

The Main Feature



Season 33 - Issue 14 (screening 11.4.13)



USA

1953

108 minutes

Director	Alfred Hitchcock		
Writers	Thornton Wilder, Sally Benson and Alma Reville (from Gordon McDonnell's story)		
Cameraman	Joseph Valentine	Art Director	Robert Boyle
Editor	Milton Caruth	Music	Dimitri Tiomkin

Cast

Uncle Charlie	Joseph Cotten
Young Charlie/Charlotte Newton	Teresa Wright
Jack Graham	Macdonald Carey
Mrs Emma Newton	Patricia Collinge
Joseph Newton	Henry Travers
Herbie ~Hawkins	Hume Cronyn
Fred Sanders	Wallace Ford

"Nothing much happens but like a nervous girl going down a dark alley, you've got your mouth open ready to scream if necessary" Harry Deans, Sunday Dispatch



Originally titled “Uncle Charlie” the film was planned as the lowest costing of all his American films and his first opportunity to make a truly American picture exactly as he envisaged.

This was also the first time in the US that he scouted locations with his writer before they began work on the screenplay. He would recall..... “the writer, Thornton Wilder, and I went and stayed in the town, Santa Rosa, California, lived in it, got to know the people....and came back and wrote the script based on the people and nature and character of the town itself.”

“I am extremely anxious to avoid the conventional small town American scene. By conventional I mean the stock figures

that have been seen in so many films of this type. I would like them to be very modern.”

Another reason for filming on location was that the War Production Board had issued a \$5,000 limit on Hollywood set building to preserve material for the war effort, so filming in the town helped with the budget.



Before filming began Joseph Cotten had asked to see Alfred Hitchcock as he was anxious about how to play his character. Ever so casually, Hitchcock, who did not drive, asked an apprehensive Cotten to take him to downtown Beverly Hills where he told the actor to pull his car over to the curb. The famous director then asked Cotten to study the faces and behavioural mannerisms of men walking down the street.

Cotten finally wondered if there was a point to what seemed to him like a baffling, if not pointless, exercise. Hitchcock explained that the exercise explained everything he needed to know about his next part.

The answer was that killers “act like anyone else” and reflective of the way people generally act; like the men Hitchcock asked Cotten to observe. Thereafter the two had a good relationship throughout filming.

It also features the beautiful Teresa Wright in only her fourth film (she was nominated for an acting Oscar in each of her first three roles!).

The film shows a director in complete control of his look and tone; no wonder, then, that his trademark cameo in this feature is a shot of him at a bridge table literally holding all of the cards!

Although he died on 8 April 1980, Alfred Hitchcock continues to fascinate the film industry and audiences. The start of this year saw two new films about Hitchcock. First, the BBC/HBO film *The Girl* (which portrayed him as a cruel obsessive intent on shredding the sanity of his leading lady Tippi Hedren’s *The Birds*); and then Sacha Gervasi’s *Hitchcock*, which deals with the personal and professional dramas surrounding the making of *Psycho*, the director’s most profitable and nakedly horrifying film. Helen Mirren also starred in the later film, playing his wife, Alma Reville (credited tonight as one of the writers, as she was for many of his films).



Roger Ebert: Tributes paid to celebrated film critic

Hollywood actors and directors have paid tribute to US film critic Roger Ebert who has died aged 70 after a long battle with cancer.

Ebert's top 10 films of all time

- Aguirre, Wrath of God - Werner Herzog (1972)
- Apocalypse Now - Francis Ford Coppola (1979)
- Citizen Kane - Orson Welles (1941)
- La Dolce Vita - Federico Fellini (1960)
- The General - Buster Keaton (1926)
- Raging Bull - Martin Scorsese (1980)
- 2001: A Space Odyssey - Stanley Kubrick (1968)
- Tokyo Story - Yasujiro Ozu (1953)
- The Tree of Life - Terrence Malick (2011)
- Vertigo - Alfred Hitchcock (1958)

Roger Ebert one-line reviews

- "To call it an anticlimax would be an insult not only to climaxes but to prefixes." - The Village (2004)
- "I've seen audits that were more thrilling." - Crocodile Dundee in Los Angeles (2001)
- "No matter what they're charging to get in, it's worth more to get out." - Armageddon (1998)
- "I had a colonoscopy once and they let me watch it on TV. It was more entertaining than The Brown Bunny." - The Brown Bunny (2003)

Director Martin Scorsese, who is producing a documentary on Ebert, said it was "an incalculable loss". Oscar-winning actor Samuel L Jackson called the critic "the real deal" in his tribute tweeted to his "good friend". Steven Spielberg, who Ebert praised for his "talent and his flexibility", said it was "the end of an era". Director and actor Mel Gibson called the writer "a gentle soul" who was more a "film historian and lover of the art" than a critic. "I sought out his opinions and thoughts often and he was always extremely generous with his time," he said in a statement.

Ebert, who also wrote 1970 film Beyond the Valley of the Dolls, earned respect from the movie industry during his 46 years reviewing films for the Chicago Sun-Times.

In his statement, Scorsese paid tribute to his "dear friend". "Roger was always supportive, he was always right there for me when I needed it most, when it really counted," he said. "At the very beginning, when every word of encouragement was precious; and then again, when I was at the lowest ebb of my career, there he was, just as encouraging, just as warmly supportive. "We all knew that this moment was coming, but that doesn't make the loss any less wrenching. I'll miss him — my dear friend."

There was more praise for the writer on Twitter with directors Ron Howard, Wes Craven, Cameron Crowe and Darren Aronofsky leading the mass outpour of affection. "We lost a passionate and broad minded force for cinema of all shapes sizes and genres," Howard said. Aronofsky remembered his first review from Ebert as a "career highlight". While Craven tweeted: "Roger Ebert gave my first film, Last House on the Left, its only positive review. Everyone else reviled it, but he saw merit in it."

Actor and director Robert Redford called Ebert "one of the great champions of freedom of artistic expression" in his statement. "His personal passion for cinema was boundless, and that is sure to be his legacy for generations to come," he added.

Actor Steve Martin tweeted in reference to the balcony from which Ebert used to film his review show with co-host Gene Siskel: "Goodbye Mr Ebert. We had fun. The balcony is closed."

BBC Website 5 April 2013

The printing of the notes for each film is undertaken by Repropoint free of charge



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Reactions to **Of Gods and Men** – 28.3.13

Score **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**
 ~ ~ 1 4 1 7 8 10 6 1

Total received – 37

Average Score – 7.03

Your Comments

Apposite on Maundy Thursday but rather turgid

The agony of religion – well told, acted and produced

Beautifully acted – thought provoking but a bit bleak

A thought provoking film but not very hopeful

Too painful to watch again but very moving

Well acted – very interesting subject but so slow

Authentic and moving film, very well directed and acted

A fine film – thought provoking and so appropriate at Easter

Beautifully made and acted – unusual film: food for thought

Seldom is one's sympathy for the characters of a film so strongly engaged

This continues every day all over the world – really sad that we cannot live together

Sadly Pascal had a point

Powerful film

Very Moving

Too moving for me

So very moving

Not my sort of film

Position	Film	Average Score
1 st	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	8.39
2 nd	The Artist	8.28
3 rd =	Hugo	7.84
3 rd =	Departures	7.84
5 th	My Week With Marilyn	7.56
6 th	Le Ballon Rouge	7.33
7 th	Of Gods and Men	7.03
8 th	A Separation	6.97
9 th	Pal Joey	6.88
10 th	La Grande Illusion	6.67
11 th	Of Time and the City	6.31
12 th	Rumba	6.25
13 th	Peepli Live!	6.17
14 th	Crin Blanc (White Mane)	5.83
15 th	French shorts combined score	5.65
16 th	La Boulangère de Monceau	4.81
17 th	Wolke 9	4.56

*Our next
film*

**8pm on
Thursday
25 April
2013:**

