



THE DAILY TELEGRAPH (23/6/2018)

Top 10 greatest films

1. Singin' in the Rain (Stanley Donen & Gene Kelly, 1952) | [More](#)
2. Ugetsu Monogatari (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1953) | [More](#)
3. Mulholland Dr. (David Lynch, 2001) | [More](#)
4. My Neighbour Totoro (Hayao Miyazaki, 1988) | [More](#)
5. Playtime (Jacques Tati, 1967) | [More](#)
6. The Awful Truth (Leo McCarey, 1937) | [More](#)
7. Back to the Future (Robert Zemeckis, 1985) | [More](#)
8. Tropical Malady (Apichatpong Weerasethakul, 2004) | [More](#)
9. Beau Travail (Claire Denis, 1999) | [More](#)
10. Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (FW Murnau, 1927) | [More](#)

Thriller



Rififi

(Jules Dassin, 1955)

Out of the murk of postwar Paris slunk the perfect heist film, with the perfect heist as its centrepiece: a half-hour heart-stopper without dialogue or music.

Point Blank

(John Boorman, 1967)

A hardboiled crime yarn deconstructed and refracted to the point of cubism, with set-pieces like lucid dreams, and Lee Marvin emanating granite menace.

Carlito's Way

(Brian De Palma, 1993)

Introspective tragedy and glaring gangland swagger in the same exhilarating package, with technique to make you swoon and Al Pacino at his bruised but unbowed best.

Pulp Fiction

(Quentin Tarantino, 1994)

The last one to Change Everything: a flip, disjointed, ultra-scabrous underworld patchwork that still hits with the swiftness and force of its own adrenalised needle-jab to the heart.

Heat

(Mann, 1995)

A cop (Robert De Niro) and a robber (Al Pacino) on a city-sized chessboard of concrete and glass. Los Angeles plays itself, in every sense.



Blockbuster

Lawrence of Arabia

(David Lean, 1962)

The epic of epics, but also an intimate, conflicted work of portraiture, with a mesmeric Peter O'Toole and a grandeur that threatens to tear the screen in two.

The Empire Strikes Back

(Irvin Kershner, 1980)

Star Wars enriched, upended and opened out, as if the entire galaxy had always been there for the exploring. Not just a classic, but the greatest imaginable sequel a classic could have.

Back to the Future

(Robert Zemeckis, 1985)

Part oddball oedipal comedy, part breakneck science-fiction escapade, all ludicrous entertainment, with a momentum that morphs the cinema into a roller-coaster cart.

Akira

(Katsuhiro Otomo, 1988)

No film did more to teach the gobsmacked west that animation could go anywhere and show anything: nuclear apocalypse is literally only the start of it.

The Dark Knight Rises

(Christopher Nolan, 2012)

Cracking the comic-book formula is one thing. Transcending it is something else. A plangent, prophetic urban warfare fable that eclipses the entire superhero craze.

Action



A Touch of Zen

(King Hu, 1971)

One sweeping martial arts epic to rule them all, shot with painterly precision and featuring some of the most beautiful combat ever captured on celluloid.

The 36th Chamber of Shaolin

(Liu Chia-liang, 1978)

The kung fu hustle never looked better than in this genre-shaping Shaw Brothers classic, featuring revolutionary cutting and camerawork and staggering athletic prowess.

Police Story

(Jackie Chan, 1985)

Slapstick maxes itself out in this relentlessly dazzling Hong Kong caper, with its director-star earning his “rightful heir to Buster Keaton” stripes in sweat and bruises.

Point Break

(Kathryn Bigelow, 1991)

The “wet western” (its director’s words) that shook Hollywood out of its 1980s meathead phase, and turned a pulse-pounding counterculture crime spree into the ultimate ride.

Mad Max: Fury Road

(George Miller, 2015)

A pared-down, flame-grilled convoy to hell and back, with an inexhaustible supply of “Did I just see that?” moments and a mile-wide feminist streak.

Horror

The Cabinet of Dr Caligari

(Robert Weine, 1920)

Realism is thrown out of the (insanely angled) window in this silent expressionistic chiller about a sleepwalker's killing spree engineered by a mad hypnotist.

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre

(Tobe Hooper, 1974)

The family that slays together stays together in this gut-churning indictment of the American Condition, fired by a righteous fury that left cinema changed.

The Thing

(John Carpenter, 1982)

Unfathomable cosmic terror has its Agatha Christie moment in cinema's greatest and grisliest drawing room mystery, with allegorical heft and creature effects that won't be bettered.

American Psycho

(Mary Harron, 2000)

You can't tear your gaze from Christian Bale in this black-hearted slasher-satire of 0.1-percenter ruthlessness, which has only mushroomed in stature and relevance.

Pulse

(Kiyoshi Kurosawa, 2001)

Malevolent spirits roam the virtual world, making online life a kind of waking death in the J-horror revolution's creepiest, most prescient instalment.

Comedy

The Awful Truth

(Leo McCarey, 1937)

No on-screen chemistry has ever out-crackled that of Cary Grant and Irene Dunne as a divorcing couple lobbing spanners into each other's rebound romances.

The Palm Beach Story

(Preston Sturges, 1941)

Roaringly chaotic screwball with Joel McCrea and Claudette Colbert as a pair of estranged young marrieds dipping their toes in the Florida good life.

Bakumatsu Taiyo-den

(Yuzo Kawashima, 1957)

Bawdy shenanigans in a 19th century Japanese brothel, as seen by a guest who turns odd-job-man after running up an unpayable tab.

Daisies

(Vera Chytilová, 1966)

No-holds-barred absurdist Czech farce, banned in its day for "depicting the wanton", about two young women thumbing their noses at the stale male establishment.

Playtime

(Jacques Tati, 1967)

Meticulous comic set-piece heaven, with the French clown Monsieur Hulot adrift in a smooth-edged, techno-crazed, completely baffling metropolis.

This Is Spinal Tap

(Rob Reiner, 1984)

Rock and roll excess lampooned beyond repair in this mightiest of all mockumentaries, with a cast in supernatural improvisational synch.

Groundhog Day

(Harold Ramis, 1993)

Bill Murray's hangdog schlump takes on time-looping everyday purgatory in a cautionary tale that's equal parts Frank Capra and Franz Kafka, and completely ingenious.

Clueless

(Amy Heckerling, 1995)

Inspired by Jane Austen's Emma but entirely its own perfect thing, with Alicia Silverstone's plaid-swaddled Beverly Hills princess as the comic heroine the 90s needed.

Borat

(Larry Charles, 2006)

The camouflaged biases and bigotry of the 21st century west are dragged into the daylight, without mercy, by Sacha Baron Cohen's greatest grotesque.

You, The Living

(Roy Andersson, 2007)

Fifty bizarre skits on the human condition transmitted from a drab, grey Scandinavian somewhere: it's like Beckett meets *The Fast Show*, with a cumulative force that knocks you flat.

Psychological drama

Mildred Pierce

(Michael Curtiz, 1945)

An LA story poised on the precipice between melodrama and noir, with an iconic Joan Crawford as the indefatigable single mother setting her cap at the American Dream.

12 Angry Men

(Sidney Lumet, 1957)

A dozen clashing personalities stripped bare in a racially charged jury-room procedural that swelters and rumbles in baleful synch with the world outside its ever-constricting walls.

Persona

(Ingmar Bergman, 1966)

At a far-flung coastal retreat, two women's personalities inexplicably buckle and merge. A crazily influential, glittering Jungian swan-dive from which cinema never entirely resurfaced.

Morvern Callar

(Lynne Ramsay, 2002)


Something like Balamory via Camus, with an unforgettable Samantha Morton as the young woman from a huddled Scottish port town who turns domestic tragedy to her advantage.

The Headless Woman

(Lucrecia Martel, 2008)

A rivetingly cryptic meditation on denial and guilt, in which a well-to-do dentist recovers from a traffic accident, wondering if more than her short-term memory was lost in the jolt.

Romance



Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans

(FW Murnau, 1927)

True love weathers everything the world can throw at it in this still-stunning silent fable, in which a couple rekindle their romance in a dreamlike metropolis.

Trouble in Paradise

(Ernst Lubitsch, 1932)

Champagne fizz in cinematic form, with Herbert Marshall and Miriam Hopkins as two con-artists who fall for one another during the sting of their lives.

It Happened One Night

(Frank Capra, 1934)

Sparkling proto-screwball with Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable on the road together as a runaway heiress and the reporter who stumbles on the scoop of his life.

Love & Basketball

(Gina Prince-Bythewood, 2000)

Two young sports stars in the making balance their desires for professional success and one other in this deeply felt, dizzyingly sensual Sundance sleeper hit.

Tropical Malady

(Apichatpong Weerasethakul, 2004)

Love is a sickness and a transformative force in this visionary Thai wonderwork, in which a soldier falls for a country boy who is transfigured into a tiger spirit.

Film noir

The Big Sleep

(Howard Hawks, 1946)

A city sunk in conspiracy and a case so hard-boiled it won't be cracked, with Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall glowing like struck matches in the dark.

The Third Man

(Carol Reed, 1949)

There's something rotten in postwar Vienna, and it wears a conspiratorial grin. With twists that chill to the bone, and in Orson Welles's Harry Lime, a villain for the ages.

Vertigo

(Alfred Hitchcock, 1958)

A romance repeats itself, each time as tragedy, with James Stewart's befuddled San Francisco PI as both voyeur and participant. If aliens descend and ask what cinema is, point them to this.

Touch of Evil

(Orson Welles, 1958)

The last and sleaziest of the classic Hollywood noirs: a grime-ridden tale of border-town corruption, with a moral compass that spins like a stopwatch.

Taxi Driver

(Martin Scorsese, 1976)

New York is a spluttering pressure cooker and the stage for a new kind of urban alienation, personified by Robert De Niro's rage-racked army vet.

Musical

Singin' in the Rain

(Gene Kelly & Stanley Donen, 1952)

The greatest fairy tale Hollywood ever told about itself, with dance numbers that make your heart beat in step, and an unquenchable slapstick spirit.

A Star is Born

(George Cukor, 1954)

The finest version of this perennial show-business romance was also Judy Garland's last great film, and gained tragic resonance from its leading lady's life.

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort

(Jacques Demy, 1967)

The French New Wave winks back at Hollywood of old, with Catherine Deneuve and Françoise Dorléac as twin sisters in technicolor dresses caught up in a cross-generational romantic farce.

All That Jazz

(Bob Fosse, 1979)

The director-choreographer of *Cabaret* and *Chicago* turned his exacting gaze inward for this electrifying mix of scalding self-portraiture and madcap theatrics.

Beauty and the Beast

(Gary Trousdale & Kirk Wise, 1991)

As timeless as Howard Ashman and Alan Menken's magical title song suggests, and the heart-soaring peak of the late-20th-century Disney Renaissance.

Science fiction

2001: A Space Odyssey

(Stanley Kubrick, 1968)

From the dawn of man to beyond the infinite in a little under two and a half hours, this is cinema at its most elemental, farsighted and gigantic.

Blade Runner

(Ridley Scott, 1982)

All style and all substance, this detective tale bathed in neon and smog offers a vision of the future that still feels chillingly in step with our present and past.

Aliens

(James Cameron, 1986)

An all-guns-blazing übersequel that prised open the nightmarish possibilities of Ridley Scott's 1979 original, escaping its host like a chestburster emerging with a triumphant screech.

Ghost in the Shell

(Mamoru Oshii, 1995)

The term cyberpunk could have been custom-designed for this shiveringly melancholic Japanese animation, in which a police cyborg tracks a hacker infiltrating human souls.

Under the Skin

(Jonathan Glazer, 2013)

An unrepeatable, visually staggering exercise in gonzo existentialism, with Scarlett Johansson's alien honeytrap browsing the streets of Glasgow for male victims who can't believe their luck.



Western

Stagecoach

(John Ford, 1939)

The bringing together of John Wayne and Monument Valley was one of cinema's defining eureka moments – and in doing so, Ford made a standalone art-form of his genre of choice.

The Treasure of the Sierra Madre

(John Huston, 1948)

Three scheming deadbeats (Bogart, Huston Sr, Holt) go in search of gold in this dark backwoods morality play, enacted with Chaucerian glee by its terrific trio of leads.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

(Sergio Leone, 1966)

A gut-busting, palate-scalding portion of wholewheat spaghetti, with Clint Eastwood fixing his narrowed, glinting eyes on the horizon for a third time, and securing his legendary status.

McCabe & Mrs Miller

(Robert Altman, 1971)

It's all strictly business between Warren Beatty and Julie Christie in this tattily magnificent saga of frontier life that upends expectations like saloon tables.

No Country for Old Men

(Joel & Ethan Coen, 2007)

A drug deal goes bad in the godforsaken Texas desert, with an all-time ghoul in Javier Bardem, delectable noir trimmings, and humour as sharp as an upturned plug.

Family life

Late Spring

(Yasujiro Ozu, 1948)

Heart-aching portrait of an unmarried woman (the wonderful Setsuko Hara) who dotes on her middle-aged father, as lyrical and controlled as a sonnet.

Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai de Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles

(Chantal Akerman, 1975)

A landmark feminist path-breaker, in which nothing more than a dropped spoon and burnt potatoes herald the collapse of a Belgian single mother's regimented existence.

The Ballad of Narayama

(Shohei Imamura, 1983)

An elderly woman steels herself for ritual death in this spectacular, skin-and-soul-abrading saga of 19th century Japanese wilderness life.

Yi Yi

(Edward Yang, 2000)

Time quietly works on a middle-class Taipei family over the course of a year, from a wedding to a funeral, and with the whole banquet of life in between.

The Royal Tenenbaums

(Wes Anderson, 2001)

A sly New York patriarch feigns cancer in order to reunite his ramshackle clan, in this cracklingly eccentric, painstakingly crafted deadpan group portrait.

Childhood

Bambi

(David Hand, 1942)

Animated coming-of-age pastorate that triggered a lasting medium-wide revolution with its impressionistic visual style and piercingly emotional storytelling and character work.

Mirror

(Andrei Tarkovsky, 1975)

Songs of innocence and experience from the first act of a 20th century Russian life; history, memory and poetry all gathered up in a glittering trove.

ET The Extra-Terrestrial

(Steven Spielberg, 1982)

Boyhood loneliness plus starlit wonderment equals the still-definitive Spielbergian experience, and one of a precious few films you can't make sense of cinema without.

My Neighbour Totoro

(Hayao Miyazaki, 1988)

The greatest animation of them all is this quietly staggering ode to the magic of childhood, as experienced by two sisters who befriend an enigmatic forest spirit.

Inside Out

(Pete Docter, 2015)

The growing-up process reimagined as a zany adventure across the landscape of human consciousness. Sitcom-sharp and fantastically perceptive, only Pixar could have pulled it off.

A Time and a Place

Umberto D

(Vittorio De Sica, 1952)

An elderly Italian and his dog do their best to scrape together a life in the Second World War's ashen aftermath. A galvanising neorealist classic.

Vagabond

(Agnès Varda, 1985)

A painterly but unsparing reconstruction of a female drifter's short life in France's wild south, peppered with faux-interviews that reveal a hard and hostile world.

Do The Right Thing

(Spike Lee, 1989)

One scalding summer day in post-Reagan Brooklyn, where racial tensions splutter like sauce on the hob. Electrifying and ethically complex, it makes you sweat every way at once.

Lost in Translation

(Sofia Coppola, 2003)

A work of bleary, jet-lagged majesty, with Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson as two outsider souls adrift in a place both snugly comforting and bafflingly strange.

There Will Be Blood

(Paul Thomas Anderson, 2007)

God and oil lock horns in this black-hearted American foundational myth, built around one of the most indestructible screen performances of all time from Daniel Day-Lewis.

Journeys

Pinocchio

(Ben Sharpsteen & Hamilton Luske, 1940)

A fantastical, often viscerally frightening voyage of self-actualisation – just, you know, for kids – and the stunning high watermark of Disney's Golden Age.

Ugetsu Monogatari

(Kenji Mizoguchi, 1953)

Two greedy Japanese peasants risk everything for fame and gold, and end up beset by tragedy and ghosts. Mesmeric and indelible, this is cinema as spell.

Alice

(Jan Švankmajer, 1988)

Surreally menacing stop-motion rethink of Lewis Carroll's Wonderland tale, set in a dolls-house dreamscape where no object can be trusted to stay inanimate.

American Honey

(Andrea Arnold, 2016)

A freewheeling pop odyssey by minibus through a US heartland of haves and have-nots, both acutely grounded in its time and set dreamily apart from it.

The Lost City of Z

(James Gray, 2016)

The most recent film on the list frames the life story of the explorer Percy Fawcett as a grand metaphysical parable about the human hunger for transcendence.

Films about film

Sherlock Jr

(Buster Keaton, 1924)

Hectically inventive silent comedy in which a projectionist dreams himself inside the cinema screen, with stunts that even now can't be believed.

Sunset Boulevard

(Billy Wilder, 1950)

The fall of the studio system was preempted by this blackly sardonic satire, with Gloria Swanson's faded screen queen Norma Desmond as the restless ghost of Hollywood past.

Le Mépris

(Jean-Luc Godard, 1963)

A film flounders mid-production; its screenwriter's marriage follows suit. A sensual, plaintive, hauntingly shot and scored New Wave contretemps between love, success and art.

Mulholland Dr.

(David Lynch, 2001)

The dream factory short-circuits, rending a young actress's life story in two, in this malevolent, seductive mystery bred out of Hollywood's darkest shadows.

Holy Motors

(Leos Carax, 2012)

An all-night limousine ride through Paris becomes a narcotic cine-reverie, as an actor (Denis Lavant) flits from role to role like an assassin picking off a roster of targets.



War

The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp

(Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger, 1943)

A still-extraordinary bittersweet comic epic about personal and national identities in flux, with Roger Livesey as the Boer War hero who ripens into a blustering Home Guard relic.

I Am Cuba

(Mikhail Kalatozov, 1964)

The Castro uprising in four parts, as envisioned in the most miraculous, exhilarating tracking shots ever committed to celluloid. Pure propaganda, of course. But pure cinema too.

Apocalypse Now

(Francis Ford Coppola, 1979)

Charred by the madness of its own making as much as its subject, this psychotropic Vietnam remix of Joseph Conrad turns the Heart of Darkness into the jaws of hell on earth.

Grave of the Fireflies

(Isao Takahata, 1988)

Two young siblings cling to life and each other in the wake of the firebombing of Kobe, in this once-seen, never-forgotten animated masterwork.

Beau Travail

(Claire Denis, 1999)

The French Foreign Legion becomes a kind of desert-bound corps de ballet in this stark, transfixing cine-mosaic inspired by Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*.

Documentary

Man with a Movie Camera

(Dziga Vertov, 1929)

This electric image-medley of Soviet urban life remains the definitive city symphony movie, thrumming with sensuality and vigour, and with a visual wow factor that hasn't paled.

Edvard Munch

(Peter Watkins, 1974)

A rigorous, probing recreation of the Norwegian artist's life, that does a better job than any other film of making sense of the causes and courses of genius.

Welfare

(Frederick Wiseman, 1975)

Behind the scenes of the New York benefits system, shot and edited with a watchful care that finds the humanity in the Kafkaesque hubbub.

Grey Gardens

(Albert & David Maysles, 1975)

A mother and daughter rattle and squawk around their crumbling, junk-infested mansion, dwelling on aristocratic glories past. Samuel Beckett meets *Pink Flamingos*, but somehow real.

Harlan County, USA

(Barbara Koppel, 1976)

A coal miners' strike in eastern Kentucky becomes a pitched battle for a community's soul in this stirring, scarily unflinching frontline dispatch.

Sans Soleil

(Chris Marker, 1983)

Freeform wanderings through Japan, Iceland, Guinea-Bissau and the San Francisco of *Vertigo* cohere into a meditation on memory and time: eerie, absorbing and quite unlike anything else.

Shoah

(Claude Lanzmann, 1985)

The Holocaust, itemised through nine-hours-plus of location filming and first-person testimony from survivors and perpetrators alike. A monumental, exhaustive, necessary work.

Close-up

(Abbas Kiarostami, 1990)

The strange case of an unemployed film buff who masqueraded as a famous director, masterfully refracted into a playful disquisition on the slippery nature of truth.

Baraka

(Ron Fricke, 1992)

Often humbling, unflaggingly astonishing large-format cinematography from Earth's strangest, most notorious and furthest-flung corners.

Los Angeles Plays Itself

(Thom Andersen, 2004)

A deliciously laconic portrait of the town the movies built, assembled from a collage of classic clips – and the film-list-compiler's equivalent of asking the genie for three more wishes.