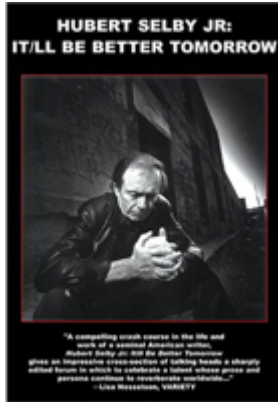




04/04/07

Reviewed by - [Matt Rowe](#)



**Hubert Selby, Jr
It//ll Be Better
Tomorrow**



Hubert Selby, Jr was an enigmatic writer, responsible for the “depths of despair” fiction that has been immortalized in several well-received films. The first, *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, referenced the lives of people lost in a go-nowhere neighbourhood, unable to climb out of the muck and become a better person for it. In his other film adaptation, *Requiem for a Dream*, which put Ellen Burstyn in the running for an Academy Award, ran through drug addiction and the hole that addicts fall into despite their hatred of the chains that are wrapped around them quite tightly. Both films represent loathing, self-loathing, fear, and hopelessness, offering no solutions other than to serve as unintended warnings.

But the real impact comes from the author’s books themselves. Written in an unconventional style (lower case, apostrophes substituted by slashes, and no quotation marks) and left that way by maverick publisher, Grove Press, Hubert Selby, Jr’s books were fireballs in a flurry of “new” writers (Burroughs, Kerouac, Brautigan, Vonnegut) emerging in the 60s to critical revulsion but reader acceptance. Today, those same writers are revered as ushering in the new voice of fiction - gritty, ‘true to life’ portrayals of struggling humanity and the frustrations it experiences.

It//ll Be Better Tomorrow explores the life and art of Hubert Selby, Jr. And what a life he led. He developed tuberculosis at a young age, spent a lot of time in hospitals, and became addicted to heroin and other medications. In time, with no prospects of a meaningful life or career, he chose to write. With his frighteningly realistic descriptions of the outcasts of urban life, he was able to craft unimaginable and unforgettable tales of woe without chance of redemption.

This documentary is filled with a range of discussion that involves not only the author himself, but also noted archivists, critics, and fans that include Lou Reed, whose own lyrical work mirrors, to a degree, the subjects of Selby’s material, and über-fan Henry Rollins. As a documentary, *It//ll Be Better Tomorrow*, does an admirable job of recounting Hubert Selby, Jr from his birth to his death, running through his time with USC as an adjunct professor of writing who championed the work of his students. He encouraged them to be separate from the pack and decried the rejections that his students received as they attempted to set apart their literary voice from the usual mass. The extras found on *It//ll Be Better Tomorrow* include more than 3 hours of audio interviews with Hubert Selby, Jr. The DVD is narrated by Robert Downey, Jr. The main program has a running time of 79 minutes.

This documentary begins and ends with the complexities of Selby’s life as he

explored the worst of America, presenting it to us as a canvas of distorted art so intriguing that, as art, it is transcendent. You may ask what this has to do with Rock and Roll. It has everything to do with it. As defining and changing as Rock was to our generations, so was the work of Hubert Selby, Jr. Along with other notable writers of the Beat Generation, existing smack dab in the middle of Rock's shining eras, Hubert Selby, Jr helped to redefine the way that we read and comprehend, especially as it pertains to life. These contributions cannot be ignored. Although Selby was the least known of all of the extraordinary writers previously mentioned – and some who weren't – his work is no less important.

<http://www.musictap.net/Reviews/SelbyJrHubertBetterTomorrowDVD.html>

Release Date: March 13, 2007
Produced by: Michael W Dean / Ryan Brown
Directed by: Michael W Dean / Kenneth Shiffrin
Format: DVD

[Website](#)

MVD
ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

Track Listing:
