



CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD CINEMA

The Studio System

production

distribution

exhibition

vertical
integration

The Big 5

- Warner Bros.
- 20th Century Fox
- Loews/MGM
- Paramount
- RKO

Little 3

- Universal
- Columbia
- United Artists

Salaries in Hollywood

- Less than 250\$: 93 Authors = 40,8%
- 250-499: 52 22,8%
- 1.750 -1.999: 3 1,3%
- 2.500: 3 1,3%
- 3.000 – 3.249: 1 0,4 %

Hollywood
as
Destroyer

F. Scott
Fitzgerald

William
Faulkner

Richard Fine

If writers as individuals were rarely destroyed in Hollywood, then the profession of authorship as they knew it certainly was under attack. This was the true significance of the Eastern writer's experience in Hollywood in the 1930s.

New Screenwriter s

- W.R. Burnett
- Charles Brackett
- James M. Cain

Screenwriter

S

- Ben Hecht
- Clifford Odets
- Dorothy Parker

WILL HAYS



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PRODUCTION CODE ADMINISTRATION
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CERTIFICATE NO.

1110

The "Seal of Approval" was initially shown full-screen before the credits. Within a year the MPPDA emblem and certificate # were made smaller and displayed at the bottom of the screen listing the production crew's credits.

**PCA
SEAL**

Story Conference

„A story isn't a
story but a
conference“

Stephen Vincent Bénéet



DARRYL
F.
ZANUCK



DAVID O. SELZNICK K

Criteria

- length of a scene, pace of the film
- Motivation
- Starsystem
- Dialogue
- Inter-titles, Voice-over etc.
- Ideology
- Budget

Criteria

- Movement, Development
- Dramatic vs. Narrative
- The storyline
- Personal story
- literary source
- Ending

Criteria cont.

- Planting
- characters
- verisimilitude
- Dialogue
- Stars
- Visual Devices
- practical aspects
- Ideology
- audience
- success of comparable films



IRVING
THALBERG
G

*GRAND
HOTEL
(1932)*



Grand Hotel

- Novel by Vicki Baum
- Play in Germany (Dir.: Max Reinhardt)
- Broadway
- Edmund Goulding

Story Conference 17.11.1931

Goulding: „We have one hundred and fifty pages and have to cut it down to one hundred and twenty-five or thirty.“

Thalberg: „First we want to get our story and then cut it down. Have you got the play here. To me the play was so far better, Eddie. In my humble opinion.“

Thalberg

Over my dead body, you'll cut that scene. I know what the audiences' reaction to this scene is – They have applauded. (...) don't destroy what is right.

this is the scene that sells her to the audience

Goulding: „... there is no ground wire, no reason for it“

Thalberg: „But the reaction I got from the play was marvelous. ... it was funny to the audience.“

Thalberg

I miss the increasing tempo in these damn scenes – I'm a great believer in curtains. Work it up to a point – bang – look – fade out before an audience is up to you – while they are still wondering, „What did he mean?“ Fade out.

Thalberg

To me this is a lousy play that only succeeded because it is lousy. It's full of life – a painted carpet upon which the figures walk – audiences love those damn things, if they are properly done.

Thalberg

Eliminate her saying: ,I'm so tired.' Have her say ,I'm so tired.' Very simply. There are certain things that can not be over-played and be sincere. And one of them is a person feeling sorry for herself. It should be played with an understanding.



BEN HECHT

Ben Hecht

- *Scarface* (1932)
- *Nothing Sacred* (1937)
- *Kiss of Death* (1947)
- *Spellbound* (1945)
- *Notorious* (1945)

Ben Hecht

- self-conscious screenplays
- humour
- Male friendship
- Dialogue
- introductory titles

Hollywood in the 1940s

- Organization
- Anti-Trust Suit, Paramount decision
- Independent Production
- audience research
- Office of War Information (OWI)

Hyphenates

- Producer-Director, Writer-Producer
- screenwriters as producers:
Nunnally Johnson

MGM

- back to Central Producer System
- Dore Schary



Paramount Case

- 1938 Anti-Trust law-suit
- Blockbooking
- Consent Decrees

Independent Productions

- Independent Cinemas
- Independent Productions
- consequences for film production and screenwriting
 - *blacklist*
 - *Production code*

Audience Research

- Gallup
- 1940 Audience Research Institute (ARI)

OWI

- Office of War Information
- 1942 - 45