

The Rise and Fall of the Horror Film

Dr. David Soren

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The history of the horror film has been the subject of many books, many of them unfortunately picture books. Where more serious efforts have been made, the genre has been explored primarily from a chronological/factual or socio-economic point of view. Studies by sub-genre (vampires, wolf men, etc.) also may be cited. In an effort to begin to fill

that gap and to try to explain why such films are generally so poor today, Dr. David Soren has written this book, primarily for the benefit of his film students, who continually lament the absence of any textbook on the subject. It is also essential that future filmmakers and critics realize the tremendous debt that the horror film owes to the history of art. Beginning with the relationship between Georges Melies and his Academic contemporaries such as Bouguereau, Dr. Soren has attempted to point out the influence of Symbolist (artists who seek to express or evoke emotions, ideas, etc. by the use of symbolic language, images, color, etc.), Dada (the style and techniques of artists, writers, etc. of the early 20th-century who exploited accidental and incongruous effects in their work and programmatically challenged established canons of art, thought, morality, etc.), and Surrealist (a style of art and literature developed principally in the 20th century stressing the subconscious or non-rational significance of imagery arrived at by automation or the exploitation of chance effects, symbolic objects, etc.) art on filmmakers such as Vigo and Cocteau. German Expressionism is also discussed by the Post-Impressionist Edvard Munch is seen as an important creative force in the German theater of Max Reinhardt and in the making of such films as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919) and *Frankenstein* (1931). *The Rise and Fall of the Horror Film* remains a fresh and intriguing ode to fantastic cinema and will ensnare all film fans in it's fascinating web of movie mystique.

About the Author David Soren was born in 1946 in Philadelphia, Pa. He has written 10 books and more than 80 articles on subjects including Ancient Roman and Etruscan archaeology, dance, vaudeville, film, history and art history for publishers, which include Simon and Schuster, Prentice-Hall, Random House and Midnight Marquee. He has been the subject of documentary specials on The Learning Channel, The BBC, Italys RAI-1 and the Discovery Channel. Currently he holds appointments in 3 different departments at the University of Arizona where he is the Regents Professor of Anthropology and Classics. He also founded and directed four major archaeological excavations in Cyprus, Portugal, and Italy and is a Resident at the American Academy in Rome. For his contributions to Italian archeology he has been made an honorary Italian citizen and for his contributions to Greek archaeology he has been named an Honorary Philhellene by the Greek Orthodox Church. He is a Fellow of Great Britains Royal Institute of International Affairs and also of the Johns Hopkins Schools of Advanced International Research. For his contributions to American entertainment he has been named one of 1,500 biographies included in the two volume Encyclopedia of Vaudeville. Oxford University has named his archaeological discoveries one of the 75 most important of all time. Dr. Soren received his B.A. from Dartmouth College in Greek and Latin Studies, his M.A. from Harvard in Fine Arts, and his Ph.D. in Classical Archaeology from Harvard. He has been married for 43 years to Noelle Soren, the noted archaeologist and photographer and co-author of books and articles with Dr. Soren.