

**EXTRACT FROM  
"HARLAN ELLISON'S WATCHING"**

'At final consideration, GOTHIC is loopy and fatally flawed and an aberration.

'Yet I treasure this film. So may you. If you, as am I, are out of your head... you will cleave to this tortured bit of cinematic epilepsy because it is ALIVE. It is yet another crime of passion committed by Ken Russell, and his sort of berserk creativity has fallen on such hard times in this age of Reagan and yuppie sensibility, that simply to be exposed to the ravings of an inspired madman is cathartic.

'I came away from GOTHIC with my soul on fire. It drove me to this essay, all 5000+ words of it.

'BACK TO THE FUTURE had no such effect on me. Nor have any of the hundred or so films I've seen in the last six months had anything remotely like that effect. We live in a time of "safe" art that is in no way art, but merely artifice. GOTHIC frightens, after the fact, because it is dangerously conceived, impudently mounted, uncaring of its footing, determined to crawl the wall or tumble into the abyss, all in the name of disgorging the absurd demon in thought.'

'The final assertion of critical judgement on GOTHIC is not whether or not it is good, or whether one likes it or not. The undeniable truth of GOTHIC, as in all the work of Ken Russell (an artist who is either so mad or so foolhardy as not to care if he wins or loses), is that it is palpably ALIVE. It is riot and ruin and pandemonium. But it will have you by the nerve-ends.

'And isn't that what Real Art is supposed to do? Even in Canton, Illinois?'

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