SILENT CINEMA

FILM 130

Silent Cinema

Mon & Wed 3:30 – 6:00 pm

Office Hours: Fridays 12:00 – 2:00 pm & by appointment

Course Website: http://people.ucsc.edu/~stamp/130

Teaching Assistants:
Joor Baruah | ubaruah@ucsc.edu | Grading last names A - F
Dani Williamson | dnewillia@ucsc.edu | Grading last names G - O
Marc Francis | mnewman2@ucsc.edu | Grading last names P - Z

This course will provide an introduction to the cultural, aesthetic and technological development of early motion pictures. In the first part of the class we will trace the emergence of cinema from various scientific experiments and popular entertainments in the nineteenth century, then look at the unique problems of narrative construction faced by early filmmakers and the increasingly prominent role movies occupied in the national consciousness. In the second part of the course we turn to international film movements that surfaced in the 1920s as alternatives to the functional narrative style developing in Hollywood. In the third and final phase of the course we return to the U.S., looking at the rise of Hollywood’s glamour culture and the emergence of the movie star system.

COURSE COMPONENTS

Attendance and participation (10%): Attendance at all class meetings and screenings is required. Active participation in class discussion will count favorably in your final evaluation; repeated absences will have a negative impact on your final grade. Plan on having readings completed prior to the date they appear on the syllabus. Lectures and discussions will assume your familiarity with concepts presented in the readings.

Movie Theater and Film Program Assignment (30%): Your first assignment will give you an opportunity to design an early movie theater, curate a film program, and create an advertising campaign. Due in class Monday, April 27

Research Paper (30%): Your second assignment will be a 10 page (2,500-3,000 word) research paper on a selected aspect of silent cinema. Suggested topics will be circulated, but you are encouraged to pursue your own area of interest.

- Topic question and bibliography due in class Monday, May 11
- Final paper due in class Wednesday, June 3

Final Exam (30%): The final exam will be a short-answer/essay exam covering all lectures, screenings and readings in the class. Eligible students should request special exam accommodations within the first two weeks of class. All others must write the final at the assigned date and time: Wednesday, June 10, 8:00 am – 11:00 am

REQUIRED TEXTS

Both required texts are available for purchase at the Bay Tree Bookstore and are on 2-hour reserve at McHenry Library:

- From Peep Show to Palace: The Birth of American Film, by David Robinson
- Course Reader for FILM 130
**Class Policies**

**Disability Resources:** If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to Professor Stamp within the first two weeks of the quarter. Contact the DRC at 459-2089 (voice), 459-4806 (TTY), or [http://drc.ucsc.edu](http://drc.ucsc.edu) for more information.

**Laptop Policy:** Computers are permitted for note-taking purposes only during lectures. All other electronic devices must be turned off during lectures and screenings. Students caught using electronic devices for other purposes or otherwise interfering with lectures and screenings will be asked to leave and will have electronic privileges suspended for the remainder of the quarter.

**Lateness Policy:** All papers are due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the dates indicated above. Extensions can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and only with the prior permission of your TA. Essays submitted late without an extension will be accepted only at the discretion of your TA; if accepted, they will be subject to a penalty of one grade step per day (i.e., a B paper would become a B- if submitted one day late, a C if submitted three days late).

**Unauthorized Sale of Course Notes:** Please be aware that UCSC policy stipulates that students may be disciplined for selling, preparing, or distributing course lecture notes for any commercial purpose. For more info: [http://news.ucsc.edu/2010/11/course-notes-notehall.html](http://news.ucsc.edu/2010/11/course-notes-notehall.html)

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct:** Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Students caught plagiarizing the work of others, submitting identical papers, cheating on exams or committing any other act of academic misconduct will be referred to their College Provost for disciplinary action. For more info: [http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acd_integrity/index.html](http://undergraduate.ucsc.edu/acd_integrity/index.html)

✧ Any act of academic misconduct will result in failure of the class ✧
CLASS SCHEDULE

PART 1: EARLY MOVING PICTURES

MON MAR 30 THE Emergence OF CINEMA

Read:  From Peep Show to Palace, chp 1-4

WED APR 1 THE FIRST FILMS

Edison Kinetoscope Films (US 1894-1897)
Lumière Program (France, 1895-1897)

Let Me Dream Again (G.A. Smith, GB 1900)
Grandma’s Reading Glass (G.A. Smith, GB 1900)
As Seen Through a Telescope (G.A. Smith, GB 1900)
Ladies’ Skirts Nailed to a Fence (Bamforth and Co., GB 1900)
How it Feels to be Run Over (Cecil Hepworth, GB 1900)
Peeping Tom (Pathé Frères, France 1901)

Before the Nickelodeon (Charles Musser, US 1987) 60 mins

Read:  From Peep Show to Palace, chp 5

MON APR 6 EARLY FILM EDITING AND LAST-MINUTE RESCUES

A Trip to the Moon (Georges Méliès, France, 1902)
Rescued by Rover (Lewis Fitzhamon and Cecil Hepworth, GB 1905)
The Lonely Villa (D.W. Griffith, US 1909)

Read:  From Peep Show to Palace, chp 6,
Gunning, “Weaving a Narrative”

WED APR 8 FILM CENSORSHIP AND CINEMA’S POPULAR AUDIENCE

Traffic in Souls (dir., George Loane Tucker, US 1913) 74 mins

Read:  From Peep Show to Palace, chp 12
Stamp, “Is Any Girl Safe? Female Spectators at the White Slave Films”
**MON APR 13**  
**SEX, CINEMA AND THE RISE OF HOLLYWOOD**

*The Cheat* (dir., Cecil B. DeMille, US 1915) 55 mins

Read:  *From Peep Show to Palace*, chp 8, 11  
Higashi, “Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Film: DeMille’s *The Cheat*”

**WED APR 15**  
**WOMEN AND THE SILENT SCREEN**


Read:  Blaché, “Woman’s Place in Photoplay Production”  
Weber, “How I Became a Motion Picture Director”  
Stamp, “Women and the Silent Screen”

**MON APR 20**  
**RACIAL POLITICS AND THE EARLY BLOCKBUSTER**

excerpt: *The Birth of a Nation* (dir., D.W. Griffith, US 1915)

Read:  Lang, “*The Birth of a Nation*: History, Ideology, Narrative Form”  
Taylor, “The Re-Birth of the Aesthetic in Cinema”

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**PART 2: INTERNATIONAL STYLE**

**WED APR 22**  
**GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM AND FILM STYLE**

*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (dir., Robert Weine, Germany, 1919) 68 mins

Read:  Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler* (excerpts)  
Elsaesser, “Social Mobility and the Fantastic: German Silent Cinema”

**MON APR 27**  
**GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM MEETS THE FUTURE**

*Metropolis* (dir., Fritz Lang, Germany, 1926) 147 mins (!!!!)

Read:  Huyssen, “The Vamp and the Machine: Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*”  
Neumann, “Before and After *Metropolis*: Film and Architecture in Search of the Modern City”


☆ First Paper due in class today

☆ Class will run long today!!
**Wed Apr 29** | **Eisenstein and Soviet Montage**
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*Battleship Potemkin* (dir., Sergei Eisenstein, USSR, 1925)  68 mins

Read: Bordwell, “The Idea of Montage in Soviet Art and Film”
Eisenstein, “A Dialectic Approach to Film Form”

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**Mon May 4** | **Soviet Documentary Filmmaking**
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*Man with a Movie Camera* (dir., Dziga Vertov, USSR, 1929)  68 mins

Read: Michelson, “From Magician to Epistemologist: Vertov’s Man with a Movie Camera”
Vertov, “WE: Variant of a Manifesto” and “The Council of Three”

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**Wed May 6** | **Dada and Surrealist Cinema**
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*Ballet mécanique* (dir., Fernand Léger and Dudley Murphy, France, 1924)  14 mins
*Entr’acte* (dir., René Clair, France, 1924)  15 mins
*Un chien Andalou* (dir., Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, France, 1929)  16 mins
*The Smiling Madame Beudet* (dir., Germaine Dulac, France, 1922)  26 mins

Read: Elsaesser, “Dada/Cinema?”
Buñuel, “Cinema, Instrument of Poetry”

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**Mon May 11** | **Narrative Avant-Garde**
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*The Passion of Joan of Arc* (dir., Carl Theodor Dreyer, France, 1927)  82 mins

Read: Abel, “The Great Debates”
Abel, “Narrative Avant-Garde: La passion de Jeanne d’Arc”

**Topic Question & Bibliography due in class today**

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**Wed May 13** | **Chinese Cinema and Modernity**
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*The Goddess* (dir., Wu Younggang, China 1934)  74 mins

Read: Rayns, “Ten Cities That Shook Cinema: Shanghai, Labyrinth of Chances”
Zhang, “Prostitution and Urban Imagination: Negotiating the Public and Private in Chinese Films of the 1930s”
Part 3: Hollywood's Silent Golden Age

Mon May 18  Slapstick Comedy

Mabel’s Blunder (dir., Mabel Normand, US 1914) 13 mins
The Immigrant (dir., Charlie Chaplin, US 1917) 20 mins
Sherlock, Jr. (dir., Buster Keaton, US 1924) 45 mins

Read: Musser, “Work, Ideology and Chaplin’s Tramp”
Gunning, “Buster Keaton, or the Work of Comedy in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”

Wed May 20  Oscar Micheaux and Early “Race Movies”

Body and Soul (dir., Oscar Micheaux, US 1925) 79 mins

Read: Gaines, “Fire and Desire: Race, Melodrama and Oscar Micheaux”
Carbine, “The Finest Outside the Loop: Motion Picture Exhibition in Chicago’s Black Metropolis”

Mon May 25

Memorial Day. No class.

Wed May 27  Movie Stars, Fan Culture and the Valentino Craze

Son of the Sheik (dir., George Fitzmaurice, US 1926) 72 mins

Read: May, “You Are the Star: The Evolution of the Theater Palace, 1908-1929”
Studlar, “Optic Intoxication: Rudolph Valentino and Dance Madness”

Mon June 1  The “IT” Girl: Sex, Flappers and the Jazz Age

It (dir., Clarence Badger, US 1927) 71 mins

Ross, “‘Good Little Bad Girls’: Controversy and the Flapper Comedienne”

Wed June 3  Mexican Audiences & Hollywood’s Transnational Appeal

Read: Serna, “La virgin and la pelona: Film Culture, Border Crossing, and the Modern Mexican Woman”

Final Paper due in class today

Final Exam: Wednesday, June 10, 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM