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Course title: Film as Collaborative Art

Track: B-Track

Language of instruction: English

Contact hours: 48 (6 per day)

ECTS-Credits: 4

Course description:

Despite the internationally recognized auteur theory (politique des auteurs/auteurism), no artistic activity appears more reliant on the talents of so many diverse people and special capacities as the making of a film. The great German movie producer and boss of the UFA (Universum Film Co.), Erich Pommer, articulated this clearly as early as during the Twenties when he claimed: "Film production has always been based on a collective effort, on a colourful multitude of components which flow together from opposing directions."

Those journalists, historians and theorists who, in contrast to this opinion, backed auteurism during the 1950s and 1960s were shocked by how quickly their new aesthetic ideal degenerated into a commonplace. The phrase "a film by..." has become the rule and nowadays all too often merely serves to create an illusion of at least some way of categorization in an ever-growing global maze of film production. The director appears to be the undoubted star behind the camera.

In such a way of looking at and thinking about films, the "colourful multitude of components" of which Erich Pommer was speaking seems to have all but vanished. The selective view that only looks at the topical and stylistic idiosyncracies of a director misses the richness of a film: the precision of a series of cuts, the coherence of a production design or the power of expression of a tune. To enlarge our view and to render it more sensitive to these different facets is the aim of a treatment of film as collaborative art.

During the course students will create a number of presentations based on collective viewings, group discussions and individual readings. With the help of real examples - historical ones (e.g. films of the Nouvelle Vague or films from the era of the classical Hollywood studio system) as well as contemporary ones (e.g. TROPICAL MALADY, BABEL, I'M NOT THERE) - we will find out together how audiovisual achievement can be seen as the result of extremely diversified and planned production processes which will nonetheless always require an "alchemistic" extra so that the final result is more than the sum of the individual contributions involved.

We will visit some Berlin-based film institutions and companies, have discussions with the curators in charge of the Berlin Filmmuseum during their preparations for the upcoming exhibition starting during February 2010, and we have the opportunity to participate in exclusive press screenings of selected festival films (sections

"International Forum of Young Cinema", "Panorama", "Perspective German Cinema", and "Retrospective").

Since students are in Berlin at the onset of the biggest German cinematic event, the International Berlin Film Festival 2010 aka Berlinale, this course offers them insights beyond those directly related to their in-class work. They will be thoroughly prepared, sensitized and having their views enlarged to get the very most out of the annual cineastic feast which the Berlinale provides, and thus to see film through different eyes.

Student profile:

Students interested in unprejudiced film reading and training of their way of viewing films. The material covered in the seminar includes both the very old and the brand-new. Our working hypothesis will be that working with very popular projects can be just as rewarding as analyzing extremely marginal or fringe enterprises.

Prerequisites:

Basic knowledge of how a film production works. Basic knowledge of film history. Basic knowledge of scientific methods of film analysis.

Course Requirements:

The willingness to watch and analyze films of all kinds thoroughly, i.e. also patiently.

Grading:

Regular and active attendance (30%),
presentation of a topic connected to the course's content (40%),
written final exam (30%).

Literature:

A course reader will be provided.

Optional Preparatory Reading (Selection):

Donald Chase: *Filmmaking – the collaborative art*. Boston 1975.

Michel Chion: *Le cinéma et ses métiers*. Paris 1990.

John Hill/Pamela Church Gibson: *The Oxford Guide to film studies*. Oxford 1998.

Roy Paul Madsen: *Working cinema. Learning from the masters*. Belmont 1990.

Linda Seger/Edward Jay Whetmore: *From script to screen. The collaborative art of filmmaking*. Hollywood 2004.

Alison Smith: "The other auteurs. Producers, Cinematographers, Scriptwriters." In: *The French Cinema Book*. Edited by Michael Temple and Michael Witt. London 2004.

Course schedule

Date	Program
<p>Tuesday, January 19, 2010</p>	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Introduction/Lecture „Auteurism vs. film as collaborative art“: Presentation by Ralph Eue plus screening of film excerpts. For example: BEWARE OF A HOLY WHORE (Dir.: Rainer Werner Fassbinder), DAY FOR NIGHT (Dir.: François Truffaut), THE STATE OF THINGS (Dir.: Wim Wenders), LIVING IN OBLIVION (Dir.: Tom DiCillo).</p> <p>Afternoon Session (Walking Tour):</p> <p>Directions for use of necessary/interesting facilities in Berlin regarding the course – such as Museum für Film und Fernsehen, Berlinale, Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie, Volkswagen Bibliothek – Media Studies Department.</p> <p>Special:</p> <p>Individual advice (for example: reading lists, films etc.) for the presentations to be prepared by the students.</p>
<p>Friday, January 22, 2010</p>	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Discussion of the creative and collaborative process of filmmaking: The key departments. Their organisation and what they contribute to audiovisual work. This discussion should refer to the films seen during day #1 and to other examples given by the students.</p> <p>Screening in class – DEAD POETS SOCIETY (Dir.: Peter Weir, Producer: Steven Haft, Screenplay: Tom Schulman)</p> <p>Afternoon Session:</p> <p>Discussion of the producer’s and screenwriter’s contribution to DEAD POETS SOCIETY.</p> <p>Sideviews to further examples: DER LETZTE MANN (Dir.: F.W. Murnau), PULP FICTION (Dir.: Quentin Tarantino), 29 PALMS (Dir.: Leonardi</p>

	<p>Ricagnini), BABEL (Dir.: Alejandro Gonzalez Iñarritu).</p> <p>Special:</p> <p>Meeting the co-ordinators of the Script and Production Course of studies at the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (dffb).</p>
<p>Tuesday, January 26, 2010</p>	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Student's presentation: The Cinematographer's work. For example Henri Alekan in WINGS OF DESIRE (Dir.: Wim Wenders).</p> <p>Sideviews to other Cinematographers – for example Gregg Toland (CITIZEN KANE, Dir.: Orson Welles), Michael Ballhaus (GANGS OF NEW YORK, Dir.: Martin Scorsese), Frank Griebbe (RUN LOLA RUN, Dir.: Tom Tykwer), Christopher Doyle (IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE, Dir.: Wong Kar-wai) and maybe other suggestions from participants.</p> <p>Discussion of presentation.</p> <p>Afternoon Session (Walking Tour):</p> <p>Press screening Berlinale ("Panorama" Section or "Internationales Forum des jungen Films" Section or "Retrospective" Section / Title and exact time: t.b.c.)</p>
<p>Friday, January 29, 2010</p>	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Student's presentation: The Production Designer's work. For example William Chang in IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE (Dir.: Wong Kar-wai).</p> <p>Sideviews to other Production Designers – for example Alexandre Trauner (PORT OF SHADOWS, Dir.: Marcel Carné), Dante Ferretti (KUNDUN, Dir.: Martin Scorsese) and maybe other suggestions from participants.</p> <p>Discussion of presentation.</p> <p>Screening in class – GATTACA (Dir.: Andrew Niccol, Production Design: Jan Roelfs).</p> <p>Afternoon Session (Walking Tour):</p> <p>Excursion to the Studio Facilities of Studio Babelsberg in Potsdam-Babelsberg.</p>

<p>Tuesday, February 2, 2010</p>	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Student's Presentation: The Costume Designer's work. For example Edith Head (BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S).</p> <p>Sideviews to other Costume Designers - for example Jacqueline Guyot (THE DISCREET CHARME OF THE BOURGEOISIE, Dir.: Luis Bunuel), Ruth Carter (DO THE RIGHT THING) and maybe other suggestions from participants.</p> <p>Discussion of presentation.</p> <p>Afternoon Session:</p> <p>Screening in class – THE CONVERSATION (Dir.: Francis Ford Coppola, Preparation for session of Fri, Feb. 5)</p>
<p>Friday, February 5, 2010</p>	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Student's Presentation: The Sound Designer's work. For example Walter Murch (THE CONVERSATION, APOCALYPSE NOW, THX 1138).</p> <p>Sideviews to other Sound Designers – for example Adolf Jansen (M – EINE STADT SUCHT EINEN MÖRDER, Dir.: Fritz Lang), Jacques Maumont (BREATHLESS, Dir.: Jean-Luc Godard), Chris McLaughlin (NASHVILLE, Dir.: Robert Altman), Derrick Leather/Max Bell (ALIEN, Dir.: Ridley Scott), Vasco Pimentel (LISBON STORIES, Dir.: Wim Wenders) and maybe other suggestions from participants.</p> <p>Discussion of presentation.</p> <p>Screening in class – TOUCH OF EVIL (Dir.: Orson Welles / Reconstruction by Walter Murch).</p> <p>Afternoon Session:</p> <p>Student's Presentation: The Editor's work. For example Walter Murch (THE CONVERSATION).</p> <p>Sideviews to other Editors – for example Sergej Eisenstein (BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN, Dir.: Sergej Eisenstein), George Tomasini (PSYCHO, Dir.: Alfred Hitchcock), William Anderson (DEAD POETS SOCIETY, Dir.: Peter Weir), Bettina Böhler (YELLA, Dir.: Christian Petzold) and maybe other suggestions from participants.</p>

	Discussion of presentation.
Tuesday, February 9, 2010	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Student's Presentation: The Musician's/Composer's work. For example Maurice Jarre (DEAD POETS SOCIETY). Sideviews to other musicians/composers – for example Hanns Eisler (HANGMEN ALSO DIE, Dir.: Fritz Lang), Nino Rota (8 ½, Dir.: Federico Fellini), Michel Legrand (THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG, Dir.: Jacques Demy), Pale 3 (RUN LOLA RUN, Dir.: Tom Tykwer) and maybe other suggestions from participants.</p> <p>Discussion of presentation.</p> <p>Resumé and final discussion. Preparation of final examination.</p> <p>Afternoon Session (Walking Tour):</p> <p>Berlinale Behind the Scenes.</p>
Friday, February 12, 2010	<p>Morning Sessions:</p> <p>Final Examination.</p>