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Aguirre, the Wrath of God

Directed by Werner Herzog

Cast: Klaus Kinski, Helena Rojo,
Guerra, Del Negro.

1973. Germany. In German with
English subtitles.

94 minutes. Color.

In the mid-1500's, a large Spanish expedition searching for the mythical lost city of El Dorado detached an advance party to explore a tributary of the Amazon; they never returned. Werner Herzog has extrapolated this obscure historical incident into **Aguirre, the Wrath of God**, a spectacularly horrifying chronicle of imperialism gone amok. In Herzog's version, the conquistadors' expedition falls into the hands of one Don Lope de Aguirre, a power-driven lunatic who dreams of stealing an entire continent. Klaus Kinski delivers a magnificent performance as Aguirre, creating a funny-scary quintessence of menacing malevolence, part Richard III, part Attila the Hun. **Aguirre** is filled with images that seize the imagination and follow one for days afterward. (The film played continuously in Paris for 18 months.) Stunningly photographed in hazardous locations, **Aguirre, the Wrath of God** takes the viewer on a mad voyage as frightening and entertaining as one of Edgar Allan Poe's maelstrom-bent epics of demented discovery.

"**Aguirre, the Wrath of God** is a masterpiece of the New German Cinema and, I suspect, a film for all time. The closing shot alone is the grandest, most chilling image of raging solipsism ever filmed." —David Ansen, *The Real Paper*, Boston.

"A splendid and haunting work."—Vincent Canby, *The New York Times*.