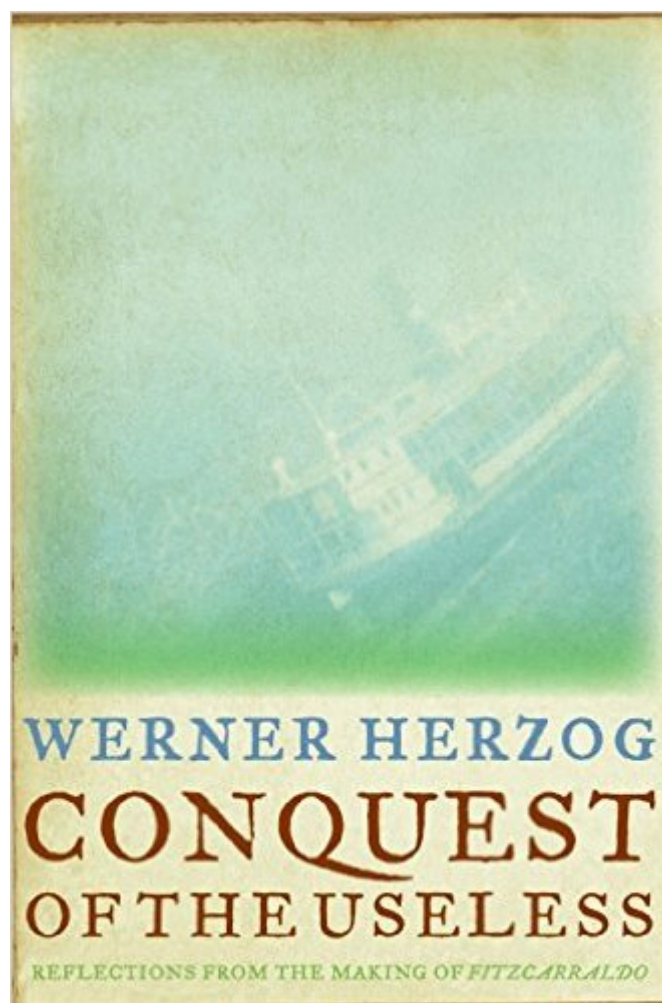


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Conquest Of The Useless: Reflections From The Making Of Fitzcarraldo



Synopsis

It is ever tempting to try to fathom his restless spirit and his determination to challenge fate. "Janet Maslin, New York Times" Werner Herzog (Grizzly Man) is one of the most revered and enigmatic filmmakers of our time, and Fitzcarraldo is one of his most honored and admired films. More than just Herzog's journal of the making of the monumental, problematical motion picture, which involved, among other things, major cast changes and reshoots, and the hauling (without the use of special effects) of a 360-ton steamship over a mountain, Conquest of the Useless is a work of art unto itself, an idiosyncratic fever dream that emerged from the delirium of the jungle. With fascinating observations about crew and players including Herzog's lead, the somewhat demented internationally renowned star Klaus Kinski and breathtaking insights into the filmmaking process that are uniquely Werner Herzog, Conquest of the Useless is an eye-opening look into the mind of a cinematic master.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Conquest of the Useless is Werner Herzog's journal while he was in the , planning and filming Fitzcarraldo. If you are a fan of Fitzcarraldo, this book, along with Les Blank's documentary on the filming (Burden of Dreams), give a real feel for Herzog's experience of the and the challenges in making the movie. He doesn't dwell very much on the best-known aspect of the story, his determination to haul a steamboat uphill and downhill from one tributary of the to another. This was very much Herzog's determination -- in the historical events that Fitzcarraldo is based on, the ship

was disassembled and moved, not pulled over intact. What he does dwell on is the itself. Herzog seems to enjoy love-hate relationships -- his relationship with the is much like his relationship with Klaus Kinski. At times he is repelled and rants against the jungle: "The jungle is obscene. Everything about it is sinful, for which reason the sin does not stand out as sin. The voices in the jungle are silent; nothing is stirring, and a languid, immobile anger hovers over everything." "Tumors form on the trees. Roots writhe in the air. The jungle revels in debauched lewdness." Kinski appears, with his own rants, irrational behavior, just plain annoying, irritating behavior. He keeps insisting to Herzog that the jungle is erotic: ". . . Kinski amorously leaned his cheek against a tree trunk and then began to copulate with the tree. He thinks this is immensely erotic: the child of nature and the wild jungle. . . . To me it was not erotic at all. I spat, only obscene." Mick Jagger and Jason Robards also appear -- they were cast in Herzog's first attempt to film the movie, cut short by Robards' illness.

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