ULMER, Edgar Georg (September 17, 1904- September 30, 1972)

Born in what would later become the Czech Republic, Edgar Ulmer lived in Vienna for several years before immigrating to the United States, where he became a versatile film director. In Austria, he worked with such prominent filmmakers as Fred Zinnemann and Billy Wilder, who would also soon become émigré directors in California. Ulmer’s first appointment in Hollywood was as an assistant to another Austrian émigré, F. W. Murnau, on his first American film, *Sunrise* (1927). In the early and mid-1930s, Ulmer directed many low-budget, sensational exploitation films on Poverty Row for B-movie studios. In the latter half of the decade, however, Ulmer also worked on ‘ethnic films’, mostly for Jewish immigrants, in Yiddish. In 1945, Ulmer directed one of his most critically acclaimed films, *Detour*, considered a classic film noir. Nearly all of his films were made quickly and cheaply, but some were considerable successes at the box office, while over the years many others became cult classics. In the 1950s, he was praised by the critics of the renowned French film journal *Cahiers du cinéma*, which rediscovered his work and singled him out as a cinematic auteur and an alternative to mainstream filmmaking in America.

Partial Filmography:

Mr. Broadway (1932)

Damaged Lives (1933)

From Nine to Nine (1935)

Grune Felder(1937)

Yankl der Shmid(1938)

Moon Over Harlem (1939)

Cloud in the Sky (1940)

Tomorrow We Live (1942)

Girls in Chains (1943)

Isle of Forgotten Sins (1943)

Jive Junction (1944)

Detour (1945)

Club Havana (1946)

The Wife of Monte Cristo (1946)

Her Sister’s Secret (1946)

The Strange Woman (1946)

Murder Is My Beat (1955)

The Naked Dawn (1955)

Paratextual Materials:

http://sensesofcinema.com/2003/great-directors/ulmer/#film

References and Further reading:

Herzogenrath, B. (ed.) (2009) *The Films of Edgar G. Ulmer*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press.

Rhodes, D. G. (ed.) (2008) *Edgar G. Ulmer: Detour on Poverty Row*. Plymouth: Lexington Books.

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