

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FILMMAKERS

One Review

Tibbetts, John C. **The encyclopedia of filmmakers**, by John C. Tibbetts and James M. Welsh; ed. by Gene Phillips, Tony Williams, and Ron Wilson. Facts on File, 2002. 2v. 776p bibl index afp ISBN 0-8160-4384-1, \$125.00

Choice

Edited by the familiar team of Tibbetts and Welsh (*The Encyclopedia of Stage Plays into Film*, CH, Dec'01; *The Encyclopedia of Novels into Film*, CH, Jun'98), this set lists alphabetically some 350 past and present filmmakers worldwide, representing directors associated with important film movements (e.g., French New Wave, Dogme 95), documentaries, Hollywood blockbusters, silent films, and more. The editors intend to “represent a cross-section of biographical and critical commentary on each director” and to make their book serve as a jumping-off point for further study. Contributed by a team of film scholars, academics, and fans, signed entries feature brief biographical portraits of filmmakers, snapshots of their early work and entry into the industry, and discussions of key films and their major themes. All entries end with brief bibliographies of mainstream books and articles. Volume 2 ends with a roster of contributors, a general bibliography, and a combined index of directors, films, and film movements. While useful, this title has some significant flaws—its entries are too selective, editing lacks control, and choice of contributors is questionable. The editors’ criteria for selection often result in questionable choices; e.g., Joan Chen is included but neither Michael Cimino nor the more commercial Penny Marshall. Entries vary widely in length—Frank Capra has eight pages, Billy Wilder just over two—and in quality. While the index is satisfactory, separate indexes that included directors by country would have been useful. A comparable work, *World Film Directors*, ed. by John Wakeman (v.1, CH, Apr'88), while now dated, is stronger in its coverage of early filmmakers. Useful to film novices and undergraduates, this title is recommended for academic and public libraries to complement Wakeman.

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