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Maurice Yacowar

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Maurice Yacowar : THE COMIC ART OF MEL BROOKS before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised THE COMIC ART OF MEL BROOKS:

THE COMIC ART OF MEL BROOKS By Maurice Yacowar Mel Brooks is a mystery. On the one hand, he is

notorious for his wacky public behaviour and for his zany films. On the other, some of his public pronouncements show him to be a very serious fellow. While his audiences clutch their sides in helpless laughter, Madman Mel warns us that serious things are going on amid those wild goings-on. This book is a new, updated edition of Maurice Yacowar's classic book on Brooks, first published in 1981. There is a section on Mel Brooks' background and origins, including his work on television, his early works, audio recordings, and how Brooks uses comedy. Each film directed by Brooks is analysed, with a brief plot summary to refresh the memory, a close reading of the films' major themes and strategies, and a scattering of background information about the movies. For Mel Brooks, comedy can serve a serious purpose. 'I maintain there is nothing you cannot deal with in comic terms and make a point. I proved that by spoofing Hitler in *The Producers*.' Brooks adds: 'I'll never do a serious picture just to make a profound statement. I can make those statements comically. You don't have to stop laughing.' With his art of energy, openness and exuberance, Brooks values freedom more than discipline, outburst more than restraint, and emotion more than abstemious craft. Energy and present outweigh control and the future. Wild, even vulgar, valour is the better part of discretion. Mel Brooks's art is a varied body of comedy with distinctive emotional power, formal energy, and moral purpose. Whether the result of extended calculation (his films), or the flash of his improvisational genius (his quips and interviews), his comedy draws deeper than laughter. It invites us to face and to warm our essential nature. It challenges the myths and restrictions with which we have been afflicted and subdued. Most importantly, it bares a lively heart and soul - that of the wacko but wise Melvin Kaminsky. Ages have fed into his formation. Ages more may well be moved and nourished by his wild, warm wit. In his academic career Maurice Yacowar served as Dean of Humanities at Brock University, Dean of Academic Affairs and Acting President at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, and Dean of Fine Arts at the University of Calgary, where he retired as professor emeritus of English and Film Studies. Maurice Yacowar's recent books are *Roy and Me: This is Not a Memoir*, *Hitchcock's British Films*, the satire *Mondays with Moishe*, *The Great Bratby*, a biography of the British painter, *The Sopranos Season Seven*, *The Sopranos On the Couch: Analyzing TV's Greatest Series*, and the satiric novel *The Bold Testament*. Includes a detailed filmography and a bibliography. Fully illustrated, with stills from all of Mel Brooks' movies. ISBN 9781861715111 320 pages.
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About the Author MAURICE YACOWAR In his academic career Maurice Yacowar served as Dean of Humanities at Brock University, Dean of Academic Affairs and Acting President at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, and Dean of Fine Arts at the University of Calgary, where he retired as professor emeritus of English and Film Studies. Maurice Yacowar's recent books are *Roy and Me: This is Not a Memoir* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2010), *Hitchcock's British Films* (Hamden, Conn.: Shoestring Press, 1977; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), the satire *Mondays with Moishe* (lulu.com, 2009), *The Great Bratby*, a biography of the British painter (London: Middlesex University Press, 2008; Libri Publishing), *The Sopranos Season Seven* (lulu.com, 2007), *The Sopranos On the Couch: Analyzing TV's Greatest Series* (New York and London: Continuum, 2002; expanded editions, 2003, 2005, and 2006), and the satiric novel *The Bold Testament* (Calgary: Bayeux Arts, 1999). He is also the author of *The Films of Paul Morrissey* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), *Studies in International Cinema* (British Columbia Open University telecourse, 1992), *Losers Take All: The Comic Art of Woody Allen* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1979; expanded edition, New York and London: Continuum Press, 1991), *Method in Madness* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981; expanded edition, *The Comic Art of Mel Brooks*, London: W.H. Allen, 1982), *I Found It at the Movies* (Brooklyn: Revisionist Press, 1978), *Tennessee Williams and Film* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1977), and *No Use Shutting the Door* (Fredericton: Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 1971). He provided the commentary for the Criterion laser disc editions of Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1987) and Paul Morrissey's *Blood for Dracula* (1996; DVD 1998) and *Flesh for Frankenstein* (1996; DVD 1998).