

### **Adrian Wootton**

**Q1. You have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to cinema; tell us in your opinion, what is it about this period of cinema that makes it so unique and fascinating?**

This time of 1940s and 1950s was really the last great period of the "dream" factory where the star system, the production line of movie-making, was so efficient, refined and full of such talent in front of and behind the camera that the studios churned out lots and lots of movies many of which were classics that continue to stand the test of time remaining popular and critically acclaimed with new generations of audiences, critics and filmmakers .

**Q2. From Ingrid Bergman in *Casablanca* to Judy Garland in *The Wizard of Oz* - there are a hundreds of legendary female performances from the Hollywood Golden Age - a few of which you'll explore in one of your upcoming seminars! What are your five favourite female performances from the Golden Age and why?**

There are so many great performances from so many wonderful female stars that it's almost impossible to single out a small selection. But from the group of wonderful women I am talking about in this series I would say Ingrid Bergman in *Gaslight*, her second Oscar-winning performance, for her vulnerability, nervousness and sensitivity in a complex role. Judy Garland in *A Star is Born* showed every facet of her amazing talent as a performer and star. Lauren Bacall was fantastic in movies like *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* but her presence with Bogart was magical from the first film *To Have and Have Not* where she simply lights up the screen. And Gloria Grahame is fabulous in *The Big Heat* but I particularly love her in *In A Lonely Place* as a warm hearted smart starlet trying to make a go of the edgy relationship with the explosive Bogart.

**Q3. Your seminar titled 'Lauren Bacall: Hollywood Icon of Cool' explores the actresses' string of dazzling onscreen performances and the success of her long life and career. So what was it that made Bacal so undeniably 'cool'?**

Actually Lauren Bacall was characterised as having "The Look" and undeniably the way she looked sidelong at Bogart, her natural ease in front of the camera, her deep beautifully modulated voice and her ability to deliver dialogue lines with a smart, snappy pizzazz together with her undoubted beauty all contributed to creating a very unique aura .

**Q4. Ingrid Bergman's succesful career took a sharp turn after a controversial relationship with married man Roberto Rossellini which resulted in Bergman's European exile. Why do you think Bergman was treated so harshly by the film industry and how difficult do you think it was to be a woman during the Golden Age of Hollywood?**

I believe all the great women stars of the Hollywood golden era had a very tough time constrained and controlled by male Studio bosses who definitely applied conservative sexist attitudes towards their most famous female employees. In the end Bergman was so talented (like Bette Davis, like Katherine Hepburn) so as to rise above it all because of the sheer force of her talent that outlasted and outshone all the nonsense she was unfortunately subjected to.

**Q5. What made you decide on these four film femmes and if given the opportunity to present on more prominent female figures, who could you choose?**

These four stars are very different and yet share eras, in some cases share creative and personal experiences, and all have amazing movies to watch and incredible lives to discuss. I am a huge admirer of all of their work and have been for most of my life so it was easy to pick them!

In terms of other subjects, Ava Gardner, Joan Crawford, Rita Haworth, Vivien Leigh are just another 4 names that would easily merit the same attention.