

# Classical Myth in Four Films of Alfred Hitchcock: Unraveling the Hidden Depths of Cinematic Masterpieces



[Classical Myth in Four Films of Alfred Hitchcock](#) by Joseph W. Moser

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : German  
File size : 448 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 210 pages  
Lending : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported

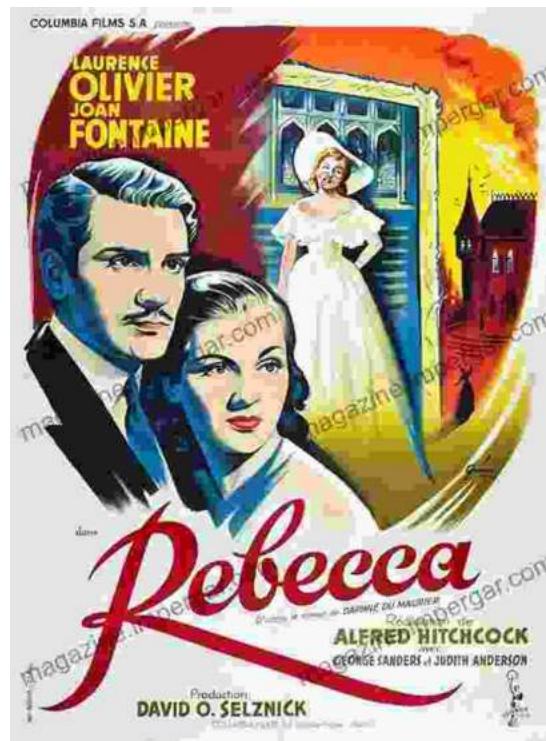


Alfred Hitchcock, the "Master of Suspense," is renowned for his thrilling and psychologically complex films. However, beyond the surface of his cinematic masterpieces lies a rich tapestry of classical myth that adds depth and resonance to his work.

This book, "Classical Myth in Four Films of Alfred Hitchcock," explores the mythological underpinnings of four iconic Hitchcock films: *Rebecca* (1940), *Rear Window* (1954), *Vertigo* (1958), and *Psycho* (1960).

Through a combination of detailed analysis and engaging storytelling, the book reveals how Hitchcock masterfully weaves classical myths into his films, creating a deeper level of meaning and emotional resonance.

## Rebecca: The Shadow of the Past



Based on the novel by Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca* tells the story of a young woman who marries a widower and must navigate the haunting legacy of his first wife, Rebecca.

The film draws heavily on Greek mythology, particularly the story of Persephone and Hades. The young woman, played by Joan Fontaine, is a modern-day Persephone, who descends into a dark and enigmatic underworld represented by Manderley, the widower's estate.

Hitchcock uses the myth to explore themes of love, loss, and the irresistible lure of the past. Rebecca becomes a symbol of the unattainable and a constant reminder of the young woman's inadequacy.

## Rear Window: The Voyeur as Orpheus

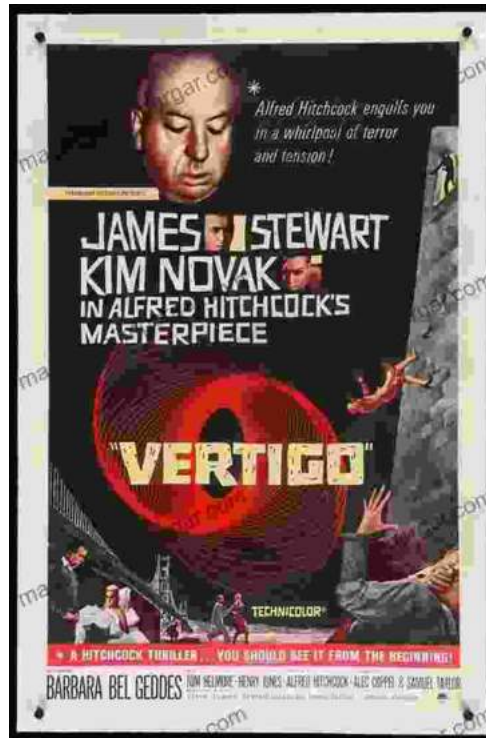


In *Rear Window*, Jimmy Stewart plays a wheelchair-bound photographer who witnesses a crime from his apartment window. His voyeuristic obsession leads him on a dangerous journey to uncover the truth.

The film resonates with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Jimmy Stewart's character, Jeff, is a modern Orpheus, who risks everything to save the life of his beloved, Lisa Fremont (played by Grace Kelly).

Hitchcock uses the myth to explore the themes of voyeurism, guilt, and the boundaries between observer and participant. Jeff's voyeurism becomes a metaphor for his inability to intervene and save Lisa from danger.

## Vertigo: The Quest for the Eternal Feminine



*Vertigo* is a psychological thriller about a former police detective (James Stewart) who becomes obsessed with a woman (Kim Novak) who bears an uncanny resemblance to his deceased wife.

The film is steeped in classical mythology, particularly the myth of Eros and Psyche. James Stewart's character, Scottie, is a modern-day Eros, who falls in love with a woman who represents the ultimate feminine ideal.

Hitchcock uses the myth to explore themes of love, obsession, and the dangers of idealizing the beloved. Scottie's obsession with Madeleine (played by Novak) leads him into a spiral of madness and self-destruction.

## Psycho: The Shadow Within



*Psycho* is a psychological horror film about a young woman (Janet Leigh) who flees with a stolen sum of money and encounters a charming but unstable motel owner (Anthony Perkins).

The film draws heavily on Greek mythology, particularly the story of Oedipus Rex. Anthony Perkins' character, Norman Bates, is a modern-day Oedipus, who unknowingly commits terrible crimes against his family.

Hitchcock uses the myth to explore themes of guilt, punishment, and the inescapable nature of fate. Norman Bates's twisted psychology becomes a symbol of the dark and complex forces that can lurk within the human mind.

In "Classical Myth in Four Films of Alfred Hitchcock," the author provides a comprehensive and thought-provoking analysis of how Hitchcock uses classical myth to enhance the storytelling and psychological depth of his films.

The book is a must-read for film enthusiasts, students of mythology, and anyone interested in the intersection of art and literature. It offers a unique perspective on Hitchcock's work and deepens our understanding of the enduring power of classical myths.

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