

October After Dark

Friday, October 28, 9:15 pm

Eraserhead, US, 1977

dir. David Lynch (89 mins., Cult, 35mm)

Is the twisted child of Henry Spencer (Jack Nance) a metaphor for the paternal anxiety this new father is experiencing? Or are the child, the Lady in the Radiator, the Man in the Planet, and all the other grotesque figures that Henry encounters meant to be taken at face value? Director David Lynch offers no road map for reading his stark, black-and-white debut feature, released after a five-year gestation period. Celebrated as one of the original midnight movies, the film ran for several consecutive years on the late night, 1970s theater circuit in New York and San Francisco, slowly catapulting it into the upper echelon of cult favorites. *Eraserhead* is a genre unto itself, much as Lynchian has entered the lexicon to describe anything disturbingly left of center. "Watching *Eraserhead* today, what emerges is the sheer, immersive clarity of David Lynch's vision, the sense of a world unlike our own and yet inextricably bound to it: a world in which all the light has been sucked out, leaving only horror and isolation, desperation and unattainable dreams." – Tom Huddleston, *Time Out*.

Saturday, October 29, 7 pm

The Innocents, UK, 1961

dir. Jack Clayton (100 mins., Gothic horror, DCP)

Deborah Kerr's startling mid-career performance as the conflicted and repressed governess Miss Giddens haunts this 1961 adaptation of Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*. Named one of the best British films of all time by *Time Out*, *The Innocents* places Kerr's character in charge of two precocious children living in a large, country estate. After hearing of the fate of the previous governess and her lover, Giddens comes to believe the spirits of the dead linger beyond the grave. Magnificently captured by cinematographer Freddie Francis (*The Elephant Man*) and co-written by William Archibald (*I Confess*) and Truman Capote, *The Innocents* is a gothic horror tale for the ages, eschewing cheap scares and effects for an exercise in pure and sustained existential dread. "An elegant, sinister and scalp-prickling ghost story – as scary in its way as *Rosemary's Baby* or *The Exorcist*." – Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian*.