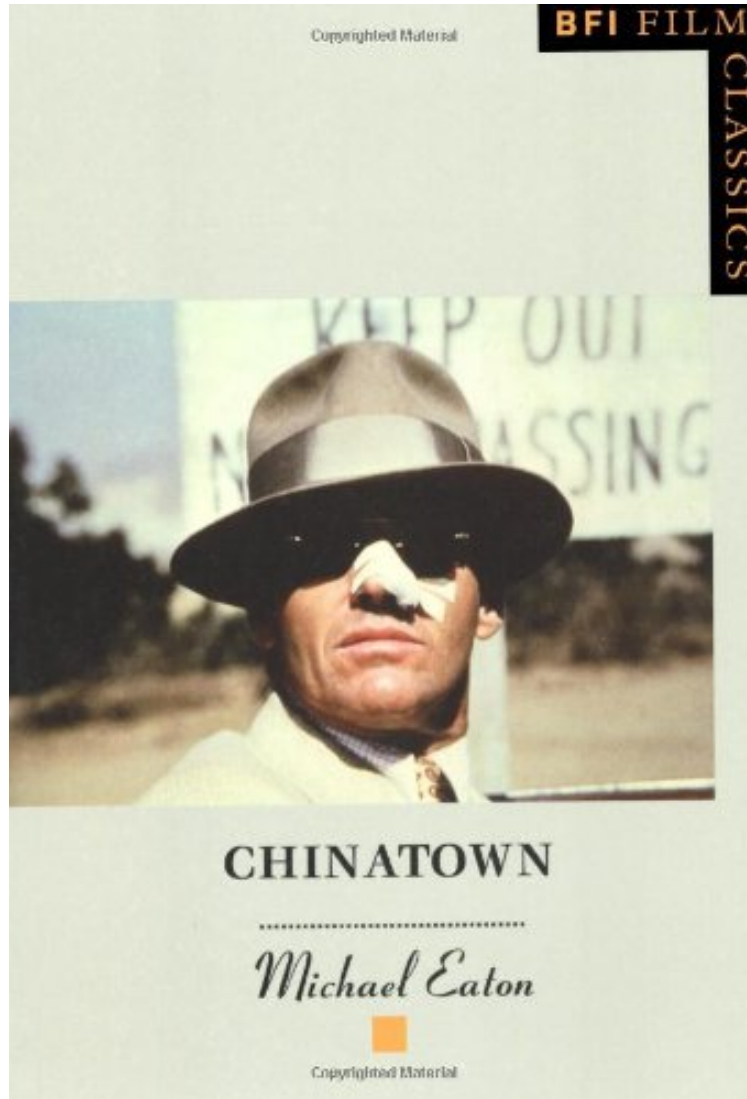


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## Chinatown (BFI Film Classics)

*Michael Eaton*

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**Michael Eaton : Chinatown (BFI Film Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chinatown (BFI Film Classics):

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This study analyzes "Chinatown" in the context of the figure of the detective in literature and film from Sophocles to Edgar Allan Poe and Alfred Hitchcock. In the account of "Chinatown"'s narrative development Michael Eaton seeks to uncover both its relationship to the pessimism of American cinema in the 1970s and its veritably mythical structure.

.com How did an avant-garde director, a script doctor with only one major screenplay to his credit, the producer of The Odd Couple and Love Story, and a lead performer despised by the Hollywood establishment come together to make one of the greatest and most enduring films of the 1970s? Chinatown, directed by Roman Polanski, written by Robert Towne, produced by Robert Evans, and starring Jack Nicholson, is a lush, mysterious, thrilling work whose influence still resonates in movies as different as L.A. Confidential and The Big Lebowski. This little book, part of a remarkable series published by the British Film Institute, guides you through Chinatown's production history. Author Michael Eaton also summarizes its complex plot and offers intriguing interpretations. Eaton is particularly interested in the symbolism of the movie's title, which he sees as having multiple meanings: it is a state of mind, an image of the world, even a metaphor for filmmaking itself. Breaking with critical tradition, he credits Evans--not Polanski, Towne, or Nicholson--as the major creative force behind the movie. Breaking with interpretative tradition, Eaton displays sympathy for Jake Gittes, the film's hero, characterizing him as a man trapped in a detective plot turned on its head, a world where "it is better not to act, much better not to know" the truth. --Raphael Shargel

From the Back Cover This study analyzes "Chinatown" in the context of the figure of the detective in literature and film from Sophocles to Edgar Allan Poe and Alfred Hitchcock. In the account of "Chinatown"'s narrative development Michael Eaton seeks to uncover both its relationship to the pessimism of American cinema in the 1970s and its veritably mythical structure.

About the Author Michael Eaton is a screenwriter and playwright. His screen credits include Fellow Traveller, Signs and Wonders, Shoot to Kill and Why Lockerbie?