

FILM 3020 Film History



TTH 1:30-3:35pm

107 PIGT

Professor: Kirsten Moana Thompson

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This image is from Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali's famous surrealist film *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) which comes a few seconds before the notorious eyeball slitting shot. Widening our eyes will be a metaphor for this class—we will be learning to see, and to see again through a number of different methodological frames: aesthetic, industrial, theoretical, technological and cultural. This class will introduce you to some key movements or moments in the history of world cinema, from its origins at the end of the nineteenth century through to the present era. It will consider the earliest years of cinema; Russian montage and German Expressionism; the development of the classical Hollywood system and specific genres; the relationship of propaganda media to the Second World War; postwar art cinema; Italian neo-realism; the decline of the studio system and the French New Wave, and finally, the contemporary arthouse film. It will include comparative selections from other influential movements in international filmmaking including French *actualités*, German expressionism, Soviet montage, the international avant-garde, and Japanese, Italian and New Zealand cinema. The course will also develop your close analysis skills in watching, describing and analyzing film form and aesthetics. By the end of the class you will have the tools necessary to begin to describe, historicize, and analyze the film text.

Each week the first class will be a screening of a feature film supplemented periodically with animated shorts, trailers or ephemeral films, while the second class will be devoted to group work, viewing of clips and some lecturing (Roughly 70 % group work & analysis and 30 % lecture). Together we will practice close analysis of the weekly readings and film. You will be expected to participate in class discussions, complete all class assignments on time and see all scheduled films. As the quarter system moves very quickly, it is essential you come to class prepared. Each week as part of your homework you will also be required to watch one additional film at home (via Kanopy Streaming online) and to write a short (2-3 page) report on its connection to the weekly readings and lectures. I will post more specific questions or guides on Canvas and announce them each week in class. Please bring your textbooks and syllabus to every class and complete the weekly reading assignments *in advance* of each class.

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of the semester you will:

1. gain a knowledge of some of the key technological and industrial changes the medium has undergone from 1880-1960.
2. understand in greater depth several influential aesthetic and stylistic developments of film
3. understand how film is an art form (both narrative and non narrative) and an industrial, theatrical, and non theatrical medium;
4. gain an understanding of film as a national, international and global medium
5. gain insight into the interaction of film and media with its historical and cultural contexts
6. critically engage with select examples of academic writing about film history

Course Materials:

An Introduction to World Cinema Aristedes Gazetas (McFarland: NY, 20 2008) (GAZ in syllabus).

Second edition. Also on reserve at the Lemieux Library.

ISBN-10: 0786439076 **ISBN-13:** 978-0786439072 available in the Seattle University Bookstore and online from Amazon (only second hand editions are available on Amazon but they are absolutely fine and cheap! Only 18-20\$!) Additional readings are available as pdfs and listed on the syllabus as CANVAS. Please print these out and bring to class or have in digital form in class ready to discuss each week.

Generally films will be available on course reserves in the Lemieux Library and most class films are also available via Lemieux Library's streaming Kanopy service

http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_1:CP71228581550001451 (which holds major collections from Criterion, Janus and Kino Lorber) as well as on other major streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime, and for rental from Scarecrow Video (see

<http://blog.scarecrow.com/hourslocation/>). The SU library also enables you to borrow films from other libraries through the SUMMIT interlibrary loan system and from University of Washington.

Office Hours: Tuesday 10-12, Rm 514 Casey

I expect everyone to come and see me at least once in the term. Come see me earlier rather than later, and tell me about your expectations for the class and what topics interest you most. Email me if this time is not convenient and we can make another time.

PREREQUISITES

The ability to write college-level essays with appropriate documentation and formatting. (see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> for guidance on MLA style)

The ability to take detailed lecture notes.

College-level competency in basic language and writing skills. (with correct grammar and spelling).

Please see Writing Tips (pdf) on Canvas under Assignments and read it before all assignments. You will be penalized for every 5 spelling or grammatical errors. Consult the Learning center if you are unsure about any of this. (see <https://www.seattleu.edu/learning-assistance/> for more online writing resources, and links to get tutoring help with your assignments)

COURSEWORK: Weekly responses (6) (30%); Essays (3) (30%); attendance participation 10 %; final exam 30%

Weekly Reports (30%): You are to write a 2-3 page report or close analysis responding to the weekly questions given out in the lecture or on Canvas which will practise your analytical and interpretative skills (and which will also prepare you for your longer essays and final exam). You are expected to answer these questions with reference to the specified film or films on "Home viewing" in the syllabus, which you must watch on your own (usually through Kanopy streaming). I will

collect these 3 times in the semester, printed out together in a folder, but you are also expected to post them weekly on CANVAS and submit it (and all other written assignments) to Turnitin. Reports are generally to be posted by Sunday of the week in which they should be written. (I will do random spot checks on Canvas and also collect reports on Sept. 29, October. 18 and November 22. Nearly every week you will be working on either a weekly report or an essay (or both).

Attendance/participation (10%): Attendance is mandatory and will be taken every class; students are allowed one **free absence** with no direct effect on their grade, beyond this each absence will incur a half letter grade penalty. If you are sick or have another reasonable excuse, please bring documentation and this absence will not count against you. Please be punctual to class as lateness will also be reflected in your grade. **Five absences**, including your free absence, results in an automatic course failure. Mere attendance, however, is not adequate and students are expected to actively participate in class discussions, engaging with the course material, the instructor, and classmates in critical but respectful ways. This means being prepared to discuss the material, ask questions and respond to your classmates.

Essays X 3 = 30 %

Essay # 1 (10%) Due in class and Turnitin/Canvas Oct 11. Close Analysis of an Essay, Béla Balázs's "The Closeup") CANVAS
Recommended reading: Mary Ann Doane "The Closeup" CANVAS , Further Instructions, TBA. 5 page essay Due

Essay # 2 (10%) Due in class and Turnitin/Canvas Oct 25. You will use the Media History Project (<http://mediahistoryproject.org>) to research and find a primary document relating to a film (either screened in class or watched at home by you) that pertains to one of the 10 weekly topics. You will want to pick something that develops from what you have learnt in class for that week using your film: it might be a film review for *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, a poster for *Birth of a Nation*, or an advertisement of the film for *Battleship Potemkin* or *Bicycle Thieves*. Using your primary document, write a 2-3 page analysis, properly citing your source in MLA. You should address the following questions as they apply to your source.

What does this document/image contain or say? (Textual analysis)

What does the document/image imply about the author or studio or other source(e.g. what is the tone or perspective)?

Does it seem to encapsulate broader ideas of its cultural/historical context?

How does it complement what you know from class readings and lecture?

In what kind of historical study would this document be most useful: an aesthetic history, a technological history, a cultural history, an economic history, etc.?

Print your original analysis and a copy of your primary document, staple them together, and bring the bundle to class on Oct. 25.

Essay # 3 (10%). Due Nov. 8.

Take a contemporary film like *Sully* (Clint Eastwood, 2016) or *Birth of a Nation* (Nate Parker, 2016) and discuss the relationship between the social and historical context in which the film is made and the issues which the film explores. For example, although *Sully* depicts a "true" story, what debates have arisen about the film's representation of events in the airplane crash landing in the Hudson River? Or for *The Birth of a Nation*, how has the controversy over the filmmaker Nate Parker's involvement in an alleged rape (for which he was acquitted) impacted the reception of the film, and how do issues of sexual violence also connect to the content of *Birth of a Nation* (2016) and to DW Griffith's earlier eponymous film?

Final Exam (30%) In Class Dec. 1 all readings, screenings and lectures up to final week. Will consist of both short and long answer questions. (study guide to follow)

BASIC GRADING SCALE (For my expectations for grades, see grade descriptors below)

A	100-93	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	92-90	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	Below 60

Assignment Protocol

All written work must be typeset in 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, with margins of no more than 1 inch. All papers must have your name on every page, have page numbers and be stapled. All assignments must be submitted to CANVAS/Turnitin online as well as in printed form. Both must be submitted by the due date and time.

Other Important Things

Please switch off all cell phones before entering the classroom and close all computers during class. Please remember to address me courteously if you send me emails and don't expect a response faster than 24 hours. (First read this: <https://medium.com/@lportwoodstacer/how-to-email-your-professor-without-being-annoying-af-cf64ae0e4087#.6yhml54r8>). (Please do not walk out in the middle of films, and don't start packing up to leave until the auditorium lights go up.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of the thoughts, words, or ideas of someone other than yourself. An assignment which uses material from any source but does not document it completely and accurately both in the paper itself and on a works cited page will receive a failing grade and may not be revised. If you cut and paste from another's work, this constitutes plagiarism. If you change a few words, but copy the ideas without acknowledgement, this is plagiarism. Whenever you quote from another person's work, you must use quotation marks, and footnotes/or endnotes. If you do not, this is plagiarism, and you will fail the class.

Grading Rubric

The “A” paper/presentation addresses an appropriately complex topic and answers a specific research question. The thesis is clearly presented, and the paper is exceptionally well-organized. The topic and thesis are well-developed with primary and secondary research. The development of the topic and thesis is clear and logical. The reasoning is valid and shows an awareness of the complexities of the topic. Supporting evidence is convincingly presented in coherent and well-organized paragraphs.

The “A” paper is free of grammatical and mechanical errors. The style is appropriate for the genre and audience. Sources are correctly cited and documented in MLA/APA style.

The “B” paper/presentation addresses a topic competently, but the topic and research question may not be of appropriate complexity. It is well-organized, though the development of the topic and thesis may not be consistently clear. The reasoning may not always be valid and logical with an awareness of the complexities of the topic. Supporting evidence is not always coherently and convincingly presented in well-organized paragraphs. The topic and thesis are developed with primary and secondary sources, but the development may not be thorough or balanced. The paper/presentation competently executes the genre of the assignment (proposal, review of the literature, presentation, researched argument), though some elements may not be clearly presented or completely developed. There may be some grammatical and mechanical errors. The style may not be consistently appropriate for the genre and audience. Sources may not be completely and correctly cited and documented in MLA/APA style.

The “C” paper/presentation addresses a topic, but the topic and research question may not be of appropriate complexity for college-level writing. The thesis may be unclear or simplistic. The topic and thesis may not be adequately developed with primary and secondary research. The paper/presentation does not execute the genre of the assignment adequately (proposal, review of the literature, presentation, researched argument). Elements of the genre may be only partially presented or not well-developed. Supporting evidence is not well-organized at the paragraph level. It has a number of grammatical and mechanical errors. The style is often not appropriate for the genre and audience. Sources may not be adequately cited and documented in MLA/APA style. The writer may not be clearly making a distinction between information from sources and ideas in his/her argumentation.

The “D” paper/presentation addresses a topic that is too broad or too simple. The thesis may be missing or overly simplistic. The topic and thesis are poorly developed with primary and secondary research. It shows little organization. The development of the topic and thesis may be minimal, and the reasoning may be incoherent. Supporting evidence is not presented or organized coherently at the paragraph level. It has major grammatical and mechanical errors. The style is inappropriate for the genre and audience. The paper may contain plagiarized passages, with little or incorrect citation and documentation in MLA/APA style.

The “F” paper/presentation does not address a topic suitable for college-level writing. There is no thesis. The topic and thesis are not developed with primary and secondary research and the paper is completely disorganized. The development of the topic and thesis may follow no discernible order, and the reasoning may not be coherent. Paragraphs are neither coherent nor well-developed. There are numerous and major grammatical and mechanical errors. The style is inappropriate for the genre

and audience. The paper may be mostly or completely plagiarized. There is no or rudimentary citation and documentation of sources in MLA/APA style.

SYLLABUS

Silent Film: Art and/or Industry

Week 1 9/22 Course Introduction and the Conception and Birth of the Cinema

Professor away on Thursday at overseas Conference.

Screening: *Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011) US

Reading: Chp. 1 "The Invention of the Movies" (GAZ)

Homework: Write Report # 1 on *Hugo* (see handout given out in class and also posted on Canvas) Due in class 9/27; Also watch *A Trip to the Moon* (In its Original 1902 Colors) (Georges Méliès, 1902) available online on Kanopy

http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_1:CP71228581550001451 and explore other films by Méliès on Kanopy (<https://seattleu-kanopystreaming-com.proxy.seattleu.edu/video/georges-melies-collection>)

Week 2 9/27 & 9/29 / Early Film and the development of Narrative

Tuesday: Hand in Report # 1 in class today and Continue discussion and view clips of *Hugo*

Tuesday/Thursday Screenings: selections from *Humorous Phases of Funny Faces* (J. Stuart Blackton, 1906); *Gertie the Dinosaur* (Winsor McCay, 1909); Edward Muybridge Compilation Program (1877-1885); Thomas Edison Program: *Sandow The Strong Man* (1894); *Serpentine Dance* (1895); *The Kiss* (1896); *Skyscrapers of NYC from North River* (1903) Edwin S. Porter Program: *Great Train Robbery* (1903);

Trip to the Moon (Georges Méliès 1902); Lumière Bros. Actualités: *Leaving/Exiting the Factory*; *Arrival of A Train at Ciotat Station* (1895); *Baby's Lunch*; *The Waterer Watered* (L'Arroseur Arrosé, 1895); Pathé Frères: *Peeping Tom / Par le Trou de serrue* (1901)

Readings: Chapter 2 "Early Narratives and the Nickelodeons" (GAZ);

Read Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions" pdf CANVAS

Homework Watch material not covered in class (TBA) and write Report # 2 on Gunning's essay. Post on Canvas/Turnitin.

Week 3 10/4 & 10/6 / Film is an Art: Germany and Art Cinema

Screening: *La passion de Jeanne d'Arc / The Passion of Joan of Arc* (Carl Dreyer, 192X)

http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_3:CP99167831601868

Reading: Chp. 4 UFA and the German Studio System & Béla Balázs "The Closeup" (CANVAS)

Homework (on Kanopy): watch *Nosferatu, Symphony of Horrors* (Murnau, 1922) (see

http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_3:CP99167083201868)

Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_1:CP99167731701868) and/or *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 19 http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_3:CP99167721001868).

Write Essay # 1 (due next week)

Week 4 /10/11 & 10/13 /Soviet Montage and Revolutionary Cinema

ESSAY # 1 due in class & on Turnitin today

Screening: *Man With a Movie Camera* (Vertov, 1929); *Battleship Potemkin*; *Un Chien Andalou* (Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel, 1929); selections: *Birth of A Nation* (DW Griffith, 1915), *Intolerance* (DW Griffith, 1916);

Reading: Chap 3 DW Griffith and Cinematic Language & Chap 5: The Impact of DW Griffith on Soviet Montage (GAZ); Vertov, “We, A Version of a Manifesto”; Eisenstein, “The Montage of Attractions”

Homework: Watch *Strike* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925) and/or *October* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1928); Write Report # 3 and Post to Canvas.

**Week 5 10/18-10/20 Hollywood, the Studio System, and the Coming of Sound
COLLECTION of REPORTS 1, 2 & 3**

Screening: *His Girl Friday* (Howard Hawks, 1940); Animation: *Snow White* (Fleischer Bros, 1933); excerpts *Snow White* (Walt Disney, 1937); *Coal Black and De Sebben Dwarfs* (Warner Bros, 1943); *I'll be glad when you're dead, you rascal you* (Fleischer Bros, 1932)

Readings: chap 7 Hollywood Silent Films and chap 8 Hollywood and the Sound Films (GAZ)

Homework: Watch *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941) and write Essay # 2 on Media History Research Project (due next week)

**Week 6/ 10/25-10/27 /Italian Neo-Realism and International Art Cinema
ESSAY # 2 due today**

Screening: *Roma, città aperta/ aka Rome Open City* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945) Italy
Clips: *The Bicycle Thieves*, 1948 (Vittorio De Sica)

Reading: Chap 11; Italian Neorealist Cinema (GAZ)

Homework: Watch *La Strada/ The Road* (Federico Fellini, 1954), Italy

http://primo.seattleu.edu/SEAU:seau_rec_1:CP99167695301868 and write/post Report # 4

Week 7 11/1-11/3 /World War II

Screening: *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942); Cartoons: *Der Führer's Face* (1943) Disney; *Education for Death* (Clyde Geronimi, 1943); Disney

Reading: Chap 10, The Hollywood Golden Years (GAZ)

Homework: Watch *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941) Write Essay # 3. (Due next week)

**Week 8 11/8-11/10 /INTERNATIONAL ARTHOUSE
ESSAY # 3 Due today**

Screening: *Rashomon* (Akira Kurosawa, 1950) Japan.

Reading: chap 13, Japanese Postwar Cinema, 1950-1990 (GAZ)

Homework: Pick one or more: *Throne of Blood* (Akira Kurosawa, 1950); *Pather Panchali* (Satyajit Ray, 1955, India); *Sjunde inseglet, Det/ The Seventh Seal* (Bergman, 1957) Sweden; 1955) Write Report # 5

Week 9 11/ 15 & 11/17 /Global Cinema and National Arthouse Cinema

Screening: *Once Were Warriors* (Lee Tamahori, 1994, NZ)

Reading: Kirsten Moana Thompson “*Once Were Warriors*: New Zealand's First Indigenous Blockbuster” CANVAS

Homework: Watch *The Piano* (Jane Campion, 1993); *Boy* (2010. Taika Waititi); *Whale Rider* (Niki Caro, 2002); also in theaters *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* (Taika Waititi, 2016). Write/post Report # 6

Week 10/French New Wave 11/22

COLLECTION OF REPORTS 4, 5 & 6

Screening: *Elevator to the Gallows* (Louis Malle, 1958) France.

Screening only this week.

Reading: Chap 16: The French New Wave. (GAZ); André Bazin "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema" pp. 119-127 (GAZ). No Report this week

Nov 23-26 Thanksgiving Break, no classes. Happy Turkey Day!

French New Wave & Finals Prep/ 11/29

Tuesday: clips *Breathless* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960); Lecture on French New Wave. Exam Review 12/1 Final Exam.

General Course and University Policies

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an “invisible disability” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND RECORDING DEVICES

So that we can all stay focused and get the most from our time in class, all cell phones – including my own – must be turned off except when in use for class activities or by prior agreement. (For instance, if you’re the primary caregiver for someone, a relative or close friend of someone who’s critically ill in hospital, or an expectant birth partner, please let me know so that we can make a suitable arrangement.)

There may be a few opportunities during class to use your laptops and I will let you know when these occur. If you want to use a laptop, other mobile device, or recording device in class at any other time, you need to ask for permission in advance. There are very few instances where I will agree (such as an accommodation through Disability Services), and there are good reasons for this: Good note-taking skills are vital for you in your future careers: You can’t always rely on technology being available, can’t expect to be given prepared summaries or notes, nor can you afford the time to write everything long-hand. It’s important that when you graduate, you have some good note-taking techniques and can differentiate essential facts from background information during a discussion. We will also discuss this in class. Using laptops can be a distraction, both for other students and for the instructor. The temptation to attempt to “multi-task” using technology in class can also be enormous, but to do so would be extremely discourteous to the entire class, and would be a waste of your own learning opportunity.

Seattle University Statement on Academic Honesty: "Seattle University is committed to the principle that academic honesty and integrity are important values in the educational process. Violations of academic honesty include, but are not limited to, acts of plagiarism, cheating, submitting false data, submitting work for multiple purposes, and falsifying academic documentation. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense against the academic community. Acts of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the [Academic Honesty Policy](#)."

For more detailed Film History of the Classical Studio Era

Bordwell, David, Staiger, Janet, and Kristin Thompson. *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

Gomery, Doug. *The Hollywood Studio System, A History*. London: BFI, 2005.
Schatz, Thomas *Hollywood Genres: Formulas, Filmmaking and the Studio System*. New York: Random House, 1981.
Schatz, Thomas. *Boom and Bust: American Cinema in the 1940s*. Los Angeles: University of California Press (History of the American Cinema,

For those who have never taken Art of Film

Any one of these textbooks are excellent (any edition)
Looking At Movies, Richard Barsam. (New York: Norton, 2009). Comes with 2 DVDs and booklet on Writing about Movies
Film Art; An Introduction, David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson. New York: McGraw-Hill.
Understanding Movies Louis Giannetti (Prentice Hall: NJ) 2007,
The Film Experience; An Introduction, Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White (Bedford/St Martin's: New York) 2008.

Misc

For more information, especially on technical equipment and formal terms consult
Ira Konigsberg. *The Complete Film Dictionary*, Penguin: New York, 1997.
For more information on specific film personnel—actors, directors,. Cinematographers, etc. (especially of the historical period) consult
Ephraim Katz *The Film Encyclopedia: The Complete Guide to Film and the Film Industry*. New York: Collins, latest edition.
Or David Thomson's *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film*. New York: Knopf, latest edition.

For those who love special effects

Patricia Netzley. *Encyclopedia of Movie Special Effects*. New York: Checkmark, 2001.
(I recommend buying yourself Katz and Konigsberg as standard reference texts in film studies).
Also remember to use imdb.com (Internet movie Database)