

Five Horror Films Worth Watching

It's that time of year again. Time for too much candy and scary movies. I'll say this upfront – I love horror movies. Of all the people that contribute to REO, I'm confident that my love for the genre is head-and-shoulders above the rest. I love the tension, the mood, and the thrill of a good, scary film. One day, I would like to further explore what draws people to horror films. I'll leave that topic for another time. For today, I want to shine the spotlight on a handful of films that represent the things I love the most about the horror genre. For what it's worth, I tend to avoid violent or bloody horror films. Seeing someone tortured or killed in some gratuitously grisly manner are not things I typically enjoy. I prefer my thrills to come from atmosphere, tone, perfectly-timed jump-scares, and other things of that nature. Give me a story with good characters and a creepy plot, and I will most likely enjoy the trip.

In an effort to make this a little different, I am going to forgo the usual mini-review format we have used in the past. Instead, I will do a brief Q&A with myself about each film. Yes, I will talk to myself and then share with you the fruits of my conversation...with myself. It all makes sense in my head so hopefully it will make sense to at least a few of you out there. Warning: If you are not a fan of horror films, this article is probably not for you. Now, if you are curious about horror movies that avoid excessive violence and gore, and don't rely on strong sexual themes or content, then perhaps this list can be of service to you. Warning Number 2: I've included the trailers for each of these films and if you are easily scared or sensitive to this type of thing, you might as well move along and read something else on our website. Might I recommend a nice [poem](#) or love letter to [tacos](#)?

The Exorcism of Emily Rose

What are the basic facts about this film?

It came out in 2005. It was directed by Scott Derrickson (Doctor Strange) and it stars Laura Linney and Tom Wilkinson. It is based on a true story about an apparent demonic possession and subsequent exorcism where things went horribly wrong.

In 50 words or less, what can I expect from this film?

A smart, well-constructed film. The story is told from the perspective of an agnostic defense attorney (Linney) and she tries to build a case to defend a priest (Wilkinson) in a homicide trial. It's as much courtroom drama as it is supernatural thriller.

If you had to pick one thing, what is it about this film that really won you over?

I love that it treats spirituality and the supernatural seriously. It creates a very compelling dialogue by examining this very complicated case. Derrickson is a professing believer and because of that, he never panders nor does he make light of the idea of evil.

[The Exorcism of Emily Rose](#) is rated PG-13.

The Conjuring

What are the basic facts about this film?

It came out in 2013. It was directed by James Wann (Insidious, Furious 7). It's based on the true story of a demonic attack that was investigated by paranormal investigators, Ed and Lorraine Warren, played by Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga. Also starring Ron Livingston and Lili Taylor.

In 50 words or less, what can I expect from this film?

A fantastically creepy atmosphere. Wonderful scares throughout. A strong storyline with real heart.

If you had to pick one thing, what is it about this film that really won you over?

While I realize that the real-life Warren's are controversial figures, in the film, they are a fantastic team. They are a beautiful picture of a strong, supportive marriage and their dedication in fighting evil is captivating. Plus, the film is about as good as it gets in mood and tension. And just to cheat a little on this question by giving you more than one thing, the family that is victimized in this demonic attack, the Perrons, are as sympathetic and believable as you could hope for.

[The Conjuring](#) is rated R.

The Conjuring 2

What are the basic facts about this film?

The sequel to the previous *Conjuring* film, it came out in 2016. Also directed by James Wann. Also starring Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga. Also based on a true story about a poltergeist in England that was investigated by the Warrens.

In 50 words or less, what can I expect from this film?

Similar, if slightly less-satisfying, returns as the first film in the franchise. While it never reaches the highs of that one, it brings enough thrills, tension, and drama to warrant a view. It amps up the supernatural activity, which might be a draw for some.

If you had to pick one thing, what is it about this film that really won you over?

Much like the first film, this series takes the supernatural seriously. But more importantly, it takes Christianity seriously. The Warrens are believers and fight back against the forces of evil with Scripture, prayer, and conviction. I'm not saying that I endorse all the views of the film, but it is refreshing to see a film like this when so much about Christianity is reviled in popular American culture.

[The Conjuring 2](#) is rated R.

Quick note about both *Conjuring* films – they are both rated R. Not due to language, gore, or sexual content. The MPAA (the ratings board) gave them an R rating because they deemed them too scary for a PG-13 rating.

The Others

What are the basic facts about this film?

The film came out in 2001. It was written, directed, and scored by Alejandro Amenábar. It stars Nicole Kidman and Fionnula Flanagan.

Set just after World War II, on the Channel Islands, *The Others* tells the story of a mother (Kidman) who cares for her two young children who suffer from a rare photosensitivity that makes it impossible for them to ever be exposed to direct

sunlight. They live in a huge mansion and weird stuff starts to happen.

In 50 words or less, what can I expect from this film?

A foreboding, claustrophobic atmosphere. A haunted house film where the true nature of the haunting gets revealed little by little throughout. *The Others* is a film that takes a simple concept and layers it with wonderful characters and poignant family moments.

If you had to pick one thing, what is it about this film that really won you over?

The sense of mystery. I love not knowing where a film is going and trying to guess how it is all going to end. *The Others* does that and does it well. There are signposts throughout the film and perhaps more observant viewers will pick up on those, but for most people, the climax will be satisfying and not the least bit shocking.

[The Others](#) is rated PG-13.

The Woman In Black

What are the basic facts about this film?

The film was released in 2012. It was directed by James Watkins and stars Harry Potter...I mean, Daniel Radcliffe. Also starring Ciarán Hinds, Janet McTeer, Sophie Stuckey, and Liz White.

The Woman In Black tells the story of a young lawyer (Radcliffe) who is sent to a remote village to orchestrate the sale of an estate on the marshland. He stays in the old house on the estate looking for records to facilitate the sale. The

villagers treat him poorly, outside of one man (Hinds) and it quickly becomes apparent that something is very wrong on the marsh.

In 50 words or less, what can I expect from this film?

The Woman In Black feels like a throw-back haunted house film. It has good scares, a creepy tone, and a good lead performance by Radcliffe. It relies on shadows, darkness, and the viewer's imagination to create a lot of the most frightening moments.

If you had to pick one thing, what is it about this film that really won you over?

It's a very simple film with a well-worn storyline and concept. Sometimes that doesn't work, but in this case it does because it's all done with style and care. The film rarely uses cheap thrills to scare the audience, though it is not above a few good jump-scares.

[*The Woman In Black*](#) is rated PG-13.

So there you have it. Let us know in the comment section what you think. Now that you have read through my list, which is not a top five or anything like that, feel free to chime in below with some of your favorites.