

ENG 3122. History of Film 2: 1930-1965 (Spring 2023)

Professor: Dr. Trevor Mowchun

Class (TUR 2322): Tuesday Period 9 (4:05pm - 4:55pm), Thursday Periods 8-9 (3pm - 4:55pm)

Screening (ROLFS 115): Wednesday E1-E3 (7:20pm - 10:10pm); Projectionist: Brooke Whitaker

Office hours (TUR 4336): Tuesday 5-6pm, or by appointment.

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Film and Media Studies Production Lab: TUR 4303

Technician (especially for video editing assistance): Chance Freytag

Email: freytagc@ufl.edu

Chance's lab hours:

- Monday Period 5
- Tuesday Periods 6-8
- Wednesday Periods 5-8
- Thursday Periods 7-8

Course Description

There is no single or exhaustive history, whether it be film, the arts and sciences, or any field of knowledge. That is why historians are, and have always been, partial storytellers. There is no such thing as fact without fiction, no possibility for truth without the limitations and interests of human perspectives. In this respect, an awareness of the subjectivity of history itself can help us better understand what is revealed, concealed, and sometimes fabricated by the *making* of history—for history is ultimately a creation as opposed to a recording of the past. Now film presents unique challenges to the conscientious historian, particularly its value as both art *and* commerce, fiction *and* documentary, mainstream entertainment *and* independent or avant-garde expression—values so at odds with each other that the film historian may be at a loss for where and how to begin. We will investigate these and many other concepts through which film history has been framed, and with help from our old friend “imagination,” devise ways to better illuminate darker, less understood areas of film history, without grafting present day ideologies onto historical contexts which have their own complex systems of values, often in direct opposition to our own. In this way we are more likely to discover films that are as relevant or even more relevant today than when they were produced.

Throughout the semester we will question familiar and more obscure topics in pre- and post-WWII film history (from around 1930-1965), a highly complex period of cinematic maturation and experimentation. Topics will range from the Hollywood studio system's first international anomaly, lost/unfinished films, the perils of adapting great works of literature, and the impact of “the film school” on cinematic innovation. The course is structured around historical turning points, or what philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn called “paradigm shifts”: historical events of various kinds which reorient and sometimes revolutionize the trajectory of knowledge and

culture, in this case an artform like film, rather than guide it along cold rails of fate as if the history of film had no choice but to evolve in the way that it did. As historians we never cease to forget the simple fact that the cinema *could have* unfolded differently; and if this fact is taken seriously as a method, it still *can* unfold differently if we remain open to possibilities of the medium not fully appreciated or even repressed by the dominant historical narratives of which it is our task to rethink.

Required Books:

- Available in the bookstore or online.
- Copies will be placed on 24-hour reserve at the library.
- Paul Hammond, *L'âge d'or*, 2nd edition (London: BFI, 2020).
- Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).
- V.F. Perkins, *The Magnificent Ambersons* (BFI, 1999).
- Lillian Ross, *Picture* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002).

* Individual readings such as book chapters, essays, and interviews are available as PDFs or in some cases weblinks through the Course Reserves section on Canvas (ARES). These texts will make up the majority of the readings for this course.

* Aim to complete assigned readings by the Tuesday class of each week. Readings linked to the films screened on Wednesday will be taken up on Thursday (the film title will usually appear in the book/essay title).

* The Wednesday screening session is mandatory. Attendance will be taken by the projectionist. If you have to miss a screening then you are responsible for watching the films on your own before the Thursday class. Not all films are readily available online. Screenings designated as “clips” will be shown in class.

Now, let's begin! If you do all the readings, watch all the films, and attend all the classes, you will have an immensely fruitful and memorable experience learning film history.

SCHEDULE

* Course material is subject to change.

Week 1 (Jan. 10-12)

Transitional Film: From Silence to Sound and the Sound of Silence

Films:

- Short film: *Zero for Conduct* (Jean Vigo, 1933)
- Feature film: *Vampyr* (Carl Dreyer, 1931)

Texts:

- Essay: Robert Spadoni, “The Uncanny Body of Early Sound Film,” *The Velvet Light Trap*, No. 51, (Spring 2003), pp. 4-16.

- Article: Peter Swaab “‘Un Film Vampirisé’: Dreyer's *Vampyr*,” *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 4 (Summer 2009), pp. 56-62.
- Book chapter: David Rudkin, *Vampyr* (London: BFI, 2005). *Chapter 3: “The Problem of *Vampyr*”, pp. 25-29.

Week 2 (Jan. 17-19)

Pre-code Passions and Two Great Patrons of the Avant Garde: The Vicomte Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles

Films:

- Clip(s) from pre-code films (TBD).
- Short film: *Les Mystères du Château de Dé* (Man Ray, 1929)
- Short feature: *L'âge d'or* (Luis Buñuel, 1930)
- Short feature: *The Blood of a Poet* (Jean Cocteau, 1932)

Texts:

- Pre-code filmography/bibliography: Jennifer Tang, “The Forgotten Women of Pre-Code: An Annotated Filmography and Bibliography,” *Feminist Teacher*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2010), pp. 237-248.
- Book: Paul Hammond, *L'âge d'or* (London: BFI, 2020).
- Article: Louise Alphan, “Villa Noailles ‘The Loonies’ House,” *Cimaise* 49, No. 268 (Ja/F: 2002), pp. 10-16.

Week 3 (Jan. 24-26)

For and Against the Classic Hollywood Studio System: David O. Selznick

Films:

- Feature Film: *Rebecca* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940)
- Clips from: *The Paradine Case* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1947)

Texts:

- Book chapters: Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (New York: Pantheon, 1988). *Chapter 11: “Selznick International Pictures: Going Independent,” pp. 176-198; Chapter 15: “Selznick and Hitchcock: Balance of Power,” pp. 271-294; Chapter 20: “Selznick and Hitchcock: Separate Ways,” pp. 381-407.
- Letters: David O. Selznick’s Memos to Alfred Hitchcock on the making of *Rebecca*: “We bought *Rebecca* and we intend to make *Rebecca*,” in *Stars and Letters: Letters from Hollywood’s Golden Age*, Feb. 7, 2019.

Week 4 (Jan. 31-Feb. 2)

Movie Stars—The Art of Being Larger than Life: Charles Laughton and Bette Davis

Films:

- Clips from: *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (Alexander Korda, 1933)
- Feature film: *Now, Voyager* (Irving Rapper, 1942)

Texts:

- Book chapter: Richard Dyer, *Stars* (London: BFI, 1998). *Chapter 1: “Conditions for Stardom,” Chapter 2: “Production: Consumption,” pp. 5-19.
- Essay: Martin Shingler, “Breathtaking: Bette Davis’s Performance at the End of *Now, Voyager*,” *Journal of Film and Video*, Vol. 58, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer 2006), pp. 46-58.

- Essay: George Toles, "Auditioning Betty in *Mulholland Drive*," *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Fall 2004), pp. 2-13.

Week 5 (Feb. 7-9)

Lost/Unfinished Films: Jean Renoir and Orson Welles

Films:

- Short film: *A Day in the Country* (Jean Renoir, 1936) *Originally shot in 1936, but not completed and released until 1946.
- Feature film: *The Magnificent Ambersons* (Orson Welles, 1942)

Texts:

- Book: V.F. Perkins, *The Magnificent Ambersons* (BFI, 1999).
- Essay: Robert M. Webster, "Renoir's Une Partie de campagne: Film as the Art of Fishing," *The French Review*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (Feb., 1991), pp. 487-496.
- Book chapter: Robert L. Carringer, *The Magnificent Ambersons: A Reconstruction* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993). *Chapter 2: "A Note on Textual Practice," pp. 33-38.
- Recommended script: Carringer, *The Magnificent Ambersons: A Reconstruction* *Chapter 4: *The Magnificent Ambersons* Cutting Continuity Script, pp. 43-277.
- Recommended: Footage and outtakes from *A Day in the Country* (Criterion Collection special feature).

Week 6 (Feb. 14-16)

World War II: Propaganda, Dissent, and Trauma

Films:

- Clips from: *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl, 1935)
- Short film: *Listen to Britain* (Humphrey Jennings, 1942)
- Short film: *Night and Fog* (Alain Resnais, 1956)
- Feature film: *The 49th Parallel* (Michael Powell, 1941)

Texts:

- Book excerpt: J.P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People*, Revised Edition (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992). *Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-31, endnotes pp. 203-208.
- Article: David Badder, "Powell and Pressburger: The War Years," *Sight and Sound*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (Winter 1978), pp. 8-12. *Interview with Powell
- Essay: Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism," in *Under the Sign of Saturn* (London: Vintage, 1996), pp. 73-105.

Week 7 (Feb. 21-23)

Postwar Italian Neorealism and Modernism

Films:

- Segment from: *Paisan* (Roberto Rossellini, 1946)
- Clips from: *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica, 1948)
- Feature film: *L'Avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960)

Texts:

- Essay: Cesare Zavattini, “Some Ideas on the Cinema,” *Sight and Sound* 23:2 (October-December 1953), pp. 64-69. *Edited from a recorded interview published in *La rivista del cinema italiano* 2 (December 1952). Translated by Pier Luigi Lanza.
- Essay: André Bazin, “De Sica: Metteur en scene,” in *Vittorio De Sica: Contemporary Perspectives* in ed. Howard Curle and Stephen Snyder (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 62-75.
- Essay: Gilles Deleuze, “Beyond the Movement-Image,” in *Vittorio De Sica: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Howard Curle and Stephen Snyder (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 81-86.
- Article: Michelangelo Antonioni, “*L’avventura*: Cannes Statement,” Nov. 25, 2014 (online, Criterion) (1 page).
- Book chapter: Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *L’avventura* (London: BFI, 1997) *Chapter 3: “The Adventure of *L’avventura*,” pp. 19-28.
- Recommended interview: Eric Rohmer and François Truffaut, Fereydoun Hoveyda and Jacques Rivette, “Interviews with Roberto Rossellini (July 1954 and April 1959),” in *Cahiers du cinema: The 1950s: Neo-Realism, Hollywood, New Wave*, ed. Jim Hillier (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 209-217. *Chapter 28

Week 8 (Feb. 28-Mar. 2)

The New Yorker’s Lillian Ross Goes Behind the Scenes with John Huston

Films:

- Short film: *Let There Be Light* (John Huston, 1946)
- Feature film: *The Red Badge of Courage* (John Huston, 1951)

Texts:

- Book: Lillian Ross, *Picture* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002).
- Recommended: Excerpts from Mark Harris, *Five Came Back: A Story of Hollywood and the Second World War* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2014). *Chapter 27: “An Angry Past Commingled with the Future in a Storm (Hollywood, New York, and Germany, 1945)” and Chapter 28: “A Straight Face and a Painfully Maturing Mind (Hollywood, New York, and Washington, December 1945–March 1946),” pp. 391-418, notes pp. 482-485.

Week 9 (Mar. 7-9)

The American Avant Garde and the National Film Board of Canada

Films:

- American Independents (short films): *Rose Hobart* (Joseph Cornell, 1936), *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (Maya Deren, 1946), *The Potted Psalm* (James Broughton & Sidney Peterson, 1946), *Fireworks* (Kenneth Anger, 1947), *Desistfilm* (Stan Brakhage, 1954), *Hurry! Hurry!* (Marie Menken, 1957), *A Movie* (Bruce Connor, 1958), *Window Water Baby Moving* (Brakhage, 1959), *Sirius Remembered* (Brakhage, 1959)
- Produced by Tom Daly, Head of NFB’s Unit B (short films): *Paul Tomkowicz: Street-railway Switchman* (Roman Kroitor, 1953), *City of Gold* (Colin Low and Wolf Koenig, 1957), *Universe* (Kroitor and Low, 1960), *Very Nice, Very Nice* (Arthur Lipsett, 1961), *Lonely Boy* (Koenig and Kroitor, 1962)

Texts:

- Essay: Aldous Huxley, “Heaven and Hell,” in *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009). *purchase book

- Article: Joseph Cornell, “Enchanted Wanderer: Excerpt from a Journey Album for Hedy Lamarr.” (1 page)
- Essay: D.B. Jones, “Tom Daly’s Apprenticeship,” *Film History*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1989, pp. 259-273.
- Article: Michael Dancsok, “An Introduction to Notes and Proposals by Arthur Lipsett,” *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring 1997), pp. 43-46.
- Recommended article: Stan Brakhage, “Sidney Peterson,” in *Film At Wit’s End: Eight Avant-garde Filmmakers* (Kingston, NY: Documentext, 1989), pp. 49-65, filmography p. 177.

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (Mar. 21-23)

Cinematic Paradigms of the East: Japan

Films:

- Clips from: *Ugetsu* (Kenji Mizoguchi, 1953)
- Feature film: *Tokyo Story* (Yasujirō Ozu, 1953)

Texts:

- Essay: William Rothman, “Notes on Ozu’s Cinematic Style,” *Film International*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (September 2006), pp. 33-42.
- Essay: Robert Boyers, “Secular Vision, Transcendental Style: The Art of Yasujirō Ozu,” *The Georgia Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Spring 1978), pp. 63-91.
- Articles: Luc Moullet, André Bazin, Jacques Rivette, “Exchanges about Kurosawa and Mizoguchi (February 1957, March 1957, March 1958),” and Alexandre Astruc, “What is *mise-en-scène*?” in *Cahiers du cinema: The 1950s: Neo-Realism, Hollywood, New Wave*, ed. Jim Hillier (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 260-268. *Chapter 32 and 33.
- Recommended essay: Nelson Tollof, “Theoretical Apparitions of Haiku: An Intermedial Interrogation of Modernity,” *Cinémas: Journal of Film Studies*, Vol. 10, Issue 2/3 (Spring 2000), pp. 185-203.

Week 11 (Mar. 28-30)

The VGIK Film School: Andrei Tarkovsky and Sergei Paradjanov

Films:

- Short Film: *The Killers* (Andrei Tarkovsky, Marika Beiku and Aleksandr Gordon, 1956)
- Clips from: *Ivan’s Childhood* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1962)
- Feature Film: *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (Sergei Parajanov, 1965)

Texts:

- Article: Natalia Noussinova, “Sergei Gerasimov, A Student of the Factory of the Eccentric Actor (FEKS),” *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2019, pp. 139–150.
- Article: Raymond De Luca, “Tarkovsky Screens Hemingway: Andrei Tarkovsky’s First Student Film, *The Killers* (1956),” *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2019, pp. 172–181.
- Memoir: Serge Parajanov, “Perpetual Motion,” in *Film Comment*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Fall 1968), pp. 40-48.

- Article: Leonid Alekseychuk, “Warrior in the Field,” in *Sight and Sound*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Winter 1990), pp. 22-26.

Week 12 (Apr. 4-6)

Beneath the Surface of 1950s America: Melodrama and Noir in the Films of Nicholas Ray

Films:

- Clips from: *In a Lonely Place* (Nicholas Ray, 1950)
- Feature film: *Bigger than Life* (Nicholas Ray, 1956)

Texts:

- Essay: Robin Wood, “Robin Wood on *Bigger Than Life*,” *Film Comment*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (September-October 1972), pp. 56-61.
- Article: Michael Wilmington, “Nicholas Ray: The Years at RKO (Part One),” *Velvet Light Trap*, Vol. 10 (Fall 1973), pp. 46-53.
- Essay: Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance,” in *The Annotated Emerson*, ed. David Mikics (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 160-185.
- Recommended interview: Charles Bitsch, “Interview with Nicholas Ray (November 1958),” in *Cahiers du cinema: The 1950s: Neo-Realism, Hollywood, New Wave*, ed. Jim Hillier (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 120-124. *Chapter 15

Week 13 (Apr. 11-13)

French New Wave and the Enigmatic Elder Robert Bresson

Films:

- Clips from: *Breathless* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)
- Feature film: *Au hasard Balthazar* (Robert Bresson, 1966)

Texts:

- Book excerpt: Friedrich Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life,” in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). *Foreword and Chapter 1, pp. 58-67.
- Article: Jean-Luc Godard, “One Should Put Everything Into A Film,” *OnScenes* (online), June 11, 2017; and “Let’s Talk about *Pierrot*: An Interview with Jean-Luc Godard,” *A-Bittersweet-Life* (online) *From *Godard on Godard* (5 pages total)
- Essay: Colin Burnett, “Robert Bresson as a Precursor to the Nouvelle Vague: A Brief Historical Sketch,” *Offscreen*, Vol. 8, Iss. 3 (March 2004). (10 pages)
- Recommended essay: Sharon Cameron, “Animal Sentience: Robert Bresson's *Au hasard Balthazar*,” *Representations*, Vol. 114, No. 1 (Spring 2011), pp. 1-35.

Week 14 (Apr. 18-20)

Jacques Tati and Alain Resnais: Participatory Cinema

Films:

- Feature film: *Playtime* (Jacques Tati, 1967)
- Clips from: *Last Year at Marienbad* (Alain Resnais, 1961)

Texts:

- Handout: “René Prédal and his Sixteen Interpretations of the Plot of *Last Year at Marienbad*” (1 page)

- Article/Interview: Jonathan Rosenbaum, “Tati's Democracy,” *Film Comment*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (May/June 1973), pp. 36-41.
- Book chapter: Michel Chion, *The Films of Jacques Tati*, trans. Antonio D'Alfonso (Toronto: Guernica, 2003). *Chapter 2: “Comic Democracy,” pp. 20-40.

Week 15 (Apr. 25): Conclusions

COURSEWORK

- **Collisions (2 pages each x 4 = 40%) Due: Fridays by midnight**
***4 collisions are required; you can choose to write one for any given week of the course.**
 - History is like archeology: find the gems amidst the ruins to bring the past back to life.
 - Since we will be dealing with an abundance of material each week, these short assignments allow you to focus on the written and cinematic details that stand out to you and call out for more attention.
 - Each collision will consist of **three parts**: 1. A brief quote from a reading, 2. A shot/scene/sequence from a film (describe it in detail), 3. A brief account of why you have paired the film and text quotes—together, what might they reveal about the film, theory, and/or history at stake?
 - Text and film must be from the same week of course material.
 - **Moving Image Collision (15%) Due: a Friday by midnight**
***The moving image collision does not count as one of the 4 written collisions above.**
Like the written collisions, you can create one for any given week of the course.
 - The same principle as the written collisions except in the form of a very short film consisting of three shots. Juxtapose a written and filmic quote using text onscreen followed by a brief film clip that you find online (shots 1 and 2). Conclude with a cinematic synthesis of shots 1 and 2. Use your imagination!
 - Upload your MP4 or MOV video file onto Canvas or send it to me via wetransfer.com, a free file-sharing website for files under 2GB.
- *Only ONE collision assignment can be submitted per week, be it a written or moving image collision.**
- **Final essay (8-10 pages, 35%) Due: Monday May 1, by midnight**
 - Suggested essay topics will be provided.
 - You may develop your own topic and method of analysis with prior approval from me.
 - You can work within the course materials or explore material not covered in class. Some outside research of films and texts will be required.
 - **Participation (10%)**
 - Regular attendance in class and screenings.
 - Completion of occasional in-class written responses.
 - Participation in class discussions.

Grade Scale

A 4.0 93-100%	C 2.0 73-76%
A- 3.67 90-92%	C- 1.67 70-72%
B+ 3.33 87-89%	D+ 1.33 67-69%
B 3.0 83-86%	D 1.0 63-66%
B- 2.67 80-82%	D- 0.67 60-62%
C+ 2.33 77-79%	E 0.00 0-59%

Policies and Services

- You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.
- All coursework can be submitted electronically via Canvas unless otherwise stated. Word and PDF files are acceptable.
- Written work should be 1.5 or double-spaced with standard-sized margins.
- No late submissions unless an extension has been previously agreed upon.
- 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 prefer to come meet with me during office hours (in-person or via Zoom) to discuss the course material.
- Regular attendance is essential. If I see that you are consistently absent then your grade will be adversely affected. 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 browsing during class and screenings.
- Please do not record any class lecture or discussion 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/>