

THE HISTORY OF CINEMA

The History

- » A movie theater or movie theatre (also called a cinema, movie house, film house, and film theater or picture house) is a venue, usually a building, for viewing films or movies. In the US, theater has long been the preferred spelling, while in the UK and elsewhere it is theatre.
- » However, many US theaters opt to use the British spelling in their own names, a practice supported by the National Association of Theatre Owners, while apart from North America most English-speaking countries generally use the term cinema. The latter terms, as well as their derivative adjectives "cinematic" and "kinematic", ultimately derive from Greek 'movement', "motion". In the countries where those terms are used, the word "theatre" is usually reserved for live performance venues.
- » Colloquial expressions, mostly applied to motion pictures and motion picture theaters collectively, include *the silver screen* (formerly sometimes *sheet*) and *the big screen* (contrasted with the smaller screen of a television set. Specific to North America is *the movies*, while specific to the UK are *the pictures*, *the flicks*, and for the facility itself *the flea pit* (or *fleapit*).
- » Screening room refers to a very small theater, often a private one, such as for the use of those involved in the production of motion pictures or in a large private residence.

The Seven Ages of Film

Pioneering Age
1896 - 1912



The Seven Ages of Film

The Silent Age
1913 - 1927

The emergence of
Hollywood
World War I and the
exodus from
Europe



The Seven Ages of Film

The Transition Age
1928-32

From Silent to Sound



The Seven Ages of Film

The Hollywood
Studio Age
1932 - 1946

Domination by the
Studio
Genre movies
World War II



The Seven Ages of Film

The Internationalist
Age

1947 - 1959

Hollywood Studio
decline

The challenge of TV



The Seven Ages of Film

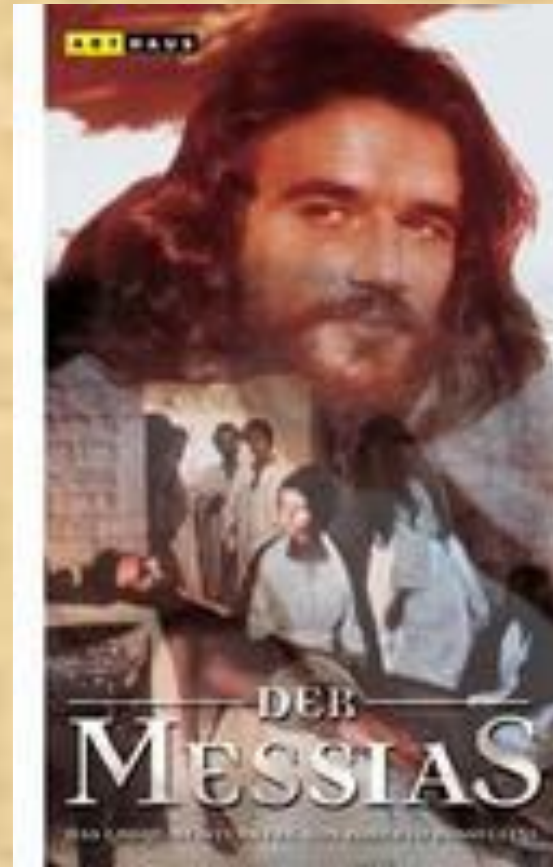
The New Wave Age
1960 - 1980

From France to the
world

Technological
innovation

Small scale productions

Strong social / political
value to film.



The Seven Ages of Film

The Mass Media Age

1980 - present

Film & movies as part of
the global
entertainment /
communications
media

Digital production

History

Mechanisms for producing moving images had been demonstrated from the 1860s. -
zeotropes
praxinoscopes
kineoscopes

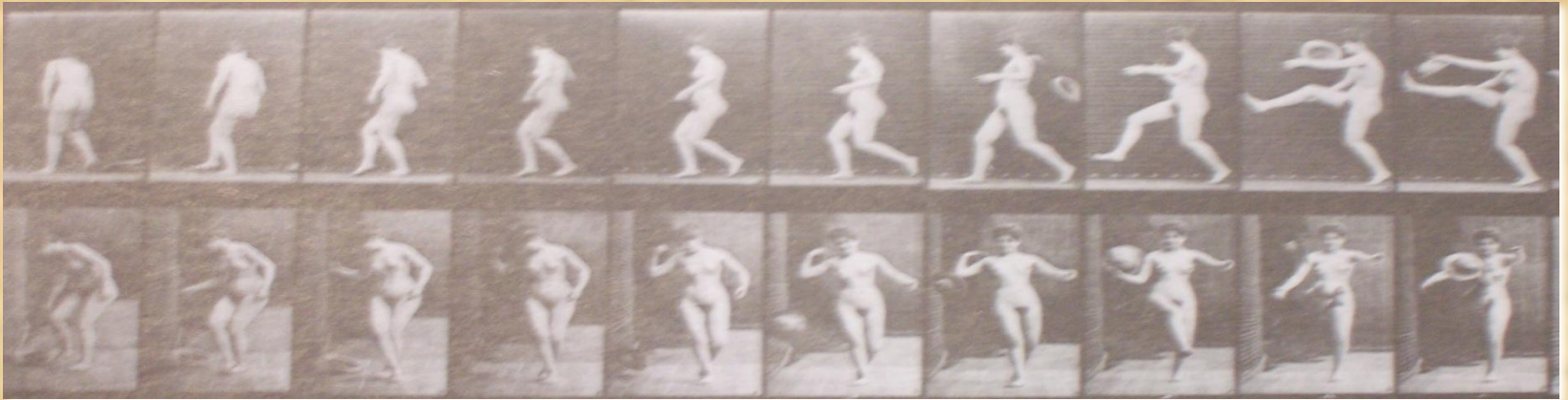


History

These relied on the “persistence of vision” to provide an illusion of movement if the images were moved at sufficient speed past the viewer.



History



The development of the motion picture projector and film stock allowed the development of film.

Early motion pictures were static shots showing an event or action with no editing or other cinematic techniques as this series showing a nude walking demonstrates.

History

- » Early films were a visual art until the late 19th century when they developed into a narrative with a series of scenes linked together to tell a story.
- » Scenes were broken up into multiple shots of varying sizes and angles.
- » Camera movement was used to add to the story development.
- » Music was used to create mood using a pianist / organist using either sheet music or a score as they accompanied the screen action.

Film History

- » The first audience to experience a moving film did so in 1895. The film, by the Lumiere brothers was called “Workers leaving the Lumiere Factory (1895)”
- » Their film “Train Entering the Gare de Ciotat (1895)” caused people to faint with fear as the train loomed from the screen into the theatre auditorium.
- » These films did not carry a story or narrative - they merely showed a moving image on the screen.



Film History



A colourised still of the Train Entering the Gare de Ciotat Station.



Playing petanque (1895)



» August (1862-1954) & Louis (1864-1948) Lumiere

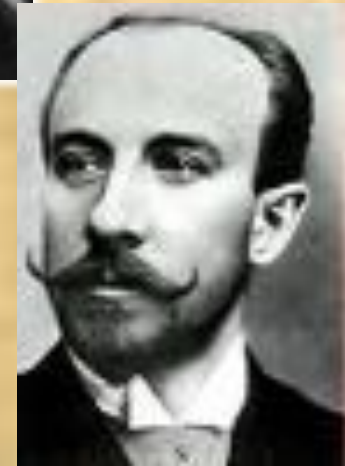
Film History - Melies

- » Realising the potential of a good story George Melies (1861-1938) utilised film to create fantastic stories that took his characters and audiences to the moon and beyond.



The changing process of cinema

- » The changes in film process involve several factors.
- » George Huaco indentifies four factors:
 1. Current events & achievements. (political climate)
 2. The creativity of the film-makers who influenced the team of crafts-people involed in the films.
 3. The technical developments that could be exploited.
 4. The capacity of a sufficient audience to appreciate the results.



Changing process of cinema

- » The division between film and movie creates two views of quality and purpose.
- » MOVIES = This is a commercial differentiation = popular entertainment with a mass circulation of copies of the movie. The audience being largely passive.
- » . The product of an industry dominated by the producer (money) in which there is no individual film-maker but a team under the producer's control. (The studio system.) The director is hired to create the movie from the script. The final version is, however, the responsibility of the Producer and Editor.
- » The director of a movie is known as: *metteur en scene* = an interpreter of a score / script.



Progressions - The Silent Film



- » Film makers experimented with the use of the camera to develop new techniques that would enhance their ability to tell a story.
- » 1913: Giovanni Pastrone (**Cabiria**) moved his camera laterally and slightly above the level of the foreground thus changing the perspective of the audience from that they'd previously had in the Lumiere films.
- » 1923: Carl Mayer directing **Last Laugh** for F.W.Murnau proposed a forward movement of the camera at dramatic moments as if to thrust the audience into the action.

Progressions - The Silent Film

The man who exploited this change was D.W. Griffith (1875-1948. USA) whose film “The Birth of a Nation (1914) created an explosive examination of the development of the American nation from the Civil War.

The films until then were narrative and anecdotal this followed several threads of narrative - the friendly families in the North & South, political events in Washington, warfare with friends in opposite camps, exploitation of the South, white & black, carpet baggers from the North and the rise of the Ku Klux Klan.



Progressions - The Silent Film

Griffith's success was also his undoing. His films - **Intolerance** -**The Mother & The Law** and **The Fall of Babylon** put him into debt. As a result Financiers ceased to regard the film-makers as the king-pins of production and decided to build up the film-star in their place - to put control in the hands of the producer, aided by his team of organisers and writers. (The Hollywood system).

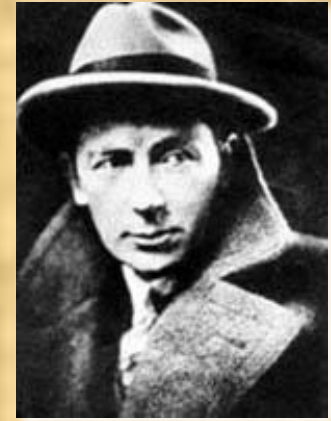
This favoured the movie over the film and reduced the risk for the banks.

It also meant that the *actor* was out of place in the movie world as his / her versatility would make them unrecognisable and therefore valueless commercially.

But they also introduced the language (french = way of speaking) of the film- long shot / mid shot/ close-up and their variations. These terms allowed the editor to construct a movie or film to produce identified reactions from the audience.

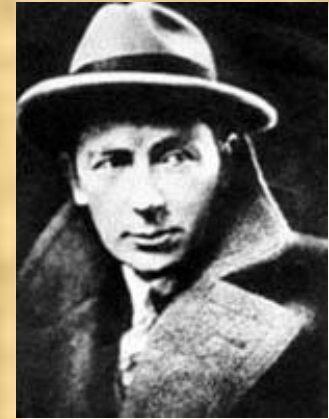
Progressions - The Silent Film

- » **F.W.Marnau** (1888-1931) influenced the film making process with the introduction of the design tool - the storyboard. This is a script visualised by drawings of every basic change of camera angles in the film.
- » Marnau was influenced by the swing to the right in Germany post W/W I where business took advantage of the high inflation rate to mass produce films at cheap rates.



Progressions - The Silent Film

- » The storyboard design focus introduced techniques like “visual punning” that (e.g) involved showing the passage of time by tracking towards a candle flame then dissolving into a lighted gas jet or electric bulb from which they would track away to the next sequence of the story.
- » This technique was replaced by nouvelle vague that introduced jump cuts to show or allow the passage of time and space.
- » This was known as “kultur-film” in Germany.
- » World War I signaled the advance of the movie from the USA. This was because while Europe was fighting a four year long war, costing 10 million dead, the Americans only fought for six months at a cost of 115,000 dead. The 10 years of prosperity in the USA allowed the industry to gain dominance.



The Advent of Sound

- » Sound and film were slow to accommodate each other.
- » Sound technology was clumsy and difficult to link to the speed of the film.
- » Sound made it difficult to film in the open air, to film without interfering with lighting, without interfering with the way the actors spoke and with the number of cameras able to be used.
- » Sound forced film to adapt and develop new narrative techniques.



Sound



- » Historical events and the sound film.
- » The depression (1929-35) encouraged the development of the conventions of the gangster movie (the urban western) and comedies that saw ordinary folk standing up against corrupt big business.
- » World War II encouraged the development of the propaganda film and again helped the USA gain dominance of the movie making business.
- » The impact of the technology is seen in Citizen Kane (Oson Welles 1941)

History



World War II

Studios became propaganda machines for the War Effort.

Films patriotic and focused on concerns of those on the home-front as they worried over those on the battle field as the stills from “Freedom Comes High” (1943) shows

New Wave 1960-80

The death of the Studio system had international effects allowing the re-emergence of competition from Europe - particularly Sweden, France and Britain.

The collapse of the Studio System also encouraged the Film Festival circuit giving a screen to films made outside of the USA conglomerates.

- » The New Wave allowed the nascent European Film industry a time to recover from the US domination that had emerged as a result of WWII.
- » However the resurgence of USA post 1980 meant that European film-makers moved into TV production - particularly in the UK.

History- The Mass-Media age

1980 -2000+

- 1) A horizontal control of the media with the Media Conglomerates able to exploit Film, TV, Books, CD, record, DVD publication for mass profit.
 - 2) Individual contracting systems for “talent” rather than salaried staff favored by the Studios. Actors, Directors, Technicians contracted for single movies.
 - 3) The advent of the “Blockbuster” disaster genre as the Conglomerates look to mass saturation marketing and maximised profit.
 - 4) Smaller Production houses move into specialised niche audience orientated films e.g Woody Allan
- This has changed the face of the Film Industry - particularly in terms of production and distribution.

- » Modern Film industry has cross fertilisation from other nationalities'' industries: e.g. India, Asia & Australasia.
- » Examples of films: Bride & Prejudice: Bollywood interpretation of classic English text Pride & Prejudice. A similar cross fertilisation happened with Vanity Fair.
- » Matrix utilised effects from Asian film: Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon.
- » Utu, a NZ film, was effectively a Western transposed into a NZ setting.