

WELCOME TO OUR NEW WARNER BROS. THEATER!

We all love the silver screen, even after it went technicolor. Moviemaking and moviegoing are constants in American life. Our notions about history, heroes, explorations, fears, and dreams are formed and transformed by the way we make movies and the way we watch them.

Thanks to a very generous gift from Warner Bros., a vigorous leader in the entertainment industry over nine decades, we have freshly renovated our former Carmichael Auditorium, and we open its doors for the public to experience the old, the new, and the yet-to-be.

We debut with a series of timeless film classics from Warner Bros., accompanied just outside the theater walls by cases displaying some unforgettable memorabilia from its vast archives: among them, a Vitaphone microphone, Bogey's *Casablanca* suit, and animation drawings of Bugs Bunny—all against a glamorous backdrop.

This opening cavalcade of films and artifacts from the golden age of Hollywood sets the stage for exploring the new genres, the new formats, and the unexpected trends and themes that followed. Our renewed Museum theater itself, with genuine artifacts in the vicinity that tell stories too, will be an exploratory place. Here we will witness cutting-edge documentaries, multidisciplinary performances, and audiovisual storytelling of the digital era and beyond.



We at the National Museum of American History are proud to invite everyone to their Museum to look back at the past and forward to the future at “the movies.” Come to marvel, to question, to dream. Now, “house lights down, please!”

Marc Pachter

Interim Director, National Museum of American History

HUMPHREY BOGART FILM FESTIVAL

CASABLANCA

Friday, February 3, 7:00 p.m. (ticketed screening)
(Dir. Michael Curtiz, 1942, 102 min.)

One of the most beloved American films, *Casablanca* is a captivating wartime drama of adventurous intrigue and romance starring Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Paul Henreid. Set in Morocco during World War II, Bogart is a cynical American expatriate living in Casablanca. He owns and runs the most popular nightclub in town, “Rick’s Café Américain.” An upscale nightclub, it’s become a haven for refugees looking to purchase illicit letters of transit that will allow them to escape to America.

When Rick’s former lover—who deserted him when the Nazis invaded Paris—Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman), surfaces in Casablanca with her Resistance leader husband, Victor Laszlo (Paul Henreid), Rick is pulled into both a love triangle and a web of political intrigue. Ilsa and Victor need to escape from Casablanca, and Rick may be the only one who can help them.



French poster, *Casablanca* (1942)

© Turner Entertainment Co.

HUMPHREY BOGART FILM FESTIVAL

One hour prior to each of the following feature presentations, NPR film commentator Murray Horwitz will lead a pre-screening discussion highlighting historical aspects and motifs to watch and listen for in these classic Hollywood movies.

THE MALTESE FALCON

Saturday, February 4, 2:00 p.m.
(Dir. John Huston, 1941, 100 min.)

Adapting Dashiell Hammett's novel, *The Maltese Falcon*, and rendering the film as close to the original story as the Production Code allowed, rookie director John Huston created what is often considered the first *film noir*. In his star-making performance as Sam Spade, Humphrey Bogart embodies the ruthless private investigator who accepts the dark side of life with no regrets. Sam and his partner, Miles Archer, tolerate each other. One night, a beguiling woman named Miss Wonderly walks into their office and by the time she leaves, two people are dead. Miss Wonderly appeals for Sam's protection, and throughout the movie, murder after murder occurs over the lust for a statue—the Maltese Falcon.



Contrary to most memories, “It’s the stuff that dreams are made of,” spoken by Bogart, is not the last line in the picture. Immediately after Bogart says that line, Ward Bond, playing a detective, replies, “Huh?”—making that the last line in the picture. *The Maltese Falcon* was nominated for three Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Screenplay, establishing Huston as a formidable double talent and Bogart as the archetypal detective antihero.

Humphrey Bogart, *The Maltese Falcon* (1941)

© Turner Entertainment Co.

HUMPHREY BOGART FILM FESTIVAL

THE TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE

Saturday, February 4, 7:00 p.m.
(Dir. John Huston, 1948, 126 min.)

Written by Huston as well, this treasure-hunt classic begins as drifter Fred C. Dobbs (Humphrey Bogart), down on his luck in Tampico, Mexico, spends his last bit of money on a lottery ticket. Meeting a fellow indigent, Curtin (Tim Holt), they seek lodging in a cheap flophouse and meet a grizzled old man named Howard (Walter Huston, the director's father), who enraptures them with stories about prospecting for gold. Sold on the idea, Dobbs and Curtin agree to let Howard join them in their search for gold. The men are successful in finding gold, but bandits, the natural elements, and greed make their success more difficult than they expected.

The Treasure of the Sierra Madre won John Huston Oscars for both Director and Screenplay, as well as a Supporting Actor award for his father, Walter. Huston became the first to direct his own father to an Oscar, and it was the first instance of a son and father winning in the same year.



Lobby card, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948)

© Turner Entertainment Co.

HUMPHREY BOGART FILM FESTIVAL

THE BIG SLEEP

Sunday, February 5, 2:00 p.m.
(Dir. Howard Hawks, 1946, 114 min.)

Howard Hawks directs Raymond Chandler's first novel of an acclaimed series about detective Philip Marlowe. None other than William Faulkner is primary screenplay writer. The film noir classic features superb acting by Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall in this grand black-and-white thriller.



Private eye Marlowe (Bogart) is hired by the very wealthy elderly General Sternwood to protect his youngest daughter from her own indiscretions. Along the way there is murder, blackmail, car chases, and gun play to deal with. Right in the middle of this complex case, Marlowe finds time to fall in love with his client's eldest daughter (Bacall). Witty dialogue and colorful characters make this a classic among classics in all film genres.

In 1997, the U.S. Library of Congress deemed this film "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant," and added it to the National Film Registry.

A NOTE FROM WARNER BROS.

Warner Bros. (WB) Studios was founded in 1923 by the four Warner brothers, Albert, Harry, Jack, and Sam, from Pennsylvania. The studio has changed hands many times over the years and is currently owned and operated by Time Warner in New York. WB maintains operations around the globe and its iconic symbol is recognized in every corner of the world. WB is known for its extensive film library (6,700 films); however, WBTV is the prolific leader in TV production (*Friends*, *ER*, *West Wing*, *Gilmore Girls*), and WB consumer products and animation have reputations as leaders, with brands that



include DC Comics, *Batman*, *Superman*, and *Looney Tunes*, to name a few. WB will turn 90 years old in 2013.

WB Studios' CEO, Barry Meyer, has historically had an appreciation for the arts as well as for American history. Mr. Meyer visited the Smithsonian in 2009, and forged a relationship with its National Museum of American History and its then director. Over

the past two years, the Smithsonian, with cooperation from WB, has been renovating the former auditorium and multipurpose entertainment space into a new NMAH theater capable of projecting films in high definition and 3-D. It is named Warner Bros. Theater.

This generous gift from Warner Bros. will allow the Museum to bring both to Washingtonians, as well as to global visitors, new and exciting experiences as we celebrate the art of film. In addition to film screenings, Warner Bros. will open its archives to provide loans of one-of-a-kind artifacts that will be exhibited to Museum visitors. Warner Bros. and the Smithsonian are two iconic institutions that have come together with one goal: to educate, entertain, and enlighten audiences.

Jeffrey Baker

Executive Vice President and General Manager, Warner Home Video Theatrical Catalog

The iconic water tower on the lot of Warner Bros. Studios, Burbank, Calif.

© Turner Entertainment Co.

HOLLYWOOD MOTION PICTURES: AN AMERICAN ART FORM

The phenomenon of Hollywood motion pictures has had a profound and enduring effect on shaping the American experience, from the bright, rainbow-hued Technicolor optimism and sly show business humor of *Singin' in the Rain* to the morose Civil War–era landscapes and racial politics of *Glory*. With their own brand of native brio, Hollywood movies have informed us about behavior, politics, culture, and technology with their own form of storytelling, offering, as film critic and theorist David Bordwell observes, “intense artistic experiences or penetrating visions of human life in other times and places.”

Hollywood movies have also contributed catchphrases that have infiltrated our everyday cultural vocabulary, such as Clint Eastwood’s laconic offer, “Go ahead. Make my day,” from *Sudden Impact*, and the derisive use of the term *Star Wars* to describe President Reagan’s plan of strategic defense initiatives in the 1980s. And they have given us songs, such as the wistful “Over the Rainbow” from *The Wizard of Oz* or the humorous “Hakuna Matata” from *The Lion King*, which act as a soundtrack of sorts for common experiences in our lives that both define and transcend the eras in which the songs were composed.

The Museum’s festivals of classic motion pictures recognize Hollywood movies as cultural artifacts, particularly

those produced by studios such as Warner Bros., MGM, and others, and their wide-reaching ability to offer both leisure-time entertainment and the powerful communication of ideas. Like works for the stage, the films establish their points through dramatic examples that are rooted in common emotions and situations. Above all, the festivals espouse film critic Roger Ebert’s observation, “Every great film should seem new when you see it,” conveying a perpetual freshness in its perspectives and visuals.

The screenings in each festival are augmented by authoritative notes by film historians, and are given greater contexts in on-site introductions by arts commentators and film professionals. Accompanying the screenings are displays of objects, from the Museum’s collections and the Warner Bros. Archives, in the first-floor Artifact Walls adjacent to the theater. The festivals of films and related objects combine to provide visitors with a unique Museum experience.

Dwight Blocker Bowers

Director, Warner Bros. Festivals of classic Hollywood films and Curator of Entertainment Collections at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History

BOGART: NOTES FROM A LONELY PLACE

It required some time for Humphrey Bogart, journeyman juvenile on Broadway and inconsequential Hollywood actor in more or less forgotten early 1930s movies, to emerge as perhaps the quintessential American movie star of the 1940s and 1950s. He had first appeared on stage in the New York theater as early as 1922 and was rarely, if ever, out of work for very long thereafter. Still it was almost a decade and a half before he made a really strong impression as the gangster Duke Mantee in *The Petrified Forest* in 1935, capped by his appearance in the film version of the play a year later.

But this made him a star in name only. Warner Bros. placed Bogart under contract, but was largely clueless about his appeal. Between 1936 and 1941, he appeared in close to twenty movies—small parts in big films, large parts in routine films—before he began to emerge as something like his recognizable screen self in *High Sierra*. This was largely a matter of misidentification. Because he had played (not entirely comfortably) Duke Mantee, the studio was content to let him play gangsters or, more broadly speaking, “tough guys” in this period. Indeed, it was as a tough guy (a soulful convict released from prison to mastermind one last criminal score) that he finally achieved his breakthrough.

But Bogart was never really tough and

when he tried to be, the results were often ludicrous. He could, however, be sardonic. He could be cynical. He could be moodily romantic. When they let him. Which was not very often. And not for very long.

That's because he was not raised to be a tough guy. Rather the opposite. He was the child of moderate privilege—the son of a society doctor and a mother who was a successful commercial artist. He went briefly to Andover, and served in the navy in World War I. Shortly thereafter, his father lost his money and then died (typically Bogart painfully repaid his debts). Because one of his best friends was the son of an important Broadway producer, William A. Brady, he drifted, without much conviction, into show business, first in backstage jobs, then as an actor. He was, by his own account, polite, mannerly, and highly professional. He was never a stage star in the twenties and thirties, but he was a reliable presence and he got the job in the movie version of *The Petrified Forest* because he had originated the role on stage and because its star, Leslie Howard, refused to make the picture without him.

But thereafter, nothing. Or not much. The years between *The Petrified Forest* and *High Sierra* were a very mixed bag. Mostly he was, well, yes, tough, in a variety of contexts, including a couple of ludicrous Westerns. His one unabashedly good film of this period

was called *Black Legion*—82 minutes long and just a B picture. In it Bogart plays a man called Frank Taylor, a sardonically withdrawn factory worker who is passed over for promotion at work and begins listening to the siren song of a Ku Klux Klan–like organization—darkly populist and rank with nativism and racism. Something in this character spoke to something in Bogart’s nature—possibly his sense of still being an outsider—at Warner Bros., and in Hollywood generally. By the end of picture he is a monster of sullenness and a murderer. It is, within its limited terms, an awfully good film, which, like most B pictures, was unsubtle, hard-driving—and essentially unattended at the time. Its reputation has grown only in retrospect. He made seven pictures in 1937, of which only his turn as a crusading district attorney in *Marked Woman*, opposite Bette Davis, was modestly memorable.

Unlike Davis (and Olivia de Havilland and James Cagney), he was not among the king rebels of the always fractious Warner lot. He took his share of suspensions, and he was always alert to roles he wanted to play and made his pleas for them, but on the whole he maintained good relationships with Jack Warner (difficult, at best) and with Hal Wallis, the smooth and intelligent operative who ran the studio very efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Raoul Walsh, the director who was about to enter his life in a brief, but decisive, way, characterized him as “Bogie the

beefier,” the kind of guy who tended to complain more about the box lunches on location than more substantive matters.

Mostly, though, he was an isolated figure. He had few friends in the business. His hobbies were sailing (generally alone) and chess, which was more a matter of working out problems by himself rather than playing matches. And drinking the evenings away at Mike Romanoff’s restaurant. And, of course, fighting with his third wife, the minor actress Mayo Methot, who was far more deeply alcoholic than he was. At this stage of his career you could argue that he was more famous as one of “The Battling Bogarts” than he was as an actor.

In his essence (and in his mind’s eye) he was, I believe, a declassed and displaced gentleman. If his life had worked out as planned, he probably never would have been an actor—something less raffish might have been more to his liking. Certainly he would not have been, circa 1940, a fringe movie star, vaguely, but not very rebelliously, doing roles his studio carelessly handed him. What he needed was some luck. Which suddenly began to change.

In 1939 he starred opposite Cagney in *The Roaring Twenties* for Walsh, and was terrible in it—particularly in a scene where he was called upon to snivel for his life. Bogart was never

very good at the extreme edges of behavior—cowardice, for example, or farcicality. He needed to be grounded at the center of his dour and depressive nature—watchful, reactive, unhappy in some largely inexplicable way. In 1941, Walsh had just the thing for him. It was called *High Sierra*, and it was based on a novel by the expert and still underappreciated crime novelist, W. R. Burnett. It is about a gangster, Roy “Mad Dog” Earle, paroled from prison to mastermind one last heist, on the proceeds of which he hopes to go straight. Wearing a comically hideous prison haircut, determined not to surrender himself to Ida Lupino (and her winsome dog), he is a marvel in the picture. There is something resigned yet brave in his manner. It’s as if he knows his story is bound to end badly, but he is determined to play it out, maybe hoping against hope that he will catch a lucky break—the “crash-out” he keeps talking about—and which his death ironically provides.

It is a quiet, commanding performance. It signals that if you put this guy at the center of a movie, instead of at its fringe, something extraordinary might happen. The picture was a hit. And nine months later he achieved the authentic stardom he had been for so long denied—another kind of crash-out, if you will.

Warner Bros. had made *The Maltese Falcon* twice before, once rather well, once quite poorly. Now John Huston,

who had settled down as a scenewriter after an adventurous and wandering young manhood, wanted to direct and Howard Hawks, for whom he had written, told him not to get fancy: rely on the novel’s snappy text, cast it well, and you’ll be fine, the director said. Much, if not most, of the film’s very good dialogue came over directly from the book. The casting could not have been improved, particularly Mary Astor as Brigid O’Shaughnessy, that congenial liar and slyest of sexpots. I believe that this is the best portrayal of a totally duplicitous female in the history of screen acting. But Sydney Greenstreet’s rumbling menace and bonhomie is great, too, and Peter Lorre’s hysterical homosexual is also a treat. Bogart, caught in the middle of their half-mad schemes to find the eponymous falcon and convert it to untold riches, strikes a perfect note of balance. He is ever the bemused cynic—though he is also a man of more principle than he lets on until the end.

The Maltese Falcon is not a flawless film. It’s a rather cramped picture, imprisoned in a succession of dull apartments and offices, with what action there is—very little, truth to tell—staged no more than adequately. That doesn’t matter too much, given the cast and their lines. And the chance it gives Bogart, at long last, to establish a screen character—a man at first perceived as standing in ambiguous relationship to conventional

morality, but in the end rallying firmly to righteousness.

Now, he was a star—no question about it—which Bogart defined simply: “You have to drag your weight at the box office and be recognized wherever you go.” *Casablanca*, coming a little over a year (and three pictures) after *Falcon*, confirmed that status. You could say that it is a sort of *Falcon* with production values. Some of the same supporting cast (Greenstreet, Lorre), were present, but with the splendid addition of the great Claude Rains and, of course, Ingrid Bergman, walking into Rick’s Café and causing all sorts of romantic grief for its proprietor, who has troubles enough without her popping up—lost love, lost causes, that sort of thing. It’s perfect nonsense, of course. But in its moment, a year after America’s entrance into World War II, it was also perfectly, if accidentally, judged. We needed to be reminded that a great war demanded great sacrifices, and that it was all right for a certain romantic rue to attend those efforts.

Bogart was more than ready for the part (though he murmured that he could not imagine anyone giving up Bergman’s melting sexiness, no matter what grand geopolitical cause was at stake). He had, I think, an unassailable point: The movie has to mobilize him for righteousness, let him become a symbol for the larger mobilization of America’s fighting spirit. And he’s

awfully good in the role—appraising, a little bitter, and dryly humorous, too. But the film’s largest gift to Bogart was to grant him the hint of a backstory—the suggestion that he had done certain services for the cause of liberal democracy—maybe something like gun running—in the years before the formal outbreak of World War II. And that for some reason, that had not worked out too well for him.

Casablanca sealed his stardom, which was, come to think of it, an unusual one. He was forty-four when he made the film, rather old for such annunciations—short, balding, and not obviously heroic in attitude. He hints at some American reserve amidst all the gung-ho, get-it-done, spirit that was the official attitude toward the war effort. It began a truly remarkable run of pictures—relatively short as these things go (he was only 15 years from his premature death at age 58 in 1957)—but blessed in the choices he made. Every two or three years, in among the many routine (though often enjoyable) films, he managed to appear in something truly memorable.

This run began in 1944, with *To Have and Have Not*. It was a project that Howard Hawks initiated, having informed his friend Ernest Hemingway that he, Hawks, could make a decent movie out of even Hemingway’s worst novel, which he thought this one was. He liked Bogart’s “insolent” quality, a trait he judged previously insufficiently

exploited. He also had under personal contract a nineteen-year-old sometime model named Betty Perske, whom his wife had urged upon him after seeing her on a magazine cover. He brought her west, renamed her Lauren Bacall, and soon had her shouting lines into the ether on Mulholland Drive to deepen her voice. In the event of the movie, she turned out to match Bogart in insolence. She was some 25 years younger than Bogart, which turned out not to matter much. They quickly fell in love and quickly fell into anguish as well: What to do about the inconvenient Mayo Methot? Love, of course, found a way, though not without a deal of dithering. And the film turned out to be good, though it shared with Hemingway's novel not much more than a title.

A sequel was ordered up—*The Big Sleep*, based on the classic Raymond Chandler private-eye novel. It was a more troubled production—many rewrites—but in the end it was an excellent and amusing film. You could see that the stars were in love—and their badinage was absolutely first-class, the situations and dialogue fresh and surprising. Like a visit to a bookstore where Bogart impersonates a swishy bibliophile to Dorothy Malone's coolly eager clerk, and, immortally, a conversation between him and Bacall in which horse racing becomes a sexual metaphor (how they slipped that one by the censors we'll never know).

Thereafter, Bogart essentially darkened his screen character, a development that has not, I think, been sufficiently remarked upon. Take, for instance, 1948's *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, in which for the first time, as Fred C. Dobbs, he unlooses a previously unsuspected paranoia. It's a tale of gold-mining in the Mexican mountains, with director John Huston's father, Walter, doing a goatish, hugely comic, Oscar-winning turn as a veteran miner while Bogart noisily, effectively slides into madness.

Two years later, he delivered what I think is his greatest performance as Dixon Steele, in Nicholas Ray's *In a Lonely Place*. He is a successful screenwriter, nursing an anger that is only partly hidden, and the source of which is never explained. One night his agent brings him a book, the adaptation of which can be his if he can, overnight, read and get a fix on it. A woman in the bar where they meet has read the thing and offers to help him understand it enough to get him through a meeting with the producers. She, alas, is murdered and Steele is the leading suspect. Meantime, he has actually fallen in love with a woman in his apartment complex (the excellent Gloria Grahame), and in the film's sunny middle passage we are led to believe that she may reform him. This, naturally, is a false hope, but there is nothing false in Bogart's work, which is beautifully measured. In the movies, anger is a temporary emotion, usually

engendered by obvious causes, it is the business of the story to rectify. It is never—in leading men particularly—simply allowed to fester and then lash out. In this film it does. As played by Bogart, Dix Steele's mysterious, brooding, and psychopathic ragefulness, surfacing in a naturalistic setting, tells us that something akin to it must have been present in Bogart all along.

Not that the actor cared to talk about it. Acting was one of the many subjects he didn't like to discuss. In his home, around that time, Bacall had a sign printed and prominently displayed which read: "Danger: Bogart at work. Do not discuss politics, religion, women, men, pictures, theatre or anything else." That pretty much covered his many reluctances.

In A Lonely Place was not a particularly successful film in its time, and it is still generally undervalued. Bogart never seemed to care about that (one searches mostly in vain for his opinions about most of his films). But he was far from finished with his actorly exertions. A year later he was working, on location, in *The African Queen*, opposite Katharine Hepburn, with John Huston directing. It was probably his most successful film, and he finally won his Oscar for it.

It's a redemptive comedy—his Charlie Allnut recovering from drink and general disarray, her Rose Sayer from

stiff-backed sexual repression—and quite funny in its roughneck way. A couple of years later he was much more smoothly sophisticated in *Beat the Devil* as Billy Dannreuther. The plot has him mixed up with a comically inept group of con men in a somewhat improvised script by Truman Capote, directed by Huston. Shot in Italy, it was a notable flop, with Bogart pretending he did not know what it was about. Through the years, however, it became a kind of cult favorite, one of those sly dead pan comedies that actually evokes a sense of discovery every time you reencounter it.

A year later, Bogart gave his final great performance as Captain Queeg in the screen adaptation of Herman Wouk's mighty best seller, *The Caine Mutiny*. In it he is required, under the relentless questioning of José Ferrer's navy lawyer, to crack up on the witness stand when he is questioned about how he was relieved of command of the eponymous mine sweeper in the midst of a storm. It is, perhaps, Bogart's most openly manic performance, as, ball bearings clacking in his hands, he relives his loss of control under pressure.

On the night he won his *African Queen* Oscar, his wife reflected, "Bogie had everything now—a son, another child on the way, an ocean racing yawl, success, and the peak of recognition in his work." That was in 1952 and for the next four years, he made

six mostly acceptable films that did nothing to diminish his stature. He was, comparatively speaking, quite a young man. There was no reason to suppose that he had anything but years, perhaps decades, of more success ahead of him.

But early in 1957 he was dead from cancer of the esophagus. There is much testimony to his gallantry in death. Almost every afternoon he was dressed and wheeled down to meet his many visitors, drink in hand, eager for news and gossip about the industry. There was no sign of self-pity, just a slow wasting away of his body, never of his spirit. He was dying as a gentleman, displaced or not, must. Without complaint. With dignity. With his emotions under control and with thoughts spared for the feelings of friends and loved ones. He was perhaps more in touch with his essence, clinging to it, believing in it, than he had ever been. He would let no one down, least of all himself.

He died in his sleep on January 14, 1957.

Richard Schickel

Author of 35 books, among them definitive biographies of D. W. Griffith, Elia Kazan, and Clint Eastwood. He is also the director and writer-producer of a similar number of television documentaries, most of which are studies of movie people and movie issues. He has been a film critic since 1965, first for Life, then for Time, and currently for the blog, Truthdig.com. His study of the films of Steven Spielberg will appear in fall 2012. He is working on a television program about Clint Eastwood's directorial career.

WARNER BROS. THEATER PROJECT

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The Museum is located at 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily; closed December 25. Admission is free. Extended summer hours are determined annually. The Museum exhibition areas, performance spaces, and most rest rooms accommodate wheelchairs.

For further information call 202-633-1707
or email WBtheater@si.edu