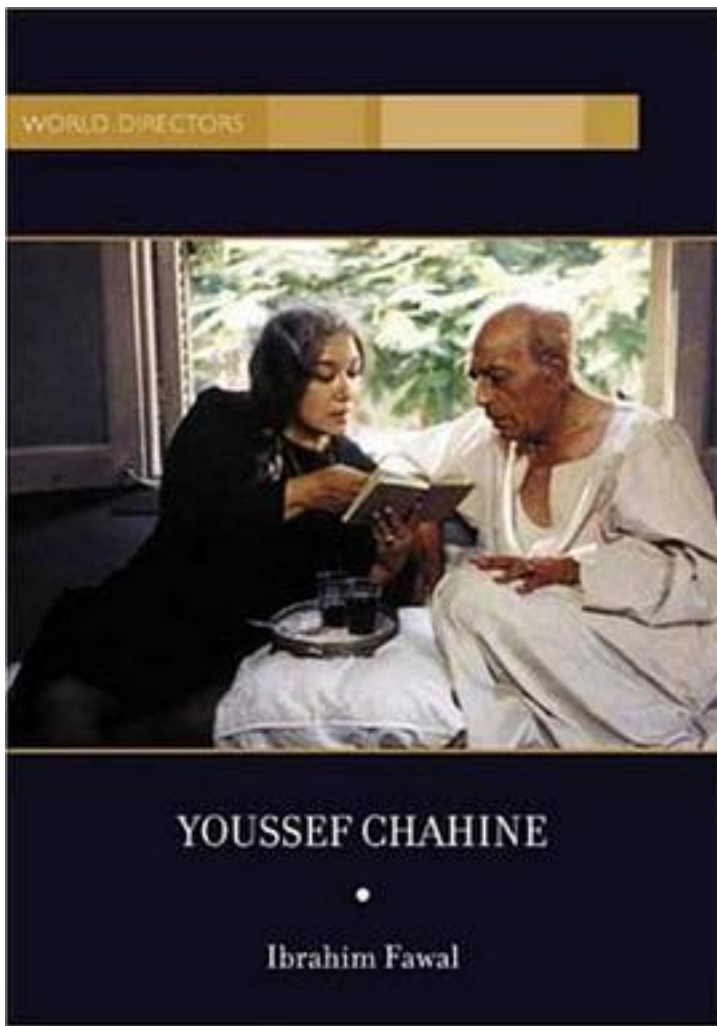


Youssef Chahine



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A filmmaker of truly international renown and the recipient of the Cannes Film

Festival's Lifetime Achievement Award, Youssef Chahine is the director of one of the most diverse and prestigious bodies of work of any living director. Born in Alexandria in 1926, the cosmopolitan Chahine embodies the preoccupations of his native Egypt in a career (still continuing) which has ranged from social realism to autobiographical fantasy, from historical epics to musicals, and has spanned over fifty years from 1950 to the present day. In writing this book, Ibrahim Fawal draws on his unique qualifications as an Arab-American whose native language is Arabic, and as a film practitioner and educator. His discussion of the frequently controversial filmmaker illuminates Chahine's work in the context of modern Egyptian culture and its tumultuous post-colonial history and how such films as Cairo Station (1958) and The Earth (1969) dramatized the dilemmas of ordinary Egyptians. He also demonstrates how Chahine's intensely personal autobiographical trilogy: "Alexandria...Why?" (1978), "An Egyptian Story" (1985) and "Alexandria...More and More" (1989) spoke to the concerns of the broader Egyptian intelligentsia amongst whom he has earned the reputation of being 'poet and thinker' of modern Arab cinema. In the final analysis, Fawal argues that Chahine's work stands comparison with the directors such as Fellini, Bergman, Kurosawa, and Sembene but also emphatically draws strength from its links with one of the most vibrant popular cinemas of the world and from the roots and traditions of popular Arabic culture.

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目录:

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