

Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society
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<https://bookreadfree.com/all/191881>

Picks for Turner Classic Movies for November (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

We have VAMPYR left over from October, a Tarzan movie every Saturday morning, but we also have a half dozen great political films (in honor of off-year elections?):

- SEVEN DAYS IN MAY
- THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE
- ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN
- A FACE IN THE CROWD
- THE DAY OF THE JACKAL
- A TALE OF TWO CITIES (1935)

The last two are not usually categorized as political, but the motivation in THE DAY OF THE JACKAL is political, and A TALE OF TWO CITIES is set in and driven by the French Revolution, and deals with what happens when the group in power starts killing off anyone they think is an enemy of the state. (I could even have added RASPUTIN AND THE EMPRESS, or THE CANDIDATE, but didn't.)

[SEVEN DAYS IN MAY, Monday, November 3, 8:00PM]

[THE DAY OF THE JACKAL, Wednesday, November 5, 8:00PM]

[THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, Thursday, November 6, 12:45AM]

[A TALE OF TWO CITIES (1935), Thursday, November 6, 2:00PM]

[A FACE IN THE CROWD, Saturday, November 22, 4:45PM]

[ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN, Wednesday, November 26, 10:15PM]

Other films of interest:

SATURDAY, November 1

7:00 AM Vampyr (1932)

10:00 AM Tarzan and the Green Goddess (1938)

3:30 PM The Thing from Another World (1951)

MONDAY, November 3

12:00 AM The Mark of Zorro (1920)

8:00 PM Seven Days in May (1964)

TUESDAY, November 4

3:15 AM The Wind and the Lion (1975)

5:30 AM Logan's Run (1975)

10:15 AM Svengali (1931)

3:45 PM Phantom of the Rue Morgue (1954)

6:30 PM Fingers at the Window (1942)

WEDNESDAY, November 5

8:00 PM The Day of the Jackal (1973)

THURSDAY, November 6

12:45 AM The Manchurian Candidate (1962)

10:00 PM A Tale of Two Cities (1935)

FRIDAY, November 7

2:30 AM Kismet (1944)
4:15 AM The Story of Mankind (1957)
8:00 PM The Wizard of Oz (1939)
10:00 PM Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981)

SATURDAY, November 8

2:15 AM Jason and the Argonauts (1963)
10:00 AM Tarzan's Revenge (1938)
3:30 PM The Boy with Green Hair (1948)
5:15 PM The Wizard of Oz (1939)
7:15 PM The Power of Film Episode 1: Popular and Memorable (2023)

SUNDAY, November 9

9:15 PM The Mummy (1932)

WEDNESDAY, November 12

8:00 PM North by Northwest (1959)

THURSDAY, November 13

2:45 AM Fail Safe (1964)
8:00 PM The Invention of Cinema: Cinema Finds its Voice (2022)

FRIDAY, November 14

1:15 AM Blackmail (1929)
2:45 AM Becoming Hitchcock - The Legacy of Blackmail (2024)
8:00 PM Brazil (1985)
10:30 PM 12 Monkeys (1995)

SATURDAY, November 15

1:00 AM Time Bandits (1981)
3:00 AM Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975)
4:30 AM Monty Python's Life of Brian (1979)
10:00 AM Tarzan Finds a Son! (1939)
7:15 PM The Power of Film Episode 2: Trapped (2023)
5:00 PM Touch of Evil (1958)

SUNDAY, November 16

5:45 PM The Birds (1963)
8:00 PM The Big Lebowski (1998)

MONDAY, November 17

12:00 AM Vertigo (1958)

TUESDAY, November 18

6:00 AM Cat People (1942)
7:30 AM Camelot (1967)

THURSDAY, November 20

6:30 AM The Return of Dr. X (1939)

SATURDAY, November 22

10:00 AM Tarzan's Secret Treasure (1941)

12:00 PM Gigi (1958)
 4:45 PM A Face in the Crowd (1957)
 7:15 PM The Power of Film Episode 3: Character Relationships (2023)

SUNDAY, November 23

3:45 AM The Crimson Pirate (1952)

MONDAY, November 24

8:00 PM Dog Day Afternoon (1975)

TUESDAY, November 25

10:45 AM Rasputin and the Empress (1932)

WEDNESDAY, November 26

8:00 PM The China Syndrome (1979)

10:15 PM All the President's Men (1976)

THURSDAY, November 27

7:00 AM The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm (1962)

11:15 AM The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T. (1953)

12:45 PM The Absent-Minded Professor (1961)

2:30 PM Doctor Dolittle (1967)

5:15 PM Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968)

SATURDAY, November 29

10:00 AM Tarzan's New York Adventure (1942)

7:15 PM The Power of Film Episode 4: Heroes and Villains (2023)

[-ecl]

REDS (film review by Mark R. Leeper):

[This review is from 1981, and was not printed in the MT VOID (or the "Holmdel Science Fiction Club Notice", as it was then known) because at the time, only science fiction and fantasy films were included. So in remembrance of Diane Keaton, we will print it now. -ecl]

I think if I had known beforehand what this film was, I never would have gone to see it. The concept of Warren Beatty writing, directing, and starring in a film about American intellectuals caught up in the Russian Revolution and the formation of American Communist parties sounds about as reasonable and appealing as would be a treatment of the Wars of the Roses by Steve Martin. Until now I have never been much impressed by anything Beatty has been connected with. Luckily I decided to see REDS on a whim before I knew anything about it, and I came out saying that Beatty deserves the Oscar for producing the Best Picture of the Year.

In truth, REDS comes as close to being a thinking person's historical epic as any film has since LAWRENCE OF ARABIA. The film is a biography of an historical figure no less controversial than T. E. Lawrence, American Communist John Reed, author of TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD. The story traces the life of Reed (Warren Beatty) and his wife, Louise Bryant (Diane Keaton), from Reed's journalistic origins in Portland, Oregon, to New York's Greenwich Village, where a clutch of intellectuals are building the foundations of what was to become two Communist parties (the American Communist Party and the American Communist Labor Party). Incidentally here also is formed a love triangle among Reed, Bryant, and Eugene O'Neill (played very ably by Jack Nicholson).

Then the film really starts moving. We are carried away with the Reeds to France for World War I, to Russia to see the laying of the foundations of the Bolshevik Revolution, back to the United States where Reed is swept into the turmoil of the Communist movement in America, and again to Russia to see the less than happy results of the Revolution. All this and much more happens to Reed in the short span of years from 1915 to 1920.

Such a film could easily have become a propaganda tract for any of many different groups: the New York liberal community, the American government, the American Communist Party, the Soviet Communist Party, and several others. Instead, a rounded view of each is presented; each of the major forces takes licks and kudos, though usually more of the former. In the end none gets a clean bill of health and the only positive stand the film seems to take is for the idealism of youth. The idealism of the Reeds seems noble even if it is a tragic flaw that alienates them from their own country and leaves them easy prey to be exploited by the Soviets.

The casting of the film is odd, to say the least. Beatty, Keaton, and Nicholson are certainly not the sort of dramatic actors one would expect to find in an historic epic film. In addition, the film is laced with several other unexpected but familiar faces even, in small parts. Along with Paul Sorvino, Maureen Stapleton, and Jerzy Kosinski, small roles include Ian Wolfe, Bessie Love, George Plimpton, Dolph Sweet, and Gene Hackman. In addition, the film is interspersed with the testimony of what it calls "witnesses," people who lived through the period (and most of whom knew the Reeds). Included in the witnesses are such diverse personalities as Will Durant, George Jessel, and Henry Miller. Their appearance in the film, a set of inserts, adds an air of documentary authenticity to the proceedings that Beatty uses to good advantage.

Paramount Pictures has been very low-key over the last few years; their output was mostly very minor films. Now, in the past eighteen months, the mountain logo has graced boxoffice successes like AIRPLANE and RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, and artistic successes like ORDINARY PEOPLE, ELEPHANT MAN, DRAGONSLAYER, and now REDS. A record like that would be impressive for any studio in the world. After years of being one of the lesser "major studios," it looks like Paramount is bidding for the Number One spot. [-mrl]

Peter Cushing (letter of comment by Paul Dormer):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on Peter Cushing](#) in the 10/24/25 issue of the MT VOID, Paul Dormer writes:

I was amused to see when the Laurel and Hardy comedy A CHUMP AT OXFORD appeared on TV many years ago that one of the students is played by Cushing, in what the IMDb gives as his second film role. [-pd]

Evelyn responds:

I see the IMDb lists THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK (1939) as his first film. That must be a recent discovery, since for years I had heard that A CHUMP AT OXFORD was his first film.

And the first film that had both Cushing and Christopher Lee was not THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN. They were "together" in three films before that: HAMLET (1948), MOULIN ROUGE (1952), and ALEXANDER THE GREAT (1956). I say "together", but they had no scenes together in any of them (in ALEXANDER THE GREAT Lee only provided dubbing for Helmut Dantine's character).

One reason, by the way, that one variously sees 22 and 24 as the number of films they were in together is probably because some do not count ALEXANDER THE GREAT or THE DEVIL'S AGENT (1962) where Cushing's scenes were shot, but ended up on the cutting room floor. [-ecl]

THE STONE TAPE and New Podcast (letters of comment by Peter Trei and Bernard Peek):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on THE STONE TAPE](#) in the 10/24/25 issue of the MT VOID, Peter Trei writes:

I saw this when it was first broadcast (I was living in England then). I was fifteen, and found it genuinely scary. [-pt]

Bernard Peek adds:

I still find it really scary. [-bp]

In response to [the announcement of a new podcast](#) in the same issue, Peter writes:

That's 'Bielak'. I've known him for years, and he's the guy who got me started as a professional programmer, hiring a biochemistry major without a CS degree.

I'll have to check that out. [-pt]

Evelyn responds:

Sorry, Richie; obviously I need to proofread better. [-ecl]

ANDOR and Other "Star Wars" Media (letters of comment by Peter Trei and Steve Coltrin):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on her "to-watch" list](#), in the 10/24/25 issue of the MT VOID, Peter Trei writes:

Let me add to your burden. Watch ANDOR (on Disney TV). Yes, it's 'Star Wars', but its the best written SW show ever made.

You can think of it as eight movies if it makes you feel better, with 24 episodes set up as three episode arcs.

So much thought and care went into this (as well as a very high budget), that it is equal, and perhaps better, than the original trilogy.

If you're doubtful, check the reviews on YT. [-pt]

Evelyn replies:

I don't have Disney TV, and I have no plans to get Disney TV. I also don't have Amazon Prime, or AppleTV, or Hulu, and no plans to get those either. I do have Netflix and Turner Classic Movies, and also the free Hoopla and Kanopy (not to mention an extensive DVD and VHS collection, as well as the occasional DVD from the library), and those are more than sufficient to keep me supplied. [-ecl]

Steve Coltrin adds:

I wholeheartedly agree with every word of this, and strongly suggest following ANDOR immediately with ROGUE ONE, which continues the story almost seamlessly.

(There's an episode of REBELS that continues a different thread of the last arc of ANDOR, but that's a whole different rabbit hole to jump down. The first few episodes of REBELS seems aimed at children, but it grows up the hard way alongside one of the characters ... and it leads into AHSOKA the way ANDOR leads into ROGUE ONE.

(And AHSOKA builds on CLONE WARS, which, believe it or not, justifies the existence of Episodes II and III. (Nothing can justify the existence of Episode I. It's worse than the Holiday Special.)) [-sc]

This Week's Reading (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

Looking through a list of Philip K. Dick movies, I decided that a lot of them were worth re-watching. One of the lesser-

known ones was NEXT (2007), based on Dick's short story "The Golden Man". The film's credits say it is based on the "novel story" "The Golden Man". There is no such novel, just a twenty-eight-page short story. I read it in Judith Merrill's anthology BEYOND THE BARRIERS OF TIME AND SPACE. In the introduction to the story, Merrill says, "The theme [precognition] is handled here, with unusual dramatic impact, by a young West Coast writer of exceptional promise." Well, the anthology *is* from 1954.

But little of the story is left. Nicholas Cage has precognition, but none of the back story is there, and Cage bears no resemblance, either in appearance or in personality, to the character in the story. Which is a pity, because the back story seems particularly relevant to today's world. The plot is also totally different. In fact, all that is left is the idea of precognition (which Dick is better known for in "The Minority Report", the film of which also made major changes to the original story).

This is not unusual in films--taking a story and removing almost everything from it when it is made into a film, or rather, a film is made "inspired by" the story. This is why, by the way, that whenever I am asked which of my favorite novels I would like to see made into a movie, my answer is, "Please, God, none of them." Not to mention that a novel is too long to make into a movie without removing a lot. A better length is a novella, or even shorter. As an example, I recently watched LAST AND FIRST MEN. It would have fit right into the "Wavelengths" track at the Toronto International Film Festival, a track devoted to the experimental and avant garde, which Mark and I tended to avoid. A narrator (Tilda Swinton), but no actors, and a lot of slow panning over structures, landscapes, monuments, and who knows what, all in black and white. And it covers only the Eighteenth Men in any case. Lord knows what Olaf Stapledon would have made of it. [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

Diets come and diets go but the girth abides.
--Mark R. Leeper

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