

MAKING MEMORIES AT THE MOVIES – A Guide to Watching At Home
Romantic Interludes

All films in this program have something in common:

Romance is front and center in them all!

Do you recall seeing these films? Let's spark some memories!

Guys and Dolls is a 1955 musical with music and lyrics by Frank Loesser and book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows.

The premiere on Broadway was in 1950. It ran for 1200 performances and won the Tony Award for Best Musical. The musical has had several Broadway and London revivals, as well as a 1955 film adaptation starring **Marlon Brando**, **Jean Simmons**, **Frank Sinatra** and **Vivian Blaine**.

Theme:

Nathan Detroit, runs an illegal floating crap game. Due to local policeman Lt. Brannigan's strong-armed police activity, he has found only one likely spot to hold the game: the "Biltmore garage."

Nathan goes to watch his fiancée of 14 years, Miss Adelaide, perform her nightclub act ("A Bushel and a Peck"). After her show, she asks him, as she has many times before, to go down to city hall and get a marriage license.

We join the film when she is distraught to find out that Nathan is still running the crap game. She consults a medical book, which tells her that her chronic cold is a psychosomatic reaction to her frustration with Nathan's failure to marry her ("**Adelaide's Lament**"). The next day, Nicely and Benny watch as Sky pursues Sarah, and Nathan tries to win back Adelaide's favor. They declare that guys will do anything for the dolls they love ("**Guys and Dolls**")

Fun Facts:

Guys and Dolls was selected as the winner of the 1951 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. **However**, because of writer **Abe Burrows'** troubles with the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), the Trustees of Columbia University vetoed the selection, and no Pulitzer for Drama was awarded that year.

Food for Thought:

Did you see **Guys & Dolls** on Broadway?

Can you recall when Hollywood was under attack by the U. S. Congress for possible connections to Communism?

Singin' in the Rain is a 1952 American musical comedy film directed and choreographed by **Gene Kelly** and **Stanley Donen**, starring Kelly, **Donald O'Connor**, and **Debbie Reynolds**.

Theme:

Don Lockwood (Gene Kelly) is a popular silent film star with humble roots as a hooper and stuntman. Don barely tolerates his vain, cunning, conniving, and shallow leading lady, Lina Lamont (Jean Hagen), though their studio, Monumental Pictures, links them romantically to increase their popularity. Lina is convinced that they are in love, despite Don's protestations otherwise.

We join the film after Don meets Kathy and becomes smitten with her. He searches for her for weeks. While filming a romantic scene, a jealous Lina reveals that her influence is behind Kathy's loss of work and subsequent disappearance. On the studio lot, Cosmo (Donald O'Connor) finally finds Kathy quietly working in another Monumental Pictures production ("Beautiful Girl") and gets Don. Don sings her a love song, and she confesses to having been a fan of his all along. ("**You Were Meant for Me**")

Fun Facts:

The film was only a modest hit when first released. But it has since been accorded legendary status by contemporary critics and is frequently regarded as the best movie musical ever made. In the sequence in which **Gene Kelly** dances and sings the title song while spinning an umbrella, splashing through puddles and getting soaked with rain, Kelly was sick with a 103 °F (39 °C) fever. The water used in the scene caused Kelly's wool suit to shrink during filming.

Debbie Reynolds was not a dancer when she made *Singin' in the Rain*; her background was as a gymnast. Kelly apparently insulted her for her lack of dance experience, upsetting her. In a subsequent encounter when **Fred Astaire** was in the studio, he found Reynolds crying under a piano. Hearing what had happened, Astaire volunteered to help her with her dancing. Kelly later admitted that he had not been kind to Reynolds and was surprised that she was still willing to talk to him afterwards.

Food for Thought:

When you think of Debbie Reynolds, what comes to mind? That she married to Eddie Fisher, starred in the film **The Unsinkable Mollie Brown**, was Carrie Fisher's mother, that she played **The Flying Nun** on TV?

Do you know the words to **Singin' in the Rain**?

The Philadelphia Story is a 1940 American romantic comedy film directed by George Cukor, starring, **Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant and James Stewart** and featuring Ruth Hussey and John Howard as George Kittredge.

It is considered one of the best examples of a comedy of remarriage, a genre popular in the 1930s and 1940s, in which a couple divorce, flirt with outsiders and then remarry.

Theme:

Based on the Broadway play of the same name by Philip Barry, the film is about a socialite whose wedding plans are complicated by the simultaneous arrival of her ex-husband and a tabloid magazine journalist, Tracy Lord (Jimmy Stewart). (Katharine Hepburn) is the elder daughter of a wealthy Philadelphia socialite family. She was married to C.K. Dexter Haven (Cary Grant), a yacht designer and member of her social set, but divorced him two years ago, because he did not measure up to the exacting standards she sets for all her friends and family: He drank too much for her taste, and as she became critical of him, he drank more. Now, she is about to marry nouveau riche "man of the people" George Kittredge (John Howard).

We join the film the night before the wedding, Tracy gets drunk for only the second time in her life and takes an innocent midnight swim with Mike. When George sees Mike carrying an intoxicated Tracy into the house afterward, he thinks the worst. The next day, he tells her that he was shocked and feels entitled to an explanation before going ahead with the wedding. She takes exception to his lack of faith in her and breaks off the engagement. As the wedding nears, she finds herself torn between George, Dexter, and Mike.

Fun Facts:

The film was Hepburn's first big hit following several flops. Nominated for six Academy Awards, **the film won two; James Stewart for Best Actor** and Donald Ogden Stewart for Best Adapted Screenplay. **The film was adapted in 1956 as the MGM musical *High Society*, starring Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Celeste Holm, and Louis Armstrong.**

Broadway playwright Barry wrote the film specifically for Hepburn, who ended up backing the play and forgoing a salary in return for a percentage of its profits. Costarring with Hepburn on Broadway were Joseph Cotten as Dexter Haven, Van Heflin as Mike Connor, and Shirley Booth as Liz Imbrie.

The socialite character of the play—performed by Hepburn in the film—was inspired by Helen Hope Montgomery Scott (1904–1995), a Philadelphia socialite known for her hijinks, who married a friend of playwright Barry.

Food for Thought:

Did you ever break-off an engagement?

What was your wedding like? Where was it? Was it big? Small?

Did you see the movie **High Society**?

Funny Girl is a 1968 American biographical romantic musical comedy-drama film directed by William Wyler. The screenplay by Isobel Lennart was adapted from her book for the stage musical of the same title. It is loosely based on the life and career of Broadway and film star and comedian Fanny Brice and her stormy relationship with entrepreneur and gambler Nicky Arnstein.

Theme:

Set in and around New York City just prior to and following World War I, the story opens with Ziegfeld Follies star Fanny Brice awaiting the return of husband Nicky Arnstein from prison, and then moves into an extended flashback focusing on their meeting and marriage.

Fanny meets the suave Arnstein following her debut performance on the Vaudeville stage. They continue to meet occasionally over the years, becoming more romantically involved as Fanny's career flourishes and she becomes a star. Arnstein eventually seduces Fanny, who decides to abandon the *Follies* to be with him.

We join the film when Fanny decides to give up her stage career to follow Arnstein on the RMS *Berengaria*, where he wins a fortune playing poker. Fanny sings (**Don't Rain on My Parade**) on her way to meet Arnstein.

Fun Facts:

Produced by Brice's son-in-law, Ray Stark, with music and lyrics by Jule Styne and Bob Merrill, the film stars **Barbra Streisand**. Streisand reprised her Broadway role as Brice with Omar Sharif playing Arnstein,

Streisand won the Academy Award for **Best Actress** for her performance, tying with **Katharine Hepburn** starring in *The Lion in Winter*.

Food for Thought:

Can you recall going to a Vaudeville show?

Did you ever see Fanny Brice perform? What about another female comedian, such as Phyllis Diller or Joan Rivers?

Have you ever gone on a ferry before? What about a cruise? Where did you travel to on the boat?

I Love Lucy – The Anniversary Present (1952)

Theme:

Lucy thinks **Ricky** has forgotten their swiftly approaching 11th wedding anniversary. Not only has he not forgotten, he's arranged to buy an expensive string of pearls for his wife from neighbor **Grace Foster**, who works in a jewelry store.

We join the episode when Ricky sneaks off to see the samples that Grace has brought home on approval. Lucy and Ethel jump to the conclusion that Ricky and Grace are having an affair. They disguise themselves as housepainters and attempt to use scaffolding to spy on the two lovers. Lucy ultimately winds up with the pearls -- but not before she has doused herself with a whole bucket of white paint!

Fun Facts:

In episode #24, we learned that Grace Foster was a beautiful blonde. So, why is she a brunette the time we ever see her on camera in this episode? By the way, Grace /Foster was played by Gloria Blondell, Joan's sister.

The date circled on Lucy's Calendar signaling the Ricardos' anniversary is the 19th, but the month isn't visible. The Ricardos' anniversary was probably picked as the 19th because that was Lucy's lucky number and the date that Lucy and Desi renewed their wedding vows on June 19, 1949.

Food for Thought:

Do you have a favorite I Love Lucy episode?

Did you ever surprise your spouse with a surprise for your anniversary?

Did you renew your wedding vows? How was it different from your original wedding day?

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes is a 1953 American film adaptation of the 1949 stage musical, released by 20th Century Fox, directed by Howard Hawks, and starring **Jane Russell** and **Marilyn Monroe** with **Charles Coburn**, **Elliott Reid**, **Tommy Noonan**, **George Winslow**, Taylor Holmes and Norma Varden in supporting roles.

The screenplay by Charles Lederer was based on the 1949 Broadway musical of the same name, directed by John C. Wilson, with Carol Channing as Lorelei Lee.

Theme:

Lorelei Lee (Marilyn Monroe) and Dorothy Shaw (Jane Russell) are American showgirls and best friends. Lorelei has a passion for diamonds, believing that attracting a rich husband is one of the few ways a woman can succeed economically.

She is engaged to Gus Esmond (Tommy Noonan), a naïve nerd willing to do or buy anything for her. However, Gus is under the control of his wealthy, upper-class father. Lorelei plans to wed Gus in France, but Esmond, Sr. stops his son from sailing, believing that Lorelei is bad for him. Lorelei decides to travel to France with or without Gus, and before she leaves, he gives her a letter of credit to cover expenses upon her arrival and promises to later meet her in France. The ship arrives in France, and Lorelei and Dorothy spend time shopping. However, the pair are then kicked out of their hotel and discover Lorelei's letter of credit has been cancelled.

We join the film when Gus shows up at their show in France, Lorelei rebuffs him, after which she performs (**Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend**), the musical number whose lyrics explain why and how women need to pursue men with money.

Fun Facts:

In her very last interview, 10 years after making **Gentleman Prefer Blondes**, **Marilyn Monroe** recall the lack of respect studio execs had for her, but makes a point of mentioning co-star, **Jane Russell**: "I remember when I got the part, Jane Russell was the brunette **IT** and I was the blond. She got \$200,000 for it and I got \$500 a week, but that was, you know, considerable." In preparation for her role as Lorelei, **Marilyn Monroe** attended the Broadway production of **Gentlemen Prefer Blondes** starring **Carol Channing** every night for over a month. She was wonderful to me."

For the **Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend** musical number, **Marilyn Monroe** was originally going to be dressed in nothing but bands of black velvet and masses of rhinestones, creating the illusion of a woman-sized diamond necklace. However, this design was deemed too revealing and vetoed by the studio in favor of the now iconic pink dress.

Food for Thought:

What's your most vivid memory of Marilyn Monroe?

Can you think of other movies that Marilyn Monroe was in? How about Jane Russell?

To whom was Marilyn Monroe married?

Lady and the Tramp is a 1955 American animated romantic musical comedy film produced by Walt Disney and released to theaters on 22 June 1955. The 15th Disney animated feature film was the first animated feature filmed in the CinemaScope widescreen film process.^[2] Based on **Happy Dan, The Whistling Dog** by **Ward Greene**, **Lady and the Tramp** tells the story of a female American Cocker Spaniel named **Lady** who lives with a refined, upper-middle-class family, and a male stray mutt named **Tramp**. When the two dogs meet, they embark on many romantic adventures.

Theme:

On Christmas evening in the year 1909, in a quaint Midwestern town, Jim Dear gives his wife Darling a cocker spaniel puppy they named **Lady**. Lady enjoys a joyful life with the couple and befriends two local neighborhood dogs, a Scottish terrier named Jock, and a bloodhound named Trusty. Meanwhile, across town, a stray mutt named **Tramp** lives on his own, dining on scraps from Tony's Italian restaurant and protecting his fellow strays Peg and Bull from the local dogcatcher. One day, Lady is upset after her owners begin treating her rather coldly. Jock and Trusty visit her and determine that their change in behavior is due to Darling expecting a baby. Soon Lady will lose her coveted spot in her house.

We join the film when Tramp tries to woo Lady with a homemade spaghetti dinner at his favorite haunt, **Tony's Town Square Restaurant**. Tramp, a bit of a "womanizer" wins her over and their antics together begin.

Fun Facts:

Lady and the Tramp has become quite iconic in the history of cinema. The sequence of Lady and Tramp sharing a plate of Italian spaghetti – climaxed by an accidental kiss as they swallow opposite ends of the same piece of spaghetti – is considered an iconic scene in American film history.

Recording artist **Peggy Lee** wrote the songs with **Sonny Burke**. **Bella Notte** has become a classic love song.

Tony's restaurant has spawned several real restaurants in Disney parks, including **Tony's Town Square Restaurant** in **Magic Kingdom** and **Pizzeria Bella Notte** in **Paris**.

Food for Thought:

Have you ever heard **Peggy Lee** sing **Bella Notte**? Perhaps you can listen now.....

What's your favorite Italian meal? What do you order when you eat at an Italian restaurant?

Have you ever been to **Disney World**? Who did you go with? Do you have a favorite memory?