

Stanley Kubrick: A Biography

By John BAXTER

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For decades, the films of Stanley Kubrick have staked out a claim at the core of the cultural landscape. In the 1950s he was one of the few American filmmakers, with Paths of Glory, to achieve the gravitas of European cinema. To 1960s audiences he was the man who made Dr. Strangelove, the influential anti-war movie, and the counterculture favorite 2001: A Space Odyssey. In the 1970s he created his hymn to urban violence, A Clockwork Orange, and in the 1980s distilled the nature of private madness and collective insanity in The Shining and Full Metal Jacket.Yet little is still known of the man and the influence exerted by his private life on his public art. Born in the Bronx, Kubrick has lived since 1961 in seclusion in rural England. From in-depth interviews with a range of people who have known the man best, from his childhood to the present, John Baxter has extracted the most complete account available of Kubrick's life: the conflicts with partners and stars, the failure to make Napoleon, the failed marriages and broken friendships, the use and abuse of writers and other creative collaborators.Kubrick emerges from this detailed and complex telling as a man both sensitive and ruthless, petulant and generous: a man who adulates reason but whose films reflect the wildest excesses of passion and who, above all, has dared to live life on his terms, whatever the price.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal
This book is timed to appear with the release of Kubrick's new film, Eyes Wide Shut, his first movie since Full Metal Jacket in 1987. The decade-long gap between projects is, by the author's reasoning, part of the price Kubrick pays for being himself. Baxter (Fellini, LJ 11/1/94) portrays Kubrick as a gifted man with an instinctive talent for directing. Indeed, Kubrick has a unique genius for film images, for how a scene looks and how it should be lit. But Baxter also reveals a man obsessed with his privacy who controls everything even remotely connected to his work. Kubrick is also apparently the boss from hell, especially for writers. Baxter effectively uses extensive interviews with people who have worked on Kubrick's movies to support these characterizations, and this raw material makes his book stand out among the few biographies of Kubrick.?Marianne Cawley, Charleston Cty. Lib., S.C.
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From the Back Cover
For decades, the films of Stanley Kubrick have staked out a claim at the core of our cultural landscape. In the 1950s, he was one of the few American film makers to achieve the gravitas of European cinema with Paths of Glory. To 1960s audiences, he was the man who made both Dr. Strangelove, the influential anti-war movie, and 2001: A Space Odyssey, the counterculture favorite. In the 1970s he created his hymn to urban violence, A Clockwork Orange, and in the 1980s he distilled the nature of private madness and collective insanity with The Shining and Full Metal Jacket. His first film of the 1990s will be Eyes Wide Shut starring Tom Cruise. Yet little is known of the man and the influence exerted by his private life on his public art. Born in the Bronx, Kubrick has lived since 1961 in seclusion in rural England. From in-depth interviews with a range of people who have known the man best, spanning from his childhood to the present, John Baxter now presents the most complete account available of Kubrick's life. The conflicts with partners and stars, the failure to make Napoleon, the failed marriages and broken friendships, the use and abuse of writers and other collaborators - this detailed and complex study addresses all these to reveal a man who, above all, has dared to live life on his terms.

About the Author
John Baxter is a film critic, novelist, biographer and broadcaster (born in Australia), whose film books include The Hollywood Exiles, Stunt: The Great Movie Stuntmen, An Appalling Talent: The Life of Ken Russell, Science Fiction in the Cinema, The Cinema of John Ford, The Cinema of Josef Von Sternberg, Fellini and Bunuel. His Steven Spielberg: The Unauthorised Biography was published by HarperCollins in June 1996.

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