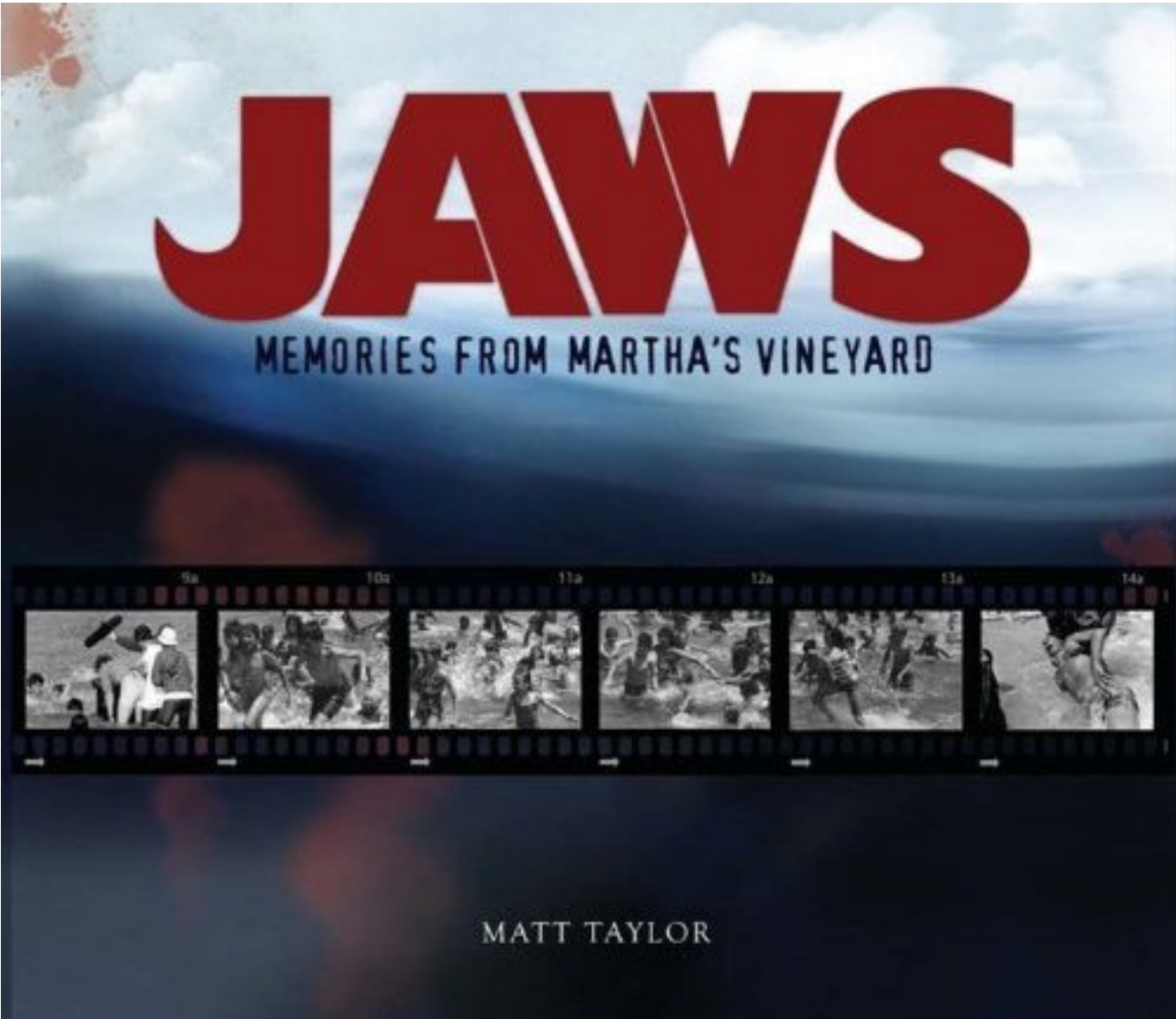


Book Review: ‘Steven Spielberg: A Retrospective,’ ‘Jaws: Memories From Martha’s Vineyard’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 5, 2012 - 1:11pm

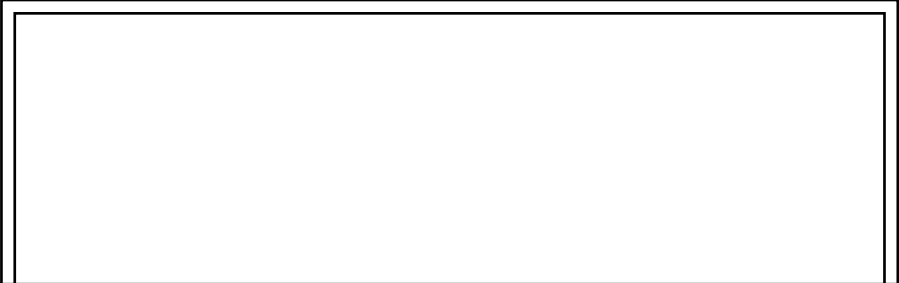
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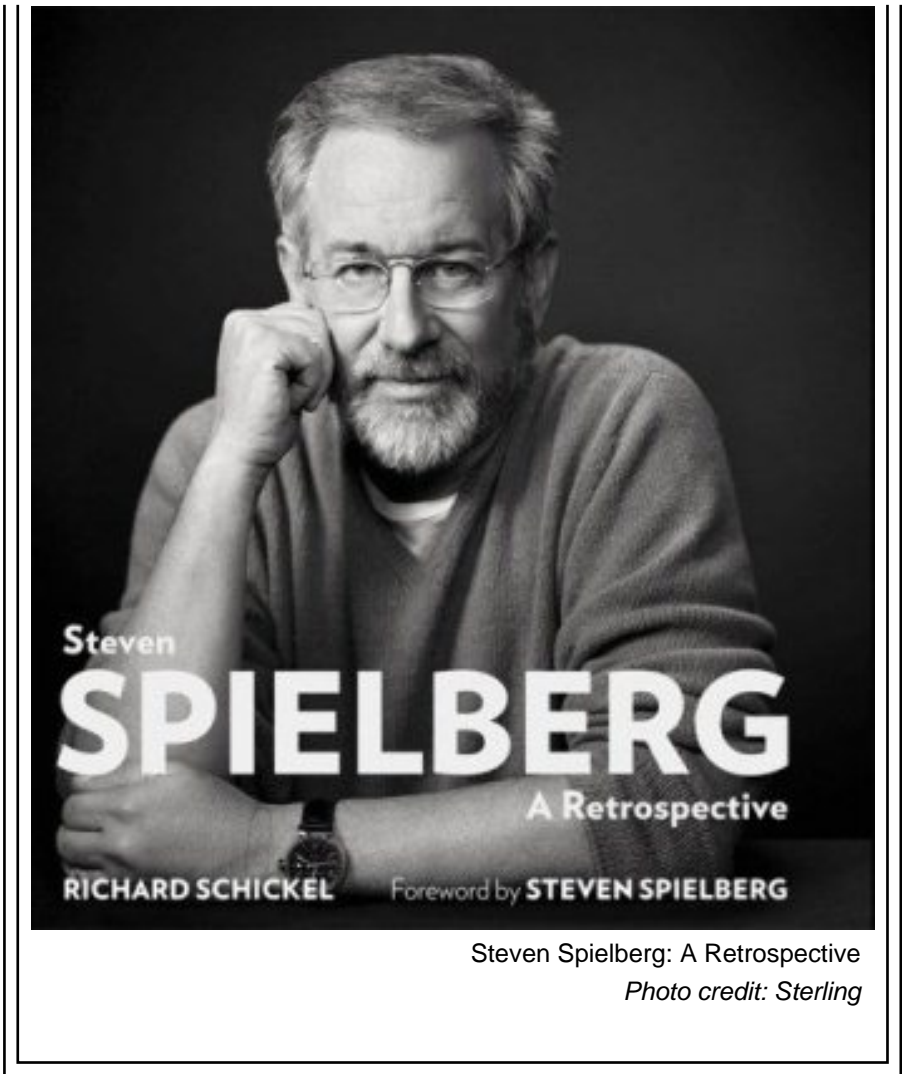
CHICAGO – It’s a full-on assault for Steven Spielberg fans this holiday season as “Lincoln” plays in theaters (starting 11/9, watch for our full review on that day) and thousands pick up “[E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial](#) [13]” and “[Indiana Jones: The Complete Adventures](#) [14]” on Blu-ray. Even book store shelves feature two of the most interesting gift releases of the season with a Spielberg theme — Richard Schickel’s “Steven Spielberg: A Retrospective” and Matt Taylor’s “Jaws: Memories From Martha’s Vineyard.” Both coffee table books would make a spectacular gift this holiday season for the film lover in your family. They are wonderful volumes about one of the most important filmmakers of all time.



Jaws: Memories From Martha’s Vineyard
Photo credit: Titan Books

The more high-profile of the two books comes from Mr. Schickel, one of the most notable film critics of all time (he has been the critic for Time Magazine for decades). Fans of Schickel’s work in the magazine may not know his expansive library of books about film history, including works on Marlon Brando, James Cagney, Cary Grant, Woody Allen, Elia Kazan, Clint Eastwood, and many more. His latest work, “Steven Spielberg: A Retrospective” is one of his best. It’s a massive volume (over 250 pages) of large stills from the entirety of Steven Spielberg’s career along with commentary and insight from the director himself all the way up to “Lincoln.”





Schickel’s tome focuses not on the films but the man who made them. It’s not coincidental that a vast majority of the stills are of the behind-the-scenes variety — Spielberg hugging E.T., finetuning a dinosaur in one of the “Jurassic Park” films, or just working with one of his A-list casts. The book is a lovingly produced window into Spielberg’s process and it reminds one of the amazing scope of his career, one of the most notable in film history.

“Jaws: Memories From Martha’s Vineyard” has a very different focus although it’s even more remarkable in its behind-the-scenes access given how it devotes its entirety to one film. The book is filled with archival newspaper articles and photos from the production, many of which were taken by locals as the film took over Martha’s Vineyard. Spielberg’s use of setting in “Jaws” is one of its most notable elements and so this book is a perfect way to capture how a small town turned into one of cinema’s most notable locations.

Being a film lover for years, I’ve been lucky enough to get books about moviemaking for the holidays for a large portion of my life. They always make great gifts. And these are two of the best in my collection. Don’t miss them.

“Steven Spielberg: A Retrospective” and “Jaws: Memories From Martha’s Vineyard” are available in stores now.



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