

Depends on the Genre

By Pete Clark

My favorite movie depends on the genre. To compare a Western to a Musical is like comparing a tor in the Rocky Mountains to a corn field in Nebraska. *Paint Your Wagon* is my favorite musical for several reasons. The story is placed in an era and area, both of which I find interesting, and some familiar faces appear on screen. The story is well plotted. And to me the music is, for the most part, great, but Clint Eastwood does much better as Dirty Harry Callahan and Lee Marvin's singing is different but enjoyable. Harvey Presnell's version of "They Call the Wind Maria," singing in the role of Hard Luck Willie, is one of my all-time favorite pieces of recorded music. In my book, another plus for *Paint Your Wagon* is the total lack of violence and foul language.

I went through my formative years ogling the Saturday afternoon double features, with short subjects, cliff hanger serials and a newsreel thrown in. So naturally I like vintage Westerns and I like a few of the newer Horse Operas. My favorite Western is *The Magnificent Seven* from 1960. I had never imagined Yul Brynner as a cowboy and gunslinger but his portrayal of Chris Adams was convincing. Brynner's co-stars in *The Magnificent Seven* would keep motion pictures and television series stocked with tough guys for many years to come. I know the movie was based on *Seven Samurai*, but the writer, the director and actors produced an excellent piece of work.

When it comes to comedy in a movie, I like *Operation Petticoat*, based on the extraction of nurses from Corregidor in Manila Bay during the spring of 1942, before the Japanese invaded the island. The writer and the director took a mission from a dark and dangerous era and gave the audience reasons to smile, laugh and appreciate the rescue of the nurses. *There's Something About Mary* is undoubtedly funnier than *Operation Petticoat*, the difference, for me, being that *There's Something About Mary* left only one impression with me: everyone can be insulted.

For the Adventure genre, my favorite movie is *The African Queen*. The screenwriter, the director, Humphrey Bogart, Katherine Hepburn and the supporting cast bring an abundance of life to the characters of C.S. Forester's novel. In the movie, Charles Allnut struggles with drunkenness and Rose Sayer tries to keep him sober. I like Robert Morley's characterization of the Reverend and it is easy to dislike the Germans.

In the Science Fiction category, I like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. The director and actors gave excellent portrayals of people in very difficult situations where answers from those who should know were not forthcoming. The special effects were spectacular and referencing Flight 19, a group of Navy TBM Avenger Torpedo Planes which left Fort Lauderdale Naval Air Station 05DEC45 and disappeared in the Bermuda Triangle was an excellent move. The movie illustrates some of the possible investigational road blocks to the studying of ufology.