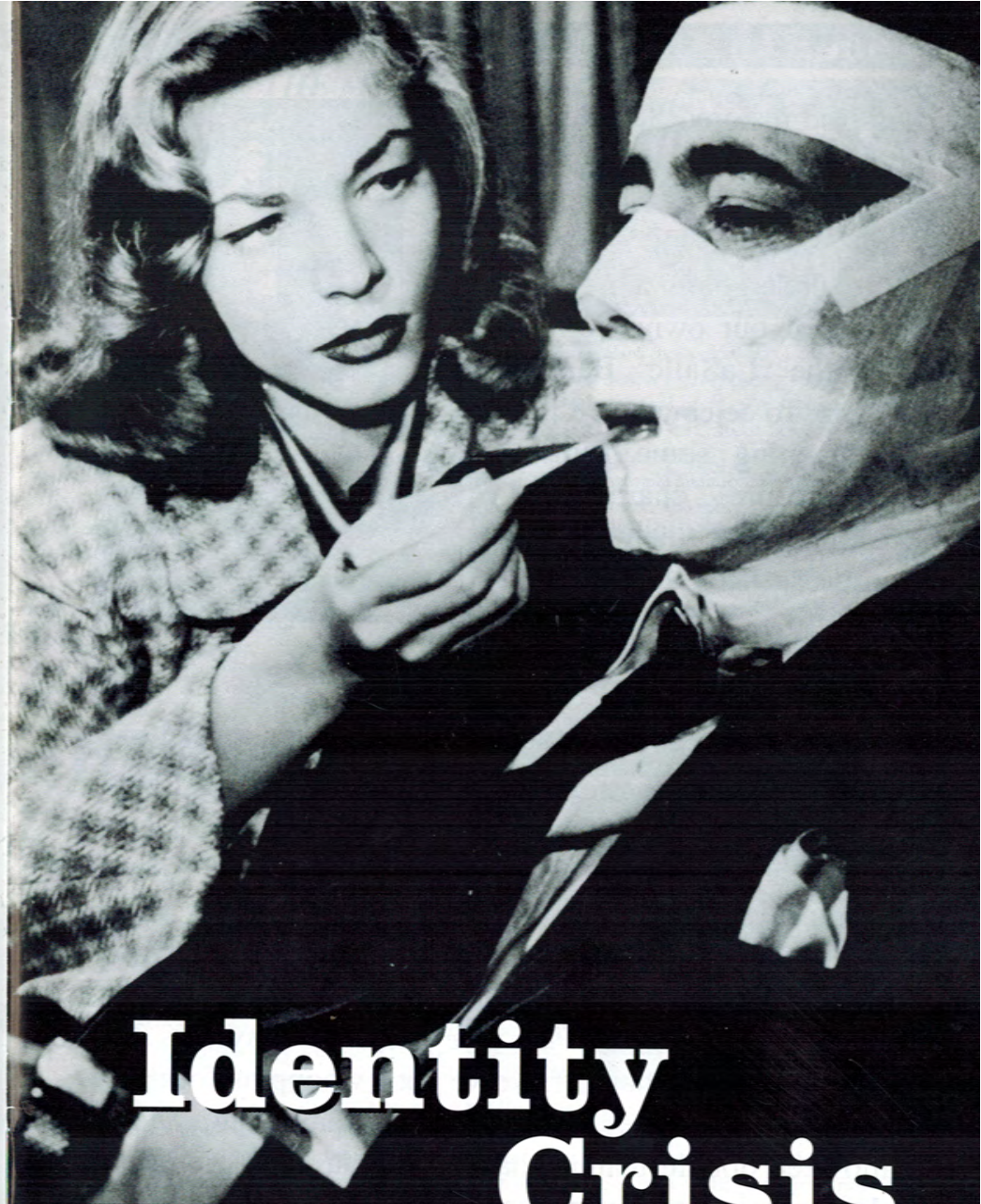




Identity Crisis

The LaSalle Bank Cinema

*July – December
2004*

With the restored Schubert Theatre scheduled to reopen as The LaSalle Bank Theatre in 2005, we're undergoing a name change of our own: we're now the LaSalle Bank Cinema. To celebrate, we'll be screening some films that feature characters wrestling with their own identities. Royalty goes incognito, crooks try it straight, and vice versa on both accounts.



Lest the next six months turn into a makeover parade, we'll be ducking in and out of our theme with other highlights, including live piano accompaniment (courtesy of David Drazin) for King Vidor's *The Crowd*. In addition to two films apiece by Michael Powell, Preston Sturges, Ernst Lubitsch, and Otto Preminger, we'll be giving our 35mm CinemaScope lenses a workout with screenings of Nicholas Ray's *Bigger Than Life* and Jack Clayton's *The Innocents*. To top it all off, we've got a whopping four pre-Code works by the great Rouben Mamoulian, and a Halloween double feature that finds Bela Lugosi on both ends of man/animal hybridization experiments.

THE MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK (1944)

Preston Sturges
Paramount/98 min.
35mm

Short: "Jerry's" (1974), Tom Palazzolo



Preston Sturges put his favorite 4F through the wartime wringer in 1944, forcing Eddie Bracken into small town heroism here and in the equally scathing *Hail the Conquering Hero* (both received Oscar nominations for best screenplay). This time around Bracken plays Norval Jones, forever pining for Trudy (Betty Hutton), whose attempts to dress up her raging hormones as patriotism land her in a world of trouble. When a military farewell dance leaves Trudy pregnant and in the dark about her new husband's identity, Norval devises an "airtight, watertight, foolproof, and almost legal" solution that, of course, just makes things worse, propelling a personal scandal to international attention. William Demarest is at his frustrated best as constable/curmudgeon Kockenlocker, "father and mother combined" to Trudy and Emmy (Diana Lynn). In typical Sturges fashion, the plot finally (d)evolves into a frantic skewering of church and state alike, along with irreverent digs at every sacred American institution between. The director even indulges in a little self-referential fun amid the mayhem, resurrecting The Boss and McGinty, who declare the whole ordeal "the biggest thing to happen to this state since we stole it from the Indians."

THE CROWD (1928)

King Vidor
MGM/104 min.
16mm

with live accompaniment by David Drazin
Cartoon: "Porky's Preview" (1941), Tex Avery



Head firmly planted in the clouds, go-getter John Sims (James Murray) heads to the Big Apple to make his mark in King Vidor's visionary critique of the American success ethic. After a lifetime of believing he's destined for greatness, John quickly resigns to anonymity in a towering skyscraper, channeling his shrunken ambitions into desperately concocted advertising slogans. Inspired by a successful trip through Coney Island's Tunnel of Love on a blind date with Mary (Eleanor Boardman, Vidor's wife at the time), John proposes to his new flame on the train ride home. Disturbingly convinced his modest family life is some sort of failure, John's selfish frustration gets interrupted by genuine tragedy (including a harrowing preview of Murray's own self-destructive fate). The director on his protagonist: "He's just observing life...the ordinary man observing life. He's not causing situations; he's not bringing them about. It's the carrying out of the idea of *The Big Parade*." Permeated with urban expressionism, Vidor employs gliding camera movements and location photography in a last gasp of silent movie freedom before the onset of the microphone-tethered talkies—too bad the incessant mugging of Bert Roach hasn't aged quite so well. Vidor's depression prophecy earned Oscar nominations for best picture and best director; in 1934 he self-financed a sequel, *Our Daily Bread*, in which the deflated Sims family (reprised by Tom Keene and Karen Morely) takes up farming.

(With 10 Minute Intermission)

July 17

**CITY STREETS (1931)**

Rouben Mamoulian

Paramount/82 min.

16mm

Short: "The Fatal Glass of Beer" (1933), W.C. Fields

Two years after *Applause* and still waiting for Hollywood to catch up, erstwhile Broadway director Rouben Mamoulian returned to filmmaking for this stylish gangster yarn. Sharpshooter The Kid (Gary Cooper) catches the eye of Nan (Sylvia Sydney), stepdaughter of mobster Pop Cooley (Guy Kibee). She encourages him to join Big Fellow Maskal's (Paul Lukas) bootlegging gang, but The Kid insists on going the straight-and-narrow. That all goes out the window when Nan lands in jail in connection with a murder, and The Kid takes up

crime in order to scrape up enough dough to cover her legal expenses. Once he's fled the moral high ground, The Kid finds that easy money and fast living isn't so bad after all. Cinematographer Lee Garmes was in the midst of his career-defining stretch with Josef von Sternberg (whose *Underworld* is an obvious touchstone), and his work here is of the same caliber. In addition to all the striking visuals, Mamoulian added aural flashbacks to his repertoire of precedent-creating experiments. Despite the seedy subject matter, the director took great pride in keeping all of the film's killings offscreen, even while tying it up with an amoral ending that would've had him in hot water with the censors just three years later.

**THE LITTLE GIANT (1933)**

Roy Del Ruth

Warner Brothers/75 min.

16mm

A mere two years after *Little Caesar*, Edward G. Robinson was already spoofing his own tough-guy image. When the repeal of prohibition provides bootlegger Bugs Ahern (Robinson) with the perfect excuse to turn over a new leaf, he liquidates his illegal assets and splits for Santa Barbara in pursuit of high culture, dragging chief lieutenant Al (Russell Hopton) along for the ride. First stop: high tea with gold-digging debutante Polly Cass (Helen Vinson). "Positively crawling with culture," Bugs rents out a 14-bathroom mansion from incognito socialite Ruth Wayburn (Mary Astor), who stays on as his social secretary. Polly accepts the gangster's marriage proposal with her eyes already on the alimony, making poor reformed Bugs seem mismatched with the erudite breed of west-coast crooks he's mixed up with. He'd be much

better off with Ruth anyhow. Also featuring Berton Churchill, Louise Mackintosh, and Don Dillaway as Polly's swindling family, and Kenneth Thomson as her boyfriend. The timely scenario of writing team Robert Lord and Wilson Mizner's crackling script offers plenty of last-minute pre-Code hijinks, delivered at a lightning pace by director Roy Del Ruth. Produced in the midst of Ruth's 1933 flurry, during which he churned out six pictures, including *Lady Killer* and *Employees' Entrance*.

July 24

THE LODGER (1944)

John Brahm

20th Century Fox/84 min.

35mm

Cartoon: "Jack From All Trades" (1927),

Otto Messmer (Felix)



Laird Cregar gives the performance of his unfortunately abbreviated career in a role tailor made for his hulking intensity—Jack the Ripper. As London is being terrorized by its infamous serial killer, the Burtons (Sarah Allgood and Cedric Hardwicke) rent a room to the mysterious Slade (Cregar). Their suspicions aroused by the boarder's peculiar habit of ducking out in the middle of the night carrying a black leather bag, the Burtons soon regret placing Slade in such close proximity to their showgirl niece (Merle Oberon). George Sanders plays John Warwick, the Scotland Yard detective/love interest who puts a handy historical anachronism to good use in his pursuit of the murderer. As if Cregar's glowering presence weren't enough, John Brahm and cinematographer Lucien Ballard mischievously betray the intended ambiguity over Slade's real identity with their chiaroscuro lighting design. Marie Belloc Lowndes's source novel had received the silent treatment (complete with cop-out ending) from Alfred Hitchcock in 1927, and resurfaced in 1953 as *The Man in the Attic*, starring Jack Palance. Cregar gave his final turn the following year in Brahm's similarly feverish *Hangover Square*.

July 31

**THE EDGE OF THE WORLD
(1937)**

Michael Powell

British Independent Exhibitors'

Distributors/80 min.

35mm

Short: An Airman's Letter to His Mother
(1941), Michael Powell

"After the past five years' arguing, struggling, begging, pleading, shouting, raving, persuading, I was at last going to make the film that I myself wanted to make: all the other had been chosen for me and I had tried to make entertainment out of them. I was still innocent enough to believe that the filmmaker should choose what he wanted to do and that he is the best judge of how it should be done. With freedom of choice, however, goes responsibility to the financial backers of the film." Fortunately director Michael Powell had producer Joe Rock underwriting his graduation into serious filmmaking. Inspired by the evacuation of St. Kilda, Powell, operating in Flaherty mode, dragged his crew to the remote island of Foula where, according to the opening text "the slow shadow of death is falling." Threatened by the encroachment of the modern world, restless youth Robbie Manson (Eric Berry) plans to leave Foula, despite his father's protests. Robbie's in love with the twin sister of Andrew Gray (Niall MacGinnis), who proposes a cliff climbing race to decide the fate of Foula, per an ancient custom. Those left to dwell in the tragic aftermath include Belle Chrystall as Ruth, and John Laurie as her father/island patriarch. Michael Powell himself appears, and even gets the film's first line. Years later, Powell and Laurie returned to Foula, a trip recorded in the nostalgic documentary *Return to the Edge of the World*.



ONE HOUR WITH YOU (1932)

Ernst Lubitsch & George Cukor
Paramount/80 min.
16mm
Cartoon: "Notes to You" (1941),
Friz Freleng (Porky Pig)

Ernst Lubitsch pulled out all the stops when updating his *The Marriage Circle* for the sound era, adding tunes, rhyming dialogue, and a complete disregard for the fourth wall. Maurice Chevalier stars as Parisian

doctor Andre Bertier, ever faithful to his loving wife Collette (Jeanette MacDonald) despite the relentless advances of his female clientele. His fidelity finally meets its match with the arrival of a new patient, Collette's best friend Mitzi (Genevieve Tobin). Faced with unparalleled feats of monogamous strength, an overwhelmed Andre turns to the audience for advice – an atypical move for Chevalier's suave persona. While Andre has his hands full with Mitzi, his friend Adolph (Charlie Ruggles) seizes the opportunity to put the moves on Collette. All the while, Mitzi's being tailed by a private detective (Richard Carle) hired by her suspicious husband (Roland Young). The tunes by Oscar Straus and Leo Robin include "We Will Always be Sweethearts" and "What Would You Do?" A fledgling George Cukor co-directed the American version, while Lubitsch concurrently filmed a French-language version that retained his fluent leads. 1932 saw Chevalier and MacDonald belting out more duets in *Love Me Tonight* (screening later in this series). Oscar nominated for Best Picture.



WHERE THE SIDEWALK ENDS (1950)

Otto Preminger
20th Century Fox/95 min.
35mm
Short: "The Great Chase" (1940), W.C. Fields

Otto Preminger finished his run at Fox studios by reuniting the stars of *Laura* for a noir on the other end of New York City. Dana Andrews is detective

Mark Dixon, a loose cannon whose obsessive vendetta against mob boss Scalise (Gary Merrill) is easily traced back to his father's career as a gangster. Dixon takes his bad habit of roughing up the witnesses too far when he accidentally kills while questioning a robbery suspect named Paine (Craig Stevens). Dixon dumps the body only to be assigned to the case, which he uses as another outlet for his rage by attempting to pin it on Scalise's men. However, when the police nab the victim's innocent stepfather Jiggs (Tom Tully), figuring that the slaying was the unfortunate result of a familial feud, Dixon's conscience begins to compete with his thirst for vengeance. Plus, his growing infatuation with Paine's estranged wife (Gene Tierney) doesn't make matters any easier. Bert Freed and Karl Malden turn up as Dixon's partner and commander on the force. Cinematographer Joseph LaSelle capitalizes on the claustrophobic New York City locations to bring out the grime in Ben Hecht's screenplay, which was adapted from William Stuart's novel *Night Cry*.

BIGGER THAN LIFE (1956)

Nicholas Ray
20th Century Fox/95 min.
35mm CinemaScope
Short: "The Miraculous Movies of Melies" -
contains "The Vanishing Lady" (1896)
and "Dream of an Opium Fiend" (1908),
Georges Melies



Leave it to Nicholas Ray to twist a film ostensibly about the dangers of cortisone abuse into a bitter attack on picket-fence conformity. James Mason (who also produced) stars as Ed Avery, a suburban schoolteacher who suffers from intense bouts of pain that lead to his being prescribed the "wonder drug." He's quickly hooked on the stuff, transforming from genial family man to raging megalomaniac. The cortisone-fueled Mr. Hyde to Ed's Dr. Jekyll makes his public debut spewing fire and brimstone at an apocalyptic parent-teacher night, proclaiming "Childhood is a congenital disease – and the purpose of education is to cure it," and "we're breeding a race of moral midgets." Things only go downhill, especially for Ed's wife and son, played by Barbara Rush and Christopher Olsen. Inspired by a *New Yorker* article about a New Jersey schoolteacher who was mentally unhinged after receiving experimental cortisone treatments, Cyril Hume and Richard Maibaum's screenplay was extensively retooled by the director and uncredited writers Gavin Lambert and Clifford Odets. Nicholas Ray's outright condemnation of American ideals was certainly an anomaly in 1950s cinema, and the film even attracted concern from the American Medical Association, who inserted into the movie posters an image of a doctor with the declaration "I prescribed it...but he misused it!"

ME AND MY GAL (1932)

Raoul Walsh
20th Century Fox/78 min.
16mm
Cartoon: "The Great Cheese Robbery" (1920),
Vernon Stallings (Krazy Kat)



Eighteen years before they appeared together in Vincente Minnelli's *Father of the Bride*, Spencer Tracy and Joan Bennett hooked up twice in 1932, first under more tumultuous circumstances in *She Wanted a Millionaire* (guess the moral), and later in director Raoul Walsh's wisecracking comedy. When he's not busting her sister's boyfriend, streetwise New York City cop Danny Dolan (Tracy) spends most of his time indulging his crush on Helen Riley (Bennett), the sassy waitress at a local greasy spoon. Fortunately, Danny is able to capitalize on a *Strange Interlude* parody and win his dream girl. Meanwhile, Helen's sister Kate (Marion Burns) gets mixed up with shady mobster Duke Castage (played by George Walsh, brother of the director). It's up to Danny to make good on Helen's sisterly protectiveness and put Duke behind bars before Kate gets in too deep. Oh yeah, there's a subplot with Henry B. Walthall as a paralyzed vet who blinks in Morse code. Screenplay by Arthur Kober, from a story by Philip Klein and Barry Connors, which was remade in 1940 as *Pier 13*.



SIDE STREET (1950)

Anthony Mann

MGM/83 min.

16mm

Cartoon: "Trouble Indemnity" (1950),
Pete Burness (Mr. Magoo)

Following their successful pairing in *They Live By Night*, Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell rekindled their onscreen romance as newlyweds Joe and Ellen Norson in the last of Anthony Mann's definitive string of noir-tinged thrillers. Short on cash with a baby on the way, normally stand-up guy Joe suffers a lapse of honor when he steals 30 grand out of an empty office on his mail route. Joe's caviar dreams are quickly shot down

when the loot turns out to be blackmail collected by sadistic thug George Garsell (James Craig). Too late in realizing he's in over his head, Joe gets dragged into the underworld, with both cops and robbers in hot pursuit. Joseph Ruttenberg's consistently inventive cinematography fills John Alton's shoes nicely, especially in the climactic car chase, shot on location in the streets of Manhattan. With Paul Kelly as the hard-boiled police captain, and Jean Hagen as the obligatory chanteuse. It all begins with a semi-documentary prologue with omniscient narration inviting the audience to pick out potential murderers from random samplings of New Yorkers. Occasionally chiming in throughout, the narrator's disapproving yet sympathetic attitude towards Joe's misadventures strives to meld two seemingly irreconcilable genres: film noir and after-school specials.



QUEEN CHRISTINA (1933)

Rouben Mamoulian

MGM/101 min.

35mm

Short: "Frogland" (1922), Ladislav Starevitch

Greta Garbo stars as the eponymous 17th century peacemaker in Rouben Mamoulian's first MGM gig. Heir to the Swedish throne following her father's demise in the Thirty Years' War, Christina's efforts to breathe new life into the stodgy regime are met with hesitation by government officials too busy fretting over her single status like a pack of doting mothers. Her incognito retreat to a hunting lodge (where everyone insists on Garbo's dubious androgyny while speculating on their queen's promiscuity)

interrupted by the arrival of verbose Spaniard Don Antonio de la Prada (John Gilbert), the lovestruck Christina finds herself no longer able to keep her gender under wraps. After enjoying a brief honeymoon, their idyllic union is truncated by the shackles of nepotism. Already pronounced a casualty of talkies, John Gilbert was handpicked by his charitable former lover to play her leading man. Refusing to be bogged down in either historical facts or the boring traps typical of period romance, Mamoulian sneaks in censor-baiting hints at Christina's bisexuality and generously favors Garbo close-ups over the sleepy art direction. Contemporary viewers may find it refreshing to see a world leader stick to her guns in condemnation of xenophobia, bureaucracy, and war.

MONTE CARLO (1930)

Ernst Lubitsch

Paramount/90 min.

16mm

Short: "Paris to Monte Carlo" (1905),
Georges Melies



After her screen debut in *The Love Parade*, Jeanette MacDonald returned in director Ernst Lubitsch's follow-up musical, with Jack Buchanan filling in for Maurice Chevalier as her leading man. Kicking off with one of Lubitsch's most inspired musical episodes, Countess Vera Von Conti (MacDonald) once again ditches Prince Otto Von Seibenheim (Claud Allister) at the altar, this time skipping town on a train to the tune of "Beyond the Blue Horizon," with members of the passing countryside providing her accompaniment. She winds up in a Monte Carlo casino, where the infatuated Count Rudolph Falliere (Buchanan) keeps his identity secret while convincing her to hire him as her hairdresser/good-luck charm, an ideal position to win her heart. They manage a few duets before more financially appropriate suitors for Vera step in, causing Rudolph to regret his hasty disguise. Richard Whiting and W. Franke Harling's score includes "Always in All Ways" and "Whatever It Is, It's Grand." With Zasu Pitts, Lionel Belmore, Tyler Brooke, and John Roche as Paul, the "real" hairdresser. After *Monte Carlo*, Jack Buchanan retreated back to his native England, not appearing stateside again until 1953, donning a baby bonnet in *The Band Wagon*.

THE SPY IN BLACK (1939)

Michael Powell

Columbia Pictures/82 min.

16mm

Short: "German Naval Landings"
(1917) German WWI footage



Upon reading Emeric Pressburger's revamping of J. Storer Clouston's novel, Michael Powell "had seen a marvel: a screenwriter who could really write. I was not going to let him get away in a hurry. I had always dreamt of this phenomenon: a screenwriter with the heart and mind of a novelist, who would be interested in the medium of film, and who would have wonderful ideas, which I would turn into even more wonderful images, and who only used dialogue to make a joke or to clarify the plot. I congratulated him on the conjuring trick he had pulled with poor Storer Clouston's plot." *The Spy in Black* inaugurated what became one of the most fruitful collaborations in film history, yielding such miracles as *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*, *A Matter of Life and Death*, and *The Red Shoes*. The action takes place in World War I, with Conrad Veidt starring as Ernst Hardt, a German U-Boat captain sent as a spy to a British naval base. Surprised to find a looker like Valerie Hobson as his contact, Hardt becomes too distracted by romance to catch on that she's a British double agent. Powell and Pressburger performed their first narrative stunt in casting the enemy as a sympathetic lead. The next year, the writer/director team reunited with Veidt and Hobson for another espionage thriller, *Contraband*.

October 2



I WAKE UP SCREAMING (1941)

H. Bruce Humberstone

20th Century Fox/82 min.

35mm

Cartoon: "Sure Locked Homes" (1926),
Otto Messmer (Felix)

Victor Mature and Betty Grable mercifully keep the
beefcake/cheesecake factor to a minimum in this film

noir prototype. Not surprisingly, it's the great Laird Cregar who steals the show as detective Ed Cornell, investigating the murder of Hollywood hopeful Vicky Lynn (Carole Landis). Suspects abound, notably Frankie Christopher (Mature), Vicky's sister Jill (Grable), and peripherals played by Elisha Cook, Jr., Allyn Joslyn, and Alan Mowbray. Cornell's obsessive hounding of Frankie provides plenty of welcome opportunities to watch Laird Cregar berate Victor Mature, and it soon appears the detective isn't as much interested in solving the case as he is just generally giving Frankie a bad time. Time has imposed interesting retroactive significance onto certain aspects of *I Wake Up Screaming*, such as the impending tragic fates that befell costars Cregar and Lynn, and the repeated incorporation of "Over the Rainbow" into the film's score. Director H. Bruce Humberstone gets plenty of pulp mileage out of his shadowy lighting and the occasional odd frame, especially in the early scenes, as Cregar storms between interrogation rooms, navigating Jill and Frankie's oscillating flashbacks. This juggling of perspectives is curious for a film with a first person title—exactly which character does "I" refer to? Don't look for answers in the movie's biggest broken promise—nobody actually wakes up screaming.

October 9



SONG OF SONGS (1933)

Rouben Mamoulian

Paramount/90 min.

16mm

Short: "The Original Movie" (1922), Tony Sarg

Marlene Dietrich escaped the clutches of Josef von Sternberg to work with another great stylist of the early 1930s: Rouben Mamoulian, who again displays his customary aesthetic dexterity. Following her father's death, Lily Czepernek (Dietrich) arrives in Berlin to stay with her aunt (Alison Skipworth) and work at her bookstore. There she meets neighboring artist Richard Waldrow (Brian Aherne), who instantly recognizes her as the cure for his bad case of sculptor's block. Lily begins sneaking out at night to pose for Richard, whose penchant for sculpting nudes is readily used as an excuse by Mamoulian to push the pre-Code envelope. The tension between artist and model spells romance, but trouble brews when the resulting statue catches the eye of Baron von Merzbach (Lionel Atwill, who would again cross paths with Dietrich in *The Devil is a Woman*). Scared off by "notions in her head

about eternal fidelity," Richard concedes his muse to the manipulative Baron. Lily's marriage and newfound status as Baroness provides Marlene Dietrich with a perfect opportunity for one of her trademark about-face character changes. Hermann Sudermann's source novel had already been adapted twice during the silent era, with Elsie Ferguson and Pola Negri as the previous inhabitants of the lead role.

October 16

GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935 (1935)

Busby Berkeley

Warner Brothers/98 min.

16mm

Short: "Klondike Goldrush Scrapbook" (1898-
1901), Edison Co.



Given a free directorial hand, Busby Berkeley officially went off the deep end with "Lullaby of Broadway," the free-associative finale of the 1935 installment in the *Gold Diggers* series. A self-contained song-and-dance aberration that appears to have been accidentally spliced into an otherwise unrelated film, "Lullaby" stands out as one of Berkeley's most compelling and audacious visions. The let's-put-on-a-show plot that surrounds it concerns the arrival of the Prentiss family at Wentworth Palace, an upscale hotel where medical student Dick Curtis (Dick Powell, used to this kind of thing by now) works as a clerk with his fiancée Arlene (Dorothy Dare). Unhappily engaged to snuff specialist Mosely Thorpe (Hugh Herbert), Ann Prentiss (Gloria Stuart) works out a suspicious deal with her meddling mother Matilda (Alice Brady), wherein she concedes to eventually marrying Mosely in exchange for temporary freedom. In an effort to temper her daughter's quest for immediate gratification, Matilda enlists Dick as Ann's chaste chaperone to the tune of \$500. Two songs later, they're lovebirds, sparking a movie-wide game of romantic musical chairs. Meanwhile, cheapskate millionaire Matilda has her hands full fending off the platoon of swindling eccentrics (Adolphe Menjou, Joseph Cawthorn, and Grant Mitchell) she's employed to organize her annual charity event. Glenda Farrell and Frank McHugh round out the ensemble cast. Though relegated to the final reel, the big production numbers kick off Matilda's Milk Fund Follies with dozens of dancing grand pianos for "The Words Are In My Heart." "Lullaby" won the Oscar for best song, with Berkeley's hallucinations earning a nomination for best choreography.

October 23

THE INNOCENTS (1961)

Jack Clayton

20th Century Fox/100 min.

35mm CinemaScope

Short: "Magic Mummy" (1933), John Foster,
Vernon Stallings – Van Beuren Studios



Start Halloween a week early with Jack Clayton's prime archetype of the scary-little-kids-singing genre, certainly the definitive version of Henry James's frequently adapted *The Turn of the Screw*. Deborah Kerr stars as Miss Giddens, newly appointed governess to creepily angelic orphans Miles (Martin Stephens, already a horror veteran from *Village of the Damned*) and Flora (Pamela Franklin). Immediately taken with the children upon her arrival at Bly House, Miss Giddens only learns of the morbid fates met by the country estate's previous employees from housekeeper Miss Grose (Megs Jenkins). Foreboding exposition quickly gives way spooky atmospherics when Miss Giddens spots the ghosts of Bly's past routinely popping up around the grounds. Corrosively suspicious of the supernatural corruption she perceives lurking beneath the children's pleasant facades, Miss Giddens freaks out, bringing the film's trippy sound design along with her. William Archibald and Truman Capote's screenplay wisely keeps the validity of ultra-repressed Miss Giddens' paranoia dubious, an effective strategy enhanced by Clayton's added emphasis on Kerr's reaction shots over the images that inspire them. Dynamically photographed in deep focus CinemaScope by Freddie Francis, who later directed several Hammer horror pictures and eventually became a favorite cinematographer of David Lynch. Featuring Peter Wyngarde and Clytie Jessop in the scary parts, and Michael Redgrave as The Uncle.

HALLOWEEN HORROR SHOW

October 30



ISLAND OF LOST SOULS (1932)

Erle C. Kenton

Paramount/71 min.

16mm

Cartoon: "Ghosts" (1927), Otto Messmer (Felix)

Shipwrecked on a remote island with a zoo's worth of animals and a mad scientist to contend with, unlucky sailor Edward Parker (Richard Arlen) has his hands full in the first (and best) cinematic adaptation of H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. Decked out in a gleaming white suit and a devilish goatee, Charles Laughton dives into the part of Dr. Moreau with feverish delight. Sauntering between manimals, he leads his guest on a Willy Wonka-style tour of his refuge from popular science. Not even the ominously named House of

Pain fazes old Edward, who takes the inhuman monstrosities roaming the island for "natives," and even concedes to a bit of matchmaking when he hooks up with Lota the Panther Woman (Kathleen Burke) at Moreau's goading. By the time he catches on to his host's macabre surgery and god-like control over his creations, revolution is nigh. Leila Hyams and Paul Hurst turn up as Edward's rescue party, and that's Bela Lugosi hiding behind so much hair as The Sayer of the Law. Director Erle C. Kenton does a good job keeping the violence offscreen, instead allowing the tortured screams that emanate from the House of Pain to rouse the imagination.



MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE (1932)

Robert Florey

Universal/61 min.

16mm

Though the opening titles proclaim "Based on the Immortal Classic by Edgar Allen Poe," Robert Florey's consolation prize for getting booted off *Frankenstein* is at least as indebted to *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* as the alleged literary source. In 1845 Paris, mustachioed medical student Pierre Dupin (Leon Ames, back when he was Leon Waycoff, still stiff as a board) takes Camille

(Sidney Fox) to the carnival, where Dr. Mirakle (Bela Lugosi) espouses vague evolutionary mumbo-jumbo and shows off Erik, his pet gorilla. Busy conducting grotesque experiments based on opaque theories about cross-breeding ape and woman, Mirakle hopes his search for Erik's hypodermic bride has ended when the primate takes a shine to Camille—the mad scientist even tries to sweeten her up with a new bonnet before just giving up and kidnapping her. Will Dupin arrive in time to rescue Mirakle's latest guinea pig? "Paris" receives an expressionistic overhaul courtesy of art director Charles D. Hall and the lens of master cinematographer Karl Freund. Though expository patches tend to drag, Florey cooks up several memorably morbid scenes, and Lugosi is remarkably effective in a role that requires him to speak gibberish to a guy in a monkey suit (veteran simian impersonator Charles Gemora).

November 6

THE GREAT MCGINTY (1940)

Preston Sturges

Paramount/82 min.

16mm

Cartoon: "Hell Bent for Re-Election" (1944),

Chuck Jones



"I was governor of a state, baby." After proving himself a natural born racketeer, Chicago hobo Dan McGinty (Brian Donlevy) finds himself climbing the crooked political ladder, with graftmeister The Boss (Akim Tamiroff) supplying the rungs. On the campaign trail, McGinty picks up a wife/conscience (Muriel Angelus) to secure the women's vote ("Marriage: the most beautiful setup between the sexes"), and is soon looking to shed his status as a puppet of The Boss's corrupt machine—but it's a long way down to the banana republic cabana from where the story is relayed. Preston Sturges sold his Academy Award winning script to Paramount for \$10 on the condition that it be his directorial debut—look out for William Demarest, Arthur Hoyt, Harry Rosenthal, Esther Howard, and other members of his burgeoning stock company. Though Sturges hadn't yet perfected his scattershot blend of satire and slapstick, he attacks liberals and conservatives with equal zeal, and the abundance of priceless wisecracks and macho posturing (oh yeah?) are distinctly of his emerging voice. Overflowing with vicious one-liners like "you gotta crawl before you creep" and "in this town, I'm all the parties," let's hope this doesn't hit too close to home come November.

November 13

CITY GIRL (1930)

F.W. Murnau

20th Century Fox/88 min.

16mm

Short: "Town Rat and the Country Rat" (1926),

Ladislas Starevitch



After parlaying the resources of a major American studio and the gift of complete creative control into the masterful *Sunrise*, F. W. Murnau sought to revisit similar themes with "Our Daily Bread."

Unfortunately, Fox wasn't quite so generous this time around, and the retitled *City Girl* was eventually completed (and haphazardly retrofitted as a talkie) by the studio, Murnau having already moved on to filming *Tabu* with Robert Flaherty in Tahiti. The titular woman is Kate (Mary Duncan), a Chicago waitress whose pastoral daydreams are answered with the arrival of country bumpkin Lem (Charles Farrell), in town to sell his father's wheat crop. Taking advice from a printed fortune, their relationship transitions rather abruptly from customer/waitress to husband/wife, all in time to catch Lem's train home. Their honeymoon is spent running through a field of wheat in a tracking shot, one of the highlights of Murnau's most cinematographically conservative film (shooter Ernest Palmer was no Karl Freund). Waiting for them is Lem's tyrannical father (David Torrence), furious with his son for scoring a bride instead of a better wheat price. Kate suffers the brunt of his wrath with no help from Lem, whose pathetic passivity lands him in the doghouse with his new wife. Entangled in a web of deceit and jealousy, country life proves far more treacherous than was indicated on the landscape portraits Kate left behind. Some fifty years later, shades of the film Murnau might have made unabated resurfaced in Terrence Malick's *Days of Heaven*.

**PARK ROW (1952)**

Samuel Fuller

United Artists/83 min.

35mm

Cartoon: "Jerky Turkey" (1944), Tex Avery

Twentieth Century Fox head honcho Darryl Zanuck to Samuel Fuller: "Look, Sam, your script is terrific. But your hero is in love with a linotype machine. The audience won't get it. We need stars. We need color. We need CinemaScope. Here's what we do. We cast Greg

Peck as your crusading editor. Then we get Susan Hayward as the love interest. Or maybe Ava Gardner. Dan Dailey can play the guy who jumps off the Brooklyn Bridge. Mitzi Gaynor can be the barmaid. We write some songs and make it a musical!" Needless to say, that didn't happen. Fuller fronted his own two hundred grand to make sure that the studios didn't interfere in his most personal picture, a love letter to the free press. Kicking off with a heartfelt dedication to American Journalism and a reverently narrated dolly shot linking Johannes Gutenberg, Benjamin Franklin, and Fuller's protagonist, responsible journalism never seemed so infectious, much less cinematic. Gene Evans, Mary Welch, Herbert Heyes, Tina Pine, and George O'Hanlon are among the players that Zanuck wasn't biting on. Fuller on his relevant-as-ever themes: "A powerful, free press was a necessary element in a democracy. When the press becomes corrupt, it was harmful. Newspapers were only as good as the men and women running them. They could lie by skimming the complexities of crucial topics and avoiding controversy."

**FALLEN ANGEL (1945)**

Otto Preminger

20th Century Fox/100 min.

35mm

Short: "We Faw Down" (1928), Leo McCarey (Laurel & Hardy)

Otto Preminger returned to *Laura* turf with another tale of masculine obsession embodied by Dana Andrews, but Linda Darnell and Alice Faye combined still don't add

up to Gene Tierney. Penniless con man Eric Stanton (Andrews) gets thrown off a bus, landing in a small California town where, like everyone else, he is quickly transfixed by Stella (Darnell), the waitress at the local diner. Figuring Stella would give him the time of day if he had more money, Eric hatches a scheme to marry the wealthy June Mills (Faye) and split with Stella for San Francisco with June's fortune in tow. When the mysterious murder of his crush ruins his plans, Eric finds himself at the top of detective Mark Judd's (Charles Bickford) suspect list, along with peripherals played by Anne Revere and Bruce Cabot. Alice Faye had hoped to emerge from her musical typecasting with her serious role in *Fallen Angel*, but when many of her scenes landed on the cutting room floor, she walked out on her contract with Darryl Zanuck (who'd already slated Betty Grable as her replacement anyway) and filmmaking altogether for seventeen years, returning in 1962 to play Pat Boone's mom in the *State Fair* remake, of all things.

THE NAKED DAWN (1955)

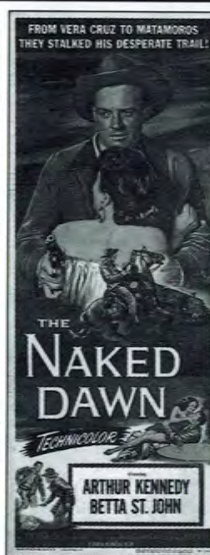
Edgar G. Ulmer

Universal/82 min.

16mm

Note: A black & white print will be shown.
Cartoon: "Daffy Duckaroo" (1942), Norman McCabe

On the lamb after a botched train robbery that left him partnerless, drifter Santiago (Arthur Kennedy) hides out with isolated farmers Manuel (Eugene Iglesias) and Maria (Betta St. John). Santiago whets his hosts' appetite for luxury with tall tales of high living, eventually recruiting Manuel as his new partner in crime. Meanwhile, things start heating up between Santiago and Maria. Dollar signs in their eyes, the corrupted trio members hatch self-destructive plots against each other. This all made quite an impression on critic-turned filmmaker Francois Truffaut, whose 1956 review read: "What counts are the delicate and ambiguous relationships among the three, the stuff of a good novel. One of the most beautiful modern novels I know is *Jules et Jim* by Henri-Pierre Roché, which shows how, over a lifetime, two friends and the woman companion they share love one another with tenderness and almost no harshness, thanks to an esthetic morality constantly reconsidered. *The Naked Dawn* is the first film that has made me think that *Jules et Jim* could be done as a film." Five years later, Truffaut gave it a go. Shot on location in Mexico.

**DARK PASSAGE (1947)**

Delmer Daves

Warner Brothers/107 min.

16mm

Short: "Mighty Like a Moose" (1926), Leo McCarey (Charley Chase)



See the world through Humphrey Bogart's eyes and make eye contact with Lauren Bacall in their third film together. Vincent Parry (Bogart) busts out of San Quentin in a barrel, his escape aided by mysteriously sympathetic stranger Irene Jansen (Bacall). Back home, she justifies her impromptu vigilantism as vengeance against the media blackballing that similarly marred the murder trials of both Vincent and her deceased father (played in a newspaper clipping by writer/director Delmer Daves). Irene loans her pet fugitive enough cash for a permanent makeover courtesy of "specialist" Walter Coley (Houseley Stevenson). Having remained unseen thus far, Vincent emerges from the surgery bearing a striking resemblance to Humphrey Bogart. The hunt for his wife's real killer begins with Vincent tracking down his villainous ex, played with scene-stealing enthusiasm by Agnes Moorehead. Bogart's on-screen absence for the first third of the picture is facilitated through striking first-person cinematography and a great array of character turns, including Bruce Bennett, Clifton Young, and Tom D'Andrea. A similar subjective perspective had been attempted to lesser effect in Robert Montgomery's 1946 *Lady in the Lake*. Writer/director Delmer Daves wisely confines his gimmick to the film's first act, couching it within an already striking visual sensibility – especially notable are the whip pans of a primitive handheld camera that disguise many of the first-person edits. Filmed on location in San Francisco.

December 18

LOVE ME TONIGHT (1932)

Rouben Mamoulian

Paramount/104 min.

16mm

Short: "The Frozen North" (1922), Buster Keaton

Right from the opening sequence, which sees Paris awoken in diageitic syncopation, through to Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald sharing a duet in their sleep (courtesy of a split screen), the question is raised: was the best Ernst Lubitsch musical in fact directed by Rouben Mamoulian? The entire movie is pretty much summarized when tailor Maurice Courtelin serenades the mirror (a quintessential Chevalier distillate if there ever was one) to the strains of "Isn't it Romantic," and singing Frenchmen transport the melody all the way to Princess Jeanette, perched as ever on the balcony of a chateau. Things aren't quite that simple (aristocracy complicates everything) so Maurice is forced to apply a fake title when romantically accosting Jeanette. Charles Ruggles, Charles Butterworth, C. Aubrey Smith, and Myrna Loy appear as the supporting nobility, who finally catch on to Maurice's act to the tune of "The Son of a Gun is Nothing but a Tailor." It's debatable whether musicals ever caught up to the restless zooms and elaborate moves achieved by cinematographer Victor Milner, whose camerawork should have earned a choreography credit. The memorable Rodgers and Hart score also includes "Mimi," "Lover," and "The Poor Apache." Mamoulian's stylistic bag of tricks also includes slow and fast motion photography and a happy ending that somehow manages to parody Sergei Eisenstein.



Feature program and text by Michael King
Shorts program by Ian McDermott





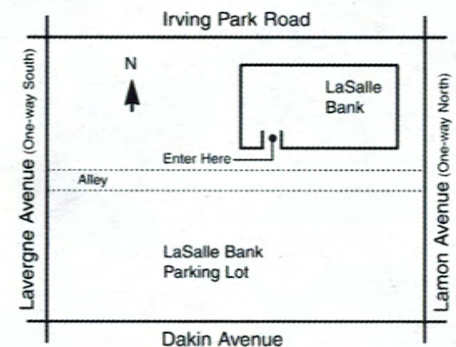


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