

# FILM, BEST QUOTES ON

A film is never really good unless the camera is an eye in the head of a poet.

--Orson Welles

The movie is the imagination of mankind in action.

--Gilbert Seldes

The cinema has no boundaries. It is a ribbon of dreams.

--Orson Welles

The films made in the first half of the 20th century are in many ways superior to the films being made now. It wasn't an industry forced by bankers and investors to pander to 18-year-olds. A film now has to fill vast numbers of seats. Studios have to show huge profits to the multinational corporations that own them. Not exactly like the old days of classic Hollywood.

--Mike Disa

Through the magic of motion pictures, someone who's never left Peoria knows the softness of a Paris spring, the color of a Nile sunset, the sorts of vegetation one will find along the upper Amazon and that Big Ben has not yet gone digital.

--Vincent Canby

If I can make them laugh and through that laughter make this world seem just a little brighter, then I am satisfied.

--W. C. Fields

If you are lonely, dim the lights and put on a horror movie. After a while it won't feel like you're alone anymore.

—Unknown

I was watching *Annie Hall* on TV, and my girlfriend came home and started complaining about her office drama. She asked me, 'Are you tuning me out for *Annie Hall*?' I said, 'Oh, I'm sorry. Was your story nominated for seven Academy Awards?'

—Sam Morril

It is a fact, and a disturbing one in many ways, that every basic device of cinematic storytelling had been established by 1912. The close-up, the tracking shot, the high angle, the flashback, the insert, effect lighting, masking, fades, dissolves—the whole gamut was there. But it was though the components of a steam train had been assembled, and no one knew how to light the boiler. For while all the components of the narrative film had been devised, no one was fully exploiting them.

--Kevin Brownlow

When, in *Fantasia*, Mickey Mouse clambered up on the (real) podium and shook hands with the (real) conductor Leopold Stokowski, high art and low art collapsed into one another.

—Robert Hughes

When Spielberg first showed John Williams a cut of *Schindler's List*, Williams was so moved he had to take a walk outside to collect himself. Upon his return, Williams told Spielberg he deserved a better composer. Spielberg replied, 'I know, but they're all dead.'

—IMDB

There will always be those who love old movies. I meet teenagers who are astonishingly well-informed about the classics. But you are right that many moviegoers and video viewers say they do not 'like' black and white films. In my opinion, they are cutting themselves off from much of the mystery and beauty of the movies. Black and white is an artistic choice, a medium that has strengths and traditions, especially in its use of light and shadow. Moviegoers of course have the right to dislike b&w, but it is not something they should be proud of. It reveals them, frankly, as cinematically illiterate. I have been described as a snob on this issue. But snobs exclude; they do not include. To exclude b&w from your choices is an admission that you have a closed mind, a limited imagination, or are lacking in taste.

—Roger Ebert

People who LIKE movies have a favorite. People who LOVE movies couldn't possibly choose.

—Nicole Yatsonsky

We live in a box of space and time. Movies are windows in its walls. They allow us to enter other minds—not simply in the sense of identifying with the characters, although that is an important part of it, but by seeing the world as another person sees it.

--Roger Ebert

Every great film should seem new every time you see it.

—Roger Ebert

Film as dream, film as music. No art passes our conscience in the way film does, and goes directly to our feelings, deep down into the dark rooms of our souls.

—Ingmar Bergman

The most interesting of the classic movie genres to me are the indigenous ones: the Western, which was born on the Frontier, the Gangster Film, which originated in the East Coast cities, and the Musical, which was spawned by Broadway. They remind me of jazz: they allowed for endless, increasingly complex, sometimes perverse variations. When these variations were played by the masters, they reflected the changing times; they gave you fascinating insights into American culture and the American psyche.

—Martin Scorsese

TV stars are cool. Even if their characters are less than admirable, they come across as somehow sympathetic, maybe even neighborly. They are, after all, people you invite into your home every week. If you don't like them, you won't watch them.

Movie stars, by contrast, are hot. They have to blaze so fiercely that they fill a screen forty feet high and demand the attention of a crowded theater.

That's why very few TV stars have graduated successfully to features. It requires not only different skills but a different personality. You have to go from amiable to commanding.

Likewise, some movie stars are simply too big for television. Jack Nicholson is riveting on-screen, but you wouldn't want him in your living room week after week. The television simply couldn't contain his personality.

—Walter Jon Williams

There's a very old and famous story about a conversation between Dustin Hoffman and Sir Laurence Olivier on the set of *Marathon Man* in 1976. The gist is that Hoffman, being a method actor, had stayed up all night in preparation for a scene they were filming that day. When he told Olivier, the British actor said, 'Why not try acting? It's much easier.'

—Shane Ryan

Always make the audience suffer as much as possible.

—Alfred Hitchcock

Learning on the job isn't a bad way to become an actor: pretty much everybody in the early days of the movies took that route, and some of them turned out fine. (In fact, quite a few impeccably trained British actors could barely hold the screen next to their untutored but movie-savvier American co-stars: watch what Bette Davis does to Leslie Howard—who was no slouch in *Of Human Bondage*.)

—Terrence Rafferty

Disney has the best casting. If he doesn't like an actor he just tears him up.

—Alfred Hitchcock

With animation you can suspend the laws of physics and the laws of society and the laws of reason and the laws of biology and the laws of family. You can have a dog adopt a boy. You can turn a rat into a French chef. You can make male cows with big pink udders. You can change the Declaration of Independence. You can have a family in which every member is a doggone superhero.

--Sarah Boxer

One can be sad, alone, detached from family and friends, and the movies can fill a void. Film can provide one for a short period of time with an intimate relationship with characters who fully participate in all aspects of life. One becomes absorbed in a film and vicariously experiences life through characters created by gifted artists.

--Dan L. Miller

*It's a Wonderful Life* sums up my philosophy of filmmaking. First, to exalt the worth of the individual. Second, to champion man—plead his causes, protest any degradation of his dignity, spirit or divinity. And third, to dramatize the viability of the individual—as in the theme of the film itself...there is a radiance and glory in the darkness, could we but see, and to see we only have to look. I beseech you to look.

--Frank Capra

Silent films were never silent. During shooting, studio stages resounded with the cacophony of carpenter's hammers, cranking cameras, hissing kleig lights, 'mood' music, and directors exhorting actors through each scene. Doors leading to and from the stages squeaked open and slammed shut. Executives conferred, extras chatted, and even actors carried on conversations.

--David Stenn

You introduce the man and the woman—and then you complicate it.

--Susan Seidelman

There is no other occupation in the world that so closely resembles enslavement as the career of a film star.

--Louise Brooks

I always liked movies...they were Milk Duds for the soul.

--Joe Queenan

The length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder.

--Alfred Hitchcock

I always tried to get laughter into my pictures. Make them laugh, make them cry, and back to laughter. What do people go to the theater for? An emotional exercise. And no preachment. I don't believe in taking advantage of someone who comes to the theater by teaching him a lesson. He can go to church, he can read the newspapers. But when people go to a motion picture they want to be entertained.

--Mary Pickford

Garbo had something behind the eyes that you couldn't see until you photographed it in close-up. You could see thought. If she had to look at one person with jealousy, and another with love, she didn't have to change her expression. You could see it in her eyes as she looked from one to the other. And nobody else has been able to do that on the screen. Garbo did it without the command of the English language.

--Clarence Brown

A director is a man who never sleeps. Because if he superintends a staff of brilliant and infallible scenario writers, temperamental stars and untemperamental actors, helpless extra people, nut cameramen, artistic artists, impractical technical directors, excitable designers, varied electricians and carpenters, strange title writers, the financial department and the check signers; if he endeavors ultimately to please the exhibitors, the critics, the censors, the exchange men, and the public, it's a perfect cinch he won't have time to sleep.

--Cecil B. DeMille

The secret of the silent film lay in its unique ability to conjure up a situation that closely involved an audience, because demands were made on its imagination. The audience responded to suggestion, supplied the missing sounds and voices, and became a creative contributor to the process of projection. A high degree of technical skill was required to make such demands effective; what the audience saw it had to believe in.

--Kevin Brownlow

The oddest thing about this whole funny business is that the public really wants to laugh, but it's the hardest thing to make them do it. They don't want to cry, yet they will cry at the slightest provocation. Maybe that's why so many comedians want to play tragedy—they want a sort of vacation.

--Harry Langdon

The history of the cinema is the history of boys photographing girls.

--Jean-Luc Godard

American motion pictures are written by the half-educated for the half-witted.

--St. John Ervine

The fascinating thing about film is that it's an illusion. You see people pointing to the screen and saying, 'That movie...' That's not where the movie is, it's up in the projection booth, in the can. What they're pointing at is just shadows on the wall and projections of their own emotions.

--Peter Bogdanovich

Films, much like literature and drama, come out of our society and mirror it, and beyond matters of clothing and interior decoration, movies reflect and do not set patterns.

--Judith Crist

Animation is not the art of drawings-that-move, but the art of movements that are drawn.

--Norman McLaren

Movies, by affecting us on sensual and primitive levels, are a supremely pleasurable—and dangerous—art form. That mixture needs separating out, which I take to be my task as a critic...

Movies are a hybrid, all-encompassing art and I suppose that what I've devised for dealing with them is a mongrel form of criticism. But systematic criticism seems to me a violation of the very qualities that make movies such a powerful art form. It's an attempt to impose order on a medium which incorporates the appeal of the circus, the wild-west show, the penny dreadful, of theatre, opera, and the novel, a medium which bites off chunks of anthropology, journalism, and politics, and a medium that is always, of course, the domain of Eros. Movies can take in so much from the other arts, and so much from the world, that the job for the critic is not to close himself off.

--Pauline Kael

American movies aren't much fun anymore, and I suppose if you wanted to be solemn you might say they aren't very healthy either. The violence stuff goes on and on and will probably never end or even slacken off. At the same time there's a trend toward an increasing isolation of the sexes, and that means no comedy, no joy, no lyricism, and no myths that are fun to believe in. Movies like the working-girl comedies of the Thirties or the Astaire-Rogers or Tracy-Hepburn series are remembered so vividly because they made people feel better about their own lives. Our movies don't do that anymore. Sometime in the Sixties we decided we no longer deserved to feel good and romance died.

--David Denby

Film is the pack rat of the arts. It constantly raids not only its own past history but the entire range of our culture for bright baubles of material and techniques; it is this something-from-everybody, something-for-everybody mode of operation that gives movies their centrality in the modern sensibility. In this day of intensive specialization by individuals it is not uncommon—indeed, it is the norm—to find intellectuals who cheerfully admit that they know nothing about music or dance or drama or even the modern novel, but I have yet to meet anyone, intellectual or not, who can bring himself to admit that he knows nothing about the movies.

--Richard Schickel

It is always a game when making a film, to see if you can take from life, from reality, in order to produce the illusion of reality.

--Desire Ecarre

The film's job is to make the audience 'help itself,' not to 'entertain' it. To grip, not to amuse. To furnish the audience with cartridges, not to dissipate the energies that it brought into the theater.

--Sergei Eisenstein

Film has nothing to do with literature; the character and substance of the two art forms are usually in conflict. This probably has something to do with the receptive process of the mind. The written word is read and assimilated by a conscious act of the will in alliance with the intellect; little by little it affects the imagination and the emotions. The process is different with a motion picture. When we experience a film, we consciously prime ourselves for illusion. Putting aside will and intellect, we make way for it in our imagination. The sequence of pictures plays directly on our feelings.

--Ingmar Bergman

Everyone criticizes the movies. Yet everyone seems to continue to go to them.

--James M. Gillis

Screenwriting involves more than mere dialogue and plot. The choice between a close-up and a long-shot, for example, may quite often transcend the plot. If the story of Little Red Riding Hood is told with the wolf in close-up and Little Red Riding Hood in a long-shot, the director is concerned primarily with the emotional problems of a wolf with a compulsion to eat little girls. If Little Red Riding Hood is in close-up and the Wolf in long-shot, the emphasis is shifted to the emotional problems of vestigial virginity in a wicked world. Thus, two different stories are being told with the same basic anecdotal material.

--Andrew Sarris

When the film is finished it is never the film I said I wanted to make....It's another thing, another creature, born of certain stimulations and initial conditions, but which has taken on bit by bit a completely different physiognomy.

--Federico Fellini

In good films, there is always a directness that entirely frees us from the itch to interpret.

--Susan Sontag

Substance separates film from movies.

--John Huston

A film is a petrified fountain of thought.

--Jean Cocteau

A wide screen just makes a bad film twice as bad.

--Samuel Goldwyn

The stultifying effect of the movies is *not* that the children see them but that their parents do, as if Hollywood provided a plausible adult recreation to grow up into.

--Paul Goodman

A film is a boat which is always on the point of sinking—it always tends to break up as you go along and drag you under with it.

--Francois Truffaut

Film is not to be played with. It may be our most powerful medium and should be treated as such.

--Spike Lee

Perhaps the most outstanding device in film propaganda is the use of contrasts. Not only do strong contrasts contain a greater emotional intensity than the more subtle nuances, but they also guide the audience's sympathies with more certainty.

--David Welch

Propaganda has its best chance of success when it clearly designates a target as the source of all misery and suffering....One of the most striking means by which the cinema has influenced social attitudes—changing or reinforcing opinions—has been through the use of stereotypes...conventional figures that have come to be regarded as representative of particular classes, races, and so on.

--David Welch

The only way to get rid of my fears is to make films about them.

--Alfred Hitchcock

Film is the poetry of light.

--Unknown

Cinema is not just pictures. It is something great, mysterious and sublime, for which one should not spare any effort and for which one should not fail to risk one's life if the need arises.

--Abel Gance

Whatever future the cinema may have will be based solidly upon its past. Time is a human conception—very much like a motion picture. It is all there, but we have to live it. And you cannot enjoy the last reel unless you know what happened in the first.

--Kevin Brownlow

You can have a small army of people charging across the screen and it won't matter much to the audience. But if you show details of the action, like guns going off, individual men fighting or a fist hitting someone in the eye, then you will have more feeling of action than if all the extras in Hollywood are running about. That is why real catastrophes look tame in newsreels. You need detail work and close shots in a movie. Only then does it come alive.

--B. Reaves Eason

Producers are the eternal thorn in the flesh of creative film makers. Their role is as difficult to define as their contributions are hard to distinguish. They are the men who reduce motion pictures to the level of merchandise.

--Kevin Brownlow

We talk of the worth, the service, the entertaining power the community value, the recreative force, the educational influence, the civilizing and commercial possibilities of the motion picture. And everyone has, singularly enough, neglected to mention its rarest and subtlest beauty: Silence.

In its silence it more nearly approximates nature than any arts save painting and sculpture. The greatest processes of the universe are those of silence. All growth is silent. The deep-set love is most eloquent in that transcendent silence of the communion of souls. The majestic caravan of the stars is forever silent. The flaming passion of sunset whispers nothing to the ear....No great thought ever came out of a cabaret. No one expects wisdom from a parrot....

The value of silence in art is its stimulation to the imagination and the imaginative quality is art's highest appeal. The really excellent motion picture, the really great photoplay, are never mere photography. Continually, they cause the beholder to hear things which they suggest—the murmurs of a summer night, the pounding of the surf, the sigh of the wind in the trees, the babble of crowded streets, the whisperings of love.

The talking picture will be made practical, but it will never supersede the motion picture without sound.

--James Quirk

An editor's job is no more limited to the joining up of scenes than a poet's to the rhyming of words. Both are essential functions, but both are merely mechanical stages in a creative process.

Editing is directing the film for the second time. To gauge the psychological moment—to know exactly where to cut—requires the same intuitive skill as that needed by a director.

--Kevin Brownlow

It is no fun to watch a man thinking. But to see him span a yawning chasm in a furious auto leap...to swing from plane to plane...to see him fulfill the wildest flights of fancy on our behalf is an exhilarating and gratifying experience. An experience without risk.

--Kevin Brownlow

A director is the only man besides your husband who can tell you how many of your clothes to take off.

--Betty Blythe

The great art of films does not consist of descriptive movement of face and body, but in the movements of thought and soul transmitted in a kind of intense isolation.

--James Card

Popular illusion sees the role of the motion-picture director as the very essence of glamour and romance—and the nearest equivalent to a Divine Power yet achieved by mankind. People behave as he tells them to, events occur when he wants them to. He has the ability to freeze time and to reshape history—not just on paper but in actuality. And when he has committed his creation to film he can play God all over again and rearrange events and characters in the cutting room.

Directors, however, are human. While creating their motion-picture events they are at the mercy of real ones. They may be able to part the Red Sea, but they're helpless if the sun goes down while they're shooting it.

In order to get a story on film, a director has to combine the organizational abilities of an army general with the patience and insight of a psychoanalyst. He has to have energy and stamina enough to give full rein to his talents as an artist and as a craftsman. He is answerable for his work on every level—financial, artistic, and administrative—and his job carries enormous responsibility. But his compensations can be equally great. For when the director has transformed his imaginings into reality, and when he has preserved that reality on motion-picture film, he has experienced something no other artist can know.

--Kevin Brownlow

When they ask me what elements are necessary for a director, I propose some absolutely horrible qualifications. I tell them he must know all the languages, he must know the history of the theater from its beginnings, he must be an expert at psychoanalysis and must have had some psychiatric training. He must know every emotion. And they ask me, 'Did you know all this?' And I say, 'No—but I never asked anyone how to become a director.'

--Kevin Brownlow

And this was the secret of the silent era. Men unhampered by a literary education had a greater facility for visual narrative than men trained all their lives to use words; they may have been inarticulate in speech, but they were often superbly eloquent with pictures. And they had *lived*.

--Kevin Brownlow

A director is the channel through which a motion picture reaches a screen.

--King Vidor

A director is the best illustration of the term 'all-guy.' He is the one upon whose should *all* of the blame invariably falls if the picture is not good—and if it is good, he is not always the one to get the thanks.

--Rex Ingram

The role of a director is the same as being a conductor in music: both are interpreters of artistic creations. But just as the virtuosos often extend their work into the field of composing, so the director becomes a creator by originating supplementary ideas to enhance the values of the photoplay.

--Thomas Ince

A director, to be successful, must combine efficiency with artistry, blending the two by the exercise of judgment and finesse, and knowing instinctively when to cease exercising one quality and when to begin employing the other. He should at once possess the qualifications of a dramatist, of an actor, should be a good executive and have a sympathetic understanding of human nature.

--Jesse Lasky

The director is essentially an interpreter. To him is given the task of making logical and understandable, pictorially, what the author and the continuity writer have set down. He must understand how to make the public understand. He must be as fluent with his camera as the author is with his pen. He must possess a sound sense of the mechanics of the motion picture, of composition, of continuity, of sequence. He must be a barometer of public opinion.

--Frank Lloyd

(On actresses.) I am inclined to favor beginners. They come untrammelled by so-called techniques, by theories, and by preconceived ideas. I prefer the young woman who has to support herself and possibly her mother. Of necessity she will work hard.

--D. W. Griffith

(On actresses.) I prefer the nervous type. I never engage a newcomer who applies for work without showing at least a sign or two of nervousness. If she is calm she has no imagination.

--D. W. Griffith

I am ice cold. You cannot direct unless you have contempt for your camera, contempt for your lights, contempt for your actors.

--Josef von Sternberg

I am a businessman. I have a commercial mind. A man can make the most artistic picture ever filmed, but if it plays to empty houses it hasn't achieved a thing for Art or for Humanity. The great problem of pictures is the welding of art and business. Waste is not artistic. Inefficiency is not artistic.

--Allan Dwan

Any story worth a damn must be intimate. It must be close to you. It must move you. Size will never move people. They may gasp—and that's it. It's over. You go to New York to see the tall buildings—and once you've seen them, you're satisfied. It's the same with the pyramids; you take a look and you've seen them. You don't want to go back every day for another look. For the average entertainment you need an intimate story—and an intimate story requires good scenes between two people. Occasionally more, but basically two people.

--Allan Dwan

A stage director was also a teacher. There were very few schools where an aspirant could learn the rudiments of his art. So it was up to the director to tell him how to walk, to stand, to kneel, to enter and exit a door, and above all, to read—and the hundred and one other things he's supposed to do naturally and gracefully. I carried some of this over into pictures. I always believed in full and thorough rehearsals, and I augmented this by coaching the players while the camera was grinding.

--Edward Sloman

I'm sure the early days in pictures were much more glamorous, much more romantic, much more soul-stirring, and much more edifying than anything today's directors can experience. We planned, and tried to create, something *new*. In many instances, we actually *did* create something new. And by so doing, we grew with the art.

--Edward Sloman

The living legend, the once great artist, is a vulnerable creature. His life's work completed, appraised, classified, he alone remains at large, uncertain and unpredictable. Rediscovery seldom leads to regeneration; the most he can contribute now is disappointment.

--Kevin Brownlow

Where films are concerned, you must lose your emotional involvement, otherwise you will not be in full control of your scenes. People will see things that you did not know were there. You cannot be sure you have the effect, because of the emotion you had at the time.

--Josef von Sternberg

The more successful the art direction, the less likely it is to be noticed. Only when it fails, only when a set *looks* like a set, does the work of this much overlooked department become apparent.

--Kevin Brownlow

However authentic the detail, however correct the costumes, however accurate the characterizations, one element of Hollywood period films was always wrong: the women. Whether it was ancient Babylon or pre-war Vienna, the women's cosmetics, hair styles, and apparel were a compromise between the era of the story and the year of production. The same still holds true today—and the reason for it has yet to change.

Hollywood films are the fashion plates of the world. Not only do the latest releases reflect the newest styles in clothes, but also in hair styles, cosmetics, and interior decoration. The men behind these industries are also the men behind motion pictures; producers do not allow themselves to forget that.

--Kevin Brownlow

It represents the highwater mark of film production—the farthest step that the silent drama has ever taken along the high road to art. Back of all the vast display is an intelligence which is indeed rare. *Robin Hood* did not grow from the bank roll; it grew from the mind—and this is the chief reason for its superiority.

--Robert E. Sherwood

Reassured by the belief that their prime duty was to entertain, film makers bought material of great potential and intelligence, stripped it of motivations and complex overtones, and reduced the action to basic, easy-to-follow melodrama.

--Kevin Brownlow

The purveyors of entertainment find melodrama an invaluable asset. It requires not the slightest effort on the part of the audience. They are not required to think; they merely watch. They will not miss any subtlety because there will not *be* any subtlety. The values are simple, the threat is clear, and the resolution action-filled and straightforward. There is seldom any characterization in pure melodrama, never any complex motivation. Life is reduced to the infantile level of an adventure strip.

--Kevin Brownlow

I have never been able to understand the intellectuals' denigration of melodrama. Because good always triumphs over evil in melodrama, beautiful little lamps are temporarily lit in the lousiest of us. I think melodrama has been a more powerful and inspiring force than any other literary or cinematic form.

--*Films in Review*

The first place in which a film is seen is in the scenario writer's imagination. And that is where it looks its best. The imagination short-circuits practical issues and reveals the film in all its glory, untarnished by effort and undiminished by compromise. It will never look so good again.

--Kevin Brownlow

*The Birth of a Nation* was the first feature to be made in the same fluid way as pictures are made today. It was the most widely seen production of the time and it had the strongest influence. It is still being shown—but now it looks like an actor who has been on the stage for half a century. A pale, worn shadow, its original glory is a memory rather than an actuality. The film has been reprinted and cut about frequently; it is also shown at the speed of sound films—twenty-four frames a second—instead of the sixteen frames more suitable for it. But, as with the actor, it is good to have it with us after all this time.

--Kevin Brownlow

The major aim of Hollywood's managing organization is to achieve conformity. Now this is something to be watched all the time, this pressure on the part of management to take the sting and statement out of a story and make it conform.

--George Stevens

For actors, aren't the movies our only real life?

--Robert Di Niro

I believe that every film made should provide a new impact on audiences, give them a new experience or view of the life around them and the times in which they live. The treatment and exposition of it on the screen should be freshly thought out and freshly created according to its needs.

--George Stevens

A movie is not about what it's about. It's about how it's about it.

--Roger Ebert

It cannot be doubted that motion pictures are a significant medium for the communication of ideas. They may affect public attitudes and behavior in a variety of ways, ranging from direct espousal of a political or social doctrine to the shaping of thought which characterizes all artistic expression. The importance of motion pictures as an organ of public opinion is not lessened by the fact that they are designed to entertain as well as to inform.

--Tom Clark

Most arts appeal to the mature. This art appeals at once to every class, mature, immature, developed, undeveloped, law abiding, criminal.

*--Production Code of the  
Motion Picture  
Association of  
America*

One really only makes one film in his life, and then he breaks it up into fragments and makes it again.

--Jean Renoir

Photography is truth. And cinema is truth twenty-four times a second.

--Jean-Luc Godard

If it can be written, or thought, it can be filmed.

--Stanley Kubrick

To shoot a film is to organize an entire universe.

--Ingmar Bergman

I feel like a father toward my old films. You bring children into the world, then they grow up and go off on their own. From time to time you get together, but it isn't always a pleasure to see them again.

--Michelangelo Antonioni

The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people's reality, and eventually in one's own.

--Susan Sontag

I went into the business for the money, and the art grew out of it. If people are disillusioned by that remark, I can't help it. It's the truth.

--Charlie Chaplin

The great thing about the movies...is—you're giving people little...tiny pieces of time...that they never forget.

--James Stewart

The vision of the audience is never as deep as the vision of the artist involved. They are always willing to settle for less than you want for yourself.

--Woody Allen

If you have a good script and you shoot it in a poor way, you can still have a movie that works. Whereas if you have bad material, you can shoot the eyes out of it and most of the time, no matter what style you bring to it, it doesn't work.

--Woody Allen

If you love movies enough, you can make a good one. You don't have to go to school, you don't have to know a lens from a bag of sand.

--Quentin Tarantino

Movies...are increasingly about technique, and technology, rather than people, and draw their inspiration from other movies rather than from any special passion or insight of the director.

--Tobias Wolff

Talkies are spoiling the oldest art in the world—the art of pantomime. They are ruining the great beauty of silence. They are defeating the meaning of the screen, the appeal that has created the star system, the fan system, the vast popularity of the whole....It's beauty that matters in pictures—nothing else. The screen is pictorial.  
*Pictures!*

--Charlie Chaplin (1929)

Despite the rise of the 'talkie,' I remain convinced that in the cinema the text itself counts for very little. What counts is the image.

--G. W. Pabst (1928)

One of the world's few true generalizations is that all nations, including the British and the Americans, fight the boredom of everyday life by admiring and despising the flaws and glamour of their dynasties.

--Simon Sebag Montefiore

The moving picture is beautiful; the moving wind in the trees is more beautiful than a painting.

--D. W. Griffith

Our invention can be exploited for a certain time as a scientific curiosity, but apart from that, it has no commercial future whatsoever.

--Auguste Lumière (1895)

The task I'm trying to achieve above all is to make you see.

--D. W. Griffith

The motion picture industry deals essentially in commodities and its greatest commodity today is youth. Youth is the common dream of all mankind. Childhood looks forward to it, age looks back at it, but the great and beautiful appeal of it never dies.

--Ruth Waterbury

Sound will not complicate, it will simplify....The new director will be more de Maupassant than Dickens—terse, tense, succinct. The new actor will bring with him to the screen a new kind of voice. The fallacy of voice training will soon be discovered. The pompous, grandiloquent actor will be a nuisance....

The girl who, in a close-up, can sing a soft lullaby to her baby and whisper —‘Good night, my darling’—in such a way that the camera might be listening to her through a keyhole—she will be the new star.

Vocal tricks, screams, sobs, snores, laughter, will be among the valuable tools for story-telling....The infant industry has taken the ribbons from her hair. She has put away some of her bright toys—she is growing up. She may have a child, one day, and the child’s name may be Television.

--Edmund Goulding  
(1928)

The telegraph, the telephone, the electric light had created a sensation but they had not entered into the lives of millions of people. The common man and his family still used kerosene lamps; none but the well-to-do had telephones; and the telegram was a form of communication seldom known in the average household except to announce serious illness or death. But this new thing—this ‘living picture’ affair—was not a prosaic tool to reduce labor or to save time; it was not an instrument to create more comfort and luxury for the well-to-do. It was a romantic device to bring entertainment to the common people.

--Benjamin B. Hampton

Hollywood makes you pay attention to the pictorial world, not the means by which it brings it to you.

--Richard Sylbert

Get the audience by the throat. Don’t let them escape. Don’t wake them up. Don’t let them stop and realize ‘this is only a movie.’

--Billy Wilder

All we’re trying to do is to get somebody’s attention and make them concentrate.

--Robert Altman

The audience wanted to escape—not to a different galaxy, not to a different world—but to their own world as they might have wanted it to be.

--Joseph Mankiewicz

American cinema is international like the fairy tales were international.

--Bernard Tavernier

The distance between your life and that life in film was enormous; that was part of the success.

--Sydney Pollack

The thing about writing and directing a film is that you are presenting a view of the universe. Each time, every scene, every line. Every time you put the camera down you are saying here's a version of the universe as I perceive it. And that is being tested by everyone who sees that movie.

--Lawrence Kasdan

If we were a primitive society, movie stars would be gods.

--Sydney Pollack

You become a prisoner of your image. It's a gold-plated cell, but it's still a cell.

--Rick Nicita

Violence is the ultimate conflict and conflict is the ultimate drama.

--Clint Eastwood

There's an element in film noir, the way light and shadow are used in such extreme contrast, that is almost religious or spiritual or philosophic, if you will. You know, the age-old notion, or the Manichaeist dialectic of light against dark. Good against evil. And when you look at the film noir film, you're dealing almost with a very simple, fundamental notion of morality; of what is good and evil. I mean, there's really no gray scale of behavior; things stand in very bold relief.

--John Bailey

Light in film noir is just barely there, and flares up when somebody lights a cigarette, or a light source kind of sweeps across the frame. It's just eruptive and quick, and then it falls back into darkness....Light is a difficult thing to maintain itself, to find definition, because the world is dark. Film noir has to be done at night. Otherwise it's not film noir.

--John Bailey

The trouble with movies as a business is that they're an art; the trouble with movies as an art is that they're a business.

--Charlton Heston

It was a manufacturing business, and the parts were the actors and actresses.

--Richard Brandt

It was very difficult to explain to people what it was like living in the studio. You had lunch there. You had dinner there. You ran movies after dinner. It never stopped. Everything functioned twenty-four hours a day. You didn't have to leave the studio to register to vote, because they came in and got your voter registration. You didn't have to leave the studio to renew your auto driving license. They came to you. The barber shop was open twenty-four hours a day if you needed it. They had a dentist on the lot. They had a doctor full time on the lot. They were like duchies, these studios.

--Joseph L. Mankiewicz

Independent films are the most important things there are in our country, in the USA. They're the lifeblood of the filmmaking industry. They set the new standards and they set the trends and they have the wildest ideas and the most interesting stories.

--Sam Raimi

What is the audience in the mood for at a particular time. No one really knows until it happens. By and large, you just make the film and make it as good as you can and that's it. Put it out there and then it's up to the audience. It's their responsibility to like it or not.

--Clint Eastwood

A motion picture company lives hard and plays hard, and they better or they will go nuts.

--William Wellman

We didn't need words. We had *faces* then.

--Gloria Swanson

You can take all the sincerity in Hollywood, place it in the navel of a fruit fly and still have room enough for three caraway seeds and a producer's heart.

--Fred Allen

I venture the paradox that films, as well as stage productions, should really be played by amateurs, if they only could! When an actor is 'great,' he works unceasingly to simplify his craft...to get back to the natural simplicity that was his when he knew nothing about the technique of acting.

--Mauritz Stiller

Talkies not only changed the way movies were made, but the way they were watched. Gazing at a silent screen upon which mouths moved but did not speak, audiences had idealized not only how stars sounded, but what they said. Talkies turned these fantasies into a single, concrete reality, and fans whose minds had 'listened' to their favorite silent film stars were bound to feel disappointed. What voice could possibly fulfill one hundred million different expectations? No matter how appealing a star's voice was, its actual sound could not compare to its imagined one.

--David Stenn

My father used to say jokingly that stars when they reached the top should be shot, so that they could be remembered at their best.

--Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.

Hollywood impresses me as being ten million dollars' worth of intricate and highly ingenious machinery functioning elaborately to put skin on baloney.

--George Jean Nathan

There are more valid facts and details in works of art than there are in history books.

--Charlie Chaplin

The best movie actors are children and animals.

--Douglas Fairbanks

Directors are no different than anybody else; their capacity for self-deception is enormous.

--Sidney Lumet

The cinema has thawed out people's brains.

--Jean Cocteau

In Hollywood, writers are considered only the first drafts of human beings.

--Frank Deford

Born as a technology, reared as an industry, and nurtured as an art, the moving image is an unprecedented instrument for education, enlightenment, documentary record, and entertainment. It is the art form of the 20th century—and it has the potential to become the literature of the 21st century.

--Jean Firstenberg

You're only as good as your last picture.

--Marie Dressler

We do not fear censorship for we have no wish to offend with improprieties or obscenities, but we do demand, as a right, the liberty to show the dark side of wrong, that we may illuminate the bright side of virtue—the same liberty that is conceded to the art of the written word, that art to which we owe the *Bible* and the works of Shakespeare.

--D. W. Griffith

Hollywood is a dreary industrial town controlled by hoodlums of enormous wealth (with) the ethical sense of a pack of jackals.

--S. J. Perlman

The industry is run on economics. It knows only one color: green. There's prejudice, sure. But economics makes it go away.

--Edward James Olmos

The people who control the movie business, generally—there are exceptions, I hope—see it as a product. It's more like salespeople packaging a product. They're not very concerned with what the movie contributes to people. They're not very much concerned with the human values that can be posed or explored in a film. They are shoe sellers making films.

--Raúl Julia

Hollywood: The most beautiful slave-quarters in the world.

--Moss Hart

Pictures are for entertainment, messages should be delivered by Western Union.

--Sam Goldwyn

A leader of public thought in Hollywood wouldn't have sufficient mental acumen anywhere else to hold down a place in the bread line!

--Anita Loos

No one ever went broke in Hollywood underestimating the intelligence of the public.

--Elsa Maxwell

The only 'ism' Hollywood believes in is plagiarism.

—Dorothy Parker

Hollywood: You can seduce a man's wife there, attack his daughter and wipe your hands on his canary, but if you don't like his movie, you're dead.

--Joseph von Sternberg

Over in Hollywood they almost made a great picture, but they caught it in time.

--Wilson Mizner

A tape measure is a device used to measure the acting talent of movie stars.

--Unknown

In Hollywood a starlet is the name for any woman under thirty who is not actively employed in a brothel.

--Ben Hecht

People wear resort clothes, but actually Hollywood is an enormous factory.

--Marie-France Pisier

Genius, geniuses everywhere I turn! If only there were some talent!

--Henri Bernstein

The movie business is at the moral level of the South Vietnamese Army.

--Josh Greenfield

Movies are just another form of merchandising. We have our factory, which is called a stage. We make a product, we color it, we title it and we ship it out in cans.

--Cary Grant

They're the most expensive art form ever invented. Leonardo didn't need a studio chief for the money to draw a lower jaw. All he needed was a nickel for a pencil.

--Mel Brooks

The camera likes some people and the people it likes can't do any wrong.

--Howard Hawks

Aside from the anonymous obscene phone call, modern technology provides no potentially sneakier way of getting across a punchy message than film-editing.

--Richard Eder

In the theater you work very, very hard right up to the curtain, here we go, bang, and adrenaline does the rest. In the movies the curtain never goes up. It's like a loose rubber band—no tension.

--Vera Zorina

You can improvise and you should improvise, but I think it should be done in an office, where there are no electricians waiting and no actors waiting, and you can improvise all you want—ahead of time. Sometimes, I compare it with a composer who is trying to write a piece of music with a full orchestra in front of him. Can you imagine him saying, 'Flute, give me that note again, will you? Thank you, flute,' and he writes it down. A painter has his canvas and he uses his charcoal sketch and he goes to work on that canvas with a preconceived idea. I'm sure he doesn't guess it as he goes along. So I am not in approval of the improvisation on the studio stage, while the actor is on the phone about his next picture, and all that kind of stuff...I shoot a precut picture. In other words, every piece of film is designed to perform a function.

--Alfred Hitchcock

The American film stands alone as the only product manufactured in the U.S. that is number one in every country in the world.

--Robert Evans

All I need to make a comedy is a park, a policeman and a pretty girl.

--Charlie Chaplin

Comedy just pokes at problems, rarely confronts them squarely. Drama is like a plate of meat and potatoes, comedy is rather the dessert, a bit like meringue.

--Woody Allen

There is a correlation between the creative and the screwball. So we must suffer the screwball gladly.

--Kingman Brewster

You know what your problem is, it's that you haven't seen enough movies— all of life's riddles are answered in the movies.

--Steve Martin

Adding sound to movies would be like putting lipstick on the Venus de Milo.

--Mary Pickford

A good film is when the price of the dinner, the theatre admission and the babysitter were worth it.

--Alfred Hitchcock

The carpeted, gilt-adorned palace interior of the theater, where in the darkness you find two seats, whisper a remark or two, and go lifting, speeding into the great moving magic of the silver screen which pulls all into itself, lulling with the magnetic other-worldliness all who sit in adoration before it. The collection is taken discreetly at the door by the gaunt, gray-haired man in the scarlet uniform with the crust of gold braid, and the worshipers are ushered to their cushioned pews in reverent darkness. No matter if they are late; the service is continuous, and if the beginning of the first mass is missed, one may stay through the beginning of the second to achieve full continuity. In the democratic twilight, the clothes of the patrons are not in evidence. If Mrs. Allan's hat is out of taste, if Mac the cabdriver snores through the dull first lesson or the news reel, if Mamie and Joe nuzzle each other playfully, fondly in response to the sermon of a screen kiss, there is no one to be censorious, no one who really minds. For this is the altar at which more Americans spend their time and money, daily, nightly than ever before. Here the mystic incense of the traditional popcorn, chewing gum and chocolate, of mixed perfume and whiskey smells is neutralized and cooled by the patented air-conditioning system. And here people can lose their identity in a splurge of altruism before the twentieth century god. His messengers, his missionaries are everywhere. Dark in the room above your heads, one runs the machine; reel after vibrating reel of divine life circles under his directions onto the mammoth screen, playing forth the drama, the life force, the Bible of the masses. Rave notices are circulated in the newspapers. Everybody reads them. Sex and slaughter are substituted for the sin and sulphur of the pulpits, now quite antiquated. Instead of watching a man dictate manners and morals, you watch the very workings of these manners and morals in an artificially constructed society which to you, is real. Which, to all the worshipers, is the most wonderful and temporary reality they could every hope to know. The liquid, gleaming lips of movie actresses quiver in kiss after scintillating kiss; full breasts lift under lace, satin, low scallops: sec incarnate, (and the male worshiper feels his mouth go thick and sweat start, and the fire start burning in his loins.

--Sylvia Plath

Dialogue should simply be a sound among other sounds, just something that comes out of the mouths of people whose eyes tell the story in visual terms.

--Alfred Hitchcock

Drama is life with the dull bits cut out.

--Alfred Hitchcock

Today's films are so technological that an actor becomes starved for roles that deal with human relationships.

--Natalie Wood

The world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is boundless.

--Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Animation can explain whatever the mind of man can conceive. This facility makes it the most versatile and explicit means of communication yet devised for quick mass appreciation.

--Walt Disney

All cartoon characters and fables must be exaggeration, caricatures. It is the very nature of fantasy and fable.

--Walt Disney

Animation offers a medium of story telling and visual entertainment which can bring pleasure and information to people of all ages everywhere in the world.

--Walt Disney

I never called my work an 'art.' It's part of show business, the business of building entertainment.

--Walt Disney

I would rather entertain and hope that people learned something than educate people and hope they were entertained.

--Walt Disney

Laughter is America's most important export.

--Walt Disney

Movies can and do have tremendous influence in shaping young lives in the realm of entertainment towards the ideals and objectives of normal adulthood.

--Walt Disney

Of all of our inventions for mass communication, pictures still speak the most universally understood language.

--Walt Disney

We have created characters and animated them in the dimension of depth, revealing through them to our perturbed world that the things we have in common far outnumber and outweigh those that divide us.

--Walt Disney

If my films don't show a profit, I know I'm doing something right.

--Woody Allen

If my films make one more person miserable, I'll feel I have done my job.

--Woody Allen

Filmmaking is not going to ever fundamentally change. It's about storytelling. It's about humans playing humans. It's about close-ups of actors. It's about those actors somehow saying the words and playing the moment in a way that gets in contact with the audience's hearts. I don't think that changes. I don't think that's changed in the last century.

--James Cameron

The heart of the cinematic experience is the group experience. It's the psychology of sitting in a dark room with a bunch of people and reacting to something, and feeling like your reaction is the same as the rest of the group, a way of proofchecking your emotions are normal.

--James Cameron

It is dangerous to let the public behind the scenes. They are easily disillusioned and then they are angry with you, for it was the illusion they loved.

--W. Somerset Maugham

It is a business. It's show business. I don't know what studio executives think, because they are an interesting breed of people. Their job is to keep their job, to make the studio money. Art is really secondary sometimes.

--Sandra Bullock

I passionately hate the idea of being with it, I think an artist has always to be out of step with his time.

--Orson Welles

A good director will sometimes make a bad movie; a bad director will always make a bad movie.

--Gore Vidal

It's impossible for a film not to have an opinion, and the best films are the ones that allow room for the audience to decide whether they agree with the perspective of the film.

--Amir Bar-Lev

Lack of education simply results in students' seeking for enlightenment wherever it is readily available, without being able to distinguish between the sublime and trash, insight and propaganda....*Kramer v. Kramer* may be up-to-date about divorce and sex roles, but anyone who does not have *Anna Karenina* or *The Red and the Black* as part of his viewing equipment cannot sense what might be lacking, or the difference between an honest presentation and an exercise in consciousness-raising, trashy sentimentality, and elevated sentiment.

--Allan Bloom

Anybody can direct, but there are only eleven good writers.

--Mel Brooks

The thrill that began with a shaft of light in the dark will still go on.

--Clive James

Film is the only really vital American art form right now. It's a unifying, worldwide, powerful art form that's unique in human history.

--Mike Disa

It's the same thing that ruined the housing market. Films are being forced into that same mold by bankers and corporate investors and financial analysts and producers who wouldn't know how to make a movie if you told them. It's all accountants and businessmen and people who are in the business of being rich. That's the pressure studios are under, and they are producing fewer and fewer good films each year.

--Mike Disa

How can a serious, passionate artist not make film? It's the most important art form ever created.

--Mike Disa

Big-budget studio films are only going to continue to get worse. They're chasing dwindling dollars toward a younger and younger audience—a less-sophisticated audience—right to the point where they're just photographing comic books.

--Mike Disa

(When production begins on a screenplay) all your schemes about making a masterpiece are reduced to 'I'll prostitute myself any way I have to, to survive this catastrophe.'

--Woody Allen

It's really a childlike pleasure—the set, the cinema—a kid's dream. I think you have to keep that, marvel at it. To be with a little dog, to be able to dance, to be in incredible theaters. That's where the imagination is.

--Jean Dujardin

I saw that so much politics was involved with moviemaking. I thought it was all about hard work and actors like Al Pacino and Robert De Niro. But you can be mediocre and still be a movie star. To me, when I learned that, it ruined everything. Then I hated it....Look at some of the young movie stars today from the United States—they are shit.

--Mickey Rourke

Fame means millions of people have the wrong idea of who you are.

--Erica Jong

Fear isn't what drives creative people. It's more trust, and hope, and the challenge of doing something you haven't done before. It's not fear so much as it's confidence.

--Steven Spielberg

The kind of film in which I believe compels the spectator to examine one facet or another of his own conscience. It stimulates thought and sets the mental juices flowing.

--Sidney Lumet

If we were all doing what we should be doing as grownups, we'd be working in an office. We're all still kids playing make-believe.

--George Clooney

A script can only create nests in which magic may settle.

--Emeric Pressburger

I always say about acting: the audience doesn't come to see you, they come to see themselves. So if you're able to give them an experience where they feel: 'Oh, my gosh, that's me, that's my story, they know me!' then you've done your job.

--Julianne Moore

I believe movies are one of the great American art forms and the shared experience of watching a story unfold on screen is an important and joyful pastime.

--Christopher Nolan

Biblical spectacles convey magnitude of character by magnitude of close-up.

--Pauline Kael

Remember how small the world was before I came along. I brought it all to life. I moved the whole world onto a 20-foot screen.

—D. W. Griffith

How leaden-tongued modern Hollywood is. Writers like Chayevsky and Aaron Sorkin are rare cases, and the preferred way of writing is to bolt together clichés that have already been tested to near-destruction....in a medium that spoke—still speaks—in a string of sunsets and crashed cars.

--Clive James

A celebrity is a person who works hard all his life to become known, then wears dark glasses to avoid being recognized.

--Fred Allen

The trouble with Hollywood is everybody is crazy for money. The producers are trying to make pictures cheaper and faster. They do not realize the public is becoming more critical, and can see the cheapness.

--Ann Dvorak (1932)

I appreciate the theater environment. Although audience members sometimes make the experience uncomfortable, I'd rather take that chance. There's something unique and meaningful in a group experience. You're sitting in a large audience, and there's a moment when everyone cheers or everyone laughs or everyone cries. You're all emotionally in sync.

--Ron Howard

When a movie transports me in an emotional way, it inspires my imagination or my intellect. I love to lose myself in the characters or the world the director is creating. It's rare and wonderful.

--Ron Howard

Americans didn't invent film. But we made it a medium for the masses, not for the elite or for academics. We moved it to populist entertainment.

--Ron Howard

Movies came at a time in American culture when there was a kind of restless, energetic ambition, a desire to tackle the world. That created anxiety, and people wanted escapism. They wanted jolts, emotions, thrills, laughs and tears.

--Ron Howard

Movies are obligated to please only the people who pay for the tickets, and not the critics.

--Unknown

I don't really look for something (like Oscar potential) when I sit down to read a script. There is not really a lot of thought. It's a bizarre instinctual and emotional thing that just hits me.

--Jennifer Lawrence

When you travel, you seek, as Elizabeth Bishop put it, 'to see the sun the other way around.' The world comes to you in vivid pictures—it feels at times as focused as art. The supermoon low over the Seine. The Pont Neuf's ironwork covered in locks symbolizing true love. The butchers roasting their chickens. But movies invite us to watch the world through new eyes, too. We see more vividly in a dark theater. The price we pay for travel is homesickness mixed with anxiety that we won't have time to see everything. Going to the movies is my way, briefly, of having it all. I'm away and also at home, in a familiar world made ever so slightly strange by the printed yellow words running across the bottom of the screen, spooling onward to the last one.

--Meghan O'Rourke

My advice to young filmmakers is this: Don't follow trends. Start them!

--Frank Capra

Film is a disease. When it infects your bloodstream, it takes over as the number one hormone; it bosses the enzymes; directs the pineal gland; plays Iago to your psyche. As with heroin, the antidote to film is more film.

--Frank Capra

The concept of 'the uncanny,' or encountering an eerie double of oneself or of the human form, has been really important to many analyses of the psychology of horror. A horror movie 'monster' represents the repressed elements of an average human being, and this is why they are unsettling. There has to be enough that is identifiable or relatable about a monster to make it truly disturbing.

--Catherine Zimmer

Having your book turned into a movie is like seeing your oxen turned into bouillon cubes.

--John le Carre

With all the horror in the world and all the crap that's going on, for an hour and a half you go eat some popcorn and laugh with your friends. That's what a movie is all about.

--Michael Rosenbaum

When I was a Hollywood press agent, I learned how the Hollywood casting system worked. There was a roster of actors who were always perfect as doctors or lawyers or laborers, and the directors just picked the types they needed and stuffed them into film after film.

--Richard Condon

I love books, by the way, way more than movies. Movies tell you what to think. A good book lets you choose a few thoughts for yourself. Movies show you the pink house. A good book tells you there's a pink house and lets you paint some of the finishing touches, maybe choose the roof style, park your own car out front. My imagination has always topped anything a movie could come up with. Case in point, those darned Harry Potter movies. That was so not what that part-Veela-chick, Fleur Delacour, looked like.

—Karen Marie Moning

The book is a film that takes place in the mind of the reader. That's why we go to movies and say, 'Oh, the book is better.'

—Paulo Coelho

In literature, the reader standing at the threshold of the end of a book harbors no illusion that the end has not come—he or she can see where it finishes, the abyss the other side of the last chunk of text. Which means that the writer is never in danger of ending too soon—or if he does the reader has been so forewarned. This is the advantage a book has over a film—it is the brain that marshals forward the text and controls the precise moment of conclusion of the book, as the density of the pages thins. A film can end without you if you've fallen asleep or, because you can't wait any longer to use the bathroom, slipped out of the darkness of the theatre salon, and missed it. There will never be a form more perfect than the book, which always moves at your pace, that sits waiting for you exactly where you've left it and never goes on without you.

—John M. Keller

Movie making is the slowest business on earth next to fossil manufacture.

--Aaron Latham

Honestly, I think about my appearance less than I did ten years ago. People talk about the golden age of Hollywood because of how women were lit then. You could be Joan Crawford and Bette Davis and work well into your 50s, because you were lit and made into a goddess. Now, with everything being sort of gritty, women have this sense of their use-by date.

--Cate Blanchett

You know what I would like to do: make a film with actors standing in empty space so that the spectator would have to imagine the background of the characters.

--Michelangelo Antonioni

I am a sensitive writer, actor and director. Talking business disgusts me. If you want to talk business, call my disgusting personal manager.

--Sylvester Stallone

A good opening and a good ending make for a good film provide they come close together.

--Federico Fellini

I loved to eat. For all of Hollywood's rewards, I was hungry for most of those 20 years.

--Gene Tierney

Other actors like to rehearse on film-they like 30 or 40 takes. When you get an actor like that, it becomes difficult for me because I'm ready to quit after number two.

--Richard Widmark

Desperation is the perfume of the young actor. It's so satisfying to have gotten rid of it. If you keep smelling it, it can drive you crazy. In this business a lot of people go nuts, go eccentric, even end up dead from it. Not my plan.

--Uma Thurman

The movie medium will eventually take its place as art because there is no other medium of interest to so many people.

--Irving Thalberg

That's how you get surprises, because what movies are all about is surprises.

--Peter Bart

Follow the wisdom of the great actor, James Cagney: you hit your mark, you look the other guy in the eye, and you tell the truth.

--Larry Merchant

Every citizen in every country in the world now grows up in two nations. Their own and Hollywood.

--Nick Mancuso

Moving pictures are an incredibly sophisticated technology that allows man to re-create and project all the sights and sounds of real life, only with better-looking people. Film (or 'movies,' to those not attending a campus Godard retrospective) combines theater's emotional immediacy with photography's spectacular realism and sound's remarkable hear-itude, in a complete sensory experience.

--*Earth (The Book) A*  
*Visitor's Guide to*  
*the Human Race*

Imagine 400 strangers sitting in a dark, dank room, feet stuck to a disgusting adhesive floor, staring up at a flickering screen in a near-diabetic coma, desperately holding in their urine for hours at a stretch. We call it the 'movies.'

--*Earth (The Book) A*  
*Visitor's Guide to*  
*the Human Race*

Hollywood. Behind its shiny facade lay a superficial veneer masking a shallow layer of eggshell-thin unreality. Few people dig much further. The famous people who live and work here are called stars, because they are volatile explosive gasballs surrounded by an entourage of dependent entities basking in their reflected glow. We call Hollywood the Dream Factory. Unfortunately most people who go to work there end up working at the Cheesecake Factory.

--*Earth (The Book) A*  
*Visitor's Guide to*  
*the Human Race*

An entertainer should in his public performance keep himself out of any controversy, political or otherwise.

--Kate Smith

You know...that a blank wall is an appalling thing to look at. The wall of a museum -- a canvas -- a piece of film -- or a guy sitting in front of a typewriter. Then, you start out to do something -- that vague thing called creation. The beginning strikes awe within you.

--Edward Steichen

Chameleonism has become its own form of marquee spectacle: come see the stars transform. We don't go to the movies anymore to be convinced. We go to be tricked—to admire acting as a kind of special effect.

--Tom Shone

Even great screen actors generally have only two performances in them: a version of themselves and an inversion of themselves.

--Tom Shone

Brando's performances revolutionized American acting precisely because he didn't seem to be 'performing,' in the sense that he wasn't putting something *on* as much as he was *being*.

--James Franco

You can have a family of octopuses on four legs, with a fifth serving as a tail, and a sixth—a trunk. You can do anything. How much (imaginary!) divine omnipotence there is in this! What magic of reconstructing the world according to one's fantasy and will.

--Sergei Eisenstein

You know, this is a business where only 15% make a living wage and only 9% of those are women. But I figured somebody has to be that 15%, somebody's got to be one of those women.

—Marcia Wallace

For a long time I have compared cinema to music, I think cinema has a lot to do with the rhythm of music.

—Isabelle Huppert

There are five stages in the life of an actor: Who's Mary Astor? Get me Mary Astor. Get me a Mary Astor type. Get me a young Mary Astor. Who's Mary Astor?

—Mary Astor

There's a terrible truth for many women in the picture business: Aging typically takes its toll and means fewer and less desirable roles.

—Maureen O'Hara

Movies are a complicated collision of literature, theatre, music and all the visual arts.

—Yahoo Serious

I don't act, anyway. The stuff is all injected as we go along. My pictures are made without script or written directions of any kind.

—Buster Keaton

Hollywood will accept actresses playing ten years older, but actors can play ten years younger.

—Greta Scacchi

A number of images put together a certain way become something quite above and beyond what any of them are individually.

—Francis Ford Coppola

Ken Burns is what happens when a powerpoint gets funding from the Kellogg Foundation and viewers like you.

—*TL;DR Wikipedia*

The *Polar Express* is a 2004 children's movie about a boy who goes for a ride with a stranger and somehow doesn't get murdered.

—*TL;DR Wikipedia*

The *Hunger Games* is a 2012 film about teenagers killing each other with bows and arrows instead of texting while driving.

—*TL;DR Wikipedia*

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (or FBI) is a governmental agency responsible for making DVDs fifteen seconds longer.

—*TL;DR Wikipedia*

It's often the case with directors that they don't like to share credit, which is the case of Stanley. He would prefer just A Film By Stanley Kubrick including music and everything.

—Terry Southern

The only good thing about books is that they can be adapted into films.

—Michael Votto

If you take *2001: A Space Odyssey* as an example of somebody who creates a new language in film by what he was able to accomplish with art direction, photography, lighting, etc., it is still a gold standard for science fiction.

—Matthew Modine

More people are exposed to movies than to most other forms of art.

—Richard King

Today's cinema is a global art form. It is impossible to make movies for a market the size of France, representing no more than 4% of the world's total.

—Jean-Jacques Annaud

Television and film are our libraries now. Our history books.

—David Strathairn

The essence of cinema is editing. It's the combination of what can be extraordinary images of people during emotional moments, or images in a general sense, put together in a kind of alchemy.

—Francis Ford Coppola

Sometimes I try to improve the language, the lines, or the delivery, but I don't ad-lib because I think that makes it really hard for everybody else involved.

—Harrison Ford

Well, I look at it like this: When you go to a restaurant, the less you know about what happens in the kitchen, the more you enjoy your meal. If the soup tastes good, everything's cool, and you don't necessarily want to know what's in it. The same thing holds true with movies.

—Jeffrey Wright

Hollywood is a place where people from Iowa mistake each other for a star.

—Fred Allen

Film will only become an art when its materials are as inexpensive as pencil and paper.

—Jean Cocteau

The British cinema had been very dull and conformist.

—Karel Reisz

Sweating out improvisations and emotional-memory exercises at the Actors Studio or the Neighborhood Playhouse doesn't seem the best way to get noticed anymore. The actors of the current generation mostly started going before the camera as kids, and got their training on the job: in commercials, then on TV shows, and then, for the lucky and/or unusually talented, in movies. Leonardo DiCaprio...came up that way. So did Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Jennifer Lawrence, Reese Witherspoon, Keri Russell, Michelle Williams, Emma Stone, Michael B. Jordan—practically every young American actor you want to see has the same story.

—Terrence Rafferty

There's nothing magical about acting schools, which in any event didn't really exist in this country until after World War II. The British send their actors to school for the sound reason that playing Shakespeare well takes a ton of technique, and Shakespearean actors are what English theatrical culture is designed to produce. American culture is in the business of making stars, which is more a matter of finding people who are able to be themselves—or some likable, reasonably plausible version of themselves—onscreen. Everything else, the Bard included, is gravy.

—Terrence Rafferty

For an actor, the joy of slipping into a bad guy's skin can be intense, a satisfaction like no other. When Richard III is doing his devious worst, or when music-hall performer Archie Rice is displaying the gloomiest depths of his grubby soul in *The Entertainer*, the gleam in Olivier's eye is blinding. Brando gets that rapt look, too, when he's taunting defenseless Blanche DuBois in *Streetcar*, or whipping his horse in frustration in *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1967). And God knows De Niro's got it as the seething, paranoid Travis Bickle in *Taxi Driver* (1976), posing in front of a mirror and rehearsing what he'll say, and do, to his legions of enemies.

—Terrence Rafferty

Every man's work, whether it be literature, or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself.

—Samuel Butler

Hollywood is the only industry, even taking in soup companies, which does not have laboratories for the purpose of experimentation.

—Orson Welles

In our film profession you may have Gable's looks, Tracy's art, Marlene's legs or Liz's violet eyes, but they don't mean a thing without that swinging thing called courage.

—Frank Capra

I believe that one reason why it is hard to interest some children in school today is that their minds have been filled and their imagination thrilled with too vivid motion pictures, and, when these children come to school, they are disappointed because the teacher cannot make the subject as interesting as a motion picture.

—Peter Olesen, School  
Superintendent,  
(1914)

I mean, everyone says *Citizen Kane*. It isn't that great, anyway. And Orson Welles I knew well, of course. He made other incredible films that no one would let him make, which were much better than *Citizen Kane*, really.

—Patrick Macnee

What can be shown, cannot be said.

—Ludwig Wittgenstein

Boxing is just show business with blood.

—Bruno Frank

There's nothing more important in making movies than the screenplay.

—Richard Attenborough

Movie directing is a perfect refuge for the mediocre.

—Orson Welles

I make a film like I cook for friends. I hope they like it, but if they don't, I'm prepared to enjoy it all by myself.

—Melvin Van Peebles

The test audience holds a great deal of power in the process of filmmaking in the United States.

—Brendan Fraser

Every star has that certain something that stands out and compels us to notice them.

—Maureen O'Hara

Dialogue should simply be a sound among other sounds, just something that comes out of the mouths of people whose eyes tell the story in visual terms.

—Alfred Hitchcock

Don't ever take a pause at the beginning of a line because they'll always cut it out. If you want to take a pause, lurch into a line, then take your pause, and then they can't cut it.

—Henry Fonda

Cinema is still a very young art form with extraordinary techniques and very impressive special effects but sometimes it seems the soul has been taken out of things.

—Catherine Deneuve

I prefer to remake flops. *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* was a remake of a flop, and *The Quiet American* is a remake of a flop.

—Michael Caine

The production designer is responsible for everything you see on the screen, except the actor.

—Richard D. James

Music is the magic dust of movies. *Star Wars* was meant to be a simple hero's journey, a fantasy for young people. Then John [Williams] wrote the music. He raised it to a level of art—popular art that would stand the test of time. What I'm trying to say is, you made my life so easy. I had so many ideas for other movies, but I never got to them because you ensured that *Star Wars* would endure forever.

—George Lucas

Today films are made to cater to commercial markets created by multiplexes, not for those who enjoy good cinema.

—Sunny Deol

Self-plagiarism is style.

—Alfred Hitchcock

I began taking liberties a long time ago; now it is standard practice for most directors to ignore the rules.

—Michelangelo Antonioni

The out-of-work actor wears out more than shoe leather. The very sensibilities that make him an artist are shattered by the disregard he is shown as a human being.

—Bette Davis

Some films could only have been cast in one way: Screen tests were given and the losers got the parts.

—Gene Shalit

I feel that film is inevitably the medium of the future. It has been for years, decades, but more so now than ever.

—Sean Lennon

Like the manufacturing of many products, the making of motion pictures started out as a craft industry. Very early in the 20th century, most films were produced on a small scale, using methods adapted from live theater. But by the 1910s and early '20s, the mass-market potential of movies had become evident to the leading filmmakers of the time—Cecil B. DeMille, D.W. Griffith, Thomas Ince. Ince in particular envisioned a production process akin to that of the auto industry, where Henry Ford had pioneered the moving assembly line and the standardization of the vast majority of jobs.

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

Ince, who set up a film studio on Sunset Boulevard, established an assembly-line approach that brought efficiency to film production. His 'continuity script' rearranged scenes into the most economical sequence for shooting, minimizing downtime. Everything from camera angles to actors' facial expressions was specified. When shooting was finished, editors would piece scenes together in a precursor to what we now call 'post-production.' Using this process, Ince, sometimes called the 'father of the Western,' began cranking out as many as two short Westerns a week.

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

Technological innovations like the Panaflex handheld camera, which enabled studio-quality results in a more authentic setting, had led to an expansion of location shooting. Directors could achieve a more realistic look. And by avoiding the union work rules of Los Angeles and taking advantage of tax incentives offered by other cities—domestic and foreign—producers could save money.

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

The speed with which large parts of the movie industry have recently decamped from Hollywood is striking. According to the Monitor Group, a consulting firm, in 1990 just 14 percent of film and television productions developed by American studios were shot outside the U.S. for economic reasons. By 1998, that figure had nearly doubled, to 27 percent, resulting in the loss of 20,000 full-time jobs in Los Angeles. A recent study by FilmL.A., the area's film-production-licensing organization, found that of the 106 films released in 2014 by Southern California's major and 'mini major' studios, only 22 were primarily produced in California. New York, with its generous tax incentives, was the most favored out-of-town location, landing 13 feature films followed by the United Kingdom and Canada with 12 apiece. As for 2015 releases, the report said, 'there isn't a single live-action movie with a budget estimate over \$100 million that shot primarily in California.

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

Postproduction used to have a natural home in Los Angeles for the simple reason that it involved the manipulation of film. As recently as 2007, most major motion pictures were shot with color film, and it made sense for the shooting, the film-processing, and all the assorted film-doctoring that followed to occur in close proximity. But that's no longer true. Make no mistake, postproduction is more important to moviemaking than ever: According to FilmL.A., movies like *Iron Man 3*, the top-grossing movie of 2013, spend between 30 and 40 percent of their budget on special effects. But special effects now involve the excretion and manipulation of computer files, which can happen anywhere. *Iron Man 3*'s special-effects work occurred not only in California but also in New Zealand, Canada, Germany, England, and Australia.

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

As it grows wealthier, China is becoming a nation of moviegoers. Box-office revenues grew by roughly a third in 2014, and even faster in the first half of this year. With North American box-office receipts essentially flat in recent years, some analysts expect that within five years, China will be the world's box-office king (it is now No. 2).

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

The Chinese government prohibits movies made or released in China from showing nudity, strong violence, ghosts, time travel, or other subjects deemed unsuitable by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television.

—Willy Shih and  
Henry McGee

Although for some people cinema means something superficial and glamorous, it is something else. I think it is the mirror of the world.

—Jeanne Moreau

I don't mind being an actor. It's a lot easier than arithmetic.

—Tommy Kelly [12-  
Year-Old Tom  
Sawyer, 1937]

The studio system collapsed only when Elizabeth Taylor charged \$1 million for *Cleopatra*.

—Leslie Caron

When I started in the late 1950s, every film I made—no matter how low the budget— got a theatrical release. Today, less than 20-percent of our films get a theatrical release.

—Roger Corman

You don't have to cry real tears. I hate these people who brag that they can cry at the drop of a hat. The point is not for you to cry but to make your audience cry. So you must be in control. Don't just throw yourself into it and say 'Oh, I felt that scene.' Make your audience feel the scene.

—Lon Chaney

During the twenties, no director was considered any good who could not make his actors cry real tears, and no actor was considered any good who could not shed real tears on demand.

—Louise Brooks

The movie *It* is rather stodgy, and Bow's performance enjoyed fame because the actress conveyed freedom without danger, romance without recklessness. *It* offered a bowdlerized version of Jazz Age liberties.

—Richard Brody

I first encountered cross-cutting as a creative technique in a film studies class in college, in which we were instructed to pay close attention to the climactic montage in *The Godfather* that 'cross-cut' between the baptism of Michael Corleone's nephew and the murders of his enemies. As a stylistic device, the cross-cut (also known as parallel editing) is well suited to establishing tension in a film.

—Bernadette Geyer

Enduring comedy is grounded in both surprise and recognition, and that recognition requires that comedy arise from the real world.

—Frank Lidz

Almost any story is almost certainly some kind of lie.

—Orson Welles

Very few comedies are visually interesting. Which is why Terry Gilliam never really directed another Monty Python movie after *Holy Grail*. In one scene, the other members of the troupe kneeled uncomfortably in suits of armor while Gilliam held up the shoot for hours until he got the smoke right. John Cleese said, ‘Terry, how many laughs are in the smoke?’

—Bill Hader

Continental directors, as opposed to British and American, tend to be somewhat high-handed in their approach.

—Donald Pleasence

I’m frightened of my own movies. I never go to see them. I don’t know how people can bear to watch my movies.

—Alfred Hitchcock

One has the responsibility to oneself, to the writer, director and the people who put up the money, to put out the best of what one has experienced and understood about the human condition as it relates to the role one has been hired to portray.

—Tom Skerritt

I would be the first person to die in a horror film because I refuse to spend the last minutes of my life running. Screw that!

—Ged Backland

The only reason I’m in Hollywood is that I don’t have the moral courage to refuse the money.

—Marlon Brando

We must get into the picture business. This is a new industry and a gold mine. it looks like another telephone industry.

—Joseph P. Kennedy

I know that the arts are important. I'm not denying that, but I can't associate myself with all the claptrap that goes on around it.

—Anthony Hopkins

No one turns down a film with Woody; it's something everyone wants in their career as an important moment. He's such a comedic genius, without question.

—Mark Rydell

I always felt that if I made a movie, it would be one movie; I didn't see how they could make 26 swimming movies.

—Esther Williams

Too caustic? To hell with the costs, we'll make the picture anyway.

—Samuel Goldwyn

The director is the only person who knows what the film is about.

—Satyajit Ray

I mean, certainly it's the single biggest event, I think, in terms of popular entertainment, or art even, if you say that, of the 20th Century. It's been film. It's the 20th Century's real art form.

—Sydney Pollack

An agent is a person who is sore because an actor gets 90% of what they make.

—Elton John

The real good comedians, like Chaplin, would make you laugh and a second later, cry.

—Martin Landau

My only problem is finding a way to play my fortieth fallen female in a different way from my thirty-ninth.

—Barbara Stanwyck

Totally unoriginal, feebly plotted, instantly forgettable.

—J. G. Ballard on *Star Wars*

The first assistant director runs the set. The whole mood of the movie, the whole tenor of the set comes off that person, and it's just a critical choice.

—John Frankenheimer

If you look at yourself as a star, you've already lost something in the portrayal of any human being.

—Gene Hackman

We're not nearly as violent as the westerns.

—Moe Howard

If I'd observed all the rules, I'd never have got anywhere.

—Marilyn Monroe

Script for an actor is like a bible. You carry it with you, you read it over and over, you go to your passages.

—Cameron Diaz

As you follow the escapades or the journey of the hero through a story, it evokes some kind of emotion in the viewers. The director's job is to make sure that the audience goes through the journey and has an emotional reaction.

—Don Bluth

Hollywood grew to be the most flourishing factory of popular mythology since the Greeks.

—Alistair Cooke

I don't watch my own performances—who does that? That would be madness. I've seen all the movies once, but I don't need to see them again, because they don't change.

—Tom Hanks

Over 90% of American movies filmed before 1930 have been lost without a trace.

—*theChive*

Most scripts are bad. I read a lot of them.

—Joseph Gordon-Levitt

I wouldn't want my two kids doing what I do. I love the art form but not the business. There's a lot of superficiality. The way women are judged—they have an expiration date. It's ridiculous. Or you're too tall, too short. I wouldn't mind my kids becoming playwrights or screenwriters. Then it's about the work, not the B.S.

—John Leguizamo

How many times do I gotta tell you. I don't act at all, i *re-act*.

—John Wayne

The American motion-picture industry still represents a kind of mechanical monster, programmed to stifle and destroy all that is interesting and worthwhile and 'creative' in the human spirit.

—Joan Didion

I know very little about acting. I'm just an incredibly gifted faker.

—Robert Downey, Jr.

A picture in release is gone. A picture in release tends to fade from the minds of the people who made it.

—John Didion

Reviewing motion pictures, like reviewing new cars, may or may not be a useful consumer service (since people respond to a lighted screen in a dark room in the same secret and powerfully irrational way they respond to most sensory stimuli, I tend to think much of it beside the point, but never mind that); the review of pictures has been, as well, a traditional diversion for writers whose actuarial work is somewhere else.

—John Didion

Most actors really love it, that's what they want to do. They burn to do it. And so they'll read a script and think, that's an interesting part. And because they love acting, that blinds them to the fact that the rest of it is pretentious nonsense, which it very often is.

—Hugh Grant

I know what I have given you. I do not know what you have received.

—Antonio Porchia

Cinematography is infinite in its possibilities... much more so than music or language.

—Conrad Hall

The biggest mistake in student films is that they are usually cast so badly, with friends and people the directors know. Actually you can cover a lot of bad direction with good acting.

—Brian De Palma

It appeared as if I had invited the audience into the water with me, and it conveyed the sensation that being in there was absolutely delicious.

—Esther Williams

Virtue has its own reward, but no sale at the box office.

—Mae West

Shirley Maclaine once said that she didn't want to be a big star, just a long star. That's what I want too.

—Joyce DeWitt

I think fine old movies are great for a writer to look at and ponder over. They're basic story technique, which applies to any fiction: quick and sure characterization, hang out a story line, stay tight to it, and keep out of the way. Those movies packed in the fans because the writers knew how to grab, entertain, excite—and how to keep things moving. I've learned from them and know I can learn a lot more.

--Robert Twohy

Living is a form of not being sure, not knowing what's next or how. The moment you know how, you begin to die a little. The artist never entirely knows. We guess. We may be wrong, but we take leap after leap in the dark.

--Agnes de Mille

Self-consciousness is the enemy of all art, be it acting, writing, painting or living itself, which is the greatest art of all. Creativity, at heart, is the essence of man's being.

—Ray Bradbury

If it's stage, the two most important artists are the actor and the playwright. If it's film, THE most important person is the director. The director says where the camera goes.

—Brad Dourif

My three Ps: passion, patience, perseverance. You have to do this if you've got to be a filmmaker.

—Robert Wise

There are so many effects and so many things that are done digitally now that it's so hard for the director to really control the process, because there are more and more experts that come in.

—John Frankenheimer

The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.

—William James

I told Miyazaki I love the ‘gratuitous motion’ in his films; instead of every movement being dictated by the story, sometimes people will just sit for a moment, or they will sigh, or look in a running stream, or do something extra, not to advance the story but only to give the sense of time and place and who they are.

‘We have a word for that in Japanese,’ he said, ‘It’s called ma. Emptiness. It’s there intentionally.’

Is that like the ‘pillow words’ that separate phrases in Japanese poetry?

‘I don’t think it’s like the ‘pillow word.’ He clapped his hands three or four times. ‘The time in between my clapping is ma. If you just have non-stop action with no breathing space at all, it’s just busyness, but if you take a moment, then the tension building in the film can grow into a wider dimension. If you just have constant tension at 80 degrees all the time you just get numb.’

—Roger Ebert

I loved old black and white movies, especially the Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musicals. I loved everything about them—the songs, the music, the romance and the spectacle. They were real class and I knew that I wanted to be in that world.

—Sharon Stone

‘The darkness in *Bambi* is no more or less than the darkness in *Fantasia* or *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, but Disney knew how to balance light and dark, he was great at it even before George Lucas conceived of the Force!’ For Disney..., ‘There could be healing. There could be fear and then there could be redemption.’

—Steven Spielberg

People in the East pretend to be interested in how pictures are made. But if you actually tell them anything, you find...they never see the ventriloquist for the doll. Even the intellectuals, who ought to know better, like to hear about the pretensions, extravagances and vulgarities—tell them pictures have a private grammar, like politics or automobile production or society, and watch the blank look come into their faces.

—F. Scott Fitzgerald

Making judgments on films is in many ways so peculiarly vaporous an occupation that the only question is why, beyond the obvious opportunities for a few lecture fees and a little careerism at a dispiritingly self-limiting level, anyone does it in the first place.

—Joan Didion

A finished picture defies all attempts to analyze what makes it work or not work: the responsibility for its every frame is clouded not only in the accidents and compromises of production but in the clauses of its financing.

—Joan Didion

As filmmakers, we can show where a person's mind goes, as opposed to theater, which is more to sit back and watch it.

—Darren Aronofsky

I'm just trying to tell a good story and make thought-provoking, entertaining films. I just try and draw upon the great culture we have as a people, from music, novels, the streets.

—Spike Lee

A James Cagney love scene is one where he lets the other guy live.

—Bob Hope

The eye of the camera must be the eye of the director. It is absolutely inevitable because you are telling a story in images.

--Rouben Mamoulian

Movies are a door to knowledge—knowledge of society, knowledge of history, knowledge of art.

--Martin Scorsese

To be a writer, you need a pen. To be a painter, a brush. To be a musician, an instrument. But to be a filmmaker, you needed the collaboration of others to bring your vision to the canvas that is the movie screen.

--Martin Scorsese

The cinematographer's job is to tell people where to look.

--Michael Chapman

The great cinematographers are able to understand the stories they are trying to tell and find those elusive visual images that help to tell that story.

--Caleb Deschanel

The twenties was really a golden age for cinema, because the camera was unencumbered by sound....It really was a visual medium.

--John Bailey

When I was a kid, I thought that movies were made in an hour and a half and that they were shot in sequence. I was vaguely aware that there had to be a camera, but I imagined that it could change setups instantaneously,...It took a long time for me to realize that movies are made. I had to step back even further to notice that they are made of shots, that each shot is a unit in itself as well as part of the whole, and that it is possible for the way a film is shot to convey its meaning.

--Bruce F. Kawin

Most of us go to the movies to have fun: to laugh, cry, boo, cheer, be scared, thrilled, or simply to be amused for a few hours. But movies are something more than just an evening's entertainment. They are also historical documents that help us see—and perhaps more fully understand—the world in which they were made.

--Steven J. Ross

Film has its own language, its own grammar—camera shots...movement...the editing of scenes...the *mise-en-scène*, the actual placing people in the frame and moving them around.

--Martin Scorsese

Any time Hollywood takes a book and turns it into a successful movie, there's every chance that the book, however good it may be, will be forgotten....Of all the people who have seen Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, how many have read the Daphne du Maurier novella on which the movie is based, much less recognize that in many ways the original is better? How many fans of *Die Hard* know it's based on a good crime novel?...The explanation isn't complicated: more people will go to see a movie on any given Wednesday afternoon than will read the book on which it's based in a year. Almost always, the more successful the movie, the more forgotten the book.

--Malcolm Jones

Hollywood grew to be the most flourishing factory of popular mythology since the Greeks.

—Alistair Cooke

I watched *Titanic* when I got back home from the hospital, and cried. I knew that my IQ had been damaged.

—Stephen King

A movie audience is your best and worst critic. If you ask them outright to tell you what's wrong, they'll be hopeless. But if you sneak in and listen to them, they'll tell you everything.

--Harold Lloyd

We are not trying to entertain the critics. I'll take my chances with the public.

--Walt Disney

When you go to a movie, it's about what's not being said.

—William Devane

The film business is absurd. Stars don't last very long. It's much more interesting to be a proper actor.

—Tom Courtenay

Pictures will not do; they will never do. Television is fun to watch, but it is utterly and entirely dependent on the spoken and written word. The proof is this: darken the image into invisibility but leave the sound on, and you will still have a crude sense of what is going on. Turn off the sound, however, and exclude the appearance of written words, and though you leave the image as bright as ever, you will find you understand nothing of what is going on unless you are watching the most mindless slapstick. To put it even more simply: radio had no images at all and managed, but the silent movies found subtitles essential.

There is the fundamental rule, then.

--Isaac Asimov

So that, to me, is important that audiences are treated with an amount of respect toward their intelligence. Most Hollywood films don't respect their intelligence.

—Eriq La Salle

The challenge, really, on any new film is to try to...achieve a few moments that aren't cliché.

—Adrian Lyne

Most women's pictures are as boring and as formulaic as men's pictures. In place of a car chase or a battle scene, what you get is an extreme closeup of a woman breaking down.

—Frances McDormand

The delusion of entertainment is devoid of meaning. It may amuse us for a bit, but after the initial hit we are left with the dark feeling of desolation.

—Arthur Erickson

I can't think how anyone can become a director without learning the craft of cinematography.

—Nicolas Roeg

The *Long, Long Trailer* (1954) actually happened and the man wrote a book about it. *Father of the Bride*, same thing; a banker wrote that who had never written anything else.

—Vincente Minnelli

I don't think anyone starts doing creative work because they're serving humanity. They want to get laid; they want to get money; they want to get attention.

—Richard Gere

It never fails: everybody who really makes it does it by busting his ass.

—Alan Arkin

Every time I go to a movie, it's magic, no matter what the movie's about.

—Steven Spielberg

Hollywood is loneliness beside the swimming pool.

—Liv Ullmann

Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall were dining in the Stork Club when Harry Cohn, president of Columbia Pictures, walked by their table and whispered a few words to Bogart. The actor turned to Bacall and beamed: 'Our picture's a hit!'

'What makes you so sure?' Bacall asked.

'Because Mr. Cohn referred to it as 'our' picture,' Bogart explained. 'If it was a flop, he'd have said 'your' picture.'

—*Leadership for the  
Front Lines*

People in show business can't really live happily unless other people constantly tell them they love them and they're god-like.

—Merrill Markoe

Acting is easy and fun. You earn a lot of money, and you hang out with girls. The profession is given tremendous significance within our society, but it's not really worthy of it.

—James Spader

'You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!' In the two centuries since Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's monster first uttered these rebellious words to his maker in the pages of *Frankenstein*, this terrible reversal has captivated cultural imagination. What would happen if or when the day came that humankind created an intelligence so powerful that it turned against us? It's a scenario that's been visualized a thousand ways: with robots (*The Terminator*), with computers (*2001: A Space Odyssey*), with human-animal hybrids (*The Island of Doctor Moreau*)—even, in the case of Disney's (and yes, going further back, Goethe's) 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice,' with animated brooms.

—Christopher Orr

Drama on television and the big screen has always leaned heavily on the existence of an Other, a generic foe or foil that can be presented without concern for inner life or ultimate fate: African American or American Indian, German or Japanese, Latin American drug lord or Muslim terrorist. But as the circle of empathy has expanded, reliance on such 'types' has radically waned. (The 1970s-era decline of the Western—once a Hollywood staple—reflected in no small part the overdue revelation that American Indian roles could no longer plausibly be limited to murderous braves and semi-comic sidekicks)

—Christopher Orr

Haunted houses—the kind portrayed in countless books and movies—are designed to make their guests feel small and powerless, but also a tiny bit titillated in spite of themselves. Suspense builds slowly. Each creepy revelation incites curiosity first, then dread, then horror. The point is to seduce these mortals into exploring their own darkest corners, only to reduce them to a quivering pile of nerves. The best haunted houses don't murder their guests. Instead, they slowly and sublimely drive them mad.

—Heather Havrilesky

Actually, it doesn't feel like they've seen my butt. The butt belongs to fictional characters, you know.

—Sharon Stone on Her  
Nude Scenes

For the first time the movies had a man [D. W. Griffith] who realized that, while a theater audience listened, a movie audience watched.

—James Agee

To understand *The Birth of a Nation* we must first understand the difference between what we bring to the film and what the film brings to us. All serious moviegoers must sooner or later arrive at a point where they see a film for what it is, and not simply for what they feel about it. *The Birth of a Nation* is not a bad film because it argues for evil. Like Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, it is a great film that argues for evil.

—Roger Ebert

Making a movie is a long, dull process. There's a lot of waiting around.

—Julia Louis-Dreyfus

Ensure that your script is watertight. If it's not on the page, it will never magically appear on the screen.

—Richard E. Grant

In musical theater you have to be very big and very animated, while film and television are more toned down.

—Kevin Richardson

For any director with a little lucidity, masterpieces are films that come to you by accident.

—Sidney Lumet

I aim for a lifetime full of movies.

—Salma Hayek

I wanted to make people happy, if only for an hour.

—Busby Berkeley

*Bambi* has a profound effect on children because it's about losing your mother.

—Christine Baranski

It has been said that if I have any one big theme in my movies, it's got to do with the difference between reality and fantasy. It comes out very frequently in my films. I think what it boils down to, really, is that I hate reality. And, yet, unfortunately it's the one place where we can get a good steak.

—Woody Allen

*Batman Forever* (Warner Bros.) almost lives up to its title. I thought it would never end.

—Stanley Kauffman

Ages at which six famous movie actresses had their first speaking roles:

Harriet Nelson: 3

Shirley Temple: 4

Margaret O'Brien: 4

Natalie Wood: 5

Jodie Foster: 9

Elizabeth Taylor: 10

—*World Features  
Syndicate*

Culture is the habit of being pleased with the best and knowing why.

--Henry Van Dyke

Another thing that really excites me: I'd like to do multiple versions of the same film.

—Steven Soderbergh

The Sennett system of making pictures was actually fun. You never knew what the person next to you was going to do.

—Gloria Swanson

When we were making KONG, I went into the sound room and made an aria of horror sounds. I was in charge of it; there was no one there to listen to me. I was totally in charge of what I wanted to do.

—Fay Wray

I have no interest in Shakespeare and all that British nonsense... I just wanted to get famous and all the rest is hogwash.

—Anthony Hopkins

What's going on in Southern California is best summed up in the Universal Pictures/Sylvester Stallone deal. The published information was simply this: Universal was to pay the actor \$60 million for three as-yet-unspecified films. One can, however, pause a moment over the message that the deal sent around the world. And here is what Universal, and by implication all Hollywood, is saying: *Hey, everybody, listen; we're gonna make more shit.*

These are the movies Sylvester Stallone has chosen to star in over the past ten years: *Assassins; Judge Dredd; The Specialist; Demolition Man; Cliffhanger; Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot; Oscar; Rocky V; Tango & Cash; Lock Up; Rambo III; Over the Top; Cobra.*

Do you remember in the wonderful Jimmy Cagney comedy *One, Two, Three* when the Communists tortured Horst Buchholz by playing 'Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weeny Yellow Polkadot Bikini' until he did what they wanted? How long do you think you'd hold if you had those thirteen movies played over and over for you in a locked room? Under these conditions, there is nothing I wouldn't admit to.

—William Goldman

That would be getting up at 5 am... I don't understand why film's shoot such brutal hours. I think it'd be worth it to not be so strictly cost-effective and have an 8 hour day. The film's would benefit in the end.

—Terry Zwigoff

Where talent is a dwarf, self-esteem is a giant.

—John Petit-Senn

*Dumbo*... makes me cry. Every single time and in the exact same spot. I just have a special affection for *Dumbo*.

—Leonard Maltin

Silent pictures show us how we lived and what our attitudes were. And as an art form, they can be wonderfully entertaining and often inspirational.

—Kevin Brownlow

Who would have thought that a tap-dancing penguin would outpoint James Bond at the box office? And deserve to? Not that there's anything wrong with *Casino Royale* But *Happy Feet*—written and directed by George Miller—is a complete charmer, even if, in the way of most family fare, it can't resist straying into the Inspirational.

—Robert Gottlieb

We should never forget that Hollywood was built by Europeans, and the old Jewish boys from Eastern Europe.

—Maximilian Schell

I don't know what the secret to longevity as an actress is. It's more than talent and beauty. Maybe it's the audience seeing itself in you.

—Joan Blondell

I think a smart person today realizes that you have to be part of the art films that are done just for the sake of the art.

—Halle Berry

A director makes 100 decisions an hour. Students ask me how you know how to make the right decision, and I say to them, 'If you don't know how to make the right decision, you're not a director.'

—George Lucas

The real trouble with film school is that the people teaching are so far out of the industry that they don't give the students an idea of what's happening.

—Brian De Palma

A lot of dumb pictures have made a lot of money, but that doesn't mean they're going to be anything cinema students will revel over in the future.

—Clint Eastwood

When I was twelve, my sixth-grade English class went on a field trip to see Franco Zeffirelli's film adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. From that moment forward I dreamed that someday I'd meet my own Juliet. I'd marry her and I would love her with the same passion and intensity as Romeo. The fact that their marriage lasted fewer than three days before they both were dead didn't seem to affect my fantasy. Even if they had lived, I don't think their relationship could have survived. Let's face it, being that emotionally aflame, sexually charged, and transcendently eloquent every single second can really start to grate on a person's nerves. However, if I could find someone to love just a fraction of the way that Montague loved his Capulet, then marrying her would be worth it.

—Annabelle Gurwitch

Asked why actors do what they do Olivier responded: 'Look at me, look at me, look at me!'

—Laurence Olivier

Only about 1 in 10 of the 4,066 actors with speaking roles were 60 or older at the time of their movie's release date (and that's despite the fact that 19.5 percent of Americans are in that age group). Even more dramatic: Of those older actors, only 27 percent were female. Just three 60-plus actresses—Meryl Streep, Helen Mirren and Lin Shaye—had lead roles in any of those 100 films.

—*AARP Bulletin*

I have often compared making a movie to vomiting. I don't like to vomit. But there are times I think, *Maybe I'll just feel better if I go ahead and throw up*. So then I make the movie.

—Warren Beatty

Because fear is such an easy emotion to evoke in a movie audience, horror can be the most cynical of genres. Any filmmaker with a bit of technique can get a nice satisfying reaction out of us—a shudder, a scream, or a heartfelt 'Ewww!'—without much effort, and after a while (if not sooner) a certain contempt for the audience can set in. The fright becomes mechanical, just an exercise in stimulus and response; the horrors are engineered rather than imagined.

—Terrence Rafferty

The [horror] genre is more about imagery than narrative, closer to poetry than to fiction. What we remember from horror movies are moments of keen, concentrated fear; flashes of appalling beauty; and of course the monsters, whose function is to incarnate forces that cannot be understood.

—Terrence Rafferty

I don't know how much movies should entertain. To me I'm always interested in movies that scar. The thing I love about JAWS is the fact that I've never gone swimming in the ocean again.

—David Fincher

People don't read any more. It's a sad state of affairs. Reading's the only thing that allows you to use your imagination. When you watch films it's someone else's vision, isn't it?

—Lemmy Kilmister

Science fiction films are not about science. They are about disaster, which is one of the oldest subjects of art.

—Susan Sontag

Sean Connery was actually wearing a wig while playing James Bond. And ironically, his fellow Bond Roger Moore suffered from hoplophobia, which is a fear of firearms.

—Julie Gerstein

Daniel Radcliffe went through 160 pairs of glasses while filming the Harry Potter movies. The books in Dumbledore's office are actually leather-bound phone books. More than 3,000 WANDS were used during the filming of the Potter movies.

—Julie Gerstein

The Horse of A Different Color in the Emerald City in *The Wizard of Oz* was coated with Jell-O crystals in order to achieve the bright color. Throughout shooting the horse kept trying to lick the color off. Toto, the dog in *The Wizard of Oz*, earned \$125 a week, while the actors who played Munchkins in the movie only made \$50 each week.

—Julie Gerstein

Sorry, but the horse's head used in *The Godfather's* infamous horse head bed scene was REAL. Coppola got it after striking a deal with a nearby dog food factory. 'One day, a crate with dry ice came with this horse's head in it,' he recalled.

—Julie Gerstein

*Grease* was originally supposed to be an ANIMATED film.

—Julie Gerstein

The 1997 movie *Titanic* cost more to make than the actual ship that sank. The movie cost \$200 million. The actual costs to construct the ship between 1910 to 1912 were \$7.5 million and when you adjust that amount for inflation, it would come out to around \$125 million in 1997 dollars.

—Julie Gerstein

In order to prevent anybody spoiling the ending of the movie, Alfred Hitchcock attempted to purchase every copy of the 1959 Robert Bloch book *Psycho* was based on.

—Julie Gerstein

I have only one rule in acting—trust the director, and give him heart and soul.

—Ava Gardner

Acting is the most minor of gifts and not a very high-class way to earn a living. After all, Shirley Temple could do it at the age of four.

—Katharine Hepburn

Never judge a book by its movie.

—J. W. Eagan

You know, when I first went into the movies Lionel Barrymore played my grandfather. Later he played my father and finally he played my husband. If he had lived I'm sure I would have played his mother. That's the way it is in Hollywood. The men get younger and the women get older.

— Lillian Gish

Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels.

—Ann Richards

The way I learn to do things is by imagining that I can. I remember wanting to do a twist and a half off the diving board when I was 13. I was afraid, so I imagined it happening and then went and did it. That is what we do as actors. We imagine it, and then it happens.

—Meryl Streep

Book—what they make a movie out of for television.

--Leonard Louis Levinson

I think the measure of your success to a certain extent will be the amount of things written about you that aren't true.

—Cybill Shepherd

An actor is just a part of a movie, but the director—he is the movie.

—Amit Kalantri

I had a dream about you. We were actors in a horror movie and I was hunting you down with a knife. When I finally cornered you the director yelled 'Cut'... What? I can't be blamed for following instructions.

—Georgia Saratsioti

I made some mistakes in drama. I thought the drama was when actors cried. But drama is when the audience cries.

—Frank Capra

I don't get it. I just don't get it. If Art is supposed to imitate Life, why do they want all the actors to be thin? There are fat people in the world. Shouldn't there be a few of us actors to represent them?

—Camryn Manheim

Any actress who appears in public without being well-groomed is digging her own grave.

—Joan Crawford

Movies are a fad. Audiences really want to see live actors on a stage.

—Charlie Chaplin

Most of the successful people in Hollywood are failures as human beings.

—Marlon Brando

Seven actors have played Batman on the big screen, and if you can name all seven without reading any further, your youth has been wasted.

—Grant Morrison

Remember that the expressions and vocal patterns you are committing to film will become synecdoches... That means something little that stands in for something big. Your smile will stand in for all human happiness. Your tears will be a model for everyone else's sadness.

...You have a responsibility to the people who will repeat your lines, wink your winks, imitate your laughter without knowing they are imitating anything. This is the secret power that actors hold. It is almost like being a god. We create what it is to be human when we stand fifty feet tall on a silk screen.

So you'd better be good at it, for God's sake.

—Catherynne M. Valente

Actresses talking about characters they've played often use the phrase 'strong woman,' which kind of irks me. Firstly, the description appears to be reserved for two kinds of female: the gun-toting chick in tiny-vest-and-shorts combo, or the tough-talking businesswoman who secretly longs for a man to bring out her softer side. So obviously, our idea of strength is pretty narrow and one-dimensional. Secondly, why isn't Brad Pitt ever asked about how much he enjoys playing a 'strong man?' Is it automatically assumed that men's roles will be complex and interesting?

—Rosie Blythe

All FILM directors are good actors, because you have to understand actors in order to program them.

—Henry Johnson Jr.

People never forget two things, their first love and the money they wasted watching a bad movie.

—Amit Kalantri

The varying physical characteristics of the actors may also necessitate changes. Sean Connery is six feet four. Dustin Hoffman isn't.

—Sidney Lumet

People see so many movies that when they finally see one not so bad as the others, they think it's great. an Academy Award means that you don't stink quite as much as your cousin.

—Charles Bukowski

A film that is a true work of art transcends theatre and heartwarminglly changes lives.

—A. D. Posey

There's always one sure way of finding out that you're a misfit. When you're eleven years old, and your friends are telling you that they just sneaked into the theater to watch 'Twilight' and that it was 'sooooo emotional and sooooo terrifying and sooooo romantic!' - but you've been spending the summer watching 'Rosemary's Baby' and 'Don't Look Now' and knowing the lines to all the Alfred Hitchcock films by heart - that's the moment you realize that you're a misfit.

—Rebecca McNutt

Theatre has always seemed to me more real than books or film. One goes to the cinema either alone or with someone, and a film is shown. It was made two years ago, a year ago, a month ago; it does not matter. It is there, once and for all. It has another substance, another reality than that of the audience watching it. It is brought in a tin, and it can be seen in an empty room. But an empty house in a theatre is embarrassing. The audience in a theatre is different from one in a cinema. Theatre is very much like a cafe. Spectators play a part as well as the actors. And it is a somewhat different performance every time it is given.

--Jan Kott

All artists have one quality that is priceless—eternal childhood.

--Rod Steiger

A comedian has to gain more than just a laughing action. The audience must laugh with him. The comedian that just has you laugh at him very seldom becomes a great comedian. The audience has to root for him. The audience has to sympathize with him. The audience must work for him. Of course, the comedian has to be funny, too.

--Harold Lloyd

Working in films is a lazy man's existence compared to working in the theatre where, if you're a star, there is a terrible responsibility. You have to be always on top. You can't let down for a moment, or everybody lets down without knowing that he is doing it.

--Ethel Barrymore

If you give everything to acting, you are embroiled in a constant fight for a bigger part, a better part. There is no time to live. You get old and you still want to be young. That is not life. A woman is a fool if she does not learn this.

--Simone Signoret

The most important thing in acting is honesty. Once you've learned to fake that, you're in.

--Samuel Goldwin

But seriously, I think overall in the scheme of things winning an Emmy is not important. Let's get our priorities straight. I think we all know what's really important in life—winning an Oscar.

—Ellen DeGeneres

The moment we cry in a film is not when things are sad but when they turn out to be more beautiful than we expected them to be.

—Alain de Botton

Give them pleasure. The same pleasure they have when they wake up from a nightmare.

—Alfred Hitchcock

Usually when you see females in movies, they feel like they have these metallic structures around them, they are caged by male energy.

—Björk

It's not what a movie is about, it's how it is about it.

—Roger Ebert

Artists use frauds to make human beings seem more wonderful than they really are. Dancers show us human beings who move much more gracefully than human beings really move. Films and books and plays show us people talking much more entertainingly than people really talk, make paltry human enterprises seem important.

—Kurt Vonnegut

I don't like the idea of 'understanding' a film. I don't believe that rational understanding is an essential element in the reception of any work of art. Either a film has something to say to you or it hasn't. If you are moved by it, you don't need it explained to you. If not, no explanation can make you moved by it.

—Federico Fellini

Up until then, whenever anyone had mentioned the possibility of making a film adaptation, my answer had always been, 'No, I'm not interested.' I believe that each reader creates his own film inside his head, gives faces to the characters, constructs every scene, hears the voices, smells the smells. And that is why, whenever a reader goes to see a film based on a novel that he likes, he leaves feeling disappointed, saying: 'the book is so much better than the film.'

—Paulo Coelho

A good movie can take you out of your dull funk and the hopelessness that so often goes with slipping into a theatre; a good movie can make you feel alive again, in contact, not just lost in another city. Good movies make you care, make you believe in possibilities again. If somewhere in the Hollywood-entertainment world someone has managed to break through with something that speaks to you, then it isn't all corruption. The movie doesn't have to be great; it can be stupid and empty and you can still have the joy of a good performance, or the joy in just a good line. An actor's scowl, a small subversive gesture, a dirty remark that someone tosses off with a mock-innocent face, and the world makes a little bit of sense. Sitting there alone or painfully alone because those with you do not react as you do, you know there must be others perhaps in this very theatre or in this city, surely in other theatres in other cities, now, in the past or future, who react as you do. And because movies are the most total and encompassing art form we have, these reactions can seem the most personal and, maybe the most important, imaginable. The romance of movies is not just in those stories and those people on the screen but in the adolescent dream of meeting others who feel as you do about what you've seen. You do meet them, of course, and you know each other at once because you talk less about good movies than about what you love in bad movies.

—Pauline Kael

Academia is the death of cinema. It is the very opposite of passion. Film is not the art of scholars, but of illiterates.

—Werner Herzog

Every actor in his heart believes everything bad that's printed about him.

—Orson Welles

I'm sure anyone likes a good crime, provided it is not the victim.

—Alfred Hitchcock

Movies are so rarely great art that if we cannot appreciate great trash we have very little reason to be interested in them.

—Pauline Kael

I don't believe in learning from other people's pictures. I think you should learn from your own interior vision of things and discover, as I say, Innocently, as though there had never been anybody.

—Orson Welles

Last, but not least—in fact, this is most important—you need a happy ending. However, if you can create tragic situations and jerk a few tears before the happy ending, it will work much better.

—Satyajit Ray

We all steal, but if we're smart we steal from great directors. Then, we can call it influence.

—Krzysztof Kieślowski

After 100 years, films should be getting really complicated. The novel has been reborn about 400 times, but, like cinema, is stuck in the birth canal.

—Harmony Korine

Every director has at least 10 bad films in them.

—Robert Rodríguez

As long as a film stays unmade, the book is entirely yours, it belongs to the writer. As soon as you make it into a film, suddenly more people see it than have ever read the book.

—Iain Banks

R means under 18 accompanied by an adult. Therefore all corporately funded films in the US must be made with the concept that those under the age of 18 are able to view the film. This means all corporately funded films in the US are made for the eyes of children.

—Crispin Hellion Glover

Our personal past is only available to us now through black-and-white film, it's a medium for communication with the dead, including our dead selves, the way we used to be, which is why we're drawn to it.

—Frank Lentricchia

In my experience there are billions of dollars available for pieces of shit. As soon as the material distinguishes itself by something interesting, financing becomes a problem.

—Rutger Hauer

Cinema is a mixed form. *L'Avventura* has characters, it has social context, and these things are not trivial. Its plot is the disappearance of a disappearance. Possibly the most frightening plot imaginable. Forgetting the dead, whom all of history tells us we must remember. But what makes movies themselves, rather than novels or plays, is something else. What is it if not the film medium itself? The purity of the visual, which lies in the silence of the stilled image. The freeze frame. The deeply, deeply silent image. Like death. The image in itself in its silent purity reaches--it reaches!--for the purity of death.

—Frank Lentricchia

It is a quintessential example of the whirling kinetics that drive a Keaton film, in which not just the medium but the human body- the permutations of the sinews, the shock of the limbs -seems infinitely elastic, an unruly instrument to be wielded with a cheeky kind of grace.

— Edward McPherson

Anyone can remember lines, but it takes an artist to come on the set and not know her lines and give the performance she (Marilyn Monroe) did.

--Billy Wilder

Poor darling glamorous stars everywhere, their lives are so lonely and wretched and frustrated. Nothing but applause, flowers, Rolls-Royces, expensive hotel suites, constant adulation. It's too pathetic and wrings the heart.

--Noel Coward

Can you imagine being wonderfully overpaid for dressing up and playing games?  
--David Niven

Nobody would be in this business if he were normal.  
--Vincent Price

Actors spend their whole lives doing something they put people in asylums for.  
--Jane Fonda

Show me a great actor and I'll show you a lousy husband. Show me a great actress,  
and you've seen the devil.  
--W. C. Fields

There is as much difference between the stage and the film as between a piano and  
a violin. Normally you can't become a virtuoso in both.  
--Ethel Barrymore

In the theater you work very, very hard right up to the curtain, here we go, bang,  
and adrenaline does the rest. In the movies the curtain never goes up. It's like a  
loose rubber band—no tension.  
--Vera Zorina

If it's a good script I'll do it. And if it's a bad script, and they pay me enough, I'll  
do it.  
--George Burns

An actor's popularity is fleeting. His success has the life expectancy of a small boy  
who is about to look into a gas tank with a lighted match.  
--Fred Allen

For an actor, the joy of slipping into a bad guy's skin can be intense, a satisfaction  
like no other. When Richard III is doing his devious worst, or when music-hall per-  
former Archie Rice is displaying the gloomiest depths of his grubby soul in *The En-  
tertainer*, the gleam in Olivier's eye is blinding. Brando gets that rapt look, too,  
when he's taunting defenseless Blanche DuBois in *Streetcar*, or whipping his horse  
in frustration in *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1967). And God knows De Niro's got it  
as the seething, paranoid Travis Bickle in *Taxi Driver* (1976), posing in front of a  
mirror and rehearsing what he'll say, and do, to his legions of enemies.  
—Terrence Rafferty

In entertainment your last job may be your *last* job.

--Jackie Gleason

*Titanic* I thought was the most dreadful piece of work I've ever seen in my entire life. Another film that I think is equally bad was *American Beauty*. So badly acted and directed. But people like that.

—Robert Altman

Most actors really love it, that's what they want to do. They burn to do it. And so they'll read a script and think, that's an interesting part. And because they love acting, that blinds them to the fact that the rest of it is pretentious nonsense, which it very often is.

—Hugh Grant

I mean there's a certain finality about a movie, when it's done it's done—that raised eyebrow in that moment will always be that raised eyebrow. Whereas a play only lives as a blueprint for a performance on any given night. There's a reason you can eat popcorn and watch a movie and you can't do that in the theatre. Theatre you have to lean in, you have to tune your ear to the stage and participate.

—Tracy Letts

Theatergoing is a communal act; movie going a solitary one.

—Robert Brustein

Film is the greatest educational medium the world has ever known.

—Preston Sturges

When the bespangled Miss Charisse wraps her phenomenal legs around [Fred] Astaire, she can be forgiven everything—even the fact that she reads her lines as if she learned them phonetically.

—Pauline Kael

Literature and film in my opinion are like saloons where bottles have no labels. I want to taste each one myself and figure out which is what. If I'm denied this by labeling, then my entertainment is considerably lessened.

— Saadat Hasan Manto

Vanessa insisted that film was exactly like poetry. Nothing necessarily had to happen; you just had to feel something.

—Cecily von Ziegesar

Anyone who has observed a child playing with a doll will know how intently the child examines it by touch as well as gaze. Fingers and eyes probe the physical form with the precision of a master surgeon who has been assigned the duty of dissecting a body to the bone. Every nook and cranny is inspected; nape of neck and ear, groin and instep are caressed.

In the same fashion, the cinema audience scrutinizes the light-puppets on the silver screen, and whether it is the curve of Asta Nielsen's back, Thede Bara's naked shoulders, Pina Menichelli's sensual eyelids, Clara Kimball Young's slim ankles, Musidora's Cupid's bow, Gunnar Tolnæs' strong fingernails, Douglas Fairbanks' firm thighs, or Max Linder's soft eyes, the body part in question and its position will become the focus of the viewer's existence and etch itself into his psyche, while the size of the image and the repeated close-ups of lips, teeth, and even tongues will exacerbate the effects until few have the strength to resist them.

Film is thus immoral by its very nature, transforming the actor into a fetish and fostering perversion in the viewer, who allows himself to be seduced like a moth to the flame. The difference lies in that the cinema audience's appointment is with the cold flicker of the flame rather than the searing fire itself.

—Sjón

Cinema is a language. It can say things—big, abstract things. And I love that about it. I'm not always good with words. Some people are poets and have a beautiful way of saying things with words. But cinema is its own language. And with it you can say so many things, because you've got time and sequences. You've got dialogue. You've got music. You've got sound effects. You have so many tools. And you can express a feeling and a thought that can't be conveyed any other way. It's a magical medium. For me, it's so beautiful to think about these pictures and sounds flowing together in time and in sequence, making something that can be done only through cinema. It's not just words or music—it's a whole range of elements coming together and making something that didn't exist before. It's telling stories. It's devising a world, an experience, that people cannot have unless they see that film. When I catch an idea for a film, I fall in love with the way cinema can express it. I like a story that holds abstractions, and that's what cinema can do.

—David Lynch

If California is a state of mind, Hollywood is where you take its temperature. There is a peculiar sense in which this city existing mainly on film and tape is our national capital, alas, and not just the capital of California. It's the place where our children learn how and what to dream and where everything happens just before, or just after, it happens to us.

—Ross Macdonald

Film makes me feel less alone in the world.

—A. D. Posey

Watching a movie for the first time is a flirt. Rewatching it, is a date.

—Guillermo del Toro

Everyone has their truth. Mine lies in the cinema.

—Dawn Garcia

I've never seen an exploding helicopter. I've never seen anybody go and blow somebody's head off. So why should I make films about them? But I have seen people destroy themselves in the smallest way, I've seen people withdraw, I've seen people hide behind political ideas, behind dope, behind the sexual revolution, behind fascism, behind hypocrisy, and I've myself done all these things. So I can understand them. What we are saying is so gentle. It's gentleness. We have problems, terrible problems, but our problems are human problems.

—John Cassavetes

People say that a time machine can't be invented, but they've already invented a device that can stop time, cameras are the world's first time machines.

—Rebecca McNutt

We make, see, and love films, not digitals. To convert all of our movies, home videos, theaters, photographs and television to digital would be like telling a painter to throw away his brushes and canvas for an I-Pad. Celluloid isn't just nostalgic, it's an art form and, like it or not, it's superior to digital. It lasts much longer, it provides grain and brighter colors, and it takes more effort so that it produces something wonderful. With the inferior binary codes, pixels and untested shelf-life of digital files, plus the fact that these days anyone with a digital camera, even a two-year-old, can make a video and pollute the world with self-photography and cat pictures, film has a lot more integrity and worth than digital.

—Rebecca McNutt

People see a *Macbeth* film. They imagine they have seen *Macbeth*, and don't want to see it again; so when your Mr. Hackett or somebody comes round to act the play, he finds the house empty. That is what has happened to dozens of good plays whose authors have allowed them to be filmed. It shall not happen to mine if I can help it.

—George Bernard Shaw

All Sam Peckinpah ever did in his movies was show that getting hit on the chin doesn't sound like [makes a small popping noise]. When one grown man hits another grown man in the face, it splatters like an overripe tomato. And it's not fun getting killed. It's bloody and gory and altogether unpleasant. That's all Sam Peckinpah ever did.

—Harry Crews

A lot of film people are like that—especially the ones below the line, the blue-collar guys, the grunts. They like putting their hands on the equipment and getting it to do things for them. It's not about art or ideas. It's about working at something and making it come out right.

—Paul Auster

Or take this girl, for example. At a meeting just outside Paris, a fifteen-year-old girl came up to me and said that she'd been to see [The Double Life of] *Véronique*. She'd gone once, twice, three times and only wanted to say one thing really—that she realized that there is such a thing as a soul. She hadn't known before, but now she knew that the soul does exist. There's something very beautiful in that. It was worth making *Véronique* for that girl. It was worth working for a year, sacrificing all that money, energy, time, patience, torturing yourself, killing yourself, making thousands of decisions, so that one young girl in Paris should realize that there is such a thing as a soul. It's worth it.

—Krzysztof Kieślowski

Hey, I got an idea, let's go to the movies. I wanna go to the movies, I want to take you all to the movies. Let's go and experience the art of the cinema. Let's begin with the *Scream Of Fear*, and we are going to haunt us for the rest of our lives. And then let's go see *The Great Escape*, and spend our summer jumping our bikes, just like Steve McQueen over barb wire. And then let's catch *The Seven Samurai* for some reason on PBS, and we'll feel like we speak Japanese because we can read the subtitles and hear the language at the same time. And then let's lose sleep the night before we see *2001: A Space Odyssey* because we have this idea that it's going to change forever the way we look at films. And then let's go see it four times in one year. And let's see *Woodstock* three times in one year and let's see *Taxi Driver* twice in one week. And let's see *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* just so we can freeze there in mid-popcorn. And when the kids are old enough, let's sit them together on the sofa and screen *City Lights* and *Stage Coach* and *The Best Years of Our Lives* and *On The Waterfront* and *Midnight Cowboy* and *Five Easy Pieces* and *The Last Picture Show* and *Raging Bull* and *Schindler's List*... so that they can understand how the human condition can be captured by this amalgam of light and sound and literature we call the cinema.

—Tom Hanks

I think cinema, movies, and magic have always been closely associated. The very earliest people who made film were magicians.

—Francis Ford Coppola

Just watch any husband arguing with his wife about something insignificant; listen to what they say and watch how their residual emotions manifest when the fight is over. It's so formulaic and unsurprising that you wouldn't dare re-create it in a movie. All the critics would mock it. They'd all say the screenwriter was a hack who didn't even try. This is why movies have less value than we like to pretend—movies can't show reality, because honest depictions of reality offend intelligent people.

—Chuck Klosterman

The lasting and ultimately most important reputation of a film is not based on reviews, but on what, if anything, people say about it over the years, and on how much affection for it they have.

—Stanley Kubrick

A director must be a policeman, a midwife, a psychoanalyst, a sycophant and a bastard.

—Billy Wilder

I'm very worried about the depiction of women on the screen. It's gotten worse than ever and it's related to their being either high- or low-class concubines, and the only question is when or where they will go to bed, with whom, and how many. There's nothing to do with the dreams of women, or of woman as the dream, nothing to do with the quirky part of her, the wonder of her.

—John Cassavetes

Your audience is your adversary. If you don't have one get one—imagine it. Imagine it now. To whom is your story addressed and why? Audience is always a creative act of the imagination. You can't tell your story effectively and leave it out. It must be alive in you, vividly alive. It is in conflict with everything that is false in what you have written. If it is an audience worthy of your talent and potential, it won't let you slide by the lies, the laziness, the shortcuts. If you don't take audience seriously, you can be sure it will return the favor.

—Billy Marshall  
Stoneking

Censors tend to do what only psychotics do: they confuse reality with illusion.

—David Cronenberg

The collective sign of relief heaved on V-J Day ought to have inspired Hollywood to release a flood of ‘happily ever after’ films. But some victors didn’t feel too good about their spoils. They’d seen too much by then. Too much warfare, too much poverty, too much greed, all in the service of rapacious progress. A bundle of unfinished business lingered from the Depression—nagging questions about ingrained venality, mean human nature, and the way unchecked urban growth threw society dangerously out of whack. Writers and directors responded by delivering gritty, bitter dramas that slapped our romantic illusions in the face and put the boot to the throat of the smug bourgeoisie. Still, plenty of us took it — and liked it.

—Eddie Muller

Three films a day, three books a week and records of great music would be enough to make me happy to the day I die.

—François Truffaut

Everybody has something that chews them up and, for me, that thing was always loneliness. The cinema has the power to make you not feel lonely, even when you are.

—Tom Hanks

In this business, until you’re known as a monster, you’re not a star

—Bette Davis

I’m lucky enough to be able to make films and so I don’t need a psychiatrist. I can sort out my fears and all those things with my work. That’s an enormous privilege. That’s the privilege of all artists, to be able to sort out their unhappiness and their neuroses in order to create something.

—Michael Haneke

Good film, television, or music keeps you awake, anxious for the next movement or act, and wanting more when it is finished.

—John Grooters

In America, film is the highest form of art that the public aspires to. People will come to me and say ‘Oh, your book was so good, they ought to make a movie out of it!’ To which I reply ‘Well, why? It’s already a book.’

—Orson Scott Card

Yet in recent years I have witnessed a new phenomenon among filmgoers, especially those considered intelligent and perceptive. I have a name for this phenomenon: the Instant White-out. People are closeted in cozy darkness; they turn off their mobile phones and willingly give themselves, for ninety minutes or two hours, to a new film that got a fourstar rating in the newspaper. They follow the pictures and the plot, understand what is spoken either in the original tongue or via dubbing or subtitles, enjoy lush locations and clever scenes, and even if they find the story superficial or preposterous, it is not enough to pry them from their seats and make them leave the theatre in the middle of the show.

But something strange happens. After a short while, a week or two, sometimes even less, the film is whitened out, erased, as if it never happened. They can't remember its name, or who the actors were, or the plot. The movie fades into the darkness of the movie house, and what remains is at most a ticket stub left accidentally in one's pocket.

—Abraham B. Yehoshua

Her first really great role, the one that cemented the 'Jean Arthur character,' was as the wisecracking big-city reporter who eventually melts for country rube Gary Cooper in Frank Capra's *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936). It was the first of three terrific films for Capra: Jean played the down-to-earth daughter of an annoyingly wacky family in Capra's rendition of Kaufman and Hart's *You Can't Take It With You* (1938), and she was another hard-boiled city gal won over by a starry-eyed yokel in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939). 'Jean Arthur is my favorite actress,' said Capra, who had successfully worked with Stanwyck, Colbert and Hepburn. '. . . push that neurotic girl . . . in front of the camera . . . and that whining mop would magically blossom into a warm, lovely, poised and confident actress.' Capra obviously recognized that Jean was often frustrated in her career choice.

—Eve Golden

For the casual viewer, Kurosawa's films can be an exercise in endurance.

—Jerry White

I would rather be told an R-rated truth than a G-rated lie.

—Ken Gire

Summer movie idea: take all the sequels that are out right now, and make movies about their backstories.

—Stephen Colbert

The function of camera movement is to assist the storytelling. That's all it is. It cannot be there just to demonstrate itself.

—Mike Figgis

I admire nudity and I like sex, and so did a lot of people in the Thirties. But, to me, overexposure blunts the fun...Sex as something beautiful may soon disappear. Once it was a knife so finely honed the edge was invisible until it was touched and then it cut deep. Now it is so blunt that it merely bruises and leaves ugly marks. Nudity is fine in the privacy of my own bedroom with the appropriate partner. Or for a model in life class at art school. Or as portrayed in stone and paint. But I don't like it used as a joke or to titillate. Or be so bloody frank about.

—Mary Astor

I'd prefer not to be the pretty thing in a film. It's such a bloody responsibility to look cute, because people know when you don't and they're like, 'They're trying to pass her off as the cute girl and she's looking like a bedraggled sack of potatoes.'

—Minnie Driver

I think every American actor wants to be a movie star. But I never wanted to do stupid movies, I wanted to do films. I vowed I would never do a commercial, nor would I do a soap opera—both of which I did as soon as I left the Acting Company and was starving.

—Kevin Kline

The secret to the movie business, or any business, is to get a good education in a subject besides film—whether it's history, psychology, economics, or architecture—so you have something to make a movie about. All the skill in the world isn't going to help you unless you have something to say.

—George Lucas

I don't think it's the job of filmmakers to give anybody answers. I do think, though, that a good film makes you ask questions of yourself as you leave the theatre.

—Paul Haggis

I made some truly awful movies. 'Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot' was the worst. If you ever want someone to confess to murder just make him or her sit through that film. They will confess to anything after 15 minutes.

—Sylvester Stallone

The film is made in the editing room. The shooting of the film is about shopping, almost. It's like going to get all the ingredients together, and you've got to make sure before you leave the store that you got all the ingredients. And then you take those ingredients and you can make a good cake - or not.

—Philip Seymour  
Hoffman

My movie is born first in my head, dies on paper; is resuscitated by the living persons and real objects I use, which are killed on film but, placed in a certain order and projected on to a screen, come to life again like flowers in water.

—Robert Bresson

This film cost \$31 million. With that kind of money I could have invaded some country.

—Clint Eastwood

Sometimes I take the watch, or I take the shoes, but usually the souvenir is to take the life you had with those directors, or the crew - the camera person, the lighting person. When you finish a film it's like a little death. You had a family for a bit, and you finish the movie and you probably will never see each other again.

—Jean Reno

Flashback in film rarely works.

—Susan Hill

'Alien' is a C film elevated to an A film, honestly, by it being well done and a great monster. If it hadn't had that great monster, even with a wonderful cast, it wouldn't have been as good.

—Ridley Scott

There is a strange pecking order among actors. Theatre actors look down on film actors, who look down on TV actors. Thank God for reality shows, or we wouldn't have anybody to look down on.

—George Clooney

Actors search for rejection. If they don't get it they reject themselves.

—Charlie Chaplin

There are no rules in filmmaking. Only sins. And the cardinal sin is dullness.

—Frank Capra

We don't make movies to make money, we make money to make more movies.

—Walt Disney

I don't try to guess what a million people will like. It's hard enough to know what I like.

—John Huston

A film is—or should be—more like music than like fiction. It should be a progression of moods and feelings. The theme, what’s behind the emotion, the meaning, all that comes later.

—Stanley Kubrick

A director makes only one movie in his life. Then he breaks it into pieces and makes it again.

—Jean Renoir

We tend to do period stuff because it helps make it one step removed from boring everyday reality.

—Ethan Coen

Our feeling is that the most important thing on a set is that actors have enough confidence to try different things. If there’s stress or tension, they won’t go out on a limb because they won’t want to embarrass themselves if they don’t feel completely comfortable.

—Peter Farrelly

Casting is 65 percent of directing.

—John Frankenheimer

The directing of a picture involves coming out of your individual loneliness and taking a controlling part in putting together a small world. A picture is made. You put a frame around it and move on. And one day you die. That is all there is to it.

—John Huston

Cinema should make you forget you are sitting in a theater.

—Roman Polanski

Certain things leave you in your life and certain things stay with you. And that’s why we’re all interested in movies—those ones that make you feel, you still think about. Because it gave you such an emotional response, it’s actually part of your emotional make-up, in a way.

—Tim Burton

I foresee no possibility of venturing into themes showing a closer view of reality for a long time to come. The public itself will not have it. What it wants is a gun and a girl.

—D. W. Griffith (1917)

We love films because they makes us feel something. They speak to our desires, which are never small. They allow us to escape and to dream and to gaze into the eyes that are impossibly beautiful and huge. They fill us with longing. But also, they tell us to remember; they remind us of life. Remember, they say, how much it hurts to have your heart broken.

—Nina LaCour

Movies touch our hearts and awaken our vision, and change the way we see things. They take us to other places, they open doors and minds. Movies are the memories of our life time, we need to keep them alive.

—Martin Scorsese

Books and movies, they are not mere entertainment. They sustain me and help me cope with my real life.

—Arlaina Tibensky

Every once in a while I have what I think of as an out-of-the-body experience at a movie. When the ESP people use a phrase like that, they're referring to the sensation of the mind actually leaving the body and spiring itself off to China or Peoria or a galaxy far, far away. When I use the phrase, I simply mean that my imagination has forgotten it is actually present in a movie theater and thinks it's up there on the screen. In a curious sense, the events in the movie seem real, and I seem to be a part of them.

—Roger Ebert

There was a time when the feature was invariably preceded by a cartoon, and audiences smiled when they heard the theme music for 'Looney Tunes' and 'Merrie Melodies' from Warner Bros. Cartoons have long since been replaced by 20 minutes of paid commercials in many theaters, an emblem of the greed of exhibitors and their contempt for their audiences. In those golden days, the cartoon (and even a newsreel and a short subject) was a gift from the management.

—Roger Ebert

A film director, like an orchestra conductor, is the lord of his domain, and no director has more power than a director of animated films. He is set free from the rules of the physical universe and the limitations of human actors, and can tell any story his mind can conceive.

—Roger Ebert

A slow movie that closely observes human beings and their relationships can be endlessly fascinating, while a thriller with nonstop wall-to-wall action can be boring, because it is all relentlessly pitched at the same tone.

—Roger Ebert

It seems to me that there are two basic approaches to any kind of comedy, and in a burst of oversimplification I'll call them the Funny Hat and the Funny Logic approaches. The difference is elementary: In the first, we're supposed to laugh because the comic is wearing the funny hat, and in the second it's funny because of his reasons for wearing the funny hat. You may have guessed by now that I prefer the Funny Logic approach.

—Roger Ebert

I am against censorship and believe that no films or books should be burned or banned, but film school study is one thing and a general release is another. Any new Disney film immediately becomes part of the consciousness of almost every child in America, and I would not want to be a black child going to school in the weeks after *Song of the South* (1946) was first seen by my classmates.

—Roger Ebert

In the previous century the movie theater was often, in smaller towns and cities, the only grand architectural statement, save perhaps for a church or courthouse. They unashamedly provided a proscenium for our dreams.

—Roger Ebert

Long shot for comedy, close up for tragedy.

—Charlie Chaplin

The novel's days of cultural preeminence have long since gone. The form rose to primacy across the 19th century, achieved a zenith of prestige in modernism, then yielded pride of place to the new visual media. It is no accident, perhaps, that the modernist *anni mirabiles* after the First World War (the years of *Ulysses*, Proust, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Magic Mountain*, *The Great Gatsby*, and others) directly preceded the invention of the talkies—a last, astounding efflorescence.

--William Deresiewicz

I'll always be there because I'm a skilled professional actor. Whether or not I've any talent is beside the point.

—Michael Caine

A close-up on screen can say all a song can.

—Stephen Sondheim

One of the curious things about censorship is that no one seems to want it for himself. We want censorship to protect someone else; the young, the unstable, the suggestible, the stupid. I have never heard of anyone who wanted a film banned because otherwise he might see it and be harmed.

—Edgar Dale

Right now I think censorship is necessary; the things they're doing and saying in films right now just shouldn't be allowed. There's no dignity anymore and I think that's very important.

—Mae West

If the First Amendment means anything, it means that a state has no business telling a man, sitting alone in his own house, what books he may read or what films he may watch.

—Justice Thurgood  
Marshall

[On watching old movies] It's funny, because it's all the same fears and anxieties. Everyone is talking about the same [stuff], in a way, whether it's not hearing back on a text or someone not calling you back. You listen to old songs, you listen to old music, and you are like, 'Oh, these fears are really universal and generations of people have had them before me.'

—Aziz Ansari

When the entire audience goes silent. All the conversations and rustlings stop, and everyone, at about the same time, falls into quiet anticipation for what is about to happen. This is called the hush over the crowd, but really it's the moment when the crowd itself first forms. The 200 unique people with different thoughts and ideas now become one single entity, joining together for the first time to give their unified attention to the front of the room.

And the strange part is that the audience gives control over to the unknown. They have not seen the movie before. They haven't heard the lecture or seen the play. It's an act of respect and an act of hope—and it's amazing.

--Scott Berkun

Why should people go out and pay to see bad movies when they can stay at home and see bad television for nothing.

--*The Observer* (9/9/56)

You can't be sad or cynical watching 'Singin' in the Rain.' I dare you to try. Those rich Technicolor hues; those dashing jawlines and cherubic smiles; the wry choreography; those soigné dyed-fox gowns and drop-waist, fringed flapper skirts; the goofball slapstick; those infectious show tunes, sung with bouncing trills and bright vibrato: They will always buck you up, with or without your consent.

—Catherine Rampell

Film is distinctive because of its nature, of its being able to cut through time with editing.

—Oliver Stone

The arts are a highway into the soul of the people.

--Arthur Miller

Only 7% of directors on the top 250 films of 2016 were women. That's slightly less than the percentage of female directors on top films in 1998.

—Ariane Lange

I mean, certainly writing, painting, photography, dance, architecture, there is an aspect of almost every art form that is useful and that merges into film in some way.

—Sydney Pollack

I think politicians and movie actors and movie executives are similar in more ways than they're different. There is an egocentric quality about both; there is a very sensitive awareness of the public attitude, because you live or die on public favor or disfavor. There is the desire for publicity and for acclaim, because, again, that's part of your life....And in a strange and bizarre way, when movie actors come to Washington, they're absolutely fascinated by the politicians. And when the politicians go to Hollywood, they're absolutely fascinated by the movie stars. It's a kind of reciprocity of affection by people who both recognize in a sense they're in the same racket.

--Jack Valenti

While being called beautiful is extremely flattering, I would much rather be noticed for my work as an actress.

—Halle Berry

I hate acting when I see it. I don't want to feel it, I don't want to see it, I want to be taken away with the story—I don't want the actor's ego in front of me. That's what I try to live when I do the work.

—Rutger Hauer

Lynda Obst mourned what she saw as cult worship of 'pre-awareness' in the film and television industry. As the number of movies and television shows being produced each year has grown, risk-averse producers have relied heavily on films with characters and plots that audiences already know. Indeed, in 15 of the last 16 years, the highest-grossing movie in American has been a sequel of a previously successful movie (for example, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*) or an adaptation of a previously successful book (*The Grinch*). The hit-making formula in Hollywood today seems to be built on infinitely recurring, self-sustaining loops of familiarity, like the Marvel comic universe, which thrives by interweaving movie franchises and TV spin-offs.

—Derek Thompson

I've made so many movies playing a hooker that they don't pay me in the regular way anymore. They leave it on the dresser.

—Shirley MacLaine

We (actors) don't really change the world. We reflect it.

—Martin Sheen

I mean, you know, actors lives—you're forgotten. Look at Barrymore, and look at all the great actors. They're forgotten after awhile.

—Anthony Quinn

[David Lean's] images stay with me forever. But what makes them memorable isn't necessarily their beauty. That's just good photography. It's the emotion behind those images that's meant the most to me over the years. It's the way David Lean can put feeling on film. The way he shows a whole landscape of the spirit. For me, that's the real geography of David Lean country. And that's why, in a David Lean movie, there's no such thing as an empty landscape.

—Martin Scorsese

I always scout locations first. The apartments, the railway tracks, the café, the canal—I figure out the geography of the film.

—Claire Denis

I don't believe that the public knows what it wants; this is the conclusion that I have drawn from my career.

—Charlie Chaplin

Historically, what movies got made and what movies were good were the decisions of a small number of individual executives at the studios. And even the most esteemed studio heads have blind spots. Because of the financial pressures associated with making a movie, they tend to err on the side of safety, preferring films that are somehow similar to ones that have done well in the past. (Thus, the seven *Fast and the Furious* sequels.) But convention can be the death of creativity—and it's no guarantee of box-office success, either.

—Alex Wagner

*Star Wars* gave us Leia: a 'princess' who defied the stereotype as a kick-ass rebel fighter. She changed the definition of a heroine. And as the revolutionary special effects transformed our imaginations, the story set in a galaxy far, far away reminded us of our own world's battle between good and evil—one that never ends but must always be fought.

—Allison Schroeder

Mae West's witty dialogue, revealing gowns, purring voice, and sexual innuendos in *She Done Him Wrong* (1933) made her an icon of a type of frank female sexuality that would define the early 1930s and the pre-censorship era, and would inspire concepts of high camp and female sexual independence in cinema for decades to come.

—Anna Biller

It's hard to name a film of more expansive reach than Lang and von Harbou's *Metropolis* (1927). A work of magisterial surrealism that both predicted and incarnated the rest of the 20th century, the film cast its long chiaroscuro shadow over everything from the Third Reich to cyberpunk.

—Howard A. Rodman

D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915)—the first cinematic blockbuster and a revisionist racist artifact that helped resurrect the Ku Klux Klan, led to a fresh wave of violence, bolstered myths about the ante-bellum South, and cemented the false image of the black male 'savage' in the white cultural mainstream. One hundred years on, the movie still has far too much to answer for.

—Ty Burr

Movies, after all, are one of the ways American tells itself who it is.

—Alex Wagner

*The Great Train Robbery* (1903) directed by Edwin S. Porter, was one of the first films to combine multiple story lines into a narrative structure. The film also used innovative camera and editing techniques that are still very much a part of our cinematic vocabulary today. All of that in 12 minutes—and it was commercially successful to boot!

—Tom McCarthy

In 26.6 seconds and 486 frames, the *Zapruder Film* brought a brutal assassination into our living rooms and the world to its knees in shock and grief.

—Nancy Wolske Lee

*Jaws*—the first summer blockbuster—changed the business of filmmaking, gave us an iconic score, and continues to make us fearful of ocean swimming even though we know better.

—Tim Cox

No dancer can watch Fred Astaire and not know that we all should have been in another business.

—Mikhail Baryshnikov

That's probably when I get the most angry at American movies, when they just so cynically manipulate the audience without even trying to give a good story.

—Gene Siskel

I find myself saying this all the time during every movie I make, 'Why is this is so hard?' And I realize yes it is. Every movie I make I find kind of excruciating. I get a lot back from it, but I feel like I'm kind of always working at the edge of my ability. I guess that's what I'm looking for when I go to work. I am trying to become the edge.

—Michelle Williams

All the time I've been in this business which is a long, long time now, I go from having incredible days like shooting the part of Sam Houston and then all of a sudden I'm home and I'm out of work and it's two o'clock in the afternoon, I'm in my boxer shorts watching Turner Classic Movies.

—Bill Paxton

In movie acting especially, there's a big element of luck. I've probably taken some roles I shouldn't have. It's taking a chance and rolling the dice. If something doesn't work, what are they going to do to you? All right, so you get bad reviews, people say you stink, then it's over with. I'm not impervious, but being an actor means that you have to be sensitive, and you also have to have the hide of a rhinoceros.

—Christopher Walken

Actors don't retire—they get retired.

—Christopher Walken

Imagination is not something apart and hermetic, not a way of leaving reality behind; it is a way of engaging reality.

—Irving Howe

As actors, the thing we have to fight, more than even the business part of making movies, is boredom.

—Linda Fiorentino

Charlie Chaplin made films before there were genres like horror, superhero, thriller, drama. He didn't have to do one thing, so his movies did it all. His appetite wasn't restricted by the rules.

—Steve Conrad

It's important as an actor to learn...what it means to be a small fish in a big pond.

—Anthony Michael Hall

The general consensus seems to be that I don't act at all.

—Gary Cooper

Writers are generally seen as balky, obstacles to the forward flow of the project. They take time. They want money. They are typically the first element on a picture, the people whose job it is to invent a world sufficiently compelling to interest actors and directors, and, as the first element, they are often unwilling to recognize the necessity for keeping the front money down, for cutting their fees in order to get a project going. 'Everyone,' they are told, is taking a cut ('everyone' in this instance generally means every one of the writers), yet they insist on 'irresponsible' fees. A director who gets several million dollars a picture will often complain, quite bitterly, about being 'held up' by the demands of his writers. 'You're haggling over pennies,' a director once complained to me.

—Joan Didion

I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph.

—Shirley Temple

I have a sneaking suspicion that if there were a way to make movies without actors, George Lucas would do it.

—Mark Hamill

Typically in horror films the character just services the plot, and you really are just going from ‘point a’ to ‘point b,’ just so that you can end up at ‘point c.’ They are just sort of stick characters. That’s just not interesting to me.

—Kevin Williamson

I see stardom very clearly as a construct that’s been created in order to sell things.

—Julie Christie

I think that when a film does its job, it poses questions rather than gives answers. It should act as a frustrating counselor who, at your bidding for advice, says, ‘What do you think?’ I think that’s some of what the culture critic Greg Tate meant by art leaving a ‘metaphysical stain.’

—Aunjanue Ellis

Cartooning at its best is a fine art. I’m a cartoonist who works in the medium of animation, which also allows me to paint my cartoons.

—Ralph Bakshi

I’ve never seen anyone causally cough in movies. It’s almost always related to lung cancer.

—*theChive*

The ideal, it seems to me, is to show things happening and allow the reader to decide what they mean.

—John M. Ford

They say the camera never lies. It lies every day.

—Cesar Romero

I don’t think there’s any artist of any value who doesn’t doubt what they’re doing.

—Francis Ford Coppola

Older adults visit the cinema more often than millennials....Older audiences can produce a blockbuster hit: Sully, the Clint Eastwood film about airline pilot Chesley Sullenberger, made \$124 million at the U.S. box office, mostly thanks to older moviegoers.

—*AARP Bulletin*

The only area where women have achieved equal status is in the profession of acting, and that is because there they are a necessity.

--William Bayer

I'm just an actor. My performance is not more important than your life. Stop watching. We're false images designed to sell you products by exploiting your insecurities. To make you spectators in life, not participants.

—Grant Morrison

Acting is the expression of a neurotic impulse. It's a bum's life. The principal benefit acting has afforded me is the money to pay for my psychoanalysis.

—Marlon Brando

I love taking you inside a world that you're not a part of and showing you how it actually works.

—Jerry Bruckheimer

I think most Hollywood meetings are silly and I truly despise pitching. It's insane to expect someone to come in and tell you the story before they've written it, and buying an idea from someone who can explain it rather than write it is like choosing a mechanic based on his ability to draw a picture of your car's problem.

—Jess Walter

No star is a heroine to her makeup artist.

—Richard Corliss

In a lot of action films, a lot of guys are driving muscle cars or vintage cars, whereas in reality, a lot of getaway drivers would actually choose, like, commuter cars and find a way to blend into freeway traffic as quickly as possible.

—Edgar Wright

Film fixes a precise visual image in the viewer's head. In fiction, you just hope you're precise enough to convey the intended effect.

—Jeff Vandermeer

Yes, movies! Look at them—All of those glamorous people—having adventures—hogging it all, gobbling the whole thing up! You know what happens? People go to the movies instead of moving! Hollywood characters are supposed to have all the adventures for everybody in America, while everybody in America sits in a dark room and watches them have them! Yes, until there's a war. That's when adventure becomes available to the masses! Everyone's dish, not only Gable's! Then the people in the dark room come out of the dark room to have some adventures themselves—Goody, goody!—It's our turn now, to go to the south Sea Island—to make a safari—to be exotic, far-off!—But I'm not patient. I don't want to wait till then. I'm tired of the movies and I am about to move!

—Tennessee Williams

Look at any black-and-white movie; everybody is smoking.

—Loni Anderson

*Toy Story 2* (1999) didn't merely equal the original. The sequel enriched it, presenting Woody with a new but related quasi-parental dilemma: should he spend the rest of his life untouched and pristine on the shelf of a vintage-toy collector? Or should he return to enjoy loving play with a rowdy boy (as the movie opens, Andy has inadvertently torn Woody's arm half off) who will ultimately outgrow and discard him? In the end, Woody opts for the messy combination of joy and sacrifice with Andy, as apt a metaphor for parenthood as you're likely to find. And with its foreshadowing of eventual abandonment, *Toy Story 2* laid the groundwork for still further thematic development. That promise was fulfilled almost a decade later, in *Toy Story 3*, a concluding chapter in which Andy finally heads off to college and a new life, leaving behind toys and parents alike.

—Christopher Orr

When I first began, the technicians, camera and makeup men made me feel so self-conscious that I began to have the biggest inferiority complex about my looks.

—Jessie Matthews

If you're successful, acting is about as soft a job as anybody could ever wish for. But if you're unsuccessful it's worse than having a skin disease.

—Marlon Brando

Woody doesn't rehearse, as opposed to my own method of directing where I really work with actors around a round table for weeks, examining the values of the material, so his technique is very different.

—Mark Rydell

In the 1930s, the popularity of Pearl Buck's novels, especially *The Good Earth*, as well as growing American sympathy for China in its struggles with Japanese Imperialism, opened up opportunities for more positive Chinese roles in U.S. films. Wong [Anna May] returned to the U.S. in June 1935 with the goal of obtaining the role of O-lan, the lead female character in MGM's film version of *The Good Earth*. Since its publication in 1931, Wong had made known her desire to play O-lan in a film version of the book; and as early as 1933, Los Angeles newspapers were touting Wong as the best choice for the part. Nevertheless, the studio apparently never seriously considered Wong for the role because Paul Muni, an actor of European descent, was to play O-lan's husband, Wang Lung. The Chinese government also advised the studio against casting Wong in the role. The Chinese advisor to MGM commented: 'whenever she appears in a movie, the newspapers print her picture with the caption 'Anna May again loses face for China''.

According to Wong, she was instead offered the part of Lotus, a deceitful young girl who helps to destroy the family and seduces the family's oldest son. Wong refused the role, telling MGM head of production Irving Thalberg, "If you let me play O-lan, I will be very glad. But you're asking me—with Chinese blood—to do the only unsympathetic role in the picture featuring an all-American cast portraying Chinese characters.' The role Wong hoped for went to Luise Rainer, who won the Best Actress Oscar for her performance. Wong's sister, Mary Liu Heung Wong, appeared in the film in the role of the Little Bride. MGM's refusal to consider Wong for this most high-profile of Chinese characters in U.S. film is remembered today as 'one of the most notorious cases of casting discrimination in the 1930s'.

—*Wikipedia*

It starts so young, and I'm angry about that. The garbage we're taught. About love, about what's 'romantic.' Look at so many of the so-called romantic figures in books and movies. Do we ever stop and think how many of them would cause serious and drastic unhappiness after *The End*? Why are sick and dangerous personality types so often shown as passionate and tragic and something to be longed for when those are the very ones you should run for your life from? Think about it. Heathcliff. Romeo. Don Juan. Jay Gatsby. Rochester. Mr. Darcy. From the rigid control freak in *The Sound of Music* to all the bad boys some woman goes running to the airport to catch in the last minute of every romantic comedy. She should let him leave. Your time is so valuable, and look at these guys—depressive and moody and violent and immature and self-centered. And what about the big daddy of them all, Prince Charming? What was his secret life? We don't know anything about him, other than he looks good and comes to the rescue.

—Deb Caletti

In most films music is brought in at the end, after the picture is more or less locked, to amplify the emotions the filmmaker wants you to feel.

—Ken Burns

One *Catch-22* or *Dr. Strangelove* is more powerful than all the books and movies that try to show war ‘as it is.’

--William Zinsser

The only way to see a movie is in a big theater, on a big screen, with a big bag of popcorn.

—Dan Glickman

Ageism is pervasive in this industry. It’s not a level playing field. You don’t often see women in their 60s playing romantic leads with costars who are decades younger. I think about how few wonderful actresses of my generation are still doing viable, important film work. You go to television. You go to the stage. You do whatever you can because you want to keep working.

—Jessica Lange

An actor should never marry, not even another actor. You’re too involved with yourself, and your work is too demanding, to give the necessary amount of attention to another human being. Inevitably that person feels left out. And becomes unhappy. We must never make people unhappy. Life’s too short for that.

--Katharine Hepburn

At an audition for *King Kong* I was told I was too ‘ugly’ for the part. This was a pivotal moment for me. This one rogue opinion could derail my dreams of becoming an actress or force me to pull myself up by the boot straps and believe in myself. I took a deep breath and said ‘I’m sorry you think I’m too ugly for your film but you’re just one opinion in a sea of thousands and I’m off to find a kinder tide.’ Today I have 18 Academy Awards.

—Meryl Streep

Batman isn’t a comic book anymore. *The Dark Knight* is a haunted film the leaps beyond its origins and becomes an engrossing tragedy....This film and to a lesser degree ‘Iron Man,’ redefines the possibilities of the ‘comic-book movie.’

—Roger Ebert

The technology available for film-making now is incredible, but I am a big believer that it’s all in the story.

—Robert Redford

Beauty is not all-important as an asset...I cannot for the moment recall a single great actress who is a beauty. At least not in the popularly accepted idea of what constitutes beauty.

--Laurette Taylor

Shelley Duvall as Wendy is really one of the most misogynistic characters ever put on film. She's basically just there to scream and be stupid and that's not the woman that I wrote about.

—Stephen King

I'm an assistant storyteller. It's like being a waiter or a gas-station attendant, but I'm waiting on six million people a week, if I'm lucky.

—Jane Fonda, Actress

In Europe an actor is an artist. In Hollywood, if he isn't working, he's a bum.

—Anthony Quinn

That was my one big Hollywood hit, but, in a way, it hurt my picture career. After that, I was typecast as a lion, and there just weren't many parts for lions.

—Bert Lahr

Film is different for me now. If the money is good and it's not totally revolting, I'll do it.

—Claire Bloom

Movies such as *The Perfect Flapper*, *Dancing Mothers* and *Flaming Youth* made young stars of Clara Bow, Olive Thomas and Colleen Moore. (Bow so completely embodied the flapper's allure that her performance as a plucky shop girl in the 1927 dramatic comedy *It* lead critics, coining a phrase, to call her the 'It girl.')

—Linda Simon

What is acting but the study of human behavior?

—Amy Smart

Marilyn Monroe was no fun to work with. She would report to work around 5:00 in the evening. You've been in make-up since 8:30 in the morning waiting for her.

—Tony Randall

Charlie Chaplin was casting about unsuccessfully for an idea for his next film. When he peered at stereographs of the Yukon. 'This was a wonderful theme,' he realized, and in a flash conceived the idea for his next hit film, *The Gold Rush*.

—Olive Thompson

I did what I could to inflate the rumor I was on my way to stardom. What I was on my way to, by any mathematical standards known to man, was oblivion, by way of obscurity.

—Tallulah Bankhead

I'm not a film star, I am an actress. Being a film star is such a false life, lived for fake values and for publicity.

—Vivien Leigh

Know when your time is over. It's the only advice I have. Hell, I knew twenty-five years ago it wasn't going to last. Sooner or later, the demand won't be there, and you better get ready for it. I know actresses who go ape if they're not invited to a party. What the hell is that? I am content. Happiness is within yourself. Get ready for the dream to fade. So I'm no longer in demand, but so what? I see no reason to go into a decline or hit the bottle or sink into a melancholy depression. I've had my time and it was lovely. And I'm very grateful for it. But now I move over and make room for somebody else....What the hell. Whatever I had, it worked, didn't it?

--Barbara Stanwyck

Law students have taken over Hollywood. To them it's all about making money. They know people want to see what they've seen before. Also, remakes are places to showcase the new stars of tomorrow.

—Tobe Hooper

The Screen Actors Guild numbers are frightening: Something like 90 percent of the roles are for men, 5 percent are for livestock and 5 percent are for women.

—Melanie Mayron

I remember all too well the premiere of *Ecstasy* when I watched my bare bottom bounce across the screen and my mother and father sat there in shock.

—Hedy Lamarr

I remember that Jack Lemmon, who is one of my favorite actors of all time, says that the day he stops being nervous is the day he should leave the business.

—Kim Basinger

The tensions are always based on financial resources....film is very problematic because it is viewed as an art form and also as an industry with a pure commercial base.

—Ann Macbeth

It's a job—someone's gotta kiss Jennifer Aniston.

—David Schwimmer

For roughly a quarter century—from *Take the Money and Run* in 1969 to, say, *Bullets over Broadway* in 1994—Woody Allen was among America's most fascinating and iconic filmmakers. His early comedies were a revelation; his more mature works (in particular *Annie Hall*, *Manhattan*, *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, and *Hannah and Her Sisters*) were among the best films of the period. Frequently casting himself in central roles, he mined a vein of humor that was emphatically Jewish yet accessible to a wide audience. And if his occasional homages to great European directors such as Bergman (*Interiors* and *Another Woman*) and Fellini (*Stardust Memories* and *Alice*) weren't entirely successful, they nonetheless deepened the intellectual reputation of an oeuvre also known for his allusions to art, literature, and philosophy. Alone among major directors, he seemed to be speaking almost intimately to his audience, playing repeated variations on the same character, a man who was a recognizable variation on Allen himself.

—Christopher Orr

I'm lazy and an imperfectionist. Steven Spielberg and Martin Scorsese will work on the details until midnight and sweat it out, whereas for me, come 6 o'clock, I want to go home, I want to have dinner, I want to watch the ball game. Filming is not the end-all be-all of my existence.

—Woody Allen

Don't ruin it by making the characters talk to the audience because that distances you from the intense reality of it.

—Woody Allen

Meryl [Streep] and Katharine Hepburn are probably the two greatest actresses of this and the last century.

—Denzel Washington

An artist lives more passionately, more deeply, with more seeking for life and truth and beauty than any man in the world.

--Charlie Chaplin

The curious fact is that biology tells us nothing about desire. And, when you think about it, culture—novels, movies, opera, and quite a lot of painting—is about desire, how we manage desire, how we suffer from it, and how it brings us joy when we get things right. A story without desire—and that means without the insistence of desire—will be empty, dry, and more or less aimless. That is one reason we read novels, to see how people fall into awkward moral situations and then try to extricate themselves. This is why there is so much anguish in the world: frustrated desire is every bit as miserable as poverty, because desire is no respecter of one's position in life: everyone goes through it.

--Peter Watson

Being a motion picture actress is the pitch of ecstasy.

—Norma Shearer

I'm...disillusioned with what has happened to World cinema. Now cinemas in both Eastern and Western Europe are filled with the same blockbusters from Hollywood.

—Alexander Walker

(Because) it is the intellect which dominates schooling...the specifically soul making subjects—literature, drama, music, the visual arts—are progressively 'de-souled' as the child progresses through school.

—Dr. Bernie Neville

The great thing about literature is that you can imagine; the great thing about film is that you can't.

--James Monaco

Personally speaking there's only so long you can go from film to film to film. There's an inspiration an actor gets from the stage.

—Jude Law

A writer can write, a painter can paint, a composer can compose by himself. But an actor cannot work individually. He needs a script, a stage, a performing crew, a group of technicians and, if he has a normal ego, encouragement.

—Mickey Rooney

William Faulkner and Nathanael West...viewed film writing as a means of underwriting their other work.

—Marion Meade

Motion pictures are tested in focus groups at every stage of their production, sometimes even before production, in the ‘concept’ stage.

—Joan Didion

A room full of them [celebrities], depresses me, possibly because I have learned at firsthand the wretched things that make a celebrity—the pain of almost constant defeat, the arrows of a thousand critics forever sticking out of your rump, the fact that your name has become a magnet for irritation, malice, or calumny. And the worst of all, the fact that a celebrity cannot, like luckier folk, drop out of sight when he is ripened with age. He must stay on the vine and rot—for all to see and disdain.

—Ben Hecht

It’s hard to see a film that’s been made from a book that you really loved because it’s such a different experience.

—Ed Harris

I don’t do stunts and I don’t think many actors do. For an actor to say they do their own stunts I don’t think is very respectful of the profession of stunt men and women.

—Nick Stahl

Cecil B. DeMille once produced a motion picture allegedly based on E. Arnot Robertson’s story of the Indo-Chinese jungle, *Four Frightened People*. The star was Claudette Colbert. DeMille took the author to a preview. ‘How did you like it?’ he asked when the lights went on again. Miss Robertson reflected a moment. ‘Mr. DeMille,’ she said slowly, ‘do you remember the roar of an off-stage lion that came in somewhere about real three? Well, I do believe that you took that straight from my story.’

—Bennett Cerf

When the moving image first began to circulate in the late nineteenth century, it wasn’t as if stars suddenly popped up along with it. Audiences were mostly just fascinated with the technological marvel they saw before them—the moving image itself was the star. Even as cinema developed in the early 1900s, huge cameras made it difficult to film anything other than a full-length shot. Because viewers couldn’t see the actor’s face up close, it was difficult to develop the feelings of admiration or affection that we associate with film stars. Gradually, close-ups became more prevalent, various actors became more recognizable, fans begin to know the stars’ names, slowly but surely, audiences pieced together types associated with each star—the hero, the villain, the damsel in distress, the virtuous heroine.

—Anne Helen Petersen

It wasn't until the early 1910s...that stars as we understand them today came to be: an actor with a recognizable type on screen—'a picture personality'—accompanied by information about her off-screen, made available through the proliferating fan magazines. A star was the combination of her on-screen and off-screen selves—selves that complemented and amplified each other. An actor who played a cowboy on screen would stable a horse just outside of Hollywood; a sporting heroine would fit in a game of golf between taking care of her children and cooking dinner. Crucially, these off-screen images were always squeaky clean. Women were married or seeking marriage; men were eligible bachelors or devoted husbands. Throughout the 1910s, these narratives served a distinct purpose: to make Hollywood seem less scandalous.

—Anne Helen Petersen

Stars are always symbols of something—of masculinity, of Americanism, of youth. But when their overarching symbolization is of sex, especially a new articulation of sex, their popularity becomes all the more mercurial. Bow [Clara] and Valentino's [Rudolph] images were scandalous for the way they embodied sex and the way they incited desire. Valentino died before he could entirely fall out of favor and is thus immortalized, frozen as if at the height of his fervor, even when it's clear, to anyone who looks closely at history, that his image was already recycling itself and would soon exhaust its pertinence.

—Anne Helen Petersen

I hate Valentino! All men hate Valentino. I hate his Oriental optics; I hate his classic nose; I hate his Roman face; I hate his smile; I hate his glistening teeth; I hate this patent leather hair; I hate his Svengali glare; I hate him because he dances too well; I hate him because he's the greatest lover of the screen; I hate him because he's an embezzler of hearts; I hate him because he's too apt in the art of osculation; I hate him because he's leading man for Gloria Swanson; I hate him because he's too good-looking...the women are all dizzy over him. The men have formed a secret order (of which I am running for president and chief executioner as you may notice) too loathe, hate and despise him for obvious reasons. What! Me jealous?—Oh, no—I just Hate Him.

—Dick Dorgan (1922)

Dean [James] scuffs his feet, he whirls, he pouts, he sputters, he leans against walls, he rolls his eyes, he swallows his words, he ambles slack-kneed—all like Marlon Brando used to do. Never have we seen a performer so clearly follow another's style....Whatever there might be a reasonable torment in this youngster is buried beneath the clumsy display.

—Bosley Crowther

Bow [Clara] was the ‘flapper par excellence’: she bounced, she danced, she fidgeted and moved. Bliss was written all over her body—she seemed constantly alight and alive. With her flaming red hair and wide, playfully mischievous eyes, Mary Pickford she was not. Like Valentino, Bow represented a sea change. She looked physically different from the stars that had come before—there was a certain lushness to her, a vibrancy and indelibly modern look. By 1927, she was arguably the biggest star in the world, the woman most resplendent with what screenwriter Elinor Glyn called ‘It’—a polite way of saying ‘sex appeal’....Bow was constructed as imminently changeable, able to alter her face, demeanor, and personality at a moment’s notice. She could be sexy yet demure, playful yet scowling, a tomboy with no concern for the games of romance and a flirt who plays the game flawlessly. Bow’s mutability mirrored the complicated, contradictory expectations of the New Woman, who had to be liberated yet passive, aggressive yet still desirous of man, ‘new’ when alluring, ‘old’ when necessary.

—Anne Helen Petersen

After Will Hays’s crackdown on on-and off-screen immorality in the early twenties, the studios began a gradual process of boundary testing. Sure, there were rules for what they could and couldn’t show or suggest on-screen—but enforcement of those rules was nearly nonexistent. Thus emerged a motley genre of films, today known as Pre Code Cinema, that weren’t so much before the code as flaunting it. Gangster films, ‘kept-woman’ films, films depicting insurrection and drug use and white slavery, also known as prostitution—they were the hottest thing in theaters.

—Anne Helen Petersen

Mae West was an incinerator, with enough heat to consume a man whole. With a supple, curvaceous figure and a comedic style she termed ‘down low’, West was a wholly singular star creation. She spoke with a nasal, all-knowing tone, her words brimming with innuendo—she couldn’t even say ‘good morning’ without it taking on a devious double meaning. When she entered a room or a conversation, she always did it with her hands casually on her hips, an intoxicating nonchalance to her utter dominance of all, especially men, who crossed her path.

West’s body, with its so-called dangerous curves, along with the turn-of-the-century fashions she clothed it again, inspired an entire trend against ‘reducing’ (read: dieting). But from the beginning, she was marked as an outsider: she wrote all her own material.

—Anne Helen Petersen

Shirley Temple, then 6, landed a contract with Fox Film in 1934 that awed the country: \$1000 a week for her, \$250 a week for her mother, Gertrude. From 1935 to 1938, she was the top box office star; she dropped down but not off the top-10 list in 1939. She helped save 20th Century Fox from near bankruptcy. At the height of her six-year reign, she made more money annually than anyone in Hollywood besides MGM's Louis B. Mayer (and more than General Motors president): \$307,014 in 1938. She was photographed more often than anyone else on the planet, Time magazine reported in 1936. She received more than 3,000 fan letters a week. She endorsed products from Bisquick and CornFlakes to Sunfreze ice cream in Vassar Waver hair curlers. In her prodigy domain—children whose fame no grown-ups could match—Shirley had only one predecessor: Jesus.

—Ann Hulbert

Movies are the most powerful empathy machine in all the arts. When I go to a great movie I can live somebody else's life for a while. I can walk in somebody else's shoes. I can see what it feels like to be a member of a different gender, a different race, a different economic class, to live in a different time, to have a different belief. This is a liberalizing influence on me. It gives me a broader mind. It helps me to join my family of men and women on this planet. It helps me to identify with them, so I'm not just stuck being myself, day after day.

The great movies enlarge us, they civilize us, they make us more decent people.

—Roger Ebert

Dustin Hoffman was only cast as Benjamin [in the *Graduate*] after Charles Groden turned down the role, and other initial choices, including Burt Ward (Robin from the Batman television series), were unavailable. Ann Bancroft (who was only six years older than Hoffman) was cast after producer Larry Truman failed to convince the French actress Jeanne Moreau to sign on and conversations with other actresses, including Ava Gardner, Joan Crawford and Angela Lansbury, were unsatisfactory.

—Phil Hall

The best date movies give you something to talk about. A movie that's a downer is a great way to find out about someone.

—Henry Adams

It's said in Hollywood that you should always forgive your enemies—because you never know when you'll have to work with them.

—Lana Turner

(Things I learned from Lorne Michaels) Producing is about discouraging creativity.

--Tina Fey

Nowadays films and television are what I like to call ‘Microwave Media’. I like mine in the oven, giving the production time to simmer; get the juices flowing, and cooked to perfection. And that takes time. Slow, precious, tempered time. A script is a film's recipe. It's just a piece of paper to the novice cook, but even a recipe needs time to be perfected before it's given to the masses.

—Solange Nicole

In this image-driven age, wildlife filmmakers carry a heavy responsibility. They can influence how we think and behave when we're in nature. They can even influence how we raise our kids, how we vote and volunteer in our communities, as well as the future of our wildlands and wildlife. If the stories they create are misleading or false in some way, viewers will misunderstand the issues and react in inappropriate ways. People who consume a heavy diet of wildlife films filled with staged violence and aggression, for example, are likely to think about nature as a circus or a freak show. They certainly won't form the same positive connections to the natural world as people who watch more thoughtful, authentic, and conservation-oriented films.

--Chris Palmer

The excitement in the Long Island theater where I first saw *Pulp Fiction* was unlike anything I'd previously experienced at the movies.

—Caitlin Flanagan

The studios are very much business. Maybe it was always that way. It is really commercial now. Judgments are made and directions are given to make the cash register ring.

—Dianne Wiest

Francis Ford Coppola did this early on. You tape a movie, like a radio show, and you have the narrator read all the stage directions. And then you go back like a few days later and then you listen to the movie. And it sort of plays in your mind like a film, like a first rough cut of a movie.

--Al Pacino

Artists are the architects of our future. The messages they deliver through music, film and television are what guides popular culture. If we want to see more love, peace and prosperity in the world, artists must take responsibility and lead.

—Tammy McCrary

I'm a classic example of all humorists—only funny when I'm working.

—Peter Sellers

Reading is different, reading is something you do. With TV, and cinema for that matter, everything's handed to you on a plate, nothing has to be worked at, they just spoon-feed you. The picture, the sound, the scenery, the atmospheric music in case you haven't understood what the director's on about... The creaking door that tells you to be stiff. You have to imagine it all when you're reading.

--Daniel Pennac

It's a business you go into because you're an egocentric. It's a very embarrassing profession.

—Katharine Hepburn

How people watch movies when they're:

DATING \*hold hands-

ENGAGED \*cuddle\*

MARRIED \*one person turns the volume up when I'm choking on a piece of popcorn.\*

—Internet Meme

I don't care who you are. When you sit down to write the first page of your screenplay, in your head, you're also writing your Oscar acceptance speech.

—Nora Ephron

No company has been more responsible for shaping the modern entertainment landscape than Walt Disney. In 1937, with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, its first feature film, Disney invented the family blockbuster. In 1954, with *Disneyland*, an anthology series hosted by Walt Disney himself, it became the first movie studio to strike out for the wild west of television. Since then, Disney's dominance has only grown. Of the dozen films with the largest worldwide box-office take since 2010, Disney released eight.

—Derek Thompson  
(2018)

*Black Panther*...represent[s] Hollywood's treating an African story with grace and care, but [it] also...celebrate[s] the film's dispelling the long-held myth that black movies don't attract a global audience.

—Debra Lee

If I ever do a nude scene, I want to be in shape just enough so nobody calls me 'courageous' for doing it.

—Ali Wong

Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing.

--Robert Bresson

1939...marked Miss [Vivien] Leigh's triumph in *Gone with the Wind*. *Gone with the Wind* having been written in Atlanta by a native daughter, Margaret Mitchell, it was fitting that the world premiere of the picture be given there. The hysterical hoop-la that attended the event gave ample indication that this celluloid epic of the Civil War was destined to be the biggest grossing picture in the history of Hollywood.... That opening night in December, 1939, was a sight to behold. Governor Rivers had proclaimed a stateside holiday, urged the womenfolk to don skirts and pantalettes, and appealed to the males to sprout sideburns and goatees and try to look as much like Clark Gable as possible. They complied with a will—and also practically tore off Gable's uniform when he appeared in person. Georgia's immortal athlete, golfer Bobby Jones, and baseball's one and only Tyrus Raymond Cobb, were invited, along with the governors of five neighboring states. Only the author, Miss Mitchell, failed to appear.

Miss Leigh, possibly due to the influence of a well-known soft drink company located in Atlanta, acknowledged of the wild plaudits of the multitude with, 'Ah, this is the applause that refreshes!' And an eleven-year-old girl, given her choice of a Christmas bicycle or meeting Clark Gable, unhesitatingly chose Gable.

—Bennett Cerf

Laurence Olivier, who returned in triumph to Broadway to co-star with his beautiful wife, Vivian Leigh, in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra* and Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra* (the dual bill was referred to by the trade as Two on the Nile), is one of the most charming and versatile actors alive. He's equally at home in stark tragedy, drawing-room comedy, or knockabout clowning in a benefit performance with Danny Kaye.

He learned his profession the hard way, touring the hinterlands of Britain and Wales with an obscure group, playing in houses so ill-equipped that most changes had to be made in public washrooms. His fame in America dates back to the time Samuel Goldwyn persuaded him to play the lead in the memorable screen version of *Wuthering Heights*.

—Bennett Cerf

Benito Mussolini drew two dollars a day in Rome for playing an extra in Samuel Goldwyn's *The Eternal City*; Leon Trotsky made three dollars a day (in 1915) when he appeared in *Rasputin* at Fort Lee, New Jersey; and the Duchess of Windsor, then known as Wallace Simpson, was paid five dollars a day for brief appearances in a number of the Hollywood productions.

—Bennet Cerf

Al Shean...was...the man responsible for making Harpo Marx a silent comedian. Shean scripted the first vaudeville act for the then-unknown Marx Brothers, and inadvertently forgot to write in a part for Harpo. When Harpo indignantly called the omission to his attention, Shean hastily explained, 'I did it on purpose. I want you to play in pantomime. I've got a feeling you'll be terrific.' Mr. Shean didn't know how right he was!

—Bennett Cerf

Motion pictures are just a passing fancy and aren't worth comment in this newspaper.

—Arthur Brisbane (1913)

The screen had just started to talk when Miss [Tallullah] Bankhead interrupted in 1930.

—Richard Maney

The film version of *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* was a landmark in [Danny] Kaye's screen career, but aged several other interested parties anywhere from ten to fifty years.

The ending was rewritten about ten times, and even the one finally shot left Mr. Goldwyn nursing considerable doubts. 'I'm going to call Thurber himself and see what he thinks of it,' decided Mr. G. Thurber was located in the New Yorker office and listened patiently while Goldwyn, in Hollywood, described the new ending in vivid detail. 'Look, Mr. Goldwyn,' said Thurber finally, 'I don't know anything about moving pictures. I don't know what you've done with the rest of my story and I don't particularly care. I sold you the story and that's that. How can I say whether or not your new ending is right?' Mr. Goldwyn thought this over for a moment, and then cried approvingly, 'Thank you, my boy. Why can't I get criticism like that in my own studio?'

At the preview, when Mr. Thurber saw a little was left of his original story, he discovered that he did care after all. 'Anybody catch the name of this picture?' He asked sarcastically, and went home to unburden his soul in an article for *Life*. The Ancient Order of Mitty Worshipers (Frank Sullivan, President) threatened to blow out the brains of either themselves or the producer. The general public, a surprising part of which had never heard of the secret lives of Mr. Mitty, or Mr. Thurber, or Mr. Goldwyn, for that matter, enjoyed itself very much.

—Bennett Cerf

Film music should have the same relationship to the film drama that somebody's piano playing in my living room has to the book I am reading.

--Igor Stravinsky

The story of how the role of Scarlett O'Hara was finally filled in the screen version of *Gone with the Wind* is not generally known, and will bear retelling.

You may recall the reams of publicity that accompanied the casting of this picture, with contests sponsored all over the country to single out an unknown beauty for the leading part. Folks in the know in Hollywood regarded all this as the usual malarkey, and it was generally expected that either Joan Bennett or Paulette Goddard would win the coveted contract. David Selznick called a press conference for Friday morning to announce the full cast of the picture; the preceding week-end, Miss Bennett and Miss Goddard both were guests of the Selznicks, and, coy but confident, assured each other a dozen times, 'I just know it's going to be you, my dear!' On Wednesday, there appeared at the busy agency of David Selznick's brother Myron a young English actor named Laurence Olivier, who signed a contract appointing the Selznick office his legal representative. 'There's going to be quite a show at David's studio tomorrow night,' Myron mentioned casually. 'They're planning to burn down the Atlanta sets for the Margaret Mitchell picture. Want to come with me?' 'Sure,' said Olivier. 'Can I bring a girl with me?' 'Why not?' said Myron.

The next night, Olivier appeared on the set with Miss Vivian Leigh. She had played a small part in *A Yank at Oxford*, but was lost and unnoticed among the galaxy of stars that had turned out for the show.

The torch was applied to the massive sets, and a red glow lit evening sky. Miss Leigh watched entranced, her profile etched sharply against the dancing flames. Myron noticed her, gulped, and tugged brother David by the arm. 'Come with me,' he commanded, 'and see Scarlett O'Hara watching the burning of Atlanta.'

That was Thursday night. The next morning, while reporters were gathering in the outer office, Selznick made a silent, photographic test of Vivian Leigh, and stood in the darkroom while it was developed. A few minutes later he made a public announcement. An unheralded English girl, who had never so much as laid eyes on the script of *Gone with the Wind*, was to play one of the most publicized roles in the history of motion pictures.

—Bennet Cerf

Marlon Brando. The finest actor who ever lived. He was my idol when I was 13. He's done enough work to last two lifetimes. Everything I do, I think: Can Brando play this with me?

—Barbra Streisand

Film is our literature, so we should tell stories that are apropos of our culture, in that we can learn something about ourselves.

—David Strathairn

Sooner or later, we sell out for money.

—Tony Randall, Actor

The one that would give the most therapeutic value to the future...would be *Grease*. It's amazing the joy level that it gives kids, old kids, for generations, you know?

—John Travolta

*Grease* is about firsts—first love, first car, first heartache. That has a very special energy to it. And don't forget, this was time, too, before music videos. *Grease* was one long music video.

—Didi Conn

It's [*Grease*] the ultimate look at a peaceful time when the most important thing was who you were going to invite to the prom and what kind of car you were going to drive. It's the way we wish the '50s were. Now the movie appeals to a lot of people because it's from a time before mass shootings, stabbings; before social media.

—Randal Kleiser

That's what I do. Watch movies and read. Sometimes I even pretend to write, but I'm not fooling anyone. Oh, and I go to the mailbox.

--Nicole Krauss

When you know what an actor has, you can reach in and arouse it. If you don't know what he has, you don't know what the hell is going on.

—Elia Kazan, Director

She [Cher] performs the function for women moviegoers that Jack Nicholson has always fulfilled for men. Free of the burden of ever having been America's sweetheart, she is the one who represents us [women] in our revenge fantasies, telling all the fatheads ... exactly where they can go. You need to be more than beautiful to get away with this. You need to have been Cher for 40 years.

—Stephanie Brush

Hollywood is a place where the stars twinkle until they wrinkle.

—Victor Mature

Nobody can give a good performance unless the authors and composers have written a good part, a fact which is often overlooked.

—Judy Holliday

Reality can be beaten with enough imagination.

—Unknown

To the general public, show business may just mean the artistic part, but the dollar and cents element is the reality every performer has to face.

—Liza Minelli

It's because [Heath] Ledger's performance [in *The Dark Knight*] is so intense and so lasting; it's because despite the insane mask, it's a subtle, nuanced piece of acting so powerful it banishes all memories of the handsome Aussie behind it. The makeup seems to have liberated him: He's supple of body, expressive with only his eyes, and his voice has undulations of irony and mockery and psychopathology to it. He's an essay—in a way he's never before been, playing straight-faced characters—in pure charisma.

—Stephen Hunter

The average life of the movie is till it reaches the critic.

—Will Rogers

British Pictures needed a start, so I thought I just as well go and help them out. I being the one that started American Pictures. I was in Pictures in Hollywood away back when some of these big ones now were just learning to get married. You see Pictures have to undergo a poor or what Will Hayes would call a 'Mediocre' stage before they can get to be big. Well, there is the stage that I assisted the great Film Industry through. The minute they commenced to get better, why my mission had been fulfilled. In other words, I am what you would call a Pioneer. I am all right in anything while it's in its crude state, but the minute it gets to having any class, why I am sunk. After anything begins to take itself seriously I have to gradually drop out, sometimes suddenly. So that is why they sent for me to get the British Pictures through this state.

—Will Rogers

You can't get a picture so poor but there will be an audience growing up somewhere that will like it, and you can't get one so good but what there will be forty percent of the people that see it that won't like it. If it wasn't that way everybody in the world would go to see one picture.

—Will Rogers

Call them 'arts and sciences' but do so with your tongue in your cheek. Everything that makes money and gives pleasure is not art. If it was, bootlegging would be the highest form of artistic endeavor.

—Will Rogers

They, just a few months ago in New York, had a convention to discuss ways and means of regulating them [movies] and fixing a few of the things that they thought was worrying the industry. Well, it didn't get anywhere for nobody knew what was worrying the industry.

Everybody knew what was worrying him personally, but there was no two things that was worrying the same person.

The exhibitor said he wanted better picture for less money; the producer said he wanted better stories and better directors and better actors for less money.

The actor said: 'You are not giving me a fair share of what I draw at the box office.'  
Will Hays said: 'They got to be cleaner.'

The exhibitor says: 'If you get them too clean nobody is interested in them.'

The novelist says: 'What's the use of selling them a story, they don't make the story they buy.'

The Scenario Staff says: 'It reads good but it won't photograph.'

The exchange salesmen say: 'The exhibitors are a dumb lot, they don't know what their audiences do want.'

The exhibits say: 'We may be dumb, but we know how to count up. Give us pictures were there is something to count up.'

The so-called intellectual keeps saying: 'Why don't they give us something worthwhile in the movies that we can think about.'

The regular movie fan says: 'Give us something to see, never mind think about. If we wanted to think we wouldn't come here.'

The old married folks say: 'Give us something besides all this love sick junk, and the fadeout behind a willow tree.'

The young folks that pay the rent on these temples of uplift say: 'Give us some love and romance; what do we care about these picture with a lot of old folks trying to show what they do in life. We will get old soon enough without having to see it now.'

Wall Street says: 'We want more interest on our money.'

The producers say: 'Look at the fun you are having by being in this business. Didn't we give you a pass through the studio, what do you want for your money?'

The actors that aren't working say: 'They don't want actors any more, they only want types.'

The actors that are working say: 'Thank God they are beginning to realize it's us actors they want and not just somebody that looks like the part.'

Everybody is trying to offer suggestions how to regulate the business and bring it down on a sane basis. They are not going to bring it back on a sane basis. It will keep right on going just like it is now. It was never meant to be sane. It grows and gets bigger in spite of every known handicap.

—Will Rogers

We are liable to miss the best of life if we do not know how to tingle, if we do not learn to hoist ourselves just a little higher than we generally are in order to sample the rarest and ripest fruit of art which human thought has to offer.

--Vladimir Nabokov

I think the reason novels are regarded to have so much more 'information' than films is that they outsource the scenic design and cinematography to the reader... This, for me, is a powerful argument for the value and potency of literature specifically. Movies don't demand as much from the player. Most people know this; at the end of the day you can be too beat to read but not yet too beat to watch television or listen to music.

—Brian Christian

An artist carries on throughout his life a mysterious, uninterrupted conversation with his public.

—Maurice Chevalier

I will say nothing to an actor that cannot be translated into action.

—Elia Kazan, Director

The greatest drawback in making pictures is the fact that film makers have to eat.

—Ray Milland

Reading a book is like living a deep and fulfilling life. Watching a movie is like being a paralyzed person: watching others live their lives while you observe from the sidelines.

—Charbel Tadros

A book can be a great friend, an advisor, a means to an end. A book reveals so much more than a movie would ever do. For example, when I watched the movie 'The Hours' I was fascinated by the story. Just a year later I decided to read the book. And what was my surprise that I was even more dazzled by its writings than I was by the images... The images in my head were more vivid than the film could ever transport me to that feminine universe that the author was trying (and so successfully granted me) to conceive.

—Ana Claudia Antunes

I'm most suspicious of scripts that have a lot of stage direction at the top of the page... sunrise over the desert and masses of... a whole essay before you get to the dialogue.

—Anthony Hopkins

Anton Yelchin died tragically at 27, having made some 40 feature films. There was no finer actor. He was also a gifted writer and director, with a dazzling intellect and revolutionary ideas. Had he lived, I believe he would have been the Orson Welles of his generation.

—Victor Levin

Listening to a podcast, reading a book, listening to an audiobook and watching films isn't a waste of time. It's how somebody becomes wise!

—Deyth Banger

Until 45 I can play a woman in love. After 55 I can play grandmothers. But between those ten years, it is difficult for an actress.

—Ingrid Bergman

In old movies, the cinematography is a thousand times better than anything today. Writing, a thousand times better.

—John Kricfalusi

Robert Altman's *Nashville* is my all-time favorite film because it covers all the bases—it's original, moving, and has something to say, but also funny and incredibly entertaining.

—Douglas Wood

Who could imagine that even after I won the Oscar, those who could employ me would continue to cast me as a Spanish spitfire. I was still only offered those dusky maiden roles. I decided that I would never do one of those roles again: 'Ha, ha, I'll show them!' But they showed me—I didn't do a film for seven years after *West Side Story*. It broke my heart. I couldn't understand it. I still don't understand. And there you have it, Hollywood's mind-set at the time.

—Rita Moreno

The Greeks already understood that there was more interest in portraying an unusual character than a usual character—that is the purpose of films and theatre.

—Isabelle Huppert

You can take a handful of dollars, a good story, and people with passion and make a movie that will stand up against any \$70 million movie.

—Jason Patric

Every time I work with a European director, I find they hire the person that captures the spirit of the role. Americans tend to hire the best face. The person that looks more like the role, whether they can perform the role or not is a bonus.

—Elizabeth Pena

I discovered early in my movie work that a movie is never any better than the stupidest man connected with it. There are times when this distinction may be given to the writer or director. Most often it belongs to the producer.

—Ben Hecht

I think that George Lucas' 'Star Wars' films are fantastic. What he's done, which I admire, is he has taken all the money and profit from those films and poured it into developing digital sound and surround sound, which we are using today.

—Peter Jackson

'While we were shooting, I'd say to myself, what the hell is this?' The actor Alec Baldwin recalls of his starring role in *Beetlejuice*. 'Even trying to explain to people what the movie was about—it was difficult. People gave me the most crazy, blank stare.'

—Holly Millea

A hit for me is if I enjoy the movie, if I personally enjoy the movie.

—Ridley Scott

The Covenant of the Arc: The screenwriting law that says: Every single character in your movie must change in the course of your story. The only characters who don't change are the bad guys.

—Blake Snyder

'MY GOD, ARE WE GONNA be like our parents?' That's the fear voiced by one of the five motley high-school students locked in detention in John Hughes's *The Breakfast Club*—and that's the curricula question underlying most movies about adolescents coming of age. The on-screen antics of teenagers might take the form of giddy flirtations (*Grease*), drunken ramblings (*Dazed and Confused*), or feisty self-renaming (*Lady Bird*), but the kids' objectives are usually the same: to fashion an identity by rebelling against the authorities—and expectations—that raised them. This quest, is however, circular. The losing of virginities and conquering of cliques may require transgressions in the moment, but by the time the credits roll, the teens have generally started prepping for productive adulthood against which their own children might someday revolt.

—Spencer Kornhaber

I got sent a screenplay once where the character was described as ‘37 but still attractive.’ That pissed me off.

—Actress Kathleen  
Turner

High-school movies are always, on some level, about outing: the protagonist struggles—nervously or defiantly or both—to announce who she really is to the world.

—Spencer Kornhaber

One of the first moving picture ever made [1896]—by an Edison rival, the American Mutoscope Company—was a silent three-minute clip of children in New Haven, Connecticut, building snow sculptures and throwing snowballs.

—Ann Hodgman

*Gone With the Wind*—a 1939 movie...distills the South into a cozy racial lifestyle while utterly marginalizing the civil War. In the movie’s four-hour running time, there is not a single battle scene.

—Jack Hitt

As long as a film stays unmade, the book is entirely yours, it belongs to the writer. As soon as you make it into a film, suddenly more people see it than have ever read the book.

—Lain M. Banks

I have a child and doing a movie represents three months somewhere. Even doing a week on a movie is a minimum 12-hours-a-day job, so you never see your family.

—Steve Martin

The plot of every Hallmark movie is about a career woman who is too busy for love but she has to move to a small town where a handsome local bachelor teaches her about the true spirit of the holiday. It starts snowing and they kiss. There is also a dog.

—Internet Meme

The first film created solely with Computer Generated Imagery (GCI) was ‘Toy Story’ (1995).

—Internet Meme

Joan Crawford had her back teeth removed so her face would look more defined and it’d accentuate her cheekbones.

—Spencer Althouse

The first movie to be made in Hollywood was 'In Old California.' It was a 17 minute short film by director D. W. Griffith, who was also responsible for the groundbreaking 'Birth of a Nation.'

—Internet Meme

Thomas Edison invented the first moving pictures, which were small film images that could be viewed in a box. Initially, he was opposed to movies on the big screen because one-on-one viewing would be more profitable.

—Internet Meme

Legendary producer Hal Roach would employ someone called a 'wildie' who was either an insane person or a drunk to sit in his writers' room and spout crazy ideas whenever they had writer's block.

—Internet Meme

The only utterly independent woman in the history of Hollywood: Mae West.

—Ethan Mordden

While the star system was ancient in the American theatre, the first movie businessmen viewed their actors as hired employees. So, by the way, did the established theatre people. Movies were junk and movie people junk dealers unworthy of literature, tradition, glamour, and good timing—the elements of theatremanship. In the theatre, they asked, 'How do you read lines?' In film, they asked, 'How will the camera see you?' What talent did that call for, what craft? Some Broadway producers wouldn't hire anyone who had worked in film, and unemployed actors took to giving fake names when applying for movie work. It was just as well, because movie work could hardly lead to anything notable or even steady.

—Ethan Mordden

[Theda] Bara is the only major American film star whose pictures have almost entirely vanished: all but three are lost. Still, film historians will never cease to cite her, for she was, if nothing else, the first star who was entirely created: imaginary name, imaginary roles, imaginary life.

—Ethan Mordden

Hollywood permitted cowboys, detectives, warriors, and even romantic male leads to age well beyond the time span their roles implied, while women had to retire or go into 'character' when they reached middle age....Luise Rainer won two Best Actress Oscars in a row; two years later, she was discarded....Garbo, in some ways the ultimate Hollywood attraction, ran out of steam after fifteen years and melted away.

—Ethan Mordden

Filming a musical as a silent was no problem, for while one did have to do without singing, the prints were released with instrumental parts synchronized to the action, arranged for everything from symphony orchestra to solo piano.

—Ethan Mordden

Six great essentials for women stars: beauty, personality, charm, temperament, style, and the ability to wear clothes.

—Marshall Neilan

Screwball comedy is literate farce that (1) emphasizes wit, charm, and good looks as the great American virtues; (2) urges idiosyncratic goofing around as the great American pastime; and (3) usually mates a wealthy woman with a fortune less man. The literacy provides scripts rich in wordplay and fleet fun, and the farce provides intricate plotting and crazy personnel who help defeat the genre's biggest enemy: pompous logicians.

—Ethan Mordden

Film noir [was] one of Hollywood's distinctive artistic inventions but a genre so bitter and constricted that it sours and strangles everything it touches. Obsessed with greed and sex, longing for violence, and trapped in darkness, film noir as an aesthetic was largely devised by German emigrants fleeing Nazism, and they had little interest in limning the idealism and camaraderie of the thirties fighter comedies. But because their art called for strong women, they inherited many of the fighters (or women very much like them) and bent their energy from rebuilding a wrecked world to grabbing at loot and pawing men.

—Ethan Mordden

Youth and beauty are considered paramount in the inauguration and maintenance of woman stars. But...they are much less significant than such variables as talent, the ability to exploit an exploitive system for one's own ends, and the pressure of contemporaneity. It was neither youth nor looks that got Katharine Hepburn and Bette Davis entree into Hollywood; nor did youth and looks have anything to do with RKO's and Warner Brothers' decisions to build them into stars; nor did advancing age and deteriorating looks have anything to do with their later good or ill fortune.

—Ethan Mordden

A great many actors have been hired entirely on the basis of physical charisma, and a great many have been made or broken by considerations of age.

—Ethan Mordden

Garland represents much more than musical comedy expertise: in her numerous breakdowns and comebacks, in her shocking tales of studio-ordered drug addiction, in her early death, and in her openness as a performer that seemed to give away the self in every character. It's no great deal in film to leave a name behind one, but to remain a working experience after death is true stardom. Who was Theda Bara? Who was Mary Pickford? Garland survives as they do not: in a theme song that is one of the most enduring melodies in American culture; in a number of classic films; and in a kind of replica of herself, a daughter, whom she left behind to carry on the concerns of vulnerability and vitality and the absurd idealism about the splendor of all-out gut-spilling show-biz performance.

—Ethan Mordden

A starlet is any woman under the age of thirty not actively employed in a brothel.

—Ben Hecht

[Elizabeth] Taylor was well aware of her own technical limitations; the one thing MGM had failed to do was to provide her with acting lessons. She was what is known as 'a natural,' and her greatest talent was that unknown quality that leaps through the camera and goes directly into the audience's heart.

—Sam Kashner and  
Nancy  
Schoenberger

The world has changed. I mean our world. Nobody but nobody will pay us a million dollars a picture again for a long time. I've had two financial disasters, *Staircase* and *Boom!*, and Elizabeth [Taylor], *Boom!* and *Secret Ceremony*....I'm afraid we are temporarily out in the cold, and fallen stars. What is remarkable is that we have stayed up there for so long.

—Richard Burton (1970)

There's nowhere to go when you retire from movies, except oblivion.

—Tennessee Williams

Richard [Burton] had that thing which Al Pacino has, which is that some way or another, he brings up the standard of everybody around him. He had a phenomenal presence on the set. He wasn't really interested in the psychology of the character. He was hopeless with props—none of this Marlon Brando stuff. He had this physical presence, but he also had this amazing voice. That was what held you.

—Michael Radford

I've said this before, to varying degrees of reader disgust, but I don't like movies. They're too long, I'm not smart enough to understand most of them, and I think they're too frequently used by dummies to signal that actually, they're geniuses because they totally 'get' *A Clockwork Orange*. I could go the rest of my life without someone asking me, 'Wait, you haven't seen *Gone With the Wind*????' to which I usually respond that no, I don't need to watch racists be beautiful.

—Scaachi Koul

In 1944, Walt Disney was suffering from what he called 'the D.D.s—disillusionment and discouragement.' The man who had revolutionized cinema with 1937's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the first full-length animated film, had been demoralized by a studio strike in 1941 and was now cheerlessly churning out war propaganda. His enthusiasm for film had dimmed considerably, but some of the old magic returned that December when he found his 11-year-old daughter, Diane, laughing over *Mary Poppins*, the 1934 book by P. L. Travers. In fact, Diane loved the books about the magical British nanny so much (there were three at the time) that she made her father promise to turn them into a movie. He agreed.

—Amy Lennard Goehner

The rich used to pay peasants to entertain them and now the peasants pay the rich to entertain them.

—*theChive*

'Movie' was a place people longed to be.

—David Thomson

If we see a movie one night and involuntarily think about it the next day, then it is a film. These involuntary reflections suggest that it was a form of art, its impact beyond simple entertainment.

—Stephan Ellenwood and  
Nancy McLaren

The best sequel in the history of cinema is *The Godfather: Part II*. However, the danger of *The Godfather Part II* being the best sequel ever is that it tempts you to watch *The Godfather: Part III*, which may be the worst sequel ever.

—Barry Cutler

If I had a dollar every time a customer complained about the price of cinema food, I could almost afford a small popcorn.

—*juliarose/Instagram*

In the first minutes of the otherwise forgettable 1934 film *As the Earth Turns*, something remarkable happens: the falling snow melts. For years Hollywood's 'snowmen' had faked winter wonderlands with a dusting of gypsum, banks of bleached cornflakes, fields of pyrocel (similar to the substance used for dental impressions) and flurries of asbestos. Now Warner Bros. technical director Louis Geib had conjured a cold and wet blizzard on a sunny backlot in Burbank.

His invention—the first known snowmaking machine—consisted of three rotating blades that shaved ice from a 400-pound block and a high-powered fan that blew the resulting particles into the air. A low-tech precursor to the water-crystallizing snow guns that will be used...at about 90 percent of the country's ski resorts, Gib's machine was ideal for close-ups and, as the movie's child actors learned, snowballs, though they disappeared quickly under the hot lights.

—April White

Let me tell you a story. The day after Columbine, I was interviewed for the Tom Brokaw news program. The reporter had been assigned a theory and was seeking sound bites to support it. 'Wouldn't you say,' she asked, 'that killings like this are influenced by violent movies?' No, I said, I wouldn't say that. 'But what about 'Basketball Diaries'?' she asked. 'Doesn't that have a scene of a boy walking into a school with a machine gun?' The obscure 1995 Leonardo Di Caprio movie did indeed have a brief fantasy scene of that nature, I said, but the movie failed at the box office (it grossed only \$2.5 million), and it's unlikely the Columbine killers saw it.

The reporter looked disappointed, so I offered her my theory. 'Events like this,' I said, 'if they are influenced by anything, are influenced by news programs like your own. When an unbalanced kid walks into a school and starts shooting, it becomes a major media event. Cable news drops ordinary programming and goes around the clock with it. The story is assigned a logo and a theme song; these two kids were packaged as the Trench Coat Mafia. The message is clear to other disturbed kids around the country: If I shoot up my school, I can be famous. The TV will talk about nothing else but me. Experts will try to figure out what I was thinking. The kids and teachers at school will see they shouldn't have messed with me. I'll go out in a blaze of glory.'

In short, I said, events like Columbine are influenced far less by violent movies than by CNN, the NBC Nightly News and all the other news media, who glorify the killers in the guise of 'explaining' them. I commended the policy at the Sun-Times, where our editor said the paper would no longer feature school killings on Page 1. The reporter thanked me and turned off the camera. Of course the interview was never used. They found plenty of talking heads to condemn violent movies, and everybody was happy.

—Roger Ebert

Wife is going out tonight....Who wants to come over and talk and ask questions during a movie?

—*theChive*

### SPECIAL EFFECTS

For you, inventive artists forged a gift—  
The magic, the power, the poetry of light.  
An unbound world  
Where sorrow slips away.  
Where those alone can live as one.  
Where laughter brightens a dull world.  
Where life's replaced with one renewed.

Behold the brilliance of a setting sun,  
Shiver in the damp of a dense, London fog.  
Live an alternate reality.  
Feel, relate, escape, enjoy.  
Popcorn? That's a bonus.

—Dan L. Miller

Hobos have been stock characters in the movies since the days of the hand-cranked nickelodeon. Charlie Chaplin took the American hobo global. His Little Tramp is the bittersweet flip side of radical labor politics and industrial-agrarian alienation. Always broke but never broken, his struggles were everyone's. By camouflaging it as comedy, he presented us then—and presents us still—the tragedy of modernity. Every hobo is a commentary on capitalism.

There's the hobo played for laughs again in director Preston Sturges' *Sullivan's Travels*, and Gary Cooper in Frank Capra's *Meet John Doe*, but the summit of the early Hollywood hobo form might be William Wellman's *Wild Boys of the Road* from 1933. Meant to discourage Depression-era runaways and warn young Americans about the risks of vagrancy and the hobo jungle, it had the opposite effect, and was so thrilling it became a kind of recruiting instrument....The 1970s delivers *Emperor of the North Pole* and *Bound for Glory*, two of the best, and last, movies of the genre.

—Jeff MacGregor

Rodgers and Hammersteins' whole damn catalog—all are political works that tell the truth....Consider *The Sound of Music*. It isn't just about climbing mountains and fording streams. Look beyond the adorable von Trapp children: It's about the looming existential threat of Nazism. No longer relevant? A GIF of Captain von Trapp tearing up a Nazi flag is something we see 10 times a day on Twitter, because all sorts of Nazis are out there again in 2019. As last spring's searing Broadway revival of *Oklahoma!* revealed, lying underneath Hammerstein's elephant-eye high corn and chirping birds is a lawless society becoming itself, bending its rules and procedures based on who is considered part of the community (Curly) and who is marginalized (poor Jud...seriously, poor Jud). Or consider your parents' favorite, *South Pacific*. At its center, our hero, Nellie Forbush, must confront her own internalized racism when she learns that the new love of her life has biracial children from a previous marriage. Let your parents know if they forgot: Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals form the spine of Broadway's 'golden age,' and they also deeply engage with the politics of their era.

—Lin-Manuel Miranda

Almost as soon as the movies could talk, they talked about crime. In 1928, five months after the premiere of *The Jazz Singer*, Warner Brothers released Michael Curtiz' *Tenderloin*, a 'part-talkie' underworld potboiler that grossed almost \$900,000 on a \$188,000 budget. (The film has since been lost; Curtiz went on to direct *Casablanca*.) In 1931, Warner released *Little Caesar* and *The Public Enemy*, two films that, along with the Howard Hughes-produced *Scarface* in 1932, effectively invented the gangster genre. In these three movies we see every major hallmark of the genre take shape: the antihero who's preternaturally fluent in violence; his intoxicating rise, spurred by an aversion to authority in all its forms; his sense of familial obligation, which grows fatalistic; the psychosexual dysfunction that pollutes his relationship with women; his turn to hubris and his violent downfall. Just about every major American gangster picture has contained some or all of these components.

—Jack Hamilton

For me, acting is not hard work. I read a part until I know the text so well that I can be very relaxed. Some people like to do hundreds of takes. I belong to the Clint Eastwood school: Just get on with it.

—Anthony Hopkins

When you make movies, you want to make an impact on people, not just entertain them. It's great when a movie can speak to someone. Those moments stick with me.

—Annette Bening

What then is the difference between film and theatre? Or should one not rather ask: what are the differences? Let us be content with the reply that the screen has two dimensions and the stage three, that the screen presents photographs and the stage living actors. All the subtler differences stem from these. The camera can show us all sorts of things—from close-ups of insects to panoramas of prairies—which the stage cannot even suggest, and it can move from one to another with much more dexterity than any conceivable stage. The stage, on the other hand, can be revealed in the unsurpassable beauty of three-dimensional shapes, and the stage actor establishes between himself and his audience a contact real as electricity.

—Eric Bentley

The novel succeeds on terms exclusive to literature. A good film succeeds on terms exclusive to the cinema. That's why so many bad novels can become good movies, like 'Jaws' or 'The Godfather.'

—Alexander Payne

Seventy-five percent of all silent films made at the end of the 19th Century and in the first three decades of the 20th, are considered lost, according to a 2013 study by U.S. Library of Congress. Some of these vanished artifacts have taunted film historians for decades. And for every 'London After Midnight' (1927, directed by Tod Browning and starring Lon Chaney) or '4 Devils' (F.W. Murnau's 1928 circus melodrama, with cameras strapped to trapezes), thousands of less pedigreed examples of silent cinema remain out of sight and out of reach—ghosts without form.

—Michael Phillips

There's no other art form that can put you back in time the way film can.

—Dave Kehr

The arts vividly illustrate the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.

—Rachelle Doorley

Film does not replace language, for it cannot exist without it. Film displaces language, exposes the abyss that threatens to engulf every semantic signification. Film parasitizes language, much as the animal does, drawing into its imaginary panorama that which remains undisclosed in discursivity. Cinema is a parasite.

—Akira Mizuta Lippit

If it weren't for movies, most people wouldn't know what an elevator shaft looks like.

—Internet Meme

No one likes to feel stupid. And reading things or watching things, like French movies that don't seem to actually end—that you don't 'get' is a surefire way to feel like you're not the sharpest tool in the shed....Just because you don't get it now doesn't mean you won't get it later. Assume a growth mindset. Your brain is huge and super-plastic; it's busy absorbing things even if you don't quite know that's happening.

—*The Writer* (December, 2020)

You have your antenna out. You're just walking through the world and you're picking up these signals of emotions and spirit and history and events, today's events and past remembrances. These things you divine from the air are all intangible elements: spirit, emotion, history. These are the tools of the songwriter's trade before he even picks up the pen.

People who are very attuned to that atmosphere usually end up being artists of some sort. Because they're so attuned to it, they have a desire to record it. If that desire to record it is strong enough, you learn a language to do so. Whether it's paintings, films, songs, poetry...

—Bruce Springsteen

The director should be in control, not because he's the sole creative intelligence, but because only if he is in control can he liberate and utilize the talent of his coworkers.

—David Fincher

*It's a Wonderful Life* is one of the greatest movies ever made because it can change the way one views the world. What this film tells the viewer is that success is not measured in materialism, but how much one gives back.

—Carla Valderrama

Working the culture from within could raise difficult questions. [Louis Armstrong's] stage persona—later problematized by African Americans in the 1950s and 1960s—seemed to fit the cloying stereotypes manufactured by a cynical white media. 'He made a lot of black people uncomfortable', the African American critic Gerald Early said, and Miles Davis, still fond of Armstrong, resented his penchant for 'clowning'. His film appearances in the 1930s posed a particular challenge. In *Pennies from Heaven*, a launchpad for Armstrong's multimedia success, he played a mentally challenged farmer that couldn't count. He was draped in a Tarzan cape in a movie soon after, and was even directly named Uncle Tom in another.

—Ed Prideaux

Though not a critical success in its own time, the 1957 film [A Face in the Crowd], written by Budd Schulberg and directed by Elia Kazan, has since been heralded as a masterpiece, praised by Francois Truffaut and preserved by the National Film Registry. The movie tells the story of Larry ‘Lonesome’ Rhodes (Andy Griffith), a charismatic, populist entertainer with a dark side, who uses the new medium of television to rise to the pinnacle of American power.

—Jake Tapper

Women admire Marlene Dietrich so much because she looks as if she ate men whole, for breakfast, possibly on toast.

—Angela Carter

In 1915, Woodrow Wilson showed *Birth of a Nation* at the White House. The revisionist film grossly demeaned Reconstruction and inspired the revival of the Ku Klux Klan as a nationwide terrorism organization.

—Bobby J. Donaldson

Everything I learned I learned from the movies.

—Audrey Hepburn

That’s the thing with the young these days, isn’t it? They watch too many happy endings. Everything has to be wrapped up, with a smile and a tear and a wave. Everyone has learned, found love, seen the error of their ways, discovered the joys of monogamy, or fatherhood, or filial duty, or life itself. In my day, people got shot at the end of films, after learning only that life is hollow, dismal, brutish, and short.

—Nick Hornby

Not one person in the entire motion picture field knows for a certainty what’s going to work. Every time out it’s a guess and, if you’re lucky, an educated one.

—William Goldman

*The Queen’s Gambit* has been viewed by 62 million people. The producer, Allan Scott, is on BBC News talking about how it took 30 years, with 9 rewrites, and every studio he showed it to said that no one would be interested in chess. PLEASE PERSEVERE WITH THAT THING YOU’RE MAKING.

—Internet Meme

The Navy, which provided equipment and training for the production [*Top Gun*] and reportedly shaped some of its story lines, set up recruitment booths outside theaters showing the film. Applications to Annapolis soared.

—Megan Garber

The vast majority of the population has watched more movies more than they've read books. Because of this, we've become experts on how movies are made. Films are a collaborative art form in which each artist or technician has a unique job. The scriptwriter writes the story and the dialogue. The actors interpret the dialogue with gesture, action, and speech. The art director conceives the overall visual concept for the film, which is then realized by location scouts, set designers, and set dressers. Costume designers make clothes that characters will wear. And the cinematographer, along with the director, decides how the image will be framed for the audience.

—Todd James Pierce

The idea that people who want to be part of the entertainment industry must first pay their dues by working assistant jobs that amount to nonstop hazing, or enduring on-set abuse from tyrannical directors or fellow stars, is still seen by many as not just an acceptable price of doing business but perfectly fair. You want to enter the dream factory? First you must endure its nightmares.

—Mary McNamara

In...the Western...*High Noon* (1952)...a town marshal (Gary Cooper) tries and fails to rally locals to help him confront an outlaw. Now considered a classic, the film drew criticism in Hollywood. John Wayne pressured Cooper to cut ties with its screenwriter, who had been under congressional investigation for Communist affiliation. Wayne later called the film 'un-American.' Howard Hawks made the movie *Rio Bravo* (1959) as a direct response to *High Noon*, casting Wayne as a stoic male lead who has to have help thrust upon him. But *High Noon* was the real hit; it earned four Oscars, including one for Best Actor. Ironically, Wayne accepted the award on Cooper's behalf (Cooper was filming another feature). Wayne joked that he should find his agent and business manager and 'run my 1930s Chevrolet into one of their big black new Cadillacs' for failing to get him the role.

—Stephanie Hayes

75 percent of all silent films ever made are estimated to be completely lost. As well as half of all films made from 1927 to 1950.

—*theChive*