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REVIVALS IN FOCUS

A Critical Guide by Andrew Sarris & Tom Allen

Wednesday

Alfred Hitchcock's Rear Window (1954), from a screenplay by John Michael Hayes, based on Cornell Woolrich's short story, with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Raymond Burr, Thelma Ritter, and Wendell Corey, is both engagingly entertaining and ominous. Under the guise of a thriller, it is also one of Hitchcock's most profound insights into the voyeuristic attraction that is at the heart, if not in the soul, of all filmmaking. One may still carp that Hitch's view of bohemia is strictly Middle American and that the master of suspense occasionally nods in relating some of the details of detection in his murder mystery, but the crackling script goes right to the essence of the rich but underdeveloped themes in the original Woolrich story. The deliciously perverted relationship between Stewart's morbid photographer-snooper and Kelly's elegantly masochistic heroine (at her most *Vogue* coverish) receives sterling support from the professionalism of Corey's detective and Ritter's nurse. The incredible tension between the sound film in the foreground and the silent film across the courtyard with its broad pantomimes should enchant and enthrall all but the most obtuse Hitchknockians. (Co-feature: Hitchcock's 1956 *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, with Stewart) **Regency: through Saturday, 2:05, 6:15, 10:20.**

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