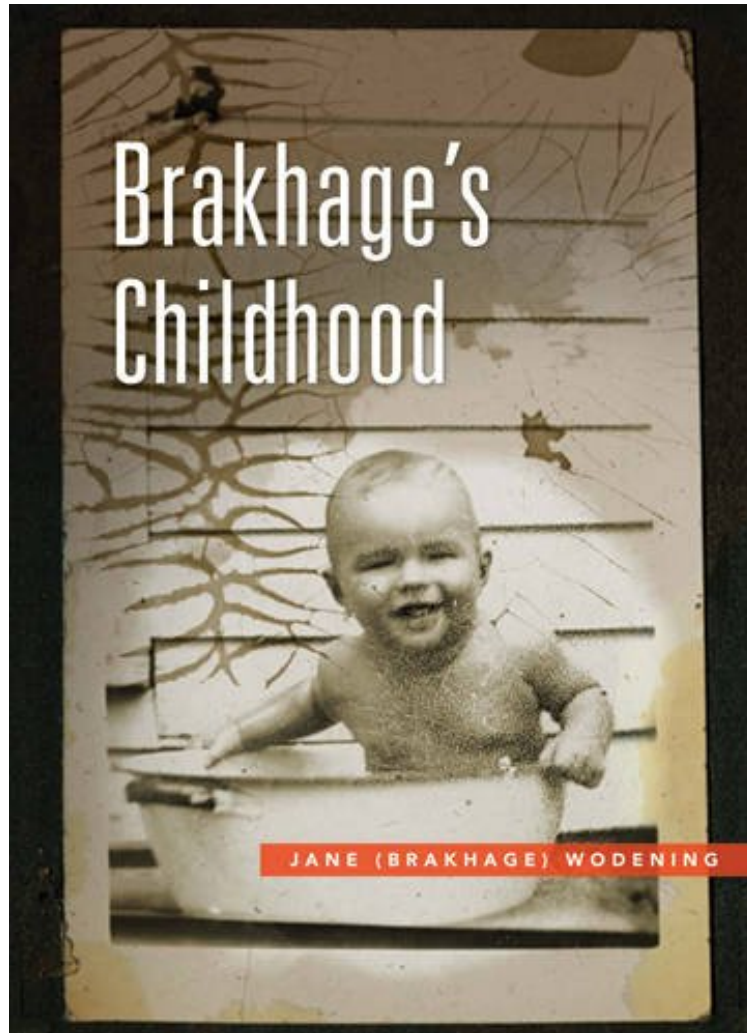


Brakhage's Childhood

Jane Wodening

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Jane Wodening : Brakhage's Childhood before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Brakhage's Childhood:

Brakhage's Childhood recounts the story of visionary American filmmaker Stan Brakhage's (1933-2003) life up to age 12. In 1983 Stan and Jane Brakhage began a series of interviews wherein Stan described his life and Jane took notes. Each session yielded a chapter and each chapter usually a place. After each interview Jane organized, wrote and edited the stories. After two years they had 23 chapters in 100,000 words. "He had the most amazing memory I had ever encountered," says Jane, who writes: "This is a biography of a child, taken from the memory of that child grown up. I

can only assume that we stopped the interviews, stopped the book, stopped the marriage, at exactly the right moment. Stan and I worked together a lot in his medium; this time, we worked together in my medium." "In the end," writes Tony Pipolo in the afterword, "[Jane] created a masterly fiction about a fiction that reveals undeniable truths, assuming an autobiographical posture at once commanding and equivocal, a chronicle of semi-Dickensian misery offset by plainspoken observations about an American childhood bearing the mark of its author's writing style, demonstrated in books written during and after her life with Stan Brakhage." Brakhage's *Childhood* is a remarkable achievement conceptually, intellectually and aesthetically, and provides crucial insight into the early life of one of America's most inspired and complex experimental filmmakers.