



***Klaus at Gunpoint***

# *Klaus at Gunpoint - 16 - December 2014*

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The National Film Registry is a big deal to me. It's a record that exists forever, theoretically. It records what mattered in the history of American Film, and American Film is where I grew up! So, it matters to me a lot.

And this year's list of 25 new films to the Registry is kinda disappointing.

Yes, *The Big Lebowski* is on the list. It's a wonderfully quirky film, and one of the most culturally significant. It's not the Coen Brother's best film. In fact, I can name four that are better - *Raising Arizona*, *Miller's Crossing*, *The Man Who Wasn't There*, and *No Country For Old Men*. The other Coen film on the Registry, *Fargo*, is even less impressive a selection. The fact that *Miller's Crossing* isn't on bothers me.

*Saving Private Ryan* was put on the Registry. To me, this is utterly disappointing. It's not a bad movie, but films that are far better in the same arena (*The Big Red One*, *Cross of Iron*, *The Green Berets*) and several that were far more influential (*Platoon* being the biggest crime of them all!) and I can't see why *Saving Private Ryan*'s up there. It just annoys me.

Yes, it's nice to see the Registry moving the bar forward, including more films from the 1980s and 90s, but a film like *13 Lakes* from 2004 was an awful choice. If it was meant to stand for experimental films, then choices like *Nutria*, *Scorpio Rising*, or any of David Lynch's artier films. If it was meant to stand in for circuitfilms, where's *Rejected* by Don Hertzfeld? It's not a bad choice in the long run, but it's a very weak choice when you consider films that were passed over.

The Registry also made some highly appaulable risky choices. Footage from an unreleased Bert Williams film is a great addition, as is footage from Sam Fuller of his war time. They always manage some good across-the-board stuff, and this year was a good example of what they try to do most years.

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## Bert Williams Lime Kiln Club Field Day (1913)

This is the first thing on the list, and the first one I have not seen. It's also one of few movies that are on the Registry that was never completed.

The Production was one of the first to have an interracial production team, with three directors, two of which were white, one of which was black. The star was supposed to be Bert Williams, who was a huge star and had yet to make his run at Broadway where he would become a HUGER star.

When MoMA went through their Biograph film collection, they came across seven reels of footage that was untitled. When they looked it over, they found that it was one of the first feature films ever, PLUS the first known feature with a black cast. That makes it an incredible find, but there was nothing else. No stills, no script, nothing but an obituary that mentioned the film being made.

The script was recreated the coolest way possible - by hiring a lip-reader to get down what folks were saying! The MoMA put together a cut that ran over an hour. I guess that would mean that the film is eligible, because it was created in 1913, but not eligible because it was finished in 2014!

I really hope that MoMA finds a way to release this as it would be something I'd be really excited to own.

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□ ————— □  
“I named all my children after flowers. There’s Lillie and Rose and my son, Artificial.” Bert Williams



Bert Williams was the only actor to perform in blackface in the film.



## The Big Lebowski (1998)

This is one of the most beloved movies of the last twenty years. And why not? It's one of the quirkiest films ever made, and so much fun! Great gaggles of people became attracted to it on DVD, and while it did OK in theatres, it was on Home Viewing that it became a cult classic.

I hated it the first time I tried to watch it. I don't think I made it more than twenty minutes. I tried again, with a group of friends, and that's when it turned around for me. The Dude, played with perfect timing by Jeff Bridges, is an unwilling detective, who only comes around to trying when things get weird. John Goodman gives one of his best performances as Walter, a man hamstrung by his ex-wife and anger issues.

There is an absurdity to the film that is beautiful. The story is convoluted, and at the same time completely misunderstood. It's not about the kidnapping that the Dude is hired to solve, it's about what the Dude goes through to keep the laid-back lifestyle he's made for himself. He's a Buddhist not because of the mind-body connection, but because it allows him to increase his slack.

The Coens throw everything at the screen. Musical numbers that reflect Busby Berkeley, visual symbolism Bergman would have appreciated, and music that calls forth many different genres and milleau. In other words, it's a brilliant mess.

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□ “Oh, the usual. I bowl. Drive around. The occasional acid flashback.” The Dude



□ “We believe that the Dudeist tradition started as a response to the excesses of civilization.”



## Down Argentine Way (1940)

A serious disappointment on one level, and a great moment in American film on another. First off, this was a great debut film. Betty Grable became a star off of this film. Before she made that amazing poster that turned on every GI in World War II, she was an actress who wasn't exactly great. She certainly had charisma, and looks, but she wasn't a great actress. The real gem is Carmen Miranda, the Brazillian import who made her American debut here. She was sizzlin' and really made this picture her own.

But it's not a great picture, and when you consider the other films from the likes of Hope-and-Crosby that aren't on the Registry, you gotta wonder. The musical numbers are memorable, as is Don Ameche's performance, but as a film, it barely holds together.

But it does look gorgeous, and not just because of the actors.

It's shot in crisp Technicolor, by Leon Shamroy (4-time Oscar winner!) and Ray Rennahan, who shot *Gone with the Wind*. The cinematography is really strong, and that allows the actors to really shine. The costumes, designed by the legendary Travis Banton, are vibrant and perfect for the story.

Now, think of the film as an excellent example of the late 30s, early 40s popcorn cinema. The equivalent in the early 2000s would be a film like *Head Over Heels* - not a great film, but watchable with a memorable performance or two.

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“Observed without either of those ladies within the camera’s range, it is just a sprawling Technicolored musical picture



concocted out of some flashy production numbers and a few specialty acts.”

The New York Times



## The Dragon Painter (1919)

Not the best silent film featuring a Japanese-American cast, but a decent one. To me, the reason to even consider it is the fact that it was shot largely in Yosemite and the vistas are spectacular. The cinematography is great, even in black-and-white, there's a radiance to this film.

Sessue Hayakawa was a major sex symbol, and one of the most extravagant of all partiers in Hollywood during the teens. He was famous and though he is largely forgotten today, he was probably the fourth or fifth biggest star in Hollywood. He was probably at his best in *The Tong Man* (though he was great in *The Bride on the River Kwai* as well) and here he's really good. of course, Japan didn't like this film, but what are you gonna do?

I'd like to see this get a much better DVD release than it's gotten. There's a lot to talk about!

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□ "A film about Japan that does not properly depicts Japanese customs is very hard to watch



for us Japanese."

Katsudo Kurabu magazine  
in 1919



## Felicia (1965)

I've never seen this one, but I've heard of it and have wanted to see it for years. It's a documentary that covers the life of a young girl living in Watts. It's often cited as one of the best examples of the African-American experience in LA in the 1960s.

The short film has been shown all over the US, and influenced a generation of young film students because it was shown at festivals. First off, it was made by film students at UCLA, and it was marketed to schools and other educational institutions. This led to it being used in schools all over the country, and becoming a major influence over filmmakers. It's done in a style that I love: first-person narration over images. It's a close-up heavy film. Not as much as something like Fake Fruit Factory, but that shows so strongly in documentaries of the last fifty years.

I still need to see it!

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□ In many ways, Felicia is the predecessor to the LA Rebellion, which was responsible for



□ another film on the Registry, Bless Their Little Hearts.



Perhaps John Hughes' comedy masterpiece. The Breakfast Club was his best film over all, and one of the most underrated dramas of the 1980s, but Ferris is the most influential of the 1980s comedies, and even more importantly, it kickstarted the narrator-driven comedy. Everything from Malcolm in the Middle to Election used the technique and it really made it possible for a single charismatic actor to carry a comedy much more easily.

The key to Ferris Bueller is Ferris, played by the magical Matthew Broderick. He not only carries the movie, but he also changed the way people remember the 80s. Add to that the brilliantly pointed performances of both Jeffrey Jones and Jennifer Grey, and you've got an actor's picture.

Hughes' direction, and the smart script, coupled with a keen eye for the history of film, allowed this to earn a spot on the National Film Registry, but more than that, it also forces the viewer to consider which we are - Cameron or Ferris. Are we the mover & shaker who is beloved even when he lies and spends a lot of his time mugging. Or are we Cameron, the guy who has faced his problems by retreating into a sort of staged depression. He's withdrawn to the point of near catatonia. Or are we Ed Rooney, the principal who can't abide by the breaking of rules, and is jealous of the attention and/or love that Ferris gets.

Which are you?

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□ “When Cameron was in Egypt’s land... let my Cameron go!”



□ “Hey, Cameron. You realize if we played by the rules right now we’d be in gym?”





## The Gang's All Here (1943)

Another Carmen Miranda film, and really, the only thing I remember from watching this back when I was in college were the Berkeley musical numbers. He was amazing in the grand visions he choreographed, and the ones in *The Gang's All Here* are really good.

I guess I never knew that Benny Goodman was in it.

The whole film's a really fun little piece of fluff, and I've seen it referred to as a Camp Classic. I'm not entirely sure I'd go that far, but it's light and fun.

The thing is that Carmen Miranda was a GIANT star, though at this point, she was probably as big as she'd get in America. She was probably the biggest star ever in Brazil up to that point. She was less popular by the end of WWII, but she was always around. Perhaps the reason she's not nearly as remembered as her image is that she died in 1955.

And her image lives on. We see the Fruit Hat and we know, we just know, what things are about.

□  
“But in the main, *The Gang's All Here* is a series of lengthy and lavish production numbers



□  
all arranged by Busby Berkeley as of money was no object but titillation was.” *New York Times*



## House of Wax (1953)

My favorite 3D picture. Dial M For Murder is a better movie, but I love House of Wax better. Why?

Vincent Motherfucking' Price!

The man was amazing, in a way campy, but ultimately creepy. I really loved his performance as the artist running a Wax Museum. This is at once completely gimmicky and totally sincere filmmaking. The paddleball guy is a gig, a fun one, but a gig, and the jumping out is awesome, but really, it's a movie that uses the receding of the setting as well as any other 1950s 3D film.

3D was, of course, a reaction to the advent of television, but it was also a re-imagining of what film was supposed to be. It wasn't trying to make an image any more; it turned film into a diorama. It wasn't about the story; it was about the setting, and it was in 3 dimensions. Basically, it re-created film as Theatre, with the screen serving as a stage. In the evolution of film from parlor trick to storytelling medicine to amusement park ride, it was the beginning of the third act.

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□ "I'm afraid that the visit of a such distinguished critic may cause my children to become



conceited. To you they are wax, but to me their creator, they live and breathe." □



## Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport (2000)

Oscar-winning doc, about the Holocaust? Sold!

This is one of the most impressive documentaries about World War II heroism, covering the incredible Kindertransport that brought tens of thousands of Jewish children from Central Europe to England.

At my work, I know a couple of people who were brought from Poland to England in the Kindertransport. The fact that I've managed to see the evidence of what happened in my everyday life.

This is a slick documentary. It's a really good one, powerful, with excellent narration by the legendary Judi Dench. The way the movie moves is great, and it's an impressive doc, and I hope it's the first of a set from the 2000 timeframe to get in. Spellbound, The Weather Underground, The Kid Stays in the Picture, Ghengis Blues, and maybe Legacy. All of them are worth including on the Registry.

I really suggest finding this and giving it a watch.



## Little Big Man (1970)

This is the one that made Dustin Hoffman a major actor. Not a big name star, he was already that, but here he ages from 18 all the way to 121. It's a great performance, never failing to hit his marks. It's a wonderful performance that is largely sympathetic to the Cheyenne people who took in a young Jack Crabb.

Now, there are so many things to like about this movie, from the incredible performance of Hoffman, to wonderful supporting turns from Richard Mulligan as Gen. Custer and Martin Balsam, to some incredible make-up to make Hoffman look like he was 121. It's so great, and it's a film that I always kinda thought would get on eventually.

Now, let me suggest that Faye Dunaway was a huge star coming off of films like *Bonnie & Clyde*, but here she was so very good. Chief Don George was really good, and he got a lot of attention, and an Academy Award nomination!

Arthur Penn, though, was at the peak of his powers as a director. He captured lighting with Hoffman, but it's his eye in not getting in the way of his actors that really pays off here.

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“Arthur Penn’s most extravagant and ambitious movie, an attempt to capture the essence of the



American heritage in the funny, bitter, uproarious adventures of Jack Crabb.” *New York Times*



## Luxo, Jr. (1986)

Time to rant. I am a Computer Animation guy. I have studied it professionally, I've watched it since I was little. I am STEEPED in Computer Animation, I even love Luxo, Jr. (I wrote about it at <http://www.computerhistory.org/atcm/pixars-luxo-jr/>) and I think it's important and Computer Animation as a whole is probably under-represented on the Registry.

Pixar is over-represented.

Yes, Pixar is probably the single most important company in the history of Computer Animation, but putting Luxo, Jr. in before any of the really important experimental pieces, or any non-Pixar computer animated film, is just flat wrong. Already on the Registry is Toy Story (and absolutely if any Computer Animation is going to be on the Registry, that's the first one!) and Tin Toy, and you could argue that The Computer Animated Hand by John Lassiter, which is also on, is a Pixar film, and I'd agree that it should be there as well. But before they put Luxo on, they should have honored the pioneering work of Alvy Ray Smith and Ed Emshwiller with [Sunstone](#) or [Hummingbird](#) by Charles Csuri and James Shaffer or any of the really important work pre-1980. That's a bad thing, plus there are lots of Mid-1980s films that should be on, including Dire Straits' video for Money For Nothing. That said, I still love Luxo, Jr.!

□ "It was perhaps the first computer-animated film that enabled viewers to forget they



were watching computer animation." □

David Price



## Moon Breath Beat (1980)

When you program animated shorts, there are a number of types you immediately begin to identify. One, and a personal favorite, is the morphing animation. It's not a surprise that so many computer animations of the 1980s and 1990s relied on Morphing - traditional animators have been doing that sort of thing for decades! At the 2014 Cinequest, we had a wonderful film called *Salmon Deadly Sins* that used that technique well. The first time I can remember seeing an animation like that was in the early 1980s when I saw Lisze Bechtold's lovely, and strange, *Moon Breath Beat*.

I showed this to Evelyn when she was little. She liked the images, but she put her hands over her ears. The sound is strange, and the images are as well. It was done while Bechtold was a student at CalArts, before she became one of the most important animators out there, including being the Principal for *Fergully*.

The film's a lovely piece, surrealistic and engaging. 1980 was a good year for animation, and this is a great addition.

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□ In addition to making her own animations, and *Fergully*, Bechtold also worked on



various Disney films, like all CalArts grads!



## Please Don't Bury Me Alive! (1976)

It was pushed as “The First Chicano Film”, and while that’s something of an over-statement (there were a lot of small-time indy Chicano filmmakers working in both English and Spanish), this was certainly one of the most important to me.

You see, it’s not that it’s a great film, though I think it’s very good, it’s that it hit me at the exact right moment. I was a sophomore at Emerson and our Latino students organization, AMIGOS, showed it. It was an incredible film, powerful and really telling of the kind of situation that my Dad’s generation of Mexicans lived. Director and Star Efrain Gutierrez was really good, but it wasn’t the quality of the film that got it listed. It’s the best example of regional cinema that I can think of. It was shot, and distributed, around South Texas, and within that market, it was well-known among the Mexican community. I’m still kind of shocked that it made it to Boston where I could see it! This year’s Registry seems very interested in the Hispanic film, and I could think of only a couple that fit the bill of Small Indy Chicano Cinema better than Please Don’t Bury Me Alive!

□ This independent film, a slice-of-barrio- life that was shot and exhibited in South Texas. It is a compel-



ling film about the dilemmas facing a young Chicano in the spring of 1972 amid the Chicano Movement. □



## The Power and the Glory (1933)

I've never seen this one, though I certainly know a lot about it. There's always been this idea that it was the Prototype for Welles' Kane, and it would make sense as Preston Sturges was a good friend of Welles. Spencer Tracy plays a railroad tycoon and it's a powerful film, from what I hear.

This was the first film sold by the legendary Preston Sturges. He sold the script for 17K, and then got a backend deal that made him rich. Smart movie, and it was one of the first of that kind of deal to make it.

What everyone talks about when it comes to The Power and The Glory is the word 'Narratage' which is a non-chronological form of storytelling. Up until Pulp Fiction, everyone said Citizen Kane was the first to do that, but NO!

□  
“Hollywood, big on ballyhoo but short on real self-respect, failed to transfer the nitrate negative to



□  
safety stock, and modern prints of The Power and the Glory are tattered remnants.” Pauline Kael





Supposedly, Howard Hawks and John Wayne made Rio Bravo as a response to High Noon. Wayne hated the story of High Noon and how it was a metaphor for McCarthyism. That would make sense, I guess. The problem is that Rio Bravo, while a really fun film, is nowhere near the level of High Noon.

True, there are some remarkable production notes, including the lack of close-ups, but when you weight it against some of the real heavyweights in the history of The Western, it just comes up a bit short.

Tombstone, with it's ballet of violence and incredible performances from Val Kilmer and Sam Elliott, would have been a much better choice. Or, from the same era, Alias Jesse James is a comedy western that would have been a better choice. The Alamo should have been on years ago, and it was directed by John Wayne!

The Leigh Brackett script for Rio Bravo is strong, and the way the story moves is excellent, and it was an influential film, especially on Quintain Tarrantino. The problem is it's not the film that should stand for the period.

That film is already on the Registry. It's called High Noon.

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“When I’m getting serious about a girl, I show her Rio



Bravo and she better like it.” - Quentin Tarantino



This might be the first movie with Charles Grodin to enter the Registry! Woohoo!

This is one of the creepiest films ever made, and one that I could watch over and over. I'm not shocked it took a while to make the list, as the Registry isn't great with horror, as the absence of *The Blair Witch Project* and *Halloween* shows, but it was sure to make it sooner-or-later

The best part about *Rosemary's Baby* is that you can look at it just about any way and it works! You've the symbolic form, where it stands as a testament to the creeping influence of satanic elements (and it's not too much of a stretch to see it as a critique of much of film theory), or as a straight, popcorn-and-Coke horror pic. Either one works!

The direction by Roman Polanski is solid, but the performance of Mia Farrow is, without a doubt, the best of her career. Seriously, she was amazing, and you can watch it again and again and not catch all the nuances to her crafting of a brilliant character. Seriously, read the script and get a vibe from it, then watch Farrow play with those words and you'll see how great she was!

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□ “Pregnant women are supposed to gain, not lose weight!”  
Hutch



□ “This is no dream! This is really happening!”  
Rosemary



## Ruggles of Red Gap (1935)

This is a film I saw YEARS ago, and I remember three things . The first is that Charles Laughton is one of the greatest actors who ever lived. Two, that films of the 1930s were still figuring out what it meant to use sound for dialogue. Three - ZaSu Pitts is BRILLIANT!

This is the story of an American couple who win a Gentleman's valet and bring him back home to the American West. That means it's a fish out of water story at its pointy little heart, but there's more to it than that. It's funny, it's got the kind of script that you don't see a lot of these days, and it let the actors do their thing inside a not-so-restrictive box.

Laughton is always great, just watch a few minutes of Mutiny on the Bounty to prove that, and here he's golden. He plays comedy better than nearly any English actor I can think of, He had a warmth to his performances that made the darkness of many of his characters so much darker. Pitts, always great (especially in her work with Thelma Todd) was probably the best comedy actress ever!

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□ What you want is... is... is...  
some more of this imprisoned



laughter of the pleasant maids  
of France." □



## Saving Private Ryan (1998)

I hate this movie. While there are some impressive moments, I really consider it one of the most significantly over-rated films of all-time. It's Spielberg at his most epic Hollywood, and to me, that's just showy crap. The best moments, like the message passing scene, are really great, but he's using them within a context that is at once simpering and over-powering. It gets credit for the realism, but when I watch it, I just feel like he's desperately trying to fire directly into my chest.

There are so many better, and more important, World War II films out there. The Big Red One, Cross of Iron, The Thin Red Line, and The Longest Day are all far more impressive, and for just war films, Platoon and Born on the Fourth of July should be up there.

But Spielberg is a big deal, and there's a film of his that got a lot of love so it needs to be included.

Still, from me, meh.

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□ "For all the care and thoughtfulness that follow in the story, I never could shake the impres-



□ sion that all I was watching was every other war film Spielberg had ever seen." Ben Rosenbaum



## Shoes (1917)

The San Francisco Silent Film Festival is a great way to get a film on the Registry. Every couple of years, a film that is featured as a part of it ends up on the Registry having gotten new exposure through the festival. I've never seen *Shoes*, though it did come up a number of times when I was on a big Women Directors kick about ten years ago.

Lois Weber was a great director. In many ways she was the model for Social Justice directors who have come in the years since. Her films tackled all sorts of issues, and while not all were great, they all told their message clearly and well. *The Blot* is her masterpiece, without question, and *Hypocrites* the most important of her films, but *Shoes* is great as well. Weber took massive amounts of control over her work, and with the exception of Griffith, was probably the director who had the most control over their films. She's not as well remembered today as Griffith, perhaps because her films weren't as brazen.

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□ "I did missionary work in the slums of New York ... especially among young girls .... I know them and their problems, and



not a few of my stories have been suggested by incidents recalled from those early experiences." Lois Weber



## State Fair (1933)

There have been three filmed versions of State Fair, two musicals and this wonderful Will Rogers version. I really like the 1945 version, but there is so much charm in Janet Gaynor and Rogers that you can't help but love State Fair!

Two of the reasons have to be excellent performances and the fact that it's a pre-Code film. There are scenes that suggest a sexual relationship and seduction, which would have been a no-no under the Hayes Code. That alone gives this a bit more umph than the 1960s version, and it is handled with grace, if not explicitly.

The film was a smaller budget than most, and made a lot of money, but it was a big artistic success, especially since it was riding a wave of popularity for Gaynor and Rogers.

Sadly, I really think this is the only film that actually showcases Rogers' level of talent.

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□ "Watching this film is almost as interesting as going to a State fair, for nothing seems to be

neglected during the week in which it is supposed to take place." The New York Times



## 13 Lakes (2004)

Awful selection, and not because it's a series of static shots of lakes. It's a series of beautiful static shots of lakes that is supposed to make you think about nature, and the nature of film viewing, but in the end, really makes you consider the world in which you live more than the world in which these images are presented.

And compared to real cinematic experimentation, it's a bust.

I often point to *Eraserhead* or *The Saddest Music in the World* as incredible examples of experimentation, but the real one we should be looking at here is another film on the Registry - *Fake Fruit Factory* by Chick Strand. It's just a series of close-ups with voice-over of factory workers talkign about life and sex. That makes a point, and while the imagery is every bit as pointless as the images in *13 Lakes*, it actually does something.

I can remember watching *Lumiere and Company*, where they had a bunch of filmmakers use Lumiere cameras to make 1 minute films. Lynch did an amazing semi-Noir mood piece that killed, but one of the filmmakers made a film that was a static shot of the Hiroshima Memorial, the trees gently blowing. It was a waste of a minute, even though I fully got what they were going for. Same with *13 Lakes*. There is a message, but tell it better.

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□ "His choice of form turns time into an aesthetic question, and the viewer's short-lived restless-

ness is a natural first response."

Andrew Chans

# Grace Cunard



Will Appear Here in

## Unmasked (1917)

A Serial and one I've never seen. Grace Cunard and Francis Ford wrote and directed it, and that's a powerful team. Cunard wasn't quite Lois Weber in either talent or Control Freakishness, but she was a very talented director and actress. Francis Ford was the little brother to John Ford, and much like the Demme brothers, he was of a different cloth than his sibling. John was Johnathan Demme, fine director of incredible, genre-changing films. Francis was Ted Demme, competent but less Eart-shattering.

I've never seen it, and there's not a lot of info on it. She did some work with Thomas Ince, and she acted well into the 1940s. In fact, the 40s were a good time for former Silent actors as they were replacing many of those stars who went off to the war effort. Ford was a fairly big star, but Cunard, while still working, was mostly stuck in B-pictures.

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□ "The films' success led to Cunard's nickname of "The Serial Queen," and by 1916 she and



Ford were ranked among the most popular stars in Hollywood. " from IMDB





## V-E+I (1945)

I knew this existed, and I may have seen a piece or two of it in documentaries, but I am so glad this made the Registry. It's footage shot by the legendary director Sam Fuller of the liberation of the Falkennau concentration camp. It's incredible that this exists, and it's so important that the Registry includes something like this. It's first-person footage by a significant member of Film's Pantheon. of an event that changed human history.

I have said it several times, most recently in a Drink Tank issue with a section dedicated to the films of WWII, that the reason there was no World War III is that we had incredible, thorough footage from World War II, and this is the kind of footage that reminds us of what can happen if we forget.

I really hope that this footage ends up getting a Blu-Ray release with all sorts of extras. It's what every school that teaches about the War should show. It's not the battles, it's not footage expertly shot and edited to elicit a response; it's exactly what happened, shot and presented through a camera's unblinking eye.

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□ "I write with the camera. It is my typewriter." □

□ "I hate violence. That has never prevented me from using it in my films." □



## The Way of Peace (1947)

Puppets - you either love 'em or you hate 'em. I happen to love 'em. Frank Tashlin's classic films, such as *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?* are totally different than this wonderful film that follows the birth of Earth to us blowing ourselves up in a Nuclear armageddon. These things happen, no?

The strange thing is that few of his other films have any sort of preachy element, and I believe at the time few would work with Lew Ayers, who had been a conscious objector during World War II. That's a big deal in 1947.

I first saw this in 1993 in High School. We had a section of Civics that covered pacifism and this was a video they showed. Was it incredibly well-done? Yup. Was it appropriate to show a school group? Maybe not.

Why? Because it's HELLA Christian preaching! No, it's not quite *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*, but it's close!

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□ "The film premiered at Constitution Hall in Washington D.C., with more than 2,700 in attendance, including



members of Congress, representatives of the Supreme Court and 750 leaders from various branches of government." □



# Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory (1971)

I know you'll hate me for it, but I really do love the Johnny Depp version. The 1971 version, a classic for sure, messed me up as a kid. It was a brilliantly made film, but its combination of psychedelic imagery and bombastic message all made me pained.

Still, the songs are great, Gene Wilder is a marvel, and the kids are so very very good. Even the lack of Deep Roy, who made Tim Burton's version so good, was not enough to make me hate it!

Two important things to think about with this one going on the Registry. The first thing has to be that it's a hugely influential film, not only on other filmmakers (And Burton is a great example), but also on writers, as so many of the Fantasy authors of today cite it as an influence.

The screenplay was written by Roald Dahl himself,, which is why it retains so much of the nastiness of the original books. There's a certain amount of taming down that happened, but not nearly as much as if another writer had tackled it.

And then there's Gene Wilder. Perfectly cast, a deliciously touched performance, one of the defining performances of the 1970s. He really helped mess up a generation of kids!

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□ If you want to view paradise  
Simply look around and view it  
Anything you want to, do it



Want to change the world,  
there's nothing to it



## A Reaction brought on by Beyond Recognition

I grew up looking like a white kid, wearing a Mexican last name, and being constantly reminded that I am an Ohlone. According to my Grandmother, a Rumsum Ohlone. 1/8 Ohlone mixed in with 3/8 Mexican and 1/2 varying Anglo. I am far removed from my Great-Grandmother, Mary Cota, who spoke a little of the language of her ancestors, and I have always wondered if I have done them proud... or if there is any connection at all between the Chris Garcia that writes about films and works at a Computer History Museum.

Beyond Recognition, a wonderful documentary on the fight to preserve spaces sacred to the Ohlone people, made me consider my views, what I am, and how I look at the world. Michelle Grace Steinberg's excellent work looks at the Indian People Organizing for Change as they attempt to bring awareness to the shellmounds that have been bulldozed and covered over.

And that made me think of Shellmound in Emeryville, where I would watch movies, eat, read books at the Barnes & Noble. Did I know it was a site sacred to a band of Ohlone? Of course. Did it stop me from shopping there? Not at all. Does that make me a terrible person? Yeah, probably, but would I support it having never been built? Indeed I would have, but it is hard to resist this sort of attractor once it's there.

The film made me think, and it's wonderful production values, and the way the story plays out, make it a film that is as important to a thought process as it is pleasureable as a viewing experience.

But it made we wonder if I could do more. Can I help? I will say that everyone should go to the official website for the IPOfC (<http://ipocshellmoundwalk.homestead.com/>) and see what you can take away from it. Also, look at the film's official website, <http://www.beyondrecognitionfilm.com/>. It'll start the Festival circuit with the Wild & Scenic Film Festival, and will play as a part of Cinequest as well. It's thirty well-spent monutes that med me to hours of reflection.

And that reflection was difficult on me, because I do want to be able to honor the traditions of my ancestors, but at the same time, I am a creature of a time and place. My Great-Grandmother didn't much cotton to the traditions, and she complained that life would have been so hard had she had to live the traditional ways, but at the same time, she told the stories to my Gramma, to my Dad. She made SURE I knew that I was an Ohlone, that I knew where I came from, but at the same time encouraged that the kids go to college, she watched TV, (yelled at the TV during wrestling, according ot my Dad), drank and smoked and shopped at Safeway every Sunday. She made choices, but when you asked her what she was she'd say "I'm from the Rumsun people." and she wore that with pride.

And so, what do I do?

I want my background to be honored, and I want to live a life where I can be happy, take care of my family, and not turn my back on the past, while not ignoring that there are many many many things of the present that are so much better than were possible in the past.

We should preserve the remaining shellmound, work to preserve sites that are significant to the Ohlone peoples, fund archeological work, and most importantly, we MUST give recognition to various bands that constitute the Ohlone so that we can ensure the preservation of the sacred sites.

And so there are fewer people placed in the quandries that I find myself having.

# The 2016 National Film Registry Additions I'd Most Love!

1776

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

The Big Red One

The Blair Witch Project

The Circus

The Decline of Western Civilization

Eraserhead

Ghostbusters

Holiday Inn

JFK

LA Confidential

Les Miserables

Mother Goose Goes Hollywood

Night & The City

The Patterson-Grimlin Bigfoot footage

Platoon

Return of the Saucacus 7

The Shiek

The Sin of Norma Moran

Sunstone

The Theiving Hand

Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe

Whatever Happened to the Human Race?

Who is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe

Your National Gallery