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Silver Screen Fiend: Learning About Life from an Addiction to Film

Patton Oswalt

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Patton Oswalt : Silver Screen Fiend: Learning About Life from an Addiction to Film before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Silver Screen Fiend: Learning About Life from an Addiction to Film:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great look at a film addiction with a lot of fillerBy Keith MoserNot your garden variety celeb tell-all memoir about addiction, Patton Oswalt's Silver Screen Fiend tells about his crippling addiction to film.As an ex-sprocket fiend myself, I loved reading about someone who considered seeing five films in a

day normal. Oswald's second memoir (haven't read his first, *Zombie Spaceship Wasteland*) uses a structure of several Night Café moments—instances of revelation; figurative (and literal) rooms one enters and leave a changed man. From seeing *Nosferatu* (1922) at five years old in a library run by idiots, to making one comedian laugh during his first abysmal five-minute set at a comedy club, to bombing in a room full of comics and wanting to be an artist, to visiting the New Beverly Cinema and wanting to be a director! The book is a quick read but don't expect a lot of jokes—this isn't your garden variety comedian's memoir either. There are a lot of references to both cult films and classics (I'm gonna try to cue up a specific scene from *Apollo 13*) with some tame looks behind the curtain that is Hollywood/TV (stories from the set of *Down Periscope* or the pilot taping of *The King of Queens*) but nothing too shocking (one chapter is written about a comedian I'd like to see more of—his style sounds intriguing—but the chapter uses a pseudonym because he kinda comes across as "Misguided" (p. 146).) The novel did make me miss the years where I saw over 200 films in theaters (not counting movies on TV or DVD) which is probably the exact opposite feeling Oswald would want to create in his readers. His fifth Night Café was the birth of his daughter. No longer does he want to waste time in "flickering movie temple[s]" when "the wide-angle world" (p. 185) has so much more, but I suppose I haven't completely squashed that sprocket fiend demon living in my head... Thirty-four pages (over 15% of the book!) are dedicated to listing every film he watched over the main 4 years he wrote about. I skimmed these pages looking for a few notes written in certain sections, but seriously, what a waste of ink. Another 12 pages in the one epilogue are dedicated to a fictional, beyond-the-grave film festival he created for a friend who passed away in 2007. It was fun to read about these films that never were and imagine what could have been and the section reminded me about how awesome *Flicker* by Theodore Roszak was. Overall, it was a decent read but felt like it was quickly put together with a lot of filler to make a certain page or word count... 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Different but GoodBye main007I really didn't know what to expect from this book. I read his first book and loved it, but I wasn't expecting another memoir. That's really what this book is, a memoir of his obsession with movies. I guess the title should have clued me in. It took a bit but as I understood better where he was going with this book I began to really enjoy it. I loved his retelling of the *Karate Kid*. It alone makes any price you paid for this book worth it. So does the short story included about the vampire couple. Perhaps what I'm getting at is that maybe Patton should tackle fiction in his next book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Patton Oswald's second memoir, *SILVER SCREEN FIEND*, is a story of addiction, but not an addiction in the traditional sense. By Stacy Helton Patton Oswald's second memoir, *SILVER SCREEN FIEND*, is a story of addiction, but not an addiction in the traditional sense. From 1995 to 1999 Oswald had an addiction to movies, spending several nights a week at LA's many retro houses, but especially the New Beverly, which offered double bills each night, from *SUNSET BOULEVARD/ACE IN THE HOLE* to *MAD MAX/DEATH RACE 2000*. From a personal standpoint I think this would be heaven – retro houses are non-existent in most cities, and even in New York there are only a few, and they certainly don't have the cinematic range that the New Beverly offers. During this time, Oswald continues to develop his chops at comedy palaces around LA, especially Largo, which any podcast fan knows is the alt-club HQ for most of today's brightest comics. Oswald details his transition from Virginia to San Francisco and on to LA, learning from other comics and working the craft. There is a neat chapter on *THE DAY THE CLOWN DIED*, an infamous never-seen Jerry Lewis film. Oswald gets a copy of the script and has a live reading with the likes of David Cross, Paul F. Tompkins and Bob Odenkirk weekly at a local venue, until a surprising cease and desist gets handed to him. Still, this is a book about addiction, and while movies are more benign than heroin or Wild Turkey, nonetheless Oswald outlines what this addiction did for him and how his life was affected. Since this book goes until 1999, Oswald has many many more books left; an entire book could be written about his performances in *BIG FAN* and *YOUNG ADULT*. Books have been written about the 1970s-80s comics, like the *LAUGH FACTORY* stars and those who get "called over to Johnny," that fans we need a history of the alt-comedy scene, of which Patton is one of the original founders.

New York Times bestselling author, comedian, and actor Patton Oswald shares his entertaining memoir about coming of age as a performer and writer in the late '90s while obsessively watching classic films at the legendary New Beverly Cinema in Los Angeles. Between 1995 and 1999, Patton Oswald lived with an unshakeable addiction. It wasn't drugs, alcohol, or sex. It was film. After moving to L.A., Oswald became a huge film buff, absorbing classics and new releases at least three nights a week at the New Beverly Cinema. Silver screen celluloid became Patton's life schoolbook, informing his notions of acting, writing, comedy, and relationships. Set in the nascent days of the alternative comedy scene, Oswald's memoir chronicles his journey from fledgling stand-up comedian to self-assured sitcom actor, with the colorful New Beverly collective supporting him all along the way. Ideally timed for awards season, when everyone's mind is on Hollywood, *Silver Screen Fiend* follows up on the terrific reception of Oswald's New York Times bestselling debut, *Zombie Spaceship Wasteland*. Already a beloved fixture on the comedy stage, on television, and in film—not to mention his 1.87 million Twitter followers—Oswald announces, with this second book, that he's also here to stay on the page.

"Patton Oswald is one of the most brilliant comedy minds of a generation. This book confirms it." (Ricky Gervais)"I

loved this book. It feels like a great one sided conversation from your funniest friend. It made me feel less alone in the precious hours I read it. But now it's gone and I have nothing." (Amy Schumer)"Silver Screen Fiend is both a love letter to artistic obsession and string of caution tape around it. Patton describes the ecstatic demands of the arts (in this case, Stand-up and Film) with insight, fond pity, and unfailing humor. This is a book for anyone who strives to be great, or is bored in an airport." (Joss Whedon)"Smart and pointed. [Oswalt] is a colorful writer." (NPR)"A funny and sentimental read.... deep, passionate, and personal." (The Daily Beast)"Immediate and vital... [Silver Screen Fiend is] enough to make any reader seek out the many films that made him hibernate in the first place. (A.V. Club)Oswalt's prose is sparkling.... A coming-of middle-age meditation, Oswalt's homage to films is both hilarious and heartfelt." (USA Today)"Hilarious.... [Silver Screen Fiend] shows Oswalt's maturity as a writer and a thinker." (Philadelphia Inquirer)"Oswalt is...a formidable storyteller....A love song to the silver screen." (Paste Magazine)"Vivid and funny." (Entertainment Weekly)"[Oswalt has] a set of synapses like a pinball machine and a prose style to match....Oswalt's writing gives off the hallucinogenic shimmer of the true obsessive, packing all the sharpness and bite of his stand-up." (New York Times)"Clever and readable...Oswalt's encyclopedic knowledge and frothing enthusiasm for films (from sleek noir classics, to gory B movies, to cliché-riddled independents, to big empty blockbusters) is relentlessly present, whirring in the background like a projector." (Boston Globe)"A must for fans of comedy and film." (Ithaca.com)Oswalt is a great conveyer of his real-life (and reel-life) experiences....great insider stuff." (Cleveland Plain Dealer)"Entertaining and maniacally informative." (Tampa Bay Times)"[An] astute, acerbic, and footnote-crazy chronicle of life as a "movie freak mole man." ... Oswalt is a true cinephiliac, equally appreciative of the artistry of Jean Cocteau's *Beauty and the Beast* and Doris Wishman's *Bad Girls Go to Hell*." (Philadelphia Inquirer)"Anyone who loves movies...will be better for reading this enjoyable and funny memoir." (Columbus Dispatch)About the AuthorPatton Oswalt is the author of the New York Times bestseller *Zombie Spaceship Wasteland*. He has released four TV specials and four critically acclaimed comedy albums, including the Grammy-nominated *My Weakness Is Strong*. He put together the *Comedians of Comedy* tour and television series. Oswalt has also appeared on many television shows and in more than twenty films, including *Young Adult*, *Big Fan*, and *Ratatouille*. He lives in Los Angeles, California.