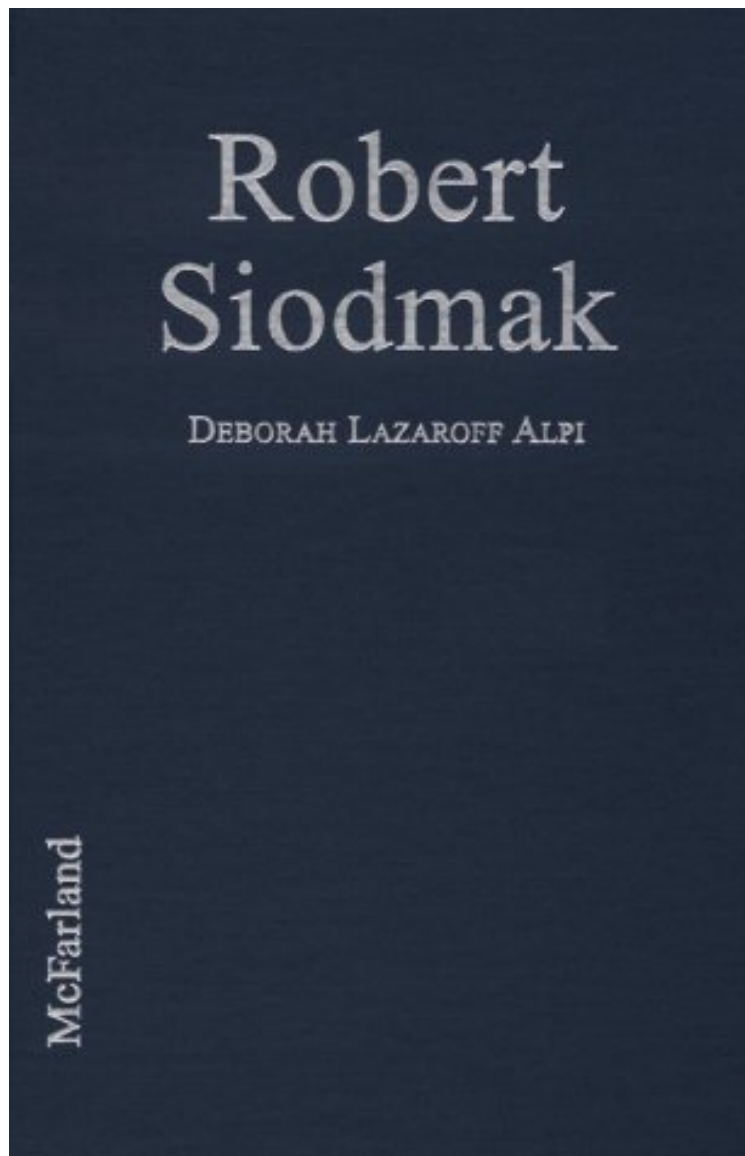


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Robert Siodmak: A Biography, with Critical Analyses of His Films Noirs and a Filmography of All His Works

Deborah Lazaroff Alpi
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Deborah Lazaroff Alpi : Robert Siodmak: A Biography, with Critical Analyses of His Films Noirs and a Filmography of All His Works before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Robert Siodmak: A Biography, with Critical Analyses of His Films Noirs and a Filmography of All His Works:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Intelligent, perceptive analyses of director's films noirsBy A CustomerAlthough Alpi's book almost looks like a carbon copy of Herve Dumont's French study on Robert Siodmak (Switzerland, 1980)---even the structure is the same, the Alpi book however is superb because she does examine all of the films noirs of the great master of suspense as part of the chronology of Siodmak's life---and then adds a special section at the end of the book devoted only to the "noir" titles which contain many new insights not discussed in her earlier chapters. What intrigued this writer is her comparisons of Siodmak's American noirs to his earlier output in Germany and France. We agree, THELMA JORDON was Siodmak's last noir film and practically everything that came after proceeded downhill--but like Dumont, Alpi completes the director's output until his death. But unlike Dumont, Alpi could have included a filmography on Curt Siodmak, who exercised much influence over his brother's career and also better stills which illustrate the action of the noir films she describes. Although Alpi considers noir a "genre" but it is really a STYLE, and at times she is not aware how really well-known Siodmak was in Germany (in the early nineties, there was a complete retrospective of his films: FILMEXIL, EXILFILM---a cooperative venture of 4 film museums--in Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt and Hamburg in 1997) and also a German autobiography was published in Munich in 1980 entitled R.Siodmak, ZWISCHEN BERLIN UND HOLLYWOOD, I can only sing the praises of Alpi's work on Siodmak since it is practically the most complete, the most accessible to American scholars. But Alpi must realize there is also a linguistic community out there is multi-lingual--and so Siodmak's life and career is nothing new to us--but her careful scholarship in America is the best I have ever seen on this director. Although Alpi makes occasional errors---Preminger's FALLEN ANGEL was a vehicle for Alice Faye, NOT Gene Tierney---well, she did not live during the peak noir era herself. Nevertheless, Alpi's book is a terrifically readable work, full of interesting speculations (what would Hitchcock and Siodmak have talked about when they met, for example) and hopefully it will generate interest in film revivals and scholarship on other neglected noir directors like John Farrow, Edgar Ulmer, Alfred Werker and Anthony Mann. McFarland also brought out a new work on Jacques Tourner, another neglected noir director of the forties---so hats off to McFarland as well for giving us Alpi's perceptive and formidable work. Dr.Ronald Schwartz, Prof. of Romance Languages and Film at City University of New York at Kingsborough. 10/30/982 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A sterling Hollywood director gets his dueBy A CustomerIn the annals of Hollywood, many superior directors whose works are well regarded by the critics and the public are often overlooked as individuals. The author remedies this situation regarding Siodmak with a detailed biography which has a highly useful analysis of the director's many fine--and quite varied in genre--motion picture productions.This is a very worthwhile addition to anyone's library.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Siodmak Deserves BetterBy M.K. FisherAlpi's book is nearly an exact copy of Herve Dumont's excellent biography of Siodmak, which is published in only French and Spanish. She offers nothing new in the way of Siodmak's career, but merely restates facts Dumont had stated, and better. In fact, her book contains numerous factual errors whenever it strays of its blueprint. As a film historian,I can not recommend this book.

A study which opens with a detailed biography of the director (focusing on the development and evolution of his thematic and visual style) followed by critical analysis of each of his noir films, and a plot synopsis and comments on its place in the Siodmak canon. Concludes with an exhaustive filmogr

"[Siodmak's] films...are examined in detail in this excellent critical chronology...not only dissects and evaluates each movie, but also provides much biographical information about the director's private life.... Brimming with film acts, trivia and analysis" -- Film "delivers exactly what its subtitle promises...highly detailed...important" -- Classic Images"well researched and nicely written. Alpi's...scholarly apparatus will stand for many years as definitive" -- Catholic Library WorldAbout the AuthorDeborah Lazaroff Alpi is the president of a freelance writing, editing and desktop publishing company. She lives in Aliso Viejo, California.