

DVD Review: Fascinating ‘The Story of Film: An Odyssey’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 17, 2012 - 3:11pm

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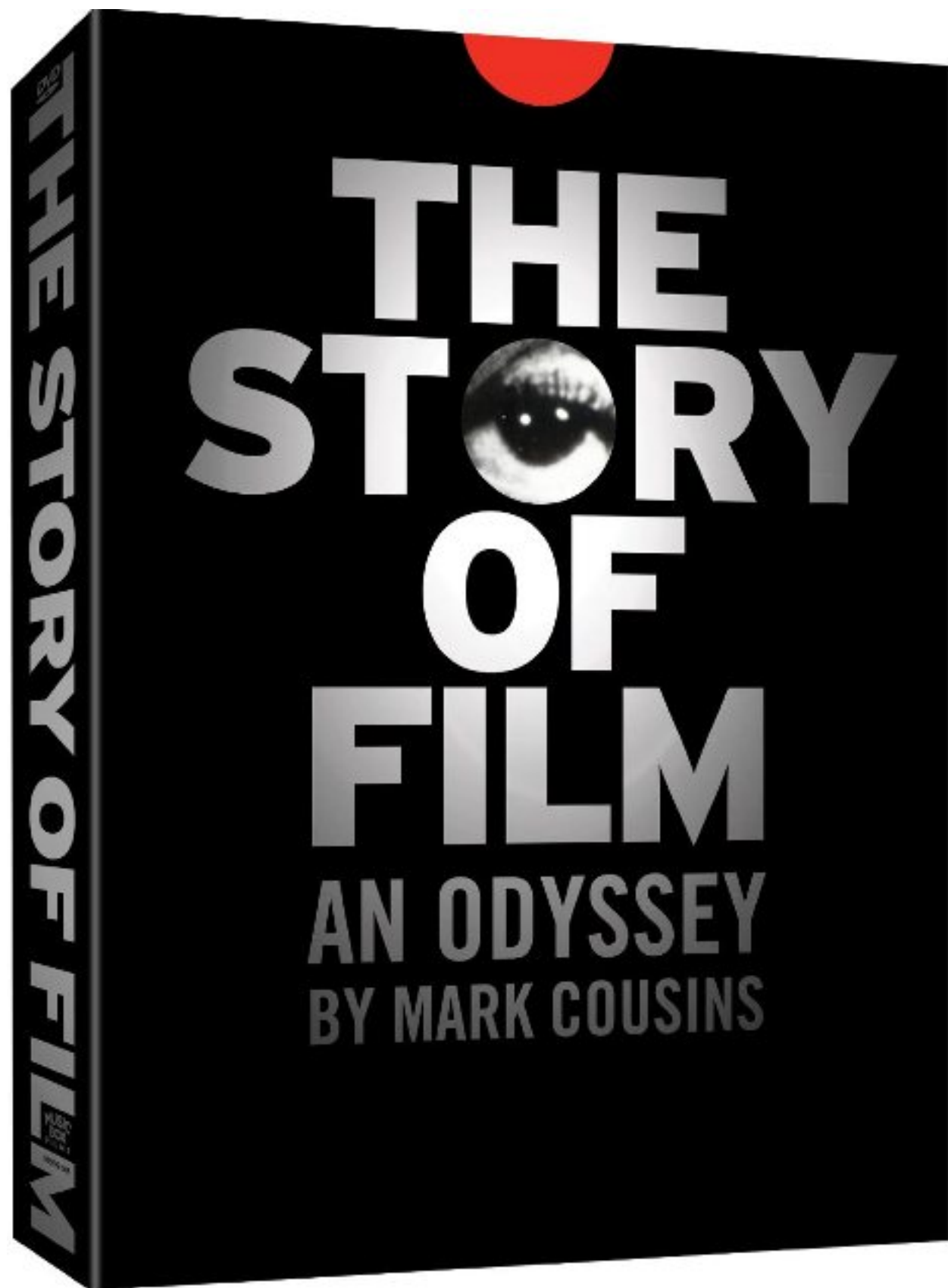
CHICAGO – Music Box Films’ DVD presentation of Mark Cousins’ challenging and often fascinating “The Story of Film” is a perfect gift for the movie lover in your family who would truly appreciate going to a film class but doesn’t have the access, time, or money. It isn’t a perfect class (but it’s hard to imagine even the best professor in the world not stumbling a few times with such a vast scope of coverage) but this fifteen-hour journey from 1895 to today is a fascinating dissection of not just the men and women who innovated the art form but how our understanding of film history has long been incomplete.



Rating: **4.5/5.0**

Cousins starts with that aggressive tone — challenging film historians who have had what he could call “racist by omission” understandings of film history that too often place emphasis on white, male pioneers in the field while ignoring all others. It’s hard to argue with most of Cousins’ points but he can sometimes be overly aggressive and confident in his viewpoints, stating things as fact that aren’t necessarily so. I’ll admit that I came to admire his confidence but it’s off-putting in the first hour when he dismisses previously held tenets often merely through statement because he won’t be providing evidence for hours.

What I admire most about “The Story of Film” is its ambition. Many people have attempted to chronicle important chapters in film history but few have taken on the entire thing with such ambition. And Cousins finds fascinating clips to use to make his cases along with interviewing some truly smart people in the industry like Lars Von Trier, Paul Schrader, Robert Towne, Baz Luhrmann, Bernardo Bertolucci, and Ken Loach. Just the clip choices are a joy as Cousins opens with “Saving Private Ryan” and closes hours later with “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind,” hitting everything from “The Thief of Bagdad” to “Starship Troopers” in between.



The Story of Film was released on DVD on December 11, 2012

Photo credit: Music Box Films

Synopsis:

The Story of Film: An Odyssey is an epic journey through the history of world cinema that is a treat for movie lovers around the globe. Guided by film historian Mark Cousins, this bold 15-part love letter to the movies begins with the invention of motion pictures at the end of the 19th century and concludes with the multi-billion dollar globalized digital industry of the 21st.

Featuring contributions from legendary filmmakers including Bernardo Bertolucci, Charles Burnett, Jane Campion, Claudia Cardinale, Youssef Chahine, Terence Davies, Claire Denis, Stanley Donen, Kyoko Kagawa, Abbas Kiarostami, Baz Luhrmann, Paul Schrader, Alexander Sokurov, Robert Towne, Gus Van Sant, Sharmila Tagore, Lars von Trier, Wim Wenders, Haskell Wexler, Yuen Woo-Ping.



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"The Story of Film" \[9\]](#)

Special Features:

- o 44 Page Collector's Booklet
- o Viewer's Guide

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