Synopsis

Roger Luckhurst's study of Kubrick's dark masterpiece 'The Shining' illuminates the film's themes, tropes and resonances through a detailed analysis of sequences and performances. Taking the maze as a key motif, Luckhurst offers numerous threads with which to navigate the strange twists and turns along the corridors of this enigmatic film.

Book Information

Series: BFI Film Classics

Paperback: 104 pages

Publisher: British Film Institute (November 8, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1844576396

ISBN-13: 978-1844576395

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.3 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

Like a lot of the BFI books, Luckhurst's study of Kubrick's THE SHINING is a mixed bag, but -- despite the tone of this review -- the good does outweigh the bad. The book does a couple of things really well: Luckhurst thoroughly situates Kubrick's film in the historical context of 1960s and 70s horror films. The discussion of music in the film is also interesting, if too brief. I also thought the book raised some interesting questions about subjectivity in the film. Although he occasionally pushes a preferred reading, Luckhurst tends to present various theories for the film's labyrinthine enigmas. This inclusivity of perspectives makes the book useful if you're just beginning to study the film's mysteries. Unfortunately, in the end, I don't think the book makes the film any more comprehensible. Specifically, I wish that Luckhurst had devoted more discussion to the film's final shot. While he presents various theories about what the final shot signifies, he ultimately evades the question by retreating to a discussion of the ending of King's novel. If, as one of the popular theories holds, Jack Torrance has "been there all along," what does that even mean? In that final image, is Kubrick actually parodying the twist endings popularized by The Twilight Zone (as another theory

suggests)? What does that say for the echo chamber of rigorous intellectual discussion that accompanies every detail in the film in books like Luckhurst's? It starts to sound like this film is Kubrick's PALE FIRE, and, hey, he did make his own LOLITA adaptation...

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