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.

**References and Further Reading:**

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**Paratextual**

Film clip (3:00): Otto\_e\_mezzo\_Beginning

[http://www.federicofellini.it/ [02.28.2014](http://www.federicofellini.it/%20%5b02.28.2014)]

(Homepage of the Fellini foundation in Italy)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtDQOF_pU8A> [02.28.2014]

(Original Trailer)

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