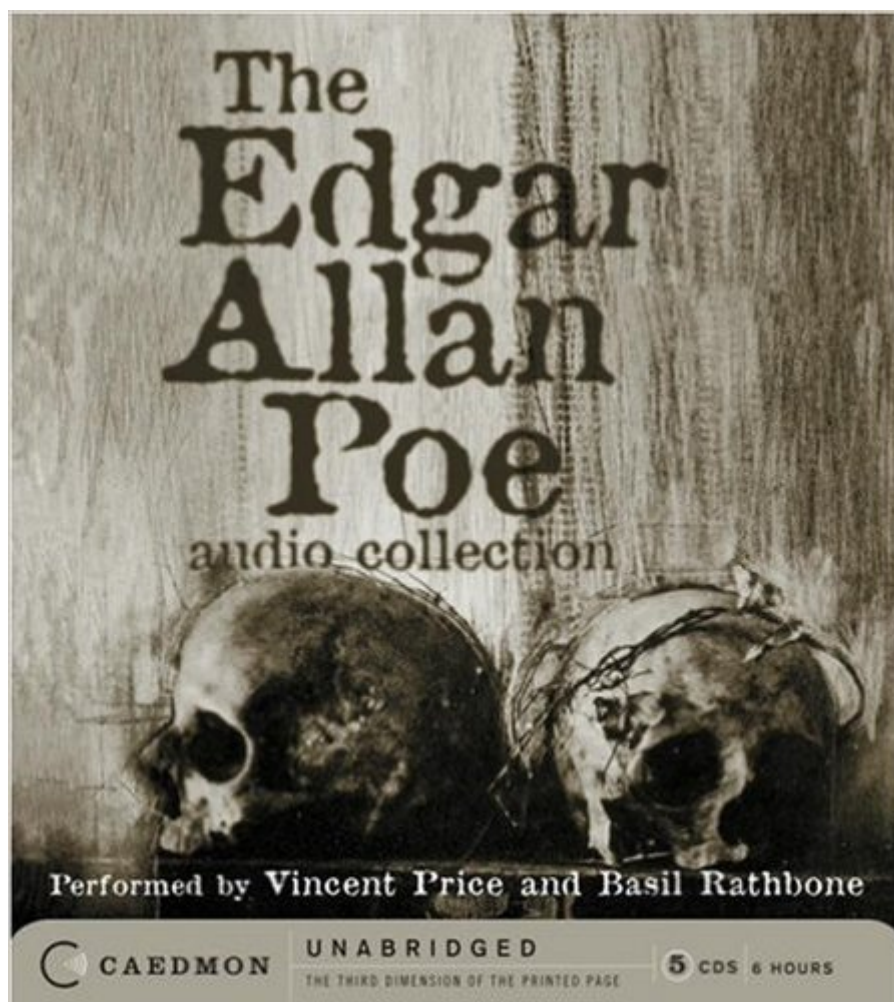


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Edgar Allan Poe Audio Collection



Synopsis

Universally acclaimed as the maestro of horror and the morbid, Edgar Allan Poe's dark gift has for more than a century and a half set the standard for the genre. Now, Caedmon Audio presents a classic collection of Poe's most terrifying tales performed by two of the most brilliant interpreters of his work ever to be recorded: Vincent Price and Basil Rathbone. Between them, they perform 20 of Poe's chilling stories and poems, creating an unforgettably intense listening experience.

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Caedmon; Unabridged edition (October 3, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0694524190

ISBN-13: 978-0694524198

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 5.1 x 0.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 7 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (72 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #124,658 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) [#7 in Books > Books on CD >](#)

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Customer Reviews

This 5 disk collection of Edgar Allen Poe's works is one of the best audio collections I have ever heard. Generally, I am a fan of the "radio play" style of spoken audio, with a full cast and appropriate sound effects. Yet, Poe's work (especially on the represented stories) tends to be from a single point of view, and largely take place in the mind of the main character. This first person style lends itself well to a single narrator. I could not imagine two better chosen narrators. The heritage of radio shines in there performances. These are two actors who cut their teeth in radio, in shows such as "Suspence," "Inner Sanctum" and "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." Voice acting is almost a lost art. It is amazing, the sheer richness that comes from hearing Poe's words manipulated by such talented voices. Vincent Price, famous for his sinister voice, is a natural for Poe. He does fewer pieces, voicing "Ligeia," "The Imp of the Perverse," "Morella," "Berenice" and "The Gold Bug." All of them are well done, with "Ligeia" being a stand out. Basil Rathbone does the lion's share of the CD set. As I was not as familiar with him, I was a little disappointed about this. Then I heard him speak. Wow. His voice is superb, and obviously highly-trained. I prefer him to Price on the recordings, and I

am thankful that he voices my favorite pieces. He slips easily between prose and poetry, and has a voice full of both emotion and cold regard.

The reviewers for this audio box set of Edgar Allan Poe's most famous works of fiction are absolutely right. There is perfection in this product. The talented Vincent Price and Basil Rathborne lend their voices to the narration of the classic tales of horror and suspense. This is an antique. It is valuable and very reminiscent of the old World War II days of radio-plays sponsored by soap companies. This same style was responsible for the popularity of H.G. Well's "War of the Worlds". When Orson Welles narrated the story, his voice and the drama of the radio was so convincing, people actually believed flying saucers were invading American cities. The power of radio was very strong in the time before television media. At any rate, my point is that this same magnetism is felt in the drama that Vincent Price and Basil Rathborne provide to the original master of horror pre-Stephen King, Edgar Allan Poe. Poe was responsible for creating the detective story, some would say the short story, American Gothic, macabre tales that gripped readers with haunting melancholia, dread and superstition. It was as if he took drugs and hallucinated and wrote down what he saw. Among his most famous tales, of which Vincent Price and Basil Rathborne perfectly read with powerful narration are "The Cask Of Amontillado", "The Fall of the House of Usher", "The Mask Of The Red Death," "The Pit and the Pendulum", "The Tell-Tale Heart" and the "Black Cat". It is unfortunate that they didn't include selections from "Tales From The Rue Morgue". Among the poems that are read and made Poe quite a literati are "The Raven" and "Annabel Lee". With all the well-constructed suspense and literary Gothic, poetic romanticism, the tales of Edgar Allan Poe are suddenly alive and fresh in the old radio style.

Any fan of Mr. Poe's shocking stories will be happy to obtain this very fine collection, they read like a "greatest hits" list; The Tell-Tale Heart, The Fall Of The House Of Usher, The Cask Of Amontillado (my favorite), The Black Cat, The Masque Of The Red Death, The Pit And The Pendulum and several others. The poetry of Mr. Poe is also well represented with his most famous works being included in this collection. There could be no better choice of narrators, Vincent Price and Basil Rathbone both possess voices that translate very well to the works of Mr. Poe, they are perfect in their gesticulation and their delivery. To hear Mr. Rathbone's voice rise into a frenzy of madness as the police come to investigate "a shriek in the night" during the performance of The Tell Tale Heart is wonderful, the creepy narration of Mr. Price will remind you of listening to an old serial radio show. This is a large volume, 5 CDs that contain 6 hours of material, the sound quality is good despite the

fact that these performances (at least Mr. Rathbone's) were taped in the 60's, I found no skips or static. This style of horror short story and especially POEtry are more difficult to follow than one would expect, I don't think this would be a good substitute for a book on tape to listen to in a car, this collection demands your attention. So why you ask do I only rate this collection at 3 stars?

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