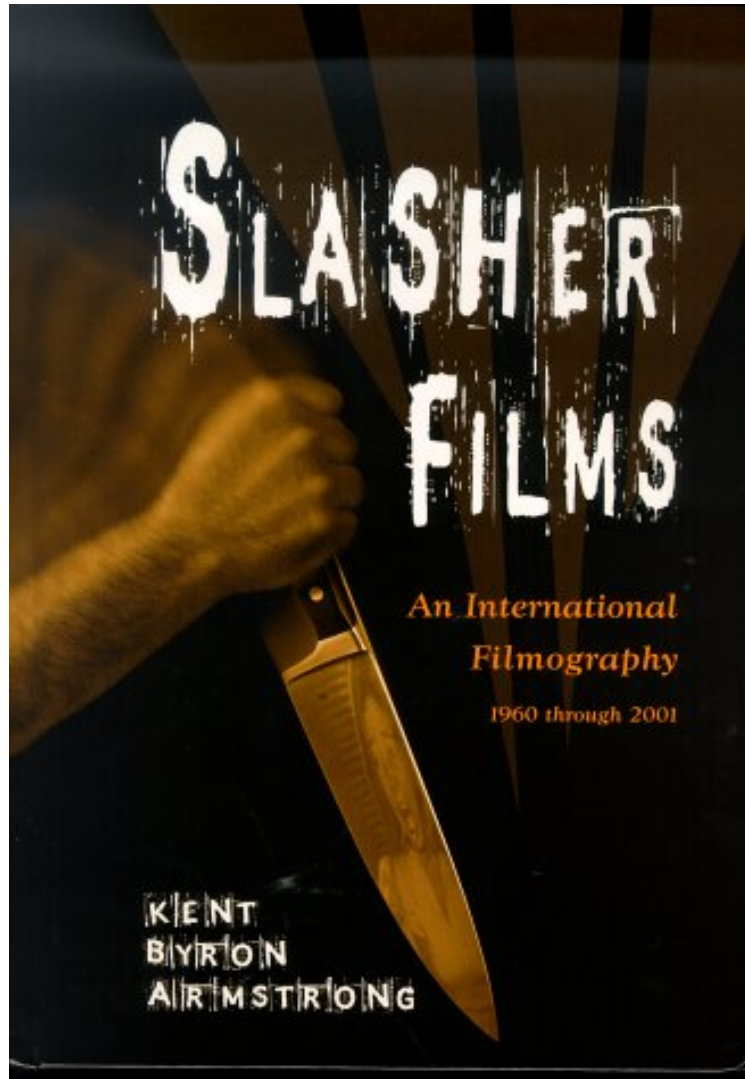


(Online library) Slasher Films: An International Filmography, 1960 Through 2001

Slasher Films: An International Filmography, 1960 Through 2001

Kent Byron Armstrong

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Kent Byron Armstrong : Slasher Films: An International Filmography, 1960 Through 2001 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Slasher Films: An International Filmography, 1960 Through 2001:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As horror fans we've all seen a boat load and would probably watch a tanker full By Jacob Gustafson Slasher films are as integral to the history of horror as peanut butter is on a PB J. As horror fans we've all seen a boat load and would probably watch a tanker full. They are a bridge that leads from gialli and nasty drive-in fare to the supernatural special effects spectacles that dominated the mid to late 80's. Slasher Films is a reference guide that hopes to inform us horror addicts on all the slasher films ever made between 1960-

2001. The book covers over 250 films and is pretty exhaustive in its listing of slasher flicks. Thumbing through I found several films that I had never heard of before which is always a treat. The first twenty pages or so are dedicated to information about slasher films as a sub genre. A bit of history, a bit of classifying what makes a slasher and what doesn't, it's a good crash course if you're new to the genre. If you aren't, there isn't much in there that you don't already know. As I said the book does a good job of creating a big reference guide to the genre but there is a glaring problem with the book. Each entry consists of a complete breakdown of the plot of each film, instead of supplying a simple synopsis. This means that if you read each entry you could possibly spoil the whole dang movie. The commentary about each film is very minimal. Usually a short paragraph consisting of a few sentences. That's all the analysis you're going to get. Historically relevant information is also omitted so if you want to know more about each film (like connections to other films via the writer, director, or actors) you are usually out of luck. Because of this I can't recommend this book unless you're willing to skip the entire description of the film and go straight to the minimal review of the film. This could have been a fantastic book if only each film was given a few sentences to run down the synopsis and then several paragraphs about why you should or shouldn't watch the film and maybe a little background on it. Let's be honest, it isn't as if slashers are usually that complex. "A killer wearing a hockey mask stalks camp counselors, killing them one by one using unique ways of dispatching them." Boom, I just summed up a few Friday the 13th's in one sentence. The review sections are very succinct and in many places I agree with the review, I just wish there was more of it and less spoilers. There are a handful of books dedicated to slasher films, I would do some exploring about those ones first before I laid down my cash for this one. 9 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Rather pointless. By Jarrett B. Graver I wanted to like this book, really I did. Big props to McFarland for even commissioning a second study of the slasher genre after their good, if distressingly slim, *Going to Pieces*. The problem here is the lack of a critical commentary. After a brief overview of slasher film history and conventions, the majority of the book consists of long, boring plot synopses (spoilers and twist endings included) followed by one or two lines of lame "production notes" and the author's overall opinion of the film's worth. For \$65, I was hoping for much more than rote recitation of slasher film plots. Where are the intriguing behind-the-scenes stories from Adam Rockoff's *"Going to Pieces"*? Where is the kind of excellent, in-depth analysis found in another McFarland book, John Kenneth Muir's eminently worthwhile *"Horror Films of the 1970s"*? Pretty much a washout, I'm granting an extra star for good intentions. The slasher genre still yearns for a comprehensive study...let this be the clarion call! 8 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A welcome addition, but pretty cold-blooded. By Dave Felter After the entertaining but disappointing *'Going To Pieces'* I was thrilled to pick this *Slasher* reference up, hoping it would be a deeper, more thorough examination of my beloved sub-genre. What a let down! Long-winded synopses, terse criticisms, and several glaring omissions made for a boring, frustrating read. Why in the world would one devote most of their text to lengthy, uninvolved plot descriptions when they have the chance to either sing a film's praises or unleash a scathing criticism? Rockoff's *'Pieces'*, though thin, was at least a pleasurable, nostalgic read by someone who clearly knows his stuff. Armstrong never really lets on as to whether he's into this stuff or not, and while that's not essential, it's clearly more fun to know. So, the second of two noble tries is a let down as well. Perhaps a book with the color and flavor of Rockoff's, and the width and depth of Armstrong's, would be what we Slasher-buffs need.

The slasher film genre got its start in the early 1960s when acclaimed filmmakers such as Alfred Hitchcock and Michael Powell made provocative mainstream film such as *Psycho* and *Peeping Tom*, but it is most associated with the late 1970s and the releases of *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th*. They have been frightening and thrilling audiences ever since with their bloody scenes and crazed killers. Over 250 slasher films are presented in this work. Entries provide major cast and production credits, a plot synopsis, and a short critique; interesting production notes are often provided. Some of the films covered include *Alice*, *Sweet Alice*, *American Psycho*, *The Burning*, *Cherry Falls*, *Curtains*, *Deep Red*, *Frenzy*, *Hide and Go Shriek*, *Maniac*, *Prom Night*, *Scream*, *Sleepaway Camp*, *Slumber Party Massacre*, and *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. Filmographies are provided for slasher directors, actors, writers, and composers.

From *Booklist* Splatter film and its "half brother," the slasher, may appear synonymous to the uninitiated, but these volumes attempt to sort out what makes each genre unique. Splatter films have been around about 40 years and still do not enjoy high status. The sequel to Stine's *The Gorehound's Guide to Splatter Films of the 1960s and 1970s* (McFarland, 2001) treats about 500 1980s titles, what Stine calls "the childhood days" of splatter films, which featured more special effects and more literalism. Most are U.S. productions, but a few European titles are covered. Entries are listed alphabetically and range in length from a half page to two pages. Technical information includes director, crew, cast, length, release date, variance in titles, distributor, and distribution forms. Plot is described briefly, with extensive commentary and background providing most of the text. The author is a "reel" aficionado and strong in his opinions (e.g., "a disgusting, albeit riotously funny, splatter flick"). Readers should not expect objectivity; rather, they can count on passionate interest. Extensive cross-references help the reader find films listed with different titles. A list of sources for DVDs and videocassettes follows the film entries. The index is extensive. About 100 black-and-white photos from

movie posters and film clips supplement the text. According to Armstrong, author of *Slasher Films: An International Filmography, 1960-2001*, Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 film *Psycho* was the seminal slasher film. The prototype slasher film is defined as one that combines: an introductory murder or predictive event; a setting that does not inspire terror; visualized killings; a human or humanlike killer; systematic, thematic killing; and an unhappy or unresolved ending. Armstrong's well-developed introduction provides examples for each of these elements, and he uses the criteria to select more than 150 representative films, most of them U.S. made. The classics are found (e.g., *Scream*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*), but lesser-known films are also given good coverage. Entries are arranged alphabetically by English title and vary in length from one to three pages. Information includes date, screenwriters, directors, film company, length, cast, and crew; a very detailed plot outline follows. A final paragraph gives the author's critique of the film's role in the genre. Writing is straightforward and generally objective. A few black-and-white photos provide a sense of the genre. Separate appendixes list slasher directors and screenwriters. The index is minimal. These two titles overlap somewhat in coverage (both cover the *Friday the 13th* and *Halloween* series, for example), although Stine is much more opinionated. Both are recommended for libraries with relevant collections. RBBCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Recommended. --Booklist rbb "Should be in all comprehensive film collections" --Communication Booknotes Quarterly "Serious...comprehensive" --Hitch.About the Author Writer Kent Byron Armstrong lives in Mitchell, Indiana, where he is employed by the local newspaper, *The Mitchell Tribune*.