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The light that failed, Wellman, William, 1939

They drive by night, Walsh, Raoul, 1940

IDA LUPINO



Ida Lupino on the set of *Hard, Fast and Beautiful*

Hard, Fast and Beautiful



Ida Lupino photographed by
Scotty Welbourne

Ida Lupino was born in England but came to Hollywood when she was still a teenager, where she quickly established herself as an ingenue in a run of light comedies at Paramount. By the late 1930s, Lupino managed to shed her early image and established the persona for which she would become a star: the tough, no-nonsense dame at the center of hard-boiled classics by macho directors like Raoul Walsh and William Wellman.

Lupino's ambition was not however limited to acting. In the late '40s she founded with husband Collier Young an independent production company, The Filmakers, and proceeded to direct—and in several cases write and co-produce—a series of six powerful and gritty low-budget B-movies. Inspired by the brisk efficiency of action auteurs Walsh and Wellman, as well as the street-level social consciousness of her work at Warner Bros., Lupino's films are distinguished by strong, straightforward storytelling and a frank approach to sex, class and the quotidian reality of young women's lives.

Carrying on a tradition begun by directors Lois Weber and Dorothy Arzner—look for the Archive's Arzner retrospective next year—Ida Lupino maintained a career as a filmmaker at the height of Hollywood's male-dominated studio system. Her achievement, sometimes still overshadowed by her star persona, fully deserves the recognition offered by this complete retrospective of the features she directed as well as a sample of her finest acting performances.

Special thanks to: Fleur Buckley—British Film Institute; Lucy Moon—Museum of Modern Art; Caroline Yeager—George Eastman House; Bob O'Neil—Universal; Mala Powers.



This program is supported by a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts.



High Sierra



The Light That Failed

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

7:30 p.m.

NOT WANTED

(1949) Directed by Elmer Clifton, Ida Lupino
Lupino's feature directorial debut—credited to Elmer Clifton but helmed almost entirely by Lupino—NOT WANTED is a social-problem film starring Sally Forrest as a young woman frustrated by her colorless surroundings in a respectable small town. Fleeing to the big city in search of the moody itinerant piano player (Leo Penn) with whom she's had a one night stand, Forrest soon finds herself pregnant and alone in a harsh, unforgiving world. A low-budget effort shot partially on location, NOT WANTED vividly evokes a postwar working-class milieu and presents a sympathetic yet clear-eyed portrait of a heroine coming of age under difficult circumstances.

Producer: Collier Young, I. Lupino, Anson Bond. Screenplay: Paul Jarrico, I. Lupino, Malvin Wald. Cinematography: Henry Freulich. Editor: William Ziegler. With: Sally Forrest, Keefe Brasselle, Leo Penn, Dorothy Adams. 35mm, 91 min.

NEVER FEAR

(1950) Directed by Ida Lupino
The second production from Lupino and husband Collier Young's independent company The Filmakers, NEVER FEAR is a surprisingly unsentimental melodrama about a dancer whose career and romantic prospects are dashed when she contracts polio. Sally Forrest demonstrates remarkable range and maturity in the lead role, with Keefe Brasselle co-starring as her erstwhile dance partner and love interest. A deeply personal film, inspired in part by Lupino's own experience—she had polio at age 16 and suffered temporary paralysis in her hand—NEVER FEAR handles potentially bathetic material with low-key matter-of-factness, resulting in an understated yet moving treatment of a young woman's struggle with adversity.

Producer: Collier Young. Screenplay: I. Lupino, C. Young. Cinematography: Archie Stout. Editor: Wm. H. Ziegler, Harvey Manger. With: Sally Forrest, Keefe Brasselle, Hugh O'Brian, Eve Miller. 35mm, 81 min.

In person: Sally Forrest (schedule permitting)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20

7:00 p.m.

THEY DRIVE BY NIGHT

(1940) Directed by Raoul Walsh
A gritty, realistic melodrama about wildcat truckers—George Raft and Humphrey Bogart—who dream of running their own fleet while they eke out a subsistence living as independent haulers. Raft is the nominal star, but the film breaks midway through into an intense courtroom drama, centered mainly around Lupino as an ambitious woman on trial for murder. *Variety* claimed that Lupino was "[e]qual in importance" to Raft, and praised her for "turn[ing] on her dramatic talents for an exceptionally outstanding portrayal, unsympathetic though it is."

Warner Bros. Producer: Hal B. Wallis, Mark Hellinger. Screenplay: Jerry Wald, Richard Macaulay. Based on the novel Long Haul by Albert Isaac Bezzerides. Cinematography: Arthur Edeson. Editor: Thomas Richards. With: George Raft, Ann Sheridan, Ida Lupino, Humphrey Bogart. 35mm, nitrate, 93 min.

THE SEA WOLF

(1941) Directed by Michael Curtiz
Edward G. Robinson stars as the merciless captain of a sealing ship in this rip-roaring adaptation of the Jack London adventure yarn. Lupino plays a fugitive picked up by Robinson from a sinking ferry in San Francisco Bay. Lying ill below deck, she falls in love with would-be mutineer John Garfield, and together they plot to escape from the brutal captain. Michael Curtiz directs the action with characteristic brio, and Robinson is in top form as the larger-than-life "Sea Wolf."

Warner Bros. Producer: Henry Blanke. Screenplay: Robert Rossen. Based on the novel by Jack London. Cinematography: Sol Polito. Editor: George Amy. With: Edward G. Robinson, Ida Lupino, John Garfield, Alexander Knox. 35mm, nitrate, 98 min.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24

7:30 p.m.

OUTRAGE

(1950) Directed by Ida Lupino

Among the first American films to deal with sexual assault, **OUTRAGE** features Mala Powers as a bright young woman whose unremarkable life is derailed when she is raped one night while returning home from work. Despairing and confused, she subsequently rejects the sympathy of her family and fiancé and runs away from home. Her eventual reintegration with society is effected with the help of a kindly minister grappling with his own loss of faith. In yet another tough, unsensationalistic exploration of volatile material, Lupino dramatizes the rape itself as well as its aftermath, centered around the victim's experience of physical and social alienation.

Producer: Collier Young, Malvin Wald. Screenplay: C. Young, M. Wald, I. Lupino. Cinematography: Archie Stout. Editor: Harvey Manger. With: Mala Powers, Tod Andrews, Robert Clarke, Raymond Bond. 35mm, 75 min.

HARD, FAST AND BEAUTIFUL

(1951) Directed by Ida Lupino

Lupino's first studio-backed directorial effort, **HARD, FAST AND BEAUTIFUL** stars Sally Forrest as a naïve tennis prodigy driven to on-court success by her manipulative, social-climbing mother (a note-perfect Claire Trevor). At once a study in female self-determination as well as an exposé of corruption behind the façade of country club sport, the film sets Forrest between her exploitative mother and her well-meaning, if ineffectual, father (Kenneth Patterson). In typical fashion, Lupino uses melodrama to investigate women's social position, here describing a mother-daughter conflict exacerbated by destructive aspirations for upward mobility.

Producer: Collier Young. Screenplay: Martha Wilkerson. Based on the novel by John R. Tunis. Cinematography: Archie Stout. Editor: George C. Shrader, William Ziegler. With: Claire Trevor, Sally Forrest, Carleton C. Young, Kenneth Patterson. 35mm, 78 min.

In person: Mala Powers

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

7:00 p.m.

HIGH SIERRA

(1941) Directed by Raoul Walsh

Warners supporting player Humphrey Bogart finally achieved star status in the role of aging gangster Roy "Mad Dog" Earle, an old pro who's sprung from prison for one last job. After a botched hotel heist, he goes on the lam with Lupino, his erstwhile partner's wised-up gunmoll. The film is famous for cementing Bogart's screen persona, but Lupino is also superb as the prototypical "bad girl" redeemed by her devotion to the doomed antihero. A crime picture that harks back to the spirit of '30s gangster movies, **HIGH SIERRA** can also be seen as a significant precursor to the postwar cycle of film noir.

Warner Bros. Producer: Hal B. Wallis, Mark Hellinger. Screenplay: John Huston, W.B. Burnett. Based on the novel by W.B. Burnett. Cinematography: Tony Gaudio. Editor: Jack Killifer. With: Ida Lupino, Humphrey Bogart, Alan Curtis, Arthur Kennedy. 35mm, nitrate, 100 min.

DEEP VALLEY

(1947) Directed by Jean Negulesco

A moody, austere rural melodrama, **DEEP VALLEY** features Lupino, in a departure from her tough girl image, as an ingenuous young woman confined to an isolated farm where she tends to her embittered parents. Lonely and love-starved, she finds hope in the form of a convict (Dane Clark) working on a nearby road crew. When Clark escapes from prison, the movie adopts the young-couple-on-the-lam film noir scenario, with distinct echoes of **HIGH SIERRA**'s tragic sense of pathos. Like that film, **DEEP VALLEY** combines Warner Bros. hard-bitten realism and the lyricism of redemptive love more typical of a Borzage picture to powerful effect. Warner Bros. Producer: Henry Blanke. Screenplay: Salka Viertel, Stephen Morehouse Avery. Based on the novel by Dan Totheroh. Cinematography: Ted McCord. Editor: Owen Marks. With: Ida Lupino, Dane Clark, Wayne Morris, Fay Bainter. 35mm, nitrate, 103 min.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2

7:30 p.m.

ROAD HOUSE

(1948) Directed by Jean Negulesco

Lupino initiated this project, selling Fox the option on the Gruen/Saul story along with her acting services. **ROAD HOUSE** is a juicy crime melodrama starring Lupino as a roadhouse lounge singer caught in a triangle between her beau Cornel Wilde and their psychotic boss Richard Widmark. When she rejects Widmark, he frames Wilde for grand larceny, prompting a climactic run for freedom that ends in a backwoods chase and shootout. Measured and atmospheric, **ROAD HOUSE** is an overlooked noir gem that includes Lupino's rendition of several blues numbers—*Variety* compared her "gravel-toned voice" to "a femme Hoagy Carmichael"!—as a delicious added bonus.

20th Century-Fox. Producer: Darryl F. Zanuck, Edward Chodorov. Screenplay: E. Chodorov, David Hertz, J. Negulesco, Serge Bertensson. Based on a story by Margaret Gruen, Oscar Saul. Cinematography: Joseph LaSelle, Norbert Brodine. Editor: James B. Clark. With: Ida Lupino, Cornel Wilde, Celeste Holm, Richard Widmark. 35mm, nitrate, 95 min.

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED

(1940) Directed by William A. Wellman

Lupino got her start in Hollywood with a series of ingenue parts in films like **SEARCH FOR BEAUTY** (1934) and **SMART GIRL** (1935) before landing her breakthrough role in this period drama based on the classic Kipling novel. Ronald Colman stars as a newspaper illustrator who becomes an acclaimed artist after he's wounded by natives in a colonial misadventure. Lupino plays the cockney bar maid who inspires Colman to paint her portrait, and it is here that she established the screen persona for which she would become best known: "the brittle, alone-in-the-world moll, outwardly tough and cynical, but 'marshmallow on the inside.'" (Annette Kuhn)

Paramount. Producer: W.A. Wellman. Screenplay: Robert Carson. Based on the novel by Rudyard Kipling. Cinematography: Theodore Sparkuhl. Editor: Thomas Scott. With: Ronald Colman, Walter Huston, Muriel Angelus, Ida Lupino. 16mm, 97 min.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

2:00 p.m.

THE TROUBLE WITH ANGELS

(1966) Directed by Ida Lupino

See *Kids' Flicks* for Sunday, November 3.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

7:00 p.m.

THE HITCH-HIKER

(1953) Directed by Ida Lupino

Lupino's focus shifted radically from her earlier "women's pictures" to this taut, moody thriller about two family men on a fishing trip waylaid by a psychopathic killer. Edmond O'Brien plays the stressed-out '50s Everyman whose long-awaited Mexican vacation becomes a nightmare after he picks up a murderous fugitive. Widely considered Lupino's best film, **THE HITCH-HIKER** is directed with the stylistic audacity of classic film noir and displays an assured command of atmosphere and suspense. Lupino moreover transforms the low-budget genre scenario into a compact allegory about middle-class fears of unknown forces at the bottom of the social order.

Producer: Collier Young. Screenplay: Lucille Fletcher, Robert L. Joseph, I. Lupino. C. Young, Daniel Mainwaring. Cinematography: Nicholas Musuraca. Editor: Douglas Stewart. With: Edmond O'Brien, Frank Lovejoy, William Talman, José Torvay. 35mm, 71 min.

THE BIGAMIST

(1953) Directed by Ida Lupino

Lupino's dissection of '50s masculinity continued with **THE BIGAMIST**, a thoughtful drama about a man divided between two wives: an infertile upper-crust career woman (staid Joan Fontaine) on the one hand, and a tough-talking working-class waitress (Lupino herself, in fine form) on the other. Edmond O'Brien stars as the salesman whose secret life threatens to implode under the weight of its own contradictions. A study of male passivity anchored by O'Brien's self-searching voiceover, the film nevertheless clearly illuminates the limited roles available to women in the context of postwar America.

Producer: Collier Young. Screenplay: C. Young, Larry Marcus, Lou Schor. Cinematography: George E. Diskant. Editor: Stanford Tischler. With: Edmond O'Brien, Joan Fontaine, Edmund Gwenn, I. Lupino. 35mm, 80 min.



The Hitch-Hiker