

After the War

Film Noir
Message Films

Film Noir

» Style

- Dark shadows for psychological purposes
- Unhappy or ambiguous endings

» Genre

- Tough, moral detective
- Femme fatale
- Clichés: city settings, rain soaked streets, spiral staircases, window blinds...
- Voiceover narration



Postwar Developments

» Decline of studios

- Loses antitrust suit
- Rise of television
- HUAC attacks

» New tone of American films

- Subjects often treat serious problems
- Darker tone in film noir and message films

▪ Music developments

- Growth of popular music in scoring
- Growth in use of modern music



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Laura (1944)

» Composer: David Raksin

» AFI score ranking: No. 7

» Theme song became one of the most popular songs of the century

» Popular musical style employed exclusively

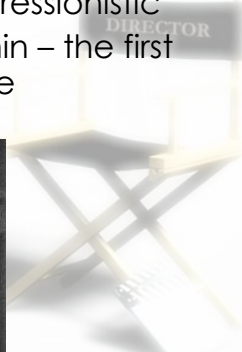
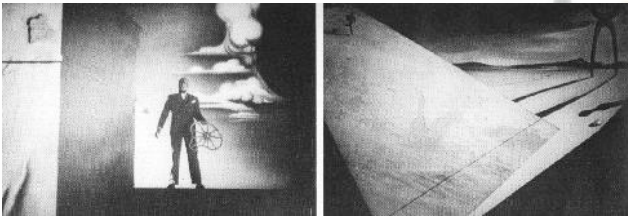
- Gives principal character sophisticated quality
- Use as underscoring sets model for future use of popular music

» Apartment scene: Viewer Guide 13.1



Spellbound

- » Director by Hitchcock, this is a hybrid of romance and noir
- » Set design (dream sequence): Salvadore Dali
- » Music is by Miklos Rozsa
 - Music contrasts Romantic and Expressionistic
 - Modern sections employ a theremin – the first electronic instrument in a film score



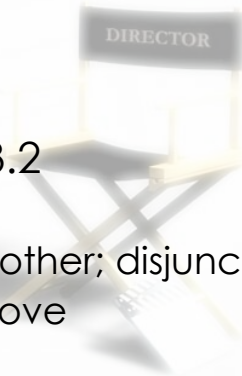
The Third Man, 1949

- » Highest rated British film (BFI)
- » *Citizen Kane* influence (film noir)
 - Use of light and shadows
 - Decadent setting
 - Ambiguous ending
 - Orson Welles
- » Music landmark
 - All on a zither
 - Anton Karas composer/performer
 - Revelation: Viewer Guide 16.1



The Best Years of Our Lives

- » 1946 Best Picture Winner
- » Deals with issues of returning veterans
- » Music
 - Composer: Hugo Friedhofer
 - Style: American Nationalism
- » Revelation: Viewer Guide 13.2
 - Warm; strings and woodwinds
 - Themes similar flow into each other; disjunct
 - Memories; Wilma; Neighbor; Love



Sunset Blvd (1950)

- AFI: No. 12 Greatest Film
- Composer: Franz Waxman – first Oscar
- AFI: No. 16 greatest score
- Film contains elements of film noir, including musical style
 - Norma given a Salome theme
 - Prominent trill – a film noir cliché
- Conclusion: Viewer Guide 13.3

