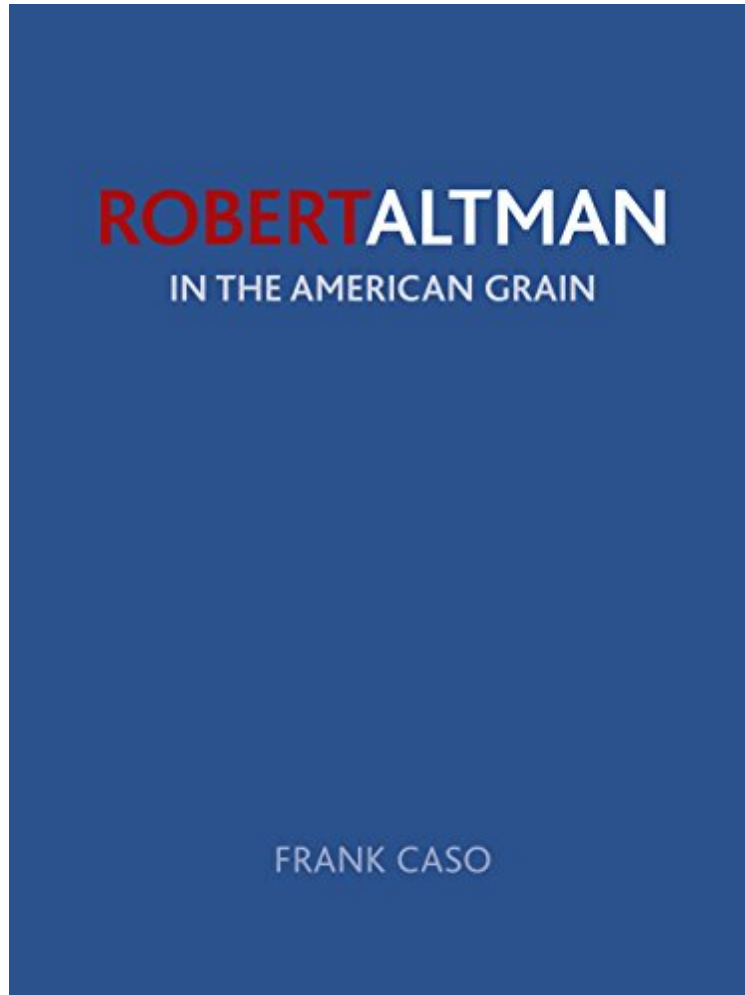


[Ebook free] Robert Altman: In the American Grain

Robert Altman: In the American Grain

Frank Caso

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Frank Caso : Robert Altman: In the American Grain before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Robert Altman: In the American Grain:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Superb Profile of a Film GiantBy Clem RussoKudos to Frank Caso for producing this superb study, meticulously researched and elegantly written, that helps us to understand and appreciate better one of our greatest film directors. Reflecting the priorities of its subject, who consistently eschewed both fame and money, Caso focuses on what mattered most to Altman: his work which was prodigious! Starting as a maker of industrial films, Altman honed his craft for a decade on such hit TV programs as Alfred Hitchcock Presents and Combat! and then went on to direct (and in many cases also write and produce) more than 40 films over several decades.During that time, Altman was both acclaimed by critics and derided for being obscure, artsy, and resistant to popular tastes. Caso avoids these assessments. Instead, he lets Altmans films speak for themselves, but expertly

elucidates our understanding of them by examining Altman's technical innovations, his thematic obsessions, and his outsider perspective as social critic and satirist. By viewing his films as a body of work, we come to see Altman for what he truly was -- a visionary filmmaker, who refused to compromise his art for profit and never stopped experimenting and taking risks. This book inspired me, as I read it, to watch again more than a dozen Altman films, and I'm grateful to Caso for that experience. After more than 40 years, there's still nothing to match the exuberant irreverence of *M*A*S*H* or the stunning imagery of *McCabe Mrs. Miller*. It's too bad that Altman's career was such an uphill battle, given the greediness of our film industry and the tendency of American audiences to prefer passive entertainment to interesting and engaging films. But this fine book may stimulate a renewed interest in Altman and help to ensure the recognition and attention he deserves. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A first-class study of the films and personality of Robert Altman, for scholars and film buffs. By Duncan Fisher. Our college library just acquired this beautifully written work, that situates Robert Altman in the pantheon of American directors, and explains his poorly understood turns in and out of public favor, and his special and rather private relationship during his out time with the theater, exploring new genres and techniques. Caso makes it clear as well, in specifics, just what it is that makes an Altman film. I was especially interested in Altman's use of Christian imagery and symbology. I'd not been aware of his ultimate rejection, like that of Bresson, of his own religious background. Caso's style is joyfully intimate -- his chatty footnotes are a joy in themselves, such as the one explaining the post-WWII joke on the names of Chief Sitting Bull and Admiral Bull Halsey. Caso being a thorough scholar, his bibliography alone is worth the price of the book: here is the essential road map for any serious Altman scholar.

Known as an iconoclast and maverick, film director Robert Altman has consistently pushed against the boundaries of genre. From refashioning film noir in *The Long Goodbye*, the western in *McCabe Mrs. Miller*, the psychological drama in *Images*, science fiction in *Quintet*, and the romantic comedy in *A Perfect Couple*, he has always tested the limits of what film can and should do. In this book, Frank Caso examines the development of Altman's artistic method from his earliest days in industrial film to his work in television and feature films. Altman is one of those directors whose films audiences can easily recognize, but what exactly are the distinctive elements that have become his signature? Caso identifies more than twenty such elements in Altman's style, tracing some such as his use of free-hand cameras and engagement with Christian imagery to the beginning of his career. Caso also examines Altman's unsettling mix of offbeat comedic tone with a predominance of violence, murder, and death, showing how their counterpointing effects rendered his films at once naturalistic and otherworldly. Exploring these and other aspects of the Altmanesque style, Caso maps the innovations that have made Altman a master filmmaker. Enriched with illustration throughout, *Robert Altman* will appeal to fans of this distinctive American auteur or anyone interested in ground-breaking cinema.

If you want to get a complete understanding of Altman, his filmmaking style, and why his movies are so important to the history of cinema, Frank Caso's book is a must read.