

# DIA LO GUE



“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 for film is more film.”

**Frank Capra**

# MARTIN SCORSESE

interviewed by Michael Henry Wilson about *Hugo*\*

*“The antidote for film is more film”*

The above quote introduces *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese through American Movies* (1995), directed by Michael Henry Wilson and Scorsese himself. The words are Frank Capra's, and the man who speaks them is Scorsese, who together with Wilson pays a personal tribute to American film presented, in Scorsese's words, in the form of a journey “through an imaginary museum, unfortunately one too big for us to enter each room.” It is a journey in two senses of the word: an itinerary of films to explore and the life's journey that Scorsese made to realize his American dream (expressed in his vocation of filmmaker), taking him from New York City's Little Italy neighbourhood, where he spent his childhood, to Hollywood. This awakening to the meaning of Hollywood – where personal expression was not at odds with the logic of mechanical production typical of the major studios (SCORSESE, 2000: 71) – began with the discovery of *Duel in the Sun* (King Vidor, 1946), was shaped by his extensive experience as a viewer of the movies of different filmmakers, and ended (or was transformed) when he himself became a filmmaker in the 1970s. It is curious that Scorsese would open his documentary with a quote by Capra – author of the notion of “one man, one film”, of art as individual production – in spite of the fact that from the beginning he distinguishes the film director from artists (poets and painters) who can create their works on their own (the film director is, “first and foremost, a team player” admits Scorsese at the beginning of the documentary). But although directors are distinguished from lone creators by the collective nature of filmmaking, they share with such artists a creative pas-

sion that cannot be disconnected from their own lives. Scorsese's journey is thus (to quote the director himself) an exploration of “the films that colored my dreams, that changed my perceptions, and in some cases even my life. Films that prompted me, for better or worse, to become a filmmaker myself.” Like an author who gives equal value to reading and writing, Scorsese accords to the viewing of a film a similar importance as direction, not only because the work of the masters helps him to express his world view, but because his love of cinema constantly feeds his desire to make films and to make a living out of them, to satisfy “the need that people have to share a common memory”.

Thus, in his role of interpreter or museum guide (and therefore, of critic) Scorsese presents the scenes that he considers most representative of the work of the masters who preceded him. By taking this approach he casts his gaze in two directions: on the one hand, the selection is made according to the idea of filmmaking he seeks to convey (to show the director as narrator, illusionist, smuggler or iconoclast); on the other, by choosing the best of the films – not only the ones he admits have influenced him, but also those he believes can “open the palate of the viewer, liberate it” and educate it (SCORSESE, 2000: 79)<sup>1</sup> – he turns his documentary into a personal anthology not of films that should be seen, but of key moments from those films, the moments that had a formal and emotional impact on him as spectator, to the point that the scene chosen became what determined the script of the documentary rather than the other way round: “At times, a

clip chosen didn't work in juxtaposition with another or it wasn't available, and the commentary was then adapted to our choices" (SCORSESE and WILSON, 1997: 7). And it is here that Wilson's work proves especially important: first, because he was the inventor of the classification of directors as smugglers, iconoclasts, etc<sup>1</sup>; and second, because together with Thelma Schoonmaher, he worked for two years on the arduous task of selecting the key scenes; in Wilson's words, "we roamed freely about Marty's imaginary museum, a fabulous treasure chest of thousands of pictures" (SCORSESE and WILSON, 2001: 8)<sup>2</sup>.

If, from the perspective of documentary, *A Personal Journey* is Scorsese's most significant tribute to film, from the perspective of fiction that role is probably filled by *Hugo* (2011), a homage that in this case is based on his knowledge of the early days of cinema. Scorsese has demonstrated his sensitivity to early film history with his active promotion of the restoration of several classic films through his Film Foundation. The intertextuality that Scorsese proposes in *Hugo* goes beyond cinematic texts to bring to the screen (thanks to the work of his regular production designer Dante Ferretti) cinematic adaptations of well-known photographs of the Paris of Brassai, Kertész and Cartier-Bresson, a technique that they had used previously with Jacob Riis's famous "Bandit's Roost" in *Gangs of New York* (2002) to give the scenery of New York's East Side a more realistic quality.

The other protagonist of this dialogue is Michael Henry Wilson, director, writer and film historian, with a background in both Anglo-American and French culture, and a great connoisseur of American cinema, but above all, a fervent enthusiast of the seventh art. In his case, his unquestionable cinephilia has been expressed in two forms, which have fed into each other over the course of his extensive career: on the one hand, his documentaries, and on the other, his writings about the cinematic medium, which are listed in the biographical note on the author at the end of the section.

Clear evidence of his passion for film is the fact that one of the topics featured in many of his documentaries is cinema itself. Two of Hollywood's biggest directors have been the object of his camera's gaze: in 2007, he made *Clint Eastwood: A Life in Film*, offering us an intimate portrait of the director of *Unforgiven* and his relationship with the medium; and of course, the other major director he has turned the camera around on is Scorsese, and, especially, Scorsese's cinephilia. As could hardly have been otherwise, it was their shared passion for film that led Scorsese and Wilson to cross paths. At first, a project to reflect on one of the great American directors admired by both, King Vidor, came close to bringing them together. The television series *Through the Looking Glass* was to give young directors the chance to produce a portrait of the filmmakers they admired. One of these young directors, charged

with making the pilot episode, was Scorsese; his assistant in the project would be Wilson, and the admired filmmaker, Vidor. Due to production contingencies, however, the project would never get off the ground, and so the planned collaboration never actually materialized.

But this initial setback wouldn't stop the two from finally working together. Michel Ciment, who had read the doctoral thesis that Wilson wrote in 1969 on German Expressionism, asked him in 1972 to join the team of contributors to *Positif*. Between 1973 and 1974, Wilson – by then an established film critic – discovered a film that pleasantly surprised him. It was *Boxcar Bertha* (1972), one of Scorsese's first films. His next film, *Mean Streets* (1973), would open the Directors' Fortnight at the 1974 Cannes Festival. This would finally provide the pretext for the two directors to meet. Ciment called Wilson to join him to interview Scorsese. A conversation of more than three hours marked the beginning of a friendship which, in spite of the passage of time, still endures and continues to bear fruit, as evidenced by the three-part series dedicated to British cinema that they are currently writing and co-directing, following *A Personal Journey*<sup>3</sup>.

Further evidence is the book *Martin Scorsese – Entretien with M.H. Wilson* (Pompidou Museum/Cahiers du Cinéma, 2005), reedited in 2011 by Cahiers under the title *Scorsese on Scorsese*, compiling nearly forty years of dialogue between the two directors; and the recent interview that Wilson did with Scorsese for the premiere of *Hugo*, Scorsese's most recent film that has the cinema as one of its main *raison d'être*. It is a memorable dual homage that Scorsese pays in 3D to the most significant work of Georges Méliès, as the tribute is constructed both from outside and inside the narrative. Méliès himself is one of the film's protagonists, who leaves his ostracised existence behind him to receive a heartfelt recognition from the film-goers of his day, thanks to the daring efforts of a pair of children, Hugo and Isabelle. In this way, Scorsese links an audience from Méliès's time to today's audience in a well-deserved tribute to the man who was the pioneer of "fantastic" cinema or, in Wilson's words, "celebrating the magic of cinema while making an appeal for the safeguard of its heritage" (WILSON, 2011b).

In this Dialogue with Scorsese, we have sought to connect the different Wilson-Scorsese collaborations dedicated to revealing his cinephilia. As a complement to the topic addressed in the Notebook, we thus present an anthology comprised mainly of excerpts from Wilson's aforementioned interview with Scorsese about his film *Hugo* (2011), published in *Positif* as part of the monograph *Les nouveaux horizons de Martin Scorsese*, in September 2012, and extracts from *A Personal Journey* and *Scorsese on Scorsese* that we found significant in relation to the cinematic heritage to which the filmmaker himself admits he is indebted. ■

## “WHAT IS MISSING MOST, AT LEAST HERE IN AMERICA, IS A SENSE OF FILM HISTORY”

Michael Henry WILSON (2011). Excerpts from «Interview with Martin Scorsese: “Why don’t you make a film that a kid could see for once?” *Hugo/George Harrison: Living in the Material World*», in *Positif*, September 2011.

### The love of film is instilled in Hugo by his father (Jude Law). Isn’t that how it happened for you too?

Absolutely! Helen was right when she said, “Hugo, that’s you.” I didn’t realize it immediately, but when he wasn’t taking me to the doctor, my father did bring me to see mature films such as *The River* [Jean Renoir, 1951], *The Red Shoes* [Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, 1948], *The Magic Box* [John Boulting, 1951], and 3D films as well. They became an obsession. I had to see them all. I watched all of Paramount’s 3D films, including the curious *Cease Fire* [Owen Crump, 1953], which was a semi-documentary in black and white on the Korean War; Warner Bros. films like *Phantom of the Rue Morgue* [Roy Del Ruth, 1954]; the MGM titles like *Kiss Me Kate* [George Sidney, 1953], where Ann Miller’s numbers such as “Too Darn Hot” are stunning in 3D. There were also B movies like *I the Jury* [by Harry Essex, 1953], *Man in the Dark*, a film [by Lew Landers, 1953] shot in sepia, or such Jack Arnold movies as *Creature from the Black Lagoon* [1953] and, particularly, the terrifying *It Came from Outer Space* [1953] which was steeped in the paranoia of the Cold War. Let’s not forget *The Maze* [1953], an underrated film by William Cameron Menzies. The script is mediocre, the ending terrible, but the mood is creepy. You are left with an uneasy feeling of strangeness, like in a Jacques Tourneur film. You’re not convinced? It’s because you only saw it in 2D. That film only works in 3D! The two superior pictures are the ones I had my crew screen one morning at the Film Forum: *House of Wax* [André De Toth, 1953], which I saw at the time in 3D, and *Dial M for Murder* [Alfred Hitchcock, 1954], which I only discovered in the right format years later.

### Hugo does for Méliès what *The Magic Box* did for William Friese-Greene.

You’re right. It all goes back to *The Magic Box*. No other film has given us a finer description of the process that led to the invention of the cinema and its machines. And none has better expressed the passion of a man who sacrifices everything to it, his marriage, his family, his existence. Friese-Greene’s obsession with moving images is something I know very well. It’s been in me forever.

Isn’t Michael Powell, who happened to be a great admirer of Méliès, the other tutelary figure? In your opening, you start on a wide panorama of Paris and end on Hugo’s face inside his clock. It’s the reverse of [*The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*’s sequence [Michael Powell y Emeric Pressburger, 1943], where the camera leaves the duelists and soars out of the gymnasium to reveal the Berlin cityscape with the carriage where Deborah Kerr is waiting.

I guess you’re right. We did it like Michael Powell, but in reverse! However, it wasn’t a conscious reference like in *Raging Bull*, where I set up one of the fights but did not show it. However, it must be because of that sequence in *Blimp* that I became fixated on the snowflakes. I wanted them enormous, like the ones you might see falling on the Empire State Building in a glass ball. Originally, we were to start on the Paris cityscape, reach the front of the edifice, then go all the way through the station up into the clock and end on the boy’s eyes. The problem was that the building wasn’t perceived as a train station and the trains inside were not distinct enough in the background. It was Rob Legato [special effect supervisor] who suggested that we enter the station through the train yards and swoop down on the trains to move forward along a platform filled with passengers. There were a thousand computers around the world that worked on that sequence. It took them months, and those particular shots were not even ready for our first two press screenings in Los Angeles!

### Which French films did you ask him to screen?

Mostly films shot in a studio, like René Clair’s. I had in mind *The Million* [Le million, 1931] and *Under the Roofs of Paris* [Sous les toits de Paris, 1930], but also [Jean] Vigo for *The Atalante* [*L’Atalante*, 1934] and particularly *Zero for Conduct* [Zéro de conduite: Jeunes diables au collège, 1933], to which we made a number of references. We naturally screened all the Dadaist and Surrealist films of the time. I also kept thinking about Jacques

*Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011)





Rivette's *Paris Belongs to Us* [Paris nous appartient, 1961], which was made in a different decade but where the actors spend a lot of time walking on the city's roofs. We replicated certain photographs by Brassai, Kertész and Cartier-Bresson. As to French literature, I thought of the Céline of *Death on the Installment Plan*, where he describes kids running around train stations amid hookers. Naturally, there was no way for us, in this particular film, to evoke the city's underbelly and its denizens!

**Did the vignettes on the human comedy that takes place inside the station exist in the script? Or were they fleshed out during the shoot?**

They were featured in the book. Some had to be pruned, like the painter's, Monsieur Rouleau. Johnny Depp was going to play the part but couldn't fit it in his schedule. The tone was a little different in the book where the station people wanted the boy to be arrested. John Logan [the screenwriter] made them more, how should I say, "whimsical," though I only like that adjective when it is applied to the Ealing films!

**In the film, these vignettes bring to mind [Jacques] Tati's *Playtime* [1967] rather than Ealing comedies.**

That's true. *Playtime* was the film that I asked Thelma [Schoonmaker] and the sound editors to study because Tati had found the perfect balance in his dialogue track between what needs to be heard and what doesn't when minor characters are interacting. It inspired me and gave me the courage to attempt something simi-

lar. In our case, this device was justified by the fact that Hugo observes the world from a distance, through his clocks. The other reference for me was *Rear Window* [Alfred Hitchcock, 1954], where you observe the tenants from the point of view of James Stewart, but where you sometimes come closer to some of them, particularly Raymond Burr. Their gestures may look realistic, almost captured by a candid camera, but are nonetheless slightly exaggerated.

**The Station Inspector could have jumped out of one of Max Linder's slapstick comedies.**

Yes, Max Linder, Harold Lloyd, maybe Keaton. With a touch of... Bill the Butcher [the antagonist played by Daniel Day-Lewis in *Gangs of New York*, Martin Scorsese, 2002]. A Bill the Butcher that would be capable of self-deprecating humor! I wanted the slapstick to be anchored in a certain reality. Hence the idea that he was wounded in the war and came back with a bad leg. Sacha loved that piece of business. We improvised a lot with him.

**Is it the case, for instance, when he is dragged along the platform by a departing train, like De Niro was in *New York New York* [Martin Scorsese, 1977]?**

It was Sacha's idea, and it gave us a few headaches because it was both costly and dangerous. What we ended up doing is to move the platform, not the train! We really needed this gag after the chase. We needed a sort of exclamation point. The other important element was Blackie, the Doberman, who didn't exist in the book. I

*Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011)



observed during the costume and make-up tests that a connection was happening between Sacha and Blackie. I also noticed that their faces stood out in the same fashion when they were filmed in 3D. Sacha became aware of it, and he started moving his head like the dog by imitating her moves. She was the one directing him! After two weeks, Blackie had become a star on the set and a full-fledged character. With her deadpan expression, she showed a sort of ironic distance toward her master, but also some compassion: "He is not what he used to be, but I love him as he is." It was sweet, but these huge teeth in 3D can be terrifying, especially for a kid. It took me a month or two to get used to them!

### Were you exposed to silent slapstick comedies during your childhood?

I wasn't. Silent films were not visible. The only thing on television were the early sound comedies, Laurel and Hardy, a bit of Harry Langdon and Charlie Chase. [Charles] Chaplin, I only knew through *Limelight* and *Monsieur Verdoux*. My father often talked about *The Kid* [1921], his favorite film, but on the small screen it was a mess: grey and scratched images projected at the wrong speed. During my formative years, the fifties, silent cinema was inaccessible. It's only in the seventies, when Chaplin rereleased his films, that I started becoming aware of their artistic qualities. The same thing happened with *Napoleon* [Napoléon, Abel Gance, 1927] and the other films restored by Kevin Brownlow. It made me reconsider the entire history of cinema.

### Were the films of Méliès part of these revelations?

No. Méliès' direction was so inventive that I was able to ignore the deterioration of his images. Méliès was revealed to me by the prologue of *Around the World in 80 Days* [Michael Anderson], which I saw when it came out in 1956 on the giant screen of the Rivoli in Todd-AO. The film begins in 1:33 with Edward R. Morrow, the narrator, talking about Jules Verne and trips to the moon. He showed black and white clips of Méliès' film. American audiences had never heard of Méliès, but they laughed and applauded at every showing.

### It's not for nothing that the anagram of Méliès is "Smile" in English! Out of the 200 and some films that have survived, how did you come to focus mainly on *A Trip to the Moon* [Le voyage dans la lune, 1902] and *The Kingdom of Fairies* [Le Royaume des fees, 1903]?

I started screening the films about a year before the shoot. You can only do it in small increments or it all blends together. I tried to watch everything, including his historical pieces and his remarkable film about The Dreyfus Affair [1899], which was the first, if I'm not mistaken, to be officially censored. Every Sunday,



*Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011)

I would gather Dante, Sandy [Powell, costume designer] and Marianne [Bower, archivist] and we would proceed with selecting, first the films, then some of their episodes, and finally specific shots. I ended up choosing *The Kingdom of Fairies* because there is something very modern about the composition of its images. They seem to have several layers, like these archeological books that allow you to see what a ruined temple may have looked like by lifting a transparent overlay. You could also describe it as an old illustrated manuscript coming to life. Its simplicity is admirable. Thus the idea of using an aquarium in the foreground and throwing live lobsters into it to suggest that we are at the bottom of the ocean! All he had to do was to film through the glass walls of the aquarium. No need for CGI effects! We tried to copy Méliès' costumes as accurately as possible. Our actors were trained to replicate the gestures and movements of his actors. I had planned to recreate the final ballet too, but had to give it up for lack of time and money. What you see in the film is exactly what we shot. It took us only six days. We were well prepared and there was only one scene with a child.

### Were you shooting in natural light, like Méliès did in Montreuil?

Naturally. We would shoot until 4:30 PM and then move on to something else. It was a transforming experience for everybody, including our seamstresses and key electricians who found themselves playing their part in the film within the film. To achieve the Oktochrome hues, Bob Richardson timed and re-timed our digital palette over a period of nine months. We tried many different things, even masking the borders of the frame or making them a little darker. The flashbacks with the father were supposed to be in black and white, but I discovered that black and white doesn't have the same impact as color in 3D. We tried different forms of tinting, very much like they did in



the silent era. Digital really came handy. It was somewhat similar to what we had experienced on *The Aviator* [2004] to recreate two-strip Technicolor. Now can you imagine what Méliès could have done if he had had a computer?

### And 3D!

He did experiment with it on *The Infernal Cake-walk* [Le cake walk infernal, 1903]. He interfaced two cameras to create two negatives simultaneously. About two minutes of it have survived, which Serge Bromberg restored. For the final gala evening, I didn't hesitate to convert the clips in 3D because Méliès himself would have done it if he had had the opportunity! I also converted the archival footage of World War I.

**Over the years, we've often talked about the magic of studio shoots. You experienced it for the first time on *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* [1974], when you were shooting the prologue around a cyclorama at the old Columbia Studio on Gower Street. Did you feel it again on Shepperton's sound stages?**

I certainly did. *The Third Man* [Carol Reed, 1949] and so many great British films were shot there, including some of Powell and Pressburger's. I feel the need to connect with the past, with the classic studio cinema. I had felt it strongly on *Alice*. On *Hugo*, it was like entering another universe. Though we had to set up a green screen for the trains, which were painted in postproduction, our sets formed a special world. Each time I'd go there, I'd find the extras already in character, dressed in vintage costumes as they were rehearsing their little vignettes. It was like being transported back in time.

*Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011)



**You had the pleasure of immersing Christopher Lee in it, as Monsieur Labisse, the bookseller.**

I had wanted to work with him for ever. I remember that he had warned me years ago: "Never work with children and animals." And here we were, surrounded by kids, cats and dogs! He was actually very good with them. He was quite knowledgeable about silent films. We never stopped talking and sharing stories.

**What guided your selection of clips in creating the montage of silent films discovered by Hugo and Isabelle?**

We needed images with an iconic value: Douglas Fairbanks, William S. Hart, *The Great Train Robbery* [Siegmond Lubin, 1904], *Intolerance* [Love's Struggle Throughout the Ages, D.W. Griffith, 1916], *Caligari* [Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920], *Loulou* [Die Büchse der Pandora, Georg Wilhelm Pabst, 1929]... As Norma Desmond would say: "They had faces then!" The choice was quite painful. I wish I could have included the color sequence from *The Wedding March* [Erich von Stroheim, 1928], a clip from *Seventh Heaven* [Frank Borzage, 1927], etc. It couldn't be the pictures that impacted French filmmakers and cinephiles of the time, though I managed to throw in a shot of Catherine Hessling in Jean Renoir's *Whirlpool of Fate* [La fille de l'eau, 1925]. That's why the montage doesn't include Eisenstein or other Russian greats, for instance. It's an American perspective, and a popular one, that of Brian Selznick's book, but not necessarily mine. I would have included Eisenstein rather than William S. Hart!

**However, you did include various French pieces from the period in your music score.**

I listened to all the French songs of the era. The two that I selected, "Frou-Frou" and "Marguerite," come from *The Grand Illusion* [La grande illusion, Jean Renoir, 1937]. As to Django Reinhardt, he used to play in bals-musettes at the time. During the production, I found this young man who looked just like him and decided to put him in the band inside the café where James Joyce and Salvador Dalí are sitting. Howard Shore was able to integrate the musette and also the ondes Martenot. Erik Satie was perfect for Méliès' magical acts. We also tried some Arthur Honegger, but it was a little too heavy.

**Somehow, you managed to kill two birds with the same stone in *Hugo*: celebrating the magic of cinema while making an appeal for the safeguard of its heritage.**

This is exactly why I was so attracted to that story!

**You have been waging a battle for more than thirty years to preserve our film legacy been. Has it finally been won?**

To some extent, yes. They don't call them "old films" anymore, but "classics". There is a market for them now. And audiences demand quality. The classics that I discovered on television were horrible dupes larded with commercials, and as I was watching them, I could hear the neighbors yelling or fighting in the tenements through the window. Later, many of the videocassettes we used to watch were of dubious quality. These images would be totally rejected today. Audiences couldn't even absorb their content. They would move on to something else. There is such a glut of information and imagery now that they tend to stay with what looks best. What is missing most, at least here in America, is a sense of film history. People who work in film today discovered the cinema in a world that was very different from ours. They haven't even experienced the seventies. They have known the blossoming of independent film, but the major studios' production has been progressively restricted to franchise films, to theme-park movies.

**As far as the classics are concerned, your Film Foundation seems to have built strong alliances with most of the Hollywood studios.**

They all have a program in place now – except Paramount, which is lagging behind as usual. Fox, for instance, is doing beautiful work. Our common projects include *Leave Her to Heaven* [John M. Stahl, 1945], *Drums along the Mohawks* [John Ford, 1939], *The Girl Can't Help It* [Frank Tashlin, 1956] and *The Adventures of Hajji Baba* [Don Weis, 1954], a title that we are keen on but that was met with some jeer and disbelief. Also, we are still looking for the "orphan films". The last one we found is *The Chase* [1946] by Arthur Ripley, a strange, dreamlike kind of movie where flashbacks unfold within flashbacks. And then Gucci gave us the money to restore *Once Upon a Time in America* [Sergio Leone, 1984].

**What distinguishes the World Cinema Foundation from the Film Foundation?**

Its mission is to restore films from countries that do not have the adequate labs or equipment, such as Indonesia for *After the Curfew* [Usmar Ismail, 1954]. India has the capacities, but too many films. So we decided to restore *Kalpna*, a classic musical by Uday Shankar [1948]. The Foundation's board of directors comprise filmmakers like Ermanno Olmi, Souleymane Cissé, Fatih Akin, Wim Wenders, Bertrand Tavernier, who give us suggestions and help us track down those films' elements. It's a very slow process. We've done about twenty pictures. Among the next ones, there should be both versions of

*The Color of Pomegranates* [Sayat Nova, 1968] by Parajanov and perhaps *The Mummy* [Al-Mummiya, 1969] by Egyptian Shadi Abdel Salam.

**Our discovery of cinema unfolded essentially on the big screen, in movie theaters, amid and in tune with audiences. Today, young people consume films at any given time and on all sorts of individual devices, computers, tablets, cellphones, etc. Should we deplore it?**

No, no! I screened *It Happened One Night* in a beautiful new print for my daughter and her friends. They adored it. It's a film I had never really related to because I had only seen it in mediocre dupes. I realized for the first time that it was a masterpiece. As Francesca (Scorsese's daughter) was becoming interested in *The Artist* [Michel Hazanavicius, 2011], I felt I had to put the film in context and help her discover the real silent cinema. We started the program with *Sunrise [A Song of Two Humans]*, F.W. Murnau, 1927]. She and her buddies were so enthralled that they started to talk to the screen during the screening: "No! Watch out! Don't climb in the boat!" Next will come *The Crowd* [King Vidor, 1928], *Seventh Heaven*, *Broken Blossoms* [D.W. Griffith, 1919], and maybe *Nosferatu* [Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens, F.W. Murnau, 1922], *Metropolis* [Fritz Lang, 1927], *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* [Rex Ingram, 1921]. After the silent film we usually take a break, and then I screen a more recent picture for them. I always try to balance it: after a serious film like *Pater Panchali* [Satyajit Ray, 1955], a purely entertaining one like *The Bad Seed* [Mervyn LeRoy, 1956] or *Boy on a Dolphin* [Jean Negulesco, 1957]. Last Saturday, the serious one was *Odd Man Out* [Carol Reed, 1947], which I wanted to show to the d-p of my next film, Rodrigo Prieto, as a reference.

*Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011)





## “STUDY THE OLD MASTERS. ENRICH YOUR PALETTE. EXPAND THE CANVAS”

Excerpts from Martin Scorsese and Michael Henry Wilson (1997). *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese through American Movies*. New York: Miramax Books. [pages 15-17, 63-64, 120, 47, 165-166]. [The book is a transcription of the documentary of the same title, sponsored by the *British Film Institute* among the initiatives promoted by this institution in 1994 to celebrate the centenary of the birth of cinema. It was presented at the Cannes Festival in 1995 and nominated at the *British Academy Awards*.]

Over the years, I have discovered many obscure films and sometimes these were more inspirational than the prestigious films that received all the attention. I can't really be objective. I can only revisit what has moved or intrigued me. This is a journey inside an imaginary museum, unfortunately one too big for us to enter each room. There is too much to see, too much to remember! So I've chosen to highlight some of the films that colored my dreams, that changed my perceptions, and in some cases even my life. Films that prompted me, for better or for worse, to become a filmmaker myself.

[...]

In the mid-forties, something interesting happened: darker currents seeped into the musical as they had in the Western and the Gangster Film. Even the more conventional musicals hinted at the post-war malaise. On the surface, *My Dream is Yours* [Michael Curtiz, 1949] had all the trappings of a Doris Day vehicle produced on the Warner Bros assembly-line. It seemed to be pure escapist fare. But the comedy had a bitter edge. You saw the performer's personal relationships turning sour and being sacrificed to their careers. [...] The film makes you aware of how difficult, if not impossible, relationships are between creative people. It was a major influence on my own musical, *New York, New York*. I took that tormented romance and made it the very subject of the film.

[...]

I am often asked by younger filmmakers: Why do I need to look at old movies? The only response I can give them is: I still consider myself a student. Yes, I have made a number of pictures in the past twenty years. But the more pictures I make, the more I realize that I really don't

know. I'm always looking for something or someone that I can learn from. This is what I tell young filmmakers and film students: Do what painters used to do, and probably still do. Study the old masters. Enrich your palette. Expand the canvas. There's always so much more to learn.

[...]

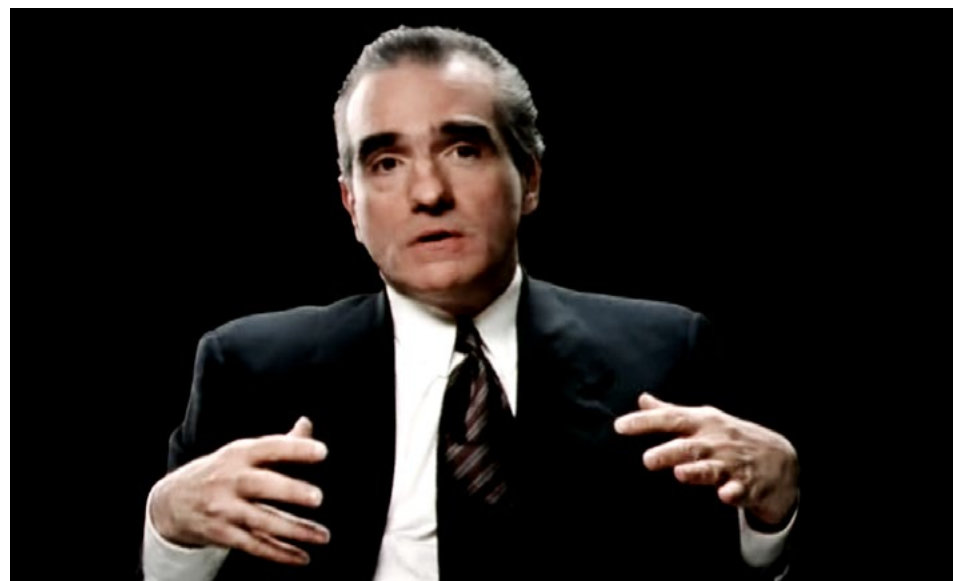
At the end of the thirties came a really pivotal film, Raoul Walsh's *The Roaring Twenties* [1939]. This chronicle of the Prohibition era was the last great gangster film before the advent of film noir. It read like a twisted Horatio Alger story. The gangster caricatured the American dream. It was the gripping saga of a war hero turned bootlegger and his downfall after the stock market crash. The gangster had become a tragic figure. Walsh even dared to end the film on a semireligious image that evokes a "Pietà". It was actually the inspiration behind one of my student films, *It's Not Just You, Murray* [1964]. And I would like to think that *Goodfellas* [1990] comes out of the extraordinary tradition spawned by *Scarface* [Howard Hawks and Richard Rosson, 1932] and *The Roaring Twenties*.

[...]

So many directors have inspired me over the years. I wouldn't know where to start if I had to name them all: Tod Browning, Fred Zinnemann, Leo McCarey, Henry King, James Whale, Robert Wise, Gregory La Cava, Donald Siegel, Roger Corman, Jean Renoir. We are indebted to them, as we are to any original filmmaker who managed to survive and impose his or her vision in a very competitive profession.

When we talk about personal expression, I'm often reminded of [Elia] Kazan's *America America* [1963], the

*A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies*  
(Martin Scorsese and Michael Henry Wilson, 1995)



story of his uncle's journey from Anatolia to America, the story of so many immigrants who came to this country from a distant foreign land. I kind of identified with it. I was very moved by it. Actually, I later saw myself making the same journey, not from Anatolia, but rather from my own neighborhood in New York, which was in a sense a very foreign land. My journey took me from that land to moviemaking—which was something unimaginable!

In fact, when I was a little younger, there was another journey I wanted to make: a religious one. I wanted to be a priest. However, I soon realized that my real vocation, my real calling, was the movies. I don't really see a conflict between the church and the movies, the sacred and the profane. Obviously, there are major differences, but I can also see great similarities between a church and a movie house. Both are places for people to come together and share a common experience. I believe there is a spirituality in films, even if it's not one which can supplant faith. I find that over the years many films address themselves to the spiritual side of man's nature, from Griffith's *Intolerance* to John Ford's *The Grapes of Wrath* [1940], to [Alfred] Hitchcock's *Vertigo* [1958], to [Stanley] Kubrick's *2001 [A Space Odyssey]*, 1968] ... and so many more. It is as though movies answered an ancient quest for the common unconscious. They fulfill a spiritual need that people have to share a common memory.

## “IT'S MORE THAN PASSION, IT'S AN OBSESSION!”

Excerpts from Michael Henry WILSON (2011). *Scorsese on Scorsese*. Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma. (pages 33, 107, 123, 137, 146, 155, 162, 168, 169, 179, 182-183, 183-184, 184, 196, 198, 213, 247, 248, 264, 265, 270, 274, 284, 285, 292, 297).

### BOXCAR BERTHA (1972)

Did you notice all the references to *The Wizard of Oz* [Victor Fleming, 1938]? There's one at every turn of the story! In the opening scene, Barbara Hershey [Boxcar Bertha] has the same hairstyle as Dorothy; in the brothel scene there's this line: “Don't pay attention to the man behind the curtain”

### RAGING BULL (1980)

Michael Powell talked me out of it; he thought the character was sufficiently original without any quotations. Again his advice though, I decided on Kazan. At this point, I wasn't listening anyone anymore; I was acting like a kamikaze...So I tried to please myself. I saw

*On the Waterfront* [1954] when I was twelve and have never forgotten it. It's so beautiful, that monologue of Brando's so funny and so sad: “Let's face it, I'm just a bum...”

### AFTER HOURS (1985)

I used a succession of different angles and framing that parodied Welles or Hitchcock, and heaps of close-ups that allowed me to stretch out the tension. The idea was that in the editing it would reflect his inner helplessness. For instance, when he calls the police on the telephone, the camera flies into the bedroom as in *Dial M for Murder*.

### THE COLOR OF MONEY (1986)

I also had a lot of fun with the 360-degree pan on Paul [Newman], with all those blurred faces whirling by as the camera turns with him. It's as if he were reviewing his whole life at that moment. It's been a long time that I wanted to borrow that shot from Sergio Leone: do you remember the circular pan during the final confrontation in *Once Upon a time in the West* [1968]?

### THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST (1988)

I've always been fascinated by images, representations of Jesus. And I've always wanted to add my contribution to that tradition...I told myself that one way of approaching the New Testament would be a mixture of documentary and cinéma vérité in black and white, as Pasolini had tried to do in *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* [Il vangelo secondo Matteo, 1964]. I saw the film at the end of the 1960s. I was very moved by it, but I thought: “Ok, I can't go down that road now”...I kept wondering: “But how can we renew our vision, find a different approach?”

### Where did you get the idea for the intermittent lighting, the ever-changing chiaoscuro?

That goes back to 1983. I had been very impressed by the ending of [Kenji Mizoguchi's] *Ugetsu Monogatari* [1953], when the hero goes home...If you watch the film closely, you'll notice how the light changes here and there when she moves about the room. That gave me the idea of using the lighting in a dramatic way. It allowed me to direct the audience's attention to a particular part of the body or the face.

### The cinematography and lighting that you devised with Nestor Almendros were extremely stylized.

I sometimes used an iris on the lens instead of a spotlight...It's the same iris that Almendros used on [François Truffaut's] *The wild child* – a good old-fashioned diaphragm mounted on the camera the way they did it in the days of silent movies.

*GOODFELLAS* (1990)

**The free-frames in the opening sequence recall your early shot films.**

The idea comes from *Jules and Jim* [Jules et Jim, 1962], specially the first three minutes of the film. It comes from Truffaut and Godard's films of the early 1960s. It's a way of breaking up the traditional narrative style...

**In terms of the music, you fuse several decades into a rich tapestry of sounds.**

I recognized that in *The Public Enemy* [1931]...[William A.] Wellman only used music emanating from the environment. The contrapuntal effect was sometimes very ironic, as when they're waiting for James Cagney at his house and his brother puts on "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles". Cagney does arrive, but as corpse, and the record continues playing. Why did I end *Goodfellas* with Sid Vicious? It was the same idea.

*CAPE FEAR* (1991)

**Would you say the word subversion applies to *Cape Fear*? Wasn't it an attempt to retread the genre movie?**

I didn't want to subvert the genre so much as to stretch it. I wanted to see how far I could go without slackening the suspense, and also to introduce elements that I found more interesting. What makes everything more complicated is that you have responsibilities toward the audience. They expect powerful sensations because that's part of the thriller genre. You can't deny them that, but you can perhaps find a way of getting around it... Memories of such masters of the genre as Hitchcock intimidated me a bit. If the original film [made by J. Lee Thompson in 1962] had been directed by Hitchcock, I'd never have touched it.

*THE AGE OF INNOCENCE* (1993)

**How did you get the idea of using a narrator that isn't a character in the story?**

It was *Barry Lyndon* [Stanley Kubrick, 1975], I think, that encouraged me to do that. The voice is that of Edith Wharton herself. I liked the idea of a female voice guiding us and preparing for the downbeat ending.

**Unlike the novel, the film opens with a sequence at the opera – just like *Senso* (1954). Was that in homage to [Luchino] Visconti, to the tradition of the great period costume films?**

I love *Senso*, it's a very daring film. It's all about opera: the music, the color, and the heroine's passion. Il Trovatore sets the mood from the beginning. I've always liked costume dramas. *The age of innocence* is my homage to that genre, the way *New York, New York* was my homage to the musicals of the 1940s and 1950s. There's Visconti of course. But there's also Max Ophüls' *Letter from an*

*Unknow Woman* [1948], Jacques Tourneur's *Experiment Perilous* [1944], and Vicent Minnelli's *Madame Bovary* [1949]. Two of William Wyler's films were constant points of reference: *Carrie* [1952]... and *The Heiress* [1949]... I was tremendously impressed by *The Heiress*, especially the scene where the father, played by Ralph Richardson, calmly tells his daughter, Olivia de Havilland, that Montgomery Clift could only be interested in her money because she's neither beautiful nor intelligent enough... I've never forgotten the ending either, with de Havilland going up the stairs inside the house, carrying her lamp, while Clift stands outside hammering at the door. It still sends shivers down my spine.

**Were you inspired by *The Magnificent Ambersons* [Orson Welles, 1942], especially for the episode of the ball?**

We watched it several times. It's a film that's been disfigured [by the cuts and retakes imposed by RKO], and it's hard for me to forget that. The original version was certainly more satisfying. I've never really understood the characters. That's a world I find difficult to identify with. *Citizen Kane* [Orson Welles, 1941] is much closer to my experience, although it's about a multi-millionaire. I understand the camera movements and positions in *Kane*, which were so different from the *invisible* style of directing that had dominated films until then.

***The Leopard* [Il gattopardo, Luchino Visconti, 1963] is one of your all-time favorite films.**

All things considered, I may feel closer to Visconti than to Welles – to *Leopard*, especially. The first time I saw it, when it came out, it was dubbed into English, and I thought the ball sequence was too long. But the film made a lasting impression on me and I learned to enjoy its slow pace, its pictorial sumptuousness, the way Visconti has the actors move in sync with the music, and also the beauty of the character played by Burt Lancaster, the prince who knows that his time is past and he has to make way for a new social class. I showed my copy, the restored three-hour version, to the whole crew of *The age of Innocence*.

*CASINO* (1995)

**The first hour combines [Fritz] Lang and [Sergei M.] Eisenstein, *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* [Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse, 1933] and *Strike* [Stachka, 1925]. You expose all the mechanisms of that fantastic money machine. You watched a lot of early Soviet films in Las Vegas, didn't you?**

*Storm Over Asia* [Potomok Chingis-Khana, Vsevolod Pudovkin, 1928], *The General Line* [Staroye i novoye, Grigori Aleksandrov, Sergei M. Eisenstein, 1929], *The End of St. Petersburg* [Konets Sankt-Peterburga, Vsevolod



Pudovkin, Mikhail Doller, 1927], *Arsenal* [Aleksandr Dovzhenko, 1929]... For years I've been watching the Russian directors of the 1920s before or during my shoots. I haven't found a better way of getting into a shape. It's pure cinema, and it reminds you of all the possibilities offered by the cinematic language. I love their feeling for cutting and composition... On *Casino*, the two Russians I watched most were Eisenstein and Pudovkin. While I was shooting *Goodfellas*, I recall watching a 16 mm copy of Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* [Chelovek s kino-apparatom, 1929] one Sunday when I was feeling depressed. It galvanized me. After a few minutes, I was impatient to get back to the set the next morning. It certainly helped me to finish the film.

**In *A Personal Journey Through American Movies*, we were trying to show how gansterism, from *Scarface* to *The Godfather* [Francis Ford Coppola, 1972], or from *The Roaring Twenties* to *Point Blank* [John Boorman, 1967], has always been a caricature of the American Dream. I believe *Casino* illustrates that very clearly.**

*Casino* certainly contains many echoes of the gagster films we've discussed over the years, especially the ones we included in our documentary. Those are themes and characters to which I keep coming back. But there's something else that worries me and which *Casino* deals with, indirectly: the tightening grip of big business in every area, whether it's the government or the arts.

*KUNDUN* (1997)

**Seeing you working with these children and nonprofessionals, I can't help thinking of neorealism and its experiences.**

I put myself in the right mood by watching some of Vittorio De Sica's films: *The Bicycle Thief* [Ladri di biciclette, 1948], *The Gold of Naples* [L'oro di Napoli, 1954], etc., and also Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* and Chinese films such as *The Horse Thief* [Dao Ma Zei, Zhuang-zhuang Tian, Peicheng Pan, 1986], which was actually shot in Tibet... With De Sica, there's a lot of improvisation and an experienced actor, Eduardo De Filippo. Here, it's all about Buddhism and we have a beautifully written screenplay by Melissa Mathison. So it's much more structured. But you may find a touch of De Sica here and there, in an expression on Kunga's face.

*GANGS OF NEW YORK* (2002)

**How did you choreograph the pitched battles?**

I describe to him [Vic Armstrong, second-unit director] in minute detail what I would need in the editing. I gave him as a model the Soviet cinema of the twenties and thirties, in particular, some sequences from Desester [Dezertir, 1933], Pudovkin's first sound film, because I wanted to emulate its energy and stylistic daring. There was also a seg-

ment from *Battleship Potemkin*, notably the sailor's arm that retracts after he breaks the dish crawling with maggots. Besides the Soviet directors, I could name Welles's *Chimes at Midnight* [Campanadas a medianoche, 1965]. I wanted the camera to be in constant movement, always tracking. I also asked him to vary the speed with each take... Yes, changing the speed in the middle of the shot! In the editing, when Thelma [Schoonmaker] and I were putting together our montage, I encouraged her to use the bits and pieces we'd normally discard.

**Raoul Walsh seems to have been one of your main cinematic references.**

Raoul Walsh and also Tay Garnett with films like *Her Man* [1930] and *Bad Company* [1931]. In the sequence of the boxing match on the barge, we were paying homage to *Gentleman Jim* [Raoul Walsh, 1942]. There was also *The Bowery* [Raoul Walsh, 1933], which I love, especially the first part. We borrowed from that one the fight among the rival brigades of firemen.

*THE AVIATOR* (2004)

**Your expressionist approach to color is also reminiscent of *New York, New York*.**

With *New York, New York*, my idea was to shoot with the same equipment and in the same style as directors did in the old days. The actors wore costumes that could have been worn at the time to three-strip Technicolor... Also, the context allowed me to play with color again, and recapture the visual magic that blew me away when I first saw *Duel in the Sun* [King Vidor, 1946], *The Adventures of Robin Hood* [The Adventures of Robin Hood, Michael Curtiz, William Keighley, 1948], or Roy Rogers' Westerns in Cinecolor. I wanted to use the range of colors that audience were familiar with in those days. So the scenes that take place before 1935 look like two-strip Technicolor. Green only appears when Katharine Hepburn takes Howard to visit her family in Connecticut. That's when the era of three-strip Technicolor began.

**The tempo of the dialogue recalls some of the comedies of the 1930s. How did you train your actors for it?**

I took inspiration from the reporters in [Michael Curtiz's] *Mystery of the Wax Museum* [1933] and, of course, from *His Girl Friday* [Howard Hawks, 1940]... On the other hand I made Cate [Blanchett] watch all of Hepburn's films, from *A Bill of Divorcement* [George Cukor, 1932] to *The Philadelphia Story* [George Cukor, 1940]... I think she's captured the essence of the young Hepburn. That's also true of Kate [Beckinsale] as Ava Garner. To prepare her, I showed her *Mogambo* [John Ford, 1953] and *The Barefoot Contessa* [The Barefoot Contessa, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, 1954]. It wasn't long before "Mogambo" became our password on the set.

*THE DEPARTED* (2006)

**You've chosen an "X" as a recurrent visual motif, just as in...**

Yes, it's my homage to *Scarface*. The motif is appropriate, because, just as in Hawks' film, everyone dies. Sometimes the X is painted on the set; sometimes it's created by the lighting.

**The first director who systematically explored that interplay, the notion that the police and the underworld are mirrors of each other, was Jean-Pierre Melville.**

We watched his films, of course: *The Red Circle* [Le cercle rouge, 1970], *Le Samouraï* [1967], *Second Breath* [Le deuxième soufflé, 1966], and especially the one that's essential for me, *Doulos: The Finger Man* [Le doulos, 1962]. The idea of mirrors has haunted me for a long time. I found it in Monahan's script and in everything he told me about Irish cops and gangsters.

*THE KEY TO RESERVA* (2007)

**Let's talk about *The Key to Reserva*, your ad for Freixenet champagne. It's both a pastiche and an essay on cinema. How did the project come about?**

I locked myself up for a week and a half with the screenwriter, Ted Griffin, looking for an idea that could be treated in less than ten minutes. We first thought of a shoot where everything goes wrong, but to do that successfully you need the timing and genius of someone like Buster Keaton. We fall back on another idea, the discovery of a treasure, such as the lost reel of *Greed* [Erich von Stroheim, 1924]. What would we do, for instance, if we found a Hitchcock project that had remained unproduced? How would we bring it to life? Would there be someone crazy enough to direct it? If so, what would he be seeking? The pleasure that Hitchcock's films have given us in the past, or the pleasure that the master would give us if he made that film today? Why does he want to attempt the impossible?

I was wearing two hats, one as the mad director of the "film within the film" and another one as the director of the film itself... It wasn't easy to re-create an old film that never existed, especially if you have to shoot it with today's technology... We wanted to re-create Hitchcock's films down to their artificiality, whether by pumping up the Technicolor or accentuating the unreality of the green screen. The process was made more complicated by references to half a dozen different pictures, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* [1956] to *Rear Window* [1954] to *North by Northwest* [1959] to *The Birds* [1963].

**Isn't that your kind of craziness? Doesn't it reflect on your passion for the cinema?**

It's more than passion, it's an obsession! You know very well what it's all about. We've shared the cinemania for

a long time now! That's where we find that obscure object of desire again. So what is this object? Maybe it's the need to relive the first films we saw, while being aware that we'll never see them in the same way again. To re-experience the moment when we came upon *Citizen Kane*, *The Red Shoes* [Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger, 1948], *The Leopard*, *Ordet* [Carl Theodor Dreyer, 1955], or *Paisà* [Roberto Rossellini, 1946] – the moment when those films transformed us, transported us to another world.

*SHUTTER ISLAND* (2010)

**Didn't you screen some of the period's great film noirs for your actors?**

...I showed Leo [Di Caprio] and Mark [Ruffalo] *Out of the Past* [Jacques Tourneur, 1947] to give them an idea of the mood...I wanted him [Leo] to study Robert Mithcum, and also Dana Andrews in *Laura* [Otto Preminger, 1944]... I'm thinking of that night scene in *Out of the Past* when the couple on the run is kissing in the bungalow, the door is blown open by the wind, and the camera goes out in the darkness. There's no way you can ever match Tourneur's vision, that dreamlike quality, but whenever I see it I feel excited about the cinema as an art form.

***Shutter Island* also has the edginess of Val Lewton's productions, which played with genre expectations while offering poetic journeys into the subconscious. Even Lewton's imagery is perceptible at some moments.**

No doubt about it. The key Lewton films were *I Walked with a Zombie* [Jacques Tourneur, 1943], *Cat People* [Jacques Tourneur, 1942], and *The Seventh Victim* [Mark Robson, 1943], but I like all of them. We screened *Bedlam* [Mark Robson, 1946], too, of course. Although Lewton's screenplay was badly tampered with, *Isle of the Dead* [Mark Robson, 1945] has always impressed me with its sense of pervasive dread. You remember the scene where they shake hands and someone says, "You broke the first rule. No touching!". You may blame the plague on any kind of mythology, but death will get you sooner or later. No matter what you do, you're doomed. That moment captured the essence of what I was trying to achieve on *Shutter Island*.

**You worked for a long time with Kent [Jones] on *A Letter to Elia* [2010]. It started as a study of Elia Kazan but became a self-portrait: how his films mirrored your own emotions.**

Originally, the idea was to do a three-hour piece mixing film clips and interviews with surviving actors. It took me three years to realize that Michel Ciment and other historians and film critics have already done that incredibly

well. Why try again to analyze his style, his method with actors, or his political struggles? Let's bring it closer to home. How did it start for me? Two pictures did it: *On the Waterfront* and *East of Eden* [1955], which I saw within a year of each other at the age of thirteen or fourteen. How did they affect me? Why did I recognize myself in them? Why did they inspire me to become a filmmaker? They had taken on a life of their own, and that's what Kent and I tried to recapture.

### Don't forget that you've got another documentary on the back burner

Oh, yes, I know. The British Cinema documentary goes next. We have to finish it, especially now that I've spent so much time in London and, at the Shepperton Studio: 149 days! Having worked in the place where so many of those classic films were made will be an inspiration... So we'll slowly and surely finish *Hugo*, take a deep breath, and get back to our British Cinema, at least until *Silence* gets started! ■

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### Notes

- \* The pictures of *Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011) that illustrate this section have been provided by Paramount Home Media Distribution Spain. *L'Atalante* is grateful for the permission to publish them. (Edition note).
- 1 This quote and others of Scorsese's from *Mis placeres de cinéfilo* have been translated into English from the Spanish text. The text is itself a translation of a French source text, *Mes plaisirs de cinéophile*. (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1998), for which there is no English version. Although Scorsese's original statements were probably made in English and then translated into French for the original text, the original English quotes are not available from any print source.
- 2 “The hardest part involved choosing the scenes that could definitively illustrate what we were saying. In that, Thelma [Schoonmaker] and Michael [Wilson, the co-author] had a huge job. They chose the scenes and then consulted me. And as I was looking at all these long passages of films to connect them more precisely with what we were saying, at times I would shout: ‘Why am I looking at this? I don't understand why...’ And they would tell me that this scene illustrated this or that point of the commentary. If I felt that a scene didn't fit in with what I wanted to say, all kinds of questions were raised: Why? Why stray so far from the commentary? Why doesn't it fit with the commentary? Or perhaps the scene is the wrong choice? When we got to this point, we had to find another scene. And to watch the whole film again. To watch *Intolerance* [1916] again takes more than three and a half hours. So the work was done that way, with Michael and Thelma.” (SCORSESE, 2000: 76-77)
- 3 “This classification of the directors – smugglers, iconoclasts – was an idea of Michael Wilson's.” (SCORSESE, 2000: 81)
- 4 Recovered from <<http://michaelhenrywilson.com/about>>.





Michael Henry Wilson on the set of *In Search of Kundun* (1998), Dharamsala, India / <http://michaelhenrywilson.com/>

**Fernando Canet** (Valencia, 1969) is Associate Professor in Film Studies at the Fines Arts College (Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain). He has been a visiting research fellow at Goldsmiths College University of London and at New York University. He has taken part in several national and international research projects. He is the author of the book *2002: Narración cinematográfica / 2002: Narrative Cinematic*, co-author of other *Narrativa audiovisual: Estrategias y recursos / Audiovisual Narrative: Strategies and Resources*, and he is currently working in the co-edition of the third book titled *(Re)viewing Creative, Critical and Commercial Practices in Contemporary Spanish Cinema* for Intellect Ltd. Bristol. He is also author of various chapters of the collective works as well as several peer-reviewed articles mainly on cinema, and he has been the editor guest of special issue for *Hispanic Research Journal* about Contemporary Spanish Cinema.

**Rebeca Romero Escrivá** (Valencia, 1982) holds bachelor degrees in Audiovisual Communication and in Journalism, and received her doctorate from Universitat de València (Spain) in June 2013. She specializes in the history of photography and journalism and concentrates her scholarship on the interaction between journalism, photography and film. She also contributes to specialized print publications such as *Archivos de la Filmoteca: Revista de estudios históricos sobre la imagen* or *Cinema & Cíe: International Film Studies Journal*. Her last book, *Las dos mitades de Jacob Riis. Un estudio comparativo de su obra literaria y fotográfica [The Two Halves of Jacob Riis: A Comparative Study of His Literary and Photographic Work]* was published in 2014 in *Cuadernos de Bellas Artes*, vols. 28 & 29 (La Laguna, Tenerife) where she outlines an interdisciplinary research study on American history, literature, journalism and documentary photography. She has published, among other monographs, *Páginas pasaderas. Estudios contemporáneos sobre la escritura del guion* [Stepping pages. Contemporary studies about screenplay writing] together with Miguel Machalski (Shangrila, 2012). Most of her papers (including her books) are available free of charge at <http://academia.edu>. She taught in the master course of *Film Innovation and Project Development* offered by the Valencian International University (VIU) from 2009 to 2011 and is currently adjunct professor of the *Máster Universitario en Creación de Guiones*

at the Universidad Internacional de la Rioja (UNIR). Her current projects include an analytical guide in Spanish to the film *To Kill a Mockingbird*, titled *Guía para ver y analizar Matar un ruiseñor* (Nau Llibres/Octaedro). She is also the editor of *L'Atalante. International Film Studies Journal*.

Born and educated in Paris and now living in Los Angeles, **Michael Henry Wilson** (Bologne sur Seine, 1946) is a writer, director and film historian. Since *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese through American Movies*, Wilson has written and directed *À la recherche de Kundun avec Martin Scorsese* (1995), *Clint Eastwood, le franc-tireur* (2007) and *Reconciliation: Mandela's Miracle* (2010). His first participation in a documentary was as the scriptwriter for *Hollywood Mavericks* (1990), produced by Florence Dauman. He is currently working in pre-production on the documentary *Myanmar Year Zero*, and co-writing and co-directing (with Martin Scorsese) a three-part series on classic British cinema. As a fiction screenplay writer he has collaborated regularly with Alan Rudolph, as creative consultant for *The Moderns* (1988), and as co-scriptwriter of the surrealist comedy *Intimate Affairs* (Showtime, 2008), starring and produced by Nick Nolte, as well as *The Last Saturday* and *Baroness*, both of which are works in progress. As an author, he has published the following books: his doctoral thesis *Le Cinéma expressionniste allemand* (Editions du Signe, 1971), *Borzage* (with Henri Agel, Avant-Scène, 1971), *A Personal Journey Through American Movies* (Miramax Books-Cahiers du Cinéma, 1997), *Raoul Walsh ou la saga du continent perdu* (Cinémathèque Française, 2001, which won the French Guild of Film Critics award for best essay on cinema), *Jacques Tourneur ou la magie de la suggestion* (Pompidou Museum, 2003), *Martin Scorsese – Entretiens avec M.H. Wilson* (Pompidou Museum/Cahiers du Cinéma, 2005), and *Clint Eastwood – Entretiens avec M.H. Wilson* (Cahiers du Cinéma, 2007). The last two books have been updated and published in both French and English by Cahiers du Cinéma in 2011 under the titles *Scorsese on Scorsese* and *Eastwood on Eastwood*. In his most recent study dedicated to American film, *A la Porte du Paradis: le cinéma américain en 57 cinéastes, de D.W. Griffith à David Lynch* (scheduled for publication in 2014), Wilson explores the work of 57 directors. More information at <http://michaelhenrywilson.com/>