

MOVIES

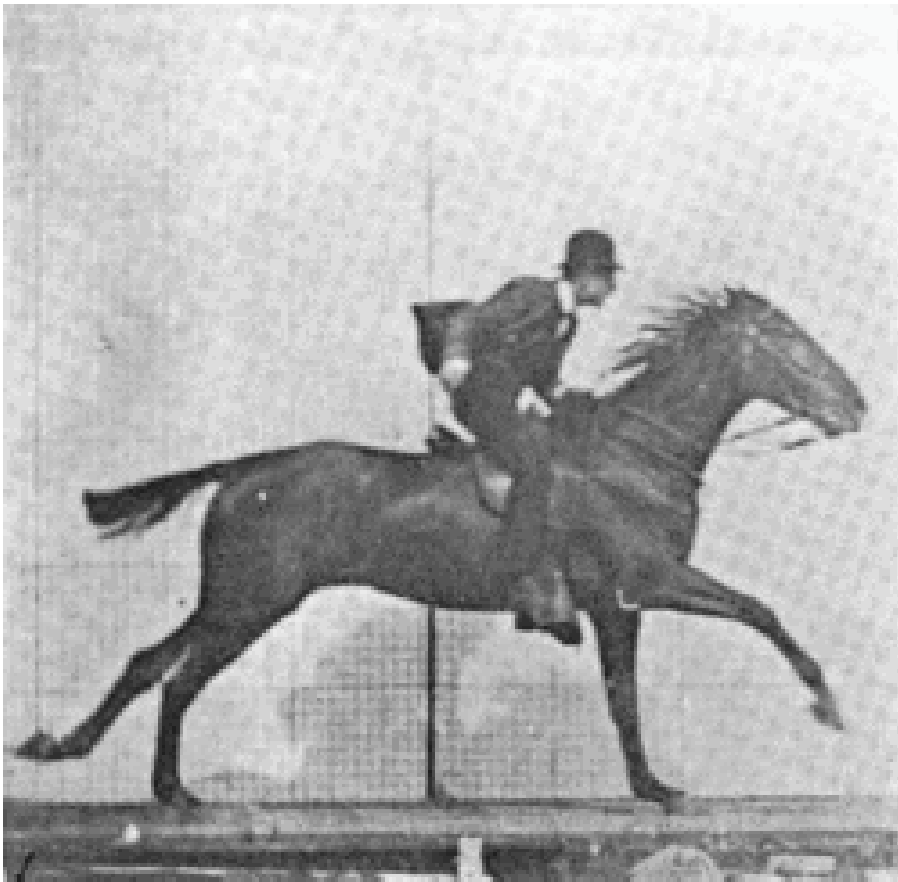
Before Movies

The history of movies is preceded by the history of photography

- Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, first person to make practical use of camera and film in 1816
- Louis Daguerre introduced daguerreotype in 1839
- William Henry Fox Talbot introduced calotype, a paper film process

Development Of Motion Pictures

Zoopraxiscope

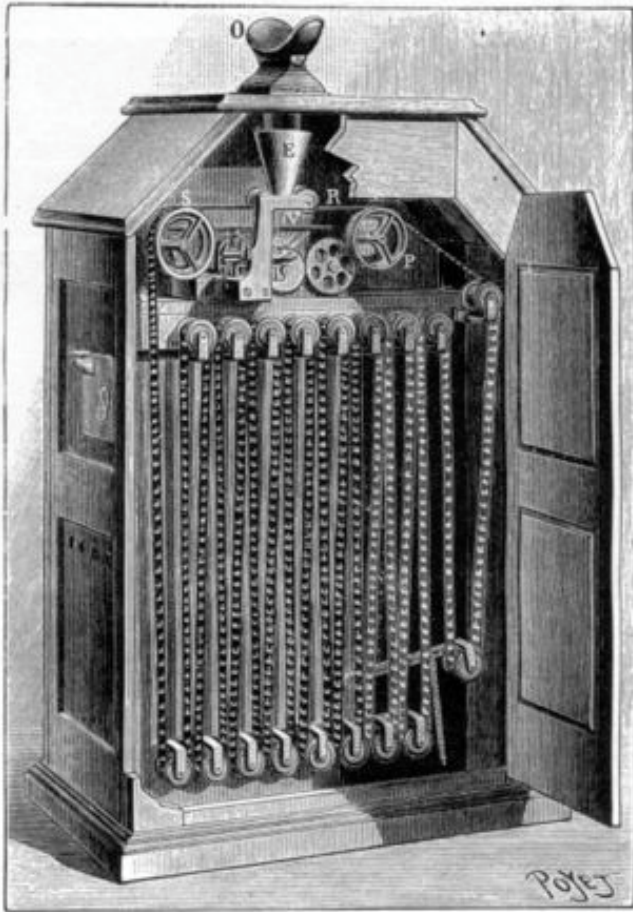


- 1873: Former California governor Leland Stanford needed help winning a bet
- Enlisted Eadweard Muybridge
- 1877: Arranged still cameras along race track, resulting images displayed on zoopraxiscope

Kinetograph

- William Dickson, Thomas Edison's company's official photographer was tasked to develop a better projector
- He saw the problem was to develop a better system of *filming*
- Combined Hannibal Goodwin's celluloid roll film with George Eastman's Kodak camera to make a motion picture camera that took 40 photographs a second

Kinetoscope



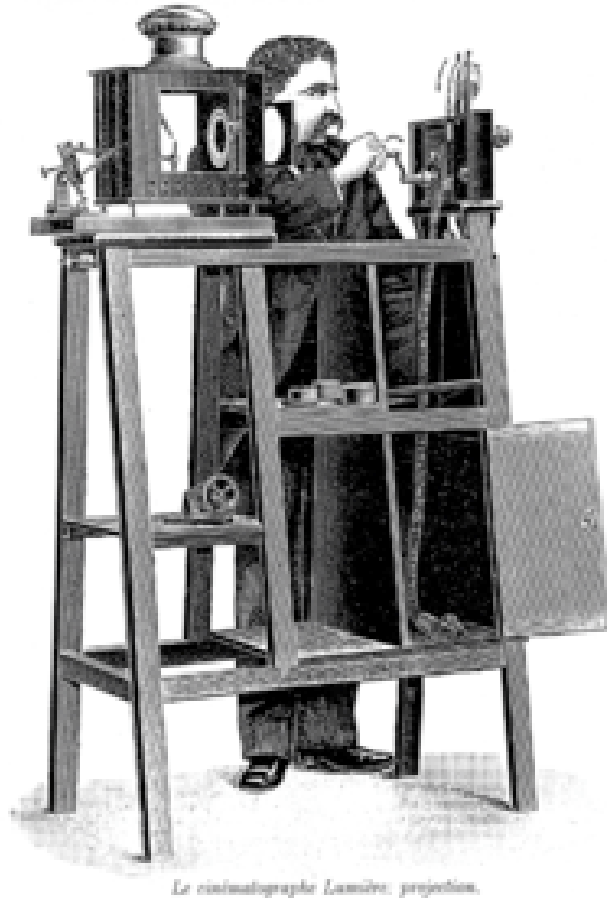
- Introduced the basic approach: it creates the illusion of movement by conveying a strip of perforated film bearing sequential images over a light source with a high-speed shutter.
- Not a movie projector
- Became popular in penny arcades, vaudeville halls, Kinetoscope parlors
- Later used in tandem with a phonograph and called a Kinetophone

Black Maria



- First motion picture studio built by Thomas Edison
- Had an open roof and revolved to follow the sun so the set would be illuminated at all times

Cinematographe



- An all-in-one camera: a film projector and developer invented by the Lumière brothers
- Initial screenings showed that people would sit in a darkened room to watch motion pictures projected on a screen
- Edison acquired patent for an advanced projector and with Edison Vitascope, the American movie business was born

- The first films were reproductions of reality
- They were shot in fixed frame, with no editing
- Subjects of these films include celebrities, weightlifters, jugglers, babies eating

Georges Méliès

- Began making narrative motion pictures: movies that told a story
- Began making movies based on sequential shots in different places
- Often called the 'first artist of the cinema'

Edwin S. Porter

- *The Great Train Robbery* was first movie to use editing, intercutting of scenes and a mobile camera
- Use of montage was a hit with audiences
- Nickelodeons opened around the US
- Because of public enthusiasm, many movies were needed and hundred of new factory studios (production companies) were started

D. W. Griffith

- Because so many movies needed to be made and rushed to nickelodeons, people in the industry had to learn everything about production
- D. W. Griffith however was recognized as a brilliant director
- Introduced scheduled rehearsals, production based on close adherence to a shooting script, gave attention to costume and lighting and used close-ups and dramatic camera angles
- *The Birth Of A Nation*, most influential silent film

Hollywood

The Move To California

- 1908: Thomas Edison founded the Motion Picture Patents Company
- Ruled production and distribution with an iron fist
- Rules included movies had to be one reel, 12 minutes long and must have 'stage perspective'
- Many independent film companies moved to California to avoid MPPC scrutiny
- Used artistry, drive and innovation to meet needs of growing audience: immigrants and new city dwellers
- War in Europe halted the industry, American movies were distributed there, establishing itself as world leader in film industry

The Talkies

- Sound made possible new genres like musicals
- Performance aesthetics improved as actors now had to really act
- Because sound made film production more expensive and complicated, many small filmmakers closed shop
- Big studios took even bigger hold of industry

Scandals And Censorship

- Because of their popularity, movies were questioned about their impact on culture
- Kissing in movies, questionable divorces, bribery, murder, drugs were happening with those connected to movie industry
- Censorship began with the Motion Picture Production Code in 1934
- The industry began to self-censor and the Motion Picture Association of America's rating system introduced in 1966
- G (general), PG (parental guidance), PG-13 (parental guidance for under 13), R (restricted to above 17 unless with adult), NC-17 ('X', no under 17)

Surviving The Depression

- Depression affected ticket sales, but industry was able to make it through crisis
- Creativity gave birth to new genres like feature documentaries (1936's *The Plow That Broke The Plains*), musicals (1933's *42nd Street*), screwball comedies (1938's *Bringing Up Baby*), gangster movies (1930's *Little Caesar*), horror films (1931's *Frankenstein*), socially conscious movies (1936's *Mr. Deeds Goes To Town*)
- Double feature with a B-movie frequented by penny-pinching working people

Vertical Integration

- Studios were producing their own films, distributing them through their own outlets and exhibited in their own theaters
- Resulted in the Paramount Decision in 1948
- Vertical integration and block booking was illegal
- Studios forced to sell off their theaters

The Coming Of Television

- First broadcast was in 1939
- The number of homes with television sets grew as ticket sales went down
- 10,000 homes with TV sets in 1946 to more than 10 million in 1950
- 1955: movie attendance was down to 46 million people a week, 25% below the worst attendance figures during the Depression years
- Movie industry fought back with technical and content innovations: special effects, colour, epic movies, the 'message movie'

Movies Today

- Movie audiences today are getting increasingly younger, typically a teenager or young adult
- Because of this many movies are aimed at kids, usually remakes of television shows, computer games and comic books or fantasy/adventure
- Hollywood still gives us great socially important movies alongside the aforementioned

“We have no obligation to make history. We have no obligation to make art. We have no obligation to make a statement. Our only obligation is to make money.” - Michael Eisner, former president of Paramount Pictures and CEO of Disney

Components In The Film Industry

Production

- Production is the making of movies
- 900 feature length films were made in 2003 compared to 288 in 1985
- Revenues from home video and technology has affected production

Distribution

- Used to be simple: make prints of films and send them to theaters
- Now involves supplying television networks, cable and satellite networks, makers of videocassettes and videodiscs
- Ensures large companies (and usually the big studios themselves) will dominate
- Advertising/promotion costs getting higher, sometimes more than production
- Advertising/marketing people are involved in green light process
- Platform rollout is used as a strategy

Exhibition

- Reagan administration policy to deregulate the business undid the Paramount Decision in the 1980s
- Many screens are now owned by studios again
- If not, they are usually owned by large theater chains

Cinema Of Malaysia

Early Films

- Dates back to 1930s when *Laila Majnun* was released in 1933, produced by the Singapore-based Motilal Chemical Company of Bombay
- The Shaw Brothers opened their studio on Jalan Ampas in Singapore in 1937 and made 6 films before Japanese invasion
- Continued ten years after with *Singapura Di Waktu Malam* starring Siput Sarawak
- Backed by their own chain of theaters
- Introduced new faces and produced even more movies

P. Ramlee

- Malaysia's cinema legend
- Debuted in *Cinta* in 1948
- Versatile as a leading actor, singer, composer, comic, dramatic artiste, scriptwriter and film director

Development And Decline

- Success of Shaw Brothers' Malay Film Productions prompted other companies to open (Nusantara Films, Tan & Wong Film Company, Rimau Productions and Cathay-Keris)
- All films were in B&W. Direct sound recording was used until the 60s and today post-synching is still in use
- The screenplays were mostly based on folk tales, stage plays, legends of fictional or real historical heroes or events
- But due to escalating costs and dwindling audiences, many closed down leaving Cathay-Keris and MFP operating in Singapore
- 1961, H. M. Shah started Merdeka Studio in Kuala Lumpur. It is now headquarters of the National Film Development Corporation, Malaysia (FINAS)

Renaissance

- 1975: Sabah Films grossed huge profits with *Keluarga Comat* and encouraged other companies to open, Perfima, Syed Kechik Productions, Indra film Productions and Jins Shamsudin Productions
- 1980s: National Film Development Corporation of Malaysia was set up to develop and stimulate the growth and maintain the standards of the film industry including a credit facility scheme which enables young and untiring film-makers to test their potential
- Nearly all the films were made in colour, some using the scope format and some the standard format.
- A company can only do two of three functions: production, distribution or exhibition in order to avoid a monopoly by a certain party
- The producers also might be able to recover part of their investment by the return of the entertainment tax as a way of incentive.

Malaysian Movies Today

- Dominated by slapstick comedies, romantic comedies in the vein of American teen movies in the early 2000s and portrayal of Malaysian subcultures
- Talent such as Yasmin Ahmad, James Lee and Amir Muhammad are making names for themselves as Malaysian filmmakers in festivals overseas to critical acclaim

Future Of Movies

- Studios are producing more television than movies these days, and some have an entire television network
- Satellite, cable, pay-per-view, DVDs, VCRs provide huge distribution and exhibition opportunities
- Digital distribution from studios to theaters will save hundreds of millions on production of prints
- Digital filming also saves on film (celluloid technology costs around 100 times more)
- Microcinema movement: filmmakers using digital video cameras and desktop software to make movies

- Internet distribution is slowed down by two factors:
- Lack of widespread availability of hi-speed modems and streaming technology
- Piracy, especially with file-sharing programs like BitTorrent
- Studios are in talks with internet partners for online video-on-demand services like Movielink and Starz! Ticket which offers subscribers 100 downloads a month for \$12.95

- Relationship between medium and audience is different than in other media except books
- Both are not dependent on advertising for financial support, hence must satisfy YOU
- Movies are our escape: they are bigger than life, we want to be 'just like in the movies'