

# INVASIONS USA

THE ESSENTIAL  
SCIENCE FICTION  
FILMS OF THE 1950s



MICHAEL BLISS

# Invasions Usa The Essential Science Fiction Films Of The 1950s

**Robert McParland**



## **Invasions Usa The Essential Science Fiction Films Of The 1950s:**

*Invasions USA* Michael Bliss, 2014-07-30 Out of more than 180 science fiction films produced in the United States between 1950 and 1959 twenty were concerned with the notion of an invasion Of these a select number used the invasions as metaphors of issues that were of importance to America at the time such as assaults upon individuality and marriage and debates about the supremacy of the human race The invasion may be real The Day the Earth Stood Still and War of the Worlds dreamed Invaders from Mars or the result of a mental breakdown as seems to be the case in Invasion of the Body Snatchers Real or not all of these massive disturbances to the status quo convey the same anxiety In the 1950s many Americans felt that things in their world weren't quite right and this sense of unease was expressed in the country's art notably these films In *Invasions USA The Essential Science Fiction Films of the 1950s* Michael Bliss examines movies that stripped away the veneer of normality during a decade often portrayed as the last innocent period in American history From a boy's nightmares about his alien controlled parents and a young woman's fears that her fiancé has been replaced by an emotionless alien to an extraterrestrial visitor who comes to warn mankind about its self destructive ways the stories of these films offer a variety of messages both subtle and overt With detailed discussions and analyses of the films in question this book examines a unique group of movies with profound messages By exploring depictions of insecurities whether personal or political Bliss shows how science fiction films spoke to American audiences deeply troubled by their circumstances *Invasions USA* will appeal to science fiction buffs and film aficionados interested in this significant phenomenon in movie and cultural history

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**Invasions USA** Michael Bliss, 2014-07-30. Out of more than 180 science fiction films produced in the United States between 1950 and 1959, twenty were concerned with the notion of an invasion. Of these, a select number used the invasions as metaphors of issues that were of importance to America at the time, such as assaults upon individuality and marriage and debates about the supremacy of the human race. The invasion may be real. *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *War of the Worlds* dreamed invaders from Mars.

or the result of a mental breakdown as seems to be the case in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Real or not all of these massive disturbances to the status quo convey the same anxiety. In the 1950s many Americans felt that things in their world weren't quite right and this sense of unease was expressed in the country's art, notably these films. In *Invasions USA: The Essential Science Fiction Films of the 1950s*, Michael Bliss examines movies that stripped away the veneer of normality during a decade often portrayed as the last innocent period in American history. From a boy's nightmares about his alien-controlled parents and a young woman's fears that her fiancé has been replaced by an emotionless alien to an extraterrestrial visitor who comes to warn mankind about its self-destructive ways, the stories of these films offer a variety of messages, both subtle and overt. With detailed discussions and analyses of the films in question, this book examines a unique group of movies with profound messages. By exploring depictions of insecurities, whether personal or political, Bliss shows how science fiction films spoke to American audiences deeply troubled by their circumstances. *Invasions USA* will appeal to science fiction buffs and film aficionados interested in this significant phenomenon in movie and cultural history.

*Horror in Space* Michele Brittany, 2017-10-27. In sharp contrast to many 1960s science fiction films with idealized views of space exploration, Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979) terrified audiences depicting a harrowing and doomed deep space mission. The *Alien* films launched a new generation of horror set in the great unknown, inspiring filmmakers to take Earth-bound franchises like *Leprechaun* and *Friday the 13th* into space. This collection of new essays examines the space horror subgenre with a focus on such films as Paul W. S. Anderson's *Event Horizon*, Duncan Jones' *Moon*, Mario Bava's *Planet of the Vampires*, and John Carpenter's *Ghosts of Mars*. Contributors discuss how filmmakers explored the concepts of the final girl survivor, the uncanny valley, the isolationism of space travel, religion, and supernatural phenomena.

*Martian Pictures* O'Brien Stanley, Nicki L. Michalski, Lane "Doc" Roth, 2018-07-26. Mars has long served as a blank canvas for illustrating society's aspirations and anxieties, a science fiction setting for exploring our future history. Covering a wide array of films from Soviet propaganda to Hollywood blockbusters, the authors examine a range of themes and concepts in motion pictures about Mars: attitudes about women, fear of government, environmental issues, and how these depictions changed over time. A complete filmography provides a concise summary of each film discussed.

**The Aliens Are Here** Fraser A. Sherman, 2022-10-10. Aliens: They have taken the form of immigrants, invaders, lovers, heroes, cute creatures that want our candy, or monsters that want our flesh. For more than a century, movies and television shows have speculated about the form and motives of alien life forms. Movies first dipped their toe into the genre in the 1940s with Superman cartoons and the big screen's first story of alien invasion, 1945's *The Purple Monster Strikes*. More aliens landed in the 1950s science fiction movie boom, followed by more television appearances: *The Invaders*, *My Favorite Martian*. In the 1960s, extraterrestrials have been on screen mainstays ever since. This book examines various types of the on-screen alien visitor story, featuring a liberal array of alien types, designs, and motives. Each chapter spotlights a specific film or TV series, offering comparative analyses and detailing the tropes, themes, and clichés and how they have

evolved over time Highlighted subjects include Eternals War of the Worlds The X Files John Carpenter s The Thing and Attack of the 50 Foot Woman

**The War of the Worlds** Peter J. Beck,2016-08-25 First published in 1897 H G Wells s alien invasion narrative The War of the Worlds was a landmark work of science fiction and one that continues to be adapted and referenced in the 21st century Chronicling the novel s contexts its origins and its many multi media adaptations this book is a complete biography of the life and the afterlives of The War of the Worlds Exploring the original text s compelling sense of place and vivid recreation of Wells s Woking home and the concerns of fin de si cle Britain the book goes on to chart the novel s immediate international impact Starting with the initial serialisations in US newspapers Peter Beck goes on to examine Orson Welles s legendary 1938 radio adaptation TV and film adaptations from George Pal to Steven Spielberg Jeff Wayne s rock opera and the numerous other works that have taken their inspiration from Wells s original Drawing on new archival research this is a comprehensive account of the continuing impact of The War of the Worlds

**Cinema of Collaboration** Mariana Ivanova,2019-10-03 From their very inception European cinemas undertook collaborative ventures in an attempt to cultivate a transnational Film Europe In the postwar era it was DEFA the state cinema of East Germany that emerged as a key site for cooperative practices Despite the significant challenges that the Cold War created for collaboration DEFA sought international prestige through various initiatives These ranged from film exchange in occupied Germany to partnerships with Western producers and from coproductions with Eastern European studios to strategies for film co authorship Uniquely positioned between East and West DEFA proved a crucial mediator among European cinemas during a period of profound political division

**The People We Meet in Stories** Robert McParland,2020-10-20 Novels bring us into fictional worlds where we encounter the lives struggles and dreams of characters who speak to the underlying pulse of society and social change In this book post World War II America comes alive again as literary critic Robert McParland tilts the rearview mirror to see the characters that captured the imaginations of millions of readers in the most popular and influential novels of the 1950s This literary era introduced us to Holden Caulfield Augie March Lolita and other antiheroes Together with popular culture heroes such as Perry Mason and James Bond they entertained thousands of readers while revealing the underlying currents of ambition desire and concern that were central to the American Dream Ralph Ellison s Invisible Man and James Baldwin s Go Tell It on the Mountain and Giovanni sRoom explored racial issues and matters of identity that reverberate still today The works of Jack Kerouac the Beat poets Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso and the clever and creative William S Burroughs and his Naked Lunch challenged conventional perspectives The People We Meet in Stories will appeal to readers discovering these works for the first time and to those whose tattered paperbacks reveal a long relationship with these key works in American literary history

Laurel and Hardy's Comic Catastrophes Michael Bliss,2017-06-29 One of America s most beloved comic duos Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy have entertained generations of viewers with their unique heartwarming brand of slapstick comedy The pair s teamwork and friendship set their films apart

softening both pratfalls and hardships and earning them a cherished place in cinema history From their first joint on screen appearance in 1921's *The Lucky Dog* through their work at the Hal Roach studios their comic signature remained unique But what made the films of Laurel and Hardy so enduring In *Laurel and Hardy's Comic Catastrophes: Laughter and Darkness in the Features and Short Films* Michael Bliss illustrates why these films continue to make audiences laugh Combining an appreciation for the pleasure that these films elicit with a critical examination of what made them work Bliss first investigates the milieu in which the pair's comedy takes place The author then explores Stan and Ollie's friendship and their troubled and troubling relationships with women The book also features a detailed discussion of Stan Laurel's approach to gag structure while the remainder of the book focuses on many of the pair's silent and sound films such as *Duck Soup* *Pack Up Your Troubles* *Chickens Come Home* and *The Music Box* By delving into the pair's films including several neglected short films in greater detail than any previous work this volume provides readers with a fundamental understanding of Stan and Ollie's universal appeal Featuring an extensive filmography *Laurel and Hardy's Comic Catastrophes* will engage a wide audience from film scholars to fans of humor everywhere

**The Eternal Future of the 1950s** Dennis R. Cutchins, Dennis R. Perry, 2023-07-17 Science fiction cinema once relegated to the undervalued B movie slot has become one of the dominant film genres of the 21st century with Hollywood alone producing more than 400 science fiction films annually Many of these owe a great deal of their success to the films of one defining decade the 1950s Essays in this book explore how classic 50s science fiction films have been recycled repurposed and reused in the decades since their release Tropes from Don Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* 1956 for instance have found surprising new life in Netflix's wildly popular *Stranger Things* *Interstellar* 2014 and *Arrival* 2016 have clear though indirect roots in the iconic 1950s science fiction films *Rocketship X* M 1950 and *The Day the Earth Stood Still* 1951 and *The Shape of Water* 2017 openly recalls and reworks the major premises of *The Creature From the Black Lagoon* 1954 Essays also cover 1950s sci fi influences on video game franchises like *Fallout* *Bioshock* and *Wolfenstein*

*Attack of the New B Movies* Justin Wigard, Mitch Ploskonka, 2023-04-14 Since its inception in 1992 the Sci Fi Channel later rebranded as SYFY has aired more than 500 network produced or commissioned films Campy and prolific the network churned out one low budget film after another finally finding its zenith in the 2013 release of *Sharknado* With unpretentious charm and a hearty helping of commodified nostalgia the *Sharknado* franchise briefly ruled the cultural consciousness and temporarily transformed SYFY's original films from cult fringe to appointment television Naturally the network followed up with a steady stream of sequels and spin offs including *Lavalantula* and its sequel *2 Lava 2 Lantula* This collection of essays is the first to devote critical attention to SYFY's original film canon both pre and post *Sharknado* In addition to unpacking the cultural historical and critical underpinnings of the monsters at the heart of SYFY's classic creature features the contributors offer a variety of approaches to understanding and interrogating these films within the broader contexts of ecocriticism monster theory post 9/11 criticism and neocolonialism Providing a further entry point for

future scholarship an appendix details a thorough filmography of SYFY's original films from 1992 to 2022      Sci-Fi Film Fiesta Chris Christopoulos,2022-11-11 This volume of the Sci Fi Film Fiesta series VOLUME 4 JOURNEYS WITHIN features classic science fiction films from the 1950s that depict strange and exotic worlds that await discovery deep within the bowels of the earth and deep down in the fathomless depths of our oceans Let's now turn our gaze from the heavens and peer into worlds within a world that may exist under our very noses      **Sci-Fi Film Fiesta** Chris Christopoulos,2022-10-12 This volume is part of a series intended as a salute to the pioneering work of science fiction film makers from the golden age of science fiction films of the 1950s The films in this volume feature monsters that stand as metaphors for the fears of the time when people had genuine concerns about atomic power and the atom bomb's potential for the first time in human history to bring about the end of human civilisation For instance in the case of Godzilla 1954 the film is an allegory for the destruction and devastation unleashed on Japan by the atomic bomb with the 400 foot tall mutant dinosaur Gojira serving as the visual metaphor Such monsters represent forces of nature awakened by human science that once brought into being cannot be controlled      Science Fiction Cinema and 1950s Britain Matthew Jones,2017-11-30 For the last sixty years discussion of 1950s science fiction cinema has been dominated by claims that the genre reflected US paranoia about Soviet brainwashing and the nuclear bomb However classic films such as Invasion of the Body Snatchers 1956 and It Came from Outer Space 1953 and less familiar productions such as It The Terror from Beyond Space 1958 were regularly exported to countries across the world The histories of their encounters with foreign audiences have not yet been told Science Fiction Cinema and 1950s Britain begins this task by recounting the story of 1950s British cinema goers and the aliens and monsters they watched on the silver screen Drawing on extensive archival research Matthew Jones makes an exciting and important intervention by locating American science fiction films alongside their domestic counterparts in their British contexts of release and reception He offers a radical reassessment of the genre demonstrating for the first time that in Britain which was a significant market for and producer of science fiction these films gave voice to different fears than they did in America While Americans experienced an economic boom low immigration and the conferring of statehood on Alaska and Hawaii Britons worried about economic uncertainty mass immigration and the dissolution of the Empire Science Fiction Cinema and 1950s Britain uses these and other differences between the British and American experiences of the 1950s to tell a new history of the decade's science fiction cinema exploring for the first time the ways in which the genre came to mean something unique to Britons      **The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader** J.P. Telotte,2008-05-02 A richly detailed and critically penetrating overview from the plucky adventures of Captain Video to the postmodern paradoxes of The X Files and Lost Rob Latham coeditor of Science Fiction Studies Exploring such hits as The Twilight Zone Star Trek Battlestar Galactica and Lost among others The Essential Science Fiction Television Reader illuminates the history narrative approaches and themes of the genre The book discusses science fiction television from its early years when shows attempted



to recreate the allure of science fiction cinema to its current status as a sophisticated genre with a popularity all its own J P Telotte has assembled a wide ranging volume rich in theoretical scholarship yet fully accessible to science fiction fans The book supplies readers with valuable historical context analyses of essential science fiction series and an understanding of the key issues in science fiction television *Women Scientists in Fifties Science Fiction Films* Bonnie Noonan,2015-02-18 In the 1950s science was rapidly advancing and so were scientific opportunities for women Modern science fiction films reflected these simultaneous social developments This book proposes that the social ideology of the 1950s which was partly concerned with gender issues saturated the B science fiction films of that era and inspired a new appreciation for the role of women in scientific advancements and other social achievements Drawing on feminist literary and cultural theory the author argues that the emergence of the modern American science fiction film in 1950 and the situation of post World War II female scientists together created a film genre That genre was explicitly amenable to exploring the tension between a woman s place in her home and her place in the work force particularly in scientific fields Early chapters provide a general introduction to the science fiction genre and specifically describe 1950s B science fiction films as they resonate with concerns proper to feminist theory Subsequent chapters offer detailed historically situated readings of 10 B science fiction films from the 1950s that feature women in science The cinematic representations of female scientists are compared and contrasted with real female professionals of the time illuminating the changing gender dynamics reflected in popular film in the 1950s Films analyzed include *Rocketship X M It Came from Beneath the Sea Them Tarantula The Deadly Mantis Beginning of the End Kronos Cat Women of the Moon World Without End and Queen of Outer Space* **Invasion USA** David J. Hogan,2017-10-26 With the queasy U S Soviet wartime alliance long dissolved into mutual suspicion the House Un American Activities Committee launched aggressive investigations of alleged communist activity in the Hollywood film industry in 1947 and again in 1951 Studio chiefs terrified of scandal scrambled to display their patriotism by producing anti communist films from melodramas to thrillers to animated cartoons Twenty one lively new essays by film historians examine the aesthetics and politics of more than 40 remarkable films of the McCarthy era and the chauvinism that spawned them

*Of Body Snatchers and Cyberpunks* Sonja Georgi,Kathleen Loock,2011 **Historical Dictionary of Science Fiction Cinema** M. Keith Booker,2020-06-15 In the years since Georges M li s s *Le voyage dans la lune* *A Trip to the Moon* was released in 1902 more than 1000 science fiction films have been made by filmmakers around the world The versatility of science fiction cinema has allowed it to expand into a variety of different markets appealing to age groups from small children to adults The technical advances in filmmaking technology have enabled a new sophistication in visual effects This second edition of *Historical Dictionary of Science Fiction Cinema* contains a chronology an introduction and an extensive bibliography The dictionary section has over 400 cross referenced entries on important personalities films companies techniques themes and subgenres This book is an excellent resource for students researchers and anyone wanting to know

more about science fiction cinema

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