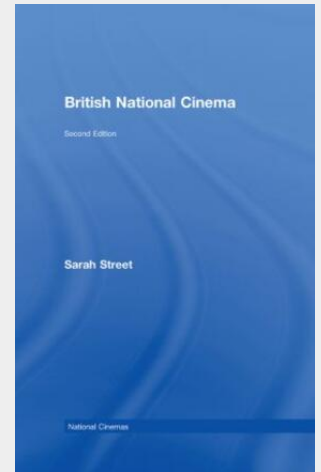


Street

British National Cinema

The first substantial overview of the British film industry with emphasis on its genres, stars, and socioeconomic context, *British National Cinema* by Sarah Street is an important title in Routledge's new National Cinemas series. *British National Cinema* synthesizes years of scholarship on British film while incorporating the author's fresh perspective and research. Street divides the study of British cinema into four sections: the relation between the film industry and government; specific film genres; movie stars; and experimental cinema. In addition, this beautifully illustrated volume includes over thirty stills from every sphere of British cinema. *British National Cinema* will be of great interest to film students and theorists as well as the general reader interested in the fascinating scope of British film.

With films as diverse as *Bhaji on the Beach*, *The Dam Busters*, *Trainspotting*, *The Draughtsman's Contract*, *Prick Up Your Ears*, *Ratcatcher*, *This Is England* and *Atonement*, British cinema has produced wide-ranging notions of British culture, identity and nationhood. *British National Cinema* is a comprehensive introduction to the British film industry within an economic, political and social context. Describing the development of the British film industry, from the Lumière brothers' first screening in London in 1896 through to the dominance of Hollywood and the severe financial crises which affected Goldcrest, Handmade Films and Palace Pictures in the late 1980s and 1990s, and the formation of the UK Film Council, Sarah Street explores the relationship between British cinema and British society. Using the notions of 'official' and 'unofficial' cinema, the author demonstrates how British cinema has been both 'respectable' and 'disreputable' according to the prevailing notions of what constitutes good cinema. This expanded and fully revised second edition includes a new chapter on contemporary British cinema, as well as selective references to recent scholarship on British film. *British National Cinema* analyses the politics of film and establishes the difficult context within which British producers and directors have worked. Sarah Street questions why British film-making, production and distribution have always been subject to government apathy and financial stringency. In a comparison of Britain and Hollywood, the author asks to what extent was there a 'star system' in Britain and what was its real historical and social function. An examination of genres associated with British film, such as Ealing comedies, Hammer horror, 'heritage' films and hybrid forms, confirms the eclectic nature of British cinema. In a final evaluation of British film, she examines the existence of 'other cinemas': film-making which challenges the traditional concept of cinema and operates outside mainstream structures in order to deconstruct and replace classical styles and conventions. Illustrated with over 30 stills from classic British films, *British National Cinema* provides an accessible and comprehensive exploration of the fascinating development of British cinema.



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