A recent Siggraph panel discussion about hiring young people in the digital arts (video games, film effects, motionography etc.) unanimously agreed that among many things they looked for in a potential hire is a knowledge of film. Creativity requires an artist/designer be able to reference films of the past. Nothing can be more embarrassing than sitting in on a creative meeting and not knowing what the other people are talking about when they bring up a scene from a classic film.

Below are ten films. If you cannot speak with some familiarity about most these films you run the risk of being considered ignorant and loosing what might be your dream job! So, watch some old movies!

Drama - Citizen Kane (1941)
Often considered the greatest film of all time, Citizen Kane contains just about every film and camera trick or technique ever devised.

Science Fiction - 2001 A Space Odyssey (1968)
The granddaddy of all modern sci fi films. Made in 1968 and the special effects still hold up.

Crime - The Godfather (Trilogy) (1972-90)
A Shakespearean version of a gangster family. Not accurate (see "Goodfellas" for authenticity) but an amazing story of a family.

Slapstick Comedy - A film from each: Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Laurel & Hardy (1920's)
These guys, and a handful of others, invented physical comedy.

War - Apocalypse Now! (1979)
Bizzarre examination of the war in Viet Nam. Visually stunning.

Horror - Psycho (1960)
Alfred Hitchcocks classic thiller. Contains classic scenes that all film/video fans should know.

Western - The Searchers (1956)
Probably the best western of all time. One of John Wayne's best performances. One man's obessession to find his kidknapped niece. But what will he do when he does?

Romantic Comedy - Some Like It Hot (1959)
Classic humor. Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon dress up as female musicians to hide from the gangsters. Marilyn Monroe to boot!

Adventure -Lawrence of Arabia (1962)
The greatest epic of all time. David Lean directs Peter O'Toole in the title role. Beautiful to watch. Massive battle scenes (no CGI).

Fantasy - The Wizard of Oz (1939)
The best fantasy film of all time. Studio craftsmanship at its' zenith. Great music.

Of course this list is a bit simplistic. Another list could be made with ten differing films, all important films that should be seen to be considered culturally literate. But the point is you should be aware of films made before 1995.