

Some interesting films on US television, May 9-15

David Walsh
9 May 1998

*Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest

Saturday, May 9

11:00 am (TCM) - *One-Eyed Jacks* (1961) - Marlon Brando's only directing effort. He plays an outlaw seeking revenge on Karl Malden, a former friend, now a sadistic sheriff.

12:00 pm (TBS) - *The Great Escape* (1963) - Steve McQueen and James Garner stand out in this World War II prisoner-of-war escape film. Routine in many ways, directed by John Sturges.

5:00 pm (AMC) - *I Was a Male War Bride* (1949) - Cary Grant is a French officer marrying a WAC (Ann Sheridan) and encountering a series of dilemmas. The film is very funny, and it also provides director Howard Hawks an opportunity to examine sexual roles, and subvert them.

*5:30 pm (TCM) - *The Champ* (1931) - Wallace Beery is an over-the-hill boxer and Jackie Cooper his adoring son in this sentimental, but very moving work, directed by King Vidor.

9:00 pm (TNT) - *For a Few Dollars More* (1966) - The sequel to *A Fistful of Dollars*. One of the more memorable "spaghetti Westerns," with Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef and Gian Maria Volonte, directed by Sergio Leone.

10:30 (TCM) - *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938) - Lively, eye-catching version of the Robin Hood story, with Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains. Directed by Michael Curtiz and William Keighley, with an award-winning score by Wolfgang Korngold.

Sunday, May 10

12:00 am (TNT) - *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) - John Cassavetes is excellent as ambitious actor who involves himself in diabolical activities to advance his career. Mia Farrow is his unsuspecting wife. Roman Polanski wrote the screenplay, based on the Ira Levin potboiler, and directed.

6:00 am (AMC) - *Cat People* (1942) - The first of the Val Lewton-produced horror films, directed with considerable elegance by Jacques Tourneur. Extraordinary moments of psychological terror.

7:15 am (AMC) - *The Curse of the Cat People* (1944) - Not a horror film at all, this is the story of a lonely girl who conjures up a vision of her father's mysterious first wife (Simone Simon from *Cat People*). Val Lewton produced, Robert Wise made his directorial debut.

*10:00 am (TCM) - *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946) - John

Garfield and Lana Turner play the illicit and doomed lovers in the film based on James M. Cain's novel. They kill her husband, the owner of a roadside diner, and suffer the consequences of nearly getting away with it. Tay Garnett directed.

10:35 am (TBS) - *Escape from Alcatraz* (1979) - Clint Eastwood plays a convict determined to break out of Alcatraz, the supposedly inescapable prison. Based on a true story, the film methodically follows Eastwood's efforts. Directed by Don Siegel.

12:00 pm (A&E) - *Darling* (1965) - Mostly memorable as the opportunity for Julie Christie to make a lasting impression on the film-going public, John Schlesinger's film was "Britain's answer to *La Dolce Vita*" in the words of one critic.

2:00 pm (TCM) - *King Kong* (1933) - Beauty and the Beast story, with Fay Wray as the former and an animated ape as the latter. Last ten minutes are worth waiting for. Directed by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack.

4:00 pm (TCM) - *Anna Karenina* (1935) - A superficial and turgid version of the Tolstoy novel. But anything with Greta Garbo is of interest. Clarence Brown, for some reason Garbo's favorite, directed the film.

4:15 pm (TBS) - *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.

6:00 pm (AMC) - *My Favorite Wife* (1940) - Amusing film, directed by Garson Kanin, with Irene Dunne, thought dead, returning to find husband Cary Grant married to another woman (Gail Patrick). Produced and co-written by Leo McCarey.

6:00 pm (TCM) - *Little Caesar* (1931) - Mervyn LeRoy directed Edward G. Robinson as a smalltime hood who rises to the top of the crime world. From the novel by W.R. Burnett.

Monday, May 11

12:00 am (TCM) - *Pandora's Box* (1928) - The film, directed by G.W. Pabst, is based on two plays by German playwright Franz Wedekind. It is the story of Lulu, also the subject of Alban Berg's opera, who unwittingly brings about the destruction of several men. The film is unforgettable because of the performance, the presence of Louise Brooks, one of the most extraordinary film actresses of the 1920s.

12:00 am (VH1) - *Sid and Nancy* (1986) - Flawed, but relatively unsentimental study of the relationship between punk-rocker Sid Vicious (Gary Oldman) and girl-friend Nancy Spungen (Chloe Webb). Directed by Alex Cox.

1:15 am (AMC) - *I Remember Mama* (1948) - George Stevens, in his first film after returning from war, directed this saga of Scandinavian immigrants in San Francisco. With Irene Dunne, Barbara Bel Geddes and

Oskar Homolka, among others.

2:00 am (TCM) - *Nothing Sacred* (1937) - Fredric March is a cynical reporter who sets out to make headlines with the story of a Vermont girl (Carole Lombard) supposedly dying from radium poisoning. Ben Hecht wrote the script and William Wellman directed.

*3:30 am (AMC) - *Make Way for Tomorrow* (1937) - A remarkable portrait of an aging couple (Victor Moore and Beulah Bondi) in the Depression years, shunted aside by their ambitious children. Directed by Leo McCarey.

5:00 am (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.

7:15 am (AMC) - *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946) - William Wyler's occasionally affecting drama about ex-servicemen in postwar America. With Fredric March, Dana Andrews, Myrna Loy, Virginia Mayo and Teresa Wright.

1:00 pm (AMC) - *The Major and the Minor* (1942) - Remarkable film by Billy Wilder, with Ginger Rogers, posing as a 12-year-old to save train fare, becoming involved with Ray Milland.

8:15 pm (AMC) - *An Affair to Remember* (1957) - Leo McCarey directed this remake of his own 1939 *Love Affair* (Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer), this time with Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr. A shipboard romance has unexpected complications on land. Sentimental, but it has something.

Tuesday, May 12

2:15 am (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.

6:00 am (TCM) - *Mary of Scotland* (1936) - John Ford's sympathetic and largely fanciful, from an historical point of view, account of the last years in the life of Mary Queen of Scots, Catholic queen and rival of Elizabeth I of England. Based on the play by Maxwell Anderson. Katharine Hepburn is Mary.

*10:00 am (TCM) - *Bringing Up Baby* (1938) - Classic screwball comedy, with Katharine Hepburn as bedazzling, eccentric heiress and Cary Grant as the sedate zoologist whose life she turns upside down. Howard Hawks directed this comedy of sex and morals.

12:15 pm (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.

1:30 pm (AMC) - *Morning Glory* (1935) - Katharine Hepburn is a small-town girl who tries to make it as an actress in New York City. Hepburn, according to one critic, displays "a self-mocking irony and delirious rapture that few actresses have ever attempted, much less achieved." Directed by Lowell Sherman.

2:00 pm (TCM) - *Undercurrent* (1946) - In the *Gaslight* genre: a woman (Katharine Hepburn) discovers her husband is evil and conniving. Robert Mitchum is her ultimate savior. Directed by Vincente Minnelli.

*2:45 pm (AMC) - *Alice Adams* (1935) - Katharine Hepburn as social-climbing girl in George Cukor's filming of Booth Tarkington's novel. Memorable dinner-table scene, as Hepburn embarrassingly tries to impress wealthy Fred MacMurray.

4:00 pm (TCM) - *Pat and Mike* (1952) - Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy play a leading female athlete and her manager, respectively, in this lightweight piece. Directed by George Cukor.

*4:30 pm (AMC) - *Stage Door* (1937) - Amusing, lively comedy-drama set in a theatrical boarding-house. Extraordinary cast includes Katharine

Hepburn, Ginger Rogers, Lucille Ball, Eve Arden, Franklin Pangborn and Jack Carson. Directed by Gregory La Cava.

6:00 pm (AMC) - *Arch of Triumph* (1948) - Charles Boyer and Ingrid Bergman falling for each other in wartime France, from the novel by Erich Maria Remarque. Directed by the stolid Lewis Milestone.

8:00 pm (TCM) - *Private Lives* (1931) - Sidney Franklin directed this version of Noel Coward's play, with Norma Shearer and Robert Montgomery. Hollywood's attempt at Anglicized gentility.

Wednesday, May 13

12:00 am (TCM) - *Clash by Night* (1952) - Fritz Lang directed this melodrama which sees Barbara Stanwyck, as a woman bored with her fisherman husband Paul Douglas, suddenly taken with Douglas' cynical friend (Robert Ryan). Clifford Odets wrote the story.

9:45 am (AMC) - *Midnight* (1939) - Very clever film, directed by Mitchell Leisen and written by Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett, about penniless Claudette Colbert pretending to be an aristocrat in Paris. Memorable scene with Don Ameche, a taxi-driver.

11:30 am (AMC) - *I Confess* (1953) - Alfred Hitchcock's tale of priest, played by Montgomery Clift, who hears a confession of a murder and later becomes accused of the crime. Filmed in Quebec.

1:05 pm (AMC) - *All My Sons* (1948) - Irving Reis directed this adaptation of Arthur Miller's play about a returning soldier discovering his father's shady business practices. With Burt Lancaster and Edward G. Robinson.

6:30 pm (AMC) - *Spellbound* (1945) - Psychiatrist Ingrid Bergman attempts to unravel patient Gregory Peck's dilemmas. Has he committed a murder? Alfred Hitchcock directed.

Thursday, May 14

12:00 am (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.

12:00 am (TCM) - *Ah, Wilderness!* (1935) - Based on the relatively lighthearted Eugene O'Neill play about turn-of-the-century small-town life. Directed by Clarence Brown, with Wallace Beery, Lionel Barrymore and Mickey Rooney.

12:30 pm (AMC) - *Unfaithfully Yours* (1948) - Not Preston Sturges at his best, but still amusing. Rex Harrison is a symphony conductor convinced of his wife's (Linda Darnell's) infidelity.

4:15 pm (AMC) - *The Naked City* (1948) - A "neo-realist" treatment of a murder case, filmed self-consciously on the streets of New York. Barry Fitzgerald and Howard Duff play leading roles. The film provided the basis for the subsequent television series. Directed by Jules Dassin and co-scripted by Albert Maltz, both soon to be blacklisted.

8:00 pm (AMC) - *The Getaway* (1972) - Steve McQueen as a convict who gets out of jail and immediately takes part in a bank robbery. With Ali McGraw. Directed by Sam Peckinpah, from the novel by Jim Thompson.

Friday, May 15

4:00 am (A&E) - *Smash Up, the Story of a Woman* (1947) - Susan Hayward, in her film breakthrough, does a remarkable turn as a nightclub singer who sinks into alcoholism. Stuart Heisler directed and John Howard Lawson wrote the script, based on a story by Dorothy Parker and Frank Cavett.

6:00 am (TCM) - *Gaslight* (1944) - Charles Boyer tries to drive Ingrid Bergman mad in George Cukor's period thriller. With Joseph Cotton and Angela Lansbury in her film debut.

*7:00 am (AMC) - *The Long Voyage Home* (1940) - Sentimental, murky, but enormously moving account of sailors at sea, adapted by screenwriter Dudley Nichols from four short plays by Eugene O'Neill. John Ford was the director, Gregg Toland (who shot *Citizen Kane* the following year) the cinematographer.

*12:00 pm (TNT) - *North by Northwest* (1959) - One of Alfred Hitchcock's wondrous late 1950s' color pieces, with Cary Grant as an ad executive turned into a wanted and hunted man.

*1:45 pm (AMC) - *Duel in the Sun* (1947) - 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.

2:25 pm (TCM) - *The Money Trap* (1966) - Glenn Ford is a policeman who goes bad in this modest murder story. Rita Hayworth co-stars in one of her later performances. Walter Bernstein, formerly blacklisted, wrote the script and Burt Kennedy directed.

*4:00 pm (AMC) - *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) - Teresa Wright is a young girl who comes to realize that her amiable uncle is the Merry Widow murderer, in this remarkable Alfred Hitchcock work. Playwright Thornton Wilder helped write the script.

6:30 pm (COM) - *Something Wild* (1986) - Melanie Griffith, in one her rare performances of substance, turns out to be trouble for Jeff Daniels, an uptight businessman. Ray Liotta is her psychotic boy-friend. Not a great film, but it has its moments. Directed by Jonathan Demme.



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact