

## My 100 Favorite Movies

### Joe Garrett

I love movies. It's that simple.

Back in the early 1970's, I made a list of my top 100 movies. There weren't computers to save it on, so I just typed it up, and, predictably, lost it somewhere over the years. Here in 2024, I decided it was time to do it again.

My friend Pat Joseph is a magazine editor, and he once told me he hates articles that include lists. He refers to them as *listicles*. I disagree with Pat. I think ranking things into lists forces you to sharpen your thinking.

How did I do this? I got *Halliwel's Film Guide 2008*, a 1400-page book with little thumbnail sketches of every movie made through 2008. To fill in the void between 2008 and 2023, I found a list on Google of the top 100 movies for each one of those years. I'm sure I missed some, but that's okay.

Every time I saw a movie I had liked, I wrote it on a 3x5 card. I then divided them into three groups, the A-group, the B-group, and the C-group. The A-group was the movies that I *absolutely* loved.

I spread out the cards on my dining room table, trying to establish some order, from my #1 favorite to my 100<sup>th</sup> favorite.

Over the course of a week, I played around with the order. As an example, I saw that Peter O'Toole's *My Favorite Year* was #31 and thought, "No, that movie needs to be closer to the top ten" and eventually moved it to #9.

When I look at the finished list, the top ten make total sense. For the next 90, you could randomly shuffle the order and it wouldn't matter much. *Requiem for a Heavyweight* sits pretty far down the list at #88, but it could just as easily have been #58.

After my top 100 are another 140, which I call Honorable Mentions. I liked each one of them a lot, but they just didn't quite make the top 100.

I didn't try to take into account *when* I saw them, and I fully acknowledge that a movie I saw when I was fifteen years old might not hold my attention today. I saw *Damn Yankees* the year the Giants came to town, when I was ten, and I fell in love with this musical about baseball. I might not like it as much if I saw it today, but it's on the list because of the impact it had on me back then.

Also, a movie didn't have to be perfect to make the list. *The Godfather II* spent too much time on Don Vito Corleone's years in Italy, but it was still an awesome movie. So, here we go.

### Top 100 Films

1. The Godfather I and II
2. Anna and the King
3. The Razor's Edge
4. Mean Streets
5. Annie Hall
6. Splendor in the Grass
7. The Parent Trap
8. Forget Paris
9. My Favorite Year
10. Goodfellas
11. Love, Actually
12. Bowfinger
13. Million Dollar Baby
14. The Great Gatsby (with Redford)
15. Bang The Drum Slowly
16. The Graduate
17. Night of the Living Dead (the original)
18. North by Northwest
19. Mr. Saturday Night
20. A Streetcar Named Desire

21. To Kill a Mockingbird
22. Orange County
23. Schindler's List
24. Ferris Bueller's Day Off
25. Death of a Salesman
26. The Player
27. Foreign Correspondent
28. Goodbye, Mr. Chips
29. Dirty Harry
30. Get Him to the Greek
  
31. Animal House
32. Rocky I, II, III, IV, and V
33. When Harry Met Sally
34. Halloween, Friday the 13th, Nightmare on Elm Street
35. Hairspray (both versions)
36. Taxi Driver
37. Rock n' Roll High School
38. Lifeguard
39. The Terminator
40. The Manchurian Candidate (with Lawrence Harvey & Frank Sinatra)
  
41. The Deer Hunter
42. The Wanderers
43. No Way Out
44. The Way We Were
45. The Lady
46. The American President
47. Terms of Endearment
48. Mrs. Doubtfire
49. Bananas
50. The Candidate
  
51. The Contender
52. Scent of a Woman
53. Breaking Away
54. Damn Yankees
55. The Rocky Horror Picture Show
56. Remember the Titans
57. Grapes of Wrath

58. Elmer Gantry
59. I, Tonya
60. Ninotchka
61. Something's Gotta Give
62. Dirty Harry
63. Dirty Dancing
64. Chinatown
65. Slap Shot
66. Sixteen Candles and Pretty in Pink
67. Thelma & Louise
68. That's Entertainment! I, II, and III
69. Triumph of the Will
70. Top Hat (plus every other Fred Astaire movie)
71. 12 Angry Men
72. Fiddler on the Roof
73. Duck Soup (and any other Marx Brothers movie)
74. Fail Safe
75. Before Sunrise, Before Sunset, and Before Midnight
76. The Battle of Algiers
77. Days of Wine and Roses
78. Pulp Fiction
79. The Night of the Hunter
80. Midnight Express
81. Breakfast at Tiffany's
82. On the Waterfront
83. Getting Straight
84. Three Days of the Condor
85. Matinee
86. Scent of a Woman
87. Farewell, My Lovely (1975)
88. Requiem for a Heavyweight
89. Roar
90. Carnal Knowledge
91. Raiders of the Lost Ark
92. Mean Girls
93. Raging Bull

94. Five Easy Pieces
95. The Year of Living Dangerously
96. Fast Times at Ridgemont High
97. Exodus
98. No Hard Feelings
99. City Slickers
100. Marty

**Honorable Mentions (in no particular order)**

1. The Heart is a Lonely Hunter
2. The Lost Weekend
3. Dr. No (and all Sean Connery James Bond movies)
4. You Only Live Twice
5. Marjorie Morningstar
6. Modern Times
7. My Little Chickadee (and any other W.C. Fields movie)
8. Looking for Mr. Goodbar
9. The Apartment
10. Platoon
  
11. West Side Story
12. Sweet Smell of Success
13. A Thousand Clowns
14. Touch of Evil
15. On the Beach
16. Used Cars
17. On the Town
18. Faces
19. Wall Street
20. Sweet Bird of Youth
  
21. Bugsy Malone
22. Billy Jack
23. Putney Swope
24. Paths of Glory

25. The Producers
26. The Strawberry Statement
27. Rebel Without a Cause
28. Rocco and His Brothers
29. Sauve Qui Peut (La Vie)
30. Risky Business
  
31. Save the Tiger
32. The Owl and the Pussycat
33. The Snake Pit
34. Chushingura
35. Chloe in the Afternoon
36. Claire's Knee
37. Argo
38. Duck Soup (and any Marx Brothers movie)
39. La Dolce Vita
40. Double Indemnity
  
41. Dr. Strangelove
42. The 400 Blows
43. Do the Right Thing
44. Girl, Interrupted
45. Gold Diggers of 1933 (and every other Busby Berkeley movie)
46. Footlight Parade
47. Greetings
48. Gone with the Wind
49. I Am David
50. The Last of the Mohicans
  
51. Endless Summer
52. The Best Years of Our Lives
53. Moonrise Kingdom
54. The Sterile Cuckoo
55. The Last Picture Show
56. Charlie Wilson's War
57. One, Two, Three (and just about all of Billy Wilder's movies)
58. Once Upon a Time in Hollywood

59. Harry and the Hendersons  
60. You Don't Mess with the Zohan

61. The Silence of the Lambs  
62. What's Up, Doc?  
63. That Man from Rio  
64. Easy-A  
65. Z  
66. Follow the Fleet  
67. Singin' in the Rain  
68. The Seven Year Itch  
69. Blazing Saddles  
70. King Kong (1933)

71. King Kong (with Jack Black)  
72. Paper Moon  
73. Bonnie and Clyde  
74. BeetleJuice  
75. The Bad Seed  
76. Saving Silverman  
77. My Fair Lady  
78. The Naked Runner  
79. Cat on a Hot Tin Roof  
80. Champion

81. Down and Out in Beverly Hills  
82. Other People's Money  
83. Parenthood  
84. The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz  
85. Antwone Fisher  
86. The Best Man  
87. Cartouche  
88. Blazing Saddles  
89. Les Enfants du Paradis  
90. The Wages of Fear

91. I Spit on Your Grave (both versions)
92. Psycho
93. Gone with the Wind
94. Juno
95. Funny Girl and Funny Lady
96. Ghost
97. Stagecoach
98. The Last Seduction
99. Mickey One
100. Citizen Kane

101. Barefoot in the Park
102. Young Frankenstein
103. Soldier Blue
104. The Fixer
105. Fly Away Home
106. Five Came Back
107. Kings Row
108. The Bank Dick
109. King Arthur
110. Broadway Melody of 1940

111. Footlight Parade
112. From Here to Eternity
113. Freaks
114. Some Like it Hot
115. Belle de Jour
116. Alfie
117. Charly
118. Come Blow Your Horn
119. La Vie en Rose
120. Lord of the Flies

121. Airplane
122. Last year at Marienbad
123. Advise & Consent
124. Auntie Mame



125. The Brothers McMullen
126. Bringing Up Baby
127. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
128. The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie
129. The Firemen's Ball
130. A Face in the Crowd
  
131. Sunset Boulevard
132. Sea of Love
133. Election
134. God Grew Tired of Us
135. The Emerald Forest
136. In Her Shoes
137. Jules et Jim
138. The Glass Menagerie
139. True Grit ( with John Wayne)
140. Zulu

A few random comments:

1. *The Godfather* I and II were really one movie divided in half. Choosing this as #1 was easy, and I didn't spend any time agonizing over it.
2. *Anna and the King*. I love everything about old Siam (Thailand).
3. People probably thought casting Bill Murray in *The Razor's Edge* was stupid, but he was perfect. Somerset Maugham would have been pleased.
4. It surprises me that most people have never heard of *Mean Streets*. It's kind of about junior varsity hoodlums, and one of Scorsese's best.
5. *Annie Hall* might be Woody Allen's best movie.
6. The final scene in *Splendor in the Grass* might be one of the best endings of movie.

7. Hannah and I probably saw *The Parent Trap* 10-20 times, and it never gets old.
8. *Forget Paris* is a perfect movie. I wouldn't change a thing.
9. *My Favorite Year* is just about my favorite movie. It could easily have been #2 on this list.
10. *Bowfinger* is brilliant.
11. *Bang the Drum Slowly* is my all-time favorite sports movie, but it's about a lot more than baseball. Robert DeNiro has mostly played himself the last 30-40 years, but but he's brilliant t playing a dimwitted baseball player.
12. Who'd think a movie about college admissions would be this funny? *Orange County* is aa must-see.
13. If I ever made a movie, I'd want to make one like *Lifeguard*. Super low-budget, intelligent, and with a sort of lazy summer feel to it.
14. In the late 70s, a very attractive graduate law student lived upstairs from me. I barely knew her, but I'd see her going to campus every so often. She was always well dressed, with a plaid skirt, ruffled blouse, and carrying a briefcase. She looked like she was going to argue a case before the Supreme Court. One day she came down and asked if I wanted to go see *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* that night. I can like some horror movies, so I said yes.

When it was time to go to the theater, she showed up wearing skin-tight black leather pants, a shimmering gold lame blouse showing lots of cleavage, and what must have been 6-7-inch high heels. As you probably know, it's hardly a horror show, but we had lots of fun. The movie started at midnight, so it was probably 2:00 or later when it ended. I knew a fraternity on Warring with a pool, so we somehow sneaked over the fence and went skinny dipping.

15. Who'd think a movie about union corruption would be any good, but *On the Waterfront* shows the power of great directing (Elia Kazan), great acting (Marlon Brando, Rod Steiger, and Lee J. Cobb), and great writing (Bud Schulberg).