CLEVELAND ON FILM

It's hardly Hollywood on the Cuyahoga, but over the years Cleveland has served as the location for quite a few movies. The first movie made in Cleveland was the silent, educational film "Snow White," made in 1916. That year, another silent film, "The Perils of Society," was shot here.

After sound entered the picture, the following movies were shot, in whole or in part, in the Cleveland area:

1936: "It Happened in Cleveland," a two-reeler filmed with a cast of John Marshall High School students, shot at John Marshall, the Statler Ballroom and the Trianon Ballroom at East 93rd Street and Euclid Avenue.

1949: "The Kid From Cleveland," directed by Herbert Kline, with George Brent playing a sportswriter who helps a disturbed kid. The film features the 1948 Cleveland Indians, who had won the World Series the year before.

1954: "One Potato, Two Potato," directed by Larry Peerce, with Barbara Barrie, Bernie Hamiton, Richard Mulligan and Robert Earl Jones. The drama about an interracial marriage was filmed and in and around Painesville.

1966: "The Fortune Cookie," directed by Bily Wilder, with Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau and 10,000 Cleveland Browns fans. Matthau won an Academy Award for his role in the film. The Browns agreed to sue the Cleveland Browns after he was injured while photographing a football game. Locations included the Stadium, Public Square and St. Vincent Charity Hospital.

1966: "Up Tight," directed by Jules Dassin, with Raymond St. Jacques, Ruby Dee and members of Karamu Theater. This black thriller about criminals who shoot down a private plane was later blamed for money for a remake of the John Ford film, "The Informer." It was shot on the East Side of Cleveland.

1968: "Double-Step," produced by Roger and Gerald Sindell. Not much information is available on this film, a tragedy about the family of a cellist for the Cleveland Orchestra. It was shot in Shaker Heights, Brownlee and in the Fine Arts Garden and included a score played by the Cleveland Orchestra.

1970: "Aquarius," produced by John Pappas, traded on the popularity of the Broadway musical "Hair." The rock musical was shot at locations including the Cleveland Museum of Art.

1973: "Return to Campus," directed by Harold Corsan, is about an older man who goes back to college and ends up on the football team.

1978: "The Deer Hunter," directed by Michael Cimino, with Robert De Niro, Meryl Streep, Christopher Walken, John Savage and John Cazale, won the Oscar for best picture, best director and best supporting actor (Walken). The drama about a group of friends torn apart emotionally and physically by the Vietnam War was shot in U.S. Steel's blast furnaces, at St. Theodorus Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Lemo Hall and on the near West Side.

1977: "The Gathering," directed by Randal Kleiser, with Edward Asner and Maureen Stapton, was a made-for-TV movie about a woman who is in and out of institutions for her alcoholicism. It was based on a novel by Cleveland-area author Joyce Rebeta-Burdittas, and included interiors shot downtown near Public Square.

1982: "The Escape Artist," directed by Caleb Deschanel, with Griffin O'Neal, Raquel Vertu and Tedi Corp, told the story of an orphaned teenager who uses his talent for magic and escape artist to come into his own and escape adulthood. It was shot downtown near City Hall, in the Flats, in Ohio City and in the Cedar Faifmount area of Cleveland Heights.

1983: "A Christmas Story," directed by Bob Clark, with Peter Billingsley, Darren McGavin and Melinda Dillon, was based on the Jean Shepherd's hilarious "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash." Narrated by Shepherd, it fondly and amusingly remembers growing up in the '40s and wanting nothing more than a Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas (which, as every adult warns him, "will put your eye out"). Parts of the film were shot in Higbee's downtown store, and on Public Square.

1984: "Stranger Than Paradise," directed by Jim Jarmusch, with John Lurie, was the first feature made by onetime Cleveland lecturer. The minimalist comedy followed three laconic pales — a Hungarian girl, her assimilated brother-in-law and a man from New York City, to Cleveland and the rigid slopes of Lake Erie, to Florida. Cleveland locations included the East 9th Street Pier and the banks of Lake Erie on the West Side.

1987: "Light of Day," directed by Paul Schrader, with Michael J. Fox and Joan Jett, was about a factory worker and his sister who dream of making it as rock musicians. It was filmed at, among other locations, the Euclid Tavern, a playground at Euclid Heights Boulevard and Hampshre Road in Cleveland Heights, and Marshallen Productions on the West Side.

1988: "Major League," directed by David S. Ward, with Tom Berenger, Charlie Sheen and Wesley Snipes, was a broad comedy about a hapless Cleveland Indians team and their improbable winning season. Because of schedule difficulties at the Stadium, Milwaukee stood in for Cleveland much of the time, but the title sequence offered a wide array of famous Cleveland sports, including Public Square, the Terminal Tower, the Flats and Lake Erie.

1991: "Paradise," directed by Mary Agnes Donoghue, with Don Johnson and Melanie Griffith. A remake of the French film, "La Grande Chemise," it starts in Cleveland and follows a young boy to a small town in the Deep South, where he comes of age during one eventful summer.

Compiled by Plain Dealer film critic Joanna Connors