

Some interesting films on US television May 23-29

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23 May 1998

Asterisk indicates film of exceptional interest.

Saturday May 23

6:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *A Shot in the Dark* (1964)--Blake Edwards directed the second of the Inspector Clouseau films, starring the inimitable Peter Sellers. With Elke Sommer, George Sanders and Herbert Lom.

12:00 p.m. (TNT)-- *Operation Petticoat* (1959)--Cary Grant stars as the commander of a damaged submarine, Tony Curtis is a con man junior officer, in this comedy set during World War II. Blake Edwards directed.

1:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Alfie* (1966)--Somewhat unpleasant film about cockney playboy, played memorably by Michael Caine, from the play by Bill Naughton. With Shelley Winters, Jane Asher and Eleanor Bron, among others. Directed by Lewis Gilbert.

2:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *Seminole* (1953)--Modest film, directed by Budd Boetticher, about an army officer, Rock Hudson, doing his best to help an Indian tribe preserve itself against the advances and intrusions of the white man's civilization.

3:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *Has Anybody Seen My Gal?* (1952)--Charles Coburn is marvelous in Douglas Sirk's film about a millionaire in 1920s small-town America planning to leave his money to the family of a woman who once rejected his marriage proposal.

5:00 p.m. (AMC) *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing* (1955)--Melodrama set in Hong Kong during the Korean War, with Jennifer Jones as a Eurasian doctor who falls for William Holden. Directed by Henry King.

8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Strawberry Blonde* (1941)--Evocative film about turn-of-the-century New York, with James Cagney as a dentist who loves Rita Hayworth, and married Olivia de Haviland. Raoul Walsh directed.

8:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *Breaking Away* (1979)--Intelligent story of group of 'townies' in Bloomington, Indiana, home of Indiana University. Directed by Peter Yates.

10:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *They Died with Their Boots On* (1941)--Hollywood's version of the George Custer story. Surprisingly sympathetic to the Indians, in fact. Custer is made out to be an opponent of the campaign that led to his death. The last of the Errol Flynn-Olivia de Haviland cycle of films; directed vividly by Raoul Walsh, with a score by Max Steiner.

11:15 p.m. (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.

Sunday, May 24

*1:30 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 Duryea as a gangster. Directed by Robert Siodmak.

2:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *In This Our Life* (1942)--John Huston's second effort at directing. Bette Davis steals her sister's husband and eventually ruins her own life. Based on the novel by Ellen Glasgow. With Olivia de Haviland and George Brent.

The Killing (1956)--An early TCM effort by Kubrick, about an elaborate racetrack heist. With Sterling Hayden, Marie Windsor and Elisha Cook.

3:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *The Crowd Roars* (1932)--James Cagney is a race car driver in this early sound film, directed by Howard Hawks. With Joan Blondell and Ann Dvorak (who was to star in Hawks's immortal *Scarface* the same year).

11:00 p.m. (TNT)-- *The Big Red One* (1980)--Sam Fuller's war film, semiautobiographical, about an infantry squadron doing battle in World War II. A vivid account. With Lee Marvin. (Also, Monday at 2:00 p.m.)

Monday, May 25

12:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *Champion* (1949)--Effective boxing drama, with Kirk Douglas as selfish, ambitious fighter determined to get to the top and stay there. Paul Stewart is his friend whom he betrays. Directed by Mark Robson.

6:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Battleground* (1949)--William Wellman directed this dramatic reenactment of World War Two's Battle of the Bulge. The large cast includes Van Johnson, John Hodiak, Ricardo Montalban and George Murphy.

6:30 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.

7:30 a.m. (TNT)-- *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.

8:30 (AMC)-- *My Little Chickadee* (1940)--W.C. Fields costars with Mae West in this odd western, directed by Eddie Cline. One critic suggested that the pairing 'was more funny/peculiar than funny/ha ha.'

12:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *The Red Badge of Courage* (1951)--John Huston's intelligent adaptation of Stephen Crane's Civil War novel, about a young soldier in the Union army who runs from his first encounter with the enemy, but comes to terms with his fear.

*1:30 (TCM)-- *Paths of Glory* (1957)--Stanley Kubrick's fine film about military insanity. In World War I, when a suicidal advance that he ordered has failed, a French officer selects three of his men to be tried and shot for cowardice. With Kirk Douglas, Ralph Meeker and Adolphe Menjou.

*5:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *They Were Expendable* (1945)--An extremely well-done film: the story of an American PT boat squadron, directed by John Ford. John Wayne and Robert Montgomery are the squadron's officers, but equally memorable is Donna Reed, as a nurse in love with Wayne's character.

6:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *Man Without a Star* (1955)--King Vidor-directed western, with Kirk Douglas as a drifter, Jeanne Crain as a manipulative rancher.

8:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *Friendly Persuasion* (1956)--William Wyler directed this film about a family of Quakers and, therefore, pacifists, trying to survive with dignity during the Civil War. With Gary Cooper, Dorothy McGuire and Anthony Perkins.

8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *What Price Hollywood?* (1932)--Early of Hollywood, with Constance Bennett as a waitress who becomes a movie star and Lowell Sherman as an alcoholic film director. George Cukor directed.

11:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Dinner at Eight* (1933)--A collection of individuals from various social classes, all facing a crisis, prepare to dine at eight. George Cukor directed this MGM version of the George Kaufman-Edna Ferber play, with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, Wallace Beery and John Barrymore.

Tuesday, May 26

*1:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Little Women* (1933)--George Cukor's film version of the Louisa May Alcott classic, perhaps the best of the lot. Four sisters growing up in Civil War America, with Katharine Hepburn and Joan Bennett.

3:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *David Copperfield* (1935)--W.C. Fields as Mr. Micawber and Basil Rathbone as Murdstone are highlights of this lavish film version of the Dickens novel. Freddie Bartholemew is the young David Copperfield. Directed by George Cukor.

3:15 a.m. (AMC)-- *Mister Cory* (1957)--Tony Curtis is excellent as poor boy turned rich gambler in this Blake Edwards drama.

*10:45 a.m. (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 p.m. (TNT)-- *Two Mules for Sister Sara* (1970)--The formerly blacklisted Albert Maltz wrote the script, from a story by director Budd Boetticher, about a drifter (Clint Eastwood) who helps a 'nun' (Shirley MacLaine) stage an uprising in Mexico. Veteran action filmmaker Don Siegel directed. (Also, Tuesday at 10:35 p.m.)

2:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Long Trail* (1930)--John Wayne leads a wagon trail across the country in this early epic sound film, directed by Raoul Walsh. Rough, but interesting. Tyrone Power Sr. plays a part.

4:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Shepherd of the Hills* (1941)--One of Henry Hathaway's more unusual efforts. An Ozark Mountain man lives under a curse: he has promised to kill the man who left his mother. With John Wayne, Berry Field, Harry Carey and Beulah Bondi.

*8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Sylvia Scarlett* (1935)--Disconcerting, interesting film about a father (Edmund Gwenn) and daughter (Katharine Hepburn), who take to the road with a touring show, which later includes Cary Grant. Hepburn disguises herself as a boy, which turns all sorts of social and sexual relationships upside down. George Cukor directed.

*8:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *Stagecoach* (1939)--Famed western, directed by John Ford, about a group of disparate passengers thrown together on the same eventful journey. Starring John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Thomas Mitchell, John Carradine. Dudley Nichols wrote the script.

9:45 p.m. (TCM)-- *Romeo and Juliet* (1936)--Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard were a good deal too old for their starring roles, but they perform admirably, in George Cukor's version of the tragedy.

Wednesday, May 27

*12:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Camille* (1937)--Perhaps Greta Garbo's finest film. She plays Dumas's tragic courtesan, forced to give up her love, a young man from a 'good family,' for the sake of his family's honor. Robert Taylor and Lionel Barrymore are adequate, but Henry Daniell enlivens the proceedings as the villain. Directed by George Cukor.

12:50 p.m. (TNT)-- *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949)--The second part of John Ford's cavalry trilogy, with John Wayne as an officer about to retire, drawn into a campaign against a tribe of Indians. With Joanne Dru, Ben Johnson, Victor McLagen.

2:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Philadelphia Story* (1940)--George Cukor directed this film adaptation of Philip Barry's stage play about a spoiled mainline socialite yearning for ... well, what exactly? One critic calls it

simply the breaking, reining, and saddling of an unruly thoroughbred,' i.e., Katharine Hepburn.

4:00 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.

6:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Great McGinty* (1940)--Preston Sturges's fable about a derelict (Brian Donlevy) who, with the help of the political machine, makes it to the governor's mansion and then tries to turn honest, with catastrophic consequences.

8:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *Days of Wine and Roses* (1962)--Blake Edwards's somber film about alcoholic Jack Lemmon who drags Lee Remick into his orbit.

6:00 p.m. (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.

8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *A Woman's Face* (1941)--Joan Crawford is a vengeful woman, whose face has been disfigured. Not a consistently good film, but it has some moments. With the wonderful Conrad Veidt. George Cukor directed.

9:00 p.m. (TNT)-- *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964)--A loose remake of Kurosawa's *Yojimbo*, with Clint Eastwood as the Man With No Name, manipulating two rival clans in a border town. Sergio Leone directed, with a score by Ennio Morricone.

Thursday, May 28

2:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Gaslight* (1944)--Charles Boyer tries to drive Ingrid Bergman mad in George Cukor's period thriller.

10:45 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.

11:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *How the West Was Won* (1963)--An 'epic' saga, with more weaknesses than strengths, about three generations of western pioneers. Henry Fonda, Carroll Baker, Gregory Peck, George Peppard and countless others star. Co-directed by John Ford, Henry Hathaway and George Marshall.

12:00 p.m. (TNT)-- *Coogan's Bluff* (1968)--A good action film, directed by veteran Don Siegel, concerning an Arizona lawman (Clint Eastwood) who comes to New York City to pick up a prisoner (Don Stroud); complications ensue. (Also, Thursday at 10:30 p.m.)

3:00 p.m. (HIS)-- *Men in War* (1957)--The seriously underrated Anthony Mann directed this film about the Korean War. With a cast of stalwart character actors, including Robert Ryan, Aldo Ray and Vic Morrow (father of Jennifer Jason Leigh).

9:00 p.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. (Also, Friday at 2:00 p.m.)

*10:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Adam's Rib* (1949)--One of the stronger Spencer Tracy-Katharine Hepburn films, in which the two find themselves on opposing sides in the court case of a woman (the wonderful Judy Holliday) who has shot and wounded her philandering husband (Tom Ewell). Ruth Gordon and Garson Kanin wrote the script; George Cukor directed.

Friday, May 29

2:00 a.m. (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.

4:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Actress* (1953)--The film is based on the experiences of Ruth Gordon struggling to be a stage performer in the early part of the century in Massachusetts. With Jean Simmons, Spencer Tracy and a youthful Anthony Perkins. George Cukor directed.

2:00 p.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.

6:00 p.m. (COM)-- *High Anxiety* (1978)--Uneven, to say the least, Mel Brooks comedy, but with rewards for the patient. Brooks is the new chief of a sanitarium, in this homage to and spoof of Hitchcock. With Madeline Kahn, Cloris Leachman and Harvey Korman.

6:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *Drums Along the Mohawk* (1939)--The story of American colonials in upstate New York during the Revolutionary War. With Henry Fonda and Claudette Colbert, in one of John Ford's more modest works.

8:00 p.m. (TCM)--*Bhowani Junction* (1956)--Stewart Granger and Ava Gardner as star-crossed lovers in this melodrama about postwar India. Directed by George Cukor.



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