

Boğaziçi University  
Fall 2023

## **FA 49P – Sp. St. Comprehensive Film Appreciation 1**

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### **Course Description:**

In order to develop an understanding of interpreting cinematic works, a non-analytic approach to classic works of cinema is useful. Allowing a space of open encounters with film enthusiasts is also beneficial. Therefore, a survey of cinema classics supplemented by basic readings on their backgrounds can clarify what many students find baffling at first sight. Any person interested in cinema may find themselves perplexed over deciding when and where to start. One basic reason behind this confusion is the lack of a guiding introduction as to what appreciation, analysis, history, criticism and theory of cinema are. This seminar course aims to allow students to develop a refined taste in cinema via guided group discussions.

Consequently in this course, we will watch a classic film from a different geography each week. Provided with simple readings on these masterpieces, our lectures will develop into discussions on themes and minor analyses. We will focus on a selection of themes, determined by the class population in the first weeks. These themes include but are not limited to initiation, gender issues, epistemology, custom/law, time/repetition, game/chance, body politics and virtue/decision.

Following each week, the discussions will develop in an accumulative manner, covering a variety of terminology as we go along. The theoretical approaches of the lectures will be based on texts at hand and when possible, we'll capitulate on the knowledge of the students from other courses. The task is to produce comprehensive studies of the films and to be able to appreciate the value of a film collectively, in order to be able debate, hypothesise and arrive at conclusions.

As per their assignments, the students will be asked to write freely on designated films, provide their opinions and reflections with certain theoretical or informational constraints. They will be evaluated according to their success in developing conceptual arguments and integrating class discussions into their writings.

**Prerequisites:** This is an advanced course which requires students to have completed at least four courses in Film Studies two of which need to be must courses (Film Analysis; History of Cinema; Film Theory).

## **Grading:**

30% Attendance and Participation (a maximum of 3 lectures are allowed to be missed with valid excuses)

35% Midterm Paper - A 6 to 10 page reflection (double-spaced Times New Roman 12pts) on a film that will be announced.

35% Final Paper – An 6 to 10 page reflection (double-spaced Times New Roman 12pts) on a film that will be announced.

## ***SCHEDULE***

### **Week 1: Introducing Classic Cinema**

1. City Lights (1931) Charlie Chaplin, USA

Readings:

“Hugo Münsterberg: *Psychologizing Spectatorship between Laboratory and Theater*” by Jeremy Blatter, from *Thinking in the Dark* edited by Murray Pomerance and R. Barton Palmer. London: Rutgers University Press, 2016, (7-18).

### **Week 2: German Expressionism**

2. The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920) Robert Wiene, Germany

Readings:

"Caligari". From *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film*. Siegfried Kracauer, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004, (61-76).

### **Week 3: Soviet Avant-garde**

3. Man with a Movie Camera (1929) Dziga Vertov, USSR

Readings:

“New Paths: The Eleventh Year, Man with a Movie Camera”, from *Dziga Vertov: Defining Documentary Film*, Jeremy Hicks, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007, (55-70).

### **Week 4: French Impressionism**

4. Grand Illusion (1937) Jean Renoir, France

Readings:

“La Grande Illusion: Sound, Silence, and the Displacement of Emotion” by Valerie Orpen, from

*A Companion to Jean Renoir*, edited by Alastair Phillips and Ginette Vincendeau, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013 (121-130).

### **Week 5: Chinese Social Melodrama**

5. Street Angel (1937) Yuan Muzhi, China

Readings:

Excerpt from *Chinese National Cinema*, Yingjin Zhang, London: Routledge, 2004 (59-83)

### **Week 6: Italian Neorealism**

6. Bicycle Thieves (1948) Vittorio De Sica, Italy

Readings:

Excerpt from *Neorealism: Rebuilding the Cinematic City*, Mark Shiel. London: Wallflower - Columbia University Press, 2006, (54-62).

### **Week 7: Beginning Modern Cinema**

7. Citizen Kane (1942) Orson Welles, USA

Readings:

“Citizen Kane: From Log Cabin to Xanadu” by Laura Mulvey, from *Orson Welles’s Citizen Kane: A Casebook*. edited by James Naremore. London: Oxford University Press, 2004, (217-247).

### **Week 8: French New Wave**

8. 400 Blows (1959) François Truffaut, France

Readings:

“The French New Wave” by T. Jefferson Kline, from *European Cinema*, edited by Elizabeth Ezra. London: Oxford University Press, 2004 (157-175).

### **Week 9: Transcendental Style**

9. Tokyo Story (1953) Yasujiro Ozu, Japan

Readings:

Excerpt from *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer*, Paul Schrader, Berkeley : University of California Press, 1972 (17-55)

### **Week 10: Suspense and Masculine Fantasy**

10. Vertigo (1958) Alfred Hitchcock, USA

Readings:

“Robin Wood on Hitchcock” by Harry Oldmeadow from *A Companion to Alfred Hitchcock*, edited by Thomas Leitch and Leland Poague, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011 (121-130).

### **Week 11: The Art of Cinema**

11. *Persona* (1966) Ingmar Bergman, Sweden

Readings:

“Ingmar Bergman’s *Persona*” by Susan Sontag, from *Ingmar Bergman’s Persona*, edited by Lloyd Michaels, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000 (405-424).

### **Week 12: Surrealism**

12. *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972) Luis Bunuel, Spain

Readings:

“On a Road to Nowhere” by Sheldon Penn, from *A Companion to Luis Bunuel*, edited by Rob Stone and Julián Daniel Gutiérrez-Albilla, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011 (457-478).

### **Week 13: The End of Classic Cinema**

13. *Lost Honor of Katharina Blum* (1975) Volker Schlöndorff, Margarethe von Trotta, Germany

Readings:

None.