Pastiche

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Pastiche, genre, history

At a meeting of the Hollywood Directors' Guild in 1950, a speaker stood up and identified himself thus: 'My name's John Ford. I make Westerns'. The anecdote is often told to illustrate Ford's modesty and straightforwardness, but here I want to explore two other implications. First, Ford knows what he is doing (making Westerns), and secondly what that is is clearly seen as unproblematic, a fixed reference point.

Ford knows that he is making Westerns, and in that sense he is self-conscious, but it would seem inappropriate to call most of his, or anyone else's, Westerns self-conscious: to know what you are doing does not necessarily mean that what you do is marked by foregrounded awareness of the fact. Moreover, Ford did in fact make some Westerns that are extremely self-aware meditations on the genre, but they do not use the particular form of self-awareness that concerns this book, pastiche. One of the concerns of what follows, then, is to explore the differences between knowing what you are doing (straightforward genre production), reflecting on this in a work and pastiche as a specific form of that reflexivity.

Ford also takes what a Western is as given. This is rather different from the makers of The Great Train Robbery 1903, who, despite its reputation as the first Western, probably did not know they were making a Western, and it is a fortiori different from John Huston or Otto Preminger, who, in directing, respectively, The Maltese Falcon 1941 and Laura 1944, certainly did not know they were making films noirs. Genres do not spring immediately into existence, they must be identified and promulgated as such, and pastiche plays its part in this. This historical process is the second underlying concern of this chapter, which opens out at the end to a wider consideration of pastiche and history.

My focus is deliberately restricted to narrowly definable genres and to film. In so far as genre just means type or kind of work, it can designate very broad practices. Aristotle, usually taken to be the first (extant) namer of genres in Western tradition, speaks of such broad categories as epic, tragedy, comedy, dithyramb² and 'music composed for the flute and lyre' (1965: 31); some film genre theory argues that the main genres of cinema should really be considered to be the narrative feature, documentary and avant-garde film (Williams 1984).

There are also different ways of differentiating between generic categories, including the emotional affects offered and sought (e.g. melodrama, comedy, romance (cf. Thomas 2000)) and textual qualities of form or of subject matter (Dubrow 1982: 7).

Such broad approaches are not, however, relevant to a study of pastiche. This requires circumscribed, and therefore recognisable and isolatable, styles and concerns. Thus one cannot really pastiche, say, tragedy in general, although one can undoubtedly pastiche ancient Greek, Elizabethan or French classical tragedy, or, even more specifically, Euripidean, Shakespearean or Racinian tragedy. Similarly, the long tradition of the sonnet has been a source of reference and engagement for all who have taken it up (ibid.: 14-23), but pastiching within it none the less requires greater specificity – to write a sonner now is merely to write within a given poetic structure; you would have to write one like Petrarch and the Petrarchans, the English Romantics or the French symbolists before it could be eligible to be considered an act of pastiche.

The genres I focus on are filmic. This is partly because of my relative familiarity with them (genre study entails considering a large number of works and I did not feel inclined to become competent in, say, the Petrarchan sonnet or gangsta rap) and partly because of the liveliness of recent writing in the field (e.g. Altman 1999, Gledhill 2000, Neale 2000, Thomas 2000). My focus is narrower still, considering just two genres, the Western and film noir (especially neo-noir). I look at these in relation to the two issues I derived from Ford's declaration: kinds of generic self-awareness (focusing especially on the Western) and the role of pastiche in defining genres (neonoir). At the end, on the other hand, I consider pastiche in relation to history in the widest terms.

Generic self-awareness: the Western

The Western is instantly recognisable, in its look (cowboys and Indians, homesteaders, prairies and deserts, townships, ranches and saloons, sometimes wagon trains, sometimes cavalry, Payll lettering, 3 certain stars 4) and its sound (gunshots, horses' hooves, the clink of spurs, laconic male speech, distinctive musical scoring⁵). These are not only in the films but also in posters, trailers, records, reviews, websites and learned works. You won't get all of these in any one film but you will get enough to evoke a world and with that other expectations: narrative situations (e.g. chases, shoot-outs, bar-room brawls) and thematic structures (e.g. the confrontation of wilderness and civilisation). It is all this that also makes the Western amenable to self-awareness. Its very distinctiveness is liable to make people especially aware that they are making or choosing to go to see this kind of thing, and this in turn enables reflection upon so making and choosing, reflections that can be built into the films as self-awareness.

In this section, I begin by looking at kinds of self-awareness in the Western, of which pastiche is only one. I then look at pastiche in the Western in three

instances. First, films in which characters themselves are seen to pastiche Westernness and which usually in the process wind up becoming actual or pastiche Westerns. Then, two groups of films - spaghetti Westerns and Westerns centred on women - that, by virtue of, respectively, geographic distance and a major change in generic gender organisation, tend to be especially aware of the Western as a distinct choice with distinct expectations, an awareness liable to result in pastiche. Both these two groups raise the historical question of pastiche in relation to what it pastiches and I end this section with a preliminary discussion, through the instance of the Western, of pastiche and the historical processes of generic definition, a topic that is more centrally the focus of the subsequent section on neo-noir.

Self-awareness in Westerns takes many forms. There are travesty (the Marx Brothers' Go West 1940, Cat Ballou 1965, Carry on Cowboy 1965, Shanghai Noon 2000) and parody (A Bear of a Story 1916, His Bitter Pill 1916, The Frozen North 1922, Buster Keaton's Go West 1925, Along Came Jones 1945, The Paleface 1948, Blazing Saddles 1974, Rustler's Rhapsody 1985)6 Westerns. There are remakes (several of The Last of the Mobicans 1911, 1920, 1932, 1936, 1992, Pale Rider 1985 (re-make of Shane 1952)) and ripostes (Rio Bravo 1958 as a reaction to High Noon 19527). There are Westerns that introduce new (or what are perceived as new) elements to the genre and may thus make the habits of the genre more evident: new angles on subject matter (Native Americans (Broken Arrow 1950, Alien Thunder 1973, Dances with Wolves 1990), women (Johnny Guitar 1954, Heartland 1979, The Ballad of Little Joe 1993)) or new stylistic elements (noir (Pursued 1947, Ramrod 1947), Gothic (High Plains Drifter 1972, Comes a Horseman 1978), naturalism (Will Penny 1967, The Culpepper Cattle Company 1972), 'acid'8 (The Shooting 1967, El topo 1972, Dead Man 1996)). There are Westerns that in dealing with ageing cowboys seem to be writing valedictories for the genre, which means signalling awareness of it even while saying it is dying (Ride the High Country 1962,9 Monte Walsh 1970, Unforgiven 1992). I shall not discuss all these here (though some may use or court pastiche). There are also both self-reflexive and self-conscious Westerns that are, none the less, not pasticke, which I shall discuss next. And then there is pastiche Western.

Westerns may have built into them a reflection on the significance of what they are doing. Among the most celebrated instances, John Ford's Fort Apache 1948 and The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance 1962 (Pye 1996) both use a double time frame, relating what happened in the past to the present, and end with a verbal reflection on what has been recounted. In Fort Apache, the commander of the eponymous fort, Colonel Thursday (Henry Fonda), leads the cavalry into a disastrous battle with the Apaches;†† the film ends with a

coda, in which Thursday's second-in-command, Captain, now Colonel, York (John Wayne), in conversation with a group of journalists, affirms the heroic image of Colonel Thursday with which they are familiar, over against the depiction of Thursday that we have just seen. In The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, a senator and his wife, Ransom and Hallie Stoddard (James Stewart and Vera Miles) travel from Washington DC to the small Western town of Shinbone to pay their respects to an obscure, recently deceased cowboy, Tom Doniphon (John Wayne); Ransom is celebrated as the man who shot the notorious outlaw, Liberty Valance (Lee Marvin), an act that represents the establishment of law in the West; Ransom tells the local reporters what really happened, that is was Tom Doniphon who shot Liberty Valance.

Both films tell the truth about a legendary character: the dead Colonel Thursday (who foolhardily led his troops to their death but is celebrated for his courageous last stand) and the living Senator Stoddard (who did not shoot Liberty Valance, even though his celebrity rests on the widespread belief that he did). The use of flashbacks puts the events recounted, which form the bulk of each film, into a perspective. Fort Apache, whose coda takes place soon after the main story, stresses the continuity of values between the two time frames: the cavalry should continue to live by the values embodied by the image of Colonel Thursday. The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, on the other hand, stresses the gap between the two frames, not only in the evident ageing of Ransom and Hallie but also in symbolic and stylistic particulars: the train journey, which takes the older Ransom and Hallie to Shinbone, contrasts with the stagecoach journey that opens the flashback; slow dissolves, into and out of the flashback and within it, suggest the fading slow sadness of memory (Leutrat 1995: 42-44, 75-76). Yet in neither film is there a stylistic difference between the frame and the main story. There is no pastiche, nothing that keeps to the fore the fact that the tale is being recounted and in Western film form. The reflexivity comes from the contrasts in time and mood, from the very fact that the story is being told and not simply unfolding before one (something one only knows in Fort Apache at the end), and above all from closing verbal observations.

In Fort Apache, York affirms the truth of an image the journalists have learnt from school books and paintings against the truth he, and now we, know: the books and paintings are, he avers, 'correct in every detail'. In The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance, the editor of the Shinbone Star tears up the notes that his junior reporter has taken from Ransom's story of what really happened and pronounces: "This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend". In Fort Apache York conceals the truth, so that only we know the distortion involved in producing the myth of the West; in Liberty Valance, the representative of the media knowingly colludes in perperuating a myth he now knows to be untrue, and makes it an article of faith that one should reproduce all such myths. Both films thus reflect upon the promulgation of images of the West, but without recourse to pastiche.

Such self-reflexive Westerns build into themselves elements that prompt reflection on what they are doing. Others, however, signal a consciousness of

[†] These are just the Hollywood versions; there are also German (1920, 1965) and Italian (1965) versions and television versions (1971, 1977).

^{††} An allusion to Custer's battle with Sioux and Cheyenne at Little Big Horn.

themselves as Westerns that also indicates a wish to distinguish themselves from typical genre production. In 1955 André Bazin wrote of the kind of 'Western that would be ashamed just to be itself (Bazin 1971: 149). He had specifically in mind post-war Westerns such as Duel in the Sun 1946, High Noon 1952 and Shane 1953, but the cultural status of the Western had long, perhaps always, been such that many films would not want to be 'just' a Western. One of the commonest forms of this is the development since the 1920s of the A-Western as American epic: The Iron Horse 1924, The Big Country 1958, How the West Was Won 1962, Dances with Wolves 1990. By using historical figures, incidents and motifs (the building of the railroad, the wagon train, the encounter of red and white peoples) and/or foregrounded moral dilemmas, significant locations, painterly composition of the landscape, sweeping orchestral music and high production values, A-Westerns declare themselves to be about history and myth, celebrations of the archetypes of the nation or of humanity itself. In this development there is a self-consciousness about the genre which often feels like a species of self-importance: 'Westerns are better when not so self-importantly self-conscious' (Pauline Kael on Shane (quoted in Countryman and von Heussen-Countryman 1999: 73)); 'The A-Western is conscious, pompously conscious, of its responsibility to represent America's essence' (Simmon 2003: 114).

Very often in the attendant preparation and publicity, and sometimes in the films themselves, there is a sense of such productions seeking to be a cut above the typical or B-Western. David Selznick, for instance, was resistant to making Stagevoach because he saw it as 'just another Western' (Buscombe 1992: 15).† It was by grafting 'the sturdy appeal of the traditional Western proper ... on to the classier pedigree of the Hollywood A-feature' (ibid.) that Stagecoach came to be both made and promoted. As Edward Buscombe shows, Stagecoach is in its deployment of generic tropes and its casting deeply rooted in the B-Western and such antecedents as the Wild West Show; yet it fashions its group of stagecoach travellers into significance as a cross-section of the society that conquered and settled the West, while the look of its photography and costumes also made it, in the Hollywood Reporter's words, 'one swellegant Western that even the carriage trade will go for' (quoted in ibid.: 88).

Stagecoach melds B-Western attractions (John Wayne, Indian chases, cavalry to the rescue) with A-Western values (Claire Trevor, narrative significance, picturesque cinematography). Shane seems to want to purify the genre more fully, 'to freeze the Western myth once and for all' (Warshow 1971: 150), 10 dwelling on A values and insisting on the actual momentous significance of B attractions. Even more than Stagecoach, it was made and perceived to be 'above the run-of-the-mill horse opera' (Daily News, quoted in Countryman and von Heussen-Countryman 1999: 72) and notably what was perceived to be the Western's most degraded manifestation, 'singing cowboy glamour' (ibid.: 33). Its studio, Paramount, pushed it as Academy Award material (always a sign of a certain level of pretension), campaigned for the script to be awarded the Pulitzer prize and had the music turned into a Symphonic Suite, all bids for attaining the cultural status of literature and classical music. Edward Countryman and Evonne von Heussen-Countryman also emphasise the handling of the elements in the film itself. There was considerable attention paid to historical accuracy in dress and setting; composition draws on the conventions of nineteenth century landscape painting, while the music uses the orchestral palette of pastoralism and what Aaron Copland had forged into the symphonic Western sound (Brownrigg 2003: 65-66). Elements are also made to appear as if in archetypal simplicity. Much of the detail of the book is discarded. The long introduction of Shane (a series of shots that has him riding past the camera into the landscape, then picked out against it, gradually moving closer to the homestead that is the main location for the film) and his equally long departure (receding into the distance, disappearing over the horizon, with the boy's voice endlessly repeating his by now iconic name) take a relatively standard element of the Western, the lone cowboy who comes along, sorts things out and then moves on to fresh situations and adventures, and pushes the treatment towards the abstract and mythic. Likewise, the confrontation with the chief badman is pared down in the miseen-scène to the moral and literal antinomy of light and dark. None of this makes Shane pastiche in the sense of signalled imitation: it does not deploy conventions to acknowledge their role in mediating the story and world view unfolded. Rather, it takes the conventions as something more than mediations, as tropes that can be revealed to contain an essential truth about America and eternal human verities of morality and character. It does this with such care and deliberation that the conventions stand out starkly - if you don't buy into them as authentic archetypes, they are liable to appear merely conventions, to be perhaps pastiche in the sense of failed achievement rather than deliberate choice.11

Neither self-reflexive nor self-conscious Westerns, as I have defined them, use pastiche. The latter operates in two ways in Westerns: within the world of the narrative and/or in the style of the film itself. In the first case, we see people adopting Western dress and behaviour; in the second, the construction of the film is signalled as itself adoption.

Characters in films may perform Westernness. We may not know that they are doing so at first. In New Frontier 1939, we see a cowboy (John Wayne) chased by Indians; when he makes it into a town, it is revealed that this was a show put on to celebrate the town's jubilee, with whites dressed as Indians (Simmon 2003: 101-102). In Hearts of the West 1975, set in the 1930s, the hero Lewis Tater (Jeff Bridges), stumbling in the desert on the run from thieves, suddenly finds himself surrounded by whooping and hollering cowboys, who,

[†] Stagecoach may have been a version of Guy de Maupassant's short story 'Boule de suif'. (Buscombe suggests most critics are doubtful (1992: 35-36), although Joseph McBride upholds the view in his biography of Ford (2003: 278, 284).) When Boule de suif was filmed in France in 1945 André Bazin thought it seemed a good 'pastiche' of Stagecoath (unaware of the latter's putative relation to 'Boule de suif') (Bazin 1975: 146).

it turns out, are on location for a film. In these cases, the West is put on as pageant and movie, respectively, but we do not know that what we see is a put-on until it's over, producing retrospective pastiche. In the case of Hearts of the West we may suspect that the whooping cowboys are pastiche from the filmic context: it opens with a spoof silent Western film-within-the-film. Lewis is established as a naïve writer enamoured of the legend of the West and the overall tone of the film is lightly comic; even so, the effect of the sequence resides in the possibility that these are real cowboys surrounding Lewis.

Wild and Wooly (1917 John Emerson) offers a more sustained presentation of pastiching at this level. In it Douglas Fairbanks plays Jeff Hillington, a rich young New Yorker obsessed with the West. The people of the Western town Bitter Creek hope to persuade Jeff's father, a railway magnate, to build a branch from the main railway line to a mining development out of town; he sends Jeff to investigate. Learning beforehand of Jeff's obsession with the West, the town decides to transform itself into the way it was in the 1880s, making over frontages and interiors. When Jeff arrives in town, he is delighted to find, apparently, the West just as he imagined it. When townsfolk pretending to be bad men molest the town beauty, Nell, or confront Jeff, he soon despatches them, and without harming them, since the townsfolk have put blanks in his gun. They even lay on a train hold-up and an Indian uprising. However, under the cover of this fakery, Steve, an Indian agent, and his Mexican side-kick Pedro, decide really to rob the train, using the uprising as a distraction, with Pedro abducting Nell while he's at it. When this happens and the Indian uprising gets out of hand, Jeff proves himself a true Western hero, recovering the loot from Steve, rescuing Nell first from Pedro and then from the Indians, and liberating the town from the Indians.

In Wild and Wooly the people of Bitter Creek put on a Westernness that they no longer practice - except that some of them really do still want to rob trains, make off with girls and cross over to Mexico, and the Indians can still be troublesome (especially when, as here, they discover the alcohol in the town saloon). The film moves from the most overt declaration that the West of the Western no longer exists to an affirmation that really it does. We see the modern small town being turned into a Western township (crudely painted signs replace modern ones, bear skins are hung in the hotel saloon, people change into cowboy and cowgirl clothes); characters wink at one another behind Jeff's back and we see them going into character as bad guys for his benefit; and there are elements of parody, notably in the intertitled dialogue (by Anita Loos): when Jeff, barely arrived, says he'll sort out the threat from Wild Bill Highy of Dirty Ditch (already a parodic, almost burlesque, set of names), one man says "Wish you'd come last Thursday, there wasn't a killin' all day long", as if everyone in the West just lives for killings; and when Jeff shows an interest in Nell, a local man says "Take keer of our Nell, pard, - she ain't had much book-larnin' and she's had to use alkali for face powder, but her heart's as big as all outdoors", lines combining mockery of Western pronunciation, sentimental clichés and a touch of the grotesque (alkali for

face powder). All of this keeps reminding us that the West we and Jeff see is fake. Yet at the end of the film, the town remains as it has been made over, classic Western adventures have been experienced for real and the townsfolk on horseback wave their cowboy hats in farewell to Jeff. In other words, it becomes a Western pretty much like any other. It even in one of its final intertitles refers to itself generically. Jeff has gone back East by train, leaving Nell behind. 'But wait a minute!', cries a title, 'this will never do! We can't end a Western without a wedding.' Thus by the end Wild and Wooly, which seemed to set itself up as a modern comedy, is referring to itself as a Western and, in the process, spelling out one of the rules of the genre, that it should end with the cowboy settling down. 12

It is always clear in Wild and Wooly that the townsfolk are putting on the West, even if Jeff is fooled by it. Yet it becomes the real thing. This is because of course what the townsfolk are putting on is a Western, both in the sense of the characters acting in line with broad cultural ideas of the West and also the performers and filmmakers in fact using the mise-en-scène, performance style and scenarios of the Western film.

Wild and Wooly makes clear the sources of Jeff's fascination with the West in media images. He reads dime novels, has cowboy and Indian paintings on his office walls and a statuette of a cowboy on a rearing horse on his desk. Much of his imagination of the West is really of rodeos: when he gazes at a painting on his bedroom wall, he takes up the pose of a man in it, and, by means of a dissolve, the painting comes to life and the man mounts and rides a bucking bronco, a standard rodeo turn; then Jeff practices circling a lasso, twirling it round himself as in a Wild West Show.

Jeff also goes to see Westerns at the movies. Here the film performs a characteristic trick. We have already been introduced to the character of Nell in Bitter Creek and seen her go out riding. Jeff goes to see a movie, The Round-Up, in New York. When he comes out he looks at one of posters for the film, of a woman on horseback. Cut to Nell riding in the country, then back to Jeff telling a bystander "That's the kind of mate I'm going to have!", then back to a medium shot of Nell on horseback, turning and riding off down a trail. The editing makes it seem that Jeff in his imagination sees the real Nell, and thus the film itself confuses the West of Jeff's fantasy with the real West of Bitter Creek; but then, of course, both Wests are really movie images.

This play on imagination, reality and film is established from the beginning of Wild and Wooly. It opens with three pairs of shots, each contrasting the Old West (wagon train, stagecoach, a posse riding into town) with today's (locomotives, goods train, cars). This contrast seems to be repeated with the introduction of Jeff's father. We see him in collar, tie and suit, at breakfast reading a newspaper; the film then cuts to a young man wearing a scout hat, sitting cross-legged on the ground eating off a tin plate, a cactus behind him on one side, a wigwam and a cauldron on the other. Though in reverse order from the three opening pairs, we seem here once again to have a contrast between today (in the East) and the Old West. But then we see that the young

man is reading a Western story book and the camera tracks back to reveal that he, cactus, wigwam, cauldron and all, are actually indoors, in a rather spacious and well appointed room in a house. This is Jeff, who is playing at living as a Westerner, but the film uses both an editing pattern and a tight framing (that excludes any non-Western mise-en-scène) that makes the image seem momentarily to be from a Western.

Once the film has given us both this and the edit of Nell, really out West, and Jeff looking at a cowgirl on a movie poster, there is no problem in having the townsfolk's charade of Westernness segue into a Western film proper. After all, what are both characters and performers doing but acting as in a Western, the standard backlit sets and scrubland exteriors the very ones used for making straight Westerns? The paired opening shots might even already be indicating this to us: the shots of the West today are actuality material, but the shots of the Old West could only be recreations, and recreations for the movies at that.

If, in their different ways, Jeff and the townsfolk put on being and then become Westerners, the film itself also plays with being a Western and by the end becomes one. This is fun: as in all his films of the period, Fairbanks' performance conveys boyish amusement at doing all this, not least in the set pieces of his athletic display, always indicating that he, Fairbanks, is not fooled by either put-on or for-real Westernness (cf. Studlar 1998). However, if it is fun, it is also disquieting. In the move via pastiche to straight Western, Jeff's open-hearted, hybrid imagination of himself as a cowboy living like an Indian (his father calls him "that Comanche Indian")¹³ and the film's recognition of the corrupt treatment of the Indians by Indian agents (in the character of Steve) give way to standard issue images of Indians as gullible and drunkards, while the sequence of Jeff riding to the rescue of Nell surrounded by Indians intent on abducting her for their Chief's delectation is straight out of The Birth of a Nation (a massive hit from just two years before). In the move from playing at Westernness to being a Western proper, Wild and Wooly seems to require shedding any sense of fellow feeling or political awareness vis-à-vis the Indians.

The move in Wild and Wooly from putting on the West to becoming a Western is also present in Westworld 1973. This imagines a future in which people visit fictional 'worlds' - ancient Roman, medieval, Western - perfectly simulated not only in setting but even down to the humanoids inhabiting them. We know from the start that 'Westworld' is a simulacrum and are reminded that it is so throughout the film by scenes in the control room, shots of the 'worlds' seen on CCTV and glances and verbal exchanges between the clients. Consequently, we know that when a client shoots someone, he's only shooting robots. Yet in two particulars this acting out of Westernness (by clients and robots alike) bleeds into real Westernness (that is, becomes like a Western film rather than a fictional world within a sci-fi movie). First, the sequences within 'Westworld' are for the most part shot like a Western. Confrontation scenes, for instance, use cutting between antagonists and

bystanders to build up tension and shot: reverse shot of shooter and shot-at. Western-style background music is used that, as in all movies, we have to assume the characters cannot hear, but which underlines events and creates general Western ambiance for our benefit. Thus, although we always know from context that it is simulacrum, many sequences taken on their own could be from a Western movie. Second, as the film develops, the machinery gets out of control and the robots start killing the clients for real, leading to a sequence of pursued and pursuer through a canyon, at which point the film has actually become a Western.

My Name Is Nobody (Il mio nome è nessuno 1973) crosses the idea of people performing Westernness, as in Wild and Wooly and Westworld, with the selfreflexiveness of Liberty Valance and in the process does not so much, like the former, become a Western, as become itself pastiche. In it, Henry Fonda plays Jack Beauregard, a legendary gunman shadowed throughout the film, much to his irritation, by the young gunman, Nobody (Terence Hill/Mario Girotti).† Beauregard is tired of being a legend and just wants to get away to Europe (he has a ticket booked on a boat from New Orleans), but Nobody does not want the myth of the West simply to peter out with the likes of Beauregard slinking quietly away. He therefore stages Beauregard's exit as a suitable finale. First he sets up a confrontation between him and a mass of charging cowboys, the Wild Bunch, saying:

"Just think of it, 150 pure bred sons of bitches on horseback and you facing 'em alone. You'll be written up in all the history books."

As Beauregard proceeds to rout the Bunch, a series of cuts between him and pictures in history books illustrating the event, with Nobody's words "You'll end in history" in voice-over, recalls the equation between painting and event in Fort Apache. Except that here, in fact, the illustration accurately represents the event, which has, however, been rigged by Nobody, who has concealed dynamite in the Bunch's saddles, indicating to Beauregard to shoot at the latter not the men themselves, thus exploding them rather than gunning them down. So it's a magnificent last stand, accurately illustrated, yet based on a sly strategy. There is a further echo of Fort Apache. Beauregard does not know what Nobody has planned until the last minute, thus he does face up to the Bunch bearing down on him; like Captain Thursday (that is, also, Henry Fonda), his character is not in doubt, even if the grounds on which his ultimate fame rests are (in Apache, distorted subsequent representation; in Nobody, at-the-time trickery).

[†] The name Nobody is taken by the Native American character in Dead Man (specifically on this borrowing, see Rickman (1998: 395-396)). Jim Kitses (1998: 27) refers to Dead Man as 'a striking pastiche of The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance'. For further discussion of Dead Man and revisionism in the western, see Hall (2001) and Rickman (op. cit.).

The film does not end with this confrontation. Defeating the Wild Bunch consolidates Beauregard's legendary status rather than relieving him of it. The only way out is to die, suitably. Beauregard and Nobody face each other in a final shoot-out in the street, Nobody draws first and Beauregard falls. But this is in New Orleans, has been staged for a photographer and is faked: Beauregard is not really shot even though everyone thinks he is, leaving Nobody with the burden of being the Man Who Shot Jack Beauregard.

As with Wild and Wooly and Westworld, My Name is Nobody shows characters putting on the West, but more extensively than them it also itself pastiches the Western. For instance, every so often there is a long sequence of the Wild Bunch riding through the country. They are a huge number of men, much more than the eponymous Bunch of Sam Peckinpah's 1969 film, 14 and it is the riding through the country, rather than getting somewhere, that matters: the Bunch spread out across the (very) wide screen against impressive landscapes of boulder and desert; the great swirls of dust thrown up by the galloping; and devices which dwell on the loveliness and excitement of the movement and formation (including a spectacular crane shot, an extreme close-up of horses' legs in soft focus, slow motion, and a use of a telephoto lens so that, while the bunch are clearly moving towards the camera, they never seem to get any nearer). All this is to music (by Ennio Morricone) that combines confident whistling of a cheery, soaring theme, male choral grunts and tinny guitar riffs, in other words, worked-over Western music elements, heightened at points by a synthesised 'Ride of the Valkyries'. In short, these sequences are slight exaggerations of blockbuster Western elements, made all the more notable by their lack of any significant narrative function, so that they become displays of generic form qua form, that is, pastiche.

This handling of the Wild Bunch sequences is characteristic of Italian spaghetti Westerns,*15 and it is to these that I now turn more fully. Pastiche is their ground both contextually and textually.

Spaghetti Westerns have long been referred to in passing as pastiche. Michael Parkinson and Clyde Jeavons (1972), for instance, call them, disparagingly, 'astonishingly popular and lucrative pastiches of the hallowed American Western', 16 and Edward Buscombe, favourably, 'highly self-conscious pastiche' (1992: 75). The very fact of a Western being made not in the American West or even North America, and at a time when Hollywood Western production was considerably diminished, may suggest that at the very least it is apt to be pastiche, to be not the real thing and evidently conscious of it.¹⁷ Moreover, the cultural presence of the Western, the overdetermined sense of its Americanness in the context of the overwhelming global presence of American popular culture, means that its iconography and style is always

redolent of American values. To do Americanness in an evidently Italian (or at any rate un-American) way is liable to feel like putting it on.

Liable but not inevitable. In a discussion of the German films based on the novels of Karl May, Tassilo Schneider (1998) argues that while these German Westerns do not (as some have averred) simply reproduce the Hollywood model, nor are they involved in pastiching it; rather they transform it into a utopian space of adventure, stripped of the historical/mythic connotations of American Western mise-en-scène and narrative structures. Schneider explicitly contrasts this with the spaghetti example.

The spaghetti, pastiche sense of Europeans doing Americanness without quite inhabiting it is carried in the names of both the heroes and the actors playing them as well as of other personnel. The heroes' names sometimes (Ringo[†]) have Hollywood Western connections; more (Biondo, Django, †† Sabata, Sartana, Trinità) do not; and still others are a rejection of naming ('The Man with No Name' in Leone's Dollars trilogy, Nobody in My Name is Nobody). They are played sometimes by Italians who retain their (star) names (Franco Nero) or who sometimes do but at other times adopt punningly Hollywoodian names (Giuliano Gemma/Montgomery Wood) or hybrid Anglo and Latin ones (Gianni Garko/John Garko, Gian Maria Volonté/Carlo John Wells) or who became known principally by Anglo-Saxon names (Terence Hill (Mario Girotti), Bud Spencer (Carlo Pedersoli)), or else sometimes actually by Hollywood stars, bit players, newcomers and has-beens (William Berger, Clint Eastwood, Henry Fonda, Burt Reynolds, Lee Van Cleef); one of the most popular spaghetti stars, Tomas Milian, was Cuban; secondary roles often went to older Hollywood stars (Dan Duryea, Farley Granger, Jack Palance). Some directors, well known from other genres, went under their own names when making spaghettis (Damino Damiani, Carlo Lizzani), but others sometimes used their own names, sometimes Anglo-Saxon ones: Sergio Corbucci (aka Stanley Corbett and Gordon Wilson Jr), Sergio Leone (Bob Robertson), Sergio Sollima (Simon Sterling). No-one doubted for long that these were Italian films: 18 they were marketed as such, most of the other personnel have Italian names and many of the performers were familiar Italian faces; equally, anyone would know that the Western is a quintessentially American genre. The names play promiscuously with this sense of mixture, not simply and invariably substituting Anglo for Italian names, but more a teasing of the taken-for-grantedness of the underlying generic reference points, a teasing that contributes to the default pastiche tone of the films.

My Name is Nobody ratchets this up in its use of Henry Fonda and Terence Hill. Fonda embodies the classic Hollywood Western (at its most morally serious).

^{*} Frayling (1981: xi) notes other culinary terms used to qualify non-American Westerns - Sauerkraut, Paella, Camembert, Chop Suey, Borsch and Curry Westerns - and also that another food term was once used for Hollywood Westerns: oaters.

[†] Echoing the name of John Wayne's character in Stagecoach and of the reluctant legend limmy Ringo in The Gunfighter 1950.

^{††} Named after Django Reinhardt (according to Hughes (2004: 59)), that is, a foremost European exponent of a quintessential American art form, jazz.

Hill the spaghetti (at its most slapstick, in especially the two Trinity films (see below)). The opening sequence stresses Fonda's pedigree by reworking the beloved barbershop sequence from My Darling Clementine 1946, down to his spraying himself with perfume after a shave (whereas in Clementine the barber sprays him, to his subsequent mild embarrassment); the confrontation with the Wild Bunch reruns, as noted above, Custer/Thursday/Fonda's last stand in Fort Apache. Beauregard's (Fonda's) desire just to get away to Europe gestures towards to spaghetti Westerns and their complex relation to the legends of West. Hill/Girotti/Nobody/Trinity, on the other hand, is given ample opportunity to display his impish taste for violent tricks and outwittings and his constant desire for beans and sleep.

But spaghettis do not need to be as self-consciously and specifically allusive as this. They mostly pastiche general tropes of the Western rather than specific films, such as the entry of the cowboy hero and the shoot-out.

Nearly all spaghetti Westerns open with a lone protagonist riding into the film's world, most commonly coming in to a landscape from a space behind the camera (as in such canonical Hollywood openings as My Darling Clementine and Shane (discussed above)), then, via a series of shots riding through country, arriving in a small town. Dimitris Eleftheriotis (2001: 115-122) shows how the opening of Ringo and His Golden Pistol (Johnny Oro 1966) pushes this towards a celebration of Ringo/Giuliano Gemma's 'physical presence, in his black clothes, golden pistol and his love for gold'. The opening of They Call Me Trinity (Lo chiamavano Trinità 1970) likewise emphasises Trinity's character: close-ups of a gun in a holster and boots with spurs being dragged over sand, then a track starting on Trinity/Hill/Girotti's face with stubbled chin and his hat over his eyes, yawning, and then the camera moving down his body, revealing that he is lying on a travois, showing his tattered granddad vest and very faded, dusty jeans and finishing on bare feet, an image of cool (and, as the English language title song has it, Trinity is 'always cool'), then finally a long shot, horse and travois coming in from behind the camera screen left, all to the accompaniment of a breezy tune whistled to acoustic guitar accompaniment. The opening anatomises the hero: his gun, his boots, his Western-attired body. The close-ups do not serve a narrative function, as they might further into a Hollywood Western, but rather display the adoption of Western elements. This is emphasised by the fact that nothing is doing what it is supposed to do narratively in a Western: the gun and boots are out of use, the travois is being used for lazy transport not carrying the sick, Trinity is not on the alert. Like the rest of this film and the sequel Trinity Is Still My Name (Continuavano a chiamarlo Trinità 1971), this sequence nudges towards comedy: the tone of the music is light-hearted and to begin with a hero being carried lazily along on a travois rather than riding into the scene is a gag. Yet this is not parodic nor, yet, travesty, but pastiche, the savouring of generic elements as generic elements.

The shoot-out is a set piece of the Western, early on in a film the moment at which the hero demonstrates his prowess, climactically the decisive

confrontation between him and the forces of disorder. Cowboys in Hollywood Westerns have preternatural abilities at being quick and unfailingly accurate on the draw. While dazzling and thus, we at some level probably know, a trick, the agreed fiction is that the skill resides in the man himself. The dazzle is pushed much further in spaghetti Westerns. Where in, say, Dodge City 1939, My Darling Clementine 1946, Gunfight at the O.K. Corral 1956, Doc 1971, Tombstone 1993 or any of the other films based on the O.K. Corral shoot-out (cf. Buscombe 1988: 115), everything is clear spatially (where people are in relation to each other and the setting) and temporally (the sound and sight of someone shooting cuts to someone falling back shot), in spaghetti Westerns, characteristically, extreme close-ups and extraordinarily rapid editing fragment space and time and make it impossible to work out how the hero manages to outshoot his opponents. Since the latter are often many against the hero on his own, the thrill is even more incredible. When in My Name Is Nobody, Beauregard/Fonda, inside a barber's shop, outshoots three men outside who draw on him simultaneously, the barber's son turns to his father and asks "How'd he do it, pa? I only heard one shot", and gets the reply, "It's a question of speed, son". Yes, indeed, but here, as throughout spaghettis, it's the speed of editing rather than of drawing and shooting. 19 Western heroes everywhere win shoot-outs thanks to editing, but in spaghetti Westerns the editing itself constitutes the excitement, a visceral explosion of near-subliminal cuts that stun the eye. Spaghetti Westerns thus, and characteristically, take a standard formal procedure of the Western and then exaggerate and intensify it, to the point that it is carrying most of the force rather than the action it is disclosing.

This procedure is typical of pastiche, although spaghetti Westerns are seldom, perhaps never, all pastiche. It is the default mode that then enables them to push things towards, for instance, light-hearted slapstick (Trinity), manic perversity and violence (Django), political comment (A Bullet for the General [Quien sabe?] 1966, Duck You Sucker [Giù la testa aka A Fistful of Dynamite] 1971, Bad Man's River [E continuavono a fregarsi il milione di dollari] 1971) and high seriousness (Once Upon a Time in the West [C'era una volta il West] 1968). There are, however, perhaps two major impulses, often combined: boys having fun and ironic self-reflection.

The boys-just-want-to-have-fun impulse is already evident in The Life of an American Cowboy (see below) and the Douglas Fairbanks' Westerns that made Wild and Wooly possible, and also in Tom Mix, Tim Holt, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and, on television, The Lone Ranger and Rawhide. Such figures, just like Billy the Kid or, come to that, Shane, are detached from the world of

[†] Which, running from 1959 to 1966, starred Clint Eastwood, who then, beginning with A Fistful of Dollars 1964, went on to be the most internationally famous star of spaghetti Westerns (even though he only made three).

homesteaders and townships, free to roam in search of adventures. This is even more strikingly so of spaghetti Westerns, where the hero is also detached from many of the meanings of the Hollywood Western, even from the meaning of the lone hero in the Western. As Eleftheriotis shows, Ringo, Django and the rest stand out against the mise-en-scène of the film, which in any case lacks detail, and thereby are doubly disconnected from the ideological freight this carries in the American Western. This is of a piece with the impossible death-by-editing shoot-outs and the frequent sequences of cheery, aimless riding about the countryside that fill spaghetti Westerns. As a result, instead of the hero representing the values of the cowboy and the West, he is valued for how he looks, how he rides, how he shoots - as Eleftheriotis puts it, in spaghettis 'to be pretty is to shoot well' (2001: 122). The fun then is not just the galloping about, the (often slapstick) rough and tumble of a brawl, nor alone the explicit and sometimes aestheticised portrayal of the entertaining nastiness of violence, but also male narcissism and sometimes homoeroticism in the presentation of the body. What is still at some level ideologically mythically, historically - motivated in, even, Douglas Fairbanks or The Lone Ranger, is in spaghettis prized for the opportunity afforded for certain kinds of human (though, in the event, exclusively male) pleasures of voyeurism and display. The Western generic tropes remain important, for they provide certain notions of American freedom, opportunity, space and mobility favourable to the kind of fun spaghetti boys want to have; yet, precisely because there is a sense that it is only a bit of fun, all these notions are no longer quite meant, which is the sense in which the fun of the spaghetti Westerns is a kind of pastiche.

Spaghetti Westerns do also sometimes take themselves, the Western and its Americanness more seriously. I want to consider here one of the best known spaghetti Westerns, Once Upon a Time in the West (figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3), and in particular one moment, the arrival of Jill (Claudia Cardinale) at Flagstaff, a moment in which one sees the process of pastiching at work.

Once Upon a Time in the West deals with a standard moment in the epic of the West: the coming of the railroad and the establishment of community (cf. The Iron Horse 1924, Union Pacific 1939, Carson City 1951, How the West Was Won 1962 (Buscombe 1988: 205-209)). It gives this a Marxist gloss: the railroad is both a technologically advanced and a commercially driven enterprise that is antithetical to the lawless, chivalrous, revenge-driven, in short, precapitalist mentality represented by gunfighters; the railroad entrepreneur is driven by greed, ready to do anything to achieve commercial dominance (including employing pre-capitalist gunfighters); but in the process he must produce a workforce, and at the end of the film it is they, united around the figure of the woman, who seem to be about to inherit the earth. As in classic Marxist models, capitalism sweeps away feudalism and brings the benefits of order and technology; it also produces, and exploits, a working class that is necessary to it and will eventually overthrow it and create a communitarian society. This intellectual schema co-exists with sequences of incredible out-shootings, laconic humour and romantic lyricism, producing the film's particular 'once upon a time' flavour.†

The historical model and the lyricism are condensed in the coming of the railroad to the town of Flagstaff and in the scene of Jill's arrival there by train. She comes as bride to one of the settlers, McBain, but he is not at the station to meet her. She looks about her, then makes enquiries and has herself driven out to McBain's ranch, Sweetwater (where she discovers he has been killed). Three things indicate the work of pastiche: music, camera movement and Jill.

As Jill looks about her, there is a honky-tonk piano playing somewhere; we do not see where, but given its familiarity and the sound level mixed with ambient sound of voices, a light wind and the unloading of the train, it's reasonable to assume it's playing in some nearby bar room. Jill looks at her watch, then checks out the station clock; on a cut to a close-up of the latter, the honky-tonk piano and ambient sound fade away; on the cut back to Jill, we have the introduction of the musical phrase that introduces the title theme of the film. The sound level is now clearer and closer, with only ambient wind underlay; the uneven, almost hesitant phrase is played, over a deep sustained bass chord, by a harpsichord, 'pungently but also fragilely metallic' (Miceli 1994: 143). The tempo and instrumentation are distinctive for a Western, meditative and archaic, yet both the syncopation of the rhythm and the timbre of the instrument in fact carry over sound qualities from the honkytonk piano. In part this is an effective way to bridge the shift from music within the world of the film to music without it (diegetic to non-diegetic), so that the latter seems to rise imperceptibly out of the former. It is, though, also a demonstration of the pastiche principles of distortion (slowing down the rhythm) and discrepancy (substituting harpsichord for honky-tonk piano), used here not just to maintain the sense of a film that is doing but not quite inhabiting its ur-genre (the Hollywood Western) but also to suggest perspectives of quiet reflection and archaism (that is, perhaps, Europeanness).

Jill stands and looks about some more as this phrase is repeated; then, with the camera cut back some distance from her, framing her just left of centre of the widescreen and with her facing the camera, she starts to walk directly towards it. At the moment she starts, the title theme comes in on the soundtrack, a soaring melody sung wordlessly in an effortless, clear, high soprano (Edda Dell'Orso), with string orchestra accompaniment; as Jill goes to the station manager's office and thence out into the town, the melody completes and then, via a tremendous rising orchestral bridging crescendo, is taken up again on massed violins with accompanying wordless mixed voice choir and occasional harpsichord chords. Romantic music does occur in Westerns, though nearly always specifically tied to love scenes and usually pretty well indistinguishable from such scenes in other films (Brownrigg 2003: 242-244), and where such themes have been used as a basis for the score (most famously and influentially in High Noon) they have not usually been sung by women.

The nearest anticipation of Once Upon a Time in the West in this respect is Johnny Guitar, itself an extremely unusual Western that more generally prefigures Once Upon a Time in its search for a new look and tone for the Western. 20 In Johnny Guitar, the melody, if not as long-lined and soaring as Once Upon a Time, is less regular and strophic than the High Noon and other such themes, and it is sung by a female voice (Peggy Lee). However, the latter is heard only over the final moments of the film and addresses a man (Johnny); elsewhere, the theme is used always to accompany the romantic/melodramatic scenes between ex- and renewing lovers Vienna (Joan Crawford) and Johnny (Sterling Hayden). Achingly yearning, it never attains the dreamy lyricism of the Once Upon a Time theme, which is moreover associated with a woman, but not within a love context, rather as a pioneer. The main theme is a transformation beyond pastiche, but it has been arrived at (and is usually introduced elsewhere in the film) via pastiche (the archaic, meditative phrases) and, as we shall see, contributes to the pastiche effect of the camera movement and the figure of Jill as well as more broadly to the 'Once Upon a Time' feel that casts the whole film into the ambit of pastiche.

When Jill advances towards the camera, it starts to move backwards away from her; it then tracks right with her movement into the station manager's office and then, in exact synchrony with the rising musical crescendo, it cranes up, past the office roof, to disclose a panorama of Flagstaff, with Jill, now bottom centre of the frame, walking into the town (and thus up the screen). Camera movement is common enough in Westerns, usually to follow the exciting actions of characters or sweep across landscape; here it begins by following a narratively interesting but not exciting character movement and then gives way to a spectacular crane shot of a townscape. Moreover, the town is in the process of being built and the central character is a woman. In other words, again a basic procedure of the Western is both exaggerated (the smoothness of the camera's movement, the precision of its interaction with the music and character movement, the technical prowess of the track giving way to the vertiginous crane) and discrepantly applied (to a town, one moreover in the making, and to a woman).

Both the voice (and, perhaps, lyricism) of the music and the camera's centring insist on Jill as the key to the image. Women in the Western have tended to play secondary roles (cf. Levitin 1982 and Cook 1988). They may be whores, necessary comfort and release for the lone cowboy, in which case they cannot usually become wives and mothers. The latter roles, often marginal in terms of action, are none the less symbolically essential, especially in the more historically minded Western, for they are the unspoken ultimate reason for the action, the settlement of the land by the reproduction of the white race. Jill draws on the same symbolism and she has nothing to do with the aberrant female cowboy discussed below. She does, however, amalgamate the whore and wife/mother image. She was a whore before coming West, arrives as a bride and turns out to be McBain's wife already and, therefore, his widow. At the end of the film, after some hesitation, she decides to settle, and, as one



Figure 4.1 Once Upon a Time in the West 1968 (Paramount/The Kobal Collection).

of the other characters (Cheyenne (Jason Robards Jr)) has suggested, takes out water for the railroad workers. This is an image of the nurturing woman, wife, helpmate, mother, but it is also a sexual image, for it signifies her acceptance of the main thrust of Cheyenne's advice:

"[You] can't imagine ... how happy it makes a man to see a woman like you, just to look at her. And if one of them should pat your behind, just make believe it's nothing - they earned it".

This reconciliation of whore, wife and mother in the figure of Jill is achieved partly through foreignness. Jill comes from New Orleans, with its continental European, mixed race and sexually permissive connotations, rather than the morally pure, mono-racial and asexual New England backgrounds of many Western women, embodied supremely by Clementine (Cathy Downs) in My Darling Clementine. And Jill is played by a well-known Italian star.

[†] Cardinale had already played in a Western, The Professionals 1966; there she was a railroad millionaire's wife kidnapped in Mexico who does not want to return to the West; as with Leone's use of Henry Fonda (classic good guy, one time Mt Lincoln) in Once Upon a Time as an unremittingly callous killer, Cardinale is cast exactly against her previous association with the West: she wants to be there, for the railroad.



Figure 4.2 Once Upon a Time in the West 1968 (Paramount/Rafran/The Kobal Collection).

Jill's/Cardinale's Europeanness (Italianness, spaghetti-ness) makes possible this reconciling twist on the usual roles of women in the Western, contributing to the film's sense of the desirability, otherness and impossibility of the West of the Western.

The final shot of the film is accompanied by the theme tune, which undergoes a variation taking it to even more lyrically soaring heights, Edda Dell'Orso now recorded with yet more echo, so that it sounds almost

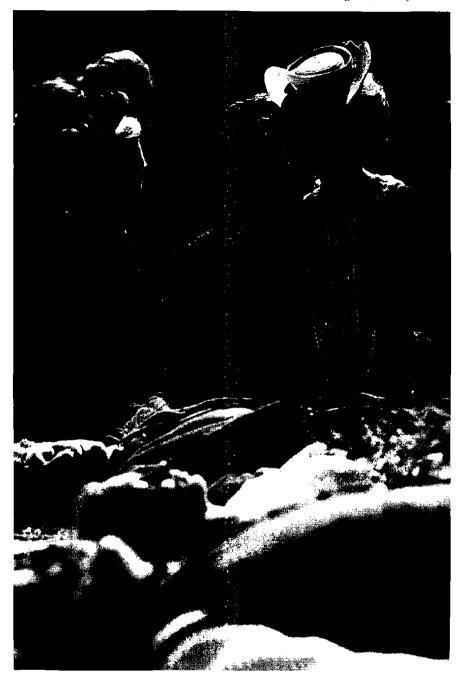


Figure 4.3 Once Upon a Time in the West 1968 (Paramount/Rafran/The Kobal Collection).

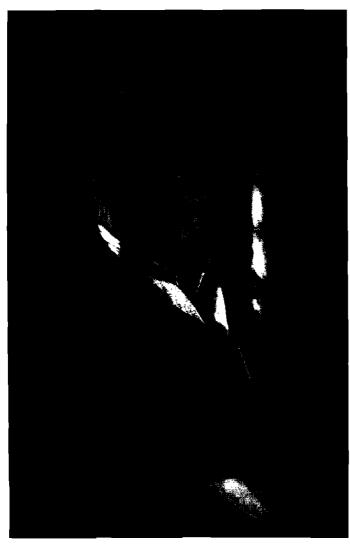


Figure 4.4 The Quick and Dead 1995, Ellen's clothes (Tri Star/The Kobal Collection/ Close, Murray).

like a female chorus, the embodiment of the principle of womanhood. The shot is one long take, the camera first zooming in quite fast on Jill as she strides confidently towards the men carrying two pails of water, then pulling much more slowly back, as she chats to the men (notably one of the black workers, all part of the utopian vision of inclusion) and they gather around her, with the dust of their movement creating a haziness around them all.

As the camera cranes back higher, the film's title in Playbill lettering appears over the shot and recedes spiralling from the camera until it fades from sight, while the camera tracks now away from the group around Jill to the panorama of the working men and beyond that to the two main surviving male characters riding away. The towering music and camera movement, the hazy image and the spiralling title all evoke what has all along been implicit and what that title makes explicit, namely, that this is all fairy story, a long 'if only', a desire for there to have been a West like this along with an acknowledgement that there never was (and a Marxist critique of the historical West), a pastiche sublime.

Part of the pastiche quality of Once Upon a Time in the West is achieved, as already noted, through the impossible reconciliation of female gender roles in the figure of Jill/Claudia Cardinale. A genre so overdetermined in terms of gender as the Western is liable to be thrown out of gear when there are sex role changes: a change in gender role is a change in the generic conventions. However, the Jill/Cardinale reconciliation of roles does not challenge the options for women in the Western. Other films (Annie Get Your Gun, Calamity Jane, Cat Ballou, Cattle Queen of Montana, Johnny Guitar) have played with putting women in the male Western roles. Often this has meant pushing the genre flavour towards acceptable feminine spheres of melodrama and the musical, often getting a laugh out of the cowgirl protagonist and insisting on the need for her to learn femininity in order to get the thing she obviously most wants, a man. All of this reaffirms the Western's generic gender equations. However, two mid-90s films, Bad Girls 1994 and The Quick and the Dead 1995, both put women centrally into male roles in a way that risks highlighting those conventions as conventions, which could mean pastiche. This is what happens overwhelmingly in The Quick and the Dead but only occasionally in Bad Girls.21

The latter tells of a group of prostitutes who become outlaws after shooting a client molesting one of their number. In the process, they hook up with various men, one of whom is captured and has to be rescued by the women, in a sequence leading to a final shoot-out. Bad Girls works very much within the style of the Hollywood A-Western feature (albeit not a super-production) and for the most part finds plausible ways to reconcile the women with their masculine roles: the idea that whores were independent women who could look after themselves is in any case not far-fetched, and the film takes care to show that some of the characters have to learn to use a gun, while others are willing if need be to use their femininity to get what they want. The Quick and the Dead is based around a shooting contest, one of whose contestants, and the ultimate winner, is, unprecedentedly, a woman, Ellen (Sharon Stone). Its style is a hybrid of Western traditions (wholly integrated with one another, thus not pasticcio): part B-Western (boys - and a girl - just having fun in a pointless, sadistic contest), part A-Western (high production values, with Stone near the highest point in her career), part contemporary Hollywood art cinema (a dark cinematographic and musical palette reminiscent of Seven 1995),

part spaghetti (gunfights as moments of visceral explosive pleasure for the viewer as well as of cinematic sleight of hand, music based on Morricone (cf. Brownrigg 2003: 98) and a denouement that explicitly references Once Upon a Time in the West²²).

An index of the films' tendency towards pastiche - and the difference between them - resides in costume.

For most of Bad Girls, the women wear women's clothes. This may provide a sense of cognitive dissonance, women in lacy bodices and voluminous skirts, with long flowing hair, riding fast astride horses to rescue one of their number from the gallows, chasing after a bolted horse and cart or riding off with the booty from a train hold-up. Yet everything about the film - how it is acted, shot, its music in the expansive tradition of The Big Country and The Magnificent Seven - tends towards encouraging us to adapt our ideas of Western action to accommodate it being performed by women who do not thereby have to be seen as masculine.

Only at the end of Bad Girls do the women dress in cowboy clothes: Stetson hats, patterned shirts, waistcoats, gun belts, black, brown or beige jeans and boots. In The Ouick and the Dead, in contrast, Ellen wears male clothing virtually throughout: brimmed hat, duster overcoat, embossed leather jacket, broad gun belt, leather trousers with Mexican slit bottoms, boots with spurs (figure 4.4). In both cases, the sense of pastiche is nearer to the fore, partly because of the ambiguity of such clothes in relation to gender. By the 1990s they had long become accepted, indeed utterly normal items of female clothing,23 and their suitability is if anything heightened in both films by the unmistakably female glamour of the stars who wear them. Yet historically such clothes are identified as male, something reinforced by the asymmetry in such gender divisions in the conventions of accourrement.²⁴ Equally, these specifically Western items of clothing carry particular masculine Western values. Thus, while there is nothing outlandish anymore in seeing women dressed like this, it does still carry an echo of masculinity, of its historical gender and genre appropriateness, something further underlined by the poses of the women with guns at the ready and the narrative situations (a gang facing down another in order to rescue one of their number, a shooting contest), all traditionally male. Just because cowboy clothes are now near normalised as female clothing, but yet carry reminders that this was not always so and a fortiori in generic situations like this, they begin to render the image something like pastiche, something like performing or acting out the West.

This may be at work in the final sequence of Bad Girls, where, dressed as described, the girls ride in what one might call Bunch formation across the horizon and into the ranch of badman Kid Jarrett (James Russo), confront him and rout him and his men in a gun battle. Yet the sequence is not shot and played in a way that pushes it towards pastiche and it might be that to see it as pastiche is to see it as failing to pull off the scene as a straightforward generic confrontation between Western gangs (as if, in other words, the fact that one of the gangs is all female simply must make it feel played at). The Quick

and the Dead, on the other hand, is grounded in pastiche (not least in its amalgamation of Western modes, indicated above). Its central conceit - a contest in which the contestants shoot to kill one another - works up the boys-justwant-to-have-fun impulse into the deadly serious business of a lethal shootout. It also plays explicitly on the issue of clothing and gender. In the opening, pre-credits sequence, someone on horse back, in Stetson and duster overcoat, rides into the scene in classic fashion (My Darling Clementine, Shane, A Fistful of Dollars, Ringo and His Golden Pistol); a man burying gold sees the stranger and thinks they've come to steal from him; he shoots and the stranger falls; as he peers over the body, the stranger knocks him out with a kick; only when the stranger says "Arsehole" do we realise it's a woman. Throughout the film, much is made of the sound, with and without tracking close-ups, of boots with spurs on them. Sometimes they turn out to belong to one of the men, but sometimes Ellen. However, the camera has only to track up Sharon Stone's body, her legs and behind sheathed in leather, for not just her gender but the glamour of it to be evident. Sound and initial image retain the association of this clothing with Western masculinity; the track up the figure reminds us that, outside the Western, such a look is also feminine; but since after all this is a Western, the net result is to emphasise the person wearing these clothes as someone putting something – Westernness – on.

At one point in The Quick and the Dead, Ellen does wear women's clothes, when she is invited to dinner by Herod (Gene Hackman), the organiser of the shooting contest and the man she wishes to kill. We see her lay out satin lingerie, then see her walking across the street trailing a long, flouncy skirt behind her, with a flower-patterned shawl round her shoulders and hair piled high up on her head; later, at dinner, we see she is wearing a frilly off-the-shoulder dress, while shots from below the table enable us to see her garters and black lace stockings, as she releases a small gun from its holster. All of this is excessively feminine, offset by the confidence of her stride across the street and the gun concealed in amongst the lace; in other words. it suggests femininity as masquerade, something put on rather than innately possessed.

Masculinity can also be performed (though the perception of this is perhaps even more threatening than the masquerade of femininity, with masculinity, and especially Western masculinity, strongly invested in notions of naturalness and authenticity). A sense of this seems to be at work in The Quick and the Dead. The contestants act out pointed, only just exaggerated stereotypes of masculinity: Ace (Lance Henriksen), for instance, introduced by the sound of his clinking spurs, then a track along a long shadow and up its source. dressed in black leather embossed with spades, 25 with trimmed beard and moustache and flat black hat, standing holding the saloon doors open; Sergeant Clay Cantrell (Keith David), pausing laconically to light a longstemmed pipe, when asked how to spell his name when names are being taken for the contest, and replying "Correctly", wearing a blue cavalry officer overcoat and presenting himself later as a "gentleman adventurer", deep voiced.

very conventionally handsome but, still surprising given the genre and the Southern indicators, African-American; ²⁶ and Spotted Horse (Jonothon Gill), in black suit with long black hair and braid, and chunky Native American necklace, speaking in defiant but broken English ("Many white men leave this town in wooden box"). More developed is the Kid, played by Leonardo DiCaprio. He looks as pretty (clean, blonde, floppy hair, pink, smooth complexion, often smiling) as Sharon Stone (often dirty, always scowling), perhaps even more so; his youthful prettiness clothed in neat, clean masculine Western gear (tastefully blended browns, with, like Ellen, a large loose patterned scarf about his neck) seems far more a performance of masculinity than does hers. This is reinforced by the film's overt deployment of mythic overtones, of Edipus, who is destined to kill his father in Greek myth (just as, according to Freudianism, all men must do symbolically if they are really to become men), and of King Herod, who has all newborn children slain on hearing of the birth of a potential rival, the Saviour, Jesus. Kid is one of the participants in the contest organised by Herod, who turns out to be his father; the time comes when they must face each other in the contest and, against Œdipal (but not Biblical) expectation, it is Herod who kills him and not vice versa. Kid is almost comic in his preening assumption of grown-up masculinity (and Ellen/Stone conveys as much when he first comes on to her and then when she beds him) and is unable to live up the Œdipal archetype. In contrast, Ellen, a woman, puts on masculinity and does deliver on its promise: she does kill the archetypal father (the organiser of the contest and also the killer of her father).

When, at the end Bad Girls, Cody (Madeleine Stowe) finally confronts Jarrett, he is out of bullets; she tosses him one, saying "Die like a man", that is, in a fair shoot-out. The irony of this being said by a woman may also lead to a reflection that what men have always done in Westerns is act 'like' men, that everything is a species of gender performance that only appears to come naturally to one sex rather than another. If Cody and the others may appear to be acting like men in the last part of the film, then her "Die like a man" may in turn suggest that so have the men been all along.

My use of the terms 'masquerade' and 'performance' above draw on now well established discourses within gender studies, stemming, respectively, from the work of Joan Rivière (1986 [1929])²⁷ and Judith Butler (1990, 1991). Their work argues that we should learn to see femininity (Rivière) and gender more generally (Butler) against the grain of what we take them to be, not as given and natural behaviours, but as enactments, based on endless reiteration and imitation. Pastiche may be one way in which works can show that this is so, since it is by definition the open presentation of imitation. However, as with all such aesthetic manoeuvres, it doesn't necessarily work like that. Both films do also slip into the default position of the naturalness of, especially, male masculinity. The contestants and the comparison of Ellen and the Kid in The Quick and the Dead, and Cody's line to Jarrett in Bad Girls, are striking and suggestive, reinforced in the former by the film's overall tone of pastiche. However, both films also have male characters and performances that suggest the naturalness of their assumption of masculinity, the sense indeed that it is not assumed but the embodiment of how they are, that it is being not performance. They may be threateningly bad, but if so have mature authority (Herod/Gene Hackman) or a real sense of threat (Jarrett). The good men may be wounded or restrained (in Bad Girls, Josh (Dermot Mulroney) is captured and William (James LeGros) is wounded, unable to join the rescue party for Josh; in The Quick and the Dead, Cort (Russell Crowe) is a peerless gunfighter who has undergone a Christian conversion and refuses to fight); such maimed or held-in masculinity may serve to explain why the women have to behave as they do, against their upbringing and even natures (and if Cody does face down and kill Jarrett, she and the girls fail to rescue Josh. whom Jarrett kills in front of them). Moreover, while sidelined from the action, the masculine capability of Josh, William and Cort is always clearly established, and they never cease to be attractively virile. Mulroney, LeGros and Crowe all sport designer stubble; this is a major feat of grooming (and thus of putting on masculinity), requiring daily trimming, but it signifies natural growth and is a kind of attractiveness only available to men. In short, if aspects of both films deploy pastiche and thereby break open the masquerade and performance of gender by virtue of generic discrepancy, they also hang on to a sense that masculinity is none the less more appropriate to some people (that is, men) than to others.

Both spaghetti Westerns and those centring on women suggest some kind of distance - cultural, geographic, ideological, gendered - from the standard Western. I by no means wish to argue that such distancing is a sine qua non of pastiche production, but cultural shifts and dislocations are liable to make one aware of the particularity of a convention that one adopts, thus making the option of pastiche more readily apparent.

Spaghetti and woman-centred Westerns also affirm the sense, noted in the John Ford declaration with which I opened, that the Western is a known quantity that is there to be pastiched. Yet very often what is involved in pastiche, as well as other kinds of revisionist and self-aware Westerns, is the construction of an implicit model of the Western that turns out on inspection to be at the least questionable. Once Upon a Time in the West and The Quick and the Dead, for instance, appear innovative in their centring on women, yet the implicit perception, that women are marginal to the Western, may turn out to be, if one looks back across the genre, at the very least exaggerated (Lucas 1998). I retailed this perception above and the effect of both films depends on assuming this to be so, yet it may not be. Again, Sergio Leone's Westerns are often considered canonical to the Italian Western mode (indeed, for many, perhaps most, filmgoers they are virtually the only familiar instances of it), yet they are in many ways exceptional, both to spaghetti Westerns in general and in terms of the narrow band of canonical Hollywood Westerns they reference.

One can push these considerations back further. Edward Buscombe, for instance, comments of André Bazin's much-cited judgement on post-war superwesterns like *Shane* that he saw in such films 'something extra to the Western which was not there in its original state of innocence' (1992: 85), evoking a very common trope of genre criticism, the positing of an age of innocence when a given genre existed in a pure, uninflected form. Yet films that might be taken to exemplify this state of being appear less innocent when set in their historical context. *Stagevoach*, for instance, often considered the quintessential Western, was, as we have seen, made to be exceptional, not 'just another Western'.

It might even be reasonable to say that Life of a Cowboy²⁸ 1906 involves pastiche and perhaps contributed to the sense that there was something, the Western, to pastiche. Earlier films than this are still now commonly presumed to be the first Westerns, notably The Great Train Robbery 1903, but also A Bluff from a Tenderfoot 1899, The Pioneers 1903, Kit Carson 1903 and Cowboy Justice 1904; however, many researchers suggest that, if categorised at all at the time, these were most likely seen as belonging to, for instance, the railway travel, true crime or ethnography genres (cf. Altman 1999: 34-38, Musser 1990, Neale 1990: 52-56) and the word 'Western' was not used in this sense until around 1910.29 Edwin S. Porter, who had made The Great Train Robbery, none the less regarded the later Life of a Cowboy as his first Western. In it, a cowboy performs various rope and horse rodeo tricks alongside what we would now regard as typical Western moments: thwarting a stagecoach robbery, beating up an Indian in a bar. The sense of a continuity between rodeo stunts and narrative adventures, all part of a 'life', perhaps suggests that they are all performances (as they were in rodeos[†] and Wild West Shows), not to be straightforwardly believed in, that is, not a million miles from pastiche. Although in line with the way films were made at the time, the apparent narrative incoherence of Life of a Cowboy, the sense of it as just a jumble of actions, perhaps also relates to what it is doing in relation to genre: it is referencing the tropes of a genre, the Western, that had barely been named or perhaps even perceived as such. It is a pastiche that contributes to bringing the genre more firmly into existence by indicating that it already exists.

All Westerns know they are Westerns, are in this sense self-aware; but most just get on with the job of being Westerns. A few make self-awareness part of their concerns, some by explicit reflection on the genre, some by tweaking the elements or introducing discrepant notes, that is, by pastiching. All such processes posit what the genre is and was like; they confirm, delineate and at times even bring the genre (back) into being; they are an integral and even sometimes originatory aspect of a genre's history.

Generic definition: neo-noir

Neo-noir is, quite simply, a contemporary rendering of the *film noir* sensibility. (Erickson 1996: 321)

Any work implicitly evokes and acknowledges prior models of cultural production, of which it is necessarily a perception and on which it is necessarily a variation. When this is more evident, we evoke notions of genre (of the work's likeness to a category). With pastiche (and other forms of self-awareness) the process becomes even more explicit, a positive affirmation of what a genre is like, even an intervention in defining it. This dynamic, touched on at the end of the last paragraph, I explore more fully here through the example of neo-noir.

This is a style in contemporary film, television, fashion and publicity³⁰ that reworks the visual style and/or mood of the film noir of the 1940s and 1950s; I shall refer to the latter as classic noir, a notion that neo-noir itself plays a part in producing. It has become a commonplace to consider neo-noir pastiche. In 1974 The Listener referred to 'genre pastiches like Chinatown', a connection then enshrined as one of the most recent usages of the word pastiche in the 1989 Oxford English Dictionary. Neo-noir is one of the pastiche forms that Fredric Jameson identifies influentially as symptomatic of post-modernism (1984: 67). Overviews tend to fall back on pastiche as a term to describe those instances of neo-noir they judge negatively: The Hot Spot 1990 'is little more than a superficial exercise in genre pastiche' (Grist 1992: 285), Romeo Is Bleeding 1993 'never rises above the level of a clever pastiche' (Naremore 1998: 266), L.A. Confidential 1997 'is pastiche, a résumé of familiar elements skilfully assembled to evoke a style from the past' (Hirsch 1999: 13).

The prefix 'neo' suggests the notion of a return to an earlier form that has been in abeyance, and at times it seems almost a synonym for pastiche. Eighteenth and nineteenth century neoclassicism in painting and sculpture looked back to ancient Greece and Rome and to the renewal of these models in the Renaissance, twentieth century neoclassicism in music harked back to the baroque, to music before romanticism. Both kept in play notions of the classic, and this perhaps always shadows neo production; and both, in their self-conscious adoption of a form against the current of contemporary practice, often come into the orbit of pastiche. Similarly, neo-noir indicates a re-adoption of a style that was perceived to have fallen into desuetude. Noir had begun to peter out as a regular product in the mid 1950s, and although there were notable instances thereafter (Odds Against Tomorrow 1960, Underworld USA 1961, The Naked Kiss 1964, Harper 1966, Point Blank 1967, Taxi Driver 1976), they were received as stragglers or isolated instances; it was only in the 1980s that noirs begin to be made in numbers of a critical mass that suggested a new phenomenon: neo-noir.31

What makes the case even more interesting is that the very term 'film noir' was unknown in a Hollywood context until the 1960s. This, and the fact that

[†] Rodeos were themselves show contests based on actual cowboy work; in effect, they pastiched the labour involved in controlling horses and cattle.

neo-noir is so widely seen as pastiche, makes it an especially promising way into considering questions of pastiche and history, that is, for the moment, the role of pastiche in the development and perhaps even the recognition and invention of genres. The discussion that follows assumes that pastiche is indeed a meaningful designation of or within neo-noir. I begin by considering the way in which neo-noir is pastiche, before considering its relation to classic noir.

I want to focus the discussion of neo-noir's pasticheness through one film, Body Heat (1981 Lawrence Kasdan) (figures 4.5 and 4.6). This is often referred to as representative of the form, as occupying 'a seminal position' (Grist 1992: 272), as being 'paradigmatic' (Spicer 2002: 131) and 'symptomatic' (Hirsch 1999: 179), as well as being perhaps the occasion of the first recognition of neo-noir 'as a distinct formal category' (ibid.: 18). It is also named by Jameson in his critique of postmodern pastiche (1984: 67) and Grist concurs that, despite being 'entertaining [and] stylish', its 'superficiality underlines [its] status as a postmodern artefact [because] its generic reference is not parody ... but pastiche' (Grist 1992: 272-273).

In Body Heat, Ned Racine (William Hurt), a lawyer in the Florida town of Miranda Beach, has an intense affair with a married woman, Matty Walker (Kathleen Turner), which leads to them murdering her rich husband. However, Matty has manipulated the situation, such that at the end Ned is in prison for the murder while Matty, presumed dead, has escaped with her large inheritance to a tropical beach.

Body Heat has the following classic noir elements: 32 an aimless man attracted to a beautiful woman, an urban diner, Venetian blinds, neon lights, snap-brim hat, cigarettes, mournful jazz tunes, hard-boiled, sexually charged language, murder, chiaroscuro lighting, fog at night and black skies. It also explicitly echoes two classic noirs in plot and aspects of dialogue and mise-enscène: Double Indemnity (1944 Billy Wilder) and The Postman Always Rings Twice (1946 Tay Garnett), the latter itself remade contemporaneously with Body Heat. Like Matty in Body Heat, Phyllis (Barbara Stanwyck) in Double Indemnity sexually manipulates a small-time professional (insurance agent Walter (Fred MacMurray)) to murder her considerably older husband and reap a rich reward; in both, the opening dialogue between the couple crackles with sexual innuendo; like Matty to Ned, Phyllis at the end declares she really loves Walter, a declaration that remains unproven in both cases; the only major difference is that Phyllis does not get away with the murder. In Postman, Cora (Lana Turner) persuades Frank (John Garfield) to murder her considerably older husband; like Lana Turner, Kathleen Turner is first seen dressed in brilliant and leg-revealing white; like Postman, Body Heat is suffused with an overwhelming sense of heat, conveyed in the title, dialogue and images of sweat on flesh and baths in ice, a heat at once oppressive but also expressive of uncontrollable sexuality.

Body Heat also includes a number of generic cues that nudge us towards seeing its imitativeness.



Figure 4.5 Body Heat 1981 (Ladd Company/Warner Bros/Kobal Collection).

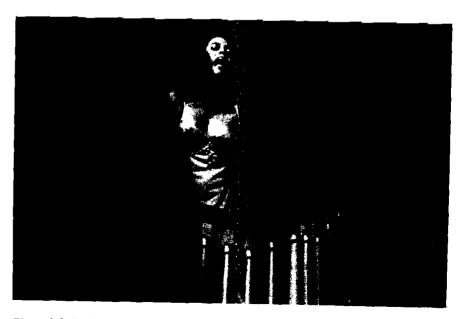


Figure 4.6 Body Heat 1981 (Ladd Company/Warner Bros/Kobal Collection).

- Matty gives Ned a hat, a 1940s snap-brim hat in a period moreover, the 1980s, when men no longer wore hats, suggesting the way he is being set up as an old-style noir fall guy.
- There is a shot of a spider's web with a spider at its centre, inserted between the sequence of Ned setting up the murder and Matty lying awake in bed with her husband; the idea of woman as spider is common in writing on film noir,33 as well as being a venerable tradition, and this shot underlines the sense of Ned's being drawn into the femme's fatal machinations.
- As Ned walks past the band on the boardwalk, before seeing Matty for the first time, it is playing 'That Old Feeling'; the presentation underlines the song's period, with shadows of the musicians thrown up on the cyclorama behind the band, especially when the trombonists and trumpeters stand for their solos, in the manner of presentations of big band jazz in the movies of the 1930s and 1940s; Ned may be having a feeling he's had before, and one as old as desire itself, but it is also specifically a feeling suggested by noir jazz.
- Everyone in Body Heat smokes, which must have struck audiences even in 1981 and much more so now; when everyone lights up at a tense moment in the meeting between Ned, Matty and the lawyers after Mattie's husband's death, one of the lawyers, Peter (Ted Danson), declines one offered him, saying "I don't need my own, I'll just breathe in the air"; later, on a pier, Ned, who's been jogging, offers Peter a cigarette, who takes it and then throws it away, while Ned starts coughing, which he also does later in the film; cigarettes are part of the glamour of film noir, but Peter (and Ned's cough) also articulates the contemporary consciousness of the price of smoking.
- At the start of the film, Ned watches from his bedroom window a fire ablaze; the woman he has just been in bed with asks what it is:

"It's the Seawater Inn - my family used to take dinner there twentyfive years ago - now somebody's torched it to clear the lot."

"That's a shame"

"Probably one of my clients" (sniggers) [...] "My history is burning up out there".

Twenty-five years ago takes us to 1946, with noir in full swing. Ned (whose surname is Racine, French for root) is aware of the significance of the past and able to mouth platitudes about it; but he is also cynical about the reason for the fire and sniggeringly dismissive of his implication in it (as a lawyer to tawdry clients). He thus encapsulates some of the attitudes that neo can have towards classic noir: historically conscious, cynically dismissive, smart-ass.

Most of these nudges are concealed within the dramatic construction of the film (although Stephen Schiff, in a contemporary review, says that it 'has been roundly pooh-poohed in some quarters for being such a calculatedly

noirish picture' (1994: 32-33). 'That Old Feeling' is played not sung, is just ambient and is plausible (seaside resorts often provide dated entertainment). Peter's rejection of smoking is part of his rather prissy characterisation. The fire gives Ned the idea for the murder (he buys an old property, dumps the body in it and sets fire to it) and is also how Matty in turn intends to kill him (by sending him to find something in her boathouse, whose door she has booby trapped to explode in flames). Unlike the explicit commentary in Fort Apache, The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance and My Name is Nobody, discussed above, Body Heat's cues inflect the telling of the story, which is to say that they are part of the way it produces pastiche, indicating noirness as the story goes along. Even more important though is its style.

One would not mistake Body Heat for a 1940s/1950s noir. It does film noir but not quite like earlier film noir did it and it is especially this that makes it reasonable to describe Body Heat as pastiche. This is evident in at least three elements: colour, sexual explicitness and music.

Film noir is so associated, not least by its very name, with the use of black and white photography, that the idea of noir in colour seems a contradiction in terms. However, neo-noir may be said to achieve the quality of noir blackand-whiteness by other means.³⁴ Developments in technology in the 1980s made possible colour photography that could achieve the strong contrasts as well as the inky blacks of the cinematography of the 1940s and 1950s (Erickson 1996: 314-316), while a number of New York-based photographers found ways of lighting and developing colour stock to create a noir-like look; and a very controlled use of colour, especially coloured light, above all red, could create equivalents to the chiaroscuro of classic noir (Naremore 1998: 191-192). All of this is very clearly illustrated by Body Heat (cinematographer Richard H. Klein). When Ned and Matty first meet, on the boardwalk at Miranda Beach, the sky is pitch black and she stands out in the middle of the scope screen in a white dress, bright light rimming the shapely outline of her back, with a tinge of blue and red catching the grey sand and wooden railings. This sense of an over-ridingly black and white composition is even stronger in a later scene of the pair taking a bath together. Strong directional lighting makes their suntanned flesh at points literally white; in the establishing shot, apart from gold pipes, everything is black and white: black bath, black and white tiles, their flesh tones; then a cut to close-up has their flesh standing out against an utterly black background, relieved only by a black and grey striped tile and a splodge of grey-white light in the upper left hand corner of the screen. Elsewhere, such techniques are supplemented by red. When Ned meets her at her local bar, the Pinehaven Tavern, the predominant colours are darkness, (diegetic) neon red and white rimming light; in crosscutting between them, she is shot against red, he against the dark, a variation on the standard romantic lighting set-up of male desire yearning towards the alluring woman. Even in less obviously noir set-ups, Body Heat is drawn towards a restricted palette relieved by red: as Ned goes about setting up the

crime, in the day time, wearing a white shirt and black tie, the colours are predominantly grey, cream, flesh and slate, plus a scattering of red objects: his car, a van that passes on the motorway, a valet in a red waistcoat, signs ('For Sale', 'Rent a Car'), the reflection of red stripes in the car rental window, a red car driven by a clown.

Occasionally this principle of composition is supplemented by a couple of others associated with 1940s/1950s noir. Fragmentation: when Ned returns to Matty's house after she has locked him out (making a show of not wanting to have sex with him), he sees her through the front door, her body broken up by its squares of glass. Skewed angles: when, once he has broken his way into the house, they start to embrace, there is a shot from below, a skewed angle that also includes a turning ceiling fan, the twist of the banisters and a blurry pool of bright light; the colours are white, grey, beige and flesh and her red skirt.

This last shot also illustrates the sexual explicitness of the film: we clearly see his hand between her thighs. That there was sexual lust and act between characters in 1940s/1950s film noir is of course indubitable, but its physical detail is not shown. In Body Heat, as in other neo-noirs, it is very clear who is doing what to whom (e.g. Matty fondles Ned's penis in his shorts, he takes her from behind, they discuss whose genitals are sorest). Neo-noir also spells out the perverse sexualities hinted at in earlier noir: a teenager cruises Ned in the toilet in Body Heat; a woman has a child by her own father in Chinatown 1974; a bull dyke brothel keeper touches up her girls in Farewell My Lovely 1976. All of this is in the noirs of the 1940s and 1950s, but showing it, stating it, in neo-noir marks the latter's distance from its referent, the same as but not the thing itself.

The score of Body Heat (composer: John Barry) is predominantly a languorous melody on tenor saxophone over strings (though the sax disappears in the central sequence of planning and executing the murder). This is par excellence the sound of noir - except that it isn't in fact the basis of the musical scores of 1940s/1950s noir (cf. Boujout 1984, Butler 2002³⁵). Jazz does figure in the latter, but only when heard in night clubs (often played by whites) and is either piano or vocal ballad or else hot jazz. The jazz sound of neo-noir is doubly anachronistic, for not only does it not appear in the noirs of the earlier period but its kind of smooth, sinuous and sultry 'Midnight Jazz' is itself predominantly a product of the 1960s and later.

This last point should give us pause. It suggests that what neo-noir imitates is not straightforwardly noir but the memory of noir, a memory that may be inaccurate or selective. As noted before, pastiche imitates its idea of that which it imitates. This is suggested in the present context by considering another noir made after those of Hollywood in the 1940s and 1950s, one which has the added interest of having been described by its director, François Truffaut, as a pastiche, and yet which sounds and feels very different from the noirs discussed so far: Tirez sur le pianiste (Shoot the Pianist) France 1960.

This tells of a Parisian café pianist, Charlie (Charles Aznavour), who gets caught up in the conflict between his two older, criminal brothers, Richard and Chico, and two other hoodlums, Ernest and Momo. To escape the latter, the brothers hole up in their parents' house in the country. Ernest and Momo kidnap the brothers' other, much younger brother Fido (who lives with Charlie), to get him to take them to the brothers. Charlie's new girlfriend, Léna (Marie Dubois), drives Charlie to the brothers to warn them, but when Ernest and Momo turn up, she is shot dead in the crossfire.

Though there are evident differences from 1940s and 1950s Hollywood noir (there is no femme farale, it is shot in widescreen), Tirez sur le pianiste is none the less recognisably noir in its story and its style.³⁶ The former (based on a novel, Down There 1956, by noir writer David Goodis³⁷) produces a sense of bleakness, of hope doomed to be destroyed by events over which the protagonists have no control. This is especially emphasised by the use of a back story (presented as a flash-back): Charlie had been a rising concert pianist, until his wife, having told him that he got his first break when she slept with a leading concert promoter, killed herself. Now he is an anonymous café pianist, always playing the same tune, until Léna, who has found out about his celebrated past, persuades him to go back to his interrupted career; they go to the café for Charlie to hand in his notice; but the café owner, Plyne, jealous of Charlie's success with Léna, picks a fight with him, in the course of which Charlie kills him. The chance of a new life has been immediately snatched away from him. At the end of the film, Charlie is holed up with his criminal brothers awaiting the arrival of the latter's rivals; Léna comes to tell him that he has been cleared of the charge of murdering Plyne, that it was an accident, but this second chance at happiness is also snatched away as Léna is shot by one of the brothers' rivals and dies in Charlie's arms. At the end of the film he is back in the café, playing the same tune, staring expressionlessly ahead of himself.

As well as this fatalistic narrative, Tirez sur le pianiste is also noir in its style, notably of lighting and editing. The opening sequence, after the credits, has a man careering down a city street with wet pavements, apparently pursued by a car, whose headlights glare into the camera; the pace of the cutting is fast, so that the headlights together with the points of light that the man runs past and a moment when he enters the full light of a street lamp, all in a context of darkness and night, together create a chiaroscuro flicker quality; the noise of the car, the roar of the engine and squeal of tyres and breaks, reinforces the sense of both threat and confusion. Towards the end of the film. long sequences of driving at night - Ernest and Momo with the kidnapped Fido, Léna with Charlie – are lit (in a classic noir and wholly unrealistic style) as if from the dashboard, strong light picking them out in the darkness, with the low angle creating shadows in the chin and over the cheeks.

Much of the film is not lit like this, but with the even, bounced light that characterised French New Wave cinema. Yet every so often noir lighting intrudes. Quite near the beginning, Charlie and Léna are walking home together

down a well- and undramatically lit street, and she realises that they are being followed; she shows him this in her make-up mirror, which we see in closeup, and then drags him down a side alley, plunging them into chiaroscuro set-ups of striated light and then sharply delineated areas of light and dark. This sense of being dragged into the dangerous noir world increases towards the end of the film. The sense of the co-existence of two worlds, conveyed in the contrast of the well lit and the chiaroscuro, is itself characteristic of some Hollywood noirs, where the hero is seen in a domestic setting that he has to leave (often in order to protect it) (cf. The Dark Corner 1946, Kiss of Death 1947, Act of Violence 1949, The Big Heat 1953). At one point, Tirez sur le pianiste even seems to comment on this. Charlie returns home, moving about his flat in the dark, checking that his little brother is sleeping alright; like many characters in noirs, he seems to live in a flat behind a flashing neon sign, and as he moves about, the flat is repeatedly illuminated and then plunged into darkness; however, when he goes into his bedroom and puts on two small table lamps, their light cancels out this effect, safe domestic light cancelling threatening, exterior noir light.

Yet for all this noirness, Tirez sur le pianiste is markedly different from the neo-noir represented by Body Heat. This has to do, first, with the fact that it is a film of the French New Wave (whose interest in noir can be found also in, for instance, A double tour 1959, A bout de souffle (Breathless) 1960, Le Doulos 1963, Alphaville 1965 (Vincendeau 2006)). Body Heat, for all its self-awareness and transgressions (sexual explicitness, a femme fatale that gets away with it), is a classically constructed mainstream Hollywood genre movie. Tirez sur le pianiste, in contrast, is New Wave not only in such stylistic features as digressions, ellipses, gags, jump cuts, loose camerawork and even lighting but also in its relation to genre. If Body Heat produces a consistent, albeit neo, stylistic tone, Tirez sur le pianiste is constantly changing tone. As described above, the opening sequence of a man running frantically along a street immediately evokes anguish (noir); but then he runs into a lamppost (slapstick) and is helped to his feet by a man with whom he proceeds to have a very everyday chat about the vagaries of married life (social realism). This is the procedure throughout the film, which also moves into other generic modes, notably a (Western) shoot-out at the end of the film. Such shifts in tone and generic reference constitute a pasticcio of pastiches, with the interruptions bringing one up short against the fact of imitation and reference.

Such procedures are sometimes interpreted as anti-noir. Jean-Paul Török, writing in Positif in 1961, took the view that the genre of the thriller 'is quite dead' and in any case unusable in France, and thus argued that Tirez sur le pianiste is 'not a film noir'; rather, 'the rules and conventions of the genre are systematically destroyed ... from the inside' (1993: 229), and Truffaut too at that time spoke of it being 'the explosion of a genre (the detective film) by mixing genres' (1993: 135). Whereas Body Heat finds a new way of making a genre film, Tirez sur le pianiste disrupts the very notion of films made coherently within a given genre. This does not mean, however, an attack on noir as such (or indeed any other specific genre). Indeed, Truffaut, in the same interview, refers to what he is doing in Tirez sur le pianiste as what 'I would call a respectful pastiche of the Hollywood B films from which I learned so much' (ibid., emphasis in original). Thus genres become repositories of situations, styles and iconographies that can be used and combined, to set one another off, to highlight, pastiche-fashion, what is characteristic, interesting or suggestive about them.

Tirez sur le pianiste differs from Body Heat not only because its comes out of a different aesthetic project but also because it operates with a different sense of what noir is. Body Heat's referents are Double Indemnity and The Postman Always Rings Twice, big budget, major studio (Paramount and MGM) productions with top stars (Fred MacMurray and Barbara Stanwyck, John Garfield and Lana Turner); it has the production values and star power of other A noirs, such as Laura (C20 Fox 1944; Dana Andrews, Clifton Webb, Gene Tierney), The Blue Dahlia (Paramount 1945; Alan Ladd, Veronica Lake) and Gilda (Columbia 1946; Glenn Ford, Rita Hayworth). Tirez sur le pianiste draws on low budget films from minor studios and with stars most people never heard of: Detour (PR 1945; Tom Neal, Ann Savage), They Live By Night (RKO 1948; Cathy O'Donnell, Farley Granger), Gun Crazy (United Artists 1949; Peggy Cummins, John Dall), The Hitch-hiker (Filmmakers 1953: Edmond O'Brien, Frank Lovejoy), Kiss Me Deadly (Parklane 1955; Ralph Meeker). It is not just that these films have a grainier look, are often either simply dark or more starkly chiaroscuro, with run-down settings and cheap looking or dishevelled costumes; they also have an unhinged quality about them, of unpredictability, fatality and compelling implausibility. It is especially this last that recommended them to the New Wave directors, suggesting as it did a marvellous irrationality. This was a quality admired by the surrealists of the 1920s and 1930s, who celebrated B pictures for their lack of bourgeois realism and hide-bound good sense and who also considered that one of the best ways to appreciate movies was to go in and out of cinemas, not knowing what was showing, so that you freed the imagery of its narrative constraints and you mixed up generic tropes. Tirez sur le pianiste is not a surrealist film, yet it is informed by a sense of the fierce and strange allure of cheap imagery and the tonic effect of promiscuous genre pasticcio. Thus its film noir is not the film noir of neo-noir.38

Not the least surprising thing about this is the relation of Tirez sur le pianiste to the French tradition of film noir. The term 'film noir' was applied in France to Hollywood films in the immediate post-WWII years.³⁹ On the one hand, an analogy was being drawn between the Hollywood productions we now as a result call films noirs and a tradition of French films that had already started to be referred to as films noirs since the late 1930s (cf. O'Brien 1996); but, on the other hand, the Hollywood films were seen by these French critics as something quite different from (and better than) the French. Although later critics have explored the influence of 1930s French noir on the Hollywood variant (Durgnat 1970, Vincendeau 1992: 51, 2006), the early

French critics downplayed or denied it, partly out of that rejection of mainstream French cinema - the well-made, bourgeois, cinéma du papa - that would lead to the style of the New Wave. In this context, American cinema, especially the B movie, seemed more energetic, less hide-bound, with more sense of rebellion and madness. In fact, there is more of French film noir in Tirez sur le pianiste than is often acknowledged. If it consciously takes the doom from Goodis, it could also have found it in Le Jour se lève 1939, Le Corbeau 1943 or Une si jolie petite plage 1949, and the adoption of aspects of American clothing (the trench coats of Charlie and Léna) and weaponry (guns) is evident in many post-war French gangster movies; 40 there is, too, unlike the Hollywood model, an emphasis on everyday life and unmarried domesticity (cf. many Jean Gabin vehicles, and Charlie's tender concern for his young brother Fido echoes especially that of lonely Inspector Antoine for his young son in Quai des Orfèvres 1947), and Charlie's piano playing has little of jazz in it and everything of 'Milord', 'Boum!' and other classic French chansons. These elements, though, precisely because they are there as a matter of course, unaddressed despite the rejection of the cinéma du papa, are not pastiched and if anything serve to underscore the pastiche quality of the elements taken from American film noir.

Looking at Tirez sur le pianiste suggests then two characteristics of pastiche in relation to genre history:

- the form of a pastiche is in part governed by the modes other than pastiching within which it is also of necessity working (mainstream Hollywood as opposed to French New Wave, standard narrative cinema as opposed to modernist pasticcio);
- a pastiche imitates what it perceives to be characteristic of its referent, perceptions that are temporally and culturally specific.

I want to turn now to considering how pastiche also functions in genre history in the identification of genres and also in their renewal.

By 1906 Edwin S. Porter probably knew he was making a Western with Life of a Cowboy (even if he might not yet have used the word), as did John Ford throughout his career, but the makers of Detour, Double Indemnity, Gun Crazy and The Postman Always Rings Twice did not know that they were making films noirs. Neo-noir says that, all the same, they were. The French naming of them so and the take-up of this by Anglo-Saxon critics identified film noir as a generic term retrospectively, and this was reinforced when a sense of noir entered consciously - pastiche fashion - into actual film-making, first in the likes of Tirez sur le pianiste and then in those of Chinatown and Body Heat. Critics may designate a hitherto unsuspected category, but pastiche more powerfully demonstrates the category's existence by being able to imitate it so recognisably; if the category did not exist it could not be imitated.

Thus pastiche contributes not only to fixing the perception of the genre that it pastiches but to identifying its very existence. Moreover, in the case of

neo-noir, it contributes to making the case for something whose existence is in fact problematic. Noir is notoriously hard to pin down, so many supposed instances seeming not to fit: unquestioned noirs turn out to be lacking a feature you'd think indispensable (the landscapes of The Postman Always Rings Twice and Detour are more sun drenched than chiaroscuro, the eponymous Gilda and Laura are not in fact fatal, nor wishing to be), while most overviews contain titles of which I find myself saying "why've they included that?" Yet neo-noir assures us that there was such a thing as noir and that this is what it was like, in practice side-lining the kind of film referenced by Tirez sur le pianiste to fix moody chiaroscuro lighting, fatally glamorous women and midnight jazz scores as essential noir.

Neo-noir harks back to something much less clear-cut than the act of pastiching may make it appear, perhaps not quite something that never existed, but at any rate something more elusive and vague than posited by the neo of neo-noir. In the process, however, it also produces a wave of noir production, so that making things noir becomes simply a way of doing things, aware of where the style supposedly comes from but not especially nostalgic or ironic about the fact, not so much neo-noir as just noir now. Indeed there has emerged a common model of the history of noir (e.g. Grist 1992, Martin 1997, Spicer 2002) that places pastiche neo-noir as something coming between modernist or revisionist noirs in the 1960s and 1970s (Harper, Point Blank, Klute 1971, Chinatown, Taxi Driver) and noirs of the 1990s which either use the genre with a heightened sense of ironic intertextuality, pastiche gone mad (The Two Jakes 1990, Reservoir Dogs 1992, Romeo Is Bleeding 1994), or else have simply got over noir's provenance and distinctiveness and got on with working with its tropes and styles (Red Rock West 1992, The Last Seduction 1994, Someone to Watch Over Me 1987, Seven 1995, Bound 1996).41

This has also made it possible to take noir in new directions, one of the most striking of which is a number of films that put back the black in noir: A Rage in Harlem 1991, Deep Cover 1992, One False Move 1992, The Glass Shield 1995, Devil in a Blue Dress 1995 (cf. Covey 2003, Diawara 1993, Naremore 1998: 246-253, Nieland 1999). Many have argued that the unspoken subject of classic film noir is African-Americans. Black people are only visible in the margins of 1940s and 1950s noir, coming a bit more centre stage with Odds Against Tomorrow 1959 (Harry Belafonte an equal member of a three-man bank heist gang) (Naremore 1998: 233-246). Yet it may also be that the emphasis in so much classic noir on the allure and dangers of the city - allure represented through nightclub jazz, dangers through darkness - speaks of a white perception that the city was increasingly becoming a black space threatening even to white men, leave alone women (Murphet 1998). African-American neo-noirs fill in that space, as if to say this is indeed a black space and this is what it's like. Yet these films are not characterised by pastiche. Even Devil in a Blue Dress, which is set in Los Angeles just after the Second World War, though it involves historical re-creation does not pastiche noir

style but uses and even in some respects refuses it. The Angst associations of chiaroscuro are replaced with muted colour, and voice over and flashbacks are used to create a stable position of knowledge from which the hero, Easy Rawlins (Denzel Washington), recounts and understands the story (Oliver and Trigo 2003: 168-172). The film is grounded in the African-American culture of the period of its setting: its look from a painting behind the credits, 'Bronzeville at Night' 1949 by Harlem Renaissance painter Archibald Motley Jr, its images of black community life from Shades of LA, a photographic collection in the Los Angeles Public Library, and its sound rhythm and blues of the period (not anachronistic Midnight Jazz). Black noirs now fill in the blank produced by the erasure of African Americans from classic noirs, a development made possible by neo-noir, the moment of pastiche, even though black noirs are not themselves pastiche.

The neo-noir moment of pastiche made such things possible because most were never empty exercises in style. Rather the style was used because it was redolent of certain feelings and perceptions that still seemed relevant and serviceable. In a contemporary review of Body Heat, bad object par excellence of the critique of neo-noir, Stephen Schiff observed that 'Body Heat isn't - and can't be - a pure, contemporary film noir' because it is about the way that 'old films noirs ... [have] crept into our dreams until they're part of our unconscious vocabulary' (1993: 33). Noir activated what was still a memory of a way of doing things, a way still appealing and suggestive. Part of this had to do with sexuality, the recovery of a language of glamour and allure in an age where the availability, permissibility and ubiquitous imagery of sex risked making it banal.⁴² James Naremore suggests it also had to do with the need to find a vocabulary to express an equivalent trauma to that of the 1940s, namely Vietnam (1998: 34-37, 209), and perhaps it has continued to express the continued anxieties of a fearful era, better perhaps than more realist approaches.

Pastiche noir is able to recognise and mobilise the structure of feeling it perceives to have been caught by classic noir. It does also seem to say: they don't make them like this anymore. This may be a source of regret and nostalgia - if only we still did Angst and sexiness like this. It may be a source of self-congratulation, a sense of the contemporary noir being an improvement on its earlier incarnation: in colour, able to be sexually explicit, sophisticatedly unfazed by disillusion and so on (cf. Gallafent 1992). Yet in the very moment of reflecting on such films not being made any more, neo-noir is making them, and some of them work genuinely in terms of anguish, sexuality and disillusion, enough to make noir become simply a viable style among others.

There is also a further potential gain. Even noir now must trail a sense of where the style came from, what it came out of, and thus allow the possibility of inhabiting its feelings with a simultaneous awareness of their historical constructedness. But they are not the less feelings for that. Pastiche makes it possible to feel the historicity of our feelings.

History

Generic pastiche is a special case of the way more generally pastiche's signalled imitation at once mobilises the qualities of and indicates a relationship with prior works (albeit sometimes immediately prior and even ongoing). In other words, pastiche is always and inescapably historical. I want in this final section to look a little more about what this implies, moving now away from the instance of genre.

First, to understand what any given pastiche is doing one has to return it to its historical context. This is a basic - and hardly controversial or unusual principle informing all the analyses in this book.

Second, as suggested above following on from my discussion of Tirez sur le pianiste, the historicity of a pastiche involves both the historically specific aesthetic forms within which it works and the prevalent perception of what it is pastiching.

Third, there may be historical circumstances that favour the production of pastiche. Pastiche is to be found throughout the Western cultural tradition, high, middle and low (and I don't see a reason why it should not be found throughout all human cultural production), and in so far as this book is trying to rescue pastiche from postmodernism (as one colleague suggested to me with a twinkling eye), it is to argue that pastiche should not only be understood through the postmodern instance (cf. Wilson 1990). However, there may be more pastiche, or it may be more characteristic, in specific historical periods, which include those listed below. All have to do with the possibility of recognising the fact of form, with seeing that given ways of saying or making or performing things are not simply the inevitable human way those things are said, done and performed.

- Periods in which a multiplicity of traditions are brought together (under the pressure of geographical exploration, imperialism or migration) which enable the perception that particular forms are indeed particular. Thus societies like ancient Rome and Elizabethan England (both centres of imperialism, exploration and migration) and the contemporary globalising and diasporic world might account for the use of pastiche in, respectively, the Satyricon (Petronius C1 AD), Shakespeare and postmodernism.
- Periods in which new media suddenly make available a huge range of hitherto inaccessible works, such as the printing press (enabling the work of Cervantes and Rabelais) and audiovisual innovations since the nineteenth century (Jenny 1982: 35-38),43 the suddenness and multiplicity heightening a sense of the variability of ways of doing things.
- Periods which feel themselves to be coming at the end of an era, such as early Modern Europe and the contemporary world. 44 The emergence of modern literary pastiche in the late seventeenth century, for instance, is concurrent with a feeling in the period of living at 'the end of a great

literary movement, in an epoch suffused with a feeling of unsurpassable perfection' (Mortier 1971: 204-205). Likewise, there is often in postmodernist theory a sense of a 'fin de millénaire, when history appears to have reached its end and when all that seems to be possible is some posthistorical afterpiece, some carnivalesque postlude', such that there is nothing left but 'a new Alexandrianism of quotation, parody and travesty [and, thus, pastiche] ... that plays its serene, intoxicated or despairing games with the left-overs of the cultural heritage and the garbage of the cultural industry' (Pfister 1991: 208).45

- Periods (such as Western modernity since the eighteenth century) in which imitation of other arts is not so universally recognised as the basis of cultural production as to make specific forms of it, such as pastiche, copies or even plagiarism, unremarkable. In other words, without the modern investment in originality, pastiche would probably not stand out as worthy of designation or disdain.
- Cultures in which there is a strong, enforced and thus foregrounded sense of proper form, such as France (cf. chapter 2 p. 53).
- The longevity of a form, such that it comes to feel tired or out of date. This is a common argument about the tendency towards various forms of self-awareness in genres and styles late in their development, something often seen as a form of decadence. Jenny (1982: 59-61), however, sees intertextuality (of which pastiche is a particular case) more positively, as a way of coping with the 'threat of stagnation' that comes from 'cultural persistence' and thus 'a fitting instrument of expression in times of cultural breakdown and renaissance'.
- The importance of repetition and recognisability in the economics of, specifically, mass and capitalist cultural production: mechanical reproduction, multiple copies, series, serials, cover versions, remakes, genres, cycles, formulae, all of which insist on sameness and thus facilitate reflection and play on sameness.46
- The perception by a social group that cultural forms do not speak for them. This might apply to any group (or even isolated individual), though there may be an especially strong case to be made for the affinity for pastiche of Jews and gays in the past two centuries, groups that are both placed outside of prevailing social norms and yet can pass within them and have been increasingly (though unevenly) socially accepted, such that their relationship to cultural norms is at once external (conscious of them qua norms) and internal (able and increasingly permitted to use them).

None of the above are necessary for the production of pastiche nor do they inevitably give rise to it, but they may make it more likely.

Fourth, pastiche has a role in cultural history. In my discussion of genre, I suggested that pastiche may have the effect of affirming the existence of a genre by the very fact of being able to imitate it (arguable of both the early period of the Western and of neo-noir) and also be a stage in generic renewal

(neo-noir being a step towards normalising contemporary noir production). It may also fix for a time the perception of a given form: Proust's Flaubert pastiche sees more of the proto-naturalist in the latter than we might now, Body Heat eclipsed the feeling for B-movie noir evident in Tirez sur le pianiste. Pastiche may also have a role in designating things as past, as I suggested about Hamlet and the kind of drama represented by 'The Murder of Gonzago'. In the next chapter I suggest that this is so also of The Afro-American Symphony and Far From Heaven, although the former also suggests the continuity of the past with the present. In some cases, pastiche evokes (or may be taken to evoke) a past or contemporaneous form or style as somehow more innocent and simple, less self-aware. 47 This seems to be especially true of the Western, each pastiche (Wild and Wooly, My Name is Nobody, The Quick and the Dead) somehow implying that what went before were Westerns unaware of themselves as constructions, but it is also implicit in the use of romanticism in Madame Bovary and can certainly be extrapolated from both The Nutcracker and The Afro-American Symphony, and some have thought it to be true of the implied attitude of Far From Heaven towards 1950s melodrama.

The mode of pastiche may thus be a product of historical circumstances and/or a factor in cultural development. Either way, it is always inescapably historical in two senses: it always references something before it and it always signals the fact (if it did not, it would not be pastiche). When - as with the Angst and sexiness of film noir, or, to anticipate, the pathos of Far From Heaven - it is also emotionally engaging, its inescapable historicity facilitates our feeling the sources of our feeling. T.S. Eliot (1920: 44), discussing awareness of earlier art, observed that 'the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence' and Charles Jencks uses the term 'the presence of the past' in relation to pastiche in his What is Postmodernism? (1986). What I am suggesting is that that sense of the presence of the past in pastiche is not just something cerebrally observed but felt. It is part of the knowledge we can have of our place in history. We make our own feelings but not in affective circumstances of our own choosing; pastiche can help us understand those circumstances through feeling them.

Notes

- 1 See Studlar and Bernstein (2001: 18) on the provenance and authenticity of this remark.
- 2 A kind of choral hymn in honour of Dionysius.
- 3 See Buscombe (1988: 202).
- 4 For example, Broncho Billy Anderson, William S. Hart, Tom Mix, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, John Wayne, Clint Eastwood.
- 5 Brownrigg (2003: 63-111) notes inter alia the use of cowboy instruments (male voices, whistling, guitar, fiddle, Jew's harp, harmonica, accordion), honky-tonk piano, Native American and Mexican elements and the influence of Aaron Copland's harmonies, orchestral colours and rhythmic patterns.
- 6 Many of these are discussed in Harries (2000); the parodies often lapse into travesty (e.g. the farting sequence after a supper of baked beans in Blazing Saddles), while there is parody in the travesties.

- 7 See Wood (1968: 32-35).
- 8 '... revisionist Westerns in which American history is reinterpreted to make room for peyote visions and related hallucinogenic experiences' (Rosenbaum 2000: 47-62).
- 9 Released in Britain with the more valedictory title Guns in the Afternoon.
- 10 First published in 1954.
- 11 See Introduction, pp. 2-3.
- 12 A generic rule that was still in place in Stagewoach but is liable to surprise us now where the cowboy as 'inveterate loner' (Buscombe 1992: 76) has become a primary expectation.
- 13 The fact that he lives in a wigwam is in line with earlier Westerns in which the West was identified with the native peoples and white Americans were seen to find themselves in these aboriginal Americans (cf. Simmon 2003: 3-31). Baird (1998) traces this impulse in later films.
- 14 As if calling them the Wild Bunch were not enough, this allusion is reinforced by having a grave marked 'Sam Pekimpek' in a Native American cemetery visited by Beauregard and Nobody.
- 15 Frayling (1981) discusses the appropriateness of spagherti as a metaphor for a product that is distinctively Italian but globally present, symbolising both sophistication and popular appeal. Eleftheriotis (2001: 92ff.) stresses the implication of hybridity in the term, spaghetti Westerns being quintessential Italianness plus quintessential Americanness.
- 16 Ouoted in Frayling (1981: 124).
- 17 This is an aspect of what Frayling (1981: 121-137) calls the 'cultural roots' controversy in spagnetti Western criticism.
- 18 The first Italian Westerns had all-Italian casts and personnel, in fact and in name; when it seemed that this wave was running out of steam, producers did seem to think that some fake Anglo names might pass new Italian Westerns off as actually American. This seems to be initiated around the time of A Fistful of Dollars (Per un pugno di dollari 1964), whose phenomenal national and international success suggested however that what was still marketable was this distinct kind of Western, distinctive because of its spaghetti flavour.
- 19 If you pore over spaghetti Western shoot-outs on an editing table, video or DVD, you can see the sleights of hand involved (e.g. cutting from someone going for their holster to someone else having already drawn their gun; the chronology makes it seem that the latter has acted in response to the former, but the strictest logic says he must have acted before his opponent); of course, the point is the impact on the eye of the speed, not its chronological accuracy. Incidentally, poring over the soundtrack of My Name is Nobody indicates that in fact there are three gunshots coming from Beauregard, though you can't see the action that produces them.
- 20 On Johnny Guitar, see, inter alia, Charney (1990), Perkins (1996), Robertson (1996), Pererson (1998).
- 21 I am grateful to Kate Bernstein for raising these issues and drawing Bad Girls to my attention.
- 22 In Once Upon a Time in the West, a flashback reveals that as a boy Harmonica was forced by Frank to kneel with his older brother, his neck in a noose, standing on his shoulders; when the brother finally kicks the boy away, he thereby hangs himself, as Frank calculates; this is why Harmonica has sought revenge on Frank throughout the film and finally kills him. In The Quick and the Dead, a flashback reveals that as a girl Ellen was forced by Herod to shoot at the rope from which her father is hanging, alive; she misfires and kills him, as Herod calculates; this is why Ellen has sought revenge on Herod throughout the film and finally kills him.
- 23 For The Quick and the Dead, Gaines and Herzog (1998) specifically reference the clothes style of I. Peterman.
- 24 That is, female clothing has not become accepted, leave alone utterly normal for men, with the result that, supposedly deviant or comic occasions apart, men are always everywhere seen in men's clothes, thus reaffirming the sense that these are ineluctably male clothes.
- 25 That is, as on playing cards.

- 26 Westerns have featured African-American cavalrymen, notably Sergeant Rutledge 1961 (whose eponymous hero was played by Woody Strode, to whose memory The Quick and the Dead is dedicated and who appears briefly, greeting Ellen on her ride into town) and Glory 1989, but not as Southern officers and gentlemen as well.
- 27 Cf. Doane (1982).
- 28 Known in Great Britain as Life of an American Cowboy. For a more detailed account of the film, see Musser (1991: 360-363).
- 29 Cf. Neale (2000: 43) (drawing on Leutrat 1985). Neale (43–47) discusses a range of factor that come together to produce the Western (in literature as well as film) in 1910 as a category and not just an adjective.
- 30 On the reach of noir beyond film, see Naremore (1998), especially pp. 254-277.
- 31 However, Grist argues that 'the most generally accepted starting point for modern film noin is Harper' (1992: 1966), while Spicer claims that the 'neo-noir revival began with Point Blank' (2002: 136); Naremore suggests that 'film noir did not become a true Hollywood genre until the Vietnam years, when productions such as Taxi Driver appeared with some regularity', because only then had the term gained sufficient currency to be recognised as such within Hollywood (1998: 37). Erickson (1996: 307) says that the first film actually to be advertised as noir was The Hot Spot 1990, which Stanfield (2002: 256) notes was marketed with the slogan 'Film Noir Like You've Never Seen Before'.
- 32 I take the first eight from Naremore (1998: 1).
- 33 Notably Place (1998: 53–60), an article first published in 1978 in Ann Kaplan's Women in Film Noir, both article and book quite possibly an influence on the development of 1980s noir.
- 34 See also Ginette Vincendeau's discussion of Jean-Pierre Melville's last three films, Le Samourai 1967, Le Cercle rouge 1970 and Un flic 1972, as, in Melville's own words, 'black and white films in colour' (2003: 186, 210).
- 35 Butler discusses this point specifically in relation to Body Heat at 167-169.
- 36 On Truffaut and noir see Guérif (n.d.) and Fairlamb (1996). The latter also discusses the relation between *Tirez sur le pianiste* and the work of Nicholas Ray, mainly *Johnny Guitar* but also his noirs *In a Lonely Place* and *On Dangerous Ground*.
- 37 Goodis wrote novels turned into Hollywood noirs (Dark Passage novel 1946/film 1947; Nightfall 1947/1956) and himself worked on Hollywood noirs (The Unfaithful 1947, The Burglar 1956 (based on his 1953 novel)), but his reputation was much higher in France through the publication of his work in the paperback thriller series, the Série Noire (that gave its name by association to film noir), and many more of his novels have been filmed there (e.g. The Moon in the Gutter 1953 as La Lune dans le caniveau 1983, The Wounded and the Slain 1955 as Descente aux enfers 1986). On Goodis and film, see Wooton and Taylor (n.d.).
- 38 Alain Silver (1996) points out that there is also a strand of low budget American neo-noir much more within the tradition behind *Tirez sur le pianiste*, including films such as *Delusion* 1991, *Genuine Risk* 1990, *Guncrazy* 1992, *The Kill-off* 1990 and *Reservoir Dogs* 1992; this though is much less likely to be the kind of film evoked by the term neo-noir.
- 39 By Nino Frank in 'Un nouveau genre "policier": L'aventure criminelle' ('A New Crime Genre: The Criminal Adventure') in L'Ecran français 61 (1946, 14–16) and Jean-Pierre Chartier in 'Les Américains aussi font des films "noirs" ('Americans also make "black" films') in La Revue du cinéma 2 (November 1946, 67–70) (both translated in Silver and Ursini 1999, 12–20, 21–24), and then most influentially by Raymond Borde and Érienne Chaumeton in Panorama du film noir américain, 1941–1953, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1955. For further discussion see Naremore (1998: 11–27, Vincendeau 2006).
- 40 Michel Marie (2003: 45) specifically notes for instance 'the strong influence of the American [noir] model' in costume and lighting in *Bob le flambeur* 1955; see also Vincendeau (2006).
- 41 We do not have to consider this process only as one phase succeeding another. Neo-noir persists alongside noir now: Miller's Crossing 1990, Mortal Thoughts 1991, The Man Who Wasn't There 2002, to say nothing of European adoptions of the mode (e.g. the British The Near Room 1995, Shallow Grave 1995 and Croupier 1999), whose geo-cultural difference are

136 Pastiche, genre, history

liable to lead to the sense of pastiche analogously to that informing the spaghetti Western. (On British noir, see Williams (1999) and Spicer (2002: 175-203).)

- 42 Schiff (1993: 33): 'It's a pretty sexy picture, but the sexiness isn't all in the lovemaking scenes. It's also in the very idea of Matty, and in the atmosphere her presence in a modern movie conjures up.'
- 43 Jenny draws here on Marshall McLuhan: From Cliché to Archetype (New York: Viking, 1970).
- 44 I extrapolate this by analogy from Simon Dentith's discussion of parody and period (2000: 29).
- 45 Pfister's article qualifies this perception, partly by insisting that there has always been intertextuality, partly by suggesting that postmodern intertextuality is a product of post-structuralist theory and the huge expansion of academic literary studies:

An academic system that produces more literary theory, and even more *Hamlet* interpretations, than anyone can digest, encourages a type of literary production that is equally self-reflective and self-conscious, a literature, so to speak, that grows out of graduate seminars and provides them again with new material for analysis and research. (1991: 214)

- 46 I am grateful to Georgina Born for raising this point.
- 47 Although it emerged from collective discussions, I am especially grateful to Rahul Hamid in my NYU Pastiche class for focusing this issue.

5 The point of pastiche

So far in this book I have been concerned, first, to identify a particular kind of signalled imitation that can legitimately be termed pastiche and to distinguish it both from other uses of the word pastiche and also from other kinds of signalled imitation. Then, second, I have indicated some of the formal characteristics of pastiche, considered in terms of closeness to what is imitated, deformation (selection, accentuation, exaggeration, concentration) and discrepancy (inappropriateness, anachronism, self-reference, stylistic inconsistency and so on). Third, I have indicated some of the ways that pastiche may work historically.

I have not, however, been directly concerned with the question of value. As I've occasionally indicated, the word pastiche tends to have a negative overtone. Very commonly it is seen as, at best, fun or charming, at worst trivial. Even Marcel Proust and others in the French tradition of literary pastiche, who defend it, do so in ways that suggest its secondary value: as a way of getting influences out of one's system, improving one's style, practising criticism. Within debates about postmodernism, there is more disagreement, although in cultural theory Fredric Jameson's definition of pastiche as 'blank parody' has been especially influential. Charles Jencks' defence of pastiche in relation to postmodern architecture is more concerned with the pasticcio sense of pastiche and this is largely true of Ingeborg Hoesterey's wide-ranging study of contemporary culture. The latter is also interested in identifying progressiveness in postmodern pastiche practices (over against Jameson's and others' claim that pastiche is more or less intrinsically reactionary). It is such issues of value that I want to explore in this chapter, but without the problematic of postmodernism and without assuming that pastiche is by definition either profound or trivial, progressive or reactionary, a good or a bad thing.

In what follows, I consider the question of the aesthetic and political value – the point – of pastiche through three groupings. First, I consider signalled imitation in the politically loaded context of cultural difference, considering white imitation of non-white dance in *The Nutcracker*, the Jewish production of black popular song, and the use of African-American music within the Western symphonic tradition (especially William Grant Still's Afro-American