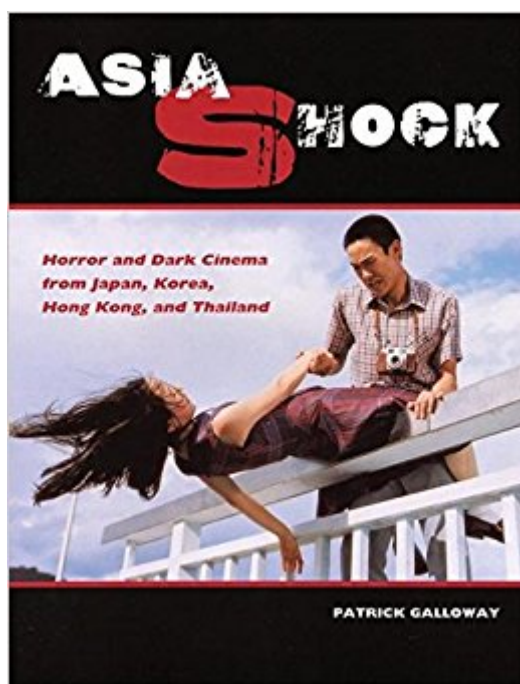


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# Asia Shock: Horror And Dark Cinema From Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, And Thailand



## Synopsis

Asian Extreme cinema is hot, and this book lays it out in all its gory glory. Patrick Galloway, who last looked at samurai movies in his well-received *Stray Dogs and Lone Wolves*, now takes on Asian masters of suspense, exploitation, the supernatural, and bone-chilling, blood-curdling fear and evil. The films featured here are pan-Asian, including Korea and Thailand, and represent a mix of classics and the contemporary cutting edge. Included are viewing tips and overviews of genres and cultures. "Galloway has all sorts of interesting insights and facts that'll make you want to rewatch your favorites, or check out some that you've never seen." -- *Wired* "It has a conversational feel, as if you're sitting down with a film buddy and just discussing the film." -- *Twitch* "What with brain-sauce spaghetti, switchblade cellphones, and other wonders, could horror flicks from Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong be any better? Patrick Galloway savors the genre in *Asia Shock*." -- *East Bay Express*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Film critic Patrick Galloway won over readers with film guides *Stray Dogs & Lone Wolves: The Samurai Film Handbook*, and *Asia Shock: Horror and Dark Cinema from Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Thailand*. A lifelong student of Asian philosophy and culture, Galloway has traveled in Japan, Hong Kong, India and Nepal. He lives in the Bay Area.

I'll read any review book that Patrick Galloway puts out. Excellent sense of the bizarre.

i love alot of j-, k-, and c-horror films, they're very intelligent and well made. this book gave me a great list to start for more movies to get into.

I purchased the book because of the reviews and because there aren't that many books on J-Horror. A few things I didn't like- while the movie reviews are well written and quite obvious that the author has watched them- there is way too much detail, i.e. spoilers in the reviews. If you have not watched the movie yet, you won't need to as the author gives you pseudo spoilers in key areas of the movie. It's the equivalent of reading a Cliff's Notes version of the movie. With the whole point of J-Horror focusing on mood, knowing what will happen ruins the tension and build up of the movie. I only read the reviews on movies in the book i had already seen and skipped the ones i plan on watching. The other problem is the types of movies selected. Some are good, some are ok and some are just plain mediocre. For example , Takashi Miike's, "Visitor Q" was chosen for review (The author only picked movies he felt deserved recognition as a movie to watch), and while I am a fan of Miike, he goes from hot to cold and "Q" is definitely not one of his best, in my opinion (actually it was horrible). Plus a few of the movies are selected from the 70's and early 80's and definitely not in the same vein as what i expect in current J-horror. Taste is subjective, so for better ideas skip the book, subscribe to Netflix and read the reviews/ratings and compare them against reviews/ratings at Rottentomatoes (RT tends to have more accurate ratings than Netflix user ratings).

I recently purchased this book and was really looking forward to it. I have to say, however, that I was pretty disappointed. I thought I'd share some thoughts with potential buyers so they'll know what to expect, and what not to expect if they're considering a purchase. I'll start with the good: Mr. Galloway is clearly educated on the subject of Asian horror films and very enthusiastic about the subject. Moreover, he writes in a casual, engaging style that makes for a pleasant read -- I finished the book in a couple of hours. Additionally, in my opinion, he has great taste within the genre...I'd seen a lot of the films he discusses and there weren't any that I found myself disagreeing with him on. On to the bad. First, be aware that this is only a book of reviews. If like me, you were hoping to find some attempt to contextualize these films, either through discussions of directors, studios, or a history of the genre in Asian film, you won't find it here. Apart from a brief introductory chapter, this is just reviews front to back. That's not necessarily a bad thing, if that's what you're looking for, but personally I think there are plenty of review sites and blogs all over the internet. When I buy a book like this I'm generally looking for a little more depth, and this is as shallow as they come. As for the reviews themselves, as another reviewer noted, Mr. Galloway explains the plot in inordinate detail

for each and every movie -- far more than is necessary for a book with the stated purpose of recommending movies, a book that does not attempt to provide any critical analysis. (I'm not suggesting that he should necessarily have offered critical analysis, but if he's not going to then there is absolutely no reason to detail the plot of each movie.) Finally, the author makes comments throughout to suggest why he thinks Asian horror films are superior to American horror films, generally giving cultural explanations that are, frankly, asinine. I teach Japanese politics and culture at the University level and I broke into laughter multiple times while reading this book at the broad sweeping generalizations he made about Japanese and American cultures. So, in conclusion, if you're looking to buy a book that will recommend a number of great films, and don't mind skipping large chunks of it to avoid spoilers, than this book may be worth your time and money. If you want anything more, look elsewhere.

One of the most vital and exciting developments in the last decade has been the trans-national dissemination of horror films from the east. Often made with one eye firmly on the international market, these films travel very well, without totally foregoing their own cultural specificity. Hideo Nakata's "Ring" has become the totemic film from which all other J-horror has been inspired and although I think western audiences have finally tired of the creepy kids and the long haired ghosts, these films remain persistently innovative and challenging. Galloway's very readable and entertaining book brings together a number of films from Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Thailand, that could be loosely categorised as Extreme Asia. It must be noted that Galloway's book is an entirely subjective summary of films which have left an impression on him. It is in no means academic, which lends itself to a wider audience. Therefore Asia Shock is more a device to generate debate and to encourage those with more explorative tastes to seek out material from more exotic climes. In this respect the book succeeds totally. I particularly liked the book because of the number of South Korean films include; films such as "Oldboy," "Tale of Two Sisters," and "Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance" are nothing short of masterpieces and deserve too be recognised by a wide audience. This is Mr. Galloway's quest with Asia Shock and I for one certainly hope he succeeds.

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