

Editors' Preface

The *Critical Guides to Contemporary Film Directors* are a series of multi-volume reference guides that focus on hundreds of well-established and newly-emerging directors. Each volume in the series is made up of entries that include brief biographical material and a comprehensive feature filmography, and engage with the film-makers' main body of work, highlighting their prominent themes, concerns and styles. The entries have been specially commissioned from a wide-ranging mix of film critics and journalists, industry practitioners, and established academics and postgraduate students of film.

Contemporary North American Film Directors: A Wallflower Critical Guide is an enlarged and updated second edition of the first volume. The second in the series was published in 2001 and focuses on British and Irish directors. *Critical Guides* on Continental European directors and World Cinema directors are in production.

In compiling the *Critical Guide*, certain inclusion criteria have had to be employed. We have tried to cover most, if not all, film-makers who have had fiction feature films released for theatrical exhibition in the last decade or so. In some cases, film-makers who have had animation films or documentaries released have been included, but we have not been able to extend the present *Critical Guide* to cover all film-makers of non-feature-length or non-fiction films. This is not to give artistic or industrial priority to the fiction feature film but is purely a reflection of organisational constraints – we hope to cover animation, documentary and shorts in subsequent editions.

Furthermore, certain issues exist with regard to the inclusion of film-makers not native to North America. Our understanding of a 'North American director' is someone making feature films within the American and Canadian film industries, mainstream and independent. Thus directors such as John Woo, Paul Verhoeven, Wim Wenders, Peter Weir, Lasse Hallström, Milos Forman and Christopher Nolan are all included here although they are not American or Canadian by birth. Indeed some directors will appear in more than one volume because a substantial body of their work has been produced in different countries.

Each volume of the *Critical Guide* will continue to be periodically revised and updated to incorporate each director's latest works and also to include new entries on emerging film-makers. Every edition will thus provide a unique ongoing resource and critique of contemporary film-making.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information, yet details on works that are stated as currently in production may be subject to change. Should there be any factual inaccuracies present in the book, do feel free to let us know. Also, we welcome contributions on new directors and so please send all comments, suggestions and queries to info@wallflowerpres.co.uk.

Finally, the Editors would like to very warmly thank all the contributors for their original entries and their assistance in updating them, and everyone involved in the commissioning, research, editing and production of this unique reference resource, especially Laura Bushell, Alexander Hadziioannou, Chris Kasrils and Ian Haydn Smith. A special mention should also go to Howard Seal for conceiving the original idea.

We hope you continue to find this collection helpful and stimulating.

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