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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:15 - 6:15 p.m.

***FILM FORM AND REVOLUTION: NEW CINEMAS
IN THE LATIN AMERICAN SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES***

AN UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

UCLA Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Winter Quarter 2009

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 - 4:50 p.m.
Room: PAB 1434A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is twofold. First, it shall provide undergraduate students with a foundation in cinema studies by introducing them to various of the central themes and debates of the discipline, both historical and theoretical, meanwhile furnishing them with the tools of critical film analysis. Second, the course will offer a unique introduction to the study of Latin American cinema by examining the great innovations of independent and avant-garde film production during the 1960s, a "long decade that extends from the mid-1950s into the mid-1970s. As we shall see, the new cinemas of the Latin American sixties can and should be situated in relation to the transformations in film aesthetics and critical discourse taking place on an international scale during the period. Through weekly screenings of feature-length films, engaged in-class discussion of critical, programmatic and historical texts, the consideration of numerous film clips from Latin America and beyond, and a series of shorter writing assignments designed to foster close formal and theoretical film analysis, we will address issues of "new wave" aesthetics, the transnational elements of Latin American film history, the cinematic re-configuration of cultural identities, national imaginaries, and dominant ideologies, and the dynamic matrix of modern discourse, revolutionary politics, and the global circulation of film styles on the eve of postmodernity.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS

In addition to the analysis of films and clips, part of our weekly work will include a modest amount of required readings. The selections range from historical essays to works of film theory and criticism, along with the occasional manifesto penned by the filmmakers themselves. All readings have been chosen to illuminate the films we watch each week. In addition, I occasionally recommend further weekly readings—these are NOT required—for those wishing to delve more deeply into the issues of each unit. Finally, most weeks I will distribute handouts with helpful information on relevant terminology and techniques of film analysis. These should be used as a resource for your writing assignments. Please refer to the list at the end of this syllabus for full bibliographic citations to the course-pack readings.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at Ackerman Union)

- [MR] King, John. *Magical Reels: A History of Cinema in Latin America*. New ed. London: Verso 2000.
- [NLAC] Martin, Michael T. *New Latin American Cinema*. Vol. 1: *Theory, Practice and Transcontinental Articulations*. Detroit: Wayne State UP 1997.
- [CP] Course Pack. See bibliography, below, for full citations of included articles. Cross-listed references can be found in the list of recommended readings.

RECOMMENDED

- Thompson, Kristin and David Bordwell. *Film History: An Introduction*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2003.
- Bordwell, David and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. 7th. ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2004.

A NOTE ON THE FILMS

Independent Latin American films from the sixties are often quite difficult to find today, in any format. Of the works that are available on video, many are of poor visual and sonic quality. Only recently have archives and private entities begun to make more concerted efforts at preservation while assuming the costly challenge of creating high-quality digital transfers from original film prints. While this scenario poses real obstacles to any serious student of Latin American cinema from the sixties, it is a fact our course will necessarily confront. That said, I am regrettably unable to project any of this quarter's films from their actual prints. Rather, we will project digital versions onto a large screen. While I have attempted to include works in reasonable states of preservation that already exist on DVD, the quality of at least some of the films and clips we view will be less than optimal. I assure you, however, that all the movies selected for this course are of profound aesthetic and critical interest, whatever their physical condition.

Regardless of their present quality, it is also important to note that these films were the objects of a fervent cinema culture in Latin America in the sixties, that is, well before the advent of home video. At the time, as in many regions of the world, young people from Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile to Rio de Janeiro, México D.F. and La Habana would flock to small art houses and crowd into cinema clubs, eager to view and discuss the latest release. At the same time, however, a number of the films we'll see this quarter emerged from conditions of intense political repression and state censorship and, consequently, were produced and screened clandestinely. In a certain respect, then, our course will aim to re-create something of the communal atmosphere of film-going that reigned during the 1960s.

SCREENINGS

With the exception of the first week, screenings will take place on Tuesdays during scheduled class hours, while our Thursday sessions will be devoted to discussion and analysis of the week's film, readings and clips (these will be shown in class on Thursdays). Thus, **your attendance at each week's screening is mandatory**. The idea is not simply that you watch the film at your convenience, but rather that you *go to the movies* in the traditional sense: you will sit in a darkened hall with your peers and watch moving images projected onto a large screen in front of you. Popcorn and snacks are welcome. The use of cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices, however, are strictly prohibited.

Before showing each week's movie, I will deliver a brief introduction to the work, its director, and its historical context. On certain occasions, I may also suggest elements worthy of particular attention. After each screening, if time permits, we may also take a few brief moments to recap the film and hash out focal points for Thursday's discussion.

Please note that all of the principal weekly screenings for this course will be available on-line through the Instructional Media Lab as well. **I strongly recommend that you give all films a second viewing** at the very least, in order to take notes and catch whatever you may have missed the first time.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Punctual arrival to all screenings and classes is a must. Regular class attendance and participation will also constitute an important part of your final grade. No more than two unexcused absences will be tolerated throughout the quarter. Each subsequent, unexcused absence after the second will result in an automatic deduction of one-third of a letter grade from the final average (i.e. an A- avg. will be reduced automatically to a B+). Under extreme extenuating circumstances, you should approach me in person as soon as possible.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Cultivating the ability to write and speak critically and cogently about films figures among the chief aims of this course. To that end, students will engage in a variety of writing-intensive exercises in film analysis throughout the quarter. In addition, active participation in class is essential. It is imperative, therefore, to have carefully analyzed the weekly film and completed the readings by the beginning of class each Thursday. Though I prefer that students come prepared to engage in discussion of their own accord, I do reserve the right to "cold-call" on any student at any time as I see fit. The break-down of final grades is as follows:

Class Participation
15%

Writing Assignment 1: Segmentation and descriptive analysis (2-3 pp) 15%
Writing Assignment 2: Sequence analysis and interpretation (4 pp) 15%
Writing Assignment 3: In-depth critical analysis of film of choice (6-8 pp) 25%
Final Take-home Exam: 30%

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

To earn full credit, all written work must be handed in on-time, that is, **by the beginning of Thursday's class** on the date indicated on the syllabus. Ten (10) points will be deducted from all work handed in within 24 hours of the due date. Additional penalties of two (2) points will accrue daily beyond the first 24 hours.

OFFICE HOURS AND E-MAIL

I encourage you to visit me during my scheduled office hours at any time; no appointment is necessary. You are also welcome to e-mail me with any questions or concerns. While I will make every effort to respond to your e-mails promptly, please allow for up to a 24-hour turn-around before following up. After 24 hours, please don't hesitate to contact me again: chances are, I'll be in great need of a reminder! In any case, please compose your emails with a salutation, a signature, and standard spelling and capitalization.

FILM FORM AND REVOLUTION: WEEKLY SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

WEEK 1 (6 - 8 JANUARY):

ART CINEMA, THE FILM AUTEUR, AND TRANSNATIONAL MODERNIST AESTHETICS

Screen*: Leopoldo Torre Nilsson, *La casa del ángel* (Argentina, 1957)
[Alternate: Fernando Ayala, *El jefe* (Argentina 1958)]

* Screening takes place on Thursday, this week only

Read: [CP] Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, selections from *Making Waves* (41pp)
[NLAC] 135-56: Ana M. López, "An 'Other' History: The New Latin American Cinema"

Clips: Alfred Hitchcock, *Rear Window* (U.S.A., 1954)
Luis Buñuel, *Los olvidados* (México, 1950)
Ingmar Bergman, *Wild Strawberries* (Sweden, 1957)

WEEK 2 (13 - 15 JANUARY):

NEW WAVE CINEMAS, YOUTH CULTURE, AND "MINOR" AESTHETICS

Screen: Leonardo Favio, *Chronicle of a Boy Alone* (Argentina, 1966)

Read: [MR] 65-77
[CP] Jim Hillier, "Introduction: Re-thinking the Function of Cinema and Criticism" (7pp)
[CP] Laura Podalsky, "High-Rise Apartments, Arcades, Cars, Hoteles de Cita..." (20pp)

Clips: François Truffaut, *The 400 Blows* (France, 1959)
David José Kohon, *Tres veces Ana* (Argentina, 1961)
Alexander Kluge, *Yesterday Girl* (Germany, 1966)

Write: *Assignment 1: Segmentation and sequence analysis (due Thursday 1/22, by start of class).*

WEEK 3 (20 - 22 JANUARY):

"PERIPHERAL" FILM GEOGRAPHIES: SPACE, MOBILITY, MODERNITY

Screen: Jorge Bodanzky and Orlando Senna, *Iracema: An Amazonian Affair* (Brazil, 1974).

*Outside screening (please watch before Thursday's class):
Fernando Birri, *Throw a Dime* (short; Argentina, 1958)

Read: [CP] Giuliana Bruno, "Site-Seeing: The Cine City" (19pp)
[CP] José de Souza Martins, "The Hesitations of the Modern..." (26pp)

*Recommended:

[CP] Michel de Certeau. "Walking in the City" (20pp)

Clips: Walter Ruttmann, *Berlin, Symphony of a City* (Germany, 1927)
Anthony Mann, *Border Incident* (U.S.A., 1949)
Raul Ruiz, *Tres tristes tigres* (Chile, 1968)

WEEK 4 (27 - 29 JANUARY):

NEOREALISM AS POLITICAL AND AESTHETIC IMPERATIVE

Screen: Nelson Pereira dos Santos, *Barren Lives* (Brazil, 1963)

Read: [CP] André Bazin, "An Aesthetic of Reality..." (25pp)
[CP] John Hess, "Neo-Realism and New Latin American Cinema..."
(15pp)
[NLAC] 86-94: Fernando Birri, "Cinema and Underdevelopment"

*Recommended:

[CP] Robert Stam and Randal Johnson, "The Cinema of Hunger..." (8pp)

Clips: Jorge Sanjinés, *Blood of the Condor* (Bolivia, 1969)
Vittorio de Sica, *Bicycle Thieves* (Italy, 1948)
Satyajit Ray, *Pater panchali* (India, 1955)

Write: *Assignment 2: Sequence analysis and interpretation (due Thursday 2/5, by start of class)*

WEEK 5 (3 - 5 FEBRUARY):

MODERNISM, ALLEGORY, AND POLITICS

Screen: Glauber Rocha, *Land in Anguish* (Brazil, 1967)]

Read: [CP] Ismael Xavier, "Introduction," *Allegories of Underdevelopment* (30pp)
[NLAC] 59-61: Glauber Rocha, "An Esthetic of Hunger"

*Recommended:

[CP] Roberto Schwartz, "Culture and Politics in Brazil, 1964-1969" (34pp)

Clips: Akira Kurosawa, *Rashomon* (Japan, 1950)
Jean-Luc Godard, *Le Mépris* (France, 1963)
Alejandro Jodorowsky, *El Topo* (Mexico, 1970)

WEEK 6 (10 - 12 FEBRUARY):

"IMPERFECT CINEMA": GENRE, INTERTEXTUALITY, SPECTATORSHIP

Screen: Julio García Espinosa, *Las aventuras de Juan Quin Quin* (Cuba 1967)

Read: [MR] 145-67
[CP] Leo Braudy, "Genre: The Conventions of Connection" [17pp]
[NLAC] 71-82: Julio García Espinosa, "For An Imperfect Cinema,"

Clips: Humberto Solás, *Lucía* (Cuba, 1968)
Ousmane Sembene, *Xala* (Senegal, 1975)
Seijun Suzuki, *Branded to Kill* (Japan, 1967)

Write: *Assignment 3: Film theory in practice* (due Thursday 2/26, by start of class)

WEEK 7 (17 - 19 FEBRUARY):

AMBIVALENT SPACE-TIME AND REVOLUTIONARY FILM FORM

Screen: Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, *Memories of Underdevelopment* (Cuba 1968)

Read: [CP] Robert Stam, "The Presence of Brecht" and "The Politics of Reflexivity" [9pp]
[CP] T. Gutiérrez Alea, "Identification and Distancing: Aristotle and Brecht" [8pp]
[CP] Timothy Barnard, "Death is Not True..." (12pp)

* Recommended:

[CP] C. Gledhill, "Rethinking Genre" (23pp)

Clips: Michelangelo Antonioni, *Red Desert* (Italy, 1964)
Vera Chytilová, *Daisies* (Czechoslovakia, 1966)
Andrea Tonacci, *Bang Bang* (Brazil, 1971)

WEEK 8 (24 - 26 FEBRUARY):

POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY CINEMA AND THE DOCUMENTARY IMPULSE: BEYOND, AGAINST, AND (STILL) WITH THE AUTEURS

Screen: Miguel Littín, *The Jackal of Nahueltoro* (Chile, 1969)

Read: [MR] 169-87
[CP] Bill Nichols, "The Fact of Realism and the Fiction of Objectivity" (36pp)

Clips: Emile de Antonio, *In the Year of the Pig* (U.S.A., 1969)
Felipe Cazals, *Canoa* (Mexico, 1975)
Júlio Bressane, *The Angel Was Born* (Brazil, 1969)

WEEK 9 (3 - 5 MARCH):

RADICAL DOCUMENTARY, EXPERIMENTAL FILM, AND QUESTIONS OF THIRD CINEMA

Screen: Fernando Solanas/Octavio Getino, *The Hour of the Furnaces* (Argentina 1968)

Read: [CP] Emilio Bernini, "Politics and the documentary film..." (16pp)
[NLAC] 33-58: Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema"
[CP] José Carlos Avellar, "Vento, barravento [Glauber and Godard...]" (9pp)

*Recommended:

[CP] Sergei Eisenstein, "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form" (18pp)
[NLAC] 221-51: Paul Willemen, "The Third Cinema Question..."

Clips: Glauber Rocha, *Der leone have sept cabeças* (Congo/France/Italy, 1970)
Dziga Vertov Group, *Vent d'Est* (Germany/Italy/France, 1969)
Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (France, 1973)

WEEK 10 (10 - 12 MARCH):

POLITICAL MODERNISM BETWEEN IDEOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONAL REPRESSION

Screen: Selection of short films by Mexican *Superocheros*; Alejandro Jodorowsky, *Fando y Lis* (Mexico, 1968)

Read: [MR] 129-44
[CP] Jesse Lerner, "Superocheros" (16pp)
[NLAC] 157-84: Julianne Burton, "Film Artisans and Film Industries..."

* Recommended:

[CP] Sergio García, "Hacia el 4o cine" (53pp)

Clips: Rogério Sganzerla, *The Red Light Bandit* (Brazil, 1969)
Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* (Italy, 1966)
Nagisa Oshima, *Violence at High Noon* (Japan, 1966)

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TAKE-HOME EXAM:

Distributed at end of last class of quarter, Thursday, 12 March. Due via e-mail attachment (MSWord document only) **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 17 March.**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

COURSE PACK READINGS

Following are full citations of course pack articles, in the order they appear:

- Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey. *Making Waves: New Cinemas of the 1960s*. New York: Continuum, 2008. 15-55.
- Hillier, Jim. "Introduction: Re-thinking the Function of Cinema and Criticism." *Cahiers du Cinéma. 1960-1968: New Wave, New Cinema, Reevaluating Hollywood*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992. 165-71.
- Laura Podalsky, "High-Rise Apartments, Arcades, Cars, Hoteles de Cita, and the Public-Private Divide." *Specular City: Transforming Culture, Consumption, and Space in Buenos Aires, 1955-1973*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 2004. 118-37.
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- Stam, Robert. "The Presence of Brecht." "The Politics of Reflexivity." *Film Theory: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000. 145-53.
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- archiveonlinessays/JC30folder/ViewersDialectic2.html. Accessed 12/17/08. Originally published in *Jump Cut* 30 (March 1985): 48-53.
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- Gledhill, Christine. "Rethinking Genre." *Reinventing Film Studies*. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams, eds. London: Arnold, 2000. 221-43.
- Nichols, Bill. "The Fact of Realism and the Fiction of Objectivity." *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1991. 165-98.
- Bernini, Emilio. "Politics and the documentary film in Argentina during the 1960s." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 13.2 (August 2004): 155-170.
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- Jesse Lerner. "Superocheros." *Wide Angle* 21.3 (June 1999): 2-35.
- Sérgio García. "Hacia el 4o. Cine." Prol. Manuel Michel. *Wide Angle* 21.3 (June 1999): 70-175.

RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER READING AND RESEARCH

- Acevedo-Munoz, Ernesto R. "Los Olvidados and the Crisis of Mexican Cinema." *Buñuel and Mexico: the Crisis of National Cinema*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. 57-79.
- Armes, Roy. *Third World Film Making and the West*. Berkeley: University of California, 1987.
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