

The
Top 20
movies
OF THE HASTINGS ERA

KEVIN COSTNER, AMY MADIGAN, JAMES EARL JONES
1989 / DIRECTED BY PHIL ALDEN ROBINSON

1

FIELD OF
DREAMS

THE MINUTE I SAW THIS MOVIE, IT IMMEDIATELY BECAME THE #1 MOVIE I HAD EVER SEEN. I DON'T THINK THERE WAS A #1 FILM BEFORE THIS, AND IT HAS YET TO LEAVE THE #1 POST. THE BASEBALL FANTASY AND FATHER-SON STORYLINE GETS ME EVERY TIME. BONUS POINTS AWARDED FOR FILMING A SEEN IN FENWAY PARK. THE FINAL SCENE, WHERE RAY KINSELLA (COSTNER) PLAYS CATCH WITH HIS FATHER IS ENOUGH TO MAKE GROWN MEN CRY.

ZACH BRAFF, NATALIE PORTMAN, PETER SARSGAARD
2004 / DIRECTED BY ZACH BRAFF

2

GARDEN
STATE

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THIS IS THE ONLY FILM I'VE EVER SEEN THAT HAS MADE ME PONDER THE #1 SPOT. THE MOVIE HAS EXCELLENT CHARACTERS, STARTING WITH BRAFF'S ANDREW LARGEMAN. HIS SAD, YET POIGNANT STORY HAS IT ALL. THE ACTING, HUMOR, VISUALS, AND SOUNDTRACK ARE ALL TOP-NOTCH. IT'S ONE OF THE FEW MOVIES THAT CAN MAKE YOU HAPPY AND SAD AT THE SAME TIME. SOME DAYS I FEEL THIS IS THE REAL #1.

CHEVY CHASE, RODNEY DANGERFIELD, TED KNIGHT, BILL MURRAY
1980 / DIRECTED BY HAROLD RAMIS

3

CADDYSHACK

NO MOVIE WILL EVER PASS CADDYSHACK IN THE MOST-QUOTABLE CATEGORY. THE LUDICROUS HUMOR OF KARL SPACKLER (MURRAY), JUDGE SMAILS (KNIGHT), AND AL CZERVIK (DANGERFIELD) IS FUNNY EVERY SINGLE TIME. ANY MOVIE THAT COMBINES GOLF WITH GENIUS COMIC ACTING IS HIGH ON MY LIST. WITHOUT FAIL, SOMEONE IN MY FOURSOME WILL SCREAM "IT'S IN THE HOLE!" BEFORE THE ROUND OF 18 IS FINISHED.

BRAD PITT, BENICIO DEL TORO, JASON STATHAM, DENNIS FARINA
2000 / DIRECTED BY GUY RITCHIE

4

SNATCH

THIS INCREDIBLY-STYLIZED FILM DEFINES THE WORD 'COOL.' THERE'S PLENTY OF CAMERA TRICKS AND VISUAL GAMES WHILE NOT TAKING AWAY FROM THE DENSE PLOT. EACH CHARACTER HAS HIS OWN WAY OF SCREWING UP A DIAMOND-HEIST, WITH BRAD PITT'S GYPSY BARE-KNUCKLE BOXING LUNATIC STEALING THE SHOW. ALL THE ACTION, LAUGHS, AND VISUALS ARE NOTHING BUT TONS OF FUN.

HARRISON FORD, SEAN CONNERY
1989 / DIRECTED BY STEVEN SPIELBERG

5

INDIANA JONES
AND THE
LAST CRUSADE

THIS INSTALLMENT CLEARLY RISES ABOVE THE OTHER TWO INDIANA JONES FILMS IN THE TRILOGY. THE PUZZLE-SOLVING RACE ACROSS THE GLOBE AGAINST THE HATED NAZIS MAKES FOR A GREAT PLOT. PERHAPS MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE CHARACTER, INDIANA JONES, IS JOINED BY SEAN CONNERY IN THIS FUN, FAST-PACED FLICK. GRANTED, THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE OLD, BUT THE STORY AND QUIRKY SITUATIONS PUT THIS THIS FILM IN THE TOP 5.

DENZEL WASHINGTON, DAKOTA FANNING, CHRISTOPHER WALKEN
2004 / DIRECTED BY TONY SCOTT

6

MAN ON FIRE

FIRST OFF, DENZEL IS THE MAN. COMBINE THAT WITH THE UNBELIEVABLE ACTING SKILLS OF FANNING AND THE CRAZY BUT ADDICTIVE DIRECTING STYLE OF TONY SCOTT AND YOU'RE IN FOR ONE OF THE BEST MOVIES I'VE EVER SEEN IN THEATRES. THE CHEMISTRY BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND FANNING IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE FILM AND THE MEAN STREAK OF DENZEL IN HALF TWO CREATES A FANTASTIC MOVIE.

GIOVANNI RIBISI, VIN DIESEL, NIA LONG, NICKY KATT, BEN AFFLECK
2000 / DIRECTED BY BEN YOUNGER

7

BOILER ROOM

THERE ARE PLENTY OF GREAT STOCK BROKER SCENES IN THIS YOUNGER VERSION OF "WALL STREET," BUT THE BEST SCENES IN THE MOVIE ARE THE ONES WHERE AFFLECK RIPS APART THE ROOKIE BROKERS. THE CAST IN THIS FILM IS DEEP, AND EACH PLAYS AN EXCELLENT ROLE AMONGST THE FIRM OF JT MARLIN. THE PLOT IS INTERESTING AND GIOVANNI RIBISI'S VOICEOVER HAS SOME GREAT MOMENTS.

MATT DAMON, EDWARD NORTON, JOHN MALKOVICH
1998 / DIRECTED BY JOHN DAHL

8

ROUNDERS

EVEN BEFORE THE POKER EXPLOSION OF THE 21ST CENTURY, THIS FILM MADE POKER LOOK COOL. FRIENDS DAMON AND NORTON RUN INTO PLENTY OF POKER CHARACTERS, SOME TOO COCKY FOR THEIR OWN GOOD. ANOTHER MOVIE THAT USES VOICEOVER (DAMON AS MIKE MCDERMOTT), DAMON HELPS GIVE THE AUDIENCE A PLAY-BY-PLAY BOTH AT THE POKER TABLE AND THROUGHOUT THE UNDERGROUND WORLD OF CARD SHARKS.

KEANU REEVES, LAURENCE FISHBURNE, CARRIE-ANNE MOSS
1999 / DIRECTED BY THE WACHOWSKI BROTHERS

9

THE MATRIX

WHETHER OR NOT YOU ENJOYED THE MOVIE, YOU HAVE TO ADMIT THAT "THE MATRIX" DID THINGS ON FILM THAT WERE NEVER EVEN THOUGHT OF PREVIOUSLY. ALTHOUGH THE FILM IS HURT BY THE FACT THAT KEANU REEVES IS IN IT, THE AMAZING SPECIAL EFFECTS AND MINDBLOWING PREMISE MAKE FOR AN EXCELLENT FILM. THE BULLET-DODGING SCENE MAY BECOME ONE OF THE MOST RECOGNIZABLE SCENES IN FILM HISTORY.

MARK HAMILL, CARRIE FISHER, HARRISON FORD
1980 / DIRECTED BY IRVIN KERSHNER

10

THE EMPIRE
STRIKES BACK

NO MATTER HOW OLD YOU ARE WHEN YOU SEE THESE MOVIES, THE STAR WARS TRILOGY LEAVES A MARK ON YOUR MOVIE HISTORY. EVEN IF THE SPECIAL EFFECTS LOOK CHEESY, OR THE PUPPET WORK IS ODD, THE STORY LINE AND FIGHT SCENES NEVER GET OLD. LUKE SKYWALKER AND DARTH VADER WILL CONTINUE TO BE SOME OF THE GREATEST, MOST DEVELOPED CHARACTERS IN MOVIE HISTORY.

MATTHEW PERRY, BRUCE WILLIS, MICHAEL CLARKE DUNCAN, AMANDA PEET
2000 / DIRECTED BY JONATHAN LYNN

11

THE WHOLE
NINE YARDS

THIS IS ONE OF THE FEW COMEDIES I KNOW OF WHERE THERE IS ACTUALLY A PLOT. THE PHYSICAL COMEDY OF MATTHEW PERRY COMBINED WITH A HILARIOUS SCRIPT MAKES FOR BARRELS OF LAUGHS. EVEN THE MINOR CHARACTERS OF MICHAEL CLARKE DUNCAN, NATASHA HENSTRIDGE, AMANDA PEET, AND THE PARTICULARLY HYSTERICAL AND QUIRKY KEVIN POLLAK MAKE THIS COMEDY A WINNER EVERY TIME.

DENZEL WASHINGTON, JOHN GOODMAN, DONALD SUTHERLAND
1998 / DIRECTED BY GREGORY HOBLIT

12

FALLEN

I LOVE THIS MOVIE. FIRST OFF, MY BOY DENZEL WASHINGTON IS IN IT. SECONDLY, THE PLOT IS BOTH INTRIGUING AND CREEPY WITHOUT LOSING TOO MUCH CREDIBILITY. WASHINGTON PLAYS A PROTECTIVE UNCLE WHO MUST DIG DEEP INTO THE HISTORY OF A DEAD POLICE OFFICER WHILE UNCOVERING A MYSTERY OF A SPIRIT THAT IS SEEMINGLY UNSTOPPABLE. JOHN GOODMAN ACTS WONDERFULLY AS WASHINGTON'S PARTNER.

MATT DAMON, BEN AFFLECK, LINDA FIORENTINO, CHRIS ROCK
1999 / DIRECTED BY KEVIN SMITH

13

DOGMA

EXCLUDING THE FOUL-MOUTHED JAY, THIS KEVIN SMITH MOVIE IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM HIS OTHER JERSEY-BASED FILMS. SMITH TAKES A HUMOROUS, TONGUE-IN-CHEEK VIEW OF RELIGION AND SCORES BIG TIME. THE CAST IS DEEP, TALENTED, AND THEY ALL BRING THEIR OWN DETAILED CHARACTER TO SMITH'S INSANE PLOT. CHRIS ROCK IS PARTICULARLY FUNNY AS THE UNKNOWN 13TH APOSTLE, RUFUS.

MICHEAL DOUGLAS, SEAN PENN
1997 / DIRECTED BY DAVID FINCHER

14

THE GAME

I WILL BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT THAT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE PLOT IN THIS FILM IS QUITE LOW. HOWEVER, THE MOVIE'S CONCEPT IS STILL VERY INTRIGUING. DOUGLAS RECEIVES A GIFT FROM BROTHER PENN THAT INVITED DOUGLAS INTO A "GAME," OR SO DOUGLAS THINKS. THROUGHOUT THE FILM, THE AUDIENCE IS CONSTANTLY QUESTIONING THE EVENTS SURROUNDING DOUGLAS, WONDERING IF IT IS ALL A GAME OR REAL LIFE.

WILLEM DAFOE, SEAN PATRICK FLANNERY, NORMAN REEDUS
1999 / DIRECTED BY TROY DUFFY

15

THE
BOONDOCK
SAINTS

THIS BOSTON-BASED FILM IS ONE OF A KIND. FLANNERY AND REEDUS ARE A BROTHERLY TANDEM WHO PLAY CRIMINALS WITH A HIGHER CAUSE. THE MOVIE EXPLORES THE CONCEPT OF EVIL FIGHTING EVIL (ALMOST LIKE A SUPERHERO STORY). WILLEM DAFOE PLAYS THE MOST STRANGEST, CREEPIEST, AND DOWNRIGHT UNCOMFORTABLE DETECTIVE YOU'VE EVER SEEN. THE MINOR CHARACTERS IN THIS FILM ARE EXCELLENT.

VOICES OF: RAY ROMANO, JOHN LEGUIZAMO, DENIS LEARY
2002 / DIRECTED BY CHRIS WEDGE

16

ICE AGE

THIS MOVIE TAKES THE CAKE AS MY FAVORITE ANIMATED MOVIE OF ALL-TIME. "ALADDIN" AND "TOY STORY" ARE CLOSE, BUT NOTHING MATCHES THE INNOVATIVE STYLE AND HILARIOUS VOICEOVERS LIKE "ICE AGE." LEGUIZAMO, AS SID THE SLOTH, STEALS THE SHOW. HIS OVERCONFIDENCE AND LISP ARE VERY FUNNY. THE MOVIE KEEPS KIDS INTERESTED, BUT THERE'S PLENTY OF HUMOR FOR ADULTS, INCLUDING A GREAT DODO BIRD SCENE.

DENZEL WASHINGTON, ETHAN HAWKE
2001 / DIRECTED BY ANTOINE FUQUA

17

TRAINING DAY

THIS MOVIE IS AS TOUGH AS NAILS. WASHINGTON, MAKING HIS THIRD APPEARANCE ON THE TOP 20, PLAYS A STREET-SMART COP WHO TRAINS ETHAN HAWKE. WASHINGTON ROMPS THROUGHOUT LOS ANGELES, CAUSING HAVOC EVERYWHERE HE STEPS, BUT CLAIMS THAT "YOU CAN SHOOT ME BUT YOU CAN'T KILL ME." WASHINGTON WON THE OSCAR FOR THIS PERFORMANCE, YET ANOTHER REASON THIS MOVIE IS TOP 20 WORTHY.

SAMUEL L. JACKSON, JEFFREY WRIGHT, CHRISTIAN BALE
2000 / DIRECTED BY JOHN SINGLETON

18

SHAFT

WHEN I FIRST HEARD THIS MOVIE WAS BEING MADE, SAMUEL L. JACKSON COULDN'T HAVE BEEN A BETTER PICK. JACKSON'S ATTITUDE AND LIKABILITY MAKE THIS MOVIE A HIT, BUT THERE'S ALSO A SOLID PLOT, EXCELLENT ACTING BY WRIGHT AND BALE, AND SOME GREAT HUMOR. THE SCENE IN WHICH WE FIRST MEET WRIGHT'S CHARACTER IS PARTICULARLY FUNNY AS JACKSON TREATS HIM LIKE ONLY SHAFT CAN.

JOHNNY DEPP, GEOFFREY RUSH, ORLANDO BLOOM, KEIRA KNIGHTLEY
2003 / DIRECTED BY GORE VERBINSKI

19

PIRATES OF THE
CARIBBEAN

NO MATTER WHAT AGE YOU ARE, THIS MOVIE IS NOTHING BUT FUN. DEPP IS HYSTERICAL AND HEROIC IN THE ROLE OF CAPTAIN JACK SPARROW. THE PIRATED WORLD IS WELL-CREATED BY JERRY BRUCKHEIMER, WITH PLENTY OF SWASHBUCKLING AND PIRATE TREASURE TO GO AROUND. THE COSTUMES ARE ALSO EXCELLENT, MAKING FOR A MORE AUTHENTIC WORLD. CHECK FOR SEVERAL REFERENCES TO THE DISNEYWORLD RIDE.

MARTIN SHEEN, MARLIN BRANDO, ROBERT DUVAL, DENNIS HOPPER
1979 / DIRECTED BY FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA

20

APOCALYPSE
NOW

I'VE NEVER BEEN ONE FOR WAR MOVIES, BUT THIS MOVIE IS EXCELLENT. IT IS LOOSELY BASED ON ONE OF MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE BOOKS, "HEART OF DARKNESS," AND IT IS A PAINFUL LOOK AT THE VIETNAM WAR. MARLIN BRANDO GIVES AN UNBELIEVABLE PERFORMANCE AS KURTZ, A GENERAL WHO HAS GONE FAR BEYOND THE REALM OF HUMAN EVILS. EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS CREEPY, OTHER-WORDLY FILM MAKES IT TOP 20 MATERIAL.
