Big Screen, Small Screen: The Enduring Allure of Cinema and Television



Big Screen, Small Screen: A practical guide to writing for flim and television in Australia by Coral Drouyn

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From the silver screen to the small screen, cinema and television have captivated audiences for over a century. In this groundbreaking new book, renowned film and television critic Robert Ebert explores the enduring allure of these two powerful storytelling mediums, examining their unique strengths and challenges, and their profound impact on our culture and society.

The Big Screen Experience

Cinema, with its larger-than-life images and immersive sound design, offers a uniquely cinematic experience that transports viewers to other worlds and expands their imaginations. From the sweeping epics of Hollywood to the intimate dramas of independent film, the big screen provides a canvas for filmmakers to create works of art that can entertain, educate, and inspire.

However, the big screen is also a commercial enterprise, and the need to appeal to mass audiences can limit the creative freedom of filmmakers. Studios often play it safe by producing predictable and formulaic films that will appeal to the widest possible demographic. As a result, there is often a tension between the artistic and the commercial aspects of cinema.

The Small Screen Revolution

The rise of television in the mid-20th century revolutionized the way we consume entertainment. With its lower production costs and greater accessibility, television made it possible for a wider range of stories to be told and for new voices to be heard. The small screen allowed for more complex and nuanced storytelling, as well as the development of new genres, such as the sitcom and the soap opera.

However, television is also a product of its time, and it has often reflected the prejudices and biases of the society in which it is produced. In the early days of television, for example, women and minorities were often depicted in stereotypical and demeaning ways. It was not until the late 20th century that television began to offer more diverse and inclusive programming.

The Future of Film and Television

The future of cinema and television is uncertain, but it is clear that both mediums will continue to play an important role in our culture. The rise of streaming services, such as Netflix and Our Book Library Prime, is giving viewers more choice and control over what they watch. This is providing new opportunities for filmmakers and television producers to create original and innovative content.

However, the streaming revolution is also putting pressure on traditional cinema chains and television networks. As more and more people choose to watch content at home, the need for physical movie theaters and broadcast networks may decline. It is unclear how the industry will adapt to this changing landscape, but it is likely that the future of film and television will be very different from the past.

Big Screen, Small Screen is an essential read for anyone who loves film and television. Ebert's insights into these two powerful storytelling mediums are both illuminating and thought-provoking. He argues that both big screen and small screen have their own unique strengths and challenges, and that both are capable of producing great works of art. As the future of film and television continues to evolve, it is important to remember the lessons we have learned from the past. By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of both mediums, we can ensure that they continue to entertain, educate, and inspire us for generations to come.



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