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|  | University of Zurich, Switzerland | | | |

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| 8 ½ , Eight and a Half |
| (Otto e mezzo, IT, 1963) |
| A semi-autobiographical film made up of a series of episodes, Federico Fellini’s *8 ½* problematizes modern ideas of authorship (Kovács 2007). *8 ½* extended the Italian filmmaker’s existing international reputation as a director, becoming his third film to win the Academy Award for “Best Foreign Language Film.” *8 ½* scrutinizes the troubled state of mind of a director during the creative process of filmmaking (Stubbs 2006). The central character is Guido Anselmi (Marcello Mastroianni), a middle-aged film director who has lost the inspiration that will enable him to finish his film. In creative crisis, Anselmi withdraws to a sanatorium where he meets his film collaborators. His private and professional entourage is highly demanding. At the end of the film, during a meeting with journalists, Anselmi hides under a table and shoots himself. Anselmi, Fellini’s alter ego, is omnipresent, with his first-person narration based on dreams, imaginings and memories that reference Fellini’s commitment to Jungian psychology. *8 ½* portrays its subject’s self-seeking attempt to form a continuous narrative of his life; equally modern is the protagonist’s search for authenticity and individual truth within a context shaped by tradition and public opinion (Pamerleau, 2009). In engaging the concept of the cinéma d’auteurs, the film perfectly portrays the spirit of the early Sixties. *8 ½* is not only a tale of filmmaking but also a reflection on cinema’s cultural significance. |
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| Further reading:  Bondanella, P. (1992) *The Cinema of Federico Fellini*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.  Burke, F. (2007) *Fellini’s Films. From Postwar to Postmodern*, New York: Twayne Publishers.  Dyer, R. (2010) “The Ending of 8 ½ (1963)” in: T. Brown, J. Walters, *Film Moments*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 61–64.  Kovács, A. B. (2007) *Screening Modernism: European Art Cinema*, *1950–1980*, Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press.  Stubbs, J. C. (2006) *Fellini as An Auteur. Seven Aspects of his Films, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press*.  Miller, D. A. (2008) *8 ½ [Otto e mezzo]*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.  Pamerleau, W. C. (2009) *Existentialist Cinema*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.  Film clip (3:00): Otto\_e\_mezzo\_Beginning  [http://www.federicofellini.it/ [02.28.2014](http://www.federicofellini.it/%2520%255b02.28.2014)]  (Homepage of the Fellini foundation in Italy)  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtDQOF_pU8A> [02.28.2014]  (Original Trailer) |