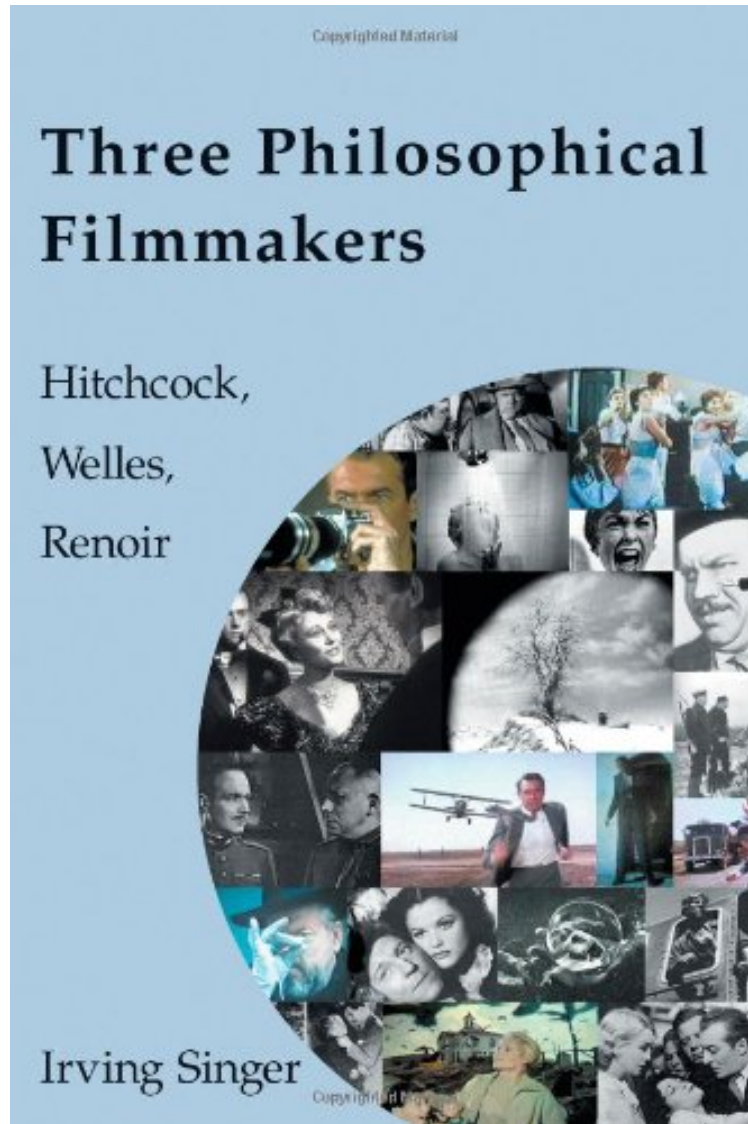


[Free] Three Philosophical Filmmakers: Hitchcock, Welles, Renoir (The Irving Singer Library)

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Irving Singer

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Irving Singer : Three Philosophical Filmmakers: Hitchcock, Welles, Renoir (The Irving Singer Library) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Three Philosophical Filmmakers: Hitchcock, Welles, Renoir (The Irving Singer Library):

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Filmbuff's pleasureBy Philip LeetchDo not be worried by the title if you are unphilosophical. The book is a lucid and enjoyable discussion of the different styles and attitudes towards film-

making of three fine directors. Worth the attention of filmbuffs.

Although Alfred Hitchcock, Orson Welles, and Jean Renoir do not pontificate about "eternal verities or analytical niceties," as Irving Singer remarks in *Three Philosophical Filmmakers*, each expresses, through his work, his particular vision of reality. In this study of these great directors, Singer examines the ways in which meaning and technique interact within their different visions. Singer's account reveals Hitchcock, Welles, and Renoir to be not only consummate artists and inspired craftsmen but also sophisticated theorists of film and its place in human experience. They left behind numerous essays, articles, and interviews in which they discuss the nature of their own work as well as more extensive issues. Singer draws on their writings, as well as their movies, to show the pervasive importance of what they did as dedicated filmmakers. Hitchcock used his mastery of contrived devices not as mere formalism divorced from content, Singer notes, but in order to evoke emotional responses that are meaningful in themselves and that matter greatly to millions of people. Singer's discussion of Hitchcock's work analyzes, among other things, his ideas about suspense, romance, and the comic. Singer also makes a detailed comparison of the original *Psycho* with Gus Van Sant's recent remake. Considering the work of Welles, Singer shows how and why the theme of vanished origins -- "the myth of the past" -- recurs in many of his films, starting with the Rosebud motif in *Citizen Kane* and continuing much later in his little-known masterpiece *The Immortal Story*. Expanding upon Renoir's comment that his own films were "always the same film," Singer studies his entire work as a coherent though evolving search for contact and "conversation" with the audience. While recognizing the primacy of technique, Renoir used cinematic artifice in the service of that humanistic aspiration.

"It is a lively pleasure to read Irving Singer's concrete and minutely attentive discussions of certain great films, and it is a privilege to follow him as he converses with the written or recorded words of three great directors, deriving from each a distinctive vision of reality." --Richard Wilbur, United States poet laureate, 1987-1988

Written clearly and engagingly, Irving Singer's book is rich in examples, skillfully deployed and analyzed, that exhibit his wonderful knowledge of the three filmmakers under discussion. Singer argues convincingly that their works reconcile formalism and realism and present distinct insights into human nature. His book should greatly interest students and faculty across the humanities, as well as more general readers. (Saam Trivedi, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Simmons College)

Singer's book provides supremely literate commentary: this is a film criticism of ideas, images, and detail. His writing makes the book as pleasurable to read as the films are to watch. (James Engell, Gurney Professor of English and Professor of Comparative Literature, Harvard University)

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Writing from the perspective of his earlier work on love and sexuality, Singer puts his indelible stamp on this study of classical cinema by connecting some of our best loved films to his contributions in philosophy. This is an American philosopher's book--written well and wisely--about topics we all share. (Marian Keane, film critic, Denver)

"Irving Singer's *Three Philosophical Filmmakers* is the kind of book which rarely gets written any more. Singer pushes aside the encrusted secondary literature which surrounds Hitchcock, Welles, and Renoir to engage with their works from a loving and knowing perspective. In the course of the book, he gives us a deeper appreciation of how these three men thought about and through the cinema. Some of what he has to say is certainly debatable and that is part of this book's pleasure because it comes from a lifetime of filmgoing rather than speaking through the borrowed authority of some theoretical grand master. Singer writes with an analytic eye and a conversational tone, showing how we must bring our minds and our hearts to bear on art that matters." Henry Jenkins, Director of the Comparative Media Studies, MIT

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About the Author Irving Singer was Professor of Philosophy at MIT. He was the author of the trilogies *The Nature of Love and Meaning in Life*, *Philosophy of Love: A Partial Summing-Up*, *Mozart and Beethoven: The Concept of Love in Their Operas*, all published by the MIT Press, and many other books.