



Truffaut: A Biography

Serge Toubiana, Antoine De Baecque

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One of the most celebrated filmmakers of all time, Francois Truffaut was an intensely private individual who cultivated the public image of a man completely consumed by his craft. But his personal story--from which he drew extensively to create the characters and plots of his films--is itself an extraordinary human drama. Now, with captivating immediacy, Antoine de Baecque and Serge Toubiana give us the definitive story of this beloved artist.

They begin with the unwanted, mischievous child who learned to love movies and books as an escape from sadness and confusion: as a boy, Francois came to identify with screen characters and to worship actresses. Following his early adult years as a journalist, during which he gained fame as France's most iconoclastic film critic, the obsessive prodigy began to make films of his own, and before he was thirty, notched the two masterpieces *The 400 Blows* and *Jules and Jim*. As Truffaut's dazzling body of work evolves, in the shadow of the politics of his day, including the student uprisings of 1968, we watch him learning the lessons of his masters Fellini and Hitchcock. And we witness the progress of his often tempestuous personal relationships, including his violent falling-out with Jean-Luc Godard (who owed Truffaut the idea for *Breathless*) and his rapturous love affairs with the many glamorous actresses he directed, among them Jacqueline Bisset and Jeanne Moreau. With Fanny Ardant, Truffaut had a child only thirteen months before dying of a brain tumor at the age of fifty-two.

Here is a life of astonishing emotional range, from the anguish of severe depression to the exaltation of Oscar victory. Based on unprecedented access to Truffaut's papers, including notes toward an unwritten autobiography, de Baecque and Toubiana's richly detailed work is an incomparably authoritative revelation of a singular genius.

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