Just published!

David Walsh's *The Sky Between the Leaves*

22 November 2013

Mehring Books is excited to announce the release of *The Sky Between the Leaves* by *World Socialist Web Site* arts editor David Walsh, which contains a collection of film reviews, essays on film and interviews with directors and film critics spanning the 20 years from 1992 to 2012.

This volume contains articles from the WSWS, as well as from the *Bulletin* and *International Workers Bulletin* newspapers, the forerunners in the US of the WSWS, which was launched in February 1998 by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI).

As Walsh explains in the Introduction, "The development within the International Committee of systematic work on problems of culture and art, and my own participation in this process, was the outcome of the ICFI's response to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991." In wrestling with the consequences of this historic defeat of the working class, and posing the question, "Upon what basis would a new mass revolutionary socialist movement emerge?" the ICFI recognized that a cultural awakening within the working class was "essential to the development of a conscious, revolutionary critical attitude toward capitalist society."

Walsh began to write about art and culture for the *Bulletin* in September 1991 and was instrumental in the expansion of coverage of artistic and cultural developments with the launch of the *World Socialist Web Site* seven years later.

The film reviews contained in this volume cover a wide spectrum—from James Cameron's *Titanic* and Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* to the award-winning *A Separation* by Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi and films of Chinese and Taiwanese directors. There are also interviews with Abbas Kiarostami, Mike Leigh, Jia Zhangke and other filmmakers, as well as with critics Andrew Sarris and Robin Wood.

Several essays discuss the work of talented and principled artists of the 1930s and 1940s who sought to bring humanity to their work. Walsh details the fate of many who fell victim to the anti-communist McCarthyite witch-hunts of the 1950s. A recurring theme in these writings is the profound impact this historical period has had on Hollywood in the ensuing years. Walsh consistently returns to the crisis of contemporary filmmaking and the inability, or unwillingness, of so many of today's writers and directors to see the world as it is and grapple with social reality as millions experience it.

The critique provided by David Walsh is absolutely unique in the field of contemporary film criticism. No other source provides the Marxist analysis of culture contained in the WSWS. Walsh's writing is widely respected for its unrelenting hostility both to the pervasive academic fog of postmodernism in the arts, as well as the pseudo-left glorification of identity politics in contemporary film. Walsh's writings are essential for the development of a conscious, revolutionary critical attitude toward capitalist society.

Click here to order.

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