Expressive Culture: Film

Class Code
CORE-UA 9750 – 001

Instructor Details
Dr Anne Barnes
anne.barnes@nyu.edu
Consultations by appointment.
Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

Class Details
Spring 2018

Expressive Culture: Film

Thursday 9:00am –1:00pm (4 hours per week including film screening) OR
Thursday 2:00 –6:00pm (4 hours per week including film screening)
1 February to 10 May
Room 302
NYU Sydney Academic Centre
157-161 Gloucester St, The Rocks 2000

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
How has Australian cinema engaged with significant and often contested historical, political and cultural events in the nation’s past? The films in this course offer critical perspectives on the history of colonisation in Australia; the legacies of the Stolen Generations; the controversies surrounding Australia’s role in World War One; as well as Australia’s relationships with its Pacific Asian neighbours. We will focus on films that have marked significant shifts in public consciousness about the past such as Gallipoli (1981), Rabbit-Proof Fence (2002) and Balibo (2009). We will also draw on films that have employed innovative narrative and aesthetic strategies for exploring the relationship between the past and the present such as Ten Canoes (2006) and The Tracker (2002). Throughout the course, students will develop their understanding of the methods and concepts of cinema studies. In particular, students will develop a critical vocabulary for analysing how filmmakers have approached the use of memory, testimony, re-enactment, researched detail, allegory and archives across a diverse range of examples.

Desired Outcomes
By the end of the course students will be able to:
• Apply the basic vocabulary of film form.
• Grasp the mechanics of structuring a written argument about a film’s meaning.
• Engage with different approaches to thinking and writing about cinema and film.
• Reflect upon their viewing position and their application of interpretive strategies to films from diverse historical and cultural contexts.
• Utilize a critical vocabulary for analysing representations of the relationship between the past and the present on film.
• Critically analyse the ways that representations of the past shape and are shaped by their historical, political and cultural contexts.
• Research and investigate aspects of the Australian cinema and communicate their findings in a coherent, well-structured written form.
• Situate contemporary Australian cinema in its national, regional and international contexts.

Assessment Components

Weekly Quizzes: (10%) Assessed throughout the semester.
Sequence Analysis: 4-6 pages (20%) Due by beginning of class, Thu 8 March (Week 6)
Critical Paper: 4-6 pages (20%) Due by beginning of class, Thu 5 April (Week 10)
Proposal for Final Paper: 2-3 pages (10%) Due by beginning of class, Thu 19 April (Week 12)
Final Paper: 10-12 pages (40%) Due by beginning of class, Thu 10 May (Week 15)

Weekly Quizzes: Students are required to demonstrate accountability and responsibility in their preparation for, and engagement with, the course. It is expected that the required readings are completed prior to the class so that students are able to engage actively with the discussion and the films. Weekly reading questions will be set and students must submit answers to these questions for a minimum of 10 weeks of the course.

Sequence Analysis (Week 6) Students will identify a sequence from a film presented in the first five weeks of the course and critically analyse how the sequence reflects key themes, issues, concepts and/or aesthetic strategies introduced in Weeks 1-5. Students will pay close attention to the formal (stylistic and technical) qualities of the sequence, demonstrating their understanding of film form, style and narration.

Critical Paper (Week 10) Students will select two readings from the selection provided by the instructor and write a short critical essay in which they identify and analyze the key arguments, ideas, concepts and issues raised by the authors. Students will compare the arguments of the different authors and offer their own assessment of the authors’ claims and conclusions. The paper should be written in an appropriate academic style with consistent scholarly referencing and bibliography. This assignment will help to develop students’ critical reading, thinking and writing skills, essential for the final paper in this course.

Proposal for Final Paper (Week 12) Students will submit a proposal indicating how they intend to approach their chosen question.

Final Paper (Week 15) Questions for the final papers will be released in Week 10.
Students are required to apply their analysis to specific, carefully selected case studies and film examples and to demonstrate their critical thinking, analysis and evaluation skills. Students are expected to situate their argument in relation to the relevant required readings and undertake additional research and reading on their topic.

 Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class.

 For this course your total numerical score, calculated from the components listed above, is converted to a letter grade without rounding.

 Extra Credit: Site policy does not allow grading of work outside of the assignments included in the syllabus. The final grade will only be calculated from the assessment components listed here and no other work, whether additional or substituted, is permitted.

The College Core Curriculum is designed to provide students with an intellectually rigorous general education in the liberal arts. Because Core courses seek to stretch you beyond your previous schooling and major course of study, they will likely be among the most academically challenging experiences you undertake as an undergraduate. The following guidelines outline our common expectations concerning the evaluation of students’ work across the curriculum.

The grade of A marks extraordinary academic performance in all aspects of a course and is reserved for clearly superior work.

As a faculty, we are similarly concerned to reserve the mark of B+ to signify very good work. It is our hope and desire that the majority of students will want and be able to do good work in their Core classes, work in the B range. Because these courses are intended by design to foster your intellectual development, the difference between merely satisfactory and good work will frequently depend on outstanding effort and class participation. For this reason, class participation is typically a substantial component of the overall grade in Core courses.

The grade of C denotes satisfactory work—regular attendance, ordinary effort, a minimum of demonstrated improvement across the semester. It is expected that every student is capable of and motivated to perform at least at this level.

Grades below C are reserved for less than satisfactory and, in the D range, for poor work and effort, and mark a need for improvement.

The grade of F indicates failure to complete the requirements for a course in a creditable manner. It marks a judgment about the quality and quantity of a student’s work and participation—not about the student—and is therefore in order whenever a student fails to complete course requirements, whatever his or her intentions or circumstances may be.

The temporary mark of I (Incomplete) is given only when sudden and incapacitating illness, or
other grave emergency, prevents a student from completing the final assignment or examination for a course. It must be requested by the student in advance; all other course requirements, including satisfactory attendance, must have been fulfilled; and there must be a reasonable expectation that the student will receive a passing grade when the delayed work is completed. Students must make arrangements with the faculty member to finish the incomplete work as soon as circumstances permit within the following semester. If not completed, marks of I will lapse to F.

The complete range of grade conversions is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Conversion</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 to 100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to &lt; 94</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87 to &lt; 90</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80 to &lt; 84</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74 to &lt; 77</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70 to &lt; 74</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67 to &lt; 70</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>65 to &lt; 67</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 to &lt; 65</td>
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Assignments (excluding in-class presentations and exams) must be submitted electronically via NYU Classes. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm that the work has been successfully been uploaded. In the unlikely event that a submission to Classes fails, students must immediately submit the work to the Academic Programs Coordinator via email before the original submission deadline accompanied by an explanation of the issue. All in-class presentations and exams must be completed during the scheduled class time. An assessment component is considered completed when the student has met all the terms for that assessment component as outlined by the instructor.

An assessment component completed after the deadline without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late. Work completed beyond five weekdays after the due date without an agreed extension receives a mark of zero, and the student is not entitled to feedback for that piece of work. Because failure to submit or fulfil any required assessment component will result in failure of the course, it is crucial for students to complete every assignment even when it will receive a mark of zero.

The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University’s plagiarism policy. The
presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

It is a serious academic offense to use the work of others (written, printed or in any other form) without acknowledgement. Cases of plagiarism are not dealt with by your instructor. They are referred to the Director, who will determine the appropriate penalty (up to and including failure in the course as a whole) taking into account the codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU’s various schools and colleges.

Class Attendance

Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students’ semester grades. The class roster will be marked at the beginning of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalised by a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to two unexcused absences. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

Faculty cannot excuse an absence. Requests for absences to be excused must be directed to the Academic Programs Coordinator. Students must provide appropriate documentation for their absence. In the case of illness, students must contact the Academic Programs Coordinator on the day of absence. They must provide medical documentation to Academic Programs Coordinator within three days of the absence in order to be medically excused. The note must include a medical judgement indicating that the student was unfit to attend class/work on the specific day or dates of the absence. Faculty will be informed of excused absences by the Academic Programs staff.

Classroom Expectations

This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
- Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no
email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.

- Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
- The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another class, is not acceptable.
- Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “...not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU Sydney we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

Religious Observance

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Academic Programs Coordinator in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.

Provisions to students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Centre for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Required Texts

- Weekly readings will be posted on NYU Classes.
It is a course expectation that you have done the required reading and have prepared sufficiently to discuss them in class.

### Supplemental Texts (Available in NYUS Library)


• Screening the Past: [http://www.screeningthepast.com/](http://www.screeningthepast.com/)


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**Week 1  Wake in Fright – Restoring a Cinema Classic and Australian National Cinema**

**Thursday 1 February**

Film: *Wake in Fright* (Ted Kotcheff, Australia/USA, 1971, 114 min)

Excerpt: *The Story of the Kelly Gang* (Charles Tait, 1906, restored NFSA 2006, 30 min)

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


Week 2  *Gallipoli* – Narrative Form, Historical Film and National Myth

Thursday 8 February

Film: *Gallipoli* (Peter Weir, Australia, 1981, 110 min)

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

Week 3  *Australia* – Mise-en-Scene and the Historical Epic

Thursday 15 February

Film: *Australia* (Baz Luhrmann, Australia, 2008, 165 min)

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**
- Catherine Simpson, ‘Shifting from landscape to country in *Australia*, after Mabo,’ *Metro* 165 (2010), 89-93.

Week 4  *Balibo* – Cinematography, Historical Reconstruction and Researched detail

Thursday 22 February

Film: *Balibo* (Robert Connolly, Australia, 2009, 111 min)

**Required Reading:**

Recommended Reading:

Week 5 Shine – The Biopic and Film Sound
Thursday 1 March

Film: Shine (Scott Hicks, Australia, 1996, 105 min)

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Week 6 The Home Song Stories – Film Form and Transnational Australian Cinema
Thursday 8 March

Film: The Home Song Stories (Tony Ayres, Australia, 2007, 113 min)

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:
Assignment: Sequence Analysis due (20%)  

SPRING BREAK: 12 – 16 March (Week 7)

Week 8  The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – Genre and the Australian Road Movie

Thursday 22 March

Film: The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (Stephan Elliott, Australia, 1994, 104 min)

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Week 9  Beneath Clouds – Historical Memory, Identity and the Australian Road Movie

Thursday 29 March

Film: Beneath Clouds (Ivan Sen, Australia, 2002, 90 min)

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Week 10  Rabbit Proof Fence – The Stolen Generations and Film Adaptation

Thursday 5 April

Film: Rabbit-Proof Fence (Phillip Noyce, Australia, 2002, 94 min)

Required Reading:

**Recommended Reading:**


**Assignment: Critical Paper due (20%)**

**Week 11  The Tracker – Australian Cinema after Mabo, Traumatic Memory and the Road**

*Thursday 12 April*

Film: *The Tracker* (Rolf de Heer, Australia, 2002, 90 min)

**Required Reading:**

• Fiona Probyn-Rapsey, ‘The Ethics of Following: Trackers, Followers and Fanatics,’ *Australian Humanities Review* No. 37 (December 2005)

**Recommended Reading:**


**Week 12  Ten Canoes – Collaborative Histories and the Archive**

*Thursday 19 April*

Film: *Ten Canoes* (Rolf de Heer & Peter Djigirr, Australia, 2006, 90 min)

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**

**Assignment: Proposal for Final Paper due (10%)**

**Week 13  The Tall Man – Documentary Reconstruction and Contested Pasts**
Thursday 26 April

Film: *The Tall Man* (Tony Krawitz, Australia, 2011, 79 min)

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Week 14  Cane Toads: The Conquest – Mockumentary and Allegory**
Thursday 3 May

Film: *Cane Toads: The Conquest* (Mark Lewis, 2010, 85 min)

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Week 15  Collisons – Virtual Reality and Immersion**
Thursday 10 May

Film: *Collisons* (Lynette Wallworth, 2015, 15 min)

**Required Reading/Viewing:**

**Recommended Reading:**


**Assignment: Final Paper due (40%)**

**Your Instructor**

Dr Anne Barnes (Ph.D., University of New South Wales, M.A. 1st Class Hons, Australian Film Television and Radio School) worked in both the New Zealand and Australian film industries as a filmmaker and sound professional prior to becoming an academic and film scholar. She has taught film and media studies at NYU Sydney and the University of New South Wales.

Anne’s research interests and areas of publication include: film sound, history and film, Australian cinema, global and national cinemas, transcultural cinema, genre, spectatorship, memory and trauma. She is interested in practice led research, multidisciplinary collaborations, cross-platform initiatives and new media. Anne is the director of Sonic Reflections, a documentary that outlines the director/sound designer relationship. She is currently working on an interactive project documenting the history of the Australian film sound industry, in collaboration with the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI).