

## 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 *Halliwell'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 he's brilliant playing a dimwitted baseball player.
12. Who'd think a movie about college admissions would be this funny? *Orange County* is a 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).