



Auguste Lumiere

1862-1954

Louis Lumiere

1864-1948

Sons of a portrait painter who ran a photographic firm, Auguste and Louis Lumière are credited with the invention of cinematography. Expanding on the concept of the Edison company's Peephole Kinetoscope, they invented a portable device that combined a motion picture camera, film processor, and projector. Edison's device permitted viewing by only one person and the equipment was bulky. Auguste and Louis overcame these limitations and incorporated the principle of intermittent movement using a device similar to that found in sewing machines. Although their invention was kept secret, they organized private screenings of films Louis photographed of the world around him. One of his first films was of workers leaving the Lumière factory. Their invention, patented in 1885 in France, followed by a patent application in England, was called Cinématographe. With their increasing catalog of films taken by the brothers as well as others, they opened Cinématographe theaters in London, Brussels, Belgium and New York, culminating with a film projected on a 99 x 79 foot screen at the Paris Exposition in 1900. Following the Exposition they returned to manufacturing and the sale of their inventions including the first practical color photography process, the Autochrome Plate. Louis Lumière once stated that, "The cinema is an invention without a future." His strengths were in invention, not prediction!