

ENG 6392. Film and Video Production— "Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation" Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Trevor Mowchun

Class: Wednesday, Period 6 - 8 (12:50 PM - 3:50 PM); Seminar Room (TUR 4112)

Screening: Monday, Period 9 - 11 (4:05 PM - 7:05 PM); Room: ROL 115; Projectionist: Elizabeth

Hernandez *Due to availability of projectionists, some screenings will start at 4:15pm

Office hours (TUR 4336): Tuesday 3:15pm – 4:15pm, Thursday 4:30pm – 5:30pm, 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: 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

"Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation"

In this hybrid seminar workshop, students will have the opportunity to adapt a literary work of fiction, non-fiction or poetry into a filmable screenplay, one or two of which will be made into a short/medium length film by the end of the semester. To prepare for such a venture, we will address various issues at work in the field of film adaptation from writers such as André Bazin, Linda Hutcheon and Thomas Leitch, in addition to some practical dimensions from Linda Segar's manual. We will also consider the cinema's own natural predisposition towards adaptation, debate the value of remaining faithful to the original literary text versus betraying it, updating it, or exploiting its power to spur the imagination in unexpected ways, and ultimately as practitioners to *experiment* with the process by which "the spirit" of a literary work can be adapted and perhaps rendered complete by cinematic embodiment. Each week will feature a case study that tracks the transformative journey of a film adaptation from literary source to script (in some cases) to screen, involving works which capture the spirit of the original, perform the original in cinematic terms, or altogether uproot the original for its own imaginative ends (thus creating a new point of origin). Adaptation methods of particular interest for us will be literal vs. experimental adaptation, modernization, piecemeal adaptation, and multiple source adaptation. Examples of short films based on novellas, short stories and poems will be emphasized as more practical production models for the course. For the workshop, students will select a literary work, ideally a short story, prose piece or poem (novellas may also be suggested) not yet made into a film, and devise ways of adapting its "spirit," using the source material as raw material to be molded into something new, whether this process involves preserving or altering the ostensible narrative. As a class we will then select 1-2 of these scripts (possibly more) to develop into a short film to be created in groups, exposing students to the various aspects and phases of filmmaking. These short "spirit adaptations" may turn out to bear little or no

resemblance whatsoever to the original—in any case, the aim is to surpass the original in some way and rethink it for the present time.

Books

Theory and Practice:

* Read at your own pace

- Linda Hutcheon with Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013). *library ebook
- Linda Segar, *The Art of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction into Film* (New York: Henry Holt, 1992).

* Some additional scholarly essays on adaptation

Source Material for Adaptations (available for purchase at bookstore):

* Read prior to the Monday screening of the adaptations

* Other editions may be used; illustrated editions have been selected to enhance the study of adaptation

- Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*
- Maurice Blanchot, *Thomas the Obscure*
- Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
- Anton Chekhov, *Ward No. 6*
- Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
- Sheridan Le Fanu, *In a Glass Darkly*
- Knut Hamsun, *Pan*
- Heraclitus, *Fragments*
- Franz Kafka, *Metamorphosis and Other Stories*
- Daphne de Maurier, "Don't Look Now" and "The Birds" in *Don't Look Now and Other Stories*
- Edgar Allan Poe, *Stories and Poems*
- Arthur Schnitzler, "Dream Story" in *Night Games*
- Leo Tolstoy, "The Forged Coupon" in *The Death of Ivan Ilyich and Other Stories*
- Robert Walser, "The Walk" in *Selected Stories*

Suggested Inspirational Micro-fiction:

- *New Sudden Fiction: Short-short Stories from America and Beyond*, edited by Robert Shapard and James Thomas (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007). *library reserve
- Lydia Davis, *Can't and Won't* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014). *library reserve

Short Stories, Poetry, Essays, Book Chapters:

- Additional short stories, poetry and screenplays not listed above are digitized on Canvas or placed on reserve through Library West as hard copies or ebooks.

* The Monday afternoon screening will often feature dense combinations of full-length and short films. Such work is always best experienced in a dark theater, in a devoted time slot, and with your fellow peers. Many of these films may be difficult to track down online. Therefore, attendance at the screening is vital to the success and pleasure of the course.

SCHEDULE

* Adaptations are listed in the following manner: **“Source”** > **“Film”**. Screenplays, when available, are listed after the primary literary and film texts.

* It is highly recommended to read the literary sources prior to watching the films.

* Films and screening order are subject to change.

Week 1 (Jan. 6 + 8). An Everyday Wonderland: Lewis Carroll and Jan Svankmajer

- Short poem: *Jabberwocky* (Carroll, 1871) > Short film: *Jabberwocky* (Svankmajer, 1971)
- Novel: *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, 1865) > Feature film: *Alice* (Svankmajer, 1988)

Week 2 (Jan. 13 + 15). A Quiet Canon: Shorts Based on Shorts

- Short story: “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” (Ambrose Bierce, 1890) > *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* (Robert Enrico, 1962)
- Short story: “The Lottery” (Shirley Jackson, 1948) > Short film: *The Lottery* (Larry Yust, 1969) *See *Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery”: The Authorized Graphic Adaptation*, by Miles Hyman
- Short story: “A Day in the Country” (Guy de Maupassant, 1881) > Short film: *A Day in the Country* (Jean Renoir, 1936)
- Short story: “The Overcoat” (Gogol, 1842) > Short film: *The Bespoke Overcoat* (Jack Clayton, 1956) *Based on the play of the same name by Wolf Mankowitz (1953)
- Short film: *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962) > Short film: *The Life of a Dog* (John Harden, 2005) *Watch *La Jetée* on your own

Week 3 (Jan. 20 + 22). Nikolai Gogol, Anton Chekhov, and Fyodor Dostoevsky

* No screening on Monday Jan. 20: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—Watch the films on your own.

- Short story: “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man” (Dostoevsky, 1877) > Short animation: *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man* (Aleksandr Petrov, 1992)
- Short story: “The Nose” (Gogol, 1836) > Short animation: *The Nose* (Alexandre Alexieff and Claire Parker, 1963)
- Novella: *Ward No. 6* (Chekhov, 1892) > Feature film: *Ward No. 6* (Aleksandr Gornovskiy and Karen Shakhnazarov, 2009)

Week 4 (Jan. 27 + 29). Edgar Allan Poe and Films on Painting

- Short poem: “The Raven” (Poe, 1845) > Short film: *The Raven* (Thiel and Sapphire, 2011) > Excerpt from *The Simpsons: Treehouse of Horror*, Season 2, Episode 3 (Wes Archer, Rich Moore, David Silverman, 1990)
- Short story: “The Tell-Tale Heart” (Poe, 1843) > Short film: *The Tell-Tale Heart* (J.B. Williams, 1953)
- Short story: “The Pit and the Pendulum” (Poe, 1842) > Short film: *The Pendulum, the Pit and Hope* (Jan Svankmajer, 1983) *Also based on “A Torture by Hope,” by Auguste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam (1891)
- Short story: “The Fall of the House of Usher” (Poe, 1839) > Short feature: *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Jean Epstein, 1928) > Short film: *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Svankmajer, 1980)
- On painting: *Guernica* (Resnais, 1950), *Night Gallery* (first segment of pilot episode, Boris Sagal, 1969) *time permitting

Week 5 (Feb. 3 + 5). Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett

- Short story: “A Country Doctor” (Kafka, 1918) > Short animation: *A Country Doctor* (Kōji Yamamura, 2007)
- Short story: “The Metamorphosis” (Kafka, 1915) > Short film: *Metamorfosis* (Fran Estévez, 2004)
- Biography/diaries (see “A dream,” in *Frank Kafka Diaries 1910-1923*, p. 209-10) > Short animation: *Franz Kafka* (Piotr Dumala, 1992)
- Short story: “Jackals and Arabs” (Kafka, 1917) > Short film: *Jackals and Arabs* (Straub-Huliet, 2012)
- Short story: “The Burrow” (Kafka, 1931) > Short animation: *The Burrow* (Forrest Rice, 2019)
- Parable: “Before the Law” (Kafka, 1915) > Excerpt from *The Trial* (Orson Welles, 1962)
- Monologue: *Not I* (Beckett, 1972) > Filmed performance: *Not I* (BBC, with Billie Whitelaw, 1975)
- Voiceover monologue: *Eh Joe* (Beckett, 1965) > Short film: *Eh Joe* (BBC, with Jack MacGowran, 1966)
- Short abstract plays: *Quad 1* and *Quad 2* (Beckett, 1981) > Short films: *Quadrant I + II* (Beckett, German, 1981)
- Short mime: *Act Without Words II* (Beckett, 1956) > Short film: *The Goad* (Paul Joyce, 1965)

Week 6 (Feb. 10 + 12). From Short Story to Feature Film: Casting Daphne du Maurier

- Short story: “The Birds” (du Maurier, 1952) > Feature film: *The Birds* (Hitchcock, 1963) *Excerpt: First Act
- Short story: “Don’t Look Now” (du Maurier, 1971) > Feature film: *Don’t Look Now* (Nicolas Roeg, 1973)

Week 7 (Feb. 17 + 19). Modernization and the Novella: Arthur Schnitzler and Joseph Conrad

- Novella: *Dream Story* (Schnitzler, 1926) > Feature film: *Eyes Wide Shut* (Kubrick, 1999)
*Excerpt—Bill and Alice’s dreams *Script available in *Eyes Wide Shut: A Screenplay* (Stanley Kubrick and Frederick Raphael)
- Novella: *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad, 1902) > Feature film: *Windigo* (Robert Morin, 1994)

Week 8 (Feb. 24 + 26). Piecemeal Adaptations: Leo Tolstoy and Jack Kerouac

- Play: *Beat Generation* (Kerouac, 1957) *Third Act of the text > Short film: *Pull My Daisey* (Robert Frank and Alfred Leslie, 1959)
- Novella: *The Forged Coupon* (Tolstoy, 1911) *Part 1 of the text > Feature film: *L’argent* (Robert Bresson, 1983) **Also read: “Le Journal d’un cure de campagne and the Stylistics of Robert Bresson” in *What is Cinema?* (André Bazin)

*Spring Break: February 29 – March 7

Week 9 (Mar. 9 + 11). Multiple Source Adaptation I

- Short story: “The Yellow Wallpaper” (Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1892) + Play: *The Seagull* (Anton Chekhov, 1896) + *Easter* (August Strindberg, 1901) > Feature film: *Through a Glass Darkly* (Ingmar Bergman, 1961) *Script available in *Three films by Ingmar Bergman*

Week 10 (Mar. 16 + 18). Multiple Source Adaptation II

- Novel: *Pan: From Lieutenant Thomas Glahn's Papers* (Knut Hamsun, 1894) + Short story: “The Venus of Ille” (Prosper Mérimée, 1837) > Feature film: *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs* (Guy Maddin, written by George Toles, 1997) *Read: Toles, “From Archangel to Mandragora in Your Own Backyard: Collaborating with Guy Maddin,” in *A House Made of Light: Essays on the Art of Film*

Week 11 (Mar. 23 + 25). Rare Adaptations of Philosophy

- Philosophy: *Fragments* (Heraclitus, 6th Century B.C.E.) > Short film: *Heraclitus the Dark* (Patrick Deval, 1967)
- Novella: *Thomas the Obscure* (Maurice Blanchot, 1976) > Short video art: *Incidence of Catastrophe* (Gary Hill, 1988)
- Philosophy: *The Society of the Spectacle* (Guy Debord, 1967) > Feature film: *The Society of the Spectacle* (Debord, 1973) *Script available: “The Society of the Spectacle” in *Debord’s Complete Cinematic Works* (the script contains the original philosophical text)

Week 12 (Mar. 30 + Apr. 1). Bold Adaptations of Poetry: Dante Alighieri and Samuel Taylor Coleridge

- Long poem: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Coleridge, 1798) > Short animation: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Larry Jordan, 1977)
- Epic Poem: *Inferno* (Dante, 14th century) > TV miniseries: *A TV Dante: Cantos 1-4* (Peter Greenaway & Tom Phillips, 1990), *Cantos 9-12* (Raoul Ruiz, 1991) > Short abstract film: *The Dante Quartet* (Brakhage, 1987)

Week 13 (Apr. 6 + 8). Child Consciousness and Mental Illness: D.H. Lawrence and Conrad Aiken

- Short story: “Silent Snow, Secret Snow” (Aiken, 1934) > Short film: *Silent Snow, Secret Snow* (Gene R. Kearney, 1966)
- Short story: “The Rocking-Horse Winner” (Lawrence, 1926) > Feature film: *The Rocking-Horse Winner* (Anthony Pelissier, 1949) *Script available in *From Fiction to Film: D.H. Lawrence’s “The Rocking-Horse Winner”* > Short film: *The Rocking-Horse Winner* (Michael Almereyda, 1997)

Week 14 (Apr. 13 + 15). Literal, Loose, and Impossible Adaptations

- Short story: *The Killers* (Ernest Hemingway, 1927) > Short film: *The Killers* (Marika Beiku, Aleksandr Gordon, Andrei Tarkovsky, 1956)
- Book chapter from *The Street of Crocodiles* (Bruno Schulz, 1934) > Short film: *The Street of Crocodiles* (Quay Brothers, 1986)
- Short story: “The Mask” in *Mortal Engines* (Stanislaw Lem, 1976) > Short film: *Maska* (Quay Brothers, 2010)
- Short story collection: *In a Glass Darkly*—esp. “The Room in the Dragon Volant” and “Carmilla” (Sheridan Le Fanu, 1872) > Feature film: *Vampyr* (Carl Dreyer, 1931) *Script available in *Four Screenplays: Carl Theodor Dreyer*

Week 15 (Apr. 20 + 22). Try Robert Walser (and why not Sylvia Plath): The Biopic, Found Footage, and Some Poetry

- Short story: “The Walk” (Walser, 1917) > Excerpts from found footage film: *All This Can Happen* (Siobhan Davies and writer David Hinton, 2012)
- Inspired by Walser’s early dramolettes and fairy tales > *The Comb* (Quay Brothers, 1991)
- Novel: *Jacob von Gunten* (Robert Walser, 1909) > Feature film: *Institute Benjamenta* (Quay Brothers, 1995) *Excerpt
- Biography/“The Walk” > Feature film: *Robert Walser* (HHK Schoenherr, 1978)
- Poetry/biography: Sylvia Plath > Short film: *Lady Lazarus* (Sandra Lahire, 1991)
- Poetry: excerpt from *Beautiful Losers* (novel by Leonard Cohen, 1966) > Short animation: *Poen* (Josef Reeve, 1967)

COURSEWORK

- In-class presentation (20-30 minutes) on 1-2 adaptations (source > film), followed by discussion *Requests due via email by Friday Jan. 10 — 15%

* Choose **2** of 3 adaptation exercises:

- Exercise 1: Adapt a monologue of your choice (it could be your own work) into 3-5 scenes with minimal or no dialogue (1-2 pages, not including the source text, include source in your submission). Due Jan. 22 – 15%

- Exercise 2: Propose a method for adapting an assigned short story (“The Beggarwoman of Locarno,” by Heinrich von Kleist, on Canvas) which has yet to be adapted, as far as I’m aware (1-2 pages, no need to include the source text). Due Jan. 29 – 15%
- Exercise 3: Adapt a piece of micro-fiction (it could be your own work) into a short script or short film (1-3 pages, not including the source text, include source in your submission; or 1-4 minutes for films *see micro-fiction texts on reserve for possible sources). Due Feb. 5 – 15%
- The Workshop: 50%
 1. Select a short story/prose piece/poem for adaptation and annotate it with ideas/questions/problems (handwritten or digital annotation)—Due: Feb. 19
 2. Brief rationale for your choice (Why is this source worth adapting?) (1-2 pages)—Due: Feb. 19
 3. Propose a method of cinematic adaptation (approach to story, structure, themes, film form, feasibility, etc.) (2-3 pages)—Due: Feb. 26
 4. Write the script (maximum 20 pages, screenplay format) or treatment (maximum 15 pages, prose format)—Due: Mar. 11
 5. Circulate your adaptation prospectus to the class (annotated source, rationale, methodology, script/treatment) and email me a brief evaluation of each one (Will this adaptation work? Yes or no, and why?)—Due: Mar. 17, by 5pm
*I will compile the evaluations, remove all names, and redistribute to the class for discussion, and collectively we will decide which project(s) to pursue into production.
 6. Script revision (in groups)—Due: Mar. 25
 7. Film project (in groups or as a class)—Due: Apr. 26
- Participation: 5%

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

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

* If you’re interested, Brown’s book is one of the better technical filmmaking manuals. 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 innovation and is not of much interest. 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).

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://gdip01.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.

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.

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/>