



SILVERSCREEN
PRIMARY
EDUCATION

1970s Cinema: The Rebirth of Hollywood

By Adam Pepper

Session 4



Welcome to Session 4 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 4:

'The Godfather' is a hit! A huge hit! And suddenly, Francis Ford Coppola, like his mentor Roger Corman before him, is in a position to support new film-makers with their projects. George Lucas is back in the fold, and a young Steven Spielberg is making a name for himself on the TV backlots in Hollywood.

And fresh from cutting his teeth on the Corman-produced 'Boxcar Bertha', Martin Scorsese is doing what all of his friends are telling him to do; 'tell one of your stories'. Cue Keitel, grungy streets, empty church confessions and the audacious entrance of a true cinema icon!

But it is in the ghettos and slums of NYC that cinema audiences spring from next. Sick of white guy detectives solving white guy crimes, in white guy neighbourhoods, a new breed of film-maker is out to present the Black experience on film. Only this time it will be done to a funky beat and with a slick set of clothes on!

As we hit 1972-4, the temperatures are rising, new stories are emerging, icons are being created and cinema is changing. Forever.

Useful information for Session 4:

Melvin Van Peebles

Melvin Van Peebles (born August 21, 1932 – September 21, 2021) was an American actor, filmmaker, writer, and composer. He worked as an active filmmaker into the 2000s. His feature film debut, *The Story of a Three-Day Pass* (1967), was based on his own French-language novel *La Permission* and was shot in France, as it was difficult for a black American director to get work at the time. The film won an award at the San Francisco International Film Festival which gained him the interest of Hollywood studios, leading to his American feature debut *Watermelon Man*, in 1970. Eschewing further overtures from Hollywood, he used the successes he had so far to bankroll his work as an independent filmmaker.

In 1971, he released his best-known work, creating and starring in the film *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*, considered one of the earliest and best-regarded examples of the blaxploitation genre. He followed this up with the musical, *Don't Play Us Cheap*, based on his own stage play, and continued to make films, write novels and stage plays in English and in French through the next several decades; his final films include the French-language film *Le Conte du ventre plein* (2000) and the absurdist film *Confessionsofa Ex-Doofus-ItchyFooted Mutha* (2008). His son, filmmaker and actor Mario Van Peebles, appeared in several of his works and portrayed him in the 2003 biographical film *Baadasssss!*

Ryan O'Neal

Charles Patrick Ryan O'Neal (April 20, 1941 – December 8, 2023) was an American actor. Born in Los Angeles, he trained as an amateur boxer before beginning a career in acting in 1960.

In 1964, he landed the role of Rodney Harrington on the ABC night-time soap opera *Peyton Place*. It was an instant hit and boosted O'Neal's career. He later found success in films, most notably in the romantic drama *Love Story* (1970), for which he was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actor and the Golden Globe Award for Best Actor – Motion Picture Drama; Peter Bogdanovich's *What's Up, Doc?* (1972); *Paper Moon* (1973), which earned him a nomination for the Golden Globe Award for Best Actor – Motion Picture Musical or Comedy; Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (1975), in which he portrayed the titular character; Richard Attenborough's *A Bridge Too Far* (1977); and Walter Hill's *The Driver* (1978).

In 1989, he starred in "Chances Are" opposite Cybil Shepard and Robert Downey Jr.

From 2005 to 2017, he had a recurring role in the Fox television series *Bones* as Max, the father of the show's eponymous protagonist.

In 2001, O'Neal was diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukemia (CML). After struggling with leukemia, O'Neal was frequently seen at his wife, Farrah Fawcett's side when she was battling cancer. He told *People* magazine, "It's a love story. I just don't know how to play this one. I won't know this world without her. Cancer is an insidious enemy." In April 2012, O'Neal stated he had been diagnosed with stage 4 prostate cancer. He later stated it was stage 2.

O'Neal died at Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, California, on December 8, 2023, at the age of 82. His cause of death was congestive heart failure, with cardiomyopathy listed as a contributing factor. O'Neal was interred next to Fawcett at Pierce Brothers Westwood Village Memorial Park and Mortuary.

Tatum O'Neal

Tatum Beatrice O'Neal (born November 5, 1963) is an American actress. At the age of 10, she became the youngest person ever to win a competitive Academy Award, for her performance as Addie Loggins in *Paper Moon* co-starring her father, Ryan O'Neal. She later starred in the films *The Bad News Bears*, *Nickelodeon*, and *Little Darlings*, and appeared in guest roles in the television series *Sex and the City*, *8 Simple Rules*, and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*.

O'Neal starred in films such as *The Bad News Bears* (1976) with Walter Matthau, *International Velvet* (1978) with Christopher Plummer and Anthony Hopkins, and *Little Darlings* (1980) with Kristy McNichol, and co-starred in *Nickelodeon* (1976) with her father and in *Circle of Two* (1980) with Richard Burton.

Films to look out for:

Sweet Sweetbacks Baadasssss Song (1971)

Shaft (1971)

Columbo: Murder By The Book (1971)

Duel (1971)

Live & Let Die (1973)

Mean Streets (1973)

Paper Moon (1973)

Foxy Brown (1974)

