

Fellini, Federico (1920-1993)

Encyclopedia Article

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Italian film director Federico Fellini helped bring the cinema to a mature state of expressive quality, introducing an eye-opening kaleidoscope of psychological symbolism and sometimes bawdy imagery to popular audiences and art-house denizens alike. Beginning in film as a screenwriter for famed filmmaker Roberto Rossellini, Fellini came into his own directing a number of masterpieces in the 1950s which expanded upon the natural, visually stark style of Italian Neorealism pioneered by Rossellini. Most notable of these were *La Strada* and *Nights of Cabiria*, both of which boasted emotionally rich performances by Fellini's wife, the gamin-faced Giulietta Massina. However, it was during the 1960s that Fellini reached the height of his international stature with films such as *La Dolce Vita*, *8 1/2*, and *Juliet of the Spirits*, wherein Fellini evinced a circus-like, sometimes surreal, and always highly personal vision of the world that could only be achieved through the cinema. Fellini continued directing films until his death in the early 1990s, consistently creating worlds so unique that the word "Felliniesque" found its way into the popular vocabulary.

Further Reading:

Baxter, John. *Fellini*. London, Fourth Estate, 1993.

Bondanella, Peter. *The Cinema of Federico Fellini*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992.

Fellini, Federico. *Fellini on Fellini*. London, Faber and Faber, 1995.