

The Battle of Brazil

Jack Mathews

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Jack Mathews : The Battle of Brazil before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Battle of Brazil:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book that captures a epic struggleBy NottilBrazil is a great movie. It's a work of genius....but not perfect. This book captures the battle between the director, Terry Gilliam, and the studio head, Sid Sheinberg, who had different views on how the movie should be changed for American audiences. It was shown in what was known as the 'European Cut' in Europe. Then there was the Gilliam US cut. Shorter than the European cut. Sheinberg disliked both. He thought US audiences would prefer a shorter, happier movie and more money would be made. He hired some guys to edit it into shape and came up with a different vision. Shorter, happier and missed the mark. The stage was set for an embarrassingly public spat that is documented well in the book. I found it a page turner and finished it in a few days. It seemed to be fair to me but occasionally the author shows where he stands. Read the book and see if you agree. Definitely the best I have read on the subject and most entertaining. I really enjoyed the feud played out. Today the Directors Cut is also available. So there is four versions I know about. I think Gilliam is the overall winner. But he paid a steep price. He made mistakes along the road like agreeing to the movie length clause which was missed when the original deal was struck. Sheinberg was as stubborn as Gilliam. He was not going to be dictated to by a junior director. Gilliam wasn't going to let a talentless bureaucrat cut one frame from his masterpiece. The book captures it all. After seeing all versions, In the end, Gilliam's version is the best. First is his cut, then the European Cut, then his US cut. All keep the basic concept alive. The Sheinberg cut is of interest in

that it shows the degree of change that can be made to a movie. Book is easy to recommend and if your a fan of the movie, a must read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. expecting more...By Joker-scarI must say I was expecting much more. I had listened/watched all the behind the scenes material on the BRAZIL /laser disc/DVD/blu-ray through out the years and was ready to hear more about the battle. The book adds pieces here and there but isn't as satisfying as I had hoped. Most of the story was told in the condensed versions I had already watched. I base a book or film on whether I can watch/read it again in the future. This book only required one read, and I got rid of it. If you haven't any idea of the back story then either chose one or the other, probably better to read the book first, then watch the goodies on the film after. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Very readable, biased but apparently fairBy Paul E. HarrisonNeither side comes out as particularly positive in this story of how a furious film director prevented a studio from ripping his work to meaningless shreds in the name of commercial popularism, but there's no doubting where Mathews stands on the subject. The description associated with this item gives some idea of what the story is about (Boy makes film, Boy loses film to studio, Boy fights studio, studio finally releases film.) Mathews presents the story as factually as he can, from the point of view of someone who clearly loves what Gilliam had made. The Battle of Brazil section itself is reasonably brief but manages to capture the spirit of the events, painting portraits of the major players in the events, their backgrounds and concerns. No party is painted either as a monster or a saint, though Mathews isn't shy about suggesting 1984 newspeak parallels for some of Sheinberg's defenses. The second half of the book is a/the script of (almost all) of the final director's cut of Brazil. I spotted a missing sequence or two but for the most part it's there, essentially unabridged, with annotations on opposing pages describing anything from anecdotes, how the script evolved to that point, to differences between the European/American/Final cuts. Both sections are gems, the first gives an insiders glimpse of the politics within Hollywood, the other a view of the guts of a wonderful film.

(Applause Books). The totally restored, revamped and researched blow-by-blow recounting of the most spectacular title bout in the blood-soaked history of Hollywood. "This book documents in rare detail the back-room haggling and the attempted ego-bashing that is part of the movie business." Gene Siskel; "Told with the passion of an advocate yet with the objectivity of a crack reporter, The Battle of Brazil is a chilling, inevitably hilarious account of a great film that almost got away." USA Today.