

Movies in print...

THE GODFATHER FAMILY ALBUM

Edited by Paul Duncan (published by Taschen. Hardback. £44.99). 528 pages, illustrated. ISBN 978-3-8365-2430-8

Taschen know how to make big books. This latest, *The Godfather Family Album* is HUGE. I mean, should come with a set of wheels huge. This is not a book to read on the daily commute, unless you are training for The World's Strongest Man competition.

This was previously only available as a limited edition, priced at a mere £1000 each. You would have to be a seriously big *Godfather* fan to pick that one up, and I imagine even Francis Ford Coppola would have had to think twice. But classic movie fans rejoice! Taschen have now reprinted this incredible book for us mortals retailing at a much more affordable price and it is virtually the same as the original volume. To use the unavoidable pun, this is one offer you can't refuse. The book brings together the collected on-set photos of Steve Schapiro, who was the official photographer on all three *Godfather* movies. He captured both the classic images used in publicity as well as more candid moments behind the scenes. Also featured in the book are many reminiscences and interviews with all the key players as well as Schapiro himself. He discusses how many of the well known pictures came to be taken and reveals some little-known facts, such as the time Coppola happened to find a stray cat wandering past the studio. He picked it up and gave it straight to Marlon Brando. That spur of the moment decision became one of the defining images from *The Godfather*.

Here you can also learn of the struggle Coppola had to cast Al Pacino, referred to as "the midget" by the film's producers. Although some of the problems Coppola had with the first film have been well documented, there are still some surprising revelations here, and when printed alongside such amazing pictures it seems hard to believe they ever doubted this would be anything but a success. James Caan discusses his incredibly violent death scene, revealing that the special effects team had never put so many squibs on one person before. There is a fascinating photo showing how these explosive effects were even attached to his face. Also reproduced here in full is Al Pacino's interview with *Playboy* magazine. Taken from over 40 hours of recordings it really covers in great detail his experience making those first two movies. So to paraphrase the Godfather himself, "a fan who doesn't spend with *The Godfather Family Album* can never be a real fan". It's another terrific book for movie lovers. Taschen put such care into their books that it feels like you might be the only person in the world privileged enough to own one. Once out of print this is surely going to become a highly sought after collector's item. (AS).

