

NEW GERMAN CINEMA

ENG 6138 (1266) Studies in the Movies: New German Cinema

GET 6299 (039G) New German Cinema and Its Legacy

Associate Professor Barbara Mennel

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-2:00pm, Thursdays 2:00-4:00pm and by appointment

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Course meetings: Thursday periods 9-11 (4:05-7:05pm) in CBD 0234

Film screenings: Monday periods E1-E3 (7:20-10:10pm) in TUR 2334

Course description:

In 1962, a group of young filmmakers at the Oberhausen Film Festival in West Germany boldly declared: "The old cinema is dead! We believe in a new cinema!" Out of this movement to overcome the legacies of fascism and the genre conventions of the *Heimatfilm* (homeland film) emerged a wave of filmmaking that became internationally known as New German Cinema. Heavily funded by the West German government and its public television stations, the films were indebted to the student movement and a vision of filmmaking and distribution based on the notion of the director as "Autor" (*auteur*). Wim Wenders and Rainer Werner Fassbinder embodied a new generation untainted by the Nazi legacy as they were both born in 1945. Similarly, Fassbinder's untimely death in 1982 coincided with the demise of New German Cinema as the result of a changed political climate and funding structure.

This course offers a survey of the films made in this brief period of enormous output and creativity. We will discuss films by Fassbinder, Werner Herzog, Alexander Kluge, Helke Sander, Helma Sanders-Brahms, Volker Schlöndorff, Margarethe von Trotta, and Wenders. We will trace the influence of the second women's movement on questions of feminist aesthetics, and situate the films' negotiations of fascism and terrorism in debates about the cinematic representation of history and memory. Readings will include Thomas Elsaesser's *New German Cinema* (1989). The writing assignments in this course emphasize scholarly genres, beginning with a book review, an abstract for the final paper, a draft, a response to a fellow student's draft, and a final research paper. Please be aware that New German Cinema includes scenes and content that might offend spectators' sensibilities. Should you have any concerns, please discuss them with me in person at the beginning of the semester.

Required Reading:

Course Pack: Available at Xerographic Copy Center, 927 NW 13th Street

Ph: (352) 375-0797 Email: xerocopy@bellsouth.net

Please call ahead before you pick up the course pack. I do not require that you purchase the course pack. But it is your responsibility to have the text in front of you during class session in some kind of format (electronic or paper).

Book titles:

John E. Davidson. *Deterritorializing the New German Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Thomas Elsaesser. *New German Cinema: A History*. London: Macmillan and British Film Institute, 1989.

Julia Knight. *Women and the New German Cinema*. London: Verso, 1992.

Brad Prager. *The Cinema of Werner Herzog: Aesthetic Ecstasy and Truth*. London: Wallflower, 2007.

Grading:

Oral participation	10%
Book review (max. 500 words)	20%
Abstract for Final Paper (max. 250 words)	10%
Draft of Final Paper	20%
Response to Draft	10%
Final Paper	30%

Writing assignments:

The assignments in the class are geared toward introducing you to scholarly genres, including the book review; abstract, as you would submit it to a conference or edited collection; and a formal response, as you would receive in the form of an anonymous evaluation of a submitted article; and a final research paper. Beginning in week nine, you will work on your writing continuously for the rest of the semester, while receiving feedback from me and fellow students. In order for the exchange and collaboration to work successfully, there will be no extensions of deadlines. Should you experience extenuating circumstances, it is your responsibility to communicate with me and your fellow graduate students with whom you are exchanging your work, and make alternative arrangements.

Oral participation and attendance:

It is self-understood that graduate students attend all seminar sessions and are thoroughly prepared. Should you not be able to do so because of extenuating circumstances, please inform me in a timely manner. Legitimate excuses for absence includes religious holidays. Should any of the assignments fall on a religious holiday that you observe, please let me know in time to make alternative arrangements. Oral participation is one of the scholarly skills that you should have acquired at this point in your graduate career. Often graduate students, particularly in cross-listed courses, come from different scholarly backgrounds, sometimes with different language abilities. This should not prevent you from participating. You should prepare the readings carefully and ask questions, if you have any. Participants who are either advanced or specialized in a particular area, should feel prepared to explain material to other participants. I regularly ask participants to pose discussion questions. In all my years of teaching, students always have had interesting and insightful things to say: so please neither hold

back, nor dominate discussion, but share your knowledge, insight, and questions in a way that is productive for our mutual project.

Screenings:

Even though it has become a tradition in graduate classes that students organize screenings individually, I highly recommend watching the films on the big screen by attending the screenings. In short, attendance at screenings is not required but highly recommended. All films are available in some format on reserve for this course in Library West. Please also note that some of the films are only available on VHS or that the only copy to screen is on reserve in Library West. So please do not take out the copy during the time of the screening.

Book review:

Book review (max. 500 words)--hard copy due in class

Review a book that relates to the course and will be of importance for your research paper. We will discuss the function and conventions of book reviews prior to the due date and read selected reviews. Begin thinking about your research topic early and look out for books of interest to you. Feel free to discuss both the book title and your research interest with me. The book review should be written for possible submission to a journal in the field, so please look at journals that publish book reviews in your area of research interest.

Abstract for final paper:

The course requires that you submit an abstract for your research paper, which should be the standard length of max. 250 words and has to include the following:

- 1) Tentative title of your final paper
- 2) Description of your topic
- 3) The film(s) that you will discuss
- 4) Your theoretical approach and methodology
- 5) A bibliography and filmography

You will hand in the abstract to me and to two-three fellow students (which might vary according to enrollment) whom I select. You will receive written feedback from me and oral feedback from your fellow students in class. The abstract is due as email attachment to two or three fellow students in class and to me.

Draft of Final Paper:

You will hand in a draft of your final paper to me and one other student, for which you will receive a formal written review from your fellow student and marginal comments from me. These comments will help you revise your final paper for final submission. Please submit the draft both as email attachment and as hard copy in class.

Response to Draft:

You will read and respond to one draft of a final paper that you will receive in an exchange with your fellow classmate, which I will coordinate. Your response should be

productive, pointing out strengths and areas of possible improvement. The response should be approximately 1-2 pages single-spaced. On the last day of class, you will give one hard copy of your response to your fellow student and one to me. If we decide to use track changes as well, please email those to both of us. We will discuss the practice of anonymous reviews and read examples of reviews.

Final Research Paper:

The final research paper should 12-16 pages long, addressing a topic related to the course. Standard format is 12 pt font, 1 inch margins, double-spaced, page numbered, and undone justification on the right margin. I am open to graduate students producing work for my class that is part of a larger project (thesis, dissertation, preliminary work for a dissertation, article to be published) as long as you submit **12-16 pages of original work** on the topic of the seminar.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of the intellectual works of others, including websources, friends' papers, published, and unpublished work. I prosecute plagiarism and cheating to the fullest extent possible at UF. The minimum response to plagiarism is that you will fail this class and that I would bring your plagiarism to the attention of the respective graduate coordinator and Chair of your department.

Course outline:

Introduction

Week 1

R August 28 Introduction

Alexander Kluge, Peter Schamoni, Wolf Wirth, Dieter Lemmel. *Brutality in Stone* (*Brutalität in Stein*, 1962)

Eric Rentschler. "Remembering Not to Forget: A Retrospective Reading of Kluge's *Brutality in Stone*." *New German Critique* 49 (Winter 1990): 23-41. [R]

Rainer Werner Fassbinder: The Brutality of Intimacy

Week 2

M September 1--NO SCREENING-LABOR DAY

Watch outside of class: Rainer Werner Fassbinder. *Katzelmacher*. (1969) (88 min)

R September 4

Thomas Elsaesser. Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2. *New German Cinema: A History*. London: Palgrave and British Film Institute, 1989: 1-73.

John Davidson. "Introduction." *Deterritorializing the New German Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999: 1-34.

Week 3

M September 8

Rainer Werner Fassbinder. *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant (Die bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant, 1972)* (124 min)

R September 11

Susan Sontag. "Notes on 'Camp'." *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject: A Reader*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999: 53-65. [R]

Jack Babuscio. "The Cinema of Camp (aka Camp and the Gay Sensibility)." *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject: A Reader*. Ed. Fabio Cleto. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999: 117-135. [R]

Johannes von Moltke. "Camp in the Art Closet: The Politics of Camp and Nation in German Film." *New German Critique* 63 (1994): 77-109. [R]

Brigitte Peucker. "Un-framing the Image: The artificiality and the Art World of *Bitter Tears*." *A Companion to Rainer Werner Fassbinder*. Ed. Brigitte Peucker. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012: 352-371. [R]

Week 4

M September 15

Guest speaker: Ula Stöckl will be screening *The Cat has Nine Lives (Die Katze hat neun Leben, 1968)*

Watch outside of class: Rainer Werner Fassbinder. *Angst essen Seele auf (Ali: Fear Eats the Soul, 1974)* (94 min)

R September 18

Thomas Elsaesser. Chapters 3 and 4. *New German Cinema: A History*: 73-116.

Judith Mayne. "Fassbinder and Spectatorship." *New German Critique* 12 (1977): 61-74. [R]

Elena Gorfinkel. "Impossible, Impolitic: *Ali: Fear Eats Soul* and Fassbinder's Asynchronous Bodies." *A Companion to Rainer Werner Fassbinder*. Ed. Brigitte Peucker. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012: 502-515. [R]

Week 5

M September 22

Rainer Werner Fassbinder. *Fox and his Friends (Faustrecht der Freiheit, 1975)* (123 min)

R September 25

John Davidson. "Conceiving, Producing, and Remembering the New German Cinema." *Deterritorializing the New German Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999: 35-63.

Al LaValley. "The Gay Liberation of Rainer Werner Fassbinder: Male Subjectivity, Male Bodies, Male Lovers." *New German Critique* 63 (1994): 109-139. [R]

Ronald Gregg. "Fassbinder's Fox and His Friends and Gay Politics in the 1970s." A *Companion to Rainer Werner Fassbinder*. Ed. Brigitte Peucker. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012: 564-578.

Female Directors and Feminist Aesthetics

Week 6

M September 29

Helma Sanders-Brahms. *Under the Pavement Lies the Strand (Under dem Pflaster liegt der Strand, 1974)* (103 min)

R October 2

Thomas Elsaesser. Chapter 6. *New German Cinema: A History*: 171-206.

Edith Hosthino Altbach. "The New German Women's Movement." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 9.3 (1984): 454-469. [R]

Julia Knight. Introduction and Chapter 1. *Women and the New German Cinema*. London: Verso, 1992: 1-50.

Week 7

M October 6

Helke Sander. *The All-round Reduced Personality (Die allseitig reduzierte Persönlichkeit, 1977)* (98 min)

R October 9

Judith Mayne. "Female Narration, Women's Cinema: Helke Sander's *The All-Round Reduced Personality/Redupers*." *New German Critique* 24/25 (Fall 1981/Winter 1982): 155-171. [R]

Julia Knight. Chapter 2 and 3. *Women and the New German Cinema*. London: Verso, 1992: 51-101.

Week 8

M October 13

Margarethe von Trotta. *Marianne and Juliane (Die bleierne Zeit, 1981)* (106 min)

Public Talk at the Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere
The Work of the Humanities: Critical Thinking in Life and Labor

Evan Selinger (Rochester Institute of Technology)

"The Outsourcing Illusion: Why Tempting Technology Can Lead to Dangerous Delegation"

5:30pm, Smathers Library 100

R October 16

Eric Kligerman. "The Antigone Effect: Reinterring the Dead of *Night and Fog* in the German Autumn." *New German Critique* 38.1 (Winter 2011): 9-38. [R]

Thomas Elsaesser. Chapter 7. *New German Cinema: A History*: 207-238.

Julia Knight. Chapter 4 and 5. *Women and the New German Cinema*: 102-149.

Week 9

M October 20

Helma Sanders-Brahms. *Germany, Pale Mother (Deutschland, bleiche Mutter, 1980)* (123 min)

R October 23

Angelika Bammer. "Through a Daughter's Eyes: Helma Sander-Brahms' *Germany, Pale Mother*." *New German Critique* 36 (Fall 1985): 91-109. [R]

Julia Knight. Chapter 6. *Women and the New German Cinema*: 149-191.

Due: Book review

Deterritorializing the New German Cinema

Week 10

M October 27

Wim Wenders. *Alice in the Cities (Alice in den Städten, 1974)* (110 min)

R October 30

Thomas Elsaesser. Chapter 9. *New German Cinema: A History*: 279-308.

Week 11

M November 3

Wim Wenders. *Paris, Texas* (1984) (147 min)

R November 6

John Davidson. Resettling the West: Of Family Spats and Spits, and the End of the Road Movie." *Deterritorializing the New German Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999: 65-106.

Week 12

M November 10

Ulrike Ottinger. *Johanna D'Arc of Mongolia* (1989) (165 minutes)

Due: 7:00pm abstract for final paper (email to Dr. Mennel and two or three other students)

R November 13

John Davidson. "Railing against Convention, or Camping Out in Mongolia: The Performative Displacement of Ulrike Ottinger's *Johanna D'Arc of Mongolia*." "Epilogue: Beyond the New German Cinema." *Deterritorializing the New German Cinema*: 107-164.

Julia Knight. Chapter 6. *Women and the New German Cinema*: 150-172.

Discussion of abstracts in small groups and you will receive written feedback from me

Werner Herzog: Aesthetic Truth or Neocolonial Fantasy?

Week 13

M November 17

Guest speaker Randall Halle, Klaus W. Jonas Professor of German Film and Cultural Studies, Department of German, University of Pittsburgh

Tentative schedule: 10:40-12:35 Workshop on researching funding in European cinema
4:00pm public talk on European cinema (place tba)

Screening: Werner Herzog. *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) (158 min)

R November 20

Brad Prager. Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2. *The Cinema of Werner Herzog: Aesthetic Ecstasy and Truth*. London: Wallflower: 1-81.

Lutz Koepnick. "Archetypes of Emotion: Werner Herzog and Opera." *A Companion to Werner Herzog*. Ed. Brad Prager. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012: 149-167.

We will end class early. Please attend:

Public Talk at the Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere

The Work of the Humanities: Critical Thinking in Life and Labor

Christopher Michaelson (University of St. Thomas)

"Narratives of Capitalism: Reading and Writing the Future of the Global Economy."

5:30pm, Hough Hall 150

Week 14

M November 24

Werner Herzog. *Nosferatu, the Vampyre* (*Nosferatu*, 1979) (107 min) and discussion with pizza

Brad Prager. Chapters 3 and 4. *The Cinema of Werner Herzog*: 82-141.

Kenneth S. Calhoon. "Werner Herzog's View of Delft Or, *Nosferatu* and the Still Life." *A Companion to Werner Herzog*. Ed. Brad Prager. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012: 101-126.

R November 27--CLASS CANCELLED THANKSGIVING

Week 15

M December 1

Werner Herzog. *Lessons of Darkness*. (1992)

R December 4

Brad Prager. Chapters 5, 6, and Conclusion. *The Cinema of Werner Herzog*: 142-202.

Matthew Gandy. "The Melancholy Observer: Landscape, Neo-Romanticism, and the Politics of Documentary Filmmaking." *A Companion to Werner Herzog*. Ed. Brad Prager. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012: 528-546. [R]

Due: Draft of final paper in class and via email to one student and me--ABSOLUTELY NO EXTENSIONS!

Public Talk at the Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere

The Work of the Humanities: Critical Thinking in Life and Labor

Wendy Chun. "Uncertain Actions, Inexperienceable Evidence: Towards New Practices of the Future."

5:30 pm, Smathers Library 100

Week 16

M December 8

Wim Wenders. *Wings of Desire (Himmel über Berlin, 1987)* (128 min) with discussion and pizza

Thomas Elsaesser. "Conclusion." *New German Cinema: A History*: 309-323.

**Due: Response to draft: to one student and me
ABSOLUTELY NO EXTENSIONS!**

M December 15

Due: 9:00am Final Research Paper--ABSOLUTELY NO EXTENSIONS!