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1963
“8½”

Produced by Angelo Rizzoli
 Directed by Federico Fellini
 Screenplay by Fellini, Tullio Pinelli, Ennio Flaiano, Brunello Rondi
 Photographed by Gianni di Venanzo
 Set design by Piero Gherardi
 Edited by Leo Catozzo
 Released by Embassy Pictures
 Running time: 135 minutes

Cast:

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|----------------|--|
| Guido Anselmi | Marcello Mastroianni |
| Claudia | Claudia Cardinale |
| Luisa Anselmi | Anouk Aimee |
| Carla | Sandra Milo |
| Rossella | Rossella Falk |
| Gloria | Barbara Steele |
| Mezzabotta | Mario Pisu |
| Guido as a boy | Riccardo Guglielmi and Marco Gemini |

Federico Fellini, director of *THE WHITE SHEIK*, *I VITELLONI*, *LA STRADA*, *NIGHTS OF CABIRIA* and *LA DOLCE VITA*, made a notable contribution to experiment in the contemporary commercial cinema in “8½,” when he used the subjective camera technique to relate a subjective topic—the confusions, doubts, and memories of a 43-year old film director embarking on a new work as revealed through his own dreams and fantasies. In some parts of “8½” the camera moves constantly, its rhythmic swinging making full use of the wide screen to define vast areas of space and depth. The movement forces the spectator (to resist is to become dizzy as in riding on a roller coaster) to take the role of the protagonist and to feel physically what it is like to be a celebrity who is surrounded by countless demands and pressures. The spectator shares the entire vision of the film director—not only seeing the surface reality in front of his eyes, but also experiencing what passes before his mind’s eye. Faces come into closeup as they enter his consciousness, but at other times the camera slides past them as when one walks through a crowd without really seeing the passing faces. The film slips into surrealism when the director lets his mind drift into fantasy or falls asleep. A strange effect of repeated mirror images is developed as we discover that the movie the director is trying to script is actually the same one we are watching.

Fellini has wittily anticipated criticisms of “8½” by inserting them in the dialogue of characters who discuss the film that is to be made. Whether he has been able to tell us any more about the film director than more objective means might have allowed may be debated, but “8½” is a virtuoso’s display of technique.