



**A Century of Cinema:** let's explore cinema by the decade – the 1990's: a decade of Sundance, Miramax, grunge, slackers, Gen X'ers and indies galore. Here are hundreds of titles - all available on DVD or through our streaming services (HOOPLA and Kanopy). Recommended reading: *Best. Movie. Year. Ever.: How 1999 Blew Up the Big Screen* by Brian Raftery (2019), *Down and Dirty Pictures: Miramax, Sundance, and the Rise of Independent Film* by Peter Biskind (2004) and *The Nineties* by Chuck Klosterman (2022), which examines the social, political and cultural climate of the decade.

**All About My Mother** (*Todo sobre mi madre*, Spain 1999): Pedro Almodóvar's critically acclaimed, Oscar-winning, gender-bending film deals with complex issues (AIDS, homosexuality, faith, and existentialism) while still managing to be an exceptional homage to the American melodrama. *Part of every woman is a mother/actress/saint/sinner. And part of every man is a woman.* Other Almodóvar films of this decade: *The Flower of My Secret* (1995), *High Heels* (1991) and *Live Flesh* (1997).

**American Beauty** (1999): Director Sam Mendes and Writer Alan Ball's clever, yet cynical film depicts the grim side of American suburbia. Stars Kevin Spacey and Annette Bening as Lester and Carolyn Burhman; by all appearances, they are a perfect, loving couple; but underneath it all perfectly miserable with their marriage and their lives. *Never underestimate the power of denial.*

**American History X** (1998) Edward Norton stars in this riveting drama (loosely based on real life ex-skinhead Frank Meeink): Derek Vinyard, a former Neo-Nazi, tries to prevent his younger brother from going down the same wrong path that he did. Even after twenty plus years, *AMX* remains as shockingly relevant in today's society as it did in the pre-9/11 world in which it first aired. Recommendation: for an eye-opening expose of the beliefs, history, and personalities of American White Supremacist groups, the documentary *Blood in the Face* (1991).

**As Good As It Gets** (1997) James L. Brooks' dramedy set in New York City stars Jack Nicholson stars Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt and Greg Kinnear. Melvin (Nicholson) an obsessive-compulsive, bigoted, homophobic curmudgeon and successful romance novelist (how's that for a hybrid) forms an unlikely alliance with Simon (Kinnear), his neighbor - a gay artist - and Carol (Hunt) - a waitress and single mother with a chronically ill son. Nicholson and Hunt would pick up Oscars for their performances.

**Audition** (*Ôdishon* Japan, 1999) Takashi Miike's audacious and deeply disturbing horror film is not an easy watch. Shigeharu, a lonely widower, stages phony film auditions in hopes to find a new wife. After interviewing a several candidates, he becomes enchanted by Asami – beautiful, young charming, and seemingly docile; but soon things take a very dark and twisted turn as we find that Asami isn't what she seems to be. For a little perspective, the gruesome final section makes Stephen King's *Misery* look wholesome entertainment – you've been warned.

**Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery** (1997) *Shagadelic, baby!* Mike Myers stars in this hilarious James Bond parody: Austin Powers, a world-class playboy and part-time secret agent from the 1960's emerges after thirty years in a cryogenic state to battle with his nemesis Dr. Evil (also played by Myers). Other 90's comedies: *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me* (1999), *Groundhog Day* (1993), *Home*

*Alone* (1990), *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993), *My Cousin Vinny* (1992), *Office Space* (1999), *Tommy Boy* (1995) and *The Wedding Singer* (1998).

***Before the Rain*** (*Pred dozhdot*, Macedonia 1994) Milcho Manchevski's critically acclaimed debut was the first Macedonian film to be nominated for an Oscar. Three interconnected stories of an orthodox Christian monk, a British photo agent, and a native Macedonian war photographer – it paints a gripping portrait of simmering ethnic and religious hatred about to reach its boiling point; considered one of cinema's most powerful laments on the futility of war.

***Before Sunrise*** (1995) The first installment in the *Before Trilogy* - Richard Linklater's celebrated romance "talky" stars Ethan Hawke and Julie Delphy as Jesse and Céline - twentysomethings who meet on a Eurail train and disembark in Vienna to spend the night together; Thought-provoking and beautifully filmed, it's an intelligent, unabashedly romantic look at modern love. Linklater, Hawke and Delphy would go on to create subsequent films every nine years: ***Before Sunset*** (2004) and ***Before Midnight*** (2013).

***Being John Malkovich*** (1999) Have you ever wanted to be someone else? Or, more specifically, have you ever wanted to crawl through a portal hidden in an anonymous office building and thereby enter the cerebral cortex of John Malkovich for fifteen minutes, before being spat out on the side of the New Jersey Turnpike? Spike Jonze's quirky, bizarre and surreal debut stars John Cusack, Cameron Diaz, Catherine Keener -- and of course, John Malkovich.

***The Best Intentions*** (*Den goda viljan*, Sweden 1992) An Ingmar Bergman (writer) and Bille August (director) collaboration – it stars Samuel Fröler, Pernilla August and Max von Sydow, and tells the story of Bergman's parents. In 1909, poor, idealistic theology student Henrik Bergman falls in love with Anna Åkerbloom, the intelligent, educated daughter of a rich family in Uppsala. Urbane Anna can't stand living in the rural county and grows increasingly restless. She returns to Uppsala and the couple's love and commitment are put to the test.

***The Blair Witch Project*** (1999) Three film students vanish after traveling into a Maryland forest to film a documentary on the local Blair Witch legend, leaving only their footage behind. One of the first theatrical features to make use of a large-scale viral marketing campaign: a website debuted one year prior to the release, in order to set up the premise of the documentary, complete with detailed reports of the search, the recovery of the trio's footage within an old cabin, reactions from their families, and expert opinions; the three actors were instructed to refrain from making public appearances; and the myth wasn't debunked until after the movie's premiere. *TBWP* was in the Guinness Book of World Records for "Top Budget: Box Office Ratio" - it cost \$60,000 to make and made back \$248 million, a ratio of \$1 spent for every \$10,931 made. The entertainment value of the film is debatable, but that was some genius marketing.

***Boogie Nights*** (1997) In 1977, sex was safe, pleasure was a business, and business was booming. Paul Thomas Anderson's sex, drugs and disco drama stars Mark Wahlberg, Julianne Moore and Burt Reynolds. Adult film director Jack Horner (Reynolds) is always on the lookout for new talent – and he discovers Eddie Adams (Wahlberg) who is working as a busboy in a restaurant. Handsome young has a healthy libido and is *ahem* well-endowed. Using the screen name Dirk Diggler, he quickly rises to the top of his industry winning awards year after year – only to have drugs and ego eventually crash his career. [note: Dirk Diggler was actually directly inspired by famous porn actor John Holmes; the film took cues from Holmes's life and career, along with certain aspects of Anderson's own life growing up in 1970's California]. PTA would also write and direct ***Magnolia*** (1999).

***Boys Don't Cry*** (1999) Kimberly Peirce's debut feature based on the documentary ***The Brandon Teena Story*** (1995) - a dramatization of the real-life story of Brandon Teena (aka Teena Brandon), a transgendered person (played by Hilary Swank, who won an Oscar for her performance) who adopts a male identity and attempts to find himself and love in Nebraska, yet tragically falls victim to a brutal crime; Other great movies directed by females: Marleen Gorris' ***Antonia's Line*** (Netherlands, 1995), Julie Dash's ***Daughters of the Dust*** (1991), Kasi Lemmons' ***Eve's Bayou*** (1997), Allison Anders' ***Gas Food Lodging*** (1992), Lisa Cholodenko's ***High Art*** (1998), Sally Potter's ***Orlando*** (UK, 1992), Jennie Livingston's ***Paris Is Burning*** (1990) and Sofia Coppola's ***The Virgin Suicides*** (1999).

***Boyz n the Hood*** (1991) *Once upon a time in South Central L.A. ... It ain't no fairy tale.* Writer and Director John Singleton's debut follows the lives of three young males living in the Crenshaw ghetto of Los Angeles ("the hood"), dissecting questions of race, relationships, violence, and future prospects. Stars Cuba Gooding Jr., Morris Chestnut, Ice Cube, Laurence Fishburne, Nia Long, Regina King, and Angela Bassett. Singleton (1968 – 2019) was the first African-American person (and youngest to date, age 24) to be nominated for Best Director at Academy Awards. Singleton also directed: ***Higher Learning*** (1995), ***Poetic Justice*** (1993) and ***Rosewood*** (1997).

***Buffalo '66*** (1998) Vincent Gallo's debut (which he wrote, directed and scored); this audacious, idiosyncratic, comically bleak romance stars Gallo, Christina Ricci, Ben Gazzara and Anjelica Huston – about Billy Brown (Gallo), a man who kidnaps a young tap dancer named Layla (Ricci) and forces her to pretend to be his wife to impress his parents (Gazzara and Huston) after he gets released from prison. The photo booth scene is worth the price of admission: *We're taking pictures like we're a couple. Like we like each other. Like we're husband and wife, and we \*span\* time together. We \*span\* time together as a couple. Because we're a loving couple, \*spanning\* time. These photos are us, in love, \*spanning\* time.*

***The Celebration*** (*Festen*, Denmark 1998) *Every family has a secret.* Thomas Vinterberg's savage chamber drama: On a wealthy man's sixtieth birthday, family and friends convene at a lavish country estate for a celebration that soon spirals into mayhem – when his son makes a revelatory, incriminating toast to his dear old dad. Part of the *Dogme 95* Danish Cinema movement popularized by Vinterberg and fellow Dane, Lars von Trier, who would gain international recognition with his dark, unconventional love story ***Breaking the Waves*** (1996).

***Central Station*** (*Central do Brasil*, Brazil 1998) Critically acclaimed, Oscar nominated film stars Fernanda Montenegro - considered the Great Dame of Brazilian Theatre – as Dora, a jaded middle-aged former schoolteacher who writes letters for illiterate people at Rio de Janeiro's Central Station; one of her customers is the mother of Josué, a poor 9-year-old boy who hopes to meet his unknown father someday. When she is killed in a bus accident just outside Central Station and Josué is left homeless, Dora is forced to take him in and help him search for his father.

***The Comfort of Strangers*** (1990) Paul Schrader's unsettling, erotic thriller stars Rupert Everett, Natasha Richardson, Helen Mirren and Christopher Walken. Set in Venice, Colin (Everett) and Mary (Richardson) are the prey, a beautiful British couple working on their relationship while on holiday; Robert (Walken) and Caroline (Mirren) are the hunters who draw them into the sinister web of their opulent, old-world palazzo. Other Paul Schrader films of this decade: ***Affliction*** (1997) and ***Touch*** (1997).

***The Commitments*** (UK, Ireland, USA, 1991) Alan Parker's musical comedy-drama based on Roddy Doyle 1987 novel about the tumultuous rise and fall of a Dublin Soul band, and stars some of Ireland's revered actors and musicians: Robert Arkins, Angeline Ball, Maria Doyle Kennedy and Bronagh Gallagher to name a few; set in the Northside of Dublin, Jimmy Rabbitte (Arkins), an unemployed wheeler and dealer, and music

fanatic with a vision to create a group of working-class youths to form a soul band named "The Commitments" – dubbed "The Worlds Hardest Working Band."

***The Crying Game*** (UK, 1992) Neil Jordan's IRA thriller film stars Stephen Rea, Miranda Richardson, Jaye Davidson and Forest Whitaker, and explores themes of race, sex, nationality, and sexuality against the backdrop of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Other IRA themed films: ***The Boxer*** (1997), ***In the Name of the Father*** (1993) and ***Michael Collins*** (1996).

***Damage*** (UK and France, 1992) Louis Malle's (1932–1995) penultimate film – his last being ***Vanya on 42nd Street*** (1994); based on Josephine Hart's 1991 novel, the erotic thriller stars Jeremy Irons, Juliette Binoche, Miranda Richardson and Rupert Graves. British MP Dr. Stephen Fleming (Irons) has the seemingly perfect life with his beautiful wife Ingrid (Richardson) and son Martyn (Graves). It all goes horribly downhill when he falls passionately in love with his son's fiancée, Anna (Binoche), driving him into scandalous, all-consuming and ultimately catastrophic relationship – it doesn't end well. The classically trained, versatile British actor, Irons would also star in ***Lolita*** (1997), a controversial adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov's novel; Bernardo Bertolucci's ***Stealing Beauty*** (1996); the tortured high school history teacher in ***Waterland*** (1992); and ***Reversal of Fortune*** (1990), as Claus von Bülow, an enigmatic socialite convicted of the attempted murder of his wife – Irons would pick up an Oscar for his impeccable performance.

***Dead Man Walking*** (1995) Based on Sister Helen Prejean's 1993 non-fiction, it stars Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn; Sarandon would pick up an Oscar for her performance as Sister Helen Prejean – a Catholic nun who, based on her experiences as a spiritual advisor for death row convicts, became a leading American advocate for the abolition of the death penalty. Nominations would go to: Sean Penn for his performance as Matthew Poncelet, the death row convict; Tim Robbins for his Direction, and Bruce Springsteen for his original song *Dead Man Walking*.

***Deconstructing Harry*** (1997) Woody Allen's black comedy stars Allen and an ensemble cast, including Kirstie Alley, Billy Crystal, Judy Davis, Julie Kavner, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Elisabeth Shue, Stanley Tucci and Robin Williams to name a few. Suffering from writer's block and eagerly awaiting his writing award, Harry Block (pun very much intended) remembers events from his past and scenes from his best-selling books as characters, real and fictional, come back to haunt him. Other Woody Allen: ***Alice*** (1990), ***Bullets Over Broadway*** (1994), ***Celebrity*** (1998), ***Husbands and Wives*** (1992), ***Manhattan Murder Mystery*** (1993), ***Mighty Aphrodite*** (1995), ***Shadows and Fog*** (1991) and ***Sweet and Lowdown*** (1999).

***Edward Scissorhands*** (1990) Tim Burton's fantastical romance stars Johnny Depp, Winona Ryder and Dianne Wiest (and features the legendary Vincent Price in his last role). Depp plays an artificial humanoid named Edward, a recluse and an unfinished creation who has scissor blades instead of hands; Edward is taken in by a suburban family and falls in love with their teenage daughter, Kim (Ryder). Other Tim Burton films include: ***Ed Wood*** (1994), ***Mars Attacks!*** (1996) and ***Sleepy Hollow*** (1999).

***Election*** (1999) *Reading, Writing, Revenge*. Alexander Payne's dark teen/adult comedy (the polar opposite of a John Hughes brat pack flick) based on Tom Perrotta's 1998 novel stars Matthew Broderick and Reese Witherspoon. The plot revolves around a student body election and satirizes politics and high school life; set in Omaha, Nebraska, Jim McAllister (Broderick) is a beloved high school social studies teacher – and his nemesis is Tracy Flick (Witherspoon) an annoying, overachieving student. When Tracy runs for student government president, McAllister sabotages her candidacy by backing a rival candidate and tampering with the ballot count. Other great high school comedies: ***American Pie*** (1999) and ***Clueless*** (1995).

***Enchanted April*** (UK, 1991) Mike Newell's charming period piece - adapted from Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 novel *The Enchanted April* - stars Miranda Richardson, Josie Lawrence, Polly Walker and Joan Plowright, with Alfred Molina, Michael Kitchen and Jim Broadbent in supporting roles. Set after World War I, four English women, who are unhappy with their lives, decide to spend the month of April on vacation in a beautiful Italian villa. Newell would gain attention later in the decade with the wildly successful, ***Four Weddings and a Funeral*** (1994).

***Europa Europa*** (Germany, 1990) Agnieszka Holland's historical war drama loosely based on Solomon Perel's 1989 autobiography *Ich war Hitlerjunge Salomon* (*I Was Hitler Youth Salomon*) stars Marco Hofschneider and Julie Delpy; a German Jewish boy escapes the Holocaust by masquerading as a "Nazi" German and joining the Hitler Youth. Perel himself appears briefly as himself in the film's finale. Other German imports: ***Aimée & Jaguar*** (1999), ***Run Lola Run*** (1998) and ***Stalingrad*** (1993).

***Eyes Wide Shut*** (1999) Stanley Kubrick's final film – an erotic thriller based on Arthur Schnitzler's 1926 novella *Traumnovelle* (*Dream Story*) - stars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. Set in 1990's New York City (the novella was 1920's Vienna), it follows the sexually charged adventures of Dr. Bill Harford, who is shocked when his wife, Alice, reveals that she had contemplated having an affair a year earlier. He then embarks on a night-long adventure, during which he infiltrates a masked orgy of an unnamed secret society. It's out there, but it's Kubrick – a must see.

***Falling Down*** (1993) Joel Schumacher's unconventional, riveting tale of urban madness stars Michael Douglas, Robert Duvall and Barbara Hershey. William "D-Fens" Foster (Douglas), a divorced and unemployed former defense engineer, just wants to get to his daughter's birthday party; while stuck on a Los Angeles freeway in the blazing heat, Foster snaps, abandons his vehicle, and treks on foot across the city to his destination. Along the way, a series of encounters cause him to react with increasing violence and make sardonic observations on life, poverty, the economy, and commercialism. *Think about it!*

***Farewell My Concubine*** (*Ba wang bie ji*, China 1993) Oscar nominated (and the very first film from the People's Republic of China to win the *Palme d'Or* at the Cannes Film Festival), historical drama based on Lilian Lee's 1985 novel stars Leslie Cheung, Fengyi Zhang and the stunning Gong Li. Set in a politically tumultuous 20th-century China, from the early days of the Republic of China to the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, it chronicles the troubled relationships between two Peking opera actors and lifelong friends, and the woman who comes between them. Gong Li would garner international attention in the decades to follow; two notable performances were in ***Raise the Red Lantern*** (1991) and ***The Story of Qiu Ju*** (1992).

***Fargo*** (1996) Ethan and Joel Coen's *homespun murder story* – black comedy stars Frances McDormand (Joel's wife), William H. Macy, Steve Buscemi and Peter Stormare. Minnesota car salesman Jerry Lundegaard (Macy) hires Carl Showalter and Gaear Grimsrud (brilliantly played by Buscemi and Stormare, cinema's most incompetent criminals) to kidnap his wife in order to extort a hefty ransom from her wealthy father – and of course, the inept plan falls apart from the start. Enter Marge Gunderson (McDormand), a very pregnant Minnesota police chief, whose persistent police work solves the crimes. The Coen Brothers would pick up an Oscar for their Original Screenplay and McDormand for her brilliant performance. Other Coen greats: ***Barton Fink*** (1991), ***The Big Lebowski*** (1998), ***The Hudsucker Proxy*** (1994) and ***Miller's Crossing*** (1990).

***Forrest Gump*** (1994) Robert Zemeckis's *magnum opus* and winner of six Oscars (Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Visual Effects, and Best Film Editing) stars Tom Hanks, Robin Wright, Gary Sinise and Sally Field, and story depicts several decades in the life of Forrest

Gump (Hanks), a slow-witted and kindhearted man from Alabama who witnesses and unwittingly influences several defining historical events in the 20th-century United States.

***Fight Club*** (1999) *Mischief. Mayhem. Soap.* David Fincher's examination of Gen X angst; based on Chuck Palahniuk's 1996 novel, it stars Brad Pitt, Edward Norton and Helena Bonham Carter. Norton plays the unnamed narrator - an insomniac discontented with his white-collar job, who forms a "fight club" with soap salesman Tyler Durden (Pitt), and becomes embroiled in a relationship with a destitute woman, Marla Singer (Bonham Carter). Together the two men spiral out of control and engage in competitive rivalry for love and power. Fincher also directed *Alien<sup>3</sup>* (1992), *The Game* (1997) and *Se7en* (1995).

***Fire*** (India/Canada, 1996) *Together they shared a burning secret.* Initially banned in India for its explicit, taboo nature and its religious insensitivity, *Fire* tells the story of two Hindu housewives, Radha and Sita, who fall in love as a result of their failed marriages. On its opening day in India, some film theatres were attacked by Hindu fundamentalists for depicting a lesbian relationship. Regardless of its controversies, Deepa Mehta's critically acclaimed work was the first mainstream Bollywood film to address homosexual relations. Another renowned India-born female director is Mira Nair - *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* (1996), *Mississippi Masala* (1991) and *My Own Country* (1998).

***Gods and Monsters*** (1998) Loosely based Christopher Bram's 1995 novel *Father of Frankenstein*, it stars Ian McKellen, Brendan Fraser and Lynn Redgrave and recounts the last days of the life of film director James Whale (brilliantly played by McKellen); Whale (1889-1957) was not only a pioneer in the horror film genre - best remembered for *Frankenstein* (1931), *The Old Dark House* (1932), *The Invisible Man* (1933) and *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935) - but he lived as an openly gay man throughout his career in Hollywood, something that was virtually unheard of in that era.

***Goodfellas*** (1990) Martin Scorsese's mafia classic, based on Nicholas Pileggi's 1985 nonfiction *Wiseguy: Life in a Mafia Family* stars Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta, Joe Pesci, Lorraine Bracco and Paul Sorvino, the film narrates the rise and fall of mob associate Henry Hill chronicles the life of Henry Hill, a Mafia associate turned informant, from 1955 to 1980. Loaded with violence, sex, drugs, f-bombs – and an exquisite tracking shot through the Copacabana nightclub, *Goodfellas* does not disappoint. Martin Scorsese also directed *The Age of Innocence* (1993), *Cape Fear* (1991) and *Casino* (1995).

***Heavenly Creatures*** (New Zealand, 1994) Sir Peter Jackson's psychological drama based on the notorious 1954 Parker–Hulme murder case in Christchurch, New Zealand stars Kate Winslet and Melanie Lynskey in their feature film debuts. Set in the 1950's, the film focuses on the relationship between two teenage girls—Pauline Parker (Lynskey) and Juliet Hulme – which spirals dangerously out of control, culminating in matricide. In the following decades, Jackson would be known for the widely successful *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

***Howards End*** (1992) Ismail Merchant and James Ivory period drama based on 1910 E. M. Forster's novel stars Emma Thompson, Helena Bonham Carter, Vanessa Redgrave and Anthony Hopkins, and explores class relations in turn-of-the-20th-century Britain, through events in the lives of the Schlegel sisters; Winner of three Oscars - Best Actress (Thompson), Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Art Direction. Other Merchant Ivory films of this decade: *The Remains of the Day* (1993) and *Surviving Picasso* (1996). Other period dramas of notice: *Impromptu* (1991), *The Madness of King George* (1994), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1997), *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1991) and *The Wings of a Dove* (1991).

***The Ice Storm*** (1997) Ang Lee's drama film based on Rick Moody's 1994 novel features an ensemble cast of Kevin Kline, Joan Allen, Tobey Maguire, Christina Ricci, Elijah Wood, Katie Holmes, Glenn Fitzgerald,

Jamey Sheridan, and Sigourney Weaver. Set during Thanksgiving 1973, it depicts two dysfunctional New Canaan, Connecticut, upper-class families who are trying to deal with tumultuous social changes, and their escapism through alcohol, adultery, and sexual experimentation (*key parties*, anyone?). The Taiwanese filmmaker also directed: *Eat Drink Man Woman* (1994), *Ride with the Devil* (1999), *Sense and Sensibility* (1995) and the film that put Lee on the US map - *The Wedding Banquet* (1993).

*Indochine* (France, 1992) Oscar-winning period drama film set in colonial French Indochina from the 1930's to the 1950's; stars Catherine Deneuve, Vincent Pérez and Linh Dan Pham; the story of Éliane Devries (Deneuve), a French plantation owner, and of her adopted Vietnamese daughter, Camille (Pham), set against the backdrop of the rising Vietnamese nationalist movement. Other French imports: *Delicatessen* (1991), *La Femme Nikita* (1990), *The Lover* (1992), *Ma vie en rose* (1997), *Ponette* (1996) and *Queen Margot* (1994).

*Jerry Maguire* (1996) Cameron Crowe wrote and directed this coming-of-age sports drama, which starred Tom Cruise, Renée Zellweger and Cuba Gooding Jr. Jerry Maguire (Cruise), a sports agent, has a late-night epiphany, which prompts him to write a mission statement *The Things We Think and Do Not Say: The Future of Our Business*, and then naively and arrogantly expects it to inspire his colleagues; but it just results in him getting fired and losing his clientele. The only people to stay with Jerry are Arizona Cardinals wide receiver Rod Tidwell (Gooding, Jr., who won an Oscar), who keeps him on as his agent, and accountant Dorothy Boyd (Zellweger), who agrees to leave the agency with him in solidarity and to start a new firm – and so begins Jerry's journey.

*Kids* (1995) Photographer-provocateur Larry Clark paints a pretty disturbing portrait of NYC “skate rats” (kids skate boarding all over the borough). Not exactly a “coming of age” teen comedy, but rather a bleak portrait of teens behaving very badly. Clark has a knack for nailing youth culture's nihilistic side and *Kids* certainly performs the task – the film packs a punch.

*Leaving Las Vegas* (1995) Mike Figgis' devastating portrait of addiction, based John O'Brien's semi-autobiographical 1990 novel, stars Nicolas Cage and Elisabeth Shue. Ben Sanderson (Cage), a Hollywood screenwriter and chronic alcoholic, has just lost everything. So he decides to move to Las Vegas and drink himself to death. Once in Vegas, he meets Sera (Shue), a hardened prostitute, and the two form an unlikely alliance. Cage would pick up an Oscar as the suicidal inebriate – but sadly O'Brien took his life after signing away the film rights to the novel.

*Let Him Have It* (1991) Peter Medak's drama set in 1950's London and based on M J Tow's 1990 book *Let Him Have It, Chris: The Murder of Derek Bentley*, stars Christopher Eccleston, Paul Reynolds, Tom Courtenay and Tom Bell; the true story of Derek Bentley, an illiterate, epileptic youth with developmental disabilities, who was convicted of the murder of a police officer by joint enterprise and was hanged in 1953 under controversial circumstances – a grave miscarriage of justice [Bentley was eventually pardoned in 1993, and his murder conviction quashed in 1998 by Court of Appeal].

*Like Water for Chocolate* (*Como agua para chocolate*, Mexico 1992) *A feast for the senses!* Romantic drama based on Laura Esquivel's 1989 novel; set in a Mexican village in the 1900's - the dawn of the Revolution, it tells the story of Tita and Pedro, two star crossed lovers forbidden to marry due to an antiquated family tradition. When customs prevents Tita from marrying the man she loves, she discovers her unique talent for cooking, and woos them all. With elements of magic realism, melodrama, comedy and culinary delights, *LWFC* is a gem, and became the highest-grossing foreign-language film ever released in the United States at the time.



***The Matrix*** (1999) Lana and Lilly Wachowski's critically acclaimed dystopian sensation stars Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving, and Joe Pantoliano. Set in year 2199, humanity is unknowingly trapped inside a simulated reality, the Matrix, which intelligent machines have created to distract humans while using their bodies as an energy source. The Wachowski's groundbreaking second feature - their first being ***Bound*** (1996) - grossed over \$463 million worldwide, and won Academy Awards for Best Film Editing, Best Visual Effects, Best Sound, and Best Sound Editing. Other sci-fi thrillers: ***12 Monkeys*** (1995), ***Independence Day*** (1996) and ***Total Recall*** (1990).

***Metropolitan*** (1990) *The Preppiest*, *WASPiest*, *Wittiest Comedy of Heirs* - writer/director Whit Stillman's debut; set in the 1980's, a sparkling comedic chronicle of a young man's romantic misadventures while trying to fit in to New York City's debutante society; the first of the Stillman film trilogy followed by ***Barcelona*** (1994) and ***The Last Days of Disco*** (1998).

***Misery*** (1990) Rob Reiner's wonderfully twisted psychological thriller - based on Stephen King's 1987 novel - stars James Caan and Kathy Bates. Paul Sheldon (Caan), a famous author, is rescued from a car crash by Annie Wilkes (Bates) an obsessive fan of his novels, only to realize that the care he is receiving is only the beginning of a nightmare of captivity and abuse. Reiner also directed: ***The American President*** (1995), ***A Few Good Men*** (1992), ***Ghosts of Mississippi*** (1996) and ***The Story of Us*** (1999); Bates would carry home an Oscar for her performance as the deranged Annie - and also starred in ***Dolores Claiborne*** (1995), ***Fried Green Tomatoes*** (1991), ***Used People*** (1992) and ***The Waterboy*** (1998).

***Muriel's Wedding*** (1994) The coming-of-age comedy stars Toni Collette and Rachel Griffiths; the ABBA-obsessed, socially awkward Muriel's (Collette) sole ambition is to have a glamorous wedding and improve her personal life by moving from her dead-end hometown to Sydney; with fellow outcast Rhonda (Griffiths), she does so - but it doesn't exactly go as planned. The film catapulted Collette and Griffiths' careers - the actors have been consistently working since their international debuts. Other great Aussie imports: ***The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*** (1994), ***Shine*** (1996) and ***Strictly Ballroom*** (1992).

***My Own Private Idaho*** (1991) Gus Van Sant's taboo-laden, subversive road film - loosely based on John Rechy's 1963 novel *City of Night* (a stark exposé of street hustling) and William Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (quite a hybrid!); stars River Phoenix and Keanu Reeves as best friends living on the streets of Portland as hustlers, as they embark on a journey of self-discovery and find their relationship stumbling along the way; ***MOPI*** is considered a groundbreaking, landmark film, especially amongst LGBT audiences. Van Sant went on to direct: ***Good Will Hunting*** (1997), the remake of ***Psycho*** (1998) and ***To Die For*** (1995).

***Natural Born Killers*** (1994) Oliver Stone's highly stylized, ultra-violent and downright disturbing crime film stars Woody Harrelson and Juliette Lewis, and tells the story of two victims of traumatic childhoods who become lovers and mass murderers, and are irresponsibly glorified by the mass media. Stone has always maintained that the ***NBK*** is a satire on how serial killers are adored by the media for their horrific actions. Stone would also direct: ***Any Given Sunday*** (1999), ***The Doors*** (1991), ***JFK*** (1991), ***Heaven & Earth*** (1993) and ***Nixon*** (1995).

***Once Were Warriors*** (New Zealand, 1994) Lee Tamahori's critically acclaimed directorial debut - based on Alan Duff's 1990 novel - set in Auckland, this harrowing drama tells the story of the Hekes, an urban Māori family, and their problems with poverty, alcoholism, and domestic violence. Tamahori would go on to direct: ***The Edge*** (1997) and ***Mulholland Falls*** (1996).

***Party Girl*** (1995) Parker Posey, the undisputed Queen of the Indies, stars as Mary, a free-spirited, fashionista and club girl-turned librarian; an off the wall comedy and glimpse into the 1990's downtown club scene and



the inner workings of the Dewey Decimal System. Posey would also appear in *Basquiat* (1996), *Clockwatchers* (1997), *House of Yes* (1996) and *Waiting for Guffman* (1996). Another indie gem to check out is *Next Stop Wonderland* (1998), starring Hope Davis, who also starred with Posey in *The Daytrippers* (1996).

*Passion Fish* (1992) Writer/Director John Sayles' compelling drama stars Mary McDonnell and Alfre Woodard. May-Alice Culhane (McDonnell), a wisecracking soap opera star, returns home to Louisiana after an auto accident leaves her paralyzed. Her cruel humor and hard-drinking drive away a succession of nurses until she meets her match in Chantelle (Woodard). With impeccable acting, traditional Cajun music and the picturesque bayou as a backdrop, *Passion Fish* is a rare gem. Other Sayles works: *Lone Star* (1996), *Men with Guns* (1997) and *The Secret of Roan Inish* (1994).

*The People vs. Larry Flynt* (1996) Miloš Forman's biopic about the controversial pornography publisher stars Woody Harrelson in the title role as Larry Flynt, and Courtney Love as his unconventional, but loving wife Althea. Flynt is the hedonistically obnoxious, but indomitable, publisher of *Hustler* magazine. The film recounts his struggle to make an "honest living" publishing his porn magazine and how it changes into a battle to protect the freedom of speech. Forman would also direct *Man on the Moon* (1999), another biopic about the legendary, avant-garde comic, Andy Kaufman, starring Jim Carrey.

*The Piano* (1993) Dame Jane Campion's period drama stars Holly Hunter, Harvey Keitel, Sam Neill, and Anna Paquin (in her film debut). In the mid-19th century Ada McGrath (Hunter), a mute woman, is sent to New Zealand via Scotland, along with her young daughter, Flora (Paquin) and prized piano for an arranged marriage with Alisdair Stewart (Neill), a frontiersman; doomed from the start, Ada develops a passionate relationship with farmhand, George Baines (Keitel). Campion would pick up an Oscar for her Original Screenplay, Hunter and Paquin for their brilliant performances. New Zealand's Campion also directed: *An Angel at My Table* (1990), *Holy Smoke!* (1998) and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1996).

*The Player* (1992) Robert Altman's brilliant Hollywood satire, based on Michael Tolkin's 1988 novel stars Tim Robbins, Greta Scacchi, Fred Ward, Whoopi Goldberg, Peter Gallagher, Brion James and Cynthia Stevenson – and 65 celebrity cameos; the story of Griffin Mill (Robbins), a Hollywood film studio executive who kills an aspiring screenwriter he believes is sending him death threats. Other Altman films: *Short Cuts* (1993) and *Vincent and Theo* (1990).

*The Postman* (*Il postino*, Italy 1994) *A shy postman didn't stand a chance with the island's most beautiful woman until the great poet of love gave him the courage to follow his dreams...and the words to win her heart.* A charming film - based on Chilean novelist, Antonio Skármeta's 1985 *El Cartero De Neruda* ("The Postman") - stars Massimo Troisi, Philippe Noiret, and Maria Grazia Cucinotta. Set in 1953 on a tiny island off the Italian coast, portrays the story of Mario (Troisi) a timid postman who develops a transformative friendship with the exiled Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (Noiret). *Il Postino* is an extremely bittersweet story both on screen and off - Troisi, who suffered a lifetime of heart problems, tragically died the day after filming was complete. Other Italian films: *Caro Diario* (1993), *Farinelli* (1994) and *Lamerica* (1994).

*The Rapture* (1991) *Rapture (rap'chur) 1. ecstatic joy or delight. 2. a state of extreme sexual ecstasy. 3. the feeling of being transported to another sphere of existence. 4. the experience of being spirited away to Heaven just before the Apocalypse.* Controversial "Christian" drama stars Mimi Rogers as Sharon, a Los Angeles telephone operator by day, libidinous cruising swinger by night (airport bars, furniture showrooms, you name it); realizing her evil ways, she converts and becomes a born-again Christian after learning that a true Rapture is upon the world. A little out there, but at the time, *The Rapture* upset many and worth the watch.

***Reality Bites*** (1994): Winona Ryder, Ethan Hawke, Janeane Garofalo, Steve Zahn and Ben Stiller (also his directorial debut) star in this Generation X comedy – a documentary filmmaker and her fellow graduates face life after college, while looking for work and love in Houston. The 90's produced such Gen X/Slacker classics: ***Clerks*** (1994), ***Dazed and Confused*** (1993), ***Singles*** (1992), ***Slacker*** (1991), ***Walking and Talking*** (1996) and ***Wayne's World*** (1992).

***Reservoir Dogs*** (1992) Quentin Tarantino's directorial debut stars Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Steve Buscemi, Michael Madsen and Chris Penn (yes, Sean's brother). A band of thieves jewelry store heist goes terribly wrong - and to make matters worse, there's an undercover cop among them. Although controversial when it was released, due to its graphic violence and unconventional narrative style (which would go on to become Tarantino's trademark style), it's been hailed as one of the all-time greatest feature film debuts. Tarantino would go on to direct: ***Pulp Fiction*** (1994) and ***Jackie Brown*** (1997).

***A River Runs Through It*** (1992) Robert Redford's stunning period piece (it would pick up a Best Cinematography Oscar), based on Norman Maclean's 1976 semi-autobiographical novella, stars Craig Sheffer, Brad Pitt, Tom Skerritt, Brenda Blethyn, and Emily Lloyd. Two sons of a stern minister - one reserved, one rebellious - grow up in rural 1920's Montana while devoted to fly-fishing. Redford would also direct: ***The Horse Whisperer*** (1998) and ***Quiz Show*** (1994).

***Romper Stomper*** (Australia, 1992) Mesmerizing glimpse into Melbourne's skinhead culture stars (the then relatively unknown) Russell Crowe; wildly successful in Australia, critics and audiences hailed it for its relentlessly grim and gripping depiction of the inner dynamics of a hate group; Crowe's electric performance as Hando (the gang leader and unpredictable psychopath/white nationalist) turned heads. Crowe would star in: ***The Insider*** (1999) ***L.A. Confidential*** (1997), ***Mystery, Alaska*** (1999), ***Proof*** (1991) and ***The Quick and the Dead*** (1995).

***Rushmore*** (1998) Wes Anderson's directorial debut: this quirky, coming-of-age, cult favorite stars Jason Schwartzman (in his film debut), veteran Bill Murray and the UK's stunning Olivia Williams. Set in Houston at the fictional Rushmore Academy, it centers around an eccentric teenager named Max Fischer (Schwartzman), his friendship with rich industrialist Herman Blume (Murray), and their love in common for elementary school teacher Rosemary Cross (Williams). Co-written by Anderson and Owen Wilson, ***Rushmore*** would launch both careers in the decades to come.

***Scent of a Woman*** (1992) *Col. Frank Slade has a very special plan for the weekend. It involves travel, women, good food, fine wine, the tango, chauffeured limousines and a loaded forty-five. And he's bringing Charlie along for the ride.* A remake of Dino Risi's 1974 Italian film *Profumo di donna*, and based on Giovanni Arpino's 1969 novel *Il buio e il miele* (*Darkness and Honey*); stars Al Pacino as the blind, acerbic Lt. Col. Frank Slade, and Chris O'Donnell as Charlie Simms, a prep school student in need of cash, who takes on the task of "babysitting" Slade during Thanksgiving. *Whoo-ah!* Pacino would pick up an Oscar. Other Pacino films: ***Carlito's Way*** (1993), ***The Devil's Advocate*** (1997), ***Donnie Brasco*** (1997), ***Frankie and Johnny*** (1991) and ***The Godfather: Part III*** (1990).

***Schindler's List*** (1993): *The List Is Life.* Steven Spielberg's intense historical drama based on the true story of Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist who was instrumental in saving over one thousand Polish-Jewish refugees from the Holocaust by employing them in his factories during World War II; stars Liam Neeson as Schindler, Ralph Fiennes as SS officer Amon Göth, and Ben Kingsley as Schindler's Jewish accountant Itzhak Stern. Other Spielberg films of this decade: ***Amistad*** (1997), ***Hook*** (1991), ***Jurassic Park*** (1993), ***The Lost World: Jurassic Park*** (1997) and ***Saving Private Ryan*** (1998).

***Secrets & Lies*** (1996) Writer-director, Mike Leigh is an expert observer of unembellished humanity – *Secrets & Lies* is considered one of his greatest works. Stars Brenda Blethyn and Marianne Jean-Baptiste; Following the death of her adoptive parents, Hortense (Baptiste) a successful young black optometrist establishes contact with her biological mother, Cynthia (Blethyn), a lonely white factory worker living in poverty in East London, which sends shock waves through the rest of Cynthia's already fragile family. Other Leigh works: ***Career Girls*** (1997), ***Life is Sweet*** (1990), ***Naked*** (1993) and ***Topsy Turvy*** (1999).

***The Shawshank Redemption*** (1994) Based on Stephen King's 1982 novella, *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption*, it stars Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman - banker Andy Dufresne (Robbins) is sentenced to life in Shawshank State Penitentiary for the murders of his wife and her lover, despite his claims of innocence. Over the following two decades, he befriends a fellow prisoner Ellis "Red" Redding (Freeman), who knows the ropes and helps him to cope with the frightening realities of prison life; not your conventional brutal prison film, but rather one that illustrates the themes of faith, friendship, and survival – even after countless viewings, the ending is still a tear-jerker! Another Stephen King prison novel-turned film is ***The Green Mile*** (1999).

***The Silence of the Lambs*** (1991): *Dr. Hannibal Lecter. Brilliant. Cunning. Psychotic. In his mind lies the clue to a ruthless killer. - Clarice Starling, FBI. Brilliant. Vulnerable. Alone. She must trust him to stop the killer.* Jonathan Demme's psychological thriller movie based on Thomas Harris' 1988 novel stars Jodie Foster and Sir Anthony Hopkins – an F.B.I. cadet enlists the aid of an incarcerated and manipulative cannibal killer in order to help catch another serial killer, a madman who skins his victims. Not only is this the only horror film ever to win for Best Picture, this cult classic won the Grand Slam of the Oscars: Best Picture, Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay, Best Actor, and Best Actress. Demme also directed ***Philadelphia*** (1993).

***The Sixth Sense*** (1999) *There are ghosts walking among us, looking for help... They have found it.* M. Night Shyamalan's supernatural thriller stars Bruce Willis, Haley Joel Osment, Toni Collette and Olivia Williams. Set in Philadelphia, Malcome Crowe (Willis), a prominent child psychologist, takes on young Cole Sear (Osment), a lonely outcast who claims he can see and talk to the dead – hands down, one of the greatest endings/plot twists of all time. Other great psychological thrillers: ***The Bone Collector*** (1999), ***Copycat*** (1995), ***Dead Again*** (1991), ***Funny Games*** (Austria, 1997), ***Jacob's Ladder*** (1990), ***Lost Highway*** (1996) and ***Single White Female*** (1992).

***Sling Blade*** (1996) Billy Bob Thorton wrote, directed and stars in this riveting drama set in Arkansas, and features Dwight Yoakam, John Ritter, Lucas Black, Natalie Canerday and Robert Duvall. Karl Childers (Thorton), after 25 years in a mental hospital for the murder of his mother, is released to return back to his hometown. Karl becomes friends with a young boy, Frank Wheatley (Black), and his mother, Linda Wheatley (Canerday) and they invite him to come and live with them – however, it's anything but a Hallmark family movie! Thorton would pick up an Oscar for his Screenplay, and continue to appear in films, most notably ***A Simple Plan*** (1998).

***The Spanish Prisoner*** (1997) *It's the oldest con in the book.* David Mamet's neo-noir suspense stars Campbell Scott, Steve Martin, Rebecca Pidgeon, Ben Gazzara, Felicity Huffman and Ricky Jay, and tells a story of corporate espionage conducted through an elaborate confidence game. Other David Mamet films: ***American Buffalo*** (1996), ***Glengarry Glen Ross*** (1992), ***Oleanna*** (1994) and ***Wag the Dog*** (1997).

***Strawberry & Chocolate*** (*Fresa y chocolate*, Cuba 1993) Tomás Gutiérrez's a coming-of-age film set in 1979 Havana, Cuba and based on Senel Paz's 1990 short story *The Wolf, The Forest and the New Man* (*El Lobo, el bosque y el hombre nuevo*) stars Jorge Perugorria and Vladimir Cruz; the story Diego and David,

two men who are polar opposites: one gay, the other straight; one a fierce communist, the other a fierce individualist; one suspicious, the other accepting; and how they come to overcome intolerance and love each other; the first (and to date, the only) Cuban film to be nominated for an Oscar.

***Summer of Sam*** (1999) Spike Lee's take on the "Son of Sam" murders in New York City during the summer of 1977; stars John Leguizamo, Adrien Brody and Mira Sorvino, and centers on the residents of an Italian-American Bronx neighborhood who live in fear and distrust of one another. Other Spike Lee joints: ***Clockers*** (1995), ***Crooklyn*** (1994), ***He Got Game*** (1998), ***Jungle Fever*** (1991), ***Malcolm X*** (1992) and ***Mo' Better Blues*** (1990).

***The Sweet Hereafter*** (Canada, 1997) *There is no such thing as the simple truth.* Atom Egoyan's intense drama - based on Russell Banks 1991 novel - stars Ian Holm and Sarah Polley; a school bus accident in a small Canadian town kills 14 children. A class-action lawsuit ensues, proving divisive in the community and becoming tied with personal and family issues; critically acclaimed, but not at Box Office success - worth a watch.

***Swingers*** (1996) *cocktails first. questions later.* Jon Favreau and Vince Vaughn star in this hilarious buddy film about two single, unemployed actors living on the 'eastside' of Hollywood, California (Los Feliz) and looking for love - or a good time! A critical and commercial hit, the film helped propel Favreau and Vaughn into stardom. Another buddy film of mention: ***The Brothers McMullen*** (1995).

***Smoke*** (1995) *Five strangers. Four secrets. Three schemes. Two best friends. And one neighborhood hangout where the world still makes sense.* Wayne Wang's indie gem stars Harvey Keitel, William Hurt, Stockard Channing and an ensemble cast including Harold Perrineau Jr., Giancarlo Esposito, Ashley Judd, and Forest Whitaker; it follows the lives of multiple characters, all of whom are connected via their patronage of a small Brooklyn tobacconist store managed by Auggie (Keitel). Wang directed ***Anywhere But Here*** (1999), the sequel to ***Smoke*** ***Blue in the Face*** (1995) and ***The Joy Luck Club*** (1993).

***Thelma & Louise*** (1991) Sir Ridley Scott's female buddy film stars Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon as Thelma and Louise, best friends who embark on a road trip in a 1966 Ford Thunderbird convertible to escape their hum drum lives. What starts out as a dream holiday soon becomes a nightmare: Thelma is almost raped in a car park, but is saved by gun-toting Louise; in a rage, Louise shoots the assailant and soon, the FBI is chasing them down. Deservedly won the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay and a very young (and devilishly sexy) Brad Pitt makes an appearance.

***The Three Colors Trilogy*** (French: *Trois couleurs*, Polish: *Trzy kolory*) Krzysztof Kieślowski's magnum opus - a boldly cinematic trio of stories about love and loss. ***Blue*** (1993), ***White*** (1994) and ***Red*** (1994) - named for the colors of the French flag, representing liberty, equality, and fraternity; are set in Paris, Warsaw and Geneva, and examine a group of ambiguously interconnected people experiencing profound personal disruptions. Kieślowski's (1941-1996) trio blew up in art houses - a benchmark of contemporary cinema, as well as his earlier work, ***The Double Life of Véronique*** (1991).

***Titanic*** (1997): James Cameron's epic romance/historical fiction drama stars Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet as the ill-fated lovers, Jack and Rose, members of different social classes who fall in love aboard the ship during its ill-fated maiden voyage. Winner of 11 Academy Awards, *Titanic* is not only one of the greatest disaster films, but also one of the highest grossing films in history.

***Toy Story*** (1995) the world's first computer animated feature film and a critical and commercial blockbuster. Taking place in a world where toys come to life when humans are not present, the plot focuses on the

relationship/rivalry between an old-fashioned pull-string cowboy doll named Woody (Tom Hanks) and a modern space cadet action figure, Buzz Lightyear (Tim Allen). Other animated classics: ***Aladdin*** (1992), ***Beauty and the Beast*** (1991), ***The Hunchback of Notre Dame*** (1996), ***The Lion King*** (1994) and ***The Nightmare Before Christmas*** (1993).

***Trainspotting*** (Scotland, 1996) Danny Boyle's brilliant black comedy based on Irvine's Welsh's 1993 novel stars Ewan McGregor, Ewen Bremner, Jonny Lee Miller, Kevin McKidd, Robert Carlyle and Kelly Macdonald; follows a group of heroin addicts in an economically depressed area of Edinburgh and their passage through life. Boyle also directed: ***A Life Less Ordinary*** (1997) and ***Shallow Grave*** (1994); breakthrough performances put actors McGregor and Carlyle on the international map. McGregor would also star in ***Little Voice*** (1998) and ***Velvet Goldmine*** (1998), Carlyle in ***The Full Monty*** (1997) and James Bond's ***The World is not Enough*** (1999).

***The Truman Show*** (1999) Peter Weir's psychological science fiction satire stars Jim Carrey as Truman Burbank, an insurance salesman who grew up living a seemingly ordinary life; unbeknownst to him his entire life is actually a reality TV Show. The supporting cast includes Laura Linney, Ed Harris, Noah Emmerich, Natascha McElhone and Holland Taylor; another alternative universe-TV film - ***Pleasantville*** (1998).

***The Usual Suspects*** (1995) neo-noir mystery thriller stars Stephen Baldwin, Gabriel Byrne, Benicio del Toro, Kevin Pollak, Chazz Palminteri, Pete Postlethwaite, and Kevin Spacey. The plot follows the interrogation of Roger "Verbal" Kint, a small-time con man, who is one of only two survivors of a massacre and fire on a ship docked at the Port of Los Angeles. Through flashback and narration, Kint tells an interrogator a convoluted story of events that led him and his criminal companions to the boat, and of a mysterious crime lord—known as Keyser Söze—who controlled them. Spacey picked up an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor, as did Christopher McQuarrie for his clever Original Screenplay.

***A Walk on the Moon*** (1999) Diane Lane, Viggo Mortensen and Liev Schreiber star in this drama, set against the backdrop of the Woodstock festival of 1969 and the United States's Moon landing of that summer. Set in the Catskills, Pearl Kantrowitz (Lane) is a frustrated young housewife with two children and married to Marty (Schreiber), a square, but decent TV repairman. Pearl's life is upended when she has an affair with Walker Jerome (Mortensen), a free-spirited blouse salesman. Another marriage in crisis film worth a viewing is ***Metroland*** (1997), set in 1977 London suburbs and stars Emily Watson and Christian Bale.

***Welcome to the Dollhouse*** (1995) Todd Solondz's hilarious, but brutal, coming-of-age dark comedy stars Heather Matarazzo (in her film debut) as Dawn Weiner, an awkward seventh-grader who struggles to cope with her disinterested family, vicious and snobbish class-mates, and her own insecurities in suburban New Jersey. ***WTTD*** launched the careers of writer-director Solondz and actor Matarazzo. Solondz also wrote and directed another wicked comedy ***Happiness*** (1998).

***What's Love Got to Do with It*** (1993) Adapted from Tina Turner's autobiography ***I, Tina*** (1986), it stars Angela Bassett and Laurence Fishburne, and follows the music icon's life from a rural Tennessee upbringing to her rise to stardom, along with her abusive marriage to Ike Turner. Other great music biopics: ***Hilary and Jackie*** (1998) The tragic story of world renowned classic cellist Jacqueline du Pré, as told by her sister, flautist Hilary du Pré-Finzi (stars Emily Watson and Rachel Griffiths); and ***Selena*** (1998) stars Jennifer Lopez in a breakthrough role, as the doomed Tejano music star Selena Quintanilla Pérez, following her rise to fame and tragic death when she was murdered by Yolanda Saldívar at the age of 23.

***When We Were Kings*** (1996) Oscar winning, riveting documentary chronicles the untold story of the “Rumble in the Jungle,” the 1974 heavyweight championship bout in Zaire, between champion George Foreman and underdog challenger Muhammad Ali; features archival footage and interviews of celebrities and journalists, including James Brown, B.B. King, Don King, Norman Mailer and George Plimpton. Other great documentaries of this decade: ***A Brief History of Time*** (1991), ***Berkeley in the Sixties*** (1990), ***The Celluloid Closet*** (1995), ***Crumb*** (1994), ***Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*** (1991), ***Hoop Dreams*** (1994), ***One Day in September*** (1999) and ***The War Room*** (1993).