



Future Noir Revised & Updated Edition: The Making of Blade Runner

Paul M. Sammon

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Rediscover the groundbreaking magic of *Blade Runner* with this revised and updated edition of the classic guide to Ridley Scott's transformative film—and published in anticipation of its sequel, *Blade Runner 2049*, premiering October 2017 and starring Ryan Gosling, Jared Leto, Robin Wright, and Harrison Ford.

Ridley Scott's 1992 "Director's Cut" confirmed the international film cognoscenti's judgment: *Blade Runner*, based on Philip K. Dick's brilliant and troubling science fiction masterpiece *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, is the most visually dense, thematically challenging, and influential science fiction film ever made. *Future Noir* offers a deeper understanding of this cult phenomenon that is storytelling and visual filmmaking at its best.

In this intensive, intimate and anything-but-glamorous behind-the-scenes account, film insider and cinephile Paul M. Sammon explores how Ridley Scott purposefully used his creative genius to transform the work of science fiction's most uncompromising author into a critical sensation, a commercial success, and a cult classic that would reinvent the genre. Sammon reveals how the making of the original *Blade Runner* was a seven-year odyssey that would test the stamina and the imagination of writers, producers, special effects wizards, and the most innovative art directors and set designers in the industry at the time it was made. This revised and expanded edition of *Future Noir* includes:

An overview of *Blade Runner*'s impact on moviemaking and its acknowledged significance in popular culture since the book's original publication
An exploration of the history of *Blade Runner: The Final Cut* and its theatrical release in 2007
An up-close look at its long-awaited sequel *Blade Runner 2049*
A 2007 interview with Harrison Ford now available to American readers
Exclusive interviews with Rutger Hauer and Sean Young

A fascinating look at the ever-shifting interface between commerce and art, illustrated with production photos and stills, *Future Noir* provides an eye-opening and enduring look at modern moviemaking, the business of Hollywood, and one of the greatest films of all time.

Future Noir Revised & Updated Edition: The Making of Blade Runner Details

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From Reader Review Future Noir Revised & Updated Edition: The Making of Blade Runner for online ebook

D.M. says

This is THE book on Ridley Scott's 80s epic Blade Runner. Not only is it an utterly indispensable guide through the making of the film, it is a pleasantly readable account of the battle that can happen in making any film. Though the special effects chapter is necessarily a little dry, Sammon makes efforts to direct it to the uninitiated as well as those more versed in the ways of effects. Aside from that one section, Sammon did an admirable job assembling years-worth of information on all the aspects of the film into a coherent whole. There is almost certainly an up-to-date version of this book that will cover the eventual re-re-release of the film in its Final Cut version, but even this earlier edition (published after the Director's Cut was released for home viewing) explains why so many different versions of the film exist. Chockful of information both necessary and trivial, this is essential reading for the fan, and informative for the curious.

Kevin Kelsey says

This book contains an unbelievably vast amount of information regarding Blade Runner. It is an absolute encyclopedic history, covering everything from Philip K. Dick's early childhood through the moments leading up to Blade Runner 2049's release. Blade Runner has had a turbulent history to say the least, and Paul Sammon has done a phenomenal job chronicling everything about it. He was involved in documenting the project before the first shot was filmed, was frequently on set during filming, and through post-production. He was in the screening audience of previews cuts. He was at auctions for props. If it was related to Blade Runner, he was involved, conducting interviews and documenting at all. This book is a massive wealth of film history.

This third edition of Future Noir has been extensively rewritten and updated with more current information, new cast and crew interviews, etc. It is quite a doorstop, but remains engaging throughout. I particularly enjoyed the new interview with Sean Young at the end, and the huge amount of information on exactly what it took to create the "Final Cut".

Being involved in the making of an ambitious movie like Blade Runner seems like it would be a special kind of hell, but I am oh so glad that everyone involved took on such a daunting project.

If you're a fan of the movie, or remotely interested in filmmaking or film history, this is a must read.

Andrew says

Everything you do (and probably do not) want to know about Blade Runner. Wow. This is a nearly exhaustive look at the making and cultural impact of the Blade Runner film, including its various 'cuts'. It contains an extensive interview with star Harrison Ford and director Ridley Scott at the end. It includes discussion of the then-upcoming Blade Runner 2049 and one can hope the next edition, or a separate follow-up book will deal with that sequel as well.

A good read for fans of the film, the genre, and those who enjoy pop culture and film history.

WarpDrive says

“The light that burns twice as bright burns half as long, and you have burned so very very brightly, Roy”

This is a well written, detailed and informative book about a timeless masterpiece, about a movie that still now, so many years after its first release, has a lot to say, to all of us, about the nature of the human condition.

This book deserves praise for the amount of interesting information about the movie's troubled and complex history, its actors and their relationship to the Director Ridley Scott, and its making from an artistic as well as technical perspective. Highly recommended to all fans. A labour of love.

But I must admit one thing: the review of this nice book has been for me just an excuse to express my feelings about the movie: the one that has given me so much at many levels since I first watched it: it is time for me to talk about Blade Runner.

Blade Runner is a mesmerizing movie with a deceptively simple story, evocatively presenting timeless themes about humanity, consciousness, personal identity, death and oblivion that run deep at many different levels.

It is a story where the two main characters (a man and a replicant) discover their own humanity and the uniqueness and preciousness of conscious life.

But this movie is not a purely intellectual exercise: the haunting loneliness, the jaded love, the desperation for meaning and for more life, all paired with the haunting soundtrack, are deeply felt and simply unforgettable. This is a work of art in cinematic form, pure and simple. I really struggle to convey the beauty and the layers of meaning of this masterpiece, which always polarized critics (some of them clearly demonstrating, I think, their inability to get past the narrative surface of the movie and get to the meaning of its elliptical narrative and complex thematics – or maybe they should all undertake the Voight-Kampff test :-)). Quite a few viewers, in particular, appeared not to initially appreciate the downbeat, morally ambiguous (up to the point of being disorienting), enigmatic and subtly sobering overall tone of this unconventional movie. But this movie was well ahead of its times, when it was initially released to the public.

That this work of art is something quite remarkable appears clear from the very beginning: the opening scenes are incredible and it all hits you immediately – a wondrous view of a far-future, stark, rain-drenched megalopolis (LA), where the sense of awe and magic of the imagery are exalted by the beautiful and atmospheric soundtrack that some have fittingly defined as “futuristic nostalgia”.

Many have called this a dystopian environment, but I personally found it a strangely beautiful and captivating scene. Almost reassuring. Exquisite in its decadence. A beautiful cityscape that is reflected into the iris of one of the main characters. We are in the presence of a human civilization that managed to create artificial consciousness, colonies on other planets, flying cars, forests of skyscrapers, but that also generated increasing wealth disparities and population and climate control issues. Dystopian ? Yes, but also reflecting amazing technical and scientific progress, to an extent that I might even define optimistic in a way, and reflecting faith in the capabilities of humankind, even with all the visible problems affecting its social and ecological environment. A civilization great in its decadence.

Exquisite, dreamlike decadence that is also beautifully reflected in the architecturally grandiose but rotting, huge and melancholic apartment building where Sebastian (the nerdish main developer of this Nexus replicant technology) lives alone with his bizarre creations, an environment imbued with an eerie ambiance.

His bizarre creations present a discomforting mixture of human-like (when, for example, the Kaiser-looking doll continually shoots a series of urgent, very human looks between the female replicant and Sebastian) and toy/machine-like characteristics (the mechanical movement, the repetition of acts, the bumping against walls). We have, in the same room, all different levels of consciousness, which challenges you to contemplate the nature, threshold and meaning of consciousness.

Also, the immense, ziggurat-shaped buildings of the Tyrell corporation, engulfed in golden light, and the vast, stark and intimidating Tyrell's office with its huge picture window, all exude an aura of almost religious power, in stark opposition to the anonymous faceless humanity rushing through the rain-drenched, overpopulated lower level streets.

This atmosphere, these environments hit me every time at a deep subliminal level, they provoke in me the same deep reactions that I experience when I contemplate a De Chirico streetscape or some surrealist paintings. The cityscape of LA 2019, where the movie is based, is eerie in its sense of alienation and isolation, even in its bustling overpopulated streets – a sense of isolation that I have seen pictorially rendered in paintings like *Nighthawks* by Edward Hopper, for example.

But I love this immersive, bleak world populated by a melting pot of styles and cultures, an uber-globalised environment with a heavy Eastern Asian influence. It is like Tokyo (which by the way is a stunning city), but with steroids. It is a great movie that keeps giving every time you watch it, but also a visual feast with transcendental and hallucinatory overtones.

The main characters have deeply flawed, ambiguous, morally complex, desperate personalities, whose development mirror and contrast each other. It is a constant struggle between feeling admiration or loath for either of them. And the moral and existential boundaries between the two, between human and replicant, get increasingly blurred as the movie progresses towards its conclusion. The purely instinctual and even

homicidal greed for survival initially demonstrated by Roy the replicant get progressively nuanced and enriched by other elements. The attraction between Deckard (the “Blade Runner”) and Rachael (the replicant who initially was totally unaware of her own nature, thinking of herself as human but then discovering that her own memories were transplanted) is almost hateful, or at least dysfunctional; the love scene between the two amounts almost to rape – it is about two desperate human beings with a hollow existence who use each other to try and find some comfort that they desperately search for, some life meaning, in a desert of overcrowded anonymity, that they subliminally perceive they can't reach. A desperation that pushes them close to each other.

The meeting between the replicant Roy and his maker is also quite unforgettable: its dynamics resemble that of a confession between a believer and a priest (“I have done...questionable things”), between a son and his father, between the creator and his creation (“It's not an easy thing to meet your maker”). It is strangely intimate, and it expresses both the almost paternal pride of Tyrell for his creation and a dim beginning of moral conscience by the replicant, together with his desperate demand for more life, but it ends up with the son killing his father in an act of liberating, unexpected and violent rage. An act laden with symbolic meanings, from Greek mythology to the potential advent of the so-called technological singularity.

Some of the other characters are quite fascinating too – including the female replicant Pris (companion of Roy) with her strange mixture of erotic appeal, doll-like but super-human athletic strength, ruthlessness and manipulateness mixed with fragility and insecurity. Gaff (the enigmatic veteran Blade Runner) and Tyrell himself are also fascinating, even if only (but masterfully) sketched.

Sebastian is also very interesting: he is twenty-five years old, a genius, but his skin is wrinkled and he is fast aging because of a physical condition. "Accelerated decrepitude" is how the replicant Pris describes it: in this, he has something in common with the replicants, but also with the civilization he is an exponent of. His condition highlights and magnifies the overall themes of mortality, decadence and caducity that appear throughout the narrative.

The theme of the relationship between memories and identity is also recurrent, and developed with intelligence and measure – starting from the fabricated memories of Rachael, to the childhood photographs stored in Deckard's apartment, to his enigmatic unicorn's dream, to the statement by Tyrell (“If we gift them with a past... we create a cushion or pillow for their emotions... and we can control them better”) to the final scene with the death of Roy the replicant.

The most emotionally charged scene of the movie is towards the end, when Roy the replicant, having clearly overwhelmed Deckard with his superior physical abilities, has literally Deckard's life in his hand.

Roy's final words express and appreciation for life and for the uniqueness and value of his life experiences, which he almost gently remembers and cherishes, and an appreciation for his own personhood; they are all the more poignant because he is about to die, and he knows it. The tragedy and pathos to the kind of knowledge of one's mortality that this replicant possesses, make him more human than his human opponent. While he is dying, he wants to hold onto something that is alive, a white dove that is symbolically released at the very moment of his death.

But the deeply human way with which Roy makes us witnesses to his death does not come as a total surprise - glimpses of the developing humanity of this replicant start appearing when he finds his companion dead, with her tongue protruding from her mouth – in a scene of deep tenderness so contrasting to her bizarre, machine-like death, he puts her tongue back into her mouth by kissing her, giving her the dignity she deserved. It is a very strong moment.

Even at the beginning of the movie, when the replicants are depicted as ruthless, in-emotional machines with superhuman capabilities and intelligence, one of Roy's replicant companions expresses his emotional desperation, while he is holding by the neck and about to kill his prospective destroyer: "Painful to live in fear, isn't it?". Something very similarly later expressed by Roy himself: "Quite an experience to live in fear, isn't it? That's what it is to be a slave".

Finally, by saving the life of the person who was supposed to "retire" him, Roy the replicant shows his full humanity: he comes to fully appreciate the value of human life, and he saves the life of his enemy. In doing so, he reaches emotional maturity by loving life "per se", anybody's life, not just his own.

The author of this book reports that when Hauer performed the scene, the film crew applauded and some even cried – which I found not surprising at all, considering how beautifully and heartrendingly the replicant wants to make his mark on existence, how his final short speech highlights at the same time his deeply human traits and his super-human (almost in a Nietzschean sense) short but very intense existence (as per his "maker" Tyrell unforgettable statement: "The light that burns twice as bright burns half as long, and you have burned so very very brightly, Roy"). Experience. Discovery. Empathy. And, most of all, appreciation of the beauty and majesty of the Universe. All features that characterize the short life of Roy, and that make him intensely human. Maybe he represents Human 2.0. Maybe this is why we are around - what is the point of beauty if there is nobody to contemplate, understand and appreciate it.

Roy is an Übermensch, physically and morally speaking - he is morally free of the rules of his human chasers, but ultimately he is not amoral. His choice to save Deckard is made from a position of strength, an utterly free choice.

But the replicant life's meaning is ultimately marked by the manner of his death – and in doing so he shows his human opponent Deckard what humanity is about, he shows freedom and free will that his human opponent has not demonstrated yet. He is a fallen angel that has gained his full meaning by the manner of his dying.

He shows Deckard the understanding that anybody life's loss is everybody's loss, and how life, consciousness and the unique magic that is the individual "soul" are all so fragile ("all these moments will be lost – like tears in rain"). Existential angst at its most poetic.

Our short human life is, after all, not so different to the few years lifespan that has been irreversibly hardwired into the basic structure of these replicants – we too have incept dates and a built-in internal obsolescence mechanism. Like Roy, we too long to meet, or at least fathom, our Maker (whatever it may be – be it in a theistic, deistic or atheistic version). At least Roy can go and find Tyrell – we can't. And, like Roy, Deckard, and Rachael, we all try to figure out ourselves, consciously or unconsciously.

At the end of the movie we are left to wonder if these replicants are human, and if Deckard is in fact a replicant (the hint delivered by the puzzling Deckard's unicorn dream). But, does it really matter? Maybe

this is the message – that it does not. Lots of questions are left unanswered – in a deeply ethical movie that, nevertheless, does not provide any clear-cut, ready-made simple answers. It is left to us, viewers. But this is part of the magic and beauty of it.

One message from the movie is quite unequivocal, though: to love conscious life as a gift, contemplate it for the mystery that it represents, and live it every day - at its possible best. And that we are not nothing – Roy teaches us that, after all, there is value in us human beings and in our conscious minds. And that we should not waste it. Experience and discover. Learn. Expand your consciousness. Build memories. Contemplate beauty. Make your own light burn as bright as you can.

"I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhäuser Gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears...in...rain. Time to die."

I love Blade Runner. I always will.

PS: note that this review is about the "director's cut" version, not about the versions containing the silly, feel-good happy ending that was tacked on for purely commercial reasons.

Will Johnson says

Future Noir is certainly a unique book at least as far as I can tell. It is very rare to find a book dedicated to every ounce of a film. This includes examinations of the original source material, all the sales of stories and pitches to directors, rewrites, design, preproduction, production, postproduction, release, re-release, and multiple editions on video/laser disc (this book was written before DVD).

If you wanted to know EVERYTHING about Blade Runner, and haven't watched the four hour doc on the Blu-Ray 5-disc set (I have and I still liked the book), then this is the book for you. The writer, Paul Sammon, had insider access during production and during sneak previews so this isn't a researcher just pounding the pavement doing interviews.

So you've got insider access and, at the time of the publishing, 13 years of relationships with almost everyone (excluding Harrison Ford, of course) including Ridley Scott. And the author even says the book is not exactly a book but more of a reference guide which can be read at any point. And even if you don't want to do that, there are a billion appendices in the back summarizing anything.

The insider access and comprehensive review of all aspects of production certainly helps because Paul Sammon can't write to save his life. Switching between documentarian to ass-kissing fanboy to elitist snob, the book is, at times, troublesome to read if going from beginning to end. Plus, Sammon can't simply just use 'I' in a sentence. He has to say 'this author thinks' or 'at least to this author', etc. I literally was tearing my eyeballs out at the incessant use of 'this author'. I know this seems trivial but just read the book. . .I took off a whole star because of it.

Anyway, amateur writing aside, the book is THE go-to for Blade Runner knowledge.

Matthias Thorn says

The first time I even heard of the movie known as *Blade Runner*, I was ten years old and in the backseat of a stationwagon. I'd just gotten picked up by Rebecca's mom as part of a four-kid carpool I was in. Rebecca's mom had just seen the movie the night before and wanted to talk about it to the oldest and most intellectually sophisticated person in the car with her at the time, which happened to be yours truly. She had enjoyed the film, but she also frankly disclosed a certain amount of surprise and confusion. It was nothing like *Star Wars*, *Alien*, *Empire* or any of the other big-name sci-fi movies making their way through the movie theaters at that time, the dawn of the big-budget special-effects blockbuster era. She wanted to describe *BR* to me, but couldn't, not adequately. This of course drove me mad with a desire to see it.

But my parents were strict about movie ratings, and so, since it was R for Restricted, I didn't get to see *Blade Runner* until its television premier in 1986. I didn't really understand it myself, but, like a lot of movies at that time, I made a mental footnote to watch it again later if I ever had the chance. Thanks to first VHS and then DVD, I've since had many chances to watch it. I've also watched a lot of Ridley Scott's other movies, and a lot of movies inspired by *Blade Runner*. I've also read a lot of Philip K. Dick short stories, and watched pretty much every PKD-based movie I can find.

Nothing is really quite like *Blade Runner*. I wouldn't say it's my favorite movie, by any stretch, but it's probably one of my favorite movies to think about, take apart, and analyze. It's also one of my favorite movies just to *see* - it's such a fantastically beautiful and richly textured movie. I can enjoy it almost as much with the sound off as I can with the sound on. I love its mood, and its moodiness. I love the world that it creates, more than the story or the characters.

I've never been able to figure out why I'm so fascinated by certain parts of *Blade Runner*, or why, on the whole, it seems so different from so many other movies. So imagine my surprise and reserved delight when I discovered that a man named Paul Sammon had written a book in the 90's called *Future Noir: the Making of Blade Runner*. Here was a book that, maybe, might just possibly give me a clue as to what's so different and elusive about this one particular movie. I put the book on my wishlist, but then decided I'd probably never buy it.

Like I said, it's not my favorite movie. I'm not even sure I can say it's a terribly strong movie, all told. Harrison Ford himself, the leading man, says it's one of his least favorite movies he's ever been involved with. But here's the thing. When I watch that movie, I feel like it's brushing up against some kind of ceiling, and if it had just had a little more oomph, strength, speed, brilliance, I don't know what, it could have, I don't know, somehow *transcended*. Transcended what? I don't know. Become what instead? I also don't know. All I know is that sometimes I feel like in *Blade Runner*, Ridley Scott achieved something that might have put that film on the threshold of being something else entirely.

Which makes me sound like a crazy sort of fan. Which I'm definitely not. So I put off buying *Future Noir*. Because I didn't want to feed what felt like an embryonic obsession.

Then I completely and totally just *happened* to run across one used copy of it at the Strand in NYC this past winter. Well. What did you think I would do? I threw my hands up in the air, said what the hell, and bought it. I know a sign when I see it after all.

Now, a couple months later, *Future Noir* has finally bubbled up the bedside reading stack. I've read it almost cover to cover (I skipped the short chapter on how the special effects were done, and a couple of the appendices), and I wanted to write a review, but it's hard to write a review of a book like this. So even though this blog entry started its life with intention of being a book review, the actual review book is going to be pretty short.

Future Noir mostly does what it sets out to do, tell how *BR* was made. Sammon goes into great exclusive detail regarding how the rights to the story were acquired, how the screenplay evolved over time, how Scott got involved, and so on. The longest chapter of the book is a scene-by-scene breakdown of the movie, and each scene usually has one or two "behind the scenes" anecdotes that are just the sort of thing you'd hope for from a book like this. Sammon's obviously a huge fan of the movie, and went to great lengths to get access to some of the people and materials that he did. He's a true film geek and a true, unapologetic *BR* fan.

This very fandom, though, is also one of the places where the book falls down a couple times. There's more space devoted to gushing over how great *BR* is than there is space devoted to critical analysis or deconstruction. He doesn't ask hard questions of his interviewees. That's all ok, though. No one but a fan could have possibly cared enough to write this book.

Also, I have to say, Sammon did a great job in getting himself conversations with almost all the major players involved with the making of *BR*. The only people he didn't get any substantial time with were Harrison Ford and Sean Young, the stars. While this may seem like a big omission, he actually does have interview excerpts from so many other big players - writers, producer, director, other actors - you almost don't notice these two glaring absences. Ah well. I never thought Young did much for the film anyway.

The biggest problem, though, with *FN* is not anything Sammon had any say over: *Future Noir* is just really dated at this point. It came out in 1996, fourteen years into the movie's history, sure, but now that's less than half way into its 31-year life span. Since then, the so-called Final Cut has been released, the authoritative version, and the only version with Ridley Scott's full seal of approval. At the time that *FN* came out, the most authoritative version was the so-called "Director's Cut", which was still a compromise between what Scott wanted and what the studio let him get away with.

More significantly, however, Sammon wound up missing everything that the Internet would do for *BR*, or the plateau to which said Internet would allow fandom of any sort to ascend. Another strip of fabric that's inevitably missing from Sammon's otherwise master opus is all the material that got scraped up to serve as "bonus materials" on the various DVD boxed sets, 25th anniversary edition and 30th anniversary Blu-Ray edition. All of these sources probably could have informed *FN*'s ultimate direction and scope.

I definitely recommend *Future Noir* to anyone interested in learning more about *Blade Runner*. It's a great place to begin, especially if, like me, you're trying to decide how much of a fan you want to be. Because, as much as Sammon loves this particular movie, somehow, this book winds up laying out what should be plain to see: it's just a movie. A movie that happened to come along before it's time maybe, and maybe a movie that had a creative director behind it who was just coming into the height of his powers, but still for all that, just a movie.

Me? Now that I can see how much of what went into *Blade Runner* was actually flawed and broken and human, I'm actually more interested in how it, as a work of art, manages to rise above its medium and point to something else.

But that's another review altogether.

Bill Lynas says

A superb book about a classic film.

Paul M Sammon has been fortunate enough to to put his wealth of knowledge on Blade Runner into print. From being on the set while the film was being made in the early 1980s, right up to conducting new interviews in 2017, Sammon covers it all.

This is not really a book for the casual viewer, but if you love Blade Runner as much as I do then this is the ultimate "making of" book.

Even the Acknowledgements section is worth a read where it's nice to see him thank his wife, "who never wants to hear the words Blade Runner again." I think my wife feels the same!

Exapno Mapcase says

This is a Goodreads First Reads review.

This is an amazingly detailed book, it goes through everything related to *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep/Blade Runner*. A combination of the first two editions Sammon has at one time or another had access to a number people involved from Phillip K. Dick to Harrison Ford which leads to some impressive coverage from page to studio, to filming, to editing, and to fan reaction.

Martín says

Seguramente el libro más exhaustivo que se haya editado nunca sobre la película. 450 páginas de análisis escena por escena, entrevistas con todo el equipo (Dick incluido), creación del guión, efectos, banda sonora, diferencias entre versiones... Detallado hasta el agotamiento ajeno.

Diz says

This is a must-read for Blade Runner fans. It is an exhaustive resource on everything about the movie from the novel to the final cut of the movie released on DVD in the 2000's. There's even a short section introducing Blade Runner 2049, but since this was published before that movie was released, there isn't much content on the new movie. I particularly enjoyed the interviews with Scott, Ford, Young, and Bauer that were printed at the end of the book. Those interviews really give an in-depth look into how they viewed their work on that film.

Paul Christensen says

Epic read on all aspects of the making of *Blade Runner*, one of the best films of the 1980s.

So, was Deckard a replicant or not?

The answer is that **Ridley Scott intended him to be so** (hence the unicorn sequence in the director's cut), but **few other of the film's participants agreed**.

Hopper's painting 'Night Hawks' is mentioned as an influence, along with the French comic 'Heavy Metal'.

Scott's obsession to detail was such that the set 'even smelled like a sleazy metropolis'.

TK Keanini says

I've collected everything over the years that had anything to do with Blade Runner. On page 338, there is talk about a 35mm dupe of the 70mm workprint viewing at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco. I was there. In fact, I was there for the first show, 4 hours before the box office opened and yes, I was first in line to view this rare event. It got pulled after running for 13 days because of the legalities involved but as pointed out in this book, it made 94,000.00 during one week of the two week run making it the top-grossing theater in America for that 7-day period back in 1991.

C.T. Phipps says

Do you like Blade Runner? I mean, do you REALLY like Blade Runner? Well, I do REALLY-REALLY like Blade Runner. I've watched the movie dozens of times and it's really one of those films which exists up there in my head space with Alien and Star Wars that influence everything from my personal life to writing.

As such, I was interested in what has been considered to be the definitive book on the movie. That's because not only was Paul M. Sammon on set with the movie during filming but he's returned to write about Blade Runner consistently for the past thirty or so years. This book has a number of editions because he keeps coming back to write on it.

This book more or less follows the creation of the film from its beginnings as an adaptation of DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP to retrospectives from the actors on the film twenty-to-thirty years later. We find out everything from how individual scenes were filmed to the making of the neon lights to how everyone thought about Ridley Scott (he was not a popular director with the cast and terrified Sean Young).

This is an in-depth and wonderful work on the subject even if it sometimes drags. Paul M. Sammon doesn't really touch on any of the movie's deeper themes and keeps himself laser-focused on the facts of production. As such, this is more a book for those interested in the nuts and bolts of the movies' creation as well as influence.

Still, I definitely got my money's worth. I mean, how many other books talk about how the snake was actually owned by Joanna Cassidy a.k.a Zhora, how she really wanted to do the snake dance but got shot down by the producers (even going so far as to film it years later), and how she felt walking around the set

naked the entire time? Those are the kind of stories you find within.

In fact there's a lot of humor to be found in how much the cast you'd think would get along didn't and the cast which you'd think would be difficult turned out to be the best of friends. Ridley Scott, Harrison Ford, and Sean Young all came away from the movie hating one another while Rutger Howard is apparently friends with everyone to this day. Indeed, funnily, most of them know the author due to his constant checking up on them for fan material.

Harrison Ford is a great interviewee in this book as well, which is to say it's clear he's only barely tolerating being interviewed and hates most of his former cast. The best part of the book is, hands down, "Do you want to talk about your co-star Sean Young" and his answer of, "No." That was worth the price of the book by itself.

In conclusion, this is only a book which a super-fan would want but why would you be buying it otherwise?

9/10

Todd says

If you are a Blade Runner fan, then you *must* read this book. There is no other work about any specific film, let alone Blade Runner, that exists. Paul M. Sammon has put together a collector's masterpiece. The book covers every single detail any fan could ever want, and some that many fans would never have even thought of. Sammon, a film journalist and film maker/worker, was on the set during the making of Blade Runner. He interviewed the actors, the director, and every other major player in the making of this film.

Moreover, throughout the years, Sammon has updated the work (up to 1995), and has included nine appendices that cover film credits, to director interviews, to various versions of the films, to blunders in the film and much more. Additionally, portions of this work discuss Philip K. Dick, the author of Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, and his feelings about Hollywood and this film.

Once again, this is a must read for fans of Ridley Scott, the movie Blade Runner, the writer Philip K. Dick, or movie making in general.

Noah says

Blade Runner is my favorite movie. The first time I watched it, I was awestruck. Although it is over thirty years old by now, the atmosphere and setting left me bewildered. I was so blown away by the environment within the film that I did not understand much of either the story or the symbolism. However, I knew that I liked it. It confused me, but it was one of the most interesting and unique films I had seen. Since then, I have watched it over multiple times, and have come to understand many aspects of Blade Runner that had confused me originally. Even after re-watching it multiple times, however, I was still amazed by it. So when I heard about this book, I decided that I had to read it.

This book goes into all of the aspects of the making of Blade Runner, with all of its significant events and developments recorded, often in the form of interviews with the many people involved in the film-making

process. This book also goes beyond just the development of the theater release of the film, and goes into the story behind the Workprint as well as the Director's Cut. Sadly, it does not cover the Final Cut, which was released many years after this book was written. The only other section of the book that I consider lacking is the chapter on the soundtrack, and that is mainly because Vangelis did not want to be interviewed for this book. Besides these few flaws, this book should be required reading for any Blade Runner fan.
