RTVF 370
World Cinema

American Reevaluation and Reemergence

Wexman gives the dates for reemergence:

1963-1974
“A Blockbuster Mentality” - 1975-1993
“The Digital Future: United States” 1994 to present

Reevaluation/Reemergence 1963-1980

1. Impact of Auteur Theory
2. Impact of Film Schools
3. Shift in Film Content
**Film Content**

1. Anti-hero
2. More explicit sex
3. More explicit violence
4. Mixture of comic & serious
5. Self-Consciousness (self-reflexive)

**Impact of “New” Content**

1. CARA -- 1968 institutes ratings: G, PG, PG-13, R, NC-17, X.
2. Elite audiences
3. Films for specialized audiences (films for African Americans, Latinos, teens, family, etc.)
4. genre genres (films about film)

**Films of 60s and 70s**

Important directors:
Arthur Penn, Sam Peckinpah,
Francis Coppola, Mike Nichols,
Robert Altman, Martin Scorcese

And key films like:
Bonnie & Clyde, The Wild Bunch,
The Godfather, The Graduate,
MASH, Raging Bull
Other Directors/Films of Note

*Easy Rider* (Dennis Hopper)
*Midnight Cowboy* (John Schlesinger)
And many directors had already begun to work by 1980 (hence Ellis’ overlap):
Woody Allen, Sydney Pollack, Hal Ashby, George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and Terrance Malick

The Key

Maybe for the 1st time in American film history many filmmakers consciously trying to make **ART**

Reasons: French New Wave, film schools, elite audiences, new freedom in American society

An Example

The cameramen’s view of the period and a little beyond from **Visions of Light**
The Academy Award-winning documentary on cinematography
Return to "Myths" by late 70s
Led by Spielberg & Lucas ----
Return to familiar Hollywood genres
More conservative, more patriotic
Exploiting new technologies:
surround sound, Dolby,
Steadicam, better special effects

Blockbuster Mentality
Big, expensive, special effects-filled
films that appeal to audiences in
U.S. and in entire world.
Films like: Star Wars, E.T., Jaws,
Close Encounters, Raiders..., etc.

American Film Business Even
More an International Business
1974 -- 20% of profits abroad
1992 -- 40 % of profits abroad
& 55% of profits in Europe
1996 -- Approaching 50%
2001 – 55 % & more for some
American Dominance in Europe

50% of box office in every major Western European country
70% in Germany & England
7 of top 10 box office draws in Paris each year are typically American films

Reasons for American Dominance

1. Size of domestic audience
2. Bigger budgets
3. Far more advertising
4. More theatres & better distribution system
5. English language

European Response

1. Quotas and gov’t subsidies
2. Co-productions

European Economic Community has targeted this area
International Film Production
or When Is a Film American?

1. Financing from many countries (co-productions)
2. International stars
3. International directors/writers/crews

When is a Studio American?

MCA (Universal) -- was owned by Matsushita
Columbia (CBS records) -- Sony
20th C. Fox -- Rupert Murdock
MGM-PATHE -- French banks

The Major Trend
Today:

1. Internationalism
or
2. Multinationalism
Film Business today more of a World Business:

1. Co-productions

2. Talents works across borders both in front and behind camera

Real Shift in Film Business

Typical Sources of Film Profits

- Box Office
- Video Rentals
- Television

Who Really Owns Film Studios

Giant international global media giants:
- Time Warner
- Disney
- Bertelsmann, Viacom, Murdoch’s News Corp., TCI, G.E., Sony and Seagram
Behind these Big 9

3 or 4 dozen media firms ($1-8 billion per year) ...strong regional or national strongholds About half in North America:

CBS, New York Times Co., Hearst, Comcast, Gannet. Most of rest in Europe with a handful in Latin America and East Asia

Time Warner as example

20% of profits from music
Cable systems 10%
Most of rest from film, video and television holdings (HBO-Cinemax, CNN, TNT-Cartoon Network, TNT, TBS, Turner Classic Movies, Comedy Central…

Own Warner Bros., New Line, 50%
DC Comics, Six Flags theme parks

Compare to Studio in Hollywood’s Golden Age

Completely international
Can take book property through publication, comic book, movie, TV, software, theme parks.

Makes the old Hollywood moguls look relatively insignificant.
Example

The Last Emperor
English screenplay -- M. Peploe
Italian Director - B. Bertolucci
Italian Crew
Actors- Chinese, British, American
Financing- Amer., British, Chinese

Example

Ivory-Merchant : The ultimate multinational team:
Ishmail Merchant (Indian)
James Ivory (American)
Ruth Prawer Jhabvala (German)
A Passage to India
Room With a View , Howards End

Example

The Unbearable Lightness of Being (1988)
Czech novel, American director (Phillip Kaufman), French script, shot in France with British, French, Swedish crew & cast.
Financing from everywhere.
Transmigration of Talent

Actors work anywhere:
Rutger Hauer, Max Von Sydow, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Marcello Mastroianni, Gerard Depardieu

International cameramen: Vittorio Storaro, Vilmos Sigsmond, etc...

International Directors:
Roman Polanski  Milos Forman
Wim Wenders  Ivan Passer
Karel Reisz  Sergio Leone
Bruce Beresford  Peter Weir
John Woo  Baz Luhrman
Ang Lee  Wolfgang Peterson

Percy Adlon
German director who makes films in English, in the U.S., but really German new wave subjects --

Sugarbaby (1986)
Bagdad Cafe (1988)
Rosalie Goes Shopping (1989)