

# FILM IN THE 1970s

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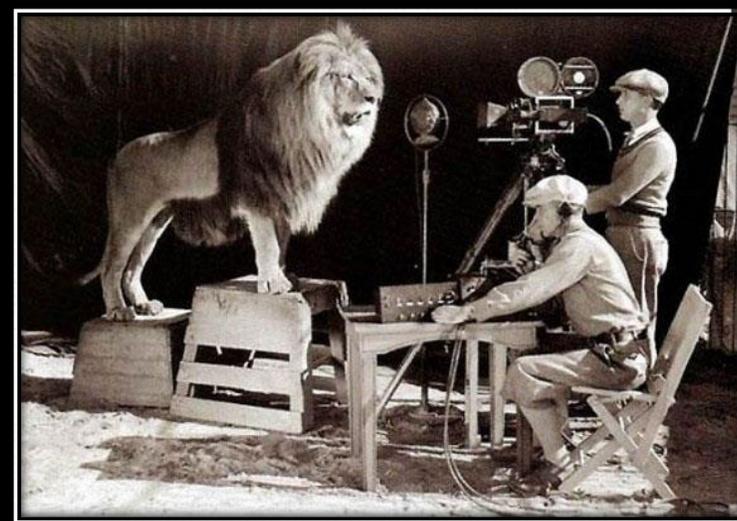
THE FILM SCHOOL GENERATION  
AND THE BIRTH OF THE  
NEW HOLLYWOOD





## HOLLYWOOD STUDIO SYSTEM –

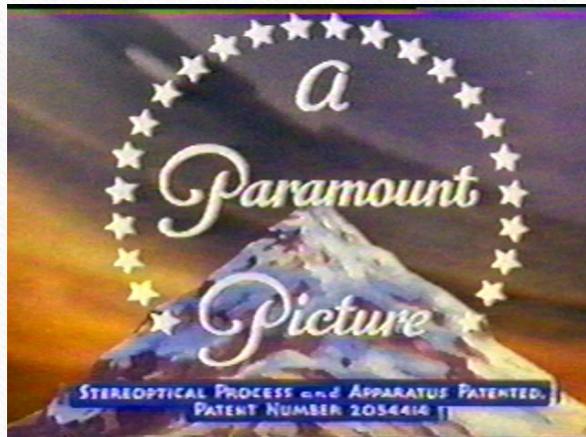
- Mid-1920s through early 1950s
- Dominated film production - more than 95% of all films during this period were made within the studio system
- Centers of business, innovation, creativity





## THE MAJORS

- Production
- Distribution
- Exhibition





## THE MINORS

- Production
- Distribution
- Did *not* own theaters



# Vertical Integration

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- Studios own and operate all facets of the process of making, distributing, and exhibiting films. Studios have their own in-house marketing and distribution departments, and they own the theaters in which their films are shown.
- Contract system – writers, directors, actors, creative personnel are all under contract – they work exclusively for that studio for the full term of their contract, and are assigned to specific films by the studio
- This is a stabilizing and lucrative process for the studios: personnel are always available; no need to constantly renegotiate contracts; the success (or failure) of an individual film matters less, because the studio reaps the profit from all of them

## THE PARAMOUNT DECISION OF 1948



- 1948 – Supreme Court rules that the 8 major and minor studios were in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act
- Orders major studios to divest themselves of their theater holdings, and to end block-booking and other practices that hurt independent filmmakers and independent exhibitors
- Paramount Pictures split into two different companies: the film company Paramount Pictures, and the theater chain United Paramount Theaters

# Aftermath of Paramount Decision

- Loss of revenue from theater chains
- Loss of many creative personnel to independent filmmaking companies
- Each film had to be competitive in the marketplace on its own merits
- Smaller studios now have access to making bigger films with major stars
- Weakening of regulations that govern filmmaking and exhibition (because studio-era rules do not apply to independent exhibitors)



## MOVIE ATTENDANCE

1940s-1970s

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1946 – 90 million per week

1950 – 60 million per week

1971 – 15 million per week

Late 1970s – 20 million per week



# The Film Industry in the Age of Television





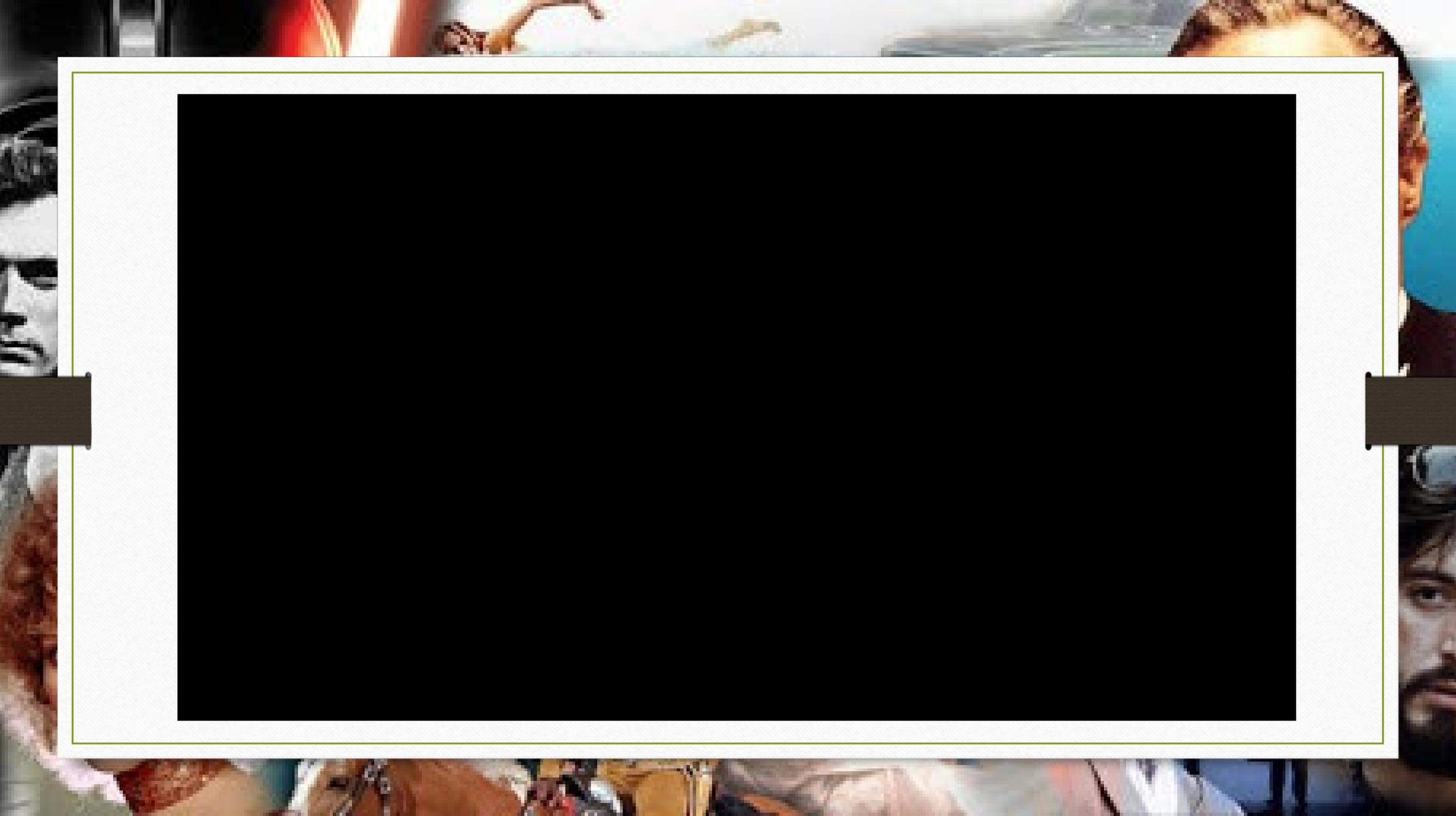
“We all go a little mad  
sometimes.”

- Norman Bates (1960)

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And, with that,  
the 1960s have begun!





## Mid-1960s “Buying Frenzy” – many studios sold to multinational corporations

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- Gulf + Western buys Paramount
  - Bank of America buys United Artists, and absorbs it into its Transamerica Corporation subsidiary
  - Kirk Kerkorian buys MGM and sells off most of its real estate holdings and memorabilia – MGM suspends moviemaking for the next 10 years
- These buyouts and mergers turn film studios into subsidiaries of conglomerates – no longer the entrepreneurial and creative heads of filmmaking industry, but checks and balances on another corporation’s ledger

# Example – Paramount – Gulf + Western

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## Gulf + Western holdings in 1970s (partial list)

Miss Universe Pageant	Catalina Swimwear
New Jersey Zinc	Stax Records
Sega gaming	Simon & Schuster
Madison Square Garden + NY Rangers + NY Knicks	
Simmons bedding	Auto parts & cigar companies
Sugar cane refinery	Financial services companies
Paramount Pictures, including its music publishing companies	
Film and television production libraries, including Lucille Ball shows, <i>Star Trek</i> , and <i>Mission: Impossible</i>	







# Five Films

