

Submitted by PatrickMcD [1] on January 15, 2010 - 12:32am

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CHICAGO – In developing Top Ten film lists every year, the "critic" tends to move on and simply forget what they said in previous annual evaluations. Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com looks back, with less fear than expected.

The following list is a little different from the typical film decade analysis. There will be a showcase of all number one films in each of the decade's years, according to McDonald, and then a reassessment as to if that film still belong in that top spot. If it doesn't, another film from that year will replace it. Hindsight rules!

So rev up the flux capacitor and pilot the DeLorean back, as Patrick McDonald studies the effects of the number one films of the last ten years.



The Year 2000: 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon'



Why it Was Picked: Director Ang Lee's martial arts classic made quite a splash as the millennium rang in. With passion, magical realism and awesome fight sequences, it simply outshown anything that was in the film landscape that year.

**Replacement?** None for this year although some strong candidates whose reputations have survived the years include "O Brother, Where Art Thou" and "Dancer in the Dark."

Forgot About This One "Timecode," the strange, grand experiment using early high end video.

Published on HollywoodChicago.com (http://www.hollywoodchicago.com)



Why it Was Picked: Probably because it was a late entry, and made a histrionic impact with all the high drama and familial breakdowns. Tom Wilkerson, Sissy Spacek and Marisa Tomei were all nominated, with no wins.

**Replacement?** In review, a very strong Top Ten including the Coen Brothers "Man Who Wasn't There" and the weird "Sexy Beast." But there is a willingness to replace Bedroom with David Lynch's wild and creepy "Mulholland Drive."

Forgot About This One Remember the Sean Penn directed, Jack Nicholson starring "The Pledge." Yeah, me either.



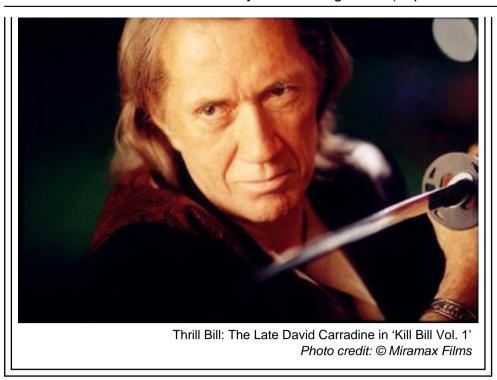
Why it Was Picked: No doubt this is animator Hayao Miyazaki's masterpiece, yet to be supplanted even though he's been fairly busy since then ("Howl's Moving Castle," this year's "Ponyo"). There is simply an epic, sweeping beauty to both the passionate animation and the story. For the kids and the kid inside, Miyazaki delivers.

Replacement? No way, but some strong candidates include the underrated films "Confessions of a Dangerous Mind" and "25th Hour."

Forgot About This One "Heaven," the final script of legendary director Krzysztof Kieslowski ("The Decalogue"), brought to conclusion by director Tom Tykwer and starring Cate Blanchett and Giovanni Ribisi.

2003: 'School of Rock'		

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Why it Was Picked: Was swept up in the hijinks and vivacity of the human tornado Jack Black and Richard Linklater's don't-take-this-too-seriously direction and story line. Doesn't hold up to multiple viewings, but probably it isn't that type of film.

**Replacement?** Well, to play it better, especially since it is still enjoyable and fun to watch, "Kill Bill, Vol. 1." But not Vol. 2, please not Vol. 2. Not many others stand out, in the year of "The Station Agent" and the sumptuously gratuitous "Swimming Pool."

Forgot About This One Remember Disney's "Holes"? Remember Uranus as a whole?



2004: 'Fahrenheit 9/11'



Why it Was Picked: The excitement of seeing this film in a packed house of fellow travelers maintained itself until the end-of-the-year assessment. As a film, it is only as good as its sense of documentary, but as a flamethrower its impact cannot be denied.

**Replacement?** I have no problem putting "The Incredibles" to replace Michael Moore. Over the years it has always delivered. I noticed Brad Bird (creator of The Incredibles), a former producer of "The Simpsons," made sure he had The Incredibles family in figurines around him when he was on The Simpsons 20th Anniversary Special. Take that, Matt Groening!

Forgot About This One The dishwatery remake of "The Ladykillers" starring Tom Hanks

2005: 'Match Point'				

Published on HollywoodChicago.com (http://www.hollywoodchicago.com)



Why it Was Picked: What the hey, it was easy to get caught up in Woody Allen's best film in years, especially as a fan. It doesn't hold up to now, and the ghost sequence as the end seems to be a mistake. It still has a great ending line.

**Replacement?** So many great ones in '05. How about "Caché," "Brokeback Mountain," "Pride and Prejudice" and "Crash"? Wow. And there is no problem replacing Match Point with "Munich," Stephen Spielberg's subtle masterpiece.

Forgot About This One "Zathura." Gesundheit.



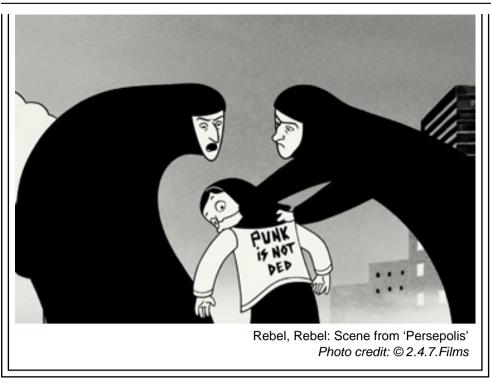
Why it Was Picked: There is something very American about this morality story, as in the American Dream, the American Lies and the American Nightmare, all rolled up in a neat little judgmental package. Also the acting in this was absolutely top drawer, up to and including a rarely acknowledged Patrick Wilson.

Replacement? Can't find a better one, but nods to Altman's last, "A Prairie Home Companion" and David Lynch's "Inland Empire."

Forgot About This One It lived up to its name and forgettability, "Lost City."

2007: 'The Savages'			
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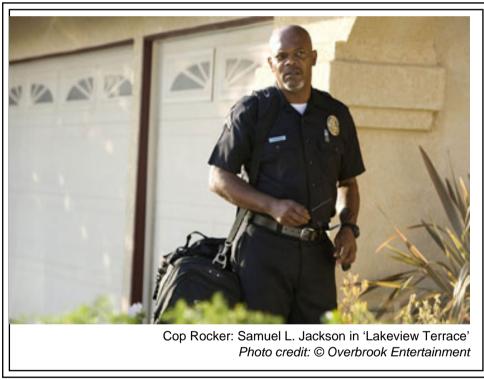


Why it Was Picked: As a redemption story – a particular favorite genre – there was a natural rhythm in The Savages that was instinctually portrayed by greats Philip Seymour Hoffman and Laura Linney. It was enjoyable again in multiple views, but...

**Replacement?** "Darjeeling Limited," "The Host" and "My Best Friend" are worthy competitors, but in hindsight it is the animated "Persepolis" that still continues in memory.

Forgot About This One She ain't nothing but a "Waitress" on the screen.

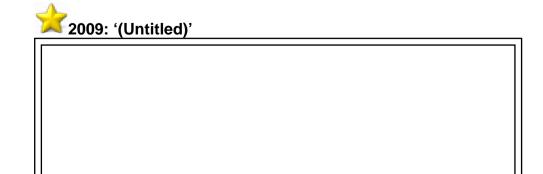




**Why it Was Picked:** What would this be like in multiple viewings? Would its passionate, surprising turn of events in exploring race relations in America still as incendiary as the impending wildfire. Why can't we just get along?

Replacement? No change, despite the weather. Though "Redbelt," "Teeth" and "The Visitor" did rock that year.

Forgot About This One Yeesh! "Hell Ride"





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Why it Was Picked: Not much else to say on this, see last week [16]. In addition, it takes on the broad subject of art evaluation and compacts it into an accessible and philosophic narrative. Exceptional.

**Replacement?** Of course not, way too fresh, ask in ten years. Worthy contenders include "Where the Wild Things Are" and the just-released-on-DVD "In the Loop."

Forgot About This One It's hard to do in the same film year, but "Brothers" is instantly forgettable.

Read Patrick McDonald's 2008 interviews of Neil LaBute on Lakeview Terrace [17] and and Richard Jenkins regarding The Visitor. [18]



[19]

By <u>PATRICK McDONALD</u> [20] Senior Staff Writer HollywoodChicago.com <u>pat@hollywoodchicago.com</u> [19]

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