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*Peter Brunette*

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**Peter Brunette : Wong Kar-wai (Contemporary Film Directors)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wong Kar-wai (Contemporary Film Directors):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A valuable look at an imaginative voice in cinema - that helps clarify the continuity and development within Wong Kar-Wai's workBy NatePeter Brunette's brief guide to the work of Wong Kar-Wai is valuable especially for its insight into the continuity and development of Wong Kar-Wai's style and thematics. The book manages to balance careful analysis with scholarly engagement, and to make it personal without

becoming precious. Occasionally his claims about style and substance in the work of Wong Kar Wai sound a bit obscure, and are hard to connect back to specifics in the films, but for the most part what Brunette does is trace a set of themes and stylistic elements through each one of the films - at least up through 2046 and the BMW ad that appeared around the same time, since this was written before the appearance of *My Blueberry Nights*, and while the collaboration with Stephen Soderbergh and Antonioni on *Eros* was still in development. He engages with other Wong Kar Wai criticism, but mostly in order to clarify and show what questions can be considered in relation to these films - for example, he examines claims that Wong Kar Wai's work is highly political and concerned mostly with issues such as the reunification of Hong Kong with mainland China, and he argues that while such interpretations are not without merit the thrust of the films is to connect such issues with the more dominant concerns in his work such as the impact of memory and the flow of time and the inevitability of loss. The book doesn't ever get bogged down in scholarship, and is an easy read for those familiar with Wong Kar-Wai's films. He helped me to see a number of things in the films that hadn't clicked for me before - especially that Wong Kar Wai is interested in the idea of personal identity as something constructed, an image. I like that Brunette both speaks broadly about Wong Kar Wai's films, and also that there is a section devoted to each film that helps tie the broader claims to specific reflections on the circumstances under which the film was made, the look and approach of each film, the highly important and unique use of music and sound in his works, and the storylines, replete with conflicts and struggles that recur throughout his work, but with important variations. Also valuable is his defense of the value of Wong Kar-Wai's work against charges that it is all style without substance - and at the same time his recognition that there are imperfections in the work, that there are missteps and mistakes, and that some of the criticisms raised against Wong Kar-Wai have merit and deserve consideration. Highly recommended for lovers of great cinema and especially for Wong Kar Wai fans. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Informative StudyBy Picky Reader Honestly written. Unpretentious yet intelligent. Brunette does not reach for dazzling overstatements, but instead keeps his claims conservative and convincing. Of particular interest is his discussion of Wong's recycling of and departure from genre conventions. 0 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Cinema Genius...By Lindsie Carlsen Wong Kar-wai is one of the most interesting and innovative directors since the French New Wave, and this collection of nearly all of his pre-"In The Mood For Love" films is well worth owning. These are all movies whose artistic and philosophic dimensions never seem to exhaust themselves...a rare thing in contemporary cinema...and a great reason to own this set...

Wong Kar-Wai traces this immensely exciting director's perennial themes of time, love, and loss, and examines the political implications of his films, especially concerning the handover of former British colony Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China. This book is the first in any language to cover all of Wong's work, from his first film, *As Tears Go By*, to his most recent, the still unreleased 2046. It also includes his best-known, highly honored films, *Chungking Express*, *Happy Together*, and above all, *In the Mood for Love*. Most importantly, Peter Brunette describes the ways in which Wong's supremely visual films attempt to create a new form of cinema by relying on stunning, suggestive visual images and audio tracks to tell their story, rather than on traditional notions of character, dialogue, and plot. The question of Wong Kar-wai's use of genre film techniques in art films is also explored in depth.

From Booklist When Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai broke through to a sizable American audience with *In the Mood for Love* (2000), he had more than 15 years of stunningly gorgeous and innovative films to his credit, and those have gone largely unseen on these shores. Brunette covers Wong's entire oeuvre, including the yet to be released 2046, showing how the director came to apply his virtuosic technique, front-and-center from his early work on, to more sophisticated stories and characterizations. Brunette traces the love, longing, and regret on view in all of Wong's films, and he rightly emphasizes their "graphic expressivity"--that is, the distinctive, visually kinetic approach that continues to be the director's hallmark as he matures. Two interviews, from 1995 and 2000, provide additional insights into Wong's career. Gordon Flagg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "An insightful and encompassing look at an important director."--Film International About the Author Peter Brunette is the Reynolds Professor of Film Studies at Wake Forest University. He has written books on Roberto Rossellini and Michelangelo Antonioni and is the coauthor of *Screen/Play: Derrida and Film Theory*. He is chief critic for indieWIRE.com and reviews regularly for the British trade journal, *Screen International*.