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NAAC ACCREDITED 'A' GRADE



Topic: FRENCH NEW WAVE

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## FRENCH NEW WAVE

### What is French New Wave?

The **French New Wave** was a film movement from the 1950s and 60s and one of the most influential in cinema history. Also known as "Nouvelle Vague," it gave birth to a new kind of cinema that was highly self-aware and revolutionary to mainstream filmmaking. A group of French critics, who wrote for the journal, *Cahiers du Cinema*, believed films had lost their ability to capture true human emotion and "lacked sincerity." They felt the films were out of step with how people actually live.

There were quite a few notable French film directors who were part of the movement, including Francois Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol, Eric Rohmer, Jacques Rivette. These directors have produced hundreds of movies to the French cinema industry and their involvement created a tremendous impact on the success of French New Wave. As a result, many other French directors were influenced by it, which created an ideal platform to deploy the radical change that the French cinema industry required.

### How did the French New Wave movement originate?

The manifesto of Alexandre Astruc, *The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: The Camera-Style* can be considered as the starting point of the French New Wave movement. This event took place in 1948. This manifesto outlined several ideas that were explained by Cahiers du cinema and François Truffaut at a later stage.

They argued that the French cinema was similar to the literature, which expresses the same ideas that are depicted in novels and paintings. In other words, the artists at that time used movies to voice their thoughts. Some of the leading film producers, whose names are mentioned above, wanted to change it and this is the birth of the radical movement in the history of French cinema.

Morris Engel, who was an American film director, also contributed a lot towards the French New Wave. He produced a movie called *Little Fugitive* back in 1953 as he was impressed with the concept of French New Wave. This film clearly shows how the cinema industry in France got International support to

carry forward the much-needed move. The French movie producers still appreciate the contribution of Morris Engel.

During the French New Wave movements, particular attention was paid towards the theory called auteur theory. As per auteur theory, the director of a movie is also the producer of it.

Therefore, the directors took necessary measures to add a personal signature to the film. The directors who lived in France at that time praised the films produced by Jean Vigo and Jean Renoir because they were pioneer figures who fought against this theory.

They were able to create few memorable films with the help of talented script writers. The participation of script writers helped them to stay away from adding their personal opinions and views into the movies that they created.

Jean Rouch can also be considered as a prominent figure in the French New Wave. The first new wave feature came out at this point. It was delivered along with the movie *Le Beau Serge* by Chabrol. The trend continued for few more years as well, where few other movies such as Godard, **The 400 Blows**, and Truffaut came out with similar features.

These movies became popular in international film industries in an unexpected manner. In fact, it received both financial as well as critical success. This made the entire world talk about the French New Wave. As a result, a perfect platform was created for the movement to flourish. The characters who took part in the movies that were produced during the radical change were not labeled as protagonists. This created a positive impression on their minds as well.

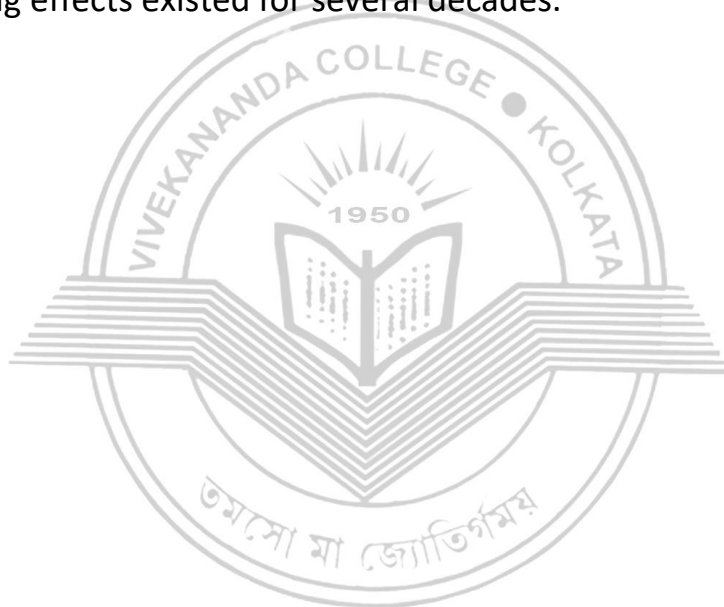
### **FRENCH NEW WAVE CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Deemphasized plot & dialogue was often improvised
- Jump cuts rather than continuity editing
- Location shooting
- Handheld cameras
- Long takes
- Direct sound & available light (live recordings, often didn't adjust light)

## French New Wave Films

- Breathless (1960)
- Jules et Jim (François Truffaut, 1962)
- 400 Blows *Les Quatre Cents Coups* (François Truffaut, 1959)
- Les Cousins (Claude Chabrol, 1959)
- Paris nous appartient (Jacques Rivette, 1961)
- Hiroshima mon amour (1959)

The French New Wave was roughly famous in between 1958 and 1964. The movement came to an end by 1973. Even though it was finished at that time, the influencing effects existed for several decades.



Reference: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)