

Nikita Mathias

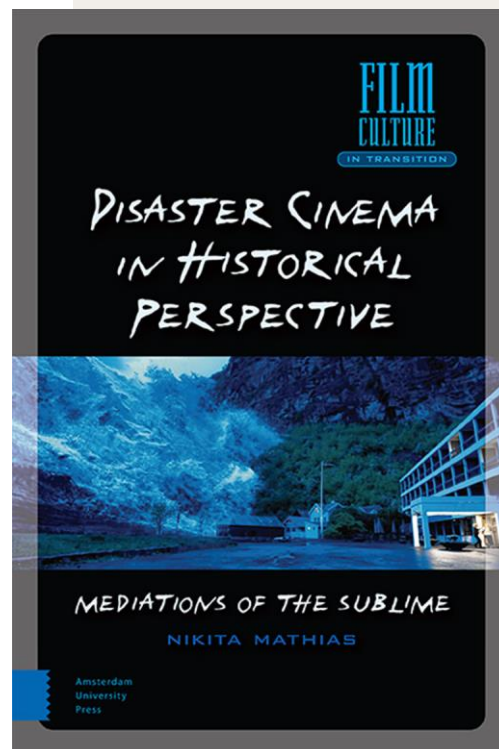
Disaster Cinema in Historical Perspective

Mediations of the Sublime

How do we experience disaster films in cinema? And where does disaster cinema come from? The two questions are more closely related than one might initially think. For the framework of the cinematic experience of natural disasters has its roots in the mid-eighteenth century when the aesthetic category of the sublime was re-established as the primary mode for appreciating nature's violent forces. In this book, the sublime is understood as a complex and culturally specific meeting point between philosophical thought, artistic creation, social and technical development, and popular imagination. On the one hand, the sublime provides a receptive model to uncover how cinematic disaster depictions affect our senses, bodies and minds. On the other hand, this experiential framework of disaster cinema is only one of the most recent agents within the historical trajectory of sublime disasters, which is traced in this book among a broad range of media: from landscape and history painting to a variety of pictorial devices like Eidophusikon, Panorama, Diorama, and, finally, cinema.

"Disaster Cinema in Historical Perspective: Mediations of the Sublime is a genuine and original contribution to the fields of art history and cinema studies as well as to discussions on the concept of the sublime in the field of aesthetics. It is well-organized, well-informed, and lucidly written and draws on an impressive body of empirical and theoretical materials. As importantly, it is critical and nuanced in its claims and assertions, leaving ample room for discussion and counter-argument."

Ina Blom, University of Chicago, University of Oslo



Holding a PhD from the University of Tübingen, Germany, **Nikita Mathias's** main research interests lie within the fields of art history, media studies, aesthetics, and literary studies. Besides his academic career, he has worked as a journalist and in various positions in the cultural sector. In his current occupation, he holds the position of Senior Concept Developer at the Munch Museum in Oslo, Norway, which involves creating meaningful and engaging art experiences as well as publications and research.

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