

**BLOODSUCKER!**

**Deadlier than Dracula!**

Warm young bodies will feed his hunger  
and hot, fresh blood  
his awful thirst!



**BLACULA**

**"'BLACULA' IS THE MOST HORRIFYING FILM OF THE DECADE."**  
—COUNT DRACULA SOCIETY

**"BLACULA" STARRING WILLIAM MARSHALL  
DENISE NICHOLAS · VONETTA MCGEE  
GORDON PINSENT · THALMUS RASULALA**

CO-STARRING EMILY YANCY · LANCE TAYLOR, SR. and CHARLES MACAULAY AS 'DRACULA' **COLOR** **PG** PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED May not be suitable for pre-teenagers **AS USUALLY**  
PRODUCED BY JOSEPH T. NAAR DIRECTED BY WILLIAM CRAIN WRITTEN BY JOAN TORRES AND RAYMOND KOENIG MUSIC COMPOSED AND CONDUCTED BY GENE PAGE · An AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL Picture **ai**

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William Marshall as Blacula.

## "BLACULA"

BLACULA is only referred to as Blacula once during the entire film, and for that someone should sincerely thank American-International. Black Dracula would have had so much more class, but American-International isn't known for having much trucking with class and many times not even for genuine horror. BLACULA is better than many of their releases, thanks mostly to William Marshall who plays the title lead with a great sense of dignity. The other actors and actresses are given very little to do with the exception of Vonetta McGee. Blacula, originally an African Prince during the early 1800's, is positive that she is a 1970 reincarnation of his late wife. Vonetta is lovely enough to be anybody's carnation, re or not, and Blacula seems to be of the same mind as he spends most of the film trying to convince her to join him in his undead activities.

To its credit, BLACULA unravels at a pell-mell pace, in fact,



that is the film's most appealing facet. At times, what with the number of people becoming vampires during the unfolding of the picture, it reminds one of the 1960's horror classic, BLACK SUNDAY. Unfortunately . . . ahh, horror fans hate that word . . . this film doesn't have the shadowy intensity of that earlier vampire film, basically because someone wasn't paying much attention to the lighting of many of the scenes. Too many sequences have too much light and that weakens the brooding, grim tone that a horror film, especially a vampire film, needs for mood and atmosphere. Often, entire sequences are bleached of color as if someone were trying to use the flood-lights on the sparse sets to destroy Blacula by melting William Marshall into the ground.

Thalmus Rasulala (which would be a great name for a character within a vampire film) is the lead protagonist, a police doctor who becomes the first one to realize that there is a vampire invading the fair city of Los Angeles. There's always one of those in these types of pictures and half the fun is watching them trying to convince everyone else that what they're trying to tell them is fact. Mr. Rasulala isn't helped any by a poor sound-track. One can actually envision people sitting around a set of mikes in a studio room, dubbing the sound onto the film. The sets, too, especially at the police station, leave much to be desired and certainly do not effect authenticity.

There are some comic moments in the film. A black lady cab-driver shouts angrily at Blacula when he makes her run her cab onto the side-walk, but she abruptly changes her tune when our black vampire shifts his attention from the before-mentioned Vonetta McGee to her. And there are a couple of gayly decorated interior decorators that react toward Marshall in the best comic duo traditions.

The moments mentioned above, an effective closing scene, and Mr. Marshall and his romantic lead, Miss McGee, make BLACULA worth passing attention, with hopes that when the planned sequel arrives, American-International will have placed some of the profits from this film into the next so that the actors won't have to rely solely on personality to convince us of the situations.

One thing is certain, American-International will try to make this new vampire series as habit forming as Dracula's bite. They just might succeed.

—D. McG.

## "DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN"

DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN returns Vincent Price to his role as the deformed, murder-orientated genius who seeks to find a way to bring his wife out of the state of suspended animation that keeps her from total death. Phibes is certainly back, whistling his same bad vibes for those unlucky enough to cross his path: and, as anyone who has seen the original DR. PHIBES knows, there are victims standing in line just waiting for the diabolical madman to practice his craft upon.

The first Phibes film ended with Phibes entombing himself with his lovely wife, systematically pumping the blood from his veins and substituting the vital life substance with formaldehyde! It seems that even with the choosing, supposedly, of his own death, he must add a touch of the exotic. And this Phibes entry carries on that tradition.

This time around, Phibes isn't trying to kill the doctors that failed to save his wife's life after a fatal car crash, but that doesn't mean that he lacks for prey! After resurrecting himself, a self-manipulated Lazarus, Phibes calls his voluptuous assistant, Vulnavia, back from whatever dimension or nether world she inhabits. Neither Vulnavia nor the script ever explains just who exactly Vulnavia is, and she remains mute throughout the ghastly proceedings. But she seems to like helping Phibes carry out his torturous schemes and quietly consents when Phibes tells her they are heading for Cairo. Their destination: an underground fortress buried beneath the ruins of an ancient Egyptian tomb, wherein flows a mystic river, the fabled Gates of the Sacred River; gates which open only during the conjunction of the sun and moon, revealing a passage way to the secret of eternal life. Unfortunately for Phibes, another man is after that secret, the haunted, fear-driven Professor Beiderbeck.

The Phibes series is a level above the average horror film. The most noticeable aspect of the films is that they have a higher budget than most, a fact easily recognizable because of the expensive, detailed sets that adorn the films. Set Designer Brian Eatwell has a keen eye for detail that lend the films a rich visual appeal that ranges from 1920 Dallesque furnishings with rising organs and life-sized marionette band players to the crypt interiors of exotic splendour within an Egyptian tomb.

DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN also has a large cast, hosting many cameo names who appear all too briefly in this episode. Peter Cushing seems to have been included merely to list his name on the marquee as he appears only for a few moments. Only Hugh Griffith of all the name players has a role of any substance, and he plays it as broadly as the others. The entire film is unleashed in that manner, style and visuals are much more important than plot most times, and a perverse sense of humor filters into almost every scene. At moments, PHIBES leans toward camp, but unlike the late BATMAN television series, the director of the Phibes' films knows when to turn serious. The arty extravaganzas of the scenes between Phibes and Vulnavia in their various exotic retreats are substituted for direct, harsh story telling when it comes to the death scenes. These are played for real and they always proceed past the point you might expect. If Phibes sends flesh-eating falcons to rip a man to shreds, it is not enough to merely show a flurry of wings and claws battering the man about, the final graphic scene must have one of the carnivours perched upon the corpse, tearing out half of its victims' neck! As mentioned, the film turns deadly serious at these moments.

DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN is worth seeing, but one has the uncomfortable feeling that the makers were trying too desperately to repeat the success of their first film. Instead of seeking new directions, the film retains the same form as the last, adding a few clever twists to the death scenes; but never becoming as innovative as the first Phibes film, almost as if they weren't certain what made the original work and were trying to imitate themselves.

But horror enthusiasts should enjoy themselves, nevertheless, for even with this slightly distasteful feeling of deja-vu, the film has a number of frightening moments, a good number more than most of the films in the horror market.

—D. McG.

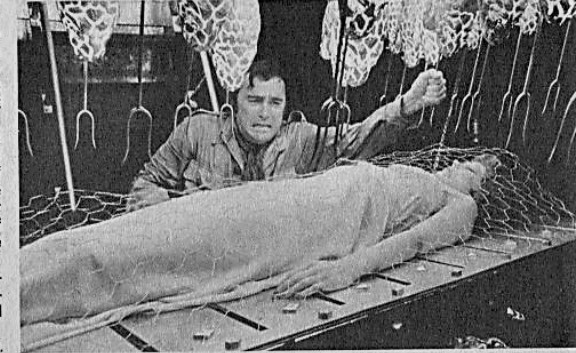


Vincent Price as the diabolical Dr. Phibes.

One of his victims.



Prof. Beiderbeck must choose between eternal life and his wife.



JAMES H. NICHOLSON and SAMUEL Z. ARKOFF Present

# DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN!

Starring  
**VINCENT PRICE**  
**ROBERT QUARRY**

Guest Stars:  
**PETER CUSHING**  
**BERYL REID**  
**TERRY-THOMAS**

Original Music Composed By JOHN GALE  
Written By ROBERT FUEST and ROBERT BLEES  
Based on Characters Created By  
JAMES WHITON and WILLIAM GOLDSTEIN  
Directed By ROBERT FUEST  
Executive Producers:  
SAMUEL Z. ARKOFF and JAMES H. NICHOLSON  
Produced By LOUIS M. HEYWARD  
An AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL Picture  
Color Prints By DE LUXE®

**PG** PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED  
Some material may be offensive to children  
under 14 years of age.

THEY HAVEN'T BUILT  
THE COFFIN THAT  
CAN HOLD HIM.

