

FILM 237 - 403 Film Philosophy

DePaul University; Autumn, 2023 - 24: W 1:30 - 4:45 p.m., CDM 218

Sept. 6 - Nov. 21, 2023; **Section 412** is asynchronous online

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Richardson Library, 2nd fl. (The Forum)

Date of this syllabus' last update: July 23, 2023

Instructional Method

Lecture and discussion. Student presentations. Coltube recordings of meetings are uploaded to D2L. Students have to visit D2L, watch the narrative works, post discussion comments, and upload writing assignments. With two exceptions (available on the web), required narrative films are at Panopto and linked to D2L. The second Varda film, as well as the non-narrative artists' works, are not available to the public and will have to be viewed during class or through the recording of meetings.

Summary of Course

This course offers a history of cinema as an artistic medium. We focus on philosophical questions that the medium raises during the period known as modernism. We will examine several theoretical approaches to film as a narrative art, take into account other art forms such as theater and painting, and consider influences on mid-20th century cinema in Europe. Students will respond to several specific works in writing, study aesthetic and political dimensions of film theory, and become familiar with broader philosophical questions addressing art in the modern and postmodern periods.

Learning Objectives

Students in the course will:

- a. Learn to analyze narrative cinema
- b. Become familiar with a history of European cinema
- c. Study classic texts in the discipline of film theory
- d. Write three short essays integrating various dimensions of the above

Prerequisites

No previous knowledge of computers or philosophy is assumed, or necessary.

Textbooks

Brigitte Peucker, *Aesthetic Spaces: The Place of Art In Film* (Northwestern University Press, 2019); András Bálint Kovács, *Screening Modernism: European Art Cinema, 1950 - 1980* (University of Chicago Press, 2007) - this is available online at Richardson Library.

Additional readings from files uploaded to D2L will introduce students to classics in on narrative film's relation to theater, painting, and modernity.

Graded Materials

Online Discussion: 25 points

If you are posting a thoughtful and proofed comment in response to an online prompt, a single post per week may be sufficient. If you are writing off-the-cuff you might want to post more than once, but this is not ideal.

Paper 1: 25 points due Sat., Sept. 23 (end of module 3: technology and art history)

Paper 2: 25 points due Sat., Oct. 21 (end of module 7: theater and cinema)

Paper 3: 25 points due Sat., Nov. 11 (end of module 10: time, narrative, modernism)

A paper runs 3 - 4 pages, double-spaced and in 12-point font. These are not research papers. There is no final in this class.

Writing Expectations

a. General

Writing requires careful study of assigned readings. *All submitted writing must be the student's own work.* The prompts for papers will be provided a week prior to the paper's due date. Please include your name at the top of the first page and number your pages. A title is not necessary. Citations that include quotation must identify the page if the source is an assigned reading. Use of an outside source is not recommended if material has been discussed during class and the reading assignment can be used. But if you do use an outside source, it must be cited in full at the end of your essay. Please avoid any links in your file.

b. Citation

A student essay will ideally include quotation. This requires that the page on which the quotation appears is cited. Normally, the author and title have already been assigned. So the student can simply provide the author and page number in citing the quotation or idea. Please be careful not to incorporate ideas that will raise suspicion about your authorship. A student is not expected to have a broad mastery of course content, and any essay that demonstrates such mastery raises the prospect of plagiarism. You want to be fully responsible for what you write.

c. Evidence of Study

The essays required in this class replace the need for a midterm or final exam, which would be essay exams. But in order to serve this purpose, student papers must demonstrate an appreciation of course content. In one way or another, an essay submitted for credit should therefore rely on central ideas that have been discussed and studied in reading assignments. Also, any student who discusses only films that have not been assigned will receive a failing grade for the assignment. References to outside viewing must be secondary.

Grade Conversion Scale

A 94–100	B+ 87–89	C+ 77–79	D+ 67–69
A- 90–93	B 84–86	C 74–76	D 60–66
	B- 80–83	C- 70–73	F 0–59

Module 1: Week of Sept. 6 Meeting

Movie: *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), Dreyer

Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (1936);

Epstein, *The Intelligence of a Machine* (1946) excerpt

Module 2: Week of Sept. 13 Meeting

Movie: *Cries and Whispers* (1972), Bergman

Kovács, *Screening Modernism* (2007), ch. 1;

Peucker, *Aesthetic Spaces* (2019), 85 - 95.

Module 3: Week of Sept. 20 Meeting (Paper 1 due 12 midnight, Sept. 23)

Movie: *Suspicion* (1941), Hitchcock

Reading: Heath, “Narrative Space” (1976) excerpt;

Arnheim, *Film as Art* (1933) excerpt;

Peucker, 15 - 29

Module 4: Week of Sept. 27 Meeting

Movie: *Europe '51* (1954), Rossellini

Bazin, “Theater and Cinema - Part Two” (1967);

Bazin, “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” (1950 - 55)

Module 5: Week of Oct. 4 Meeting

Movie: *Red Desert* (1964), Antonioni

Kovács, “The Film History of Thought” (2000);

Peucker, 29 - 36

Module 6: Week of Oct. 11 Meeting

Movie: *Elisa, vida mía* (1977), Saura

Ziarek, “Carlos Saura: Cinematic Poiesis” (2008) excerpt

D’Lugo, *The Films of Carlos Saura*

Module 7: Week of Oct. 18 Meeting (Paper 2 due 12 midnight, Oct. 21)

Movie: *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972), Fassbinder

Barthes, "Diderot, Brecht, Eisenstein" (1973);
Marin, *To Destroy Painting* (1995) excerpt;
Peucker, 67 - 77

Module 8: Week of Oct. 25 Meeting

Movie: *Close-Up* (1990), Kiarostami
Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1979), ch. 1

Module 9: Week of Nov. 1 Meeting

Movie: *La Chinoise* (1967), Godard
Kovács, ch. 19, first 10 pages

Module 10: Week of Nov. 8 Meeting (Paper 3 due 12 midnight, Nov. 11)

Movie: *Cléo from 5 to 7* (1962), *Jane B. per Agnès V.* (1988), Varda
Peucker, 104 - 113

Respect for Diversity and Inclusion

We at DePaul thrive on diversity. Faculty at DePaul see diversity as an asset and a strength that adds to the richness of classroom learning. We invite students to engage with difficult questions and strive to create an environment that values all perspectives.

Online Classroom Policies

It is expected that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of other students. In the event of difficulties the professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Religious Observations & School Activities

Please let your professor know in advance by email if you will be absent or need extensions on assignments due to religious observations or official school activities such as athletic competitions.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately, during office hours, to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. A student may also contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, csd@depaul.edu, Student Center, LPC, Suite #370. Phone number: (773) 325.1677; Fax: (773) 325.3720; TTY: (773) 325.7296. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early in the quarter.

Sexual and Relationship Violence

Classroom relationships are based on trust and communication. Material raised in class may bring up issues for students related to sexual and relationship violence. Faculty are required to report information students give about sexual or relationship violence among students. However, disclosing information about sexual violence during discussion or in course work will not initiate the process of reporting it to DePaul University. A student who would like to report such violence should contact public safety (773 325-7777 on Lincoln Park Campus; 312 362-8400 on Loop Campus). More information is available at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/hpw/shvp.html>.

Academic Policies/Absences

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and Incompletes can be found at: <https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Student-Resources/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>. In the case of illness, or other excused absences, a student may contact the Dean of Students to request a formally approved absence from online participation. Upon receipt of this documentation, the dean's office will notify all instructors who have the student in a class that an approved absence has been granted. The notification that is sent out will maintain student privacy by not including the reasons for the absence. Contact information may be found at: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/contactus.html>.

Incomplete and Pass/D/Fail Grades

A grade of incomplete is given at the end of the quarter only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family or a serious illness. Any such reason must be documented, but contact your instructor early for guidance. A request for an incomplete must be made at least two weeks prior to Finals Week and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Contact your instructor if you are considering requesting an incomplete.

Academic Integrity Policy

This course will be subject to the faculty council rules on the Academic Integrity Policy web site. *All work submitted by a student must be the student's own.* Any online quiz must be taken by the student alone. Each submission of written work must be exclusively the student's own effort. This means that any consultation with another person over written work has to be about a document the student is taking full responsibility for.

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course, as well as all other courses in which independent research or writing play a vital part in the course requirements should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism (*or the hiring of an outside source to complete student work*) could result in an automatic F in the course. The student's name will also go on file as having been found to have violated the standards of integrity at DePaul University.

Online Course Evaluations

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to providing you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in Campus Connect.

School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) Production Office

The Production office is located in lower level of Daley Building and at the email address, production@cdm.depaul.edu. The office is an essential resource for DePaul student filmmakers. The office can answer general questions about filming inside or outside of DePaul University property, use of SCA facilities and equipment, and issues concerning casting, insurance, crew calls, etc. Office hours are listed on the CDM Production Resources page [here](#).

SCA Central

Run by The Production Office, SCA Central is our online information hub. It is filled with resources, including the SCA Production Handbook, pre-production templates, waivers and contract forms, job listings, SCA events, local production news, internship opportunities, etc. Find it on D2L and make it your home page.

SCA Production Handbook

Required reading for all SCA Students prior to equipment/stage/studio reservations, The SCA Production Handbook is an invaluable resource to all DePaul student filmmakers. Guidelines, policies, and procedures for filming at DePaul; using SCA facilities and

equipment; and answers to questions regarding SCA resources and building contacts, are found inside. The handbook is updated regularly on SCA Central.

Talent Waivers

Talent waivers must be signed by any outside talent (non-DePaul students) and submitted to The Production Office *prior* to camera rolling for any projects. Waivers and other commonly used forms can be found on SCA Central under "Info & Forms".

DePaul Production Insurance

DePaul production insurance does not cover the use of fire (including pyrotechnics and fireplaces), use of vehicles for shooting (moving or stationary), or animals of any kind and is therefore not permitted for SCA projects unless proof of personal production insurance is provided. Read more about DePaul's requirements via the SCA Production Handbook. Any questions about DePaul's insurance should be directed to The Production Office *well before* shooting begins (production@cdm.depaul.edu).

Use of Prop Weapons in Productions

Rules and regulations must be followed when using prop weapons, including firearms. The instructor must approve the appearance of a prop weapon in any student film, including class syllabus assignments. An approved/signed Prop Weapon Request Form must be submitted to the Production Office prior to filming (find it on SCA Central under "Info & Forms"). For safety purposes, The Production Office may also review the filmmaker's plan for transportation of prop firearms prior to receiving approval for use.

Changes to Syllabus

Although it is unlikely, this syllabus is subject to change. In the event of a change, students will be notified by means of D2L and email.