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The Poe Encyclopedia

Frederick S. Frank, Tony Magistrale



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?? [[Best known as the author of imaginative short fiction, such as The Fall of the House of Usher and The Cask of Amontillado, and as the author of hauntingly sonorous poems such as The Raven, Edgar Allan Poe was a leading practitioner of the American Gothic and helped popularize the short story as a genre. This reference work assembles in dictionary format a complete and current body of information on Poe's life and work. More than 1900 entries cover all phases of Poe's art and literary criticism, his family relationships, his numerous travels and residences, and the abundance of critical responses to his works. Each entry provides bibliographical information, and the volume concludes with an extensive listing of works for further consideration.]] ??

Best known for his mysterious and imaginative short fiction, such as The Fall of the House of Usher and The Cask of Amontillado, as well as hauntingly sonorous poems such as The Raven, Edgar Allan Poe has secured a lasting place in the American literary canon. He was one of the first American authors to be given serious attention in Europe, and his works popularized the Gothic, the short story, and detective fiction in America. Poe's works are frequently studied in schools and colleges, but he also retains his appeal as one of America's most demanding popular authors. His works reflect his vast and sometimes arcane erudition, his probing insights into the workings of the mind, his theories of literature and aesthetics, and his interest in science and the supernatural.

Through more than 1900 alphabetically arranged entries, this reference book provides complete and current coverage of Poe's life and work. Some entries treat Poe's known reading and his responses to literary contemporaries and international literary figures. Others comment on the impact of various writers and literary traditions on Poe's imagination. Still others address Poe's views on subjects ranging from Shakespeare to mesmerism to phrenology. Each entry is supplemented by a bibliographical note which gives the basis for the entry and suggests sources for further investigation. Each entry for Poe's fiction and poetry contains a critical synopsis, and an extensive bibliography at the end of the volume lists the most important critical and biographical studies of Poe.

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