

## THE BLARG

THE SITE OF JUSTIN SHADY + WAYNE CHINSANG

# Three books, two DVDs, one CD...

January 22, 2010 in [Blogs!](#) | Tags: ["Admit One: My Life in Film"](#), ["Revolution in the Head: Rage Against the Machine and the Art of Protest"](#), ["The 13th Hour"](#), ["Think Outside the Box Office"](#), ["Up From Below"](#), ["Wesley Willis's Joy Rides: It's a Rock You Mentary"](#), [book](#), [CD](#), [DVD](#), [Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros](#), [Emmett James](#), [Jon Reiss](#), [Rage Against the Machine](#), [review](#), [Richard Doetsch](#), [Wesley Willis](#)

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### **Books:**

#### **Think Outside the Box Office** by Jon Reiss (Hybrid Cinema)

Breaking into the film industry has always been easier said than done. The digital age, of course, has made the world much smaller, bringing people closer together. One would think that this would make it *easier* to get a film made, but it's unfortunately had the reverse effect; it's forced filmmakers to get creative. Just look at the popularity of films like "The Blair Witch Project" and "Paranormal Activity." The filmmakers of those movies thought outside of the box and made a killing because of it. Think Outside the Box Office can easily be regarded as a bible for those types of filmmakers. Whether you're looking to produce a feature film, web series, short, or even a clip for YouTube, this book outlines unique distribution strategies and marketing methods for filmmakers of all sizes. I can see readers who aren't surrounded by the film industry becoming a little bogged down by some of the book's lingo and terminology, but don't let that discourage you. If anything, this book should force you to learn those terms, not run from them. If filmmaking is an industry you're looking to get into, pick this up, grab a highlighter, and get reading.

#### **The 13th Hour** by Richard Doetsch (Atria Books)

You know the backward episode of "Seinfeld," where Kramer's gigantic lollipop gets bigger and bigger as the episode goes on? Well, this novel kind of has that same premise, minus Kramer and his ever-growing lollipop, of course. The 13th Hour is a thriller told in reverse. The story begins on July 28th at 9PM. Nicholas Quinn sits in an interrogation room at police headquarters unjustly accused of his wife Julia's murder. Then, through the help of a mysterious man who enters the room, Nicholas is given the power to go back in time (one hour at a time) and solve the murder of his wife. Admittedly, at first, the story's premise can come across as being cliched or gimmicky; but if television shows like "Lost" and films like "Memento" have proven anything, they've proven that it all comes down to how the material is handled. Author Richard Doetsch has done a great job of steering far away from the ridiculous, and has given readers a story that is as interesting as it is unique. I admit I'm a sucker for stories that begin at the end (or end at the beginning, for that matter), but The 13th Hour is more than just a clever idea; it's a damn good novel.

#### **Admit One: My Life in Film** by Emmett James (Fizzypop Productions)

Everybody's got a story, and Emmett James is proof. In this autobiography, James looks back on his life, from his cinema-obsessed childhood in South London in the 1980s, to his crashing of the Academy Awards in Hollywood. James' obsession with movies runs deep in his blood, from watching films at a local theater as a child, to an acting career in the business itself. (He even made a brief appearance in 1997's "Titanic" as 1st Class Steward.) Here, James reflects on all of it, bringing together his very private real world with the very public plastic world of the movie-making industry. With every chapter, James compares and contrasts his real life with the scripted fiction of some of Hollywood's most well-known movies. In doing so, he

manages to blur the lines between reality and surreality, leaving the reader wondering what is true and what's been written simply for more effect. But who really gives a shit, right? Because in the end it's all about telling a good story; true, false, or somewhere in between.

## DVDs:

### **“Revolution in the Head: Rage Against the Machine and the Art of Protest”** (Sexy Intellectual)

Rage! Against the Machine! Anger! I love Rage, and this documentary reminds me why. This DVD is very similar in content and style to [this](#) Nine Inch Nails DVD that I reviewed a few months back. There's most definitely a lot of great information here about Rage Against the Machine, as well as some fantastic live performance footage, but the members of RATM are noticeably absent from the film itself. Still, there are a lot of great interview subjects featured including Rage producer/engineer Garth Richardson, and Rage biographer (to be read: Rage Against the Machine Nerd, or RATMN) Colin Devenish. The best part of the documentary is that, while it's definitely a film about Rage, they use the group as more of a vehicle to talk about the broader topic of protest musicians, everybody from Pete Seeger to Public Enemy. If you're looking for just a live performance DVD you're going to want to sit this one out. But if you're looking for a film about Rage's creative process and the history of protest music, pick it up.

### **“Wesley Willis's Joy Rides: It's a Rock You Mentary”** (Eyeosaur Productions)

There are two types of people in the world: Those who “get” Wesley Willis and everyone else. I was fortunate enough to catch a [live performance](#) of Wesley a few years before he passed away, and I can honestly say that no matter what your opinion of the man may be, he was a consummate performer through and through. This documentary about the music, art and life of the man delivers that message. What the film shows is that beneath the mystery of Wesley Willis (beyond the headbutts he'd give fans, beyond the commercial jingles that ended each and every one of his 5,000+ songs) there was a warm and caring guy who wanted nothing more than to make people happy with his witty and bizarre music. That's it. Unlike so many people in the music industry, he wasn't out for fame or fortune. He really *did* only care about the music. When I first heard that Wesley died back in 2003, I have to admit that I really didn't feel anything. He most definitely wasn't a healthy or well individual, so his death wasn't a big surprise. But while watching this documentary I actually found myself *missing* him. Weird. Rock over London, Wesley. Rock on Chicago. Indeed. For those of you who have never heard of Wesley before, check out this short piece on him. If you like *this*, you'll also like the DVD.



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## CDs:

### Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros “Up From Below” (Community Records)

I have to admit that when I first saw a video of Edward Sharpe and his joyful hippie-esque clan of Magnetic Zeros, images of The Polyphonic Spree popped into my head. Ugh... I shudder. But this bizarre band of musicians has something the Spree doesn't: TALENT! Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros are more Muppet gypsies than they are crazy hippies... not that there's anything wrong with that. But what do they sound like? Well, they sound like the theme song of “The Great Space Coaster” as covered by the original 1971 Broadway cast of “Jesus Christ Superstar.” Yeah... kind of like that. Sure, the music is both catchy and quirky, but not once did it feel gimmicky. Beyond the beards and barefoot performances lies a rag-tag group of talented musicians who just want to have fun while making quality music. Mission accomplished, folks.

I miss [One-Sentence Reviews](#),

*-Shady*

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5