



Vertigo



Main Facts

- Made: 1958
- PRODUCTION COMPANY: Alfred Hitchcock Studios/
Paramount
- Directed by: Alfred Hitchcock
- Written By: Alec Coppel
- Starring: James Stewart, Kim Novak, Tom Helmore
- Genre: Suspense



Major Plot Points

- John "Scottie" Ferguson is a retired San Francisco police detective who suffers from acrophobia and Madeleine is the lady who leads him to high places. A wealthy shipbuilder who is an acquaintance from college days approaches Scottie and asks him to follow his beautiful wife, Madeleine. He fears she is going insane, maybe even contemplating suicide, he believes she is possessed by a dead ancestor. Scottie is skeptical, but agrees after he sees the beautiful Madeleine. (IMDB)



Financials

- Budget: 2.4 Million (Estimated)
- Money Made: 3.2 Million
- Special Costs: Some reshoots



Quotes

Scottie: One final thing I have to do... and then I'll be free of the past.

Gavin Elster: Scottie, do you believe that someone out of the past - someone dead - can enter and take possession of a living being?

Madeleine: Only one is a wanderer; two together are always going somewhere.

Gavin Elster: There's no way for them to understand. You and I know who killed Madeleine.

Officer on rooftop: Give me your hand. Give me your hand.



Historical/Cultural Significance

- Considered a major moment for the use of the dolly zoom camera technique



Filming Information

- Filming location(s): San Francisco, Mission San Juan Bautista, Paramount Studios
- Advances made in film: Dolly-zoom technique
- Source Material: Novel by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac



Composition/Music Notes

- Compositions by Bernard Hermann
- Use of Mozart



Inane Trivia

Uncredited second-unit cameraman [Irmin Roberts](#) invented the famous "zoom out and track in" shot (now sometimes called "contra-zoom" or "trombone shot") to convey the sense of vertigo to the audience. The view down the mission stairwell cost \$19,000 for just a couple of seconds of screen time.

First ever film to use computer graphics (Intro sequence done by Saul Bass)

[Alfred Hitchcock](#) was embittered at the critical and commercial failure of the film in 1958. He blamed this on [James Stewart](#) for "looking too old" to attract audiences any more. Hitchcock never worked with Stewart, previously one of his favorite collaborators, again.

The movie's poster was as #3 of "The 25 Best Movie Posters Ever" by Premiere.

[Alfred Hitchcock](#) originally wanted [Vera Miles](#) to play Judy, but she became pregnant and was therefore unavailable.



Accolades

- Nominated for two academy awards
- Best Art Direction
- Best Sound