

NYU Prague

IFMTV-UT1040P01

Czech Cinema and Culture

Spring 2019

Instructor Information

- Ivana Dolezalova M.A.
- **Email:** id22@nyu.edu
- **Office hours:** before and after class and by appointment

Course Information

- IFMTV-UT1040P01
- **Czech Cinema and Culture**
- Interest in culture, history and film, open mind and eagerness to learn
- Tuesday 10:30am-1:20pm
 - Dvorak classroom, Blue Building

Course Overview and Goals

This interdisciplinary course will provide deeper insight into the issues of modern Czech (oslovak) history, culture and socio-cultural developments as documented by major feature films by leading Czech and Slovak directors (including the Academy Award Laureates Milos Forman and Jiri Menzel). Film screenings include the films covering World War II., the Stalinist Fifties, the period of political and cultural thaw of the Sixties as well as the most significant works of the post-1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Viewed against the general backdrop of key historical events, the participants will gain more intimate knowledge and understanding of the specifics of the unique Central European experience as interpreted by famous film makers, many of whom helped create the phenomenon of the Czech New Wave in Cinema in the Sixties. That period of time made the Czech (oslovak) film recognized and appreciated internationally.

Students will also have an opportunity to learn more about post-1989 Velvet Revolution trends and controversies in the Czech film art.

The course does not cover theory and techniques of the film art.

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

- Learn about the historical and geo-political context within the European space.
- Investigate the best of the Czech (oslovak) film art
- Learn about the specifics of various film-makers' means of expression.
- Learn to analyze the screened films.
- Discuss politics, art and national identity

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Class participation/attendance

Assignment 1

Presentation

There will be student presentations after each screening followed by a discussion session. Every student will be presenting a film analysis of a screened film in a form of a power point presentation using reading, handouts and other sources of information.

Assignment 2

Mid-term paper

There will be an out-of-class written 6-8 pages essay on the topics based on the screened films. Students can choose one of the topics which will be discussed beforehand with the professor and can be modified according to the students' sphere of interest.

Assignment 3

Final paper

8-10 pages of a final out-of-class written essay on the topic chosen by the student out of several suggested by the professor. Once again it is open to discussion.

Grading of Assignments

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

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class participation/attendance	15%
Presentation	25%
Mid-term paper	20%
Final paper	40%

Letter Grades

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

Letter Grade	Percent
A	92.5% and higher
A-	90.0 – 92.49%
B+	87.5% - 89.99%
B	82.5% - 87.49%
B-	80% - 82.49%
C+	77.5% - 79.99%
C	72.5% - 77.49%
C-	70% - 72.49%
D+	67.5% - 69.99%
D	62.5% - 67.49%

Letter Grade	Percent
D-	60% - 62.49%
F	59.99% and lower

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: Excellent work demonstrating a critical and observant approach to the subject, sound research and an ability to express thoughts cogently and persuasively.

Grade B: Very good work

Grade C: Satisfactory work.

Grade D: Passable work.

Grade F: Failure to achieve a passable grade.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 Tuesday February 5	Introductory session, information on the structure of the course, assessments, deadlines and other policies. Historical background of WWII. The Jewish question Screening: <i>The Distant Journey</i> , A. Radok, 1949	Distant Journey http://www.ce-review.org/01/20/kinoeye20_cieslar.html	Presentation of the film February 12
Session 2 Tuesday February 12	Czech New Wave in Cinema Public and private Screening: <i>Closely Watched Trains</i> , 1966, Jiri Menzel	Closely Watched trains https://creofire.wordpress.com/2016/06/09/closely-watched-trains-1966-clever-allegorical-coming-age-tale/ Closely Watched Trains https://lisathatcher.com/2012/01/05/closely-watched-trains-the-czech-new-wave-consistently-ahead-of-its-time/	Presentation of the film February 19
Session 3 Tuesday February 19	Czech New Wave Heroism and Collaboration Screening: <i>The Fifth Rider is Fear</i> , 1965, Zbynek Brynych	The Fifth Rider is Fear http://www.filmwalrus.com/2008/05/review-of-fifth-horseman-is-fear.html Brynych http://www.filmwalrus.com/2008/05/review-of-fifth-horseman-is-fear.html	Presentation of the Film February 26
Session 4 Tuesday February 26	Czech New Wave Experiments, feminism, surrealism Screening: <i>Daisies</i> , 1966, Vera Chytilova	Daisies https://filmgrimoire.com/2013/12/08/daisies-1966-nobody-understands-anything http://www.anothermag.com/fashion-beauty/7525/lessons-to-learn-from-daisies https://www.filmcomment.com/blog/daisies-eat-me/	Presentation of the film March 5
Session 5	Czech New Wave	Loves of A Blond	Presentation of the film

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Tuesday March 5	Microcosmos of the Ordinary Screening: <i>Loves of a Blond</i> , 1966, Milos Forman	http://sensesofcinema.com/2010/cteq/milos-formans-loves-of-a-blonde-pop-culture-rebellion-and-sexual-liberation-in-the-eastern-european-bloc/ https://www.rogerebert.com/balder-and-dash/milos-forman-1932-2018	March 12
Session 6 Tuesday March 12	Czech New Wave Apocalypse now! Screening: <i>The End of August in the Hotel Ozone</i> , 1967, J. Schmidt, Pavel Juracek	The End of August in the Hotel Ozone https://www.dvdtalk.com/dvdsavant/s1864ozon.html https://www.filmlinc.org/films/the-end-of-august-at-the-hotel-ozone/	Presentation of the film March 19
Session 7 Tuesday March 19	Czech New Wave Postponed Laughter in the Brutal 50s Screening: <i>Larks on a String</i> , 1969/90, Jiri Menzel	Larks on a String https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/03064227608532555 https://lisathatcher.com/2012/01/18/larks-on-a-string-jiri-menzel-at-his-very-best/	Presentation of the film March 26 Midterm Due March 26
Session 8 Tuesday March 26	Blood, Sweat and Fear 68 Soviet Union invasion aftermath- Normalization Screening: <i>Ear</i> , 1970, Karel Kachyna	Ear http://www.kinoeye.org/02/01/schneider01.php https://eefb.org/retrospectives/karel-kachynas-the-ear-ucho-1970/	Presentation of the film April 2
Session 9 Tuesday April 2	Post 1989 Velvet Revolution Cinema Back in the 60s Screening: <i>Cosy Dens</i> , 1999, Jan Hrebejk	Cosy dens https://eefb.org/retrospectives/jan-hrebejks-cosy-dens-pelisky-1999/ http://www.ce-review.org/99/10/kinoeye10_horton1.html	Presentation of the film April 9
Session 10 Tuesday April 9	New lost generation? Screening: <i>Loners</i> , 2000, David Ondricek	Loners http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/4/hames.shtml http://www.ce-review.org/00/22/kinoeye22_liska.html	Presentation of the film April 16
Make-up Day Friday, April 12 (9am-5pm)	Make-up day for missed classes		
Session 11 Tuesday April 16	Gloomy normalization Agents, dissidents and 'normal citizens' Screening: <i>Walking too Fast</i> , 2009, Radim Spacek	Walking Too Fast https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walking_Too_Fast https://www.timcawkwell.co.uk/walking-too-fast	Presentation of the film April 30
Spring Break April 20 - 28	Spring Break		
Session 12 Tuesday April 30	Czech losers in the new system –capitalism? Screening: <i>Champions</i> , 2004, A. Najbrt	Handouts by the professor	Presentation May 7

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 13 Tuesday May 7	Animated film phenomenon Jan Svankmajer's short animated films	https://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.3/issue2.3pages/2.3jacksonsvankmajer.html https://www.theguardian.com/film/2011/dec/05/jan-svankmajer-puppets-politics Discussion on the finals Topis for the finals	No presentation
Session 14 Tuesday May 14 (last day of classes)	Czech documentaries on the rise Screening: <i>All for the Good of the World and Nosovice</i> , 2010, Vit Klusak	https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/6105d81e-a4c4-4402-bdbf-8472d40167c2/all-for-the-good-of-the-world-and-nosovice	
Session 15 Tuesday May 21	Final exam	https://www.calvertjournal.com/articles/show/8126/czech-cinema-1927-1943-moma-new-wave Final wrap-up, handing in an out-of-class written essay	

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

A.J.Liehm: *The Most Important Art*, University of California Press, 1977

A.J.Liehm: *Closely Watched Films, Czechoslovak Experience*, White Plains, N.Y. 1974

František Daniel: *The Czech Difference*, 2005

Peter Hames: *The Czechoslovak New Wave, Czech and Slovak Cinema, Theme and Tradition*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009

Yvette Biró: *Pathos and Irony in East European Films*

Dina Iordanova: *Cinema of the other Europe*, Wallflower Press, London, 2003

Students will be given numerous handouts before each film screening which will serve them as a preparation for each session and presentation in class.

Useful on-line sources:

www.kinoeye.org

www.filmcenter.cz

www.ce-review.org

Supplemental Text (not required to purchase, copies available in NYU P Library)

Daniel J. Goulding: *Post New Wave Cinema in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989

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)
- **NYU Prague library:** [Tritius Catalog](https://nyu.tritius.cz/?lang=EN) (https://nyu.tritius.cz/?lang=EN)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Absences only for medical reasons and for religious observance will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor's note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). To be excused for religious observance, you must contact the instructor and the Academic Director via e-mail one week in advance of the holiday. Your absence is excused for the holiday only and does not include days of travel associated with the holiday. Unexcused absences will be penalized with a 2% percent deduction from your final course grade for every week of classes missed.

Please note that Friday, April 12 (9am – 5pm) is reserved as a make-up day for missed classes. Do not schedule any trips for this day.

Late Submission of Work

Late submission of work may influence your grade

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as though it were one's own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one's own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer's work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student's intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science's Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else's idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” **(Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)**

Classroom Etiquette

Coming late to class without an excuse is not allowed.

Eating is not permitted in class. No mobile phones allowed as well as notebooks unless instructor decides otherwise.

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.