

THEORETICAL AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE FRENCH NEW WAVE

THEORETICAL CONVICTION & MATERIAL CIRCUMSTANCES SHAPE THE FRENCH NEW WAVE

- 1) The Nouvelle Vague is about a new relationship between fiction and reality. Fictionalized circumstances based in physically “real” space.
- 2) Improvisation and “real” behavior, long takes, real lighting, location shooting but consciously self referential (pointing out that you are WATCHING a film) and self conscious film/cinema references to other films and filmmakers
- 3) Proponents of Auteur Theory/ director as guiding influence on body of work Influenced by American movies, especially the genre masters like Hitchcock, Ford, and Hawks
- 4) Anti Film Establishment. Rejected commercial French cinema
- 5) Created style & aesthetics of independent, low-budget filmmaking out of necessity; they made do with what they had. Partially based on the influence of Italian Neo-Realism
- 6) Developed ideas about mise-en-scene and auteur theory; saw a dialectical relationship between the director's unique vision (themes, style, motifs) and the genre's conventions. This idea of dialectic or paired opposites is originally from Soviet Montage Theory.
- 7) Cinema about cinema/ self reflectivity (Precedent in Dziga Vertov “Man with the Movie Camera”)

TIME & SPACE IN NEW WAVE CINEMA:

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

- 1) self-reflexive narratives, loose discursive plots, authorial intrusions, homages
- 2) use of obvious camera and editing techniques such as iris shots, freeze frames, wipes, fast and slow motion

UNCONVENTIONAL EDITING

- 1) disrupts sense of time and space with flashbacks, jump cuts, asides
- 2) rejection of continuity editing of Classical Hollywood style in favor of lengthy takes, beginning scenes with close-ups instead of establishing shots

TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FRENCH NEW WAVE

- 1) Lightweight handheld cameras (Éclair)
- 2) Portable synchronous sound (Nagra – reel to reel recording)
- 3) Light-sensitive fast film stocks,
- 4) Zoom lenses
- 5) New technologies allowed location shooting with small crews, improvisation during shooting, increased camera movement, natural light and sound