**American Cinema**

Report made by Bragina Kate, Class 10-4

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**Introduction.**

I’m a cinema goer. And also I like watching films on TV or video. But I think, that watching a good film is the best relaxation. It is thought-provoking and entertaining. Now a growing number of people prefer watching films on TV to attending cinemas. There are wonderful comedies, love stories, science fiction, horror films, detective stories, and historical films on. There’s a variety of films available today. It is difficult to live without cinema. One fact is clear for everyone: cinema makes our life better. Cinema helps us to forget different problems. When people watch films, they have a rest. Some films take people into another world. I think it is a pure world, where usual problems do not even exist. Cinema is a great power, it helps us to understand our complex well. Cinema can leave nobody indifferent. It is so powerful that it provokes complex feelings. We meet a lot of people. Everyone has his own opinion about something and like most of us I have my own opinion too, for example, about cinema. Cinema is a necessary and important part of my life. It is my essence, my mode of life and my happiness. Cinema helps me to cope with difficulties and with incorrigible problems. So that’s why I have chosen the topic ‘Cinema’.

**American Cinema**

The world of American cinema is so far-reaching a topic that it deserves, and often receives, volumes of its own. Hollywood (in Los Angeles, California), of course, immediately comes to mind, as do the many great directors, actors and actresses it continues to attract and produce. But then, one also thinks of the many independent studios throughout the country, the educational and documentary series and films, the socially-relevant tradition in cinema, and the film departments of universities, such as the University of Southern California (USC), the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) or New York University.

For over 50 years, American films have continued to grow in popularity throughout the world. Television has only increased this popularity.

The great blockbusters of film entertainment that stretch from "Gone with the Wind" to "Star Wars" receive the most attention. A look at the prizes awarded at the leading international film festivals will also demonstrate that as an art form, the American film continues to enjoy-considerable prestige. Even when the theme is serious or, as they say, "meaningful", American films remain "popular". In the past decade, films which treated the danger of nuclear power and weapons, alcoholism, divorce, inner-city blight, .the effects of slavery, the plight of Native Americans, poverty and immigration have all received awards and international recognition. And, at the same time, they have done well at the box-office.

Movies (films), including those on video-cassettes, remain the most popular art form in the USA. A book with 20,000 readers is considered to be a best-seller. A hit play may be seen by a few thousand theatergoers. By contrast, about a billion movie tickets are sold at movie houses across the USA every year.

There are three main varieties of movie theaters in the USA: 1) the "first-run" movie houses, which show new films; 2) "art theaters", which specialize in showing foreign films and revivals; 3) "neighborhood theaters", which run films — sometimes two at a time — after the "first-run" houses.

New York is a movie theater capital of the country. Many of the city's famous large movie theaters, once giving Times Square so much of its glitter, have been torn down or converted (in some cases into smaller theaters), and a new generation of modem theaters has appeared to the north and east of the area. Most of them offer continuous performances from around noon till midnight. Less crowded and less expensive are the so-called "neighborhood theaters", which show films several weeks or months after the "first-run" theaters. There are several theaters that specialize in revivals of famous old films and others that show only modernist, avant-garde films. Still others, especially those along 42nd Street, between the Avenue of Americas and Eighth Avenue, run movies about sex and violence. Foreign films, especially those of British, French, Italian and Swedish origin, are often seen in New York, and several movie theaters specialize in the showing of foreign-language films for the various ethnic groups in the city.

**The earliest history of film.**

The illusion of movement was first noted in the early 19th century. In 1824 the English physician Peter Mark Roget published an article ‘the persistence of vision with regard to moving objects’. Many inventors put his theory to the test with pictures posted on coins that were flipped by the thumb, and with rotating disks of drawings. A particular favorite was the zoetrope, slotted revolving drum through which could be seen clowns and animals that seemed to leap. They were hand drawn on strips of paper fitted inside the drum. Other similar devices were the hemitrope, the phasmatrope, the phenakistoscope, and the praxinoscope. It is not possible to give any one person credit for having invented the motion picture. In the 1880s the Frenchman Etienne Jules Marey developed the rotating shutter with a slot to admit light, and George Eastman, of New York, developed flexible film. In 1888 Thomas Edison, of New Jersey, his phonograph for recording and playing sound on wax cylinders. He tried to combine sound with motion pictures. Edison’s assistant, William Dickson, worked on the idea, and in 1889, he both appeared and spoke in a film. Edison did not turn his attention to the projected motion picture at first. The results were still not good enough, and Edison did not think that films would not have large appeal. Instead he produced and patented the kinetoscope, which ran a continuous loop of film about 15 meters (50 feet) long. Only one person could view it at a time. By 1894, hand-cranked kinetoscope appeared all over the United States and Europe. Edison demonstrated a projecting kinetoscope. The cinematograph based on Edison’s kinetoscope was invented by two Frenchmen, Louis and Auguste Lumiere. This machine consisted of a portable camera and a projector. In December 1895, The Lumiere brothers organized a program of short motion pictures at a Parisian cafe.

**The earliest movie theatres.**

Films were first thought of as experiment or toys. They were shown in scientific laboratories and in the drawing rooms of private home. When their commercial potential was realized they began to be screened in public to a paying audience. The first films to be shown publicly were short, filmed news items and travelogues. These were screened alongside live variety acts form theatre shows, called vaudeville in United States. Within a few years fairground tents that slowed nothing but programs of films were common sights. In United States stores were converted onto movie theatre, which were known as ‘storefront theatre’. People would pay a nickel to see about an hour’s worth of film, so the theatre came to be known as ‘nickelodeons’. Early film audiences needed patience. There were many technical problems. Projectors were likely to breath down and every projectionist kept slides to reassure the audience: ‘The performance will resume shortly.’ Many projectors caused flickering on the screen, earning films the nickname of ‘the flicks’.

**The growth of the film industry.**

From the start the film industry was eager to make and show films that people would want to see. The most popular films were those that told stories- narrative fiction films. Film making began to realize that by using different camera angels, locations, lighting and special effects, film could tell a story in the way that live theatre couldn’t.

The great Train Robbery, made in 1903 by Edwin S. Porter, was the first American narrative fiction film. It included the basic ingredients of the Western: a hold-up, a chase, and a gunfight. It used a great variety of shots by showing the action at different distances from the camera- long shots of action in the distance, but also medium shots of the actors shown full-length, and chase-ups of the face and shoulders of a gunman shooting directly at the audience.

Before World War I American film industry had logged behind the film industries of Europe particularly those of France and Italy. But during the war, film making almost stopped in Europe, partly because a chemical used in celluloid was needed for making gunpowder. The American film industry thrived during the war because there was money for making films; and also because of popular the genius of D. W. Griffith. In 1915 Griffith made The Birth Of Nation, a film about the American Civil War and in 1916 he made Intolerance. These three hour’s films were American’s answer to the spectacular Italian films such as Quo Vadis that had earlier astonished the world. For Intolerance Griffith had built a set of an ancient Babylonian city, which was over a mile long, and he photograph it from a balloon. Griffith was a genius, not just because he could show huge and thrilling scenes on the screen, but because he was aware of the artistic possibilities of film.

The actors in the old-sealers had mostly been unknown and their performances very poor. Because the films were silent, actors made up for lack of speech by frantic and unnatural gestures and movements. A new and better style of acting was adopted by a young American actress called Marry Pickford who showed that a simple natural style was more effective on the screen than dramatic arm-waving and chest-thumping. Her fame spread across the Atlantic. In 1918, she signed a contract for more than a million dollars. The stars system was born.

About the same time, some of the slapstick comedians developed unique comedy styles, and also became world-famous stars. Charlie Chaplin, the little man with the derby hat, cane, and boggy pants, became the most famous (he, too, sealed a million-dollar contract). But others such as Buster Heaton, Harold Lloyd, and Harry Langdon were also widely acclaimed. They were great artists whose work is still popular today. By 1920 the cinema had became the most popular form of leisure activity outside the home.

Film studios such as Metro-Goldwin Meyer, Paramount, Warner’s, 20th Century Fox, and United Artists developed a system for producing films on the same principle that Henry Ford used for his cars- the assembly like Hollywood, on the west coast of the United States, became the center of the film industry. Its climate, light and physical surroundings were suited to the film industry, which shot much material out of doors. Film making thrived. In succeeding years, many great films were made in Hollywood, beginning with the silent films, followed, in the mid-twenties, by the first sound pictures.

The first animated cartoon drawn in the United States especially for film was done in 1906 by J. Stuart Blackton. The first full-length animated feature film was Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs made in 1937.

The stars of the films being produced in Hollywood became known throughout the world. Among them were famous Cagney, Clark Gable, Marlene Dietrich, who had first appeared in films in Germany, the Swedish Greta Garbo and the young Shirley Temple. Some of the most famous stars were Mickey Mouse and characters from Walt Disney’s cartoon. Leading film makers included John Ford, Howard Hawks, Frank Capra and George Cukor.

During World War II some of the best Americans directors in the US were recruited by the War Department, because films were needed to help raise the morale of servicemen. Among the best films of this war period were Frank Capra’s ''Why We Fight'' series (1942-45). Walt Disney’s animated films; and documentaries about important battlers directed by Garson Kanin, John Huston, Billy Wilder. Orson Welles’s masterpiece ''Citizen Kane'' (1940) was the story of a newspaper tycoon. After the war high-quality films continued to pour out of the United States. They included Charlie Chaplin’s ''Limelight'' (1952), the fine Western Shane (1956), a drama of the New York docks called On The Waterfront (1954) and many high-spirited musicals of which An American In Paris (1951) was outstanding. Alfred Hitchcock made his best films during this period. ''Psycho'' with its famous murder-in-the-shower scene was probably the most successful. Despite these successes the great studios began to get into financial difficulties because of declining audiences.

However, the late 1960s saw a turning point in the American film industry with the release of a number of films appealing to the youth market, which drew enormous audiences. The most famous of these were Arthur Penn’s ''Bonnie and Clyde'' (1967) and Dennis Hopper’s ''Easy Rider'' (1969). Realising that they could no longer rely on their traditional family audiences, film makers increasingly concentrated on films for the so-called ‘teenage market’, science fiction and fantasy ‘blockbusters’ with computer enhanced special effects Dolby sound such as George Lucas’s ''Star Wars'' (1977) and Steven Spielberg’s ''Raiders Of The Lost Ark'' (1981) became very popular.

**Popcorn**

Today Americans still continue the custom of eating popcorn at the movies. Americans use 500,000 pounds of popcorn every year. All corn does not pop. A seed or kernel of corn must have 14 percent water in it to pop. Other kinds of pop have less water and do not pop. When you put a kernel of corn on a fire, the water inside makes the corn explode. This makes a ‘pop’ noise. That is why we called it popcorn. The American Indians popped corn a long time ago. The Indians knew there were three kinds of corn. There was sweet corn for eating, corn for animals, and corn for popping. The Indians introduced corn to the first settlers, or Pilgrims, when they come to America in 1620. One year after they came, the Pilgrims had a Thanksgiving dinner. They invited the Indians. The Indians brought food with them. One Indian brought popcorn. Since that time Americans continued to pop corn at home. But in 1945 there was a new machine that changed the history of popcorn. This electric machine popped corn outside the home. Soon movie theatres started to sell popcorn to make more money. Popcorn at the movies became more and more popular. Many people like to put salt and melted butter on their popcorn. Some people eat it without salt or butter. Either way - Americans love their popcorn!

**The Oscar.**

The Oscars are awarded every year by the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science. These statuettes are awarded to actors, film directors, screenwriters and so on for outstanding contributions to the film industry. The Oscars were first awarded in 1927. The first winners were chosen by five judges. Nowadays all of the members of the Academy vote. The ceremony is attended by most Hollywood stars, although some famous stars, such as Woody Allen, refuse to go, even if they win an award. The oldest winner of an Oscar was 80-year- old Jessica Tandy for her performance in the film “Driving Miss Daisy” in 1990. The youngest was Shirley Temple when she was only five years old. The statuette is of soldier standing on a reel of film. Nobody is really sure why it is called an Oscar, although some people say that it is because when the first statuette was made, a secretary said, “It reminds me of Uncle Oscar!”

**Hollywood.**

When people think about of Hollywood, they probably think of film stars like Marilyn Monroe, Gary Grant and James Dean. Hollywood is the center of the international movie industry and American movies are distributed all over the world. They are made in English but often dubbed into other languages. In some countries 90 percent of the movies that people see are US production. Sometimes, a film is not very popular with Americans, but people in other countries like it. The first films were made in Hollywood in 1911. Between 1930-1945, the five largest Hollywood’s studios produced most of the movies and owned most of the movie theatres in the United States. Making films is expensive. On the average, it costs 36 million dollars to produce a movie. Some of this goes to pay the salary of well-known movie stars and large sums can be spent on special effects like computer-generated imagery (CGI). Marketing the movie to the public may cost another 17 million dollars or more. To cover these costs film companies receive money for movie theatre tickets and the sale or rental of videos. They also sell CDs of the soundtrack and toys, books, or clothes associated with the movie. Indeed, there was a time when Hollywood was the most famous place in the USA, if not the world.

The Hollywood story begins at the end of the last century.

1887. A man called Harvey Wilcox bought a large ranch in a district north-west of Los Angeles in California. His wife called the land ‘Hollywood’.

1902-04. The first cinemas (‘nickelodeons’) opened in the USA.

1911. Two brothers from New Jersey built Hollywood’s first film studio.

1912. Film-makers from the east coast of the USA came to California, first in small number and then in thousands.

1912. The Hollywood industry was born.

There were several reasons why film makers went to Hollywood. Firstly, there was a lot of space, secondly, California’s warm sunny weather was ideal for making films outside. Thirdly, there was a variety of locations for filming: ocean, mountains, deserts, villages, woodland and rivers.

By 1939 the great dream factory studios made nearly 500 movies a year, drew American audience of 50 million a week and earned over 700 million dollars at the box office-all with the help of 30,000 employees who dealt with everything from processing film to fan mail.

In the 1950s and 60s Hollywood became more international. Famous stars like Maurice Chevalier from France, Marlene Dietrich from Germany and Sofia Loren from Italy came to Hollywood. Even today many international stars like Gerard Depardier and Arnold Schwarzeneger make films in Hollywood.

A big film studio, like MGM or Warner Brothers, brought to life a lot of film stars. They could make or break a star.

The Hollywood film studio produced different types. There were the silent Charlie Chaplin comedies of the 20s, gangster films, Frankenstein horror films and Greta Garbo romantic melodramas of the 30s, the musicals of the 40s and 50s, the westerns (cowboy films) of the 50s, the historical epics of the 60s, the science fiction films of the 70s and the Steven Spielberg action films and violent horror films of the 80s. Who knows what the next century will be famous for?

**Beverly Hills.**

Most visitors to Los Angeles, California want to go and see Beverly Hills. This is where you find the homes of the movie stars. But Beverly Hills isn’t Los Angeles. It’s a small city next to Los Angeles. All kinds of celebrities live in Beverly Hills. These celebrities may be movie stars, television stars, sport stars, or other people in the news. Tourists can buy special maps for the homes of the stars. These homes are very beautiful. They usually have swimming pools and tennis courts. But sometimes you cannot see very much. The homes have high walls or trees around them. Beverly Hills is also famous for Rodeo Drive. This is one of the most expensive shopping streets in the United States. Rodeo Drive started to be an elegant street in the 1960s. Many famous stores are opened on the street. People liked all the new styles and fashions they could buy. Today you can find the most expensive and unusual clothing, jewelry and furniture in the world on Rodeo Drive. Rodeo Drive is a very special street. When you want to park your car in public parking, an attendant will come and park your car for you. Beverly Hills is really a small city. Only About 35,000 people live there. But during the day more than 200,000 people come to Beverly Hills to work or to shop!

**The major film genres.**

The major film genres developed in the United States are the following:

Comedy. Charles Spencer Chaplin became the most widely recognized comedy figure in the world. He emphasized the development of character and plot structure, in contrast to the simple reliance on gags and gimmicks that characterized the work of other comedy producers of the day.

Westerns. The Western (a film about life in the American West in the past) was the first American genre to be developed and has remained a staple of the American motion-picture art and industry. It has been estimated that one quarter of US films have been Westerns. However, today most American Westerns are made in Italy and are called '"spaghetti Westerns".

Musicals. The musicals of the late 1920s and the early 1930s consisted of a series of "numbers" by established stars of Broad-way, vaudeville and radio. Later manifestations of the form were the biographical musicals, often highly fictionalized, about great composers, musicians, singers, providing an opportunity to string together some of their most popular hits. The transferring of musicals intact from the Broad-way stage became almost automatic beginning in the 1950s.

Gangster films. While the Western deals with a mythical American past and the musical with a fantasy land, the gangster film is closely tied to a real facet of American life. In earlier films, the gangster had risen to the top to enjoy wealth, power, beautiful women, expensive homes and large cars, but before the end of the film he was bound to be caught by law-enforcement officers, overthrown by fellow gang members or killed. Such punishment was considered obligatory. By 1971, however, "The Godfather" showed how far the genre has evolved: Marion Brando, in the title role, dies of old age. The gangster was another businessman.

War films. They have evolved into a major American genre, since wars have occupied so much of contemporary American history. The Second World War has been the subject of the greatest number of American films in this genre.

Horror films (thrillers). In the 1920s the creation of a monster who gets out of control or is coming to life from non-human beings who survive by killing the living provided the basic story lines of countless horror films. These films also have dealt with supernatural forces that manifest themselves as an unseen power rather than in individual form. A third major kind of horror films deals with people who are insane or in the grip of psychological powers beyond their control.

Horror films as a genre is associated with the name of Alfred Hitchcock. Like Walt Disney with animated cartoons, Alfred Hitchcock was thought not just to have invented a film genre but to have patented it (hence "Hitch", another name for a horror film).

Detective and spy films. These include first of all the James Bond series. Hitchcock's films of this genre feature ordinary people who accidentally become involved with spies or other evil doers.

Science fiction. After the Second World War science-fiction films increasingly suggested that the dangers of the future stemmed from what human beings were doing in the present.

**Film Companies**

Columbia Pictures (also Columbia)-American film company, which produces films for cinema and television.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) — a film company based in Hollywood, which has made many famous films and animated cartoons.

Paramount- a film company in Hollywood.

20th Century-Fox — an American film company.

United Artists — a film company (studio) in Hollywood.

Universal — n film company (studio) in Hollywood.

Warner Bros (Brothers) — an American film company.

Film Directors and Producers

Alien, Woody (1935—) — a comic actor and maker of humorous films. Since the late 1960s, he has been directing films and acting in them, usually playing a neurotic, bookish New Yorker. Some of his best-known films have been "Annie Hall", "Manhattan" and "Hannah and Her Sisters".

Capra, Frank (1897-1991) - a film director, best known for the films "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" and "It's a Wonderful Night".

Chaplin, Charlie (Charles Spencer) (1889-1977) — an English actor and director who worked mainly in the United States in silent black-and-white comedy films. He created the beloved character, the Little Tramp, who wore a shabby black suit, derby hat and floppy shoes, and walked with the backs of his feet together and the toes pointing outwards. He always walked with a cane.

By 1918 Chaplin had forsaken short comedies for longer, independently made films, including "Shoulder Arms" (1918) and "The Kid" (1921). His major films, produced for United Artists (a film company which he helped to found in 1923), included "The Gold Rush" (1925), "The Circus" (1928), "City Lights" (1931) and "Modern Times" (1936), the latter two made as silent films with synchronized sound effects. Chaplin spoke on the screen for the first time in "The Great Dictator" (1940), which ridiculed Hitler and Mussolini. In "Monsieur Verdoux" (1947), which draws an acid analogy between warfare and business morality, the tramp disappeared entirely; the film provided further ammunition for a growing anti-Chaplin group who attacked his unconventional personal life and political views.

After 1952 Chaplin resided in Switzerland. He starred in his production "A King in New York" (1957), a sharp satire on contemporary America, and wrote and directed "A Countess from Hongkong" (1967). Chaplin made a triumphant return to the United States in 1972. He was given an Academy Award (an Oscar) for his part in "making motion pictures the art form of the century".

Coppola, Francis Ford (1939)- a film director, best known for the films "'The Godfather" and "Apocalypse Now".

Ford, John (1895-1973) - a film director, especially known for his Westerns including "Stagecoach", "How the West Was Won", etc.

Goldwin, Samuel (1882-1947) - a film producer, head of one of the companies, which later became MGM. Goldwyn is famous for saying odd things like "include me out".

Griffith, D. W. (1875-1948) - a film maker, known especially for his use of new photographic methods and for his epic silent films, such as "The Birth of the Nation" (1915) that required huge casts and enormous sets.

Griffith directed the first film, "The Adventures of Dollie", in 1908 and went on to make hundreds of pictures. With "The Birth of the Nation", he created a landmark in film industry. Also influential on the future of the film was "Intolerance" (1916). Griffith continued to make successful films throughout the 1920s. However, the Victorian sentiment that pervades his films was increasingly alien to the theme. He failed to make the transition to sound pictures.

Russel, Ken (1926-) — a film director, best known for documentary films and for the film "Women in Love".

Scorsese, Martin (1942—) — a film director whose works include "Taxi Driver", "The Last Temptation of Christ", etc.

Spielberg, Steven (1946—) — a film director who has made many very popular films, including "Jaws", "LT", "Raiders of the Lost Ark", "Star Wars", "Empire of the Sun", etc. His films are well known for being very fast moving and full of exciting action.

Zinneman, Frederick (1907- ) – an American film director, born in Austria, famous for the films such as "High Noon" and "The Day of Jackal".

Wilder Billy (1906-) – a film director whose films include "Sunset Boulevard" and "Some Like It Hot".

**Films.**

"The Birth of the Nation" — a dramatic silent film from 1915 about the American Civil War. "The Birth of the Nation" was directed by D. W. Griffith. The film, based on Thomas Dixon's novel "The Clansman", has been condemned for historical distortion and racial bias, but it became a landmark in the artistic development of motion pictures through its successful introduction of many now-standard film techniques.

"Planet of the Apes " - a film set in about imaginary future where monkeys rule the world.

''Psycho'' — a horror film directed by Alfred Hitchcock. It is especially known for a scene in which the character Mario (Janet Leigh) is stabbed in a shower by Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins).

"Rocky" — the first of a group of films (later ones were called "Rocky II", "Rock III", etc.), starring Sylvester Stallone as a determined boxer called Rocky. In each of the films the main character overcomes difficulties and win a fight against a strong opponent. The films are especially popular with young people.

"Star Wars " — a popular science-fiction film about the battle between the hero, Luke Skywalker, and Darth Vader, an evil person who wears a black mask over his face and comes from an evil empire. The film was directed by Steven Spielberg and is remembered for its many new exciting special effects.

"The Terminator" — a film with Arnold Schwarzenegger, set in Los Angeles in the near future in which a lot of people are killed. The film was followed by "Terminator II".

**Actors and Actresses.**

Astaire, Fred (1899—1987) — a dancer, singer and actor who made many films, often with his dancing partner, Ginger Rogers, and who was known for his stylishness.

Bassinger, Kim (1954—) — a film actress, known especially for playing attractive, sexy women.

Brando, Marlon (1924—) — an actor whose films include "A Streetcar Named Desire", "On the Waterfront", "The Godfather", etc.

Cooper, Gary (1901—1962) — an actor who often played strong, silent heroes, for example in the film "High Noon".

Costner, Kevin (1955—) — an actor and director whose films include "Dances with Wolves", "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves", "JFK", etc.

Cruise, Tom (1962—) — an actor who has played leading film parts since the early 1980s, e.g. in "Top Gun" and "Cocktail". He is especially popular with women.

De Niro, Robert (1945—) — an actor, known especially for his part in the films "Taxi Driver" and "The Deer Hunter".

Dietrich, Marlene (1904—1992) — an American actress and nightclub performer, born in Germany, who usually played the part of an extremely sexually attractive woman. She is best remembered for her part in the film "Blue Angel".

Douglas, Kirk (1916—) — a film actor, known for playing the hero in films such as "Spartacus".

Douglas, Michael (1944—) — a film actor, son of Kirk Douglas, known for his part in the films "Fatal Attraction" and ''Romancing the Stone".

Eastwood, Clint (1930—) — a film actor and director, best known for playing parts as a gunfighter in Westerns and a modern city police officer. His characters almost always have their right on their side, and no fear.

Fonda, Henry (1905-1982) - an actor who made many films including "The Grapes of Wrath", "Twelve Angry Men", "On Golden Pond", etc.

Fonda, Jane (1937—) — an actress, daughter of Henry Fonda, known for her left-wing views, especially her support for Vietnam and her opposition to the American government during the Vietnam War. Her best-known films are "The China Syndrome" and, with her father, "On Golden Pond". She is also known for her interest in active physical exercise.

Fonda, Peter (1939—) — an actor and director, best known for his film "Easy Rider"; son of Henry Fonda.

Fox, Michael (1961-) -- an American actor, born in Canada, who has appeared in such films as "Back to the Future" (parts 1, 2, 3). He is very popular, especially with young girls.

Gable, Clark (1901-1960) - a film actor, best known for his role as Rhett Butler in "Gone with the Wind". He also appeared in many other Hollywood films, including "Mutiny on the Bounty", "The Misfits", etc.

Garbo, Greta (1905—1990) — an American film actress, born in Sweden. She was celebrated for her classic beauty and her portrayals of moody characters.

Having first attracted notice in the Swedish silent film “The Story of Gosta Berling” (1924), Garbo went to the United States in 1925 and became perhaps the most celebrated motion-picture actress of the time, a provocative, enigmatic embodiment of feminine beauty and mystery. “Flesh and the Devil” was her best-known silent film; among her notable talking pictures were “Anna Christie” and the comedy “Ninotchka”.

Greta Garbo became famous for her with drawn, aloof off-screen personality. In the movie “Grand Hotel”, she made the famous complaint, “I want to be alone.” Garbo retired from the movies in the early 1940s and lived as a recluse ever since.

Garland, Judy (1922-1969) - a film actress and singer who was most famous as the character of Dorothy in the film "The Wizard of Oz".

Gere, Richard (1949—) — an actor, known especially for his part in the films "American Gigolo", "An Officer and a Gentleman" and "Pretty Woman".

Goldberg, Whoopi (1949-) - a film actress who appeared in "The Color Purple" and "Ghost".

Grant, Cary (1904-1986) - an American actor, born in Britain, who is remembered especially for his comic films including ''The Philadelphia Story'' and ''Bringing Up Baby''.

Hoffman, Dustin (1937-) - a film actor, best known for his roles in the films "The Graduate", "Kramer vs. Kramer", "Midnight Cowboy", "The Rain Man", etc.

Kelly, Gene (1912-1996) - a film actor, dancer and director who appeared in many musicals of the 1940s and 1950s, including "Singing in the Rain", in which he sang and danced to a song with the same name.

Kelly, Grace (1928-1982) - a film actress, star of "High Noon" and "High Society" in the 1950s, who became Princess Grace of Monaco when she married Prince Rainier.

Marvin, Lee (1924—1987) — a film actor, known especially for playing strong, violent characters in films such as "The Dirty Dozen" and "Point Blank". He is also remembered for singing the song "I was born under a wandering star" in a very deep voice.

Mathau, Walter (1922—) — an actor in films and theater, known especially for his humorous roles, e.g. in "The Odd Couple".

Monroe, Marilyn (1926—1962) — a film actress whose real name was Norma Jean Baker, who starred in films during the middle of the 20th century and became the leading sex symbol of the 1950s.

Monroe first attracted notice in “The Asphalt Jungle”, thereafter she became a reigning screen siren. Her major films include “Gentlemen Prefer Blondes”, “The Seven Year Itch”, “Bus Stop” and “Some Like It Hot”.

While still in her thirties, she died of an overdose of sleeping pills.

To many people, Marilyn Monroe is a tragic symbol of the unhappiness that can accompany fame and glamor.

Murphy, Eddie (1961—) — an actor and comedian who first became known for his work on the television program “Saturday Night Live” but now is known mostly for his films, such as “Trading Places” and “Beverly Hills Cop”.

Newman, Paul (1925—) — an actor and director, lending male star of Hollywood films in the 1900s and 1970s and considered very attractive. His films include “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid”, “The Sting”, “The Color of Money”, etc.

Nicholson, Jack (1937—) — an actor who started appearing in films in the l960s, such as “Easy Rider’’ which represented the feelings of young Americans, and has now become a big Hollywood star.

Pacino, Al (1940—) — an actor, known for the films such as “The Godfather” and “Scarface”.

Poitier, Sidney (1927—) — a black Amer ican film star and director, who was one of the first black actors to play serious parts rather than black stereotypes.

Pryor, Richard (1940-) - a comedian who has appeared in films and made several records. He is black and often makes jokes about situations involving black and white people together.

Redford, Robert (1937—) — a film actor and director who was in films such as ''Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid'',“The Sting” and “Out of Africa”. He is popular for his good looks as well as his acting.

Schwarzenegger, Arnold (1947—) — an American actor, born in Austria, whose bodybuilding appearance won him the titles of Mr. Gcrriiaiiy and Mr. Universe. He is best known for his part in the film “The Terminator” in which he plays the hero.

Scott, George C. (1926—) — an actor, best known for his film parts, especially strong-willed characters, such as soldiers. He was the first actor to refuse an Oscar.

Streisand, Barbra (1942—) — a singer and actress who has performed on stage and in many successful film musicals, including “Hello, Dolly”, “The Way We Were”, “A Star is Born”, etc.

Taylor, Elizabeth (1932—) — an American film actress, born in Britain. She began making films at the age of ten, but is perhaps at least as well known for marriages, of which there have been eight (two of them to Richard Burton).

Temple, Shirley (1928—) — a film actress who was the child star of over 20 films in the 1930s, and in later life, as Shirley Temple Black, became a US ambassador. She was very popular when her films first appeared because of her style of singing, dancing and acting and her curly golden hair.

Valentino, Rudolph (1895—I926) — an American film actor, born in Italy. He was famous for playing the part of a lover in silent films, especially in “The Sheikh”. He is sometimes mentioned as a typical example of a good-looking romantic man. Valentino was a ballroom dancer and movie extra before reaching stardom in “Four Horsemen in the Apocalypse” (1921).

Soon he became the American women’s idea of masculinity, and his private life and loves were avidly reported in newspapers and magazines. His physique, his good looks and his physical grace were well exhibited in “The Sheikh” and “Monsieur Beaucaire”. Valentino’s most successful film is “Blood and Sand”, for here he seems able to bring some of his own personality to the portrayal of the matador, an opportunity his other, more stereotyped roles had thwarted. His untimely death created a national furor and reportedly drove some of his fans to suicide.

Wayne, John (1907-1979) - a film actor who often played "tough guys", particularly soldiers and cowboys.

Early in his career Wayne appeared as Hollywood's first singing cowboy. In 1939, in "Stagecoach", he achieved star status. In his 50-year career he appeared in more than 200 motion pictures. Some of his outstanding films are "Red River", "The Quiet Man", "The High and Mighty", "The Searchers", "True Grit", for which he won an Academy Award (1969), and "Shootist".

The characters John Wayne played, especially in Westerns ("Stagecoach", "True Grit"), were often honest, strong, independent and patriotic. Because he played these characters, John Wayne was thought to have those qualities himself and was an example of a good American. His old-fashioned patriotism made him something of a folk hero. In 1979 he was voted a Congressional gold medal; the inscription read, "John Wayne — American".

Williams, Robin (1952—) — an actor and comedian whose films include “Good Morning, Vietnam”, “Dead Poets Society”, etc.

**Marilyn Monroe.**

I think that the greatest actress not only of the USA, but of the whole world is Marilyn Monroe. So I ‘d like to tell some facts about her life.

Six queens come and go, easily crowned, easily forgotten. Yet Marilyn Monroe’s memory has remained very much alive. Admirers still cut her picture out of public library books, artists still paint her; even the young have become familiar with her name and her face by watching her films on television.

Death has changed the sexy blonde into a myth, a symbol of soft femininity and loveliness. Nowadays she is sometimes mistaken for a saintly martyr, which she certainly was not. But then, what was she? Those who knew her disagree so violently that it is difficult to see the real woman through the conflicting judgments of her friends. A simple little girl to her first husband, producer Mike Todd, she was also been described as the most unappreciated person in the world, the meanest woman in Hollywood, a tart, an enchanting child, an idiot, a wit, a great natural intelligence, a victim, and a clod ‘user’ of people From the very contradiction, one can guess that she was not simple. And obviously she had something special- not talent, perhaps, but a certain spark. It is well known that most of her problems had their roots in an unhappy childhood.

Marilyn had come into the world in a Los Angel’s hospital as Norma Jean Mortensen. Her mother, Gladys Monroe Mortensen, loved her child; but since she had to work, she left her in the hands of Ida and Albert Bolender, a respectable couple who boarded children on their farm. Norma Jean spent her first seven years with them. Her physical needs were well looked after, and Gladys visited faithfully every weekend. But when she had gone, there was not much warmth around the little girl. For Norma Jean, who was extremely sensitive, it was a lonely, distressing childhood. In 1933 Gladys bought a house and took her daughter home with her. But she was not there much and when she was out, Norma Jean had to stay with the elderly couple who rented part of the house. They were not bad people, only indifferent and more interested in drinking than in baby-sitting. When Norma Jean didn’t have to go to school, the couple dropped her at a nearly movie house in time for the first afternoon show. The little girl watched happily all day, and after the last matinee she walked home by herself. In her room, later, she would act out the whole story. In this way she developed a passion for acting that she never outgrew. After nine months of live together, Gladys had a mental collaps and was hospitalized. She appeared from time to time in her daughter’s life, but more as a burden than as a support. Many people took Norma Jean under their wings throughout the years. She looked so insecure, so defenseless, that men and women alike felt compelled to protect her.

However vague Norma Jean may have been about life in general, she never felt vague about the career she wanted to have. She wanted to be an actress. But the first three years of Marilyn’s career didn’t bring her more than a few very small parts. She kept herself alive by modeling. In 1950 Marilyn attracted attention in a small part in ‘The Asphalt Jungle’, which had been obtained for her by a powerful protector. Another protector, and the most influential by far, was the agent Johnny Hyde. Hyde was a powerful man in Hollywood when he met Marilyn. He was too wise to claim that she had talent; instead he insisted that such personality didn’t need to be talented. He succeeded in getting her a part in ‘All About Eve’, a film that was to prove lucky for all its actors. The font mail started piling up. The Hollywood columnists included the new blonde in their gossip columns. Soon ‘Life and Look’ magazines were honoring her with long articles, and one critic ventured to declare her ‘a forceful actress’. The studio, after having her co-star in several pictures, finally gave her a starring role in ‘Niagara’ in 1953. She had become the Fox’s biggest moneymaker.

Whenever she appeared she was cornered by excited admirers and photographers. But there was no private happiness behind the facade, and even her fame was not of the kind she would have liked. She resented her shallow roles; she resented the fact she had no voice in the choice of her scripts and that her old contract was keeping salary ridiculously low for a star. Hurt, she retaliated as best as she could. She arrived late on the set, unprepared and obviously indifferent to the hardships. She was imposing on the other actors and the technicians. Scenes had to be redone forty or fifty times because she could not remember a four-word sentence. If something displeased her, she locked herself in her dressing room, or failed to show up at all for days. Her behavior disgusted the people who worked with her, but her fans loved the radiant child-woman on the screen.

In 1961 after divorcing her next husband the famous American playwright Arthur Miller, Marilyn drifted back to the West Coast to open a new page in her life. On August 5, 1962 she was found dead in her house. She had made many attempts at suicide before. But it does not seem that she intended to hill herself that Saturday. When she retired for the night, she had plans for the next day. But early in the morning her housekeeper found her dead.

The world was shocked. In the words of one of her biographers: ‘She broke her heart trying to achieve something she didn’t have in her to accomplish.’

**Walt Disney**

Walt Disney was an American artist and film producer, who was famous for his animated cartoons. He was born on December 5, 1901 in Chicago, his father being Irish Canadian, his mother of German-American origin. In his early child hood he revealed a talent for drawing and an interest in photography. His teens he began an art course, but World War I broke out and he drove for the Red Cross in Europe. When he got back to America he met artist Ub Iwerks, ‘and they went into business together.

In 1923 he left with his brother for Hollywood Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks made a series of short cartoons but lost all their money, and for some years struggled against poverty. Luckily, Walt’s brother Roy gave him more to start up again. The first talking picture came out in 1927 and Disney realized that sound held the key to the future of films. He developed many techniques in producing cartoons.

His most famous characters are Mickey Mouse, Duck and Pluto. The first Mickey Mouse cartoon was drawn 1928. It was the first sound cartoon, which brought great success to its creator. In the early cartoons he was really horrible. He looked quite rat-like with long pointed nose and small eyes.

Later his face changed. His head got as big as his body or almost, his eyes got bigger, too. He got younger instead of older. That makes him cuter. Now it is an acceptable symbol for the USA. Donald Duck was created in 1936. Walt Disney took the biggest risk of his career and spent a fortune on a full-length cartoon. Finally, the first full-length cartoon feature film “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” was brought out in 1935, which the public paid millions of dollars to see The songs to the cartoon were written by Frank Churchill. After the Second World War Disney turned his attention to real — life nature studies and non-cartoon films with living actors.

In the 1950’s and 1960’s, Walt Disney began developing the family-entertainment parks, Disneyland and Disney World. The first Disneyland was opened in southern California in 1955. It is situated 27 miles south of Los Angeles, at Anaheim. Of all the show-places none is as famous as Disneyland. This superb kingdom of fantasy linked to technology was created by Walt Disney. The park is divided into six themes and there is so much to see and do in each that no one would attempt to see all of them in one visit. For extended visits, there are hotels nearby. In 1971 Disney World was opened in Florida.

Walt Disney died in California at the age of 65. But his films are still shown regularly at the cinema, because of their time1esS quality and will be shown for years to come.Walter (Walt) Elias Disney has won more “Oscars” — the awards of the United States Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, instituted on May 16, 1929 and named after Oscar Pierce of Texas, USA — than any other person:20 statuettes and 12 other plagues and certificates, including posthumous awards.

**Titanic.**

The shooting of ‘Titanic’ in 1997 brought people flocking to the cinemas. It has become a blockbuster and brought big profits to the producers. The reasons are:on the one hand, the thrilling plot of the film, depicting the first of the greatest disasters of the 20th century, and, on the other hand, new technologies of film making, used by James Cameron, the producer. Everybody wanted to see if the film was really worth eleven ‘Oscar’ awards.

‘Titanic’ is the latest screen version of the tragedy happened on April 14-15, 1912 during the maiden voyage of the British luxury passenger liner. The vessel sank with a loss of about 1,500 lives:men, women, children. Their voyage on board the dream ship ended in a nightmare. It revealted all human vices: arrogance, self-satisfaction, greed, selfishness and self-confidence. But at the same time this tragedy showed the best traits of humancharacter: the sense of duty and responsibility, self-sacrifice and short but immortial love. The love-story about Jack and Rose, a young poor artist and a 17-year old girl from the upper society, arouses uor sympathy and admiration. Paired with the main story-line, it adds much to the impression of the film. ‘Titanic’ made the leading actors Leonardo Di Caprio and Kate Winslent international celebrities. The music of James Horner created a special atmosphere in the film and has become popular with the public.

The film is interesting not only from the artistic point of view, but from the technical ones as well. Both the ship and the ocean are virtual, created by computers. Besides, we can see unique pictures of ‘The Titanic’ buried in the depth of the ocean. Its wreck was found lying in two pieces on the ocean floor at the depth of about 4,000 ..metres. The pictures were taken with the help of the Russian ocean-explores and shown to the whole world.

By the way, the film was directed by James Cameron, famous for creating very expensive films with new special effects, which were the biggest box-office success. ‘Titanic’ is not an exception. Critics say the film has opened a new era in film production. I think they are right.

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Vocabularly.

Mothion picture industry - киноиндустрия

Release - выход на экран

Nervous breakdown - нервное расстройство

Mercilessly - безжалостно

To keep one’s grip - продолжать овладевать умами

To hit the nail on the head - попасть прямо в точку

Skit - пародия

Antics - ужимки, шутки

Unheard-of - неслыханный

Reentry - возвращение

Flock - стекаться толпами

Plot - сюжет

Depict - изображать

Screen version - экранизация

Shooting - (кино) съемка

Nightmare - кошмар

Reveal - показывать, обнаруживать

Vice - порок, зло, недостаток

Arrogance - высокомерие, надменость

Trait of character - черта характера

Immortial - бессмертный, вечный

Wreck - остов разбитого судна

Direct - ставить (фильм)

Essential - необходимый

Indispensable - незаменимый

Trade skills - профессиональные

Aim - стремиться

Be at one’s disposal - быть в чьем-то распоряжении

Facilities - возможности, удобства

Inspiration - вдохновение

Enrich - обогощать

Genre - жанр

Aspiration - стремление, желание

Pricless - бесценный

Spitting image - точная копия