



Mann Alive

Luxurious pic-book for LA's biggest fan...

MICHAEL MANN

By FX Feeney (Edited by Paul Duncan), Taschen, £14.99



Feeney's sumptuous tribute will spark a circle-slobber among committed Mann mentalists, but is it really much more than a slideshow of pretty pictures?

Tracking Mann's CV from 1981's underseen James Caan-starrer *Thief* to 2006's cops-and-criminals caper *Miami Vice*, the focus

eventually settles on the bond between director and longstanding editor Dov Hoenig (to Mann as Thelma Schoonmaker is to Scorsese). They're a formidable double-act: Mann as compulsive research geek and visual visionary; Hoenig his taming, framing, safe-hands.

Best is the chapter on *Heat*, with plenty of crackling, kinetic shots of Mann conducting his two greatest pretenders (Pacino and De Niro) and Feeney smartly linking a clutch of pics that warms to Mann's strongest recurring theme: using LA's architecture to evoke its ever-swinging moods (criss-cross freeways; soothing

symmetry at the train station; the airport's murky concrete limbo, periodically inflamed by landing lights).

Taschen's standard pornographic pore over a subject is well-suited to Mann's twinkling eye for twilight panorama, and the insights are acute and accurate (shame about the scattering of typos). But this is too glossy to qualify as biography. More appreciation than criticism; a scrap-book with a posh picture budget. *Pretty pictures, mind...*

QUOTE "As Neil lies dying, the combat is over. They are no longer enemies, jut two men who understand each other."

Andy Lowe