

ENG 4146: Advanced Filmmaking—“Space” (Spring 2020)

Professor: Dr. Trevor Mowchun

Class time: Tuesday, Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM), Thursday, Period 7 - 8 (1:55 PM - 3:50 PM)

Room: TUR 2322

Screening: Wednesday, Period E1 - E3 (7:20 PM - 10:10 PM); Room: ROL 115; Projectionist:

Sofia Arriaga

Office hours (TUR 4336): Tuesday 3:15pm - 4:15pm, Thursday 4:15pm - 5:15pm, or by appointment.

Email: tmowchun@ufl.edu (please allow at least 24 hours for a response)

Office phone number: 352-294-2839

Media Assistant: Jack Edmondson (TUR 4303)

Availability: Monday: 10:40 AM - 1:40 PM, Tuesday: N/A, Wednesday: 5:10 PM - 7:05 PM,

Thursday: 11:45 AM - 1:40 PM, Friday: 10:40 AM - 12:50 PM

* Students can also reach Jack by email: jacholas330@gmail.com, call or text at: 954-695-3720

Advanced Filmmaking: “Space”

The importance and potential artistic impact of space in cinema is an often underappreciated if not altogether ignored aspect of the medium, especially in comparison with the structural logic of time. Cinema, like music, is conventionally defined as a temporal art form, but perhaps to a greater extent than music, it is a powerfully spatial art form with as much in common with the field of architecture. Knowledge of the subtle dynamics of space and insight into how to dramatize what we call “setting” or “location” is crucial for the ambitious filmmaker striving to realize a compelling artistic vision onscreen. More importantly, the independent filmmaker working with limited resources will benefit immensely from the imaginative possibilities of creating films set in a limited number of spaces or even a single space, for example a house, apartment complex, campground, restaurant, elevator, bus or even a space as confined and inconspicuous as a closet. The expressive range of single-space films can be remarkably broad, whether the filmmaker opts to expand a space beyond its apparent limits and into an “ecosystem” or “world,” or, just the opposite, to implode the space into an experience of confinement in which the characters are subjected to pressures capable of revealing hidden depths of the human psyche. Whatever the approach, we will discover that a serious consideration of space in cinema can form the foundation for an independent filmmaking process that is both imaginative and practical. Working with rather than against the practical constraints of cinematic space can yield surprisingly liberating conditions for un-locking artistic possibilities difficult to imagine when the filmmaker’s vision is set too high in terms of narrative scale and complexity. Here we will emphasize the breadth of cinematic stories, events and worldviews made possible by a poetics of space derived from and for the cinema.

The course will involve reading some foundational texts on various aesthetic theories of space, in conjunction with close examination of films which successfully demonstrate an imaginative use of space for their relatively minimalist narratives. Emphasis will also be placed on location scouting, storyboarding, selection of props, staging of actors, camera placement/movement, sound design, and the various technical logistics of filming in small spaces. Students will create a series of short film sketches and propose their own projects for a short film to be realized individually or in small groups. The final film will utilize a limited number of locations or even a single location—foregrounding cinematic space as a character, presence and poetry in its own right.

Required books *Available for purchase in the bookstore; hard copy on reserve in the library

- Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (New York: Penguin Books, 2014).
- Frank Kessler, *Mise en scène* (Montreal: Caboose, 2014).
- Richard McGuire, *Here* (New York: Pantheon, 2014).

Filmmaking manuals

- Blain Brown, *Cinematography, Theory and Practice: Image Making for Cinematographers and Directors*, Third Edition (New York and London: Routledge, 2016). *Purchase online; hard copy on reserve in the library

* Brown's book is the technical manual I suggest you read steadily throughout the semester. I will be incorporating in class some of the key technical elements most vital to your filmmaking work. The first half of the book is devoted to the so-called "language of film," which is often limited to traditional narrative methods at the expense of experimentation and is not of much interest for our purposes. The book becomes more useful in a technical sense with the "Lighting Basics" chapter and those which follow.

- Recommended: Sonja Schenk and Ben Long, *The Digital Filmmaking Handbook*, Fifth Edition (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning PTR, 2015).

Articles, Essays, Book Chapters

All remaining articles, essays, and book chapters are available on Canvas. The readings will be informing much of our work, so it is crucial that you keep up with the reading, devoting the necessary time and energy to its understanding. The same holds for the film screenings.

Online technical resources:

- Video Production Tips (from Penn State Media Commons):
<https://mediacommons.psu.edu/2017/02/01/video-production-tips/>
- Department camera manual—Canon Rebel T5i (information about video starts on page 173; page 176 discusses manual video settings): <http://gdlp01.c-wss.com/gds/5/0300010905/07/eos-rebelt5i-700d-im7-en.pdf>
- Film glossary (from New York Film Academy):

<https://www.nyfa.edu/student-resources/glossary/>

- Basic Adobe Premiere editing tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hls3Tp7JS8E>

Equipment, Technical Assistance, and Proficiency

The Department of English provides production and post-production equipment, including Adobe Premiere editing software, however you are free to use your own equipment with approval from me. Our media assistant will be available in the equipment room (TUR 4303) to provide ongoing demonstrations of production and postproduction equipment, in addition to assisting with any technical questions you may have in person and via email. Please be aware that technical support is restricted to the department's onsite resources. Hours of availability are listed at the top of the syllabus.

NB: Due to the limited amount of equipment on hand, you will all be paired up to share equipment throughout the semester, especially cameras. The maximum amount of time you can check out any piece of equipment is **one week**. If you have equipment checked out that is not in use, please return it to the media lab during office hours. Students are also free to use their own film equipment with prior approval from the instructor.

In order to record, store, transfer and regularly back up your work you may need all or some of the following equipment:

- SD card for video recording (recommended: SanDisk 32 or 60GB Extreme Pro SDHC UHS-1 Memory Card)
- SD card for audio recording (recommended: SanDisk 16GB Ultra UHS-1 SDHC Memory Card class 10)
- External hard drive for project storage (recommended: WD 1TB My Passport USB 3.0 Secure Portable Hard Drive)
- SD card reader (recommended: Transcend RDF5 USB 3.0 SDHC / SDXC / microSDHC/SDXC Memory Card Reader) *The department's iMac computers have SD slots, as do the majority of laptops

Equipment and Lab Policies

The production room is located in TUR 4303 (code 0415*). Throughout the semester you will have 24/7 access and will be given keys to the building and to an interior editing room. If you lose either of these keys, you will be charged \$50 for a replacement. To sign out keys please consult with the technician during scheduled office hours in TUR 4303. Be sure to return your keys at the end of the semester.

When checking out equipment, the technician will manage all equipment sign-ins and sign-outs, support all computer platforms and deal with any equipment problems, exchanges, repairs etc. He will provide a schedule and forms for requesting equipment for all projects and determine

return dates in accordance with the syllabus and the course deadlines. You are fully responsible for all equipment that you have signed out, including any mishandling, damage or loss of gear.

SCHEDULE

- * Screenings are subject to change
- * Short films will screen before features

Week 1 (Jan. 7 - 9). Country and City

Screening: *You Are Here* (Daniel Cockburn, 2010)

Screening (excerpt): *Sunrise* (F.W. Murnau, 1927) *0:0 – 0:37:00

Reading: Filipa Rosário and Iván Villarrea Álvarez, “Introduction: Screen is the Place,” in *New Approaches to Cinematic Space*

Week 2 (Jan. 14 - 16). The Room I

Screening: *Twelve Angry Men* (Sydney Lumet, 1957)

Screening (short): *Film* (Samuel Beckett/Alan Schneider, 1965)

Reading: Tom Conley, *Cartographic Cinema*, Introduction

Week 3 (Jan. 21 - 23). The Room II

Screening: *Woman of the Dunes* (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1964)

Screening (short): *Wavelength* (Michael Snow, 1967)

Reading: Frank Kessler, *Mise en scène*

Week 4 (Jan. 28 - 30). The Car

Screening: *Taste of Cherry* (Abbas Kiarostami, 1997)

Screening (excerpt): *Locke* (Steven Knight, 2013)

Reading: Susan J. Fernández and Robert P. Ingalls, *Sunshine in the Dark: Florida in the Movies*, Chapter 1: “Paradise Framed: The Natural Environment”

Reading: Maria Irene Aparício, Chapter 5.1: “On Location: Kiarostami’s Landscapes and Cinematic Value,” in *New Approaches to Cinematic Space*

Week 5 (Feb. 4 - 6). The Apartment I

Screening: *Repulsion* (Roman Polanski, 1965)

Screening (short): *Pull My Daisy* (Robert Frank and Alfred Leslie, 1959)

Reading: Fernández and Ingalls, *Sunshine in the Dark: Florida in the Movies*, Chapter 2: “Manufacturing Paradise: The Built Environment”

Week 6 (Feb. 11 - 13). The Apartment II

Screening: *Rosemary’s Baby* (Roman Polanski, 1968)

Reading: A. Alvarez, “The Dark at the Top of the Stairs (I & II), in *Night: Night Life, Light Language, Sleep, and Dreams*

Week 7 (Feb. 18 - 20). The Apartment III

Screening: *The Tenant* (Roman Polanski, 1976)

Screening (excerpt): *Rear Window* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1954)

Reading: María Novela de Aragón, Chapter 2.1: "The Architectural Space Generated by Staircases in Alfred Hitchcock's Films," in *New Approaches to Cinematic Space*

Reading: Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Introduction (optional) and Chapter 1: "The House. From Cellar to Garret. The Significance of the Hut"

Week 8 (Feb. 25 - 27). The Epic House

Screening: *Keyhole* (Guy Maddin, 2011)

Screening (excerpt): *Lost Highway* (David Lynch, 1997)

Screening (short): *Wedlock House: An Intercourse* (Stan Brakhage, 1959)

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 1 (cont'd) and Chapter 2: "House and Universe"

Spring Break: February 29 - March 7*Week 9 (Mar. 10 - 12). Housebound**

Screening: *The Exterminating Angel* (Luis Buñuel, 1962)

Screening (excerpt): *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Commerce Quay, 1080 Brussels* (Chantal Akerman, 1983)

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 2 (cont'd) and Chapter 3: "Drawers, Chests and Wardrobes"

Week 10 (Mar. 17 - 19). Outdoors I: Backyard and Park

Screening: *The Park* (Damien Manivel, 2016)

Screening (excerpt): *Blow-Up* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1966)

Screening (short): *Sirius Remembered* (Stan Brakhage, 1959)

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 4: "Nests" and Chapter 9: "The Dialectics of Outside and Inside"

Week 11 (Mar. 24 - 26). Outdoors II: The Zone

Screening: *Stalker* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1979)

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 9 (cont'd) and Chapter 5: "Shells"

Week 12 (Mar. 31 - Apr. 2). Boarding School and College

Screening: *Indignation* (James Schamus, 2016)

Screening (short): *Zero for Conduct* (Jean Vigo, 1933)

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 6: "Corners"

Reading: Richard McGuire, *Here* (graphic novel)

Week 13 (Apr. 7 - 9). Restaurant, Bar, Sport

Screening: *The Hustler* (Robert Rossen, 1961)

Screening (excerpt): *Play Time* (Jacques Tati, 1967)

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 7: "Miniature"

Week 14 (Apr. 14 - 16). Boat and Plane

Screening: *The African Queen* (John Huston, 1951)

Screening (short:): *Nightmare at 20,000 Feet* (George Miller, 1983) *Final segment of *Twilight Zone: The Movie*

Reading: Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, Chapter 8: "Intimate Immensity" and Chapter 10: "The Phenomenology of Roundness"

Week 15 (Apr. 21 - 22). Library and Theater

Screening: *Wittgenstein* (Derek Jarman, 1993)

Screening (short): *Toute la mémoire du monde* (Alain Resnais, 1956)

WORKSHOPS *Schedule TBA

Examples of workshops: screenwriting, storyboarding, mise-en-scene, camera placement and viewfinder, focus/zoom/pan/tilt, camera movement (shoulder rig, slider), staging/blocking, window light and practicals, small space production, sound editing/mixing

COURSEWORK

* Submission of written material: I require hardcopies of all written assignments, submitted in class and on time. If you are unable to submit your work in class, please provide a reason and email me a PDF file on the due date. Use 1.5 or double spacing.

* Submission of film material: Use a free file sharing service called WeTransfer instead of flash drives. On WeTransfer you can upload files upwards of 2GB, which should be more than sufficient. If your files exceed the maximum size you can either compress them or use another service such as Youtube. Send your files/link to my email address: tmowchun@ufl.edu. Once you successfully transfer your files using WeTransfer, I will receive a link with the time of submission and you will receive a confirmation email once they have been downloaded. Please ensure your files are labelled with your name and project title, if applicable.

- Oral presentation: 10 minutes, 10%

Choose one of the films shown in class and explore its creative use of space. Draw a map of the film's primary location in as much detail as possible, then photograph it and project it during your presentation. Perform a shot-by-shot illustration of **one scene** by indicating on your map: camera placement, camera movement, staging of actors, light sources and intensities, location and usage of props, etc. Stills and/or clips may also be used. *Film choices must be finalized by Thursday, Jan. 9. **Presentations will take place on the Thursday class and will cover the Wednesday screening. ***You must find a copy of the film

to study in preparation for the presentation; let me know if you are having trouble locating the film at the library, online, or via streaming services.

- Cinematic topography of your home: 3-5 minutes, 15%, Due Jan. 26
 - Document all interiors and exteriors (include camera/synch sound, wide shots, moving shots, close-ups, etc.)
 - Document different times of day: morning, noon, evening, night
 - Include two time-lapse shots (interior and exterior) to show changes in light over time
 - Record sound with the H4N in one room and one exterior space; include them in your topography without showing any images (use text over black to indicate the space)

- Film sketches on the poetics of space: approximately 30 seconds – 2 minutes each, 30%
 - * Choose **6** out of 11
 - ** A clear idea or micro-narrative is required for each sketch. I will occasionally ask you to workshop your ideas in class.
 - 1. Featuring a single shot with zoom in/zoom out, or vice versa (use tripod)—Due Feb. 2
 - 2. Featuring a single static shot with wide-angle lens (Tokina 11-16mm, or Canon 18mm-50mm): use tripod, emphasize composition, framing, mise en scène (include a storyboard drawing)—Due Feb. 9
 - 3. Single tracking shot (not hand-held): use slider or secure the camera to a stable rolling device, i.e. skateboard, wheelchair—Due Feb. 16
 - 4. Single shoulder-rig shot with a clear start-point, end-point, and focus throughout—Due Feb. 23
 - 5. Offscreen space: make creative use of offscreen space through camerawork, sound, story, etc.—Due Mar. 8
 - 6. Film a sketch MOS (no synchronous audio) and create a soundtrack in post-production—Due Mar. 15
 - 7. Create a “psychic transition” from exterior space to interior space and back, or vice versa—Due Mar. 22
 - 8. Adapt an image/concept/passage from Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space*—Due Mar. 29
 - 9. A film sketch inspired by McGuire’s graphic novel *Here*—Due Apr. 5
 - 10. A film sketch based on your experience of moving out of an old place and/or into a new place (i.e. packing, unpacking, cleaning, disarray, house-hunting, moving-on, acclimating, new routines, memories, etc.)—Due Apr. 12
 - 11. Film a construction site or sacred space—Due Apr. 19

- Final short film: 40%
 - Pitch your film in class: Due Feb. 6
 - Treatment, character bios, subject matter, style (4-6 pages): Due Feb. 18
 - Script: Feb. 27

- Statement on the creative use of space (1-2 pages), with images/drawings: Due March 10
 - Full location report: drawings, maps, photos, moving images, practicals (list, photos), sun path (list, time-lapse), site-specific props (list, photos), notes on accessibility/capacity/technical logistics, artistic add-ons (set, props, lights, etc.) (submit images digitally): Due Mar. 24
 - Storyboard with key images (submit digitally): Due Apr. 2
 - * At least 2 significant scenes/shots must be unscripted
 - Rough cut (1-2 scenes): Due April 16
 - Final film (8-15 minutes): Due April 26
- Participation: 5%
 - * At the advanced level it is assumed that everyone will participate in class discussions and workshops.

*** Final film screening: details regarding the possibility of a screening of final film projects will be forthcoming.**

Policies and Services

* I will respond to emails from Monday to Friday, usually within a day or two, though please be patient when waiting for a response. While email communication may seem indispensable nowadays, you may find it more productive and interesting to come meet with me during office hours to discuss the course material. Indeed there is no substitute for a one-on-one conversation when providing feedback to students in the process of developing and crystallizing ideas into a state of maturity. If you are unable to meet during scheduled office hours then feel free to make an appointment.

* Regular attendance for classes and screenings is mandatory. If you have to miss a class for any reason, then please let me know ahead of time. A maximum of 2 absences will be permitted with advance notice and a reasonable excuse. Communication with the instructor is crucial to avoid misunderstandings related to absences. These policies are consistent with the UF's attendance policies. For more information on these policies, please visit:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

* I respectfully ask all students to refrain from using cell phones and internet during class and screenings.

* Please do not record any class lecture without permission from me.

* Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism. Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

* Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/>).

* For information on UF Grading policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

* For counseling or urgent help you may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center at 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/individual/>

* UF's policy on Harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <https://hr.ufl.edu/forms-policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/>