

A Trip to the Movies!

Exploring film of the 1920s and 1930s

Wings (1927) - A look at making film in a way that had never been done. The techniques and requirements to get the aerial shots seem absolutely bonkers. Is it any wonder this won Best Picture?

WATCH: [The Aerial Cinematography and Spectacle of Wings 1927](#)

RESPOND: Dangers like this make you question whether it was worth it or not to film like this. Why do you think the filmmakers were determined to do what they did to get the action?

Buster Keaton - Perhaps the master of the physical gag, Keaton dominated the 1920s with his silent films. However he was not without competition, such greats as Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd were right there with him.

Watch: [Best of Buster Keaton's greatest stunts](#)

Watch: [Best of Harold Lloyd's greatest stunts](#)

RESPOND: Knowing that all these stunts are basically Keaton or Lloyd risking their own lives for gags, how does it change the relationship of viewer to actor versus movies today?

Art of Humor Without Sound - The process of working silent films to talking films wasn't one that happened over night, and for many films of the 1920s and 1930s, physical gags and humor continued to be what audiences wanted.

Watch: [Charlie Chaplin - The Circus \(1928\)](#)

RESPOND: When you consider what a "good" or "great" actor/actress is, how is the silent era strikingly different from modern films with sound? What makes a good actor/actress in the silent age, and what makes a good actor/actress in the sound age?

Busby Berkeley - The famed director and musical choreographer created some of the greatest and most memorable scenes from early Hollywood - in the case of the clip you'll see below, involving more than 100 chorus girls.

Watch: [Footlight Parade - Human Waterfall](#)

RESPOND: These types of enormous scenes were some of the most popular scenes ever made for movies.

The Thief of Bagdad (1924) - One of the biggest films made to date, it was directed by the Legendary Raoul Walsh and starred Douglas Fairbanks. It cost a staggering 1.1 million dollars to make.

See an image of the set [here](#). You'll see the approximately 10 minute clip the end of the film and the huge sets and number of extras that were needed for this story.

Watch: [The Thief of Bagdad](#) (you'll watch the last ten minutes – should be linked to open at that spot)

RESPOND: This film is 100+ years old. Keep it real... what do you think about it? How effective is the acting, effects, and overall entertainment value?