



Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds: The Dark Dreams of Dario Argento

By Maitland McDonagh

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Italian filmmaker Dario Argento's horror films have been described as a blend of Alfred Hitchcock and George Romero—psychologically rich, colorful, and at times garish, excelling at taking the best elements of the splatter and exploitation genres and laying them over a dark undercurrent of human emotions and psyches. *Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds*, which dissects such Argento cult films as *Two Evil Eyes*, *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, *Suspiria*, and *Deep Red*, includes a new introduction discussing Argento's most recent films, from *The Stendahl Syndrome* to *Mother of Tears*; an updated filmography; and an interview with Argento.

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Broken Mirrors/Broken Minds: The Dark Dreams of Dario Argento By Maitland McDonagh Bibliography

- Rank: #1628579 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Univ Of Minnesota Press
- Published on: 2010
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x 1.00" w x 5.50" l, .82 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 296 pages

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Editorial Review

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Virtually unknown to mainstream moviegoers in the U.S. and even to most connoisseurs of foreign films, Italian director Dario Argento is highly esteemed among aficionados of the cinematic extremities. He's been called the Italian Hitchcock, but his work--11 films in the horror and thriller genres during the last 25 years--is far more lurid and violent than Hitchcock's. Argento often dispenses with such niceties as character development and narrative coherence in favor of the over-the-top effects his fans love; for example, in one film, a killer's madness is illustrated by shots of his pulsating brain. Most of Argento's American following consists of "psychotronic" types who disdain the scholarly critical approach, but for its verve, individualism, and technical virtuosity, Argento's work warrants such treatment. McDonagh strikes an effective balance between intellectuality and enthusiasm, offering film-by-film commentary enlivened by a generous helping of poster and production-still reproductions and topping everything off with a recent interview with Argento in which he admits, "I like when people are disgusted, because it means you've made an impression on them. A deep impression." *Gordon Flagg*

About the Author

Maitland McDonagh is a film critic and TV commentator who maintains her own Web site, MissFlickChick.com. She was the senior movies editor of TVGuide.com from 1995 to 2008.

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