

History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960
CMST 28600
Winter 2020

Lecture: T/Th 11:00 AM–12:20 PM, Logan Center for the Arts 201

Screenings: M 7:00–10:00 PM and W 3:30–6:30 PM Logan Center for the Arts 201

(Attendance at both screening sessions is required. Their contents are not redundant with one another.)

Instructor: Ian Bryce Jones, ijones@uchicago.edu

Office Hours: T/Th 12:30–2:30 PM (please make appointment to ensure availability), Classics 314B

Discussion Sections for MAPH Students: Wed 6:30–7:20 PM (even-numbered weeks only)

Discussion Sections for PhD Students: Th 3:30–4:20 PM (even-numbered weeks only)

TAs:

Cinta Peleja, cpeleja@uchicago.edu

Office Hours: T 12:30–2:30 PM, Cobb 328 **Discussion Section:** Th 5:00–5:50 PM, Cobb 311

Cooper Long, cooperlong@uchicago.edu

Office Hours: F 2:00–3:00 PM, Cobb 328 **Discussion Section:** F 12:00–12:50 PM, Cobb 303

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the history of cinema from the transition to sound in the late 1920s to approximately 1960. Over this 32-year period, the course will provide an overview of cinema as a set of social, technological, and industrial practices, and examine the impact of these practices on the history of film style. Our overview of cinema during this period will be informed by a range of writings about film history, filmmaking, and film culture, by a mix of historians, contemporaneous critics and theorists, and practicing filmmakers. From the integration of sound into the Hollywood studio system, through the emergence of Italian Neorealist cinema, modernist approaches to filmmaking, and the eventual blossoming of various national new wave cinemas, this course examines the key trends that cemented cinema as one of the most major and vital art forms and cultural forces of the 20th century. Topics covered include the emergence of sound cinema, the role of the director within the Hollywood studio system, the place of documentary within both fascist and communist rhetoric, the introduction of deep focus cinematography, technological advances in animated film (both commercial and experimental), the emergence of avant-garde cinema in North America, the fate of American “race filmmaking” in the sound era, Italian cinema during Neorealism and its aftermath, Japanese postwar cinema, Mexican Golden Age cinema, Hindi-language musicals, *cinema vérité* and direct cinema, and the beginnings of the French *nouvelle vague*.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this class, students will:

- Understand the relationship of moving images to the social and political contexts of their production and circulation.
- Identify how technological, economic, social and cultural factors transformed the medium.
- Engage critically with contemporaneous critical encounters with the medium, as well as key scholarship in cinema and media studies concerned with the early sound through postwar eras.
- Assess film (including current filmmaking) in terms of its relation to this era of filmmaking and the history of its practices.
- Undertake research projects in film history incorporating analysis of film form, discourse analysis, and comparative analysis.
- Form well-supported arguments about films and film culture.

COURSE MATERIALS: REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED

Most of the readings for the course, both **required** and **recommended**, are posted in PDF form on the course's **Canvas** site.

All readings marked as **required** should be treated as such by undergraduate, MAPH, and PhD students. I have tried (not always successfully) to limit required reading to 50 pages per week.

All readings marked as **recommended** are recommended for undergraduate students. MAPH and PhD students, however, *should treat these readings as required*.

Students who took the first course in this history sequence may have already purchased *Film History: An Introduction* by **Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell**. This textbook is **not required** for the course—not for undergrads, MAPH, or PhD students. However, for those of you who already own it, I have included page numbers for relevant sections for most days, in case you would like to use it as an additional reference. Page numbers refer to the 3rd edition.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADE DISTRIBUTION

1. Weekly Canvas Posts (20%): ~1 paragraph in response to a film of your choice. Due at a time to be specified ahead of your discussion section.
2. 3 Short Papers (15%, 20%, 25%): Specific prompts and directions will be circulated.
3. Film Event Report (10%): You are asked to attend one historically-appropriate film event anytime during the quarter. Recommended events will be announced. Please write a one-page report on the event, focusing on central issues from class discussion. Post the event report to the dedicated folder on Canvas.
4. Active and thoughtful participation in discussion sections and canvas discussions (you are encouraged to respond to others' posts) (10%)

COURSE POLICIES: WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

- The written assignment should include proper citations, following the guidelines of either the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) or MLA reference style. Either is fine, but be consistent.
- Papers submitted after the deadline without prior approval will lose one half-grade per day late, after a one-day grace period.
- Papers and blog posts must conform to the University's policies on academic honesty and plagiarism. If you have any questions regarding this requirement, please visit the University's guidelines at <http://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/academic-policies/> or see me.

CLASS ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

This course is intended for all University of Chicago students, including those with mental, physical, or cognitive disabilities, illness, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that tends to negatively affect one's equal access to education. If, at any point in the quarter, you find yourself not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are welcome (and not required) to contact me by email, phone, or during office hours to discuss your specific needs. I also encourage you to contact Student Disability Services for resources and procedures: <https://disabilities.uchicago.edu>.

HARASSMENT

The University's guidelines for sexual and gender-based harassment will be strictly enforced. For reference, please see <https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/university-policies/university-of-chicago-policy-on-harassment-discrimination-and-sexual-miscon/>. Students should be aware that the course instructor is a Title IX mandated reporter.

CLASSROOM POLICIES: IN-CLASS ELECTRONICS USE

This course's texts will be made available only in PDF and/or online form, and I wholeheartedly understand the desire to reduce the amount of printing that must be done simply to bring in a week's readings. With this in mind, my default is to allow the use of laptops and tablets within my classroom. This use is to be reserved for note taking and reading reference only; use for social communication or personal entertainment is prohibited. I reserve the right to tightened restrictions on in-class electronics use if I observe it being an impediment to student learning.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: THE COMING OF SOUND – FOUNDATIONS, FANTASIES, FLUBBED LINES

Week 1 Mon Jan 6 Screening: Taken ... for ... a ride

- *Lights of New York* (Bryan Foy, USA, 1928, 57 min)

Tues Jan 7 Readings – Required:

- Donald Crafton, "Enticing the Audience: Warner Bros. and Vitaphone" (from *The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926–1931*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 177–184

Week 1 Wed Jan 8 Screening: From Mickey-Mousing to Contrapuntal Sound

- *Steamboat Willie* (Ub Iwerks and Walt Disney, USA, 1928, 8 min)
- *Deserter* (Vsevolod Pudovkin, USSR, 1933, 107 min)

Thurs Jan 9 Readings – Required:

- Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Alexandrov, "A Statement on Sound"
- Vsevolod Pudovkin, "Asynchronism as a Principle in Sound Film"
- Giannalberto Bendazzi, "The Golden Age (1928–1951)" (from *Animation: A World History Vol 1*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 188–190

WEEK 2: CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD CINEMA – STUDIOS, CODES, GENRES, AUTEURS

Week 2 Mon Jan 13 Screening: Genre and the Code as Artistic Constraints

- *Trouble in Paradise* (Ernst Lubitsch, USA, 1932, 82 min)
- *Stagecoach* (John Ford, USA, 1939, 96 min)

Tues Jan 14 Readings – Required:

- Lea Jacobs, "Industry Self-Regulation and the Problem of Textual Determination"
- Rick Altman, "Where Do Genres Come From?" (from *Film/Genre*)

Tues Jan 14 Readings – PhD/Recommended:

- The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930
- Joseph McBride, "Introduction" [excerpt] (from *How Did Lubitsch Do It?*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 198–199 ("The Hays Code: Self-Censorship in Hollywood" box)

Week 2 Wed Jan 15 Screening: _____ Girl _____

- *Dance, Girl, Dance* (Dorothy Arzner, USA, 1940, 88 min)
- *His Girl Friday* (Howard Hawks, USA, 1940, 92 min)

Thurs Jan 16 Readings – Required:

- Tino Balio, “Feeding the Maw of Exhibition” (from *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930–1939*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 195–204

WEEK 3: DOCUMENTARY, BODIES, AND INTERWAR IDEOLOGIES**Week 3 Mon Jan 20: NO SCREENING DUE TO MLK DAY****Tues Jan 21 Readings – Required:**

- Andrew Sarris, “Towards a Theory of Film History”
- Claire Johnston, “Dorothy Arzner: Critical Strategies”

Week 3 Wed Jan 22 Screening: Body Politics

- *Olympia* (Leni Riefenstahl, Germany, 1938) [selected clips from Parts 1 & 2, totaling 68 min]
- *Land Without Bread* (Luis Buñuel, Spain/France, 1933, 28 min)
- *Freaks* (Tod Browning, USA, 1932, 62 min)

Thurs Jan 23 Readings – Required:

- Rainer Rother, “The Best Sports Film of All Time” (from *Leni Riefenstahl: The Seduction of Genius*)
- Gwynne Edwards, “Buñuel and the Surrealists” [excerpt] (from *A Companion to Luis Buñuel*)

Thurs Jan 23 Readings – Grad/Recommended

- Mercé Ibarz, “A Film and Its Histories: Six Decades of *Tierra Sin Pan*”
- Jürgen Trimborn, “Perfect Bodies” (from *Leni Riefenstahl: A Life*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 248–253

WEEK 4: DEEP FOCUS AND NEW FORMS OF STYLISTIC MASTERY**Week 4 Mon Jan 27 Screening: Jean Renoir, Framing, and *Mise-en-scène***

- *The Rules of the Game* (Jean Renoir, France, 1939, 106 min)

Tues Jan 28 Readings – Required:

- Raymond Durgnat, “*Le règle du jeu*” (from *Jean Renoir*)

Tues Jan 28 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- André Bazin, “The French Renoir” (from *Jean Renoir*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 266–267

Week 4 Wed Jan 29 Screening: Orson Welles, Gregg Toland, and Deep Focus

- *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, USA, 1941, 119 min)

Thurs Jan 30 Readings – Required:

- Gregg Toland, “How I Broke the Rules in *Citizen Kane*”
- André Bazin, “The Technique of *Citizen Kane*”

Film History: An Introduction – pp 205–210

WEEK 5: ANIMATION, ABSTRACTION, AND OTHER ALTERNATIVES

Week 5 Mon Feb 3 Screening: Adventures in Animation

- *The Stolen Heart* (Lotte Reiniger, Germany, 1934, 10 min)
- *Popeye the Sailor Meets Sinbad the Sailor* (Dave Fleischer, USA, 1936, 17 min)
- *Rainbow Dance* (Len Lye, New Zealand, 1936, 5 min)
- *An Optical Poem* (Oskar Fischinger, USA, 1938, 7 min)
- *Spook Sport* (Mary Ellen Bute with Norman McLaren, USA, 1940, 8 min)
- *No. 10* (Harry Smith, USA, c.1950–1951, 4 min)
- *Abstronic* (Mary Ellen Bute and Ted Nameth, USA, 1952, 6 min)
- *Dumbo* (Ben Sharpstein, USA, 1941, 64 min)

Tues Feb 4 Readings – Required:

- Maureen Furniss, excerpts from “Disney’s New Aesthetic” and “Style and the Fleischer Studio” (both chapters from *A New History of Animation*)
- Lauren Rabinovitz, “Mary Ellen Bute”

Tues Feb 4 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- Robert Russett and Cecile Starr, eds., “Len Lye,” “Lotte Reiniger,” and “Harry Smith” (all from *Experimental Animation: An Illustrated Anthology*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 217–218

Week 5 Wed Feb 5 Screening: Alternative Traditions in US Cinema

- *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren, USA, 1943, 14 min)
- *At Land* (Maya Deren, USA, 1944, 15 min)
- *Notebook* (Marie Menken, USA, 1940–1962, 10 min)
- *Fireworks* (Kenneth Anger, USA, 1947, 15 min)
- *Mr. Frenhofer and the Minotaur* (Sidney Peterson, USA, 1949, 21 min)
- *Bridges-Go-Round* [Version 1] (Shirley Clarke, USA, 1958, 4 min)
- *Go Down, Death!* (Spencer Williams, USA, 1944, 54 min)

Thurs Feb 6 Readings – Required:

- Maya Deren, “Magic Is New”
- P. Adams Sitney, “The Magus” [excerpt] (from *Visionary Film*)
- Judith Weisenfeld, “‘A Mighty Epic of Modern Morals’: Black-Audience Religious Films” [excerpt] (from *Hollywood Be Thy Name: African American Religion in American Film, 1929–1949*)

Thurs Feb 6 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- Ara Osterweil, “America Year Zero”
- Dennis Looney, “Spencer Williams and Dante: An African-American Filmmaker at the Gates of Hell”

Film History: An Introduction – pp 451–462

WEEK 6: POSTWAR RE-CONFIGURATIONS

Week 6 Mon Feb 10 Screening: Noirs in Cars

- *Detour* (Edward G. Ulmer, USA, 1945, 69 min)
- *The Hitch-Hiker* (Ida Lupino, USA, 1953, 71 min)

Tues Feb 11 Readings – Required:

- Paul Schrader, “Notes on Film Noir”
- Lauren Rabinovitz, “*The Hitch-Hiker*”
- Barry Richards, “The Great Car Society” [excerpt] (from *Disciplines of Delight*)

Tues Feb 11 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- David Bordwell, “Who Blinked First?”

Film History: An Introduction – pp 215–216, 312–316

Week 6 Wed Feb 12 Screening: Italian Neo-realism, pt 1

- *Paisan* (Roberto Rossellini, Italy, 1946, 125 min)

Thurs Feb 13 Readings – Required:

- André Bazin, “An Aesthetic of Reality: Neorealism”

Film History: An Introduction – pp 330–337

WEEK 7: INTERNATIONAL GENRES, INTERNATIONAL AUTEURS 1**Week 7 Mon Feb 17 Screening: Italian Neo-realism, pt 2**

- *Umberto D.* (Vittorio De Sica, Italy, 1952, 88 min)

Tues Feb 18 Readings – Required:

- Cesare Zavattini, “Some Ideas on the Cinema”
- André Bazin, “*Umberto D: A Great Work*”

Week 7 Wed Feb 19 Screening: Japanese Shoshimin-geki

- *Early Summer* (Ozu Yasujiro, Japan, 1951, 125 min)

Thurs Feb 20 Readings – Required:

- Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, “Vernacular Meanings of Genre: The Middle-Class Film” (from *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s*)
- David Bordwell, “*Early Summer*” (from *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*)

Thurs Feb 20 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- Noël Burch, “Ozu Yasujiro” (from *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in Japanese Cinema*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 360–363

WEEK 8: INTERNATIONAL GENRES, INTERNATIONAL AUTEURS 2**Week 8 Mon Feb 24 Screening: Mexican Golden Age Cinema**

- *Enamorada* (Emilio Fernández, Mexico, 1946, 96 min)

Tues Feb 25 Readings – Required:

- Charles Ramírez Berg, “The Cinematic Invention of Mexico: The Poetics and Politics of the Fernández Unit Style” (from *The Classical Mexican Cinema: The Poetics of the Exceptional Golden Age Films*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 377–380

Week 8 Wed Feb 26 Screening: The Bollywood Musical

- *Awara* (Raj Kapoor, India, 1951, 193 min)

Thurs Feb 27 Readings – Required:

- Ravi Vasudevan, “Shifting Codes, Dissolving Identities: The Hindi Social Film of the 1950s as Popular Culture”
 - Teri Skillman, “Songs in Hindi Films: Nature and Function”
- Film History: An Introduction** – pp 373–377

WEEK 9: EMERGING STYLES IN ART CINEMA AND DOCUMENTARY**Week 9 Mon Mar 2 Screening: European Auteurism, Post-Neorealism**

- *Journey to Italy* (Roberto Rossellini, Italy, 1954, 85 min)
- *La Pointe Courte* (Agnès Varda, France, 1955, 80 min)

Tues March 3 Readings – Required:

- Kelley Conway, “Planning and Precision in *La Pointe Courte*” (from *Agnès Varda*)
- David Bordwell, “Art-Cinema Narration” [excerpt] (from *Narration in the Fiction Film*)

Tues March 3 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- Rebecca J. DeRoo, “Complicating Neorealism and the New Wave: *La Pointe Courte*” (from *Agnès Varda between Film, Photograph, and Art*)

Film History: An Introduction – pp 328–330, 337–340, 350–351, 381–383

Week 9 Wed Mar 4 Screening: *Cinema Verité* and Direct Cinema

- *Primary* (Robert Drew, USA, 1960, 53 min)
- *La Pyramide Humaine* (Jean Rouch, France, 1961, 93 min)

Tues Mar 5 Readings – Required:

- Erik Barnouw, “Sharp Focus” [excerpt] (from *Documentary: A History of the Non-fiction Film*)
- Edgar Morin, “For a New *Cinema Verité*” (as excerpted in “Chronicle of a Film”)

Tues Mar 5 Readings – Grad/Recommended:

- Jeanne Hall, “Realism as a Style in Cinema Verite: A Critical Analysis of *Primary*”
- Mick Eaton, “The Production of Cinematic Reality”

Film History: An Introduction – pp 444–451

WEEK 10: NEW WAVES**Week 10 Mon Mar 9 Screening: *Nouvelle Vague* and the New American Cinema**

- *The Connection* (Shirley Clarke, USA, 1962, 103 min)
- *Vivre Sa Vie* (Jean-Luc Godard, France, 1962, 83 min)

Tues March 10 Readings – Required:

- Michel Marie, “A Journalistic Slogan and a New Generation” (from *The French New Wave: An Artistic School*)
- various filmmakers, “The First Statement of the New American Cinema Group”

Film History: An Introduction – pp 407–414

Week 10 Wed Mar 11: NO SCREENING