

Impossible Puzzle Films: A Cognitive Approach to Contemporary Complex Cinema

Mikls Kiss, Steven Willemsen

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Mikls Kiss, Steven Willemsen : Impossible Puzzle Films: A Cognitive Approach to Contemporary Complex Cinema before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Impossible Puzzle Films: A Cognitive Approach to Contemporary Complex Cinema:

Narrative complexity is a trend in contemporary cinema. Since the late 1990s there has been a palpable increase in complex storytelling in movies. But how and why do complex movies create perplexity and confusion? How do we engage with these challenges? And what makes complex stories so attractive? By blending film studies, narrative theory and cognitive sciences, Kiss and Willemsen look into the relation between complex storytelling and the mind. Analysing the effects that different complex narratives have on viewers, the book addresses how films like *Donnie Darko*, *Mulholland Drive* or *Primer* strategically create complexity and confusion, and, by using the specific category of the 'impossible puzzle film', it examines movies that use baffling paradoxes, impossible loops, and unresolved ambiguities in their stories and storytelling. By looking at how these films play on our mind's blind spots, this innovative book explains their viewing effects in terms of the mental state of cognitive dissonance that they evoke.

"Kiss and Willemsen's book is an important step forward in the study of cinematic complexity. It offers a thorough analysis of complex storytelling techniques with a special focus on the 'impossible puzzle films,' reveals the cognitive effects and challenges they evoke and explores the reasons why viewers find them fascinating." -- Professor Marina Grishakova, University of Tartu

About the Author Mikls Kiss is Assistant Professor in Film and Media Studies and Steven Willemsen is a PhD candidate and Junior Lecturer in Film Studies, both at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands.