

Close Up: Iranian Cinema, Past, Present, and Future

Hamid Dabashi

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#1115933 in Books Verso 2001-11 2001-11-17Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x .50 x 7.50l, 1.21
#File Name: 1859843328320 pages | File size: 61.Mb

Hamid Dabashi : Close Up: Iranian Cinema, Past, Present, and Future before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Close Up: Iranian Cinema, Past, Present, and Future:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Novelist's GodsendBy Mrs. Alison QuigleyWhat makes this survey of Iranian film so entertaining is the scope he gives to incorporating personal, anecdotal material. This is not a dry account about what makes Iranian theatre so dynamic and interesting - it's also a story about the hilarious schemes that Hamid undertakes as a child, in his quest to discover more about movies. There's an energetic, cheeky tone to the first chapter of this book that drew me in immediately; watch out for his fabulous account of his attempts to make a slide projector, and nearly burn the family house down! There's also a story about the outdoor cinema and the local kids methods for circumventing admission fees, by selling "seats" in the boughs of trees.On the whole, Hamid's prose style is very satisfying, particularly when he's summarising the plots of various films, and when translating the poetry of Sapehri. It is at its weakest when he resorts to the jargon of the "cultural studies" lexicon, exemplified in sentences such as "Art denatures and dethematizes reality so that precisely its cultururation and thematisation become self-evident." Does this mean "art deconstructs in order to reconstruct?"In any case, Hamid Dabashi's account of Iranian

cinema is a gift for anyone seeking to understand the historical, political and social contexts of movies. I was fascinated with the interviews, particularly as directors discussed the challenges they needed to overcome in order to conform with post-Revolutionary censorship requirements. Highly recommended, Alison Q.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Analysis By Jonaid Sharif Wonderful reading with lots of detailed commentary and interviews. This is a great book about the vibrant Iranian cinema both in depth and in scope.

Abbas Kiraostami planted Iran firmly on the map of world cinema when he won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes film festival in 1997 for his film *A Taste of Cherry*. In this book Hamid Dabashi examines the growing reputation of Iranian cinema from its origins in the films of Kimiyai and Mehrjui, through the work of established directors such as Kiraostami, Beyzai and Bani-Etemad, to young film-makers like Samira Makhmalbaf and Bahman Gobadi, who triumphed at the Cannes 2000 festival. Dabashi combines exclusive interviews with directors, detailed and insightful commentary, critical cultural context, an extensive filmography, and generous illustration to provide an indispensable guide to globally celebrated but little-studied cinematic genre. Unabashedly polemical, he dissects the idea of the orient in western perceptions of Iranian cinema and details the way that film festivals and distribution in the west have shaped domestic output in Iran. He looks, too, at the particular difficulties faced by women film-makers in a country of Islamic orthodoxy, and the obstacles placed in the path of directors attempting to introduce dissident politics in their work.

Hamid Dabashi's learned book on Iranian cinema in the era of globalization sparkles with verve and a sometimes punishing wit. Encyclopedic in scope, informal in tone, shrewd in its interpretation, it is the indispensable work on one of the most extraordinary artistic and social adventures of our time. Dabashi is the perfect guide. Edward W. Said With Hamid Dabashi's new book, we finally have a reading of the post-Revolutionary Iranian cinema from within Iranian culture and society. Dabashi traces the deep roots of the work of filmmakers such as Abbas Kiarostami, Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Rakshan Bani-Etemad, and shows how their work opens up a fascinating and far-reaching interrogation of contemporary cultural production. Richard Pea A better understanding of Iranian cinema needed someone as much aware of its global significance as knowledgeable of its immediate social roots. Hamid Dabashi is one of those rare cultural critics who has been able to add such a perspective. Mohsen Makhmalbaf About the Author Hamid Dabashi is the Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. He is the founder of *Dreams of a Nation: A Palestinian Film Project*, committed to the preservation and dissemination of Palestinian cinema. His *Close Up: Iranian Cinema: Past, Present and Future* is also published by Verso.