

THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU
OF GODS AND MEN Ends tonight! 6:15	SUPER 9:00 11:00	9:00 11:00	Late Nite punch passes accepted! 9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00
HOOD TO COAST Ends tonight! 5:25 7:45	5:00 7:00	12:45 2:45 5:00 7:00	12:45 2:45 5:00 7:00	QUEEN OF THE SUN 5:00 7:00	5:00 7:00	5:00 7:00	5:00 7:00
Late Nite punch passes accepted! 9:00	9:15 11:15	9:15 11:15	HOUSE (HAUSU) 9:15	9:15	9:15		
		12:00 1:45 3:30 7:15	12:00 5:15 7:15	INTO ETERNITY 5:15 7:15	5:15 7:15	5:15 7:15 9:20	5:15 7:15 9:20
		LIVING DOWNSTREAM 5:15	2:00 PANEL DISCUSSION W/ OREGON TOXICS ALLIANCE	Coming soon: DISORIENT FILM FESTIVAL MEEK'S CUT OFF THE GREATEST MOVIE EVER SOLD			

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movies BY RICK LEVIN



One Hell of a House

Japanese horror flick from '77 will eff you up

The year 1977 saw a number of upsetting, absurd and/or momentous pop culture events: The rings of Uranus were discovered, for instance, and Fonzi jumped the shark on *Happy Days*. The world's first personal computer was demonstrated in Chicago, and *Star Wars* hit the big screen. Yankee slugger Reggie Jackson became "Mr. October," the Son of Sam was nabbed, George Willig scaled the south tower of the World Trade Center, Usu erupted, Elvis died, Gummo and Groucho Marx bought the farm, Joan Crawford croaked, Gary Gilmore got the firing squad, four gay guys pied Anita Bryant and Lynrd Skynryd's plane crashed. Jimmy Carter was President. Gas was 62 cents a gallon.

And yet — in terms of surpassing weirdness, upside-down oddity and polymorphous psycho-perversion — none of the above items, alone or taken together, can compete with the 1977 release of director Nobuhiko Obayashi's Japanese horror film *Hausu* (*House*). The only thing you can positively assert about *House* is that the movie exists. It's real. Beyond that truth, the film is the quintessence of mindfuckery — ontologically inexplicable, aesthetically incoherent, morally repugnant, sexually deviant, generically unidentifiable and totally beyond interpretation. If I were to rub DMSO and peyote into your armpits, hang you by your heels like a piñata, pin your eyelids open, spin you in circles and subject you to an endless loop of sad-happy images like puppies and pineapples and mushroom clouds and plastic surgery, all while circus music crackled through a megaphone, you might approach the sensual experience of watching *House*. Maybe.

Needless to say, *House* is a masterpiece — but only accidentally and inadvertently so, much in the way that *Pink Flamingos* and *Showgirls* are masterpieces. Like a rite of passage, this movie is a thing you must see, and then never see again.

A few details are look-up-able about the history of this strange relic. Apparently, after the worldwide success of *Jaws*, the Japanese distribution company Toho — most famous for its Godzilla franchise — was clamoring for the Asian equivalent of Spielberg's monster blockbuster. Obayashi, in cooperation with his pre-teen daughter Chigumi, worked up a spec script, but every director at Toho refused to film it, saying such a movie would end his career. Finally, after a couple years of struggle and

some self-created hype, Obayashi himself was green-lit to make *House*.

Incorporating his daughter's surreal, Id-charged ideas with his own memories of surviving the bombing of Hiroshima, Obayashi concocted a skeletal narrative about a schoolgirl, Gorgeous, who travels with six of her classmates to her aunt's home in the countryside during summer vacation. The aunt's house is haunted, of course, but not in any recognizable, *Fall of the House of Usher* sort of way. The ghoulish guts of this particular house are something akin to *Evil Dead* meets *H.R. Pufnstuf*, with elements of *Gone with the Wind*, *Yellow Submarine*, *Enter the Dragon* and *Inland Empire* thrown in the mix.

For those sharp of eye and bent of mind, *House* reveals its influences in fits and starts and tits and farts, moving in grindhouse spasms from the perverse juxtapositions of John Waters to the overdetermined gore of Dario Argento, and from the google-eyed madness of Sergio Leone to the blotchy faux-gothic gloom of Ken Russell. Even more interesting to behold, however, is *House's* obvious influence on the sped-up, slapstick grotesqueries and campy special effects of *Evil Dead* director Sam Raimi, who likely thought, upon seeing a decapitated head fly out of the aunt's well and bite a schoolgirl on the ass, *Wow, Mr. Obayashi is really onto something here!*

"But too many strange things are happening one after another," says Prof, one of the giggling schoolgirls who is beleaguered, bugged, battered and butt-bit over the course of *House's* descent into cinematic delirium. And one after another, like a killer kaleidoscope, this categorically uncategorizable movie doesn't just transgress taboos — it obliterates them, by comparing Nagasaki's A-Bomb bloom to cotton candy, offering visions of a necrophiliac piano and, in general, dropping the viewer *in media res* into a loopy nightmare that feels like speed skating across the cerebral cortex of a cannibalistic clown. *House* is a big tangle of the horrifying and the hilarious, but the laughter it elicits is distinctly Freudian, an abreaction to an overdose of the macabre. One must enter this house at one's own risk, but one must enter nonetheless. "Can such things happen in this world?" Gorgeous wonders at one point. Apparently so. But they must be seen to be believed. **EW**

House plays through Tuesday, April 26, at the Bijou Art Cinema; info and times at www.bijou-cinemas.com or 686-2458.

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DIARY OF A WIMPY KID 2: RODRICK RULES PG 11:15AM 1:55, 4:35
HANNA PG-13 11:30AM 2:15, 5:00, 7:35, 10:15
HOP PG 12:45, 3:15, 5:45, 8:15
HOP (DIGITAL) PG 11:30AM 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
INSIDIOUS PG-13 2:50, 7:50
LIMITLESS PG-13 7:10, 9:40
LINCOLN LAWYER, THE R 11:25AM 2:20, 5:05, 7:45, 10:30
RANGO PG 11:25AM 2:00, 4:45, 7:25, 10:05
RIO G 12:50, 3:20, 5:50, 8:20

RIO (3D) G
SPECIAL EVENT PRICING: \$3.00
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11:35AM 2:05, 4:35, 7:05, 9:35
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11:35AM 2:15, 4:55, 7:35, 10:15
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11:55AM 2:35, 5:15, 7:55, 10:35
SOURCE CODE PG-13
12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30
TYLER PERRY'S MADEA'S BIG HAPPY FAMILY PG-13
11:20AM 1:55, 4:30, 7:05, 9:40
WATER FOR ELEPHANTS (DIGITAL) PG-13
11:20AM 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:40PM
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GNOME AND JULIET G
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GNOME AND JULIET (3D) G
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12:40, 2:50, 5:05, 7:10
THE GREEN HORNET PG-13
12:50, 3:45, 7:25, 10:05
HALL PASS R
12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10
I AM NUMBER FOUR PG-13
12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

JUST GO WITH IT PG-13 12:20, 3:35, 7:20, 9:50
JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER G 12:35, 6:15
JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER DIRECTOR'S FAN CUT (3D) G
SPECIAL EVENT PRICING: \$2.00
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THE KING'S SPEECH PG-13 12:25, 3:25, 7:05, 9:45
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Fri. - Sun. (1155 220) 520 755 1025

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Fri. (230) 505 735 1005
Sat. (1200) 505 735 1005
Sun. (230 PM) 505 PM 735 PM

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HOP (PG) Fri. - Sun. (1150 205) 425 650 920
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