

500 Essential Anime Movies: The Ultimate Guide

Helen McCarthy

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Helen McCarthy : 500 Essential Anime Movies: The Ultimate Guide before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 500 Essential Anime Movies: The Ultimate Guide:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A perfect anime canon By Luis Bugarini Beautifully illustrated, this book will guide through the most important anime movies ever. The selection is fair and appears what has to. 6 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A book not so essential ... By m-chan This is a nicely organized and finely printed volume, but the author's choice of what is essential is often mystifying. Her ratings make things even more mystifying in light of what she leaves out. Why include lower-star rated titles when clearly good titles are omitted? For instance, a big omission is the two-part Rurouni Kenshin OVA "Trust" and "Betrayal." I would think that anyone who has a decent amount of anime under their belt would agree: those are essential viewing--and do not necessarily require watching the TV series or reading the manga to understand. But the author opted to omit them, presumably in favor of

some anime she regards as not so great. ("A Wind Named Amnesia" is another glaring omission--it may not be great; but it's way more essential than some of the other titles included. The omission of "Twelve Kingdoms" is among the other absurdities.) Then there are the several titles that clearly belong in no book of recommendations, such as "Ninja Resurrection" (which doesn't even have a real conclusion). To some point, yes, this is a matter of taste. But any author undertaking such a book has to step back a little from personal taste and idiosyncrasy and use a finer critical eye. Also, applying a little practical thought to the choices/ratings would, in some cases, have been more useful. What good is featuring as "best" something like "Samurai X: Reflection (Director's Cut)" when it's very likely to be a frustrating watch for someone who hasn't seen the whole Rurouni Kenshin series and read the manga? Also, her ratings in some cases seem less well-considered or classy than an intentional attempt to buck the norm. Rating "Spirited Away" lower than "Pom Poko"? Giving "FLCL," "Jin Roh," and "Vampire Hunter D: Bloodlust" the same rating as "Ninja Resurrection" and "X: The Movie" and a lower rating than "Origin" and the RahXephon movie? Did the author even watch this stuff? The five-star rating of "Reflection" also fits this bill as do many of her other ratings. All of this flaming weirdness does a disservice to readers. (For me, it means I can't trust the author's judgment on titles I haven't seen, and so her ratings become merely an irritating distraction.) If you're already an anime fan, what the book is good for is its listings of older titles that have fallen off the general radar screen. If you're new to anime, it's okay as a basic volume to give you some titles to check out elsewhere to determine viewing worthiness. I would say that's about it. I bought the book inexpensively from a marketplace seller, and my advice to anyone interested is do the same rather than shell out big bucks. And as Bruce Carlson (another reviewer) mentioned, you're apt to get better info/details online. Anime sites like Anime News Network are very helpful (check out ANN's top 10 lists, which offer active stats based on the ongoing opinions of fans and which can be expanded to include many more titles); also, 's listmania can be surprisingly useful, especially if you're starting out as an anime watcher. Anime fans can have their own idiosyncrasies; but I've found over time that, when opinions are averaged out, they're really the ones who know what's up.

17 of 24 people found the following review helpful. Nice book, but just who is it for? By Bruce
This book describes 500 anime. Its definition of "movie" (from the title) is flexible enough to embrace OVAs (direct-to-video animation), OVA series and even a few TV series. The author restricted her title selection to those that have had some English language release somewhere in the English-speaking world. It's organized by sub-genre, such as SciFi, Fantasy, "History, Politics and Life", and "Action"; Perhaps the oddest is "Love and Death" (which includes both "Grave of the Fireflies" and "Orange Road".) Within each of these categories, there are 10 "best" titles (listed alphabetically), each of which get two facing pages of text and pictures. This is followed by the "best of the rest" within that genre, which are given less space (a page, or even half a page.) There are color-coded marks at the page edge letting you know which section you're in. The break between the top ten and the rest isn't obviously marked, other than the alphabet recycles. (Sometimes the categories seem coin tosses, e.g. placing "Voices of a Distant Star" under "Robots and Mecha" instead of "SciFi" or "Love and Death") Each title has a few bright pictures from the anime, a few basic creator credits (director, writer, music, animation and designers) and a few paragraphs text of varying length and depth (what's it about, and sometimes a brief critical assessment.) Each also has a rating, 1-5 stars. There's an index by anime title near the back (though a more general index by director or writer isn't available.) It's a little confusing that the table of content at the front lists genre sections by page number, but the index at the back references titles by the anime number (1-500.) There's certainly plenty of room to argue about the choice of which titles are included ("Fushigi Yugi", but not "Twelve Kingdoms", Otogizoushi, or Moribito.) Obviously if there's a limited amount of space, something's going to fall out. There's even more room to argue about the author's ratings, but that's just a matter of taste. The book is thick, soft-cover, printed on heavy, semi-gloss stock so the pictures are bright and clear. I can't guess yet how well the binding will hold up under use. The text is pretty small, requiring my reading glasses. While the book is pretty well done, I mean the author no slight when I write that books like seem like dinosaurs. There are far more comprehensive, free database of anime on-line, searchable and hypertexted, so you can learn much more detail and browse to other titles by the same director or writer or any other creator with just a click. And the web is always up to date, while this book is already obsolete ("Appleseed Ex Machina", and "The Girl Who Leapt Through Time" seem to be just a few examples of movie releases too new to make the cut, though "5cm per Second" and "Paprika" made the cut.) It's just hard for me guess what audience would benefit from this sort of compendium in the age of the internet.

500 Essential Graphic Novels is an all-in-one guide to this exciting form of visual literature. Including more than 350 authors and 400 artists, this lush volume contains an essential mix of some of the finest visually-stunning stories of our time. From politically-charged non-fiction sagas to imaginative fantasy tales, this ultimate guide has something to satisfy everyone's taste. The first of its kind, this book focuses on each graphic novel separately, honing in on art technique, style and prose, plus an age rating system so parents will know what is suitable for their children. Chapters are divided by genre, complete with individual plot synopses and star-scaled reviews for each book, providing the

reader with a concise and balanced understanding of today's best graphic novels.