

*A Companion to Martin Scorsese.*

Edited by Aaron Baker.

Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2014.

484 pages.

*A Companion to Martin Scorsese* is the most comprehensive critical guide available to the multifaceted director's oeuvre. It provides a well-rounded examination of Scorsese's films, and the director's Italian American identity, in articles by twenty-three international scholars and practitioners examining Scorsese's artistic genius and his evolution from compelling auteur to Hollywood star.

Addressing a majority of Scorsese's twenty-three features, *Companion* is divided into four parts: "The Pious Auteur," "Social Contexts and Conflicts," "Form and the Filmmaking Process," and "Major Films," each part comprised of five or six chapters focusing on one theme. Baker's introduction, not critical in nature, places the chapters within the realm of Scorsese studies while also noting the director's important role in film history and preservation.

Part 1 begins with Marc Raymond's "How Scorsese Became Scorsese: A Historiography of New Hollywood's Most Prestigious Auteur," which charts Scorsese's most noteworthy films and his emergence in the group of "New Hollywood Auteurs." This biographical chapter sets the stage for the first critical chapter, "Smuggling Iconoclasm: European Cinema and Scorsese's Male Antiheroes," by Giorgio Bertellini and Jacqueline Reich. They examine the "aggressive male characters" of Scorsese's films in a comparative analysis of the presence in European cinema of similar characters (39). Their argument sheds light on Scorsese's inspirations and how his knowledge of international cinema enhances his creative voice. In "Italian Films, New York City Television, and the Work of Martin Scorsese," Laura E. Ruberto argues for the importance of Scorsese's neorealist upbringing. Although not putting forth a new argument, her chapter draws on little-known archival material, concluding that the director's dedication to and advocacy of cinema find roots in his passion for Italian neorealism. Robert P. Kolker's "The Imaginary Museum: Martin Scorsese's Film History Documentaries" examines *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese through American Movies* and *My Voyage to Italy (Il mio viaggio in Italia)* and analyzes diverse influences ranging from Stanley Kubrick and Elia Kazan to John Cassavetes and Italian neorealism. David Sterritt explores an oft-noted theme in "Images of Religion, Ritual, and the Sacred in Martin Scorsese's Cinema." While the chapters here present arguments that have surfaced in discussions elsewhere, they are usually well supported and clearly evidenced, and they effectively demonstrate the origins of much of Scorsese's auteur flair.

Part 2 opens with Baker's "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore and Italianamerican: Gender, Ethnicity, and Imagination," addressing the impor-

tance of the female narrative/voice. Here Baker also looks at Scorsese's interest in Emanuele Crialese's *Nuovomondo*, which is both noteworthy and refreshing, as Scorsese marketed the film and introduced it at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival. Robert Casillo compares Scorsese's contribution to the Italian American cinematic corpus in "Mobsters and Bluebloods: Scorsese's *The Age of Innocence* in the Perspective of His Italian American Films." "Off-White Masculinity in Martin Scorsese's Gangster Films," by Larissa M. Ennis, investigates Scorsese's innovative use of "self-reflexive and self-aware gangsters who eventually comment upon their own implication in a gender- and race-aware social political sphere" (174). Matt R. Lohr contributes a unique approach in "Irish-American Identity in the Films of Martin Scorsese," where he discusses portrayals of the two ethnic groups in Scorsese's Italian American films while also demonstrating the importance of the director's representation of race in relations between African and Irish Americans. In "Issues of Race, Ethnicity, and Television Authorship in *Martin Scorsese Presents the Blues and Boardwalk Empire*," Jonathan J. Cavallero explores the director's role in television and illuminates an important, if unstudied, aspect of his oeuvre. Although this part is valuable for incorporating ethnic themes beyond the realm of Italian American and gender studies, it lacks a strong, unifying theoretical foundation.

Part 3 pays particular attention to the director's manipulation of sound, including music. In "Martin Scorsese and the Music Documentary," Michael Brendan Baker shows how Scorsese has been an essential influence on the creation and evolution of the "rockumentary" genre in such projects as *Woodstock* (Michael Wadleigh, 1970), *The Last Waltz* (1978), *Shine a Light* (2010), and *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan* (2005). Giuliana Muscio's "Martin Scorsese Rocks" examines his use of popular songs in *Mean Streets* (1973), *GoodFellas* (1990), and *Casino* (1996). Muscio's observations are enriched by her use of the concept of collective memory, underscoring the ethnic identity of both director and subject. Anthony D. Cavaluzzi's "Music as Cultural Signifier of Italian/American Life in *Who's That Knocking at My Door* and *Mean Streets*" explores the relationship of music to Scorsese's historical and ethnic themes in these two films. In a discussion of actors as musical "soloists" (295) in a cinematic project, R. Colin Tait's "When Marty Met Bobby: Collaborative Authorship in *Mean Streets* and *Taxi Driver*" examines the "partnership" of Scorsese and Robert De Niro. Tait cleverly and convincingly explores the interactions between director and actor and the ways in which De Niro's voice is imprinted in these films. Another important dimension of Scorsese's work—the subject of death—is the focus of Murray Pomerance's "Scorsese's Landscape of Mortality." In "Borderlines: Boundaries and Transgression in the City Films of Martin Scorsese," Brendan Kredell astutely probes the concepts of place and space, both physical and theoretical, beginning with the influence of New

York's Little Italy neighborhood in the narratives of *Mean Streets* (1973), *Taxi Driver* (1976), *After Hours* (1984), and *Gangs of New York* (2002). This is the book's most distinctive part since little academic attention has been paid to these aspects of his cinema; Scorsese's use of sound, both diegetic and nondiegetic, is critical in understanding his work from semiotic, theoretical, and thematic perspectives.

The final part draws special attention to films best representing the stages of a career: *Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, *Goodfellas*, and *Hugo*. Stefan Sereda argues the question of genre ("indie film") as a foundational, if unique, reading titled "*Mean Streets* as Cinema of Independence." In "*Taxi Driver* and Veteran Trauma," Michael D. High offers an innovative interpretation that goes beyond the metaphor of Vietnam to discuss the film's importance through trauma theory. In "Filming the Fights: Subjectivity and Sensation in *Raging Bull*," Leger Grindon explains how the film differs cinematographically from previous boxing films and how these distinctions, particularly the manipulation of the camera within the ring, offer an internal examination of Jake LaMotta's psyche. Daniel S. Cutrara provides a queer reading in "*The Last Temptation of Christ*: Queering the Divine," built on Eve Sedgwick's philosophy of homosociality, here focusing on the kiss between Jesus and John the Baptist. In "The Cinematic Seduction of Not a 'Good Fella,'" Bambi Higgins demonstrates how the film seduces the spectator through its unique plot, its episodic storytelling, and aspects of *mise-en-scène* including sound and soundtrack. Gueric DeBona's "*Hugo* and the (Re-) Invention of Martin Scorsese" argues that "Scorsese adopts the features of Selznick's novel in order to say something both modern and cautionary about cinema and contemporary Hollywood itself" (460–461). He explores what the cinematic treatment of the novel's themes might imply for Scorsese's career and for American cinema in general. This part is the theoretical high point of the volume, closely tracking what most critics believe to be Scorsese's most noteworthy films. It succeeds in filmically representing the major turning points in the evolution of Scorsese's directorial career.

*A Companion to Martin Scorsese* is a well-conceived and deeply researched resource that will be cited for years to come. Wide-ranging in scope, detail, and perspectives, its careful organization helps readers find an extensive range of material on particular films or on themes related to their research interests. The chapters fall into three main categories: close readings, comparative analyses, and thematic/theoretical arguments. The parts focusing more directly on the film text would serve as wonderful guides in undergraduate teaching while those grounded in critical theory are useful for graduate classrooms.

In any later edition of the book, I would suggest the inclusion of all of Scorsese's films, including shorts and media—the book lacks analyses of *The*

*Wolf of Wall Street*, *The Aviator*, *Bringing Out the Dead*, *Cape Fear*, and *The Color of Money*, with only one passing citation of *Kundun* and one paragraph on *The King of Comedy*. Considering the box-office success of *The Wolf of Wall Street* and *The Aviator*, some attention needs to be paid to the way they highlight the growth of Scorsese as director. Moreover, one wishes for a full section on Scorsese's cinematographic genius and a look at his relationships with such figures as Leonardo DiCaprio and Harvey Keitel.

*Companion* advances the scope of Scorsese scholarship by analyzing numerous motifs and aspects of the director's opus in one volume and provides a robust and contemporary bibliography. Carefully charting Scorsese's evolution as director, it is a welcome addition that will enhance the fields of cinema and media studies, Italian and Italian American studies, as well as American studies and ethnic studies.

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*American Cicero: Mario Cuomo and the Defense of American Liberalism.*

By Saladin Ambar.

New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

224 pages.

*Fiorello H. La Guardia: Ethnicity, Reform, and Urban Development*,  
Second Edition.

By Ronald Bayor.

Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2018.

224 pages.

The careers of Fiorello La Guardia and Mario Cuomo, perhaps the two most famous and beloved Italian American politicians of the twentieth century, bookend the era in which American liberalism was most profoundly shaped by the institutions, attitudes, and assumptions forged during the Great Depression and World War II. La Guardia, a "New Dealer before the New Deal," spent the 1920s as a maverick congressman championing such policies as public power and unemployment insurance. Then, as mayor, he made New York City into a laboratory of New Deal reform, building bridges, airports, health centers, housing, public broadcasting facilities, and much more. Half a century later, New York Governor Mario Cuomo labored to keep the flame of liberalism