

Cinema in Britain

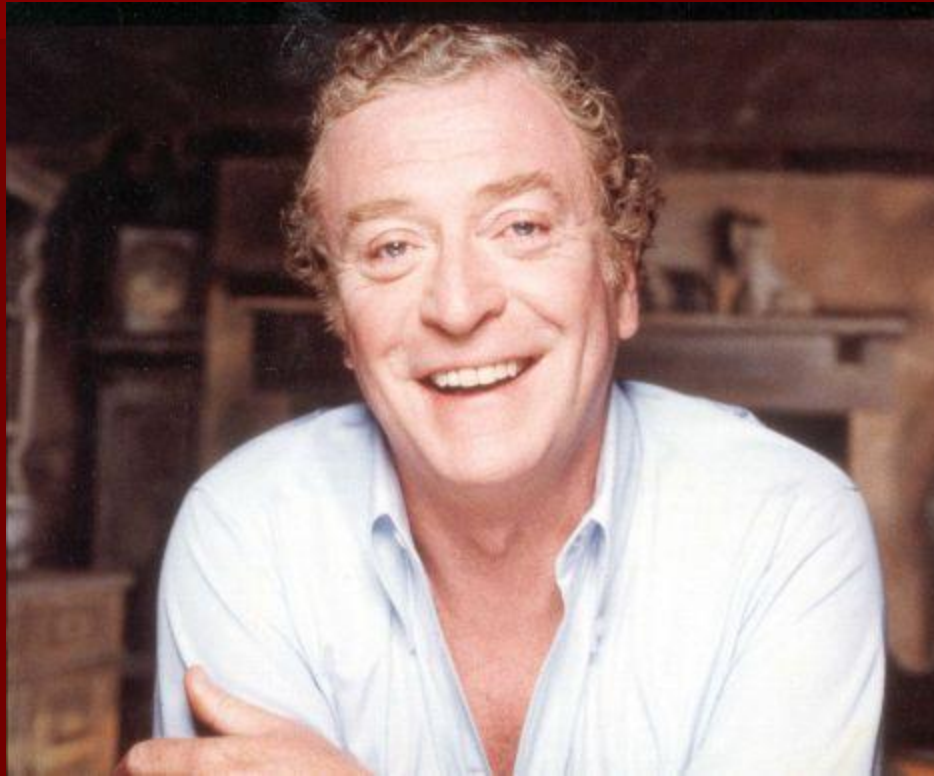
The cinema has occupied a centrally place in British popular culture since its beginning as a music hall novelty in the mid-1890s until the rise of television as the predominant form of popular entertainment in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the early thirties it was suggested that “film is a form of art which is fundamentally unsuited to the expression of the English character” and this bleak and negative appraisal has been echoed in various ways by critics and historians. Less than twenty years ago it was described as “an unknown cinema” and as “utterly amorphous, unclassified, unperceived”.

There are two important points to make. Firstly, British films have lived in the shadow of not just the American cinema but also in the shadow of the British documentary film which has enjoyed considerable prestige amongst critics and writers both in Britain and abroad. Documentary cinema is an important framing notion, which has influenced the ways in which the British commercial cinema has been thought about.

The second point concerns the very term “British cinema” itself and it is important to bear in mind that what are known as “British films” are invariably films which have been produced in England rather than Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and, by and large, films produced in one quite distinctive region of England – London and its outer suburbs.

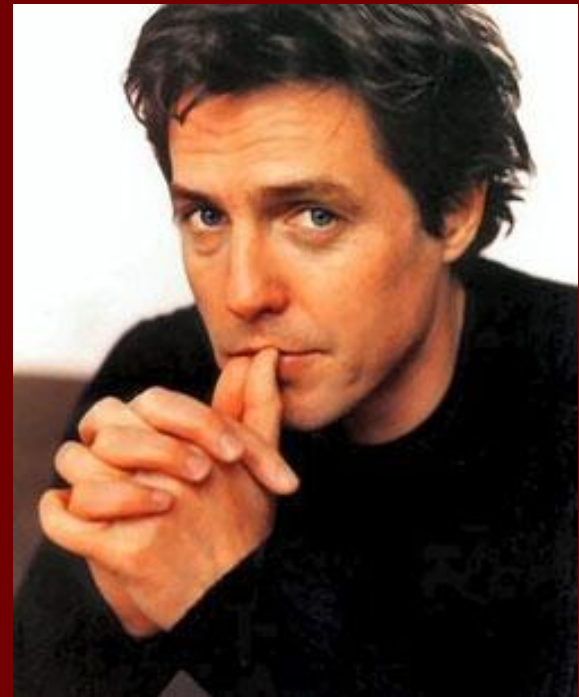
British actors and actresses



Michael Cane



Hugh Grant



Cristian Bale





Jason Statham



Colin Firth

James Hugh
Calum Laurie





Kate Winslet

Jonathan Rees
Meyers





Daniel Craig

Jude Law





Helena Bonham Carter



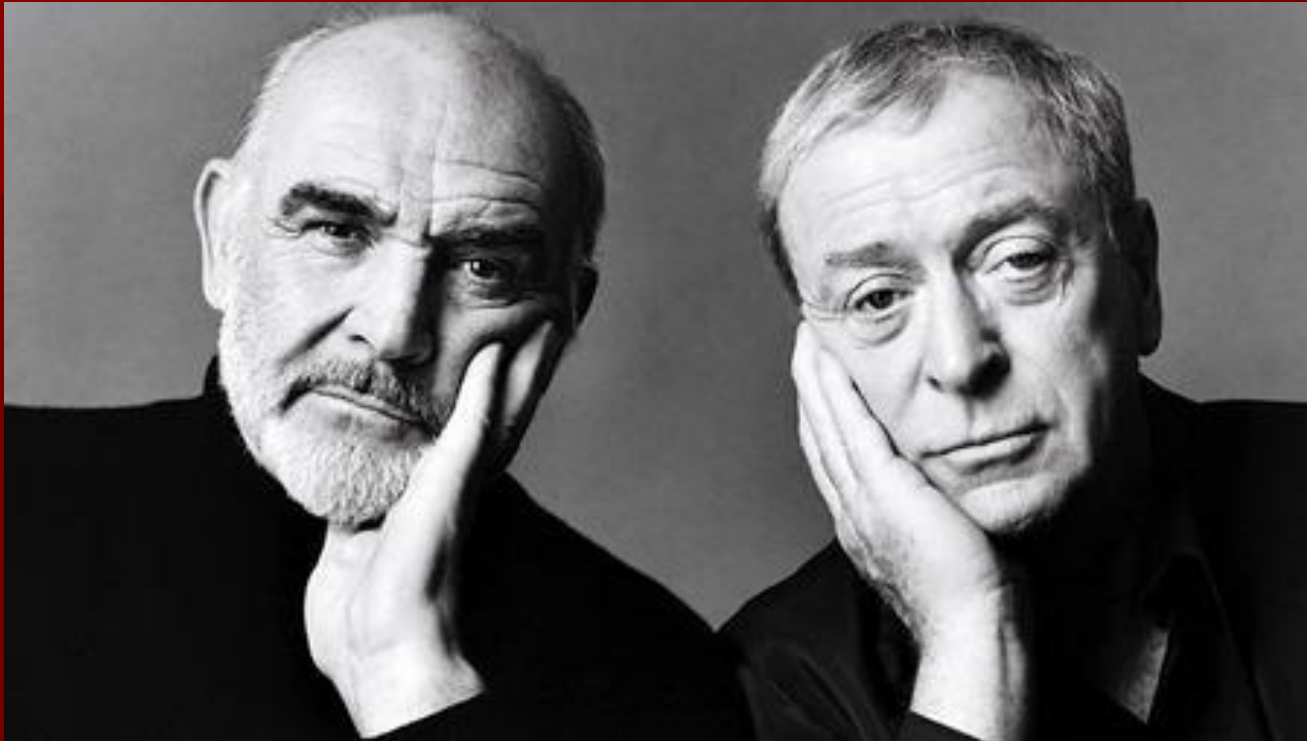
Benjamin Barnes



Robert
Pattinson

Jim Broadbent





Sean Connery and Michael Caine

Carey Hannah Mulligan



Emma
Thompson





Emma Watson



Keira Knightley

