

132 (S) SOLD OUT

## STANLEY KUBRICK'S NAPOLEON: THE GREATEST MOVIE NEVER MADE



Stanley Kubrick's Napoleon:  
The Greatest Movie Never Made

Sold out through Taschen but with some good hunting can be found for \$2,200.00 and up. Note: If you're patient, this fall, TASCHEM will also be releasing a \$70.00 version. Smaller format but same indulgent content.

**ANTENNA**  
Spring 2010

IN THE contentious year of 1969, after tackling the abstract ideas of life, death, and the nature of God in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Stanley Kubrick set his sights on a significantly more tactile subject, Napoleon Bonaparte. The famously meticulous director immediately began consuming any and all things regarding the French emperor, reading hundreds of books, designing detailed period costumes, and scouting real locations to film what he was quoted, humbly, as saying would be "the best movie of all time." In hindsight, film buffs and Kubrick geeks may relish in this confident hyperbole, but at the time no studio would touch it, thus making *Napoleon* the great "what-if" in film history. To ever so slightly satiate this glaring gap in 20th century American moviemaking, the German publishing house Taschen has released *Stanley Kubrick's Napoleon*, a comprehensive collection of every single piece of research he did in preparation for shooting, including working drafts of the never-to-be masterpiece. It was Kubrick's deliberate approach to filmmaking, the years of research and preproduction, repetitive takes, endless shoots, and months in the editing room that led to his rather abbreviated library. Tackling the core of human emotion and desire, the nihilistic depths of ego and the inevitable march to life's finite demise, with a crackling visual acuity and oblique elegance, probably didn't lend itself to a Woody Allen-like output either. Simply put, the master's life was too short to paint all his canvases. It's widely known that Kubrick spent many years attempting to make what would become Steven Spielberg's *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*. Kubrick gladly handed this softball off to Spielberg, knowing that, at its core, this was a story about what it means to feel love, not what it means to feel human. The life of Napoleon was one of glory, conquest, violent selfishness, and ultimately tragic, lonely death. All tropes inherently Kubrick and unlike every other piece in the director's canon, historically true, making this glaring omission on his filmography not just a slight bummer but an unfortunate artistic tragedy.

**JARED MCHUGH FLINT**