American Experimental Film & Video: A Private View

Instructor: Albert Nigrin

Course #: 01:050:265: Section 1

Dates: Fall 2008 Semester
Day/Time: Tuesday & Thursday 5:35-6:55 PM
Location: Ruth Adams #001, Douglass Campus, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Course Description: A survey course focusing on the history and development of the various American experimental cinema movements from its beginnings to the present. In-depth analyses of the structure and content of films by Andy Warhol, Maya Deren, Stan Brakhage, Sidney Peterson, Kenneth Anger, Bruce Baillie, Yoko Ono, and others. Emphasis on the "mise-en-scene," editing, narrative form, sound, and special effects in the films of these celebrated experimental film/videomakers. Warning: some films may contain nudity, sexual situations, violence, profanity, substance abuse, and disturbing images.

Required Reading: Xerox Packet of Articles -- $40 (includes Lab Fee for most in-class film/video rentals and licenses) from the instructor between September 2-11, 2008 at the beginning and end of class.

Course Requirements and Grading: Attendance is mandatory. Two Exams [Short Answer/Essay Questions].
Class Participation: 20%; Attendance: 10%; Exam #1: 35%; Exam #2: 35%

Attendance and Absences: I will overlook one absence from class; thus, take your absences seriously. In addition, more than one absence will affect your attendance score and I will be less flexible in considering your overall grade. The opposite also holds true: if your attendance and class participation are consistently strong, you may enhance your final grade.

Exams: You should take careful notes during class; both exams will be based directly on the material we cover in class, the readings assigned, and the films viewed for class. The first exam will cover the first half of the syllabus; the second exam will cover the second half of the syllabus. If you are caught cheating in this course the penalties are as follows: an automatic “F” on that exam, a report to the dean, and other disciplinary actions.

Required Additional Screenings: All students must attend the Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC film screenings listed below. Cost= $6 or $9 per screening and you must sign the attendance sheet at the door.
1- Dreams That Money Can Buy on Th-9/18/08 beginning at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams #001-DSS. $6
2- L’Atalante on Th-9/25/08 beginning at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams #001-DSS. $6
3- Idiots and Angels Fr-Su-9/26-28/08 beginning at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days. $9.
4- Chelsea Girls on Fr-Su-10/3-5/08 beginning at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days. $9.
5- Beauty #2 and Outer and Inner Space on Fr-Su-10/10-12/08 beginning at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days. $9.
6- Cabinet of Dr. Caligari/Creature from the Black Lagoon - In 3D on Fr-10/31/08 beginning at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. $9...$7 if you go in costume.
7- Animania 3 Festival on Sa-Su-11/1-2/08 beginning at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days. $9
**Suggested Reading:**
*Film Culture*. New York: Anthology Film Archives, 1960-present.

**Syllabus:**

**9/2**  
Introduction

**9/4+9**  
Precursors - Thomas Edison, Lumiere Brothers, George Melies, Watson and Weber  
Films: The Kiss, Lumiere Shorts, A Trip to the Moon, The Fall of the House of Usher

**9/11+16**  
Dada and Cubist Cinema - Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp, Ferd. Leger, Rene Clair  
Films: Starfish, Emak Bakia, Ballet Mecanique, Entr’acte
Syllabus (continued):

9/18+23  Surrealist Cinema - Luis Bunuel/Salvador Dali, Jean Cocteau
Films: An Andalusian Dog, L’Age D’Or and Blood of a Poet (excerpts)

9/25  The Films of Dean Snider presented by Douglas Katelus

9/29  The Films of Maya Deren: Part 1
Films: Meshes of the Afternoon, At Land, Ritual In Transfigured Time

10/2  No Class

10/7  Exam #1

10/9  The Films of Maya Deren: Part 2
Films: Meditation on Violence, The Very Eye of Night, etc.

10/14+16  Art in Cinema - Willard Maas, Marie Menkin, Sidney Peterson
Films: Geography of the Body, Hurry, Hurry, The Petrified Dog

10/21+23  Found Footage - Bruce Conner, Stan VanderBeek
Films: A Movie, Science Friction, etc.

10/28+30  Counter Cultural Films
Kenneth Anger and Andy Warhol
Films: Rabbit’s Moon, Scorpio Rising, Lucifer Rising, Chelsea Girls, etc.

11/4+11/6  Stan Brakhage
Films: Mothlight, Window Water Baby Moving, etc.

11/11  Multi-Layered - Bruce Baillie and Robert Fulton
Films: Mass for the Dakota Sioux, Aleph, Castro St., etc.

11/13  Structuralist Films
Jordan Belson, Robert Nelson, and Chuck Hudina
Films: Music of the Spheres, Bleu Shut

11/18  Women’s Films - Yoko Ono and Gunvor Nelson
Bottoms, Fly, Take Off

11/20+25  No Class

12/2  Contemporary Films
Jem Cohen, A.G. Nigrin, etc,
This is the History of NY, Mental Radio, etc.

12/4  Exam #2

12/9  No Class