Sixty landmarks in cinema history

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I got to 60 landmark in 1995. Hence I stopped there.
Birth of a nation

At the time that the film was made, there was no closeups. All films were shot in long or middle shot. And there is no cinema without closeups. Therefore, this film invented cinema. In addition the film is a 3 hours long epic. Its war scenes are studied till today in universities.

This film uses in a revolutionary way, all the tools that existed at this point.

The is film brought upon the first known actress in the history of cinema. "Lilian Gish". This woman became famous and had an amazingly long career.

There is just one unfortunate thing: its a racist films that hails the K.K.K. Black people (in fact white people who colored their skin black) kidnap a white girls that is saved by the K.K.K.
Continued

The horror is best described by the line: "The former enemies of North and South are united again (against the blacks) in defense of their Aryan birth right. Done in 1915.

The man that invented cinema, the director of this film is D.W Griffith. He was from the south. He did not mean to be racist, but just did not understand what was wrong with liking the K.K.K. "Birth of a nation" stands until today as a stain on American cinema. He is up there with other racist films like Gone with the wind and The song of the west
The cabinet of Dr Caligari

A 1920 German silent horror film, directed by Robert Wiene.

Describes a mad doctor that presents a sleepwalker that can tell the future.

It’s rather amazing how a silent film from so many years ago, holds his power till today. One person asks the sleep walker: When will I die? The sleep walker answers with the scary: ”You will die tonight”. And this is what happens. The surprise is less manifested when the sleep walker is discovered to be a murderer. The doctor is completely insane. As in other films of the era.

Before German expressionism, the directing was quite neutral. The film The cabinet of Dr Caligery has clearly completely fake, twisted sets (made of paper).
Continued

The film showed the way to many others by using unnatural camera angles that mimic what the character feels. This is why it's called German expressionism. Because the film expresses what the feelings of characters (which most time coincide with what the spectator feels). German expressionism introduced play with shadows and light and defined the cliche: A person light white is good, and a person in the dark is bad. The subject were new. Many crazy scientist. Robots that look like humans. A subtle hint on the Germans, that do whatever they are told like machines. The films have a lot of madness and betrayal. Showing worrying signs of the German soul. A book called *From Caligari to Hitler* latter claimed (in a quite convincing way) that the German expressionism predicted the rise of Hitler. The first anti-realistic films collection. And this film was the first.
The last laugh

A film from 1934. The correct name is *The last man*. A German expressionistic film. This film commented on silent films by the decision of Murnau not to use written titles, that explain what characters say. At the end, the film has one title card, because they imposed on Murnau a phoney good ending. A hotel doorman is proud of his job. This is manifested in a long landmark amazingly uncut camera movement. This camera movement was later imitated in the film *The good-fellows*. They used a camera attached to a moving chair to achieve this shot. It influences films till today. See the Oscar winner film "Birdman".

Then the doorman looses his job and his dignity. He pretends to his family to still be working, but as they find out the truth, they forsake him as well, and he lives in the bathroom of the hotel.
Continued

Now comes the only title card: Murnau protests the imposed good ending by the only title card in this film. "Here our story should really end, for in actual life, the forlorn old man would have little to look forward to but death.

The ex doorman kindly helps a stranger that later dies in his arms. It turns out that the stranger is a millionaire.

The doorman inherits all the money of this dead millionaire. He buys the hotel and treats all workers kindly.

A film that was made without title cards. Shows that the silent films developed a full language and are in their peak maturity. There was no real need for films to talk.
German expressionistic films you should see

The Golem, Paul Wegener 1920,
From Morn to Midnight, K. Martin 1920,
Nosferatu, Murnau 1922,
Destiny, Paul Wegener 1922,
Phantom Kabir Khan 1922,
Metropolis, Lang 1927,
Doctor Mabuse, Lang 1927,
Faust, Murnau 1926.
Sunrise, Murnau 1927,


**Battleship Potemkin**

A landmark in editing. Combining fast cuts with close ups followed by long shots.

They related their form of editing to communism. The close up is the thesis, the long shot is the antithesis and the editing gives a synthesis.

This ship, Potemkin really existed. The rebellion was real. Except that this propaganda film does not stay truth to history. The struggle took place in the streets near the harbor of Odessa and not on the stairs near the harbor.

The first enlarging shot (as far as I know) was shown in this film. An enlarging shot puts more frames than usual, and so the action we see takes longer than in reality. A soldiers reveals that the meat he is served is infected with worms.
Continued

The enlarging shoot follows as the soldier angrily throws the infected meat away. Such conditions make the soldiers rebel. They start a life and death war against the cruel soldiers of the Tsar. The Tsar soldiers form battle lines at the top of the steps and march towards a crowd of unarmed civilians including women and children. The film is needlessly cruel. Including showing a Tsar soldier stepping on the head of a baby! Here comes a scene that made a lot of noise. A mother dies and her baby carriage (with the baby inside) drops down the stairs near the harbor in Odessa. This scene was raved for years as the most famous shot in the history of cinema and was cited many times ("The untouchable", "We all loved each other so much", Love and death). It is certainly not a well known scene. Not as far as the public goes. Nobody knows this movie. The film is from 1925 by Sergei Eisenstein. At the end, its just communist propaganda.
Other Russian films

When the soviets took over, they said that the only films that are allowed should follow social realism. For example surreal films were strictly forbidden. The films that Sergei Eisenstein did were documentaries with creative touches, and in fact Battleship Potemkin was a film invited by Lenin himself. This does not bother the critics, that unlike me, worship this communist propaganda. Other films by the same director were Strike, October Ivan the terrible 1 Ivan the terrible 2. With the two latter, maybe the real masterpiece (if he has one) by the (over) raved Eisenstein. He was a true intellectual, so there was something to admire in any case.
There is another important director of the time called Vsevolod Pudovkin that was also an intellectual and has amazing silly argument with Eisenstein on the questions if shots crash or meld. Today this seem laughable. If a film of Vsevolod Pudovkin survived, it should be "Storm over Asia". Vertog did in 1929 a movie considered a landmark by many called Man with a movie camera. Its a collection of showoff random shots of one day in the life of Odessa (Odessa was considered a very important city back then, and remain so today). A director that made films the communists were happy with was Nikita Mikhalkov. A man that is opportunistic enough to get along with the regime. His most known film may be "A Few Days from the Life of I. I. Oblomov". Yet after communism fell, he did an anti Stalin film called "Burnt by the Sun". About a general friend of Stalin that is betrayed by Stalin.
Continued

Their most raved director (does he deserve it?) is Tarkovsky. He did only seven film among them Solaris, Stalker, The mirror, Andrey Rublev. Tarkovsky is the best film maker ever, according to Bergman. Beware, his films are super arty. Finally we must pay tribute to one of the most shocking films I have ever saw. Come and see by Klimov from 1985 is an ultra shocking film on world word two. The title is taken from the book of revelation. After each horse of the Apocalypse causes havoc the book of revelation says come and see. This film does something rare. It takes a child, whose face is turned into the face of an old many during war time.
Un Chien Andalou

The dog from Andalou is a 1929 silent that invented surrealist cinema.

Directed by Bunuel. Dali the painter helped. Its complete garbage. Just one stupid shot after another with no relation.

Similarly to "Man with Movie camera". Its hard for me to think that such films are not way easier to make. The first shot shows an eye of a woman cut by a knife. But still a big landmark. Surrealist cinema became huge later
Silent films you must see

Intolerance (the second big film of David Griffith that was meant to correct the wrong he did in Birth of a nation).

Greed, an amazing film by Stroheim

The wind and The phantom carriage (that latter a truly remarkable film) by Sjostrom.

The kid and other films by Chaplin, The passion of Joan of Ark (a sadistic masterpiece by Dreyer), Pandoras box by Wedekind, Napoleon by Gance, I was born however (a silent film from Japan by Ozu).
Talking Cinema: ”The Jazz singer”

This film with the famous singer/actor Al Johnson. This film is partially a silent film but partially a talking film that invented talking cinema.

Al Johnson sings 6 songs. The main character in the film Jakie Rabinowitz says one of the most famous lines in the history of cinema:

Wait a minute, wait a minute. You ain’t heard nothin’ yet! The film itself feels old and boring and probably only cinema students should watch it. Directed by Alan Crosland in 1927
M

A German expressionistic film that uses similar tools. Its is a landmark talking film by Fritz Lang. The great novelty was that we are presented the scam of the earth. A child killer. But in a landmark way, the film lets the child killer explain himself. Before that nobody cared about what the reasons of monsters are. We first meet the child killer indirectly. His shadow covers a child he is about to murder. The criminals put the child killer on trail. The child killer says: I cant help it. Killing children is the only thing that calm the demons in my head. But you are criminals for no reason. This film shows in a scary way the dark souls of the German people that just can not help themselves. At least, it looked like this in World Word two.

This is also the first film ever to have a known music number associated with a character as the child killer compulsively whistles Peer Gynt. Done in 1930.
All quiet on the western front

The first talking American classic.
The first anti war talking film.
Shows the war from the point of view of the enemy.
The Germans in world war one.
Shows that at home they do not care that soldiers are dying.
Influenced all anti war films that came later including Paths of Glory, Oh What a lovely war, Platoon, Apocalypse Now, The Deer Hunter, An Officer and Gentleman. And many others.
The training by the sadist Sergeant. The new soldiers meet the veteran soldiers. The raid on the enemy. The horrible experience of coming back home. All of that was done in this movie first. Sets the bar for all anti war films to come. 1930.
It happened one night

Capra invented in 1934 a new kind of comedy called a screwball comedy. It had two main ingredients: sharp super fast arguments between men and a women in the battle of the sexes, and social critic. Ellen "Ellie" Andrews jumps to the water to avoid the plans of her overbearing father to marry her to someone she does not love. Its a road film of her and an out of work journalist named Peter Warne that dislikes rich people. In many occasions he makes his opinion on rich people clear. He calls Ellent a spoiled girl. He wins in most arguments but not in all. When Peter Warne tries to show her how to hitchhike he fails. Ellen makes fun of him by picking her skirt up, making a car stop immediately.
Continued

A lot of memorable scenes like the one of the walls of Jericho, referring to a makeshift wall made of a blanket over a wire tied across the rooms they slept. A thing that makes sure that they will stay decent. At the end, not that surprisingly, they get married. Set the tone to many screwball in the future.
Other Screwball comedies you should watch

1) Bringing Up Baby (1938)
2) My Man Godfrey (1936)
3) Easy Living (1937)
4) The Awful Truth (1937)
5) Nothing Sacred (1937)
6) Sullivan’s Travels (1941)
7) Midnight (1939)
8) His girl Friday (1940)
9) Lady Eve (1941)
10) The Palm Beach Story (1942)
L’Atalante

A French film by Jean Vigo, that represents the peak of the poetic realism movement in French cinema. Films on low class French people. Poetic realism seems to be an oxymoron. It just that the films were realistic, but combined it with blunt surrealism scenes.

You can see this when the film starts. Very realistic shots of the river, the ships that float above the water, the smoke from the trains. Then we see a wedding: Jean, the captain of the canal barge L’Atalante, marries Juliette in her village. This is filmed in a surreal way.

They take a ride on the boat. The crew that never had a woman aboard, are attracted to this woman. This brings a lot of Jealousy.
Continued

In Paris they get separated. Jean recalls what Juliette telling him that if you look at water you can see your love. This makes a very pretty surrealistic fantasy. At the end they reunite. This film and his first ("Zero in conduct") had a huge influence.

Vigo did two and a half film and died at the age of 29. But without the 200 minutes of cinema he did, some directors such as François Truffaut would have never been directors.
Some great poetic realism French films

Port the Shadows 1938 Carne (great film)
Pepe Le Moke 1937 Julien Duvivier Famous but I dont like this film.
La Chienne 1931 Renoir (Not bad).
The human Beast Renoir (Great film)
Le Grand Jeu 1934 Jack Feyde (Not much)
The rules of the game

French film directed by Jean Renoir 1939. It may be the second most influential film ever done, after "Citizen Kane". The thing is that this film lured many cinema lovers and critics into becoming directors. The film looks simple. Looks like a film you can do. So the aspiring film makers said: why not?

The story starts with an aviator Andr Jurieux that recently crossed the ocean, to show how much he loves Christine. Even though she is married. It combines comedy and drama in a way that was hardly done in the USA at the time. One of the first uses of deep focus.
Continued

We see a weekend in which rich French behave terribly with violent hunting and bad fights. While pretending to obey "the rules of the game", they break every rule. A lot of affairs. A lot of cheating. Andre and Christine declare their love for each other and plan to run away together. But it was not to be.

At the end, naive Andre is shot and killed by accident. Presents a terrible world in which humans behave like animals, there is no chance for love.

This is a metaphor. The rich people represent counties. These rich people cant help but being evil, and starting fights. And countries are exactly the same. The cry of Renoir against the war coming is ignored since art does not affect life. The second world war started not long after the film.
The Maltese Falcon

Invented film noirs. John Huston, 1941. A bunch of shady characters follow a legendary statue: The Maltese Falcon. Nobody is to be trusted in this film. The hero who is a private investigator falls in love with a woman, but later turn her in since she got his partner killed. The private investigator is more loyal to his ethics, then to his love.

These films contain a lot of private eye. The lighting is strange making people look unreal. Strange camera angles. The fatal woman the frequent narration, the city compared to a maze with people entering in one door and leaving in another. A lot of detective hats. A lot of warm weather and cell fans. A lot of electrical appliances and trains.

Set the way to many film noirs that followed.
Film noirs you should see

Out of the Past (1947)
Double Indemnity (1944)
In a Lonely Place (1950)
Laura (1944)
The Lady from Shanghai (1947)
Kiss Me Deadly (1955)
The Third Man (1949)
The Reckless Moment (1949)
The Big Sleep (1946 film)
The Stranger (1946)
Touch of Evil (1958)
Sunset Boulevard (1950)
The great dictator

There was nothing like that before, and non after. A film against a leader when this leader is at the peak of his power. Chaplin hated Hitler and the Nazi movement. He loved persecuted people. Rumors saying that he was Jewish were common. One time when he was "accused" of being a "Jew", Chaplin answered. "I was never given this honor". His manager and half brother Sidney, had a Jewish father.

Chaplin did the film in 1940 before the Americans entered world war two. A small Jewish barber fights in world war one, but then returns to the Jewish ghetto. It turns out that he and Hynkel (Hitler) look completely the same. Not surprising since both parts are played by Charlie Chaplin.
This is the first talking film of Chaplin. It even has one liner jokes. A German friend of the barber discovers that his friend the barber is Jewish. Disappointed he says: "Too bad. I always thought you are an Aryan". The barber answer: "I am a vegetarian". At the end, as it must in such films the barber is mistaken to be Hynkel and has to make a speech. Chaplin steps out of his character and as Chaplin himself gives us a summary of his humanistic vision. His girl friend in the film is Hannah, like the name of his mother. This is a name that is the same if read in reverse, since the little tramp is the opposite of Hitler.

The speech of Chaplin is heart breaking, especially since we are aware that the holocaust happened after this film. Till then, the movie is very funny. The critics spoke harshly on this speech, to their shame. Chaplin said that if he knew about the death camps he would never have done this movie.
Citizen Kane

The best and certainly most influential film ever made.

The use of long takes, low and high camera angles, remarkable camera movements, sets with ceilings, novel use of makeup, novel acting, novel editing, a landmark world changing film score, play with shadow and light, clever dialogues (that can be understood in two ways) the famous deep focus, placing people in frames, and totally amazing missensencece. The first film of Orson Welles. Done in 1941 when he was 25. This film and his next one “The magnificence of the Amberssons” cursed Welles. The studios never liked geniuses. Wells for years was hard pressed to find money to produce his films. This is the reason that he made only 12 films.
Continued

He was directing theater since he was 15, and knew full plays by his hero Shakespeare by heart. He was one of the most talented and original theater director, in the history of theater. For example he did an adaptation Othello with all black cast.

He was a painter, a sculptor, a competent bull fighter, a professional magician. If you adjust to inflation he is the man that got the highest salary as a magician in Las Vegas. He changed radio for ever with his notorious "War of the worlds" episode that caused panic. But not only this way. He came into the radio and seconds later he was "in character". He was a great script writer that wrote his own scripts.

As he asked once: why are there so many of you, but so few like me? He is both vane, and right.
Sullivan’s travels

A films that combined many genre together in a landmark way. Road films, Jail films, Satire on Hollywood, Slapstick comedy especially in the pool, Screwball comedy with sharp lines exchanged between Sully and his girl. Directed by Preston Sturges, one of the best directors ever in 1941. Even though the film is located at 1937. A director named Sully is tired of making comedies when people are starving. He wants to make a important film titled Oh Brother Where are Thou. How come we are not helping our starving brothers and sisters.? He tries to spend time with the simple men but each time he is thrown to Hollywood back. Until he gets arrested. When a prisoner he watches a comedy, and sees that these comedies are the only escape of the poor. When he gets back to Hollywood he decides not to make the important film he wanted to do, but instead do another comedy.
Continued

The cynical Cohen brothers made Oh Brother were are Thou, the name of the film inside a film in Sullivans Travels. Sullivan Travels is among the first movies to discuss cinema itself and not only because its a film on a director. With lines like "How did this girl arrive here?" to which Sully answers: "There is always a girl in the picture". When Sully is arrested, he says "The plot needs a good twist". The way he is saved from prison is amazing. Since he killed a person that wore his cloth he is accused of killing himself but denies it. He finds a way to get free. He admits that he kills himself, a thing that brings on a trail. Then they recognize the famous Hollywood person. And they let him walk away from the murder. He is just released from jail. This film may say a thing or two on the way rich and famous can get away with anything.
The life and death of Colonel Blimp

The first English film to make fun of the army.

Directed by a team of two: Powell and Pressburger.

The colonel in the name is a cartoon character.

About the British General Candy and his friendship with a German General Schuldorff for 40 years.

The British were really angry to see such friendship with the enemy.

Candy starts as a great man but when he becomes old he gets arrogant, stupid and disconnected from reality.

Not a critic the British were ready to accept. This makes this film a landmark brave film.
Its a wonderful life

The most famous tear jerker film ever (many cry at the end). Studio films rising to pure perfection. Done by Capra at 1946 and failed at the box office. Failed badly.

Then the studio lost the rights and the film was shown in TV and became a sensation. Many (certainly I) will say its the highest achievement of the studio system. George Bailey helped people all his life. He saved his brother from death when they were children. But now he loses a large sum of money, and faces jail.
Continued

Thus wants to kill himself. An angel (Clarence) is sent from the sky and shows George how ugly would his village looked, if George would never have been born. After visiting his dead brother (George was not there to save him) Clarence says: You see George? You really had a wonderful life! Don’t you see what a mistake it will be to Throw it all away? George is convinced and says: I want to live again.

What follows is the most famous happy ending ever done.
Rome the open city

A 1945 Italian films by Roberto Rossellini that invented neo-realist cinema. A bunch of neo-political films that were the first to state that cinema can treat serious subjects.

These films were shot on location, with non professional actors. The spoke about mundane topics. The basic things people do in life like trying to find work, loosing people, loosing dignity, because you are hungry or homeless. They describe the real life after the second world war almost like a documentary film.

This particular film ends with a heart breaking scene in which children are watching the execution of a beloved priest. The fire squad misses on purpose and the children all of a sudden are filled by hope. But the angry Nazi officer takes his gun and shoots the priest in the head.

The children lower their head and leave this place with a broken spirit.
Other important neo-realistic films

- Shoeshine (Vittorio De Sica, 1946)
- Paisan (Roberto Rossellini, 1946)
- Germany, Year Zero (Roberto Rossellini, 1948)
- Bicycle Thieves (Vittorio De Sica, 1948)
- The Earth Trembles (Luchino Visconti, 1948)
- Umberto D. (Vittorio De Sica, 1952)
- Journey to Italy (Roberto Rossellini, 1954)
The third man

A film noir about guilt, (the influence of the catholic script writer Graham Green). The only important English film noir by by Carol Reed. A great English director. From In 1949. Film noir that takes place in Europe were non existence. We see a big city Vienna in Europe, immediately after the war, lending the film a historic importance. Vienna still looks bombarded. An efficient use of a single source of light that makes for great shadows. The role of the life of Orson Welles as Harry Lime. His cooperation with Joseph Cotton brings pleasant echo to Citizen Kane.

Welles wrote his own dialogues. And apparently helped directing. Harry Lime becomes a murderer during world war two and at the end of the film, his childhood friend shoots him in the back, in one of the most cruel scenes in cinema history.
A miracle in Milan

An important landmark film that helped the Italian cinema move from neo-realism to comedy Italian style.

It uses the non professional actors, and shooting at location. As in neo-realist films, but its a fantasy.

However, it is a legend, and starts with Once upon a time. A film with the legendary comedian Toto. Toto gets super powers and this takes the film to a fantasy and outside neo-realism.

Still contains the anti capitalistic message of the neo-realism. Corporation wants to throw away the poor people from their houses as their land contains oil. But at the end, by Toto magic powers, the poor people attacked by corporations take their broomsticks and fly to a better place. A scene that was imitated in the film E.T. The Italian were ready after such film for Comedies Italian style.
Rashomon

The first Japanese film seen in the west. Nothing was known about films from Japan. The west was shocked by the technical level of the film.

By Akira Kurosawa from 1951. Then films from Japan became all the rage.

The film suffers from an artificial imposed ending. But the camera movements are a real landmark in cinema history. The camera movement imitate the character of the person speaking.

Talks about how hard it is to understand reality (or does reality exists) since several people give a completely different account of a case of murder and rape they witness.
Other important film from Japan

Ran 1985
Yojimbo 1961
Kagemusha 1980
Ugetsu Monogatari 1953
The Life of Oharu 1953
Taboo 1999
Late Spring 1949
Floating Weeds 1934
The Human Condition 1961
The Tokyo Story

The perfection of the style of one of the most unique directors in cinema history. Yasujiro Ozu, 1953.

He used almost no camera movement. Every shot almost is beautiful. A lot of nature shots. Trying to remove from the films anything glamorous. Only the bare bones of life remain. Almost all films are on families. Emotional outburst is not allowed in Japan. People should keep their emotion to themselves. And respect the elderly and those who are in a higher social class.

A couple goes to visit their children in Tokyo. But they all ignore them. The only one that pays attention to them is the wife of their son the dies in the war. Like in many films by Ozu, there is one outburst at the peak of the film. But no more.
The seven Samurai

A very influential (and long) 1954 Japanese adventure/drama film directed by Akira Kurosawa.

A village of simple people are constantly attacked by bandits that steal their crop. The village asks help from an unemployed samurai that collects seven samurai to defend the village.

They save the village but four of them are killed. In a logic that can probably be understood in the east better than in the west the leader samurai says: "So. Again we are defeated. The farmers have won. Not us."

The fight scenes were a clear landmark. They are filmed in slow motion (first time in cinema history) and very close to the horses that participate in the fight.

Only films like Ran by the same director or Paths of Glory by Kubrick achieved such level in the war scenes.
On the water front

A despicable film that tries to justify the director, Eliya Kazan, informing on his friends, even his close friend Arthur Miller, to the House of Un-American Activities. A witch hunt anti communist committee.

When Eliya Kazan got a Life achievement award in the Oscars most people did not clap in protest.

But we do not deal with good films. Just Landmarks. In Russia a school of acting was perfected by Stanislavsky. It was called: The method. His theory was on acting by absorbing things from the outside, to the inside of the actor.

To play a character of some type, you have to live with characters like that for a long time. Investigate them. Study them. Talk to them.
Continued

Two influential people Eliya Kazan and Bud solberg imported "The method" into American theater. They used this in an adaptation of two of Arthur miller's plays: "All my sons" and "Death of a salesman". Later they took this acting style to cinema. Marlon Brando, a typical "method actor" played the leads in many of their films.

The above film perfected the method acting (see also Viva Zapata and A streetcar named Desire).

And in addition this acting school influenced the acting in the USA for years. Till today.

There is a second acting school that prevails in England. Search the character that you need you play inside yourself. Not from the outside into inside, but rather from the inside to the outside.
Important method actors

Daniel Day-Lewis.
Christian Bale.
Robert De Niro.
Heath Ledger.
Jim Carrey.
Joaquin Phoenix.
Marlon Brando.
Nicolas Cage.
Meryl Streep.
Dustin Hoffman
James Dean
The seventh seal

A huge landmark in cinema history. The big entrance of Ingmar Bergman in 1957 directly to the top of the pantheon of the best directors in cinema history.

This film spread like a wildfire around the world. It became one of the most famous film of all times.

The first film that dared deal with philosophical questions like What is the meaning of life?. Done in 1957.

A disillusioned knight returns from the crusades and wonders why god keeps silence with all the terrible things that take place.

This film contains some of the most beautiful shots in cinema’s history. Beautiful white and black shots.
Continued

The knight has a cynical Squire that never believed and instead of thinking all the time, he acts. He saves a girl from rape, and saves the main artist of the film.

The knight meets death himself portrayed by a pale man dressed all black. Clearly the greatest movie metaphor ever invented.

Death want to take (kill) the knight. The knight says he is not ready yet and invites death to a chess game. A game he is doomed to loose.

The knight meets a band of artists. He distracts death and lets the artists escape. Only the main Artist can see death.

After saving the artists the knight understands that art is the only way to cheat death and become eternal.
Wild strawberries

A landmark modernistic film. Dealing with important psychological things such as psychoanalysis. Bergman is imitated to death, just by non talented people. Bergman did this landmark masterpiece in the same year he did The seven Seal, 1957. Yet the films are completely different. A brave and merciless film about a vane doctor on his way to accept a life achievement award. The day before he had a dream on a watch without handles and a coffin with himself inside. This tells us that his death is coming, and if he did mistakes in his life, he should correct them fast. Indeed his daughter in law that drives with him to the university, tells him that he is a cold and harsh, judgemental person. The doctor goes via simulated psychoanalysis via a series of dreams. One dream show how his brother stole his loved one. Another dream about his wife that was unfaithful because he treated her badly.
They put him into a trial and the verdict is Guilty. When he asks what is the punishment, they tell him: being lonely. They pick up many hitchhikers on the way. In his dreams, his daughter in law and the hitchhikers play the roles of his family when he was young. When they stop to fill gas something surprising happens. The one that owns the station speaks highly on the doctor and on how much did the doctor help his community. There is another side to this doctor. The big trick of the film may be the leading actor. In a touching homage the lead part is given to a Swedish director from the silent era called Victor Sjstrm (The wind). His face is so special that it makes all the difference. The doctor learns how to correct his way and be warmer. Wild strawberries is a symbol of fertility. At the end of the trip his daughter in law that is pregnant, decides to carry the child.
Big Deal on Madonna Street

The founding film of comedies Italian style that are on mundane issues. A comical extension of the neo-realistic movement. Directed by Monicelli in 1958. A film with the legendary Italian comic: Toto. He teaches a collection of losers how to commit a heist.

Also acting, Vittorio Gassman, Marcello Mastroianni, and Claudia Cardinale, in a small role. Four people want to get to a safe. They get a map of the house, not realizing that the map is wrong. One of the four asks another to go to the kitchen and bring him water. They dig a hole they think will lead them to the safe, but when the wall breaks they see the man that was sent to bring water. They dig a hole directly into the kitchen.

They start to blame each other, and there is no time to dig another hole. But being Italians, very fast they grab food from the kitchen, seat, and have a fine meal.
Very symbolic for comedy Italian style.
There are various jokes and gags in the film but the ending is sad. At the end, like by a force from above the four criminals get separated and may never see each other again. The next day the newspaper speaks about the strange case of a thief that broke into an apartment and stole food.
The separation of the four brings what seems to be an existential depression to the movie.

In the film "The great war" (with the same director) has two cowards in the lead role. Both of which die at the end of the film.

In the film "The easy life" Vittorio Gassman plays a playboy that attracts a shy younger man and lures him into the social life of Rome. This young fellow dies at the end of the film.
The ending of "The hard life" is also very pessimistic, as its in all comedies Italian style.
Important Italian comedies

The following three Italian comedies are among the best films ever done:

The Great War (Monicelli, 1958)
Bread and Chocolate (Brusali, 1974)
Difficult Life. (Dino Risi 1961)

With the latter film being the ultimate masterpiece of the genre.

Other important Italian comedies are:

Love and Larceny (Dino Risi 1960)
The Easy Life (Dino Risi 1962) This film is worshiped greatly.
Divorce, Italian Style (Germi, 1961)
Vertigo

Here is the film that in the last sight and sound poll, (the most important poll on best movies that is done every 10 years) was selected as the best film ever done by the critics.

I would say it is a joke except that cinema critics have no humor. The choice is a big insult the the way way way better film "Citizen Kane" and a humiliation of the critics themselves that look like they have no clue.

Enough to say that IF Vertigo is a masterpiece, its a very flawed one. An example: at the end Scottie looks at the woman he loves that just jump to her death. If he ever loved that woman, how can he be so cruel and watch the dead woman. And there are clear holes in the plot right and left.

True, the direction in this movie is spectacular.
It is the best films of Alfred Hitchcock.
Continued

However, this is important. Alfred Hitchcock never had anything to say. Compare this to much much better directors with their own philosophy like Bergman, Fellini, Kubrick and Welles.

These four directors are several degrees better than Hitchcock. And I am being polite.

Why was he raised to the level of "The best director of all times"? Because of the unrelentless propaganda work by the French new wave critics that admired him. To the point, they fooled the world.

A unique case in cinema history of a director with nothing to say that gets such credit. This borders on corruption.
**On "Vertigo"**

His films were designed to make us identify with the hero of the film. This is the reason that he used almost only point of view shooting. This film is based on the Lacan theory. That said that some fantasies are better left as fantasies and fulfilling them may cause a disaster.

There is a 360 camera movement in which the room changes in the middle, which is unlike any camera move in the history of cinema. Directed in 1958.

Hitchcock used the color red for symbol of emotions and life and pale green as a symbol of death. The hero is one of the most obsessive characters in cinema history. After his female lover dies he finds another woman and slowly but surely he turns her look to the look of the dead girl.
Continued

There are hints to necrophilia. Hitchcock confessed much more than he wanted. He was one sick twisted individual. A cruel and misanthropic person. His main cheer leader the critic Francois Roland Truffaut, wrote a book on Hitchcock in which he speaks with Hitchcock on almost all films that Hitchcock made. When they got to "Vertigo" they agreed both: it's not a good film. But what does Hitchcock knows on films anyway? The film was a trauma for Hitchcock as the first reviews were bad and the film made very little money, at start. His servant, Francois Roland Truffaut, did not like Vertigo. He just thought it's not a good film. But what does Francois Roland Truffaut knows? I hope the critic will correct this unethical choice in the next poll.
Touch of evil

This film of Orson Wells is the last film noir. Done in 1958. The last American film of this cursed director that was able to do only 12 films in all his career.

The film starts with a spectacular shot of almost 3 minutes. A man plants a bomb in a car and for three minutes we follow the car until it explodes. Many obstacle that the car hits on (people crossing and similar ideas) enhance the tension.

Nobody is pure in this films that shows in a landmark way that in order to win, the good character must have at least a touch of evil.
Breathless

The most radical of the new wave directors, Godard, makes his first film, with the intention, just as in *Citizen Kane* of changing cinema for ever. And indeed this film changed cinema and made directors choose to do much more personal films. A revolution.

First let us talk on what Godard was attacking.

The attack on the psychological films. The so called Quality tradition films done by then in France, mostly based on masterpiece books. These films were too static and some times looked more like theater.

But what made the new wave critics much angrier is that in these "quality" films, anything that the heroes did had to be logical from a psychological point of view.

Godard decided to do a film that is the opposite of any of those quality tradition film. A film that is alive and free.
Continued

After filming, Godard had about 3 hours of a film, that he needed to reduce to an hour and a half.

Godard decided that he will cut his film in a way that is as revolutionary as in any other film. The film contains countless intentional jump cuts. A jump cut is a "wrong cut" in which the character jumps in the screen as if the character moved. It was always taught to be a mistake, in cinema schools but Godard put it in intentionally. This film describes a gangster Michel with an American girl friend Patricia. You can look in vain, but you will never find any reasonable psychological explanation for the way they act. The two have no interior self. Only exterior. The film was shot with natural light on location with a hand held camera. The film breaks the rules all right. Scenes finish but then linger on without a reason.
Continued

The hero imitates Bogart by passing his finger on his lips and saying "Boggy!". He has irrational discussions with Patricia. Michel kills a cop for no particular reason, a thing that is shot from strange angles. Now, for no apparent reason Patricia calls the police and turns Michel in. The police comes and shoot Michel that starts running like a little girl. There is a square of light that emanate from below the street. Michel falls dying, in the middle of this square. Here there is an intentional mistake. The hero dies face down. In the next shot the intentional mistake. He lies on his back. Michel: It’s disgusting, really. Patricia: What did he say? A cop: He said, "You’re a real scumbag". The Patricia moves her fingers over her lips as Michel did when he saw a photo of Bogart and asks: What’s a scumbag? And the film ends. The last scene makes no sense. But if you ask me I will say: the meaning of the last scene is to make no sense.
Some important new wave French films

Jules and Jim, Francois Truffaut 1962.
400 blows, Francois Truffaut 1959 (Maybe the best film on cruel lives of children)
Claire’s Knee, ric, Rohmer 1970
Cleo from 5 to 7, Agnès Varda 1962
Band of outsiders, Godard 1964 My favorite new wave movie.
Living her life, Godard 1962.
My night at Mauds, ric Rohmer 1969
The bitch, Chabrol 1968
Last year in Marienbad, Alain Resnais I must admit seeing this last film feels like torture.
Psycho

A landmark in editing. See the shower scene. An experimental films by Hitchcock.

He kills the leading lady character Marion Crane after a third of the film. A huge novelty for its time. Because she was the famous actor of them all in the film: Janet Leigh. Vera Miles was much less famous.

A few years before Bonnie and Clyde Hitchcock makes us identify with Bates. Recall the scene in which Bates tries to drown the car. When the car stops drowning for a moment we desperately want it to drown. This means that Hitchcock was toying with the spectators.

This is the first horror films of Hitchcock and today the style looks much better than the content. At the end of Psycho a doctor explains why Bates behaves as he did, Closing things for us neat and tighny.
Let us compare to the other horror film he made: *The birds*. In the birds, we do not know why the birds started acting this way, and nothing is resolved at the end. We still do not know. In this regards, *The birds* is a better film than *Psycho*. However, Psycho contains some of the best camera movements ever. The direction is spectacular.

A lot of scenes in the film are given attention they do not deserve such as the scene with the policeman that stops Marion and looks menacing for no reason. Very manipulative film.

But to be manipulative you need to know how to direct. Psycho is the highest grossing film among all the film of Hitchcock.
La Dolce Vita

A film about how after the Marshal Plan (the USA giving money to Europe to help them recover from world war two) the financial miracle came. The Italians were so proud of this miracle. They did very unethical thing, but this was ignored. Fellini presents Italy as it was: corrupt. Angered the church badly because of the orgy scene and other controversial scenes. Today, it all looks harmless.

This was a film without a real script that opened the door to many later films made like that. Done in 1960. A journalist named Marcelo tries to find meaning to his life. Religion does not work. Two children that say they have seen the Madonna die later. Knowledge does not work. The intellectual Steiner that Marcelo looks up to kills himself in the middle of the film.
Continued

His relation with his father is bad. When his father comes to visit him he gets a heart attack. As soon as the father is better, he wants to go home. Marcelo tells him: stay. We do not meet each other a lot. But to no avail.

He has bad relations with his wife and the relations he has with other woman is phoney. So family is not the answer.

A rediculous scene with a huge blond (Anita Ekberg) in which he fails to communicate with her (she asks all the time "What" "What?") makes him understand that sex is not it either.

Near the end of the film there is a glimpse of hope. Marcelo eats in a restaurant and sees a girl named Paola. Marcelo says: "Paula looks looks like the angels in the pictures of Raphael".
Continued

Not finding a moral compass, Marcello participates in an orgy. He may be the most active person in the orgy. The world looks to him as sad and without hope.

After the orgy they go to the sea. They find monster huge fish stranded at the sand near the sea, and start worshiping it. Marcelo participates.

Then in the crucial moment of the film Paola appears and tries to talk to him. He has to make a moral choice: choose Paula the innocent or the monster.

He tells Paula with his hands: I cant hear you. The sea is too noisy. And then he chooses the monster over Paula. The last shot we see lonely Paula smiling, in one of the most pretty endings in cinema’s history.
Le Jette (The airport)

A once in a life film. Its all stills photos except for few seconds. This method of making a film (is it a film?) is well connected to the philosophy of the the film on time that is due to Henry Bergson. Time exists only in our consciousness. All times together: past future present. The still shots are separated because the time of any two people is different because their consciousness is separated. To see this invoked consider the love that our hero finds in the past. Then narrator says: and their consciousness (of our hero and his loved woman) was one. Since they now have one consciousness, the film moves for a few seconds. The story is spectacular (A warning: I am not sure that there are prints of this film, unless somebody did a huge restoration work on his film lately Last I checked, they were running out of prints). A man goes to the future not with a time machine but by an injection.
Continued

The injection puts his consciousness in the right state for moving to the future. There was a terrible world war three. And our worlds is polluted and uninhabitable. What makes our hero special, is that he is one of a chosen few that has a memory from before the war. He was a child, and was in Orly airport. He saw a memorable moment: a man running. Some strange looking people that may be the police shot this man in the back and killed him. But the authorities are interested only in the future. He should bring from the future tools that can repair the present. Because otherwise, how would the future exist? The future is saving itself! The ending of this film is one of the most surprising in the history of cinema. Do yourself a favor, and try to watch the film.
Eight and a half

Like Breathless and Citizen Kane, this film single handedly changed cinema. Fellini 1963. The film demonstrate that the drama could happen inside the mind of an artist. Indeed, the film follows Guido, a film director with directors block. One of the great innovation is that the film moves from reality to fantasy and back without any warning. A very hard film to understand. This film is based on the theory of Jung. Jung said that to resolve your problems you should study the relation with the archetype woman characters in your life. There are many woman archetypes. We see ”The Wife”, ”The Mother” ”The Mistress” ”The Whore” and ”The Woman of His Dreams”. The latter turns to be Claudia Cardinale that plays herself. Guido invents in his mind a critic. While he is blocked, he tries to imagine a scene in his movie with a nun gives him a glass of water, and then the nun changing to Claudia Cardinale.
Continued

The critic he invents tells him: "The scene is not good". Commenting on the archetypes, his mother is transformed in one scene to his mistress. In one of his fantasies, he holds the hand of his father and leads him to his (father) grave. By the way, it's very hard for him to find an appropriate actor to play his father. He keeps saying: "it's not really it".

The film starts with Guido in a car and everybody on the other cars look at him without an expression. He starts dying, going up the sky, but someone below catch him with a rope. Guido is saved and brought down. The film takes place in a hospital in which he is recovering. He thinks and thinks all the time. People are asking him questions, and he has no answers. He build a huge phallic rocket ship construction.
Continued

He talks to Claudia Cardinale, the woman of his dreams (according to Fellini she is exceptionally smart). They discuss the reason he can't make a film. He says: Because he does not want to lie. Claudia Cardinale: because he does not know what love is. This continues, by Guido giving a reason and Claudia saying because he does not know what love is.

Guido understands that logic is what bothers him, and is the enemy of an artist. The phallic tower is brought down. Guido then says: life is a celebration. At the end all the characters, the real ones, and those only in his head come to a round circus ring. They hold each other hand, and to the genius music on Nino Rota, they dance around the ring, in one of the most beautiful film endings ever.


**Au Hasard Balthazar**

If cinema could change life, this film would be a good candidate. I do not think that there is a film that shows such compassion to an animal. A donkey.

The film is highly moving, an achievement that was never before and never surpassed later. It starts with Marrie that loves her donkey but she looses him. Then the film continues with heart breaking description of the other owners of this donkey and the way they abuse him.

A morality tale using an animal as a metaphor. At a certain moment the donkey cries loudly. I do not think a normal person could see that without his/her heart being broken.

And at the end of the film the donkey dies. All this is described without sentimentality. By Bresson in 1996. A highly unusual director. To say the least.
Bonnie and Clyde

This film was first suggested to Truffaut and Godard who refused to direct it. It was later directed by the great American director Arthur Penn. He is influenced by the new wave directors, making the film a very personal revolutionary crime film.

The film starts with half naked Faye Dunaway, a thing that was not allowed by the code, but the code was loosing his power. It was not usual to glorify murderers at the time. Both Bonnie and Clyde are young and pretty. We root for them which is a first. The banks they robe represent corruption. This was a new form of modernism that took genre and changed them.
Continued

Penn and Altman were the "genre changing directors". Altman revised the western in *MacCabe and Mrs Miller* (the western takes place in the snow), revises the war film, in the cynical *Mash*, and revises the neo-noir Altman in *The long Goodbye*. Penn revise's the crime movie in this film, the western in *Little big man*, and the self reflecting America dramas in *For Friends*.

The last scene of *Bonnie and Clyde* shows the police shooting the pair with countless number of bullets in slow motions. This scene was raved even though this idea was used before by Kurosawa. Bringing the new wave to the USA, makes for a big landmark.
Doctor Strangelove

A prophecy that will happen soon. A stark warning. This film done by Kubrick in 1964, two years after the Cuba crisis, was never repeated. A genre of one film.

This is the most important film ever done because it a punch to the belly on the most dangerous thing facing us: an all out nuclear war. This film is at least one degree above 95 percent of the films here. Certainly more brilliant. One of the funniest film ever done, but his subject is the end of the world because a crazy general attacks Russia and Russia has a dooms day machine that destroys the world. A thing that makes the ex-Nazi scientist Dr Strangelove highly nostalgic. We are going to perish because we are stupid is the message of the film. A film that shows a menacing fear of machines. There are countless scenes in which the machine wins over humans.
**Continued**

Dr Strangelove, that can not control his right mechanical hand, is more a machine than a human. He speaks and thinks like a Nazi. While the film is funny, it seems that everybody in the film lacks a sense of humor. They say their crazy lines completely seriously.

A whole additional sinister character like Major Kong (King Long) the commander of the plain that at the ends destroys humanity. The film offered some of the most unforgettable scenes in the history of cinema, mainly of them Major Kong Ridding the bomb and shouting like in a rodeo all the way to extinction (well he is from Texas). The end with the films with a series of (true) Atomic bombings is also well remembered. The insanity is well expressed by the president that sees one of his generals and the Soviet ambassador exchanging blows. The president shouts: Gentleman you can not fight here! This is the war room!
The Samurai

Jean Pierre Melville was a highly influential French director. He demanded independence, and filmed on location. His films, while non realistic still had a feel of documentaries, I do not remember a film by him in which a character tells another character "I love you". He did a string of crime films influenced by the golden age of Hollywood. His style made his the spiritual father of the new wave in French cinema. This is a film from 1966 and is considered his masterpiece. A neo-noir located in an unclear place (in Paris). Pure cinema. A hit man goes to a killing mission but is betrayed by his senders. The so called citation "There is nobody more lonely than a Samurai, but the tiger in the jungle" was an invention of Melville. A films that many times looks like a silent film. Long scenes in the film have no talking at all. A hit man like Samurai has no emotions, and is completely alone, and depends on other people that may betray him.
Andrei Rublev

A unique director. The Russian Tarkovsky. Did only 7 films but remarkable influence. About a painter that really existed. Taking on poetical freedom. Amazing sights. A very hard to understand film. With Mirror invents a new notion, some films should not be understood. Only felt.

Very strange but revolutionary film. Tarkovsky shows an evil world. A sequence of barbaric acts. This film is clearly influenced by The seventh seal but is a peak in much more abstract cinema.

Very long shoots, and a very slow moving film. The ultimate definition of art cinema. I do not think that apart from critics, and intellectuals anybody else should watch. You will be bored. Those who are able to watch such films will have an amazing experience.
The graduate

A landmark indictment of the old generation compared to the make love not war generation of young people in 1967.

Directed by Mike Nicholas. Mrs Robinson abuses the young Benjamin for sex. Being an evil and bored woman. I call this old generation back then, the plastic generation as one of the friends of the parents of Benjamin tells him to deal with plastic. Its the next thing, he says.

At the end Benjamin elopes with the daughter Alain of Mrs Robinson. At start they feel good about what they did but later the mood changes to fear of an uncertain future.

Fabulous songs by Simon and Garfunkel help. The confusion and helpless feeling of the young generation is strongly felt in this film.
2001: A Space Odyssey

There may not have been a film, that influenced its genre more than this film. The critics like it and chose it as the 6 best film of all times. I see their point and in this case, I will not critic or second guess them.

Bringing philosophy to science fiction films, with an amazingly abstract film. It is again a film of the fear of the machine. described a terrible world (at least for the director Stanley Kubrick) in which machines become are humans with emotions. With pride with fear. In fact machines kill out of fear. On the other hand the humans. Catatonic, lacking any curiosity, lacking almost any initiative. Machine like. There are some scenes that entered the Pentagon of cinema, and in particular the star-gate scene and the embryo scene with the baby moving his head until he looks directly at us.
Continued

This child is the opposite to HAL the super computer. This child will return to our origins and be an ape (not a machine) as the music connects the child and the apes.

To the director this is a horror film. So much, that he brings a powerful alien to hasten evolution, and then take us out of our catatonic state and makes us apes again. Being an Ape (and a killer unfortunately) is better than being a machine (hence not human since if you are not free you are not a human) is the motto of Kubrick.

The film, while not well understood influenced almost all science fiction films that came later. Even the second best science fiction film Blade Runner. Ironically, Blade Runner later influenced many other science fiction films.
Easy Rider

This is the founding film of modern independent cinema. An anarchistic film if there ever was one.

Directed by Denise Hopper at 1969.

A disturbed lawyer and two free willing souls take a trip by motorcycle around the USA.

They were called the Touchstone generation. The generation of the hippie. A landmark exploration of drug use communal living style.

The editing is so anarchist that by itself is a landmark in cinema history.

The terrible ending was to be expected as this is an anti establishment film.

This film will never appear in list on the best 100 film but in most list of the 100 largest landmarks.
The godfather

A despicable film that asks us to love murderers because they have ethics (see the first scene with Bonasera), because of their sense of family, because unlike other criminals they don’t curse, and because the film is shot as one big opera, just with under acting.

Brilliant photography. The film did not only damaged cinema, but it damaged the world.

The director of the film F.F. Coppola, a devoted Catholic saw this film of his as a big sin.

He did The Godfather two to avoid eternal damnation.

And he made it. Godfather two is a masterpiece and not evil as the first part. The godfather I was done in 1972. The godfather II was done in 1974.

Famously Godfather II makes us hate Mikel because he kills his brother Fredo.
Chinatown

A huge landmark that was directed by the genius Roman Polanski. The film has a genius script. Maybe the best in cinema history.

At start it was not so good, but after a 8 days treatment of the film by Polanski it became the film we know.

Depicts extremely well the sensation of distrust of the establishment that was prevailing in the USA due to the Vietnam war and the Watergate affair.

The film manages to insert the personal world of Roman Polanski, Greek tragedies, destiny, and philosophical discussions on good versus evil. Film noirs are after all formula films. One on the greatest achievements in the history of cinema. Done in 1974.
F For Fake

The most personal film of Orson Welles about art, and about the question if forgery can be art.

Welles was open to the answer yes because he saw a film as a magic trick.

Others like Bergman and Fellini thought that films are about finding the artistic truth Welles could not tolerate this notion. Therefore he hated the films of Bergman and Fellini.

He does not need soul searching. He knows exactly what he wants to convey, and does it with one spectacular direction choice after the other.

This was a documentary that invented the Cinema essay. Done in 1974.
Jaws
A good film but an unlucky one.
Ruined cinema together with the boring film Star wars.
These two films invented the blockbuster cinema that made a mockery of American cinema and brought its level to the unwatchable.
Three man go out to catch a giant shark. The line: We are going to need a larger boat became famous.
Of course as a blockbuster is, it later has three sequels.
Done by Spielberg in 1975.
Nashville

This film by Robert Altman from 1975 invented a new genre that was copied to death after that.

The film has 24 characters and countless plots. Among them a Republican politician that wants votes.

Nashville is the home of country music (the country singers hated this film).

The ending could not be more American. After someone shoots the politician havoc starts.

Then a girl gets upstage and starts to sing the song It dont bother me sweeping the people of their feet, and making then forget the assassination attempt.

A star was born.
Star wars

Was a sensation when it came out and cemented the disaster called blockbusters films.

I was young but still amazed when I saw it at 13: it was a completely boring film.

My opinion of it never changed. It only became worse.

The damage that this film and Jaws did together to the American cinema can not be measured.

The movies today are infantile. Terrible.

Sequels.

Done by George Lucas in 1977.
Annie Hall

Woody Allen in 1978 invents a genre, when it seems impossible to do so.

The film was imitated to death but nobody did it even close later including Allen himself whose later films shame his giant career.

Allen perfects the character of the neurotic Jew.

This film shows that comedy and philosophy can go hand in hand.

An amazing collection of tricks in a way that was never shown before.

Has a heart warming and intelligent, but bad ending.
The shining

A great landmark use of the Steadicam.
This is the best horror films ever made.
Done by Kubrick in 1980.
I am in a minority that ranks this film as the second best Kubrick did.
Kubrick shows in a landmark way that a low genre such as horror movies can discuss philosophy and not directly.
One of the hardest to understand films I ever saw.
But trying to understand it is worth it.
Kubrick continues with his habit of presenting non real people that represent IDEAS.
One of the most fatalistic films ever done, and a landmark in such films. Showing a fantasy world overtakes reality with terrible results.
In the year of 13 moons

This film has to represent by itself all the new German wave cinema.

Rainer Werner Fassbinder, was a sick violent man, addicted to hard drugs, and helplessly alcoholic. He got into street fights frequently and finally killed himself by an overdose at the age of 37.

But since he did 4 movies every year since he was 21(!), he did over 40 films a large majority of which I saw.

This film shocked me and this is rare. It was done after his male lover (this director was bisexual) killed himself. The film has one of the most cruel scenes I have ever saw.

This film is like a punch in the belly. An amazing film to those who are able to watch it.
New wave German films that you should watch

Aguirre, the Wrath of God, Herzog (1972). Do a favor to yourself and see this film. One of the best films on the gradual descent to madness.


Stroszek, Herzog (1977) Again, a must see if you love yourself.


The Tin Drum Schlndorff (1979) A shocking film.

Kings of the road Winders (1976) Classic film
**Blade Runner**

The second most important landmark in science fiction film history.

Highly philosophical like his big brother 2001 by Kubrick.

The look is amazing in a dystopian world.

When are replicant (robots) too human to be killed?

If something terrible is about to happen is it better to know in advance?

How can a robot not know it is a robot?

The last speech by Roy, is one of the most beautiful in cinema history.

One big warning: watch ONLY the final cut.

Directed in 1982 by Ridley Scott.

Pay attention to the dream with the unicorn. And to the last scene.
This Mockumentary, namely a film that pretends to be a documentary is the best defense of post modernistic cinema in films history.

Almost a summary of the motives of post modernism, which makes the film a landmark.

We find a person that is a chameleon. He gets the personality of the person beside him (indeed a remark on post modernistic films).

Shows how being conformist can lead to fascism. A very surprising homage to Citizen Kane.

Woody Allen parodies the balcony scene with Hitler from Citizen Kane (in Citizen Kane its not a parody at all. In fact this scene is based on a TRUE event).

Done in 1983. Before his career went almost completely downhill.
Blue Velvet

One of the best and deepest films in the history of American cinema, albeit, it was so cruel that this makes it a first.

A strong example of post modernistic cinema.

Combines terrible cruelty in a provocative way, with innocence.

Meet Frank Booth, one of the most disgusting and cruel villains in cinema history. Every scene has some hint to a story, a film, or to Freud.

After this film cinema changed and every amount of grotesque violence became acceptable.

The songs of the film are innocent songs from the fifties and sixties and are contrasted by insufferable cruelty.

Done by Lynch in 1986.
Wings of desire

A monumental landmark in philosophical films by Wim Winder in 1989. The theory of forms of Plato is described nicely. About the black and white world of the logical angels that live the present together with any moment from the past. One angel falls in love with a circus lady and decides to give his immortal life due to love. Then the film changes to colors. Peter Falk plays himself and it is claimed that Falk was an angel too one day and that he participated in the Spanish civil war.

The speech of Falk in behalf of life is one of the most beautiful in cinema history. The last speech of the film is memorable. How can you love someone and still be true to yourself?

A remarkable existential speech. Talking on purity, children can see the angels but the adults lost this ability. They lost their purity while aging.
Close up

Perhaps the most influential film of the Iranian new wave from 1991.

Given the image that Iran had in the world we were almost shocked to find the films of Abbas Kiarostami that gave hope to cinema when it looked that all was lost.

This director was given access to the real life trial of a person that impersonated another famous film maker from Iran. The director tries in his own novel way to treat the usual question such as What is truth? Can we know anything?

Note that apart from the trial, the rest of the scenes are a reincarnation of real life scenes.

This person that wanted to be a director so badly, at least did became an actor in the end. Its fair to say that in this film its hard to make what is a documentary and what is fiction. How much is Kiarostami fabricating?

Elaborating and extending themes of the the film F for Fake.
The silence of the lambs

After this film that hailed a totally psychopath cannibal named Lecter, nothing was too low for cinema.

The dams were broken and sadist films for the sake of being a sadist prevailed.

Sick films like the Saw series, the two Hostel movies and similar filth.

Done in 1991 by Demme.

A young FBI woman Clarice goes to ask for the devil to help in a case.

This is Lecter a serial killer that is portrayed as god by the use of light.

He is highly educate on top of that. The director makes us love him with dirty tricks like comparing him immediately after Lecter meets Clarice to her father.

Lecter defends Clarice and wins our affection.

And made sure that a lot of filth is coming to cinema
Jurassic Park

Done in 1993.
An industrialist John Hammond cloned dinosaurs. An inspection is to be done by chaos theorist Ian Malcolm, paleontologists Dr. Alan Grant, Dr. Dr. Ellie Sattler.

At the time of this film Computer-generated imagery (CGI for short) was starting. For me its clear that this is THE film to use it in a wonderful way first. Without computer this amazing film would not have been possible. And since Spielberg directed it, its a gem. And the dinosaurs look amazing!

Maybe Snow white and The Seven Dwarfs, and Toy story that used a completely new three dimensional animated film should be in my list. I just arbitrarily excluded animated films.
Continued

The chaos expert warns that putting dinosaurs and humans in the same time age, will be a disaster. And it is. But I think that the message to derive from the film is NOT avoid thinking big, but rather do not be a capitalistic pig.

This film is no less on Alan learns how to be a father to two children. So he could marry Ellie. But the second sequel (not done by Spielberg) shows a complete lack of understanding. The pair did not marry.
Pulp fiction

This film was not only a film. It was an event that made Quentin Tarantino a sensation.

Tarantino for some reason takes and cites from everywhere. But in a post modern way. Low and high. He uses editing methods similar to Godard. But cites in his films some forgotten Swedish horror film (that I did not see). He cites Jean Pier Melville, But Pulp Fiction is not only a crime film. It is also a spaghetti western, a neo-noir and above all a comedy. An excellent representation of post modernism.

In particular, Pulp Fiction takes a post modernistic look at violence. In his first film a shows a criminal that cuts the ear of a cop. But he makes it a comic scene.
Continued

In Pulp Fiction some amateur rapes a scary gangster named Marsellus Wallace without understanding what a mistake he is making. The scene after the rape is extremely funny. Tarantino does not seem to care about anything but making cool films. He does not think film cause violence (well, apart from "A clockwork Orange"). His films are amoral and do not judge the characters. His dialogues are surprisingly authentic. He does whatever he wants. A lot of use on the N word. The narrative is not linear and in fact is circular. On the other hand, you have to be numb in some sense if you want to see this film as good. A once rebel John Cleese called this film "a product of a sick mind". In any case this film influenced independent cinema in a decisive way.
A moment of Innocence

This is the best Iranian new wave film in my (unpopular) opinion and a great film. The Iranian films remind you a lot the Italian neo-realism. Talking about the social situation in their country with somewhat critical eye. This films of Makhmalbaf also talk on cinema itself. The main character in this film is a director that was one arrested, and wants to make a film on that incident. This film depicts the big love of the Iranian have toward the old American films. This film like "The killing" (Kubrick) describes scenes many times each time from a different perspective. Our main hero may not be happy with a decision taken by the actors (albeit we will never know since the film ends there). The reincarnation moment should have a knife a gun and a female crook. The actors decide to change the ending. We see the frame freezing with a piece of bread, a flower and a face of a girl. A moment of innocence. See next slide!
Films that almost made it

The phantom carriage, Aguirre the Wrath of god, Greed, Nosferatu (of Moreau), The blue angel, Gone with the wind, Metropolis, Casablanca, Duck Soup, The night of the hunter, All about Eve A nous le liberte, LAventura, Blowup, "Blow out", The strategy of the spider, "The conformist", Ashes and diamonds, A trip to the moon, There will be blood, Toy Story, Nanook of the north. The beauty and the beast (the French film), A letter from an unknown woman, E.T., Pather Panchali, 400 blows, Love of a blonde, Persona, Barry Lyndon, A clockwork orange, Knife in the water, Spirited away, American beauty See more next slide.
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