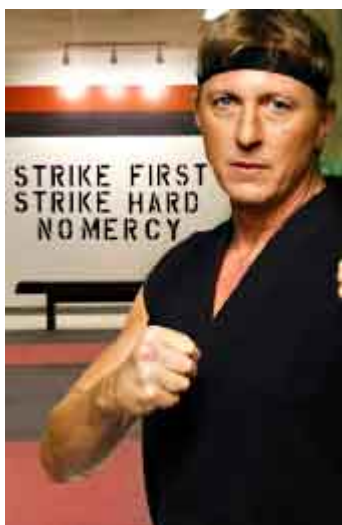


personality type—incel—and the climactic shooting rampage he perpetrates likewise seems all-too-familiar. NETFLIX



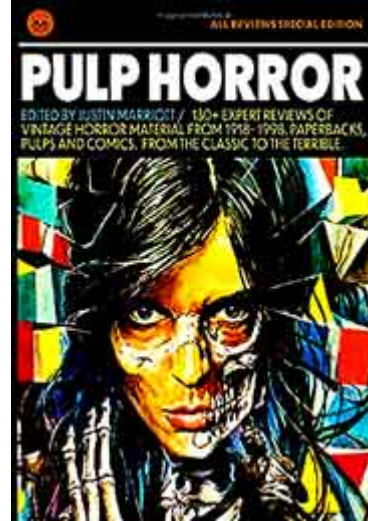
2. **PARANORMAL ACTIVITY**

Anyone remember this? Released back in 2009, the \$15,000 camcorder lensed PARANORMAL ACTIVITY was a phenomenon in its day, and one of the key entries in the found footage movie craze. It was also the release that put the now-mighty Blumhouse on the map (the film having been acquired, and heavily retooled, by a then Miramax executive named Jason Blum). It's inevitable that 13 years later the pic seems a mite stodgy, although I find its minimalism refreshing in our current more-is-better era. NETFLIX



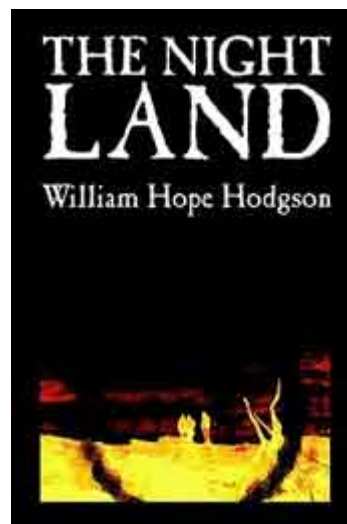
3. **COBRA KAI Season 4**

This latest season of COBRA KAI is stronger than I was expecting. The idea of having the young son of Daniel (Ralph Macchio) become a



2. **PULP HORROR: ALL REVIEWS SPECIAL EDITION** Edited by **JUSTIN MARRIOTT**

Another nifty horror fiction themed anthology compiled by Mr. Marriott. If nothing else, this book is the *only* place you'll find the widely revered **BOOK OF SKULLS** by Robert Silverberg and the tie-in version of the 1970s porno feature **DRACULA SUCKS** (which Marriott claims is little more than “an aid to masturbation”) sharing the same space. Likewise Ramsey Campbell's highly respected ANCIENT IMAGES and Guy N. Smith's less esteemed **THE SUCKING PIT**, and I say such an eclectic range of subject matter is a good thing. BOOK



3. **THE NIGHT LAND** by **WILLIAM HOPE HODGSON**

Speaking of classic horror fiction, here's one of the most imaginative and audacious examples of such, a 500-plus page epic from 1912 that tells the tale of a sun-deprived future

bully—and Daniel wrongly assuming his kid was the victim—is brilliant, although that particular plot strand concludes in the most trite manner imaginable. The same can be said for the entire season, which brings up a number of provocative topics only to shrug them off—or, in the case of Sensei John Kresse (Martin Kove) and his relationship with KARATE KID III heavy Terry Silver (Thomas Ian Griffith), pushed forward to season 5. NETFLIX



4. PARASYTE: THE MAXIM

The 2014-15 anime adaptation of the famous 1989-95 manga of the same name. Said manga is often credited with popularizing the concept of bodysnatching in Japan, although to western readers its chief virtue is the bizarre imagery contained in its account of a teenage boy's right arm being penetrated by a tiny critter that causes it to undergo all manner of mutations—and take on an entire netherworld of “parasyte” infected humans and animals. All those virtues and drawbacks, FYI, apply equally to this 24 part anime, which works best if you don't think too much about WICKED CITY (1987), still the most potent example of bad biology in Japanimation. NETFLIX

Earth overtaken by inter-dimensional monsters. The novel can safely be dubbed a masterpiece, yet it's also irredeemably flawed, being both the greatest *and* most problematic work of its brilliant author. BOOK



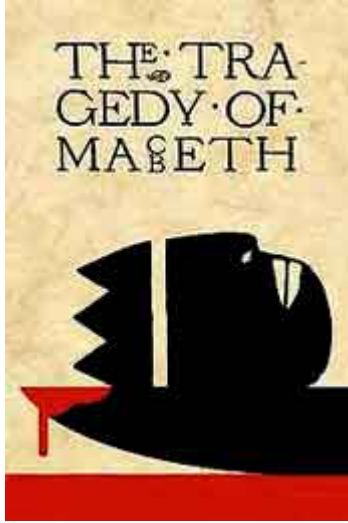
4. THE QUEEN OF BLACK MAGIC

This nutty Indonesian horror fest, released on DVD by Mondo Macabro, is far from the best example of Indonesian cinematic dementia. Still, THE QUEEN OF BLACK MAGIC definitely has its moments, and was one of the first (and only) films of its kind to make any kind of impact in the USA (where it was initially titled BLACK MAGIC TERROR, and falsely advertised as being part of the Shaw Brothers' **BLACK MAGIC** franchise). Plus it stars Southeast Asia's top scream queen, the sultry brunette Suzzanna. FILM



5. DAGON

Not to be confused with the abovementioned Fred Chappell



5. THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

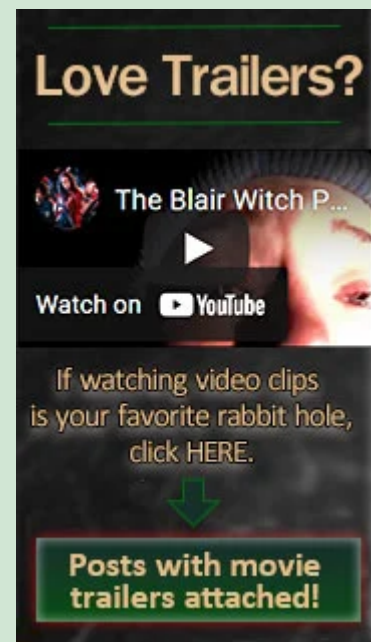
Just about anything by the Coen brothers is worth seeing, and that includes this adaptation of the Bard's grimmest play, written and directed by Joel Coen (his bro Ethan having for some reason sat this project out). Denzel Washington underplays the title role and Francis McDormand follows suit as Lady McB. Essentially a filmed play, the film has its good and bad points, with the former thankfully outweighing the latter. APPLE TV

novel, this is the late **Stuart Gordon**'s exuberantly trashy 2001 take on H.P. Lovecraft's story of the same name. The film hits most (if not all) the Lovecraftian bases, including the fishy monsters, unhealthy isolated protagonist, otherworldly atmosphere (it was Lovecraft's work, let's not forget, that inspired the term "cosmic horror") and decidedly *unhappy* ending. FILM



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- **I was Flesh Gordon (Book)**
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Insider Info

Amid noteworthy showbiz deaths in January 2022, there was one that kind of got lost (sandwiched as it was between those of Betty White and Sidney Poitier), but which had a special resonance for me: the actor/director/author **Peter Bogdonovich**.



There was never anyone like Mr. Bogdonovich, and never will be again. A filmmaker who made his 1968 feature debut with one of the greatest, most subversive horror movies of all time (**TARGETS**) but never went near the genre again (unless you count the 1998 TVM NAKED CITY: A KILLER CHRISTMAS), Bogdonovich had the distinction of being the most literate and refined of the so-called Movie Brats who stormed Hollywood in the late 1960s and early 70s (a crowd that included Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, **Brian De Palma** and Martin Scorsese), yet he was also the most scandal plagued.

Scandals & Tangles

About those scandals, they ran the gamut from the mundane (Bogdonovich dumping his first wife, the late Polly Platt, for Cybill Shepard) to the sordid (getting involved with the late *Playboy* playmate Dorothy Stratton, and unwittingly playing a part in her 1980 murder). He was also known to tangle with studio executives, as he did in 1984 when his film MASK was released with a soundtrack packed with Bob Segar tunes in place of the Bruce Springsteen songs Bogdonovich had intended (**the Bogdonovich cut was released on DVD in the aughts**).



In film nerd circles claiming you prefer the Bob Segar scored MASK is akin to saying you like the studio version of TOUCH OF EVIL (1958), from Bogdonovich's longtime idol Orson Welles, better than the director's cut. Well it just so happens that I'm partial to the TOUCH OF EVIL studio cut, which is notable

primarily for having music and credits accompanying the bravura opening shot (which in Welles' version comes off as show-offy), so it shouldn't surprise anyone that my MASK preference is for the initial version. No, Bob Segar on his best day can't approach The Boss, but I say Segar's tunes work far better than Springsteen's, particularly the pitch-perfect end credits inclusion of "Roll Me Away" (**see if I'm not right**).

Recommendations

Recommended Peter Bogdonovich movies, aside from **TARGETS**, include THE LAST PICTURE SHOW (a film heavily inspired by the work of masters like Ford and Welles that can stand alongside their best work), THEY ALL LAUGHED (a far better updating of the 1930s screwball formula to the modern era, IMO, than the overrated WHAT'S UP DOC?), TEXASVILLE (undoubtedly the most atmospheric depiction of the Lone Star state since **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**) and THE CAT'S MEOW (which is among the most absolute brightest and most enjoyable depictions of Golden Age Hollywood)—and again, I also recommend viewing the studio cut of MASK, if you can find it.

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