

German Expressionism

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- The German Expressionist movement was initially confined to Germany due to the isolation of the country experienced during World War I. In 1916, the government had banned foreign films.
- After WWI, German films became stranger and quite a bit darker. The control of the government banning foreign films also aided to their isolation. From there, German Expressionism was born

German Expressionism

- **German Expressionism Portrays a Subjective, Emotional World Rather Than An Objective Reality**

GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM

- German expressionist filmmakers used visual distortion and hyper-expressive performance to show inner turmoils, fears and desires of that era.

- The first Expressionist films made up for their low budgets by using set designs with wildly non-realistic, geometrically absurd sets, along with designs painted on walls and floors to represent lights, shadows, and objects.



- The plots and stories of the Expressionist films often dealt with madness, insanity, betrayal, and other "intellectual" topics (as opposed to standard action-adventure and romantic films).

Characteristics of German Expressionism

- ⦿ High angles
- ⦿ Deep shadows/chiaroscuro lighting
- ⦿ Extreme camera tilting
- ⦿ Impossible sets

What is Chiaroscuro?

- **Chiaroscuro** is an Italian term used to describe the technique of using light and dark in an artwork, particularly paintings. It originally comes from the days of the Renaissance, and combines the Italian words: “chiaro” meaning “clear” or “bright,” and “oscuro” meaning “obscure” or “dark.” It refers to the dramatic effect experienced when using contrasting areas of light and dark in a piece.

Chiaroscuro

- In cinematography, the term refers to the extremes of low and high-contrast lighting to create areas of light and darkness in films. This applies especially to black and white films.
- Often the light would only illuminate half of the subject's face, while obscuring the other side, giving them a three dimensional shape and volume.

CHIAROSCURO EXAMPLES IN CINEMA?

- ◉ *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920)
- ◉ *Nosferatu* (1922)
- ◉ *T-Men* (1947)

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- This technique obscures part of the subject in question, it's often used to create suspense, and is common in thriller or horror films.

Cabinet of Dr. Caligari

- *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was based on the writers' experiences as WWI soldiers and their distrust of authoritarian leadership. The filmmakers chose to deliberately distort reality in order to disorient the audience to invoke a feeling of the time rather than a truthful or realistic depiction.

Soviet Montage

- **Soviet Montage** Theory is a film movement that took place in **Soviet** Russia during the 1910's, 20's and into the early 30's. It was **founded** by **Lev Kuleshov** while he was teaching at the **Moscow Film School**

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- Lev Kulshov first conceptualised montage theory on the basis that one frame may not be enough to convey an idea or an emotion.
 - The audience are able to view two separate images and subconsciously give them a collective context.

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- The idea behind Kuleshov's short film was to combine a single, center-framed shot of the popular actor Ivan Mosjoukine with three other distinct shots

Kuleshev effect

- The first is a bowl of **soup**, the second is a girl in a **coffin**, and the third is a **woman** lying on a couch.
- the combination of shots would evoke something different each time, such as **hunger** (soup), **sadness** (coffin) and **desire** (woman.) Kuleshov was credited with pioneering the evoking of emotion through contrasting images, therefore the technique became known as the Kuleshov effect.

Metric Montage

- The Metric Montage is inspired by the pacing of a musical score, AKA the meter. This is used to create a visual pace within a film scene by cutting to the next shot after a finite number of frames no matter what is happening on screen.

Rhythmic Montage

- If the Metric Montage is used to establish a visual pace, then the Rhythmic Montage is used to keep to the pace, in both a visual and auditory sense.



Neorealism

- the neorealist movement strived to portray real world struggles in the aftermath of WWII

Neorealist directors such as Luchino Visconti, Vittorio De Sica and Federico Fellini

redefined how filmmakers could implement honest portrayals of life on the big screen. With an emphasis on holding a mirror up to society, the neorealist movement strived to portray real world struggles in the aftermath of WWII, and did so to great effect.

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- **French Impressionist Cinema** describes an avant-garde **film** movement lasting approximately from 1918 to 1929.
 - The definition of **avant garde** is new and innovative in style or method, usually describing something in the arts.
 - **Impressionist** filmmakers regarded **film** as an art form in itself rather than simply a means for recording plays and novels
 - immediate visual impression produced by a scene

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- French Impressionist film emphasizes the thinking or feeling of character,
 - the frames usually changes all the time by varying the
 - camera height,
 - camera angle and
 - camera distance,
 - to show from the angle of the character.

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- the camera movement of French Impressionist film is smooth. To achieve a smooth camera movement, there is a series of technological innovation. They tie their camera to cars, wheels, or rollers in order to achieve a smooth camera movement.

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- ◉ French Impressionist focus on personal emotion and inner action, a lot of flashback is used to depict memories.
 - ◉ they even insist to show the dreams, fantasies and mental states of characters

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- In the aspect of editing, French Impressionist film uses point-of-view editing and rhythmic editing to depict the mental states. Point-of-view editing is used to show things from the angle of a single character. For example, the scene will start from a shot which the character is looking at something, then shifts to the object that the character is looking at. Rhythmic editing is usually used for violence scene, which the rhythm accelerates, and the shots get shorter and shorter

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- In French Impressionist film, the cinematography and editing is used to show the characters' personal experience and optical impressions. The film interest falls on inner action instead of external physical behavior. The film normally uses the superimpositions to show a character's thoughts or feelings (Bordwell & Thompson, 2009, p.465). This technique is used by dissolving two visuals cutting cross each other in a scene.

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- French Impressionism is arguably the movement that initially inspired film criticism in an academic fashion. The movement explored techniques such as non-linear editing, innovative lighting, attempts to portray dream sequences and fantasies, and other ingenious methods to tell a story from a protagonist's point of view. Although these conventions are well-known to filmgoers today, this common knowledge is thanks to innovative frameworks created with movements such as French Impressionism. In fact, Abel Gance even introduced the concept of using widescreen to enhance the cinematic experience for his 1927 film, *Napoléon*.





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- The movement gained international attention when Roberto Rossellini's *Rome, Open City* won the Grande Prize at the 1946 Cannes Film Festival, and Italian Neorealism's brutally honest portrayals of the working class and their enduring struggles became known as the country's cinematic 'golden era' – a title that it undeniably deserves.