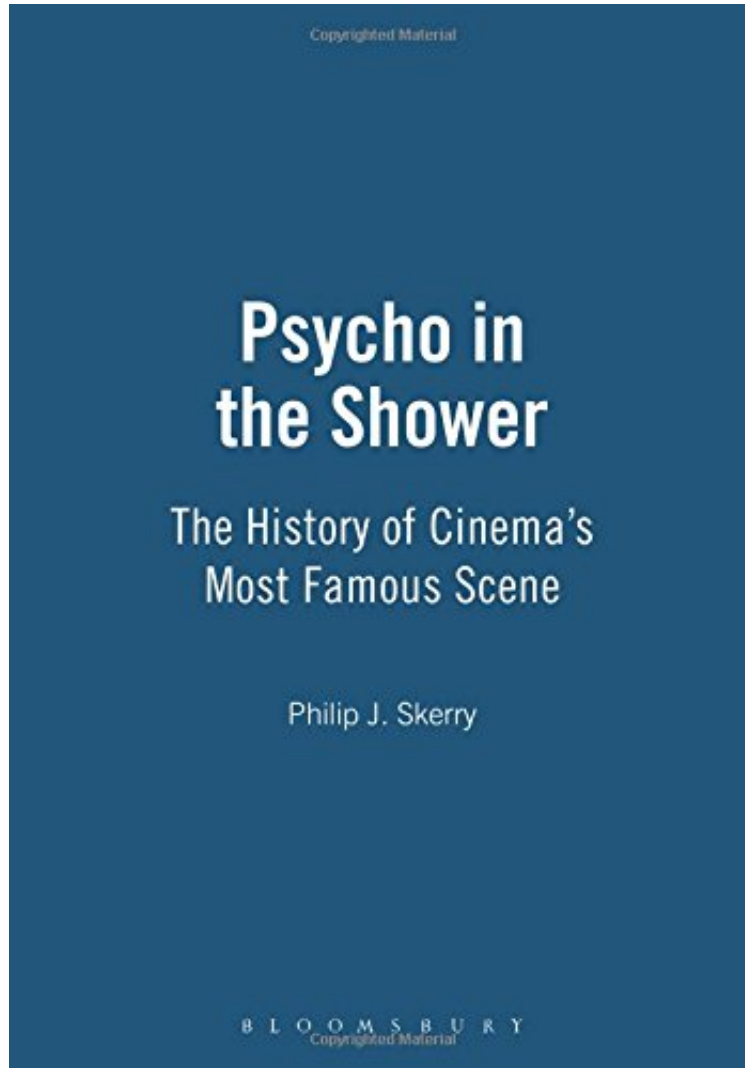


(Online library) Psycho in the Shower: The History of Cinema's Most Famous Scene

Psycho in the Shower: The History of Cinema's Most Famous Scene

Philip J. Skerry

**Download PDF / ePub / DOC / audiobook / ebooks*



 Download

 Read Online

#1003639 in Books Philip J Skerry 2009-04 2009-04-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.00 x .70 x 7.00l, .85 #File Name: 0826427693316 pagesPsycho in the Shower The History of Cinema s Most Famous Scene | File size: 46.Mb

Philip J. Skerry : Psycho in the Shower: The History of Cinema's Most Famous Scene before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Psycho in the Shower: The History of Cinema's Most Famous Scene:

7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Psycho in the Shower is a detailed examination of the iconic shower scene in the 1960 Hitchcock classic filmBy C. M MillsA woman cowers in total terror as a large phallic shaped knife descends into her mortal flesh. The audience screams in bloody terror and Psycho nets 32 million dollars at the box office. In "Psycho in the Shower" the film professor Phillip J. Skerry takes a detailed technical look at the making of

the film and gauges the reactions of a wide spectrum of people reporting on their thoughts and emotions on first seeing the film. Among the salient points made by Skerry concerning Psycho: 1. The film dealt a whammy blow to the puritanical Production Code system in Hollywood. Hitch introduced a flushing toilet, a shower curtain veiled glimpse of female nudity and overt slashing violence to the mainstream movie audience. The age of the slasher/horror films were about to begin in Hollywood. 2. The film serves as a harbinger of the new youth culture developing in America. A newer and more realistic and sexual cinema was aborning in the baby boomer generation. 3. Psycho introduced a new era of film violence and sex into movies. 4. It began the now established practice of showing films at set starting times and modern advertising techniques. Hitchcock appeared in a film trailer advertising his movie with a tour of the Bates Motel and creepy mansion. Skerry writes biographically about his first viewing of Psycho which he saw in Cleveland as an innocent teenager in love with movies. He is good at showing how certain themes in Hitchcock's oeuvre came to full flower in Psycho. Among those themes: 1. The doppelganger good/evil selves which exist in all of us. This is seen in Marion Crane's mirror images and in the contrast between the white and black brassieres and slips she wears. 2. Hitchcock shows us several scenes in his movies where his fear of heights and being confined are expressed through filmic action. For instance we see the fatal knife attack on Marion coming from above her head in the shower; she is confined in the tiny shower stall where her life is ended by murder. 3. Hitchcock was the film master in dissecting family dynamics. Norman Bates is dominated by his dead mother. Norman is also a prime example of the Freudian Oedipal complex. 4. The film deals with guilt and redemption. Hitchcock was raised as a Roman Catholic. We see Marion seeking redemption by returning the \$40,000 she stole from Mr. Cassidy in Phoenix. Her efforts to redeem herself are abruptly ended with her grisly murder at the Bates Motel. 5. Violence is always lurking in the shadows of the human soul. We never know when the evil genie will be released in our actions and the actions of our enemies. Marion Crane takes a trip to Conrad's Heart of Darkness in the wilderness of interstate and isolated America. She never returns and never will our innocence as a nation. Alfred Joseph Hitchcock was a master of pure film using the techniques he had learned in many years in the film business. He was deeply influenced by German expressionism and by the Hollywood way of telling a story using montage and using the palette of the screen to paint the director's vision. He made good use of his storyboarding skill and the use of the composing genius of Bernard Herrmann to create the eerie bird like music of Psycho. Skerry has technical chapters on how Psycho was made but also includes interviews with Janet Leigh, assistant director Hilton Green, screenwriter Joseph Stefano and others to garner their insights on the making of Psycho and working with Hitchcock. Skerry says the myths of Psycho being originally filmed by a German crew and shot in color are false. He also proves for that for a fleeting second viewers did see the knife sticking into Marion's flesh below the navel. A nude model filled in for Janet Leigh during the 45 second shower scene. Among the spate of new Hitchcock books hot off the presses this paperback from a small publishing company is one of the best. Its pictures, commentary on the film and bibliography make it a valuable addition to Hitchcockian scholarship. This reviewer would like to be a student in a film seminar taught by Skerry or view Hitchcock's films with his commentary included on an audio DVD track. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. One scene, one book By Joseph W. Smith Skerry attempts what few others have tried (in fact, I'm not aware of a single book that aims to do what "Psycho in the Shower" has achieved) -- namely, an entire book on a single scene in one film! This fascinating tome -- edited down to a slimmer, handsomer, less costly and much more user-friendly version from its earlier hardback edition -- includes invaluable interviews with lead actress Janet Leigh and scenarist Joseph Stefano, in both cases perhaps the last significant interview granted before these two gracious "Psycho" figures passed on. He also interviews "Psycho" AD Hilton A. Green, whose anecdotes about Hitchcock show us a much different -- much humbler, kinder -- Hitch than the one stereotypically portrayed in most print sources. Best of all is Skerry's shot-by-shot breakdown of the scene itself, carefully analyzing the angles and in particular the sense of terror created by the now-famous space inside that motel-bathroom shower stall. This book is a "must" for the "Psycho" fan. 4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The Fulcrum of Filmdom By Terrence T. Meehan This book is so well-written and enthusiastic that it is hard to believe it was written by a film scholar. The central idea that one scene can be such a turning point, or fulcrum, in the history of film is intriguing, while the interviews are lively and enlightening. After reading this you will want to meet this guy.

"With this book, Philip Skerry makes an ambitious and largely successful effort to restore perspective to the debate that has swirled around Psycho since Hitchcock first ripped back the shower curtain of our expectations in 1960 and plunged his knife into the collective cinematic consciousness." - John Baxter, *Film International* Psycho in the Shower is a multi-dimensional study of Psycho's astonishing shower scene. Philip J. Skerry shows how it may be the most significant and influential film scene of all and substantiates this claim by providing chapters on the evolution of the scene in Hitchcock's career, with particular focus on his methods for creating suspense and terror in the audience. In tracing the evolution of the shower scene, the author discusses and analyzes many films (both Hitchcockian and otherwise) that lead up to Psycho. The book places the shower scene in the cultural and social contexts of American popular culture of the 1950s and 1960s, arguing that it helped to create a revolution in both sensibility and cinematic style. Several unique dimensions help to set this study apart from other books on Psycho and Hitchcock: extensive and

detailed interviews with people who worked on the film, including star Janet Leigh and screenwriter Joseph Stefano (the last significant interviews before their deaths); a close study of Hitchcock's employment of mise en scene and montage in the scenes leading up to the famous shower murder; a shot by shot analysis of the scene itself and a discussion of the numerous controversies surrounding it; and a provocative and insightful account of the writing of the book itself, which provides a unique look at the author's creative process. The book culminates with examples of how the shower scene has become embedded in the matrix of contemporary culture and the remarkable ways in which the scene affected people on first viewing.

"Wearing its scholarship lightly and revealing unashamedly the author's enthusiasm, even affection, for his subject, this book illuminates and refreshes what had risked becoming a stale debate."