FRENCH 334: FRENCH CINEMA
SPRING 2008
PROF. VEST
Rhodes Tower 413 = 901-843-3587 = vest@rhodes.edu

PARTICULARITIES
This course satisfies the F-5 Foundation Requirement and the Humanities Distribution Requirement. It also counts toward the Film Studies minor. It is taught in English, and all films have English subtitles or intertitles.

Students wishing this course to count toward the French major or minor (or advanced-level French studies) should have completed French 301 or 321 and either French 323 or 324 prior to taking it, since, for French minors and majors, readings and writing assignments will be in French. A weekly French “salon” will be provided beyond regular class hours (meeting time to be arranged) to discuss Le Cinéma mondiale.

OBJECTIVES
In this course students will become acquainted with the most prominent directors and movements of French cinema, from 1895 to the present. Their appreciation for the cinematic techniques and themes of French filmmaking will be enhanced through communal viewing and discussion of films, readings of principal theoreticians of the French cinema, oral presentations on at least one metteur en scène or movement, in-class discussions, two critical reaction papers, and a final project (written or filmed).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
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<td>Jan. 10</td>
<td>Intro. to the course; Discussion: Who invented the cinema? READ: Williams, p. 7-47. Screening: Shorts by the Lumière brothers (1895-98) and Georges Méliès (1896-1914); Abel Gance: Napoléon (1927) [Part I]</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Screening: Jean Cocteau: La Belle et la bête [Beauty and the Beast ] (1946); Hitchcock Spellbound (1945) [S. Dali dream sequence]</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>M.L.KING DAY</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Screening: Jean Vigo: Zéro de conduite [Zero for Conductor] (1932)</td>
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29 Discussion: Zéro de conduite
Reaction paper I Groups C & D; in-class presentations: Group C
PRESENTATION: Jean Renoir

Feb. 5 Discussion: La Grande Illusion
Reaction paper I Groups E & F; in-class presentations: Group E
PRESENTATION: Marcel Carné, the Occupation and the Resistance ; Jean-Paul Sartre
7 Screening: Marcel Carné: Les Enfants du paradis [Children of Paradise] (1944)

12 Discussion: Les Enfants du paradis
Reaction paper I Groups G & H; in-class presentations: Group G
PRESENTATION: Robert Bresson, Georges Bernanos, Jacques Tati
14 Screening: Jacques Tati: Les Vacances de M. Hulot [Mr. Hulot’s Holiday] (1952); Mon oncle [My Uncle] (1958) [excerpts]

19 Discussion: Post-War France: La Revue du Cinéma, L’Ecran Français, Les Vacances de M. Hulot, Mon oncle
PRESENTATIONS: Henri-Georges Clouzot, Vera Clouzot, Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac
21 Screening: Henri-Georges Clouzot: Diaboliques (1954), Le Salaire de la peur [The Wages of Fear] (1953) [excerpts]

26 Discussion: Diaboliques ; Le Salaire de la peur; Clouzot and Hitchcock; Les Cahiers du Cinéma; la politique des auteurs
PRESENTATIONS: François Truffaut; Les Cahiers du cinéma; Positif

Mar. 1-9 Spring Break

11 Discussion: Nouvelle Vague / New Wave: Les Mistons; Les 400 Coups; La Nuit américaine
READ: Williams, p. 327-340, 348-353; Monaco, p. 3-25; Truffaut “Filmography,” p. 346
PRESENTATIONS: Jean-Luc Godard, Jacques Rivette, Agnes Varda
Discussion: Reaction paper II, Groups A & B; in-class presentations: Group B
13 Screening: Jean-Luc Godard: À Bout de souffle [Breathless] (1960) [excerpts] ; Agnes Varda: Cloé de 5 à 7 [Cloe from 5 to 7]
18 Discussion: À Bout de souffle, Cloé de 5 à 7;

Reception paper II Groups C & D; in-class presentations: Group D
PRESENTATION: Eric Rohmer
Optional (individual) viewing: Eric Rohmer, Ma Nuit chez Maude [My Night at Maud’s] (1969)

20-23 Easter Break

25 Discussion: Hitchcock/Truffaut; Sartre, Lacan
Final project prospectus due;
READ: Williams, p. 364-373
PRESENTATIONS: Laura Mulvy, Jacques Lacan, Jean Douchet; Alain Resnais


Apr. 1 Discussion: L’Année dernière à Marienbad, Mon oncle d’Amérique; filming the classics: Madame Bovary and Topaz

Reception paper II Groups E & F; in-class presentations: Group F
PRESENTATIONS: Claude Chabrol, Gustave Flaubert

3 Screening: Claude Chabrol: Madame Bovary (1990); cf. Jean Renoir: Madame Bovary (1934) (excerpts)

8 Discussion: Mesdames Bovary

Reception paper II Groups G & H; in-class presentations: Group H
PRESENTATION: Louis Malle


15 Discussion: Au Revoir, les Enfants;
Final project progress report due.
PRESENTATION: Krzysztof Kieslowski, Christian Metz; Raymond Bellour


22 Discussion: Bleu, Blanc, Rouge;

24 EVENING SESSION: PRESENTATION (PROJECTION) AND DISCUSSION OF FINAL PROJECTS (INVITE YOUR FRIENDS)
SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS must be formally cleared through the college’s Disability Services Office and confirmed with Prof. Vest at least ten working days before implementation.

READINGS

I. PURCHASE IN RHODES BOOKSTORE:

A. Required of all students:
   • Alan Williams, Republic of Images: A History of French Filmmaking (Harvard, 1992)
   • COMMON READINGS (in English)
     - includes J. Vest: cinematic terms/termes cinématographiques (French/English); selections from André Bazin, Jean Renoir trans by W. W. Halsey and W. Simon (Simon and Schuster, 1973); and James Monaco: New Wave (Oxford, 1976)

B. Optional for French minors and majors -- required for all others:
   • François Truffaut, The Films in My Life trans. by L. Mayhew (da Capo, 1994)

C. Required for French majors and minors -- (optional for non-French majors and minors):
   • André Bazin, Qu’est-ce que le Cinéma? (Cerf, 1990);
   • READINGS IN FRENCH -- Coursepack Required for French minors and majors:
     - selections from André Bazin, Jean Renoir (in French); and François Truffaut, Les Films de ma vie (Flammarion, 1975)

II. On reserve in Burrow Library:

   • Jill Forbes, Les Enfants du paradis (BFI, 1997)
   • Nelly Kaplan, Napoléon (BFI, 1994)
   ° additional readings

GRADES

Participation in class, presence, preparedness, discussion, presentations of directors/terms ..........30%

2 Reaction papers 3-4 pages each (doubled-spaced) and in-class presentations of them ..........40%

1 final project, either written (an 8-10 page research paper, double-spaced, or a 20+ page screenplay) or filmed (3-4 minutes) treating aspects of our study, accompanied by a classroom explanation of this project .................................................................30%

All work presented for a grade is bound by the Rhodes College Honor System.

Any graded assignment submitted late for any reason will receive a lowered grade, normally 1/3 letter grade per school day (or portion of school day) late.