



1931-1940

By: Mia and Maria



Key Films and Directors - Maria

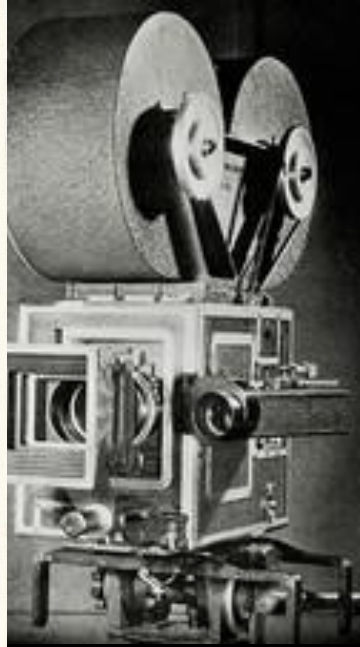


- All Quiet on the Western Front (1930) Lewis Milestone
- Dracula (1931) Tod Browning, Karl Freund
- Frankenstein (1931) James Whale
- The Mummy (1932) Karl Freund
- The Invisible Man (1933) James Whale
- Gone with the Wind (1939) Victor Fleming
- The Wizard of Oz (1939) Victor Fleming

- The most common and popular genres or types of film in the 1930s included **gangsters, comedies, musicals, westerns, and movies with social consciousness**, Drama, Romance, War, Monster Films

- Other types were horror, thrillers and literary adaptations (from classical books) like Frankenstein and Dracula.

Technological Breakthroughs - Both (Read by Mia)



The breakthrough of synchronized sound occurred at the end of the 1920s and that of **full colour motion picture film** in the 1930s (although black and white films remained very common for several decades).

Colour Toning in film was a lot more popular as it was easier to dip the whole frame in ink than it was to individually hand paint every shot.

By the mid 1920's 90% of all films were either tinted, toned or had some sort of colour. But when film started having audio the colours interfered with the audio. This caused them to make Techno Colour.

People were fascinated by the movies and **the transition from silent films to sound pictures was complete by 1930, which resulted in a Golden Age of Hollywood cinema.**

Although times were difficult during the Great Depression due to the economic circumstances, many forms of popular entertainment such as the cinema became popular. Movies **provided an escape from the difficulty of having to live through the Great Depression, allowing a glimpse into high society life, so far from rural life.**

Once audiences could hear actors speak, listen to pre-recorded musical scores, and enjoy sound effects, film cemented its place as the main medium for mass communication, art, and commerce.

The Big 5 further info – Both (Read by Maria)

- **MGM** by Louis B Mayor and Irving Thalburg. They focused on Melodramas and Musicals. They spared no expense on sets, costumes and the biggest movie stars
- Eg. The Wizard of Oz, Gone with the wind, Mutiny on the Bounty.
- **Paramount Pictures** (Most European of the companies). They lured a lot of filmmakers away from Germany and the UK. They gave these filmmakers leeway to create their own ideas for films.
- Eg. Shanghai Express, The sign of the Cross, Morocco.
- **Warner Brothers** (Studio of the working class). They made low budget mellow dramas, Gangster Movies and Musicals.
- Eg. The Public Enemy, Footlight Parade
- **20th Century Fox** made their profit from director John Ford who won back to back Oscars.
- Eg. The Grapes of Wrath
- **RKO**
- Eg. Bringing up baby, King Kong and Citizen Kane



Context of the 1930's - Mia

Craig Benzine

In fact, more films were released by the major studios during the 1920s and '30s than any other decade – averaging about 800 a year, compared to less than 500 per year today.

- 70% of people were going to the cinemas every week
- After the stock market crash of 1929 most parts of American Economy were struggling, but not Hollywood.
- The Great Depression happened in 1933 so you would think that this would stop people from going to the cinema. But The Great Depression is one of the greatest things to happen to Hollywood. Movies provided an escape from the difficulty of having to live through the Great Depression, allowing a glimpse into high society life, so far from rural life.



The Studio Systems - Mia

- THE BIG 5 – All these production companies were competing against each other.

The studio system is a business method where Hollywood movie studios control all aspects of their film productions, including production, distribution, and exhibition. Dominated by the Big Five studios, all personnel including actors, crew, directors, and writers were under contract to the studios. It made for efficient and “assembly-line” style filmmaking that dominated the industry for about two crucial decades.

- Studios owned their own movie theatres (which would play their movies).
- Studios offered independent theatres a block set of films (known as “block booking”), containing desirable movies mixed with unwanted ones.
- Everyone from actors to directors were paid a salary instead of “per film,” along with having contracts.



Links Used

Photos

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