

**Albert G. Nigrin**

**Office: 018 Loree Building-Douglass/Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC/**

**Program In Cinema Studies/Douglass Campus/Rutgers University**

**Telephone: (732) 932-8482**

**Office Hours: By appointment**

### **Special Topics In American Studies: American Film Directors**

Course #: 01: 050: 301: 03

Dates: Spring 2009

Day/Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:35-6:55PM with screenings on select Thursdays from 7:15 p.m. to 9:00 PM and other additional required viewings. Location: Ruth Adams Building #001, Douglass Campus, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

#### **Course Description:**

A course focusing on the films of Stanley Kubrick, Orson Welles, David Lynch, Maya Deren, Joseph Cornell, Bruce Conner, Val Lewton, Harold Ramis and others. In-depth analyses of the structure and content of films which include: *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Mulholland Drive*, *Cat People*, *Groundhog Day*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, , and others. Emphasis on the "mise-en-scene," narrative form, set design, sound, and special effects in the films of these celebrated filmmakers.

#### **Course Requirements and Grading:**

Attendance is mandatory. Two exams [Short Answer/Essay Questions].

Class Participation: 20%

Attendance: 10%

Exam #1: 35%

Exam #2: 35%

#### **Required Additional Viewings:**

All students must attend the Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC film screenings listed below. Cost= \$9 per screening and you must sign the attendance sheet at the door.

1- *Eadweard Muybridge: Zoopraxographer*, *Before The Nickelodeon* and *Edison Films*- Thursday, January 22 at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams Building 001-DSS, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

2- *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *Cat People* - Thursday, January 29 at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams Building 001-DSS, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

3- *Happy-Go-Lucky* and *Groundhog Day* - Friday-Sunday, January 30-February 1 at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days.

4 - *Divine Horseman* and *I Walked With A Zombie* - Thursday, February 5 at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams Building 001-DSS, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

5 - *Films by Joseph Cornell* - Thursday, February 12 at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams Building 001-DSS, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

6 – *U.S. Super 8 Film and DV Festival* - Friday-Saturday, February 20+21 at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days.

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7 – *A Tribute to Bruce Conner* - Thursday, February 26 at 7:30 PM in Ruth Adams Building 001-DSS, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

8 – *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Bonnie & Clyde* - Friday-Sunday, March 6-8 at 7:00 PM in Scott Hall #123-CAC. Go to one screening on these days.

### **Required Reading:**

Xerox Packet of Articles/Lab Fee - Available only from the instructor. Cost: \$40 (cash or check made payable to the Rutgers Film Co-op/NJMAC) includes xeroxed reading materials and select in-class film/video rentals/licenses.

### **Attendance and Absences:**

Attendance is mandatory; thus, take your absences seriously. In addition, one absence will affect your attendance grade 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 and during the film screenings; both exams will be based directly on the material we cover and our class discussions, as well as the readings assigned. The first exam will cover the first half of the syllabus; likewise, the second exam will cover the second half of the syllabus.

### **American Film Directors Syllabus:**

January 20+22+27 – Introduction; *Eadweard Muybridge*; *Edwin S. Porter*, *Edison Films*

January 29+ February 3 – *Orson Welles's The Magnificent Ambersons*

February 5+10 – Val Lewton/Jacques Tourneur's *Cat People*, *I Walked With A Zombie*

February 12 – **No Class**

February 17+19 – Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon*, *At Land*, *Ritual in Transfigured Time*, *Divine Horseman*

February 24 – **Exam #1**

February 26 + March 3 + 5– *Joseph Cornell's and Bruce Conner's films*

March 10 + 24 – Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde*

March 12, 17, 19 – **No Class Spring Break**

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March 26 + 31 – Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*

April 2 + 7 – Harold Ramis's *Groundhog Day*

April 9 + 14 – David Lynch's *Eraserhead*

April 16 + 21 – David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*

April 23 - **No Class**

April 28 – **Exam #2**