

The Current

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THE TOP FOUR MOST BEAUTIFUL SHOTS IN MOVIE HISTORY

BY BELLA HOWE

Motion pictures date back to the 19th century, beginning in 1878 when multiple cameras were used to compile an 11 frame clip of a man riding a horse on Leland Stanford's Palo Alto Stock Farm, the founder of Stanford University. Many generations since then have gone on to develop the industry of film. Movies bring literature and art to life through a different medium of storytelling. With the continual advances in technology, this century has witnessed software-based broadcasters like HBO, Hulu, Netflix, and Starz make movies accessible to billions of people globally.

Film is a fantastic medium of art that allows for one to venture into a story other than their own. Many motion pictures have managed to create utterly compelling scenes that have the ability to consume the viewer. The top four scenes that have done so in my experience are as follows.

Number One: The 2005 film, *Pride and Prejudice* by Joe Wright, The Cliff Scene. After discussing the complications of Elizabeth's interests in Mr. Darcy with her sister Jane, Lizzy leans over and blows out a candle. The scene goes dark, and then a red hue appears on the screen which is a representation of what Lizzy sees as the sun when she closes her eyes. The song *Liz On Top Of The World* by Jean-Yves Thibaudet slowly crescendos when the scene shifts to Lizzy standing on top of a cliff overlooking a meadow. As Lizzy stares into the distance a breeze lifts up the layers of her dress and blows the loose strands of hair. The camera swiftly moves from right to left encompassing the full scene as the violins and piano work together to complement the shot to form a moving cohesiveness. What captivates me most in this scene is the feeling of freedom I feel as I watch Lizzy stand on the cliff wind swept. Although in this time in the plot she is consumed with emotion and conflict it almost provides the viewer with a feeling of peace.

Number Two: The 2019 film, *Little Women* by Greta Gerwig, The Jo and Laurie Dancing Scene. Jo, not enjoying the social aspects of the party, found herself in a back room where she met Laurie. After spending a little time getting to know each other, you can see their friendship begin to develop. Laurie then asks Jo to dance but she declines because her sister Meg told her to refrain from dancing, as she did not want people to see that Jo had burnt her dress. Laurie tells Jo he has an idea, and they meet on the porch of the house. The two try to resist smiling as they begin to dance in an elegant manner. As the scene carries on, their nature becomes more playful as they jump and twist around with their arms in the air when they pass a wall of the house. Each time they pass a window they quickly shift to composed slow walking. The music accompanying the scene is *Dance on the Porch* by Alexandre Desplat, a fast-paced orchestral piece. The scene manages to show Joe and Laurie's light hearted relationship in a way that makes it almost impossible to keep from smiling. Both their playful characters bring notes of pure joy to the viewer.

Number Three: The 2018 film, *Roma* by Alfonso Cuarón, The Roma's Beach Scene. In this long unbroken scene the family nanny Cleo Gutierrez, who has suffered through an incredibly hard year, stays behind while on the beach watching three of the children. Two are in the water while the mother exits the scene. The two oldest children, while in the water, begin to struggle in the large waves. Cleo realizes that she could no longer hear the two kids in the water. No music appears in the scene making it all the more ominous. Cleo races through the water reaching the struggling kids. When they finally make it back to the beach their mother returns, rushing into the scene. The whole family is united, huddling together soaked, on their knees, hugging each other. Finally, through tears, Cleo says "No la quería" which translates to "I did not want her". This is a reference to Cleo's baby which had been stillborn. Throughout the whole movie, Cleo had acted in a calm manner in reaction to the majority of the situations she was forced to face. In this scene, she finally releases her emotions to which she had kept so tightly bound within her, and hidden from everyone around her. A sort of relief and sorrow is expressed in this scene and the choice of no music only adds to the intensity of the emotional drama. The scene manages to express the emotions and ideas of the moment with such intensity, even with a lack of narration, and purely with physical communication is why it is favored in my eyes.

Number Four: The 2019 film, *1917* by Sam Mendes, The River Scene. The British soldier, Lance Corporal Schofield, had been sent on a mission with his friend to give a message that would save the lives of hundreds of men preparing for battle against the Germans in a WWI battle. After losing his companion, Lance is faced with finishing the mission on his own. Just before dawn, Lance finds himself in the ruins of a town in which multiple German soldiers have taken up camp. As he runs through a maze of destruction, collapsed buildings, he is chased by the German soldiers' gunfire. Left with no more options, he is forced to jump into a fast-flowing river. Struggling for air while being pulled under, Lance is thrown off a waterfall. He breaches the surface gasping for his breath after only a few seconds. Finally, a sense of calm sets in. He grabs on to a floating log letting the now mellow river take him. One begins to hear the chirping of birds which plays in harmony with a soft piano melody. As Lance looks up into the sky, petals from flowers that had bloomed on trees surrounding the river, fall gently into the water in an almost surreal moment. After the chaotic chase Lance's moment of peace is so serene it is almost hard to look away. As the adrenaline drains from his, and the audience's bodies, a calm is restored which is done in such a beautiful way with the now lazy river.

Many films have captivated the indescribable experiences of the world. It is a medium of art that has the ability to catalyze waves of emotion within the viewer. The scenes are just a few that have done that for me.

Coronavirus' Impact on Fire Preparation

By Sophia Pilot

Summer vacation is approaching, and as the temperature increases, the heat indicates we are approaching fire season, something Malibu is very familiar with. In November of 2018, the Woolsey Fire ravaged our community. Many families returned weeks after evacuating to see their homes burned down, and are just starting the rebuilding process, nearly two years later, after obtaining permits from the city, while also dealing with the outbreak of COVID-19. The city is doing the best it can to decrease the threat of another fire amidst the coronavirus pandemic.

A mandatory evacuation order was called on November 9, 2018 for all areas of Malibu. Residents packed up as quickly as possible and hit the road. Malibu's lack of an emergency evacuation plan slowed

residents as they tried to escape fire danger in Malibu. As a result, the Pacific Coast Highway was backed up for hours. It was too late to put an evacuation plan into effect, but there was fear that the bumper-to-bumper traffic along PCH would not allow for evacuees to escape the fire danger in time. In response, the city blocked incoming traffic and opened the southbound lanes, which increased the steady flow of cars. This procedure will be seen in an updated evacuation plan that will appear in front of the city council before being implemented.

An Updated Evacuation Plan has been put into place with an abundance of caution, and will target problems that evacuees ran into in 2018. Each emergency situation presents unique obstacles, which is why the plan is tentative, and spur of the moment decisions will be made by first responders. The plan was created to lighten the traffic on PCH, so residents can leave the danger zone as quickly as possible. In case of a power outage during an emergency, Caltrans will connect small gas-powered generators to every traffic light. Caltrans will also be responsible for monitoring the electronic message boards, because it will be necessary that they are constantly updated so that they provide the evacuees with accurate and current instruction. Sheriffs will be placed at each intersection to increase the flow of traffic by manually controlling the signals. Residents evacuating from the canyons are going to be instructed to merge onto PCH using center turn lanes, as opposed to merging on at intersections, which would disrupt the flow of traffic. Lastly, the southbound lanes on PCH will be used as extra lanes to lessen the amount of traffic while evacuating.

Firehouses have been a hub for the coronavirus due to the large number of people working closely together around the clock. Many first responders who are presenting symptoms of coronavirus have been advised to stay home in a time when they are needed most. Volunteers with proper training have stepped up to fill in for the firemen who were advised to stay home. Unfortunately, volunteers who have the credentials to fight fires or assist people are few and far between. They initiated virtual training for incoming firemen. Just like the rest of the world, firemen are adapting to the current situation.

Fire season preparation begins in the spring, which is unfortunately now, during the height of the coronavirus. Prescribed burning, one important method of fire-control, was postponed. Prescribed burning occurs when an area is intentionally set on fire to reduce the amount of brush that fire can ignite from and feed off of. Also known as controlled burning, this is the most effective tool in preventing wildfires. A prescribed burn that was scheduled to happen before the Woolsey Fire, across 431 acres of Big Rock, was canceled. The amount of vegetation and brush in Malibu combined with hot, windy, and dry temperatures is a fire threat.

Coronavirus is a disease that affects the respiratory system and will become more lethal when combined with air pollution from wildfires. Smoke from wildfires contains toxins that irritate the lungs and could put more people at risk for COVID-19 due to a weakened respiratory system and increase the risk of lower respiratory infections. Respiratory illnesses from fires will add to the number of patients healthcare workers need to attend to.

The Woolsey fire is behind us, but many families are just starting the rebuilding process, while recounting the failures that evacuees experienced. A new evacuation plan was set to appear in front of the city council, but that was put to a stop when the pandemic hit. The Coronavirus has shut down many planned events, along with the prescribed burns which are essential in fire preparation. With no preparation in place, fires will likely be a common and fast-spreading occurrence this season. Fires are not only threatening to structures, but the pandemic has brought concern of people being more susceptible for the virus when combined with the toxic atmosphere as a result of fire. Although the rest of the world is slowing down due to the spread of coronavirus, fires will continue to be a threat.

Most Dangerous Animals

By Ian Lamont

Regardless of where you live, there are many dangerous creatures lurking about. As a child, you probably went to the zoo and saw a hippopotamus. If you did not, they are big land mammals that actually spend a lot of time in the water. For starters, they can weigh up to three tons. They are also very aggressive animals, even when unprovoked, and their teeth are extremely sharp. In Africa, about five hundred people are killed a year by these monstrosities. If you see one in the wild, do not approach them.

Another dangerous animal is the crocodile. Crocodiles are not natural human predators, but if they see an opportunity to strike, they will. Around half of attacks from crocodiles are fatal. They seem like slow creatures when observed in their natural habitat, but in reality, when it's time to eat, they can move in the blink of an eye. They can be hard to spot because only their eyes appear above the water, making them look like merely a floating piece of driftwood. Every year, about a 1,000 people die due to crocodiles, so stay away from murky waters and lakes.

Mosquitoes are also dangerous, but in a different sense. They may not be able to maul you or bite you to death, but they can carry many deadly diseases. The problem with mosquitoes is that they are like mobile needles. If they suck the blood from an organism that has malaria, for example, and then bite you, then you will get malaria. In the United States, mosquito-borne diseases are not much of a threat, but worldwide, about seven hundred and twenty-five thousand people are killed by the diseases carried by mosquitoes.

There are many different types of snakes, and a lot of them are poisonous. Not only do they move very quickly, but they can also squeeze into tight spots where you least expect them to be hiding. If bitten by a venomous snake, the poison starts spreading through the bloodstream, which ultimately connects to every part of the human body. More than one hundred thousand people die a year due to snake bites, especially because there is a lack of antivenom available.

Unfortunately, man's best friend is one of the leading perpetrators of animal-caused deaths. Dogs often have rabies, which is very deadly, but quite preventable with a vaccine. Dogs are generally faster than people, so once one has its eyes set on someone, the person will quite likely be caught. In many parts of the world, there are an abundance of stray dogs who contract rabies. When anything has rabies, human or animal, the brain swells, inhibiting logical thinking, creating a more aggressive behavior. According to the WHO, of the thirty-five thousand deaths a year from rabies, ninety-nine percent were a result of a dog attack.

The most dangerous animal in the world is arguably human beings. Since the beginning of mankind, there have been wars upon wars. Death by killing has always played a part in human history. Every year, about four hundred and seven thousand people are murdered, not counting the deaths due to war and deaths not recorded.