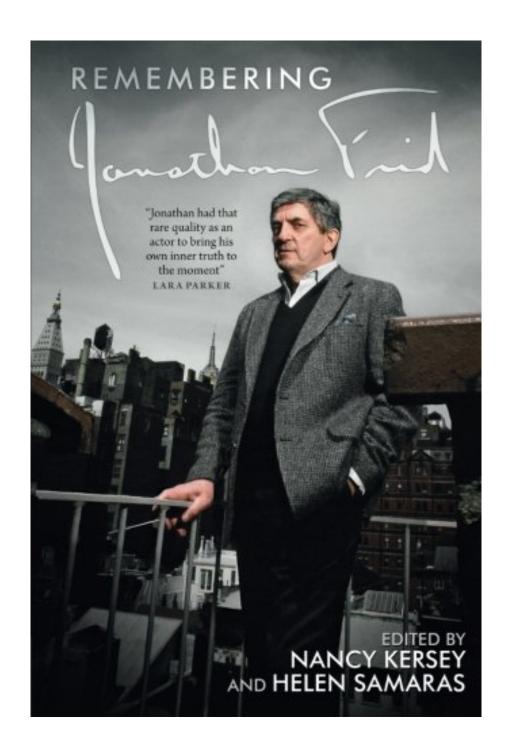


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Jonathan Frid was thought to be something of a mysterious figure: He disliked the celebrity spotlight, he never aspired to stardom and seldom spoke about his private life. What made him tick? What kind of a man was he? From his early days on the stage to his time as vampire Barnabas Collins on the cult television classic Dark Shadows, Remembering Jonathan Frid gathers friends, family and colleagues to share their insights and memories of this complex and talented actor, illustrated throughout with over 130 rare and unseen photographs.

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A Must-Read for Dark Shadows Fans

By Jerilynn R. Watlington

I grew up during the original run of Dark Shadows; it's become almost stereotypical to talk about "racing home after school" to watch the show, but for us sixties kids, that's exactly what happened. Back then, I was terrified of Barnabas Collins and gave little thought to the actor who portrayed him. I learned to recognize the signs of an upcoming vampire bite, and dove head-first into my grandfather's reclining chair to avoid watching. When the show was cancelled, I was traumatized until I fell in love with Keith Partridge ... but never forgot Dark Shadows.

A little more than ten years later, DS was revived with reruns on WNBC in New York. I was drawn into the show all over again, with one major difference: I was no longer afraid of Barnabas Collins. Instead, I began to recognize the talent of the distinctively handsome Shakespearean actor who portrayed this reluctant vampire. During a televised interview that I eagerly watched, I learned that Jonathan Frid seemed a unique individual, an actor who could've capitalized upon his DS fame and made a career of starring in horror flicks, but chose not to do so. He was fascinating ... an enigma. What made him tick?

Regretfully, I didn't delve any further into DS fandom once WNBC relegated the series to an early-morning timespot. My first real job and other myriad interests beckoned. Several years ago, however, I painstakingly collected the entire series on DVD, and picked up my fascination with Jonathan Frid right where I'd left off. Again, I wondered: who was this man? Why was he able to breathe such life into a vampire .... a role which easily could've become a one-dimensional cartoon? When Mr. Frid passed away in April 2012, I was heartbroken. I'd missed my chance to know who he really was.

Well, maybe not.

Remembering Jonathan Frid is the perfect book for anyone with even a passing interest in Dark Shadows. Here, we are introduced to Mr. Frid by those who knew him best: friends, co-workers, even his nephew, Donald, who describes "Uncle John" with more than just a hint of awe. Imagine having your uncle's TV character portrayed in a board game ... complete with plastic fangs! Actors who reach pop-icon status have often done their best to avoid fans, but not Jonathan Frid. He regularly greeted "studio kids" who gathered outside West 53rd Street, where DS was filmed, even recruiting some to help him answer the voluminous fan mail he received . One of the book's most touching stories was written by a fan who says that Jonathan Frid changed her life; she was so shy, while he was so friendly and genuine, that he helped draw her out of her shell.

Nancy Kersey and Helen Samaras have done a wonderful job of compiling memories and photos, many of them rare. This is a book to savor; I read quickly, and I'm holding myself back, because I don't want it to end too soon. Once it does, I'll probably just open it and start again. Remembering Jonathan Frid is a class act all the way. I can't believe I once feared the gentle, kind, funny, intelligent man who is profiled in its pages. I never had the pleasure of meeting Jonathan Frid in person, but I'm grateful for the opportunity to discover him in this book.

18 of 18 people found the following review helpful.

Finally a wide eyed and affectionate look at a remarkable man....by people who knew him and cared about him.

By Julie T. Byers

Finally a wide eyed and affectionate look at a remarkable man....by people who knew him and cared about him. To me, Jonathan Frid was always more then a reluctant vampire, he was a actor who could be a King or a beast or a murderous criminal. I fell in love with Barnabas but miss Jonathan more every day. I'm grateful to the family, fans and fellow actors who shared wonderful, human stories about their time with him in a mesmerizing and totally addictive read. If you ever raced home to watch "Dark Shadows" and longed to be in that world, this is your chance to meet the man behind "the cool ghoul!"

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

The book is a great read and a fascinating window into the personality of ...

By Bookmark

At last--a multi-faceted perspective of the complex man who possessed the ring, the cane, the cloak and the commanding voice of Dark Shadows! This book finally introduces Frid's loyal fans to the complicated man who developed and delivered the complex persona of Barnabas Collins to millions of TV viewers daily. Appreciative of his fans' continued support, Frid preferred to be perceived as a consummate actor, as well as an ordinary human being with personal strengths and flaws-- NOT as an occult figure!

Frid is portrayed as an intelligent, educated man who was full of contradictions. Polite and reserved in public, yet spontaneous and celebratory when entertaining acquaintances, Frid chose a semi-sequestered Manhattan lifestyle that afforded him his privacy, as well as the freedom to pursue various creative projects at will. At the same time, he cultivated and maintained an enduring network of loyal friends/fans/employees who adored, assisted, and protected him throughout most of his life in New York, on the road, and finally in Hamilton, Ontario. Those who belonged to his inner circle describe him as a perfectionist who demanded much from those around him, but also as a warm and caring man who rewarded them often with thoughtfulness and a generosity of spirit. The book is an entertaining read and a fascinating window into the personality of the man known to generations of Dark Shadows fans as the Canadian actor Jonathan Frid!

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