NYU Madrid
CORE-UA9750
Expressive Culture: Film
Instruction Mode: In-Person

Fall 2021

Instructor Contact Information
● TBA

Prerequisites
N/A

Units earned
4

Course Details
● Class meeting day/time: Tuesdays 9:30 am – 12:20 pm.

● Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.

● COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU Madrid community, we are closely following CDC guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority.
  ○ If you are attending in person, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person; however, this may change during the drop/add period if in-person student registration increases significantly or at any point during the semester if local COVID-19 regulations require additional physical distancing.

Course Description
Expressive Culture is intended to introduce you to the study and appreciation of human artistic creation and to foster your ongoing engagement with the arts. Through critical engagement with primary cultural artifacts, it introduces you to formal methods of interpretation and to understanding the importance of expressive creation in particular and historical contexts.

This course analyzes the films of the two most well-known Spanish filmmakers, Luis Buñuel and Pedro Almodóvar, from the standpoint of grotesque expression.

There are serious differences between the two directors. Buñuel is the most representative filmmaker of Spanish modernity, while Almodóvar is the clearest representative of postmodernism. They were born in very different times: Buñuel in 1900 and Almodóvar fifty years later. Despite these differences, there are things they share that allow us to investigate very different moments in the cultural history of Spain with a specific focus: both were born and received their first sentimental education in rural areas, under strong religious influence (and religious repression), and in their works we can see a strong use of the grotesque expression. Both repression and grotesque expression will be related in our analysis of the films, since grotesquity is a way of degrading and decentralizing what is considered the center of social authority. Almodóvar and Buñuel react in their grotesquity to the dominant Catholic culture of their times, both rejecting and admiring this culture at the same time. The presence of that religion is something that the students will be able to see constantly in the field trips and visits to Museums.

The grotesque expression in Art is not an exclusive characteristic of the cultures of Spain but it still is a very important feature to understand the Spanish Cultural History since the Middle Ages. In many different artists who work in different ways of expression, from Quevedo to Goya, from Valle Inclán to Gutiérrez Solana, from Pio Baroja to Dalí, and, of course from Luis Buñuel to Pedro Almodóvar, we find the importance of diverse ways of grotesque creation. For this reason we will include two visits to museums in this course. We will visit the Prado Museum following the ideas of Wolfgang Kaiser, who began writing his book on the grotesque culture motivated by a visit to this Spanish museum. We will also visit the Reina Sofia Museum for students to relate the work of Buñuel with the grotesque expression of the 20s and 30s, and the cinema of Pedro Almodóvar with forms of musical and visual expression of Madrid in the 80s. Besides this, students will also be able to experience grotesquity in the streets of Madrid. Sometimes visitors to this city feel surprised about the grotesque sense of humor in colloquial language. They will also be able to experience this in expressions of mass culture. In recent films and television series it is very frequent to find this kind of humor. Therefore, at the end of the course sequences of some current television series will be included.

In analyzing the films, central importance will be given to the formal techniques that make cinematographic art an autonomous form of expression (planning, camera angles, lighting, etc.). These purely formal components will be expanded upon by situating them in the context of film’s contact with other modes of interpretation such as history, mythology, symbolism, fine arts, and literature. Given the wide variety of disciplines that have converged in this art form since its origins, this course is taught from an especially multidisciplinary perspective.

To contextualize the work of both authors, we will give special relevance to the autobiography of Buñuel, My Last Breath, where he provides very valuable comments about his time, and the book of Mark Allinson, A Spanish Labyrinth. The Films of Pedro Almodóvar.
The texts of Hayward and Bazin included in the bibliography will be used to facilitate the students the knowledge of the language of cinema.

Taught in English.

Course Objective / Outcomes

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Provide students with an understanding of key films by Buñuel and Almodóvar, two of the most relevant filmmakers of Spanish Cinema, in their cultural and social contexts.

- Provide the students with an understanding of grotesquery in Spanish culture through the filmography of Buñuel and Almodóvar.

- Provide students with a complete understanding of the language of cinema.

Assessment Components

You are expected to attend class in person. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Class Participation – 10%

You are expected to attend class in person. Your active participation in class and attendance will be reflected in this part of the course requirements.

The use of computers for things not related to the class will seriously lower the participation grade. Students who use computers or telephones in a manner not admissible for the class will receive a written notice from the teacher, if after this warning they persist in the improper use of said devices, their grade will be directly and seriously affected.

4 Writing assignments 60% (3 pages each)

The students will write 4 papers covering all the subjects of the course responding questions given by the instructor one week ahead.

1 Film Review 10% (2 pages)

Students will write one review on one film that has especially caught their attention. Guidelines will be discussed in class in week 3. The best reviews will be published in an electronic journal.

2 Short papers on museums 20% (3 pages each)

The students will select works of Art from each museum that clearly express grotesquery in Spanish culture. Guidelines will be given before each visit.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Writing assignments (3 pages each)</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Film Review (2 pages)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Short papers on museums (3 pages each)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Required Text(s)**

**Required Readings via Brightspace**


Materials – FIMLS TO BE SEEN INDIVIDUALLY
Every class we will analyze a film in detail. The films assigned for every session on the syllabus will be seen individually by the students before class. The movies will be either provided by the professor through electronic copies or will be found in the DVD collection of NYU Madrid (on Reserve for this class).

LUIS BUÑUEL

Un Chien Andalou (1929).

Las Hurdes (1934).

Los Olvidados (1950).

Viridiana (1960).


PEDRO ALMODÓVAR

What Have I Done to Deserve This? (1984).

Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios (1988)

Talk to Her (2002)

Volver (2006)

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<td>Week/Date</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Mainlines of the evolution of filmic language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2,</td>
<td>Buñuel, Dalí and Grotesquy in the Spanish Avant Garde.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14th</td>
<td>Buñuel and Dalí at the Reina Sofía Museum</td>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong></td>
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<td>-Language of cinema, language of dreams.</td>
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<td><strong>Film:</strong> <em>Un Chien Andalou</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 3,</td>
<td>Buñuel, Dalí and Grotesquy in the Spanish Avant Garde.</td>
<td><strong>Paper on Reina Sofia Gallery Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 21st</td>
<td>Buñuel and the Culture of the II Republic. Grotesquy and Politics in <em>Las Hurdes</em>.</td>
<td>Discussion of guidelines for Film Review. Discussion of guidelines for First Writing Assignment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Formal aspects:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Documentary and fictional filmic narration.</td>
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<td>-Fade in – fade out.</td>
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<td><strong>Film:</strong> <em>Las Hurdes</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 4,</td>
<td>Buñuel and the Culture of the II Republic. Grotesquy and Politics in <em>Las Hurdes</em>. Los Olvidados and the Aesthetics of Modern Grotesque.</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week/Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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| Buñuel and Exile in Mexico. | The aesthetics of the Grotesque.  
Formal aspects:  
- Buñuel and classical editing.  
Film: Los Olvidados. | **Freud, Sigmund.** *The uncanny*. 1-21.  
**Hayward,** “Editing”, 119-123, Classic Cannons”, 80-83, Codes and Conventions”, 83-84. |
| Viridiana: Parodies of Catholicism and the Problems with Fascist Censorship. |  
**Viridiana.** Buñuel and the Spanish Grotesque.  
Formal aspects:  
- Things and detail shot in Buñuel.  
- Close up and grotesquery in Buñuel.  
**Film:** Viridiana. | **Readings:**  
| Session 5, October 5<sup>th</sup> |  
The Dialogue of Luis Buñuel with the Grotesque Spanish Tradition Through the Novels of Benito Perez Galdós.  
A reconsideration of formal aspects in cinema before the midterm.  
**Film:** Tristana. |  
**Readings:**  
**Bazin, André.** “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” in *What is Cinema?*  
**Hayward,** “Adaptation” 9-14 and “Costume Dramas / Heritage Cinema” 92. |
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<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion of guidelines for Second Writing Assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 8, November 2nd</td>
<td>Almodóvar: Between Grotesque and Pastiche. Parodies of the Patriarchal Family.</td>
<td><strong>Formal aspects:</strong> Camera angles and expressive values. <strong>Film:</strong> <em>What Have I Done to Deserve This?</em>  [Jameson, Fredric. <em>“Postmodernism and Consumer Society.”</em> 1-12.]  [Allinson, Mark. <em>A Spanish Labyrinth. The Films of Pedro Almodóvar.</em> London-New York: Tauris. 2001. 7-22.]  [Hayward, <em>“Gaze/Look”</em> 173-176, <em>“Genre/Subgenre”</em> 182-188, <em>“Film Noir”</em> 149-153.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week/Date</td>
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<td>Reading</td>
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   Formal aspects: -Movements of camera and settings.  
   Film: *El Pisito* by Marco Ferreri: | Readings:  
   Hayward, “Tracking Shot / Travelling Shot” 395.  
   Third Writing Assignment Due |
| Session 12, December 7th  | Postmodernism in Spain in the Eighties. Humor and Defamiliarization in Almodóvar.  
   Formal aspects: -Flat image in Almodovar’s cinema.  
   -Shots for comedy and shots for drama.  
   -Glasses and frames.  
   Film: *Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios*. | Reading:  
| Session 13, December 14th | Unique Almodóvar: Between Grotesque and Tragedy. Grotesquery Nowadays. TV Shows.  
   Film: *Volver*.  
   Formal aspects: -The colors of pain and passion. | Reading:  
   Hayward, “Colour” 84-89. |
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<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
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<th>Reading</th>
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<td>Conclusion: Rethinking the Grotesque in Spanish Culture: the Prado Museum</td>
<td>Reading: <a href="#">Allinson, Mark. A Spanish Labyrinth. The Films of Pedro Almodóvar</a> 122-158.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 14, December 17th, FRIDAY</td>
<td>Unique Almodóvar: Between Grotesque and Tragedy. Grotesquery Nowadays. TV Shows.</td>
<td><strong>Film Review Due</strong></td>
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<td>Formal aspects:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- The visual importance of the credits in Almodóvar.</td>
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<td>- Variety of forms of narration in Almodóvar.</td>
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<td>Film: <em>Talk to Her.</em></td>
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**Required Co-curricular Activities**

The students will have to assist to one of the cultural activities organized by NYU Madrid related to our field of study.

**Online Classroom Etiquette**

To optimize the experience in a blended learning environment, please consider the following:

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary).
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class.
Academic Policies

Grade Conversion
Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100 – 93</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>92 – 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>89 – 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>86 – 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>82 – 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>79 – 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>76 – 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>72 – 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>69 – 67</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>66 – 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>59 – 0</td>
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Attendance Policy
Studying at Global Academic Centers 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 centers, or online through NYU Brightspaces if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to madrid.academics@nyu.edu to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor’s note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof.
Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to staff. Doctor's notes must be submitted by e-mail to the Academics team (madrid.academics@nyu.edu), who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week’s worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to site staff by e-mail (madrid.academics@nyu.edu); until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

For Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays please see section “Inclusivity Policies and Priorities” in this syllabus.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

Final exams
Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team (madrid.academics@nyu.edu). Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work
(1) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of your instructor or NYU Madrid Staff (madrid.academics@nyu.edu), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

(2) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.

(3) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director, James D. Fernández (jf2@nyu.edu).

(4) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

(5) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.
Academic Honesty/Plagiarism
As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your instructor may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

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 also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines
NYU Library Guides

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities
NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their instructor and NYU Madrid’s Academics Office in writing via e-mail (madrid.academics@nyu.edu) one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)
Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, NYU LMS Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website.

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the Personalizing Zoom Display Names website.

Moses Accommodations Statement
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Madrid.

Bias Response
The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University’s existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the Web Form (link)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277
- Phone: +34 91 904 42 58