

HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF

# FILM NOIR



ANDREW SPICER

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# Historical Dictionary of Film Noir

Andrew Spicer

*Historical Dictionaries of  
Literature and the Arts, No. 38*



The Scarecrow Press, Inc.  
Lanham • Toronto • Plymouth, UK  
2010

Published by Scarecrow Press, Inc.

A wholly owned subsidiary of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.  
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706  
<http://www.scarecrowpress.com>

Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7PY, United Kingdom

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Spicer, Andrew, 1953–

Historical dictionary of film noir / Andrew Spicer.

p. cm. — (Historical dictionaries of literature and the arts ; no. 38)


Includes bibliographical references and filmography.

ISBN 978-0-8108-5960-9 (cloth : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-0-8108-7378-0 (ebook)

1. Film noir—Dictionaries. I. Title. PN1995.9.F54S685 2010

791.43'6556—dc22

2009041150

™ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Printed in the United States of America

For Brian McFarlane



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## Editor's Foreword

While much of cinema tends toward the brighter hues of glorious Technicolor, a major segment is gray or black. This is partly because the subjects are themselves darker, with devious or violent drives and motivations, black moods, and tendencies toward a tragic ending. Even comedies can be black. In addition, many movies in the film noir genre are shot in black-and-white with chiaroscuro lighting, jarring music, and enervating subthemes. Although *noir* is the French word for *black*, the term *film noir* was applied to American films exclusively for much of its history until it was exported to many other countries and cultures with equal success: Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and Hong Kong—and more all the time, since the human condition is similar everywhere. Thus, while the first of these films appeared during and just after World War II, they are still being produced today, although most are now called *neo-noir*. While the range of topics was once rather narrow, there are now categories such as boxing noirs, troubled veteran noirs, and even science fiction noirs, along with the earlier gangster and detective noirs. Perhaps this is not the drawback it seems, however, since there is no agreed definition and filmmakers have been free to develop the genre as they see fit over more than half a century.

This *Historical Dictionary of Film Noir* provides a broad coverage of the topic. The dictionary section includes entries on the various categories and subcategories that presently compose film noir, focusing particularly on those who have created the films. After considering the wide range of writers, directors, producers, actors, and others involved in these movies, readers will understand why it has become one of the most lively and popular fields of cinema. Equally important, perhaps even more so, are the numerous entries on notable films, which impart a more palpable feel by describing the topics and themes. The introduction and chronology trace a tradition many decades in the making and still going strong. For those who want to know more, the bibliography includes nearly all serious

writing on the subject. And for those who want to *see* more, the filmography is equally helpful—while reminding most of us how many films noir we have already seen and enjoyed.

This volume was written by Andrew Spicer, one of the leading specialists in the field. He is a reader in cultural history in the Faculty of Creative Arts at the University of the West of England. He has written widely on cinema: British, European, and world, including works on gangster movies and masculinity. But his focus is clearly film noir, on which he has written numerous articles, essays, and contributions to books and reference works. He is also the author of *Film Noir* and editor for *European Film Noir*. All this and much more have been combined into one handy volume, which will be extremely useful for teachers, students, and the general public.

Jon Woronoff  
Series Editor

## Preface

It is no longer possible to regard *film noir* as encompassed by black-and-white American films produced between 1940 and 1959. As discussed later in the introduction, these films are one element, albeit the most important one, in any attempt to provide an overview of the diverse cultural phenomenon that the term designates. Therefore, readers will find that dictionary entries include “classic” American film noir (1940–59), American neo-noir, and film noirs from other countries, including Australia, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, and Mexico. Entries also present noir in other forms: comics and graphic novels, posters, radio, television, and video games. In order to keep the dictionary within reasonable limits, noir fiction has not been included, but there are entries on important writers, including James M. Cain, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Jim Thompson, and Cornell Woolrich, whose work was extensively adapted for films noir. There are entries on major cultural and philosophical influences on film noir, including existentialism, expressionism, Freudianism, hard-boiled fiction, poetic realism, and Universal horror films. There are also entries on films that anticipated film noir (precursors) and influential cultural practitioners in other forms, such as those of Edward Hopper and Weegee (Arthur H. Fellig). For reasons of space, entries on noir personnel (actors, cinematographers, composers, directors, producers, and screenwriters) are confined to those who have been closely associated with the development of film noir and who have been involved in at least half a dozen noirs. There are a few exceptions, such as Rita Hayworth and Fred MacMurray, whose roles were sufficiently iconic to merit inclusion.

Although inevitably, given the genre’s size and longevity, entries are mainly about personnel involved in American noir and neo-noir, there are also entries on émigré directors, composers, cinematographers, and set designers, and on non-American writers and directors such as Claude Chabrol, Graham Greene, Mike Hodges, Jean-Pierre Melville, Georges

Simenon, and François Truffaut, whose work is essential to understanding film noir. Other entries range more widely over distinctive aspects of film noir: gender, narrative, music, representation of the city, and visual style; subcycles (amnesiac, boxing, hit man, outlaw couple, and prison noirs); left-wing and right-wing cycles; the blacklist that had such a profound effect on noir personnel; and entries on retro-noirs, remakes, and hybrids that are important aspects of the “noir phenomenon.”

Also for reasons of space, only seminal films crucial to the development of film noir and neo-noir—e.g., *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), *Point Blank* (1967), and *Body Heat* (1981)—have been included, and ones that have attracted a great deal of commentary, e.g., *The Third Man* (1949), *The Big Heat* (1953), *Rififi* (1955), *Touch of Evil* (1958), *Le Samourai* (1967), *Chinatown* (1974), and *L.A. Confidential* (1997).

The bibliography is divided into five general sections that include a selection of the most important contextual studies, but the sections that list the literature directly discussing film noir are as comprehensive as possible. The filmography, similarly, includes all films that could reasonably be regarded as noir (but not hybrids) and encompasses those countries where film noir has a significant presence (and therefore an entry in the dictionary).

## Acknowledgments

The Faculty of Creative Arts at the University of the West of England assisted the preparation of this volume with a small grant for the purchase of a number of rare film noir titles. It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to several people. I would like to thank Jon Woronoff at Scarecrow Press for his careful guidance, his prompt responses to queries, and his forbearance as the book slipped behind its deadline. Alex Ballinger read through the entire manuscript with great thoroughness and saved me from many embarrassing errors as well as helping with points of detail and style. I am, of course, responsible for any errors that remain. My partner, Dr. Joyce Woolridge, has supported me throughout the entire project, advising and commenting on all the entries and compiling the filmography. Dr. Brian McFarlane encouraged me to undertake the daunting task of compiling a dictionary and made judicious comments on a number of entries; his own work, *The Encyclopedia of British Film*, has remained a constant source of inspiration. This book is dedicated to Brian in friendship and affection.



## Reader's Note

There is no consensus as to the English plural of film noir. The form *films noir* has been used throughout this book. The term *film noirs*, on the other hand, indicates the existence of several bodies of films, e.g., Mexican and Spanish film noirs.

The date given for a film in the entries and in the filmography is the year of its first release. For foreign language films, the original language title has been given followed by the American title (in parentheses). The titles of Hong Kong films noir are Mandarin Chinese transliterations. Where alternative titles exist, these have been given and the filmography contains an entry under both titles. The filmography does not list noir hybrids as this would be confusing.

Terms in bold, as well as *see* and *see also* references, indicate entries elsewhere in the dictionary.





## Chronology

**1794 Great Britain:** Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is published, the distant origins of Gothic noir.

**1915 United States:** *Alias Jimmy Valentine* is released, the first significant American crime film, remade in 1920 and 1928. Publication of *Detective Story Magazine*, the first cheap magazine devoted to crime fiction.

**1919 Germany:** The release of Robert Weine's *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*) marks the beginning of expressionism in film.

**1922 United States:** Inception of *Black Mask* edited by Joseph T. Shaw, the most influential of popular crime magazines. **Germany:** Fritz Lang's first crime film, *Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler: Ein Bild der Zeit* (*Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*) released.

**1923 United States:** Dashiell Hammett's private detective Continental Op first appears in print. **Germany:** Karl Grune's *Die Strasse* (*The Street*) inaugurates the cycle of *Strassenfilm* (street film) in which respectable, middle class protagonists descend into a murky underworld.

**1924 Germany:** Expressionist cinema established with the release of Robert Weine's *Orlacs Hände* (*The Hands of Orlac*) and Paul Leni's *Das Wachsfigurenkabinett* (*Waxworks*).

**1925 Germany:** G. W. Pabst's *Die freudlose Gasse* (*The Joyless Street*) released, the most influential of the *Strassenfilm*.

**1926 Germany:** Release of Henrik Galeen's *Der Student von Prag* (*The Student of Prague*), the first expressionist treatment of this famous tale, and the birth of the cinematic *Doppelgänger*, the protagonist's dark self or double. **Great Britain:** Alfred Hitchcock's *The Lodger*, a dark, atmospheric thriller, anticipates film noir.

**1927 United States:** In *Underworld*, Josef von Sternberg's shadowy atmospheric direction and Ben Hecht's script focuses on the criminal milieu, which prefigures film noir.

**1928 United States:** Release of von Sternberg's *The Docks of New York*, another American precursor of film noir. **Germany:** Release of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, the origin of the sci-fi/noir hybrid.

**1929 United States:** Hammett's first novel, *The Red Harvest*, is published; release of von Sternberg's third noir precursor, *Thunderbolt*. **France:** First Maigret story by Georges Simenon. **Great Britain:** Hitchcock's crime thriller *Blackmail* is released.

**1930 United States:** Publication of Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*; Hammett's *The Red Harvest* adapted as *Roadhouse Nights*. **Germany:** Release of von Sternberg's *Strassenfilm, Der Blaue Engel (The Blue Angel)* with Marlene Dietrich as the nightclub singer Lola Lola, the archetypal femme fatale. **Great Britain:** Publication of Edgar Wallace's *On the Spot: Violence and Murder in Chicago*.

**1931 United States:** *Little Caesar*, written by W. R. Burnett and starring Edward G. Robinson, and *The Public Enemy*, starring James Cagney, are the first modern gangster films; first adaptation of *The Maltese Falcon* directed by Roy Del Ruth and the release of further noir precursors *City Streets* and *Quick Millions*; publication of Hammett's novel *The Glass Key*. **France:** Jean Renoir's *La Chienne (The Bitch)* marks the beginnings of film noir. **Germany:** Lang's *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder (M: A City Searches for a Murderer)* is the first urban crime thriller; Robert Siodmak's *Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht (The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer)*, *Stürme der Leidenschaft (Storms of Passion)*, and *Voruntersuchung (Inquest)* are noir precursors.

**1932 United States:** Universal continues its cycle of horror films with the crime-horror hybrids, *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and *The Old Dark House*; release of *Scarface*, the third seminal gangster film and further noir precursors: *Beast of the City*, *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, *Night World*, *Payment Deferred*, and *Two Seconds*. **France:** Renoir's *La Nuit du carrefour (Night at the Crossroads)*, Julien Duvivier's *La Tête d'un homme (A Man's Neck)*, and Jean Tarride's *Le Chien jaune (The Yellow Dog)*, all based on Simenon novels, establish noir in France. **Great Britain:** Publication of Wallace's *When the Gangs Came to London*.

**1933 United States:** Publication of Raymond Chandler's first short story, "Blackmailers Don't Shoot." **Germany:** Adolf Hitler comes to power (January); many film personnel flee, including Fritz Lang and Robert Siodmak, usually to Paris then on to the United States.

**1934 United States:** Publication of James M. Cain's *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and the first Cornell Woolrich story, "Death Sits in the Dentist's Chair." Universal releases *The Black Cat*, directed by Edgar G. Ulmer; noir precursors *Crime without Passion* and *Manhattan Melodrama* released. **Mexico:** Release of the first noir—*La Mujer del puerto* (*The Woman of the Port*).

**1935 United States:** First adaptation of *The Glass Key*; Universal releases *The Bride of Frankenstein*.

**1936 United States:** Cain's *Double Indemnity* serialized in *Liberty* magazine; Lang's *Fury* is an important noir precursor. Weegee's photograph "Corpse with a Revolver" is published, as is *Detective Picture Stories*, the first crime fiction comic. **France:** Major phase of poetic realism begins with *Les Bas-fonds* (*The Lower Depths*) starring Jean Gabin. **Great Britain:** Graham Greene's *A Gun for Sale* establishes him as an important crime writer.

**1937 United States:** Lang's *You Only Live Once* is the first outlaw couple thriller; *Detective Comics* published. **France:** Release of *Pépé le Moko* starring Gabin as the charismatic criminal. **Great Britain:** First full noir, *The Green Cockatoo* (U.S. title: *Four Dark Hours*) completed, based on a Greene story.

**1938 Finland:** First noir—Nyrki Tapiovaara's *Varastettu kuolema* (*Stolen Death*). **France:** Marcel Carné's *Le Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*), starring Gabin, is released. **Great Britain:** Arthur Wood's *They Drive by Night* released.

**1939 United States:** Publication of Chandler's *The Big Sleep* and David Goodis's first novel, *Retreat from Oblivion*; release of further noir precursors: *Blind Alley*, *Dust Be My Destiny*, *Each Dawn I Die*, and *They Made Me a Fugitive*. **France:** Marcel Carné's *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*) starring Gabin is released, as is Robert Siodmak's *Pièges* (*Traps*) and Pierre Chenal's *Le Dernier tournant* (*The Last Turn*), the first adaptation of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. **Great Britain:** *On the Night of the Fire*,

directed by Brian Desmond Hurst, and the Edgar Wallace “shocker” *The Dark Eyes of London*, starring Bela Lugosi, are released.

**1940 United States:** *Stranger on the Third Floor*, directed by Boris Ingster, is the first “true” noir; Hitchcock’s *Rebecca* is the first Gothic noir. Chandler’s novel *Farewell, My Lovely* and his seminal essay, “The Simple Art of Murder,” are published, as is Cornell Woolrich’s *The Bride Wore Black*; Weegee’s photographs “On the Spot” and “One Way Ride” appear in print. **Great Britain:** Publication of Eric Ambler’s noir spy novel *Journey into Fear* and the release of Thorold Dickinson’s Gothic noir, *Gaslight*.

**1941 United States:** John Huston’s *The Maltese Falcon* with Humphrey Bogart as Sam Spade is the first noir to replicate the cynical tone and atmosphere of hard-boiled fiction; Bogart also stars in Huston’s *High Sierra* as a troubled gangster. Orson Welles’s *Citizen Kane* shows the potential of expressionist techniques. Other early noirs include: *Among the Living*, *I Wake Up Screaming*, *Ladies in Retirement*, and *Out of the Fog*, starring John Garfield; von Sternberg’s *The Shanghai Gesture*; and Hitchcock’s *Suspicion*. Publication of Weegee’s “Murder on the Roof” and “Rocco Finds His Pal Stabbed.” **Denmark:** Release of the first noir, *En Forbryder (A Criminal)*.

**1942 United States:** Release of *Street of Chance*, the first Cornell Woolrich adaptation and the second and darker adaptation of *The Glass Key*, starring Brian Donlevy, Veronica Lake, and Alan Ladd; Ladd also stars in the first hit man noir, *This Gun for Hire*, based on Greene’s novel. Val Lewton’s “B” Unit at RKO releases a cycle of psychological horror films beginning with *Cat People*. First publication of the *Crime Does Not Pay* comic that continues to 1955; first broadcast of *Suspense*, a radio noir that continues until 1962. Hopper’s painting *Nighthawks* first exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago. **Great Britain:** Release of *The Night Has Eyes* with James Mason as a troubled Spanish Civil War veteran. **Italy:** Luchino Visconti’s *Ossessione (Obsession)* is an unauthorized adaptation of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

**1943 United States:** Release of Hitchcock’s *Shadow of a Doubt* starring Joseph Cotten as a plausible serial killer and Orson Welles’s first noir *Journey into Fear*, also starring and cowritten by Cotten, based on Ambler’s novel; three further Lewton horror-noirs—*I Walked with a Zombie*, *The Leopard Man* (both directed by Jacques Tourneur), and *The Seventh*

*Victim*—are released. **France:** Release of Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Le Corbeau (The Raven)*. **Mexico:** Emergence of a sustained production cycle of film noir with Fernando de Fuentes' *Doña Bárbara* and *La mujer sin alma (The Woman without a Soul)*.

**1944 United States:** Release of *Double Indemnity*, adapted by Chandler and Billy Wilder (who also directed) from Cain's novella; *Murder, My Sweet*, based on Chandler's *Farewell, My Lovely*, directed by Edward Dmytryk with Dick Powell as Philip Marlowe; and Otto Preminger's *Laura*, from Vera Caspary's novel, three hugely influential noirs; Lang's *Woman in the Window* and Siodmak's first noir, *Phantom Lady*, adapted from a Woolrich story, are also important releases. Several Gothic noirs released, including *Dark Waters*, *Experiment Perilous*, *Gaslight* (MGM's version) and *The Lodger* (John Brahm's remake of the Hitchcock original).

**1945 United States:** *The House on 92nd Street*, directed by Henry Hathaway and produced by Louis de Rochemont, is the first semidocumentary noir that shows the major impact of Italian neo-realism. Release of Lang's *Scarlet Street*, an adaptation of Renoir's *La Chienne*; Ulmer's *Detour*; *Mildred Pierce*, based on the Cain novel; Hitchcock's *Spellbound*, which deals with amnesia and psychological confusion; Edward Dmytryk's *Cornered*, starring Dick Powell as a troubled veteran; and *Leave Her to Heaven*, the first color noir, with Gene Tierney as a psychotic femme fatale. **France:** Publication of the first *Série Noire* titles by Gallimard.

**1946 United States:** Production of film noir is now well established; major releases include: Howard Hawks's *The Big Sleep*, based on Chandler's novel and starring Bogart as Marlowe; *The Blue Dahlia*, the only original Chandler screenplay addressing the topical issue of the troubled veteran, starring Alan Ladd and Veronica Lake; *Gilda*, starring Glenn Ford and Rita Hayworth; the first American adaptation of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, starring John Garfield and Lana Turner; Siodmak's *The Killers*, starring Burt Lancaster and Ava Gardner, and his Gothic noir *The Spiral Staircase*; three Woolrich adaptations: *Black Angel*, *The Chase*, and *Deadline at Dawn*. Howard Duff stars in *The Adventures of Sam Spade*, a radio serial that continues until 1951. **France:** First use of the term *film noir* by reviewers to describe the new type of American crime thriller; production of noirs well established, including *Les Portes de la nuit (The Gates of the Night)*. **(East) Germany:** *Die Mörder sind unter uns (The Murderers Are Among Us)* launches the brief cycle of *Trümmerfilme*

(rubble films). **Great Britain:** *Wanted for Murder*, starring Eric Portman, is released. **Italy:** Release of Alberto Lattuada's *Il bandito* (*The Bandit*), which focuses on a troubled veteran.

**1947 United States:** Production of films noir continues to increase, including: Jacques Tourneur's *Out of the Past*, starring Robert Mitchum and Jane Greer; Robert Rossen's boxing noir, *Body and Soul*, starring John Garfield; *Crossfire*, *Dead Reckoning*, and *Ride the Pink Horse* focus on the troubled veteran; Henry Hathaway's *Kiss of Death*, a blending of the semidocumentary and the noir thriller; Robert Montgomery's Chandler adaptation *Lady in the Lake*, in which the camera becomes the eyes of Philip Marlowe; and three further low-budget Woolrich adaptations: *Fall Guy*, *Fear in the Night*, and *The Guilty*. Enterprise Productions is formed to nurture left-wing social noirs, but the investigations of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) result in the production of a blacklist (in force until 1962) that wrecks the careers of many left-inclined noir personnel. *I, the Jury*, the first Mickey Spillane story featuring Mike Hammer, is published. *The Adventures of Philip Marlowe* begins on radio (continuing until 1950) with Van Heflin, then Gerald Mohr, playing Chandler's gumshoe. **France:** Release of *Quai des orfèvres* (*Jenny Lamour*) and Duvivier's *Panique* (*Panic*). **Great Britain:** A large number of noirs are released, including: *Odd Man Out* directed by Carol Reed and starring James Mason; *Dear Murderer* starring Eric Portman; *They Made Me a Fugitive*; and *Temptation Harbour*, adapted from a Georges Simenon novella. **Italy:** Release of several noirs including *Tombolo, paradiso nero* (*Tombolo, Black Paradise*), and *Caccia tragica* (*Tragic Pursuit*), directed by Giuseppe de Santis.

**1948 United States:** Large numbers of films noir continue to be produced. Dore Schary takes over as head of production at MGM and encourages the making of modestly budgeted noirs. Releases include: *T-Men*, a semidocumentary thriller, the first of five directed by Anthony Mann and photographed by John Alton that also included *Raw Deal*, with its rare sympathetic female protagonist (Claire Trevor); Orson Welles's *The Lady from Shanghai*; Jules Dassin's *The Naked City*, produced by Mark Hellinger, the definitive semidocumentary noir set in New York; Dassin also directed *Brute Force*, a grueling prison noir; Nicholas Ray's *They Live by Night*, the quintessential outlaw couple noir; Abraham Polonsky's *Force of Evil*, starring John Garfield; Siodmak's *Cry of the City*; John Farrow's *The Big Clock*, starring Ray Milland and Charles Laughton;

*Night Has a Thousand Eyes*, adapted from a Woolrich story; *The Dark Past*, a remake of the noir precursor *Blind Alley*; and *Pitfall*, starring Dick Powell as the archetypal beleaguered suburbanite. **France:** Release of *Dédée d'Anvers (Woman of Antwerp)*, directed by Yves Allégret. **Great Britain:** A number of noirs are released, including: *Daybreak*, a bleak, Gallic tale starring Eric Portman; *Mine Own Executioner* and *Silent Dust*, which feature troubled veterans; and the adaptation of Greene's prewar novel *Brighton Rock*. **Italy:** Release of Lattuada's *Senza pietà (Without Pity)* and de Santis's *Riso amaro (Bitter Rice)*. **Japan:** Akira Kurosawa's *Yo dire tensi (Drunken Angel)* is the first postwar Japanese noir.

**1949 United States:** Production of film noir remains high. Notable titles include: Siodmak's *Criss Cross* and *The File on Thelma Jordan*; Mann's *Reign of Terror*, set in France during the revolution; Max Ophüls's *Caught*; Robert Wise's *The Set-Up*, a boxing noir starring Robert Ryan; Dassin's *Thieves Highway*; two troubled veteran noirs, *The Clay Pigeon* and *The Crooked Way*; and *White Heat* with James Cagney as a psychotic gangster. *Nothing More Than Murder*, Jim Thompson's first major crime novel, is published. **France:** Release of several bleak noirs, including Allégret's *Une si jolie petite plage (Riptide)* and *Manèges (The Cheat)*. **Great Britain:** Production of films noir continues apace, including: Ambler's story about amnesia, *The October Man*; *Obsession*, directed by the exiled Dmytryk; and Michael Powell's *The Small Back Room*, which all explore psychological disturbance, as well as Carol Reed's *The Third Man*, an Anglo-American coproduction set in Vienna. **Japan:** Kurosawa's *Nora inu (Stray Dog)* explores postwar tensions. **Mexico:** Production of noir continues with a number of films featuring *la devoradora* (the devouring woman); the most famous and successful was *Aventurera (The Adventuress)* starring the Cuban singer-actress Ninón Sevilla. **Norway:** First true noir released: *Døden er et kjærtegn (Death Is a Caress)*.

**1950 United States:** The most prolific year for the release of noirs. Notable titles include: Huston's *The Asphalt Jungle*, the father of the caper/heist film; Rudolph Maté's *D.O.A.*, one of the great existential noirs, starring Edmond O'Brien as the ordinary Everyman caught in a malevolent world; Joseph H. Lewis's *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*), an unromantic outlaw couple film; Nicholas Ray's *In a Lonely Place* with Bogart as an unstable troubled veteran and disillusioned Hollywood writer; Preminger's *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, starring Dana Andrews, indicates that attention is now shifting to the corrupt cop; Wilder's *Sunset*



*Boulevard*, starring Gloria Swanson as a faded silent film star, is the definitive Hollywood noir. Publication of Patricia Highsmith's *Strangers on a Train*. **Great Britain:** *Night and the City* is an Anglo-American production filmed in London so that Dassin can continue directing despite being blacklisted. *Cage of Gold*, starring David Farrar, continues to explore the psychological and social legacy of the war. **Italy:** Michelangelo Antonioni directs *Cronaca di un amore* (*Chronicle of a Love*), an intense story of doomed passion and guilt. **Mexico:** Release of Luis Buñuel's *Los olvidados* (*The Forgotten Ones*).

**1951 United States:** The pace of releases of American noir slackens, but notable examples include: Wilder's *Ace in the Hole* (aka *The Big Carnival*), a coruscating account of an amoral journalist played by Kirk Douglas; Joseph Losey remakes *M*, and his *The Prowler* critiques America's obsession with ambition and money. **Argentina:** Film noir emerges with *El pendiente* (*The Earring*), adapted from a Woolrich story. **Germany:** Release of *Der Verlorene* (*The Lost One*), directed by and starring Peter Lorre. **Great Britain:** Release of *Pool of London*, "Britain's Naked City."

**1952 United States:** *Captive City* is the first of the cycle of city exposé noirs that take their cue from the 1950 Senate hearings on municipal corruption chaired by Estes Kefauver. Nicholas Ray's *On Dangerous Ground*, starring Robert Ryan and Ida Lupino, is an exploration of the troubled cop and a moving love story. Phil Karlson's first noir, *Scandal Sheet*, is based on Samuel Fuller's novel, *The Dark Page*. The first noir television series, *China Smith*, is broadcast, starring Dan Duryea as a faded American gumshoe working in Singapore. Publication of Thompson's *The Killer Inside Me*. **Argentina:** Two further Woolrich adaptations, both directed by Carlos Hugo Christensen: *No abras nunca esa puerta* (*Don't Ever Open That Door*), and *Si muero antes de despertar* (*If I Should Die before I Wake*).

**1953 United States:** Production of noir begins to decline noticeably and becomes predominantly second features. Release of Samuel Fuller's *Pickup on South Street*, his first noir as a director, starring Richard Widmark; Ida Lupino directs and stars in *The Bigamist* opposite Edmond O'Brien, and she also directs him in *The Hitch-Hiker*; Lang's *The Big Heat* shows, like the city exposé noirs, the shift from individual concerns to a focus on widespread corruption and criminal organizations. Release of the first Mike

Hammer film, *I, the Jury*. Vincente Minnelli's *The Band Wagon* contains a clever parody of the noir style in the "Girl Hunt Ballet" sequence.

**1954 United States:** Release of *Riot in Cell Block 11*, a violent and powerful prison noir directed by Don Siegel. **France:** *Touchez pas au Grisbi* (*Honor Among Thieves*), starring Jean Gabin, is the first of a series of French gangster noirs. **Great Britain:** Release of Cy Endfield's *Impulse* and *The Good Die Young*, with a mixed Anglo-American cast.

**1955 United States:** Release of *Kiss Me Deadly*, Robert Aldrich's radical reworking of Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer thriller; *The Night of the Hunter*, starring Robert Mitchum as a Christian fundamentalist and serial killer; Lang's *While the City Sleeps*; Joseph H. Lewis's *The Big Combo*, a brooding *Doppelgänger* story; *New York Confidential* and Karlson's *The Phenix City Story*, brutal city exposés. Publication of Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. **France:** Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton's *Panorama du film noir américain (1941–1953)* is the first book-length study of noir. Dassin's *Du rififi chez les hommes* (*Rififi*) is the definitive heist noir. **Spain:** Juan Antonio Bardem's *Muerte de un ciclista* (*Death of a Cyclist*) is the first noir.

**1956 United States:** Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing* is another intelligent heist noir; *Slightly Scarlet*, photographed by John Alton, and Fuller's *House of Bamboo* are color noirs, the latter depicting a criminal gang of ex-soldiers. *Nightmare*, directed by Maxwell Shane, is a remake of his own 1947 film *Fear in the Night*, based on the Woolrich short story; Hitchcock's *The Wrong Man*, starring Henry Fonda, is one of the bleakest films noir; *The Harder They Fall* is Bogart's last noir; Lang's *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* is his final American noir; Siegel's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* is a paranoid, sci-fi noir hybrid. **France:** *Bob le Flambeur* (*Bob the Gambler*), starring Roger Duchesne, is Jean-Pierre Melville's first significant noir. **Great Britain:** Roy Ward Baker's *Tiger in the Smoke* is a powerful troubled-veteran story.

**1957 United States:** Alexander Mackendrick's *Sweet Smell of Success*; Karlson's *The Brothers Rico*, based on the Simenon novel; Tourneur's *Nightfall*; and Paul Wendkos's *The Burglar*, also adapted from a Goodis novel, are distinctive noirs in a period when production is declining. Shift of noir from film production to television series includes *Richard Diamond*, starring David Janssen as a private eye, continuing to 1960. **Germany:** Siodmak's *Nachts, wenn der Teufel kam* (*The Devil Strikes*

*at Night*) explores the Nazi past. **Great Britain:** Release of Endfield's *Hell Drivers*.

**1958 United States:** Two late noir masterpieces are released: Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, a study in obsession, and Orson Welles's expressionist *Touch of Evil*. Irving Lerner's *Murder by Contract* is an intelligent exploration of the hit man. **Great Britain:** Seth Holt's *Nowhere to Go* is a powerful, existential crime thriller.

**1959 United States:** Release of Robert Wise's *Odds Against Tomorrow*, a heist noir that foregrounds racial tensions, is often cited as the "last" classic film noir. Production of noir now shifting decisively to television series: *Johnny Staccato* starring John Cassavetes; *Peter Gunn* starring Craig Stevens; and *The Man with a Camera* starring Charles Bronson. **France:** Robert Bresson's influential *Pickpocket* is released. **Great Britain:** Release of Siodmak's last noir, *The Rough and the Smooth*, and Losey's *Blind Date*.

**1960 United States:** Release of *The 3rd Voice* starring Edmond O'Brien as a man hired to impersonate a businessman who has been murdered shows that noir production did not cease in 1959; it remains sporadic throughout the 1960s. Hitchcock's *Psycho* is a new type of horror-noir. First episodes of the sci-fi noir television series *Twilight Zone*, which continues until 1964. **France:** Jean-Luc Godard's *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*), scripted by François Truffaut and dedicated to Monogram, shows the influence of American noir on the French New Wave directors, as does Truffaut's own *Tirez sur le pianiste* (*Shoot the Piano Player*), adapted from a David Goodis novel, the action shifted from Philadelphia to Paris. René Clément's *Plein Soleil* (*Purple Noon*) stars Alain Delon as Ripley, Highsmith's amoral protagonist. **Germany:** *Die tausend Augen des Dr Mabuse* (*The Thousand Eyes of Dr Mabuse*) is Lang's final film. **Great Britain:** Joseph Losey's *The Criminal* and Val Guest's *Hell Is a City*, both starring Stanley Baker, are harsh, brutal crime thrillers. **Japan:** Akira Kurosawa's *Warui yatsu hodo yoku nemuru* (*The Bad Sleep Well*) focuses on corporate corruption.

**1961 United States:** Release of the "late noirs," Samuel Fuller's *Underworld U.S.A.* and Robert Rossen's *The Hustler*, which has many similarities with his *Body and Soul* (1947). **Great Britain:** Release of *The Naked Edge* starring Gary Cooper and Eric Portman. **Italy:** Francesco Rosi's

*Salvatore Giuliano*, the story of a Sicilian bandit in the immediate postwar years, is his first *giallo politico*, “political thriller.”

**1962 United States:** Release of John Frankenheimer’s *The Manchurian Candidate*, from Richard Condon’s novel, a Cold War psychological thriller about the Communist threat. **Poland:** Roman Polanski’s first noir released, *Nóż w wodzie* (*Knife in the Water*).

**1963 United States:** Further late noirs: Fuller’s *Shock Corridor*, a disturbing tale of a journalist in a mental hospital investigating who committed a murder that has been hushed up; *The Girl Hunters*, an adaptation of a Spillane story, with Spillane himself as Mike Hammer. First broadcast of *The Fugitive* starring David Janssen, a long-running noir television series (through 1967) that is one continuous story. **France:** Melville’s *Le Doulos* (*The Finger Man*) is one of his most powerful and influential noirs; Claude Chabrol’s *L’Œil du matin* (*The Third Lover*), indebted to Hitchcock’s *Vertigo*, is his first noir. **Great Britain:** Release of Michael Winner’s *West 11* starring Eric Portman and Alfred Lynch. **Japan:** Kurosawa’s *Tengoku to jigoku* (*High and Low*), adapted from an Ed McBain “87th Precinct” novel, depicts a stark moral choice faced by a rich businessman after a kidnapping.

**1964 United States:** Release of Hitchcock’s *Marnie* starring Sean Connery and Tippi Hedren; Arthur Penn’s *Mickey One*, starring Warren Beatty, an art-house American noir indebted to the French New Wave; Siegel’s *The Killers*, a radical remake of Siodmak’s film; Fuller’s *The Naked Kiss*, a brutal but compelling noir about a reformed prostitute; Frankenheimer’s *Seven Days in May*, another Cold War political thriller. **Great Britain:** John Moxey’s *Face of a Stranger* is one of the best of over 40 updates of Edgar Wallace thrillers.

**1965 United States:** Release of the two sci-fi/noir hybrids: Dmytryk’s *Mirage* and William Conrad’s *Brainstorm*; release of *Who Killed Teddy Bear?* and *Angel’s Flight*, two late films noir. **Great Britain:** *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* is the first adaptation of John le Carré’s dark spy fiction that focuses on corruption and betrayal. **Spain:** Carlos Saura’s *La caza* (*The Hunt*) revisits Civil War conflicts.

**1966 United States:** Frankenheimer’s *Seconds*, starring Rock Hudson, is the third part of his “paranoia trilogy”; *Harper*, starring Paul Newman, is a late private eye film. **Great Britain:** Release of Polanski’s *Cul-de-sac*.

**1967 United States:** John Boorman's *Point Blank*, starring Lee Marvin as an implacable revenger, is the first neo-noir. Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* conflates 1930s criminals with counter-cultural rebels; Truman Capote's influential novel *In Cold Blood* is filmed, directed by Richard Brooks as a late semidocumentary noir. **Great Britain:** Polanski's *Repulsion*, a compelling psychological drama starring Catherine Deneuve, is released. **Japan:** Seijun Suzuki's *Koroshi no rakuin (Branded to Kill)* is an art-house existential thriller about a paranoid hit man.

**1968 United States:** Release of Mann's political thriller, *A Dandy in Aspic*, Siegel's *Madigan* starring Richard Widmark, and *The Detective* starring Frank Sinatra. **France:** Truffaut's *La Mariée était en noir (The Bride Wore Black)* is adapted from a Woolrich story; Chabrol's *La Femme infidèle (The Unfaithful Wife)* is the first of his "Hélène" cycle. **Great Britain:** *The Strange Affair*, starring Michael York, is the first British film to deal with police corruption.

**1969 France:** Release of Melville's *Le Samouraï* starring Alain Delon as an existential and tragic hit man; Truffaut's *La Sirène du Mississippi (Mississippi Mermaid)* from a Woolrich story; further Chabrol noirs: *Que la bête meure (This Man Must Die aka Killer!)* and *Le Boucher (The Butcher)*; Constantin Costa-Gavras's political thriller, *Z*.

**1970 United States:** Huston's *The Kremlin Letter* is a dark political thriller about corruption and betrayal. **France:** release of Chabrol's *La Rupture (The Break)*, and Melville's *Le Cercle rouge (The Red Circle)* starring Delon. **Great Britain:** *Performance*, portraying the clash of the underworld with the rock music counterculture, is finally released after a delay of two years. **Italy:** Release of two political thrillers: Bernardo Bertolucci's *Il conformista (The Conformist)*, which revisits the fascist period, and Elio Petri's *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto (Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion)*.

**1971 United States:** *Shaft* is the first "blaxploitation" film providing a space for the representation of aspects of the African American experience; Siegel's *Dirty Harry*, starring Clint Eastwood as Detective Harry Callahan, is an influential corrupt cop neo-noir; *The French Connection* also focuses on an unstable cop, "Popeye" Doyle (Gene Hackman); *Klute* is one of the few neo-noirs thus far to have a woman as the main protagonist. **France:** Chabrol's *Juste avant la nuit (Just Before Nightfall)*

completes his “Hélène” cycle. **Great Britain:** Mike Hodges’s *Get Carter* is as brutal and violent as American crime thrillers.

**1972 United States:** Publication of Paul Schrader’s seminal “Notes on *Film Noir*” to accompany a major retrospective of films in Los Angeles that identifies film noir as an important cultural phenomenon. Important releases: *Hickey and Boggs*, focusing on two world-weary private eyes in a rundown Los Angeles; *Across 110th Street*, a powerful African American neo-noir; *Cool Breeze*, a black remake of *The Asphalt Jungle*; and Sam Peckinpah’s *The Getaway*, an outlaw couple film. **France:** *Un flic (Dirty Money)* is the third and final Melville-Delon crime film. **Great Britain:** Sidney Lumet’s *The Offence* stars Sean Connery as a beleaguered policeman on the verge of breakdown; Hitchcock’s *Frenzy* is a brutal serial killer film. **Italy:** Rosi’s *Il caso Mattei (The Mattei Affair)* is a hard-hitting political thriller.

**1973 United States:** Robert Altman’s *The Long Goodbye* is a sustained critique of the Chandler myth of the private eye; *Coffy*, an African American noir with a feisty woman protagonist, played by Pam Grier, is the first of several such films; release of Martin Scorsese’s first noir, *Mean Streets*; Karlson’s *Walking Tall* is his most violent, and successful, noir; Sidney Lumet’s *Serpico* is a new take on police corruption. **Italy:** Release of Rosi’s gangster noir *Lucky Luciano*.

**1974 United States:** Roman Polanski’s *Chinatown*, set in 1930s Los Angeles with Jack Nicholson as a private eye out of his depth in the pervasive civic corruption, is a radical reworking of noir paradigms. Francis Ford Coppola’s superbly crafted *The Conversation*, starring Gene Hackman, and *The Parallax View*, starring Warren Beatty, expose the paranoia rampant in American society; Robert Altman’s *Thieves Like Us* remakes *They Live by Night* (1948), but, although in color and CinemaScope, presents a bleaker delineation of the Depression era. **France:** Claude Chabrol’s *Nada (The Nada Gang)* explores the morality of terrorism. **Japan:** Yoshitaro Nomura’s *Suna no utsuwa (The Castle of Sand)* is a moving and distinctive noir focusing on outcasts and moral responsibility.

**1975 United States:** Release of two powerful neo-noirs starring Hackman—Frankenheimer’s *French Connection II* and Arthur Penn’s *Night Moves*; Robert Aldrich’s *Hustle* stars Burt Reynolds as a disillusioned police lieutenant. **Great Britain:** Dick Richards’s *Farewell, My Lovely*,

starring Robert Mitchum, is one of the first retro-noirs that attempts to recreate the style, mood, and atmosphere of the 1940s. **Italy:** Release of Dario Argento's *Profondo rosso* (*Deep Red*), starring David Hemmings, and Rosi's *Cadaveri eccellenti* (*Illustrious Corpses*). Antonioni's *Professione reporter* (*The Passenger*) starring Jack Nicholson as a disaffected journalist who tries to switch his identity, is an Italian-American coproduction.

**1976 United States:** Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, scripted by Schrader and starring Robert De Niro, updates the noir veteran; *The Killer Inside Me* is the first adaptation of a Jim Thompson novel; *All the President's Men* is another probing political noir.

**1977 United States:** *The Domino Principle* and *Twilight's Last Gleaming* continue the cycle of political noirs; *The Late Show* starring Art Carney is a further demolition of the private eye myth. **Germany:** Wim Wenders's *Der amerikanische Freund* (*The American Friend*), an adaptation of the Highsmith novel, *Ripley's Game*, is the first serious engagement by a German New Wave director with American noir.

**1978 United States:** Release of Walter Hill's *The Driver*, a bleakly existential neo-noir; *Capricorn One* continues the cycle of political thrillers.

**1979 United States:** Publication of Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward's *Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style*, which establishes a canon of noir films. **France:** Release of the bleak *Série Noire*, adapted from Thompson's *A Hell of a Woman* (1954). **Germany:** Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (*The Marriage of Maria Braun*) is the first of a trilogy of neo-noirs that explores recent German history.

**1980 United States:** Release of *Raging Bull*, Scorsese's boxing noir with De Niro as Jake La Motta; and *Atlantic City*, starring Burt Lancaster and directed by Louis Malle. **Great Britain:** Release of John Mackenzie's *The Long Good Friday*, a brutal crime thriller starring Bob Hoskins as an East End gangster.

**1981 United States:** Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat*, a loose remake of *Double Indemnity*, inaugurates a new phase of neo-noir, the shift from radical revisionism to a more modulated development of noir's mood with a recognizable and reproducible style and tone. Bob Rafelson's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, starring Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange, is one of the first neo-noir remakes of a 1940s "classic." **France:** Jean-

Jacques Beineix's *Diva* inaugurates a new phase of French neo-noir as an adjunct of the *cinéma du look*—stylish, sophisticated, and street-smart.

**1982 United States:** Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, an influential blending of sci-fi and noir, depicts a dystopian Los Angeles of 2019. **France:** Bob Swaim's *La Balance (The Nark)*, is another stylish thriller; *Vivement dimanche! (Confidentially Yours)*, an adaptation of Charles Williams's hard-boiled thriller *The Long Saturday Night*, is Truffaut's final film. **Germany:** Wenders's *Hammett* is a highly self-reflexive noir that blends fiction and reality on several levels.

**1983 United States:** Huston's *Prizzi's Honor* is a blackly comic neo-noir starring Jack Nicholson as a stolid hit man. Brian De Palma's *Scarface* is an ultraviolent remake of the 1932 film. **Australia:** *Goodbye Paradise*, indebted to Chandler, blends American and Australian sensibilities. **France:** Beineix's *La Lune dans le caniveau (The Moon in the Gutter)* is an art house French neo-noir based on the Goodis novel.

**1984 United States:** *Blood Simple*, the Coen brothers' first neo-noir, is a "country noir" set in Texas but rooted in hard-boiled fiction (Hammett and Cain). Release of *Against All Odds*, a remake of *Out of the Past*; De Palma's *Obsession*, a loose remake of *Vertigo*; and *Tightrope*, starring Clint Eastwood, a powerful *Doppelgänger* neo-noir. First broadcast of Michael Mann's *Miami Vice* (continues until 1989), whose pace, style, and high production values set new standards for television noir series. **Denmark:** Lars Von Trier's *Forbrydelsens element (The Element of Crime)* is a complex European art house noir.

**1985 France:** Luc Besson's *Subway*, his first noir, is a stylish thriller set in Paris.

**1986 United States:** David Lynch's first noir *Blue Velvet* exposes the corruption beneath small-town America. First broadcast of Mann's television series *Crime Story*, set in Chicago in the 1960s; Abel Ferrara directs the pilot episode. Publication of Frank Miller's graphic novel *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* makes the noir elements in this character explicit. **Hong Kong:** John Woo's *Ying xiong ben se (A Better Tomorrow)* establishes noir as a productive genre.

**1987 United States:** Release of Alan Parker's *Angel Heart*, starring Mickey Rourke and Robert De Niro, a supernatural noir. **Great Britain:** Neil Jordan's *Mona Lisa* is a powerful, hallucinogenic neo-noir. **Hong**



**Kong:** Ringo Lam's *Long hu feng yun (City on Fire)* becomes one of the first noirs to be influential internationally.

**1988 United States:** *The Dead Pool* is another outing for Eastwood's "Dirty" Harry Callahan; Constantin Costa-Gavras's *Betrayed* explores the terrorist threat on American soil.

**1989 United States:** John Dahl's debut neo-noir *Kill Me Again* is visually stylish. **France:** Remake of *Panique* as *Monsieur Hire*. **Hong Kong:** John Woo's *Die xue shuang xi (The Killer)* starring Chow Yun-Fat as a hit man, helps cement Hong Kong cinema's international reputation. **Japan:** *Sono otoko, kyôbô ni tsuki (Violent Cop)*, directed by and starring Takeshi Kitano, is both homage to *Dirty Harry* and the emergence of a distinctive sensibility.

**1990 United States:** Production of films noir increases, becoming more mainstream and commercial, including many erotic thrillers that go straight to cable release. Stephen Frears's *The Grifters* and James Foley's *After Dark, My Sweet* are intelligent adaptations of Thompson novels. Other notable releases: Dennis Hopper's *Hot Spot*, starring Don Johnson; *Internal Affairs*, starring Richard Gere and Andy Garcia; Kathryn Bigelow's *Blue Steel*, starring Jamie Lee Curtis as a woman cop; and Sidney Lumet's *Q & A*, where Nick Nolte plays a particularly loathsome corrupt cop. David Lynch's television series *Twin Peaks*, a surreal noir, becomes cult viewing. **South Korea:** Noir begins to emerge with Kwon-taek Im's *Janggunui adeul (Son of a General)* and its two sequels (1991 and 1992), an expansive and slow-moving gangster saga. **Spain:** Release of Vicente Aranda's celebrated political allegory *Amantes (Lovers)*.

**1991 United States:** Return of African American noir as an important element in American filmmaking, including Bill Duke's *A Rage in Harlem*. **Spain:** *Todo por la pasta (All for the Dough)* and *Beltenebros* help to establish an internationally recognized neo-noir.

**1992 United States:** *Reservoir Dogs* establishes Quentin Tarantino as an important new filmmaker; Peter Verhoeven's *Basic Instinct* makes a star of Sharon Stone, who reconfigures the femme fatale; Carl Franklin's *One False Move* is a powerful African American neo-noir exploring interracial tensions; Ferrara's *Bad Lieutenant*, starring Harvey Keitel, is an extreme exploration of the corrupt cop.

**1993 United States:** Notable releases include: Peter Medak's *Romeo Is Bleeding*, an extreme version of the unreliable, self-deluding narrator;

Tamra Davis's *Guncrazy* reworks the outlaw couple paradigm, through remaking *Gun Crazy* (1950); *Carlito's Way*, starring Pacino as a criminal who attempts to reform; and *Falling Down*, starring Michael Douglas as "D-Fens," an unemployed defense worker who wages a one-man psychotic war against the world. First broadcast of the sci-fi noir television series *The X-Files*, which continues through to 2002. **Italy:** Revival of the *giallo politico*: *Il lungo silenzio* (*The Long Silence*), *La scorta* (*The Escort*), and *Il giudice ragazzino* (*The Young Judge*).

**1994 United States:** Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, with its episodic, non-chronological construction and profusion of allusions to an eclectic range of world cinema, cements his cult reputation; in Dahl's *The Last Seduction*, Linda Fiorentino plays a successful contemporary femme fatale—duplicitous, cruel, but unpunished.

**1995 United States:** Franklin's *Devil in a Blue Dress*, starring Denzel Washington, is a retro-noir that explores the postwar period through African American eyes; *Se7en* is a horror-noir hybrid, one of the most disturbing of the spate of serial killer films; Mann's *Heat* is an epic crime thriller with the first onscreen meeting of Pacino and De Niro; Steven Soderbergh's *Underneath*, starring Peter Gallagher, is an intelligent remake and updating of *Criss Cross*; Scorsese's *Casino* is an epic gangster-noir based on a true story, starring De Niro and Stone. **France:** Release of *La Haine* (*Hate*), representative of a return to social themes; Chabrol's *La Cérémonie* (*Judgement in Stone*) continues his excoriation of the bourgeoisie.

**1996 Denmark:** Nicolas Winding Refn's *Pusher* is the first internationally successful Danish noir with two sequels (in 2004 and 2005).

**1997 United States:** Release of the retro-noir *L.A. Confidential*, an adaptation of the third novel in James Ellroy's celebrated LA quartet, set in the 1950s; Tarantino's *Jackie Brown*, adapted from Elmore Leonard's novel and starring Pam Grier; Lynch's *The Lost Highway*, a surreal noir that remains ultimately mysterious; *This World, Then the Fireworks* also uses a surrealistic, Gothic style to render the strange, distorted, and self-destructive world of Thompson's novels. **Japan:** Kitano directs and stars in *Hana-Bi* (*Fireworks*) as a retired, psychologically damaged policeman. **Norway:** Release of Erik Skjoldbjerg's *Insomnia*, a powerful thriller set in northern Norway. **Spain:** Pedro Almodóvar's *Carne Trémula* (*Live Flesh*), based on a Ruth Rendell novel, employs a complex flashback structure, shifting between the 1970s and the present in order to examine Francoism.

**1998 United States:** Schrader's *Affliction* stars Nick Nolte as a small-town sheriff irreparably damaged by his father's abuse; *Dark City* is a powerfully dystopian sci-fi noir. **Germany:** Release of Tom Tykwer's highly successful *Lola Rennt (Run Lola Run)*. **Great Britain:** Mike Hodges's *Croupier*, scripted by Paul Mayersberg and starring Clive Owen, is a compelling story of greed and corruption.

**1999 United States:** The Wachowski brothers' *The Matrix* is the first in what became a trilogy (2002/2003) of existentialist future noirs starring Keanu Reeves as a warrior cyber-hacker. Polanski's *The Ninth Gate* is a supernatural noir hybrid.

**2000 United States:** Christopher Nolan's *Memento* is a radical take on the amnesiac noir with a reverse chronology. The first episodes of the highly successful and long-running television series *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* are broadcast. **France:** Release of Chabrol's late masterpiece, *Merci pour la chocolat (Nightcap)*. **Great Britain:** *Sexy Beast* stars Ray Winstone as a criminal retired to Spain but drawn back into the London underworld.

**2001 United States:** Lynch's *Mulholland Drive* is driven by the surreal logic of dreams where identities shift and transfer; the Coen Brothers' *The Man Who Wasn't There* is a black-and-white retro noir set in 1949; *Training Day* stars Denzel Washington as a highly decorated but corrupt black cop. *Max Payne*, the first successful noir video game, is released. Beginning of the noir television series *24*, starring Kiefer Sutherland as a Los Angeles counterterrorist agent.

**2002 United States:** Nolan's *Insomnia*, starring Al Pacino, is a remake of the 1997 Norwegian film; Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report*, starring Tom Cruise, is an intelligent future-noir; *The Bourne Identity* is the first of a trilogy of films in which Matt Damon plays an amnesiac Central Intelligence Agency assassin. **Argentina:** Release of the highly successful *Nueve reinas (Nine Queens)*, directed by Fabián Bielinsky. **Brazil:** *Cidade de Deus (City of God)*, based on a true story set in the *favela* (slums) of Rio de Janeiro, is nominated for four Academy Awards. **Hong Kong:** *Wu jian dao (Infernal Affairs)* depicted the blurred boundaries between police and criminal. **Italy:** Liliana Cavani's *Il gioco di Ripley (Ripley's Game)*—an Anglo-Italian co-production—is another Highsmith adaptation.

**2003 United States:** Clint Eastwood's *Mystic River* is a powerful study of three damaged men set in Boston; release of the video game sequel *Max Payne 2: The Fall of Max Payne*. **Great Britain:** Mike Hodges's *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* is a bleakly existential noir starring Clive Owen. **South Korea:** *Oldboy*, the second part of Chan-wook Park's violent "revenge" trilogy, wins the Grand Prix award at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival and becomes South Korea's best-known noir.

**2004 United States:** Release of Mann's *Collateral* with Cruise as a hit man, the latest in a line of self-destructive antiheroes; remake of *The Manchurian Candidate* starring Denzel Washington as a troubled Desert Storm war veteran. **Italy:** Release of Paolo Sorrentino's stylish *Le conseguenze dell'amore* (*The Consequences of Love*).

**2005 United States:** Robert Rodriguez's *Sin City*, an adaptation of Frank Miller's graphic stories, attempts to be faithful to the look and style of the original as the primary text; Nolan's *Batman Begins*, also based on Miller's stories, depicts an existential Batman (Christian Bale) in a nightmare Gotham City; David Cronenberg's *A History of Violence* is a very different adaptation of a graphic novel. The highly rated *Brick* is a hard-boiled thriller set in a California high school. **Argentina:** Bielinsky's *El aura* (*The Aura*), in which a down-at-the-heel taxidermist gets involved in a robbery that goes wrong, is another internationally successful neo-noir. **France:** Jacques Audiard's *De battre mon coeur s'est arrêté* (*The Beat My Heart Skipped*) reworks the 1978 American neo-noir *Fingers*; Michael Haneke's *Caché* (*Hidden*), taps into contemporary anxieties about surveillance, celebrity, and the price of affluence.

**2006 United States:** Release of Scorsese's *The Departed*, a remake of *Infernal Affairs* but transferred to Boston; Mann's *Miami Vice* movie, based on his earlier television series; and De Palma's retro-noir *The Black Dahlia*. **Finland:** Release of *Laitakaupungin valot* (*Lights in the Dusk*), the third film in Aki Kaurismäki's loose trilogy of noirs.

**2007 United States:** The Coen Brothers' *No Country for Old Men*, a classic noir tale of greed, corruption, and betrayal, wins several Oscars; Ridley Scott's *American Gangster* stars Denzel Washington as Frank Lucas, the Harlem drug kingpin who smuggled heroin into the United States on U.S. service planes returning from the Vietnam War.

**2008 United States:** The new releases are dominated by noirs derived from graphic novels: Nolan's *The Dark Knight*, a further installment of the Batman franchise, and Frank Miller's *The Spirit*, based on Will Eisner's stories (1940–52), in which another near-invulnerable masked hero confronts a gloomy noir world; *Max Payne* is based on the successful video games.

**2009 United States:** Release of Tony Gilroy's *Duplicity* about corporate corruption and greed, starring Julia Roberts and Clive Owen; Kevin Macdonald's *State of Play* (with a screenplay by Gilroy) stars Russell Crowe as an investigative reporter on the trail of a corporate cover-up; Johnny Depp plays John Dillinger in Michael Mann's period gangster-noir *Public Enemies*. **Great Britain:** The television/film trilogy *Red Riding*, based on David Peace's novels, is a bleak and compelling drama of corruption and betrayal.

# Introduction

## What Is Film Noir?

Most people recognize the term *film noir*, but what does it mean? Which films are included in this category, and which are excluded?

A few films often spring to mind—*Double Indemnity*, *The Big Sleep*, *The Third Man*—but how many others are there, and what are the boundaries? Does a film noir have to be in black and white? Must it have been produced in the 1940s or 1950s? Defining film noir has always been problematic because it is a retrospective category, not applied to the films when they were being made, and it seems to refer to films whose characteristics are not as obvious or clear cut as comedies or Westerns, or even crime thrillers, with which film noir is sometimes conflated.

These problems have persisted not only because commentators cannot agree on what constitutes the corpus of films noir—each new study and website has its own filmography—but also because film noir has itself developed and mutated over time. There is now another body of films, neo-noirs, which constitutes a second disputed and ill-defined group. When did neo-noir begin? What is the relationship between film noir and neo-noir? Is *Blade Runner*, with its strange blending of the past and the future, a neo-noir? If so, is this a category that has any usefulness or explanatory power?

A further complication has arisen because film noir was often defined and written about as if it was a filmmaking practice exclusively confined to the United States. Recent studies, albeit working with the same ill-defined terms, have demonstrated that this was simply not the case, that other cinemas—in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and also in Australasia—have developed comparable bodies of films, at least in terms of style and subject matter if not in quantity. These “other” film noirs developed at slightly different times in somewhat different ways and have their own national variations and

specificities. However, sufficient shared characteristics for film noir are now understood as a transnational phenomenon.

This introduction will attempt to explore briefly these issues and, if not to settle the disputes, at least to explain why they have arisen and for what reasons, beginning with the problem of the term itself. Film noir—literally “black cinema”—is the label customarily given to a group of black-and-white American films, mostly crime thrillers, made between 1940 and 1959. The term was first used in France by the film critic Nino Frank in his review of four crime thrillers—*The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), and *Laura* (1944)—released in Paris in August 1946. Frank was struck, particularly because of the five-year absence of Hollywood films during the German Occupation, by what he perceived as a new mode of crime film with a dark, brooding visual style, complex narration with voice-overs and flashbacks, and a marked interest in the characters’ “uncertain psychology.”<sup>1</sup> He used the term *film noir* to describe this new development through its analogy with *Série Noire*, the name given in autumn 1945 by publisher Gaston Gallimard to a series of French translations of American hard-boiled fiction from which these films had been adapted. The term was taken up and developed by critics and future filmmakers (including Claude Chabrol and François Truffaut) writing for the film journals *Cahiers du cinéma* and *Positif* in the 1950s to identify what was perceived as an important aspect of American popular cinema. This interest culminated in the first book-length study published in 1955 by Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton, *Panorama du film noir américain (1941–1953)*, which memorably characterized film noir as “oneiric, strange, erotic, ambivalent, and cruel.”<sup>2</sup>

By contrast, film noir was not a term that was understood or acknowledged in Anglo-American film criticism until the late 1960s and was not widely known before the appearance of Paul Schrader’s 1972 essay “Notes on *Film Noir*,” originally issued to accompany a major retrospective at the Los Angeles Museum.<sup>3</sup> Building on the French critics, Schrader provided a definition, chronology, and list of important films, identifying film noir as an important period of American film history. He argued that film noir spoke to a new generation of Americans disillusioned by Vietnam and should become part of the vocabulary and thinking of young American filmmakers in order to critique the corruption and inequalities of American society. Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward’s *Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style*, first published in 1979, gave detailed commentaries on over 250 films noir, thereby establishing an influential

canon of films, along with tabulations of studio output, significant creative personnel, and a yearly breakdown of releases that extended until 1959.<sup>4</sup>

Subsequent editions of Silver and Ward were enlarged to include discussion of “neo-noir”: films noir produced after the ending of the “classic” period (1940–59). The 1980s witnessed the inscription of film noir in popular consciousness, becoming a widely used and accepted category in habitual use by filmmakers, critics, reviewers, and the film industry itself as a marketing label. It is therefore now impossible—in any meaningful sense—to discuss film noir as a solely time-bound phenomenon, a period of American filmmaking that finished with *Odds Against Tomorrow* in 1959. Neo-noir has become an object of study in its own right, and most recent commentators discuss both film noir and neo-noir.

However, this habitual use of the term should not be taken to imply a uniform consensus about what film noir actually is, and there is considerable dispute about what are the shared features that mark a noir film, and therefore which films should be included in this category. These problems are partly caused because film noir is a retrospective label that was not used (in the 1940s or 1950s) by the film industry itself as a production category and therefore its existence and features cannot be established through reference to trade documents. Because filmmakers at this time were unaware of the term and working, largely separately, for various studios, they did not form a cultural or intellectual movement, even a loose or informal one. Indeed, some commentators have questioned the validity of the category altogether, regarding film noir as a particular development within the broader generic history of the crime/gangster film. However, although the majority of noirs are crime thrillers, most critics, from Borde and Chaumeton onward, see film noir operating transgenerically, across a diverse group of films that span—in addition to crime thrillers and gangster films—Gothic melodramas, horror, science fiction, semidocumentaries, social-problem films, spy thrillers, and Westerns.

Lacking a generic framework, critics have frequently defined film noir in terms of a particular look or visual style that habitually employs high-contrast (chiaroscuro) lighting, where deep, enveloping shadows are fractured by shafts of light from a single source, and where asymmetrical or off-center compositions, unconventional camera angles and movements, and distorting wide-angle lenses render an alienating and threatening sense of space. However, these stylistic conventions are clearly used in other types of film, and many films that are frequently referred to as films noir do not exhibit these features. Similar problems occur if noir is defined



through its particular, and unusually complex, narrative devices including voice-overs, multiple narrators, flashbacks, and ellipses that break with the Hollywood convention of straightforward causality and lead to ambiguous or inconclusive endings. Such devices characterize many noirs but are by no means the majority. Most noirs take place in dark, nighttime cities, their streets damp with rain that reflects the flashing neon signs where the alienated, often psychologically disturbed, male antihero encounters a deceitful femme fatale leading to his doom. However, there are too many exceptions to make these features conclusive criteria. Some commentators have sought to unify film noir through its prevailing mood or tone—its characteristically dark, malign, morally ambivalent, and unstable universe, where existence is understood to be meaningless and absurd. This description fits some examples (the darkest) but also fails to encompass the full range of films noir, many of which have upbeat endings in which the forces of law and order or romantic love are triumphant. Overall, attempting to define film noir as a set of “essential” formal components—stylistic, narratological, or thematic—tends to be reductive or even misleading.

These considerations led James Naremore in *More Than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts* to classify film noir not as a body of films with “definitive traits” but as an evolving discursive construction, an imprecise but necessary critical category whose use has become an indispensable part of cultural history, one that helps to make sense of diverse but important phenomena that encompass not only fiction and film but also other media such as radio, television, graphic novels, and video games.<sup>5</sup> Naremore suggests that film noir designates both a body of American films from a particular period (“classic noir,” 1940–59) and a determining discourse that constantly redefines the meaning of those films through its use in academic criticism and within the media.

## THE ORIGINS OF FILM NOIR

Like any cultural phenomenon, film noir evolved gradually from a variety of different influences. The most obvious and fundamental was indigenous hard-boiled fiction. The works of influential writers such as Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, and Cornell Woolrich provided the source for many films noir. Nearly 20 percent of noir crime thrillers produced between 1941 and 1948 were direct adaptations of hard-boiled novels or short stories, and far more were imitations or reworkings; Hol-

lywood studios hired several hard-boiled authors as screenwriters with varying degrees of success. The hard-boiled authors decisively shifted the locale of crime from the country house drawing rooms of the “English school” onto the “mean streets” of the fast-growing American city, providing film noir with its characteristic image of the city as a dark, corrupt, threatening, and confusing labyrinth, populated by criminals, tough private eyes, and duplicitous femme fatales. The new style—a terse, understated vernacular idiom peppered with laconic wisecracks—provided noir with its distinctive dialogue. The influence of hard-boiled writing was delayed because films were subject to close censorship, which prose fiction escaped. It was John Huston’s prescient *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), adapted from Hammett’s novel, that first reproduced the cynical, corrosive tone and attitude of the hard-boiled tradition.

The other American vernacular tradition that directly influenced film noir was the gangster film, also concerned with money, crime, and violence and set in the modern American city. Although the dominant 1930s cycle beginning with *Little Caesar* and *The Public Enemy*, both released in 1931, was preoccupied with the rise and fall of the dynamic self-made criminal, many others, including Josef von Sternberg’s *Underworld* (1927) or Rouben Mamoulian’s *City Streets* (1931), adapted from a Hammett story, depicted a shadowy criminal milieu and explored themes of alienation, paranoia, betrayal, and revenge that directly presaged film noir. Like hard-boiled fiction, the gangster film constituted a dissident tradition in which the desires and frustrations of lower class or ethnically marginalized Americans could find a voice during the Depression. This oppositional aesthetic informs film noir.

There were equally important European influences on film noir, notably expressionism, whose origins went back to late-18th-century Gothic novels such as Ann Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. In Germany, expressionist films—including the most famous and influential, Robert Wiene’s *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1919)—formed part of an international artistic movement that attempted to express the alienation and “irrationality” of modern life through the presentation of protagonists who are tormented or unbalanced. The narratively complex expressionist films created an overall *stimmung* (mood) and distinct visual style by using high-contrast, chiaroscuro lighting where shafts of intense light contrast starkly with deep, black shadows and where space is fractured into an assortment of unstable lines and surfaces, often fragmented or twisted into odd angles. In addition, the Weimar

*Strassenfilm* (street film), a cycle of movies beginning with Karl Grune's *Die Strasse* (*The Street*, 1923), also presented a dark and unstable world, as the respectable middle-class protagonist descends into the irresistible but dangerous nighttime city, a proto-noir milieu of deep shadows, flashing lights, criminals, and femme fatales. Fritz Lang's *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931) emerged from this cycle as the first urban crime thriller, depicting the city as a dark labyrinth in which the pedophile Hans Beckert (Peter Lorre) is a tortured outsider caught between the rival forces of police and organized crime. Lorre was one of many émigrés who fled from Nazi Germany to Hollywood that included Lang and fellow directors Otto Preminger, Robert Siodmak, Edgar G. Ulmer, and Billy Wilder together with cinematographers John Alton, Karl Freund, and Rudolph Maté, and various set designers, scriptwriters, and composers. Carrying with them knowledge and understanding of expressionist cinema, these émigré personnel decisively influenced the development of film noir.

Of almost equal importance, though less well-known, was the influence of poetic realism (*Réalisme Poétique*), a cycle of dark films that flourished in France during the 1930s. Poetic realism drew on an indigenous tradition of crime fiction, chiefly Georges Simenon, but also adapted from hard-boiled American crime writers: Pierre Chenal's *Le Dernier Tournant* (*The Last Turn*, 1939) was the first version of Cain's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. Poetic realism was indebted to expressionism, but the lighting was less extreme and more atmospheric, its depiction of an urban milieu more realistic and specific. In the two most celebrated examples, Marcel Carné's *Le Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*, 1938) and *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939), Jean Gabin starred as the romantic but doomed hero, his character prefiguring the angst-ridden males of film noir. Because poetic realism was not only successful in France but also widely admired internationally, including in America, and because several Austro-German émigrés worked in Paris before going on to Hollywood, it acted as bridge, culturally and historically, between expressionism and film noir.

The influence of expressionism was evident in the cycle of horror films produced by Universal Studios in the early 1930s. Several, including Robert Florey's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1932), were overtly expressionist, displaying strong echoes of *Caligari* in the twisted streets, oddly contorted houses that lean over the glistening cobblestones, and gloomy shadows, all of which directly anticipate film noir. Various émigrés worked on these horror films, including Ulmer, who directed *The Black*

*Cat* (1934). Universal's second horror cycle, beginning in 1939, was less aesthetically distinguished, but both cycles were a major influence on the studio's early experimentation with film noir, beginning with Hitchcock's *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) and Siodmak's *Phantom Lady* (1944) that, in turn, influenced the development of the whole noir cycle.

The other studio most associated with the inception of film noir was RKO, mainly through the work of Val Lewton and Orson Welles. The Russian-born Lewton started at RKO in 1942, running his own second-feature unit to produce horror films that would compete with Universal's. However, Lewton's horror films, including *Leopard Man* adapted from Woolrich's *Black Alibi* and *The Seventh Victim*, both released in 1943, were highly distinctive, featuring ordinary men and women in atmospherically lit, mostly contemporary settings and emphasizing psychological disturbance. Lewton's films acted as a training ground for cinematographer Nicholas Musuraca, already known as a specialist in "mood lighting," and for directors Mark Robson, Jacques Tourneur, and Robert Wise, all of whom went on to make distinguished films noir.

Orson Welles's innovative *Citizen Kane* (1941) was a major influence on film noir. Its expressionist set design, Gregg Toland's deep focus photography, atmospheric lighting, and its creative use of wide-angle lenses and low-angle compositions, its use of mirrors, superimpositions, and distorted perspectives as well as its subjective narration and multiple flashbacks all prefigured noir techniques. Bernard Herrmann's unconventional score, which used unorthodox combinations of instruments, was the first of many he would contribute to film noir. As the most celebrated example of American expressionism, *Citizen Kane* acted as another bridge between European modernism and film noir.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILM NOIR AND NEO-NOIR

The coming together of these various influences led to film noir, usually dated from the appearance of Russian émigré Boris Ingster's *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), in which Lorre played the mysterious outsider. An RKO second feature marketed as a horror film, *Stranger* had a highly expressionist dream sequence with clear echoes of *Caligari*. *Stranger* began noir's early "experimental" period (1940–43), with a wide variety of styles and modes including hard-boiled adaptations—*The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and *Street of Chance* (1942) from a Woolrich story—and numerous

Gothic melodramas including Alfred Hitchcock's *Rebecca* and *Among the Living*, photographed by émigré cameraman Theodor Sparkuhl. As wartime restrictions on costs began to take a bite, almost all the major studios encouraged the development of modestly budgeted crime thrillers whose restricted sets could be disguised by "atmospheric" lighting and the use of unusual camera angles. One influential example, Paramount's *This Gun for Hire* (1942) based on Graham Greene's thriller, featured a new type of antihero, a psychologically disturbed hit man (Alan Ladd). Early noirs also included several spy thrillers, notably Welles's *Journey into Fear* (1943), adapted from one of Eric Ambler's existentialist novels.

The release of *Double Indemnity*, *Laura*, and *Murder, My Sweet* in 1944 inaugurated the second phase of noir's development, a major burst of energy and sustained production that stretched through to 1952. In contrast to the earlier phase in which most films noir were second features, the majority were now intermediate productions that fell somewhere between first and second features. They commanded reasonable budgets but had far less market hype on their launch than a full "A" production. Visually, this period may be divided between a studio-bound "expressionist" period, 1944–1947, which focused on individual pathologies, and a "location" period, 1947–1952, dominated by semidocumentaries and social-problem films. The latter showed the influence of Italian neo-realism, the most important European cinematic movement to have emerged during the war, which emphasized the importance of taking the camera out onto the streets and depicting the lives of ordinary people. Thematically, films noir during this phase were preoccupied with the transition from war to peace, depicting numerous troubled veterans experiencing the traumatic difficulties of readjustment to civilian life after the profound disruption of active service. Politically, film noir displayed both left- and right-wing orientations, but the development of a left-leaning critique of American capitalism was truncated by the anti-Communist campaign led by Republican senator Joseph McCarthy, conducted through the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). This led, in October 1947, to the imprisonment of the "Hollywood Ten" (which included three important noir personnel: director Edward Dmytryk, writer-producer Adrian Scott, and scriptwriter Albert Maltz) and the implementation of a blacklist of unemployable artists that numbered over 200 and went unchallenged until 1960. The blacklist had a profound effect on film noir, ending or inhibiting many careers or pushing some (Jules Dassin, Cy Endfield, and Joseph Losey) into exile.

After 1952, film noir went into a longer period of fragmentation, which ended in 1959. The expressionism of the earlier periods had disappeared, and this period was dominated by more brutal and violent crime films preoccupied with the threat of underworld “corporations” taking over American life, as in the cycle of city exposé films—beginning with *The Captive City* (1952)—that depicted the supposedly ubiquitous threat of organized crime syndicates. These thrillers were mainly second features, conventionally lit and shot, made either by small companies or the more cost-conscious majors: Columbia, RKO, Universal, and United Artists acting as a distribution agency. There were significant exceptions: Robert Aldrich’s terrifying *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), with its threat of nuclear destruction; Welles’s *Touch of Evil* (1958), a baroque expressionist masterpiece; and Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* (1958), a rare color noir that was a probing study of guilt and obsession.

Although *Odds Against Tomorrow*, released in 1959, is the conventional watershed that marks the end of film noir’s “classic” phase, the date is an arbitrary and convenient fiction. As the chronology shows, films noir were produced, sporadically, throughout the 1960s. *The 3rd Voice* (1960), *Angel’s Flight* (1965), and *In Cold Blood* (1967) are unmistakably noir, as is the work of Samuel Fuller: *Underworld U.S.A.* (1961), *Shock Corridor* (1963), and *The Naked Kiss* (1964). These films formed part of an “underground” culture, including roman noir authors Patricia Highsmith, Chester Himes, Jim Thompson, and Charles Willeford, who retained noir as a critical mode even if their authors were isolated figures, lacking a cultural climate that could make their work influential. The major energies of noir screen production went into the making of television series, including *Johnny Staccato* (1959–60), *Peter Gunn* (1959–61), and *The Fugitive* (1963–67), which drew heavily on the existentialist sensibility of hard-boiled writer David Goodis.

Although, as discussed earlier, these films are often lumped under the general label of neo-noir, films noir released in this period (1960–67) may best be termed “late noirs”—ones that could have been made before 1959—in order to differentiate them from neo-noirs that may be dated from the release of *Point Blank* in 1967. Neo-noirs are ones that self-consciously allude to classic noir, either implicitly or explicitly, building on what is now recognized and accepted as a distinct body of films. In *Point Blank*, director John Boorman, drawing on the French New Wave, explicitly and self-consciously revised the noir tradition in a contemporary idiom, adapting Donald E. Westlake’s hard-boiled novel as the basis for

a brutal revenge drama shot in 40 mm color Panavision that uses repetitions, doublings, and elliptical editing to create a story that hesitates between dream and reality in order to explore the ambiguities of desire, memory, and identity. Boorman's film was the beginning of what may be termed the neo-modernist phase of film noir (1967–80) that formed part of the "Hollywood Renaissance," in which a new generation of filmmakers, profoundly influenced by recent developments in European cinema, attempted to transform American cinema. Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* (1973), an acerbic updating of Chandler; Roman Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974); Arthur Penn's *Night Moves* (1975); and Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976) all engaged in a critique not only of American society but also of noir myths such as the honorable, resourceful private eye. The characteristic protagonist of the neo-modernist noirs is alienated and dysfunctional, adrift in a world where he has lost his bearings. In a separate development, the work of black hard-boiled author Chester Himes finally reached the screen in *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1968) and *Cotton Comes to Harlem* (1970). *Shaft* (1971) launched a cycle of "blaxploitation" films that also used the noir crime thriller to open up a space in which the black experience, suppressed in the overwhelmingly white orientation of classical noir, could find an expressive voice and explore the deep-seated racism in American society.

The release of Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat* in 1981 marked a new phase of neo-noir in which noir conventions were embraced rather than critiqued. Kasdan's film, a loose remake of *Double Indemnity*, evoked the mood and atmosphere of classical noir through its use of chiaroscuro lighting, a jazz score, and the archetypal story of the victim-hero seduced by a femme fatale, who, unlike her predecessors, is successful. *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, released in the same year, was the first of a fairly constant line of remakes of noir classics. Released a year later, Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* was a highly influential "future noir," a complex melding of the conventions of science fiction and film noir, and was the forerunner of the hybridization that is so characteristic of many neo-noirs.

Gradually, neo-noir has established itself as an important contemporary genre within a restabilized, expanding Hollywood cinema. Neo-noirs are now a staple of cinema exhibition, cable television programming, and video/DVD rental. Their production is no longer characterized, as it was in the neo-modernist period, by sporadic releases, but by a continuous stream of new films. The noir "look" has become part of a knowing postmodern culture, with modern cineliterate audiences attuned to the multiple allu-

sions of neo-noirs such as Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* (1994) or Curtis Hanson's *L.A. Confidential* (1997), an example of a "retro-noir" set during the classic period. Christopher Nolan's *Memento* (2000), with its reverse chronology and amnesiac self-deluding narrator, is an example of the extreme use of narratological devices that characterizes many neo-noirs. Many neo-noirs are also stylistically extreme, using hypermobile camerawork, rapid zooms, shock cuts, and ultrafast montage sequences to create an intense, disruptive, often overwhelming sensory experience that makes them very different from classic noir. A more recent development is the frequent adaptation of graphic novels. *Sin City* (2005) exemplifies this trend, with director Robert Rodriguez striving for a strict fidelity to the particular noir look of Frank Miller's original comic book creations.

Three other developments characterize the postmodern phase of film noir. The first is an extension of the focus on the city to embrace "country noir" set amidst the wide-open spaces of redneck America. Country noirs, such as the Coen Brothers' *Blood Simple* (1984), Peter Medak's *Romeo Is Bleeding* (1993), or John Dahl's *Red Rock West* (1996), are antipastoral, the countryside a site of corruption, betrayal, and murderous hatreds. The panoramic shots, often startlingly beautiful, serve only as an ironic backdrop to the sordid dramas that unfold. The second was a renewed and more wide-ranging development of African American noir that revealed the complexity and heterogeneity of the black experience, beginning with Bill Duke's *A Rage in Harlem* (1991) and *Deep Cover* (1992) and including Carl Franklin's *One False Move* (1992) and *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995) and Spike Lee's *Clockers* (1995). Kathryn Bigelow's *Blue Steel* (1990) and Tamra Davis's *Guncrazy* (1992), a radical remake of the famous Joseph H. Lewis noir *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950), exemplify the third development as important feminist interventions into the overwhelmingly masculine world of film noir.

## GLOBAL NOIR

One of the most striking aspects of recent work on film noir has been its recognition as an international category—applied to European, Asian, and Latin American cinemas—rather than a solely American phenomenon. This recognition has been slow in arriving because earlier studies argued emphatically that film noir was a strictly American form. In their 1955 *Panorama*, Borde and Chaumeton described noir as a specifically



American series that was “inimitable” and dismissed the possibility of a French equivalent.<sup>6</sup> Schrader argued that film noir was essentially the inevitable development of the American gangster film that had been delayed by the war, and Silver and Ward declared emphatically that noir was “an indigenous American form . . . a unique example of a wholly American film style.”<sup>7</sup>

Subsequently, sporadic essays challenged this entrenched view, and gradually cycles of noir have been identified in a range of other cinemas. Critics have located significant film noirs (and neo-noirs) in Europe, especially in France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Spain,<sup>8</sup> but also in Denmark, Finland, and Norway. These European film noirs were often fugitive forms, usually reviled by critics and reviewers and made only sporadically with little continuity of production. Each has different chronologies and displays distinctive national characteristics that reflect a particular nation’s history, its political organization, its cultural traditions, the state of its film industry, and the strength of its cinematic culture, leading to marked variations in visual style, characterization, and in the representation of gender. Above all, although they often developed initially in the 1930s, each was profoundly affected by American noir in a complex, two-way dialogue displaying a reciprocal appropriation and reappropriation at a number of different levels, including remakes and coproductions. Christopher Nolan’s *Insomnia* (2002), for instance, is a remake of a Norwegian film released in 1997.

Similar developments can be located in Latin America—in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico—and here too these noirs display particular national characteristics, different trajectories, and intermittent cycles of production.<sup>9</sup> The case with Asian noir is somewhat different. Although the film industry in Japan was well established and film noir developed immediately after World War II, cinema in Hong Kong and in South Korea is a more recent development. Hong Kong noir did not achieve international recognition until the mid-1980s through the work of John Woo; recognition of South Korean noir came a decade later. However, there is again a mutual and reciprocal relationship between these noirs and American neo-noir: John Woo made *Face/Off* for Paramount in 1997; Siu Fai Mak’s *Wu jian dao* (*Infernal Affairs*) was remade in 2002 as *The Departed* by Martin Scorsese; and there are plans to remake the 2003 South Korean film *Oldboy*. Australia has produced a significant body of films noir, drawing extensively on American noir; but, as in the case of the Chandleresque *Goodbye Paradise*

(1983), they have produced a rich mixture of noir themes and indigenous “exactitude” to mount a scathing critique of Australian society.

Although film noir, as discussion of its origins has shown, was international from its inception, the breadth of noir’s global reach suggests that it is best regarded as a transnational phenomenon, one that operates (commercially and conceptually) as part of various specific national cinemas and of a wider cultural formation.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FILM NOIR

The global extent of film noir and its pervasive presence in a range of interpenetrating media has made it an important part of the restlessly circulating fabric of images that form contemporary postmodern culture. Films noir straddle the entire range of contemporary filmmaking, from ultra low-budget independent productions such as Christopher Nolan’s *Following* (1998) through to his *The Dark Knight* (2008), whose budget has been estimated at \$185,000,000.<sup>10</sup> However, noir’s significance rests not so much on its extent as on its continued capacity to startle and provoke audiences, to deal with difficult issues including psychological trauma, dysfunctional relationships, existential dread, the lure of money, and the power and indifference of huge corporations and governments.

From the start, the French espousal of film noir expressed a delight not only in the discovery of popular cinema elevated to art but also as a popular art that was oppositional, exploring the dark underside of the American dream. Because that dream forms the core mythology of global capitalism, film noir, handled intelligently, is not merely a commodified style, but an important and continuously evolving cultural phenomenon that, even if it cannot be defined precisely, remains a crucial vehicle through which that mythology can be critiqued and challenged.

## NOTES

1. Nino Frank, “Un Nouveau Genre ‘Policier’: l’Aventure Criminelle,” *L’Ecran Français* (28 August 1946). Translated as “A New Kind of Police Drama: The Criminal Adventure,” by Alain Silver in *Film Noir Reader 2*, edited by Alain Silver and James Ursini. New York: Limelight, 1999, p. 16.

2. Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton, *Panorama du film noir américain (1941–1953)* (1955), translated by Paul Hammond as *A Panorama of American Film Noir 1941–1953*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2002, p. 2.

3. Paul Schrader, “Notes on *Film Noir*,” *Film Comment* 8, no. 1; reprinted in *Film Noir Reader*, edited by Alain Silver and James Ursini. New York: Limelight, 1996, pp. 53–63.

4. Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward (eds.), *Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style*. Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1979.

5. James Naremore, *More Than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts*, 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008 (1998).

6. Borde and Chaumeton, *Panorama*, p. 1.

7. Schrader, “Notes on *Film Noir*,” pp. 58–59; Silver and Ward, *Film Noir*, p. 1.

8. See Andrew Spicer (ed.), *European Film Noir*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.

9. For a useful overview see David Desser, “Global Noir: Genre Film in the Age of Transnationalism,” in *Film Genre Reader III*, edited by Barry Keith Grant. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003, pp. 516–36.

10. Figure given by Internet Movie Database, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0468569/business> (accessed 19 July 2009).

## The Dictionary

– A –

**AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM NOIR.** Reflecting the racist limitations of Hollywood cinema as a whole, film noir's black characters were marginal figures: servants, menials, or jazz musicians in hothouse dives. The African American experience was only very occasionally broached, as in *No Way Out* (1950), in which Sidney Poitier, in his film debut, plays a young, idealistic intern at a metropolitan hospital whose encounter with a bigoted, racist crook (**Richard Widmark**) is seen as part of a wider black-white confrontation. *No Way Out* is the only film noir in which a black man is the hero, but *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959) foregrounds racial tensions in its story of a bungled robbery in which a sympathetic black criminal (Harry Belafonte) is eventually united in death with his racist white partner (**Robert Ryan**).

A form of "black noir" cinema emerged in two adaptations of African American **hard-boiled** author Chester Himes's novels, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1968) and *Cotton Comes to Harlem* (1970). They were followed by the "blaxploitation" films of the early 1970s consequent upon the huge success of *Shaft* (1971). Richard Roundtree's eponymous hero, a resourceful and intelligent private eye, embodied in the wake of civil rights activism the desire to represent black males as charismatic and cool masters of the city streets. Other films in this cycle included: *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (1971), *Across 110th Street* (1972), *Cool Breeze* (1972), *Hit Man* (1972), *Super Fly* (1972), *Detroit 9000* (1973), and *Friday Foster* (1975). They were complemented by a series of black noirs in which Pam Grier starred as an action heroine: *Coffy* (1973), *Foxy Brown* (1974), and *Sheba, Baby* (1975). The films noir in this cycle celebrated the vibrancy of African American culture through their prominent use of black popular music.

A second wave of African American filmmaking began in the late 1980s, forming part of a wider project to reveal the complexity and heterogeneity of the black experience, exploring what has been labeled “black rage” directed against the inequalities and racism of American society. As a group, African American noirs have not only mapped out a new terrain but also often offered hope for redemption and reconciliation conspicuously lacking in “white noir.” Bill Duke’s *A Rage in Harlem* (1991), adapted from a Himes novel set in the 1950s, was imbued with black rage but also depicts reconciliation between violent and nonviolent blacks. Carl Franklin’s *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995), set in the immediate postwar period, explored those themes, while his earlier *One False Move* (1992) portrayed the complexities of interracial relationships through the figure of Fantasia (Cynda Williams) returning to her roots in Star City, Arkansas, and confronting the white sheriff (Bill Paxton) whose son she bore. Several films deliberately reverse central noir paradigms. *Dead Presidents* (1995)—produced and directed by Allen and Albert Hughes—was the story of a **troubled** (black Vietnam) **veteran** who cannot readjust to civilian life. Charles Burnett’s *The Glass Shield* (1995) inverted the police procedural by centering on an idealistic young black cop assigned to a corrupt division, a motif also tackled in Mario Van Peebles’s *Gang in Blue* (1996). Duke’s *Deep Cover* (1992) used the device of the undercover agent to probe racist attitudes. Laurence Fishburne is compelling as the divided noir protagonist, whose assignment to infiltrate a black drugs cartel by posing as a dealer brings out all contradictions of his situation. Duke’s *Hoodlum* (1997) revised the **gangster** genre by focusing on the struggle for control of the Harlem numbers racket in the 1930s between Bumpy Johnson (Fishburne) and Dutch Schultz (Tim Roth).

There is now a greater crossover between African American and “white” noir, although an emphasis on racism is retained, as in John Singleton’s remake of *Shaft* (2000), starring Samuel L. Jackson, in which its hero pursues a racially motivated killer. Spike Lee, whose earlier *Clockers* (1995) focused on a low-level drug dealer (or “clocker”) attempting to escape the clutches of a drug boss, directed the **cap/er/heist** neo-noir *Inside Man* (2006) as a deliberate updating of the gritty New York thrillers of the 1970s directed by white filmmakers, including **Sidney Lumet**’s *Serpico* (1973) and *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975). Lee introduces into the action several vignettes that display the continuing casual racism of the police department in

its handling of suspects and in its assumptions about black criminality. *American Gangster* (2007), directed by Ridley Scott, depicted the career of Frank Lucas (**Denzel Washington**), a real-life Harlem crime lord who smuggled heroin into the United States on U.S. service planes returning from the Vietnam War.

Other African American noirs include: *Fatal Beauty* (1987), *Boyz n the Hood* (1991), *New Jack City* (1991), *Straight out of Brooklyn* (1991), *Juice* (1992), *Menace II Society* (1993), *Set It Off* (1996), *Ambushed* (1998), and *Out of Time* (2003). See also NEO-NOIR.

**ALDRICH, ROBERT (1918–1983).** Director Robert Aldrich entered the film industry in 1941, taking a variety of roles before becoming assistant director on a number of films that included several noirs—*The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), *Body and Soul* (1947), *Force of Evil* (1948), and two with **Joseph Losey**, *The Prowler* (1951) and *M* (1951)—all of which had a strong social and political agenda. Aldrich was part of **Enterprise Productions**, briefly a haven for talented and often radical left-wing artists, before directing two episodes of the noir television series *China Smith* in 1953 starring **Dan Duryea** as a down-at-heel gumshoe, Mike Callahan, plying his trade in Singapore. This led to his first film noir as director, *World for Ransom* (1954), a spin-off from that series. Not working on material he had chosen, Aldrich nevertheless encouraged cinematographer **Joseph Biroc** to shoot from “impossible” angles to forge the restless, dynamic style that was to become Aldrich’s hallmark. This visual style was extended in *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), which radically reworked its **Mickey Spillane** source novel.

Aldrich also made a significant contribution to **neo-noir**, where his social and political agenda could be made more explicit. In *The Grisom Gang* (1971), Aldrich again made far-reaching changes to his source, James Hadley Chase’s infamous 1939 novel *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*, which had been made into a **British film noir** in 1948. His adaptation concentrated on the social context, the midwestern rural poor during the Depression engaged in a desperate struggle for existence, together with the consequent moral ambivalence and emotional underdevelopment of the central protagonists. *Hustle* (1975), with a contemporary setting, focused on a conflicted protagonist, police lieutenant Phil Gaines (Burt Reynolds), confused about his life and his relationship with the enigmatic high-class prostitute (Catherine Deneuve) and repelled by the venality of **Los Angeles** where everyone is on the

hustle. Against studio pressure, Aldrich held out for the bleak ending in which Gaines is shot in a futile attempt to prevent a liquor store burglary. *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), one of a group of paranoid thrillers that were noir **hybrids**, had a similarly disaffected and self-destructive protagonist, Lawrence Dell (**Burt Lancaster**), a high-ranking **troubled veteran**, who escapes from a military prison and takes over a missile silo in Montana in order to force the president to reveal the truth about the Vietnam War. It had an equally desolate ending, expressive of Aldrich's consistent use of film noir to pose uncomfortable questions about American society.

Aldrich's other films noir are *The Big Knife* (1955), *Autumn Leaves* (1956), *The Garment Jungle* (1957), where he was replaced as director by Vincent Sherman, and *The Choirboys* (1977). See also LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**ALTON, JOHN (1901–1996).** The Hungarian-born John Alton was the most prolific—19 films in the space of nine years (1947–56)—and the most influential of the great noir cinematographers. His polemical “manual,” *Painting with Light* (1949), revealed a conscious craftsman thoroughly versed in the techniques of “mystery lighting” that could “heighten the atmosphere” and move films decisively away from the “chocolate-coated photography of yesterday.” Alton noted the striking effects of “passing automobile headlights on the ceiling of a dark interior” and “fluctuating neon or other electrical signs,” as well as the play of light on “shiny, wet surfaces.” Fiercely independent, opinionated, and highly innovative, Alton had to carve out a career in second features but was able to forge a creative partnership with **Anthony Mann**, with whom he made five films noir in the space of two years: *T-Men* (1947), *Raw Deal* (1948), *He Walked by Night* (1949), *Border Incident* (1949), and *Reign of Terror* (1949).

Working on a restricted budget, Alton displayed a visceral and inventive visual style that was a major element in his films' emotional and dramatic impact. Alton's cinematography is powerful, occasionally baroque, with much recourse to unusual angles and high-contrast chiaroscuro lighting with rich, deep blacks. His deep focus, unusual compositions, and odd reflections added range and depth to what were essentially **semidocumentary** noirs—*T-Men*, *He Walked by Night*, and *Border Incident*—but was at its most graphic in *Reign of Terror*, an extraordinary Cold War allegory set during the French Revolution in

which virtually every frame is unconventionally composed. The odd angles and intense shafts of light that cut through the perpetual murk that invades each setting create an intensely dramatic and highly disorientating film.

Its success led to Alton's "promotion" to higher-budgeted first features at MGM under the aegis of producer **Dore Schary**, which included *Mystery Street* (1950) and *The People Against O'Hara* (1951) as well as *Border Incident*. **The Big Combo** (1955) was Alton's most accomplished later noir, using chiaroscuro cinematography to create a claustrophobic, dark, and oppressive world filled with repressed emotions and overt violence. Alton also photographed one color noir, *Slightly Scarlet* (1956), in which he continued to use extensive areas of dark shadow as well as garish pinks, greens, and oranges in a typically bold visual repertoire.

Alton's other films noir are *Bury Me Dead* (1947), *The Pretender* (1947), *The Amazing Mr. X* (aka *The Spiritualist*, 1948), *Canon City* (1948), *Hollow Triumph* (1948), *The Crooked Way* (1949), *I, the Jury* (1953), *Count the Hours* (1953), and *Witness to Murder* (1954). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**AMBLER, ERIC (1909–1998)**. Eric Ambler's dark, paranoid spy novels were an important influence on the early development of film noir. Like his fellow Englishman **Graham Greene**, Ambler helped to redefine the thriller, focusing on ordinary men who find themselves enmeshed in the shadowy world of international intrigue where nothing is what it seems and they lose their moral bearings. *Journey into Fear* (1943) was the first of his novels to be adapted, by **Orson Welles** and **Joseph Cotten**, who were also the main stars. It was a dark, oppressive tale of Nazi intrigue in which an anonymous **hit man** tries to kill Howard Graham (Cotten), a naval engineer with important information. *Background to Danger* (1943), adapted by **W. R. Burnett** from Ambler's 1937 novel, was a more orthodox spy thriller, but *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944), adapted (by Frank Gruber) from Ambler's 1939 novel, was thoroughly noir. At its center is the figure of Dimitrios himself (**Zachary Scott**), an international criminal of polyglot nationality who, like Harry Lime in Greene's *The Third Man* (1949), fakes his own death.

Ambler wrote an original screenplay for and also produced the **British noir** *The October Man* (1947), the story of an **amnesiac** protagonist Jim Ackland (John Mills), an ordinary Everyman, who becomes



convinced that he has murdered a fashion model (Kay Walsh) staying at the same boarding house. This disturbing noir, indebted to **poetic realism**, is infused with a strong sense of existential dread; Jim's confession to his girlfriend Jenny (Joan Greenwood) that there is "something in my mind, a sort of fear, as if it's dangerous to stay alive," encapsulates the Ambler universe.

**AMNESIAC FILMS NOIR.** Amnesiac films distill the central noir elements of fear, paranoia, guilt about the past, and a sense of foreboding. They intensify the instabilities of identity, loss of control and vulnerability, and the sense of alienation in a strange and hostile world that characterize films noir as a whole. Amnesiac noirs are often intertwined with **troubled veteran** noirs, as in **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Spellbound* (1945), *Crack-Up* (1946), *High Wall* (1947), and *The Clay Pigeon* (1949). In *Somewhere in the Night* (1946), directed and coscripted by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, **John Hodiak** plays an ex-marine who has lost his memory in a grenade blast and struggles to understand what has happened to him and who he is. His fear is that the man who has survived war and won a Purple Heart will turn out to be a venal crook, perhaps a murderer; he dreams of a second chance with a "blank score card." *The Crooked Way* (1949) starring **John Payne** explored similar themes. In *High Wall* (1947), ex-army pilot Steven Kenet (**Robert Taylor**), who has a blood clot pressing on his brain resulting in violent headaches and amnesia, is manipulated into assuming responsibility for his wife's death.

Amnesia is also a key plot device in the adaptations of **Cornell Woolrich**—*Street of Chance* (1942), *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), *Fall Guy* (1947), *Fear in the Night* (1947) and its remake *Nightmare* (1956)—in which it heightens the paranoia of the central protagonist, an ordinary man who comes to believe he is capable of murder. In *Black Angel* (1946), also from a Woolrich novel, Martin Blair (**Dan Duryea**), an alcoholic nightclub pianist, commits a murder and then blanks it from his mind, eventually regaining his memory in time to save the man accused of the crime. *The Scarf* (1951), written and directed by E. A. Dupont, stars **John Ireland**, who escapes from a hospital for the criminally insane where he has been held for the supposed strangulation of a young girl, of which he has no recollection. *The Scarf* is notable for its highly wrought **expressionist** style that provides a visual correlative for the protagonist's fears.

Other amnesiac noirs include: *Crossroads* (1942), *Power of the Whistler* (1945), *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), *Man in the Dark* (1953), *The Long Wait* (1954), *Blackout* (GB 1954, U.S. title *Murder by Proxy*), and *Memento* (2000). See also TROUBLED VETERANS.

**ANDREWS, DANA (1909–1992).** Dana Andrews came to prominence as the enigmatic, obsessive Detective Lieutenant Mark McPherson in **Otto Preminger's** *Laura* (1944). Andrews was the ideal Preminger actor because his minimalist style, subtle underplaying, and bland good looks could project a fascinating ambiguity, a suggestion of powerful depths and a deep confusion at the core of his identity. He was equally effective in two further films for Preminger: *Fallen Angel* (1946), where he played a gold digger masquerading as a bogus medium who is being framed for a murder he did not commit, and as a conflicted rogue cop in *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950). Andrews's suggestion of a darkness lurking within the average American male was also exploited by another émigré director, **Fritz Lang**, in two late noirs, *While the City Sleeps* (1956) and *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (1956). In the former, Andrews plays a television reporter who shows disturbing similarities to the serial killer stalking New York; in the latter, having agreed to pose as a murderer, he eventually reveals to his wife (Joan Fontaine) by accident that he was indeed the killer. These films are the culmination of Andrews's "postheroic" persona beneath whose apparent solidity lurk repressed criminal desires.

Andrews's other noirs are *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1943), *Boomerang!* (1947), *Edge of Doom* (1950), and *Brainstorm* (1965).

**ARGENTINIAN FILM NOIR.** There was a significant early development of film noir in Argentina during the unsettled period of the 1940s and 1950s that was directly influenced by American noir and **hard-boiled fiction**. Three were adapted from **Cornell Woolrich** stories: *El pendiente* (*The Earring*, 1951), *No abras nunca esa puerta* (*Don't Ever Open That Door*, 1952), and *Si muero antes de despertar* (*If I Should Die before I Wake*, 1952). All have the paranoid atmosphere typical of Woolrich with an emphasis on distorted psychologies and the blurring of dream and reality. *Pasaporte a Río* (*Passport to Rio*, 1948), and *Rosaura a las diez* (*Rosaura at Ten O'Clock*, 1958), written and directed by Mario Soffici, were also psychological melodramas. In the latter, which uses distorting wide-angle lenses and multiple voice-over

narration, Camilo (Soffici), a timid restorer of paintings, sends himself love letters from “Rosaura,” an imaginary woman he invents in order to make himself more attractive to the landlady’s daughter. After she materializes, he becomes ensnared by his own invention and accused of her murder. *El asalto* (*The Assault*, 1960), about a group of delinquents planning a bank robbery, and *Alias Gardelito* (1961), about the difficulty of living honestly in the face of unrelenting poverty, were more socially orientated films noir. *A hierro muere* (*Kill and Be Killed*, 1962), directed by Manuel Mur Oti, was clearly influenced by *Double Indemnity* (1944) in its portrayal of two amoral lovers intent on poisoning the man’s lonely aunt and living abroad on the proceeds.

**Neo-noir** was slow to establish itself in a volatile, heavily censored film industry. But in the 1980s several films dealing with political and social corruption had noir elements: *Tiempo de revancha* (*Time for Revenge*, 1981), *Plata dulce* (*Sweet Money*, 1982), *Los enemigos* (*The Enemies*, 1983), and Fernando Ayala’s *El arreglo* (*The Deal*, 1983). A more commercial, internationally orientated cinema developed during the 1990s with several notable noir crime thrillers, including *Asesinato a distancia* (*Murdered at a Distance*, 1998) and Fabián Bielinsky’s highly successful *Nueve reinas* (*Nine Queens*, 2000), the story of two con men who meet by chance and decide to cooperate in a scam, with a delightful series of reversals at its conclusion. Bielinsky also directed *El aura* (*The Aura*, 2005), in which a down-at-the-heel taxidermist gets involved in a robbery that goes wrong. Both *La fuga* (*The Escape*, 2001) and *La señal* (*The Signal*, 2007) were ambitious gangster thrillers told in flashback, with multiple interconnecting stories involving numerous betrayals and double-crosses.

**THE ASPHALT JUNGLE (1950).** Highly successful at the box office, **John Huston’s** *The Asphalt Jungle* established the intricate **cap/er/heist**, with its assembly of a variegated, complementary team undermined by the inevitable double-cross, as a standard noir plot device. **John Huston** coscripted the film (with Ben Maddow) from **W. R. Burnett’s** 1949 novel, and although the adaptation stays faithful to the original, the key change was to abandon its narration by a police lieutenant in favor of a more inward and intimate focus on the criminal group. As in all of Huston’s films, the characterization is rounded and carefully developed, allowing an audience to sympathize with (if not condone) the criminals who have complex lives, hopes, and aspirations as well as greed. The

jewelry heist is masterminded by Doc Riedenschneider (Sam Jaffe), undone by his fatal penchant for lubricious young women. He is loyally assisted by petty criminal Dix Handley (**Sterling Hayden**), seemingly indifferent to the down-market night club hostess (Jean Hagen), who is hopelessly in love with this taciturn, undemonstrative strongman. Even the oleaginous lawyer Alonzo Emmerich (Louis Calhern), who offers to fence the jewels but plans a double-cross, is depicted with compassion. Estranged from his ailing wife, squandering his resources on his mistress (Marilyn Monroe), and facing bankruptcy, Emmerich shares the desperation of all the group for the big job that will secure their future.

Huston's extensive location work in an anonymous midwestern city lends a strong sense of realism and authenticity to the story. Photographer Harold Rosson's shadowy lighting and low-angle shots create claustrophobic interiors, whose oppressiveness is heightened by **Miklós Rózsa**'s ominous score. In the memorable final sequence, the wounded Dix drives desperately toward the beloved farm in Kentucky where he was raised, only to collapse and die amid this idyllic pastoral scene, uncorrupted by the degradation of the noir city.

*The Asphalt Jungle* was remade as a western, *Badlanders* (1958), starring **Alan Ladd**; as a **British noir**, *Cairo* (1963), directed by Wolf Rilla; and as a "blaxploitation" thriller, *Cool Breeze* (1972).

**AUSTRALIAN FILM NOIR.** Australian cinema experienced a strong, government-funded revival from the 1970s onward and developed a number of genres, including crime thrillers. Many of these show the clear influence of American film noir and **neo-noir**, including *Color Me Dead* (1969), a remake of *D.O.A.*, and *Money Movers* (1979), a typical **caper/heist** film. The better films use their American models to explore indigenous themes and issues, as in *Goodbye Paradise* (1983), which transposes Raymond Chandler's decadent **Los Angeles** to the Australian Gold Coast. It depicts a disgraced policeman, played by Ray Barrett, who, asked to locate the daughter of a prominent politician, uncovers a right-wing secessionist coup and becomes embroiled in a typically noir world of false appearances, corruption, and betrayal. *The Empty Beach* (1985) was adapted from the fourth of Peter Corris's series of hard-boiled novels about a tough and cynical Sydney private eye played by Bryan Brown. *The Big Hurt* (1986) and the complex and accomplished *Grievous Bodily Harm* (1988) depicted a society that is corrupt and venal, but where redemption is possible on a personal level.

Other Australian noirs were more overtly political, including *Far East* (1982) and *The Year of Living Dangerously* (1982), set in postcolonial Indonesia, and *The Killing of Angel Street* (1981) and *Heatwave* (1982), both based on the death of an investigative reporter engaged in exposing civic corruption. Later examples include the much-admired *Lantana* (2001), starring Anthony LaPaglia and Geoffrey Rush, in which the investigation of a suspected murder occasions a complex psychological character study; *Risk* (2000), in which Bryan Brown plays a corrupt insurance investigator involved in an intricate swindle that unravels; and *Solo* (2006), which took a fresh look at the standard trope of the **hit man** (Colin Friels) who wants to get out of the business but who cannot leave until he does one last job.

– B –

**BACALL, LAUREN (1924–)**. Tall, sultry, and sexy, Betty Perske, aged only 19 and renamed Lauren Bacall, starred opposite **Humphrey Bogart** in *To Have and Have Not* (1944), which launched her career and their love affair (they married in 1945). They were teamed together in three Warner Bros. films noir: *The Big Sleep* (1946), *The Dark Passage* (1947), and *Key Largo* (1948), in each of which she plays a character similar to her debut role—cool, laconic, and independent. Bacall and Bogart became the most popular screen pairing, eclipsing **Alan Ladd** and **Veronica Lake**, with audiences enjoying what one reviewer called their “leisurely mating duels” where the exchange of witty wisecracks is indicative of tenderness and genuine affection. Unlike the femme fatale, Bacall’s characters, though sexually assured, are not duplicitous, and she proves to be a resourceful and supportive companion for the hero.

After *Key Largo*, Bacall did not appear in any further noirs until her cameo appearance in *Harper* (1966), in which she reprised her role in *The Big Sleep* as a wealthy woman who hires a private eye (Paul Newman) to find her missing husband. In *The Fan* (1981), she played an actress stalked by a psychotic admirer, and she appeared briefly in **Paul Schrader’s** *The Walker* (2007).

**BASEHART, RICHARD (1914–1984)**. Having been a success on Broadway, Richard Basehart made his film debut in 1947 and starred in **Anthony Mann’s** *He Walked by Night* in 1948, a **semidocu-**

**mentary** film noir, as a psychopathic loner who seems, outwardly, perfectly normal. It was the sense of something calculating under the conventional good looks that allowed Basehart to play a range of rather different roles. Memorable as the repulsive Robespierre in Mann's *Reign of Terror* (1948), "a fanatic with a powdered wig and a twisted mind," Basehart was equally effective in *Tension* (1949) as the archetypal little man and hen-pecked suburbanite who is nevertheless capable of assuming a new identity and contemplating murder. He played a troubled young man about to jump from the 15th floor of a hotel in New York in **Henry Hathaway's** *Fourteen Hours* (1951) but played an *homme fatal* in the **Gothic** noir *The House on Telegraph Hill* (1951), cold, calculating, and ruthless. In his two **British films noir**, Basehart was more sympathetic, playing a decent ex-soldier in the excellent *The Good Die Young* (1954) and a victim-hero in *The Intimate Stranger* (U.S. title *Finger of Guilt*, 1956).

Basehart's other films noir are *Outside the Wall* (1950) and *Portrait in Black* (1960).

**BASIC INSTINCT (1992).** Paul Verhoeven's *Basic Instinct*, which made a star of **Sharon Stone** as the modern femme fatale Catherine Tramell, was one of the most successful, widely discussed, and influential **neo-noirs** of the early 1990s. Catherine embodies both male fantasies—blonde, beautiful, wealthy, and erotically uninhibited—and also fears—bisexual (does she prefer women?), insatiable, highly intelligent, and probably homicidal. She is strongly suspected of the violent murder of a retired rock star with which the film begins. Like Phyllis Dietrichson in *Double Indemnity* (1944), Catherine is witty and provocative, and, in the permissive 1990s, can talk directly about sex in front of her police interrogators and flash her crotch provocatively. She dominates the unstable detective Nick Curran (**Michael Douglas**), whom she seduces and controls, making him the subject of her new novel. With the killer apparently apprehended, Nick lies beside her musing about their future together. In the final scene the camera closes in on the ice pick under their bed, the killer's preferred weapon, indicating that he is the next victim.

*Basic Instinct* was a controversial film. Verhoeven's graphically explicit style for the frequent scenes of sex or horrific violence deliberately pushed at what was permissible in mainstream cinema. It also generated protests from gay and lesbian groups who objected to the association

of bisexuality with psychotic violence. But Catherine was a potentially attractive figure for female viewers—a strong character with wit and style, enjoying sex and money but not punished for her appetites. A sequel, *Basic Instinct 2*, set in London and directed by the Englishman Michael Caton-Jones, was released in 2006, but it was poorly received and unsuccessful. *See also* WOMEN.

**BENDIX, WILLIAM (1906–1964).** Burly, broken-nosed, and with a strong Brooklyn accent, William Bendix was physically the archetypal heavy, but this accomplished actor lent his characters a depth of interest that made them memorable. In his first film noir, *The Glass Key* (1942), he played Jeff, one of the thugs who surround the racketeer Nick Varna (Joseph Calleia), and who shows a sadistic relish in beating up Ed Beaumont (**Alan Ladd**), calling him “sweetheart” and “baby” to emphasize the homoerotic charge in their rivalry. He played supporting roles to Ladd in two other films, *The Blue Dahlia* (1946) and *Calcutta* (1947), in which he was a more sympathetic character. In the former he played “Buzz” Wancheck, an **amnesiac/troubled veteran** accused of murdering the wife of Johnny Morrison (Ladd) while suffering from a blackout caused by his war wound. In *The Dark Corner* (1946) he played another thug, the anonymous “White Suit,” menacing yet also intelligent. His subsequent roles were more routine: a police lieutenant in *Race Street* (1948) and *The Web* (1947); an army officer in Don Siegel’s *The Big Steal* (1949); an underworld boss in *Gambling House* (1951); and detectives in *Detective Story* (1951) and *Macao* (1952). After this Bendix appeared mainly on television, but he costarred in the **British film noir** *The Rough and the Smooth* (U.S. title *Portrait of a Sinner*, 1959), directed by **Robert Siodmak**. Bendix plays a sympathetic, almost wistful role as the older man in love with the heartless femme fatale (Nadja Tiller), who shoots himself when she deserts him, giving his character a pathos and emotional range that belied his appearance.

**BENNETT, JOAN (1910–1990).** Joan Bennett, born into a New Jersey acting family and who first appeared in films at the age of six, became one of the most important film noir females, principally for her roles as the seductive femme fatale in *The Woman in the Window* (1944) and *Scarlet Street* (1945). Both were directed by **Fritz Lang**, with whom, along with her third husband, the producer **Walter Wanger**, she had formed Diana Productions in 1945. In *The Woman in the Window*, she

appears to be the archetypal seductress, materializing apparently out of nowhere, the incarnation of the painting that Professor Wanley (**Edward G. Robinson**) has been gazing at in the window. But after Wanley has killed her boyfriend in a brief struggle, she helps him dispose of the body and seems genuinely concerned about his welfare. By contrast, in *Scarlet Street*, Bennett incarnates a duplicitous vamp as the slovenly prostitute Kitty, “Lazy Legs,” who manipulates her middle-aged dupe (Robinson again) into funding her luxurious lifestyle. Without remorse, she humiliates him at every turn, precipitating her violent death and his own destruction.

In her third film with Lang, *The Secret beyond the Door* (1948), a **Gothic** noir, Bennett played a more unusual figure, an accomplished older woman (who narrates the film) who has fallen in love with an enigmatic and brooding man (Michael Redgrave) but who becomes trapped in his mansion. Bennett shows her range as an actress by skillfully conveying her longing—Mark is, as she admits, her “first love”—as well as fear and confusion at what he might do. Her role in Jean Renoir’s only American noir, *The Woman on the Beach* (1947), was more conventional, the wife of a blind artist (Charles Bickford), who has an affair with a **troubled veteran** (**Robert Ryan**) in what was a beautifully photographed but indeterminate noir. In Max Ophüls’s *The Reckless Moment* (1949), Bennett played a more satisfyingly complex role as Lucia Harper, an upper-middle-class mother whose quiet existence is overturned as she attempts to protect her daughter, who has accidentally killed the man with whom she has been having an affair. Lucia is attracted to the blackmailer (**James Mason**) who falls in love with her, but she knows she must keep the family together. Bennett, one of the most versatile and accomplished of noir actresses, also starred in *Hollow Triumph* (1948) and *Highway Dragnet* (1954). See also WOMEN.

**BERNHARDT, CURTIS (1899–1981).** Having directed some crime and mystery films including *Der Mann, der den Mord beging* (*The Man Who Committed the Murder*, 1931), the Jewish Curtis Bernhardt fled Germany to France in 1933. He left for America in 1939 after making the highly successful *Carrefour* (1938), an **amnesiac** noir that was remade as *Dead Man’s Shoes* (1940) in Great Britain and as *Crossroads* (1942) by MGM. Bernhardt made three highly melodramatic noirs for Warner Bros., beginning with the atmospheric *Conflict* (1945), from a



story by **Robert Siodmak**, in which Richard Mason (**Humphrey Bogart**), trapped in a failing marriage, murders his wife after having fallen in love with her younger sister. *A Stolen Life* (1946), itself a remake of a 1939 British film, was a love triangle in which Bette Davis plays twin sisters in love with the same man (**Glenn Ford**). Bernhardt, who always collaborated closely with his screenwriter and cinematographers, had a stronger story in *Possessed* (1946), in which he explored the psychological state of an unbalanced and obsessive woman (**Joan Crawford**). *High Wall* (1947), also characterized by Bernhardt's innovative handling of composition and lighting, was another story of a disturbed psyche, an amnesiac **troubled veteran** (**Robert Taylor**). Bernhardt was reunited with Bette Davis in *Payment on Demand* (1951), which he also cowrote with Bruce Manning. It chronicles a marriage undermined by the ruthless social ambitions of Joyce Ramsey (Davis) that drive her husband, David (**Barry Sullivan**), away.

**BEZZERIDES, A. I. (1908–2007)**. A Californian of Greek descent, Albert Isaac “Buzz” Bezzerides was a **hard-boiled** novelist turned screenwriter. A member of the left-wing Writers Guild, Bezzerides never joined the Communist Party but was nevertheless temporarily placed on the **blacklist** that hindered his career. His novels *The Long Haul* (1938) and *Thieves' Market* (1949) were both distinctive, based on firsthand knowledge about independent truck drivers, their tough lives and their exploitation by wholesalers. The first was adapted (by Richard Macaulay and Jerry Wald) as *They Drive by Night* (1940), directed by Raoul Walsh and starring **George Raft** and **Humphrey Bogart**, a typical Warner Bros. action film that was a noir **precursor**. Bezzerides's own adaptation of *Thieves' Market* as *Thieves' Highway* (1949), directed by **Jules Dassin**, had stronger noir elements in its depiction of the **troubled veteran** (**Richard Conte**) determined to avenge his father's crippling by the racketeer Figlia (**Lee J. Cobb**) who dominates San Francisco's wholesale fruit market. Bezzerides wrote the screenplay, adapting Gerald Butler's novel *Mad with Much Heart*, for *On Dangerous Ground* (1952), but he was very disappointed when producer John Houseman and director **Nicholas Ray** replaced his downbeat ending in favor of what Bezzerides felt was a sentimentalized coupling of policeman and blind woman. He worked more harmoniously with **Robert Aldrich** on *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), the director encouraging him to rework comprehensively **Mickey Spillane**'s novel. Although French critics and the

New Wave directors admired its modernity, terrifying savagery, and satire of the private eye, all of which anticipated **neo-noir** themes, *Kiss Me Deadly* also retained Bezzerides's lifelong commitment to a left-liberal critique of American values. He also wrote the screenplays for two other films noir: *Desert Fury* (1947) and *A Bullet for Joey* (1955).

**THE BIG COMBO (1955).** Although not much appreciated on its initial release, *The Big Combo* now has a deserved reputation as one of the most important 1950s noirs. It was an ambitious film made by Allied Artists trying to establish itself as an “A” feature studio, and it used established stars, photography by **John Alton**, music by **David Raksin**, and direction by **Joseph H. Lewis**. *The Big Combo*'s sadism, sexual corruption, violence, and self-reflexive use of conventions mark it as late in the cycle, and it shares the paranoid concern of many 1950s noirs, notably the **city exposé** films that depict the fear that shadowy criminal organizations are taking over America. Although **Philip Yordan**'s script operates within this broad framework—the Combination runs the “largest pool of illegal money in the world”—it is more centrally concerned with the moral and psychological duel between two opposed men: Mr. Brown (**Richard Conte**), the head of the Combination, and police lieutenant Leonard Diamond (**Cornel Wilde**). Brown is amoral, predatory, and charismatic; Diamond, honorable but tormented and brooding. Diamond's desire for Brown's mistress, the beautiful socialite Susan Lowell (Jean Wallace), becomes a fatal obsession, and his pursuit of Brown is motivated more by sexual jealousy than justice and leads to the death of his loving girlfriend Rita (Helene Stanton), gunned down by Brown's homosexual hoods, Fante and Mingo. Susan is an enigmatic character, neither femme fatale nor victim but weak and confused, confessing that she lives in a “strange, blind, and backward maze,” summing up the film's general mood. Alton's customary deep black shadows and harsh pools of light, Lewis's use of odd angles and claustrophobic framing devices, and Raksin's melancholic jazz score create a downbeat mood, which the death of Brown and Susan's rescue do not fully alleviate. The most memorable scene is the chilling torture and death of Joe McClure (**Brian Donlevy**), the man Brown replaced and whom he delights in humiliating.

**THE BIG HEAT (1953).** A second-tier Columbia release with a modest budget and tight shooting schedule whose box-office grosses were

average, *The Big Heat* is now recognized as a key film noir. Adapted by **Sydney Boehm** from **William P. McGivern**'s story and directed by **Fritz Lang**, *The Big Heat* was typical of 1950s noirs in its depiction of a "frightened city" in the grip of crime lord Mike Lagana (Alexander Scourby), the new type of organized, outwardly respectable criminal. He is the head of a syndicate and is aided by his sadistic henchman Vince Stone (Lee Marvin). Charles B. Lang's fluid and highly mobile cinematography effectively animates what was an almost entirely studio-bound production that focuses on a complex presentation of the lone avenger, Detective-Sergeant Dave Bannion (**Glenn Ford**), whom Lang saw as "the eternal man trying to find justice." Bannion, investigating the sudden suicide of a police officer, is told by his superiors to cease his enquiries, but when he persists, his wife Katie (Jocelyn Brando) is blown up by a car bomb meant for him. He is dismissed from the force when he accuses the commissioner of collusion. From this point, Bannion transforms into a fearless scourge, taking on a corrupt police force and a vicious criminal organization single-handedly. But in the process he loses his humanity, becoming as violent and brutal as the **gangsters** he opposes, his actions causing the death of four women. Bannion's behavior recalls the **expressionist** Golem, beyond rational control or appeal and yet driven by an implacable logic. Only with the moving death of Stone's sympathetic mistress Debby (**Gloria Grahame**) can Bannion regain contact with his tender emotions, including the memories of his loving wife. Bannion is reinstated into the police force and justice prevails, but the ending is a muted triumph. *See also* MEN.

**THE BIG SLEEP (1946).** *The Big Sleep*, producer-director Howard Hawks's only film noir, is visually atypical, his economical direction displaying none of noir's characteristic visual conventions, though the low-lit finale at the gangster's Laurel Canyon bungalow has a suitably atmospheric foggy pall. Although he sticks closely to **Raymond Chandler**'s novel, retaining much of Chandler's witty dialogue, Hawks is far less interested in clarifying the twists and turns of Chandler's notoriously convoluted and impenetrable plot—there is no voice-over to guide audiences—than in characterization and relationships. Indeed, a scene in which Marlowe is interrogated by the district attorney, which added crucial plot information, was cut in postproduction. Hawks was under instruction from Warner Bros. to emphasize the pairing of **Humphrey**

**Bogart** and **Lauren Bacall** that had been so successful in *To Have and Have Not* (1944). Bogart's shrewd and wary Marlowe, armed with an arsenal of cool one-liners, is matched by Bacall's independent and sexually assured heiress Vivian Rutledge, who, while not duplicitous, hides some facts in order to protect her blackmailed sister Carmen (Martha Vickers). Hawks, risking **copyright**, does not compromise Chandler's subject matter, depicting a decadent and depraved world that encompasses murder, blackmail, gambling, pornography, nymphomania, drug-taking, and (albeit heavily veiled) homosexuality.

*The Big Sleep* was originally shown to American servicemen in August 1945 but was held up by Warner Bros. for a year while the studio released its more time-bound films. It is now recognized as a seminal noir, one of the most effective renditions of Chandler's noir world and containing a definitive performance from Bogart as the wary **private eye** attempting to navigate its darkness.

**BIROC, JOSEPH (1903–1996).** A seasoned and versatile professional, Biroc emerged in the 1950s as a cinematographer of moderately budgeted films noir. Unencumbered by a commitment to the earlier **expressionist**, studio-bound style, Biroc was adept at creating the flatter, quasi-documentary realism that characterized 1950s noir, as in *The Killer That Stalked New York* (1951), the story of a smallpox carrier. However, he could be overtly expressionist, as in *Nightmare* (1956), the remake of the 1947 *Fear in the Night* adapted from a **Cornell Woolrich** short story. Biroc photographed four films for **Robert Aldrich**: *World for Ransom* (1954), *The Garment Jungle* (1957), and two **neo-noirs**: *The Grissom Gang* (1971) and *Hustle* (1975). In the latter, Biroc used high-contrast lighting and shot through dingy frosted glass to suggest how even the bright California sunlight cannot dispel the shadows created by the pervasive pornography and sexual exploitation. Biroc's cinematography for *Kitten with a Whip* (1964), a late noir, was highly imaginative, as in the striking opening shots where Jody (Ann-Margret) is escaping from reform school, a blonde figure backlit in her white nightdress fleeing across a nighttime landscape. Biroc photographed the underrated *The Detective* (1968) with his customary expertise, and his final noir was *Hammett* (1982), Wim Wenders's self-reflexive recreation of the world of the 1940s gumshoe that blurred the distinction between creator and creation.

Biroc's other noirs are *Johnny Allegro* (1949), *Cry Danger* (1951), *Without Warning* (1952), *Loan Shark* (1952), *Vice Squad* (1953), and *The Organization* (1971).

**BLACKLIST.** The Hollywood blacklist, which operated from 1947–62, had a profound impact on the American film industry as a whole, but particularly on film noir, as noir tended to attract left-wing writers and directors seeking to use its conventions to critique American society. The blacklist came about as the result of intense pressure from right-wing groups to a supposed Communist threat. This anti-Communist campaign came to be referred to as “McCarthyism” after the Republican senator Joseph McCarthy, who tirelessly rooted out the “enemy within,” subversive elements supposedly undermining the fabric of American society and values. The actual instrument was the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) formed in 1938, but now given a vigorous new lease on life with the Republican resurgence after the war.

In May 1947 a HUAC subcommittee descended on Hollywood for preliminary hearings into alleged “Communist infiltration of the motion picture industry.” In October, the committee conducted public hearings in Washington to which various film personnel were summoned. “Friendly” witnesses were those who dutifully complained of Communist infiltration in the film industry, but 11 “unfriendly” witnesses refused to cooperate. One, Bertolt Brecht, fled back to Europe, but the remainder, who became known collectively as the “Hollywood Ten”—including **Edward Dmytryk, Albert Maltz, Adrian Scott,** and Dalton Trumbo, all of whom made several noirs—were imprisoned for contempt of Congress.

The day after the citations for contempt were approved, 25 November 1947, a meeting of studio executives and members of the industry's regulating body, the Motion Pictures Producers Association, issued what became known as the Waldorf Statement, in which they agreed to fire the Ten and deny employment to anyone refusing to cooperate with HUAC's investigations. It effectively instituted a blacklist of unemployable artists, though this was always officially denied. Also “unofficial” but almost equally damaging was the “graylist,” composed of those who had not been named in the HUAC hearings but who appeared in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's list of persons suspected of harboring left-wing views. Often suspects did not know they had been listed. After a second more protracted and virulent round of investigations, which hap-

pened intermittently during 1951–54, over 200 suspected Communists had been blacklisted, including Leonard Bernstein, John Berry, **Lee J. Cobb**, **Howard Da Silva**, **Jules Dassin**, **Howard Duff**, Hans Eisler, **Cy Endfield**, **John Garfield**, **Dashiell Hammett**, **Sterling Hayden**, **John Ireland**, Sam Jaffe, Elia Kazan, Howard Koch, **Joseph Losey**, Burgess Meredith, Clifford Odets, **Abraham Polonsky**, **Edward G. Robinson**, **Robert Rossen**, **Paul Stewart**, Bernard Vorhaus, Hannah Weinstein, and **Orson Welles**. In 1952 the Screen Writers Guild, formerly a quite radical group, capitulated, authorizing the studios to omit from the screen names of any who had failed to clear themselves.

Some of those blacklisted, mainly writers, continued to work under pseudonyms or used the names of others as “fronts,” but many, including Scott who never produced another film, could not find work in either the film or television industries. The blacklist went unchallenged until 1960 when Trumbo was re-employed, but Dmytryk reappeared before the committee in 1951 and, because he had named 24 former Communists, was reinstated. The existence of the blacklist promoted a conservative ideology throughout the industry, effectively ending the **left-wing cycle** of noirs.

**BLADE RUNNER (1982).** Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*, a noir **hybrid** that melded noir and sci-fi to create future noir, has been an exceptionally influential film visually and thematically. It was loosely adapted, by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples, from Philip K. Dick’s 1968 novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* In the mesmerizing opening shot, a nightmare **Los Angeles** of 2019 is depicted as a vast industrial sprawl belching out huge fireballs of gaseous waste, while at street level a crowded, polyglot community jostles for space in perpetual darkness beneath the unending acid rain. *Blade Runner*’s dystopian future **city** is a heterogeneous environment of recycled objects, assorted architectural styles, and discontinuous spaces, full of decay and dereliction. Scott and designer Lawrence G. Paull used actual locations, including the rundown Bradley Building and Union Station, but integrated them into Warner Bros.’ huge studio space that was “retrofitted” (putting new add-ons to existing buildings) over the 1929 New York Street set used for gangster movies and films noir such as *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and *The Big Sleep* (1946). This created a postmodern aesthetic both retrospective and futuristic, “a film set forty years hence, presented in the style of forty years ago,” as Scott put it. *Blade Runner*’s visual style

is densely textured. Jordan Cronenweth's cinematography uses low-key lighting and blue filters to create a noirish gloom with particular objects, including the twitching neon signs picked out in saturated color gels, techniques that became standard elements in **neo-noir's** visual style but which this film pioneered. Much use is made of the handheld "steadicam" to track intricate movements throughout the set and slow-motion photography, in which every detail of an event can be savored.

The plot concerns a group of "replicants"—genetically manufactured beings that closely resemble humans employed to conduct dangerous work on "off-world colonies"—that has revolted and is now hiding in Los Angeles. Rick Deckard (Harrison Ford), a semiretired "blade runner"—the specialist squad trained to kill ("retire") replicants—has been reluctantly persuaded to hunt them down. Deckard is both futuristic law enforcer and archetypal 1940s **private eye** in his battered trench coat. Fancher wrote the part with **Robert Mitchum** in mind, but Scott was happy with the casting of Ford, whom he thought "possesses some of the laconic dourness of [**Humphrey Bogart**], but he's more ambivalent, more human." Deckard's ambivalence stems from his developing sense that the replicants are not rogue automata but more human than their creators, a confusion compounded by his love for Rachael (Sean Young), a further stage in genetic evolution whose "life-span" is undefined and whose bobbed, swept-back hair recalls **Joan Crawford**. Deckard's final confrontation with the renegade replicants' leader Roy (Rutger Hauer) is also ambiguous. Roy recounts the marvelous sights he has seen and the replicants' dreams of prolonged life before dying quietly in a moment of almost tragic stillness.

In all, seven versions of *Blade Runner* have been released. Some are minor variations, but a rushed director's cut, released in 1992, had significant differences. Deckard's studio-imposed voice-over was eliminated, as was the more upbeat conclusion; the new version had Deckard and Rachael huddled in an elevator shaft hoping to escape rather than flying off into the sunset. A 25th Anniversary Edition, over which Scott had complete editorial control, was released in 2007.

**BLOOD SIMPLE (1984).** *Blood Simple* was the first film by the brothers **Joel and Ethan Coen** and launched their highly successful career. Joel Coen commented: "We've liked that type of story for a long while. . . . It's a genre that really gives us pleasure. And we also chose it for very practical reasons. We knew we weren't going to have much money.

Financing wouldn't permit other things. We could depend on that type of genre, on that kind of basic force." *Blood Simple* was independently financed and shot economically in eight weeks, but it was almost two years in postproduction as the Coens sought a distributor for a film that was "too bloody to be an art movie and too arty to be an exploitation film." It generated much interest on the festival circuit—winning the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival—and then a distribution deal. The success of *Blood Simple*, costing only \$1.5 million, demonstrated the potential of film noir for cash-strapped independent filmmakers who could use its conventions to make visually sophisticated films with a subversive content on small budgets.

*Blood Simple* was also one of the first examples of **country noir**, its memorable opening a montage of shots evoking a bleak, barren Texan landscape, with its sleazy motels, sinister incinerators, and straight highways that seem to go nowhere. Barry Sonnenfeld's cinematography, with its extensive use of dirty greens, magentas, and sulphur yellows, makes the **visual style** downbeat and tacky. Exaggerating noir conventions almost to the point of parody, the film has a peculiarly repulsive and venal version of the **private eye**, the reptilian Visser (M. Emmet Walsh) in his canary yellow suit and pockmarked Stetson, prepared to do anything if the price is right. Inspired by **Dashiell Hammett's** *Red Harvest*—which contains the observation that after a murder a man "goes soft in the head, blood-simple"—and **James M. Cain**, *Blood Simple* is a highly complex tale of adultery, betrayal, but above all the false suspicions and confusion that characterize this ingrown community where nothing seems to change, as registered by the Four Tops' resonant "It's the Same Old Song" that dominates the soundtrack. The lugubrious Marty (Dan Hedaya), owner of the tawdry Neon Boots roadhouse, employs Visser first to spy on and then kill his wife Abby (Frances McDormand) and his employee Ray (John Getz), with whom she is conducting a desultory affair, only to be double-crossed and shot by Visser. Ray, finding Marty in his office and believing Abby shot him, tries to dispose of the body in a deserted field. Visser, wrongly assuming the couple knows about his deception, kills Ray but is finally killed by Abby in a grotesquely violent and protracted scene where she imagines it is Marty who is attacking her.

*Blood Simple* is a rich mixture of film noir, Greek tragedy, southern Gothic, Grand Guignol, and the low-budget horrors on which Ethan Coen had previously worked. It is shot in an intricate, allusive style



that provides sophisticated entertainment for a cineliterate audience, combining the visceral pleasures of pulp fiction with an innovative use of generic conventions. *See also* GOTHIC; NEO-NOIR.

**BODY HEAT (1981).** Writer-director Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat* is frequently identified as the film that popularized **neo-noir** as a self-conscious mode of filmmaking, deliberately re-creating the ambience of classical noir. There are strong resemblances to *Double Indemnity* (1944) in this story of Ned Racine (William Hurt), whose passionate affair with a married woman, Matty Walker (Kathleen Turner), leads to the murder of her rich husband. Ned, a small-time and somewhat incompetent lawyer whose life is secure but unsatisfying, like his avatar, Walter Neff, sees in this sordid affair a fantasy of sex and success that will restore his self-esteem. But, even more manipulative than her femme fatale predecessor Phyllis Dietrichson, Matty escapes with the inheritance to an idyllic tropical island, while Ned, the classic noir victim, is imprisoned for the murder. Unencumbered by the restrictive  **censorship**  code of the 1940s, Kasdan was able to depict their affair much more explicitly in a number of graphic sex scenes. Kasdan, and his veteran cinematographer Richard H. Kline (who had assisted on *The Lady from Shanghai* [1948] and was another deliberate link to classic noir) created a drowsy, oneiric **visual style** through slow, languid, tracking shots and lap dissolves, and low-lit, mutedly chiaroscuro interiors. *Body Heat's* color scheme is carefully graded: the warmth of the yellows, browns, and reds gradually gives way to cool blues and grays as Ned realizes he is the victim of Matty's wiles. John Barry's sultry jazz score complemented this visual re-creation of the classic noir atmosphere and mood.

Reviewers recognized *Body Heat* as a re-creation of a noir sensibility they thought had been abandoned, but Kasdan's film was also an attempt to make this relevant to a new generation of baby boomers who grew up in "the expectation that the world would be wonderful and it wasn't," and whose feelings of disillusionment paralleled those returning from World War II. For Kasdan, Ned represents "someone of my generation who just happens to find himself in the *film noir* world." Hence, the film seems to hesitate between the two periods, captured in its setting in Miranda Beach, Florida, which is contemporary but without air conditioners, caught in an incomplete time shift, like Ned himself. Matty gives him a 1940s snap-brim hat as a sign of his retro-modern status. *Body Heat's* deft and provocative combination of a classical and modern sen-

sibility rekindled the possibilities of film noir for a new generation of filmmakers and their audiences. *See also* MEN; WOMEN.

**BOEHM, SYDNEY (1908–1990).** Boehm began his career as a news writer before moving on to screenwriting. Although a journeyman who worked on a variety of films for all the major studios, Boehm tended to specialize in **hard-boiled** noirs, beginning with *High Wall* (1947), an **amnesiac/troubled veteran** noir, and *The Undercover Man* (1949), in which a U.S. Treasury agent (**Glenn Ford**) takes on the mob. Boehm's original story and screenplay for **Anthony Mann's** *Side Street* (1950) was a compelling drama in which Everyman Farley Granger becomes trapped in a hostile and predatory New York City that seems to close in on him from every side. *Mystery Street* (1950), *Union Station* (1950), and *Second Chance* (1953) were routine thrillers, but Boehm's original story and screenplay for *Black Tuesday* (1954), a taut **gangster**-on-the-run noir starring **Edward G. Robinson**, had more punch. Boehm found his greatest success in three **William P. McGivern** adaptations: *The Big Heat* (1953), *Rogue Cop* (1954), and *Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955).

**BOGART, HUMPHREY (1899–1957).** Humphrey Bogart was the most influential male actor appearing in film noir, attaining iconic status as the epitome of hard-bitten, laconic, and world-weary masculinity. It derived principally from his definitive portrayals of the noir **private eye**: Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and Philip Marlowe in *The Big Sleep* (1946), cigarette dangling from his mouth under the wide-brimmed fedora, the figure hunched in a crumpled, belted trench coat. Bogart's nondescript physique and lived-in face expressed the nonheroic world of film noir as did his minimalist acting style, a stiff, tight-lipped wariness, in which the eyes, knowing and sad, gave depth to his tough guys. His rasping voice, with the famous slight lisp, was better at conveying scornful cynicism and bemused irony than overt sentiment.

Bogart had had a moderately successful stage career before becoming a contract artist for Warner Bros., and his reputation in the 1930s came from a succession of vicious tough-guy villains or heroes, as in the noir **precursors** *The Petrified Forest* (1936) and *They Drive by Night* (1940). *High Sierra* (1941), based on **W. R. Burnett's** novel and co-adapted by **John Huston**, established Bogart as a major star through his compelling performance as the gangster Roy "Mad Dog" Earle, whom he made into a complex, sympathetic figure beneath whose toughness

lurks self-doubt, fallibility, and the need for love. Bogart worked again with Huston in *The Maltese Falcon* after George Raft had been “persuaded” not to take the role of Sam Spade. Bogart’s Spade has a cynical, wisecracking carapace and is prepared to act ruthlessly in his own interests, but there is also the engaging vulnerability and reluctant idealism that were Bogart’s hallmark. These qualities were more prominent in *The Big Sleep* as Marlowe is a more romantic character, falling in love with Vivian Rutledge, played by Bogart’s fourth wife **Lauren Bacall**.

They were paired again in *Dark Passage* (1947), where she comes to his aid as, on the run, he tries to prove his innocence. The film is notable for its delayed revelation of Bogart’s face (his character has undergone plastic surgery as a disguise) for over an hour. Bacall played the widow of one of his comrades in *Key Largo* (1948) in which Bogart is a **troubled veteran** who has lost his purpose and self-respect, regaining it in his struggle with a ruthless **gangster (Edward G. Robinson)**. Bogart played a somewhat similar role in *Dead Reckoning* (1947) in which he investigates the death of an ex-comrade, battling his way against gangsters and the seductive wiles of his buddy’s girlfriend, the femme fatale Coral (**Lizabeth Scott**). He again played a dysfunctional veteran in **Nicholas Ray’s** *In a Lonely Place* (1950), as Dixon Steele, an alcoholic, self-destructive screenwriter who, although innocent of the murder charge for which he is the prime suspect, is clearly capable of homicidal violence. Bogart’s compelling performance was only rivaled by his role in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), in which he was reunited with Huston, as the ordinary Joe, down on his luck, who succumbs to gold fever, his greed driving him almost to madness and murder.

Bogart could play the duplicitous *homme fatal* in *Conflict* (1945) and *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (1947), or upright district attorneys in *Knock on Any Door* (1949) and *The Enforcer* (1951), and a savage criminal terrorizing a suburban family in *The Desperate Hours* (1955). But his forte was always uncertain, ambivalent characters caught up in the confusing and threatening noir world, as in his final role as the weak sportswriter turned promoter in *The Harder They Fall* (1956), a **boxing noir**. See also MEN.

**BOXING NOIRS.** Like the **gangster**, the boxer embodies a distorted version of the American success ethic; ambitious to break free from working-class or ethnic poverty, his rise and fall exposes the moral and

emotional price of success. These thematic and ideological preoccupations meant that the boxing film could be assimilated into the concerns of film noir, particularly to those of the **left-wing cycle**. **Robert Rossen's** *Body and Soul* (1947), with a screenplay by **Abraham Polonsky**, was a paradigmatic example, starring **John Garfield** as the ghetto-boy Charlie Davis determined to escape poverty but whose success and material wealth associate him with gangsters and alienate Charlie from his loved ones. He eventually has the courage to defy the mobsters, rediscovering his humanity. *Champion* (1949) had a similar storyline but lacked Rossen's idealism; its central character (**Kirk Douglas**) is nastier, a ruthless egomaniac intent on getting to the top, and the ending is bleaker.

*The Set-Up* (1949) abandoned the rise-and-fall narrative to concentrate on the misery and physical toll that boxing exacts. **Robert Ryan** plays an aging prizefighter beaten up by two thugs after he refuses to throw a fight. Retaining his integrity, he can return to his wife (**Audrey Totter**), but only now that he is finished with boxing. The theme of corruption that runs through these films is the principal focus of *The Harder They Fall* (1956). **Humphrey Bogart**, as fading sports columnist Eddie Willis, is hired by a ruthless impresario (Rod Steiger) to promote a talentless Argentinian boxer in a series of fixed fights so that he is slaughtered in a championship decider. A disgusted, disillusioned Willis decides to write a series of exposés of the fight game, whatever the cost.

**John Huston's** ironically titled *Fat City* (1972) was one of the rare boxing **neo-noirs**, set in a dreary small town and focusing on a contrasting pair of fighters. Stacy Keach plays Billy Tully, the battered pug who cannot pull his life together and has become a seedy derelict in dingy bars, the image of what Ernie Monger (Jeff Bridges), the 18-year-old young pretender desperate for success, will become. The definitive boxing noir was **Martin Scorsese's** *Raging Bull* (1980), in which **Robert de Niro** gives an extraordinary performance re-creating the various phases of Jake La Motta's career. Jake embodies all the hopes, dreams, violence, and inarticulate rage of the fighter that make him unable to form stable or enduring relationships and that lead to his own destruction. In a memorable scene, having alienated his family and friends and thrown into a police cell for resisting arrest, Jake pounds his fists and head against the unforgiving concrete, the image of despair.

Other boxing noirs include: *City for Conquest* (1940), *The Killers* (1946), *The Big Punch* (1948), *Whiplash* (1948), *Iron Man* (1951),

*Glory Alley* (1952), *99 River Street* (1953), *The Crooked Circle* (1958), and *The Champ* (1979).

**BOYLE, ROBERT F. (1909– )**. Robert Boyle worked for a number of studios before becoming a freelance art director. His designs for *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) evoked the prosaic ordinariness that **Alfred Hitchcock** desired, while the composer's house in *Nocturne* (1946) had an unsettling, decadent atmosphere, causing the detective (**George Raft**) to doubt that the body he finds is a suicide, making him conduct his own murder case. Boyle's set for the old carousel in *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947) contrasts effectively with the mournful uniformity of the rest of the New Mexican town in which the film is set. Some of Boyle's best work was on **Phil Karlson's** *The Brothers Rico* (1957), in which the modern, open-plan house and geometrically arranged office of Eddie Rico (**Richard Conte**) evoke a world of successful, ordered modernity as opposed to the squalid streets and apartments of New York, to which his past compels him to return. For **Samuel Fuller's** *The Crimson Kimono* (1959), Boyle's imaginative designs depicting Japanese culture complement the location shooting in Little Tokyo. Boyle also designed *They Won't Believe Me* (1947) and *Abandoned* (1949) and worked with distinction on the late noir *Cape Fear* (1962) and the **neo-noir** *Winter Kills* (1979).

**BRACKETT, LEIGH (1915–1978)**. Leigh Brackett, one of the few women screenwriters working in Hollywood, was a respected **hard-boiled** writer, whose output included *No Good from a Corpse* (1944), which Howard Hawks admired. Thinking the novel had been written by a man, Hawks hired Brackett to contribute to the screenplay of *The Big Sleep* (1946), working with William Faulkner. However, they wrote separately, without consultation, Faulkner dividing the scenes between them. **Humphrey Bogart**, who thought Faulkner's contributions were occasionally too genteel, went to Brackett for any dialogue he felt needed "roughing up." Brackett's 1957 novel about juvenile delinquency, *The Tiger Among Us*, which focused on the victims of crime and suburban problems, became a late noir, filmed as *13 West Street* in 1962 starring **Alan Ladd**. Brackett returned to **Raymond Chandler** with *The Long Goodbye* (1973). Her initial script was a compromise, retaining something of the earlier conception of Marlowe as a knight errant, but she worked closely with director Robert Altman to produce a much harsher

version in which Marlowe (Elliott Gould) becomes a loser, adrift in a world he fails to comprehend. Brackett's adaptation makes the ending more violent as Marlowe murders the friend who has betrayed him.

Brackett also wrote for noir **television series**, including *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour* in the 1960s and *Archer* (1975). *See also* PRIVATE EYES.

**BRADY, SCOTT (1924–1985).** Born Gerard Tierney, the younger brother of **Lawrence Tierney**, Scott Brady played more sympathetic characters than his sibling. In *Canon City* (1948), he played the decent member of a group of escaped convicts who is eventually recaptured, while in *Undertow* (1949) he was an empathetic **troubled veteran** framed for murder by his fiancée and her lover. In *Port of New York* (1949), he was a narcotics agent battling a vicious gang who is killed in his pursuit of its leader. None of his films noir, however, really stood out and Brady never attained more than second-tier stardom, becoming a television stalwart.

Brady's other noirs are *He Walked by Night* (1949), *Undercover Girl* (1950), and *Three Steps to the Gallows* (GB 1953, U.S. title *White Fire*).

**BRAHM, JOHN (1893–1982).** John (originally Hans) Brahm had a high reputation as a leading stage director in Vienna, Berlin, and Paris, and worked as an editor, screenwriter, and director in the British film industry before going to Hollywood in 1937 and directing the noir **precursors** *Let Us Live* (1939), a falsely accused crime thriller, and *Rio* (1939), in which a crazed man (Basil Rathbone) escapes from prison to murder his wife. Highly influenced by **expressionism**, Brahm's finely wrought style, with its pronounced chiaroscuro lighting, was particularly suited to the two **Gothic** noirs he directed starring **Laird Cregar**: *The Lodger* (1944) and *Hangover Square* (1945). *Guest in the House* (1944), also a Gothic tale, in which a psychotic young woman (Anne Baxter) nearly succeeds in destroying a middle-class American family, was another modestly budgeted noir to which Brahm's style lent a rich texture.

*The Brasher Doubloon* (1947), starring George Montgomery as Marlowe, was the most expressionist **Raymond Chandler** adaptation, focusing on the claustrophobic décor of the Victorian Murdoch mansion in Pasadena, surrounded by huge, gnarled trees and long shrubbery that encircle the building, the interiors infiltrated by menacing shadows.

Brahm's best-known film was *The Locket* (1947), a complex story with flashbacks within flashbacks in which the central protagonist, Nancy Blair (Laraine Day), suffers from destructive kleptomania resulting from a childhood incident in which she was denied a locket she coveted.

Brahm's final noir, *Singapore* (1947), was undistinguished, and he migrated to television in the 1950s and 1960s, directing episodes of several noir **television series**, including *Johnny Staccato*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Suspicion* as well as *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour*. He also directed the **German film noir**, *Die goldene Pest* (*The Golden Plague*, 1954). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**BRAZILIAN FILM NOIR.** Brazil developed quite a strong tradition of crime and detective fiction, adapting a foreign genre to portray Brazilian reality, but the instabilities of the Brazilian film industry meant that there were only occasional films noir, including *Maior Que o Ódio* (*Greater Than the Hatred*, 1951), the story of two friends growing up in the same neighborhood who take different paths in adult life. *Mulheres e Milhões* (*Women and Millions*, 1961) was a complex heist film with significant similarities to *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950) and *Rififi* (1955). *Assassinato em Copacabana* (*Assassination in Copacabana*, 1962) was a fast-paced thriller. In the 1970s some of the “Boca do Lixo” (“Trash Alley”) low-budget films had noir elements, including *Patty, a Mulher Proibida* (*Patty, the Forbidden Woman*), and *Os Depravados* (*The Depraved Ones*), a police thriller, both released in 1979. A 1990 noir that took *Boca do Lixo* as its title was a complex story of adulterous passion, betrayal, and attempted embezzlement indebted to **James M. Cain** and *Body Heat* (1981).

*Terra Estrangeira* (*Foreign Land*, 1996), a Brazilian-Portuguese coproduction directed by Walter Salles and Daniela Thomas, was shot in black-and-white with evocative chiaroscuro lighting. It depicts a destitute college student recruited in a smuggling operation that takes him to Lisbon, where he becomes enmeshed in a violent and opportunistic underworld and encounters an enigmatic woman. *O Que É Isso, Companheiro?* (*Four Days in September*, 1997), was a political thriller based on true story of the abduction of the American ambassador Charles Burke Elbrick in 1969 by the MR-8 terrorist group, while *Bufo and Spallanzani* (2001) was an intricate murder mystery. The celebrated *Cidade de Deus* (*City of God*, 2002), directed by Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund, nominated for four Academy Awards, was based on a

true story set in the *favela* (slums) of Rio de Janeiro. Its voice-over narration tells the story, over two decades, of a boy's desperate attempts to escape the drug abuse, gang rivalries, violent crime, and vicious poverty that are endemic in that area. Sérgio Machado's *Cidade Baixa* (*Lower City*, 2005), set in the crime-ridden quarter of Salvador de Bahia on the northeast coast of Brazil, had some similarities, but it was more picaresque, the story of two friends who become rivals when they meet a sexy prostitute.

**BREDELL, ELWOOD “WOODY” (1884–1976).** The British-born Woody Bredell was an accomplished cinematographer, based at Universal, who collaborated with **Robert Siodmak** on several noirs. Bredell's cinematography is characterized by its rich, contrastive chiaroscuro, a silken texture and fluidity that helps create a sense of corruption running just below the surface in *Phantom Lady* (1944) and *Christmas Holiday* (1944). In the latter, he shone the light through a five-gallon jar of water, which gave this Southern Gothic noir its disturbing shimmer. *The Killers* (1946), Bredell's third film with Siodmak, has a memorably shot opening scene in which shafts of light from dark buildings underline the disturbing isolation of the diner, creating a **Hopperesque** mood of ominous menace. Bredell's sophisticated low-key lighting full of threatening shadows in *The Unsuspected* (1947), directed by Michael Curtiz, was crucial in establishing the atmosphere of claustrophobia and paranoia in this complex story of an unbalanced and obsessive murderer (Claude Rains). Bredell also shot *Lady on a Train* (1945) and *Female Jungle* (1955). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**BRITISH FILM NOIR.** British cinema is often accused of being a pale reflection of American cinema, but although there are many similarities between British and American film noirs, there are also several key differences. British film noir, just like **French film noir**, began to develop before the war, starting with *The Green Cockatoo* (U.S. title *Four Dark Hours*, 1937), and it stretched to 1964 and the demise of the second-feature crime film. As in America, British cinema was strongly influenced by **expressionism**—partly through the influx of **émigré** European talent, including set designer Alfred Junge and cinematographers Mutz Greenbaum (Max Greene), Otto Heller, Erwin Hillier, Günther Krampf, and Wolfgang Suschitzky—and also **poetic realism**, particularly in the immediate postwar period. **Alfred Hitchcock's** early



crime thrillers, *The Lodger* (1926) and *Blackmail* (1929), show expressionist influences, and his *The 39 Steps* (1935) and *Young and Innocent* (1937) were also noir **precursors** in their depiction of falsely accused men-on-the-run.

Great Britain also had its own tradition of **hard-boiled fiction**: Arthur la Bern, James Hadley Chase, Peter Cheyney, James Curtis, Robert Westerby, and above all **Graham Greene**. But a key difference from American noir was the strong influence of the **Gothic**/macabre tradition. “Blood and thunder” Gothic melodrama was the staple of 19th-century British popular culture, on stage, in music-hall sketches, in “penny dreadfuls,” “sensation novels,” and of Charles Dickens’s novels. It was adaptations of the prolific Edgar Wallace’s “shockers,” a combination of fast-paced action and the macabre, which translated this tradition onto the screen—50 British films were adapted from Wallace stories between 1925 and 1939, including *The Dark Eyes of London* (U.S. title *The Human Monster*, 1939) starring Bela Lugosi. It was Arthur Woods’s *They Drive by Night* (1938) that showed the passage from the macabre shocker to film noir, revealing a paranoid world of social and sexual corruption, the dark underside to respectable British society. *On the Night of the Fire* (U.S. title *The Fugitive*, 1939), adapted from F. L. Green’s novel, directed by Brian Desmond Hurst and expressionistically photographed by Krampf, was a riveting psychological study of that favorite English victim, the disgraced petit bourgeois.

The development of British film noir was arrested at this point, displaced by a wartime cinema committed to consensual values and pulling together, but it returned immediately after the war in a more prolific and sustained cycle. There were numerous Gothic noirs: *Blanche Fury* (1947), *The Mark of Cain* (1947), and *So Evil My Love* (1948), all based on novels by Joseph Shearing, with their strong-willed independent female protagonists and Byronic young men (*homme fatales*); and more art house ones: Rudolph Cartier’s *Corridor of Mirrors* (1948) and Thorold Dickinson’s *The Queen of Spades* (1949), adapted from Alexander Pushkin and photographed by Heller, whose visual style was baroque. British noir, like its American counterpart, showed a strong preoccupation with damaged men, often **troubled veterans**, beginning with **James Mason**’s Spanish Civil War soldier in *The Night Has Eyes* (U.S. title *The Terror House*, 1942). Mason also starred in *The Upturned Glass* (1947) and *Odd Man Out* (1947), directed by **Carol Reed** and adapted from another F. L. Green novel. His noir rivals were **Eric Port-**

**man** in *Great Day* (1945), *Wanted for Murder* (1946), *Dear Murderer* (1947), and *Daybreak* (1948), and Robert Newton in *Temptation Harbour* (1947), adapted from a **Georges Simenon** novella, and **Edward Dmytryk**'s *Obsession* (U.S. title *The Hidden Room*, 1949).

The protagonists of *Mine Own Executioner* (1947), *The Small Back Room* (1949), and the **amnesiac** story *The October Man* (1949), scripted by **Eric Ambler**, were also dysfunctional men with varying degrees of psychological neuroses who commanded a degree of sympathy and understanding. Some veterans were venal and corrupt: Nigel Patrick in *Silent Dust* (1949) and *Uneasy Terms* (1949), or David Farrar in *Cage of Gold* (1950); others were adrift in a radically changed peacetime society. In Alberto Cavalcanti's *They Made Me a Fugitive* (U.S. title *I Became a Criminal*, 1947), atmospherically photographed by Heller, Clem Morgan (Trevor Howard) is an ex-RAF pilot prepared to embrace crime out of sheer frustrated boredom on the toss of a coin. Joining an East End gang, he is quickly out of his depth and becomes framed for a murder by gang leader Narcy (Griffith Jones), another product of social dislocation, "not even a respectable crook, just cheap, rotten, after the war trash."

Narcy was representative of a cycle of spiv films that focused on the well-dressed, opportunistic petty criminal and included *Waterloo Road* (1945), *Dancing with Crime* (1947), *Noose* (U.S. title *The Silk Noose*, 1948), and the definitive example, **Jules Dassin**'s *Night and the City* (1950). The more organized spiv graded into the low-level gangster, as in *Appointment with Crime* (1946), *Night Beat* (1947), and the Boulting Brothers' *Brighton Rock* (U.S. title *Young Scarface*, 1948), based on Graham Greene's 1938 novel, in which Richard Attenborough was mesmerizing as the psychotic adolescent, Pinkie Brown. As in France, British noirs typically intertwine noir conventions with social realism, creating a cast of characters and a class-consciousness that are culturally specific, including **semidocumentary** noirs such as the three made by Basil Dearden and Michael Relph: *Frieda* (1947), *The Blue Lamp* (1950), and *Pool of London* (1951), promoted as "Britain's Naked City." Something of an exception was *The Third Man* (1949), with an original screenplay by Graham Greene, an international coproduction set in war-torn Vienna.

In the 1950s, British noirs tended to be almost exclusively second-feature crime films. The influence of American noir was stronger, including the use of imported second division American leads as well as

the presence of American directors, notably **Cy Endfield** and **Joseph Losey**, fleeing the **blacklist**. Films such as *The Flanagan Boy* (U.S. title *Bad Blonde*, 1953), *Marilyn* (U.S. title *Roadhouse Girl*, 1953), a remake of **James M. Cain's** *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, and *Impulse* (1955) deliberately copied American models. However, most British noirs retained an emphasis on ordinary people, not a detached underworld, and melded the pace and action of American films with the depiction of resonantly British milieux. This is exemplified in the films of Ken Hughes, including *Wide Boy* (1952), *The House Across the Lake* (U.S. title *Heat Wave*, 1954), and *The Brain Machine* (1955), in which Maxwell Reed played a brain-damaged, psychopathic gangster moving through an evocative underworld of sleazy tenements and seedy Soho nightclubs.

Hughes's *The Long Haul* (1957), in which **Victor Mature** battles it out among tough British truck drivers, was typical of the transformed visual style, a bleak, chilling realism shot in a cold, hard, naturalistic lighting that corresponded to the brutal violence of the action. Other examples include Seth Holt's *Nowhere to Go* (1958) and three films starring Stanley Baker: Endfield's *Hell Drivers* (1957), Losey's *The Criminal* (U.S. title *Concrete Jungle*, 1960), and Val Guest's *Hell Is a City* (1960). The last was set in Manchester, typical of a British "New Wave" impulse to explore provincial cities: Liverpool in *Violent Playground* (1958), *Beyond This Place* (U.S. title *Web of Evidence*, 1959), and *In the Wake of a Stranger* (1959), and Newcastle in *Payroll* (U.S. title *I Promised to Pay*, 1961). There was a prolific series of hour-long updates of Edgar Wallace's fiction (1960–64) that minimized the macabre elements in favor of a brusque realism, as in Alan Bridges's *Act of Murder* (1964) and John Moxey's *Face of a Stranger* (1964).

After the demise of the supporting feature and the replacement of black-and-white by color, British noir went into abeyance until a cycle of American-funded crime films emerged beginning with *The Strange Affair* (1968), the first film to admit that the police could be other than admirable. P. C. Strange (Michael York), whose story is told in flashback after his arrest and conviction, gets caught up in a changing London pervaded by drugs and pornography and where police can be bribed or bend the rules. **Sidney Lumet's** *The Offence* (1972), starring Sean Connery, was an even more disturbing look at the modern policeman. *Villain* (1971), *Sitting Target* (1972), Hitchcock's *Frenzy* (1972), and, above all, **Mike Hodges's** *Get Carter* (1971) focused on

criminals who, following the trial of the notorious Kray twins, were depicted as just as ruthless, sadistic, and psychopathically violent as their American counterparts. All had a bleak, uninflected modernist style that registered a world of radically changing social and cultural values. Nicolas Roeg's *Performance* (1970), filmed in 1968 but whose release was held up for two years by outraged Warner Bros. executives, was more mannered. Writer and codirector Donald Cammell depicted an extraordinary clash of lifestyles between the criminal underworld and 1960s counterculture.

In the early 1980s, British **neo-noir** was influenced by European art-house cinema. Stephen Frears's *The Hit* (1981), in which a contract killer (John Hurt) takes an informer (Terence Stamp) from his Spanish rural villa to Paris where he is to meet his fate, and Jim Goddard's *Parker* (1981), depicting the obsessive efforts of a toy salesman (Bryan Brown) to prove that he did not imagine, or fake, his abduction and incarceration in a cellar, were indebted to the German New Wave. Chris Petit's low-budget neo-noirs—*Radio On* (1980), *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1982), adapted from best-selling crime writer P. D. James's novel, and *Chinese Boxes* (1984)—also show this European orientation. *Hidden City* (1987), written and directed by Stephen Poliakoff, and Neil Jordan's *Mona Lisa* (1987) were more American-orientated, but their depiction of a secret and corrupt London netherworld contained an implied critique of Thatcherism. In *Empire State* (1987), *Stormy Monday* (1989), and *The Long Good Friday* (1980), this critique was made explicit. In the last, East End gang boss Harold Shand (Bob Hoskins) embodies the contradictory ideology of Thatcherism: its Little Englandism (a parochial veneration of British traditions) coupled with a belief in unfettered international enterprise as Shand tries to form a partnership with the American mafia, incarnated by Eddie Constantine, is shattered by the Irish Republican Army. Hoskins's memorable performance—with its energy, charisma, bursts of uncontrolled violence, and moments of vulnerability—was reminiscent of James Cagney in *White Heat*.

The more generically and commercially orientated British cinema of the 1990s and beyond led to a proliferation of neo-noirs, many of which are **hybrids**, including: *Shopping* (1994)—future noir; *Shallow Grave* (1995), *Darklands* (1996), *Dr. Sleep* (2002), and *Trauma* (2004)—horror/psychological horror; *The Criminal* (2000)—conspiracy thriller; *Christie Malry's Own Double Entry* (2000)—black comedy; *Miranda* (2003)—comedy thriller; and *Dead Man's Shoes* (2004)—revenge

melodrama. There was a deliberate use of noir visual conventions, as in the chiaroscuro lighting, unusual angles, and distorted compositions of David Hayman's *The Near Room* (1995), set in Glasgow, the Scottish city that has a reputation for violent crime. Its alienated protagonist, journalist Charlie Colquhoun (Adrian Dunbar), is the archetypal noir antihero haunted by his past and plunging ever deeper into a morbid world of pornography, child prostitution, and civic corruption.

Although *Gangster No. 1* (2000) starring Paul Bettany was a classic story of the rise and fall of the eponymous gangster, British noirs continued to concentrate on petty criminals on the fringes of professional crime, on would-bes and failures, those who wish to escape from the underworld but cannot, and in which the violence is deliberately deglamorized. Examples include: Antonia Bird's *Face* (1997), Terry Winsor's *Essex Boys* (2000), Colin Teague's *Shooters* (2002) and *Spivs* (2004), Saul Dibbs's *Bullet Boy* (2004), Paul Andrew Williams's *London to Brighton* (2006), Nick Love's *Outlaw* (2007) starring Sean Bean as the leader of a motley vigilante group, and Noel Clarke's *Adulthood* (2008). In *Sexy Beast* (2000), retired gangster Gary "Gal" Dove (Ray Winstone), sunning himself on Spain's Costa del Sol, the nirvana of all British gangsters, is wrenched back by psychotic hard man Don Logan (Ben Kingsley) to London's underworld, a world he no longer believes in or wants. *Mr. In-Between* (2001), the tale of a tormented **hit man** (Andrew Howard), and Mike Hodges's two outstanding neo-noirs, *Croupier* (1998) and *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* (2003), were more explicitly existential, the last a bleak, circular tale of violence and betrayal that is shown as ultimately pointless. *See also* MEN.

**BRODIE, STEVE (1919–1992).** With his indistinct features, Steve Brodie tended to be typecast as weak but malicious and corrupt characters as in *Out of the Past* (1947), where he plays the venal former partner of private eye Jeff Bailey (**Robert Mitchum**). As Bowers in *Crossfire* (1947), he was one of the four army buddies who witnessed the killing of a Jewish civilian by Montgomery (**Robert Ryan**), but he is too weak to expose the crime and is killed in order to ensure his silence. Brodie played unscrupulous villains in *Armored Car Robbery* (1950) and *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* (1950), as James Cagney's sidekick. He had one starring role, in **Anthony Mann's** "B" feature *Desperate* (1947), in which he plays an ordinary truck driver framed for a murder he did not commit and brutally beaten by the henchmen of gangster Walt Radak

(**Raymond Burr**). Brodie was featured in numerous noir **television series**, including *Richard Diamond, Private Detective* (1957–60).

Brodie's other noirs are *Criminal Court* (1946), *Bodyguard* (1948), *I Cheated the Law* (1949), *Tough Assignment* (1949), *M* (1951), *The Crooked Circle* (1957), and *Arson for Hire* (1959).

**BURNETT, W. R. (1899–1982)**. William Riley Burnett was a prolific, successful, and highly influential novelist and screenwriter who specialized, if not exclusively, in crime fiction. Like **Dashiell Hammett**, Burnett pioneered a style of writing based on vernacular speech and maintained an equally skeptical take on American society and its institutions. His stories and screenplays are characterized by their solid structure and tight, linear trajectories; spare dialogue; and focus on criminals who are nevertheless treated with understanding. He remains best known for his gangster novel *Little Caesar* (1929), made into a film in 1931 starring **Edward G. Robinson**, and he also coscripted *Scarface* (1932) with Paul Muni as the eponymous gangster. Burnett had a direct influence on the development of film noir beginning with the **precursor** *The Beast of the City* (1932), adapted (by John Lee Mahin) from Burnett's story. The crusading policeman Captain Jim Fitzpatrick (Walter Huston) is a noir figure whose obsessive pursuit of mobster Sam Belmonte makes him blind to the corruption of his own brother (Wallace Ford).

Burnett wrote the novel *High Sierra* and cowrote the screenplay (with **John Huston**) when it was filmed in 1941, directed by Raoul Walsh. Its gangster figure, Roy "Mad Dog" Earle (**Humphrey Bogart**), was depicted with compassion and understanding. Earle is an outsider who yearns for freedom but whose death has the bleak inexorability that characterizes Burnett's fiction, which the writer struggled to preserve against the "sentimental" interventions of producer **Mark Hellinger**. Burnett experienced less interference when it was remade in 1955 as *I Died a Thousand Times*, but the casting of **Jack Palance** as Earle and Shelley Winters rather than Ida Lupino as his girlfriend Marie was less memorable. Burnett cowrote the screenplay (with **Albert Maltz**) for another influential early noir, *This Gun for Hire* (1942), from the **Graham Greene** novel.

Burnett wrote the story and screenplay for *Nobody Lives Forever* (1946), another bleak tale in which the character cannot escape his past. **John Garfield** starred as a **troubled veteran** who returns to find his girlfriend and his gambling operation in New York has been taken

over. Equally bleak but more compassionate was *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), adapted by Ben Maddow and director John Huston in 1950 from Burnett's 1949 novel, which redefined the heist film by its sympathetic presentation of the criminal group. Burnett was hired to rewrite the screenplay of *The Racket* (1951), a remake of a 1928 film, and its confrontation between an obsessive righteous cop (**Robert Mitchum**) and an alienated, doomed mobster (**Robert Ryan**) has the Burnett hallmark. *See also* HARD-BOILED FICTION.

**BURR, RAYMOND (1917–1993).** Raymond Burr is best remembered as the omniscient television trial lawyer Perry Mason (1957–66) and his wheelchair-bound detective Ironside (1967–75), but he contributed to numerous films noir as one of the most effective “heavies,” his burly frame and well-groomed but saturnine handsomeness exuding both charm and menace. He played sadistic, calculating **gangsters** in **Anthony Mann's** *Desperate* (1947) and *Raw Deal* (1948), often shot from an extreme low-angle to exaggerate his bulk. His performance in *Pitfall* (1948), where he played a grubby and psychotic **private eye** who stalks a glamorous yet vulnerable woman (**Lizabeth Scott**), was a thoughtful study in thwarted desire, a complexity that also characterizes his role in **Fritz Lang's** *The Blue Gardenia* (1953). In *A Cry in the Night* (1956), Burr gave his most absorbing performance as a tormented, mother-dominated loner, hunted down after kidnapping a police captain's daughter through fear and confused desire.

Burr's other noirs are *I Love Trouble* (1948), *Ruthless* (1948), *Sleep, My Love* (1948), *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), *Abandoned* (1949), *Borderline* (1950), *Red Light* (1950), *Unmasked* (1950), *His Kind of Woman* (1951), *M* (1951), *Rear Window* (1954), *Please Murder Me* (1956), *Crime of Passion* (1957), and *Affair in Havana* (1957).

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**CAIN, JAMES M. (1892–1977).** Along with **Dashiell Hammett** and **Raymond Chandler**, James M. Cain was the most influential of the popular **hard-boiled** crime writers, and three of his novels—*Double Indemnity*, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, and *Mildred Pierce*—became seminal noirs. Cain's work is rooted in the Depression, and his distinctiveness was to focus on ordinary people who turn to crime. Cain

described his fiction as a form of American tragedy where “force of circumstance” (money and sexual desire) drove individuals to the “commission of a dreadful act,” usually murder. Edmund Wilson dubbed Cain the leading “poet of tabloid murder” because of his simple, direct style and first-person narration, using the “confessional” mode beloved of the popular press. His females are tougher, smarter, and more acquisitive than their male counterparts and usually take the lead in planning the crime.

After a career as a journalist and teacher on the East Coast and briefly editor of *The New Yorker*, Cain became a writer. His first story, “Pastorale,” published in the *American Mercury* in 1928, contained the quintessential Cain theme of a man who commits a crime but cannot live with the consequences. Cain’s popularity came with the publication of the hugely successful *The Postman Always Rings Twice* in 1934. He worked as a screenwriter intermittently for various studios from 1931–48 but was unsuccessful; most of his scripts, for instance, his version of *Out of the Past* (1947), did not reach the screen. However, he earned large sums through the adaptation of his fiction by others.

Although an adaptation of his crime thriller *Money and the Woman* was released by Warner Bros. in 1940, it was quite tame and sentimental. It took the war to loosen the  **censorship**  shackles sufficiently for the Breen office—which had banned Paramount’s proposed adaptation of *Double Indemnity* in 1936, soon after it had been published in serial form in *Liberty* magazine—to sanction its production in 1943. Chandler cowrote the screenplay of the film *Double Indemnity* (1944) with director  **Billy Wilder** . Although they retained Walter’s first-person narration (Cain admired their neat strategy of having him confess into a company Dictaphone), they made several significant changes to the story. Keyes, the claims manager, no longer colludes in the crime, and Walter and Phyllis do not escape justice through jumping overboard while on a steamship bound for Mexico. The success of *Double Indemnity* encouraged MGM to produce *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), which it had optioned in 1935. Both stories were loosely based on the real-life story of Ruth Snyder and her lover Judd Gray, the subject of a sensational trial in 1927–28. Although the adaptation, by Harry Ruskin and Niven Busch, retained the essential structure of Cain’s story and its first-person narration by a man about to be executed, the language and explicit nature of the lovemaking had to be toned down.



In between these two productions, Warner Bros. had released *Mildred Pierce* (1945), adapted by Randal MacDougall from Cain's 1941 novel. Cain had always thought of *Mildred Pierce* as his first "serious" novel, evoking the problems of the Depression through its tale of an ordinary housewife who, saddled with a weak husband, has to keep the family together. He therefore fought against producer **Jerry Wald's** determination to make it into another noir murder mystery and the transformation of Mildred's daughter from concert singer into a "cheap little tart," but he was unsuccessful. Cain was even more scornful of the adaptation of his 1942 novel about corruption in a midwestern city, *Love's Lonely Counterfeit* as *Slightly Scarlet* (1956), which is distinguished only by **John Alton's** color cinematography.

Cain's fiction continues to be adapted for **neo-noirs**, particularly *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

**CAPER/HEIST NOIRS.** The caper or heist film constitutes a subcategory of noir in which a group of professional criminals plan and execute a daring but ultimately unsuccessful robbery, usually for jewels or cash. Although there are elements of the heist film in **Robert Siodmak's** *Criss Cross* (1949), it was **John Huston's** *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950) that provided the defining template by focusing on the preparation, execution, and aftermath of the heist itself. Its complex presentation of a collection of variegated criminals and the drama of the inevitable double-cross were memorable and set the mold for subsequent films. *Armored Car Robbery* (1950), released in the same month, was also thrilling but less innovative, concentrating on action rather than character and on the duel between the robbers and the police.

**Jules Dassin's** **French noir** *Du rififi chez les hommes* (*Rififi*, 1955), with its 30-minute silent set-piece robbery and prolonged and complex aftermath of betrayal ending in tragedy, extended and deepened the heist film and was both popular and influential. Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing* (1956), starring **Sterling Hayden**, also focused on the drama of the robbery—the racetrack heist itself is superbly orchestrated—and on the psychology of the characters. *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959) was less concerned with the mechanics of the heist itself than with the tensions between the criminals, including the racial confrontation between Johnny Ingram (Harry Belafonte) and Earl Slater (**Robert Ryan**).

After *Odds*, the caper film became much lighter in tone and often comic, with *Ocean's Eleven* (1960) marking the transition. Some **neo-**

**noirs** returned to the heist formula, including *The Friends of Eddie Coyle* (1973), **Sidney Lumet's** *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), *Special Delivery* (1976), *The Brink's Job* (1978), **Quentin Tarantino's** *Reservoir Dogs* (1991), *Ronin* (1998), *Heist* (2001), *The Good Thief* (2002), and Spike Lee's *Inside Man* (2006).

Other caper/heist noirs include: *Touchez pas au grisbi* (*Honor Among Thieves*, France 1954), *5 Against the House* (1955), *Violent Saturday* (1955), *The Big Caper* (1957), *A Prize of Gold* (GB 1955), *The Burglar* (1957), *Hell Bound* (1957), *Plunder Road* (1957), and *A Prize of Arms* (GB 1962).

**CENSORSHIP.** With their focus on sex, crime, and violence, films noir were an obvious target for America's notoriously puritanical and restrictive censorship regime. One of the Production Code's three General Principles, which attempted to ensure that films showed "correct standards of life," insisted that crime must never go unpunished, while its numerous Particular Applications closely regulated the ways in which sex and violence might be depicted and excluded the detailed and explicit depiction of criminal methods. However, it was noir filmmakers' often adroit circumventions of the Code through ellipses and suggestive *mise-en-scène* and its emphasis on disturbed psychological states and illicit relationships that was an important factor in the gradual liberalization of the Code.

This is well illustrated through the production of *Double Indemnity* (1944). In October 1935 Paramount had been barred from adapting **James M. Cain's** controversial novel because it violated the Code's strictures about adulterous relationships and detailed murder plotting and because it would "harden young and impressionable audiences to the thought and fact of crime." However, during World War II, attitudes were changing and Paramount was allowed to proceed with a production in October 1943. The adaptation, by director **Billy Wilder** and **Raymond Chandler**, made some obvious concessions: the protagonist does not commit suicide—instead he kills his accomplice but dies after having confessed his crime into a Dictaphone—and his boss no longer colludes in his crime. *Double Indemnity* was passed with only minor quibbles about language and the way in which **Barbara Stanwyck** was dressed in certain scenes. However, its "adult" treatment of sex and violence and the degree to which it creates sympathy for the adulterous, murdering couple was seen by both audiences

and the industry as a watershed film that allowed further, even more challenging films to be developed, including MGM's *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, another Cain adaptation, which the studio had optioned in 1935 but felt unable to produce until 1944, after *Double Indemnity* had paved the way.

The Majors' new-found boldness was also a signal to independents to handle more controversial material. Ernst Lubitsch had attempted to remake Jean Renoir's *La Chienne* (*The Bitch*, 1931) before the war without success. However, **Fritz Lang's** adaptation, *Scarlet Street* (1945), which clearly shows Kitty (**Joan Bennett**) as a prostitute living with her pimp, was passed in 1944, only for a furor to break out with several local censorship boards, including an outright ban in Atlanta, Milwaukee, and New York. Producer **Walter Wanger** and Universal's executives had to work strenuously to get these bans lifted. Chandler had problems with his only original screenplay, *The Blue Dahlia* (1946). He had to tone down the violence and brutality, drop all reflections on police incompetence, and promote its hero Johnny (**Alan Ladd**) in rank, thus making him more respectably middle class. Even then, he had to radically alter the ending because the navy objected to a naval officer "Buzz" Wanchek (**William Bendix**) being the killer, even though the crime was committed "under the stress of great and legitimate anger." Chandler had to substitute an old-fashioned and highly contrived dénouement in which the least likely suspect, the house detective, is revealed as the killer.

These battles over what was permissible became more sporadic in the 1950s, especially after the Supreme Court's decision in May 1952 that films were a "significant medium for the communication of ideas" and therefore subject to the same safeguards as the press under the First Amendment to the Constitution that guaranteed freedom. The Code was increasingly recognized as outmoded and no longer easily enforceable, nor was it a guide to what the general public would tolerate. Although it gradually became redundant, it was not replaced by a ratings system until 1968. *See also* BLACKLIST.

**CHABROL, CLAUDE (1930– )**. Profoundly indebted to **Alfred Hitchcock**, writer-director Chabrol has created another large body of films that exist alongside rather than fully within the ambit of film noir. He has worked with a small team of technicians throughout his career and has tended to use the same actors, giving his films the sense of a tight,

enclosed world that is instantly recognizable. Each has a sympathetic predator, the victim of circumstances that make their actions at least understandable. Chabrol's great theme is the tensions and dark secrets lying behind the facade of the respectable French bourgeoisie, beginning with *L'Œil du matin* (*The Third Lover*, 1963) indebted to *Vertigo* (1958). It was the "Hélène" cycle—*La Femme infidèle* (*The Unfaithful Wife*, 1968), *Que la bête meure* (*This Man Must Die*, aka *Killer!*, 1969), *Le Boucher* (*The Butcher*, 1969), *La Rupture* (*The Break*, 1970), and *Juste avant la nuit* (*Just Before Nightfall*; U.S. title *The Vice*, 1971)—that established his reputation.

Each film starred his then wife Stéphane Audran as an inscrutable protagonist and explored the instability of identity, the transference of guilt and class tensions that derived from Hitchcock. They also demonstrated the influence of **Fritz Lang** in their poised and economical focus on essentials and the use of *mise-en-scène* in an analytical and objective way. *Le Boucher*, set in a remote and enclosed village plagued by a serial killer, remains Chabrol's most celebrated film. It explores the struggle between the culture, refinement, and repression of the schoolteacher Mademoiselle Hélène (Audran) and the barbarian violence and sensuality of the butcher (Jean Yanne). Chabrol refuses easy moral judgements and creates a genuinely shocking ending.

After a fallow period, notable only for the political thriller *Nada* (*The Nada Gang*, 1974), Chabrol successfully relaunched his career with *Violette Nozière* (1978), his first film with Isabelle Huppert, based on a real-life crime in which a young woman murders her parents. *Poulet au vinaigre* (*Cop au vin*, 1985) and its sequel *Inspecteur Lavardin* (1986), starring Jean Poiret, were highly successful, more so than the **Patricia Highsmith** adaptation *Le Cri du hibou* (*The Cry of the Owl*, 1987), which was overly complex. However, *La Cérémonie* (*Judgement in Stone*, 1995), based on a Ruth Rendell novel and starring Huppert and Sandrine Bonnaire, was a masterful study of the murderous class tensions existing between a bourgeois family and its servants.

Chabrol's other noirs are *Les Noces rouges* (*Blood Wedding*, 1973), *Les Innocents aux mains sales* (*Innocents with Dirty Hands*, 1975), *Les Liens du sang* (*Blood Relatives*, 1978), *Au coeur du mensonge* (*The Color of Lies*, 1999), *Merci pour le chocolat* (*Nightcap*, 2000), *La Fleur du mal* (*The Flower of Evil*, 2003), *La Demoiselle d'Honneur* (*The Bridesmaid*, 2004), and *La Fille coupée en deux* (*The Girl Cut in Two*, 2009). See also FRENCH FILM NOIR.

**CHANDLER, RAYMOND (1888–1959).** Raymond Chandler was one of the most influential writers of the 20th century and the most important source of film noir, principally through adaptations of his novels, but also through his work as a screenwriter. He brought a complex, cultured, and partly British (Chandler was educated in England) sensibility to crime fiction that contained the longing for a vanished age as opposed to the cheap depravity of the present. His works were set in and around **Los Angeles**, and Chandler is its great chronicler, regarding it as a decadent, tawdry **city** pervaded by a deep-seated cultural decline. Chandler's strengths as a writer lay in description and dialogue, not plotting and structure.

Chandler was 44 when his first short story, "Blackmailers Don't Shoot," was published by *Black Mask* magazine in 1933. His first novel, *The Big Sleep*, appeared in 1939 and redefined the **private eye** through his detective Philip Marlowe. Although tough, hard-drinking, and good with his fists, Marlowe, as his name connotes, has a quasi-English refinement, a man of honor who, if no saint, is incorruptible, summed up in Chandler's famous phrase from *The Simple Art of Murder* (1940): "down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid." *The Big Sleep* was quickly followed by *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940), the first of his works to be adapted. But RKO's version, *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942), the third film in its "The Falcon" series, took little from Chandler except parts of the storyline, creating a lightweight confection—starring George Sanders as a debonair amateur sleuth—that the series' formula required. Chandler's third novel, *The High Window* (1942), was also extensively reworked by Twentieth Century-Fox as *Time to Kill* (1942), the seventh and final film in its "Michael Shayne" series, where Lloyd Nolan plays the brisk, no-nonsense private eye. Although more faithful to Chandler, it was essentially a mystery story, lacking the atmosphere of betrayal and menace that make him so congenial to film noir.

The first adaptation to retain those essential qualities was RKO's *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), an adaptation of *Farewell, My Lovely*, directed by **Edward Dmytryk** and starring **Dick Powell** as Marlowe. John Paxton's screenplay often uses Chandler's descriptions wholesale in Marlowe's intermittent narration. Warner Bros.' version of *The Big Sleep* (1946) was equally faithful to Chandler's voice and intentions and even more successful, with **Humphrey Bogart** becoming the definitive incarnation of Philip Marlowe. Much less successful was Fox's

second adaptation of *The High Window* as *The Brasher Doubloon* (1947), adapted by Dorothy Hannah. Although imaginatively directed by **John Brahm**, George Montgomery was, in most people's estimation, including that of the actor himself, too young and lightweight to play Marlowe. MGM's version of Chandler's 1943 novel, *Lady in the Lake*, released in 1947, had the noir menace, but writer-star **Robert Montgomery**'s decision to have the camera become Marlowe's eyes (we never see Marlowe unless in reflection) was too extreme an experiment in first-person narration.

Chandler was wary of working for Hollywood because such employment could "destroy the link between the writer and his subconscious. After that what one does is merely a performance." However, he was attracted by the high salaries offered and began working at Paramount in 1943. He combined with director **Billy Wilder** to adapt the **James M. Cain** novel *Double Indemnity* for the screen in 1944. Although he despised Cain as a "Proust in greasy overalls," Chandler managed, despite a tempestuous relationship with Wilder, to craft the film's celebrated dialogue and its exactitude about Los Angeles locations. Being on Paramount's payroll disqualified Chandler from adapting film versions of his own fiction for RKO or Warner Bros., but he coadapted *The Unseen* (1945). His only original screenplay, *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), is one of the best of the **troubled veteran** group of noirs, starring **Alan Ladd** and **Veronica Lake**. Chandler's story captures the disillusionment and bewilderment of men returning to a changed world, and he was very disappointed when its powerful ending was subverted by **censorship**. Chandler accepted an offer from Universal to write an original screenplay, *Playback*, but it was never produced and was eventually turned into a novel in 1957. He was hired to adapt **Patricia Highsmith**'s novel, *Strangers on a Train*, for **Alfred Hitchcock**, but on this occasion director and writer could not collaborate effectively and Chandler was eventually fired; Czenzi Ormonde completed the final rewrite.

Chandler died in 1959, but his work continued to be adapted. MGM made *Marlowe* (1969), adapted by Stirling Silliphant from Chandler's 1949 novel *The Little Sister*. James Garner was generally considered too lightweight for the role, and the adaptation strained to bring the character up-to-date and failed to capture the desolation of Chandler's bleakest novel. *The Long Goodbye* (1973), filmed 20 years after the novel had been published, was a thoroughly revisionist **neo-noir** directed by **Robert Altman** and brought a modern sensibility to Chandler's private

eye, whom Altman saw as “a *real* loser, not the false winner Chandler made out of him. A loser all the way.” By contrast, the British **remake** of *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) was a **retro-noir**, faithful to Chandler and set in the early 1940s, just before war was declared in America. Director Dick Richards wanted to do “pure Chandler” and considered **Robert Mitchum**, even at 57, perfect for the role. John Alonzo’s cinematography used warm, intense colors—deep reds, browns, and yellows—to evoke photographs and advertising posters from the early 1940s. The follow-up, a remake of *The Big Sleep* (1978), adapted and directed by Michael Winner and set in Home Counties Britain, missed its mark. Bob Rafelson directed *Poodle Springs* (1998), a made-for-television film adapted by Tom Stoppard from Robert Parker’s completion of Chandler’s unfinished novel. James Caan starred as an over-the-hill and out-of-date Marlowe who has just married a young heiress and now lives quietly in Poodle Springs, a wealthy desert town in Nevada, but gets dragged back into a sleazy and corrupt world.

Chandler’s work also provided material for **radio** noir, including *The Adventures of Philip Marlowe* (1947) with Van Heflin, then Gerald Mohr; and also noir **television series**, including *Philip Marlowe, Detective* (1958) with Philip Carey, and a second series in 1983 starring Powers Boothe. *See also* HARD-BOILED FICTION.

**CHINATOWN (1974).** *Chinatown* was one of the key films that redefined the potential of film noir and has become one of the definitive representations of **Los Angeles**. Although set in 1937, director Roman Polanski avoided any suggestion of a pastiche: “I saw *Chinatown* not as a ‘retro’ piece or conscious imitation of classic movies shot in black and white, but as a film about the thirties seen through the camera eye of the seventies.” It was photographed by John Alonzo in Technicolor and widescreen 40 mm Panavision/CinemaScope, but its surface beauty—almost every scene is bathed in warm California sunlight—only serves to emphasize the rottenness that lies at the heart of Robert Towne’s screenplay, based on the true story of the Owens River Valley scandal of 1908. Towne’s **private eye**, J. J. Gittes (**Jack Nicholson**), is no re-tread of Spade or Marlowe, but a new type, insolent and dandified. He is drawn inexorably into a typically noir investigation where the mystery continually deepens, the corruption becoming more profound. Its ruthless magnate, Noah Cross (**John Huston**), is quite prepared to destroy a city and copulate with his own daughter in order to preserve his power

and dynastic aspirations. In the dénouement in Chinatown itself, Gittes is powerless to prevent the death of the woman he loves, Cross's daughter Evelyn Mulwray (Faye Dunaway), shot by a police officer as she tries to drive away in a last attempt to get herself and her sister/daughter clear of her father. Gittes is led away by one of his colleagues, who tells him, "Forget it Jake, it's Chinatown," which echoes the words he used to hear from his superiors in the police force when they wanted his investigations to cease. Towne wanted a redemptive ending in which Evelyn kills her father, but Polanski was insistent that this bleak ending was appropriate to a truly dark noir that relentlessly exposes how the guilty can escape justice while the innocent suffer.

Towne intended *Chinatown* to be the first part of a trilogy that explored further moments in the "rape" of Los Angeles. The second part, *The Two Jakes*, was released in 1990 starring Nicholson, who also directed, but it was overlong and convoluted. Its tepid reception meant that plans for the third film were abandoned. *See also* NEO-NOIR.

**THE CITY.** Although some films noir take place in small towns and there is a disparate group of **country noirs**, the overwhelming majority are set in major cities where the pressures and angst of modern life and the sense of alienation, paranoia, and violence are intensified. In the noir city there are no bonds and communities, but a world of aggressive and threatening strangers, knowing no loyalties, its protagonists trapped and fearful in the dark, wet nighttime streets that glisten with reflected neon lights. Many noirs have "city" in their title: *City of Fear* (1959), *City of Shadows* (1955), *Cry of the City* (1948), *Dark City* (1950), *Night and the City* (1950), or *While the City Sleeps* (1956); many begin with an aerial or skyline nighttime panorama, a synoptic overview of the city beneath: **Los Angeles** in *Criss Cross* (1949) or **New York** in *The Big Combo* (1955). In *City That Never Sleeps* (1953), the personified "spirit" of the city of Chicago itself narrates the film.

Noir's preoccupation with city life is derived from its principal sources—German *Strassenfilm* (**street film**), **poetic realism**, and **gangster films**—but also from **Edward Hopper** and the "Blood on the Pavement" artists and the sensational photojournalism of **Weegee**, as well as a plethora of journalistic and sociological accounts. Above all, it derives from American **hard-boiled fiction**, whose focus on the city is summed up in **Raymond Chandler's** famous lines about the "mean streets . . . which are dark with something more than night."



The **private eye** often acts as the mediator of the corrupt, dangerous, and violent noir city, which has a fundamental ambivalence—squalid and corrupt, but also exciting and sophisticated, the place of opportunity and conspicuous consumption. Noirs, for instance, *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), often present a city of contrasts, sharply divided by wealth: dingy rooming-houses, rundown tenement blocks, dark alleyways, grimy diners, nondescript lunch counters, and squalid, smoke-filled bars, but also bright, garish night clubs, spacious luxury apartments, and imposing mansions. Because film noir deals with life-on-the-edge, the noir city is symbolically homeless and impermanent, populated by drifting anomic loners who are outsiders, without a defined role or function. There is a concentration on transient, liminal spaces: hotel lobbies, bus terminals, train stations, markets, racetracks, and sports arenas; and on the precarious: rooftops, walkways, bridges, high window ledges, unlit alleys, railroad tracks, and cars.

Noir's pervasive **existentialism** conceptualizes the city as an urban jungle, a bewildering labyrinth and a trap. On one level there is the actual physical maze of streets and alleyways, as in *Scarlet Street* (1945), where each turning introduces a new threat. On another level, this is expressed in the furtive motives, inner conflicts, and paranoia of the noir protagonists, unsure of their identity, as in noirs deriving from **Cornell Woolrich's** fiction including *Phantom Lady* (1944) and *The Guilty* (1947). On a third level, the city itself becomes a nightmare that cannot be fathomed because it is ruled by chance and coincidence, a city of fleeting shadows. Noir's victims descend, metaphorically, into an underworld, a nether city or necropolis that exists below the surface. Here the locales are emblematic: subway tunnels, underground car parks, the storm drains of *He Walked by Night* (1949), or the Viennese sewers of *The Third Man* (1949).

The noir city is both a metaphoric space and an authentic one. The **semidocumentary** noirs, notably *The Naked City* (1948), prided themselves on their extensive location shooting, the particularity and authenticity of their depiction of specific cities and buildings, in this case, New York. The cycle of **city exposé** noirs such as *Chicago Confidential* (1957) also favored a palpable, solid realism in what are supposedly genuine "revelations" about the vice and corruption permeating actual American cities. The exposé films were also expressive of a significant shift in the representation of the noir city between the 1940s and the 1950s. The early period showed an existentialist concern with the cen-

tripetal metropolitan inner city—densely populated, cramped, and built vertically—whereas by the 1950s the focus is on the centrifugal town with its spread-out, ribbon development. It was the shift from recognizable, monumental spaces to immaterial ones, as separation replaces proximity and concentration and the highway becomes the main focus, as in *Plunder Road* (1957).

**Neo-noir** has continued this preoccupation with the city, including the central focus on Los Angeles and New York as the principal locations, but it also encompasses other American cities: New Orleans in *Tightrope* (1984), Denver in *Things to Do in Denver When You're Dead* (1995), Miami in *Miami Vice* (2006), or Boston in *The Departed* (2006). European film noirs have also shown a preoccupation with the metropolitan city, be it Paris, London, Rome, Berlin, Madrid, Copenhagen, or Helsinki. Asian film noir is also city-located, principally Tokyo, Hong Kong, or Seoul. The metaphor of the nightmare city has taken on a new dimension in the futuristic Los Angeles of *Blade Runner* (1982) or *Strange Days* (1995), a city controlled by aliens in *Dark City* (1998) or the cyber-city in the Matrix trilogy (1999–2003). See also *L.A. CONFIDENTIAL*.

**CITY EXPOSÉ FILMS.** City exposé films noir formed a distinct group that was inspired, at least initially, by the televised Senate hearings on municipal corruption and organized crime chaired by Senator Estes Kefauver between 1950 and 1951. These films are also part of a longer tradition of periodic urban exposés in American journalism and literature that purported to reveal the hidden truth of American urban life, but which often focused on the more lurid and sensational aspects of their material. The most influential example was the four books cowritten by journalists Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer that began with *New York Confidential* (1948). They popularized the term *crime syndicate* and preyed on American fears of a ruthless, organized underground corporation poised to take over.

Although anticipated by *The Enforcer* (1951), in which the tireless District Attorney Martin Ferguson (**Humphrey Bogart**) battles a murder syndicate run by Mendoza (Everett Sloane), the city exposé cycle began with *The Captive City* (1952), which ended with an investigative reporter (John Forsythe) giving evidence about the dark side of his “small and friendly” town, Kennington, at the Kefauver hearings in Washington; it had an epilogue spoken by Kefauver. Other exposés

followed: *Kansas City Confidential* (1952), *The Turning Point* (1952), *The Miami Story* (1954), *Chicago Syndicate* (1955), *Inside Detroit* (1956), *Chicago Confidential* (1957), *Las Vegas Shakedown* (1955), *New Orleans Uncensored* (1955), *New York Confidential* (1955), **Phil Karlson's** *The Phenix City Story* (1955), *The Houston Story* (1956), *Miami Exposé* (1956), *New Orleans After Dark* (1957), and *Portland Exposé* (1957). Typically, they deploy a quasi-documentary mode and are often introduced, as in Harold Schuster's *Portland Exposé*, by an authoritarian voice-over. In this example, the anonymous narrator contrasts the beauty and wholesomeness of this "modern family town" with the dark forces of "crime and vice" that threaten it, highly organized protection rackets that seem to be a return to the dark days of the Prohibition era. Like the **semidocumentary** noirs, the city exposé films were photographed in an anonymous **visual style** with flat, naturalistic lighting and conventional camerawork and were primarily filmed on location—"in the same spots where it happened" as the poster for *New Orleans After Dark* proclaimed—and sometimes used nonprofessionals, including policemen, in minor roles. *See also* THE CITY.

**CLARK, DANE (1913–1998).** Clark worked under his birth name Bernard Zanville until 1943 when he changed it to Dane Clark. He appeared in a number of "B" feature noirs in both America and Britain before going into television. The first was *Moonrise* (1948), perhaps his best role, in which he played a young man haunted by the knowledge that his father was hanged, making him a social pariah and psychologically crippled. *Whiplash* (1948) was a second-drawer version of *Body and Soul* (1947), with Clark as an ambitious, working-class prizefighter, typical of his "Joe Average" persona. In the first of Clark's three **British films noir**, *The Gambler and the Lady* (U.S. title *Blackout*, 1952), he was cast atypically as a **gangster**, but in *Murder by Proxy* (U.S. title *Blackout*, 1954) and *Five Days* (U.S. title *Paid to Kill*, 1954), he again played ordinary men trapped by circumstances.

Clark's other noirs are *The Glass Key* (1942), *A Stolen Life* (1946), *Gunman in the Streets* (1950), and *The Man Is Armed* (1956).

**COBB, LEE J. (1911–1976).** Leo Jacoby Cobb was an imposing, thickset actor, tough and harsh-voiced, who played intelligent, hard-bitten characters on either side of the law. In his first noir, *Johnny O'Clock* (1947), he played a case-hardened detective convinced that the title character

**(Dick Powell)** is redeemable. In *The Dark Past* (1948), Cobb had a more substantial role as a police psychiatrist who, in flashback, tells the story of his ultimate success in curing and rehabilitating a disturbed young man (William Holden) of his psychopathic tendencies. He was a blustering Chicago newspaper editor in *Call Northside 777* (1948) who, initially interested only in boosting circulation, ultimately supports the crusade of his reporter (James Stewart) for justice. By contrast, Cobb's cynical and ruthless wholesaler in *Thieves' Highway* (1949) will stop at nothing in his exploitation of workers. Starring rather than supporting roles came in *The Man Who Cheated Himself* (1951), where he played a long-serving policeman who compromises his integrity in helping his mistress, a married woman, cover up a murder, and *The Garment Jungle* (1957), as a ruthless, self-made entrepreneur who refuses to allow unions into his clothing factory but who has, in the process, compromised himself by using hoodlum muscle. Cobb returned to supporting roles in *Party Girl* (1958) and *The Trap* (1959).

Cobb's career was blighted by the **blacklist**. Although he initially denied his Communist affiliations, he admitted to them in the second round of trials in 1953 following intense pressure.

**COCHRAN, STEVE (1917–1965).** Steve Cochran, dark and powerfully built, gave a genuinely menacing performance as the psychotic **gangster** Eddie Roman in his first noir *The Chase* (1946), adapted from a **Cornell Woolrich** story. He played similar roles in *The Damned Don't Cry* (1950), starring **Joan Crawford**, and in *Highway 301* (1950) as the leader of a vicious gang of armed robbers on the run. In the underrated *Tomorrow Is Another Day* (1951), he had a more complex role that showed his range as an actor, playing a man who has served 18 years for a crime he did not commit and who struggles to adjust after his release. He becomes involved with a cheap dance-hall girl (Ruth Roman), and when her protector is accidentally killed, they flee together as an ill-sorted **outlaw couple**. Cochran is superb as an emotionally adolescent man trapped in a prizefighter's body, groping toward an understanding of the world and his own responsibilities.

His later roles played on this ambivalence. His **corrupt cop** in **Don Siegel's** *Private Hell 36* (1954) was an emotionally remote loner who illicitly pockets the proceeds of a robbery because he thinks it will make him more attractive to nightclub singer Lilli Marlowe (**Ida Lupino**). In Roger Corman's *I, Mobster* (1958), told mainly in flashback, he plays

another gangster, intelligent and shrewd, but again emotionally underdeveloped, torn between the secure world of his loving Italian-American parents and a life of crime. He gave another accomplished performance in *The Beat Generation* (1959) as a troubled, alienated man, a policeman who cannot accept his wife after she has been raped by a serial killer with whom he shares a similarly unstable misogyny.

Cochran went into television in the 1960s, appearing in *The Twilight Zone* (1959) and *Naked City* (1960), but he died in 1965 aged only 48. His other noirs are *White Heat* (1949), *The Weapon* (GB 1957), and *The Big Operator* (1959).

**COEN, JOEL (1954– ) AND ETHAN (1957– ).** The brothers Joel and Ethan Coen have shared the roles of producer, writer, director, and editor in a career that now spans 25 years, during which they have made a number of distinctive **neo-noirs** that restlessly experiment with noir conventions and subvert expectations. Their first film, *Blood Simple* (1984), inspired by **Dashiell Hammett** and **James M. Cain**, was an innovative **country noir** that transferred a familiar tale of corruption, greed, and betrayal to a contemporary Texas landscape. *Miller's Crossing* (1990), which reworked the gangster-noir **hybrid** in its unusual, Prohibition-era story of rival Italian and Irish mobs struggling for control of an unnamed small town, was indebted to Hammett's *The Glass Key*. The central figure, Tom (Gabriel Byrne), is an **existentialist** antihero, trapped in a moral no-man's-land where he is unsure of his own motives and allegiances. *Fargo* (1996), which won the Coens an Oscar for Best Original Screenplay, had a familiar plot of a kidnap that goes wrong, but it has a highly unusual setting: rural Minnesota in mid-winter. Roger Deakins's accomplished cinematography creates a desolate landscape of fused white sky and land, the tale's bleakness redeemed by the warm humanity of heavily pregnant Police Chief Marge Gunderson (Frances McDormand, who won an Oscar).

*The Big Lebowski* (1998), which makes reference to **Raymond Chandler's** *The Big Sleep* (1946) in its wheelchair-bound businessman, was another change of tack, a hybrid noir comedy in which Jeff "The Dude" Lebowski (Jeff Bridges) blunders into a crime mystery he is incapable of solving. It has become a cult hit. By contrast, *The Man Who Wasn't There* (2001) was a deeply serious **retro-noir**, set in 1949, filmed in color and then reprocessed into lustrous black-and-white and photographed by the Oscar-nominated Deakins. Replete with allu-

sions to *Scarlet Street* (1945), *The Man* is narrated by passive, chain-smoking Ed Crane (Billy Bob Thornton), a small-town California barber. In a series of cruel ironies, Ed, trapped in a life he hates, inadvertently kills the lover of his wife Doris (Frances McDormand), only for Doris to be arrested for the crime and to hang herself in a cell. Ed's is a representative tragedy of anonymous modern man, unable to achieve the life he desires in this powerful noir that delineates a spiritual malaise.

*No Country for Old Men* (2007), a return to the Texas of *Blood Simple*, was the Coens' most critically applauded film, winning Oscars for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Adapted Screenplay for their adroit adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's novel. The Coens use a familiar noir story of greed and betrayal to explore the power of evil, represented by Anton Chigurh (Javier Bardem), a sociopathic **hit man** who pursues Everyman Llewelyn Moss (Josh Brolin) after he takes a case of money he accidentally discovers in the aftermath of a drug-deal-turned-massacre. Chigurh appears to be the instrument of a malign but inexorable fate, one that the decent sheriff investigating the affair (Tommy Lee Jones), bewildered and frightened, can neither stop nor comprehend.

**COLLATERAL (2004).** Michael Mann's *Collateral* is, along with Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Samourai* (1967), the definitive portrait of the **hit man**. Mann worked with screenwriter Stuart Beattie on fleshing out the characters while retaining the "poetic intensity" and strong structure of Beattie's script, *The Last Domino*. *Collateral* was shot on high-definition digital video, enabling Mann to photograph characters in midshot or even in close-up without losing the sharpness of the background, thus creating a heightened realism, a three-dimensional space even at night that is nevertheless ominous. Like Mann's earlier *Heat* (1995), *Collateral* concentrates on the confrontation between two men with contrasting personalities. Vincent (Tom Cruise), the immaculately groomed hit man, has the male beauty and cool elegance of Mann's long line of self-destructive antiheroes. He flies into **Los Angeles** from an unspecified American town like an angel of death, with a tight schedule of multiple hits to be performed in a single night to kill potential witnesses at a Grand Jury trial. By chance he chooses the cab of mild, affable Max (Jamie Foxx), an indecisive dreamer who has ambitions to run a fleet of limousines but lacks the drive to achieve it. Vincent takes Max prisoner and forces him to drive to the various destinations and, in a series of deftly orchestrated scenes, the two get to understand each

other's lives and motivations, Vincent's self-serving nihilism and Max's laid-back underachievement. Like Raven in *This Gun for Hire* (1942), Vincent is psychologically damaged, beaten by his father, unable to remember his mother, and exacting an obscure revenge on society. Max embodies the values the hit man lacks: the capacity for love, friendship, and tenderness. Max triumphs, rescuing the beautiful state prosecuting lawyer (Jada Pinkett Smith) and killing Vincent in a subway gun battle. However, it is the austere dignity of Vincent's death, collapsing from his wounds and dying quietly on an anonymous subway seat, that stays in the mind.

**COMICS/GRAPHIC NOVELS.** Comic books emerged in the 1930s. The first depicting crime stories was *Detective Picture Stories* in 1936, followed swiftly by the highly successful *Detective Comics* in 1937. Both were influenced by **hard-boiled fiction** and introduced a series of tough investigators working at night in dark urban streets who encountered vicious gangsters and sexy femme fatales. A grittier, realistic vein was pioneered by *Crime Does Not Pay*, which ran from 1942–55. Many others followed, including *Criminals on the Run*, *Lawbreakers Always Lose*, *Inside Crime*, *Wanted*, *Fight Against Crime*, and *Murder Incorporated*, providing one of film noir's neglected cultural contexts. **Mickey Spillane's** comic-strip hero Mike Danger was the prototype for Mike Hammer, one of a number of private eyes that emerged, including Johnny Danger and Johnny Dynamite. Other noirish comic-strip creations included sleuths that crossed the law enforcer with the superhero, notably Bob Kane's *Batman*, who first appeared in May 1939, patrolling the mean streets of a nocturnal Gotham City; Charles Biro's *Steel Sterling*, who threw himself into a vat of molten steel to emerge as an invulnerable revenger under the guise of an ordinary gumshoe; and Will Eisner's blackly comic *The Spirit* (1940–52), another near-invulnerable masked hero returned from the grave, who roams Central City, a noir world of dilapidated tenements and dark, labyrinthine, predatory streets.

Powerful protests were lodged against these crime comics on the grounds that they glorified violence and corrupted juveniles. A Senate Subcommittee was convened in 1954, led by Estes Kefauver, that focused on these misgivings, and the genre declined after this point. It was, eventually, succeeded by the graphic novel, a term popularized by Eisner after the late 1970s. Numerous noir graphic novels emerged in

America and, in Japan, the more violent manga comics. The most influential author/artist was Frank Miller, an avid fan of hard-boiled fiction and film noir. Miller reinvigorated the Batman franchise with *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (1986) and *Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again* (2002), which portrayed a psychologically damaged, **existentialist** hero always uneasily poised on the brink of vigilantism. Miller's visuals were expressionist and his Gotham City a place of terror and dread. Miller also created a 13-part serial (April 1991 to June 1992) under the general title *Sin City* that was even more thoroughly noir in conception and execution.

Miller's graphic novels have formed the basis for several **neo-noirs**: Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989), **Christopher Nolan's** *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Dark Knight* (2008), and Roberto Rodriguez's *Sin City* (2005), which Miller codirected. He was sole director of *The Spirit* (2008), with Gabriel Macht as Denny Colt/The Spirit taking on a range of grotesque villains in this uneven excursion. Other notable neo-noirs derived from graphic novels include Sam Mendes's *Road to Perdition* (2002), a **gangster** noir set in the 1930s; *From Hell* (2001) about Jack the Ripper; the Wachowski Brothers' *V for Vendetta* (2005), set in a future dystopian, fascist Britain; and *Constantine* (2005), about an occultist of dubious reputation, which derived from Alan Moore's work. David Cronenberg's *A History of Violence* (2005), based on John Wagner's graphic novel, depicts a hero (Viggo Mortensen), who cannot, in true noir fashion, escape his criminal past. *See also* HYBRIDS; VISUAL STYLE.

**CONTE, RICHARD (1910–1975).** Richard Conte was one of the few film noir male actors who could play, with equal conviction, both villains and heroes: a charming, ostensibly helpful nightclub owner who is nevertheless a ruthless murderer in *Somewhere in the Night* (1946), or an incorruptible homicide detective in *The Sleeping City* (1950). In **Robert Siodmak's** *Cry of the City* (1948), his quick-witted, charismatic **gangster**, Martin Rome, is the perfect foil for the stolid, puritanical policeman (**Victor Mature**), from the same intimate Italian-American neighborhood. Indeed, it was Conte's ability to project a moral ambiguity that gave his characters depth, as in his "two-sided" gangster in *The Raging Tide* (1951) or his ruthless **hit man** in *New York Confidential* (1955), harboring an **existential** conviction that, as the son of a gangster, he is fated to live the life he does and is powerless to save those he



cares for before he is himself “silenced.” Conte gave his most powerful performance as the corporation boss in *The Big Combo* (1955), another charming but vicious gangster who takes a sadistic pleasure in violence. Conte’s moral ambiguity is perfect for his role as the elder brother Eddie in **Phil Karlson’s** *The Brothers Rico* (1957), a man trying to escape from the Italian ghetto in New York where he grew up and to become a successful businessman but who knows he must return to the corrupt urban world to try to protect his brothers. Conte’s iconic status was used by Francis Ford Coppola in *The Godfather* (1972) as Don Vito Corleone’s rival, Don Barzini.

Conte’s other noirs are *The Spider* (1945), *House of Strangers* (1949), *Whirlpool* (1949), *Hollywood Story* (1951), *Under the Gun* (1951), *The Blue Gardenia* (1953), *Highway Dragnet* (1954), and *The Big Tip-Off* (1955).

**COOK, ELISHA, JR. (1903–1995).** Cook’s diminutive size, scrawny appearance, woeful baby face, and the neurotic intensity of his performances meant that he was typecast in his numerous films noir as a victim or as a would-be hoodlum desperate to prove himself. In *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), he played a characteristic role as a hapless taxi driver accused of murder, placed on trial, and committed to prison, but who is eventually reprieved when the real killer (**Peter Lorre**) is found. In *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941) he was a similarly nervous loner who does indeed turn out to be the murderer, occupying a squalid room papered with pictures of the showgirl he has killed. One of his best roles came in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) as the weaselly gunsel Wilmer, always about to pull his trigger, but constantly abused by his boss (**Sydney Greenstreet**) and humiliated by Sam Spade (**Humphrey Bogart**). He had a memorable role, or at least sequence, in *Phantom Lady* (1944), as a small-time band member who plays his drums orgasmically in order to impress the sleuthing secretary (**Ella Raines**). As **Lawrence Tierney’s** sidekick in *Born to Kill* (1947), he was prepared to go to any lengths to protect his psychopathic friend but is killed for his pains: Cook, famously, rarely survived to the last reel. One of his best later roles was as the weak, cuckolded husband of **Marie Windsor** in *The Killing* (1956), who is eventually pushed beyond his limits and kills her. Cook became a noir icon, reprising his Wilmer role in *The Black Bird* (1975) and used symbolically as the taxi driver in Wim Wenders’s *Hammett* (1982).

Cook also appeared in noir **television series**, including *Johnny Staccato* (1959–60) and *Peter Gunn* (1960). His other noirs are *Dark Waters* (1944), *The Big Sleep* (1946), *Fall Guy* (1947), *Born to Kill* (1947), *The Gangster* (1947), *The Long Night* (1947), *Don't Bother to Knock* (1952), *I, the Jury* (1953), *Accused of Murder* (1956), *Chicago Confidential* (1957), *Plunder Road* (1957), *Baby Face Nelson* (1957), *The Wrong Man* (1956), and *The Outfit* (1973).

**COREY, WENDELL (1914–1968).** Wendell Corey played a number of key supporting roles in various films noir; his characters are usually weak, biddable creatures, easily manipulated. As the brother of the ex-con (**Burt Lancaster**) in *I Walk Alone* (1948), Corey gradually realizes his weakness in helping his brother's corrupt partner (**Kirk Douglas**) succeed. In *The Accused* (1949) he was second lead to Robert Cummings, playing a stolid homicide detective reluctantly investigating the guilt of a woman (Loretta Young) with whom both men are in love. His best role came in *The File on Thelma Jordon* (1950), as an assistant district attorney (Cleve Marshall) whose involvement with femme fatale Thelma (**Barbara Stanwyck**) shatters his marriage and his career. Cleve, a sympathetic, even tragic figure, gradually becomes more and more enmeshed as he lies and covers up for Thelma, even planning her defense in the trial in which he is the prosecutor. In *The Killer Is Loose* (1956), he played an unusual role as "Foggy" Poole, a myopic bank clerk who colludes in a robbery but who blames the supervising officer, Sam Wagner (**Joseph Cotten**), for his wife's accidental death when they come to arrest him. Escaping from prison, he terrorizes Wagner and his wife in their home before being shot.

Corey's other noirs are *Desert Fury* (1947), *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), *Rear Window* (1954), and *The Big Knife* (1955).

**CORRUPT/ROGUE COPS.** Police corruption is a major theme in film noir both as an index of a more widespread social malaise and the breakdown of law and order. The cop himself can, like the **troubled veteran**, be depicted as a frightening figure, trained to kill, skilled in covering up his tracks and possibly psychotic, as in **Laird Cregar's** Lieutenant Cornell in *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941). The rogue cop may have a basic decency and try to redeem himself: **Robert Taylor** in *The Bribe* (1949) and *Rogue Cop* (1954), and Gig Young in *City That Never Sleeps* (1953); or he may be corrupted too far: **Van Heflin** in *The*

*Prowler* (1951), **Lee J. Cobb** in *The Man Who Cheated Himself* (1951), **Fred MacMurray** in *Pushover* (1954), **Steve Cochran** in *Private Hell 36* (1954), or **Orson Welles** in *Touch of Evil* (1958). A third group, the most complex, become violently unstable through their loathing of the criminals with whom they have to deal: **Dana Andrews** in *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950), **Kirk Douglas** in *Detective Story* (1951), **Glenn Ford** in *The Big Heat* (1953), or **Robert Ryan** in *On Dangerous Ground* (1952), who is shown on the verge of breakdown as he pummels a confession out of another small-time hoodlum. By contrast, **Edmond O'Brien** in *Shield for Murder* (1954) is animated solely by greed, the inverted image of the ambitious American professional, as he murders to acquire his longed-for suburban home.

In **neo-noir** the corrupt cop has become the norm rather than the exception. In *Tightrope* (1984), detective Wes Block (**Clint Eastwood**) shares many disturbing characteristics with the serial killer he pursues relentlessly through the New Orleans *demimonde*. Mike Figgis's *Internal Affairs* (1990) recalls *Touch of Evil* in its duel between a corrupt cop (Richard Gere) and the arrow-straight but emotionally repressed bureau of internal affairs investigator (Andy Garcia), insecure as an Hispanic outsider in a white community. In *Unlawful Entry* (1992), Ray Liotta played an outwardly charming and attractive cop who has become violent and psychotic through his dealings with "scum." In *Cop Land* (1997), Sylvester Stallone plays the sheriff of a small New Jersey town occupied exclusively by police officers from New York City whom he gradually discovers are all on the take or involved in cover-ups of serious crimes. The acclaimed *L.A. Confidential* (1997), set in 1952, was a complex exploration of police corruption at various levels. **Denzel Washington** gave a commanding performance in *Training Day* (2001) as a veteran narcotics officer who initiates a young rookie in the grim realities of police intimidation and corruption before overreaching himself. *Dark Blue* (2002), set in the days preceding the acquittal of four white officers for the beating of black motorist Rodney King and the subsequent **Los Angeles** riots in April 1992, used a similar scenario.

Other corrupt cop noirs include: *Night Editor* (1946), *Murder Is My Beat* (1955), *The Strange Affair* (GB 1968), *The Offence* (GB 1972), *Q & A* (1990), *Bad Lieutenant* (1992), *Night Falls on Manhattan* (1996), and *The Black Dahlia* (2006). See also MEN.

**COTTEN, JOSEPH (1905–1994).** Cotten made his Broadway debut in 1930, but the formative moment in his career was when he joined **Orson Welles's** Mercury Theatre Company in 1937. He starred in both *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) and in Welles's early noir *Journey into Fear* (1943), which he adapted (with Welles) from **Eric Ambler's** wartime thriller. Cotten plays a naval engineer who possesses life-threatening information. Cotten's old-world charm, coupled with his deliberate movements and soft, southern drawl, allowed him to play the conventional hero, as in *Gaslight* (1944) and *Beyond the Forest* (1949), or the out-of-his-depth innocent Holly Martins opposite Welles's suave villain Harry Lime in *The Third Man* (1949). His most effective roles were ones in which this sense of stolid uprightness belied a sinister undertone. In **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), he played the charming Uncle Charlie, the idol of his niece Young Charlie (Teresa Wright), whose affability masks a deep corruption as the "wealthy widows' killer." He played a similar role in Hitchcock's *Under Capricorn* (1949) and in the underrated *Walk Softly, Stranger* (1950), as a gambler who returns to his hometown and falls in love with a wheelchair-bound heiress (Alida Valli) but whose past catches up with him.

Cotten's career dipped in the 1950s, and he appeared in less-prestigious features. He played the beleaguered Everyman in *The Steel Trap* (1952), *A Blueprint for Murder* (1953), and *The Killer Is Loose* (1956), and he had a cameo role in Welles's *Touch of Evil* (1958). His most interesting part came in **Henry Hathaway's** *Niagara* (1953). He played a **troubled veteran** of the Korean War, George Loomis, who is recently released from a psychiatric hospital. Unhappily married to a much younger wife (Marilyn Monroe), Loomis proves resourceful enough to foil the attempt of his wife's lover to kill him and strangle her before meeting his death on the falls. Cotten played a minor role in the **neo-noir** *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977).

**COUNTRY NOIR.** Although the overwhelming majority of films noir have urban settings, a significant number of **neo-noirs** take place in the wide-open spaces of the American South or West. This subgrouping was created by the merging of film noir and the road movie, resulting in a **hybrid** form that retained the themes and characterization of noir but transposed them to a new milieu. Although there were precedents

in classic noir, particularly in the **outlaw couple** films, and those such as **Don Siegel's** *The Big Steal* (1949), where the protagonists escape to Mexico, the freedom of the open road in country noir is futile and meaningless where towns are “two bit shitholes in the middle of nowhere” as the villain in *Breakdown* (1997) puts it, riven by incest and murderous hatreds. Unlike the idyllic pastoral retreat depicted in classic noir—*Out of the Past* (1947) or *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950)—there is no rural hiding place untouched by the corruptions of city life. The panoramic establishing shots, often arresting in their beauty, with which country noirs frequently open, serve only as an ironic contrast to the sordid dramas that unfold.

The pathbreaking neo-noir was the **Coen Brothers' *Blood Simple*** (1984), set in redneck Texas. The Coens set *Fargo* (1996), with its resonantly named town Brainerd, in rural Minnesota and returned to Texas in their chilling *No Country for Old Men* (2007). Their influence was clearly felt in **John Dahl's** *Kill Me Again* (1989) and *Red Rock West* (1992), intricately plotted tales of double- and triple-cross located in the expansive mountains and desert landscapes of Nevada and Wyoming, respectively. Oliver Stone's *U Turn* (1997) took place in the depths of Arizona, the tale of a drifter (Sean Penn) trapped in a small town when his car breaks down and who is propositioned first by a husband (**Nick Nolte**) to kill his faithless wife (Jennifer Lopez) and then by the wife herself to kill her husband. Stone captures the claustrophobic, murderous tensions of small-time, broken-down, and isolated rural America. **Christopher Nolan's** *Insomnia* (2002) transposed the Norwegian setting of the original to Alaska, adding the burden of perpetual daylight to the problems that confront its world-weary investigator (**Al Pacino**), another example of the extreme locations that characterize this form of noir.

Other country noirs include: *The Red House* (1947), *Siesta* (1987), *Internal Affairs* (1990), *The Hot Spot* (1990), *Guncrazy* (1992), *White Sands* (1992), *Flesh and Bone* (1993), *Kalifornia* (1993), *Romeo Is Bleeding* (1993), *The Getaway* (1994), *The Way of the Gun* (2000), and *Confidence* (2003). See also THE CITY; REMAKES.

**CRAWFORD, BRODERICK (1911–1986).** The son of two vaudeville performers, the burly, rough-hewn, and gravel-voiced Crawford was best known for his Oscar-winning role as Governor Willie Stark in **Robert Rossen's** *All the King's Men* (1949), an extraordinarily powerful

performance depicting the gradual corruption of the people's champion. Crawford could play either menacing villains—as in the head of the “Syndicate” Charlie Lupo in *New York Confidential* (1955)—or gruff but decent law enforcement officials—as in his prison governor in *Convicted* (1950). In the underrated *The Mob* (1951), he played a cop who goes undercover among the mobsters who are controlling New York's docks and proves to be as tough as the criminals with whom he mixes. A richer, more ambivalent role came as Mark Chapman in **Phil Karlson's** *Scandal Sheet* (1952), the abrasive, bullying newspaper editor who accidentally kills the wife whom he deserted after she threatens to expose him. He uses all his skills to try to prevent his ace reporter (John Derek) from uncovering his guilt in what deepens into a near-classical tragedy of nemesis. Crawford became a household name as Chief Dan Matthews, the leading character in the long-running television series *Highway Patrol*, appearing in 154 episodes from 1955–59. He remained in television for the rest of his career.

Crawford's other noirs are *The Black Angel* (1946), *Human Desire* (1954), *Down Three Dark Streets* (1954), and *Big House, U.S.A.* (1955).

**CRAWFORD, JOAN (1905–1977).** Born Lucille Fay Le Sueur, Joan Crawford was a major prewar star for Warner Bros., often playing **women** who are stoical in adversity. This was the cornerstone of her first and arguably best noir performance (for which she won an Oscar), playing the title role in *Mildred Pierce* (1945). As the ambitious and overprotective mother, Crawford combines strength, tenacity, and a degree of vulnerability that lends her character depth and pathos. However, pressure from producer **Jerry Wald** meant that she had also to be a glamorous seductress. The role revived her flagging career, and she made several further noirs that also combine sexual attractiveness, ambition, and fallibility in differing degrees. In *Possessed* (1947) she plays an obsessive woman who becomes psychologically disturbed when her sexual desire is thwarted. In *Flamingo Road* (1949) she was an ambitious carnival dancer, trapped in a southern town run by a corrupt sheriff (**Sydney Greenstreet**), who gradually regains control of her life.

*The Damned Don't Cry* (1950) allowed her a more convincing role as another strong, tough-minded woman who refuses to be shackled by a drab, unfulfilling marriage. Although she becomes the mistress of a ruthless gangster (**Steve Cochran**), who uses her in a power struggle

with his rival, she retains her self-possession. Crawford received another Oscar nomination for her portrayal, in *Sudden Fear* (1952), of a powerful but vulnerable playwright who becomes involved with an *homme fatal* (**Jack Palance**) who tries to murder her, assisted by femme fatale **Gloria Grahame**. She had a similar role in *Female on the Beach* (1955), and in her final noir, *Queen Bee* (1955), she plays a southern socialite whose ruthlessness ruins the lives of everyone around her. Although this last role was a caricature version of her noir persona, Crawford's strong women are a distinctive presence in classic noir, offering a counterpointed image of the independent woman in noir's masculinist world.

**CREGAR, LAIRD (1916–1944)**. Although physically huge, Cregar had a suave, urbane presence that was highly distinctive. In *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941), he played the egregious detective Lieutenant Ed Cornell, whose obsessive love for the woman whose murder he is investigating has made him psychopathic and corrupt. Cornell is a complex creation, chilling, loathsome, and yet pitiable, with a silky, taunting voice and sick smile as he relishes framing his rival Frankie Christopher (**Victor Mature**) for the crime. In one memorable scene Frankie wakes to find Cornell perched at the end of his bed, gloating over the evidence he has collected, which also hints at a repressed homosexual desire. In *This Gun for Hire* (1942), Cregar had another crucial supporting role as unctuous, deceitful epicure Willard Gates, who hires Raven (**Alan Ladd**) as a **hit man**.

Cregar starred in two **Gothic** films noir set in London, both written by Barré Lyndon and directed by **John Brahm**. The first was *The Lodger* (1944), a remake of **Alfred Hitchcock's** 1927 film. Cregar's Jack the Ripper figure, whose precise diction and silken charm make him pathetic as well as repellent, was another multilayered study of a killer. He was even more effective in *Hangover Square* (1945), based on Patrick Hamilton's novel, as a young composer, George Harvey Bone, a schizophrenic who commits brutal murders during periodic blackouts and who kills his girlfriend (Linda Darnell) when he discovers her infidelity. Bone is in many ways a helpless, innocent figure, bewildered by what is happening to him and who, when he realizes what he has done, kills himself in a spectacular climax, wildly pounding out the concerto he has composed while the room around him goes up in flames and the ceiling crashes down on him.

In an attempt to move away from being typecast as the “sympathetic heavy,” Cregar went on a crash diet and died of a heart attack, aged only 28.

**CRISS CROSS (1949).** One of the most plangent and haunting of films noir, *Criss Cross* combines a keen depiction of everyday realities with a sense of inexorable fate. The decision to adapt Don Tracy’s 1934 pulp thriller was made by producer **Mark Hellinger**, but when he died before the production was fully under way, director **Robert Siodmak** assumed greater creative control. Jettisoning Anthony Veiller’s existing screenplay, Siodmak collaborated with **Daniel Fuchs** to fashion a story that extensively reworked Tracy’s novel, making it less tough and downbeat and centering much more fully on the doomed lovers, Steve Thompson (**Burt Lancaster**) and Anna (Yvonne De Carlo). Siodmak borrowed extensively from his own 1932 film *Stürme der Leidenschaft* (*Storms of Passion*) and orchestrated the entire action—beginning with a beautiful aerial shot that swoops down to reveal the furtive lovers in a car park menaced by an unseen threat—in order to create a sense of impending doom. **Franz Planer**’s accomplished camerawork creates a detailed sense of the realities of their lives and uses an expressionist register in the more melodramatic scenes.

Steve—a much more sympathetic figure in the screenplay, an ordinary guy from the working-class neighborhood of Bunker Hill in **Los Angeles**—recounts his story with an air of tragic fatality: “From the start it all went one way. It was in the cards. No way of stopping it. . . .” Thus the renewal of his relationship with his ex-wife Anna, his involvement with her husband, gangster Slim Dundee (**Dan Duryea**), and their robbery of the armored car firm for which Steve works, are all stages that lead inevitably to the final scene in the beach house where Steve and Anna confront each other. It is the clash between the romantic and the realist, with Steve still dreaming of their future together, while Anna, bags packed, prepares to leave the wounded man who will only be a liability as she tries to escape. In a deeply ironic romantic finale, the pair, shot by Dundee, die in each other’s arms, murmuring each other’s names, as if they were lovers in a classical tragedy. Behind them lies the moonlight ocean as **Miklós Rózsa**’s lush score swells to its peak, penetrated by the police sirens that signify Dundee’s capture.

*Criss Cross* was intelligently reworked as *Underneath* (1995), directed by Steven Soderbergh. See also REMAKES.



**CROSSFIRE (1947).** *Crossfire* was the most comprehensive of the group of noirs that deal with the problems of the **troubled veteran**. It depicts a group of soldiers waiting to be demobilized in Washington, D.C., in an atmosphere of intense instability and restlessness. The central protagonist is the gentle, artistic, and oversensitive Mitchell (George Cooper), nervous about returning to civilian life and being reunited with his wife after so long away. He becomes innocently involved with Samuels (Sam Levene), a Jew, who the aggressive Sergeant Montgomery (**Robert Ryan**) thinks has had a soft, profitable war—in fact he was honorably discharged after being wounded at Okinawa. Fuelled by drink and racist hatred, the psychotic Montgomery kills Samuels and tries to get Mitchell implicated. He also kills the witness Private Floyd (**Steve Brodie**), but he is eventually cleverly trapped by Detective Finlay (Robert Young), aided by the most levelheaded and sympathetic veteran, Sergeant Keeley (**Robert Mitchum**), who knows that the “snakes are loose.”

Edward Dmytryk’s direction uses low-angles, distorted perspectives, and harsh chiaroscuro compositions (photographed by J. Roy Hunt) to provide an appropriate *mise-en-scène* for this claustrophobic, out-of-kilter world. The dramatic opening plunges the audience *in media res* with the murder of Samuels in a room illuminated by a single lamp, knocked over in the struggle and by which we see the legs of two soldiers retreating in shadow. The events leading up to this are shown in several flashbacks, both Montgomery’s mendacious and self-serving one and Mitchell’s more extended recollection. In one of the most memorable scenes, Mitchell encounters “the Man” (Paul Kelly) who may or may not be the husband of Ginny (**Gloria Grahame**), whom he has picked up at a nightclub. This enigmatic figure—who emerges out of the shadows and talks about the meaningless posturings of his life—constitutes a spectral presence or “lost soul,” which embodies *Crossfire*’s pervasive sense of a restless, dislocated society.

The film’s source, Richard Brooks’s critically admired 1946 novel *The Brick Foxhole*, was transformed by screenwriter John Paxton into an antiracist film, as the subject of the novel, a homophobic killing, would not have been allowed by the Production Code. Producers **Dore Schary** and **Adrian Scott** were keen to emphasize this message, and thus Finlay’s homily about racist hatred is rather forced and indicates the tension between an overt social message and the noir perspective. However, it was a major element in the film’s enthusiastic reception. It

was nominated in five Academy Award categories in 1948: Best Supporting Actor, Ryan; Supporting Actress, Grahame; Best Screenplay; Best Picture; and Best Director. It did not win, losing out for Best Picture award to *Gentleman's Agreement*, also about anti-Semitism, but it won Best Social Picture Award at Cannes in 1947 and an Edgar in the 1948 Edgar Allan Poe Awards.

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**DA SILVA, HOWARD (1909–1986).** Howard Da Silva was a forceful character actor who contributed to a half-dozen noirs, beginning with *Strange Alibi* (1941), in which he played a callous prison officer. He continued to portray menacing villains, notably in **Nicholas Ray's** *They Live by Night* (1948), in which he was the brutal, one-eyed convict Chickamaw. Although he could play slick villains, as in *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), he was better suited to sadistic characters, including his memorable depiction of Owen Parkson, a vicious, crooked rancher who smuggles Mexicans with phony work permits over the border into California in **Anthony Mann's** *Border Incident* (1949). He was also effective as the egregious **gangster** Carl Durham in *The Underworld Story* (1950). After appearing in *Fourteen Hours* (1951) and **Joseph Losey's** *M* (1951), Da Silva was one of over 200 actors, writers, and directors whose careers were blighted by the **blacklist**, and he found roles difficult to come by.

**D'AGOSTINO, ALBERT (1892–1970).** Albert D'Agostino ran the Art Department at RKO from 1939 until his retirement in 1958, collaborating on, or supervising, the art direction of every RKO film, including over 40 films noir. His influence was important in the development of the distinctive glossy but realistic RKO look, forged in collaboration with **Val Lewton** on his series of low-budget psychological thrillers. It was developed in RKO's films noir, including *Out of the Past* (1947), with its crisp location shooting and carefully contrasted interiors, the Mexican café, the beach house in Acapulco, hotels, nightclubs, and apartments, and the gangster's luxurious Lake Tahoe mansion. D'Agostino's **expressionist** sets for the **Gothic** noirs *Experiment Perilous* (1944) and **Robert Siodmak's** *The Spiral Staircase* (1946) help to create a claustrophobic atmosphere dominated by the warped and

destructive psychology of the principal male characters. D'Agostino's 1950s sets show a characteristic tendency to shed expressive elements in favor of a functional realism, as in *Roadblock* (1951). However, in the late noir *The Unholy Wife* (1957), D'Agostino demonstrates his ability to design expressively in color, creating another oppressive mansion with deep threatening shadows, owned by the wealthy vintner (Rod Steiger).

D'Agostino's other noirs are *Johnny Angel* (1945), *Cornered* (1945), *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), *The Stranger* (1946), *Notorious* (1946), *The Devil Thumbs a Ride* (1947), *Born to Kill* (1947), *Desperate* (1947), *They Won't Believe Me* (1947), *Crossfire* (1947), *They Live by Night* (1948), *A Woman's Secret* (1949), *The Set-Up* (1949), *The Clay Pigeon* (1949), *Follow Me Quietly* (1949), *The Big Steal* (1949), *The Window* (1949), *Strange Bargain* (1949), *I Married a Communist* (aka *The Woman on Pier 13*, 1949), *The Threat* (1949), *A Dangerous Profession* (1949), *The Secret Fury* (1950), *Armored Car Robbery* (1950), *Where Danger Lives* (1950), *Born To Be Bad* (1950), *Walk Softly, Stranger* (1950), *Gambling House* (1951), *The Racket* (1951), *On Dangerous Ground* (1952), *Macao* (1952), *The Narrow Margin* (1952), *Clash by Night* (1952), *Beware My Lovely* (1952), *Angel Face* (1953), *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), *Split Second* (1953), *Second Chance* (1953), and *Chicago Confidential* (1957). See also HYBRIDS.

**DAHL, JOHN (1956–)**. John Dahl, a storyboard artist then music video director, wrote the screenplay for the **neo-noir** *P.I. Private Investigations* (1987), directed by Nigel Dick, in which a young architect is stalked by a criminal gang. When he became a film director, Dahl continued to make noirs, beginning with *Kill Me Again* (1989) and *Red Rock West* (1992), which he also cowrote. Although made-for-cable, they have a witty black humor and sophisticated **visual style** that prompted a cinema release and established Dahl's reputation. Both are notable contributions to **country noir**, set in Nevada and Wyoming, respectively. In *Kill Me Again*, second-class **private eye** Jack Andrews (Val Kilmer) is outmaneuvered by femme fatale Fay Forrester (Joanne Whalley Kilmer), who tries to escape with the money she stole with her violent and vengeful boyfriend Vince (**Michael Madsen**). *Red Rock West*, coscripted with brother Rick, starred Nicolas Cage as a sympathetic drifter who is mistaken by a local bar owner (J. T. Walsh) for the **hit man** he's hired to kill his wife, Suzanne (Lara Flynn Boyle). In

another complex tale of bluff and betrayal, she then hires him to kill her husband before the actual hit man, played by Dennis Hopper, appears. In the acclaimed *The Last Seduction* (1994), scripted by Steve Barancik, the figure of the femme fatale (**Linda Fiorentino**) reached its apotheosis as she destroys all the men who cross her path.

Dahl directed an episode of the **television** noir *Fallen Angels* before his first high-budget noir *Unforgettable* (1996), a horror noir **hybrid** in which Dr. David Krane (Ray Liotta), a police pathologist, relives the experiences of the victims of a serial killer, including his wife, by injecting himself with a serum based on their spinal fluids in order to trap the murderer and clear his own name. This variation on the Jekyll and Hyde archetype is shot in a highly visceral style but was rather labored and unsuccessful, and Dahl's career faltered. His road movie/noir **hybrid** *Joy Ride* (2001), a clichéd tale of three young people who are pursued by a psychotic truck driver, sat unreleased for over 18 months. *You Kill Me* (2007) is another hybrid: a comedy thriller, about an alcoholic Polish hit man (Ben Kingsley) trying to pull his life together and secure the family business against a rival Irish gang. Despite occasional witty moments, it was something of a misfire.

**DANIELS, WILLIAM H. (1901–1970).** Cinematographer William Daniels had a long and distinguished career, his most celebrated work being the 21 films he shot with Greta Garbo. His noirs are characterized by their realist style with extensive location shooting, as on *Lured* (1947), *Brute Force* (1948), and *The Naked City* (1948), for which he won an Oscar. However, ever an adaptable and versatile practitioner, Daniels shot *Abandoned* (1949) with oblique, vertical chiaroscuro lighting, where the low-key slick, damp streets imbue **Los Angeles** with a sinister malevolence. After shooting the undistinguished *Forbidden* (1953), he photographed one **neo-noir**, *Marlowe* (1969), in Metrocolor.

**DANISH FILM NOIR.** The German Occupation of Denmark (1940–45) encouraged increased indigenous film production to compensate for an import ban. This resulted in a wider generic mix of Danish movies, including the development of film noir. The central influences were **poetic realism**, **expressionism**, and also **Alfred Hitchcock's** British thrillers. The focus of early Danish noir was on ordinary people whose crimes are seen as part of the fabric of everyday life. The first identifiable Danish noir is *En Forbryder* (*A Criminal*, 1941), inspired by Marcel

Carné's films, a fatalistic tale employing flashbacks, a voice-over, and low-key lighting to create a dark and gloomy central Copenhagen where two ordinary people, a clerk and a shop assistant, murder to escape the clutches of a loan shark. *Afsporet* (*Derailed*, 1942) was a psychological drama, a doomed love affair in which a wealthy married woman suffering from amnesia becomes embroiled in an intense affair with a petty criminal from the notorious Nyhavn quarter of central Copenhagen. It was directed by the famous actress Bodil Ipsen, who also made two further noirs: *Besættelse* (*Obsession*, 1944), another erotic thriller, the affair this time was between an older wealthy man and a femme fatale who meet by chance, and *Mordets Melodi* (*Melody of Murder*, 1944) about a sexually ambiguous serial killer.

After the war the Hollywood influence became more prominent. *Kristinus Bergman* (1948), set in a shadowy, rain-swept provincial town, showed the continuing influence of poetic realism but also American **semidocumentary** police procedurals. Although the visual style is international, this story of four boys whose ill treatment at an orphanage led them into a life of crime had a pronounced social critique that was specifically national. *John og Irene* (1949), an international coproduction with Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian actors, set in Stockholm and America, was also based on an indigenous novel and focused on everyday life as a businessman and his wife try to escape poverty. There were occasional noirs in the 1950s, including *Blændværk* (*Delusion*, 1955), which also had ordinary people as protagonists.

Noir was revived in an extreme form by Lars Von Trier's *Forbrydelsens element* (*The Element of Crime*, 1984), a complex and densely allusive art film, made in English. It has several extraordinary sets created by production designer Peter Høimark and was shot by Tom Elling in sodium lighting (usually used on European autostrada) that gives it a bilious black and yellow color. Michael Elphick stars as Inspector Fisher, recalled from a 13-year exile in Cairo to investigate a series of hideous murders in which young girls have been mutilated. In his nightmare journey across a postapocalyptic northern Europe, Fisher gradually takes on the character of the chief suspect, Harry Grey, his *Doppelgänger*, and relives a sadistic relationship with Grey's mistress Kim (Me Me Lai).

Later **neo-noirs** were more commercial, notably the trilogy directed by Nicolas Winding Refn—*Pusher* (1996), *Pusher II: With Blood on My Hands* (2004), and *Pusher III: I Am the Angel of Death* (2005).

These are fast-paced, violent, and visceral films (with much handheld camerawork) about drug-dealing in the Copenhagen underworld. *Nordkraft* (*Angels in Fast Motion*, 2005) also dealt with drugs, but *Kærlighed på film* (*Just Another Love Story*, 2007) and *Kandidaten* (2008) marked a return to the concentration on ordinary people, the latter a classic noir tale in which the protagonist's attempt to prove his innocence opens up difficult issues from his past. *See also* FINNISH FILM NOIR; NORWEGIAN FILM NOIR.

**DASSIN, JULES (1911–2008).** One of eight children of an Austrian-Jewish barber in Connecticut and a French mother, Jules Dassin made a very significant contribution to film noir, though his contribution would undoubtedly have been more substantial if he had not been placed on the **blacklist** that forced him into exile.

Dassin's first noir *Brute Force* (1947)—one of the definitive **prison noirs**, in which the jail is depicted as a fascist state under the dictatorial power of Captain Munsey (Hume Cronyn)—displays Dassin's characteristic concern with rebels and outsiders who desperately seek to realize their aspirations for justice and a better life but whose desires are inevitably crushed. *The Naked City* (1948), the quintessential **semidocumentary** noir, was more upbeat, but it acknowledged the wasted lives and frustrated hopes of most New Yorkers. *Thieves' Highway* (1949), adapted from **A. I. Bezzerides's** novel, displayed Dassin's typical rugged realism in its depiction of San Francisco's wholesale fruit market riddled by corruption and violence. The Anglo-American coproduction *Night and the City* (1950) was more **expressionist**, based on Englishman Gerald Kersh's prewar thriller, a sordid and macabre tale of the London underworld. The supporting cast was British, but the principals American: Harry Fabian (**Richard Widmark**) and his long-suffering girlfriend Mary (**Gene Tierney**). Fabian, a club tout attempting to break into the wrestling circuit, is an over-reacher, an "artist without art" whose scheme to better himself leads to his death.

Although Twentieth Century-Fox's head of Production, **Darryl F. Zanuck**, had deliberately sent Dassin off to London to shoot the film in order to avoid being blacklisted, his comradely action merely postponed the inevitable. Dassin spent the rest of his career in Europe, but even in exile he struggled to get work. He was fired from a French film in 1953 because of pressure from the Hollywood studios, and the U.S. Embassy in Rome prevented him from completing a project in Italy in

1954. Dassin finally managed to make *Du rififi chez les hommes* (*Rififi*) in 1955. Dassin's screenplay was a loose adaptation of Auguste Le Breton's novel, and he also acted in a minor role. Here too the criminals are sympathetically viewed outsiders searching for a big break, but their hopes are inevitably doomed. *Rififi* was a major influence on subsequent **caper/heist** noirs and is Dassin's best-remembered film. *See also* BRITISH FILM NOIR; ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL; FRENCH FILM NOIR; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**DE NIRO, ROBERT (1943–)**. The son of Italian-Irish American parents and brought up in Little Italy, New York, Robert De Niro is a celebrated and highly accomplished actor who has had a major impact on the development of **neo-noir** in a variety of roles, but particularly through his close association with **Martin Scorsese**. De Niro starred in six Scorsese neo-noirs: *Mean Streets* (1973), *Taxi Driver* (1976), *Raging Bull* (1980), *Goodfellas* (1990), *Cape Fear* (1991), and *Casino* (1995), in each case portraying volatile, conflicted characters, uncertain of their identity. His performance in *Taxi Driver* is one of the most striking, capturing the masochistic physicality as well as the damaged psychology of the **troubled veteran** Travis Bickle. In a famous scene, Travis stares at his mirror reflection as if it were his ultimate antagonist: “You talkin’ to me? You talkin’ to *me*? Who the fuck do you think you’re talkin’ to?” It was an extraordinary image of the schizophrenic solipsist waging war on himself, trying out various guns and postures. As in *Mean Streets*, De Niro's Method-inspired acting—at once intense, meticulously planned, and apparently improvised and unpredictable—captures the unstable identity of contemporary urban man whose masculinity has become a succession of performances. He won an Oscar for his portrayal of the unstable boxer Jake La Motta in *Raging Bull*. The production was shut down for several months so that De Niro could put on 60 pounds in order to transform himself from a young, muscular boxer into the fat, seedy wreck La Motta becomes.

*Cape Fear* gave further evidence of De Niro's extraordinary ability to mold his body to the demands of the part, playing a menacing Max Cady, covered in garish tattoos, who plots his vengeance on the lawyer (**Nick Nolte**) responsible for his incarceration. In *Casino* he played a **gangster** based on the notorious Frank “Lefty” Rosenthal who ran several Las Vegas casinos for the Chicago mob in the 1970s and 1980s, giving a nuanced performance as a man whose acquisitive paradise

gradually crumbles along with his relationship with his wife and best friend. In **Michael Mann's** *Heat* (1995), De Niro gave another exceptional performance as master criminal Neil McCauley, an introverted loner harboring a deep sadness, contrasted with the edgy volatility of his pursuer, Lieutenant Vincent Hanna (**Al Pacino**). McCauley's relationships with Eady (Amy Brenneman), a bookstore clerk, and his younger associate Chris (Val Kilmer), undermine his single-minded professionalism and lead to his death, from Hanna's bullet, which has a near-tragic grandeur.

In the 1990s, De Niro set up his own production company, TriBeCa productions, becoming a producer and director, making his debut with the neo-noir *A Bronx Tale* (1993). Set in New York City during the 1960s, it depicts the struggle for a young man's loyalties between his natural father Lorenzo Anello (De Niro), a hard-working but impoverished bus driver, and the charismatic local mafia boss, Sonny, played by Chazz Palminteri, who also wrote the film. De Niro's direction is sure-footed, and his own performance is quietly self-possessed in a more subdued role. He also directed the political noir *The Good Shepherd* (2006) about the moral and emotional duplicity that were an inescapable part of the Central Intelligence Agency's formation. Matt Damon stars as the rising star of the service, recruited by General Bill Sullivan, played by De Niro in a minor role. De Niro returned to familiar ground in Jon Avnet's *Righteous Kill* (2008) as a volatile cop, Tom "Turk" Cowan, suspected of killing suspects but actually framed by his devious partner David "Rooster" Fisk (**Al Pacino**).

De Niro's other noirs are *True Confessions* (1981), *Angel Heart* (1987), *Night and the City* (1992), *Cop Land* (1997), *Jackie Brown* (1997), *Ronin* (1998), and *City by the Sea* (2002).

**DE PALMA, BRIAN (1940– )**. Although his films vary in quality, writer-director Brian De Palma has made a notable contribution to the development of **neo-noir** through a series of films that are bleak, pessimistic, often surreal nightmares that exhibit a consistent preoccupation with voyeurism, doubling, and conflicting identities in a single body. Densely allusive, with spectacular, brilliantly orchestrated set pieces, they often intensify techniques and scenarios borrowed from his cinematic inspiration **Alfred Hitchcock**. **Bernard Herrmann**, who wrote the score for De Palma's first two noirs, *Sisters* (1973) and *Obsession* (1976), was an acoustic connection between the two directors.



*Sisters* was a psychological thriller about the intense, murderous rivalry between two sisters that makes liberal use of unusual point-of-view shots and split-screen effects to show two events happening simultaneously from two separate viewpoints. *Obsession*, rewritten by De Palma from **Paul Schrader**'s screenplay, was De Palma's homage to *Vertigo* (1958). *Dressed to Kill* (1980) was similarly an homage to *Psycho* (1960), and *Body Double* (1984) to *Rear Window* (1954). However, the underrated *Blow Out* (1981) was more indebted to Coppola's *The Conversation* (1974) than Hitchcock. John Travolta starred as a humdrum movie sound effects technician who stumbles upon evidence of the possible assassination of the Pennsylvania governor and presidential hopeful. In a superbly choreographed chase through Philadelphia on Liberty Day, he is pursued by the psychotic hired **hit man** (John Lithgow). Lithgow played another psychotic in *Raising Cain* (1992), his fractured, multiple personality the result of abuse and torture by his mentally disturbed father, who, having faked his death, uses his son to procure the young children he needs to continue his experiments.

De Palma's ultraviolent remake of *Scarface* (1983) was less noir than *Carlito's Way* (1993), also starring **Al Pacino** as Carlito Brigante, the classic noir protagonist who longs to escape a life of crime but is sucked back through his corrupt lawyer, Kleinfeld (Sean Penn), who uses Carlito as a pawn in his double-dealings with the mob. *Femme Fatale* (2002), a Franco-American production, was another extended exploration of doubling and multiple identities. It is De Palma's most self-reflexive noir—the film begins with Laure (Rebecca Romijn) watching the ending of *Double Indemnity* (1944), her reflection superimposed on that of Phyllis Dietrichson's—and his most surreal, consistently hesitating between reality and dream. *The Black Dahlia* (2006), based on James Ellroy's 1987 novel, was De Palma's first **retro-noir**, set in **Los Angeles** in 1946. It is also suffused with a sense of entrapment and of the intermingling of past and present in its tale of two detectives—played by Josh Hartnett and Aaron Eckhart—who become obsessed with a murder, known as the “Black Dahlia” because of its brutal savagery, which gradually consumes their lives. *See also* MEN.

**DE ROCHEMONT, LOUIS (1899–1978).** Sometimes known as the “father of docu-drama,” Louis de Rochemont established his reputation making the *March of Time* newsreels in the 1930s and early 1940s, earning plaudits for dealing with controversial subjects. He transferred this

aesthetic and ideology to feature films, producing *The House on 92nd Street* (1945) and *13 Rue Madeleine* (1947), both directed by **Henry Hathaway** for Twentieth Century-Fox. They were highly influential in the development of the **semidocumentary** noir. *House* was the detailed reconstruction of an “actual case” depicting the destruction of a Nazi spy ring that had infiltrated wartime America. As the typically stentorian voice-over announces, this reconstruction was “photographed in the localities of the incidents depicted. . . . Wherever possible in the actual places the original incidents occurred, using Federal Bureau of Investigation employees, except for the principal players,” thereby giving an apparent authenticity to the material. De Rochemont had strong links with the FBI’s director, J. Edgar Hoover. In *Walk East on Beacon* (1952) the menace is now the Communist world, and George Murphy plays an FBI agent on the trail of a Soviet spy ring. *Boomerang!* (1947), directed by Elia Kazan, though again based on real-life events, included more fictional elements, depicting a falsely accused **troubled veteran** (Arthur Kennedy), brutalized by detectives into making a confession. The District Attorney who believes him innocent (**Dana Andrews**) is under pressure to convict by corrupt careerist politicians. *See also* RIGHT-WING CYCLE.

**DE TOTH, ANDRÉ (1912–2002).** The Hungarian-born director André De Toth worked in the British film industry before moving to Hollywood in 1942. His noirs are characteristically tense and spare, with the emphasis on realism, action, and location work. *Dark Waters* (1944) was an exception, an atmospheric Southern **Gothic** film noir in which Merle Oberon plays a shipwreck survivor whose relatives try to make her question her sanity. *Ramrod* (1947) and *The Man in the Saddle* were noir **hybrids**, tough, dark Westerns. *Pitfall* (1948) was the archetypal suburban noir with **Dick Powell** as a respectable insurance agent, Johnny Forbes, bored by his dull marriage, who has an affair with Mona (**Lizabeth Scott**). **Richard Widmark** starred in *Slattery’s Hurricane* (1949) as a **troubled veteran** involved in drug smuggling off the Florida coast, who narrates his story in flashback as he flies through the eye of the storm. *Crime Wave* (1954) and *Hidden Fear* (1957) were “B” crime features, but De Toth showed his feel for noir by combining fast-paced action with deft character touches and the occasional imaginative composition. His final noir was *The Two-Headed Spy* (1958) made in Great Britain, a spy thriller set during World War II and starring Jack Hawkins.

**DEADLY IS THE FEMALE.** See *GUN CRAZY*.

**DEKKER, ALBERT (1905–1968).** Tall and heavily built, Albert Dekker tended to play supporting villains rather than heroes, though in the early Southern **Gothic** noir *Among the Living* (1941), he starred in the dual role of respectable man and his insane, murderous twin brother. He was effective as the double-crossing gang leader in **Robert Siodmak's** *The Killers* (1946), but *The Pretender* (1947) gave him a choicer role as a middle-aged financial adviser trying to fleece his rich ward. Deciding that the best method is to marry her, he hires a **hit man** to eliminate his rival but becomes the target of the unknown assassin. Dekker's depiction of paranoia and fear gave his shabby character some depth. In *Destination Murder* (1950) and *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), he played world-weary aesthetes, lonely, scheming, and murderous, distinctive portrayals of villainy that showed his accomplishment as an actor.

Dekker's other noirs are *Night in New Orleans* (1942), *Experiment Perilous* (1944), *Suspense* (1946), and *Illegal* (1955).

**DELON, ALAIN (1935– ).** Alain Delon was, after **Jean Gabin**—with whom he appeared in *Mélodie en sous-sol* (*Any Number Can Win*, 1963), *Le Clan des Siciliens* (*The Sicilian Clan*, 1969), and *Deux hommes dans la ville* (*Two Men in Town*, 1973)—the most potent male actor in **French film noir**, but his appeal was also international. Delon's sensual but cold, self-absorbed male beauty allowed him to play an *homme fatal* in two René Clément noirs: *Plein Soleil* (*Purple Noon*, 1960) as the ruthless and predatory Ripley from **Patricia Highsmith's** novel, and the amoral but finally outmaneuvered con man in *Les Félines* (*Joy House*, 1964). He was more victim than villain in the late American noir *Once a Thief* (1965) set in San Francisco, pursued by the vengeful cop (**Van Heflin**) and manipulated by his brother (**Jack Palance**). Delon's trilogy of films for **Jean-Pierre Melville**—*Le Samourai* (1967), *Le Cercle rouge* (*The Red Circle*, 1970), and *Un flic* (*Dirty Money*, 1972)—deepened the Delon persona into a genuinely tragic figure, melancholy and utterly alone, with the star's performance distilled into a few exquisitely minimalist gestures. Delon continued to be strongly associated with **gangster** and crime films—especially the hugely successful *Borsalino* (1970) with Jean-Paul Belmondo—in his subsequent career as actor, director, writer, and producer, from *Flic Story* (*Cop Story*, 1975) through to the **television noir** series *Frank Riva* (2003–04).

Delon's other noirs are *Quand la femme s'en mêle* (*When a Woman Meddles*, 1957), *La Veuve Couderc* (*The Widow Couderc*, 1971), *Le Gang* (1976), *Mort d'un pourri* (*Death of a Corrupt Man*, 1977), *Pour la peau d'un flic* (*For a Cop's Hide*, 1981), *Le Choc* (*Contract in Blood*, 1982), *Parole de flic* (*Cop's Honor*, 1985), *Ne réveillez pas un flic qui dort* (*Let Sleeping Cops Lie*, 1988), and *Un crime* (1993). See also HIT MAN.

**DETOUR (1945).** Although *Detour* went largely unrecognized on its release, it has subsequently attained cult status as the quintessential "B" feature noir with a running time of 68 minutes. It was made on a small budget for Producers Releasing Corporation (PRC) by **Edgar G. Ulmer**, who shot the whole film in only six days and was limited to filming within a 15-mile radius of PRC's headquarters. However, its minimal plot, sets, and décor, disguised by the extensive use of fog and shadow—all designed to save costs—serve to create an existentialist nightmare in which its confused and guilt-ridden protagonist Al Roberts (Tom Neal), who narrates the story in voice-over, becomes the archetypal doom-laden Everyman. Al, another of noir's frustrated artists, hitchhikes his way toward **Los Angeles** to rejoin his girlfriend Sue (Claudia Drake), a singer trying to break into the movies. When the man who offers him a lift, Charles Haskell Jr. (Edmund MacDonald)—the long sequence of their drive westward is created by shots of two people in conversation against a rudimentary backdrop—dies accidentally, Al immediately assumes he will be blamed. By malign chance, the hitchhiker he picks up, Vera (Ann Savage), knew Haskell and demands that Al cooperate in her scheme to blackmail Haskell's family. Vera is a demonic, nightmare version of the femme fatale, cheap, vindictive, and ruthless. After Al accidentally kills her in their hotel room, the story returns to its starting point, a shabby **Hopperesque** diner outside Reno, in which Al anticipates the moment of his inevitable arrest, the police car emerging out of the ubiquitous fog, intoning grimly: "Yes, fate or some mysterious force can put the finger on you or me for no good reason at all." Lost amidst the indeterminate gloom, Al incarnates noir man, going nowhere, unable to escape his past and with no future.

A **remake** of *Detour* was released in 1992, directed by Wade Williams and starring Tom Neal's son, Tom Neal Jr. See also MEN.

**DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS (1995).** *Devil in a Blue Dress* was Carl Franklin's big budget adaptation of Walter Mosley's best-selling novel

set in 1948 **Los Angeles**, shot by Tak Fujimoto in lustrous widescreen photography. It followed the success of Franklin's *One False Move* (1992) and marked the re-emergence of **African American** noir, created by black filmmakers and featuring black protagonists. "Easy" Rawlins (**Denzel Washington**), the archetypal veteran down on his luck and out of work, innocently accepts a job to find a white woman, Daphne Monet (Jennifer Beals), the fiancée of a wealthy mayoral candidate, assumed to be hiding somewhere in the black community. Easy's search takes him into a netherworld as corrupt and threatening as anything in **Raymond Chandler**, filled with crooked cops, ruthless politicians, and vicious hoodlums. However, the presence of a black protagonist forces an audience to understand familiar scenes from a new perspective, to observe how his color creates barriers and threats at every turn. Daphne, despite appearances, is no femme fatale but a black woman passing as white, itself a comment on segregation. The film omits her confession of incest and also her lovemaking with Easy, softening the novel's subject matter in order to provide a more optimistic conclusion in which Easy returns to his suburban bungalow in a black neighborhood that is an uncontaminated haven of peace and security. His utopian perspective, not subject to irony, is very different from the unstable, fragmented perspectives of "white" noir. *See also* NEO-NOIR.

**DISKANT, GEORGE E. (1907–1965).** Diskant was principal cinematographer at RKO, where he developed a style of unforced realism with intermittent **expressionist** moments. In his first film noir, **Anthony Mann's** *Desperate* (1947), in the scene in which the hero is brutally beaten in a squalid basement hideout, Diskant lit the scene with a single electric light bulb that illuminates odd areas of the action as it swings about violently under the force of the blows. His most distinguished films are the pair he made with **Nicholas Ray**, *They Live by Night* (1948) and *On Dangerous Ground* (1952). In the latter Diskant precisely evokes both the squalid claustrophobia of the **city** and the contrasting pure, snow-clad landscapes of the countryside. His work on *The Narrow Margin* (1952) was also accomplished, imparting an air of threat to the glistening corridors of the train carriages in which the majority of the film is set. After photographing the brutally realistic **city exposé** *Kansas City Confidential* (1952), Diskant worked in noir **television series**, including *Richard Diamond, Private Detective* (1957–60), until his untimely death.

Diskant's other noirs are *A Woman's Secret* (1949), *Port of New York* (1949), *Between Midnight and Dawn* (1950), *The Racket* (1951), and *Beware My Lovely* (1952). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**DMYTRYK, EDWARD (1908–1999).** Born in Canada to Ukrainian parents, Edward Dmytryk worked his way through the studio system, becoming an editor for Paramount in the 1930s and a director by the end of the decade. He directed the **Universal horror film** *Captive Wild Woman* (1943) before joining RKO, where Dmytryk created three influential noirs in collaboration with producer **Adrian Scott** and screenwriter John Paxton: *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), *Cornered* (1945), and *Crossfire* (1947). *Murder, My Sweet* was the first noir to incorporate the essence of **Raymond Chandler**—the acerbic dialogue, the honorable but beleaguered private eye (**Dick Powell**) and a decadent and venal **Los Angeles**—as well as developing the **expressionist** lighting, disorientating compositions, and subjective camera work that **Orson Welles** had pioneered on RKO's *Citizen Kane* (1941). The studio owned the rights to *Farewell, My Lovely*, but its earlier adaptation, *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942), had jettisoned most of Chandler's novel; therefore, as Dmytryk commented in his 1978 autobiography, *It's a Hell of a Life But Not a Bad Living*, no one would spot that they were remaking it.

*Cornered* and *Crossfire* were two of the most important **troubled veteran** films. In both, Dmytryk was able to explore an important issue that reflected his left-liberal social concerns as well as his **existentialism**, a combination that characterized this period. In *Cornered*, Powell plays a Canadian pilot recently released from a prisoner-of-war camp intent on avenging the death of his French war bride. He eventually beats the perpetrator to death in one of the brief "trances" that have afflicted him since his incarceration. Although Dmytryk directs with his characteristic economy, he creates several occasions, as in *Murder, My Sweet*, in which Powell's bewilderment and disorientation is manifested strongly. In *Crossfire*, for which Dmytryk received an Oscar nomination, the social themes take greater precedence in this synoptic view of the problem of the transition to peace, but Dmytryk's treatment retains a strong existential element.

Despite this success, Dmytryk, who had very briefly been a member of the Communist Party, was investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and then imprisoned as one of the "Hollywood Ten" for refusing to cooperate. After several months in prison,

he went to Great Britain and directed three films, including *Obsession* (U.S. title *The Hidden Room*, 1949), a powerful noir in which a respectable English doctor (Robert Newton) locks up his wife's American lover, tormenting him with the intricacies of the slow and undetectable murder he has planned. Dmytryk returned to the United States in April 1951 and appeared before HUAC for a second time. He denounced several colleagues, including Scott and **Albert Maltz**, which caused bitter resentment but allowed him to work again in America. He then directed *The Sniper* (1952) about a mentally disturbed young man (Arthur Franz) who feels compelled to kill women but whose actions are treated sympathetically as an unrecognized social problem. Dmytryk also directed the noir **hybrid** *Mirage* (1965), a surrealistic sci-fi thriller starring Gregory Peck as an eminent scientist unsure if he is a killer. *See also* BLACKLIST; REMAKES.

**D.O.A. (1950).** Although little remarked upon when released, **Rudolph Maté's** *D.O.A.* is now recognized as the quintessential existentialist noir. Russell Rouse and Clarence Green's screenplay is indebted to **Robert Siodmak's** *Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht* (*The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer*, 1931) but constructs a remarkable and startling opening scene in which Frank Bigelow (**Edmond O'Brien**) marches through the seemingly endless double doors of a police station in **Los Angeles** and announces, to the bemused captain, that he wishes to report his own murder. In flashback, Bigelow recounts his story, a certified public accountant leading a dull life in Banning, California, who, on vacation in San Francisco, is diagnosed with radiation poisoning and given 48 hours to live. When the doctor explains that it must have been deliberate and that he has been murdered, Bigelow runs furiously out through the sunlit streets amid the jostling crowds of indifferent citizens in a desperate attempt to escape his fate.

Determined to find his killers, Bigelow plunges into the noir "chaos world" of corrupt businessmen and psychotic killers, including Chester (Neville Brand), who enjoys inflicting pain. **Ernest Laszlo's** accomplished cinematography combines location shooting with claustrophobic, threatening interiors, including the sleazy waterfront dive where Bigelow was poisoned. Although Maté keeps the action at a relentless pace, he also establishes Bigelow as the sympathetic Everyman desperate to protect his home-loving fiancée Paula (Pamela Britton) from the truth: that he has been murdered because he innocently notarized a bill

of sale for what was stolen iridium and therefore can be a witness to the crime. At the end of his story, Bigelow collapses and the captain tells his subordinates to mark the case “DOA: Dead on Arrival,” thus rendering his story pointless, a chilling climax to this dark noir that infuses ordinary life with a sense of dread.

*D.O.A.* was remade as an **Australian film noir**, *Color Me Dead* (1969), set in Sydney, and as an American **neo-noir** in 1988 starring Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan. *See also* EXISTENTIALISM; NARRATIVE PATTERNS; REMAKES.

**DONLEVY, BRIAN (1901–1972).** Brian Donlevy was an underrated actor who could be highly effective either as a leading man or in supporting roles. He starred as the politician Paul Madvig in the early noir *The Glass Key* (1942), a complex portrayal that combined ruthlessness with a certain softness and vulnerability. He was highly effective as the sympathetic lead in *Impact* (1949), playing a successful businessman who survives an attempt on his life by his scheming wife and her lover and settles down into a new life with Marsha (**Ella Raines**). In supporting roles he could be either an honest official—the arrow-straight district attorney in *Kiss of Death* (1947), a senator in *Hoodlum Empire* (1952), and an honest cop in *A Cry in the Night* (1956)—or villain: the vicious **gangster** in *Shakedown* (1950). Donlevy commanded sympathy as an aging mobster complete with hearing aid in *The Big Combo* (1955), supplanted and humiliated by the new breed of corporate gangster, Mr. Brown (**Richard Conte**).

**DOUBLE INDEMNITY (1944).** One of the most influential films ever made, *Double Indemnity* has become the film that most defines noir, forging its dominant mode narratively, thematically, and visually. It was very successful at the box office and encouraged other filmmakers to attempt similar stories and treatments. The **James M. Cain** novella on which it was based had first been published in 1935, but **copyright** restrictions meant that Paramount had to wait until 1943 before being allowed to make an adaptation—*Double Indemnity* was a pivotal film in weakening the rigidity of the Production Code. Director **Billy Wilder** cowrote the screenplay with **Raymond Chandler**, an adversarial but also highly productive collaboration, Chandler infusing Cain’s “unplayable” dialogue with his trademark crackling wit. They retained the novella’s main structure—a clever but superficial insurance salesman



(Walter Neff) becomes infatuated with an attractive married woman (Phyllis Dietrichson) and helps her concoct a lucrative scheme to murder her wealthy husband and collect the insurance payout—but framed this within a confessional flashback in which the dying protagonist reflects on his own downfall and that of his mistress. This creates a strong bond with audiences but also circumvented the problems of Cain’s ending where the couple commit suicide on a boat bound for Mexico. Wilder had originally shot a scene detailing Neff’s execution in a gas chamber, but this was discarded after adverse reaction from preview audiences. Even the censors considered it heavy-handed.

Wilder’s casting seems precisely right, but he had to pursue **Fred MacMurray** relentlessly until he agreed to depart from his usual comedy roles and play Neff, portraying perfectly a slick but shallow man whose clever scheme ministers to his vanity: “one night you get to thinking you could rook the house yourself, and do it smart, because you’ve got the wheel under your hand, you know every notch in it by heart.” Wilder showed similar persistence in convincing **Barbara Stanwyck** that she would be effective as Phyllis, a callous, ruthlessly manipulative femme fatale—it is strongly implied that neither her husband nor Neff are her first victims. Chandler and Wilder also greatly enlarged and altered the role of claims manager Barton Keyes (**Edward G. Robinson**), whose hard-bitten integrity (in the novel he colludes in the scheme) provides a foil against the venality of the central pair. In the rewritten ending, Keyes lights a cigarette for the dying Neff, the reversal of the gesture that has symbolized their close bond now strengthened in the moment of death, a homoerotic subtext that offers some form of redemption.

**John F. Seitz**’s expert cinematography was important in developing the modulated **expressionism** that became the dominant noir style. In the superb opening sequence the wounded Neff speeds recklessly through the nighttime traffic before his stooped, shadowy figure enters the cavernous Pacific All-Risk Insurance building, expertly designed by **Hans Dreier** and Hal Pereira, which glints sinisterly. **Miklós Rózsa**’s score is ominous and unnerving, superbly complementing the visual style. Strongly indebted to **Fritz Lang**’s *M* (1931), Wilder’s film is fast-paced, dynamic, and realistic in the modern American idiom but draws on expressionism to evoke a deep and ominous threat amid everyday **Los Angeles**, in which the streets seem to swallow Neff as he walks home after the murder: “I couldn’t hear my own footsteps. It was the walk of a dead man.” In its combination of inexorable fatalism and

complex characterization, *Double Indemnity* is perhaps the greatest film noir. See also MEN; NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

**DOUGLAS, KIRK (1916– )**. One of the great Hollywood superstars, Kirk Douglas made several films noir that revealed his versatility. In *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), he created an absorbing study in estrangement and paranoia as the weak, alcoholic husband of Martha (**Barbara Stanwyck**), a small town District Attorney complicit in his wife's guilty secret. In *Out of the Past* (1947) and *I Walk Alone* (1948), he played oleaginous, inveigling, but utterly ruthless criminals, the foil to the sympathetic antiheroes played by **Robert Mitchum** and **Burt Lancaster**, respectively. *Champion* (1949), a key **boxing noir**, offered a more substantial part that allowed Douglas to project the energetic virility that became his trademark. He played a boxer whose ruthless ambition to escape poverty alienates his family and friends and who dies having been beaten up after refusing to throw a fight. Though bleak, Douglas's portrayal of the lead slightly softens the harsh contours of the Ring Lardner original.

**Billy Wilder's** *Ace in the Hole* (aka *The Big Carnival*, 1951) gave Douglas the opportunity to play an utterly repellent character, a rampantly egotistical journalist, cheap and slick, who is responsible for the death of an innocent man in his desperation to prolong the sensational story of his entrapment. *Detective Story* (1951), from Sidney Kingsley's Broadway play about a single day in a detective's life, was Douglas's most complex characterization as Jim McLeod—an unstable, sadistic, and self-righteous New York policeman, whose crusade to stamp out lawbreaking verges on vigilantism with its instant diagnoses and summary “justice.” The warring tensions in his life between his love for his wife and his refusal to forgive her for having an abortion lead him to deliberately take the bullet from a hoodlum's gun, a man who is trying to escape from the police station. He dies in her arms reciting the Act of Contrition.

**DOUGLAS, MICHAEL (1944– )**. The son of **Kirk Douglas**, Michael Douglas has made a distinctive contribution to **neo-noir**, usually playing high-ranking professionals who are unstable, edgy characters experiencing major difficulties in their relationships. His roles attract attention and comment because they often reflect disturbing modern phenomena: addiction, stalking, and female sexual harassment. In

*Fatal Attraction* (1987) he played a happily married New York attorney whose weekend affair with Alex Forrest (Glenn Close) threatens his existence when she obsessively refuses to allow the relationship to end. He had a similar role in *Disclosure* (1994) as an executive sexually harassed by his new female boss (Demi Moore). In *The Game* (1997), he is a wealthy investment banker whom success has destroyed and who is persuaded by his wayward younger brother (Sean Penn) to take part in an addictive live-action game that starts to consume his life. In *Don't Say a Word* (2001), Douglas plays a psychiatrist whose wife and daughter are held hostage and will only be released if he can find the whereabouts of a hidden fortune by unlocking the memory of young mental patient (Brittany Murphy).

Douglas made his early reputation playing Inspector Steve Keller in the popular television crime drama, *The Streets of San Francisco* (1972–76), and he continued to play tough cops: a veteran New York City police officer facing possible criminal charges in Ridley Scott's *Black Rain* (1989) and the unstable detective known as "The Shooter" because of his hair-trigger in the highly successful *Basic Instinct* (1992). Douglas's most distinctive role came in *Falling Down* (1993) as William "D-Fens" Foster, an unemployed defense worker who wages a one-man psychotic war against the world. Douglas also starred in the **remake** of *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (2009).

**LE DOULOS (1963).** Along with *Le Samouraï* (1967), *Le Doulos* (*The Finger Man*) is the finest of the long series of **French films noir** made by writer-director **Jean-Pierre Melville**. In the unforgettable opening scene, an unidentified figure, in a fedora and tightly belted raincoat, moves through an indeterminate, drab, but menacing nighttime landscape on the edge of a town, lit by single street lamps. He enters a nondescript house for a prearranged meeting with a fence, whom he kills after a brief exchange in an act that appears to be half-planned, half-extemporized. The electric light continues to swing on its cable in the aftermath, bathing the figure first in light then shadow, who checks his reflection in a mirror before departing and burying a suitcase. This scene, stylized but ambiguous, shrouded in obscurity and uncertain motivation, characterizes a film that extends the lineaments of American noir into a more abstract, generic space where archetypal characters, conscious of their own appearance, act out ritual roles. Although based

on American models, Nicolas Hayer's photography prefers dark grays rather than heavy blacks, enhancing the drabness and obfuscation.

Adapted from the 1957 *Série Noire* novel by Pierre Lesou, *Le Doulos* stars Jean-Paul Belmondo as Silien—"le doulo"—literally the man who puts on the hat, but connoting a "Finger Man" or police informer. Silien's motives often appear ambiguous as he negotiates the tense and uncomfortable space between the professional underworld and the authorities. Silien has a close relationship with the man in the first scene, Maurice (Serge Reggiani)—both men dress identically—who trusts Silien, but then mistakenly believes he has betrayed him, tipping the police off about a burglary in which Maurice's partner dies and he is wounded. Realizing his mistake, Maurice is killed trying to save Silien from the **hit man** he has contracted. Silien shoots the assassin but is mortally wounded, adjusting his appearance in the mirror one final time before collapsing. The corrosive ironies of *Le Doulos*—Silien is innocent and about to retire—and its exploration of the complex bonds of loyalty and betrayal that exist among criminals, have their roots in *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), which Melville so admired, but the ambiguity of action and motive, the fractured identities, deep **existentialist** fatalism, and the self-reflexivity distance it from American noir and make *Le Doulos* unequivocally French. It was a highly influential film in France, and in America it was admired by **Quentin Tarantino**, among many others.

**DREIER, HANS (1885–1966).** Hans Dreier had a significant career in the German film industry in the 1920s before going to Hollywood in 1923. He designed three noir **precursors**: *Underworld* (1927), *The Docks of New York* (1928), and *Thunderbolt* (1929). Dreier became supervising art director at Paramount in 1932, a position he held until his retirement in 1950. His work lent a European elegance and sophistication to American set design, and he had an important influence on film noir through his own designs and through those he trained at "Dreier College," notably Hal Pereira. Dreier's firsthand knowledge of **expressionism** was instrumental in shaping Paramount's aesthetic design during the formative wartime period, including *This Gun for Hire* (1942), *The Glass Key* (1942), and *Street of Chance* (1942). To accommodate wartime restrictions on expenditure, Dreier devised an economical style in which sets were atmospheric and suggestive rather

than elaborately dressed, and he promoted the early introduction of dark and mysterious surroundings, dramatically lit, to create atmosphere. Dreier found **Billy Wilder**, another European, *simpatico* and created some of his most effective designs for *Double Indemnity* (1944) and also *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), for which he received an Oscar. The latter allowed Dreier the opportunity to design elaborate interiors in the decaying **Gothic** mansion in Beverly Hills of the silent screen star (Gloria Swanson), where every available surface was densely cluttered with film memorabilia, the décor expressing her petrified mental state. Dreier's sets for *The Big Clock* (1948) were also memorable, creating oppressively labyrinthine designs for the Janoth magazine headquarters, expressive of its owner's egomania.

Dreier's other noirs are *Ministry of Fear* (1945), *The Unseen* (1945), *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), *Caltutta* (1947), *I Walk Alone* (1948), *Saigon* (1948), *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), *The Accused* (1949), *Chicago Deadline* (1949), *The File on Thelma Jordon* (1950), *Union Station* (1950), *Appointment with Danger* (1951), and *The Desperate Hours* (1955). See also ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL; VISUAL STYLE.

**DUFF, HOWARD (1913–1990).** Howard Duff, who could play, equally effectively, tough-guy heroes and slippery, venal characters, first came to prominence as Sam Spade on **radio noir**; indeed, in his first film noir, **Jules Dassin's** *Brute Force* (1947), he was billed as "Radio's Sam Spade." Duff played "Soldier," a decent man imprisoned for helping a family with "diverted" army supplies during the Liberation of Italy. He had a more prominent role in *The Naked City* (1948) as the mendacious Frank Niles, a college boy who has failed to make anything of his life and, posing as a businessman and war hero, slipped into crime while retaining a plausible respectability. In *Johnny Stool Pigeon* (1949) he portrayed an undercover narcotics policeman who enters into an uneasy partnership with an ex-con (**Dan Duryea**) in order to crack an international drug ring. In *Shakedown* (1950), he had a more morally ambiguous role as a cynical photographer who will stop at nothing, manipulating both the rival crime bosses (**Brian Donlevy** and **Lawrence Tierney**) to act against each other. He gets his comeuppance in a highly melodramatic finale where he photographs his own murderer. In *Woman in Hiding* (1950) and **Don Siegel's** *Private Hell 36* (1954),

he played opposite his wife, **Ida Lupino**. The latter contained one of his best roles as **Los Angeles** detective Jack Farnham, a decent family man, who becomes, like his partner (**Steve Cochran**), corrupted by the thought of easy money.

After further minor roles in *Women's Prison* (1955) and *While the City Sleeps* (1956), Duff moved into noir **television series**, including a long stint (26 episodes, 1960–61) in the series *Dante* as Willi Dante, a gambler with a shady past who now owns a legitimate gambling nightclub. Duff starred in the **neo-noir** *Panic in the City* (1968) and made cameo appearances in *The Late Show* (1977), *Double Negative* (1980), and *No Way Out* (1987).

**DURYEA, DAN (1907–1968)**. Dan Duryea was able to play both leading man and villain, but his flaccid good looks and rakish charm made him more memorable as rogues. He played louche, scheming lowlifes in **Fritz Lang's** *The Woman in the Window* (1944) and *Scarlet Street* (1945), and the slimy **gangster** Slim Dundee in **Robert Siodmak's** *Criss Cross* (1949). In the "B" feature, *Black Angel* (1946), based on a **Cornell Woolrich** story, Duryea had a starring role as an alcoholic nightclub pianist and songwriter who, despite being revealed as the murderer, is a sympathetic figure, haunted by desires and aspirations that can never be fulfilled. He played a sleazy and corrupt private eye in the undistinguished *Manhandled* (1949) and a more complex one in **Robert Aldrich's** *World for Ransom* (1954). Duryea reprised the part he had played in a successful noir **television series**, *China Smith* (1952–55), as world-weary Irish gumshoe Mike Callahan, adrift in the Singapore underworld, who clings to an old-world chivalry in trying to protect the husband of an old flame. His most complex role came in Paul Wendkos's *The Burglar* (1957), adapted from a **David Goodis** novel, as a cheap crook, Nat Harbin, who gradually becomes a tragic figure in his determination to protect Gladden (Jayne Mansfield) and so keep his pledge to the dying wish of his mentor and surrogate father figure. Harbin's chivalrousness is at odds with his own sexual impulses and the squalid world he inhabits.

Duryea's other noirs are *The Great Flamarion* (1945), *Lady on a Train* (1945), *Ministry of Fear* (1945), *Too Late for Tears* (1949), *One Way Street* (1950), *The Underworld Story* (1950), and *Storm Fear* (1956).

**EASTWOOD, CLINT (1930– )**. Clint Eastwood has had an important influence on the development of **neo-noir** as an actor, director, and producer, working through his own company, Malpaso, formed in 1968. In the influential *Dirty Harry* (1971), directed by **Don Siegel**, Eastwood played tough San Francisco policeman Inspector “Dirty” Harry Callahan, a laconic, unstable loner, barely able to contain and control the often sadistic violence that wells up within him. The right-wing Harry believes his unorthodox methods are justified in his pursuit of a sadistic and psychopathic killer, Scorpio—whose long hair and peace symbol belt buckle announce his countercultural affiliations—but the film repeatedly suggests disturbing similarities between these two opposed figures, both damaged men separated by a thin divide. *Dirty Harry* was a very influential film, but its four sequels—*Magnum Force* (1973), *The Enforcer* (1976), *Sudden Impact* (1983), and *The Dead Pool* (1988)—were more routine thrillers.

By contrast, *Tightrope* (1984) also suggested unnerving similarities between Eastwood’s New Orleans detective Wes Bloch and the serial killer he pursues. This rich motif also informed *In the Line of Fire* (1993), in which Eastwood plays another abrasive loner, veteran Federal Bureau of Investigation agent Frank Horrigan, haunted by his failure to prevent Kennedy’s assassination and who is tormented and targeted by his *Doppelgänger*, an ex-Central Intelligence Agency now rogue **hit man** Mitch Leary (John Malkovich), a monster created by the same society that produced Frank; their chase across the rooftops has echoes of *Vertigo* (1958).

Somewhat different is the character Eastwood plays in three Westerns that are noir **hybrids**, *High Plains Drifter* (1973), *Pale Rider* (1985), and *Unforgiven* (1992), all variations of the man-with-no-name he played in Sergio Leone’s “Dollars” trilogy (1964–66). In these films Eastwood’s character is no longer a bounty hunter who works for money but an inexorable, **existential** force, seeking a form of justice that will give meaning to his existence and rights the wrongs that have occurred.

As a director, Eastwood has continued to explore the problems of male identity. *A Perfect World* (1993), set in 1963, is the story of another damaged man, escaped convict Butch Haynes (Kevin Costner), who befriends the boy he abducts. *Mystic River* (2003) was more powerful and disturbing, a dark tale of three damaged men—Dave

(Tim Robbins), Jimmy Markum (Sean Penn), and Sean Devine (Kevin Bacon)—childhood friends from a close-knit blue-collar Boston neighborhood. Robbins and Penn gave Oscar-winning performances, and the film was also nominated for Best Picture, Best Screenplay (Brian Helgeland), and for Eastwood as Best Director. In *Grand Torino* (2008), Eastwood himself plays a dyspeptic Korean War **troubled veteran** who finds a cause in protecting a young neighbor from gang violence. The conflicts in his position, the belief in the self-reliance and inviolability of the white American male, and yet the need to protect those who are disadvantaged or at risk are central to Eastwood's whole oeuvre, which exhibits a powerful engagement with film noir.

Eastwood's other neo-noirs are *Play Misty for Me* (1971), *The Gauntlet* (1977), *The Rookie* (1990), *Absolute Power* (1997), *True Crime* (1999), *Blood Work* (2002), and *Changeling* (2008). See also CORRUPT/ROGUE COP; MEN.

**ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.** The American film industry has been international almost from its inception, but from the 1920s a deliberate policy of hiring European creative personnel emerged as several studios tried to elevate their own cultural standing, improve the artistic quality of their films, and weaken the opposition by poaching its best talent. Although many of the early émigrés took great pains to immerse themselves thoroughly in the American way of life and had a respect for American democracy, they remained at least partial outsiders, able to maintain a critical detachment from the host culture that was often sharply critical. The Austrian Josef von Sternberg, who achieved international prominence with the German *Strassenfilm* *Der Blaue Engel* (*The Blue Angel*, 1930), starring Marlene Dietrich, had already worked in the United States, making the influential noir **precursors** *Underworld* (1927) and *Thunderbolt* (1929), which made use of expressionist lighting. Von Sternberg went on to direct other precursors—*Shanghai Express* (1932) and *The Devil Is a Woman* with Dietrich—and the films noir *The Shanghai Gesture* (1941) and *Macao* (1952), though the latter was largely reshot by **Nicholas Ray**. The Hungarian Michael Curtiz (Mihály Kertész), who directed in Germany before coming to Hollywood in 1926, pursued a long and successful career with Warner Bros., making three of its films noir: *Mildred Pierce* (1945), *The Unsuspected* (1947), and *The Breaking Point* (1950). The German composer Erich Wolfgang Korngold was another European émigré who arrived in the 1920s



and had a lengthy career. William Dieterle, who came to Hollywood from Germany in 1930, directed the second version of *The Maltese Falcon*—*Satan Met a Lady* (1935), but as a comedy-romance—and went on to direct four noirs: *The Accused* (1949), *Dark City* (1950), *Paid in Full* (1950), and *The Turning Point* (1952), all of which display his expressionist heritage with low-key lighting, mobile camera movements, and bizarre angles.

The influx of German personnel intensified when Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, creating a major exodus of actors, cinematographers, composers, directors, scriptwriters, and set designers as well as other creative artists, initially to Paris and then, usually, to Hollywood. The reputation of Weimar cinema and the technical expertise of its creative personnel made them a highly desirable commodity for Hollywood studios. Austro-German émigrés include: directors **John Brahm**, **Fritz Lang**, Max Ophüls, **Otto Preminger**, Douglas Sirk (Detlef Sierck), **Robert Siodmak**, **Edgar G. Ulmer**, and **Billy Wilder**; cinematographers Karl Freund, **Rudolph Maté**, and **Franz Planer**; set designer **Hans Dreier**; scriptwriter Curt Siodmak; and composers **Max Steiner** and **Franz Waxman**. Singly (especially in the case of Lang and Siodmak) and together, these refugees from Nazism had a profound influence over the whole development of film noir, especially in the formative period 1940–44, through their creation of a pervasive atmosphere of doom-laden fatalism, a characteristic **visual style** that showed the influence of expressionist lighting and camerawork, the deployment of complex, time-shifting, and fractured narratives, and the depiction of alienated protagonists.

Other émigrés who had a significant input into film noir include: English—director **Alfred Hitchcock**, actor/director **Ida Lupino**, scriptwriter **Joan Harrison**, and composer Cyril Mockridge; French—director Jean Renoir and composer Michel Michelet; Hungarian—director **André De Toth**, cinematographers **John Alton** and **Ernest Laszlo**, actor **Peter Lorre**, and composer **Miklós Rózsa**; Polish—composer Bronislaw Kaper and art director **Anton Grot**; Russian—producer **Val Lewton**, directors **Boris Ingster** and **Anatole Litvak**, art directors Alexander Golitzen and Eugène Lourière, composers Daniele Amfitheotrof, Constantin Bakaleinikoff, and **Dimitri Tiomkin**.

Current émigré personnel include **Roman Polanski**, **Christopher Nolan**, and the Hong Kong director John Woo, who continue to make

important contributions to American neo-noirs. *See also* BLACKLIST; EXPRESSIONISM.

**ENDFIELD, CY (1914–1995).** Cy Endfield was involved in various forms of radical left-wing theater in New York during the 1930s before moving to Hollywood in 1940 and gradually establishing himself in the film industry as a writer and director. He adapted his first film noir, *The Argyle Secrets* (1948), from his own radio play, and directed it as well. It was a mystery thriller with a strong political edge concerning the collusions between American corporations and the Nazis in case of a German victory in Europe. Endfield wrote several scenes for Douglas Sirk's only noir, *Sleep, My Love* (1948), before directing *The Underworld Story* (1950) starring **Dan Duryea** as a cynical journalist who eventually campaigns against corruption and racial prejudice in a small southern town. *The Sound of Fury* (aka *Try and Get Me*, 1951), set in postwar suburban California, depicted two contrasting **troubled veterans**—played by Lloyd Bridges and Frank Lovejoy—drawn into crime. Their misdemeanors are sensationalized by the local press, causing the pair to be lynched in a terrifying finale reminiscent of **Fritz Lang's** *Fury* (1936).

Poised to move into first features, Endfield's career was completely derailed when he was placed on the **blacklist** in 1951. In order to avoid naming names, Endfield chose exile. Like **Joseph Losey**, he moved to London (in 1952) and gradually rebuilt his career working in the lower levels of the British film industry as a writer and director. He directed two **British noir** "B" features *The Limping Man* (1953) and *Impulse* (1955) under the pseudonym Charles de Latour, the latter containing a strong performance by Arthur Kennedy as an ordinary suburbanite whose affair with a nightclub singer tears his life apart. Endfield wrote and directed a spy thriller, *The Master Plan* (1954), as Hugh Raker before directing *The Secret* (1955) as C. Raker Endfield. It starred Sam Wanamaker as a shiftless American trying to get back to New York who becomes suspected of murder. Now more established in Great Britain, Endfield directed two noirs starring Stanley Baker: *Child in the House* (1956), in which he plays a man-on-the-run, and *Hell Drivers* (1957), in which he was an ex-con who has to accept work in a corrupt and violent haulage firm. Baker and Endfield formed a production company, Diamond Films, together and their most famous film was the historical epic

*Zulu* (1963). *See also* BRITISH FILM NOIR; ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL; FILM GRIS; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**ENTERPRISE PRODUCTIONS.** Founded by David Loew in 1947, Enterprise Productions was an idealistic, left-liberal company that tried to foster a communal ethos and encourage filmmakers who were critical of the establishment. It was the home for **Robert Rossen's** *Body and Soul* (1947) and **Abraham Polonsky's** *Force of Evil* (1948), starring **John Garfield**. Garfield enjoyed Enterprise's collectivist philosophy, which reminded him of his time working for the Group Theater on Broadway. However, **Robert Aldrich**, who was also part of the company, recalled that Enterprise lacked a driving force at its center who could organize the company effectively. Enterprise also produced the noir **hybrid**, *Ramrod* (1947), a Western directed by **André De Toth**. Its final film was Max Ophüls's *Caught* (1949), after which the company folded through a combination of uncertain organization, commercial pressures, and the **blacklisting** of its major talents. *See also* LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**EXISTENTIALISM.** As a philosophy, existentialism emphasizes contingency and chance, a world where there are no transcendent values or moral absolutes, one devoid of meaning except those that are self-created by the confused, desperate, and paranoid "non-heroic hero." The existential protagonist is trapped, often by mischance, in an alienating, lonely world, usually the nighttime **city**, where he faces the threat of death or recognizes the futility of existence. Film noir's use of existentialism derived, not from the specific school of thought that developed in wartime France, but from American **hard-boiled fiction** that reached the screen toward the end of the war in *Double Indemnity* (1944). Noir's existentialism, its sense that life is absurd and meaningless, its paranoid protagonists at the mercy of chance or fate, is neatly summed up in *The Dark Corner* (1946), where private eye Bradford Galt (Mark Stevens), framed for reasons he cannot fathom, cries in anguish to his secretary: "I feel all dead inside. I'm backed up in a dark corner and don't know who's hitting me." Adaptations of **Cornell Woolrich**, the hard-boiled author most associated with existentialism, show paranoid protagonists adrift in cities that are monstrous, hallucinatory, and actively malevolent. *The Gangster* (1947), adapted by **Daniel Fuchs** from his own hard-boiled novel *Low Company*, reworks the figure of the dynamic, extrovert **gangster** into a paranoid existentialist whose

voice-over expresses his corrosive self-contempt and the meaninglessness of his existence where any action seems futile. The malign logic of **Rudolph Maté's** *D.O.A.* (1950) showed how a chance encounter can destroy an innocent protagonist, and even the story of his own murder becomes pointless as his case is labeled “Dead on Arrival.”

**Neo-noir** has been even more powerfully pervaded with existentialist ideas, derived from noir itself and from the European neo-modernist filmmaking that emerged at the end of the 1950s in France and Italy. Neo-modernist films were often profoundly existentialist, exhibiting indeterminate narratives and complex, enigmatic characterization, depicting unmotivated characters adrift in ambiguous situations beyond their comprehension that they are incapable of resolving. It influenced a new generation of filmmakers emerging in America during the 1960s and 1970s, such as **Arthur Penn** and **Martin Scorsese**, who both made a number of existential noirs including *Night Moves* (1975) and *Taxi Driver* (1976), respectively.

The existentialism of contemporary neo-noirs is often more extreme, displaying a pervasive uncertainty about the reliability of what is being shown or told and the deceptive processes of memory, underscored by an existential fear of meaninglessness. In Peter Medak's *Romeo Is Bleeding* (1994), the confessional flashback narrative of **corrupt cop** Jack Grimaldi (Gary Oldman) is both self-serving and deceitful as he rearranges chronology in order to disguise or evade his own motives. His recollections are frequently interrupted by dream sequences that undermine his credibility as a narrator and question the whole basis of his story. **Christopher Nolan's** *Memento* (2000) is even more extreme, with its reverse chronology and an **amnesiac** narrator desperately trying to make sense of events. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS.

**EXPRESSIONISM.** Expressionism, whose origins lay in the Gothic-Romantic movement in European culture, was a broadly based artistic movement lasting approximately from 1906 to 1926 whose style and subject matter had a major influence on film noir. Expressionism was an attempt to express the alienation, fragmentation, and dislocation of modern life through a focus on subjective and interior experience: states of mind, feelings, ideas, perceptions, dreams, and visions, and often paranoid states. Expressionist art forms created an all-embracing *stimmung* (mood) and texture, dependent on a distinct **visual style** that used high-contrast, chiaroscuro lighting where shafts of intense light

contrast starkly with deep, black shadows. Space is fractured into an assortment of unstable lines and surfaces, often fragmented or twisted into odd angles, as in the first, and most famous and influential expressionist film, Robert Wiene's *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1919), an enigmatic murder story. Expressionism's preoccupation with tormented or unbalanced psychologies is evident in *Der Student von Prag* (*The Student of Prague*), first released in 1913 but remade in expressionist style in 1926. It is the archetypal *Doppelgänger* story in which a student sells his mirror image to a sorcerer who turns that image into the young man's evil, murderous second self. *The Student of Prague* showed expressionism's concern with the instability and fluidity of identity, and its arresting visual style found resonant echoes in film noir. Expressionism also influenced noir's **narrative patterns** through its innovative use of displaced, decentered narratives, nested in frame tales, split or doubled stories, voice-overs, and flashback narration. Expressionist films often combined horror and crime: *Schatten: Eine nächtliche Halluzination* (*Warning Shadows*, 1923), *Das Wachsfigurenkabinett* (*Waxworks*, 1924), *Orlacs Hände* (*The Hands of Orlac*, 1924), and *Alraune* (*Unnatural*, 1918, remade in 1928, 1930, and 1952), the story of an unnaturally created woman who becomes a vengeful femme fatale. German expressionism's influence was widely diffused across American culture, but in Hollywood it was disseminated principally through the work of **émigré personnel** (including **Fritz Lang** and **Robert Siodmak**), who assimilated their expressionist heritage into the dark visions of film noir. *See also* GERMAN FILM NOIR; NARRATIVE PATTERNS; POETIC REALISM; VISUAL STYLE; WELLES, ORSON.

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**FARROW, JOHN (1904–1963).** After an early career as a screenwriter, the Australian-born John Farrow began directing with the crime film *Men in Exile* (1937). Farrow adapted himself to his material rather than imposing a particular “signature,” but his noirs exhibit certain distinctive characteristics, notably his preference for long takes with the camera moving fluidly around particular scenes and spaces. This is evident in *Calcutta* (1947) starring **Alan Ladd**, but it is used to great effect in Farrow's most accomplished noir, *The Big Clock* (1948),

adapted by **Jonathan Latimer** in the first of his four films with Farrow. In this tense cat-and-mouse thriller, Farrow shows a subtle grasp of **expressionist** techniques, using low-angle shots, “choker” close-ups, and deep, foreboding shadows that increase the dramatic tension. *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948) was an imaginative adaptation of a **Cornell Woolrich** story, Farrow’s direction rooting this terrifying fantasy in a believable context. *Alias Nick Beal* (1949), another dark fantasy in which the fabular mingles with the everyday, has the same qualities.

Farrow moved to RKO, directing the underrated *Where Danger Lives* (1950), in which **Robert Mitchum** is the victim of Faith Domergue’s deranged femme fatale. *His Kind of Woman* (1951), starring Mitchum and Jane Russell, was more routine. Farrow’s last noir was the seldom seen Technicolor *The Unholy Wife* (1957), in which Diana Dors plays Phyllis, a siren sheathed in a tight-fitting, flame-red dress lurking amidst the deep shadows of the mansion of her vintner husband Paul (Rod Steiger), whom she is trying to murder in order to be with her lover. Here the influence of Farrow’s Catholicism comes through strongly as Phyllis finds true repentance. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**FERRARA, ABEL (1951– )**. Born in the Bronx, the Italian-American Abel Ferrara is a highly controversial director best known for his visceral horror films, including the notorious *Driller Killer* (1979). Ferrara has made a significant contribution to **neo-noir**, his demanding and violent films often written by long-term collaborator Nicholas St. John. In the innovative horror-thriller *Ms. 45* (aka *Angel of Vengeance*, 1981), a mute seamstress (Zoë Tamerlis), twice raped, uses the gun obtained by killing her second assailant to attack men at night, combining the revenger with the wronged woman. *Fear City* (1984) dealt with the same difficult subject matter, but its main protagonist was male. Matt Rossi (Tom Berenger), the boss of an agency supplying strippers, combines with his bitter rival (Jack Scalia) to hunt down a serial killer preying on strippers who threatens his ex-lover (Melanie Griffith). Ferrara directed two episodes of the seminal noir **television series** *Miami Vice* in 1985, and he was rehired by **Michael Mann** to direct the feature-length pilot for *Crime Story* in 1986. Ferrara’s next neo-noir, *Cat Chaser* (1989), is an underrated film, its victim-hero (Peter Weller), a **troubled** Vietnam **veteran** now owner of a small hotel in Miami, caught up in a whirl of events in which he is out of his depth. *King of New York* (1990) is better known and more characteristic of Ferrara’s abiding themes. It stars

Christopher Walken as newly released drug baron Frank White, who decides to kill his competitors in order to fund a hospital in South Bronx but whose violent philanthropy is compromised by the obsessive pursuit of a **corrupt cop** (Victor Argo). This latter figure assumes epic proportions in the grueling *Bad Lieutenant* (1992), Ferrara's best film, in which Harvey Keitel gives an astonishing performance as an unnamed New York police lieutenant on a spiraling descent into gambling, alcoholism, drug addiction, and the sexual abuse of young women but who desperately searches for some form of redemption.

Ferrara's other films noir are *Body Snatchers* (1993), *The Funeral* (1996), and *'R Xmas* (2001).

**FILM GRIS.** *Film gris* (gray film) was a term coined by critic Thom Andersen in his influential 1985 essay "Red Hollywood" to group together a distinctive cycle of films released between 1947 and 1951 made by a number of left-wing dissidents—including **Jules Dassin, Cy Endfield, John Huston, Joseph Losey, Abraham Polonsky, Nicholas Ray, and Robert Rossen**—many of whom were subsequently **blacklisted**. Andersen distinguished *film gris* from other films noir because of their drab and depressing social realism that was more naturalistically photographed than the high-contrast chiaroscuro that characterized the majority of films noir in this period. The emphasis in *film gris* falls not on individual problems but on the inequalities of capitalism, on its class divisions and rampant materialism, using crime as a social critique. *Film gris* often showed the blurred boundaries between "enterprise" and criminality, including the figure of the **corrupt cop**, and on the fraudulence of supposedly legitimate society and the failings of the legal system to protect its citizens. *Films gris* have a pervasive sense of guilt and paranoia, their grim stories depicting a brutal and violent society.

The films usually included in this category are *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), *Body and Soul* (1947), *The Breaking Point* (1950), *Brute Force* (1947), *Force of Evil* (1948), *He Ran All the Way* (1951), *Knock on Any Door* (1949), *The Lawless* (1950), *Night and the City* (1950), *The Prowler* (1951), *Quicksand* (1950), *Road House* (1948), *Shakedown* (1950), *Thieves' Highway* (1949), *They Live by Night* (1948), *The Sound of Fury* (aka *Try and Get Me*, 1951), *The Underworld Story* (1950), and *We Were Strangers* (1949). See also LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**FINNISH FILM NOIR.** As with other Scandinavian countries, Finland has produced, intermittently, powerful noirs that exhibit an assured mastery of the form. The first was *Varastettu kuolema* (*Stolen Death*, 1938), set in Helsinki in 1918, a tale of dark alleyways, corruption, and mentally disturbed protagonists. *Tulipunainen kyyhkynen* (*The Scarlet Dove*, 1961), also set in Helsinki and also shot in black-and-white, was the story of a middle-aged doctor who, after witnessing his wife's infidelity, wanders the nocturnal streets only to return and become the prime suspect for her murder. Producer-writer-director Aki Kaurismäki has made a loose **neo-noir** trilogy beginning with *I Hired a Contract Killer* (1990), set in a decaying, bilious-looking East London. It stars Jean-Pierre Léaud as a depressed Everyman who hires a **hit man** to kill him but, having fallen in love, tries to cancel the contract. In *Mies vailla menneisyyttä* (*The Man without a Past*, 2002), a drifter arriving in Helsinki is beaten up so severely that he develops amnesia and has to begin his life again from scratch. *Laitakaupungin valot* (*Lights in the Dusk*, 2006) depicts a lonely night watchman who is exploited by a femme fatale to become the fall guy for a jewel robbery. In each film, Kaurismäki's slow-moving direction and spare dialogue create a bleak, curiously sterile world where everyone is exploited but that also contains love, loyalty, and hope. *See also* DANISH FILM NOIR; NORWEGIAN FILM NOIR.

**FIORENTINO, LINDA (1958– ).** Dark, husky-voiced, and seductive, Linda Fiorentino had an Italian-American Catholic background, gaining her first professional acting role in 1985 and appearing in **Martin Scorsese's** *After Hours* (1985). Fiorentino attained stardom in 1994 through her performance as the predatory femme fatale Bridget Gregory in **John Dahl's** *The Last Seduction* (1994). Unfortunately, because it premiered on Home Box Office television, Fiorentino was ineligible for an Academy Award nomination for Best Actress despite glowing reviews. She played another erotic seductress in William Friedkin's *Jade* (1995), but she was wasted in Dahl's *Unforgettable* (1996) in the dull role of Dr. Martha Briggs, a research chemist. In *Liberty Stands Still* (2002) she played another successful, professional woman who becomes the target of a **hit man** (Wesley Snipes). But this film also failed to recapture the impact of *The Last Seduction*. *See also* NEO-NOIR; WOMEN.



**FISHER, STEVE (1912–1980).** **Hard-boiled** novelist and screenwriter Steve Fisher made a significant contribution to the development of film noir, specializing in complex narratives with dream sequences and the skillful use of dialogue. He wrote the novel on which *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941) and its **remake** *Vicki* (1953) were based, a dark tale of victimization, exploitation, deviant sexuality, obsessive desire, and a **corrupt cop**. Fisher went on to script or coscript 13 noirs, most of which are above average. His adaptation of **Raymond Chandler's** *Lady in the Lake* (1947), while retaining much of Chandler's sardonic dialogue, tells the entire story in the first person, with the camera serving as the eyes of Philip Marlowe (Robert Montgomery, who also directed). Fisher adapted *Dead Reckoning* (1947) from an unpublished story, his screenplay moving deftly through a complex story of corruption, betrayal, and doomed love.

His adaptation of a **Cornell Woolrich** novel, *I Wouldn't Be in Your Shoes* (1948), another tale of a male victim and a corrupt cop, was equally assured. *Roadblock* (1951) was a conventional action thriller about a hold-up that goes badly wrong, but Fisher's screenplay maintains the tension throughout and creates well-rounded characters, the corrupt insurance investigator and his avaricious girlfriend, played with great effect by **Charles McGraw** and Joan Dixon. *City That Never Sleeps* (1953) was a powerful original screenplay that relied on location shooting in Chicago in the **semidocumentary** mode, but it also evoked a strong degree of pathos and compassion for the characters. After the underrated *I, Mobster* (1958), Fisher moved into noir **television series**, writing episodes for many crime series, including *Peter Gunn* (1959–61).

Fisher's other films noir are *Johnny Angel* (1945), *The Lost Hours* (GB 1952), *Thirty-Six Hours* (GB 1953, U.S. title *Terror Street*), *Betrayed Women* (1955), *The Big Tip Off* (1955), *The Toughest Man Alive* (1955), and *Las Vegas Shakedown* (1955).

**FLEMING, RHONDA (1923– ).** A beautiful redhead best remembered for her Technicolor roles in costume epics and westerns, Fleming played scheming femme fatales in *Out of the Past* (1947) and *Cry Danger* (1951), and an ambitious, manipulative gold digger in **Fritz Lang's** *While the City Sleeps* (1956). She was less distinctive as one of the victims in *The Spiral Staircase* (1946), the beleaguered wife in *The*

*Killer Is Loose* (1956), or as the foil to her neurotic, unpredictable sister (Arlene Dahl) in *Slightly Scarlet* (1956).

**FORCE OF EVIL (1948).** *Force of Evil* was one of the most moving and memorable of the socially conscious **left-wing cycle** of films noir before the **blacklist** took its toll. It was directed by **Abraham Polonsky**, who collaborated on the screenplay with Ira Wolfert, the author of *Tucker's People*, on which the film is based. *Force of Evil's* indictment of organized crime masquerading as enlightened “enterprise” is focused through the contradictions in the character of Joe Morse (**John Garfield**), a successful gambling syndicate lawyer who owes his career to the sacrifices of his elder brother Leo (Thomas Gomez). Trying to persuade Leo to join the “corporation” that he is setting up with Ben Tucker (Roy Roberts), Joe triggers a chain of events that causes Leo’s death and destroys his company. Joe is the archetypal divided noir antihero, whose story is a dark version of the American success ethic. In his desperate desire to escape the slums of Lower East Side New York where he was raised and in which Leo still has his business, Joe passes off racketeering as professional business ethics, the legitimate desire to succeed: “To reach out and take something—that’s human, that’s natural.”

*Force of Evil's* dialogue and Joe’s voice-over narration is consciously and distinctively stylized with a poetic timbre and cadence that Polonsky hoped would “play an equal role with the actor and the visual image and not run alongside as an illustration.” It was complemented by cinematographer George Barnes’s naturalistic lighting and assistant director **Robert Aldrich's** extensive location shooting, both of which give the raw, “unpolished” look that Polonsky wanted. *Force of Evil* reaches a memorable climax, in which Joe leaves his plush Wall Street office to walk across an eerily deserted Manhattan and to descend the steps onto the rocks beneath George Washington Bridge, where his brother’s body has been dumped: “It was like going to the bottom of the world to find my brother. I turned back to give myself up because if a man’s life can be lived so long and come out this way, like rubbish, then something had to be ended one way or the other, and I decided to help.” Joe’s reformation and commitment to fighting corporate greed is emphasized by **David Raksin's** sonorous score, which gives an upbeat mood to what would otherwise be an almost unbearably bleak and desolate ending. Joe

is supported by Doris (Beatrice Pearson), Leo's secretary with whom he has fallen in love, the antithesis of Tucker's wife (**Marie Windsor**), the femme fatale who tried to seduce him. *See also* LANGUAGE; MEN.

**FORD, GLENN (1916–2006).** Glenn Ford's first film noir role, in *Gilda* (1946), was atypical, playing a drifter caught in a destructive *ménage-a-trois* in postwar Buenos Aires. He was again teamed with **Rita Hayworth** in *Affair in Trinidad* (1952), a lackluster imitation of *Gilda*. Ford's real *metier* was gruff ordinariness, the decent man tested by circumstances, as in *A Stolen Life* (1946) and *Framed* (1947). In the first he was the harassed husband of a ruthless social climber (Bette Davis); in the latter he played an honest but unemployed mining engineer, seduced by a femme fatale (Janis Carter) as part of an embezzlement scheme. He had a similar role in *Convicted* (1950) as an innocent man convicted of murder who battles to prove his innocence. In **Joseph H. Lewis's** *The Undercover Man* (1949), he portrayed an indomitable U.S. Treasury Department agent on the trail of the shadowy "big fellow." In **Fritz Lang's** *The Big Heat* (1953) that indomitability is subjected to severe emotional and moral testing as Ford's Detective Dave Bannon, upright cop and family man, is sucked into a vicious world of corruption and violence when his wife is killed in a car bomb meant for him. Only gradually does he come to regain his humanity in what was a moving and finely judged performance. In *Human Desire* (1954), Lang's remake of Jean Renoir's *La Bête humaine* (*The Human Beast*, 1938), Ford was again the decent man caught in a web of corruption, capable of an affair with his boss's wife (**Gloria Grahame**) but not prepared to murder her husband. He played another decent guy under pressure, a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent, in Blake Edwards's neglected late noir *Experiment in Terror* (1962). *See also* MEN.

**FRANKENHEIMER, JOHN (1930–2002).** Director John Frankenheimer made an important contribution to the development of **neo-noir** through his distinctive action thrillers that show a pervasive alienation. *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962) and *Seven Days in May* (1964) are noir **hybrids**, political thrillers depicting disaffected **troubled veterans**. *Seconds* (1966), the third part of Frankenheimer's "paranoia trilogy," explores the doomed attempt of an alienated businessman (Rock Hudson) to escape his moribund life. All three films were too bleak and disturbing on their initial release to be box-office successes but

subsequently have established high reputations. *I Walk the Line* (1970) and *99 and 44/100% Dead* (1974) were less successful, but *French Connection II* (1975) was sharply realized, focusing on the alienation of its tough cop hero “Popeye” Doyle (**Gene Hackman**) adrift in a foreign city (Marseilles). *Black Sunday* (1977) also focuses on the alienated protagonist (Bruce Dern), another troubled veteran who colludes with the Palestinian terrorist group Black September to launch an attack on the Super Bowl.

Frankenheimer’s later political thrillers, *The Holcroft Covenant* (1985), *The Fourth War* (1990), and *Year of the Gun* (1991), also have noir elements, but these are stronger in the crime thrillers *52 Pick-Up* (1986), based on the Elmore Leonard novel, and *Dead-Bang* (1989). *Ronin* (1998), influenced by **Jean-Pierre Melville** and scripted by David Mamet, again focuses on disaffected outsiders, a group of former special forces or intelligence agents now *ronin*—the Japanese term for samurais who have no master and whose actions are mercenary, not honorable—led by **Robert De Niro**. *Reindeer Games* (aka *Deception*, 2000), Frankenheimer’s last theatrically released film, was a classic noir story focusing on the victim-hero (Ben Affleck) set up by his former cell mate and the duplicitous femme fatale (Charlize Theron).

**FRENCH FILM NOIR.** French film noir has its roots in the broad corpus of French crime fiction that extends back to the mid-19th century. The most important author was **Georges Simenon**, whose dark, morally ambiguous stories, set in drab, everyday surroundings, deal with characters whose lives are wrecked by crime. The three Simenon adaptations released in 1932—Jean Renoir’s *La Nuit du carrefour* (*Night at the Crossroads*), Julien Duvivier’s *La Tête d’un homme* (*A Man’s Neck*), and Jean Tarride’s *Le Chien jaune* (*The Yellow Dog*)—constitute the beginning of French film noir, though preceded by Renoir’s *La Chienne* (*The Bitch*) in 1931. French noir’s key characteristic is a concentration on atmosphere, character, and place rather than action, as exemplified in prewar **poetic realism**, whose films, including *Le Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*, 1938) and *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939), were often more pessimistic and fatalistic than film noir. French film noir is thus darker than its American counterpart with a greater moral ambiguity, as exemplified by **Jean Gabin**’s doomed **gangster** in *Pépé le Moko* (1937).

War interrupted this development, but Henri Decoin’s adaptation of Simenon’s *Les Inconnus dans la maison* (*Strangers in the House*, 1942)

and Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Le Corbeau* (*The Raven*, 1943), dark dramas of corruption, suspicion, and morbid sexuality, were made during this period. Postwar French noirs were even bleaker, retaining the quotidian realism and fatalism of the prewar films but without the "poetry," in films marked by a strong sense of disillusionment in the aftermath of the war and the Nazi Occupation (the *années noires*) when American films were banned. *Les Portes de la nuit* (*The Gates of the Night*, 1946), *Quai des orfèvres* (*Jenny Lamour*, 1947), *Une si jolie petite plage* (*Riptide*, 1949), and *Manèges* (*The Cheat*, 1949) are representative examples, all with seedy or sordid settings, oppressive atmospheres, and venal characters obsessed with money and sexuality.

French noir of the 1950s, as did **British film noir**, showed a greater American influence, often via *Série Noire*. A popular series of gangster thrillers featured the American actor Eddie Constantine as "Lemmy Caution," the tough, hard-drinking, and womanizing Federal Bureau of Investigation agent created by Peter Cheyney, including *La Môme vert-de-gris* (*Poison Ivy*, 1953). More distinctively French, but equally stylized, were *Touchez pas au grisbi* (*Honor Among Thieves*, 1954), *Razzia sur la chnouf* (*Razzia*, 1955), *Du rififi chez les hommes* (*Rififi*, 1955), *Bob le flambeur* (*Bob the Gambler*, 1956), and *Le Rouge est mis* (*Speaking of Murder*, 1957). These gangster films depict an affluent society of conspicuous consumption, hybrid music that blends American jazz with French melodies and instruments, and a masculine world of professional criminals. However, the principal figure is the aging, tired gangster, anxious to retire, as with Gabin in *Grisbi*. The **visual style** was more mobile than in the prewar predecessors, moving around the nighttime **city** with its glistening cobblestones, dark streets, and threatening alleyways.

The French New Wave directors, notably **Claude Chabrol**, Jean-Luc Godard, and **François Truffaut**, admired American cinema, especially the "B" feature noirs, which they appropriated in very different ways as part of their modernist concern with the alienated rebel adrift in an absurd world and which, in turn, profoundly influenced American **neo-noir**. Truffaut's *Tirez sur le pianiste* (*Shoot the Piano Player*, 1960), and Godard's *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*, 1960), with a screenplay by Truffaut, were seminal. In the latter, Jean-Paul Belmondo's Michel Poiccard is both a charismatic, cynical petty crook and a modernist antihero in a film that creates a dark, existential vision, despite being shot in broad daylight. It is packed with allusions to and borrowings

from American noir, including the famous scene where Michel reverentially imitates **Humphrey Bogart** while gazing at a poster of *The Harder They Fall* (1956). **Jean-Pierre Melville's** use of American noir (1956–72) was deeper and more extended, and his films display a characteristically French self-reflexivity and stylistic self-consciousness in their melding of the two cultures.

French neo-noir was also indebted to crime literature, mostly to new developments that occurred in the wake of the uprisings and political protests in May 1968 that showed a more explicit concern with social and political issues. It was more directly genre-based, essentially a series of developments of the *polar* (police thriller) and the political thriller, and with a clear, if complex, relationship to American neo-noir. As in the United States and in Italy, political thrillers are more characteristic of the 1970s. Made from a left-wing perspective, they were the product of the questioning of state power and legitimacy triggered by the events of May 1968. Constantin Costa-Gavras's *Z* (1969), starring Yves Montand and Jean-Louis Trintignant, was set in Greece and tells the story of a right-wing cover-up of the murder of a liberal politician; *L'Aveu* (*The Confession*, 1970) had similar concerns. *État de siege* (*State of Siege*, 1973), starring Montand, depicted the struggle between the U.S.-backed Uruguay government and the Tupamaro guerrillas, while Yves Boisset's *L'Attentat* (*Plot*, 1972) recounts the kidnapping and probable murder of a dissident Moroccan, Ben Barka, in 1965, by French policemen working for the Moroccan police chief. Although influenced by the American thriller, *L'Attentat* remains very French, its roots in poetic realism; its disaffected, lonely, and doomed hero (Trintignant) recalls Gabin. Chabrol's *Nada* (*The Nada Gang*, 1974) explores the morality of terrorism through the actions of a group that kidnaps the American ambassador.

Boisset also directed the *polar* *Un condé* (*Blood on My Hands*, 1970), which depicts a **corrupt cop** who ignores the rules to avenge his colleague. In *Max et les ferrailleurs* (*Max and the Junkmen*, 1971), a frustrated cop sets up a robbery in order to catch the criminals who have eluded him for so long. *Deux hommes dans la ville* (*Two Men in Town*, 1973) depicts police harassment, *Dernier domicile connu* (*Last Known Address*, 1970), police impotence. *Police Python 357* (*The Case Against Ferro*, 1976) combines the two strands in its complex story of a policeman, Ferrot (Montand), investigating the murder of his mistress. She was also the mistress of his superior who murdered her, and

he engineers the investigation so that Ferrot can appear to be the main suspect. The helpless individual, corrupt institutions, conspiracy, and paranoia come together in this absorbing police thriller.

In the 1980s the old-style French policeman metamorphosed into an American-style cop. Bob Swaim's *La Balance* (*The Nark*, 1982), although set in a carefully depicted Parisian underworld and with a doomed love affair that evoked poetic realism, had the fast-paced narrative and explosive action that typified the American crime thriller. The highly artificial style of the *cinéma du look* thrillers made by Jean-Jacques Beineix: *Diva* (1981), *La Lune dans le caniveau* (*The Moon in the Gutter*, 1983); Luc Besson: *Subway* (1985); and Léos Carax: *Mauvais Sang* (*Bad Blood*, 1986), retained familiar Parisian landmarks and echoes of poetic realism but appropriated the visual conventions of classic American noir, although with a postmodern playfulness. *La Lune dans le caniveau*, adapted from a **David Goodis** novel, makes no attempt to depict a realistic setting but evokes an onerous atmosphere of paranoia and betrayal that reached back to the French surrealists.

In the 1990s there was also a return to social issues, as in *L.627* (1992), *Regarde les hommes tomber* (*See How They Fall*, 1994), *La Haine* (*Hate*, 1995), *Assassin(s)* (1997), and *La Vie rêvée des anges* (*The Dreamlife of Angels*, 1998), which also emphasized marginality, alienation, and racial issues in an increasingly fractured society. These films were often set in dreary suburbs or impoverished areas of Paris, as exemplified by *La Haine*'s story of three young men from different ethnic minorities whose antisocial behavior stems from police violence.

A number of tendencies can be identified postmillennium, including a revival of the classic *polar*, as in *Feux rouges* (*Red Lights*, 2004), *36 Quai des Orfèvres* (2004), and *Le Petit lieutenant* (*The Young Lieutenant*, 2005), and films noir that explore social issues, including *Sur mes lèvres* (*Read My Lips*, 2001) about a petty hoodlum on the margins of society, and Jacques Audiard's *De battre mon cœur s'est arrêté* (*The Beat That My Heart Skipped*, 2005). The latter, a reworking of the 1978 American neo-noir *Fingers*, centers on the deeply conflicted impulses of Romain Duris's Jacques, torn between following in his mother's footsteps as a classical pianist or in his father's as an exploitative semicriminal making his money from real estate deals. These dishonest deals take him to the marginal areas of Paris among the ethnic down-and-outs in derelict buildings and into a violent conflict with the Russian mafia, now the ubiquitous face of organized villainy. A third

tendency, as exemplified by Michael Haneke's *Caché* (*Hidden*, 2005), taps into contemporary anxieties about surveillance, celebrity, and the price of affluence. Here a literary talk-show host (Daniel Auteuil) is sent mysterious videos filmed outside his house triggering a web of paranoia, guilt, and betrayal that envelops his life and family.

There was also an intermittent strain of “blacker” French neo-noirs, which unsettle the spectator in their stark portrayals of a dystopian society (a strong continuity with the earlier French noirs) permeated with a sense of tragic inevitability, fatalism, and entrapment and populated by dysfunctional males. Alain Corneau's *Série noire* (1979) shows the influence of American noir—it was based on **Jim Thompson's** *A Hell of a Woman*—but the action was relocated to dismal, nondescript Parisian suburbs, and the characters are recognizably French. More recently this has evolved into “hyper-noir”—*L'Humanité* (*Humanity*, 1999), *Seul contre tous* (*I Stand Alone*, 1998), *Sombre* (1998), *Romance* (1999), *Baise-moi* (*Kiss Me*, 2000), and *Irréversible* (2002)—that focuses on the abject and tormented body in films that are complex **hybrids**, visceral and disorientating adult fairy tales that show the influence of American independent cinema and **David Lynch**. *Baise-moi*, with two porn actresses (Raffaëla Anderson and Karen Bach) as its leads and shot on a tiny budget in grainy digital video, was almost a punk version of *Thelma and Louise* (1991), telling the story of two **women**, one who is raped and the other whose friend has been shot dead, who meet by chance and go on an indiscriminate killing spree. It was also a challenge to the relentlessly masculinist orientation of French noir.

**FREUDIANISM.** Film noir's depiction of a wide variety of disturbed mental states is one of its most marked features, distinguishing it from earlier crime fiction. As with **existentialism**, film noir's use of Freudian motifs and terminology—which had begun to enter into American consciousness during the interwar period and was popularized during the war—does not represent a detached and in-depth understanding of psychoanalysis per se, but rather an acute sense of its potential to dramatize characters' repressed or hidden sexual longings, irrational motivations, and murderous impulses, where violence and desire are often disturbingly conjoined. This process is shown graphically in the early noir *This Gun for Hire* (1942) in which the disturbed killer Raven (**Alan Ladd**), physically maimed and psychologically crippled by childhood abuse, yearns for a psychoanalytical cure: “Every night I dream. I



read somewhere about a kind of a doctor, a psych-something. You tell your dream. You don't have to dream it any more."

Several early noirs, including *The Seventh Veil* (GB 1945), *Spellbound* (1945), *The Dark Mirror* (1946), *Possessed* (1947), and *The Snake Pit* (1948), also explicitly feature psychoanalysts. In **Fritz Lang's** *The Woman in the Window* (1945), the protagonist lectures on Freud. In **Rudolph Maté's** *The Dark Past* (1948), escaped killer Al Walker (William Holden) suffers from the childhood trauma of witnessing the death of his father, gunned down by the police. Dr. Andrew Collins (**Lee J. Cobb**), the avuncular police psychiatrist Al is holding hostage, gradually unravels the causes of Al's psychotic behavior through interpreting his recurring dream.

Many **Gothic noirs**, such as **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Rebecca* (1940) and **Fritz Lang's** *The Secret Beyond the Door* (1948), exploit Freudian motifs. Other contemporary romance-thrillers use a psychoanalytical framework. *Leave Her to Heaven* (1946) traces the neurotic violence of its central protagonist (**Gene Tierney**) to its roots in her obsessive devotion to her father, an incestuous longing that has left her psychologically crippled. **John Brahm's** *The Locket* (1947) uses a complex series of flashbacks within flashbacks to reveal the childhood origins of the mental instability of Nancy Blair (Laraine Day) who collapses on the day of her wedding.

As with existentialism, Freudianism became part of the fabric of film noir as shown in its preoccupation with fantasies, dream states, schizophrenia, concealment, unconscious and repressed desires, and warped sexuality. Although noir's concern with individual pathology became less important as the cycle moved into an exploration of more social themes in the 1950s, there were powerful exceptions. *The Big Combo* (1955), whose ostensible subject is criminal corporations, is deeply imbued with a psychopathology that unites criminal and policeman. Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) was one of the most profound of noir's exploration of psychosexual dislocation. **Neo-noir** takes a concern with disturbed mental states as a given, and there are numerous examples, including *The Killer Inside Me* (1976), *Blue Velvet* (1986), *Unforgettable* (1996), and *Memento* (2000).

**FUCHS, DANIEL (1909–1993).** Born in a working-class Jewish neighborhood in New York City, Daniel Fuchs established a reputation in the 1930s as a writer whose work expressed a strong left-liberal concern

with social issues but which emphasized acceptance and resignation. In 1940 MGM bought the rights to one of his stories and hired Fuchs to work on it. Although a film was never produced, Fuchs spent the next 30 years of his life writing screenplays, beginning with *The Big Shot* (1942), a routine **Humphrey Bogart gangster** film, and an uncredited contribution to the early noir *Background to Danger* (1943). Fuchs adapted *The Gangster* (1947) from his own **hard-boiled** novel *Low Company* (1937), an important reworking of the gangster figure into a tragic existentialist. Its setting, Neptune Beach, is a grim wasteland of vice, corruption, and murder, the action taking place over 48 hours as an organized gang close in to get rid of a small-time crook, Shubunka. Fuchs altered his novel so that Shubunka, played by **Barry Sullivan**, is a more attractive figure, and his empty, meaningless life is the central focus of the film's disillusionment.

Fuchs's screenplay for *Hollow Triumph* (1948), adapted from a Murray Forbes novel, was a well crafted if routine story of a confidence man who outsmarts himself, but he worked more creatively on *Criss Cross* (1949), collaborating with director **Robert Siodmak** to refashion Don Tracy's very ordinary pulp novel into a complex and moving story with a bitterly ironic climax. His final noirs were *Panic in the Streets* (1950), a **semidocumentary** set in New Orleans, directed by Elia Kazan, and the melodramatic *Storm Warning* (1951), about the Ku Klux Klan. See also EXISTENTIALISM; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**FULLER, SAMUEL (1911–1997).** An experienced ex-crime reporter for the *New York Graphic*, Samuel Fuller's films noir, nearly all of which he wrote or cowrote, are informed by a raw energy and broad-brush pulp sensibility that make them among the most distinctive in the classical period that he "extended" into the early 1960s. Fuller's films are full of violent confrontations but are also pervaded by a sense of moral ambiguity in the choices his divided characters are forced to make.

Fuller started working in the film industry as a writer (from 1936) and cowrote, with Helen Deutsch, *Shockproof* (1949), in which a parole officer (**Cornel Wilde**) is sucked into a life of crime by a femme fatale (Patricia Knight). **Phil Karlson's** *Scandal Sheet* (1952) was adapted from Fuller's novel *The Dark Page*. Fuller became a director in 1949, and, like **Edgar G. Ulmer**, made a conscious decision to work in low-budget second features in order to exploit the relative freedom they offered, acting as his own producer from 1959 onward. *Pickup on South*

*Street* (1953), a Cold War thriller, has a characteristic focus on alienated, socially marginal characters—a pickpocket (**Richard Widmark**), a prostitute (**Jean Peters**), and an informer (Thelma Ritter)—who discover their underlying patriotism. Fuller’s innovative camerawork, mixing long takes, intense close-ups, and off-angle compositions with more conventional tracking shots creates an unstable, restless world, and the waterfront settings, subways, and shabby rooms of New York’s outcasts are vividly realized.

*House of Bamboo* (1955), photographed in color CinemaScope by Joe MacDonald, focused on another group of outsiders, a criminal ring of disgraced soldiers operating in Tokyo after the war, organized by Sandy Dawson (**Robert Ryan**). Fuller’s story about the infiltration of the gang by an army agent (Robert Stack) is based on the critical premise that the American occupation of Japan was a criminal enterprise. *The Crimson Kimono* (1959) also explores interracial relationships and rivalries in its story of two detectives, Charlie Bancroft (Glenn Corbett) and Joe Kojaku (James Shigeta), best friends who fought together in Korea but who become rivals for Christine (Victoria Shaw), an artist whom they meet on a murder investigation. *Underworld U.S.A.* (1961) was another story of infiltration, but this time the undercover man is a criminal, Tolly Devlin (Cliff Robertson), out to gain revenge on the gang who murdered his father.

In *Shock Corridor* (1963), a journalist (Peter Breck) is the man undercover, spending time in a mental hospital to find out who committed a murder that has been covered up. He is subjected to violent attacks by other patients and electric shock treatment by the hospital authorities until he begins to lose his sanity. *The Naked Kiss* (1964) was equally powerful, the shocking tale of a reformed prostitute (Constance Towers), another of Fuller’s anarchic misfits, who works with handicapped children in a small town only to discover that the wealthy intellectual whom she was about to marry is a paedophile. She batters him to death with a telephone receiver, disgusted that he thinks they share comparable “perversions.”

Fuller also made one **neo-noir**, *Street of No Return* (1989), a coproduction filmed in Portugal and adapted from the **David Goodis** novel. Here too, Fuller focuses on an outcast, a haunted-looking derelict, Michael (Keith Carradine), who reveals in an extended flashback how his career as a rock musician was ended when a gangster, Eddie, cut his vocal chords. Fuller’s jump cuts, extreme camera movements, and elliptical editing effectively create a nightmare world.

## – G –

**GABIN, JEAN (1904–1976).** Jean Gabin was the dominant prewar French male star who created a new type of hero that was notably different from his American counterparts, a complex, ambivalent, modern Everyman, combining toughness with vulnerability. Gabin's decent ordinary Joe is also an outsider whose life becomes intertwined with sorrow and crime, whose love affairs are doomed and who always dies, making his character darker than its film noir successors. However, like the noir antihero, his past is constantly alluded to, but never fully revealed. Gabin played variations of this figure in a succession of films: *Les Bas-fonds* (*The Lower Depths*, 1936), *Le Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*, 1938), *La Bête humaine* (*Judas Was a Woman* aka *The Human Beast*, 1938), *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939), and *Remorques* (*Stormy Waters*, 1940). Gabin's style is minimalist, making each small gesture and expression significant, but although his characters are generally introspective, each film contains a trademark scene in which Gabin's suppressed anger explodes. In his **gangster** film, *Pépé le Moko* (1937), Gabin's character is more swaggering and charismatic but equally doomed.

After fleeing during the Occupation, Gabin did not regain popular stardom until the success of *Touchez pas au Grisbi* (*Grisbi* aka *Honor Among Thieves*, 1954). Gabin's aging gangster Max incarnates his postwar archetype: the declining patriarch who nevertheless maintains old-style decency in a changed world of affluence and conspicuous consumption. Gabin played this role in *Razzia sur la chnouf* (*Chnouf: To Take It Is Deadly*, 1955), *Le Rouge est mis* (*Speaking of Murder*, 1957), *Le Désordre et la nuit* (*Night Affair*, 1958), *Le Cave se rebiffe* (*The Counterfeiters*, 1961), *Mélodie en sous-sol* (*Any Number Can Win*, 1963), *Du rififi à Paname* (*Rififi in Paris* aka *The Upper Hand*, 1966), and *Le Clan des Siciliens* (*The Sicilian Clan*, 1969). His performance style continued to be minimal, rarely moving except to deliver the magisterial slap that would humiliate his adversary.

Gabin's other noirs are *La Belle équipe* (*They Were Five*, 1936), *Voici le temps des assassins* (*Deadlier Than the Male*, 1956), and *Deux hommes dans la ville* (*Two Men in Town*, 1973). See also DELON, ALAIN; FRENCH FILM NOIR; POETIC REALISM; PORTMAN, ERIC.

**GANGSTER NOIRS.** After **hard-boiled** fiction, the strong tradition of gangster narratives (in print and on film) was the most important vernacular influence on film noir. In addition to its focus on crime and the

underworld, the gangster film was centrally concerned with violence and the struggle for money and power seen as the essential constituents of modern American urban living. The gangster was another folk hero whose life exhibited the contradictions of American capitalism, the price of being a successful, competitive individualist. The three seminal gangster films—*Little Caesar* (1931), *The Public Enemy* (1931), and *Scarface* (1932)—depicted the gangster as the modern entrepreneur, from a deprived and/or ethnic background whose toughness, quick wit, and energy allow him to succeed. However, several noir **precursors**, including *Quick Millions* (1931) and *Blood Money* (1933), that depicted the gangster emphasized corruption and betrayal as central themes, anticipating film noir's typically unheroic presentation of the gangster.

The key transitional film was *High Sierra* (1941), in which **Humphrey Bogart's** tough gangster-on-the-run, Roy Earle, was presented as a vulnerable, insecure figure wracked by self-doubt. James Cagney, the star of *The Public Enemy*, made two gangster noirs, *White Heat* (1949) and *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* (1950), in which the gangster's dynamism has become psychotic. **Edward G. Robinson's** gangsters in *Key Largo* (1948) and *Black Tuesday* (1954) were deliberate throwbacks to his performance in *Little Caesar*, but the films' trajectory is much more downbeat. Mickey Rooney's histrionic performance as the 1930s gangster *Baby Face Nelson* (1957), while retaining the figure's astounding energy, also emphasizes his instability, mental anguish, and psychopathology. *The Gangster* (1947), in which **Daniel Fuchs** adapted his own prewar novel, re-created the gangster as a paranoid existentialist who believes that any action might be futile. In *The Big Combo* (1955), the gangster (**Richard Conte**) has become part of the sinister, shadowy corporations that were thought to dominate crime in America, but he too is corrupt and sadistic, enjoying inflicting pain and humiliation on his victims.

Noir, in turn, influenced the development of gangster films, including **Arthur Penn's** *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and Francis Ford Coppola's Godfather trilogy (1972/1974/1990). Several **neo-noirs** have returned to the figure, notably **Martin Scorsese's** *Goodfellas* (1990), which has a voice-over and flashbacks, *Casino* (1995), *Gangs of New York* (2002), and *The Departed* (2006). Other influential neo-noir gangster films include the **Coen Brothers' Miller's Crossing** (1990), Sam Mendes's *Road to Perdition* (2002), and Ridley Scott's *American Gangster* (2007).

Other gangster noirs include: *Johnny Eager* (1942), *Her Kind of Man* (1946), *Johnny O'Clock* (1947), *Black Hand* (1950), *Highway 301* (1950), *711 Ocean Drive* (1950), *The Racket* (1951), *The System* (1953), *City of Shadows* (1955), *I Died a Thousand Times* (1955), *The Naked Street* (1955), *Tight Spot* (1955), *The Houston Story* (1956), *Party Girl* (1958), and *The Trap* (1959).

**GARDNER, AVA (1922–1990).** Like **Jane Greer**, Ava Gardner's reputation as an iconic femme fatale is based on one outstanding performance: as Kitty Collins in **Robert Siodmak's** *The Killers* (1946). Gardner's spider woman has a dreamlike sensuality, raven-haired, curvaceous, and full-mouthed, first glimpsed by her victim (**Burt Lancaster**) singing "The More I Know of Love" in a nightclub. Even during the mundanities of planning a robbery, she reclines suggestively on a bed, and the proliferation of mirror shots connotes her narcissism and duplicity. Other noirs failed to offer her such a substantial role. In *Whistle Stop* (1946), she played the good-bad girl opposite **George Raft** in a film that depicted the claustrophobia of small-town life. In *Singapore* (1947) she played the **amnesiac** wife of returning veteran Matt (**Fred MacMurray**). Her character has remarried another man in ignorance. Gardner was more effective in *The Bribe* (1949) as another corrupt siren with whom a federal agent (**Robert Taylor**) becomes romantically involved.

**GARFIELD, JOHN (1913–1952).** The son of a Russian-Jewish immigrant, John Garfield was born Jacob Julius Garfinkle on the Lower East Side of New York City, and he worked for the left-wing Group Theater in New York before gaining a contract with Warner Bros. He became an important star, acting in a number of seminal films noir before the **blacklist** helped hasten his premature death. Garfield played a succession of tough, battling working-class loners, struggling to make their way in an unsympathetic world, often unsuccessfully. His subdued style, almost immobile, mouth taut, only the eyes moving, suggestive of a suppressed violence ready to erupt, expressed Garfield's doomed, despairing, misunderstood, and thwarted persona.

Garfield played falsely accused outsiders in the noir **precursors** *They Made Me a Criminal* (1939) and *Dust Be My Destiny* (1939), **gangsters** in *Castle on the Hudson* (1940), *East of the River* (1940), and *Out of the Fog* (1941), and emotionally scarred **troubled veterans** in *The Fallen Sparrow* (1943) and *Nobody Lives Forever* (1946). But his

most celebrated early noir role was as the working-class drifter Frank Chambers in *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946). Frank, who narrates the story in flashback from his prison cell awaiting execution, embodies Depression America—rootless, disaffected, and forced by circumstances and his infatuation with Cora (Lana Turner) into murdering her husband.

When his Warner Bros. contract expired in 1946, Garfield was one of the first Hollywood stars to go independent and became part of **Enterprise Productions**, playing the lead in two films that reflected his own left-wing views: **Robert Rossen's** boxing noir *Body and Soul* (1947) and **Abraham Polonsky's** *Force of Evil* (1948). In these allegories of exploitative capitalism, Garfield's self-made man eventually recognizes how he is being exploited and determines to put things right. In *The Breaking Point* (1950), he played a **troubled veteran** forced into smuggling by economic circumstances. His final film was *He Ran All the Way* (1951), written by Guy Endore (Dalton Trumbo) and Hugo Butler and directed by John Berry, all victims of blacklisting. Garfield plays petty thug Nick Robey, who can only experience family life at gunpoint by holding an ordinary working-class family hostage as he tries desperately to avoid capture by the police for the murder he committed. Shot by the woman he befriended, Peg (Shelly Winters), while protecting her father, Nick dies wordlessly in the gutter on the dark, wet, windswept street.

Placed on the blacklist in the early 1950s for his left-wing sympathies, Garfield refused to name names in April 1951 and was found dead of a heart attack only a month later. *See also* LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**GARMES, LEE (1897–1978).** Lee Garmes had a long and distinguished career as a cinematographer, making his name initially through the Josef von Sternberg–Marlene Dietrich films—including *Morocco* (1930) for which he won an Oscar—that influenced film noir particularly through their atmospheric lighting. Along with **John F. Seitz**, Garmes pioneered the use of “Rembrandt lighting,” in which the main source of light comes from the north, lending a low-key effect with strong blacks and enabling an audience's attention to be drawn to significant detail. This is amply demonstrated in his photography for the noir **precursors** *City Streets* (1931) and *The Scoundrel* (1935), and also occasionally in *Scarface* (1932). His finest noir work was the **expressionist** lighting on *Nightmare Alley* (1947)—from the dark, shadowy world of the second-

rate traveling carnival to the plush nightclubs—and in Max Ophüls's *Caught* (1949), where the lighting perfectly complements a brooding tale about tangled emotions. Garmes's style was at odds with the shift to a more naturalistic register in 1950s noirs, and the **city exposé** *The Captive City* (1952) displays this tension. However, the more melodramatic *The Desperate Hours* (1955) was better suited to his talents.

Garmes's other noirs are *Crime without Passion* (1934), *Guest in the House* (1944), and *Detective Story* (1951). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**GERMAN FILM NOIR.** The origins of German film noir are in **expressionism**, the Weimar *Strassenfilm* (street film) and **Fritz Lang's** *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931), with their explorations of disturbed mental states, crime, and the conflicts of urban modernity. These developments were truncated by the rise of Nazism that led Lang, **Robert Siodmak**, and many other film personnel to emigrate. However, even after the war, there was no critical climate, as in France, that embraced film noir or celebrated American films, and even the films noir of German exiles were met with scorn or hostility as morally corrupt. It was not until the 1970s that German audiences became familiar with the concept of film noir, initially adopted under the term *Schwarze Serie* (Black Series) from the French *Série Noire*. Crime films, always the basis of film noir, were a minor component of postwar German film production. However, there was a postwar German film noir in the 1940s and 1950s that can be retrospectively defined, one that crossed several genres or cycles of film, which was haunted by the past, uncomfortable about the present, and harbored fears about the future.

*Die Mörder sind unter uns* (*The Murderers Are Among Us*, 1946)—produced in East Germany as filmmaking did not resume in the West until 1949—was the first of a short-lived cycle of *Trümmerfilme* (rubble films) that combined an expressionist heritage with topical elements. In this story, a **troubled veteran** wracked by war guilt struggles to resume a peacetime existence in a society that is devastated materially, culturally, and psychologically. *Blockierte Signale* (*Blocked Signals*, 1948), *Hafenmelodie* (*Harbour Melody*, 1948), *Schicksal aus zweiter Hand* (*Second-Hand Destiny*, 1949), and *Tromba* (1949) also depict insecure and disturbed male protagonists, but there is a noticeable absence of the femme fatale; German **women** tend to be represented as supportive and redemptive, with the exception of *Alraune* (*Unnatural*, 1952), *Die*



*Sünderin* (*The Sinner*, 1951), *Illusion in Moll* (*Illusion in a Minor Key*, 1952), and *Nachts auf den Strassen* (*At Night on the Streets*, 1952), all starring Hildegard Knef.

Some of the most powerful noirs were made by returning **émigrés**. *Der Verlorene* (*The Lost One*, 1951), directed by and starring **Peter Lorre**, was a complex story of war guilt told in flashback. Lorre plays Dr. Rothe, who has faked his death in order to erase his past as a Nazi scientist and serial killer. **Robert Siodmak's** *Nachts, wenn der Teufel kam* (*The Devil Strikes at Night*, 1957) also explores the past through the figure of the serial killer, a retarded manual worker (Mario Adorf) whose actions are used by Nazi authorities as a cynical propaganda exercise to garner public support for their policy of exterminating the mentally ill. Several other noirs also centered on the serial killer: *Es geschah am helllichten Tag* (*It Happened in Broad Daylight*, 1958)—remade in Hollywood by Sean Penn as *The Pledge* (2001)—*Viele kamen vorbei* (*Many Passed By*, 1956), and *Gestehen Sie, Dr. Corda!* (*Confess, Dr. Corda*, 1958).

Other noirs examined the social, familial, and intergenerational conflicts produced by the commercial success of the postwar *Wirtschaftswunder* (“economic miracle”): *Das Bekenntnis der Ina Kahr* (*Ina Kahr's Confession*, 1954), *Geständnis unter vier Augen* (*Private Confession*, 1954), *Teufel in Seide* (*Devil in Silk*, 1955), *Die Halbstarcken* (*The Hooligans*, 1956), *Die Frühreifen* (*The Adolescents*, 1957), *Nasser Asphalt* (*Wet Asphalt*, 1958), *Am Tag als der Regen kam* (*The Day the Rains Came*, 1959), *Der Rest ist Schweigen* (*The Rest Is Silence*, 1959), *Die Wahrheit über Rosemarie* (*The Truth About Rosemarie*, 1959), and Lang's final film *Die tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse* (*The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*, 1960). Here the titular master criminal uses a luxury hotel built by the Nazis to attract the new international partners of West Germany's economic miracle, while secretly spying on them through intricate systems of surveillance. There was a similarly bleak group of films depicting provincial communities, including *Die goldene Pest* (*The Golden Plague*, 1954)—directed by another returning émigré, **John Brahm**—*Kirmes* (*Fairground*, 1960), *Es geschah am helllichten Tag* (*It Happened in Broad Daylight*, 1958), and *Schwarzer Kies* (*Black Gravel*, 1960), which show small towns as rife with corruption, paranoia, introspection, and hidden guilt.

German **neo-noir** originated as part of the ambivalent attraction American cinema had for New German Cinema directors in the 1970s

and 1980s, notably Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Wim Wenders. Noir became a way of connecting a new generation of German filmmakers with Weimar cinema through the work of the German exiles, but it was also the only language available to critique the social hypocrisies of the new economic miracle, the pervasive influence of American popular culture, and their parents' "historical amnesia" concerning the Nazi past. Fassbinder's early **gangster** cycle, *Liebe: kälter als der Tod* (*Love Is Colder Than Death*, 1969), *Götter der Pest* (*Gods of the Plague*, 1970), and *Der amerikanische Soldat* (*The American Soldier*, 1970) used noir playfully, often parodically, but his second trilogy, *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (*The Marriage of Maria Braun*, 1979), *Lola* (1981), and *Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss* (*Veronika Voss*, 1982), used noir to explore the legacy of the recent past. The first was set in the immediate aftermath of the war, *Lola* in the mid-1950s and *Veronika Voss* during the Nazi period. The last was a reworking of Billy Wilder's *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), depicting the life of a has-been star from the Third Reich.

This self-reflexive use of film history is also to be found in Wenders's work. Elements of noir can be found throughout his oeuvre but is concentrated in *Der amerikanische Freund* (*The American Friend*, 1977) and *Hammett* (1982). The first is an adaptation of **Patricia Highsmith's** *Ripley's Game* and explores the descent of Jonathan Zimmerman (Bruno Ganz), a happily married, respectable picture framer, into a world of violent crime caused by Ripley (Dennis Hopper), a shady American art dealer who represents metaphorically the seductive lure of the American thriller. *Hammett* deliberately conflates the writer **Dashiell Hammett** with his creation Sam Spade as Sam Hammett (Frederic Forrest), who, in a sequence that hesitates between dream and reality, appears to act in the story he has just written. Wenders deliberately exaggerates noir conventions in order to expose them as fictive devices.

In the 1990s German filmmakers no longer felt the need to critique Hollywood, shifting from art house to more popular genre-based filmmaking that emulates the fast-paced, action-driven American mode, as in Tom Tykwer's *Lola rennt* (*Run Lola Run*, 1998). *Long Hello and Short Goodbye* (1998) is a highly stylized neo-noir, reminiscent of **Pulp Fiction** (1994) in its use of nonchronological narrative, interpolated stories, and references to an eclectic range of popular culture.

However, German neo-noir can still be used as a critical instrument, especially for former East German filmmakers anxious to explore the

inequalities of the reunification and the failures of integration. *Meschugge* (1999) revisits the problem of dealing with the Nazi past from the perspective of postunification “normalization” debates. *Wege in die Nacht* (*Paths in the Night*, 1999) directly explores the problem of integrating the citizens of the former German Democratic Republic into the new Germany by dramatizing the psychological decline of a man who, since unification, has been consigned to Germany’s rubbish heap and, in response, forms a vigilante group. *Kurz und Schmerzlos* (*Short Sharp Shock*, 1998) was a homage to **Martin Scorsese’s** *Mean Streets* (1973) in its exploration of destructive male friendship among the disaffected ethnic minorities of Hamburg. *Die Unberühmbare* (*No Place to Go*, 2000) is a bleak tale about the false euphoria of unification, while *Jerichow* (2008) is a noir tale of a **troubled veteran** working for a wealthy immigrant and his femme fatale wife that recalls **James M. Cain**.

**GET CARTER (1971)**. Although *Get Carter* was critically reviled on its initial release because of its violence, it has subsequently become a cult classic, recognized as an innovative and morally complex crime thriller that has influenced the development of both **British film noir** and American noir. It displays the high degree of generic self-consciousness characteristic of **neo-noir**: Jack Carter (Michael Caine), a professional **hit man** working for London gangsters, reads *Farewell, My Lovely* as he journeys north back to his home town of Newcastle to investigate the circumstances of his brother’s death. Although clearly indebted to Hollywood **gangster** films, *Get Carter* was based on a British crime novel, Ted Lewis’s *Jack’s Return Home*, which, though borrowing from the American **hard-boiled** tradition, contained a detailed depiction of provincial British life. Producer Michael Klinger wanted a British thriller that was adult and hard-hitting and his chosen director, Mike Hodges, decided to locate the action in Newcastle because it was a British city in the throes of radical change. Hodges’s documentarist’s eye and Wolfgang Suschitsky’s long-lens camera-work contrast the **city’s** prewar terraced housing with its new tower-block developments and multistory car parks, a rapid modernization that embraced two of the major growth industries of 1960s Great Britain, gambling and pornography, which turned Newcastle into the Las Vegas of the northeast of England.

As Carter probes the circumstances behind his brother’s demise, he uncovers how civic corruption, gambling, violence, and sleazy sex are

intermingled in a predatory noir world. Carter, as realized in Caine's admired performance, is a complex figure, uniting the typically cool, fastidious hit man, the revenger from Jacobean drama purging the infected state, and the family man who sheds tears of shame and grief as he views his niece (probably daughter) appearing in a porn movie. However, although Carter is an understandable figure, he is not sympathetic. Hodges's dispassionate presentation emphasizes his ruthless, often heartless actions, littering the film with *memento mori* that point toward Carter's inevitable, and deserved, death. In the dénouement, he is killed by an anonymous assassin (first glimpsed travelling north on the same train as Carter) in the pay of either porn king Kinnear (John Osborne) or Carter's London employers on a desolate beach as Roy Budd's haunting, unsettling jazz score plays for the final time.

*Get Carter* was remade in 2000 with Caine appearing briefly in a supporting role to Sylvester Stallone's Las Vegas gangster, who returns to his hometown of Seattle.

**GIBBONS, CEDRIC (1893–1960).** The longest-serving and most influential of the studio art directors, the urbane, sophisticated, and autocratic Gibbons supervised the art department at MGM from its inception in 1924 to his retirement in 1956. Gibbons's attention to detail and his belief in built sets were demonstrated perfectly in the early **Gothic** noir *Gaslight* (1944). He won an Oscar for his creation of the cluttered, oppressive London town house in which the *homme fatal* (Charles Boyer) tries to drive his wife (Ingrid Bergman) insane in order to obtain her aunt's jewels.

In the modern, urban gangster noir *Johnny Eager* (1942), there is a highly effective set in which Johnny (**Robert Taylor**) transforms from cab driver to gangster by walking through a series of doors that lead him from a new office building at a racetrack to the luxurious apartment where he assumes his criminal identity. There is another accomplished contrast of different worlds in *Rogue Cop* (1954), where the well-heeled lifestyle of the **corrupt cop** Kelvaney (Taylor) and his "business associates" is counterpointed by the scenes in which his brother patrols the neighborhood of cheap bars and flophouses separated by dark alleyways, the world to which Kelvaney eventually returns to avenge his brother's death. Gibbons combined with Randall Duell on several important noirs, including *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946) and *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950).

Gibbons's other noirs are *Fury* (1936), *Bewitched* (1945), *Undercurrent* (1946), *The Arnello Affair* (1947), *High Wall* (1947), *Lady in the Lake* (1947), *Act of Violence* (1949), *Border Incident* (1949), *The Bribe* (1949), *Scene of the Crime* (1949), *Tension* (1949), *Dial 1119* (1950), *A Lady without Passport* (1950), *Mystery Street* (1950), *Shadow on the Wall* (1950), *Side Street* (1950), *Cause for Alarm!* (1951), *No Questions Asked* (1951), *The People Against O'Hara* (1951), *The Strip* (1951), *The Unknown Man* (1951), *Talk About a Stranger* (1952), and *Jeopardy* (1953).

**GILDA (1946).** Set in Buenos Aires toward the end of the war where the normal rules do not apply, Charles Vidor's *Gilda* is notable not for its **visual style**, though **Rudolph Maté**'s cinematography is highly accomplished, but for its daring and disturbing depiction of a dark and destructive sexual triangle that ensured its initial box-office success and subsequent reputation. **Glenn Ford** plays Johnny Farrell, a typical noir drifter, rescued by the sophisticated, urbane Ballin Mundson (**George Macready**), on the docks as he is about to be robbed of his winnings from a crooked crapshoot. Johnny is installed as Mundson's casino manager and is his implied homoerotic companion. The beautiful Gilda (**Rita Hayworth**), brought back from one of Mundson's trips, completes the triangle, as she and Johnny were former lovers. Often thought of as the iconic femme fatale, Gilda is better understood as the good-bad girl, wanting to be revenged on Johnny and trapped between the now rival males. Her frequently tantalizing and provocative behavior, including the famous rendition of "Put the Blame on Mame," a public and parodic enactment of the promiscuous, worthless tramp she is thought to be, is an attempt to escape from her impossible situation. Even when Mundson disappears, Johnny marries Gilda only to humiliate her for these apparent infidelities and disloyalty to his friend. The pleasure Johnny takes from this situation is as perverse as it is masochistic, sublimating his erotic feelings into protracted punishment. *Gilda's* upbeat ending, in which Mundson is killed and the happy couple are bound for the United States, seems contrived and incongruous, but it was insisted upon by producer Virginia Van Upp, who was anxious to appease the censors and mitigate the film's darkness. *See also* CENSORSHIP; MEN; WOMEN.

**GOLITZEN, ALEXANDER (1908–2005).** Alexander Golitzen's family fled from Russia after the 1917 revolution, and he arrived in America

at age 16. He entered the film industry in 1933 as a set designer, his first noir being **Fritz Lang's** *Scarlet Street* (1945), in which Golitzen's studio-built Greenwich Village streets have an ominous, sealed-off, claustrophobic quality. The telling detail that was one of Golitzen's hallmarks is displayed in the cramped, overstuffed interior of Christopher Cross's apartment, contrasting with the spacious, clean-cut airiness of the expensive one he rents for Kitty with embezzled money.

Golitzen's main work was at Universal, where he became supervising art director from 1952 through to his retirement in 1976. His major contribution to film noir was from the mid-1950s onward in a series of modestly budgeted films that reflected the studio's cash-strapped status. However, each—*Naked Alibi* (1954), *Forbidden* (1953), *Female on the Beach* (1955), *The Price of Fear* (1956), *The Tattered Dress* (1957), *The Night Runner* (1957), *Man Afraid* (1957), and *The Midnight Story* (1957)—is characterized by precisely functional interiors that also comment subtly on the action. Golitzen designed the marvellously sleazy border town of Los Robles with its cracking walls, peeling paint, murky bars, rancid hotels, and seedy bordellos for **Orson Welles's** *Touch of Evil* (1958). Golitzen worked on 31 episodes of the important noir **television series** *Peter Gunn* (1958–59), on two late noirs, *Cape Fear* (1962) and *Kitten with a Whip* (1964), and on the neo-noirs *Madigan* (1968) and *Play Misty for Me* (1971). *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.

**GOODIS, DAVID (1917–1967).** Goodis was an influential **hard-boiled** writer whose work has a darker, more dreamlike and poetic quality than **Dashiell Hammett's**. His protagonists are mostly working class, ordinary people who are frightened, lonely, and paranoid. Although popular in America, Goodis was more esteemed in France as his melancholy, world-weary **existentialism** and oneiric prose were more in tune with French sensibilities. Goodis wrote for numerous pulp magazines and radio, and he sold *Dark Passage* to Warner Bros. even before publication, signing a six-year contract. He cowrote the original screenplay for *The Unfaithful* (1947), in which a wife (Ann Sheridan) kills her ex-lover and tries to keep it from her husband (**Zachary Scott**), a **troubled veteran**. However, he was not involved in adapting *Dark Passage* (1947), a typical Goodis story of a man (**Humphrey Bogart**) wrongly imprisoned for his wife's murder who, having escaped, has to elude capture while struggling to prove his innocence.

Goodis became frustrated by screenwriting, having been involved in numerous abortive projects, and he returned to his hometown, Philadelphia, and novel writing in 1950. His work continued to be adapted, including *Nightfall* (1957), directed by **Jacques Tourneur**, the story of another innocent man on the run that perhaps comes closest to translating Goodis's melancholy poetry onto the screen. *The Burglar* (1957), which Goodis was persuaded to adapt himself, was a darkly existentialist tale of guilt and frustrated hopes starring **Dan Duryea**. So far, one **neo-noir**, *Street of No Return* (1989) directed by **Samuel Fuller**, has been adapted from his work along with an episode of the noir **television series** *Fallen Angels* (1995).

Adaptations of Goodis's work in France began with *Section des disparus* (1956), directed by Pierre Chenal from *Of Missing Persons*. **François Truffaut's** *Tirez sur le pianiste* (*Shoot the Piano Player*, 1960) was adapted from *Down There*, with Truffaut shifting the action from Philadelphia and New Jersey to Paris and its environs. René Clément's *La course du lièvre à travers les champs* (*And Hope to Die*, 1972), adapted from *Black Friday*, starred Jean-Louis Trintignant as the typical bemused and beleaguered Goodis protagonist, kidnapped by an outlaw gang led by **Robert Ryan**, in the last film before his death. Jean-Jacques Beineix's *La Lune dans le caniveau* (*The Moon in the Gutter*, 1983) was a radical adaptation stylistically, even though it was faithful to the surreal poetry of the original and the turbulent and troubled lives of its socially marginal protagonists. Other directors were attracted to Goodis in the 1980s: Gilles Béhat's *Rue Barbare* (*Street of the Damned*, 1983), adapted from *Street of the Lost*, and Francis Girod's *Descente aux enfers* (*Descent into Hell*, 1986), based on *The Wounded and the Slain*. See also FRENCH FILM NOIR.

**GOTHIC.** Most accounts of film noir tend to overprivilege its debt to **hard-boiled fiction** at the expense of its Gothic legacy. However, appreciating the impact of the Gothic tradition on film noir is crucial to understanding its development, especially in the formative stages of the 1940s.

The Gothic romance was a literary tradition that originated in the late 18th century as part of a European revival of Gothicism in the arts, a shift in taste and sensibility that embraced the wild, the morbid, and the supernatural together with a new preoccupation with death, solitude, and the horrific or terrifying. The key Gothic setting is the labyrinthine man-

sion with its secret, shadowy passageways and locked rooms containing dark secrets. The most influential Gothic romance was Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), with its persecuted heroine imprisoned in the decaying castle of Udolpho by her aunt's sinister husband. In the 19th-century, European Gothicism was developed by Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe, in whose work evil Europeans and the pathology of guilt became central preoccupations. Modulated through the 19th-century "sensation novel," the modern Gothic romance became one of the staples of popular fiction, targeted at a female audience. At its center is the imperiled victim-heroine, often recently married to an enigmatic older man who is intensely attractive but also frightening and who seems to harbor a dark secret. Unsure of her own identity, the heroine feels helpless, confused, and despised; her paranoia includes the strong sensation that the past is repeating itself. These Gothic romances articulate the dark side of feminine experience: the fear of mental and physical annihilation by **men**.

Hollywood drew extensively on this Gothic tradition in the 1940s as a branch of the "woman's film," centering on a female protagonist and often narrated by her and with a Victorian or foreign setting. The first Gothic noir was **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Rebecca* (1940), its paradigmatic story, unfolded in flashback by the unnamed heroine (Joan Fontaine), concerns her aristocratic older husband (Laurence Olivier), the mysterious circumstances of his first wife's death, and the dark secrets possibly contained in his huge family home, Manderley. The other influential and hugely popular Gothic noir was *Gaslight* (1944), first filmed as a **British film noir** by Thorold Dickinson in 1940 and released in the United States as *Angel Street*, the title of the Patrick Hamilton play on which it was based. MGM bought the rights and removed the British film from circulation to make way for its own version starring Charles Boyer and Ingrid Bergman (who won an Oscar). The other important component in noir's formative period was Southern Gothic, with similar themes and iconography, but set in the southern states of America. *Among the Living* (1941), which takes place in a generic southern location, was photographed by Theodor Sparkuhl, an **émigré** cinematographer, in an **expressionist** register. *Dark Waters* (1944) was set in the Louisiana bayous, with Merle Oberon playing the imperiled heroine.

Noir's developing expressionist **visual style**, with its shadowy lighting and odd angles, was ideally suited to Gothic fiction's attempt to render the unconscious and the forbidden, as shown in **Robert Siodmak's**



*The Spiral Staircase* (1946), Joseph L. Mankiewicz's *Dragonwyck* (1946), and **Fritz Lang's** *Secret Beyond the Door* (1948) and *House by the River* (1950), which all develop the exploration of the male figure's psychopathologies as well as the heroine's mounting terror.

Other Gothic noirs include: *Ladies in Retirement* (1941), *Suspicion* (1941), *Experiment Perilous* (1944), *My Name Is Julia Ross* (1945), *Love from a Stranger* (1947), *Moss Rose* (1947), *So Evil My Love* (1948), *Sleep, My Love* (1948), *The Woman in White* (1948), and *Night of the Hunter* (1955). See also MEN; WOMEN.

**GRAHAME, GLORIA (1923–1981).** With a distinctive little girl's voice, Gloria Grahame was often used straightforwardly as a femme fatale, as in *Sudden Fear* (1952) or *Human Desire* (1954), but her best roles were more complex and enigmatic. She received an Academy Award nomination for her supporting role as the world-weary but decent nightclub hostess in *Crossfire* (1947), but a more substantial role came with *In a Lonely Place* (1950), directed by her second husband, **Nicholas Ray**. Grahame played an independent **woman** drawn into a relationship with the *homme fatal* (**Humphrey Bogart**) whom she defends, mistrusts, and ultimately betrays emotionally. Her most memorable role came in **Fritz Lang's** *The Big Heat* (1953), in which she plays the archetypal moll Debby Marsh with intelligence and wit, transforming the stereotype into a complex creation whose sexuality has a playful, ironic quality that makes it appealing. After her **gangster** boyfriend (Lee Marvin) scars her with scalding coffee, she becomes a tragic figure, her death the most poignant moment in the film. Grahame's career faltered in the mid-1950s, and in *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959), she has only a minor role as a seductress.

Grahame's other noirs are *A Woman's Secret* (1949), *Macao* (1952), *The Good Die Young* (GB 1954), *The Naked Alibi* (1954), and *Chandler* (1971).

**GRAPHIC NOVELS.** See COMICS/GRAPHIC NOVELS.

**GREENE, GRAHAM (1904–1991).** One of the major writers of the 20th century, Graham Greene had an important influence on the development of film noir on both sides of the Atlantic, particularly during its formative period, both as an author and as a screenwriter. Greene modernized the English thriller in parallel with the American **hard-boiled** writers,

often drawing on **poetic realism** that he deeply admired, as shown in his extensive film reviews. Greene's protagonists are usually psychologically disturbed, at odds with society or pursued by nebulous threats, wracked by guilt, with thwarted sexual longings and suffused by a sense of doom. He made use of first-person narration and internal monologues with complex shifts in point-of-view and with ambiguous or darkly ironic endings. His prose is vivid and imagistic and captures a seedy world of drab ordinariness infused with a feeling of dread that came to be known as "Greeneland." Although he described his thrillers as "entertainments," they were never straightforward propositions for film adaptations, despite their seemingly cinematic qualities, because of their metaphysical and religious dimensions that were difficult to translate. However, as an internationally acclaimed author he was a marketable property for both British and American production companies.

The earliest **British film noir**, *The Green Cockatoo* (U.S. title *Four Dark Hours*, 1937), was adapted from one of Greene's short stories, but the war meant that there was a decade's gap before Sydney Box's *The Man Within* (U.S. title *The Smugglers*, 1947), an unusual period noir set in early-19th-century England and adapted from Greene's first published novel. Greene adapted and cowrote the screenplay (with Terence Rattigan) for *Brighton Rock* (U.S. title *Young Scarface*, 1948) from his 1938 novel. Its central protagonist Pinkie (Richard Attenborough), a psychotic gang leader, was a typically paranoid, death-driven figure, although the adaptation excised the more complex religious elements concerning predestination. Greene adapted his short story "The Basement Room" as *The Fallen Idol* (U.S. title *The Lost Illusion*, 1948). Superbly directed by **Carol Reed**, this deceptively gentle story seen from the perspective of a young boy was a moving exploration of fear, deceit, and betrayal. Greene worked with Reed again on *The Third Man* (1949), an international coproduction for which Greene wrote an original screenplay.

In the United States, his 1936 novel *A Gun for Sale* (1936) became *This Gun for Hire* (1942), adapted by **W. R. Burnett** and **Albert Maltz**, an important early noir starring **Alan Ladd** as the alienated, disturbed **hit man**. It was remade, directed by James Cagney, as *Short Cut to Hell* (1957). **Fritz Lang's** *Ministry of Fear* (1945), in which **Ray Milland** plays the victim-hero pursued by Nazis and suspected by the police for a crime he did not commit, was adapted from Greene's novel, as was *Confidential Agent* (1945), the story of a former concert pianist

(Charles Boyer), middle-aged, weary, and embittered after losing his wife and child in the Spanish Civil War, who travels to England on a secret mission for the Republicans. As with the best Greene adaptations, James Wong Howe's cinematography captures a shabby, hostile world peopled by murderous grotesques in a fog-bound London.

Other noirs adapted from Greene are *Across the Bridge* (1958) and *Double Take* (2001).

**GREENSTREET, SYDNEY (1879–1954).** The portly British-born actor Sydney Greenstreet had a successful stage career in England before his first film role, at the age of 62, as Kasper Gutman in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941). Greenstreet's silvery-smooth elegance and soft patrician voice connoted devious corruption in what was his defining performance. Although he could play virtuous roles, notably his avuncular psychiatrist in *Conflict* (1945), Greenstreet's forte remained suave villainy, as in *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944), *Three Strangers* (1946), and *The Verdict* (1946). In all three, as in *The Maltese Falcon*, he appeared with **Peter Lorre** in what became an extended double act.

Greenstreet's other noirs are *Ruthless* (1948), *The Woman in White* (1948), and *Flamingo Road* (1949).

**GREER, JANE (1924–2001).** Jane Greer only appeared in a handful of films noir, but her iconic role as Kathie Moffatt in *Out of the Past* (1947) made her one of the quintessential femme fatales. In her carefully delayed entrance in the shabby Mexican bar, the slim, 22-year-old Greer emerges from near invisibility on the shining plaza in a pale dress and matching straw hat, seeming to materialize out of the brightness itself. Her dreamlike, ethereal presence utterly disarms Jeff Bailey (**Robert Mitchum**), hired by Kathie's **gangster** boyfriend (**Kirk Douglas**) to bring her back. Her apparent vulnerability makes her duplicity and ruthlessness all the more shocking, shattering Jeff's romantic illusions. She was reunited with Mitchum in **Don Siegel's** *The Big Steal* (1949), designed to cash in on their pairing, but it misfired. In *They Won't Believe Me* (1947), Greer had an underdeveloped role as the first mistress of Larry Ballentine (Robert Young). When Howard Hughes took over control of RKO, he apparently stifled her career because Greer had refused earlier to become one of his mistresses. She then went into television work. Greer appeared in *Against All Odds* (1984), a leaden **remake** of *Out of the Past*, this time playing the mother of Kathie Moffatt, and in **David Lynch's** noir **television series** *Twin Peaks* (1990).

Greer's other noirs are *Station West* (1948), *The Company She Keeps* (1950), and *The Outfit* (1973).

**GROT, ANTON (1884–1974).** Born Antocz Groszewski, Anton Grot came to Hollywood from his native Poland in 1909 and became the dominant set designer at Warner Bros. from 1927 until his retirement in 1948. His work for *Svengali* (1931) revealed a strong **expressionist** influence, and his designs for many of the studio's influential **gangster** films, including *Little Caesar* (1931), while they demonstrated he could adopt a contemporary urban idiom, often relied on lighting to compensate for the penny-pinching décor. Both elements fed into Grot's influential designs for his first noir, *Mildred Pierce* (1945), which specify not only the set itself but also the angle from which it should be shot to create mood as well as convey the action. Grot's designs for *Deception* (1946), *Nora Prentiss* (1947), and *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (1947) were equally effective in their memorably sinister interiors. *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.

**GUFFEY, BURNETT (1905–1983).** Burnett Guffey was the most prolific of the noir cinematographers, but this may be due to his efficiency and adaptability rather than his distinctiveness, as it is difficult to distinguish a Guffey style throughout his 22 films noir. He was Oscar-nominated for *The Harder They Fall* (1956), in which his harsh, uncompromising photography captured the brutal and corrupt milieu of professional **boxing**. His versatility—equally at home on **Gothic** noirs (*My Name Is Julia Ross*, 1945), on studio-bound melodramas (*The Reckless Moment*, 1949), on tough urban dramas (*Scandal Sheet*, 1952), and on location work (*Nightfall*, 1957)—made Guffey a favored cinematographer throughout the entire noir cycle. He worked effectively with imaginative directors: **Nicholas Ray**—*In a Lonely Place* (1950), **Fritz Lang**—*Human Desire* (1954), and **Phil Karlson**—*The Brothers Rico* (1957). Guffey continued to work on **neo-noir**, gaining an Oscar for *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and photographing *The Split* (1968) in Panavision.

Guffey's other noirs are *Night Editor* (1946), *So Dark the Night* (1946), *Johnny O'Clock* (1947), *Framed* (1947), *Knock on Any Door* (1949), *The Undercover Man* (1949), *Convicted* (1950), *Two of a Kind* (1951), *The Family Secret* (1951), *The Sniper* (1952), *Private Hell 36* (1954), and *Tight Spot* (1955).

**GUN CRAZY (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950).** Joseph H. Lewis's *Gun Crazy* was the most compelling and challenging of the early **outlaw**

**couple** noirs in which rebellion, eroticism, and the American cult of the gun are inextricably intertwined. It was an “intermediate” production, a bid by the **King Brothers** to raise their critical and commercial prestige, with a reasonably generous \$450,000 budget allowing a 30-day shoot. Thus, although *Gun Crazy* has the fast-paced quality of the “B” feature “actioner,” it also had a subtlety of characterization and care in execution that were more typical of the “A” film. Originally released as *Deadly Is the Female*, the title was quickly changed to that of the MacKinlay Kantor’s serialized story from which it was adapted by Dalton Trumbo under the pseudonym of Millard Kaufman. Trumbo keeps the focus on the couple, Bart Tare (John Dall) and Annie Laurie Starr (Peggy Cummins), whose affair is forged in the heat of the shooting contest where they first meet. They go together, Bart opines, “like guns and ammunition.” Bart is the classically divided noir male, just returned from spells in reform school and the army where his obsession with guns has been temporarily satisfied but not his yearning for a settled and ordinary life. The background of Annie, a carnival sharpshooter, is left deliberately opaque, the enigmatic femme fatale who craves excitement, desperate to do a “bit of living.” She is both a free spirit, sexy, ambitious, and intelligent, and an unstable killer who will never fulfill Bart’s dreams of the loving housewife on the ranch raising a family. It is Annie who ensures that their crimes escalate, including a bank hold-up that Lewis famously shot in a single take of three and a half minutes and the robbery of a meatpacking factory during which Annie shoots two employees. In a fog-bound dénouement that symbolizes their moral confusion, Bart kills Annie before she can kill his boyhood friends and before the police arrive, knowing that their self-destructive affair can only end in death.

The film was radically remade in 1992 by the feminist director Tamra Davis to foreground the female character’s background and emotional life. *See also* BLACKLIST; REMAKES.

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**HACKMAN, GENE (1930– )**. Gene Hackman came to acting relatively late, winning an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actor in **Arthur Penn**’s *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) as Clyde’s older brother Buck. Hackman’s burly physique and “lived in” face meant that he did not play ro-

mantic leads but specialized in complex characters that were mixtures of violence and vulnerability. He won an Oscar for Best Actor as “Popeye” Doyle in the highly successful *The French Connection* (1971). Doyle is a violent, unstable loner whose obsession with capturing the criminal mastermind Charnier (Fernando Rey) is a disturbing mixture of hatred, fear, and envy. In the 1975 sequel, *French Connection II*, Doyle is removed from the security of New York to Marseilles, where he is captured by Charnier’s gang and pumped full of drugs. In an extraordinary performance, both frightening and deeply affecting, Hackman depicts the terror of the powerless tough guy experiencing “cold turkey,” desperately clinging to the shards of his fragile American identity.

He was equally impressive in Francis Ford Coppola’s *The Conversation* (1974) as Harry Caul, a professional electronic surveillance expert, another obsessive loner, whose paranoia prevents him from having any normal relationship. In the final scene, convinced he is now the object of surveillance, Harry frenziedly rips his apartment apart. Hackman’s defining performance was as the bewildered and outmaneuvered **private eye** Harry Moseby in Penn’s *Night Moves* (1975). In *The Domino Principle* (1977), he played a **troubled Vietnam veteran**, a further embodiment of the alienation that made Hackman the dominant male **neo-noir** star of the 1970s.

Hackman’s other neo-noirs are *Target* (1985), *No Way Out* (1987), *Narrow Margin* (1990), *Absolute Power* (1997), *Enemy of the State* (1998), *Twilight* (1998), *Under Suspicion* (2000), and *Heist* (2001). See also MEN; NEO-NOIR.

**HAMMETT, DASHIELL (1894–1961).** Along with **Raymond Chandler**, Dashiell Hammett was the most influential writer in the development of film noir. As Chandler acknowledged, Hammett was the writer who really transformed crime fiction, who “took murder out of the Venetian vase and dropped it into the gutter,” forging the characteristic tough, terse, **hard-boiled** masculine idiom and the concern with urban America and its denizens. Hammett had been a private detective himself, working with the Pinkerton Agency, and this experience was the basis for his creation of the modern **private eye**: The Continental Op, an employee of a detective agency, and the self-employed Sam Spade. Hammett’s short, declarative sentences created a sense of speed and urgency that resembled reportage, and his work became the staple of **radio** noir. Like Chandler, Hammett is the master of the laconic

one-liner, the wisecrack put-down that deflates the opposition, combining wit, verbal aggression, and a sense of superiority. Hammett's work is also characterized by its emphasis on male individualism, inclining to the misogynist and homophobic, his heroes attempting to avoid social, sexual, or economic entanglements. Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon* (1930) is determined never to be made a "sap," but there was also a concomitant concern with male loyalty and its betrayal.

Although a populist writer, Hammett was a cultivated intellectual, an existential Marxist, whose work offers a searching critique of American capitalism. After becoming a Hollywood screenwriter and a script "doctor," though he was relatively unsuccessful, Hammett lived a sybaritic life in Los Angeles, but he was also an active member of the Communist Party. This meant that he was pursued by the authorities, subpoenaed to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) hearings in 1953, and placed on the **blacklist**.

Hammett's first novel, *The Red Harvest* (1929), was made into a **gangster** film in 1930 under the title *Roadhouse Nights* (1930), but this uneven film is uncertain in its address. The noir **precursor** *City Streets* (1931) was based on his short story "After School," which he had specifically written for the screen, although he did not write the screenplay. Warner Bros. produced a reasonably faithful adaptation of *The Maltese Falcon* in 1931 in their fast-paced, low-budget style, but it lacked subtlety. The 1935 remake, *Satan Met a Lady*, reconstituted the story as a light comedy in the style of *The Thin Man* (1934), the most successful film based on Hammett's fiction that spawned five sequels. However, the third adaptation of *The Maltese Falcon* in 1941, written and directed by **John Huston**, not only retained much of Hammett's dialogue but also was much closer to the tone and temper of the original. Paramount had announced its intention to make *The Glass Key* soon after it was published in 1931 but dropped its plans under pressure from the Hays Office. However, a version was made in 1935 starring **George Raft**, but again the adaptation lacked the teeth of the original. A much better version was made in 1942, adapted by **Jonathan Latimer**, who restored much of the sexually perverse material omitted from the earlier version.

Hammett's work has also influenced **neo-noir**, not so much in direct adaptations—though one of his stories was the basis of an episode of the noir **television series** *Fallen Angels* (1993–95) and another for *The House on Turk Street* (2002)—but in a more generalized sense. For in-

stance, *The Red Harvest* and *The Glass Key* lie behind the **Coen Brothers' *Blood Simple*** (1984) and *Miller's Crossing* (1990), an indication that his fiction remains a seminal presence. See also CENSORSHIP.

**HARD-BOILED FICTION.** Hard-boiled fiction was the most important influence on film noir, not only in the large numbers of direct adaptations from particular novels or short stories but also in a more pervasive effect on dialogue, themes, and subject matter. Many of the most important hard-boiled writers—including **James M. Cain, Raymond Chandler, David Goodis, Dashiell Hammett, Jim Thompson, and Cornell Woolrich**—also worked for Hollywood studios, but their influence extended into various European film noirs.

Hard-boiled fiction took its name from the characteristically tough, terse, understated vernacular idiom of the writing that kept close to the rhythms of ordinary speech and is often narrated by the male protagonist. Carroll John Daly and Hammett were acknowledged as the “fathers” of hard-boiled crime writing, their work appearing from 1922 onward. Joseph C. Shaw, the editor of the most influential film noir magazine, *Black Mask*, encouraged other contributors to emulate Hammett’s “objectivity, economy and restraint” and “hard, brittle style.” The hard-boiled writers challenged the dominant English tradition of genteel middle-class murder mysteries written by Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers among others, replacing ratiocination with action, stilted exchanges with an aggressive verbal wit, and the drawing rooms of country houses with the “mean streets” of the fast-growing American cities. Indeed, hard-boiled writers became the great chroniclers of **city** life as corrupt, disorientating, and threatening, a nightmare labyrinth of violence and death. As Chandler articulated in his seminal 1940 essay “The Simple Art of Murder,” hard-boiled fiction generated “the smell of fear . . . [its] characters lived in a world gone wrong. . . . The law was something to be manipulated for profit and power. The streets were dark with something more than night.”

The sexual politics of film noir are mapped out in hard-boiled fiction in the aggressively masculine, even misogynist viewpoint, at its extreme in **Mickey Spillane. Women** are desired and feared as beautiful but duplicitous femme fatales, and males are admired for their self-contained completeness as embodied in the **private eye**. But hard-boiled authors often depicted male fears and paranoia as much as, or more than, ambition, ruthlessness, and lust. The other principal male



character, especially in Cain, Thompson, or Woolrich, is the criminal himself, an ordinary man, gripped by forces beyond his control, usually sexual desire, which overwhelms his reason and even his sanity. The male protagonist is often a victim in a paranoid world where reality and morbid fantasy become interchangeable.

However, there were also female hard-boiled writers—for instance, Vera Caspary, who wrote *Laura* (1942, film 1944) and *Bedelia* (1945, film, GB 1946), and Dorothy B. Hughes, who wrote *In a Lonely Place* (1947, film 1950)—but their contribution has been much less clearly recognized. Their take on gender is often quite different, privileging women protagonists who are the victims of male power and misogyny and who have to survive as best they can in a corrupt, patriarchal world.

Overall, the hard-boiled writers—including European masters such as **Georges Simenon** and **Graham Greene**—transformed an established tradition of “blood melodrama”—stories of violence and erotic love—into a critical modern art form that was populist rather than avant-garde. However, because of the conservative  **censorship**  regime in America, it was not until the mid-1940s that their work could reach the screen as film noir. *See also* AMBLER, ERIC; BURNETT, W. R.; BRACKETT, LEIGH; DANIELS, WILLIAM H.; FUCHS, DANIEL; HIGGINS, JOHN; MCCOY, HORACE; MCGIVERN, WILLIAM P.; MAINWARING, DANIEL; MEN; WESTLAKE, DONALD E.

**HARRISON, JOAN (1907–1994).** Best understood as one of the talented **émigrés** who contributed so much to the development of film noir, the English-born Joan Harrison worked as an assistant and scriptwriter for **Alfred Hitchcock**, accompanying him to Hollywood in 1939. She cowrote the first two of Hitchcock’s American noirs: *Rebecca* (1940) and *Suspicion* (1941), both **Gothic** noirs in which the victim-heroine (Joan Fontaine) marries an attractive man who seems to be harboring a dark secret. Working as a freelance writer, Harrison cowrote the screenplay for another Gothic noir, *Dark Waters* (1944), set in the Louisiana bayous, in which a young heiress (Merle Oberon) is preyed upon by bogus relatives trying to drive her insane and gain her inheritance.

From 1943 Harrison turned to producing, one of only three women in this role at that time in Hollywood, in order to gain more creative control, but she also assisted in the script development. She produced two noirs with **Robert Siodmak**: *Phantom Lady* (1944) and *The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* (aka *Uncle Harry*, 1945). Both show her influ-

ence in their presentation of strong, capable females and weak, paranoid **men**. Harrison produced *Nocturne* (1946), in which **George Raft** plays an obsessive detective who refuses to believe that the death of a famous composer is suicide, and *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947), written and directed by **Robert Montgomery**, one of the best noirs about the **troubled veteran**. Harrison worked with Irving Pichel on *They Won't Believe Me* (1947), the story of a shallow cad Larry Ballentine (Robert Young), who is unfaithful to his rich wife, whom he only married for money and who disposes of her body after she committed suicide in order not to incriminate himself. After returning to Great Britain to produce *Circle of Danger* (1951), Harrison moved into noir **television series**, reuniting with Hitchcock to produce *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (1955–62) and *The Alfred Hitchcock Hour* (1962–65).

**HATHAWAY, HENRY (1898–1985)**. A reliable and highly experienced action director, Hathaway directed several **semidocumentary** noirs: *The House on 92nd Street* (1945) and *13 Rue Madeleine* (1947) produced by **Louis de Rochemont**, and also *Call Northside 777* (1948), in which he combined extensive location shooting with a straightforward handling of the plot. His best noir, *Kiss of Death* (1947), combines expert use of authentic locations with a richly melodramatic confrontation between decency (**Victor Mature**) and psychopathic villainy (**Richard Widmark**). The potentially stagey and static melodrama of *Fourteen Hours* (1951), in which a disturbed young man (**Richard Basehart**) is poised to jump from a hotel balcony, is enlivened by Hathaway's creative location shots. Hathaway directed the **existential** *The Dark Corner* (1946) at a brisk pace, despite its convoluted plot about a **private eye**, Bradford Galt (Mark Stevens), framed for murder. Hathaway's final noir *Niagara* (1953) was in color, but it again showed his ability to unite thrilling location work around the falls with a character study, here a **troubled veteran** (**Joseph Cotten**).

**HAYDEN, STERLING (1916–1986)**. The imposingly tall Sterling Hayden tended to play rough-hewn, self-absorbed characters with a capacity for tenderness. His most compelling performance was as Dix Handley in *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), a petty criminal and the “strong arm” element of the motley gang recruited for the **heist**, but loyal and essentially decent underneath his gruff exterior. In the concluding scene, the mortally wounded Dix becomes a tragic figure as he drives

desperately out of the noir **city** toward the beloved Kentucky farm on which he was raised. He had a similar role in Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing* (1956) as an ex-convict and small-time criminal who masterminds a racetrack robbery. Hayden could play, equally effectively, a range of characters: the dogged Detective-Sergeant Sims in *Crime Wave* (1954); the discharged policeman determined to rehabilitate himself in *The Naked Alibi* (1954); the local sheriff taken hostage by the **troubled veteran** (Frank Sinatra) in *Suddenly* (1954); or the honest detective-lieutenant in *Crime of Passion* (1957), whose lack of ambition enrages his aspirant wife (**Barbara Stanwyck**). Hayden's career was affected by his appearance before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) where he was forced to name names, an action he regretted for the rest of his life. He made a memorable cameo appearance in **Robert Altman's neo-noir** *The Long Goodbye* (1973) as an alcoholic writer who eventually commits suicide.

Hayden's other noirs are *Manhandled* (1949), *The Come-On* (1956), *Hard Contract* (1969), *Winter Kills* (1971), and *Deadly Strangers* (1974). *See also* BLACKLIST.

**HAYWORTH, RITA (1918–1987)**. Born Margarita Carmen Cansino, Rita Hayworth changed her name when she signed for Columbia in 1937. Although appearing in only three noirs, Hayworth's striking performances in *Gilda* (1946) and *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948) made her iconic. In the latter she plays one of the definitive femme fatales, the exotic, inscrutable, utterly duplicitous woman from the Orient, locked into a sterile relationship with her wealthy husband (Everett Sloane) that moves inexorably toward their mutual destruction. In *Gilda* her role is more complex, part of an ambiguous *ménage-à-trois* with her husband (**George Macready**) and lover (**Glenn Ford**), who both suspect her of being faithless. She is in fact the good-bad girl whose provocative sexuality—the gaucho costume for the Mardi Gras complete with whip and her famous song, “Put the Blame on Mame,” part of a strip tease—are designed as public and parodic enactment of the promiscuous and worthless tramp she is thought to be. The tensions in her role are not removed by the enforced happy ending. Hayworth was teamed with Ford again in *Affair in Trinidad* (1952), in some ways a pallid imitation of *Gilda*, where she plays a beautiful nightclub entertainer suspected by Ford of having a hand in his brother's death but who is actually working undercover for the local police. *See also* WOMEN.

**HEAT (1995).** *Heat* is the most critically acclaimed of **Michael Mann's** neo-noirs, the epic confrontation between Lieutenant Vincent Hanna (**Al Pacino**) and master criminal Neil McCauley (**Robert De Niro**) that contained the famous first on-screen meeting between these two star actors. *Heat's* origins go back to a script Mann had written in 1979 but was only able to make as a television film, *L.A. Takedown*, in 1989, with the concomitant restricted budget and short shooting schedule. After his success with *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), Mann was able to return to the project with a considerably increased budget that allowed top-line stars, a generous shooting schedule, and a slow, deliberate unfolding of the plot: *Heat* is nearly three hours long. Mann used 85 separate locations and many panoramic shots from high angles or helicopters, especially at night, which give *Heat's* presentation of **Los Angeles** an operatic quality.

The protagonists are conflicted males, both characteristically obsessive consummate professionals. Hanna has a fraught, fractured home life and is in danger of destroying his third marriage because of his all-consuming dedication, in which he has “to hold on to my angst. I preserve it because I need it. It keeps me sharp, on the edge, where I’ve got to be.” McCauley, his quarry, is an introverted loner holding a deep sadness, with a Spartan apartment overlooking the ocean. His self-completed **existentialism** becomes compromised by his relationship with Eady, a young woman who works in a bookstore, and his younger associate Chris (Val Kilmer), whom he needs to protect. At the midpoint in their duel, Hannah and McCauley meet in a coffee shop—each is shot in the same way but never together, as if they are mirror images of each other—where they acknowledge their mutual respect for the other’s integrity and uncompromising professionalism but recognize that only one can survive. In their final confrontation Hanna shoots McCauley down, but the criminal’s death has a tragic grandeur, which Hanna acknowledges as he holds the dying man’s hand and looks away. *See also* MEN.

**HECHT, BEN (1894–1964).** Ben Hecht, who made his name as a Chicago newspaperman before achieving fame as a novelist, short story writer, and the author of *Scarface* (1932), was a formative influence on film noir. He became a Hollywood screenwriter from 1926, valued highly for his contemporary, idiomatic, and vivid prose, and as a ruthless and effective “script doctor,” having a hand in many films noir for which

he was uncredited, including *Cornered* (1945), *Gilda* (1946), *Cry of the City* (1948), and *Angel Face* (1953). Hecht wrote an original story for the noir **precursor** *Underworld* (1927)—winning an Oscar at the first Academy Awards in 1929—adapted **Dashiell Hammett's** *Red Harvest* as *Roadhouse Nights* (1930), and won another Oscar for *The Scoundrel* (1935), an **existentialist** study of greed, cynicism, and corruption starring Noël Coward as an exploitative New York publisher. Hecht wrote the screenplays for **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Spellbound* (1945) and *Notorious* (1946), the latter an original script for which he was Oscar nominated. He also made several uncredited contributions to Hitchcock's films, including *Rope* (1948) and *Strangers on a Train* (1951). Hecht combined with Charles Lederer in writing the screenplays for *Kiss of Death* (1947), a melding of the **semidocumentary** and **gangster noir**, and *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947), from the Dorothy B. Hughes novel, one of the best **troubled veteran** noirs. He adapted the Guy Endore novel *Whirlpool* (1949) for **Otto Preminger** under a pseudonym, Lester Bartow, and wrote the compelling screenplay for *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950), perhaps his best work. *See also* AMNESIAC NOIRS.

**HEFLIN, VAN (1910–1971).** Van Heflin had a mobile, expressive countenance that could project both attractive and morally ambiguous characters, making him a good choice for film noir roles. He won an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor in *Johnny Eager* (1942) as the foil to **Robert Taylor's** gangster, playing a crooked lawyer who, realizing he has prostituted his ideals and his profession, hides his self-hatred behind a mask of cultivated cynicism in an alcoholic haze. Heflin starred in *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946) as the charismatic drifter, Sam Masterson, who rekindles buried passions and guilt within his childhood friend Martha (**Barbara Stanwyck**) but refuses to collude in her scheme to murder her weak husband (**Kirk Douglas**). In *Possessed* (1947) he played a similarly attractive but egotistical and exploitative young man whose indifference sends **Joan Crawford** into a murderously jealous rage that precipitates catatonia. Heflin portrayed **troubled veteran** Frank Enley in *Act of Violence* (1949), whose prosperous postwar life is disturbed when confronted by his nemesis Joe Parkson (**Robert Ryan**), the only survivor of a prison camp massacre in which Enley was implicated. Heflin's finest role was as a **corrupt cop**, Webb Garwood, in *The Prowler* (1951), who seduces an attractive woman (**Evelyn Keyes**) and shoots her husband while pretending

to respond to a prowler call. Consumed by fantasies of wealth and luxury—the Las Vegas hotel that will “make money for you even while you sleep”—Garwood represents the dark side of the American dream and is eventually gunned down by the police.

Helfin’s other noirs are *Grand Central Murder* (1942), *Black Widow* (1954), and *Once a Thief* (1965).

**HEIST NOIRS.** See CAPER/HEIST NOIRS.

**HELLINGER, MARK (1903–1947).** Mark Hellinger made his name as a New York theater critic and Broadway columnist before writing screenplays for several films, notably the **gangster** movie *The Roaring Twenties* (1939), whose success persuaded Warner Bros. to make him an associate producer on *They Drive by Night* (1940). Hellinger lobbied hard to have the offbeat gangster film *High Sierra* (1941) made, and its popularity established his reputation as a capable filmmaker. Hellinger was a hands-on, hard-driving producer, working on two or three films simultaneously, but one who recognized the value of writers and that a good script was the key to a successful film. He worked for **Darryl F. Zanuck** and for Warner Bros., producing *The Two Mrs. Carrrolls* (1947), but he was also an independent producer, head of Mark Hellinger Productions, which released through Universal. *The Killers* (1946), adapted from an austere but suggestive Ernest Hemingway short story, reflected Hellinger’s preference for **hard-boiled**, spare narratives and realistic settings, which tempered the work of its more romantically inclined director **Robert Siodmak**.

*Brute Force* (1947), a quintessential **prison noir**, was also violent and uncompromising, with director **Jules Dassin** asked to emphasize the brutality of prison life. Dassin also directed *The Naked City* (1948), but this was Hellinger’s project, which he called his “celluloid monument to New York” and which drew on his cosmopolitan knowingness. Hellinger dispatched screenwriter **Malvin Wald** to work with the New York homicide squad in order to get an authentic story of an actual murder case as the focus of this **semidocumentary** anatomization of New York life. Hellinger was highly involved in the final cut, which was orchestrated to his voice-over, but the stress of the production caused his death of a heart attack shortly after completing the film.

*Criss Cross* (1949) was released posthumously, and although Hellinger had chosen the subject and source, without his presence

during production, Siodmak moved away from its conspectus of **Los Angeles** life toward a more archetypal but bitterly ironic romantic tragedy. Hellinger had also announced the production of *Act of Violence*, but this was transferred to William H. Wright at MGM and released in 1949. He had also purchased the rights to Willard Motley's novel *Knock on Any Door*, which was subsequently produced by **Humphrey Bogart's** Santana Productions in 1949.

**HERRMANN, BERNARD (1911–1975).** Bernard Herrmann, an outspoken and acerbic composer, was never under a long-term studio contract, but his scores influenced film noir, particularly through his collaborations with **Alfred Hitchcock**. Herrmann's innovative compositions were sparing, deliberately avoiding lush melodies, emotional underscoring, and the standard symphonic orchestra in favor of isolated harmonies and short, often nonmelodic musical cues. He used unorthodox combinations of instruments that produced a deliberate dissonance, unresolved chordal structures, and polytonality. Herrmann always insisted on orchestrating his own scores and being part of the creative process at an early stage. He started in collaboration with **Orson Welles**, writing scores for his prewar radio shows and providing the highly innovative score for *Citizen Kane* (1941). He had a major opportunity with **John Brahm's** *Hangover Square* (1944), as the film itself is about a schizophrenic composer, George Harvey Bone (**Laird Cregar**), who has psychotic episodes triggered by discordant sounds. Herrmann wrote George's piano concerto, "Concerto Macabre," as a distinctively nonclassical, discordant piece, which George plays as the flames engulf him in the closing scene.

Perhaps the finest of his scores for Hitchcock was in *Vertigo* (1958), which deliberately avoids a conventional melody and thereby frustrates identification with the characters and which is part of the insistent but unpredictable rhythms and tonal ambiguities that reinforce the film's deeply unsettling themes. Herrmann's final score was for *Taxi Driver* (1976)—he died just hours after recording it—another deliberately nonmelodic piece with its sourly dissonant chords and heavily accented percussion, capturing perfectly the paranoia of the protagonist.

Herrmann's other noirs are *The Wrong Man* (1956), *Psycho* (1960), *Cape Fear* (1962), *Marnie* (1964), *La Mariée était en noir* (*The Bride Wore Black*, France 1968), *Endless Night* (GB 1972), and *Obsession* (1976). See also MUSIC.

**HERZBRUN, BERNARD (1891–1964).** Bernard Herzbrun entered the film industry in the 1920s, becoming supervising art director at Universal from 1947 to 1954, where he was responsible for the design of 12 noirs, including *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947) and *Abandoned* (1949), where he worked closely with **Robert Boyle**. Herzbrun had to operate within tight financial constraints that somewhat inhibited the development of a studio style. Nevertheless, he was able to impose a distinctive look in which **expressionist** techniques were restrained and combined with a strong realist aesthetic that favored location shooting. In *Brute Force* (1947), his designs for the high-security prison are solidly palpable but also functioned allegorically as a violent, **existentialist** hell. *Criss Cross* (1949) combined location shooting with the careful delineation of contrasting environments: the tacky bar where Steve (**Burt Lancaster**) sees Anna (Yvonne De Carlo) again, the spacious home of her **gangster** husband (**Dan Duryea**), and the beach house where the lovers are killed. Herzbrun's later noirs were more functional with little expressive use of setting, though his designs for the metropolitan hospital where corruption is rife in *The Sleeping City* (1950) were both convincing and evocative.

Herzbrun's other noirs are *A Double Life* (1947), *Kiss the Blood off My Hands* (1948), *Undertow* (1949), *Johnny Stool Pigeon* (1949), *One Way Street* (1950), *The Shakedown* (1950), and *Forbidden* (1953).

**HIGGINS, JOHN C. (1908–1995).** The Canadian-born John Higgins wrote several complex murder-mystery films, including *Murder Man* (1935), police procedurals including *They're Always Caught* (1938), and documentary shorts in the "Crime Does Not Pay" wartime series. This work was the foundation for his five noir screenplays written for **Anthony Mann** that were adapted from unpublished stories. The first of these, *Railroaded* (1947), was in the **hard-boiled** tradition, but *Raw Deal* (1948) transcended these elements by creating an authentic and moving **woman's** voice-over through which this story of doomed love is narrated. For the **semidocumentary** *T-Men* (1948), Higgins took an unpublished story by Virginia Kellogg based on the files of the U.S. Treasury Department and forged it into a compelling story about two undercover agents subject to intense danger. *He Walked by Night* (1949) also had documentary elements but was primarily a study in alienation and paranoia. *Border Incident* (1949), based on Higgins's own unpublished story, was another undercover film, but about immigration



officials. Higgins only wrote one further noir, *Shield for Murder* (1954), adapted (with Richard Alan Simmons) from a **William P. McGivern** story. It too exhibits the violence that characterized Higgins's collaborations with Mann.

**HIGHSMITH, PATRICIA (1921–1995).** Patricia Highsmith has influenced the development of film noir in America, France, and Germany through adaptations of her dark novels, with their amoral characters (notably Tom Ripley, the subject of five works) and complex psychological confrontations. Her first novel, *Strangers on a Train*, was published in 1950, but it was **Alfred Hitchcock's** adaptation, released the following year, that established her reputation. The complex sharing of identities between the two protagonists, in effect an exchange of murders, was typical of Highsmith and congenial to Hitchcock's preoccupations. *Strangers on a Train* had many similarities to Claude Autant-Lara's *Le Meurtrier (Enough Rope)*, 1963) adapted from Highsmith's *The Blunderer* (1954), in which two men are, independently, suspected of murdering their wives and who forge a strange alliance after they become prime suspects. René Clément's *Plein Soleil (Purple Noon)*, 1960) was an adaptation of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955), in which **Alain Delon** played Ripley, a charming but predatory figure, utterly without scruples or conscience, who murders a rich playboy and assumes his identity. It was remade using Highsmith's title in 1999, directed by Anthony Minghella. But, by common consent, Matt Damon could not match Delon's sinister, disturbing presence as Ripley.

Wim Wenders's *Der amerikanische Freund (The American Friend)*, 1977) used Highsmith's third Ripley novel, *Ripley's Game* (1974), to explore the complex relationship between German and American culture (seen as both exciting and predatory), as did Liliana Cavani in the coproduction *Il gioco di Ripley (Ripley's Game)*, 2002) filmed in English. John Malkovich is a more soft-spoken Ripley than Dennis Hopper in the 1977 film, but he is equally manipulative and amoral. *Die gläserne Zelle (The Glass Cell)*, 1978), adapted from Highsmith's 1964 novel, was a dark, brooding tale of a man released from prison who becomes psychologically trapped and tortured by a corrosive jealousy concerning his beautiful wife's activities while he was incarcerated. **Claude Chabrol's** *Le Cri du hibou (The Cry of the Owl)*, 1987), adapted from the 1962 novel, effectively encompassed the strange psychic

permutations between its two couples, but it became overcomplex and lacked impact.

Other noirs adapted from Highsmith's fiction are *Dites-lui que je l'aime* (*The Sweet Sickness*, 1977), *Eaux profondes* (*Deep Water*, 1981), *Die zwei Gesichter des Januar* (*The Two Faces of January*, 1986), *Der Geschichtenerzähler* (*The Story Teller*, 1989), and *Ripley Under Ground* (2005). See also FRENCH FILM NOIR; GERMAN FILM NOIR.

**HITCHCOCK, ALFRED (1899–1980).** Born in Leytonstone, northeast London, Hitchcock had a major career on both sides of the Atlantic, and his contribution to American and **British film noir** was immense. Hitchcock was involved in every aspect of filmmaking—scripting, art direction, cinematography, music, and editing—and his films constitute a body of work with its own personal “signatures” both visual and thematic. Therefore, many of his crime and spy thrillers—including *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934, remade in 1956), *The 39 Steps* (1935), *Young and Innocent* (1937), *Secret Agent* (1936), *Foreign Correspondent* (1940), *The Paradine Case* (1948), *Under Capricorn* (1949), *Dial M for Murder* (1954), *North by Northwest* (1959), *The Birds* (1963), and *Torn Curtain* (1966)—exist on the fringes of noir. Thus although not as central to the development of film noir as **Fritz Lang**'s contributions, the major preoccupations of many of Hitchcock's finest films clearly encompass noir's central concerns.

Even a very early film, *The Lodger* (1926), a horror-mystery based on the Jack the Ripper murders, contains strong noir elements in its subtle presentation of the falsely suspected male protagonist (Ivor Novello) who appears to be responsible for the murders, and in the high-contrast, atmospheric lighting that shows Hitchcock's knowledge of **expressionism**—he had worked in Germany during the previous two years—and his visual inventiveness. *Blackmail* (1929)—which exists in both silent and sound versions—was another British noir **precursor**. Alice (Anny Ondra), who accidentally kills the man who tried to rape her, escapes detection because her blackmailer falls to his death during the police pursuit. Alice's secret, which she shares with her detective fiancé (John Longden), became a recurring and central Hitchcock preoccupation, the “transference of guilt.” In *Sabotage* (1936), adapted from Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, a woman (Sylvia Sydney) murders her anarchist/saboteur husband because he caused her young brother's death.

The evidence is destroyed in a fire at their home, but the handsome detective knows her guilty secret. This exploration of a dark, complex, psychosexual terrain established Hitchcock not only as the foremost British director but also as someone who had reinvented the moribund genre of the crime thriller.

Hitchcock went to Hollywood in 1939, and although his first American film, *Rebecca* (1940), was the choice of his producer, David O. Selznick, Hitchcock transformed this “woman’s picture” into a **Gothic** noir that, in several key scenes, used low-key lighting and unbalanced compositions to evoke an atmosphere of fear and guilt in which the couple both share. *Suspicion* (1941) was also Gothic, with Cary Grant playing a charming playboy whom his wife (Joan Fontaine) suspects of being a murderer and of harboring designs on her life. RKO vetoed Hitchcock’s desire to make Grant guilty, but this only serves to make his character’s motivations all the more unfathomable. *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) had similar themes but a radically different style, much of it filmed on location in a typical, small American town that Hitchcock thought created “an atmosphere of actuality that couldn’t be captured in any other way” and which profoundly influenced the **semidocumentary** films noir. It focuses on another charming playboy, Charlie (**Joseph Cotten**), but this time he actually is a serial killer whose guilt, in a typical Hitchcock transference, envelops his niece (Teresa Wright), who shares his name.

*Spellbound* (1945) is the story of a traumatized, **amnesiac/troubled veteran** (Gregory Peck) who believes he is guilty of the murder of Dr. Edwards, whom he is impersonating and whose guilt transfers to the psychiatrist (Ingrid Bergman) who has fallen in love with him. It contains a famous dream sequence designed by Salvador Dali that was explicitly surrealist, a bold move by Hitchcock to create a visual correlative for psychological disturbance. *Notorious* (1946) was another star-driven romantic thriller, but again it was built around the notion of the couple (Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman) who share a guilty secret. Devlin (Grant) is the cynical government agent who recruits Alicia Huberman (Bergman) to infiltrate a group of Nazi conspirators who have relocated to Rio after the war. Although in love with her, Devlin is mistrustful of her promiscuous past and also needs her sexual attractiveness as the bait to trap the Nazi businessman (Claude Rains). Alicia is in love with Devlin but accepts her role because she needs to atone for the sins of her father, a Nazi spy sentenced at the film’s opening.

In *Strangers on a Train* (1951), based on **Patricia Highsmith's** first novel, this motif of the guilty secret is transferred to the male couple, who agree on an "exchange of murders." Although opposites, this pact ensures that a complex psychic transference occurs between the pair so that in their final struggle on the circus merry-go-round, it is unclear where our sympathies lie. *Rear Window* (1954), based on a **Cornell Woolrich** story, was an exploration of paranoia, guilty secrets—discovered by the wheelchair-bound journalist (James Stewart) spying on his neighbors—and voyeurism that was more disturbing than the murder mystery that drives the plot.

*The Wrong Man* (1956) was Hitchcock's deliberate break with the romantic thriller centered on the couple. Based on a true story, it was a return to semidocumentary mode using actual locations in its depiction of the quintessential victim-hero, Manny Balestrero (Henry Fonda), a New York nightclub musician misidentified as the man who has held up a number of local businesses in Queens. Manny is an ordinary, trusting, insecure man caught up in a nightmare that could have come from a Woolrich novel, in which witnesses who could prove his innocence are either missing or dead. Although Manny's innocence is eventually established, the accusations have driven his wife insane in this austere and desolate film. *Vertigo* (1958) was also very bleak, a ruthless exploration of male weakness and the capacity for self-deception. *Marnie* (1964) was a late noir that returned to the theme of the guilty couple. Mark Rutland (Sean Connery), a jaded, wealthy Philadelphia playboy, becomes fascinated and attracted by Marnie (Tippi Hedren) because she is a compulsive thief. Mark's cruelty and sadism are evident in the way he forces her to marry him, indicating that he is as psychologically disturbed as she is, although the ending provides a **Freudian** "explanation" for her frigidity and fear of men located in a childhood trauma. The earlier and hugely influential *Psycho* (1960) was another change of direction. It begins as a noir, a woman embezzling money to run away with her lover with whom she is having an adulterous affair, and develops into a horror film. Hitchcock's final noir *Frenzy* (GB 1972) was a return to the London of *The Lodger*, in which a troubled veteran (Jon Finch) is suspected of being a sadistic serial killer. Hitchcock, who had adopted U.S. citizenship in 1956, was knighted in 1979.

Hitchcock's other noirs are *Murder!* (GB 1930), *Number 17* (GB 1932), *Saboteur* (1942), *Rope* (1948), *Under Capricorn* (1949), and *Stage Fright* (GB 1950). See also MEN; VISUAL STYLE; WOMEN.

**HIT MAN.** Films about a hit man constitute an important subgenre of the thriller, and there have been a number of significant noir and **neo-noir** hit men. The first was Philip Raven (**Alan Ladd**) in *This Gun for Hire* (1942), based on **Graham Greene's** *A Gun for Sale* (1936), the earliest detailed depiction of the modern urban hit man. Raven is the quintessentially alienated noir protagonist, isolated, paranoid, and psychologically damaged despite his professional expertise. *Murder by Contract* (1958) also evokes some sympathy and understanding for the hit man, as does *Johnny Cool* (1963), **Don Siegel's** *The Killers* (1964), and **Michael Mann's** *Collateral* (2004). By contrast, other noirs have emphasized the brutal and psychotic nature of the hit man: Frank Sinatra in *Suddenly* (1954), Eli Wallach's Dancer in *The Lineup* (1958), Peter Falk's portrait of the infamous Abe "Kid Twist" Reles in *Murder, Inc.* (1960), and the **Coen Brothers'** *No Country for Old Men* (2007), in which Javier Bardem plays a sociopathic hit man with a unique weapon.

A third strand focused on the hit man as part of a wider political conspiracy, notably: *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), *The Parallax View* (1974), and also the Bourne Trilogy (*The Bourne Identity*, 2002, *The Bourne Supremacy*, 2004, and *The Bourne Ultimatum*, 2007) based on Robert Ludlum's 1980 thriller, in which Matt Damon plays an **amnesiac** who suspects that he may have been a Central Intelligence Agency assassin and who is being pursued by various agents. A fourth strand is the female assassin inaugurated by Luc Besson's *Nikita* (1990), in which Nikita (Anne Parrillaud) is systematically transformed from heroin addict into a government killing machine. It was remade in Hong Kong as *Black Cat* (1991), in the United States as *Point of No Return* (1993), and also spawned a television series, *La Femme Nikita* (1997), that ran for five seasons. More recently **Quentin Tarantino's** hybrid noirs, *Kill Bill I* and *2* (2003/2004) starred Uma Thurman as "The Bride," a kung fu inspired killing machine exacting revenge.

The hit man has been important in European noirs: **Jean-Pierre Melville's** **French film noir** *Le Samourai* (1967) and *Leon* (1994); **British film noir**—*Five Days* (U.S. title *Paid to Kill*, 1954), **Mike Hodges's** *Get Carter* (1971), and also *Mr. In-Between* (2001); and numerous **Asian films noir**, including John Woo's *Die xue shuang xiong* (*The Killer*, 1989).

Other American hit man noirs include: *The Whistler* (1944), *The Pretender* (1947), *New York Confidential* (1955), *Accused of Murder*

(1956), *Hard Contract* (1969), and *Ghost Dog, the Way of the Samurai* (1999). See also MEN.

**HODGES, MIKE (1932– )**. Although highly respected, writer-director Mike Hodges's films have often been box-office failures, hence the long gaps in his oeuvre. Hodges was drawn to noir because he believed that the crime thriller could act like an autopsy, delving "deep into the underbelly of society" to reveal corruption and sickness, as in *Get Carter* (1971), which remains his most celebrated film. *Pulp* (1972), also starring Michael Caine as a sleazy popular fiction writer caught up in a real-life murder mystery, was an intermittently effective comedy-thriller. *The Terminal Man* (1974) and *Black Rainbow* (1989) were noir **hybrids**, sci-fi/horror and supernatural horror respectively. *A Prayer for the Dying* (1987), a grueling thriller about the impossibility of renouncing violence, starred **Mickey Rourke** as an Irish Republican Army **hit man**. Hodges disowned the film after it was drastically re-edited by the production company that substituted what he deemed to be a crassly inappropriate musical score.

Hodges regained international recognition with *Croupier* (1998). Paul Mayersberg's brilliant original screenplay is a modern **existential** fable about the contemporary obsession with money. Jack/Jake Manfred (Clive Owen) is an archetypal noir split self, part serious novelist, part gambler, who returns, at his father's behest, to working in a casino, a noir world of tawdry glamour, shimmering surfaces, and distorting reflections. For Hodges, Jack is a contemporary antihero, making his way in an insecure world of casualized labor where the social fabric is collapsing and everyone is on their own. *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* (2003), written by Trevor Preston, was even bleaker, narrated entirely in flashback by Will Graham (Owen), a feared hard man who has renounced violence and the London underworld only to be sucked back by the need to understand the reasons for his brother's death (echoing *Get Carter*). Will, unlike Jack Carter, survives, but there is no redemption in a film that Hodges argued was about futility and the meaninglessness of any action, a study in "lost lives, wasted lives." See also BRITISH FILM NOIR.

**HODIAK, JOHN (1914–1955)**. For a brief period in the late 1940s John Hodiak was a leading man for Twentieth Century-Fox and MGM, but

his career declined in the 1950s before his early death in 1955, aged only 41. He appeared in seven noirs and, like **Richard Conte**, had the suave good looks that meant that he could play either hero or villain. His strongest role came opposite Conte in *Somewhere in the Night* (1946), where he created a compelling performance as the **amnesiac/troubled veteran**, an unstable mixture of strength, tenderness, and **existentialist** fear. In *Two Smart People* (1946), *The Arnelo Affair* (1947), and *Love from a Stranger* (1947), Hodiak played attractive but venal rogues, seducing and exploiting women for his own ends.

Hodiak's other noirs are *Desert Fury* (1947), *The Bribe* (1949), *A Lady without Passport* (1950), and *The People Against O'Hara* (1951).

**HONG KONG FILM NOIR.** With its high-density, fast-paced, and rapidly changing urban society, a history of organized gangsterism (the Triads) and police corruption, it is unsurprising that Hong Kong has developed a strong film noir tradition. Part of a large film industry—the “Hollywood of the East”—that works rapidly and favors sequels, Hong Kong film noir shows a strongly reciprocal relationship with Hollywood cinema, borrowing heavily from American models that are reworked and that then often influence American **neo-noirs**. As with other Asian noirs, there is a central tension between traditional Confucian values and the impact of Western materialism. This was intensified after 1984 when Great Britain and China negotiated the return of Hong Kong to Chinese rule from 1997, encouraging the exploration of ethnicity, nationality, and identity for which noir was an important vehicle.

Although the 1970s were dominated by kung fu films, a number of crime films had noir elements. *Dian zhi bing bing* (*Cops and Robbers*, 1979) and *Hang Gui* (*The System*, 1979), explored the ubiquitous theme of the blurred boundaries between police and the underworld. The bleak psychological thriller *Feng jie* (*The Secret*, 1979) used layered flashbacks to unfold the murky motivations surrounding a double murder. In the 1980s Johnny Mak's influential *Sheng gang qi bing* (*Long Arm of the Law*, 1984) and its two sequels depicted a close-knit outlaw gang based on the “Big Circle” mobsters, Hong Kong's most notorious criminals after the Triads, betrayed by a police informer. Mak's film culminates in a graphic shootout in the now-vanished Walled City.

Hong Kong cinema began to achieve international recognition from the mid-1980s with John Woo's *Ying xiong ben se* (*A Better Tomorrow*, 1986) and *Die xue shuang xiong* (*The Killer*, 1989). Extremely violent

but with scenes of melancholic longing, Woo's films explore noir's central concerns about blurred moral boundaries, shifting identities, and the ties of friendship and honor in an unstable and rapidly changing world. *A Better Tomorrow*, loosely based on a famous Cantonese-dialect thriller (*Story of a Discharged Prisoner*, 1967—itself a **remake** of the French-American thriller *Once a Thief*, 1965, starring **Alain Delon**), depicts a **gangster** leader who tries to go straight after his release from prison and become reconciled with his policeman brother, while his old sidekick (Chow Yun-Fat) attempts to persuade him back into crime. In the sequel, *Ying xiong ben se xu ji* (*A Better Tomorrow Part II*, 1987), set in New York, Yun-Fat plays the earlier protagonist's twin brother, and the action contrasts mafia corruption and Triad honor. *Ying xiong ben se III—tzu yang tsugor* (*A Better Tomorrow Part III*, 1989), directed by Hark Tsui, was a prequel set in Saigon.

*The Killer*, directly influenced by *Le Samourai* (1967) in its lighting and the costuming as well as thematically, again starred Yun-Fat as Jeff, a **hit man** who accidentally blinds a nightclub singer and undertakes one last job to pay for her operation. He is pursued by his corrupt employers and the police, forming a close bond with his adversary and mirror image, rogue police inspector Li Ying (Danny Lee). Woo's later noir, *Die xue jie tou* (*Bullet in the Head*, 1990), influenced by *The Deer Hunter* (1978), was a tale of friendship and betrayal between three Vietnam veterans that explored the instabilities of the Hong Kong male. *Zong heng si hai* (*Once a Thief*, 1991) was a more lighthearted caper film, but *La shou shen tan* (*Hardboiled*, 1992), was shockingly violent in its bleak view of vicious criminality without any moral code. Although Yun-Fat's volatile, obsessive cop, "Tequila," is clearly distinguished from the **gangsters** he relentlessly pursues, his adherence to outmoded values is anachronistic. The international success of Woo's films meant that he was invited to Hollywood, where he made the American neo-noir *Face/Off* (1997).

Ringo Lam's *Long hu feng yun* (*City on Fire*, 1987), a decisive influence on **Quentin Tarantino's** *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), initiated a subgenre known as "heroic bloodshed," gritty urban nightmares that depicted a turbulent world of violent crime and corruption, emphasizing the neon-lit, nighttime streets of downtown Hong Kong. Yun-Fat plays an undercover cop, Ko Chow, who infiltrates a gang and, prefiguring *The Killer*, finds his *Doppelgänger* in adversary/buddy Fu (Danny Lee), their bond stronger than their group loyalties. Yun-Fat gives one of his



strongest performances as a world-weary character, so long undercover that his loyalties and purpose have become confused.

A pervasive ambivalence also characterizes more recent Hong Kong noirs. *Wu yi tan zhang: Lei Luo zhuan* (*Lee Rock*, 1991) and *Wu hu jiang zhi jue lie* (*The Tigers*, 1991) portray **corrupt cops**, while the noirs of Kirk Wong—including *Tian luo di wang* (*Gunmen*, 1988), *Zhong an zu* (*Crime Story*, 1993), and *Chung ngon sat luk: O gei* (*Organized Crime and Triad Bureau*, 1994)—focused on policemen caught in an in-between world, their signature blue-filtered chiaroscuro and enclosed spaces providing a visual correlative for the moral ambivalence. A similar ambiguity haunts the portrayal of the hit man, as in *Saat saat, yin tiu tiu* (*Ballistic Kiss*, 1998) and *Wang jiao hei ye* (*One Night in Mongkok*, 2004). Depictions of the Triads and gangsterism also displayed ambivalent attitudes. *Gu huo nu zhi jue zhan jiang hu* (*Sexy and Dangerous*, 1996) and its nine sequels adapted from a **comic** book series romanticized the Triads, but the nihilistic *Long hu Bo Lon ji* (*Street of Fury*, 1996) argued that the traditional Triad code was dead amidst the narrow, dirty, and vulgar mean streets of Hong Kong. *Chan sam ying hung* (*A Hero Never Dies*, 1998) depicts two rival enforcers for different Triad bosses who, after being betrayed, join forces and take revenge in the name of the traditional code of honor, a solid ethical stance in an increasingly material world.

Wai-keung Lau and Siu Fai Mak's *Wu jian dao* (*Infernal Affairs*, 2002) was highly successful, giving rise to a prequel and a sequel, both released in 2003. It was also influential, remade by **Martin Scorsese** as *The Departed* (2006). *Infernal Affairs* also reflected the blurred boundaries between police and criminal and the intricate connections between Triad and police organizations in its parallel story of a cop who infiltrates a crime gang and a gang member who infiltrates the police force, each mole planted by the rival organization to gain an advantage in intelligence over the other side. Both moles struggle with their double identities and begin to lose their moral bearings and sense of purpose. *Sun taam* (*Mad Detective*, 2007) also explores psychological confusion through the figure of Inspector Bun, whose troubled personality and unorthodox methods cost him his job. However, five years later he is contacted by a young inspector as the only person capable of solving a baffling spate of killings that seem to point to his former partner. *See also* THE CITY; JAPANESE FILM NOIR; MEN; SOUTH KOREAN FILM NOIR; VISUAL STYLE.

**HOPPER, EDWARD (1882–1967).** Hopper’s paintings, with their wide compositions and dramatic use of light and dark, had a significant influence on film noir. Hopper himself was profoundly influenced by **hard-boiled fiction** and the cinema: he had designed posters for prewar gangster films as well as covers and illustrations for pulp magazines. Hopper studied at the New York Institute of Art and Design with Robert Henri, who encouraged his students to render realistic depictions of urban life and who influenced the Ashcan School of American art. Accordingly, Hopper derived his subject matter from the common features of American life—gas stations, drugstores, diners, motels, the railroad, or an empty street—and their ordinary inhabitants. His most famous painting, “Nighthawks” (1942), depicts customers sitting at the counter of an all-night diner set in a dark, empty urban street. The four figures appear isolated, lonely, and vulnerable under harsh electric light, and the painting’s mood is one of entrapment and alienation. In “Office at Night” (1940), painted in drab and subdued greens and browns, the shaft from the streetlight cutting through the window and onto the frosted glass at the rear of the office could be a sketch for a noir about the beleaguered **private eye**.

Hopper’s work had a very direct influence on several noirs: when **Abraham Polonsky** was dissatisfied with the rushes for *Force of Evil* (1948), he took cinematographer George Barnes to an exhibition of Hopper’s paintings in Greenwich Village; “House by the Railroad” (1925) was the inspiration for the Bates’s **Gothic** home in **Alfred Hitchcock’s** *Psycho* (1960); Sam Mendes used “New York Movie” (1939), Hopper’s study of an usherette standing beneath a wall light in a small auditorium, to establish the lighting for the **retro-noir** *Road to Perdition* (2002). *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**HUSTON, JOHN (1906–1987).** John Huston, the son of the famous actor Walter Huston who had appeared in the noir **precursor** *Beast of the City* (1932), was a talented artist, writer, and actor as well as a director. Huston involved himself in every aspect of a production, including the design, décor, costuming, cinematography, and editing. He became a contract writer for Warner Bros. in 1938, and his screenplays included the influential **gangster** film *High Sierra* (1941), adapting **W. R. Burnett’s** novel, *Three Strangers* (1946), and the noir-adventure story *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), which he also directed. Huston also made uncredited contributions to the screenplays for noirs

made by other companies: *Dark Waters* (1944) and **Robert Siodmak's** *The Killers* (1946). His first feature film as a director was *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), the earliest adaptation of **Dashiell Hammett** that retained the dark timbre of the original. *Key Largo* (1948) was based on Maxwell Anderson's prewar blank verse play about a gangster on the run who holds a group prisoner in a dilapidated hotel on the Florida Keys. Huston updated the play with Richard Brooks. Although the film retains an ineradicable staginess, Huston elicits memorable performances from his cast: **Lauren Bacall**, **Humphrey Bogart**, **Edward G. Robinson**, and above all, **Claire Trevor**, who won an Oscar for her performance as the gangster's moll, Gaye Dawn. Huston helped organize the Committee for the First Amendment to combat the **blacklist**. These left-liberal views are reflected in perhaps his finest film, *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), an extremely influential **cap/er/heist noir** that recognizes the humanity of the criminals. Huston received Academy Award nominations for Best Screenplay and Best Direction and won the Screen Directors Guild Award.

Huston made three **neo-noirs**. *The Kremlin Letter* (1970) was a political thriller in which a disparate group, assembled to recover a compromising American State Department letter discussing a United States–Soviet Russia plan to attack Red China, uses moral and sexual corruption to accomplish its goal. It is a relentlessly bleak film, permeated by suspicion, betrayal, and double-cross, in which all of the characters are compromised and most are sacrificed to a fake mission. *Fat City* (1972), which Huston coadapted with the author of the novel, Leonard Gardner, was a **boxing noir**, but one where the characters are chasing another false quest: fame and wealth. *Prizzi's Honor* (1985), based on Richard Condon's novel, was an accomplished and deft black-comic thriller about a ruling mafia family who demand absolute loyalty. A study in the "banality of evil," it focuses on Charley Partanna (**Jack Nicholson**), the Prizzi's loyal **hit man**, who succumbs to the Prizzi's code of honor. Agreeing to murder his wife Irene (Kathleen Turner), he is reassured by his father: "It's only business Charley."

Huston showed his accomplishment as an actor by playing Noah Cross, the corrupt patriarch in **Roman Polanski's** *Chinatown* (1974), and a similar role in the underrated *Winter Kills* (1979).

**HYBRIDS.** Noir hybrids are films that can be securely located in a particular genre but which have significant noir elements. From the first, noir

shared many elements with **Gothic** horror—an investigation that moves into unknown territory, a convoluted plot, aberrant psychology, claustrophobic spaces, social disintegration, stylized lighting and décor—and therefore horror-noir is a persistent hybrid. The **Universal horror films** were a major influence on film noir and produced a number of hybrids, including *Calling Dr. Death* (1944) and *The Brute Man* (1946), as did **Val Lewton**'s cycle of psychological horrors for RKO, including *Curse of the Cat People* (1944). **Edgar G. Ulmer**'s *Bluebeard* (1944), set in 19th-century Paris, was also a typical horror-noir hybrid, using **expressionist** sets, low-key lighting, and oblique angles, all noir visual tropes. The cadaverous John Carradine plays a puppeteer who kills women in order to preserve his artistic creativity but is a haunted, disturbed character, desperate to be released from his uncontrollable compulsions. **John Brahm**'s *The Lodger* (1944) and *Hangover Square* (1945) had similar hybrid elements.

The horror-noir hybrid was rare in the 1950s and the 1960s with the exception of **Alfred Hitchcock**'s *Psycho* (1960), which influenced **Brian de Palma**'s blendings of noir and horror in *Obsession* (1976), *Dressed to Kill* (1980), and *Body Double* (1984). Horror-noir became an important component of 1980s **neo-noir**, as in *The First Deadly Sin* (1980), *Blowout* (1981), and *Wolfen* (1981). In *Angel Heart* (1987), set in 1955, detective Harold Angel (**Mickey Rourke**) is summoned by his demonic client Louis Cyphre (**Robert De Niro**) to find a missing singer in Harlem, Johnny Favorite, who, 12 years earlier, sold his soul to the devil. Other supernatural horror-noirs include Kathryn Bigelow's *Near Dark* (1987), *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), scripted by **Quentin Tarantino**, which splices the noir thriller with the vampire tale, and **Roman Polanski**'s *The Ninth Gate* (2000), in which an unscrupulous rare book dealer (Johnny Depp) is hired to track down an occult text.

Another variation was the “slasher noir,” in which the monster and the victim are both female, as in *Single White Female* (1992). **Michael Mann**'s underrated *Manhunter* (1986) was the beginning of an extended concern with the psychopathic serial killer continued (or started again) in *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991). Anthony Hopkins reprised his role as Hannibal “The Cannibal” Lecter in *Hannibal* (2001) and *Red Dragon* (2002), which were baroque, neo-Gothic horror-noirs abandoning the investigative realism of the first film. A prequel, *Hannibal Rising* (2007), dramatized Hannibal's formative years. Other serial-killer noirs included *Copycat* (1995)—in which the killer commits killings

modeled on famous cases—*Roberto Succo* (2001), and *Tattoo* (2002), but the most accomplished was *Se7en* (1995).

The melding of sci-fi and noir has its roots in **Fritz Lang**'s *Metropolis* (1928), but in America the emerging science fiction genre of the 1950s occasionally incorporated noir elements to express Cold War anxieties: Roger Corman's *The Day the World Ended* (1955), *Indestructible Man* (1956), and *Not of This Earth* (1957). The most powerful was **Don Siegel**'s *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), narrated in flashback by a hysterical doctor (Kevin McCarthy) who believes the inhabitants of his small hometown of Santa Fe in California have become "pod people," their bodies taken over by aliens. There were also several interesting examples in the 1960s: *The Most Dangerous Man Alive* (1961), *Brainstorm* (1965), in which Jeffrey Hunter plays a physicist working on a project to develop atomic weapons, Jean-Luc Godard's influential **French film noir** *Alphaville* (1965), and **Edward Dmytryk**'s *Mirage* (1965). *The Groundstar Conspiracy* (1972) and Richard Fleischer's *Soylent Green* (1973), with their intrigues, betrayals, and dark secrets, were later examples.

Following sci-fi's powerful and sustained re-emergence in the late 1970s, a recognizable hybrid called, variously, "future noir," "cyber noir," or "tech noir" was established that drew upon a noir register in order to project a dystopian, often terrifying, vision of the future. The most celebrated and influential example remains Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), depicting a nightmare **Los Angeles** of 2019. Others included *The Terminator* (1984), *Miracle Mile* (1988), and Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days* (1995), set in Los Angeles in the closing days of 1999. *Dark City* (1998), *The Thirteenth Floor* (1999), and the Matrix Trilogy (1999–2003) depicted dystopian future worlds ruled by aliens. In the latter, Neo (Keanu Reeves), a warrior cyber-hacker, has to combat a simulated world in which the majority of humanity has become enslaved by a race of machines that live off their body heat and which, to forestall a revolution, project an artificial reality—The Matrix—where life appears perfectly normal. Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002), like *Blade Runner*, loosely based on a Philip K. Dick story, takes place in Washington, D.C., in 2054 where murders are solved before they are committed by the "precrime" unit headed by John Anderton (Tom Cruise), who goes on the run when the "precogs" predict he will kill the man who abducted his son.

Westerns, with their wide-open spaces and sense of unlimited expansion, are thematically and iconographically remote from noir, but

several display a noir sensibility in the genre's postwar development. *Pursued* (1947), starring **Robert Mitchum** as Jeb Rand, who narrates the tale through a series of flashbacks, is the story of a **troubled veteran** (after the Civil War) tormented by events he cannot recollect clearly but which haunt his dreams and thwart his relationships. Mitchum also starred in *Blood on the Moon* (1948), a dark tale of divided loyalties. *Ramrod* (1947), a violent and dark Western, has a femme fatale (**Veronica Lake**), while *Station West* (1948) transposes the detective story into a Western setting with **Dick Powell** as an army intelligence officer and **Jane Greer** as a femme fatale; **Alan Ladd** played a similar character in *Whispering Smith* (1948). *Yellow Sky* (1949), coscripted by **W. R. Burnett** about a group of bank robbers on the run, has a classic noir plot, and the atmosphere is one of fear, suspicion, betrayal, and claustrophobia. Two Westerns directed by William Wellman—*The Ox-Bow Incident* (1943) and *Track of the Cat* (1954)—also show clear noir influences, as does *Rimfire* (1949). Henry King's *The Gunfighter* (1950) was the study of a tragic, isolated man (Gregory Peck) anxious to retire but finding it impossible, another noir protagonist trapped by his past.

The most important noir director who made Westerns—10 in all—was **Anthony Mann**. *Winchester '73* (1950), one of six starring James Stewart, has a pursuit and revenge plot, while *Naked Spur* (1954) and *Man of the West* (1958), the latter starring Gary Cooper, have an atmosphere of uncertainty and bitterness that demonstrate how Mann's noir sensibility was transposed to a Western setting. *Bad Day at Black Rock* (1955) was thoroughly noir in its gradual unearthing of corruption and buried secrets. Although the Western's popularity waned, occasional later examples show a noir influence, including *Welcome to Hard Times* (1967), and three by **Clint Eastwood**: *High Plains Drifter* (1973), *Pale Rider* (1985), and *Unforgiven* (1992).

The 1960s and 1970s saw the development of the noir political thriller beginning with *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), directed by **John Frankenheimer**, in which a troubled veteran from the Korean War (Laurence Harvey) has been brainwashed by Communist forces and programmed to become a political assassin. Frankenheimer also directed *Seven Days in May* (1964) about a potential right-wing military coup led by General Scott (**Burt Lancaster**), and he directed **John Huston** in the equally desolate *The Kremlin Letter* (1970). In these hybrids, noir conventions are used to create a paranoid world that displayed a deep mistrust of American institutions subsequently fuelled by the Watergate revelations. These influenced Alan J. Pakula's *The*

*Parallax View* (1974), in which journalist Joe Frady (Warren Beatty) investigates a widespread conspiracy controlled by the mysterious Parallax Corporation. Pakula uses off-center framing and low-key lighting to suggest a corrupt and unbalanced world. Others included: *Executive Action* (1973), *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), *The Domino Principle* (1977), **Robert Aldrich's** *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), and *Capricorn One* (1978). Although noir political thrillers are now less common, they continue to be made, notably the Bourne trilogy (2002, 2004, 2007) starring Matt Damon and the 2004 **remake** of *The Manchurian Candidate* starring **Denzel Washington**.

Comedy might seem the most remote genre from noir, but there are examples of comedies that contain noir elements and also comic parodies of noir. *Whistling in the Dark* (1941), a screwball comedy, has noir elements in its story of the abduction of The Fox (Red Skelton), a radio sleuth, by a cunning religious cult led by Conrad Veidt, which wants his services to perform the perfect murder. *Lady on a Train* (1945), in which Deanna Durbin plays a society girl who becomes involved in solving a murder that no one else takes seriously, has farcical action, but there is an underlying atmosphere of menace and corruption. There is a noir sensibility at work in several of Preston Sturges's comedies, including *Hail the Conquering Hero* (1944), with its troubled veteran, and *Unfaithfully Yours* (1948), in which an orchestra conductor (Rex Harrison) plans to murder his supposedly unfaithful wife during a concert.

There were comic **neo-noir** hybrids, notably *The Late Show* (1977), with its aging, disencharnted **private eye** (Art Carney), who has to act when his ex-partner Harry (**Howard Duff**) arrives at his house riddled with bullets. The action is played for comic effect, but there is an underlying seriousness in the bleak picture of 1970s Los Angeles that emerges. Woody Allen's *Manhattan Murder Mystery* (1993) and Jake Kasdan's *Zero Effect* (1998) were comedy thrillers with an affectionate spoofing of noir conventions. *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (2005) was partly comic, its bogus private eye Harry Lockhart (Robert Downey Jr.) interrupting his flashback narration with cajoling voice-over asides as he becomes inadvertently mixed up in a real case. Noir comic parodies include *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1947), starring Danny Kaye, and *My Favorite Brunette* (1947), in which Bob Hope gets involved with a criminal gang because his photography studio adjoins that of a private investigator (a cameo appearance by **Alan Ladd**) who is away on a case. *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid* (1982) starring Steve Martin

was a labored parody, intercutting scenes from classic noirs with modern pastiche, but better than the leaden *The Black Bird* (1975), a spoof of *The Maltese Falcon*. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* (1988) was a private-eye burlesque in which a hard-drinking tough guy (Bob Hoskins) investigates Roger Rabbit, a fictive star framed for murdering a human. *Blondes Have More Guns* (1995) was a send-up of two highly successful neo-noirs, *Lethal Weapon* (1987) and *Basic Instinct* (1992), while the **Coen Brothers'** *The Big Lebowski* (1998) was a Chandleresque spoof, starring Jeff Bridges as Jeffrey "The Dude" Lebowski, mistaken for a millionaire who owes the mob money.

A minor noir hybrid is the noir road movie, beginning with **Ida Lupino's** *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), but developed through neo-noir, notably *The Hitcher* (1986), starring Rutger Hauer, and its 2007 remake starring Sean Bean. Others include *Bright Angel* (1991), *Cold Around the Heart* (1998), and *Kalifornia* (1993), which takes the form of an inverted westward journey in which a middle-class researcher (David Duchovny) discovers Third World America with its elemental amoral killers, represented by Early Grayce (Brad Pitt) with his strange visions, and **John Dahl's** *Joy Ride* (2001).

Another minor hybrid is the sexploitation (soft-core) noir: a development of the erotic thriller, most famously *Basic Instinct* (1992). These hybrids, including *Body Chemistry* (1990), where a married sex researcher is lured into a sadomasochistic affair with his colleague, an unhinged femme fatale, are usually aimed at the straight-to-cable market. Others include *Carnal Crimes* (1991), *Night Rhythms* (1992), in which the hero is a promiscuous disc jockey framed for the murder of a resentful colleague who is a lesbian femme fatale, *I Like to Play Games* (1994), *Sinful Deeds* (2001), and *Young and Seductive* (2003), where the heroine is a sex worker who helps a detective catch her former boyfriend who is a serial killer. *See also* THE CITY; GANGSTER FILMS; *KISS OF DEATH*; SEMIDOCUMENTARY.

– 1 –

*I WAKE UP SCREAMING* (1941). *I Wake Up Screaming*, directed by H. Bruce Humberstone, was an important early noir because, although it has aspects of the prewar screwball comedy cycle with its feisty females, knowing, wise-cracking dialogue, and a conventional murder



mystery, these elements are incorporated into a dark melodrama that explores perverse sexuality as a characteristic element of the noir **city** and that are told through a complex series of flashbacks. Cinematographer Edward Cronjager's low-angle, occasionally off-angle, compositions and high-contrast chiaroscuro lighting show the emergence of the noir **visual style**, including his use of mesh bars or Venetian blinds where characters are trapped half in shadow, half in light. *I Wake Up Screaming* was based on a **hard-boiled** novel by **Steve Fisher**, serialized in *Photoplay-Movie Mirror* but transferred from Hollywood to New York because the Head of Twentieth Century-Fox, **Darryl Zanuck**, had tabooed Hollywood pictures. The three characters—boxing promoter Frankie Christopher (**Victor Mature**), ex-actor Robin Ray (Alan Mowbray), and columnist Larry Evans (Allyn Joslyn)—are bachelor men-about-town who have a casual bet as to whether waitress Vicky Lynn (Carole Landis) can be transformed, Pygmalion-like, into a star. After she is murdered, Frankie becomes framed for her murder, joining forces with Vicky's sister Jill (Betty Grable) to prove his innocence. He is pursued by Lieutenant Ed Cornell (**Laird Cregar**), whose obsessive love for Vicky—his room is a shrine to her—makes him determined to see off his rival. An introverted loner, Cornell takes a macabre relish in describing how men react to the imminence of their death in the electric chair, during a scene in which Frankie had woken to find Cornell perched at the end of his bed, gloating over the evidence he has collected, which also hints at a repressed homosexual desire. Cornell is well aware that the real killer is the switchboard operator at Vicky's apartment building, Harry Williams (**Elisha Cook Jr.**), another misfit hopelessly in love with her.

*I Wake Up Screaming* was **remade** as *Vicki* (1953), directed by Harry Horner. Although more consistently noir, *Vicki* did not have the original's power to disturb. Elliott Reid lacked Mature's charisma and substance as Frankie, and Richard Boone was loathsome as Cornell rather than disturbing.

**INGSTER, BORIS (1903–1978)**. Born in Riga, Latvia, Boris Ingster worked with Sergei Eisenstein and came with him to Hollywood in the early 1930s, choosing to remain there. Initially a screenwriter, Ingster directed the first film noir, *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), made on a very modest budget for RKO, which showed the marked influence of **expressionism** in style and subject matter as well as the presence of

**Peter Lorre** as the mysterious stranger. Ingster wrote the story from which **Fritz Lang's** *Cloak and Dagger* (1946) was adapted, about an American physicist (Gary Cooper) asked to penetrate the European scientific network and find out about the development of atomic bombs. Ingster cowrote and directed *Southside 1-1000* (1950) produced by the **King brothers**, another undercover noir in which a federal agent, John Riggs (Don DeFore), infiltrates a gang of counterfeiters led by Nora Craig (Andrea King), a remarkably tough, callous, and resourceful femme fatale. After this point, Ingster went on to become a successful writer and producer in television. *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.

**IRELAND, JOHN (1914–1992).** Born in Canada but raised in New York, John Ireland was a talented actor who played intelligent villains or hard-pressed, beleaguered heroes in second-feature noirs. He was memorable as sadistic killers in two **Anthony Mann** noirs, *Railroaded* (1947) and *Raw Deal* (1948). In *Open Secret* (1948), a poor man's *Crossfire* (1947), expressionistically directed by John Reinhardt, he was the Everyman hero, caught up in a small-town Nazi League that has murdered his ex-army pal. Ireland was Oscar-nominated as Best Supporting Actor in **Robert Rossen's** *All the King's Men* (1949) as the disillusioned reporter who becomes the supporter of the governor (**Broderick Crawford**) in his quest for power, only to experience a far deeper sense of disappointment. In *The Scarf* (1951), an **expressionist** noir directed by E. A. Dupont, he played an escapee from an insane asylum who tries to find out whether he committed the murder for which he has been incarcerated. Ireland codirected *The Fast and the Furious* (1955), in which he plays a man-on-the-run who takes a woman (**Dorothy Malone**) as hostage.

Ireland's other noirs are *The Gangster* (1947), *I Love Trouble* (1948), *The Good Die Young* (GB 1954), *Party Girl* (1958), *Faces in the Dark* (GB 1960), *Return of a Stranger* (GB 1961), and *Farewell, My Lovely* (GB 1975).

**ITALIAN FILM NOIR.** There has been little recognition and discussion of Italian film noir because it has been subsumed under the ambit of *giallo*, a capacious term encompassing crime mysteries, horror films, and political and erotic thrillers. The Italian film industry has been highly volatile with short-lived cycles of films (*filoni*) rather than evolving genres. However, an Italian film noir can be identified, distinguished above all

by its highly politicized nature, as critiquing an unstable, corrupt public life constantly rocked by fresh and often inexplicable scandals.

Italian film noir has deep cultural roots, stretching back to silent crime serials and the proliferation of crime fiction that occurred even under Benito Mussolini's rule (the *ventennio nero* or black twenty years, 1922–1944) that were highly influenced by **poetic realism** and American **hard-boiled fiction**. The latter was the source for Luchino Visconti's *Ossessione* (*Obsession*, 1942), an adaptation of **James M. Cain's** *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. The action was transferred to the Po Valley, where the extensive location shooting establishes a specifically Italian world of poverty and privations, of people forced to the margins of society in order to survive, the bleak context for the intense, overwhelming passion between Gino (Massimo Girotti) and Giovanna (Clara Calamai). The impact of *Ossessione* was foreshortened by the war and its release was blocked internationally by MGM, but it was the forerunner of the postwar *neorealismo nero* (black neo-realism) that included *Tombolo paradiso nero* (*Tombolo, Black Paradise*, 1947) and Alberto Lattuada's *Senza pietà* (*Without Pity*, 1948), both set in the port of Livorno (Leghorn), a major depot for U.S. army supplies and thus a center of blackmarketeering. *Without Pity* revolves around an interracial love affair between a black American soldier and an Italian prostitute whom he tries to protect from both the authorities and the criminal underworld. Lattuada's earlier *Il bandito* (*The Bandit*, 1946) focused on a **troubled veteran** facing problems of unemployment, poverty, and social and familial disruption who has to become a criminal in order to survive. Although the film has **gangster** elements derived from American models, its location shooting and engagement with specific cultural issues made it resonantly Italian. The same hybrid qualities inform *Gioventù perduta* (*Lost Youth*, 1949), where a gang of young delinquents commit a number of violent armed robberies in a shadowy urban setting, and two films by Giuseppe De Santis: *Caccia tragica* (*Tragic Pursuit*, 1947) and *Riso amaro* (*Bitter Rice*, 1948), which combine crime film conventions with neo-realist settings on collective farms.

Michelangelo Antonioni's noir—*Cronaca di un amore* (*Story of a Love Affair*, 1950), another erotic triangle inspired by Cain and *Ossessione*—was superbly realized, but the real development of Italian noir came through its diffusion into popular genres. Rai (Italian state television) produced a series of crime thrillers: adaptations of **Georges Simenon**, translations of French *Série Noire*, and American pulp fiction,

but also programs made from indigenous sources, including Giorgio Scerbanenco's stories with their cynical protagonist, abused characters, corruption, and violence, set in a bleak and ugly Milan of anonymous hotels, waste ground, and low-life clubs.

The most important crossover was with the horror film, especially those by Mario Bava and Dario Argento. Bava's *La frusta e il corpo* (*The Whip and the Body*, aka *Night Is the Phantom*, 1963), for example, makes spectacular use of shadows to create a threatening world in which horror constantly returns, usually associated with excessive female sexual desire. Argento's *Profondo rosso* (*Deep Red*, 1975) starred David Hemmings as a music teacher who investigates a series of violent murders that he cannot comprehend and that put his own life in danger. It displays Argento's trademark elaborate set-pieces of violence and suspense, with a meticulous build-up and a visceral study of the mechanics of killing that also characterize *Tenebre* (*Tenebrae*, 1982), but here the focus on male anxieties and pathologies is more overt. The visit of an American author (Anthony Franciosa) to Italy is disrupted by a series of murders in which the victims are found with pages of his latest novel stuffed into their mouths.

However, the most significant Italian development of film noir occurred in the political thriller (*giallo politico*) in the 1970s, when there was a marked increase in terrorist crime by both far-right and extreme-left groups. Elio Petri's *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto* (*Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion*, 1970)—which won an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film—was an influential example, presenting contemporary Italian life as a Kafkaesque fable about a **corrupt cop**. The key filmmaker was Francesco Rosi, whose *Salvatore Giuliano* (1961), the story of a Sicilian bandit in the immediate postwar years, was an earlier example. In *Il caso Mattei* (*The Mattei Affair*, 1972), *Lucky Luciano* (1973), and *Cadaveri eccellenti* (*Illustrious Corpses*, 1975), Rosi employs the investigative mode of the conspiracy thriller in order to explore the nature of power relationships in Italian society. The disruptions triggering the investigations are exceptional events that disturb the carefully constructed impression of normality preferred by those in power, revealing the hidden alliances and corrupt dealings that maintain the status quo.

Bernardo Bertolucci's *Il conformista* (*The Conformist*, 1970)—an adaptation of the famous novel by Alberto Moravia—revisited the fascist era, with Jean-Louis Trintignant as the bland protagonist trapped

by the past. Its multiple flashbacks indicated the attractions of a noir paradigm for *auteur* directors, as did Bertolucci's later *La tragedia di un uomo ridicolo* (*The Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man*, 1981) and Antonioni's *Professione reporter* (*The Passenger*, 1975), starring **Jack Nicholson** as a disaffected journalist who switches identity and finds himself pursued as a gunrunner. As in Antonioni's earlier *Blow-up* (1966), another film intensely preoccupied with the instability of identity, the protagonist never seems to grasp the significance of the events in which he becomes embroiled.

Italian **neo-noir**, which dates from the 1980s, is characterized by a combination of American and Italian elements (including coproductions), but it continues to be highly politicized. *L'assassinio di poliziotti* (*Copkiller*, 1983) is typically allusive both to Italian popular culture (the hooded killer derives from *Diabolik* comics) and to American noir in the figure of the corrupt cop, played by Harvey Keitel. In spite of its New York setting, the use of the long takes and beautifully composed interior shots are typically Italian. The *giallo politico* was revived in the early 1990s in *Il lungo silenzio* (*The Long Silence*, 1993), *La scorta* (*The Escort*, 1993), *Il muro di gomma* (*The Rubber Wall*, 1991), *Il giudice ragazzino* (*The Young Judge*, 1993), and *Un eroe borghese* (*Middle Class Hero*, 1994), which all focus on the imperiled lives of high-ranking officials. *Rose e pistole* (*Roses and Guns*, 1998)—which was set on the edge of Naples and focused on low-life, marginalized characters who inhabit a border zone and “work” in the telephone sex industry or armed robbery—was one of a number of films concerned with social breakdown and the problem of Eastern European immigration into Italy. Liliana Cavani's *Il gioco di Ripley* (*Ripley's Game*, 2002), an adaptation of **Patricia Highsmith**'s novel, explored metaphorically the uneasy relationship between Italy and America, the dying picture framer sucked into the amoral, criminal world of Ripley (John Malkovich) by the need to provide for his family.

Paolo Sorrentino's stylish *Le conseguenze dell'amore* (*The Consequences of Love*, 2004) was a return to the crime-mystery, in which the apparent orderliness of the protagonist's life in a Swiss hotel conceals a relationship with the mafia that destroys his attempts to break free with the young woman with whom he has fallen in love. The highly politicized nature of Italian noir was further underlined by three recent films that explored the kidnapping and murder of Prime Minister Alberto Moro in 1978: *Buongiorno notte* (*Good Morning, Night*, 2003), *Piazza*

*delle cinque lune* (*Five Moon Square*, 2003), and the highly successful *Romanzo criminale* (*Crime Novel*, 2005). The last depicts the Magliana gang, one of the most powerful Italian criminal associations centered in Rome from the early 1970s to 1992, whose activities included drug-running, assassinations, and terrorism, another index of the corruption and instability that characterize Italian public life.

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**JAPANESE FILM NOIR.** Japanese society and culture have the necessary conditions to develop a strong film noir: high-density cities, a criminal underworld, a taste for crime fiction, a fascination with the *yakuza* (**gangster**), and a strong cinematic tradition. Typical of Asian film noirs, there is a particular concern with the clash between long-established conceptions of loyalty and honor (often represented by the samurai tradition) and the amoral forces of Western capitalism. Japanese film noir has been dominated by talented auteur-directors whose distinctive films often straddle the boundary between commercial and art-house cinema. Thus, unlike **Hong Kong film noir** or **South Korean film noir**, they are often too distinctive to be easily remade and are therefore less directly influential on American noir.

There were noir elements in three prewar Yasujiro Ozu crime films: *Sono yo no tsuma* (*That Night's Wife*, 1930), *Hogaraka ni ayume* (*Walk Cheerfully*, 1930), and particularly *Hijosen no onna* (*Dragnet Girl*, 1933), in which a thief corrupts an ordinary woman. However, as in other cultures, film noir developed strongly after World War II when Japan experienced a pervasive social and psychological alienation during the period of American Occupation, 1945–52. This is captured in two compelling noirs by Akira Kurosawa: *Yodire tensi* (*Drunken Angel*, 1948), in which an alcoholic slum doctor tries to help a callow gangster (Toshirō Mifune) suffering from tuberculosis contracted from contaminated water, and, especially, *Nora inu* (*Stray Dog*, 1949), which showed American noir's influence in its high-contrast black-and-white photography. *Stray Dog* is the story of a new police recruit (Mifune) who has to recover his stolen gun used in a murder, and, descending into the Tokyo underworld, discovers an unnerving similarity between himself and the killer, both men disturbed and deracinated by the war. Kurosawa's later *Warui yatsu hodo yoku nemuru* (*The Bad Sleep Well*,

1960) about corporate corruption and revenge had noir elements, as did *Tengoku to jigoku* (*High and Low*), adapted in 1963 from an Ed McBain “87th Precinct” novel that depicted a stark moral choice faced by a rich businessman (Mifune) after a kidnapping.

The tense black comic noir *Hateshinaki yokubo* (*Endless Desire*, 1958), in which war comrades retrieve a buried cache of black-market morphine, is a classic noir story of corruption and betrayal involving a shady femme fatale. Yoshitaro Nomura’s *Harikomi* (*The Chase*, 1958), in which two detectives pursue a low-life drifter suspected of murder, has atmospheric black-and-white photography in what is an absorbing, deliberately paced, social-realist character study. Nomura’s later masterpiece *Suna no utsuwa* (*The Castle of Sand*, 1974) was based on a popular detective story relating how two detectives pursue the killer of an old man found bludgeoned to death in a rail yard. Their pursuit expands into a complex and deeply moving story about outcasts and moral responsibility.

Many of the *yakuza* gangster films, a staple of Japanese filmmaking, had noir elements, as in Seijun Suzuki’s *Tôkyô nagaremono* (*Tokyo Drifter*, 1966) and the internationally influential *Koroshi no rakuin* (*Branded to Kill*, 1967). The latter, beautifully shot in black-and-white chiaroscuro by Kazue Nagatsuka, depicts a **hit man**, inveigled by a femme fatale to kill the American agent investigating a smuggling operation, who is pursued by the gangster organization that hired him when the hit goes wrong. This avant-garde noir with its jump cuts, extreme close-ups, elliptical editing, and fractured, nightmarish narrative with frequent flashbacks, depicts an ambivalent, unsure, and paranoid protagonist trapped in a world he no longer understands. Fukasaku Kinji’s noirs—*Gendai yakuza: hito-kiri yota* (*Street Mobster*, 1972), *Hito-kiri yoya: kyoken san-kyodai* (*Outlaw Killers*, 1972), and *Shin jingi naki tataki* (*Battles without Honor and Humanity*, 1973), which was highly successful and spawned four sequels—delineated the demise of the samurai tradition in a brutal critique of Japan’s economic success.

Though there is no clear consensus, it can be argued that a Japanese **neo-noir** developed in the 1980s. There are noir elements in some of the numerous *anime* films, such as *The Professional: Golgo 13* (1983), about a hit man, and *Yôjû toshi* (*Wicked City*, 1987), with its femme fatale. Noir continues to have a strong presence in contemporary Japanese cinema, including: *Nudo no yoru* (*A Night in Nude*, 1993), depicting an ordinary man, hired as a Tokyo tour guide by a femme fatale, who

becomes involved, half unwittingly, with crooks and killers; *Yume no ginga* (*Labyrinth of Dreams*, 1997), shot in black-and-white, in which a new bus driver is suspected of being a serial killer by his female colleague; and *Hyôryû-gai* (*City of Lost Souls*, 2000), an action-packed thriller with a multinational cast.

In the 1990s, writer-director-actor and television celebrity Takeshi Kitano emerged as a dominant presence. His first neo-noir was *Sono otoko, kyôbô ni tsuki* (*Violent Cop*, 1989), in which Kitano took over direction of the film from Kinji Fukasaku, who fell ill. Kitano stars as a “Dirty Harry”-style vigilante cop, an old-school detective, who battles corruption, ineffective bureaucracy, and betrayal in a world of confused boundaries. In *3-4x jûgatsu* (*Boiling Point*, 1990), an apathetic, slow-witted gas station attendant becomes inadvertently involved with a psychotic gangster (Kitano). In these films Kitano started to develop his distinctive **visual style**, combining long, static takes in which nothing appears to be happening with shock cuts to a moment of extreme violence or the aftermath of an event. This style reaches fruition in *Sonatine* (1993), inspired by Fukasaku’s *Bakuto gaijin butai* (*Sympathy for the Underdog*, 1971), which established Kitano’s international reputation. Kitano plays Murakawa, a disaffected yakuza who now perceives gang rivalries as pointless but gradually becomes sucked back into the Tokyo underworld partly through revenge for the death of one of his men. In the final scene Murakawa commits suicide on a deserted beach. Kitano’s masterpiece, *Hana-Bi* (*Fireworks*, 1997), was equally bleak, depicting retired policeman Nishi (Kitano), psychologically damaged by a shooting in which a colleague dies and his partner is paralyzed. Drawn into crime to support the treatment of his wife, who is dying of leukemia, Nisha also commits suicide as the only honorable course of action.

More recently, Shinya Tsukamoto has emerged as an important director with both a cult and a growing critical reputation. Tsukamoto’s films noir explore the problems of identity, beginning with *Bullet Ballet* (1998), about a man (Tsukamoto) obsessed with locating the gun his girlfriend used to commit suicide. *Sôseiji* (*Gemini*, 1999) was a classic *Doppelgänger* story, *Rokugatsu no hebi* (*A Snake of June*, 2002) and *Vital* (2004) are dark erotic thrillers, and *Akumu Tantei* (*Nightmare Detective*, 2006) and its sequel *Akumu Tantei 2* (*Nightmare Detective 2*, 2008) are horror-noir **hybrids** in which Tsukamoto plays a serial killer with supernatural powers.



**LE JOUR SE LÈVE (DAYBREAK, 1939).** Along with *Le Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*, 1938), *Le Jour se lève* represents the high point of **poetic realism**. Both films were directed by Marcel Carné and scripted by Jacques Prévert and are highly influential, admired in intellectual circles, popular with the public, and a major inspiration for the development of film noir. *Le Jour* begins *in media res* with Valentin (Jules Berry) staggering and collapsing on the stairs, having been shot by François (**Jean Gabin**), who then holes up in his single room. In the night that passes, with a large crowd gathered in the square of an anonymous town, we come to understand the motivation for his action through a series of extended flashbacks, evocatively photographed by Philippe Agostini. Gabin is an ordinary worker in love with the gamine Françoise (Jacqueline Laurent), who has fallen under the sway of the Svengali-like Valentin, an animal trainer with hypnotic powers. As in *Le Quai*, Gabin is a tragic hero, a decent man with a fatal violent streak when crossed, as when a gloating Valentin is about to reveal the details of his affair with Françoise.

Although the structure and fatalism of *Le Jour* found its way into many American noirs, it was directly **remade** as *The Long Night* (1947), starring Henry Fonda. *See also* FRENCH FILM NOIR.

– K –

**KARLSON, PHIL (1908–1985).** Phil Karlson was one of the most important and influential directors of film noir in the 1950s, his films exhibiting the violence, social themes, and direct, uncomplicated, quasi-documentary style that characterized its development in that decade. After directing the noirish melodrama *Wife Wanted* (1946), Karlson's first noir was *Scandal Sheet* (1952), an exposé of tabloid journalism, based on **Samuel Fuller's** novel. Karlson's two **city exposé** films, *Kansas City Confidential* (1952) and *The Phenix City Story* (1955), were hard-hitting, grueling depictions of organized crime. *99 River Street* (1953) and the color noir *Hell's Island* (1955), both starring Karlson's favored male lead, **John Payne**, were more individualized if equally brutal. *5 Against the House* (1955) was a **cap/er/heist** noir with conventional characterization, but *Tight Spot* (1955) was unusual in having a female lead, with Ginger Rogers playing a **gangster's** moll under police protection as a star witness. Karlson's masterpiece was *The Brothers Rico*

(1957), based on the **Georges Simenon** novel, starring **Richard Conte** as an ex-syndicate accountant, and like all Karlson's male protagonists he is unable to escape his past but is drawn back to fight the organization after the death of his two brothers. Its depiction of criminal organizations mirroring corporate America anticipated later developments.

After directing the late noir *Key Witness* (1960) about a vicious delinquent gang, Karlson worked in noir **television series** and in **neo-noir**, achieving his greatest box-office success with *Walking Tall* (1973), starring Joe Don Baker as a Tennessee sheriff, Buford Pusser, prepared to use any method, however violent, to achieve "justice." Baker also starred in *Framed* (1975), Karlson's last noir.

**KEYES, EVELYN (1916–2008)**. Evelyn Keyes did not develop a distinct character type but had interesting roles in several noirs, beginning with the maid in the **Gothic noir** *Ladies in Retirement* (1941). She had a more substantial role in the **hybrid** *The Face Behind the Mask* (1941) as the blind woman with whom the hideously scarred immigrant (**Peter Lorre**) falls in love. Keyes played the out-of-town girl investigating the murder of her sister in *Johnny O'Clock* (1947), who falls in love with and eventually redeems the **gangster (Dick Powell)**. She played a similar role in **Phil Karlson's** *99 River Street* (1953). In *The Prowler* (1951), she had a more complex role as a woman who begins an affair with the charismatic **corrupt cop (Van Heflin)** that leads to her husband's death. Her strong, sympathetic performance was a departure from the slight mawkishness of her earlier roles. *The Killer That Stalked New York* (1951) contained Keyes's most extended role as a smallpox carrier who is hiding from the police because she has been involved in a jewel theft with her husband.

**THE KILLERS (1946)**. *The Killers* was one of the most influential early noirs, with an elaborate series of six flashbacks by different narrators that was clearly modeled on *Citizen Kane* (1941) and a memorable robbery sequence filmed entirely in one continuous three-minute take. It was the product of the creative tension between producer **Mark Hellinger's** desire for "newsreel" realism and director **Robert Siodmak's** romantic fatalism. It was adapted and greatly expanded by Anthony Veiller and an uncredited **John Huston** from a brief Ernest Hemingway **hard-boiled** short story, whose action only encompasses the first scene in which two hired killers (William Conrad and **Charles McGraw**) enter

the small town of Brentwood to shoot “The Swede” (**Burt Lancaster**). The flashbacks, interconnected but not chronological, are held together by the plot device of the investigation by an insurance agent (a fine performance by **Edmond O’Brien** in what was a thankless part) initially into a small bequest that The Swede made, but which becomes, through his obsessive interest, an exploration as to why The Swede should accept his death so passively. Drifting into crime after his boxing career has been ended by a busted right hand, The Swede becomes fatally enamored of Kitty Collins (**Ava Gardner**) as soon as he sees her and listens to her croon “The More I Know of Love.” Softly and sensuously lit, Kitty is the siren, driven by avarice and knowing no sense of loyalty, who leads him to his doom, manipulating The Swede as she does all the other **men** who cross her path, including the gang leader “Big” Jim Colfax (**Albert Dekker**). **Woody Bredell**’s wide-angle, deep-focus cinematography, with its unnerving angles and high-contrast chiaroscuro lighting, inclines more to **expressionism** than realism, as does **Miklòs Rózsa**’s tense and urgent score. Although Riordan solves the case and recovers the money, The Swede remains an enigmatic figure whose poignant death lingers in the memory. *See also* MUSIC; NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

**KING BROTHERS (Frank King, 1913–1989; Maurice King, 1914–1977)**. The sons of Russian immigrants, Frank and Maurice King started out manufacturing film projectors, pinball machines, and slot machines before moving into feature films as King Brothers Productions in 1941. They gained a rather unenviable reputation as tough, no-nonsense formula producers, ruthlessly paring down budgets and economizing wherever possible, with younger brother Herman (1916–1992) usually credited as a “technical adviser.” The quality of the King Brothers’ films depended on their choice of writers and/or directors and varied considerably. Their first noir was the little known *Gangs Inc.* (aka *Paper Bullets*, 1941), with an unusual criminal heroine (Joan Woodbury). *When Strangers Marry* (1944, reissued as *Betrayed*), written by **Philip Yordan**, was a routine “falsely accused” noir with Dean Jagger as the innocent victim and **Robert Mitchum** as the real murderer. Yordan’s screenplay for *Suspense* (1946) was much stronger, an intense melodrama starring **Barry Sullivan**, who murders his rival (**Albert Dekker**) but retains some sympathy. The coruscating **existentialism** of *The Gangster* (1947) was attributable to **Daniel Fuchs**, adapting his own

novel, utterly different from the furious rise and fall paradigm of the King Brothers' *Dillinger*, made only two years earlier. *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950) is undoubtedly their best-known film, but its strengths are largely attributable to its director, **Joseph H. Lewis**. However, Lewis benefited from the King Brothers' attempt to go up-market, affording him a higher budget and longer shooting schedule. *Southside 1-1000* (1950) was a **semidocumentary** noir, directed with style and assurance by **Boris Ingster**, which has resemblances to **Anthony Mann's** *T-Men* (1948) in its story of an undercover FBI agent (Don DeFore) who descends into the criminal underworld.

**KISS ME DEADLY (1955).** *Kiss Me Deadly* was attacked on its release for its confusing plot and brutal violence, blackballed by the Legion of Decency, and banned in Great Britain. It is now recognized as one of noir's incontestable masterpieces, a seminal film that, coming late in the cycle, was a forerunner of the revisionist neo-noirs that characterized the 1970s. For producer Victor Saville, who had made *I, the Jury* (1953), it was to be another adaptation of a **Mickey Spillane** novel whose popularity would ensure box-office success. But screenwriter **A. I. Bezzerides**, encouraged by director **Robert Aldrich** who considered Spillane a cynical and quasi-fascist writer, inverted Spillane's values, making the brutality and viciousness of Mike Hammer (Ralph Meeker) part of a corrosive critique of the **private eye** hero. Hammer is depicted as venal (a cheap "bedroom dick"), philistine, and chauvinist (the film's sexual politics are also ahead of its time), who exploits his assistant Velda (Maxine Cooper) and all the other **women** he encounters. Bezzerides replaces Spillane's prosaic search for a cache of mafia drugs with the pursuit of the "Great Whatsit," the secret of nuclear fission. During the course of the investigation, the slick, stylish, and supposedly resourceful Hammer becomes hopelessly out of his depth.

From the outset, Aldrich depicts a dissonant world. A young woman, clad only in a trench coat, runs in terror along a pitch-black road, trying to flag down passing motorists. When Hammer reluctantly picks her up, the title credits unroll in reverse as if to suggest an upside down, looking-glass world, one that is supposedly speeding forward but actually running backward toward oblivion. Moments later she is killed in one of the film's characteristically elliptical and disorientating scenes, an event that we only witness obscurely from the viewpoint of the partially conscious Hammer. It is also more violent and graphic than preceding

noirs, showing how the woman's twitching legs and screams gradually cease as she is tortured and then killed. *Kiss Me Deadly's* brutality is both gruesomely realistic and oneiric, as if taking place in a nightmare world. **Ernest Laszlo's** cinematography is highly inventive with a restless mobility, using odd or "impossible" angles and high-contrast lighting casting deep shadows to evoke a surreal, distorted world. The final scene is genuinely frightening and apocalyptic with the loose cannon Gabrielle/Lily Carver (Gaby Rogers), the roommate of the dead woman, opening a box containing radioactive material, thereby causing a nuclear chain reaction. It parallels Pandora's mythical unleashing of sin into the world and is a metaphor for a paranoid, overly competitive society about to self-destruct. Although Hammer and Velda escape from the building, as they stumble in the surf they are far too close to a nuclear explosion to have any chance of surviving. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

**KISS OF DEATH (1947).** *Kiss of Death*, directed by **Henry Hathaway** and with an accomplished screenplay by **Ben Hecht** and Charles Lederer, was an influential film noir through its merger of the **semidocumentary** with the traditional crime thriller. It starred **Victor Mature** as Nick Bianco, a decent family man but with a criminal record, who is arrested robbing a jewelry store. In order to give authenticity to his actions, the film states: "All the scenes . . . both interior and exterior, were photographed in the State of New York in the actual locale associated with the story." These include the working-class neighborhood in Queens where Nick and his family live, the Chrysler Building (where the robbery takes place), the Criminal Courts Building (where Nick is sentenced), Tombs Prison, Sing Sing Penitentiary, including its machine workshop to which Nick has been assigned and where he hears the news of his wife's suicide amid the dinning noise, and an orphanage in New Jersey to which his children are taken. Hathaway insisted that cast and crew were transported to Sing Sing and "processed through" the prison as if they were convicts. Norbert Brodine shoots these scenes in an unobtrusively naturalistic style, giving them a subdued, gray look. Eventually, Nick is persuaded by Assistant District Attorney Louis D'Angelo (**Brian Donlevy**) to become an undercover agent and so secure his parole; in the process the crime thriller elements become more pronounced. Nick has to gain the confidence of the psychotic, unstable gangster Tommy Udo (a memorable debut performance by **Richard**

**Widmark**), who likes to shoot squealers in the belly “so they can roll around for a long time, thinking it over,” and who dispatches a fellow hood’s wheelchair-bound mother down a tenement staircase with one giggling, gurgling leer. Behind him lies the film’s real villain, shyster lawyer Earl Howser (Taylor Holmes), who protects criminals and operates an undercover crime ring.

As a **hybrid** film, *Kiss of Death* oscillates between naturalism and melodrama. The most memorable scene takes place at a cheerless suburban station where Nick waits anxiously for the train that will take his second wife Nettie (Coleen Gray) and his two young children to safety. A large black car pulls up, but the driver is simply waiting to pick up a passenger. The children play too close to the rails, and Nettie and then Nick pulls them back. These apparently contingent events and the nondescript location give a documentary feel, yet are tense and exciting because of the threat to their safety if Nick’s cover is blown. The dénouement, where Nick waits for his final showdown with Udo, is shot expressionistically with deep, menacing shadows. In a rather unconvincing ending, Nettie, who narrates much of the film, tells us Nick has survived being shot at point-blank range and the family will be reunited.

*Kiss of Death* was **remade** by Barbet Schroeder in 1995.

**KRASKER, ROBERT (1913–1981).** The Australian-born Robert Krasker was a highly accomplished cinematographer who won an Oscar for his work on *The Third Man* (1949), one of several **British films noir** he shot for **Carol Reed**. The first of these was *Odd Man Out* (1947), in which Krasker’s high-contrast photography, with its deep, rich shadows, helps create the alien and hostile city that becomes a trap for the protagonist (**James Mason**). Krasker’s mastery of chiaroscuro lighting was also evident in the little known **Gothic noir** *Uncle Silas* (U.S. title *The Inheritance*, 1947), another world of entrapment and fear. *Another Man’s Poison* (1951) was conventional, but in *Libel* (1959), directed by Anthony Asquith, Krasker’s contrastive cinematography helps create a disturbing tale of a **troubled veteran** (Dirk Bogarde) whose identity is uncertain. Krasker’s work on *The Criminal* (U.S. title *The Concrete Jungle*, 1960) was radically different, his harsh, unforgiving lighting and cold, gray location shooting creating the brutal, alienating world that director **Joseph Losey** envisaged. In Krasker’s last noir, *The Running Man* (1963), he was reunited with Reed in what was a routine thriller. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**KRASNER, MILTON (1904–1988).** Krasner worked as a cinematographer on second features before photographing two important noirs by **Fritz Lang**: *Woman in the Window* (1945) and *Scarlet Street* (1945). In both, Krasner used dramatic chiaroscuro photography to convey the central characters' psychological state. Krasner's cinematography in all his films noir was consistently **expressionist**, characterized by dark, atmospheric lighting and bold camera angles, best exemplified in *A Double Life* (1948), in which he creates an unstable world of glittering, shifting surfaces that mirror the split personality of its protagonist (Ronald Colman). Krasner was awarded the Best Cinematography Prize at Cannes for his work on *The Set-Up* (1949), in which his very low-key lighting and gloomy shadows create the oppressive darkness of the harrowing **boxing noir**.

Krasner's other noirs are *The Accused* (1949), *No Way Out* (1950), *House of Strangers* (1949), and *Vicki* (1953). See also VISUAL STYLE.

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**L.A. CONFIDENTIAL (1997).** *L.A. Confidential* is a **retro-noir** adapted, by director Curtis Hanson and screenwriter Brian Koppelman, from the third novel in James Ellroy's celebrated **Los Angeles** quartet that began in 1987 with *The Black Dahlia*. The film compresses the novel's eight years into a few weeks beginning on Christmas Eve 1952, depicting a **city** in the throes of violent transformation in which the utopian promise of post-war optimism starts to dissolve. Sid Hudgens (Danny DeVito), working for the tabloid journal *Hush-Hush* (based on *Confidential Magazine*), is busy exposing the sleaze and smut behind the veneer of the tinsel-town community, aided in his humiliations of the rich and famous by dapper "celebrity cop" Jack Vincennes (Kevin Spacey), one of three contrasting policemen around whom the narrative is constructed. The others are Edmund Exley (Guy Pearce), the straight-arrow cop, his purging zeal driven by the memory of his revered father, a policeman killed by an unidentified assailant, and Wendell "Bud" White (Russell Crowe), another in the long tradition of unstable cops, always close to the edge and treading the borderline between effectiveness and vicious brutality. All three, though mutually hostile, pursue their own leads and begin to recognize that their common enemy is corrupt Captain Dudley Smith (James Cromwell), protected by crooked District Attorney Ellis Loew (Ron Rifkin), who

is attempting to take over the Los Angeles drug trade now that mobster Mickey Cohen has been incarcerated. As the plot unfolds, the dark underside of the “innocent” 1950s emerges powerfully, its racism, misogyny, and endemic corruption, a city riddled with drugs and racketeering and where prostitutes like Lynn Bracken (Kim Basinger), with whom White becomes involved, look like movie stars (in this case **Veronica Lake**), another reminder that LA is dominated by Hollywood.

Hanson wanted to avoid cliché and nostalgia in his re-creation of the early 1950s and “be true to the period but also feel contemporary,” creating a meticulous re-creation of the surface features but imbuing them with the sense of “manufactured illusion” that characterizes how memory has been shaped by cinema itself. Cinematographer Dante Spinotti uses the skewed angles and chiaroscuro lighting of classic noir sparingly, mainly in the final shootout where Exley and White confront Smith and his posse of bent cops. The film is more upbeat than the novel, with Smith defeated and Exley installed as his replacement, bidding farewell to the injured White, who heads off to Arizona with Lynn. But the ending cannot erase the uneasy brittleness that suffuses the whole film and made it such a compelling and popular **neo-noir**.

**LADD, ALAN (1913–1964).** After several minor roles, including *Gangs Inc.* (aka *Paper Bullets*, 1941), Alan Ladd became a star through his performance as the sympathetic **hit man** in *This Gun for Hire* (1942). Ladd’s minimalism is highly effective in portraying a paranoid killer for whom every gesture is a potential betrayal. His stiff movements, masklike face, and parched, expressionless voice have a grace and beauty absent in the source novel by **Graham Greene**. In *The Glass Key* (1942) and *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), Ladd also played opposite the equally diminutive **Veronica Lake**, the pair forming the **outlaw couple**. In these two films, despite his outward toughness, Ladd plays insecure figures, the man between in *The Glass Key* and a **troubled veteran** in *The Blue Dahlia*. In *Calcutta* (1947), *Chicago Deadline* (1949), and *Appointment with Danger* (1951), he played less interesting roles as tough, two-fisted investigators who eventually solve the case.

Ladd’s other noirs are *Whispering Smith* (1948), *Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955), *The Man in the Net* (1959), and *The Tiger Among Us* (1962).

**THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI (1948).** Starring, scripted, and directed by **Orson Welles**, *The Lady from Shanghai* is an enigmatic and cryptic



tale narrated entirely in flashback by jobbing sailor Michael O'Hara (Welles) who confesses, after rescuing Elsa Bannister (**Rita Hayworth**) from a hold-up in New York's Central Park, that he is an unreliable narrator: "once I had seen her, I was not in my right mind." Accepting a job captaining a yacht chartered by her husband Arthur (Everett Sloane), "the world's greatest criminal lawyer," to sail to San Francisco, O'Hara is caught up in a complex plot of betrayal, double-cross, and murder acted out between the Bannisters and Arthur's partner George Grisby (Glenn Anders). The trio's sole purpose seems to be to devour each other, summed up in O'Hara's own interpolated story of crazed sharks eating themselves off the hump of Brazil, the nightmare image of a destructive and predatory capitalism. Welles's characteristically elliptical and bravura direction is organized around particular set pieces, culminating in the famous scene in the Crazy House in San Francisco's Chinatown. O'Hara, dazed and confused after escaping from a rigged trial where he is accused of murder, blunders around a series of fantastical rooms before descending a chute into a hall of mirrors. The bewildering doubling and redoubling of distorted images, which fracture and shatter as Elsa and Arthur shoot each other, is a final metaphor for their illusive, empty identities, grotesquely distorted by paranoia, greed, and perverse eroticism. O'Hara is now free but condemned to relive the meaning of these events like a man in limbo: "Maybe I'll live so long I'll forget her. Maybe I'll die trying."

Welles's initial rough-cut ran to 2.5 hours and was ruthlessly pruned by Columbia's chief editor Viola Lawrence, its plot judged incomprehensible by studio head Harry Cohn. Welles's lengthy memo of instructions was ignored, and the dénouement became a much-reduced version of what Welles had intended. It was also saddled with, in his view, inappropriate music. Finally released after nearly two years' delay, *The Lady from Shanghai* was met with lukewarm reviews and indifferent box-office returns. Always admired by the French as embodying the surrealism and oneirism that they took to be the essence of film noir, it has slowly become an accepted classic, with Hayworth's enigmatic Elsa celebrated as one of the iconic femme fatales. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS.

**LAKE, VERONICA (1919–1973).** A diminutive, pretty blonde, Veronica Lake achieved celebrity opposite **Alan Ladd** in three noirs: *This Gun for Hire* (1942), *The Glass Key* (1942), and *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), in

each of which they are partnered as an **outlaw couple**. Lake's "peek-a-boo" bang—the wave of blonde hair that hung over her left eye—became her much imitated trademark and contributed to her iconic status, re-created in *L.A. Confidential* (1997) by Kim Basinger. Lake's persona was cool but sultry, tough and hard-edged but also vulnerable. Her acting style was detached, remote, and unemotional, and she could engage in smart dialogue effectively. In *This Gun for Hire* she had her most complex role: the loving fiancée of a detective, a singer at a club owned by one of the villains, an undercover agent for the U.S. government and confidante of the psychotic killer (Ladd) whom she encounters by chance. In *The Glass Key*, she is part of an emotional triangle between Ed Beaumont (Ladd) and his boss (**Brian Donlevy**). Lake's most accomplished performance came in *The Blue Dahlia*, in which she plays the estranged wife of the man with whom Ladd's adulterous wife has had an affair, a mutual cuckolding that propels the pair together.

Lake's stardom was short-lived, and after the **hybrid** noir Western *Ramrod* (1947), in which she plays a tough, resourceful ranch owner holding out against the local "boss" of the valley, she appeared in only one further noir, *Slattery's Hurricane* (1949), in a dull role as the faithful woman waiting patiently for the **troubled veteran** Slattery (**Richard Widmark**) to see sense.

**LANCASTER, BURT (1913–1994).** An ex-circus acrobat, Burt Lancaster was one of a new breed of self-taught actors who brought an unpolished energy to their performances. He became a star through his first film, *The Killers* (1946), in which he played "The Swede," ensnared by a femme fatale (**Ava Gardner**), who loses the will to live after she deserts him. He played another doomed, masochistic lover in *Criss Cross* (1949), returning to the area in which he grew up (Bunker Hill) only to be betrayed by his ex-wife Anna (Yvonne De Carlo) with whom he resumes a romance. In both, Lancaster epitomizes the **existential** antihero, undone by his own weaknesses and misjudgements, which he interprets as malign fate. Wasted as an honest local sheriff in *Desert Fury* (1947), he played the leader of the convicts who revolt against the sadistic brutality of the chief warden in *Brute Force* (1947), an important **prison noir**. In *I Walk Alone* (1948) he plays another figure who cannot cope with a changed, postwar world, an ex-con, bewildered by the new corporate structures of the crime "business" represented by his former partner (**Kirk Douglas**). This alienation was more explicit

in *Kiss the Blood off My Hands* (1948), set in London, in which he played an embittered **troubled veteran** whose long incarceration has left him with shattered nerves and an uncontrollable temper and who is blackmailed after he kills a bar worker in a fit of rage. In *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948) Lancaster was cast against type as the bespectacled, ineffectual husband of the self-invalided heiress (**Barbara Stanwyck**), weakly colluding in a scheme to murder her.

Lancaster went independent in 1948, setting up his own company with Harold Hecht and James Hill. He returned to film noir with *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957), directed by Alexander Mackendrick, in a very different role as the predatory and egotistical Broadway columnist J. J. Hunsecker (based on Walter Winchell) who suborns the venal publicity agent (Tony Curtis) into breaking up the relationship between his sister and a musician. This action, supposedly a demonstration of Hunsecker's power and control, inadvertently betrays his incestuous desire.

Lancaster appeared in two **neo-noir** political thrillers, *Executive Action* (1973) and *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), and in Louis Malle's *Atlantic City* (1980), in which he plays the archetypal character of the small-time crook who gets sucked into a noir world of murder and betrayal. *See also* MEN.

**LANG, FRITZ (1890–1976).** Lang was the most important of the **émigré personnel** who helped to shape film noir, and he was the most significant single influence on its development. Lang had a distinguished career in Weimar Germany, one of the elite group of directors (*autoren*) who dominated the film industry. Lang wrote and directed two crime thrillers about a master criminal, *Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler: Ein Bild der Zeit* (*Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, 1922) and *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse* (*The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*, 1933), but his most influential film was *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931), the first modern urban crime thriller. Lang fled from Germany two years later after Adolf Hitler came to power, working in Paris before going to America in 1935, where, despite his reputation, he had to work for a variety of studios and accept whatever assignments he was offered. Adapting himself to new conditions, Lang found the crime thriller to be a congenial genre through which to explore social and psychological tensions and what he perceived as the fundamental contradictions of the American dream. Lang has been described as the “classicist” of film noir, his films being typically precise, analytical, and

economical, the product of Lang's understanding that "every scene has only one *exact* way it should be shot."

Lang's first two American films, *Fury* (1936) and *You Only Live Once* (1937), are noir **precursors** that anticipate noir themes, and their use of low-key lighting and unusual camera angles, derived from Lang's heritage from **expressionism**, prefigure its aesthetic conventions. Both concentrate on ordinary, average Americans who become sympathetic victims, imprisoned for crimes they did not commit and whose lives exhibit the tensions in the Depression era. *You and Me* (1938), starring **George Raft** as a paroled convict trying to go straight, was much less distinctive. Lang's wartime spy thrillers, *Man Hunt* (1941), *Ministry of Fear* (1945), and *Cloak and Dagger* (1946), with their atmosphere of suspicion, paranoia, and false appearances, also powerfully anticipate the main noir cycle.

The bulk of Lang's 10 films noir may be divided into two distinct phases. The first four films in the 1940s—*The Woman in the Window* (1945), *Scarlet Street* (1945), *Secret Beyond the Door* (1948), and *House by the River* (1950)—are preoccupied with psychological disturbance and individual relationships; the second, 1950s quartet—*The Blue Gardenia* (1953), *The Big Heat* (1953), *While the City Sleeps* (1956), and *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (1956)—concentrate more on social issues and the burgeoning power of the media. However, running through Lang's whole oeuvre is a focus on the ambiguities of guilt and innocence and the anarchic force of sexual desire. In a shift of emphasis that was typical of the whole noir cycle, Lang's 1940s films are much more expressionist and more overtly melodramatic, deploying high-contrast chiaroscuro lighting and complex compositions, whereas the lighting in his 1950s films is more uniform, the camera work more fluid and mobile.

*The Woman in the Window* and *Scarlet Street* concentrate on the middle-aged protagonist (**Edward G. Robinson**) trapped in a hopeless and destructive *amour fou* by a manipulative femme fatale (**Joan Bennett**). In the former, the male victim awakes from his nightmare at the end—Lang's clever reverse tracking shot helps to palliate this cliché—in the latter, his humiliation is total. *Scarlet Street* was the first film made by Diana Productions, an independent company formed by Lang, Bennett, and her husband, the producer **Walter Wanger**, with whom Lang had worked at Universal on *You Only Live Once*. Diana Productions offered Lang the creative control he craved, but it was

short-lived. *Secret Beyond the Door* was its second film, a **Gothic** noir that explores the paranoia felt by Celia (Joan Bennett), who narrates the film in voice-over, in her mid-life marriage to the brooding and enigmatic Mark (Michael Redgrave). An uneven, sometimes opaque film, replete with surreal dream imagery, *Secret Beyond the Door* was unsuccessful with cinemagoers. Its failure exacerbated the tensions within Diana Productions, and the company was dissolved. The low-budget *House by the River* was a “B” feature, but Lang was able to invest this rather unpromising Gothic melodrama with an acute exploration of the dark depths of male sexual desire.

Suspected of harboring subversive attitudes, Lang was placed on the industry’s “gray list” and found work more difficult to come by. *Clash by Night* (1952), based on a play by Clifford Odets, and *Human Desire* (1954), adapted from an Emile Zola novel that had also been filmed by Jean Renoir as *La Bête humaine* (*Judas Was a Woman* aka *The Human Beast*) in 1938, were realist social dramas, but there are many disturbing noir undercurrents in the love triangles formed between **Barbara Stanwyck**, **Robert Ryan**, and Paul Douglas in *Clash by Night* and **Glenn Ford**, **Gloria Grahame**, and **Broderick Crawford** in the latter. The **women** are trapped in unsatisfying marriages, the **men’s** desires often violent or thwarted, further indication of the tensions within American, in this case small-town, life. The first of the more overtly social noirs was *The Blue Gardenia*, based on a short story by Vera Caspary, who wrote the novel from which *Laura* was adapted. Unusually, it has a working-class heroine, Norah (Anne Baxter), who believes she has killed her would-be rapist (**Raymond Burr**). Norah is first exploited then championed by a cynical newspaper reporter (**Richard Conte**), who eventually uncovers the actual murderer. In this film, in collaboration with **Nicholas Musuraca**, Lang developed the use of a crab dolly that could “wander through space like a curious person,” as Lang put it.

*The Big Heat* was Lang’s most powerful and successful 1950s film noir, a searching exploration of the threat of underworld corporations and of the ambiguities of the vigilante policeman (Glenn Ford). *While the City Sleeps* and *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* exploit the enigmatic, opaque persona of **Dana Andrews**, as television reporter and writer respectively, renewing Lang’s examination of the ambiguities of guilt and innocence, the fragility of identity in the modern world, and the dark compulsions of the male libido. In the former Andrews shows disturbing

similarities to the serial killer stalking New York; in the latter having agreed to pose as a murderer, he eventually accidentally confesses to his wife (Joan Fontaine) that he was indeed the killer.

Restless and autocratic, Lang had never been comfortable in the commercial environment of the American studio system and he was never fully accepted. He returned to Germany in 1958 to resume his career there, directing *Die Tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse* (*The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*, 1960), a return to his roots in the crime thriller. See also BLACKLIST; GERMAN FILM NOIR.

**LANGUAGE.** Although film noir is regarded as having a highly visual style, part of its appeal comes through its distinctive verbal language articulated in voice-overs or in dialogue. Noir's verbal idiom derives primarily from the **hard-boiled fiction** on which so many noirs were based or the pulp fiction authors who frequently wrote or adapted the screenplays. The caustic **existentialism** of the low-rent hood's opening voice-over in *The Gangster* (1947) is taken from its source novel *Low Company* (1937) by its author **Daniel Fuchs**, who also wrote the screenplay: "I was no hypocrite. I knew everything I did was low and rotten. I knew what people thought of me. What difference did it make? What did I care? I got scarred, sure. You get hurt a little when you fight your way out of the gutter." By contrast, the voice-over of Jeff Bailey (**Robert Mitchum**) in *Out of the Past* (1947), adapted from **Daniel Mainwaring's** novel *Build My Gallows High*, expresses the doomed longing of the man gripped by a romantic obsession: "I never saw her in the daytime. We seemed to live by night. What was left of the day went away like a pack of cigarettes you smoked. I didn't know where she lived. I never followed her. All I ever had to go on was a place and time to see her again. I don't know what we were waiting for. Maybe we thought the world would end. Maybe we thought it was a dream and we'd wake up with a hangover in Niagara Falls." **Raymond Chandler** wrote the resonant opening voice-over delivered by the dying Walter Neff (**Fred MacMurray**) for *Double Indemnity* (1944), including the memorable image: "As I was walking down the street to the drugstore, suddenly it came over me that everything would go wrong. It sounds crazy but it's true, so help me. I couldn't hear my own footprints. It was the walk of a dead man." Chandler was also responsible for much of the crackling dialogue that characterizes the exchanges between Neff and femme fatale Phyllis Dietrichson (**Barbara Stanwyck**): Neff: "You'll

be here too?" Phyllis: "I guess so. I usually am." Neff: "Same chair, same perfume, same anklet?" Phyllis: "I wonder if I know what you mean." Neff: "I wonder if you wonder."

The ubiquitous **private eye**, Chandler's Philip Marlowe, or **Dashiell Hammett's** Sam Spade in the 1941 adaptation of the *Maltese Falcon*, is a master of the cynical, devastating one-liner: "We didn't exactly believe your story, Miss O'Shaughnessy, we believed your \$200." The private eye is a connoisseur of "dames" whom he treats with wary skepticism, an appreciation that extends even to indolent playboy Larry Ballentine (Robert Young) in *They Won't Believe Me* (1947): "She looked like a special kind of dynamite, neatly wrapped in nylon and silk. Only I wasn't having any. I'd been too close already. I was powder-shy." But the wary males can be matched, on occasion, by the salty tongue of the hard-bitten femme fatale: "Not only don't you have any scruples, you don't have any brains," says Vera (Ann Savage) to her victim Al Roberts (Tom Neal) in *Detour* (1945). **Gangsters** too, are often equipped with a mordant sense of how things are in the noir world. In *The Big Heat* (1953), Mike Langalla (Alexander Scourby) observes: "Prisons are bulging with dummies who wonder how they got there." And gangster's moll Debby Marsh (**Gloria Grahame**) tells avenging cop Dave Bannion (**Glenn Ford**): "I've been rich and I've been poor. Believe me, rich is better."

**Neo-noir** inherited and developed these verbal tropes. Matty Walker (Kathleen Turner) says approvingly of the infatuated Ned Racine (William Hurt) in *Body Heat* (1981): "You're not too smart. I like that in a man." In reply to the dilemma of **hit man** Charley Partanna (Jack Nicholson) in *Prizzi's Honor* (1985), unsure whether to marry the fellow assassin (Kathleen Turner) he loves but who has crossed the Prizzis—"Do I ice her? Do I marry her? Which of dese?"—femme fatale Maerose Prizzi (Angelica Huston) replies: "Marry her Charley. Just because she's a thief and a hitter doesn't mean she's not a good woman in all other departments. . . . She's an American. She had a chance to make a buck and she grabbed it." Neo-noir's pervasive sense of the inversion of American values is often expressed through its omnipresent **corrupt cops**. Max Hoover (**Nick Nolte**) in *Mulholland Falls* (1996) opines: "This is LA. This is my town. Out here you're a trespasser. Out here I can pick you up, burn your house, fuck your wife and kill your dog." Neo-noir protagonists are imbued with the same pervasive existentialism as their predecessors. Travis Bickle (**Robert De Niro**) in

*Taxi Driver* (1976) muses: “Loneliness has followed me my whole life, everywhere. In bars, in cars, sidewalks, stores, everywhere. There’s no escape. I’m God’s lonely man.” Overall, language remains important to the development of film noir, always rooted, as in *Sin City* (2005), in the pulp fiction to which it is profoundly indebted.

**LASHELLE, JOSEPH (1900–1989).** A talented cinematographer, Joseph LaShelle’s first noir was *Laura* (1944), for which he won an Oscar, in which his intricate, delicate lighting and subtle chiaroscuro created a suitably languorous, dreamlike atmosphere for this complex tale. He photographed three further noirs for **Otto Preminger**: *Fallen Angel* (1946), *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950), and *The Thirteenth Letter* (1951), where his low-key, contrastive cinematography contributes powerfully to the drama. Some of his most accomplished work was in **John Brahm**’s period noir *Hangover Square* (1945), in which LaShelle uses a more overtly **expressionist** style, with high-contrast chiaroscuro, as befits a highly wrought tale of schizophrenia and madness. In the more realistic *Road House* (1948), he tempered his style to the different demands of this action melodrama. In *Storm Fear* (1956), LaShelle showed his ability to photograph exteriors, capturing the rugged beauty of the snow-clad mountains where the family are trapped. *Crime of Passion* (1957), LaShelle’s final noir, was more routine. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**THE LAST SEDUCTION (1994).** **John Dahl**’s *The Last Seduction*, which originally premiered on Home Box Office television, was re-released in cinemas after favorable reviews, becoming one of the most celebrated **neo-noirs** of the 1990s largely through the charismatic performance of **Linda Fiorentino** as Bridget Gregory, perhaps the ultimate femme fatale, who destroys all the men who cross her path. Bridget, a highly capable professional, first shown in an office demanding her male workers increase sales, embodies the then-fashionable yuppie ethos of upward mobility and greed. Unable to be content with legitimate enterprise, Bridget assists her vain doctor husband Clay (Bill Pullman) in a drug deal, then double-crosses him and escapes with \$700,000. Driving into “cow country”—Beston in upstate New York—the film shifts from urban to **country noir** as Bridget seduces the “rural Neanderthal” Mike (Peter Berg). She works her way rapidly to a top position in Mike’s insurance company, where she uses the client database to create a feminist



assassination agency offering wives the chance to be revenged on their unfaithful husbands. But her scheme is part of a more diabolical plan to kill Clay and have Mike blamed for his murder. In the final sequence, Bridget climbs into a gleaming limousine, triumphant.

Essentially a black comedy, *The Last Seduction* has a postmodern playfulness and irony that allows Bridget to “have it all”: power, sexuality, and wealth. It reconfigures the erotic attractiveness of the femme fatale within a narrative constructed around a female subject whose seductive image is always under her own control. Like **Sharon Stone**’s Catherine Tramell in *Basic Instinct* (1992), Bridget offers a postfeminist image of a strong and attractive woman who is both feminine and independent, uniting what were previously incompatible qualities in a way that was particularly appealing to young women as well as powerfully erotic for males, making *The Last Seduction* into a cult film. See also WOMEN.

**LASZLO, ERNEST (1898–1984).** The Hungarian-born Ernest Laszlo was director of photography on eight noirs, mainly for United Artists. His first, *Impact* (1949), a highly superior “B” noir, showed Laszlo’s proficiency with location shooting that, in *D.O.A.* (1950), was coupled with a controlled **expressionism** that created suitably murky, claustrophobic interiors. Laszlo shot 11 films for **Robert Aldrich**, including his noir masterpiece *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), with its evocative variety of **Los Angeles** locations and superb nighttime opening sequence in which Laszlo’s strongly contrastive chiaroscuro lighting creates an atmosphere of confusion and terror. Laszlo also collaborated repeatedly with Stanley Kramer, including on the political conspiracy thriller *The Domino Principle* (1977), in which **Gene Hackman** played a **troubled Vietnam veteran**.

Laszlo’s other noirs are *Cover Up* (1949), *Manhandled* (1949), *M* (1951), *The Steel Trap* (1952), *The Big Knife* (1955), and *While the City Sleeps* (1956). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**LATIMER, JONATHAN (1906–1983).** A **hard-boiled** novelist and screenwriter highly indebted to **Dashiell Hammett**, Jonathan Latimer’s reputation was as a consummate professional rather than an innovator, esteemed for his lively and convincing dialogue. His 1936 novel *The Lady in the Morgue* was filmed in 1938 starring Preston Foster as Latimer’s wisecracking **private eye** William Crane, but it was a murder

mystery. Latimer's first noir was an adaptation of Hammett's *The Glass Key* (1942) in which, in contrast to the previous (1935) adaptation, Latimer retained the novel's perverse and disturbing sexuality. *Nocturne* (1946), a poor man's *Laura* (1944), was enlivened by Latimer's smart dialogue, as was *They Won't Believe Me* (1947), a sub-**James M. Cain** story of corrupt passion starring Robert Young. Latimer's best work came through his creative association with director **John Farrow** on four films beginning with *The Big Clock* (1948), adapted from Kenneth Fearing's novel. Latimer's screenplay adroitly reproduces the novel's intricate plotting and its tense, disturbing atmosphere. *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948) is regarded as one of the best adaptations of **Cornell Woolrich**, capturing the paranoia and morbid fatalism of the original. *Alias Nick Beale* (1949) had more overt fantasy elements, with **Ray Milland** as the Devil, but Latimer gives full weight to the chillingly real disintegration of the crusading district attorney (Thomas Mitchell). *The Unholy Wife* (1957) had an original screenplay by Latimer (with William Durkee) depicting a restless, ambitious femme fatale (Diana Dors) who tries to destroy her husband (Rod Steiger).

**LAURA (1944).** *Laura*, highly rated by critics and popular with audiences, was the third film released in 1944 (along with *Double Indemnity* and *Murder, My Sweet*) that established film noir as a style. Adapted by Jay Dratler, Samuel Hoffenstein, and Betty Reinhardt from Vera Caspary's novel, *Laura* combined the **Gothic** woman's picture with the contemporary crime thriller. Its sophisticated "European" style was largely attributable to its **émigré** producer-director **Otto Preminger** who, having replaced Rouben Mamoulian after 18 days shooting, successfully lobbied Twentieth Century-Fox's Head of Production **Darryl F. Zanuck** to get the film "A" status. As such, it benefited from the sophisticated set design and dressing of **Lyle Wheeler** and unit art director Leland Fuller and the fluid camerawork and lighting of cinematographer **Joseph LaSelle**, who received an Oscar. In particular, Preminger uses interiors to express character, as in the famous opening shot in which the camera travels slowly around the apartment of New York columnist Waldo Lydecker (Clifton Webb) to suggest the fastidious, over-refined narcissism of this acerbic New York intellectual.

At the center of Manhattan's *haut monde*—a rarified world, untypical of noir, of expensive restaurants, luxurious apartments, modern offices, and art galleries—is the mysterious, enigmatic figure of Laura

herself (**Gene Tierney**), the ingénue trying to become a successful designer, her career molded by the Svengali figure of the sexually ambivalent Lydecker. Her disappearance triggers the investigation of police Lieutenant Mark McPherson (**Dana Andrews**), who, although hard-bitten and misogynist, falls in love with her portrait. As he falls asleep in her apartment, Laura returns, an audacious entrance that suggests she is a ghost or a spirit who haunts men while remaining elusive. It is deliberately unclear whether she really has returned as if from the dead or whether McPherson has imagined it all. **David Raksin's** celebrated haunting score preserves this mysteriousness, and he opposed Preminger's idea to use Duke Ellington's "Sophisticated Lady" as Laura's theme tune as he felt the associations of jazz would mark her as a wanton **woman**. It is this hesitation between dream and reality that transforms *Laura* from a conventional murder mystery into a true noir, exploring the dark undercurrents of male desire. *See also* MEN; MUSIC; VISUAL STYLE; WOMEN.

**LEFT-WING CYCLE.** There was a powerful group of films noir informed by a left-liberal critique of American democracy as sick and corrupt. These films attempted to keep alive the spirit of the 1930s New Deal and its cultural manifestation the Popular Front, a broad alliance of left-wing activists whose work attacked the gross inequalities of capitalism. **Orson Welles** was the most significant Popular Front figure, and his disparate films noir—notably *Journey into Fear* (1943), *The Stranger* (1946), and *Touch of Evil* (1958)—are informed by an existentialist Marxism. This combination of **existentialism** and Marxism characterizes a generation of filmmakers whose radicalism was forged in New York's political theatre of the 1930s: **Jules Dassin, Edward Dymtryk, Cy Endfield, John Huston, Elia Kazan, Joseph Losey, Abraham Polonsky, and Robert Rossen**, whose collective contribution to film noir was highly significant.

*Body and Soul* (1947), written by Polonsky and directed by Rossen, was the paradigm story of the slum kid who becomes a successful boxer but who is corrupted by material success. It starred **John Garfield**, an actor known for his left-wing sympathies, who was also the lead in Polonsky's *Force of Evil* (1948), portraying the human cost of amoral *laissez-faire* capitalism and individual ambition. Dassin's *Brute Force* (1947) was an allegorical critique of totalitarian institutions, the prisoners' bid for freedom a generalized revolt against entrapment and

persecution. Dmytryk's *Crossfire* (1947) directly addressed the social and psychological problems of returning veterans and of regional and racial prejudice. Endfield's *The Sound of Fury* (aka *Try and Get Me*, 1951) again explored **troubled veterans** but also the power of social prejudice. Kazan's *Boomerang!* (1947) examines small-town mentality and the cries for mob justice, while the plague scare in his *Panic in the Streets* (1950) was a metaphor for collective fears about the presence of foreigners and "outsiders" in American culture. Huston's *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950) contrasts the band of sympathetic outcasts engaged in a robbery with the corrupt lawyer (Louis Calhern) and the self-righteous police commissioner.

Losey's *The Prowler* (1951) was a powerful allegory about the false values that capitalism induced, which corrupt the personable young police officer Webb Garwood (**Van Heflin**). It was scripted by Dalton Trumbo, who had to remain uncredited because he had been placed on the **blacklist** and then imprisoned as one of the "Hollywood Ten," which also included Dmytryk. The anti-Communist witch hunt conducted by Senator Joseph McCarthy effectively ended the left-wing cycle, its main figures either in prison, in exile, or forced to work under a pseudonym. In the process, studio executives became increasingly wary of "message" films and distanced themselves from the values that had informed the left-wing cycle. *See also* BLACKLIST; FILM GRIS; RIGHT-WING CYCLE.

**LEWIS, JOSEPH H. (1907–2000).** Director Joseph H. Lewis spent his career in "B" features with limited budgets, but this did not prevent him forging a distinctive **visual style** in his seven films noir, showing a preference for complicated takes, striking camera movements, and intricate lighting schemes. His first film noir was the **Gothic** *My Name Is Julia Ross* (1945), in which the heroine (Nina Foch) is drugged and imprisoned in a mansion overlooking the coast. *So Dark the Night* (1946) is the story of a schizophrenic French Sûreté detective (Steven Geray) who investigates his own criminal self. Numerous shots of mirrors and other reflective surfaces create a visual correlative for his divided mind. By contrast, *The Undercover Man* (1949), the story of a group of undercover agents fighting organized crime in Chicago, was in **semidocumentary** style but with **expressionist** scenes depicting the criminal underworld. *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950) is Lewis's most celebrated film, one of the definitive **outlaw couple** noirs,

the study of a perverse and fatal infatuation and with a famously audacious robbery sequence shot in a single 3.5-minute take. *A Lady without Passport* (1950) and *Cry of the Hunted* (1953) were more routine thrillers, but Lewis makes interesting use of the swamp settings, the Florida Everglades and the Louisiana bayous respectively. *The Big Combo* (1955) was Lewis's other celebrated noir, which, like *Gun Crazy*, was a study in perverse sexuality and self-destructive violence.

After 1958 Lewis directed several noir **television series**, including *The Investigators* (1961).

**LEWTON, VAL (1904–1951).** Although not directly connected with the postwar noir cycle, the Russian-born producer Val Lewton exercised an important influence on its aesthetic and thematic characteristics through a series of intelligent and highly wrought **Gothic** horror-thrillers: *Cat People* (1942), *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), *The Leopard Man* (1943), *The Seventh Victim* (1943), *Curse of the Cat People* (1944), *The Body Snatcher* (1945), and *Bedlam* (1946). Working as head of his own, modestly budgeted, second-feature unit at RKO where he was allowed almost complete creative freedom, the erudite Lewton was involved in all aspects of these films' production, frequently coscripting and codirecting, which gave them an instantly recognizable look and sensibility. Thematically, Lewton's films have a pronounced **existentialism**, sharing strong similarities with **Cornell Woolrich's** fiction—indeed, *The Leopard Man* was adapted from *Black Alibi*—in which ordinary men and women in, for the most part, contemporary urban settings, experience paranoia, terror, and a morbid dread of death and whose sexuality is repressed or hideously distorted into violence. *The Seventh Victim* takes its epigraph from one of John Donne's holy sonnets ("I run to Death, and Death meets me as fast, and all my Pleasures are like Yesterdays") and is a genuinely disturbing and frightening story of isolation, fear, and despair in which a young woman, Jacqueline, takes her own life rather than continue to face the intolerable pressures of living.

Aesthetically, these films deploy atmospheric, low-key lighting—they were the training ground for **Nicholas Musuraca**—to subtly evoke the sense of doom and foreboding. Lewton encouraged his young directors to be experimental and innovative, and he was responsible for molding the early career of several who made significant noirs: Mark Robson, **Robert Rossen**, **Robert Wise**, and, most notably, **Jacques Tourneur**. See also HYBRIDS.

**LITVAK, ANATOLE (1902–1974).** Born in Kiev of Jewish parents, director Anatole Litvak worked in the German film industry in the 1920s but fled when the Nazis came to power. He pursued a career in British and French cinema—where he directed *Coeur de Lilas* (*Lilacs*, 1932)—before going to Hollywood in the late 1930s. In 1940 he directed three noir **precursors**: *Castle on the Hudson* and *Out of the Fog* starring **John Garfield**, and *City for Conquest*, starring James Cagney. His first true noir was *The Long Night* (1947), an American **remake** of *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939), in which Henry Fonda plays the **Jean Gabin** role, now reconfigured as a **troubled veteran**. Litvak’s version uses a double flashback and is visually striking, but the characterization seems strained and the sentimental ending false. *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), adapted from Lucille Fletcher’s famous radio script, was a crisply handled crime thriller, whereas *The Snake Pit* (1948), nominated for several Academy Awards including Best Director, was a sensitive study of a woman (Olivia de Havilland) who has to cope with her incarceration in an insane asylum. Litvak also directed a **British film noir**, *The Deep Blue Sea* (1955), featuring another bored and restless troubled veteran (Kenneth More), a Battle of Britain ace who cannot adjust to peacetime existence. *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.

**THE LONG GOODBYE (1973).** Although Robert Altman’s *The Long Goodbye* had a disastrous theatrical release and received poor reviews, it is now recognized as one of the key 1970s **neo-noirs** that radically reworked noir conventions. The screenplay was by Leigh Brackett, who had worked on *The Big Sleep* (1946). Altman encouraged her to update **Raymond Chandler**’s 1939 novel and to subvert the convention of the **hard-boiled** but omniscient **private eye**. Accordingly, Altman cast against type: Elliott Gould is a shambling, scruffy, passive, and above all puzzled Marlowe, whose tagline—“It’s okay with me”—betrays his bewilderment and attempt to disengage himself from what is going on. His laid-back attitude seems contemporary, but his ill-fitting suits and addiction to wearing a tie appear hopelessly old-fashioned. He shambles about, his actions banal or apparently inconsequential.

Altman’s **visual style** is also radical—almost every shot is either a slow, never completed zoom or an almost imperceptible arc or track around the characters—which creates a drifting, uncertain perspective, neither conventionally objective nor subjective. In nearly every scene, the central focus shifts in what appears to be a random way, leaving the

viewer unsure what the real object of interest is. This self-conscious, obtrusive style is consistent with an episodic, rambling narrative that refuses orthodox emotional melodramatic climaxes. This is most starkly shown in the scene where Roger (**Sterling Hayden**), whom Marlowe has been engaged to protect from his corrupt psychiatrist, commits suicide, the action happening away from the center of the frame as Marlowe talks inconsequentially to Roger's wife (Nina Van Pallandt). Marlowe's one moment of decisive action occurs right at the end of the film when he shoots his friend Terry Lennox, whom he has been shielding, after Lennox reveals casually how he used and betrayed Marlowe and faked his own death after murdering his wife. This apparent vindication of Marlowe's professional honor and integrity is undermined by the strident playing of "Hooray for Hollywood" on the soundtrack, which reminds viewers of the artifice of American myths. Altman commented: "I see Marlowe the way Chandler saw him, a loser. But a *real* loser, not the false winner that Chandler made out of him. A loser all the way."

**LORRE, PETER (1904–1964).** One of the more important *émigré* actors, the Hungarian-born László Loewenstein achieved fame on stage before making a memorable film debut, as Peter Lorre, in **Fritz Lang's** *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931). He left Germany when the Nazis came to power in 1933 and moved to America via Paris and London—he played a terrorist in **Alfred Hitchcock's** **British film noir** *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934)—signing a contract with Warner Bros. in 1935. Lorre's obvious foreignness, his huge, globular eyes and diffident, breathy whine (much impersonated) cast him as the eternal outsider. In *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940) he played the mysterious, nameless stranger, the killer terrorizing a small American town; in *Quicksand* (1950) he was a sleazy, blackmailing arcade owner. Lorre's characters often had an exotic, decadent quality, as in his perfumed, primed Joel Cairo in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941). This was the first of several films in which he was paired with **Sydney Greenstreet**; the others were *The Face Behind the Mask* (1941), *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944), *Three Strangers* (1946), and *The Verdict* (1946). Lorre played supporting roles in two **Cornell Woolrich** adaptations: *Black Angel* (1946), as a shady nightclub owner suspected of murder, and a psychotic gangster's henchman in *The Chase* (1946), a role he also played in the British film noir *Double Confession* (1950). Lorre's association with Bertolt Brecht meant he was on the

Hollywood “gray list,” making roles difficult to obtain. Lorre returned to Germany to cowrite, direct, and star in the important **German film noir** *Der Verlorene* (*The Lost One*, 1951). See also BLACKLIST.

**LOS ANGELES.** Los Angeles (LA) is the most frequently represented **city** in film noir and **neo-noir**. In part, this is because of its convenience for Hollywood filmmakers, but more importantly because it has been seen, especially by crime writers, as the quintessential modern American metropolis, what **Raymond Chandler** called that “big **hard-boiled** city with no more personality than a paper cup.” Thus LA is at once an actual place with famous streets (Wilshire Boulevard, Sunset Strip) and recognizable landmarks—especially City Hall, Union Station, or the Bradbury Building—and a metaphoric urban space, dark, unknowable, and threatening. It can be the palimpsest for the dystopian city of the future, as in *Blade Runner* (1982) or *Strange Days* (1995) or, because it includes Hollywood itself—one of a number of towns swallowed up by the relentless expansion of what has become the largest metropolitan area in the United States—the setting for noirs that critique the movie industry, including **Billy Wilder’s** *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), **David Lynch’s** *Mulholland Drive* (2001), or Brian De Palma’s *The Black Dahlia* (2006). In some noirs, such as *The Killers* (1946) or *Impulse* (1990), LA is simply the anonymous neon-lit noir city. In others, there is a realistic concentration on actual locations.

*Criss Cross* (1949), **Mark Hellinger’s** attempt to anatomize LA along the lines of New York in *Naked City* (1948), opens with a shot of the City Hall in the heart of downtown, as Steve Thompson (**Burt Lancaster**), returning to the city, journeys back to his working-class residence in Bunker Hill with its white-framed houses built in the 1920s. Steve’s house is accessed by the short railway ride up Angels Flight, a picturesque area used in several noirs—*Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), *Act of Violence* (1949), and *M* (1951)—before its redevelopment in 1969. *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955) encompasses the fading tenements of Bunker Hill but also the Bel Air mansions, where **gangsters** relax by their swimming pools, and the fashionable Malibu beach house where the final explosion takes place. John Boorman’s *Point Blank* (1967), Robert Altman’s *The Long Goodbye* (1973), and **Michael Mann’s** *Collateral* (2004) are also topographically explicit, depicting a range of actual LA locations. *Armored Car Robbery* (1950) features the downtown district with its old bridges, the Long Beach oil fields, and shipyard



terminal, while *Roadblock* (1951) culminates in a car chase along the concrete-lined bed of the Los Angeles River, used again in *Point Blank*. Although most LA noirs feature central locations, *Pitfall* (1948), *Two Days in the Valley* (1996), and *Jackie Brown* (1997) are set in the suburbs. Some, such as *Double Indemnity* (1944), encompass both. Three important **neo-noirs**, *Chinatown* (1974), *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995), and *L.A. Confidential* (1997) depict specific periods of LA's history (the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s respectively), in order to understand its complex present-day realities. Thom Andersen's *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (2003) is a documentary compendium of how the city has been represented in films. See also *HEAT*.

**LOSEY, JOSEPH (1909–1984).** Director Joseph Losey made an important contribution to the development of film noir on both sides of the Atlantic, but, as with **Cy Endfield**, Losey's was an enforced exile, his American career brutally truncated by being placed on the **blacklist**: he chose to work abroad rather than appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee and name names.

Losey worked in left-wing political theatre in the 1930s and was deeply influenced by the Marxist-materialism of Bertolt Brecht; all his films search for a causal realism that can explain events and characters' actions. Losey's first noir was *The Lawless* (1950), indebted to **Fritz Lang's** *Fury* (1936), an exposé of small-town prejudice and the plight of Mexican fruit pickers. *M* (1951) was an actual **remake** of Lang's 1931 film, set in present-day **Los Angeles**. Losey's treatment of the child killer emphasizes the alienating effects of a narrow, materialistic society but also makes the protagonist's sickness and perversion more explicit. *The Prowler*, scripted by Dalton Trumbo, who had been imprisoned as one of the "Hollywood Ten" before it was released in July 1951, explored the dark underside of the American dream through its depiction of the **corrupt cop** (**Van Heflin**) obsessed with money, "100,000 bucks, a Cadillac and a blonde," which eventually destroys him and the woman he seduces (**Evelyn Keyes**). *The Big Night* (1951), which Losey coscripted, was another study in alienation. As shy, bookish teenager George La Main (John Barrymore Jr.) seeks revenge on the man who humiliated his father, his eyes are opened to the dark undercurrents in social and familial life in what becomes a rite-of-passage film. Losey's blacklisting meant that he was unable to finish postproduction and the film is told chronologically, whereas he had wanted it to be in flashback.

Having gone into exile, Losey moved to Great Britain in 1952 and directed two noirs under “fronts”: *The Sleeping Tiger* (1954) and *The Intimate Stranger* (U.S. title *Finger of Guilt*, 1956), both routine thrillers directed under pseudonyms. *Time without Pity* (1957), the first **British film noir** to carry Losey’s name, was more compelling, an intense and claustrophobic melodrama in which an estranged and alcoholic father (Michael Redgrave) tries desperately to prove the innocence of his son (Alec McCowen) accused of murder. In *Blind Date* (U.S. title *Chance Meeting*, 1959), Losey used the conventions of the crime thriller to probe the class prejudice and xenophobia of British society. A foreigner (Hardy Krüger) needs the help of a dissident working-class police inspector (Stanley Baker) to prove his innocence of a murder and thus reveal an attempted establishment cover-up. *The Criminal* (U.S. title *The Concrete Jungle*, 1960), also starring Baker, ranks with the best of the Hollywood **prison noirs** in its depiction of the brutality of life behind bars. Johnny Bannion (Baker) is another alienated protagonist, able to survive prison, but not the new breed of slick criminal (Sam Wanamaker) he encounters on his release. Bannion is lost in the shallowly affluent world of modern Britain. His death in a bleak, snow-covered field is terrifying and shocking.

*Eve* (1962), a French-Italian coproduction, had noir elements in the obsessive love of a disaffected writer (Baker) for a femme fatale (Jeanne Moreau). *The Servant* (1963) was Losey’s final noir, a highly wrought *Doppelgänger* tale in which the charming but ineffectual upper-class Tony (James Fox) is gradually manipulated by his manservant Barrett (Dirk Bogarde) into a position of utter dependency and virtual psychic annihilation. Visually inventive, *The Servant* was a profound exposure of the destructiveness of the British class system. See also FILM GRIS; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**LUMET, SIDNEY (1924– )**. In a long and distinguished career as a director, Sidney Lumet made a number of ambitious, often grueling **neo-noirs**, most of which are set in New York and deal with police corruption. He directed Sean Connery, anxious to escape being typecast as James Bond, in two noirs. The first was *The Anderson Tapes* (1971), where Connery plays an ex-con who has to cope with ubiquitous surveillance as he plans an ambitious robbery. The second was *The Offence* (1972), a **British film noir** in which Connery played veteran Detective-Sergeant Johnson in the throes of disillusioned middle age and marital

breakdown, who beats to death a suspected child molester (Ian Bannen) because he is forced to confront the deviant tendencies he has himself been suppressing. Throughout, Lumet expertly orchestrates a visual and aural correlative for Johnson's confusion and anguish.

Lumet also directed **Al Pacino** in two noirs. *Serpico* (1973) was based on the true story of a New York City cop who goes undercover to expose police corruption, and by embracing countercultural mores, becomes a lonely and alienated figure. In *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), a **cap/er/heist noir**, Pacino plays a **troubled veteran** turned robber to fund his transgendered partner's sex-change operation. In both, Lumet employs a grittily realistic style, framing familiar noir themes and scenarios within a wider commentary on social change.

The long and complex *Prince of the City* (1981) attempted to treat police officers' lives in a more rounded way, exploring the pressures that lead to corruption, whereas *Q & A* (1990), starring **Nick Nolte** as the loathsome Lieutenant Mike Brennen, prepared to stoop to any lengths, takes corruption as a given. Lumet wrote and directed *Night Falls on Manhattan* (1996) about an idealistic district attorney (Andy Garcia) who finds out that the prosecution case that made his name was based on corrupt police evidence.

Lumet's other noirs are *Power* (1986), *A Stranger Among Us* (1992), *Guilty as Sin* (1993), *Gloria* (1999), and *Before the Devil Knows You're Dead* (2007). See also CORRUPT/ROGUE COP.

**LUPINO, IDA (1918–1995).** Ida Lupino made a significant contribution to film noir as an actress, director, writer, and producer. Born into a London theatrical family, Lupino went to Hollywood in 1933 and secured a contract with Warner Bros. She had strong roles in *They Drive by Night* (1940) and *Out of the Fog* (1941), but especially in the film that really established her reputation, *High Sierra* (1941). In each she portrayed tough, knowing characters who are resourceful but also vulnerable, a role she again played in *The Man I Love* (1947) and *Road House* (1948), both of which used her talent as a singer. Lupino became an American citizen in 1948, forming an independent company, Emerald Productions, the name changed to The Filmmakers in 1950 when **Malvin Wald** joined. The company's aim was to make low-cost but high-quality films in a realistic style that had unorthodox and provocative subject matter. In addition to hard-hitting social melodramas, such as her first film as director, *Not Wanted* (1949), Lupino directed

(and cowrote) the noir **hybrid** *The Bigamist* (1953) in which **Edmond O'Brien** plays a successful suburban businessman who turns out to have a double life.

In *The Bigamist*, the first film in which a woman director directed herself, Lupino played his **Los Angeles** mistress, an ordinary, unglamorous, working woman; Joan Fontaine played his wife in San Francisco. *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), based on a notorious real-life case, was also about the suburban male, the story of two ex-army buddies (O'Brien and Frank Lovejoy) getting away from their families for the first time since the war, who are terrorized by the psychotic ex-convict they pick up (William Talman). Lupino cowrote *Private Hell 36* (1954), but **Don Siegel** directed because her second husband, **Howard Duff**, thought it unmanly to take direction from his wife. Duff played one of two **corrupt cops**, typical Lupino males who are restless and insecure with a suppressed violence and who have something of the dangerous, irrational force that the femme fatale represented for male directors. Lupino played a characteristic role as an ambitious working-class woman, a nightclub singer. However, she could portray very different characters, as in **Nicholas Ray's** *On Dangerous Ground* (1952), where she was a blind woman whose disinterested love for her brother provides the psychotic cop (**Robert Ryan**) with hope for salvation. She starred opposite Ryan again in *Beware, My Lovely* (1952) as a teacher and war widow terrorized by the handyman (Ryan) who behaves violently during bouts of insanity of which he has no recollection. In **Fritz Lang's** *While the City Sleeps* (1956), she was one of the competitive group of careerist reporters investigating the "lipstick killer" whose actions help create the horror they purport to diagnose.

From the mid-1950s, Lupino moved into noir **television series**, directing, among others, episodes of *The Untouchables* (1959) and *The Fugitive* (1963).

Lupino's other noirs are *Ladies in Retirement* (1941), *Moontide* (1942), *Woman in Hiding* (1950), *Jennifer* (1953), *The Big Knife* (1955), *Women's Prison* (1955), and *Strange Intruder* (1956).

**LYNCH, DAVID (1946– )**. Writer-director David Lynch is a highly distinctive presence within American cinema. Lynch's **neo-noirs** have pronounced surreal elements, their bizarre, hallucinatory narratives intertwining dreams and reality where the ordinary coexists with the strange and nightmarish and where many of the characters have multiple,

fractured identities. Lynch's films often explore the seedy underside of small-town American life, as in *Blue Velvet* (1986), for which he received an Academy Award nomination for Best Director and which has become a cult classic. The investigations of innocent college student Jeffrey Beaumont (Kyle MacLachlan) into a severed ear he discovers lead him and his girlfriend (Laura Dern) into a nightmare world of perverse sexuality in which a lounge singer (Isabella Rossellini) is abused by a sociopathic criminal (Dennis Hopper).

Lynch's cult noir **television series** *Twin Peaks* (1990–91) and its film prequel *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (1992) also depicted a seething welter of corrupt passions beneath small-town respectability. MacLachlan plays a Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent investigating the death of popular high school student Laura Palmer (Sheryl Lee) who uncovers a series of disturbing secrets, including the incest that destroyed Laura's life. *Wild at Heart* (1990), which won the Palme d'Or at the 1990 Cannes Film Festival, is Lynch's **outlaw couple** film in which Sailor (Nicolas Cage) and Lula (Laura Dern) are on the run from the police and gangsters hired by Lula's vindictive mother (Diane Ladd). Like *Blue Velvet*, it shows Lynch's profound debt to classic noir, in this case **Nicholas Ray's** *They Live by Night* (1948).

The bizarre, surreal events that punctuate *Wild at Heart* become more central to *Lost Highway* (1997), a complex, baffling, circular narrative in which one character, Fred Madison (Bill Pullman), unsure whether he has murdered his wife (Patricia Arquette) for which he has been imprisoned, inexplicably changes into a completely different self, Pete Dayton (Balthazar Getty). This second self is caught up in another web of intrigue apparently organized by Mr. Eddy/Dick Laurent (Robert Loggia), another of Lynch's sociopathic **gangsters**, whose abused mistress is also played by Arquette. In the final scene, Pete, transformed back into Fred, is pursued by police along a nighttime highway that begins to turn into a dark vortex as he appears to be metamorphosing once again. It is therefore unclear whether the events are all a dream triggered, as in the famous Ambrose Bierce story "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," at the moment of death.

These doublings and metamorphoses also characterize *Mulholland Dr.* (2001), for which Lynch was Oscar-nominated as Best Director and won that award at the Cannes Film Festival. An aspiring actress, Betty Elms (Naomi Watts), another small-town innocent, meets and befriends a mysterious amnesiac stranger (Laura Elena Harring), whose

dark beauty makes her appear like a femme fatale and who assumes the name “Rita” when she sees a poster for *Gilda* (1946). Their passionate but tender affair is beautifully handled by Lynch in another baffling narrative where identities shift and transfer—Rita may be Betty’s fantasy self—and where all the events may have the surreal logic of dreams rather than reality. Thus, Lynch’s films draw from the body of classic noir but subject it to a radical and complex reworking that constantly challenges the viewer, refusing to offer easy or convenient explanations. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS; NEO-NOIR.

– M –

***M* (1931/1951).** Fritz Lang’s *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931) was the most influential of the German *Strassenfilm* (street film) and the first modern urban crime thriller that depicted the city as a dark labyrinth fraught with danger. Hans Beckert (Peter Lorre) is a pedophile who has murdered several young girls. The police pursuit is so intense and intrusive that the organized underworld mounts its own search, eventually catching Beckert and subjecting him to a “trial.” While a thrilling pursuit film and the first police procedural with a detailed presentation of organization and tactics (mirrored by the underworld), the profundity of Lang’s film lies in his presentation of Beckert as a man painfully aware of his condition: “I have to roam the streets and I always sense that someone is following me. It is me! And I shadow myself. . . . Sometimes I feel that I’m hunting myself down.” Unable to escape this hideous other that is subject to uncontrollable urges, Beckert is the archetypal divided self whom we first see gazing into a mirror, as if trying to transform himself into the monster conjured up by the newspaper headlines and the children’s rhyme and thereby understand his own identity. Lorre’s extraordinary and affecting performance, combined with the intense subjectivity of certain scenes where the action is shown from Beckert’s viewpoint, make *M* a deeply disturbing film in which the audience is invited to understand this figure rather than dismiss him as a loathsome pariah, suggesting that criminality and deviance are a potential within us all.

*M* was remade in 1951 by Joseph Losey, who had been approached by Lang’s producer, Seymour Nebenzahl. A new screenplay was prepared by Norman Reilly Raine and Leo Katcher with additional

dialogue by Waldo Salt, and the story was relocated to contemporary **Los Angeles**, set in the Bunker Hill area with the final “trial” in the labyrinthine Bradbury Building. Like Lang, Losey presents the protagonist Martin Harrow (David Wayne) sympathetically. Martin also gazes at his reflection as if unable to comprehend it. However, his sickness and perverted sexuality is made more explicit, a comment on what Losey saw was an alienating materialistic society that created its own outsiders. Although Wayne’s performance is compelling, Losey’s film lacked the power and weight of Lang’s and was not warmly received. However, it deserves to be rescued from the relative obscurity into which it has fallen.

**McCOY, HORACE (1897–1955).** An influential **hard-boiled** novelist, Horace McCoy was regarded by Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus as the first American **existentialist**, his fiction concentrating on the despairing individual as much as social themes. His most famous novel, *They Shoot Horses, Don’t They?* (1935), about the exploitation of Depression-era characters in dance marathons, was finally filmed as a **neo-noir** in 1969, though Sydney Pollack’s film waters down the nihilism and general hopelessness by emphasizing the motivations of the crooked dance organizers. McCoy’s novel *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* (1948) was filmed in 1950, adapted by Harry Brown, and starred James Cagney as ex-con Ralph Cotter, who, arriving in an obscure small town realizes that the police and politicians are corrupt and can be bribed and exploited. It is a brutal, cynical film, with Cotter displaying no redeeming features in his relentless rise to the top. *The Turning Point* (1952), adapted by Warren Duff from McCoy’s unpublished story, starred **Edmond O’Brien** as the head of a special committee fighting organized crime in a midwestern city. It prefigured the **city exposé** cycle, but the sadism and brutality displayed are pure McCoy. It was published posthumously as a novel, *Corruption City*, in 1958. There is one **French film noir** adapted from McCoy: *Un linceul n’a pas de poches* (*No Pockets in a Shroud*, 1974).

**MACDONALD, JOE (1906–1968).** An accomplished cinematographer, Joe MacDonald was adept at **expressionist** photography, as in *Shock* (1946) and *The Dark Corner* (1946), which uses deep shadows broken or distorted by intense shafts of light. He was equally competent in the more realistic **semidocumentary** style of *Call Northside 777* (1948),

*The Street with No Name* (1948), *Panic in the Streets* (1950), and *Fourteen Hours* (1951), which have extensive location shooting. MacDonald's two noirs with **Samuel Fuller**—*Pickup on South Street* (1953) and *House of Bamboo* (1955)—have innovative and striking compositions, full of visual dynamism, the latter in color. *Niagara* (1953) was also in color, where Macdonald's photography makes full use of the film's dramatic setting. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**MCGIVERN, WILLIAM P. (1918–1982).** An ex-police reporter turned crime writer, William Peter McGivern's fiction explores police corruption and the capacity of decent people to descend into amoral brutality, as exemplified in the *The Big Heat* (1953) adapted by **Sydney Boehm**, and *Shield for Murder* (1954), adapted by Richard Alan Simmons. *Rogue Cop* (1954), also adapted by Boehm, has a crooked detective (**Robert Taylor**) finally turning against the syndicate that pays him in order to avenge the death of his brother. McGivern himself adapted *Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955) in which an ex-cop (**Alan Ladd**), released from San Quentin after five years, wants to be revenged on the gangster who framed him for manslaughter (**Edward G. Robinson**). McGivern's 1957 novel was the basis for *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959), in which Ed Begley plays a renegade former cop using his insider knowledge to plan an apparently foolproof **heist**. McGivern's work was also adapted as a **French film noir**, *Un choix d'assassins* (*A Choice of Killers*, 1966), and as a **neo-noir**, *Night of the Juggler* (1980), in which a tough New York ex-cop relentlessly searches for his kidnapped daughter, held by a twisted psychopath who mistook her for the daughter of a wealthy businessman. *See also* CORRUPT/ROGUE COP.

**MCGRAW, CHARLES (1914–1980).** Charles McGraw's distinctive gravely voice and rugged appearance—the jutting jaw and penetrating gaze—enabled him to play tough guys on both sides of the law. Even in small supporting roles—a mobster in *T-Men* (1948) or **hit man** in *The Killers* (1946)—he had a compelling presence, most memorably as the sadistic and vicious **gangster's** henchman in *His Kind of Woman* (1951). His starring roles came in “B” features, including *Armored Car Robbery* (1950), where he played the steely, hard-bitten cop on the trail of a cruel, intelligent criminal (William Talman) determined to avenge the death of his partner. In *The Narrow Margin* (1952), also directed by Richard Fleischer, he played a tough detective



escorting a racketeer's widow (**Marie Windsor**), who is to appear as a star witness. A more vulnerable side emerged most strongly in *Roadblock* (1951), where he plays a cynical insurance agent who falls for a seductive woman. McGraw skillfully reveals his character's deep desire for companionship and love. McGraw continued to play minor roles in neo-noirs: *Chandler* (1971), *The Killer Inside Me* (1976), and *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977).

**MACMURRAY, FRED (1908–1991).** Fred MacMurray was a Paramount leading man who played mostly in light comedies and musicals, but he is best remembered for his role as Walter Neff in *Double Indemnity* (1944). Although he initially resisted the move from his customary genres, MacMurray proved able to portray, with great precision, a clever but weak figure, desperate to show that he “knows all the angles” and can outsmart his boss (**Edward G. Robinson**). In the process he becomes a helpless pawn in the schemes of the far stronger and more ruthless femme fatale (**Barbara Stanwyck**). In *Pushover* (1954) he played a similar character, an intelligent police detective with the same laconic one-liners but who also falls for a femme fatale (**Kim Novak**).

MacMurray's other noirs are *Singapore* (1947) and *Borderline* (1950).

**MACREADY, GEORGE (1899–1973).** George Macready was a descendant of the great 19th-century Shakespearean actor William Macready, and his clipped, cultivated voice and patrician bearing made him suitable for casting as a suave villain, as in his sinister *homme fatal* in **Joseph H. Lewis's Gothic** noir *My Name Is Julia Ross* (1945), or as the coldly manipulative right-hand man of the business tyro (Charles Laughton) in *The Big Clock* (1948). His most famous role was as Ballin Mundsén in *Gilda* (1946), an urbane, bisexual sadist who admits he only feels alive when he experiences hate.

Macready's other noirs are *The Missing Juror* (1944), *The Man Who Dared* (1946), *Alias Nick Beal* (1949), *Johnny Allegro* (1949), *Knock on Any Door* (1949), *A Lady without Passport* (1950), *Detective Story* (1951), and *A Kiss Before Dying* (1956).

McGraw's other noirs are *Brute Force* (1947), *The Gangster* (1947), *The Long Night* (1947), *Berlin Express* (1948), *Border Incident* (1949), *Side Street* (1950), *Loophole* (1954), and *In Cold Blood* (1967).

**MADSEN, MICHAEL (1958– )**. The tall, powerfully built Michael Madsen has been used extensively as villains in a plethora of **ne-noirs** where his saturnine appearance and gruff tones have created a succession of sinister, sadistic characterizations. After working in noir **television series** and appearing in some minor film roles, he attracted notice as a deranged killer in **John Dahl's** *Kill Me Again* (1989), but his big breakthrough came as the sadistic jewel thief Mr. Blonde in **Quentin Tarantino's** *Reservoir Dogs* (1992). The bravura scene in which he dances around a tied-down police officer—slicing him with a knife and splashing gasoline all over the terrified man—to the upbeat melody of Stealer's Wheel's "Stuck in the Middle with You" was memorably disturbing. Madsen was also well suited to playing **corrupt cops**, as in *Mulholland Falls* (1996), *L.A.P.D. to Protect and to Serve* (2001), and *Sin City* (2005). He worked for Tarantino again in the two-part martial arts noir **hybrid** *Kill Bill: Vol. 1* (2003) and *Kill Bill: Vol. 2* (2004), as the coldly evil Budd (aka "Sidewinder"). Madsen has appeared in many indifferent or straight-to-cable crime noirs and alternates starring roles in lesser films with supporting roles in more prestigious ones.

Madsen's other noirs are *Miami Vice* (TV, 1984), *Crime Story* (TV, 1986), *The Killing Time* (1987), *Fatal Instinct* (1991), *Beyond the Law* (1992), *Inside Edge* (1993), *Dead Connection* (1994), *The Getaway* (1994), *Man with a Gun* (1995), *Donnie Brasco* (1997), *Executive Target* (1997), *The Stray* (2000), *Outlaw* (2001), *Living and Dying* (2007), *Machine* (2007), *Break* (2008), *Hired Gun* (2009), and *The Big I Am* (GB 2010).

**MAINWARING, DANIEL (1902–1977)**. Daniel Mainwaring, who frequently used the pseudonym Geoffrey Homes, wrote several detective novels, including two adapted for the screen, *No Hands on the Clock* (1941) and *Crime by Night* (1944). Mainwaring's career as a screenwriter began with the screenplay for *They Made Me a Killer* (1946), a routine man-on-the-run thriller adapted from Owen Franes's story. He adapted his own thriller, *Build My Gallows High* (1946), for the seminal noir *Out of the Past* (1947), and his own novel for **Joseph Losey's** *The Lawless* (1950), which exposes the racist prejudices of small-town America. Mainwaring's left-wing views caused him to be placed on the "gray list," which damaged his career. However, he wrote the screenplays for *The Big Steal* (1949), *Baby Face Nelson* (1957), and the noir

**hybrid**, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), all directed by **Don Siegel**. *Invasion* was the strongest, capturing the fears and paranoia that he had also explored in the story that was the basis for **Ida Lupino's** *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), where he remained uncredited. Mainwaring cowrote *The Phenix City Story* (1955), a **city exposé** film, directed by **Phil Karlson**.

Mainwaring's other noirs are *Roadblock* (1951), *This Woman Is Dangerous* (1952), and *A Bullet for Joey* (1955). See also BLACKLIST; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**MALONE, DOROTHY (1925–)**. Dark, sensuous, and alluring, Dorothy Malone tended to be poorly served by her films noir in which she had underwritten or supporting roles: a bookshop assistant in *The Big Sleep* (1946), the wife of the district attorney (**Broderick Crawford**) in *Convicted* (1950), and a nurse in *The Killer That Stalked New York* (1951). She played the supportive wife to her falsely accused husband (**Barry Sullivan**) in *Loophole* (1954), and in *Pushover* (1954) and *Private Hell 36* (1954) she was the foil to the femme fatales **Kim Novak** and **Ida Lupino**, respectively. She had a more substantial role in her last noir, *The Fast and the Furious* (1955), taken hostage by a desperate man-on-the-run played by **John Ireland**, who codirected. Malone also appeared in two **neo-noirs**: *Winter Kills* (1979) and *Basic Instinct* (1992). See also WOMEN.

**THE MALTESE FALCON (1941)**. **John Huston** adapted and directed the 1941 version of *The Maltese Falcon*, but it was the third version made by Warner Bros., which had purchased the rights to **Dashiell Hammett's** story only six months after it had been published in 1930. The first version, released in 1931 and directed by Roy Del Ruth, follows Hammett quite closely, retaining much of the original dialogue, but it lacks the wit and irony of the original. Sam Spade, in Ricardo Cortez's broad interpretation, is more accomplished lothario than hard-bitten **private eye**. The second adaptation, *Satan Met a Lady* (1936) directed by William Dieterle, was a light comedy-mystery, following the success of the "Thin Man" series also based on Hammett. Huston's version returned to the original and, in addition to retaining as much of the dialogue as possible, attempted to convey Hammett's acerbic sense of the predatory and competitive nature of American society and the gullibility of the avaricious who pursue phantoms, "the stuff that dreams are made

of.” The lighting by Arthur Edson, who had shot the 1931 version, was fairly conventional, but Huston’s innovations came through his use of frequent low-angles and intense close-ups, coupled with shock cuts to unsettle the viewer. The compositions are deliberately cramped and unbalanced, lending an oppressive claustrophobia to the rather anonymous interiors. Huston also elicits subtle and inventive performances from his cast. **Humphrey Bogart’s** Spade is suitably hard-bitten and cynical, equipped with a mordant wit but also vulnerable. He is unsettled by his love for the lying femme fatale Miss Wonderly/Brigid O’Shaughnessy (Mary Astor) that compromises his professional integrity—he needs to do something about the death of his partner Miles Archer—and that threatens to make him the “sap” he so despises. Instead of the novel’s ending in which Spade returns to his affair with Archer’s amoral wife, the film ends with a tormented Spade reluctantly arranging for Brigid to be arrested. Astor plays the schemer with a brittle, somewhat theatrical refinement, constantly moving from one persona to another, conscious that Spade knows she is putting on an act. **Sydney Greenstreet’s** elegant, urbane, but ruthless Kasper Gutman, **Peter Lorre’s** over-refined, effeminate, and decadent Levantine Joel Cairo, and **Elisha Cook Jr.’s** neurotic, abused gungel Wilmer give excellent support to the principals and embody the novel’s sense of perverse sexuality.

On its release in 1941, reviewers commented on this adaptation’s toughness and cynicism, its crisply economical scenes and black humor, which they saw as a decisive departure from the conventional Warner Bros. crime thriller. Although the war delayed the impact of Huston’s version, it had a major influence on the main film noir cycle. *See also* LANGUAGE; PRECURSORS; VISUAL STYLE.

**MALTZ, ALBERT (1908–1985).** Author and screenwriter Albert Maltz was imprisoned as one of the “Hollywood Ten,” another victim of **blacklisting** that effectively ended the powerful **left-wing cycle** of film noir. Maltz made his reputation as a playwright working for the left-wing theatrical companies Theatre Union and Group Theatre in the 1930s, and he joined the Communist Party in 1935. He started working as a screenwriter in 1941 and cowrote (with **W. R. Burnett**) the screenplay for *This Gun for Hire* (1942), which depicted the **hit man** as a sympathetic social outsider. Maltz cowrote the screenplay for **Fritz Lang’s** spy noir *Cloak and Dagger* (1946) and collaborated, uncredited, on *The Red House* (1947), a **country noir** starring

**Edward G. Robinson.** He was nominated, with **Malvin Wald**, for the Writers Guild of America Award for Best Written American Drama for *The Naked City* (1948).

**MANN, ANTHONY (1906–1967).** Mann was the most important indigenous American director of film noir beginning with his first film, *Dr. Broadway* (1942), a Runyonesque crime film that had noir elements. *The Great Flamarion* (1945) was a distinctive early noir in which a vaudeville marksman (Eric Von Stroheim) narrates, in flashback, the tale of his destruction by a three-timing femme fatale. Mann worked on “B” features where time and money were at a premium: *Strange Impersonation* (1946), *Desperate* (1947), and *Railroaded* (1947) all betrayed their limited resources. However, he was fortunate in being able to collaborate with a talented screenwriter, **John C. Higgins**, and an innovative and accomplished cinematographer, **John Alton**, on four films: *T-Men* (1948), *Raw Deal* (1948), *He Walked by Night* (1949), and *Border Incident* (1949). Their distinctiveness was to combine **expressionist** lighting with **semidocumentary** realism in characterization, setting, and in extensive location shooting. *T-Men* and *Border Incident* were compelling tales of undercover agents, capturing the compromises and harsh dangers inherent in their situation and where the violence is often brutal and shocking. In *T-Men* the two agents who infiltrate the notorious Vantucci gang in Detroit form a strong and protective bond that is cruelly shattered when O’Brien (**Dennis O’Keefe**) has to watch helplessly as Genaro (Alfred Ryder) is shot by the vicious Moxie (**Charles McGraw**) rather than give away their mission.

In *He Walked by Night* Mann replaced Alfred Werker and remained uncredited, but the film has Mann’s hallmark paranoia and a bravura final chase sequence in **Los Angeles**’s cavernous storm drains. *Raw Deal* was a moving tale of doomed love unusually narrated by a **woman** (**Claire Trevor**). For *Reign of Terror* (1949), set during the French Revolution, Mann, aided again by Alton, created a baroque masterpiece in which each frame is composed unconventionally, claustrophobic close-ups are juxtaposed with extreme high or low angles, the editing jagged and disorientating. These techniques evoke a nightmare world whose violence is even more brutal and grotesque than in Mann’s earlier films, providing producer **Walter Wanger** with a mordant allegory for

the paranoia, denunciations, and betrayals he felt were associated with the anti-Communist investigations and the **blacklist**.

*Side Street* (1950), made on a higher budget for MGM, attempted to capitalize on the success of **Nicholas Ray**'s *They Live by Night*, released five months earlier, using the same star pairing of Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell. However, Mann's film lacks Ray's romanticism, and the opening voice-over presents this tale as a semidocumentary of New York life. Mann, characteristically, concentrates on the existentialist hopelessness of individuals trapped in a hostile and alienating environment. Like the protagonists of *Desperate* and *Railroaded*, Joe Norson (Granger) is the archetypal "little man," the victim of forces beyond his control in Mann's dark, oppressive noir world.

The brutality and **existentialism** of Mann's noirs anticipate his later Westerns—including *Winchester '73* (1950), *Bend of the River* (1952), *The Naked Spur* (1953), and *The Tin Star* (1957)—all of which have strong noir elements in themes, characterization, and visual style and represent his most accomplished work. Mann's last film, *A Dandy in Aspic* (1968), was a **neo-noir hybrid**, a dark political thriller starring Laurence Harvey as a double agent. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**MANN, MICHAEL (1943–)**. Producer-director Michael Mann has made one of the most significant contributions to the development of American **neo-noir** stretching over 25 years, combining an American predilection for fast-paced action and orchestrated violence with a European **existentialism**. Mann is involved in every aspect of filmmaking and shows a meticulous attention to detail. Although he films on location where possible, there is a recognizable Mann visual style that is highly orchestrated with a glossy high-tech sheen, and his noirs repeatedly focus on consummate professionals on either side of the law. *Thief* (1981) starred James Caan as Frank, the leader of a small band of jewel thieves, whose dream of complete professional self-sufficiency is compromised by his desire for family life that leads to his own destruction. The noir **hybrid** *Manhunter* (1986), famous for the first screen appearance of Hannibal Lecter (played here by Brian Cox), centers on another top professional, retired Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent Will Graham (William Petersen), whose uncanny ability to apprehend serial killers is based on learning to think as they do, a process that nearly destroys him and his family.

Mann's central occupation during the 1980s was as the executive producer of the hugely successful noir **television series**: *Miami Vice* (1984–89)—which he insisted had a “big screen” look in its cinematography, design, pacing, and sense of scale—and *Crime Story* (1986–88). *L.A. Takedown* (1989), a television movie, finally metamorphosed into *Heat* (1995), where Mann had the budget to realize fully his epic confrontation between two supreme professionals, an obsessive cop (**Al Pacino**) and a master criminal (**Robert De Niro**). *Collateral* (2004) depicted another self-sufficient professional, Vincent (Tom Cruise), a top **hit man** who flies in to **Los Angeles** to perform multiple hits in a single night. *Miami Vice* (2006), also shot on high-definition video, was Mann's long-delayed feature-film version of his television series, displaying his trademark fast-cutting, extended chases, and complex shoot-outs. *Miami Vice* continued Mann's exploration of the instabilities of masculine identity as the two narcotics cops, Sonny Crockett (Colin Farrell) and Ricardo Tubbs (Jamie Foxx), go undercover and start to lose their true selves. *Public Enemies* (2009) is a noir **hybrid**, a period film about the notorious gangster John Dillinger (Johnny Depp), another of Mann's charismatic, dedicated, but doomed criminals, and an epic confrontation with his professional nemesis, FBI agent Melvin Purvis (Christian Bale). *See also* MEN; VISUAL STYLE.

**MASON, JAMES (1909–1984).** Dark and handsome, with a distinctive, deep, purring voice, James Mason was the most popular male star in British cinema in the 1940s before moving to Hollywood in 1947. His first **British film noir** was *I Met a Murderer* (1939), a low-budget thriller in which he was both star and coproducer. He was a **troubled veteran** (from the Spanish Civil War) in *The Night Has Eyes* (U.S. title *Terror House*, 1942), before appearing in three **Gothic** noirs: *The Man in Grey* (1943), *Fanny by Gaslight* (U.S. title *Man of Evil*, 1944), and *The Seventh Veil* (1945) as a ruthless and sadistic *homme fatal*. His brooding, troubled nature suggested a soul in torment, the essence of his role in *The Upturned Glass* (1947). His portrayal of Johnny McQueen, an idealistic Irish Republican Army activist in **Carol Reed's** *Odd Man Out* (1947), was his finest performance. Wounded in a bungled raid, Johnny tries to evade capture as the police close in, his helpless vulnerability in a now alien **city** making his *via dolorosa* genuinely tragic. Mason returned to Great Britain to star in another Reed film, *The Man Between* (1953), playing Ivo Kern, a former lawyer now black-market

agent who eventually sacrifices himself to save the innocent Susanne (Claire Bloom) with whom he has fallen in love. In the **neo-noir** *The Deadly Affair* (1966), based on a John Le Carré novel, Mason gave a similarly compelling performance as a secret agent who has become disillusioned with Cold War betrayals and evasions.

Mason's first two American noirs were directed by Max Ophüls. In *Caught* (1949), Mason played the one-dimensional role of the understanding doctor set against the overweening and cruel millionaire (**Robert Ryan**). Mason had a more substantial part in *The Reckless Moment* (1949) as a blackmailer who falls in love with the heroine Lucia Harper (**Joan Bennett**). He protects Lucia and her daughter from his vicious boss at the cost of his own life. In *One Way Street* (1950), Mason was a doctor who goes on the run after double-crossing a **gangster (Dan Duryea)**, but in *Cry Terror* (1958) he was as an innocent man, trapped with his wife in their home by a psychotic former wartime comrade (Rod Steiger).

**MATÉ, RUDOLPH (1898–1964).** The Polish-born cinematographer-director Rudolph Maté worked in Germany in the 1920s (with **Fritz Lang** among others), establishing a reputation as a brilliant and inventive cameraman before moving to Hollywood in 1935. Maté was the cinematographer on *Gilda* (1946) and completed some uncredited photography for *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948), but his main contribution to noir was as a director. *The Dark Past* (1948) was an uneven film but contained some striking dream sequences that explain the psychosis of the killer (William Holden). *Union Station* (1950), *Forbidden* (1953), and *Second Chance* (1953), RKO's first 3-D release, were competent noir thrillers with extended chase sequences. Maté's masterpiece was *D.O.A.* (1950) in which he preserves the pace and tension of an action thriller while emphasizing the **existential** anguish of its victim-hero (**Edmond O'Brien**). *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL; FREUDIANISM.

**MATURE, VICTOR (1913–1999).** Victor Mature's florid, slightly exotic good looks were used by Josef von Sternberg as the sinister, manipulative Dr. Omar in *The Shanghai Gesture* (1941). In another early noir, *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941), Mature played an egotistical promoter who becomes incriminated in a murder he did not commit by the cynical manipulations of his self-appointed adversary Lieutenant Cornell (**Laird Cregar**). *Kiss of Death* (1947) contained his best role, in which



his characteristic long-suffering look, as if haunted by aspirations that he cannot really acknowledge, let alone achieve, made Mature perfect as a sympathetic ex-con having to support his family by becoming the police informant used to trap the psychotic killer (**Richard Widmark**). In *Cry of the City* (1948), he was again highly effective as detective Lieutenant Candella, a saturnine loner obsessed by his *Doppelgänger*, the charismatic villain Martin Rome (**Richard Conte**), brought up in the same neighborhood, whom he admires, envies, and hates. Mature played a small-time racketeer in *Gambling House* (1951) and a rich businessman ashamed of not having fought in World War II in *Violent Saturday* (1955), both characteristically conflicted characters.

**MAZURKI, MIKE (1907–1990)**. Born in what is now Ukraine, Mike Mazurki's huge bulk of solid muscle (he had been an accomplished soccer player and wrestler) and battered face that seemed to have been crudely hacked out of granite made him one of the most distinctive of noir's pantheon of heavies. Belying his real-life cultivation and intelligence, he specialized in playing lowbrow heavies, as in *New York Confidential* (1955), where he is one of the "Syndicate's" thugs. His most memorable role came early, in the **Raymond Chandler** adaptation *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), as Moose Malloy, just out of jail and enlisting Marlowe's help to find his beloved Velma. His performance combined menace with a poignant wistfulness. He was also highly effective as a wrestler, "The Strangler," in **Jules Dassin's** *Night and the City* (GB 1950).

Mazurki's other noirs are *The Shanghai Gesture* (1941), *Nightmare Alley* (1947), *I Walk Alone* (1948), *Abandoned* (1949), *Dark City* (1950), *New Orleans Uncensored* (1955), and *Man in the Vault* (1956).

**MELVILLE, JEAN-PIERRE (1917–1973)**. Director Jean-Pierre Grumbach renamed himself after the novelist Herman Melville as an expression of his deep affection for American culture. But although Melville made a number of thrillers based on American models, he always insisted: "I make gangster films inspired by the gangster novels, but I don't make American films, even though I like the American *films noir* better than anything." Although Melville's noirs are indebted to American sources, they remain intensely and unmistakably French. Melville had an exceptional degree of control over his films, as pro-

ducer, director, scriptwriter, set designer, actor, and editor, even owning his own studio, and was fanatical about small details. His first film noir *Quand tu liras cette lettre* (*When You Read This Letter*, 1953), the story of a charismatic gigolo and criminal, was more melodramatic than his later work.

*Bob le flambeur* (*Bob the Gambler*, 1956), although influenced by *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), evoked a very French world through Melville's idiomatic script (with dialogue by Auguste Le Breton, a *Série Noire* author) and his extensive location shooting in Montmartre and Pigalle. Bob (Roger Duchesne), an aging criminal, down on his luck, tries to rob a casino but is double-crossed, thus invoking Melville's key themes of loyalty and betrayal. This concern has its origins in the French wartime resistance movement, a subject Melville tackled directly in the compelling thriller *L'Armée des ombres* (*The Army of Shadows*, 1969). *Le Doulos* (*The Finger Man*, 1963) and *Le Deuxième souffle* (*The Second Breath*, 1966), both adapted from *Série Noire* novels, were more abstract distillations of American noir stylistically (the **expressionist** lighting and ubiquitous belted trench coats) and thematically. Both concern the nature of honor among thieves, Melville's abiding preoccupation.

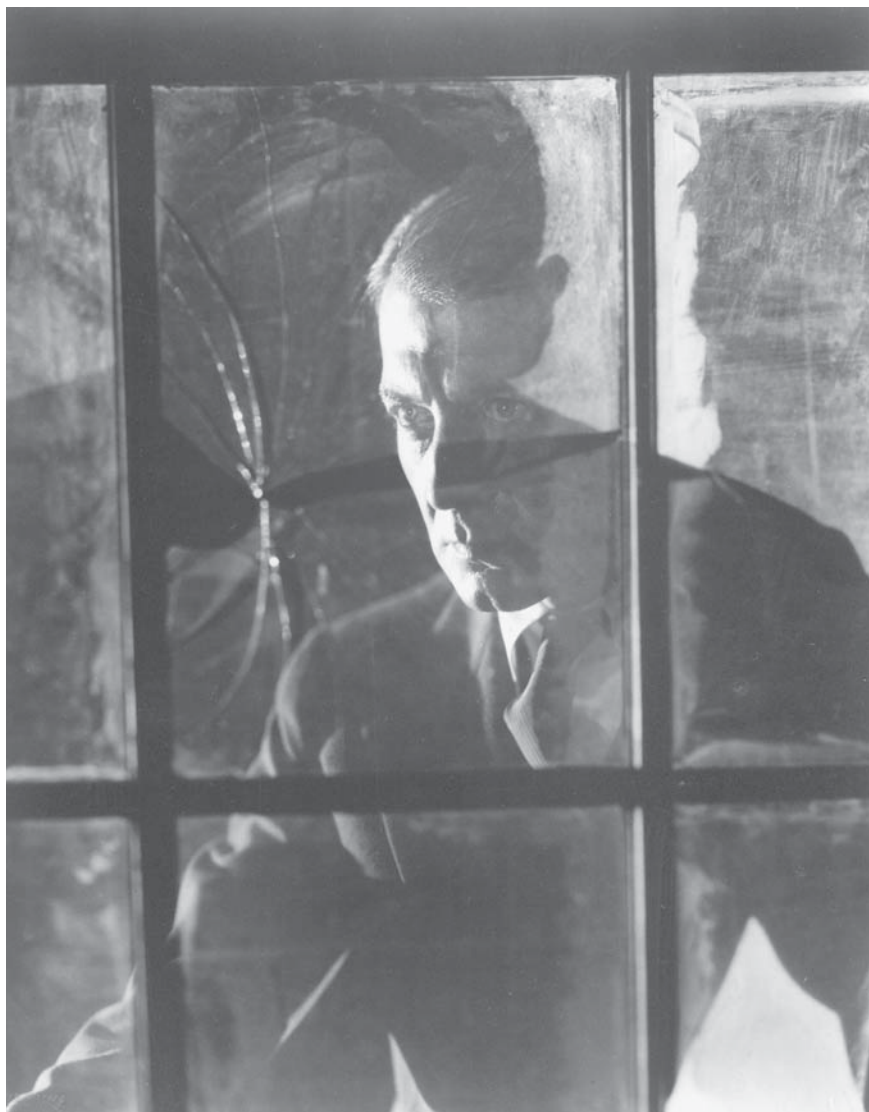
Melville's later noirs were even more consciously stylized—creating a cold, harsh, modernist world of muted colors: washed-out grays, blues, and greens—and were even more deeply **existential**. *Le Samouraï* (1967), *Le Cercle rouge* (*The Red Circle*, 1970), and *Un flic* (*Dirty Money*, 1972) all starred **Alain Delon** as a **hit man**, criminal, and cop respectively. In each, Melville uses Delon's beauty and minimalist performance style to evoke a mythically pure masculinity that is inevitably compromised. *Un flic*, Melville's final film, has two complicated 20-minute silent robberies, making it one of the most accomplished **cap/er/heist** noirs.

Melville influenced later American directors, notably Walter Hill (*The Driver*, 1978), **Quentin Tarantino** (*Reservoir Dogs*, 1992), the **Coen Brothers** (*Miller's Crossing*, 1990), and Jim Jarmusch (*Ghost Dog, the Way of the Samurai*, 1999). Neil Jordan **remade** *Bob le flambeur* as *The Good Thief* (2002).

Melville's other noirs are *Deux hommes dans Manhattan* (*Two Men in Manhattan*, 1959) and *L'Ainé des Ferchaux* (*Magnet of Doom*, 1963). See also FRENCH FILM NOIR.

**MEMENTO (2000).** *Memento*, an extreme version of the **amnesiac films noir**, is the story of Leonard Shelby (Guy Pearce), an insurance investigator who suffers from a form of amnesia that makes him incapable of making new memories lasting longer than 15 minutes. He suffers from a head injury apparently inflicted when he tried to rescue his wife from being raped and murdered. Leonard is determined to take revenge on his wife's killer, and, to compensate for his disability, takes Polaroid snapshots of places and people he encounters on which he writes captions to retain essential information and places a series of notes and tattoos on his body to preserve other "facts" he finds out. In this way, director **Christopher Nolan**, who wrote the screenplay from his brother Jonathan's short story "Memento Mori," was keen to "freshen up" the amnesiac paradigm. And, instead of a conventional flashback structure in which events are gradually explained and their motivation revealed, *Memento* unfolds in a complex reversal, where each scene depicts events that immediately precede the action we have just witnessed. However, *Memento* is not a straight reversal but unfolds like a Möbius strip, punctuated with flashbacks, direct or indirect repetitions of the same events, and interspersed with black-and-white sequences that proceed chronologically, apparently providing a more objective depiction of Shelby's situation. Gradually, as the pace of the intercutting between the two modes increases, the black-and-white sequences are also revealed as subjective.

In the process, the motivations of Teddy (Joe Pantoliano), the undercover policeman who helps Leonard, and the woman Natalie (Carrie-Anne Moss) who befriends him, become more ambiguous. The character and motivations of Leonard himself, initially an empathetic wronged character, also become more clouded, keeping viewers in the state of heightened attention that Nolan felt was essential to understand *Memento*'s ambiguities and the process of memory itself. In a riveting performance, Pearce manages the difficult feat of being, at the same time, bewildered and cunning, living in a perpetual present but haunted by the fear that he may be capable of murder, which his amnesia has allowed him to forget. *Memento*'s backward spiraling narrative and **existential** confusion culminates in a chilling final scene that, instead of resolving the issues, provokes a more profound uncertainty, creating the possibility that what we have witnessed, as in *Vertigo* (1958) or *Point Blank* (1967), may be a dream.



The noir precursor: *Underworld* (1927), directed by Josef von Sternberg. Shown: Clive Brook. Courtesy of Photofest.



The first “true” film noir: *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), directed by Boris Ingster. Shown: Charles Waldron. Courtesy of Photofest.



The iconic private-eye noir: *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), directed by Edward Dmytryk. Shown: Dick Powell (as Philip Marlowe). Courtesy of Photofest.

THE COLDEST  
KILLER  
A WOMAN  
EVER LOVED



RKO  
PRESENTS

Lawrence Claire Walter  
TIERNEY · TREVOR · SLEZAK

IN  
*"Born to Kill"*

WITH  
PHILLIP TERRY · AUDREY LONG

Produced by HERMAN SCHLOM

Directed by ROBERT WISE

Screen Play by EVE GREENE  
and RICHARD MACAULAY

RKO  
RADIO  
PRESENTS

*Born to Kill* (1947), directed by Robert Wise. Shown: One-sheet poster featuring Lawrence Tierney, Claire Trevor, Walter Slezak. Courtesy of Photofest.



Noir realism: *Criss Cross* (1949), directed by Robert Siodmak. Shown: Burt Lancaster's character, returning home to Bunker Hill, Los Angeles. Courtesy of Photofest.





Japanese film noir: *Nora inu*, or *Stray Dog* (1949, Japan), directed by Akira Kurosawa. Shown: Toshirô Mifune (left, as Detective Murakami), Takashi Shimura (right, as Detective Sato). Courtesy of Photofest.



French film noir: *Du rififi chez les homes*, or *Rififi* (1955, France), directed by Jules Dassin. Shown (left to right): Robert Manuel, Jean Servais (standing), Jules Dassin (background, billed as Perlo Vita), and Carl Möhner.



The birth of neo-noir: *Body Heat* (1981), directed by Lawrence Kasdan. Shown from left: William Hurt, Kathleen Turner. Courtesy of Photofest.

*Memento*'s radical confusion of subjective and objective states where it is impossible to separate facts from lies or self-deluding fantasies meant that it straddled the uncertain divide between generic fiction (a revenge drama) and the radical ambiguities associated with European art-house cinema. Produced as a very modestly budgeted independent **neo-noir**, its rapid success allowed it to "cross over" onto the mainstream circuit, achieving widespread distribution and exhibition and quickly attaining cult status, the object of continued reinterpretation. See also NARRATIVE PATTERNS.

**MEN.** The unconventional representation of masculinity is one of film noir's most distinctive features. Instead of the heroic, successful, and self-confident males that are the norm of Hollywood cinema, film noir, profoundly influenced by **existentialism** and **Freudianism**, characteristically depicts weak, confused, and ineffectual males, often damaged men who suffer from a range of psychological neuroses and are unable to resolve the problems that they face. Existentialist ideas produced the "nonheroic hero" or antihero who acts in a fatalistic, absurdist world lacking the ethical framework that sustains the traditional hero, one governed by chance and contingency, where actions appear to be meaningless and pointless. *D.O.A.* (1950) was a prime example. The popularization of Freudian ideas and terminology during World War II encouraged noir filmmakers to depict disturbed mental states, where repressed, frequently murderous desires surface and where sexuality is often morbid, violent, and sadistic, as in *Phantom Lady* (1944). The noir male is therefore frequently an alienated, ambivalent, and divided figure, unsure of his own identity. Noir males are characteristically loners, without a durable home life or, if they have one, its stability and security is under threat, as in *Pitfall* (1948) or *The Steel Trap* (1952).

The nearest film noir gets to a conventional masculine hero is the government law enforcer, often operating, as in *The Undercover Man* (1949), in a clandestine way. However, the decent policemen or tireless agents are outnumbered by the legion of **corrupt cops**, from **Robert Taylor** in *The Bribe* (1949) through to **Orson Welles** in *Touch of Evil* (1958). The **private eye**, walking noir's "mean streets," is honorable and incorruptible if not stridently heroic, but he is often enveloped in a mystery whose darkness exceeds his comprehension, as in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944). More typical is the male victim, the passive or emasculated man either falsely accused of a crime he did not commit, as in

*Crack-Up* (1946) or *Nightfall* (1957), or innocently caught up in a network of crime, as in *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948). Most frequently, he is the dupe of the stronger and more intelligent femme fatale, as in *Double Indemnity* (1944) or *Scarlet Street* (1945). Above all, the noir male is a man who cannot escape his past, either the **troubled veteran** who fails to cope with the new demands of peacetime or who harbors a dark secret, or someone who attempts to live an ordinary decent life—*The Killers* (1946) or *Out of the Past* (1947)—until ambushed by figures from his previous existence.

Film noir also offers a range of corrupt or evil males, such as the *homme fatal* sadistically exercising his sexual power in a number of **Gothic** noirs, for example, *Gaslight* (1944) or its contemporary equivalent, *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (1947). Noir is littered with psychopaths who enjoy inflicting pain, beginning with **Richard Widmark's** memorable Tommy Udo in *Kiss of Death* (1947) or James Cagney's unstable gangster in *White Heat* (1948), who eventually blows himself up. Grotesques, hulking bruisers, vicious sidekicks, and sociopaths are frequently depicted, including **Mike Mazurki's** Moose Molloy in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944).

These characteristic representations of masculinity in film noir are taken to greater extremes in **neo-noir**. The private eye becomes a bemused, vulnerable, and inept investigator, lost and alienated in a world he no longer understands and is therefore powerless to master, as in *Night Moves* (1975). Lone investigators are overwhelmed by political conspiracies in a world dominated by surveillance—*The Parallax View* (1974). The corrupt cop has become the norm rather than the aberration in noirs that seem to abandon the hope of justice or civil order, as in *Training Day* (2001). The male victim suffers more extreme abjection, as in Steven Soderberg's *Underneath* (1995), a remake of *Criss Cross* (1949) that abandons the romanticism of the original, emphasizing just deceit and betrayal. The male victim still abounds in neo-noir (*Body Heat*, 1981) as the femme fatale has become more ruthless and more successful. The troubled veteran has become psychotic as in *Taxi Driver* (1976), part of a more widespread focus on extreme mental disturbance, as in the number of neo-noirs adapted from **Jim Thompson**, from *The Killer Inside Me* (1976) through to *This World, Then the Fireworks* (1997). Neo-noir also abounds with *homme fatals* (*Jagged Edge*, 1985) and sociopathic **hit men** (*No Country for Old Men*, 2007). One key neo-noir character is the serial killer, the ultimate

transgressor, a mythical figure composed of Gothic elements and the contemporary psychopath, as in *Se7en* (1995). See also ANDREWS, DANA; BASEHART, RICHARD; BOGART, HUMPHREY; COOK, ELISHA, JR.; COTTEN, JOSEPH; CREGAR, LAIRD; DE NIRO, ROBERT; DELON, ALAIN; DOUGLAS, KIRK; DOUGLAS, MICHAEL; DURYEA, DAN; EASTWOOD, CLINT; FORD, GLENN; GABIN, JEAN; HACKMAN, GENE; HAYDEN, STERLING; HEFLIN, VAN; HODIAK, JOHN; LADD, ALAN; MCGRAW, CHARLES; MACMURRAY, FRED; MACREADY, GEORGE; MADSEN, MICHAEL; MASON, JAMES; MATURE, VICTOR; MILLAND, RAY; MITCHUM, ROBERT; MONTGOMERY, ROBERT; NICHOLSON, JACK; NOLTE, NICK; O'BRIEN, EDMOND; O'KEEFE, DENNIS; PACINO, AL; PALANCE, JACK; PAYNE, JOHN; PORTMAN, ERIC; POWELL, DICK; RAFT, GEORGE; ROBINSON, EDWARD G.; ROURKE, MICKEY; RYAN, ROBERT; SULLIVAN, BARRY; TIERNEY, LAWRENCE; WASHINGTON, DENZEL; WILDE, CORNEL; WOMEN.

**MEXICAN FILM NOIR.** Mexican film noir began with *La mujer del puerto* (*The Woman of the Port*, 1934) in which Rosario (Andrea Palma), an innocent young country **woman**, leaves her hometown after her faithless fiancé kills her father for the port of Veracruz, where she lives in the red-light district as a prostitute, a *mujer manchada* or “stained woman.” Rosario meets a sailor, Alberto (Domingo Soler), who rescues her from an attack on the docks and they make love, only to discover that they are siblings. *La mujer* shows the deep influence of **expressionism** and the *Strassenfilm* (**street film**) in its subject matter and **visual style**, the dark shadows intensifying as the tragedy deepens. It was a highly influential film, **remade** four times, that inaugurated a new genre, the *cabaretera* (brothel) film in which an innocent woman moves to the **city** and becomes a prostitute or nightclub singer/hostess enmeshed in an underworld milieu. The genre developed rapidly during and after World War II as in *Doña Bárbara* (1943), *La mujer sin alma* (*Woman without a Soul*, 1944), *Crepúsculo* (*Twilight*, 1945), *La devoradora* (*The Man Eater*, 1946), *Salón México* (1949)—remade in 1996—and *Victimas del pecado* (*Victims of Sin*, 1951), which all feature the femme fatale or *la devoradora*—the devouring woman. The most famous and successful was *Aventurera* (*The Adventuress*, 1950) starring the Cuban singer-actress Ninón Sevilla. Sevilla plays an innocent who

leaves for “sin city,” Ciudad Juarez, after her father commits suicide, where she is drugged by a nightclub owner and madame (Palma) and becomes a cabaret dancer.

Luis Buñuel, who made over 20 films in Mexico after fleeing from Spain in 1946, contributed to this genre through *Susana (The Devil and the Flesh)*, (1950) and, in the same year, directed *Los olvidados (The Forgotten Ones, aka The Young and the Damned)*, a dark and violent picture about the lives of several destitute children in the slums of Mexico City. In *El bruto (The Brute)*, (1953), Buñuel depicted another urban predator, a young man who enforces eviction, but the story was one of redemption, as was Buñuel’s *Ensayo de un crimen (The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz)*, (1955), which focused on a would-be serial killer. Other noirs in this period include *Distinto amanecer (A Different Dawn)*, (1943), the story of an idealistic labor leader pursued by the gunmen of a corrupt state governor because of the compromising evidence he possesses, and *El suavecito* (1950), a **boxing noir** that has similarities to *The Set-Up* (1949).

The Mexican film industry experienced a sharp decline after 1955, and there has not been a sustained production cycle of **neo-noirs**, but the occasional example. Alfredo Gurrola’s *Llámenme Mike* (1979) was a blackly comic neo-noir in which a narcotics cop, an avid reader of **Mickey Spillane**, is desperate to become Mike Hammer. Psychologically damaged after a beating, he wages a one-man war against drug barons. Gurrola’s *Días de combate (Days of Combat)*, (1982) was less playful, depicting an engineer turned **private eye** trying to hunt down a notorious strangler with whom he establishes a strange rapport. His *Cosa fácil (Easy Thing)*, (1982) was a private eye thriller, but one in which the detective becomes personally obsessed by his investigations. In all three instances, Gurrola explores the ills of Mexican society, its violence, corruption, and injustice. *Los albañiles (The Bricklayers)*, (1976) was a police procedural in which the investigation of the murder of a night watchman on a construction site reveals the financial and moral corruption rife in Mexican society at that time.

Arturo Ripstein remade *La mujer del puerto* in 1991 before remaking *The Honeymoon Killers* (1970) as *Profundo carmesi (Deep Crimson)*, (1996), the story of the “Lonely Hearts Killers,” a famous pair of murderers who preyed on lonely American widows. Both noirs present their shocking tales with cool detachment. Alex Cox’s *El patrullero (Highway Patrolman)*, (1992) was a thoughtful depiction of the **corrupt**

**cop**, portraying a young cadet's first assignment on the northern border where his integrity is slowly, insidiously undermined. *Soba* (*Beaten*, 2004), shot in black-and-white, its roots firmly in the *cabaretera* tradition but filtered through *Taxi Driver* (1976), portrays a young girl, Justina, fleeing from home, who is abused by the police before she is "rescued" by an unstable maverick cop, Ivan, with whom she has a fraught affair.

**MILDRED PIERCE (1945).** Long recognized as a seminal noir, *Mildred Pierce* was a **hybrid**, combining the prewar woman's picture with the crime thriller. Something of an experiment for Warner Bros., it was a critical (nominated for Academy Awards for Best Picture and Best Screenplay) and commercial success, and **Joan Crawford's** own Oscar-winning performance as Mildred revived her career, leading to starring roles in a further six films noir.

The film, directed by Michael Curtiz, was based on the 1941 novel by **James M. Cain**, a major departure for the writer through its focus on a female protagonist, its chronological third-person narrative, and the absence of a crime; Cain wanted to depict the struggle of an ordinary, working-class woman to be economically successful. However, producer **Jerry Wald**, the key figure in the making of *Mildred Pierce*, consistently, through eight rewrites, encouraged various screenwriters and advisers—including the uncredited **Malvin Wald**—to emphasize the crime elements in their adaptations. The opening murder of Monte Beragon (**Zachary Scott**), shot in shadowy chiaroscuro and the film's focal point, is not in the novel. Its inspiration, along with the imported flashback structure, was Wald's admiration for *Double Indemnity* (1944).

Crawford is a more glamorous figure than in the novel, more sexually attractive and more manipulative, aligning her with the femme fatale archetype and allowing an audience to believe that she is indeed guilty of Monte's murder, the louche, predatory, but charming playboy she marries after her divorce from her drab husband Bert (Bruce Bennett). The real culprit is Mildred's daughter Veda (Ann Blyth), a more venal and superficial character than in the novel, who kills Monte because he has spurned her for Mildred. In covering up the crime, Mildred acknowledges that Veda is her dark self, the product of her own ambitions and desires. In a muted conclusion, Mildred is reunited with her loyal first husband, but the film's emphasis was on Mildred's guilt and responsibility for what happens, as shown in its publicity



campaign: “She knew there was trouble coming—trouble she made for herself—a love affair—and a loaded gun. . . . She had no right playing around with either!” *See also* WOMEN.

**MILLAND, RAY (1905–1986).** Born Reginald Alfred Truscott-Jones in South Wales, Ray Milland entered British cinema in 1929 and changed his name before emigrating to Hollywood in 1930, where he became a proficient leading man, winning an Oscar for his desperate alcoholic in **Billy Wilder’s** *The Lost Weekend* (1945), which has noir elements. Milland’s good looks and charm led him to play debonair professionals under duress, as in **Fritz Lang’s** *The Ministry of Fear* (1945) or **John Farrow’s** *The Big Clock* (1948), or suave villains, for example, *Alias Nick Beale* (1949), in which he plays a modern incarnation of the devil, **Hitchcock’s** *Dial M for Murder* (1954), and the **British noir** *So Evil My Love* (1948). A subtle and accomplished actor, Milland played the role of the corrupt scientist-on-the-run in *The Thief* (1952), a film entirely without dialogue.

Milland’s other noirs are *The Glass Key* (1935), *Circle of Danger* (GB 1951), and *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing* (1955).

**MILTON, DAVID (1888–1979).** Art director David Milton worked exclusively in second features for Monogram and later Allied Artists. Forced to be highly economical, Milton evolved a style that was spare and angular, where the poverty of the sets and décor could be disguised by inventive lighting and camerawork, as on the cut-price adaptations of **Cornell Woolrich:** *Fall Guy* (1947) and *I Wouldn’t Be in Your Shoes* (1948).

Milton’s other noirs are *Decoy* (1946), *Southside 1-1000* (1950), *The Underworld Story* (1950), *Riot in Cell Block 11* (1954), *Cry Vengeance* (1954), *Loophole* (1954), *Sudden Danger* (1955), *Baby Face Nelson* (1957), and *Portland Exposé* (1957). *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**MITCHUM, ROBERT (1917–1997).** Robert Mitchum was the single most important male performer, appearing in over 20 films noir. Mitchum’s size and muscular physique were counterpointed by the wry, ambivalent attitude he projected, and his indolent, soft-spoken style lacked the usual aggression and dynamism of the American star but made him perfect for the introverted, skewed noir world. He perfected a minimalist style that lent meaning to the smallest gesture and suggested

intelligence and the capacity for reflection. Mitchum had supporting roles in *When Strangers Marry* (1944), *Undercurrent* (1946), and *The Locket* (1947) and a more substantial one in *Crossfire* (1947), but his first starring role came in *Out of the Past* (1947). As **private eye** Jeff Bailey, whose world-weary skepticism is blown apart by his romantic longings for the femme fatale (**Jane Greer**), Mitchum gave what became his most iconic performance and established him as RKO's most bankable male star. He played several similar roles, including *The Big Steal* (1949) again with Greer, *Where Danger Lives* (1950) with Faith Domergue, and *Angel Face* (1953) with Jean Simmons. In *His Kind of Woman* (1951) and *Macao* (1952), he starred opposite Jane Russell, essaying the same weary, sardonic character, apparently indifferent to his fate. Mitchum starred in two noir **hybrids**, the westerns *Pursued* (1947) and *Blood on the Moon* (1948), savage tales of persecution, guilt, and paranoia in which he adopted a more demonstrative style, as he also did in what is considered to be his best performance in Charles Laughton's *Night of the Hunter* (1955). Mitchum is genuinely terrifying as the psychotic criminal posing as a fundamentalist preacher who preys on his victims across Bible-belt America. In the late noir *Cape Fear* (1962), he was Max Cady, another frighteningly convincing psychotic waiting patiently for his revenge.

Mitchum appeared in a number of **neo-noirs**, notably the adaptation of a George V. Higgins's novel, *The Friends of Eddie Coyle* (1973). Mitchum played a middle-aged loser, haunted by his past, caught between the police and the mob. In *The Yakuza* (1974), he portrayed a retired detective summoned to assist his friend in his dealings with a yakuza **gangster**, becoming embroiled in a different culture he gradually learns to respect. His performance as Philip Marlowe in the two **Raymond Chandler** adaptations *Farewell My Lovely* (1975) and *The Big Sleep* (1978) provided a self-consciously nostalgic link to 1940s noir, but Mitchum gave the character a new sense of middle-aged weariness and ennui.

Mitchum's other noirs are *The Racket* (1951), *Second Chance* (1953), *Thunder Road* (1958), *Going Home* (1971), *Nightkill* (1980), and *Cape Fear* (1991). See also MEN.

**MOHR, HAL (1894–1974).** Hal Mohr was a distinguished cinematographer who did not work on film noir until the cycle was fully developed. His early noirs—*The Second Woman* (1950), *Woman on the Run* (1950),

and **Joseph Losey's** *The Big Night* (1951)—had **expressionist** elements, but his cinematography on *Baby Face Nelson* (1957), *The Line-Up* (1958), and **Samuel Fuller's** *Underworld U.S.A.* (1961) evinced the increasing brutal realism of the later noirs. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**MONTGOMERY, ROBERT (1904–1981).** Robert Montgomery was an established leading man from 1931 onward, mainly in comedies, but his debonair charm was used very effectively in the noir **precursor**, *Night Must Fall* (1937). Montgomery plays an *homme fatal*, a psychopathic sexual opportunist and murderer, who enters the employ of a rich spinster with a beautiful niece. Montgomery turned to directing as well as acting, beginning with the **Raymond Chandler** adaptation, *Lady in the Lake* (1947), a bold experiment in first-person screen narration in which Marlowe's eyes were the camera and Montgomery's Philip Marlowe was seen only in reflections. *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947), one of the definitive **troubled veteran** noirs, was adapted from Dorothy B. Hughes's **hard-boiled** novel. Montgomery plays the morose Gagin, on the trail of a war profiteer who caused the death of an army comrade. The war's fallout was also the theme of *Your Witness* (U.S title *Eye Witness*, 1950), a **British film noir** in which he plays a New York lawyer who comes to England to defend a former comrade who saved his life but now stands accused of murder.

**MURDER, MY SWEET (1944).** *Murder, My Sweet*, along with *Double Indemnity* and *Laura*, released in the same year, established the major film noir cycle. RKO owned the rights to **Raymond Chandler's** 1940 novel *Farewell My Lovely* and had adapted it as the comedy thriller *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942). However, the creative team of director **Edward Dmytryk**, writer John Paxton, and writer-turned-producer **Adrian Scott** saw the opportunity of making a version that was much closer to the novel's cynical, dispassionate take on American society. Although their adaptation was influenced by the hard-boiled dialogue and sardonic ambience of *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), it was stylistically thoroughly different, much more indebted to *Citizen Kane* (1941) in its use of flashback, voice-over narration, **expressionist** lighting, and **Albert S. D'Agostino's** deliberately distorted sets. Cinematographer **Harry J. Wild** uses disorientating reflections, subjective camerawork, and whirling dissolves to render how **private eye** Philip Marlowe (**Dick Powell**) drifts in and out of consciousness as he is knocked senseless,

choked, drugged, and beaten by Dr. Sonderborg and his hoods in the course of his search for the elusive Velma. At one point Marlowe seems to fall through space, pursued by huge figures that tower over him.

Indeed, the most radical aspect of *Murder, My Sweet* is its pervasive oneirism beginning in the second scene where Marlowe, musing on the “dead silence of an office building at night—not quite real,” is interrupted when the next flash of the neon light outside discloses the hulking figure of Moose Molloy (**Mike Mazurki**), the first in a series of grotesque figures whom Marlowe encounters in what seems to be an hallucinogenic world where dream and reality mingle and become confused. Powell, a more vulnerable Marlowe than **Humphrey Bogart**, though he protects himself through a series of smart wisecracks, often discloses an **existential** bewilderment at the seductive but disorientating **city** whose secrets he can barely grasp. Marlowe inhabits an ominous world beyond his control, be it the seediness of cheap flophouses and grimy bars or the corrupt, decadent world of the rich, revealing a society that is insubstantial and predatory.

*Murder, My Sweet* was very popular and highly influential, especially in its attempt at providing a visual equivalent for subjective states. *See also* FREUDIANISM; LANGUAGE; NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

**MUSIC.** Music in films noir of the 1940s was dominated by the conventional approach to film scoring derived from late 19th-century European romanticism, particularly Richard Strauss, whose main features were full symphonic scoring, lush orchestration, the use of melodies as leit-motifs, and the underscoring of dramatic action. Many noirs used variations of this model, including **Max Steiner**'s score for *Mildred Pierce* (1945) and **Miklós Rózsa**'s superb orchestration for *Criss Cross* (1949). The **Gothic** noirs have lush orchestration that underlines the emotional climaxes, as in **Franz Waxman**'s score for *Rebecca* (1940).

However, one of noir's distinctive elements was its use of more experimental musical styles that incorporated dissonance and atonality, the use of unusual instrumentation, and experimental recording techniques to make the scoring darker and more threatening with more effective use of silences. **Bernard Herrmann** counterpoints his romantic score for **John Brahm**'s *Hangover Square* (1945) against the discordant sounds used during the blackouts of the protagonist, composer George Harvey Bone (**Laird Cregar**), in which he transforms into a murderous

psychopath. Bone's own piano concerto is characterized by its modernist atonality and dissonance.

Noir incorporated elements of modern "urban" American music. Jazz, derived from the black *demimonde*, was used strategically to suggest the exotic and the forbidden, as in the famous sequence in *Phantom Lady* (1944) where "Kansas" (Ella Raines), dressed as a prostitute, visits a jazz cellar and listens to the "hot music." Unlike symphonic orchestration, jazz is improvisational, and noir uses its strident, dissonant aspects to signal illicit sexuality, a sense of danger and disturbed mental states. In *D.O.A.* (1950), the jazz club is the dangerous, uncontrolled space where the hero's murder takes place. Vincent Minnelli's pastiche of the noir style in the "Girl Hunt Ballet" sequence in *The Band Wagon* (1953) uses a jazz score. In the 1950s, jazz started to be used as the basis of film noir orchestration rather than as irruptions into it. In *Nightmare* (1956), the **remake** of *Fear in the Night* (1947), the central protagonist is a New Orleans jazz musician, and Herschel Burke Gilbert provided an inventive jazz score. Hiring Gilbert was also indicative of the greater use of indigenous rather than European composers. Jazz began to be used as an important part of film noir's appeal, as in Henry Mancini's score for *Touch of Evil* (1958) or that of composer John Lewis for *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959). Early noir **television series**—including *Johnny Staccato* (1959–60) or *Peter Gunn* (1959–61)—used jazz scores as the norm.

**Neo-noir's** use of music is more heterogeneous, generally showing the tension between atonal techniques and the return of more melodic elements. Jazz scores are often used to evoke the 1940s, as in John Barry's for *Body Heat* (1981), a "retrospective illusion" or "constructed nostalgia" that recasts jazz as the dominant soundtrack of classic noir. *See also* NEWMAN, ALFRED; RAKSIN, DAVID; SALTER, HANS J.; SAWTELL, PAUL; TIOMKIN, DIMITRI; YOUNG, VICTOR.

**MUSURACA, NICHOLAS (1892–1975).** Italian-born Nicholas Musuraca worked as a cameraman from the end of the silent period through to 1960. Known as a specialist in "mood lighting," he was the director of photography for the first film noir, *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940). Musuraca exercised a seminal influence on the development of film noir through his work with **Val Lewton** at RKO on a series of **Gothic** horror-thrillers that included *The Seventh Victim* (1943). Musuraca's low-key contrastive cinematography and subtly suggestive chiaroscuro evolved

into the “RKO **expressionism**” that defined the early noir style, as shown in *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), *Out of the Past* (1947), and the noir **hybrid** *Blood on the Moon* (1948). For **Robert Siodmak**’s *The Spiral Staircase* (1946) and **John Brahm**’s *The Locket* (1947), Musuraca intensifies his use of chiaroscuro lighting, in keeping with the Gothic nature of the stories. This is shown in the famous doubled scenes in *The Spiral Staircase* in which the female victims descend the spiral staircase, candle in hand, their huge, ominous shadows dominating the frame. In *Clash by Night* (1952), and especially *The Blue Gardenia* (1953), Musuraca’s cinematography was more naturalistic, using neutral gray tones to help depict the claustrophobic, stifling modern world that director **Fritz Lang** wanted to create. Musuraca used the mobility of the crab dolly to make the camerawork sufficiently fluid to “eavesdrop” on the action.

Musuraca’s other noirs are *The Fallen Sparrow* (1943), *I Married a Communist* (aka *The Woman on Pier 13*, 1949), *Where Danger Lives* (1950), *Roadblock* (1951), *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), *Split Second* (1953), and *The Lawbreakers* (1960). See also VISUAL STYLE.

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**THE NAKED CITY (1948).** *The Naked City* was the most celebrated and popular of the **semidocumentary** noirs. Director **Jules Dassin** spent 10 weeks filming in 107 different locations in New York City, conducting the most ambitious attempt to put the ideas promoted by Italian neo-realism and the American wartime documentarists into practice. Interiors were often shot in actual buildings to add authenticity. Dassin, and cinematographer **William Daniels** who received an Oscar, used the new fast film stock and portable lighting units to shoot on location, and some of the film was photographed secretly through trucks panelled with two-way mirrors to avoid onlookers crowding around or posing for the camera. The editing—by Paul Weatherwax, who also received an Oscar—is dynamic, with constant changes of perspective, from tracking shots that follow the action and underline dramatic involvement to the high-angle panoramic perspectives in which the workings of the **city** are exposed.

*The Naked City* was the brainchild of screenwriter **Malvin Wald**, who had spent several months researching in the New York police department records for an appropriate story that was both typical and

engaging. It was based on an unsolved story that gave Wald and co-screenwriter **Albert Maltz** the freedom to create a highly dramatic ending. The working title, “Homicide,” was changed to its present one as a reference to **Weegee**’s influential 1945 book of black-and-white-photographs, *Naked City*, the rights to which had been acquired by producer **Mark Hellinger**. Hellinger narrates the film in a more confidential fashion than the customary “voice of God” mode: “I may as well tell you frankly that it’s a bit different from most films you’ve ever seen,” reflecting Hellinger’s own intimate knowledge of New York as a newspaper columnist. According to Dassin, much of the explicit left-wing social commentary that he and Maltz had wanted to show (largely through the juxtaposition of images) was jettisoned in Hellinger’s emollient treatment.

Like most films in this cycle, *The Naked City* is a tribute to the methodical workings of authority (in this case the New York Police Department) and its avuncular representative, Lieutenant Dan Muldoon (Barry Fitzgerald), 38 years on the force, who succeeds in solving the murder case of model Jean Dexter by doggedly sifting through all the evidence. Almost a third of the time on location was spent on the bravura final sequence, in which the working-class ex-wrestler and Dexter’s actual murderer Garzah (Ted de Corsia), now trapped in his teeming East Side neighborhood, tries to evade capture, eventually falling to his death from the Williamsburg Bridge Tower.

*The Naked City* ends with Hellinger intoning “There are eight million stories in the naked city—this has been one of them,” which became the catchphrase of the noir **television series** *Naked City* (1958–63). Ironically, Hellinger died almost immediately after recording the voice-over, and shortly after the film’s release, Dassin and Maltz were placed on the **blacklist**. See also LEFT-WING CYCLE; VISUAL STYLE.

**NARRATIVE PATTERNS.** Film noir’s distinctive narrative patterning derives from its depiction of protagonists dominated by their past, particularly how past actions determine the present and the future. Therefore, the stabilities of a linear chronology are often undermined and time becomes discontinuous and fragmented. Hence the narrative devices that attempt to render this discontinuity—voice-overs, multiple narrators, flashbacks, and dream sequences depicting subjective states—that are such a striking feature of film noir. These unorthodox narrative patterns were a radical departure from classical Hollywood’s

conventional mode of storytelling, with its omniscient, smoothly flowing linear narrative in which each action leads swiftly and logically on to the next and where all the loose ends are tied up, as opposed to noir's often ambiguous or inconclusive endings.

Noir's use of voice-over was an attempt to replicate the first-person narration of the **hard-boiled fiction** from which many noirs were adapted, and they can be either confessional or investigative. The use of a confessional flashback in *Double Indemnity* (1944) was highly influential, creating a dramatic counterpoint between the confession itself and the narrator's present situation. *Detour* (1945) and *Out of the Past* (1947) are also celebrated examples in which the narrator tries to make sense of the past, his narrative becoming both an exorcism and a plea for understanding. *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948) makes repeated references to dreams, and its voice-over narrative seems not so much to progress toward a resolution as compulsively double back. *Sunset Boulevard* (1950) and *D.O.A.* (1950) both use the flashback narrative of a man already dead or about to die. The confessional narrative is dominated by the male protagonist's retrospective examination of the ways in which he was seduced and betrayed by a duplicitous femme fatale, but there are occasional examples of female narrators—*Rebecca* (1940), *Mildred Pierce* (1945), or *Raw Deal* (1948). Investigative narratives often circle around enigmatic central characters, as in *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944) or *The Killers* (1946), which were highly influenced by *Citizen Kane* (1941). *The Killers'* screenplay expands its source—a cryptic Hemingway short story that only directly provides the material of the opening scene—into a complex succession of 11 disconnected and overlapping narrative flashbacks that shed some light on why The Swede (**Burt Lancaster**) had lost his desire to live and made no attempt to run or hide from two hired killers. The Swede himself is not permitted a voice but remains, like Charles Foster Kane, the enigmatic absent center. **John Brahm's** *The Locket* (1947) uses a complex series of flashbacks within flashbacks to “explain” the mental instability of Nancy Blair (Laraine Day), who collapses on the day of her wedding.

Noir's dream sequences and subjective point-of-view scenes were an attempt to provide a visual correlative for disturbed psychological states that derived from German **expressionism**, as shown clearly in *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940). A much more widely seen example was *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), which uses whirling dissolves and partially fogged screens to render Marlowe's lapses in and out



of consciousness as he is drugged, beaten up, and tortured. **Robert Montgomery's** *Lady in the Lake* (1947) took this experiment further by making the camera Marlowe's eyes so that the whole film is what he sees. **Curtis Bernhardt** used subjective techniques in *Possessed* (1947) and *High Wall* (1947) to convey the mental conflicts of their **amnesiac** protagonists. *Possessed* begins with an extended sequence shot from the point of view of Louise Howell (**Joan Crawford**) to capture her distracted, catatonic state in which she wanders through the early morning **Los Angeles** streets. *High Wall* uses scenes shot from the point of view of **troubled veteran** Steve Kenet (**Robert Taylor**), who has a blood clot pressing on his brain that results in violent headaches and amnesia and who is suspected of murdering his wife. **Alfred Hitchcock** used dream sequences designed by the surrealist Salvador Dali in *Spellbound* (1945) to convey the bewilderment and disorientation experienced by another amnesiac troubled veteran (Gregory Peck), who believes himself guilty of murdering the man he is impersonating. A **Cornell Woolrich** adaptation, *Fear in the Night* (1947), has a wonderfully surreal opening where Vince Grayson (DeForest Kelley) experiences a nightmare in which he murders a man in a mirrored room from which he cannot escape. He falls into what appears to be an endless tunnel before waking, only to find the evidence—cuts on his arm, two thumbprints on his neck, a button torn off in the struggle, and the key to the mirror cupboard—that seems to prove the dream was true, creating an intense paranoia and confusion.

In the 1950s, where there is less concern with individual pathologies, these experiments with subjective camerawork, flashbacks, voice-overs, or dream sequences fade away in favor of more conventional narration—Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) and **Orson Welles's** *Touch of Evil* (1958) were powerful exceptions. However, these techniques returned in **neo-noirs**. Modernist neo-noirs abandoned the crisp, fast-paced trajectory of their predecessors in favor of meandering, episodic, and inconclusive stories, circling back on themselves and leading to ambivalence about narrative itself as a meaningful activity, as in **Arthur Penn's** *Night Moves* (1975). In *Taxi Driver* (1976), the intermittent voice-over of Travis Bickle (**Robert De Niro**) is not retrospective but haltingly tracks his deteriorating mental condition and increasingly intense misanthropy and bewilderment.

Postmodern noirs also use flashbacks, but these tend to be more visceral, oblique, and ambiguous than their classical predecessors, with

unreliable narrators. In Peter Medak's *Romeo Is Bleeding* (1994), the confessional flashback narrative of **corrupt cop** Jack Grimaldi (Gary Oldman), told to an imaginary interlocutor, is self-serving and deceitful. His recollections are frequently interrupted by dream sequences, making it unclear whether the whole story is real or a self-deluding fantasy. The flashback narrative of Verbal Kint (Kevin Spacey) in Bryan Singer's *The Usual Suspects* (1995) unfolds events in meticulous detail but explains nothing and may all be embroidered from the names he sees on the police notice board in the interrogation room. Nothing definite is resolved as the film allows us no access to an objective viewpoint. This radical indeterminacy is pushed further in **Christopher Nolan's** *Memento* (2000), where it is impossible to separate "facts" from lies or self-protecting fantasies. The two separate narratives, one in color that proceeds in reverse, the other told intermittently but chronologically in black-and-white, eventually merge, but nothing is resolved. In these ways the narrative patterning of neo-noirs often exceeds their classic predecessors and comes close to the radical ambiguity associated with European art-house cinema.

**NEO-NOIR.** *Neo-noir* has established itself as the preferred term for films noir made after the end of the "classic" period (1940–59). However, neo-noirs are films that self-consciously allude to classic noir, either implicitly or explicitly, building on what had become recognized and accepted as a distinct body of films from a particular period. Thus, neo-noirs should be distinguished from "late noirs" (1960–67)—that include *The 3rd Voice* (1960), *Angel's Flight* (1965), *In Cold Blood* (1967), or the work of **Samuel Fuller**: *Underworld U.S.A.* (1961), *Shock Corridor* (1963), and *The Naked Kiss* (1964)—which were simply a continuation of noir filmmaking practices slightly after the arbitrary watershed of 1959.

The first true neo-noir was John Boorman's *Point Blank* (1967), which, drawing on the French New Wave, explicitly and self-consciously revised the noir tradition in a contemporary idiom, using color, widescreen lenses, and elliptical editing. It inaugurated, gradually, what can be termed the "modernist" phase of neo-noir (1967–80) in which a new generation of filmmakers, profoundly influenced by recent neo-modernist developments in European cinema, attempted to transform American cinema and its generic traditions. Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* (1973), an acerbic updating of **Raymond Chandler**,

**Roman Polanski's** *Chinatown* (1974), **Arthur Penn's** *Night Moves* (1975), and **Martin Scorsese's** *Taxi Driver* (1976) written by **Paul Schrader**, all engaged in a critique not only of American society but also of noir conventions, including the resourceful **private eye**.

Modernist neo-noirs abandoned the crisp, fast-paced trajectory of their predecessors in favor of meandering, episodic, and inconclusive stories, circling back on themselves. Formally self-reflexive, modernist neo-noirs developed Boorman's innovations in widescreen compositions, disjunctive editing, the expressive use of color, and the persistent deployment of unsettling zoom shots to depict protagonists who are alienated and dysfunctional, adrift in situations beyond their comprehension that they are incapable of resolving. Neo-noir antiheroes are the product of the forces that destabilized American society during this period: including the protests against the Vietnam War and left-wing student activism, the struggle for black civil rights, the feminist movement, and the 1972 Watergate scandal, all of which combined to create a profound disillusionment with American society and the countercultural creation of "alternative" lifestyles.

These disruptive forces, most directly the deep mistrust of American institutions stemming from the Watergate revelations, also generated a less experimental group of political conspiracy thrillers, neo-noir **hybrids**, through which social anxieties could be expressed. This cycle of films included Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation* (1974), **Robert Aldrich's** *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), and Alan J. Pakula's "paranoia trilogy" *Klute* (1971), *The Parallax View* (1974), and *All the President's Men* (1976). These social and political upheavals also generated a cycle of **African American** neo-noirs—beginning with the adaptation of the novels of black **hard-boiled** author Chester Himes: *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1968) and *Cotton Comes to Harlem* (1970), and *Shaft* (1971), that launched a cycle of "blaxploitation" films—exploring the black experience and the deep-seated racism in American society.

The release of Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat* in 1981 marked a new, postmodern phase of neo-noir in which noir conventions were embraced less critically and which often—as in the case of *Body Heat*, directly indebted to *Double Indemnity* (1944)—evoked the mood and atmosphere of classic noir through their visual style, jazz scores, and archetypal narratives. Cinematographers were now able to shoot in color at very low lighting levels, creating striking contrasts that resembled classic noir's chiaroscuro. *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, also released in 1981,

was the first of numerous direct **remakes** of classic noirs. These remakes were complemented by many **retro-noirs** set during the 1940s or 1950s, as in *L.A. Confidential* (1997) or **Brian de Palma's** *The Black Dahlia* (2006). A countertendency was an increasing hybridity in which noir was melded with a variety of other genres, most notably sci-fi, inaugurated by *Blade Runner* (1982), a highly influential “future noir” that combined retro elements, such as Harrison Ford’s trench-coated blade runner, with a dystopian vision of **Los Angeles** in 2019. Other examples included *Dark City* (1998) and *Minority Report* (2002).

Neo-noir also expanded its range through adaptations of **Jim Thompson**—notably *After Dark, My Sweet* (1990), *The Grifters* (1990), and *This World, Then the Fireworks* (1997)—the hard-boiled writer whose style and subject matter was most challenging, and **country noirs**—including the **Coen Brothers' *Blood Simple*** (1984) or **John Dahl's *Red Rock West*** (1996)—in which the corruption, betrayals, and murderous hatreds of classic noir’s urban settings were extended into the wide-open spaces of redneck America. The 1990s also saw a renewed and wider-ranging development of African American noir that revealed the complexity and heterogeneity of the black experience, beginning with Bill Duke’s *A Rage in Harlem* (1991) and *Deep Cover* (1992), and including Carl Franklin’s *One False Move* (1992) and *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995). More women directors made neo-noirs, bringing a feminist perspective to its masculine confines that opened up new vistas, as in Kathryn Bigelow’s *Blue Steel* (1990) and Tamra Davis’s *Gun Crazy* (1992), a radical remake of *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950) in which the subjectivity and experiences of the woman partner were foregrounded. A recent development has been the proliferation of neo-noirs adapted from **comics/graphic novels**, including *Sin City* (2005), which used digital technology to render Frank Miller’s comic strip landscape.

What unites these developments is an intensification of the visual and aural experience for the cinemagoer. Hypermobile camerawork, rapid zooms, shock cuts, and ultrafast montage sequences create a visceral, disruptive, often overwhelming sensory experience that makes neo-noirs stylistically very different from classic noir. *Face/Off* (1997), for instance, combines a dark *Doppelgänger* story with the high-speed action sequences and breathtaking special effects through which director John Woo made his name in **Hong Kong film noir**. *Face/Off* exemplifies the increasingly global nature of neo-noir in which American

directors react not only to developments in European cinema but also to ones in Asia and Latin America. The subject matter and core themes of classic noir—paranoia, alienation, existential fatalism, and Freudian psychopathology—have been retained, but heightened, often through the use of oblique and ambiguous flashback devices and disruptive chronologies, as in Peter Medak's *Romeo Is Bleeding* (1994) or **Christopher Nolan's** *Memento* (2000), with its reverse chronology and **amnesiac** self-deluding narrator.

Neo-noirs have often emerged from independent cinema, the sector of the American film industry associated with formal innovation and challenging subject matter that characterized European art cinema or the modernist American auteurs in the 1970s. **Quentin Tarantino's** *Pulp Fiction* (1994) with its discontinuous narrative and multiple allusions, was a famous example and one that "crossed over" between independent and mainstream cinema, though this boundary is increasingly blurred. Neo-noirs have now become a staple of cinema exhibition, cable television programming, and DVD rental. Their production is no longer characterized, as it was in the modernist period, by occasional productions but by a continuous stream of new releases. There is even a low-budget equivalent to the studio second feature, the noir-inflected erotic thriller, such as *Night Rhythms* (1992), made to be released on cable networks or DVD and relying on the basic appeal of sex and violence.

In these ways, neo-noir has become, unlike its classic predecessor, a widely recognized and accepted contemporary genre. The noir "look" is now part of a knowing postmodern culture, with cineliterate audiences attuned to the multiple allusions and prepared to accept a greater narrative ambiguity and range of stylistic devices. Neo-noirs themselves are now part of a wide network of noir fiction: hard-boiled novels, **television series**, interactive **video games**, magazines, cover art, websites, comic books and graphic novels, and even tourist industry simulations. Although this commodification means that film noir is no longer clearly an oppositional form of filmmaking, neo-noir retains the capacity, handled intelligently, to engage with important issues. *See also* ARGENTINIAN FILM NOIR; AUSTRALIAN FILM NOIR; BRAZILIAN FILM NOIR; BRITISH FILM NOIR; DANISH FILM NOIR; EXISTENTIALISM; FINNISH FILM NOIR; FRENCH FILM NOIR; FREUDIANISM; GERMAN FILM NOIR; ITALIAN FILM NOIR; JAPANESE FILM NOIR; MANN, MICHAEL; MEN; MEXICAN FILM NOIR; NARRATIVE PATTERNS; NEW ZEALAND FILM NOIR; NORWEGIAN

FILM NOIR; SOUTH KOREAN FILM NOIR; SPANISH FILM NOIR; VISUAL STYLE; WOMEN.

**NEW ZEALAND FILM NOIR.** New Zealand has a relatively small film industry and the strongest generic elements are **Gothic** horror and the macabre rather than crime fiction, thus the earliest films noir were horror-noir **hybrids**. In *Scarecrow* (1982), John Carradine plays a cadaverous serial killer and necrophiliac in a small rural town, while in *The Lost Tribe* (1982), an anthropologist (John Bach), working from a remote coastal hut investigating the graves of a lost Maori tribe, is affected by a “dark force” that leads him to murder his twin brother. The female protagonist (Heather Bolton) of *Mr. Wrong* (1985), having bought a beautiful Jaguar car to assert her independence, finds it is haunted by its previous owner who was murdered in the vehicle by a mysterious stranger.

A second noir strand was comprised of several political thrillers inspired by true events that critiqued aspects of New Zealand society. *Should I Be Good?* (1985) was based on the arrest and death of Martin Johnstone, a real-life drug baron, dubbed “Mr. Asia” by international police. The film explores the popular myth that the man who died was not the real criminal. In *Spooked* (2004), also based on real incidents, an investigative journalist (Cliff Curtis) determines to uncover the truth behind the death of a secondhand computer dealer who may have died as the result of stumbling upon information that identifies New Zealand as the center of money laundering by multinational corporations to fund terrorism and illegal arms trading. *The Last Tattoo* (1994), starring Kerry Fox, Tony Goldwyn, and Rod Steiger, was also about cover-ups and political intrigue, but it was set during World War II and is about the fraught encounter between American servicemen and the local female population. This powerful film probes the dark underside of wartime, the spread of venereal disease, and a mysterious death to protect those in charge.

**NEWMAN, ALFRED (1901–1970).** A prolific and influential composer, Alfred Newman was musical director at Twentieth Century-Fox from 1940–60 and oversaw all the studio’s releases. Newman was a conservative composer using melodic strings, leitmotifs, and countermelodies throughout his career, including his nine noirs. Because of his high turnover, Newman tended to repeat his major themes and was adaptable

rather than original, but his scores for films noir are often memorable, as in the haunting melody for *Cry of the City* (1948). He was Oscar-nominated for his work on *The Snake Pit* (1948).

Newman's other noirs are *You Only Live Once* (1937), *Leave Her to Heaven* (1946), *Boomerang!* (1947), *The Brasher Doubloon* (1947), *13 Rue Madeleine* (1947), *Call Northside 777* (1948), *Thieves' Highway* (1949), *Whirlpool* (1949), *Panic in the Streets* (1950), *No Way Out* (1950), *Fourteen Hours* (1951), and *House on Telegraph Hill* (1951). See also MUSIC.

**NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY.** The influence of news photography on film noir has not been widely recognized. The *New York Daily News* was the most aggressive and influential tabloid newspaper pioneering the graphic and sensational use of photographs that captured actual incidents, most famously the shot of Ruth Snyder dying in the electric chair on 12 January 1928. These photographs helped stimulate a public appetite for representations of violent crime, particularly involving a sexual element, which paralleled developments in **hard-boiled fiction**. Technological advances in the early 1930s, including faster film and shutter speeds, meant that photographs became more sharply focused, could be shot at night, and had greater depth of field. This created the characteristic high-contrast lighting with deep black shadows, an aesthetic that fed directly into the development of film noir. News photographers and their editors made creative choices that established a repertoire of events (accidents, arrests, beatings, destruction of property, murder, and shootings) and a cast of characters—policemen, criminals, victims, prostitutes—that signified the dangerous and threatening nature of the **city** at night, all of which were taken up by noir filmmakers. See also WEEGEE.

**NICHOLSON, JACK (1937– ).** One of the major actors currently working in Hollywood, Jack Nicholson has starred in several **neo-noirs**, although his first noir was Roger Corman's *The Cry Baby Killer* (1958), in which he plays a juvenile delinquent who panics after shooting two other teenagers. Nicholson also wrote the late noir *Thunder Island* (1963) about a **hit man**. Nicholson's most accomplished performance came in his first neo-noir, *Chinatown* (1974), in which he played the smug **private eye**, J. J. Gittes, trammelled in a mystery in which he is out of his depth. Nicholson directed himself in the sequel, *The Two*

*Jakes* (1990), set in a postwar **Los Angeles** still riven by corruption, this time concerning the oil industry. He played the disaffected television journalist David Locke in Michaelangelo Antonioni's Italian-American noir *Professione: reporter* (*The Passenger*, 1975). Changing identities with the man who has died suddenly overnight in the next door hotel room, Locke finds himself embroiled in gun-running and the target for assassins. Nicholson starred in the 1981 **remake** of *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), but he failed to recapture **John Garfield's** charisma.

Nicholson gave one of his most controlled and satisfying performances as "Straight-Arrow Charley, the All-American Hood" in **John Huston's** noir **hybrid** *Prizzi's Honor* (1985), based on the Richard Condon novel. Charley Partanna is a hit man for the ruling Prizzi family, who accepts their ideology and logic even at the cost of killing his own wife, fellow assassin Irene (Kathleen Turner). In *Blood and Wine* (1996) he played a Miami-area wine merchant so heavily in debt that he risks all on a jewel robbery. Nicholson gave a reflective, understated performance in *The Pledge* (2001) as a retiring detective who makes a pledge on his final day to find a child killer. He becomes obsessed by the case to the point of putting the life of his newly acquired "family" at risk and ends a decrepit wreck in this bleakly powerful film. He was equally compelling as the Irish crime boss Frank Costello in **Martin Scorsese's** *The Departed* (2006), who believes in the **gangster's** adage that you have to make your own way in this world because "no one gives it to you . . . you have to take it."

**NOLAN, CHRISTOPHER (1970–)**. The son of an English father and an American mother, Christopher Nolan has emerged as a significant contemporary writer-director. All of his five films so far, if not entirely films noir, draw heavily upon its themes and style and show a preoccupation with memory and the instabilities of identity. His debut film, *Following* (1998), made in Great Britain, was a 16 mm black-and-white feature made on a minuscule budget but with a sophisticated triple timeline narrative, a fragmented **visual style** with jarring cuts, odd angles, and off-center compositions, and an archetypal noir antihero (Jeremy Theobald), a would-be writer confused about his purposes and identity and subject to the distorting, unreliable power of memory. *Following* attracted considerable attention and led to Nolan's first American film, *Memento* (2000), an innovative **amnesiac noir**.



*Memento*, which received Academy Award nominations for Best Picture and Editing, was a major success, enabling Nolan to direct his first high-budget studio production, *Insomnia* (2002), a remake of the **Norwegian film noir**, but with the action shifted to Alaska. **Al Pacino** plays a world-weary cop, Will Dormer, worn down by the grimy realities of his profession and beginning to be unsure of his own purposes and identity, uncertain if he killed his partner accidentally and of what separates him from a killer (Robin Williams) he is pursuing. Characteristically, *Insomnia* is peppered with hallucinatory miniflashbacks that evoke a state of waking dream.

Nolan was brought in to revive Warner Bros.' Batman franchise, directing *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Dark Knight* (2008), starring Christian Bale as Batman. Both are dark, haunted noir **hybrids** in which Batman is an ambiguous figure, uncertain of his identity in a corrupt and brutal Gotham **City** that is a mythic version of the archetypal noir necropolis. In between, Nolan wrote and directed *The Prestige* (2006), another exploration of male identity through the story of two magicians (Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale) in 1890s London who seek to destroy each other. *The Prestige* is a brooding tale of duplicity and doubling that explores the connections between magic ("the prestige" is the third and crucial part of the magician's act whereby the vanished object returns), cinema, and experimental science. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS; NEO-NOIR.

**NOLTE, NICK (1941– )**. Gravel-voiced, burly, and intimidating, Nick Nolte's first noir was as the **troubled Vietnam veteran** in Karel Reisz's underrated *Who'll Stop the Rain* (aka *Dog Soldiers*, 1978), but Nolte came to prominence in *48 Hrs.* (1982) as a cynical, tough cop, a role he played in several noirs, including the sequel, *Another 48 Hrs.* (1990). He could be the stoical good guy version, as in his Texas Ranger in *Extreme Prejudice* (1987), but he was more powerful as the loathsome **corrupt cop** Mike Brennan in Sidney Lumet's *Q & A* (1990). He played a more charismatic version in Lee Tamahori's stylized *Mulholland Falls* (1996) as the leader of an elite group of unorthodox and often unethical cops battling organized crime in postwar **Los Angeles**. Nolte could also play disillusioned, troubled men, as in **Martin Scorsese's** *Cape Fear* (1991) and Oliver Stone's *U Turn* (1997). His most powerful role, in **Paul Schrader's** *Affliction* (1997), combines the two elements. Nolte gives a striking performance as the emotionally crippled Wade White-

house, sheriff of a small New Hampshire town whose life has been blighted by the destructive presence of his father Glen (James Coburn), a brutal alcoholic. In Neil Jordan's *The Good Thief* (2002), a **remake** of *Bob le flambeur* (*Bob the Gambler*, 1955), Nolte played the aging, world-weary gambler trying to pull off one last **heist**.

Nolte's other noirs are *Everybody Wins* (1990) and *Nightwatch* (1997).

**NORWEGIAN FILM NOIR.** Norway has a small film industry that nevertheless has managed to generate some interesting if sporadic films noir and **neo-noirs**. Norwegian film noir was influenced by **expressionism**, **poetic realism**, and American **hard-boiled fiction** as well as American film noir, but there were also indigenous sources, including Edvard Munch's paintings, Henrik Ibsen's plays, and a vernacular hard-boiled tradition. *To levende og en død* (*Two Living and One Dead*, 1937) had noir elements, but the first "true" noir was *Døden er et kjærtegn* (*Death Is a Caress*, 1949), adapted from a Norwegian novel but heavily influenced by film adaptations of **James M. Cain**. Its opening and "confessional" flashback was indebted to *Double Indemnity* (1944), and its tale of a violent desire leading to murder between a car mechanic and a wealthy married woman displayed some striking similarities to *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946). *Death Is a Caress* is more sexually explicit than its American counterparts and the ending bleaker, a typically Norwegian pessimism, which also pervades *To mistenkelige personer* (*Two Suspicious Characters*, 1950), a fugitive-on-the-run story.

Norwegian **neo-noir** began in the 1970s, following a huge boom in the output of indigenous crime novels, with *Bortreist på ubestemt tid* (*Away for an Indefinite Time*, 1974), a complicated tale of murder, passion, and guilt, with an ambiguous central protagonist, which shows the influence of European modernist cinema and particularly **Claude Chabrol**. *Angst* (*Anguish*, 1976) was a hostage thriller with another ambivalent male protagonist and a bleak ending. The neo-noirs of the 1980s also focus on the troubled male protagonist, as in *Brun Bitter* (*Hair of the Dog*, 1988), with its flawed detective and femme fatale. The most successful and accomplished was Erik Skjoldbjerg's *Insomnia* (1997), which **Christopher Nolan remade** in 2000. Skjoldbjerg described his film as a "reverse film noir" because its summer setting in Tromsø, a small town in northern Norway, meant the sun is always

visible. Two policemen investigating a murder try to trap the killer and in the process one, Engström, accidentally kills the other. In trying to make it appear that the murderer they were hunting was responsible, Engström becomes haunted by guilt, cannot sleep, and feels he is going insane, his perception of the world confused and uncertain as *Insomnia* moves toward its bleak conclusion. *Uro (Restless, 2006)* was an archetypal noir tale of a man who, attempting to reform and join the police, finds his past coming back to haunt him. See also DANISH FILM NOIR; FINNISH FILM NOIR.

**NOVAK, KIM (1933– ).** Kim Novak is best remembered for her dual role in *Vertigo* (1958), which exploited both her ethereal beauty as the enigmatic Madeleine Elster and her earthy sexuality as the hapless Judy, who can only be attractive to Scottie Ferguson (James Stewart) once she has been re-created as her false self, Madeleine. Novak had her first starring role in an earlier noir, *Pushover* (1954), in which she plays a femme fatale, and she was a nightclub singer in **Phil Karlson's** *5 Against the House* (1955). She appeared in one **neo-noir** *Liebstraum* (1991), but was at odds with the director, Mike Figgis, and her role was much reduced.

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**O'BRIEN, EDMOND (1915–1985).** Edmond O'Brien often played the decent, ordinary Joe, as in *D.O.A.* (1950), where he is the innocent victim of a criminal web that is indifferent to his fate, or *The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), where he plays one of two friends held up by a psychotic killer (William Talman). He was equally effective as an indefatigable investigator in *The Killers* (1946), or in *The Turning Point* (1952), as the leader of a special committee investigating organized crime in a large midwestern city. However, there was always an edgy tension in O'Brien's performance that made his characters inclined to cynicism and skepticism about human motivations, and thus his strongest roles were as darker, more ambiguous characters. In *Between Midnight and Dawn* (1950) and *A Cry in the Night* (1956), he played policemen who have been brutalized by the criminals they have to deal with and who struggle to maintain their relationships with others. In *711 Ocean Drive* (1950) and *Shield for Murder* (1954), this dark side is allowed greater

rein. The latter, which O'Brien also codirected with Howard Koch, was adapted from a **William P. McGivern** novel, in which a case-hardened policeman, Barney Nolan, is prepared to murder and rob a bookmaker who carried mob money and to kill the only witness. Alienated from his girlfriend and the young detective who idolizes him, Nolan is gunned down at the suburban dream home where he had buried the money.

O'Brien's other noirs are *The Web* (1947), *A Double Life* (1948), *White Heat* (1948), *Backfire* (1950), *Man in the Dark* (1953), and *99 and 44/100% Dead* (1974).

**O'KEEFE, DENNIS (1908–1968).** The tall, well-built, gruff-voiced O'Keefe could be both action hero and tough guy. His best roles came in two **Anthony Mann** films noir, *T-Men* (1948) and *Raw Deal* (1948). In the former he played a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent, O'Brien, working undercover, who impersonates a hoodlum in order to infiltrate a counterfeiters' gang. His pose is uncomfortably authentic, making O'Brien seem interchangeable with the **gangsters** he works to expose. However, when his partner is shot rather than give away their mission, O'Keefe conveys the hurt and pain superbly. In *Raw Deal* he was escaped convict Joe Sullivan, tough and abrasive but decent underneath, who can command the love of two women. However, these roles did not lead to stardom, and O'Keefe spent the rest of his career in "B" features, for instance, *Cover Up* (1949), which he also coscripted, playing an insurance investigator. He went undercover again in *Chicago Syndicate* (1955) and tries to revenge his brother's murder in *Inside Detroit* (1956), both **city exposé films**. O'Keefe wrote, codirected, and starred in *Angela* (1955), an American-Italian coproduction that had many similarities to *Double Indemnity* (1944).

O'Keefe's other noirs are *Dishonored Lady* (1947), *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), *Abandoned* (1949), *Woman on the Run* (1950), and *The Company She Keeps* (1951).

**OUTLAW COUPLE.** The outlaw couple noir is an important subcategory that focuses on the conflict between sexual desire and the law. The outlaw couple is often sympathetically presented, rebelling against outmoded or insensitive barriers and constraints, both class-based and generational. The first example was the noir **precursor, Fritz Lang's** *You Only Live Once* (1937), starring Henry Fonda as a "three-time loser," wrongfully convicted for his part in a robbery and eventually going on the run after

a prison break, with his adoring pregnant wife Jo (Sylvia Sidney). They are killed in a police ambush trying to cross the border into Canada.

*Out of the Past* (1947) has elements of the outlaw couple, but the first postwar example was **Anthony Mann's** *Desperate* (1947), in which a newlywed truck driver (**Steve Brodie**) is inadvertently drawn into a warehouse robbery. He goes on the run with his pregnant wife from the vengeful mobster (**Raymond Burr**), but he is pursued by a shady **private eye**. Mann's second outlaw couple film was *Raw Deal* (1948), highly distinctive because it is an outlaw *ménage à trois*, narrated by one of the two **women** who are in love with escaped convict Joe Sullivan (**Dennis O'Keefe**). Douglas Sirk's *Shockproof* (1949) starred **Cornel Wilde** as an honest parole officer who, falling in love with a femme fatale (Patricia Knight), is slowly drawn into a life of crime. Perhaps the definitive example, and one of the most romantic, was **Nicholas Ray's** *They Live by Night* (1948), which centers on the relationship between Bowie (Farley Granger) and Keechie (Cathy O'Donnell), young, near-innocents on the run because Bowie misguidedly gets involved in a prison break with two hardened criminals and is sucked into their criminal activities. Equally memorable but more downbeat was **Joseph H. Lewis's** *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950), in which the outlaw couple (John Dall and Peggy Cummins) meet in a shooting contest and become fatally addicted to lawlessness.

**Arthur Penn's** *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) was an attempt to see the Depression era of the 1930s through the countercultural lens of the late 1960s, depicting a couple—Clyde (Warren Beatty) and Bonnie (Faye Dunaway)—who are “liberated” criminals at odds with a bankrupt conventional world. It was the inspiration for numerous **neo-noirs**, including Robert Altman's *Thieves Like Us* (1974), a somber **remake** of *They Live by Night* with a more deliberate emphasis on the period setting (the 1930s). Tamra Davis's *Gun Crazy* (1992), a remake of *Gun Crazy*, emphasized the impoverishment and limited horizons of rural America. The action-packed neo-noir *The Getaway* (1972), directed by Sam Peckinpah and starring Steve McQueen as an escaped bank robber and Ali McGraw as his wife, was remade in 1994, directed by Roger Donaldson, starring Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger. Terrence Malik's influential *Badlands* (1973) was based on real-life events and set, loosely, in the late 1950s. It is narrated by the infatuated Holly (Sissy Spacek), emancipated from her mundane existence in South Dakota by

the charismatic young rebel Kit (Martin Sheen), the pair embarking on a trans-state killing spree.

Other notable examples include **David Lynch's** *Wild at Heart* (1990), also indebted to *They Live by Night*, which depicts a small-town young couple Sailor (Nicolas Cage) and Lula (Laura Dern) on the run from the police and **gangsters** hired by Lula's vindictive mother (Diane Ladd). Ridley Scott's *Thelma and Louise* (1991) depicted a female couple (Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon), whose outlaw status is a liberation from patriarchal oppression. Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* (1994) argued that its conscienceless outlaw couple Mickey (Woody Harrelson) and Mallory (Juliette Lewis) were produced by a media-infatuated American society in love with crime and violence. See also MEN; WOMEN.

**OUT OF THE PAST (1947).** *Out of the Past* was adapted by **Daniel Mainwaring** from his own 1946 novel (as Geoffrey Homes) *Build My Gallows High*. **Robert Mitchum** plays the central character, **private eye** Jeff Markham, who is dispatched by crime boss Whit Sterling (**Kirk Douglas**) to bring back his mistress Kathie Moffat (**Jane Greer**) and the \$40,000 she stole. Jeff catches up with Kathie in Acapulco but falls in love and, instead of bringing her back, flees with her to San Francisco. Jeff's former partner Jack Fisher (**Steve Brodie**) spots them, but he is shot by Kathie, who then flees. Jeff narrates these events in flashback to his new girlfriend Ann (Virginia Huston) in the small town of Bridgeport in the Californian Sierras, where he lives under his new name Bailey, just before he is sucked back in to Sterling's affairs. Adroitly compressing the novel's secondary plot convolutions, Mainwaring's screenplay makes the story more inexorably fatalistic and changes the ending so that Jeff and Kathie meet their fate together.

This archetypal story of double- and triple-cross is given depth by the principal performances. Douglas is superb as Whit, cruel and vindictive but also inveigling and fearful; Greer is perfect as Kathie, utterly ruthless and manipulative but never losing the air of helplessness that makes her so attractive. However, it is Mitchum who carries the film, conveying a complex character: intelligent, skeptical, and engaging but also passive, enveloped in a coruscating fatalism that can only comment on his actions, never alter them. He realizes that he has created a romantic fantasy around Kathie, but he is never able to disengage. As she starts to

tell him about her past in one of their first meetings, Jeff merely shrugs saying “Baby, I don’t care” before resuming his embrace.

Equally effective is **Jacques Tourneur’s** expansive, slow-paced direction that creates the space for the central love affair to develop convincingly. The fluidity of **Nicholas Musuraca’s** subtle photography complements the performances, his delicately modulated lighting lending *Out of the Past* a dreamlike quality that also characterizes Jeff’s voice-over narration. When he recounts first seeing Kathie materializing out of the bright Mexican sunlight as he dozes over his beer in the La Mar Azul bar, or coming to him on the moonlit beach, the words and images give her a delicate, ethereal beauty that is overwhelmingly desirable. Like all noir protagonists, Jeff cannot escape his past and realizes that the new life he tried to construct for himself in wholesome Bridgeport is another illusion, as insubstantial as his love for Kathie.

*Out of the Past* was successful on its initial release and made Mitchum into a star and RKO’s leading man. It has become an iconic film that, along with *Double Indemnity* (1944), best exemplifies film noir.

– P –

**PACINO, AL (1940– )**. The son of Italian-American parents and brought up in the South Bronx, New York, Al Pacino is a celebrated and highly influential actor who has made a major contribution to the development of **neo-noir**. Pacino attained stardom through his role as Michael Corleone in *The Godfather* (1972). *Serpico* (1973), narrated in flashback, contained noir elements with Pacino as a countercultural maverick policeman, the first of several roles in which he plays unstable outsiders. In the **cap/er/heist noir** *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), also directed by **Sidney Lumet**, Pacino played a **troubled** Vietnam **veteran**, who takes to crime in order to fund his transgendered partner’s sex-change operation. In *Cruising* (1980), Pacino played Steve Burns, a New York City police officer sent deep undercover to frequent sadomasochistic bars in order to track down a serial killer targeting gay **men**. In true noir fashion, his undercover work leads Burns to question his own sexual orientation and his identity.

Pacino starred in the ultraviolent **remake** of *Scarface* (1983) but did not return to film noir until *Sea of Love* (1989), as a hard-drinking New York City detective trying to catch a serial killer. Now middle-aged,

Pacino's dark, deep-set owl eyes and hoarse, gravelly voice allowed him to play a series of police officers or villains deeply affected by a pervasive weariness, forcing them to question the values they have lived by and whether their lives have been worthwhile. His characters have dysfunctional emotional lives, are unable to form stable relationships, and, although desperate to change direction, cannot. Pacino was compelling in *Carlito's Way* (1993) as a **gangster**, Carlito Brigante, newly released from prison, whose past drags him inexorably back into criminal activities. In *Heat* (1995), he plays the unstable Lieutenant Vincent Hanna, in the process of losing his third marriage but needing his edgy angst to keep him sharp in his pursuit of the master criminal (**Robert De Niro**). Pacino played an idealistic but corrupt mayor in *City Hall* (1996), but a better role came in *Donnie Brasco* (1997), set in the late 1970s, as Lefty Ruggiero, a low-level mafia **hit man** who is continually passed over for promotion to a higher position within the Family and whose personal life is in tatters. He suffers yet another betrayal by Brasco (Johnny Depp), an undercover policeman he treats as a son. In **Christopher Nolan's** *Insomnia* (2002), a remake of the 1997 **Norwegian film noir**, Pacino plays another world-weary cop, Will Dormer, under investigation by the internal affairs unit. He becomes increasingly guilt-ridden and unstable, unable to sleep because of the perpetual Alaskan summer daylight, deeply unsure if his shooting of his partner was really accidental. In *Righteous Kill* (2008), Pacino was the archetypal **corrupt cop**, "Rooster" Fisk, murdering criminals whom he thought would escape justice and becoming addicted to the satisfaction of killing while attempting to frame his partner, the volatile "Turk" Cowan (De Niro).

**PALANCE, JACK (1919–2006).** Born Volodymyr Palahniuk in Pennsylvania of Ukrainian parents, Jack Palance's imposing height, rugged looks, and intimidating glare made him the natural choice for villains, as in his first noir, Elia Kazan's *Panic in the Streets* (1950), in which he played a killer who becomes a plague carrier. He received an Oscar nomination for his supporting role in *Sudden Fear* (1952) as an *homme fatal* who plans to murder his wife (**Joan Crawford**) after he finds that she intends to leave the bulk of her fortune to a charitable foundation. Palance starred in two ill-judged **remakes**: *Man in the Attic* (1953), based on Marie Belloc Lowndes's novel *The Lodger*, which fictionalizes the Jack the Ripper killings and was better made by **Alfred Hitchcock** in 1927, and *I Died a Thousand Times* (1955), an inferior version



of *High Sierra* (1941). Palance played a **hit man** in *Second Chance* (1953), but he had a more substantial role in **Robert Aldrich's** *The Big Knife* (1955), based on Clifford Odets's play about the venalities of the film industry. As Charlie Castle, Palance created a complex and sympathetic character who eventually commits suicide, destroyed by the pressures of stardom.

Palance had a demanding dual role as lookalike brothers in the labored **prison noir** *House of Numbers* (1957), filmed on location in CinemaScope at San Quentin prison. In the late noir *Once a Thief* (1965), he played **Alain Delon's** criminal brother, and he was in two **neo-noirs**: as another hired killer in *Portrait of a Hitman* (1977), a thoughtful performance that gave his character some depth, and a vigilante cop in *The One Man Jury* (1978), who is prepared to go to any lengths to apprehend a serial killer.

**PANORAMA DU FILM NOIR AMÉRICAIN (1941–1953).** Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton's *Panorama du film noir américain (1941–1953)*, published in 1955, was the first book-length study of film noir. Although they were not the first to use the term *film noir*, Borde and Chaumeton's study established film noir as a significant object of critical debate, even though a full text in English did not become available until Paul Hammond's translation in 2002. As the title implies, the *Panorama* sought to map out a distinctive and significant body of films that redefined American crime cinema for the postwar world. Borde and Chaumeton defined noir as a "series," with a common style, atmosphere, and subject matter that was characterized as "oneiric, strange, erotic, ambivalent, and cruel." They were more interested in the emotional or affective qualities of film noir than its **narrative** structures or **visual style**, considering that the disorientation of the spectator, a "specific sense of malaise," was noir's key quality.

Although Borde and Chaumeton considered noir to be a relatively short-lived cycle of films lasting from 1941–53, "a specific moment in sensibility" that was part of a longer cultural history of crime fiction, they regarded Robert Aldrich's *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955) as its culmination. However, in the Postface to the 1979 edition, originally published in *Écran* in 1975, they welcomed another series of **neo-noirs**, "a flourishing renaissance," which displayed "a new kind of morbid heartlessness" in which the **private eye** had been replaced by the flawed or **corrupt cop**.

**PAYNE, JOHN (1912–1989).** Like **Dick Powell**, John Payne was a singer and dancer in musicals who made the transition to film noir once his looks had matured and hardened. He was effective in *The Crooked Way* (1949) as a Silver Star **amnesiac/troubled veteran**, who discovers, to his horror, that in the past life he cannot remember, he was a violent criminal. In three films for **Phil Karlson**—*Kansas City Confidential* (1952), *99 River Street* (1953), and *Hell's Island* (1955)—Payne also played empathetic, confused battlers, struggling against seemingly overwhelming odds. He played a more ambivalent character in *Slightly Scarlet* (1956), based on a **James M. Cain** novel. In *Hidden Fear* (1957), directed by **André De Toth**, Payne played a tough cop who travels to Copenhagen to pursue his quarry.

**PENN, ARTHUR (1922– ).** Arthur Penn was a crucial transitional figure between classic and **neo-noir** through a series of distinctive films made in the 1960s. *Mickey One* (1965) was deeply indebted to the French New Wave and to the experiments with fractured narrative and disjunctive editing by **François Truffaut** and Jean-Luc Godard. Mickey (Warren Beatty) is a second-rate nightclub comic who, becoming involved with a mob in Detroit, flees to Chicago, where he lives as an outcast. His story is presented obliquely, often in disconnected and grotesque images, capturing Mickey's paranoia and his confused, distorted perceptions. *The Chase* (1966) was more conventional, a taut thriller that developed understated elements in the **city exposé films** in its exploration of the racism, corruption, and violence in a small southern town. Penn's major commercial success came with *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), the definitive **outlaw couple** noir, a depiction of the 1930s through a countercultural lens so that the couple, Clyde Barrow (Warren Beatty) and Bonnie Parker (Faye Dunaway), are presented as young, glamorous, and appealing rebels, at odds with a moribund and bankrupt officialdom.

Penn's *Night Moves* (1975) was one of several 1970s neo-noirs that redefined the **private eye**. Penn stated that he was part of a generation "which knows there are no solutions" and described *Night Moves* as a "dark picture" caused by his sense of depression and loss after the Kennedy assassinations. Penn regarded it as a "counter-cultural genre film, a private-eye film about a detective who finds the solution is not solvable." **Gene Hackman** played **Los Angeles** private investigator Harry Moseby, disillusioned, insecure, and disconcertingly detached from events, even his wife's infidelity. Harry's lack of a true purpose

or a moral center, his nameless fears, hopelessness, and impotent anger, are mirrored in the film's oblique style, where scenes often seem to lose their energy and drift onward to no real purpose, only to be abruptly truncated by a disorientating cut. Even the central investigation into the disappearance and subsequent death of the promiscuous Delly (Melanie Griffith) becomes mired in Harry's doubts and lack of resolution. At the end of the case, Harry is trapped on a yacht, ironically named the *Point of View*. Penn's slow reverse zoom shows the craft circling endlessly, a metaphor for a stagnant, directionless contemporary world. *Target* (1985), also starring Hackman, was a conventional political thriller, and *Dead of Winter* (1987) a labored **remake** of *My Name Is Julia Ross* (1945). After this point, Penn directed for television and became an executive producer for the noir **television series** *Law and Order* (1990–). See also NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

**PERFORMANCE (1970).** *Performance* was an innovative and internationally influential British crime film, codirected by Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg. Cammell, a member of London's exclusive bohemian Chelsea Set, was interested in dramatizing the clash of the criminal underworld and 1960s counterculture. The lead singer of the Rolling Stones, Mick Jagger, in his first film, played the reclusive rock star Turner, who has lost his "demon" and retreated into an alternative world of drugs and Eastern mysticism. Turner's dark locks, unnatural pallor, long, thin fingers, and fear of daylight and mirrors mark him as a modern vampire, androgynously sexual in his fluid *ménage à trois* with Pherber (Anita Pallenberg) and Lucy (Michèle Breton). Like Dracula, he awaits the arrival of the victim who will revive his powers: East End hard man Chas Devlin (James Fox), a violent "enforcer" for Harry Flowers (Johnny Shannon), loosely modeled on the notorious **gangster** Ronnie Kray. Chas, on the run after killing another member of the organization, hides out in Turner's house in Notting Hill.

In their encounter, both Turner and Chas have their identities remodeled as Chas, the sadomasochistic performer of sex and violence, is forced, through drugs and clever manipulation, to acknowledge his feminine side; in one pivotal moment, Pherber holds a mirror so that her breast appears on his chest. As Chas, now clothed in hippie attire with ruffled shirt, velvet suit, and long-haired wig, loses himself in drug-induced catatonia, Turner absorbs his hard, male energy and, in his electrifying performance of the song "Message from Turner," symbolically

takes over the East End gang. In the final scene, the identities of Chas and Turner have become interchangeable, suggesting the disturbing proximity, even equivalence, of these two apparently opposite worlds.

*Performance* made the most radical use of the extraordinary freedom offered to British filmmakers by American studios convinced that British culture was in the forefront of change. Roeg's rococo, allusive, and self-reflexive **visual style** with its "cut-up" editing creates a surreal, Nietzschean space in which "all is permitted." Turner's house, designed by Christopher Gibbs, another member of the Chelsea Set, is a psychedelic mausoleum stuffed with Arabian exotica and images of rebel icons, including Jorge Luis Borges. Filmed during the summer of 1968, *Performance*'s experimental style, graphic violence, and above all its notoriously explicit sex scenes meant that its release was delayed for over two years by Warner Bros. executives appalled at the results. However, it has become recognized as an important and influential film that innovatively explores the deep recesses of masculine identity. A cult classic, *Performance* has become an inspirational film for subsequent filmmakers. *See also* BRITISH FILM NOIR; MEN.

**PETERS, JEAN (1926–2000).** Slim, pretty Jean Peters starred in four noirs all released in 1953. In *Vicki*, a **remake** of *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941), she played convincingly an ambitious, ruthless **woman** catapulted from waitressing to celebrity status. In *A Blueprint for Murder* she was an attractive widow eventually revealed to be a murderer despite appearances. She had an antithetical role in *Niagara* as the demure young wife, the foil to Marilyn Monroe's femme fatale. Her strongest role came in **Samuel Fuller's** *Pickup on South Street* as Candy, the low-rent prostitute in her cheap dresses and gaudy jewelry, hard-bitten and streetwise but also with an independence and integrity that makes her character complex and compelling. Her relationship with the pick-pocket (**Richard Widmark**) mixes eroticism, violence, and tenderness. Peters's acting career was cut short in 1955 when she married billionaire Howard Hughes.

**PHANTOM LADY (1944).** *Phantom Lady* was a highly influential early noir that helped to establish its dominant themes and **visual style**. This adroit adaptation of a **Cornell Woolrich** story by Bernard C. Shoenfeld, who worked on a number of noirs, stays close to the original. Scott Henderson (Alan Curtis), a successful businessman, is arrested for the

murder of his wife, but the witness who will prove his innocence—a young woman he met in a bar—cannot be located. Henderson is paranoid and morbidly fatalistic, assailed by doubts about his identity and almost courting his own annihilation in the typical Woolrich manner. It is his secretary, the resourceful, strong-willed Carol “Kansas” Richman (**Ella Raines**), who tries to prove his innocence. In a famous scene she dresses like a prostitute in order to visit a jazz cellar and extract information from musician Cliff Milburn (**Elisha Cook Jr.**). The murderer is Marlow (Franchot Tone), whose dandified dress, “hysterical” headaches, and profession as a modernist sculptor all mark him as both deviant and an *homme fatal*.

Director **Robert Siodmak**’s deliberate pacing and visual style stem from his knowledge of **expressionism**: the scene in which Kansas talks to Henderson in his cell has unmistakable echoes of *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1919). Siodmak also drew on his experience working on **Universal horror films**: Marlow’s neurotic volatility, compulsive inspection of his hands, and preoccupation with his own reflection have clear allusions to *The Hands of Orlac* (1935). Siodmak worked closely with cinematographer **Woody Bredell**, whose chiaroscuro lighting, which often has a velvety texture, subtle and suggestive, helps create a strongly atmospheric thriller that is claustrophobic, intense, and menacing, the perfect visual counterpart to Woolrich’s novel. *Phantom Lady* performed well at the box office and established Siodmak as a key noir director. *See also* VISUAL STYLE; WOMEN.

**PLANER, FRANZ F. (1894–1963)**. The Austrian-born cinematographer Franz Planer was one of many talented **émigré personnel** who fled from Nazi Germany and arrived in Hollywood via Paris. His first noir, *The Chase* (1946), revealed a mastery of **expressionist** style, with minimalist lighting and ominous shadows, in this evocative adaptation of a **Cornell Woolrich** story. Planer received an Oscar nomination for the **boxing noir** *Champion* (1949) starring **Kirk Douglas**, which combines graphic action sequences in the ring with vividly executed scenes in which Douglas is chased and cornered by racketeers. *Criss Cross* (1949) melded evocative location shooting in **Los Angeles**’ Bunker Hill district with delicately rendered chiaroscuro compositions.

Planer’s other noirs are *711 Ocean Drive* (1950), *The Scarf* (1951), *99 River Street* (1953), and *The Long Wait* (1954). *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**POETIC REALISM.** Poetic realism was one of the major cultural influences on film noir. The term *poetic realism* (*Réalisme poétique*) was used to describe a cycle of 1930s French films usually set in working-class or underworld Paris, focusing on crime and/or a doomed romance that, through an atmospheric visual style, elevated ordinary characters and everyday surroundings to the level of “poetry.” The principal sources for poetic realism were French crime writers, notably **Georges Simenon**, but also American ones, especially **James M. Cain**. Although poetic realism stretched from 1931–40, the main period was 1936–39, dominated by the collaboration between scriptwriter Jacques Prévert, director Marcel Carné, and star **Jean Gabin**, which produced seven films, including the two considered to be definitive: *Le Quai des brumes* (*Port of Shadows*, 1938) and *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939). The latter was **remade** (with a happy ending) as *The Long Night* (1947), directed by **Anatole Litvak** and starring Henry Fonda, one of a number of American noirs that were directly indebted to poetic realism.

Aesthetically, poetic realism was the “bridge” between **expressionism** and film noir and several **émigrés**—**Fritz Lang**, Max Ophüls, **Robert Siodmak**, and **Billy Wilder**—made films in Paris before going to America. Its **visual style** deployed softened, less severe chiaroscuro lighting and realistic rather than abstract renderings of the **city**; its atmospheric use of shadows and fog, rain-soaked cobblestones reflecting the garish signs of neon-lit nightclubs, narrow streets, and dark, claustrophobic alleyways, anticipate film noir. Although poetic realism’s slow pace and preference for long takes, reframing rather than cutting in deep-focus settings, were not reproduced in the faster style of American thrillers, its typical protagonists prefigure film noir. The principal characters are the “lost girl” in her beret and shiny raincoat, the prototypical femme fatale, and the angst-ridden male protagonist (usually Gabin), confused, passive, and introspective, an alienated outsider who combined an outward toughness with an acute, even morbid vulnerability. More pessimistic and fatalistic than film noir, the doom-laden protagonist of poetic realism cannot escape his past nor avoid his ineluctable death.

Other poetic realist films are *La Chienne* (*The Bitch*, 1931), *La Nuit du carrefour* (*Night at the Crossroads*, 1932), *La Rue sans nom* (*Street without a Name*, 1934), *Les Bas-fonds* (*The Lower Depths*, aka *Underworld*, 1936), *La Belle équipe* (*They Were Five*, 1936), *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (1936), *Pépé le Moko* (1937), *La Bête humaine* (*The*

*Human Beast*, aka *Judas Was a Woman*, 1938), and *Remorques* (*Stormy Waters*, 1940). See also FRENCH FILM NOIR; MEN; WOMEN.

**POINT BLANK (1967).** John Boorman's *Point Blank* has been identified as the first true **neo-noir**, reflecting back on the conventions and scenarios of classic noir but through a modernist sensibility informed by the narrative and thematic experimentation of the European New Wave directors. Boorman was particularly indebted to Alain Resnais's *L'Année dernière à Marienbad* (*The Last Year at Marienbad*, 1961) with its exploration of the ambiguities of desire, memory, and identity. Arriving at a time when American studios were unsure of their direction, Boorman was given almost complete creative control, if with a modest budget of \$3 million. *Point Blank* was based on the 1962 **hard-boiled** thriller *The Hunter* by **Donald E. Westlake** writing as Richard Stark. Boorman retains Westlake's basic structure in which a criminal, Walker (Lee Marvin), shot at point-blank range and left for dead by his unfaithful wife Lynne (Sharon Acker) and his partner Mal Reese (John Vernon) in the disused prison on Alcatraz Island, exacts his revenge, determined to hunt down Lynne and Mal and recover the \$93,000 he is "owed" by the shadowy Organization. However, Boorman deliberately makes it unclear if Walker actually survived the shooting (a seeming impossibility) and thus whether the events we witness are actually happening or whether they are Walker's compensatory hallucination just before he dies. Walker—we never learn his first name—is played by Marvin as an impenetrable, implacable force, whose actions seem subject to the dream logic of desire, not of reality.

Boorman relocated the action to **Los Angeles** because he "wanted my setting to be hard, cold and in a sense futuristic. I wanted an empty, sterile world, for which Los Angeles was absolutely right." Shooting with a 40 mm Panavision lens and low-key lighting that bleached the colors, Boorman updated the noir style. His jarring angles and crosscutting, sudden outbursts of unanticipated violence, and unexplained actions all enforce this central hesitation between dream and reality. In particular, Boorman frequently repeats events (typical of dreams), often through an innovative deployment of flashbacks, creating a feeling of "*déjà vu*. Everything that happens to Walker has happened to him before. . . . The impression is that he is caught in a revolving door, that his life is repeating itself." Boorman's sound design was equally innovative with

overlapping dialogue, disembodied monologues, and sudden amplified sound effects, coupled with an experimental score that was more tonal than melodic. The conclusion returns to Alcatraz, reinforcing the sense that Walker's life is circular and his revenge a recurring nightmare, the delusion of a man already dead. Thus Boorman turns an apparently archetypal revenge thriller inside out, transforming it into an **existentialist** narrative about the nature of desire, the fallibility of memory, and the fragility of identity in the face of a contingent and meaningless world, expressing the blank pointlessness of modern existence.

The film was **remade** in 1999 as *Payback*, directed by Brian Helgeland, with Mel Gibson in the principal role. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

**POLANSKI, ROMAN (1933–)**. Born Rajmund Roman Liebling in Paris of Polish parents, Roman Polanski is an eclectic and nomadic writer-director, one of a number of modernist European filmmakers who made their mark on film noir. *Nóz w wodzie* (*Knife in the Water*, 1962), made in Poland, was a remarkably assured first feature. The story of a hitchhiker picked up by an unhappily married couple going for a sailing trip sharply delineates the male rivalries and sexual tensions that characterize all Polanski's work. It was nominated for an Academy Award (for Best Foreign Film) and gained Polanski an international reputation.

Supported by producer Michael Klinger, Polanski made two **British films noir**: *Repulsion* (1965) and *Cul-de-sac* (1966), both jointly scripted with his long-term writing partner Gérard Brach. *Repulsion*, starring Catherine Deneuve as Carole Ledoux, a Belgian immigrant living in London, was a disturbing study in alienation and progressive psychological trauma. In a surrealist scene, Carol imagines that hands are coming out of the walls trying to catch her and that a man is trying to rape her. In terror, she kills her landlord and her suitor but has no sense of what she has done. *Cul-de-sac* was an archetypal **gangsters-on-the-run** story, but Polanski's Absurdist sensibility—influenced by Samuel Beckett in the figure of the mysterious boss, Katelbach, who never appears—meant it became a typically intense study of sexual jealousy, psychological breakdown, and **existentialist** despair.

Polanski's masterpiece was *Chinatown* (1974), one of the most significant and visually accomplished of the modernist **neo-noirs**. The pacing, careful creation of mood and atmosphere, wide, panoramic



compositions, and long takes that are typical of Polanski's work as a whole here find their apogee. Polanski made *Le Locataire* (*The Tenant*, 1976) in France, combining again with Brach to adapt Roland Torpor's 1964 novel, returning to the claustrophobic, paranoid psychological territory of *Repulsion*. Polanski himself played the main protagonist, a diffident introvert who rents a dingy apartment in Paris where the previous tenant committed suicide. He becomes convinced that his neighbors and landlord are trying to make him follow suit.

In 1978 Polanski was arrested in Los Angeles and pleaded guilty to the charge of having "unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor" and, released after a psychiatric evaluation, fled to France. He is unable to return to America without risking arrest and imprisonment but has continued to pursue a filmmaking career through international coproductions. Polanski was arrested in Switzerland on 26 September 2009, and the United States formally requested his extradition on 23 October. At press time he was under house arrest at his chalet in Gstaad.

In 1988 Polanski filmed *Frantic*, a routine thriller with occasional noir elements, but *Bitter Moon* (1992), a further collaboration with Brach, set in another claustrophobic setting on board a cruise liner, returned to the familiar territory of destructive, sadistic relationships, as did *Death and the Maiden* (1994). *The Ninth Gate* (1999) was a noir **hybrid**, a horror-mystery thriller with supernatural elements. Johnny Depp stars as Dean Corso, a shady rare book dealer who is hired to search for the three copies of a 17th-century text believed to be able to summon the Devil. Although often visually stunning, its range of locations lacked the intensity and depth of Polanski's best work that added a distinctive dimension to film noir.

**POLGLASE, VAN NEST (1898–1968).** Van Nest Polglase entered the industry in 1919, moving to RKO in 1932 as supervising art director working closely with **Albert D'Agostino**. Polglase worked on *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940) and *Citizen Kane* (1941), both highly influential films that used **expressionist** sets to create an unsettling world. Polglase moved to Columbia in 1943 and was largely responsible, under the supervising direction of Stephen Goosson, for creating the decadent sophistication of *Gilda* (1946), filmed on two sets, an Art Moderne gambling casino and an opulent Buenos Aires mansion. Polglase's designs for his final noir, *Slightly Scarlet* (1956), shot in color, showed a similar attention to detail in his creation of the crime boss's tastelessly gaudy mansion.

Polglase's other noirs are *Suspicion* (1941), *The Crooked Way* (1949), and *The Man Who Cheated Himself* (1951). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**POLONSKY, ABRAHAM (1910–1999).** A moderately successful novelist, Abraham Polonsky joined **Enterprise Productions** and wrote the Oscar-nominated original screenplay for *Body and Soul* (1947), directed by **Robert Rossen**, a powerful story of a boxer (**John Garfield**) corrupted by greed and alienated from his loved ones, who finally turns against his promoter/gangster partner. Polonsky adapted and also directed Ira Wolfert's socialist novel *Tucker's People* as *Force of Evil* (1948). Garfield was again the star as a gambling syndicate lawyer in another trenchant indictment of American "enterprise."

Polonsky was attracted to film noir because he thought that "the intellectual content is absorbed into what people think is a dark, criminal type of picture anyhow and so there's an acceptance of it." He therefore judged film noir to be an excellent vehicle for the promotion of a left-wing critique. However, he was unable to continue working because, having never made a secret of his membership of the Communist Party and been politically active, including an association with the radical journal *Hollywood Quarterly*, he was indicted and appeared before one of the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings in 1951. After refusing to "name names," Polonsky was placed on the **blacklist** for 17 years. He was only able to work as an uncredited screenwriter operating under "fronts," as with the screenplay for *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959), adapted from the **William P. McGivern** novel. Polonsky emphasizes the novel's indictment of racism, and the climactic ending in which the two criminals are blown up was a metaphor for the destructive nature of capitalism. Polonsky was finally able to cowrite the screenplay for **Don Siegel's** *Madigan* (1968) under his own name, a bleak **neo-noir** whose themes are as much **existential** as social. See also FILM GRIS; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**PORTMAN, ERIC (1903–1969).** Eric Portman was the dominant male actor of **British film noir**. He specialized in tormented, introspective, sexually thwarted figures, first surfacing in the wartime melodramas *A Canterbury Tale* (1944) and *Great Day* (1945). This persona was developed in a series of postwar noirs beginning with *Wanted for Murder* (1946), in which he played a psychologically disturbed serial killer. In

*Daybreak* (1946) he was cast as a doomed, **Gabinesque** figure who eventually commits suicide. In *Dear Murderer* (1947), he was seemingly more suave and assured, relishing the ingenious ways in which he can torment his wife's lover before killing him, but he is finally undone by his wife's ruthlessness. In all these films—and in *The Mark of Cain* (1948), *Corridor of Mirrors* (1948), and *The Spider and the Fly* (1949) that were set in the past—Portman plays a man unable to adjust to the new demands of peacetime, one who cannot achieve lasting or fulfilling relationships. Portman continued to play similar lonely, unsatisfied figures throughout the remainder of his career, notably in *The Naked Edge* (1961), *West 11* (1963), and *Deadfall* (1968). As he lost his looks, Portman's characters were increasingly seedy and socially marginal, with the homosexual element, latent in his earlier performances, becoming more explicit.

Portman's other noirs are *Child in the House* (1956) and *The Man Who Finally Died* (1963). See also POETIC REALISM.

**POSTERS.** During the period of classic noir (1940–59), all the major studios engaged in extensive marketing and promotion of their films through graphic posters. Films noir often stimulated some of their best work, which closely resembled the artwork and colors of the paperback fiction covers that continued throughout the cycle. The muted palette of William Rose, an accomplished illustrator for *Collier's* and *American Weekly*, produced some of the most distinctive posters for RKO, including *Born to Kill* (1947), in which the stony features of tough guy **Lawrence Tierney**, with the ubiquitous dangling cigarette, stare out at the viewer above an alluring image of the femme fatale (**Claire Trevor**), in the customary long, sheathlike dress, with a vignette of a murder scene in the bottom left-hand corner. Occasionally, the **woman** is represented as the tough guy, as in the poster for *Gun Crazy* (1950), in which Laurie Starr (Peggy Cummins)—“She was more than any man could handle!”—is depicted holding a smoking gun in both hands and with a cigarette in her mouth. This combination of sex, crime, and violence was the basis for the marketing of film noir, a reminder that although noirs are now frequently seen as sophisticated adult artifacts, they were offered to contemporaneous audiences as thrilling popular entertainment. The ways in which films noir were advertised reveal that the target audience was the same as for **hard-boiled** fiction: urban, working-class males. The poster for *Detour* (1945) was highly typical: a montage of graphic

scenes depicting sex and death next to the caption: “He went searching for love. . . . But Fate forced a DETOUR to Revelry. . . . Violence. . . . Mystery!” On the right-hand side of the poster, Ann Savage and Tom Neal lean on the same lamppost, he upright and wary and she cool, confident, and suggestively pressed against the metal.

The poster for *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) trumpeted the film as “TWO-FISTED, HARDBOILED, TERRIFIC!” between a two-shot of a tough, unshaven **Dick Powell** gazing into the brazen eyes of the femme fatale (Claire Trevor) and another of him struggling with the hulking Moose Molloy. Its copy continues: “MEET the year’s biggest movie surprise. . . . Dick Powell playing a new kind of role. . . . In a murder-mystery that packs as big a punch as the NEW Dick Powell!” As in this instance, the star’s image was usually the principal selling device. The posters for *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946) emphasized the hot-blooded romance between its stars (**John Garfield** and Lana Turner): “Their Love Was a Flame that Destroyed!” and the reputation of the **James M. Cain** novel on which it was based: “The Book that Blazed to Best-Seller Fame!” *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), with no major stars, was advertised as “**Mickey Spillane**’s LATEST H-BOMB,” offering “BLOOD-RED KISSES!” and “WHITE-HOT THRILLS!” Often the main protagonists stare out at some undisclosed danger, as in the poster for *The Chase* (1946), in which Robert Cummings and Michele Morgan seemed trapped by a searchlight beam on precipitous stairs. Noirs that deal with disordered states and **amnesia** produce some of the most inventive work: the posters for *Somewhere in the Night* (1946) and *The Scarf* (1951) have complex montages organized around the haunted eyes of the male figure. Photomontages are occasionally used, as with *The Underworld Story* (1950) and **Phil Karlson**’s *Scandal Sheet* (1952), both stories about newspapers.

Overall, the noir posters present a relatively crude version of their subject, but their striking graphics and design no doubt contributed to the films’ box-office success and remind us of their intended audience.

**THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE (1946).** Tay Garnett’s film for MGM was the third version of **James M. Cain**’s 1934 novel. The first was *Le Dernier tournant* (*The Last Turn*, 1939), directed by Pierre Chenal, a significant **French film noir** with extensive nighttime scenes and chiaroscuro lighting. Luchino Visconti directed the second version *Ossessione* (*Obsession*) in 1942, an important **Italian film noir**,

transferring the action to the Po Valley and filmed in what became the neo-realist manner with extensive location shooting. Both versions show a pronounced interest in transferring the milieu of Cain's story to a specific national context. Neither was influential because they were not shown in America during the war; indeed, distribution of *Ossessione* was blocked by MGM as an unauthorized adaptation.

MGM had optioned the novel in 1935 but did not proceed until Paramount's *Double Indemnity* (1944) showed that the anticipated  **censorship** problems of Cain's "hot" story about adulterous passion and murder could be circumvented. Although the tale is narrated in flashback, Garnett's direction and Sidney Wagner's cinematography use few noir stylistic elements, keeping to the high-key MGM style in which scenes are evenly lit and classically composed, thus ensuring that the focus is on the glamorous stars and their actions. The power of the MGM version, particularly in the repeated scenes on a deserted nighttime beach, comes through its direct presentation of an irresistible and destructive passion between charismatic drifter Frank Chambers (**John Garfield**) and Cora (Lana Turner), the much younger wife of California roadside café owner Nick Smith (Cecil Kellaway). Nick is an unattractive figure, and although his murder is brutal and heartless, Cora and Frank remain sympathetic characters. Frank is basically decent and Cora, who has been relentlessly pursued by men since she was 14, had taken refuge in a marriage that offers security and stability. However, their subsequent marriage is blighted by the aftermath of Nick's death, and when they finally trust each other, Cora dies in a car accident and Frank is accused of her murder. In the final upbeat scene, he becomes reconciled to his fate because he hopes they will be reunited after death.

The film was **remade** in 1981, directed by Bob Rafelson, scripted by David Mamet, and starring **Jack Nicholson** and Jessica Lange. A **retro-noir**, it lacks the ambience of the original, and although the postcode sex scenes are far more explicit, their erotic charge is reduced. The key difference is in the ending, where there is no quasi-religious redemption but a highly secular desolation. *The Postman* continues to be remade: *Szenvedély (Passion)*, directed by György Fehér, was released in Hungary in 1998, and a Malaysian version, directed by U-Wei Haji Saari, was released in 2004.

**POWELL, DICK (1904–1963).** Dick Powell was a popular song-and-dance man in prewar Warner Bros. musical comedies, but he managed

the transition to noir tough guy, beginning with *Murder, My Sweet* (1944). As Philip Marlowe, Powell was laconic and hard-bitten, with a well-timed delivery of one-liners but also displaying a vulnerable humanity. The success of *Murder, My Sweet* and the public's acceptance of Powell in his new guise led directly to *Cornered* (1945), with the same production team: director **Edward Dmytryk**, producer **Adrian Scott**, and screenwriter John Paxton. Powell's characterization is more driven, playing a Canadian pilot recently released from a prisoner-of-war camp and intent on avenging the death of his French war bride. He eventually beats the perpetrator to death in one of the brief "trances" that have afflicted him since his incarceration. Powell is convincingly gruff and laconic but also emotional enough to cry at the memory of his wife. Powell's suave **gangster** in *Johnny O'Clock* (1947) was less interesting, but in *Cry Danger* (1951) he played another vulnerable tough guy, framed for a robbery he did not commit. In *Pitfall* (1948) Powell had a more subtle role as a suburban professional who feels jaded and stifled in what he views as a humdrum existence and whose fling with an attractive woman (**Lizabeth Scott**) nearly proves his undoing. Powell also worked in **radio** and **television** noir through his production company Four-Star Playhouse, notably making *Richard Diamond* (1957–60). See also LANGUAGE; PRIVATE EYE.

**PRECURSORS.** Precursors are those films that predate the main American noir cycle (1940–59) but which anticipate the thematic or visual elements that would become central to the development of film noir. Josef von Sternberg's *Underworld* (1927)—from a **Ben Hecht** story—and *Thunderbolt* (1929), both starring George Bancroft as a mobster, were the first crime films to concentrate on the gangland milieu and explore the themes of corruption, alienation, and betrayal that characterize noir. Other prewar **gangster** films with noir elements include: *Quick Millions* (1931) and *Blood Money* (1933), both directed by Rowland Brown, *The Beast of the City* (1932), and *Manhattan Melodrama* (1934). Rouben Mamoulian's *City Streets* (1931), adapted from a **Dashiell Hammett** story, has a lush **visual style** with chiaroscuro lighting that creates a noir world of bribery and double-cross. Two of Warner Bros.' prewar social realist films, produced by Hal B. Wallis and directed by Mervyn LeRoy, had noir thematic elements. In *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932), Paul Muni played a World War I **troubled veteran** who is sentenced for a crime he did not commit and becomes disillusioned and

fatalistic, summed up in his final line, “I steal.” **Edward G. Robinson** starred as John Allen in *Two Seconds* (1932), wrongly imprisoned for a murder he did not commit and about to be executed. In flashback, Allen reveals that he is guilty of another crime: killing his faithless wife.

Other precursors explored ordinary men corrupted by crime. In *Payment Deferred* (1932), Charles Laughton plays a bank clerk desperate for money to pay his family’s bills, who murders his young nephew after he refuses to make him a loan and is destroyed by his crime. *Crime without Passion* (1934), directed, produced, and written by **Ben Hecht** and Charles MacArthur and photographed by **Lee Garmes**, starred Claude Rains as a prominent lawyer who shoots his girlfriend during a quarrel and loses his sanity trying to escape the consequences. *The Scoundrel* (1935), made by the same trio, starred Noël Coward as a sadistically exploitative New York publisher, who, after dying in a plane crash, is returned to life in order to try to find someone who will mourn his death. **Fritz Lang’s** *Fury* (1936) and *You Only Live Once* (1937) use low-key lighting and unusual camera angles, derived from German **expressionism**, to explore the fate of ordinary, average Americans who are imprisoned for crimes they did not commit and who represent sympathetic victims of the tensions and stresses of the Depression era.

**PREMINGER, OTTO (1905–1986).** Like **Edgar G. Ulmer** and **Billy Wilder**, Otto Preminger was an **émigré** Jewish-Viennese director who brought a distinctive European sensibility to film noir. Preminger had been a successful stage director working with Max Reinhardt before moving to America in 1935 to work for Twentieth Century-Fox. Fiercely autonomous and wanting control of all aspects of the film-making process, Preminger had several battles with Head of Production **Darryl F. Zanuck**, beginning with his first film noir, *Laura* (1944). *Laura* was highly successful and established a recognizable **visual style**, the “Preminger touch,” where the long takes and fluid camerawork are used analytically to explore moral ambiguity and the ambivalence of guilt and innocence. Preminger used **Dana Andrews**, the obsessive policeman in *Laura*, again in *Fallen Angel* (1946) as a bogus medium and in *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950) as a **corrupt cop** in order to deepen his analysis of moral ambiguity. Like another **émigré**, **Fritz Lang**, Preminger valued Andrews’s ability to project the hidden darkness of the all-American male. **Gene Tierney**, the other enigmatic star of *Laura*, also played in *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, and in *Whirlpool* (1949), as

a wealthy woman suffering from kleptomania who is manipulated by a corrupt hypnotist (José Ferrer) so that she becomes the suspect for the murder he has committed.

*The Thirteenth Letter* (1951), a **remake** of Henri-Georges Clouzot's *Le Corbeau* (*The Raven*, 1943), projected Preminger's exploration of moral ambiguity onto an entire community in a small French-Canadian village, the dénouement revealing the often perverse depths of human motivations and actions. *Angel Face* (1953), which Preminger produced and directed for RKO, was another twisted and thwarted love story between the gullible working-class Frank Jessup (**Robert Mitchum**) and the exploitative and unstable heiress Diane Tremayne (Jean Simmons), an obsessive relationship that leads inexorably to their deaths.

Preminger became an independent in 1953 but did not make another American noir, with the partial exception of the Oscar-nominated *Anatomy of a Murder* (1959), a courtroom drama in which the motivations of the killer (Ben Gazzara) are the subject of intense debate. Preminger's one **British film noir**, *Bunny Lake Is Missing* (1965), also displayed his characteristic themes of obsession, moral ambiguity, and corrupt desires.

**PRISON FILMS NOIR.** As with **boxing noirs**, prison noirs were in part a revival of the prewar Warner Bros. subgenre that included *Numbered Men* (1930), *Each Dawn I Die* (1939), or *Mutiny in the Big House* (1939), and the noir **precursor**, *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932).

The first postwar prison noir was *San Quentin* (1946), in which **Lawrence Tierney** plays an ex-con and war veteran who has founded the Inmate's Welfare League. He feels obliged to hunt down a vicious inmate who absconds by abusing the League's efforts. The powerful and influential *Brute Force* (1947) starred **Burt Lancaster** as the leader of a group of convicts who attempt to break free from the Nazi-style regime of Captain Munsey (Hume Cronyn). *Caged* (1950) was unusual in its focus on a woman's prison, with Eleanor Parker playing a wrongly accused innocent who learns that "in this cage you get tough or you get killed." In *Convicted* (1950), **Glenn Ford** played the falsely accused character, with **Broderick Crawford** as the liberal governor. The outstanding mid-1950s prison film was **Don Siegel's** *Riot in Cell Block 11* (1954) that, like *Brute Force*, sided with the aggrieved inmates rather than the sadistic or corrupt authorities. *Black Tuesday* (1955), starring



**Edward G. Robinson**, and *Behind the High Wall* (1956) were more routine prison escape films, as was *The Last Mile* (1959), enlivened by Mickey Rooney's energetic performance as a hardened convict trying to escape Death Row.

Prison films after this period tend to be action adventures, lacking the fatalism and sense of oppression that would qualify them as noir; hence prison **neo-noirs** are rare. Alan Parker's *Midnight Express* (1978) was a dark and brooding tale about a young American student (Brad Davis) incarcerated in a brutal Turkish jail for smuggling hashish. *Brokedown Palace* (1999) was also about foreign incarceration for drug smuggling, but it featured two young women trapped in a grim Thailand jail.

Other prison noirs are *Canon City* (1948), *The Story of Molly X* (1949), *Under the Gun* (1951), *Cell 2455 Death Row* (1955), *Gang Busters* (1955), *Women's Prison* (1955), *The Steel Jungle* (1956), *House of Numbers* (1957), and *Revolt in the Big House* (1958).

**PRIVATE EYES.** With his belted trench coat, fedora, and dangling cigarette, the private eye is one of the most recognizable male characters in film noir. The private eye was the rugged, self-reliant, individualistic frontiersman urbanized, acting as a cultural middleman, poised between respectability and the underworld. An outsider, not bound by official codes and conventions, the private eye was ideally placed to describe society's workings. Film noir's private eyes are almost always drawn from **hard-boiled fiction**, beginning with **Dashiell Hammett's** The Continental Op in 1923 and then the abrasive, cynical Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon* (1930). **Raymond Chandler's** Philip Marlowe was the most influential figure, intelligent, cultivated, and sensitive but also tough, hard-drinking, and good with his fists. Above all Marlow is a "man of honor" who takes on the challenge of investigating modern urban America: "down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid." By contrast, the third archetype, **Mickey Spillane's** Mike Hammer, was a self-appointed lone avenger, as violent as the criminals he pursues.

The first important incarnation of the private eye in film noir was **Humphrey Bogart's** Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941). Bogart's Spade is close to Hammett's original, an egotistical competitor, hard, sarcastic, and motivated by the desire to win out over everyone rather than having a commitment to truth or justice. However, Bogart projects a greater vulnerability in the altered closing scenes. **Dick Pow-**

ell's incarnation of Marlowe in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) was close to Chandler's conception of the modern urban knight whose toughness hid a belief in justice and the protection of the weak, clinging to a hope that things can be made better. Bogart's incarnation in *The Big Sleep* (1946) was more hard-bitten, wary, and tough, but also with a capacity to fall in love. Spillane's Mike Hammer was first filmed in *I, the Jury* (1953) starring Biff Elliot, but the definitive version came in *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), played by Ralph Meeker, where the figure is subjected to a withering critique as chauvinist, emotionally repressed, morally bankrupt, and unaware of the implications of his actions. Other private eyes are often victims rather than heroic figures, as in **Robert Mitchum's** Jeff Bailey in *Out of the Past* (1947) or Bradford Galt (Mark Stevens) in *The Dark Corner* (1946), caught in a complex web of intrigue that he cannot fathom: "I feel all dead inside. I'm backed up in a dark corner and I don't know who's hitting me."

**Neo-noirs** tended to undermine further the image of the honorable private eye. *Chandler* (1971), *Klute* (1971), *Hickey and Boggs* (1972), *The Long Goodbye* (1973), *Shamus* (1973), *Night Moves* (1975), *The Drowning Pool* (1975), *The Late Show* (1977), and *The Big Fix* (1978) all depicted bemused, inept investigators, lost and alienated in a world they no longer understand and are therefore powerless to master, adrift in a society that no longer has a real place for them. Even in *Chinatown* (1974), set in the 1930s, the private eye is shown as hopelessly out of his depth. After the 1970s, the private eye is an anachronism, only featured in **retro-noirs**, for instance, *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975), *Angel Heart* (1987), or *Dead Again* (1991).

Other private eye noirs include: *The Maltese Falcon* (1931), *The Spider* (1945), *Blackmail* (1947), *The Brasher Doubloon* (1947), *High Tide* (1947), *Lady in the Lake* (1947), *I Love Trouble* (1947), *Philo Vance's Gamble* (1947), *Riff-Raff* (1947), *World for Ransom* (1954), *My Gun Is Quick* (1957), *Harper* (1966), *Shamus* (1973), *The Big Sleep* (1978), *I, the Jury* (1982), and *Poodle Springs* (1998). See also MEN; RADIO; TELEVISION SERIES.

**PULP FICTION (1994).** *Pulp Fiction* has become a contemporary classic, a highly influential, much imitated, quintessentially postmodern **neo-noir** that helped to confirm **Quentin Tarantino** as a celebrated director. In addition to winning the Palme D'Or at Cannes in 1994, *Pulp Fiction* won an Oscar for Best Original Screenplay (by Tarantino

and Roger Avary) and was nominated for Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor (John Travolta), Best Supporting Actress (Uma Thurman), and Actor (Samuel L. Jackson). It was also a huge commercial success, “crossing-over” from independent to mainstream cinema and rapidly establishing itself as a cult film. *Pulp Fiction* displays Tarantino’s characteristic profusion of allusions, verbally and visually, to an eclectic range of popular culture; not only **hard-boiled** (pulp) **fiction** and classic film noir (notably *Kiss Me Deadly*, 1955) but also European art cinema, Hong Kong action cinema, Italian pulp horror (especially Mario Bava’s *Black Sabbath*, 1963), and **French film noir**, particularly **Jean-Pierre Melville’s** *Le Doulos* (*The Finger Man*, 1963) whose complex narrative Tarantino so admired.

*Pulp Fiction* was originally conceived as three separate films shot by different directors but ended up as one film consisting of three distinct but interrelated and overlapping stories, presented nonchronologically, among which the central characters circulate. The stories are book-ended by a hold-up in a diner by two down-and-outs Pumpkin (Tim Roth) and Honey Bunny (Amanda Plummer). Tarantino deliberately disrupted the expected narrative sequence to stimulate an audience to try to make sense of events, thus affording a fresh approach to familiar noir conventions.

Tarantino wanted his modestly budgeted film to have epic qualities, enticing major stars to take part and having cinematographer Andrej Sekula shoot on lustrous 50 ASA film stock. A major item in the budget was the design of the 1950s retro restaurant Jack Rabbit Slim’s, to which **hit man** Vincent (Travolta) takes Mia (Thurman), the wife of mobster Marsellus (Ving Rhames). But *Pulp Fiction* is not a conventional **retro-noir**, taking place (as its diverse soundtrack suggests) in a continuous postwar present. Its eclectic mode playfully mingles comedy with noir seriousness, necessitating violent changes in tone, as when Mia overdoses on heroin or where Vincent accidentally shoots an informant, creating a bloody mess that has to be cleaned up by Winston Wolf (Harvey Keitel). In this way *Pulp Fiction* also makes exacting demands on its audience. Tarantino commented: “I wanted to take these genre characters and put them in a real-life situation.” *Pulp Fiction* ends with Vincent’s partner Jules (Samuel L. Jackson) sparing the lives of Pumpkin and Honey Bunny, which may indicate, as Tarantino argued, that it is a film about mercy and redemption but which also avoids ending with the downbeat (and startling) death of Vincent, shot by the ag-

ing prizefighter Butch (Bruce Willis), or with the potentially excessive sentimentality of Butch's escape to freedom. *See also* NARRATIVE PATTERNS; VISUAL STYLE.

– Q –

**LE QUAI DES BRUMES (PORT OF SHADOWS, 1938).** Along with *Le Jour se lève* (1939), *Le Quai des brumes* was the most distinguished example of **poetic realism** that strongly influenced the development of film noir. Both films were directed by Marcel Carné, scripted by Jacques Prévert, here adapting a novel by Pierre Mac Orlan, and starred **Jean Gabin**. In *Quai*, Gabin plays Jean, an army deserter, a **troubled veteran**, scarred by his fighting in Indo-China. He tells the truck driver who gives him a lift: “You’re left standing there, not understanding anything anymore. It’s like everything had melted away.” On the run after an undisclosed killing committed “in anger,” Jean drifts toward Le Havre, where he meets the 17-year-old Nelly (Michèle Morgan), and they have a brief affair. Nelly is no femme fatale but a “lost girl” desperate to escape the mean circumstances of her life but powerless to do so. Jean’s concern for Nelly makes him pass up the opportunity to leave on a ship bound for South America. He kills her guardian Zabel (Michel Simon) only to be gunned down by local hoodlum Lucien (Pierre Brasseur) in a neurotic act of vengeance. Eugen Schüfftan’s atmospheric cinematography creates a gloomy, foreboding atmosphere that intensifies the somber mood, a slow, inexorable fatalism in which moments of happiness penetrate a deeper darkness than American noir could usually contemplate. Jean, like all classic noir heroes, is a marked man who cannot escape his past. *See also* EXISTENTIALISM; FRENCH FILM NOIR; MEN.

– R –

**RADIO.** Radio noir series were predominantly adaptations of **hard-boiled fiction**, beginning with the mystery anthology *Suspense* (1942–62) produced by William Spier that included adaptations of **Dashiell Hammett**, **Raymond Chandler**, and other crime writers. Spier also produced *The Adventures of Sam Spade* (1946–51) starring **Howard Duff**,

a weekly broadcast that was very popular. *The Fat Man* (1946–50) was loosely based on Hammett’s Continental Op, but the stories—often scripted by Lawrence Klee—were written especially for radio; J. Scott Smart played the hefty crime fighter, Bradford Runyon. A Chandler-based series, *The Adventures of Philip Marlowe* (1947–51), adapted by Milton Geiger, starred Van Heflin and later Gerald Mohr. Although the dominant figure in radio noir series was the **private eye**—including the highly successful *Martin Kane, Private Detective* (1949–52) with William Gargan and two series starring **Dick Powell**: *Rogue’s Gallery* (1945–46), where he played gumshoe Richard Rogue, and *Richard Diamond, Private Detective* (1949–53)—there were other types of investigator. *Crime Doctor* (1940–47) was about a criminal psychiatrist, and Frank Lovejoy, a seasoned radio performer, appeared in *Nightbeat* (1949–52) as Chicago reporter Randy Stone, roaming the nighttime streets in search of a “special” story.

*Dragnet* (1949–57) starred Jack Webb as **Los Angeles** Police Department Sergeant Joe Friday, apparently investigating actual cases in which “only the names have been changed”; **Dan Duryea** starred as hard-bitten Lieutenant Lou Dana in *The Man from Homicide* (1951). *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* (1949–62), about an insurance investigator, had five changes of lead including **Edmond O’Brien**; *I Was a Communist for the FBI* (1952–53) starred **Dana Andrews** as undercover agent Matt Cvetic who infiltrated the top echelons of the Communist Party. Lucille Fletcher’s *Sorry, Wrong Number*, first broadcast on 25 May 1943, the compelling story of a trapped woman who believes, rightly, that she is about to be murdered, was highly distinctive and often repeated. It was filmed in 1948 starring **Barbara Stanwyck**. Increasing production costs and competition from television made radio noir rare after the mid-1950s. *The Zero Hour* (1973) was an unsuccessful attempt at revival.

Others include: *Johnny Madero, Pier 23* (1947), *Pat Novak, For Hire* (1947–49), *Box 13* (1948), *Jeff Reagan, Investigator* (1948–50), *Crime Fighters* (1949–56), and *The Lineup* (1950–53). See also TELEVISION SERIES.

**RAFT, GEORGE (1895–1980).** After his role as the coin-tossing henchman in *Scarface* (1932), George Raft became one of Warner Bros.’ major prewar stars, specializing in **gangster** roles. With a limited range as an actor, Raft concentrated on honing the lineaments of a type: immaculately dressed, with repeated gestures and an unruffled cool, the

way he played Ed Beaumont in the first version of **Dashiell Hammett's** *The Glass Key* (1935), a noir **precursor**. Raft was a poor judge of which roles to take and turned down *High Sierra* (1941), *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), and *Double Indemnity* (1944), losing him status at Warner Bros. and elsewhere. His typical noir role was as the man of integrity battling against the odds, determined to find out the truth, as in *Nocturne* (1946), where he played a policeman, or *Loan Shark* (1952), in which he fights corruption by infiltrating a gang. In *Intrigue* (1947) as a **troubled veteran**, *Race Street* (1948), and *Red Light* (1950), he portrayed **men** spurred on by the desire to avenge a wrong.

Raft's other noirs are *They Drive by Night* (1940), *Johnny Angel* (1945), *A Dangerous Profession* (1949), *Johnny Allegro* (1949), *I'll Get You for This* (GB 1950; U.S. title *Lucky Nick Cain*), *Black Widow* (1954), *Rogue Cop* (1954), and *A Bullet for Joey* (1955).

**RAINES, ELLA (1920–1988)**. Ella Raines's dark, sultry beauty was exploited in three noirs she made with **Robert Siodmak**. As Raines acknowledged, her role as Carol "Kansas" Richman in *Phantom Lady* (1944) was really four roles in one film: the prim, efficient secretary; the woman in love; the pretend femme fatale in a provocatively tight black dress, fishnet stockings, and heavy makeup; and the intelligent and resourceful amateur sleuth chasing down suspects. In *The Suspect* (1944), she played the young woman who falls in love with an older man, Philip Marshall (Charles Laughton), the sympathetic murderer of his vicious wife. Marshall responds to her warmth, integrity, and vivacity. She was another capable professional woman in *The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* (aka *Uncle Harry*, 1945), who also awakens in a trapped middle-aged man (George Sanders) the possibility of true happiness. She was not used so creatively by other noir directors, having rather nondescript roles in *The Web* (1947) and *Brute Force* (1947), though in *Impact* (1949), she played another resourceful, capable woman who falls for an older man (**Brian Donlevy**) and again plays detective to help him. Raines retired in 1957 after appearing in a **British film noir** *The Man in the Road*, a sadly underused talent. *See also* WOMEN.

**RAKSIN, DAVID (1912–2004)**. Trained as a dance band musician and Broadway arranger, David Raksin was one of a new generation of American composers who modified and diversified the "classical idiom." His scores were more impressionistic, tending to emphasize

implicit rather than explicit action, contrapuntal rather than chordal and pared-down. They were smaller ensembles, creating a greater range and complexity. Raksin came to prominence through his score for *Laura* (1944). Raksin objected to **Otto Preminger's** choice of "Sophisticated Lady" for Laura's theme tune judging that its connotations of an available sexuality were reductive. Raksin's original theme melody tries to capture her ambivalence as a modern, sophisticated, sexually experienced woman rather than a temptress. Her theme is never completed in the film, contributing to Laura's ambiguity. After the film's release, Raksin combined with lyricist Johnny Mercer to create a hit song version. However, Raksin's score for *Laura* was more conventional than with his later noirs, which are not dominated by melodic strings but introduce elements of jazz—brass, woodwind, and percussion. His most experimental scores, including *Force of Evil* (1948) and *The Big Combo* (1955), rely almost solely on contemporary jazz and blues.

Raksin's other noirs are *Fallen Angel* (1945), *Whirlpool* (1949), *A Lady without Passport* (1950), *Suddenly* (1954), and *Pay or Die!* (1960). *See also* MUSIC.

**RANSFORD, MAURICE (1896–1968).** Maurice Ransford, like many other set designers of this period, was a trained architect and practiced for 10 years before entering the film industry in 1940 working for Twentieth Century-Fox. His first noir was *Hangover Square* (1945), in which his elaborate sets helped create the atmosphere of Edwardian London and the climactic scene in which the disturbed protagonist (**Laird Cregar**) is engulfed in flames in his home while playing a concerto. Ransford was nominated for an Oscar (with **Lyle Wheeler** and Thomas Little) for his designs for the lakeside house where the majority of the action takes place in *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), a rare color noir. In **Otto Preminger's** *The Thirteenth Letter* (1951), Ransford's cramped, deliberately overstuffed sets help create the claustrophobic atmosphere of the small French-Canadian village imploding under a poison pen campaign.

Ransford's other noirs are *Somewhere in the Night* (1946), *13 Rue Madeleine* (1947), *Road House* (1948), *Panic in the Streets* (1950), *Niagara* (1953), and *Black Widow* (1954). *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**RAW DEAL (1948).** In several respects *Raw Deal* is **Anthony Mann's** finest noir, combining the typically taut, tense, and violent masculine

action thriller replete with dynamic, low-angled compositions for which Mann was best known, with an uncharacteristically romantic counterpoint. It also contains the very unusual technique of a female voice-over, provided by Pat (**Claire Trevor**), the loyal and long-suffering girlfriend of criminal Joe Sullivan (**Dennis O'Keefe**). Sullivan is sprung from prison by **gangster** Rick Coyle (**Raymond Burr**), but only in the expectation that he will be killed or captured in the police dragnet. The framing and betrayal of the central character is an archetypal film noir story, but it is given a fresh perspective in the screenplay by Leopold Atlas and Mann's frequent collaborator **John C. Higgins**, through Pat's plangent narration. Pat's brief, intermittent, deadpan voice-overs that comment on the action are accompanied by the eerie, haunting sounds of the theremin in **Paul Sawtell's** evocative score. The **music**, combined with **John Alton's** soft-focus photography, gives the narration a haunting, oneiric quality.

Pat's commentary is fatalistic, always sensing that happiness is beyond her grasp, focusing on the presence of her rival Ann (Marsha Hunt), a lawyer's assistant whom Pat and Joe kidnap during his escape. Although the two **women** are carefully contrasted in looks, voice, and behavior—Pat the gangster's moll from the same slum, Corkscrew Alley, where Joe was brought up, Ann the refined middle-class professional—*Raw Deal* refuses any simple moral distinctions: both are strong and courageous women in love with Joe and prepared to kill for him. But for Pat, Ann is always in the way, always separating her from Joe: "sitting next to Joe where I should be. Where I would be if she wasn't there." In the fog-bound dénouement, Pat's plans to escape with Joe to South America are wrecked when Joe returns to rescue Ann, who has been captured by Coyle. As Ann cradles the dying Joe, Pat bleakly intones: "There's my Joe in her arms, a kind of happiness on his face. In my heart I know this is right for Joe. This is what he wanted." Thus Pat is that film noir rarity, a genuinely tragic working-class antiheroine, and *Raw Deal* is a moving elegy to her blighted hopes.

**RAY, NICHOLAS (1911–1979).** Born Raymond Nicholas Kienzle, Nicholas Ray changed his name when he moved to New York in 1932 and worked in radical theater. Although he was associated with the left-wing social conscience directors, Ray's six films noir principally focus on vulnerable, doomed figures, on social misfits or outsiders; although often fatalistic, his noirs are underpinned by a fundamental romanticism.



Even though his films noir give space to intelligent, resourceful, and loving **women**, their main focus is on the insecure, unstable, over-sensitive **men** whose struggle to find a meaning and purpose in their lives is constantly frustrated. Ray was respected by actors and usually elicited strong performances, but these are complemented by his trained architect's eye for evocative compositions and the expressive use of decor, lighting, and camera movement.

*They Live by Night* (1948), which Ray adapted as well as directed, was a classic **outlaw couple** story, the emphasis falling on the tender love that develops between the young pair—Bowie (Farley Granger) who misguidedly gets involved in a prison break with two hardened criminals and is sucked into their life of violent crime—and Keechie (Cathy O'Donnell), the woman who befriends him. They retain a fundamental innocence in the face of an unsympathetic and corrupt society, and although Bowie is betrayed and killed in a police ambush, Keechie still possesses Bowie's letter expressing his love. *Knock on Any Door* (1949) was less successful because the character of the young delinquent (John Derek) is seen solely as a victim of impoverished circumstances as his defending attorney (**Humphrey Bogart**) emphasizes. *In a Lonely Place* (1950), adapted from the Dorothy B. Hughes novel, offered Bogart a much more compelling role as the frustrated, neurotic, and sexually repressed Hollywood writer Dixon Steele. In a beautifully paced film, Ray charts the development and then destruction of Steele's relationship with Laurel Gray (**Gloria Grahame**). Although she has given evidence in his favor, Steele's unpredictable violence make Laurel suspect that he did indeed murder the hatcheck girl as the police believe. His innocence is established too late to save their love affair in Ray's bleakest conclusion.

*A Woman's Secret* (1949), told in flashback, deserves to be better known as it is an unusual noir that focuses on the destructive relationship between two women—Marian Washburn (Maureen O'Hara), a singer whose rare throat infection ends a promising career, and Susan Caldwell (**Gloria Grahame**), the slow-witted, small-town hick she befriends and ruthlessly molds into a Broadway star. Ray took over the direction of the meandering thriller *Macao* (1952), but although he reshot most of the film, his work was uncredited in favor of the originally contracted director, Josef von Sternberg. Ray was much more creatively involved in *On Dangerous Ground* (1952), coadapting, with **A. I. Bezzerides**, Gerald Butler's novel *Mad with Much Heart*. It enabled Ray to focus on

another lonely, alienated character, Jim Wilson (**Robert Ryan**), a New York City policeman brutalized by his job. Wilson is sent upstate to capture a disturbed teenager—Ray and his cameraman **George E. Diskant** evocatively contrast the nighttime **city** streets shot in **expressionist** chiaroscuro with the more naturalistically photographed snow-covered countryside—and although Wilson fails to save the boy, he finds love in a developing relationship with the boy's sister Mary (**Ida Lupino**). Ray was opposed to the unconvincingly optimistic ending in which the pair are united, made at the insistence of the studio, RKO.

Ray's last noir, *Party Girl* (1958), set in 1930s Chicago, was more stylized than his earlier films, but it characteristically depicts a lonely, frustrated, and morally compromised central male protagonist, the crippled criminal lawyer Thomas Farrell (**Robert Taylor**). Farrell also experiences the redemptive power of love through his relationship with a nightclub dancer (Cyd Charisse). Despite being pursued by the mobsters Farrell represented, the pair are able to leave Chicago and begin a new life.

Ray had a cameo role in Wim Wenders's *Der amerikanische Freund* (*The American Friend*, 1977). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**REED, CAROL (1906–1976)**. One of the foremost directors in British cinema—and the first to be knighted, in 1953—Carol Reed made several noirs that were both visually sophisticated and morally complex and that take place in locations that are alienating or divided. They were profoundly influenced by **poetic realism**. *Odd Man Out* (1947), adapted from F. L. Green's novel, was the haunting story of a wounded Irish Republican Army gunman (**James Mason**) on the run in Belfast after a botched robbery. Reed's direction and **Robert Krasker**'s cinematography create a **city** at once real and archetypal, here divided by sectarian loyalties that allow no refuge for the doomed protagonist. Reed enjoyed a stimulating and productive collaboration with **Graham Greene** on two noirs: *The Fallen Idol* (U.S. title *The Last Illusion*, 1948) and *The Third Man* (1949). The first was located in an embassy in London's Belgravia where the ambassador's son—Reed elicits a superb performance from the 12-year-old Bobby Henrey—is another outsider, desperately struggling to make sense of the duplicitous adult world.

Both *The Third Man*, set in postwar Vienna, and *The Man Between* (1953), set in postwar Berlin, also depicted divided cities with alienated protagonists. Though it is often regarded as an inferior version of *The*

*Third Man*—by common consent Reed’s finest film—*The Man Between* centers on the doomed love affair between the world-weary, morally compromised Ivo Kern (Mason) and the innocent abroad (Claire Bloom) whom he tries vainly to protect. *Outcast of the Islands* (1952), adapted from a bleak Joseph Conrad novel set in and around Singapore, was another doomed romance with strong noir overtones. It tells the story of the self-destructive Willems (Trevor Howard), another displaced figure, a rogue Dutch trader, and his infatuation with a native woman.

*The Key* (U.S. title *Stella*, 1958), though clearly a war film, also had noir elements. Trevor Howard again plays a self-destructive figure, a tugboat skipper rescuing crippled ships, who is in love with a Swiss refugee (Sophia Loren), one of cinema’s most enigmatic femme fatales. Reed’s career faltered after this point, and his final noir, *The Running Man* (1963)—a routine thriller about a man (Laurence Harvey) who fakes his own death and is pursued by an insurance investigator—lacked the intensity of his earlier work.

**REMAKES.** Although the most obvious remakes are those **neo-noirs** that adapt classic noir originals, film noir has been, from its inception, partly a process of remaking and reworking the same material. **John Huston’s** *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) was the third adaptation of **Dashiell Hammett’s** novel, the others being in 1931 and 1936; **Edward Dmytryk’s** *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) was a radical remake of *The Falcon Takes Over* (1942), an adaptation of **Raymond Chandler’s** *Farewell, My Lovely*. In each case the studio owned the rights, and talented filmmakers saw the potential for a darker treatment of the story, closer to the temper of the **hard-boiled** original. Similarly, Maxwell Shane’s *Nightmare* (1956), a remake of his 1947 noir *Fear in the Night*, adapted from the **Cornell Woolrich** story, used the opportunity of a larger budget to enhance the **visual style**, introduce an expressive jazz score, and film in evocative New Orleans locations. The noir **precursor** *Blind Alley* (1939) was remade as *The Dark Past* (1948) with director **Rudolph Maté** pointedly emphasizing the psychological aspects of the story. By contrast, *Vicki* (1953), Harry Horner’s remake of *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941), although more coherently noir and excising the intrusive moments of light comedy, lacked the original’s edgy menace.

Often the remake is an adaptation from one national cinema into another, usually, though not exclusively, from a French original into

an American remake. **Fritz Lang's** *Scarlet Street* (1945) was a remake of Jean Renoir's **French film noir** *La Chienne* (*The Bitch*, 1931), and his *Human Desire* (1954) remade Renoir's *La Bête Humaine* (*Judas Was a Woman*, aka *The Human Beast*, 1938). **Anatole Litvak** remade *Le Jour se lève* (*Daybreak*, 1939), a classic of **poetic realism**, as *The Long Night* (1947). Lang's own **German noir** *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931) was remade by **Joseph Losey** in 1951. By contrast, Maté's American noir *D.O.A.* (1950) spawned an **Australian film noir** *Color Me Dead* (1969), an EastmanColor remake directed by Eddie Davis starring the American Tom Tryon. Although transferring the action to Australian locales, it followed the original much more faithfully than the 1988 American remake, an updated version starring Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan. John Huston's *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950) was remade as the **British film noir** *Cairo* (1963), directed by Wolf Rilla, who had already made as *Marilyn* (U.S. title *Roadhouse Girl*, 1953), a version of the **James M. Cain** story *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. *The Asphalt Jungle* was remade again as a "blaxploitation" noir *Cool Breeze* (1972), directed by Barry Pollack, in which proceeds from the jewel heist will go to fund a black people's bank. More recently, Asian film noirs have been remade by American filmmakers, notably **Martin Scorsese's** *The Departed* (2006), a remake of Wai-keung Lau and Siu Fai Mak's **Hong Kong film noir**, *Wu jian dao* (*Infernal Affairs*, 2002).

Although neo-noirs can spawn their own remakes—Sam Peckinpah's *The Getaway* (1972) was remade in 1994 by Roger Donaldson, heightening the criminal elements, sexuality, and violence of the original—they typically remake classic noirs to cover a spectrum ranging from a slavish attempt to re-create the original to a radical and highly creative reworking. The 1992 remake of *Detour* (1945), directed by Wade Williams, although in color, cast Tom Neal's son, Tom Neal Jr., as Al Roberts, redeployed the actual Packard that **Edgar G. Ulmer** had used, and followed the original script very closely with only minor additions. Dick Richards's *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) set out to re-create Chandler's 1940s **Los Angeles** and used noir icon **Robert Mitchum** as Marlowe. David Goodman's screenplay follows the novel's plot more closely than Dmytryk's version and takes the opportunity of a more liberal  **censorship** regime to depict the sleazier parts with Velma (Charlotte Rampling) clearly being an ex-prostitute. Similarly, Rob Rafelson's 1981 remake of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, scripted by David Mamet,

took the opportunity to have more explicit sex scenes, thus again bringing the remake closer to Cain's original novella.

Other neo-noir remakes depart more widely from their originals. **Robert Altman's** *Thieves Like Us* (1974), a remake of **Nicholas Ray's** *They Live by Night* (1948), although in color and CinemaScope, determinedly avoided the original's romanticism in its bleaker, more objective delineation of the Depression era. Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat* (1981) was a deliberately loose remake of *Double Indemnity* (1944) in which the original is a source rather than a blueprint. Roger Donaldson's *No Way Out* (1987), based on *The Big Clock* (1948), reconfigured the original as a Cold War conspiracy thriller. **Don Siegel's** *The Killers* (1964) is not interested, as was **Robert Siodmak's** 1946 original, in re-creating small-town America or romanticizing the love affair through chiaroscuro photography, but it focuses on the killers (Lee Marvin and Clu Gulager) as much as their victim Johnny (John Cassavetes) and is much more violent and sadistic than the original. Writer-director Steven Soderbergh's *Underneath* (1995) was an intelligent updating of Siodmak's *Criss Cross* (1949), located not in working-class Los Angeles but in Austin, Texas, to which Michael Chambers (Peter Gallagher) returns. Soderbergh accentuates the dysfunctional familial elements, and the protagonist is not yearning for love. He radiates a disaffected, directionless anomie; his motives are enigmatic and ambiguous. In Soderbergh's fatalistic universe there is no romanticism, only deceit and betrayal. Tamra Davis's *Guncrazy* (1992) reworked the **outlaw couple** paradigm, in particular **Joseph H. Lewis's** *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950), by privileging the subjectivity and experiences of the woman partner, Anita (Drew Barrymore), abandoned by her mother and abused by her stepfather (Joe Dallesandro). She teams up with ex-convict Howard (James LeGros), another ill-educated redneck, in a film that depicts a rarely glimpsed, impoverished rural America dominated by revivalist religion.

Remakes continue to be produced: Lang's *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (1956) has been remade in 2009, starring **Michael Douglas**; a remake of *Rififi* (1955), starring **Al Pacino**, is in production.

Other remakes include: *The Big Sleep* (1946/1978); *Black Angel* (1946) / *Night without Sleep* (1952); *Body and Soul* (1947/1981); *Dark Passage* (1947) / *Johnny Handsome* (1989); *The Desperate Hours* (1955) / *Desperate Hours* (1990); *Les Diaboliques* (1955) / *Diabolique* (1996); *La Femme Nikita* (1990) / *Point of No Return* (1993); *Get*

*Carter* (1971/2000); *High Sierra* (1941) / *I Died a Thousand Times* (1955); *I, the Jury* (1953/1982); *A Kiss Before Dying* (1956/1991); *Kiss of Death* (1947/1995); *The Narrow Margin* (1952) / *Narrow Margin* (1990); *Night and the City* (1950/1992); *Out of the Past* (1947) / *Against All Odds* (1984); *Plein Soleil* (*Purple Noon*, 1960) / *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999); *Point Blank* (1967) / *Payback* (1999); *The Prowler* (1951) / *Unlawful Entry* (1992); *Psycho* (1960/1998); *Ransom* (1956/1996); and *Vertigo* (1958) / *Obsession* (1976) / *Mirage* (1995). See also RETRO-NOIR.

**RETRO-NOIR.** Retro-noirs are **neo-noirs** that consciously re-create the “classic” 1940–59 period; *Chinatown* (1974), set in the 1930s, was deliberately not retro. *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975) was one of the first retro-noirs, with David Goodman’s screenplay staying closer to **Raymond Chandler**’s novel than **Edward Dmytryk**’s *Murder, My Sweet* (1944). The presence of **Robert Mitchum** as Philip Marlowe combines with John A. Alonzo’s chiaroscuro cinematography to evoke the mood and look of classic noir. *Body Heat* (1981), loosely based on *Double Indemnity* (1944), was a complex retro-modern example, ambiguously straddling the contemporary and the classic periods. *Blade Runner* (1982), though set in the future, also re-created the look of classical noir in its trench-coated hero, Deckard (Harrison Ford). Since the 1990s, there have been more instances of retro-noirs, including *Mulholland Falls* (1996) and *L.A. Confidential* (1997), both set in 1950s **Los Angeles**. The latter was based on the third novel in James Ellroy’s celebrated “L.A. Quartet” (1987–92), while **Brian De Palma**’s *The Black Dahlia* (2006) was based on the first, set in 1946 and re-creating the unsettled mood of the immediate postwar period in its archetypal tale of obsession and betrayal.

The **Coen Brothers**’ *The Man Who Wasn’t There* (2001), set in 1949 and shot in black-and-white, alluded, in particular, to *Scarlet Street* (1945) in its bleak story of an archetypal noir antihero, Ed Crane (Billy Bob Thornton), the victim of a series of cruel ironies. *Hollywoodland* (2006) was based on the famous mystery that surrounded the death of George Reeves—played by Ben Affleck—the star of the *Superman* television series in 1959. *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (2005), also set in Hollywood, was an ironic and partly comic take on retro-noir, in which small-time criminal Harry Lockhart (Robert Downey Jr.) finds himself inadvertently enmeshed in a complex mystery that he attempts to solve

with his partner, homosexual **private eye** Perry van Shrike (Val Kilmer). Harry is conscious of his role-playing and directly addresses the audience at several points. *See also* REMAKES; SPANISH FILM NOIR.

**RIFI (DU RIFI CHEZ LES HOMMES, 1955).** Often referred to as the definitive **caper/heist** film, the title of **Jules Dassin's** *Du rifi chez les hommes* comes from the French argot for “free-for-all,” or “of brawling among **men**,” connoting open hostilities between rival gangs or individuals. It was coined by *Série Noire* writer Auguste Le Breton and popularized in his 1953 novel from which the film is adapted. Dassin, directing his first film since being placed on the **blacklist** in 1950, disliked the novel's racism—all the villains were North Africans—therefore the adaptation, on which he collaborated with screenwriter René Wheeler, made the main characters (with one exception) French. Dassin retains the central focus on loyalty and betrayal and made the gang's burglary of a Parisian jewelry store the centerpiece, played wordlessly (and with no accompanying music) for 28 tense minutes.

The central character, Tony le Stéphanois (Jean Servais), is an aging criminal, typical of 1950s **French film noir**, who adheres to the old-fashioned code of honor. In a key scene, not in the novel, he shoots another member of the gang, César le Milanais—played by Dassin himself under the pseudonym Perlo Vita—because he betrayed the **gangster's** code of honor. Tony has to rescue the five-year-old son of his partner from a rival gangster, but he is mortally wounded. In a marvellously realized final sequence that combined point-of-view shots evoking Tony's hallucinating state of near death with the vivid realism that characterizes the whole film, he drives the boy home before collapsing.

Although *Rifi* was made for a very modest budget of \$200,000, Dassin's reputation in France commanded highly talented collaborators: Alexander Trauner, who designed the jewelry store and the L'Age D'Or nightclub; Georges Auric, whose sparing and haunting score helps create the film's elegiac mood; and Phillipe Agostini, whose cinematography creates a palpable but subdued Montmartre—Dassin insisted that they shot only on gray days, never when the sun was shining, thus evoking a melancholic fatalism. *Rifi* was a major hit, and Dassin won the Best Director's award at the 1955 Cannes Festival. A major influence on subsequent heist noirs, notably **Quentin Tarantino's** *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), *Rifi* was re-released theatrically in 2000 and a **remake** is scheduled starring **Al Pacino**.

**RIGHT-WING CYCLE.** The conventional image of film noir is as antiestablishment and left-leaning. However, there was a pronounced right-wing agenda in numerous noirs whose overriding theme is the enforcement of law and order. The **semidocumentaries** were usually informed by a right-wing ideology that celebrated the vigilance, hard work, and courage of American institutions and where government agents or policemen root out and destroy “the enemy.” The early examples—*The House on 92nd Street* (1945) and *13 Rue Madeleine* (1946)—are preoccupied with fascism; but, as Nazis operate like **gangsters**, this focus shifts seamlessly into a concern with crime lords. **Joseph H. Lewis’s** *The Undercover Man* (1949) was a rerun of the Capone indictment. Frank Warren (**Glenn Ford**) is the tireless Internal Revenue agent who uncovers a web of intimidation, murder, fraud, and tax evasion organized by the shadowy “big fellow.” Right-wing noirs of the 1950s are obsessed with corporate crime, with takeovers by ever more powerful and well-organized syndicates. This is shown clearly in *The Enforcer* (1951) and in the **city exposé** cycle. *The Racket* (1951), set in an anonymous midwestern city, looked back to the Prohibition era (an earlier version had been released in 1928), but its struggle between honest cop Captain McQuigg (**Robert Mitchum**) and mobster Scanlon (**Robert Ryan**) is framed within an overarching corruption that reaches the highest levels of government.

A right-wing agenda is most clearly visible in the subcycle of Cold War films noir that were explicitly about the Communist threat, beginning with *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), which teamed a Scotland Yard detective (Louis Hayward) and a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent (**Dennis O’Keefe**) to fight crooks stealing atomic secrets to sell to the Communists: those “who walk their crooked mile along the highways and byways of free America.” In *I Married a Communist* (aka *The Woman on Pier 13*, 1949), the bridegroom of the title is blackmailed by a Communist leader who wishes to foment unrest in the docks for the party’s ends. *I Was A Communist for the F.B.I.* (1951)—in which an ordinary citizen (Frank Lovejoy) is recruited to infiltrate the Communist Party, and *The Thief* (1952), where Dr Allan Fields (**Ray Milland**) plays an Atomic Energy Commission scientist who has defected—show different aspects of the perceived Communist threat together with its defeat by the resilience and vigor of American democracy. John Wayne starred in the title role of *Big Jim McLain* (1952), a House Un-American Activities Committee investigator trying to break up a Communist ring;



*Walk East on Beacon* (1952) was producer **Louis de Rochemont**'s anti-Communist equivalent to *The House on 92nd Street*, with Soviet spies replacing the Nazi ones from the earlier film. See also BLACKLIST; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**ROBINSON, EDWARD G. (1893–1973).** One of the most commanding and distinctive actors in film noir, Edward G. Robinson, born Emanuel Goldenberg in Bucharest, attained stardom through his memorable performance as Johnny Rico in Warner Bros.' *Little Caesar* (1931). Although he played variations on this iconic role in *Key Largo* (1948) and *Black Tuesday* (1955), Robinson's main contribution to film noir came through very different parts that exploited his maturity and his ability, evident in his tough-guy roles, to project a thoughtful, vulnerable sensitivity. As the second male lead in **Billy Wilder**'s *Double Indemnity* (1944), Robinson invested the unsympathetic role of the dyspeptic insurance claims investigator, Barton Keyes, with a warm humanity. He played two middle-aged male victims in **Fritz Lang**'s *The Woman in the Window* (1944) and *Scarlet Street* (1945), whose need for love and understanding is abused by the femme fatale. In the latter his cruel fate is bleakly tragic.

In *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), the focus of the **Cornell Woolrich** story was shifted from the heroine to the male clairvoyant, giving Robinson the opportunity to create another tragic figure, the man who can foresee future events but who is powerless to prevent their outcome. In *The Red House* (1947), an unusual **country noir**, he played the archetypal man-with-a-dark-secret, obscuring the traces of his murderous jealousy and sealing up the woods around the Red House so that his adored stepdaughter will not discover the truth. *House of Strangers* (1949) offered another major role as Gino Monetti, a proto-Godfather, a self-made man on New York's Lower East Side who is blind to the corruption that his pursuit of wealth and status has caused. As with so many other noir personnel, Robinson's career suffered from the House Un-American Activities Committee investigations after which he was "gray listed" and his roles diminished.

Robinson's other noirs are *The Stranger* (1946), *Vice Squad* (1953), *A Bullet for Joey* (1955), *Illegal* (1955), *Tight Spot* (1955), *Nightmare* (1956), and *Soylent Green* (1973). See also BLACKLIST; MEN; PRECURSORS.

**ROGUE COPS.** *See* CORRUPT/ROGUE COPS.

**ROSSEN, ROBERT (1908–1966).** Robert Rossen, another major casualty of the **blacklist**, wrote and directed for the theater before becoming a screenwriter with Warner Bros., scripting a series of prewar **gangster** thrillers. His first film noir screenplay was *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), a brooding tale of corrupt passion, which has the characteristic Rossen concentration on the psychological and social origins of the characters, the corruption of money, and the abuse of power. By contrast, his screenplay for *Desert Fury* (1947) lacked a powerful center. Rossen became a writer-director with *Johnny O'Clock* (1947), a **gangster** film but with the emphasis on betrayal, corruption, and the power of money. Rossen next directed *Body and Soul* (1947) for the new **Enterprise Productions**, written by **Abraham Polonsky**. In his finest film, Rossen, working with cinematographer James Wong Howe, handles the fight scenes with imagination and inventiveness and develops the prewar boxing film about a working-class battler into a metaphor for predatory capitalism.

Its success enabled Rossen to form his own company, and he produced *The Undercover Man* (1949), an indictment of organized crime directed by **Joseph H. Lewis**. Rossen adapted, from Robert Penn Warren's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, and directed *All the King's Men* (1949), which won an Oscar for Best Picture and Best Actor for **Broderick Crawford**, with Rossen nominated as Best Director and Screenwriter. It was a noir **hybrid**, based on the true story of the rise and fall of Louisiana governor Huey Long, with Rossen emphasizing the abuse of ordinary people's hopes by Willie Stark (Crawford), his corruption by the old aristocratic order at Burden's Landing, and the crippling price of his ruthless desire to succeed. After blacklisting, Rossen pursued a career abroad, returning to make *The Hustler* (1961), which has noir elements. *See also* BOXING NOIRS; FILM GRIS; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**ROURKE, MICKEY (1952– ).** Mickey Rourke, feted, especially in France, as a rebellious outsider figure, has created a distinctive persona and presence in **neo-noir** playing complex, self-questioning antiheroes. Rourke has the ability to suggest an underlying pathos mixed with streetwise toughness, making his characters fragile, vulnerable figures underneath their rough, violent exteriors, as in his portrayal of a seedy

**private eye**, Harry Angel, in the noir **hybrid** *Angel Heart* (1987) and his troubled Irish Republican Army **hit man** in **Mike Hodges's** *A Prayer for the Dying* (1987). Rourke's defining role came in *Johnny Handsome* (1989) as a career criminal, deformed since birth, whose face is rebuilt by a kindly doctor and then he is paroled from prison. Pretending to cooperate, he executes his revenge on the man who killed his father figure and sent him to prison. Rourke's career faltered in the 1990s (he even made a return to prize-fighting, 1991–95), but he wrote and starred in *Bullet* (1996), the story of Butch Stein ("Bullet") who, after leaving prison with intentions to reform, goes back home to his dysfunctional Jewish family and his old life, robbing drug dealers and using heroin. Typically, Bullet has to overcome his inner demons as well as his sworn enemy Tank (Tupac Shakur). Rourke had a major success as Marv in *Sin City* (2005), a hulking ex-con who, like Moose Molloy in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), is both violent and a pitiable victim desiring love and beauty.

Rourke's other noirs are *Body Heat* (1981), *Desperate Hours* (1990), *White Sands* (1992), *Thursday* (1998), *The Pledge* (2001), and *Man on Fire* (2004).

**RÓZSA, MIKLÓS (1907–1995).** The Hungarian-born composer Miklós Rózsa was a classically trained musician whose first films were made in Great Britain. He scored two early **British noirs**, *The Green Cockatoo* (U.S. title *Four Dark Hours*, 1937) and *On the Night of the Fire* (U.S. title: *The Fugitive*, 1939), working for fellow Hungarian Alexander Korda's London Film Productions. Rózsa moved to California in 1940, establishing a reputation as one of Hollywood's most accomplished film composers. Rózsa thought the function of **music** was to "complete the psychological meaning of a scene," and his noir scores were among his finest work. He was Oscar-nominated for *Double Indemnity* (1944), combining closely with director **Billy Wilder**—with whom he collaborated on five occasions, including *The Lost Weekend* (1945)—who defended Rózsa's "advanced" score against the criticisms of Paramount's musical director, Louis Lipstone, who judged it too harsh and unsettling. Rózsa's music showed a clear break from the prevailing lush romanticism that was the norm. It was often dissonant and scored in dark instrumental hues, starting with a gloomy trumpet-call introduction over the title credits, going into a slow dirge without a harmonic minor mode, producing an ominous, doom-laden mood.

Rózsa won an Oscar for **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Spellbound* (1945), introducing the eerie, tremulous tones of an electronic instrument, the theremin, into the Hollywood repertoire, which was highly influential. Rózsa won another Oscar for *The Killers* (1946), its rumbling, ominous, low-note opening used later as the theme tune for *Dragnet*, and for his evocative scoring of George Cukor's only noir, *A Double Life* (1948). For **Fritz Lang's** *Secret beyond the Door* (1948), Rózsa wrote and recorded a piece of music backward and then played the recording in reverse so that it was in the normal sequence but strangely distorted. Rózsa could also make telling use of an understated score, as with *The Naked City* (1948), and indeed his most radical score was his sparsest—for **John Huston's** realistic *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), which uses only five minutes of music to accompany the opening and closing moments. The beginning has edgy, anxious music as Dix (**Sterling Hayden**) dodges a police patrol car in the early hours; the ending a brief and ironically lush passage as he dies on his beloved Kentucky farm. Rózsa also wrote the score for the **neo-noir** comic parody *Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid* (1982).

Rózsa's other noirs are *Ministry of Fear* (1944), *Dark Waters* (1944), *Blood on the Sun* (1945), *Lady on a Train* (1945), *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), *The Red House* (1947), *Brute Force* (1947), *Desert Fury* (1947), *Kiss the Blood off My Hands* (1948), *The Bribe* (1949), *Criss Cross* (1949), *Crisis* (1950), and *Last Embrace* (1979).

**RUSSELL, GAIL (1924–1961).** An attractive, doe-eyed brunette, Gail Russell could play either sensual or supportive **women**. In *Calcutta* (1947) opposite **Alan Ladd**, she was a duplicitous femme fatale, and in *The Tattered Dress* (1957), she played the mistress of the local sheriff (Jack Carson), used by him to undermine a city lawyer (Jeff Chandler). By contrast, she portrayed a schoolteacher and the sympathetic girlfriend of the tormented hero (**Dane Clark**) in *Moonrise* (1948). She was also a campaigning editor in **Joseph Losey's** *The Lawless* (1950). Her best role came as the wide-eyed, trusting heroine in *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948). The film opens with her attempted suicide because she believes in the premonitions of the clairvoyant (**Edward G. Robinson**), whose vision of her lying under the stars seemed to portend her death.

**RYAN, ROBERT (1909–1973).** Ryan was one of the most important noir male actors, appearing in 15 films. His craggy good looks, imposing

height, taut muscular body, and dark, impenetrable eyes made him a cross between heavy and leading man, thus perfect as a disturbed or ambiguous noir antihero. He played **troubled veterans** in *Crossfire* (1947)—for which he was Oscar-nominated—in Jean Renoir’s *Woman on the Beach* (1947) and in *Act of Violence* (1949). In each, his character is an unstable, violent loner who can explode at any moment. This also typified his compelling performance as the bitter and resentful cop on the verge of a nervous breakdown in **Nicholas Ray**’s *On Dangerous Ground* (1952). His anguished outburst when he beats a confession out of a petty criminal, “Why do you make me do it?” encompasses the sense of incoherent rage and neurotic self-destructiveness that permeates all his performances. In the later scenes Ryan also reveals a tender and vulnerable side that came through strongly in an earlier outstanding performance as the aging boxer Stoker in *The Set-Up* (1949), brutally beaten up by mobsters because he would not throw the fight but who retains his dignity and can return to his wife (**Audrey Totter**). Ryan played a psychotic handyman in *Beware, My Lovely* (1952), whose murderous rages are obliterated by amnesia, and gangsters in *The Racket* (1951) and *House of Bamboo* (1955), less complex roles but with the suggestion of troubled depths. Ryan was again compelling in *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959) as the racist, self-loathing criminal whose trajectory, as always, is toward self-destruction. Ryan appeared in two **neo-noirs**, *The Outfit* (1973), in which he plays a powerful and ruthless syndicate boss, and *Executive Action* (1973), as one of the right-wing conspirators.

Ryan’s other noirs are *Berlin Express* (1948), *Caught* (1949), *I Married a Communist* (aka *The Woman on Pier 13*, 1949), *The Secret Fury* (1950), *Born to Be Bad* (1950), and *Clash by Night* (1952). See also BOXING NOIRS; MEN.

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**SALTER, HANS J. (1896–1994).** The Viennese-born composer Hans J. Salter worked in Germany, including scoring *Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht* (*The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer*, 1931) directed by **Robert Siodmak**. He left for Hollywood in 1936 where he enjoyed a long-term contract with Universal. Salter was a versatile composer who collaborated with several major **émigré** directors, in-

cluding three film noirs for Robert Siodmak: *Phantom Lady* (1944), *Christmas Holiday* (1944), and *The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* (aka *Uncle Harry*, 1945). Salter was Oscar-nominated for his lush scoring of *Christmas Holiday*, including several torch songs by Deanna Durbin that are fundamental to the meaning of the film.

Salter's other noirs are *Scarlet Street* (1946), *The Web* (1947), *Love from a Stranger* (1947), *Cover Up* (1949), *The Reckless Moment* (1949), *The Killer That Stalked New York* (1951), *The Night Runner* (1957), and *The Midnight Story* (1957). See also MUSIC.

**LE SAMOURAÏ (1967).** *Le Samourai*, which forms a loose trilogy with *Le Cercle Rouge* (*The Red Circle*, 1970) and *Un flic* (*Dirty Money*, 1972), all starring **Alain Delon** and directed by **Jean-Pierre Melville**, is the consummate **hit man** noir, a radical reworking of *This Gun for Hire* (1942), replacing the former's psychological underpinning with a profound **existentialism**. Jef Costello (Delon) is a hit man who executes the director of a nightclub and becomes pursued both by the police and his paymasters who think he has betrayed them or is a bad risk. As Costello, the consummate professional, Delon, like **Alan Ladd**, has a hard, sculpted handsomeness, an impenetrable beauty, cold and still. Delon's performance is even more minimalist, built around a series of repeated and precise gestures including the fastidious way in which he exactly adjusts the curve of his hat (which, like his trench coat, is iconographic). Delon's style is matched by Melville's austere *mise-en-scène*—influenced by Robert Bresson's *Pickpocket* (1959)—and Henri Decaë's cinematography, with its muted blue-grays in which even the colors of ordinary objects such as banknotes or labels were deliberately bleached out. The dialogue is stripped down (the first 7.5 minutes are wordless) and action only intermittent.

The ideological framework is the Japanese feudal warrior code of the samurai that demands an utter dedication to the craft of killing: "There is no more profound solitude than the samurai's, except that of the tiger in the jungle . . . maybe. . . ." as the film's opening epigraph, from Melville's invented ancient samurai text, *The Book of Bushido*, states. Melville eschews a social context almost entirely (though the settings and the elaborate chases on the Paris Métro are unmistakably French) in favor of a series of elaborate, slow-paced rituals that move inexorably towards Costello's death in which he colludes. He fakes the execution of the nightclub pianist (Cathy Rosier) who had refused earlier to

identify him, pointing to an empty gun as he is shot by a police marksman. Jef collapses elegantly, crossing his white-gloved hands over his upper chest. Costello's death, like his executions, is an act of tragic beauty. *Le Samourai* is a modern fable about masculine solitude that is deliberately abstract and self-consciously mythical, and it was highly influential in both European and American cinema. *See also COLLATERAL*; FRENCH FILM NOIR.

**SAWTELL, PAUL (1906–1971).** The Polish-born composer Paul Sawtell worked in Hollywood from 1939, scoring numerous second feature noirs including three for **Anthony Mann**: *Desperate* (1947), *T-Men* (1948), and *Raw Deal* (1948). *Raw Deal* makes eloquent use of the eerie sound of the theremin to underscore the plangent voice-over narration of the tragic heroine.

Sawtell's other noirs are *Cornered* (1945), *The Devil Thumbs a Ride* (1947), *Born to Kill* (1947), *For You I Die* (1947), *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), *Bodyguard* (1948), *The Clay Pigeon* (1949), *Follow Me Quietly* (1949), *The Threat* (1949), *Outrage* (1950), *Southside 1-1000* (1950), *Roadblock* (1951), *The Racket* (1951), *Another Man's Poison* (GB 1951), *Kansas City Confidential* (1952), and *On Dangerous Ground* (1952). *See also* MUSIC.

**SCARLET STREET (1945).** *Scarlet Street* is one of the most powerful and influential noirs and **Fritz Lang**'s finest film. It was adapted from Georges de la Fouchardière's play that had already been filmed by Jean Renoir as *La Chienne* (*The Bitch*) in 1931, though, as Lang insisted, not a single scene was directly copied. Set designer **Alex Golitzen** transposed Renoir's Montmartre to the sleazy Bohemia of New York's Greenwich Village in 1934, and his forced perspective sets, together with **Milton Krasner**'s low-key cinematography, allowed Lang to create an ordinary-seeming world where the everyday blends with the sinister and the macabre.

*Scarlet Street* is shot through with a series of devastating ironies that thread a web of deception and betrayal. The principal character is the hen-pecked Christopher Cross (**Edward G. Robinson**), infatuated by the prostitute Kitty (**Joan Bennett**), who pretends to be an actress. Chris ensconces her in a luxurious apartment, which he can only maintain by embezzling from his firm but which is his emotional escape from a loveless marriage to the castrating Adele (Rosalind Ivan). When Kitty's

pimp/lover Johnny (**Dan Duryea**) opportunistically sells one of Chris's spare-time paintings, it is Kitty who becomes fêted as a talented artist. In a cruel scene Chris paints her picture, calling it "Self Portrait," while Kitty, exercising her power, sticks out her toenails: "Paint me Chris. . . . They'll be masterpieces." When Chris discovers the truth about her relationship with Johnny, he stabs her repeatedly with an ice pick in a murderous frenzy that releases his repressed sexual desire. In a further irony, Johnny becomes convicted of Kitty's murder and is executed in Sing Sing. Foiled in his attempt to kill himself, Chris is subject to a final irony in which his portrait of Kitty is sold by Adele for a huge sum. As the camera cranes up over the street and the crowd dissolves around him, Lang's final image is of Chris's desolate figure, haunted by Kitty's refrain "Jeepers I love you Johnny" and her song "Melancholy Baby" that has never left him, the archetypal nighttime urban wanderer, a doomed outcast beyond the reach of society.

Lang cut the scene in which Chris climbs a telegraph pole on a hill overlooking Sing Sing in order to watch the glare of light in the death chamber, judging it too shocking, but *Scarlet Street* remained a controversial film, banned in three states, and subject to studio cuts to which producer **Walter Wanger** was forced to agree. One of the bleakest noirs, *Scarlet Street's* devastating and corrosive ironies continue to make it a challenging film.

**SCHARY, DORE (1905–1980).** Dore Schary was active in a number of progressive organizations and consistently supported innovative and forward-thinking filmmakers, working initially for David O. Selznick's Vanguard Films that released through RKO, then as Head of Production at MGM (1948–56). An ex-Broadway playwright and screenwriter, Schary was a creative producer, involved in optioning stories, revising screenplays, casting, and final editing as well as controlling the budget. Through Vanguard he supported, among others, **Robert Siodmak's** *The Spiral Staircase* (1946), despite its controversial subject matter, and the hard-hitting social noir *Crossfire* (1947). Schary defended its director **Edward Dmytryk** and producer **Adrian Scott**, but he was unable to prevent their being placed on the **blacklist**. At MGM, he redirected production policy to include a far greater number of lower-budgeted, realistic crime films with greater location shooting, providing a climate in which talented filmmakers, including **John Alton**, **Sydney Boehm**, **Joseph Losey**, **Anthony Mann**, and **Nicholas Ray** could flourish. He



encouraged **John Huston** to make *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), despite the opposition of MGM boss Louis B. Meyer.

**SCHRADER, PAUL (1946– )**. Paul Schrader has made a significant contribution to the development of film noir as critic, screenwriter, and director. His 1972 essay “Notes on *Film Noir*,” originally issued to accompany a major Los Angeles Museum retrospective, is the most influential short piece on film noir, defining a style, canonical works, and a “specific period of film history” that was ripe for reevaluation and reappropriation following the widespread disillusionment consequent upon the war in Vietnam. Schrader observed: “as the current political mood hardens, filmgoers and filmmakers will find the *film noir* of the late forties increasingly attractive,” and argued that its influence will be felt at a time when “American movies are again taking a look at the underside of the American character.”

These ideas were graphically embodied in Schrader’s original screenplay for **Martin Scorsese’s** *Taxi Driver* (1976), with its **troubled veteran (Robert De Niro)**. Schrader’s first noir screenplay, cowritten with his brother Leonard and Robert Towne, *The Yakuza* (1974) starring **Robert Mitchum**, had portrayed the clash of traditional Japanese and imported American values after the war. Schrader cowrote *Rolling Thunder* (1977), which also depicted disaffected veterans—played by William Devane and Tommy Lee Jones—returning home to a small town in Texas. *Hardcore* (1979), which Schrader wrote and also directed, explored the clash between Schrader’s own cultural roots, embodied in the repressed Calvinist midwestern businessman Jake Van Dorn (George C. Scott), and dissolute modern America, as Jake searches for his missing daughter who has become involved in the Californian porn industry. Schrader combined again with Scorsese, writing the screenplay for *Raging Bull* (1980), one of the definitive **boxing noirs** and another study in the alienated male.

There were noir elements in Schrader’s “night workers” series of films—*American Gigolo* (1980), *Light Sleeper* (1992), *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), and *The Walker* (2007)—which, following *Taxi Driver*, all depicted estranged, insomniac males trying to find meaning in their lives. Schrader’s bleakest and most compelling study of the classic noir themes of corruption, betrayal, and the hero’s inability to escape the past came in *Affliction* (1997), the story of the destruction of Wade Whitehouse (**Nick Nolte**), a small-town policeman in New Hampshire, by his

alcoholic father Glen (James Coburn). Glen has also abused his wife Jill, and Wade's brother Rolfe (Willem Dafoe) retrospectively narrates the story in voice-over.

Schrader's other noirs are *Obsession* (1976), *City Hall* (1996), and *Forever Mine* (1999). See also MEN; NEO-NOIR.

**SCORSESE, MARTIN (1942– )**. Writer-director Scorsese, whose *métier* is the crime film, has had a profound influence on **neo-noir**, his films informed by his Italian-American Catholicism and his comprehensive knowledge of film history. *Mean Streets* (1973), made for only \$500,000, explored Catholic guilt and redemption in New York's working-class Little Italy. The title is an allusion to **Raymond Chandler**, and Scorsese's edgy style and rapid-fire editing was indebted to John Cassavetes and Jean-Luc Godard, but the pounding rock soundtrack was contemporary. Charlie (Harvey Keitel), who works for his uncle Giovanni (the local mafia *caporegime*) collecting debts, is the first in a long line of divided protagonists unsure of their identity and direction. His confusion is exacerbated by his sense of responsibility toward his childhood friend, the unstable, violent, and self-destructive Johnny Boy (**Robert De Niro**), in many ways Charlie's alter ego. These themes were explored further in *Taxi Driver* (1976), scripted by **Paul Schrader**, which remains Scorsese's most celebrated film, capturing the disaffection of the post-Vietnam generation. Scorsese combined with Schrader again on *Raging Bull* (1980), one of the definitive **boxing noirs**, filmed in high-contrast black-and-white, a violent biopic of middleweight boxing champion Jake La Motta, played by De Niro. Scorsese employs extensive slow-motion photography, complex tracking shots, and extravagant distortions of perspective to explore the psychological fragmentation of the protagonist.

*After Hours* (1985)—like the later *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), Scorsese's third collaboration with Schrader—was a change of direction, a black-comedy noir, with a playful and often witty use of noir archetypes. *GoodFellas* (1990), based on *Wiseguy* by New York crime reporter Nicholas Pileggi, who collaborated on the screenplay, refocused on mafia practices. Scorsese was drawn to Pileggi's sharp delineation of the day-to-day actualities of the gangster's lifestyle, the tedium, casual violence, and occasional exhilaration experienced by Irishman Henry Hill (Ray Liotta), who, beginning in 1955, works for a Sicilian family of "wiseguy" **gangsters**, the Ciceros, in Queens, New York. *Cape Fear*

(1991) was a lumbering **remake** of J. Lee Thompson's 1962 late noir, but *Casino* (1995), again adapted from a Pileggi novel that was based on a true story, was an epic noir tale of corruption and betrayal. It charts the destruction of Sam "Ace" Rothstein (De Niro), a top gambling handicapper called by the Chicago Mob to oversee the day-to-day operations at the fictional Tangiers Casino in Las Vegas, and his desert paradise.

*Gangs of New York* (2002) was an historical gangster film, but *The Departed* (2006), for which Scorsese won his first Oscar, was a return to noir, a remake of the 2002 **Hong Kong film noir** *Wu jian dao* (*Infernal Affairs*). Scorsese switches the action to Boston, and the film precisely evokes the specificities of its history, culture, and its racial, social, and class antagonisms. *The Departed* is also a penetrating study of the instabilities of identity through its complex mirror story of how two informers (Matt Damon and Leonardo DiCaprio), working for mobster Frank Costello (**Jack Nicholson**) and the Massachusetts State Police respectively, get caught up in their double lives and become obsessed with finding the other. *The Departed*'s story recalls Scorsese's beginnings in *Mean Streets*, indicating the deep consistency of his noir oeuvre.

**SCOTT, ADRIAN (1912–1973).** Adrian Scott was a talented writer and producer whose career was proscribed by the **blacklist**. A Popular Front Communist and a member of various progressive groups, Scott believed in film's capacity to raise public consciousness. Having established a reputation as freelance writer, Scott joined RKO in 1942, where he turned to producing to gain greater creative control and had the support of Head of Production **Dore Schary**. Though he produced the **Cornell Woolrich** adaptation *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), Scott's major noirs were made with screenwriter John Paxton and director **Edward Dmytryk**. Their first film was the highly influential **Raymond Chandler** adaptation *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), followed by *Cornered* (1945), also starring **Dick Powell**, a thriller dramatizing the postwar fascist threat in Argentina. Scott battled with RKO executives to retain the overt political content, but he had to compromise. Scott's greatest success was *Crossfire* (1947), nominated for five Academy Awards, another antifascist (and antiracist) film that dramatized the problems of **troubled veterans**. However, despite its success, Scott and Dmytryk were called before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947 and imprisoned as two of the "The Hollywood Ten." Scott sued RKO for wrongful dismissal, but the case was dismissed in 1957. He

survived by writing for film and television behind a front, but he never produced another film. *See also* LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**SCOTT, LIZABETH (1922–).** Born Emma Matzo to Slovakian parents, Lizabeth Scott appeared in 11 films noir. Her sultry blonde beauty and low, husky voice were obvious femme fatale material, the role she played in *Dead Reckoning* (1947) and in *Too Late for Tears* (1949). She also played more sympathetic and supportive **women** in *I Walk Alone* (1948), *Dark City* (1950), and *The Racket* (1951). However, her most distinctive performances were as the good-bad girl, basically decent but drawn into situations over which she has no control, as in *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946) and *Pitfall* (1948).

Scott's other noirs are *Desert Fury* (1947), *The Company She Keeps* (1951), *Two of a Kind* (1951), *Stolen Face* (GB 1952), *Bad for Each Other* (1954), *The Weapon* (GB 1957), and *Pulp* (GB 1972).

**SCOTT, ZACHARY (1914–1965).** Zachary Scott's somewhat sinister good looks lent themselves to the portrayal of ruthless or amoral characters whose surface charm masked an inner corruption in several noirs. He was hired by Warner Bros. after appearing on Broadway and played a ruthless criminal in *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944), the amoral millionaire playboy Monte Beragon in *Mildred Pierce* (1945), a suave scoundrel in *Danger Signal* (1945), and the cold-hearted businessman Horace Vendig in *Ruthless* (1948). His most complex role was in *Guilty Bystander* (1950) as a dishonorably discharged police detective turned alcoholic, who redeems himself through his search for his kidnapped child, a quest that reveals a seamy American underclass.

Scott's other noirs are *The Unfaithful* (1947), *Whiplash* (1948), *Flamingo Road* (1949), *Shadow on the Wall* (1950), *Wings of Danger* (GB 1952, U.S. title *Dead on Course*), *The Counterfeit Plan* (GB 1957), and *Man in the Shadow* (GB 1957, U.S. title *Violent Stranger*).

**SEITZ, JOHN F. (1892–1979).** As principal photographer at Paramount, John F. Seitz had an important influence on film noir, developing the high-contrast “north” or “Rembrandt” lighting technique he had worked on in the 1920s with director Rex Ingram into what became the dominant noir **visual style**. In *This Gun for Hire* (1942), Seitz blended realistic location shooting with an **expressionist** use of Rembrandt lighting, creating the film's deep brooding shadows and the atmospheric backlit,

fog-shrouded scenes photographed at night or in the early hours. This style was refined in *Double Indemnity* (1944), the first of three Oscar-nominated collaborations with **Billy Wilder**—the others were *Sunset Boulevard* (1950) and the quasi-noir *The Lost Weekend* (1945)—where Seitz’s cinematography was consistently resourceful and inventive in ways that stimulated and influenced his fellow cinematographers. Seitz also received an Oscar nomination for his cinematography on *Rogue Cop* (1954), with its compelling contrast between the sordid underground streets and dark alleyways and the luxurious penthouse that Kelvaney (**Robert Taylor**) has obtained through graft.

Seitz’s other noirs are *The Unseen* (1945), *Calcutta* (1947), *The Big Clock* (1948), *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), *Saigon* (1948), *Chicago Deadline* (1949), *Appointment with Danger* (1951), *Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955), and *A Cry in the Night* (1956).

**SEMIDOCUMENTARY.** This category of films noir has the authenticity and hard-edged naturalism of contemporary newsreel journalism and documentaries. It was stimulated by wartime restrictions on studio space and technological changes including lighter cameras and portable lighting equipment, and it was profoundly influenced by Italian neorealism. The forerunner was **Alfred Hitchcock**’s *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), which made use of local inhabitants and location shooting in Santa Rosa. But the first true example was **Louis de Rochemont**’s *The House on 92nd Street* (1945), directed by **Henry Hathaway**, based on an actual case of the destruction of a Nazi spy ring. *House* was made with the cooperation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which lent its offices, personnel, and equipment, and it was “photographed in the localities of the incidents depicted. . . . Wherever possible in the actual places the original incidents occurred.” It also used what became the standard authoritarian voice-over introduction. Further examples that were also avowedly **right-wing**—including *13 Rue Madeleine* (1946) and *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948)—followed, but the most celebrated and influential was **Mark Hellinger**’s *The Naked City* (1948), almost entirely shot on the streets of New York.

Others, notably **Henry Hathaway**’s *Kiss of Death* (1947), **Anthony Mann**’s *T-Men* (1948), and **Robert Siodmak**’s *Cry of the City* (1948), combined the documentary with a typically noir story of crime and corruption. Elia Kazan’s *Panic in the Streets* (1950), filmed primarily on the waterfront and French Quarter of New Orleans, depicted the efforts

of the authorities to catch a criminal who is a plague carrier. *The Asphalt Jungle* (1950) combined a documentary realism with the **capert/ heist** film. In the 1950s, the **city exposé** cycle used similar techniques, and the semidocumentary element in film noir goes through to the late noir *In Cold Blood* (1967), an outstanding adaptation by Richard Brooks (who also directed) of Truman Capote's novel based on the actual killing of a Kansas family by two parolees in 1959.

Other semidocumentary noirs include: *Call Northside 777* (1948), *Union Station* (1950), *711 Ocean Drive* (1950), *Walk East on Beacon* (1952), and *The Wrong Man* (1956).

**SÉRIE NOIRE.** *Série Noire*—"Black Series"—was a highly influential run of French translations of American and English **hard-boiled fiction** that helped to provide the context within which film noir was first recognized and understood. *Série Noire* was launched by the French publisher Gaston Gallimard in autumn 1945 and edited by Marcel Duhamel, a skilled translator, a specialist in American literature and member of the Paris surrealist movement, who wrote the foreword to *Panorama du film noir américain (1941–1953)*. Duhamel believed that hard-boiled crime novels were the true future of popular fiction, and he differentiated *Série Noire* from the famous French collection of murder mystery detective fiction, *Le Masque*, which had been published since 1927: "Sometimes there is no mystery. And sometimes not even a detective. So what? . . . there is action, anxiety, violence." The title *Série Noire* was selected by the poet and screenwriter Jacques Prévert, who had been strongly associated with **poetic realism**. The title was a play on the expression *une série noire* used to describe a succession of troubling events, but it also evoked *littérature noire*, the French term for English **Gothic** literature. The series, with its distinctive black and yellow covers, combined the cultural prestige of Gallimard with the lurid appeal of pulp fiction and became highly popular, attracting an educated as well as a mass readership.

The first two titles were translations of the English writer Peter Cheyney, featuring his Federal Bureau of Investigation hero Lemmy Caution, followed by another British author James Hadley Chase and a succession of prominent American hard-boiled writers, including **James M. Cain, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, and Jim Thompson**. Initially French writers, including Thomas Narcejac, wrote under American pseudonyms, but in the 1950s they wrote more Gallic

stories, usually set in Paris and using an underworld argot, under their own names. Among the most popular were Albert Simonin, *Touchez pas au Grisbi* (1953); Auguste Le Breton, *Du rififi chez les Hommes* (1953); Pierre Lesou, *Le Doulos* (1957); and José Giovanni, *Le Deuxième Souffle* (1958), which were all adapted into prominent **French films noir**, the last two by **Jean-Pierre Melville**. *Série Noire* still continues as a vehicle for the publication of noir fiction.

**SE7EN (1995)**. David Fincher's *Se7en* is a highly influential **hybrid** horror-noir that deliberately and disorientatingly oscillates between a highly stylized modern **Gothic** and a police procedural. World-weary Lieutenant William Somerset (Morgan Freeman), about to retire after 34 years of service, must take on one final case, a serial killer calling himself John Doe (Kevin Spacey). He is obsessed with punishing his victims, who each represent one of the seven deadly sins, in a manner that befits their sin. Somerset is partnered by his impulsive, overconfident successor, Detective David Mills (Brad Pitt), their investigations taking place in a partially glimpsed unidentified **city**—Fincher withholds establishing shots—soaked in perpetual rain and insistently noisy, which was inspired by the gritty urban noirs of the 1970s, such as *The French Connection* (1971) and *Blade Runner* (1982). Each crime scene they go to is a shadowy and confusing labyrinth in which the visceral horror of the serial killer's "artistic" crimes is gradually revealed, but also partially obscured, allowing an audience's imagination to work feverishly. *Se7en*'s cinematographer, Darius Khondji, an admirer of **expressionism** as well as Gregg Toland, used a somber, oligochromatic color register, composed of a very limited, closely related range of colors: white, cream, gray, slate, ochre, beige, brown, black, and dirty, acidic greens, to create what he called a "crepuscular aesthetic."

The pursuit ends in a truly terrifying dénouement following a surprise move in which Doe gives himself up but will only plead guilty if he shows Mills and Somerset his last two victims. In the only scene shot in sunlight amid an out-of-town scrubland landscape, Doe has arranged that at seven on the seventh day, a package is delivered to Mills containing the head of his artless wife Tracy (Gwyneth Paltrow). When, despite Somerset's pleadings, Mills shoots Doe, he becomes the sixth sin (envy—he had talked of how much he envied Mills's marriage) and Mills the seventh: wrath. Mills has succumbed to Doe's power and is irredeemably damned. It was only at Pitt's insistence that this ending

was retained against studio pressure, but it provides a fitting if uncompromisingly bleak and chilling conclusion to this unnerving film. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**SIEGEL, DON (1912–1991).** Don Siegel, whose lengthy career encompasses both films noir and **neo-noirs**, was predominantly an action director with a straightforward, uncluttered visual style, partly driven by his limited budgets. Siegel used restricted camera movement and shot mainly on location, making his films “taut and lean.” His films noir focus on antiheroes, at odds with a timid and unambitious society, a conflict that leads to the character’s isolation and his continual struggle between violence and control. Siegel was thus temperamentally unsuited to his first noir, *The Verdict* (1946), a period detective drama starring **Sydney Greenstreet** and **Peter Lorre**, but he hit his stride with *The Big Steal* (1949), a fast-paced chase thriller across Mexico, designed by RKO to cash in on the popularity of the Robert Mitchum/Jane Greer pairing from *Out of the Past* (1947). *Riot in Cell Block 11* (1954) was an abrasive, violent **prison noir** that also made an appeal for penal reform within its action setting. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) was a noir **hybrid**, its science fiction framework imbued with Cold War noir paranoia.

*Baby Face Nelson* (1957), his third collaboration with **Daniel Mainwaring**, starring Mickey Rooney as the diminutive **gangster**, has the characteristic harsh, raw energy of all Siegel’s films, combining graphic violence, action sequences, and a character study of psychopathology. *The Lineup* (1958), based on Stirling Silliphant’s characters from the television series of the same name for which Siegel had directed the pilot episode in 1954, was another fast-paced crime thriller with numerous action sequences and an elaborate final chase. The criminals, notably the psychotic Dancer (Eli Wallach), are antisocial outcasts, struggling to retain a professional control that will channel their violence. Something of an exception was *Private Hell 36* (1954), much more of a character study, focusing on two contrasting policemen, the emotionally repressed Bruner (**Steve Cochran**) and sensitive family man Farnham (**Howard Duff**), both corrupted by money.

Siegel’s late noir *The Killers* (1964) was a **remake** of **Robert Siodmak**’s 1946 film, but with the focus much more on the contract killers themselves and with a more brutal and alienated violence. *Madigan* (1968) was an accomplished depiction of the **corrupt cop** starring a



world-weary **Richard Widmark** in the title role, who recognizes that his professionalism has been hopelessly compromised. In *Dirty Harry* (1971), Siegel's most celebrated film, the lone cop "Dirty" Harry Callahan (**Clint Eastwood**) operates his own system of quasi-vigilante justice outside the normal rules. In this intricate and compelling pursuit film, Siegel superbly orchestrates Callahan's relentless tracking down of the serial killer who is menacing San Francisco. Siegel does not shrink from showing Callaghan's disturbing brutality.

Siegel's other noirs are *Count the Hours* (1953), *Crime in the Streets* (1956), *The Hanged Man* (1964), *Stranger on the Run* (1967), and *Charley Varrick* (1973).

**SIEGEL, SOL C. (1903–1982).** Sol C. Siegel was an experienced and efficient producer (from 1937) who made *Among the Living* (1941) and *Street of Chance* (1942) for Paramount, both of which helped to define and establish a noir style and sensibility. He joined Twentieth Century-Fox after the war and assisted in the establishment of the studio's distinctive noir style through five further noirs that blended location realism with melodrama: *Cry of the City* (1948), *House of Strangers* (1949), *Panic in the Streets* (1950), *Fourteen Hours* (1951), and *Deadline U.S.A.* (1952).

**SIMENON, GEORGES (1903–1989).** A prolific writer, best known for his creation of the Parisian detective Commissaire Jules Maigret who first appeared in 1929, the Belgian-born Georges Simenon was a seminal influence on the development of film noir in France and was also adapted occasionally in Great Britain and in America. Like his American **hard-boiled** counterparts, Simenon took the detective novel away from the English murder mystery and placed his ordinary characters in realistic settings, downplaying action, suspense, and violence in favor of atmosphere and a dreary quotidian actuality. His stories gradually uncover the social and psychological pressures, the dishonesty, fear, and guilt, which lead to crime and murder. In Simenon's fiction there are no long expositions; the past is evoked rapidly in a series of flashbacks and the focus is always on the crisis, a turning point in the character's life. His killers often act in a dreamlike state that separates them from their actions or crimes and demonstrates the fundamental alienation that Simenon sees at the heart of existence.

Three adaptations of Maigret novels in 1932 constituted the beginning of **French film noir**: Jean Renoir's *La Nuit du carrefour* (*Night at the Crossroads*), Julien Duvivier's *La Tête d'un homme* (*A Man's Neck*), and Jean Tarride's *Le Chien jaune* (*The Yellow Dog*). An adaptation of *Les Inconnus dans la maison* (*Strangers in the House*, 1942) was one of the major noirs made during the Occupation and was remade in Britain in 1967, as *Stranger in the House*. *Panique* (*Panic*, 1947) was a typical Simenon story, focusing on the fear and suffering of an unattractive loner (Michel Simon) after he is suspected of murder. It was **remade** in 1989 by Patrice Leconte as *Monsieur Hire*, starring Michel Blanc. Leconte called Simenon a "false friend" because his novels are full of what appear to be visual images but which are not translatable into cinematic terms. Indeed, Simenon's distinctive atmosphere, subtle psychological states, sensory impressions, and minute details of everyday life are difficult to realize on film. However, *Le Chat* (*The Cat*, 1971) was one of the most successful adaptations, as was *La Veuve Couderc* (*The Widow Couderc*, 1971), a portrait of village life and two doomed lovers, Simone Signoret and **Alain Delon**. Bertrand Tavernier's *L'Horloger de Saint-Paul* (*The Watchmaker of St. Paul*, 1973) managed to translate Simenon's novel into a finely drawn portrait of ordinary life in Lyon as a father (Philippe Noiret) tries to understand his son's reasons for murdering an industrialist.

In Britain, Lance Comfort's *Temptation Harbour* (1947), based on the novella *Newhaven—Dieppe*, successfully captured the Simenon universe using Otto Heller's somber, gray cinematography; Robert Newton gave a fine performance as the alienated victim drawn into crime. In *The Man Who Watched the Trains Go By* (U.S. title *The Paris Express*, 1952), Claude Rains engagingly played a drab little man, whose well-ordered life is shattered by a chance encounter. *The Man on the Eiffel Tower* (1949) was the first Maigret novel to be filmed in the United States, but despite its Parisian setting, director and star Burgess Meredith fails to capture either quotidian realism or psychological torment. Much more powerful was **Phil Karlson's** adaptation of *The Brothers Rico* (1957), one of Simenon's American-set novels, which emphasizes ordinary, everyday lives as much as gangsterism and how Eddie Rico (**Richard Conte**) is inexorably pulled back into a criminal milieu.

Simenon's fiction continues to be the basis for French films noir, including *Feux rouges* (*Red Lights*, 2004) and *L'Homme de Londres* (aka *A londoni férfi*, *The Man from London*, 2007).

**SIN CITY (2005).** *Sin City* decisively altered the relationship between film noir and graphic novels. Director Robert Rodriguez referred to the process as a “translation not an adaptation” and shot what is now the film’s prologue—in which an unnamed professional **hit man** (Josh Hartnett) kills a scarlet-clad woman—in order to persuade writer and graphic artist Frank Miller that he could retain the integrity, the narration, and the dialogue but above all the visual quality of Miller’s fiction. Miller was persuaded to adapt his own fiction and eventually took codirector credit. **Quentin Tarantino** was a “guest director” for one sequence, and Rodriguez’s rearrangement of the stories’ chronology recalled *Pulp Fiction*.

*Sin City* was “translated” from several of Miller’s graphic novels and a short story that first appeared as a 13-part serial in the *Dark Horse Presents comic book* from April 1991 to June 1992, under the title of *Sin City*. It was one of the first films to be shot primarily rather than occasionally on a digital backlot, allowing a faithful translation of Miller’s artwork onto the screen, with many shots being almost exact replicas of ones in the source novels. It was shot initially in full color then converted back to high-quality black-and-white that facilitated the classic noir chiaroscuro, stark blacks and whites with very little gray tone. In this way Rodriguez created an utterly stylized **retro-noir** universe, visually and thematically, but one that was also “modern and savage,” invested with Miller’s customary grim, gallows humor and extreme violence.

All the stories take place in Basin or “Sin” City, a fictional town in the American northwest, which, like **Dashiell Hammett**’s “Poisonville” in *Red Harvest*, is a dark version of the American **city**, ruled by the Roark family, a dynasty of shady landowners and politicians with a corrupt police force and several criminal gangs. It has the usual panoply of noir locations: a rundown neighborhood, a squalid waterfront area, Old Town, a red-light district but run by **women**, a wealthy suburb, and a focal bar/strip club, Kadie’s Club Pecos, creating the archetypal oppressive and labyrinthine urban environment, bathed in ubiquitous rain. The characters are noir archetypes, with sexy femme fatales, battling victim-heroes, **corrupt cops**, and psychotic villains. The outstanding creation Marv (**Mickey Rourke**) in the second story, “The Hard Goodbye,” a hulking, grotesque jailbird, is framed for the murder of the beautiful Goldie (Jaime King) by the Roarks, who inflicts terrible violence in his struggle to find her real killer.

*Sin City* won the Technical Grand Prize at the 2005 Cannes Festival for its “visual shaping.” Although it was admired for its style, *Sin City* was also criticized for its excessive, graphic violence (which included torture, decapitation, rape, and castration), its misogyny, and its failure to make the characters empathetic. However, it was highly successful commercially and a sequel, *Sin City 2*, is due to be released in 2010. *See also* MEN; VISUAL STYLE.

**SIODMAK, ROBERT (1900–1973).** One of the most important *émigré* directors whose work is at the heart of film noir, Robert Siodmak’s themes are cruelty, betrayal, and death, combining a fatalistic **existentialism** with a powerfully countervailing romanticism, drawing on noir’s **Gothic** and its **hard-boiled** lineage. His characters are divided and ambivalent figures, gripped by sexual obsession. The **men** are weak, self-absorbed, and usually destroyed by their desires; the **women** are often stronger, more resilient, but also more duplicitous. Siodmak began, along with his brother Curt, as a screenwriter before having a successful directing career in Weimar Germany, including *Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht* (*The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer*, 1931). Both *Voruntersuchung* (*Inquest*, 1931) and *Stürme der Leidenschaft* (*Storms of Passion*, 1931) anticipate film noir, the latter an underworld tale of sexual obsession and betrayal with a scheming femme fatale. Siodmak was one of a number of Jewish filmmakers who fled from Nazi persecution, departing for Paris where he made *Pièges* (*Traps*, 1939, U.S. title *Personal Column*), which, like *Inquest*, focused on a man wrongly accused of murder, set in a seedy underworld milieu.

Siodmak moved to the United States in 1940, gaining a long-term contract with Universal, where Curt was an established screenwriter. He directed the **Universal horror film** *Son of Dracula* (1943) before directing Universal’s first noir, *Phantom Lady* (1944), adapted from the **Cornell Woolrich** story. *Phantom Lady*, as with Siodmak’s European noirs, demonstrated a strong interest in psychological disturbance and sexual pathology, as did *Christmas Holiday* (1944), a bold and intelligent adaptation of a W. Somerset Maugham story. In this dark, “European” tale of obsessive love and corrupt passion, the location shifted from Paris to southern Gothic New Orleans. Deanna Durbin and Gene Kelly were both deliberately cast against type, as a vamp nightclub singer and her weak-willed, homosexual husband, respectively. Both

films show Siodmak's preference for **expressionistically** shot and lit studio settings, creating a claustrophobic intensity in which to explore complex and dark psychological states. Both *The Suspect* (1944) and *The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* (aka *Uncle Harry*, 1945) have middle-aged suburban male protagonists—Philip Marshall (Charles Laughton) and Harry Quincey (George Sanders)—respectively. Each is ensnared by gentility, their happiness threatened by destructive, castrating women, who look for freedom through the love of a wholesome young woman, played by **Ella Raines**.

*The Dark Mirror* (1946), the first film made by the new Universal-International company, had higher production values. Olivia de Havilland plays identical twins whose dispositions are antithetical. Although Siodmak's **visual style** is assured, the scenes in which the psychiatrist (Lew Ayres) provides an explicitly Freudian analysis of her condition are dull and wordy. Siodmak had more freedom with *The Spiral Staircase* (1946), a Gothic noir, which, like *Christmas Holiday*, anatomizes the corruption of long-established families. Siodmak's next two films, *The Killers* (1946) and *Criss Cross* (1949), show the influence of producer **Mark Hellinger**. Both are based on hard-boiled fictions set in realistic, contemporary locations, but they demonstrate Siodmak's continued fascination with obsessive love and pathological relationships.

*Cry of the City* (1948) was Siodmak's most explicitly realistic work and part of the **semidocumentary** cycle. It depicted the struggle between a charismatic, amoral, and ruthless gangster, Martin Rome (**Richard Conte**), and his *Doppelgänger*, the self-righteous Lieutenant Vittorio Candella (**Victor Mature**), who also grew up in the teeming neighborhood of New York's Little Italy. Siodmak's final American film, *The File on Thelma Jordan* (1950), was his most subtle study of duality and obsession. Cleve (**Wendell Corey**), another of noir's ground-down husbands, an assistant district attorney trapped in routine and castrated by his dominating father-in-law, a judge, engages in a liberating and enriching as well as destructive encounter with Thelma (**Barbara Stanwyck**), another complex, divided character, both ruthless and desperate.

Siodmak returned to Germany in 1952 and directed *Nachts, wenn der Teufel kam* (*The Devil Strikes at Night*, 1957), announced as a "true story from the secret archives of the Gestapo," in which a mentally retarded serial killer who is terrorizing Hamburg is used by the Nazi authorities to garner public support for their policy of exterminating undesirables.

His final noir, *The Rough and the Smooth* (1959, U.S. title *Portrait of a Sinner*), was made in Great Britain, adapted from a novel by Robin Maugham, in which the femme fatale Ila (Nadja Tiller) is a refugee. She is the object of two men's obsessive infatuation, a successful architect (Tony Britton) and a shady businessman (**William Bendix**), forming a disturbing triangular relationship. *See also* FREUDIANISM; NARRATIVE PATTERNS.

**SOUTH KOREAN FILM NOIR.** South Korean is the most recent of the Asian film noirs, as the film industry only developed significantly from the 1980s when severe censorship and state controls were relaxed, becoming a commercial cinema that gained international recognition from the 1990s. But, as in the **Hong Kong** and **Japanese film noirs**, the conflict between old and new values, between Confucian ethics that emphasize honor, duty, brotherhood, and family loyalties and an amoral foreign materialism, is very strong. South Korean noir characteristically dramatizes how traditional ways of living have been replaced by the anomie and loneliness of the modern **city**. South Korea's capital, Seoul, has its own organized **gangsters** or *jopoks*.

A pathbreaking film was *Jangunui adeul* (*Son of a General*, 1990) and its two sequels (1991 and 1992), the violent and slow-moving story of Kim Du-han, a gangster and later politician who organized a militia to fight against the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910–45). *Chorok milkogi* (*Green Fish*, 1997) was an archetypal noir tale of a **troubled veteran** who becomes embroiled with gangsters on his return; *Tellmisseomding* (*Tell Me Something*, 1999) was a serial killer film that derived from *Se7en* (1995). *Fuyajo* (*Sleepless Town*, 1998) was more distinctive, a beautifully photographed tale of the seedy back-alleys of Kubuchiko, starring the popular Takeshi Kaneshiro as a sleazy underworld figure caught in gangland war and involved with an enigmatic woman (Mirai Yamamoto). *Chingoo* (*Friend*, 2001) traces the story of four friends over the turbulent period 1970–90, two of whom become rival gangsters. *Swiri* (*Shiri*, 1999) was a high-budget thriller that depicted the efforts of South Korean intelligence agents to foil the efforts of a North Korean Special Forces unit with its deadly female assassin. *Gonggongui jeog* (*Public Enemy*, 2002), successful enough to spawn two sequels (2005/2008), depicts a volatile **corrupt cop** who relentlessly pursues an apparently upright businessman and family man whom he suspects of being a psychopathic killer.

Chan-wook Park's bleak and violent trilogy, *Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance* (2001), *Oldboy* (2003), and *Sympathy for Lady Vengeance* (2005), was also highly successful, especially *Oldboy*, which won the Grand Prix award at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival. Replete with flashbacks and brooding first-person narration, *Oldboy* is a dark, disturbing tale of the victim-hero, Dae-su Oh (Min-sik Choi), an ordinary man locked in a hotel room for 15 years without understanding his captor's motives, who finds he has been framed for his wife's murder. He is suddenly released and given five days to find out why, only to discover even darker secrets in this bleak, compelling film.

**SPANISH FILM NOIR.** Film noir or *cine negro* had great difficulty in establishing itself in Spain, a country that was predominantly rural and ruled by a repressive fascist dictatorship, underpinned by inflexible Catholicism. Spain lacked a tradition of indigenous **hard-boiled** crime fiction, or even American translations, and American films noir were treated with suspicion. A few low-budget urban thrillers (*policíacas*)—including *Brigada criminal* (*Crime Force*, 1950) and *Distrito quinto* (*Fifth Precinct*, 1957)—had occasional noir elements, while *La corona negra* (*The Black Crown*, 1951) depicted a fallen, amnesiac woman plagued by drink-induced flashbacks. *Surcos* (*Furrows*, 1951) was a hybrid of Italian neo-realism and the American **gangster** film.

The first genuine Spanish noir was Juan Antonio Bardem's *Muerte de un ciclista* (*Death of a Cyclist*, aka *Age of Infidelity*, 1955), the story of an adulterous couple, a paranoid, tormented male protagonist Juan (Alberto Closas) and vengeful femme fatale, María José (Lucía Bosé), whose relationship disintegrates after they kill a cyclist in their speeding black car. Bardem's darkly lit tale weaves in a concern with the past, so characteristic of Spanish noir, when Juan recognizes the spot on which the cyclist died as a battlefield where he fought during the Civil War. The cyclist's death thus becomes part of his guilt at destroying the Republican armies. The dissident filmmaker Carlos Saura made two noirs, *Los golfos* (*The Delinquents*, 1960) and *La caza* (*The Hunt*, 1965) to critique General Francisco Franco's repressive regime, the latter depicting three **troubled veterans** who gather for rabbit shooting in a desolate gulch that was a Civil War battlefield, an event that triggers guilt, rivalries, and violence.

After Franco's death in 1975 a Spanish **neo-noir** became possible, partly based on the crime fiction boom of *novela negra*. In addition to

being able to discuss openly sexual issues and illicit relationships, these neo-noirs acknowledged the complexity of regional identities and analyzed the peculiarly Spanish theme of *desencanto*, the disenchantment many felt after the hopes for democratic developments were not realized and state corruption came to light. *El asesinato en el Comité Central* (*Murder in the Central Committee*, 1981) deals with the changed political landscape, specifically the reintegration of a newly legalized Communist Party into political life. *El arreglo* (*The Deal*, 1983) tapped into fears about the “reformed” forces of law and order, attitudes only heightened after a failed coup in February 1981. In contradistinction to other European film noirs, many Spanish neo-noirs have female-centered narratives, a development that recognized the transformed role of **women**. Both *Adiós, pequeña* (*Goodbye, Little Girl*, 1986) and *Todo por la pasta* (*All for the Dough*, 1991) are set in Bilbao as a substitute for New York, the former resembling *Jagged Edge* (1985), the second a celebration of female solidarity, albeit in crime. Alejandro Amenábar’s *Tesis* (*Thesis*, 1995) has a female protagonist who finds the snuff killer she is seeking is a man to whom she is sexually attracted.

**Retro-noir** has a special place in Spanish cinema because it offers the opportunity to explore a past that is uncomfortable and which could not be addressed at the time. Vicente Aranda’s *Tiempo del silencio* (*Time of Silence*, 1986) set in an ill lit, claustrophobic, and highly corrupt Madrid, uncovers the unacknowledged 1950s. *Si te dicen que caí* (*If They Tell You That I Fell*, 1989) revisited the Civil War, and Aranda’s celebrated *Amantes* (*Lovers*, 1990), depicted the struggle between right- and left-wing forces through its story of the seduction of a weak man by a femme fatale who persuades him to murder his fiancée. In *Beltenebros* (1991), Darman (Terence Stamp), who executed a traitor in a clandestine Madrid Communist cell in the 1940s, has cause to question the victim’s guilt when he returns to Madrid in 1962 to repeat the process, his mind constantly flashing back to the events of the 1940s. Pedro Almodóvar’s *Carne trémula* (*Live Flesh*, 1997), based on a novel by British crime writer Ruth Rendell, also employs a complex flashback structure, shifting between past (the 1970s) and the present, in order to examine Francoism and the instabilities of memory and identity. Several of Almodóvar’s other films have noir elements, notably *Matador* (1986) and *¡Átame!* (*Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!*, 1990), which focus on destructive relationships, and *La mala educación* (*Bad Education*, 2004), whose *homme fatal*, Juan, is indebted to **Patricia Highsmith**’s Tom Ripley.



Recent Spanish neo-noirs include *Los horas del día* (*The Hours of the Day*, 2003) about a disturbingly ordinary serial killer in the Barcelona suburbs; *El Lobo* (2004), a political thriller; *Hormigas en la boca* (*Ants in the Mouth*, 2005)—the title slang for “coming to a bad end”—set in Fulgencio Batista’s repressive Cuba in the late 1950s, in which a newly released political activist tries to track down his money and his girlfriend amid the gangsters and corrupt politicians; and *Solo quiero caminar* (*Just Walking*, 2008), a violent **cap/er/heit** noir.

**SPILLANE, MICKEY (1918–2006).** Mickey Spillane became one of the world’s best-selling authors after World War II, whose books sold over 200 million copies. Spillane learned his craft writing for **comic** books and then magazines and carried over that graphic, direct style into his fiction. As the Cold War successor to the prewar **hard-boiled** writers, Spillane’s distinction was to add more sex and to make the violence more brutal and detailed. His serial **private eye**, Mike Hammer, is a tough-talking, hard-drinking, misogynistic bruiser, merging the investigator with the vigilante in his right-wing and xenophobic hatred of “Reds” wherever they may be found. Spillane’s first novel *I, the Jury* (1947) was adapted in 1953 as a cheaply made “B” feature produced by Victor Saville, though graced by **John Alton**’s cinematography. Although less sadistic than the novel, Harry Essex’s adaptation retained its basic brutality, as Hammer (Biff Elliot) investigates the murder of his best friend. Saville also produced *My Gun Is Quick* (1957), this time with Robert Bray as a more world-weary Hammer. Saville directed another Spillane adaptation, *The Long Wait* (1954), closer to the **existentialism** and angst of noir, in which Anthony Quinn plays an **amnesiac** arrested as a murder suspect who exposes the corruption of his hometown when he tries to clear his name.

Ironically, in the most influential and celebrated Spillane adaptation, *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), director **Robert Aldrich** and screenwriter **A. I. Bezzerides**, who both hated the original, turned Spillane’s world inside out, exposing the chauvinism and brutality of Hammer. The burly Spillane himself starred as Hammer in *The Girl Hunters* (1963), a late noir made at MGM’s British studios, with Shirley Eaton as the femme fatale. *I, the Jury* was remade in 1982, and Spillane’s work also provided numerous noir **television series**, including *Mickey Spillane’s Mike Hammer* (1984–86).

**STANWYCK, BARBARA (1907–1990).** Barbara Stanwyck’s superlative, Oscar-nominated performance as Phyllis Dietrichson, the archetypal femme fatale, in *Double Indemnity* (1944) marked her as one of the most iconic female performers in film noir. Stanwyck constructs a character with an impenetrable hardness, whose harsh, insistent voice, rigid body postures, steely smile, and unmoving blonde hair are the outward signs of an implacable ruthlessness, prepared to go to any lengths to get her way. Only at the moment of her death does she display any tenderness toward her victim Walter Neff (**Fred MacMurray**), whom she has treated as an expendable commodity. Stanwyck’s performance, built on the character she had played in the noir precursor *Baby Face* (1933), defined her subsequent noir roles as a tough, uncompromising woman, determined to get on whatever the cost.

In *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), she plays a ruthlessly ambitious woman who harbors a guilty secret that drives her to dominate not only her weak husband Walter (**Kirk Douglas**) but also a whole midwestern town. She played another heiress in *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), who pays for her domineering destruction of another weak man (**Burt Lancaster**) by death. It was another Oscar-nominated performance, requiring tremendous skill and technique in solo acting, for the most part talking into a telephone in this adaptation of a celebrated **radio** noir. Playing the title role in *The File on Thelma Jordan* (1950), Stanwyck was again hard and manipulative, but her character is presented more sympathetically, confessing at her death that she had always been two people: “All my life struggling, the good and the bad.” Stanwyck played tough, ambitious, but also frustrated **women** in **Fritz Lang’s** *Clash by Night* (1952) and her last noir *Crime of Passion* (1957). In the latter, thwarted by the lack of drive of her policeman husband (**Sterling Hayden**), she seduces and then kills his boss (**Raymond Burr**) in order to advance her husband’s career.

Stanwyck’s other noirs are *No Man of Her Own* (1950), *Jeopardy* (1953), *Blowing Wild* (1953), and *Witness to Murder* (1954).

**STEINER, MAX (1888–1971).** The Austrian-born Max Steiner, who became head of the Music Department at Warner Bros. in 1936, was one of the most prolific of Hollywood composers. His practice of synchronizing musical effects very closely with events on screen, emphasizing every action by **music**, was criticized by his detractors as excessive

“mickey-mousing.” Steiner’s score for his first noir, *Mildred Pierce* (1945), was one of his best, effectively combining the established lush, late-romantic style with its large-scale symphonic motifs with more discordant notes, emphasizing the film’s **hybrid** status. Steiner’s score for *The Big Sleep* (1946) showed his capacity to differentiate character: the jazz rhythms for the wayward Carmen, agitated strings for her rational sister Vivian. His swelling Wagnerian scores for the noir hybrid *Pursued* (1947) and for *White Heat* (1949) emphasized the tragic dimensions of their tales.

Other noirs: *The Letter* (1940), *The Unfaithful* (1947), *Key Largo* (1948), *Beyond the Forest* (1949), *Flamingo Road* (1949), *The Breaking Point* (1950), *Caged* (1950), *The Damned Don’t Cry* (1950), *I Was a Communist for the FBI* (1951), *Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955), and *Illegal* (1955).

**STERLING, JAN (1921–2004).** Jan Sterling’s bleached hair, sullen pout, and strident voice meant she specialized in playing hard-nosed **women**: a **gangster**’s moll in *Appointment with Danger* (1951); Smoochie, one of the hard-bitten convicts in the **prison noir** *Caged* (1950); the femme fatale in *Flesh and Fury* (1952); or a scheming estate agent trying to dispose of her rival (**Joan Crawford**) in *Female on the Beach* (1955). Her best role came in *Ace in the Hole* (aka *The Big Carnival*, 1951), in which she plays the embittered wife of the man trapped underground who colludes with reporter **Kirk Douglas**’s cynical machinations to delay his rescue, sensing the opportunity to make money and escape the mean life of running a roadside diner. As the scheme collapses, she effectively reveals the fear and emptiness behind her tough façade.

Sterling’s other noirs are *Mystery Street* (1950), *Union Station* (1950), *Split Second* (1953), *The Human Jungle* (1954), and *The Harder They Fall* (1956).

**STEWART, PAUL (1908–1986).** Paul Stewart was a highly regarded character actor—a founding member of the Mercury Theatre Company whose first film role was in *Citizen Kane* (1941)—who became typecast as a suave, callous, and calculating villain in numerous noirs, beginning with *Johnny Eager* (1942), where he played a sinister criminal. He played well-groomed, ruthless mobsters in several noirs, including *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955). His most memorable role was in *The Window* (1949), based on a **Cornell Woolrich** story, as the supposedly ordinary

neighbor pursuing the child (Bobby Driscoll) who has seen him rob and murder a drunken sailor. He starred in and occasionally directed some episodes of noir **television series**, including *Peter Gunn* (1959–61).

Stewart's other noirs are *Champion* (1949), *Illegal Entry* (1949), *Edge of Doom* (1950), *Walk Softly, Stranger* (1950), *Appointment with Danger* (1951), *Deadline U.S.A.* (1952), *Loan Shark* (1952), *Chicago Syndicate* (1955), *Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955), and *In Cold Blood* (1967).

**STONE, SHARON (1958–)**. Stone's defining role was as *the* contemporary femme fatale, Catherine Trammel, in *Basic Instinct* (1992). She reprised the character in the much delayed and long-awaited *Basic Instinct 2* (2006), set in a contemporary noir London of plateglass architecture, in which she manipulates and torments her new victim, psychiatrist David Glass (David Morrissey), who has been sent to diagnose her. Stone had played a mysterious, inscrutable femme fatale in her first noir *Cold Steel* (1987) but could play other roles, including a sexually repressed woman in *Scissors* (1991), driven toward insanity by a doctor trying to frame her for the murder of his wife's lover. Stone was Oscar-nominated for her performance as the attractive hustler and former prostitute, Ginger McKenna, who marries casino manager Sam Rothstein (**Robert De Niro**) in **Martin Scorsese's** *Casino* (1995). Stone conveys movingly how Ginger becomes trapped and alienated, taking refuge in drug addiction, eventually dying alone of an overdose. She was also effective in *Diabolique* (1996), a **remake** of *Les Diaboliques* (*The Devils*, 1954), as the mistress of a cruel school principal (Chazz Palminteri), who collaborates with his wife (Isabelle Adjani) in a carefully planned and executed attempt to murder him in the Pittsburgh countryside.

Stone's other noirs are *Total Recall* (1990), *Diary of a Hitman* (1991), *Where Sleeping Dogs Lie* (1991), *Year of the Gun* (1991), *The Specialist* (1994), and *Gloria* (1999). *See also* WOMEN.

**STRANGER ON THE THIRD FLOOR (1940)**. Often cited as the first film noir, *Stranger on the Third Floor* was a **hybrid** of the horror genre and the contemporary crime thriller, developed as a result of the decision of RKO's Head of Production Leo Spitz to request producer Leo Marcus, who ran the second-feature unit, to produce some topical "exploitation pictures." Frank Partos's story and screenplay are sub-**Cornell Woolrich**, depicting paranoid hero Michael Ward (John McGuire) who partly narrates the story in stream-of-consciousness voice-over.

Ward's evidence convicts taxi driver Joe Briggs (**Elisha Cook Jr.**) of a brutal murder. Beset by doubts over Briggs's guilt, Ward dreams that he is arrested, tried, and convicted of the murder of Albert Meng (Charles Halton), his repulsive and interfering neighbor. In an extended dream sequence, *Stranger's* contemporary realism gives way to an overt stylization, directly influenced by **expressionism**. In particular, the abstract aesthetic of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919) was the basis for the design of the huge, distorted courtroom and condemned cell by **Van Nest Polglase** and **Albert S. D'Agostino** and for **Nicholas Musuraca's** severe chiaroscuro lighting where subjects are lit from below, contorting features and objects. The dream deepens into a surreal nightmare, expertly orchestrated by director **Boris Ingster** who was familiar with expressionism, as Ward sees the shadowy outline of the trial judge transformed into a composite figure, scales of justice in one hand, scythe in the other, a paranoid conflation of the law with death. Ward is arrested, but his resourceful girlfriend Jane (Margaret Tallichet) locates the real killer, a mysterious stranger (**Peter Lorre**), a psychotic trying to avoid being taken back to an asylum who darts in and out of the deep, threatening shadows. As a relatively unpublicized "B" feature, *Stranger* made little impact and it thus anticipated rather than directly influenced the development of film noir. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**STRASSENFILM (STREET FILM).** The *Strassenfilm* (street film) was the second major influence on film noir emanating from Weimar Germany. It differs from **expressionism** because it derived from *Neue Sachlichkeit* or New Objectivity, which replaced expressionism's **Gothic** scenarios with the social realities of contemporary German life. The *Strassenfilm* cycle, 1923–30, was initiated by Karl Grune's *Die Strasse* (*The Street*, 1923), with its prototypical descent of a respectable, middle-aged, middle-class protagonist, bored with bourgeois confinement, into the overcharged, heightened landscape—thrilling, fascinating, but dangerous—of **city** streets at night, with its deep, threatening shadows and flashing lights. This proto-noir urban milieu of dreary slums or tenements is populated by the dregs of city life: gamblers, thieves, and con men, but above all the femme fatale who embodies the temptation and threat of illicit desire. Other key examples include G. W. Pabst's *Die Freudlose Gasse* (*The Joyless Street*, 1925), set in Vienna in a period of hyperinflation; Bruno Rahn's *Dirnentragödie* (*Tragedy of*

*the Street*, aka *Tragedy of the Whore*, 1927); Joe May's *Asphalt* (1929), the compelling tale of a young policeman who falls in love with a prostitute; *Mutter Krausens Fahrt ins Glück* (*Mother Krause's Trip to Happiness*, 1928); and the most famous, Josef von Sternberg's *Der blaue Engel* (*The Blue Angel*, 1930), with Marlene Dietrich as the nightclub singer Lola Lola, the archetypal siren singing in the first German talkie. See also GERMAN FILM NOIR.

**SULLIVAN, BARRY (1912–1994).** Tall, well-groomed, and good-looking, Barry Sullivan could play tough guys, as in his **gangster** turned scourge in *The Miami Story* (1954), but was more usually suave schemers—as in *Suspense* (1946), *Framed* (1947), or *No Questions Asked* (1951). He also played sympathetic if weak-willed victims in *Jeopardy* (1953) and in *Loophole* (1954), where he is hounded by a special investigator (**Charles McGraw**) who believes he is guilty of collusion in a robbery. He was effective in a more complex role as Shubunka, the low-level hood in *The Gangster* (1947), an **existential** antihero who cannot find a meaning in his existence. In the underrated *Cause for Alarm!* (1951), Sullivan played an insanely possessive suburban husband who turns his wife's ordered world into a living nightmare. Sullivan also appeared in several noir **television series**, including *Police Story* (1973) and *The Streets of San Francisco* (1972–77).

Sullivan's other noirs are *Tension* (1949), *Payment on Demand* (1951), *The Unknown Man* (1951), *Cry of the Hunted* (1953), *Miami Story* (1954), and *Julie* (1956).

**SYLOS, PAUL (1900–1976).** Paul Sylos's career as an art director was unusual in that he worked for several different studios. His first work on film noir was for Monogram—*When Strangers Marry* (1944) and *Suspense* (1946)—his designs compromised by the minuscule budgets. He had slightly greater scope on the Paramount “B” feature *Fear in the Night* (1947), an adaptation of a **Cornell Woolrich** story that features a terrifying room composed entirely of mirrored doors. Sylos also worked on the more ambitious **remake**, *Nightmare* (1956), set in New Orleans where the exotic bayous and the nocturnal jazz bars on Bourbon Street showcase the inventiveness of Sylos's designs and his creative use of space. His best work was for Max Ophüls on *Caught* (1949), where he creates the shadowy, oppressive mansion in which the obsessive recluse (**Robert Ryan**) traps his fearful wife.

Sylos's other noirs are *The Great Flamarion* (1945), *Jealousy* (1945), *Fear* (1946), *They Made Me a Killer* (1946), *The Pretender* (1947), *The Gangster* (1947), *Ruthless* (1948), *Red Light* (1949), *Danger Zone* (1951), *99 River Street* (1953), and *The Big Caper* (1957). See also VISUAL STYLE.

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**TARANTINO, QUENTIN (1963– )**. Quentin Tarantino was *the* 1990s celebrity writer-director, closely associated with **neo-noir**. As a “film geek” with an enormous knowledge of all forms of cinema, Tarantino’s films are highly allusive, promiscuously mingling references not only to Hollywood genres but also Hong Kong action cinema, spaghetti westerns, Italian pulp horror (notably Mario Bava), and the French New Wave. Tarantino named his production company A Band Apart in homage to the fresh, improvisatory playfulness of Jean-Luc Godard’s early films, which also characterizes his own filmmaking. Tarantino populates his films with compulsive talkers, preoccupied with the telling distinctions that mark them as pulp connoisseurs. His first noir, *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), made for only \$1.2 million, established his reputation by its inventive updating of the **caper/heist noir** and its extreme violence. It was influenced by the **Hong Kong film noir** *Longhu Fengyun* (*City on Fire*, 1987), and the idea of using color-coded criminals came from *The Taking of Pelham One Two Three* (1974). But *Reservoir Dogs* had a deeper debt to Stanley Kubrick’s *The Killing* (1956), and **Lawrence Tierney**’s crime boss provided a further link to classic noir. In a complex plot, intercut with various characters’ flashbacks, Tarantino concentrates on the preparation and protracted aftermath, not the crime itself.

The fractured chronology, multiple allusions, and set-piece scenes of *Reservoir Dogs* were further developed in ***Pulp Fiction*** (1994), Tarantino’s most successful and influential noir. In a change of tempo and direction, *Jackie Brown* (1997), based on Elmore Leonard’s *Rum Punch* (1995), was a character study, taking its tone and mood as well as much of the storyline from Leonard but crucially making the heroine Jackie, played by “blaxploitation” icon Pam Grier, black, not white. In this leisurely paced, elegiac film noir, Tarantino subtly delineates the hopes and fears of a middle-aged woman in a dead-end job who sees

her big chance to make her getaway with \$500,000 of stolen money. Although she develops a tender relationship with bail bondsman Max Cherry (Robert Forster), another middle-aged figure desperate to change his life, he hesitates too long after she urges him to join her in flying to Spain. Jackie, saddened but not defeated, drives off to the sounds of “Across 110th Street” on the car stereo, which celebrates breaking out of the ghetto. *Jackie Brown* was an answer to Tarantino’s detractors that he possessed an adolescent sensibility, adored clever talk and edgy violence (the film is less violent than Leonard’s novel), was incapable of understanding women, and harbored racist attitudes.

However, *Kill Bill*, an epic revenge drama starring Uma Thurman that was originally conceived as one film but released in two separate “volumes” (in autumn 2003 and spring 2004) because of its running time of approximately four hours, was a return to stylized ultraviolence. It makes numerous allusions to Hong Kong martial arts movies, Chinese “wuxia” films, Japanese samurai movies, especially *Lady Snowdrop* (1973), Italian spaghetti westerns, “blaxploitation” films, and also **François Truffaut’s** *La Mariée était en noir* (*The Bride Wore Black*, 1968). Tarantino wrote and directed two episodes of the noir **television series** *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* in 2005 and was a “special guest director” on Robert Rodriguez’s *Sin City* (2005), directing the car chase sequence with Clive Owen and Benicio del Toro.

**TAXI DRIVER (1976).** *Taxi Driver*, highly successful on its initial release, has become one of the most celebrated and influential **neo-noirs**. It fused director **Martin Scorsese’s** Italian-American Catholicism with its penchant for baroque spectacle with the puritanical Dutch-American Calvinism of screenwriter **Paul Schrader** and was informed by their wide knowledge of European and American cinema and culture. Fyodor Dostoevsky’s anonymous narrator in *Notes from Underground*, John Wayne’s Ethan Edwards in *The Searchers* (1956), Irving Lerner’s **hit man** in *Murder by Contract* (1958), and Robert Bresson’s *Pickpocket* (1959) all provided prototypes for *Taxi Driver’s* alienated antihero Travis Bickle (**Robert De Niro**), a **troubled Vietnam veteran**. Travis conforms to Schrader’s conception of the late noir protagonist who has lost his integrity and stable identity, now prey to “psychotic action and suicidal impulse.” Travis’s diary was based on the one kept by Arthur Bremer that was serialized in newspapers and published as *An Assassin’s Diary* in 1974. Travis, angry and inarticulate—“I got some



bad ideas going on in my head”—is the quintessential noir drifter, a paranoid, psychotic insomniac driving his cab endlessly through New York’s nighttime streets. His intermittent voice-over narration haltingly tracks his deteriorating mental condition, expressed in his increasingly intense misanthropy and bewilderment that fuels his determination to purge the city’s sleaze and corruption.

Travis’s alienation makes him incapable of sustaining a relationship with Betsy (Cybill Shepherd), the virginal Madonna dressed in white. He can relax with Iris (Jodie Foster), the 12-year-old prostitute in her hot pants, but he is unsure what he wants from her. In the penultimate scene he “rescues” her from the pimp (Harvey Keitel) in what becomes an escalating bloody massacre of the occupants of the bordello. In a deeply ironic ending, this psychotic slaughter is rendered heroic by the media and Iris’s grateful father, who congratulates Travis on returning their daughter to them. In the coda, Travis is once again in his cab, looking as he did in the opening scene, but driving Betsy, who shows a far greater interest in this media celebrity. Travis’s smile is enigmatic, giving the impression that although temporarily in control “any second the time bomb might go off again” in his unappeased alienation.

*Taxi Driver’s* **visual style** deliberately hovers between dream and reality, subjective and objective perspectives, what Scorsese referred to as “that sense of being almost awake” and “a cross between a **Gothic** horror and the New York *Daily News*.” The jump-cuts and edited zooms, the frenetic handheld camerawork, apparent randomness of the drifting narrative, and the jagged editing were all inspired by the French New Wave directors. But *Taxi Driver* also shows a profound debt to **expressionism** and classic noir. Cinematographer Michael Chapman uses a wide-angle lens to capture Travis’s distorted view of the glare and tawdry glamour of the neon signs in their saturated primary colors, or the strange eruptions of smoke through the manhole covers. **Bernard Herrmann’s** moody jazz score provides a further link with classic noir and **Alfred Hitchcock**. *See also* MEN.

**TAYLOR, ROBERT (1911–1969).** Usually associated with romantic and action-adventure roles, Robert Taylor made six noirs for MGM, playing against type. He was a **gangster** in *Johnny Eager* (1942), whose death on a wet, dark street was quintessential noir. In *Undercurrent* (1946), directed by Vincente Minnelli, Taylor played an *homme fatal*, who has killed in order to assume credit for inventions and is fearful his

brother (**Robert Mitchum**) will betray him. *High Wall* (1947) offered Taylor his most expressive role, as an **amnesiac troubled veteran** arrested for the murder of his wife. In *The Bribe* (1949), Taylor played an American federal agent, but he was more interesting and effective playing corrupt characters in *Rogue Cop* (1954) and **Nicholas Ray's** *Party Girl* (1958).

**TELEVISION SERIES.** During the 1950s, the impetus of the postwar American film noir cycle migrated to television series, and numerous creative personnel moved across, including **John Brahm**, **Jonathan Latimer**, **Ida Lupino**, and **Dick Powell**. Although there are profound similarities in style and subject matter between noir films and television series—in particular a shared concern to depict the seamy recesses of the noir **city** and the depiction of the lonely, troubled antihero whose identity is under threat—because television series are ongoing their storylines are less fatalistic than their film cousins, if no less doom-laden and angst-ridden.

Noir television series began with *China Smith* (1952–55) starring **Dan Duryea** but became more prominent in the late 1950s when the film cycle was in decline. *Johnny Staccato* (1959–60) is a celebrated example, starring John Cassavetes (who occasionally directed) as a New York jazz pianist turned **private eye**, trying to help those who ask for his aid in a corrupt and duplicitous world. The voice-over, lighting, **expressionist** *mise-en-scène*, and the haunted, world-weary Staccato were a throwback to 1940s noir. By contrast, the private eye (Craig Stevens) of Blake Edwards's *Peter Gunn* (1959–61) looked ahead toward the suave “cool” of James Bond. *The Man with a Camera* (1958–59) starred Charles Bronson as a **Weegee**-style crime photographer, a lonely, volatile figure, often perilously close to being sucked into the world he captures on his camera. Others, notably *Dragnet* (1951–59), inspired by **Anthony Mann's** *He Walked by Night* (1949), and *Naked City* (1958–63), indebted to the 1948 film *The Naked City*, continued the tradition of the noir **semidocumentary**. *The Fugitive* (1963–67) had a similar style, but for 120 episodes David Janssen, who had starred in *Richard Diamond, Private Detective* (1957–60), played Dr. Richard Kimble, the archetypal noir man-on-the-run, falsely accused of murdering his wife, who endlessly searches for the one-armed man whom he thinks is responsible. Unusually, the series had a two-part finale, “The Judgment,” in which Kimble was exonerated. *The Fugitive* was **remade**

in 1993 as a feature film starring Harrison Ford. Occasionally, as in *The Twilight Zone* (1959–64), television noir inhabited other genres, in this case science fiction.

Noir television series were rare in the 1970s, though Janssen starred in *Harry O* (1974–76), but returned strongly in the 1980s, notably with **Michael Mann's** *Miami Vice* (1984–89) and *Crime Story* (1986–88). In the latter, set in a rundown, racially fractured Chicago of the 1960s, Mike Torello (Dennis Farina) is a police lieutenant in charge of the Major Crime Unit whose investigations into the criminal empire of his nemesis Ray Luca (Anthony John Denison) constantly require him to bend the rules. Immersed in the violence and corruption, Torello, haunted by flashbacks and nightmares, is always on the verge of losing his moral sense, even his own identity.

*Miami Vice* had a similar central theme; its vice squad policemen Sonny Crockett (Don Johnson) and Ricardo Tubbs (Philip Michael Thomas) are also haunted by the past. Crockett is a Vietnam veteran, and Tubbs is driven by trying to find his brother's murderer. Both struggle to maintain a precarious balance between their actual identities and their undercover masks. In the final season, Crockett's identity seems to merge with his undercover persona, Sonny Burnett, and he must come to terms with the killer inside him. Shot on film rather than videotape, *Miami Vice* broke new ground aesthetically, depicting a fast-paced, ultramodern world in which most of the color was bleached out, leaving a seductive but unstable landscape of shimmering white beaches, glistening office complexes, and pastel waterside mansions. This was complemented by an innovative soundtrack blending reggae and pop music that was more akin to a **music** video than film noir. This highly influential series helped popularize **neo-noir**.

The 1990s began with **David Lynch's** surrealist cult series *Twin Peaks* (1990–91), whose complex generic **hybridity**—an allusive and unstable blend of black comedy, horror, mysterious supernatural occurrences, and Lynch's brand of surrealism—was highly influential, inspiring *The X-Files* (1993–2002), in which Federal Bureau of Investigation agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) investigate cases involving paranormal phenomena. *The X-Files* producer, Chris Carter, was also responsible for *Millennium* (1996–99), with a deliberately older investigator, freelance forensic profiler Frank Black (Lance Henriksen), who has the unique ability to see the world through the eyes of serial killers and compulsive murderers. *Night*

*Stalker* (2005–06) had a similar mixture of sci-fi, horror, and film noir. In *Angel* (1999–2004), a darker spin-off from the supernatural horror series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, the central character (David Boreanaz) is a 200-year-old vampire who investigates the underworld of demons and supernatural beings in a transformed **Los Angeles**.

*The Sopranos* (1999–2007), created and produced by David Chase and inspired by **Martin Scorsese's** *Goodfellas* (1990), depicted the life of New Jersey mobster Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini) who suffers from a range of family and work problems revealed during his frequent therapy sessions and in the numerous dream sequences that were a distinctive feature of this multi-award-winning series. Also highly popular was *24* (2001– ) in which Kiefer Sutherland plays Jack Bauer, an investigator for the Los Angeles Counter Terrorist Unit, an **existentialist** hero battling with anxieties about loss of identity and meaninglessness in a series that played on the fears of the “terrorist threat” following 9/11. Its innovation was to present the investigation as if in real time, with each series charting a day in the action, criss-crossing between the predicaments of various characters.

*24* is one of a number of ongoing, internationally popular noir series—others include *Law & Order* (1990– ) and *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* (2000– ) featuring a team of Las Vegas police forensic scientists, which spawned *CSI: Miami* (2002– ) and *CSI: New York* (2004– ). The huge success of these series demonstrates that television continues to be an important medium for the exploration of noir ideas and themes.

Other series include: *The Edge of Night* (1956–84), *Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer* (1956–59), *The Untouchables* (1959–63), *The Outsider* (1968–69), *The Streets of San Francisco* (1972–77), *Police Story* (1973), *Kolchak: the Night Stalker* (1974–75), *The Rockford Files* (1974–80), *Hill Street Blues* (1981–87), *Moonlighting* (1985–89), *Spenser for Hire* (1985–88), *Wiseguy* (1987–90), *Magnum P.I.* (1980–88), *Philip Marlowe*, *Private Eye* (1983), *Gabriel's Fire* (1990–91), *Nightmare Café* (1992), *Fallen Angels* (1993–95), *L.A.P.D. Blue* (1993–2005), *Boomtown* (2002–03), *The Shield* (2002– ), *The Wire* (2002–08), *Carnivàle* (2003–05), *Veronica Mars* (2004–07), *Dexter* (2006–08), and *Southland* (2009– ).

**THE THIRD MAN (1949).** *The Third Man*, one of the most successful and influential films noir, was an international coproduction, an uneasy alliance between Alexander Korda, head of London Films, and the

American independent producer David O. Selznick. Korda was keen to have a story set in Occupied Vienna and to reuse the creative partnership of **Graham Greene** and director **Carol Reed** after the success of their previous collaboration, *The Fallen Idol* (U.S. title *The Lost Illusion*, 1948). Selznick supplied the American leads, **Orson Welles** and **Joseph Cotten**, which necessitated Greene's two English ex-public schoolboy friends becoming American buddies. As the last remaining conduit between East and West, Vienna was a magnet for smugglers, refugees, and spies. The opening voice-over (by Reed), evincing the sardonic black humor that pervades the whole film, plays up the contrast between the "glamour and easy charm" of prewar Vienna and the divided, devastated postwar city in which everyone is involved in some kind of racket and where amateurs "can't stay the course like a professional." **Robert Krasker's** bravura cinematography used extensive backlighting, extreme wide angles, frequent tilted compositions, and night-for-night shooting to create a nightmare city where nothing is what it seems.

At its center is the enigmatic figure of Harry Lime (Welles), whose faked death allows him to continue his career as a duplicitous racketeer dealing in adulterated penicillin, his habitual haunt the labyrinthine sewer system that runs underneath the city. Welles's mesmerizing performance creates a charming, charismatic, but amoral figure, the dark *Doppelgänger* of his boyhood friend Holly Martins (Cotten), a stolid, dull-witted pulp novelist whose black-and-white morality is hopelessly inadequate. In their central confrontation aboard one of the cars on the Riesenrad's Great Wheel, with its unstable, constantly shifting perspective, Holly receives his brutal education in the **existential** postwar sensibility, a world without heroes where anything is permitted. If Holly is finally convinced of Harry's villainy by Major Calloway (Trevor Howard), the beautiful refugee Anna Schmidt (Alida Valli) remains loyal to the man with whom she fell in love in what is a movingly tragic relationship. Reed's accomplished direction is nowhere more in evidence than in the superbly orchestrated sequence in which Harry is chased along the sewers (brilliantly designed by Vincent Korda) and eventually shot by Holly in a complex act of renunciation and betrayal. In the final scene, set in the cemetery where Harry has been finally buried, Anna walks right past the waiting Holly, a satisfyingly bleak ending, insisted on by both Reed and Selznick against Greene's more conventionally romantic conclusion in which Holly and Anna were to be united, which preserves the ironic skepticism that informs the whole film.

*The Third Man* also benefited from the distinctive zither **music** of Anton Karas—a bold choice by Reed to forgo an orchestrated score—that ranges from light and relaxed to violent and terrifying. The subsequent record was a smash hit and contributed to the film’s popularity with the public and critics. *The Third Man* won the Grand Prize at the 1949 Cannes Festival and Reed, Krasker, and editor Oswald Hafenrichter were all nominated for Academy Awards, Krasker winning. Characteristically, Selznick reedited the American version, including a redubbed opening narration (by Cotten). Selznick makes Holly a more orthodox hero, emphasizing the legitimacy of the American presence in Vienna, thereby undercutting the vertiginous ambivalence that pervades the British print, now recognized as the definitive version.

**THIS GUN FOR HIRE (1942).** *This Gun for Hire* was one of the most significant early noirs, the best of Paramount’s initial experiments with a new **visual style** and “tough” subject matter. It was adapted from **Graham Greene**’s 1936 thriller *A Gun for Sale*, which offered the first detailed delineation of the modern urban **hit man**, a new antihero that expressed the feelings of doom, disillusionment, and social unease in a society poised on the brink of war. Greene’s hired killer, Phillip Raven, is an unattractive figure, his harelip constantly emphasized to explain his resentment, his fear of women, and his cold, calculating ruthlessness, but he elicits some sympathy through Greene’s delineation of his destructively dysfunctional family and his longing to be released from his recurring nightmares.

Paramount acquired the rights to *A Gun for Sale* in 1937 but did not develop a script until 1941, after Warner Bros. had released *The Maltese Falcon*. Screenwriters **W. R. Burnett** and **Albert Maltz** retain much of Greene’s novel, including the explicit **Freudianism**, but they switch the action from London to the American West Coast and turn the villains into Nazi fifth columnists selling chemical formulae to the Japanese—*This Gun for Hire* was released after Pearl Harbor. However, the key difference was to make Raven an attractive figure. His harelip is replaced by a deformed wrist smashed by his stepmother, and he is played by the handsome **Alan Ladd** in his first major role.

After completing a hit for the egregious epicure Willard Gates (**Laird Cregar**), Raven finds he has been double-crossed and vows to get even. He is befriended by Ellen Graham (**Veronica Lake**), a nightclub singer and girlfriend of Raven’s pursuer Lieutenant Crane (Robert Preston),

who has been enlisted as a government agent. Director Frank Tuttle keeps the action moving at a brisk pace, but in order to save money and comply with wartime restrictions, art designer **Hans Dreier** and cinematographer **John F. Seitz** use odd angles, mirrors, low-key lighting, and fog-bound exteriors to disguise the relative economy of the sets. Their innovative work is most evident in several set pieces, notably the freight yard at night where Raven and Ellen are hiding and from which Raven makes his daring escape, darting in and out of the pools of intense light from the police searchlights. Seitz's **expressionist** photography helps create Raven's feelings of schizophrenia and entrapment by shooting him from low-angles with shafts of light falling across his face and body. The ending is less bleak than Greene's, with Raven showing his love for Ellen by complying with her request to get a confession from the villains, even at the cost of his own life. *See also* VISUAL STYLE.

**THOMPSON, JIM (1906–1977).** Thompson was an unsuccessful screenwriter whose career was blighted by the **blacklist**. During his lifetime, Thompson's bleak, uncompromising, and despairing novels that dwell on characters' interior thoughts made him a difficult proposition to adapt, even for film noir. **Neo-noir** directors have rediscovered his work and there have been various adaptations, beginning with *The Getaway* (1972), in which Thompson's own screenplay was rejected in favor of Walter Hill's upbeat action script; the 1994 **remake** was slightly closer to Thompson's original. *The Killer Inside Me* (1976), from the 1952 novel, was a genuine, if somewhat ham-fisted, attempt to render Thompson's sensibility, with Stacy Keach as Lou Ford, an affable small-town sheriff, aware that he is "split down the middle" and unable to control his murderous impulses. Director Burt Kennedy uses flashbacks, voice-overs, chiaroscuro lighting, mirror reflections, and distorted, repetitive images from the past to convey Lou's condition. Even bleaker was Alain Corneau's *Série noire* (1979), adapted from *A Hell of a Woman* (1954), which had been published in the *Série Noire* series in 1967, proof of Thompson's high standing in France. Thompson's Kentucky is transposed to dismal, nondescript Parisian suburbs, and Patrick Dewaere gives a mesmerizing performance as a down-at-heel door-to-door salesman gradually transmuting into a schizophrenic murderer. *Pop. 1280* (1964) was adapted into *Coup de Torchon* (*Clean*

*Slate*, 1981) directed by Bernard Tavernier, the action transferred from the American South to colonial West Africa.

Thompson's reputation underwent a revival in America, and there were three adaptations in quick succession: *The Kill-Off* (1989), *After Dark, My Sweet* (1990), and *The Grifters* (1990). The first was a low-budget independent film directed by Maggie Greenwald, set in a decaying amusement park in a dead-end New Jersey seaside town, which uses multiple viewpoints to convey how each of the various narrators are trapped in their personal hells. *After Dark*, directed by James Foley, starred Jason Patrick as "Kid" Collins, a brain-damaged ex-boxer struggling to make sense of his existence and the deeper meaning of the kidnapping scheme he has been sucked into. The intermittent first-person narration and complex time shifts make this a challenging but absorbing film. By contrast, Stephen Frears's *The Grifters* presents the action straightforwardly, using Thompson's **hard-boiled** dialogue often verbatim. The volatile, disturbing triangle between small-time con-man Roy (John Cusack), his girlfriend and partner Myra (Annette Bening), and his mother Lilly (Anjelica Huston) is powerfully realized, and **Donald E. Westlake's** adaptation reproduces Thompson's **existential** bleakness.

An episode of the noir **television series** *Fallen Angels* (1993), adapted from "The Frightening Frammis," was authentic Thompson, but *Hit Me* (1996), from *A Swell-Looking Babe* (1954), failed to capture the despair or the dark humor of the original. Much more effective was *This World, then the Fireworks* in 1997, directed by Michael Oblowitz, who uses a surrealistic, **Gothic** style to render the strange, distorted world of Marty Lakewood (Billy Zane) locked into a destructive incestuous relationship with his sister Carol (Gina Gershon).

**TIERNEY, GENE (1920–1991).** Although Tierney appeared in Josef von Sternberg's noir **precursor** *The Shanghai Gesture* (1941), it was **Otto Preminger's** *Laura* (1944) that made her an important noir icon as the incarnation of the ethereal, enigmatic, and utterly desirable woman. She was Oscar-nominated for her performance in *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), a rare color noir in which she played an insanely jealous and possessive wife whose husband (**Cornel Wilde**) resembles her late father to whom she was devoted. Tierney's powerful and convincing portrayal was a notable study in an all-consuming obsession, her beauty



blank and impenetrable. She was the typical victim heroine in the **Gothic** noir *Dragonwyck* (1946) and in Preminger's *Whirlpool* (1949), in which a bogus psychologist (José Ferrer) tries to convince her she committed a murder he had performed. Her later noir roles in *Night and the City* (1950), *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950), her third with Preminger, and *Black Widow* (1954) were bland and underwritten, a poor use of her talents. *See also* WOMEN.

**TIERNEY, LAWRENCE (1919–2002).** Lawrence Tierney made his name in the title role of *Dillinger* (1945) and went on to star in several “B” feature films noir, mainly as psychopathic killers. His angular handsomeness, thin lips, and stone-faced expression were perfect as the ruthless villain in *The Devil Thumbs a Ride* (1947). He was even more memorable in *Born to Kill* (1947), in which he plays Sam Wild, a morose and moody murderer engaged in a perverse and fiercely destructive relationship with Helen Trent (**Claire Trevor**). He had similar roles as a crime boss in *Shakedown* (1950) and a pathological criminal in *The Hoodlum* (1951); even his policemen in *Bodyguard* (1948) and *Female Jungle* (1955) were unstable, volatile characters. He played crime boss Joe Cabot in *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), **Quentin Tarantino**'s calculated attempt to link his **capere/heist** film with classic noir.

Tierney's other noirs are *San Quentin* (1946), *Prizzi's Honor* (1985), and *2 Days in the Valley* (1996).

**TIOMKIN, DIMITRI (1894–1979).** The Ukrainian-born Dimitri Tiomkin became a highly respected and prolific composer in Hollywood from 1930 onward. His scoring tended toward the lush and sweeping, but he was adaptable enough to compose a dozen noirs, including *D.O.A.* (1950), for which his **music** is insistent and ominous. He worked twice on noirs by **Alfred Hitchcock**: *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) and *Strangers on a Train* (1951).

Tiomkin's other noirs are *When Strangers Marry* (1944), *Dillinger* (1945), *The Dark Mirror* (1946), *The Long Night* (1947), *Red Light* (1949), *Guilty Bystander* (1950), *The Steel Trap* (1952), *Angel Face* (1953), and *Jeopardy* (1953).

**TOTTER, AUDREY (1918– ).** An attractive blonde with a distinctive low voice, Audrey Totter could play both femme fatales and resourceful **women** with equal effectiveness. She portrayed capable profession-

als in *Lady in the Lake* (1947) and *High Wall* (1947), but she was also effective as an archetypal spider woman in *Tension* (1949) and as the long-suffering wife in *The Set-Up* (1949). An interesting role came in *Alias Nick Beal* (1949) as the pawn of Beal (**Ray Milland**), a modern incarnation of the devil, which allowed her to be both manipulative and sympathetic, a role she also played in *A Bullet for Joey* (1955).

Totter's other noirs are *Main Street After Dark* (1945), *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), *The Unsuspected* (1947), *Under the Gun* (1951), *The Sellout* (1952), *Man in the Dark* (1953), and *Women's Prison* (1955).

**TOUCH OF EVIL (1958).** There were no great expectations of *Touch of Evil*, an adaptation of a pulp novel, *Badge of Evil*, by actor-director **Orson Welles**, whose star had dimmed. It was shot mostly on location at Venice, west of **Los Angeles**, with its faux-Italianate colonnades and canals. Venice doubled as Los Robles, a border town between the United States and Mexico, not fully subject to the laws of either country, where the boundaries between right and wrong, reality and nightmare, sanity and madness are constantly blurred. At its heart is the racial and cultural clash between the **corrupt cop**, police captain Hank Quinlan (Welles)—a grotesque figure, with his vast paunch, pronounced limp, and half-closed eyes, who routinely plants evidence to convict a suspect and who is eaten away by his failure to find his wife's killer—and upright, incorruptible Mexican narcotics agent Mike Vargas (Charlton Heston), whose faith in rational systems blinds him to the deeper meaning of events. Vargas seeks to vindicate the young Mexican, Sanchez, whom Quinlan has framed for the murder of an American businessman with which the film opens.

*Touch of Evil* is a deliberately confusing, disorientating film, with Welles orchestrating a calculated opacity that contributes to the sense of waking nightmare throughout. The fluidity of the famous crane shot that occupies the first three minutes of the film does not establish a clear sense of space but rather a swirling, confusing sequence of disconnected actions that ends in an explosion that happens off camera. Throughout, Welles encouraged cameraman Russell Metty to use extreme low-angles or tilted compositions to disorientate the viewer; Metty's wide-angle lens distorted figures and buildings. *Touch of Evil*'s baroque **visual style**, with its high-contrast chiaroscuro, is both intensely claustrophobic and agoraphobic, oscillating disconcertingly between the two

because Welles dispenses with master shots or reaction shots that might securely orientate the viewer.

In several key scenes the action takes on a surreal, oneiric quality that is horrific. After Vargas's wife Susie (Janet Leigh) is pumped full of drugs (and possibly raped) by the teenage gang who descend on her isolated motel, she wakes to find herself in a seedy hotel room where the pop-eyed figure of the dead Joe Grandi (Akim Tamiroff) lolls hideously over the rail at the bottom of her bed. Grandi, enlisted by Quinlan to disgrace Vargas, was strangled by Quinlan in an earlier, unnerving sequence, the action lit intermittently by a flashing neon light. In the final scene, Vargas and Quinlan confront each other, but Quinlan is betrayed by his sidekick Pete Menzies (Joseph Calleia), who has realized how corrupt Quinlan has become. Each kills the other in the final severance of their long partnership, with Quinlan falling backward into the garbage-strewn waters beneath the creaking oil derricks that pump inexorably. Vargas is reunited with Susie, but the emphasis falls not on his triumph but on Quinlan's tragic destruction, with the inscrutable Tanya (Marlene Dietrich) providing his epitaph.

After completion, a nervous Universal studio reedited and partly reshot the film and gave it minimal publicity and circuit bookings as the lower half of a double bill. After being celebrated by French critics and enjoying a two-year run in Paris (1959–60), *Touch of Evil* has gradually become accepted as a noir masterpiece. A longer version (108 minutes as opposed to the original 95), discovered in 1975, was released in 1976. A third version has been edited by Walter Murch, who attempted to follow the instructions contained in Welles's 58-page memo to Universal, omitting reshot scenes (by Harry Keller) where these were not absolutely necessary. This version had a theatrical release in 1998 before becoming available on DVD.

**TOURNEUR, JACQUES (1904–1977).** Jacques Tourneur acted as assistant director on his father Maurice Tourneur's French sound films before going to Hollywood in 1934. His formative influence was **Val Lewton**, for whom Tourneur directed three films—*Cat People* (1942), *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), and *The Leopard Man* (1943)—that anticipate many of the preoccupations and visual style of his films noir. A subtle and meticulous director, Tourneur's style is suggestive and understated, drawn to complex, ambiguous stories that reflect the protagonists' own doubts about their motivations, and even their identities.

*Experiment Perilous* (1944), a **Gothic noir** set in turn-of-the-century New England, starred Hedy Lamarr as the imperiled heroine trapped by her insanely possessive husband (Paul Lukas). *Out of the Past* (1947) also emphasized entrapment, with Jeff Bailey (**Robert Mitchum**) unable to escape his past. *Berlin Express* (1948) was a noir **hybrid**, part melodrama about neo-Nazis attempting to silence a famous resistance fighter (Lukas) trying to reunify Germany, a documentary about conditions in Germany immediately after the war (the unit spent seven weeks shooting in Paris, Frankfurt, and Berlin), and a characteristically Tourneurian film about terror, doubt, and failure.

In the **British film noir** *Circle of Danger* (1951), produced by **Joan Harrison**, **Ray Milland** investigates the mystery of his brother's death in a British army command mission in Brittany in 1944. Tourneur emphasizes the ambiguity and shifting motivations of those involved. *Nightfall* (1957), adapted from a **David Goodis** novel, explores the paranoias and melancholy fatalism of Jim Vanning (Aldo Ray), chased by **gangsters** and suspected by the police of murdering his friend. Tourneur orchestrates a subdued, delicate film about an Everyman sucked into nightmarish events, the plot revealed gradually over the course of the film in sporadic flashbacks.

Tourneur made some distinguished episodes of noir **television series**, notably "Into the Night" (1955) for *The General Electric Theatre* and "Night Call" (1963) for the *Twilight Zone*.

**TREVOR, CLAIRE (1910–2000)**. Claire Trevor's film noir roles exploited her ability to be both vulnerable and hard. In *Street of Chance* (1942), adapted from a **Cornell Woolrich** novel, she played a femme fatale capable of deceit and murder but also of warm emotion. She was colder and more calculating in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944) as the sexy Mrs. Grayle/Velma, a performance that, along with **Barbara Stanwyck's** Phyllis Dietrichson in *Double Indemnity* (1944), defined the femme fatale type. She reprised the role in *Johnny Angel* (1945), but she was given a more sympathetic role in *Crack-Up* (1946) as a newspaperwoman who helps the victim-hero (Pat O'Brien) clear his name. In *Born to Kill* (1947), she is a calculating widow, Helen Trent, attracted to the violent and vicious Sam Wild (**Lawrence Tierney**) against her better judgement in a powerful and dark story of doomed lust. As Pat, Trevor narrates **Anthony Mann's** *Raw Deal* (1948), constructing a deeply moving portrait of a woman who knows that her love for Joe (**Dennis**

**O'Keefe**) is constantly thwarted by her middle-class rival Ann (Marsha Hunt). Her powerlessness to alter the fateful turn of events lends the drama a tragic dimension. Her most famous, Oscar-winning, role was in *Key Largo* (1948) as Gaye Dawn, a washed-up, alcoholic nightclub singer, abused and humiliated by the sadistic **gangster** Johnny Rocco (**Edward G. Robinson**).

Trevor's other noirs are *Crossroads* (1942), *Borderline* (1950), and *Hoodlum Empire* (1952). See also WOMEN.

**TROUBLED VETERANS.** Trained to kill but left rootless by their military service, returning veterans represented a major social problem after the end of World War II. They were often disaffected and insecure, unable to readjust to peace, and frequently exhibited an array of psychological problems. It is therefore unsurprising that the troubled veteran became a central figure in the films noir of the immediate postwar period, most notably in *Crossfire* (1947), which contained the widest range of maladjusted returnees and was set in the transition period before full demobilization. *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), **Raymond Chandler's** only original screenplay, featured three disillusioned wartime comrades. Their leader Johnny Morrison (**Alan Ladd**) finds his wife has been unfaithful, and one of his buddies "Buzz" Wanchek (**William Bendix**) is accused of murdering Johnny's wife while suffering from a blackout caused by his war wound.

Similarly unsettled and unpredictable figures, often subject to bouts of amnesia, occur in *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), *Somewhere in the Night* (1946), *The Guilty* (1947), *High Wall* (1947), *The Crooked Way* (1949), and *Undertow* (1949). Bill Saunders (**Burt Lancaster**) in *Kiss the Blood off My Hands* (1948) is a particularly unstable version: his long incarceration as a prisoner of war has left him embittered, with shattered nerves and a furious temper. After he accidentally kills a bar owner in a fit of rage, Saunders becomes the prey to blackmailers and the denizens of a nocturnal London populated by outcasts and criminals.

Disgruntled veterans are easy prey for **gangsters**: in *Nobody Lives Forever* (1946), **John Garfield** plays a disaffected ex-soldier sucked into criminal activities; *The Chase* (1946) has Robert Cummings as a down-at-the-heel veteran who slides into a corrupting relationship with a gangster (**Steve Cochran**); or *The Bribe* (1949) and *Slattery's Hurricane* (1949), in which **John Hodiak** and **Richard Widmark** respectively have become smugglers. In *Violence* (1947), a domestic fascist organization run by racketeers is composed of discontented veterans.

Veterans are also resentful about wartime profiteering and the abuse of comrades or loved ones—as in *Cornered* (1945) starring **Dick Powell**, *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947) with **Robert Montgomery**, *Dead Reckoning* (1947) in which **Humphrey Bogart** is on the trail of a murdered comrade, *Thieves' Highway* (1949) with **Richard Conte**, or *Backfire* (1950), in which army veteran Gordon MacRae searches for his buddy (**Edmond O'Brien**), who has become involved with gangsters. In *The Clay Pigeon* (1949), Jim Fletcher (Bill Williams) clears himself of collaboration by revealing the identity of another soldier who worked with a corrupt Japanese prison guard, while in Fred Zinneman's *Act of Violence* (1949), Joe Parkson (**Robert Ryan**), a disabled and near-psychotic veteran, wants revenge on his former commanding officer Frank Enley (**Van Heflin**), who betrayed his fellow captives in a prison camp.

There are occasional disillusioned servicemen who are veterans of the Korean campaign: *Niagara* (1953), *Strange Intruder* (1956), and *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962). **Neo-noirs** sometimes depict Vietnam veterans, as in *Taxi Driver* (1976) or *Who'll Stop the Rain?* (aka *Dog Soldiers*, 1978). Christian Bale plays a Gulf War veteran in *Harsh Times* (2005), unable to adjust to civilian life and suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder with flashbacks and nightmares about the killings he performed during the war. Rejected by the **Los Angeles** Police Department, he reunites with an old buddy, and they fall back into their former life of crime.

Other troubled veteran noirs include: *Swamp Fire* (1946), *Boomerang!* (1947), *Singapore* (1947), *The Unfaithful* (1947), *The Woman on the Beach* (1947), *Key Largo* (1948), *The Breaking Point* (1950), *Sound of Fury* (aka *Try and Get Me*, 1951), *The Strip* (1951), *Three Steps North* (1951), *Hoodlum Empire* (1952), *The Lost Hours* (aka *The Big Frame*, 1952), *Macao* (1952), *Suddenly* (1954), *The Unfaithful* (1954), *A Woman's Devotion* (1956), *Thunder Road* (1958), and *Cutter's Way* (1981). See also AMNESIAC FILMS NOIR.

**TRUFFAUT, FRANÇOIS (1932–1984).** Writer-director François Truffaut made a major contribution to the development of **French film noir** and also influenced American **neo-noir** filmmakers. In common with several other New Wave directors, including **Claude Chabrol**, Truffaut had a passionate interest in American cinema, especially film noir, as expressed in his essays as a critic for *Cahiers du cinéma*, his monograph on **Alfred Hitchcock** (1966), his screenplay for Jean-Luc Godard's *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*, 1960), and his direction of *Tirez*

*sur le pianiste* (*Shoot the Piano Player*, 1960), which he adapted from the **David Goodis** novel, *Down There*. Describing *Tirez* as “a respectful pastiche of the Hollywood B-films from which I learned so much,” Truffaut transposed its setting from Philadelphia/New Jersey to Paris and its environs. He cast Charles Aznavour as the melancholic pianist, Charlie Koller, the archetypal doomed noir hero whose isolation, passivity, and self-doubt are very different from Goodis’s embittered, brawling veteran. *Tirez*’s complex flashback structure, multiple ironies, and enigmatic central figure owed much to *Citizen Kane* (1941), which Truffaut deeply admired, but its combination of deep seriousness and an ironic playfulness in an allusive, multilayered construction was thoroughly *nouvelle vague*. Truffaut is far less interested in careful plotting than in exploring male desire and the complexity of relationships. Visually, Truffaut retains the iconography of classical noir, including the chiaroscuro opening with its glistening streets, trench coats, cars, and shootouts, but these conventions are used intermittently and often ironically, indicating the film’s self-reflexivity.

These qualities are also evident in his subsequent noirs—*La Peau douce* (*Soft Skin*, 1964), *La Mariée était en noir* (*The Bride Wore Black*, 1967), and *La Sirène du Mississippi* (*Mississippi Mermaid*, 1969), the last two adapted from **Cornell Woolrich** novels. Truffaut’s final film, *Vivement dimanche!* (*Confidentially Yours*, aka *Finally Sunday*, 1983), an adaptation of another **hard-boiled** thriller, Charles Williams’s *The Long Saturday Night*, was also a deliberate return to black-and-white cinematography, to “rediscover the sense of magic” that Truffaut’s generation had found in American noirs. As usual, he mixed the serious and the playful, and he re-created the classic noir mode with low-key lighting and an urban underground of clubs, brothels, and gambling set on the Provençal coast. It had Truffaut’s characteristically weak-willed hero Julien (Jean-Louis Trintignant) and strong female figure, Barbara (Fanny Ardant), who, echoing Kansas in *Phantom Lady* (1944), rescues her boss from a murder charge. See also MEN; VISUAL STYLE.

– U –

**ULMER, EDGAR G. (1904–1972).** An Austrian Jew, Edgar Georg Ulmer had worked as a set designer—on *Der Golem* (1920) and *M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (*M: A City Searches for a Murderer*, 1931)—

and assistant director in German cinema before moving to Hollywood. He directed the **Universal horror film** *The Black Cat* (1934), which demonstrated an unusual and distinctive noir sensibility. Ulmer moved to Producers Releasing Corporation (PRC) in 1942, which gave him enormous creative freedom but meagre budgets. He directed *Tomorrow We Live* (1942), a convoluted crime tale about rival gangs and wartime blackmarketeering, whose enigmatic central character “The Ghost” (Ricardo Cortez) is a noir figure. *Bluebeard* (1944), a noir **hybrid**, starred John Carradine as a deranged artist who murders women after he has finished painting their portraits, under a strange compulsion that he cannot control. In *Strange Illusion* (1945), a static murder mystery, a young man, Paul Cartwright (James Lydon), suspects his father was murdered by his mother’s suitor Brett Curtis (Warren William). The most powerful scenes occur in the asylum to which Curtis persuades his mother to have Paul committed, a claustrophobic prison that almost drives him insane. *Detour*, released eight months later, was Ulmer’s most compelling film, an **existential** nightmare that has become an acknowledged noir masterpiece.

Ulmer left PRC, cowriting and directing *The Strange Woman* (1946) for Hunt Stromberg Productions, where he enjoyed a more generous budget. This neglected **Gothic** noir is set in Bangor, Maine, in the 1820s, a raw, occasionally violent boomtown in which Jenny Hager (Hedy Lamarr) is roughly brought up and beaten by her drunken father. Ulmer’s film presents a complex portrait of a woman determined to use her beauty and intelligence to make something of her life. *Ruthless* (1948), made on a higher budget for Eagle-Lion, had handsome set designs that reflected Ulmer’s training. It was another study of an amoral figure, businessman Horace Vendig (**Zachary Scott**), who stops at nothing to achieve his desire for wealth and power. Ulmer’s final noir *Murder Is My Beat* (1955), made for Allied Artists, was his most conventional story, told in flashback with a voice-over by Ray Patrick (Paul Langton), a police detective in homicide who becomes convinced that the chief suspect, Eden Lane (Barbara Payton), is innocent. Like all Ulmer’s noirs, the most powerful moments occur when the central protagonist makes an irrational choice he or she cannot explain. *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.

**UNIVERSAL HORROR FILMS.** Part of the major influence of **expressionism** on film noir was refracted through two cycles of horror films



produced by Universal Studios. Several noir directors and cinematographers worked on these films, experimenting with light, shadow, mood, and style in films whose slow pace allowed the subtle suggestiveness of the *mise-en-scène* to create meaning. Universal, led by the German-born Carl Laemmle, had a tradition of hiring Weimar talent, including **Edgar G. Ulmer**, who directed the extraordinary *The Black Cat* (1934), a tale of betrayal, vengeance, and lust that was set not in a **Gothic** past but in a stylish, art deco future. The first Universal cycle was initiated by the American Tod Browning's *Dracula* and the Englishman James Whale's *Frankenstein*, both released in 1931. Whale, a sophisticated intellectual with a feeling for Gothic forms, was the key influence, also directing *The Old Dark House* (1932), *The Invisible Man* (1933), and *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935). Robert Florey's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1932) was the most directly expressionist, with strong echoes of *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1919) in its twisted streets, oddly contorted houses that lean over the glistening cobblestones, and gloomy shadows. *The Raven* (1935), which focused on sadism, murder, and torture, was set in contemporary America with Bela Lugosi as a criminal neurologist and Boris Karloff as his accomplice.

Universal's second horror cycle, beginning with *Son of Frankenstein* (1939) and lasting until the mid-1940s, was lower-budgeted and visually less distinguished, but it also contributed to the development of film noir. *Black Friday* (1940), with Karloff as a criminal surgeon and Lugosi as a tough New York **gangster**, was set in an urban milieu and photographed by **Woody Bredell**, working creatively with chiaroscuro lighting. **Robert Siodmak** cut his noir teeth on *Son of Dracula* (1943), as did **Edward Dmytryk** on *Captive Wild Woman* (1943). *Calling Dr. Death* (1944), a psychological study in crime, *House of Horror* (1946), depicting a murderer revived from the dead who seeks revenge, and *The Brute Man* (1946), with its bleak world of deformed killers, helpless victims, dark tenements, and squalid waterfronts, were all horror-thriller **hybrids**, demonstrating the important similarities between horror films and films noir.

– V –

**VERTIGO (1958)**. Although only a moderate success on its initial release, *Vertigo* is now recognized as a seminal noir and one of **Al-**

**fred Hitchcock**'s finest films. A profound exploration of delusion, obsession, and betrayal, *Vertigo*'s preoccupation with the nature of perception and deceptive appearances is signaled in the giant eyes of Saul Bass's celebrated opening credits. *Vertigo* was based on the 1954 French **hard-boiled** thriller *D'entre les morts* (*From Among the Dead*) by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac, the locale shifted from Paris to San Francisco. Although set in the present, *Vertigo* is a tale obsessed with the past, with the European remnants of 19th-century San Francisco. Hitchcock collaborated on the screenplay in detail with first Maxwell Anderson, then Alec Coppel, and finally Samuel Taylor, an indication of the complexity of the themes and the care that was taken in their construction.

The central character is "Scottie" Ferguson (James Stewart), a detective with a fatal weakness, fear of heights, which in the opening rooftop chase results in the death of a fellow policeman. Hitchcock uses subjective shots of Scottie's petrified gaze down at the horrifying drop to the street below to indicate psychological trauma. In his damaged state, Scottie is approached by an old college friend, Gavin Elster (Tom Helmore), to shadow his wife Madeleine (**Kim Novak**), who is obsessed with Carlotta Valdes, her great-grandmother who committed suicide. Scottie falls in love with the enigmatic and beautiful Madeleine, who he saves from trying to drown herself. But his vertigo makes him powerless to prevent what seems to be Madeleine's suicide from the mission tower they visit. Blamed by the coroner at the inquest, Scottie becomes possessed by his own death wish. In an innovatively subjective sequence, Scottie experiences a nightmare in which he advances toward the open grave gaping to receive him. As he falls, the void becomes a revolving tunnel round his disembodied head, then the dark silhouette of a male figure falling through endless space, first toward the roof where Madeleine died, then dissolving into nothingness, represented by a blank white screen.

Scottie retreats into wordless catatonia, eventually wandering the streets of San Francisco in the search for a woman he knows to be dead, which, as Hitchcock witheringly remarked, is an act of necrophilia. In a grim irony, he catches a glimpse of the woman, Judy, who impersonated Madeleine, and, unaware of the truth, he obsessively re-creates this gauche working-class girl from Kansas as the "real" Madeleine, with exactly the same clothes and hairstyle. Discovering the deception at the heart of the film, Scottie, in a desperate act of exorcism, takes her

back to the mission tower where Madeleine's "death" was staged. For Scottie it is not her part in the crime that must be confronted but her act of betrayal toward him—"I loved you so"—that is bound up with his determination to redeem his weakness and, in the great dream of the noir protagonist, be free of the past. Judy, fleeing from a dark, shadowy figure she mistakes for Madeleine/Carlotta, throws herself from the tower in a "true" re-enactment of the faked death. Hitchcock ends on the stark image of the dark shape of Stewart's outstretched, etiolated figure gazing down at her body, seemingly poised for a final plunge into the abyss of death.

*Vertigo's* bleak ending and its dark exploration of psychic trauma, together with its radical narrative strategies, were too uncomfortable for contemporaneous audiences, as was the score by **Bernard Herrmann**, who worked with Hitchcock several times. He deliberately avoids a conventional melody. It is replaced by an insistent, but harmonically ambiguous, shifting, and unpredictable rhythm and tempo, which reinforce the ambiguity in the film's themes and visual effects. Like John Boorman's *Point Blank* (1967), Hitchcock's most radical suggestion is that the whole story might all be Scottie's compensating dream as he is about to die ignominiously in the opening scene. A remastered print was re-released theatrically in 1996, making it possible to appreciate the full subtlety of Hitchcock's color scheme and restoring this masterpiece to its full beauty. *See also* FREUDIANISM; MEN; MUSIC; VISUAL STYLE.

**VIDEO GAMES.** A number of video games have been based on an exaggerated use of film noir conventions. *Mean Streets* (1989) was one of the first, a dystopian cyberpunk/noir **hybrid** in which the main protagonist, Tex Murphy, a down-and-out **private eye** living in a postapocalyptic San Francisco, is hired by a beautiful young woman to investigate the death of her father who was working on a secret project. *Discworld Noir* (1999), based on Terry Pratchett's *Discworld* comic fantasy novels, was a noir parody depicting a private investigator in the ancient and corrupt city of Ankh-Morpork. In *Dead to Rights* (2002), the protagonist is a good cop living in Grant City, the most corrupt town in the world. He becomes a fugitive after being framed for murder while investigating the mysterious death of his father. By far the most successful noir video game has been *Max Payne* (2001) and its sequel *Max Payne 2: The Fall of Max Payne* (2003), which have sold more than seven mil-

lion copies. Max Payne is a former New York Police Department cop working undercover for the Drug Enforcement Administration after his wife and unborn child were killed by thugs high on designer drugs. Payne, equipped with a rapid-fire verbal idiom derived from **Raymond Chandler**, moves through the murk of a rundown noir **city**, another fugitive figure, framed for murder to forestall his investigations. The stylish cinematography and choreography of the action is heavily influenced by **graphic novels** and **Hong Kong film noir**, particularly John Woo. The sequel was more imaginative, frequently using an overtly **expressionist** style and fantasy/drug-induced sequences, including the arresting opening scene, where Payne has lost control, signified by blurred vision and the on-screen avatar's failure to respond to the controls. Payne has become a more deeply troubled and unreliable figure, and his world correspondingly darker. A film version, starring Mark Wahlberg, was released in 2008.

**VISUAL STYLE.** The central noir style—the one by which it is conventionally identified—is derived from **expressionism**, deploying low-key, high-contrast (chiaroscuro) lighting, where deep, enveloping shadows are fractured by shafts of light from a single source and dark, claustrophobic interiors display shadowy shapes on the walls, as in **Robert Siodmak's Gothic** noir, *The Spiral Staircase* (1946). There is a pervasive use of claustrophobic framing devices including doorways, windows, stairways, and metal bed frames that seem to invade the space of the characters, trapping them, as displayed in *This Gun for Hire* (1942).

Mirror images are prevalent, suggesting deceptiveness, doubling, neurotic narcissism, and disordered fantasy, as in *Fear in the Night* (1947). These decentered, unstable compositions are further distorted by the use of unusual camera angles—"choker" close-ups shot right under the actor's chin or extreme overhead shots that dwarf the action—and wide-angle lenses that distort faces and buildings, as in **Carol Reed's** *The Third Man* (1949). Conventional establishing shots are often withheld, and exterior scenes are shot in inky blackness illuminated by spectral backlights or the intermittent flashing of neon signs; fog or mist often obscures the action, creating hidden and threatening spaces; **Jules Dassin's** *Night and the City* (1950) is a memorable example.

Much use is made of reflection: polished surfaces or the famous rain-soaked streets splashed with a sudden downpour, which glisten in the nighttime glow of the street lamps or car headlights, as in **Otto**

**Preminger's** *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950). In certain intense or highly charged moments, this style becomes more overtly expressionist, as in the nightmare trial sequence in *Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940) or in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), which uses subjective camerawork, fogged lenses, and whirling dissolves to approximate the drug-induced stupor of Philip Marlowe (**Dick Powell**). Overall, the expressionist style was a powerful element in creating noir's distorted, morally ambiguous, and confused universe.

Noir's unconventional visual style was made possible by technological developments, notably the widespread use of faster film stock with reduced graininess and a new range of lenses that allowed cinematographers to shoot at lower lighting levels. New lightweight cameras with built-in noise dampening devices and more portable lighting equipment allowed filming to take place in previously inaccessible positions. However, these developments also facilitated a countervailing style that was profoundly influenced by Italian neo-realism and wartime documentaries, one that emphasized a quotidian actuality and the use of naturalistic lighting and location shooting. This led to the development of the **semidocumentary** cycle of noirs, including *The Naked City* (1948) or *Kiss of Death* (1947), where exterior scenes have a harsh, raw quality, gray and subdued. Gradually, this style replaced the more studio-bound expressionism and became the norm for 1950s noirs, not only the **city exposé** cycle, such as **Phil Karlson's** *Kansas City Confidential* (1952), but also conventional crime thrillers such as *Crime Wave* (1954).

There is no dominant **neo-noir** style. Initially, the use of color, zoom lenses, highly mobile cameras, and widescreen compositions all served to redefine noir's visual style. Earlier neo-noirs, notably *The Long Goodbye* (1973), showed a keen awareness of the potential of the zoom lens that creates a very different sense of space from the tracking shot, one of the cornerstones of the classic style. A forward or reverse zoom abstracts space by flattening or elongating it and, because it does not reproduce human perception, is overtly cinematic and self-conscious. **Arthur Penn's** *Mickey One* (1965) and **Martin Scorsese's** *Taxi Driver* (1976) have an exaggeratedly jagged, fragmented visual style with numerous jump cuts and frenetic handheld camerawork that was influenced by the French New Wave directors, Jean-Luc Godard and **François Truffaut**. *Point Blank* (1967) and *Chinatown* (1974) experimented with color and widescreen formats that created a different, but equally threatening, use of space. The gradual introduction of faster film

stock allowed cinematographers to shoot in color at very low lighting levels. The deep blacks punctuated by objects picked out using colored gels created striking contrasts that resembled classic noir's chiaroscuro, as in *Body Heat* (1981). **John Dahl's** accomplished first noir *Kill Me Again* (1989) uses smooth, languorous tracking shots as femme fatale Fay (Joanne Whalley Kilmer) drives into Reno where the nighttime neon signs glide sinuously over the car windshield and blue-filtered night exteriors are wreathed in mist as **private eye** Jack (Val Kilmer) dumps the car to fake Fay's death.

This reworking of classic noir has created a seductive, instantly recognizable look—known in the trade as “noir lite”—that has become a standard feature of contemporary noirs. However, what characterizes the overall style of recent noirs is that the tight economy of the classic period has been abandoned in an intensification of the viewing experience: a spectacular, visceral *mise-en-scène*, hypermobile, often handheld camera work, rapid zooms, shock cuts, and ultrafast montage sequences. Disruptive spectacle is now preferred to classical noir's coherent diegesis or causality. Instead of being solicited as the ideal observer of the unfolding action, the postmodern spectator is now “engulfed” in an often overwhelming sensory experience. Contemporary noirs are often “modular,” consisting of loosely connected set pieces, as in Dahl's *Unforgettable* (1996), with its disorientating montages in which a kaleidoscope of images rush over the viewer in a whirl of disconnected fragments that, in this instance, approximate the confusions of memory. **Brian De Palma's** *Femme Fatale* (2002) uses this hyperbolic style to explore multiple and unstable identities. Many noir **hybrids**, including the Wachowski brothers' future noir the Matrix Trilogy (1999–2003), deploy a range of techniques made possible by digital technologies that create a dizzying spectacle.

The other significant stylistic shift derives from the use of **graphic novels** as source material. In some cases, including **Christopher Nolan's** *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Dark Knight* (2008), these fantasy scenarios provide the basis for further hyperbolic engulfment, but in others, notably Roberto Rodriguez's *Sin City* (2005), shot entirely on a digital backlot, the intention is to create a close approximation of Frank Miller's graphic art that provides an exaggerated version of classic noir. The color footage was converted back to sharply defined black-and-white to create a shimmeringly intense version of classic noir chiaroscuro, in which occasional colored objects were picked out.

## – W –

**WALD, JERRY (1911–1962).** The most prolific producer of films noir, Jerry Wald was a former journalist turned Hollywood screenwriter in the 1930s who became a producer for Warner Bros. in the 1940s, eventually replacing **Hal Wallis** as head of production. Wald continued Warner's tradition of hard-edged, socially orientated action melodramas, beginning with *Mildred Pierce* (1945), in which he encouraged the scriptwriters to play up the crime elements. This was the first of the five films noir that Wald made with **Joan Crawford**, the others being *Possessed* (1947), *Flamingo Road* (1949), *The Damned Don't Cry* (1950), and *Queen Bee* (1955), made for Columbia. Wald's penchant for melding crime and melodrama is also evident in *The Unfaithful* (1947), a story of betrayal and infidelity in which a wife (Ann Sheridan) tries to convince her **troubled veteran** husband (**Zachary Scott**) that the man she murdered was a burglar rather than her lover, *Key Largo* (1948), *The Breaking Point* (1950), and *Dark Passage* (1947), in which an escaped convict (**Humphrey Bogart**) has been wrongly convicted of his wife's murder. *Caged* (1950) was a hard-hitting, socially conscious drama about women's prisons in which the liberal warden (Agnes Moorehead) battles with the sadistic matron (Hope Emerson). Wald became independent in 1950, producing **Fritz Lang's** *Clash by Night* (1952) and Josef von Sternberg's *Macao* (1952). See also WALD, MALVIN.

**WALD, MALVIN (1917–2008).** Brother of producer **Jerry Wald**, Malvin Wald was a versatile screenwriter who came to prominence with his Oscar-nominated story for *The Naked City* (1948). He co-adapted James Warwick's play *Blind Alley* as *The Dark Past* (1948), a psychological noir, and contributed additional dialogue for **Joseph H. Lewis's** *The Undercover Man* (1949), a **semidocumentary** noir. He joined **Ida Lupino's** Emerald Productions and worked with her on the screenplay for *Not Wanted* (1949) and on the original story for *Outrage* (1950). Wald cowrote the 60-minute noir "B" feature *Street of Darkness* (1958), the crime biopic *Al Capone* (1959), starring Rod Steiger, and also episodes of several noir **television series**, including *Peter Gunn* (1958).

**WALLIS, HAL B. (1899–1986).** In a long career as a creative producer involved in all aspects of the production process, including casting,

scripting, and editing, Hal B. Wallis produced a number of important films noir. During his time as Head of Production at Warner Bros., Wallis made several noir **precursors**: *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932), *City for Conquest* (1940), *The Letter* (1940), adapted from a Somerset Maugham short story in which Bette Davis plays a femme fatale on a plantation in the tropics, and *They Drive by Night* (1940), a tough melodrama about truck drivers. He also produced *High Sierra* (1941) and the hugely influential *The Maltese Falcon* (1941).

Wallis resigned from Warner Bros. in 1944 to form his own production company, releasing films primarily through Paramount. Its first film noir was *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), starring **Barbara Stanwyck**, which emphasized characterization over action, dwelling on psychological obsessions and neuroses. Wallis made two further films with Stanwyck, *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), from Lucille Fletcher's celebrated **radio** play, and *The File on Thelma Jordan* (1950). *So Evil My Love* (1948), produced for Paramount British, was a **Gothic** noir that also had a woman lead (Ann Todd), who eventually kills the *homme fatal* (**Ray Milland**), who has seduced her into criminal activities. *The Accused* (1949) was another story of guilt and thwarted romantic entanglements, with Loretta Young as a shy professor of psychology who accidentally murders one of her students when he tries to seduce her and then conceals the crime. *I Walk Alone* (1948) and *Dark City* (1950) were more conventional crime melodramas, but they also emphasized corruption and betrayal.

**WANGER, WALTER (1894–1968)**. Walter Wanger was a cultivated and cosmopolitan producer, a progressive intellectual who believed in cinema's role to promote social awareness. As a creative independent producer, Wanger was keenly involved in the choice of project and the scripting and the casting of his films, as evident in the noir **precursor**, **Fritz Lang's** *You Only Live Once* (1937), which Wanger saw as a serious indictment of the mob fury to which American democracy could fall prey. He married the actress **Joan Bennett** in 1941 and together with Lang they formed Diana Productions in early 1945, releasing through Universal. Its first film, *Scarlet Street* (1945), was a huge financial success, but differences arose between Lang and Wanger during the editing and about the cuts made to appease the studio and the censors. Diana's second film, *Secret Beyond the Door* (1948), became a much more fraught production, and Universal demanded it be recut after



unfavorable responses from preview audiences. It was poorly distributed and performed badly at the box office; consequently, Diana Productions dissolved acrimoniously.

Wanger supervised the scripting, editing, and publicity for *Reign of Terror* (1949), directed by **Anthony Mann**, which he produced for Eagle-Lion. The film's setting during the dark days of the French Revolution contained an antitotalitarian allegory which, by implication, could be seen as an attack on the House Un-American Activities Committee investigations as well as Cold War communism. Wanger's European sensibility and his preference for **émigré** directors was evident in *The Reckless Moment* (1949), directed by Max Ophüls, who had come to the United States during World War II. It starred Bennett as an upper-middle-class mother desperate to protect her daughter from being blackmailed. Wanger produced two films directed by **Don Siegel**. The **prison noir** *Riot in Cell Block 11* (1954) was prompted by Wanger's own incarceration for shooting his wife's lover and was partly an indictment of the American penal system. The noir **hybrid** *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) was another liberal allegory that showed Wanger's profound disillusionment with American ideals and his sense that democratic values were being threatened. *See also* BLACKLIST; LEFT-WING CYCLE.

**WASHINGTON, DENZEL (1954– )**. A major star of contemporary American cinema, Denzel Washington has been long associated with crime and noir films, beginning with the **British film noir** *For Queen and Country* (1988), as **troubled veteran** Reuben James, a black British paratrooper who returns from fighting in the Falklands to find a corrupt and racist East End of London where he has no place. He played a World War II veteran in *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995), but here he embodied the character's grace, self-confidence, and tenacity and his belief in the resourcefulness of the black community. Always more powerful as ambivalent characters, Washington won an Oscar for *Training Day* (2001) as Alonzo Harris, a highly decorated but **corrupt cop** who has become adept at manipulating the system, the charismatic leader of an elite corps that has placed itself outside the law. He was also effective as the disaffected and alcoholic ex-Central Intelligence Agency **hit man** in *Man on Fire* (2004), who redeems himself by saving a kidnapped child, and as another maladjusted veteran (from Desert Storm) in the 2004 **remake** of *The Manchurian Candidate*. In Ridley Scott's *Ameri-*

*can Gangster* (2007), Washington, who has portrayed several real-life figures, played Frank Lucas, the Harlem drug kingpin who smuggled heroin into the United States on U.S. service planes returning from the Vietnam War. Pursued by his nemesis, the incorruptible Richie Roberts (Russell Crowe), Lucas is a complex character: ruthless, organized, but not entirely corrupt.

Washington's other noirs are *Ricochet* (1991), *Virtuosity* (1995), *Fallen* (1998), *The Bone Collector* (1999), *Out of Time* (2003), *Inside Man* (2006), and *The Taking of Pelham 123* (2009). See also AFRICAN-AMERICAN NOIR.

**WAXMAN, FRANZ (1906–1967).** The German-born composer Franz Waxman worked in Weimar cinema from the 1920s onward, including scoring *Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht* (*The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer*, 1931). He fled from Nazi persecution, going to Hollywood via Paris. Waxman worked on the **Universal horror film** *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935) and the noir **precursor** *Fury* (1936) before scoring his first noir *Rebecca* (1940), one of three films he made for **Alfred Hitchcock**, the others being *Suspicion* (1941) and *Rear Window* (1954). Waxman's score for *Rebecca* showed the subtle and intricate patterning of principal themes and individual motifs that characterized his work, also superbly evident in his Oscar-winning music for *Sunset Boulevard* (1950).

Waxman's other noirs are *Her Kind of Man* (1946), *Nora Prentiss* (1947), *The Two Mrs. Carrolls* (1947), *Possessed* (1947), *Dark Passage* (1947), *The Unsuspected* (1947), *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), *Whiplash* (1948), *Alias Nick Beal* (1949), *Night and the City* (1950), *Dark City* (1950), *He Ran All the Way* (1951), *I, the Jury* (1953), and *Crime in the Streets* (1956). See also ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL; MUSIC.

**WEEGEE (1899–1968).** Arthur H. Fellig, better known as Weegee, had an important influence on film noir through his work as a freelance news photographer (from 1935 onward) whose stark black-and-white shots documented street life in New York City. Born in Galicia, he came to New York in 1910 with his Jewish family and settled in New York City's Lower East Side. Self-taught, Fellig's nickname was either a transmogrification of "squeegee"—an early job was to remove the moisture from photographs that were being prepared—or a phonetic rendering of *Ouija*, the epithet coming from his knack of arriving at

emergencies only minutes after they were reported to authorities. His speed was the result of being the only New York newspaper reporter with a permit to have a portable police-band shortwave radio and his habit of maintaining a complete darkroom in the trunk of his car.

Weegee's photographs of crime scenes, murder victims, down-and-outs, **gangsters**, and prostitutes, a nocturnal world of bars, nightclubs, and cheap glamor, have a stark directness that was unprecedented. Characteristic examples such as "Corpse with a Revolver" (1940), "On the Spot" (1940), "One-way Ride" (1940), "Rocco Finds His Pal Stabbed" (1941), "Murder on the Roof" (1941), or "Accident on Grand Central Station Roof" (1944) have a scale and framing that is cinematic rather than conventionally photographic. His compositions are too wide or too tight or from an unusual angle, making them both dramatic and unsettling, and which, along with the use of high-contrast lighting, anticipate the characteristic instability and sense of menace of film noir's **visual style**. His highly acclaimed first book collection, *Naked City* (1945), where the photographs are accompanied by a caustic running commentary, became the inspiration for *The Naked City* (1948) when **Mark Hellinger** bought the rights and instructed director **Jules Dassin** and cinematographer **William Daniels** to re-create Weegee's style. Although Weegee's influence was important and he worked in Hollywood from 1947–52, his direct involvement in noir films, including *The Set-Up* (1949), was marginal. Weegee's work inspired the noir **television series** *The Man with a Camera* (1958–59), and his own noirish life was the basis of the **neo-noir** *The Public Eye* (1992), starring Joe Pesci. See also THE CITY; NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY.

**WELLES, ORSON (1915–1985).** Orson Welles was extraordinarily talented and had a major influence on the development of film noir as an actor, director, producer, and writer. He worked extensively in radio and formed the Mercury Theatre company in 1936. Its productions were experimental and espoused Welles's lifelong commitment to left-wing views. His first film, *Citizen Kane* (1941), is often cited as the most influential example of "American Expressionism," and its use of distorted set designs, chiaroscuro lighting, mobile camerawork, and point-of-view shots, Gregg Toland's deep-focus cinematography, and the multiple flashback narration had a profound impact on film noir. It provided a bridge between **expressionism**, with which Welles was familiar, and indigenous American themes: Welles's portrayal of an

American newspaper magnate who loses his values. Welles had also worked on an adaptation of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and a "Mexican melodrama," *The Way To Santiago*, but these proto-noirs that were to include considerable subjective camerawork did not find favor at RKO and were not produced.

Welles's first noir was thus *Journey into Fear* (1943), a wartime tale of international intrigue and murderous Nazis, based on the **Eric Ambler** story. It showed Welles's penchant for extravagant stylistic devices and was permeated by an **existentialist** dread. *The Stranger* (1946) was more visually conventional (though over 30 minutes were trimmed by the studio), with Welles playing a fugitive ex-Nazi living in a small New England town who is pursued by a government agent (**Edward G. Robinson**). Welles produced, directed, starred in, and wrote the screenplay for *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948), though again this was extensively cut by Columbia. Welles's direction captures the dreamlike quality of this fable of greed and includes the bravura sequence in the Hall of Mirrors. The film's lack of success in America made Welles less attractive to production companies, but he produced and directed a low-budget expressionist adaptation of *Macbeth* (1948) for Republic.

From this point, partly through fear of being placed on the **blacklist**, Welles lived a nomadic life, spending much of his time in Europe. He continued to be sought after as an actor and dominated *The Third Man* (1949) as the enigmatic villain Harry Lime, charming and amoral. Welles wrote the screenplay of *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), which he also starred in and directed. Gregory Arkadin (Welles), one of the richest **men** in the world, tries to eliminate all traces of his brutal past in this study of corruption and greed. Its episodic narrative and baroque visual style make *Mr. Arkadin* somewhat impenetrable, but *Touch of Evil* (1958) intelligently deploys these qualities to produce an absorbing masterpiece, with Welles providing the screenplay, direction, and one of his most memorable characters, the **corrupt cop** Hank Quinlan. Welles directed and narrated the late noir *The Trial* (1962), a haunting adaptation of the Franz Kafka novel using the deserted Gare d'Orsay as the set.

Overall, Welles's films noir depict the struggle between an innocent protagonist and a dark and enigmatic world of corruption and duplicity that ultimately consumes itself, a metaphor for a predatory capitalism that Welles opposed as a left-wing intellectual. *See also* LEFT-WING CYCLE; VISUAL STYLE.

**WESTLAKE, DONALD E. (1933–2008).** Donald Edwin Westlake was a prolific writer of crime fiction, both serious and comic, who published under his own name and several pseudonyms, including Richard Stark. Adaptations of his work formed an important bridge between film noir and **neo-noir**, and Westlake has also written screenplays from others' work. The first adaptation was Jean-Luc Godard's *Made in U.S.A.* (1966), a very loose reworking of Westlake's novel *The Jugger*, but as Godard had not purchased the rights, Westlake successfully sued to prevent the film's distribution in America. *Point Blank* (1967) was John Boorman's radical adaptation of *The Hunter*, the first of Westlake's long series of novels about the tough criminal Parker, renamed Walker in the film. The **cap/er/heist** film *The Split* (1968) and the revenge thriller *The Outfit* (1973) stayed much closer to Westlake's novels, as did the **British film noir** *Slayground* (1983), another heist-gone-wrong thriller but with the moral ambiguity that characterizes Westlake's fiction. The most recent adaptations have been French: *Je suis un assassin* (*The Contract*, 2004), and *Le Couperet* (*The Axe*, 2005), directed by Constantin Costa-Gavras. *Le Couperet* was a successful black comedy about a man who murders all his rivals in a desperate bid to get back into professional employment.

Westlake's Oscar-nominated screenplay for *The Grifters* (1990) was an adroit adaptation of **Jim Thompson's** novel that deepened certain elements in the original while retaining its existential bleakness. Westlake also coadapted *Ripley Under Ground* (2005) from **Patricia Highsmith's** novel, an acerbic black comedy that mirrored his own work.

**WHEELER, LYLE (1905–1990).** Lyle Wheeler was one of Hollywood's foremost set designers whose work made a distinguished contribution to film noir. He received one (of 29) Oscar nominations for his design of Manderley, the cavernous mansion that dominates **Alfred Hitchcock's** *Rebecca* (1940). Moving to Twentieth Century-Fox as supervising art director, Wheeler collaborated on nearly all of Fox's films, including 31 films noir, receiving Oscar nominations (with Leland Fuller and Thomas Little) for *Laura* (1944), with Little and **Maurice Ransford** for *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), and with Little, John De Cuir, and Paul S. Fox for *The House on Telegraph Hill* (1951). *Laura* best exemplifies the sophisticated, elegant, precisely evocative sets that Wheeler specialized in, encouraging **Otto Preminger** to open the film with a long take that took in every facet of the overfastidious apartment of Waldo Lydecker

(Clifton Webb). Each dwelling in the film is expressive of its occupant's character, including that of Laura (**Gene Tierney**), narcissistically dominated by her own portrait over the fireplace. Wheeler collaborated with Preminger again on *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950) and *The Thirteenth Letter* (1951).

Wheeler was also partly responsible for the evolution of Fox's other major strand of noirs, the **semidocumentaries**—*The House on 92nd Street* (1945), *Kiss of Death* (1947), *Call Northside 777* (1948), *Cry of the City* (1948), and *Panic in the Streets* (1950)—which favored location shooting and a restrained naturalism in their settings and décor. In two of Wheeler's later noirs with Samuel Fuller, *Pickup on South Street* (1953) and *House of Bamboo* (1955), this style is modified to incorporate Fuller's more insistent *mise-en-scène*. The latter (in color and CinemaScope) contains some of Wheeler's best work in its pachinko parlors, Great Buddha, and whirling globe, where the final confrontation takes place.

Wheeler's other noirs are *Hangover Square* (1945), *Circumstantial Evidence* (1945), *Fallen Angel* (1946), *Shock* (1946), *Nightmare Alley* (1947), *Road House* (1948), *The Street with No Name* (1948), *Thieves' Highway* (1949), *House of Strangers* (1949), *Whirlpool* (1949), *No Way Out* (1950), *Fourteen Hours* (1951), *Night without Sleep* (1952), *A Blueprint for Murder* (1953), *Niagara* (1953), *Vicki* (1953), and *Black Widow* (1954).

**WHERE THE SIDEWALK ENDS (1950).** *Where the Sidewalk Ends* was **Otto Preminger's** most accomplished film and the definitive **corrupt cop** noir, showing how this figure replaced the **troubled veteran** as the vector for postwar social and psychological unease. It was based on William L. Stuart's novel *Night Cry*, expertly adapted by **Ben Hecht**, with **Dana Andrews** as Detective Mark Dixon, the son of a mobster, whose pursuit of criminals takes on a psychotic edge because he is always trying to expunge the taint of his father. This classic noir antihero, haunted by his past, in Andrews's tense, simmering performance, is obsessed with capturing the **gangster** Scalise (Gary Merrill), set up by his father. Symbolically, the man, Ken Paine, Dixon accidentally kills while trying to extract information is a war hero with a silver plate in his head from a shrapnel wound that leads to his death, a glamorous ex-pilot with a "hatful of medals" but now a drifting lush. In an expertly crafted moment as he stands over the body, Dixon's instincts lead him,

as he later confesses, to “cover it up like a mobster. I couldn’t shake loose from what I was.” At that point he becomes a distracted, divided, increasingly frantic man, “walking around half cop and half killer,” as Scalise mocks. His torment is increased when he falls in love with Morgan Taylor (**Gene Tierney**)—the stars reunited from Preminger’s *Laura* (1944)—Paine’s former wife and the daughter of the hapless taxi driver suspected of Paine’s murder. In a final desperate attempt to extract himself from his moral and emotional morass, Dixon prepares for a “suicide” mission on Scalise’s headquarters, trying to get him indicted for Dixon’s murder. Scalise dies and is deemed responsible for Paine’s death, but Dixon confesses, convinced that Morgan will wait for him.

*Where the Sidewalk Ends* carefully delineates its gritty, naturalistic low-life milieu: the dingy dive that Paine now inhabits, Taylor’s working-class apartment, and the rundown East River parking garage where the dénouement takes place. **Joseph LaShelle**’s photography is assured, both on location and in the studio scenes. Preminger’s direction is fluent, the action kept taut and tense with studied close-ups of the conflicting emotions on Andrews’s face and using persistent low-angles that give a sense of oppression and claustrophobia. Cyril Mockridge’s influential score is both edgy and haunting, with a repeated refrain that captures the seductive ambivalence of **city** life.

**WIDMARK, RICHARD (1914–2008)**. An accomplished radio and theater actor, Widmark made his film debut in *Kiss of Death* (1947), the first film in his 12-year contract with Twentieth Century-Fox. Widmark won an Oscar nomination for his performance in the supporting role as the psychotic killer Tommy Udo. Widmark creates a complex portrait of gleeful sadism and extreme instability, as in the infamous scene where Udo laughs hysterically as he pushes an old woman in a wheelchair down a flight of stairs. Widmark’s taut, lean body, his hard, angular face, and cruel good looks together with his rather harsh, stabbing voice and clipped delivery were exploited in a series of similar roles, including gang boss Alec Stiles in *The Street with No Name* (1948), overwrought, neurotic, and sexually ambivalent, or Jefty in *Road House* (1948), another volatile mixture of sadism, sexual jealousy, and the need to dominate and manipulate. In the controversial *No Way Out* (1950), written and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Widmark played another conscienceless psychotic, Ray Biddle, a cheap, racist crook, the adver-

sary of the young black intern at a large metropolitan hospital, Sidney Poitier, whom he frames for murder.

Elia Kazan's *Panic in the Streets* (1950) offered an exceptional role as the hero, a public health service doctor in New Orleans who has to track down a plague carrier (**Jack Palance**), but Widmark's highly strung, restless persona, imbued with a nervous, pent-up energy, was more suited to villains or ambivalent antiheroes. In *Slattery's Hurricane* (1949) he plays a **troubled veteran**, selfish and confused, who eventually redeems himself. In **Jules Dassin's** *Night and the City* (1950), he gave an outstanding performance as Harry Fabian, a cheap nightclub tout who nevertheless possesses abundant imagination. Fabian's struggle to get to the top, his longing to "be somebody," affords him near-tragic status as he rushes headlong toward his inevitable doom. Widmark was equally compelling in **Samuel Fuller's** *Pickup on South Street* (1953) as another energetic, restless cheapskate, Skip McCoy, a New York pickpocket, devious and selfish but capable of finer feelings even if he remains socially marginal.

In a long career, Widmark starred in several **neo-noirs**, notably **Don Siegel's** *Madigan* (1968), as the world-weary New York detective who takes what measures he feels necessary to get results but who is troubled by an **existential** fatalism that leads, obscurely but inevitably, to his death in a pointless shootout. Widmark starred in the **television** noir spin-off (1972–73).

Widmark's other noirs are *A Prize of Gold* (GB 1955), *The Trap* (1959), *The Domino Principle* (1977), *Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), and *Against All Odds* (1984). *See also* MEN.

**WILD, HARRY J. (1901–1961).** A staff cinematographer at RKO, Harry J. Wild had an important influence on the development of a recognizable noir style beginning with his celebrated work on *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), which combined a mastery of suggestive lighting with subjective camerawork and contorted reflections to create a strong sense of disorientation and menace. He combined with **Edward Dmytryk** again on *Cornered* (1945), also starring **Dick Powell**, which was darker and less visually showy than its predecessor. Wild worked with Powell for a third time on *Pitfall* (1948), which made effective use of location photography, as did *The Woman on the Beach* (1947), directed by Jean Renoir. After the demise of RKO, Wild worked on noir **television series**, including contributions to *The Twilight Zone* (1960).



Wild's other noirs are *Johnny Angel* (1945), *Nocturne* (1946), *They Won't Believe Me* (1947), *The Big Steal* (1949), *The Threat* (1949), *Walk Softly, Stranger* (1950), *His Kind of Woman* (1951), *Gambling House* (1951), and *Macao* (1952). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**WILDE, CORNEL (1915–1989).** Muscular and athletic, the Hungarian-born Cornel Wilde was more suited to costume films and Westerns, but he appeared in several films noir in roles that combined strength and weakness. After a minor role in *High Sierra* (1941), Wilde starred in the Technicolor *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), playing the husband of the insanely possessive Ellen Berent (**Gene Tierney**), his rugged strength useless against her machinations. In *Shockproof* (1949), Wilde played a parole officer compromised by a femme fatale. He was the foil to the psychotic **Richard Widmark** in *Road House* (1948), in a love triangle with **Ida Lupino**. He played a similar but more developed version of this character in *The Big Combo* (1955) as a puritanical policeman, obsessed by the enigmatic society woman Susan Lowell (Jean Wallace), the mistress of charismatic and sadistic gangster **Richard Conte**. Wilde gives an absorbing performance as a man tormented beyond endurance by the thought of her liaison with Brown, whom he despises and seeks to convict by any means. In *Storm Fear* (1956), which Wilde also directed, he plays a self-destructive loser, a gangster-on-the-run, who, in typical noir fashion, is plagued by doubts and tormented by guilt.

**WILDER, BILLY (1906–2002).** Along with **Otto Preminger** and **Edgar G. Ulmer**, Wilder was the third Austrian-Jewish director who exerted a seminal influence on the development of film noir, particularly through *Double Indemnity* (1944), which, more than any other single film, defined the new sensibility. Wilder was as much screenwriter as director, his formative influence working as a journalist in Berlin before writing the **German film noir** *Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht* (*The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer*), directed by **Robert Siodmak**, in 1931. He left Germany when Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933 and, after a brief sojourn in Paris, moved to America in 1934.

Through a partnership with Charles Brackett he established himself in Hollywood as a screenwriter before expanding into a producer-director team that included the noirish *The Lost Weekend* (1945), which won Oscars for Best Picture, Director, and Screenplay and *Sun-*

set *Boulevard* (1950) (an Oscar for Best Screenplay), after which the partnership dissolved. *Sunset Boulevard* is a highly distinctive noir, a mordant satire of the vanities and superficialities of Hollywood itself. Joe Gillis (William Holden), a young, down-and-out screenwriter, whose body is discovered floating in a pool at the beginning of the film, narrates the whole film in flashback as his corpse is fished out of the water. Wilder's original script, in which Joe wakes up on the mortuary slab and narrates his tale to other cadavers, was deleted after adverse preview reactions. Gillis has some affinities with Walter Neff in *Double Indemnity*, weak-willed, rather superficial, and ultimately shot by the woman with whom he is having an affair. In this case the woman is a faded silent star, Norma Desmond (played by Gloria Swanson, whose heyday was in the 1920s).

Wilder's third and final noir was *Ace in the Hole* (aka *The Big Carnival*, 1951), which he also produced. The most cynical of Wilder's films, *Ace* is set in the parched desert landscape around Albuquerque, New Mexico, with its tawdry roadside café and souvenir shop. Charles Tatum (**Kirk Douglas**), looking for a return to big-time journalism, sees his opportunity by exploiting the plight of a miner, Leo Minosa, trapped in a cave-in. Instead of allowing him to be rescued by tunneling, Tatum persuades Minosa's slattern wife (**Jan Sterling**) to agree to a lengthy drilling operation, during which time Tatum can generate huge publicity for the rescue and resurrect his career. In the end Minosa dies in Wilder's coruscating exposé of the cynical and predatory nature of American society and its amoral media looking for ratings. *See also* ÉMIGRÉ PERSONNEL.

**WINDSOR, MARIE (1919–2000).** Tall, dark, commanding and with a brassy, vulgar sexuality, Marie Windsor was a distinctive noir performer. Her first substantial role was in **Abraham Polonsky's** *Force of Evil* (1948) as the tough wife of the syndicate head who tries to seduce Joe Morse (**John Garfield**). Her best performances came in *The Narrow Margin* (1952) as an undercover policewoman pretending to be a **gangster's** widow, engaged in a tense relationship with her protector detective (**Charles McGraw**) because she cannot reveal her secret. She had another strong role in Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing* (1956) as Sherry Peatty, the sexually voracious wife of a small-time crook (**Elisha Cook Jr.**) whom she eventually provokes into killing her.

Windsor's other noirs are *The Sniper* (1952), *City That Never Sleeps* (1953), *No Man's Woman* (1955), *The Girl in Black Stockings* (1957), *The Unholy Wife* (1957), and *The Outfit* (1973). See also WOMEN.

**WISE, ROBERT (1914–2005).** After training as an editor at RKO—he cut *Citizen Kane* (1941) and *The Fallen Sparrow* (1943)—Robert Wise moved to **Val Lewton's** “B” feature unit directing *The Curse of the Cat People* (1944) and *The Body Snatcher* (1945). Wise's later noirs show the benefits of this training in their carefully composed *mise-en-scène* and the evocative use of lighting, shadows, and camera angles. In the first of four noirs for RKO, *Born to Kill* (1947), adapted from James Gunn's **hard-boiled** novel *Deadlier than the Male*, Wise keeps the focus on the intense, destructive, and perverse passion between a violent, moody drifter (**Lawrence Tierney**) and a willful high-class woman (**Claire Trevor**). *The Set-Up* (1949) was equally grim and violent, but it was redeemed by the unconquerable spirit of the aging fighter (**Robert Ryan**), who retains his integrity in a brutal and corrupt world. Wise's inventive camera angles and **Milton Krasner's** rich, dark tones combine to make *The Set-Up* the best of the **boxing noirs**. *Blood on the Moon* (1948) and *The House on Telegraph Hill* (1951) showed Wise's ability to maintain a somber, brooding atmosphere, even when the subject matter was very different, a Western and **Gothic** melodrama respectively.

Wise's first film after leaving RKO showed his versatility. *The Captive City* (1952) initiated the cycle of **city exposé** films in **semidocumentary** style with Wise insisting that it was shot entirely on location, in Reno, Nevada. However, the killing of the private investigator in a shadowy, claustrophobic alley and the sleek cars prowling the nighttime streets show Wise's preference for the 1940s **expressionist** style. Wise both produced and directed *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959), a sub-*Rififi* **cap/er/heist** film based on the **William P. McGivern** novel. This also combined the bleak realism of 1950s noir with the atmospheric elements of the 1940s style. The striking beauty of the compositions and the searching depiction of the tense relationships between the three contrasting criminals demonstrated Wise's skill, intelligence, and accomplishment as a director.

Wise's other noirs are *Curse of the Cat People* (1944), *Criminal Court* (1946), *I Want to Live!* (1958), and *The Haunting* (1963). See also VISUAL STYLE.

**WOMEN.** The figure of the deadly female—the femme fatale or spider woman—is the most conspicuous representation of femininity in film noir. Overpoweringly desirable, duplicitous, and sexually insatiable, the femme fatale has been interpreted as a symptom of male anxieties about women, a creature who threatens to castrate and devour her male victim. In a patriarchal culture, she also embodies a challenging female independence, her intelligence, resourcefulness, and ruthlessness threatening male primacy and an explicit rebuttal of the postwar consensus that women should be fulfilled by the roles of wife and mother. The femme fatale’s appearance is always explicitly sexual, with long dark or blonde hair worn loose, revealing costumes emphasizing long, sensuous legs, and heavy makeup.

Although her cultural roots are deep, the femme fatale was a stock type in **hard-boiled fiction**, and many of the most powerful screen incarnations derived from this source: **Barbara Stanwyck’s** Phyllis Dietrichson in *Double Indemnity* (1944), **Claire Trevor’s** Mrs. Grayle in *Murder, My Sweet* (1944), or **Jane Greer’s** Kathie Moffat in *Out of the Past* (1947). **Rita Hayworth** in *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948) embodies the exoticism that was often part of the type. The femme fatale’s most characteristic role is as a nightclub singer on the fringes of the underworld, a modern Circe, trapping her victim through her seductive torch song; for example, “The More I Know of Love” sung by Kitty Collins (**Ava Gardner**) in *The Killers* (1946). The proliferation of mirror shots signals the femme fatale’s narcissism and duplicity, and her enigmatic qualities propel the central narrative quest to understand her motivations and to try to reassert rational male control, a doomed project. Frequently encountered in 1940s noir, the femme fatale all but disappears in the 1950s as noir’s focus became more explicitly social.

The antithesis of the femme fatale, often appearing in the same film, is the figure of the innocent, wholesome homebuilder, the wife or sweetheart who sees her role as support and solace for her man. In *Out of the Past*, the wholesome sweetness of Ann (Virginia Huston) is contrasted with the duplicitous Kathie or the venal Meta (**Rhonda Fleming**). As befits her role, Ann is often statically framed as the eternal, understanding listener, offering forgiveness and the promise of a stable world of loyalty, faithfulness, and loving security. She is associated with daylight, nature, and open spaces and is photographed in conventional high-key lighting. Jane Wyatt in *Pitfall* (1948), Cathy

O'Donnell in *Side Street* (1950), Coleen Gray in *Kiss of Death* (1947), or Teresa Wright in *The Steel Trap* (1952) are further examples, but they too are placed on the narrative margins, indicating the difficulties that film noir had in portraying a virtuous and stable family life. One way out of this narrow framework was to make the figure more active as the beleaguered hero's helpmate. Ann Sheridan plays a wife determined to help clear her husband's name in *Woman on the Run* (1950), while **Ella Raines** in *Phantom Lady* (1944) and Lucille Ball in *The Dark Corner* (1946) are capable secretaries who have the resourcefulness the passive hero lacks.

Between these two poles is the "good-bad girl" who combines the sexuality of the femme fatale with the fundamental decency of the homebuilder. She can appear to be cynical, willful, and obsessed with money, but this stems from disillusionment with **men** and the frustrations of a circumscribed life. Susan Hayward played the type as June, a dance hostess in *Deadline at Dawn* (1946), who, jaded by the sleazy corruption of **city** life, is mistrustful and cynical, reluctant to help the **amnesiac troubled veteran** Alex (Bill Williams), whom she regards as a hick. But her gradual involvement with this gentle, innocent, and trusting man reawakens her fundamental faith in humanity. Other memorable examples are **Lauren Bacall** in *The Big Sleep* (1946), **Veronica Lake** in *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), and **Lizabeth Scott** in *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946) and *Pitfall*.

Noir's debt to horror included the figure of the imperiled female victim, notable in the early **Gothic** noirs where they are psychologically abused and physically threatened by the deranged *homme fatal*—Joan Fontaine in *Suspicion* (1941), Ingrid Bergman in *Gaslight* (1944), Hedy Lamarr in *Experiment Perilous* (1944), **Gene Tierney** in *Dragonwyck* (1946), Dorothy McGuire in **Robert Siodmak's** *The Spiral Staircase* (1946), or **Joan Bennett** in **Fritz Lang's** *Secret Beyond the Door* (1948). This scenario was transferred to a contemporary setting as in *The Arnello Affair* (1947) or *Cause for Alarm* (1951), where suburban housewives are the victims of their husband's obsessive jealousy.

**Neo-noirs** both intensify existing female types and introduce others. The femme fatale is still much in evidence, beginning with Kathleen Turner's Matty Walker in *Body Heat* (1981), even more duplicitous and much more successful than her avatar Phyllis Dietrichson. Bridget Gregory (**Linda Fiorentino**) lays waste to all the men who cross her path in **John Dahl's** *The Last Seduction* (1994). Bridget offers a post-

feminist image of a strong and attractive woman who is both feminine and feminist, if utterly ruthless, as did Catherine Tramell (**Sharon Stone**) in the hugely successful noir sex thriller *Basic Instinct* (1992). The relaxation of  **censorship** regulations mean that Catherine now has the opportunity to be more erotically uninhibited, allowed to talk directly about sex in front of her police interrogators. Also unlike her 1940s forebears, the new femme fatale competes with her male victim in the job market as well as seducing him: Glenn Close in *Fatal Attraction* (1987) or Demi Moore in *Disclosure* (1994).

A more demonic form of the figure recurs as the vampiric psychofemme in “slasher-noirs,” such as *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle* (1991), with its crazed nanny (Rebecca De Mornay), and *Single White Female* (1992), in which the victims are primarily women. *Single White Female* mingles lesbian desire with murderous intentions as Hedy (Jennifer Jason Leigh), traumatized by guilt about causing the death of her twin sister in childhood, attempts to steal the identity of her roommate Allie (Bridget Fonda) by first resembling, then destroying, her rival. Several neo-noirs constructed a strong version of the “wronged woman,” one who displays miracles of tenacity and courage to undertake her revenge: *Mortal Thoughts* (1991), *Eye for an Eye* (1995), or *Double Jeopardy* (1999). Another new type was the female investigator (on her own terms, not as the hero’s substitute): Kathleen Turner played Sara Paretsky’s serial **private eye** in *V. I. Warshawski* (1991); Jodie Foster was a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent in *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991); *Betrayed* (1988) and *Impulse* (1990) have Debra Winger and Theresa Russell respectively as undercover investigators; and in *Bodily Harm* (1995), Linda Fiorentino played a homicide detective. See also CRAWFORD, JOAN; GRAHAME, GLORIA; KEYES, EVELYN; LUPINO, IDA; MALONE, DOROTHY; NOVAK, KIM; PETERS, JEAN; RUSSELL, GAIL; STERLING, JAN; TOTTER, AUDREY; WINDSOR, MARIE.

**WOOLRICH, CORNELL (1903–1968).** A prolific writer, Cornell Woolrich used two pseudonyms, William Irish and George Hopley. More films noir were adapted from his novels and short stories than from any other writer, and his fiction was important as the source for early noirs. Like other **hard-boiled** writers, Woolrich started writing for the pulp magazines—his first crime story appeared in *Detective Fiction Weekly* in August 1934—then graduating into novels. *The Bride Wore*

*Black* (1940) was the first of six with “black” in the title that inspired Marcel Duhamel’s *Série Noire*. Woolrich’s crime fiction is highly distinctive and immediately recognizable, having a characteristically neurotic intensity and pervasive sense of entrapment and paranoia. Woolrich’s protagonists are ordinary **men**, not professional **private** eyes, who are prey to morbid doubts as to their true natures, experiencing amnesia, nightmares, and hallucinations and an overwhelming fear of death. Caught in a chain of frequently bizarre coincidences, Woolrich males feel trapped and persecuted in a contingent, heartless, **existentialist** universe in which they are powerless. By contrast, his **women** are more determined and resourceful, but not the central focus.

The first Woolrich adaptation was *Street of Chance* (1942), a paranoid **amnesiac** story in which an ordinary Joe (Burgess Meredith) discovers he has been leading a double life and may be a murderer. More assured was **Robert Siodmak’s** *Phantom Lady* (1944), in which the falsely suspected protagonist cannot corroborate his alibi and has to rely on his resourceful secretary (**Ella Raines**) to clear him. The potential of Woolrich’s fiction for “atmospheric” second features where low-key lighting could hide their restricted budgets was recognized by several studios, including Monogram, which produced *Fall Guy* (1947), *The Guilty* (1947), and *I Wouldn’t Be in Your Shoes* (1948), which captured something of the Woolrich sensibility despite their limited budgets. RKO’s *Deadline at Dawn* (1946) was hobbled by an unsympathetic screenplay by Clifford Odets that was at odds with Woolrich’s vision.

However, United Artist’s *The Chase* (1946) was far more successful. **Philip Yordan’s** screenplay dispenses with the lengthy flashback of the original novel, *The Black Path of Fear*, but retains Woolrich’s sense of paranoia and entrapment in this story of a down-at-heel **troubled veteran** (Robert Cummings) who becomes accidentally involved with a psychotic **gangster** (**Steve Cochran**). *The Chase* plays in the disturbing, liminal space between dream and reality, as does writer-director William Shane’s *Fear in the Night* (1947), with its surreal opening in which Vince Grayson (DeForest Kelley) experiences a nightmare in which he murders a man in a mirrored room from which he cannot escape. He falls into what seems like an endless tunnel before waking, only to find marks on his body and clothing that suggests the dream was true.

Shane **remade** the film as *Nightmare* (1956), but the 1950s shift away from individual paranoia to more social concerns made this use

of Woolrich atypical, though **Alfred Hitchcock** used Woolrich's story for *Rear Window* (1954). However, his work was taken up by European directors. **François Truffaut** made *La Mariée était en noir* (1968) from Woolrich's first novel *The Bride Wore Black*, followed by *La Sirène du Mississippi* (*Mississippi Mermaid*, 1969) from *Waltz into Darkness* (1947), which has an historical setting. Rainer Werner Fassbinder made *Martha* for West German television in 1973, from Woolrich's final story "For the Rest of Her Life" (1968). **Neo-noir** filmmakers also find Woolrich congenial material, including *Union City* (1980), adapted from "The Corpse Next Door" (1937), starring Deborah Harry.

Other noirs adapted from Woolrich include: *The Leopard Man* (1943), *Black Angel* (1946), *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), *The Window* (1949), *No Man of Her Own* (1950), *Obsession* (France 1954), *J'ai épousé une ombre* (*I Married a Dead Man*, 1983), and *Original Sin* (2001).

– Y –

**YORDAN, PHILIP (1914–2003).** Philip Yordan was a prolific screenwriter and also a sought-after script "doctor" and dialogue polisher who acted as a front for various other screenwriters, including several unable to work because of the **blacklist**. The first of his nine films noir was *When Strangers Marry* (1944), a conventional wronged-man story written to a strict deadline for the **King Brothers**, as was *Suspense* (1946), which had a greater strength and intensity in its depiction of male rivalries. *The Chase* (1946) was another low-budget second feature, but Yordan's screenplay was one of the best adaptations of **Cornell Woolrich**, capturing the dark, oppressive atmosphere of the source novel. Yordan cowrote *Reign of Terror* (1949), the brainchild of producer **Walter Wanger**, with bravura direction by **Anthony Mann**. Yordan considered that his device—the black book in which Robespierre's victims are recorded—provided a strong narrative thread and stopped the film from becoming a series of set speeches about the French Revolution. Yordan adapted Budd Schulberg's novel for *The Harder They Fall* (1956), one of the best of the **boxing noirs**, but his finest work was the original screenplay for *The Big Combo* (1955), directed by **Joseph H. Lewis**, a dark tale that crackles with sexual tension as well as menace and fatalism. Yordan's other noirs are *House of*



*Strangers* (1949), *Edge of Doom* (1950), *Detective Story* (1951), and *Joe MacBeth* (GB 1955).

**YOUNG, VICTOR (1899–1956).** Victor Young was a staff composer with Paramount from 1935, and his prodigious output of scores included numerous noirs, which, as with *The Big Clock* (1948), were effective if not distinctive.

Young's other noirs include: *The Glass Key* (1942), *Ministry of Fear* (1945), *Calcutta* (1947), *I Walk Alone* (1948), *So Evil My Love* (GB 1948), *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), *The Accused* (1949), *Chicago Deadline* (1949), *The File on Thelma Jordon* (1950), *Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*, 1950), and *Appointment with Danger* (1951). See also MUSIC.

– Z –

**ZANUCK, DARRYL F. (1902–1979).** Darryl F. Zanuck was an energetic and active writer turned producer who helped to form Twentieth Century-Fox and forged its production policy. In the postwar period he encouraged the development of lower-budgeted noir crime films, such as *Somewhere in the Night* (1946), that would not interfere with his more prestigious studio productions. He also encouraged the production of socially conscious noirs such as *Thieves' Highway* (1949) and *No Way Out* (1950). Zanuck disapproved of the **blacklist** and encouraged **Albert Maltz** and **Jules Dassin** as far as he could, sending the latter off to London to film *Night and the City* (1950) in an attempt to protect his career.

Zanuck's other noirs are *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), *Dragonwyck* (1946), *Boomerang!* (1947), and *The Snake Pit* (1948). See also LEFT-WING CYCLE.

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## Introduction

Film noir has been an object of intense interest and debate since its “invention” by French critics immediately after the war and its consecration by Raymond Borde and Etienne Chaumeton’s *Panorama du film noir américain (1941–1953)* (1955), and it has now generated an extensive body of works, both scholarly and populist. Although slow to mobilize, Anglo-American criticism came of age with the appearance of Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward’s seminal *Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style* in 1979 (a revised edition, retitled *The Film Noir Encyclopedia*, with James Ursini and Robert Porfirio as additional authors, was published in 2010), but although the bulk of the work on noir is in English, the interest in noir is international. Included here are some of the major works that have appeared in French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

Discussions of “classic” film noir (1940–59) constitute the bulk of this bibliography, but this literature is clearly stronger in some areas than in others. There have been numerous studies of directors but far fewer of other personnel: cinematographers, composers, set designers, and producers, whose influence on film noir, one could legitimately argue, was equally important. Although male hard-boiled writers are well represented, studies of women screenwriters are only just beginning to emerge, and the whole relationship of writers to film noir needs to be rethought and redefined. Discussions of the city and gender in film noir abound,

but there are far fewer that address issues of class and ethnicity, though the balance is beginning to shift. Although textual analysis and interpretation—particularly of individual films—is extremely well represented in discussion of film noir, much less well developed is an attention to its conditions of production, exhibition, marketing, and reception. Although there are numerous studies of individual actors, these are often journalistic, impressionistic, or biographical and there is a clear need for more conceptually orientated studies of acting, stardom, and performance in relation to film noir, ones that could extend Robert Sklar's *City Boys* (1992), which defined and mapped the development of a particular cultural archetype.

As noted in the main introduction, it is now impossible—in any meaningful sense—to discuss film noir as a solely time-bound phenomenon, a period of American filmmaking that finished with *Odds Against Tomorrow* in 1959. Recent studies of noir, such as those by Andrew Spicer (2002) and Mark Bould (2005), encompass both noir and neo-noir. Richard Martin's *Mean Streets and Raging Bulls* (1997) began the process of systematically mapping neo-noir, but, perhaps because of the lack of an historical perspective, the terrain remains inchoate, lacking a strong center. Studies of neo-noir have been shaped by the preoccupations that characterize studies of film noir and are prey to the same weaknesses, overwhelmingly privileging texts over contexts and not often addressing issues of, in particular, marketing and reception. However, a real strength has been to recognize the hybridity of neo-noir, an understanding that many of the seminal films—for instance, *Blade Runner* (1982) or *Se7en* (1995)—are meldings of, respectively, sci-fi and horror with film noir and must be understood within the fluid context of contemporary generic production. This, in turn, has made commentators more sensitive to the hybridity of classic noir, to its commerce with melodrama, horror, the period film, and Westerns.

In addition to recognizing that noir continues to be an evolving phenomenon, James Naremore's *More Than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts*, first published in 1998 and reissued with an additional chapter in 2008, decisively widened the conception of film noir from a filmic to a cultural phenomenon, understanding it as a mutable and multiple discursive construction rather than a genre. Naremore used the term *noir mediascape* to designate the pervasive nature of noir and to open the field to studies of other forms, including comics and graphic novels, radio, television, and video games. Naremore also identified noir as an international phenomenon, though his actual discussion of this concentrated on how various ethnic groups were represented in American noirs. However, recent studies of noir have tried to locate its presence in other national cinemas, constituting a significant shift away from understanding noir as a solely American phenomenon and identifying its global presence. David Desser's "Global Noir: Genre Film in the Age of Transformation" (2003) was a useful overview, concentrating, in particular, on the processes of global production, distribution, and consumption of neo-noir and the rise of Asian noirs. Desser identifies a number of shared stories, themes, characters, and settings and argues that there is a pronounced tendency to

use multiple storylines and decentered disrupted narratives. The book-length collection edited by Andrew Spicer, *European Film Noir* (2007), contains nine essays that chart the development of noir and neo-noir in five European countries. There is clearly scope for many more such studies, particularly those that explore East Asian noir further and those that identify and map other European and world noirs, including Latin America. Thus an interest in film noir now needs to encompass its geographical, historical, and cultural reach, a more complex understanding than the one that informed earlier studies of black-and-white American crime thrillers of the 1940s and 1950s, but one that arguably produces a better appreciation of the nature of noir.

Because the bibliography is extensive, containing a comprehensive listing of writing about film noir, it has been divided into a number of sections that will, it is hoped, allow the reader to locate particular studies easily. It begins with General Studies, containing works that are not centered on film noir but that either analyze noir in the course of a wider survey or provide an indispensable contextual discussion. The first section—Cultural/Historical/Social—lists very broadly based studies, including discussions of genre, gender, film techniques and aesthetics, representations of the city, ethnicity, and cultural types such as the serial killer, and important historical and cultural studies. For instance, Brian Neve's *Film and Politics in America* (1992), John Orr's *Cinema and Modernity* (1993), and Robert Kolker's *A Cinema of Loneliness* (2000) valuably locate film noir (or neo-noir) within broader generic, political, social, and cultural configurations.

The next two sections are more self-explanatory: Crime/Gangster Films and Crime/Detective/Hard-Boiled Fiction contain discussions of what Borde and Chaumeton identified as the "immediate context" for film noir. Many of the studies of crime and gangster films—including Colin McArthur's *Underworld USA* (1972) and Jack Shadoian's *Dreams and Dead Ends* (2003)—contain important analyses of film noir. The section on hard-boiled fiction includes studies of the work of seminal authors—James M. Cain, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Jim Thompson, and Cornell Woolrich—whose work was extensively adapted for film noir. The next section—European Influences—lists works that consider the impact expressionism has had on the genesis and development of film noir, including discussion of German émigré personnel whose importance is difficult to overestimate. Thomas Elsaesser's *Weimar Cinema and After* (2000) is a particularly valuable account of this complex (and reciprocal) relationship. Ginette Vincendeau's "Noir Is Also a French Word: The French Antecedents of Film Noir" identified the cultural and intellectual importance of poetic realism for American film noir. Because the impact of the investigations of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and the production of the blacklist was so pronounced on many noir personnel, there is a final section that lists the most important literature on this subject.

The remainder of the bibliography consists of works devoted solely to film noir, with the exception of the African American and World Noirs sections, in which more general material has also been included that contextualizes those discussions. There are now a number of reference works on noir, in addition to Silver and Ward's *An Encyclopedic Reference*. Some are clearly populist but often lively and informative. The collections of essays either bring together work scattered in journals, as is the case with the four volumes edited by Alain Silver and James Ursini, or have specially commissioned essays, as in Ian Cameron's *The Movie Book of Film Noir* (1992) or Joan Copjec's *Shades of Noir* (1993). For ease of reference, individual essays from these collections have been included in their relevant sections throughout the bibliography. Ed Gorman et al.'s *The Big Book of Noir* (1998) is particularly wide-ranging, containing short pieces on radio and television and comic books as well as fiction and film. R. Barton Palmer's *Perspectives on Film Noir* (1996) contains most of the early French studies. These are listed separately in the next section, which brings together the pioneering work on film noir, not only Borde and Chaumeton but also Raymond Durnat's "Paint It Black: The Family Tree of Film Noir" (1970) and Paul Schrader's "Notes on *Film Noir*" (1972) that inaugurated the Anglo-American interest in this fugitive form of filmmaking. The section labeled Theoretical may strike some as otiose (surely all studies of noir must engage, at some level, with the conceptual problems in defining the term?), but the aim is to group together works that make these issues their principal focus. Marc Vernet's pithy "Film Noir on the Edge of Doom" is a salutary interrogation of whether the term has validity, while Christopher Orr's "Genre Theory in the Context of the Noir and Post-Noir Film" (1997) deftly reconsiders the perennial difficulty of noir's problematic status.

The long Overview section has been divided between book-length and shorter studies in order to separate out the major works that have attempted to define and discuss noir as a whole. Carl Richardson's *Autopsy: An Element of Realism in Film Noir* (1992) is an uneven but nevertheless important study that contextualized noir within wartime and postwar developments in more realistic forms of filmmaking, considering the impact of documentaries and Italian neo-realism. Paula Rabinowitz's *Black & White & Noir: America's Pulp Modernism* (2002) is a genuine attempt, like Naremore's seminal study, to widen the parameters of noir studies, surveying its imbrication in an eclectic array of media forms. Sheri Biesen's *Blackout* (2005) scrupulously traced the emergence of noir during World War II, thereby decisively critiquing the conventional view that it was a postwar phenomenon. The shorter pieces offer an eclectic but rich variety of different takes on noir, but the ones listed in this section all take noir as a whole as their focus. Such eclecticism also characterizes the work on neo-noir, but those studies were grouped together partly to show how extensive the literature now is and also to locate studies of neo-noir conveniently in one section.

By contrast, the following sections have a narrower focus, organized around the major preoccupations that have characterized the study of film noir: its relationship with hard-boiled fiction and its representation of the city and gender. Edward Dimendberg's *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* (2004) is the most conceptually sophisticated study of noir's urban focus, delineating an important historical shift between the 1940s and 1950s. Film noir and the femme fatale have been provocative issues for feminist scholars. E. Ann Kaplan's *Women in Film Noir*—first published in 1978 but revised and reissued in 1998—was the pioneering collection with a range of incisive contributions, though Elizabeth Cowie's "Film Noir and Women" (1993) remains the best single overview. The aberrant, paranoid males who litter film noir have also attracted much attention, and Frank Krutnik's *In a Lonely Street: Film Noir, Genre, Masculinity* (1991) remains the best single study. Readers should note that these sections need to be cross-referenced with the one on neo-noir as there are many studies that explore the ways in which later noirs provide more extreme representations of the city and gender. As noted, discussion of ethnicity has been far less pronounced in studies of noir, but the African American section contains a number of significant studies focusing on both representation and on production cycles. Dan Flory's recent *Philosophy, Black Film, Film Noir* (2008) is the first book-length study, an indication of the growing importance of this concern with ethnicity in film noir.

Janey Place and Lowell Peterson's pioneering "Some Visual Motifs in Film Noir" (1974) identified the importance of lighting and camerawork to film noir, but set design and costumes need more attention. Music and sound design is becoming a more important area for film studies as a discipline, and noir studies are beginning to reflect this, notably David Butler's book-length *Jazz Noir* (2002). As noted, the most disappointing area of noir studies has been that of production and marketing. Although studies of individual noirs often discuss their production and reception context, there are few overview studies that have this as their principal focus. Mike Chopra-Gant's *Hollywood Genres and Postwar America: Masculinity, Family and Nation in Popular Movies and Film Noir* (2006) goes some way toward looking at how noirs were received in the postwar period, but much more work needs to be done. J. P. Telotte's "Film Noir at Columbia: Fashion and Innovation" (1992) showed how Columbia was attempting to compete with, to "out-noir," other studios, and it would be very useful to have comparable studies of other studio outputs, including "poverty row" companies such as Monogram and Republic. Studies of these studios exist, but there is a need to focus specifically on their films noir. As also noted, the paucity of studies that consider stardom and performance in film noir is equally disappointing.

The studies of individual actors—the first of the Personnel sections—go some way to addressing this lacuna, but they are often primarily descriptive and biographical. Considerations of particular directors are often much stronger with Tom Gunning's *The Films of Fritz Lang: Allegories of Vision and Modernity* (2000).

Further studies of cinematographers, composers, and producers would be welcome, and also of writers, though many detailed studies are listed in the section on hard-boiled fiction and noir. The listed studies of particular films—always a key strength of noir literature—has also divided what was potentially an unwieldy list between noir and neo-noir. A number of book-length analyses of the most celebrated noirs have been published in the BFI's Film Classics and Modern Classics series, and it is often here that issues of production, marketing, and reception are analyzed.

One of the most encouraging recent developments has been a focus on film noir's presence in other forms. The pioneering work by Jeremy Butler on *Miami Vice* (1985) showed the importance of television noir, but further work emerged only slowly. It is hoped that the collection edited by Steven Sanders and Aeon J. Skoble, *The Philosophy of TV Noir* (2008), will be the first of many that remap and redefine this important area. It appears that there are only two essays on radio noir: Mark Dawidziak's study of Howard Duff ("Radio's Sam Spade") and William Nadel's more general piece, both in *The Big Book of Noir*. The time is therefore ripe for scholars to examine radio as an important vehicle for film noir and thus explore further the interconnectedness of noir forms. Hopefully, this will extend to further studies of comics and graphic novels, an area of intense debate and interest for aficionados but lacking, at present, sustained and systematic scholarly work.

As with any other area of study, much material is now available and accessible online. The Internet Movie Database ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)) is an indispensable source of information about personnel, films, and television series generally and includes a list of films noir. It is not definitive and needs to be checked against other sources as there are occasional inaccuracies. Often the anonymous users' reviews of rarely seen noirs are particularly helpful. The most useful noir-specific sites have been listed at the end of the bibliography. Many of these have a wealth of visual material and are often lively and interesting, but most are populist and tend to recycle the same ideas and information about film noir/neo-noir.

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There is no journal specifically devoted to film noir, but articles on film noir appear in most film journals, notably in *Film Comment*, the *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, and *Literature/Film Quarterly*. The online film journal *Bright Lights* has featured a number of short essays on film noir: see its website, [www.brightlightsfilm.com/filmnoir.html](http://www.brightlightsfilm.com/filmnoir.html).

## Audio-Visual

*Century of Cinema: A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese through American Movies* (three-part documentary, Channel 4, 1995).

*The Film Noir Story* (BBC2, 1995).

*Dark and Deadly* (Channel 4, 1995).

*American Cinema: Film Noir* (New York Center for Visual History Production, in association with KCET and the BBC, 1994).

## Collections

The most useful collection of catalogued material, searchable online, is the University College of Los Angeles Library ([www.library.ucla.edu/](http://www.library.ucla.edu/)), which has a fairly comprehensive listing of books, journal articles, chapters in collections, and audio-visual sources for film and television noir.

University College Berkeley ([www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/Noirtext.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/Noirtext.html)) has a list of links to full-text articles and essays on film noir available via various e-magazines.

## Websites

Classic Noir Online: [www.classicnoir.com](http://www.classicnoir.com)—this site has grown into an online community devoted to film noir with news and reviews, short articles, links to other online sites, and information on over 900 films.

The Danger and Despair Knitting Circle: A Resource for Classic Film Noir: [www.noirfilm.com](http://www.noirfilm.com)—has information about private screenings in San Francisco and other matters.

Dark City: Film Noir and Fiction: [www.eskimo.com/~noir](http://www.eskimo.com/~noir)—includes both films and hard-boiled fiction with summaries, reviews, author profiles, and a film list.

The Dark Room: La Chambre Noir: [http://cinepad.com/filmnoir/dark\\_room.htm](http://cinepad.com/filmnoir/dark_room.htm)—Jim Emerson's enjoyable and imaginative site that introduces noir iconography and archetypes.

Film Noir Foundation: [www.filmnoirfoundation.org](http://www.filmnoirfoundation.org)—an education resource existing primarily to “rescue” and restore 35mm prints of classic noir and reintroduce them into circulation. Its site has some other useful information and

links, including to [www.noircity.com](http://www.noircity.com), which has details of an annual festival in San Francisco.

The Film Noir 'Net: <http://bernardschopen.tripod.com/noir.html>—some useful listings of films, literature, and music.

Film Noir Studies: [www.filmnoirstudies.com](http://www.filmnoirstudies.com)—has a useful time line, glossary, short essays, and links to other sites.

Film Noir Woodcuts: [www.filmnoirwoodcuts.com](http://www.filmnoirwoodcuts.com)—an unusual and enjoyable site by Guy Budziak, featuring his film noir-inspired artwork.

Filmsite: Film Noir: [www.filmsite.org/filmnoir.html](http://www.filmsite.org/filmnoir.html)—a short introduction, history, and useful conspectus under categories (e.g., “prison noirs” and “documentary-style noirs”), and by decades.

Noir of the Week: <http://noir.of.theweek.blogspot.com>—an interesting site that has blogs and short articles featuring different noirs each week and other information.

TSPDT-Film Noir: They Shot Dark Pictures Didn't They?: <http://www.theyshootpictures.com/noir.htm>—has a brief introduction and some useful listings of classic noir that, interestingly, go through to 1964; also includes listings of more recent neo-noirs.

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## American Film Noir

### American Precursors

<i>Alias Jimmy Valentine</i> (1915), d. Maurice Tourneur	
<i>Baby Face</i> (1933), d. Alfred E. Green	
<i>Beast of the City</i> (1932), d. Charles Brabin	
<i>The Black Cat</i> (1934), d. Edgar G. Ulmer	
<i>Blind Alley</i> (1939), d. Charles Vidor	
<i>Blood Money</i> (1933), d. Rowland Brown	
<i>Border G-Men</i> (1938), d. David Howard	
<i>Bordertown</i> (1935), d. Archie Mayo	
<i>Bullets or Ballots</i> (1936), d. William Keighley	
<i>Castle on the Hudson</i> (1940), d. Anatole Litvak	
<i>Cat People</i> (1942), d. Jacques Tourneur	
<i>Citizen Kane</i> (1941), d. Orson Welles	
<i>City Streets</i> (1931), d. Rouben Mamoulian	
<i>Confessions of a Nazi Spy</i> (1939), d. Anatole Litvak	
<i>Crime without Passion</i> (1934), d. Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur	
<i>The Curse of the Cat People</i> (1944), d. Gunther von Fritsch and Robert Wise	
<i>Devil Is a Woman</i> (1935), d. Josef von Sternberg	
<i>The Docks of New York</i> (1928), d. Josef von Sternberg	
<i>Dr. Broadway</i> (1942), d. Anthony Mann	
<i>Dust Be My Destiny</i> (1939), d. Lewis Seiler	
<i>Each Dawn I Die</i> (1939), d. William Keighley	
<i>East of the River</i> (1940), d. Alfred E. Green	
<i>The Face behind the Mask</i> (1941), d. Robert Florey	
<i>The Fallen Sparrow</i> (1943), d. Richard Wallace	
<i>Fugitive Lady</i> (1934), d. Albert S. Rogell	
<i>Fury</i> (1936), d. Fritz Lang	
"G" Men (1935), d. William Keighley	
<i>The Gang Buster</i> (1931), d. Edward A. Sutherland	
<i>The Get-Away</i> (1941), d. Edward Buzzell	
<i>The Ghost Ship</i> (1943), d. Mark Robson	
<i>The Glass Key</i> (1935), d. Frank Tuttle	
<i>The Great Gabbo</i> (1929), d. Eric Von Stroheim	
<i>Heat Lightning</i> (1934), d. Mervyn LeRoy	
<i>Hell's Highway</i> (1932), d. Rowland Brown	

*Heroes for Sale* (1933), d. William Wellman  
*House across the Bay* (1940), d. Archie Mayo  
*I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932), d. Mervyn LeRoy  
*The Leopard Man* (1943), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*The Letter* (1940), d. William Wyler  
*Let Us Live* (1939), d. John Brahm  
*The Maltese Falcon* (1931), d. Roy del Ruth  
*Manhattan Melodrama* (1934), d. W. S. Van Dyke  
*Man Hunt* (1941), d. Fritz Lang  
*Marked Woman* (1937), d. Lloyd Bacon  
*Night Must Fall* (1937), d. Richard Thorpe  
*Night World* (1932), d. Hobart Henley  
*Out of the Fog* (1941), d. Anatole Litvak  
*Payment Deferred* (1932), d. Lothar Mendes  
*Penguin Pool Murder* (1932), d. George Archainbaud  
*The Petrified Forest* (1936), d. Archie Mayo  
*The Public Enemy* (1931), d. William A. Wellman  
*Quick Millions* (1931), d. Rowland Brown  
*Rio* (1939), d. John Brahm  
*Road Gang* (1936), d. Louis King  
*Roadhouse Nights* (1930), d. Hubert Henley  
*The Roaring Twenties* (1939), d. Raoul Walsh  
*Safe in Hell* (1931), d. William Wellman  
*Satan Met a Lady* (1935), d. William Dieterle  
*The Scoundrel* (1935), d. Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur  
*The Secret Six* (1931), d. George W. Hill  
*The Seventh Victim* (1943), d. Mark Robson  
*Shanghai Express* (1932), d. Josef von Sternberg  
*Smart Money* (1931), d. Alfred E. Green  
*They Drive by Night* (1940), d. Raoul Walsh  
*They Made Me a Criminal* (1939), d. Busby Berkeley  
*Thunderbolt* (1929), d. Josef von Sternberg  
*20,000 Years in Sing-Sing* (1932), d. Michael Curtiz  
*Two Seconds* (1932), d. Mervyn LeRoy  
*Underworld* (1927), d. Josef von Sternberg  
*We're Only Human* (1935), d. James Flood  
*You and Me* (1938), d. Fritz Lang  
*You Only Live Once* (1937), d. Fritz Lang

### American "Classic" Noir: 1940–1959

*Abandoned* (1949), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Accomplice* (1946), d. Walter Colmes

*The Accused* (1949), d. William Dieterle  
*Accused of Murder* (1956), d. Joseph Kane  
*Ace in the Hole* (aka *The Big Carnival*) (1951), d. Billy Wilder  
*An Act of Murder* (1948), d. Michael Gordon  
*Act of Violence* (1949), d. Fred Zinnemann  
*Affair in Havana* (1957), d. Laslo Benedek  
*Affair in Trinidad* (1952), d. Vincent Sherman  
*Alias Nick Beal* (1949), d. John Farrow  
*Alimony* (1949), d. Alfred Zeisler  
*All My Sons* (1948), d. Irving Reis  
*All the King's Men* (1949), d. Robert Rossen  
*Allotment Wives* (1945), d. William Nigh  
*The Amazing Mr. X* (aka *The Spiritualist*) (1948), d. Bernard Vorhaus  
*Among the Living* (1941), d. Stuart Heisler  
*Anatomy of a Murder* (1959), d. Otto Preminger  
*Angel Face* (1953), d. Otto Preminger  
*Angela* (1955), d. Edoardo Anton and Dennis O'Keefe  
*Angels over Broadway* (1940), d. Ben Hecht and Lee Garmes  
*Apology for Murder* (1945), d. Sam Newfield  
*Appointment with a Shadow* (1958), d. Richard Karlson  
*Appointment with Danger* (1951), d. Lewis Allen  
*Arch of Triumph* (1948), d. Lewis Milestone  
*The Argyle Secrets* (1948), d. Cy Endfield  
*Armored Car Robbery* (1950), d. Richard Fleischer  
*The Arnelo Affair* (1947), d. Arch Oboler  
*Arson for Hire* (1959), d. Thor L. Brooks  
*The Asphalt Jungle* (1950), d. John Huston  
*Autumn Leaves* (1956), d. Robert Aldrich  
*Baby Face Nelson* (1957), d. Don Siegel  
*Backfire* (1950), d. Vincent Sherman  
*Background to Danger* (1943), d. Raoul Walsh  
*Backlash* (1947), d. Eugene Forde  
*Bad for Each Other* (1954), d. Irving Rapper  
*The Badlanders* (1959), d. Delmer Daves  
*Bait* (1954), d. Hugo Haas  
*The Beast with Five Fingers* (1946), d. Robert Florey  
*The Beat Generation* (1959), d. Charles Haas  
*Bedlam* (1946), d. Mark Robson  
*Behind Green Lights* (1946), d. Otto Brower  
*Behind Locked Doors* (1948), d. Budd Boetticher  
*Behind the High Wall* (1956), d. Abner Biberman  
*Below the Deadline* (1946), d. William Beaudine

*Berlin Express* (1948), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*Betrayal from the East* (1945), d. William Berke  
*Betrayed* (aka *When Strangers Marry*) (1944), d. William Castle  
*Betrayed* (1954), d. Gottfried Reinhardt  
*Betrayed Women* (1955), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*Between Midnight and Dawn* (1950), d. Gordon Douglas  
*Beware, My Lovely* (1952), d. Harry Horner  
*Bewitched* (1945), d. Arch Oboler  
*Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (1955), d. Fritz Lang  
*Beyond the Forest* (1949), d. King Vidor  
*The Big Bluff* (1955), d. W. Lee Wilder  
*The Big Boodle* (1957), d. Richard Wilson  
*The Big Caper* (1957), d. Robert Stevens  
*The Big Carnival* (aka *Ace in the Hole*) (1951), d. Billy Wilder  
*The Big Clock* (1948), d. John Farrow  
*The Big Combo* (1955), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*The Big Heat* (1953), d. Fritz Lang  
*Big Jim McLain* (1952), d. Edward Ludwig  
*The Big Knife* (1955), d. Robert Aldrich  
*The Big Night* (1951), d. Joseph Losey  
*The Big Operator* (1959), d. Charles Haas  
*The Big Punch* (1948), d. Sherry Shourds  
*The Big Sleep* (1946), d. Howard Hawks  
*The Big Steal* (1949), d. Don Siegel  
*The Big Tip Off* (1955), d. Frank McDonald  
*Big Town* (1947), d. William C. Thomas  
*The Bigamist* (1953), d. Ida Lupino  
*Black Angel* (1946), d. Roy William Neill  
*Black Friday* (1940), d. Arthur Lubin  
*Black Hand* (1950), d. Richard Thorpe  
*Black Magic* (1949), d. Gregory Ratoff  
*Black Tuesday* (1954), d. Hugo Fregonese  
*Black Widow* (1954), d. Nunnally Johnson  
*Blackmail* (1947), d. Lesley Selander  
*Blind Spot* (1947), d. Robert Gordon  
*Blonde Alibi* (1946), d. Will Jason  
*The Blonde Bandit* (1950), d. Harry Keller  
*Blonde Ice* (1948), d. Jack Bernhard  
*Blood on the Moon* (1948), d. Robert Wise  
*Blood on the Sun* (1945), d. Frank Lloyd  
*Blowing Wild* (1953), d. Hugo Fregonese  
*The Blue Dahlia* (1946), d. George Marshall



*The Blue Gardenia* (1953), d. Fritz Lang  
*Bluebeard* (1944), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*A Blueprint for Murder* (1953), d. Andrew L. Stone  
*Blues in the Night* (1941), d. Anatole Litvak  
*Body and Soul* (1947), d. Robert Rossen  
*The Body Snatcher* (1945), d. Robert Wise  
*Bodyguard* (1948), d. Richard Fleischer  
*The Bonnie Parker Story* (1958), d. William Witney  
*Boomerang!* (1947), d. Elia Kazan  
*Border Incident* (1949), d. Anthony Mann  
*Borderline* (1950), d. William A. Seiter  
*Born to Kill* (1947), d. Robert Wise  
*The Boss* (1956), d. Byron Haskin  
*Bowery at Midnight* (1942), d. Wallace Fox  
*The Brasher Doubloon* (1947), d. Dorothy Hannah  
*The Breaking Point* (1950), d. Michael Curtiz  
*The Bribe* (1949), d. Robert Z. Leonard  
*The Brighton Strangler* (1945), d. Max Nosseck  
*The Brothers Rico* (1957), d. Phil Karlson  
*Brute Force* (1947), d. Jules Dassin  
*A Bullet for Joey* (1955), d. Lewis Allen  
*Bullet Scars* (1942), d. D. Ross Lederman  
*Bunco Squad* (1950), d. Herbert I. Leeds  
*The Burglar* (1957), d. Paul Wendkos  
*Bury Me Dead* (1947), d. Bernard Vorhaus  
*Caged* (1950), d. John Cromwell  
*Calcutta* (1947), d. John Farrow  
*Call Northside 777* (1948), d. Henry Hathaway  
*Calling Dr. Death* (1944), d. Reginald Le Borg  
*Calling Homicide* (1956), d. Edward Bernds  
*Canon City* (1948), d. Crane Wilbur  
*The Captive City* (1952), d. Robert Wise  
*The Capture* (1950), d. John Sturges  
*Casablanca* (1942), d. Michael Curtiz  
*Cat People* (1942), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*Caught* (1949), d. Max Ophüls  
*Cause for Alarm!* (1951), d. Tay Garnett  
*Cell 2455 Death Row* (1955), d. Fred F. Sears  
*Chain of Evidence* (1957), d. Paul Landres  
*Champion* (1949), d. Mark Robson  
*The Chase* (1946), d. Arthur Ripley  
*Chicago Confidential* (1957), d. Sidney Salkow

*Chicago Deadline* (1949), d. Lewis Allen  
*Chicago Syndicate* (1955), d. Fred F. Sears  
*Chinatown at Midnight* (1949), d. Seymour Friedman  
*Christmas Holiday* (1944), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Circumstantial Evidence* (1945), d. John Larkin  
*City across the River* (1949), d. Maxwell Shane  
*City for Conquest* (1940), d. Anatole Litvak  
*City of Fear* (1959), d. Irving Lerner  
*City of Shadows* (1955), d. William Witney  
*City That Never Sleeps* (1953), d. John H. Auer  
*Clash by Night* (1952), d. Fritz Lang  
*The Clay Pigeon* (1949), d. Richard Fleischer  
*Cloak and Dagger* (1946), d. Fritz Lang  
*C-Man* (1949), d. Joseph Lerner  
*The Come-On* (1956), d. Russell Birdwell  
*The Company She Keeps* (1951), d. John Cromwell  
*Compulsion* (1959), d. Richard Fleischer  
*Confidential Agent* (1945), d. Herman Shumlin  
*Conflict* (1945), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*Convicted* (1950), d. Henry Levin  
*Cop Hater* (1958), d. William Berke  
*Cornered* (1945), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*Count the Hours* (1953), d. Don Siegel  
*Cover Up* (1949), d. Alfred E. Green  
*Crack-Up* (1946), d. Irving Reis  
*Crashout* (1955), d. Lewis R. Foster  
*Crime against Joe* (1956), d. Lee Sholem  
*Crime in the Streets* (1956), d. Don Siegel  
*Crime of Passion* (1957), d. Gerd Oswald  
*Crime Wave* (1954), d. André de Toth  
*Criminal Court* (1946), d. Robert Wise  
*The Crimson Kimono* (1959), d. Samuel Fuller  
*Crisis* (1950), d. Richard Brooks  
*Criss Cross* (1949), d. Robert Siodmak  
*The Crooked Circle* (1958), d. John Smith  
*The Crooked Way* (1949), d. Robert Florey  
*The Crooked Web* (1955), d. Nathan Juran  
*Crossfire* (1947), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*Crossroads* (1942), d. Jack Conway  
*The Cruel Tower* (1956), d. Lew Landers  
*The Cry-Baby Killer* (1958), d. Roger Corman  
*Cry Danger* (1951), d. Robert Parrish

*A Cry in the Night* (1956), d. Frank Tuttle  
*Cry of the City* (1948), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Cry of the Hunted* (1953), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Cry Terror!* (1958), d. Andrew L. Stone  
*Cry Tough* (1959), d. Paul Stanley  
*Cry Vengeance* (1954), d. Mark Stevens  
*Cry Wolf* (1947), d. Peter Godfrey  
*D.O.A.* (1950), d. Rudolph Maté  
*The Damned Don't Cry* (1950), d. Vincent Sherman  
*Danger Signal* (1945), d. Robert Florey  
*Danger Zone* (1951), d. William Berke  
*Dangerous Crossing* (1953), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Dangerous Intruder* (1945), d. Vernon Keays  
*A Dangerous Profession* (1949), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Dark City* (1950), d. William Dieterle  
*The Dark Corner* (1946), d. Henry Hathaway  
*The Dark Mirror* (1946), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Dark Passage* (1947), d. Delmer Daves  
*The Dark Past* (1948), d. Rudolph Maté  
*Dark Waters* (1944), d. André de Toth  
*Date with Death* (1959), d. Harold Daniels  
*The Day the World Ended* (1955), d. Roger Corman  
*Dead Reckoning* (1947), d. John Cromwell  
*Deadline at Dawn* (1946), d. Harold Clurman  
*Deadly Is the Female* (aka *Gun Crazy*) (1950), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Death in Small Doses* (1957), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Death of a Salesman* (1951), d. Laslo Benedek  
*Death of a Scoundrel* (1956), d. Charles Martin  
*Deception* (1946), d. Irving Rapper  
*Decoy* (1946), d. Jack Bernhard  
*Deep Valley* (1947), d. Jean Negulesco  
*Desert Fury* (1947), d. Lewis Allen  
*Desperate* (1947), d. Anthony Mann  
*The Desperate Hours* (1955), d. William Wyler  
*Destination Murder* (1950), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*Destiny* (1944), d. Reginald LeBorg and Julien Duvivier (uncredited)  
*Detective Story* (1951), d. William Wyler  
*Detour* (1945), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*The Devil's Sleep* (1951), d. W. Merle Connell  
*The Devil Thumbs a Ride* (1947), d. Felix E. Feist  
*Dial 1119* (1950), d. Gerald Mayer  
*Dial M for Murder* (1954), d. Alfred Hitchcock

*Dial Red 0* (1955), d. Daniel B. Ullman  
*Dillinger* (1945), d. Max Nosseck  
*Dishonored Lady* (1947), d. Robert Stevenson  
*Don't Bother to Knock* (1952), d. Roy Ward Baker  
*Doorway to Suspicion* (1954), d. Dallas Bower  
*Double Deal* (1950), d. Abby Berlin  
*Double Indemnity* (1944), d. Billy Wilder  
*Double Jeopardy* (1955), d. R. G. Springsteen  
*A Double Life* (1948), d. George Cukor  
*Dragonwyck* (1946), d. Joseph L. Mankiewicz  
*Drive a Crooked Road* (1954), d. Blake Edwards  
*Edge of Doom* (1950), d. Mark Robson  
*Edge of the City* (1957), d. Martin Ritt  
*The Enforcer* (1951), d. Bretaigne Windust and Raoul Walsh (uncredited)  
*Escape from Crime* (1942), d. D. Ross Lederman  
*Escape in the Fog* (1945), d. Oscar "Budd" Boetticher  
*Experiment Perilous* (1944), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*F.B.I. Girl* (1951), d. William Berke  
*A Face in the Crowd* (1957), d. Elia Kazan  
*Fall Guy* (1947), d. Reginald LeBorg  
*Fallen Angel* (1946), d. Otto Preminger  
*The Family Secret* (1951), d. Henry Levin  
*The Fast and the Furious* (1955), d. John Ireland and Edward Sampson  
*The Fat Man* (1951), d. William Castle  
*Fear* (1946), d. Alfred Zeisler  
*Fear in the Night* (1947), d. Maxwell Shane  
*Female Jungle* (1955), d. Bruno VeSota  
*Female on the Beach* (1955), d. Joseph Pevney  
*The File on Thelma Jordon* (1950), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Finger Man* (1955), d. Harold Schuster  
*Fingerprints Don't Lie* (1951), d. Sam Newfield  
*Fingers at the Window* (1942), d. Charles Lederer  
*5 against the House* (1955), d. Phil Karlson  
*The Flame* (1948), d. John H. Auer  
*Flamingo Road* (1949), d. Michael Curtiz  
*Flaxy Martin* (1949), d. Richard Bare  
*Flesh and Fury* (1952), d. Joseph Pevney  
*Follow Me Quietly* (1949), d. Richard Fleischer  
*Footsteps in the Night* (1957), d. Jean Yarbrough  
*For You I Die* (1947), d. John Reinhardt  
*Forbidden* (1953), d. Rudolph Maté  
*Force of Evil* (1948), d. Abraham Polonsky

- Four Boys and a Gun* (1957), d. William Berke  
*Fourteen Hours* (1951), d. Henry Hathaway  
*Framed* (1947), d. Richard Wallace  
*The French Key* (1946), d. Walter Colmes  
*The Furies* (1950), d. Anthony Mann  
*Gambling House* (1951), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Gang Busters* (1955), d. Bill Karn  
*Gangs Inc.* (aka *Paper Bullets*) (1941), d. Phil Rosen  
*The Gangster* (1947), d. Gordon Wiles  
*The Garment Jungle* (1957), d. Vincent Sherman and Robert Aldrich  
*Gaslight* (1944), d. George Cukor  
*Gilda* (1946), d. Charles Vidor  
*The Girl in Black Stockings* (1957), d. Howard W. Koch  
*The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing* (1955), d. Richard Fleischer  
*The Girl on the Bridge* (1951), d. Hugo Haas  
*The Glass Alibi* (1946), d. W. Lee Wilder  
*The Glass Key* (1942), d. Stuart Heisler  
*The Glass Wall* (1953), d. Maxwell Shane  
*The Glass Web* (1953), d. Jack Arnold  
*Glory Alley* (1952), d. Ralph Meeker  
*Grand Central Murder* (1942), d. S. Sylvan Simon  
*The Great Flamarion* (1945) d. Anthony Mann  
*The Green Buddha* (1955), d. John Lemont  
*The Green Glove* (1952), d. Rudolph Maté  
*Guest in the House* (1944), d. John Brahm  
*The Guilty* (1947), d. John Reinhardt  
*Guilty Bystander* (1950), d. Joseph Lerner  
*Gun Crazy* (aka *Deadly Is the Female*) (1950), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Gunman in the Streets* (1950), d. Frank Tuttle  
*The Halliday Brand* (1957), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Hangover Square* (1945), d. John Brahm  
*The Harder They Fall* (1956), d. Mark Robson  
*A Hatful of Rain* (1957), d. Fred Zinnemann  
*He Ran All the Way* (1951), d. John Berry  
*He Walked by Night* (1949), d. Alfred Werker and Anthony Mann (uncredited)  
*Heartaches* (1947), d. Basil Wrangell  
*Hell Bound* (1957), d. William J. Hole  
*Hell on Frisco Bay* (1955), d. Frank Tuttle  
*Hell's Half Acre* (1954), d. John H. Auer  
*Hell's Island* (1955), d. Phil Karlson  
*Her Kind of Man* (1946), d. Frederick de Cordova  
*Hidden Fear* (1957), d. André de Toth

- Hideout* (1949), d. Philip Ford  
*High Sierra* (1941), d. John Huston  
*High Tide* (1947), d. John Reinhardt  
*High Wall* (1947), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*Highway 301* (1950), d. Andrew L. Stone  
*Highway Dragnet* (1954), d. Nathan Juran  
*Highway West* (1941), d. William McGann  
*His Kind of Woman* (1951), d. John Farrow  
*Hit and Run* (1957), d. Hugo Haas  
*The Hitch-Hiker* (1953), d. Ida Lupino  
*Hold Back Tomorrow* (1955), d. Hugo Haas  
*Hollow Triumph* (1948), d. Steve Sekely  
*Hollywood Story* (1951), d. William Castle  
*Homicide* (1949), d. Felix Jacoves  
*Hong Kong Confidential* (1959), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*The Hoodlum* (1951), d. Max Nosseck  
*Hoodlum Empire* (1952), d. Joseph Kane  
*Hot Cargo* (1946), d. Lew Landers  
*Hot Summer Night* (1957), d. David Friedkin  
*House by the River* (1950), d. Fritz Lang  
*House of Bamboo* (1955), d. Samuel Fuller  
*House of Horrors* (1946), d. Jean Yarborough  
*House of Numbers* (1957), d. Russell Rouse  
*House of Strangers* (1949), d. Joseph L. Mankiewicz  
*The House on 92nd Street* (1945), d. Henry Hathaway  
*The House on Telegraph Hill* (1951), d. Robert Wise  
*The Houston Story* (1956), d. William Castle  
*Human Desire* (1954), d. Fritz Lang  
*The Human Jungle* (1954), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Hunt the Man Down* (1950), d. George Archainbaud  
*The Hunted* (1948), d. Jack Bernhard  
*I Cheated the Law* (1949), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*I Cover the Underworld* (1955), d. R. G. Springsteen  
*I Died a Thousand Times* (1955), d. Stuart Heisler  
*I, Jane Doe* (1948), d. John H. Auer  
*I Love Trouble* (1947), d. S. Sylvan Simon  
*I Married a Communist* (aka *The Woman on Pier 13*) (1949),  
d. Robert Stevenson  
*I, the Jury* (1953), d. Harry Essex  
*I Wake Up Screaming* (1941), d. H. Bruce Humberstone  
*I Walk Alone* (1948), d. Byron Haskin  
*I Walked with a Zombie* (1943), d. Jacques Tourneur

- I Want to Live!* (1958), d. Robert Wise  
*I Was a Communist for the F.B.I.* (1951), d. Gordon Douglas  
*I Was a Shoplifter* (1950), d. Charles Lamont  
*I Was Framed* (1942), d. D. Ross Lederman  
*I Wouldn't Be in Your Shoes* (1948), d. William Nigh  
*I'll Cry Tomorrow* (1955), d. Daniel Mann  
*Illegal* (1955), d. Lewis Allen  
*Illegal Entry* (1949), d. Frederick de Cordova  
*Impact* (1949), d. Arthur Lubin  
*In a Lonely Place* (1950), d. Nicholas Ray  
*Incident* (1948), d. William Beaudine  
*Inner Sanctum* (1948), d. Lew Landers  
*Inside Detroit* (1956), d. Fred F. Sears  
*Inside Job* (1946), d. Jean Yarbrough  
*Intrigue* (1947), d. Edwin L. Marin  
*Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), d. Don Siegel  
*The Invisible Wall* (1947), d. Eugene Forde  
*The Iron Curtain* (1948), d. William A. Wellman  
*Iron Man* (1951), d. Joseph Pevney  
*Ivy* (1947), d. Sam Wood  
*Jail Bait* (1954), d. Edward D. Wood  
*Jealousy* (1945), d. Gustav Machatý  
*Jennifer* (1953), d. Joel Newton  
*Jeopardy* (1953), d. John Sturges  
*Jigsaw* (1949), d. Fletcher Markle  
*Johnny Allegro* (1949), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Johnny Angel* (1945), d. Edwin L. Marin  
*Johnny Cool* (1958), d. William Asher  
*Johnny Eager* (1942), d. Mervyn LeRoy  
*Johnny O'Clock* (1947), d. Robert Rossen  
*Johnny One-Eye* (1950), d. Robert Florey  
*Johnny Rocco* (1958), d. Paul Landres  
*Johnny Stool Pigeon* (1949), d. Robert L. Richards  
*Journey into Fear* (1943), d. Orson Welles  
*The Judge* (1949), d. Elmer Clifton  
*Julie* (1956), d. Andrew L. Stone  
*Kansas City Confidential* (1952), d. Phil Karlson  
*Key Largo* (1948), d. John Huston  
*Key Witness* (1947), d. D. Ross Lederman  
*Kill or Be Killed* (1950), d. Max Nosseck  
*The Killer Is Loose* (1956), d. Oscar "Budd" Boetticher  
*The Killer That Stalked New York* (1951), d. Earl McEvoy

*The Killers* (1946), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Killer's Kiss* (1955), d. Stanley Kubrick  
*The Killing* (1956), d. Stanley Kubrick  
*A Kiss Before Dying* (1956), d. Gerd Oswald  
*Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), d. Robert Aldrich  
*Kiss of Death* (1947), d. Henry Hathaway  
*Kiss the Blood off My Hands* (1948), d. Norman Foster  
*Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye* (1950), d. Gordon Douglas  
*Knock on Any Door* (1949), d. Nicholas Ray  
*Ladies in Retirement* (1941), d. Charles Vidor  
*Lady at Midnight* (1948), d. Sam Newfield  
*The Lady Confesses* (1945), d. Sam Newfield  
*The Lady from Shanghai* (1948), d. Orson Welles  
*The Lady Gambles* (1949), d. Michael Gordon  
*Lady Gangster* (1942), d. Robert Florey  
*Lady in the Death House* (1944), d. Steve Sekely  
*Lady in the Lake* (1947), d. Robert Montgomery  
*Lady on a Train* (1945), d. Charles David  
*A Lady without Passport* (1950), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Larceny* (1948), d. George Sherman  
*Las Vegas Shakedown* (1955), d. Sidney Salkow  
*The Las Vegas Story* (1952), d. Robert Stevenson  
*The Last Crooked Mile* (1946), d. Philip Ford  
*The Last Mile* (1959), d. Howard W. Koch  
*Laura* (1944), d. Otto Preminger  
*The Lawless* (1950), d. Joseph Losey  
*Leave Her to Heaven* (1945), d. John M. Stahl  
*A Life at Stake* (1954), d. Paul Guilfoyle  
*Lightning Strikes Twice* (1955), d. King Vidor  
*The Lineup* (1958), d. Don Siegel  
*Loan Shark* (1952), d. Seymour Friedman  
*The Locket* (1947), d. John Brahm  
*The Lodger* (1944), d. John Brahm  
*Lonely Heart Bandits* (1950), d. George Blair  
*Lonelyhearts* (1958), d. Vincent J. Donehue  
*The Long Night* (1947), d. Anatole Litvak  
*The Long Wait* (1954), d. Victor Saville  
*Loophole* (1954), d. Harold Schuster  
*Lost, Lonely and Vicious* (1958), d. Frank Myers  
*The Lost Moment* (1947), d. Martin Gabel  
*The Lost Weekend* (1945), d. Billy Wilder  
*The Louisiana Hussy* (1959), d. Lee Sholem



*Love from a Stranger* (1947), d. Richard Whorf  
*The Lucky Stiff* (1949), d. Lewis R. Foster  
*Lure of the Swamp* (1957), d. William George  
*Lured* (1947), d. Douglas Sirk  
*Lust for Gold* (1949), d. S. Sylvan Simon  
*M* (1951), d. Joseph Losey  
*Macao* (1952), d. Joseph Von Sternberg  
*Mad at the World* (1955), d. Harry Essex  
*The Madonna's Secret* (1946), d. William Thiele  
*Main Street After Dark* (1945), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*Make Haste to Live* (1954), d. William A. Seiter  
*The Maltese Falcon* (1941), d. John Huston  
*Man Afraid* (1957), d. Harry Keller  
*The Man I Love* (1947), d. Raoul Walsh  
*Man in the Attic* (1953), d. Hugo Fregonese  
*Man in the Dark* (1953), d. Lew Landers  
*The Man in the Net* (1959), d. Michael Curtiz  
*Man in the Shadow* (1957), d. Jack Arnold  
*Man in the Vault* (1956), d. Andrew V. McLaglen  
*The Man Is Armed* (1956), d. Franklin Andreon  
*The Man on the Eiffel Tower* (1949), d. Burgess Meredith  
*The Man Who Cheated Himself* (1951), d. Felix E. Feist  
*The Man Who Dared* (1946), d. John Sturges  
*The Man Who Died Twice* (1959), d. Joseph Kane  
*The Man with a Cloak* (1951), d. Fletcher Markle  
*The Man with My Face* (1951), d. Edward Montagne  
*Manhandled* (1949), d. Lewis R. Foster  
*Mark of the Whistler* (1944), d. William Castle  
*The Mask of Dijon* (1946), d. Lew Landers  
*The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944), d. Jean Negulesco  
*Miami Exposé* (1956), d. Fred F. Sears  
*Miami Story* (1954), d. Fred F. Sears  
*Midnight Manhunt* (1945), d. William C. Thomas  
*The Midnight Story* (1957), d. Joseph Pevney  
*Mildred Pierce* (1945), d. Michael Curtiz  
*Ministry of Fear* (1945), d. Fritz Lang  
*The Missing Juror* (1944), d. Budd Boetticher  
*Missing Women* (1951), d. Philip Ford  
*The Mob* (1951), d. Robert Parrish  
*Money Madness* (1948), d. Sam Newfield  
*Moonrise* (1948), d. Frank Borzage  
*Moontide* (1942), d. Archie Mayo

*Moss Rose* (1947), d. Gregory Ratoff  
*Mr. Arkadin* (1955), d. Orson Welles  
*Murder by Contract* (1958), d. Irving Lerner  
*Murder Is My Beat* (1955), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*Murder, My Sweet* (1944), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*Murder without Tears* (1953), d. William Beaudine  
*My Favorite Brunette* (1947), d. Elliott Nugent  
*My Forbidden Past* (1951), d. Robert Stevenson  
*My Gun Is Quick* (1957), d. Phil Victor and George A. White  
*My Name Is Julia Ross* (1945), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*My Son John* (1952), d. Leo McCarey  
*Mysterious Intruder* (1946), d. William Castle  
*The Mysterious Mr. Valentine* (1946), d. Philip Ford  
*Mystery in Mexico* (1948), d. John Sturges  
*Mystery Street* (1950), d. John Sturges  
*Naked Alibi* (1954), d. Jerry Hopper  
*The Naked City* (1948), d. Jules Dassin  
*The Naked Street* (1955), d. Maxwell Shane  
*The Narrow Margin* (1952), d. Richard Fleischer  
*Never Trust a Gambler* (1951), d. Ralph Murphy  
*New York Confidential* (1955), d. Russell Rouse  
*Niagara* (1953), d. Henry Hathaway  
*Night Editor* (1946), d. Henry Levin  
*Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1948), d. John Farrow  
*The Night Holds Terror* (1955), d. Andrew L. Stone  
*Night into Morning* (1955), d. Fletcher Markle  
*Night of the Hunter* (1955), d. Charles Laughton  
*The Night Runner* (1957), d. Abner Biberman  
*Night without Sleep* (1952), d. Roy Ward Baker  
*Nightfall* (1957), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*Nightmare* (1956), d. Maxwell Shane  
*Nightmare Alley* (1947), d. Edmund Goulding  
*99 River Street* (1953), d. Phil Karlson  
*No Down Payment* (1957), d. Martin Ritt  
*No Escape* (1953), d. Charles Bennett  
*No Man of Her Own* (1950), d. Mitchell Leisen  
*No Man's Woman* (1955), d. Franklin Adreon  
*No Questions Asked* (1951), d. Harold F. Kress  
*No Time to Be Young* (1957), d. David Lowell  
*No Way Out* (1950), d. Joseph L. Mankiewicz  
*Nobody Lives Forever* (1946), d. Jean Negulesco  
*Nocturne* (1946), d. Edward L. Marin

*Nora Prentiss* (1947), d. Vincent Sherman  
*Not Wanted* (1949), d. Elmer Clifton and Ida Lupino  
*Notorious* (1946), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959), d. Robert Wise  
*On Dangerous Ground* (1952), d. Nicholas Ray  
*On the Waterfront* (1954), d. Elia Kazan  
*Once a Thief* (1950), d. W. Lee Wilder  
*One Way Street* (1950), d. Hugo Fregonese  
*Open Secret* (1948), d. John Reinhardt  
*The Other Woman* (1954), d. Hugo Haas  
*Out of the Past* (1947), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*The Outcasts of Poker Flat* (1952), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Outrage* (1950), d. Ida Lupino  
*Outside the Law* (1956), d. Jack Arnold  
*Outside the Wall* (1950), d. Crane Wilbur  
*Paid in Full* (1950), d. William Dieterle  
*Panic in the Streets* (1950), d. Elia Kazan  
*Paper Bullets* (aka *Gangs Inc.*) (1941), d. Phil Rosen  
*The Paradine Case* (1947), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Parole, Inc.* (1949), d. Alfred Zeisler  
*Party Girl* (1958), d. Nicholas Ray  
*Payment on Demand* (1951), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*The People Against O'Hara* (1951), d. John Sturges  
*Pete Kelly's Blues* (1955), d. Jack Webb  
*Phantom Lady* (1944), d. Robert Siodmak  
*The Phenix City Story* (1955), d. Phil Karlson  
*Philo Vance's Gamble* (1947), d. Basil Wrangell  
*Pickup* (1951), d. Hugo Haas  
*Pickup on South Street* (1953), d. Samuel Fuller  
*Pitfall* (1948), d. André de Toth  
*Playgirl* (1954), d. Joseph Pevney  
*Please Murder Me* (1956), d. Peter Godfrey  
*Plunder Road* (1957), d. Hubert Cornfield  
*The Port of Forty Thieves* (1944), d. John English  
*Port of Hell* (1954), d. Harold D. Schuster  
*Port of New York* (1949), d. Laslo Benedek  
*Portland Exposé* (1957), d. Harold D. Schuster  
*Possessed* (1947), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*Post Office Investigator* (1946), d. George Blair  
*The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), d. Tay Garnett  
*Power of the Whistler* (1945), d. Lew Landers  
*The Pretender* (1947), d. W. Lee Wilder

*The Price of Fear* (1956), d. Abner Biberman  
*Private Hell 36* (1954), d. Don Siegel  
*The Prowler* (1951), d. Joseph Losey  
*Pursued* (1947), d. Raoul Walsh  
*Pushover* (1954), d. Richard Quine  
*Queen Bee* (1955), d. Ranald MacDougall  
*Quicksand* (1950), d. Irving Pichel  
*Quiet Please: Murder* (1942), d. John Larkin  
*Race Street* (1948), d. Edward L. Marin  
*The Racket* (1951), d. John Cromwell  
*Rage in Heaven* (1941), d. W. S. Van Dyke  
*The Raging Tide* (1951), d. Ernest K. Gann  
*Railroaded* (1947), d. Anthony Mann  
*Ramrod* (1947), d. André de Toth  
*Rancho Notorious* (1952), d. Fritz Lang  
*Ransom* (1956), d. Alex Segal  
*Raw Deal* (1948), d. Anthony Mann  
*Rear Window* (1954), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Rebecca* (1940), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*The Reckless Moment* (1949), d. Max Ophüls  
*The Red House* (1947), d. Delmer Daves  
*Red Light* (1950), d. Roy Del Ruth  
*The Red Menace* (1949), d. R. G. Springsteen  
*Reign of Terror* (1949), d. Anthony Mann  
*Repeat Performance* (1947), d. Alfred L. Werker  
*Revolt in the Big House* (1958), d. R. G. Springsteen  
*Ride the Pink Horse* (1947), d. Robert Montgomery  
*Riff-Raff* (1947), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Riot in Cell Block 11* (1954), d. Don Siegel  
*Road House* (1948), d. Jean Negulesco  
*Road to the Big House* (1947), d. Walter Colmes  
*Roadblock* (1951), d. Harold Daniels  
*Rogue Cop* (1954), d. Roy Rowland  
*Rope* (1948), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Rope of Sand* (1949), d. William Dieterle  
*Roughshod* (1949), d. Mark Robson  
*Ruthless* (1948), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*Saboteur* (1942), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Saigon* (1948), d. Leslie Fenton  
*San Quentin* (1946), d. Gordon Douglas  
*Scandal Sheet* (1952), d. Phil Karlson  
*The Scarf* (1951), d. E. A. Dupont

*Scarlet Street* (1945), d. Fritz Lang  
*Scene of the Crime* (1949), d. Roy Rowland  
*Screaming Mimi* (1958), d. Gerd Oswald  
*Sealed Lips* (1941), d. George Waggner  
*Second Chance* (1953), d. Rudolph Maté  
*Second Face* (1950), d. Jack Bernhard  
*The Second Woman* (1951), d. James V. Kern  
*Secret Beyond the Door* (1948), d. Fritz Lang  
*Secret Enemies* (1943), d. Benjamin Stoloff  
*The Secret Fury* (1950), d. Mel Ferrer  
*The Secret of Convict Lake* (1951), d. Michael Gordon  
*Secret of the Whistler* (1946), d. George Sherman  
*The Sellout* (1952), d. Gerald Mayer  
*The Set-Up* (1949), d. Robert Wise  
*711 Ocean Drive* (1950), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Shack Out on 101* (1955), d. Edward Dein  
*Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Shadow of a Woman* (1946), d. Joseph Santley  
*Shadow on the Wall* (1950), d. Pat Jackson  
*Shadow on the Window* (1957), d. William Asher  
*Shakedown* (1950), d. Joseph Pevney  
*The Shanghai Gesture* (1941), d. Josef von Sternberg  
*Shed No Tears* (1948), d. Jean Yarbrough  
*Shield for Murder* (1954), d. Edmond O'Brien and Howard W. Koch  
*Shock* (1946), d. Alfred L. Werker  
*Shockproof* (1949), d. Douglas Sirk  
*Shoot to Kill* (1947), d. William Berke  
*Short Cut to Hell* (1957), d. James Cagney  
*Side Street* (1950), d. Anthony Mann  
*The Sign of the Ram* (1948), d. John Sturges  
*Singapore* (1947), d. John Brahm  
*Sirocco* (1951), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*Slander* (1956), d. Roy Rowland  
*Slattery's Hurricane* (1949), d. André de Toth  
*Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* (1957), d. Arnold Laven  
*Sleep, My Love* (1948), d. Douglas Sirk  
*The Sleeping City* (1950), d. George Sherman  
*Slightly Scarlet* (1956), d. Allan Dwan  
*Smart Girls Don't Talk* (1948), d. Richard L. Bare  
*Smash-Up, The Story of a Woman* (1947), d. Stuart Heisler  
*The Snake Pit* (1948), d. Anatole Litvak  
*The Sniper* (1952), d. Edward Dymtryk

*So Dark the Night* (1946), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Somewhere in the Night* (1946), d. Joseph L. Mankiewicz  
*Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), d. Anatole Litvak  
*The Sound of Fury* (aka *Try and Get Me*) (1951), d. Cy Endfield  
*Southside 1-1000* (1950), d. Boris Ingster  
*Special Agent* (1949), d. William C. Thomas  
*Specter of the Rose* (1946), d. Ben Hecht  
*Spellbound* (1945), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*The Spider* (1945), d. Robert D. Webb  
*The Spiral Staircase* (1946), d. Robert Siodmak  
*The Spiritualist* (aka *The Amazing Mr. X*) (1948), d. Bernard Vorhaus  
*Split Second* (1953), d. Dick Powell  
*Spy Hunt* (1950), d. George Sherman  
*Stakeout on Dope Street* (1958), d. Irvin Kershner  
*Station West* (1948), d. Sidney Lanfield  
*The Steel Helmet* (1951), d. Samuel Fuller  
*The Steel Jungle* (1956), d. Walter Doniger  
*The Steel Trap* (1952), d. Andrew L. Stone  
*Step by Step* (1946), d. Phil Rosen  
*Step Down to Terror* (1958), d. Harry Keller  
*Stolen Identity* (1953), d. Gunther von Fritsch  
*A Stolen Life* (1946), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*Storm Fear* (1956), d. Cornel Wilde  
*Storm Warning* (1951), d. Stuart Heisler  
*The Story of Molly X* (1949), d. Crane Wilbur  
*The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* (aka *Uncle Harry*) (1945), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Strange Alibi* (1941), d. D. Ross Lederman  
*Strange Bargain* (1949), d. Will Price  
*Strange Fascination* (1952), d. Hugo Haas  
*Strange Illusion* (1945), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*Strange Impersonation* (1946), d. Anthony Mann  
*Strange Intruder* (1956), d. Irving Rapper  
*The Strange Love of Martha Ivers* (1946), d. Lewis Milestone  
*The Strange Mr. Gregory* (1945), d. Phil Rosen  
*Strange Triangle* (1946), d. Ray McCarey  
*The Strange Woman* (1946), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*The Stranger* (1946), d. Orson Welles  
*Stranger on the Third Floor* (1940), d. Boris Ingster  
*Strangers on a Train* (1951), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Street of Chance* (1942), d. Jack Hively  
*Street of Darkness* (1958), d. Robert G. Walker  
*The Street with No Name* (1948), d. William Keighley

*The Strip* (1951), d. Leslie Kardos  
*Sudden Danger* (1955), d. Hubert Cornfield  
*Sudden Fear* (1952), d. David Miller  
*Suddenly* (1954), d. Lewis Allen  
*The Sun Sets at Dawn* (1950), d. Paul Sloane  
*Sunset Boulevard* (1950), d. Billy Wilder  
*The Suspect* (1944), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Suspense* (1946), d. Frank Tuttle  
*Suspicion* (1941), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Swamp Fire* (1946), d. William H. Pine  
*Sweet Smell of Success* (1957), d. Alexander Mackendrick  
*The System* (1953), d. Lewis Seiler  
*Take One False Step* (1949), d. Chester Erskine  
*Talk About a Stranger* (1952), d. David Bradley  
*The Tattered Dress* (1957), d. Jack Arnold  
*The Tattooed Stranger* (1950), d. Edward J. Montagne  
*Teenage Doll* (1957), d. Roger Corman  
*Temptation* (1946), d. Irving Pichel  
*Tension* (1949), d. John Berry  
*Terror at Midnight* (1956), d. Franklin Adreon  
*They Live by Night* (1948), d. Nicholas Ray  
*They Made Me a Killer* (1946), d. William C. Thomas  
*They Won't Believe Me* (1947), d. Irving Pichel  
*The Thief* (1952), d. Russell Rouse  
*Thieves' Highway* (1949), d. Jules Dassin  
*13 Rue Madeleine* (1947), d. Henry Hathaway  
*The Thirteenth Hour* (1947), d. William Clemens  
*The Thirteenth Letter* (1951), d. Otto Preminger  
*This Gun for Hire* (1942), d. Frank Tuttle  
*This Side of the Law* (1950), d. Richard L. Bare  
*This Woman Is Dangerous* (1952), d. Felix E. Feist  
*The Threat* (1949), d. Felix E. Feist  
*The Three Bad Sisters* (1956), d. Gilbert Kay  
*Three Steps North* (1951), d. W. Lee Wilder  
*Three Strangers* (1946), d. Jean Negulesco  
*Thunder Road* (1958), d. Arthur Ripley  
*Tight Spot* (1955), d. Phil Karlson  
*Time to Kill* (1942), d. Herbert I. Leeds  
*Timetable* (1956), d. Mark Stevens  
*T-Men* (1948), d. Anthony Mann  
*To the Ends of the Earth* (1948), d. Robert Stevenson  
*Tokyo File 212* (1951), d. Dorrell and Stuart McGowan

*Tomorrow Is Another Day* (1951), d. Felix E. Feist  
*Tomorrow Is Forever* (1946), d. Irving Pichel  
*Tomorrow We Live* (1942), d. Edgar G. Ulmer  
*Too Late for Tears* (1949), d. Byron Haskin  
*Touch of Evil* (1958), d. Orson Welles  
*Tough Assignment* (1949), d. William Beaudine  
*The Toughest Man Alive* (1955), d. Sidney Salkow  
*Track of the Cat* (1954), d. William A. Wellman  
*A Tragedy at Midnight* (1942), d. Joseph Santley  
*The Trap* (1959), d. Norman Panama  
*Trapped* (1949), d. Richard Fleischer  
*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), d. John Huston  
*Try and Get Me* (aka *The Sound of Fury*) (1950), d. Cy Endfield  
*The Turning Point* (1952), d. William Dieterle  
*Two Dollar Bettor* (1951), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*The Two Mrs. Carralls* (1947), d. Peter Godfrey  
*Two of a Kind* (1951), d. Henry Levin  
*Uncle Harry* (aka *The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry*) (1945), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Under Capricorn* (1949), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Under the Gun* (1951), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Undercover Girl* (1950), d. Joseph Pevney  
*The Undercover Man* (1949), d. Joseph H. Lewis  
*Undercurrent* (1946), d. Vincente Minnelli  
*Undertow* (1949), d. William Castle  
*The Underworld Story* (1950), d. Cy Endfield  
*The Unfaithful* (1947), d. Vincent Sherman  
*The Unholy Wife* (1957), d. John Farrow  
*Union Station* (1950), d. Rudolph Maté  
*The Unknown Man* (1951), d. Richard Thorpe  
*Unmasked* (1950), d. George Blair  
*The Unseen* (1945), d. Lewis Allen  
*The Unsuspected* (1947), d. Michael Curtiz  
*The Unwritten Code* (1944), d. Herman Rotsten  
*Valerie* (1957), d. Gerd Oswald  
*The Velvet Touch* (1948), d. John Gage  
*Vertigo* (1958), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Vice Raid* (1960), d. Edward L. Cahn  
*Vice Squad* (1953), d. Arnold Laven  
*The Vicious Circle* (1948), d. W. Lee Wilder  
*Vicki* (1953), d. Harry Horner  
*Violated* (1953), d. Walter Strate  
*Violence* (1947), d. Jack Bernhard



*Violent Saturday* (1955), d. Richard Fleischer  
*Voice in the Wind* (1944), d. Arthur Ripley  
*Voice of the Whistler* (1945), d. William Castle  
*Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), d. Gordon Douglas  
*Walk East on Beacon* (1952), d. Alfred Werker  
*Walk Softly, Stranger* (1950), d. Robert Stevenson  
*The Walking Hills* (1950), d. John Sturges  
*The Walls Came Tumbling Down* (1946), d. Lothar Mendes  
*We Were Strangers* (1949), d. John Huston  
*The Web* (1947), d. Michael Gordon  
*The Well* (1951), d. Leo C. Popkin and Russell Rouse  
*Wetbacks* (1956), d. Hank McCune  
*When Gangland Strikes* (1956), d. R. G. Springsteen  
*When Strangers Marry* (aka *Betrayed*) (1944), d. William Castle  
*Where Danger Lives* (1950), d. John Farrow  
*Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1950), d. Otto Preminger  
*While the City Sleeps* (1956), d. Fritz Lang  
*The Whip Hand* (1951), d. William Cameron Menzies  
*Whiplash* (1948), d. Lewis Seiler  
*Whirlpool* (1949), d. Otto Preminger  
*Whispering Footsteps* (1943), d. Howard Bretherton  
*Whispering Smith* (1948), d. Leslie Fenton  
*Whistle Stop* (1946), d. Leonid Moguy  
*The Whistler* (1944), d. William Castle  
*White Heat* (1949), d. Raoul Walsh  
*Wicked Woman* (1954), d. Russell Rouse  
*Wife Wanted* (1946), d. Phil Karlson  
*The Wild One* (1953), d. Laslo Benedek  
*The Window* (1949), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Without Honor* (1949), d. Irving Pichel  
*Without Warning!* (1952), d. Arnold Laven  
*Witness to Murder* (1954), d. Roy Rowland  
*The Woman from Tangier* (1950), d. Harold Daniels  
*Woman in Hiding* (1950), d. Michael Gordon  
*The Woman in the Window* (1945), d. Fritz Lang  
*The Woman in White* (1948), d. Peter Godfrey  
*The Woman on Pier 13* (aka *I Married a Communist*) (1949), d. Robert Stevenson  
*The Woman on the Beach* (1947), d. Jean Renoir  
*Woman on the Run* (1950), d. Norman Foster  
*A Woman's Devotion* (1956), d. Paul Henreid  
*A Woman's Secret* (1949), d. Nicholas Ray  
*A Woman's Vengeance* (1948), d. Zoltan Korda

*Women in the Night* (1948), d. William Rowland  
*Women's Prison* (1955), d. Lewis Seiler  
*World for Ransom* (1954), d. Robert Aldrich  
*The Wrong Man* (1956), d. Alfred Hitchcock

### **American Late Noirs: 1960–1967**

*Angel's Flight* (1965), d. Raymond Nassour and Kenneth W. Richardson  
*Blast of Silence* (1961), d. Allen Baron  
*Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), d. Arthur Penn  
*Brainstorm* (1965), d. William Conrad  
*Cape Fear* (1962), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*Carnival of Souls* (1962), d. Herk Harvey  
*The Chase* (1966), d. Arthur Penn  
*Experiment in Terror* (1962), d. Blake Edwards  
*The Girl Hunters* (1963), d. Roy Rowland  
*The Hanged Man* (1964), d. Don Siegel  
*Harper* (1966), d. Jack Smight  
*The Haunting* (1963), d. Robert Wise  
*The Hostage* (1967), d. Russell S. Doughten Jr.  
*The Hustler* (1961), d. Robert Rossen  
*In Cold Blood* (1967), d. Richard Brooks  
*Key Witness* (1960), d. Phil Karlson  
*The Killers* (1964), d. Don Siegel  
*Kitten with a Whip* (1964), d. Douglas Heyes  
*The Lawbreakers* (1960), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Look in Any Window* (1961), d. William Alland  
*The Manchurian Candidate* (1965), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Marnie* (1964), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Mickey One* (1965), d. Arthur Penn  
*Midnight Lace* (1960), d. David Miller  
*Mirage* (1965), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*The Money Trap* (1966), d. Burt Kennedy  
*The Most Dangerous Man Alive* (1961), d. Allan Dwan  
*Murder Inc.* (1960), d. Burt Balaban and Stuart Rosenberg  
*The Naked Kiss* (1964), d. Samuel Fuller  
*Ocean's Eleven* (1960), d. Lewis Milestone  
*Pay or Die!* (1960), d. Richard Wilson  
*Portrait in Black* (1960), d. Michael Gordon  
*Psycho* (1960), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*The Pusher* (1960), d. Gene Milford  
*Right Hand of the Devil* (1963), d. Aram Katcher

*Seconds* (1966), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Seven Days in May* (1964), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Seven Thieves* (1960), d. Henry Hathaway  
*Shock Corridor* (1963), d. Samuel Fuller  
*Stranger on the Run* (1967), d. Don Siegel  
*The 3rd Voice* (1960), d. Hubert Cornfield  
*13 West Street* (1962), d. Philip Leacock  
*Thunder Island* (1963), d. Jack Leewood  
*The Trial* (1962), d. Orson Welles  
*Underworld U.S.A.* (1961), d. Samuel Fuller  
*Warhunt* (1962), d. Denis Sanders  
*Warning Shot* (1967), d. Buzz Kulik  
*Welcome to Hard Times* (1967), d. Burt Kennedy  
*Who Killed Teddy Bear?* (1965), d. Joseph Cates  
*Why Must I Die?* (1960), d. Roy Del Ruth

### American Neo-Noir

*Absolute Power* (1997), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Across 110th Street* (1972), d. Barry Shear  
*The Addiction* (1995), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Affliction* (1997), d. Paul Schrader  
*After Dark, My Sweet* (1990), d. James Foley  
*After Hours* (1985), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Against All Odds* (1984), d. Taylor Hackford  
*All the President's Men* (1976), d. Alan J. Pakula  
*Alligator Eyes* (1990), d. John Feldman  
*Along Came a Spider* (2001), d. Lee Tamahori  
*Ambushed* (1998), d. Ernest R. Dickerson  
*American Gangster* (2007), d. Ridley Scott  
*American Gigolo* (1980), d. Paul Schrader  
*The Anderson Tapes* (1971), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Angel Heart* (1987), d. Alan Parker  
*Angel of Vengeance* (aka *Ms. 45*) (1981), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Another 48 Hrs.* (1990), d. Walter Hill  
*At Close Range* (1986), d. James Foley  
*Atlantic City* (1980), d. Louis Malle  
*Bad Boys* (1983), d. Richard Rosenthal  
*Bad Influence* (1990), d. Curtis Hanson  
*Badlands* (1973), d. Terrence Malick  
*Bad Lieutenant* (1992), d. Abel Ferrara

*Basic Instinct* (1991), d. Paul Verhoeven  
*Basic Instinct 2* (2006), d. Michael Caton-Jones  
*Batman Begins* (2005), d. Christopher Nolan  
*The Bedroom Window* (1987), d. Curtis Hanson  
*Before the Devil Knows You're Dead* (2007), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Best Laid Plans* (1999), d. Mike Barker  
*Best Seller* (1987), d. John Flynn  
*Betrayed* (1988), d. Constantin Costa-Gavras  
*Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (2009), d. Peter Hyams  
*Beyond the Law* (1992), d. Larry Ferguson  
*The Big Easy* (1987), d. Jim McBride  
*The Big Fix* (1978), d. Jeremy Paul Kagan  
*The Big Lebowski* (1998), d. Joel Coen  
*The Big Sleep* (1978), d. Michael Winner  
*Bitter Moon* (1992), d. Roman Polanski  
*The Black Bird* (1975), d. David Giler  
*The Black Dahlia* (2006), d. Brian De Palma  
*Black Eye* (1974), d. Jack Arnold  
*Black Rain* (1989), d. Ridley Scott  
*Black Sunday* (1977), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Black Widow* (1987), d. Bob Rafelson  
*Blackout* (1997), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Blade Runner* (1982), d. Ridley Scott  
*Blondes Have More Guns* (1995), d. George Merriweather  
*Blood and Wine* (1996), d. Bob Rafelson  
*Blood Simple* (1984), d. Joel Coen  
*Blood Work* (2002), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Blow Out* (1981), d. Brian De Palma  
*Blue Desert* (1992), d. Bradley Battersby  
*Blue Steel* (1990), d. Kathryn Bigelow  
*Blue Velvet* (1986), d. David Lynch  
*Bodily Harm* (1995), d. James Lemmo  
*Body and Soul* (1981), d. George Bowers  
*Body Chemistry* (1990), d. Kristine Peterson  
*Body Double* (1984), d. Brian De Palma  
*Body Heat* (1981), d. Lawrence Kasdan  
*Body of Evidence* (1992), d. Uli Edel  
*Body Snatchers* (1993), d. Abel Ferrara  
*The Bodyguard* (1992), d. Mick Jackson  
*The Bone Collector* (1999), d. Phillip Noyce  
*The Border* (1982), d. Tony Richardson  
*Bound* (1996), d. Larry Wachowski and Andy Wachowski

*The Bourne Identity* (2002), d. Doug Liman  
*The Bourne Supremacy* (2004), d. Paul Greengrass  
*The Bourne Ultimatum* (2007), d. Paul Greengrass  
*Boyz n the Hood* (1991), d. John Singleton  
*Break* (2009), d. Marc Clebanoff  
*Breakdown* (1997), d. Jonathan Mostow  
*Breathless* (1983), d. Jim McBride  
*Bright Angel* (1991), d. Michael Fields  
*Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), d. Martin Scorsese  
*The Brinks Job* (1978), d. William Friedkin  
*Brokedown Palace* (1999), d. Jonathan Kaplan  
*A Bronx Tale* (1993), d. Robert De Niro  
*Buffalo 66* (1996), d. Vincent Gallo  
*Bullet* (1996), d. Julien Temple  
*Call Me* (1988), d. Sollace Mitchell  
*Cape Fear* (1991), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Capricorn One* (1978), d. Peter Hyams  
*Carlito's Way* (1993), d. Brian De Palma  
*Carnal Crimes* (1991), d. Gregory Dark  
*Casino* (1995), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Cat Chaser* (1989), d. Abel Ferrara  
*The Champ* (1979), d. Franco Zeffirelli  
*Chandler* (1971), d. Paul Magwood  
*Changeling* (2008), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Charley Varrick* (1973), d. Don Siegel  
*China Moon* (1994), d. John Bailey  
*Chinatown* (1974), d. Roman Polanski  
*The Choirboys* (1977), d. Robert Aldrich  
*City by the Sea* (2002), d. Michael Caton-Jones  
*City Hall* (1996), d. Harold Becker  
*Clay Pigeons* (1998), d. David Dobkin  
*Clockers* (1995), d. Spike Lee  
*Coffy* (1973), d. Jack Hill  
*Cold Around the Heart* (1998), d. John Ridley  
*Cold Steel* (1987), d. Dorothy Ann Puzo  
*Collateral* (2004), d. Michael Mann  
*Constantine* (2005), d. Francis Lawrence  
*Confidence* (2003), d. James Foley  
*The Conversation* (1974), d. Francis Ford Coppola  
*Cool Breeze* (1972), d. Barry Pollack  
*The Cooler* (2003), d. Wayne Kramer  
*Cop* (1988), d. James B. Harris

*Cop Land* (1997), d. James Mangold  
*Copycat* (1995), d. John Amiel  
*Cotton Comes to Harlem* (1970), d. Ossie Davis  
*Crime Story* (1986), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Criminal Law* (1989), d. Martin Campbell  
*Cruising* (1980), d. William Friedkin  
*Cutter's Way* (1981), d. Ivan Passer  
*Cypher* (2003), d. Vincenzo Natali  
*A Dandy in Aspic* (1968), d. Anthony Mann  
*Dangerous Game* (1993), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Dangerously Close* (1986), d. Albert Pyun  
*Dark Blue* (2002), d. Ron Shelton  
*Dark City* (1998), d. Alex Proyas  
*The Dark Knight* (2008), d. Christopher Nolan  
*The Dark Wind* (1992), d. Errol Morris  
*Dead Again* (1991), d. Kenneth Branagh  
*Dead-Bang* (1989), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Dead Connection* (1994), d. Nigel Dick  
*Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid* (1982), d. Carl Reiner  
*Dead of Winter* (1987), d. Arthur Penn  
*The Dead Pool* (1988), d. Buddy Van Horn  
*Dead Presidents* (1995), d. Allen and Albert Hughes  
*Death and the Maiden* (1994), d. Roman Polanski  
*Death Wish* (1971), d. Michael Winner  
*Deceived* (1991), d. Damian Harris  
*Deep Cover* (1992), d. Bill Duke  
*The Deep End* (2001), d. Scott McGehee and David Siegel  
*Delusion* (1991), d. Carl Colpaert  
*The Departed* (2006), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Desperate Hours* (1990), d. Michael Cimino  
*The Detective* (1968), d. Gordon Douglas  
*Detour* (1992), d. Wade Williams  
*Detroit 9000* (1973), d. Arthur Marks  
*Devil in a Blue Dress* (1995), d. Carl Franklin  
*Diabolique* (1996), d. Jeremiah S. Chechik  
*Diary of a Hitman* (1991), d. Roy London  
*Die Hard* (1988), d. John McTiernan  
*Dirty Harry* (1971), d. Don Siegel  
*Disclosure* (1994), d. Barry Levinson  
*D.O.A.* (1988), d. Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel  
*Dog Day Afternoon* (1975), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Dog Soldiers* (aka *Who'll Stop the Rain*) (1978), d. Karel Reisz

*The Domino Principle* (1977), d. Stanley Kramer  
*Donnie Brasco* (1997), d. Mike Newell  
*Don't Say a Word* (2001), d. Gary Fleder  
*Double Jeopardy* (1999), d. Bruce Beresford  
*Double Negative* (1980), d. George Bloomfield  
*Double Take* (2001), d. George Gallo  
*Dressed To Kill* (1980), d. Brian De Palma  
*The Driver* (1978), d. Walter Hill  
*The Drowning Pool* (1975), d. Stuart Rosenberg  
*Drugstore Cowboy* (1989), d. Gus Van Sant  
*8MM* (1999), d. Joel Shumacher  
*Eight Million Ways to Die* (1986), d. Hal Ashby  
*Enemy of the State* (1998), d. Tony Scott  
*The Enforcer* (1976), d. James Fargo  
*Equilibrium* (2002), d. Kurt Wimmer  
*Equinox* (1993), d. Alan Rudolph  
*Everybody Wins* (1990), d. Karel Reisz  
*Executive Action* (1973), d. David Miller  
*Executive Target* (1997), d. Joseph Merhi  
*Eye for an Eye* (1995), d. John Schlesinger  
*The Eyes of Laura Mars* (1978), d. Irvin Kershner  
*Eyewitness* (1981), d. Peter Yates  
*Face/Off* (1997), d. John Woo  
*Fallen* (1998), d. Gregory Hoblit  
*Falling Down* (1993), d. Joel Schumacher  
*Farewell, My Lovely* (1975), d. Dick Richards  
*Fargo* (1996), d. Joel Coen  
*Fat City* (1972), d. John Huston  
*Fatal Attraction* (1987), d. Adrian Lyne  
*Fatal Beauty* (1987), d. Tom Holland  
*Fatal Instinct* (1991), d. John Dirlam  
*Fear City* (1984), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Femme Fatale* (1991), d. Andre Gutfreund  
*Femme Fatale* (2002), d. Brian De Palma  
*52 Pick-Up* (1986), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Fight Club* (1999), d. David Fincher  
*Final Analysis* (1992), d. Phil Joanou  
*Fingers* (1978), d. James Toback  
*The First Deadly Sin* (1980), d. Brian G. Hutton  
*Flesh and Bone* (1993), d. Steve Kloves  
*Forever Mine* (1999), d. Paul Schrader  
*48 Hrs.* (1982), d. Walter Hill

*The Fourth War* (1990), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Foxy Brown* (1974), d. Jack Hill  
*Framed* (1975), d. Phil Karlson  
*Frantic* (1988), d. Roman Polanski  
*Freeway* (1996), d. Matthew Bright  
*The French Connection* (1971), d. William Friedkin  
*French Connection II* (1975), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Friday Foster* (1975), d. Arthur Marks  
*The Friends of Eddie Coyle* (1973), d. Peter Yates  
*From Dusk to Dawn* (1996), d. Quentin Tarantino  
*From Hell* (2001), d. Albert Hughes and Allen Hughes  
*The Funeral* (1996), d. Abel Ferrara  
*The Fury* (1978), d. Brian De Palma  
*The Game* (1997), d. David Fincher  
*Gang in Blue* (1996), d. Mario and Melvin Van Peebles  
*Gangs of New York* (2002), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Gattaca* (1997), d. Andrew Niccol  
*The Gauntlet* (1977), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Genuine Risk* (1990), d. Kurt Voss  
*Get Carter* (2000), d. Stephen T. Kay  
*The Getaway* (1972), d. Sam Peckinpah  
*The Getaway* (1994), d. Roger Donaldson  
*Getting Out* (2009), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Ghost Dog, the Way of the Samurai* (1999), d. Jim Jarmusch  
*The Gift* (2000), d. Sam Raimi  
*The Gingerbread Man* (1997), d. Robert Altman  
*The Glass Shield* (1995), d. Charles Burnett  
*Gleaming the Cube* (1989), d. Graeme Clifford  
*Gloria* (1999), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Going Home* (1971), d. Herbert B. Leonard  
*The Good Shepherd* (2006), d. Robert De Niro  
*The Good Thief* (2002), d. Neil Jordan  
*Goodfellas* (1990), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Gran Torino* (2009), d. Clint Eastwood  
*The Grifters* (1990), d. Stephen Frears  
*The Grissom Gang* (1971), d. Robert Aldrich  
*The Groundstar Conspiracy* (1972), d. Lamont Johnson  
*Guilty as Sin* (1993), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Guncrazy* (1992), d. Tamra Davis  
*Hammett* (1982), d. Wim Wenders  
*The Hand That Rocks the Cradle* (1991), d. Curtis Hanson  
*Hannibal* (2001), d. Ridley Scott



*Hannibal Rising* (2007), d. Peter Webber  
*Hard Contract* (1969), d. S. Lee Pogostin  
*Hardcore* (1979), d. Paul Schrader  
*Harsh Times* (2005), d. David Ayer  
*Heat* (1995), d. Michael Mann  
*Heist* (2001), d. David Mamet  
*Hickey and Boggs* (1972), d. Robert Culp  
*High Plains Drifter* (1973), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Hired Gun* (2009), d. Brad Jurjens  
*A History of Violence* (2005), d. David Cronenberg  
*Hit List* (1989), d. William Lustig  
*Hit Man* (1972), d. George Armitage  
*Hit Me* (1996), d. Steven Shainberg  
*The Hitcher* (1986), d. Robert Harmon  
*The Hitcher* (2007), d. Dave Meyers  
*The Holcroft Covenant* (1985), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Hollywoodland* (2006), d. Allen Coulter  
*Homicide* (1991), d. David Mamet  
*Hoodlum* (1997), d. Bill Duke  
*Horseplayer* (1991), d. Kurt Voss  
*The Hot Spot* (1990), d. Dennis Hopper  
*House of Games* (1987), d. David Mamet  
*The House on Turk Street* (2002), d. Bob Rafelson  
*The Human Factor* (1975), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*Hustle* (1975), d. Robert Aldrich  
*I Like to Play Games* (1994), d. Moctezuma Lobato  
*I, the Jury* (1982), d. Richard T. Heffron  
*I Walk the Line* (1970), d. John Frankenheimer  
*If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1968), d. Charles Martin  
*Illicit Behavior* (1992), d. Worth Keeter  
*Impulse* (1990), d. Sondra Locke  
*In the Line of Fire* (1993), d. Wolfgang Petersen  
*Inside Edge* (1993), d. Warren Clarke and William Tannen  
*Inside Man* (2006), d. Spike Lee  
*Insomnia* (2002), d. Christopher Nolan  
*Internal Affairs* (1990), d. Mike Figgis  
*The International* (2009), d. Tom Tykwer  
*Intimate Stranger* (1991), d. Allan Holzman  
*Jackie Brown* (1997), d. Quentin Tarantino  
*Jacob's Ladder* (1990), d. Adrian Lyne  
*Jade* (1995), d. William Friedkin  
*Jagged Edge* (1985), d. Richard Marquand

*Jezebel's Kiss* (1990), d. Harvey Keith  
*Johnny Handsome* (1989), d. Walter Hill  
*Joy Ride* (2001), d. John Dahl  
*Juice* (1992), d. Ernest R. Dickerson  
*Kalifornia* (1993), d. Dominic Sena  
*Kill Bill I* (2003), d. Quentin Tarantino  
*Kill Bill II* (2004), d. Quentin Tarantino  
*Kill Me Again* (1989), d. John Dahl  
*The Killer Inside Me* (1976), d. Burt Kennedy  
*The Killing of a Chinese Bookie* (1976), d. John Cassavetes  
*The Killing Time* (1987), d. Rick King  
*Killing Zoe* (1993), d. Roger Avery  
*The Kill-Off* (1989), d. Maggie Greenwald  
*King of New York* (1990), d. Abel Ferrara  
*A Kiss Before Dying* (1991), d. James Dearden  
*Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (2005), d. Shane Black  
*Kiss Me a Killer* (1991), d. Marcus DeLeon  
*Kiss of Death* (1995), d. Barbet Schroeder  
*Kiss the Girls* (1997), d. Gary Fleder  
*Klute* (1971), d. Alan J. Pakula  
*The Kremlin Letter* (1970), d. John Huston  
*L.A. Confidential* (1997), d. Curtis Hanson  
*L.A.P.D.: To Protect and to Serve* (2001), d. Ed Anders  
*Lady Beware* (1987), d. Karen Arthur  
*The Last Boy Scout* (1991), d. Tony Scott  
*Last Embrace* (1979), d. Jonathan Demme  
*The Last Man Standing* (1996), d. Walter Hill  
*The Last Seduction* (1994), d. John Dahl  
*The Late Show* (1977), d. Robert Benton  
*Lethal Weapon* (1987), d. Richard Donner  
*Lethal Weapon II* (1989), d. Richard Donner  
*Lethal Weapon III* (1992), d. Richard Donner  
*Liberty Stands Still* (2002), d. Kari Skogland  
*Liebestraum* (1991), d. Mike Figgis  
*Light Sleeper* (1992), d. Paul Schrader  
*The Limey* (1999), d. Steven Soderbergh  
*Living and Dying* (2007), d. Jon Keeyes  
*The Long Goodbye* (1973), d. Robert Altman  
*Lost Highway* (1997), d. David Lynch  
*Love Crimes* (1991), d. Lizzie Borden  
*Machine* (2007), d. Michael Lazar  
*Madigan* (1968), d. Don Siegel

*Magnum Force* (1973), d. Ted Post  
*Malone* (1987), d. Harley Cokliss  
*Man on Fire* (2004), d. Tony Scott  
*The Man Who Wasn't There* (2001), d. Joel Coen  
*Man with a Gun* (1995), d. David Wyles  
*The Manchurian Candidate* (2004), d. Jonathan Demme  
*Manhunter* (1986), d. Michael Mann  
*Marlowe* (1969), d. Paul Bogart  
*Masquerade* (1988), d. Bob Swaim  
*The Matrix* (1999), d. Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski  
*The Matrix Reloaded* (2003), d. Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski  
*The Matrix Revolutions* (2003), d. Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski  
*Max Payne* (2008), d. John Moore  
*Mean Streets* (1973), d. Martin Scorsese  
*Medium Cool* (1969), d. Haskell Wexler  
*Memento* (2000), d. Christopher Nolan  
*Menace II Society* (1993), d. Albert and Allen Hughes  
*Miami Blues* (1990), d. George Armitage  
*Miami Vice* (2006), d. Michael Mann  
*Midnight Express* (1978), d. Alan Parker  
*Midnight Heat* (aka *Sunset Heat*) (1992), d. John Nicolella  
*Mike's Murder* (1984), d. James Bridges  
*Miller's Crossing* (1990), d. Joel Coen  
*Minority Report* (2002), d. Steven Spielberg  
*Miracle Mile* (1988), d. Steve De Jarnatt  
*Mirage* (1995), d. Paul Williams  
*The Morning After* (1986), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Mortal Passions* (1990), d. Andrew Lane  
*Mortal Thoughts* (1991), d. Alan Rudolph  
*Ms. 45* (aka *Angel of Vengeance*) (1981), d. Abel Ferrara  
*Mulholland Dr.* (2001), d. David Lynch  
*Mulholland Falls* (1996), d. Lee Tamahori  
*Murphy's Law* (1986), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*Mystic River* (2003), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Nails* (1992), d. John Flynn  
*Narc* (2002), d. Joe Carnahan  
*Narrow Margin* (1990), d. Peter Hyams  
*Natural Born Killers* (1994), d. Oliver Stone  
*Near Dark* (1987), d. Kathryn Bigelow  
*New Jack City* (1991), d. Mario Van Peebles  
*New Rose Hotel* (1998), d. Abel Ferrara  
*The Nickel Ride* (1974), d. Robert Mulligan

*Night and the City* (1992), d. Irwin Winkler  
*Night Falls on Manhattan* (1996), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Night Moves* (1975), d. Arthur Penn  
*Night of the Juggler* (1980), d. Robert Butler  
*Night Rhythms* (1992), d. Gregory Dark  
*Night Visitor* (1989), d. Rupert Hitzig  
*Nightwatch* (1997), d. Ole Bornedal  
*99 and 44/100% Dead* (1974), d. John Frankenheimer  
*The Ninth Gate* (1999), d. Roman Polanski  
*No Country for Old Men* (2007), d. Joel and Ethan Coen  
*No Mercy* (1986), d. Richard Pearce  
*No Way Out* (1987), d. Roger Donaldson  
*Obsession* (1976), d. Brian De Palma  
*Once a Thief* (1965), d. Ralph Nelson  
*One False Move* (1992), d. Carl Franklin  
*One Man Jury* (1978), d. Charles Martin  
*The Onion Field* (1979), d. Harold Becker  
*The Organization* (1971), d. Don Medford  
*Original Sin* (2001), d. Michael Cristofer  
*Out of Bounds* (1986), d. Richard Tuggle  
*Out of the Dark* (1989), d. Michael Schroeder  
*Out of the Rain* (1991), d. Gary Winick  
*Out of Time* (2003), d. Carl Franklin  
*The Outfit* (1973), d. John Flynn  
*Outlaw* (2001), d. Bo Svenson  
*Pacific Heights* (1990), d. John Schlesinger  
*Paint It Black* (1989), d. Tim Hunter  
*Palmetto* (1998), d. Volker Schlöndorff  
*Panic in the City* (1968), d. Eddie Davis  
*The Parallax View* (1974), d. Alan J. Pakula  
*Past Midnight* (1992), d. Jan Eliasberg  
*Payback* (1999), d. Brian Helgeland  
*A Perfect Murder* (1998), d. Andrew Davis  
*A Perfect World* (1993), d. Clint Eastwood  
*P.I. Private Investigations* (1987), d. Nigel Dick  
*Play Misty for Me* (1971), d. Clint Eastwood  
*The Pledge* (2001), d. Sean Penn  
*Point Blank* (1967), d. John Boorman  
*Point Break* (1991), d. Kathryn Bigelow  
*Point of No Return* (1993), d. John Badham  
*Poison Ivy* (1992), d. Katt Shea  
*Poodle Springs* (1998), d. Bob Rafelson

*Portrait of a Hitman* (1977), d. Allan A. Buckhant  
*Positive I.D.* (1987), d. Andy Anderson  
*The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1981), d. Bob Rafelson  
*Power* (1986), d. Sidney Lumet  
*A Prayer for the Dying* (1987), d. Mike Hodges  
*The Prestige* (2006), d. Christopher Nolan  
*Presumed Innocent* (1990), d. Alan J. Pakula  
*Prime Suspect* (1989), d. Mark Rutland  
*Prince of the City* (1981), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Prizzi's Honor* (1985), d. John Huston  
*Psycho* (1988), d. Gus Van Sant  
*Public Enemies* (2009), d. Michael Mann  
*The Public Eye* (1992), d. Howard Franklin  
*Pulp Fiction* (1994), d. Quentin Tarantino  
*Q & A* (1990), d. Sidney Lumet  
*'R Xmas* (2001), d. Abel Ferrara  
*A Rage in Harlem* (1991), d. Bill Duke  
*Raging Bull* (1980), d. Martin Scorsese  
*The Rain Killer* (1990), d. Ken Stein  
*Raising Cain* (1992), d. Brian De Palma  
*Ransom* (1996), d. Ron Howard  
*Red Dragon* (2002), d. Brett Ratner  
*Red Rock West* (1992), d. John Dahl  
*Reindeer Games* (aka *Deception*) (2000), d. John Frankenheimer  
*Relentless* (1989), d. William Lustig  
*Rent-a-Cop* (1988), d. Jerry London  
*Reservoir Dogs* (1992), d. Quentin Tarantino  
*Revenge* (1990), d. Tony Scott  
*Ricochet* (1991), d. Russell Mulcahy  
*Righteous Kill* (2008), d. Jon Avnet  
*Ripley Under Ground* (2005), d. Roger Spottiswoode  
*Road to Perdition* (2002), d. Sam Mendes  
*Rolling Thunder* (1977), d. John Flynn  
*Romeo Is Bleeding* (1993), d. Peter Medak  
*Ronin* (1998), d. John Frankenheimer  
*The Rookie* (1990), d. Clint Eastwood  
*The Rosary Murders* (1987), d. Fred Walton  
*Run* (1991), d. Geoff Burrows  
*Rush* (1991), d. Lili Fini Zanuck  
*The Salton Sea* (2002), d. D. J. Caruso  
*Scarface* (1983), d. Brian De Palma  
*Scissors* (1991), d. Frank De Felitta

*Sea of Love* (1989), d. Harold Becker  
*Serpico* (1973), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Set It Off* (1996), d. F. Gary Gray  
*Seven* (1995), d. David Fincher  
*Sexual Malice* (1994), d. Jag Mundhra  
*Shaft* (1971), d. Gordon Parks  
*Shamus* (1973), d. Buzz Kulik  
*Sharky's Machine* (1981), d. Burt Reynolds  
*Shattered* (1991), d. Wolfgang Petersen  
*Sheba Baby* (1975), d. William Gerdler  
*Shoot to Kill* (1988), d. Roger Spottiswoode  
*Siesta* (1987), d. Mary Lamb  
*The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), d. Jonathan Demme  
*A Simple Plan* (1998), d. Sam Raimi  
*Sin City* (2005), d. Frank Miller and Robert Rodriguez  
*Single White Female* (1992), d. Barbet Schroeder  
*Sisters* (1973), d. Brian De Palma  
*Slamdance* (1987), d. Wayne Wang  
*Sleeping with the Enemy* (1991), d. Joseph Ruben  
*Someone to Watch Over Me* (1987), d. Ridley Scott  
*Something Wild* (1986), d. Jonathan Demme  
*Soylent Green* (1973), d. Richard Fleischer  
*The Spanish Prisoner* (1997), d. David Mamet  
*Special Delivery* (1976), d. Paul Wendkos  
*The Specialist* (1994), d. Luis Llosa  
*The Spirit* (2008), d. Frank Miller  
*The Split* (1968), d. Gordon Flemyng  
*Stakeout* (1987), d. John Badham  
*State of Grace* (1990), d. Phil Joanou  
*Still of the Night* (1982), d. Robert Benton  
*Straight Out of Brooklyn* (1991), d. Matty Rich  
*Straight Time* (1978), d. Ulu Grosbard  
*Strange Days* (1995), d. Kathryn Bigelow  
*A Stranger Among Us* (1992), d. Sidney Lumet  
*The Stray* (2000), d. Kevin Mock  
*Street Kings* (2008), d. David Ayer  
*Street of No Return* (1989), d. Samuel Fuller  
*Stripped to Kill* (1987), d. Katt Shea Ruben  
*Sudden Impact* (1983), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Super Fly* (1972), d. Gordon Parks Jr.  
*Suspect* (1987), d. Peter Yates  
*Suture* (1993), d. Scott McGehee and David Siegel

*Sweet Sweetback's Badasssss Song* (1971), d. Melvin Van Peebles  
*The Taking of Pelham One Two Three* (1974), d. Joseph Sargent  
*The Taking of Pelham 123* (2009), d. Tony Scott  
*The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999), d. Anthony Minghella  
*Target* (1985), d. Arthur Penn  
*Targets* (1968), d. Peter Bogdanovich  
*Tattoo* (2002), d. Robert Schwentke  
*Taxi Driver* (1976), d. Martin Scorsese  
*The Temp* (1993), d. Tom Holland  
*Tequila Sunrise* (1988), d. Robert Towne  
*Thelma and Louise* (1991), d. Ridley Scott  
*They Shoot Horses Don't They?* (1969), d. Sydney Pollack  
*Thief* (1981), d. Michael Mann  
*Thieves Like Us* (1974), d. Robert Altman  
*Things to Do in Denver When You're Dead* (1995), d. Gary Fleder  
*This World, Then the Fireworks* (1997), d. Michael Oblowitz  
*Three Days of the Condor* (1975), d. Sydney Pollack  
*Thunderheart* (1992), d. Michael Apted  
*Thursday* (1998), d. Skip Woods  
*Tightrope* (1984), d. Richard Tuggle  
*To Kill For* (1992), d. John Dirlam  
*To Live and Die in L.A.* (1985), d. William Friedkin  
*Total Recall* (1990), d. Paul Verhoeven  
*Training Day* (2001), d. Antoine Fuqua  
*True Believer* (1989), d. Joseph Ruben  
*True Confessions* (1981), d. Ulu Grosbard  
*True Crime* (1999), d. Clint Eastwood  
*True Romance* (1993), d. Tony Scott  
*25th Hour* (2002), d. Spike Lee  
*Twilight* (1998), d. Robert Benton  
*Twilight's Last Gleaming* (1977), d. Robert Aldrich  
*Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me* (1992), d. David Lynch  
*2 Days in the Valley* (1996), d. John Herzfeld  
*The Two Jakes* (1990), d. Jack Nicholson  
*U Turn* (1997), d. Oliver Stone  
*Under Suspicion* (2000), d. Stephen Hopkins  
*Underneath* (1995), d. Steven Soderbergh  
*Unforgettable* (1996), d. John Dahl  
*Unforgiven* (1992), d. Clint Eastwood  
*Union City* (1980), d. Mark Reichert  
*Unlawful Entry* (1992), d. Jonathan Kaplan  
*The Usual Suspects* (1995), d. Bryan Singer

*V for Vendetta* (2005), d. James McTeigue  
*Vanishing Point* (1971), d. Richard C. Sarafian  
*Very Bad Things* (1998), d. Peter Berg  
*Virtuosity* (1995), d. Brett Leonard  
*V. I. Warshawski* (1991), d. Jeff Kanew  
*The Walker* (2007), d. Paul Schrader  
*Walking Tall* (1973), d. Phil Karlson  
*The Way of the Gun* (2000), d. Christopher McQuarrie  
*Where Sleeping Dogs Lie* (1991), d. Charles Finch  
*White of the Eye* (1988), d. Donald Cammell  
*White Sands* (1992), d. Roger Donaldson  
*Wild at Heart* (1990), d. David Lynch  
*Winter Kills* (1979), d. William Richert  
*Who'll Stop the Rain* (aka *Dog Soldiers*) (1978), d. Karel Reisz  
*Witness* (1985), d. Peter Weir  
*The Yakuza* (1974), d. Sydney Pollack  
*The Yards* (2000), d. James Gray  
*Year of the Dragon* (1985), d. Michael Cimino  
*Year of the Gun* (1991), d. John Frankenheimer  
*You Kill Me* (2007), d. John Dahl

### Argentinian Noir

*A hierro muere* (*Kill and Be Killed*) (1962), d. Manuel Mur Oti  
*Alias Gardelito* (1961), d. Lautaro Múrua  
*El Asalto* (*The Assault*) (1960), d. Kurt Land  
*No abras nunca esa puerta* (*Don't Ever Open That Door*) (1952), d. Carlos Hugo Christensen  
*Pasaporte a Rio* (*Passport to Rio*) (1948), d. Daniel Tinayre  
*El Pendiente* (*The Earring*) (1951), d. Leon Kimovsky  
*Rosaura a las diez* (*Rosaura at Ten O'Clock*) (1958), d. Mario Soffici  
*Si muero antes de despertar* (*If I Should Die Before I Wake*) (1952), d. Carlos Hugo Christensen

### Argentinian Neo-Noir

*El Arreglo* (*The Deal*) (1983), d. Fernando Ayala  
*Assassinato a distancia* (*Murdered at a Distance*) (1998), d. Santiago Carlos Oves  
*El Aura* (*The Aura*) (2005), d. Fabián Bielinsky



*Los Enemigos (The Enemies)* (1983), d. Eduardo Calcagno  
*La Fuga (The Escape)* (2001), d. Eduardo Mignogna  
*Leonera (The Lion's Den)* (2008), d. Pablo Trapero  
*Neuve reínas (Nine Queens)* (2000), d. Fabián Bielinsky  
*Plata dulce (Sweet Money)* (1982), d. Juan Jose Jusid  
*La Senäl (The Signal)* (2007), d. Ricardo Darin  
*Tiempo de revancha (Time for Revenge)* (1981), d. Adolfo Aristarian

### Australian Film Noir

*The Big Hurt* (1986), d. Barry Peak  
*Blood Money* (1980), d. Christopher Fitchett  
*The Boys* (1998), d. Rowan Woods  
*Chopper* (2000), d. Andrew Dominik  
*Color Me Dead* (1969), d. Eddie Davis  
*The Custodian* (1994), d. John Dingwall  
*Dead Calm* (1989), d. Phillip Noyce  
*Deadly* (1993), d. Esben Storm  
*Dirty Deeds* (2002), d. David Caesar  
*The Empty Beach* (1983), d. Chris Thomson  
*Far East* (1982), d. John Duigan  
*Goodbye Paradise* (1983), d. Carl Schultz  
*Grievous Bodily Harm* (1988), d. Mark Joffe  
*The Hard Word* (2000), d. Scott Roberts  
*Heatwave* (1982), d. Phillip Noyce  
*Heaven's Burning* (1996), d. Craig Lahiff  
*Hurricane Smith* (1990), d. Colin Budds  
*Irresistible* (2006), d. Ann Turner  
*The Killing of Angel Street* (1981), d. Donald Combie  
*Kiss or Kill* (1997), d. Bill Bennett  
*Lantana* (2001), d. Ray Lawrence  
*Money Movers* (1979), d. Bruce Beresford  
*The Monkey's Mask* (2000), d. Samantha Long  
*Noise* (2007), d. Matthew Saville  
*Redball* (1999), d. Jon Hewitt  
*Risk* (2002), d. Alan White  
*Scobie Malone* (1975), d. Terry Ohlsson  
*Solo* (2006), d. Morgan O'Neill  
*Squizzy Taylor* (1982), d. Kevin James Dobson  
*The Surfer* (1988), d. Frank Shields

*Two Hands* (1999), d. Gregor Jordan  
*With Time to Kill* (1987), d. James Clayden  
*The Year of Living Dangerously* (1982), d. Peter Weir

## Brazilian Noir

*Assassinato em Copacabana (Assassination in Copacabana)* (1962), d. Euripedes Ramos  
*Boca do Lixo (Trash Alley)* (1990), d. Roberto Talma  
*Bufo and Spallanzani* (2001), d. Flavio R. Tambellini  
*Cidade Baixa (Lower City)* (2005), d. Sérgio Machado  
*A Dama do Cine Shanghai (The Lady from the Shanghai Cinema)* (1987), d. Guilherme de Almeida Prado  
*Maior Que o Ódio (Greater Than the Hatred)*, 1951, d. José Carlos Burle  
*Mulheres e Milhões (Women and Millions)*, 1961, d. Jorge Ileri  
*O Outro lado da rua (The Other Side of the Street)* (2004), d. Marcos Bernstein  
*O Que É Isso, Campanheiro? (Four Days in September)* (1997), d. Bruno Barreto  
*Os Depravados (The Depraved Ones)* (1979), d. Tony Vieira  
*Patty, a Mulher Praibida (Patty, the Forbidden Woman)* (1979), d. Luiz Gonzaga dos Santos  
*Terra Estrangeira (Foreign Land)* (1996), d. Walter Salles and Daniela Thomas

## British Film Noir

### British Antecedents/Experimental Period

*Blackmail* (1929), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*A Canterbury Tale* (1944), d. Michael Powell  
*The Case of the Frightened Lady (The Frightened Lady USA)* (1940), d. George King  
*Contraband (Blackout USA)* (1940), d. Michael Powell  
*The Dark Eyes of London (The Human Monster USA)* (1939), d. Walter Summers  
*The Dark Tower* (1943), d. John Harlow  
*Dead Man's Shoes* (1940), d. Thomas Bentley  
*Dead Men Are Dangerous* (1939), d. Harold French  
*Dead of Night* (1945), d. Robert Hamer and Alberto Cavalcanti  
*The Door with Seven Locks (Chamber of Horrors USA)* (1940), d. Norman Lee

- East of Piccadilly (The Strangler USA)* (1941), d. Harold Huth  
*Escape to Danger* (1943), d. Lance Comfort  
*The Face at the Window* (1939), d. George King  
*Fanny by Gaslight (Man of Evil USA)* (1944), d. Anthony Asquith  
*The Frightened Lady* (1932), d. T. Hayes Hunter  
*Gaslight (Angel Street USA)* (1940), d. Thorold Dickinson  
*Great Day* (1945), d. Lance Comfort  
*The Green Cockatoo (Four Dark Hours USA)* (1937), d. William Cameron  
 Menzies  
*Hatter's Castle* (1941), d. Lance Comfort  
*Hotel Reserve (Epitaph for a Spy USA)* (1944), d. Victor Hanbury  
*I Met a Murderer* (1939), d. Roy Kellino  
*The Lodger* (1926), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*The Man in Grey* (1943), d. Leslie Arliss  
*The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Murder!* (1930), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Murder in Reverse (Query USA)* (1945), d. Montgomery Tully  
*Murder in Soho (Murder in the Night USA)* (1939), d. Norman Lee  
*The Night Has Eyes (Terror House USA)* (1942), d. Leslie Arliss  
*Number 17* (1932), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*On the Night of the Fire (The Fugitive USA)* (1939), d. Brian Desmond Hurst  
*Pink String and Sealing Wax* (1945), d. Robert Hamer  
*Poison Pen* (1939), d. Paul L. Stein  
*Sabotage* (1936), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*The Seventh Veil* (1945), d. Compton Bennett  
*Spellbound (The Spell of Amy Nugent USA)* (1941), d. John Harlow  
*The Spy in Black (U-Boat 29 USA)* (1939), d. Michael Powell  
*Squadron Leader X* (1942), d. Lance Comfort  
*Stolen Life* (1939), d. Paul Czinner  
*They Drive by Night* (1938), d. Arthur Woods  
*The 39 Steps* (1935), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Three Silent Men* (1940), d. Thomas Bentley  
*Tower of Terror* (1941), d. Lawrence Huntington  
*Traitor Spy (The Torso Murder Mystery USA)* (1939), d. Walter Summers  
*Trunk Crime (Design for Murder USA)* (1939), d. Roy Boulting  
*21 Days (21 Days Together USA)* (1937), d. Basil Dean  
*Uncensored* (1942), d. Anthony Asquith  
*Waterloo Road* (1945), d. Sidney Gilliat  
*Went the Day Well?* (1942), d. Alberto Cavalcanti  
*A Window in London (Lady in Distress USA)* (1939), d. Herbert Mason  
*Young and Innocent* (1937), d. Alfred Hitchcock

## British Classic Noir

- Across the Bridge* (1957), d. Ken Annakin  
*Act of Murder* (1964), d. Alan Bridges  
*Alias John Preston* (1956), d. David MacDonald  
*All Night Long* (1963), d. Basil Dearden  
*Another Man's Poison* (1951), d. Irving Rapper  
*Appointment with Crime* (1946), d. John Harlow  
*Assassin for Hire* (1951), d. Michael McCarthy  
*Bang! You're Dead (Game of Danger USA)* (1954), d. Lance Comfort  
*The Bank Raiders* (1958), d. Maxwell Munden  
*Beat Girl* (1960), d. Edmond T. Greville  
*Beautiful Stranger (Twist of Fate USA)* (1954), d. David Miller  
*Bedelia* (1946), d. Lance Comfort  
*Before I Wake* (1954), d. Albert S. Rogell  
*Beyond This Place (Web of Evidence USA)* (1959), d. Jack Cardiff  
*The Big Chance* (1957), d. Peter Graham Scott  
*Bitter Harvest* (1963), d. Peter Graham Scott  
*Black Memory* (1947), d. Oswald Mitchell  
*Black Narcissus* (1947), d. Michael Powell  
*Black Orchid* (1953), d. Charles Saunders  
*Black 13* (1954), d. Ken Hughes  
*Black Widow* (1951), d. Vernon Sewell  
*Blackmailed* (1951), d. Marc Allégret  
*Blackout* (1950), d. Robert S. Baker  
*Blanche Fury* (1947), d. Marc Allégret  
*Blind Corner (Man in the Dark USA)* (1963), d. Lance Comfort  
*Blind Date (Chance Meeting USA)* (1959), d. Joseph Losey  
*The Blue Lamp* (1950), d. Basil Dearden  
*The Blue Parrot* (1953), d. John Harlow  
*Boys in Brown* (1949), d. Montgomery Tully  
*The Brain Machine* (1955), d. Ken Hughes  
*The Breaking Point (The Great Armored Car Swindle USA)* (1961), d. Lance Comfort  
*Brighton Rock (Young Scarface USA)* (1948), d. John Boulting  
*The Brothers* (1947), d. David MacDonald  
*Bunny Lake Is Missing* (1965), d. Otto Preminger  
*Cage of Gold* (1950), d. Basil Dearden  
*Cairo* (1963), d. Wolf Rilla  
*Calculated Risk* (1963), d. Norman Harrison  
*Calling Bulldog Drummond* (1951), d. Victor Saville

*Candidate for Murder* (1962), d. David Villiers  
*Carnival* (1946), d. Stanley Haynes  
*Cast a Dark Shadow* (1955), d. Lewis Gilbert  
*Cat Girl* (1957), d. Alfred Shaughnessy  
*The Challenge (It Takes a Thief USA)* (1960), d. John Gilling  
*Chase a Crooked Shadow* (1958), d. Michael Anderson  
*Child in the House* (1956), d. Cy Endfield  
*Circle of Danger* (1951), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*Circle of Deception* (1960), d. Jack Lee  
*Cloudburst* (1951), d. Francis Searle  
*The Clouded Yellow* (1950), d. Ralph Thomas  
*The Clue of the New Pin* (1961), d. Allan Davis  
*Confession (The Deadliest Sin USA)* (1955), d. Ken Hughes  
*Corridors of Mirrors* (1948), d. Terence Young  
*Cosh Boy (The Slasher USA)* (1952), d. Lewis Gilbert  
*Counterblast (The Devil's Plot USA)* (1948), d. Paul L. Stein  
*The Counterfeit Plan* (1957), d. Montgomery Tully  
*Cover Girl Killer* (1959), d. Terry Bishop  
*The Criminal (The Concrete Jungle USA)* (1960), d. Joseph Losey  
*Crossroads to Crime* (1960), d. Gerry Anderson  
*Crow Hollow* (1952), d. Michael McCarthy  
*The Damned (These Are the Damned USA)* (1962), d. Joseph Losey  
*Dancing with Crime* (1947), d. John Paddy Carstairs  
*The Dark Man* (1951), d. Jeffrey Dell  
*Dark Secret* (1949), d. Maclean Rogers  
*Daughter of Darkness* (1948), d. Lance Comfort  
*Daybreak* (1948), d. Compton Bennett  
*Deadfall* (1968), d. Bryan Forbes  
*Deadly Nightshade* (1953), d. John Gilling  
*Dear Murderer* (1947), d. Arthur Crabtree  
*The Deep Blue Sea* (1955), d. Anatole Litvak  
*Delayed Action* (1954), d. John Harlow  
*The Depraved* (1957), d. Paul Dickson  
*Desperate Moment* (1953), d. Compton Bennett  
*Dial 999 (The Way Out USA)* (1955), d. Montgomery Tully  
*Do You Know This Voice?* (1964), d. Frank Nesbitt  
*Don't Talk to Strange Men* (1962), d. Pat Jackson  
*Double Confession* (1950), d. Ken Annakin  
*Downfall* (1964), d. John Moxey  
*Dual Alibi* (1947), d. Alfred Travers  
*Eight O'Clock Walk* (1954), d. Lance Comfort  
*The Embezzler* (1954), d. John Gilling

*The End of the Line* (1957), d. Charles Saunders  
*Escape* (1954), d. John Gilling  
*Escape Route (I'll Get You USA)* (1952), d. Seymour Friedman  
*Face of a Stranger* (1964), d. John Moxey  
*Face the Music (The Black Glove USA)* (1954), d. Terence Fisher  
*Faces in the Dark* (1960), d. David Eady  
*The Fake* (1953), d. Godfrey Grayson  
*The Fallen Idol (The Lost Illusion USA)* (1948), d. Carol Reed  
*The Fatal Night* (1948), d. Mario Zampi  
*Five Days (Paid to Kill USA)* (1954), d. Montgomery Tully  
*Five to One* (1963), d. Gordon Flemyng  
*The Flamingo Affair (Blonde for Danger USA)* (1948), d. Horace Shepherd  
*The Flanagan Boy (Bad Blonde USA)* (1953), d. Reginald LeBorg  
*The Flesh Is Weak* (1957), d. Don Chaffey  
*Floods of Fear* (1958), d. Charles Crichton  
*The Flying Scot (The Mailbag Robbery USA)* (1957), d. Compton Bennett  
*Footsteps in the Fog* (1955), d. Arthur Lubin  
*For Them That Trespass* (1949), d. Alberto Calvalcanti  
*Forbidden* (1949), d. George King  
*Fortune Is a Woman (She Played with Fire USA)* (1957), d. Sidney Gilliat  
*Frieda* (1947), d. Basil Dearden  
*The Frightened City* (1961), d. John Lemont  
*The Gambler and the Lady (Blackout USA)* (1952), d. Patrick Jenkins  
*The Gentle Gunman* (1952), d. Basil Dearden  
*Give Us This Day (Christ in Concrete USA)* (1949), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*Golden Salamander* (1950), d. Ronald Neame  
*The Good Die Young* (1954), d. Lewis Gilbert  
*Good-Time Girl* (1948), d. David MacDonald  
*Green for Danger* (1946), d. Sidney Gilliat  
*The Green Scarf* (1954), d. George More O'Ferrall  
*A Gunman Has Escaped* (1948), d. Richard Grey  
*The Heart of the Matter* (1953), d. George More O'Ferrall  
*Hell Drivers* (1957), d. Cy Endfield  
*Hell Is a City* (1960), d. Val Guest  
*Hidden Homicide* (1959), d. Tony Young  
*Home at Seven (Murder on Monday USA)* (1952), d. Ralph Richardson  
*The House across the Lake (Heat Wave USA)* (1954), d. Ken Hughes  
*The House in the Woods* (1957), d. Maxwell Munden  
*House of Darkness* (1948), d. Oswald Mitchell  
*Hunted (The Stranger in Between USA)* (1952), d. Charles Crichton  
*The Hypnotist (Scotland Yard Dragnet USA)* (1957), d. Montgomery Tully  
*Hysteria* (1964), d. Freddie Francis

- I Believe in You* (1952), d. Michael Relph  
*I See a Dark Stranger* (*The Adventuress* USA) (1946), d. Frank Launder  
*I'll Get You for This* (*Lucky Nick Cain* USA) (1950), d. Joseph M. Newman  
*Impact* (1963), d. Peter Maxwell  
*Impulse* (1955), d. Cy Endfield  
*In the Wake of a Stranger* (1959), d. David Eady  
*Incident at Midnight* (1963), d. Norman Harrison  
*Information Received* (1961), d. Robert Lynn  
*The Informers* (*Underworld Informers* USA) (1963), d. Ken Annakin  
*An Inspector Calls* (1954), d. Guy Hamilton  
*The Interrupted Journey* (1949), d. Daniel Birt  
*The Intimate Stranger* (*Finger of Guilt* USA) (1956), d. Joseph Losey (as Joseph Walton)  
*The Intruder* (1953), d. Guy Hamilton  
*It Always Rains on Sunday* (1947), d. Robert Hamer  
*Jassy* (1947), d. Bernard Knowles  
*Jigsaw* (1962), d. Val Guest  
*Joe MacBeth* (1955), d. Ken Hughes  
*Johnny Nobody* (1961), d. Nigel Patrick  
*Jungle Street* (*Jungle Street Girls* USA) (1961), d. Charles Saunders  
*The Key* (*Stella* USA) (1958), d. Carol Reed  
*Kill Her Gently* (1957), d. Charles Saunders  
*Kill Me Tomorrow* (1957), d. Terence Fisher  
*Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949), d. Robert Hamer  
*Lady of Vengeance* (1957), d. Burt Balaban  
*The Large Rope* (*The Long Rope* USA) (1953), d. Wolf Rilla  
*The Last Page* (*Man Bait* USA) (1952), d. Terence Fisher  
*The Late Edwina Black* (*Obsessed* USA) (1951), d. Maurice Elvey  
*Latin Quarter* (*Frenzy* USA) (1945), d. Vernon Sewell  
*Libel* (1959), d. Anthony Asquith  
*The Limping Man* (1953), d. Cy Endfield (as Charles De Latour)  
*The Little Red Monkey* (*The Case of the Red Monkey* USA) (1955), d. Ken Hughes  
*Locker Sixty-Nine* (1962), d. Norman Harrison  
*London Belongs to Me* (*Dulcimer Street* USA) (1948), d. Sidney Gilliat  
*The Long Dark Hall* (1951), d. Anthony Bushell  
*The Long Haul* (1957), d. Ken Hughes  
*The Long Memory* (1953), d. Robert Hamer  
*The Lost Hours* (*The Big Frame* USA) (1952), d. David MacDonald  
*Madeleine* (1949), d. David Lean  
*The Malpas Mystery* (1960), d. Sidney Hayers  
*The Man Between* (1953), d. Carol Reed

- Man Detained* (1961), d. Robert Tronson  
*Man in Black* (1950), d. Francis Searle  
*The Man in the Back Seat* (1961), d. Vernon Sewell  
*The Man in the Road* (1957), d. Lance Comfort  
*Man in the Shadow (Violent Stranger USA)* (1957), d. Montgomery Tully  
*Man on the Run* (1949), d. Lawrence Huntington  
*The Man Upstairs* (1960), d. Montgomery Tully  
*The Man Who Finally Died* (1963), d. Quentin Lawrence  
*The Man Who Watched the Trains Go By (The Paris Express USA)* (1952),  
d. Harold French  
*The Man Who Wouldn't Talk* (1958), d. Herbert Wilcox  
*The Man Within (The Smugglers USA)* (1947), d. Bernard Knowles  
*Mantrap (Man in Hiding USA)* (1953), d. Terence Fisher  
*Marilyn (Roadhouse Girl USA)* (1953), d. Wolf Rilla  
*The Mark of Cain* (1947), d. Brian Desmond Hurst  
*Marriage of Convenience* (1960), d. Clive Donner  
*Midnight Episode* (1950), d. Gordon Parry  
*Mine Own Executioner* (1947), d. Anthony Kimmins  
*Mr. Denning Drives North* (1951), d. Anthony Kimmins  
*Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill* (1948), d. Lawrence Huntington  
*Murder at 3 A.M.* (1953), d. Francis Searle  
*Murder by Proxy (Blackout USA)* (1954), d. Terence Fisher  
*Murder without Crime* (1950), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*My Brother's Keeper* (1948), d. Alfred Roome  
*The Naked Edge* (1961), d. Michael Anderson  
*Naked Fury (The Pleasure Lovers USA)* (1959), d. Charles Saunders  
*The Narrowing Circle* (1956), d. Charles Saunders  
*Never Let Go* (1960), d. John Guillermin  
*Never Mention Murder* (1964), d. John Nelson Burton  
*Night and the City* (1950), d. Jules Dassin  
*Night Beat* (1947), d. Harold Huth  
*Night Boat to Dublin* (1946), d. Lawrence Huntington  
*Night of the Demon (Curse of the Demon USA)* (1957), d. Jacques Tourneur  
*Night Was Our Friend* (1951), d. Michael Anderson  
*Night without Stars* (1951), d. Anthony Péliissier  
*Nightmare (Here's the Knife, Dear: Now Use It USA)* (1963), d. Freddie Francis  
*1984* (1956), d. Michael Anderson  
*No Orchids for Miss Blandish* (1948), d. St. John L. Clewes  
*No Road Back* (1957), d. Montgomery Tully  
*No Room at the Inn* (1948), d. Daniel Birt  
*No Trace* (1950), d. John Gilling  
*No Trees in the Street* (1959), d. J. Lee Thompson



- No Way Back* (1949), d. Stefan Osiecki  
*Noose (The Silk Noose USA)* (1948), d. Edmond T. Greville  
*Now Barabbas* (1949), d. Gordon Parry  
*Nowhere to Go* (1958), d. Seth Holt  
*Obsession (The Hidden Room USA)* (1949), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*The October Man* (1947), d. Roy Ward Baker  
*Odd Man Out* (1947), d. Carol Reed  
*Offbeat (The Devil Inside USA)* (1961), d. Cliff Owen  
*Oliver Twist* (1948), d. David Lean  
*On the Run* (1963), d. Robert Tronson  
*Once a Sinner* (1950), d. Lewis Gilbert  
*One Way Out* (1955), d. Francis Searle  
*Operation Diplomat* (1953), d. John Guillermin  
*Outcast of the Islands* (1952), d. Carol Reed  
*The Painted Smile (Murder Can Be Deadly USA)* (1962), d. Lance Comfort  
*Panic* (1963), d. John Gilling  
*Paranoiac* (1963), d. Freddie Francis  
*The Passing Stranger* (1954), d. John Arnold  
*Passport to Shame (Room 43 USA)* (1959), d. Alan Rakoff  
*Payroll (I Promised to Pay USA)* (1961), d. Sidney Hayers  
*Peeping Tom* (1960), d. Michael Powell  
*Personal Affair* (1953), d. Anthony Péliissier  
*Piccadilly Third Stop* (1960), d. Wolf Rilla  
*Pit of Darkness* (1961), d. Lance Comfort  
*A Place to Go* (1963), d. Basil Dearden  
*Playback* (1962), d. Quentin Lawrence  
*The Pool of London* (1951), d. Basil Dearden  
*Port of Escape* (1956), d. Tony Young  
*Portrait from Life (The Girl in the Painting USA)* (1948), d. Terence Fisher  
*A Prize of Arms* (1962), d. Cliff Owen  
*A Prize of Gold* (1955), d. Mark Robson  
*Psyche 59* (1963), d. Alexander Singer  
*The Queen of Spades* (1949), d. Thorold Dickinson  
*The Quiet Woman* (1951), d. John Gilling  
*Radio Cab Murder* (1954), d. Vernon Sewell  
*Rag Doll (Young, Willing and Eager USA)* (1961), d. Lance Comfort  
*Recoil* (1953), d. John Gilling  
*Return of a Stranger* (1961), d. Max Varnel  
*Return to Sender* (1963), d. Gordon Hales  
*Ricochet* (1963), d. John Moxey  
*The Rivals* (1963), d. Max Varnel  
*The Rocking Horse Winner* (1949), d. Anthony Péliissier

- Room at the Top* (1959), d. Jack Clayton  
*Room to Let* (1950), d. Godfrey Grayson  
*The Rough and the Smooth (Portrait of a Sinner USA)* (1959), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Rough Shoot (Shoot First USA)* (1953), d. Robert Parrish  
*The Running Man* (1963), d. Carol Reed  
*Sapphire* (1959), d. Basil Dearden  
*Saraband for Dead Lovers (Saraband USA)* (1948), d. Basil Dearden  
*Seance on a Wet Afternoon* (1964), d. Bryan Forbes  
*The Secret* (1955), d. Cy Endfield  
*Secret People* (1952), d. Thorold Dickinson  
*The Secret Place* (1957), d. Clive Donner  
*Serious Charge (Immoral Charge USA)* (1959), d. Terence Young  
*The Servant* (1963), d. Joseph Losey  
*The Set-Up* (1963), d. Gerard Glaister  
*Seven Days to Noon* (1950), d. Roy Boulting  
*Shake Hands with the Devil* (1959), d. Michael Anderson  
*The Shakedown* (1960), d. John Lemont  
*The Share-Out* (1962), d. Gerard Glaister  
*The Ship That Died of Shame (PT Raiders USA)* (1955), d. Basil Dearden  
*The Shop at Sly Corner (The Code of Scotland Yard USA)* (1947), d. George King  
*Silent Dust* (1949), d. Lance Comfort  
*The Six Men* (1951), d. Michael Law  
*The Sleeping Tiger* (1954), d. Joseph Losey (as Victor Hanbury)  
*The Small Back Room (Hour of Glory USA)* (1949), d. Michael Powell  
*The Small Voice (The Hideout USA)* (1948), d. Fergus McDonnell  
*The Small World of Sammy Lee* (1963), d. Ken Hughes  
*The Snorkel* (1958), d. Guy Green  
*Snowbound* (1948), d. David MacDonald  
*So Evil My Love* (1948), d. Lewis Allen  
*So Long at the Fair* (1950), d. Terence Fisher  
*So Well Remembered* (1947), d. Edward Dmytryk  
*Soho Incident (Spin a Dark Web USA)* (1956), d. Vernon Sewell  
*Solo for Sparrow* (1962), d. Gordon Flemyng  
*The Spider and the Fly* (1949), d. Robert Hamer  
*The Square Ring* (1953), d. Basil Dearden  
*Stage Fright* (1950), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Stolen Face* (1952), d. Terence Fisher  
*Stormy Crossing (Black Tide USA)* (1958), d. C. Pennington-Richards  
*The Stranger Came Home (The Unholy Fear USA)* (1954), d. Terence Fisher  
*Stranger in the House* (1967), d. Pierre Rouve  
*The Stranger's Hand* (1954), d. Mario Soldati

- Street Corner (Both Sides of the Law USA)* (1953), d. Muriel Box  
*Street of Shadows (Shadow Man USA)* (1953), d. Richard Vernon  
*Strongroom* (1962), d. Vernon Sewell  
*Subway in the Sky* (1959), d. Muriel Box  
*Take My Life* (1947), d. Ronald Neame  
*Taste of Fear* (1961), d. Seth Holt  
*Temptation Harbour* (1947), d. Lance Comfort  
*There Is Another Sun (The Wall of Death USA)* (1950), d. Lewis Gilbert  
*They Can't Hang Me* (1955), d. Val Guest  
*They Made Me a Fugitive (I Became a Criminal USA)* (1947), d. Alberto Cavalcanti  
*The Third Man* (1949), d. Carol Reed  
*Third Party Risk (The Deadly Game USA)* (1955), d. Daniel Birt  
*The Third Secret* (1964), d. Charles Crichton  
*13 East Street* (1952), d. Robert S. Baker  
*Thirty-Six Hours (Terror Street USA)* (1953), d. Montgomery Tully  
*This Was a Woman* (1948), d. Tim Whelan  
*Three Cases of Murder* (1955), d. David Eady and George More O'Ferrall  
*Three Crooked Men* (1958), d. Ernest Morris  
*Three Steps to the Gallows (White Fire USA)* (1953), d. John Gilling  
*Three Sundays to Win* (1957), d. Ernest Morris  
*Three Weird Sisters* (1948), d. Dan Birt  
*Tiger Bay (Mystery at Tiger Bay USA)* (1959), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*Tiger by the Tail (Cross-Up USA)* (1955), d. John Gilling  
*Tiger in the Smoke* (1956), d. Roy Ward Baker  
*Time Bomb* (1953), d. Ted Tetzlaff  
*Time to Remember* (1962), d. Charles Jarrott  
*Time without Pity* (1957), d. Joseph Losey  
*To Have and to Hold* (1963), d. Herbert Wise  
*Tread Softly Stranger* (1958), d. Gordon Parry  
*Turn the Key Softly* (1953), d. Jack Lee  
*£20,000 Kiss* (1963), d. John Moxey  
*Twisted Nerve* (1968), d. Roy Boulting  
*The Two-Headed Spy* (1958), d. André de Toth  
*Uncle Silas (The Inheritance USA)* (1947), d. Charles Frank  
*Uneasy Terms* (1949), d. Vernon Sewell  
*The Upturned Glass* (1947), d. Lawrence Huntington  
*Urge to Kill* (1960), d. Vernon Sewell  
*Vengeance Is Mine* (1949), d. Alan Cullimore  
*The Verdict* (1964), d. David Eady  
*The Vicious Circle (The Circle USA)* (1957), d. Gerald Thomas  
*The Victim* (1961), d. Basil Dearden

*Violent Playground* (1958), d. Basil Dearden  
*Wanted for Murder* (1946), d. Lawrence Huntington  
*Waterfront (Waterfront Women USA)* (1950), d. Michael Anderson  
*We Shall See* (1964), d. Quentin Lawrence  
*The Weak and the Wicked (Young and Willing USA)* (1954), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*The Weapon* (1957), d. Val Guest  
*West 11* (1963), d. Michael Winner  
*Wheel of Fate* (1953), d. Francis Searle  
*While I Live* (1947), d. John Harlow  
*Whirlpool* (1959), d. Lewis Allen  
*Wicked as They Come (Portrait in Smoke USA)* (1956), d. Ken Hughes  
*Wide Boy* (1952), d. Ken Hughes  
*Wings of Danger (Dead on Course USA)* (1952), d. Terence Fisher  
*Witness in the Dark* (1959), d. Wolf Rilla  
*The Woman in Question (Five Angles on Murder USA)* (1950), d. Anthony Asquith  
*The Woman with No Name (Her Panelled Door USA)* (1950), d. Ladislao Vajda  
*Women of Twilight (Twilight Women USA)* (1953), d. Gordon Parry  
*Women without Men (Blonde Bait USA)* (1956), d. Elmo Williams  
*The Yellow Balloon* (1953), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*Yield to the Night (Blonde Sinner USA)* (1956), d. J. Lee Thompson  
*Your Witness (Eye Witness USA)* (1950), d. Robert Montgomery

### British Neo-Noir

*Adulthood* (2008), d. Noel Clarke  
*The Bank Job* (2008), d. Roger Donaldson  
*Beyond Bedlam* (1994), d. Vadim Jean  
*The Big I Am* (2009), d. Nic Auerbach  
*The Big Sleep* (1975), d. Michael Winner  
*Blow-up* (1967), d. Michelangelo Antonioni  
*Bullet Boy* (2004), d. Saul Dibbs  
*Chinese Boxes* (1984), d. Chris Petit  
*Christy Malry's Own Double Entry* (2000), d. Paul Tickell  
*Circus* (2000), d. Rob Walker  
*The Criminal* (2000), d. Julian Simpson  
*Croupier* (1998), d. Mike Hodges  
*The Crying Game* (1992), d. Neil Jordan  
*Cul-de-sac* (1966), d. Roman Polanski  
*Dance with a Stranger* (1985), d. Mike Newell  
*Darklands* (1996), d. Julian Richards

*Dead Man's Shoes* (2004), d. Shane Meadows  
*The Deadly Affair* (1966), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Deadly Strangers* (1974), d. Sidney Hayers  
*Dr. Sleep* (2002), d. Nick Willing  
*Empire State* (1987), d. Ron Peck  
*Endless Night* (1972), d. Sidney Gilliat  
*Essex Boys* (2000), d. Terry Winsor  
*Face* (1997), d. Antonia Bird  
*Far North* (2007), d. Asif Kapadia  
*Farewell My Lovely* (1975), d. Michael Winner  
*Following* (1998), d. Christopher Nolan  
*For Queen and Country* (1988), d. Martin Stellman  
*Franklyn* (2008), d. Gerald McMorrow  
*Frenzy* (1972), d. Alfred Hitchcock  
*Gangster No. 1* (2000), d. Paul McGuigan  
*Get Carter* (1971), d. Mike Hodges  
*Hard Men* (1997), d. J. K. Amalou  
*Harry Brown* (2009), d. Daniel Barber  
*The Hard Way* (1979), d. Michael Dryhurst  
*Helen* (2008), d. Joe Lawlor and Christine Molloy  
*Hidden City* (1987), d. Stephen Poliakoff  
*The Hit* (1981), d. Stephen Frears  
*Hush* (2008), d. Mark Tonderai  
*I'll Sleep When I'm Dead* (2003), d. Mike Hodges  
*Killing Time* (1998), d. Bharat Nalluri  
*The Krays* (1990), d. Peter Medak  
*Let Him Have It* (1991), d. Peter Medak  
*Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998), d. Guy Ritchie  
*London to Brighton* (2006), d. Paul Andrew Williams  
*The Long Good Friday* (1980), d. John Mackenzie  
*The Looking Glass War* (1969), d. Frank R. Pierson  
*Miranda* (2003), d. Marc Munden  
*Mojo* (1997), d. Jez Butterworth  
*Mona Lisa* (1986), d. Neil Jordan  
*Mr. In-Between* (2001), d. Paul Sarossy  
*The Near Room* (1995), d. David Hayman  
*The Offence* (1972), d. Sidney Lumet  
*Outlaw* (2007), d. Nick Lowe  
*Parker* (1981), d. Jim Goddard  
*Performance* (1970), d. Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg  
*Pulp* (1972), d. Mike Hodges  
*Radio On* (1980), d. Chris Petit

*Red Road* (2006), d. Andrea Arnold  
*Repulsion* (1965), d. Roman Polanski  
*Resurrection Man* (1997), d. Marc Evans  
*Scandal* (1988), d. Michael Caton-Jones  
*Sexy Beast* (2000), d. Jonathan Glazer  
*Shallow Grave* (1995), d. Danny Boyle  
*Shooters* (2002), d. Colin Teague  
*Shopping* (1994), d. Paul Anderson  
*Sitting Target* (1972), d. Douglas Hickox  
*Slayground* (1983), d. Terry Bedford  
*Spivs* (2002), d. Colin Teague  
*The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1965), d. Martin Ritt  
*Stormy Monday* (1989), d. Mike Figgis  
*The Strange Affair* (1968), d. David Greene  
*Tank Malling* (1990), d. James Marc  
*Trauma* (2004), d. Marc Evans  
*An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1982), d. Chris Petit  
*Villain* (1971), d. Mike Tuchner  
*The Young Americans* (1993), d. Danny Cannon

### Danish Film Noir

*Afsporet (Derailed)* (1942), d. Bodil Ipsen  
*Besættelse (Obsession)* (1944), d. Bodil Ipsen  
*Blændværk (Delusion)* (1955), d. Johan Jacobsen  
*Bundfald (Sin Alley)* (1957), d. Palle Kjørulff-Schmidt  
*Farlig ungdom (Dangerous Youth)* (1953), d. Lau Lauritzen  
*En Forbryder (A Criminal)* (1941), d. Arne Weel  
*Jeg mødte en Morder (I Met a Murderer)* (1943), d. Lau Lauritzen  
*John og Irene* (1949), d. Asbjørn Andersen and Anker Søj  
*Kristinus Bergman* (1948), d. Astrid Henning-Jensen and Bjarne Henning Jensen  
*Mordets Melodi (Melody of Murder)* (1944), d. Bodil Ipsen  
*Nålen* (1951), d. Johan Jacobsen  
*Smedstræde 4* (1950), d. Arne Weel  
*Strømer (Cop)* (1976), d. Anders Refn

### Danish Neo-Noir

*Flammen & Citronen (Flame and Citron)* (2008), d. Ole Madsen  
*Forbrydelsens element (The Element of Crime)* (1984), d. Lars Von Trier

*Kandidaten (The Candidate)* (2008), d. Kasper Barfoed  
*Kærlighed på film (Just Another Love Story)* (2007), d. Ole Bornedal  
*Nordkraft (Angels in Fast Motion)* (2005), d. Ole Christian Madsen  
*Pusher* (1996), d. Nicolas Winding Refn  
*Pusher II: With Blood on My Hands* (2004), d. Nicolas Winding Refn  
*Pusher III: I Am the Angel of Death* (2005), d. Nicolas Winding Refn

### Finnish Film Noir

*Tulipunainen kyyhkynen (The Scarlet Dove)* (1961), d. Mattis Kassila  
*Varastettu kuolema (Stolen Death)* (1938), d. Nyrki Tapiovaara

### Finnish Neo-Noir

*I Hired a Contract Killer* (1990), d. Aki Kaurismäki  
*Laitakaupungin valot (Lights in the Dusk)* (2006), d. Aki Kaurismäki  
*Mies vailla menneisyyttä (The Man without a Past)* (2002), d. Aki Kaurismäki

### French Film Noir

*À bout de souffle (Breathless)* (1960), d. Jean-Luc Godard  
*À double tour (Web of Passion)* (1959), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Abus de confiance (Abused Confidence)* (1937), d. Henri Decoin  
*L'Ainé des Ferchaux (Magnet of Doom)* (1963), d. Jean-Pierre Melville  
*L'Alibi (The Alibi)* (1937), d. Pierre Chenal  
*Alphaville, une étrange aventure de Lemmy Caution (Alphaville)* (1965), d. Jean-Luc Godard  
*Les Anges du péché (Angels of the Streets)* (1943), d. Robert Bresson  
*L'Armée des ombres (The Army of Shadows)* (1969), d. Jean-Pierre Melville  
*Ascenseur pour l'échafaud (Lift to the Scaffold)* (1958), d. Louis Malle  
*L'Assassin habite au 21 (The Murderer Lives at Number 21)* (1941), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot  
*L'Assassinat du Père Noël (The Killing of Santa Claus)* (1941), d. Christian-Jaque  
*Au-delà des grilles (The Walls of Malapaga)* (1949), d. René Clément  
*Bande à part (Band of Outsiders)* (1964), d. Jean-Luc Godard  
*Les Barbouzes (The Great Spy Chase)* (1964), d. Georges Lautner  
*Les Bas-fonds (The Lower Depths aka Underworld)* (1936), d. Jean Renoir

- La Belle équipe (They Were Five)* (1936), d. Julien Duvivier
- La Bête humaine (Judas Was a Woman aka The Human Beast)* (1938), d. Jean Renoir
- Bob le flambeur (Bob the Gambler)* (1956), d. Jean-Pierre Melville
- Borsalino* (1970), d. Jacques Deray
- Le Boucher (The Butcher)* (1969), d. Claude Chabrol
- Carrefour (Crossroads)* (1938), d. Curtis Bernhardt
- Casque d'or (Golden Marie)* (1952), d. Jacques Becker
- Le Cave se rebiffe (The Counterfeiters)* (1961), d. Gilles Grangier
- Les Caves du Majestic (Majestic Hotel Cellars)* (1945), d. Richard Pottier
- Cécile est morte (Cecile Is Dead)* (1944), d. Maurice Tourneur
- 120 rue de la gare* (1946), d. Jacques Daniel-Norman
- Le Cercle rouge (The Red Circle)* (1970), d. Jean-Pierre Melville
- Le Chat (The Cat)* (1971), d. Pierre Granier-Deferre
- Chéri-Bibi* (1937), d. Léon Mathot
- Le Chien jaune (The Yellow Dog)* (1932), d. Jean Tarride
- La Chienne (The Bitch)* (1931), d. Jean Renoir
- 56 rue Pigalle* (1949), d. Willy Rozier
- Le Clan des Siciliens (The Sicilian Clan)* (1969), d. Henri Verneuil
- Classe tous risques (The Big Risk)* (1960), d. Claude Sautet
- Coeur de Lilas (Lilac)* (1932), d. Anatole Litvak
- Compartiment tueurs (The Sleeping Car Murders)* (1965), d. Constantin Costa-Gavras
- Un Condamné à mort s'est échappé (A Man Escaped)* (1956), d. Robert Bresson
- Un Condé (Blood on My Hands)* (1970), d. Yves Boisset
- Le Corbeau (The Raven)* (1943), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot
- La Course du lièvre à travers les champs (And Hope to Die)* (1972), d. René Clément
- Le Crime de Monsieur Lange (The Crime of Monsieur Lange)* (1936), d. Jean Renoir
- La Dame d'onze heure (Eleven O'Clock Lady)* (1948), d. Jean Devaivre
- Dédée d'Anvers (Woman of Antwerp)* (1948), d. Yves Allégret
- Dernier atout (The Last Trump)* (1942), d. Jacques Becker
- Le Dernier tournant (The Last Turn)* (1939), d. Pierre Chenal
- Le Désordre et la nuit (Night Affair)* (1958), d. Gilles Grangier
- Deux hommes dans Manhattan (Two Men in Manhattan)* (1959), d. Jean-Pierre Melville
- Le Deuxième soufflé (Second Breath)* (1966), d. Jean-Pierre Melville
- Le Diable au corps (Devil in the Flesh)* (1946), d. Claude Autant-Lara
- Les Diaboliques (Diabolique aka The Devils)* (1954), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot
- Le Dos au mur (Back to the Wall)* (1958), d. Edouard Molinaro
- Douce (Love Story)* (1943), d. Claude Autant-Lara



- Le Doulos (The Finger Man)* (1963), d. Jean-Pierre Melville  
*Du rififi à Paname (Rififi in Paris aka The Upper Hand)* (1966), d. Denys de la Patellière  
*Du rififi chez les hommes (Rififi)* (1955), d. Jules Dassin  
*En cas de Malheur (Love Is My Profession)* (1958), d. Claude Autant-Lara  
*L'Entraîneuse (Nightclub Hostess)* (1938), d. Albert Valentin  
*Eve* (1962), d. Joseph Losey  
*Les Fanatiques (A Bomb for a Dictator)* (1957), d. Alex Joffé  
*Fantômas* (1964), d. André Hunnebellé  
*Faubourg-Montmartre* (1931), d. Raymond Bernard  
*Le Félics (Joy House)* (1964), d. René Clément  
*La Femme infidèle (The Unfaithful Wife)* (1968), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Les Femmes s'en balancent (Dames Don't Care)* (1953), d. Bernard Borderie  
*Un Flic (Dirty Money)* (1972), d. Jean-Pierre Melville  
*Le Gorille vous salue bien (The Gorilla Greets You)* (1958), d. Bernard Borderie  
*Goupi mains rouges (It Happened at the Inn)* (1943), d. Jacques Becker  
*Le Grand jeu (The Big Game)* (1930), d. Jacques Feyder  
*Gueule d'amour (Lady Killer)* (1937), d. Jean Grémillon  
*L'Homme de Londres (The London Man)* (1943), d. Henri Decoin  
*Hôtel du Nord* (1938), d. Marcel Carné  
*Impasse des deux anges (Impasse of Two Angels)* (1948), d. Maurice Tourneur  
*Les Inconnus dans la maison (Strangers in the House)* (1942), d. Henri Decoin  
*Je suis un sentimental (Headlines of Destruction)* (1955), d. John Berry  
*Jenny* (1936), d. Marcel Carné  
*Jeu de massacre (The Killing Game)* (1967), d. Alain Jessua  
*Le Jour se lève (Daybreak)* (1939), d. Marcel Carné  
*Judex* (1963), d. Georges Franju  
*Juste avant la nuit (Just Before Nightfall aka The Vice)* (1971), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Justice est faite (Justice Is Done)* (1950), d. André Cayatte  
*Justine de Marseille* (1935), d. Maurice Tourneur  
*Landru* (1962), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Made in U.S.A.* (1966), d. Jean-Luc Godard  
*Maigret tend un piège (Maigret Lays a Trap)* (1958), d. Jean Delannoy  
*La Maison du Maltais (Sirocco)* (1938), d. Pierre Chenal  
*Manèges (The Cheat)* (1949), d. Yves Allégret  
*Manon* (1949), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot  
*La Mariée était en noir (The Bride Wore Black)* (1968), d. François Truffaut  
*Massacre en dentelles (Massacre in Lace)* (1952), d. André Hunnebellé  
*Max et les ferrailleurs (Max and the Junkmen)* (1971), d. Claude Sautet  
*Méfiez-vous des blondes (Beware of Blondes)* (1950), d. André Hunnebellé  
*Mélodie en sous-sol (Any Number Can Win)* (1963), d. Henri Verneuil  
*La Métamorphose des cloportes (Cloportes)* (1965), d. Pierre Granier-Deferre

- Le Meurtrier (Enough Rope)* (1963), d. Claude Autant-Lara  
*Mission à Tanger (Mission in Tangier)* (1949), d. André Hunnebellé  
*La Môme vert-de-gris (Poison Ivy)* (1953), d. Bernard Borderie  
*Le Mystère de la chambre jaune (The Mystery of the Yellow Room)* (1930), d. Marcel L'Herbier  
*Nous sommes tous des assassins (We Are All Murderers)* (1952), d. André Cayatte  
*La Nuit du Carrefour (Night at the Crossroads)* (1932), d. Jean Renoir  
*Obsession* (1954), d. Jean Delannoy  
*L'Oeil du matin (The Third Lover)* (1963), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Panique (Panic)* (1947), d. Julien Duvivier  
*Le Parfum de la dame en noir (The Perfume of the Lady in Black)* (1931), d. Marcel L'Herbier  
*Le Passager de la pluie (Rider on the Rain)* (1969), d. René Clément  
*La Peau Douce (Soft Skin)* (1964), d. François Truffaut  
*Pépé le Moko* (1937), d. Julien Duvivier  
*Pickpocket* (1959), d. Robert Bresson  
*Picpus* (1943), d. Richard Pottier  
*Pièges (Traps aka Personal Column)* (1939), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Pierrot le fou* (1965), d. Jean-Luc Godard  
*La Piscine (The Sinners)* (1968), d. Jacques Deray  
*Plein soleil (Purple Noon)* (1960), d. René Clément  
*Pleins feux sur l'assassin (Spotlight on a Murder)* (1960), d. Georges Franju  
*Les Portes de la nuit (The Gates of the Night)* (1946), d. Marcel Carné  
*Prisons de femmes (Marked Girls)* (1938), d. Roger Richebé  
*Le Puritain (The Puritan)* (1937), d. Jeff Musso  
*Le Quai des brumes (Port of Shadows)* (1938), d. Marcel Carné  
*Quai des orfèvres (Jenny Lamour)* (1947), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot  
*Quand la femme s'en mêle (When a Woman Meddles)* (1957), d. Yves Allégret  
*Quand tu liras cette lettre (When You Read This Letter)* (1953), d. Jean-Pierre Melville  
*Que la bête meure (This Man Must Die aka Killer)* (1969), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Razzia sur la chnouf (Razzia)* (1955), d. Henri Decoin  
*Remorques (Stormy Waters)* (1940), d. Jean Grémillon  
*Retour de manivelle (There's Always a Price Tag)* (1957), d. Denys de la Patellière  
*Le Rouge est mis (Speaking of Murder)* (1957), d. Gilles Grangier  
*La Rue sans nom (Street without a Name)* (1934), d. Pierre Chenal  
*La Rupture (The Break)* (1970), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Le Salaire de la peur (The Wages of Fear)* (1953), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot  
*Le Samouraï* (1967), d. Jean-Pierre Melville  
*Le Scandale (The Champagne Murders)* (1967), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Section des disparus (Missing Persons Department)* (1956), d. Pierre Chenal  
*Une Si jolie petite plage (Riptide)* (1949), d. Yves Allégret

*La Sirène du Mississippi (Mississippi Mermaid)* (1969), d. François Truffaut  
*La Tête d'un homme (A Man's Neck)* (1932), d. Julien Duvivier  
*Thérèse Desqueyroux* (1962), d. Georges Franju  
*Thérèse Raquin* (1953), d. Marcel Carné  
*Tirez sur le pianiste (Shoot the Piano Player)* (1960), d. François Truffaut  
*Les Tontons flingueurs (Crooks in Clover)* (1963), d. Georges Lautner  
*Touchez pas au grisbi (Honor Among Thieves aka Grisbi aka Hands off the Loot)*  
 (1954), d. Jacques Becker  
*Trans-Europ-Express* (1966), d. Alain Robbe-Grillet  
*Le Trou (The Night Watch aka The Hole)* (1960), d. Jacques Becker  
*La Vérité (The Truth)* (1960), d. Henri-Georges Clouzot  
*La Vérité sur Bébé Donge (The Truth about Bebe Donge)* (1951), d. Henri Decoin  
*La Vie, l'amour et la mort (Life, Love, Death)* (1969), d. Claude Lelouch  
*Voici le temps des assassins (Deadlier Than the Male)* (1956), d. Julien Duvivier  
*Le Voleur (The Thief of Paris)* (1967), d. Louis Malle  
*Weekend* (1967), d. Jean-Luc Godard  
*Les Yeux Sans Visage (Eyes without a Face)* (1959), d. George Franju  
*Z* (1969), d. Constantin Costa-Gavras

### French Neo-Noir

*L'Amour violé (Rape of Love)* (1977), d. Yannick Bellon  
*L'Appât (The Bait)* (1995), d. Bertrand Tavernier  
*L'Argent (Money)* (1983), d. Robert Bresson  
*Assassin(s)* (1997), d. Mathieu Kassovitz  
*L'Attentat (Plot)* (1972), d. Yves Boisset  
*Au coeur du mensonge (The Color of Lies)* (1999), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Aux yeux du monde (In the Eyes of the World)* (1991), d. Eric Rochant  
*L'Aveu (The Confession)* (1970), d. Constantin Costa-Gavras  
*Baise-moi (Kiss Me)* (2000), d. Coralie Trinh Thi and Virginie Despentes  
*La Balance (The Nark)* (1982), d. Bob Swaim  
*Borsalino & Co.* (1974), d. Jacques Deray  
*Buffet froid (Cold Cuts)* (1979), d. Bertrand Blier  
*Caché (Hidden)* (2005), d. Michael Haneke  
*La Cérémonie (A Judgement in Stone)* (1995), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Le Chat et la souris (Cat and Mouse)* (1975), d. Claude Lelouch  
*Le Choc (Contract in Blood)* (1982), d. Robin Davis  
*Un Choix d'assassins (A Choice of Killers)* (1996), d. Philippe Fourastié  
*Coup de torchon (Clean Slate)* (1981), d. Bertrand Tavernier  
*Le Cri du hibou (The Cry of the Owl)* (1987), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Un Crime (A Crime)* (1993), d. Jacques Deray

- De battre mon coeur s'est arrêté (The Beat My Heart Skipped)* (2005), d. Jacques Audiard
- Demoiselle d'honneur (The Bridesmaid)* (2004), d. Claude Chabrol
- Dernier domicile connu (Last Known Address)* (1970), d. José Giovanni
- Descente aux enfers (Descent into Hell)* (1986), d. Francis Girod
- Déetective* (1985), d. Jean-Luc Godard
- Deux hommes dans la ville (Two Men in Town)* (1973), d. José Giovanni
- Dites-lui que je l'aime (The Sweet Sickness)* (1977), d. Claude Miller
- Diva* (1981), d. Jean-Jacques Beineix
- Dobermann* (1997), d. Jan Kounen
- Docteur Petiot* (1990), d. Christian de Chalonge
- Dupont Lajoie (Rape of Innocence)* (1975), d. Yves Boisset
- Eaux profondes (Deep Water)* (1981), d. Michel Deville
- L'Empreinte de l'ange (Mark of an Angel)* (2008), d. Safy Nebbou
- État de siège (State of Siege)* (1973), d. Constantin Costa-Gavras
- L'Étoile du nord (The North Star)* (1982), d. Pierre Granier-Deferre
- Les Fantômes du chapelier (The Hatter's Ghost)* (1982), d. Claude Chabrol
- La Femme Nikita (Nikita)* (1990), d. Luc Besson
- Feux rouges (Red Lights)* (2004), d. Cédric Kahn
- Flic story (Cop Story)* (1975), d. Jacques Deray
- Fleur du mal (Flower of Evil)* (2003), d. Claude Chabrol
- Fréquence meurtre (Frequent Death)* (1988), d. Élisabeth Rappeneau
- Le Gang (The Gang)* (1976), d. Jacques Deray
- Garde à vue (Under Suspicion)* (1981), d. Claude Miller
- La Haine (Hate)* (1995), d. Mathieu Kassovitz
- L'Homme de Londres* (aka *A londoni férfi* and *The Man from London*) (2007), d. Béla Tarr and Ágnes Hranitzky
- L'Horloger de Saint-Paul (The Watchmaker of St. Paul)* (1973), d. Bertrand Tavernier
- L'Humanité (Humanity)* (1999), d. Bruno Dumont
- Les Innocents aux mains sales (Innocents with Dirty Hands)* (1975), d. Claude Chabrol
- Inspecteur Lavardin* (1986), d. Claude Chabrol
- Irréversible* (2002), d. Gaspar Noé
- J'ai épousé une ombre (I Married a Dead Man)* (1983), d. Robin Davis
- J'ai vu tuer Ben Barka (I Saw Ben Barka Get Killed)* (2005), d. Serge Le Péron and Säid Smihi
- Le Juge et l'assassin (The Judge and the Assassin)* (1976), d. Bertrand Tavernier
- Le Juge Fayard dit le Shérif (Judge Fayard Called the Sheriff)* (1976), d. Yves Boisset
- L.627* (1992), d. Bertrand Tavernier
- Léon* (1994), d. Luc Besson

- Les Liens du sang (Blood Relatives)* (1978), d. Claude Chabrol
- Un Linceul n'a pas des poches (No Pockets in a Shroud)* (1974), d. Jean-Pierre Mocky
- La Locataire (The Tenant)* (1976), d. Roman Polanski
- La Lune dans le caniveau (The Moon in the Gutter)* (1983), d. Jean-Jacques Beineix
- Masques (Masks)* (1987), d. Claude Chabrol
- Mauvais Sang (Bad Blood)* (1986), d. Leos Carax
- Merci pour le chocolat (Nightcap)* (2000), d. Claude Chabrol
- Monsieur Hire* (1989), d. Patrice Leconte
- Mort d'un pourri (Death of a Corrupt Man)* (1977), d. Georges Lautner
- Nada (The Nada Gang)* (1974), d. Claude Chabrol
- Ne réveillez pas un flic qui dort (Let Sleeping Cops Lie)* (1988), d. José Pinheiro
- Nikita (La Femme Nikita)* (1990), d. Luc Besson
- Les Noces rouges (Blood Wedding)* (1973), d. Claude Chabrol
- On ne meurt que deux fois (He Died with His Eyes Open)* (1985), d. Jacques Deray
- Parole de flic (Cop's Honor)* (1985), d. José Pinheiro
- Péril en la demeure (Peril)* (1985), d. Michel Deville
- Le Petit lieutenant (The Young Lieutenant)* (2005), d. Xavier Beauvois
- Place Vendôme* (1998), d. Nicole Garcia
- Police* (1985), d. Maurice Pialat
- Police Python 357 (The Case against Ferro)* (1976), d. Alain Corneau
- Poulet au vinaigre (Cop au Vin)* (1985), d. Claude Chabrol
- Pour la peau d'un flic (For a Cop's Hide)* (1981), d. Alain Delon
- Poussière d'ange (Angel Dust)* (1987), d. Edouard Niermans
- Le Professionnel (The Professional)* (1981), d. Georges Lautner
- Regard les hommes tomber (See How They Fall)* (1994), d. Jacques Audiard
- René-la-canne (Rene the Cane)* (1977), d. Francis Girod
- Les Ripoux (My New Partner)* (1985), d. Claude Zidi
- Rivals* (2008), d. Jacques Maillot
- Roberto Succo* (2001), d. Cédric Kahn
- Romance* (1999), d. Catherine Breillat
- Rue Barbare* (1983), d. Gilles Béhat
- Le Secret (The Secret)* (1974), d. Robert Enrico
- Série noire* (1979), d. Alain Corneau
- Seul contre tous (I Stand Alone)* (1998), d. Gaspar Noé
- Sombre* (1998), d. Philippe Grandrieux
- Subway* (1985), d. Luc Besson
- Sur mes lèvres (Read My Lips)* (2001), d. Jacques Audiard
- Tendre poulet (Dear Inspector)* (1978), d. Philippe de Broca
- La Tourneuse de pages (The Page Turner)* (2006), d. Denis Dercourt
- 36 Quai des Orfèvres (Department 36)* (2004), d. Olivier Marchal

*Les Valseuses (Going Places)* (1974), d. Bertrand Blier  
*La Veuve Couderc (The Widow Couderc)* (1971), d. Pierre Granier-Deferre  
*La Vie rêvée des anges (The Dreamlife of Angels)* (1998), d. Erick Zonca  
*Violette Nozière* (1978), d. Claude Chabrol  
*Vivement Dimanche! (Finally, Sunday aka Confidentially Yours)* (1983), d. François Truffaut

## German Film Noir

*Abenteuer in Wien (Stolen Identity)* (1952), d. E. E. Reinert and Gunther von Fritsch  
*Ein Alibi zerbricht (An Alibi Collapses)* (1963), d. Alfred Vohrer  
*Alraune (Unnatural)* (1952), d. Arthur Maria Rabenalt  
*Am Tag als der Regen kam (The Day the Rains Came)* (1959), d. Gerd Oswald  
*Das Bekenntnis der Ina Kahr (Ina Kahr's Confession)* (1954), d. G. W. Pabst  
*Berlin Ecke Schönhauser (Berlin Schönhauser Corner)* (1957), d. Gerhard Klein  
*Der Blaue Engel (The Blue Angel)* (1930), d. Josef Von Sternberg  
*Blockierte Signale (Blocked Signals)* (1948), d. Johannes Meyer  
*Epilog—Das Geheimnis der Orplid (Epilogue—The Orplid Mystery)* (1950), d. Helmut Käutner  
*Es geschah am hellichten Tag (It Happened in Broad Daylight)* (1958), d. Ladislav Vajda  
*Die Frühreifen (The Adolescents)* (1957), d. Josef von Baky  
*Geständnis unter vier Augen (Private Confession)* (1954), d. André Michel  
*Gestehen Sie, Dr. Corda! (Confess, Dr. Corda)* (1958), d. Josef von Baky  
*Die Goldene Pest (The Golden Plague)* (1954), d. John Brahm  
*Hafenmelodie (Harbour Melody)* (1948), d. Hans Müller  
*Die Halbstarcken (The Hooligans)* (1956), d. Georg Tressler  
*Hanna Amon* (1951), d. Veit Harlan  
*Illusion in Moll (Illusion in a Minor Key)* (1952), d. Rudolf Jugert  
*Kirmes (Fairground)* (1960), d. Wolfgang Staudte  
*M: Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder (M: A City Searches for a Murderer)* (1931), d. Fritz Lang  
*Das Mädchen Rosemarie (The Girl Rosemarie)* (1958), d. Rolf Thiele  
*Der Mann, der den Mord beging (The Man Who Committed Murder)* (1931), d. Curtis Bernhardt  
*Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht (The Man Who Searched for His Own Murderer)* (1931), d. Robert Siodmak  
*Die Mörder sind unter uns (The Murderers Are Among Us)* (1946), d. Wolfgang Staudte  
*Nachts auf den Strassen (At Night on the Streets)* (1952), d. Rudolf Jugert

- Nachts, wenn der Teufel kam (The Devil Strikes at Night)* (1957), d. Robert Siodmak
- Nasser Asphalt (Wet Asphalt)* (1958), d. Frank Wisbar
- Opfergang (The Great Sacrifice)* (1943), d. Veit Harlan
- Der Rest ist Schweigen (The Rest Is Silence)* (1959), d. Helmut Käutner
- Schicksal aus zweiter Hand (Second-Hand Destiny)* (1949), d. Wolfgang Staudte
- Schwarzer Kies (Black Gravel)* (1960), d. Helmut Käutner
- Die Sünderin (The Sinner)* (1951), d. Willi Forst
- Die Tausend Augen des Dr Mabuse (The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse)* (1960), d. Fritz Lang
- Teufel in Seide (Devil in Silk)* (1955), d. Rolf Hansen
- Das Totenschiff (Ship of the Dead)* (1959), d. Georg Tressler
- Tromba* (1949), d. Helmut Weiss
- Der Verlorene (The Lost One)* (1951), d. Peter Lorre
- Das Verlorene Gesicht (The Lost Face)* (1948), d. Kurt Hoffmann
- Verwehte Spuren (Covered Tracks)* (1938), d. Veit Harlan
- Viele kamen vorbei (Many Passed By)* (1956), d. Peter Pewas
- Die Wahrheit über Rosemarie (The Truth about Rosemarie)* (1959), d. Rudolf Jugert
- Wenn abends die Heide träumt (When the Heath Dreams at Night)* (1952), d. Paul Martin

### German Neo-Noir

- Alabama: 2000 Light Years from Home* (1968), d. Wim Wenders
- Der Amerikanische Freund (The American Friend)* (1977), d. Wim Wenders
- Der Amerikanische Soldat (The American Soldier)* (1970), d. Rainer Werner Fassbinder
- Die Ehe der Maria Braun (The Marriage of Maria Braun)* (1979), d. Rainer Werner Fassbinder
- Der Geschichtenzähler (The Story Teller)* (1989), d. Rainer Boldt
- Die Gläserne Zelle (The Glass Case)* (1978), d. Hans W. Geissendörfer
- Götter der Pest (Gods of the Plague)* (1970), d. Rainer Werner Fassbinder
- Hammett* (1982), d. Wim Wenders
- Jerichow* (2008), d. Christian Petzold
- Kurz und Schmerzlos (Short Sharp Shock)* (1998), d. Fatih Akin
- Das Leben des Anderen (The Lives of Others)* (2006), d. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck
- Liebe—kälter als der Tod (Love Is Colder Than Death)* (1969), d. Rainer Werner Fassbinder
- Lola* (1981), d. Rainer Werner Fassbinder

*Lola rennt (Run Lola Run)* (1998), d. Tom Tykwer  
*Long Hello and Short Goodbye* (1998), d. Rainer Kaufmann  
*Meschugge* (1999), d. Dani Levy  
*Same Player Shoots Again* (1967), d. Wim Wenders  
*Die Sehnsucht der Veronika Voss (Veronika Voss)* (1982), d. Rainer Werner Fassbinder  
*Die Unberührbare (No Place to Go)* (2000), d. Andreas Roehler  
*14 Tage lebenslänglich (14 Days to Life)* (1997), d. Roland Suso Richter  
*Wege in die Nacht (Paths in the Night)* (1999), d. Andreas Kleinert  
*Die Zwei Gesichter des Januar (The Two Faces of January)* (1986), d. Wolfgang Storch and Gabriela Zerhau

### Hong Kong Noir

*Ai sha (Love Massacre)* (1981), d. Patrick Tam  
*Bian yuen ren (Man on the Brink)* (1981), d. Gwok-Ming Cheung  
*Bie hao (To Be Number One)* (1991), d. Man Kit Poon  
*Chan sam ying hung (A Hero Never Dies)* (1998), d. Johnnie To  
*Chongqing Senlin (Chungking Express)* (1994), d. Kar Wai Wong  
*Chung ngon sat luk: O gei (Organized Crime and Triad Bureau)* (1994), d. Kirk Wong  
*Dian zhi bing bing (Cops and Robbers)* (1979), d. Gwok-Ming Cheung  
*Die xue jie tou (Bullet in the Head)* (1990), d. John Woo  
*Die xue shuang xiong (The Killer)* (1989), d. John Woo  
*Diyi Leixing Weixian (Dangerous Encounters: 1st Kind)* (1980), d. Hark Tsui  
*Duo luo tian shi (Fallen Angels)* (2000), d. Wong Kar Wai  
*Feng jie (The Secret)* (1979), d. Ann Hui  
*Fie chang tu ran (Expect the Unexpected)* (1998), d. Tat-Chi Yau  
*Gao du jie bei (Full Alert)* (1997), d. Ringo Lam  
*Gu huo nu zhi jue zhan jiang hu (Sexy and Dangerous)* (1996), d. Hin Sing "Billy" Tang  
*Gu huo zi: zhi ren zai jiang hu (Young and Dangerous)* (1996), d. Wai-Keung Lau  
*Hang Gui (The System)* (1979), d. Peter Yung  
*Hei mao (Black Cat)* (1991), d. Stephen Shin  
*Hu Yue de gu shi (The Story of Woo Viet)* (1981), d. Ann Hui  
*Hua cheng (The Last Affair)* (1984), d. Tony Au  
*Ji dao zhu zhong (The Zodiac Killers)* (1991), d. Ann Hui  
*Jian yu feng yun (Prison on Fire)* (1988), d. Ringo Lam  
*Jian yu feng yun II: Tao Fan (Prison on Fire II)* (1991), d. Ringo Lam  
*Jiu shi zhe (The Saviour)* (1980), d. Ronny Yu  
*La shou shen tan (Hardboiled)* (1992), d. John Woo



- Lian zheng feng bo (Anti Corruption)* (1975), d. See-Yuen Ng  
*Long hu Bo Lan ji (Street of Fury)* (1996), d. Hing Sing "Billy" Tan  
*Long hu feng yun (City on Fire)* (1987), d. Ringo Lam  
*Qiang huo (The Mission)* (1999), d. Johnnie To  
*Saat saat yan, tiu tiu mo (Ballistic Kiss)* (1998), d. Donnie Yen  
*Sha chu xi ying pan (Coolie Killers)* (1982), d. Terry Tong  
*Shang Hai huang di zhi: sui yue feng yun (Lord of East China Sea)* (1993), d. Man Kit Poon  
*Sheng gang qi bing (Long Arm of the Law)* (1984), d. Johnny Mak  
*Sheng Gang qi bing di san ji (Long Arm of the Law Part 3)* (1989), d. Michael Mak  
*Sheng Gang qi bing II (Long Arm of the Law II)* (1987), d. Michael Mak  
*Sun taam (Mad Detective)* (2007), d. Johnnie To and Ka-Fai Wai  
*Tang kou gu shi (Tongs, a Chinatown Story)* (1986), d. Philip Chan  
*Tian luo di wang (Gunmen)* (1988), d. Kirk Wong  
*Tiaohui (Jumping Ash)* (1975), d. Po-Chih Leong and Josephine Siao  
*Wang Jiao feng yun (Mongkok Story)* (1996), d. Wilson Zip  
*Wang jiao hei ye (One Night in Mongkok)* (2004), d. Shing Yee  
*Wang Jiao zha 'fit' ren (Once Upon a Time in Triad Society)* (1996), d. Chuen-Yee Cha  
*Wong gok ka moon (As Tears Go By)* (1988), d. Kar Wai Wong  
*Wu hu jiang zhi jue lie (Jin pai wu hu jiang) (The Tigers)* (1991), d. Eric Tsang  
*Wu jian dao (Infernal Affairs)* (2002), d. Wai-keung Lau and Siu Fai Mak  
*Wu jian dao II (Infernal Affairs II)* (2003), d. Wai-keung Lau and Siu Fai Mak  
*Wu jian dao III: Zhong ji wu jian (Infernal Affairs: End Inferno 3)* (2003), d. Wai-keung Lau and Siu Fai Mak  
*Wu ting (The Club)* (1980), d. Kirk Wong  
*Wu yitan zhang: Lei Luo zhuan (Lee Rock)* (1991), d. Lawrence Ah Mon  
*Xing gui (The System)* (1979), d. Wai-Keung Lau  
*Xong xing zi: Zhi juang hu da feng bao (War of the Under World)* (1996), d. Herman Yau  
*Ye che (The Happenings)* (1980), d. Ho Yim  
*Yi ge zi tou dan sheng (Too Many Ways to Be No. 1)* (1997), d. Ka-Fai Wai  
*Ying xiong ben se (Story of a Discharged Prisoner)* (1967), d. Kong Lung  
*Ying xiong ben se (A Better Tomorrow)* (1986), d. John Woo  
*Ying xiong ben se III—tzu yang tsugor (A Better Tomorrow Part III)* (1989), d. Hark Tsui  
*Ying xiong ben se xu ji (A Better Tomorrow Part II)* (1987), d. John Woo  
*Zhi zun wu shang (Casino Raiders)* (1989), d. Jimmy Yeung and Jing Wong  
*Zhong an zu (Crime Story)* (1993), d. Kirk Wong  
*Zong heng si hai (Once a Thief)* (1991), d. John Woo  
*Zui hou sheng li (Final Victory)* (1987), d. Patrick Tam

## Italian Film Noir

- A ciascuno il suo (We Still Kill the Old Way)* (1967), d. Elio Petri  
*L'Assassino (The Ladykiller of Rome)* (1962), d. Elio Petri  
*Banditi a Milano (Bandits of Milan)* (1968), d. Carlo Lizzani  
*Il Bandito (The Bandit)* (1946), d. Alberto Lattuada  
*Caccia tragica (Tragic Pursuit)* (1947), d. Aldo Vergano  
*Cadaveri eccellenti (Illustrious Corpses)* (1975), d. Francesco Rosi  
*Il Caso Mattei (The Mattei Affair)* (1972), d. Francesco Rosi  
*La Commare secca (The Grim Reaper)* (1961), d. Pier Paolo Pasolini  
*Il Conformista (The Conformist)* (1970), d. Bernardo Bertolucci  
*Cronaca di un amore (Story of a Love Affair)* (1950), d. Michelangelo Antonioni  
*Danza macabra (Dance Macabre)* (1964), d. Antonio Margheriti  
*La Donna della Domenica (Sunday Woman)* (1975), d. Luigi Comencini  
*La Frusta e il corpo (The Whip and the Body, aka Night Is the Phantom)* (1963),  
 d. Mario Bava as John M. Old  
*Il Giorno della civetta (The Cry of the Owl)* (1968), d. Damiano Damiani  
*Gioventù perduta (Lost Youth)* (1947), d. Pietro Germi  
*In nome della legge (In the Name of the Law)* (1949), d. Pietro Germi  
*Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto (Investigation of a Citizen  
 above Suspicion)* (1970), d. Elio Petri  
*L'Istruttoria è chiusa, dimentichi (Interrogation Is Over, Forget)* (1971), d. Da-  
 miano Damiani  
*Lucky Luciano* (1974), d. Francesco Rosi  
*Un Maledetto imbroglio (A Wretched Business)* (1959), d. Pietro Germi  
*Le Mani sulla città (Hands over the City)* (1963), d. Francesco Rosi  
*Mark il poliziotto (Mark the Policeman)* (1975), d. Stelvio Massi  
*Mark il poliziotto spara per primo (Policeman Mark Shoots First)* (1975),  
 d. Stelvio Massi  
*Milano calibro 9 (Milan Calibre 9)* (1971), d. Fernando Di Leo  
*Milano violenta (Violent Milan)* (1976), d. Mario Caiano  
*Napoli violenta (Violent Naples)* (1976), d. Umberto Lenzi  
*Nella città l'inferno (And the Wild, Wild Women)* (1959), d. Renato Castellani  
*Il Nome della legge (In the Name of the Law)* (1949), d. Pietro Germi  
*Non si sevizia un paperino (Don't Torture the Duck)* (1976), d. Lucio Fulci  
*Le Notti bianche (White Nights)* (1957), d. Luchino Visconti  
*L'Oro di Napoli (The Gold of Naples)* (1954), d. Vittorio De Sica  
*Ossessione (Obsession)* (1942), d. Luchino Visconti  
*La Polizia ringrazia (The Police Are Grateful)* (1972), d. Stefano Vanzina  
*Processo alla città (City on Trial)* (1952), d. Luigi Zampa  
*Professione reporter (The Passenger)* (1975), d. Michelangelo Antonioni  
*Profondo rosso (Deep Red)* (1975), d. Dario Argento

- Quattro mosche di velluto grigio (Four Flies on Grey Velvet)* (1971), d. Dario Argento
- Riso amaro (Bitter Rice)* (1948), d. Giuseppe De Santis
- Il Rossetto (Lipstick)* (1960), d. Damiano Damiani
- Salvatore Giuliano* (1961), d. Francesco Rosi
- Sei donne per l'assassino (Blood and Black Lace)* (1964), d. Mario Bava
- Senza pietà (Without Pity)* (1948), d. Alberto Lattuada
- Senza sapere niente di lei (Unknown Woman)* (1969), d. Luigi Comencini
- La Sfida (The Challenge)* (1958), d. Francesco Rosi
- La Signora senza camelie (The Lady without Camelias)* (1953), d. Michelangelo Antonioni
- La Sindrome di Stendhal (The Stendhal Syndrome)* (1996), d. Dario Argento
- Il Sospetto (Suspicion)* (1975), d. Francesco Maselli
- Lo Spettro (The Ghost)* (1963), d. Riccardo Freda
- Todo modo* (1976), d. Elio Petri
- Tombolo, paradiso nero (Tombolo, Black Paradise)* (1947), d. Giorgio Ferroni
- Torino nera (Black Turin)* (1972), d. Carlo Lizzani
- L'Uccello dalle piume di cristallo (Bird with the Crystal Plumage)* (1970), d. Dario Argento
- Vaghe stelle dell'orsa (Sandra)* (1965), d. Luchino Visconti
- I Vinti (The Vanquished)* (1952), d. Michelangelo Antonioni

### Italian Neo-Noir

- Almost Blue* (2000), d. Alex Infascelli
- L'Amico di famiglia (Friend of the Family)* (2006), d. Paolo Sorrentino
- Assassini dei giorni di festa (The Holiday Killers)* (2002), d. Damiano Damiani
- L'Assassino di poliziotti (Copkiller)* (1983), d. Roberto Faenza
- Benzina (Gasoline)* (2004), d. Monica Stambrini
- Brucio nel vente (Burning in the Wind)* (2002), d. Silvio Soldini
- Buongiorno notte (Good Morning, Night)* (2003), d. Marco Bellocchio
- Il Cartaio (The Card Player)* (2003), d. Dario Argento
- La Casa del tappeto giallo (House of the Yellow Carpet)* (1983), d. Carlo Lizzani
- I Cento passi (The 100 Steps)* (2000), d. Marco Tullio Giordano
- Certi bambini (A Children's Story)* (2003), d. Andrea Frazzi
- Chimera* (2001), d. Pappi Corsicato
- Le Conseguenze dell'amore (The Consequences of Love)* (2004), d. Paolo Sorrentino
- Un Delitto impossibile (An Impossible Crime)* (2001), d. Antonello Grimaldi
- Il Divo (aka Il Divo: la straordinaria vita di Giulio Andreotti)* (2008), d. Paolo Sorrentino

- Un Eroe borghese (Middle Class Hero)* (1994), d. Michele Placido  
*La Fine è nota (The End Is Known)* (1993), d. Cristina Comencini  
*La Finestra di fronte (Facing Window)* (2003), d. Ferzan Ozpetek  
*Una Fredda mattina di maggio (A Cold May Morning)* (1990), d. Vittorio Sindoni  
*Il Gioco di Ripley (Ripley's Game)* (2002), d. Liliana Cavani  
*Il Giudice ragazzino (The Young Judge)* (1993), d. Alessandro Di Robilant  
*Gomorra (Gomorra)* (2008), d. Matteo Garrone  
*Io non ho paura (I'm Not Scared)* (2002), d. Gabriele Salvatores  
*Il Lungo silenzio (The Long Silence)* (1993), d. Margarethe von Trotta  
*La Mia generazione (My Generation)* (1996), d. Wilma Labate  
*Il Muro di gomma (The Rubber Wall)* (1991), d. Marco Risi  
*Il Nome della rosa (The Name of the Rose)* (1986), d. Jean Jacques Annaud  
*Notturmo Bus (Night Bus)* (2007), d. Davide Marengo  
*Piazza delle cinque lune (Five Moon Square)* (2003), d. Renzo Martinelli  
*Una Pura formalità (A Pure Formality)* (1994), d. Giuseppe Tornatore  
*Quo vadis, Baby?* (2005), d. Gabriele Salvatores  
*Romanzo criminale (Crime Novel)* (2005), d. Michele Placido  
*Rose e pistole (Roses and Guns)* (1998), d. Carla Apuzzo  
*Saimir* (2004), d. Francesco Munzi  
*La Scorta (The Escort)* (1993), d. Ricky Tognazzi  
*Segreto distato (Secret File)* (2003), d. Paolo Benvenuti  
*Teatro di guerra (Theatre of War)* (1998), d. Mario Martone  
*Tenebre (Tenebrae)* (1982), d. Dario Argento  
*La Tragedia di un uomo ridicolo (Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man)* (1981), d. Bernardo Bertolucci

## Japanese Film Noir

- Ankokugai no taiketsu (The Last Gunfight)* (1960), d. Kihachi Okamoto  
*Bakuchi-uchi socho tobaku (Big Time Gambling Boss)* (1968), d. Kosaku Yamashita  
*Bakuto gaijin butai (Sympathy for the Underdog)* (1971), d. Kinji Fukasaku  
*Fukushû suruwa wareniari (Vengeance Is Mine)* (1979), d. Shohei Imamura  
*Gendai yakuza: hito-kiri yota (Street Mobster)* (1972), d. Kinji Fukasaku  
*Hakuchu no buraikan (Greed in Broad Daylight)* (1961), d. Kinji Fukasaku  
*Hana-Bi (Fireworks)* (1997), d. Takeshi Kitano  
*Harikomi (The Chase)* (1958), d. Yoshitaro Nomura  
*Hateshinaki yokubo (Endless Desire)* (1958), d. Shohei Imamura  
*Hijosen no onna (Dagnet Girl)* (1933), d. Yasujiro Ozu  
*Hito-kiri yoya: kyoken san-kyodai (Outlaw Killers)* (1972), d. Kinji Fukasaku

- Hogaraka ni ayume (Walk Cheerfully)* (1930), d. Yasujiro Ozu  
*Jingi no hakaba (Graveyard of Honour)* (1975), d. Kinji Fukasaku  
*Karakkaze yarô (Afraid to Die)* (1960), d. Yasuzo Masumura  
*Kawaita hana (Pale Flower)* (1964), d. Masahiro Shinoda  
*Koroshi no rakuin (Branded to Kill)* (1967), d. Seijun Suzuki  
*Korutowa ore no pasupoto (A Colt Is My Passport)* (1967), d. Takashi Nomura  
*Kyatsu o nigasuna (I Saw the Killer)* (1956), d. Hideo Suzuki  
*Minagoroshi no reika (I, the Executioner)* (1968), d. Tai Kato  
*Moetsukita chizu (The Man without a Map)* (1968), d. Hiroshi Teshigahara  
*Nora inu (Stray Dog)* (1949), d. Akira Kurosawa  
*Shin jingi naki tataki (Battles without Honor and Humanity)* (1973), d. Kinji Fukasaku  
*Sono yo tsuma (That Night's Wife)* (1930), d. Yasujiro Ozu  
*Suna no utsuwa (The Castle of Sand)* (1974), d. Yoshitaro Nomura  
*Taiyo no hakaba (The Sun's Burial)* (1960), d. Nagisa Oshima  
*Taiyo o nusunda otoko (The Man Who Stole the Sun)* (1979), d. Kazuhiko Hasegawa  
*Tengoku tojigoku (High and Low)* (1963), d. Akira Kurosawa  
*Tôkyô nagaremono (Tokyo Drifter)* (1966), d. Seijun Suzuki  
*Warui yatsu hodo yoku nemuru (The Bad Sleep Well)* (1960), d. Akira Kurosawa  
*Yaju no seishun (Youth of the Beast)* (1963), d. Seijun Suzuki  
*Yajû shisubeshi (The Beast to Die)* (1980), d. Toru Murakawa  
*Yakuza no hakaba: kuchinashi no hana (Yakuza Graveyard)* (1976), d. Kinji Fukasaku  
*Yodire tensi (Drunken Angel)* (1948), d. Akira Kurosawa  
*Zero no shoten (Zero Focus)* (1961), d. Yoshitaro Nomura

## Japanese Neo-Noir

- 3-4x jûgatsu (Boiling Point)* (1990), d. Takeshi Kitano  
*Adorenarin doraibu (Adrenaline Drive)* (1999), d. Shinobu Yaguchi  
*Akira* (1988), d. Katsuhiro Ôtomo  
*Akumu Tantei (Nightmare Detective)* (2006), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Akumu Tantei 2 (Nightmare Detective 2)* (2006), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Akumu Tantei 3 (Nightmare Detective 3)* (2006), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Bullet Ballet* (1998), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Gokudô kuroshakai (Rainy Dog)* (1997), d. Takashi Miike  
*Gokudô no onna-tachi (The Yakuza Wives)* (1986), d. Hideo Gosha  
*Gonin* (1995), d. Takashi Ishii  
*Hebi no michi (Serpent's Path)* (1998), d. Kiyoshi Kurosawa  
*Hyôryû-gai (City of Lost Souls)* (2000), d. Takashi Miike

*Kin'yû fushoku rettô: Jubaku (Jubaku: Spellbound)* (1999), d. Masato Harado  
*Kôkaku kidôtai (Ghost in the Shell)* (1995), d. Mamoru Oshii  
*Nudo no yoru (A Night in Nude)* (1983), d. Takashi Ishii  
*Onibi (The Fire Within)* (1997), d. Rokuro Mochizuki  
*The Professional: Golgo 13* (1983), d. Osamu Dezaki and Schichirô Kobayashi  
*Rokugatsu no hebi (A Snake of June)* (2002), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Samehada otoko to momojiri onna (Sharkskin Man and Peach Hip Girl)* (1998),  
 d. Katsuhito Ishii  
*Score* (1995), d. Atsushi Muroga  
*Sonatine* (1993), d. Takeshi Kitano  
*Sono otoko, kyôbô ni tsuki (Violent Cop)* (1989), d. Takeshi Kitano  
*Sôsenji (Gemini)* (1999), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Vital* (2004), d. Shinya Tsukamoto  
*Waga jinsei saiaku no toki (The Most Terrible Time of My Life)* (1993), d. Kaizo  
 Hayashi  
*Yôjû toshi (Wicked City)* (1987), d. Yoshiaki Kawajiri  
*Yume no ginga (Labyrinth of Dreams)* (1997), d. Sogo Ishii

## Mexican Noir

*Los Albañiles (The Bricklayers)* (1976), d. Jorge Fons  
*Aventurera (The Adventuress)* (1950), d. Alberto Gout  
*El Bruto (The Brute)* (1953), d. Luis Buñuel  
*Coqueta (Flirt)* (1949), d. Fernando A. Rivero  
*Crepusculo (Twilight)* (1945), d. Julio Bracho  
*La Devoradora (The Man Eater)* (1946), d. Fernando de Fuentes  
*Distinto amanecer (A Different Dawn)* (1943), d. Julio Bracho  
*Doña Bárbara* (1943), d. Fernando de Fuentes and Miguel M. Delgado  
*Ensayo de un crimen (The Criminal Life of Archibald do la Cruz)* (1955), d. Luis  
 Buñuel  
*Marihuana el mónstruo verde (Marijuana, the Green Monster)* (1936), d. José  
 Bohr  
*Mientras México duerme (While Mexico Sleeps)* (1938), d. Alejandro Galindo  
*La Mujer del Puerto (The Woman of the Port)* (1934), d. Arcady Boytler and  
 Raphael J. Sevilla  
*La Mujer del Puerto (The Woman of the Port)* (1991), d. Arturo Ripstein  
*La Mujer sin alma (Woman without a Soul)* (1944), d. Fernando de Fuentes  
*Nocaut (Knockout)* (1984), d. José Luis García Agraz  
*Los Olvidados (The Forgotten Ones aka The Young and the Damned)* (1950),  
 d. Luis Buñuel  
*Pecadora (Sinner)* (1947), d. José Díaz Morales and Carlos Schlieper

*Perdida (Fallen Woman)* (1950), d. Fernando A. Rivero  
*Salón México* (1949), d. Emilio Fernández  
*Sensualidad (Sensuality)* (1951), d. Alberto Gout  
*El Suavecito* (1950), d. Fernando Méndez  
*Susana (The Devil and the Flesh)* (1950), d. Luis Buñuel  
*Victimas del Pecado (Victims of Sin)* (1951), d. Emilio Fernández

### Mexican Neo-Noir

*Cosa fácil (Easy Thing)* (1982), d. Alfredo Gurrola  
*Días de combate (Days of Combat)* (1982), d. Alfredo Gurrola  
*Llámenme Mike* (1979), d. Alfredo Gurrola  
*El Patrullero (Highway Patrolman)* (1992), d. Alex Cox  
*Profondo carmesi (Deep Crimson)* (1996), d. Arturo Ripstein  
*Salón México* (1996), d. José Luis García Agraz  
*Soba (Beaten)* (2004), d. Alan Coton  
*Voya explotar (I'm Gonna Explode)* (2008), d. Gerardo Naranjo

### New Zealand Noir

*The Last Tattoo* (1994), d. John Reid  
*The Lost Tribe* (1983), d. John Laing  
*Mr. Wrong* (1985), d. Gaylene Preston  
*Scarecrow* (1982), d. Sam Pillsbury  
*Should I Be Good?* (1985), d. Graham McLean  
*Spooked* (2004), d. Geoff Murphy

### Norwegian Noir

*Døden er kjærtegn (Death Is a Caress)* (1949), d. Edith Carlmar  
*To levende og en død (Two Living and One Dead)* (1937), d. Gyda Christensen  
 and Tancred Ibsen  
*To mistenkelige personer (Two Suspicious Characters)* (1950), d. Tancred Ibsen

### Norwegian Neo-Noir

*Angst (Anguish)* (1976), d. Oddvar Bull Tuhus  
*Blackout* (1986), d. Erik Gustavson  
*Bortreist på ubestemt tid (Away for an Indefinite Time)* (1974), d. Pål Bang-  
 Hansen  
*Brun bitter (Hair of the Dog)* (1988), d. Sølve Skagen

*Douglas* (1970), d. Pål Bang-Hansen  
*Evas øye (Eva's Eye)* (1999), d. Berit Nesheim  
*Insomnia* (1997), d. Erik Skjoldbjerg  
*Karachi* (1989), d. Oddvar Einarson  
*Livredd (Scared to Death)* (1997), d. Are Kalmar  
*Salige er de som tørster (Blessed Are the Thirsty)* (1997), d. Carl Jørgen Kjøning  
*Schpaaa* (1998), d. Erik Poppe  
*Uro (Restless)* (2006), d. Stefan Faldbakken

### South Korean Noir

*Chingoo (Friend)* (2001), d. Kyung-Taek Kwak  
*Chorok milkogi (Green Fish)* (1997), d. Chang-dong Lee  
*Chugyeogja (The Chaser)* (2008), d. Na Hong-jin  
*Fuyajo (Sleepless Town)* (1998), d. Chi-Ngai  
*Geu nom moksori (Voice of a Murderer)* (2007), d. Park Jin-pyo  
*Gonggongui jeog (Public Enemy)* (2002), d. Woo Suk Kang  
*Gonggongui jeog 2 (Another Public Enemy)* (2005), d. Woo Suk Kang  
*Injeong sajeong bol geot eobtda (Nowhere to Hide)* (1999), d. Myung-se Lee  
*Janggunui adeul (Son of the General)* (1990), d. Kwon-taek Im  
*Janggunui adeul II (Son of the General II)* (1991), d. Kwon-taek Im  
*Janggunui adeul III (Son of the General III)* (1992), d. Kwon-taek Im  
*Kang Chul-jung: Gonggonjui 1-1 (Public Enemy Returns)* (2008), d. Woo-suk Kang  
*Mubangbi-dosi (Open City)* (2008), d. Sang-ki Lee  
*Oldboy* (2003), d. Chan-wook Park  
*Salinui chueok (Memories of a Murder)* (2003), d. Bong Joo-ho  
*Swiri (Shiri)* (1999), d. Je-gyu Kang  
*Sympathy for Lady Vengeance* (2005), d. Chan-wook Park  
*Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance* (2001), d. Chan-wook Park  
*Tajja (Tazza: The High Rollers)* (2006), d. Choi Dong-hun  
*Tellmisseomding (Tell Me Something)* (1999), d. Yoon-Hung Chan

### Spanish Film Noir

*Abel Sánchez* (1947), d. Carlos Serrano de Osma  
*Apartado de correos 1001 (P.O. Box 1001)* (1950), d. Julio Salvador  
*Bienvenido Mister Marshall (Welcome Mister Marshall)* (1953), d. Luis García Berlanga  
*Brigada criminal (Crime Force)* (1950), d. Ignacio F. Iquino  
*La Caja 507 (Deposit Box 507)* (2002), d. Enrique Urbizu



*Calle mayor (Main Street)* (1956), d. Juan Antonio Bardem  
*La Caza (The Hunt)* (1965), d. Carlos Saura  
*La Corona negra (The Black Crown)* (1951), d. Luis Saslavsky  
*Crimen de doble filo (Double Edged Crime)* (1964), d. José Luis Borau  
*Distrito quinto (Fifth Precinct)* (1957), d. Julio Coll  
*Furtivos (Poachers)* (1975), d. José Luis Borau  
*Los Golfos (The Delinquents)* (1960), d. Carlos Saura  
*Muere una mujer (A Woman Dies)* (1964), d. Mario Camus  
*Muerte de un ciclista (Death of a Cyclist, aka Age of Infidelity)* (1955), d. Juan Antonio Bardem  
*Los Ojos dejan huellas (Eyes Leave Their Mark)* (1955), d. José Luis Sáenz de Heredia  
*Pascual Duarte* (1975), d. Ricardo Franco  
*Los Peces rojos (The Red Fish)* (1955), d. José Antonio Nieves Conde  
*Raza (Race)* (1942), d. José Luis Sáenz de Heredia  
*Rueda de sospechosos (Round-Up of Suspects)* (1963), d. Ramón Fernández  
*Surcos (Furrows)* (1951), d. José Antonio Nieves Conde  
*Tristana* (1970), d. Luis Buñuel  
*Viridiana* (1961), d. Luis Buñuel

### Spanish Neo-Noir

*Adela* (1986), d. Carlos Balagué  
*Adiós, pequeña (Goodbye, Little Girl)* (1986), d. Imanol Uribe  
*Al acecho (Lying in Wait)* (1987), d. Gerardo Herrero  
*El Alquimista impaciente (The Impatient Alchemist)* (2002), d. Patricia Ferreira  
*Amantes (Lovers)* (1990), d. Vicente Aranda  
*El Arreglo (The Deal)* (1983), d. José Antonio Zorrilla  
*El Asesinato en el Comité Central (Murder in the Central Committee)* (1981), d. Vicente Aranda  
*¡Átame! (Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!)* (1990), d. Pedro Almodóvar  
*Beltenebros* (1991), d. Pilar Miró  
*Canciones de amor en Lolita's Club* (2007), d. Vicente Aranda  
*Carne trémula (Live Flesh)* (1997), d. Pedro Almodóvar  
*Una Casa en las afueras (A House in the Suburbs)* (1994), d. Pedro Costa  
*Catorce estaciones (Fourteen Stations)* (1991), d. Antonio Giménez-Rico  
*Continental* (1989), d. Xavier Villaverde  
*Cos al bosc/Cuerpo en el bosque (Body in the Woods)* (1996), d. Joaquín Jordá  
*El Crack* (1981), d. José Luis Garci  
*El Crack II* (1983), d. José Luis Garci  
*El Crimen del Cine Oriente (The Crime at the Oriente Cinema)* (1997), d. Pedro Costa  
*El Detective y la muerte (Death and the Detective)* (1994), d. Gonzalo Suárez

- El Embrujo de Shanghai (The Shanghai Enchantment)* (2002), d. Fernando Trueba
- En la ciudad sin límites (The City of No Limits)* (2002), d. Antonio Hernández
- Entre las piernas (Between Your Legs)* (1999), d. Manuel Gómez Pereira
- La Escopeta nacional (The National Shotgun)* (1978), d. Luis García Berlanga
- Fanny Pelopaja (Fanny Strawhair)* (1984), d. Vicente Aranda
- La Fuente amarilla (The Yellow Fountain)* (1999), d. Miguel Santemas
- Gimlet* (1995), d. José Luis Acosta
- Hazlo por mí (Do It for Me)* (1997), d. Angel Fernández Santos
- Las Horas del día (The Hours of the Day)* (2003), d. Jaime Rosales
- Hormigas en la boca (Ants in the Mouth)* (2005), d. Mariano Barroso
- El Invierno en Lisboa (Winter in Lisbon)* (1991), d. José Antonio Zorrilla
- El Laberinto griego (The Greek Labyrinth)* (1992), d. Rafael Alcázar
- El Lobo (Wolf)* (2004), d. Miguel Courtois
- El Maestro de esgrima (The Fencing Master)* (1992), d. Pedro Olea
- La Mala educación (Bad Education)* (2004), d. Pedro Almodóvar
- Manila* (1991), d. Antonio Chavarrías
- El Mars del sud, aka Los mares del sur (The Southern Seas)* (1991), d. Manuel Esteban Marquilles
- Matador* (1986), d. Pedro Almodóvar
- Nadie hablará de nosotras cuando hayamos muerto (No One Will Talk About Us Women When We're Dead)* (1995), d. Agustín Díaz Yanes
- Un Negre amb un saxo (Black with a Sax)* (1988), d. Francesc Bellmunt
- Una Ombra al jardí / Una sombra en el jardí (A Shadow in the Garden)* (1989), d. Antonio Chavarrías
- Plenilunio (Full Moon)* (2000), d. Imanol Uribe
- Puzzle* (1986), d. Luis José Comerón
- Reflejos (Reflections)* (2001), d. Miguel Angel Vivas
- La Reina del mate (The Maté Queen)* (1985), d. Fermín Cabal
- Los Santos inocentes (The Holy Innocents)* (1984), d. Mario Camus
- Si te dicen que caí (If They Tell You That I Fell)* (1989), d. Vicente Aranda
- Sólo quiero caminar (Just Walking)* (2008), d. Agustín Díaz Yanes
- El Sueño del mono loco (Mad Monkey, aka Twisted Obsession)* (1989), d. Fernando Trueba
- Susana* (1996), d. Antonio Chavarrías
- Tesis (Thesis)* (1995), d. Alejandro Amenábar
- Tiempo de silencio (Time of Silence)* (1986), d. Vicente Aranda
- Todo por la pasta (All for the Dough)* (1991), d. Enrique Urbizu
- Tu nombre envenena mis sueños (Your Name Poisons My Dreams)* (1996), d. Pilar Miró
- La Voz de su amo (His Master's Voice)* (2001), d. Emilio Martínez-Lázaro



## About the Author

**Dr. Andrew Spicer** is reader in cultural history and director of the Visual Culture Research Group in the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of the West of England. He has published widely on British cinema, including *Typical Men: The Representation of Masculinity in Popular British Cinema* (2001) and *Sydney Box* for the British Film Makers series (2006). He is a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of British Cinema and Television* and the *Journal of Screenwriting* and is an adviser to the *New Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. He has written extensively on film noir, namely two books—*Film Noir* (2002) and, as editor, *European Film Noir* (2007)—as well as several essays, including “Problems of Memory and Identity in the Neo-Noir Anti-Hero,” in Mark T. Conard (ed.), *The Philosophy of Neo-Noir* (2006). Reference works to which he has contributed include: Brian McFarlane (ed.), *Encyclopedia of British Film* (2003/2005/2008); Robert Murphy (ed.), *Directors in British and Irish Cinema: A Reference Companion* (2006); Michael Flood et al. (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (2007); and Steven Schneider (ed.), *101 Gangster Movies You Must See Before You Die* (2009). He is currently working on a study of Michael Klinger, the producer of *Get Carter*; an essay, “The Angel of Death: Targeting the Hitman,” to be published in Bran Nicol, Patricia Pulham, and Eugene McNulty (eds.), *Crime Cultures: Figuring Criminality in Fiction and Film* (2010); and, as co-editor, the *Companion to Film Noir* forthcoming.

