



Steven Jacobs & Lisa Colpaert // **The Dark Galleries** A Museum Guide to Painted Portraits in Film Noir, Gothic Melodramas and Ghost Stories of the 1940s and 1950s

Imagine a museum in which the portrait of Carlotta Valdes, an important prop in Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, hangs on a wall next to the painted portrait of the title character of Otto Preminger's *Laura* and opposite the uncanny portraits of the desired or murdered women in Fritz Lang's *Scarlet Street*, George Cukor's *Gaslight*, and Nicholas Ray's *Born to Be Bad*. In an adjacent gallery, the visitor of this imaginary museum can contemplate the portraits of patriarchs that feature in films such as *House of Strangers*, *Suspicion*, *Gilda*, and *Strangers on a Train*. This is precisely the concept of this book. *Dark Galleries* deals with American (and some British) films of the 1940s and 1950s, in which a painted portrait plays an important part in the plot or the *mise-en-scène*. Particularly noir crime thrillers, gothic melodramas, and ghost stories feature painted portraits that seem to have a magical power over their beholders. Apart from an extensive introductory essay, this museum guide presents more than eighty entries on the artistic and cinematic aspects of noir painted portraits.

### Preview

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