

# The New Hollywood

Nov. 21, 2005

- Martin Scorsese, *Raging Bull*
- The fall of the studio system
- New *auteurs*, new audiences
- Francis Ford Coppola
- Steven Spielberg & George Lucas

# 1960s: Hollywood in Crisis

- The end of the studio system
  - Power of television
  - New economics
  - Power of independent stars
- The debacle of *Cleopatra* (1963) -- \$2 million, almost sinks Fox
- The 1960s: new audiences, changing tastes
  - The pill and the sexual revolution
  - The civil rights and antiwar movements
  - The “counterculture” (sex, drugs, rock ‘n’ roll)

# 1960s: New films for new audiences

- *Bonnie and Clyde*, 1965
  - Arthur Penn (director), Warren Beatty (star)
  - French New Wave influence
  - Episodic structure, play with multiple genres
  - New themes (impotence, ridicule of authority)
  - New characters (anti-heroes, sympathetic bad guys)
  - On-screen violence
- *Easy Rider*, 1969
  - Dennis Hopper and Peter Fonda
  - Countercultural themes (drugs, sex)
  - Jump cuts, lens flair, mismatches, digression

# 1960s/1970s: Rise of the *Auteurs*

- Widespread genre revisionism
  - Westerns (Sam Peckinpah, *The Wild Bunch*, 1968)
  - Science fiction (Stanley Kubrick, *2001*, 1968)
  - Robert Altman (multiple genres: *McCabe & Mrs Miller*, 1971; *The Long Goodbye*, 1973, *Nashville*, 1975)
- *New auteurs*
  - The first generation of directors to attend film school
  - Martin Scorsese (*Mean Streets*, 1973)
  - Francis Ford Coppola (*The Godfather*, 1972)
  - Brian De Palma (*Sisters*, 1973)
  - Steven Spielberg (*Jaws*, 1975)
  - George Lucas (*Star Wars*, 1977)
- The new blockbuster

# Martin Scorsese (1942- )

- Encyclopedic knowledge of film history
- Early low-budget work
- Major films concerned with masculinity, ethnicity, violence & Crime
  - *Mean Streets* (1973)
  - *Taxi Driver* (1976)
  - *Raging Bull* (1980)
  - *Goodfellas* (1990)
- Explorations of other genres
- Documentaries (film history, music, etc.)

# *Raging Bull*: Form and Style

- Black & white cinematography
- Flashbacks, switches between present & past
- Robert De Niro's method acting
- Boxing sequences: heightened reality by means of Steadicam, close-ups, rapid cuts, backlighting, spurts of blood, sound effects
- Domestic sequences: long shots, less aggressive editing, naturalistic decors, violence in the context of everyday life
- Sequences from Jake's POV

# *Raging Bull*: Themes

- Ambiguous fascination with male violence
- Violence and entertainment: how does Jake's boxing relate to his everyday life?
- Violence and intimacy
- Emphasis on Jake's psychology, rather than on the feelings of his victims
- Jake as masochistic, self-destructive
- Homoerotic undercurrents?
- Constructions of masculinity
- Scorsese's own ambivalence?

# Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now* (1979)

- Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- Vietnam War as madness and trauma
- About the Americans, not the Vietnamese
- Visual spectacle
- Use of sound

# Unclassifiable

- Stanley Kubrick (1928-1999)
  - Technical brilliance, sardonic distance, icy despair
  - *Dr. Strangelove* (1963)
  - *2001* (1968)
  - *A Clockwork Orange* (1971)
  - *The Shining* (1980)
- John Cassavetes (1929-1989)
  - Ensemble improvisations, existential dislocation
  - *Faces* (1968)
  - *Husbands* (1970)
  - *A Woman Under the Influence* (1974)
  - *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie* (1976)

# Crash and Burn

(late 1970s/early 1980s)

- Financial fiascos put an end to the power of the 1970s *auteurs*
- Michael Cimino, *Heaven's Gate* (1980) -- sinks United Artists (\$40 million)
- Francis Ford Coppola, *One From the Heart* (1982) -- closing of Zoetrope Studios
- Reliance on blockbusters, sequels, etc.
- The other end: low-budget horror filmmaking
  - George Romero, *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)
  - John Carpenter, *Halloween* (1978)