

ENG 4936 7449 The Modernisms of Film**Professor Maureen Turim**

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Office hours 3 period M and W or by apt.

M 4-5, W 4

Screenings: M E1-E3

Modernism has many different definitions, and some of these are linked to the various disciplines to which the term modernism has been applied: literature, film, the plastic arts, music, architecture. This course will look at modernism in film in relation to those varied concepts and histories. We will start with two weeks devoted to the films of Michelangelo Antonioni (*l'Eclisse*, *Deserto Rosso*), two on Jean-Luc Godard (*Pierrot le fou*, *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle*), Throughout this investigation, we will consider how architecture and architectonics figure into a filmic notion of modernism, and look at the correlates in painting and sculpture. From here we will turn to a different concept of modernism, introduced by Miriam Hanson as “vernacular modernism,” that considers all of early film history as a form of modernism, despite its grounding in conventions of 19th-century realism and Victorian melodramas. This will be linked to recent historical investigations of modernism in literature as responding to the introduction of film. We will also consider the particular Soviet revolutionary definitions of modernism, linking to cubo-futurism, in which parallel developments in montage film followed on movements in painting, architecture, and theater. What ties these later two concepts of modernism to our initial one are elements of abstraction and reconfigurations of spatial and temporal structures. We will consider modernism in Japanese cinema in its connection to traditional Japanese aesthetics. We will conclude with three weeks on women directors as modernists. We will consider how modernism still resonates in the art cinema in the contemporary moment, and what modernism means in the context of the post-modern. Readings will be drawn from a wide range of theoretical, analytical and historical sources, some pertaining to film, while others address other arts.

The seminar will be participatory and supplemented by weekly CANVAS participation in the form of thoughtful paragraph-long commentary on films and readings. We will have a trip to the Harn Museum of Art. A series of short assignments and a major 15 page paper will be required.

As the screenings are on Mondays, you will always be watching the film to be discussed on Wednesday, starting with *L'Eclisse*, (*Eclipse*) Michelangelo Antonioni, 1962 on Jan 8, before the seminar meets.

Week 1 Jan. 8-10 Introduction to Modernism: 60s films

L'Eclisse, (Eclipse) Michelangelo Antonioni, 1962

“Theories of Modernism in Cinema,” Miłosz Stelmach

“Rethinking Michelangelo Antonioni's Modernism: A Conversation between Karl Schoonover and John David Rhodes”

no class on Jan 15 Martin Luther King Day

Week 2 Jan 17 Continue discussion of readings and *Eclisse*

“Towards a Phenomenology of Cinematic Mood: Boredom and the Affect of Time in Antonioni's *L'eclisse*” John Rhym

“Screening Modernism: European Art Cinema, 1950-60,” Andràs Bàlint Kovács

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Week 3 Jan. 22-24 Modernism as Critique

Il Deserto Rosso, (Red Desert) Michelangelo Antonioni, 1964

“Introduction: Modernism after Postmodernity,” Andreas Huyssen

“Antonioni: Space, Place, Sexuality,” by David Forgacs

“Representing Landscape in Time,” Cristophe Girot

“Antonioni's *Red Desert*,” Angela Della Vache

“Cinema and Modernism” Laura Marcus

Week 4 Jan 29-31 Modernism, Modernity, Signs, and Writing

Pierrot le fou, Jean-Luc Godard, 1965

“Language Gone Mad,” Tom Conley

Jean-Luc Godard's *Pierrot le fou* ed. David Willis (ebook)

“Modernism and Semiology,” David Rodowick

“The Modern Cinema and Narrativity,” Christian Metz

Week 5 Feb. 5-7 Modernist Collage, Modernist Theory

Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle (Two or Three Things I Know about Her)

Jean-Luc Godard, 1967

“Dreaming and the Cinematographic Consciousness,” Laura Marcus.

“Spaces of Passage: The Architecture of Estrangement: Simmel, Kracauer, Benjamin”
Antony Vidler *Warped Space* 65

“Other on Loan: Two or Three Things I Know about Her,” John Drabinski 15-38

“Cinemas of Modernity and Postmodernity,” Maureen Turim

Week 6 Feb. 12-14 Twenties Modernism and the Arts

Metropolis, Fritz Lang, 1927

Scenes from *L'Inhumaine*, Marcel L'Herbier, 1924

Wood, Michael. "Modernism and Film." In *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*. Edited by Michael Levenson, 268–283. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

"Modern Times," Peter Wollen

"The Vamp and the Machine: Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*." Andreas Huyssen.

"Modern Art 1851-1929: Capitalism and Representation," Richard R. Brettell

Week 7 Feb. 19-21 Vernacular Modernism

An American in Paris, Vincente Minelli, 1951

"The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism," Miriam Hansen

http://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/dossier_miriam_hansen/

"An American in Paris," Emanuel Levy, 194-222

"Vincent Minelli and the Film Ballet," Beth Genné

Week 8 Feb. 26-28 The Debate about Japanese Modernism

Tokyo Chorus, Yasuhiro Ozu, 1931 plus scenes from *Equinox Flower*, Ozu, 1958

"Language at the limits: the Global Situation of Japanese modernism," William Gardner.

Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema, David Bordwell

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cifs/ozu.html> (read selected chapters)

Modernism and Japanese Culture, Roy Starrs 103-152

"The Creation of Modern Space," Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano

"Reconsidering Humanism," Scott Nygren

2/29 Collected Discussion posts due online

Spring Break

Week 9 Mar. 12-14 Modernism, Minimalism, and Understatement

Au hazard, Balthasar, Robert Bresson, 1966

“Donkey as Witness: *Au hazard, Balthasar*,” Joseph E. Cunneen

“Spiritual Style in the Films of Robert Bresson.” Susan Sontag.

“Sontag, Bresson, and the Unfixable.” Brian Price

Au hazard, Balthasar, Hanlon

Week 10 Mar. 19-21 Modernism, History and Abstraction

La Guerre est finie, Alain Resnais, 1966

Cahiers du Cinéma: 1960–1968: 54-58, 68-81, 317-323

The Sixties: 1960–1969 56-66

The Time-Image; Chapter 4 The Crystals of Time

“Montage and Memory: Articulations of Literary Modernism in Alain Resnais’ Early Films” Ria Banerjee

Week 11 Mar. 26-28 Surreal Modernism

Belle de jour, Luis Buñuel, 1966

“Bunuel: A Cinematic Impugment of Modernity, Modernism, Avant-gardism and Other Options,” Victor Fuentes

“Of Boxes, Peepholes and Other Perverse Objects: A Psychoanalytic look at Luis Buñuel’s *Belle de jour*,” Andrea Sabbadini

“French Folie: Memory and Madness in Buñuel’s *Belle de jour*,” Mary Wiles

Mar 29 Collected Discussion posts due online

Week 12 Apr. 2-4 Women in Modernism

Cléo de 5 à 7 (Cleo from 5 to 7), Agnes Varda, 1962

“From Déese to Idée,” Sandy Flitterman-Lewis

“Revising the Primitive,” Judith Mayne

“Feminist Film Theory and Cleo from 5 to 7,” Hilary Neroni

Cleo from 5 to 7, Steve Ungar

Week 13 Apr. 9-11 Political Modernism

Daisies (Sedmikrasky) Vera Chytilová, 1966

“Dolls in Fragments: Daisies as Feminist Allegory,” Bliss Cua Lim.
 “So We Will Go Bad”: Cheekiness, Laughter, Film,” Anca Parvulescu
 “Mock Realism: The Comedy of Futility in Eastern Europe,” Charles Eidsvik
 “Three Central-European Women Directors Revisited: Holland, Agnieszka,
 Chytilova, Vera, Meszaros, Marta,” A Quart

Week 14 Apr. 12-18 Literary Modernism

Orlando, Sally Potter, 1992

“Morphing Mothers and Moderns: The Synchronicity of Orlando”
 “Translating Generic Liberties: Orlando on Page and Screen,” Floriane Reviron-
 Piégay
 “Redirections Challenging the Class Axe and Lesbian Erasure in Potter’s Orlando,”
 Leslie K. Hankins, "Re: Reading, Re: Writing, Re: Teaching Virginia Woolf."
 “Sex Change and Media Change: From Woolf’s to Potter’s ‘Orlando’”
 Susan Watkins, Mosaic (Winnipeg), Vol. 31, 1998
 “Postmodernism and Orlando.” Humm. Feminism and Film

Week 15 Apr. 9-21 Returns of Modernism

Mountains May Depart, Jia Zheng-ke, 2015

“Interview: Jia Zhang-ke,” Aliza Ma

Final Paper due April 24 online.