

Robert Altman and the Elaboration of Hollywood Storytelling



Columbia Pictures 1974

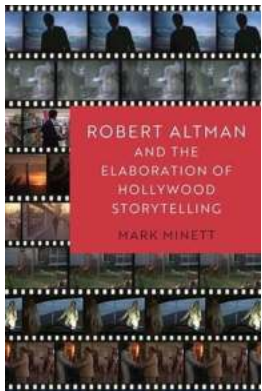
Hollywood has always been a hub of creativity, attracting filmmakers from all over the world. Among the numerous talented directors to emerge from Hollywood, Robert Altman stands out as a visionary who revolutionized storytelling in cinema. His unique approach to filmmaking pushed the boundaries of conventional

storytelling, creating a new cinematic language that captivated audiences and critics alike.

The Early Days

Robert Altman began his journey in the world of cinema in the 1950s, working primarily as a television director. However, it was his venture into feature films in the 1960s that truly showcased his potential as a groundbreaking filmmaker.

Altman's early works, such as "M*A*S*H" and "McCabe & Mrs. Miller," demonstrated his ability to challenge traditional narratives and introduce complex characters.



Robert Altman and the Elaboration of Hollywood Storytelling by David Rakoff (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language	: English
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Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
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Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 390 pages
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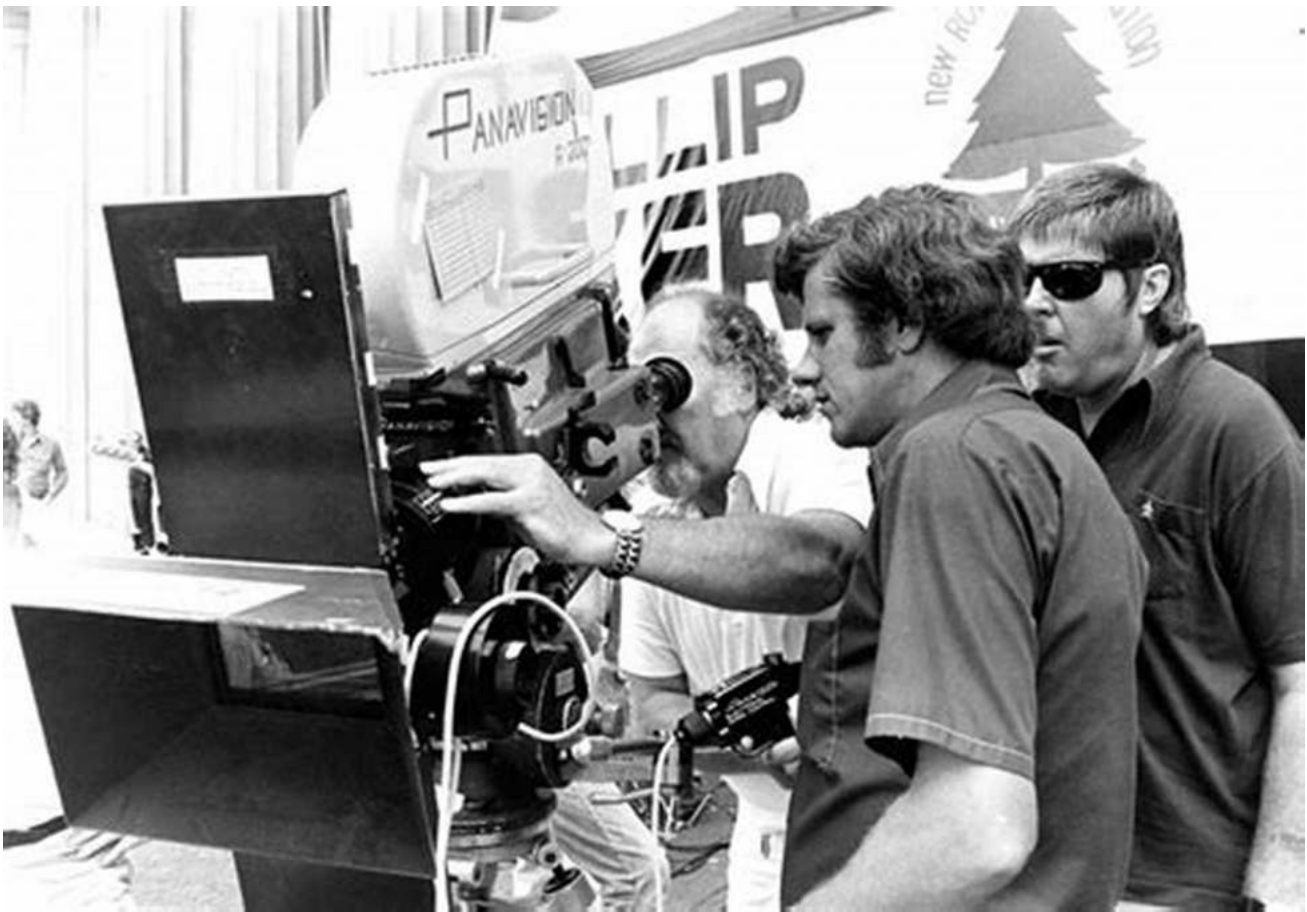
A Breakthrough with "Nashville"

Altman's breakthrough came in 1975 with the release of "Nashville," a sprawling ensemble drama that interweaved the lives of various characters against the backdrop of the country music scene. The film showcased Altman's unique style, utilizing a non-linear narrative and overlapping dialogue to create a sense of

realism rarely seen in cinema. "Nashville" earned critical acclaim and solidified Altman's reputation as a master storyteller.

Exploring Collage Storytelling in "Short Cuts"

In 1993, Altman directed "Short Cuts," an adaptation of multiple Raymond Carver stories. The film showcased Altman's mastery of collage storytelling, where multiple storylines intertwine to create a comprehensive narrative. Altman effortlessly weaves together various characters and their experiences, highlighting the interconnectedness of everyday life. The film's impact was undeniable, and Altman received widespread praise for his innovative approach to storytelling.



Challenging Genre Conventions in "The Player"

In 1992, Altman directed "The Player," a satirical take on the Hollywood industry itself. The film follows a Hollywood studio executive who becomes entangled in a murder investigation. Altman's sharp critique of the Hollywood system is skillfully woven into the narrative, challenging the conventions of the thriller genre and offering a fresh perspective on the industry. "The Player" garnered critical acclaim and further solidified Altman's status as a pioneer of innovative storytelling.

Legacy and Influence

Robert Altman's contribution to Hollywood storytelling is immeasurable. His unique approach to narrative structure, character development, and filmmaking techniques paved the way for future filmmakers to experiment and push the boundaries of conventional storytelling. Directors such as Paul Thomas Anderson, Quentin Tarantino, and Wes Anderson have cited Altman as a major influence on their work.

Robert Altman's impact on Hollywood storytelling cannot be overstated. His bold and unconventional approach to filmmaking allowed audiences to experience stories in new and exciting ways. Altman's ability to interweave multiple narratives, develop complex characters, and challenge genre conventions solidifies his place as a true visionary in the world of cinema. The legacy of Robert Altman will continue to inspire future generations of filmmakers to break free from traditional storytelling and embrace the possibilities of storytelling that are yet to be explored.

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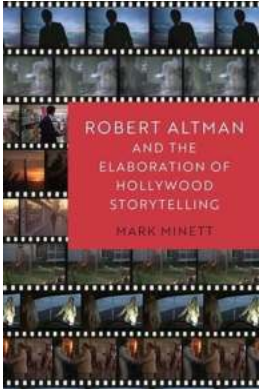
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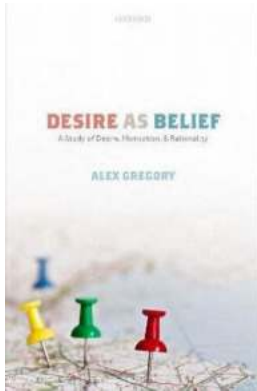


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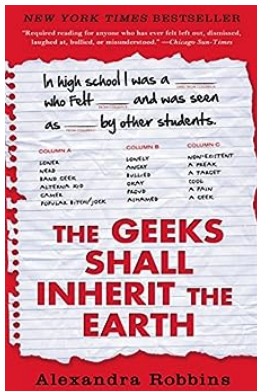
Robert Altman and the Elaboration of Hollywood Storytelling reveals an Altman barely glimpsed in previous critical accounts of the filmmaker. This re-examination of his seminal work during the "Hollywood Renaissance" or "New Hollywood" period of the early 1970s (including M*A*S*H, Brewster McCloud, McCabe & Mrs. Miller, Images, The Long Goodbye, Thieves Like Us, California Split, and Nashville) sheds new light on both the films and the filmmaker, reframing Altman as a complex, pragmatic innovator whose work exceeds, but is also grounded in, the norms of classical Hollywood storytelling rather than someone who rejected those norms in favor of modernist art cinema. Its findings and approach hold important implications for the study of cinematic authorship. Largely avoiding thematic exegesis, it employs an historical poetics approach, robust functionalist frameworks, archival research, and formal and statistical analysis to demystify the essential features of the standard account of Altman's filmmaking history and profile-lax narrative form, heavy reliance on the zoom, sound design replete with overlapping dialogue, improvisational infidelity to the screenplay, and a desire to subvert based in his time in the training grounds of industrial filmmaking and filmed television. The book provides a clear example of how a filmmaker might work collaboratively and pragmatically within and across media institutions to elaborate upon their sanctioned practices and aims. We

misunderstand Altman's work, and the creative work of Hollywood filmmakers in general, when we insist on describing innovation as opposition to institutional norms and on describing those norms as simply assimilating innovation.



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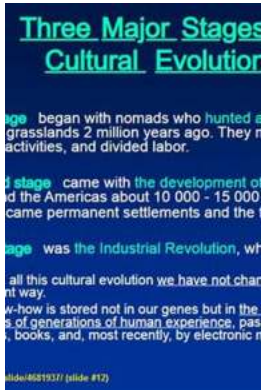
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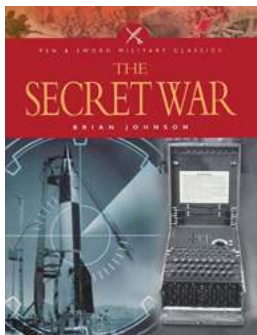
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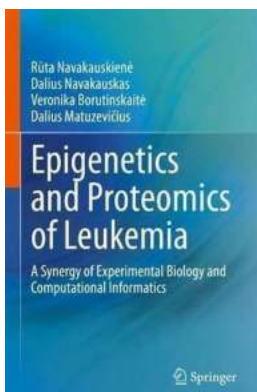
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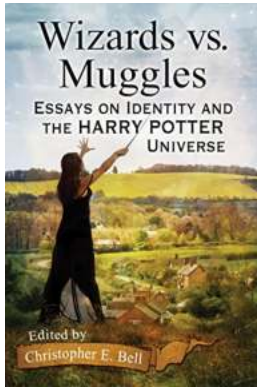
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