

# Gothique

SPECIAL THIRD MANCON ISSUE





# Gothique

On such an auspicious occasion it seems appropriate to bore you all with a short re-cap of Gothique's seedy existence. The first issue appeared just before '65's London World Con and, indeed, most copies of that first duplicated effort were given away, rammed down people's throats and actually sold at that historic event. The following three years saw the incredibly high out-put of six whole issues, all laboriously hand duped in the very best fanzine tradition. But now we have litho facilities at our disposal and our readers, (pause for hysterical laughter), will now be able to actually see the content, surely the acid test of any fanzine? At this point it also seems appropriate to add that Gothique, as of the current issue, number eight, is set out in columns of justified type and printed on a very fine paper, with an extra thick wrap-round cover, at a new, small size. So any resemblance with the rather hurridly assembled effort you now see should only be tentative, we hope!

Looking back now it seems surprising that John Ramsey Campbell's only contribution to our pages was a letter published way back in our fifth issue, ("Amateurism, in it's best sense, is always preferable to academicism" - that's our excuse and we're sticking to it!), and so we're glad to welcome him on this special occasion with the absorbing article that makes up the greater portion of this Combozine entry. John and his work need no introduction and even so his appearances in the next few days are sure to stick in your memory, (don't say we didn't warn you).

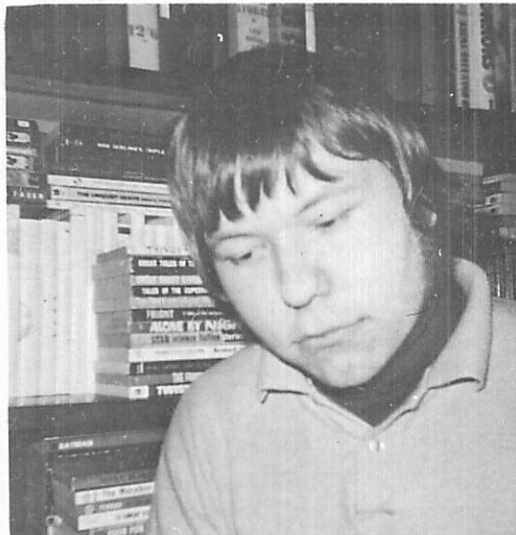
All that now remains, as Home Service announcers are want to phrase it, is to wish you all, well nearly all of you, a happy and eventfull con. Enough! Let the festivitas begin!!

## The Editors

ARTWORK: Front cover: David Britton, page four: Dave Griffiths, page six: Moira Read, page seven: David Britton, back cover: Brian J. Frost.  
STILLS: "The Haunted Palace", "The Damned" and "Mad Love".



DAVE GRIFFITHS



STAN NICHOLLS

# CORRECT TO CUT

by

## JOHN RAMSEY CAMPBELL

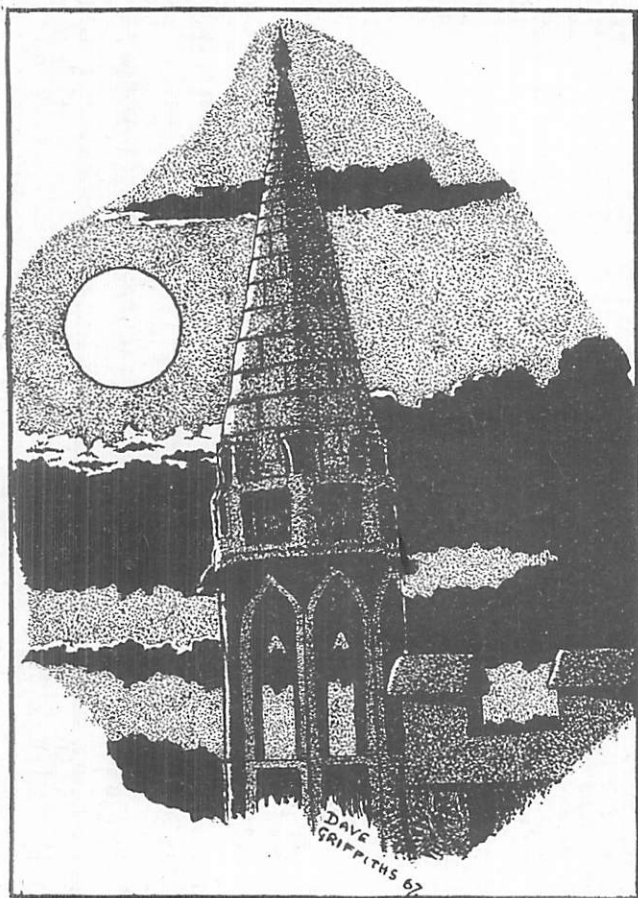
In the most perceptive point he ever made about a movie, Robert Bloch commented that the famous cut in "Frankenstein" implied something far nastier than the complete print had actually shown. Censorship in any form violates the private right; we all know that. And yet I find the howls of wrath with which the fans greet the tiniest cut in any horror film faintly disturbing. Does it matter that several hideous murders were curtailed in "Curse of the Living Corpse"? I think not: simply because the film itself doesn't matter. The idea of censors as arbiters of cinematic worth scarcely appeals to me; but it's worthwhile to take a colder, harder look at what is cut, and why such cuts are made.

Examples: "Curse of the Living Corpse" or "Frankenstein's Daughter", (a telling extract from which I hope to show at this Con), or the recent stream of sadistic Italian westerns. All have been heavily cut in England; I see no reason to complain. Such films, each typical of a whole tatty cycle, are based on violence: the characters are puppets of violence, but no more so than their audience. Their total absence from our screen would cause no lack, or would it? Unfortunately, yes, as demonstrated by the magazines which spend much of their time complaining: there would

be a lack of sadistic gratification. (Even those who realize just how bad "Frankenstein's Daughter" is are likely to qualify "The only good scene was the one with the acid-throwing" or some-such). Of all the arts, the cinema degenerates most easily into voyeurism. And that deflated feeling, (familiar to me, I'm sure, as much as anyone), which succeeds the censoring of promised sadism is basically sexual: the blind pulled down over the window opposite, the keyhole blocked, the orgasm interrupted.

Of course fine films are censored: Ingmar Bergman is a perennial victim. Of course censorship tends to be arbitrary: why was the climax of Gordon Douglas' "Them!" virtually removed when the inferior, and exceptionally tasteless "Tarantula", (from which, again, I intend to show an extract), survived intact? Why, for that matter, have I seen versions of Corman's "Haunted Palace" and Hitchcock's "Psycho", (both of which use the horror genre to make important statements), of varying completeness in different Liverpool cinemas? Yet the feeling persists that censorship is, if certainly not desirable in its implications, at least in some sense necessary. The hypothetical viewer who rushes out of "Jack the Ripper" to





stab a passer-by is of course an absurd myth; but an increase in cinematic violence could be symptomatic of, and responsible for, the increasing reluctance to be shocked by or sympathetic to forms of human suffering - which is to say a decline in humanism.

Let's consider some films from which the censor has apparently "protected" us by refusing them a public exhibition. The notorious "Lady in a Cage", by its misuse of sensationalism, (which is, as Hitchcock, Fuller, et al have demonstrated, one of the cinema's great assets), ends up by suggesting that the victim of hoodlums is more guilty and vicious than they, which may be doctrinaire liberal argument but is here disturbingly ill-formulated. I've shown elsewhere that "Freaks", (now publicly showable), ultimately turns its heroes into monsters for the sake of a ghoulish climax. The Lewton-Robson "Bedlam" simila-

arly requires it's long-suffering asylum inmates to bury alive their tormentor, and I can't support films which express an Old Testament morality. I expect the best from Bunuel's long banned "El", but "Un Chien Andalou" still strikes me merely as an unpleasant bit of enigmatic self-indulgence. On the credit side of the banned list, there's Shinto's "Onibaba", a Japanese legend which rises above sadism to become lucidly and acutely horrifying, and Kenneth Anger's homosexual fantasies which have every right to be beautiful, as much so as Hollywood's heterosexual fantasies. But God knows what their effect would be on an average audience. Incomprehension breeds immorality, and in this light censorship might be justified.

Meanwhile the new permissiveness is setting in, and bringing movies into line with prose. Why is it that violence in books, (except, of course, in the deplorably suppressed "Last Exit To Brooklyn"), is never considered cause for objection? Thus such obscenities as the stories of Scott-Moncrieff, ("Not for the Squeamish" - now out of print, I trust for always), and most of the contents of the Pan books of horror stories do their dirty work unremarked and make it all the harder for such subtle writers as Robert Aickman and Errol Undercliffe to reap their just rewards. Now it's the movies; although "Black Sunday" is still banned, and the other extremely interesting Mario Bava films are crudely cut, an inferior film like "Revenge of the Blood Beast" gets past, maggots in eye-sockets and all. Nobody is more pleased than I to see such films as "Bonnie and Clyde", "Point Blank", "The Chase",

Opposite: Two films famous for their censorship problems; "Haunted Palace", (top), and "The Damned", (bottom).





May 68.

"The Torn Curtain", etc., ( in which the effect of the violence is devastatingly moral ), shown complete, and it's a pleasant surprise to find the true horrors of a fine film like "The Long Hair of Death" visible on our screens. Even such vicious a film as "Rough Night in Jericho" commends itself as an explosion of the heroic Western myth over and above it's obvious intention to outdo the Italian "Fistful of Dollars". And the recent trend to sexual explicitness, with it's attendant dangers of voyeurism, is surely to the good in that it brings sex into the daylight from beneath the sadistic sublimation of the horror movie. But simultaneously the James Bond cycle has ushered in a plague of extreme violence, balletically (and hence enjoyably) filmed. The more we see of anything, the less we are affected - because it has been interiorized. The growing problem of the artist who feels bound to shock his audience into awareness and is thus forced to outdo the tradition of previous violence devolves upon us all. I'm not advocating censorship: I'm insisting that the more we see, the more we must evaluate, the more each of us must be his own conscious censor. Otherwise, how long before we're expermentially numbed beyond sensitivity and beyond humanity?

Gothique magazine, (the poor man's "F.M."), is available from; 5, St. John's Wood Terrace, St. John's Wood, London, N.W.8., and a copy of the current issue, 8, will be despatched in a flat, sturdy envelope on remittance of 2/6, (plus 6 pence postage, etc.). It is now in complete litho.

All lettering in this Combozine is by Robin James.  
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# THE GOTHIQUE FILM SOCIETY

"Dracula", (original), "M", "Son of Kong", "Ghost of Frankenstein", "Stranger on the Third Floor", "The Raven", (original), "Them!", "Circus of Dr. Lao", "The Cat People", "First Man into Space", "Dr. Cyclops", "Night of the Hunter", "The Ape"; these are just some of the films shown to date at Britain's only specialised film society, the

Gothique Film Society. For full details please write to the following address

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ROBIN JAMES:  
33, BETHANY WAYE,  
STAINES ROAD,  
BEDFONT, MIDDX.



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## STARDOCK

The first issue of Stardock, companion magazine to Gothique is now available, and if you don't see a copy floating drunkenly around, more are available from the following address, at the paltry sum of 2/6; small enough price for this S.F. rarity. (How's that for a plug?)

5, ST. JOHN'S WOOD  
TERRACE,  
ST. JOHNS WOOD,  
LONDON. N.W.8.





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for Gothique