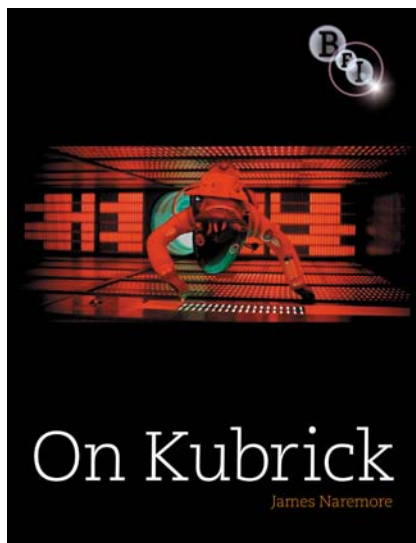


Books press release



On Kubrick **James Naremore**

Published 20 June 2007
£15.99 (paperback, 320pp)
ISBN: 978-1-84457-142-0

On Kubrick is an illuminating critical account of the films of Stanley Kubrick, from his earliest feature, *Fear and Desire* (1953), to the posthumously-produced Kubrick project, *A. I. Artificial Intelligence* (Steven Spielberg, 2001). James Naremore offers a provocative analysis

of each of Kubrick's films, with new information about their production histories and cultural contexts.

Naremore argues that in several respects Kubrick was one of the cinema's last modernists: his taste and sensibility were shaped by the artistic culture of 1950s New York; he became a celebrated auteur who forged a distinctive style; he used art-cinema conventions in commercial productions; he challenged censorship regulations, and throughout his career he was preoccupied with one of the central themes of modernist art – the conflict between rationality and its ever-present shadow, the unconscious.

War and science are key concerns in Kubrick's oeuvre, and his work has a hyper-masculine quality. Yet no director has more relentlessly emphasized the absurdity of combat, as in *Paths of Glory* (1957) and *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), the failure of scientific reasoning, as in *2001* (1968), and the fascistic impulses in masculine sexuality, as in *Dr Strangelove* (1964) and *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999).

Naremore contends that while Kubrick was a voracious intellectual and a life-long autodidact, the fascination of his work has less to do with the ideas it espouses than with the emotions it evokes. Kubrick is best understood as a skilful practitioner of what might be called the aesthetics of the grotesque; he employs extreme forms of caricature and black comedy to create disgusting, frightening yet also laughable images of the human body, creating a sense of unease that leaves viewers unsure of how to react.

About the author

James Naremore is Emeritus Chancellors' Professor of Communication and Culture and English at Indiana University. He is the author of a number of books, including *More Than Night: Film Noir in its Contexts* (1998) and *Acting in the Cinema* (1993).

For further information please contact:

Jill Reading, BFI Press Officer

Tel: (020) 7957 4759 or e-mail: jill.reading@bfi.org.uk

About the BFI

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archive, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.

BFI books are available from the Filmstore at BFI Southbank, Belvedere Road, South Bank, London SE1 and other bookshops, by mail order from 0845 458 9910 or online at www.bfi.org.uk/books