SLIDE 2  
*Impressionist painters used their brushes to splash intensity, light, and movement onto their canvases. In the same way, Impressionist filmmakers used the camera to capture a character's sensory impressions of the world on film.*

SLIDE 3  
*As you view the 7 minute video, Avant Garde - Impressionism, take notes.*

SLIDE 4  
**French Film Industry in Crisis**
- Out of date production companies
- Hollywood cinema dominated the market
- French audiences saw 8 times more Hollywood films than French
- French films were not popular and did not have international appeal
  - French companies struggled to make 100 films per year
  - Germany made over 200 annually
  - US made over 500 annually
- Disunity with film industry

SLIDE 5  
**French Film Industry Recovery**
To regain the market - boost production:
- French directors and filmmakers experimented
- Film techniques utilized and enhanced:
  - camera movement
  - fast rhythmic editing
  - optical devices

SLIDE 6  
**Periodization**
1918 Pictorialism
Films focused on manipulation through camerawork, mise-en-scene, and optical devices.
1923 Montage
Rhythmic and fast paced editing became more widely used.
1926 Diffusion
Filmmakers pursued other stylistic and formal modes.
  - Optical Devices
Characteristic Editing Patterns

SLIDE 8     Between 1918 and 1929, filmmakers explored cinema as an art.
            fascination with pictorial beauty
            intense psychological exploration

SLIDE 10  Take notes as you view the 5 minute commentary by Kristin Thompson.

SLIDE 12  In the clip from The Smiling Madame Beudet (1922), what do the
techniques used show you, as a viewer?

_______________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________

SLIDE 13  STYLISTIC PARADIGM
            Based on David Bordwell’s resemblance model:

La Roue (1922)
1. Camerawork
2. Mies-en-scene
3. Optical Devices
4. Characteristic Editing Patterns

Impressionist films manipulate plot time, subjectivity, and the registering of characters' mental states, dreams, and fantasies.

SLIDE 14  1. CAMERA
Frame Mobility: most influential technological innovation
Camera distance: close-up (as synecdoche, symbol or subjective image) illustrates psychological exploration of characters
Camera angle (high or low)
Camera movement (independent of subject, for graphic effects, pov)
- A moving shot could be an intrusive onlooker through its movement in a scene. In this way, the camera breaks the 4th wall and makes the audience aware of its presence onscreen.
- most influential technological innovation - development frame mobility

SLIDE 15  2. MISE-EN-SCENE
- Lighting (single source, shadows indicating off-screen actions, variety of lighting situations)
- Décor
- Arrangement and movement of figures in space

SLIDE 16  3. OPTICAL DEVICES
Character subjectivity is illustrated using optical devices such as:
SUPERIMPOSITIONS - to convey character's thought or memory
FILTERS - can suggest flashback
OUT-OF-FOCUS LENS - suggest memory
SLOW MOTION - often used to focus on significant element in character’s subjectivity
POINT-OF-VIEW SHOTS/IRIS - show flashback, dream sequences, memories, visions, mental images

SLIDE 17  4. EDITING
FAST RHYTHMIC EDITING
to display a character’s unstable mental state/flashback. This editing style makes audiences aware of itself.

CROSS-CUTTING

SLIDE 18  5. NARRATIVES
  Conventional
  Emotionally Charged

SLIDE 20  DECLINE

1920s - Impressionists operated independently; forming their own production companies and leasing studio facilities from Pathé and Gaumont in exchange for distribution rights.

1929 - Most foreign audiences had not taken to Impressionism; experimentation was attuned to elite tastes.

Production costs were rising with the arrival of sound, Gance and L'Herbier became even more free-spending.

As a result, filmmakers' companies either went out of business or were absorbed by the big firms.

Napoleon and L'Argent failed and were reedited by the producers; they were among the last Impressionist films released.

SLIDE 21

French impressionism destabilized familiar or objective ways of seeing, creating new dynamics of human perception. Using strange and imaginative effects, it altered traditional views and aimed to question the norm of the film industry at the time.
SLIDE 22  **IMPRESSIONISTIC THEORY**

✧ Cinema as an art form
   - Art, as a form of expression, conveys personal vision
   - Art creates an experience - that experience leads to emotions for the viewer
   - Art creates feelings not by direct statements - but by evoking or suggesting them
   - Artwork create momentary feelings – or impressions

✧ Cinema as a synthesis of other arts
   - Photogenie – the quality that distinguishes a film shot from the original object photographed

SLIDE 23  **INFLUENCE**

‘The freely moving camera used to convey a character's perceptual experience was quickly picked up by German filmmakers, who popularized this technique and usually have gotten credit for inventing it. Perhaps the most famous artist to carry on the Impressionist tradition was the young designer and director Alfred Hitchcock, who absorbed influences from American, French, and German films during the 1920s. His 1927 film *The Ring* could pass for an Impressionist film, and during his long career, Hitchcock became a master of the precise, using camera placement, framing, special effects, and camera movement to convey what his characters see and think. Character subjectivity has long been a staple element of storytelling, and the Impressionists were the filmmakers who explored this aspect of film most thoroughly.’