

Edited by Francesco Pascuzzi, Sandra Waters

# The Spaces and Places of Horror

SERIES IN CRITICAL MEDIA STUDIES

## Summary

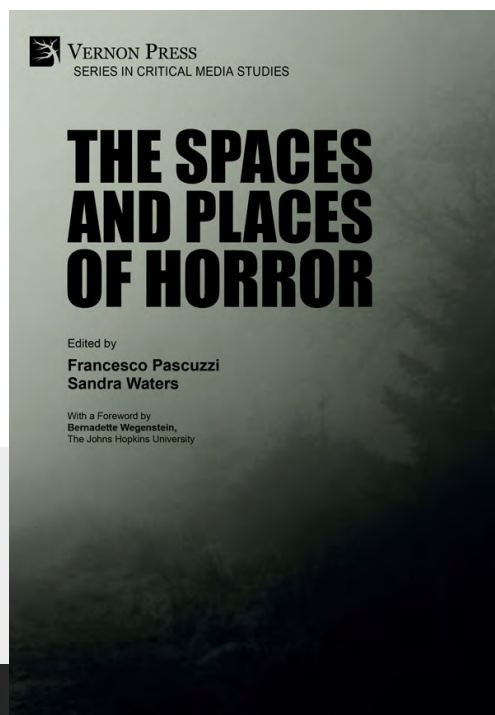
This volume explores the complex horizon of landscapes in horror film culture to better understand the use that the genre makes of settings, locations, spaces, and places, be they physical, imagined, or altogether imaginary. In *The Philosophy of Horror*, Noël Carroll discusses the “geography” of horror as often situating the filmic genre in liminal spaces as a means to displace the narrative away from commonly accepted social structures: this use of space is meant to trigger the audience’s innate fear of the unknown. This notion recalls Freud’s theorization of the uncanny, as it is centered on recognizable locations outside of the Lacanian symbolic order. In some instances, a location may act as one of the describing characteristics of evil itself: In *A Nightmare on Elm Street* teenagers fall asleep only to be dragged from their bedrooms into Freddy Krueger’s labyrinthine lair, an inescapable boiler room that enhances Freddie’s powers and makes him invincible. In other scenarios, the action may take place in a distant, little-known country to isolate characters (Roth’s *Hostel* films), or as a way to mythicize the very origin of evil (Bava’s *Black Sunday*). Finally, anxieties related to the encroaching presence of technology in our lives may give rise to postmodern narratives of loneliness and disconnect at the crossing between virtual and real places: in Kurosawa’s *Pulse*, the internet acts as a gateway between the living and spirit worlds, creating an oneiric realm where the living vanish and ghosts move to replace them. This suggestive topic begs to be further investigated; this volume represents a crucial addition to the scholarship on horror film culture by

adopting a transnational, comparative approach to the analysis of formal and narrative concerns specific to the genre by considering some of the most popular titles in horror film culture alongside lesser-known works for which this anthology represents the first piece of relevant scholarship.

## About the editor

**Francesco Pascuzzi** received a Ph.D. in Italian from Rutgers University. He currently teaches English Writing at Rutgers University as a full-time teaching instructor. He has presented and published on a variety of topics, from Visconti’s “*Morte a Venezia*” to the representation of reality in Cinema Novo and Neorealism. He is the editor of *Dreamscapes in Italian Cinema*, an anthology that examines the oneiric realm in Italian film culture, published in February 2015 by Fairleigh Dickinson University. His main field of research encompasses comparative and transnational studies between Italian and foreign cinema, and his current interests include modern and contemporary horror film, Hallyu and contemporary Korean cinema, Italian auteur film of the new millennium, and the portrayal of motherhood and family dynamics in Italian and world film culture.

**Sandra Waters** received her Ph.D. from Rutgers University with a dissertation on the figure of the narrator in the historical novel. She is currently the managing editor of the journal *Italian Quarterly*. Her research interests include gender, trauma, and film theory; the historical novel; the collective author; and horror. She has taught cinema and literature at Rutgers, The Colorado College, Texas Christian University, and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Her recent publications include articles and chapters on Paolo Sorrentino, Luther Blissett and Wu Ming, Dario Argento’s *Mother Trilogy*, and Maria Rosa Cutrufelli’s *La briganta*.



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