

TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE

AN ONGOING SERIES OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMS PRESENTED IN 35MM BY THE YALE FILM STUDY CENTER

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 9, 2018
2:00PM • WHITNEY
HUMANITIES CENTER

TO CATCH A THIEF

PRESENTED WITH SUPPORT FROM
PAUL L. JOSKOW '70 M.PHIL., '72 PH.D.



Grace Kelly. Cary Grant. A jewel theft at the finest hotel on the French Riviera. Hollywood films don't come much more glamorous than Alfred Hitchcock's *TO CATCH A THIEF*. Critics such as Bosley Crowther of the *New York Times* faulted the film for lacking the edge audiences had come to expect from Hitchcock; he wrote, "*TO CATCH A THIEF* does nothing but give out a good, exciting time. If you'll settle for that at a movie, you should give it your custom right now." And while it may not dabble in the darkness of the film that preceded it, *REAR WINDOW*, or the terror of Hitchcock's next collaboration with Cary Grant, *NORTH BY NORTHWEST*, it's still a sumptuous, entertaining adventure, and a crucial part of the master's filmography. The film also showcases the work of some of Hitchcock's most important collaborators: cinematographer Robert Burks (who worked with Hitchcock on 12 films), costume designer Edith Head (11 films), Cary Grant (4), screenwriter John Michael Hayes (4), and Grace Kelly (3).

No. 1
SEASON 5

THE STORY: David Dodge was a successful author of mystery stories in the postwar era, and in December of 1951, as his next book, *TO CATCH A THIEF*, was on the verge of publication, Alfred Hitchcock purchased the film rights for \$15,000. In the meantime, Hitchcock finished *I CONFESS*, and shot his 3-D feature *DIAL M FOR MURDER* for Warner Bros. to fulfill his contract with the studio. By 1954, he had negotiated a new contract with Paramount Pictures, which covered what would become his next four projects: *REAR WINDOW*, *TO CATCH A THIEF*, *THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY*, and a remake of his own 1934 film *THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH*. Each of these four films would be written by John Michael Hayes, a successful writer for radio eager to make his name in film. While Hitchcock later characterized Hayes as "nothing more than a radio writer who wrote the dialogue," Hayes's contributions to Hitchcock's films, with his literate dialogue and sympathetic characters, as well as his ability to stand behind his work and not be pushed around by studio executives, were crucial to the success of these mid-period films. Their string of four successive collaborations ended with a major falling out over credit on *THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH*. Hitchcock was never able to find another partnership so successful; after they stopped collaborating, Hitchcock never worked with another writer on more than one film in a row.

DIRECTED AND PRODUCED BY
ALFRED HITCHCOCK
SCREENPLAY BY **JOHN MICHAEL HAYES**
BASED ON A STORY BY **DAVID DODGE**
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY **ROBERT BURKS**
A PRODUCTION OF **PARAMOUNT PICTURES**
(1955) 106 MINS.
STARRING **CARY GRANT, GRACE KELLY,
JESSIE ROYCE LANDIS, JOHN WILLIAMS,
CHARLES VANEL, AND BRIGITTE AUBER**

FRENCH CONNECTIONS: Having enjoyed his work in Clouzot's *THE WAGES OF FEAR* (1953), Hitchcock cast the great French actor Charles Vanel in the role of the local restaurateur Bertani. Vanel didn't speak English, though, and despite the efforts of a dialogue coach, all of Vanel's lines had to be dubbed in post-production by another actor. Hitchcock even re-shot some of Vanel's scenes with the actor facing away from the camera to make the effect more convincing.

Famed critic and founder of *Cahiers du Cinéma* André Bazin was vacationing in a village in Provence, struggling to find something to write about for a column in the magazine, when the crew of *TO CATCH A THIEF* unexpectedly came to town to shoot a car chase that would take place in the picturesque village. Bazin witnessed days of helicopter flights as the crew attempted to capture a certain shot ("That sequence must have been expensive!") and spoke with some crew members after Hitchcock had returned to the U.S. after the end of location shooting. Bazin wrote, "Chatting with the French technicians, I learn that from a distance of about 6,000 miles this devil of a man gives them the impression of keeping close watch over their work almost as if he were here. Worse still, in his absence there is no way to avoid executing his plan... If, in an editing room in Hollywood, Hitchcock should discover that one did not 'feel' the cars leaving the village, then [at his command] everything here must begin anew..."

DID YOU KNOW: COSTUME DESIGNER EDITH HEAD SAID, "OF ALL THE PICTURES I'VE EVER WORKED ON, *TO CATCH A THIEF* IS MY FAVORITE... CAN YOU IMAGINE? GRACE KELLY PLAYING ONE OF THE RICHEST WOMEN IN AMERICA SO SHE CAN AFFORD THE MOST ELEGANT CLOTHES... THEN, A FANCY COSTUME BALL WITH HUNDREDS OF EXTRAS DRESSED AS IF THEY WERE IN MARIE ANTOINETTE'S COURT. HITCH TOLD ME TO DRESS GRACE 'LIKE A PRINCESS,' AND I DID."

NEXT UP: FIRST, JOIN THE FILM STUDY CENTER FOR THE OPENING OF **THROUGH BERGMAN'S LENS: INGMAR BERGMAN CENTENNIAL SERIES**. TO CELEBRATE 100 YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF THE SWEDISH CINEMA ICON, WE PRESENT NEW 35MM PRINTS OF **SUMMER WITH MONIKA** AND **SAWDUST AND TINSEL**, WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY PROF. KATIE TRUMPENER. **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 AT 7PM**

THEN, **ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT 7PM**, TREASURES PRESENTS A NEW 35MM PRINT OF **MEDIUM COOL**, DIRECTOR HASKELL WEXLER'S 1969 FEATURE FILM THAT CRASHED THROUGH THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN VERITÉ DOCUMENTARY AND NARRATIVE FILMMAKING. CO-PRESENTED AS PART OF THE "DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA" FILM SERIES.