

ARTS-UG 1604

Native American Film and Video: Performing Self-representation Through Media

Classes: Fridays 12:30-3:15pm
1 Washington Place, Room 601

Instructor: Amalia Cordova, amalia@nyu.edu
Office hours: Fridays, 4-5pm, 1 Wash Pl. Room 613, tel. 212.998.7340

Course Description: This course focuses on the practices of film, video, and digital expressions emerging in the past decades from indigenous communities and independent Native artists in the Americas. Notions of *Third* and *Fourth cinema*, indigenous self-representation, collective authorship, Indigenous people's representation in mainstream films and other forms of exhibition such as museums, installation and photography will be explored.

Students will research specific authors or media projects, and how institutions present this work through exhibitions, events, festivals, and publications. The course features guest lecturers and requires class and off-site viewing of films and videos that are otherwise unavailable on the market.

Course Objectives:

This course will provide students with an introduction to both the history and theory of indigenous cinema. Students will gain not only an understanding of the motivating factors that led to the emergence of this cinema and become acquainted with both its major movements and representative filmmakers, but also be able to recognize several of the aesthetic and narrative practices in these films. In addition, we will revisit the concepts of *Fourth cinema* and *imperfect cinema*, examining at the significance of these concepts in contemporary cultural and political debates. A key goal of this course is to introduce and gain familiarity with the critical tools that might help us situate indigenous audiovisual practices against our experiences with Hollywood and European cinemas.

Course policies:

Active participation is strongly encouraged. Attendance to all class lectures and screenings is mandatory. Absences and tardiness will be penalized. If you unable to come to class due to illness or some extenuating circumstance, contact me by e-mail as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements may be made. If you must leave early due to illness or for any other cause, it is your responsibility to inform me as to the reason. All work must be handed in on time except in the case of serious illness, medical emergency, or unforeseen circumstances. Incompletes will not be granted unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

Films shown during class are a key part of class. *Turn off cell phones and all other portable electronic devices during class time and screenings.*

Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website <http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html>.

Required reading:

- Gonzalez, Jennifer, "Introduction" (pp.1-20) in Subject to Display, Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art, MIT Press, 2008.
- Gauthier, Jennifer L., "Dismantling the Master's House: The Feminist Fourth Cinema Documentaries of Alanis Obamsawin and Loretta Todd" Post Script, Vol. 29 No. 3., Summer 2010.
- Ginsburg, Faye, Embedded Aesthetics: creating a space for indigenous media. Cultural Anthropology, 9(3), 1994.
_____. "Screen Memories: Resignifying the Traditional in Indigenous Media." Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain. Ginsburg, Faye, Abu-Lughod, Lila, and Larkin, Brian, Eds., University of California Press, 2002, pp. 39-57.
- Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn, Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film, University of Nebraska Press, 1999.
- Machiorlatti, Jennifer, "Indigenous Women in Film and Video: Three Generations of Storytellers and an Interview with Emerging Filmmaker Sally Kewayosh" Post Script, Vol.29 No. 3., Summer 2010, pp.13-26.
- Rony, Fatimah T., The Third Eye: Race, Cinema and Ethnographic Spectacle, Duke University Press, 1996.
- Shohat, E. & Stam, R., Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the media. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Singer, Beverly, Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video, Visible Evidence, Vol. 10, University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian's Native Networks website on Native Media: www.nativenetworks.si.edu (selections).
- Weatherford, Elizabeth, with Emilia Seubert, Native Americans on Film and Video, Vol. 1 (1981) and Vol. II (1988), Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.
- Wilson, Pamela, and Stewart, Michelle, Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics, Duke University Press, 2008.
- Valladares, Michelle, "Imagining Indians: A Native American Film and Video Festival," with essays by Victor Masayesva, Jr., Merata Mita and Alberto Muenala, in Felix: A Journal of Media Arts, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1995, pp. 150-161.
- Wortham, Erica, Between the state and Indigenous autonomy: Unpacking video Indígena in Mexico, American Anthropologist, 106 (2), 2004.

Recommended readings:

- Aufderheide, Patricia, "The Video in the Villages Project: Videomaking with and by Brazilian Indians" Visual Anthropology Review, 11(2), 1995.
- Carelli, Vincent, "Moi, un Indien/I, an Indian" Mostra Vídeo nas Aldeias: Um Olhar Indígena/Video in the Villages: Through Indian Eyes Exhibition Catalogue, 2004. At: <http://www.videonasaldeias.org.br/2009/biblioteca.php>
- Ginsburg, Faye, Lila Abu-lughod and Brian Larkin, Eds., Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain, University of California Press, 2002.
- Gonzalez, Jennifer, "James Luna" in Subject to Display, Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art, MIT Press, 2008, pp.21-62.
- Himpele, Jeff D., Circuits of Culture: Media, Politics and Indigenous Identity in the Andes, University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
- Leuthold, Steven. "An Indigenous Aesthetic? Two Noted Videographers: George Burdeau and Victor Masayesva", Wicazo Sa Review, Vol. 10, No. 1. 1994.
- Jacobs, Karen. "Optic/Haptic/Abject: Revisioning Indigenous Media in Victor Masayesva, Jr and Leslie Marmon Silko", Journal of Visual Culture, 2004;
- Lewis, Randolph, Alanis Obamasawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker, University of Nebraska Press, 2006.
- Smith, Paul Chaat Everything You Know About Indians is Wrong, Minnesota Press, 2009. http://www.upress.umn.edu/Books/S/smith_everything.html
- Smithsonian Institution, Emendatio exhibition catalog, National Museum of the American Indian, 2005. Website & Brochure PDF (in Resources) www.nmai.si.edu/exhibitions/emendatio/jamesluna.html
- Seubert, Emilia, "Native American Media in the United States" 1997. Film & Politics in the Third World. Downing, John, Ed., Praeger pp. 303-310.
- Masayesva, Jr., Victor, Husk of Time: The Photographs of Victor Masayesva, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006.
- Worth, Sol, and Adair, John, Through Navajo Eyes: An Exploration in Film and Communication and Anthropology, University of New Mexico Press, 1997.

Requirements:

- Class attendance and participation: 20%
- Midterm paper (5-6 pages) on a media project/director, film or screening attended: **25% due October 7.**
- One class presentation on one film/filmmaker or event review: **25% due Nov. 18**
- One site visit to the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian's Film + Video Center.
- Proposals for final research project **due Oct. 21 for class workshop.**
- Final Research Project and class presentation: **30%, due December 2.**
- Proposals for final papers will require an in-class presentation and sign off from the professor. Assignments will be submitted in both paper and electronic form.

COURSE SCHEDULE

CLASS 1- Sept. 9, 2011: Native Americans on Film: silent and contested spaces

Screen: *How Tasty Was my Little Frenchman* [clips]. *Imagining Indians*, (1992, 56 min. Documentary) US, by Victor Masayesva, Jr. (Hopi).

Reading: Gonzalez, J., Subject to Display, Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art, Introduction; Singer, B., Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video, Introduction.

CLASS 2- Sept. 16: Experimental ethnographies

Screen: selections from *Through Navajo Eyes* (1966): *The Navajo Silversmith* (20 min.) by John Nelson; *Intrepid Shadows* (18 min.), by Al Clah; *The Laughing Alligator* (1979, 28 min.) by Juan Downey.

Reading: Fatimah T. Rony, The Third Eye: Race, Cinema and Ethnographic Spectacle, Introduction and ch. 1; Kilpatrick, J., Celluloid Indians pp. xv-64;

Recommended: Sol Worth and J. Adair, Through Navajo Eyes, Introduction, ch. 1 & 9.

CLASS 3- Sept. 23: Native Narratives in American Cinema

Screen: *The Exiles* (1961, 72 min.), USA. Director: Kent Mackenzie;

House Made of Dawn, (1972, 90 min.) US. Director: Richardson Morse [clips].

Reading: Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn, Celluloid Indians ch. 4 (pp. 65-100) and ch.6 (pp 178-232); Ginsburg, Faye, "Embedded Aesthetics: creating a space for indigenous media"; Shohat & Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the media, pp.1-54.

Recommended: Milestone Film's website notes on

www.milestonefilms.com/movie.php/exiles/ and <http://www.exilesfilm.com/>; "House Made of Dawn: A Closer Look":

www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/rose/hmod.htm#introduction

CLASS 4- Sept. 30: We who speak the complete language

Screen: *Hopiit* (1981, 14 min.) US. Director: Victor Masayesva, Jr. (Hopi); in Hopi with English subtitles; *Chac/The Rain God* (1974, 95 min.) Mexico/US. Director: Rolando Klein [clip], *Mashikuna/Compañeros* (1995. 40 min. Narrative) Ecuador. Director: Alberto Muenala (Kichwa).

Reading: Valladares, Michelle, "Imagining Indians: A Native American Film and Video Festival," with essays by Victor Masayesva, Jr., Merata Mita and Alberto Muenala, in Felix: A Journal of Media Arts, pp. 150-161; Wilson and Stewart, Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics, 2008, Introduction.

Recommended: Leuthold, "An Indigenous Aesthetic? Two Noted Videographers: George Burdeau and Victor Masayesva", Wicazo Sa Review, Vol. 10, No. 1. 1994; "In Search of a Universal Language: Interview with Rolando Klein,"

(www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/rose/klein_r_interview.htm).

*Oct. 1, Recommended free screening of *Conversations with the Earth*, at NMAI.

CLASS 5- Oct. 7: Inuit Knowledge: from preservation to projecting the future

Screen: *Atanarjuat/ The Fast Runner* [*pre-screening], (2001, 172 min.) Canada.

Director: Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit), Producer: Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit), Norman Cohn, Paul Apak Angilirq (Inuit), Germaine Wong, produced by Igloodik Isuma Productions; *Qulliq* (1992, 12 min. Documentary) Canada. Director: Susan Avigaq (Inuit), Madeline Ivalu (Inuit), Mathilda Hanniliqq (Inuit), Martha Maktar (Inuit), Marie-Hélène Cousineau. *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* (2010, 54 min.) Canada [clip] Director: Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit) and Ian Mauro.

Reading: Wilson and Stewart, Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics, Duke University Press, 2008, chapters 3 (Cache Collective) & 15 (Ginsburg).

Recommended: Zach Kunuk Interview at:

http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/rose/kunuk_z_interview.htm#open.

Review Isuma TV website: www.isumatv.ca

CLASS 6- Oct. 14: **Pioneering Women's Documentaries**

Guest: Beck Cole (Luritja/Warrumunga), Australian director. (To be confirmed.)

Screen: *A Video Book* (1994, 10 min. Documentary) US. Director: Beverly R. Singer (Tewa/Navajo); *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*, (1993, 119 min.) Canada, by Alanis Obomsawin (Abenaki); selections of Beck Cole's work (TBC).

Reading: Gauthier, J. L., "Dismantling the Master's House: The Feminist Fourth Cinema Documentaries of Alanis Obomsawin and Loretta Todd" Post Script, Vol. 29 No. 3., Summer 2010, pp.27-43; Ginsburg, F., "Screen Memories: Resignifying the Traditional in Indigenous Media." *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*, pp. 39-57.

Recommended: Lewis, Randolph, Alanis Obomsawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker, Preface, ch.1 (pp.1-35), ch. 4 (pp. 88-121).

**** First paper due*****

CLASS 7- Oct. 21: **Latin America: forms of resistance and collective voice**

Screen: *Los Pueblos Indígenas/Indigenous Peoples: This Is How We Think* (2000, 8 min. Documentary) Bolivia, directed and produced by CEFREC-CAIB; *Los Con Voz/Those with Voice* (2007, 55 min.) by Jeff Arak; *Video in the Village presents Itself*, (2008, 14 min.) Brazil, directed by Vincent Carelli and Mari Correa; *Marangmotxingo Mirang/From the Ikpeng Children to the World* (2002, 35 min.) Brazil. Directed by Kumaré Txicão (Ikpeng), Karané Txicão (Ikpeng), and Natuyu Yuwipo Txicão (Ikpeng). Produced by Video nas Aldeias/Video in the Villages.

Reading: Wilson and Stewart, Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics, Duke University Press, 2008, chapters 1 (Salazar and Cordova) & 7 (Murillo); Shohat, E. & Stam, R., Unthinking Eurocentrism, pp 292-362;

Recommended: Aufderheide, Patricia, "The Video in the Villages Project: Videomaking with and by Brazilian Indians," Visual Anthropology Review, 11(2), 1995; Carelli, V., "Moi, un Indien/I, an Indian," 2004.

**** Final research project proposals due.**

CLASS 8- Oct. 28: **Video Mexico Indígena**

Guest speaker: filmmakers Pedro Daniel López (Tzotzil), with Dolores Santiz (Tzotzil) and Jeff Arak.

Screen: *Xanini* (1999, 8 min.) Mexico, directed by Dante Cerano (Purepecha); Collectively directed and produced by Ojo de Agua Comunicación; *The Land Belongs to*

Those who Work it (2006, 11 min.) Mexico, produced by the Chiapas Media Project-Promedios; clips from selected works by Pedro Daniel López.

Readings: Wilson and Stewart, Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics, chapters 8 (Halkin) & 9 (Smith); Wortham, E., “Between the state and Indigenous autonomy: Unpacking video Indígena in Mexico.”

Recommended: Cordova and Zamorano, NMAI, “Mapping Mexican Media”

<http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/rose/mexico.htm>;

CLASS 9- Nov. 4: **Indigenous performance and the museum space**

Site visit to the National Museum of the American Indian’s (NMAI) Film and Video Center, One Bowling Green (Lower Manhattan).

Screening: *4-Wheel War Pony* (2008, 8 min.) US. Director: Dustinn Craig (White Mountain Apache/Navajo); *Emendatio* [clips], video-performance of James Luna (Luiseño) at the 2005 Venice Art Biennale and at NMAI.

Reading: Elizabeth Weatherford with Emilia Seubert, Introductions to Native Americans on Film and Video, Vol. 1 (1981) and Vol. II (1988), Museum of the American Indian.

CLASS 10- Nov. 11: Class will attend screenings at AMNH Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival and prepare reviews.

CLASS 11 – Nov. 18: **Spaces of Circulation: Festivals and Distribution**

Screen: Trailers and clips from CLACPI indigenous festivals, 2006-2010; *EntreCulturas: VI Festival en Oaxaca*, (2006, 56 min.) Bolivia, directed by Nicolas Ipamo (Chiquitano), produced by CEFREC-CAIB.

Readings: review Festival websites from Festival section of Native Networks:

<http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/yellow/festivals.htm>.

****Film/screening review due.**

Nov. 25- No class, Thanksgiving Break

CLASS 12 – Dec. 2: **Emerging Filmmakers in New York**

Guest Speaker: filmmaker Sally Kewayosh.

Screen: *Cousins* (2010, 17 min.) US. Sally Kewayosh (Ojibwe/Cree); *Sikumi/On the Ice*, (2008, 15 min.) US. Director: Andrew Okpeaha MacLean (Inupiat); *Little Caughnawaga: To Brooklyn and Back* (2008, 56:46 min.) Canada/US. Reaghan Tarbell (Mohawk).

Reading: Machiorlatti, J., “Indigenous women in Film and video: Three generations of Storytellers and an Interview with emerging filmmaker Sally Kewayosh.”

CLASS 13 – FINAL PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 14 - FINAL PRESENTATIONS AND CLASS EVALUATION