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Young Mr. Lincoln, Ford, John, 1939

Four sons, Ford, John, 1928

The man who shot Liberty Valance, Ford, John, 1962

Stagecoach, Ford, John, 1939

The iron horse, Ford, John, 1924

Two rode together, Ford, John, 1961



# PRISONERS OF THE DESERT

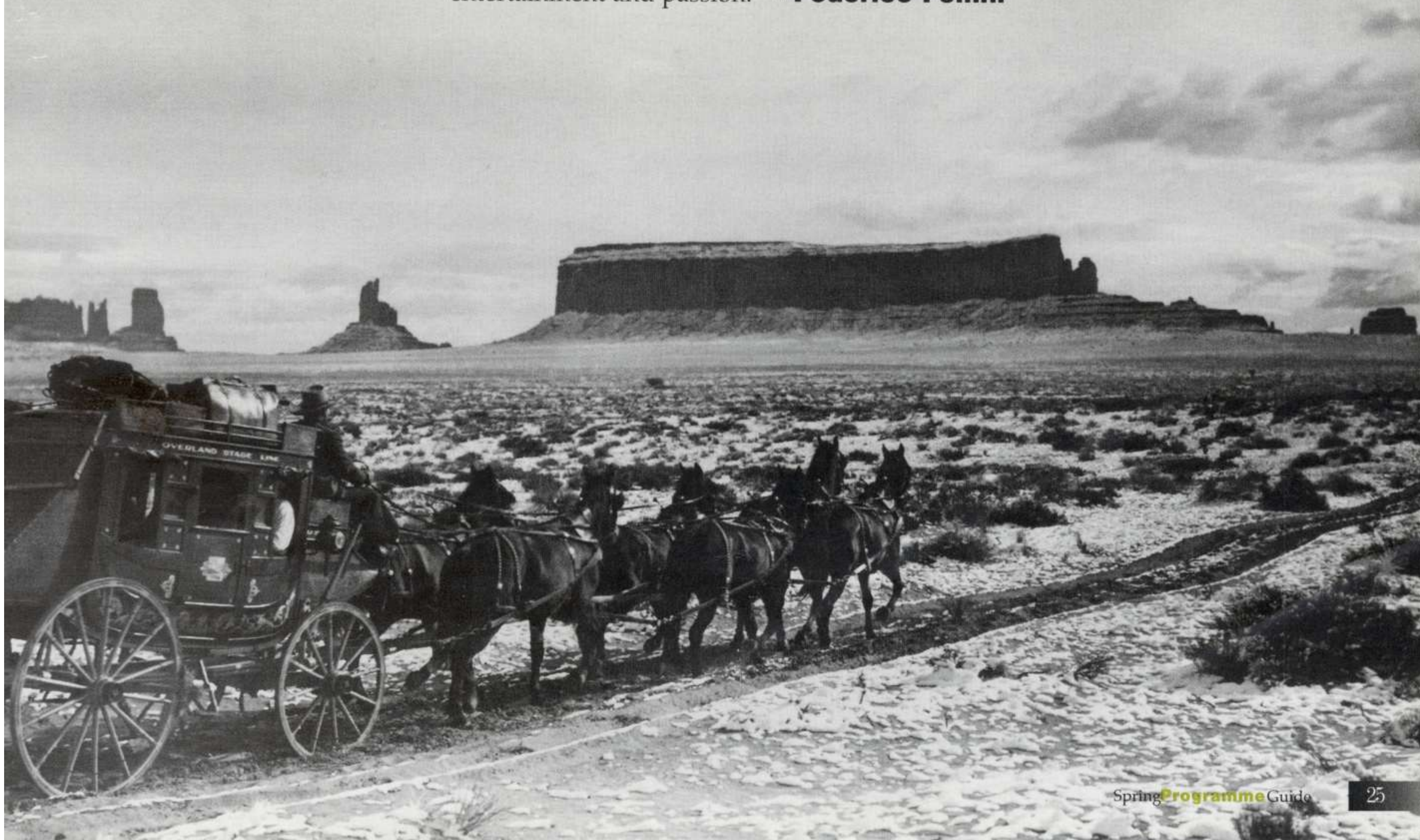
## *the films of* **JOHN FORD**

STAGECOACH

"I think nowadays, while literary men seem to have neglected their epic duties, the epic has been saved for us, strangely enough, by the Westerns . . . has been saved for the world by of all places, Hollywood." – **Jorge Luis Borges**

"When I think of Ford, I sense the smell of barracks, of horses, of gunpowder. I visualize silent and unending flatlands, the unending trips of his heroes. But, above all, I feel a man who liked motion pictures, who lived for the cinema, who has made out of motion pictures a fairy tale to be lived by himself, a dwelling in which to live with joyous spontaneity of entertainment and passion." – **Federico Fellini**

Cinemathèque Ontario  
Spring 2000  
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# the films of JOHN FORD



HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY

**T**here is no real dispute as to the stature of John Ford the filmmaker. Along with Alfred Hitchcock and Howard Hawks, he resides safely in Hollywood's pantheon, his reputation now secure: "Ford's work is much richer than Hawks" (Peter Wollen); he is "among the greatest artists the cinema has so far produced" (Robin Wood). Ford was originally perceived as a fine craftsman working within the Hollywood factory, and American critics of the time were generally supportive. *The New York Times* reviewers of the forties and fifties, Frank S. Nugent and Bosley Crowther, were sympathetic, the tonier James Agee a qualified supporter, and Manny Farber an admirer who called Ford "the moviemaker's Mr. Movie."

It was the European critics who elevated Ford from the status of craftsman to that of *auteur*. Lindsay Anderson championed the work through the Oxford-based *Sequence* in the late forties and fifties, but it wasn't until his work found favour with the French in the fifties that Ford's importance began to be sensed in the country where he made most of his films. André Bazin (who else!): "John Ford struck the ideal balance between social myth, historical reconstruction, psychological truth and the traditional theme of the Western *mise en scène*." The efforts of Andrew Sarris and Peter Bogdanovich in the sixties and seventies went the furthest in reclaiming Ford from the hands of foreigners, who, perhaps with the distance that geography afforded, could see the immense contribution that this gruff and acerbic filmmaker had made toward an understanding of America.

America was unquestionably Ford's subject, and what he found there cannot be reduced to cliché; nor is it easy to summarize what his vision of America encompassed, so full was it of apparently incompatible and contradictory attitudes. It is certainly true to say that over the decades Ford grew as an artist; his vision underwent thought, revision, and reworking. The

voyage from the exuberance of *THE IRON HORSE* (1924), where the coming of the railway is depicted with wide-eyed enthusiasm, to *THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE* (1962), a sober rethinking of how the West has in a sense been lost, is one of the most striking in the history of the cinema.

Ford directed well over 100 films. Much of his earliest work, almost 40 films from the silent period alone, is lost, but what we are left with, about 60 titles, ranges over two centuries of American history, from the War of Independence (*DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK*, 1939) to the Second World War (*THEY WERE EXPENDABLE*, 1945), in the process passing through the pre-Civil War period (*YOUNG MR. LINCOLN*, 1939), the Indian wars of the mid-19th century (*FORT APACHE*, 1948; *SHE WORE A YELLOW RIBBON*, 1949; *WAGON MASTER*, 1950; *RIO GRANDE*, 1950; *THE SEARCHERS*, 1956), the Depression of the thirties (*THE GRAPES OF WRATH*, 1940), and the Pacific War. During his six decades as a filmmaker, Ford touched on a variety of genres: historical costume dramas; war films; adventure films; family dramas; comedies; and gangster films; but his reputation rests largely on the dozen or so sound-era Westerns that are woven like a fine thread through the tapestry of his career. With the Western, Ford could explore those themes and ideas which were closest to him as an artist and which inhabited an iconic and mythological landscape that reflected vital parts of America. "Like Scripture, the Western offers a world of metaphor, a range of latent content that can be made manifest depending on the filmmaker's awareness and preoccupations" (Jim Kitses).

The young Ford directed a multitude of silent Westerns in the twenties (most of which have disappeared), but it wasn't until *STAGECOACH* (1939) that he embarked on a voyage which would see him explore ideas central to the making of America. Henry Nash Smith, in his book *Virgin Land*, charted the way in which the West has functioned as a symbol of garden or wilderness in

America's consciousness. "Is the West a Garden of natural dignity and innocence offering refuge from the decadence of civilization? Or is it a treacherous Desert stubbornly resisting the gradual sweep of agrarian progress and community values?" (Kitses). Such oppositions extended deep into Ford's work: "garden versus wilderness, ploughshare versus sabre, settler versus nomad, European versus Indian, civilized versus savage, book versus gun, married versus unmarried, East versus West" (Wollen).

These antinomies form the core of Ford's work. Above all, his vision is closely wedded to ideas of community and family. His is a tribal vision and the films are full of situations where communities are tested. The relationship between these communities and the individuals who touch them provides the films' tension and mythic power. While deeply in love with the ideas of community and family, he was drawn to the anarchy of the individual who stood in uneasy relation to society. In the earlier Westerns these nomads were effortlessly incorporated into the community (*STAGECOACH*; *WAGON MASTER*; *MY DARLING CLEMENTINE*, 1946), but by the mid-fifties, most magnificently in Ford's daring portrait of a psychotic racist in *THE SEARCHERS*, the fissures were too great to allow for easy resolution.

One of Ford's greatest talents was the ease with which he balanced the epic with the intimate. The sweep of history and the magnificence of the landscapes in which his protagonists play out their stories are integral to the grandeur of the films, but are equalled by those most private and revealing moments in his characters' lives: a young Abe Lincoln addressing the gravestone of his dead lover Ann Rutledge in *YOUNG MR. LINCOLN*; Martha Edwards, wife and mother, caressing the cloak of her brother-in-law in a gesture of suppressed love in *THE SEARCHERS*; the veteran cavalry officer Captain Nathan Brittles taking out a pair of glasses in front of his troops to read the inscription on the watch given to him on his retirement in *SHE WORE A YELLOW RIBBON* (1949). There is an almost Shakespearean sensibility in the films, extending to a measured alternation of the demands of high drama and low comedy – Henry Fonda, John Wayne, and Jimmy Stewart the valiant heroes, Victor McLaglen, Ward Bond, and Harry Carey Jr. providing much of the comic relief. Fonda, Wayne, and Stewart added another dimension – the arc from "the quiet idealism of the early Fonda through the rough pragmatism of the Wayne *persona* to the cynical self-interest of James Stewart" (Kitses) followed Ford's growing disenchantment as an artist with America and the West.

Amidst Ford's focus on family and community, the rituals of life – marriages, dances, parades, burials, singing – appear constantly, always central to his world, never as mere decoration. The unforgettable moment of Wyatt Earp (Fonda) dancing with Clementine Carter (Cathy Downs) in the unfinished church in *MY DARLING CLEMENTINE*, or the Mormons laying timber planks on a dry desert floor to dance and celebrate the discovery of water in *WAGON MASTER*, are effortlessly conceived and perhaps deceptive in effect. While they appear to be essentially moments of relaxation, they in fact embody much of what Ford values – a sense of social, moral, and spiritual communion.

Ford was undoubtedly a masculine director, and the male code of honour, loyalty, and sacrifice is never far from his view. Nostalgic, backward-looking, "the supreme American film poet of homecomings and leave-takings, of last stands and lost causes" (Sarris), Ford created heroes who endured where Hawks's excelled. But, if Ford is a romantic, his West is never romanticized. As the child of an immigrant who left Ireland during the 19th century for the promise of a better life, Ford creates a curious depiction of America,



the land of hope, this so-called Paradise: a dry, parched desert. As one character says at the end of *THE SEARCHERS*: "Some day this country's going to be a fine place to live." A future invoked from an uncertain present.

These "new world films," where the inhabitants are literally "prisoners of the desert" (the French title for *THE SEARCHERS* was *LA PRISONNIÈRE DU DÉSERT*), stand in striking contrast to those set in the "old country" – most often his beloved Ireland. In some strange inverted fashion (this was what the immigrants to America were fleeing from after all), these are the films where we see what "the garden" looks, or looked, like. In both *THE QUIET MAN* (1952) and *HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY* (1941), Ford lovingly paints his Eden, as a lush, green landscape in the former, gradually becoming industrialized in the latter.

The theme that underlies all of Ford's Westerns is the transposition of this garden to America – what would it mean, what was the cost? Unquestionably, Ford's attitude is enigmatic and underwent change. His valedictory films, *TWO RODE TOGETHER* (1961) and *THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE*, show the change in his outlook from the breezy idealism of *STAGECOACH*. A culture of money has replaced the culture of community, the West is depicted as a place where legend has replaced fact, and, most damningly, a creeping cynicism has begun to corrupt the idyll.

Ford was accused of being a filmmaker who indulged in one-dimensional portraits of women, blacks, and native Americans. In the autumn of his career, he turned to these subjects in a triad of films which attempt to address earlier attitudes. *SEVEN WOMEN* (1965), his last feature film, centres on a group of women missionaries in mid-thirties China – there is no male hero. *SERGEANT RUTLEDGE* (1960) portrays a black cavalry trooper wrongly accused of raping and killing a white woman. And *CHEYENNE AUTUMN* (1964) is a film where the Indians become the protagonists and the cavalry the enemy. These late films are further evidence of the complex man that Ford was, an artist prepared to revisit the canvas of his great project and address its flaws.

Ford has often been compared to Jean Renoir, another great humanist whose project was no less ambitious. (Ford admired Renoir greatly and had considered remaking Renoir's *LA GRANDE ILLUSION*.) Both wore their love of their characters on their sleeves, and both men avoided drawing attention to the camera. (Ford believed one should never move the camera unless the scene demanded it and shot most of his dialogue exchanges at shoulder height: "That's the way I see when I talk to someone.") Working within a Hollywood system oriented to the bottom line, Ford managed to map out a personal terrain that is remarkably homogeneous and free from compromise (although he felt many films were altered in important ways from his original vision). What one finally remembers from the work is an extraordinary sense of landscape married to a timeless belief in community. Humour is never very far away in a Ford film, tempering the struggles and battles fought by bands of pioneers and outlaws as they challenge this landscape and attempt to come to terms with what it means to try and live in these wayward places. – **Piers Handling**

The John Ford retrospective is comprised of many 35mm archival prints and has been made possible through the generous assistance of the following individuals and organizations: Steffen Pierce, Harvard Film Archive, Cambridge; David Schwartz, American Museum of the Moving Image, New York; Sandra Birnhack, The Killiam Collection, New York; Charles Hopkins, UCLA Film & Television Archive, Hollywood; Michael Friend, Academy Film Archive, Beverly Hills; Mike Schlesinger, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Los Angeles; and Robert Daudelin, La Cinémathèque québécoise, Montréal.



STAGECOACH

## NEW 35MM PRINT! HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY

Director: John Ford  
USA 1941 118 minutes  
Cast: Walter Pidgeon, Maureen O'Hara, Donald Crisp

*HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY* may be forever remembered as the film that won the Best Picture Oscar® over Welles's *CITIZEN KANE*. (It also won awards for Ford as Best Director and for Arthur Miller as Best Cinematographer.) One of Ford's richest pictorial and narrative achievements, this reminiscence about the passing of a traditional way of life in a Welsh mining town "neither fades nor fails after repeated viewings" (James Monaco). As remembered from adulthood in a voice-over narration by youngest son Huw (played as a child by a young Roddy McDowall), the populous Morgan family seems to form the heart and the conscience of a tight-knit community, one which often expresses its character in communal song. The inevitable shifts of an unpredictable industrial economy, and a growing class consciousness, however, soon bring conflict to the family and their valley, and see the Morgan sons leaving for better opportunities in the new world, while their beautiful daughter Angharad (Maureen O'Hara) must choose between her love for a penniless clergyman (Walter Pidgeon) and the attentions of the mine-owner's son. "Elegant and eloquent" (*Time Out*). (Presented as part of the Saturday Movie Matinee series; see page 41.)

Saturday, April 1 2:00 p.m.

## THE SEARCHERS

Director: John Ford  
USA 1956 119 minutes  
Cast: John Wayne, Vera Miles, Jeffrey Hunter

Ford's "finest and most ambitious film. . . . A deeply emotional experience that is also a grand entertainment, *THE SEARCHERS* is a true American experience" (James Monaco). A mainstay in polls and lists of the greatest films of all time, *THE SEARCHERS* is inexhaustible, both as ideological text and as a work of great resonance and beauty. John Wayne plays Ethan Edwards, a bitter, taciturn Confederate veteran whose family is slaughtered and whose niece is abducted by Comanches. Ethan's search for the girl turns into a vengeful seven-year odyssey into the wilderness of Monument Valley. As controversial as it is influential – Schrader, Scorsese, Spielberg, and many others have invoked it in their own films – *THE SEARCHERS* has been condemned as racist, and praised for its psychological and thematic complexity, formal beauty, and harsh poeticism. "Moving and mysterious. . . . A riveting, tragic, and complex experience" (David Thomson).

Friday, April 7 6:30 p.m.

## STAGECOACH

Director: John Ford  
USA 1939 96 minutes  
Cast: Claire Trevor, John Wayne

*STAGECOACH*, Ford once quipped, "started a flood of Westerns, and we've been suffering from them ever since." Leaving behind the overfamiliar soundstage sets of Thirties formula Westerns (Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy, et al.) in favour of location shooting in the vastness of Monument Valley, *STAGECOACH* brought new life to a tired genre. Its influence can be seen in virtually every Western that followed. This complex ensemble piece, which gave John Wayne his first major role as outlaw The Ringo Kid, charts the progress of an ill-assorted company of strangers as they venture through hostile territory in a stagecoach vulnerable to attack by raiding Apaches. The danger that threatens the stagecoach is not only a source of constant suspense, but a crucible that elicits the essence of each character. A stunning technical achievement, a moving and multi-faceted story, "*STAGECOACH* initiated the modern American cinema" (Andrew Sarris).

Friday, April 7 8:45 p.m.

## THE LONG VOYAGE HOME

Director: John Ford  
USA 1940 105 minutes  
Cast: John Wayne, Thomas Mitchell, Ian Hunter

"Moody, shadowy and romantically fatalistic" (Andrew Sarris). Adapted from four one-act plays by Eugene O'Neill (and reportedly O'Neill's favourite among the films made of his work), *THE LONG VOYAGE HOME* was produced during Ford's incredibly rich 1939-40 period. Set during the early days of World War II, *VOYAGE* is a "powerful saga" (James Monaco) of the loves, hates, and desires of the men of the SS *Glencairn*, each in his own way obsessed with death and seemingly in search of it. The film opens during a last fling on a Caribbean island – complete with exotic maidens and the requisite brawl – before the crew (including John Wayne in the unlikely role of an innocent Swede) sets sail through U-boat infested waters to deliver a cargo of dynamite to England. Celebrated for the sensuous and expressionistic camerawork of Gregg Toland (*CITIZEN KANE*), *VOYAGE* is a dark, haunting, and exquisitely atmospheric visual experience. "One of the finest of all movies that deal with life at sea" (Pauline Kael).

Saturday, April 8 6:30 p.m.



# the films of JOHN FORD

## THE GRAPES OF WRATH

Director: John Ford

USA 1940 129 minutes

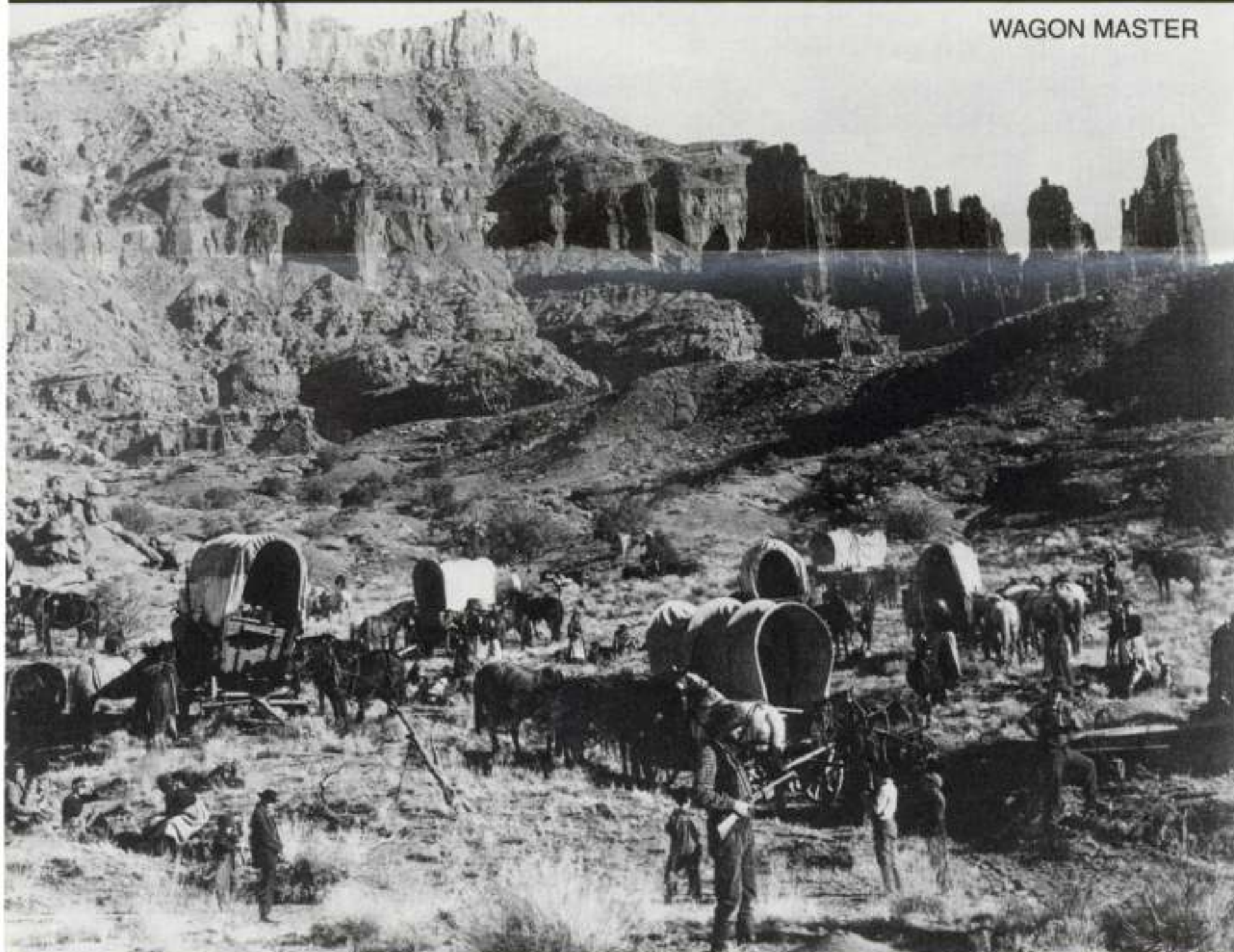
Cast: Henry Fonda, Jane Darwell, John Carradine

Ford followed up his incredible 1939 winning streak (STAGECOACH, YOUNG MR. LINCOLN, and DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK) with this unforgettable adaptation of John Steinbeck's classic novel, photographed by the brilliant Gregg Toland. The Joad family is evicted from an unproductive tenant farm in Oklahoma, so they undertake the arduous journey to California, where they find not greener pastures but ever-worse exploitation as migrant workers. When their friend, the ex-preacher Casey (John Carradine), is killed as the leader of a strike, Tom Joad (Henry Fonda, in one of his greatest performances) leaves the family to take up labour organizing. Despite Ford's later disavowals of any social or political intent – he preferred to describe the film as a "family study" – the film stands as a courageous and sharp indictment of the inevitable damage inflicted by the capitalist system. "Even today . . . few films appear quite so seditious, bitter, and damning" (Tag Gallagher). Ford received the 1940 Academy Award® for Best Director for THE GRAPES OF WRATH.

Saturday, April 8 8:45 p.m.



THE GRAPES OF WRATH



WAGON MASTER

## THE QUIET MAN

Director: John Ford

USA 1952 129 minutes

Cast: John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara

This was a long-cherished project for Ford, originally scheduled for production in 1937, but delayed time and again for economic reasons. THE QUIET MAN reverses the movement of HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY: here, former prizefighter Sean Thornton (John Wayne) returns to his home town in Ireland – Technicolor Ireland! – after living most of his life in America. Hoping for a peaceful existence, he finds himself fighting again, this time for the hand of the scarlet-haired and fiery-tempered Mary Kate Danaher (Maureen O'Hara); *The Taming of the Shrew* is an obvious antecedent. The course of the story allows Ford to engage in an analysis of every element in the society of his beloved County Connemara, from the churches to the pubs, from the fields to the gentry and the IRA, and his skill in quickly and humorously sketching the disparate elements that make up a community is at its height here. "A heroically funny film" (*A Guide To World Cinema*) which earned Ford his fourth Oscar® as Best Director.

Sunday, April 9 3:00 p.m.

THE QUIET MAN

## WAGON MASTER

Director: John Ford

USA 1950 86 minutes

Cast: Ward Bond, Ben Johnson, Joanne Dru

"The nearest any director has come to an *avant-garde* Western" (Lindsay Anderson). WAGON MASTER was a departure for Ford – a smaller production and a more personal film than those that preceded it, with no stars in the lead roles. Years later the director would say, "WAGON MASTER came closest to what I had hoped to achieve . . . [It is] the purest and simplest Western I made." Centred on the westward voyage of a wagon train of Mormons headed to their "promised land," the story opens up to include a small band of show people (including the obligatory "loose women"), a couple of horse traders, a family of vicious outlaws called the Cleggs, the posse that pursues them, and the natives of the territory. Here, more than in any other Ford Western, we find a relaxed naturalism that illuminates the beauty of the everyday: "it is WAGON MASTER's thesis that each little happening is grace" (Tag Gallagher). "WAGON MASTER is among the most stylized of Ford's Westerns, and one of the most 'perfect' . . . its elements beautifully proportioned and easily contained within the total pattern" (Robin Wood).

Sunday, April 9 1:00 p.m.





## BEAUTIFUL 35MM PRINT!

### THE IRON HORSE

Director: John Ford

USA 1924 approx. 110 minutes minutes silent

Cast: George O'Brien, Madge Bellamy

THE IRON HORSE has been compared to Griffith's BIRTH OF A NATION (in which Ford appeared as an extra) for its historical myth-making, its schematic racial stereotyping, and the scale of the production, which involved thousands of extras, rail layers, buffalo, horses, cattle, a cavalry regiment, the building of two complete towns, and the use of the original locomotives that met when the transcontinental railroad was finally completed. It also marks the beginning of Ford's use of the figure of Abraham Lincoln, to whom he would return in YOUNG MR. LINCOLN and THE PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND. Here Lincoln is the master reconciler, bringing the country together after the devastation of the Civil War by means of the great railway that would stretch from the east coast to the west, a project beset by hostile Indians and business interests. "Each scene and each character looks fresh struck at the mint of myth, while every frame asserts that this is the making of America and of the American cinema" (Time Out).

Presented with live piano accompaniment by Rick Friend.

Tuesday, April 11 6:30 p.m.

### THE INFORMER

Director: John Ford

USA 1935 91 minutes

Cast: Victor McLaglen, Heather Angel

This early Ford consolidated the director's critical reputation and picked up four Academy Awards®, including Best Director, Best Screenplay (by Dudley Nichols, from the novel by Liam O'Flaherty), and Best Actor (Victor McLaglen). Set during the Irish Rebellion of 1922, THE INFORMER immerses its story of treachery and sacrifice in a dark, expressionist pictorial style. As the towering, uncomprehending Gypo Nolan, McLaglen is on screen for nearly every shot in the film, which follows Gypo's descent from fugitive to traitor as he tries to get the money to take his girlfriend and himself to America. Distrusted by his former Irish nationalist comrades because he has allowed a British prisoner to escape, hunted by the British as a rebel, and beset by absolute poverty, Gypo, equally impulsive in his pugnaciousness and his generosity, betrays his cause and his best friend, and then betrays himself. "One of the director's finest works. . . . McLaglen never again reached such heights, although he appeared in around 150 films" (James Monaco).

Tuesday, April 11 8:45 p.m.

## 35MM RESTORED PRINT!

### RIO GRANDE

Director: John Ford

USA 1950 105 minutes

Cast: John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara

Wayne plays Lieutenant-Colonel Kirby Yorke, the commander of a remote cavalry outpost, and Maureen O'Hara is Kathleen, his estranged wife. When their son Jeff (Claude Jarman Jr.) winds up posted to Kirby's troop, Kathleen appears, eager to buy the young man out of his enlistment, reawakening the romance between her and her husband in the process. For the first time, Kirby finds himself torn between military and familial duty, as he and his company battle marauding Apaches from a position hampered by its proximity to the Mexican border. "An excellent post-Civil War tale with romance, humour, and music, RIO GRANDE is one of Ford's great achievements" (James Monaco). Print courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive.

Wednesday, April 12 8:45 p.m.

### FOUR SONS

Director: John Ford

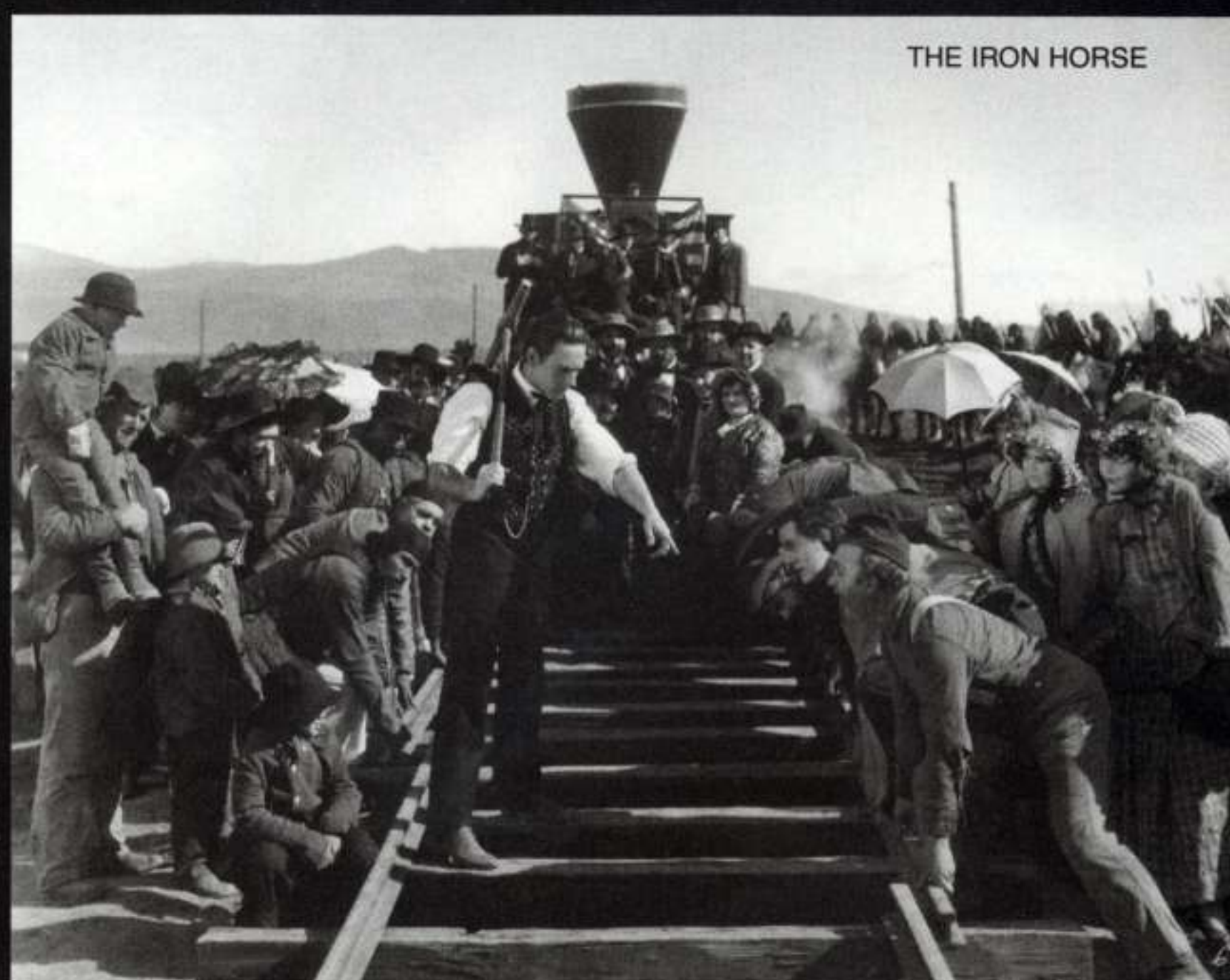
USA 1928 100 minutes silent

Cast: Margaret Mann, James Hall

The shadow of Murnau's SUNRISE looms large over FOUR SONS: the film's camerawork is uncharacteristically mobile for Ford, its lighting elaborate and atmospheric, its acting uncharacteristically studied, and its sets are literally recycled from the production of SUNRISE. Ford remained fond of the film throughout his career, despite its deviation from his usual cinematic style. FOUR SONS traces the tragic loss of a German mother's sons to World War I, and her eventual decision to join the only one left living, now an immigrant in the United States. The mother in this film can be seen as a precursor to the all-important mother figures in HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY and THE GRAPES OF WRATH. FOUR SONS was Ford's most popular silent film after THE IRON HORSE, loved by audiences and praised by critics of the time. "Despite its somewhat maudlin tone, Ford's sheer filmmaking skill wins through" (A Guide to World Cinema).

Presented with live piano accompaniment by Rick Friend.

Thursday, April 13 6:30 p.m.



THE IRON HORSE



THE INFORMER



RIO GRANDE



# the films of **JOHN FORD**

## **THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE**

Director: John Ford

USA 1962 123 minutes

Cast: James Stewart, John Wayne, Vera Miles

Ford's last black-and-white film, a reflection on the myth of the Western, is ranked by some critics among the director's greatest works. Tom Doniphon (John Wayne), a tough frontiersman, and Ransom Stoddard (James Stewart), an aspiring lawyer, form Ford's classic coalition of contradictions: the two must form an alliance to battle the nasty, tyrannical Liberty Valance (a scenery-chewing Lee Marvin). In his role as a civilizing force, however, Stoddard will inevitably destroy Doniphon's way of life, inseparable from the lawless West in which he lives, even as he courts Hallie (Vera Miles), the woman Doniphon loves. Structured as a long flashback – late in life Stoddard and Hallie, long married, return to Shinbone for Doniphon's funeral – the story emerges as the couple recount the events of Doniphon's life to a reporter, who in the end concludes, "This is the West. When the legend becomes the fact, print the legend." "THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE is a great filmmaker's own critique of the form in which he did his best work. . . . [It] ranks second to THE SEARCHERS (1956) in Ford's oeuvre" (Douglas Gomery).

Thursday, April 13 8:45 p.m.

## **35MM RESTORED PRINT!**

## **MY DARLING CLEMENTINE**

Director: John Ford

USA 1946 97 minutes

Cast: Henry Fonda, Linda Darnell, Victor Mature

Ford claimed to have known the real Wyatt Earp (played here by Henry Fonda) during his early years in movies, and to have staged the famous "shoot-out at the OK Corral" in MY DARLING CLEMENTINE just as it actually happened. (Historians, however, maintain that the real events were very different from those seen in this and the many other movies about the incident.) Former marshall turned cattle driver Earp and his three brothers arrive in Tombstone, Arizona, only to have one of the brothers killed and their cattle rustled by the evil and degenerate Clantons. Eager to see justice done, Wyatt takes up the badge again, eventually joining forces with Doc Holliday, an alcoholic gambler who is being pursued by Bostonian belle Clementine Carter (Cathy Downs) and saloon singer Chihuahua (Linda Darnell). Earp's commitment to law, originally taken up only to avenge his brother's death, grows in importance as Earp becomes more involved with the community and falls in love with Clementine. "MY DARLING CLEMENTINE, a masterwork in its own right, foreshadows Ford's greatest films" (Douglas Gomery). Print courtesy of UCLA Film & Television Archive.

Sunday, April 16 2:00 p.m. (note start time)

## **YOUNG MR. LINCOLN**

Director: John Ford

USA 1939 100 minutes

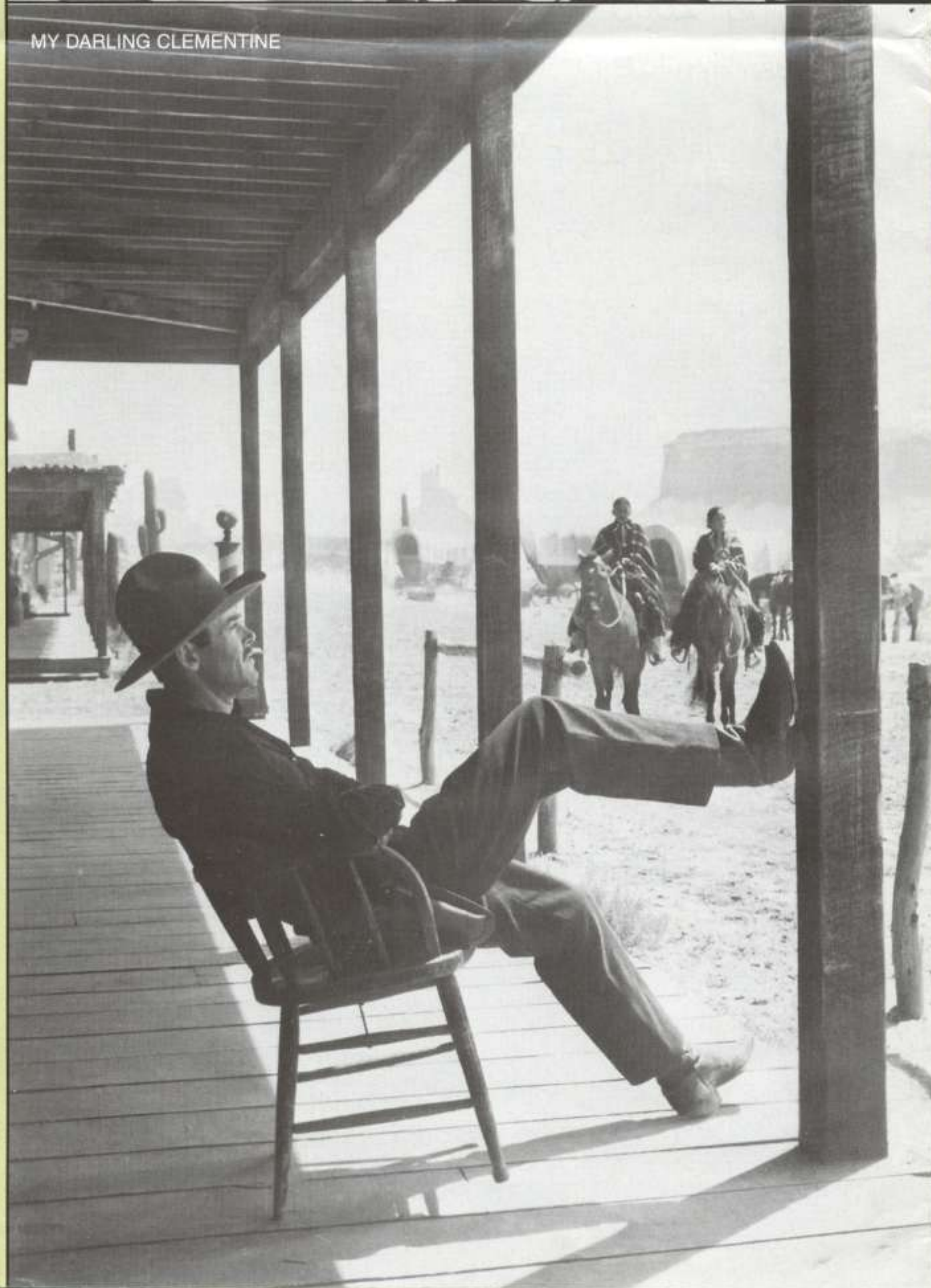
Cast: Henry Fonda, Alice Brady

None other than Sergei Eisenstein wrote that if he could have been responsible for the making of one American movie, "it would be YOUNG MR. LINCOLN," going on to praise the film for "its unity, its artistry, its genuine beauty." The film's deliberate, unhurried tempo – as Otis Ferguson put it, "when [Ford] takes his time he never throws it away" – seems to place the story in a timeless world of historical myth, and YOUNG MR. LINCOLN later became famous as the subject of a key *Cahiers du cinéma* essay which inaugurated an era of structuralist criticism. The film charts the early adult life of Abraham Lincoln (Henry Fonda, in his first Ford film) up to the year 1837, encompassing the death of girlfriend Ann Rutledge (Pauline Moore), his decision to become a lawyer, and his first great legal success. Fonda's subtle, affecting performance suggests an uncertain man beginning to discover his own great destiny and a growing sense of power. "A deeper, more multileveled work than STAGECOACH. . . . it seems in retrospect one of the finest prewar pictures" (Tag Gallagher).

Tuesday, April 18 8:45 p.m.



THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE



MY DARLING CLEMENTINE





CHEYENNE AUTUMN

## NEW 35MM PRINT!

### **TWO RODE TOGETHER**

Director: John Ford

USA 1961 109 minutes

Cast: James Stewart, Richard Widmark, Shirley Jones

Reminiscent of *THE SEARCHERS* in plot and structure, *TWO RODE TOGETHER* is a markedly darker and more cynical exploration of Ford's classic themes. The "hero," a mercenary US marshall named McCabe, lives with saloon-keeper "stiletto-in-her-garter" Belle and is skimming ten per cent of everything that goes on in town. Hired to trade guns for hostages captured by the Comanches, McCabe, with Lieutenant Gary (Richard Widmark), completes the mission, but with tragic results. The idealism and mythic qualities typifying Ford's earlier Westerns become suspect in the world of *TWO RODE TOGETHER*, where material values replace spiritual ones, and no positive course of action seems available. The single-shot riverside conversation between Stewart and Widmark (improvised by the actors when they thought they were rehearsing) was "frankly imitated by François Truffaut (in *JULES AND JIM*) and Peter Bogdanovich (in *THE LAST PICTURE SHOW*). . . . One of the screen's most memorable images of amiable communion between friends" (Andrew Sarris). James Stewart has "never been tougher or more admirable" (*The New York Times*).

Thursday, April 20 6:30 p.m.

### **CHEYENNE AUTUMN**

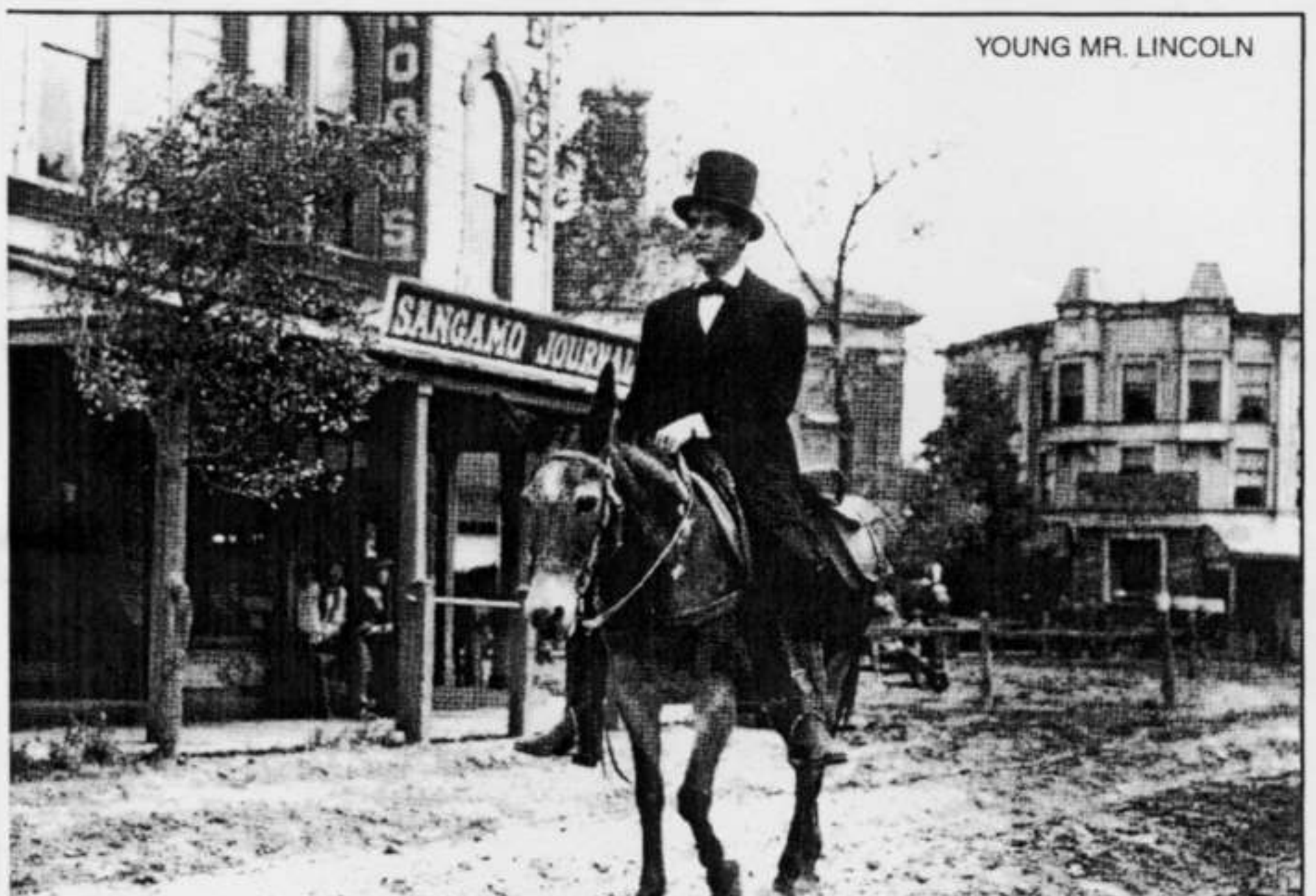
Director: John Ford

USA 1964 145 minutes

Cast: Richard Widmark, Carroll Baker, Sal Mineo

In an interview with Peter Bogdanovich, Ford said, "I've killed more Indians than Custer, Beecher, and Chivington put together"; in *CHEYENNE AUTUMN*, he focuses on the consequences of this historical (and cinematic) slaughter by recreating the 1,500 mile exodus of the Cheyenne nation from a miserable reservation in Oklahoma to their ancestral home, and the violence visited upon them on the way. Many have interpreted *CHEYENNE AUTUMN* as Ford's attempt to atone for the apparent racism of many of his Westerns, though others, including biographer Tag Gallagher, dispute the charge altogether. The scope of the film is vast, encompassing the everyday horrors of American expansionism; the politics of the American military and the cravenness of the press; the principled resistance of Quaker pacifists; complex family relations among the tenacious Cheyenne; and an odd humorous interlude in Dodge City. "The American Indian uprisings have rarely been treated more sympathetically than in this magnificent film epic" (*A Guide to World Cinema*).

Saturday, April 22 2:00 p.m.



YOUNG MR. LINCOLN