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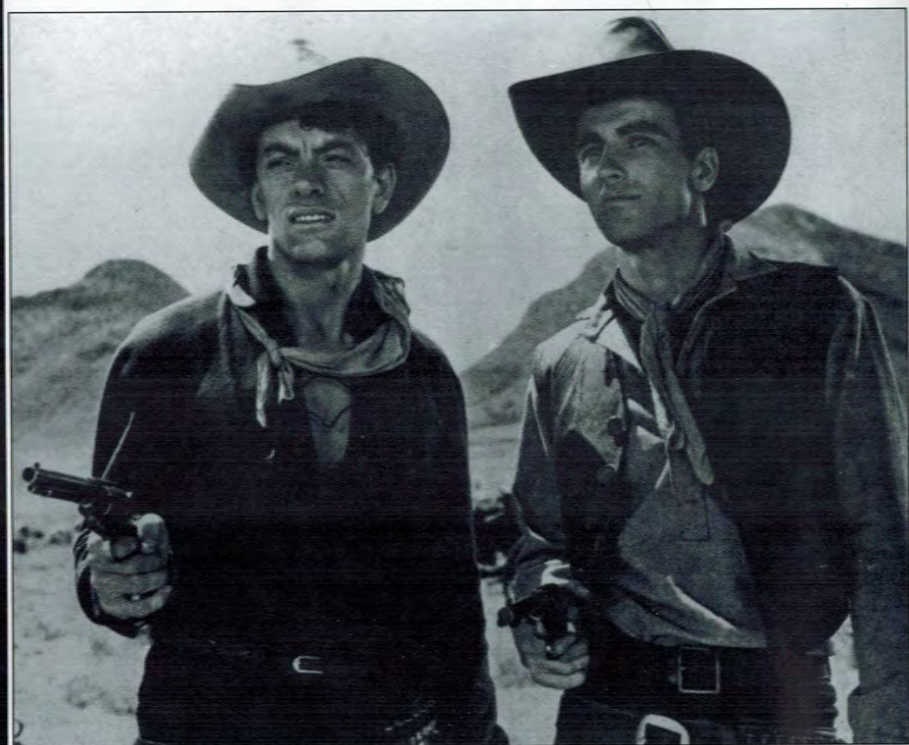
CLASSIC FILM SERIES
{ JANUARY 6 - JUNE 30, 2007 }



FROM THE BOOTH

Here we go again, another six months of the finest classic Hollywood had to offer: watch Montgomery Clift take a swing at the Duke, Gene Tierney lose her marbles, Cary Grant try on a dress, and (gulp) Jimmy Stewart sing! Plus, your favorite auteurs get a work out: genre-happy Howard Hawks escorts you from the Indianapolis 500 to the Wild West with a few far-flung stops in between, and Busby Berkeley makes the head-spinning trip from limelight to lowlifes before winding up with Mickey Rooney in the span of a decade. Also on tap: Three by Sam Fuller, the first screen appearances of Grant and a 20 year old James Dean, a couple pre-Code double features and the two best pictures Timothy Holt ever made.

Program by Michael King (MK)
and Michael W. Phillips, Jr. (MP)



UNDERWORLD U.S.A. | 1961

DIRECTOR: SAMUEL FULLER

"I'm not dealing here with beneficent kings, ravishing princesses, or charming princes who are born with castles, jewels, and juicy legacies." No kidding—on the heels of the Apalachin mob indictment, Columbia Pictures handed Samuel Fuller the rights to a gangster exposé called "Underworld U.S.A." Fuller took the title and ran with it, envisioning an opening sequence beginning with "attractive women, scantily clad and positioned to form a map of the United States" speechifying for a Union of Prostitutes and ending with the orator getting her head blown off (shockingly, the studio didn't bite). Cliff Robertson stars as Tolly, who as a child witnesses his father's murder and dedicates the rest of his life to slowly avenging it. Twenty years after the crime, he finally gets around to it: the killers (Paul Dubov, Gerald Milton, Allan Gruener) have since graduated to heading national dope, labor, and prostitution rings, and Tolly sidles up close enough to start knocking them off. Fuller and veteran cinematographer Hal Mohr let the pictures do the talking in near-silent passages composed of shadows and haunting close-ups. With Dolores Dorn, Beatrice Kay, Richard Rust, Larry Gates, and Robert Emhardt as the requisite love interest, surrogate mother, psychotic heavy, determined fed, and overweight crime lord, respectively. (MK)

COLUMBIA 99 MIN. 35MM

CARTOON: "BUGSY AND MUGSY" (1957), FRIZ FRELENG (BUGS BUNNY)



CRAIG'S WIFE | 1936

DIRECTOR: DOROTHY ARZNER

About a million miles away from *His Girl Friday*, Rosalind Russell got her big break with this domestic disaster flick. She's the hyperfastidious wife, John Boles is the hyperaloof Craig, and together they're the most dysfunctional big-screen couple this side of *Leave Her to Heaven* (screening here January 27). Can a shoehorned-in murder mystery save their marriage? Director Dorothy Arzner was never one to let the Production Code get in the way of subtext; few in Hollywood were as boldly skeptical of the status quo until Douglas Sirk started smuggling actual feelings into his weepies 25 years later. George Kelly's Pulitzer Prize-winning play offers many causes for the couple's unhappiness but eschews easy answers; and Arzner and writer Mary McCall's take on the already overloaded scenario introduces enough ideologically malleable tweaks to make their version a permanent source of debate amongst revisionist film critics. This wasn't the only time Kelly's story made it to the silver screen: Cecil B. de Mille's brother William had already filmed a version in the silent era, but its camp potential remained unrealized until 1950, when Hollywood's reigning queen of suffering (and former Arzner muse) Joan Crawford took on the title role in *Harriet Craig*. (MK)

COLUMBIA 73 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: "THE SMART WAY" (1937), WILLIAM WATSON (WILLIE HOWARD)





MY FAVORITE WIFE | 1940

DIRECTOR: GARSON KANIN

On the eve of the happy marriage of Nick (Cary Grant) and Bianca (Gail Patrick), who should show up but Ellen (Irene Dunne), Nick's presumed-to-be-dead wife, returned from being shipwrecked for seven years on an island paradise. Tagging along is Stephen (Randolph Scott), who spent the past seven years playing Adam to Ellen's Eve (but the Hays Code ensured that theirs was a chaste Garden of Eden). Sure, the situation could be cleared up in the span of one reel, but what fun would that be? Ellen tries to hide the hunky Stephen from Nick, while Nick tries to hide Ellen from the shrewish Bianca, setting the stage for some inspired screwball wackiness. This was the second of three Grant-Dunne teamups, and Leo McCarey—their Oscar-winning director from *The Awful Truth*—was supposed to work his magic again, but he was injured in a car accident, leaving Garson Kanin to helm this “frankly fanciful farce,

a rondo of refined ribaldries” (according to Bosley Crowther). The material was reworked in 1962 as *Something's Gotta Give* for Marilyn Monroe, but she was fired and then died soon after. It finally saw the screen again in 1963 as *Move Over, Darling* with Doris Day and James Garner. (MP)

RKO 88 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: “AIN'T LOVE CUCKOO?” (1946), JULES WHITE (SCHILLING & LANE)



LEAVE HER TO HEAVEN | 1945

DIRECTOR: JOHN STAHL

“Of all the seven deadly sins, jealousy is the most deadly”—not the greatest way to hear someone launch into the story of your courtship. Gene Tierney stars as a woman whose clinginess knows no bounds, refusing to let anyone stand between her and her man (Cornel Wilde). And in her glassy eyes, there's plenty of competition: his brother (Darryl Hickman), their baby (unborn), and her cousin (Jeanne Crain), for starters. Tierney and Wilde's already distant love affair begins to sour once the bodies start piling up. Vincent Price turns up whenever it's inconvenient as Tierney's district attorney ex. Leon Shamroy won his third Oscar in four years (of 18 career nominations) for his brilliant color cinematography, which works with Lyle Wheeler and Maurice Ransford's backwoods-chic art direction (also nominated) to serve as a glossy counterpoint to the shady goings-on. Tierney received her only Oscar nomination for this wicked witch, but lost to Joan Crawford (who might've been born for this role) for the year's other overwrought delight, *Mildred Pierce*. Ben Ames Williams's source novel suffered a made-for-TV remake forty-odd years later, featuring Loni Anderson and Patrick Duffy. (MK)

20TH CENTURY FOX 110 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: “FEMALE OF THE SPECIES” (1912), D.W. GRIFFITH (MARY PICKFORD)



THE OX-BOW INCIDENT | 1944

DIRECTOR: WILLIAM A. WELLMAN

Henry Fonda, the reluctant conscience of classic Hollywood, gives it another go in William Wellman's searing indictment of mob justice. He's a cowboy who gets caught up with a vigilante mob out for blood when they hear that a popular rancher has been murdered by cattle rustlers. The mob features a who's-who of crusty types: Harry Morgan, Frank Conroy, Dick Rich, Harry Davenport—even Jane Darwell poses up. Happy to blame the first strangers they encounter (Dana Andrews, Anthony Quinn, and Francis Ford), the mob settles in for a necktie party, and Fonda takes his first crack at arguing for the concept of a reasonable doubt, something he'd get to try again fourteen years later in *Twelve Angry Men*. The set-bound, talky film, based on Walter Van Tillburg Clark's novel, isn't your typical Western; it's a sort of anti-*High Noon*, one man's desperate struggle against mass cowardice, but here it's the kind of cowardice that impels people to mob justice, and there aren't any bad guys in black hats handy to blame. It received a lone nomination for Best Picture. Having at least tried to defend liberty on the big screen, Fonda enlisted in the Navy as soon as he finished filming his scenes. (MP)

20TH CENTURY FOX 75 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: “IN THE SWEET PIE AND PIE” (1941), JULES WHITE (THE THREE STOOGES)





THE PALM BEACH STORY | 1942

DIRECTOR: PRESTON STURGES

"You have no idea what a long-legged gal can do without doing anything." Preston Sturges's classic comedy aims to find out, hitting the ground running with a marriage ceremony so frantic it's set to the William Tell Overture, enabling the ubiquitous "...and they lived happily ever after" to appear onscreen in record time. Of course, it's the "...or did they?" Sturges is concerned with, picking up when the honeymoon's five years over and not-so-newlyweds Tom and Gerry (Joel McCrea and Claudette Colbert) are drowning in debt. Enter their fairy godmother in the form of the Wienie King (Robert Dudley), whose debt relief is appropriated by Gerry as a half-baked excuse for divorce. She splits for Palm Beach on a cross-country train carrying most of the Sturges stock company as the raucous Ale & Quail Club, with Tom in hot pursuit. Thanks to Sturges's easy frankness with hot-button topics like divorce,

abortion, and corruption, his irreverent brand of comedy has aged least of all his peers: he'd never let moral hand-wringing get in the way of a good one-liner. "Chivalry is not only dead, it's decomposed"; likewise, they just don't make 'em like this anymore. (MK)

PARAMOUNT 88 MIN. 16MM

CARTOON: "THE HOLE IDEA" (1955), ROBERT MCKIMSON



MAN'S CASTLE | 1933

DIRECTOR: FRANK BORZAGE

Frank Borzage's angry Depression-era film, based on a play by Lawrence Hazard, is "the saga of a roughneck you wouldn't put up in your stable—the horses might complain." Bill (Spencer Tracy "in his most distasteful role") is a roustabout who lives in a Hoover-inspired shantytown and subsists on odd jobs (very odd—he's wearing a flashing suit when we first meet him). He meets and shacks up with a homeless girl, Trina (Loretta Young), and it's true love, of a distinctly pre-Code sort. She puts up with his "wisecracks ... of the roughest, most inconsiderate kind," not to mention his dalliances with a showgirl (Glenda Farrell). Mirroring the events of the story, Tracy and Young (make that Younger, as she was 13 years her married costar's junior) started an offscreen fling as soon as production started, leading to the star's official separation from his wife. *Variety* (the source of the nasty

quotes above) was horrified by the film, calling it "contrary to normal entertainment appetites and tastes" and sniffing that "even after meeting certain requirements of the scissor brigade, the picture has nothing left that's eligible for recommendation by the local sewing circle or YWCA." Music to our ears. (MP)

COLUMBIA 75 MIN. 35MM

CARTOONS: "FARM FOOLERY" (1930), JOHN FOSTER, AND "PHILHARMONIACS" (1952), SEYMOUR KNEITEL

THE TRUE STORY OF JESSE JAMES | 1957

DIRECTOR: NICHOLAS RAY

When it came time to add to the pile of films dedicated to one of cinema's most-often resurrected characters, the bigwigs at Twentieth Century Fox simply dusted off Nunnally Johnson's script (and retrofitted some of Henry King's footage) for the 1939 *Jesse James* and inserted the dubious "True Story" claim into the title. Robert Wagner and Jeffrey Hunter star as the outlaw brothers, alternating between robbing banks and trying to play it straight while the law (Alan Baxter) hunts them down. On board for the subplots are Hope Lange (Oscar nominated the same year for *Peyton Place*) as Jesse's wife Zee, and Agnes Moorehead as the mother James. Returning to the genre he so bizarrely (and brilliantly) eviscerated with *Johnny Guitar* three years earlier, Nicholas Ray saw his nonlinear structure mangled by studio producers, who inserted those misty transitions that signify the flashbacks—he retreated to Europe to make his next masterpiece, *Bitter Victory*. By the way, if you noticed that the reverend (John Carradine) in this film looks a lot like the 1939 version's Bob Ford all grown up, you might be watching too many movies. (MK)

20TH CENTURY FOX 92 MIN. 16MM CINEMASCOPE
SHORT: "THE TRYOUT" (1925), AL JENNINGS



VIOLENT SATURDAY | 1955

DIRECTOR: RICHARD FLEISCHER

Hands down the most lurid film ever ripped from the pages of *Cosmo* (which printed the complete text to William L. Heath's source novel), Richard Fleischer's CinemaScope caper follows three hoods workin' for the weekend as they case a small-town bank job. Stephen McNally, J. Carrol Naish, and Lee Marvin (freshly dubbed the "number 1 sadist of the screen," by stiff old Bosley Crowther) head up the remarkable cast as the official bad guys, whose atypical heist research extends to inventorying the locals' vices. They sure picked a nefarious lot, with a peeping tom (Tommy Noonan), an adultress (Margaret Hayes), and a small-time crook (Sylvia Sidney) to choose from. The roles offering an ounce of redemption are filled out by headliner Victor Mature and Ernest Borgnine as an Amish farmer whose pacifism is stretched under the weight of so many subplots. Coming off 20,000 *Leagues Under the Sea*, Fleischer flexes his dizzying versatility in the final act, when all the simmering seediness rises to a boil. *Violent Saturday* marked Zanuck successor Buddy Adler's debut production at Twentieth Century Fox after striking gold at Columbia with *From Here to Eternity*; tragically, he died only four years later. (MK)

20TH CENTURY FOX 90 MIN. 16MM CINEMASCOPE

CARTOON: "THE GREAT PIGGY BANK ROBBERY" (1946), ROBERT CLAMPETT (DAFFY DUCK)





42ND STREET | 1933

DIRECTOR: LLOYD BACON

"Fourteen Stars! 200 Girls!" That's what Warner Bros. promised in the mother of all backstage musicals; I didn't check their math, but it sounds about right. Slack-jawed kiddie-car magnate Guy Kibbee's dalliance with diva Bebe Daniels lands her the starring role in a show he's producing; he doesn't know she's still in love with has-been George Brent, who waits in the wings making cow eyes enough to temporarily distract wide-eyed hooper Ruby Keeler (in her first film) from the attentions of "juvenile lead" Dick Powell (the latter two hit it off so well they did seven more musicals together). Trying to hold the show (and himself) together is Warner Baxter, the breakdown-prone self-proclaimed best director in town, and along for the ride are Ginger Rogers, Una Merkel, and just about everybody Warners had on payroll at the time. The wisecrack-a-second script details the

forced-march process of putting a big show together, but it's all a glorified lead-in to the glorious title number, where dance director Busby Berkeley makes a clean break with the proscenium arch (and with reality) with an shockingly imaginative musical trip down the landmark New York street. Too bad the Oscars hadn't come up with their Best Song and Best Dance Direction awards yet. (MP)

WARNER BROS. 89 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: "SYMPHONY IN BLACK" (1935), FRED WALLER (DUKE ELLINGTON)



THEY MADE ME A CRIMINAL | 1939

DIRECTOR: BUSBY BERKELEY

The finest of Busby Berkeley's rare no-singing, no-dancing extravaganzas, this tight little protonoir was produced at the tail end of his Warners tenure, and proves that the master choreographer had a few other tricks up his sequined sleeve. John Garfield stars as Johnnie Bradford, a prizefighter framed for murder by his manager (Robert Gleckler, dead in real life a month after this film came out), who dies in the getaway. Forced to play dead himself ("I am hunted by ruthless men! I am shunned by decent women! I am doomed to hide forever!"), as the tagline would have it), Johnnie lands in a sort of underground halfway house run by May Robson with the Dead End Kids and Gloria Dickson as tenants. Claude Rains costars in the cross-cutting as a NYC detective determined to clear Johnnie's name. After nabbing an Oscar nomination for

his big-screen debut (*Four Daughters*), Hollywood's original "Method" pioneer Garfield must've justly feared that this film's title would forecast his new career; sure enough, he and legendary cinematographer James Wong Howe revisited the ring eight years later in Robert Rossen's *Body and Soul*. (MK)

WARNER BROS. 92 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "JERRY'S COUSIN" (1950), HANNA-BARBARA (TOM & JERRY)





THE GREAT GARRICK | 1937

DIRECTOR: JAMES WHALE

"You've never seen a picture quite like *Garrick*!" shouted the publicity materials, and nobody had—at least not from Warners. The studio, looking for a respite from their usual slate of social problems films, seized on an apocryphal episode from the life of an 18th-century British actor. After David Garrick (Brian Aherne) insults the Comédie-Française, the troupe vows to teach him a thing or two about acting by impersonating the staff of an inn where Garrick is staying, but Garrick's tipped off and decides to go along with whatever happens. Director James Whale was happy to work with material closer to his own sensibilities than the horror films he's remembered for, and such florid actors as Edward Everett Horton, Lionel Atwill, and Luis Alberni, along with Olivia de Havilland as the love interest, were happy to teach audiences a thing or two about comedy (and about hammy acting). Too bad it was a

flop before it even opened. Over 3,000 theaters canceled their reservations when *Boxoffice* magazine ran an article saying it wouldn't make any money, a self-fulfilling prophecy that turned out to be so true that Jack Warner told Brian Aherne that he never wanted to see him on the lot again—a ban that lasted only until 1939's *Juarez*. (MP)

WARNER BROS. 89 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "SKIP THE MALOO!" (1931), JAMES PARROTT (CHARLEY CHASE)



FIVE STAR FINAL | 1931

DIRECTOR: MERVYN LE ROY

After a decade of being raked through the coals by a newspaper industry that gleefully trumpeted scandal after scandal (Fatty Arbuckle, Wallace Reid, Olive Thomas, William Desmond Taylor, etc.), Hollywood got its revenge in 1931 with two films about scandalous newspaper practices: the satire *The Front Page* and this more serious film. Edward G. Robinson is the managing editor of a scumbag tabloid who decides to wring a few more headlines out of a twenty-year-old scandal, disrupting the lives of the people (Frances Starr, H.B. Warner, and Marian Marsh) who thought they'd left it behind and drawing the ire of his moralistic secretary (Aline MacMahon). Robinson ditched his conscience long ago—"Ideals won't put a patch on your pants!" he snaps—but this latest bit of yellow journalism has him questioning his career choice (and washing his hands a lot). Boris Karloff, in his last film pre-*Frankenstein*,

shows up as a sleazy former divinity student, of all things. William Randolph Hearst took it personally (surprise, surprise—his *New York Mirror* had pulled the same stunt as the fictional *Gazette* in 1926), and unsuccessfully tried to get it banned, but Warner Bros. got the last laugh with an Oscar nomination for Best Picture. (MP)

WARNER BROS. 89 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "STUPOR DUCK" (1956), ROBERT MCKIMSON (DAFFY DUCK)

HELL AND HIGH WATER | 1954

DIRECTOR: SAMUEL FULLER

"Each man has his own reason for living, and his own price for dying." After defending *Pickup on South Street* to J. Edgar Hoover, Fox chief Darryl Zanuck called in a personal favor to Samuel Fuller, handing the director a script and two requests: shoot it in brand-spanking-new CinemaScope and cast his mistress (Bella Darvi). Fuller gave the atomic-age red scare scenario a rewrite, and retained *Pickup* star Richard Widmark along with his controversial "Are you waving the flag at me?" line that had so peeved the FBI. Widmark plays an apolitical freelance submarine captain who lands a high-paying gig trailing a communist sub to a remote base in the arctic circle. Zanuck home wrecker Darvi got on board as the assistant to Professor Montel (Victor Francen), whose job is to act like he understands the plot. The counterintuitive application of CinemaScope's expanded frame to an already claustrophobic submarine set must have inspired cinematographer Joseph McDonald, who treated the format to far more invention here than in his previous 'Scope outing, *How to Marry a Millionaire*. *Hell and High Water* nabbed an Oscar nomination for Best Special Effects, but lost out to a higher profile submarine adventure: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. (MK)



20TH CENTURY FOX 103 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: "DIZZY DIVERS" (1935), DAVE FLEISCHER (POPEYE)

GIRL CRAZY | 1943

DIRECTOR: NORMAN TAUROG

Girl Crazy's musical finale has the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra trek out to remotest Wyoming, round up dozens of singing cowboys who must have been waiting for just such an opportunity, and play "I Got Rhythm" just for Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney. Uh huh. Busby Berkeley directed that segment and then got fired, perhaps for running over budget, perhaps because he and Garland had a personality clash, but perhaps because he was bonkers. (But in a good way.) Anyway, Norman Taurog took over. The plot has big-city playboy Danny Churchill (Mickey Rooney) sent away to a boy's school-cum-dude ranch by his father (Henry O'Neill) to learn responsibility. Instead, he gets embroiled in romantic shenanigans with Ginger Gray (Garland), the pretty daughter of the headmaster (Guy Kibbee), with requisite tension provided by his attraction to Marjorie (Frances Rafferty). Rooney and Garland stage a Wild West Show in an effort to save the school from financial ruin, but I suspect this is really just an excuse to work in more of George Gershwin musical numbers. This was the ninth of ten films featuring Garland and Rooney—"the most incorrigibly talented pair of youngsters in movies" according to the *New York Times*—and the last before Rooney was drafted. (MP)



MGM 99 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "PUNCHY COWPUNCHER" (1950), EDWARD BERNDT (THE THREE STOOGES)



THE CROWD ROARS | 1932

DIRECTOR: HOWARD HAWKS

"He's a speed mad race driver who laughs at death...she's the girlfriend who packs dynamite in her kisses and TNT in her slaps! If they don't make your heart pound with excitement, you're not human!" (Let's all pause here for a moment to mourn the lost art of film tagline writing.) James Cagney and Eric Linden star in this blazing tale of rival race-car drivers, with Joan Blondell and Ann Dvorak as the women who love them (sometimes both at once). Writer/director Howard Hawks, drawing on one of his previous nine lives as a racer, spared no grace in his assessment of why the crowd *really* roars: "If you took the danger out of it, they wouldn't come...there were always two or three people killed, and they flocked to see that." That said, he wasn't above giving the people what they wanted: the stylishly choreographed, edge-of-your-seat race scenes are littered with spectacular crashes and fiery deaths. Thirty-odd years later, Hawks returned to the fast lane for *Red Line 7000*. Racing stars Billy Arnold, Fred Fame, Wilbur Shaw, and more turn up alongside the track that made them famous, the Indianapolis Speedway. (MK)

WARNER BROS. 85 MIN. 16MM
NEWSREEL: FIRST INDIANAPOLIS 500 RACE (1911)



THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS | 1942

DIRECTOR: ORSON WELLES

"When times are gone, they're not old, they're dead. There aren't any times but new times." Orson Welles followed up the perennially honored "greatest film of all time" with an even greater one, an elaborate consideration of a crumbling small-town aristocracy at the turn of the century, and how one spoiled brat comes to get his comeuppance. Timothy Holt, Oscar nominee Agnes Moorehead, Dolores Costello and Richard Bennett round out the titular clan, and Joseph Cotten plays the outsider who shakes up the family tree. During shooting, Welles and half of his cast were moonlighting on the concurrently produced *Journey into Fear*. Besides, they had already done their homework on *Ambersons*: Welles had adapted Booth Tarkington's novel for the airwaves two years earlier with much of the same Mercury Players and, of course, himself in the lead. Despite

the infamously butchered finale (a whopping 50 minutes excised while Welles was in South America working on the never-completed *It's All True*), which now seems just like round 1 of the director's epic bout with the studios, *The Magnificent Ambersons* remains a tour-de-force; decades later even Welles conceded that "it was a much better picture than *Kane*—if they'd just left it as it was." (MK)

RKO 88 MIN. 35MM
CARTOON: "WHAT'S OPERA, DOC?" (1957), CHUCK JONES (BUGS BUNNY)

FIXED BAYONETS! | 1951

DIRECTOR: SAMUEL FULLER

"Listen. Your picture [*Steel Helmet*] is a hit and the most controversial thing to hit the country. You're a Red and you're a reactionary. Everybody's going to copy it. It's the first Korean War picture. We want to do the same thing." When Fox honcho Daryl Zanuck asked Sam Fuller to basically remake his earlier film, Fuller balked, saying "I just did it." But he changed his mind and made *Fixed Bayonets!*, the story of a platoon left behind to cover the retreat of the US Army in early 1951. Fuller doesn't flinch from the horrors of war; he said, "That's what war is about, killing and death and staying alive. I don't like war movies that are about the girl back home or politics or stealing gold or whatever." Richard Baseheart stars as Denno, a soldier who hates killing but ends up having to when he winds up leading the platoon. Fuller insisted on gritty realism: at one point, he iced the set without telling his actors, and filmed them slipping, falling, and providing their own real bruises and cuts. And those casualties lying around are real: injured stuntmen were asked to pose as dead soldiers. Watch for an uncredited James Dean in his first screen role. (MP)

20TH CENTURY FOX 92 MIN. 35MM
SHORT: "THE CRIME OF KOREA" (1950), NARRATED BY HUMPHREY BOGART



BORN TO DANCE | 1936

DIRECTOR: ROY DEL RUTH

Sure, "born to dance" isn't exactly the Homeric epithet you'd expect to see attached to James Stewart's name—maybe "born to stammer" would be a better fit—but dance he does in his only active participation in the musical genre. He sings, too, although Cole Porter, who chose him for the lead, admitted that "he sings far from well" (but suggested him for the part anyway). When he attended the first preview screening, Stewart was shocked to hear the voice of "a fella who had a little bit of an English accent" coming out of his mouth, but the producers relented and decided to let audiences, er, bask in the lanky star's tenor on a couple of the eight new Cole Porter songs. Stewart, co-screenwriter Sid Silvers, and Buddy Ebsen appear as a trio of musically inclined sailors fresh off the sub; Virginia Bruce is a Broadway star whose manager thinks it'd be good publicity if she were photographed canoodling with Stewart, but Stewart prefers an aspiring singer/dancer (Powell, whose singing was dubbed). Meanwhile, Una Merkel has Silvers's baby (the poor girl) (Merkel, not the baby), and Buddy Ebsen... oh, never mind. There's singing and dancing to be done! (MP)

MGM 106 MIN. 16MM
SHORT: "LET'S DANCE" (1933), AUBREY SCOTTO (BURNS & ALLEN)



DOUBLE FEATURE

WALTER HUSTON FIXES AMERICA



the lobby and between subplots. The director, of course, had plenty more chances to develop his pet (sometimes conflicting) theories over the years; these days, it's impossible to miss the latent archetypes in *American Madness* that Capra would later elaborate on for his big showstoppers, from *It's a Wonderful Life* to *Mr. X Goes to Wherever*. (MK)

COLUMBIA 75 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: "SCREWBALL SQUIRREL" (1944), TEX AVERY (SCREWY SQUIRREL)

AMERICAN MADNESS | 1932

DIRECTOR: FRANK CAPRA

The seeds of Capracorn were sown in 1931, when director Frank Capra and writer Robert Riskin engaged in their first full-on collaboration. Bank of America founder A.P. Giannini served as the inspiration for everyman banker Thomas Dickson (Walter Huston), whose lax lending policies come back to haunt him when one of his trusted employees (Gavin Gordon, looking like Klaus Nomi) allows some gangsters a robbery (and makes time with Dickson's wife!). Next thing you know, there's a run on the bank, and it's up to the boss to start calling in favors to avoid a Depression-era disaster. Pat O'Brien plays Dickson's overworked head teller, Kay Johnson's his underworked wife, and Constance Cummings is in there too. Capra and his attached-at-the-hip cinematographer Joseph Walker milk the elaborate bank set for all it's worth; their gliding crane and dolly shots gracefully whisk the characters throughout



ground running: the first scene plays like a prototype for the rapid-fire, overlapping dialogue he perfected 10 years later in *His Girl Friday*. 35 years later, Tinseltown brownnoser Peter Bogdanovich pillaged *The Criminal Code* of its archival Karloff footage for *Targets*. (MK)

COLUMBIA 97 MIN. 16MM

THE CRIMINAL CODE | 1931

DIRECTOR: HOWARD HAWKS

Mediocre seed Robert Graham (Phillips Holmes) gets a tough break when he accidentally kills the governor's kid in a bar fight and winds up sharing a cell with a Frankenstein-vintage Boris Karloff (!). Years later, the hardheaded D.A.-cum-warden (Walter Huston) that sent him up the river shows up at the big house with an improbable daughter (Constance Cummings) who just might be all the reform school Robert ever needed. Seton Miller and Fred Niblo's Oscar-nominated adaptation of Martin Flavin's tough-as-nails play is perfectly suited to Howard Hawks's prescrewball disposition; more than half the lines seem to be variations on the word "yeah." The play's actual plot, on the other hand, didn't suit him quite as well: Hawks claimed to have polled the ex-con extras to come up with a replacement ending. Look no further for evidence that classic Hollywood's most adept director hit the talkie

CHINA SEAS | 1935

DIRECTOR: TAY GARNETT

Clark Gable plays "the brass-hearted skipper of a rusty old tea-kettle" in this tale of romance and intrigue in Southeast Asia. He's got a lot on his mind: typhoons, a fortune in gold bullion, pirates, a shady businessman (Wallace Beery), and especially the amorous attention of China Doll Portland (Jean Harlow), a "professional entertainer" who loves him and is jealous of his attentions toward his old flame Sybil Barclay (Rosalind Russell). The intrigue extended offscreen, too: two stuntpeople were almost drowned while filming the dramatic typhoon scene; Gable and Harlow took great pleasure in playing practical jokes on the irritable Beery; the draft presented to screenwriters John Lee Mahin and James McGuinness stole entire paragraphs from writers as varied as Mark Twain and W. Somerset Maugham; and producer "Mr. Bumble Bee himself" Irving Thalberg's legendary fussiness delayed production for "forever plus ten weeks," in the words of director Tay Garnett, who had time to write a novel while he waited for Thalberg to stop interfering. Despite everything, the end result is a distinctly 1930s blend of humor, romance, and action, populated by memorable character actors (including Lewis Stone, Dudley Digges, and Akim Tamiroff) and quoteworthy dialogue. (MP)

MGM 87 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "SINGAPORE SUE" (1932), CASEY ROBINSON (ANNA CHANG, AND CARY GRANT IN HIS FIRST SCREEN APPEARANCE)



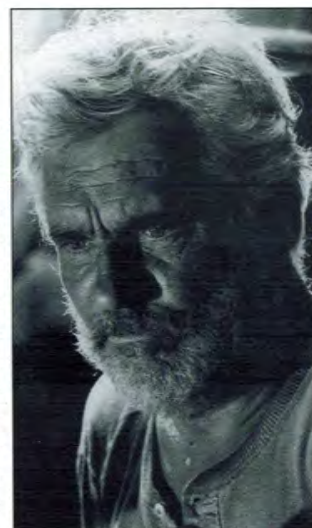
THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE | 1948

DIRECTOR: JOHN HUSTON

Humphrey Bogart, Walter Huston, and Tim Holt go digging for gold but find trouble in this enduring classic. It was originally intended as an immediate follow-up to *The Maltese Falcon*, but John Huston had to wait out WWII to direct his adaptation of super-eccentric B. Traven's gold-lust admonition. He made the most of it, coaxing career-revising performances out of two icons: finally given a part he could sink his teeth into, Bogart rises to the occasion, dispensing with the smooth talk and snarling like a trapped animal. The director convinced his dad to toss his dentures to play the prospector, and the Elmer Fudd effect worked, nabbing the film veteran of twenty years his first and only Oscar. There's not a woman in sight, but there's good extra-watching: the director himself appears as the guy Bogart hits up for change in the opening scenes, and that kid who sells Bogart his lottery ticket? Robert Blake. Never one to take the easy way, Huston dragged his whole crew to Mexico for beautiful location photography and budgetary amnesia, a stunt the maverick director famously topped with his Sam Spiegel-sponsored Congo safari, *The African Queen*. (MK)

WARNER BROS. 126 MIN. 35MM

CARTOON: "THE WACKY WABBIT" (1942), ROBERT CLAMPETT (BUGS BUNNY)





MY MAN GODFREY | 1936

DIRECTOR: GREGORY LA CAVA

A scavenger hunt for "the forgotten man" leads spoiled socialite sisters Cornelia (Gail Patrick) and Irene (Carole Lombard) to the dump where former millionaire Godfrey Parkes (William Powell, miles away from his other 1936 success, *The Great Ziegfeld*) resides. Asked "Can you butle?" by Irene, Godfrey enters the employ of the Bullock family, one of those crazy rich families that sit around waiting for a screwball comedy to inhabit. The spurned Cornelia schemes to get him fired or arrested, or both, while the smitten Irene schemes to get him to the altar. Eugene Pallette, Alice Brady, and Mischa Auer fill out the family as *père*, *mère*, and mooch, respectively. Novelist Eric Hatch, who also collaborated on the screenplay, remarked that "They discovered the story had social significance. I didn't know it had social significance when I wrote it... It surprised me, all right." *Newsweek* wasn't as happy as Hatch, whining

"Unfortunately the scenarists... retard the action occasionally by expressing their sympathy for the unemployed." The nerve. *Godfrey* was nominated for just about every Oscar except the big one, and became the first film to be nominated in all four acting categories, but that didn't help it take home any hardware. (MP)

UNIVERSAL 94 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "BOY, OH BOY!" (1936), WILLIAM WATSON (BERT LEHR)



DOUBLE FEATURE

DASTARDLY DUDES OF THE DEPRESSION

DOWNSTAIRS | 1932

DIRECTOR: MONTA BELL

Reeling from a series of spectacular failures that started with his talkie debut, *His Glorious Night*, and missed opportunities including *The Dawn Patrol* and *Red Dust*, John Gilbert was desperate to make it in the talkies. His producer friend Irving Thalberg agreed to let him write a star vehicle for himself (Gilbert reportedly received the princely sum of \$1 for his story). Gilbert came up with *Downstairs*, the cheerfully amoral tale of a scoundrel chauffeur (Gilbert, apocryphally "squeaky and girlish" voice not in evidence) who seduces and blackmails a swath through a wealthy household, mistreating people both above and below stairs with equal profligacy. Virginia Bruce, who would become the fourth Mrs. Gilbert the same month the film was released, appears as the innocent maid Gilbert chooses as his first target, and Paul Lukas plays her new husband, the head butler. This was Gilbert's attempt to reinvent himself for the sound era, but his fans weren't ready for the film's level of bitterness. Contemporary critics weren't sure what to think of it—Mordaunt Hall of the *New York Times* contented himself with outlining the plot—and audiences stayed away. Gilbert had only three more films in him before he died of heart failure in 1936. (MP)



MGM 77 MIN. 16MM

SHORT: "SURE-MIKE!" (1925), FRED GUIOL (MARTHA SLEEPER)

EMPLOYEES' ENTRANCE | 1933

DIRECTOR: ROY DEL RUTH

"There's no room for sympathy or softness—my code is to smash or be smashed!" Harsh words from a department store manager, but not so surprising coming from Warren William, pre-Code Hollywood's favorite knave. In the first of six films directed by workhorse Roy Del Ruth in 1933, William plays 1933's version of *Wall Street*'s Gordon Gekko, a Machiavellian manager who brow-beats his employers into granting him a virtual dictatorship and sets about running the lives of all of his employees, using that ultimate Depression power: to hire and fire at will. When your boss's book of wisdom includes such gems as "When a man outlives his usefulness, he ought to jump out a window," you know you're in trouble. Fulfilling the film's lurid ad campaign promise of "girls who couldn't have been touched with a 100 ft yacht—ready to do anything for a job," Loretta Young plays a shopgirl who got her job in one of those late-night, after-dinner fadeouts in the boss's apartment; Wallace Ford is her new hubby, who happens to be the boss's assistant. Will virtue and the sanctity of marriage triumph over power-mad corruption and manipulation? Before the Hays Code, you never could tell. (MP)



FIRST NATIONAL PICTURES 75 MIN. 16MM



I WAS A MALE WAR BRIDE | 1949

DIRECTOR: HOWARD HAWKS

It's love versus bureaucracy in this WWII crowd-pleaser when a French officer (Cary Grant) falls for an American WAC (Ann Sheridan) in occupied Germany. They get hitched abroad, only to find that the Army is lacking in "war husband" protocol when it's time to return home. Hollywood was never going to find a better excuse to put Grant in drag, and he dove right in—director Howard Hawks actually had to convince his star to tone it down. It's mildly shocking this romp turned out at all, as the actual production was beleaguered beyond belief. Shooting in Germany was stop-and-go as myriad illnesses befell the cast and crew: Hawks had hives and Sheridan pneumonia, but Grant got it the worst, shedding 37 pounds in a bout with hepatitis. The director landed current flame Marion Marshall her first big part as Sheridan's roommate, and she managed to be the only major player to make it out of

production in the pink. Believe it or not, this was (very) loosely based on a stranger-than-fiction bit of autobiography, Henri Rochard's informatively titled "I Was an Alien Spouse of Female Military Personnel Enroute to the United States Under Public Law 271 of the Congress." (MK)

20TH CENTURY FOX 103 MIN. 35MM

SHORT: "MAIL AND FEMALE" (1937), FRED NEUMEYER (OUR GANG)



RED RIVER | 1948

DIRECTOR: HOWARD HAWKS

"Take 'em to Missouri, Matt!" When Peter Bogdanovich wanted to sum up the western genre in *The Last Picture Show*, he chose a clip from *Red River*, Howard Hawks's superwestern starring John Wayne and screen newbie Montgomery Clift. Wayne is Tom Dunson, a cattle baron with a Texas-size ego, and Clift is his surrogate son Matthew Garth, who rebels against him on a difficult cattle drive. They clash over management styles, belief systems about justice and mercy, and especially acting styles, Clift's sensitivity and introspection contrasting with Wayne's brusque masculinity (and punching it out). Wayne gives perhaps his finest performance: John Ford said after seeing it that "I never knew the big sonofabitch could act!" Not everyone was pleased, though: Borden Chase, who wrote the story and first draft of the screenplay (and received an Oscar nomination for it), dismissed the film as "garbage,"

especially the ending, which admittedly feels more than a little false. Notice to aspiring film stars: don't steal the director's girlfriend. After John Ireland ("Ever had a good Swiss watch?") started fooling around with Hawks's sweetie Joanna Dru, both found their screen time slashed. Maybe Dru directed her immortal "Now you two boys stop fighting!" line at the wrong boys. (MP)

UNITED ARTISTS 133 MIN. 35MM

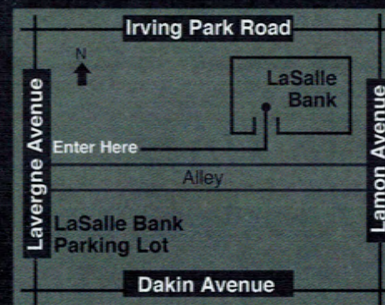
SHORT: "THE BIG SNIT" (1985), RICHARD CONDIE



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