

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

THE CINEMATIC LANGUAGE - 50326

Last update 12-08-2014

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Communication & Journalism

Academic year: 1

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Aner Preminger

Coordinator Email: aner.preminger@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00-11:30 by appointment

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Aner Preminger

Course/Module description:

Is it possible to talk about Cinema language? If not, why? And how does cinema create and communicate meaning? If so, what is its vocabulary and syntax? The course deals with these questions deconstruct Cinema into its basic units that make up the film, through which meaning is made, thus exploring cinematic utterance.

Course/Module aims:

*Understanding the various components of cinematic utterance.
Understanding how the various cinematic means create meaning, emotion and manipulate the viewer.
Understanding methods of analysis of scenes and the entire movie based on the codes of cinematic utterance.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Identify a language according to the laws of semiotics.
Examine separate components of the cinematic expression.
Interpret a single scene and the entire movie - based on the analysis of the cinematic codes.*

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Discussion of theoretical aspects of the course materials and their application using excerpts screenings from movies.

Course/Module Content:

*Language. Sign. Signifier. Signified. Manipulation of light, space and time. Realism: mimesis, illusion of reality, illusion of perspective, the illusion of movement. Law of persistence of vision. Breaking Realism: Style. Frame, shot, scene, Sequence. movie. Static shot - dynamic shot. Dramatic meaning versus semiotic meaning. Basic cinematic expression pattern: Action-reaction, shot - counter-shot. Point of View (POV): a literary point of view versus a cinematic point of view. Subjective shot - objective shot. Action axes, photography axes.
Editing: analytically editing, parallel editing, montage, juxtaposition of shots,*

Kuleshov Effect.

Camera Movement: Functional Movement, expressive movement. Subjective movement versus objective movement. Autonomous movement. Mise-en-scene.

Composition: Frame, center, focal point, depth, Negative Space, 'image size', Relationship between the whole unit and its components. Graphic shots. geometrical shapes.

Lighting: light and shadow, directional light, key light, fill light, soft light, under exposure, over exposure, light sculpting.

Color: sense, cultural significance, symbolic significance.

Tools of the director: props, decor, clothing, actors, camera, sound.

Soundtrack: synchronous sound - a-synchronous sound, dialogue, voice-over effects and music.

Narrative: linear narrative, non-linear narrative.

Classical cinema - modernism - postmodernism.

Required Reading:

N/A

Additional Reading Material:

Abel, R., ed., 1988, French Film and Theory Criticism: a history/anthology, Vol.1, 1907-1929, N.J., Princeton University Press.

Abel, R., ed., 1988, French Film and Theory Criticism: a history/anthology, Vol.2, 1929-1939, N.J., Princeton University Press.

Allen, R. & Murray, S, 1997, Film Theory and Philosophy, New York: Oxford University Press,.

Altman, R., eds., 1992, Sound Theory Sound Practice, Routledge, London.

Arnheim, R., 1936, Radio: The Art of Sound. London: Faber and Faber.

Arnheim, R., 1938, A New Laocoön: Artistic Composites and the Talking Film, in: Weis E. & Belton, J., Eds., 1985, Film Sound - Theory and Practice, Columbia University Press, pp. 112-115

Arnheim, R., 1957, Film as Art, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Arnheim, R., 1966, Towards Psychology of Art. London: Faber and Faber.

Arnheim, R., 1997, Film Essays and Criticism: University of Wisconsin press.

Bazin, A., 1971, What is cinema?, essays selected and translated by Hugh Gray, Vol. I & II, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London.

Bazin, A., 1971, The virtues and Limitation of Montage, from: What is Cinema Vol 1 p. 41-52

Bone, J. & Johnson, R., 1991, (1976), Understanding the Film, National Text Book Company, Lincolnwood, Illinois.

Chion, M., 1994, Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen, Trans. Claudia Gorbman. New York: Columbia University Press.

Chion, M., 1999, The Voice in Cinema, New York: Columbia University Press.

Dulac, G., 1988, (1924), *The Expressive Technique of the Cinema*, French Film and Theory Criticism: a history/anthology, Vol.1, 1907-1929, by Richard Abel, N.J., Princeton University Press.

Eisenstein, S., Pudovkin, V., I., Alexandrov, G., V., 1985, (1928), *A Statement*, translated by Jay Leyda, in: Weis E. & Belton, J., Eds., 1985, *Film Sound – Theory and Practice*, Columbia University Press, pp. 83-85.

Eisenstein, S., 1975, (1942), *The Film Sense*, edited & translated by Jay Leyda, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York and London.

Eisenstein, S., 1949, *Film Form*, edited & translated by Jay Leyda, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York and London.

Jacobs, L., 1980, *The Movies as medium*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York.

Metz, C., 1991, *Film Language – A semiotics of the Cinema*, Translated by Taylor Michael, University of Chicago Press.

Monaco J., 1981, *How to read a film*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Munsterberg, H., 1970, (1916), *The Film a Psychological Study*, Dover Publications Inc., New York.

Preminger, A., 2013, *Charles Chaplin sings a silent requiem: Chaplin's cinema from 1928-1952 as a cinematic statement on the transition from silent Cinema to the talkies*, In: Howe Lawrence, Caron James E., and Click Benjamin, eds., *Refocusing Chaplin: A Screen Icon Through Critical Lenses*, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Pudovkin, V. I., 1978, (1929), *Film Technique and Film Acting*, Grove Press Inc., New York.

Taylor, J. R., 1964, *Cinema Eye, Cinema Ear*, Hill and Wang, New York.

Weis, E., & Belton, J., Eds., 1985. *Film sound: Theory and Practice*, Columbia UP, New-York.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 90 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

Film excerpts will be from the following films:
The Circus/Charlie Chaplin – 1928.
Cops/Buster Keaton – 1922.
Citizen Kane/Orson Welles - 1941
Touch of Evil/Orson Welles - 1958

The Player/Robert Altman - 1992
The Passangers/Michelangelo Antonioni - 1975
Blind man's Bluff/Aner Preminger - 1993.
Potemkin/Sergei Eisenstein - 1925
The Mother/vesvold Podovkin - 1926
October/Sergei Eisenstein - 1928
Vertigo/Alfred Hitchcock - 1958
Psycho/Alfred Hitchcock - 1960
Strangers on a Train/Alfred Hitchcock - 1951
North by Northwest/Alfred Hitchcock - 1959
Rashomon/Akira Kurosawa - 1950
Dodeskaden/Akira Kurosawa - 1970
Ikiru/Akira Kurosawa - 1952
Blow Up/Michelangelo Antonioni - 1966
Wild Strawberries/Ingmar Bergman - 1958
City Lights / Charlie Chaplin - 1931
Modern Times / Charlie Chaplin - 1936
The Great Dictator / Chaplin - 1941
One Week/Buster Keaton - 1920 perspective)
The Last Man/Murnau - 1924
I vitelloni/Federico Fellini - 1953
The 400 Blows/Francois Truffaut - 1959
Sun Set Boulevard/Billy Wilder - 1950
Vivre Sa Vie/Jean-Luc Godard - 1962
Miracle in Milan/Vittorio De Sica - 1950
Bicycle Thief/Vittorio De Sica - 1948
Fahrenheit 451/Francois Truffaut - 1966
The Kid/Charlie Chaplin - 1921
The Stunt Man/Richard Rush - 1980
Shoot the Piano Player/Francois Truffaut - 1960
All of these clips are on 3 DVD and Media Library are cataloged as:
V.01 - 35078 OSV under the name Cinematic Expression 2010