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The Filmmaker's Eye: Learning (and Breaking) The Rules Of Cinematic Composition



Synopsis

This is the only book that combines conceptual and practical instruction on creating polished and eloquent images for film and video with the technical know-how to achieve them. Loaded with hundreds of full-color examples, *The Filmmaker's Eye* is a focused, easy-to-reference guide that shows you how to become a strong visual storyteller through smart, effective choices for your shots. After a short introduction to basic principles, a variety of shots are deconstructed in the following format: **Why It Works:** an introduction to a particular type of shot **How It Works:** callouts point out exactly how the shot works the way it does--the visual rules and technical aspects in action **Technical Considerations:** the equipment and techniques needed to get the shot. **Breaking the Rules:** examples where the "rules" are brilliant subverted This book: Helps you make smart visual choices with this quick, focused, and visual guide to cinematic composition. Shows you how to master the rules, then break them. Includes examples and discussions from a range of international films.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a person who is passionate about cinema, quite often I love having discussions with other fellow cineaste about various shots. May it be the jumpshots from Jean-luc Godard, the powerful images from a Rossellini film, utilization of symmetry by Rohmer and Varda, extreme long shots of Resnais, the wideangle shot by Pontecorvo, visceral shots of Mallick, Jarmusch's two shot and just discussing shots that impress us. For the budding filmmaker who is passionate about cinema, sometimes when you are working on your own short or independent film, it's good to have resources out there that show you how others deconstruct cinema, may it be classic books by

Bazin, Eisenstein, etc. Great cinema books but one may want something a bit more modern for today's filmmaker that breaks down shots from these classic films to help us understand. Not everyone goes to film school, nor do they have access to cinema aesthete. They are passionate about film, want to learn more about composition and shots. And if you want something easy to understand, didactic and straightforward, I can easily recommend "The Filmmaker's Eye" by Gustavo Mercado. Just reading his book, I had a smile on my face because the way it's written, it's user-friendly, it's not cerebral or made to be academic, it's like having a cool film teacher and discussing films and breaking it down. Films that are easily accessible and what I love about this book is that it utilizes images from those films to drive a point on composition. Well-written and just pretty much making it easy enough for those just deciding they want to be involved in cinema in some sort of aspect, can easily enjoy, read and learn from.

I am not a film maker, just a hobbyist. I found this book to be very helpful for getting a background on shot composition. It also has helped my son (in highschool) who is extremely interested in filmmaking as a career. The book starts off by explaining in very brief and basic language the basic compositions of a shot and the basic rules; rule of thirds, 180 degree, etc. It also goes in to small detail on lighting, focal lengths, zooming in/out, lenses, etc. Remember, this intro is not to teach you cinematography or how to set this stuff up as each topic would fill volumes. It is just a background so that as the different shots are explained later in the book, you have a rough idea of the basics. The next part of the book are the descriptions of the different standard shots that are commonly used in film. It covers long shots, close ups, extreme close ups, pan shots, zoom shots, to name a few. Each shot discussion is structured with an introduction to the shot, a dissected interpretation of the shot, the technical details and finally an example of breaking the rule. It starts by explaining the overall effect and uses of the shot. This is very useful as it gives insight to what the Director or DOP wanted to explain through film. Of course, this could be a feeling, a mood, or anything that needs to get across to the audience. The book then takes the concept and, using another shot example, the author dissects the shot. Angles, lighting, positioning of the actor/action are pointed out graphically and more often than not, explanations of why a particular method was used. Technical issues are addressed next. This is where the author explains focal lengths, zoom, lighting and even addresses issues depending on the type of camera being used.

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