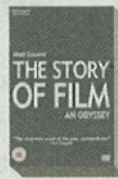


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**The Story Of Film:  
An Odyssey (15)**

DVD ★★★★★

Immerse yourself in Mark Cousins's outstanding 15-hour documentary series and you'll think of cinema in a markedly different way. The film-maker and writer's passionate enthusiasm for film shapes this deeply personal, erudite love letter to the form. The Hollywood mainstream is acknowledged but is rarely the focus – Cousins's mission is to chart the history of cinematic innovation and to broaden our scope to recognise the significant strides taken in film all around the world.

This globetrotting labour of love took five years to make, with minimal resources, but its indie scruffiness is appealing – and the quirky choice of interviewees (Baz Luhrmann and Claudia Cardinale among them) is always interesting. Understandably, the revelations dazzle less as Cousins approaches the modern-day. But he delivers so much information and shows so many of the parallels and influences that pervade this self-referential art form that you're left itching to revisit the classics and discover the surprising gems he's highlighted. Out Monday.

**SM**