



Spirited Away (BFI Film Classics)

By Andrew Osmond

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Spirited Away, directed by the veteran anime film-maker Hayao Miyazaki, is Japan's most successful film, and one of the top-grossing 'foreign language' films ever released. Set in modern Japan, the film is a wildly imaginative fantasy, at once personal and universal. It tells the story of a listless little girl who stumbles into a magical world where gods relax in a palatial bathhouse, where there are giant babies and hard-working soot sprites, and where a train runs across the sea.

Andrew Osmond's insightful study describes how Miyazaki directed *Spirited Away* with a degree of creative control undreamt of in most popular cinema, using the film's delightful, freewheeling visual ideas to explore issues ranging from personal agency and responsibility to what Miyazaki sees as the lamentable state of modern Japan. Osmond unpacks the film's visual language, which many Western (and some Japanese) audiences find both beautiful and bewildering. He traces connections between *Spirited Away* and Miyazaki's prior body of work, arguing that *Spirited Away* uses the cartoon medium to create a compellingly immersive drawn world.

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Editorial Review

Review

'...thorough and well written, covering a number of bases. For any student of animation, fan of the movie, or just someone with an interest in anime generally, this is an insightful study and valuable tool to understanding one of the key anime films in recent years.' - *Neo Magazine*

'Andrew Osmond does a fine job, not only expertly breaking down Spirited Away's myriad signs and wonders, but acting as a cultural translator to boot.' - *Empire*"

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From the Back Cover

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