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The chapters presented in this Reader, drawing on recent works, explore and analyse dynamic subject matter such as family, moral values, cultural hybridity, Asian-Australian dialogues, gender and racial stereotypes, the representations of Australianness, Indigenous Australia, imagery and motifs, the variety of Australian national symbols, mythology, traditions, representation or development of outback or suburban and metropolitan spaces in Australian cinema and culture. For a better understanding of the breadth and depth of Australia and its culture, the papers selected in this book also examine the exhibition of the Australian artist's aesthetic experimentation in the various faces of the Australian film industry, and the development and evolution of Australian film theory as part of the institutions of film studies and scholarly practices, using historical, archaeological and textual approaches for a wide variety of primary sources to discuss the trends of cinema and cultural consumption in Australia. In the area of purview, here, are not just commercial Australian films but also developments in new media, shorts, digital, art and documentary cinema in the broad context of globalization and international co-production.

— **Amit Sarwal and Reema Sarwal, Introduction**

Amit and Reema Sarwal are astute editors. They have gathered with care an interlocking collection of well chosen and persuasively researched studies of key aspects of Australian cinema and culture in this Reader. They will enlighten and enrich Indian students of acting, theatre, film and media studies, cultural studies and colonial and post-colonial history. The coverage is comprehensive.

Many issues are canvassed, addressed and analysed: the major continuities and discontinuities in Australian cinema since its beginnings; its fundamental themes, subject matter, narrative forms ambiguities and ironies; the singular achievements and bitter disappointments—both nationally and internationally; and its interwoven textures of place, landscape, mystery, class, nationality and identity. Overseas influences and involvement are explored as well as the dominant genres that emerged in the early twentieth century in a burst of creativity in the Silent Era—bushranging, pioneering, broad bush comedy, the convict past, wars and turgid sentimental melodrama. Also given serious consideration are the changing depictions in feature film of Indigenous people and recent hosannas to multiculturalism, anti-racism, reconciliation, globalisation and the need for social justice without becoming preachy or over-simplified.

For the Indian student, an in-depth appreciation of a different culture will emerge about a foreign land where people are as enthusiastic about feature films as entertainment as Indian people still are.

— **John Ramsland, Foreword**

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Australian Cinema and Cultural Studies Reader

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Amit Sarwal
Reema Sarwal

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