CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO Spring 2004

FILM 21: INTRODUCTION TO FILM STUDIES  Monday 6:15 – 9:30 P.M.
Instructor: Ira Rothstein  Section: 501  CRN# 35469
Room: Visual Arts 114  Office/Hours: Cloud 126
V mail 239-3969  M 2:45 – 5:45 P.M., and
Email: irothste@ccsf.org  T 4:00 - 5:00 P.M.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class provides a survey of developments in film aesthetics, history, and theory. The goal of the class is to enhance each student’s analytical skills as well as his/her appreciation for how motion pictures communicate. Some of the areas to be covered include editing, mise en scène, narrative structure, and theory. Each class will begin with a lecture that will introduce the film (or film clips) to be viewed along with related topics. Class discussion and participation are strongly encouraged.

REQUIREMENTS

1) Students are required to attend class, to view the films selected for class presentation, and to read the assigned chapters in the text.
2) The text (UNDERSTANDING MOVIES) is central to this course. You should read the designated chapters before coming to class each week as the lectures and films are organized to complement the reading assignments.
3) The film screenings are a time for serious viewing. Anyone talking or otherwise disrupting the viewing experience for the class will be asked to leave. Please turn off cell phones and/or pagers before the class begins.
4) Attendance will be taken. Please initial the course roster at the beginning of each class.
5) The tests will be based on materials covered in lectures and class discussion as well as on the films and the assigned reading. Both exams will feature short answer and essay questions.

REQUIRED TEXT:


GRADES:

Your course grade will be based on the following:
1) Take home assignment  Feb. 23  (Critical paper) 30 points
2) Mid-term exam  March 15  (In class: 6:15 – 7:30 P.M.) 30 points
3) Quiz  May 3  (In-class essay) 10 points
4) Final exam  May 24  30 points
Total points: 100

DATE:   FILM 21    COURSE SCHEDULE

1/26  TOPICS: Introduction and overview. What is “classical cinema”?  
Film: CASABLANCA (Michael Curtiz, 1942, 102 m. USA)

Film: VISIONS OF LIGHT (Arnold Glassman, 1993, USA,95 m.)  
Read: Chapter #1 Photography
2/9 TOPIC: MISE EN SCÈNE
Film: CITY LIGHTS (Charles Chaplin, 1931, 85 m.)
 Visual analysis in class. Take home assignment distributed.
Read: Chapter #2 MISE EN SCÈNE

2/16 Washington’s Birthday Observance – No class meeting

2/23 TOPIC: The art of motion, moving camera shots, etc.
Film: THE SERVANT (Joseph Losey, 1962, UK, 112 m.)
Read: Chapter #3 MOVEMENT
TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENT IS DUE IN CLASS.

3/1 TOPIC: Editing styles and techniques, point of view, time and space in the cinema, etc.
Editing demonstration in class with excerpts from POTEMKIN, CASABLANCA
and other films.
Read: Chapter #4 EDITING

3/8 TOPIC: Editing continued… In class demonstration and analysis.
Film: NOTORIOUS (Alfred Hitchcock, 1946, USA, 101 m.)

3/15 MID TERM EXAM ++ From 6:15 – 7:30 p.m.
( The exam covers chapters 1 through 4.)
Following the exam: The Documentary Film, Pt. 1
Film: LONELY BOY (Roman Kroitor and Wolf Koenig, Canada, 1962, 30 m.)

3/22 Topic: The Documentary Film, Pt. II
Film: TITICUT FOLLIES (Frederick Wiseman, USA, 1967, 84 m.)

3/29 TOPIC: The complexities of motion picture sound…
Read Chapter 5: SOUND
Film: MCCABE & MRS. MILLER (Robert Altman, 1971, USA, 120 m.)

4/5 Spring break – no class

4/12 TOPICS: Actors, styles of acting, the star system, etc.
Film: TAXI DRIVER (Martin Scorsese, USA, 1976, 112 m.)
Read: Chapter 6: ACTING

Film: DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS (Carl Franklin, 1995, USA, 102 m.)
Read: Chapter #7: DRAMA

4/26 TOPICS: Genre, narratology, the screenplay and the screenwriter, point of view, etc.
Read: Chapters #8: STORY
Film: BADLANDS (Terence Malick, 1974, USA, 94 m.)

5/3 TOPICS: The screenwriter, the screenplay, and the role of the director…
QUIZ - In-class essay.
Read: Chapter #9: WRITING, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's short story, BERNICE BOBS HER HAIR
which is on reserve in the library. This story may also be found on the internet at:
http://www.sc.edu/fitzgerald/bernice/bernice.html
Films: BERNICE BOBS HER HAIR (Joan Micklin Silver, USA, 1976, 45 m.),
and excerpts from: NORTH BY NORTHWEST (Alfred Hitchcock, 1959.)
5/10 TOPICS: Realist, formalist, auteur, and other theories.
Read: Chapter # 11 FILM THEORY
Film: DIM SUM: A LITTLE PIECE OF HEART (Wayne Wang, 1985, USA, 88 m.)
and excerpts from De Sica's BICYCLE THIEF

5/17 TOPICS: Course review
Read: Chapter # 12 SYNTHESIS
Film: CITIZEN KANE (Orson Welles, USA, 1941, 119 m.)

5/24 ++ FINAL EXAM ++ 6:15 – 7:30 P.M.
Essay, short answer and identification questions.

IMPORTANT DATES
Last day to drop: Feb 12
Last day to request CR/NCR option: Feb. 20
Critical/Analytical Paper: Feb. 23
Mid-term exam: March 15
Last day to withdraw: April 16
Quiz: May 3
Final Exam: May 24