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A False Autobiography: Poems, 1940-1990, Ben Maddow, Other Shore Press, 1991, 0962990914, 9780962990915, . Distinguished screenwriter ("Intruder in the Dust", "The Asphalt Jungle") & previous National Book Award Nominee ("Edward Weston" '74) Ben Maddow harvests half a century of poetic achievement in A False Autobiography reflecting the tumultuous experience of five decades as recorded in an ironically inimitable voice, succinct & wise , encompassing losses both public & private & hailed by fellow poet Allen Ginsberg as "a pleasure to read...sparse, spare & sage...".

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Spinster a novel, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, 1971, Education, 242 pages. .

A Sunday Between Wars The Course of American Life from 1865 to 1917, Ben Maddow, Mar 30, 1979, , 316 pages. .

The Wright poems , Conrad Kent Rivers, 1972, Literary Criticism, 20 pages. .

Aperture , , 2003, Photography, 80 pages. .

A sense of the present: [essays, stories, and reviews] , William Phillips, 1968, , 241 pages. Essays and stories of two decades, by a co-founder of "Partisan review"..

Labor and Lumber , Charlotte Todes, 1931, Lumber trade, 208 pages. .

The international , John Howard Lawson, 1927, , 276 pages. .

The Photography of Max Yavno , Ben Maddow, 1981, Documentary photography, 128 pages. Photographs taken between 1938 and the present show the streets and people of Cairo, Jerusalem, New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco..

Book Description: Other Shore Press, 1991. Paperback. Book Condition: Very Good. Signed. SIGNED COPY with inscription, but no personalization, on the half-title page; also included with the book is a dark little poem signed "Happy Holidays!" and signed from Ben Maddow and his wife Freda. Book has faint age discoloration to the covers; no markings to the pages. Pasadena's finest independent new and used bookstore. Signed by Author(s). Bookseller Inventory # mon0000166196

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Award Nominee ("Edward Weston" '74) Ben Maddow harvests half a century of poetic achievement in *A False Autobiography* reflecting the tumultuous experience of five decades as recorded in an ironically inimitable voice, succinct & wise, encompassing losses both public & private & hailed by fellow poet Allen Ginsberg as "a pleasure to read...sparse, spare & sage..."

Ben Maddow spent much of his screenwriting career working without credit or under a pseudonym, and on commercial projects over which he maintained little control. Despite this, he gained a reputation in both independent and popular cinema as a socially concerned artist. Maddow's involvement with film began in 1935 when he answered an advertisement placed by the celebrated still photographer Ralph Steiner who was seeking a poet to write narration for his film *Harbor Scenes*. Maddow, who had begun to have his poetry published in small literary journals, found that his words came to life when combined with the film's images. Through Steiner, he met a number of photographers and developed the aesthetic concern with photography which would play a large role in much of his later film work.

Maddow joined Steiner and other leftist artists to form Nykino, an informal organization devoted to making films that promoted social awareness and the interests of the working class. Nykino was succeeded by Frontier Films which Maddow participated in as a writer of narration and commentary under the pseudonym David Wolff. (Pseudonyms were used by a number of artists at this time since their government-subsidized jobs prohibited their taking on outside employment.) The members of Frontier Films were influenced by the popular *March of Time* series which combined staged scenes and documentary footage. At the same time, they wished to deal with social problems in a more politically and stylistically radical fashion by presenting stories about individuals which would provide a configuration and illumination of the class struggle in American society. As Maddow expressed it, the documentary director, writer, and cameraman should work as a team, with the writer looking "constantly for ideas in their specific personal forms" but linked by "a hard, invariable core of essential truth." He felt that any method; individual stories, animation, reenactment, candid material; could be utilized in expressing these ideas.

Maddow admired *The March of Time*'s use of offscreen narration and thought that this procedure might be used further to achieve a new form of cinema, the "cine-poem," in which a continuous voice would serve as a "sort of ground-bass to the images on screen." Freed from any fixed temporal continuity, a film could "encompass modern events, their violent compressions and simultaneities," by selecting and presenting actions which, when linked, would delineate larger social issues. As an alternative to *The March of Time*'s practice of writing the narration first and then fitting the image to it, Maddow proposed that the writer finish a few minutes of narration, then read it aloud and watch the film on the movieola, going back over it repeatedly; experimenting with how words could be arranged to correspond to the movement of the image on screen and with how they could be used to accentuate or conceal a detail, retard or increase the tempo. He felt, however, that the result must always be the same: to combine words and images to form a single indivisible impression.

When Frontier Films disbanded, Maddow went to South America to work on *The Bridge*, a documentary about trade problems faced by that continent. Upon his return to the United States, he was drafted and served in the Army Air Force's Hollywood Motion Picture Bureau. During this period, he wrote a screen treatment titled *Death and Mathematics* which, while never filmed, reflects the concerns raised in Maddow's previous writings on film and anticipates the complex, eclectic style of many of the later films over which he maintained control. *Death and Mathematics* concerns a science teacher who returned wounded from the war and is scheduled to teach a university course in nuclear physics, but is uncertain whether to mention atomic energy's destructive possibilities. His voice is heard intermittently on the soundtrack over screen images which are at times seen from his viewpoint and at other times from a sort of omniscient perspective. Close-ups, commentary, photographs, animation, stock footage, and staged scenes are all used to fuse the personal and educational aspects of the film.

After leaving the Army, Maddow wrote screenplays for several Hollywood studios. *Intruder in the Dust*, his adaptation of William Faulkner's novel about racial prejudice, was his first major

achievement as a Hollywood screenwriter. The complexity of Faulkner's plot and the movement of the narrative back and forth in time led Maddow to simplify story details and to reorganize the narrative's temporal structure. After this, he worked with John Huston on the screenplay of *The Asphalt Jungle*, a study of the criminal mind. Maddow's script for *Shadow in the Sky* dealt with difficulties faced by a war veteran upon his release from a mental hospital. *The Steps of Age* and *The Stairs*, two documentaries made by Maddow outside the studio system, concerned the issues of aging and mental health. During the Hollywood blacklist, Maddow worked without credit on several scripts. He went on to write for a number of television drama series and resumed screenwriting under his name with Huston's *The Unforgiven*, a study of racial strife in Texas shortly after the American Civil War.

Maddow's next film was *The Savage Eye*, on which he worked intimately with Joseph Strick and Sidney Meyers. It concerned a recently divorced woman, adrift and traveling alone through Los Angeles. As she converses offscreen with what seems to be an inner voice guiding her through the agony of realization, a series of disparate images is seen. Maddow has claimed that *The Savage Eye* was imitated widely by American and European filmmakers. One can see how, in its study of a woman whose marital problems have estranged her from the world, it anticipated, if not influenced, such films as *The Misfits*, *Red Desert*, and *Juliet of the Spirits*. Maddow and Strick again worked together on a film of Jean Genet's *The Balcony*, with the play's "house of illusions" setting changed from a brothel to a converted movie soundstage.

Certain motifs recur in Maddow's work whether it be independent or commissioned, original or an adaptation. In his screenplay for *Two Loves*, derived from Sylvia Ashton-Warner's novel *Spinster*, the themes of emotional inhibition, postwar trauma, and cultural clashes are again addressed. In *An Affair of the Skin*, written and directed by Maddow, a woman spurns, yet yearns for, affection. Maddow felt that this story of romantic entanglements as seen through the eyes of a black woman photographer had been rushed for financial reasons. Ten years later, he reedited and released it again under the title *Love As Disorder*. An offscreen narration by the photographer was added to establish her as an observer: a participant in the action but also a caustic chronicler of it. As in much of Maddow's work, inner disorder is seen against a background of social unrest as described in a highly imagistic manner by a person who has both emotional involvement and critical detachment.

In *The Chairman*, the United States and the Soviet Union are forced into an uneasy alliance against Red China which has discovered an enzyme which makes great agricultural development possible. A parallel is drawn in the film between the American General Shelby, willing to sacrifice his and others' lives for the sake of his country, and the Chinese Chairman who believes that an individual's fate is unimportant in the struggle for the progress of the masses. The fanatical Shelby resembles the men warped by war in earlier Maddow films. His glasses, with one lens tinted black, recall the black eye patch worn by the war veteran in *Death and Mathematics*. In both instances, the dark eye covering serves to suggest a psychological as well as physical injury. Like *Death and Mathematics*, which made the point that Fascism's worst crime was that it forced democracy to pervert science for wartime purposes, *The Chairman* holds up to criticism two opposing ideologies. Again in Maddow's work, social deficiencies are seen in microcosm in the individual's search for emotional fulfillment. The General, who shows no interest in the death of a scientist's wife, and the Chairman, who believes that individual love is less important than love of the masses, are contrasted with the scientist, whose wish to use the enzyme for the international alleviation of poverty coincides with his search for personal happiness.

Maddow's most notable film in the 1970s was his independent production *Storm of Strangers* which depicts how, for turn-of-the-century immigrants living in New York's Lower East Side slums, "It was better to be an uptown horse than a downtown Jew." For the film, Maddow devised a new, less expensive method of scanning photographs to approximate the way the eye scans an image, so that the camera movement would be as personalized as the first-person narration. Here too one finds Maddow combining precise visual imagery with ornate offscreen language in a purely cinematic attempt to deal with individual lives and the larger social issues which they delineate.

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