

THE MONKEY'S MASK

Film,
Poetry and
the Female Voice



Rebecca Louise

In response to the legacy that Australian poet, Dorothy Porter left us and Porter's lesbian crime novel in verse, *The Monkey's Mask*, Rebecca Louise delves in to the underworld of Porter's novel (and its film adaptation) where the poetic, the erotic and the forensic collide.

The first monograph to fully engage with the adaptation of Australian poetry to Australian film, Rebecca Louise's *The Monkey's Mask: Film, Poetry and the Female Voice* will appeal to fans of Dorothy Porter, those studying and teaching film studies and literary studies and those intrigued by the relationship between cinema and poetry. Launched in the atmospheric surrounds of The Thornbury Theatre, by Melbourne poets Jen Jewel Brown and Meg Dunn, and featuring readings from Dorothy Porter's novel, *The Monkey's Mask*, this is a night not to be missed.



Australian film director, Samantha Lang's 2000 film adaptation of *The Monkey's Mask* not only strengthened Dorothy Porter's reputation as niche celebrity and contributed to the novel's growing popularity but also took a unique approach to poetry. Because Porter's poetry is central to the narrative and mise en scène of the film, Lang's interpretation of Porter's verse novel is an interesting case of adaptation, and one that can offer insight to the role of poetry in Australian cinema more generally. Rebecca Louise looks at the ways in which Australian film directors have, over time, engaged with their poetic sources and provides insight into the relationship between poetry and film. The exploration of the poetic voice that takes place in the Louise's monograph opens up new ways of thinking about the role that the poetic voice plays in cinema and in the film adaptation process.

What critics have to say about *The Monkey's Mask: Film, Poetry and the Female Voice*:



Thinking about the relationship between poetic language and film language is a challenge for writers and moviemakers alike. Rebecca Louise meets this challenge boldly and with passion, in the process opening up some valuable new perspectives on Australian cinema.

JAKE WILSON, THE AGE



Herself a captivating poet, Louise is well equipped to take us on this fascinating critical journey through Lang's filmic realisation of the Australian firebrand poet Porter's tour de force. The resultant poetic-feminine interplay of crime, sex, longing and loss is examined here with forensic care. Highly recommended.

**JEN JEWEL BROWN, AUSTRALIAN
POET AND JOURNALIST**

The Moving Image is Australia's premier monograph series for writing on theory, criticism, history, film practice, multimedia, television and photography in Australia. It is published annually by *The Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM)*. The series is a response to the need for authoritative analysis and documentation of the field. *The Moving Image* has developed Australian writers and writing in an Australian context. It is a refereed scholarly publication, made possible through grants from cultural organisations (e.g. received from The Australian Film Institute, The National Film & Sound Archive, and The Australian Centre for the Moving Image), and underwritten by ATOM, the publisher. An Editorial Board referees all manuscripts and members of the board work closely with authors to ensure the monographs meet the standards set for academic research.

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