

Fantasy Films

What are fantasy films?

- Fantasy films are films which are usually to do with magic, supernatural events or make believe worlds and characters. They tend to include things which are physically impossible for human kind. In most fantasy films the main characters tend to be princes and princesses. There also tends to be an evil character or “baddy” that tries to harm/stop the good/hero characters but in basically every film, fails, as in fantasy films, good out rules evil.

Fantasy Films

- Fantasy films appeal to people of a variety of ages, depending on the particular film. Prince/princess ones tend to be aimed more at children.
- The main characters tend to be princes/princesses, and then the other characters tend to be evil spirits, elves, dwarves, angels, dragons, castles and knights etc.

Sub-genres in fantasy films

- A sub-genre is a sub category in the genre fantasy. They break down fantasy films into more specific kinds of fantasy films as the genre fantasy is one of the broadest genres with a variety of different kinds of films which would appeal to different kinds of people, so sub-genres make it easier for people to tell more about the film.

Comic fantasy

- Comic fantasy is a sub-genre of fantasy which is a fantasy film with humour involved.
- Comic fantasies tend to be parodies of other serious fantasy films taking the mick out of them. E.g. disaster movie.

Dark fantasy

- Dark fantasy is another sub-genre of fantasy which is a fantasy film which involves parts of horror in so it's quite scary. Tend to be about humans being under attack by species which are inhumane.

Epic/high fantasy

- Epic or high fantasy is a sub-genre which are set in a parallel world.

Heroic Fantasy

- Heroic fantasy is yet another sub-genre of fantasy which tends to revolve around heroes trying to save someone in imaginary lands. Tends to be the hero trying to save the fair maiden/heroin.

History of Fantasy Films

- Fantasy films have always been magical and mystical, but they weren't that popular until around the 1980's, there were few before then but there were some. In the 80's equipment and filming techniques were improved so they improved so then the interest of the public increased so they became more popular.

Pre 1930's

- There was a 'silent era' which was where sound was unavailable on films because of lack of technology. This was up until around the 1930s. The most popular films in the silent era included:
 - 'The thief of Baghdad'. Director - Raoul Walsh
Starring – Douglas Fairbanks
 - 'Die Nibelungen'. Director – Fritz Lang
Starring – Paul Ritter

1930's

- Sound on films had now been invented and one of the most popular famous fantasy films of all time was made, 'the wizard of Oz'. people of all ages watched and loved the film. The director was Larry Semon and it starred Dorothy Dwan and Bryant Washburn. King Kong was also very popular, made in 1933, directed by Merian Cooper and Ernest Schoedsack, and starred Bruce Cabot.

1940s

- Films in colour were invented so many were made and produced including jungle book (1942) which was very popular. Other fantasy films from the 1940s included
- Beyond Tomorrow (1941) Director – A. Edward Sutherland. Starring – Harry Carey
- The Horn Blows At Midnight (1943) Director – Raoul Walsh. Starring – Jack Benny
- One Touch of Venus (1948). Director – William Seiter. Starring – Robert Walker and Ava Gardner.

1950's

- There were a few popular fantasy films in the 1950's including:
- Darby O'Gill and the little people (1959)
Director – Robert Stevenson.
Starring – Albert Sharpe
- The 5000 fingers of Dr. T (1953)
Director – Roy Rowland
Starring – Tommy Rettig

1960's

Popular fantasy film's of the 1960's included:

- Jason and the Argonauts (1963). Critics have praised it for the use of stop-motion.

Director – Don Chaffney. Starring – Todd Armstrong

- Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968)

Director – Ken Hughes. Starring – Dick Van Dyke

Apart from these the 60's didn't really have very many fantasy films made.

1970's

Fantasy films in the 1970's include:

- 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail' (1975) which was a huge success. Directors – Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones. Starring – Graham Chapman.
- The Golden Voyage of Sinbad (1974)
Director – Gordon Hessler. Starring – John Phillip Law.
- Sinbad and the Eye Of The Tiger (1977)
Director – Sam Wanamaker. Starring – Patrick Wayne.

1980's

There was a historical fantasy release called 'Raiders of the Last Ark' (1982). Director – Steven Spielberg. Starring – Harrison Ford. This started many more fantasy film creations after that. Including:

- Conan The Barbarian (1982) Director – John Milius. Starring – Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- The Dark Crystal (1982) Directors – Jim Henson, Frank Oz.
- Labyrinth (1986)
Director – Jim Henson. Starring – David Bowie.

1990's

In the 90's there were a huge amount of successful fantasy films including:

- Hook (1991) Director – Steven Spielberg. Starring – Dustin Hoffman, Robin Williams.
- Groundhog Day (1993) – Director – Harold Ramis. Starring – Bill Murray, Andie MacDowell.
- Edward Scissorhands (1990) Director – Tim Burton. Starring – Johnny Depp.
- The Green Mile (1999) Director – Frank Darabont. Starring – Tom Hanks.

2000's

In the 2000's there was a huge success for fantasy films, there were loads. Including:

- Harry potter – film series (2001-2011)
Starring – Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson.
- Pirates of the Caribbean – film series. Directors – Gore Verbinski (1-3), Rob Marshall (4). Starring – Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom (1-3), Keira Knightly (1-3).
- Nanny Mcphee – series of 2. Director – Kirk Jones. Starring – Emma Thompson, Colin Firth.
- Shrek – series – Directors – Andrew Adamson (1-2), Chris Miller (3), Mike Mitchell (4). Starring – Mike Myers, Eddie Murphey.

2000's Continued

- The chronicles of Narnia – series. Director – Andrew Adamson (1-2), Michael Apted (3). Starring – Georgie Henley.
- 17 again (2009). Director – Burr Steers. Starring – Zac Efron,
- Twilight – series. Directors – Catherine Hardwicke (1), Chris Wertz (2), David Slade (3), Bill Condon (4). Starring – Kirsten Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner.
- Elf (2003). Director – John Favreau. Starring – Will Ferrell.

2010's

The success continued:

- Alice in Wonderland (2010). Director – Tim Burton. Starring – Mia Wasikowska, Johnny Depp.
- Clash of the Titans (remake – 2010). Director – Louis Leterrier. Starring – Sam Worthington.
- Gulliver's Travels (2010). Director – Rob Letterman. Starring – Jack Black.
- How to Train Your Dragon – 3D (2010). Directors – Chris Sanders, Dean DeBlois. Starring – Jay Baruchel.
- Immortals – 3D film. (2011). Director – Tarsem Singh. Starring – Henry Cavill.

How fantasy film's have changed through the years

Fantasy films have mainly changed through the years down to the more technology available. Pre 1930s the films weren't even available to have with sound and were all in black and white so obviously that has changed. Then in the 1940s coloured films with sound were created so this was a huge step up for fantasy films. Also in the past 10-20 years computers and internet came about so fantasy films were easily editable to make them more imaginative and give more of an illusion.

How fantasy films have changed through the years

I think the development of computers has definitely helped fantasy films become more popular because over the past 10 years or so fantasy films have become increasingly popular, and to all ages.

Why do people watch fantasy films?

- I think one reason why people watch fantasy films is to escape reality. Fantasy films involve imagination and good tends to out rule evil so I think this is why so many people watch them.

Conclusion

The key points of fantasy films are:

- They tend to involve magic, good and evil, and occur in make believe worlds.
- They are watched by people of all different ages.
- They have become increasingly popular over the last 20 years due to development of technology.