clear as he goes along, but his sense of the origins of mythic speech and the ways by which myth operates in different technological eras can become lost as the author involves himself so intensively in his analyses. Still, *Gunfighter Nation* is a wholly satisfactory ending to an extraordinary project, one that will continue to prove its usefulness to numerous disciplines.

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**Hitchcock**

The Making of a Reputation

To Claude Chabrol and Eric Rohmer, Alfred Hitchcock was a moralist. Charles Thomas Samuels called him a “primitive” film director, an unrelenting manipulator of audience emotions. In the title of his biography, Donald Spoto labeled him a “genius,” albeit a troubled one. C. A. Lejeune wrote that in watching Hitchcock’s *Psycho*, she “grew so sick and tired of the whole beastly business” that she walked out of the screening before it was over. Less than a half decade later, Robin Wood called the same film “one of the key works of our age.”

As these perspectives indicate, the films of Alfred Hitchcock have generated widely disparate responses since he first solidified his reputation in the 1930s as a skilled director of popular thrillers like *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *The Lady Vanishes*, and *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. Between the 1950s and 1970s, the critical consensus about Hitchcock shifted from the opinion that the rotund director was a slick purveyor of entertaining thrillers to a view that he was a serious artist devoted to “pure cinema” and the insightful representation of psychological dilemmas. In fact, Hitchcock’s reputation has risen so much that he was ranked fourth on the list of top ten directors in the 1992 *Sight and Sound* poll of international film critics. Robert E. Kapsis here takes up the challenge of studying the evolving response to Hitchcock’s films in the United States.

Kapsis, a scholar from Queens College in New York, draws on sociologist Howard Becker’s notion of “art world” to help structure his study. Becker argues that artistic reputations shift over time, and that they emerge and evolve through a process of discussion and debate by critics, artists, and audiences in the relevant “art world” in which the artist works. In his introduction Kapsis writes, “My subject . . . is the creation of reputation in the art world of film, and I use Alfred Hitchcock’s career and legacy as a genre director and film auteur as a case study.” (2)

The book is divided into two major sections. The first section offers an overview of Hitchcock’s early career and then traces in considerable detail the changes in Hitchcock’s reputation between the 1950s and the present. Kapsis discovers that although Hitchcock consciously set about trying to elevate his artistic reputation in the early 1960s, it wasn’t until auteur criticism became dominant in the later 1960s and early 1970s that his efforts began to succeed. In making his case in this section of the book, Kapsis draws on an impressively broad range of resources: Hitchcock’s papers at the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences; François Truffaut’s taped interviews with Hitchcock, which eventually resulted in the publication of Truffaut’s interview book, *Hitchcock*; speeches Hitchcock made over the years; fan mail he received; hundreds of American and British reviews of Hitchcock films; and dozens of scholarly books and articles on Hitchcock in particular and film studies in general.

The second part of the study discusses Hitchcock’s legacy since his death, bringing in considerations of genre and authorship. One chapter examines the influence of Hitchcock on the slasher films of the early 1980s and the adult thrillers of the late 1980s like *Fatal Attraction*. Another concentrates on the career of Brian de Palma, who for a time was working almost exclusively in the thriller genre and was often touted as Hitchcock’s heir in that realm. Kapsis here makes the interesting argument that Hitchcock’s preeminence in the thriller genre actually hindered de Palma’s attempts to establish an artistic reputation because critics often compared his films unfavorably to Hitchcock’s. The overview of de Palma’s reception history in this chapter thus provides one comparison to the shifts in Hitchcock’s reputation. The final chapter, in its briefer examinations of the careers of Hawks, Capra, Fritz Lang, and Clint Eastwood, offers more comparisons and contrasts to consider how reputations rise and fall in the art world of film.

*Hitchcock: The Making of a Reputation* is a stimulating if not always convincing book. It is certainly the most extensive treatment of the complex and difficult process through which Hitchcock became considered by many a serious artist in the cinema rather than a skilled maker of lightweight entertainments. The chapters on Hitchcock’s legacy also provided an intriguing perspective on how the reputation of a canonized director and his achievements in a particular genre live on after the film-maker’s death.

My main criticism of the book has less to do with the details of the case study of Hitchcock, which is solid and impressive, than with one limitation of the “art world”
approach as it is used in the book to explain film genres and directorial reputations. Kapsis offers the approach as an alternative to what he calls the “reflection of society perspective” (3) in cultural production. The art-world perspective, he writes, proposes that “the impact of the audience (or wider society) on the production of genre films is ultimately quite modest compared to the inputs from other more active members of the film art-world such as directors, marketing executives, and even film journalists who cooperate to bring such films and their categorizations into existence.” (6)

On the one hand, Kapsis is right. Those involved in the art world of the film industry—producers, directors, screenwriters, stars, marketing staff, and critics—are central to the establishment and continuation of film genres. However, I would argue that broader social factors also play a significant part in the rise and fall of film genres, as Kapsis himself admits when he notes that the growing antiwar mood in the United States helps to explain the sentiment against James Bond films from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. (105) Similarly, the rise of combat films during World War II, of youth films in the late 1960s, and of Rambo-esque, revisionary Vietnam films in the early 1980s were related to broad social and political factors. Instead of defining the art-world approach as an alternative to the broader social approach, I would propose that film genres (and the reputations of directors) are surrounded by two concentric circles—the first the “art world” of film, and the second the broader culture and society within which it functions. Both affect the rise and fall of film genres and the evolving reputations of film directors.

This observation is not, however, to detract from the genuine achievements of Hitchcock: The Making of a Reputation. In it, Robert Kapsis teaches us much about Hitchcock’s shifting reputation and continuing legacy, and by systematically and imaginatively showing how the notion of the art world may apply to cinema studies, he challenges us to continue refining our understanding of how film production and reception change over time.

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Hollywood’s Overseas Campaign
The North Atlantic Movie Trade, 1920–1950

Contrary to the implication of its title, this book is not about film distribution but about high policy. Using official documents found in national, state, and university archives in Canada, Great Britain, and the United States, Jarvie analyzes the responses of the Canadian and British governments to Hollywood’s domination of their nations’ screens and Hollywood’s strategies to combat protectionism. The book is organized by market. Part 1 examines Canada, particularly the government’s investigation of Famous Players Canadian Corporation for monopolistic practices in 1930 (the White Report). Part 2 examines Great Britain, particularly the political discourse surrounding the Cinematograph Films Acts of 1927 and 1938 and the ad valorem duty on film imports (the Dalton Duty) in 1947. Part 3 discusses the response of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (the Hays Office) to these protective measures, particularly the American film boycott of Great Britain and the Anglo-American Film Agreement of 11 March, 1948, that concluded the controversy.

Attempting to answer why American films dominated the North Atlantic film trade, Jarvie dismisses the “media imperialism” thesis of influential Marxist historians such as F. D. Klingender, Stuart Legg, and Thomas Guback, along with explanations based on demand (i.e., audience preferences) argued by John Grierson, Jeffrey Richards, and Peter Stead. His thesis is “that the domination of the international trade in films by the U.S. film industry was the result of entrepreneurship in the arena of supply.” Jarvie’s argument is familiar and goes something like this: The disruption of Europe’s film industries during World War I marked the beginning of Hollywood’s control of world film markets. Taking advantage of the economies of scale of vertical integration and an affluent domestic market, Hollywood produced a continuous flow of popular films that recouped their production costs at home and were regularly undersold abroad. The transition to sound threatened Hollywood’s hegemony, but the industry quickly reasserted itself and kept the competition overseas in a subordinate position. Although the majors’ grip on exhibition made it nearly impossible for foreign film-makers to penetrate the domestic market, Hollywood advocated free trade and worked through the Hays Office, the Department of State, the Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Foreign Service to ensure that