

Critical Insights Film: Casablanca

“Undoubtedly one of the most famous Hollywood films ever produced, *Casablanca* is a critic’s delight. From its moody visual design to its smart dialogue and stellar cast, the movie invites a lively discourse. This volume in the *Critical Insights Film* series shares an **engaging selection of contemporary scholarship** addressing topics such as the film’s place in popular culture, approach to gender, global appeal, auteur theory, and much more.

The opening chapters are helpful in establishing the importance of understanding the times in which *Casablanca* was made, and **include interesting anecdotes** from the film’s production. A biography of the film’s director, Michael Curtiz, is also included early on.

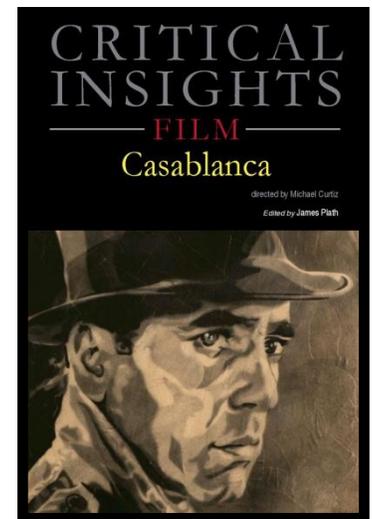
Three essays make up the Critical Contexts section, which serve to highlight the initial critical and popular reception of the film, as well as its place as an icon of the “noir” genre of film. “Tips of the Hat: The Critical Response to *Casablanca*” is a good piece which affirms understanding of why so many viewers love the film and perhaps enlightens readers about those who did not.

Critical Readings cover myriad topics, from elements of film art (music, lighting, acting, etc.) to themes such as gender, race, and heroism. “Adlibbing Greatness: *Casablanca*’s Screenplay” by Kirk Honeycutt discusses how because of, or perhaps in spite of, the group approach to writing the film’s screenplay, it has become an award-winning classic. Bjorn Nordfjord, in his piece titled “Rick’s Café International: *Casablanca* as a Film of the World,” explains the unique global appreciation of the film, even as it was a strict product of Hollywood’s studio system. Nine more essays round out this section.

The volume concludes with a **generous resources section**, which includes a cast list, awards, a chronology of director Michael Curtiz’ life, his filmography, and a bibliography, followed by an index.”

—ARBA

Text Reviews



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