



You're Not Dead until You're Forgotten: A Memoir

John Dunning, Bill Brownstein

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Much to his chagrin, John Dunning was born into the movie business. But once he came to accept his career fate, he developed a great passion for making movies, and ultimately became Canada's pre-eminent B-movie producer, with a knack for developing young talent. In You're Not Dead until You're Forgotten, Dunning, in forthright and charming fashion, recounts his rough-and-tumble upbringing in the Montreal suburb of Verdun in the 1930s, his modest start in the film industry behind the candy counter of his family's movie theatre, and later, his ventures into film distribution and production. In the 1960s Dunning, along with financial wizard André Link, founded Cinepix, which eventually merged into the Lionsgate Entertainment film colossus. Specializing in such exploitation genres as raucous comedy, groundbreaking Québécois "maple syrup porn" and horror films, Cinepix churned out cult classics like Valérie, Shivers, Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS, and Meatballs. Dunning's detailed recollections of making these movies provide a rare, candid, and witty take on how the film industry really works. Driven to succeed in the face of arbitrary censors, parochial Canadian critics, and controlling government funding agencies, Dunning and Link developed a formula for producing controversial, moneymaking movies, and helped launch the careers of such luminaries-to-be as David Cronenberg, Ivan Reitman, and Don Carmody. Cronenberg has called John Dunning "the unacknowledged godfather of an entire generation of Canadian filmmakers." Illustrated with personal photos and film stills, You're Not Dead Until You're Forgotten finally gives this pioneer Canadian filmmaker his long-overdue spotlight.



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