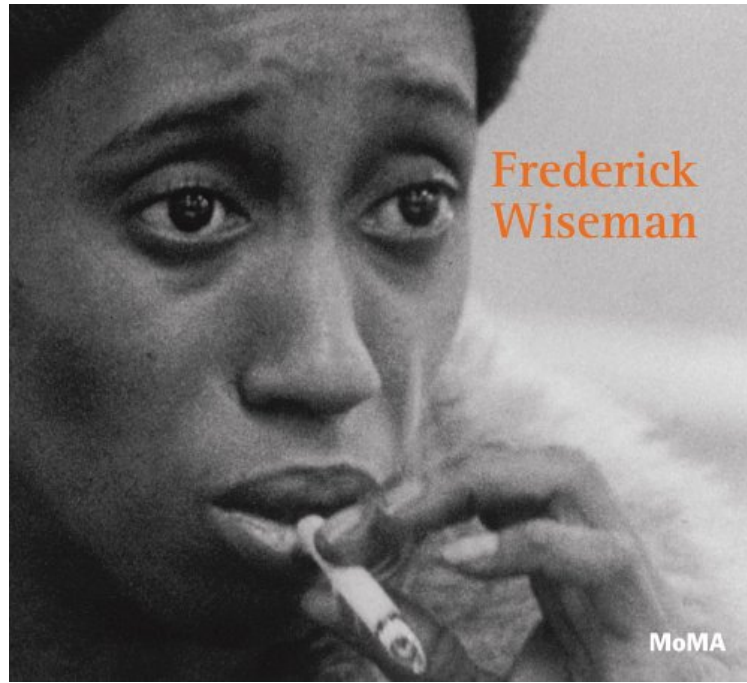


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Frederick Wiseman

Andrew Delbanco, William T. Vollman, Joshua Siegel, Marie-Christine de Navacelle
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Andrew Delbanco, William T. Vollman, Joshua Siegel, Marie-Christine de Navacelle : Frederick Wiseman
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Frederick Wiseman:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding essays on Fred WisemanBy Judith WechslerExcellent essays on master filmmaker and Wiseman's own brief disarming and witty intro. C. Ricks' essay brilliant and profound. Every essay in this book interesting and I insightful.

For over four decades, from his landmark *Titicut Follies* (1967) to his recent *La Danse: The Paris Opera Ballet* (2009) and forthcoming *Boxing Gym* (2010), Frederick Wiseman (born 1930) has used a lightweight 16mm camera and portable sound equipment to study human behavior in all its unpredictable manifestations, particularly as it responds to institutional or regimented settings or to democracy at work. Combining epic narrative with intimate portraiture, Wiseman's films constitute a grand panorama of modern life, a kind of modern-day *comédie humaine*. While he manages to intrude only minimally on the lives of his subjects, his sensitive eye, lawyerly skepticism and storytelling impulses produce imaginative truth. Wiseman has also worked in the theater, directing acclaimed adaptations of Beckett and Pirandello. His stage and film productions *La Dernière Lettre* (*The Last Letter*), based on Vassily Grossman's epic novel *Life and Fate*, starred Catherine Samie, doyenne of the *Comédie-Française* and a contributor to this book. Frederick Wiseman, the first publication in English to provide a comprehensive overview of Wiseman's career to date, includes essays by eminent observers on both sides of the Atlantic, including writers, critics, filmmakers, actors and Wiseman himself. Illustrated with stills from his films, this volume offers a compelling portrait of Frederick Wiseman as one of the world's most innovative, fearless and influential filmmakers, as well as an accomplished theater director. Frederick Wiseman has made 38 films that stand as a monumental chronicle of late-

twentieth-century institutional and cultural life. His controversial 1967 debut feature *Titicut Follies*, a look at conditions inside the Bridgewater State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, remains the only American film ever censored for reasons other than national security or obscenity. His 2009 film *La Danse: The Paris Opera Ballet* has been a tremendous critical and popular success both in the United States and abroad. Wiseman's latest documentary, about an amateur boxing gym in Austin, Texas, had its premiere at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival, and he is currently editing a film about the Crazy Horse Saloon, the legendary cabaret in Paris.

What a great salute to a true American original - our great scrutinizer, the filmmaker Fred Wiseman. In celebrating the fierce mastery of his eye and ear, the generous wisdom of his editing, and the enduring grip of his influence, the essays collected here (not least, his own) are full of essential insights into his work, and taken together they pay him the highest homage: they make you want -- no, they make you need -- to watch his movies again and again. --Philip Gourevitch, author of *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*