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FILM THEORY

WHAT IS FILM THEORY?



THE DEFINITIONS OF FILM THEORY

- ▶ According to [The Routledge Encyclopedia of Film Theory](#), Film Theory is "...a set of scholarly approaches within the academic discipline of cinema studies that question the essentialism of cinema and provides conceptual frameworks for understanding film's relationship to reality, the other arts, individual viewers, and society at large."



THE DEFINITIONS OF FILM THEORY

- ▶ According to **ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA Film theory**, theory developed to explain the nature of motion pictures and how they produce emotional and mental effects on the audience. Film theory recognizes the cinema as a distinct art form. *See also* [auteur theory](#). *See also* individual directors, such as [François Truffaut](#) and [Sergey Eisenstein](#); [genres](#), such as [documentary films](#) and [film noir](#); and movements, such as [New Wave](#).



Theorists break them down to analyze them according to their place in society. The better you get at reading films, the more meaning you can put into your work. You can't create a unique film or television show without a basic understanding of what came before you.





TYPES OF FILM

Realism

- ▶ Nonprofessional actors (with exceptions)
- ▶ No special effects
- ▶ On location sets and props
- ▶ Minimal editing
- ▶ Natural lighting
- ▶ Documentary-style

Classical

- ▶ Professional actors
- ▶ Minimal or no special effects
- ▶ On location or in studio
- ▶ Editing used for time-lapse
- ▶ Lighting and sound used to create a mood

Formalism

- ▶ Professional actors
- ▶ Relies heavily on special effects
- ▶ Editing speeds up or slows down time
- ▶ Lighting and sound create exaggerations
- ▶ Breaks the illusion of reality



MIS-EN-SCENE

- ▶ Placement around frame
- ▶ Face to camera
- ▶ Territorial space
- ▶ Frame constraints



EDITING

- ▶ Continuity
- ▶ Classical
- ▶ Radical Subjective Continuity
- ▶ Thematic
- ▶ Associative
- ▶ Dialectic



SOUND

Diegetic

- ▶ Voices of characters
- ▶ The sound made by props
- ▶ Music coming from instruments in film

Non-diegetic

- ▶ Narrator's commentary
- ▶ Sound effects added for dramatic effect
- ▶ Mood music



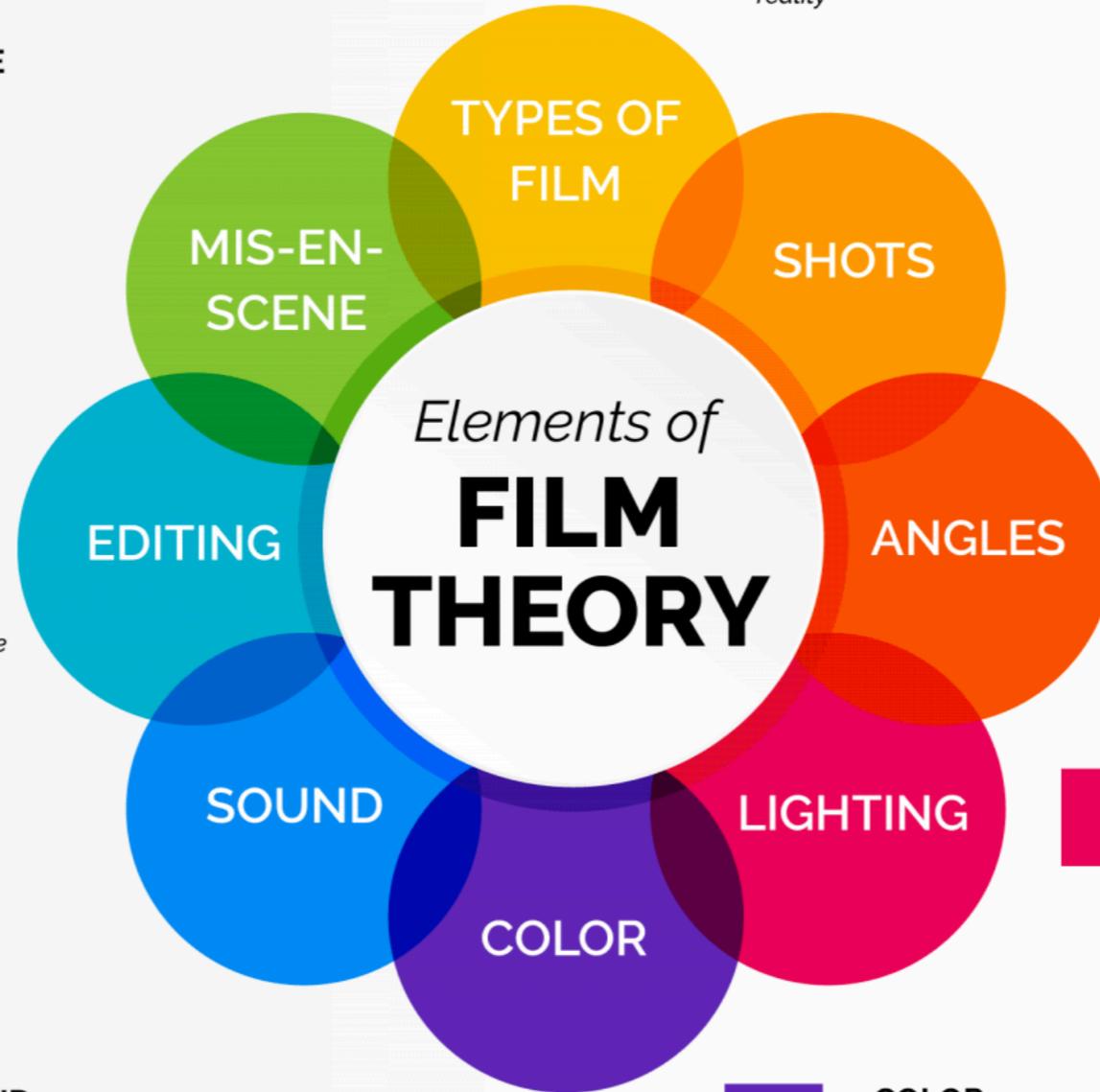
COLOR

Saturated

- ▶ Conveys happiness, fantasies, romance, or some idyllic scenery

De-Saturated

- ▶ Conveys the past, struggle, depression, or some other dystopian scenery



SHOTS

- ▶ Extreme Close-Up (ECU)
- ▶ Close-Up (CU)
- ▶ Medium Shot (MS)
- ▶ Full Shot (FS)
- ▶ Long Shot or Wide Shot (LS)
- ▶ Extreme Long Shot (ELS) or Extreme Wide Shot
- ▶ Deep Focus
- ▶ American Shot
- ▶ Over The Shoulder (OTS)
- ▶ POV Shot



ANGLES

- ▶ Eye Level
- ▶ High Angle
- ▶ Low Angle
- ▶ Oblique Angle



LIGHTING

- ▶ High Key Lighting
- ▶ Low Key Lighting
- ▶ Chiaroscuro Lighting
- ▶ Silhouette/Black Lighting

FILM THEORISTS USE THESE KEY ELEMENTS:

- ▶ **TYPE OF FILM**
- ▶ **SHOTS**
- ▶ **ANGLES**
- ▶ **LIGHTING**
- ▶ **COLOR**
- ▶ **SOUND**
- ▶ **EDITING**
- ▶ **MISE-EN-SCENE**



TYPES OF FILMS

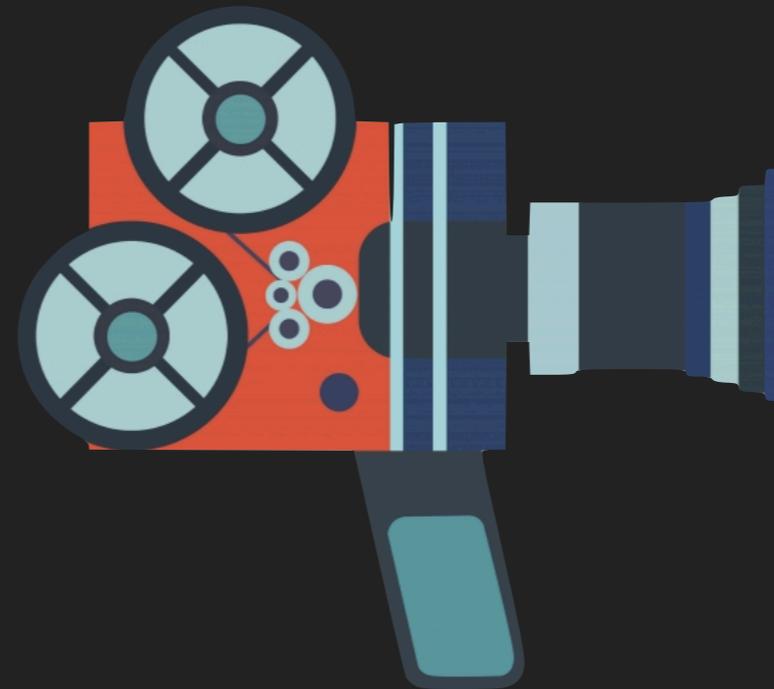
TYPES OF FILMS

- ▶ Realism
- ▶ Classical
- ▶ Formalism



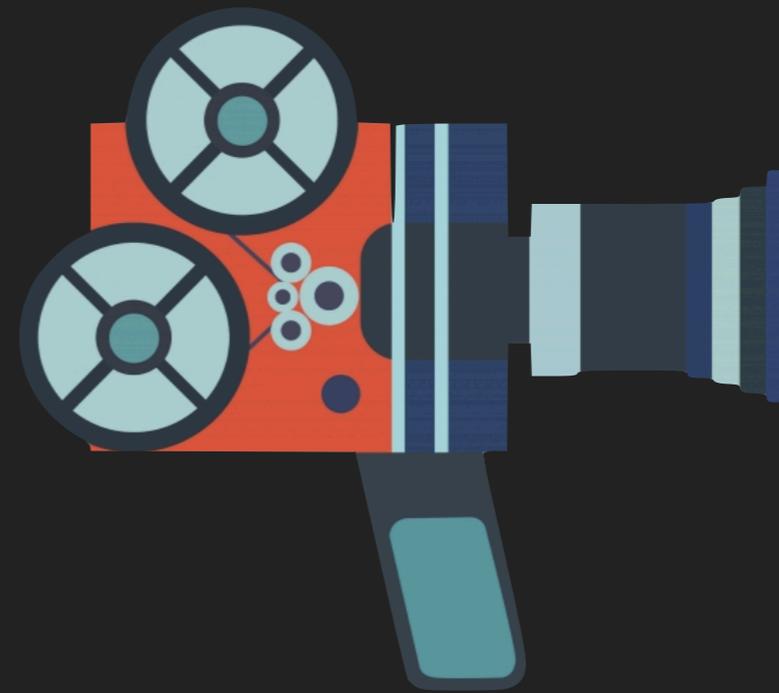
REALISM

- ▶ This type of film focuses on the real. Movies and TV take us to many different places, but to fall into this category, the piece has to be dedicated to showing the unfiltered world.
- ▶ Some examples would be *Fish Tank*, *The Bicycle Thief*, *The Deer Hunter*, *Kids*.



REALISM : CHARACTERISTICS:

- ▶ Nonprofessional actors (with exceptions)
- ▶ No special effects
- ▶ On location sets and props
- ▶ Minimal editing
- ▶ Natural lighting
- ▶ Documentary-style



REALISM

- ▶ Realism strives to show the real world for what it is. It gets down and dirty. The ability to shoot and create movies using phones and digital cameras has brought back a recent surge in Realism film. Some recent movements in realism are **Mumblecore films** and Modern Realism. Films like *The Florida Project*, *Fruitvale Station*, and *Once* strive to show their characters dealing with real issues of the day to day life.

MUMBLECORE FILMS

- ▶ **Mumblecore** is a subgenre of independent film characterized by naturalistic acting and dialogue (sometimes improvised), low-budget film production, an emphasis on dialogue over plot, and a focus on the personal relationships of people in their 20s and 30s
- ▶ 20 Great Mumblecore Movies Every Indie Lover Should See (<http://www.tasteofcinema.com/2015/20-great-mumblecore-movies-every-indie-lover-should-see/>)

CLASSICAL

CLASSICAL

- ▶ This falls between the two extremes of Realism and Formalism. Classical film still wants to emphasize authentic moments between real people but with the manipulation of its creative production elements.
- ▶ Movies like Lone Survivor, Citizen Kane, The Godfather, Trainwreck, and Spotlight.



CLASSICAL : CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Professional actors
- ▶ Minimal or no special effects
- ▶ On location or in studio
- ▶ Editing used for time-lapse
- ▶ Lighting and sound used to create a mood



CLASSICAL

- ▶ Steven Spielberg on the Importance of Studying Classic Films (https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=26&v=kdoC-5OI2xY)



FORMALISM

FORMALISM

- ▶ Formalism focuses on the Director bringing the audience an altered reality that they've created. It's pretty much most of fantasy movies. And every Superhero movie. And every *Star War*. Most modern movies.



FORMALISM : CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Professional actors
- ▶ Relies heavily on special effects
- ▶ Editing speeds up or slows down time
- ▶ Lighting and sound create exaggerations
- ▶ Breaks the illusion of reality



EXERCISE



**WHICH TYPES OF THESE
FILMS?**



THE LUMIERE BROTHERS
THE FATHERS OF CINEMA

The Lumiere Brothers' - First films (1895)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nj0vEO4Q6s>



Le Voyage dans la Lune (1902) - Georges Méliès

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNAHcMMOHE8>

THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY

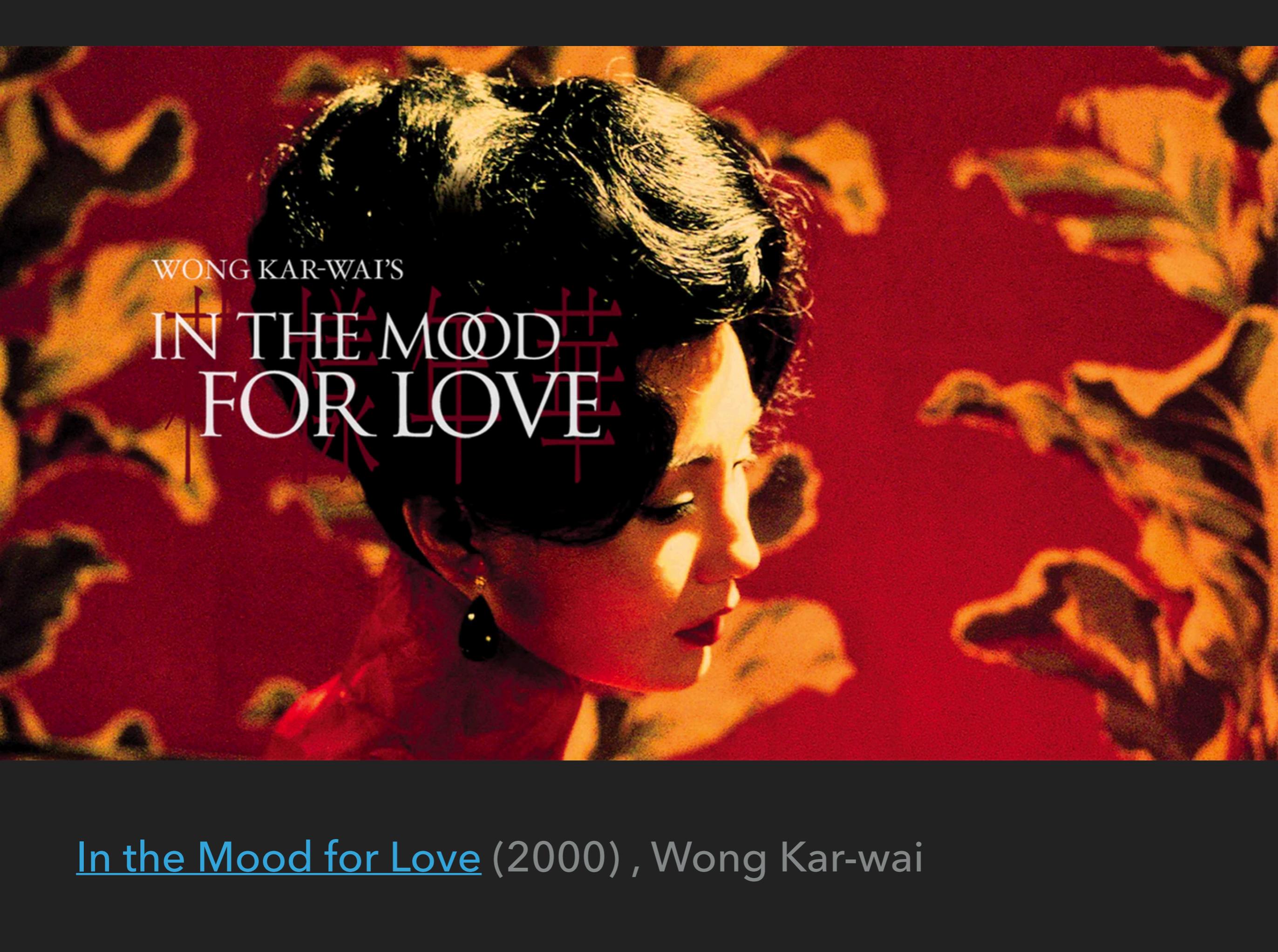
PART 2



OFFICIAL 2016 CALENDAR



[Bicycle Thieves \(1948\)](#), Italian Neo-Realism



WONG KAR-WAI'S

IN THE MOOD
FOR LOVE

[In the Mood for Love](#) (2000) , Wong Kar-wai

FORM

CONTENT

PERIOD. END OF SENTENCE.



[Period. End of Sentence. \(2018\)](#), Directed by Rayka Zehtabchi



LES CLASSIQUES

[Un Chien Andalou \(1929\)](#), A film by Spanish director Luis Buñuel and artist Salvador Dalí.