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Not To Be Missed: Fifty-Four Favorites From A Lifetime Of Film



Synopsis

The images and memories that matter most are those that are unshakeable, unforgettable. Kenneth Turan's fifty-four favorite films embrace a century of the world's most satisfying romances and funniest comedies, the most heart-stopping dramas and chilling thrillers. Turan discovered film as a child left undisturbed to watch Million Dollar Movie on WOR-TV Channel 9 in New York, a daily showcase for older Hollywood features. It was then that he developed a love of cinema that never left him and honed his eye for the most acute details and the grandest of scenes. Not to be Missed blends cultural criticism, historical anecdote, and inside-Hollywood controversy. Turan's selection of favorites ranges across all genres. From All About Eve to Seven Samurai to Sherlock Jr., these are all timeless films—classic and contemporary, familiar and obscure, with big budgets and small—each underscoring the truth of director Ingmar Bergman's observation that "no form of art goes beyond ordinary consciousness as film does, straight to our emotions, deep into the twilight room of the soul."

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Customer Reviews

"Contemporary audiences have become spoiled by movies that make sense, have great acting, and feature nudity only when absolutely necessary: no wonder hardly anyone goes to the movies anymore." Kenneth Turan didn't write this line, but I wish he had. Stephanie Zacharek wrote it in a lively critique of GRINDHOUSE (2007), a movie unlikely ever to make Turan's list of favorite films, and therein lies the problem with this book. Turan has compiled a list of his 54 favorite movies, the ones he most enjoys watching over and over again. Fair enough; you can't blame the man for liking

what he likes, and what he likes above all are romantic melodramas, glossy literary adaptations, and multiple Oscar winners of the 1940s and '50s: PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, CASABLANCA, CHILDREN OF PARADISE, GREAT EXPECTATIONS, ALL ABOUT EVE, SUNSET BOULEVARD, SINGIN' IN THE RAIN...You feel it's a small miracle when the occasional B movie worms its way into his consciousness. There's a cursory nod to the silent era (Feuillade, Keaton, and the long-forgotten ethnic comedian Max Davidson); the '30s are summed up with Paul Muni, Jean Harlow, two Leo McCarey dramas, and the dark, Yiddish-language fantasy, THE DYBBUK. The 1960s have little to offer besides late Ford, atypical Pasolini, Melville, Ken Loach, and John Boorman's POINT BLANK, an ambiguous American pastiche of a French New Wave crime thriller; the '70s have even less to offer, represented by only two movies, THE GODFATHER and CHINATOWN. From the '80s on, Turan's interest turns to documentaries, and dramas from Europe and Israel. Turan's a good writer when it comes to describing these films, but that's as far as his critique goes.

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