

*some thoughts on
movies i watched
from march to
may of this year*

may 20

venti (1983)

*watched with: dee, haven, isaac
and simk.*

we were on a gender movie kick, like going for a double feature of forcemasc harem comedies. and venti did not disappoint.

it was surprisingly and transcendently horny. barbra streisand looked like a male milf (a la taemin, mads mik-kelsen). mandy patinkin was an irresistible chauvinist. and i desperately wanted them to have sex with amy irving's hadass.

like. it was good. it was really good. my favorite moment was the gorgeous "will someone ever look at me that way?" simmering triangle of lust. i also really liked mandy patinkin whispering to anshel how he should fuck their girlfriend. both moments had me howling and writhing.

in conclusion, it was a lot of fun. i think if i had watched it as a kid i would be more. more what? more.

may 20

he's a wom- an, she's a man (1994)

*watched with: dee, isaac, simk,
and xtine.*

this movie is my everything. i know all i do is watch hong kong romcoms from the 90s starring leslie cheung, but like this is for real my everything. and it was enhanced by the double feature.

like you can analyze the consistencies of a straight woman head over heels for a gay boy, begging him to touch her boobs. or how crossdressing is a way of accessing distinctly boyish modalities (good little yeshiva boy vs floppy haired idol flower boy). etc. these genders consume ethnic butches, okay?

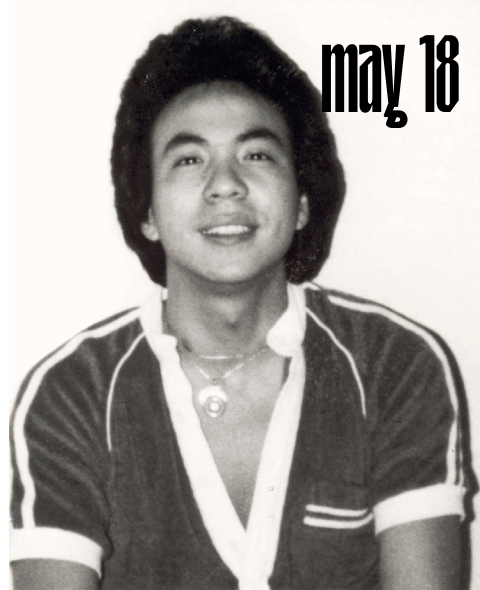
this movie is so laugh out loud funny, and its main character so eminently lovable. it's just really really really good. leslie cheung and carina liu really should break up in this movie and yet it's so fun to see them together, especially when they're being enticed by anita yuen's nerdboy sexual charisma. i think everyone in the whole world should watch this movie. NOW!

who killed vincent chin (1987)

watched with: mother

this documentary was a hard watch. it made me sad. i think vincent chin gets referenced a fair bit, but i learned new things about his case from this. i struggled the most with the interviews with his killers, as well as the footage of his mother.

this movie had me thinking a lot about the limits of the justice conceived by the activists in the movie. the followup from



the directors at the end of the version we watched alluded to this, that had this been made today, maybe the solutions called for would be different. but it had me thinking a lot about the relationship of asian americans to carcerality and the law, and how our identity is forged against the backdrop of legal petition, and the inevitable limits to that.

well. much to think about!



i watched this after my friend elliot tweeted about it. it's a documentary about the sf leatherdyke scene in the 80s.

this doc feels very honest and raw in a way i appreciated. candid interviews with some important figures in the movie as well as some truly fun, breathless scenes. there's plenty this doc doesn't delve into. it's certainly a very specific pov. but i like how intensely it inhabits that pov, even as it remains very white

and dodges trans lesbianism altogether.

at the end of the day this movie has the most capital-D Dykes i've ever seen in one movie and it made me wriggle. sometimes i'm tired of having to accept white lesbian history as a universal history, but sometimes it's just what we have, and i'd rather take it than leave it. and this movie to me is a good example of the latter case.



RRR (2022)

may 10

watched with: le and xtine.

an entertaining action mega blockbuster movie. the fight scenes were very good and the movie was well-paced. i really think these two guys should have fucked like rigorously. it would have been a better movie and it's already a bit ahistorical so what's a little bit of dick between friends. come on.

i guess my one big serious note is that i always have a hard time with art that responds to colonialism with nationalism because i'm like 1) fundamen

tally opposed to the modern nation state and how it like. necessarily functions and 2) aware of geopolitics today so i can't shut off my political opinion having brain which like. girl. ip man raised you just turn off your brain and have fun.

anyway i hated the white woman love interest. and NOT JUST BECAUSE SHE WAS GETTING IN THE WAY OF YAOI. it was a militant anti white stance. which the movie did mostly satisfy. yay.



Chevalier (2022)

april 30

this is the first movie i watched in theaters in a while which was fun! what else am i doing sunday at 10 am. anyway i had a lot of pre-formed attachment to my friend joseph bologne because of a professor i had in college who stanned him. so i went in ready for the chevalier's face slapping isekai novel ass life.

the music was good, the performances were good, but i have some thoughts. first, why the fuck do historical movies

always just give people british accents. we are in FRANCE. make them camp it up house of gucci style. second, i think trying to be a biopic with liberal humanist values/narratives but like set in the 18th century sets it back. i wish it leaned into being a weird fucked up tragedy about our attachment to things that hurt us. but that would never happen.

i think it's like. fine. he got a normal biopic. the weird ones can come later. this one was fun. but i wish it was more.

funeral parade of roses (1969)



this was a cool peek into a very different world. its language is very of its time, filtered through a translation, but if you can take it as it is. it's a dizzying psychosexual playground of a movie.

"I am a wound and a sword,
a victim and an executioner."

likeeeeeee. it's not a feel good movie but it is one worth watching because it's bristling with arresting imagery. peter's face carries the movie, in my opinion. watching him as eddie is just so captivating.

there's a point to be made here about stereotypes and the movie's various conflations, but it's another "take it as it is" thing, to me. because i think you can definitely get something good out of it.

april 29

a cinder- ella story (2004)

watched with: milky server

i like watching other people's childhood classics sometimes. now, in case you didn't notice, the standout for me in this one was jennifer coolidge. pure milf camp. she absolutely carried this thing. yeah yeah hilary duff is doing sweet girl next door, chad michael murray is trying to be prince charming, but both of them are a whole lot of nothing next to her delivery. absolutely divine. to me.

april 27



the plot was fairly implausible and i didn't particularly believe the romance. actually i was convinced for a while she was going to end up with the dweeby friend and realize that's what she needed the whole time. but i guess 2004 was a different time.

anyway, um. a cinderella story. it was fine. i was drunk i think. i like jennifer coolidge.

april 24

noriko's dinner table (2005)

well i wanted very badly to like this one, and on paper i really should like it. the coming of age drama that bleeds into psychological horror, a family that doesn't understand each other, an older girl who noriko wants desperately to impress, and a sinister conspiracy at the heart of it all. but the pieces never came together for me.

the film felt like it dragged,

and i didn't find it as emotionally affecting as i might have hoped.

in recap, i find myself wanting to be more charitable, because describing the movie makes it sound good. but i keep staunchly revisiting the ambivalence i felt at the end of my actual viewing. i'm trying my best to stand by that emotion, that honest experience of watching the movie.



april 22

he's a woman she's a man (1994)

watched with: le

that's right. a movie so nice i watched it twice. well, technically this was the first viewing of the movie for me.

i read lisa stokes' book on the movie, and while it was interesting to read about the

formal successes of the movie, it didn't quite get into what made me feel insane.

instead, i want to talk about a quote from the director that the movie was supposed to be about how not all feminine men were gay. which was hilarious to me because that's transparently not what the movie was about. if anything it was about how feminine men are often transgender. and i think that slippage to me between that initial statement and the reality is part of what's so good about the film. a little cinematic legerdemain.

april 8

cocaine bear (2023)



watched with: allula, insy, jin, juni, spec, and xtine.

brainless action comedy. exactly what you'd expect from the name and premise, i think.

i felt vindicated because i thought the relationship between eddie and daveed was pretty yaoi and i went to aoz and lo and behold there was yaoi there. there was also some niche fetish stuff but we're ignoring that.

anyway. i'm not sure i'd like. recommend this one. you already know from the title whether you want to get inebriated and watch this with friends or not.

when i watch a horror movie my usual reaction is "damn i would just die." and the body count in this one is high enough that it's like the director was looking directly at me and going yeah you would just die.

march 30

chan is missing (1982)

lot for, as it once was. i loved that it was an asian american noir. it was really inspiring to me on that level. it made me want to create art very badly,

it's also just genuinely a really cool piece of history.



i. really liked this movie. it immediately made me miss living in chinatown. the streets were recognizable even forty years later, and i loved seeing the contours of this place i care a

it captures an era that unfortunately is gone. that said, it is a bit of its time; there are a couple awkward moments related to race lmfao. but i still care deeply for this movie.

march 29

the fa- vourite (2018)

want to create.

this movie felt very yaoi to me, in the sense that power was the heart of its queerness. that is, the question of power: who has it, who exercises it, and who really truly possesses it. like structurally.

watched with: milky server

i was OBSESSED with this movie. like i loved the drama and the insane lesbian NTR. so delightful, so delicious. i loved that there were bunnies. and i hated that there were bunnies.

i really like movies that are driven by a horrible dynamic, like this powder keg driving the plot car forward, to mix some metaphors. and this movie certainly is fueled by that. again, movies that make me

i tend to like yorgos lanthimos' films, and this was definitely no exception. i think this was one of his more straightforward takes on the theme of love, askew. but this is the sort of period piece i guess i'd hoped chevalier would be. it got my expectations too high for the sort of ambitious story-telling you can do in historical stories beyond just recreating the time and place and relaying events. you know?

march 28

life is cheap... but toilet paper is expensive (1989)

this was a super stylish quirky neo-noir, which i have a demonstrated weakness for. sometimes a bit too quirky, actually, ending up feeling disjointed in execution. but it was super conceptually strong. it felt like a tour of hong kong, for the

better or the worse. probably better, but this movie inevitably invites comparisons to chan is missing, and its relationship to the city it's set in. i did like chan is missing better, for the record.

but i like the sort of movies wayne wang makes, and it was nice to see another one in that vein, even if the chase scene fell flat for me (i got motion sick, which is sad because it was probably super cool).

march 20



ban- ished of inisherin (2022)

this was an airplane movie. which was rough because i was WRITHING the whole time and probably stressing out every-
one sitting by me. i watched it as a recommendation from ki and my goodness they were right. it's really good.

this is a movie about having a girl best friend. which is a genre that i always appreciate. even though it was really

grueling because i was high and i felt like an empath and i was like oh my god..... their pain is my pain. it was rough.

the gesture at a political allegory fell flat for me and i think the movie would have been stronger by keeping the conflict interpersonal, rather than vaguely waving at a moral.

but i did sincerely really like this movie even though my father thought it was a "sick" movie because he's a wuss.

march 19



nosfer- atu the vampyre (1979)

watched with: my sister

this movie was gorgeous to look at. it was really very pretty. it was also super at-
mospheric—like the vibes were this super fun gothic haunting.

HOWEVER! all the actors are like terrible people. it's actually hi-
larious. it's like werner herzog was like i am going to assemble a dream team of people who

are going to hell. and i'm going to make a movie with them. i still liked the movie it's just worth noting.

it's also maybe TOO atmo-
spheric, seeing as i fell asleep at one point. that's just be-
cause it was quiet and i was very tired. but i enjoyed the parts i was awake for i think, and i want to acknowledge that it was well-made. despite you know the. casting.

march 15

decision to leave (2022)



another movie i watched on a plane. and what a fun movie. it was yaoi to me; like i really seriously sincerely saw this as being spiritually yaoi. i loved seeing fang wei on the screen, since i'm also obsessed with lust, caution (2004). yeah i know i like erotic thrillers too much. but this was a GOOD erotic thriller! i love when love is real. in a fake way.

some parts were a little slow, but on the whole it was super enjoyable.

i think people were disappointed in this movie because they wanted the handmaiden 2. which to be fair, the handmaiden is really good. but i'm fine with seeing park chanwook do an erotic thriller rather than a revenge thriller.

i loved seduction via voyeurism. it's all about WATCHING!!!! this was also the first and probably only time i was emotionally moved by a pedometer. that reveal was so gorgeous. i enjoyed this movie.

march 14

happy together (1997)



this is another love is real movie. if only for a while. this movie has everything it takes to be a movie of all time—tony leung and leslie cheung as the leads, wong kar-wai as the director, and it's gay. it lives up to that promise. the dancing in the kitchen scene (pictured) made me want to explode and die.

leslie cheung's performance in this was incredible. just next level. tony leung... sometimes there was a sense of distance.

like i don't think he sold any intense lust unfortunately. but he was immaculately repressed, which worked for his character.

it's thematically a lot about place, movement, citizenship, belonging, which was fascinating. but you're here for the romance, of course. and what high highs and low lows you see. this movie really makes you appreciate the craft of it.

the velvet vampire (1971)

march 8

the desert vampire. i do think vampires can and should exist in more biomes. this was very southern california feeling.

downsides to the desert setting though. weird racism. this movie was weird about its



this movie was yaoi to me. like FFM yaoi. evil bisexual femme top. femme seme. feme. you know what i'm saying?

indigenous characters unfortunately. but weird 70s camp seduction for the most part. fun throuple movie.

i also loved the aesthetics of

march 8

design for living (1933)

because it doesn't awkwardly handle sexuality at all. it just blithely dances through it.

it's also genuinely very funny. it's an excellent romcom! it does make me a little sad, though, because it's such a good demonstration of what the code took from us. movies could have been very different, and it's hard not to mourn that possibility. but the answer to that is to make good art now.

another throuple movie, this one tending towards MMF yaoi. and it was simply phenomenal. it feels so so modern. actually it feels better than modern



touch of evil (1958)

march 7

that it was perhaps progres-
sive to have a mexican charac-
ter be the charismatic leading
man, but um. i don't think the
effective brownface was it.
anyway so that's a grain of
salt to take its excellence with.



this is another movie that
draws attention to its craft.
it's gorgeous to just like.
watch. this is such a good ex-
ample of noir done beautifully.

like the velvet vampire, though,
it's plagued with weird racism
due to its setting. i understand

i always struggle to identify
how these asterisks should
be weighed. the problem of
course is that it's like asking
"how important is racism?"
"especially in relation to art?"
and that's something i struggle
with as i watch older movies.
well. food for thought.

march 3

the phan- tom lover (1995)



oh leslie cheung. i deeply care
for you. he always sells his
characters to me. out of all the
pretty boys, he was the best.
he's good here.

this is just a take on the phan-
tom of the opera story, just
in a different direction than
the musical that i think more
people are familiar with. so i
like ghost romance, i like melo-
drama, i like the components
that go into it.

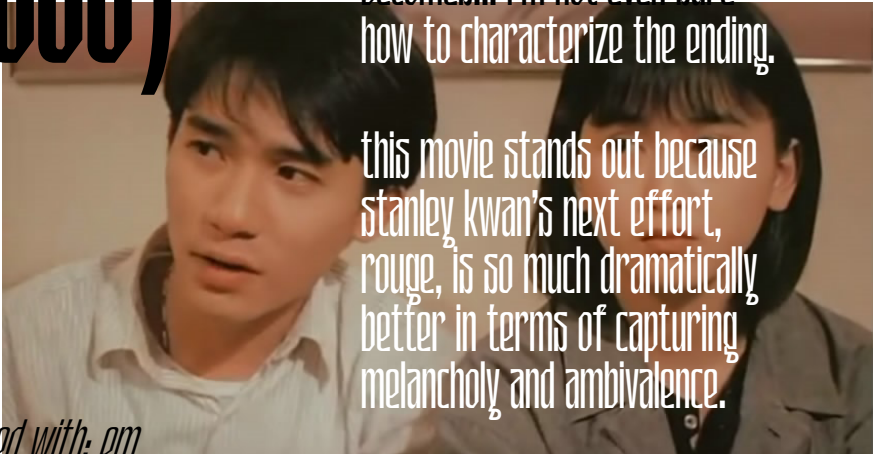
but it's frankly not a very

ambitious movie. which is fine, i
set out to watch an okay movie
and an okay movie is what i
got.

to elevate this movie to the
next level... frankly i was
seething there wasn't a love
triangle. both like, in general,
but also because "i need you
to seduce a woman exactly
according to my instructions"
will always read as a seduction
in itself. maybe that's what i
need to write someday. i love
sordid love triangles, in case
you can't tell from the con-
tents of this zine so far lmao.

love unto waste (1986)

its parts. it's a movie that's very fun to tell people about, but the actual experience of watching the movie is disorienting. what? huh? sex in the city becomes law and order becomes... i'm not even sure how to characterize the ending.



this movie stands out because stanley kwan's next effort, rouge, is so much dramatically better in terms of capturing melancholy and ambivalence.

watched with: em

this movie has quite a bit going for it. it has young tony leung. it has chow yun-fat doing a credible columbo impersonation. it swerves hilariously from genre to genre.

but somehow watching the thing is less than the sum of

this one, however, verges on incoherence. chow yun-fat is funny though. his chemistry with tony leung is undeniable, but at its best, it just anticipates their later collaboration in hard-boiled 1992. so that's love unto waste. it reminds you of movies that make more sense.