

Some interesting films on US television, July 11-17

David Walsh
11 July 1998

Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest

Saturday, July 11

*6:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Merry Widow* (1934)--Ernst Lubitsch directed this version of the Franz Lehar operetta. Described by one critic as 'the last musical of a certain spirit and style to be made on this planet.'

11:00 a.m. (Bravo)-- *Germinal* (1993)--Claude Berri's expensive, turgid adaptation of the famous Zola novel (1884), about French coal miners, their struggles and personal dramas. With Gerard Depardieu, Miou-Miou, Laurent Terzieff and many others.

1:00 p.m. (WGN)-- *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* (1982)--A lightweight film, but some lively performances by a remarkable group of young actors: Sean Penn, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Robert Romanus, Phoebe Cates, Forest Whitaker, Anthony Edwards, Nicholas Cage.

1:45 p.m. (AMC)-- *Reap the Wild Wind* (1942) - Cecil B. DeMille directed this intriguing film about nineteenth century salvagers off the coast of Georgia. Ray Milland and John Wayne fight over Paulette Goddard, as a spirited Southern belle.

Sunday, July 12

1:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Moulin Rouge* (1952)--John Huston's engrossing account of the life of nineteenth century French painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, with Jose Ferrer.

*3:10 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948)--John Huston directed this bitter version of the B. Traven story about three prospectors searching for gold in Mexico. Humphrey Bogart, Tim Holt and Huston's father, Walter, make up the trio. (Also, Wednesday at 2:30 am.)

*8:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Citadel* (1938)--King Vidor's moving and insightful adaptation of the A.J. Cronin novel about an idealistic doctor who experiences a few disappointments in a mining village and opts to treat the wealthy and hypochondriacal instead. With Robert Donat and Rosalind Russell.

*8:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Big Sky* (1952)--One of Howard Hawks's most unsettling Westerns. For the first hour and a half the film seems simply to be a picturesque adventure story, then Hawks makes something different out of it. With Kirk Douglas, Dewey Martin, Arthur Hunnicutt and Elizabeth Threatt.

1:05 (TBS)-- *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (1966)--A Serge Leone Western, the third in a trilogy, with Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef and Eli Wallach. Three outlaws look for Confederate treasure, during the Civil War.

*1:30 (TCM)-- *They Drive by Night* (1940)--Intense, vivid portrait of two truck-driving brothers (Humphrey Bogart and George Raft) and their lives, and the woman they come up against, played passionately by Ida Lupino. With Ann Sheridan and Alan Hale. Directed by Raoul Walsh.

6:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Now, Voyager* (1942)--A well-done melodrama with a remarkable cast. Bette Davis is an isolated, neurotic woman helped by psychiatrist Claude Rains, and falling in love with Paul Henreid. Directed by Irving Rapper.

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(1962)--One of the prime examples of Britain's 'neo-realist' cinema of the 1960s, directed by Tony Richardson. The story of a young man (a remarkable Tom Courtenay) in a reform school, who takes up running. An uneven work, but it has stirring moments. With Michael Redgrave.

Monday, July 13

*12:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Cameraman* (1928)--A late silent film with Buster Keaton as a love-sick newsreel cameraman. Edward Sedgwick directed, and this is not considered one of Keaton's major films, but none of his films should be missed.

1:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *Full Confession* (1939)--John Farrow, father of Mia, directed this melodrama about a priest (Joseph Calleia) who receives a confession of murder (from Victor McLaglen) and finds himself in an obvious quandary.

3:00 a.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.

8:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Flame of New Orleans* (1941)--One of French director René Clair's American films. Marlene Dietrich, the principal reason to watch the film, has to choose between wealthy Roland Young and hard working Bruce Cabot.

9:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Star Witness* (1931)--William Wellman directed this film about a family that witnesses a gangland shoot-out and then comes under pressure not to testify. Walter Huston is the district attorney.

9:30 (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.

10:15 (TCM)-- *I am a Fugitive From a Chain Gang* (1932)--Heavy-handed, but powerful expose of conditions on prison farms. Mervyn LeRoy directed Paul Muni as the innocent man framed up by the justice system.

6:30 (AMC)-- *Macao* (1952)--Not one of Josef Von Sternberg's finer efforts, but still worth watching. With Robert Mitchum as an adventurer and Jane Russell a singer, acting out a melodrama in the Portuguese enclave off the coast of China.

8:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *River of No Return* (1954)--Otto Preminger directed this interesting, relatively somber story. Robert Mitchum rescues a man (Rory Calhoun) and a woman (Marilyn Monroe) from drowning. Calhoun promptly steals his horse and takes off. Vengeful Mitchum, with his young son, and Monroe pursue him by raft.

8:00 p.m. (Comedy)-- *Diner* (1982)--Barry Levinson wrote and directed this sympathetic account of a group of young men who hang out in a diner in 1950s Baltimore. With Steve Guttenberg, Daniel Stern, Mickey Rourke, Kevin Bacon, Timothy Daly, Ellen Barkin.

8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Border Incident* (1949)--US and Mexican officials

team up to crack down on smuggling of immigrants across the border. Anthony Mann directed, with Ricardo Montalban, George Murphy, Charles McGraw.

10:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Side Street* (1949)--Anthony Mann directed this story about a young man driven to theft, whose troubles multiply. The same stars as Nicholas Ray's *They Live By Night* (1949); Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell.

11:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *Devil's Doorway* (1950)--Robert Taylor is an Indian who served in the Civil War and finds ill-treatment back home. Sympathetic handling of this question was relatively rare in Hollywood at the time. Directed by Anthony Mann, with Louis Calhern and Edgar Buchanan.

Tuesday, July 14

*1:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Tall Target* (1951)--Dick Powell is a detective investigating a plot to kill Abraham Lincoln in 1861 in this suspenseful drama. With Adolphe Menjou, Paula Raymond and Ruby Dee. Directed by Anthony Mann.

4:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Daisy Kenyon* (1947)--One of Otto Preminger's interesting postwar melodramas. Joan Crawford, Dana Andrews and Henry Fonda form a love triangle.

7:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *Little Fugitive* (1953)--Odd independent film, directed by Morris Engel, about a young boy who thinks he's killed his brother and gets lost in Coney Island. Interesting shots of 1950s New York City.

9:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Madame Bovary* (1949)--Vincente Minnelli's film version of the Gustave Flaubert novel about a bored provincial wife who thinks she has found true love. Jennifer Jones is Emma Bovary, with Van Heflin, James Mason.

11:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Marie Antoinette* (1938)--Lavish MGM spectacle about the life of the doomed queen of France. Criticized in its time, it stands up to a certain extent. Robert Morley is memorable as Louis XVI; Norma Shearer is Marie. Directed by W.S. Van Dyke.

12:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Razor's Edge* (1946)--An overlong film, with some embarrassingly silly moments, but also some extraordinarily believable ones. With Tyrone Power, looking for 'the meaning of life,' Gene Tierney, Anne Baxter. Directed by Edmund Goulding, from the novel by Somerset Maugham.

1:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935)--Ronald Colman provides some outstanding moments in this film version of the Charles Dickens novel about the French Reign of Terror. An extravagant MGM production, directed by Jack Conway. With Edna May Oliver, Basil Rathbone and Reginald Owen. (Also, Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.)

*4:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *An American in Paris* (1951)--Classic MGM musical directed by Vincente Minnelli and built around its Gershwin score; Alan Jay Lerner wrote the screenplay. Gene Kelly is an artist torn between gamine Leslie Caron and wealthy Nina Foch. With the irrepressible Oscar Levant.

*5:30 (Bravo)-- *Effi Briest* (1974)--Somewhat self-conscious and slow moving, but extremely thoughtful, insightful adaptation of Theodor Fontane's novel about a young woman in nineteenth century Prussia suppressed by marriage, family and her own conformism. Hanna Schygulla is wonderful as Effi; with Wolfgang Schenck, Karl-Heinz Böhm, Irm Hermann. Directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

6:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935)-- (See Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.)

8:05 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.

10:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *Love in the Afternoon* (1957)--Billy Wilder directed this film about the affair between a young Parisian woman (Audrey Hepburn) and a middle-aged American businessman (Gary Cooper).

Maurice Chevalier is her father, a private detective. This was Wilder's first film cowritten with I.A.L. Diamond.

Wednesday, July 15

12:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Big Trail* (1930) - An early sound picture, with John Wayne, in his first starring role, shepherding a flock of pioneers westward. Somewhat stiff and awkward, but with very nice touches. Directed with his customary vigor by Raoul Walsh.

1:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954)--Director Richard Brooks's inconsistent effort to capture F. Scott Fitzgerald's story, now set in post-World War II Europe. A tale of disillusionment and loss. With Elizabeth Taylor and Van Johnson.

*2:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948)--(See Sunday at 3:10 a.m.)

*4:00 a.m. (Bravo)-- *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1978)--R.W. Fassbinder's epic film of postwar German economic and emotional life: a woman whose husband goes missing in World War II builds a business empire at a considerable cost. With the remarkable Hanna Schygulla. Essential viewing. (Also, Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.)

8:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Story of Louis Pasteur* (1936)--Paul Muni stars as the legendary French nineteenth century scientist in this well-meaning biography. Directed by German emigre William Dieterle.

10:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Life of Emile Zola* (1937)--A stolid and not particularly accurate version of the life of the French writer (Paul Muni). The final speech, in Zola's own words, is moving. Directed by William Dieterle.

*11:00 a.m. (Bravo)-- *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1978)--(See Wednesday at 4:00 a.m.)

1:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Enchanted Cottage* (1945)--Robert Young, as a disfigured man, and Dorothy McGuire, as an unattractive woman, who grew beautiful in an enchanted locale. Directed by John Cromwell.

2:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Tennessee Johnson* (1942)--Van Heflin plays US President Andrew Johnson, who became president upon the assassination of Lincoln and came into conflict with Congress, in this biopic. With Lionel Barrymore, Ruth Hussey, Marjorie Main; directed by William Dieterle.

4:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *No Highway in the Sky* (1951)--James Stewart gives a remarkable performance as an aviation engineer who tries to persuade the authorities that planes should be grounded after a given time. With Marlene Dietrich.

*5:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1978)--(See Wednesday at 4:00 a.m.)

Thursday, July 16

6:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Primrose Path* (1940)--A sentimental, but occasionally affecting film, about a poor girl (Ginger Rogers), from a really dissolute family, who becomes involved with an ambitious young man (Joel McCrea). Gregory La Cava directed.

7:45 a.m. (AMC)-- *Ladies of Leisure* (1930)--Remarkably frank film, early Frank Capra, about the relationship between the poor and somewhat loose Barbara Stanwyck, who gives a luminous performance, and Ralph Graves, an artist and a playboy.

1:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *Vivacious Lady* (1938)--Not director George Stevens at his best, but an entertaining film about a college professor (James Stewart) marrying a night-club singer (Ginger Rogers), and having to let his strait-laced family in on the news.

3:00 p.m. (History)-- *Hell to Eternity* (1960)--Account of US World War II hero Guy Gabaldon, who had been raised by Japanese foster parents. With Jeffrey Hunter, David Janssen, Vic Damone. Directed by underrated Phil Karlson.

4:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *Bachelor Mother* (1939)--Ginger Rogers plays a sales clerk who discovers an abandoned baby and is assumed to be its mother. David Niven plays the store owner's son in this fairly sharp-eyed work, directed by Garson Kanin.

Friday, July 17

2:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *Dark City* (1950)--Charlton Heston in his film debut, as a cynical lowlife who, along with a few accomplices, takes Don DeFore in a card game, with unforeseen consequences. Future *Dragnet* costars, Jack Webb and Harry Morgan, are two of Heston's pals. With Lizabeth Scott and Viveca Lindfors. Directed by William Dieterle.

3:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *The American Friend* (1977)--One of most interesting films by German director Wim Wenders, about the problem of American influence in Europe. Dennis Hopper's Ripley, a shady character, and Bruno Ganz's German picture framer are thrown together in a criminal enterprise. Based on the novels of Patricia Highsmith. With Lisa Kreuzer and Gerard Blain.

3:00 (History)-- *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).

8:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *Julia* (1977) - Vanessa Redgrave won an Oscar for her performance as the anti-fascist Julia based on Lillian Hellman's autobiographical work, *Pentimento*. With Jane Fonda, Jason Robards; directed by Fred Zinnemann.



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