



LaSalle Bank
presents

35^{mm}
&
Beyond

July – December
2003

This is an exciting time for the LaSalle Theatre. It's taken awhile, but we finally have a permanent 35mm projector. I always wanted to see our revival house restored to full strength, and so, as the boxes of equipment rolled in through the night, we finally built up a movie machine that will keep you entertained for years to come. And, we have two new, experienced projectionists at the controls! Our 35mm screenings will be *exclusive* to Saturday nights. At the printing stage, only a half dozen of these special presentations were confirmed, but please call for possible updates. The series will open in a big way with a 35 print of *The Night of the Hunter*. Once again, Robert Mitchum's rendition of "Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" will fill our auditorium.



"35mm & Beyond" represents a new beginning with a wonderfully diverse mixture of titles. A great many of the films were selected before we got the official word of an upgrade. Thus, we're screening many 16mm films such as John Ford's *Flesh* and the ultra-rare *The Cheaters*. For our October 11th show, our good friend and Radio Hall of Famer Chuck Schaden will visit us again with a book signing before *Buck Benny Rides Again*! After the gloom and doom of the last series I thought I'd return to the more promising themes of earlier programs. The positive tone is reflected by the return of Ronald Colman to our Saturday nights with three of his films, including an excellent original print of *The Light That Failed*. The story of Richard Helder, painting his "Melancholia" before going blind, inspired me to do one more program for you. In addition, we'll be showing the neglected *One Foot in Heaven*, a film that brings out the best in us and in the motion picture medium. It's the culmination of everything I've tried to do through seven programs.

I am pleased to welcome Michael King and Ian McDermott to the theatre. They have flawlessly taken over the projecting in this transition phase, and beginning in 2004, they will be your new programmers. I am excited by their enthusiasm and their love of world cinema. Ahead is a bright future with Mike and Ian leading us into the promised land of Cinemascope... Technicolor... Hitchcock... Ford... the possibilities are endless in 35mm.

A lot has happened in our world in the four years I've been here, but through it all, the theatre has been here for you—to show movies, of course, but also to serve as a sort of social club for people with nostalgic memories of better days—and better movies—gone by. Come celebrate the "Festival of the New Wine" with us! Join Tom, John, Phil, Les, Peter, Ken, Bill, George, Gene, Dana (& the Pointy Heads), the Movie Geeks (John, Ken, and Tony), and all our friends and regulars. *To them I toast, come drink with me, That they may ever happy be, And may they live eternally...*

Matthew C. Hoffman

THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER (1955)

Charles Laughton

UA/Paul Gregory/93 min.(in 35mm)

Cartoon: "Felix Hunts the Hunter" (1926), Otto Messmer



"It's a triumphant return to the screen for Gish, perhaps the greatest film actress ever. She's still beautiful, still personifies goodness, and still exhibits tremendous power, grit, and determination. She's still a wonderfully natural actress and it is the humility and sincerity she projects as Rachel that perfectly counters the conceit and hamminess of Mitchum's Preacher... When, in my favorite scene, Rachel, sitting with a gun, starts singing her version (with a reference to Jesus) of the hymn "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" to soften the effect on her of the blasphemer's rendition—and for a moment they harmonize—you know that she can't be intimidated..." —Danny Peary

Robert Mitchum gives the best performance of his career as preacher Harry Powell, a false prophet who comes not with peace but with a sword. He is after \$10,000 which was stolen from a bank by Ben Harper (Peter Graves). John (Billy Chapin) and Pearl Harper (Sally Jane Bruce) know where the money is but they're not telling... Shelley Winters plays Willa, the mother brainwashed by Powell's fanaticism. Her watery demise is one of the film's most haunting images. The two children go on the run and eventually find refuge with Rachel Cooper (Lillian Gish), a "strong tree with branches for many birds." Told through the eyes of children, this Depression-set film emerges as a stark, expressionist allegory which is part Grimm's fairy tale, part Griffith pastoral. Laughton was greatly influenced by D.W. Griffith, as evidenced by his casting of Lillian Gish. She serves as the benevolent counterpoint to the religious distortions embodied in Powell. One of the greatest of all American films. With James Gleason as Uncle Birdie. Screenplay by James Agee, from a novel by Davis Grubb. Shot by Stanley Cortez, whose photography evokes the dustbowl imagery of Walker Evans.

THE SORROWS OF SATAN (1926)

D. W. Griffith

Paramount/84 min.

Shorts: Highlights From Griffith's Greatest Work (with narration); "Sorrows of the Unfaithful" (1910), D.W. Griffith (with Mary Pickford)



"I never saw him dressed in anything but a high, stiff collar, a gray felt hat, high shoes with brass hooks and pulling loops at the back, and one of a succession of suits none of which could be less than fifteen years old, and all of which were woefully out of style. He looked like a hard-up, itinerant school teacher. His face was grave. When he smiled it was with the benign rigidity of a stone Buddha. His nose, like his face, was long and thin, and he had a pronounced under-lip, upon which rested an endless succession of cigarettes..." — Norman Bel Geddes on D. W. Griffith

Originally purchased for Cecil B. DeMille but given to D. W. Griffith when DeMille left the studio, this silent melodrama concerns the influence of Satan on earth. Geoffrey Tempest (Ricardo Cortez) is an impoverished writer of many ideas and no success. He tries to eek out a living as a book reviewer. Mavis Clare (Carol Dempster), who lives in the apartment across from his, is the only one who has faith in him. When Geoffrey is dismissed from his job he is filled with bitter rebellion, offering to sell his soul. Enter Prince Lucio Riminez (Adolphe Menjou), the continental stranger who leads Geoffrey towards empty riches and away from Mavis's love. Dempster was no Lillian Gish, but here she gives her best performance in a Griffith film, portraying a character whose faith is tested by sorrow and privation. Her scene where she is calling to Geoffrey from the window is one of many memorable moments from an unusual film few have seen. The opening sequence on the steps of Heaven is stunning. Visionary set designer Norman Bel Geddes worked on the film. Despite front office tampering and re-edits, Griffith showed he was still the master of American cinema. With Lya de Putti as the Russian noblewoman consumed with desire. Suggested by Marie Corelli's novel, which had also been the inspiration for Carl Dreyer's *Leaves From Satan's Book*. **NOTE:** Print is courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art's circulating library and may be average in quality.

(With 10 Minute Intermission)

July 19



CHANG (1927)

Merian C. Cooper/Ernest B. Schoedsack

Paramount/67 min. (in 35mm)

Print courtesy of Milestone Films

Short: "Creation" (1931), Willis O'Brien

"During one sequence, a tiger chased two natives up a tree. Sensing a chance to get an unusual shot for intercutting,

Schoedsack later built a light platform in the tree thirteen feet above the ground while Cooper, armed with a rifle, was stationed in another tree nearby. Native beaters then chased a tiger to the vicinity and Schoedsack, lying on his perch alongside his camera, attracted the tiger's attention (and wrath) by proffering a 'Bronx cheer.' After angrily circling the tree, the beast leaped suddenly and fastened his claws in the trunk, trying desperately to climb to the platform. Cooper aimed his rifle at the cat's head, but Schoedsack called to him to hold his fire. Although tigers are not supposed to be able to climb trees, this one left claw marks on the trunk eleven feet above the ground and was so close to his goal that his face completely fills the frame in the resulting shot." — George E. Turner

Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack, the makers of *King Kong* (1933), followed up *Grass* (1925) with this drama of the wilderness. *Chang* proved to be a bigger commercial success than the earlier expeditionary film. Shot in Siam (Thailand), the film tells the story of Kru and his family, Laotian tribespeople who must survive against the daily marauders of the jungle. The chang—or elephants—and the big cats are the greatest threats. (The remote Nan province was considered the worst tiger district in the world.) Cooper & Schoedsack, faced with sickness and constant danger, were forced to innovate in terms of how they protected their film and how they positioned their camera. During the making of the film they sought dramatic realism, observing aspects of jungle life which they tried to duplicate again for the camera. Much of the action was shot at close range, and the scenes, such as "Bimbo's" flight from the leopard, were all carefully thought out and photographed with exceptional skill. Cooper later said that *Chang* was "still the best picture I ever made."



THE SON OF KONG (1933)

Ernest B. Schoedsack

RKO (Merian C. Cooper)/70 min.

Cartoons: "Wild Elephinks" (1933), Dave Fleischer (Popeye)

"Goonland" (1938), Dave Fleischer (Popeye)

"Three juvenile Kongs were constructed over the skeletons of original Kongs. Close-ups were made without the use of a large mechanical head, but the articulated Kong hand, re-designed in some particulars, is shown in two key sequences. Schoedsack would use a similarly designed human hand in 1939's *Dr. Cyclops*. The voice of Kong, Jr., was built upon the chattering of baby gorillas, as recorded at the San Diego Municipal Zoo. The roar of the ape as he fights a gigantic bear and a dragon was taken from the battle cries of tigers and elephants—combined, played backwards and slowed to the proper depth of tone." — George E. Turner/Michael H. Price

When Carl Denham (Robert Armstrong) sneaks out of his boardinghouse with a metal washtub over his head, you know you're in for trouble. Despite all the film's shortcomings, this is still an enjoyable adventure which has maintained a strange nostalgic charm about it throughout the years. Denham, remorseful for Kong's demise, is now threatened with lawsuits and prison. With Captain Englehorn (Frank Reicher), they escape from New York harbor and head to the South Seas. In the dull port of Dakang they meet LaBelle Helene (Helen Mack), whose father is shortly killed by the vile drunk Helstrom (John Marston). Anxious to ship out, Helstrom convinces the unsuspecting Denham that a return to Skull Island could prove profitable with a discovery of its treasure. Helene stows away, but after a mutiny by a communist crew, Denham's party (with Helstrom and Charlie the cook) once again find themselves on Kong Island, amid new prehistoric dangers and earth-shaking surprises. Though the climax seems hurried, the film brings a nice closure to Carl Denham's story, again memorably played by Armstrong. Special effects by the great Willis O'Brien with an excellent film score by Max Steiner. **NOTE:** We'll be screening a dupe print of fair quality.

JULY 26

APPLAUSE (1929))

Rouben Mamoulian

Paramount/78 min.

Short: "Voice of Hollywood" (1929)



"A cohesive, well integrated series of pictures. It's intensity, its sharp projection of tragedy, emerge from the eye of the camera; an omniscient, omnipresent eye that slides easily over the links of the story and emphasizes only the true and the relevant."

— Thornton Delehanty, *The Arts*

William K. Everson called this, Mamoulian's directing debut, "an oasis of filmic sophistication in a desert of stage-bound early talkies." In its use of sound, and in the way it mobilized the camera, *Applause* was years ahead of its time. Helen Morgan gives an emotionally-charged performance as Kitty Darling, a gin-swilling, has-been burlesque queen. She's involved in an abusive relationship with common law husband Hitch Nelson, a melodramatic villain who treats her poorly. As with so many unfortunate women in real life, she stays with this loser, and there's something to be said for a film that depicts such a complex mystery while at the same time thematically building a man-hating viewpoint. Her daughter (Joan Peers) arrives from the convent and is unhappy with her drunken mother, yet she finds comfort in a sailor. The scenes between the young lovers in New York are exceptionally well-photographed. The ending to this sordid tragedy is especially poignant. This box office failure was based on a novel by Beth Brown. With Fuller Mellish, Jr., and Henry Wadsworth.

August 2

MOBY DICK (1930)

Lloyd Bacon

Warner/75 min.

Short: "The Boat" (1921), Buster Keaton

Cartoon: "Fish Tales" (1936), Jack King



"Mr. Barrymore is Mr. Barrymore of the stage in this film, and not the great silent lover who is made to turn his profile to the camera on the slightest provocation. Words bring out his true talent, whether he is affording humor or delivering a grim impression of a man who wants to even up matters with a white whale. There is no shilly-shallying in his portrayal of the character, which makes a whaler a man of the seas, one who gloats over the tattooed figures of women on his arm and who evidently only represses oaths when confronted by the charming presence of Faith." — Mordaunt Hall

Rarely seen sound version of one of America's greatest novels. Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851). The incomparable John Barrymore, who had starred in the 1926 silent film about the great white whale (*The Sea Beast*), again portrays the obsessive, peg-legged Captain Ahab Ceeley with even better results. Liberties were regrettably taken with the source material—Ahab's ship, the *Pequod*, becomes *Shanghai Lil*— literary liberties which included an unnecessary love interest, but the addition of sound brought an aural resonance to the picture. If nothing else, the film evokes the sounds of Melville with the salt water slapping against the creaking ship, and the wind blowing through the canvas sails. With Joan Bennett as "Faith" (Barrymore had wanted Dolores Costello), Lloyd Hughes as the sinister Derek, May Boley, Walter Long (Starbuck), Tom O'Brien, Nigel de Brulier, and Noble Johnson as Queequeg. Remade in 1956, though we would've preferred a third, more faithful version with John Barrymore. "I've done everything three times," he once said. "The fourth time around becomes monotonous."



MURDERS IN THE ZOO (1933)

Edward Sutherland

Paramount/62 min.

Cartoon: "The Pincushion Man" (1935)

(AKA "Balloonland"), Ub Iwerks

"The setting of the zoo, especially in the night scenes where it is suggestive of the jungle, is as frightening as any gothic castle. Ernest Haller's distinctive photographic style makes each shadow a potential menace. There is effective dramatic scoring for the Indian scenes and for a tour of the zoo in which a separate motif is introduced for each animal, plus incidental music and comic passages for Ruggles. The relative sparseness of orchestral music during later action passes unnoticed; varied animal cries keep the soundtrack sufficiently occupied with disturbing noises."

—George E. Turner/Michael H. Price

Villainous Lionel Atwill sinks to new levels of depravity as millionaire sportsman Eric Gorman. For a living, he captures and sells wild animals to the municipal zoo. But he is also a jealous husband, and his wife, Evelyn (wild-eyed Kathleen Burke of *Island of Lost Souls*) has had many lovers. When her latest suitor (John Lodge) is poisoned to death by a green mamba snake at a zoo publicity function, Evelyn knows her husband is to blame. (Atwill pawing his disgusted wife will give you the creeps.) What slight sympathy we have for the cuckolded Gorman quickly dissipates as he reveals himself to be evil incarnate, having the audacity to accuse well-meaning Dr. Woodford (Randolph Scott) of negligence for his wife's "accident." The kids fishing part of a woman's dress out of the alligator pool is one of many unsettling images, but don't miss the opening when Atwill sews a man's mouth shut for kissing his wife. (Someone should've done the same to press agent Charlie Ruggles.) The opening cast credits—with animals signifying the characters—is another nice touch. As Atwill says, "I can promise you a really *unusual* evening." With Gail Patrick and Harry Beresford. Horror writer Philip Wylie was one of the contributors to the screenplay.

September 6



INTERNATIONAL HOUSE (1933)

Edward Sutherland

Paramount/73 min.

Shorts: "Earthquake!" (1933) behind-the-scenes of *International House*

"Cleopatra: The Hollywood You Never See" (1934)

"The picture began with all the earmarks of another elegant and stylized humor piece, made popular in the early thirties. Even

Burns and Allen seemed more reserved than normal. Into that came Fields, broad, loud and brash. The contrast was obvious and hilarious, and it drew your attention to the odd man out, in this case W.C. Moreover the character itself was made for thievery. Into an elegant hotel landed an autogyro piloted by a drunk, and containing a miniature car which was used to drive from floor to floor in the hotel. One could not help but steal a show with that setup." —Ronald J. Fields

Zany comedy with an all-star cast of personalities, though many in our audience will be asking, "Who is Peggy Hopkins Joyce?" Some of the better-known stars include W.C. Fields, George Burns and Gracie Allen, and Bela Lugosi. The plot, what there is of one, involves a Chinese inventor, Dr. Wong (Edmund Breese), who has assembled a primitive version of a television called a radioscope. There are several parties interested in this invention, including Stuart Erwin of the American Electric Co. and Bela Lugosi as the comic heavy Petronovich. They all gather at the International House in Wu Hu, China, where Wong plans to sell to the highest bidder. George Burns plays the house physician, and you-know-who plays his nurse. "He won't be back for a long, long time," Gracie says over the phone. "He went out on one of those eternity cases." Fields is Professor Quail, the beer-guzzling pilot who lands his autogyro on the hotel roof garden. Several funny gags highlight this one-of-a-kind farce. With Franklin Pangborn as the flustered hotel manager, Cab Calloway (singing "Reefer Man!"), Rudy Vallee, and Col. Stoopnagle and Budd. "Stoopnocracy is Peachy."

CLEOPATRA (1934)

Cecil B. DeMille

Paramount/100 min.

Cartoon: "Gypped in Egypt" (1930), John Foster, Mannie Davis (Van Beuren)

Short: "Tomb It May Concern" (with Inez Claire)



"He finally lost his temper and stormed over to us to give a demonstration of what he wanted. He grabbed a spear and shield from one of the soldiers, cautioned me to defend myself, and yelled, 'This is the way I want you to fight.' DeMille rushed at me like he was going to cut me to pieces. All swords in his films were real, not rubber. I had a helluva time keeping him off, and after a few minutes my whole body was wet and I was trying to find a way to end it, I finally succeeded in side-stepping, and as he lunged I cut his spear in half, backed up and threw my weapon on the ground. Without a sign of fatigue, he turned to the men, 'If you don't want to fight like that you can leave the set!' And a lot of them did." —Henry Wilcoxon

Cecil B. DeMille's reputation as a filmmaker has always taken a beating in critical circles, but he gave his audiences spectacular entertainment with a style that remained consistent until the end. *Cleopatra* is an opulent spectacle starring Claudette Colbert as the irresistible Queen of the Nile. Set in 48 B.C., the story follows her union with Julius Caesar (Warren William), himself hungry for Egypt's riches. After his death at the hands of the Roman senators, power is shared between Octavian (Ian Keith) and Marc Antony (intelligently played by Henry Wilcoxon), a he-man woman-hater. "They have no place amongst men. They can't think and they can't fight. They're just playthings for us." But he, too, falls under Cleopatra's spell and is deemed a traitor by Rome. With Cleopatra's army, Antony will lead the war against the Romans. The scene in which Enobarbus (C. Aubrey Smith) finally leaves Antony reveals the quality of acting, and the battle sequence—almost three minutes with most shots no more than two seconds—is masterfully edited by Anne Bauchens. The seduction scene on the royal barge is yet another highlight. The film is overflowing with beautiful images, such as Colbert's regal entrance into Rome, carried by her Nubian slaves. Victor Milner's photography did win an Academy Award. With Joseph Schildkraut as Herod, Irving Pichel, Arthur Hohl, and Gertrude Michael.

September 20

THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1937 (1936)

Mitchell Leisen

Paramount/102 min.

Cartoon: "Felix Broadcasts" (1923), Otto Messmer



"Chiefly, though, it is a picture worthy of seeing for its unusual photographic effects. The staging is modern, almost impressionistic, and Mr. Leisen and his cameraman have created a number of interesting studies in black and white. The treatment of the Stokowski symphonic interlude is exceptionally fine, with the camera focused for several seconds upon the conductor's expressive hands as they draw the fullest measure of melody from Bach's Fugue in G Minor. For that brief moment 'The Big Broadcast' is sheer poetry." —Frank S. Nugent

Otis Ferguson said of this, "It isn't a comedy and it isn't a musical, but it has a lot of laughs, the best in several types of music, and I don't know where in the world you will see anything like it." A melange of style and fun with radio star Jack Benny playing a program director at the National Networks Broadcasting Co. He's having some difficulties with his sponsors, among them, George Burns and Gracie Allen of the Platt Golf Ball Hour. "If you haven't swung at a Platt Air-Flow, you don't know what you're missing." The bulk of the plot, though, involves a small-town announcer, Gwenn Holmes (Shirley Ross), who gets lured to the Big Apple by Benny just so her on-air taunting of Frank Forest can be silenced. She winds up on the program with the tenor and eventually marries Ray Milland! The third film in the big broadcast series is actually better than my plot points on paper thanks to the charming stars and the songs which include: "Here's Love In Your Eye," "La Bomba," and "Night in Manhattan." Bob Burns, big mouth Martha Raye (singing "Vote For Mr. Rhythm"), and Benny Fields also star with appearances by Benny Goodman (and his swing band) and Leopold Stokowski.



MIDNIGHT (1939)

Mitchell Leisen

Paramount/95 min.

Cartoon: "Porky's Midnight Maimee" (1941), Chuck Jones

"We had one scene where he (Barrymore) takes Claudette down a long narrow corridor. There was no room for the idiot cards, with the lights and the camera, so I told John, 'I'm terribly sorry, but you're going to have to memorize this.' He said, 'My dear fellow, do you want me to recite the soliloquy from Hamlet? And he proceeded to recite it right then and there. I said, 'You can remember the lines, why the idiot card, John?' He said, 'Why should I fill my mind up with this s*** just to forget it the next morning?' We managed to get his cards in there somehow." — Mitchell Leisen

A reminder of how good American films were under the studio system. The bean ideal of sophisticated comedies has the total package: a witty script by Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett, a director perfectly suited to the genre of screwball comedies, and a superb cast. Claudette Colbert plays Eve Peabody, an American chorus girl traveling in Paris with an evening dress and not much else. She needs a job badly and goes around town looking for one with a sympathetic Hungarian taxi driver whom she has befriended, Tibor Czerny (Don Ameche). She deliberately loses him and shows up with a phony invitation (a pawn shop ticket) to an upscale party. Eve is mistaken for a baroness: Baroness Czerny (Lederer) so that the gigolo will stop fooling around with his wife, Helene Flammation (Mary Astor), whom he loves immeasurably. Eve accepts Barrymore's proposition... but every Cinderella has her midnight. This adulterous mayhem ranks with the best of Lubitsch, and Barrymore, in a role where he's not a caricature of himself, shows he was still one of our finest actors (even with the cue cards). Leisen would remake this in 1945 with *Maquerade in Mexico* starring Dorothy Lamour.

October 4

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED (1939)

"Wild Bill" Wellman

Paramount/97 min.

Short: "The Light That Came" (1909), D.W. Griffith (with Mary Pickford)

"It is a very masculine film, made in an era when the screen could depict close companionship between men without fear of misunderstanding. Coursing through the pictures of Wellman, bonds they develop for one another. The Light That Failed is a story of such comradeship, perfectly evoking the spirit of the old Arabian proverb cited in Colman's earlier (as well as Wellman's later) *Brau Geier*: 'The love of a man for a woman waxes and wanes like the moon—but the love of brother for brother is steadfast as the stars, and endures like the Word of the Prophet.' — R. Dixon Smith



William Wellman's remarkably faithful adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's first novel starring a true artist of the screen. Set against the backdrop of British imperialism, Ronald Colman portrays Richard Helder, a newspaper illustrator/soldier now turned painter. His pictures derive from his war experiences against the fuzzy-wuzzies of Sudan. However, Trenchow (Walter Huston), his friend who has nursed him back to health, believes his popular paintings have become too sanitized. Meanwhile, Helder's childhood sweetheart, Maisie (Muriel Angelus), tries to gain a measure of his success but to no avail. Helder will eventually create Maisie's painting after seeing his "Melancholia" in the eyes of a Cockney wait, Bessie Brooke (Ida Lupino). But when he learns he is going blind, Helder becomes inspired to finish his masterpiece before the lights go out forever. Colman, in another extraordinary performance, brings qualities of vanity, humor, charm, and pathos to a unique characterization. There is no more remarkable example of Colman's quality of speech than the scene with Maisie near the sea about the middle of the film. The supporting cast, particularly Lupino as his spiteful model, is superb. Colman had wanted Vivien Leigh, who would've been his co-star that same year in *Gone With The Wind* had he not turned down the role of (Rett Butler).

BUCK BENNY RIDES AGAIN (1940)

Mark Sandrich

Paramount/82 min.

Short: "Taxi Tangle" (1931) with Jack Benny

"During one of his one thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight radio shows Jack played the part of a cowboy, and on the program portly, raspy-voiced Andy Devine called him 'Buck Benny.' Andy's greeting to Jack on subsequent shows was 'Hiya, Buck,' and in that less sophisticated era those two words became a national catch phrase." — Milt Josefsberg

Jack Benny, one of the most loved of all radio comedians, stars in this enjoyable comedy with a Western backdrop. Jack falls head over heels for gorgeous Joan Cameron (Ellen Drew) but only succeeds in hitting her cab and breaking up her singing audition with her two sisters. He gives her his own audition and discovers she's interested in real men who come from the West. The plot soon takes us to Andy Devine's Nevada ranch where scaredy-cat Jack tries to impress Joan. Telling Andy to round up a couple tough hired hands and have them start something, Jack offers to pay \$10 for every time he has to hit them. Quite a sum for this on-screen miser, and Andy reminds him that it'll add up fast. "I know," Jack says, "but tell them to fall down fast!" Some of the other episodes involve Jack's on-air rivalry with Fred Allen and Rochester's wooing of Joan's maid (Theresa Harris). These moments provide Eddie Anderson with some of the film's best scenes, as when Rochester is sent to deliver candy for Joan but winds up singing "My, My" with Josephine while Jack waits outside in the rain. *Buck Benny* has a nice Paramount look and a stylish set design, such as the hotel/nightclub where American art deco meets American Southwest. With Phil Harris, Dennis Day, Ward Bond, the Merril Abbott Dancers, and "Carmichael."



ONE FOOT IN HEAVEN (1941)

Irving Rapper

Warner/108 min.

Cartoon: "Wholly Smoke" (1938), Frank Tashlin

"The preacher has worked hard, building a church from scratch. Now he has an imposing edifice, and the belated promise of comfort for his large, often-deprived family. Except now the bishop is asking him to take over another struggling parish—to begin work all over again. The man is visibly tortured by disappointment. Alone with his agony, he enters the empty sanctuary and regards the long-promised, expensive new pipe organ. He sits; he begins to pray. As his jaw tightens, the sacred music transforms him. He is almost smiling now, but tears are welling. As the camera pulls closer, we see a face of commitment. Never has an actor imparted more subtly or so triumphantly the conviction of a real man of God. But in that moment and for all time, *Fredric March* is also conveying to us what it can mean truly to be an Actor." — Larry Swindell



Fredric March is outstanding as William Spence, a turn of the century doctor who becomes a Methodist minister. From Ontario, Canada, he brings his self-sacrificing wife (Martha Scott) to Iowa where they move into a dilapidated town parsonage. The story concerns the various problems that arise as Spence moves around the country—from leaky holes in his roof to the gossiping society women who spread malicious lies. The greatest conflict is getting his church built, but the one with the money, Preston Thurston (Gene Lockhart), has his own ideas of how it should be designed. The Spence family is not like other families with so many of life's enjoyments falling outside the Methodist discipline, though Spence is always willing to listen to the younger generation. (His first trip to a movie theatre to see a William S. Hart silent is one of the highlights.) The film is composed of thoughtful, beautiful scenes which make one recall another film about minister life: *Stars in My Crown* (1930). *One Foot in Heaven*, which covers the WWI era and was made to parallel what was then going on in the country in 1941, reminds us of the need for God... and that it is the church which is the heart of any community. With Beulah Bondi, Elisabeth Fraser, Harry Davenport, Laura Hope Crews, and Jerome Cowan. Music by Max Steiner. Film was nominated for Best Picture.

HALLOWEEN HORROR SHOW

October 25



THE BLACK CAT (1934)

Edgar G. Ulmer

Universal/65 min.

Shorts: "Habeas Corpus" (1928), James Parrott (Laurel & Hardy), "Superstition of the Black Cat" (1934)
Trailer: *Psycho* (1960)

"The ravings of Aleister Crowley fascinated Edgar Ulmer; critically, they became the influence which made The Black Cat a

horror film. Taking inspiration from 'the Beast' (as well as Teutonic director Fritz Lang, whom Ulmer had described as 'a sadist of the worst order you can imagine'), taking the 'Poelzig' from Dr. Hans Poelzig (scenic designer of 1920's Der Golem), taking the 'Hjalmar' from The Wild Duck by Ibsen (whom Ulmer admired deeply), Ulmer fashioned the role of Hjalmar Poelzig—High Priest of a Carpathian Lucifer cult, betrayer, murderer, necrophile, who sacrifices virgins, kills his wife, weds his stepdaughter, poses female corpses in glass coffins in his cellar, and dies skinned alive on his own embalming rack." —Gregory William Mank

Edgar G. Ulmer's wickedly perverse horror show ranks with the best of Tod Browning and James Whale. The story begins with a honeymooning couple, Joan (Jacqueline Wells) and Peter Alison (David Manners)—"one of America's greatest writers... of unimportant books." On their train ride they meet the renowned Hungarian psychiatrist, Dr. Vitus Werdegast (Bela Lugosi), a soldier from the Great War with a score to settle. After an accident on a bus in the countryside, Werdegast guides the weary travelers to a modernist house built on the ruins of Fort Marmaros. The owner, Hjalmar Poelzig (Boris Karloff), is an Austrian architect who keeps his dead wife preserved in a glass cabinet (and reads *The Rites of Lucifer* while in bed). Poelzig is the man whom Werdegast has sought out. Now a game of death will be played out amidst an atmosphere of death. This macabre masterpiece is filled with great lines, fantastic set designs, and a brilliant cast. At this stage, *The Uncanny One* and Lugosi were still on equal footing, and it's wonderful to see Bela cast as the hero, albeit a rather ominous one. (Later that same year he'd become Frank Chandler, the romantic hero of the serial *The Return of Chandu*.) With Lucille Lund as Karen. Photographed by John Mescall. Art direction by Charles D. Hall.

FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN (1943)

Roy William Neill

Universal/72 min.

"Of the three monster rally films, Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man is easily the best. Taking a break from the Sherlock Holmes series, the talented Roy William Neill puts forth what seems a sincere

effort, injecting some mood and style into a film whose baldly exploitative title and premise set it down as routine even before a frame of film was exposed. Unlike director Erle C. Kenton, who was more of a ringmaster than a craftsman on the two House pictures, Neill puts his familiar stamp on the film. It's atmospheric, almost noirish in spots, and is enhanced by good performances as well as some excellent technical credits." —Michael Brunas, John Brunas, Tom Weaver

After an amazingly atmospheric opening in which two grave robbers break into the crypt of Lawrence Talbot (Lon Chaney, Jr.), the *Wolf Man* is once again unleashed upon the world. Talbot is found unconscious in the streets of Cardiff and is taken to a hospital. Physician Patric Knowles and Inspector Dennis Hoey (Lestrade in the Sherlock Holmes series) doubt his story of lycanthropy. Talbot soon escapes and finds Maleva (Maria Ouspenskaya), the old gypsy woman who will guard over him. After another full moon transformation and a chase by an angry mob, the *Wolf Man* falls into the frozen ruins of the Frankenstein castle. Here, Larry Talbot discovers the Monster (Bela Lugosi) encased in ice. His hopes are bolstered, through the aid of the Monster, at the prospect of finding Dr. Frankenstein's diary. "The Secrets of Life and Death" could finally bring him eternal peace. Though Lugosi's stiff performance has dated badly, there is one truly frightening moment of him in close-up when Dr. Mannerling is restoring him to full strength. Chaney, though, carries the weight, and he's terrific. He brought pathos and melancholy to the one monster role he could call his own. With Ilona Massey as Baroness Elsa von Frankenstein, Lionel Atwill, and Dwight Frye (in his last Universal film).

November 1

WHO DONE IT? (1942)

Erle C. Kenton

Universal/75 min.

Short: "Call of the Cuckoos" (1927), Clyde Bruckman (Laurel & Hardy)



"Who Done It? provided Abbott and Costello with their best supporting cast to date. No musical numbers were shot for the production, probably in deference to the mood of the film. Kenton's direction, combined with Charles Van Enger's atmospheric camera work, give the film an appropriately sinister ambience. Reportedly, the production was scheduled for forty days, including a week in New York to shoot exteriors around Radio City. But the crew never left Universal City." —Bob Furmanek, Ron Palumbo

Abbott & Costello comedy whodunit set at a radio station. Chick Larkin (Bud) and Mervyn Milgrim (Lou) work as soda jerks at Radio City. They aspire to be mystery writers and are invited to see a performance of "Murder At Midnight" at the GBS Studio. With staff writer Jimmy Turner (Patric Knowles) and producer Jane Little (Louise Allbritton) in attendance, they witness a real-life murder of the executive director, Col. Andrews (Thomas Gomez). Dapper Bud and dimwit Lou determine to solve the case themselves. However, not only is the murderer after our boys, but the cops too! William Gargan as Lt. Moran and William Bendix as Brannigan play the detectives. This is mostly a prop-driven comedy with some funny gags involving a drinking fountain, transcription records, and an elevator, but one of the best is when Lou tries to use the telephone. He has five minutes to claim a \$10,000 prize he won on "Wheel of Fortune" and attempts to contact the studio from a drugstore phone: "Alexander 2222." *Who Done It?* is a wonderful film about old-time radio and a pretty good example of one of Hollywood's best comedy teams. With Don Porter, Jerome Cowan, and Mary Wickes as Juliet. The story, with its similarities to the Wheeler & Woolsey comedy *The Nitwits*, was written by Stanley Roberts, Edmund Joseph, and John Grant.

November 8

SAHARA (1943)

Zoltan Korda

Columbia/97 min.

(in 35mm)

Short: "Last Drop of Water" (1911), D. W. Griffith



"It borrows, chiefly from the English, a sort of light-alloy modification of realism which makes the traditional Hollywood idiom seem as obsolete as a minuet." —James Agee

Superb World War II actioner starring Humphrey Bogart—borrowed from Warners in exchange for Cary Grant. Set after the fall of Tobruk, the film follows the retreat of a much maligned American tank in the Sahara desert.

"Lulubelle" is her name, and she is commanded by Sgt. Joe Gunn (Bogart). Bruce Bennett as "Waco" Hoyt and Dan Duryea as Jimmy Doyle make up the rest of the unit. As they roll further south they pick up a half dozen Allied stragglers and then later, Tambul (Rex Ingram), a Sudanese corporal with his own prisoner. J. Carrol Naish plays the Italian captive—"a load of spaghetti," as Bogie calls him. Desperate for water, the men search for wells which turn up dry. At a desert fort they find some relief before making a last stand against five hundred Germans. And what Bogie war pic would be complete without one of his inspirational, patriotic speeches. Shot in the 120 degree heat of California's Imperial Valley by cinematographer Rudolph Mate, who was nominated for an Oscar. One of the more striking images has Waco searching for help on foot only to collapse on a dune. Like some mirage, the sand cascades down over him like a waterfall. This incredibly suspenseful film was based on an incident from the Russian film *Trinadstat* (*Thirteen*), though it probably owes more to John Ford's *The Lost Patrol*.



RANDOM HARVEST (1942)

Mervyn Le Roy

MGM/126 min.

Cartoon: "Finding His Voice" (1929), Dave Fleischer

"Garson and Colman are eloquent in their scenes together. They complement each other perfectly. She does an amusing Harry Lauder high kick dance in a mini-kilt that is a high spot of the early sequences. Colman is suave, polished, properly bewildered and distraught during his amnesiac sequences, convincingly puzzled during periods where he is making efforts to recall the past, and movingly overjoyed when the clouds clear away from his mind." — Lawrence J. Quirk

Handsomely mounted melodrama starring Ronald Colman and Greer Garson. Colman plays a World War I amnesiac who escapes from the Melbridge Asylum but finds refuge with music hall showgirl Paula (Garson). She takes care of him, restoring his spirits and bringing him happiness through marriage. Their idyllic life together in the country is interrupted when he leaves for Liverpool and is struck unconscious by a car. When he awakens, he only remembers his life before the war. He is Charles Rainier, the son of a noble family who will become the industrial prince of England. Though his political stature rises in the ensuing years, the joy of living seems buried deep within. There are wisps of memory that can't be caught. His only link to those lost years is a house key that might unlock a foggy past. Colman superbly conveys those qualities of bewilderment and longing, and Garson, so luminescent in the role, becomes one of his best leading ladies. Both were particularly suited to stories written by James Hilton. (Garson would win the Best Actress Oscar for *Mrs. Miniver*.) Though the plot is implausible, it is put across the screen with conviction. With Susan Peters (as Kitty), Henry Travers, Reginald Owen, Bramwell Fletcher, Una O'Connor, and Margaret Wycherly. Film was nominated for four Academy Awards including Best Picture, Actor, Director, and Supporting Actress.

November 22



ROAD TO MOROCCO (1942)

David Butler

Paramount/83 min.

Cartoon: "Koko's Thanksgiving" (1925), Dave Fleischer

Short: "Crooner's Holiday" (1932) with Bing Crosby

"Road to Morocco is crammed with lavish pictorial delights, such as an impressive parade of dazzling costume designs by

Edith Head and a plush Arabian palace conceived by Paramount's ace art director Hans Dreier. To enhance the stunning visuals, veteran songwriters James Van Heusen and Johnny Burke composed five of their loveliest, most lively tunes, including 'Moonlight Becomes You,' which Crosby croons to Dorothy Lamour in the palace garden." — Robert Bookbinder

We celebrate a hundred years of Bob Hope with this "road" classic. Orville (Bob) and Jeffrey (Bing Crosby) are a couple resourceful stowaways on a freighter off the coast of Africa. When their ship is wrecked they make it to shore and travel through the desert on a camel. "This must be the place where they empty all the old hourglasses," quips Bob. In town they hatch a plan to load up on free food (but Bob comes across looking more like some of our LaSalle patrons at the concession stand)! Before long Bing sells Orville into slavery, little realizing he'll be a love slave for princess Dorothy Lamour! Dona Drake plays the servant Orville eventually winds up with, and Anthony Quinn is the evil Arab, Sheik Mullay Kassim. Filled with the usual quota of self-reflexive jokes, references to other Hope/Crosby movies, and the kind of dialogue one would expect in an Arabian adventure: "Who is this goat? This moon-faced son of a one-eyed donkey!" This was the third road movie, and as the camel says, "This is the screwiest picture I was ever in." Film was nominated for Best Original Screenplay.

CHAMPAGNE FOR CAESAR (1950)

Richard Whorf

Cardinal (George Moskov)/99 min.

Cartoon: "A Little Soap and Water" (1935),

Dave Fleischer (Betty Boop)



"Those film stars who have become cult figures are usually the ones whose lives were marred by scandal and excess, suffered breakdowns, and died tragically and usually young, like Judy Garland, Errol Flynn, Vivien Leigh, James Dean and Montgomery Clift. Colman did none of these. A very private person, as his daughter Juliet called him, he was as gracious in person as on screen, according to practically everyone who knew him. Joe Franklin writes that he could never find anyone inclined to malign Colman. 'He conducted his personal life via a code of honor and chivalry that seems to have forestalled the making of any enemies... Now that he's gone, and his old films are reappearing on television, it's suddenly apparent how vital a part of the movie scene were his courtly manners and graceful good humor, and how very much he'll be missed.'" — Robert E. Morsberger

Ronald Colman followed up his Oscar-winning performance in *A Double Life* (1947) with this delightful, semi-satirical comedy. Colman plays Beauregard Bottomley, the "last scholar"—but an unemployed genius. He lives in a Hollywood bungalow with his sister, Gwenn (Barbara Britton), who gives piano lessons. Beauregard is given a chance for employment by the Milady Soap Company—the soap that sanctifies—but is quickly dismissed by the wonderfully devilish Burnbridge "Dirty" Waters (Vincent Price, who steals the film). Bottomley then exacts his revenge by going on the "Masquerade For Money" TV quiz show—sponsored by Milady—with the intent of winning the company away from Burnbridge. However, Burnbridge concocts a scheme to find Beauregard's weakness and destroy him with beautiful torture in the form of Celeste Holm. Art Linkletter plays Happy Hogan, the "dreamboat" host of "Masquerade." *Champagne* has aged well these days when our TVs are still filled with passing game show fads like "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." Beauregard was onto something when he said of Hogan, "This man is the forerunner of intellectual destruction in America." With Byron Foulger, Ellie Marshall, and Mel Blanc as the voice of Caesar (the parrot).

December 6

WICHITA (1955))

Jacques Tourneur

Walter Mirisch/AA/81 min.

Short: "The First Round-Up" (1934),

Gus Meins (Little Rascals)



"This unpretentious film is a visual triumph. The interiors, especially those of the McCoy home, where several scenes take place, show the care with detail characteristic of Cat People, Experiment Perilous, and Circle of Danger (to name three Tourneur films in which the interior design is outstanding). We find the same compositional and dramaturgical emphasis on doorways, passages, and transitions. The set design of the film is extremely effective, creating, along with warm lighting, a dimension of unexplored reality and organic coherence." — Chris Fujiwara

My Darling Clementine, John Ford's finest Western, will always remain the definitive film on Wyatt Earp. *Wichita*, to its credit, does not try to duplicate that film. Tourneur's first effort in Cinemascope is a solid Western, and Joel McCrea makes a noble Earp. The famed gunfighter rides into Wichita, Kansas—"Babylon on the Arkansas river," says newspaper publisher Wallace Ford. Wyatt's looking to become a "businessman" but instead gets an offer from the mayor to bring order as the marshal. After a rowdy night in which the cattlemen shoot up the town—the scene where the kid gets shot in the window could've used a retake—Earp accepts the offer and proceeds to clean up the town. There is a chilling inevitability in the way *Wichita* degenerates into chaos. Before long the town businessmen conspire and accuse Wyatt of drastic reform, in effect ruining the boom town by keeping the gun-toting cattlemen away. Lloyd Bridges makes a decent second-string villain as Gyp, but the film needed a menace bigger than just Edgar Buchanan. And though the ending seems abrupt, the viewer comes away thinking more about the film's ethics, which are keenly depicted. Vera Miles co-stars as Laurie, the one and only love interest in Earp's life. With Keith Larsen as Bat Masterson, Peter Graves as Morgan, one of Wyatt's brothers, and poor Mae Clarke, victimized again. Title song performed by Tex Ritter.



THE CHEATERS (1945)

Joseph Kane
 Republic/87 min.
 Print courtesy of Matthew C. Hoffman
 Cartoons: "Night Before Christmas" (1927)
 "Christmas Night" (1932), Van Beuren (Little King)

"A far more interesting film, and a far better role, came along in The Cheaters, in which, as a downtrodden actor invited for Christmas dinner by a wealthy, snobbish family... he ends up by humanizing them, capped by a fireside reading of Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol.' He (Joseph Schildkraut) was the top-billed star of this film." — Robert A. Juran

For years this Christmas classic played on Chicago television, and then it just disappeared. It's become somewhat of a cult film and is one of the hardest films to find on video. J.C. Pidgeon (Eugene Pallette, who was simply a marvelous character actor) is the patriarch of an eccentric family. He is close to bankruptcy but learns of a five million dollar inheritance from an uncle. Meanwhile, Clara Pidgeon (Billie Burke), an empty-headed extravagant woman, and her snobbish daughters, decide to welcome a "charity case" to their home for the holidays. Mr. M, I mean, Mr. Machon (Joseph Schildkraut) plays the charity case—a lame actor who wears poverty with all the charm of an invernness cape. The Pidgeons learn that "Uncle Henry" has willed his money to a showgirl named Florence Watson, but if she cannot be found within a reasonable amount of time, the money will go instead to Mr. Pidgeon. The family, with Mr. Machon's kind assistance, tracks her down and tries to prevent her from ever finding out about the will. The witty script, faintly recalling elements from *Passing of the Third Floor Back* and even *My Man Godfrey* (which also co-starred Eugene Pallette) was written by Frances Hyland. Schildkraut's enactment of "A Christmas Carol"—which leads to a shedding of all artifice in the family—is intelligently conveyed. An impeccable cast adds immeasurably to a movie that feels like it could've been a play. With Ona Munson and Raymond Walburn as the unwelcome brother-in-law. **NOTE:** We'll be showing a fair print with decent sound but with some splices.

December 20



IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (1946)

Frank Capra
 RKO/Liberty Films (Frank Capra)/129 min.
 (in 35mm)
 Cartoon: "Christmas Toyland" (1930), Walt Disney

"Capra was still only middle-aged—he turned forty-nine while he was shooting the film, and he was marking the twentieth anniversary of The Strong Man, his first feature as a director—but Wonderful Life shows that he sensed he was reaching the end of his creative powers and that the time had come to make a definitive artistic statement. And so it became, for after Wonderful Life, the rest of his film career was essentially

redundant, his work that of a man opting out of active engagement with life and settling for a dispiriting on-the-job retirement." — Joseph McBride

This year you can skip the network television broadcast with all its interruptions as we proudly present a brand new 35mm print of one of the ten greatest movies ever made. Mr. James Stewart stars as George Bailey, a small-town fellow with big dreams. After his marriage to sweetheart Donna Reed, George's life becomes one filled with big responsibilities. Through the machinations of town scrooge Mr. Potter (Lionel Barrymore), George becomes discouraged by life and considers suicide. However, with the guidance of a guardian angel named Clarence (Henry Travers), George discovers that every life has value—and no man is a failure who has friends. This sentimental but honest drama may be the finest example of Americana put on the screen. The last half hour remains one of the most haunting and uplifting passages in screen history. Familiarity in no way diminishes the meaning and value of a film which becomes more poignant with each passing year. The perfect supporting cast includes Thomas Mitchell, Beulah Bondi, Frank Faylen, Ward Bond, Gloria Grahame, and H.B. Warner. Based on "The Greatest Gift," a short story by Philip Van Doren Stern. Photographed by Joseph Walker, Joseph Biroc, and (uncredited) Victor Milner. Music by Dimitri Tiomkin.

SHALL WE DANCE (1937)

Mark Sandrich
 RKO (Pandro S. Berman)/116 min.
 (in 35mm)
 Short: "Let's Dance" (1933) with George Burns
 and Gracie Allen



"It also contained some imaginative devices that were quite as good as anything in Swing Time—better, because they were visual: the flip book of pictures that dissolves into Rogers dancing and the lifesize wax model of Rogers that creates an unearthly effect in one or two scenes. These elements—the ballet vs. musical comedy theme and the real vs. false Ginger theme—are merely stated in the course of the plot; they aren't dramatized and they don't even become themes until the big production number at the end of the film makes them even more riotously exciting than we can believe possible." — Arlene Croce

They say the musical is making a comeback these days, but it only takes a screening of a movie like this to remind us that the classic musical went out with Fred and Ginger. Spurred by the Broadway hit *On Your Toes*, RKO set out to combine ballet with tap. Fred Astaire is Petrov, an American ballet performer whose real name is Pete Peters. The typical plot device has him falling in love with a picture of Broadway dancer Linda Keene (Ginger Rogers). With his prissy manager Edward Everett Horton, Astaire pursues her onto the *Queen Anne* luxury liner, but complications arise regarding the nature of their relationship. Rumor gets out that Linda is Petrov's wife, and that it's been kept secret for professional reasons. Other characters react accordingly to the question of whether or not they're truly married—made when the public still took marriage seriously. "Mrs. Petrov, my best congratulations," says worried hotel manager Eric Blore. "I can go to bed with a *clear* conscience!" As with the other films, Fred and Ginger express their love through the musical numbers and consummate that union on the dance floor. This was the only Astaire-Rogers film for which George and Ira Gershwin provided songs, which included, among others: "Slap That Bass," "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off," and "They Can't Take That Away From Me." The seventh teaming doesn't have the reputation of its predecessors, but it has all the elements we'd expect: shiny floors and white pianos, tuxedos and gowns, extravagant art deco sets, and the charm of Ginger and the perfectionism of Fred, who made movement an art form. With Jerome Cowan, William Brisbane, and Ketti Gallian.





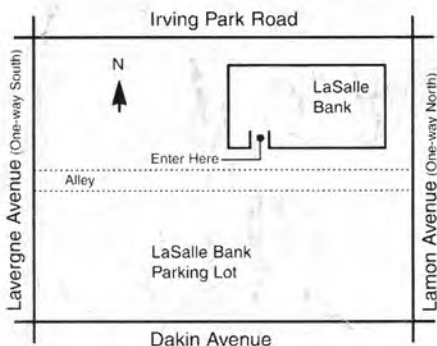
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