

(Free pdf) Re/Search #10: Incredibly Strange Films

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V. Vale

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V. Vale : Re/Search #10: Incredibly Strange Films before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Re/Search #10: Incredibly Strange Films:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Essential reading for the rude, weird and hilarious. By Douglas B. Jones Essential reading for the rude, weird and hilarious. One -of-a-kind interviews great photos. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Nice book for lovers of the obscure cinema. By EssentiallyBlonde Love this! It will be given as a gift in the spring when someone special returns home. He is a true love of all cinema, with a soft spot for the B cult classics and hard to find films..... 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By rottulich Good reference

This classic guide to little-known films neglected by the film-criticism establishment features interviews with

Herschell Gordon Lewis, Russ Meyer, Ray Dennis Steckler, Ted V. Mikels, Larry Cohen, and others who dared to make independent feature films their way, without bowing to a committee or focus group. This is an oblique how-to manual, covering everything from financing, distribution, lighting, camerawork and acting, to publicity, marketing and screenwriting. Would-be filmmakers as well as scholars will find much inspiration and enlightenment in this volume, which has been used in college film classes. In-depth interviews focus on philosophy, while anecdotes entertain as well as illuminate theory. Lists of recommended films, an A-Z directory, and quotations are also included.

From the Back Cover
Re/Search #10: Incredibly Strange Films is a functional guide to important territory neglected by the film-criticism establishment, spotlighting unhailed directors--Herschell Gordon Lewis, Russ Meyer, Larry Cohen and others--who have been critically consigned to the ghettos of gore and sexploitation films. In-depth interviews focus on philosophy, while anecdotes entertain as well as illuminate theory. Includes biographies, genre overviews, filmographies, bibliography, and A-Z of film personalities, articles, quotations, lists of recommended films, and sources. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. **INCREDIBLY STRANGE FILMS #10** This is a functional guide to territory largely neglected by the film-criticism establishment--encompassing tens of thousands of films. Most of the films discussed test the limits of contemporary (middle class) cultural acceptability, mainly because in varying ways they don't meet certain "standards" utilized in evaluating direction, acting, dialogue, sets, continuity, technical cinematography, etc. Many of the films are overtly "lower class" or "low brow" in content and art direction. However, a high percentage of these works disdained by the would-be dictators of public opinion are sources of pure enjoyment and delight, despite improbable plots, "bad" acting, or ragged film technique. At issue is the notion of "good taste," which functions as a filter to block out entire areas of experience judged-and damned-as unworthy of investigation. Our sophisticated, "democratic" Western civilization regulates the population's access to information, as well as its innermost attitudes, through media--particularly film and video. The power to literally create desire, fashion, consumer trends, opinions, aspirations and even one's very identity is expressed through film and video. This force--power through persuasion--reaches deep into the backbrain, rendering more brutal, physical control tactics obsolete. Since the '60s, film has ceased being a popular creative medium. The whole '60s avant-garde filmmaking, from Brakhage to Connor, was based on the cheap availability of 16mm film, cameras, etc; many of the films in this book were originally shot in 16mm. After this became too expensive, Super-8 became the medium of choice. Several years ago, the major manufacturers began de-emphasizing professional-quality Super-8 cameras, film stocks, etc, saying, "People don't really want it. Editing is too hard for most people, and everyone's switching to video, anyway." The result: the number of low-budget films being produced has dropped drastically. The value of low-budget films is: they can be transcendent expressions of a single person's individual vision and quirky originality. When a corporation decides to invest \$20 million in a film, a chain of command regulates each step, and no one person is allowed free rein. Meeting with lawyers, accountants, and corporate boards are what films in Hollywood are all about. So what makes films like Herschell Gordon Lewis' *The Wizard of Gore* or Ray Dennis Steckler's *The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies* worthwhile? First of all: unfettered creativity. Often the films are eccentric--even extreme--presentations by individuals freely expressing their imaginations, who throughout the filmmaking process improvise creative solutions to problems posed either by circumstance or budget--mostly the latter. Secondly, they often present unpopular--even radical--views addressing social, political, racial or sexual inequities, hypocrisy in religion or government; or, in other ways they assault taboos related to the presentation of sexuality, violence, and other mores. (Cf. George Romero's *Dead* trilogy which features intelligent, problem-solving black heroes, or Russ Meyer's *Faster Pussycat, Kill! Kill!* which showcases tough girls outwitting--and even physically outdoing--sexist men.) Thirdly, occasionally films are made of such unique stature (Cf. *Daughter of Horror*) as to stand virtually outside any genre or classification, thus extending the boundaries of what has been done in the medium, as well as providing--at best--inexplicably marvelous experiences. It is all too common--indeed, a cliché--for otherwise well-read, thoughtful people to deplore "violence" depicted in movies such as the ones discussed here. Yet there is not direct evidence that the mere viewing of a film causes crime; in fact, a film may well act as a "safety valve" preventing its occurrence. In any case, violence cannot be eliminated through repression of its representation; in fact, there is evidence we have a primal need to express ourselves violently, just as we do so--involuntarily--in our dreams. When there's an accident on the highway, our immediate, uncensored instinct is to stop and stare. But . . . there is a crucial difference between the artistic representation of violence and its willful commission against another person in actual life. This volume focuses on unhailed filmmakers whose work dates primarily from the '60s and '70s. Most of the films mentioned are classifiable into two genres: gore (violence) and sexploitation, although the best transcend such facile labeling. Certain sexploitation or gore filmmakers (such as David Cronenberg, who already has had two books written about him) are absent because of previous publicity or inaccessibility. Many wonderful, more mainstream filmmakers, such as Bunuel, Polanski, Keaton, Fritz Lang and Val Lewton--and even entire genres such as Surrealist/Dada films and film noir--are not detailed for similar reasons. This is not a completist's volume--many other American movies, plus a whole other world of films from Hong Kong, the Philippines, Mexico, Spain, etc remain to be explored and experienced. Rather, it is a presentation of the continuing creative dilemma, with specific emphasis on the problems of

artists counter to the status quo. Here the filmmakers themselves articulate their philosophies and histories while offering views and insights applicable to any creative medium. In the world of low-budget filmmaking, it is still possible for the imagination to reign supreme.