

NYU Paris

CORE-UA9750 (9510)

Expressive Culture: French cinema (in English)

Instructor Information

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Course Information

- CORE-UA9750 (9510)
- Expressive Culture: Film (in English)
- Course Description:

This course will allow students to become familiar with the methods and formal aspects of cinema. Students will discover French culture through the prism of cinema by underlining the specific dynamics by which cinema becomes the privileged witness of the profound transformations of mentalities and the upheavals that deeply changed the French society.

By putting the films into their social, historical and philosophical context, the students will get to study, across a diverse range of examples, the relation existing between French films and French culture. It deals for example with the formal and thematic relationships among the Avant-garde artistic movements (futurism, cubism, expressionism, surrealism, etc.) and the cinematographic Avant-garde (Buñuel, L'Herbier, Cocteau), those between the cinema of Renoir and classical French theatre (Marivaux, Beaumarchais, Musset), the troubled period of the occupation and the filmmakers who deliberately chose to stay in France to work there (Clouzot, Carné) and the influence of Saint Germain des Prés's existentialism (Sartre, Camus) on the Nouvelle Vague, etc. The students will thus discover that cinema is a cultural agent that reflects a period all the while produces a critical point view on said period.

Also examined are the formal structure of French cinema, its stylistic choices and ways of expression shared with other artistic practices, in order to understand to what extent the « French cultural exception » contributed to its worldwide influence. Throughout the course, students will develop their understanding of the basic methods and concepts of cinema studies.

- Prerequisite:
This course is destined to students who don't necessarily have a thorough knowledge in cinema.
- [Class meeting days and times]
 - [Class room number and building]

Course Overview and Goals

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

- *Recognize how the components of film-narrative, directing, cinematography, editing, production design and sound work together to produce a coherent and meaningful cinematographic language.*
- *Emphasizes critical thinking and writing about film.*
- *Learn the basic vocabulary of film form and be able to use it to analyze the structure of a film.*
- *Analyze how cinema reflects a historical period in its political, cultural and philosophical context and how it gives a critical point view on said period.*
- *Have a better knowledge of the different aspects of French culture such as the political, social, artistic and philosophical ones.*

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Students are expected to engage in active discussions and debates. The previous courses must be reviewed and the next one must be prepared.

Assignment

Critical Paper

Students will have to submit three papers on French cinema over the semester. These essays will deal with films related to the studied period but which have not yet been analyzed in course. Students are required to analyze an important sequence of the work and establish a thematic link between the film and the historical, political, social and cultural context of the concerned period.

The critical paper should be written in an appropriate academic style with consistent scholarly referencing and bibliography.

Mid-Term Paper

Students will submit a 4-5 pages essay.

A list of films is proposed to the students. Students are required to analyze an important sequence of the work and establish a thematic link between the film and the historical, political, social and cultural context of the concerned period.

The Mid-Term paper should be written in an appropriate academic style with consistent scholarly referencing and bibliography.

Final Paper (Exam Week)

Students will write a sequence analysis essay in class. Students are required to apply their analysis to demonstrate their critical thinking, analysis and evaluation skills.

Tests & Quizzes

- **Class Participation:** (20%) Assessed throughout the semester.
- **2 Critical Papers:** 3-4 pages (20%).
- **Mid-Term Paper:** 4-5 pages (20%).
- **Final Paper:** class exam (40%).

Assigned Readings

Cf. textes du Reader et les textes disponibles à la bibliothèque de NYU Paris

- Maria Pramaggiore, Tom Wallis, *Film: A Critical Introduction* (3rd Revised edition), Laurence King Publishing, London, 2011, ISBN-10: 1856697207, ISBN-13: 978-1856697200.
- Bernard F. Dick, *The Anatomy of Film*, Bedford/St. Martin's, New York, 2009, ISBN-10: 0312487118, ISBN-13: 978-0312487119.
- Jill Nelmes, *Introduction to Film Studies*, Routledge, London and New York, 2011, ISBN-10: 0415582598, ISBN-13: 978-0415582599.
- Allan Williams, *The Republic of Images, History of French Film making*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, ISBN: 0-674-762667-3, 791 WIL
- Emma Wilson, *French Cinema since 1950, Personal Histories*, Bristol Classical Press, 1992, 170 p., ISBN-10: 0715628496, ISBN-13: 978-0715628492.
- Rémi Fournier Lanzoni, *French Cinema: From Its Beginnings to the Present*, Continuum, 2005, 496 p., ISBN-10: 0826416004, ISBN-13: 978-0826416001.
- Colin Crisp, *The Classic French Cinema 1930-1960*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1997, ISBN 1-86064-165-2, 791 CRI
- Bernard F. Dick, *Anatomy of Film*, Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston, ISBN: 0-312-25944-1, 791 DIC
- Catherine Fowler (dir.), *The European Cinema Reader*, Routledge, London and New York, 2002, 288 p., ISBN-10: 0415240921, ISBN-13: 978-0415240925.

- Elizabeth Ezra (dir.), *European Cinema*, Ed. OUP Oxford, Oxford, 2003, 368 p., ISBN-10: 0199255717, ISBN-13: 978-0199255719.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Participation	[20%]
Critical Papers	[20%]
Mid-term exam	[20%]
Final Paper	[40%]

Letter Grades

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

Letter Grade	Points	Description
A	16-20	Outstanding
A-	15	Excellent
B+	14	Very Good
B	13	Good
B-	12	Satisfactory
C+	11	Above Average
C	10	Average
C-	9	Below Average
D+	8	Unsatisfactory
D	7	Low Pass
D-	6	Low Pass

Letter Grade	Points	Description
F	5	Fail

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Week 1 Sept 4 – Sept 6	The invention of motion pictures & introduction to cinema studies (Part I)	- Richard Abel, « The French Cinema Industry, 1896-1914 » in <i>The Ciné Goes to Town: French Cinema, 1896-1914</i> , California Press, 1994, pp. 9-25 - Bernard F. Dick, <i>The Anatomy of Film</i> , Bedford/St. Martin's, New York, 2009, Chap. 3. "Film, Space and Image", pp. 36-88.	Films: - Short-movies directed by the Lumière's Brothers - Short-movies directed by Georges Méliès Supplementary Film: - <i>Fantômas (À l'ombre de la guillotine)</i> – Louis Feuillade (1913)
Week 2 Sept 11 – Sept 13	The French Avant-garde & introduction to cinema studies (Part II)	- André Breton, <i>Manifestoes of Surrealism</i> , trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969.	Films: - <i>L'inhumaine</i> – Marcel L'Herbier (1924) Supplementary Film: - <i>Napoléon</i> – Abel Gance (1927) Paper (non graded)

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Week 3 Sept 6 – Sept 8	The French Avant-garde: Bunuel	- Luis Buñuel, « Cinema, Instrument of Poetry (1953) » in <i>The European Cinema Reader</i> , pp. 45-48.	Film: - <i>L'Age d'Or</i> – Luis Buñuel (1930) Supplementary Film: - <i>Un Chien andalou</i> – Luis Buñuel (1929) Paper (non graded)
Week 4 Sept 18 – Sept 20	The Golden Age of French Cinema (Part I): Poetic Realism	- Colin Crisp, « Class, Authority, Oppression and the Dream of Escape » in <i>Genre, Myth and Convention in the French Cinema, 1929-1939</i> , Indiana University Press, 2002, pp. 72-106	Film: - <i>Quai des Brumes</i> – Marcel Carné (1938) Supplementary Film: - <i>Sous les toits de Paris</i> – René Clair (1930)
Week 5 Sept 25 – Sept 27	The Golden Age of French Cinema (Part II): Poetic Realism	- Colin Crisp, « Class, Authority, Oppression and the Dream of Escape » in <i>Genre, Myth and Convention in the French Cinema, 1929-1939</i> , Indiana University Press, 2002, pp. 72-106	Films: - <i>Hôtel du Nord</i> – Marcel Carné (1938) Supplementary Film: - <i>L'Atalante</i> – Jean Vigo (1934) Paper (graded)
Week 6 Oct 2 – Oct 4	The Golden Age of French Cinema (Part III): Poetic Realism	- Dudley Andrew, « French Cinema in The 1930s » in <i>European Cinema</i> , pp. 97-113.	Films: - <i>Le jour se lève</i> – Marcel Carné (1939) Supplementary Film: - <i>Pépé le Moko</i> – Jean Duvivier (1937)

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Week 7 Oct 9 – Oct 11	The Golden Age of French Cinema (Part IV): Renoir	- Jean Renoir, <i>My Life And My Films</i> , Da Capo Press, 1991, 324 p., ISBN-10: 0306804573, ISBN-13: 978-0306804571, pp. 23-35.	Films: - <i>La Règle du jeu</i> – Jean Renoir (1939) Supplementary Film: - <i>La Grande Illusion</i> – Jean Renoir (1937) MIDTERM Paper
Week 8 Oct 16 – Oct 18	French Cinema of the Occupation (part I)	- Evelyn Ehrlich, « A French School of Cinema » in <i>Cinema of Paradox: French Filmmaking under the German Occupation</i> , Columbia University Press, 1985, pp. 93-112	Film: - <i>La Traversée de Paris</i> – Claude Autant-Lara (1956) Supplementary Film: - <i>Le Chagrin et la Pitié</i> – Marcel Ophüls (1971)
Week 9 Oct 23 – Oct 25	French Cinema of the Occupation (part II)	- Alan Williams, « War and Occupation » in <i>Republic of Images, A History of French Filmmaking</i> , Harvard University Press, Cambridge/London, 1992, pp. 245-271	Film: - <i>Le Corbeau</i> – Henri-Georges Clouzot (1943) Supplementary Films: - <i>Les Diaboliques</i> – Henri-Georges Clouzot (1955) - <i>Les Visiteurs du soir</i> – Marcel Carné (1942)
Week 10 Nov 6 – Nov 8	French Cinema of the Occupation (part III)	- Renée Poznanski, <i>Jews in France during World War II</i> , Brandeis University Press, 768 p., 2001, ISBN-10: 158465144X, ISBN-13: 978-1584651444, pp. 246-272.	Film: - <i>Le Dernier Métro</i> – François Truffaut (1980) Supplementary Films:

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
			<p>- <i>L'armée des ombres</i> – Jean-Pierre Melville (1969)</p> <p>- <i>Au revoir les enfants</i> – Louis Malle (1987)</p>
<p>Week 11 Nov 13 – Nov 15</p>	<p>The New Wave (part I)</p>	<p>- Ann Gillain, « The Script of Delinquency: François Truffaut's Les 400 Coups » in Susan Hayward & Ginette Vincendeau (ed.) <i>French Film: Text and Context</i>, Routledge, 2000, pp. 142-153</p> <p>- Michel Marie, « It Really Makes You Sick: Jean-Luc Godard's A bout de Souffle » in Susan Hayward & Ginette Vincendeau (ed.) <i>French Film: Text and Context</i>, Routledge, 2000, pp. 158-169</p>	<p>Film:</p> <p>- <i>A bout de Souffle</i> – Jean-Luc Godard (1960)</p> <p>Supplementary Films:</p> <p>- <i>Le Signe du Lion</i> – Eric Rohmer (1959)</p> <p>- <i>Les 400 coups</i> – François Truffaut (1959)</p> <p>Paper (graded)</p>
<p>Week 12 Nov 20 – Nov 22</p>	<p>The New Wave (part II)</p>	<p>- Emma Wilson, <i>Alain Resnais (French Film Directors)</i>, Manchester University Press, 226 p., 2009, ISBN-10: 0719064074, ISBN-13: 978-0719064074, pp. 64-82.</p> <p>- André Bazin, <i>What is cinema?</i>, Ed University of California, Los Angeles, 1967, ISBN-10: 0520242270, ISBN-13: 978-0520242272, (791) BAZ, 791 BAZ, Chap "The Virtues and Limitations of Montage", pp. 41-52.</p>	<p>Films:</p> <p>- <i>Cléo de 5 à 7</i> – Agnès Varda (1962)</p> <p>Supplementary Film:</p> <p>- <i>Hiroshima, mon amour</i> – Alain Resnais (1959)</p>
<p>Week 13 Nov 27 – Nov 29</p>	<p>The New Wave (part III)</p>	<p>- André Bazin, <i>What is cinema?</i>, Ed University of California, Los Angeles, 1967, ISBN-10: 0520242270, ISBN-13: 978-0520242272, (791) BAZ, Chap "The Ontology of the Photographic Image", pp. 9-16.</p>	<p>Film:</p> <p>- <i>Bande à Part</i> – Jean-Luc Godard (1964)</p>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
			Supplementary Film: - <i>Pierrot le fou</i> – Jean-Luc Godard (1965)
Week 14 Dec 4 – Dec 6	The New Wave (part IV)	- T. Jefferson Kline, « The French New Wave » in <i>European Cinema</i> , pp. 157-175.	Films: - <i>Le Mépris</i> – Jean-Luc Godard (1963) Supplementary Film: - <i>La Chinoise</i> – Jean-Luc Godard (1967)
Week 15 Dec 11	Final Exam	-----	Final Exam

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)
- **Forum des Images:** the city film library and cinema, housed in the Forum des Halles. Besides screenings, it is possible to access individual viewing posts and to consult the large collection of films related to Paris. There are regular thematic cycles, lectures and conferences with prestigious and famous academics and cinema professionals.
- **Cinémathèque Française:** one of the world’s largest film collections. Classics and little-known films are regularly screened.
- **La Cité du Cinéma:** real crossroads of the European cinematographic industry, the ambitious “Cité du Cinema” created by Luc Besson, brings together talents, studios, students and cinema professionals.
- **Centre Pompidou:** the city’s principal cultural center, it houses an excellent public library, art museums and exhibitions. Its two cinemas offer film retrospectives and festivals, often with related exhibitions.
- **Cinemas d’Art et d’Essai:** Independent movie theaters (several are in the Latin Quarter close to NYU Paris, but they are found throughout the city) that often program retrospectives of important directors and major genres. They also screen current films that haven’t found large distributors or that appeal to niche audiences.

- **Bibliothèque François Mitterrand:** large collections of books and magazines about cinema.
- **Bibliothèque André Malraux :** large collections of books and magazines about cinema.
- **Allocine.com:** cinema listings, searchable by film title, movie theaters, zip code, etc.

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

- Study abroad 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 is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in harsher penalties including failure.
- Unexcused absences affect students' grades: unexcused absences will be penalized with a 2% deduction from the students' final course grade.
- Absences are excused only for illness, religious observance, and emergencies.

Illness: For a single absence, students may be required to provide a doctor's note, at the discretion of the Associate Director of Academics. In the case of two consecutive absences, students must provide a doctor's note. Exams, quizzes, and presentations will not be made up without a doctor's note.

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 instructor and the Academic Office in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose. If exams, quizzes, and presentations are scheduled on a holiday a student will observe, the Associate Director, in coordination with the instructor, will reschedule them.

Please note: if you are unable to attend class, you are required to email your professors directly to notify them.

Late Assignment

Late submission or work will be accepted only with justifiable reasons of health or family emergency.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community.

Plagiarism: *presenting others' work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one's own. Plagiarism is a form of fraud. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we must give credit to the creators of the works that we incorporate into products that we call our own. Some examples of plagiarism:*

- *a sequence of words incorporated without quotation marks*
- *an unacknowledged passage paraphrased from another's work*
- *the use of ideas, sound recordings, computer data or images created by others as though it were one's own*
- *submitting evaluations of group members' work for an assigned group project which misrepresent the work that was performed by another group member*
- *altering or forging academic documents, including but not limited to admissions materials, academic records, grade reports, add/drop forms, course registration forms, etc.*

For further information, students are encouraged to check www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (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.

Instructor Bio

Sam Azulys has a Ph.D. in Philosophy (Paris I - Sorbonne) and is a Professor in philosophy and in cinema / American TV shows.

He is also a film director, screenwriter, writer and painter.

He is the author of an aesthetic essay on filmmaker Stanley Kubrick (Stanley Kubrick: a Philosophical Odyssey, Paris, Ed. de la Transparence, 2011) and of a philosophical essay about Game of Thrones.

He regularly writes articles in movie magazines and he gives lectures and conferences in different institutes such as the "Forum des images".