



## SHOCK HORROR! THE NASTIES ARE BACK!

**Video Nasties: The Definitive Guide – out on DVD Oct 11, 2010. RRP: £24.99**

Prepare to be corrupted and depraved once more as **Nucleus Films** releases the definitive guide to the Video Nasties phenomenon - one of the most extraordinary and scandalous eras in the history of British film.

For the first time ever on DVD, all 72 films that fell foul of the Director of Public Prosecutions are trailer-featured with specially filmed intros for each title in a lavish three-disc collector's edition box-set, alongside a brand new documentary - VIDEO NASTIES: MORAL PANIC, CENSORSHIP AND VIDEOTAPE, directed by **Jake** ('Doghouse') **West**.

Producer **Marc Morris**, co-author of 'Art of the Nasty' and 'Shock Horror: Astounding Artwork from the Video Nasty Era' comments: "Hopefully, every true movie fan will want this in their collection"..

**Disc One** presents the 39 titles that were successfully prosecuted in UK courts and deemed liable to deprave and corrupt. These included: 'Absurd', 'Cannibal Holocaust', 'The Driller Killer', 'I Spit on Your Grave', 'Nightmares in a Damaged Brain', 'Snuff' & 'Zombie Flesh-Eaters'.

**Disc Two** presents the 33 titles that were initially banned, but then subsequently acquitted and removed from the DPP's list. These included: 'Death Trap', 'Deep River Savages', 'The Evil Dead', 'Human Experiments', 'The Toolbox Murders' & 'Zombie Creeping Flesh'.

Both discs can be viewed either as a non-stop trailer show, or with newly-filmed introductions from a wide range of acclaimed media academics and notable genre journalists. Each disc is preceded by a brief introduction by cult horror presenter Emily Booth.

**Disc Three** This era-defining documentary features interviews with filmmakers Ruggero Deodato ('Cannibal Holocaust') Neil Marshall ('The Descent', 'Doomsday'), Christopher Smith ('Severance', 'Black Death') and MP Graham Bright as well as rare archive footage featuring James Ferman (director of the BBFC 1975-1999) & Mary Whitehouse. Taking in the explosion of home video, the erosion of civil liberties, the introduction of draconian censorship measures, hysterical press campaigns and the birth of many careers born in blood and videotape, West's documentary also reflects on the influence this peculiar era still exerts on us today.

The documentary will be screened at Film4 FrightFest on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> August, followed by a panel discussion.

Extras include a gallery of original video company idents and extensive gallery of lurid cover art for every video nasty.

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A sample of stills can be downloaded from [www.cloutcom.co.uk](http://www.cloutcom.co.uk). (picture gallery)

**READ ON....if you dare.**

## **VIDEO NASTIES: A DEFINITIVE GUIDE**

### **The History**



The UK in the early 1980s. The Video Cassette Recorder (or VCR) was the new “must-have” status symbol, and the video rental business was in full swing. Business was booming and many people wanted a part of it.

This is now a period that is regarded by many as the outlaw days of home video as there were seemingly no rules about what could be supplied.

From 1979 to 1984, there were no legal requirements for video works to be classified by either the BBFC (the British Board of Film Censors as they were then known) or any other regulatory body. The BBFC's only role at the time was to classify films intended for cinema release on behalf of the local authorities (which is a function they still perform). This era is what some collectors and fans fondly refer to as the Pre-Certification (or Pre-Cert) era.

The major film studios were initially hesitant to enter an industry they imagined would bring about the death of cinema. However, they realised they were missing out on a booming industry at a time of economic uncertainty and they too wanted part of it.

But independent video distribution companies with no ties to major film studios were emerging throughout the country as the industry mushroomed at a phenomenal rate. This made available for the first time a mind-boggling selection of material as companies sought to expand their inventories with almost anything they could lay their hands on.

From obscure horror films many had only read about or which had been rumoured to exist as very few had ever seen them, to sex films, kung-fu, cult classics, obscurities and outright trash, all these and more could be found in local video rental store located on almost every high street in the country. It is estimated that 10,000 titles were issued on VHS, Betamax and V2000 formats during this very short space of time, so there was seemingly something for young and old alike.

Many of these independent companies were simply fly-by-night seat of the pant operations that purchased the rights to any package of films they could find at the right price. Many were unaware that the films had previously fallen foul of the BBFC when submitted for their original cinema release and may have required substantial cuts or been denied a certificate and rejected outright. However, these films gained more publicity and better rentals, so these distributors were encouraged as the money rolled in and sought out more outrageous films to release.

And to make their tapes stand out, these independent distribution labels began using more and more outrageous cover art, and this included more graphic imagery, more blood, more nudity and more eye-catching over-the-top text and taglines.

However, these boom times did not last. What began as tabloid newspaper moral panic whipped up by The Festival of Light's clean-up campaigner leader Mary Whitehouse and fanned by newspapers like the Daily Mail and their infamous “Ban the Sadist Videos” headline ignited into widespread media hysteria over these so-

called "Video Nasties". As there were no age-restrictions on video tapes, anybody could rent them - from children to those considered "weak of mind".

Soon, video rental shops, retail outlets like HMV and warehouses across the country were being raided by the police, who sought prosecutions under the Obscene Publications Act - which had previously applied to pornography but now extended to video cassettes that were perceived to have the power to deprave and corrupt (or make morally bad) a significant proportion of their likely audience.



In turn, this meant that juries, often unfamiliar with contemporary horror films, were required to watch 'splatter' or 'stalk and slash' horror films (the most popular genre of films seized by police forces and subsequently recommended for prosecution by the Director of Public Prosecutions) and decide whether they were 'obscene'.

Over the next few years a total of 72 films would be added to the Director of Public Prosecutions' list of banned videos as the successful prosecutions mounted up and these titles were regularly seized as they now had a proven track record for being found obscene. Retailers or distributors were now being fined and, in some cases, jailed for offering such 'obscene' articles for gain.

However, successful prosecutions were not always guaranteed as different juries in different parts of the country could either convict or acquit the same work given the quality of the defense or prosecution case or the composition of the juries themselves. A more consistent approach was seemingly needed to avoid the risk of acquittal and to ensure the 'Video Nasties' were purged from the land.

So, Conservative back-bench M.P. Graham Bright introduced a Private Members' Bill in parliament to attempt to legally regulate the availability of these titles and their ilk. After the Conservative government of the day actively supported the bill's passage through parliament, it subsequently passed into law as The Video Recordings Act (1984). With few exceptions, this act now made it illegal for any company to supply a video work for sale or hire without a classification certificate awarded by the designated authority, the British Board of Film Classification.

Many of these works vanished from the streets and were only available illicitly. There were - and still are - penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment for supplying unclassified works or works containing material cut as a condition of classification. Many of these works could now only be obtained after often draconian cuts had been made so as to reduce the likelihood of harm that the BBFC were legally obliged to consider (amongst other relevant factors) and also to render them significantly different from the previously prosecuted versions.

For many years, many of these works were not legally available and the pre-certification era vanished with the more notorious titles

**The 39 Banned Video Nasties were:**

01. Absurd (Aristide Massaccesi, Italy, 1981)
02. Anthropophagous the Beast (Aristide Massaccesi, Italy, 1980)
03. Axe (Frederick R. Friedel, 1977)
04. Beast in Heat, The (Luigi Batzella, Italy, 1976)
05. Blood Bath (Mario Bava, Italy, 1971)

06. Blood Feast (Herschell Gordon Lewis, USA, 1963)
07. Blood Rites (Andy Milligan, USA, 1967)
08. Bloody Moon (Jess Franco, West Germany, 1981)
09. Burning, The (Tony Maylam, USA, 1980)
10. Cannibal Apocalypse (Antonio Margheriti, Italy/Spain, 1979)
11. Cannibal Ferox (Umberto Lenzi, Italy, 1981)
12. Cannibal Holocaust (Ruggero Deodato, Italy, 1979)
13. Cannibal Man, The (Eloy De La Iglesia, Spain, 1971)
14. Devil Hunter, The (Jess Franco, Spain/West Germany/France, 1980)
15. Don't Go in the Woods... Alone! (James Bryan, USA, 1980)
16. Driller Killer, The (Abel Ferrara, USA, 1979)
17. Evilspeak (Eric Weston, USA, 1981)
18. Exposé (James Kenelm Clarke, Great Britain, 1975)
19. Faces of Death (Conan Le Cilaire, USA, 1979)
20. Fight for Your Life (Robert A. Endelson, USA, 1977)
21. Forest of Fear (Charles McCrann, USA, 1979)
22. Frankenstein (Andy Warhol's) (Paul Morrissey, Italy/France, 1973)
23. Gestapo's Last Orgy, The (Cesare Canevari, Italy, 1976)
24. House by the Cemetery, The (Lucio Fulci, Italy, 1981)
25. House on the Edge of the Park (Ruggero Deodato, Italy, 1980)
26. I Spit on Your Grave (Meir Zarchi, USA, 1978)
27. Island of Death (Nico Mastorakis, Greece, 1976)
28. Last House on the Left, The (Wes Craven, USA, 1972)
29. Love Camp 7 (Robert Lee Frost, USA, 1968)
30. Madhouse (Ovidio G. Assonitis, USA/Italy, 1981)
31. Mardi Gras Massacre (Jack Weis, USA, 1978)
32. Night of the Bloody Apes (René Cardona, Mexico, 1968)
33. Night of the Demon (James C. Wasson, USA, 1980)
34. Nightmares in a Damaged Brain (Romano Scavolini, USA, 1981)
35. Snuff (Michael Findlay, USA/Argentina, 1976)
36. SS Experiment Camp (Sergio Garrone, Italy, 1976)
37. Tenebrae (Dario Argento, Italy, 1982)
38. Werewolf and the Yeti, The (Miguel I. Bonns, Spain, 1975)
39. Zombie Flesh-Eaters (Lucio Fulci, Italy, 1979)

## **The films dropped (not deemed to be obscene)**

01. Beyond, The (Lucio Fulci, Italy, 1981)
02. Bogey Man, The (Ulli Lommel, USA, 1980)
03. Cannibal Terror (Allan W. Steeve, France/Spain, 1981)
04. Contamination (Luigi Cozzi, Italy/West Germany, 1980)
05. Dead & Buried (Gary A. Sherman, USA, 1981)
06. Death Trap (Tobe Hooper, USA, 1976)
07. Deep River Savages (Umberto Lenzi, Italy/Thailand, 1972)
08. Delirium (Peter Maris, USA, 1980)
09. Don't Go in the House (Joseph Ellison, USA, 1979)
10. Don't Go Near the Park (Lawrence D. Foldes, USA, 1979)
11. Don't Look in the Basement (S. F. Brownrigg, USA, 1973)
12. Evil Dead, The (Sam Raimi, USA, 1982)
13. Frozen Scream (Frank Roach, USA, 1981)
14. Funhouse, The (Tobe Hooper, USA, 1981)
15. Human Experiments (Gregory Goodell, USA, 1979)
16. I Miss You, Hugs & Kisses (Murray Markowitz, Canada, 1978)
17. Inferno (Dario Argento, Italy, 1980)
18. Killer Nun (Giulio Berruti, Italy, 1978)
19. Late Night Trains (Aldo Lado, Italy, 1974)
20. Living Dead, The (Jorge Grau, Spain/Italy, 1974)
21. Nightmare Maker (William Asher, USA, 1981)
22. Possession (Andrzej Zulawski, France/West Germany, 1981)
23. Pranks (Jeffrey Obrow & Stephen Carpenter, USA, 1981)
24. Prisoner of the Cannibal God (Sergio Martino, Italy, 1978)
25. Revenge of the Bogey Man (Bruce Starr & Ulli Lommel, USA, 1982)
26. Slayer, The (J. S. Cardonem USA, 1981)
27. Terror Eyes (Kenneth Hughes, USA, 1980)
28. Toolbox Murders, The (Dennis Donnelly, USA, 1978)
29. Unhinged (Don Gronquist, USA, 1982)
30. Visiting Hours (Jean Claude Lord, Canada, 1981)
31. Witch Who Came from the Sea, The (Matt Cimber, USA, 1976)
32. Women Behind Bars (Jess Franco, France/Belgium, 1975)
33. Zombie Creeping Flesh (Bruno Mattei, Italy/Spain, 1981)



**NUCLEUS FILMS** is a DVD releasing company established by writer/film researcher Marc Morris and filmmaker Jake West with the intention of creating a high quality collector's film label for lovers of cinema run by people whose passion for film is equal to that of the fans.

In addition to their DVD releases, Nucleus Films also produces high quality DVD extras for other clients, ranging from extensive featurettes to audio commentaries. Examples of Nucleus' work can be seen on Anchor Bay UK's DVD releases of *The Evil Dead*, *Hellraiser*, *Bubba Ho-Tep*, *Scanners* and *The Pete Walker Collection*. Nucleus Films also produced the highly acclaimed 98-minute documentary on the Phantasm series, entitled *Phantasmagoria*, which was included in Anchor Bay UK's five-disc Phantasm Box Set.

Nucleus also made the 42 minute featurette *Stormy Seas: The Journey from Blood Star to Death Ship* which was included on the March 2007 release of the 1980 cult classic *Death Ship* and *Running the Bloodbath* - a brand new documentary featuring interviews with Executive Producers Stuart Donaldson and Laurence Myers, featuring rare Kenny Everett Archive footage.

In Jan 2009 Nucleus Films signed a new distribution deal with Odeon Entertainment via Arvato. Later that year they released *Ghost Story* as a special edition double DVD set. Revered, misunderstood and oft-discussed, Stephen Weeks' rarely seen 1974 dream-like chiller is the absolute definition of a cult British horror film. In November 2009 they released two rarely seen Burlesque films from the 1950s - *Teasermama*, the "holy grail" of girlie flicks, and *Varietease*. Both star America's legendary pin-up queen, cult icon Bettie Page and were produced and directed by girly-pix impresario Irving Klaw.

**THE GRIZZLY END....**