



Universal Studios Monsters: A Legacy of Horror

Michael Mallory , Stephen Sommers (Foreword)

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From the 1920s through the 1950s, Universal Studios was Hollywood's number one studio for horror pictures, haunting movie theaters worldwide with Dracula, Frankenstein, and the Creature from the Black Lagoon, among others. Universal Studios Monsters: A Legacy of Horror explores all of these enduring characters, chronicling both the mythology behind the films and offering behind-the-scenes insights into how the films were created. Universal Studios Monsters is the most complete record of the horror films of this legendary studio, with biographies of major personalities who were responsible for the most notable monster melodramas in film history. The stories of these films and their creators are told through interviews with surviving actors and studio employees. A lavish photographic record, including many behind-the-scenes shots, completes the story of how these classics were made. This is a volume no fan of imaginative cinema will want to be without.

Universal Studios Monsters: A Legacy of Horror Details

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From Reader Review Universal Studios Monsters: A Legacy of Horror for online ebook

Don Weiss says

Very comprehensive, with tons of photos from in front and behind the camera, synopses of the major and minor Universal Horror series and their sequels, and profiles of the people involved. A real treat for Classic Horror fans.

Michael says

A must for any fan of the Universal Monster movies. Beautifully illustrated with film stills, promotional photos, posters, lobby cards and behind-the-scenes photos (my favourite being Boris Karloff in full Frankenstein's Monster make-up genteely sipping his four o'clock tea from a china cup and saucer).

There's a short history of the studio and an overview of the macabre silent movies that were the precursors of the later Monster horrors. Each of the classic films Monster are described in brief, with some production details and information about the actors, directors, writers and some of the crew. Then there are spotlight sections on individuals who were important to the series.

This isn't an encyclopedic, in-depth history of the studio and films: it's not for scholars. It *is* a fun overview or introduction; delightful and entertaining and has sent me back, with a renewed interest and appreciation, for the films I used to stay up late as a kid to watch on the TV, lights out, tucked under a blanket on the couch and worrying about whether I, though pure of heart, might turn into a wolf when the wolfbane bloomed when the autumn moon was bright!

Kyle says

Fantastic. Recommend for any lover of horror, especially the classic Universal Monsters.

Jim Dooley says

This book is the "real deal"...the ultimate primer to everything that is classic Universal Horror (with some science fiction thrown in). I didn't find many "Gee, I never knew that" revelations, but the wonderful pictures and free-flowing writing style made this a most enjoyable read.

For the person who isn't a genuine "Monster Kid" and who doesn't have a copy of the original Famous Monsters of Filmland within easy reach, this is probably the best introduction to the films and characters that I've found. Oh, there are those that go much more in-depth, but they often read like research volumes. This is a loving tribute to the films and the professionals who made them a reality for the imagination.

Not unlike many of the "recap" books, this one also includes plot overviews. The benefit is that they don't

describe everything that happens. The drawback is that they do reveal the endings. However, in its defense, the revelations often lead to observations and speculations on the part of the writer that are truly interesting and worth pondering.

The scope of the book runs from the silent Universal Horrors (including The Hunchback of Notre Dame, which I never considered to be a horror movie) through to the co-licensed and produced Hammer horror films that reinvigorated the Universal monsters. There is even a nod to the aforesaid Famous Monsters of Filmland and the Aurora Monster Model kits...which found a place of honor in my house!

The Monster Kid in me would have really loved this book had it been available in my Chiller Theatre days...although the Hammer horror films wouldn't have been released yet...and he responded with great enthusiasm while reading it today.

I highly recommend this one.

Chris says

A really solid book covering all the Universal monster movies from the thirties all the way to the fifties. Includes sections dedicated to each movies as well as the important actors, writers, directors, make-up artists and other film makers who were instrumental in creating such memorable movies.

Russell Grant says

I'd give it 2.5/5

The good: Lot's of great pictures and some nice profiles on the people behind the scenes and actors from the films.

The bad: 90% of the book is detailed movie recaps. Which would be fine if this was the 70's and the films were hard to find. Today though, they are almost all available on DVD and get shown on the specialty channels. So the whole thing feels old fashion.

If you're a fan, it's not terrible but you probably already own most of the films so it's largely redundant.

Erik says

Some great stuff in this book. Lots of press photos, behind the scenes pics, and poster reproductions. Summaries on each of the major (and some minor) movies as well as stories and brief bios on the people that made them.

Abs007 says

This is a very nice coffee table book. It's full of lovely glossy pics and no little information about the movies themselves and the people that made them great.

Andrew says

This is sort of like the coffee table companion to Weaver and Brunas Brothers' Universal Horrors. The pictures are cool and all, but I get the feeling a lot of the behind the scenes stories might be more apocryphal than true.

Jessica says

Being a fan of classic monster films, I found this book a huge delight! It was amazing how the actors not only portrayed each character, but how they felt about their characters. I also liked reading the short biographical chapters on each of the individuals involved in the films and enjoyed seeing photos from the films and even some behind the scenes photos.

Morgan-Emilee Maalouf says

When I say "read" I mean I flipped through this book and looked at all the pictures and read the bold text underneath.

So 4 stars for photos, I'm sure it would be 5 if I actually read the content.

\$40? Maybe 3 stars now...

Thomas says

Great photos and accurate information of the classic Universal Studios Monster movies. I highly recommend it to any fan of the grand masters; Karloff, Lugosi, Chaney, Chaney Jr., etc.

Tamara Vallejos says

Although this is a lovely primer for any film fan looking to learn more about the scope of the Universal horror films, I'm knocking down one star for the poor editing. The writing itself is really good, but there are some bizarre things in here, like a sentence that is abruptly cut off with no finish, some random typos, a misspelling of "whose" as "who's," etc.

Josef Ploski says

I have loved the Universal Monsters since as far back as I can remember. I thought I knew most everything about them but this book taught me so many new and exciting things. If you are a monster fan I can not recommend this highly enough.

Steven says

Good overview of Universal's history and its most famous film series. Nice coffee table book with many photographs and a great reminder (if not a great intro) to why many of us love these 70+ year old movies.
