



The Films of Alfred Hitchcock (Cambridge Film Classics)

David Sterritt

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The introduction gives an overview of Hitchcock's long career, with special attention to the varied influences on his work; themes that run through many of his films, from the "transference of guilt," to the connection between knowledge and danger; the overlooked importance of his presence within his films, including his famous cameo appearances and characters who represent him within the story; his fascination with performance and the ambiguities of illusion and reality; the question of viewing him and his work through the auteur theory; and other issues. Also discussed is the relationship between Hitchcock as a serious, even tormented artist and Hitchcock as a magician with a weakness for cinematic practical jokes. Six chapters then provide in-depth examinations of key films: *Blackmail*, his first talkie; *Shadow of a Doubt*, one of his personal favorites; *The Wrong Man*, which questions the nature of guilt and innocence; *Vertigo*, arguably his most profound work; *Psycho*, his most savage look at the nature of evil; and *The Birds*, his last masterpiece and one of his most widely misunderstood works. David Sterritt is film critic at *The Christian Science Monitor* and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Graduate Film Division of Columbia University.

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