

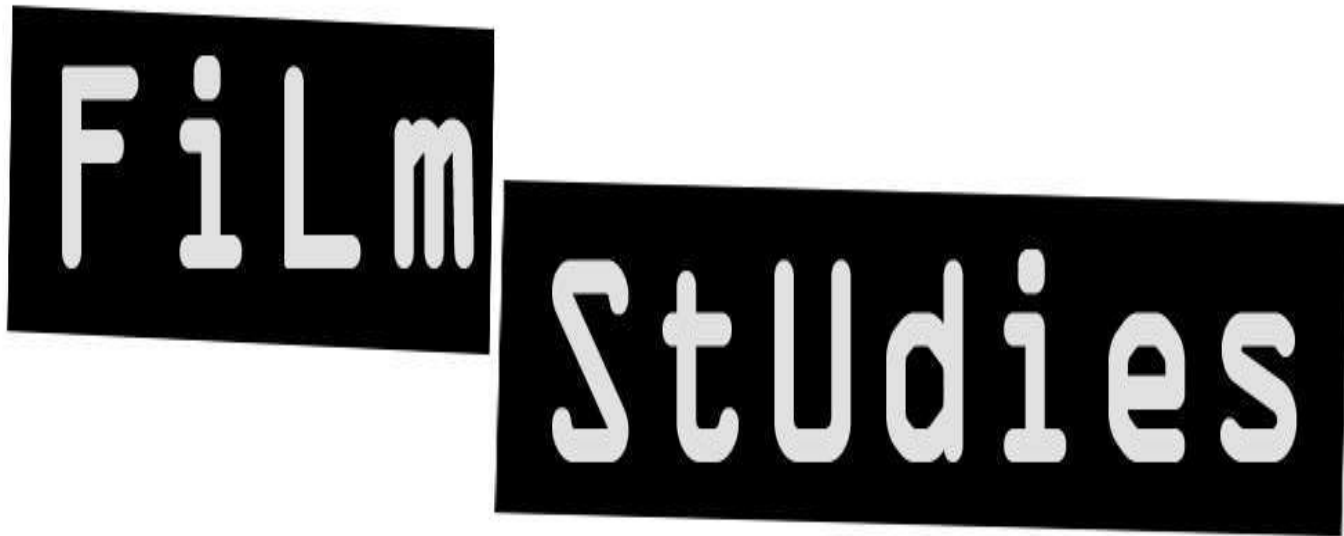
English Language and Literature

SEMESTER V

Core Course VIII – Film Studies

(EN 1543)

Part I



What is Film?

- A story or event recorded by a camera as a **set** of **moving images** and shown in a cinema or on television.
- This set of moving images is known as **shots**.

What is the basic unit of a film?

- **Shots:** A part of a film between two cuts. Shots are generally filmed with a single camera and can be of any duration.
- Film shots are an essential aspect of a movie where **transitions** and **cuts** are used to further express emotion, ideas and movement.
- **Scene** is a combination of shots, a sequence of continuous action

Hybrid nature of film

- Hybrid means: blend/mixture
- Film is a combination of Various art forms.
- And also we have different genres of film.

MACRO and MICRO elements of Film Language

- **MACRO**
- GENRE
- NARRATIVE – The story – What happens to the characters
- **MICRO**
- CINEMATOGRAPHY
- SOUND
- EDITING
- MISE EN SCENE
- SPECIAL EFFECTS

CINEMATOGRAPHY

- Refers to the visual aspects of a film's language
- Camera shots and movement can give us clear indications of emotion, motive and give audiences clues as to things that may be about to happen.

- Cinematography is the act of capturing photographic images in space through the use of a number of controllable elements.
- These include the **quality** of the film stock, the manipulation of the **camera lens, framing, scale movement** and **duration**, or the length of the shot.

Camera shots

- **DISTANCE**

with respect to the subject in the frame.

- **HEIGHT**

Refers to the degree of elevation.

- **LEVEL** in framing.

Camera shots

DISTANCE

- Close-up and extreme close-up
- Medium shot
- Long shot
- Wide (Extreme long shot - (often establishing shot))

Close up

- The viewer is supposed to understand what character feels.



MEDIUM CLOSE-UP

- Framing the shoulder, chest to head. It would fill most of the screen.
- The tight presentation of two or three actors
- Used in indoor sequences allowing for a visual signification of relationships between characters.



Extreme close up shot (ECU) show
Emotion



LONG SHOT

Gives clear sense of character in a given location and emphasises body language





EXTREME LONG SHOT XLS



VERY LONG SHOT VLS



LONG SHOT LS



MEDIUM LONG SHOT MLS



MID SHOT MS



MEDIUM CLOSEUP MCU



CLOSEUP CU



BIG CLOSEUP BCU



EXTREME CLOSEUP ECU

HEIGHT

(Refers to the degree of elevation)

- Low angle shot
- High angle shot
- Birds eye view/Aerial

Point of View shot

- (POV) Point of view shows what the character sees. These are often freehand and are used in horror films.



Level in framing

Canted Angle

- Suggest imbalance and instability (very popular in horror/psycho thriller movies)



Movement shots

- Pan
- Tilt
- Zoom
- Dolly/Tracking
- Crane

DEPTH OF FIELD

- How sharp images are within a frame. The frame for this purpose can be divided into the foreground, middle ground and background.

Deep focus: includes foreground, middle-ground, and extreme-background objects, all in focus. staging with great depth of field, using relatively wide-angle lenses



Shallow focus: one plane of the image is in focus while the rest is out of focus. Shallow focus is typically used to emphasize one part of the image over another.



Racking focus

- can change the focus of the lens to a subject in the background from the foreground or vice versa.
- This can be used to shift the audience's attention or to point out a significant relationship between the two subjects.

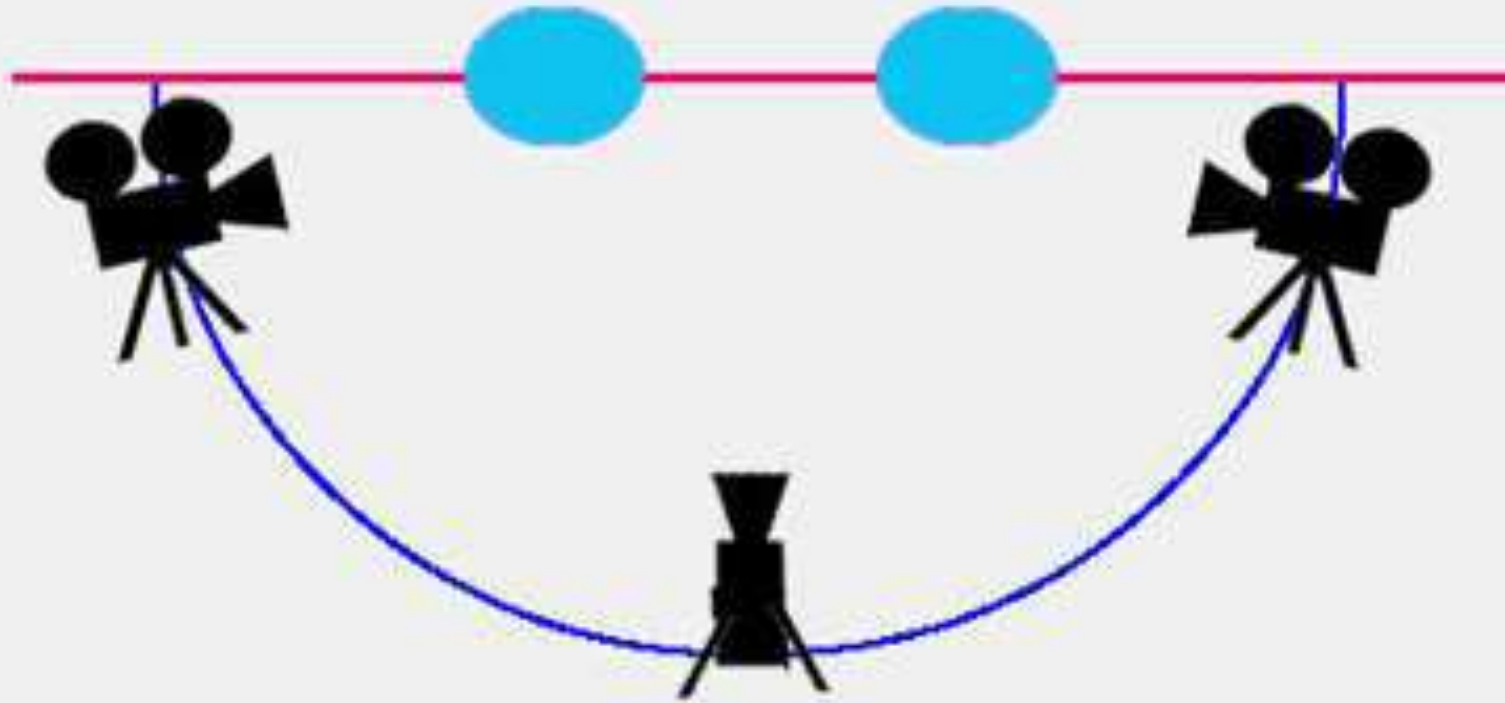


Shot reverse shot

- **Shot reverse shot** (or **shot counter shot**) is a film technique where one character is shown looking at another character, and then the other character is shown looking back at the first character.
- Since the characters are shown facing in opposite directions, the viewer assumes that they are looking at each other.



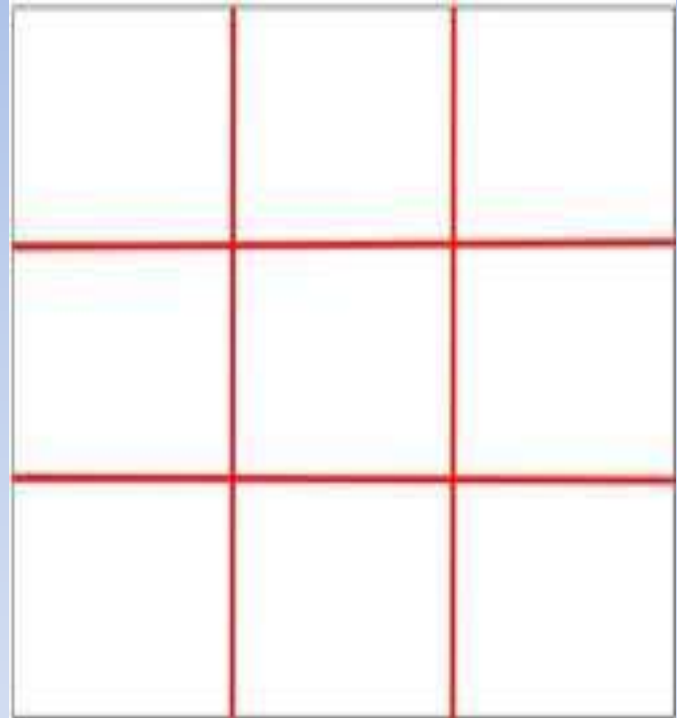
180 degree rule



Under the 180 Degree Rule, cameras must remain on one side of an imaginary line bisecting characters.

Rule of Thirds

- The **Rule of Thirds** is perhaps the most well-known ‘rule’ of photographic composition.
- The basic principle behind the rule of thirds is to imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts.



- The theory is that if you place points of interest in the intersections or along the lines that your photo becomes more balanced and will enable a viewer of the image to interact with it more naturally.
- Studies have shown that when viewing images that people's eyes usually go to one of the intersection points most naturally rather than the centre of the shot

Off-screen Space

- There are six zones of off-screen space, the four edges of the frame, the space behind and in front of the screen.
- By using these unseen spaces, the director can achieve, surprise, suspense, and other effects.



Sound in Cinema

- Talking films(talkies) dates back from 1927 with Alan Crosland's *The Jazz Singer*.
- Sound put to an end to the silent era of slapstick comedy.
- The most basic elements of the film sound track includes speech, music, sound effect etc.

Diegetic sound

- Sound whose source is visible on the screen or whose source is implied to be present by the action of the film.
 - voices of characters
 - sounds made by objects in the story
- music represented as coming from instruments in the story space

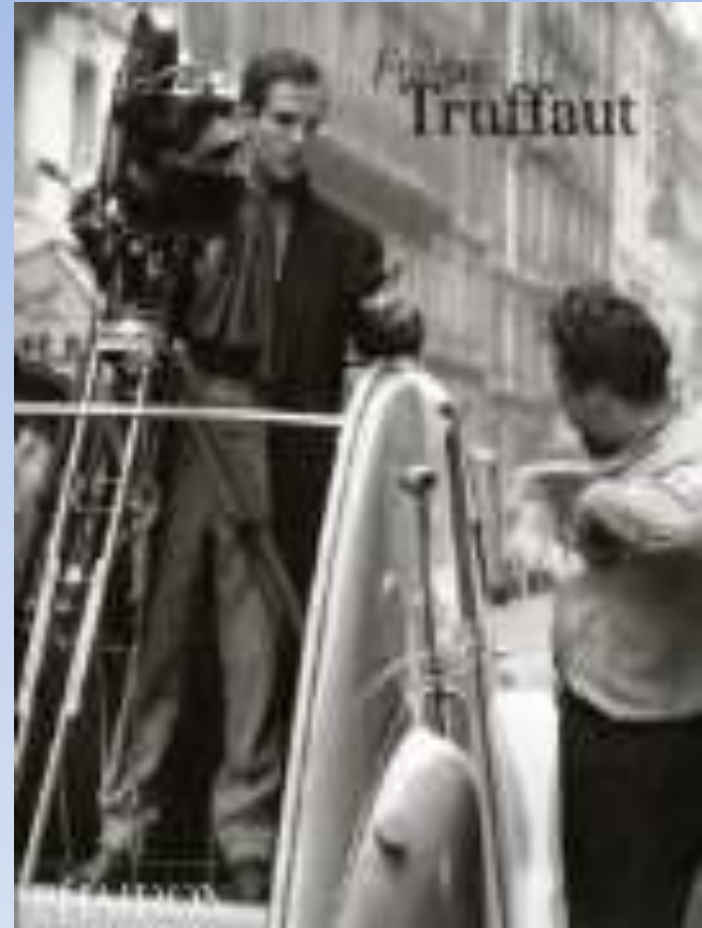
Non-diegetic sound

- Sound whose source is neither visible on the screen nor has been implied to be present in the action:
 - narrator's commentary
- sound effects which is added for the dramatic effect
 - mood music

Authorship

- **Auteur Theory**
 - In film criticism, **auteur theory** holds that a director's film reflects the director's personal creative vision, as if they were the primary "auteur" (the French word for "author").

- In 1954, François Truffaut wrote an essay entitled *A Certain Tendency in French Cinema*. In this work he claimed that film is a great medium for expressing the personal ideas of the director. He suggested that this meant that the director should therefore be regarded as an *auteur*. In fact, Truffaut once provocatively said that: "There are no good and bad movies, only good and bad directors"



- Auteur Theory suggests that a director can use the commercial apparatus of film-making in the same way that a writer uses a pen or a painter uses paint and a paintbrush. It is a medium for the personal artistic expression of the director.
- Auteur Theory suggests that the best films will bear their maker's 'signature'. Which may manifest itself as the stamp of his or her individual personality or perhaps even focus on recurring themes within the body of work.

Genres of film

- **Action (Disaster):** Stories whose central struggle plays out mainly through a clash of physical forces.
- **Adventure:** Stories whose central struggle plays out mainly through encounters with new "worlds."
- **Coming-of-Age Drama:** Stories whose central struggle is about the hero finding his or her place in the world.

- **Epic/Myth:** Stories whose central struggle plays out in the midst of a clash of great forces or in the sweep of great historical change.
- **Fantasy:** Stories which are animated, or whose central struggle plays out in two worlds - the "real" world and an imaginary world.
- **Gangster:** Stories whose central struggle is between a criminal and society. (*This genre is often blended with Film Noir*).

- **Social Drama:** Stories whose central struggle is between a Champion and a problem or injustice in society. Usually the Champion has a personal stake in the outcome of the struggle.
- **The Black Comedy:** A comedy that uses death and morbid doings as the root of its humor. Surfaces regularly. Most recent incarnations, *Very Bad Things* and *Pulp Fiction*.
- **Science Fiction:** Stories whose central struggle is generated from the technology and tools of a scientifically imaginable world.

- **The Picaresque:** An episodic string of adventures by a hero who moves from place to place.
- **Apocalyptic fiction:** is a sub-genre of science fiction that is concerned with the end of human civilization.
- **Magic realism** or **magical realism:** is a genre where magic elements are a natural part in an otherwise mundane, realistic environment.
- **Film noir :** is a cinematic term used primarily to describe stylish Hollywood crime dramas, particularly those that emphasize cynical attitudes and sexual motivations.

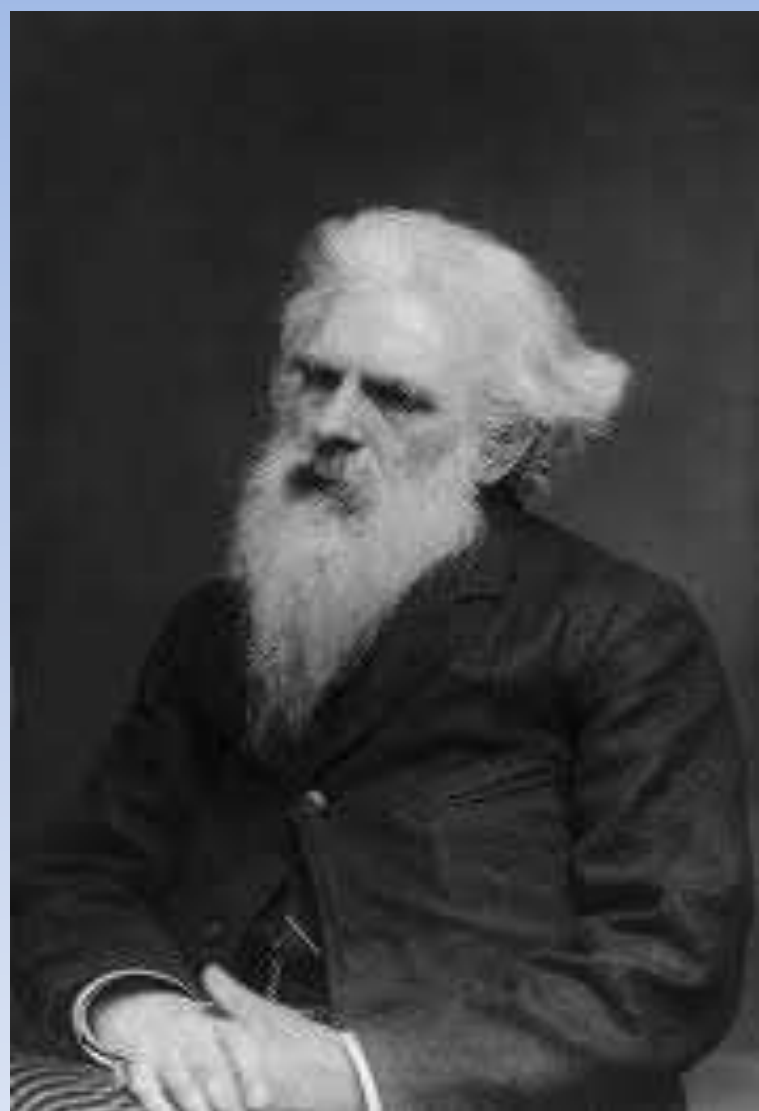
A Brief History of Motion Pictures

- The **magic lantern** or **Laterna Magica** is an early type of image projector developed in the 17th century.
- Can be considered as a prototype of movie camera.
- an early version of a slide projector that allowed images to pass through a lens with the use of light, often supplied by a kerosene lamp.



- The inventor of the magic lantern is debated, although most sources credit Dutch scientist Charles Huygens in the late 1650s.
- The magic lantern was used mostly for purely entertainment value.
- Once the Magic Lantern entered the United States in the mid 19th Century, it permeated American society, becoming widely popular and profitable.

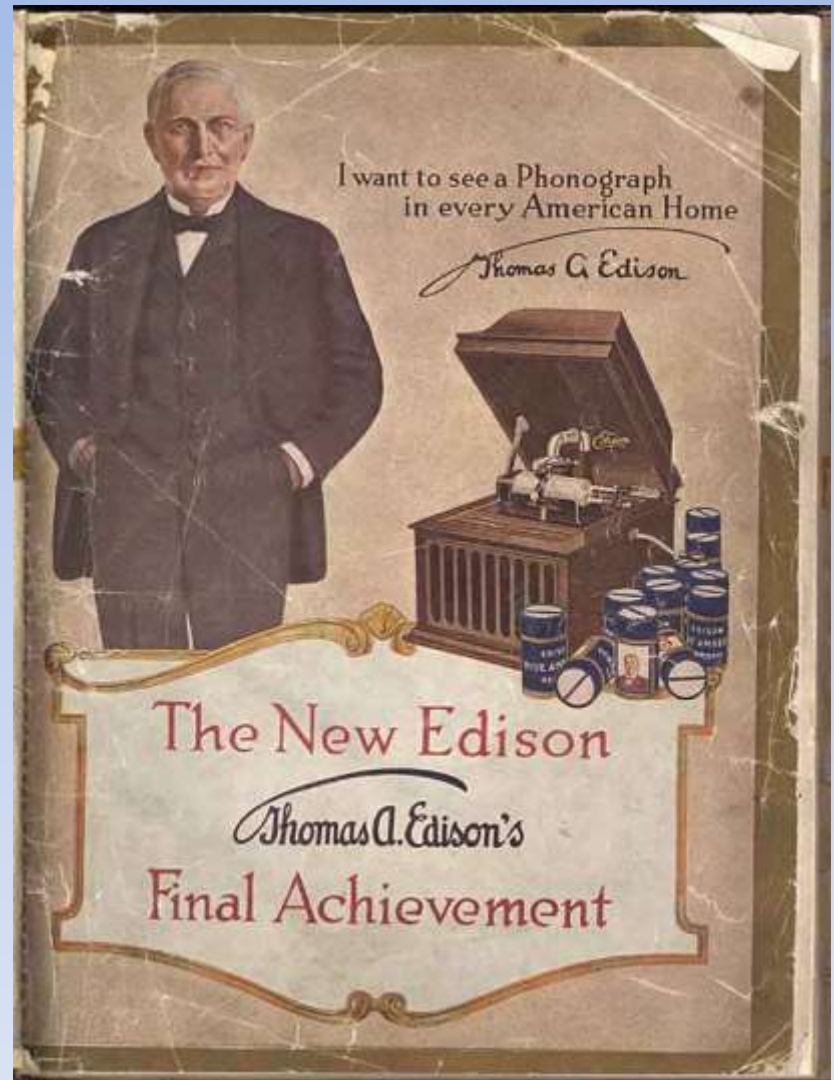
- Throughout most of the 19th century, the idea of moving pictures remained grounded in the use of static photographic stills projected rapidly.
- The concept of creating continuous live action did not occur until 1872 when British photographer Edward Muybridge was hired by California governor to win a bet that all four hooves of a race horse left the ground when it ran.
- After several attempts , Muybridge eventually developed the idea of setting 24 cameras in a row along the track.
- He perfected the technique by projecting the stills through a magic lantern.



The Horse in Motion.

MADE BY THE LANTERN SLIDE WORKS OF NEW YORK, AND BY THE PATENT PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS OF NEW YORK.

- After witnessing the work of Muybridge, American inventor Thomas Edison decided to pursue the concept of a visual companion to his phonograph.
- His enthusiasm led to the invention of Kinetoscope.



Kinetoscope

- The **Kinetoscope** is an early motion picture exhibition device. The Kinetoscope was designed for films to be viewed by one individual at a time through a peephole viewer window at the top of the device.



- Edison worked fast to stay ahead of his competitors, and in April 1894, the first Kinetoscope parlors were opened in New York city.
- By July the first case of censorship against film was enacted as one of the Edison's film is forbidden based on the footage showing a dancer who reveals her undergarments, becoming the first case of censorship against films.

- The blunder Edison's business venture was the lack of pursuit given to find a means of projection to a crowd.
- 1895 saw many inventors experimenting with projection and demonstrating it to small crowds.
- It was France that would earn the credit of showing the first large-screen projected films, led by brothers Auguste and Louis Lumiere.

Cinematographe

- The brothers owned a photographic equipment factory and had been experimenting with a camera they called the Cinematographe, which they actually demonstrated in March 1895.



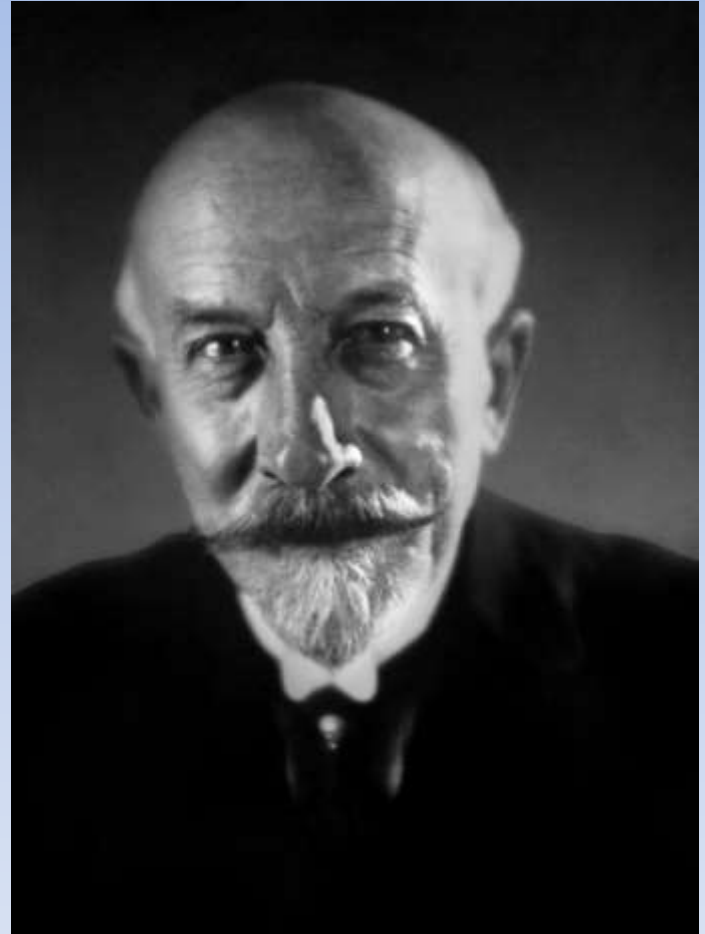
A Train Arriving at the Station (1895)

- Created in 1895, “Arrival of Train at La Ciotat Station” is mostly known for its legend.
- The footage is a single shot of a train in the distance approaching the station.



Georges Méliès.

- Méliès was a professional magician who had become interested in the illusionist possibilities of the *cinématographe*; when the Lumières refused to sell him one, he bought an animatograph projector from R W Paul in 1896 and reversed its mechanical principles to design his own camera.



- The following year he organized the **Star Film company** and constructed a small glass-enclosed studio on the grounds of his house at Montreuil, where he produced, directed, photographed, and acted in more than 500 films between 1896 and 1913.



A Trip to the Moon (1902)

- Was one of the earliest narrative films.
- establish the fiction film as the cinema's mainstream product.
- Méliès treated the frame of the film as the proscenium arch of a theatre stage, never once moving his camera or changing its position within a scene. He ultimately lost his audience in the late 1910s to filmmakers with more sophisticated narrative techniques.



Edwin S. Porter- the "Father of the Story Film"

- Innovative use of dramatic editing (piecing together scenes shot at different times and places) in such films as *The Life of An American Fireman* (1903) and *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) revolutionized filmmaking.
- **The Great Train Robbery (1903)**
- Combination of film editing and the telling of narrative stories, Porter produced one of the most important and influential films of the time to reveal the possibility of fictional stories on film.

MPPC

- **Motion Picture Patents Company**, also called **Movie Trust** or **Edison Trust** is a trust of 10 film producers and distributors who attempted to gain complete control of the motion-picture industry in the United States from 1908 to 1912.
- The original members were the American companies Edison, Vitagraph, Biograph, Essanay, Selig, Lubin, and Kalem; and the French companies Pathé, Méliès, and Gaumont. The company possessed most of the available motion-picture patents, especially those of Thomas A. Edison, for camera and projection equipment. It entered into a contract with Eastman Kodak Company, the largest manufacturer of raw film stock, to restrict the supply of film to licensed members of the company.

- The company was notorious for enforcing its restrictions by refusing equipment to uncooperative filmmakers and theatre owners and for its attempts to terrorize independent film producers.
- It limited the length of films to one and two reels (10 to 20 minutes) because movie audiences were believed incapable of enjoying more protracted entertainment.
- By 1912, however, the success of European and independent producers and the violent opposition of filmmakers outside the company weakened the Movie Trust, which, in 1917, was dissolved by court order.
- The Movie Trust, which was based in New York and other cities of the East Coast, was indirectly responsible for the establishment of Hollywood, California, as the nation's film capital, since many independent filmmakers migrated to the latter town to escape the Trust's restrictive influence in the East.

D.W. Griffith

- Developed the narrative language of film.
- was the first filmmaker to realize that the motion-picture medium, properly vested with technical vitality and seriousness of theme, could exercise enormous persuasive power over an audience, or even a nation, without recourse to print or human speech
- Experimented with camera movement and placement:
- panoramic panning shots not only to provide visual information but also to engage his audience in the total environment of his films.
- employ the tracking, or traveling, shot, in which the camera—and therefore the audience—participates in the dramatic action by moving with it.

The Studio System and The Golden Age of Hollywood

- Essentially, the Hollywood Studio System was a way to mass produce movies
- Each studio was a massive lot that took up acres and acres of land
- Studios were complete with several different sets (Western town, New York Avenue, European Village, horror castle, etc)
- Also included in studios were any prop, costume, or piece of equipment one could ever need to make a movie

Why Studios?

- As film grew more and more popular throughout the 1920's, Americans demanded more quality films quicker
- The studio system was the answer—a way to mass produce movies in one area
- Eventually, five major studios emerged
 - Paramount
 - MGM
 - Warner Brothers
 - Fox
 - RKO

Conclusions about the system

- Studio System, through mass producing movies, did several things:
 - Delivered volume of films to American people
 - Created the Golden Age of Hollywood
 - Turned actors and actresses into stars
 - Made a ton of money in the process