

John Wayne (1907-1979)

As Marion Michael Morrison Wayne held several behind-the-scenes jobs at Fox before moving in front of the cameras in the late 1920s. Director John Ford, who had befriended "Duke" Wayne, recommended him for the lead in Raoul Walsh's 1930 western epic, *The Big Trail*. Unfortunately he didn't become a star and Wayne spent the rest of the decade in a series of B-movies at poverty row studios.

Ford gave him a career break in 1939 by casting him as the Ringo Kid in *Stagecoach* and the part made Wayne into one of the top box-office stars.

But it was the movies he made at the end of the 1940s that established him as an actor of merit. Howard Hawks emphasized the darker side of Wayne's screen persona in *Red River* (1948) in which he played a Captain Bligh like character, the inflexible Tom Dunson, who clashes with Montgomery Clift. In *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon* (1949) in another excellent performance he played the retiring Nathan Brittles: a particularly moving portrait of a man and an era reaching a turning point.

For most of the 1950s and 60s Wayne ambled through a number of mediocre pictures, standard westerns and action movies made watchable, and financially successful, because of his participation.

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When he had a carefully tailored part and a director at the top of his form, Wayne always rose to the occasion, his greatest films during this period were *The Searchers* (1956) and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962) for John Ford and *Rio Bravo* (1959) for Howard Hawks.

He won the 1969 Best Actor Oscar for *True Grit*, a watchable film though not a great one. In his last film *The Shootist* (1976) he played a gunman dying of cancer, an echo of his real life battles with the disease in his last years. He brought a sincerity to this solemn film, a hallmark of all his performances over almost 50 years onscreen. His acting style might not have been flashy but was perfect for the demands of the medium and his best performances have a depth you don't often associate with him.

In 1999, the American Film Institute named Wayne thirteenth among the Greatest Male Stars of All Time. A Harris Poll released in 2007 placed Wayne third among America's favorite film stars, the only deceased star on the list and the only one who has appeared on the poll every year.

Filmography

1929 SALUTE performer
1929 WORDS AND MUSIC performer
1930 THE BIG TRAIL performer
1930 MEN ARE LIKE THAT performer
1930 MEN WITHOUT WOMEN performer
1931 ARIZONA performer
1931 GIRLS DEMAND EXCITEMENT performer
1931 MAKER OF MEN performer
1931 THE RANGE FEUD performer
1931 THREE GIRLS LOST performer
1932 THE BIG STAMPEDE performer
1932 HAUNTED GOLD performer
1932 THE HURRICANE EXPRESS performer
1932 LADY AND GENT performer
1932 RIDE HIM COWBOY performer
1932 THE SHADOW OF THE EAGLE performer
1932 TEXAS CYCLONE performer
1932 TWO FISTED LAW performer
1933 BABY FACE performer
1933 HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY performer
1933 THE LIFE OF JIMMY DOLAN performer
1933 THE MAN FROM MONTEREY performer
1933 RIDERS OF DESTINY performer
1933 SAGEBRUSH TRAIL performer
1933 SOMEWHERE IN SONORA performer
1933 THE TELEGRAPH TRAIL performer
1934 'NEATH THE ARIZONA SKIES performer
1934 BLUE STEEL performer
1934 THE LUCKY TEXAN performer
1934 THE MAN FROM UTAH performer
1934 RANDY RIDES ALONE performer
1934 THE STAR PACKER performer
1934 THE TRAIL BEYOND performer
1934 WEST OF THE DIVIDE performer
1935 THE DAWN RIDER performer
1935 THE DESERT TRAIL performer
1935 THE LAWLESS FRONTIER performer

1935 LAWLESS RANGE performer
1935 THE NEW FRONTIER performer
1935 PARADISE CANYON performer
1935 RAINBOW VALLEY performer
1935 TEXAS TERROR performer
1935 THE THREE MUSKETEERS performer
1935 WESTWARD HO performer
1936 CONFLICT performer
1936 KING OF THE PECOS performer
1936 THE LAWLESS NINETIES performer
1936 THE LONELY TRAIL performer
1936 THE OREGON TRAIL performer
1936 SEA SPOILERS performer
1936 WINDS OF THE WASTELAND performer
1937 ADVENTURE'S END performer
1937 CALIFORNIA STRAIGHT AHEAD performer
1937 I COVER THE WAR performer
1937 IDOL OF THE CROWDS performer
1938 BORN TO THE WEST performer
1938 OVERLAND STAGE RAIDERS performer
1938 PALS OF THE SADDLE performer
1938 RED RIVER RANGE performer <http://photobucket.com/>
1938 SANTA FE STAMPEDE performer
1939 ALLEGHENY UPRISING performer
1939 THE NEW FRONTIER performer
1939 THE NIGHT RIDERS performer
1939 STAGECOACH performer
1939 THREE TEXAS STEERS performer
1939 WYOMING OUTLAW performer
1940 DARK COMMAND performer
1940 THE LONG VOYAGE HOME performer
1940 SEVEN SINNERS performer
1940 THREE FACES WEST performer
1941 LADY FROM LOUISIANA performer
1941 SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS performer
1942 FLYING TIGERS performer
1942 IN OLD CALIFORNIA performer
1942 LADY FOR A NIGHT performer
1942 PITTSBURGH performer

1942 REAP THE WILD WIND performer
1942 REUNION IN FRANCE performer
1942 THE SPOILERS performer
1943 A LADY TAKES A CHANCE performer
1943 WAR OF THE WILDCATS/ IN OLD OKLAHOMA performer
1944 THE FIGHTING SEABEES performer
1944 TALL IN THE SADDLE performer
1945 BACK TO BATAAN performer <http://photobucket.com/>
1945 DAKOTA performer
1945 FLAME OF BARBARY COAST performer
1945 THEY WERE EXPENDABLE performer
1946 WITHOUT RESERVATIONS performer
1947 ANGEL AND THE BADMAN performer, producer
1947 TYCOON performer
1948 3 GODFATHERS performer
1948 FORT APACHE performer
1948 RED RIVER performer
1948 WAKE OF THE RED WITCH performer
1949 THE FIGHTING KENTUCKIAN performer, producer
1949 SANDS OF IWO JIMA performer
1949 SHE WORE A YELLOW RIBBON performer
1950 RIO GRANDE performer
1951 BULLFIGHTER AND THE LADY producer
1951 FLYING LEATHERNECKS performer
1951 OPERATION PACIFIC performer
1952 BIG JIM MCLAIN performer
1952 THE QUIET MAN performer
1953 HONDO performer
1953 ISLAND IN THE SKY performer <http://photobucket.com/>
1953 TROUBLE ALONG THE WAY performer
1954 THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY performer
1955 BLOOD ALLEY performer
1955 THE SEA CHASE performer
1956 THE CONQUEROR performer
1956 THE SEARCHERS performer
1957 JET PILOT performer
1957 LEGEND OF THE LOST/ TIMBUKTU performer
1957 THE WINGS OF EAGLES performer
1958 THE BARBARIAN AND THE GEISHA performer

1958 CHINA DOLL executive producer
1958 I MARRIED A WOMAN performer
1959 THE HORSE SOLDIERS performer
1959 RIO BRAVO performer
1960 THE ALAMO performer, director, producer
1960 NORTH TO ALASKA performer <http://photobucket.com/>
1961 THE COMANCHEROS performer
1962 HATARI! performer
1962 HOW THE WEST WAS WON performer
1962 THE LONGEST DAY performer
1962 THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE performer
1963 DONOVAN'S REEF performer
1963 MCLINTOCK! performer
1964 CIRCUS WORLD performer
1965 THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD performer
1965 IN HARM'S WAY performer
1965 THE SONS OF KATIE ELDER performer
1966 CAST A GIANT SHADOW performer
1967 EL DORADO performer
1967 THE WAR WAGON performer
1968 THE GREEN BERETS performer, co-director
1969 TRUE GRIT performer
1969 THE UNDEFEATED performer
1970 CHISUM performer
1970 RIO LOBO performer
1971 BIG JAKE performer
1971 DIRECTED BY JOHN FORD performer
1972 THE COWBOYS performer
1973 CAHILL—UNITED STATES MARSHAL performer
1973 THE TRAIN ROBBERS performer
1974 MCQ performer
1975 BRANNIGAN performer
1975 ROOSTER COGBURN performer
1976 THE SHOOTIST performer