

FILM FORUM

40TH ANNIVERSARY

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"You have to go back nearly half a century to sample the sights, sounds and smells that still evoke the quintessence of print journalism in all its inky, hectic glory. Or you could go to Film Forum... the program is a crackerjack history lesson and also, perhaps, a valediction. [The Newspaper film is] a vibrant and protean genre."

– A.O. Scott, *The New York Times*

[Click here](#) to read full article

[Click here](#) to read Clyde Haberman's interview with series programmer Bruce Goldstein in *The New York Times*

"Once upon a time, newspaper men and women — in all their wisecracking, get-the-story glory — could often be found performing their fact-checking up on the silver screen. Each daily in this inspired Fourth Estate series is worth a look, with many of the films still headlines!"

– Flavorpill

"The essential invention of this subgenre — which are really comedies or mysteries, nitromethane-fueled by hot-brained, motormouth reporters in the classic urban-American style — might just be a masterstroke. Is there a class of film, besides the history-specific emergence of Noir, that says as much about American life? Westerns, musicals and romantic comedies were their own brands of fantasy, but the newspaper movie, with its boundless cynicism and keep-it-moving pace and narrative need to know *what happened*, captures a sense of our national character that's unique and that hasn't faded a pixel since."

– Michael Atkinson, *The L Magazine*

[Click here](#) to read full article

"A SPLENDID SERIES!"

– Lou Lumenick, *New York Post*

[Click here](#) to read full article

"Almost as soon as the movies learned to talk, reporters started monopolizing the on-screen conversation. They were rude, rough and mostly honest; their stories were told at a stop-the-presses gallop, as sources were tackled, scoops published and bars drained. And that whole world is being revived at Film Forum... the movies were always sharp — and ultimately surprising."

– Stephen Whitty, *Newark Star-Ledger*

[Click here](#) to read full article



TUESDAYS APRIL 13-MAY 4 (PLUS MONDAY, APRIL 19)

LEE TRACY
 Nobody talked faster than Lee Tracy (1898-1968), but then, as creator of the role of *The Front Page's* Hildy Johnson on Broadway, he was the gold standard for Hollywood's archetypal 30s newshound — a role interchangeable with his gallery of wily press agents, gossip columnists, politicians, shysters, con men, and hucksters.

Schedule below, or [click here](#)

"Lee Tracy was a quintessential talkie star. Once seen and heard, this squawky, insinuating dynamo is impossible to forget—in part because he is almost always the best thing in the movie. The brash, cleverest motor-mouth newshound to ever slang a source or elbow his way through the urban jungle."
 — J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*. [Click here](#) to read full article

ON SALE AT CONCESSION STAND:



"A book more important than any Winchell scoop and every bit as exciting."
 — Frank Rich, *The New York Times*

Alphabetical List Of Films In Series:

ACE IN THE HOLE

[Click here to go to today's THE NEWSPAPER PICTURE Schedule](#)

APRIL 9/10 FRI/SAT

ACE IN THE HOLE

(1951, BILLY WILDER) *"I can do big news, small news, and if there's no news, I'll go out and bite a dog."* In Wilder's most venomous attack on American greed, cold-blooded reporter Kirk Douglas exploits a doomed man trapped in a cave-in. Inspired by the actual 1925 Floyd Collins case — the real reporter won a Pulitzer. *Approx. 112 minutes.*

1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00

Brooke Gladstone, co-host of NPR's *On the Media*, will introduce the 7:40 show on Friday.

- [Watch the trailer](#)
- [Brooke Gladstone on Ace in the Hole](#)

"Etched in acid and steeped in bile...with Douglas spitting zingers as if they were bullets."
 — Manohla Dargis, *The New York Times*

"A toxic masterpiece... *Ace in the Hole* takes the cyanide-laced cake!"
 – David Fear, *Time Out New York*



"May be Wilder's best, with Douglas in his growling, stalking prime and Jan Sterling playing her part rock hard and dirt cheap. It's a testament to Wilder's filmmaking acumen behind the camera and flair for caustic and smartly character-driven satire at the typewriter that not even a 'Simpsons' parody came close to the original's valedictory relentlessness. Wilder fashioned some of the most quotable, yet least known, lines of dialogue of his career."
 – Bruce Bennett, *The New York Sun*

"An emotional snake pit, the darkest of Wilder's dark meditations on American folkways. Fascinating in the sweep and savagery of its indictment... Wilder's vision of corruption seems to take in the whole spectrum of grubby, postwar America."
 – Molly Haskell

"Cold, lurid, and fascinating... Kirk Douglas's psychotic charm is perfect for the part; Jan Sterling is unforgettable."
 – Dave Kehr

"Godard's Anti-Americanism is kid stuff by comparison... its sustained nastiness shows a stunning disregard for box-office niceties."
 – J. Hoberman, *Village Voice*

"One of the most bitter, cynical films Hollywood had, or has, ever seen... Its reputation has gathered steam. Maybe the time for *Ace in the Hole* is now."
 – Sara Fishko, WNYC
[Click here](#) to Listen to WNYC's The Fishko Files on *Ace in the Hole*

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APRIL 11 SUN (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

THE FRONT PAGE

(1931, LEWIS MILESTONE) Cynical reporters, corrupt politicians, bone-headed cops, sensation-seeking editors, and a murderer in a roll-top desk: the first, most faithful, and most purely cinematic adaptation of Hecht & MacArthur's classic, with Adolphe Menjou's Walter Burns and Pat O'Brien's Hildy Johnson keeping the wisecracks, insults, and un-p.c. slurs flying at machine gun pace. Remade as [His Girl Friday](#) (see [April 24](#)). Approx. 103 minutes.
 3:30, 7:30

John Martello, executive director of The Players, will introduce the 3:30 show with a tribute to legendary newspapermen Jerry Tallmer and the late Sidney Zion.



"The greatest newspaper comedy of them all." – Pauline Kael

"The most uproarious movie that ever came out of Hollywood." – Pare Lorentz

"One of the major films of the early sound era. It holds up superbly well – both as a piece of biting theater and as a beautifully-made movie."
 – William K. Everson

"Brilliant early talkie perfectly transferring into screen terms a stage classic of the 20s. Its essential power remains."
 – Leslie Halliwell

"A gleeful rejiggering of the crack Ben Hecht–Charles MacArthur newspaper comedy... ink-stained clowns spew purple jokes and argot. Director Milestone always worked best in the trenches—the movie's press room has all the testosterone of a gym or a barracks."
 – Michael Sragow, *The New Yorker*

"Comes alive every minute suave Adolphe Menjou is on screen as cold-blooded Chicago editor Walter Burns."
 – Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

FIVE STAR FINAL

(1931, Mervyn LeRoy) Tabloid editor Edward G. Robinson's gloating over skyrocketing circulation turns to glass-shattering horror when mortality ensues over defrocked clergyman Boris Karloff's latest exposé. *Courtesy of the Library of Congress*. Plus short **The Runt Page** (1932), an all-toddler parody of the Hecht-MacArthur play/movie, with 4-year-old Shirley Temple! *Total Program Approx. 99 minutes*
 1:30, 5:30, 9:30

"Tabloid filmmaking meets tab journalism in this terminally hard-boiled Warner Bros. production, the peoples' studio at its best."
 – J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

"Of all the gangster, newspaper and social melodramas of the early 30's that together form a kind of loose genre all their own, *Five Star Final* is far and away still one of the best – and least dated. It is the grimmest and most uncompromising of the bunch. The dialogue is top-drawer all the way, and the performances match



it – one of Edward G. Robinson's best."
– William K. Everson

"Still powerful!"
– Lou Lumenick, *New York Post*

"This still powerful melodrama set the patterns for all the newspaper films of the 30s."
– Leslie Halliwell

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APRIL 12 MON (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

FRONT PAGE WOMAN

(1935, MICHAEL CURTIZ) Romance curdles when reporter George Brent won't admit that sob sister Bette Davis is as good a newshound, and then the scoop duel begins, through an execution, apartment fire, missing person, stabbing murder, faked not-guilty verdict, and barroom confession. *Approx. 82 minutes.*
1:00, 4:15, 7:40

"Little-known but delightful!" – Lou Lumenick, *New York Post*

"Curtiz keeps the pace crackling." – William K. Everson

"A swift-moving, unsensational, un sentimental, honest piece of cynicism which is really good value for the money."
– *Monthly Film Bulletin*



MYSTERY OF THE WAX MUSEUM

(1933, MICHAEL CURTIZ) Nosy reporter Glenda Farrell ("perhaps the definitive newsgal" – Lou Lumenick, *New York Post*) stops at nothing to find out exactly what's in those wax dummies, while, screaming her greatest scream, Fay Wray unmasks the villain, with Lionel Atwill as the oh-so-mild-mannered museum owner. Shot in early (two-color) Technicolor. *Color; Approx. 77 minutes.*
2:40, 6:05, 9:20

"One of the classics of screen horror, and masterly in its use of color."
– William K. Everson

"An authoritative example of the wisecracking reporter school of the 30s."
– Leslie Halliwell

"NOT TO BE MISSED! This nicely crafted horror flick stars baroque Lionel Atwill as the fiendish sculptor. Great designer Anton Grot's sets are handsome and imaginative, and poor Fay Wray is every bit as terrified as she was in *King Kong*."
– Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"A marvelously grisly chiller, with the color contributing to the general creepiness." – Pauline Kael

"Quite beautiful, producing odd, unearthly hues in perfect harmony with the images that form in your mind as a child, or maybe later when you're reading Poe or Lovecraft."
– Martin Scorsese

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APRIL 13 TUE (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

BLESSED EVENT

(1932, ROY DEL RUTH) The apotheosis of Lee Tracy, here machine-gunning his way through a raucous send-up of Walter Winchell, and attaining utter delirium when he talks Allen Jenkins through his own imagined electrocution. *Approx. 81 minutes.*
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

"One of the best of the high-pressure irreverent comedies of the early 30s."
– William K. Everson

"Milking the role of a newly minted, fantastically manic radio gossip columnist, Tracy wheedles, whines, and manipulates his way through an assortment of scoops and scrapes."
– J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*





"A raggedy masterpiece of solipsistic showboating." – Donald Phelps, *Film Comment*

"Quick and pacy and very likeable." – Pauline Kael

"Witheringly funny." – Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

ADVICE TO THE LOVELORN

NEW 35mm PRINT! (1933, ALFRED WERKER) After reporter Lee Tracy drunkenly sleeps through an earthquake, he's demoted to writing the sob sister column — which becomes a Good Spot to Be In when his fed-up girlfriend Sally Blane writes in for advice. Loosely based on Nathaniel West's *Miss Lonelyhearts*. Approx. 62 minutes.
2:40, 5:40, 8:40

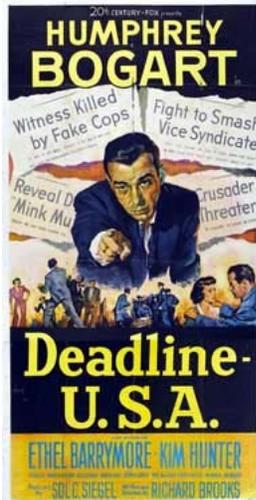
"A springy vehicle for Lee Tracy."
– Leslie Halliwell

"Good fun."
– *The New York Times*



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APRIL 14/15 WED/THU (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



DEADLINE U.S.A.

(1952, RICHARD BROOKS) Editor Humphrey Bogart battles two deadlines: one to get the goods on mobster Martin Gabel, the second — to do it before his paper is sold out from under him. Filmed at the Daily News offices on 42nd St. [Voted the best newspaper movie of all time last year in a United Press Interanional poll.](#) With James Dean in a nonspeaking role. Approx. 87 minutes.
Wed 3:35, 7:25
Thu 3:35 ONLY

"Former newspaperman Brooks made a good fist of this media drama. Tautly scripted and put over with a feeling for authenticity... Brooks' liberal sympathies and no-nonsense storytelling are squarely on target."
– *Time Out* (London)

"A small, sad story. Bogart oversees an investigative project even as his struggling paper is being sold. The next generation of owners sees it as only a drain; a new generation of readers is turned off by its sober, serious style. He is — lonely and bitter as he may be — at least honest. He believes in newspapering as a calling, a vocation, a service for the public good. And by the 1950s, he is already fading away."
– Stephen Whitty, *Newark Star-Ledger*

THE HARDER THEY FALL

(1956, MARK ROBSON) Ex-sportswriter Bogart (in his last film) opts for fight-fixing Rod Steiger's bucks as he promotes no-talent Mike Lane to the championship — but Max Baer has other ideas. From Budd Schulberg's novel based on the career of Primo Carnera (who sued), kayoed in real life by ... Max Baer. (The poster and a still from this movie — with its French title, "*Plus Dure Sera la Chute*" — are what Jean-Paul Belmondo reverently contemplates, in [Breathless](#), as he rubs his lips and murmurs, "Bogie.") Approx. 109 minutes.
Wed 1:30, 5:20, 9:10
Thu 1:30, 5:20

"A lively, stinging film."
– *The New York Times*

"It's the story of how an exposé comes to be written, and it is, itself, an exposé. Its scenes of boxing are repellently brutal and unromantic, as is its glimpse into the underside of the sports world and its sordid synergy with the Fourth Estate."
– Richard Brody, *The New Yorker*

"Has a good sense of atmosphere: Everyone and everything looks and feels tired, both spiritually and physically depleted... This was Bogart's last film, and he was dying. You can see it on his face, but you can also feel him valiantly pushing through his own discomfort to deliver a beautiful performance. Perfectly

disenchanted, his character knows every trick, every angle. When Jean Cocteau said that cinema captures death at work, he could have been describing this film and Bogart's very special performance."
— Martin Scorsese

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APRIL 16/17 FRI/SAT

CITIZEN KANE

(1941, ORSON WELLES) From its Gothic opening at looming Xanadu, through its conflicting accounts of a news magnate's public rise and private fall, to its legendary final shot, this is still the most electrifying acting/directing debut in screen history. Plus an episode of *The March of Time*, parodied in Kane as *News on the March!* (courtesy HBO). Total Program Approx. 136 minutes
1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40

[Watch the trailer](#)

Matthew Fisher, Manager of HBO Archives, will introduce *The March of Time* newsreel preceding the 7:00 show of *CITIZEN KANE* on Friday.

"More fun than any great movie I can think of."
— Pauline Kael

"The boldest free-hand stroke in major screen production since Griffith and Bitzer were running wild to unshackle the camera."
— Otis Ferguson, *The New Republic*

"Transcends the newspaper genre, but it also fulfills its implicit promise both by dwelling on the details of the journalistic enterprise and by allowing that enterprise to attain Shakespearean gravity and complexity."
— A.O. Scott, *The New York Times* (April 9, 2010)

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APRIL 18 SUN (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



PARK ROW

(1952, SAMUEL FULLER) NYC, 1886: editor-publisher Gene Evans piles up the scoops — including the lowdown on Steve Brodie's Brooklyn Bridge jump — even as he introduces newsstands, bylines, and the linotype. Self-financed labor of love for ex-newspaperman Fuller. Approx. 83 minutes.
1:00, 4:40, 8:10

"RECOMMENDED! Fuller brings his usual acerbic attitude... this ode to the early days of fly-by-your-pants journalism may very well be his masterpiece."
— *Time Out New York*

"A sort of poor man's *Citizen Kane*." — Manny Farber

"A labor of love, including one of the most violent tracking shots in the history of cinema, Fuller's two-fisted, self-financed paean to the power of the yellow press is one newspaper yarn that takes the notion of a circulation war literally."
— J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

"Fuller the ex-reporter fills it with so much argot and info (he explains everything from the use of '—30—' at the end of a news story to the derivation of the phrase 'off the cuff') and exploits his Old New York set so ingeniously that the result is entertaining and even instructive."
— Michael Sragow, *The New Yorker*

"A giddy look at New York journalism. Enthusiasm flows into every nook and cranny of this cozy movie: when violence breaks out in the cramped-looking set of the title street, the camera weaves in and out of the buildings as through a sports arena, in a single take. "Park Row" is repeated incessantly like a crazy mantra, and the overall fervor of this vest-pocket *Citizen Kane* makes journalism sound like the most exciting activity in the world."
— Jonathan Rosenbaum

"Compulsive in its insider knowledge, and passion for the press." — Steve Grant

"Fuller's favorite among his own pictures... There's an absolutely stunning opening sequence in which a moving camera cranes through three sets, and a remarkable scene near the end, also done with a crane, that gathers force as it goes along and climaxes... What was so special about these scenes was the slow relentlessness of the movement of the camera, which gave such presence to the energy of the people."
— Martin Scorsese

THE BIG CLOCK

(1948, JOHN FARROW) Monomaniacal magazine mogul Charles Laughton orders *Crimeways* editor Ray Milland to track down a murderer — with all clues pointing to Milland himself. Approx. 95 minutes.
2:50, 6:20, 9:50

"Ludicrous and magnificently repulsive."
— Peter Ericsson

"Will remind you not only of *The Blue Dahlia* but of Graham Greene and Hitchcock, with a dash of Hammett and Ambler."

– David Shipman

"A taut and elegantly directed thriller. Laughton's performance is a technical tour de force, comic and powerful, a multifaceted portrait of arrogance and assertiveness. A real nail biter!"

– Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"Tense, sprightly...[with] a nice lurid murder in it. The tricky plot generates plenty of suspense and anxious comedy, which make tolerable – even enjoyable – the movie's vivid treatment of a peculiarly good nightmare."

– Terrence Rafferty, *The New York Times*

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APRIL 19 MON (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



THE STRANGE LOVE OF MOLLY LOUVAIN



(1932, MICHAEL CURTIZ) Even reporter Lee Tracy's got an angle as Ann Dvorak, stuck with an illegitimate kid, must fend off both him and killer Leslie Fenton. *Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Approx. 73 minutes.*
2:30, 5:30, 8:30

"Tracy makes an indelible impression, and thanks to his spectacularly cynical banter with Dvorak, takes over the picture."

– J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

"Lee Tracy steals the show! There's lots of Pre-Code activity."

– Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"A lightning-paced, Ben Hecht–styled melodrama, full of irreverence, bite and ironic humor. A neglected reminder of what a versatile and dynamic director Michael Curtiz was. Once again Tracy steals every scene he's in, and wraps up the whole proceedings effortlessly. As a thorough heel, he creates such a dynamic screen character that even the last-reel reformation seems thoroughly logical and convincing. Exciting, impressive, and moving, it's a Warners product all the way."

– William K. Everson

"Though Tracy doesn't appear until halfway through the story, he instantly takes over the movie and toys with it nimbly, like the telephone he constantly juggles. (Lee Tracy without a telephone would be like John Wayne without a horse. His speed was both a response and a challenge to new technologies of instant communication.) The other actors look suddenly obsolete, left behind like pony carts in the wake of a racecar."

– Imogen Sara Smith, *Bright Lights Film Journal*

LOVE IS A RACKET

(1932, WILLIAM WELLMAN) Lee Tracy and gal Friday Ann Dvorak spectate as nympho actress/heiress Francis Dee pursues gossip monger Douglas Fairbanks Jr. — and then there's this murder... *Approx. 73 minutes.*

1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

"The plot, in any case, takes a back seat to wisecracks and leg art, hot jazz and art deco penthouses. A bubbly cocktail, *Love Is a Racket* is also startlingly astringent.

Only Pre-Code Hollywood – with the help of actors like Lee Tracy – could concoct a movie at once so pessimistic and so amiably effervescent."

– Imogen Sara Smith, *Bright Lights Film Journal*

"The Broadway scene at its sleaziest."

– Clive Hirschhorn



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APRIL 20 TUE (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

DOCTOR X



(1933, MICHAEL CURTIZ) "Synthetic flesh! Synthetic flesh!" Amid the eerie oranges and greens of two-strip Technicolor, scoop-sniffing Lee Tracy trails the cannibalistic "moon murderer," with love interest Fay Wray in fine scream. *Color; Approx. 80 minutes.*
1:00, 4:05, 7:15, 10:25

"One of the major horror films of the early 1930s, directed with great visual style by Curtiz... Throw in a bit of cannibalism, necrophilia, and dismemberment and mix with some screams from perpetually endangered Fay Wray, and you get your money's worth of goose bumps."

– Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"Remains one of the most enjoyable films of its period, if not one of the most stylish. A grand thriller of the old school, replete with clutching hands, a weird laboratory, a hooded villain, gas jets, secret panels and the whole works – a wonderful group of suspects for the hidden villain. So much happens, the settings are so fascinating, and the dialogue from Tracy so snappy, that it never slows down to a stagey walk."

– William K. Everson

"It almost makes Frankenstein seem tame and friendly." – *The New York Times*



THE NUISANCE

(1933, JACK CONWAY) Ambulance chaser Lee Tracy, aided by accident faker Charles Butterworth and his hard-boozing mentor doc Frank Morgan, wins one outrageous court case too many, so it's time for a trap baited by private eye Madge Evans. But... *Approx. 73 minutes.*
2:35, 5:40, 8:50

"A farcical and often witty film, which cannot boast of much in the way of a moral any more than of its plausibility, but there is no gainsaying that it is for the most part a hilarious diversion. The adaptation and the dialogue possess a wealth of bright lines, and Tracy makes them count for their full worth."

– *The New York Times*

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APRIL 21 WED (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

THE TARNISHED ANGELS

(1957, DOUGLAS SIRK) In Depression-era New Orleans, the *Written on the Wind* trio returns, as reporter Rock Hudson spectates while war ace/stunt flyer Robert Stack, backed by parachutist wife Dorothy Malone and ever-faithful mechanic Jack Carson, rides a roller coaster ride romance with flying death, its dramatic highlight a tender moment of incipient romance interrupted by a Mardi Gras Death's-Headed reveler. Adapted from Faulkner's *Pylon* (and a Sirk dream since Germany 1946) in beautiful b&w Scope ("Images that dazzle us." – Jean-Luc Godard). *Approx. 91 minutes.*
1:35, 5:25, 9:15

PLEASE NOTE: We are unable to screen Robert Wise's *THE CAPTIVE CITY*, as announced for this date in our printed calendar.



"Hudson turns in an astonishingly good performance... The film betters the Faulkner book in every way, from the quality of characterization to the development of the dark, searing imagery. Made in b&w CinemaScope... it should be seen in a theater or not at all."

– Dave Kehr

"Arguably Sirk's bleakest film... and one of his finest... a probing but sympathetic study in failure and despair."

– Geoff Andrew, *Time Out* (London)

"The closest that cultivated emigré Sirk would come to making a European art film at Universal studios is a svelte adaptation of Faulkner. Iconic, morbid, and stocked with symbols—it's a shadowy dans macabre rather than a gaudy mambo of desire."

– J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

CALL NORTHSIDE 777

(1948, HENRY HATHAWAY) ...if you've got new evidence on Richard Conte's 99-year murder rap. Chicago Times reporter James Stewart scents a story when he finds the ad's been placed by Conte's still-hoping Mom. Based on an actual case. *Approx. 111 minutes.*
3:20, 7:10

"One of the most impressive of Fox's semi-documentary Noir thrillers shot on location.

An absorbingly intelligent thriller."

– Geoff Andrew, *Time Out* (London)

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APRIL 23 FRI (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS

(1956, FRITZ LANG) Loco "Lipstick Killer" John Barrymore Jr. emerges as the most sympathetic character by default, as reporters Dana Andrews, George Sanders, and Thomas Mitchell go nuts in a killer-finding contest instigated by conniving publisher Vincent Price — and what is that picture Ida Lupino's leering at? After *Fury*, Lang's favorite among his own films. *Approx. 100 minutes.*

2:50, 6:30, 10:15

"The meanest newspaper film of 1956—a tabloid search for a serial, possibly 'horror comic' addicted sex killer. Fritz Lang, who basically invented the genre with the original *M*, directs with cold-eyed aplomb."

— J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

"An offbeat thriller which is one of the most original and provocative Noir newspaper films."

— Spencer Selby, *Dark City: The Film Noir*

"A puckish Film Noir with a cheerfully cynical view of modern journalism. Lang's worldly admiration for the newfangled power of modern communications in the service of the civic good is matched by his wonder at the human specimens who make it their playground."

— Richard Brody, *The New Yorker*

"A contribution of the first order to the aesthetics of the abject." — *Cahiers du Cinema*

"A multifaceted drama, in which two interesting threads—the lipstick killings and the competition for the newspaper's editorship—are woven together by a well-constructed screenplay."

— Blake Lucas



STRANGER ON THE THIRD FLOOR

(1940, BORIS INGSTER) Amid a wild nightmare montage, a reporter gets second thoughts about having ticketed hapless Elisha Cook Jr., to the death house — and was that mysterious stranger... Peter Lorre? With Margaret Tallichet (soon to become Mrs. William Wyler in real life). Co-written by an uncredited Nathanael West. *Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Approx. 64 minutes.*

1:00, 4:40, 8:25

Margaret Tallichet's daughter, Catherine Wyler, will introduce the 8:25 show.

"NOT TO BE MISSED! This remarkable B-picture is set in an urban nightworld of dreams that blur the border between illusion and reality and demonstrates the clearest influence of German expressionism on American crime movies to its time."

— Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"The first true film Noir... This unheralded B film noir, made a full year before *Citizen Kane*, demonstrates the most overt influence yet of German expressionism on American crime films to that time."

— Bob Porfirio

"A stylish B-feature with a striking dream scene and a curious fleeting performance by Lorre."

— Leslie Halliwell

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APRIL 24 SAT

HIS GIRL FRIDAY

(1940, HOWARD HAWKS) High-octane editor Cary Grant bulldozes one last scoop from soon-to-be-remarried (to Ralph Bellamy!) reporter/ex-wife Rosalind Russell, in gender-transposed version of Hecht and MacArthur's [The Front Page](#) (see [April 11](#)). *Approx. 92 minutes.*

1:30, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

Randy Cohen, "The Ethicist" of *The New York Times Magazine*, will introduce the 7:50 show.

[Watch the trailer](#)

"Never before has so much hilarious dialogue been crammed into a so little screen time. Stay for two or three screenings!"

— *Time Out New York*

"A celebration of the spirit of American journalism at its finest. I can't think of an any more exuberant, vital, and entertaining picture of life at a newspaper. Captures the romance, the cynicism, the idealism, and just the pure chaos that is the part, and sometimes the best part, of working for a newspaper."

– A.O. Scott, *The New York Times*

[Click here](#) to watch Scott's video essay on *His Girl Friday*

"One of the fastest of all movies, from line to line and from gag to gag." – Manny Farber



"Perhaps the funniest, certainly the fastest talkie comedy ever made... Quite simply a masterpiece." – Geoff Andrew, *Time Out* (London)

"A spastic explosion... Word gags take the place of the sight gags of silent comedy, as this race of brittle, cynical, childish people rush around on corrupt errands... [It has] some of the best farce lines ever written in this country, and Grant hits those lines with a smack."

– Pauline Kael

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APRIL 25/26 SUN/MON (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



NOTHING SACRED

(1937, WILLIAM WELLMAN) Carole Lombard learns she isn't dying of radium exposure, but why give up that all-expenses-paid trip to Gotham courtesy Human Interest-mongering reporter Fredric March? Ben Hecht poisonously penned this send-up of cheap sensationalism, shot in early 3-strip Technicolor. *Color: Approx. 73 minutes.*

Sun 3:00, 6:05, 9:20

Mon 3:00, 6:05

"Combines the giddy foolishness of screwball comedy with a satire of just about everything—small-town taciturnity, big-city pretentiousness, media hype. Fredric March is charming as the ace reporter and Wellman's comic manner is abrupt and tough-minded."

– David Denby, *The New Yorker*. [Click here](#) to read this week's full Critic's Notebook

"The definitive Ben Hecht screenplay." – Dave Kehr

"A consistent laugh riot." – *Time Out New York*

"Hollywood's most bitter and hilarious satire, with crazy comedy elements and superb wisecracks; a historical monument of screen comedy." – Leslie Halliwell

"A Technicolor treasure. A delirious send-up of bandwagon piety." – *The Village Voice*

ROXIE HART

(1942, WILLIAM WELLMAN) When publicity-hungry Ginger Rogers gets herself accused of murder, it's time for Adolphe Menjou's "mouthpiece" to orchestrate the gam-flashing courtroom shenanigans. Musicalized decades later as *Chicago*. *Approx. 75 minutes.*

Sun 1:30, 4:35, 7:50

Mon 1:30, 4:35

"One of the best comedies of the forties, with a zest, crackle and brevity that has quite vanished today."

– William K. Everson

"May be the funniest courtroom buffoonery ever filmed. A loving, satiric look at the speakeasies, floozies, and tabloids. Wellman directs in a fast, broad, spirited style, and Lynne Overman's vocal inflections do as much for dialogue as [Lee Tracy's](#)."

– Pauline Kael



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APRIL 26 MON (Separate Admission)

MEET JOHN DOE

(1941, FRANK CAPRA) Gary Cooper gets recruited as the John "I'm going to jump off City Hall" Doe, invented for circulation-boosting campaign by would-be fascist Edward Arnold and sob sister Barbara Stanwyck; but when he takes the role seriously, it's time for several bluffs to be called. *Preserved by the UCLA Film & Television Archive.* *Approx. 132 minutes*

7:50 ONLY

"Beautifully shot and well-acted." – Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"Capra's most cynical movie." – *Time Out New York*

"Capra is as skilled as ever in keeping things moving along briskly and dramatically – though here and there are some pretty long speeches which for all his artful manipulation have something of the effect of a set aria in an opera. He is gifted in making characters, particularly background characters, vivid and alive. Sentimentalities are neatly balanced with sharp commentaries on sentimentality."

– National Board of Review

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APRIL 27 TUE (3 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



THE POWER OF THE PRESS

NEW 35mm PRINT! (1943, LEW LANDERS) Really venal editor Otto Kruger stops at nothing — even murder — to keep his rag's isolationist stance, with copy editor Lee Tracy doing his bidding, until... Based on a story by Sam Fuller. *Approx. 64 minutes.*
1:15, 5:35, 9:50



"Shows Sam Fuller in his full-on, hysterical-didactic mode... his voice can be heard loud and clear... Fuller's fingerprints are particularly prominent on the hero, played by Lee Tracy. He is the first of Fuller's many protagonists named Griff, and the first to undergo the distinctive transformation, from cynical self-interest to idealistic enlightenment, that drives much of Fuller's work."
— Dave Kehr, *The New York Times*

"A curious little melodrama... crazily entertaining, and fascinating as one of the few films of the 40s to deal with the nation's bitter internal debate over whether to get involved with the war."
— Noel Murray, *The Onion Av Club*

THE LEMON DROP KID

NEW 35mm PRINT! (1934, MARSHALL NEILAN) On the run when he's robbed of a race-tip sucker's C-note bet, "horse medium" Tracy finds himself involved with Helen Mack and infant legend Baby Leroy. Based on Damon Runyon story. *Approx. 68 minutes.*
2:45, 7:00



"Damon Runyon's guys and dolls are at the races in this chuckle-inducing flick."
— Elliott Stein, *The Village Voice*

"As is true of all Runyon yarns, the plot is not as important as its characters and the picture adds a few new portraits to the Runyon film album. Mr. Tracy fits happily into the title role."
— *The New York Times*



NIGHT MAYOR

(1932, BEN STOLOFF) Hizzoner Lee Tracy fends off those darn reformers, while romancing showgirl Evelyn Knapp. Take-off on playboy NYC Mayor Jimmy Walker — who resigned two weeks after the premiere. *Approx. 68 minutes.*
4:10, 8:25

NEW 35mm RESTORATION!

"Gave Tracy another career role (plus the opportunity to show off his Charleston moves) as a ward-heeling bon vivant modeled on hizzoner 'Gentleman Jimmy' Walker—so convincing that decades after his Hollywood career petered out, Tracy returned for one last hurrah in [The Best Man](#), as the President."
— J. Hoberman, *The Village Voice*

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APRIL 28/29 WED/THU (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN

(1936, FRANK CAPRA) Gary Cooper's "pixillated" Vermonter Longfellow Deeds inherits \$20 million — and then he's whisked to Park Avenue before he knows what hit him. No wonder newspaper gal Jean Arthur dubs him "Cinderella Man." Screenplay by Robert Riskin. *Approx. 115 minutes.*

Wed 3:15, 7:10

Thu 3:15, 9:40*

*Note: 9:40 show on Thursday is a single feature

"A comedy quite unmatched on the screen." – Graham Greene

"Everywhere the picture goes, from the endearing to the absurd, the accompanying business is carried through with perfect zip and relish."
– Otis Ferguson



PLATINUM BLONDE

(1931, FRANK CAPRA) Smart-talking newspaperman Robert Williams breaks the heart of reporter chum Loretta Young when he weds socialite Jean Harlow — a class-crossing that gets him tagged "Cinderella Man," in Capra & Riskin's *Deeds* prototype. *Approx. 90 minutes.*

Wed 1:30, 5:25, 9:20

Thu 1:30, 5:25

"Pre-sententious Capra, when he had no time to preach the noble virtues of the common man because he was too busy following him into bedrooms and bars... of a piece with [The Philadelphia Story](#)."

– Anthony Lane, *The New Yorker*

[Click here](#) to read this week's full Critic's Notebook

"LIVELY COMEDY. Fast-moving, with some delightfully cynical wisecracks contributed by Capra's regular writer Robert Riskin."

– Geoff Andrew, *Time Out* (London)

"Marquee pizzazz and va-va-voom." – *Time Out New York*

"A GENUINELY SEXY COMEDY. Capra's unashamed sexual homage to Harlow."
– David Thomson

"A snappy comedy. Harlow, seen by master cinematographer Joe Walker as a superbly sculpturesque object with which to catch light, never appeared more seductive."
– Elliott Stein, *Village Voice*

"Holds up solidly... Williams comes off either like Noel Coward's roughneck brother or Robert Mitchum a generation early."
– *Entertainment Weekly*

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APRIL 29 THU (Separate Admission)

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

(1941, ALFRED HITCHCOCK) Windmills turning against the wind, an assassination by camera amid a sea of rain-splashed umbrellas and a mid-ocean plane crash, as the eponymous Joel McCrea tangles with a spy ring in pre-war Europe. *Preserved by the UCLA Film & Television Archive. Approx. 119 minutes*
7:15 ONLY

"A thoroughly enjoyable affair, complete with some of Hitchcock's most memorable set pieces. A predecessor of the picaresque chase thrillers *Saboteur* and *North by Northwest*, its main source of suspense comes from the fact that little is what it seems to be... Eminently watchable."
– Geoff Andrew, *Time Out* (London)

"A grand, shaggy-dog thriller. The set design and special effects of the legendary William Cameron Menzies evoked a sensibility as stark and fanciful as Hitchcock's, particularly in the climax, a brilliantly conceived and edited disaster coup that has never been surpassed."
– Andrew Sarris



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APRIL 30 FRI (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)

SHOCK CORRIDOR

(1963, SAMUEL FULLER) Journalist Peter Breck, with eyes on a Pulitzer, commits himself to an insane asylum, then — amid a ward full of "nymphos," an African-American KKKer, and a Korean vet who thinks he's a Civil War general — starts going nuts himself. #5 on Godard's '63 Top 10. Based off the exploits of ace investigative reporter [Nellie Bly](#). *Preserved by the UCLA Film & Television Archive, with funding by The Film Foundation. B&W and Color; Approx. 101 minutes*
2:40, 6:15, 9:50

"Here is an honest, visionary, pulp film, stripped of all romanticism, with characterizations and themes more real and relevant today than ever. To watch *Shock Corridor* now is to experience the complex, wacky, full-blown masterpiece of one of Hollywood's great originals, Samuel Fuller. This one is a shoo-in for Best American Film of 1963."
– Tim Hunter



"A primal yawn of homespun Surrealism. A frenetic masterwork of threadbare pulp hysterics... The resulting pageant of shrieking, shouting, singing, and slugging, all for a liberal cause, lays bare Fuller's own divided consciousness, torn between the excitement and the horror of violence."

– Richard Brody, *The New Yorker*

"Riveting storytelling." – Tom Milne, *Time Out* (London)

"Shoddily sensational." – *Variety*

SCANDAL SHEET

NEW 35mm PRINT! (1952, PHIL KARLSON) Color that journalism yellow, as hard-driving editor Broderick Crawford uses a double murder to tack up circulation, then finds that cub reporter/protégé John Derek has mastered the art of sensationalism all too well. From Sam Fuller's novel *The Dark Page*. Approx. 82 minutes.

1:00, 4:35, 8:10

"Karlson adapts Fuller's novel with tabloid gusto: the film moves to the clattering pace of city-desk chatter, and Burnett Guffey's starkly lit renderings of Bowery gin joints and tenement backstairs imbue Fuller's pulpy yarn with a pungent air of urban authenticity."

– Juliet Clark



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MAY 1 SAT



SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

(1957, ALEXANDER MACKENDRICK) "*Match me, Sidney,*" barks Burt Lancaster's Winchellesque gossip columnist J.J. Hunsecker to Tony Curtis' sycophantic publicist Sidney Falco, in the quintessential portrait of The Great White Way. Clifford Odets' stylized dialogue is now legendary, as are Elmer Bernstein's jazz score and James Wong Howe's glistening location-shot cinematography. Approx. 96 minutes.

1:30, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 9:50

Film critic V.A. Musetto of *The New York Post* will introduce the 5:40 show.

"A blackened septic tank of oral intercourse."
– Michael Atkinson, *The L Magazine*

"In the gossip-mad, fake-news atmosphere of the present, it seems stringent and prophetic." – A.O. Scott, *The New York Times* (April 9, 2010)

"A movie of blistering cynicism that boasts some of the purplest dialogue ever to emerge from the typewriter of blacklisted screenwriter Clifford Odets."
– Bruce Bennett, *The New York Sun*

"Mackendrick's first American movie, a pungent exploration of ambition and evil in the New York newspaper world, is his masterpiece.
A chilling and powerful picture."
– Elliot Stein, *Village Voice*

"Extraordinary for its depiction of a now-vanished New York, for the spiraling viciousness of Lancaster and Curtis, and for the plot, which hinges on a smear campaign."
– Stuart Klawans, *The New York Times*

"Captures the smarmy texture of the world of Broadway." – Neil Gabler

"Paints New York as a jungle of glitz and devouring egos." – Godfrey Cheshire

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MAY 2 SUN (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



WOMAN OF THE YEAR

(1942, GEORGE STEVENS) Spencer Tracy's down-to-earth sports columnist pairs with Katharine Hepburn's renowned political columnist — and sparks fly, in the first of a nine-film, quarter-century partnership. Oscar-winning screenplay by Michael Kanin and Ring Lardner, Jr. *Approx. 112 minutes.*
3:20, 7:40

Listen to our podcast:

[WOMAN OF THE YEAR: Introduction by JIM LARDNER, followed by the unused ending of the film performed by THE FILM FORUM PLAYERS](#) (Recorded May 2, 2010)

"For the first time in months this critical spectator feels like tossing his old hat into the air and weaving a joyous snake dance over the typewriter keys in celebration ...

The jolliest screen comedy that's come along since *The Lady Eve* — a cheering, delightful combination of tongue-tip wit and smooth romance... It's as warming as a Manhattan cocktail and as juicy as a porterhouse steak."

– *The New York York Times*

"Recommended! Remains one of Hepburn and Tracy's finest pairings."

– *Time Out New York*

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY

(1940, GEORGE CUKOR) Katharine Hepburn's spoiled rich girl Tracy Lord casually enchants Spy reporter James Stewart (Oscar, Best Actor), who's covering her second marriage, while ex-hubby Cary Grant waits in the wings. *Approx. 112 minutes.*
1:10, 5:30, 9:50

"Almost irresistibly entertaining."
– Pauline Kael

"One of the essential American comedies. One of those movies where wealth and style, wealth and manners, wealth and good clothes really do go together and give a lift to life."
– David Thomson



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MAY 3 MON (3 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



OKAY AMERICA

(1932, TAY GARNETT) ... barks Winchellesque columnist Lew Ayres on his nightly broadcast, while solving the kidnapping of the President's friend's daughter on the side. *Approx. 80 minutes.*
1:10, 5:30, 9:45

THE FINAL EDITION

(1932, HOWARD HIGGIN) So, did slow-fused city editor Pat O'Brien fire reporter Mae Clarke for incompetence or because she refused to marry him? Oh well, there's still the murder of the new police commissioner to solve. *Approx. 66 minutes.*
2:40, 7:00

**NEW
35mm
RESTORATION!**

SOB SISTER

**NEW
35mm
PRINT!** (1931, ALFRED SANTELL) Tabloider Linda Watkins and "legit" James Dunn find romance even as they battle for scoops, including the diary of an adulterous love suicide and the rescue of a kidnappee. *Approx. 71 minutes.*
4:05, 8:20



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MAY 4 TUE (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



THE BEST MAN

(1964, FRANKLIN J. SCHAFFNER) Decent candidate Henry Fonda is pitted against stop-at-nothing ultra-right-winger Cliff Robertson in the presidential race, but which one will feisty ex-prez Lee Tracy endorse? Tracy's sole Oscar-nominated performance was his swan song. Screenplay by Gore Vidal. *Approx. 102 minutes.*
1:00, 4:30, 8:00



"In a more complex and nuanced role than any he had tackled on screen in his heyday, Tracy is sly and folksy, shrewd and anti-intellectual, honest but willing to hand out fake sentiment, honorable but ready to fight dirty. Over all this hangs the pathos of mortality – he is dying of a cancer, as Tracy himself would in 1968 – yet he still brings a crackle of electricity into a room."
– Imogen Sara Smith, *Bright Lights Film Journal*

"This disenchanting peek behind the scenes of an American election still bites, thanks to the Vidal script which dissects with gleeful cynicism the machinery of tub-thumping, image-building and chicanery that goes into motion as rival presidential candidates. Memorable lines galore, and a whole string of brilliant performances."
– Tom Milne, *Time Out* (London)

"Has a lot of verve, with the look of crackling intelligence thanks to Haskell Wexner's black-and-white cinematography and the sure, fast-paced direction. It seems like a hot, inside view."
– Pauline Kael

WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

**NEW
35mm
RESTORATION:**

(1932, JAMES CRUZE) Pre-*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, as Congressman Lee Tracy teams up with the Bonus Army to expose a lobbyist/bootlegger/murderer. Adapted from muckraker Drew Pearson's bestseller by poetic playwright Maxwell Anderson. *Approx. 78 minutes.*
3:00, 6:30, 10:00

"A snappy, Pre-Code movie. 1932 was an election year, and Hollywood was quick to cash in on that with a number of melodramas and satires that were far from kind to the political arena, and took graft and inefficiency pretty much for granted."
– William K. Everson

"Fascinating." – Elliott Stein



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MAY 5 WED (2 FILMS FOR 1 ADMISSION)



IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT

(1934, FRANK CAPRA) During breaks from a New York-bound Greyhound bus ride, only the "walls of Jericho" separate scoop-hungry newshound Clark Gable from runaway heiress Claudette Colbert. Oscars for Best Picture, Director, Actor, Actress, Screenplay (Robert Riskin). *Approx. 105 minutes.*
2:00, 5:40, 9:20

"Made audiences happy in a way only a few films in each era can do. It was the *Annie Hall* of its day."
– Pauline Kael

"One of the most important pictures ever made in America."
– David Thomson

"Still flawlessly entertaining."
– Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

IT HAPPENED TOMORROW

(1944, RENÉ CLAIR) It's sensational scoops and a killing at the races for 1890s reporter Dick Powell when a mysterious old man keeps handing him copies of tomorrow's paper ... but — wait a minute — whose death is in that headline?! With Linda Darnell, Jack Oakie. *Preserved by the UCLA Film & Television Archive. Approx. 84 minutes.*
4:00, 7:40

"Engaging fantasy, flawlessly made and very entertaining."
– Leslie Halliwell

"Students of cinematic style will find many shrewdly polished bits to admire and enjoy."
– James Agee

"An elegantly beguiling movie."
– Tom Milne, *Time Out* (London)



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MAY 6 THU

ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN

(1976, ALAN J. PAKULA) Just a "third rate burglary" at Democratic Party HQ at the Watergate, but then Woodward and Bernstein (Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman) of *The Washington Post* follow it up right through 'Deep Throat' to Nixon's White House, with editor Jason Robards (Oscaring as Ben Bradlee) cheering them on, in hit adaptation of the team's smash bestseller. *Color; Approx. 138 minutes.*
1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30

"REPERTORY PICK! A detective story with a foregone conclusion, Pakula's improbably riveting classic is more concerned with process than results."

– Benjamin Strong, *The L Magazine*

"Spellbinding... the thinking man's *Jaws*."

– *The New York Times*



"The film is not about the fall of Nixon, or the disgrace of political aides, or the complicity of great departments. It is a stunningly well-made reconstruction of a hunt for facts."

– Dilys Powell

"It works as a detective thriller (even though everyone knows the ending) as a credible primer on the prosaic fundamentals of big league investigative journalism, and best of all as a chilling tone poem that conveys the texture of the terror in our nation's capital during that long night when an aspiring fascist regime held our democracy under siege."

– Frank Rich, *New York Post*

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