

# FILM AESTHETICS: TIME, SPACE, AND MEMORY

FILM 235-701

DePaul University | Autumn Quarter 2023-24

In-Person Lecture: Tuesdays, 5:45PM-9:00PM | 14 E. Jackson Room LL105

Instructor: Eric Marsh | [marsh@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:marsh@cdm.depaul.edu)

Virtual Office Hours: Fridays, 8AM-2PM, by email appointment only

**Course Description** - In his film essay *Sans Soleil* (1983), director Chris Marker utilizes a passage from T.S. Eliot's poem "Ash Wednesday" to encapsulate the foundation of his cinematic explorations:

*"Because I know that time is always time  
And place is always and only place  
And what is actual is actual for only one time  
And only for one place."*

For Marker, the apparatus of cinematic expression and humanity's ontological journey swirl at the intersection of Time, Space, and Memory. Our course will follow in the footsteps of Eliot, Marker, and many other philosophers, thinkers, and filmmakers by exploring the various ways these three elements affect our conscious and subconscious engagement with cinematic works of art. In particular, we will seek to develop a deeper and more active engagement with various aesthetic theories in the multiverse of Cinema. Practically speaking, it will be our goal to analyze the ways in which a diverse selection of filmmakers grapple with the elements of Time, Space, and Memory within their particular modes and styles of creation. Students will work to define and identify various approaches to questions of Beauty (aesthetics) across a wide selection of films. Ultimately, students will develop a deeper understanding of individual and collective struggles with questions of Being (ontology) in relation to cinematic experience.

**Learning Outcomes** - At the outcome of this course students will:

- Define the concept of aesthetics in the field of Cinema
- Recognize practical applications of aesthetic theories in the production of Cinematic Works
- Analyze the links between form and content in the process of generating meaning across a diverse range of practical methods
- Identify the importance of Time, Space and Memory throughout the filmmaking process with particular emphasis on narrative organization, mise-en-scene, visual & sound design

- Write an essay that utilizes scholarly sources to explore the aesthetics of a feature film

**Course Management System** - All course materials (readings, assigned films, response questions, etc) will be made available to you on [D2L](#) on a weekly basis.

**Required Text** - All readings will be provided by the instructor on D2L.

### **Basis for Evaluation**

1. Weekly Responses - 50%
2. Final Essay - 30%
3. Attendance & Participation - 20%

A = 100 – 94, A- = 93 – 90, B+ = 89 – 88, B = 87 – 83, B- = 82 – 80, C+ = 79 – 78, C = 77 – 73, C- = 72 – 70, D+ = 69 – 68, D = 67 – 63, D- = 62 – 60, F = 59 – 0

### **COURSE SCHEDULE & OUTLINE**

#### **Week 1 – September 12**

Syllabus & Course Introduction  
Definition of Terms

#### **Week 2 – September 19**

Movement and Time in the Detective Story  
*Devil in a Blue Dress*, 1995, d. Carl Franklin, USA

#### **Week 3 – September 26**

Space: Struggle in Harsh Environments  
*Sorcerer*, 1977, d. William Friedkin, USA

#### **Week 4 – October 3**

Time: Narrative and Remembering  
*Vagabond*, 1995, d. Agnes Varda, France

#### **Week 5 – October 10**

Duration and Identity  
*Orlando*, 1992, d. Sally Potter, UK

#### **Week 6 – October 17**

The Body as Space / Challenging the Male Gaze

*Daisies*, 1966, d. Věra Chytilová, Czechoslovakia

*Simone Barbes or Virtue*, 1980, d. Marie-Claude Treilhou, France

### **Week 7 – October 24**

War and Media: Traumatic Memory

*No, or the Vain Glory of Command*, 1990, d. Manoel de Oliveira, Portugal

### **Week 8 – October 31**

Slow Cinema: Time Reflected

*Goodbye, Dragon Inn*, 2003, d. Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan

### **Week 9 – November 7**

Colonized Space

*West Indies*, 1979, d. Med Hondo, Mauritania/France

### **Week 10 – November 14**

Time, Space, & Memory in Practice: Infinite Worlds Possible

*Right Now, Wrong Then*, 2015, d. Hong Sang-soo, South Korea

*Cameraperson*, 2016, d. Kirsten Johnson, USA

### **Final Paper Due November 21**

**Attendance** – Students are expected to attend each class lecture and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence for the student. The overall grade for participation drops one-third after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course. If you do need to miss class for any reason, excused or not, please let me know ahead of time. Every situation will be handled according to individual circumstances and the instructor's discretion; and if you communicate with me and keep an open line of communication leniency may be granted.

**Assignments** - All assigned work must be turned in to the submissions folder on D2L at the date and time it is due. No late work will be accepted.

**Weekly Responses** are worth 10 points each. A strong response will meet the word count and demonstrate a serious engagement with the required reading and films each week. Points will be deducted for missing the word count and/or not discussing the assigned material in detail. These assignments will not be graded with comments. If you have questions regarding the grading of the weekly responses do not hesitate to contact me.

Extensions may be granted depending on individual circumstances and as long as you communicate with me in advance.

Essays will be graded with detailed comments and worth 30 points total. You will be deducted points for missing the word count, failing to follow the guidelines clearly, lacking works cited, and/or not having citations within your paper.

**Readings** - Readings are *mandatory* unless otherwise specified. They will fuel your reflections and responses, our discussions, and will guide you in defining your own cinematic theories and approaches. It is the responsibility of each student to read and prepare questions and comments for class discussion each week. Failure to do so will result in a lower participation grade.

**Screenings** - All of the assigned films are required “texts” for the course, and as such, are *mandatory*. All of the films assigned will be made available to stream on D2L through Panopto.

**Content/Trigger Warnings** - Films, lectures, and discussion in this course may engage with potentially sensitive or traumatizing material. I will try to note ahead of time especially graphic/intense content and do my best to foster a classroom in which we can relate courageously, compassionately, and contemplatively with difficult and important material each week. If you believe a film may be potentially triggering to you, I will happily search for a replacement film for you to view and write about. Additionally, if you would like specific or personalized triggers identified throughout the course, please let me know.

**Content and Schedule Changes** - The syllabus is subject to change depending on class progress, time constraints, or material availability. This goes for the screenings as well. The overall workload, however, will not change. You will be notified of any changes in the syllabus in a timely fashion.

**Weekly Updates** - After each class meeting I will post an update on D2L detailing the immediate class “business”: assignments, readings, screenings, etc, anything that you need to \*do\* before the next class. You may also keep track of this on the D2L content page. If you want to keep up with the course you *must* read these updates or use the checklist method on D2L and make sure you’re on track. No excuses.

**Class Discussion** - Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask **questions** and offer **comments** relevant to the day’s topic. Participation allows the instructor to “hear” the student’s voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments

related to the **films and reading assignments**. Students must keep up with the readings and films to participate in class discussion.

**Civil Discourse** – DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be [Socially Responsible Leaders](#). It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

**Attitude** – A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to, or over, others when the instructor or another student is speaking, mocking classmate's opinions, cell phones ringing, or anything else that could be considered a distraction. If this becomes an issue the professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate any such issues or problems.

**Academic Policies** – 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 [here](#)

**Academic Integrity** - Plagiarism is dishonest behavior and therefore violates collegiality as well as University policy. Any cases of plagiarism will automatically receive a zero and be reported to departmental and University officials for disciplinary action. DO NOT: copy any source without proper acknowledgement, paraphrase another's work or ideas without acknowledgement, self-plagiarize, submit someone else's work, or attempt to pass off AI-generated work as your own. You should familiarize yourself with behavior that constitutes plagiarism by reviewing the University's policy regarding academic dishonesty [HERE](#).

**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 continue to provide 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 completely 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 CampusConnect.

**Special Needs** – Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

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**COVID-19 Health & Safety Precautions** – Faculty and staff should take proper precautions to safeguard their health. It is important for everyone at DePaul to monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms, test when you feel sick and stay home to avoid exposing others if you are sick.

[Health & Safety Practices](#)

[Health Monitoring](#)