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Film resources on the Web

An introduction

Films have been a part of our popular culture for more than 100 years, and it is almost impossible to imagine a world without movies. As movies became increasingly popular throughout the 20th century, they also emerged as an art form and a field of academic study. Films, like all art forms, serve as a reflection of the society and times in which they are made, and their enduring images serve as reminders of their age. Today there are film schools, journals, courses, and seminars, all devoted to the study and expression of this unique form of art.

The Web is filled with film resources of varying quality, and this column provides a selection of the resources available in various film subtopics. It is by no means conclusive, but it should provide useful starting points for film students, faculty, librarians, and anyone simply interested in learning more about the world of motion pictures.

General

BBC-Film. From the British Broadcasting Company, this is a comprehensive site featuring movie reviews and release info, DVD reviews, filmmaking advice, feature articles from BBC News, and information on alternative and short films. BBC also includes a section on Bollywood, the Indian film industry. *Access:* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/film/>.

The Internet Movie Database (IMDB). IMDB is unquestionably the biggest and most comprehensive film site on the Web. Film entries include complete cast and crew lists, production details, and technical information, as well as box office information and trivia. The homepage contains movie news, daily

polls and quotes, and information on new releases. The site is an affiliate of Amazon.com, so titles are linked to purchase information and ads are included. *Access:* <http://www.imdb.com/>.

Masters of Cinema. This is a scholarly site offering news and information on World Cinema. The site is updated regularly and includes a worldwide DVD calendar, as well as links to tribute pages for selected filmmakers. *Access:* <http://www.mastersofcinema.org/>.

Reviews/lists

The Best 1,000 Movies Ever Made. This *New York Times* site includes brief plot descriptions of the chosen movies, as well as the original reviews written by *Times*' reviewers at the time of release. Users must register on the site to read the reviews, but the movie list and plot descriptions are available without registration. *Access:* <http://www.nytimes.com/ref/movies/1000best.html>.

The Greatest Films. Run by Tim Dirks, this is one of the best and most extensive film resources on the Web. The heart of the site is the author's lists of the 100, 200, and 300 greatest films, which include detailed reviews, synopses, and historical backgrounds of the chosen films. The site also provides a comprehensive Film History by Decade and a Film Terms Glossary, as well as lists of Box Office Hits and Academy Award Winners, and Tips on Viewing Films Critically. This is an invaluable resource, although users

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do have to sift through pop-up ads. *Access:* <http://www.lmsite.org/>.

The Greatest Films

Movie Review Query Engine. This site contains reviews of more than 45,000 movies, including reviews from major newspapers, Web sites, and entertainment magazines. *Access:* <http://www.mrqe.com/lookup>.

U.S. National Film Registry-Titles. This site lists the 25 films selected each year by the National Film Preservation Board to be included in the U.S. National Film Registry. The site only lists titles, but provides links to each film's page in the Internet Movie Database for additional information. A link to the National Film Preservation Board Web site is also included. *Access:* <http://www-2.cs.cmu.edu/Unofcial/Movies/NFR-Titles.html>.

Classic

Reel Classics. A comprehensive and well-maintained site on classic movies, Reel Classics includes individual pages for films, stars, and filmmakers (including not only directors but also producers, designers, and musicians) of the classic era. The Webmaster also writes original commentary and reviews, and features fun items, such as trivia contests, an audio/video gallery, and a monthly newsletter. *Access:* <http://www.reelclassics.com/>.

Silent Era: The Silent Film Website. An excellent resource on silent film, this site includes news relating to silent movies, film lists and reviews, profiles of silent era stars and filmmakers, and information on theaters from the silent era. This is a well-organized and comprehensive resource. *Access:* <http://www.silentera.com/>.

Specialized

Asian Film Connections. The goal of this site from the University of Southern California is to promote and nurture Asian cinema, and some of its highlights include

online video clips, critical analysis, and stills of selected films. There is also a list of all films made in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan since 1998, along with brief information on each piece, and a section on historical and statistical information on the film industry in each area. A comprehensive and thorough site, this is an excellent introduction to Asian film. *Access:* <http://www.asianfilms.org/index.html>.

Black Film Center/Archive. The Black Film Center/Archive at Indiana University focuses on films by and about African Americans. While users must visit the facility to access the archive's collections, the Web site is also useful. The Early Black Images section can be accessed from the site and contains selections of short films from the 1890s to the 1900s. In addition, users can search the archive's collection to find information about each title, such as year of release, plot summary, and genre. *Access:* <http://www.indiana.edu/~bfca/>.

European Films. This site provides news and reviews of recent and upcoming European films. Reviews can be accessed by title or country and are archived back to 2002. The site is updated frequently. *Access:* <http://www.europeanfilms.net/>.

Women Make Movies. The Women Make Movies catalog is accessible through this site, and users can find information, such as plot synopsis and availability for each title, as well as biographical information on the filmmakers. The site also publishes a monthly e-newsletter for news and information relating to women in film, and offers resources for aspiring filmmakers, with information on funding opportunities, internships, and job opportunities. *Access:* <http://wmm.com/>.

Independent and documentary

DocumentaryFilms.net. This site provides news and original reviews of documentary films and links to official film sites and to other resources of interest to filmmakers, such as film schools and festivals. Other features include a Film Finder for hard-to-find films and an index of interviews with documentary filmmakers. *Access:* <http://www.documentaryfilms.net/>.

IFP.org. IFP is an outstanding resource for independent filmmakers. Although it is a membership organization, the IFP.org offers a great deal of information for free, including feature articles from the IFP monthly maga-



zine, as well as interviews with independent filmmakers. There is also a

filmmaker's library with information on production and distribution, and an Ask the Experts forum, where users can ask questions of leading filmmakers. The site also includes a Networking Center with job listings and database directories for filmmakers and companies. *Access:* <http://www.ifp.org/>.

History

Cinema Treasures. Cinema Treasures focuses on historic movie theaters, attempting to raise awareness of preservation issues. At the time of this writing, the site's theater guide features nearly 10,200 theaters and 1,598 photos. The site also posts theater industry news and events, and is updated regularly. *Access:* <http://www.cinematreasures.org/>.



Earlycinema.com. This site focuses on the first decade of motion pictures and provides an introduction to the development of modern cinema. Some of the most useful areas include a timeline of key events, profiles of movie pioneers, and an A to Z reference list on early cinema topics. *Access:* <http://www.earlycinema.com/>.

GreenCine Movie Primers. While GreenCine is a commercial site, it also features primers on film genres that are an excellent resource on the history of each genre. Offering overviews on the major film movements and examples of each, the primers are accessible and user-friendly, and they serve as great introductions to film genres as diverse as French New Wave and Anime. *Access:* <http://www.greencine.com/static/primers/index.jsp>.

Organizations

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The home of the Oscar, this site includes a valuable Academy Awards Database. Users can search by film title and find any nominations or awards a film received, or search by performer to see any nominations or wins that person has received over his or her career. Another invaluable resource is the Index to Motion Picture Credits, where users can search for production details and crew members, such as cinematographers, writers, or editors. *Access:* <http://www.oscars.org/index.html>.

American Film Institute. The American Film Institute is probably best known for its 100 Years . . . series of television specials,



but its Web site is filled with information for film students and enthusiasts. The institute provides educational opportunities for filmmakers, including the AFI Conservatory and the Directing Workshop for Women. Applications for these and other opportunities are available through the site. *Access:* <http://www.afi.com/>.

The British Film Institute (BFI). BFI is an excellent educational resource. The Web site contains a Film Links Gateway, which is a regularly updated, extensive selection of reviewed Web sites on film, organized by category for easy access. Categories include the History of Film, Scripts/Scriptwriting, and Music in Film. *Access:* <http://www.bfi.org.uk/>.

Filmmaking

Filmmaking.com: The Filmmaking Portal. This site contains information on both independent and Hollywood filmmaking and is updated regularly with industry news. The site also provides articles on topics from learn-



ing filmmaking basics to how to get a film financed to how to write a screenplay, all arranged in an

easily accessible format. One of the most useful features to potential filmmakers is a database of companies interested in financing film projects. Access: <http://www.filmmaking.com/>.

Filmmaking.net. This site provides a database of more than 500 film schools, as well as answers to more than 200 frequently asked filmmaking questions. In addition, users can communicate on discussion forums or access the classifieds for filmmaking equipment. The site accepts reference articles from users and will publish them on the site. Access: <http://www.filmmaking.net/>.

Screensite. Screensite is aimed at film students and teachers, and is sponsored by the Department of Telecommunication and Film at the University of Alabama. Some of its most useful features include an encyclopedia of film terminology, links to film course syllabi, and news articles relating to the film industry. The site also has a forum for job announcements and a directory of related Web links. Access: <http://www.screensite.org/index.php>.



Scripts

The Internet Movie Script Database. The largest collection of scripts on the Web, this site allows users to search for scripts by title or genre, and scripts can be read or downloaded for free. The site also includes links to screenwriting resources, movie reviews, and general movie sites arranged by genre. Access: <http://www.imsdb.com/>.

Simply Scripts. Updated regularly, this site has links to several hundred free, downloadable movie scripts, including those that are current, classic, and soon-to-be-released. An excellent resource for potential screenwriters, the site provides how-to resources

for writers, as well as practical information, such as the importance of protecting work through copyright. The site also includes a message board, where users can discuss and critique each other's work. Access: <http://www.simplyscripts.com/>.

Online journals

Bright Lights Film Journal. Published quarterly, this journal focuses on movie analysis and history. The articles cover classic and contemporary commercial movies, as well as independent, exploitation, and international film, and the site includes a section of movie reviews and actor and director profiles. Access: <http://www.brightlightsfilm.com/>.



Film Score Monthly.

The online version of the print magazine, *Film Score Monthly* is updated daily with film score news and feature articles. The site also includes a



free handbook of soundtrack information, links to additional resources, and original reviews and commentary. Access: <http://www.filmscoremonthly.com/>.



Images: A Journal of Film and Popular Culture. Published quarterly, *Images* is a journal focusing on movies, both classic and current, and their place in popular culture. The editors also publish news articles and movie/video reviews every week on the Web site. Access: <http://www.imagesjournal.com/>.

Scope: Institute of Film Studies Journal. Published by the Institute of Film Studies at the University of Nottingham, *Scope* is available entirely for free online. The articles focus on all aspects of film history, theory, and criticism. The journal is fully refereed and is indexed in the *MLA International Bibliography*. Access: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/film/journal/>. *W*

