

# FILM STUDIES (BRYN MAWR)

brynmawr.edu/filmstudies

Film Studies is an interdisciplinary program of inquiry bringing a range of analytical methods to bear upon films, film audiences, and the social and industrial contexts of film and media production, distribution and exhibition. The courses that comprise the minor in film studies reflect the diversity of approaches in the academic study of cinema. The minor is anchored by core courses in formal analysis, history and theory. Elective courses in particular film styles, directors, national cinemas, genres, areas of theory and criticism, video production, and issues in film and media culture add both breadth and depth to this program of study.

Film Studies is a Bryn Mawr College minor. Students must take a majority of courses on the Bryn Mawr campus; however, minors are encouraged to consider courses offered in the Tri-College consortium and at the University of Pennsylvania. Students should work with the director of the Film Studies Program to develop a minor work plan when declaring the minor.

## MINOR REQUIREMENTS

In consultation with the program director, students design a program of study that includes a range of film genres, styles, national cinemas, eras and disciplinary and methodological approaches. Students are strongly encouraged to take at least one course addressing topics in global or non-western cinema.

The minor consists of a total of six courses and must include the following:

- One introductory course in the formal analysis of film
- One course in film history or an area of film history
- One course in film theory or an area of film theory
- Three electives.
- At least one of the six courses must be at the 300 level.

Courses that fall into two or more of the above categories may fulfill the requirement of the student's choosing, but may not fulfill more than one requirement simultaneously. Students should consult with their advisors to determine which

courses, if any, may count simultaneously for multiple credentials. Final approval is at the discretion of the program director.

## FACULTY

### *Steering Committee:*

#### **Timothy Harte**

Chair and Associate Professor of Russian on the Myra T. Cooley Lectureship in Russian

#### **Homay King**

Professor of History of Art and the Eugenia Chase Guild Chair in the Humanities

#### **Michael Tratner**

Mary E. Garrett Alumnae Professor of English

#### **Sharon Ullman**

Professor of History

### *Affiliated Faculty:*

#### **Shiamin Kwa**

Assistant Professor of East Asian Studies

#### **Roberta Ricci**

Interim Director of Film Studies; Chair and Associate Professor of Italian

#### **David Romberg**

Lecturer

#### **H. Rosi Song**

Professor of Spanish and Director of Gender and Sexuality Studies

## COURSES

### **ARTW B266 SCREENWRITING**

#### *Staff*

An introduction to screenwriting. Issues basic to the art of storytelling in film will be addressed and analyzed: character, dramatic structure, theme, setting, image, sound. The course focuses on the film adaptation; readings include novels, screenplays, and short stories. Films adapted from the readings will be screened. In the course of the semester, students will be expected to outline and complete the first act of an adapted screenplay of their own. (Not offered 2017-2018)

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### **CSTS B274 GREEK TRAGEDY IN GLOBAL CINEMA**

*Staff*

This course explores how contemporary film, a creative medium appealing to the entire demographic spectrum like Greek drama, looks back to the ancient origins. Examining both films that are directly based on Greek plays and films that make use of classical material without being explicitly classical in plot or setting, we will discuss how Greek mythology is reconstructed and appropriated for modern audiences and how the classical past continues to be culturally significant. A variety of methodological approaches such as film and gender theory, psychoanalysis, and feminist theory will be applied in addition to more straightforward literary-historical interpretation. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **EALC B212 TOPICS: INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE LITERATURE**

*Staff*

This is a topics course. Topics may vary. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **EALC B240 TOPICS IN CHINESE FILM**

*Shiamin Kwa*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **EALC B281 FOOD IN TRANSLATION: THEORY AND PRACTICE**

*Staff*

This semester we will explore the connections between what we eat and how we define ourselves in the context of global culture. We will proceed from the assumption that food is an object of culture, and that our contemplation of its transformations and translations in production, preparation, consumption, and distribution will inform our notions of personal and group identity. This course takes Chinese food as a case study, and examines the way that Chinese food moves from its host country to diasporic communities all over the world, using theories of translation as our theoretical and empirical foundation. From analyzing menu and ingredient translations to producing a short film based on interviews, we will consider the relationship between food and communication in a multilingual and multicultural world. Readings include theoretical texts on translation (Apter), recipe books and menus, Chinese and Chinese-American literature (*Classic of Poetry*, Mo Yan,

Hong Kingston). Films include Ian Cheney's *Searching for General Tso*, Wayne Wang's *Soul of a Banquet* and *Eat a Bowl of Tea*, Ang Li's *Eat Drink Man Woman*, and Wong Karwai's *In the Mood for Love*. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ENGL B205 INTRODUCTION TO FILM**

*Sara Louise Bryant*

This course is intended to provide students with the tools of critical film analysis. Through readings of images and sounds, sections of films and entire narratives, students will cultivate the habits of critical viewing and establish a foundation for focused work in film studies. The course introduces formal and technical units of cinematic meaning and categories of genre and history that add up to the experiences and meanings we call cinema. Although much of the course material will focus on the Hollywood style of film, examples will be drawn from the history of cinema. Attendance at weekly screenings is mandatory. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **ENGL B227 POVERTY AND PRECARIOUS LIVES ON SCREEN**

*Staff*

The cinema and the mainstream film industry have been well suited to depicting glamour, opulence, and wealth. But what about the widespread condition of being poor and living on the brink of being even worse off? In this course, we will explore cinematic depictions of poverty and inequality to ask whether and how films can go beyond romanticizing poverty or merely rehearsing rags-to-riches narratives. How does the awareness of poverty shape aesthetic form in film? What are the social and political implications of how cinema treats the condition of being poor? Subtopics will include: the Great Depression and Hollywood; social realism and fantasies of escape; representing labor in late capitalism; global inequality and a "world" cinema; and precarity in the 21st-century U.S. Film will include *Gold Diggers of 1933*, *Sullivan's Travels*, *Ratcatcher*, *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Wendy and Lucy*, and *Beasts of the Southern Wild*. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ENGL B229 MOVIES AND MASS POLITICS**

*Michael Tratner*

Movies and mass politics emerged together, altering entertainment and government in strangely similar ways. Fascism and Communism claimed an inherent relation to the masses and hence to movies; Hollywood rejected such claims.

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We will examine films that allude to Communism and Fascism, seeking to understand how they join in political debates and comment upon the mass experience of movie going. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **ENGL B324 TOPICS IN SHAKESPEARE**

*Colby Gordon*

Films and play texts vary from year to year. The course assumes significant prior experience of Shakespearean drama and/or Renaissance drama.

(Offered Spring 2018)

### **ENGL B336 TOPICS IN FILM**

*Sara Louise Bryant*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Current topic description: We'll consider how voice has changed film & how film has changed the voice, studying cinema from 1920s to now & theories about voice. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **ENGL B355 PERFORMANCE STUDIES**

*Staff*

Introduces students to the field of performance studies, a multidisciplinary species of cultural studies which theorizes human actions as performances that both construct and resist cultural norms of race, gender, and sexuality. The course will explore "performativity" in everyday life as well as in the performing arts, and will include multiple viewings of dance and theater both on- and off-campus. In addition, we will consider the performative aspects of film and video productions.

(Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ENGL B367 ASIAN AMERICAN FILM VIDEO AND NEW MEDIA**

*Staff*

The course explores the role of pleasure in the production, reception, and performance of Asian American identities in film, video, and the internet, taking as its focus the sexual representation of Asian Americans in works produced by Asian American artists from 1915 to present. In several units of the course, we will study graphic sexual representations, including pornographic images and sex acts some may find objectionable. Students should be prepared to engage analytically with all class material. To maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and solidarity among the participants in the class, no auditors will be allowed. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ENGL B375 SEX ON SCREENS**

*Staff*

This course will provide a historical and theoretical overview of the ways moving image sex acts have been represented on screen, from early cinema's silent film loops to today's celebrity sex tapes. We will examine the ideological operations of sex in the cinema and aim to comprehend the multifarious ways viewers, filmmakers, critics, and scholars respond to dominant conceptions of sex-sexuality through alternative cinematic production and critical scholarship. Units include: stag movies, the Production Code and ratings system, European art cinema, sex ed, underground and the avant-garde, cult / sexploitation / blaxploitation, sexual revolution, hard core, women's cinema, home video, queer cinema, HIV/AIDS, the digital revolution, feminist porn, and the Internet. Prerequisites: HART / COML B110: Identification in the Cinema; or ENGL / HART 205: Introduction to Film; or ENGL B299 History of Narrative Cinema, 1945 to the Present. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **GEOL B125 FOCUS: GEOLOGY IN FILM**

*Staff*

This is a half semester Focus course. Geologic processes make for great film storylines, but filmmakers take great liberty with how they depict scientific "facts" and scientists. We will explore how and why filmmakers choose to deviate from science reality. We will study and view one film per week and discuss its issues from a geologist's perspective. (0.5 credits) (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **GERM B320 TOPICS IN GERMAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE**

*Staff*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Taught in English. Students wanting German credit will meet for additional hour per week. Current topic description: This course focuses on the development of strong international and cross-cultural trends in German literature of modernity. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **GERM B321 ADVANCED TOPICS IN GERMAN CULTURAL STUDIES**

*Qinna Shen*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Current topic description: This film course of transnational scope focuses specifically on cultural encounters between the West and the

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East in the 20th and 21st centuries. It uses visual material related to East Asia produced mainly by German filmmakers. Using film as the main medium, the course touches on issues that are at the center of contemporary cultural debates, such as orientalism, race, gender, class, and identity, as well as postcolonialism, nationalism, travel, exile, multiculturalism, and globalism. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **GNST B255 VIDEO PRODUCTION**

*David Romberg*

From its very inception in the nineteenth century, film has straddled between the magic of realism and the suspension of reality in fiction by cinematic means such as special lighting, singular perspectives, and temporal and spatial manipulations. In this course, we will explore the paradox of a medium that is expected to simultaneously index and document reality, and poetically suggest it in fiction. By blurring these too often polarized genres, this course will challenge conventional genres and test the potential creativity in playing with them. Screenings and readings of historical, influential works will illustrate the merging of documentaries and fiction films, which will be explored also in combination with hands-on production-based cinematic experiments. Students will work in groups to produce several small experimental scenarios that will borrow from both documentary and fiction methods, such as working with social actors, archival documentation, performance, dramatization, and stylization. In addition, each student will produce a final project that will be a culmination of the methods used in the smaller experiments. Students will also be required to write short regular responses to the texts and films shown. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **GNST B302 TOPICS IN VIDEO PRODUCTION**

*David Romberg*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **HART B110 CRITICAL APPROACHES TO VISUAL REPRESENTATION: IDENTIFICATION IN THE CINEMA**

*Homay King*

An introduction to the analysis of film through particular attention to the role of the spectator. Why do moving images compel our fascination? How exactly do film spectators relate to the

people, objects, and places that appear on the screen? Wherein lies the power of images to move, attract, repel, persuade, or transform its viewers? In this course, students will be introduced to film theory through the rich and complex topic of identification. We will explore how points of view are framed in cinema, and how those viewing positions differ from those of still photography, advertising, video games, and other forms of media. Students will be encouraged to consider the role the cinematic medium plays in influencing our experience of a film: how it is not simply a film's content, but the very form of representation that creates interactions between the spectator and the images on the screen. Film screenings include *Psycho*, *Being John Malkovich*, and others. Course is geared to freshman and those with no prior film instruction. Fulfills History of Art major 100-level course requirement, Film Studies minor Introductory course or Theory course requirement. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **HART B299 HISTORY OF NARRATIVE CINEMA, 1945 TO THE PRESENT**

*Homay King*

This course surveys the history of narrative film from 1945 through contemporary cinema. We will analyze a chronological series of styles and national cinemas, including Classical Hollywood, Italian Neorealism, the French New Wave, and other post-war movements and genres. Viewings of canonical films will be supplemented by more recent examples of global cinema. While historical in approach, this course emphasizes the theory and criticism of the sound film, and we will consider various methodological approaches to the aesthetic, socio-political, and psychological dimensions of cinema. Readings will provide historical context, and will introduce students to key concepts in film studies such as realism, formalism, spectatorship, the auteur theory, and genre studies. Fulfills the history requirement or the introductory course requirement for the Film Studies minor. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **HART B306 FILM THEORY**

*Staff*

An introduction to major developments in film theory and criticism. Topics covered include: the specificity of film form; cinematic realism; the cinematic "author"; the politics and ideology of cinema; the relation between cinema and

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language; spectatorship, identification, and subjectivity; archival and historical problems in film studies; the relation between film studies and other disciplines of aesthetic and social criticism. Each week of the syllabus pairs critical writing(s) on a central principle of film analysis with a cinematic example. Class will be divided between discussion of critical texts and attempts to apply them to a primary cinematic text. Prerequisite: A course in Film Studies (HART B110, HART B299, ENGL B205, or the equivalent from another college by permission of instructor). (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **HART B334 TOPICS IN FILM STUDIES**

*Homay King*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Current topic description: D. N. Rodowick argued that the digital arts “are the most radical instance yet of an old Cartesian dream: the best representations are the most immaterial ones because they seem to free the mind from the body and the world of substance.” In this seminar, we will explore digital images in relation to cinema, photography, and other media. We will examine the fate of materiality, the body, and duration in 21st c. media, and consider whether the digital marks a significant break from the analog. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **HIST B284 MOVIES AND AMERICA**

*Staff*

Movies are one of the most important means by which Americans come to know—or think they know—their own history. This class examines the complex cultural relationship between film and American historical self-fashioning. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ITAL B212 ITALY TODAY: NEW VOICES, NEW WRITERS, NEW LITERATURE**

*Roni Kubati*

This course, taught in English, will focus primarily on the works of the so-called “migrant writers” who, having adopted the Italian language, have become a significant part of the new voice of Italy. In addition to the aesthetic appreciation of these works, this course will also take into consideration the social, cultural, and political factors surrounding them. The course will focus on works by writers who are now integral to Italian canon – among them: Cristina Ali-Farah, Igiaba Scego, Ghermandi Gabriella, Amara Lakhous. As part of the course, movies concerned with various aspects of Italian Migrant

literature will be screened and analyzed. One additional hour for students who want Italian credit. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **ITAL B214 THE MYTH OF VENICE (1800-2000)**

*Staff*

In English. The Republic of Venice existed for over a millennium. This course begins in the year 1797 at the end of the Republic and the emerging of an extensive body of literature centered on Venice and its mythical facets. Readings will include the Romantic views of Venice (excerpts from Lord Byron, Fredrick Schiller, Wolfgang von Goethe, Ugo Foscolo, Alessandro Manzoni) and the 20th century reshaping of the literary myth (readings from Thomas Mann, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Gabriele D’Annunzio, Henry James, and others). A journey into this fascinating tradition will shed light on how the literary and visual representation of Venice, rather than focusing on a nostalgic evocation of the death of the Republic, became a territory of exploration for literary modernity. The course is offered in English; all texts are provided in translation. One additional hour for students who want Italian credit. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ITAL B229 THE POLITICS OF FOOD IN ITALIAN LITERATURE, CULTURE, AND CINEMA**

*Staff*

In English. A profile of Italian literature/culture/cinema obtained through an analysis of gastronomic documents, films, literary texts, and magazines. We will also include a discussion of the Slow Food Revolution, a movement initiated in Italy in 1980 and now with a world-wide following, and its social, economic, ecological, aesthetic, and cultural impact to counteract fast food and to promote local food traditions. Course taught in English. One additional hour for students who want Italian credit. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ITAL B255 UOMINI D’ONORE IN SICILIA: ITALIAN MAFIA IN LITERATURE AND CINEMA**

*Roberta Ricci*

This course aims to explore representations of Mafia figures in Italian literature and cinema, starting from the ‘classical’ example of Sicily. From Sicily, the “octopus” (*piovra*), as the Mafia is called in Italy, has spread throughout Italy, and has pervaded almost every facet of Italian life,

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including cultural life. The course will introduce students to both Italian Studies from an interdisciplinary prospective and also to narrative, using fiction and non-fiction texts written by 19th, 20th, and 21st century writers. Novels, films, testimonies and TV series will offer different representations of the Mafia: its ethics, its relation with politics, religion and business, its ideas of friendship, family, masculinity and femininity. Internships in Italy will be available connected with this course. Course is taught in Italian. Prerequisite: ITAL B102 or permission of the instructor. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **ITAL B306 YOUTH IN 20TH CENTURY ITALIAN LITERATURE AND CINEMA**

*Roberta Ricci*

This interdisciplinary course focuses on literary texts and visual material dealing with youth and youth culture in post-fascist Italy. How is youth described in Italian culture after WWII? What does youth represent in the Italian imagination of 20th century Italy? Which language is used by the youth? While the focus in analyzing the challenges faced by youth is primarily on literature and film studies, throughout the semester the course will also touch upon sociological, cultural, and anthropological perspectives concerning the role of the family, peer relationships, prostitution, drugs, criminality and violence, diversity, gender identity, and sexuality. Students will be required to attend film screenings or view films on their own devices. Prerequisite: One literature course at the 200 level or permission of the instructor. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **ITAL B307 INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS: OTHERNESS IN ITALIAN LITERATURE**

*Staff*

This course will introduce students to the most representative works in Italian literature of all genres—poetry, novels, scientific prose, theater, diaries, narrative, epistolary—throughout the centuries, with emphasis on marginalization, exile, political persecution, national identity, violence, and otherness. We will bring works of literature to the attention of students who are interested in the key role played by Italian culture in the development of a European civilization, including the international debate on modernity and post-modernity. Readings and lectures will move from 14th century writers (Dante, Boccaccio) to Humanistic Thought (Florentine political revolution) and the Renaissance

(Machiavelli); from the Enlightenment (Foscolo, Leopardi, Manzoni) to modernity (Pirandello, Svevo) and post-modernism (Calvino).

Prerequisite: One literature course at the 200 level. or permission by the instructor. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **ITAL B310 DETECTIVE FICTION**

*Staff*

In English. Why is detective fiction so popular? What explains the continuing multiplication of detective texts despite the seemingly finite number of available plots? This course will explore the worldwide fascination with this genre beginning with European writers before turning to the more distant mystery stories from around the world. The international scope of the readings will highlight how authors in different countries have developed their own national detective typologies while simultaneously responding to international influence of the British-American model. Italian majors taking this course for Italian credit will be required to meet for an additional hour with the instructor and to do the readings and writing in Italian. Prerequisite: One literature course at the 200 level or permission by the instructor. One additional hour for students who want Italian credit. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **PSYC B375 MOVIES AND MADNESS: ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY THROUGH FILMS**

*Leslie Rescorla*

This writing-intensive seminar (maximum enrollment = 16 students) deals with critical analysis of how various forms of psychopathology are depicted in films. The primary focus of the seminar will be evaluating the degree of correspondence between the cinematic presentation and current research knowledge about the disorder, taking into account the historical period in which the film was made. For example, we will discuss how accurately the symptoms of the disorder are presented and how representative the protagonist is of people who typically manifest this disorder based on current research. We will also address the theory of etiology of the disorder depicted in the film, including discussion of the relevant intellectual history in the period when the film was made and the prevailing accounts of psychopathology in that period. Another focus will be how the film portrays the course of the disorder and how it depicts treatment for the disorder. This cinematic presentation will be evaluated with respect to

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current research on treatment for the disorder as well as the historical context of prevailing treatment for the disorder at the time the film was made. Prerequisite: PSYC B209. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **RUSS B217 THE CINEMA OF ANDREI TARKOVSKY**

*Tim Harte*

This course will probe the cinematic oeuvre of the great Soviet filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky, who produced some of the most compelling, significant film work of the 20th century. Looking at not only Tarkovsky's films but also those films that influenced his work, we will explore the aesthetics, philosophy, and ideological pressure underlying Tarkovsky's unique brand of cinema. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **RUSS B238 TOPICS: THE HISTORY OF CINEMA 1895 TO 1945**

*Tim Harte*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **RUSS B258 SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN CINEMA OF THE 1960S**

*Tim Harte*

This course examines 1960s Soviet and Eastern European "New Wave" cinema, which won worldwide acclaim through its treatment of war, gender, and aesthetics. Films from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia will be viewed and analyzed, accompanied by readings on film history and theory. All films shown with subtitles; no knowledge of Russian or previous study of film required. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **SPAN B252 COMPASSION, INDIGNATION, AND ANXIETY IN LATIN AMERICAN FILM**

*Staff*

Stereotypically, Latin Americans are viewed as "emotional people"—often a euphemism to mean irrational, impulsive, wildly heroic, fickle. This course takes this expression at face value to ask: Are there particular emotions that identify Latin Americans? And, conversely, do these "people" become such because they share certain emotions? Can we find a correlation between emotions and political trajectories? To answer these questions, we will explore three types of films that seem to have, at different times, taken hold of the Latin American imagination and

feelings: melodramas (1950s-1960s), documentaries (1970s-1990s), and "low-key" comedies (since 2000s.) (Not offered 2017-2018)

### **SPAN B318 ADAPTACIONES LITERARIAS EN EL CINE ESPAÑOL**

*H. Rosi Song*

Film adaptations of literary works have been popular since the early years of cinema in Spain. This course examines the relationship between films and literature, focusing on the theory and practice of film adaptation. Attention will be paid to the political and cultural context in which these texts are being published and made into films. Students will be required to attend film screenings or view films on their own devices. Prerequisite: A 200-level course in Spanish. (Offered Fall 2017)