

English 300: Merlin Arthurian Film

Here are some suggestions for films that you might wish us to view in our first gathering. Please use the course elist to discuss our viewing schedule or contact our cinematic stewardess, Dawn Marie. An excellent guide to Arthurian films is Kevin J. Harty's "Arthurian Film," which I passed around in our last meeting. You can reach the Website for "An Arthuriana / Camelot Project Bibliography," which contains the ninety-six page article by Harty, through our Website.

First Knight (1995) Jerry Zucker (dir.) Focused mainly on the Arthur-Lancelot-Guinevere love-triangle, Zucker "intends his film to be an Arthuriad for the 1990s," as Harty suggests. Does this project succeed?

The Natural (1984) Barry Levinson (dir.) Based on Bernard Malamud's novel, The Natural, this film explores the past of aging slugger Rob Hobbs in terms of the Arthurian legend. As Kevin Harty writes, "...this film was meant as a star-vehicle for [Robert] Redford more than as a faithful adaptation of a literary source, and the Arthurian dimensions of the novel are obscured in the process."

Excalibur (1981) John Boorman (dir.) Loosely based upon Malory, the film perhaps, as Harty suggests, has not aged well. As there are many reviews of the work, the film might be a productive one to analyze.

Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975) Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones (dir.) You gotta see it at least once!

Camelot (1967) Joshua Logan (dir.) The wildly successful 1960 Broadway play by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, itself adapted from T. H. White's Once and Future King, is the basis of this film. Opinions fly about the film, ranging from its nomination in various categories of the Academy Awards to real skewerings of its director.

The Sword in the Stone (1963) Wolfgang Reitherman (dir.) Walt Disney Productions founded this animated version on T. H. White's The Sword in the Stone.

A Connecticut Yankee (1931) David Butler (dir.) An enchanting adaptation of Twain with a wonderful cast and some funny special effects. There are a half-dozen other versions of Twain's novel on film, but please do see this one as well if you intend to write a comparative paper.