

Some interesting films on US television, September 19-25

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19 September 1998

Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest

Saturday, September 19

*12:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Brink of Life* (1958)--Swedish director Ingmar Bergman's look at the lives of three women in a maternity ward awaiting childbirth. Each faces a critical point in her life. With Eva Dahlbeck, Ingrid Thulin, Bibi Andersson.

*2:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945)--Extraordinary melodrama by John Stahl, about a woman (Gene Tierney) consumed by jealousy and possessiveness, to the point of madness and murder. With Cornel Wilde and Vincent Price.

*2:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Scenes from a Marriage* (1973)--Essentially a soap opera, treating ten years in a relationship, from marriage through divorce and beyond. Ingmar Bergman directed Liv Ullmann and Erland Josephson and Bibi Andersson.

*4:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Summer Interlude* (1951)--In this Ingmar Bergman film, also known as *Illicit Interlude*, a prima ballerina is obsessed with her former lover, now dead. Their romance is told in flashbacks. With Maj-Britt Nilsson.

*2:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *His Girl Friday* (1940)--Marvelous film version of Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur's *The Front Page*, co-scripted by Hecht, with Cary Grant as scheming editor and Rosalind Russell as his star reporter trying to get married to Ralph Bellamy. Directed by Howard Hawks.

4:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?* (1957)--Jayne Mansfield, at her most disproportionate, and Tony Randall star in this Frank Tashlin film about an ad man who tries to persuade a glamour girl to endorse one of his products. A satire of advertising, television and 1950s morals, based on a George Axelrod play.

*8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955)--Nicholas Ray's socially conscious portrait of disaffected youth, with James Dean, Natalie Wood, Sal Mineo. Memorable scene in a planetarium.

9:00 p.m. (History)-- *The Deer Hunter* (1978)--Michael Cimino's somewhat strained portrait of a group of Pennsylvania steelworkers, their experiences in Vietnam and back home again. With Robert De Niro, John Cazale, Meryl Streep, Christopher Walken, John Savage.

Sunday, September 20

*12:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *On the Waterfront* (1954)--Elia Kazan's famed film, with Marlon Brando as an ex-boxer working on the docks, Rod Steiger as his crooked brother, Lee J. Cobb as a corrupt union boss, Karl Malden as a crusading priest, Eva Marie Saint as Brando's girlfriend. Kazan was seeking to justify his role as an informant to HUAC; a good movie made for the wrong reasons.

1:00 a.m. (History)-- *The Deer Hunter* (1978)--See Saturday, at 9:00 p.m.

2:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *Raging Bull* (1980)--Martin Scorsese directed Robert De Niro in this film biography of the boxer Jake La Motta. An interesting work, even if its themes are somewhat obscure. With Cathy Moriarty, Joe Pesci.

The 10th Ranger (1946)--Orson Welles' which the director plays a Nazi war criminal living in a sedate Connecticut town. With Edward G. Robinson.

12:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Father of the Bride* (1950)--Spencer Tracy is the father and Elizabeth Taylor the bride in Vincente Minnelli's look at the American marriage ritual. Amusing, and sometimes pointed. With Joan Bennett.

1:00 p.m. (A&E)-- *Giant* (1956)--George Stevens directed this work, described by many as 'epic,' about two generations of a Texas family. With Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor, and James Dean in his last role.

1:00 p.m. (History)-- *The Molly Maguires* (1970)--Sean Connery and Richard Harris co-starred in this well-meaning film about the secret organization of Irish-born miners in Pennsylvania in the 1870s. Directed by Martin Ritt.

10:00 p.m. (TBS)-- *Rio Lobo* (1970)--Howard Hawks' last film (he died in 1977), something of a disappointment. John Wayne is an ex-Union colonel who discovers a gold shipment and uncovers a traitor. Jennifer O'Neill was not up to the task in this film.

10:15 p.m. (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.

Monday, September 21

*6:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *City Lights* (1931)--Chaplin's tramp in love with a blind flower girl. Sentimental, but unforgettable.

7:10 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Gay Divorcee* (1934)--One of the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers musicals. Not famous for its plot, but for its musical numbers, including 'Continental' and Cole Porter's 'Night and Day.' Directed by journeyman Mark Sandrich.

*7:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Circus* (1928)--Underrated film, with Chaplin accidentally joining a circus troupe and falling in love with the bareback rider.

9:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Hold Back the Dawn* (1941)--Charles Boyer is a European refugee living in a Mexican border town. He woos unmarried Olivia de Havilland in an effort to get into the US. Mitchell Leisen directed with a certain flair. Billy Wilder co-wrote the script, basing it in part on his own experiences as a German refugee.

*9:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *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.

12:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *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.

1:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Police* (1984) - Gerard Depardieu and Sophie Marceau star in this film about a brutal policeman who falls for Marceau, involved in the narcotics trade. Directed by talented French director Maurice Pialat.

3:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *The Browning Version* (1951)--Michael Redgrave gives a remarkable performance as maligned teacher in Anthony Asquith's film.

4:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Tom, Dick and Harry* (1941)--Ginger Rogers is a woman considering three marriage proposals, in Garson Kanin's comic look at love and marriage.

8:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *Breaking Away* (1979)--Intelligent story of group of 'townies' in Bloomington, Indiana, home of Indiana University. Directed by Peter Yates.

Tuesday, September 22

4:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *One Sunday Afternoon* (1948)--Raoul Walsh directed this musical version of the 1933 Gary Cooper vehicle of the same name and his own *The Strawberry Blonde* (1941), the genial story of a turn-of-the-century dentist in love with a glamorous girl.

12:45 p.m. (Bravo)-- *The Browning Version* (1951)--See Monday, at 3:00 p.m.

*6:30 p.m. (Bravo)-- *The White Balloon* (1995)--Iranian filmmaker Jafar Panahi directed this beautiful film about a little girl determined to buy a goldfish on New Year's Day. Fellow filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami wrote the script.

*8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Red River* (1948)--Montgomery Clift is a young cattleman who rebels against his guardian/father figure, John Wayne (in a relatively rare unsympathetic role), in Howard Hawks' extraordinary Western. With Walter Brennan, Joanne Dru and John Ireland.

*10:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *Three Godfathers* (1948)--John Ford's version of the story of the Three Magi, with three lowlifes coming upon and taking care of an infant whose mother dies in the desert. John Wayne, Pedro Armendariz and Harry Carey Jr.

11:00 p.m. (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.

Wednesday, September 23

12:30 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.

*4:00 a.m. (Bravo)-- *Life is Sweet* (1990)--Allison Steadman and Jim Broadbent are a British suburban, working class couple in Mike Leigh's moving, occasionally irritating film. Jane Horrocks is remarkable as their self-loathing daughter; Claire Skinner is her sister.

10:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951)--Elia Kazan's version of the Tennessee Williams drama about the strong and the weak in a New Orleans tenement. Marlon Brando, Vivien Leigh, Kim Hunter and Karl Malden.

12:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *Magnificent Obsession* (1954)--The first, and perhaps least ironic, of Douglas Sirk's extraordinary 1950s melodramas, starring Jane Wyman and Rock Hudson.

*1:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *The White Balloon* (1995)--See Tuesday, at 6:30 p.m.

*2:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *All That Heaven Allows* (1955)--Extraordinarily perceptive view of postwar America. Jane Wyman plays a rich woman in love with a gardener. Her children and friends do everything to disrupt the relationship. The scene in which her children give her a television as a present is a classic. Directed by Douglas Sirk, the basis for R.W. Fassbinder's *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*.

*2:30 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Life is Sweet* (1990)--See Wednesday, at 4:00 a.m.

*10:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *Meet Me In St. Louis* (1944)--Vincente Minnelli's sentimental, but very evocative musical about turn-of-the-century family life in St. Louis, set during the world's fair of 1903. Judy Garland is memorable; she sings 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas' and 'The

*11:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Life is Sweet* (1990)--See Wednesday, at 4:00 a.m.

Thursday, September 24

*12:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942)--Considered by some to be Orson Welles's finest work. The film, based on a Booth Tarkington novel, examines the impact of social and economic change on a small town family. Joseph Cotten, Ray Collins, Agnes Moorehead are brilliant. The film was taken out of Welles's hands and an ending added.

2:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *One Sunday Afternoon* (1948)--See Tuesday, at 4:00 a.m.

*3:15 a.m. (TCM)-- *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.

3:30 a.m. (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.

5:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Tarnished Angels* (1958)--One of a series of remarkable melodramas directed by Douglas Sirk. This one, in black and white, is based on William Faulkner's *Pylon*, about a stunt pilot (Robert Stack), his wife (Dorothy Malone) and a newspaperman (Rock Hudson) in the 1930s.

*6:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *Fury* (1936)--German director Fritz Lang's first US work, a powerful statement against injustice and mob hysteria. Spencer Tracy as a traveler in a small town, mistaken for a murderer and apparently lynched.

6:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *Wings* (1927)--Silent film, directed by William Wellman, about two American flyers, in love with the same girl, who enlist in US forces during World War I. Flying sequences are famous. With Clara Bow, Charles 'Buddy' Rogers, Richard Arlen and Gary Cooper.

*8:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Woman in the Window* (1945)--Top-notch Fritz Lang melodrama, with Edward G. Robinson as a respectable married man who becomes involved with the model (Joan Bennett) of a painting he sees in a window and a lowlife, Dan Duryea.

10:00 a.m. (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.

*11:00 a.m. (Bravo)-- *Life is Sweet* (1990)--See Wednesday, at 4:00 a.m.

*12:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Rancho Notorious* (1952)--A Western like no other, except possibly Johnny Guitar. Arthur Kennedy gets work at a ranch, really a bandit hideout, run by Marlene Dietrich, to find his girlfriend's killer. With Mel Ferrer.

1:45 p.m. (TCM)-- *Moonfleet* (1955)--A Fritz Lang film, with Stewart Granger as an eighteenth century smuggler seeking a lost gem. With Jon Whiteley, George Saunders, Viveca Lindfors and Joan Greenwood.

2:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *Hollywood or Bust* (1956)--Frank Tashlin directed this Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis film (their last together), about a simpleton and a gambler out to make it in Hollywood. With Anita Ekberg.

6:00 p.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.

Friday, September 25

*2:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *High Sierra* (1941)--Wonderful, hard-boiled Raoul Walsh film about an ex-convict (Humphrey Bogart) and the two women in his life, a lame girl, Joan Leslie, whose treatment he pays for, and the tough, no-nonsense Ida Lupino. Final chase sequence in the mountains captures something essential about America. Written by John Huston and

W.R. Burnett.

8:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Lodger* (1944)--John Brahm's atmospheric retelling of the Jack the Ripper story, with Merle Oberon and George Sanders, among others.

11:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930)--Film adaptation of Erich Maria Remarque's anti-war novel about German youths' experiences as soldiers in World War I. Some memorable sequences, although the overall effect is not as strong as one would like. Directed by Lewis Milestone, with Lew Ayres.

1:00 p.m. (History)-- *Stalag 17* (1953)--Billy Wilder's World War II prison-camp film, with William Holden as a cynical GI accused of being a collaborator with the Germans who then uncovers the real traitors.

2:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Third Man* (1949)--Carol Reed directed this sharp look at life in post-World War II Vienna, impoverished and corrupt, where the Cold War is beginning to take shape. Orson Welles plays the mysterious Harry Lime and, one suspects, contributed to the overall feel of the film. Score, played on the zither by Anton Karas, is justly famous.

4:00 p.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.

*8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *The Seventh Seal* (1957)--This is the film, much-parodied, in which Max von Sydow, a knight returning from the Crusades, plays Death in a chess game. Somewhat ridiculous, but still fascinating. Directed, of course, by Ingmar Bergman.

9:00 p.m. (History)-- *Stalag 17* (1953)--See Friday, at 1:00 p.m.



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