

## Whoa! "GOKE. BODY SNATCHER FROM HELL" and more coming from Criterion

Written by Samuel Zimmerman  
Wednesday, 15 August 2012 17:16

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Much like Criterion did on their stellar Nikkatsu Noir box set, the company is shining a light on another of Japan's famous studios and their genre offerings. Head below for the full lineup of When Horror Came to Shochiku!

Criterion has an affinity for wild, weird, scary and downright unforgettable genre titles from Japan. From Kaneto Shindo's ONIBABA and KURONEKO to EMPIRE OF PASSION, to GODZILLA and most especially Nobuhiko Ohbayashi's amazing HAUSU, the beloved "continuing series of important classic and contemporary films" returns to Japan every so often and we reap the benefits.

Releasing November 20 (find more info [here](#) ), When Horror Came to Shochiku includes THE X FROM OUTER SPACE, GOKE, BODY SNATCHER FROM HELL, THE LIVING SKELETON and GENOCIDE. Here's all the details:



### ECLIPSE SERIES 37: WHEN HORROR CAME TO SHOCHIKU

Following years of a certain radioactive rubber beast's domination of the box office, many Japanese studios tried to replicate the formula with their own brands of monster movies. One of the most fascinating dives into that fiendish deep end was the short-lived one from Shochiku, a studio better known for its elegant dramas by the likes of Kenji Mizoguchi and Yasujiro Ozu. In 1967 and 1968, the company created four certifiably batty, low-budget fantasies, tales haunted by watery ghosts, plagued by angry insects, and stalked by aliens—including one in the form of a giant chicken-lizard. Shochiku's outrageous and oozy horror period shows a studio leaping into the unknown, even if only for one brief, bloody moment.

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FOUR-DVD BOX SET INCLUDES:

### **THE X FROM OUTER SPACE**

When a scientist crew returns from Mars with some space spores that contaminated their ship, they inadvertently bring about a nightmarish Earth invasion—after the spores are analyzed in a lab, one escapes, eventually growing into an enormous, rampaging beaked beast. An intergalactic monster movie from longtime Shochiku stable director Kazui Nihonmatsu, THE X FROM OUTER SPACE was the first in the studio's short but memorable cycle of horror pictures.

1967 • 88 minutes • Color • Monaural • In Japanese with English subtitles • 2.35:1 aspect ratio

{youtube}T1Trs6gDfXg{/youtube}

### **GOKE, BODY SNATCHER FROM HELL**

After an airplane is forced to crash-land in a remote area, its passengers find themselves face-to-face with an alien force that wants to possess their bodies and souls—and perhaps take over the entire human race. Filled with creatively repulsive effects—including a very invasive bloblike life-form—Hajime Sato's GOKE, BODY SNATCHER FROM HELL is a pulpy, apocalyptic gross-out.

1968 • 84 minutes • Color • Monaural • In Japanese with English subtitles • 2.35:1 aspect ratio

{youtube}7VesGOHBoQU{/youtube}

### **THE LIVING SKELETON**

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In this atmospheric tale of revenge from beyond the watery grave, a pirate-ransacked freighter's violent past comes back to haunt a young woman living in a seaside town. Mixing elements of kaidan (ghost stories), doppelganger thrillers, and mad-scientist movies, Hiroshi Matsuno's THE LIVING SKELETON is a wild and eerie work, with beautiful widescreen, black-and-white cinematography.

1968 • 80 minutes • Black & White • Monaural • In Japanese with English subtitles • 2.35:1 aspect ratio

{youtube}sZUAU\_sXHvc{/youtube}

### GENOCIDE

The insects are taking over in this nasty piece of disaster horror directed by Kazui Nihonmatsu. A group of military personnel transporting a hydrogen bomb are left to figure out how and why swarms of killer bugs took down their plane; the answer is more deliriously nihilistic—and convoluted—than you could imagine. Also known as War of the Insects, GENOCIDE enacts a cracked doomsday scenario like no other.

1968 • 84 minutes • Color • Monaural • In Japanese with English subtitles • 2.35:1 aspect ratio

{youtube}AwNHNgd86Og{/youtube}