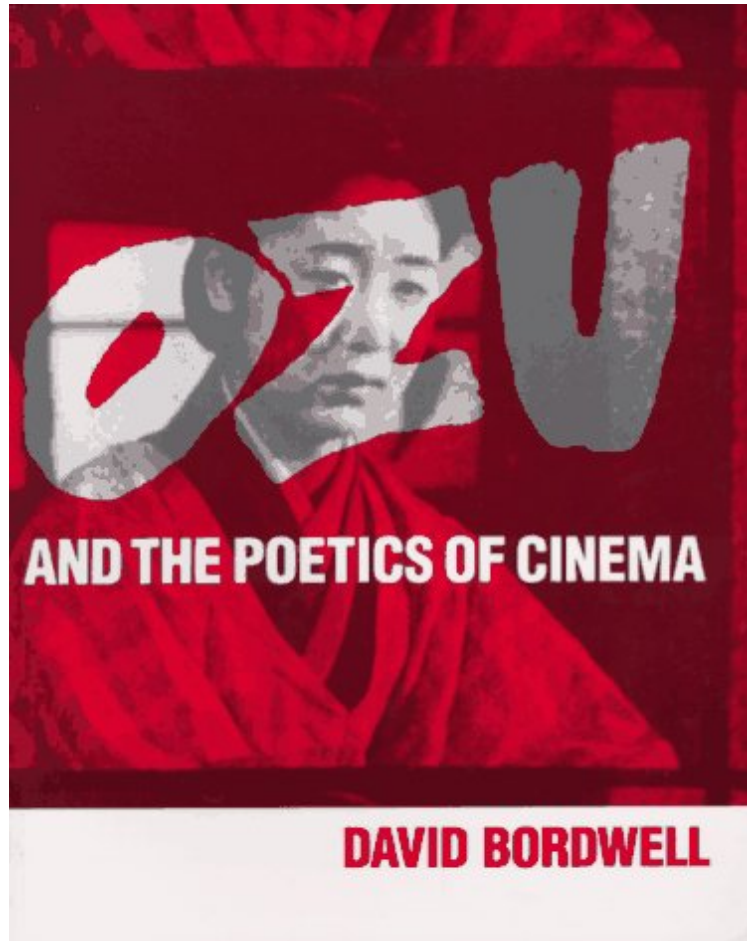


Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema

David Bordwell

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David Bordwell : Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema:

18 of 19 people found the following review helpful. The Japanese MasterBy A CustomerDavid Bordwell's extraordinarily detailed and painstaking analysis of the entire oeuvre of Ozu Yasujiro is one of the best studies of Japanese cinema written in English language. Bordwell does a brilliant job of demolishing the mythical image of Ozu as the "most (traditional) Japanese filmmaker," illustrating through numerous case studies that Ozu, rather than challenging the Western norms of narrative strategies in the manner of a Zen master, developed his own stylistics which is rigorous, refined and distinctively "modern." By no means the last word on Ozu scholarship, the book is nonetheless highly recommended to any serious student of Japanese cinema.9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. The Best Book on Ozu in EnglishBy John S. HilliardBordwell's book is without peer on the film craft of Ozu yet in English. It surpasses all other books about Ozu. It is unfortunate that this Bordwell title is difficult to gain. I

don't own it, it's too expensive, so I've had to glean its contents other ways. If you don't believe my critique of the book, just listen to the commentary by Bordwell on the DVD of Ozu's "Autumn Afternoon" film. It is brilliant, speaking of true structural aspects, visual composition, etc. Bordwell is a fine film scholar. Please publishers, issue this book in an affordable format! 17 of 29 people found the following review helpful. exhaustive and exhausting

By Kristopher Kincaid
Bordwell's extremely well-researched book on Ozu covers all of the great director's existing works from the earliest silent films on - unlike Donald Richie's book, which tends to pay scant attention to the silent pictures. Bordwell does challenge the notion of Ozu as a "traditional" director (Richie tends to reinforce it) and instead makes the argument that Ozu was a formal pioneer - as he was. The problem with Bordwell and many other "serious" film critics is that they get so wrapped up in technique that technique becomes the only measuring post - which is why formally innovative but otherwise shallow directors like Orson Welles continue to be considered the best directors in history. Ozu combined cutting-edge technique with beautiful, quiet, often profound insights into Japanese society and human nature but Bordwell, like a scientist dissecting a frog, can tell you about all the parts but not what truly animates the thing. Ozu always called himself a formalist and his attention to formal details was meticulous and precise, but it was the real poetry of his films that caused Wenders to cite Ozu as "a sacred treasure of the cinema" and separates Ozu's films from empty-headed formalist garbage like "Last Year at Marienbad" or Welles' endlessly awful "Touch of Evil." Bordwell's dry analysis of technique borders on the obsessive and really [stink] the joy out of each film, even Ozu's extent pure dumb fun silent "B" pics like "Dragnet Girl." Mr. Bordwell's effort and his attention to detail should be cheered; some of the points he makes and the patterns he discovers are truly astonishing and enlightening. But ultimately, though, I would say that neither this book nor Richie's really seem able to nail Ozu down. Perhaps that's merely a testament to Ozu's enduring genius.

Over the last two decades, Yasujiro Ozu has won international recognition as a major filmmaker. Combining biographical information with discussions of the films' aesthetic strategies and cultural significance, David Bordwell questions the popular image of Ozu as the traditional Japanese artisan and examines the aesthetic nature and functions of his cinema.

.com The Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu is not as well known as Akira Kurosawa, but his films are as extraordinary and original as those of his more famous counterpart. David Bordwell has divided this thorough introduction to Ozu's life and work into two sections. The first offers a theory of themes, ideas, and obsessions that run through Ozu's large body of films. The second treats each of Ozu's movies in turn, closely examining their individual particularities. Ozu's films are quiet and methodically paced, but richly rewarding and deeply moving. Rent any one or two of them and then settle down with this book. You won't be sorry. Ozu and Bordwell will introduce you to a new world of human interaction and cinematic storytelling.

From Library Journal
Yasujiro Ozu (1903-63) was one of the masters of modern Japanese cinema, yet his work is hardly known to most Western filmgoers. His spare studies of family life don't "translate" well for audiences used to the melodrama of *Terms of Endearment*. Nevertheless, several American studies have been published on Ozu, one by director Paul Shrader (*Transcendental Style in Film*, 1972, o.p.). Now comes the last word in Ozu scholarship: an account of the director's life and career, analysis of the social context behind his work, and individual critiques of all 55 Ozu films. Bordwell is exceptionally thorough, and his writing isn't marred by film jargon. A very worthy addition. Thomas Wiener, formerly with "American Film," Washington, D.C. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. "The author's main thrust comes in the application of a historical poetics of cinema, that is, the formalist theory of narration that he has proposed and developed elsewhere.... This refreshing book is thought-provoking and rich in questions beautifully pondered by the author."--Keiko McDonald, *Monumenta Nipponica* "David Bordwell's book is ... in the best sense, a labour of love. The writing here is often brilliant, and, in general, the book gives an extremely vivid sense of the richness and variety of Ozu's early career up to the end of the war."--Mark Le Fanu, *Sight and Sound* "This is an engaged and always engaging text that brings a new standard of historically and culturally based criticism to the formal analysis of cinema. Bordwell's primary concern is nothing less than an understanding and objectification of Ozu's entire output, placing it within the variety of contexts that constrain all film: biography, industry, genre, national culture, international cinema, and authorial intention."--David Desser, *The Journal of Asian Studies*