



**Director** Alfred Hitchcock  
**Writers** Ben Hecht, Alfred Hitchcock, and Clifford Odets (dialogue: love scenes)  
**Producer** Alfred Hitchcock  
**Music** Roy Webb  
**Cinematographer** Ted Tetzlaff  
**Film Editing** Theron Warth  
**Art Direction** Carroll Clark, Albert S. D'Agostino  
**Set Decoration** Claude E. Carpenter, Darrell Silvera  
**Special Effects** Paul Eagler, Vernon L. Walker  
**Still Photographer** Robert Capa  
**Director of Photography** Gregg Toland (uncredited)  
**Costume and Wardrobe** Edith Head (gowns designer: Miss Ingrid Bergman)

#### Cast

Cary Grant...Devlin  
 Ingrid Bergman...Alicia Huberman  
 Claude Rains...Alexander Sebastian  
 Louis Calhern...Paul Prescott  
 Leopoldine Konstantin...Mme. Sebastian  
 Reinhold Schünzel...'Dr. Anderson'  
 Moroni Olsen...Walter Beardsley  
 Ivan Triesault...Eric Mathis  
 Alexis Minotis...Joseph  
 Wally Brown...Mr. Hopkins  
 Charles Mendl...Commodore  
 Ricardo Costa...Dr. Barbosa  
 E.A. Krumschmidt...Hupka  
 Fay Baker...Ethel  
 Alfred Hitchcock...Man Drinking Champagne at Party (uncredited)



In 2006, *Notorious* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant". Film critic Roger Ebert included *Notorious* in his Ten Greatest Films of All Time list in 1991, citing it as his favorite of Hitchcock's films. The *Village Voice* ranked *Notorious* at No. 77 in its Top 250 "Best Films of the Century" list in 1999, based on a poll of critics. In 2005, Hecht's screenplay was voted by the two Writers Guilds of America as one of the 101 best ever written.

#### ALFRED HITCHCOCK

(b. August 13, 1899 in London, England—d. April 29, 1980, age 80, Los Angeles, CA) was nominated for 5 Academy Awards but he only won the Thalberg Award in 1980. That was a very good year for him: he also received a Legion of Honor from the French government and a knighthood from the queen. Directors Eric Rohmer and Claude Chabrol wrote of him, "Hitchcock is one of the greatest inventors of form in the history of cinema. Perhaps the only filmmakers who can be compared with him in this respect are Murnau and Eisenstein. . . . Here, form does not merely embellish

content, but actually creates it.” François Truffaut wrote that Hitchcock had “a unique ability to film the thoughts of his characters and make them perceptible without resorting to dialogue,” and that he was “almost unique in being able to film directly, that is, without resorting to explanatory dialogue, such intimate emotions as suspicion, jealousy, desire, and envy.” (*Notorious* was Truffaut’s favorite Hitchcock film.) Critic Andrew Sarris wrote, “What has been most disturbing in Hitchcock’s films—the perverse ironies, the unresolved ambiguities, the switched protagonists—now mark him as a pioneer in the modern idiom in which nothing is what it seems on the surface.”

Hitchcock left nothing to chance, not even that famous image of him as the plump solemn joker with a taste for the macabre: that was the product of a PR company he set up in the 1930s. Hitchcock began in film as a title designer and art director and he claimed



he storyboarded (made scene and motion sketches) for every shot in every one of his 62 films. Some of his films are *Frenzy* (1972), *The Birds* (1963), *Psycho* (1960), *North by Northwest* (1959), *Vertigo* (1958), *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956), *To Catch a Thief* (1955), *Rear Window* (1954), *Dial M for Murder* (1954), *Rope* (1948), *Spellbound* (1945), *Lifeboat* (1944), *Suspicion* (1941), *Rebecca* (1940), *The Lady Vanishes* (1938), *The 39 Steps* (1935), *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934) *Blackmail* (1930, the first British talkie), and *The Lodger* (1926).

**CLIFFORD ODETS** (b. July 18, 1906 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—d. August 18, 1963, age 57, in Los Angeles, California) was a playwright who also wrote and directed film. Besides writing the uncredited love scene dialogue in *Notorious*, some of his plays and original scripts are *Golden Boy* (1962, TV Movie), *The Story on Page One* (1959), *Clash by Night* (1959, TV Movie), *The Big Knife* (1955), *The Country Girl* (1954), and *Clash by Night* (1952). His screenplay work includes *Wild in the Country* (1961, screenplay) *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957, screenplay), *Humoresque* (1946, screenplay), *Rhapsody in Blue* (1945, uncredited), *None But the Lonely Heart* (1944), *The General Died at Dawn* (1936) and *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957). He also directed 2 films, *The Story on Page One* (1959) and *None But the Lonely Heart* (1944) starring Cary Grant.

**TED TETZLAFF** (b. Dale H. Tetzlaff, June 3, 1903 in Los Angeles, California—d. January 7, 1995, age 91, in Fort Baker, California) was the son of a racecar driver and silent movie star, Teddy Tetzlaff Sr. Junior, born Dale but used the name Teddy Tetzlaff Jr., grew up to be a famous and well-respected studio cameraman who worked on over 100 films. His career zenith was in the ‘40s and in 1943 he was nominated for an Oscar for Best Cinematography, *Black-and-White*, *The Talk of the Town* (1942). Some of his cinematography work includes the films *Notorious* (1946, director of

photography), *Those Endearing Young Charms* (1945), *The Enchanted Cottage* (1945), *The More the Merrier* (1943), *I Married a Witch* (1942), *The Talk of the Town* (1942), *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* (1941), *Road to Zanzibar* (1941), *I Want a Divorce* (1940), *Rhythm on the River* (1940), *Safari*

(1940), *Cafe Society* (1939), *Tom Sawyer, Detective* (1938), *Arrest Bulldog Drummond* (1937), *True Confession* (1937), *Swing High, Swing Low* (1937), *Lady of Secrets* (1936), *Hands Across the Table* (1935), *Annapolis Farewell* (1935), *Paris in Spring* (1935), *His Greatest Gamble* (1934), *Should Ladies Behave* (1933), *Soldiers of the Storm* (1933), *Man Against Woman* (1932), *Attorney for the Defense* (1932), *Arizona* (1931), *The Texas Ranger* (1931), *Tol’able David* (1930), *Prince of Diamonds* (1930), *Mexicali Rose* (1929), *Wall Street* (1929), *The Flying Marine* (1929), *The Donovan Affair* (1929), *The Apache* (1928), *The Power of the Press* (1928), *Stool Pigeon* (1928), *Comrades* (1928), *Ragtime* (1927), *Eager Lips* (1927), *The Ladybird* (1927), *Sunshine of Paradise Alley* (1926), and *Atta Boy* (1926). Teddy Jr. also directed 17 films some of which are *The Young Land* (1959), *Son of Sinbad* (1955), *Terror on a Train* (1953), *The Treasure of Lost Canyon* (1952), *A Dangerous Profession* (1949), *Johnny Allegro* (1949), *Fighting Father Dunne* (1948), and *World Premiere* (1941).

**ROBERT CAPA** (b. Endre Friedman on October 22, 1913 in Budapest, Austria-Hungary—d. May 25, 1954, age 40, in Thai Binh, Vietnam) is known for his work on *The 400 Million* (1939), *Notorious* (1946) and *Temptation* (1946). Capa took part in the D-Day landing “armed” only with camera and he was the only

photographer in the first wave hitting the Omaha beach. Capa was also involved in a love affair with Ingrid Bergman. The two met while Ingrid was overseas entertaining the troops during World War II. The romance was the basis for Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*.

**GREGG TOLAND** (b. May 29, 1904, Charleston, Illinois—d. September 26, 1948, age 44, Hollywood, California, coronary thrombosis) was one of the great cinematographers. Nearly all of his successors credit his work and his imagination. While he is perhaps best known for his work on *Citizen Kane* (1941), some of his other films include *The Bishop's Wife* (1947), *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), *December 7th* (1943), *The Outlaw* (1943), *The Little Foxes* (1941), *The Long Voyage Home* (1940), *The Westerner* (1940), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), *Raffles* (1940), *Wuthering Heights* (1939), *Intermezzo: A Love Story* (1939), *Come and Get It* (1936), *Les Misérables* (1935), *Nana* (1934), *Tugboat Annie* (1933), *Indiscreet* (1931), *Raffles* (1930), *Bulldog Drummond* (1929), and *Bat* (1926). He was nominated for six Oscars: *Citizen Kane*, *The Long Voyage Home*, *Wuthering Heights* (won), *Intermezzo: A Love Story*, *Dead End*, and *Les Misérables*.

**CARY GRANT** (b. Archibald Alexander Leach on January 18 1904 in Gloucestershire, England—d. November 29, 1986, age 82, Davenport, Iowa,) was in four Hitchcock films, every one of them memorable: *North By Northwest* (1959), *To Catch a Thief* (1955), *Notorious* (1946), and *Suspicion* (1941). Hitchcock saw in him a dramatic edge few other directors were able to utilize or control. Grant did some important dramatic work away from Hitchcock, but with a few exceptions his best other work was in comedy. Some of his other films are *Charade* (1963), *Indiscreet* (1958), *An Affair to Remember* (1957), *I Was a Male War Bride* (1949), *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House* (1948), *The Bishop's Wife* (1947), *Night and Day* (1946), *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1944), *Destination Tokyo* (1943), *His Girl Friday* (1940), *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939), *Gunga Din* (1939), *Bringing Up Baby* (1938) and *Topper* (1937).

**INGRID BERGMAN** (b. August 29, 1915 in Stockholm, Sweden—d. August 29, 1982, age 67, in London, England) started out wholesome. David O. Selznik saw some of her Swedish films and brought her to Hollywood where he set her to playing nice girls. When he lent her to another studio for *Dr. Jekyll and*

*Mr. Hyde* (1941), she insisted in playing the prostitute. Audiences loved her as a more complex woman. The following year she starred in the film for which she is perhaps best known, *Casablanca*, with Humphrey Bogart. She had another great role the following year, with Gary Cooper in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1943). The year after that, she won her first Oscar for best actress for *Gaslight* (1944). She had a number of great starring roles over the next 15 years, but things got rocky when she left her husband, Dr. Peter Lindstrom, for Italian director Roberto Rossellini. Sanctimonious Hollywood punished her for going public: she didn't get a Hollywood movie for 7 years. In 1956, Buddy Adler and Anatole Litvak starred her in *Anastasia*, for which she won her second best actress Academy Award. She won best supporting actress Oscar for *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974). Her last major role, completed the year of her death, was as Golda Meir in the made for TV film, "A Woman Called Golda," for which she won an Emmy. Some of her other films are *Stromboli* (1949), *Joan of Arc* (1948), *Arch of Triumph* (1948), *Saratoga Trunk* (1945), *The Bells of St. Mary's* (1945), *Spellbound* (1945) and *Intermezzo* (1939).



**CLAUDE RAINS** (b. November 10, 1889 in London, England—d. May 30, 1967, age 77, in Laconia, New Hampshire) was a stage actor for decades before his role in *Invisible Man* made him a Hollywood star. Some of his other films were *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965), *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1946), *Angel on My Shoulder* (1946), *Phantom of the Opera* (1943), *Casablanca* (1942), *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* (1941), *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), and *They Won't Forget* (1937). He also did a great deal of tv work, appearing in such series as "Dr. Kildare," "Rawhide," "Wagon Train," "Alfred Hitchcock Presents," "Naked City," "The Alcoa Hour,"

and “Kaiser Aluminum Hour.” Rains won a best actor Tony in 1961 for his portrayal of Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon* on Broadway.

**LOUIS CALHERN** (b. Carl Henry Vogt, February 19, 1895 in Brooklyn—d. May 12, 1956 in Tokyo, heart attack while filming *The Teahouse of the August Moon*) appeared in *High Society* (1956), *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), *The Student Prince* (1954), *Executive Suite* (1954), *Julius Caesar* (1953), *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), *Annie Get Your Gun* (1950, as Buffalo Bill), *Heaven Can Wait* (1943), *Duck Soup* (1933), *20,000 Years in Sing Sing* (1932) and 63 other films.

**LEOPOLDINE KONSTANTIN** (b. Leopoldine Eugenie Amelie Konstantin March 12, 1886 in Brünn, Moravia, Austria-Hungary—d. December 14, 1965, age 79, in Hietzing, Vienna, Austria) acted in German sound films during the first half of the 1930's, before moving to Britain and then to the United States. She spoke no English at that time, and had to take a job as a factory worker until, after intensive language study, she landed a supporting role in Alfred Hitchcock's 1946 film *Notorious*. Best remembered her role as the autocratic, venomous mother of Claude Rains, who was just three years her junior. Some of her other acting work includes *Robert Montgomery Presents* (1957, TV Series), *Actor's Studio* (1950, TV Series), *The Making of a King* (1935), *Prinzessin Turandot* (1934), *Cairo Season* (1933), *Der Silberkönig, 4. Teil, Rochesterstreet 29* (1921), *Der Silberkönig, 3. Teil, Claim 36* (1921), *Der Silberkönig, 2. Teil, Der Mann der Tat* (1921), *Der Silberkönig, 1. Teil, Der 13. März* (1921), *Präsident Barrada* (1920), *Lilli* (1919), *Lola Montez* (1918), *Der Dolch im Strumpfbund* (1915), *Maria Magdalena* (1914), *Ultimo* (1913) and *Sumurûn* (1910).



**HITCHCOCK from *World Film Directors, Vol. I.***  
**Edited by John Wakeman. H. W. Wilson Co NY**  
**1987, entry by Philip Kemp**

Anglo-American director, producer and scenarist, born in Leytonstone, at that time a village on the outskirts of

London. He was the third and youngest child of William Hitchcock, a green grocer and poulterer, and his wife Emma (born Whalen). Hitchcock's father seems to have been a stern rather distant figure; his mother he recalled as a placid woman, “shaped like a cottage loaf.” Both his parents were Catholics, and he grew up in what he later depicted as a somewhat stifling atmosphere of working-class respectability and strict Catholic morality. “I was what is known as a well-behaved child. At family gatherings I would sit quietly in a corner, saying nothing....I played by myself, inventing my own games.” One such game was to travel over every route served by London Omnibus Company.

It was also to childhood experiences that Hitchcock attributed the insistent fear of punishment and the processes of law that pervades his films. A much-retailed anecdote relates how, when he was about five and had committed some childish misdemeanor, his father sent him to the local police station with a note. The sergeant read it, then locked the boy in a cell for five minutes or so, saying, “This is what we do to naughty boys.” Hitchcock's preoccupation with guilt may have been further developed by his education, from 1908 onwards, at St. Ignatius College, Stamford Hill, where the Jesuit fathers dispensed corporal punishment with pious rigor. “It wasn't done casually, you know. It was rather like the execution of a sentence.... You spent the whole day waiting for the sentence to be carried out.” Not that he was often in trouble; he seems to have been a shy, quiet, slightly melancholy child, academically adequate but undistinguished, and with no aptitude for games.

When Hitchcock was fourteen his father died. A few months earlier he had left school, aware of no particular vocation, but with a talent for drawing and a vague interest in things mechanical. On the strength of this he was sent to the London School of Engineering and Navigation, where he studied mechanics, electricity, acoustics, and navigation. His training completed, he took a job with the W.T. Henley Telegraph Company as a technical clerk, and stayed there throughout the First World War. (He was turned down for active service on medical grounds, being then, as he would always remain, considerably overweight.) After some years of



boredom checking estimates, his graphic skills got him transferred to the company's advertising department, where the work was a good deal more interesting. But by now his sights were set on a job in the movie industry.

As a child Hitchcock had been taken on numerous enjoyable visits to both the cinema and the theatre, but had always preferred the cinema. From the age of sixteen or so he began to study film journals—the trade and technical press, rather than the fan magazines—and realized that filmmaking was what he really wanted to do. His chance came in 1919, when he heard that Famous Players-Lasky (later to become Paramount) were opening a studio in Islington, North London. Hitchcock designed a number of drawings suitable for illustrating title-cards and took them around to the studio. The management were impressed enough to offer him some commissioned work and soon after a full-time job.

Over the next two years Hitchcock designed title-cards for a dozen features produced at the Islington Studios, while also serving the informal apprenticeship in every aspect of filmmaking that formed the basis of his formidable technique. Nearly all the other personnel, and the working arrangements, were American—giving him, he always said, a professional head start over most of his compatriots. “All my early training was American, which was far superior to the British.” Being bright, industrious, and willing, Hitchcock soon found himself designing, editing, and even directing. “Sometimes when an extra scene was needed—but not an acting scene—they would let me shoot it.”

Famous Players-Lasky soon discovered—as most other Hollywood studios would—that there was very little financial or artistic advantage in running a UK-based operation, and pulled out in 1922, renting out the Islington studios to various independent production companies. It was one of these that gave Hitchcock his first chance to direct, on a two-reel melodrama known either as *Number Thirteen* or *Mrs. Peabody*. Whatever its title, it was never completed and has since vanished—no great loss according to Hitchcock. He also helped complete a one-reel comedy, *Always Tell Your*

*Wife*; the star, Seymour Hicks, had parted company with the original director, and finished off the film with Hitchcock's assistance.

In 1923 a new company called Balcon-Saville-Freedman moved into the Islington studios. It was headed by Michael Balcon and Victor Saville, both at the start of their cinematic careers; with them they brought their star director, Graham Cutts. On the strength of his experience with Hicks, Hitchcock was hired as assistant director and assigned to work with Cutts on the company's first picture, *Woman to Woman*. He also volunteered to write the script and serve as art director. The responsibilities of editing and script

continuity (generally handled by one person in those days) were taken by a young woman named Alma Reville.

Little of Cutts' silent work has survived; by all accounts he was a competent if uninspired director. Hitchcock worked with him on three more films, one of which, *The Blackguard* (1925), was filmed in Germany as a coproduction with UFA. On a neighboring set at Neubabelsberg Murnau was shooting *Der letzte Mann*, and Hitchcock took every opportunity to watch him at work. “*The Last Laugh* was almost the perfect film. It told its story ...entirely by the use of imagery, and that had a tremendous

influence on me....My models were forever after the German filmmakers of 1924 and 1925. They were trying very hard to express ideas in purely visual terms.” Hitchcock was also impressed, in a rather different way, by the notoriously exotic nightlife of Berlin; he was at this time by his own description “an uncommonly unattractive young man,” not just inexperienced but almost totally ignorant in sexual matters. On the boat returning to England he and Alma Reville became engaged.

Graham Cutts, whose chaotic sex life interfered considerably with his directorial duties, was by now becoming resentful of Hitchcock. The “wonder boy,” he complained, was getting far too much credit on his (Cutts') films, and he refused to use him any more. Most studio bosses would have mollified their top director by firing the younger man on the spot. Balcon instead offered Hitchcock a picture of his own to direct.



Not, admittedly, that it was much of a picture. *The Pleasure Garden* (1925) was to be another German coproduction, but not with the prestigious UFA; rather, with a shoestring Munich company called Emelka. ...More than once Hitchcock was reduced to borrowing money from his actors and crew in order to continue shooting. Nonetheless, with the help of Alma Reville as his assistant director, he managed to get the film completed. Balcon was pleased with the result, remarking that it looked less like a German picture than an American one, which Hitchcock took as high praise. He and Alma stayed in Germany to make another film, a melodrama set in the hills of Kentucky and called *The Mountain Eagle* (1926). This is the only Hitchcock feature of which no print seems to have survived; according to its director, it was “a very bad movie.” Hitchcock returned to London as a young director of promise. *The Pleasure Garden* had been cordially received by the critics, though not yet released. *The Mountain Eagle* was yet to be shown. Meanwhile he began to work on what he always referred to as “the first true Hitchcock movie.” *The Lodger* (1926) was based on a



novel by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes inspired by the Jack the Ripper killings. A mysterious, taciturn young man takes rooms with a London family, who gradually come to suspect him of being the Ripper. And so he is—at least in the original novel. But Ivor Novello had been signed to play the lead in the film, and since it was unthinkable that the elegant young matinee idol should play a deranged killer, the ending was changed. The Stranger, pursued through the streets by a baying, bloodthirsty crowd, proves to be not the Ripper but the brother of one of his victims, seeking to unmask his sister’s killer. He thus becomes the first incarnation of that classic Hitchcockian figure, the wrongfully accused innocent, hounded and hunted by a self-righteous society.

*The Lodger* also contains much else that anticipates the later Hitchcock, including the first of his celebrated brief onscreen appearances. (In time, this would become a teasing personal trademark; but on this occasion it seems that another extra was needed to swell a scene or two and the director stood in for want of

anyone else.) The technical ingenuity that distinguishes, and occasionally overpowers, his subsequent work is already on display: at one juncture, as the family gazes suspiciously upwards, the solid ceiling dissolves to one of glass, revealing their lodger’s obsessive pacing across the floor above. Most characteristic of all is the film’s moral ambiguity; ordinary decent people are shown relishing every detail of the sex killings, yet eager to lynch any suspect on the flimsiest of pretexts.

Traces of Hitchcock’s German mentors were much in evidence...heavy brooding shadows and oblique camera angles abounded, and several sequences recall the Lang of *Dr. Mabuse*....*The Lodger* was released to ecstatic reviews and enormous box-office success. “It is possible that this film is the finest British

production ever made,” wrote the critic of *The Bioscope*. Overnight, Hitchcock found himself hailed as the foremost genius of British cinema.

If this seems excessive—*The Lodger*, though it stands up well today, hardly looks like a towering masterpiece—it has to be taken in the context of the British films of the period. They were abysmal. Kevin Brownlow summed up British postwar silent movies as “with few exceptions, crudely

photographed; the direction and editing were on the level of cheap revue, they exploited so-called stars who generally had little more than a glimmer of histrionic talent, and they were exceedingly boring.” Against this dismal background, Hitchcock’s innately cinematic vision—American-trained, German-influenced—shone out with dazzling brilliance.

In 1926, Hitchcock and Alma Reville (who had converted to Catholicism) were married. (Hitchcock, who loved to present himself as a straitlaced sexual innocent, always claimed that they had both preserved strict premarital chastity.) Alma continued to work closely with Hitchcock on his films, often collaborating on the scripts, and the marriage lasted, apparently without major strain, until his death fifty-three years later. Their only child, Patricia, was born in 1928; she became an actress and appeared in small roles in several of her father’s pictures.

With hindsight, and purely on the basis of *The Lodger*, Hitchcock’s aptitude for thrillers seems

obvious. At the time, though, it apparently didn't, since none of his remaining six silent films was a thriller....

Dissatisfaction with uncongenial material, along with the promise of bigger budgets and greater freedom, lured Hitchcock to a newly founded company, British International Pictures, being set up by John Maxwell at Elstree. His starting salary was £13,000 a year, which by 1929 had risen to £17,000, making him the highest-paid director in Britain.

Hitchcock made a promising start at BIP with *The Ring* (1927)...the story was slight...but it was lifted out of the ordinary by Hitchcock's growing technical assurance and eye for significant detail. ...*Blackmail* (1929) has become something of a historical landmark as the first British talkie. It started out, though, as a silent; despite Hitchcock's urgings, John Maxwell was reluctant to invest in this new and possibly ephemeral gimmick. Only when the silent *Blackmail* was nearly complete did he change his mind; the film would be "part talking" with sound added to the final reel.

Hitchcock was already one jump ahead; anticipating Maxwell's decision, he had shot the whole film to allow for sound, making it relatively cheap and simple to produce two separate versions. The only serious problem was the star, Anny Ondra, whose strong Polish accent hardly fitted the ordinary London girl she was playing. Post-dubbing had yet to be devised, so an off-screen actress, Joan Barry, spoke the dialogue while Ondra mouthed silently to the camera....Far from letting the new medium inhibit him, Hitchcock seized the opportunity to experiment with subjective sound techniques well ahead of their time....*Blackmail* also introduced the favorite Hitchcock climax, a spectacular fall from a high place, a public monument for preference. In this case, it was the roof of the British Museum, through which the wretched blackmailer made his fatal plunge. The film was hugely successful with both critics and public, and Hitchcock's status as the foremost British director seemed secure, which was just as well, since his next few pictures might easily have demolished a lesser reputation for good.

From this low point in his career Hitchcock was rescued by Michael Balcon, now head of Gaumont-

British at Shepherd's Bush. Here he was given a free hand (barring only the occasional tussle with his old enemy C.M. Woolf) to make subjects of his own choosing, and launched himself into his first great period: the unbroken run of six masterly thrillers that brought him international fame and mapped out the territory of which he was to become undisputed master.

As early as 1925, Hitchcock had told a meeting of the London Film Society that "actors come and go, but the name of the director should stay clearly in the mind of the audience. The name of Hitchcock, at any rate, was certainly intended to do so; he had always assiduously been courting the press, and in 1930 set up a

PR company, Hitchcock Baker Productions, whose sole function was to keep himself in the public eye. Interviews and articles appeared regularly in *Film Weekly*, *World Film news*, and so on, building up the carefully fostered image of Hitch, the plump, solemn joker with a taste for the macabre.

Many writers have suggested that a less amiable personality lurked behind the



public façade (Donald Spoto, indeed, devoted a whole book to the thesis). Charles Bennett, Hitchcock's main scriptwriter during the 1930s, described him as a bully; and his predilection for putting his lead actresses through physical ordeals (both onscreen and sometimes, as with Tippi Hedren in *The Birds*, on set) has given rise to charges of misogyny. His weakness for practical jokes was famous...Hitchcock once bet a prop-man at Elstree L10 to spend a night in the studio handcuffed to a camera; before departing, he poured the man a brandy laced with a strong laxative....

"Cinema," Hitchcock once remarked, "is the orchestration of shots." It was also, for him at least, the orchestration of the audience....

Manacles, from *The Lodger* onwards, are something of a Hitchcock specialty, a vivid symbol of the humiliating process of the law; but in *The 39 Steps* they serve mainly a source of humor and teasing sexual innuendo, as when Carroll, the first of Hitchcock's long line of maltreated cool blondes, tries to remove her stockings while keeping Donat's hand off her thighs. The film also marks the first appearance of the McGuffin, Hitchcock's term (borrowed from Angus

MacPhail) for a thriller's nominal motivating factor—secret plans, miracle ingredient, priceless jewelry; in short something that matters vitally to the protagonists and not at all to the audience.

Drama, Hitchcock once suggested, is “life with the dull bits cut out.”...

For sheer entertainment, *The Lady Vanishes* (1938) is certainly Hitchcock's most accomplished film of the decade....Now free from contractual obligations, Hitchcock visited Hollywood and, from the numerous competing bids for his services, accepted a contract from David O. Selznick, at that time the most powerful of the independent producers....

Much critical dispute has centered around the respective merits of Hitchcock's British and American films. Robin Wood, firmly ensconced in the American camp, dismissed the British films as “little more than ‘prentice work,’” and a preference for them as “analogous to preferring *A Comedy of Errors* to *Macbeth*.” To Roy Arnes, this constituted “a profoundly unhistorical judgment,” Hitchcock's British work being comparable to that of Pabst and Clair, “constantly exciting in its exploration of the cinema's narrative potential and its expression of a consistent set of moral values.”...Undoubtedly the American films benefit immeasurably from Hollywood's greater technical sophistication....For some critics, though (and not only British ones), the whole of Hitchcock's American output represents nothing but a lamentable decline....

One of Hitchcock's virtually single-handed achievements was to raise the cinematic status of the thriller to parity with the other main movie genres....

Though still a British national (not until 1955 would he take out US citizenship), Hitchcock had by now decided that his future, both personal and professional, lay in America. In 1942, after renting for a while, he and Alma bought a house on Bellagio Road in the Bel-Air district of Hollywood. (A year later they also bought a vacation house in the hills north of Monterey near Santa Cruz.) The Bellagio Road house remained their home for the rest of their lives....Hitchcock's neatness and passion for order were legendary. “Evil,”

he once said, “is disorder,” and his idea of happiness was “a clear horizon, no clouds, no shadows. Nothing.” As far as he possibly could, he eliminated the unpredictable from his life, not only in his working methods but in everything he did. The family holidays were taken in the same places—New York, London, Paris, and St. Moritz—and even in the same suites of the same hotels, year after year. To some extent, this was

part of the assiduously cultivated public persona; but many people, including Hitchcock himself, also ascribed it to genuine fear—of surprise, disorder, conflict, social disgrace, the police, the processes of law—of all the things, in fact, which he packed into his movies. “Under the invariably self-possessed and cynical surface,” observed Truffaut, “is a deeply vulnerable, sensitive and



emotional person who feels with particular intensity the sensations he communicates to his audience.”...

Hitchcock returned to America in March 1944 and began working on the second of his films for Selznick. Freud, in suitably dilute form, was much in vogue in Hollywood, and in *Spellbound* (1945), Hitchcock, with Ben Hecht scripting, produced what might be claim to be the first psychoanalytical thriller....

*Notorious* (1946) also started out as a Selznick project, but before shooting had commenced Selznick, deeply embroiled with the grandiose *Duel in the Sun*, sold the entire package to RKO, with Hitchcock taking over for the first time as his own producer. Relishing his increased independence and working with two of his favorite actors—Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman—he produced a film which, in general estimation, stands with *Shadow of a Doubt* as his finest work of the decade.

Ben Hecht's script traces patterns of emotional manipulation and betrayal. Devlin, a government agent (Grant), recruits Alicia Huberman (Bergman), daughter of a convicted Nazi spy, in Rio de Janeiro. The two fall in love, but Devlin, despising Alicia for her family background and former fast life, pushes her into marriage with Sebastian (Claude Rains), a prominent member of the Nazi circle. With Alicia's help, Devlin penetrates the house and finds the McGuffin—uranium,



in this case (a detail which caused Hitchcock to be placed for a time under FBI surveillance). But Sebastien realizes that he has been betrayed, impelled by his formidable mother, he starts to poison Alicia. At the last moment Devlin breaks in and rescues her, leaving Sebastien compromised and at the mercy of his fellow Nazis.

For François Truffaut, *Notorious* “is the very quintessence of Hitchcock having “at once a maximum of stylization and a maximum of simplicity.” It was also, in William Rothman’s view, “the first Hitchcock film in which every shot is not only meaningful but beautiful....

The camera’s lush romanticism, for the first time, is equal and constant partner to its wit, elegance, and theatricality.” Much of the film, including Ted Tetzlaff’s soft lighting and sensuous camera movements, takes its tone from Bergman’s warm, vulnerable performance. Claude Rains, another of Hitchcock’s appealing villains, is cultured, charming, and far more sympathetic than the coldly censorious Devlin. As his mother, Leopoldine Konstantin inaugurates the gallery of monster mothers that culminated in *Pyscho*—an element that enters Hitchcock’s films (as Donald Spoto pointed out) only after the death of his own mother in 1942.

*Notorious*, Douglas McVey wrote in *Montage*, is “Hitchcock’s most completely, rigorously stylized film...and perfect in its stylization.” In one of the film’s most famous moments, Hitchcock duplicates his virtuoso crane shot from *Young and Innocent*. During a lavish party at the Sebastien house, Alicia plans to steal down to the wine cellar, the key to which she has previously purloined. Starting high on a landing overlooking the thronged entrance hall, the camera swoops smoothly down, past the elegant couples and the champagne-bearing servants, to where Alicia stands with Sebastian welcoming their guests, and into a close-up of her hand behind her back, which half opens to reveal the one tiny vital item in the whole bustling scene—the cellar key....

Either through luck or judgment, Selznick generally left Hitchcock alone—he once referred to him

as “the only director I’d trust a picture with”—but on occasion his interference proved disastrous....[in *The Paradine Case*]....

Hitchcock returned to the United States with his career at its lowest ebb in two decades. Not since *Notorious* had he achieved a major hit, and he seemed to have lost his bearings. From this nadir he launched himself—as he had done in 1934—into the second of his great periods. Perhaps his greatest; among the eleven films he made between 1951 and 1960 are at least five which most critics would agree in rating among his finest work.

The work of this period also consolidated Hitchcock’s public image as the Master of Suspense, the black humorist who transformed his own latent anxieties into practical essays in applied terror, capturing his audiences through skillful



appeal to the universal fear of finding ourselves helplessly entangled in events beyond our control or comprehension. In this he was in tune with the decade, insecure beneath its superficial complacency, ready to see nameless menace lurking behind bland quotidian appearance. As Andrew Sarris (*Film Culture*, Summer, 1961) commented, “What has long been most disturbing in Hitchcock’s films—the perverse ironies, the unresolved ambiguities, the switched protagonists—now mark him as a pioneer in the modern idiom in which nothing is what it seems on the surface.”...

[*Strangers on a Train*, *I Confess*, *Dial M for Murder*, *Rear Window*, *To Catch a Thief*, *Marnie*] By now, Hitchcock was probably the best-known film director in the world, rivaled only (barring actor-directors like Chaplin) by Cecil B. DeMille, one of the few whose names on a poster could attract an audience irrespective of the actors involved. But he was about to become even better known, as he first major Hollywood director to concern himself wholeheartedly with television. In October 1955, the first *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* as transmitted by CBS, produced by his old associate Joan Harrison. The series, and its successor *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour* ran continuously until 1965; of the 550-odd episodes, Hitchcock himself directed twenty. Much of their huge success derived from the famous prologues and epilogues, scripted by James Allardice and

invariably delivered by Hitchcock himself straight to camera in characteristic deadpan style.

These lugubrious performances preceded by his caricature self-portrait and bouncily sinister signature tune (Gounod's "Funeral March of a Marionette") made him a national figure, better known than most movie stars. The Hitchcock publicity machine soon developed into a whole industry; spinoffs from the TV shows included short-story anthologies (*Stories They Wouldn't Let Me Do on TV*, and so forth), magazines, records, games, toys, and even an Alfred Hitchcock Fan club.

At the same time, Hitchcock's reputation was also receiving a boost on a more elevated intellectual plane. Serious critical opinion had largely tended to ignore him or to dismiss him as a presenter of skilled but trivial entertainments. In the 1950s, though, Hitchcock became, with Hawks, one of the chief beneficiaries of the *Cahiers* school of criticism. A mass of articles, culminating in Rohmer's and Chabrol's controversial study and Truffaut's book-length interview, confirmed Hitchcock's status as one of the great cinematic *auteurs* and a fit subject for critical exegesis. This evidently afforded him huge delight. To his numerous interviewers he was invariably polite and forthcoming, rarely venturing the discourtesy of straight disagreement; at most, he would evade the issue or deflect the question into one of his many well-polished anecdotes....

*Vertigo* (1958) has become a classic. . . "I deal in nightmares" Hitchcock often said. . . *Vertigo* was the last of the four films which Stewart made with Hitchcock. Comparing them with the four starring Cary Grant, Victor Perkins noted Hitchcock's habit of "casting Grant for films whose tones are predominantly light and in which Grant's presence acts as our guarantee that all will turn out well. At the same time he centres his meaning on the moral weakness of the hero's disengaged attitude. In the Stewart films,,,the tone is much darker, reflecting the disturbing ambiguities of the central personality. Stewart's bemused detachment is seen as a mask which thinly disguises a deep and dangerous involvement." If *Vertigo* serves as a

vaedictory summation of Stewart's Hitchcockian persona, *North by Northwest* (1959) does the same for Grant. The most accomplished of Hitchcock's—or, probably, anybody else's—comedy thrillers, it triumphantly concludes the series of cross-country chase movies begun by *The 39 Steps*.

"I plunder my films for ideas, but in my business self-plagiarism is hailed as style." *North by Northwest* (made, under a one-picture deal, for MGM) not only lifts ideas from its picaresque predecessors, it reworks *The Wrong Man* for laughs.... Ernest Lehman, Hitchcock's wittiest collaborator since John Michael Hayes,



furnished a crisply sophisticated script whose ironies and thematic subtlety never for a moment impede our enjoyment. . . The casting, right down to the smallest role, is faultless: James Mason as the suavest of villains; Eva Marie Saint as the duplicitous blonde; Jesse Royce Landis, unshakeably complacent in another monster-mother role ("You men aren't *really* trying to kill my son, are you?" she inquires brightly of a pair of hit-men in an elevator); the ever-reliable Leo G. Carroll as a

Dulles-like CIA boss. At two and a quarter hours, *North by Northwest* is Hitchcock's longest film, but it never seems like it. . .

Although five times nominated for Best Director, Hitchcock never won an Oscar; in 1968 the Academy, perhaps slightly embarrassed by the omission, gave him a Thalberg Award "for production achievement." Numerous other awards and honors were bestowed on him, especially in his later years, including the Légion d'Honneur and, in 1979, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Film Institute. In the New Year's Honours List of 1980, he made a knight—Sir Alfred Hitchcock, KBE. Four months later he died quietly at home. Of kidney failure, at the age of seventy-nine.

If during the first half of his long cinematic career Alfred Hitchcock received less than his critical due, that situation has been amply remedied; he has now been more extensively written about, his work analyzed in greater detail, than any other film director.

...Hitchcock's status as an *auteur*—despite his having worked exclusively within the distorting pressures of the commercial Anglo-American cinema—is as secure as that of any director in the world; no one could deny his

films a consistent stylistic and thematic vision. His technical expertise is immense. Yet when his admirers number him among “the work’s greatest filmmakers” (Maurice Yacowar) or even among “the greatest living artists” (Jacques Leduc), doubts begin to surface. “The greatest” is playing for high stakes—line Hitchcock up alongside Renoir, Satyajit Ray, Ophuls, or Mizoguchi (to name only moviemakers), and at once a whole missing dimension becomes evident. (It must be admitted, though, that any one of those four would have made a fairly appalling hash of *North by Northwest*.) The famed control, the premeditated, pre-edited exactitude of his working method, preclude something to which the creative imperfection of less rigorous directors grants access—something which Robin Wood defined (à propos Renoir) as “the sense of superfluous life.”



...Truffaut observed that “the director who, through the simplicity and the clarity of his work, is the most accessible to a universal audience is also the director who excels at filming the most complex and subtle relationships between human beings....Hitchcock belongs....among such artists of anxiety as Kafka, Dostoevsky, and Poe.”

**Hitchcock on Hitchcock. Edited by Sidney Gottlieb. U Cal Press, Berkley, LA, London, 1997.**

*What do you feel are the most important elements to be considered in the establishment of mood on the screen?*  
AH: I think, to sum it up in one way, the risk you run in trying to get mood is the *cliché*, the shadow in the room and what have you. I spend half my time avoiding the *cliché*, in terms of scenes. In *North by Northwest*, the girl sends Cary Grant to a rendezvous where we know an attempt will be made to kill him. Now the *cliché* treatment would be to show him standing on the corner of the street in a pool of light. The cobbles are washed by the recent rains. Cut to a face peering out of a window. Cut to a black cat slithering along the bottom of a wall. Wait for a black limousine to come along. I said *no*. I would do it in bright sunshine with no place to hide, in open prairie country. And what is the mood? A *sinister* mood. There’s not a sign of where the menace can come from, but eventually it turns up in the form of

a crop duster airplane. Some one inside the plane shoots at Cary Grant and he has nowhere to hide.

*Do you feel that lighting is perhaps the most important single element in the creation of cinematic mood?*

Motion picture mood is often thought of as almost *exclusively* a matter of lighting, *dark* lighting. It isn’t. Mood is *apprehension*. That’s what you’ve got in the crop duster scene....

*You have spoken of working with the production designer in the selection of locales during the scripting phase of a production. What is your primary consideration in the choice or setting for a particular sequence?*

A rule that I’ve always followed is: Never use a setting simply as a background. Use it one hundred percent....In the crop duster sequence in *North by Northwest*, the crop duster is used as a weapon carrier. That is to say, someone in the plane shoots at Cary Grant; but this is not enough. If we are using a crop duster—then it must dust crops. In this particular case, the crops are the hiding place of Cary Grant. So I don’t use a crop duster with only a gun. That’s not enough. It must be used according to its true function. *All background must function.*

*Certainly one of the most off-beat settings you’ve ever used was in that same film. The Mount Rushmore Memorial.*

Yes, but unfortunately, I couldn’t use the Mount Rushmore Memorial to function according to my established pattern. The authorities wouldn’t let me work on the faces at all. I had to work *between* them. I wanted Cary Grant to slide down Lincoln’s nose and hide in the nostril. Then Grant has a sneezing fit, while he’s in the nostril. That would have made the setting very functional.

*Isn’t there sometimes a very fine line between a setting that is most unusual and one that is credible to the audience?*

The basic principle to be observed is to be as life-like as one can—especially in my sort of material. I deal in *fantasy*. In other words, I don’t deal in slice-of-life

stories. My suspense work comes out of creating nightmares for the audience. And I *play* with an audience. I make them gasp and surprise and shock them. When you have a nightmare, it's awfully vivid if you're dreaming that you're being led to the electric chair. Then you're as happy as can be when you wake up because you're relieved. It *was* so vivid. And that's really the basis of this attempt at realistic photography.



### **AH quotes**

“Cinema is the orchestration of shots.”

“I don’t believe in mystifying an audience. I believe in giving them all the information and then making them sweat.”

“I’m not interested in content. It disturbs me when people criticize my films because of their content. It’s like looking at a still life and saying ‘I wonder whether those apples are sweet or sour.’ Cinema is form.”

About showing detail: “If you free the spectator to choose, you’re making theater, not cinema.”

“I’d compare myself to an abstract painter. My favorite painter is Klee.”

“Staircases are very photogenic.”

“You know, people say that you can cut a film and make it go fast. I don’t believe that. Speed is preoccupation. In *The 39 Steps* there was no dead footage, so the audience’s absorption creates the impression of speed.”

“I didn’t walk into this business without proper knowledge of it. I’ve been a technician; I’ve been an

editor; I’ve been an art director; I’ve been a writer. I have a feeling for all these people. I fill my responsibility to myself by the manner in which I make films.”

“Some films are slices of life. Mine are slices of cake.”

“We’ve substituted the language of the camera for dialogue.”

“The more successful the villain, the more successful the picture.”

“The only way to get rid of my fears is to make films about them.”

“I’m frightened of eggs. That white round thing without any holes...have you ever seen anything more revolting than an egg yolk breaking and spilling its yellow liquid?”

“For me, suspense doesn’t have any value if it’s not balanced by humor.”

“Revenge is sweet and not fattening.”

“Blondes make the best victims. They’re like virgin snow that shows up the bloody footprints.”

“The length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder.”

### **William Rothman, “*Notorious*,” (Criterion Notes)**

*Notorious* is, along with *Shadow of a Doubt*, the greatest of the films Hitchcock made in his first decade in America. Indeed, I have no inclination to disagree with François Truffaut when he cites *Notorious* as the single work that provides the fullest representation of Hitchcock’s art. Unlike *Foreign Correspondent* and *Saboteur*, which seem like over-the-top remakes of British thrillers like *The Lady Vanishes*, *Notorious* transforms the Hitchcock thriller of the 1930s into a fully American genre. And unlike *Shadow of a Doubt*, whose folksy charm sets it apart from other films in the Hitchcock canon, *Notorious* establishes a new Hitchcock paradigm, as surely as *The 39 Steps* did in the 1930s. His subsequent Cary Grant vehicles—*To Catch a Thief* and *North by Northwest*—are among the many later Hitchcock films cast in the *Notorious* mold.

*Notorious* is the first Hitchcock film that features two of Hollywood's greatest romantic stars. To render their grand romance in all its passion and perversity, Hitchcock felt challenged to develop a richly expressive visual style. *Notorious* is also the first Hitchcock film whose every shot is not only filled with meaning, but also beautiful—as beautiful as Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant photographed by Ted Tetzlaff under Hitchcock's direction. From the ravishingly lit close-ups at the racetrack to the gloriously smooth, expansive crane shot that begins the suspenseful party sequence, Hitchcock seems to be in love with the world he is creating. Shot after shot simply takes our breath away. For the first time in a Hitchcock film, the camera achieves a lush romanticism equal to its wit, elegance, and theatricality—as it will be in his greatest later films.

When Hitchcock was making *Rebecca*, producer David O. Selznick made sure that the film's heroine, played by Joan Fontaine, was always presented in such a way that viewers will identify with her. We care what becomes of her because we imagine ourselves in her place, because she always acts as we like to imagine that we would in her situation. Viewing *Notorious*, we care what becomes of Alicia, too. But we care about this woman, or care so deeply, because of *who she is*. Because she is Ingrid Bergman, we do not doubt the depth of her love for Devlin, or the magnitude of her suffering when her dream man repeatedly refuses to declare his feelings for her. Yet we do not like to imagine we would act the way she does. She desperately wants to prove to him that she is worthy of love. Then why does she pretend to him that she really is the degraded woman he believes—or pretends to believe—she is?

And we care about Devlin, or care so deeply, because of who he is, too. Throughout the film, his unwillingness (or inability) to declare his feelings inexorably drives Alicia into the arms of Alex Sebastian (Claude Rains), the Nazi ringleader, and into the clutches of Alex's wicked witch of a mother (Leopoldine Konstantin). If they succeed in poisoning Alicia, or if their Nazi cohorts discover she is an American agent, and kill her themselves, her blood will be on Devlin's hands, as well as theirs. He keeps acting

as if he is indifferent to Alicia, or even hates her. Because he is Cary Grant, though, we do not doubt that he has the spiritual depth and strength of character requisite for a romantic hero. Because Alicia and Devlin are Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant, we believe in the film's fairy tale ending—we believe it when this man breaks his silence and declares that he has loved this woman all along, and his words awaken in her the strength to walk down those stairs and out of that house.



*Suspicion* keeps us in the dark until the shot in which we discover whether Cary Grant loves his wife or is planning to murder her. And even when Grant finally wraps his arm around Joan Fontaine, his gesture is perfectly ambiguous—we can read it as confirming that he loves her, or as a sign that he is now about to strangle her. Similarly, *Rebecca* withholds crucial information about the

Laurence Olivier character; namely, that he did not really love Rebecca, as his new wife believed, but hated her. In *Notorious*, by contrast, Hitchcock withholds no such information. We know that Devlin is driving Alicia into Alex's arms *because* he loves her, not because there is some misunderstanding between them. The fact that they make each other suffer, and make themselves suffer, has the necessity of tragedy. That we are capable of killing what we love most is a fact rooted in the condition of being human, Ben Hecht's masterful screenplay implies. Our all-too-human capacity for inhumanity is the dark mystery at the heart of *Notorious*. And yet, in *Notorious*, the possibility remains alive that the miracle of love can save us from our own perversity. In this respect, *Notorious* is exemplary of that remarkable moment between the end of the Second World War and the darkest days of the Cold War. Like such films as *The Best Years of Our Lives* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Notorious* acknowledges that the capacity for inhumanity is not the exclusive possession of Nazis or other villains who are fundamentally different from us. Like those films, as well, *Notorious* combines that acknowledgment with an expression of faith that it is not yet too late for us to find redemption. As early as 1948's *Rope*, such optimism all but vanishes from Hitchcock's work.



If *Notorious* is the first Hitchcock film to achieve a happy ending—happy if you're Alicia or Devlin, that is, and not Alex or his mother—that is as emotionally satisfying as it is brilliant, it is also the last Hitchcock film—*North by Northwest* is an exception that proves the rule—that calls upon us to believe in such an ending. We need just think of *The Birds*, where Prince Charming cannot awaken Sleeping Beauty, to appreciate the gulf that separates *Notorious*, for all its darkness, from the despairing Hitchcock masterpieces of the 1950s and 1960s.



**Rudy Behimer, “Notorious,” (Criterion Notes)**

Everyone has a favorite Hitchcock film. But when the votes are counted, *Notorious* always seems to be in the top three or four—and often number one. Considering how many films the master of suspense directed over several decades, this says a great deal.

*Notorious* is the 1946 Hitchcock classic that ingeniously combines a romantic story involving characters portrayed by Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman, espionage and intrigue in Rio de Janeiro, mysterious wine bottles, lethal cups of coffee, and an all-important small key.

The incomparable Claude Rains is there too, and although portraying the villain, he is extremely charming, likable, and also in love with Ingrid Bergman. In fact, he marries Ingrid, and Cary stands by and does nothing. Why? Because of the unusual circumstances that brought Cary and Ingrid to South America. But let's not reveal too much.

*Notorious* returned Hitchcock to the world of spies and counterspies. But the film primarily is a study of relationships rather than a straight thriller—which is not to say that there still isn't a great deal of Hitchcockian suspense. The Bergman character is trying to forget, Grant is cynical, and Rains has a genuine, devoted love for our leading lady. Even when he discovers her treachery, it is his mother (Leopoldine

Konstantin) who makes the decision to, shall we say, do away with her.

Francois Truffaut said to Hitchcock in his interview book on the director that “It seems to me that of all your pictures this is the one in which one feels the most perfect correlation between what you are aiming at and what appears on the screen . . . Of all its qualities, the outstanding achievement is perhaps that in *Notorious* you have at once a maximum of stylization and a maximum of simplicity.”

The stylization is fascinating to watch. Some of Hitchcock's most famous scenes are in this film: the justly acclaimed crane shot, taking the audience from a wide establishing view of the elaborate formal party into a tight closeup of the crucial key to the wine cellar in Ingrid Bergman's hand; the brilliantly staged party scene itself, which alternates between thoughtfully conceived point of view shots and graceful, insinuating camera moves; and, of course, the wine cellar sequence, during which Cary and Ingrid discover the incriminating bottle containing not vintage nectar but . . .

Also, of more than routine interest is the famous 2-minute-and-40-second love scene filmed without a cut in a tight closeup of Grant and Bergman. And the finale—Hitchcock's Odessa steps sequence—wherein the four principal players under incredible pressure descend the seemingly endless staircase while the sinister villains watch and wait for their prey to reveal the convoluted duplicity.

*Notorious* has aged well. Little if anything in this artfully and carefully conceived and executed romantic thriller has dated. It is without question one of Hitchcock's best—from any period. And for good measure, famed producer David O. Selznick (*Gone with the Wind*) was hovering in the background, having prepared *Notorious* with Hitchcock and writer Ben Hecht before selling the entire package to RKO just prior to shooting. But his hand is evident in various phases of the film—not the least of which is the script and the casting of the principals.

...A carefully preserved original negative was located at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and painstakingly transferred with shot-to-shot and scene-to-scene quality control. Thus, for the first time in decades we are able to see the film as it was originally intended. The velvety blacks, luminous whites, and a properly rendered grey scale give this gem its proper sheen (rather than the heretofore pale and lifeless reflection of the original rich black and white photography).

Here is Hitchcock with a top drawer Ben Hecht script, superb players, and a beautiful meld of all of the ingredients one associates with the master of suspense—

plus something not always present in a Hitchcock classic, a moving and unusual love story.

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### **THE SPRING 2022 BUFFALO FILM SEMINARS #44:**

All films in the series but two (*Notorious* and *The Power of the Dog*) are available from Criterion or Netflix: **c** after a title indicates it is available on Criterion, **p**=Amazon Prime, **p\$**=Amazon Prime with an extra \$4 fee. *The Power of the Dog* is available, for now, only on Netflix. *Notorious* is available on FlixFilm (low-resolution versions are free on YouTube and Tubi.). All four subscription services let you cancel at any time, so you should have access to all 24 films for well under \$100. *The Gunfighter* is on Amazon Prime and, in low rez, free on Tubi. Nine of the films—all with “UB” after the title—are available free to anyone with a UB email account via the UB Library’s Swank and Kanopy portals. Five films are available only on non-UB streaming services: *Le Corbeau*, *The Gunfighter*, *Naked*, *Salesman* and *The Power of the Dog*. (The Swank titles will be available at UB’s Library for a year; the Kanopy titles for 3 years.)

- Feb 1: 1921 Victor Sjöström, *The Phantom Carriage* **c** UB-Kanopy
- Feb 8: 1934 Frank Capra *It Happened One Night* **c p\$** UB-Swank
- Feb 15: 1941 John Huston *The Maltese Falcon* **p\$** UB-Swank
- Feb 22: 1943 Henri-Georges Clouzot *Le Corbeau* **c**
- Mar 1: 1946 Alfred Hitchcock *Notorious* FlixFling, YouTube, UB-Swank, Tubi (free)
- Mar 8: 1950 Henry King, *The Gunfighter* **p\$**, Tubi (free)
- Mar 15: 1958 Orson Welles *Touch of Evil* **p\$** UB-Swank
- Mar 29: 1962 Yasujiro Ozu *An Autumn Afternoon* **c p\$b** UB Kanopy
- Apr 5: 1973 Federico Fellini *Amarcord* **c p\$** UB Kanopy
- Apr 12: 1993 Mike Leigh *Naked* **c**
- Apr 19: 2002 Phillip Noyce *Rabbit-Proof Fence* **p\$** UB-Kanopy
- Apr 26: 2016 Asghar Farhadi *Salesman* **p**
- May 3: 2021: Jane Campion *The Power of the Dog* **NETFLIX**
- May 10: 2011 Martin Scorsese *Hugo* **p\$** UB-Kanopy

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