

the orchid thief book

The orchid thief book is a captivating non-fiction work that delves into the intriguing world of orchids, obsession, and the human psyche. Written by Susan Orlean, this compelling narrative explores the extraordinary story of John Laroche and his obsession with rare orchids, set against the lush backdrop of Florida's Everglades. Since its publication, the book has garnered widespread acclaim for its vivid storytelling, meticulous research, and insightful exploration of human passions. In this article, we will explore the key themes, background, and impact of *The Orchid Thief*, providing an in-depth overview for readers interested in the fascinating intersection of botany, crime, and obsession.

Overview of The Orchid Thief Book

What is The Orchid Thief About?

At its core, *The Orchid Thief* is a true crime and nature writing hybrid that chronicles the story of John Laroche, an eccentric horticulturist and orchid collector in Florida. Laroche's obsession with rare orchids, particularly the elusive Ghost Orchid, leads him into a complex web of illegal activities, including poaching and theft. Susan Orlean's narrative intertwines Laroche's personal obsession with broader themes such as the allure of rarity, the human desire for uniqueness, and the lengths individuals will go to attain their passions.

The book also explores the Florida landscape, capturing the region's unique ecosystem and the cultural environment that fosters such eccentric pursuits. Through detailed descriptions and vivid storytelling, Orlean paints a picture of a world where passion and obsession often blur the lines between legality and morality.

The Structure and Style of the Book

Susan Orlean employs a compelling narrative style that combines investigative journalism with literary storytelling. The book is structured around the unfolding story of Laroche, but also includes rich background information about orchids, the history of orchid collecting, and Florida's ecological and social landscape.

Her writing style is characterized by:

- Detailed Descriptions: Vivid imagery that transports readers into the Florida wetlands.
- Thorough Research: Extensive interviews, historical context, and scientific explanations.
- Narrative Pacing: A balance between suspenseful storytelling and informative exposition.

This approach makes *The Orchid Thief* accessible and engaging for a wide range of readers, from nature enthusiasts to true crime aficionados.

Background and Context

About Susan Orlean

Susan Orlean is a renowned journalist and author known for her compelling narrative nonfiction. Her other notable works include *The Library Book* and *Rin Tin Tin*. Orlean's meticulous research and ability to craft engaging stories from real-life events have made her a prominent figure in literary journalism.

The Real-Life Story of John Laroche

John Laroche was a colorful character whose obsession with orchids led him down a complicated path. Originally from Florida, Laroche's fascination with orchids began as a hobby but grew into a full-blown obsession. His pursuit of the rare Ghost Orchid, which is notoriously difficult to find and cultivate, led him into illegal activities, including poaching orchids from protected lands.

Laroche's story is a reflection of broader themes about obsession, the human desire to possess rare things, and the often blurry line between passion and obsession. His life and actions serve as a central thread in Orlean's narrative, illustrating how individual passions can have profound consequences.

Orchid Collecting and Its Cultural Significance

Orchids have long been associated with beauty, rarity, and luxury. Historically, orchid collecting was a pursuit of aristocrats and wealthy enthusiasts, who sought to acquire rare specimens. Over time, the popularity of orchids expanded, leading to a global trade and sometimes illegal poaching.

In Florida, orchid collecting became intertwined with the state's unique ecology. The Ghost Orchid (*Dendrophylax lindenii*), in particular, became a symbol of rarity and elusive beauty. Its difficulty to cultivate and find in the wild made it a coveted prize among collectors and enthusiasts.

The Themes and Messages of The Orchid Thief

Obsession and Human Passion

One of the central themes of *The Orchid Thief* is obsession. Orlean examines how obsession can motivate individuals to extraordinary lengths, sometimes crossing ethical boundaries. Laroche's relentless pursuit of the Ghost Orchid exemplifies the power of passion and how it can distort morals.

The Value of Rarity and Uniqueness

The book explores society's fascination with rare objects and the human desire to possess what is scarce. Orchids, especially the Ghost Orchid, symbolize this allure. Orlean reflects on how rarity enhances value, both monetary and emotional, and how this drives people to extreme actions.

Ethics in Nature and Collecting

The Orchid Thief raises questions about the ethics of collection, conservation, and the impact of human activities on fragile ecosystems. Laroche's illegal collection practices highlight the tension between personal passion and environmental responsibility.

Identity and Self-Discovery

Beyond the orchid world, the book touches on themes of identity, obsession, and the search for meaning. Laroche's life and choices serve as a lens to examine how passions can define and sometimes consume individuals.

Impact and Legacy

Adaptations and Cultural Influence

The Orchid Thief gained widespread popularity, culminating in its adaptation into the 2002 film *Adaptation*, directed by Spike Jonze and written by Charlie Kaufman. The film, starring Nicolas Cage, is a surreal take on Orlean's book, blending fact and fiction, and has further cemented the story's place in popular culture.

Contribution to Nature and Conservation Awareness

The book has heightened awareness about orchid conservation and the importance of protecting endangered species like the Ghost Orchid. It has also sparked discussions about the ethics of collecting and the importance of sustainable practices.

Literary Significance

As a piece of narrative nonfiction, *The Orchid Thief* is praised for its storytelling craft, meticulous research, and ability to make a niche subject engaging and accessible. It has inspired writers and journalists to explore similar themes of obsession and nature.

Where to Find and Read The Orchid Thief Book

The Orchid Thief is widely available in bookstores, online retailers, and libraries. It is available in various formats, including hardcover, paperback, and audiobook. For those interested in exploring the fascinating world of orchids, human obsession, and Florida's unique ecosystem, this book offers a compelling read.

Conclusion

In summary, *The Orchid Thief* by Susan Orlean is a masterful exploration of obsession, nature, and human nature. Through the intriguing story of John Laroche and the allure of rare orchids, Orlean invites readers to contemplate the depths of passion and the complex relationship between humans and the natural world. Its compelling narrative, rich research, and cultural insights make it a must-read for anyone interested in the mysteries of nature, the ethics of collecting, and the stories that lie beneath the surface of everyday life. Whether you are a nature lover, a true crime enthusiast, or a literary connoisseur, *The Orchid Thief* offers a captivating journey into a world where beauty, obsession, and morality intersect.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'The Orchid Thief'?

The main theme revolves around obsession, passion for orchids, and the blurred lines between obsession and madness in the pursuit of rare plants.

Who is the author of 'The Orchid Thief'?

The book was written by Susan Orlean.

Is 'The Orchid Thief' a work of fiction or nonfiction?

It is a nonfiction book that explores real events and people involved in orchid collecting and theft.

What real-life event does 'The Orchid Thief' focus on?

It centers on the story of John Laroche, an orchid poacher, and the theft of rare orchids from Florida's Everglades.

Has 'The Orchid Thief' been adapted into any other media?

Yes, it was adapted into the film 'Adaptation' directed by Spike Jonze and written by Charlie Kaufman.

What makes 'The Orchid Thief' unique among nature and true crime books?

Its blend of investigative journalism, detailed botanical descriptions, and exploration of human obsession makes it a compelling and unique narrative.

What role does the Florida Everglades play in 'The Orchid Thief'?

The Everglades serve as the primary setting, highlighting the natural environment where orchid collecting and theft occur.

How has 'The Orchid Thief' influenced popular culture?

It has inspired discussions on obsession, conservation, and crime, and its adaptation into the film 'Adaptation' brought greater mainstream attention.

What are some of the most rare and sought-after orchids discussed in the book?

The book discusses several rare orchids, including the ghost orchid, which is central to the story due to its elusive nature.

Why did Susan Orlean choose to write about orchid theft and collectors?

She was intrigued by the fascinating characters involved, the complexities of obsession, and the mysterious allure of orchids, making it a compelling subject for her investigative work.

Additional Resources

The Orchid Thief Book: An In-Depth Review

Introduction to The Orchid Thief

The Orchid Thief is a captivating nonfiction book penned by acclaimed journalist Susan Orlean, first published in 1998. This compelling narrative delves into the mysterious world of rare orchids, the obsession that surrounds them, and the eccentric characters who are drawn to their allure. At its core, the book explores themes of obsession, nature, obsession, obsession, and the complex relationship between humans and the natural world.

What sets The Orchid Thief apart is Orlean's masterful storytelling, blending meticulous research with vivid prose and a flair for character development. The book is not merely about orchids but also a reflection on passion, obsession, and the lengths people go to pursue their interests.

Summary and Overview

The Orchid Thief chronicles the true story of John Laroche, a colorful and enigmatic plant dealer who becomes entangled in a criminal investigation related to orchid poaching in Florida. Orlean's narrative weaves through Laroche's life, his obsession with rare orchids—particularly the elusive Ghost Orchid—and the broader cultural landscape of orchid collecting.

The book is structured around Orlean's exploration of the Florida landscape, her interviews with various orchid enthusiasts, conservationists, and law enforcement officials, and her own reflections. It culminates in a detailed account of Laroche's arrest and the subsequent trial, all while examining the passion that drives collectors and the sometimes blurry lines between admiration, obsession, and illegal activity.

Key Themes and Topics

1. Obsession and Passion

One of the central themes of *The Orchid Thief* is obsession. Orlean vividly illustrates how orchids, particularly rare species like the Ghost Orchid, become objects of intense fascination. People like Laroche dedicate their lives to finding, cultivating, and sometimes illegally harvesting these plants.

- The book explores how obsession can lead to extraordinary pursuits and sometimes disastrous consequences.
- It raises questions about the nature of passion—what drives individuals to such lengths, and whether their obsession is a form of art, science, or compulsion.
- Orlean's nuanced portrayal allows readers to understand the allure of orchids and why enthusiasts are willing to risk everything for a glimpse or a specimen.

2. The Natural World and Conservation

Orlean's detailed descriptions of Florida's fragile ecosystem highlight the importance of conservation. The book touches upon:

- The delicate balance of the Florida wetlands and forests.
- The threats faced by orchids due to habitat destruction, poaching, and over-collection.
- The conflict between orchid collectors' desire for rare plants and the need to protect species from extinction.

This theme raises broader questions about human responsibility toward nature and the ethics of collecting and trading rare species.

3. The Cultural Landscape of Orchid Collecting

The Orchid Thief offers a fascinating look into the subculture of orchid collectors and enthusiasts:

- The history of orchid collecting as a hobby, a science, and a status symbol.
- The social dynamics within collector communities, including rivalries, alliances, and the pursuit of

exclusivity.

- The influence of popular culture, including the 1998 film adaptation *Adaptation* by Charlie Kaufman, based on Orlean's book, which further popularized the story.

4. Crime and Morality

The book does not shy away from exploring the darker side of orchid collecting:

- The illegal poaching of orchids from protected areas.
- The legal ramifications faced by Laroche and others involved in illicit activities.
- The moral dilemmas surrounding the protection of endangered plants versus the desires of collectors.

Orlean's narrative thoughtfully examines the gray areas of legality and morality, prompting readers to consider whether obsession justifies illegal acts.

Character Profiles and Key Figures

John Laroche

Laroche is the charismatic, eccentric figure at the heart of the book. His obsession with orchids, especially the Ghost Orchid, drives much of the narrative:

- A self-taught botanist and plant dealer.
- Known for his unconventional lifestyle and intense passion.
- His illegal activities, including poaching, lead to his arrest and trial.

Laroche embodies the complex interplay between passion and morality, and Orlean's portrayal humanizes him beyond his criminal actions.

Susan Orlean

As the author and narrator, Orlean's perspective provides insight and context:

- An investigative journalist with a keen eye for detail.
- Her fascination with Laroche and the orchid world adds depth to the narrative.
- She reflects on her own experiences and the nature of storytelling.

Her narrative voice is both informative and poetic, making complex topics accessible and engaging.

Other Notable Characters

- Law enforcement officials involved in the case.
- Other orchid enthusiasts and collectors, each with unique motivations.
- Conservationists working to protect Florida's native orchids.

Writing Style and Literary Merits

Orlean's writing is characterized by:

- Rich, descriptive prose that vividly captures the Florida landscape and the intricate details of orchids.
- A journalistic approach combined with literary flair, blending factual reporting with storytelling.
- Anecdotal interludes that add humor, depth, and personality.

Her ability to weave scientific facts with compelling narrative makes the book both educational and entertaining. The prose often elevates the subject matter, transforming what could be a dry topic into a vivid exploration of obsession and nature.

Impact and Cultural Significance

The Orchid Thief has had a lasting impact on both literary and environmental circles:

- It revitalized public interest in orchids and conservation issues.
- The book's popularity led to a film adaptation, *Adaptation*, which brought the story to an even wider audience.
- It has inspired countless readers and collectors, emphasizing the emotional and ethical dimensions of collecting rare plants.

The book also sparked debates about legality, ethics, and the environmental costs of collecting, contributing to ongoing conversations about conservation and human impact.

Adaptations and Media

The most notable adaptation is the 2002 film *Adaptation*, directed by Spike Jonze and written by Charlie Kaufman. While the film diverges from the book's narrative, it captures the essence of obsession, creativity, and the complexity of storytelling. The film's success further cemented the story's place in popular culture.

Additionally, *The Orchid Thief* has been referenced in various articles, documentaries, and botanical circles, emphasizing its influence on both literature and environmental advocacy.

Critical Reception and Awards

The book received widespread acclaim for:

- Its engaging storytelling and vivid descriptions.
- Its nuanced exploration of obsession and morality.
- Its contribution to environmental literature.

It was nominated for the 1998 National Book Award and became a bestseller, resonating with a diverse readership.

Conclusion: An Essential Read

The Orchid Thief is more than just a book about rare plants; it is a profound meditation on human passions, the natural world, and the blurry boundaries between admiration and obsession. Orlean's storytelling prowess turns a niche subject into a compelling narrative that invites reflection and curiosity.

Whether you are a nature lover, a reader interested in true crime, or someone fascinated by human obsession, this book offers a richly layered experience. Its blend of scientific detail, vivid storytelling, and ethical inquiry makes *The Orchid Thief* a must-read for anyone eager to explore the lush, complex tapestry of life and human desire.

In summary, *The Orchid Thief* stands as a testament to the allure of the natural world and the extraordinary stories hidden within ordinary landscapes. It's a literary journey into the depths of obsession, the beauty of orchids, and the intricate dance between humans and nature.

[The Orchid Thief Book](#)

the orchid thief book: *The Orchid Thief* Susan Orlean, 2000-01-04 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK A modern classic of personal journalism, *The Orchid Thief* is Susan Orlean's wickedly funny, elegant, and captivating tale of an amazing obsession. Determined to clone an endangered flower—the rare ghost orchid *Polyprrhiza lindenii*—a deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him. In the end, Orlean—and the reader—will have more respect for underdog determination and a powerful new definition of passion. In this new edition, coming fifteen years after its initial publication and twenty years after she first met the “orchid thief,” Orlean revisits this unforgettable world, and the route by which it was brought to the screen in the film *Adaptation*, in a new retrospective essay. Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader's Circle for author chats and more. Praise for *The Orchid Thief* “Stylishly written, whimsical yet sophisticated, quirkily detailed and full of empathy . . . *The Orchid Thief* shows [Orlean's] gifts in full bloom.”—The New York Times Book Review “Fascinating . . . an engrossing journey [full] of theft, hatred, greed, jealousy, madness, and backstabbing.”—Los Angeles Times “Orlean's snapshot-vivid, pitch-perfect prose . . . is fast becoming one of our national treasures.”—The Washington Post Book World “Orlean's gifts [are] her ear for the self-skewing dialogue, her eye for the incongruous, convincing detail, and her Didion-like deftness in description.”—Boston Sunday Globe “A swashbuckling piece of reporting that celebrates some virtues that made America great.”—The Wall Street Journal

the orchid thief book: *The Orchid Thief* Susan Orlean, 1998-01

the orchid thief book: *The Orchid Thief* Susan Orlean, 1998-11

the orchid thief book: *The Orchid Thief* Carolyn Keene, 2012-05-22 This New York Times bestselling girl detective has one hot summer ahead! Nancy, Bess, and George are off to Key Largo, Florida for a week of sun, swimming and exploring the fabulous coral reef that stretches along the Florida keys. They've been invited by Delia Duke, a friend of theirs and also a marine biologist at the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, which covers a 175 sq. miles of reef and shoreline along the coast of Kay Largo. The park is a scuba diver's delight, with dazzling corals and tropical fish, and Delia promises to show the girls the best snorkling and diving spots. But as they head through the

mangroves toward her boat, someone takes off in a small motor boat, leaving behind a bag filled with rare, endangered butterfly orchids. This is just the beginning of a shocking eco-mystery that'd be too complex for anyone but Nancy Drew. . .

the orchid thief book: Summary of Susan Orlean's The Orchid Thief Everest Media,, 2022-05-30T22:59:00Z Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book. Sample Book Insights: #1 Laroche is a tall, skinny man with pale eyes and a sharp appearance. He is extremely passionate and driven. He has been working for the Seminole Tribe of Florida since he was twenty-one years old, setting up a plant nursery and an orchid-propagation laboratory on the tribe's reservation in Hollywood, Florida. #2 Laroche is a very unusual person. He is also the most moral amoral person I've ever known. He loves doing things the hard way, especially if it means that he gets to do what he wants to do but also leaves everyone else wondering how he managed to get away with it. #3 I met John Laroche in Florida a few years ago. He was arrested with rare orchids he had stolen out of a swamp called the Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve. He explained that the plants were going to be cloned and sold to orchid collectors around the world. #4 The trial took place in a courthouse south of Sanibel. Laroche was charged with illegally removing more than two hundred rare orchid and bromeliad plants from the Fakahatchee Swamp. He was also charged with criminal possession of endangered species and of illegally removing plant life from state property, both of which are punishable by jail time and fines.

the orchid thief book: *The Orchid Thief* by Susan Orlean Judi T. Kiraly, 2002

the orchid thief book: The Orchid Thief Susan Orlean, 2011-07-20 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK A modern classic of personal journalism, *The Orchid Thief* is Susan Orlean's wickedly funny, elegant, and captivating tale of an amazing obsession. Determined to clone an endangered flower—the rare ghost orchid *Polyprrhiza lindenii*—a deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him. In the end, Orlean—and the reader—will have more respect for underdog determination and a powerful new definition of passion. In this new edition, coming fifteen years after its initial publication and twenty years after she first met the “orchid thief,” Orlean revisits this unforgettable world, and the route by which it was brought to the screen in the film *Adaptation*, in a new retrospective essay. Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader's Circle for author chats and more. Praise for *The Orchid Thief* “Stylishly written, whimsical yet sophisticated, quirkily detailed and full of empathy . . . *The Orchid Thief* shows [Orlean's] gifts in full bloom.”—The New York Times Book Review “Fascinating . . . an engrossing journey [full] of theft, hatred, greed, jealousy, madness, and backstabbing.”—Los Angeles Times “Orlean's snapshot-vivid, pitch-perfect prose . . . is fast becoming one of our national treasures.”—The Washington Post Book World “Orlean's gifts [are] her ear for the self-skewing dialogue, her eye for the incongruous, convincing detail, and her Didion-like deftness in description.”—Boston Sunday Globe “A swashbuckling piece of reporting that celebrates some virtues that made America great.”—The Wall Street Journal

the orchid thief book: *The Orchid Thief Reimagined* Jane Kent, 2003

the orchid thief book: Summary & Analysis of The Library Book ZIP Reads, PLEASE NOTE: This is a summary and analysis of the book and not the original book. If you'd like to purchase the original book, please paste this link in your browser: <https://amzn.to/2MjMIfq> Susan Orlean weaves a beautiful and insightful tale of the history, purpose, and heart of libraries as seen through the lens of the great Los Angeles library fire of 1986. What does this ZIP Reads Summary Include? - Synopsis of the original book - Chapter-by-chapter summaries - Key takeaways from each chapter - A history of the Los Angeles Central Library - Editorial Review - Background on Susan Orlean About the Original Book: Susan Orlean uses the 1986 Great Fire at the Los Angeles Central Library as the backdrop to explore the history of libraries and librarianship in the United States. In the end, there is no clear resolution about how and why the fire started. However, the author is clear that libraries have endured all types of fires, both physical and metaphorical. Orlean shows the

biggest threat to the Los Angeles Library System, like other public library systems, is the threat of irrelevance. For her part, Orlean sees the library as ever-evolving and able to adapt to modern needs rather than succumb to them. Her book is both a history of libraries as well as a love letter to them. **DISCLAIMER:** This book is intended as a companion to, not a replacement for, *The Library Book*. ZIP Reads is wholly responsible for this content and is not associated with the original author in any way. Please follow this link: <https://amzn.to/2MjMIfq> to purchase a copy of the original book. We are a participant in the Amazon Services LLC Associates Program, an affiliate advertising program designed to provide a means for us to earn fees by linking to Amazon.com and affiliated sites.

the orchid thief book: *Beyond Adaptation* Phyllis Frus, Christy Williams, 2010-03-16 Some film and novel revisions go so far beyond adaptation that they demand a new designation. This critical collection explores movies, plays, essays, comics and video games that supersede adaptation to radically transform their original sources. Fifteen essays investigate a variety of texts that rework everything from literary classics to popular children's books, demonstrating how these new, stand-alone creations critically engage their sources and contexts. Particular attention is paid to parody, intertextuality, and fairy-tale transformations in the examination of these works, which occupy a unique narrative and creative space.

the orchid thief book: *The Screenwriter's Path* Diane Lake, 2016-10-04 *The Screenwriter's Path* takes a comprehensive approach to learning how to write a screenplay—allowing the writer to use it as both a reference and a guide in constructing a script. A tenured professor of screenwriting at Emerson College in Boston, author Diane Lake has 20 years' experience writing screenplays for major studios and was a co-writer of the Academy-award winning film *Frida*. The book sets out a unique approach to story structure and characterization that takes writers, step by step, to a completed screenplay, and it is full of practical advice on what to do with the finished script to get it seen by the right people. By demystifying the process of writing a screenplay, Lake empowers any writer to bring their vision to the screen.

the orchid thief book: *Books in Motion* Mireia Aragay, 2005 *Books in Motion* addresses the hybrid, interstitial field of film adaptation. The introductory essay integrates a retrospective survey of the development of adaptation studies with a forceful argument about their centrality to any history of culture--any discussion, that is, of the transformation and transmission of texts and meanings in and across cultures. The thirteen especially composed essays that follow, organised into four sections headed 'Paradoxes of Fidelity', 'Authors, Auteurs, Adaptation', 'Contexts, Intertexts, Adaptation' and 'Beyond Adaptation', variously illustrate that claim by problematising the notion of fidelity, highlighting the role played by adaptation in relation to changing concepts of authorship and auteurism, exploring the extent to which the intelligibility of film adaptations is dependent on contextual and intertextual factors, and making a claim for the need to transcend any narrowly-defined concept of adaptation in the study of adaptation. Discussion ranges from adaptations of established classics like *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Frankenstein*, *Henry V*, *Le temps retrouvé*, *Mansfield Park*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *'The Dead'* or *Wuthering Heights*, to contemporary (popular) texts/films like *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Fools*, *The Governess*, *High Fidelity*, *The Hours*, *The Orchid Thief/Adaptation*, the work of Doris Dörrie, the first *Harry Potter* novel/film, or the adaptations made by Alfred Hitchcock, Stanley Kubrick and Walt Disney. This book will appeal to both a specialised readership and to those accessing the dynamic field of adaptation studies for the first time.

the orchid thief book: *The Philosophy of Charlie Kaufman* David LaRocca, 2011-05-27 From the Academy Award-winning *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004) and Academy Award-nominated *Adaptation* (2002) to the cult classic *Being John Malkovich* (1999), writer Charlie Kaufman is widely admired for his innovative, philosophically resonant films. Although he only recently made his directorial debut with *Synecdoche, New York* (2008), most fans and critics refer to "Kaufman films" the way they would otherwise discuss works by directors Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese, or the Coen brothers. Not only has Kaufman transformed our sense of what can take place in a film, but he also has made a significant impact on our understanding of the role of the

screenwriter. *The Philosophy of Charlie Kaufman*, edited by David LaRocca, is the first collection of essays devoted to a rigorous philosophical exploration of Kaufman's work by a team of capable and critical scholars from a wide range of disciplines. From political theorists to philosophers, classicists to theologians, professors of literature to filmmakers, the contributing authors delve into the heart of Kaufman's innovative screenplays, offering not only original philosophical analyses but also extended reflections on the nature of film and film criticism.

the orchid thief book: *Narrative Theory and Adaptation*. Jason Mittell, 2017-04-20 *Narrative Theory and Adaptation* offers a concise introduction to narrative theory in jargon-free language and shows how this theory can be deployed to interpret Spike Jonze's critically acclaimed 2002 film *Adaptation*. Understanding narrative theory is crucial to make sense of the award-winning film *Adaptation*. The book explicates, in clear prose for beginners, four key facets important to the narrative theory of film: the distinction between practical vs. critical theory, the role of adaptation, the process of narrative comprehension, and notions of authorship. It then works to unlock *Adaptation* using these four keys in succession, considering how the film demands a theoretical understanding of the storytelling process. In using this unusual case study of a film, the author makes the case for the importance of narrative theory as a general perspective for filmmakers, critics, and viewers alike.

the orchid thief book: *Authorship in Film Adaptation* Jack Boozer, 2009-06-03 *Authoring a film adaptation of a literary source not only requires a media conversion but also a transformation as a result of the differing dramatic demands of cinema. The most critical central step in this transformation of a literary source to the screen is the writing of the screenplay. The screenplay usually serves to recruit producers, director, and actors; to attract capital investment; and to give focus to the conception and production of the film project. Often undergoing multiple revisions prior to production, the screenplay represents the crucial decisions of writer and director that will determine how and to what end the film will imitate or depart from its original source. Authorship in Film Adaptation is an accessible, provocative text that opens up new areas of discussion on the central process of adaptation surrounding the screenplay and screenwriter-director collaboration. In contrast to narrow binary comparisons of literary source text and film, the twelve essays in this collection also give attention to the underappreciated role of the screenplay and film pre-production that can signal the primary intention for a film. Divided into four parts, this collection looks first at the role of Hollywood's activist producers and major auteurs such as Hitchcock and Kubrick as they worked with screenwriters to formulate their audio-visual goals. The second part offers case studies of *Devil in a Blue Dress* and *The Sweet Hereafter*, for which the directors wrote their own adapted screenplays. Considering the variety of writer-director working relationships that are possible, Part III focuses on adaptations that alter genre, time, and place, and Part IV investigates adaptations that alter stories of romance, sexuality, and ethnicity.*

the orchid thief book: *Who Wrote That Movie?* Chris Wehner, 2003 Before the director or actors can work their magic onscreen a writer, often working alone, faces the blank page and must be the first to create the magic. Yet the writer is usually ignored by critics eager to give credit to the director or sometimes an actor. Not only that, the original vision of the screenwriter rarely makes it to the screen intact-Imagine if your favorite movie could have even been better had that image-conscious actress not demanded changes to the script? The screenplays and movies discussed include: *A Beautiful Mind* *Adaptation* *Almost Famous* *Ararat* *Black Hawk Down* *Blade 2* *Cast Away* *Catch Me if You Can* *City by the Sea* *The Cell* *Dancer in the Dark* *Far From Heaven* *Frailty* *The Gift* *Gladiator* *John Q.* *Insomnia* *In the Bedroom* *Memento* *MIB2* *Minority Report* *Monster's Ball* *Ocean's Eleven* *Panic Room* *Pay it Forward* *Pearl Harbor* *Proof of Life* *Road to Perdition* *Signs* *Spy Game* *We Were Soldiers* *Windtalkers* *Traffic* *Unbreakable*

the orchid thief book: *The New New Journalism* Robert Boynton, 2007-12-18 Forty years after Tom Wolfe, Hunter S. Thompson, and Gay Talese launched the New Journalism movement, Robert S. Boynton sits down with nineteen practitioners of what he calls the New New Journalism to discuss their methods, writings and careers. The New New Journalists are first and foremost brilliant

reporters who immerse themselves completely in their subjects. Jon Krakauer accompanies a mountaineering expedition to Everest. Ted Conover works for nearly a year as a prison guard. Susan Orlean follows orchid fanciers to reveal an obsessive subculture few knew existed. Adrian Nicole LeBlanc spends nearly a decade reporting on a family in the South Bronx. And like their muckraking early twentieth-century precursors, they are drawn to the most pressing issues of the day: Alex Kotlowitz, Leon Dash, and William Finnegan to race and class; Ron Rosenbaum to the problem of evil; Michael Lewis to boom-and-bust economies; Richard Ben Cramer to the nitty gritty of politics. How do they do it? In these interviews, they reveal the techniques and inspirations behind their acclaimed works, from their felt-tip pens, tape recorders, long car rides, and assumed identities; to their intimate understanding of the way a truly great story unfolds. Interviews with: Gay Talese Jane Kramer Calvin Trillin Richard Ben Cramer Ted Conover Alex Kotlowitz Richard Preston William Langewiesche Eric Schlosser Leon Dash William Finnegan Jonathan Harr Jon Krakauer Adrian Nicole LeBlanc Michael Lewis Susan Orlean Ron Rosenbaum Lawrence Weschler Lawrence Wright

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