



# Reading Films: My International Cinema

*Douglas Messerli*

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## **Reading Films: My International Cinema** Douglas Messerli

Encompassing two hundred international movies, Douglas Messerli's *Reading Films* is a highly personal but profound discussion of some of the most important cinematic achievements from the earliest of film history—including numerous silent films—to current movies in theaters at the time of this book's publication.

As Messerli reveals in his insightful essay, "Reading Films," his approach is not a mere evaluation of the films he has seen nor a passive appreciation or dismissal, but a deeper look into the structures of the works, the films' significance in society, and their directors' and actors' personal relationship to the created works. Messerli not only "sees" the movies on which writes, but watches them over and over again, finally "reading" them as works of poetry and fiction, evaluating and comparing them in terms of other works of art.

Yet there is nothing "academic" about Messerli's readings, written from 2000 to the present. His short essays are filled with passionate prejudices and concerns that sometimes take him on tangents other reviewers would not have dared. The author elucidates the contradictions and the sometimes subtle problems these films create that might have gone unnoticed even by their creators themselves.

Writing in a lively, sometimes colloquial, occasionally idiosyncratic language, Messerli lays his heart on his sleeve, demonstrating his loves and dislikes in the art of filmmaking. *Reading Films* is a work any film lover—whether populist or admirer of art house fare—must read.

**Douglas Messerli** is the author numerous books of poetry, fiction, drama and prose, including the annual My Year series.

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