Auguste and Louis Lumière

French brothers who pioneered cinematography. In February 1895 they patented their cinematograph, a combined camera and projector operating at 16 frames per second, screening short films for the first time on 22 March, and in December opening the world's first cinema in Paris. Their simple documentary short La Sortie des usines Lumière/Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory (1895) is considered the first motion picture.

Other early films include L'Arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat/The Arrival of a Train at Ciotat Station (1895), and the comedy L'Arroseur arrosé/The Hoser Hosed (1895). Between 1896 and 1900, the Lumières employed a number of camera operators to travel around the world and both demonstrate their invention and film new documentary shorts. Production was abandoned in 1900 after their films were displayed at the Paris Exposition. The brothers withdrew from film-making itself to concentrate on developing film technology and marketing their inventions.

The Lumière brothers, born in Besançon, joined their father's photographic firm in Lyon. They contributed several minor improvements to the developing process, including in 1880 the invention of a better type of dry plate.

In 1894 their father purchased a Kinetoscope (a peephole cineviewer), developed by another film pioneer, the US inventor Thomas Edison. The brothers borrowed some of the ideas and developed their all-in-one machine, the cinematograph (from which the word 'cinema' is derived. To advertise their success they filmed delegates arriving at a French photographic congress and 48 hours later projected the developed film to a large audience.

Auguste went on to carry out medical research. Louis invented a photorama for panoramic shots and in 1907 a colour-printing process using dyed starch grains. Later he experimented with stereoscopy and three-dimensional films.
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