

## Chapter 1 : Shell Shock Cinema | RedShelf

*Shell Shock Cinema is a brilliant book about the threshold between the visible and the invisible in post-traumatic narratives, with war memory displaced into stories of madmen, vampires, mythic heroes, and science fiction. In an entirely new key, Weimar cinema reemerges as a paradigm for our post-traumatic times."*

General Back cover copy "While Weimar psychology took film screening as a metaphor for the replay of World War I trauma under hypnosis, actual movies found relentless metaphors of their own--less as group therapy than in the thrill of referred pain--for a residual war on the nerves. Where Picasso saw cubism in the jigsaw collage of World War I camouflage, Kaes sees in screen montage the jagged forms of combat aftershock. His gripping account is a work of massive historical authority and steady revelation. Toward a Postfilmic Cinema "Siegfried Kracauer initiated the first deeply interpretive history of cinema with his work *From Caligari to Hitler*, in which he claimed that Weimar cinema presaged the rise of Nazism. Now, in *Shell Shock Cinema*, Anton Kaes offers a fully researched and equally profound work of film history by moving in the other direction, showing how the fantastic cinema of the Weimar era responded to the most explosive event of modern history--World War I. This is cinema scholarship at its most mature and also most adventuresome. It bristles with insights and will be widely read. Anton Kaes is the leading scholar of German film. His book rises far above the usual writing on the subject because of the very extensive knowledge he brings to bear on each of the films, and the highly acute analyses he continually offers. This is cultural scholarship at its very best. Weitz, author of *Weimar Germany* "With his deep knowledge of German cultural history, Kaes traces how the ghosts of the dead of World War I--the defining trauma of modernity--haunt all major Weimar films. *Shell Shock Cinema* is a brilliant book about the threshold between the visible and the invisible in post-traumatic narratives, with war memory displaced into stories of madmen, vampires, mythic heroes, and science fiction. In an entirely new key, Weimar cinema reemerges as a paradigm for our post-traumatic times. German silent cinema does not prefigure Hitler, but arises from the shell shocks of World War I. Those who return from the front haunt their homes as specters of a lost self, those who remain at home are caught in melancholia, unable to relinquish the loss they know only secondhand. An apt visual motto for these original readings of Weimar cinema, which we will never watch in quite the same way ever again. Clearly written and beautifully produced with ample illustrations, impressive notes, and a useful filmography of Weimar DVDs, the book is a pleasure to read. His expert analysis is sure to appeal to students of film studies, but his interpretations are also accessible to readers with a limited knowledge of Weimar cinema. Accordingly, this book will interest scholars and students in the fields of German studies, film studies, and cultural history. Anton Kaes has long been recognized as a leading scholar of Weimar cinema and German culture, and *Shell Shock Cinema* represents another important contribution to these fields. Feltman, *H-Net Reviews* "A combination of intensive genre analysis, well-observed contemporary cultural and psychological contextualization, and evocative cinematographic observation makes *Shell Shock Cinema* a splendid, even exemplary, cultural history that goes well beyond the bounds of previous studies. It is a wonderful read. Drawing on a growing body of work on trauma, the history of psychiatry, and World War I, he places this crucial chapter of modern cultural history within an entirely new analytic framework. *Shell Shock Cinema* is Stanley, *Canadian Journal of History* "Shell Shock Cinema posits a complex and convincing model of the fraught relationship between historical violence and representation, as well as a unique perspective on the legacies of war. He is the author of "From Hitler to Heimat:

*Shell Shock Cinema explores how the classical German cinema of the Weimar Republic was haunted by the horrors of World War I and the the devastating effects of the nation's defeat.*

He began by framing the project in classic New Historicist terms: Simply put, Kaes has spent much of his career thinking in nuanced ways about interwar Germany and its afterlives. At Cambridge, Kaes explained that, as he looked back over so much material, the problem he kept returning to was why no films of the s seemed on the surface to deal with the First World War that immediately preceded the period. The answer he came to, the one this book elaborates, is that they actually did, just not directly. As Kaes puts it: When one film storyline after the next followed narrators trying to reconstruct an uncertain past as in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, or a vampire figure between life and death sleeping in rat-infested dirt as in *Nosferatu*, this was cinema re-enacting experiences of war. These were, literally, post-traumatic films. Kaes tells us that war psychiatrists of the time used the metaphor of re-running a filmstrip for their work with hypnosis in handling trauma. *Shell Shock Cinema* makes the claim that Weimar cinema followed the model of the psychoanalytic talking cure, where repetition leads to interpretation. Films then offered a way of working through the war, something necessary not only for those who had served in the field, but for society as a whole. Among the main reasons that collective understanding of World War I tended not to find surface expression even afterwards was that censorship had kept the war itself relatively abstract for those on the home front, allowing families to see little of what was really going on beyond what and who came home. The unstable situation this created was further heightened when the ultimate defeat of Germany resulted not from a glorious final battle, but in a ceasefire. In this moment, cinema allowed for alternative futures. His opening placement of cinema itself is critical. In addition to describing a culture of going to the cinema to think about the war, Kaes also shows how, by the end of the war, filmmakers had come to understand that staged realism was not adequate to the experience: If the cinema became a place to work out the trauma of war, then the attempt to respond to that trauma through the filmic medium also worked through the limits of that medium. *Caligari*, which Kaes sees as actually the first film of the Great War. Its story of a somnambulist and an asylum director raises questions about the location of the monstrous in its ambiguity over who is insane versus who is simulating insanity. To do so, it disregards linear temporality and teases out the link between cinema and hypnosis. It too explores the uncanniness of film in its uncertain boundary between reality and hallucination, by specifically working with technological effects to materialize immaterial or phantasmagorical forces. And in *Metropolis*, Lang later revisits the war in both biblical and futuristic dimensions, by creating slippages between the modern shocks of the battlefield and those of the factory. These are just brief examples of the readings that Kaes offers up. And yet, it is important to Kaes in this book that we see none as absolute. If this range seems somewhat overwhelming to hold inside a single frame, it is at times. Early on, he makes an argument for aesthetic complexity: *Shell Shock Cinema* is a project of drawing out that complexity, of reading not in a way that is limiting, but one in which associations proliferate. There is a specific reason that Kaes is trying to avoid an all-encompassing interpretation. In his talk at Cambridge, Kaes also posed another question: *A Psychological History of the German Film*, in which he argued for the protofascistic tendencies of interwar German film. Kaes asked his question, if I recall correctly, somewhat glibly. But the intent was to historicize Kracauer, to frame him as responding to a series of his own cultural pressures while tidily theorizing those of Weimar cinema. Kaes, by contrast, proposes a different vantage point: Post-traumatic film instead of pre-fascistic. At the end of his journey, Francis indeed discovers the monster “but the monster from outside turns out to have been inside all along. This imperative to look forwards rather than backwards strikes me as one of the richest threads of *Shell Shock Cinema*. Even though Kaes has been working through this argument for a while within the academic community in talks and essays, the book form increases the likelihood of this less reductive historical perspective reaching a wider audience. By continuing in this line of more open time thought, Kaes offers a model for making parallels to the Weimar Republic more nuanced. Instead of thinking ahead toward catastrophe, why not spend more time understanding the processes already in place? What

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paranoiac fantasies haunt our own cultural productions? What is the question to which they are the answer?

### Chapter 3 : Afterimages of Trauma: Anton Kaes's "Shell Shock Cinema" - Los Angeles Review of Books

*Shell Shock Cinema is a project of drawing out that complexity, of reading not in a way that is limiting, but one in which associations proliferate. There is a specific reason that Kaes is trying.*

### Chapter 4 : Shell shock cinema : Weimar culture and the wounds of war (eBook, ) [calendrierdelascience.co

*Shell Shock Cinema is a brilliant book about the threshold between the visible and the invisible in post-traumatic narratives, with war memory displaced into stories.*

### Chapter 5 : Shell Shock Cinema by Kaes, Anton

*Book Description: Shell Shock Cinema explores how the classical German cinema of the Weimar Republic was haunted by the horrors of World War I and the the devastating effects of the nation's defeat.*

### Chapter 6 : Book Review: Shell Shock Cinema | White City Cinema

*In his book Shell Shock Cinema, Anton Kaes reads Weimar film in the context of the First World War, arguing that it is best understood as a means of psychologically working through the emotional.*

### Chapter 7 : Shell shock cinema : Weimar culture and the wounds of war (Book, ) [calendrierdelascience.co

*What makes Shell Shock Cinema such an exciting study is the cinematographic method Kaes employs as he pulls in, pans, and pulls back to explore the cultural and technical complexities of the films under discussion.*

### Chapter 8 : Shell Shock Cinema : Anton Kaes :

*Shell shock cinema does not feature witnessing characters but instead bears witness to pain and horror as ciphers of the war experience; it also highlights the paradox of the very concept of witness.*

### Chapter 9 : Shell Shock Cinema: Weimar Culture and the Wounds of War by Anton Kaes

*Shell Shock Cinema by Anton Kaes Princeton University Press, As someone who teaches film studies at the college level, I'm sorry to say that I think a lot of academic film writing is garbage.*