

Nosferatu. Revista de cine (Donostia Kultura)

Título:
Abstracts

Autor/es:
Nosferatu

Citar como:
Nosferatu (2006). Abstracts. Nosferatu. Revista de cine. (51):91-93.

Documento descargado de:
<http://hdl.handle.net/10251/41449>

Copyright:
Reserva de todos los derechos (NO CC)

La digitalización de este artículo se enmarca dentro del proyecto "Estudio y análisis para el desarrollo de una red de conocimiento sobre estudios fílmicos a través de plataformas web 2.0", financiado por el Plan Nacional de I+D+i del Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad del Gobierno de España (código HAR2010-18648), con el apoyo de Biblioteca y Documentación Científica y del Área de Sistemas de Información y Comunicaciones (ASIC) del Vicerrectorado de las Tecnologías de la Información y de las Comunicaciones de la Universitat Politècnica de València.

Entidades colaboradoras:



donostiakultura.com

Abstracts



El tesoro de Sierra Madre

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Pablo Fernández

Author or simple craftsman? Or author *and* craftsman? Critics have always been divided when it comes to evaluating the work of Huston, a character as contradictory as the films and friends of his lifetime. Tireless globetrotter, his documentary works (following his directorial debut with **The Maltese Falcon**) left an indelible mark with their portrayal of the horrors of WWII and defence of freedom, not to mention the lashing out against McCarthyism and witch-hunts serving as an example for many a compatriot. His love of adventure moreover took him to different corners of the planet to shoot movies as erratic as his life, on occasions achieving delightful beauty as in the will he left in film-form, **The Dead**.

THE GAME BETWEEN THE LINES

José María Latorre

Huston's great love of reading was responsible for the immense majority of his film screenplays being adaptations of literary works from widely varying genres. Although it's anything but easy to find a common thread between them –they're not even linked by North American literature– this vagueness didn't stop critics who hadn't read most of the texts from considering Huston as an author. But Huston himself definitely had read them, hence his adaptations, despite their varying sources, resemble a kind of essential distillation of the works read during his lifetime. A passion for reading reflected in his *mise-en-scene* and obvious in numerous sequences of **Moby Dick**, to name but one example.

ON THE HEELS OF THE LOSER

Quim Casas

Peckinpah, Ray, Cassavetes, Jarmusch... the list of North American directors setting their fictions around losers of a fame extending even beyond their own borders is considerable. Huston holds a preferential place in their midst, among other reasons because *Positif* critics strove to achieve precisely that in the battle against their counterparts at *Cahiers*. However, deeper analysis of his work shows that films like **The Asphalt Jungle** or **The Man Who Would Be King** exalt the figure of flash-in-the-pan winners given the chance to live their dreams for an instant before dying. But the last titles on his filmography would seem to indicate that Huston was seeking to justify this fame by unfolding a splendid gallery of losers from **The Misfits** and **Fat City** onwards. Or perhaps not?

STILL LIFE, FAMILY PORTRAITS

Carlos Losilla

Critics at the *Cahiers du Cinéma* stigmatized John Huston's cinema based on their belief that it was anything but *mise-en-scene*. In fact, they were rejecting what they considered to be an overly materialistic view of art and life. This text considers two styles of painting (still life and the family portrait) in the endeavour to demonstrate that Huston's focus has its roots in a kind of spirituality or even mystic tradition. And that even the much-trumpeted "failure" of Hustonian characters is in fact a victory no longer only of the moral kind, but over death understood as physical disappearance. All based on two of his most atypical films: **A Walk with Love and Death** and **The Dead**.

PLAYING / FOR HUSTON

Carlos Aguilar

Huston firmly believed that no other actor had Humphrey Bogart's charisma. Having pointed out this fact and documented it with a string of significant details, the author takes a look at a long list of leading and supporting actors and actresses who worked with the filmmaker during his career while remarking on the most outstanding aspects of their contributions. The article also underlines the close ties of Huston's family (his father, his children

and himself) to acting, quoting a number of declarations made by the filmmaker that help to understand his view of a profession that he knew inside out. A last section briefly outlines the indelible mark left on Huston's filmography by two actors (Orson Welles and Montgomery Clift).

THE INVISIBLE CAMERA

Nuria Vidal

Does Huston have his own style? Does his work have stylistic constants? To answer this question the author watched fourteen essential works on his filmography until establishing a series of basic characteristics repeated film upon film: the continuous rejection of shots and reverse angle shots from the frames, the search for compositional triangles, the use of recurring settings: bars, buses, cars... While the plot of each film is similarly usually the same: a group of people unknown to one another meet with aim of achieving a common goal and fail in the endeavour, other differences are remarkable depending on the decade in which Huston made each film, passing from the black and white violence of the forties to the travelling titles of the fifties or intellectual movies of the sixties, not forgetting the cold of the seventies and warmth of the eighties. Is it possible to single-out a particular style from this mixture? Yes, the "no-style" style.

LICENCE TO DIE. JOHN HUSTON'S SPY MOVIES

Roberto Cueto

The Kremlin Letter and **The Mackintosh Man** have always been scorned in John Huston's career due to their seemingly inevitable comparison with more decisive or prestigious works on his filmography. The article proposes the vindication of these movies as the expressions of a such a significant tradition at their time of shooting as the cinema of the Cold War, which had abandoned the patriotic and openly anti-Communist tone of its early days for a more cynical discourse where spies and secret agents were only dispensable pawns in the game of international intrigue. **The Kremlin Letter** is considered by the author to be one of the great works in Huston's career, a passionate fresco on the spy world shot with apparent coldness, yet continuously oozing pain and rage for individuals devoured by the jaws of the system. **The Mackintosh Man**, on the other hand, is a strange, unusual film, the defects of which are finally its greatest virtues, an incoherent, diffused tale achieving a surprisingly naked *mise-en-scene* depicting the loneliness of a being set adrift by the world of politics.

ON DETECTIVES AND GANGSTERS

Antonio Santamarina

A brief introduction to primitive gangster movies and the ideals on which they were based during the thirties of last century serves as the gateway to a study, focussing on their archetypes, of Huston's four thrillers, a genre which he himself initiated in 1941 with **The Maltese Falcon**. The author goes on to indicate the curious fact that it's detective Sam Spade, a strange figure in Huston's regular gallery of characters, who stars in his first movie, and that, in his subsequent dealings with the genre (**Key Largo**), Spade is replaced by a gangster taken from old criminal fictions. The article goes on to look at why Dix Handley (hero of **The Asphalt Jungle**) seems to be the character closest to the moviemaker's creative universe, given his connection to other crooks (Roy Earle and "Swede") emerging from the uniting of his pen with those of William R. Burnett and Ernest Hemingway. A final part examines his last film according to the typical traits of the genre to underline its improbability in all respects, that of its heroes included.

SUCCESS IN FAILURE. HUSTONIAN ADVENTURES

Carlos F. Heredero

Dead people who move among the living, that's the conscience of most Hustonian heroes, restless, solitary beings on the constant

trail of a specific objective. They all fail in the attempt, even when achieving final moral triumph, so that the intellectual and existential pessimism emanating from their adventures always becomes the recalcitrant optimism of a filmmaker as vitalist as Huston. A director qualified on many occasions as misogynist, although the author of the article doesn't share this opinion and endeavours –as he does throughout the entire text– to defend his position by giving several examples to the contrary.

IN THE CRUEL BATTLE

Ricardo Aldarondo

The three documentaries shot by Huston during his participation in WWII are not exactly noteworthy for their patriotic spirit and love of the war, but quite the opposite. Combat strategies somewhere in the Aleutian Islands, the defence of an Italian town and the psychological damage of warfare are the subjects of these

three documentaries, each an irreplaceable testimony to human suffering and the absurdity of war.

PARALLELISMS AND DIFFERENCES IN EIGHT FUNDAMENTAL TITLES BY JOHN HUSTON

Nuria Vidal

The author takes eight essential titles, two at a time, from Huston's filmography to point out their similarities and differences. Based on this starting point, the article analyses and compares the pessimism of **The Maltese Falcon** with the optimism of **Prizzi's Honor**, and the epic dimensions of **The Treasure of the Sierra Madre** with its simple recreation, twenty years later, in **The Man Who Would Be King**. All stepping stones leading to two masterpieces: **The African Queen** and **The Dead**, two works of plenitude, while one is full of the joys of life and the other of satisfaction with a goal accomplished: the living of life.