

'60s EURO THRILLS!

ARROW VIDEO 4-DISC
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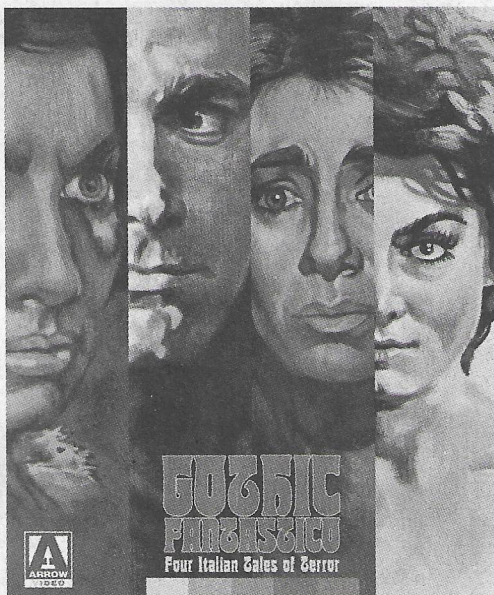
GOTHIC FANTASTICO: FOUR ITALIAN
TALES OF TERROR 10/22

LADY MORGAN'S VENGEANCE/LA
VENDETTA DI LADY MORGAN (1965)

B&W ♂♂♂

D: Massimo Pupillo. Gordon Mitchell, Erika Blanc, Paul Muller, Barbara Nelli, Michel Forain, Carlo Kechler. 86 mins.

Young Susan (Nelli) confesses to both her Uncle Neville (Kechler) and the adoring Sir Harold Morgan (Muller) that she cannot marry Harold because her heart belongs to Pierre Bris-sac (Forain). When Pierre heads back to France on business, he is pushed off his steamer by a dark figure. Heartbroken, Susan agrees to marry Harold. After they are wed, Neville takes his niece away for a time so she can grieve, and when she returns to her ancestral Blackhouse Castle, she finds Harold has hired new servants, Roger (Mitchell) and Lillian (Blanc). Unknown to anyone, Pierre awakens in a strange hospital after months in a coma. He has no memory of anything. It is immediately apparent that something is going on, but everyone is treating Susan like she's crazy. She even falls under hypnosis and suffers "hallucinations" no one believes. She hears things. She sees things. When they are certain she is at her craziest, she plummets to her death from the castle roof. At the moment of impact, Pierre suddenly comes awake and he knows who he is and that he has to get back to Susan. When he finally arrives at Blackhouse Castle, it appears abandoned. But he finds Susan and they spend the night together. Harold spies on them, and Lillian tells him he's a good-for-nothing jerk. It seems that when Susan died, her soul lived on to get revenge on those who had done her wrong. **Lady Morgan's Vengeance** is an excellent Gothic with all the trappings--ominous old castle, foggy graveyard, flickering candles, windblown curtains and a convenient dungeon. It is like a five-course meal, unfolding one delicious revelation at a time that



keeps the viewer invested in the story. Extras include interviews with Muller and Blanc, a video essay by Kat Ellinger, commentary by Alexandra Heller-Nicholas and trailer.

THE BLANCHEVILLE MONSTER (1963)

B&W ♂♂1/2

D: Alberto De Martino. Gérard Tichy, Leo Anchóriz, Ombretta Colli, Helga Liné, Irán Eory, Vanni Materassi 90 mins.

We spy a coach making its way through a storm, headed to Blancheville Castle. Emilie (Colli) is home from school to visit her brother Rodéric (Tichy). Accompanying her is her best friend Alice (Eory) and Alice's brother (and boyfriend to Emilie) John (Materassi). Emilie immediately

feels a distance between herself and the castle, as their father has died and Rodéric has replaced the entire staff. She particularly does not care for Eleonore (Liné), the new maid who seems rather close to her older brother. It's not long before Alice is hearing screams only to wander into a tower where she sees Eleonore trying to give an injection to a horribly disfigured man. She passes out and when she comes to she takes Rodéric to the tower only to find it bare. Emilie

is approaching her 21st birthday and learns of a curse that calls for her to not reach that milestone. Emilie falls into a hypnotic coma, where a stalker chases her in her dreams. Rodéric confesses that it was actually father who suffered horrible scaring from a fire whom Alice saw in the tower. He comes clean only because the insane man has gotten loose. Emilie is found dead on the day of her birthday but John refuses to believe it. Then the father comes after the rest of them. The on-screen title is its alternate, **Horror**, and while I've seen this film a couple of times on various budget DVD collections, this is the first time it's looked this crisp and lush. It is a fun Gothic thriller with just the right number of storms, creeping shadows, and screams in the night. Extras includes commentary by film historian Paul Anthony Nelson, video essay courtesy Keith Allison, interview with author Antonio Tentori, trailer, and the original opening credits from the film's U.S. release.

THE THIRD EYE/IL TERZO OCCHIO

(1966)B&W ♂♂♂ 1/2

D: Mino Guerrini. Franco Nero, Gioia Pascal,

Erika Blanc, Olga Solbelli, Gara Granda. 98 mins.

Countess Alberti (Solbelli) cannot stand her son Mino's (Nero) choice in fiancées. She hates Laura (Blanc, appearing under the name Diana Sullivan) and drives a wedge between the two, which maid Marta (Pascal) helps to widen whenever she can. When Laura leaves to meet her sister, who is returning from school, she has an accident and perishes in a horrific car accident. Mino, who teeters between being a browbeaten mamma's boy and his incredibly annoying co-dependency on Laura, totally cracks up. He's a rich kid with nothing better to do than to be an amateur taxidermist. Marta and the Countess get into an argument and the Countess takes a fatal fall. Marta blackmails Mino to make her his wife. He brings strippers back to his pad, and it never ends well for these ladies. Then Laura's sister arrives looking for her, which drives Mino into full throttle maniac mode. **The Third Eye** is a slick, sick thriller that leans into its nasty nature and hints around at necrophilia. I like my Nero characters made of a stiffer backbone, but he is absolutely nutty throughout. You may get a bit of déjà vu watching this, as Aristide Massaccesi/Joe D'Amato remade it in 1979 as **Beyond the Darkness/Buio Omega**. Extras include commentary by critic Rachael Nisbet, essay by Lindsay Hallam and a new interview with Blanc.

THE WITCH/LA STREGA IN AMORE

(1966)B&W ♂♂1/2

D: Damiano Damiani. Richard Johnson-Sergio Logan, Rosanna Schiaffino-Aura, Gian Maria Volontè-Fabrizio, Sarah Ferrati-Consuelo Lorente, Margherita Guzzinati-Lorna. 109 mins.

Lothario Sergio Logan (Johnson) begins looking for a new gal when his main squeeze starts talking marriage. He keeps seeing an old woman watching him from the park. Later, he answers a newspaper ad for a librarian position and meets Consuelo Lorente (Ferrati). Sergio assumes she's looking for a good-time boy and refuses the job but is taken to the library. There he meets the woman's daughter, Aura (Schiaffino). Instantly smitten, he takes the job, takes her to bed and then meets the last librarian, Fabrizio (Volontè), who hasn't seen Aura in months. The men squabble, then fight and Sergio bests Fabrizio. That night, the old woman and Aura seduce him. He awakens but cannot find Aura. Soon she is gone. He never realizes he has become a prisoner. **The Witch** is a psychological Gothic and comes beautifully full circle before its jolting climax. Extras include commentary by Kat Ellinger, a video essay by Miranda Corcoran, and interview with author Tentori. Additionally, this limited edition set includes an 80-page book, poster, image galleries, and wonderful video introductions to each film courtesy of Italian film expert Mark Thompson Ashworth. ♂

—Roberto Freezini