

JOHN WAYNE



DEAN MARTIN



RICKY NELSON



CO-ESTRELLA

**ANGIE
DICKINSON**



"RIO BRAVO"



PEDRO GONZALEZ · ESTELITA RODRIGUEZ LIBRO DE JULES FURTHMAN y LEIGH BRACKETT

HOWARD HAWKS SEASON



Rio Bravo

Eden Court Cinema
Tuesday, 20 October
2015 at 7.15pm

PG | 135 min |
Drama, Romance,
Western | 1958 | USA

Director:
Howard Hawks

Writers:
Jules Furthman, Leigh
Brackett, from a story
by Barbara Hawks
McCampbell

Cinematographer:
Russell Harlan

Cast:
John Wayne, Dean
Martin, Ricky Nelson,
Angie Dickinson,
Walter Brennan,
Ward Bond, John
Russell

One of the problems you can have when watching older movies from one star is that you are most likely going to watch them out of order. As such for those who watched John Wayne in "El Dorado" from 1966 may get a surprise when they watch "Rio Bravo" from 1959 because they are pretty much the same movie. There are a few changes but both are basically about a sheriff, a drunk and a young gun fighter keeping a man behind bars whilst his family try and break him free. Both "Rio Bravo" and "El Dorado" are good movies with both delivering elements of action, drama and western humour but "Rio Bravo" has the more dramatic feel to it and with it coming before "El Dorado" naturally feels the more original even if various elements are recognizable from other westerns. After Sheriff John T. Chance (John Wayne - "The Searchers") puts Joe Burdette (Claude Akins) in jail he knows he has caused a stink for himself as Burdette's brother won't stand for him being behind bars. So with the help of old deputy Stumpy (Walter Brennan), former deputy and now town drunk

Andy Webb
The Movie Scene

Dude (Dean Martin - "The Cannonball Run") as well as young gun fighter Colorado (Ricky Nelson) they do their best to make sure that Joe Burdette is kept behind bars till the Marshal gets to town. On face value "Rio Bravo" is a very simple movie with a mixed bag of men trying to defend the jail till the State Marshal arrives. As such there is a familiarity to the storyline with plenty of western cliché which along with these men includes a love interest for Sheriff John T. Chance.

To put it simply there are no major plot twists as we get served up stereo typical western action which inevitably culminates in a gun fight. But in a way "Rio Bravo" isn't about keeping Joe Burdette in

it makes this typical western so much more interesting. As we learn more about their friendship that Dude had hit the bottle after heartbreak and was a quick draw deputy Sheriff before he became a drunk makes for some surprising depth, not something you may be expecting. And you really get a sense of the respect that runs between Dude and Chance, almost as if they are brothers. A big reason why this side of things works is because the brilliant casting of Dean Martin as Dude as to be honest who better to play a drinker than a legendary drinker. What he brings to "Rio Bravo" is realism, watching him nervously twitch as he becomes more and more desperate for a drink or get angry at



jail whilst his brother hires one man after another to kill the Sheriff and his deputies. It's not even about the romance between Sheriff Chance and the attractive Feather, although it adds a pleasant bit of dualism to the story. Nope "Rio Bravo" is really about Dude and his struggle to stay off the booze and his friendship with Chance and

himself for constantly shaking and feeling the need to hit the bottle is perfect. It may go slightly wrong when it comes to the latter part of the story as issues are too easily dealt with, but it works.

What Dean Martin also brings to the movie is a touch of humour and with much of that coming from struggling with

drink it is amusing especially in the scenes he shares with Walter Brennan as old Deputy Stumpy. But Martin also brings a song as does his co-star Ricky Nelson and although listening to them sing "My Rifle, My Pony, and Me" is a sheer joy it seems a forced element, thrown in because the movie had two singers and not because the storyline called for it. And it is sort of amusing to watch John Wayne uneasily stand there smiling as they sing this song. Talking of John Wayne, well there is a lot of what can be called stereotypical John Wayne about Sheriff Chance. He's the hero, the guy who gets the girl, the popular one all the sorts of things Wayne ended up being known for. But what John Wayne also does is make Chance a more deliberate character, a man who thinks before he acts and doesn't say much. It is in fitting with the more deliberate execution of the story, slower, taking time for things to evolve and it means that Wayne's performance works. What it also means is that those who are used to more typical brisk paced westerns may find "Rio Bravo" at 141 minutes drawn out and slow.

What this all boils down to is that "Rio Bravo" is another very good western and one which whilst stereotypical with its storyline brings more depth to it with it being about the friendship between Chance and Dude as Dude tries to control his drinking. It is a long movie and a slow one but it allows it to evolve and allow the drama of the moment to be fully taken in rather than rushing to get to the next action scene.



Howard Hawks was the king of banter. His films crackle with it – think of *Bringing Up Baby* or *His Girl Friday* – but *Rio Bravo* is the best of them all. It's nominally a western, but it's really about a group of friends who call each other names, put each other down, and generally delight in their relationships.



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- **11.00am Monster House**
- **1.15pm Bride of Frankenstein**
- **3.00pm The Mummy**
- **5.00pm A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night**
- **8.15pm Haxan - Witchcraft Through the Ages**
- **10.30pm Rosemary's Baby**

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