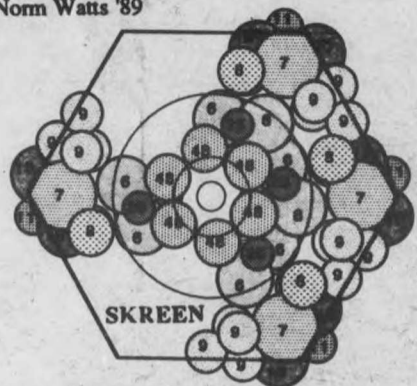


Norm Watts '89



FILM FAVORITES FROM THE EIGHTIES

When I was asked to compile this list, I protested on the grounds that my selections would be incredibly subjective, biased, eclectic, prejudiced, unpopulist and otherwise unpopular. Here then, with the blessing of Bruns regular staffers, are favorites from the decade almost past.

1980-MY BRILLIANT CAREER

-Australia
-Dir. Gillian Armstrong

This is, in my opinion, a truly feminist as opposed to woman's film featuring an engaging outback heroine (not your classically beautiful Hollywood wimp) with a mind of her own, and a handsome hero who is unable to convince her that marriage is better than the writing career she wants to pursue. The plot is tightly filmed, the action well-paced and the camera is engaged in a love affair with the Australian locale.

1981-ATLANTIC CITY

-dir. Louis Malle

Bert Lancaster, one-time Hunkus Americanus, plays an aging Lothario lusting wistfully after Susan Sarandon (in her finest role) in a film where the city itself, playing another aging charmer, takes a central role. Brilliantly quirky cinematography by Quebecois (the film is partly Canadian funded) Richard Ciupka.

1982-E.T.-THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL

-Dir. Stephen Spielberg

I hesitated over this one (I hesitated over all of them) but hey, you can't be on top of it all the time, and it's such a gas. It's bound to provide parody material for filmmakers for years to come, or until the lovable little alien stages a return. The rosette for finest screen scream in recent years goes to Drew Barrymore.

1983-THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

-Peter Weir

The political upheavals that shook the Sukarno government in 1965 vie for viewer attention with the steamy sex scenes generated by the combined erotic energies of Weaver and Gibson. Linda Hunt in a beautifully acted gender-bending role is worth the price of admission.

1984-GREMLINS

-Dir. Joe Dante

Remember Mogwais? This black humorist parody of E.T. is really fun, if only for the sight of ugly little gremlin clones adding their own macabre "hi-ho's" to Disney's Seven Dwarf's sound track. And wait till you hear what happened to the heroine's father! Santa Daddy gets his.

1985-KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

-Hector Babenco

William Hurt plays a gay queen to Raoul Julia's macho revolutionary in one of the screen's rare sympathetic looks at alternate sexuality. Absorbing, too, are the intertextual links between film ideologies; Nazi propaganda and contemporary right wing politics liked by the same eroticism(s).

1986-BLUE VELVET

-dir. David Lynch

Small town America and the nuclear patriarchal family gets it again in this steamy/seamy look at the dark side of bourgeois life. Behind Everyman lies, of course, Everywoman as the eternal maternal madonna he loves to love. The film is homophobic, but so is the family, and Lynch at least permits alternative readings. It can't be that bad; it was banned in New Brunswick.

1987-A WINTER TAN

-Dirs. Jackie Burroughs, Louise Clark, John Mizzel, John Walker, Arlene Weissman

Jackie Burroughs carries this film in an extended monologue/tribute to the words of writer Maryse Holder, who was killed on a Mexican holiday from feminism. The film presents the female quest as impossible dream. Burroughs is superb, though, as the signifier of desire, never attainable, her offensive femininity always in excess.

1988-A FISH CALLED WANDA

-Dir. Charles Crichton

What a glorious romp! John Cleese as a remarkably plausible romantic lead for all his clumsiness, Michael Palin as fish-lover, Kevin Kline as the man who tried to know too much and blew it, and Jaimie Lee Curtis, a gangster's moll with smarts (and a fine comedic sense). I haven't laughed this much since the wolves ate my little brother.

1989-DANGEROUS LIAISONS

-Dir. Stephen Frears

Eighteenth-century erotic games in this lush and lavish "I'm sorry but costume dramas do that to me) adaptation of Choderlos' epistolary novel. The women, I swear, breathed with their busts, creating an ambience I can only describe as sexually charged claustrophobia. It's hard, though, watching a sexually powerful woman get punished yet again, but it's not often you get to see such a graphic representation of the collective power of the male gaze.

And that's it. My choice for the decade. Have a great holiday, and may Santa bring you the VCR of your choice.

MEAT MOVIES

SUPPLEMENT

1. ROAD WARRIOR (George Miller)

- the stimulation for at least fifty pale imitators and probably the most influential film for underground fashion that ever existed. An excitement that never stops. Max Rockatowsky is the only loner - macho anti-hero around.

2. BLADE RUNNER (Ridley Scott)

- Chandler meets William Gibson in a strikingly spot-on prediction of a gloomy future.

3. BRAZIL (Terry Gilliam)

- Orwell meets Python head on in a bureaucratic police state hallucination of unprecedented creative brilliance.

4. THE STALKER (Andrei Tarkovsky)

- Aliens take a road side picnic in Canada (the film is Russian) and the laws of physics get turned on their ear. The nutters just want to get in there and have fun though and it is the Stalker's job to show 'em round. Stunning cinematography. Andrei's passing was a sad loss indeed.

5. APOCALYPSE NOW (Francis Ford Coppola)

6. 48 HOURS (Walter Hill)

7. PARIS, TEXAS (Wim Wenders)

- sprawling in its panoramic lust, Paris pays such painstaking attention to detail you'll find yourself a little shaken.

8. RAISING ARIZONA (Joel and Ethan Coen)

- One step up the ladder from Evil Dead and Blood Simple, no one knows how to send a camera scooting over the subject material like the Coens. Poignant and hilarious at the same time. Incredible.

9. THE TERMINATOR (James Cameron, Gail Hurd)

- Abhor graphic action as much as you want but 'Ole Termie turns brutality into an art form. I can quote Old Testament if you want but this is the cyberpunk fifth horseman.

10. THE NATURAL (George Roy Hill)

- Americana done to perfection, everything in this classic is cliched to the point of easy ridicule. But everything about it is right. Randy Newman's score Robert Redford's laconic lead and cheese-whiz flies all over. It's a lovely piece of work.

BEST OF EIGHTIES BOOB-TOOBE

1. AUF WIEDERSEN PET (Central/ITV)
2. YOUNG ONES (BBC TV)
3. AMAZING STORIES (NBC)
4. LATE NIGHT WITH DAVID LETTERMAN (NBC)
5. HILL ST. BLUES (NBC)
6. MAX HEADROOM (ABC)
7. L.A. LAW (NBC)
8. CHEERS (NBC)
9. MIAMI VICE (NBC)
10. BLACKADDER I (BBC TV)

TEN POINTS OF LIGHT

For purely arbitrary reasons, ten things that have made my life a little more interesting

1. GORBACHEV

The *sine qua non* of all latent humanitarian reforms in the East. Sure life sucks under the red (pinkish) flag at the moment but tell you children to be on guard. Marx n' Engels sure made a lasting impression on every aspect of our social infrastructure (think about it) but it took a giant to wrestle their poorly understood brilliance out of the claws of the totalitarian oppressive scum that abused it in order to start feeding it back to the kids. Expect heroic statues to start going up all over Europe anyday now.

2. WALESA

You can't keep a good man down and this dude is bitchin'. One of my favourite moments of the decade was seeing Lecky beaming in pure unadulterated vindication next to arch-crusty bastard Jaruzelski (sp.) in parliament no less. Hah!

3. THE WALKMAN

Tune in turn on and drop out of the grey miasma of everyday banalities by living in your own world for a while. How did I live without it?

4. SPY MAGAZINE

Problem with a flake/bastard/troubling trend? - who you gonna call...? erm... Spy Magazine! (actually) So damn funny and so damn well-written one wonders whether it's actually allowed. Cover to cover, it's irresistible. Don't you swines go buying my copy from Mazucca's though.

5. VCR's

Now you can see what you want when you want without having some dickhead take chunks out of a movie (TV) or make the decision as to just what you'll be able to see at the flea-pit.

6. DAVID LETTERMAN

In the face of today's sterile and hermetically sealed boll-ocks, Dave is the media messiah - but only because he's like that hilarious unpretentious dork you meet at that dull party. For God's sake somebody, get Carson off the air.

7. CANADA

Hip, growing and clean... for now. She's the kinder, gentler nation Bush can only only (damn it) dream about. Thank God I managed to sneak in when I did.

8. MARTIN AMIS

Greedy self-centred pathetic and nihilistic - those were the eighties. Amis' brilliant novels *Money* and *Success* are better than any collapsible history on the personality of the day. Absolutely essential reading.

9. GREENPEACE/FRIENDS OF THE EARTH/SEAFARMERS Heroes.

10. JOHN BOSNIYCH

Pipe down. The most valuable part of tertiary education is learning and controversy - confronting issues now that may be more important in the real world. Jim's pretty cool but having had access to the accounts (gasp) reports and taking the laodicean bent (as ever) I still think Bozzer was completely in the right in stimulating the essentially interecine legal proceedings as a result of the pencil-neck invasion during March 86. Think about it. I think of the last two SU presidents and all I can come up with is electronic signboards and those here's-the-checke photos that make me go BLAAARGH!! The Bosnitch era was an education in itself.

Steve Griffiths

