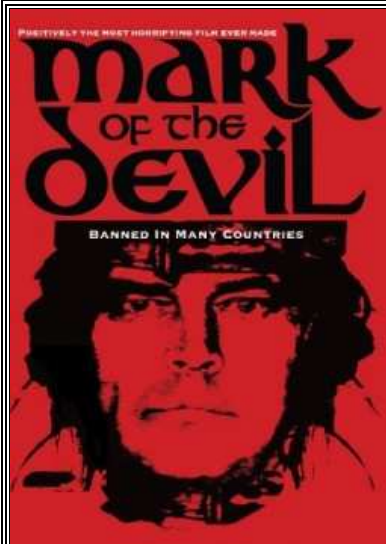


Mark Of The Devil (1970)



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Genres: Horror, Sadistic Horror, Supernatural Horror

Directors: Michael Armstrong, Adrian Hoven

Starring: Herbert Lom, Udo Kier, Olivera Katarina, Reggie Nalder, Herbert Fux

Based on one of the darkest times in history, Mark of the Devil deals with witchcraft as the church saw it. This meant years of torture, torment and false accusations from perfectly normal people. Better to call someone a witch and be wrong, than to be called a witch yourself.



Review by Bill Wolford Added: December 24, 2012

The film starts with a witch burning by the local witch-finder, Albino (Reggie Nalder, in a particularly nasty role). He returns to the pub to find that a stranger, Christian von Meruh (Udo Kier) has come with orders from the king that matters in witch hunting are becoming too complex for just the local witch-finder to handle, and will be replaced as head of these matters by Lord Cumberland (Herbert Lom), who has much more experience in these matters. Albino, who is untrusted by the villagers because of his unsavory methods of finding the guilty (who usually aren't) is berated by them as he leaves the bar. Christian has another drink, which is brought to him by the barmaid Vanessa (Olivera Katarina), with whom he has become smitten.

As Lord Cumberland arrives, Albino rushes around, trying to find, or make up paperwork for all of his innocent prisoners. Cumberland takes on Albino as his aide, but retains Christian as well, as he is Cumberland's student. The first set of trials seem to go well, as most of the people condemned are seen with pity by Cumberland, and allowed to go free. Those to whom he feels guilty he has no qualms in making sure they are tortured and die in the name of the church. Only when Albino makes advances which are refused by Vanessa resulting in him decrying her as a witch does Christian come to see the error in his ways by allowing himself to be taught the churches misleading deeds in witch-finding. Cumberland has Vanessa locked up as a witch, much to the dismay of his pupil Christian. Things become so bad at one point, that a pair of puppeteers are imprisoned on accusations of witchcraft for supposedly being able to make wooden toys move and talk. What of the fate of Vanessa and other innocents? The evil Albino, will he be brought to justice? You'll have to grab the DVD and find out!

I've seen this movie several times before I viewed the copy here, released by Cheezy flicks. I believe that the Blue Underground release is better, and has more extras, but Cheezy flicks did something cheezy and wonderful by including a vomit bag with their release. A Vomit Bag! When the U.S. theater premier runs of the film were out, they also issued vomit bags for the movie going patrons, so this is like a little trip back in history. No indication if these are the original bags left over from the theater runs, or clever replicas. Either way, it's a very cool treat for fans of the movie.

The film is very graphic, shocking, and fun to watch all at the same time. The trio of Nalder, Lom and Kier make this a must own for horror fans. This is a very underrated film and used to be quite hard to find, so grab a copy now while it's available. Enjoy the torture. 8/10.

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