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British Film Noir Guide

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Keaney, Michael F. **British film noir guide**. McFarland, 2008. 261p. Reviewed in 2008Sep CHOICE.

Independent scholar Keaney follows up his *Film Noir Guide: 745 Films of the Classic Era, 1940-1959* (CH, Sep'03, 41-0022) with this filmography of 369 British productions that embrace the visual style and dark thematic elements that define film noir as a genre. A well-documented essay reviews the debate about whether noir is essentially American and concludes that common themes, elements, and characters align these British films with the genre. The docket includes 47 obscure, low-budget films aired on television in the US as part of *The Edgar Wallace Mystery Theatre* series in the 1960s; 116 of the included films are not compiled in other published filmographies or standard online resources. Entries give titles, alternate titles, and release dates of each film, Keaney's rating on a five-star scale, cast and crew information from the credits, and Keaney's synopsis and evaluation. Summaries and selected quotations are wry and highlight Keaney's enthusiasm and knowledge of the field; in a nod to potential viewers, he takes care not to reveal the ending of each film. This entertaining overview of a noir niche will fill gaps in film collections and inform and entertain aficionados. Well indexed. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Lower-level undergraduates and above; general readers.

-- P. Finley, University of Nevada, Las Vegas