



Media Studies A2

Blogging the reel world.

Lecture 6: Classic film directors and their themes and styles

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Directors (<https://rahmeenshaikha2.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/directors.pptx>)

Our lecture was based on the all-time famous directors. Let me tell you that what a film director is. A film director is a person who directs the making of a film. The position of film director is not easy to define concisely. Different film companies and directors have different ideas about exactly what the job entails; however, the following duties are fairly standard:

- Interpreting the script and making it into a film. This can involve planning locations, shots, pacing, acting styles and anything else which affects the feel of the movie.
- Overseeing the cinematography and technical aspects.
- Coaching actors and directing them towards the required performances.
- Coordinating staff on set, directing the shooting timetable and ensuring that deadlines are met.

The directors that I studied today were as follows:

1. **Alfred Hitchcock:** He was an English film director and producer. He used many techniques in the suspense and psychological thriller genres. Alfred Hitchcock's films show an interesting tendency towards recurring themes and plot devices, such that one can almost feel that he was in some way making the same movie, or at least telling the same story, over and over again throughout his life as a director. Famous movies of Alfred Hitchcock were *Vertigo*, *Psycho*, *The Birds*, *Rear Window*, *Dial M for Murder* and etc.

2. **Stanley Kubrick:** One of the most fascinating filmmakers in the latter half of the 20th century, director Stanley Kubrick saw his work praised and damned with equal vigor, though oftentimes found that his film's reputations grew over time. Just as his singularly brilliant visual style won him great acclaim, his unconventional sense of narrative and seeming lack of emotionalism often elicited critical scorn. Some of its great works include *The Killing*, *Eyes Wide Shut*, *The Path of Glory*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Full Metal Jacket*, *The Shinning* and etc. Cited by many filmmakers from Steven Spielberg to Woody Allen as being a source of inspiration, Kubrick remained a unique artist capable of a wide diversity in a medium often dominated by repetition and mediocrity. Though his ambitious and often obsessive vision sometimes exceeded his capacity to satisfy the demands of mainstream filmmaking, Kubrick nonetheless laid claim to a distinctive style of cinema often imitated, but never duplicated
3. **Orson Welles:** he was an American writer, actor, producer and director and worked in every medium ranging from theatre, radio and film. His career involves thirteen full length movies and his distinctive directorial style featured layered and nonlinear narrative forms. He also used to play with innovative uses of lighting, unusual camera angles, sound techniques borrowed from radio, deep focus shots, and long takes. These characteristics made him unique from others. Welles all-time favorite movie includes *Mr. Arkadin*, *Touch Of Evil*, and *Citizen Kane*.
4. **Francis Ford Coppola:** Coppola is an American film writer, director and producer and is one of America's most erratic, energetic and controversial filmmakers. Francis Ford Coppola uses a lot of "attention to detail."

Some of his film techniques included:

- Creates artistic scenes that enhance the viewer's viewing.
- He has lots of great color to his scenes and you have the ability to see every last inch of picture in the scenes as well.
- He includes many different camera angles.
- He also has a low key lighting and shadow effect involved some of his films mostly *The Godfather* films *Part I* and *Part II*.

His feature films includes *Dementia 13* (1963), *The Rain People* (1969), *The Godfather* (1972), *The Godfather Part II* (1974), *The Godfather Part III* (1990), *The Conversation* (1974), *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Jack* (1996), *Youth Without Youth* (2007), and *Tetro* (2009).

5. **Steven Spielberg:** Steven Allan Spielberg is an American business magnate, film director, screenwriter, and producer. His films have covered almost every themes and genres. Spielberg's early science-fiction and adventure films were seen as archetypes of modern Hollywood blockbuster filmmaking. Some of his unique directing style includes:
 - Track-in shots-going from a medium close-up to a tighter close-up
 - Dramatic over-the-shoulder shots: Like other films, over-the-shoulder shots are very common, but

the over-the-shoulder shots filmed by Steven Spielberg are truly something else. He typically films a character over the shoulder of the protagonist using a wide lens, which makes the protagonist in the foreground look much bigger than the other character, conveying a feeling of dominance.

- Character approaches the camera to be framed in a close-up
- Wide lenses: Steven Spielberg loves wide lenses, and he uses them to film tracking shots, over-the-shoulder shots, close-ups, and any other shot in which he wants to make the foreground subject dominate the background.
- Framing characters through rich foreground objects- Steven Spielberg loves to frame characters through openings created by all sorts of objects.
- Track-in 2-shot-This technique is typically used to cover a scene in which two characters are discussing a topic of special importance. This is another film technique that is covered in detail in my free subscriber-only Filmmaking Tips.
- Hand-held camerawork-Again, there is nothing new about hand-held camerawork, but Steven Spielberg is one of the few filmmakers who can truly pull it off.
- Mirror entry shots-In this technique the camera frames a character reflected in a mirror in a wide shot; the character then enters the frame, resulting in a close-up. It is a very effective way to shift from a wide shot to a tighter shot of the same character, all in one uncut shot.
- Match cuts-Spielberg uses match cuts to great effect. As the name implies, in a match cut an element in the second shot matches an element in the first shot.
- Uncut master shots with varied shot compositions- this is the hallmark of Steven Spielberg and never any other filmmaker even come close to using it so well (or at all). Steven Spielberg sometimes covers multiple-character scenes with a single, uncut shot in which the camera and the actors move in such a way that the shot goes from a wide shot to a close-up to an over-the-shoulder back to a wide shot, ending on a close-up – all in a single uncut shot while the actors move, talk and do things.

Some of his famous movies include *Jaws*, *E.T.*, and *Jurassic Park*, etc.

6. **Quentin Tarantino:** Tarantino is an American film director, screenwriter, producer, and actor. Over decades he made a reputation for himself for using very specific camera shots, references and themes in his films. In using these techniques, these films have become a part of their own genre. His movies are famous for their violence and bloodshed; their blaring soundtracks; their offbeat, their startling performances from actors you had almost forgotten about; and their encyclopedic range of references to other movies. The style that this director, proudly, parades to his audiences is not one that appeals to everyone but rather to a select few who open their minds to new and innovative ideas. Quentin Tarantino has slowly but surely progressed his stylistic stance on the film world from his time directing, the Oscar Award-winning, *Pulp Fiction* (1994) to, what can be called his rebirth in filmmaking, *Kill Bill* (2003, 2004).
7. **Tim Burton:** Tim Burton is an American film director, film producer, writer, artist and animator. He is famous for his directing and producing dark, gothic, macabre, quirky and somehow lighthearted motion pictures such as *Beetlejuice*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Ed Wood*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *Corpse Bride*, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, *Dark Shadows*, and *Frankenweenie*, and for blockbusters such as *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, *Batman*, *Batman Returns*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. Tim Burton's cinematic genius mind has produced classic dramas, animated films, and actioners.

8. **George Lucas:** George Walton Lucas, Jr. is an American film producer, screenwriter, director, and entrepreneur. He founded Lucasfilms limited and led the company as chairman and chief executive before selling it to The Walt Disney Company on October 30, 2012. He was interested in making documentaries and other non-narrative films. Many of them concerned either cars or music. Some of his notable includes *THX 1138*, *American Graffiti*, *Indiana Jones*, and *Willow*.