



Authorship and the Films of David Lynch: Aesthetic Receptions in Contemporary Hollywood

Tony Todd

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This fresh contribution to studies on authorship and film explores the ways in which shared and disputed opinions on aesthetic quality, originality and authorial essence have shaped receptions of David Lynch's films. It is also the first book to approach Lynch as a figure composed through language, history and text. Antony Todd traces the development of Lynch's career from cult obscurity with *Eraserhead* to star auteur through the release of *Blue Velvet*, as well as the television event of the early 1990s, *Twin Peaks*. He investigates how Lynch's idiosyncratic style introduced the term 'Lynchian' to the colloquial speech of new Hollywood and helped establish Lynch as the leading light among contemporary American auteurs. Through the evidence of critical and promotional ephemera and the texts carrying Lynch's name, Todd explores contemporary manners and attitudes for artistic reputation building. He also reviews the standards by which Lynch's reputation was dismantled following the release of *Wild at Heart* and *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me*, only to be reassembled once more through films such as *Lost Highway*, *Mulholland Dr.* and *INLAND EMPIRE*.

This book also ventures beyond its empirical findings by addressing authorship concerns pertaining to the ways in which, and to whom, the contemporary auteur has meaning. In its account of the experiences at play in the encounter between ephemera, text and reader, *Authorship and the Films of David Lynch* explores how authors function for pleasure in the modern filmgoer's everyday consumption of films.

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