

Cinematic Mythmaking

Philosophy in Film

Irving Singer

The MIT Press
Cambridge, Massachusetts
London, England

© 2008 Irving Singer

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher.

MIT Press books may be purchased at special quantity discounts for business or sales promotional use. For information, please e-mail special_sales@mitpress.mit.edu or write to Special Sales Department, The MIT Press, 55 Hayward Street, Cambridge, MA 02142.

This book was set in Palatino by Graphic Composition, Inc. and was printed and bound in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Singer, Irving.

Cinematic mythmaking : philosophy in film / Irving Singer.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-262-19589-8 (hardcover : alk. paper) 1. Myth in motion pictures.

I. Title.

PN1995.9.M96S56 2008

791.43'615—dc22

2008017023

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Index

- Abrams, Gerald J., 238
Adam and Eve, myth of, 13–15,
17–18, 21, 28, 29, 38, 39, 55–56,
128
Akerman, Chantal, 78
La Captive, 78
Alcestis, myth of, 168
Alekan, Henri, 145, 161
Apollo, myth of, 188–189, 192
Appraisal and bestowal, 5,
121–123
Apuleius, Lucius, 157
Argus, myth of, 32
Asquith, Anthony, 54
Ate, myth of, 112
Athena/Minerva (Greek/Roman
goddess), 149, 179, 180, 196
Auden, W. H., 17
Auric, Georges, 166–167, 192

Beethoven, Ludwig van, 164,
216, 225, 237
Fidelio, 164, 166, 225
Ninth Symphony, 216
Bell, Ian F. A., 234
Bell, Millicent, 98, 234
Benny, Jack, 44
Béranger, Jean, 236
Bérard, Christian, 145
Bergman, Ingmar, 41, 79, 120,
173–175, 181, 203, 236
Faithless, 51
Persona, 79
Sawdust and Tinsel, 203
Seventh Seal, The, 173–175, 203
Smiles of a Summer Night, 120
Bergman, Ingrid, 20, 156
Bergson, Henri, 8–9, 231
Berlioz, Hector, 137
Les Troyens, 137
Bernstein, Leonard, 227
Candide, 227
Berst, Charles A., 233
Bettelheim, Bruno, 164, 235
Uses of Enchantment, The, 164
Bogart, Humphrey, 17
Bringing Up Baby, 23
Buñuel, Luis, 142
Un chien andalou, 142
Burgess, Anthony, 216

- Camus, Marcel, 190–192
 Orfeu Negro, 190–193
 Capra, Frank, 41
 Carson, Johnny, 208
Casablanca, 17
 Cavell, Stanley, 29, 34, 37, 45, 231
 Chaplin, Charlie, 44
 Cinderella, myth of, 79–82
City of Angels, 170
 Clarke, Arthur C., 197, 236
 Cocteau, Jean, 11, 139–193, 225, 235
 Blood of a Poet, The, 142–143, 149, 165, 169, 179, 182–183, 187
 on cinematic poetry, 139–144, 156–157
 on film as dream and hypnosis, 141
 L'Eternal retour, 176–178, 187
 La Belle et la Bête, 144–168, 181–182, 186, 224–225
 Les Enfants terribles, 180
 Les Parents terribles, 180–181
 on magic and the magical, 145–147, 159–162, 176
 on mythmaking, 139–140
 Orphée, 168–173, 175–176, 181, 183–184, 187–189, 191, 193, 195
 Testament of Orpheus, The, 149, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 175, 178, 179, 184, 185, 186, 187, 193
 Coen, Joel, and Ethan Coen, 50
 Copland, Aaron, 112–114, 127, 132
 Corneille, Pierre, 162
 Costello, Donald P., 60, 233
 Serpent's Eye: Shaw and the Cinema, The, 60
 Crowson, Lydia, 235
 Cruise, Tom, 222
 Cupid and Psyche, myth of, 157–158
 “Daisy,” 217
 Dalí, Salvador, 142
 Un chien andalou, 142
 Dante Alighieri, 188
 Divina Commedia, 188
 Darnell, Linda, 232
 Day, Josette, 154
 de Havilland, Olivia, 126
 del Bosco, Paquito, 237
 Dellanoy, Jean, 176–178
 Demarest, William, 14
 de Maupassant, Guy, 94
 Dermit, Edouard, 190
 de Rougement, Denis, 177
 Descartes, René, 152–153
 Diana (Greek goddess), 148, 156
 Dido and Aeneas, myth of, 10, 136–137
 Dirks, Tim, 219, 237
 Disney production company, 144, 147, 149
 Beauty and the Beast, 144–145, 147, 149–150
 Fantasia, 144
 Sorcerer's Apprentice, The, 144

- Don Juan, myth of, 10, 15, 73,
 95–97, 107, 123, 124
 Doré, Gustave, 160
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, 158
 Dreaming as related to myth
 and cinema, 4–6
 Dukore, Bernard F., 233
 Dunne, Irene, 41
 Durbach, Errol, 233
 Duvall, Shelley, 221

 Ehrlich, Linda C., 236
 Einstein, Albert, 82

 Fellini, Federico, 11, 195,
 200–207, 220
 Amarcord, 203, 220
 Clowns, The, 203
 8½, 201–202, 204
 Federico Fellini's Autobiography,
 204
 Ginger and Fred, 207, 220
 Giulietta degli spiriti, 205–206
 Il Bidone, 202
 I Vitelloni, 202
 La Dolce Vita, 201, 220
 La Strada, 202
 Lo Sceicco bianco, 202
 Satyricon, 206, 220
 Flying Dutchman, myth of the,
 36, 169, 227–228
 Fonda, Henry, 43, 232
 Ford, John, 11–12, 163, 209
 Forman, Miklos, 86
 Amadeus, 86
 Frankenstein, 158
 Frayling, Sir Christopher, 235
 Freud, Sigmund, 3–4, 19, 122,
 141, 198

 Garbo, Greta, 154
 Gide, André, 179
 Giotto di Bondone, 81
 Glass, Philip, 167, 235
 his “opera/film,” 167
 interpretation of Cocteau’s
 film, 167–168
 Gluck, Christoph Willibald, 171
 Orphée et Eurydice, 171
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang
 von, 17
 Faust, 17
 Goetz, Ruth, and Augustus, 84,
 85, 110–111, 116, 117, 120, 121,
 123, 125, 234
 Goldwyn, Sam, 60
 Gottfried von Strassburg, 176
 Grant, Cary, 20, 23

 Harrison, Rex, 232
 Harvey, James, 22, 231
 Romantic Comedy in Hollywood,
 Lubitsch to Sturges, 22
 Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 84, 94
 Hedges, Inez, 236
 Henderson, Archibald, 233
 Hepburn, Audrey, 69, 70
 Hepburn, Katharine, 41
 Herrmann, Bernard, 79
 Hiller, Wendy, 69, 71

- Hitchcock, Alfred, 20, 33, 45, 75,
76, 120, 156
Notorious, 20
Vertigo, 75–79
- Hoffman, Karen D., 238
- Holinshed, Raphael, 161
- Holland, Agnieszka, 83, 114–115,
118–124, 129–136, 138
Washington Square, 83, 114–138
- Homer, 6, 195–196
- Honegger, Arthur, 59, 64, 80
- Horner, Harry, 234
- Howard, Leslie, 54
- Hunchback of Notre Dame, The*, 158
- Icarus, myth of, 201
- “I’m singin’ in the rain,” 217
- Isherwood, Christopher, 209
Goodbye to Berlin, 209
- James, Henry, 12, 63, 83–86, 88,
90, 92–94, 96–102, 105, 108–
111, 114–116, 119, 123–124, 127,
130, 131, 132, 135–137, 234
Golden Bowl, The, 92, 137
Portrait of a Lady, The, 92, 137
Turn of the Screw, The, 99, 109
Washington Square, 11, 83–138
Wings of the Dove, The, 92, 137
- Judeo-Christian mythology,
50, 52
- Jung, Carl, 3–4, 19
- Kafka, Franz, 179
Trial, The, 179
- Kallman, Chester, 17
- Kant, Immanuel, 19
- Keane, Marian, 29–30, 34, 45, 231
- Keaton, Buster, 44
- Kemble, Fanny, 84, 86–90, 92, 98,
100, 102, 106, 109–110, 116,
135
- Kidman, Nicole, 222, 224
- King, Stephen, 221
Shining, The, 221
- King Kong*, 158
- Kosinski, Jerzy, 197
Being There, 197
- Kubrick, Stanley, 11, 195–200,
207–210, 214, 216, 217, 219,
221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226,
227, 228, 236, 237
Clockwork Orange, A, 215–216,
217
*Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned
to Stop Worrying and Love the
Bomb*, 208, 210, 215, 218–220
Eyes Wide Shut, 221–229
Killer’s Kiss, The, 215
Killing, The, 215
Lolita, 215–216
Paths of Glory, 215
Playboy interview, 198–200
Shining, The, 208, 221, 222
2001: A Space Odyssey, 195–
200, 209–214, 216, 217, 220
- Lake, Veronica, 25
- Lamorisse, Albert, 185
Red Balloon, The, 185

- Lerner, Alan Jay, and Frederick
Lowe, 54
*Les Très Riches Heures du Duc
de Berri*, 161
Ligeti, Gyorgy, 222
Locke, John, 107
Love of persons, 155–157
Love of things, 155–157
- Madame Leprince de Beaumont,
Jeanne-Marie, 149, 155, 163
Marais, Jean, 154, 162, 163, 190
Marks, Martin, 32, 232
McCrea, Joel, 25
McDowell, Malcolm, 208
McMahon, Ed, 208
Méliès, Georges, 197
Melville, Jean-Pierre, 180
Les Enfants terribles, 180
Mirrors in film, 29–33, 184–185
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 7,
27, 44, 86–87, 95
Don Giovanni, 95
Magic Flute, The, 87, 226–227
Musser, Charles, 232
Myth and mythmaking, 1–12,
63, 65–67, 84–85, 93, 139–140,
163, 164, 168, 188, 196, 197,
206, 209, 211, 213, 214, 220,
225, 227–229
as related to music and opera,
6–7
- Nabokov, Vladimir, 215
Naremore, James, 238
Nicholson, Jack, 208, 221
Nietzsche, Friedrich, 176, 187,
214
concept of eternal recurrence,
176
Nordern, Eric, 236, 237
- O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, 50
Odysseus, myth of, 50, 195–196,
229
Olivier, Laurence, 161
Henry V, 161
Ophüls, Max, 227
La Ronde, 227
Orpheus, myth of, 168–193,
228
Ovid, 53, 56, 57, 58, 74, 82,
188–190, 192, 193, 195, 233
Art of Love, The, 58
Metamorphoses, The, 53, 233
- Palette, Eugene, 25
Pascal, Gabriel, 54, 59–60, 70
Peck, Gregory, 156
Perrault, Charles, 80, 160
Petronius, Gaius, 206
Phantom of the Opera, The, 158
Philippe, Gérard, 227
Plato, 2, 157
Poseidon (Greek god), 196
Proof, 138
Proust, Marcel, 38, 66, 78, 86,
179, 215
Puccini, Giacomo, 79
Pygmalion, myth of, 10, 53–82

- Racine, Jean, 162
Reality Transformed: Film as Meaning and Technique, 83
- Reed, Tracy, 219
- Rembrandt, 160
Anatomy Lesson, The, 160
- Renoir, Jean, 32, 139, 151
- Rossini, Gioachino, 82, 232
Barber of Seville, The, 232
La Cenerentola, 82
 "William Tell Overture, The," 208
- Rota, Nino, 204
- Santayana, George, 16
- Sartre, Jean-Paul, 144, 235
- Schnitzler, Arthur, 221, 223, 224, 225, 227, 228, 237
Dream Story, 221–228
- Schopenhauer, Arthur, 72, 227
- Scott, George C., 208
- Segal, Charles, 236
- Shakespeare, 40, 42, 68, 73, 161, 177, 191
Hamlet, 128
Henry V, 161
King Lear, 91
Midsummer Night's Dream, A, 91
Much Ado About Nothing, 68
Romeo and Juliet, 191
- Shaw, George Bernard, 11, 53–62, 67–69, 71, 72–75, 77, 81, 82, 233
Arms and the Man, 59
How He Lied to Her Husband, 59
Man and Superman, 73–74
My Fair Lady, 54, 58, 74, 75, 76, 79
Pygmalion, 53–82, 195
- Signoret, Simone, 227
- Simon, John, 237
- Singer, Naomi Mae, x
- Slavitt, David R., 233
- Stanwyck, Barbara, 13, 17, 29, 42, 43
- Strauss, Johann, 211
 "Blue Danube Waltz, The," 211
- Strauss, Richard, 196
Thus Spake Zarathustra, 196, 213–214
- Stravinsky, Igor, 17
Rake's Progress, The, 17
- Sturges, Preston, 13, 16, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 33, 38–40, 42–47, 51, 82, 231, 232
Great McGinty, The, 39
Hail the Conquering Hero, 39
Lady Eve, The, 11, 13–52, 54, 120, 232
Palm Beach Story, The, 25, 38, 50, 82
Sullivan's Travels, 25, 39, 40, 44, 50, 51
Unfaithfully Yours, 51, 232
- Tirso de Molina (Gabriel Téllez), 96–97
- Tristan and Iseult, myth of, 10, 67, 176–179, 181

- Turgenev, Ivan, 94
- Turk, Edward Baron, 236
- Ullmann, Liv, 51
Faithless, 51
- Verdi, Giuseppe, 7, 24, 35, 79,
228, 232
Don Carlos, 232
Rigoletto, 228
- von Suppé, Franz, 232
Dichter und Bauer, 232
“Poet and Peasant Overture,”
232
- Wagner, Richard, 34, 169, 227,
228, 232
Flying Dutchman, The, 169,
227–228
Ring of the Niebelungen, The, 170
Tannhäuser, 232
- Wandering Jew, myth of the, 36,
227–228
- Welles, Orson, 11–12, 28–29, 40,
41, 139, 162–163, 235
Citizen Kane, 41, 162
- Wenders, Wim, 170
Wings of Desire, 170
- Wilbur, Richard, 227
- Wilde, Oscar, 27
Lady Windemere’s Fan, 27
Picture of Dorian Gray, The,
158–159
- Wilder, Thornton, 171, 235
Our Town, 171–172
- Wyler, William, 32, 83, 85, 111,
114–120, 123, 124, 125, 127,
128, 130, 132, 133, 134, 137
Heiress, The, 11, 83–138
- Zeffirelli, Franco, 28

