

It Don't Worry Me

The Revolutionary American Films of the Seventies

RYAN GILBEY

Faber & Faber, \$24.00 cloth, ISBN 0-571-21486-X; \$14.00 paper,
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Like the cataclysmic final scene in Robert Altman's *Nashville* from which the book takes its name, Ryan Gilbey's *It Don't Worry Me: The Revolutionary American Films of the Seventies* is a compelling snapshot of a complicated era in American cultural history.

But unlike Altman's *Nashville*, which concludes with the assassination of a mentally ill country music diva on the hallowed floor of the city's simulated Greek Parthenon, Gilbey has no taste for toppling sacred icons. He simply hopes to restore a sense of balance to our understanding of the commercial films that cropped up in the shadow of 1968 Chicago and Vietnam.

Gilbey's central argument is that the 1970s were not only a revolutionary decade for Hollywood filmmaking, but also a time when theatrical and literary adaptations trailed off and cinema came into its own as "an autonomous art form." He gives partial credit for this to the influence of B-movie maker Roger Corman, who employed several of the 1970s directors Gilbey profiles. The youth of these new directors was a factor, too, especially in their commercial success. He perceptively notes that by the end of the decade, the five highest-grossing films—*Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *Grease*, *The Godfather*, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*—had been made by directors under the age of 35.

Broken up into chapters that survey young directors ranging from the artistic Altman and Kubrick to the commercial Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, *It Don't Worry Me* offers illuminating material on the era's would-be auteurs. But fascinating too are his studies of the commercial figures. Especially intriguing is his examination of largely forgotten but important films such as Lucas' philosophical sci-fi picture *THX 1138*, whose ending challenges rather than gratifies its audience—box office be damned.

Gilbey is fairly successful in bridging the divide that sometimes separates academic and general reader-oriented film literature. No references to Lacanian suture and Brechtian distanciation here, but the influence of such theories will resonate with readers schooled in their theoretical mysteries. Occasionally, however, Gilbey lets his vast film knowledge get the best of his writing, injecting his arguments with arcane film references that threaten to puzzle even the most avid average viewer. Other times, his analysis begs for at least a tad more background in the film school basics. Weren't many of these films a product of the decades-long trickle of French New Wave influences into American film? Didn't guerilla cinema of non- and anti-commercial filmmakers of the 1960s provide some of the fodder that spelled financial success for these more commercial 1970s films?

All in all, the book's strengths outweigh its faults. *It Don't Worry Me* whittles an engaging narrative out of a formidable

subject, providing some fresh detail on a groundbreaking period in American film. ■

Cuba and Its Music

From the First Drums to the Mambo

NED SUBLETTE

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The Cuban people have a long history of forging fine art out of a mix of materials. Take David Schendel's recent documentary, *Yank Tanks*, which examines the underground culture of mechanics who keep the nation's fleet of classic 1950s American cars on the road. Inside a gleaming, stylized, chrome-covered Chevrolet body, one might find a Czech engine, a Chinese distributor, and an Argentine carburetor.

So too with Cuba's much older and even more venerable art, its music. With African, Spanish, Arabic, French, American, Jewish, Argentine, and even Mexican influences, Cuban music has risen to international acclaim partly on the basis that its sum is greater than the parts.

Written for the average reader but full of new and fascinating scholarly insights, Ned Sublette's book tells the story of Cuban music's evolution, promising to become a new standard in the field. Starting with an overview of the development of Spain's music and African drumming traditions, Sublette then moves fluidly through studies of *contradanza*, Congolese and Sudanic influences, rumba, and mambo.

What also makes this book successful is Sublette's ability to employ social and political history and anthropology skillfully to illuminate his points about musicology and music history. Even when he diverges from his main topic, his writing style is so captivating and his facts are so compelling that one hardly begrudges him the indulgence. ■

REVIEWER: **Peter La Chapelle** is an assistant professor of Mass Communications at Wilson College. His book *Proud to Be an Okie: Migration, Populism, and Cultural Politics of Country Music in Los Angeles* will be published by the University of California Press in 2005.

"Don't Worry 'bout Me" is a 1938 song composed by Rube Bloom, with lyrics written by Ted Koehler. It was introduced in the "World's Fair" edition of the Cotton Club show in 1939. The first hit recording was in 1939 by Hal Kemp and His Orchestra (vocal by Bob Allen). Savannah Churchill recorded on December 26, 1951 for RCA Victor (catalog No. 20-4773). Jack Sheldon recorded "Jack Sheldon Sings" (1992). Keith Carradine It Don't Worry Me Lyrics. 16,303 views. It Don't Worry Me. 141 views. Robert Altman's Nashville - closing scenes. 34,413 views. Top Songs By Keith Carradine. 1. I'm Easy. Keith Carradine. 121,449. It Don't Worry Me Barbara Harris Song lyrics. Economy's depressed not me, my spirit's high as they can be and you may say that I ain't free, but it don't worry me. It don't worry me, (common everybody) it don't worry me, you may say that I ain't free but it don't worry me. It don't worry me; You may say that I ain't free, but it don't worry me. It don't worry me none, it don't worry me, you may say that I ain't free, but it don't worry me; Contributed by Bernart - 2013/6/4 - 14:44. Add