

October 18, 2022 (XLV:8)

Arthur Penn **NIGHT MOVES** (1975, 100 min)

URL for Introduction Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/760657934>

URL for 7:00 Tuesday discussion zoom: <https://vimeo.com/748377120>

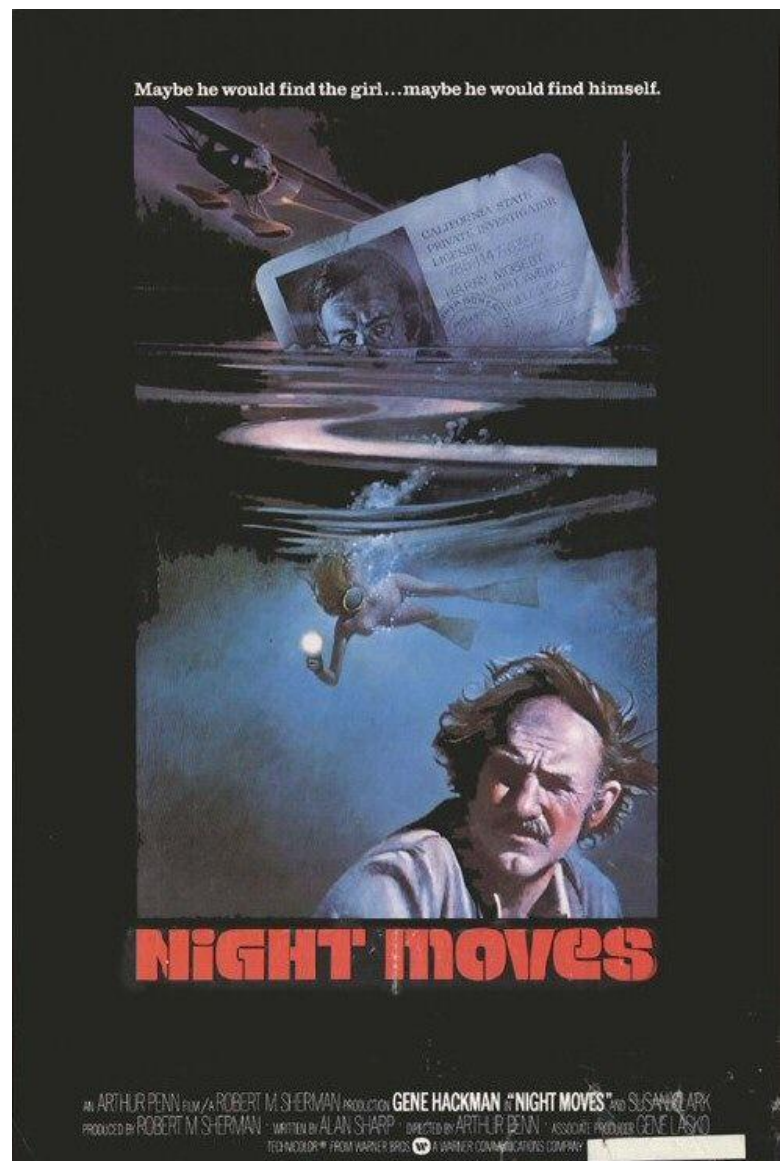


Directed by Arthur Penn
Written by Alan Sharp
Produced by Robert M. Sherman
Original Music by Michael Small
Cinematography by Bruce Surtees
Film Editing by Dede Allen

Gene Hackman...Harry Moseby
Jennifer Warren...Paula
Susan Clark...Ellen Moseby
Ed Binns...Joey Ziegler
Harris Yulin...Marty Heller
Kenneth Mars...Nick
Janet Ward...Arlene Iverson
James Woods...Quentin
Melanie Griffith...Delly Grastner
Anthony Costello...Marv Ellman
John Crawford...Tom Iverson
Ben Archibek...Charles
Max Gail...Stud

Stunts: Dean Engelhardt, Ted Grossman, Richard Hackman, Chuck Hicks, Terry Leonard, Rick Lockwood, Ernie F. Orsatti, Chuck Parkison Jr., Betty Raymond, Ronnie Rondell Jr., Walter Scott, Fred M. Waugh, Glenn R. Wilder

ARTHUR PENN (b. September 27, 1922, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – d. September 28, 2010, Manhattan, New York City, New York) was a director and producer of film, television, and theater, closely



associated with the American New Wave. Through his service in the US Army during World War II, he developed an interest in theater, at one point working with a theatrical troupe that included future director and television producer Fred Coe. Following the war, he studied literature at Black Mountain College. Before working in film, Penn spent the majority of the 1950s directing television programs including *The Philco Television Playhouse* and stage productions such as a Broadway adaptation of William Gibson's *Two for the Seesaw*. He made his film directorial debut with 1958's *The Left-Handed Gun*, though the studio re-edited the film against his wishes. Starring Paul Newman as Billy

The Kid, it was a commercial failure; despite this, it struck a chord with *Cahiers du Cinema* critic André Bazin and would also win the Belgian Film Critics Association's Grand Prix award. After a brief break from film, Penn would go on to direct a number of critically-acclaimed works in the 1960s and 1970s, including *The Miracle Worker* (1962), *Mickey One* (1965), *The Chase* (1966), *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), *Alice's Restaurant* (1969), *Little Big Man* (1970), and *Night Moves* (1975). Of these, he is perhaps best known for *Bonnie and Clyde*, which would be nominated for nine academy awards, winning two (Best Supporting Actress for Estelle Parsons and Best Cinematography for Burnett Guffey). His other films include *The Missouri Breaks* (1976), *Four Friends* (1981), *Target* (1985), *Dead of Winter* (1987) and *Penn and Teller Get Killed* (1989). He would primarily work in television for the final decades of his career, directing television features such as 1993's *The Portrait* and 1996's *Inside* as well as serving as an executive producer for the hit crime show *Law and Order*. He was nominated for Best Director three times during his career: in 1963 for *The Miracle Worker*, in 1967 for *Bonnie and Clyde*, and in 1970 for *Alice's Restaurant*. Though he did not take home the award for any of these, it is significant that Patty Duke, Anne Bancroft, and Estelle Parsons won Oscars for their roles in Penn's films.

BRUCE SURTEES (b. Bruce Mohr Powell Surtees, July 27, 1937, Los Angeles, California –d. February 23, 2012, Carmel, California) was often called “The Prince of Darkness” for his uncanny ability to film in scenes with almost no light at all. He was the son of Robert Surtees, an Oscar-winning cinematographer. Best known for working on over a dozen films directed by or starring Clint Eastwood, the younger Surtees amassed 56 cinematographer credits throughout his career, including *Joshua* (2002), *Just a Little Harmless Sex* (1998), *The Substitute* (1996), *The Stars Fell on Henrietta* (1995), *That Night* (1992), *The Super* (1991), *Men Don't Leave* (1990), *License to Drive* (1988), *Ratboy* (1986), *Psycho III* (1986), *Pale Rider* (1985), *Beverly Hills Cop* (1984), *Tightrope* (1984), *Sudden Impact* (1983), *Risky Business* (1983), *Bad Boys* (1983), *Honkytonk Man* (1982), *White Dog* (1982), *Firefox* (1982), *Inchon* (1981), *Escape from Alcatraz* (1979), *Big Wednesday* (1978), *Three Warriors* (1977), *The Shootist* (1976), *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976), *Leadbelly* (1976), *Night Moves* (1975), *Lenny* (1974), *The Outfit* (1973), *Blume in Love* (1973), *High Plains*

Drifter (1973), *Joe Kidd* (1972), *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* (1972), *The Great Northfield Minnesota Raid* (1972), *Dirty Harry* (1971), *Play Misty for Me* (1971), and *The Beguiled* (1971). For a better sense of Surtees' ingenuity, I direct you to Don Siegal's recollection of filming *The Beguiled* (1970): “I remember one thing I wanted to do is get a shot in darkness illuminated by a single candle. The old way to get a picture of someone walking with a candle was to set up a complicated series of controlled lights, dimmers, clicking on, synchronized to the step of the person with the candle. [...] I didn't want that kind of thing again. So I picked young Bruce Surtees, and said, ‘You've got to do it without dimmers.’ If I'd said that to an old-timer, he would have said goodbye. But Bruce would try to find a way to do anything I asked him. For that candle scene, he put a little bulb in the base of the candleholder and we shot. It took guts. We realized we might get nothing, and we knew we would have to intensify it, send it through a special lab. When we saw the film, most of the screen was black except for a circle of light showing the girl's face. We didn't care that it was black, that it wouldn't show up on a



television screen when the studio sold the picture to some network in a couple of years. Screw them. We liked it. It was exciting.” [From *'Don Siegal: Director' by Stuart M. Kaminsky, 1974.*]

GENE HACKMAN (b. January 30, 1930 in San Bernardino, California—) would be over 30 years old when he finally decided to take his chance at acting. Yet this late start has ended up working to Hackman's advantage. His characters belong almost entirely to middle age. Because they've been around long enough to experience failure and loss, but not long enough to take it easy, Hackman could play them with a distinctive mix of shadow and light. He began his career by enrolling at the Pasadena Playhouse in California. Both Hackman and friend Dustin Hoffman were part of the Playhouse and were voted “least likely to succeed.” His first role was as Norman in *Lilith*

(1964), starring Warren Beatty. When Beatty was casting for *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), he chose Hackman as Buck Barrow, Clyde Barrow's brother. That role earned Hackman an Oscar nomination for best supporting actor, an award for which he would again be nominated in *I Never Sang for My Father* (1970). Hackman is a versatile actor who can play comedy as the blind man in *Young Frankenstein* (1974) or villainy as the evil Lex Luthor in *Superman* (1978). His career roles have swung equally as wide: he was the first choice to play Mike Brady on *The Brady Bunch* (1969) and the sixth choice to play one of his most famous parts, Popeye Doyle in *The French Connection* (1971). He was also the first choice to play Hannibal Lector in *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991). After initially turning down the role of Little Bill Daggett in Clint Eastwood's *Unforgiven* (1992), Hackman finally accepted it, as its different slant on the western interested him. After the film, he swore he'd never again work in westerns. For his performance, he won the Oscar and Golden Globe. The actor must have decided that he wasn't tired of westerns after all. He has since appeared in *Geronimo: An American Legend* (1993), *Wyatt Earp* (1994), and *The Quick and the Dead* (1995). Deep into his career, it was his quirky patriarch in Wes Anderson's *Royal Tenenbaums* (2001) that opened Hackman up to an entirely new audience of fans. At the 2003 Golden Globes, Hackman won the Cecil B. DeMille Award for lifetime achievement. Then in 2004, Hackman quit



acting altogether. He has published several novels, and his latest, *Pursuit*, was released in 2013. He continues to lead a quiet life writing and painting in Santa Fe with his wife.

JENNIFER WARREN (b.12 August 1941, Greenwich Village, New York, USA—) is an American actress, producer and director who has 43 acting credits, among them *Partners in Crime* (2000), *Murder, She Wrote* (2 episodes, 1991-1994),

Hooperman (4 episodes, 1988-1989), *Fatal Beauty* (1987), *Paper Dolls* (13 episodes, 1984), *Cagney & Lacey* (1 episode, 1983), *Butterflies* (1979), *Champions: A Love Story* (1979), *First, You Cry* (1978), *Kojak* (2 episodes, 1975-1977), *Most Wanted* (2 episodes, 1977), *Slap Shot* (1977), *The Bob Newhart Show* (1 episode, 1975), *Night Moves* (1975), *After the Fall* (1974), and *Sam's Song* (1969). In 1987, she was accepted into the Directing Workshop for Women at the American Film Institute, where she directed the short film *Point of Departure*. Soon after, she would form a production company, Tiger Rose Productions, eventually directing two feature films: *The Beans of Egypt, Maine* (1994) and *Partners in Crime* (2000). She has taught at Wesleyan University, Johns Hopkins University, UCLA Extension, University of Tel Aviv, and the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts. Additionally, she is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and Women in Film, as well as a board member of The Alliance of Woman Directors.

HARRIS YULIN (5 November 1937, Los Angeles, California, USA—) has acted in 136 films and television series. He got his start with an off-Broadway production of *Next Time I'll Sing for You* in 1963 before making a career in classical theater throughout the remainder of the decade, acting in multiple productions of Shakespeare. He began acting for film and television in 1970, starting with supporting roles in Norman Mailer's *Maidstone* and Terry Southern's *End of the Road*. Other credits include *Ozark* (2017), *The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* (2015), *Damages* (1 episode, 2009), *Law & Order* (2 episodes, 1994-2008), *Entourage* (1 episode, 2007), *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* (1 episode, 2007), *Fur: An Imaginary Portrait of Diane Arbus* (2006), *The Treatment* (2006), *King of the Corner* (2004), *24* (9 episodes, 2002-2003), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (3 episodes, 1999-2002), *Rush Hour 2* (2001), *Training Day* (2001), *The X Files* (1 episode, 2000), *The Hurricane* (1999), *Cradle Will Rock* (1999), *Murder at 1600* (1997), *Frasier* (1 episode, 1996), *Clear and Present Danger* (1994), *Ghostbusters II* (1989), *Another Woman* (1988), *Judgment in Berlin* (1988), *Fatal Beauty* (1987), *The Believers* (1987), *Conspiracy: The Trial of the Chicago 8* (1987), *Scarface* (1983), *The Night Rider* (1979), *Victory at Entebbe* (1976), *Night Moves* (1975), *Little House on the Prairie* (1 episode, 1975), *Ironside* (1 episode, 1975), *The Missiles of October* (1974), *The F.B.I. Story: The FBI Versus Alvin Karpis*, *Public Enemy*

Number One (1974), *The Midnight Man* (1974), *Kojak* (1 episode, 1974), and *Doc* (1971). He has been nominated for two Emmys: first for his role in *Frasier* (1996, for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Comedy Series) and second for *Ozark* (2019, for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series)

KENNETH MARS (b. April 4, 1935 in Chicago, Illinois—d. February 12, 2011, age 75, in Granada Hills, California) was an off-the-wall, over-the-top actor/farceur whose broad schtick was smartly utilized by 1970s directors Mel Brooks (*The Producers* (1967) and *Young Frankenstein* (1974)) and Peter Bogdanovich (*What's Up, Doc?* (1972)). The son of stand-up comic and radio star Sonny Mars, Kenneth began acting as early as 1961 when he was with the first national company of the *Sound of Music* as Baron Elberfeld and understudied the role of Max. He acted in an impressive 207 films, TV shows and video games, including *The Land Before Time* (9 episodes, 2007-2008), *Hannah Montana* (1 episode, 2007), *Malcolm in the Middle* (25 episodes, 2002-2004), *Will & Grace* (2 episodes, 2001), *The Legend of Tarzan* (1 episode, 2001), *Nash Bridges* (1 episode, 2000), *Police Academy: The Series* (1 episode, 1997), *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* (1 episode, 1996), *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest* (1 episode, 1996), *Citizen Ruth* (1996), *L.A. Law* (1 episode, 1994), *Thumbelina* (1994), *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1 episode, 1994), *Rugrats* (1 episode, 1993), *Shadows and Fog* (1991), *Police Academy 6: City Under Siege* (1989), *Rented Lips* (1988), *Radio Days* (1987), *The Twilight Zone* (1 episode, 1986), *Remington Steele* (1 episode, 1985), *Fletch* (1985), *Murder, She Wrote* (1985), *Magnum, P.I.* (2 episodes, 1981 and 1985), *Yellowbeard* (1983), *The Fonz and the Happy Days Gang* (24 episodes, 1980-1981), *The Apple Dumpling Gang Rides Again* (1979), *Fernwood Tonight* (1977), *Columbo* (1977), *Police Woman* (2 episodes, 1975-1977), *Black Sheep Squadron* (1977), *Wonder Woman* (1975), *Night Moves* (1975), *Young Frankenstein* (1974), *The Parallax View* (1974), *What's Up, Doc?* (1972), *Viva Max* (1969), *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), *The Producers* (1967), *Get Smart* (1967), *Gunsmoke* (1967), and *Car 54, Where Are You?* (1963).

JANET WARD (b. 19 February 1925, New York City, New York, USA—d. 2 August 1995, Manhattan, New York, USA) studied at The Actors Studio as well as toured *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* with Margaret

Webster's Shakespeare company in the 1940s before beginning a career in television and film. She acted in 21 films and television series, among them *Law & Order* (1 episode, 1992), *The Wordsmith* (1979), *Kojak* (2 episodes, 1976), *Barney Miller* (1 episode, 1975), *Cannon* (1 episode, 1975), *Night Moves* (1975), *Dr. Max* (1974), *The Anderson Tapes* (1971), *N.Y.P.D.* (1 episode, 1969), *Fail-Safe* (1964), *The Defenders* (3 episodes, 1961-1963), *Perry Mason* (1 episode, 1962), *Great Ghost Tales* (1 episode, 1961), *Kraft Television Theatre* (2 episodes, 1958), *The Outcasts of Poker Flat* (1958), *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (1 episode, 1955), *Goodyear Television Playhouse* (1 episode, 1955), *Justice* (1 episode, 1954), *Inner Sanctum* (1 episode, 1954), *Campbell Playhouse* (1 episode, 1953), and *Studio One* (1 episode, 1950).



JAMES WOODS (b. 18 April 1947, Vernal, Utah, USA—) has acted in 143 films and television series. After dropping out of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he left for New York with ambitions of a career in theater, acting in 36 plays before landing his first Broadway production with Frank McMahon's adaptation of Brendan Behan's *Borstal Boy* in 1970. The next year, he would make his first film appearance, acting in Fred Coe's *All The Way Home*. He has since become an eminent character actor for film and television, appearing in, among many others, *Dice* (2 episodes, 2017), *Ray Donovan* (6 episodes, 2013), *An American Carol* (2008), *End Game* (2006), *ER* (1 episode, 2006), *Rudy: The Rudy Giuliani Story* (2003) (TV), *House of Mouse* (10 episodes, 2001-2002), *Any Given Sunday* (1999), *The Virgin Suicides* (1999), *True Crime* (1999), *Vampires* (1998), *Nixon* (1995), *Casino* (1995), *Indictment: The McMartin Trial* (1995), *The Getaway* (1994), *Citizen Cohn* (1992), *True Believer* (1989), *Salvador* (1986), *Joshua Then and Now* (1985), *Against All Odds* (1984), *Once Upon a Time in America* (1984), *Videodrome* (1983), *Fast-Walking* (1982), *Eyewitness* (1981), *The Onion Field* (1979), *The Choirboys* (1977), *Raid on Entebbe*

(1976), *The Streets of San Francisco* (1 episode, 1975), *Welcome Back, Kotter* (1 episode, 1975), *Night Moves* (1975), *The Rockford Files* (1 episode, 1974), *Kojak* (1 episode, 1974), *The Way We Were* (1973), *The Visitors* (1972), and *All the Way Home* (1971). He was nominated for a Best Actor in a Leading Role Oscar for *Salvador* and Best Actor in a Supporting Role for *Ghosts of Mississippi* (1996).



MELANIE GRIFFITH (b. 9 August 1957, New York City, New York, USA—) was born into show business. The daughter of Tippi Hedren, an actress who starred in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963) and *Marnie* (1964), and Peter Griffith, a former child actor, she began modeling at 9 months old and started acting as an extra shortly after. Her first major role was in Arthur Penn's *Night Moves* (1975); due to her controversial nude scenes in this film, she was subsequently typecast in roles that emphasized sexuality and eroticism. After a brief lull in her career, she made a second breakthrough in the mid-80s with Brian De Palma's *Body Double* (1984) and Jonathan Demme's *Something Wild* (1986), both to critical acclaim. In 1989, she was nominated for an Oscar (Best Actress in a Leading Role) for her role in the previous year's *Working Girl*. She appeared in 85 films and television series, including *Nip/Tuck* (1 episode, 2010), *Twins* (18 episodes, 2005-2006), *The Night We Called It a Day* (2003), *Tart* (2001), *Cecil B. DeMented* (2000), *Shadow of Doubt* (1998), *Lolita* (1997), *Mulholland Falls* (1996), *Buffalo Girls* (1995), *Nobody's Fool* (1994), *Born Yesterday* (1993), *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (1990), *The Milagro Beanfield War* (1988), *Vega\$* (1 episode, 1979), *Starsky and Hutch* (1 episode, 1978), *One on One* (1977), *The Drowning Pool* (1975), *The Harrad Experiment* (1973), and *Smith!* (1969).

SUSAN CLARK (8 March 1940, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada—) began acting at the young age of twelve, working with the Toronto Children's Players Theatre and acting in a 1955 production of the musical *Silk Stockings*. Later, she studied at Longon's Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, also landing televised roles on *The Benny Hill Show*. Eventually relocating to Los Angeles, she signed a ten-year contract with Universal, leading to her roles in *Coogan's Bluff* (1968), *Showdown* (1973) *Night Moves* (1975), and others. She has acted in 57 films and television series, among them *Emily of New Moon* (14 episodes, 1998-2000), *Tonya & Nancy: The Inside Story* (1994), *Murder, She Wrote* (1 episode, 1991), *Webster* (150 episodes, 1983-1989), *Porky's* (1982), *Nobody's Perfekt* (1981), *Promises in the Dark* (1979), *Murder by Decree* (1979), *Amelia Earhart* (1976), *Babe* (1975), *The Apple Dumpling Gang* (1975), *Night Moves* (1975), *Airport 1975* (1974), *The Midnight Man* (1974), *Showdown* (1973), *Marcus Welby, M.D.* (2 episodes, 1969-1972), *Columbo* (1 episode, 1971), *Skin Game* (1971), *Valdez Is Coming* (1971), *Tell Them Willie Boy Is Here* (1969), *Madigan* (1968), *Banning* (1967), and *The Virginian* (1 episode, 1967).

“Arthur Penn” from *World Film Directors, Vol. II.*
Ed. John Wakeman. The H.W. Wilson Co., NY
1988. Entry by Philip Kemp.

Arthur (Hiller) Penn, American film theatre and television director, was born of Russian-Jewish immigrant stock in Philadelphia, where his father, Harry Penn, owned a small watch-repair business. When he was three, his parents divorced, an event that had a traumatic effect on him. “I stopped believing in the adult world. For me, adults weren’t real—they only became real when they died. It wasn’t until my father died that I began to understand him.” With his elder brother Irving (later famous as a photographer) he was taken by his mother, Sonia Greenberg Penn, to live in New York. Sonia Penn, a nurse, found work there, but it was poorly paid, and food was scarce; the family often had to move to cheaper accommodation, living at various times in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and on the Lower East Side. Between the ages of eight and ten, Penn reckoned, he attended at least twelve different grammar schools.

When he was fourteen Penn returned to Philadelphia to live with his father. Harry Penn, according to his son, was “withdrawn, taciturn, fastidious. He was an excellent mechanic and a really brilliant engraver. He was full of art and his hands

were magical. But he was an evasive man for someone to try to make contact with. I think I'm like him in some ways. I'm not the most available of men, emotionally or personally." Penn studied horology, with a view to following his father's profession, but could summon little enthusiasm for it; his interests lay increasingly in the theatre, especially its technical side—lighting, building scenery, etc. He also acted in student productions at his school, Olney High in Philadelphia, and got his first chance to direct at the amateur Neighborhood Playhouse, very near his home. At this point, Penn had little experience of the cinema. He had been badly frightened by a film at the age of five, and "didn't go back to the movies until I was about fourteen. And then I saw a couple of movies, one of which was *Citizen Kane*, which absolutely lifted the top of my head off.... Suddenly I was on to something that made the theatre look ridiculous. But I couldn't admit it."

After his father died in 1943, Penn spent six months in New York waiting to be drafted and edging into theatrical and intellectual circles in Greenwich Village and Harlem. Once in the army, he was sent to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, for training as a rifleman. In his free time he formed a small theatre group through which he met Fred Coe, later to produce much of Penn's television and theatre work. Towards the end of the war Penn was transferred to Paris to join Joshua Logan's *Soldier* shows. and he stayed on in Europe to run the company for a year after his discharge. He returned to the United States in 1946 and the following year enrolled at Black Mountain College, North Carolina. At this "incredible pressure group of talent and turned-on minds," Penn studied "psychology, philosophy, literature and whatever I could overhear." He also taught a class in acting and staged a number of productions there. After Black Mountain he spent two years in Italy, studying literature at Perugia and Florence, and then joined the Los Angeles branch of the Actors Studio, studying with Michael Chekhov. In 1951 he took a job as floor manager with NBC-TV in New York.

Penn was assigned to *The Colgate Comedy Hour*, a top-rated show that featured, among others,

Bob Hope, Eddie Cantor, and Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. Starting as third floor manager, Penn worked his way up to assistant director, moving west with the show when it was relocated to California. In 1953 Fred Coe, who had also joined NBC, invited him back to New York to direct a live drama series, *First Person*. Penn also regularly directed plays for the prestigious *Philco Television Playhouse*, and himself wrote three television plays. American television was at the height

of its fabled "Golden Age," an exhilarating era of burgeoning talent, creatively experimental work, and a wealth of live drama. "At that time TV was poor, so we were free," Penn commented later. "The actors were, in a way, the best part of it. They taught us all more than we knew." In 1956 he began working for CBS, directing a number of works for *Playhouse 90* including William Gibson's *The*

Miracle Worker, which aired in February 1957.

During this period Penn was also building his career in the theatre.... Over the next two years Penn followed up this success [*Two for the Seesaw*] with four more smash hits in a row: *The Miracle Worker*, Lillian Hellman's *Toys in the Attic*, *An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May*, and Tad Mosel's *All the Way Home*. These productions were widely acclaimed, and won numerous major awards; Penn was now one of the most highly regarded directors in American theatre, "the most gifted young director since Kazan."

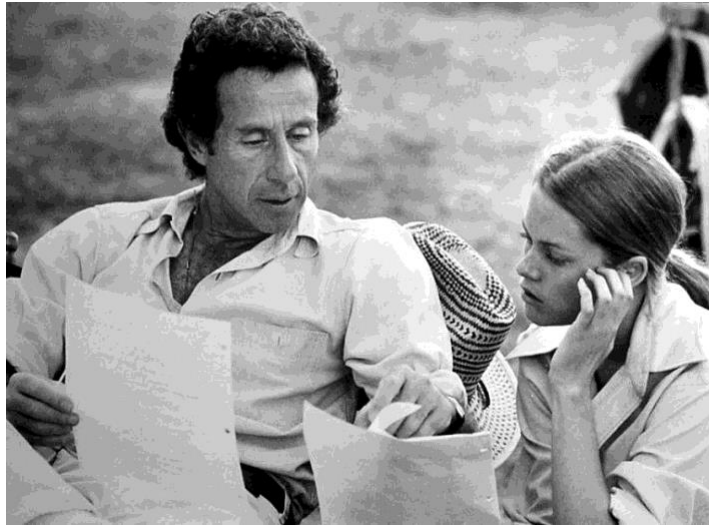
Several of Penn's Broadway shows were produced by his old associate Fred Coe, and it was a favor to Coe that he agreed to direct his first film, *The Left-Handed Gun* (1958). Based on a television play by Gore Vidal, the film retells the legend of Billy the Kid in psychological terms. Billy (played by Paul Newman) is depicted as a confused, inarticulate adolescent, emotionally damaged by childhood experiences, who "adopts" as his father an elderly rancher who shows him kindness. When this man is killed, Billy sets out to take vengeance on the four killers, and is finally himself gunned down by another surrogate father, his friend Pat Garrett.



Already, several of Penn's thematic preoccupations are in evidence: the search for a father-figure; the concern with the roots of violence, and its consequences; the tension between myth and reality; and, above all, the relationship between outsiders and the society from which they are excluded—or exclude themselves. "I would say that the only people who really interest me are the outcasts from society. The people who are *not* outcasts—either psychologically, emotionally, or physically—seem to me good material for selling breakfast food but they're not good material for films. What I'm really trying to say through the figure of the outcast is that a society has its mirror in its outcasts. A society would be wise to pay attention to the people who do not belong if it wants to find out what its configuration is and where it's failing."

The Left-Handed Gun also displays a quality that has distinguished all of Penn's films—an intense, immediate physicality. "Physical sensation," Robin Wood maintained, "is perhaps more consistently vivid in his films than in those of any other director." Pain, in Penn's movies, unmistakably *hurts*; tactile sensation is palpably communicated; and characters are conveyed above all by their bodily movements—how they walk, hold themselves, use their hands. Billy the Kid, illiterate, unable to grasp abstract or symbolic ideas, can only express himself through his body. In Newman's performance, his lunging, groping movements suggest a man trying to seize thoughts that he lacks the means to articulate....

It was four years before Penn directed another film. When he did, he chose to adapt a work he had already directed on stage and for television: William Gibson's play *The Miracle Worker*, recounting how Annie Sullivan broke through the shell of blindness and deafness around the young Helen Keller and taught her to communicate. The film was to some extent hampered by its stage origins, as Penn himself acknowledged: "It's half stage and half film. It could have been liberated in one instant from the stage, and I didn't dare." He also felt that "by then I had pretty much exhausted whatever degree of invention I had toward the material."



Despite these limitations, *The Miracle Worker* (1962) remains a powerful and compelling film....The film received excellent notices. Bancroft and Duke were both awarded Oscars for their performances; Penn was nominated for Best Director. His success, though, was short-lived. During the 1962-1963 Broadway season, in contrast with his earlier string of theatrical hits, he directed three flops in a row. And one week into the shooting of *The Train* (1963), which

starred Burt Lancaster, Penn was taken off the film and replaced by John Frankenheimer, apparently at Lancaster's request. He was given no reason for his dismissal, then or later. The bitterness and sense of persecution engendered by this experience left their mark on his next film, *Mickey One* (1965)....A paranoid melodrama, deeply *noir*

in tone, it tells the Kafkaesque story of a nightclub comedian (Warren Beatty) in Prohibition Chicago, on the run from mobsters who seem to intend vengeance on him for an undefined offense. The fragmented, elliptical narrative and deliberately signalled formal devices suggest the influence of French New Wave directors, especially Truffaut and Godard, whose work Penn greatly admired (Andrew Sarris once called him "the American Truffaut"). *Mickey One* was the first film over which Penn had complete control, with the studio (Columbia) not even allowed to see the script. Penn also acted as his own producer, a function that he usually prefers to avoid....Robert Kolker, commending it as "a work of great energy and visual imagination,"... has argued that *Mickey One* is central to a consideration of American cinema in the 1960s, and to the development of *film noir*. ...At the time, though, most reviewers were bewildered or contemptuous, and the movie did poorly at the box-office.

Penn now regrets his next movie, *The Chase* (1966)—"a poor film...with some fairly extraordinary passages in it." It was his first film in color, and the last he directed under the traditional system: shooting entirely in a studio (Columbia), with an all-star cast, under the aegis of an old-style Hollywood producer (Sam Spiegel). The story, scripted by Lillian Hellman from a play by Horton Foote, focuses on the tensions

that ignite into violence in a small Texas town when one of its citizens, an escaped convict, makes his way home. Violence is rarely absent from Penn's movies, but *The Chase* is perhaps the most deeply imbued with violence of all his films—more so, even, than *Bonnie and Clyde*.

Many critics found this emphasis on violence excessive and self-defeating, but Penn intended it to reflect an intrinsic element in the American psyche. "America is a country where people realize their views in violent ways—we have no tradition of persuasion, idealism, or legality."...

In the theatre, at least, his luck had improved...Penn might indeed at this juncture have abandoned the cinema, had not Warren Beatty persuaded him to direct *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967). David Newman and Robert Benton had already offered their screenplay to Truffaut and to Godard before it was bought by Beatty. He decided both to star and to produce, and invited Penn—with whom he had established a good relationship on *Mickey One*—to direct. The result was, in the opinion of many critics, Penn's finest film, and the one that firmly established his reputation as a major director. It was also, without doubt, one of the most significant and influential American films of the decade....On initial release, *Bonnie and Clyde* was widely attacked in the United States for historical distortion, bad taste, and the glorification of violence. Not all American critics were hostile, though; Pauline Kael perceptively defended the film in the *New Yorker*, observing that it "puts the sting back into death."...

Besides proving his first major cinematic success, *Bonnie and Clyde* marked a new departure in Penn's approach to film making. Henceforth his pictures tended to be looser, more episodic in structure, showing less concern for a conventionally coherent storyline. His plots became increasingly unpredictable, deliberately subverting audience expectations with ellipses and abrupt shifts in tone in a way that can be traced largely to the influence of the French New Wave. At the same time he developed a more personal shooting style: Penn's later films are notable for their distinctively creative approach to color and their experimental use of lenses, filters, and lighting as a

means of conditioning audience perceptions. *Bonnie and Clyde* was also the first collaboration between Penn and the outstanding Dede Allen, who subsequently worked on all his films until *Four Friends*.

In his next two films, Penn further explored the theme of outsider groups and their relationship with mainstream society. Penn's sympathies almost invariably lie with his outcasts, but he rarely presents them as blameless victims....The outside group in *Alice's Restaurant* (1969) are the archetypal "outcasts" of the 1960s, the hippies, for whom Penn felt great affection and admiration. His gentlest film, "it exposes with the most rigorous clarity," wrote Robin Wood, "—the truest sort of clarity, born out of sympathetic insight, not distaste—the essential weaknesses and inadequacies of the hippy movement."...Penn received his third Oscar nomination for *Alice's*



Restaurant. The Vietnam war, a constant shadow over the film's protagonists, also haunted his next picture, this time disguised by historical analogy. *Little Big Man* (1970), adapted by Calder Willingham from Thomas Berger's novel, presents a demythologizing—or perhaps remythologizing—view of the American West, in which the Cheyenne are the good guys, and the whites (especially General Custer) are the bad guys....Robert Kolker saw the film as acting "to undo the conventions of the Western by exposing them as pompous frauds and inhuman gestures...showing the West as merely another arena for the establishment of personal and political advantage."...Critical response to *Little Big Man* was mixed, but mainly enthusiastic. In *Focus on Film* (Spring 1971) Tom Milne called it "perhaps the first Brechtian Western." After completing the film, though, Penn underwent a personal and psychological crisis: "I lost my identity." For five years he did no work in theatre or television, and directed no films apart from one section of the eight-director documentary on the 1972 Munich Olympics, *Visions of Eight* (1973). Penn's section, "The Highest" dealt with pole vaulting.

He returned to feature films with his bleakest, most pessimistic work to date. *Night Moves* (1975), based on a prickly, allusive script by Alan Sharp, is a detective story in the convoluted *noir* tradition of *The*

Maltese Falcon and *The Big Sleep*—but soured by the disillusion and malaise of the Watergate era. The private eye, Harry Moseby (Gene Hackman) is a depressed, despairing figure existing in a state of moral paralysis, with none of the wit or resilience of a Bogart. Obsessed with his own inner problems, he can do little toward solving anyone else's. Penn "thought it would be interesting to have a detective whose own personality was part of the impediment towards the solution of the problem that was confronting him.... These people in *Night Moves* are some of the mourners of the Kennedy generation."

Following the classic pattern, Harry is called in to handle a seemingly simple assignment—a former actress wants him to trace her missing daughter—which then leads him into a labyrinth of further mysteries. But there is no grand explanation in the final reel. Instead, Harry is left wounded, circling helplessly in a boat whose controls he cannot reach. (The boat, rather too nudgingly, is called the *Point of View*). "At the end of *Night Moves*," as Michael Walker wrote, "there is only futility and despair"; Terence Butler called it "arguably Penn's best movie," adding that "each event in *Night Moves* reverberates with the characters' secret longings.... Penn achieves so full a synthesis of his themes...that it was hard to imagine how he could follow it."

He did so, with unusual promptness, less than a year later, returning for the third time to the Western genre. *The Missouri Breaks* (1976), described by Joel Zuker as "a slow and graceful dance of death," concerns the clash between ranchers and rustlers in 1880's Montana. Elegantly and quirkishly scripted by Thomas McGuane, it seemed to Richard Combs that the film "piles on detail and eccentric doodles of character," and makes its points...through ironic layers of mood, lyricism and realism used just where they are least expected."...

Penn has always enjoyed a reputation as a director of actors, establishing a close, sympathetic relationship with his players and eliciting exceptionally fine performances. He describes his methods, learned

from Elia Kazan, as "half improvisation, half control." On *The Missouri Breaks*, though, control was rumored to be lacking, with the film's superstars, Marlon Brando and Jack Nicholson, pursuing their own individual conceptions.... Penn was disappointed with the film, feeling that it suffered from insufficient preparation and "a compromise with Hollywood." Both *Night Moves* and *The Missouri Breaks* were commercial failures, and Penn "made a private determination not to do another film for money." In the event he made no films at all for five years, returning to Broadway...His next film was to have been *Altered States*, adapted by Paddy Chayevsky from his own novel. However, Penn and Chayevsky (who had known each other since army days) were unable to agree on their overall approach to the picture, and Penn resigned amicably three weeks before shooting was due to start. Another long-cherished project, a film on the Attica prison riots, ran into cost problems. Instead, Penn reverted for his next film to his favorite decade.

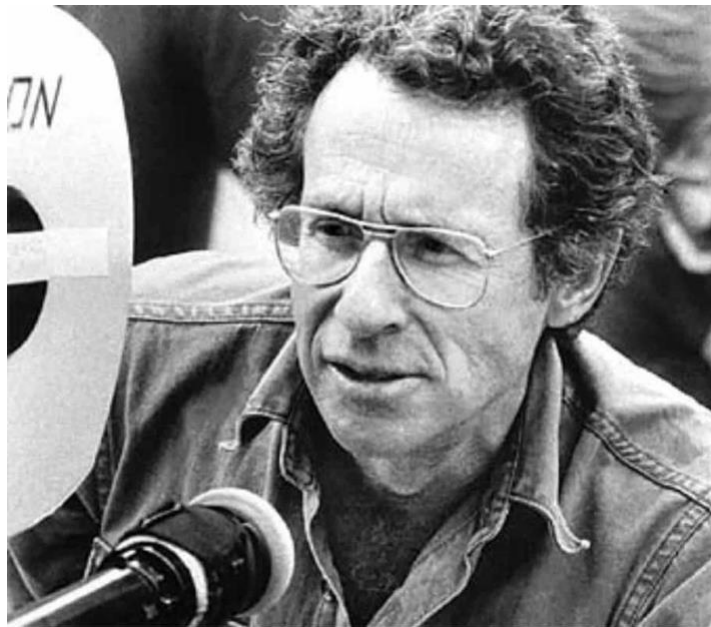
"I think the 60s generation was a state of mind and it's really the one I've been in since I was born,"

Penn says. *Four Friends* (1981), based on a partly autobiographical script by Steve Tesich, is concerned with "curiosity and exploration about who we are and where we ware."...The notable events of the 1960s impinge marginally on the plot, mirrored rather than shown.... Rich, allusive and visually superb—it was the last work of Ghislain Cloquet, the Belgian cinematographer who also worked on *Mickey One*—*Four Friends* seems to

suggest a mellowing of Penn's pessimistic outlook; he film's ending is cautiously happy, even serene.

Penn's...film *Target* (1985), deals with a father-son relationship that begins routinely in Dallas before eventuating in bloodletting and foreign intrigue in Europe....

Throughout his career, Arthur Penn has consistently maintained a dual allegiance—to the cinema and to the theatre—rare among major movie directors. Theatre, it would seem, attracts him emotionally—"a very warm, close, familial



phenomenon” while cinema exerts a more intellectual fascination. “Film offers the opportunity for constant contradiction between what is said and what is done,” he has remarked. “Film is how one looks, as against what one says. On the stage, you can’t document that. You’re too far back. So what one says is what one is.” Furthermore, he argues that the mantle of intellectual respectability has passed to the cinema: “There was a time when, if you were working in the theatre as a ‘serious’ artist, and you went off to Hollywood, you were prostituting yourself, but now it’s the opposite. In the cinema you can do serious, realistic things, but on Broadway...it’s all just entertainment.” Not that there is the least lack of emotion (or, come to that, of entertainment) in Penn’s films. “A movie,” he once remarked, “is really an act of passion.”...

“Underlying each Penn movie,” wrote Michael Walker (*Movie*, Spring 1976), “is a meditation on/investigation of aspects of the USA, its history, peoples and myths.”



From Adam Bingham, “Arthur Penn,” *Senses of Cinema*

Night Moves (1975), perhaps Penn's most underrated picture, emerges today as, in Phil Hardy's words, “A key film of the '70s”, and arguably the bleakest (certainly after *The Chase*) of the director's career. Perhaps the best way to view it now is as the dark Yang to the much lighter Yin of Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* (1973). Both films have a comparable project: to take apart and in some ways reinvent the hard boiled private eye popularised in the novels of Chandler and Hammett and in the screen adaptations of their work (*The Maltese Falcon* [1941], *Farewell, My Lovely* [1945], *The Big Sleep* [1946] etc). However, where Altman (actually adapting a Chandler novel) re-imagines Philip Marlowe as a shambling, anachronistic, laid-back bum in the bright lights of modern Los Angeles, playing fast and loose with the surface style and iconography of the character whilst

keeping the ideals more or less intact, Penn and writer Alan Sharp take a journey deep inside the genre archetype (played by Gene Hackman), finding in him a bitterness, an emptiness and, typically for Penn, an obsessive compulsion to pursue a course of action that leads not to redemption but to damnation. They also overturn genre conventions in giving the PI a wife and an errant father, as well as (logically) a life outside of his profession.

The plot, which has Hackman's detective pursue a lost daughter for her wayward mother, is a powerful pretext for the journey into his heart of darkness, as it mirrors (not unlike Michael Mann's *Manhunter* [1986] which further shares with this film a protagonist who lives by the sea) the equally troubled state of his own home life. Penn also captures an era-defining mood of post-Watergate paranoia and despair, a feeling that the government is at least as crooked as the criminals and that corruption reaches into the very highest echelons of power (something echoed ten years later in *Target*). With a dark, muted, almost *noir* palette, *Night Moves* is a substantial addition to a genre that was at this time (with *The Long Goodbye*, *Chinatown* [1974] and Dick Richards' remake of *Farewell, My Lovely* [1975] starring Robert Mitchum) enjoying a comparable vogue (backed by not too dissimilar social circumstances with Vietnam) to its original flowering in the 1940s/'50s.

from Gary Crowds and Richard Porton: Interview with Arthur Penn (*Cineaste*)

...Another characteristic of your work is the subversion of traditional genre expectations, such as in *Night Moves*. That film seems to have some parallels with *Blowup* because both films deal with the elusiveness of the truth. The Harry Moseby character, like David Hemmings's character in *Blowup*, is never really sure of what the truth is.

Penn: I hadn't thought of that, but it's perfectly acceptable. I think we were trying to do something just a little more than that, which was to say that in the detective film genre, the detective eventually solved the crime. I mean, Bogart eventually found it out, however painful it was, and Mary Astor was sent up. In *Night Moves* we were trying to say, “Wait a minute, maybe the enemy is us. Maybe Moseby's vision is blocked by his need to have a friendship with this stunt man, who was taking advantage of that friendship.” That was the only other sort of quietly psychological aspect that we were adding to that form. It's a pretty

dark and despairing film, and I guess I was feeling that way.

The paranoia links the film to Mickey One in a way.

Penn: Yeah, maybe, but it was much darker than Mickey One, which had a kind of youthful hope. In this film, when someone asked, “Where were you when Kennedy was shot?,” the reply was, “Which Kennedy?” That was really the capsule of our lives at that point.

There are echoes of the Kennedy assassination in the enormous conspiracy that devolves toward the end of the film.

Penn: Yeah, and, you know, I had worked with both Kennedys. I had served as a TV advisor to Jack Kennedy’s

campaign. During the Nixon-Kennedy debates we were in the Kennedy camp using the medium in a way we thought made for a better presentation. Later I started working with Bobby. I went down to Washington and we did one radio commercial. We were then going to do a whole bunch of radio and TV stuff as soon as he came back from California, and of course he never did.

So Night Moves was a very personal film?

Penn: It was personal in that respect, but it’s also despairing in that I just felt, “Oh God, this country...” I mean, those assassinations—Jack Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr.—were just crushing to people who’d been involved in those movements. I’d been in the Civil Rights movement up to my ears.

Dede Allen has described your shooting method as one of providing “top to bottom editorial coverage.” Would you explain what she means by that?

Penn: Well, it’s lots of coverage, but I don’t shoot that much film in relation to other directors, not by a long shot. I think what Dede is saying is that once the actors and I have rehearsed it and gotten the scene, then I don’t waste any time shooting alternate angles. I cover it tight, tight, tighter, because I believe that for editing to really work you need to have the material to alter the rhythm of a scene. As you know, we shoot out of sequence, for economic reasons. I defy you, no matter how good you are, to know on the second or third

Tuesday of the movie what that last scene is really going to be like if you haven’t gotten there yet. You have to give yourself material so that when you’re in the editing room, and you suddenly see the scene, now in context, you don’t have to say, “Oh shit, why didn’t I shoot that?” My first reaction to The Left-Handed Gun was, “Oh, why didn’t I cover it. I was right there but I didn’t do it. I’d love to be in on Paul Newman’s

eyes right now but it can’t be there because I don’t have the shot.” That’s why in The Miracle Worker, when I filmed that long fight scene, I covered it every possible way because I wanted to be able to control the rhythm. You see, that’s a nine-minute scene, so it’s gotta start, it’s gotta pick up tempo, it’s gotta move, it’s gotta pick up hostility, you have to take it up the line, up the line, UP THE LINE, to a

point, finally, of capitulation. I can do that in the theater because I see the whole scene in the context of the play but on a movie, in the third week of production, I can’t do it. That’s what I think I brought into Dede’s life because I said, “Dede, we’re just going to have to learn to understand my rhythms, and I’m going to provide a ton of material so that we can really change rhythm from what the scene seemed to be when we read it to when we shot it,” and, by God, that has stood us in good stead.

You’ve obviously had a very good working relationship with her.

Penn: Dede’s a first-rate editor, she’s made an awful lot of mediocre directors look very good. She brings a wisdom and dedication to it that almost nobody else I know has. She’s a nut when it comes to the editing process. She’s tenacious, she won’t quit, and she finds solutions. Look at all the people she’s trained—Steve Rotter, Jerry Greenberg, Richie Marks—they’re the prominent editors of our time. All the Academy Awards go to people who trained with Dede, but she never got one.

From Bruce Jackson: “Loose Ends in Night Moves” (Senses of Cinema, July 2010)

In three successive films over an eight-year period Arthur Penn redefined the borders of three major film genres. *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) was a love story about two vicious killers that ended with the female



protagonist, Bonnie Parker (Faye Dunaway) in a hip-flopping parody of sex while she was pounded and perforated by a barrage of .45 caliber machine gun bullets. *Little Big Man* (1970) is a picaresque western based on Thomas Berger's 1964 novel in which all the usual western tropes are upside down and inside out: the white women are whores, the soldiers are bloody savages, the "hero" George Armstrong Custer is a homicidal fruitcake, and only the Indians are consistent, ethical, and occasionally close to rational. And *Night Moves* (1975) is a detective film in which the caper that keeps the protagonist occupied isn't the one he's really in the middle of, and neither the caper he thinks he's in nor the caper he's actually in is what the film is about.



Roger Ebert writes that *Night Moves* is difficult to figure out on one viewing, which is true. (2) That is in large part because the difficulty or impossibility of figuring things out is its subject. The film's central character, Harry Moseby (Gene Hackman) is a private detective, a man whose job is to gather for other people apparently unrelated facts and make sense of them, but Harry is also a man who misses or misreads the facts that are all around him and therefore understands nothing of importance until it is too late for that understanding to be of any use to anyone; he understands neither the case that falls in on him nor his own life.

Penn has several times said that the mood of the film was a consequence of the Kennedy assassinations in 1963 and 1968 (he worked for both John and Robert) (3) and the killing of the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics (which he witnessed) (4). "This was a period," he said in 1994, "when we'd had all those assassinations in America. It was a terrible period, and I felt we were wandering around in a kind of blindness unaware of what we were doing to ourselves. It was a crazy period, and I thought we should tell this detective story in a way that could only be understood by what we see, not by what we are told. That's the way the film ends. We learn who has been doing these things at the exact same moment Harry Moseby learns it: by looking through the glass-bottomed boat." (5)

...The answers to the questions he asks solve none of the problems he encounters or has. He's a man out of place and out of time. "What interested me about Harry," said Penn—who finds detectives in general "despicable people" (8)—"was being able to show a man who, without being a true outsider, is nevertheless alienated from the society in which he lives. He's unable to establish meaningful connections with the world and other people." (9)

...The title of the film is a pun. Alan Sharp's screenplay was titled "The Dark Tower" but Penn changed it because of the script's many references, both literal and metaphorical, to chess. (11)

Three different chessboards appear in the film, one of them twice. Each time, the

chess involvement is more complex. A pan in the opening scene shows an ordinary white and black set atop a small office refrigerator. All the pieces are in the opening position; no moves have yet been made. A red and white ivory chess set on a white marble board is center frame in Ellen's shop when Harry enters the room in the deep right background. Harry comes around a wall, picks up a white knight and tosses it to Ellen's clerk, Charles (Ben Archibek).

Harry's small travel chess set appears twice. The first time is on the passenger seat of his car in Malibu while he waits for his wife's lover to get home. He alternately looks at oncoming traffic in his outside mirror, then at the chessboard. In the last of that scene's four shots including the chessboard, his hand hovers over a piece but does nothing.

The travel set next appears at Tom's place in Florida. Delly sees him carrying it and asks, "Is chess hard to learn?" "It isn't easy, believe me," Harry replies. A few minutes later he reenacts what he tells Paula is a championship game played in 1922. "Black had a mate," he tells her. "He didn't see it. Queen sacrifice. And three double knight moves." He shows the moves. A moment later she leaves, takes a few paces, then comes back and says through the door screen, "Show me that again." He does. "Ah. It's a beauty," she says. "Yeah," Harry says, "but he didn't see it. He played something else and he lost. Must have regretted it every day of his life. I know I would have.

Matter of fact, I do regret it and I wasn't even born yet." "That's no excuse," Paula says.

That is, most obviously, Harry's story in the film. He sees what other people are doing but he hasn't the least understanding what they're really up to. He is going to make wrong moves and not see the right ones. He is going to lose and, if he survives, he is going to regret what happened as long as he lives. (12)

The chess metaphor operates at an even deeper level, which is perhaps why Penn gives it to us in those four separate contexts. In chess, there are no unimportant or inconsequential moves.

Unlike poker, cribbage or Monopoly, there is no element of chance; chess is, with one exception, entirely a game of skill. The exception is a slight advantage to white, which gets to make the first move, which means that black's moves are at least initially responsive. (13) All possible moves are known beforehand; all moves are open. At the start of the game, both players begin with exactly the same pieces in exactly the same positions; each player has the same twenty possible first moves. (14) The possibilities, however, are thenceforth practically without limit: 10 followed by 50 to 120 zeroes, depending how you count.

The one thing hidden in chess is motive: what is the other guy really up to? ...Championship chess games are lost in one of only two ways. One is grounded in failure of imagination or strategy: a player's pieces are in a position that might result in a win but the player doesn't see it, doesn't think far enough ahead, as in the game that Harry regretfully plays over and over. The other is grounded in misconstrued motive: a player is defending against one action while his opponent is engaging in a different action entirely, so the first player loses because he was waging the wrong war in the wrong part of the board. The loser in both cases could say exactly what Harry says at the end of the film, "Shit. Missed. I missed it."

Harry misses not only the real game being played, but also his role in it. He isn't the knight errant, off on his own dealing with the ills of the world. He is rather one of the causes of the ills of the world. The reason Tom has Paula take Delly swimming that night Delly finds the fish pecking at Ellman's face isn't to

keep Delly busy before her trip back west; they have nothing new to hide from her. It is to get *Harry* out of there when Marv comes in with the latest shipment. If Harry hadn't been there, Delly wouldn't have found Marv's wrecked plane, at least not then, and there would have been no reason to get rid of Delly or anyone else. If Harry hadn't gotten Quentin riled up

Quentin wouldn't have gone to Florida and gotten murdered. If Harry hadn't spooked Joey, Joey wouldn't have gone to Florida to kill Tom, Paula and Harry. It is *Harry* who disrupts the order of the smuggling operation, at first by chance, then by choice. Harry doesn't know the difference, and if he did he wouldn't understand the significance of it. Unlike Sam

Spade and those other detectives of yore who are several times referenced in the film, Harry Moseby just isn't very smart. (15)

...Harry may not understand the difference between chance and choice, or the need to consider long-term consequences, but Arthur Penn surely does. That's why Eric Rohmer's *My Night at Maud's* (1969) figures so prominently in *Night Moves*.

When Harry visits Ellen at her antique shop she invites him to join her and Charles when they go to see *My Night at Maud's*. She is using Charles as beard for her meeting with Marty Heller, and the invitation is part of her deception as well: she knows her Harry. He responds with *Night Move's* most famous line: "I saw a Rohmer film once. It was kinda like watching paint dry." (16)

As Harry later approaches the Magnolia Theater hoping to catch up with Ellen, we see the marquee from one side and the front. He makes a U-turn and we see it from the other side. All say, "Eric Rohmer. *My Night at Maud's*." We see the sign again when Harry follows the car in which Ellen leans over and kisses the lover he hadn't until that moment known she had.

...So why so much talk and imagery having to do with *My Night at Maud's*? Why do we hear about the film once and see that Magnolia marquee in eight separate shots? Why did Penn substitute Rohmer's film for the Claude Chabrol film in Alan Sharp's original script? (17)



My Night at Maud's is about a man, never referred to by name in the film itself but generally listed as "Jean-Louis" (Jean-Louis Trintignant) in the credits, who encounters an old friend, Vidal (Antoine Vitez), in a restaurant. They discuss belief, choice, responsibility and Pascal. Later, Vidal brings Jean-Louis to the apartment of Maud (Françoise Fabian), a physician, where they have dinner and continue the conversation. Vidal gets drunk and Maud sends him home. It is Christmas, the town is covered with new snow, so Maud insists that Jean-Louis, who lives in the hills outside of town, spend the night at her place because the roads are dangerous. He does. They talk, she offers him sex; he declines. The next morning he encounters Françoise (Marie-Christine Barrault), a young woman he has previously seen in church. In the film's final scene, Jean-Louis and Françoise, now married and with a young son, encounter Maud at the beach. Jean-Louis realizes that not only do Maud and Françoise know one another, but Françoise was the woman Maud's husband was having an affair with when Maud's marriage broke up. He decides to say nothing about it because more knowledge about the past will do no good to their relationship in the future. Some secrets, he decides, are better kept and some actions are better not taken.

Jean-Louis is a man who makes choices not so much on the basis of what he wants to do as on the basis of what he believes he ought to do. There is a great deal of discussion in the film about Pascal's "wager": if there is the slightest chance that God exists, Pascal argued, then it is to your advantage to act accordingly because by doing so you have eternity to win and therefore your life has meaning; if you do not act accordingly you risk eternal damnation. Vidal tells Jean-Louis that infinity times zero is still zero, but Jean-Louis doesn't think the chances are zero, therefore he is a believing and practicing Catholic. By extension, Pascal's argument goes to the meaning of all choice: consequences unlikely to occur but of great moment must be taken seriously because if you choose incorrectly the results could be catastrophic and irreversible.



[How the knight moves \(from Wikipedia entry "Knight \(chess\)"\)](#)

The knight move is unusual among chess pieces. When it moves, it can move two squares horizontally and one square vertically, or two squares vertically and one square horizontally. The complete move therefore looks like the letter 'L'. Unlike all other standard chess pieces, the knight can 'jump over' all other pawns and pieces (of either color) to its destination square. It captures an enemy piece by moving into its square. The knight's ability to 'jump over' other pieces means it is at its most powerful in closed positions. The move is one of the longest-surviving moves in chess, having remained unchanged since before the seventh century AD.

Because of this it also appears in most chess-related national games. The knight moves alternately to white and black squares.

A knight should always be close to where the action is. Pieces are generally more powerful if placed near the center of the board, but this is particularly true for a knight. A knight on the edge of the board attacks only four

squares and a knight in the corner only two. Moreover, it takes more moves for a decentralized knight to switch operation to the opposite side of the board than a decentralized bishop, rook, or queen. The mnemonic phrases "A knight on the rim is grim" or "A knight on the rim is dim" are often used in chess instruction and reflect these features.

The knight is the only piece that can move at the beginning of the game before any pawn move has been made. Because of the above reasons, in most situations the best square for the initial move of each knight is one towards the center. Knights are usually brought into play slightly sooner than the bishops and much sooner than the rooks and the queen.

The knight is the only piece that can be in position to attack a king, queen, bishop, or rook without being reciprocally attacked by that piece. The knight is thus especially well-suited for executing a fork.

[The script is online at the Cinephilia & Beyond website.](#)

THE FALL 2022 BUFFALO FILM SEMINARS XLV:

August 30 William Wellman *Wings* 1927
Sept 6 Jean Renoir *Rules of the Game* 1939
Sept 13 Michael Curtiz *Casablanca* 1942
Sept 20 Nicholas Ray, *In a Lonely Place* 1950
Sept 27 Luis Buñuel *Viridiana* 1961
Oct 4 Orson Welles *Chimes at Midnight* 1966
Oct 11 Mel Brooks *Young Frankenstein* 1974
Oct 18 Arthur Penn *Night Moves* 1975
Oct 25 Sydney Pollack *Tootsie* 1982
Nov 1 Akira Kurosawa *Ran* 1985
Nov 8 Martin Scorsese *Goodfellas* 1990
Nov 15 Hayao Miyazaki *The Wind Rises* 2013
Nov 22 Ava Duvernay *Selma* 2014
Nov 29 Pedro Almodóvar *Parallel Mothers* 2021
Dec 6 Ang Lee *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* 2000

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Melanie Griffith with boyfriend Don Johnson on Sanibel Island during filming of *Night Moves*. Photo by Mary Ellen Mark.