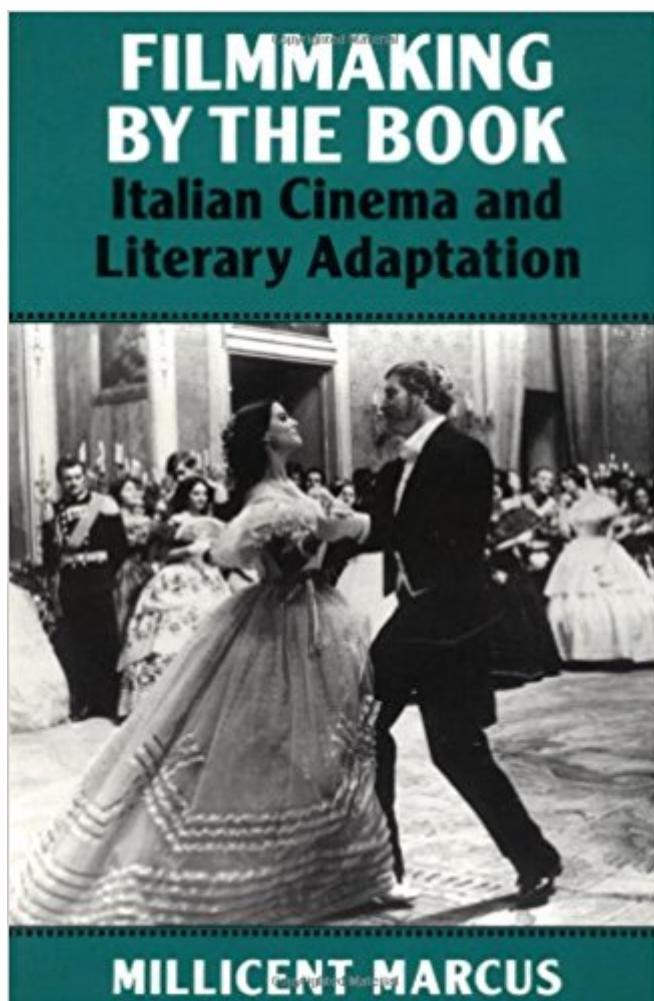


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Filmmaking By The Book: Italian Cinema And Literary Adaptation



Synopsis

What is the impulse to transform literary narrative into cinematic discourse, and what are the factors that determine that transformation? In *Filmmaking by the Book*, Millicent Marcus considers the adaptive process as the sum total of a series of encounters: the institutional encounter between literary and film cultures, the semiotic encounter between two very different signifying systems, and the personal encounter between author and filmmaker—sometimes involving an overt Oedipal struggle for selfhood. Marcus explores that process by looking at key works by such major postwar Italian filmmakers as Visconti, De Sica, Pasolini, Fellini, and the Taviani brothers. Drawing on the methodologies of semiotics, psychoanalysis, feminism, and ideological criticism, she finds that cinematic imaginations typically employ literary texts self-consciously to resolve specific artistic problems. Each of the filmmakers studied here define their own authorial task in relation to that of the literary precursor, and insert "umbilical" scenes or "allegories of adaptation" to teach viewers how to read their cinematic rewriting of literary sources.

Book Information

Paperback: 328 pages

Publisher: Johns Hopkins University Press (December 1, 1992)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 080184455X

ISBN-13: 978-0801844553

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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"Marcus' approach to her subject is extremely interesting. The result is a challenging book, packed full of new and original ideas... It is exciting, and it confirms Marcus' reputation as one of the most innovative Italianists working today." (Italian Studies)"An important and original book that breaks new ground and provides compelling interpretations of Italy's most important directors and their experiences with adaptations of literary works." (Peter Bondanella MLN)

Millicent Marcus is Mariano DiVito Professor of Italian Studies in the Department of Romance Languages and Director of the Center of Italian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

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