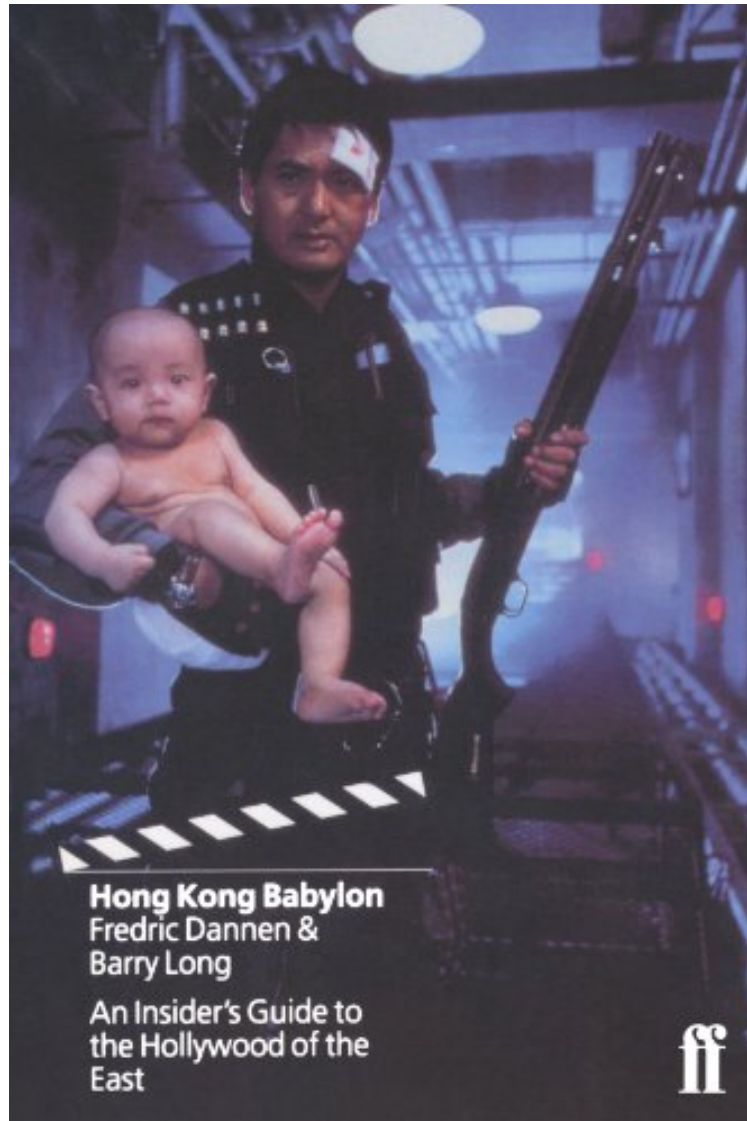


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Hong Kong Babylon

Fredric Dannen

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Fredric Dannen : Hong Kong Babylon before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hong Kong Babylon:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Sometimes lowest offer is the best option! By Miami's W. Mitty Another case study straight from the old adage, 'Don't judge a book by its cover.' With a twinge of trepidation, I selected 's cheapest paperback offering of the out-of-print title I was seeking, available for under \$2, plus shipping. The book arrived on time (5 days, shipped by ground US Mail), and the book arrived in 'like new' condition, as promised. No surprises, no hitches, no fine print -- just the uncommon pleasure of receiving a good deal without

strings attached. I'm completely satisfied with the purchase, and will continue selecting the most economical alternative, though with a tad bit less skepticism going forward. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Beware this book! By A Customer Beware this book! Given the success of Dannen's uncompromising 'Hit Men' and the promise of his previously published piece on HK cinema, one would expect 'Babylon' to provide a comprehensive, perhaps even a definitive, examination of the subject at hand. Alas, this 400+ page tome consists, substantively speaking, in very little more than that piece, which can be read for free on the Net! After the initial 54 pages, the volume degenerates into an unbearably tedious crop of lists; capsule profiles of HK film figures, endless filmographies, plot summaries, and a recommended viewing guide, most of which have been presented elsewhere in much more entertaining and engrossing fashion. As to the opinions of 'a round table of twelve diverse and exceptional critics' - who cares? The films are made to be seen, not to be endlessly pontificated upon. As a reference guide for the timid, I suppose the book has some dry value; given the 'insider's' promise of Dannen's earlier writing on the subject, this project is a lazy buzzkill, reading like a means of making a quick buck without pursuing new material or expending additional effort. Avoid, avoid. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A VERY FRUSTRATING WORK By A Customer This book could have been so much more than what it is. The author had interviews with many of the top stars and directors in Hong Kong Cinema, and yet the interviews of such notables as Jet Li, Chow Yun Fat, Jackie Chan, and Michelle Yeoh are barely a page-and-a-half. While it does provide some wonderful information, the bulk of the book is plot summaries and reviews; while the summaries might be helpful, I think most people would have been more interested in what the people involved in the business have to say. Ultimately, my main take on this book is that it was a squandered opportunity for the author to have access to so many well known stars only to reduce them to 5 or 6 comments in a book of this size. Magazine interviews are longer than the interviews found in this book. It's worth reading, but just speaking for myself, it was little more than a tease.

Hong Kong cinema embraces a wide spectrum of films, from mystical ghost stories set in a fabled past to the physical pyrotechnics of Jackie Chan and the violent urban-crime dramas of John Woo. This is a study of a world in which actors risk their lives performing life-threatening stunts and explosive feats of martial arts; in which producers are part of triads and will resort to murder to secure a deal or obtain an actor for a film. The book also sets out to show the the aesthetic of Hong Kong films has influenced Western film-makers - most particularly, Quentin Tarantino.