

Document Citation

Title	Johnny Guitar
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Mill Valley Film Festival</i>
Date	1980
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Johnny Guitar, Ray, Nicholas, 1954

Oddfellows Hall

2:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 9



Johnny Guitar

USA. 1954.

112 minutes

Director/Producer: Nicholas Ray; Screenwriter: Philip Yordan, based on the Roy Chanslor novel; Cinematography: Harry Stradling; Music: Victor Young; Principal Cast: Joan Crawford, Sterling Hayden, Mercedes McCambridge, Scott Brady

Joan Crawford sits down to play her grand piano. Done up in a white lace dress, stunning, in fact, she is not ready for a musicale. Her expected guests are a lynching posse. "Baroque -very baroque" was Director Nicholas Ray's amused comment. He had roughed up the rules again.

JOHNNY GUITAR is a mean, punch-gut western, unsettling when it came out in the mid 1950's, but one that fascinates a growing number of followers today. It concerns the flaming feud of an icy saloon keeper, Vienna, La Crawford, pitted against a hotly hysterical foe, Mercedes McCambridge. Gutteral against shrill, they crowd the men of the cast - Sterling Hayden and Scott Brady - into the shadows. (The ladies loathed each other off the set as well; at one point Crawford is said to have distributed her rival's wardrobe over a highway.)

The picture put to test a "go for broke" idea, according to Ray. The results are in. It's a winner.

J.P.