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Frank: The True Story That Inspired The Movie



Synopsis

In the late 1980s Jon Ronson was the keyboard player in the Frank Sidebottom Oh Blimey Big Band. Frank wore a big fake head. Nobody outside his inner circle knew his true identity. This became the subject of feverish speculation during his zenith years. Together, they rode relatively high. Then it all went wrong. Twenty-five years later and Jon has co-written a movie, Frank, inspired by his time in this great and bizarre band. Frank is set for release in 2014, starring Michael Fassbender, Maggie Gyllenhaal, and Domhnall Gleeson and directed by Lenny Abrahamson. Frank: The True Story that Inspired the Movie is a memoir of funny, sad times and a tribute to outsider artists too wonderfully strange to ever make it in the mainstream. It tells the true story behind the fictionalized movie. Jon Ronson is an award-winning writer and documentary maker. He is the author of four best sellers, Them: Adventures with Extremists, The Men Who Stare at Goats, The Psychopath Test and Lost at Sea: The Jon Ronson Mysteries, and two collections, Out of the Ordinary: True Tales of Everyday Crazy and What I Do: More True Tales of Everyday Crazy. He lives in London and New York City.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It helps to have a sort of quirky sense of humor, or a fondness for Jon Ronson's books, to enjoy this film. (Actually, it helps to have a quirky sense of humor to enjoy Ronson's books--and I do.) I have both, so I really liked this movie. My husband, daughter, and son-in-law, on the other hand, were more perplexed than amused. The jokes, the pathos, the music--especially the epic last song--left them cold. They kept sneaking sidelong glances at me as if wondering why I was so keen on this

movie. I liked it because it was about marginal characters making a marginal living off the kind of music that might be described, generously, as "difficult." It's their dedication to their art, and their fierce insistence on doing it their way, that makes them so compelling to watch. Frank Sidebottom wears a giant papier-mâché head with a painted-on cartoon face, but he's not doing it to get cheap laughs--he is serious about his alter ego and careful to avoid doing anything that might seem out of character. His band mates are just as serious about creating and maintaining the alternative reality in which Frank lives and writes and sings and plays--right up until the day they acquire a new keyboardist, who thinks they should set their sights higher than playing random gigs for a few hundred devoted fans. Taking Frank mainstream turns out pretty much as you might expect. But the story has a happy, if puzzling, ending. I liked it. And if you are reasonably tolerant of ambiguity, you will like this movie, too.

This is a great book by a good man about his gifted friend, FRANK SIDEBOTTOM (1955 - 2010). Buy the book, read the book, then track down every snippet of Frank Sidebottom that you can find online. It'll turn your day around. Do it because you want to. You know you do. You really do.

I bought this as a gift for a friend & she loved it, especially the photos! She had shown me the movie Frank & was fascinated by him/it, turns out she also likes this author! Sure it's a short read, but anyone who likes Frank or Ronson would be happy to own this!

It's fun look into the pitfalls of the music industry. How hard work and talent doesn't always equate to money. Frank is a cult icon.

Spectacularly brief. Read over a cup of coffee. Then rechecked my kindle for all the pages I must have accidentally skipped. There were none that I could find. Expensive anecdote!

I am not a big music fan and definitely knew nothing of this story, but was a wonderfully engaging read - funny, sad, deep, and light hearted all at once. Just a great read in general!

Typical Ronson, writing an engaging story about something I never knew. Thanks.

Quick read, but worth the time, if you were a fan of the movie or even just odd stories of marginalized artists, or lives on the fringe.

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