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| Hawks, Howard (1896-1977) |
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| Born Howard Winchester Hawks in Goshen, Indiana, to a wealthy industrialist family, he is considered one of the major directors of the classical Hollywood studio era. He was not a film stylist, but worked within mainstream studio formulas and avoided spectacular flourishes. Hawks was a versatile professional who excelled in every major film genre and contributed to establishing several of them, such as the gangster film with *Scarface* (1932), the screwball comedy with *Bringing Up Baby* (1938), or the adventure melodrama with *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939). His status changed from mere studio director to artist when French critics advocated the *politique des auteurs* in the 1950s and 1960s and hailed him, together with Alfred Hitchcock, as the paradigm of the American auteur. Henri Langlois considered him the first modernist American director for embracing functionalism and rejecting impressionism and ornament (1963). To Peter Wollen, his films had the perfection of well-designed machines. His love of speed and aviation both confirmed him as the new modern man and revealed his taste for the values of traditional heroic adventure (1996, 8). |
| Born Howard Winchester Hawks in Goshen, Indiana, to a wealthy industrialist family, he is considered one of the major directors of the classical Hollywood studio era. He was not a film stylist, but worked within mainstream studio formulas and avoided spectacular flourishes. Hawks was a versatile professional who excelled in every major film genre and contributed to establishing several of them, such as the gangster film with *Scarface* (1932), the screwball comedy with *Bringing Up Baby* (1938), or the adventure melodrama with *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939). His status changed from mere studio director to artist when French critics advocated the *politique des auteurs* in the 1950s and 1960s and hailed him, together with Alfred Hitchcock, as the paradigm of the American auteur. Henri Langlois considered him the first modernist American director for embracing functionalism and rejecting impressionism and ornament (1963). To Peter Wollen, his films had the perfection of well-designed machines. His love of speed and aviation both confirmed him as the new modern man and revealed his taste for the values of traditional heroic adventure (1996, 8).  After graduating in mechanical engineering at Cornell University and being trained as an Air Force pilot during World War I, he started working in the film industry as a property man in 1919 for the Mary Pickford Company, then as a writer from 1923 until he moved to Fox in 1926 as director of silent films, *A Girl in Every Port* (1928) being the most renowned of them. With the arrival of sound he tried his hand at every genre in pictures contracted for almost every studio of the classical era until he retired in 1970. His directorial idiosyncrasy was inscribed in story and dialogue, written by a relatively steady group of collaborators and friends that included Ben Hecht, Jules Furthman, Leigh Brackett and William Faulkner. Fast-paced witty lines and character and gender reversal defined such comedies as *Twentieth Century* (1934), *His Girl Friday* (1940), *I Was a Male War Bride* (1949) or *Monkey Business* (1952). Adventure hybrids, from melodramas to comedies or hard-boiled romance, featured the ‘Hawksian woman’, a mix of feisty and tormented femininity often associated with Lauren Bacall’s Slim in *To Have and Have Not* (1943). Alongside her, Humphrey Bogart brought to this film, and to the later *The Big Sleep* (1946) the rugged, Hemingwaysque masculinity after which Hawks fashioned himself. The homosocial world of the male group, structured his adventure films and Westerns, from *Red River* (1948) to *The Big Sky* (1952), *Rio Bravo* (1959), *El Dorado* (1967) and *Rio Lobo* (1970), his last film.  Link: *His Girl Friday* Trailer  Figure Trailer for the film *His Girl Friday*  Source: <http://archive.org/details/HowardHawkshisGirlFridayMovieTrailer1940>  Link: *The Big Sleep* Trailer  Figure Trailer for the film *The Big Sleep*  Source: <http://archive.org/details/The_Big_Sleep_trailer>  In 1953, Jacques Rivette’s ‘Génie de Howard Hawks’ brought him to the attention of the *Cahier du cinéma* critics, his name becoming a symbol in their attempt to elevate popular cinema to the category of art. In the 1960s they were joined in this praise by Andrew Sarris in the United States and by the *Movie* magazine critics Victor Perkins, Robin Wood and Peter Wollen in Great Britain. List of Works: *The Road to Glory* (Fox, 1926)  *A Girl in Every Port* (Fox, 1928)  *The Dawn Patrol* (First National-Warner Bros., 1930)  *Scarface* (Atlantic Pictures/United Artists, 1932)  *Twentieth Century* (Columbia, 1934)  *Ceiling Zero* (Cosmopolitan Productions/First National-Warner Bros., 1936)  *Bringing Up Baby* (RKO, 1938)  *Only Angels Have Wings* (Columbia, 1939)  *His Girl Friday* (Columbia, 1940)  *Ball of Fire* (Goldwyn Productions/RKO, 1941)  *To Have and Have Not* (Warner Bros., 1943)  *The Big Sleep* (Warner Bros., 1946)  *Red River* (Monterey Productions/United Artists, 1948)  *I Was a Male War Bride* (20th Century-Fox, 1949)  *The Big Sky* (Winchester Productions/RKO, 1952)  *Monkey Business* (20th Century Fox, 1952)  *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (20th Century-Fox, 1953)  *Rio Bravo* (Armada Productions/Warner Bros., 1959)  *Hatari!* (Malabar Productions/Paramount, 1962)  *Man’s Favorite Sport* (Gibraltar & Laurel Productons/Universal, 1964)  *El Dorado* (Laurel Productions/Paramount, 1967)  *Rio Lobo* (Malabar Productions/Cinema Center, 1970) |
| Further reading:  (Bordwell)  (Hillier and Wollen)  (Langlois)  (Liandrat-Guiges)  (McBride)  (McCarthy)  (Rivette)  (Sarris)  (Wollen)  (Wollen, Introduction)  (Wood)  (Wood, Howard Hawks) |