



Hollywood's Indies: Classics Divisions, Specialty Labels and American Independent Cinema

Yannis Tzioumakis

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For almost three decades the big Hollywood studios have operated classics divisions or specialty labels, subsidiaries that originally focused on the foreign art house film market, while more recently (and controversially) moving on to the American 'indie' film market. This is the first book to offer an in depth examination of the phenomenon of the classics divisions by tracing its history since the establishment the first specialty label in 1980, United Artists Classics, to more contemporary outfits like Focus Features, Warner Independent and Picturehouse. This detailed account of all classics divisions examines their business practices, their position within the often labyrinthine structure of contemporary entertainment conglomerates and their relationship to their parent companies. Yannis Tzioumakis examines the impact of those companies on American 'indie' cinema and argues that it was companies such as Fox Searchlight and Paramount Classics (now Paramount Vantage) that turned independent filmmaking to an industrial category endorsed by the Hollywood majors as opposed to a mode of filmmaking practised outside the conglomerated major players and posed as a sustained alternative to mainstream Hollywood cinema. A number of case studies are provided, including such celebrated films as *Mystery Train*, *The Brothers McMullen*, *Broken Flowers*, *Before Sunset* and many others.

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