

Neorealism and Magic Realism in Cinema

Italian Neorealism is one of the most influential, visually distinctive and thematically challenging wave in the history of cinema. The worldwide turmoil that shaped the neorealists' visions then, can be traced in every aspect of the films produced during the very short time neorealism went on. The revolutionary changes and possibilities this wave emerged led other genres and waves to be born, like French New Wave.

This course aims to focus on the Italian Neorealism, the thematic and stylistic aspects of the wave by analysing the films of the most significant directors of the time. Once the roots of the Neorealism is fully established and the means and ways are absorbed, the course will shift to discover the magic realism that replaced realism in the European cinema of 1950s. The course will get to the root of the magical realism and similar tendencies in the cinema and the literature that procreated the magic realism definition in the first place.

The course will also feed from Surrealism and Psychological Realism. During the semester, substantial works of literature and painting will be visited in order to get a broader understanding of different approaches of realism.

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 (or films) of the week. Being a participator in the class is the most important requirement of the course.

:::Attention:::

- The course starts on the first week, and although the first two weeks are 'add-drop' weeks, if you miss a class even in the beginning of the course, please drop the course, or don't take it in the first place.
- Cell phones are not used during the class.
- Students who have conflicts with other classes cannot take this course.
- The exams are done in 'closed book, no phone, no break' style.
- Since I do not have a room in the school, I don't have office hours, but if you want to meet with me for course related matters, email me and we can always set a meeting at the Mithat Alam Film Center on Tuesdays between 9:30 am and 10:30 am.
- All the films of the course are available in the archives of Mithat Alam Film Center and Boğaziçi University Multimedia Center which is located in the Aptullah Kuran Library, the North Campus.

Grading

- Participation in class discussions: 25 percent (Not attendance, but participation)
- Class Presentation: 25 percent (A detailed outline for class presentations will be given in the class. Class presentations will be held as groups of three)
- Midterm: 25 percent
- Final: 25 percent

OUTLINE

Understanding the Neorealism in Cinema

The Birth of a New Wave

'Osessione', Luchino Visconti, 1943

Rossellini's War Trilogy

'Rome, Open City', Roberto Rossellini, 1945

'Paisan', Roberto Rossellini, 1946

'Germany Year Zero', Roberto Rossellini, 1948

Marking the wave's beginning and end with Vittorio De Sica

'The Bicycle Thief', Vittorio De Sica, 1948

'Umberto D.', Vittorio De Sica, 1952

Psychological Realism and Fellini's Trilogy of Redemption:

'La Strada', Federico Fellini, 1954

'The Nights of Cabiria', Federico Fellini, 1957

'La Dolce Vita', Federico Fellini, 1960

'8½', Federico Fellini, 1963

'Fellini's Amarcord', Federico Fellini, 1973

Rossellini's Solitude Trilogy

'Stromboli', Roberto Rossellini, 1950

'Europe '51', Roberto Rossellini, 1952

'Voyage to Italy', Roberto Rossellini, 1954

Additional Analysis Films

'La Terra Trema', Luchino Visconti, 1948

'Mamma Roma', Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962

'Una Giornata Particolare', Ettore Scola, 1977

'The Conformist', Bernardo Bertolucci, 1970

Drifting away from pure Neorealism to Magic Realism

'Miracle in Milan', Vittorio De Sica, 1951

Magic Realism, The Origins

'Spider's Stratagem' by Bernardo Bertolucci from the novel of Jorge Luis Borges, 1970

Magic Realist Films in Contemporary World Cinema

Film Adaptations:

'Love in the Time of Cholera' by Mike Newell from the novel of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, 2007

'The House of the Spirits' by Bille August from the novel of Isabel Allende, 1993

*Additional readings from Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Jorge Luis Borges and Isabel Allende will be provided.

Surrealism

'The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie', Luis Bunuel, 1972

Additional Analysis Films:

'Cria Cuervos', Carlos Saura, 1976

'Le Bal', Ettore Scola, 1983

'The Purple Rose of Cairo', Woody Allen, 1985

'Cinema Paradiso', Giuseppe Tornatore, 1988

'Sweet Charity', Bob Fosse, 1969

All in all, Italian Cinema and especially some of the most important Italian directors' films will be covered thoroughly: Roberto Rossellini, Luchino Visconti, Vittorio De Sica, Federico Fellini, Bernardo Bertolucci, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Ettore Scola, Giuseppe Tornatore.

Readings:

Students will be provided a course reader which they can get from Nazar Copy in South Campus and from school's library's photocopier room. Also a digital copy will be sent to the students who do not wish to print and want to save more green.

Shiel, Mark, Italian Neorealism, Rebuilding the Cinematic City, London, Wallflower Press, 2006.

Orr, John, Post-War Cinema and Modernity, A Film Reader, New York, New York University Press, 2000.

Stam, Robert, Literature Through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation, Maiden, Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

Durix, Jean-Pierre, Mimesis, Genres and Post-Colonial Discourse: Deconstructing Magic Realism, New York, Macmillan, 1998.