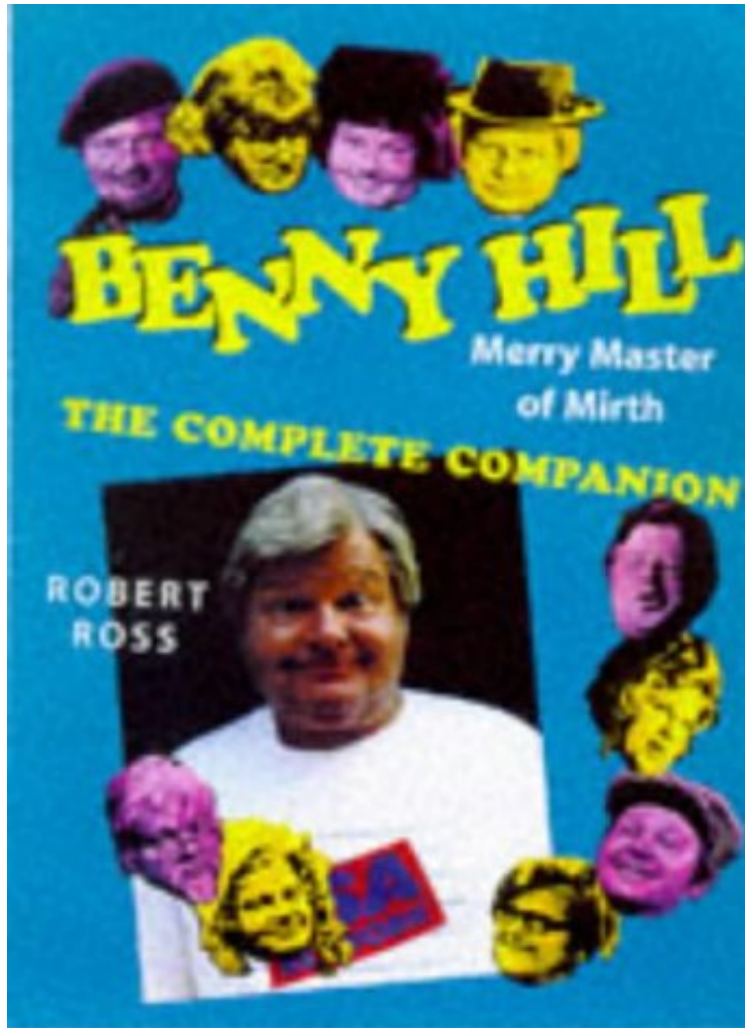


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Benny Hill: Merry Master of Mirth

Robert Ross

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Robert Ross : Benny Hill: Merry Master of Mirth before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Benny Hill: Merry Master of Mirth:

5 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A BIIIIIG disappointment: By Joel L. Gandelman I'm really SURPRISED at my reaction to this book. I LOVE Benny Hill (I have some of his videos and watched his syndicated show for years). I am now a fulltime ventriloquist and read and collect books on comedians and comedy. I have re-read many of the comedy/comedian books in my collection. I could not WAIT until I got this book! But I found this book incredibly tedious. At first I thought it was due to the fact that I'm American and Americans haven't seen as much of Hill's work as his British audiences. But I've read bios of comedians that detail work they did that I never viewed and I loved those books. This is a book crammed with research, whether it's about his early years -- how his comedy

style came together -- or his years as the King of British TV, then American syndicated TV...and his sad fall as a victim of the relentless armies of political correctness. The book reads like a collection of detailed research notes and staid business articles. There seems to be little passion (and when there seems to be passion it's a weird dispassionate passion!) for the subject, unlike the GREAT books done by authors on Laurel Hardy, Abbott and Costello, Chaplin, and most certainly, The Three Stooges. Those books make you want to go out and see more of their work, even if you don't like them. This book summarizes and informs -- and can bore a diehard fan. It's so very sad because Hill was so incredibly funny. As an American I didn't like many of his verbal skits -- and certainly NOT his songs -- but his silent segments bordered on comedic genius a la Ernie Kovacs or (I know some will be furious at this) Chaplin. This book is so clinical it took me a LONG TIME to finish it. I'm talking about MONTHS where I had to read other books to get back to and through it. Ross, who wrote a critically acclaimed book on Monty Python's Flying Circus, certainly did excellent research. There's a ton of info you can't get anywhere else -- inside information about each step of Hill's career and why he did what he did at pivotal times; who was in his corner, keeping him on t.v., and who didn't like him. But I can only recommend this to die-hard Hill fans who want every single thing available on him -- NOT to anyone seeking a book that tells about Hill and communicates the joy and (until the end) uncensored craziness of his comedy. Today his comedy lives on in video tape, despite the enemies that ended his career and, some say, finally broke his heart.

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Lad himself, Benny Hill! By A Customer It is quite obvious after reading this book that Mr. Ross is a genuine fan of "The lad himself" from not only the depth of research but also the personal take that he puts on the book in the last few segments. The ONE thing that kept me from giving this book a 5 star rating is that, although he mentions co-stars such as Jack Wright, Sue Upton, Louise English, and Henry McGee, he neglects to put pictures of them in the book with Benny. For fans of the show they know who these people are but not so the occasional viewer who might buy the book hoping to find out a bit more about Benny and his show. Despite this, it's a great book and well worth the money.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By P. Simonson Typical Benny Hill comedy - nice on a DVD rather than VHS.

This text tracks Benny Hill's career through the landmark Independent Television specials, early BBC parody sketches, film appearances, and radio shows and recordings. It examines his skillful use of the fledgling TV medium and celebrates the support of his regular backup team.