

DVD Review: Criterion Re-Releases Timeless Thriller ‘Diabolique’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 23, 2011 - 4:27pm

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CHICAGO – One of The Criterion Collection’s most successful and beloved titles has long been Henri-Georges Clouzot’s “Diabolique,” a 1955 classic that has inspired countless films, among them Alfred Hitchcock’s masterpiece “Psycho.” The company has given the film the upgrade to HD while also re-releasing it with new packaging and special features on standard DVD as well. We got our hands on the latter and can say that this once-discontinued entry in the Criterion Collection has made a triumphant return.



DVD Rating: **5.0/5.0**

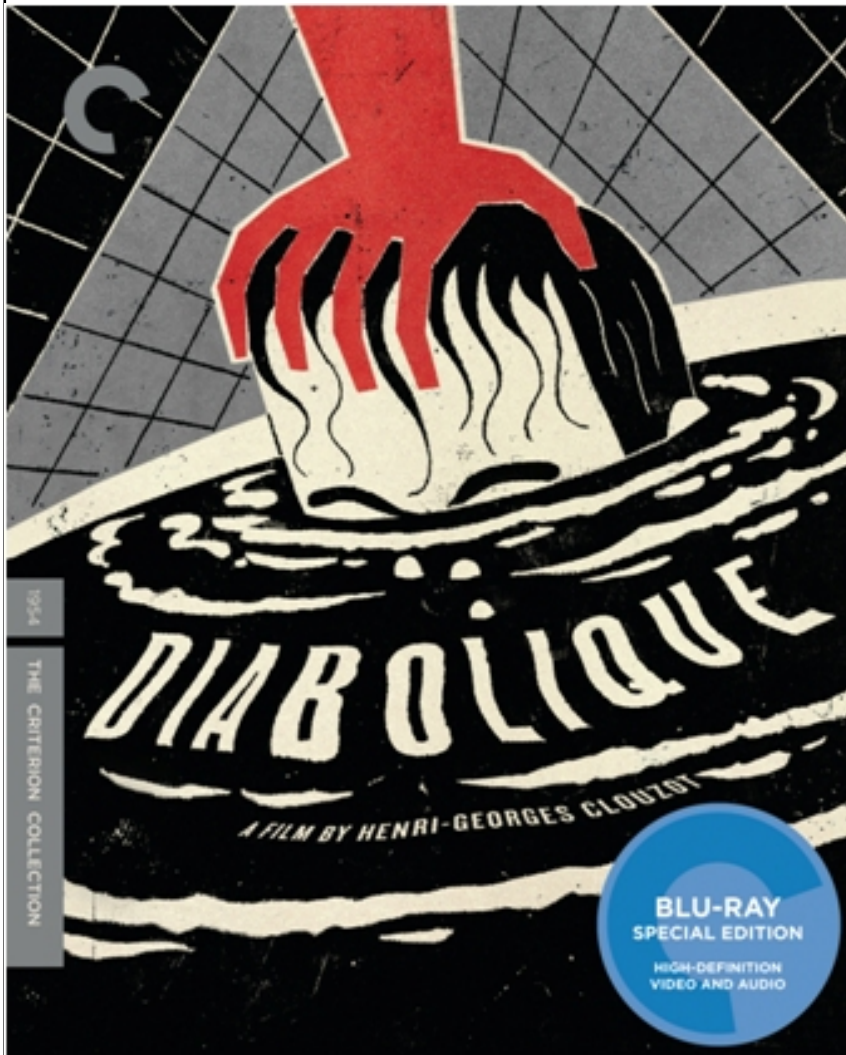
What more is there to say about “Diabolique”? It’s a classic thriller, one of the best of its kind that’s ever been made. With spectacular twists and turns, this is arguably Clouzot’s masterpiece, a film that rewards and shocks every single time you see it. (My love for “The Wages of Fear,” another great Criterion Collection film, is the only thing that cautions me from saying this is unquestionably Clouzot’s best...they’re both great.)



Diabolique was released on Blu-Ray and DVD on May 17, 2011

Photo credit: Courtesy of the Criterion Collection

The new edition of “Diabolique” comes with a new transfer and a fantastic introduction from Serge Bromberg, the director of the great documentary “Henri-Georges Clouzot’s Inferno,” a fantastic movie about a failed project of Clouzot’s that pretty much drove him mad. He explains the importance of “Diabolique,” along with breaking down a few of the techniques used by Clouzot.



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Photo credit: Courtesy of the Criterion Collection

The introduction and the film itself are the main reason to pick up "Diabolique." Criterion could only get us the standard edition, so we can't speak to the quality of the HD transfer, but that's surely the way to go if it's an option for you. However you can own "Diabolique," you should do so. It's a required entry in any film fan's library.

Synopsis:

Before Psycho, Peeping Tom, and Repulsion, there was Diabolique. This thriller from Henri-Georges Clouzot (Le corbeau, The Wages of Fear), which shocked audiences in Europe and the U.S., is the story of two women - the fragile wife and the willful mistress of a sadistic school headmaster - who hatch a daring revenge plot. With its unprecedented narrative twists and unforgettably scary images, Diabolique is a heart-grabbing benchmark in horror filmmaking, featuring outstanding performances by Simone Signoret (Casque d'for, Army of Shadows), Vera Clouzot (The Wages of Fear), and Paul Meurisse (Le deuxieme souffle, Army of Shadows).

Special Features:

- o Selected-Scene Commentary by French-Film Scholar Kelley Conway
- o New Video Introduction by Serge Bromberg, Codirector of Henri-Georges Clouzot's "Inferno"
- o New Video Interview with Novelist and Film Critic Kim Newman
- o Original Theatrical Trailer
- o A Booklet Featuring An Essay by Film Critic Terrence Rafferty

"Diabolique" stars Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse. It was directed by Henri-Georges Clouzot. It was released on DVD and Blu-ray by The Criterion Collection on May 17th, 2011.



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