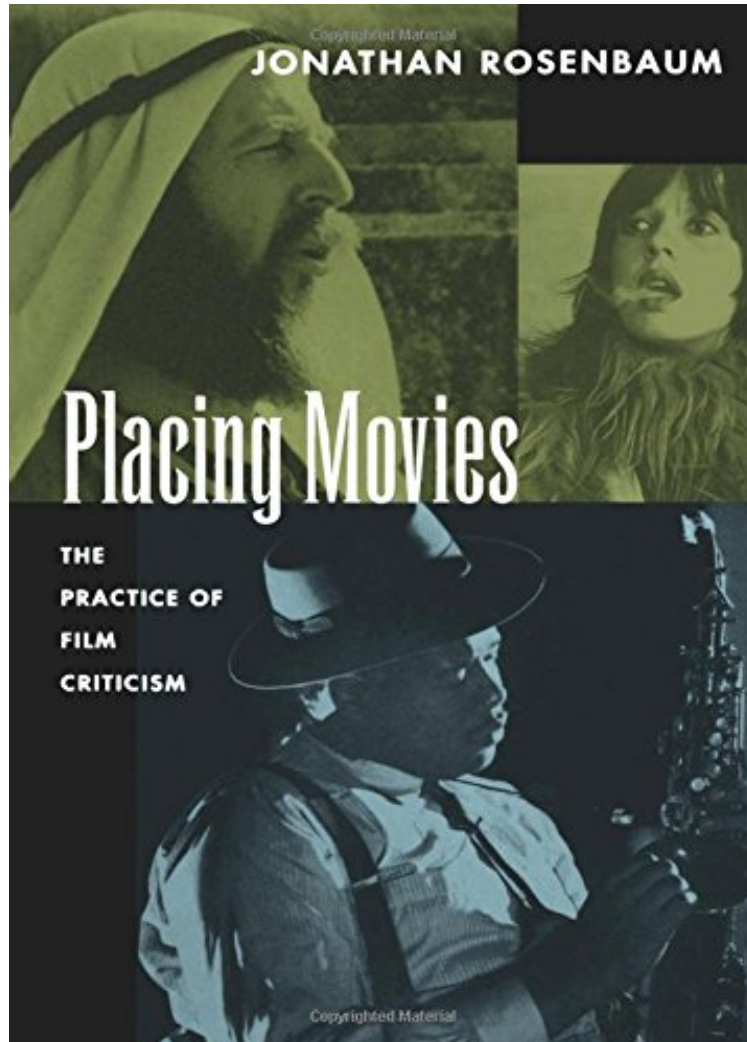


(Ebook free) Placing Movies: The Practice of Film Criticism

Placing Movies: The Practice of Film Criticism

Jonathan Rosenbaum

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Jonathan Rosenbaum : Placing Movies: The Practice of Film Criticism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Placing Movies: The Practice of Film Criticism:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Rosenbaum's first collection of criticism is pungeant and uncompromisingBy MuzzlehatchThis is the first collection of criticism by Jonathan Rosenbaum, "Chicago Reader" critic from 1987-2008; all of the reviews collected herein date from his first few years (1987-93) on that paper. The "Reader" has long been one of the best sources for serious film criticism in the USA, employing the fine Dave Kehr before Rosenbaum. But JR really put himself on the map during his 20-year stint and helped make Chicago one of the liveliest film communities around with his consistent championing of the lesser-known cinematic worlds outside of the

borders of mainstream, current, blockbuster-bound Hollywood. The reviews here are presented just as they were in the paper; most range from 2000-3000 words or so though there are a few that stretch those boundaries. Some few are devoted to fairly well-known contemporary films like RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (to which he gives zero stars), BARTON FINK, and BIRD; most of them deal with films and filmmakers that are typically described as "arthouse", and many are of older films that were reviewed upon their Chicago premiered or for retrospectives. Among the better pieces in my opinion are those on contemporary Hungarian director Bla Tarr, American maverick Josef von Sternberg's ANATHAN (1953), Danish master Carl Theodor Dreyer's final film GERTRUD (1964), Orson Welles' OTHELLO (1952), French "New Wave" cypher Jacques Rivette, American independent director John Cassavetes, Orson Welles' documentary-essay films, Chilean-French surrealist Raoul Ruiz, Clint Eastwood's Charlie Parker bio-pic BIRD (1988), Samuel Fuller's last American film WHITE DOG (1982) and the Hollywood blacklist. As you might guess from a few of these titles, Rosenbaum has a strong interest in politics and ethics, which shine through in the majority of his films. Movies are rarely if ever just dumb entertainment for him - and those who will appreciate this book are likely to have similar sentiments. Recommended with enthusiasm to anyone interested in any of these subjects at all; the author is a clear and thoughtful writer in almost all cases, and a provocative and entertaining one on many occasions.

Jonathan Rosenbaum, longtime contributor to such publications as Film Quarterly, Sight and Sound, and The Village Voice, is arguably the most eloquent, insightful film critic writing in America today. *Placing Movies*, the first collection of his work, gathers together thirty of his most distinctive and illuminating pieces. Written over a span of twenty-one years, these essays cover an extraordinarily broad range of films from Hollywood blockbusters to foreign art movies to experimental cinema. They include not just reviews but perceptive commentary on directors, actors, and trends; and thoughtful analysis of the practice of film criticism. It is this last element - Rosenbaum's reflections on the art of film criticism - that sets this collection apart from other volumes of film writing. Both in the essays themselves and in the section introductions, Rosenbaum provides a rare insider's view of his profession: the backstage politics, the formulation of critical judgments, the function of film commentary. Taken together, these pieces serve as a guided tour of the profession of film criticism. They also serve as representative samples of Rosenbaum's unique brand of film writing. Among the highlights are memoirs of director Jacques Tati and maverick critic Manny Farber, celebrations of classics such as *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *The Manchurian Candidate*, and considered reevaluations of Orson Welles and Woody Allen.

From the Inside Flap "Once or twice a generation a film critic comes along who expands or even redefines how we talk about the medium. Jonathan Rosenbaum is one of these figures." Alan Williams, author of *Republic of Images*