



“[He’s] one of what we all are, Pelly,
less than a drop in the great blue motion
of the sunlit sea.

But it seems some of the drops sparkle, Pelly,
some of them do sparkle!”

— King Arthur (Camelot)

“It’s quality work, and there are simply too many notes,
that’s all. Just cut a few and it will be perfect.”

— Emperor Joseph (Amadeus)

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My Favorite Movies

Where did this come from? Six weeks ago, I published a piece on *ConVivio* called “*Greatest Songs of All Time*” (<https://convivio-online.net/greatest-songs-of-all-time-2018/>). It was inspired by a regular customer at *The Flying Pig* named Carl. We were talking about songs from “my era” (the 60s and 70s) and he asked me, “What songs are important to you?” So, I mentioned a few off the top of my head and ... well, it caused me to rethink a list of The Greatest Songs of All Time that I had posted a few years before. So, when I made a new list and invited others to make their lists, I discovered that there are some talented list-makers among *ConVivio* readers. Fast-forward to this week and I was talking about those lists of songs with my son Will (one of the proprietors of *The Flying Pig*), observing how much attention that list-making exercise had attracted. The conversation turned to a favorite movie of mine, which Will’s brother Ben (the other *Flying Pig* proprietor) recently reminded me of. The movie, “2001 — A Space Odyssey” featured some music that I had accidentally omitted from my “Greatest Songs” list. The movie was a huge favorite during my senior year in high school and is currently getting some attention on its 50th anniversary. Will suggested, “What about a list of ‘Greatest Movies?’” I mentioned a particularly dramatic pair of lines from a climactic moment of the movie — So, this is the result ...

PapaDan’s List

Below is my list of my favorite movies. Unlike my “Greatest Songs” list, I did not feel qualified to identify the “Greatest Movies of All Time.” Turns out that “All Time” is beyond the scope of my expertise. SO, my list consists of just the movies I liked best (at least as of today). As a bonus, I include a quote I remember from each one. I invite you to reply, if you like, with:

1. Your own list, as short or as long as you wish, of your favorite movies.
2. You are also invited — though not required — to include a quote that you find memorable from one or more of them (or not).
3. You are welcome to send comments like “How could you possibly leave out _____ from your list?” or “How could you include a dumb movie like _____?” All are welcome.

→ A few words of caution — I intended to make a list of ten movies. BUT, that turned out to be impossible. A struggle with painful cutting brought it down from 25 to 17. So, if you decide to make your own list, all of your good intentions to keep it short may be futile. I also could not list them in order of “favoriteness.” Just couldn’t. So, they are in alphabetical order. I also ignored the winners of the most recent Academy Awards, since I wasn’t familiar with many of them anyway. I also did not consider whether “my” movies received any awards in their day.

I hope you, at least, find this exercise interesting.

Here is my list:



My Favorite Movies — August 2, 2018

1. **2001: A Space Odyssey**
 - Dave: "Open the pod bay doors, HAL." HAL 9000: "I'm sorry, Dave. I'm afraid I can't do that."
 - HAL 9000: "This mission is too important for me to allow you to jeopardize it."
2. **Amadeus**
 - Emperor Joseph, to Mozart: "My dear young man, don't take it too hard. Your work is ingenious. It's quality work. And there are simply too many notes, that's all. Just cut a few and it will be perfect."
 - Salieri: "This was a music I'd never heard. Filled with such longing, such unfulfillable longing, it had me trembling. It seemed to me that I was hearing the voice of God."
3. **American Graffiti**
 - "I don't like that surfin' shit. Rock and roll's been going downhill ever since Buddy Holly died."
4. **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid**
 - Butch: "If he'd just pay me what he's spending to make me stop robbing him, I'd stop robbing him."
 - Etta: "I'll do anything you ask of me except one thing. I won't watch you die."
5. **Camelot**
 - Arthur (speaking to Pellinore of the newly knighted Tom of Warwick): [He's] one of what we all are, Pelly, less than a drop in the great blue motion of the sunlit sea. But it seems some of the drops sparkle, Pelly, some of them do sparkle!"
6. **Chicago**
 - Roxie "I'm a star, and the audience loves me, and I love them, they love me for loving them, and I love them for loving me. And we love each other. And that's 'cause none of us got enough love in our childhoods. And that's showbiz, kid."
7. **E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial**
 - "I'll be right here."
8. **Field of Dreams**
 - "If you build it, he will come." John & Ray Kinsella: "Is this heaven?" "It's Iowa." "I could've sworn it was heaven. Oh yeah, it's the place where dreams come true. [Looks around and sees his wife playing with their daughter] "Maybe this is heaven."
9. **Forrest Gump**
 - "Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're going to get." "Stupid is as stupid does."
 - "I'm not a smart man, but I know what love is."
10. **Funny Girl**
 - "You think beautiful girls are going to stay in style forever? I should say not! Any minute now they're going to be out! Finished! Then it'll be my turn!"
11. **The Graduate**
 - "I want to say just one word to you, just one word." "Yes, sir." "Are you listening?" "Yes, I am." "Plastics."
12. **Moonstruck**
 - Ronnie Cammareri: "Loretta, I love you. Not like they told you love is ... but love don't make things nice, it ruins everything. It breaks your heart. It makes things a mess. We aren't here to make things perfect. Snowflakes are perfect. Stars are perfect. Not us."
13. **Planet of the Apes**
 - "Don't look for it Taylor, you may not like what you find."
14. **Saving Private Ryan**
 - "Earn this." At the very end of the movie, Tom Hanks says it twice — once to Private Ryan and once to all of us in the audience who have benefitted from the sacrifices of soldiers in World War II.
15. **The Sound of Music** (and let's not forget My Fair Lady)
 - Maria: "When the Lord closes a door, somewhere He opens a window."
16. **Star Wars I - V**
 - Yoda: "Do. Or do not. There is no try." Riyo Chuchi: "To die for one's people is a great sacrifice. To live for one's people, an even greater sacrifice. I choose to live for my people."
17. **Wizard of Oz**
 - "True courage is in facing danger when you are afraid."
18. **Midnight In Paris**
 - Hemingway: "The artist's job is not to succumb to despair, but to find an antidote for the emptiness of existence."
19. **Same Time Next Year**
 - Doris: "Doris"; George: "What?"; Doris: "My name is Doris."; George: "Your name is Doris?"; "Yes."; George: "But I've been calling you Dorothy all night."; Doris: "Yes, I know."

What's missing from my list?

I omitted a category of "ancient" movies (like Casablanca and those starring Marlon Brando-types), movies by Alfred Hitchcock (although I enjoyed several of them, notably The Birds and Rear Window), and most "war" movies (notably Patton). I also left out The Ten Commandments (I was ten years old when my parents took me to the drive-in to see it), and Ben-Hur (I was nine when my parents took me to its Premier in Oakland), Raiders of the Lost Ark (not sure why), Schindler's List (because I don't like remembering it), and Blazing Saddles (because all the memorable quotes are racist and disgusting). It's funny about movies. Looking back, some of the choices of "favorites" can feel quite personal and can represent who we were back when we saw them. But, they're just movies, right? I look forward to your comments, maybe even a few lists.

