

Some interesting films on US television

David Walsh
4 April 1998

Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest

Saturday, April 4

2:30 a.m. (TCM)- *Caged* (1950)-In the words of one critic, a “minor classic of repression.” A prison drama, with Eleanor Parker, Agnes Moorehead and Hope Emerson. Directed by John Cromwell.

5:30 a.m. (AMC)- *Union Pacific* (1939)-Cecil B. DeMille’s epic about railroad building, with Barbara Stanwyck, Joel McCrea, Robert Preston and many others.

7:30 a.m. (TCM)- *Across the Pacific* (1942)-World War II spy and action drama, with Humphrey Bogart as an army officer cashiered so that he can make contact with pro-Japanese forces. John Huston directed.

9:00 a.m. (Bravo)- *Mississippi Masala* (1992)- (Also, 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 pm, Sunday, April 5; 8:00 a.m. and 11:30 pm, Tuesday, April 7; and 3:30 pm, Wednesday, April 8) Mira Nair’s story of a cross-cultural romance between Denzel Washington and Indian-born Sarita Choudhury, set in Greenwood, Mississippi.

*9:30 a.m. (TCM)- *The Maltese Falcon* (1941)-John Huston classic, based on the Dashiell Hammett novel, with Humphrey Bogart as private detective Sam Spade. Sidney Greenstreet, Mary Astor and Peter Lorre brilliantly co-star.

*11:30 a.m. (TCM)- *To Have and Have Not* (1944)-Howard Hawks classic, based (very loosely) on a short story by Ernest Hemingway, with Bogart as an apolitical fishing boat captain who gets dragged in to French Resistance efforts. Lauren Bacall is outstanding in her debut. Dialogue by William Faulkner and Jules Furthman.

Sunday, April 5

12:00 a.m. (USA)- *Red Rock West* (1993)-Modern attempt at *film noir*, only partially successful, with Nicholas Cage, Dennis Hopper and the late (great) J.T. Walsh. Directed by John Dahl.

*1:05 a.m. (AMC)- *Saboteur* (1942)-Excellent Alfred Hitchcock film, with Robert Cummings as an innocent munitions plant worker accused of sabotage. With Priscilla Lane.

1:30 a.m. (TCM)- *The Big Sleep* (1945)-Howard Hawks’s version of the Raymond Chandler novel, with a script again by Faulkner. Detective Philip Marlowe (Bogart) becomes involved with wealthy girl (Bacall) and her spoiled, irresponsible sister. Don’t bother to figure out who did the murders; the director reportedly wasn’t certain.

4:10 a.m. (TCM)- *Dark Passage* (1947)-Bizarre film, with Bogart as an escaped convict who undergoes plastic surgery and then tries to uncover a murderer. Directed by Delmer Daves.

*9:00 a.m. (TCM)-*20,000 Years in Sing Sing* (1933)-A Michael Curtiz

prison drama, with Spencer Tracy as a hardened criminal and Bette Davis as his girlfriend.

12:00 a.m. (TCM)- *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex* (1939)-Stylishly done version of romance between Queen of England (Bette Davis) and Earl of Essex (Errol Flynn). Directed by Michael Curtiz, from the play by Maxwell Anderson.

12:00 a.m. (TNT)- *El Dorado* (1967)-Robert Mitchum, a drunken sheriff, and John Wayne, a gunfighter, join forces to defeat a rapacious rancher and keep peace on the range. Directed by Howard Hawks.

12:00 a.m. (USA)- *Tin Men* (1987)-Barry Levinson’s comedy-drama about the aluminum siding business, set in Baltimore in 1963, with Richard Dreyfuss and Danny DeVito.

1:30 a.m. (AMC)- *America, America* (1963)-Elia Kazan’s account of the immigrant experience, based on his uncle’s emigration in the late nineteenth century.

5:00 a.m. (USA)- *The Age of Innocence* (1993)-Martin Scorsese’s disappointing, unironic filming of Edith Wharton’s extraordinary novel about New York society in the 1870s. Worth seeing, however.

*5:45 a.m. (AMC)- *Springfield Rifle* (1952)-Andre de Toth’s film about a Union officer (Gary Cooper) who goes undercover to expose a Confederate horse stealing ring. Dark and spare, with an exemplary performance by Paul Kelly as the chief villain.

6:00 a.m. (TCM)- *Dark Victory* (1939)-Bette Davis is a socialite who learns she has a terminal illness. George Brent is her brain surgeon husband. Directed by Edmund Goulding.

8:00 a.m. (AMC)- *The Gunfighter* (1950)-Gregory Peck is a gunslinger trying to live down his past. Henry King directed, from a script by William Bowers and Andre de Toth.

8:00 a.m. (TCM)- *Jezebel* (1938)-Bette Davis again, as an antebellum Southern belle causing trouble with her willful behavior. Also Henry Fonda. Directed by William Wyler.

*9:30 a.m. (AMC)- *Duel in the Sun* (1946)-King Vidor’s intense Western psychodrama. Jennifer Jones, a “half-breed,” is caught between two brothers (Gregory Peck and Joseph Cotten). With Lionel Barrymore, Lillian Gish, Herbert Marshall, Charles Bickford and Walter Huston.

10:00 a.m. (Bravo)- *Ruby in Paradise* (1993)-(Also 3:00 a.m. and 4:35 p.m., Monday, April 6) A film about a young woman who leaves her Tennessee home and tries to make her way in Panama City, Florida. Occasionally interesting, with a fine performance by Ashley Judd. Victor Nunez directed.

Monday, April 6

12:00 a.m. (AMC)- *Gentlemen’s Agreement* (1947)-Gregory Peck is a writer who pretends to be Jewish to gauge anti-Semitism. Moss Hart wrote the relatively tame script; Elia Kazan directed.

2:15 a.m. (AMC)- *Five Graves to Cairo* (1943)-Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett wrote the screenplay for this North African wartime

intrigue drama; Wilder also directed. Franchot Tone stars.

8:15 a.m. (AMC)- *Lifeboat* (1944)-Alfred Hitchcock's tale of shipwreck survivors during World War II. With Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, and Walter Slezak as a Nazi taken aboard.

*11:00 a.m. (Bravo)- *Ran* (1985)-(Also 8:00 p.m., Monday, April 6 and 2:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 7) Akira Kurosawa's epic version of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, about a warlord who provokes a conflict between his sons by handing over power to the eldest.

11:30 a.m. (AMC)- *Foreign Correspondent* (1940)-Joel McCrea is the correspondent caught up in a spy intrigue in Alfred Hitchcock's film, with George Sanders, Robert Benchley, Herbert Marshall, Laraine Day.

3:00 a.m. (Bravo)- *The Ox* (1991)-Ingmar Bergman's famed cinematographer Sven Nykvist directed this work about a poor family's struggle for survival in Sweden in the mid-nineteenth century.

8:00 a.m. (AMC)- *Artists and Models* -(1955)-An extravagant Frank Tashlin cartoon, with Jerry Lewis, Dean Martin, Dorothy Malone and Shirley MacLaine.

Tuesday, April 7

4:00 a.m. (AMC)- *Our Man in Havana* (1960)-Alec Guinness is a vacuum cleaner salesman in Cuba who allows himself to be recruited as a British spy, to make a little extra income, and discovers he is in over his head. Carol Reed directed, based on the Graham Greene novel.

*6:00 a.m. (AMC)- *Hail the Conquering Hero* (1944)-A Preston Sturges comedy. Eddie Bracken, rejected by the military, is mistaken for a war hero by his hometown. William Demarest is marvelous.

12:30 a.m. (Bravo)- *Family Plot* (1976)-(Also 1:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 8) Late and mild-mannered Alfred Hitchcock, but still worth watching. Barbara Harris is a fake medium who unwittingly gets involved in a murder plot. William Devane is the mastermind.

4:30 a.m. (AMC)- *The Spiral Staircase* (1946)-Taut thriller with Dorothy McGuire as a deaf-mute servant employed in a household in 1906 New England. Directed by Robert Siodmak.

*5:00 a.m. (Bravo)- *Richard III* (1955)-(Also 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 8) Laurence Olivier's version of one of Shakespeare's greatest plays. Whether one approves of Olivier's interpretation or not, the film should be seen.

8:00 a.m. (WGN)- *Miller's Crossing* (1990)-The Coen Brothers do their version of the *Red Harvest* (Dashiell Hammett) story: gangsters wage a civil war for control of a city. Overblown and self-conscious, but it holds one's attention. With Gabriel Byrne and Albert Finney.

Wednesday, April 8

7:45 a.m. (AMC)- *A Bill of Divorcement* (1932)-Early George Cukor film about a man released from a mental institution who meets his strong-willed daughter. Katharine Hepburn's film debut.

10:00 a.m. (TCM)- *Cornered* (1945)-A postwar *film noir* with Dick Powell as a Canadian flyer tracking down Nazis in Argentina. Directed by future HUAC informer Edward Dmytryk.

12:00 a.m. (TNT)- *Andersonville* (1996)-John Frankenheimer's made-for-television film about the Confederate prison camp where 13,000 Union soldiers died from disease, starvation and brutality.

Thursday, April 9

12:00 a.m. (TCM)- *The Fortune Cookie* (1966)-Billy Wilder's ultra-cynical story about a television cameraman (Jack Lemmon) injured during a football game and the attempts by his shyster lawyer (Walter Matthau) to sue for millions.

6:30 a.m. (AMC)- *Fifth Avenue Girl* (1939)-Ginger Rogers is an unemployed girl who is hired by a millionaire (Walter Connolly) to teach his family a lesson. Directed by Gregory LaCava.

10:00 a.m. (AMC)- *Dead End* (1937)-The first appearance of the Dead End Kids (Huntz Hall, Leo Gorcey et al) in a film about the Lower East Side slums of New York. Scripted by Lillian Hellman, directed by William Wyler.

*10:00 (TCM)- *The Big Heat* (1953)-Fritz Lang film about a policeman (Glenn Ford) who sets out to break up a crime ring and pays a heavy price. Lee Marvin is chilling as a tough guy, Gloria Graham is excellent as a mob girl who turns good.

12:00 a.m. (TNT)- *Gettysburg*, Part 1 (1994)-Ronald Maxwell's meticulous recreation of the great Civil War battle. With Tom Berenger, Jeff Daniels, Martin Sheen, Sam Elliott and many others. (Part 2 on Friday at noon.)

2:45 a.m. (AMC)- *Criss Cross* (1949)-Wonderful *film noir* tale of betrayal, with Burt Lancaster as the fall guy, Yvonne DeCarlo as the object of his desire and Dan Durys as a gangster. Directed by Robert Siodmak.

10:00 a.m. (TCM)- *East of Eden* (1955)-Elia Kazan's treatment of the John Steinbeck novel about a young man, after World War I, who finds his mother runs a brothel. With James Dean.

10:30 a.m. (TNT)- *The Quiet Man* (1952)-John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara star in this John Ford film about an Irish-American boxer who goes back to his native country.

Friday, April 10

1:50 a.m. (TNT)- *Rio Grande* (1950)-One of John Ford's great cavalry films. John Wayne is an officer with family problems. Claude Jarman, Jr., is his son, Maureen O'Hara his wife.

*4:00 a.m. (TCM)- *Casablanca* (1942)-The Michael Curtiz classic about life and love in wartime Morocco, with Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

7:15 a.m. (AMC)- *The Leopard Man* (1943)-Val-Lewton-Jacques Tourneur thriller about a series of murders in a border town blamed on a leopard.

10:00 a.m. (Hist)- *Sunrise at Campobello* (1960)-This biographical work about Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt is not a great film, but worth seeing for its historical content. Directed by Vincent J. Donehue, with Ralph Bellamy and Greer Garson.

11:30 a.m. (AMC)- *All I Desire* (1953)-Barbara Stanwyck is a woman who abandoned her family for a career on the stage and returns to her hometown for her daughter's graduation in this Douglas Sirk melodrama.

12:00 a.m. (TNT)- *Gettysburg*, Part 2 (1994)-See Thursday at noon.

1:00 a.m. (AMC)- *The Naked Dawn* (1955)-Poverty Row director, German-born Edgar Ulmer made this Mexican crime drama, with Arthur Kennedy and Eugene Iglesias.

6:30 a.m. (AMC)- *Hombre* (1967)-Martin Ritt directed, from an Elmore Leonard story, this film about Indian-raised Paul Newman trying to survive in Arizona in the 1880s.

9:00 a.m. (Hist)- *Zulu* (1964)-In 1879 British soldiers hold out against

Zulu warriors. One's sympathies lie with the Zulus, but the massive battle scene is spectacular. Directed by Cy Enright.



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