

Schickel on Film: Encounters-Critical and Personal-With Movie Immortals

Richard Schickel

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Richard Schickel : Schickel on Film: Encounters-Critical and Personal-With Movie Immortals before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Schickel on Film: Encounters-Critical and Personal-With Movie Immortals:

From Publishers WeeklyEloquently placing his subjects in the larger context of social history, Time movie reviewer and inveterate observer of pop culture Schickel here assembles critical profiles of 13 Hollywood actors and directors. Essays on Chaplin, Ford and Hitchcock, though erudite and persuasive, add little to the continuing debate over their artistic vision. Of the legendary actors scrutinized--women are absent--the faded reputations of Fairbanks and Lloyd are justly revised upward; Cooper and Brando emerge as ironic embodiments of the American values of their times; and sympathetic probes behind the "tough guy" mystiques of Cagney and Bogart reveal the sadness pervading their private lives. Assessments of the careers and popular appeal of Sturges, Kubrick and Ronald Reagan are indispensable. Equally thought-provoking is the level-headed, controversially middle-of-the-road interpretation of the tragic myth of the Hollywood Ten of Cold War politics. At best, these portraits approximate the "grace of expression" and

"thoughtful enthusiasm" that Schickel admires in the writings of James Agee, though his unabashedly effusive appreciation of Woody Allen betrays his usually objective tone. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal A collection of essays by Time 's senior film reviewer. None of the pieces are original, having appeared previously in magazines or other books, but all have been reworked somewhat for this publication. The subjects include Douglas Fairbanks, Ronald Reagan, Humphrey Bogart, and Woody Allen, among others. Sometimes Schickel is off the mark--his essay on Brando is weak, and he misremembers the central plot point in the Gary Cooper film Friendly Persuasion . At times his prose is overly convoluted. More often, though, Schickel is a pleasure to read as he achieves fresh insights into his subjects.- John Smothers, Monmouth Cty. Lib., Manalapan, N.J. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.