

The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories

By Tim Burton

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From breathtaking stop-action animation to bittersweet modern fairy tales, filmmaker Tim Burton has become known for his unique visual brilliance -- witty and macabre at once. Now he gives birth to a cast of gruesomely sympathetic children -- misunderstood outcasts who struggle to find love and belonging in their cruel, cruel worlds. His lovingly lurid illustrations evoke both the sweetness and the tragedy of these dark yet simple beings -- hopeful, hapless heroes who appeal to the ugly outsider in all of us, and let us laugh at a world we have long left behind (mostly anyway).

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The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories By Tim Burton Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #58897 in Books
- Color: Black
- Brand: William Morrow Company
- Published on: 1997-10-22
- Released on: 1997-10-22
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.50" h x .25" w x 5.00" l, .68 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 128 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This unassuming hardcover in black buckram with a dark lavender title plate is the door into a world of twisted pleasures. Filmmaker Tim Burton (*Edward Scissorhands*, *Beetlejuice*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*) tells 23 winsomely macabre stories about boys and girls who don't fit in. Their bodies are misshapen, their habits are odd, and their parents are appalled by them. But they do try hard to be human, like poor unwanted Mummy Boy, who's "a bundle of gauze": he goes for a walk in the park with his mummy dog. Some kids are having "a birthday party for a Mexican girl." They think Mummy Boy is a piñata: "They took a baseball bat and whacked open his head. Mummy Boy fell to the ground; he finally was dead. Inside of his head were no candy or prizes, just a few stray beetles of various sizes." For all its simple humor, *The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories* is a peculiarly disturbing book about the violence that children suffer. It is illustrated in pen and ink, watercolor, and crayon. The themes and imagery are at a young-adult to adult level.

Review

In the manner of the pictorial tales of Shel Silverstein, Roald Dahl, and Edward Gorey--but from a slightly more twisted realm of the imagination--Burton's creepy stories conjure up the fantastical, even the slightly demented: "The Boy with Nails in His Eyes," "Roy, the Toxic Boy," "The Girl with Many Eyes" ("You get really wet/When she breaks down and cries"), and "Brie Boy" ("The other children never let Brie Boy play ... but at least he went well with a nice Chardonnay"). -- *Entertainment Weekly*

About the Author

Tim Burton is the creative genius behind *Batman*, *Beetlejuice*, *Ed Wood*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *Mars Attacks!*, *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*, and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, among others. He began his career at Disney, where his first project was a six-minute tribute to Vincent Price. His second film, the twenty-seven-minute *Frankenweenie*, was deemed unsuitable for children and never released in theaters. He lives in New York and Los Angeles.

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