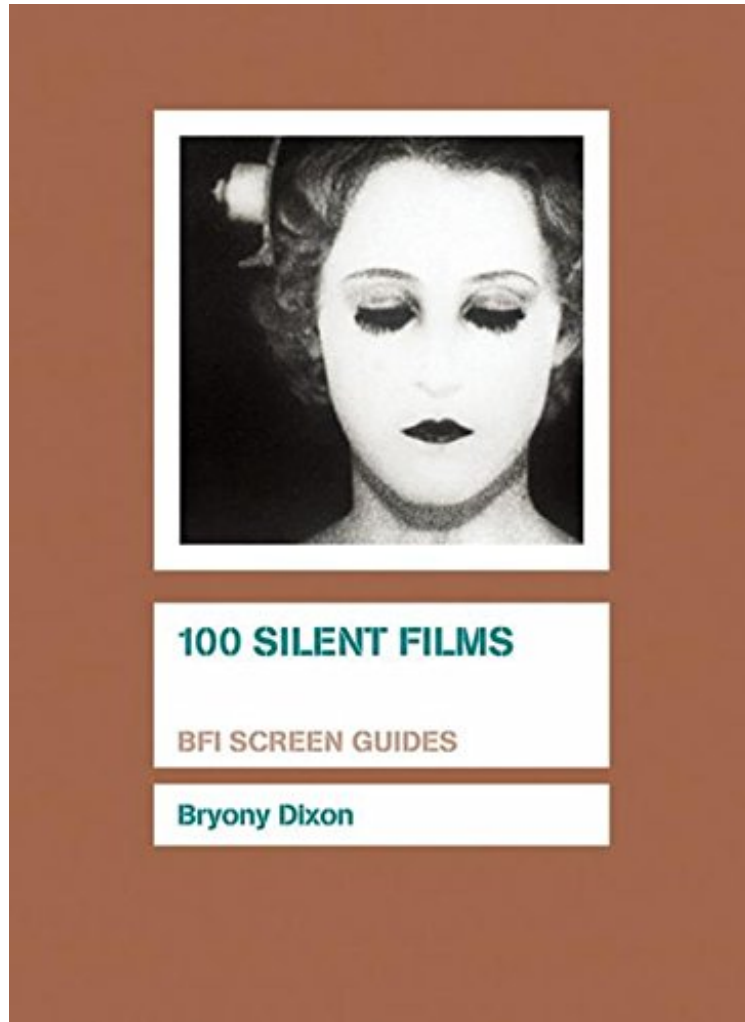


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100 Silent Films (Screen Guides)

Bryony Dixon

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Bryony Dixon : 100 Silent Films (Screen Guides) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 100 Silent Films (Screen Guides):

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful, vibrant introductionBy Michael SamerdykeThis is easily the best of the BFI film guides I have read. The author, Bryony Dixon, writes in a bright, enthusiastic style that welcomes the viewer into the world of silent film. She makes the point that silent film, instead of being "broken" or "incomplete," is instead more akin to opera or television than the conventional feature film of the talkie era. While she covers the familiar landmarks of the silent era, such as "The Gold Rush," "Battleship Potemkin," and "Metropolis" among others (making fresh points on each), she also covers many non-feature films of the silent era, such as serials, short comedies, newsreels. As she notes, with youtube, many of these rare films (such as a film showing the trenches in France just after WWI as filmed from a blimp) are more available now than they have been for decades. Even if you

consider yourself fairly well-informed on the silent cinema, you will learn something new in "100 Silent Films." It is strongly recommended for anyone interested in movies.

100 Silent Films provides an authoritative and accessible history of silent cinema through one hundred of its most interesting and significant films. As Bryony Dixon contends, silent cinema is not a genre; it is the first 35 years of film history, a complex negotiation between art and commerce and a union of creativity and technology. At its most grand on the big screen with a full orchestral accompaniment it is magnificent, permitting a depth of emotional engagement rarely found in other fields of cinema. Silent film was hugely popular in its day, and its success enabled the development of large-scale film production in the United States and Europe. It was the start of our fascination with the moving image as a disseminator of information and as mass entertainment with its consequent celebrity culture. The digital revolution in the last few years and the restoration and reissue of archival treasures have contributed to a huge resurgence of interest in silent cinema. Bryony Dixon's illuminating guide introduces a wide range of films of the silent period (1895-1930), including classics such as *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), *The General* (1926), *Metropolis* (1927), *Sunrise* (1927) and *Pandora's Box* (1928), alongside more unexpected choices, and represents major genres and directors of the period Griffith, Keaton, Chaplin, Murnau, Sjstrm, Dovzhenko and Eisenstein together with an introductory overview and useful filmographic and bibliographic information.

This is no bluffer's guide. The enjoyment of silent cinema is Dixon's priority. As Dixon says when discussing *Hell's Hinges* (1916): "Nearly everything in current cinema can be traced back to the silent era." And that's why this guide is so valuable - anyone interested in how cinema became what it is today will find many of the answers here, both in Bryony Dixon's illuminating book and the films you will rush to watch the minute you put it down.' - Silent London 'David Thomson is arguably the doyen of "film list" authors and Dixon shares both his rare ability to justify a choice with a single cinematic trump card and his lucid prose style - her description of Dziga Vertov's radical montage as "visual Esperanto" is inspired. She captures some of silent cinema's most sublime moments - Charlie Chaplin mournfully eating his shoelaces in *The Gold Rush* (1925) or the woodland chase in *People on Sunday* (1930) - with an infectious joy.' - Lucian Robinson, *The Times Literary Supplement*

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