

2016: Horror Movies Win In A Year Of Bad Blockbusters



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What a year 2016 has been for movie buffs. Plenty of anticipation and plenty more let down. There's no real way to predict the way a year is going to go movie-wise but this year has been a special letdown, to the point that *Rogue One* and its December release date may just be carrying the heavy burden of film fans everywhere holding out hope that 2016 won't be a considered the worst year for films ever.

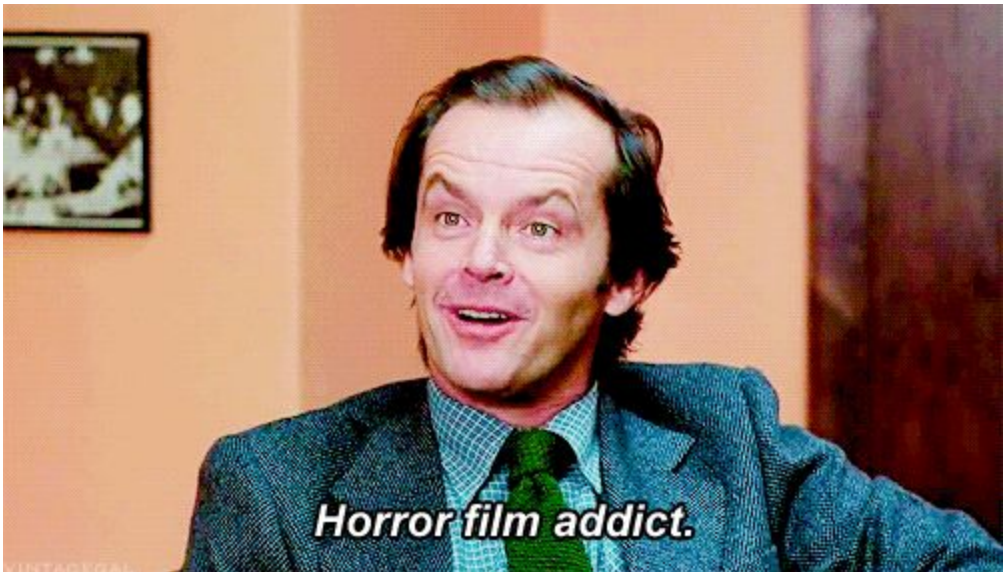
- [Best Scariest Horror Movies Of All Time](#)



Each year of movies starts with a flurry of award ceremonies keeping the focus on the previous year of film, the dramas and the standouts. The early part of any year is a forgettable flurry of indies, lower budget films, romance for Valentine's Day and comedies for the Spring, but there is one reliable standby. The ever-present and constantly releasing horror film.

The strength of 2016's horror films suggests the genre is having an absolute heyday.

Unlike blockbuster films which typically have release dates between May and August of any given year, horror films are released year round with a sometime surge near Halloween. This year has been no different with a spattering of horror films already in release and more yet to come. What makes 2016's year in horror films look a bit different than previous years is the strength of the horror films we've seen thus far. A strength that when contrasted with the letdown of the major film releases we had such hopes for, seems to suggest horror is having an absolute heyday.



Here are the top grossing horror films thus far in 2016 (as of publishing date):

- *The Conjuring 2* \$102,349,812 - **80% Rotten Tomatoes**

- *The Purge: Election Year* \$78,913,505 - **54% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *10 Cloverfield Lane* \$72,082,998 - **90% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *Lights Out* \$57,277,233 - **77% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *The Shallows* \$54,257,433 - **78% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *The Boy (2016)* \$35,819,556 - **27% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *The Forest* \$26,594,261 - **10% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *The Witch* \$25,138,705 - **91% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* \$10,907,291 - **42% Rotten Tomatoes**
- *The Darkness* \$10,753,574 - **4% Rotten Tomatoes**

This is 10 films out of the top 100 grossing films, not a bad representation. Five of them are Certified Fresh according to Rotten Tomatoes. Nine of Rotten Tomatoes' 100 highest rated films of 2016 are horror films. These numbers may seem paltry, but when it comes to horror films, of which there are hundreds released each year due to their incredibly low production cost, they tend to garner low ratings with critics.



This year gave us the highly acclaimed *The Witch* in February, setting up the potential for a craze of puritan-set horror, the likes of which the upcoming *American Horror Story* may just be taking advantage of. James Wan continued to pump out quality horror, cinematic and story-driven, with his solid follow up to *The Conjuring*. He also produced the fun and lightweight horror film *Lights Out*, which is practically an inspiration story considering the internet origins of its creator and director. *10 Cloverfield Lane* managed to actually keep audiences guessing in its creepy and mysterious build, despite how played out and formulaic horror films have become over the years.



And these are just a few of what we've gotten so far in 2016. Still to come this year:

- *Don't Breathe* — August 26
- *Morgan* — September 2
- *Before I Wake* — September 9
- *When the Bough Breaks* — September 9
- *Blair Witch* — September 16
- *Friend Request* — October 7
- *Ouija: Origin Of Evil* — October 21
- *Rings* — October 28
- *Shut In* — November 11
- *Bye Bye Man* — December 9
- *The Disappointments Room* — November 18
- *Keep Watching* — December 2

There's no denying that as far as averages go, horror is having a banner year.

I can personally attest to the the strength of Adam Wingard's *Blair Witch*, a follow up to the iconic founding father horror film of found footage movies. And though it's likely a few of these films are bound to flop among audiences, there's no denying that as far as averages go, horror is having a banner year. That's not even getting into the spectacular horror television airs these days. Just skimming the surface, *American Horror Story* and *The Walking Dead* are among the heavy hitters.

As the summer comes to a close, and with it the winding down of the blockbuster season, the Oscar-bait films will be presented to us in turn. It will be tempting to shift our focus to the dramas brought to us by Hollywood royalty, but I'd encourage all to keep an eye on the horror films. The steadiness of their presence in theaters is comforting in a year where all expectations have been subverted and quality just can't be counted on.

Further Reading:

- [What You Can Expect From The New 'Blair Witch' Sequel](#)
- [The 5 Best Horror Films Of 2016 \(So Far\)](#)
- [Has This Been A Disappointing Summer For Blockbuster Movies?](#)

Source: [Pop Matters](#), [Rotten Tomatoes](#), [Box Office Mojo](#)

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