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Just Tell Me When to Cry: A Memoir

By Richard Fleischer

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The director of films including *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* and *Doctor Doolittle* discusses his forty-five years in Hollywood and shares stories about some of Tinseltown's legends. 30,000 first printing. \$25,000 ad/promo.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Fleischer has directed 47 feature films, including *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, *Doctor Dolittle*, *Tora! Tora! Tora!* and *Conan the Destroyer*, but his delightful memoir is concerned less with his own accomplishments than with his encounters with "the moguls, monsters, superstars, greats, near-greats and ingrates of Hollywood." While admiring their individual talent, Fleischer is appalled by their sometimes infantile behavior. In a series of often hilarious anecdotes, he describes John Wayne's petty side, Kirk Douglas's ludicrous demands for attention, Robert Mitchum's methodical trashing of a set during a tantrum and Darryl Zanuck's very public infatuation with the French singer Juliette Greco. Other celebrated figures whose portraits are decidedly unflattering: Howard Hughes, Laurence Olivier, Orson Welles, Charles Bronson. Among those who escape unscathed: Irish playwright Brendan Behan, with whom the director spent a teetotaling but nonetheless wild day in Dublin, and Edward G. Robinson, one movie star Fleischer admired as a human being. Photos. 35,000 first printing; \$30,000 ad/promo.

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From Kirkus Reviews

Merry Memoirs by Hollywood director Fleischer, helmsman of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, *The Boston Strangler*, *Fantastic Voyage*, *Doctor Doolittle*, *Mandingo*, *Compulsion*, and 43 other films. Lighthearted takes on tough moments fill the standout pages of Fleischer's 77 years in the flicks. He was born (in 1916) to the movies, his father being the celebrated animator Max Fleischer, who gave film life to Betty Boop, Popeye, and many other memorable screen characters. Dad's great black beast in the industry was Walt Disney, who later offered the author the job of directing *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*--which Fleischer could accept only with his father's blessing. Among the many wonderful moments rendered here are the wrestling with the mechanical problems of Jules Verne's giant squid--as well as with Orson Welles in the full tide of his ego (he later apologized to Fleischer for his blowups). Quite moving is the death of Edward G. Robinson, who, at 80, filmed the last frames of his career--his marvelous death scene in *Soylent Green*--under the author's direction. Fleischer limns the immense ego of 20th Century-Fox studio head Darryl F. Zanuck, for whom he worked many times, who's shown with slimy cigar and brown-stained teeth, marching about giving orders. Kirk Douglas, star of the Verne vehicle, as well as of one of Fleischer's best films, *The Vikings*, also gets rapped (and forgiven) for rampant egoism, while Howard Hughes--then head of RKO--remains an idiotic perfectionist and yet has an adventurer's winning glow. John Wayne, Robert Mitchum, Rex Harrison, and Charlton Heston all have their moments center stage as well. Women--never great power-wielders in Fleischer's heyday--get little play here. Top-flight tales from a director modest about his works and days. -- *Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

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