



SILVERSCREEN
PRIMARY
EDUCATION

1970s Cinema: The Rebirth of Hollywood

By Adam Pepper

Session 2



Welcome to Session 2 of this '1970s Cinema: The Rebirth of Hollywood' course!

Over ten weeks, we will journey through over 30 years of cinema to find the secrets behind some of the most iconic, ground-breaking, popular and culture-changing stories and movies from this, the grooviest of all decades!

We will study the directors, writers, actors, stories and history of the time to uncover how the 1970s created such a shift in film and storytelling, and gave us some of our most legendary film-makers.

We will look at their childhoods, their experiences, their first film experiences and the news they lived through to chart a path to some of the greatest films ever made.

Session 2:

After visiting post-war USA last week, and meeting the fresh faces of a group of children who will grow up to exert a huge influence on cinema across the 70s and beyond, we head deeper into the Swinging Sixties this week.

It was a time of civil unrest, political division, anger at the death and destruction wrought by the Vietnam War, and high profile and country-changing political assassinations.

But it was also a time of great creative freedom for these new writers, directors and actors who, as TV kills Hollywood as we knew it, leaving the cameras and stories in their hands to keep the film-making business in the US still kicking. And with a steady stream of 'guys with cameras' happy to support this young, fresh out of college talent, it will only be a matter of time before their first stories make it to the screen.

They really were 'Born To Be Wild'!

Useful information for Session 2:

Roger Corman

Roger William Corman (April 5, 1926 – May 9, 2024) was an American film director, producer, and actor. Known under various monikers such as "The Pope of Pop Cinema", "The Spiritual Godfather of the New Hollywood", and "The King of Cult", he was known as a trailblazer in the world of independent film. Many of Corman's films are low-budget cult films including some which are adapted from the tales of Edgar Allan Poe.

In 1964, Corman became the youngest filmmaker to have a retrospective at the Cinémathèque Française, as well as in the British Film Institute and the Museum of Modern Art. He was the co-founder of New World Pictures, the founder of New Concorde and was a long-time member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. In 2009, he was awarded an Academy Honorary Award "for his rich engendering of films and filmmakers".

Corman is also famous for handling the U.S. distribution of many films by noted foreign directors, including Federico Fellini (Italy), Ingmar Bergman (Sweden), François Truffaut (France) and Akira Kurosawa (Japan). He mentored and gave a start to many young film directors such as Francis Ford Coppola, Ron Howard, Martin Scorsese, Jonathan Demme, Peter Bogdanovich, Joe Dante, John Sayles, and James Cameron, and was highly influential in the New Hollywood filmmaking movement of the 1960s and 1970s. He also helped to launch the careers of actors like Peter Fonda, Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, Bruce Dern, Diane Ladd, and William Shatner.

Corman found work at 20th Century Fox initially in the mail room. He worked his way up to a story reader. The one property that he liked the most and provided ideas for was filmed as *The Gunfighter* with Gregory Peck. When Corman received no credit at all, he left Fox and decided he would work in film by himself.

He then returned to Los Angeles and tried to re-establish himself in the film industry.

In 1959, Corman founded The Filmgroup with his brother Gene, a company producing or releasing low-budget black-and-white films as double features for drive-ins and action houses. In February 1959, Filmgroup announced they would release 10 films. Their first movies were *High School Big Shot* (1959) and *T-Bird Gang* (1959), produced by Stanley Bickman.

For AIP, Corman and Griffith made a black comedy, *A Bucket of Blood* (1959). Corman announced he would follow it with a similar comedy, *The Bloodshot Private Eye*. It does not seem to have been made. Instead, Griffith reused the same script structure and Corman employed many of the same cast in *The Little Shop of Horrors* (1960). This film was reputedly shot in two days and one night.

Sam Peckinpah

David Samuel Peckinpah (February 21, 1925 – December 28, 1984) was an American film director and screenwriter. His 1969 Western epic *The Wild Bunch* received an Academy Award nomination and was ranked No. 80 on the American Film Institute's top 100 list. His films employed a visually innovative and explicit depiction of action and violence as well as a revisionist approach to the Western genre.

Peckinpah's films deal with the conflict between values and ideals, as well as the corruption and violence in human society. His characters are often loners or losers who desire to be honourable but are forced to compromise in order to survive in a world of nihilism and brutality. He was given the nickname "Bloody Sam" owing to the violence in his films.

Peckinpah's combative personality, marked by years of alcohol and drug abuse, affected his professional legacy. The production of many of his films included battles with producers and crew members, damaging his reputation and career during his lifetime. Peckinpah's other films include *Ride the High Country* (1962), *Major Dundee* (1965), *The Ballad of Cable Hogue* (1970), *Straw Dogs* (1971), *The Getaway* (1972), *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid* (1973), *Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia* (1974), *Cross of Iron* (1977) and *Convoy* (1978).

Films to look out for:

A Bout De Souffle (1960)

Cleopatra (1963)

The Wild Angels (1966)

Bonnie & Clyde (1967)

The Trip (1967)

Easy Rider (1969)

Midnight Cowboy (1969)

The Wild Bunch (1969)

THX 1138 (1971)

