



# Walerian Borowczyk: The Beast: Pocket Movie Guide

*Jeremy Mark Robinson*

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WALERIAN BOROWCZYK: THE BEAST Walerian Borowczyk (known as 'Boro') is one of cinema's one-offs. Quite simply, there is no filmmaker quite like Borowczyk. Borowczyk's films have an astonishing, magical quality. They reach a place very rare in contemporary cinema, and are quite unlike the films of any other auteur. Borowczyk's movies create their own space, with imagery, sounds and music of a really exceptional power. The appendices include a note on fairy tales, and on other versions of Beauty and the Beast (including the Jean Cocteau movie, and the 1991 Walt Disney musical movie). Fully illustrated, with stills from The Beast, and Walerian Borowczyk's movies, plus influences, a bibliography, filmography, appendices, quotes from Borowczyk and notes. 168pp. [www.crmoon.com](http://www.crmoon.com) La Bête (a.k.a. The Beast, The Beast in Heat and Death's Ecstasy, 1975) was Walerian Borowczyk's most controversial film, a mixture of French farce, surrealism, and a lot of sex (including bestiality). The story of La Bête involves an American heiress Lucy Broadhurst (Lisbeth Hummel) being brought to a French chateau with her aunt Virginia (Elisabeth Kaza) by the scheming owners (in particular the marquis, Pierre de l'Esperance [played by Guy Tréjan]), who need to marry her to the earthy, degenerate (and somewhat backward) son of the family Mathurin (Pierre Benedetti) in order to circumvent a will which'll keep the family home intact. That's the framing story, about grasping aristocrats, decadent morality, degenerate priests and sexually repressed young women. This part of the film's set in the 20th century, though it's not the conventional modern, urban world of most movies. La Bête takes place exclusively at the French chateau and its grounds (the film is in French, but there is English dialogue - Virginia, Lucy and their chauffeur speak English). **AUTHOR'S NOTE:** This book is expanded from my book on Walerian Borowczyk. The book includes an introduction relating Borowczyk to many other filmmakers and movies, from the European art movie tradition, but also the horror genre, and animation; an assessment the critical reception of Borowczyk, and the current perception of Borowczyk as a director. There are many illustrations (some of which are rare). And it contains a useful bibliography and list of sources. The aim is to offer an introduction the extraordinary 1975 movie The Beast, in a clearly written in an entertaining style, which I hope will encourage the reader to seek out some of Borowczyk's strange, lyrical, hallucinatory and erotic movies. I hope my book will offer some fresh insights into Borowczyk and The Beast.

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