

DC233-401 Cinema & Art

Fall 2013 – M/W 10.10-11.40AM 14EAS Rm 801, LOOP

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Office Hours: Classroom M/W 9.25-10.10AM

Cinema & Art looks at the intersection of the cinema and fine art. The best definition of what falls under the jurisdiction of this course is *films & videos created by artists working outside of commercial cinema*. A special focus throughout the quarter will be on the idea of the “avant-garde” as it existed in 20th century art, and artists who made movies with this philosophy as a guide. The four main areas of interest in this course are 1) avant-garde film, 2) video art, 3) experimental animation and 4) contemporary art using film & video.

Students will be introduced to the major styles of alternative and experimental moving image work from the past hundred years. The course lectures are structured thematically, with assigned readings to prepare students for each week’s lecture, screening and discussion. Students will culminate their study of *Cinema & Art* by producing a short video in the style of their choice that responds to a specific work studied during the quarter.

Cinema & Art concentrates on moving image work that is not usually included in a survey of mainstream cinema or film history. A major concern for the class is first-hand exposure to these original sources, and an examination of the relationship of these works to mainstream cinema and other types of popular culture.

Upon completion of this course, students will be expected to do the following:

- identify major styles and themes of historical avant-garde film and video work
- analyze the aesthetic, cultural and social significances of these types of movies
- be able to discuss the work of major artists and directors working outside of Hollywood and mainstream movie cultures
- identify elements of avant-garde film and video art that have influenced popular culture

Class Assignments

Since the primary focus of this course is direct exposure to independent and alternative moving image work, the most important assignment is to view all work presented in class. Much of the work screened is difficult to obtain, and this class is a unique opportunity to see important but rare films and videos. Because of this, *class attendance is extremely important*. If a student misses more than 10% of scheduled classes (two

class meetings), the final grade will be reduced by one full letter. A fourth absence will result in a failing grade. The accumulation of two or more tardy arrivals to class (more than 20 minutes after the start of class) or two or more departures before class is formally dismissed may count as a full absence. *Attendance is taken very seriously in this class.*

Work representing a large number of artists and filmmakers will be included in this class. Many of these artists create short-duration (under ten-minute) work, and others create extremely long-duration (over three hour) pieces. The majority of these artists do not create work within feature-length timeframes. We will usually be able to watch short works in their entirety, and key passages will be excerpted from longer-format pieces in order to convey a sense of the film's aesthetics and content. Each week additional screenings to be viewed via the web will be assigned.

In addition to viewing all screened work, students will also be expected to maintain a rigorous reading schedule – **around fifty pages per week**. Students are expected to engage with serious critical and theoretical texts that will at times be challenging in both syntax and content. Weekly readings will be assigned from two textbooks and from supplemental essays. Required texts are explained below. Reading questions will accompany the assigned essays in order to help students focus on the main ideas.

Two quizzes will be given over the course of the quarter. These quizzes will ask students to be familiar with the filmmakers, films and concepts discussed in class.

Course Work

Students will submit one analytical paper, four to five pages in length each, during the course of the quarter. The first paper will be an historical research paper, in which students perform an in-depth examination of one film, director or artist discussed in class. Papers will be submitted as docx files via COLWeb. Previous to the research paper students will complete two shorter writing assignments, the first a response to a film screening, and the second a creative project that asks students to program an imagined film screening.

The final project for the class will be a video, animation or video installation project, based on an artist or topic covered in class. Students will identify an artist or idea from the curriculum that most interests them, and create a video in that style. In keeping with the theory-supported work discussed during the quarter, each student must also submit a two page paper with background information on the artist whose work to which they are responding, and the aesthetic and conceptual strategies employed by that artist.

This project will require only a very basic technical knowledge of video cameras and editing software. It is important to remember that many of the artists studied in *Cinema & Art* approach film and video from a non-professional background, and consequently a variety of homemade aesthetics will be seen. Because of this, students will be able to

explore the creative side of the artistic concepts discussed in class in this video project, and do so without an extensive technical background in shooting and editing.

Grade Distribution

Class participation 10%
Reading questions & quizzes 20%
Screening Review Paper 10%
Screening Programming Paper 10%
Research Paper 20%
Final project 30%

Required Texts

P. Adams Sitney, **Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde, 1943-2000**. Oxford University Press, 2002.

Dave Hickey, **Air Guitar: Essays on Art & Democracy** Art Issues Press, 1997.

Additional readings, supplied by instructor:

"The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Walter Benjamin
"Avant-garde and Kitsch" Clement Greenberg
"Notes on Camp" Susan Sontag
"Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" Fredric Jameson
Excerpts from "Experimental Animation: Origins of a New Art" Robert Russett and Cecile Starr, Da Capo Press, 1988. (out of print)
+ More may be assigned at instructor discretion.

| Date | Important Deadlines--- SUBJECT TO CHANGE, UPDATES ON COLWEB |
|---------|---|
| 9.23 M | <i>Screening Review Paper due</i> |
| 9.25 W | <i>Quiz #1</i> |
| 10.7 M | <i>Screening Programming Paper due</i> |
| 10.14 M | <i>Quiz #2</i> |
| 10.30 W | <i>Research Paper due</i> |

*Monday, November 25, 8.45-11AM – ***Final Project***– screening & critique

Course Policies

Late Work

Assignments and exercises must be completed by the due date provided. Late work will not be accepted without prior consent of the instructor.

Laptops

This class has a no-laptop policy during normally scheduled lecture and screening class sessions. Please do not bring a laptop to class. Please do not use any devices with keyboards & screens (iPhones, Blackberrys, whatever) to take notes in class.

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 reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

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 others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

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.

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in COLWeb and sent via email.

Online Course Evaluations

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. The greater the level of participation, the more useful the results. As students, you are in the unique position to view the instructor over time. Your comments about what works and what doesn't can help faculty build on the elements of the course that are strong and improve those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors' peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable (believable). As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted. Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. Positive comments also show the department chairs and college deans the commitment of instructors to the university and teaching evaluation results are one component used in annual performance reviews (including salary raises and promotion/tenure). The evaluation of the instructor and course provides you an opportunity to make your voice heard on an important issue – the quality of teaching at DePaul. Don't miss this opportunity to provide feedback!

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>.

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so by using the Campus Connection system (<http://campusconnect.depaul.edu>). Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

Retroactive Withdrawal

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college career students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal and one college office administrative withdrawal, each for one or more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM.

The deadlines for submitting appeals are as follows:

Autumn Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter
Winter Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter
Spring Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter
Summer Terms: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Excused Absence

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>. Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when unforeseeable circumstances prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. CDM policy

requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the incomplete request process in MyCDM.

- All incomplete requests must be approved by the instructor of the course and a CDM Associate Dean. Only exceptions cases will receive such approval.
- If approved, students are required to complete all remaining course requirement independently in consultation with the instructor by the deadline indicated on the incomplete request form.
- By default, an incomplete grade will automatically change to a grade of F after two quarters have elapsed (excluding summer) unless another grade is recorded by the instructor.
- An incomplete grade does NOT grant the student permission to attend the same course in a future quarter.
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Students with Disabilities

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:

Student Center, LPC, Suite #370

Phone number: (773)325.1677

Fax: (773)325.3720

TTY: (773)325.7296

