



Directed by Martin Scorsese

Writing Credits John Logan (wrote the screenplay based on *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick).

Music by Howard Shore

Cinematography by Robert Richardson

Film Editing by Thelma Schoonmaker

Hugo received 11 Academy Award nominations (including Best Picture), more than any other film that year, winning five: Best Cinematography, Best Art Direction, Best Sound Mixing, Best Sound Editing, and Best Visual Effects.

Cast

Asa Butterfield...Hugo Cabret

Chloë Grace Moretz...Isabelle

Ben Kingsley...Georges Méliès / Papa Georges

Sacha Baron Cohen...Inspector Gustave Dasté

Ray Winstone...Claude Cabret

Emily Mortimer...Lisette

Jude Law...Mr. Cabret

Helen McCrory...Jehanne D'Alcy / Mama Jeanne

Michael Stuhlbarg...René Tabard

Christopher Lee...Monsieur Labisse

Frances de la Tour...Madame Emile

Ben Addis...Salvador Dalí

Emil Lager...Django Reinhardt

Robert Gill...James Joyce

Martin Scorsese (b. November 17, 1942 in Queens, New York City, New York) is distinct among American filmmakers in that he is also a film scholar. He has been involved in film preservation efforts, made films about film history, and he has taught film



history (one of his notable former students at NYU is Spike Lee). He has frequently made documentaries about various topics: *Italianamerican* (1974), about his parents; *The Last Waltz* (1978), documenting the 1970s rock outfit The Band's farewell concert, including a performance by Bob Dylan that the 2016 Nobel Laureate requested Scorsese not to shoot; years after going against Dylan's wishes, he was recruited to direct and produce *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan** for PBS's *American Masters* series in 2005, and the genre-bending 2019 documentary *Rolling Thunder Revue: A Bob Dylan Story by Martin Scorsese*; he also directed and produced *The 50 Year Argument* (2014),* about the *New York Review of Books*. A recurring theme in many of his films is the human capacity for violence. He made the definitive film about the lone wolf bent on acting out on his rage in the 1976 film *Taxi Driver*, for which he won the elite Palme d'Or at Cannes that year. He had been nominated for the same

award in 1974 for *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* (1974). He examined the intersection of violence and rage as sport and in the domestic sphere in 1980's *Raging Bull*, for which he was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Director in 1981. In 1983, he was once again nominated at Cannes for the Palme d'Or for *The King of Comedy* (1982). In 1986, he won Best Director and was nominated for the Palme d'Or for *After Hours* (1985) at Cannes. His eye for violence (and perhaps his early intention to become a priest) has also been directed at religious themes. In 1989, he was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Director for *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), an adaptation of Nikos Kazantzakis's 1955 novel. In 2016, Scorsese returned to religious themes, exploring colonial cruelty intersecting with the aims of seventeenth-century Jesuit missionaries in *Silence*.*** In 1990, he turned his critique of violence onto organized crime and its theater of cruelty in *Goodfellas*,** for which he was nominated for Academy Awards for Best Director and for Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium in 1991. He also has a flair for a sober American nostalgia, adapting Edith Wharton's 1920 novel *The Age of Innocence* (1993),** for which he was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material Previously Produced or Published in 1994. In 2002, his interest in violence, crime, and American nostalgia led to an examination of Irish immigrant life in *Gangs of New York*, for which he was, again nominated for an Academy Award for Best Director in 2003. While in the 1970s to the 1990s, he was known to frequently make use of Robert De Niro, making some of his most iconic work, in the 2000s and 2010s, he has frequently made use of actor Leonardo DiCaprio: in the *The Aviator* (2004),* a film that turned the sober nostalgic gaze to the early Hollywood studio system of film production and a film for which Scorsese was nominated in 2005 for an Academy Award for Best Achievement in Directing, *The Departed* (2006),* *Shutter Island* (2010),* and *The Wolf of Wall Street* (2013).* He finally won his long-awaited Academy Award for Best Achievement in Directing in 2007 for *The Departed*. In 2012, he was nominated for



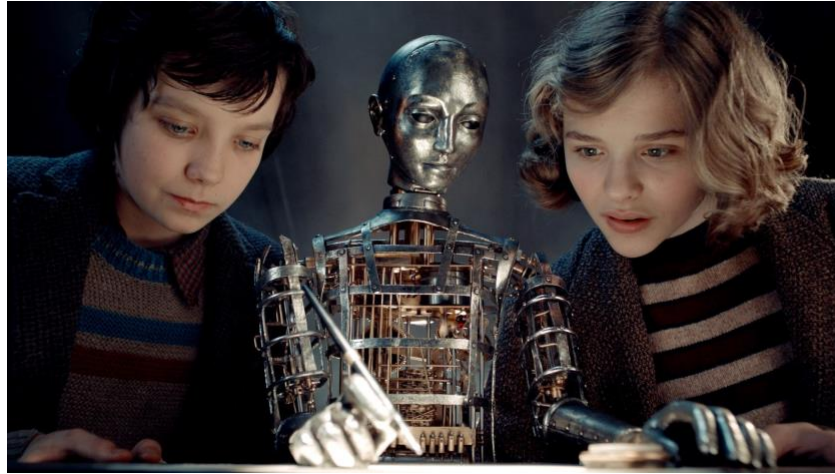
Academy Awards for Best Achievement in Directing and for Best Motion Picture of the Year for *Hugo* (2011), and he was nominated in 2014 for Academy Awards for Best Achievement in Directing and for Best Motion Picture of the Year for *Wolf of Wall Street*. His penchant for sober nostalgia has also perhaps guided his forays into television production: producing and directing for television series documenting the rise of corrupt American institutions, such as the rise of Atlantic City as a casino district in *Boardwalk Empire* (2010)* and, more recently, the 1970s recording industry in *Vinyl* (2016).* This year (2018), he won the Palme d'Or at Cannes, an award honoring a lifetime of distinguished filmmaking recognized “for the innovative qualities of his films, for his audacity and independence” (*pour les qualités novatrices de ses films, pour son audace et son indépendance*). His 2019 film, *The Irishman*,* was nominated for ten Oscars in 2020. His Oklahoma-set *Killers of the Flower Moon* is likely to be released later this year. Here are some of the other films he has directed: *Vesuvius VI* (1959 Short),* *It's Not Just You, Murray!* (1964 Short),** *Who's That Knocking at My Door* (1967),** *Boxcar Bertha* (1972), *Mean Streets* (1973),** *New York, New York* (1977), *The Color of Money* (1986), *Michael Jackson: Bad* (1987 Video short), *Cape Fear* (1991), *Casino* (1995),** *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies* (1995 TV Movie documentary),*** *Kundun* (1997), *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), *The Blues* (2003 TV Series documentary),* *The Key to Reserva* (2007 Short), *Shine a Light* (2008 Documentary), *George Harrison: Living in the Material World* (2011 Documentary),* and upcoming projects: *Roosevelt* (announced),* *The Devil in the White City* (TV Series, announced),* *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2021, filming), and *An Afternoon with SCTV* (TV Special, post-production). He has produced and executive-produced 76 films, written for 17 films, and has acted in 34 films and television series.

***Producer**

****Writer**

*****Producer and writer**

John Logan (b. September 24, 1961 in Chicago, Illinois) is known for his work as a screenwriter for such films as Ridley Scott's *Gladiator* (2000), Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator* (2004) and *Hugo* (2011), Tim Burton's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), and Sam Mendes' *Skyfall* (2012). He is a three-time Academy Award nominee; twice for Best Original Screenplay for *Gladiator* (2000) and *The Aviator* (2004) and once for Best Adapted Screenplay for *Hugo* (2011). He is also a two time Tony Award nominee for Best Play for *Red* in 2010 and Best Book of a Musical for *Moulin Rouge!* in 2021. He also was nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing for a Limited Series or Movie for *RKO 281* in 2000.



Howard Shore (October 18, 1946 in Toronto, Ontario) won Academy Awards: in 2002 for Best Music, Original Score for *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001) and in 2004 for Best Music, Original Score and Best Music, Original Song (shared with Fran Walsh and Annie Lennox) for *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003). He has consistently worked on David Cronenberg films, starting with *The Brood* (1979). In 2014, he won the Cannes Soundtrack Award for the Cronenberg film *Maps to the Stars* (2014). He has also consistently worked with Martin Scorsese, beginning with *Gangs of New York* (2002). In 2012, he was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures, Original Score for Scorsese's *Hugo* (2011). He has composed for 93 films, including: *Drop Dead, Dearest* (1978), *Scanners* (1981), *Videodrome* (1983), *After Hours* (1985), *The Fly* (1986), *Big* (1988), *Dead Ringers* (1988), *The Lemon Sisters* (1989), *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), *A Kiss Before Dying* (1991), *Naked Lunch* (1991), *M. Butterfly* (1993), *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993), *Philadelphia* (1993), *Ed Wood* (1994), *Nobody's Fool* (1994), *Se7en* (1995), *Moonlight and Valentino* (1995), *White Man's Burden* (1995), *Looking for Richard*

(1996 Documentary), *Crash* (1996), *Striptease* (1996), *Cop Land* (1997), *Gloria* (1999), *Analyze This* (1999), *Dogma* (1999), *High Fidelity* (2000), *The Yards* (2000), *The Score* (2001), *Panic Room* (2002), *Spider* (2002), *The Lord of the Rings Symphony* (2003), *The Aviator* (2004), *A History of Violence* (2005), *The Departed* (2006), *The Last Mimzy* (2007), *Doubt* (2008), *Edge of Darkness* (2010), *Cosmopolis* (2012), *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (2012), *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* (2013), *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* (2014), *Spotlight* (2015), and *The Catcher Was a Spy* (2018).

Robert Richardson

(August 27, 1955 in Hyannis, Massachusetts) has won the Academy Award for Best Cinematography three times, for his work on *JFK* (1991), *The Aviator* (2004), and *Hugo* (2011). These are some of his other films: *Salvador* (1986), *Platoon* (1986), *Wall Street* (1987), *Eight Men Out* (1988), *Talk Radio* (1988), *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), *The Doors* (1991), *A Few Good Men* (1992), *Heaven & Earth* (1993), *Natural Born Killers* (1994), *Casino* (1995), *Nixon* (1995), *Wag the Dog* (1997), *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), *Kill Bill: Vol. 1* (2003), *Kill Bill: Vol. 2* (2004), *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), *Shutter Island* (2010), *Django Unchained* (2012), *The Hatefule Eight* (2015), and *Once Upon a Time... In Hollywood* (2019).

Dante Ferretti (b. 26 February 1943) (from Wikipedia) has worked with many acclaimed directors, both American and Italian, including; Pier Paolo Pasolini, Elio Petri, Federico Fellini, Liliana Cavani, Terry Gilliam, Franco Zeffirelli, Martin Scorsese, Anthony Minghella, and Tim Burton. He frequently collaborates with his wife, set decorator Francesca Lo Schiavo. Ferretti was a protégé of Federico Fellini, and worked under him for five films. He also had a five-film collaboration with Pier Paolo Pasolini and later developed a very close professional relationship with Martin Scorsese, designing nine of his last eleven movies. In 2008, he designed the set for

Howard Shore's opera *The Fly*, directed by David Cronenberg, at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris.

Ferretti has won three Academy Awards for Best Art Direction; for *The Aviator*, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, and *Hugo*. He had seven previous nominations. In addition, he was nominated for Best Costume Design for *Kundun*. He has also won three BAFTA Awards. In 2012, he designed the decor for Salumeria Rosi Parmacotto, a restaurant on Manhattan's Upper East Side. For the 2015 Expo held in Milan, Italy Ferretti was commissioned to do a series of statues articulating the concept "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". Some of the films on which he has worked are *Medea* (1969), *The Canterbury Tales* (1972), *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* (1975), *City of Women* (1980), *And the Ship Sails On* (1983), *Ginger and Fred* (1986), *The Name of the Rose* (1986), *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988), *The Age of Innocence* (1993), *Interview with the Vampire* (1994), *Casino* (1995), *Kundun* (1997), *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), *Titus* (1999), *Gangs of New York* (2002), *Cold Mountain* (2003), *The Aviator* (2004), *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), *Shutter Island* (2010), *Hugo* (2011), *Cinderella* (2015), and *Silence* (2016).

Thelma Schoonmaker

(January 3, 1940 in Algeria) began her film career editing Mary Ellen Bute's (a largely forgotten filmmaker known in the 1930s to 1950s for abstract musical shorts) screen adaptation of Mary Manning Howe's dramatization of James Joyce's impenetrable final tome *Finnegans Wake*. Bute's film that Schoonmaker edited *Passages from James Joyce's Finnegans Wake* was screened at Cannes in 1965, taking home Best Debut of the Year. In 1970, while editing Michael Wadleigh's documentary of the epochal 1969 Woodstock festival, she was also a second-unit director with Martin Scorsese. Her work on *Woodstock* earned her first Academy Award nomination for Best Film Editing in 1971. She has first worked on one of Scorsese's own

projects in his 1970 documentary *Street Scenes** and then became a consistent editor for his films starting with *Raging Bull* (1980).* She won her first Academy Award for Best Film Editing for her work on *Raging Bull* in 1981. She was nominated for Academy Awards for Best Film Editing in 1991 for *Goodfellas* (1990)* and in 2003 for *Gangs of New York* (2002).* She took home Academy Awards for Best Achievement in Film Editing in 2005 for *The Aviator* (2004)* and in 2007 for *The Departed* (2006).* She was, once again, nominated for Best Achievement in Film Editing in 2012 for her work on *Hugo* (2011).* She has 38 editing credits. These are some of the other projects she has edited: *Who's That Knocking at My Door* (1967), *The King of Comedy* (1982),* *After Hours* (1985),* *The Color of Money* (1986),* *Michael Jackson: Bad* (1987 Video short),* *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988),* *Cape Fear* (1991),* *The Age of Innocence* (1993),* *Casino* (1995),* *Kundun* (1997),* *My Voyage to Italy* (1999 Documentary),*



Bringing Out the Dead (1999),* *The Aviator* (2004),* *Shutter Island* (2010),* *Hugo* (2011),* *The Wolf of Wall Street* (2013),* *Silence* (2016),* and *The Snowman* (2017),** *The Irishman* (2019),* and *Killers of the Flower Moon* (filming).*

***Directed by Martin**

Scorsese

****Produced by Martin**

Scorsese

Asa Butterfield (b. April 1, 1997 in Islington, London, England, UK) began his career as a child actor, Butterfield first achieved recognition as the lead of the historical drama film *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2008). He continued to headline films during the 2010s, starring in the adventure drama *Hugo* (2011), the war science fiction film *Ender's Game* (2013), the drama *X+Y* (2014), and the fantasy *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2016). In 2019, Butterfield began portraying the lead of the Netflix comedy-drama series *Sex Education*.

Chloë Grace Moretz (b. February 10, 1997 in Atlanta, Georgia) began acting as a child, with early roles in

The Amityville Horror (2005), *Desperate Housewives* (2006–07), *The Eye* (2008), *The Poker House* (2008), *Dirty Sexy Money* (2007–08), *500 Days of Summer* (2009) and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (2010). Her breakthrough came in 2010 in *Kick-Ass* and in *Let Me In*. Moretz starred in *Hugo* (2011), *Dark Shadows* (2012), *30 Rock* (2011–2013), *Kick-Ass 2* (2013), and *Carrie* (2013). In 2014, Moretz starred in the award-winning drama film *Clouds of Sils Maria* (2014), *If I Stay* (2014) and *The Equalizer* (2014).

Ben Kingsley (b. December 31, 1943 in Scarborough, Yorkshire, England, UK) has nearly 150 acting credits and is known for his starring role as Mahatma Gandhi in Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982), for which he subsequently won the Academy Award for Best Actor and BAFTA Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role. He also appeared as Itzhak Stern in Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993), receiving a nomination for the BAFTA Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role. Subsequent roles have included *Twelfth Night* (1996), *Sexy Beast* (2000), *House of Sand and Fog* (2003), *Thunderbirds* (2004), *Lucky Number Slevin* (2006), *Shutter Island* (2010), *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* (2010), *Hugo* (2011), *The Dictator* (2012), *Iron Man 3* (2013), *Ender's Game* (2013) and *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (2021). He has also voiced Archibald Snatcher in *The Boxtrolls* (2014), and Bagheera in the live-action adaptation of Disney's *The Jungle Book* (2016).

Sacha Baron Cohen (October 13, 1971 in Hammersmith, London, England, UK) is best known for his creation and portrayal of the fictional satirical characters Ali G, Borat Sagdiyev, Brüno Gehard, and Admiral General Aladeen. He adopts a variety of accents and guises for his characters and interacts with unsuspecting subjects who do not realise they have been set up. At the 2012 British Comedy Awards, he received the Outstanding Achievement Award and accepted the award in-character as Ali G. In 2013, he received the BAFTA Charlie Chaplin Britannia Award for Excellence in Comedy. In 2018, *The Times* named him among the 30 best living comedians. Baron Cohen has produced and/or performed in comedic films such as *Ali G Indahouse* (2002), *Borat* (2006) and its sequel *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm* (2020), *Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby* (2006), *Brüno* (2009), and *The Dictator* (2012). He has also appeared in dramatic

films including Tim Burton's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), Martin Scorsese's *Hugo* (2011), Tom Hooper's *Les Misérables* (2012), and Aaron Sorkin's *The Trial of the Chicago 7* (2020).

Jude Law (b. December 29, 1972 in Lewisham, London, England, UK) gained recognition for his role in Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999), for which he won the BAFTA Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role and was nominated for an Academy Award. He found further critical and commercial success in *Enemy at the Gates* (2001), Steven Spielberg's *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001) and Sam Mendes' *Road to Perdition* (2002). He continued to gain praise for starring in *Cold Mountain* (2003), *Closer* (2004), and *The Holiday* (2006). Law played Dr. Watson in *Sherlock Holmes* (2009) and *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (2011), a younger Albus Dumbledore in *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* (2018), and Yon-Rogg in *Captain Marvel* (2019); all of which rank among his highest-grossing releases. His other notable roles were in *Contagion* (2011), *Hugo* (2011), *Side Effects* (2013), *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014), and *Spy* (2015); and the television series *The Young Pope* (2016) and *The New Pope* (2020).



“Martin Scorsese,” from *American Film Directors V. II*. Ed. John Wideman, H. H. Wilson Co., NY, 1988

(This entry has nothing about Scorsese’s later career, but it’s good up to 1988.)

Martin Scorsese was born November 17, 1942, the younger son of Charles and Catherine (Cappa) Scorsese, Sicilian-Americans who both worked in the New York garment district. He was born in the New

York borough of Queens, but his parents were from Little Italy on Manhattan's Lower East Side and the family returned there when the boy was eight. A chronic asthmatic, Scorsese was at first a lonely outsider in that macho neighborhood. He found in the movies a sense of excitement and adventure denied to him in reality. "My father used to take me to see all sorts of films," he says. "From, three, four, five years old, I was watching film after film. A complete range."

In this way Scorsese became a juvenile expert on the Hollywood movies of the 1940s and 1950s, memorizing their dates, stars, and directors. His parents could not buy him a movie camera, and Scorsese's first films were drawn scene by scene on paper—epics, horror films, "three-dimensional Westerns with cutout guns emerging from the screen." In their book

The Movie Brats, Michael Pye and Linda Myles call him "the perfect child of Hollywood" and discuss him as a member of the "tribe" of young directors—all of them nourished on the movies—who have "taken over Hollywood" since World War II. The other "movie brats" are Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, John Milius, and Brian DePalma, and Scorsese has connections with all of them through work or friendship or both.

In Little Italy, Scorsese says, "there were two kinds of people who commended respect, apart from parents. There were the mini-godfathers, who controlled the neighborhood, and the priests." Scorsese wanted to be "an ordinary parish priest," though he always had a sense of "not being worthy enough." He attended a Catholic grade school and at fourteen entered an uptown junior seminary. His grades were good but he "couldn't fit in the institution of the Church" and was thrown out, transferring to the Cardinal Hayes High School in the Bronx. It was during that period that rock 'n' roll arrived—for him, as for so many others, "a real revolution."

Having failed to gain admission to Fordham College's divinity program, Scorsese went to New

York University instead, beginning as an English major but soon switching to the film department. He was taught that Hollywood movies were junk and that the films he should admire were European. Then Andrew Sarris popularized the *auteur* theory developed by André Bazin and the French New Wave, and Scorsese learned that "you didn't have to reject totally the films you liked as a child." He discovered the New Wave at the same time that he rediscovered Hollywood, and the first movie he made at NYU, a



comedy short called *What's a Nice Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like This?*, is, among other things, a homage to Truffaut. It won some student awards, as did *It's Not Just You, Murray* (1964), a fifteen-minute, tongue-in-cheek biography of a minor gangster. Drawing on Scorsese's knowledge of life in Little Italy, where it was

filmed, it is very much in the documentary mode favored at NYU and can be seen now as a preliminary reconnaissance of the material of *Mean Streets*.

In 1963, meanwhile, Scorsese had become an assistant instructor at NYU, which gave him his BS in film in 1964, his MA in 1966. He is said to have been an erratic teacher, shy and nervous most of the time, but liable to take off on manic monologues so funny that "people would come in off the corridors to listen." At this time he was in close touch with the New York school of experimental filmmakers—especially John Cassavetes and the new disciples of the *cinéma-vérité* documentary (like the Maysles brothers for whom he worked as a lighting man). In 1966 he left the university to concentrate on his first feature film, *Who's That Knocking at My Door?* Money for it was raised by its producers—Scorsese's teacher Hank Mangoojian and a movie enthusiast named Joseph Weil—by Scorsese himself, and by his father. The picture was made on location in New York for about \$35,000, and its choppy continuity reflects the fact that it was shot in fits and starts, whenever the crew could be got together, and in a mix 16mm and 35mm.

Who's That Knocking is a full-length treatment of the autobiographical material of *It's Not Just, You, Murray*. It explores the dilemma of J.R., a young Italian-American Catholic, conditioned to believe that a woman must be either a madonna or a whore, who falls in love with an educated girl who is neither. He won't make love to her out of respect for her purity, then is outraged to discover that she has already lost her virginity. (That she lost it to a rapist is almost irrelevant to him.) The picture achieved a showing at the 1967 Chicago Film Festival but with its rough quality and unorthodox technique found no distributor at that time.

Discouraged, Scorsese went to Amsterdam where filming was cheap. He directed some "strange sorts of commercials," wrote "tough dialogue" for *Obsessione*, the American version of a Dutch thriller by Pim de la Parra. With the sponsorship of Jacques Ledoux's Belgium Cinémathèque he also made *The Big Shave* (1967), a horrifying six-minute allegory about American self-destructiveness in which a man in a clinically white bathroom shaves away his own face before cutting his throat. Returning to the US, he did a variety of editing chores and in 1968 was hired to direct a feature called *The Honeymoon Killers*. Scorsese completed pre-production work but was replaced by another director a week after shooting began, apparently because his camerawork was too ambitious for the producers. He went back to NYU as an instructor (1968-1970) and there made *Street Scenes*, a documentary record of a New York antiwar demonstration. Some of his students were beaten up by counter-demonstrators and sixteen thousand dollars' worth of equipment was wrecked. Scorsese was told that he had to salvage the film or lose his job. He "edited all night for ten days without a break," and in the end had so honestly exposed the impotence of the demonstrators, that, he says "they hated it....I was pretty bitter."

After all these disappointments and frustrations, Scorsese's career began to pick up in 1969, when he

worked as assistant director and supervising editor on the famous rock documentary *Woodstock*, directed by his friend Mike Wadleigh (his cameraman on *Who's That Knocking?*). At around the same time, the sexploitation producer Joseph Brenner offered to buy Scorsese's still unscreened first feature film if he would introduce a nude scene. The required scene was shot in Amsterdam and the picture, originally called *Bring on the Dancing Girls*, then *I Call First*, was finally released in New York as *Who's That Knocking at My Door?* (1969) and in Los Angeles as *J.R.* (1970). Loose and improvisational in structure, it shows the influence of both Cassavetes and the New Wave in its *cinéma-vérité* realism and nervous, pyrotechnic, endlessly inventive camerawork. There were complaints about the totally irrelevant sex scene and mixed feelings about Harvey Keitel's performance as

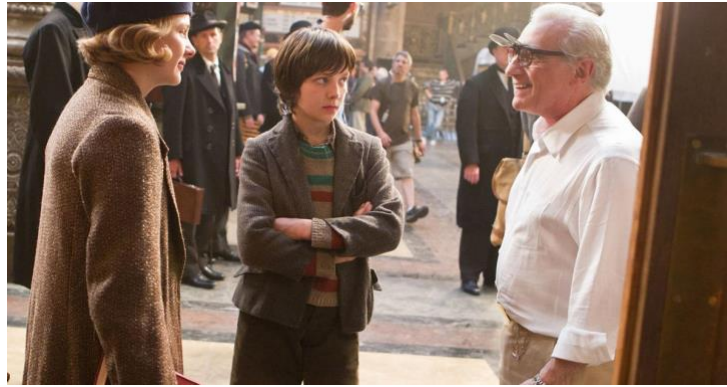
J.R., but the critic who dismissed the film as "sophomoric" was distinctly of the minority. Most reviewers liked and admired it for the realism of its settings and characterizations, its buoyancy and energy. There are those who still consider it Scorsese's best feature film.



Who's That Knocking Impressed Roger Corman and, after editing and helping to produce another rock documentary, Scorsese was hired by Corman to direct his first commercial feature, *Boxcar Bertha*. It was designed to please the same large audience that had relished Corman's own gangster movie, *Bloody Mama*, but has its redeeming features. Set in the Depression, it tells the more or less true story of a vagrant girl (Barbara Hershey) who becomes the lover and accomplice of a heroic train robber (David Carradine)—a labor leader who teals from the bosses to feed his union's funds, and who is eventually crucified on a boxcar by hired thugs. Made very cheaply and filmed on location in Arkansas in twenty-four days, it contains a generous ration of the sex and violence demanded by Corman, but makes its political points simply and vividly and conveys an "authentic sense of faces and locations."

Scorsese could have done more work for Corman but was persuaded by John Cassavetes to spend no more time on other people's projects. Instead he made the film that established his reputation, *Mean Streets* (1973). Set in Little Italy (but filmed mostly in Los Angeles), it is based on a script Scorsese had begun at NYU with a fellow student named Mardik Martin. The director has made it clear that there is a lot of himself in the central character, Charlie (played by Harvey Keitel). Charlie works as a debt-collector for his uncle, a "mini-godfather." He is ambitious for worldly success, but spiritually ambitious as well, inflicting small burns on his fingers to remind himself of hell-fire. There is a similar element of expiation in his self-punishing loyalty to his violent and unstable friend Johnny Boy. Striving to be all things to all men, Charlie in the end fails everyone. He is to some extent responsible for the final explosion of violence that leaves Johnny Boy and Charlie's girlfriend hurt and perhaps dying: "You don't pay for your sins in church, but in the streets." Catherine Scorsese, who had appeared as J.R.'s mother in *Who's That Knocking*, has a small part in *Mean Streets* also, and Scorsese himself plays the killer hired to murder Johnny Boy.

According to Michael Pye and Lynda Myles, Scorsese's use of color in *Mean Streets* owes much to the British director Michael Powell, one of his idols, while the camerawork reflects the influence of Sam Fuller: "In *Mean Streets* the hand-held camera seems to join in a pool hall fight as a participant. When Johnny Boy... enters the club there are long tracking shots of great emotional power, where the meaning is never spelled out but derives from the movement of the camera as much as from what is staged.... Scorsese uses the whole language of film to exorcise his past." The frenzied pace of the picture, its episodic structure and passages of improvisation, the cacophonous rock music of the soundtrack—these qualities distressed some reviewers, who called the film amateurish or pretentious or complained that it resembled "a class in social anthropology." Far more critics share the view of Pauline Kael, who thought it "a true original of our



period, a triumph of personal filmmaking," with "its own hallucinatory look... its own unsettling, episodic rhythm and a highly charged emotional range that is dizzyingly sensual." Robert DeNiro's performance as Johnny Boy was greeted at the New York Film Festival as a "revelation."

About this time the actress Ellen Burstyn was looking for a director for *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, a script by Robert Getchell in which she owned an interest. Francis Ford Coppola suggested Scorsese, who accepted because he was intrigued. The film centered on a woman, and women had been mostly disposable commodities in his earlier films. Also he wanted to "explore elements of the Douglas Sirk and that whole early 1950s period." (And indeed *Alice* opens on credits written across satin, as in a Sirk "women's picture" and then goes on to echo the opening of *The Wizard of Oz*.) Alice, who had once dreamed of singing "as good as Alice Faye" but had been submerged instead in a marriage to a boorish truck driver, is suddenly widowed. She sets off from New Mexico with her brattish twelve-year-old son to make a career for herself in California. Along the way she does actually land a job as a singer, but that ends when the psychotic with whom she is having an affair smashes his way into her motel room—a brilliantly realized scene of terrifying violence. In Tucson Alice finds work as a waitress—not what she had dreamed of, but a source of independence and real friendship. And in the end she settles down with a better man (Kris Kristofferson) than the one she has lost.

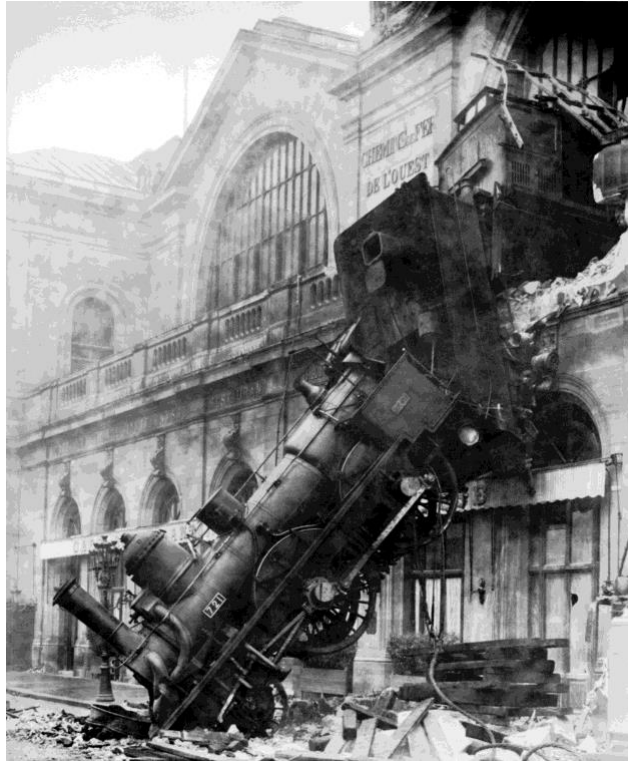
Many critics objected to the film's ending as a copout—"just another Technicolor for cotton candy romance," even though it was "dressed up to look modern." Others pointed out that Scorsese had at least managed to make a major commercial picture whose central character was a woman—no inconsiderable achievement at that time—and one that was humane, touching, and funny. Ellen Burstyn's bravura performance brought her an Oscar and the picture was a solid box-office hit, Scorsese's first. While he was completing it, he made *Italianamerican*, an affectionate documentary portrait of his parents that

received a standing ovation at the 1974 New York Film Festival.

No one called *Taxi Driver* a cop-out. It is a feverish case-study of another of Scorsese's would-be saints—"one who is going to help people so much he's going to kill them." The script was written by Paul Schrader out of his own "onetime history of personal violence," his obsessive religious guilt, and a profound admiration for Bresson. Travis Bickle (Robert DeNiro) is an ex-Marine, a Midwesterner in New York, disoriented, sexually repressed, and an insomniac. He gets a job driving a cab through this city of dreadful night, which both repels and guiltily excites him. His brief romance with a cool blonde (Cybill Shepherd) ends when he expects her to share his simple taste for and, seemingly, his disgust with porno movies. Nor does he succeed in persuading the twelve-year-old hooker Iris (Jodie Foster) to go back home to her folks. Travis gives himself up to revenge, ritually disciplining and arming himself for battle like a medieval knight. There follows a sustained, appalling, frenzied orgasm of violence when he bursts into the apartment where Iris works and shoots to death her pimp and all his criminal associates. Iris goes home (where she is miserable) and Travis, purged and at least temporarily calmed, is hailed as a hero.

David Sierritt called *Taxi Driver* "the nastiest masterpiece in years," and some reviewers found it a glorification of violence, a view angrily rejected by the director. It seemed to Pauline Kael that this was "a movie in heat, a raw, tabloid version of *Notes From the Underground*....The fact that we experience Travis' need for an explosion viscerally, and that the explosion

itself has the quality of a consummation, makes *Taxi Driver* one of the few truly modern horror films....But to acknowledge that when a psychopath's blood boils over he may cool down is not the same as justifying the explosion." Kael thought that "no other film has ever dramatized urban indifference so powerfully," and most critics shared her admiration for Scorsese's direction and DeNiro's deeply felt performance as a "man burning in misery." The film won the Golden Palm as best film at the 1976 Cannes Film Festival.



Doyle (Robert DeNiro) and singer Francine Evans (Liza Minelli) who meet on V-J Day in New York and fall in love, and marry. Jimmy takes over a big band in which Francine stars. She is more successful than the

band and goes to Hollywood. The two meet again years later but find their moment has passed. Music has played an important part in all of Scorsese's films and he intended *New York, New York* as an affectionate pastiche of the musicals he had loved in the late 1940s and early 1950s. During the

filming, however, he found himself more interested in the relationship between the two principals than in the big production numbers. Through long sessions of improvisation the story was rewritten into what Scorsese in the end called "his most personal film."

The result disappointed audiences who had hoped for a happy ending and critics who were puzzled by the film's nostalgic aspects. It had cost nearly nine million dollars and barely paid its way at the box

office. The picture nevertheless had its devoted admirers, like Lynda Myles and Michael Pye, who have called it “the ultimate expression of the movie brats’ philosophy...perhaps the most extraordinary of all the films that Hollywood’s children have made within the studio machine....It remained personal in all its substance, an elegant use of conventions that manages to explode every one of them by sheer force of feeling...one of the most literate and moving films of our times.”

After *New York, New York* Scorsese directed Liza Minelli in a stage show—a spinoff from the film, called simply *The Act*. Meanwhile he completed a notable documentary, *The Last Waltz*. The first 35mm rock movie, it is an account of the last concert given by The Band, and was described in *Rolling Stone* as “nearly perfect” in its coverage.



Scorsese’s next film, *Raging Bull* (1980) was the director’s tour de force. Based on the autobiographical book by former middleweight boxing champion Jake La Motta, the movie was written by Martin Mardik (who had worked in the screenplay of *Mean Streets*) and Paul Schrader. Continuing their long-time collaboration, Scorsese cast Robert De Niro as La Motta, a role he prepared for for over a year, working out with La Motta every day in the Gramercy Gym on East 14th Street, and ballooning his weight from one hundred forty-five pounds to two hundred fifteen so that he could play the boxer in his later years. De Niro was honored with an Academy Award for Best Actor and Vincent Canby voiced the consensual view of critics when he called his portrayal of La Motta “the performance of his career.”

Raging Bull follows La Motta from his earliest attempts to secure a title bout in 1941 through his suspension from the ring for throwing a fight, his winning the middleweight crown in 1949, defeat by Sugar Ray Robinson, and subsequent dwindling career as a coarse nightclub performer. In effect, the film is a descent into hell, with an intimation of redemption at the end. Reviewers commented on the film’s intense physical and emotional brutality—an unsparing portrayal of La Motta’s compulsion to deal out and

invite severe punishment in the ring and to destroy his relations with those closest to him, particularly his gorgeous young wife, Vicki, whom he imagined to be unfaithful. Many critics admired the film for its absorbing depiction of a protagonist who was not sympathetic. The movie, Philip French remarked, “touches upon ignoble areas of experience we try to avoid—self-pity, willful destructiveness, the humanly repulsive....The result is a remarkable film, a beautifully crafted work that some will find enigmatic

and unyielding.” Canby called *Raging Bull* Scorsese’s “most ambitious film as well as his finest,” and Stanley Kauffmann observed that Scorsese had at last purged+ his work “of heavy symbolism, of film-school display, of false portent. His directing is imaginative but controlled, egregious

mannerisms have coalesced and evolved into a strong style.” Other critics, however, found fault with the film’s moral dialectic of suffering and redemption. It seemed to Pauline Kael that cogent motivation for the fury within La Motta was missing, and that Scorsese had projected his “unmediated obsessions” on the screen without insights “disciplined by observation and narration.”

The King of Comedy (1983), also starring De Niro, was a darkly humored work about a talentless nebbish obsessed with the idea of becoming a revered Johnny Carson-like comedian and TV talk show host. It was generally felt that De Niro created the antihero Rupert Pupkin with an unsettling precision, and Jerry Lewis, as Jerry Langford, the TV celebrity Pupkin doggedly pursues, hoping for a guest appearance on his show, was highly praised as well. Richard Schickel called Lewis’ Langford “a shrewdly disciplined performance, he has been around, and he knows exactly how to play a star. As Langford, he mimes warmth perfectly until you notice the deadness in his eyes, betraying the veteran public figure’s inability to perceive any reality...outside his own ego.” Langford and Pupkin might be said to stand for success and failure in America, but in either case Scorsese stresses emptiness and a kind of manic despair. Derek Malcolm

considered *The King of Comedy* unquestionably one of the year's notable films, and it was also highly praised by Canby. Other critics, though, like David Denby, found the movie "too bitter, too angry to make anyone laugh....It is a clever, sometimes brilliant movie, but ice-cold and not really likable." The film's absurdly happy ending called to mind the heavy-handed irony of *Taxi Driver*.

After making *The King of Comedy*, Scorsese worked for a year and a half preparing a new film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, based on a novel by Nikos Kazantzakis. A few months before filming was to begin in Israel, however, Paramount canceled the project, after having been deluged with mail protesting the making of the movie, which according to rumors, would portray Christ as a sensualist. The film he *did* make, *After Hours* (1985), about a man alone in an alien, hostile culture, has been said by Scorsese to be a reaction against my year and a half in Hollywood trying to get *The Last Temptation of Christ* made." The script for *After Hours* was written as an assignment of the Columbia University Film School by a young student, Joseph Minion, and the film was made on a shoestring budget of three and a half million.

In the leading role, Griffin Dunne, who was also the movie's coproducer, plays Paul, a moderately successful yuppie, a computer programmer who lives alone on the Upper East Side. In a coffee shop one night he encounters a downtown siren, a lovely but neurotic young woman (Rosanna Arquette) whom he later telephones and arranges to visit at her Soho loft. From that point on Paul's life is a nightmare. Among other disasters, he is chased as a burglar, nearly lynched by a local vigilante squad, and assaulted in a hard-core punk club. Richard Schickel described *After Hours* as "a post-modern Ulysses in Nighttown," and Philip Horne called it a black comedy, "fiercely and disturbingly surreal in its lurid detail." Reviews were mixed but *After Hours* has aged well, becoming popular on the revival circuit, partly because it offers truly diverting entertainment, partly because it is

irradiated by the fun Scorsese says he had in making this small film. Considered "technically superb" and "vigorously unsettling," it was thought by some to be ultimately unsatisfying. David Denby complained that "the plot has no motor, and Scorsese can keep things going only by increasing the craziness of whatever happens to Paul....[its] single joke of disorientation [is] repeated over and over."

The Color of Money (1986) was more successful, both with critics and at the box office. With a script by the novelist Richard Price, it was based on Walter Tevis' novel, a sequel to his earlier work *The Hustler*, filmed by Robert Rossen in 1961 with Paul Newman as the young pool shark. In *The Color of Money* Fast Eddie Felson is again played by Newman, now a middle-aged liquor salesman in Chicago. As the film opens, he is seized with the inspiration to adopt a flashy, gifted young pool player. Tom



Cruise, who loves the game itself, purely for its sport, as his protégé. He somewhat cynically proposes to teach him the tricks of the trade and to make him a big-time champion, the winner of the Atlantic City tournament. Later in the film, however, Felson undergoes a transformation, rediscovering his own love for the purity of the game, reclaiming his talent, and achieving a measure of redemption.

David Ansen called *The Color of Money* "a dark, biting deeply human movie, both wickedly funny about human nature and uncommonly astute in its depiction of a world of incessant mind games...and psychological hustling....From the first splendid scene...you know exactly what [Scorsese and his cast] are after and have the craft to sharpen...until it glistens." Stanley Kauffmann also praised the polish of Scorsese's technique. "every strategy is used," he wrote, "to make the cramped pool tables and the dingy pool halls yield visual richness...theater lighting that takes the prosaic places out of realism into 'real' abstractions, varied angles of pool shots and players,

varied rhythms within sequences, and especially, immense close-ups of billiard balls that render them talismanic.” But many critics found the film’s story weak, with blurred lines of character development and an unlikely ending. Fast Eddie’s “redemption”—despite Newman’s Oscar-nominated performance—was thought to be contrived.

The director is a short, wiry, neat, bearded man who speaks “in a rapid and staccato city dialect that suggests jump cuts and flashing images.” He is a compulsive worker, and demonstrated his urgent nervous energy in *Taxi Driver*, burning “a small hole in the screen” during his brief appearance as the most rancid of Travis’ fares. He contributed a similar performance to Bertrand Tavernier’s *Round Midnight*....

According to Derek Malcolm, “someone once suggested that he makes movies as though his life depended on it. The truth is that it probably does.”



Roger Ebert; “Scorsese meets the sorcerer of cinema” (November 2011)

Hugo” is unlike any other film [Martin Scorsese](#) has ever made, and yet possibly the closest to his heart: a big-budget, family epic in 3-D, and in some ways, a mirror of his own life. We feel a great artist has been given command of the tools and resources he needs to make a movie about — movies. That he also makes it a fable that will be fascinating for (some, not all) children is a measure of what feeling went into it.

In broad terms, the story of his hero, Hugo Cabret, is Scorsese's own story. In Paris of the '30s, and schooling himself in the workings of artistic mechanisms. That runs in the family. Hugo's uncle is in charge of the clocks at a cavernous Parisian train station. And his father's dream is to complete an

automaton, an automated man he found in a museum. He dies with it left unperfected.

Rather than be treated as an orphan, the boy hides himself in the maze of ladders, catwalks, passages and gears of the clockworks themselves, keeping them running right on time. He feeds himself with croissants snatched from station shops and begins to sneak off to the movies.

His life in the station is made complicated by a toy shop owner named Georges Melies. Yes, this grumpy old man, played by [Ben Kingsley](#), is none other than the immortal French film pioneer, who was also the original inventor of the automaton. Hugo has no idea of this. The real Melies was a magician who made his first movies to play tricks on his audiences.

Leave it to Scorsese to make his first 3-D movie about the man who invented special effects. There is a parallel with the asthmatic Scorsese, living in Little Italy but not of it, observing life from the windows of his apartment, soaking up the cinema from television and local theaters, adopting great directors as his mentors, and in the case of [Michael Powell](#), rescuing their careers after years of neglect.

The way “Hugo” deals with Melies is enchanting in itself, but the film's first half is devoted to the escapades of its young hero. In the way the film uses CGI and other techniques to create the train station and the city, the movie is breathtaking. The opening shot swoops above the vast cityscape of Paris and ends with Hugo ([Asa Butterfield](#)) peering out of an opening in a clock face far above the station floor. We follow his Dickensian adventures as he stays one step ahead of the choleric Station Inspector ([Sacha Baron Cohen](#)), in chase sequences through crowds of travelers. Hugo always manages to escape back to his refuge behind the walls and above the ceiling of the station.

His father ([Jude Law](#)), seen in flashbacks, has left behind notebooks, including his plans to finish the automaton. Hugo seems somewhat a genius with gears, screws, springs and levers, and the mechanical man is himself a steampunk masterwork of shining steel and brass.

One day Hugo is able to share his secret with a girl named Isabelle ([Chloe Grace Moretz](#)), who also lives in the station, and was raised by old Melies and his wife. She is introduced to Hugo's secret world, and he to hers — the books in the cavernous libraries she

explores. These two bright kids are miles apart from the cute little pint-sized goofballs in most family pictures.

For a lover of cinema, the best scenes will come in the second half, as flashbacks trace the history and career of Georges Méliès. you may have seen his most famous short film, "A Trip to the Moon" (1902), in which space voyagers enter a ship that is shot from a cannon toward the moon; the vessel pokes the Man in the Moon in the eye.

Scorsese has made documentaries about great films and directors, and here he brings those skills to storytelling. We see Méliès (who built the first movie studio) using fantastical sets and bizarre costumes to make films with magical effects — all of them hand-tinted, frame by frame. And as the plot makes unlikely connections, the old man is able to discover that he is not forgotten, but indeed is honored as worthy of the Pantheon.

Not long ago, I saw a 3-D children's film about penguins. I thought it was a simpleminded use of the medium. Scorsese uses 3-D here as it should be used, not as a gimmick but as an enhancement of the total effect. Notice in particular his re-creation of the famous little film "Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat" (1897), by the Lumière brothers. You've probably heard its legend: As a train rushes toward the camera, the audience panics and struggles to get out of its way. That is a shot which demonstrates the proper use of 3-D, which the Lumières might have used had it been available.

"Hugo" celebrates the birth of the cinema and dramatizes Scorsese's personal pet cause, the preservation of old films. In one heartbreaking scene, we learn that Méliès, convinced his time had passed and his work had been forgotten, melted down countless films so that their celluloid could be used to manufacture the heels of women's shoes. But they weren't all melted, and at the end of "Hugo," we see that thanks to this boy, they never will be. Now there's a happy ending for you.



Jack Picon: "The Best Cinematography: Hugo and Martin Scorsese's 3D Wonderland" (New York Film Academy, December 10, 2014)

In 2011, the Academy Award for best [Cinematography](#) went to Robert Richardson for his work on *Hugo*, a 3D children's film that just so happened to be directed by Martin Scorsese. It had serious competition that year, beating out films directed by David Fincher, Terence Malick, and [Steven Spielberg](#) as well as that year's Best Picture—*The*

Artist. One look at that adaptation of a children's book about the turn-of-the-century filmmaking and visual effects pioneer Georges Méliès, and its Oscar is no surprise. While a 3D film loaded with visual VFX might seem like a bewildering choice for a gritty auteur like Scorsese, he's

actually a perfect fit for the film. Centered on the wonder of filmmaking and the magic Méliès brought to the medium in its earliest years, walking [film school](#) Martin Scorsese was a no-brainer to helm the movie. In many ways, he was *Hugo* himself, a little boy enchanted by the wizardry of filmmaking and optical effects.

[Scorsese](#), one of the most prominent and powerful of analog film's champions, embraced *Hugo*'s story of experimenting with the medium, choosing to shoot the film not only digitally but also in 3D, an obvious first for the director. The result is widely considered to be the best use of three dimensions and one of the most beautifully shot 3D films of all time. Unlike most of its contemporaries, it even amazes on the small screen, maximizing the potential of 3D DVD.

Scorsese wasn't interested in 3D as a gimmick, remarking "I found 3D to be really interesting, because the actors were more upfront emotionally. Their slightest move, their slightest intention is picked up much more precisely." Together, he, DP Richardson, and the visual effects team used convergence, the moving of the image through the dimensions to the point of appearing as if it's breaking past the screen and coming toward the audience, to compose their shots. The film was built and storyboarded from the

ground up, considering convergence and depth in every frame. Thinking ahead and factoring in the extra dimension even allowed filmmakers to move the images as opposed to moving the camera, giving the medium an entirely additional set of “camera moves” in addition to dollies and zooms.

Because Méliès essentially invented the concept of trick shots and using the camera to create images that aren’t being strictly photographed in reality, greater care went into the VFX of the film celebrating his life and work. Despite being at the forefront of computer imagery, digital filmmaking and 3D technology, the visual effects team took multiple approaches to *Hugo* and worked closely with Richardson and the cinematography department.

This included using optical and in-camera effects, much like Méliès did himself. For the recreation of the great train wreck, the film used meticulously-detailed miniatures. When Sacha Baron Cohen is dragged by a moving train, the platform he’s standing on actually moves in the shot and creates the illusion it’s the train pulling him along. Practical effects like this are sprinkled throughout the movie both as playful nods to Méliès as well as to create another texture to a digitally shot spectacle, which could easily look flat and empty if not shot with care.

Scorsese and Richardson also paid homage to the period and history of film in its choice of color correction. The overall look and color of *Hugo* takes its inspiration from the look of Autochrome, a color process the Lumière brothers pioneered when black-and-white was pretty much all there was. While also commenting on the early days of moviemaking for those who study film to geek out on, it also added to the mood and setting Scorsese was trying to set.

Richardson and Scorsese also relied on traditional camera techniques and framing to bring *Hugo* to life. A great deal of effort went into the complex mise-en-scene of the bustling train station the movie is predominantly set in. Framing and position is even more so important considering the depth afforded by 3D. Scorsese also uses the language of staging to

call back to earlier sequences in the film, such as when Hugo is hanging from a giant clock hand, repeating the visual from one of Méliès’ works seen earlier in the story.

Using a massive budget and state-of-the-art visual VFX to recreate 1930s Paris, Scorsese, and Richardson made sure to show off their world with sweeping aerial shots. Aerial shots and bird’s eye views are also employed to orient the audience in the busy train station. Finally, understanding *Hugo* was intended first and foremost for kids, Scorsese uses low-

angle shots looking up, the perspective of small children, especially with scenes of authoritative figures like Sacha Baron Cohen’s station agent.

For those who cite film as their passion as frequently as Martin Scorsese, *Hugo* is a must-watch. Using clever cinematography blended

with amazing VFX and 3D, viewers are invited to enter a world both fantasy and historical, and take a peek at a medium both scientific and magical. *Hugo* is a children’s movie but it is for everybody—because anyone watching it will have the same child-like wonder Scorsese brings to even his darkest films.

John Bove: “Martin Scorsese’s Magical ‘Hugo’”
(*NY Times*, Nov 2, 2011)

Last year, Martin Scorsese began working on a film version of “[The Invention of Hugo Cabret](#),” a graphic novel by Brian Selznick about a 12-year-old orphan named Hugo who lives inside the walls of a 1930s Paris train station. Hugo (Asa Butterfield) oils and maintains the station clocks while guarding a magnificent secret: a broken-down automaton and a notebook, left by his father (Jude Law), with incomplete instructions on how to bring it to life. An encounter with a bitter toy salesman and his goddaughter (Chloë Moretz) leads Hugo into the world of the real-life magician and grandfather of science-fiction film-making, Georges Méliès (Ben Kingsley). Scorsese talks about updating Méliès’s celluloid fantasies a century later — and in 3-D.



Travis Bickle. Jake LaMotta. Hugo. What led you to make a children's film?

The idea of a little boy living in the walls, sliding in and out of the innards of these clocks. It's like people living in the ceiling of Grand Central Station, looking out through the painting of stars.

So the main attraction was creating a kind of fantasy aesthetic?

Well, "[Hugo](#)" is not really a fantasy film. It's not a "Chronicles of Narnia" or a "Harry Potter" or "Lord of the Rings" type of fantasy. I would define that kind of fantasy as having viscerality. You're intended to perceive events or people as very, very real. A dragon appears outside a window, and you can imagine it coming into the room, with blue flames and beautiful green emeralds for eyes.

With Hugo, the fantasy is very real, but it's in your head and in your heart. It has to do with the mechanisms — whether it's the clocks, the interiors, the locomotives, the trains, the automaton — with the inner workings of these objects.

We experimented for days auditioning the right sounds for the automaton's machinery and making all his workings transparent. He's like a player piano. He has that magic. Is he alive? What is he thinking? That's a fantasy.

You shot a lot of the movie at Shepperton Studios outside London. In creating these sets, what aspects of the real Paris were you aiming for?

We built a train station, which is kind of an impression of Parisian train stations — the Gare du Nord, the Gare de Lyon, the old Gare Montparnasse, which no longer exists. We took that and aspects of French visual culture around the late '20s, early '30s, the Dadaists, the short films they made, Man Ray and Léger and René Clair's comedies, "[Under the Roofs of Paris](#)" and "[À Nous la Liberté](#)" and created a Paris that wasn't really Paris. It was an American's impression of Paris. As a joke, I kept asking, "How are we going to know it's Paris?" Whatever the angle was, I'd say, "Put the Eiffel Tower in there!"



Most of your films have been very funny, but adult funny, trenchant. Was it hard for you to just be more funny funny?

I don't think I've ever had the chance to explore it before. In "Goodfellas," there are moments with physical humor that are quite funny. It's dark humor, because if Joe Pesci is arguing with Henry Hill, and they just set fire to the place, and this fire is starting in the background, you know? But humor is going to depend on the context. If you tell me about a guy who goes in every week to rob a bank dressed as Gumby — that's funny! It's not funny to rob a bank.

But it's funny dressed as Gumby. The bottom line with "Hugo" is it's a story about the boy and his relationship to his dead father. It's more serious than funny.

In the past, you've gone to great lengths to achieve a desired texture. In "[Raging Bull](#)," someone held a hot bar of iron beneath the lens

to make Jake LaMotta look particularly weary. In "[The Age of Innocence](#)," when Archer first sees Ellen, you overcranked the camera and then dissolved each frame into the next to make things flutter and slow down. In what ways did you experiment on "Hugo"?

My instinct was if something wasn't normally done with 3-D cameras, let's see if we could do it. And that actually was almost every other shot. But the most enjoyable time was building an approximation of Georges Méliès's glass studio. We started replicating scenes from Méliès films as best we could. We recreated the underwater set for "Kingdom of the Fairies." With Méliès's films, especially the hand-colored ones, it's like illuminated manuscripts come alive. We shot Méliès shooting his films for five or six days. It was one of the best times I've had shooting a picture.

What made you want to work with 3-D?

I've been a 3-D fan since I was 12, in 1953, and I saw every 3-D film at that time: "[It Came From Outer Space](#)," "[Creature From the Black Lagoon](#)," "[Kiss Me, Kate](#)," which is quite beautiful in 3-D. What I really

responded to was the figures, the people in the frame.

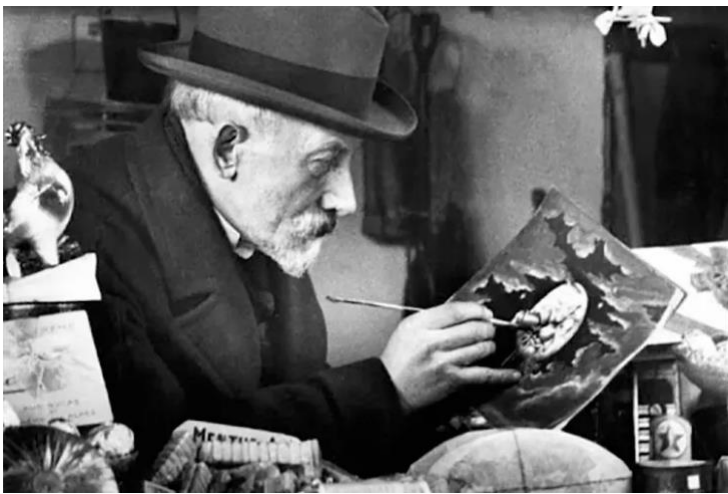
You have a lot of that in "[Dial M for Murder](#)." In "Kiss Me Kate," there's a shot where Ann Miller moves toward the camera with a fan as she dances. You feel as if you're onstage right next to her. It's a different experience, completely. Different from theater, different from 2-D film. It just is.

Did you feel a void during the 40 intervening years when there wasn't any 3-D?

I did. I'm not kidding. David Cronenberg one time sent me a comic book in 3-D, because he knows.

To see in 3-D, you had to wear those glasses that flip up and down.

There were a number of times where I got caught saying: "For God's sakes, will they focus up? What is the problem with the focus?" And someone would have to remind me, "Marty, put your glasses on!"



Georges Méliès Biography (*Encyclopedia of World Biography*)

Beginning with the mere raw materials of a new medium, which had done little more than record scenes of everyday life, Méliès began to use film to tell stories, and then, drawing on his background as a stage musician, to enchant. Largely by accident he began exploring the uses of stop-action photography. He made the first science fiction film, was the first to use the split-screen technique, and experimented with slow motion, fadeouts, and double exposure. Yet as fascinating as his technical innovations was the sheer profusion of fantasy Méliès brought to the screen. In the surviving films of Méliès (many have been lost), cut-off heads are thrown into the air and land on telegraph wires, strumming them to the tune of "God

Save the King." A spaceship, launched by chorus line of waving showgirls, lands in the eye of the man in the moon. An ancient Egyptian rejoices as his deceased wife is brought back to life by a magician, only to recoil in horror as she turns into a skeleton in his arms. Subsequent generations improved on the special effects capabilities of Méliès, but the visual surprises of his films have lost little of their impact.

Constructed Marionette Shows

The son of a prosperous French shoe manufacturer and his Dutch-born wife, who also had a background in the shoe business, Méliès was born in Paris, France, on December 8, 1861. Attending school at the Lycée Impérial in suburban Vanves, he got into trouble with teachers by filling his notebooks with caricatures of them. Another of his passions was marionettes, and he built his own sets for small marionette shows he mounted beginning at age 10. At about that age he received another push in the direction of a stage career: taken to the theater for the first time, he saw a performance by Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin, one of the great magicians of the age and one whose influence was memorialized in the stage name of American magician Harry Houdini.

At first Méliès had the ambition to become a painter, but his father insisted that he enter the family shoe business. Serving in the French military as a teenager, Méliès had the good luck to be assigned to a garrison near Robert-Houdin's estate; he likely picked up some instruction from the magician during this period. After finishing his military service, Méliès went to London; his father wanted to open a new branch there, and the plan was for the young Méliès to learn to speak English well. Working in a clothing store and uncomfortable in his new environment, Méliès sought out evening entertainment that did not depend on language. He attended performances by Maskelyne and Cooke, the so-called Royal Illusionists. Their shows both diverted audiences and debunked the claims of spiritualists and seers who claimed to call ghosts forth into the tangible world.

The mobile skeletons and other illusions of Maskelyne and Cooke's shows had a powerful effect on Méliès, and in 1888 he got the opportunity to put his theatrical ideas into action. His father retired, leaving the family business to Méliès and his brothers, whereupon Méliès sold his share and used the profits to buy the theater where his first inspiration had worked his magic—the Théâtre Robert-Houdin.

Reopening in 1888 with Méliès as owner-manager, the theater presented a variety of live acts. But it was projections—large slide shows of exotic scenes projected onto a wall or screen—that proved most popular.

In 1895 Méliès paid the one-franc admission fee and attended a demonstration by Antoine Lumière, one of the true inventors of cinema. He watched as a photograph of a street scene suddenly began to move, with a horse and cart moving toward the audience. "We sat with our mouths open, without speaking, filled with amazement," he recalled, according to the Missing Link website. Méliès immediately realized the importance of the invention and offered to buy one of the Lumière projectors. He was turned down but soon bought a rival camera offered by British inventor Robert William Paul and acquired several other movie cameras as well. He imported short films made in America by Thomas Edison to show in his theatre. Even the plain shots of factory workers leaving for home were fascinating to audiences at the time. Beginning in the spring of 1896, Méliès started making films of his own.

At first these films consisted of a single short reel, but Méliès advanced quickly. He made 80 films in the year 1896 alone, broadening his reach from single takes lasting about a minute to, by the end of the year, a three-reel, nine-minute extravaganza. From the start he had a wider palette of subjects than those of his early competitors; these early efforts included little dramas, comedies, newsreels, products, and even what would later be called pornography. Méliès almost always served as star, director, writer, producer, and even set-builder and costumer of his films, a development that fascinated later chroniclers of film as an art form but eventually damaged Méliès's financial fortunes. He built a studio (probably the first in cinema history) so that bad weather would not slow down filming, using glass walls to admit natural light. And at the end of 1896 he formed a new company, Star Film.

Early movie camera equipment was notoriously unreliable, and while Méliès was filming an ordinary street scene for one 1896 film he discovered that the film had jammed inside the machine. As he examined

the film, he noticed that the resultant gap had created a curious illusion: a carriage moving along the street appeared to have been replaced suddenly by a hearse. An earlier filmmaker had experimented with what would be called stop-action cinematography, but once again it was Méliès who saw that the device had



tremendous potential in extending theatrical realms of fantasy and imagination. Méliès began to introduce special effects into his films of 1897, one of the best of which, still extant, was *L'auberge ensorcelé* (The Bewitched Inn), in which a traveler bedding down for the night is dismayed to find his clothes moving around his room under their own power. That year Méliès also released a film called *Le chirurgien américain* that featured what may be the earliest example on film of the mad scientist character type. Although its title meant "The American Surgeon," that film was released with the English title *A Twentieth-Century Surgeon*. Films by Méliès soon became popular in England and America, where they sometimes

appeared under slightly altered titles.

In the late 1890s and early 1900s Méliès expanded his range, both technically and in the realm of fantasy. He probably hit upon the stop-action idea independently of other early filmmakers who experimented with it, and he is thought to have filmed the first double exposure (in *La caverne maudite*, 1898), the first split-screen shot (*Un homme de tête*, 1898), and the first dissolve effect (*Cendrillon*, or *Cinderella*, 1899). *Un homme de tête* was the first Méliès film to feature a special-effects decapitation, treating the viewer to severed heads that float around a room. Méliès appeared as the Devil in several films.

Méliès turned to more exotic settings for some of his films. In *La chrysalide et le papillon* (released as *The Brahmin and the Butterfly*, 1901), the filmmaker dressed as an Indian man observing a caterpillar that changes into an alluring butterfly woman. Unlike other early filmmakers, Méliès employed professional actors—often chorus girls from nearby theaters for the female roles—to make his films as entertaining as possible. Yet at times he made serious works with no fantasy element. *L'affaire Dreyfus*, his longest film before 1900, was a multipart

nonfiction treatment, essentially a documentary, about the controversial espionage trial of Jewish army officer Alfred Dreyfus.

The film stirred street violence and was banned, becoming among the first films subjected to political censorship.

Filmed Space Shot

The year 1902 saw the release of several Méliès films that survived the later mass destruction of his work and became icons of the early silent film era. In *L'homme à la tête de caoutchouc* (released as *The Man with a Rubber Head*), a man's head (as usual, that of Méliès) seems to inflate as his assistants squeeze bellows. The illusion was created by putting Méliès on

a little wagon on a miniature track and then moving the track toward the camera.

Similar tricks (later with the camera instead of the subject moving—Méliès never hit upon the ideas of close-ups and long shots) lay behind special effects using a "dolly" for decades afterward. More ambitious financially was *Le voyage dans la lune* (The Trip

to the Moon), filmed in May of 1902. The film cost Méliès 10,000 francs to make, and in a way it was cinema's first big-budget spectacular. The film featured lunar inhabitants called Selenites, played by a large cast of music-hall actors and acrobats whom Méliès attracted by offering higher salaries than they could make in live theater. The film's most famous image, frequently reproduced later, showed an earth spaceship landing in the eye of the man in the moon.

Le voyage dans la lune marked the beginning of another long-term cinematic trend—it was widely pirated and circulated in unauthorized copies. Méliès tried to keep control over the distribution of his films, opening offices in Barcelona, Berlin, London, and New York by 1903. But the new studio model of filmmaking, pioneered in France by the Pathé Frères corporation, was beginning to make inroads on Méliès's do-it-yourself operations. Méliès continued to make successful films, including *Sorcellerie culinaire* (released as *The Cook in Trouble*), in which a man is himself cooked in the stew he has been preparing, and several other adventure stories, including a 1907 parody of Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, in which a fisherman is

attacked by a giant octopus. In 1908 he made a film of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

By 1911 Méliès was in financial trouble and had to form a distribution deal with the Pathé studio in order to survive. He made a few more films, including *A la conquête du Pole* (The Conquest of the Pole, 1912), which featured a giant Bigfoot-like marionette. But he devoted most of his energy toward his Robert-Houdin Theatre, which was in turn financially hurt by the outbreak of World War I. Méliès converted part of his studio building into a small theater called Variétés artistiques, where he and his family made up most of the performing forces. He

limped along until 1923. When the Robert-Houdin Theatre was torn down as part of a road-building project, Méliès had to remove a lifetime's worth of materials from the building, and much of it, including many of his precious film negatives (he made some 500 films in all), was discarded or sold

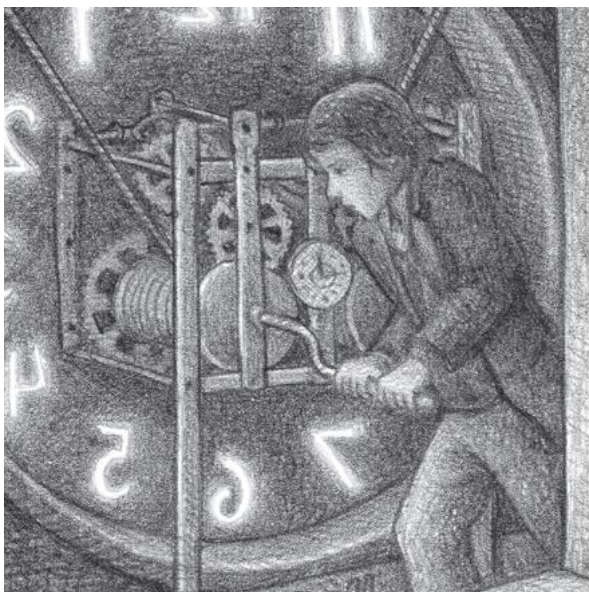
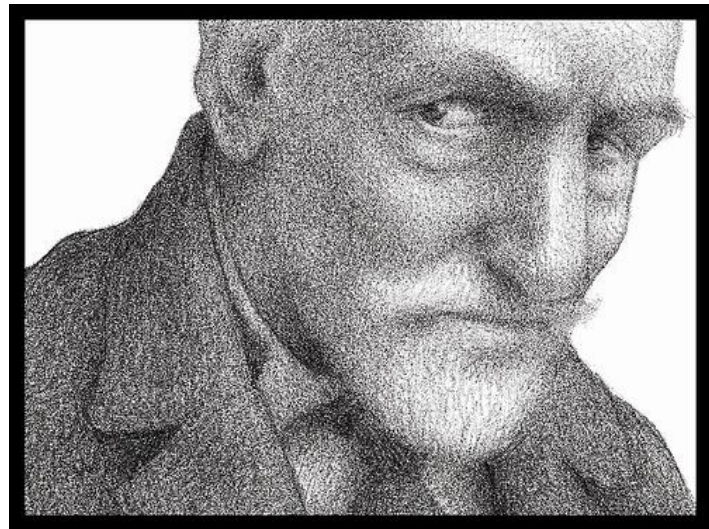
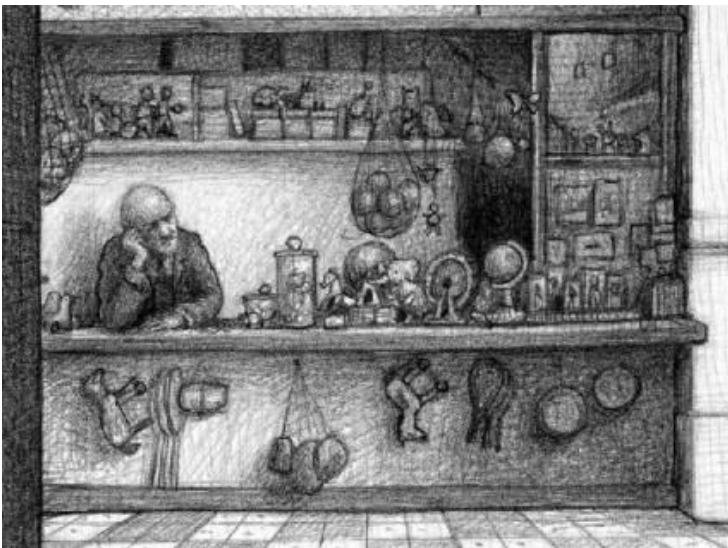
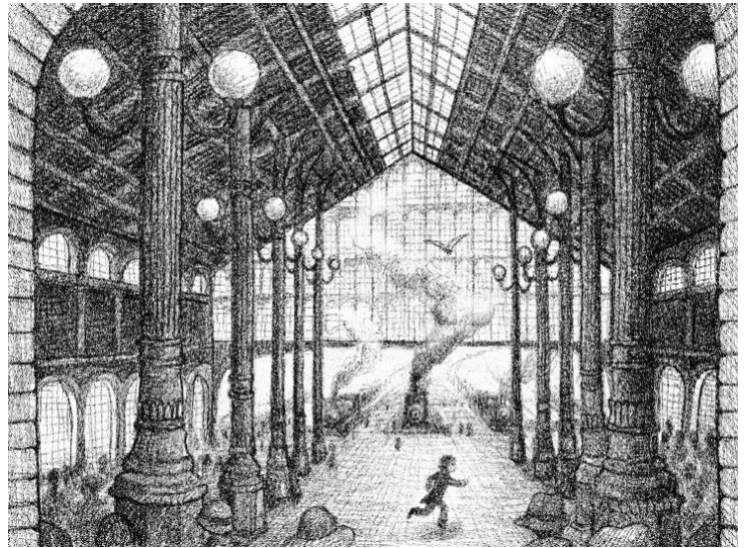
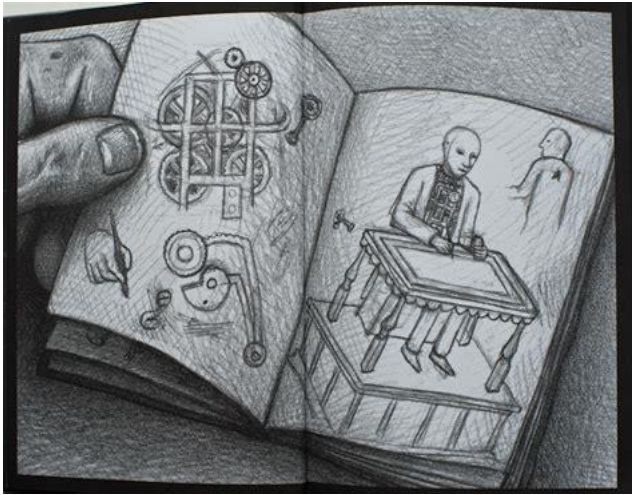


as scrap. Many of the Méliès films that survive today are copies originally made by distributors or pirates.

Coming full circle in the 1920s, Méliès scratched out a living by doing magic shows at French casinos. His first wife died, and in 1925 he married one of his former actresses, Charlotte Stéphanie Faës, and the two operated a small toy kiosk at the Montparnasse train station in Paris. His fall from prominence was interrupted when French film journalist Léon Druhot spotted Méliès working in the toy shop and wrote about him. A retrospective of Méliès films, with several new prints, was organized in 1929 by theater owner and experimental film advocate Jean-Paul Mauclair, and Méliès was given a rent-free apartment in a housing development devoted to cinema pioneers. He appeared in two advertising films in the mid-1930s and was inducted into the French Legion of Honor. Méliès died

in Paris on January 21, 1938. Painters of the Surrealist movement have cited Méliès as an influence, and his style is plainly reflected in the work of contemporary Canadian filmmaker Guy Maddin.

Some pages from David Selznick's graphic novel
The Invention of Hugo Cabret (2007):



THAT'S IT FOR THE SPRING 2022 BUFFALO FILM SEMINARS #44:

All films in the series but two (*Notorious* and *The Power of the Dog*) are available from Criterion or Netflix: **c** after a title indicates it is available on Criterion, **p**=Amazon Prime, **p\$**=Amazon Prime with an extra \$4 fee. *The Power of the Dog* is available, for now, only on Netflix. *Notorious* is available on FlixFilm (low-resolution versions are free on YouTube and Tubi.). All four subscription services let you cancel at any time, so you should have access to all 24 films for well under \$100. *The Gunfighter* is on Amazon Prime and, in low rez, free on Tubi. Nine of the films—all with “UB” after the title—are available free to anyone with a UB email account via the UB Library’s Swank and Kanopy portals. Five films are available only on non-UB streaming services: *Le Corbeau*, *The Gunfighter*, *Naked*, *Salesman* and *The Power of the Dog*. (The Swank titles will be available at UB’s Library for a year; the Kanopy titles for 3 years.)

- Feb 1: 1921 Victor Sjöström, *The Phantom Carriage* c UB-Kanopy
 Feb 8: 1934 Frank Capra *It Happened One Night* c p\$ UB-Swank
 Feb 15: 1941 John Huston *The Maltese Falcon* p\$ UB-Swank
 Feb 22: 1943 Henri-Georges Clouzot *Le Corbeau* c
 Mar 1: 1946 Alfred Hitchcock *Notorious* FlixFilm, YouTube, UB-Swank, Tubi (free)
 Mar 8: 1950 Henry King, *The Gunfighter* p\$, Tubi (free), [YouTube](#) (free)
 Mar 15: 1958 Orson Welles *Touch of Evil* p\$ UB-Swank
 Mar 29: 1962 Yasujiro Ozu *An Autumn Afternoon* c p\$b UB Kanopy
 Apr 5: 1973 Federico Fellini *Amarcord* c p\$ UB Kanopy
 Apr 12: 1993 Mike Leigh *Naked* c
 Apr 19: 2002 Phillip Noyce *Rabbit-Proof Fence* p\$ UB-Swank
 Apr 26: 2016 Asghar Farhadi *The Salesman* p
 May 3: 2021: Jane Campion *The Power of the Dog* NETFLIX
 May 10: 2011 Martin Scorsese *Hugo* p\$ UB-Kanopy

CONTACTS: s

...email Diane Christian: engdc@buffalo.edu

...email Bruce Jackson bjackson@buffalo.edu

....for cast and crew info on any film: <http://imdb.com/>

The Buffalo Film Seminars are presented by the State University of New York at Buffalo

