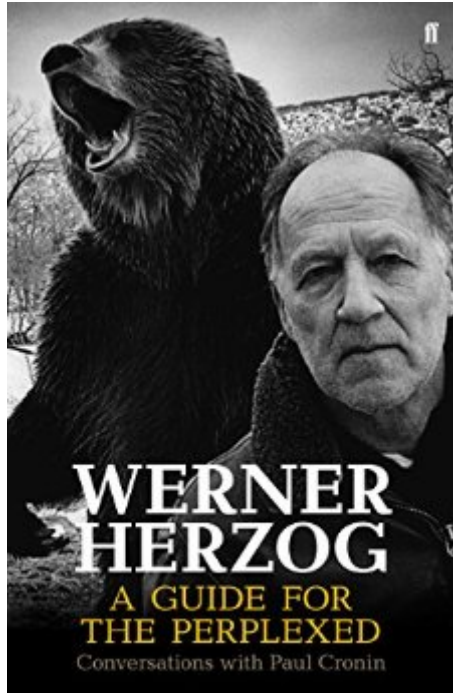


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# Werner Herzog - A Guide For The Perplexed: Conversations With Paul Cronin



## Synopsis

This edition of Herzog on Herzog presents a completely new set of interviews in which Werner Herzog discusses his career from its very beginnings to his most recent productions. Herzog was once hailed by Francois Truffaut as the most important director alive. Famous for his frequent collaborations with mercurial actor Klaus Kinski - including the epics, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Fitzcarraldo*, and the terrifying *Nosferatu* - and more recently with documentaries such as *Grizzly Man*, *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* and *Into the Abyss*, Herzog has built a body of work that is one of the most vital in post-war German cinema.

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## Customer Reviews

There are many \*good\* books out there which do a fine job of teaching you something new. There are \*great\* books that compel you to change your behavior, or take up a new hobby. And then there are \*extraordinary\* books which can potentially change the course of your life. This is such a book. Werner Herzog is an original. As a youngster, he taught himself how to make films. When no one would fund his movie-making habit, he started his own production company at age 17. When he needed to get through the Peruvian jungle for filming "*Fitzcarraldo*", he forged official-looking

documents for safe passage (they worked). For every film, he did a thousand things to get the shot. He once won a poetry contest four times by entering under five different names, and directed major operas when he couldn't read music. Reading the book, I came to have deep respect for his unstoppability and uncompromising vision. There is a certain methodical madness that should inspire all of us to roll up our sleeves, listen to that inner voice of creativity, and just do what needs to get done. It also compels the reader to look beyond the strictures of university degrees, schools of thought and ossified convention to forge one's own idiom. It's an incredibly powerful, freeing notion for any artist, exemplified by this passage: "While at work on this book, Werner explained he wanted something done a particular way. I suggested to him that 'the publisher doesn't usually do that.' He absorbed what I told him, paused, then said softly, 'I'm not interested in how things are usually done. I want it done this way.'

If you are hoping to gain some deep insight into the process by which famous directors plan their storyboards and ensure that they have adequate coverage of their angles from this book, save your money and buy a different one. If you want to discover more about Herzog's private life, you should look elsewhere. If though, like me, you are captivated by the power of Herzog's films, the poetry of his landscapes, the direct and fearless assault he makes on subjects as diverse as the aftermath of the Gulf War, Sky-Fliers, Death Row, the McMurdo research station, and want to know a more about his ideas and his work, then this book is invaluable. This book is an expanded and revised version of Cronin's earlier "Herzog on Herzog" (Faber & Faber, 2003). It consists of a series of interviews between Cronin and Herzog, edited by them both, that took place over the 10 years to 2012. Cronin prompts; Herzog explains, elucidates, reformulates, expounds, recaps and explains again. Herzog's philosophy is clearly stated throughout. Simply put, he believes that real life is everything, and it is through intimate and committed contact with real life that we discover true understanding and meaning. The quote from its pages that brought me to this book was: "The best advice I can offer to those heading into the world of film is not to wait for the system to finance your projects and for others to decide your fate. If you can't afford to make a million-dollar film, raise \$10,000 and produce it yourself. That's all you need to make a feature film these days. Beware of useless, bottom-rung secretarial jobs in film-production companies. Instead, so long as you are able-bodied, head out to where the real world is.

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