

celluloid output, closely examines 98 films, television movies and direct-to-video titles, and in the process, pens the ultimate, 292-page love letter to an often-overlooked sci-fi sub-genre.

Rather than discuss the works in chronological order, Miller organizes his chapters thematically and covers such topics as The State of Mars Cinema Before 1950, Voyages to Mars, Invasions from Mars and Inhabited Mars. A standalone chapter is devoted to the seminal 1950 film *Destination Moon* and another examines lesser known interpretations of *The War of the Worlds* (H. G. Wells). He reserves later chapters for slapstick comedies, parodies and satires, and concludes with an examination of six works slated for release after he had completed the bulk of his work on the manuscript.

Within each chapter, Miller's entries are formatted to include concise technical information (film studio, cast, crew, etc.); snippets of positive and negative reviews from a variety of film critics; straightforward, non-biased summaries; and commentary composed of trivia, as well as the author's opinions and critical assessments of the film. Make no mistake, Miller is authoritative on this topic and it is refreshing to read his insightful comments and, in some cases, his second opinions after re-watching certain works. For instance, he includes two separate reviews of *The Martian* (Ridley Scott 2015), one for the two-dimensional theatrical release and one for the three-dimensional home viewing.

Over 65 black and white illustrations, including movie posters, half sheets and film stills are peppered throughout the softcover work and, at times, this reviewer selfishly wished that some of the wackier film posters from the 1950s had been reproduced in full colour.

Miller rounds out the book with three appendixes detailing animated works, television anthology series, and a final chronological listing of all of the movies contained within the book. He also includes a comprehensive bibliography of books and magazine articles followed by a listing useful internet sites for further reading. A detailed and well-organized index completes the work.

In terms of usefulness, *Mars in the Movies* would make an excellent addition to the science fiction and/or film section of any reference collection. Since it is written by a fan, for other fans of the genre, the easy-to-read format is suitable for academic, public and even high school libraries. While there are other reference works currently on the market devoted to sci-fi films, *Keep Watching the Skies* (Warren, 2010) and *Top 100 Sci-Fi Movies* (Gerani, 2011) both come to mind, there is not one that is singularly devoted to the subject of movies about Mars.

Miller's book would serve as a compliment to both of these and to other, more generalized film reference works like the annually published *VideoHound's Golden Movie Retriever* or *Leonard Maltin's Movie Guide* which ceased publication in 2015.

John Powell

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References

- Gerani, G. (2011), *Top 100 Sci-Fi Movies*, IDW, San Diego, CA.
 Warren, B. (2010), *Keep Watching the Skies! American Science Fiction Movies of the Fifties, The 21st Century Edition*, McFarland, Jefferson, NC.

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Oak Furniture: The British Tradition: A History of Early Furniture in the British Isles and New England [Revised edition]

Victor Chinnery

ACC Art Books

Woodbridge

2016

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Keywords Furniture, United Kingdom, United States of America

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Oak Furniture: The British Tradition is a massive compendium originally authored by Victor Chinnery (1941-2011) in 1979. With various reprints in 1984, 1986, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2000 and 2002, this 2016 revised edition is an improvement in terms of editing and authorship and redesign and colouring of the included photographs. Chinnery was, without a doubt, an expert in this particular field and, as a result, this tome continues to hold its position as an important and valuable work. Chinnery was a founding member of the Regional Furniture Society and the Merchant's House Museum, a Society of Antiquaries fellow and an auctioneer at some of the most reputable auction houses, such as Christie's and Sotheby's. In addition, he was also a lecturer at John Makepeace's School for Craftsman and a consultant to the Historic Royal Palaces and many other British museums. *Oak Furniture: The British Tradition* is proof of his reputable knowledge on British antiques. It is truly a labour of love that displays the extent of his knowledge for British

furniture from the middle ages to the middle nineteenth century.

The chapters in this impressive volume have a natural and obvious layout, making it easy for the lay person or the academic expert to peruse at leisure or quickly locate pertinent information. The table of contents lists chapters for the historical context, practical context, functions and nomenclature and décor and regional chronology. *Oak Furniture* also has six appendices which comprise biographical information and selected extracts from various pertinent persons in the field of British oak furniture and private/public collectors. As if the text did not already contain enough valuable information, the indices are an additional resource that solidifies the text as a reputable source almost 40 years after its original publication. With an illustrated index and a standard index, the text is easy to use and navigate. Besides the substantial appendices and indices, there are 83 sources included in the bibliography and excerpts from *A Description of England* by William Harrison, *An Academic or Store House of Armory & Blazon* by Randle Holme and *The Life of Humphrey Beckham of Salisbury* by Victor Chinnery.

The pictorial index consists of two separate indices, a standard index to the photographs and a pictorial index, which are sorted by category and subcategory. For the illustrated and pictorial indices, the categories (number of subcategories are listed in parentheses) consist of seat furniture (37), tables and cup-boards (18), cupboards (20), dressers (3), chests and boxes (13), desks and bookcases (9), beds (4), children's furniture (10), miscellanea (19) and general (9). With the many photographs included in the tome, there are 104 entities given origination credit and over 1,000 photos overall. The volume also contains a standard index that consists of 222 main categories, 265 subcategories, and see also references.

This is an amazing resource, one that will intrigue curious minds as well as appeal to those with direct need to use it. It could benefit academic and special libraries alike but would be extremely useful for museums and archives that specialize in British history or New England/colonial history. Purchasing libraries should be warned though: the volume's all-encompassing content results in a very heavy weight of 7.8 pounds which could make it difficult to maneuver for some patrons. It is certainly not an ideal candidate for library book drops!

Jennifer Koenig Johnson

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The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Theatre

Edited by Nicholas Grene and Chris Morash

Oxford University Press

Oxford

2016

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For the purposes of this tome, and to me it is, modern Irish theatre started in 1860 with the production of Dion Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* at the Laura Keane Theatre in New York; thus, the work establishes a good early and international framework for modern Irish theatre which would normally be dated from the time of the 1890s, specifically the founding of The Irish Literary Theatre by W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn in 1897.

Both eminent editors are based in Dublin. Nicholas Grene is Emeritus Professor of English Literature at Trinity College Dublin and author of other books on Irish drama, the Irish stage and on Yeats. Chris Morash is Seamus Heaney Professor of Irish Writing at Trinity College, Dublin and the author of previous books on Irish drama and theatre. They have gathered together a strong team of 41 noted academic contributors from universities in Ireland, north and south, and England; and from the Anglophone and English-speaking countries of the USA, Canada and Australia. Thinking outside the box and representing a wider European influence on Irish drama, are contributions from Professors at the Centre for Irish Studies, Charles University Prague and from Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest. These throw a light on a generally little-known wider Irish diaspora on the continent of Europe and the interest in Irish drama on the continent. The experience and knowledge of all these contributors cannot be faulted; this is a veritable cornucopia of expertise. The work flows easily from chapter to chapter and whilst there are occasional overlaps of some information it is only to be expected as each chapter can also be read as a "standalone" article. For example, a 1957 Dublin production of Tennessee Williams's *The Rose Tattoo* has a least two mentions for the Church's attempt to