



# The Poe Cinema: A Critical Filmography of Theatrical Releases Based on the Works of Edgar Allan Poe

*By Don G Smith*

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Who can forget haunting tales like "The Oblong Box," "Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "Torture Garden"? This is a critical filmography of the 81 features from 13 countries that have adapted the literary works of Edgar Allan Poe. Each entry includes the title of the work, year of release, studio, full cast and credits, running time and a detailed plot synopsis. Production and marketing notes first examine the degree to which the film is faithful to Poe's original work. Pertinent career information for the primary actors and filmmakers, anecdotes and perspectives from the principals, and an overview of the marketing of the movie are next provided. A thorough critical analysis, including contemporary reviews of the film, completes each entry.

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### Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Smith's second foray into horror (following Lon Chaney, Jr., McFarland, 1996) examines 81 Poe-based theatrical features released between 1908 and 1992 from 31 countries. Nontheatrical productions are not addressed, although select made-for-TV productions receive mention. Each entry includes production information, credits and cast, story synopsis, production and marketing history, and excellent multipage critiques longer than those normally found in horror guides. Good illustrations, particularly from pre-World War II films, add to the overall quality. However, as Smith limits commentary to films personally viewed, some films (e.g., D.W. Griffith's *The Sealed Room*) are shortchanged. In general, however, this is a fine companion volume to Ronald Smith's *Poe in the Media* (Garland, 1990). Recommended for all horror film collections. —Anthony J. Adam, Prairie View A&M Univ. Lib., Houston

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### Review

"entertaining, informative, and well-illustrated...recommended"

"excellent multipage critiques longer than those normally found in horror guides. Good illustrations...recommended"--*Library Journal*; "entertaining, informative, and well-illustrated filmography...Smith uses the AIP pressbooks to add authority and depth to his analysis. The book's reference value is also enhanced by appendices listing Poe films by their country of origin and Poe titles and the films adapted from them. Recommended"--*ARBA*; "definitive...excellent...well researched and interesting to read"--*Midnight Marquee*; "incredible...superior...authoritative...highly entertaining"--*Film Review*; "movie stills and posters abound, along with extensive descriptions, in this complete filmography...the Poe fan can easily welcome this fine encyclopedia"--*True Review*; "hard to put down"--*Movie Collector's World*; "a first rate reference book and a must for film scholars and horror fans"--*Cult Movies*; "fans interested in the history of movie adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe will be well-served by this handy new overview...sound analyses"--*Fangoria*; "the reader with an interest in Poe, horror films or the history of cinema will want to consult this book"--*ForeWord Magazine*; "in-depth"--*The Intelligencer Record*; "a better balanced view of Poe and film would be hard to imagine...all the detail one would hope to find, and often a good bit more...humor, style, insight, and, best of all, an obvious love for the works at hand"--*Scarlet Street*; "a solid reference work...well researched and carefully documented...dissects its subject matter from a variety of useful angles"--*Film & History*; "highly recommended...well researched...a gem of a book"--*Shivers*; "a useful book...an informative reference work"--*Review 22*; "excellent...a plethora of useful material"--*Years Work in English Studies*.

### About the Author

**Don G. Smith** is an associate professor in history and philosophy of education at Eastern Illinois University. He has written for numerous publications, including *Filmfax*, *Scarlet Street*, *Movie Collector's World* and *Midnight Marquee*. He lives in Riverview Florida.

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