

## The Kid Stays in the Picture

Finally, a documentary which tells the story of an adult who has acted like a kid most of his life; in fact the film's title is *The Kid Stays in the Picture*, a film autobiography of once-hot producer Robert Evans. Evans was selling women's pants in Hollywood when he was discovered at the Beverly Hills Hotel and put into pictures in 1955. His brief acting career was mercifully followed by work as a producer, culminating in his resuscitation of the Paramount Pictures studio in the late 1960's and a string of great movie hits in the 1970's. His later demise, ending in scandal and a stroke, is also chronicled.

The film is based on Evans 1994 biography of the same name (the title comes from a line by Darryl Zanuck defending the casting of young Evans as a bullfighter in *The Sun Also Rises*), and it is a thoroughgoing vanity production. Evans himself does all the narration in his distinctive gravel tone, alternately knowing and naive, and the film is super-laden with images of its subject in every form of attitude, dress, and hairdo. There is much glory-by-association and plenty of gee-whizzery.

So why see this rampant ego display? For anyone who likes the movies, and who remembers fondly the pictures of Evan's golden era--like *Rosemary's Baby*, *Love Story*, *The Godfather*, *Chinatown*--*The Kid Stays in the Picture* will have its own appeal. There are even some insightful (yet gossipy) stories about the Mia Farrow/Frank Sinatra relationship, Evans' dreamgirl Ali McGraw, and how *The Godfather* finally got made (Evans makes a good case that he created the film as much or more than Francis Ford Coppola). Silly but stylish, capricious but insightful, *The Kid Stays in the Picture* is for the unadulterated film buff.

(August 2002)