

## ALFRED HITCHCOCK

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PRODUCT of BRITISH AND GERMAN STUDIO SYSTEM

BRITISH SYSTEMS symbiotic with Hollywood after WWI

PART OF HITCHCOCK'S APPRENTICESHIP at GERMAN UFA

Expressionist influence in films-shadows/paranoia, claustrophobia,  
unescapable fate

EMIGRATION TO HOLLYWOOD in 1939 after *The 39 steps* and *The Lady Vanishes*. On the invitation of David O. Selznick (making gone with the wind at the time).

FIRST FILM 1925(Pleasure Garden)

### 39 STEPS

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- 1) Loosely based on the 1914 novel of the same name by Scottish author John Buchan, and freely adapted by playwright Charles Bennett, Ian Hay and Hitchcock himself
- 2) The film was remade twice afterwards, both in the UK:
  - *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1959), d. Ralph Thomas
  - *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1978), d. Don Sharp
- 3) FIRST SOUND FILM 1929 (*Black Mail*) (possible England's first sound film)
- 4) Over a four day period, the suave, imperturbable and clever male protagonist (played by Robert Donat who had recently starred in the swashbuckler *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1934) Madeleine Carroll.
- 5) THEMES/MOTIFS in HITCHCOCK- Paranoia, perversions/sexuality, chase, wealth and power (separate from social causes), false identity, innocent man wrongly accused. Structural agent (chase)

**"39 steps" is a kind of blueprint for many of Hitchcock's later movies /filmic model was also found in *Young and Innocent* (1937), *Saboteur* (1942), and *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956), and culminated in Hitchcock's similar *North by Northwest* (1959) twenty-four years later - it is widely considered his "American *Thirty-Nine Steps*."**

**major motifs is the confining, sexually-frustrating institution of marriage. [There are three married couples in the film that provide the commentary: Margaret and her abusive husband John, Professor and Mrs. Jordan, and the innkeepers who encourage romance.]**

6) FILMS with MAJOR IMPACTS- The Man Who Knew Too much, The 39 Steps, The Lady Vanishes.

7) Narrative Pretext/Divice/riddle (THE MACGUFFIN)

8) 39 Steps (apolitical story of political intrigue/context) his 18th film

9) HITCHCOCK and STORYBOARDING

10) HOMAGE from the FUGITIVE

11) Probably Hitchcock's most famous scene transition, the chambermaid/landlady opens her mouth to scream at the discovery of Annabella's murdered corpse (a shadow of her figure and a knife) in his flat. The sound of her shrieks are blended together and replaced by the piercing screeches from a train whistle as a train emerges from a tunnel - this is an imaginative Hitchcockian touch overlapping and combining sound and visual techniques. [The train is the Flying Scotsman rushing northward to carry Hannay away from the scene of the crime.]

A year earlier, Frank Capra made It Happened One Night;  
a year later, Gregory La Cava made My Man Godfrey.

John Huston saw this and made The Maltese Falcon (and The Mackintosh Man).

Orson Welles remembered bits in Citizen Kane, but probably the sound editing impressed him most.

Stuart Rosenberg's Love And Bullets (and Peter Hunt's Assassination) owe a debt to it, as well as countless films more or less technically.

Fellini paid special tribute to the music hall scene in Amarcord