

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Siena

Course Title: Contemporary Italian Cinema: From Canon to the Fringe

Course Code: ITTR 3670

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Italian Studies / Film Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: None

Description

This course examines the social, political and economic evolution of contemporary Italy through cinema and other forms of visual culture. Film is one of the 20th-century art forms most suitable as a medium for observing and developing an understanding of the way that contemporary Italy has evolved since World War II, with cinema as the historical record of this evolution. As such, the cinema is also examined from an aesthetic point of view, the iconographic and stylistic developments of the medium also being crucial elements of a visual culture that complements and references traditional modes of representation such as painting and sculpture, as well as architecture, literature and the oral folk tradition.

The course is subdivided into several units, which cover important trends in 20th-century filmmaking, such as: neorealism, stardom, comedy Italian-Style, Modernist Cinema, Spaghetti Westerns, *Il cinema impegnato*, and horror. Women's and LGBTQ issues are also part of the course, insofar as it traces the evolution of social rights in Italy and issues of diversity and inclusion, as portrayed by contemporary film.

ITTR 3670 Contemporary Italian Cinema: From Canon to the Fringe has no pre-requisites. It may be taken in addition to ITTR 2630 Italian History and Culture through Film, as a complement. While it can be taken before or after the other film class, the more rigorous course assignments of ITTR 3670 may make it more suitable for enrollment following ITTR 2630.

Objectives

- Students acquire knowledge of the history of traditional Italian cinema.
- They focus on the social, political and economic trends reflected in filmmakers' concerns in the context of industrialized society and its evolution since the late 1950s.
- They are exposed to the issues which have characterized film studies in relation to Italian cinema and the diversity of filmmaking in the Italian context.
- They gain an awareness of how the cultural history of Italy has been portrayed in canonical cinema.

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- They acquire a broad overview of Italy's emergence as a major world industrial power, providing an acquaintance with the issues affecting ordinary Italians through critical consideration of the ideas, contexts and practices of filmmakers and film commentators in this period.

Course Requirements

Students must take four quizzes, two before the midterm paper is due, and two before the final paper is due. The quizzes cover the films and readings that the students must watch or complete throughout the course.

Students are required to complete a midterm paper about two of the films that they watch and discuss during the first half of our course. They receive a series of paper prompts one week before the deadline and must choose one of these on which to base their response.

Students must also complete a final paper on a topic of their choice. During the second half of our course, they complete this project in stages including: selection of a topic, completion of a bibliography, completion of a first draft, and a final draft.

Methods of Evaluation

Attendance and Participation	15%
Quizzes	20%
Midterm Paper	25%
Presentation	15%
Final Paper	25%

Primary Texts

C. Celli, M. Cottino-Jones, *A New Guide to Italian Cinema*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York 2007

M. Cottino-Jones, *Women, Desire and Power in Italian Cinema*, Palgrave MacMillan, New York 2009

Contemporary Italian Cinema Course Reader

Supplementary Texts

A. Aciman, *Call Me By Your Name: A Novel*, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York 2007

P. Bondanella, *Italian Cinema from Neorealism to the Present*, Continuum, New York 2004

M. Giori, Introduction, *Homosexuality and the Italian Cinema: From the Fall of Fascism to the Lead Years*, Palgrave MacMillan, London, 2017

M. Landy, *Stardom Italian Style*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2008

M. Landy, *Italian Film*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2000

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- G. Lombardi & C. Uva (eds), *Italian Political Cinema: Public Life, Imaginary, and Identity in Contemporary Italian Film*, Peter Lang, Bern 2016
- M. Marcus, *Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1986
- J. Reich, *Beyond the Latin Lover. Marcello Mastroianni, Masculinity, and Italian Cinema*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2004
- M. P. Wood, *Italian Cinema*, Berg, Oxford 2005

Outline of Course Content

TOPIC 1 - Course Introduction

Background to Italian cinema up to the 1940s

TOPIC 2 - Neorealism

Roma città aperta (R. Rossellini, 1945)

Classic Neo-realism: its essence defined, the social, cultural and political context of the 'movement' Focus on the role of Anna Magnani

Ladri di biciclette (V. De Sica, 1948)

De Sica, Zavattini and the myth of non-actors

Bellissima (L. Visconti, 1951)

Luchino Visconti, Anna Magnani and the end of Neorealism

TOPIC 3 - Stardom

Stromboli, terra di Dio (R. Rossellini, 1950)

Italian film and International Stars: The Ingrid Bergman case

Pane, amore e fantasia (L. Comencini, 1953)

'Pink Neorealism' and the new Italian stardom in the context of the 'economic miracle'

La marcia su Roma (D. Risi, 1962) and *I soliti ignoti* (M. Monicelli, 1958) OR *Il sorpasso* (D. Risi, 1962)

Male stardom and comedy, Italian style

Film: *Sedotta e abbandonata* (P. Germi, 1964)

Stardom (female)

TOPIC 4 – Comedy Italian Style

Matrimonio all'italiana (V. De Sica, 1964)

Stardom in the Sixties: Sophia Loren and the "unruly woman". Gender issues at stake in comedy, Italian style.

TOPIC 5 – Modernist Cinema

La dolce vita (F. Fellini, 1959)

Fellini, modernism and the Italian star system

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L'eclisse (M. Antonioni, 1962)

A Peculiar Stardom: Monica Vitti in the Context of Modernist Cinema

TOPIC 6 – The “Spaghetti Western”

C'era una volta il West (S. Leone, 1968)

Revisiting Hollywood genres: western, Italian style

TOPIC 7 – The Political Film (*il cinema impegnato*)

Swept Away (L. Wertmüller, 1974)

Political and class divisions between Italy's Two Halves

TOPIC 8 - Horror

Profondo rosso (D. Argento, 1975)

Horror movies and gender issues: the Dario Argento case

TOPIC 9 – Women's and LGBTQ Issues in Contemporary Cinema

Chiamami col tuo nome (L. Guadagnino, 2017)

Sexual orientation and (fragile) masculinity in a changing society

Io e Lei (MS. Tognazzi, 2015)

Female sexuality and sexual orientation in contemporary Italy

Un'ora sola ti vorrei (A. Marazzi, 2002)

Building female identity between motherhood and self-awareness

Corpo celeste (A. Rohrwacher, 2011)

Family, religion and gender in contemporary Italy