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Joan Mellen

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Joan Mellen : Voices from the Japanese Cinema (Cloth) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Voices from the Japanese Cinema (Cloth):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Essential Reading For Fans Of Japanese CinemaBy David AlstonVOICES FROM THE JAPANESE CINEMA is one-of-a-kind.Author/interviewer Joan Mellen is largely unobtrusive, and what emerges through this expansive collection of interviews with a great many of the finest postwar Japanese filmmakers is something of a rambling history of Japanese cinema, touching upon numerous trends and movements, along with the wide range of global influences that crept in (Lubitsch, Disney, Antonioni, John Ford, Godard and Bresson all get mentioned more than once).Filmmakers included: Daisuke Ito, Akira Kurosawa, Kaneto Shindo, Tadashi Imai, Kon Ichikawa, Masaki Kobayashi, Hiroshi Teshigahara, Susumu Hani, Tochio Narushima, Masahiro Shinoda, Nagisa Oshima and Shuji Terayama. Actress Sachiko Hidari, set designer Setsu Asakura and curator/distributor Mme. Kashiko Kawakita are also profiled and interviewed. Each of these interviews manage to be extremely interesting, though I would mention a few (notably Nagisa Oshima, Hiroshi Teshigahara and Kon Ichikawa) that make one want to track down the many individual films...As several of these creative individuals are either no longer with us, or are no longer active, Mellen's compendium stands as an essential piece of history, and many of the interviews cast a somewhat autumnal glance back at the golden ages of the first 50s discovery of Japanese cinema, and the new wave that quickly follwed in the 60s.Any cinephile should have a copy.-David Alston1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Overview of the Classic Era of Japanese Cinema thru 1975By cvairagI love it! And I

love Japanese Cinema. I feel that the Japanese were from the fifties through the eighties (and are still among) the world's finest filmmakers with the Scandinavians and the Italians tied for a close second. The era, 1945-1985 thus far has proved to be the golden age of Japanese film - for an old art house aficionado such as myself - the golden age of film. All the masters ... Kurosawa, Kobayashi, Shindo, Shinoda, Imamura, et al are interviewed by Joan Mellen, who looks a lot different on the back of the DJ than she does now - less than half as large - believe it or not, sort of a babe. When she produced this masterpiece of investigative scholarship, she was a white hot young feminist with a progressive undertow to her perspective - a newly minted professor who landed a dream post grad project - what better place to be in the early 1970's than in Japan talking to the most exciting visual artists in the world?! This really marked the climax of that immortal era in Japanese film. While a few good ones were made afterwards, esp. by Kurosawa in the 1980's - not a whole lot on the contemporary scene rates with what was being created back then. Oshima was at the height of his powers in the early 70's. Thus, unlike many other sprawling studies, Mellen's has a certain concinnity and precision which gives you the essentials of the era - often in the words of its foremost creators. Mellen's investigative genius is on full display here. Her acquaintance with Japanese culture is considerable and her analyses of and insights into the cultural currents which engender some of the greatest of screen masterpieces profound. I've learned a lot from this book and was turned on to some amazing flicks.

Book by Joan Mellen