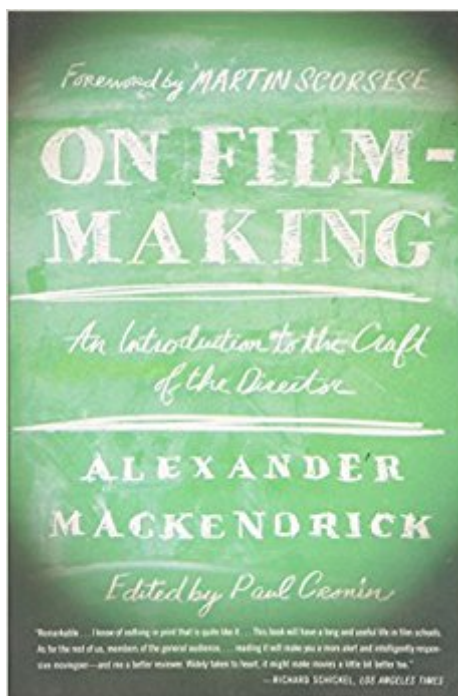


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# On Film-making: An Introduction To The Craft Of The Director



## Synopsis

A priceless examination of the filmmaker's craft, from the renowned director of *Sweet Smell of Success*. After more than twenty years in the film industry as a screenwriter, storyboard editor, and director of memorable films such as *The Ladykillers*, Alexander Mackendrick turned his back on Hollywood and began a new career as the Dean of one of the country's most demanding and influential film schools. His absolute devotion to the craft of filmmaking served as a powerful impetus to students at the California Institute for the Arts for almost twenty five years, with a teaching style that included prodigious notes, neatly crafted storyboards, and handouts containing excerpts of works by Kierkegaard, Aristotle, and others. At the core of Mackendrick's lessons lay a deceptively simple goal: to teach aspiring filmmakers how to structure and write the stories they want to tell, while using the devices particular to the medium of film to tell their stories effectively. In this impressive volume, edited by Paul Cronin, the myriad materials that made Mackendrick's reputation as an instructor are collected for the first time, offering a chance for professionals as well as students to discover a methodology of filmmaking that is challenging yet refreshing in its clarity. Meticulously illustrated and drawing on examples from such classic films as *North by Northwest*, *Citizen Kane*, and *Touch of Evil*, Mackendrick's elegant lessons are sure to provide inspiration for a new generation of filmmakers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"He doesn't soft soap his audience with advice to lie back and let their inner child do the work. Instead, he offers up the accumulated wisdom of a disciplined and productive career." - The

Guardian

Alexander Mackendrick directed several films, including *The Man in the White Suit*, which earned him an Oscar Nomination for Screenwriting. He died in 1993. Paul Cronin is the editor of Herzog on Herzog.

I'm not huge on film books...it's hard to find good ones. Most are either too technical or too snobbish. But this book is great. I read it in two days. MacKendrick has a humorous but nurturing tone in his writing that makes the book an easy read. There are some great tips and advice in it, both in terms of story and directing. I thoroughly enjoyed the book and will definitely take it out to re-read parts in the future.

*On Film-Making* by Mackendrick should be on every filmmaker's, both director's and screenwriters, as well as actors' short lists of must reads. It is essentially a Masters Thesis by a Master. So rewarding, timeless and resonant. I wish that I had read it 20 years ago, before I made my first film. If you ever wished that you had studied film at CalArts, read this book.

good

This book got stellar reviews and Martin Scorsese writes a glowing preface. I appreciate Mackendrick's advice but wish the content were a little more comprehensive. We get bits and pieces, anecdotes, into the art of screenwriting and directing. The book was edited together, post mortem, from Mackendrick's notes on the craft of filmmaking, and the seams show. The content is good but fragmentary. The book is somewhat like reading the pre-socratic philosophers--a great deal of wisdom but not much coherence or development. *On Filmmaking* seems best, not as an introduction to the craft as advertised, but as a secondary or tertiary reference for an emerging filmmaker.

Great book!!!

Came on time! I needed this book for my film class and it's quite interesting!

A classic, great filmmaker talks about how to prepare and direct a movie. There's a lot of smart

insider tips about working with actors and developing your directing skills. This is an 'old style' book but the lessons to be learned are timeless.

Alexander Mackendrick, a noted English director of classics like 'The Ladykillers' shares the notes he used to educate film students at Cal-art film school. His insights into the technical and social aspects of movie directing are still highly relevant today, and are written in a breezy and amusing style.

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