Herzog’s Philosophy Of Film

Werner Herzog, is a man who has a vision, no matter what it is, and sticks with it until it is seen through. During the production of Fitzcarraldo Herzog faced a numerous amount of challenges and difficulties. From his lead actors dropping out of the film halfway through, to lack of supplies and medical equipment in the tribes, and he overcame these challenges by thinking around them and pushing on. Herzog doesn’t believe that money is a necessity when it comes to creating films. He strongly believes that with enough of a drive and persistence you can accomplish filmmaking. Herzog takes filmmaking as being able to articulate your dreams and create something out of them. When things were looking bad on the set of Fitzcarraldo, Werner said “If I abandon this project, I would be a man without dreams and I don't want to live like that.” This alone is a statement of “I’m not going to give up.” Herzog would have felt incomplete if something would have actually stopped him from finishing his film. It would have torn him up inside. His obsession with his work is his greatest strength. To be able to throw yourself into it wholeheartedly and not back down until the job is done is truly astonishing. He even risked the lives of his cast during the pulling of the ship up the hill. He was told to not go through with it, but he had already come so far, and it all would have been wasted if he didn’t get this scene shot. This was due to the fact that the ship making it up the hill was the main metaphor for his movie. After a few attempts, he managed to do it, and the scene was a success.

Herzog’s method of filmmaking is pretty much a mirror image to guerrilla filmmaking. He had very little budget during the filming of Fitzcarraldo. He also shot on real locations with a fairly small crew. Not to mention they had a very short amount of time and resources, always shooting on the spot and having to be quick and ready to shoot because of the light in the day. All in all I find it fairly safe to consider Herzog to be a guerrilla filmmaker, especially on the production of Fitzcarraldo.