



Conversations with Scorsese

By Richard Schickel

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Mean Streets, Taxi Driver, Raging Bull, The Last Temptation of Christ, Kundun, The Departed, The Aviator, Shutter Island: these are just a few of the critically acclaimed films, startling experimental works, and spectacular commercial blockbusters with which Martin Scorsese has forever enriched American cinema. Here is a rare and wonderfully insightful chance to experience all of these films, and the history and process of moviemaking in general, through the words and wit of the master director.

Richard Schickel's canny and intelligent interviews guide us through Scorsese's life and work, from the child who escaped the realities of Little Italy in the 1950s through movies to the man whose increasingly encyclopedic knowledge of film shaped his ambitions and art. Scorsese reveals which films are most autobiographical and which have been forays into unknown territory in content or aesthetics. He talks about his lesser-known movies, those already considered classics, his documentaries, and his influences. He explains his personal style, the close attention he pays to detail, and his attraction to genre films. And he discusses what being a lifelong student of film has taught him about acting, directing, music, and camerawork, among many other topics.

The result is a vivid, immensely enlightening history of modern Hollywood seen through the eyes of one intrepid filmmaker. We see audiences' expectations tested by what Scorsese was willing to put on the screen in explorations of prostitution, institutionalized violence, and religion. We see the unavoidable frustrations and exhilarating rewards of filming live concerts for The Band and at Woodstock. And we see many of the rewarding artistic and personal relationships of Scorsese's career, including collaborations with Robert De Niro, Harvey Keitel, Jack Nicholson, and Leonardo DiCaprio.

An invaluable appreciation of one of our most admired film directors.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In this q&a-format biography, film critic and documentary filmmaker Schickel follows one of America's greatest directors on a journey through his life in cinema. An asthmatic, sickly child, Scorsese used movies to escape from family tensions and the mean streets of New York's Little Italy. In a career now in its fifth decade, Scorsese has made over 20 feature films (*Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, *Goodfellas*, etc.) as well as numerous documentaries. A cross between a film master class and after-hours jam session, the conversations range from Scorsese's Italian upbringing to Hollywood gossip to obscure silent films. Scorsese and Schickel's long friendship and their encyclopedic film knowledge bring a comfort and complexity to their interaction. Scorsese has always been a fluid raconteur, and Schickel brings out the best in him—not least of all because he's confident enough to disagree with the master. Scorsese's focus on the minutiae of his life and in his movies has given his work universal appeal. Anyone with even a passing interest in Scorsese's career or in film history will find a gem on every page. (Mar.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Film-critic Schickel recently sat down with Scorsese for a series of late-night conversations. Stitched together here, they form an illuminating autobiography-cum-film-studies-course from one of the nation's foremost directors. Scorsese speaks candidly about his childhood in Little Italy and his escape into the movies of the 1950s; his pivotal experiences at the NYU film school and his early student efforts; and, of course, his phenomenal filmmaking career, from his 1967 debut, *Who's That Knocking at My Door*, through last year's *Shutter Island*. The in-depth treatment provides fascinating insights into Scorsese's films; even his most obsessed fans will discover new revelations, and hearing him discuss his entire body of work in a single lengthy narrative ties such outliers as *The Age of Innocence* and *Kundun* to more-characteristic masterworks like *Taxi Driver* and *Raging Bull*. Both Schickel and Scorsese are utterly movie-obsessed, so a significant chunk of the conversation is inevitably devoted to the classic films they both love; for cinephiles, these passages, where two passionate and supremely informed fans articulately chat about the subjects of their fixation, might be the most rewarding part of this fascinating document. --Gordon Flagg

Review

"Blend one great film critic with one great director. Laced with a mutual love of film history and heaping portions of insight, empathy, and fellowship. Richard Schickel's *Conversations with Scorsese* is a richly textured and totally engaging triumph."

-Leo Braudy, author of *The Hollywood Sign: Fantasy and Reality of an American Icon*

"I loved it. It offers all the pleasures of eavesdropping on a riveting and wonderfully entertaining private conversation."

-Ron Howard

"*Conversations with Scorsese* is the *My Dinner with Andre* of movie books . . . only much better. Schickel's relaxed, but astute questioning has brought out the very best in Scorsese, and generated thoughts and memories from him that have never been published before. The two men are not only having a real conversation but also having fun doing it. This book is a treasure, and anyone who loves Scorsese's work should own it."

-Jeanine Basinger, *The Star Machine*

“What a high for film lovers, this conversation between one of America’s greatest directors and a similarly eminent critic. The two cinephiles bring together Scorsese’s life and career from various perspectives, encompassing the trauma and betrayals of a mean-street childhood, the genesis and on-the-set details of each movie, the films and people that have shaped his directorial personality. Schickel offers insights and criticisms along with empathy and the intimate film knowledge to spark fresh and interesting insights from the king of mavericks in a retrospective mood. Wide-ranging and astute, it’s film school on steroids.”

-Molly Haskell, author of *Frankly, My Dear: Gone with the Wind Revisited*

“Conversations-with-directors books can go one of two ways: Either the directors want to analyze their work, or they don’t. Those who do either obscure the films with trivial esoterica or—as is the case with Martin Scorsese, in Richard Schickel’s *Conversations with Scorsese*—illuminate their choices with a pragmatic instinct verging on the intimate, as though they were discussing not shots and lenses but their own biography.”

-Sam Wasson, *LA Weekly*

“Putting [Martin Scorsese and Richard Schickel] together is a perfect pairing for an epic discourse about the movies . . . *Conversations with Scorsese* is likely to stand as the definitive source for Scorsese’s views because he is so engaged—and because Schickel knows just the questions to ask . . . Schickel makes no secret that he is a fan and a friend. Still, he challenges the director, presses a point and states outright whether a particular film works for him. He also manages to keep Scorsese on topic without missing an opportunity to explore an interesting tangent. And there are plenty of tangents—just what you would expect in a spirited back-and-forth between two cinephiles at the top of their game.”

-Douglass K. Daniel, Associated Press

“A veritable library of criticism and collected interviews has been published on Martin Scorsese in the last ten years, but none remotely as valuable as this entry . . . The combination of [Schickel’s] insightful questions and Scorsese’s rapid-fire patter and stream-of-consciousness style makes this an educational and entertaining read . . . Both men’s excitement and admiration for the art and history of filmmaking fills every page. This is no shallow series of how and why questions but a true conversation about art and how one individual has endeavored to create it . . . Readers will be left simply wanting more. Perhaps the definitive piece of self-commentary that will ever be produced about the work of Scorsese.”

-Starred review, *Library Journal*

“Schickel almost always strikes the right interrogatory note . . . Along the way, Scorsese and Schickel, who are both steeped in film history, share views about dozens of old pictures—their opinionated enthusiasm should lengthen many Netflix queues. Offering a deep look into the aesthetic, technical and commercial realities of filmmaking, Scorsese provides intimate details about the making of his acknowledged masterpieces . . . Scorsese emerges as a fascinating, obsessive, complex guy. He has always seemed the most companionable of film artists, and, except for his own expansive, autobiographically driven documentaries on American and Italian movies, this is the most probing and enjoyable explication of his accomplished career. A feast for cineastes.”

-*Kirkus*

“A cross between a film master class and after-hours jam session . . . Scorsese and Schickel’s long friendship and their encyclopedic film knowledge bring a comfort and complexity to their interaction. Scorsese has always been a fluid raconteur, and Schickel brings out the best in him . . . Anyone with even a passing interest in Scorsese’s career or in film history will find a gem on every page.”

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-*Booklist*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Megan Martelli:

Book is to be different per grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. We all know that that book is very important normally. The book *Conversations with Scorsese* was making you to know about other information and of course you can take more information. It is quite advantages for you. The e-book *Conversations with Scorsese* is not only giving you a lot more new information but also to be your friend when you truly feel bored. You can spend your spend time to read your guide. Try to make relationship with the book *Conversations with Scorsese*. You never really feel lose out for everything in the event you read some books.

Yvonne Webb:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, gonna beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? May be reading a book is usually option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the publication untitled *Conversations with Scorsese* can be good book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

Clarence Delapaz:

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Randy Mosley:

That e-book can make you to feel relax. This specific book Conversations with Scorsese was vibrant and of course has pictures on the website. As we know that book Conversations with Scorsese has many kinds or style. Start from kids until youngsters. For example Naruto or Detective Conan you can read and believe you are the character on there. Therefore not at all of book are usually make you bored, any it can make you feel happy, fun and rest. Try to choose the best book for you personally and try to like reading in which.

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