

Carshalton High School for Girls –

Get Ready for Film Studies July Edition – Films to Watch from Recent Years



Welcome to the last Film Studies newsletter of the year. With the summer holidays coming up we're going to set you up with some potential viewings – which simply involves me running through some of the films I've seen in recent years that I've enjoyed the most. We're also going to point you in the direction of where to go to read the best film reviews. We hope you've enjoyed the film newsletters. Have a great summer holiday and very much look forward to seeing you in September,

Mr. Nott.

My Favourite Films Released in Recent Years:

This is a totally subjective list (meaning its based completely on my own opinions) and it certainly isn't any kind of compulsory viewing list, however these are some of the films released within the last 7-8 years or so that I've particularly enjoyed:

The Grand Budapest Hotel, Wes Anderson (2014): If you've ever watched any Wes Anderson films you'll be familiar with his distinctive, idiosyncratic, obsessively detailed style of comic filmmaking. This film, set in a fictional central European location in a period of history that looks very much like the run up to the Second World War, is perhaps his finest.



Foxcatcher, Bennett Miller (2014): A very darkly comic film about the world of competitive wrestling. One of the great films of the 21st century in my opinion, it's fantastic.

Lady Bird, Greta Gerwig: (2017): Fantastically funny coming of age movie. Watch it!



I, Tonya, Craig Gillespie (2017): Fancy a very dark comedy based on a true story about the lengths that some will go to in order to succeed in the world of competitive ice skating? *I Tonya* could be for you, a picture that proves that fact can be way, way stranger than fiction.



Get Out, Jordan Peele (2017): It could be described as a horror film, but if it is it's unlike any horror film you've seen before. It's yet another very dark comedy but one that deals with contemporary American social and political issues with real subtlety, intelligence and humour. Definitely one of the most significant films of the last ten years.



Baby Driver, Edgar Wright (2017): High octane heist movie with cars, lots of very fast cars and crazy driving. Brought to our screens by British director of *Shaun of the Dead* and *Hot Fuzz*, Edgar Wright.

Shoplifters, Hirokazu Kore-Eda (2018) : Kore-Eda is a masterful filmmaker whose films focus on the lives of those at the bottom of the social scale in Japan. His films are always touching but never sentimental and explore the lives of their subjects with warmth and good humour. *Shoplifters* is possibly his masterpiece, it follows the lives of an extended family who steal to make ends meet and are faced with a serious moral dilemma when their paths cross with Yuri, a very young child making an escape from her unhappy family life. One of my absolute favourite films of recent years.



Toy Story 4 (2019): Just a cartoon? Just a kids' film? Well yes, but as with all the other films in the *Toy Story* franchise it's also very much more than that. Moving, funny, original, witty, *Toy Story 4* goes much further than most films do by the time they get to number four in the series.



Marriage Story, Noah Baumbach: (2019): Noah Baumbach's been making films that focus on the internal lives of unravelling American families for years (see his debut feature, and possibly his greatest film, *The Squid and the Whale* – 2005). *Marriage Story*, starring Adam Driver and Scarlett Johansson, focuses on the disintegration of a couple's relationship. A film about divorce might not sound like a barrel of laughs, but *Marriage Story* manages to be funny and engaging as well as being intense, touching and downright sad at times.



Uncut Gems, Josh and Benny Safdie (2019): High energy film starring Adam Sandler as a Jewellery dealer up to his eyeballs in dodgy deals. Sandler's character has made life so difficult for himself that the film's almost exhausting to watch at times, but in the best possible way!



Knives Out, Rian Johnson (2019): Agatha Christie style murder mystery dragged into the 21st century! It's great.

Parasite, Bong Joon Ho (2019): Unexpected Oscar winner in 2020, the Korean film was the first non-English language film to receive the Best Picture award. You may well have already seen it, if you haven't it's a film with a plot that twists and turns as we watch one family infiltrate and gradually take over the lives of another before it arrives at a dramatic and gruesome conclusion.

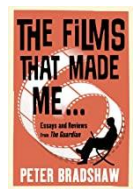


Small Axe, Steve McQueen (2020): I've mentioned this before. It's cheating really because *Small Axe* is a series of four films rather than a single film and was made for television rather than the cinema (all four films are available to watch for free on iPlayer). McQueen (who most famously directed the film *12 Years a Slave*) started out as an artist rather than a filmmaker and has a very distinctive approach to making films. This series makes the experiences of people from black British backgrounds in the 1960s and 1970s its focus. The films are unusual, ambitious and perhaps a bit more challenging than some of the others on this list, but they're well worth watching.



Where to Read Film Reviews:

As film students it's a good idea to keep up with what's being released in the world of film. There are lots of film magazines and websites out there that review films, but one of the best places to turn to is the broadsheet newspapers (*The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times*). Each of these papers has their own film critics and publish new film reviews, usually every Friday. Kevin Maher of *The Times*, Robbie Collin of *The Telegraph* and Clarisse Loughrey of *The Independent* are great film critics and their reviews are well worth reading. However, all three newspapers' websites are behind paywalls, meaning you have to pay a subscription to read their film reviews. *The Guardian* however, has an open access (free to use) website, and their film critic, Peter Bradshaw, is a great film reviewer. His reviews (published online on Thursday afternoon and in print every Friday - <https://www.theguardian.com/profile/peterbradshaw>) are regularly fair to filmmakers (particularly emerging filmmakers) but opinionated in the best of ways, insightful and often very funny. I'm a particular fan of his one star reviews! If you read his stuff and are interested, a book of his reviews (*The Films that Made Me* https://www.amazon.co.uk/Films-That-Made-Me/dp/1448217555/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=peter+bradshaw&qid=1625997200&sr=8-1)



was published a couple of years back (it includes a whole chapter of one star reviews!) I'd very much encourage you to get into the habit of reading weekly film reviews – a whole new film world will open up to you.

The Daily Telegraph