



The Films in My Life

François Truffaut , Leonard Mayhew (Translator)

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François Truffaut (1932-1984), perhaps the most respected member of the New Wave group of French moviemakers, left a legacy of beloved and influential films that include *The 400 Blows*, *Jules and Jim*, *Stolen Kisses*, *Day for Night* and *The Story of Adele H.* Equally fascinating is the very large body of film criticism Truffaut wrote over many years for *Cahiers du Cinema* and other leading film journals. Wonderfully varied, personal, and informal, these reviews all communicate unabashed love for and an enormous excitement about the movies. *The Films in My Life* is Truffaut's own selection of more than one hundred essays that range widely over the history of film and pay tribute to Truffaut's particular heroes, among them Hitchcock, Welles, Chaplin, Renoir, Cocteau, Bergman, and Buñuel.

The Films in My Life Details

Date : Published August 22nd 1994 by Da Capo Press (first published 1975)

ISBN : 9780306805998

Author : François Truffaut , Leonard Mayhew (Translator)

Format : Paperback 358 pages

Genre : Culture, Film, Nonfiction, Art

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Hiba says

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Bryce Wilson says

Ah Truffaut or Godard, like Elvis and The Beatles, Goobers or Raisinettes it's one of those decisions that helps pinpoint where you are on the pop culture map.

I'm firmly a Truffaut man and this book is a good example why. Truffaut walks the walk not merely talks the talk. For all Godard's talk about love of cinema all I see in his films is contempt. Though I know intellectually he must have done so it's difficult for me to imagine him giving a film like Vera Cruz the time of day. The difference between the two reminds me of something that Ebert said, "Great writers (Nabokov, Dickens, Wodehouse) make it look like play. Almost-great writers (Mann, Galsworthy, Wolfe) make it look like Herculean triumph. It is as true in every field; compare Shakespeare to Shaw, Jordan to Barkley, Picasso to Rothko, Kennedy to Nixon. Salieri could strain and moan and bring forth tinkling jingles; Mozart could compose so joyously that he seemed, Salieri complained, to be "taking dictation from God."

While Godard's semi coherent oh so clever Marxist Pastiche's practically scream at the audience LOOK HOW ARTFUL I'M BEING. Truffaut's are content to merely flit along possessed with a verve and skill unmatched in modern cinema. Keaton is the only other filmmaker I can think of who even approaches his unisistant grace.

The story of Godard and Truffaut is simply proof positive that the good die young and the bastards live forever.

Omar says

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Ritinha says

Um belíssimo conjunto de textos cinéfilos, honestos e incisivos. Truffaut é contagiante no seu amor ao cinema, na candura com que confessa defeitos e estados de alma, na humildade perante os que se lhe afiguram gigantes na sua arte.

Recomenda-se a leitura a todos os que gostam de cinema.

Carter says

generally interesting and insightful discussion of wide variety of older movies. the essays tend to be fairly brief but illuminating as conversations on cinematography, acting, story, themes, etc, evaluating movies based on their stylistic bent with a focus on directorial intent and experimentation. his tastes are eclectic and his ability to empathize with the intentions of a film means that the vast majority of these essays also illuminate the more opaque or difficult projects written about - they're easy to follow and even the most theoretical ones are written in layman. two big cons: very very few female directors written about, and his writing is frequently overly enamored with the concepts of the intuitive genius director and the heart versus the mind. other than that these are complex and enjoyable pieces that more frequently than not provide insight into the films and directors they discuss.

Saad Shahd says

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David says

Collection of Truffaut's writing about film from before and after he became a filmmaker. Although I have seen his films, read about his life and read interviews with him I had not read his film criticism and was very impressed with the fresh insights he brought to his viewing of films, especially American films.

Mohamed El seginy says

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William Remmers says

Long-term work in progress as I won't read particular essays until I've seen those films.

Neil says

Before turning his hand to directing acclaimed new wave film maker Truffaut wrote a copious amount of film reviews mostly for the magazine Cahiers du cinema, this is Truffaut's own selection of the best of those reviews. It's surprising as a film buff, how many of the films that Truffaut effuses about have disappeared into obscurity, I was expecting to have seen or at least know about most of the films in the book, I didn't. Still Truffsut writes well and cares deeply about his subject. Not as good as, but a good companion to, Truffaut/ Hitchcock, a film book that everyone interested in cinema should read.

Hanan Al_Jbaili says

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Aliaa Talaat says

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Matt says

François Truffaut is best known as a director of some of the greatest films to come from the French New Wave—*The 400 Blows*, *Shoot the Piano Player*, and *Jules et Jim* (and those are just his first three films!)—but Truffaut was first a film critic, a role he indulged even after becoming a director. *The Films in My Life* is a compilation by Truffaut of some of the best of his writings on film, reaching from the silent era to years after the advent of the France New Wave. The reviews he chose are primarily positive, though a few enjoyable acidic reviews are included.

Above all, Truffaut was a lover of cinema, and he writes as only someone who loves and understands the craft could. (In this, he reminds me of Martin Scorsese.) As film criticism alone, the book would be worthwhile, but *The Films in My Life* also shows a unique glimpse at one of history's best directors. Truffaut mentions three films more than any others in his reviews: Renoir's *The Rules of the Game*, which he loved, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, which he hated, and Resnais's *Nait et Brouillard*, a short film about the Holocaust that seemed to have made an indelible impression on him as person, not just as a critic.

In reviewing Edgar Ulmer's *The Naked Dawn* (which, by the way, Truffaut praised) in 1956, he compared the film to *Jules et Jim* by Henri-Pierre Roché, which he calls "one of the most beautiful modern novels I know." He concludes the comparison by writing "that *The Naked Dawn* is the first film that has made me think that *Jules et Jim* could be done as a film." Of course, Truffaut himself would adapt that same novel just 6 years later. It's now seen as one of the best films of the era.

It's just those sorts of details that makes *The Films in My Life* so rich and rewarding. It's a list of great films, a masterclass in how to think and write about movies, a history of cinema, a glimpse inside the Nouvelle

Vague, and an unique picture of one of film's true heroes.

For films lovers, *The Films in My Life* is absolutely worth seeking out.

Robert says

Looking for a model of intelligent, passionate film criticism? This is it...
