

Film Feature: The 10 Best Films of 2020, By Patrick McDonald

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 3, 2021 - 12:15am

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CHICAGO – In a world gone a bit madder and sadder, the films of 2020 were a welcome escape from the travails of weekly reality. Without theater exhibition by and large, films had to be experienced on smaller home screens, shrinking bold cinematography and emphasizing the story.

Reflected in my (the Über Critic, Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com) 10 BEST FILMS OF 2020 are those storyteller films, the escapes that told tales of our possibilities and hope. In lieu of complete normalcy in 2021, let's at least get back to the theaters.

I begin by ranking the 25th film favorites through the 11th, with the option to click on the highlighted titles for reviews or associated interviews... 25th - [EUROVISION SONG CONTEST](#) [21] (classic Will Ferrell absurdist and escapist comedy, with an amazing supporting cast), 24th - [DA FIVE BLOODS](#) [22] (Delroy Lindo symbolized a whole war in his performance), 23rd - [WONDER WOMAN 1984](#) [23] (we have met the villains and they are us), 22nd - [THE HUNT](#) [24] (sharpest satire in the tool shed), 21st - [THE NEST](#) [25] (a story of the facades we create for ourselves), 20th - [MINARI](#) (a save-the-farm film which equaled saving souls), 19th - [MULAN](#) [26] (unfairly maligned adaptation that emphasized courage), 18th - [BORAT SUBSEQUENT MOVIEFILM](#) [27] (took the concept to a necessary level), 17th - [THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF DAVID COPPERFIELD](#) [28] (the Dickens, you say!), 16th - [THE HALF OF IT](#) [31] (he loves she loves she), 12th - [MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM](#) [32] (the history lesson that we keep having to learn. Chadwick B, RIP) and 11th [RED PENGUINS](#) [33] (a documentary proving truth is weirder than any fiction).

A shout-out also to SAINT FRANCES, a locally shot feature film that was in my 10 BEST last year, but was released in 2020. [Click here](#) [34] for an interview with director Alex Thompson and lead actor/writer Kelly O'Sullivan. [Click here](#) [35] for an on-air review.

The 2020 Best for genre films ... **Animated** it's SOUL (see 10 BEST), for **Documentary** it's RED PENGUINS, for **Best Foreign Language Film** it's SWEAT (Gold Hugo for Best Film, 2020 Chicago International Film Festival), and for **Superhero** it's WONDER WOMAN 1984.

Below each film description in the 10 BEST will be a link to full reviews and/or interviews, when applicable. And away we go...



THE TRIP TO GREECE



The Trip to Greece
Photo credit: IFC Films

The TRIP series is one of the oddest two-man comedy journeys in the media ... in Britain it's a TV series and then internationally it's re-cut to films. The brave and bold comic team of Steve Coogan and Rob Bryson portray fictional versions of themselves, improvising their way through fabulous trips where they eat magnificent food (all expensed, no doubt). Indicated as the last in the series, the duo expounds mostly on Coogan's strange career and Bryson's obsession with the beats in the song STAYIN' ALIVE. But this one also has a poignant sense, as it ponders mortality, from the beginning of the end through the end of the end. But mostly it's lots of fun and laughs. **Available thru digital download and DVD.**

HIGHLIGHT: Steve Coogan: Originality is overrated.

[Click here](#) [36] for an on-air review of THE TRIP TO GREECE.

 THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



The Twentieth Century

Photo credit:

The Trial of the Chicago 7

Photo credit: Netflix

Surprisingly, the first feature film that master screenwriter Aaron Sorkin has ever directed, and he takes full advantage of the script he created. The story is of the CHICAGO 7, a group of men who were prosecuted by the federal government for allegedly inciting the police riots of the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. The action centers on the trial, which features the prosecuted, including Abbie Hoffman (portrayed with pure soul energy by Sasha Baron Cohen), Bobby Seale (a transcendent Yahya Abdul-Mateen II) and their judge Julius Hoffman (Frank Langella). The absurdity is the trial itself, which shows how government resources are misused for political revenge (another Nixon administration joint). Beautifully choreographed as a narrative and powerful in its conclusions. **Streaming on Netflix.**

HIGHLIGHT: Cohen's bravado performance as Abbie Hoffman, who knew the key to reactionary politics was performance theater.

[Click here](#) [39] for an on-air review of *THE TRIAL OF THE CHICAGO 7*.

