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Fade Out: The Calamitous Final Days of MGM

Peter Bart

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Peter Bart : Fade Out: The Calamitous Final Days of MGM before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fade Out: The Calamitous Final Days of MGM:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Send in the ClownsBy olingerstoriesPeter Bart's FADE OUT is take down of the inept management team at MGM and United Artists in the 1970s and 1980s that led to the their collective studio collapse. Among the players is the millionaire odd ball Kirk Kerkorian who has no interest in film but a lot of interest in making money. His henchman is Jim Aubrey, who creates more enemies than thought possible at the start of the 1970s. The most clueless suit is Freddie Fields who would have been better off always doing the opposite of his instinct. Frank Yablans is an over-confident, little talented head who also makes bad choice after bad choice. The talented guys who get run over are David Melnick, Alan Ladd Jr. and Bart himself. From this account, it is amazing that any movies of note got made at all at MGM and UA.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Very, very interesting!By Erik JohnsonI discovered this book while vacationing in West Hollywood in a rental house and had to get a copy for myself. While some of the references to business are slightly over my knowledge base, this is a highly entertaining and occasionally maddening story of what happens when people with no real passion for an industry but love the idea of bragging that they're "in the movie business" get control over the major properties that were built by people with passion... and run them into the ground out of ego, greed, and a whole lot of "CYA" by bending the truth.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Insider Book about a Dying Movie StudioBy Larry GevirtzThis is an amazing insider's view of the fall of MGM, told by one who was right in the center of the decline. The reader gets

a full picture of what was happening, and why this once-great studio went belly up. Written with knowing insight and humor.

A behind-the-scenes account of the decline and fall of a once great studio, tracing MGM's corporate convulsions from 20 years ago, when Kirk Kerkorian bought control to the present, the financial disasters of "Yentl", "Mrs Soffel" and "2010" and the final "take over" by Pathe. In 1983 MGM/UA was in the midst of a comeback. Under the new management of Frank Yablans the company had secured assurances of financial backing from CEO-financier Kirk Kerkorian and a series of dazzling new movies was in development. Top stars like Jack Nicholson, Barbara Streisand and Mel Gibson were on the programme, a sequel to the cult classic "2001" was planned and "Wargames" was in release. What nobody anticipated was that Kerkorian, ever the smart Las Vegas game-player, had evolved his own scheme to harness Hollywood's myth making machinery to his own personal ends. The end result was that Kerkorian emerged a billionaire and his companies emerged a shambles. The films anticipated to be immense successes - "Yentl", "Mrs Soffel" and "2010" - turned out to be financial disasters of immense proportions. The Nicholson movie never even got made and the success of "Wargames" couldn't compensate for the extent of the disaster.

From Publishers Weekly Here's a book for the film history shelves that belongs alongside *Indecent Exposure*, David McClintick's damning examination of Tinseltown politics and corruption. Readers may find this highly detailed expose difficult to digest, however, a result of the author's decision to tell his story in a disjointed and unchronological fashion. Written by one of the most qualified insiders to aim a pen at major league moviemakers, Bart (Destinies), a former reporter for the New York Times and Wall Street Journal and current editor of *Variety*, paid ample dues behind the closed doors of Hollywood studios as production chief at Lorimar, Paramount and, apparently much to his dismay, at MGM during its dying days. Zeroing in on the last 20 years of the once magnificent studio, which brought us such screen gems as *Meet Me in St. Louis* and *Dr. Zhivago*, the author paints a picture of monumental corporate chaos and incompetence as a result of poor top management appointments made by MGM owner Kirk Kerkorian. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* Bart, currently editor of *Variety*, was a senior vice-president at MGM/UA from 1983 until 1985. This experience forms the basis for an examination of financier Kirk Kerkorian's 20-year ownership of MGM. (The book's subtitle is a bit premature, as MGM is not dead: Kerkorian is still trying to sell the eviscerated company.) Most of the book focuses on the period when Bart was at the company and Frank Yablans was president. During this time the studio produced *Yentl*, *Mrs. Soffel*, and *2010*, among other films. As is usual in books of this sort, the author admits to few if any mistakes, but the book appears fair, and it is well written. A good choice for larger libraries and special collections.- John Smothers, Monmouth Cty. Lib., Manalapan, N.J. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc.