



# Critical Approaches to the Films of Robert Rodriguez

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Frederick Aldama's *The Cinema of Robert Rodriguez* (2014) was the first full-scale study of one of the most prolific and significant Latino directors making films today. In this companion volume, Aldama enlists a corps of experts to analyze a majority of Rodriguez's feature films, from his first break-out success *El Mariachi* in 1992 to *Machete* in 2010. The essays explore the formal and thematic features present in his films from the perspectives of industry (context, convention, and distribution), the film blueprint (auditory and visual ingredients), and consumption (ideal and real audiences). The authors illuminate the manifold ways in which Rodriguez's films operate internally (plot, character, and event) and externally (audience perception, thought, and feeling).

The volume is divided into three parts: "Matters of Mind and Media" includes essays that use psychoanalytic and cognitive psychology to shed light on how Rodriguez's films complicate Latino identity, as well as how they succeed in remaking audiences' preconceptions of the world. "Narrative Theory, Cognitive Science, and *Sin City*: A Case Study" offers tools and models of analysis for the study of Rodriguez's film re-creation of a comic book (on which Frank Miller was credited as codirector). "Aesthetic and Ontological Border Crossings and Borderlands" considers how Rodriguez's films innovatively critique fixed notions of Latino identity and experience, as well as open eyes to racial injustices. As a whole, the volume demonstrates how Rodriguez's career offers critical insights into the filmmaking industry, the creative process, and the consuming and reception of contemporary film.

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