

All I Need to Know about Filmmaking I Learned from the Toxic Avenger

By L. Kaufman

From The Toxic Avenger to Tromeo and Juliet, Troma films have shocked, appalled -- and inspired a generation of filmmakers from Quentin Tarantino to Kevin Smith. Now legendary Troma co-founder Lloyd Kaufman tell all...Imagine Roger Corman and John Waters crossed with Howard Stern -- and you'll have an idea of the demented genius behind Troma studios, one of the oldest (and most successful) independent film studios in the world. Lloyd Kaufman's spirited, outrageous, no-holds-barred look at low-budget, guerilla filmmaking is truly an inspiration to young filmmakers, a delight for movie buffs, and an absolute must for Toxic Avenger fans everywhere. This is the true story of the moviemaking maverick who co-founded an independent studio twenty-five years ago in a humble broom closet...who used raw hamburger, Karo syrup blood, and Bromo-Seltzer vomit to create films of questionable artistic and moral value...who is responsible for a string of cult movie hits...who was the first to reject Madonna for a part...who defied the Hollywood system and slapped the face of the industry...and who built a B-movie empire filled with Chopper Chicks, Surf Nazis, Kabuki Cops, Nymphoid Barbarians, and a lone hero known as The Toxic Avenger. Toxic ingredients include: -- Kevin Costner in Sizzle Beach, USA-- Billy Bob Thornton in Chopper Chicks in Zombie Town-- Marisa Tomei in The Toxic Avenger-- plus special tips on tearing an actor's arm off, secret recipes for fake gore, and much, too much more

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From Publishers Weekly

"When in doubt, vomit green foam" is the motto of the B-movie empire, Troma Studios, the brainchild of Kaufman and Michael Herz, whose exploitation hits, *Toxic Avenger*, *Class of Nuke 'Em High* and *Tromeo & Juliet*, today clutter the midnight movie section of most video rental shops. Here, Kaufman traces his lifelong dedication to big-screen gore, disfigurement, mutation and raunchy sex from his days in the Yale film society as a disaffected undergrad in the mid-1960s (where he made a feature-length film that consisted mainly of a braless woman jogging) to his present career as a leading impresario of bad taste. After a stint with Cannon, a low-budget studio in New York City, Kaufman launched Troma out of a broom closet he rented from McCall's magazine in 1974, while taking mainstream Hollywood jobs on the side, including acting as pre-production supervisor on *Rocky*. The *Toxic Avenger*, produced in 1982, catapulted Troma into the international limelight and has since become an icon of fringe cinema, spawning merchandise, a Saturday morning cartoon and hours and hours of ongoing late-night cable exposure. Not content to recount his story in linear fashion, Kaufman free-associates on such topics as the "erotic components of colostomy bags" and the pitfalls of Hollywood cinema. Kaufman's gross-out humor and rambling style will wear thin for all but the most devoted Troma fans, but his perspective on independent film production stands to benefit low-budget auteurs everywhere. Photos.

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From [Booklist](#)

The Troma studio and Kaufman, its founder, probably go unreferenced in most libraries' film history collections. Let that be no disincentive to acquiring this account of a prolific and spirited producer of schlock cinema. From the *Toxic Avenger* and *Class of Nuke 'em High* series to the more recent *Tromeo & Juliet* and *Maniac Nurses Find Ecstasy*, Troma has delivered the goods as far as grotesque costumes, maniacal (or nonexistent) plots, and gratuitous partial nudity are concerned. Kaufman and writing buddy Gunn's sprightly overview of Kaufman's "art" is perforce a case history from a segment of the U.S. film industry whose most famous denizens are John (*Pink Flamingos*) Waters and Russ (*The Vixens*) Meyer and whose wares exemplify sexploitation, perhaps, but hardly hard core porn. Featuring glimpses of the early careers of Billy Bob Thornton, Melissa Tomei, and others who have gone on to bigger things; claims of influence on big

time film directors; and Troma's patented assortment of nymphomaniacs, surf Nazis, and sleazy monsters, this is not-to-be-missed pop culture stuff. *Mike Tribby*

Review

...[a] very funny memoir... -- *Entertainment Weekly*, Charles Winecoff

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