

## **FA485 Mystery in Film**

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### **Course Description**

This course aims to dwell on the themes of the mystery and unknown in film which are mostly linked with the fear and curiosity it creates in the minds of the characters.

Films, by creating an illusion, pulls the spectator into a pool of desires, wishes, fears and excitements. These emotions are passed from the characters to audience via a very special and strong bond, which is identification. Spectator's identification creates an instinctual understanding for the characters they see on film. This identification makes it possible for the spectator to share the knowledge, psychological state and emotions of the characters in film.

Moving from this point, films of unknown, films of mystery and films based on the subject of 'The Other' will give us a chance to discuss character development and psychology in films.

The course will be carried out based on films and readings from the genres of Mystery, Suspense, Psychological Thrillers, The Other and Science Fiction and class discussions based on these topics.

### **Course Requirements**

The course will be carried out with a series of discussions every week and to participate to the discussions in class, every student must watch the film of the week. Being a participator in the class is the most important requirement of the course. A screening will be arranged for the students who prefer to watch the film in Mithat Alam Film Center.

Every student must moderate a class discussion (with a collaborator) and give a presentation to class.

### **Grading**

Attendance and Participation in class discussions: 50 percent

Class Presentation: 25 percent

Final Paper: 25 percent (students must declare their films to the class on the 6th week)

### **Readings**

There is a course reader in Photocopy Room, North Campus Library.

### **Outline**

Week 1:

Introduction to Unknown in Film

Key elements of Mystery and Suspense. Range of Knowledge.

Screening: The Double Indemnity and the discussion of film.

Week 2:

Identification. Major archetypes in Film.

Analysis and Discussion: 'Vertigo', Alfred Hitchcock, 1958, 128 min.

Excerpt from The Pink Panther

Week 3:

Analysis and Discussion: 'Rebecca', Alfred Hitchcock, 1940, 130 min.

Identification and survival of the spectator. Uncanny, Gothic.

Screening: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1961

Week 4:

Desires of the Spectator. Conflict of Ego.

Analysis and discussion: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960

Analysis and discussion: 'Les diaboliques', Henri-Georges Clouzot, 1955, 116 min.

Week 5:

Identity and the Other, Fear of the Unknown, Depth

Analysis and discussion: 'The Tenant', Roman Polanski, 1976, 126 min.

Week 6:

Identity and the Other, Fear of the Unknown, Depth

The Uncanny in Film

Analysis and discussion: 'The Repulsion', Roman Polanski, 1965, 105 min

Analysis and discussion: 'Rosemary's Baby', Roman Polanski, 1968, 136 min.

Week 7:

Analysis and discussion: 'Don't Look Now', Nicholas Roeg, 1973, 110 min.

Uncanny, The Effect of the location in psychological thrillers

Excerpts from 'Death in Venice', Luchino Visconti, 1971, 130 min. )

Week 8:

Psychological thrillers

Screening: from 'Jacob's Ladder', Adrian Lyne, 1990, 113 min.

Class Presentations

Week 9:

Analysis and discussion: 'The Shining', Stanley Kubrick, 1980, 144 min.

Class Presentations

Week 10:

Analysis and discussion: 'An American Werewolf in London', John Landis, 1981, 97 min.

Class Presentations

Week 11:

Screening: Columbo

Class Presentations

Week 12:

Excerpts from 'Buffy The Vampire Slayer'

From childhood to Adolescence

Week 13:

Excerpts from 'Buffy The Vampire Slayer'

From childhood to Adolescence

Addition:

Bonus films from Bela Lugosi.