

Introduction to Cinema Studies I

School of Film and Media Studies

Purchase College, State University of New York

CIN1500, CRN47591

Fall 2022, Tuesdays, 6:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Center for Media, Film, and Theatre, CMFT0065

Instructor: Prof. Joel Neville Anderson

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Office: Music Building, MUS0053

Office Hours:

- Drop-in: Mondays 2-3 PM, Thursdays 11 AM - 12 PM
- Schedule in-person or virtual times: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>

Learning Assistant: Fê Fernandes

Email: m.fernandespereira@purchase.edu

Office Hours:

- Schedule in-person or virtual times: <https://calendly.com/m-fernandespereira/>

Course Description:

This class is the first part of two-semester introduction to the world history of cinema. Beginning in the nineteenth century, moving through the silent period and into studio and sound eras, this section of the course explores the diverse forms and styles (narrative, non-narrative, documentary) that comprise film's early history until 1945. The class will cover the way that cinema evolved both as an art form and a technological medium in relation to various national, economic, and social contexts.

Course Goals/Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of film history from the 1890s to mid-1940s.
2. Understand and employ vocabulary terms and concepts corresponding to film form, style, and analysis.
3. Be able to perform analyses of film sequences that describe how aspects of cinematography, editing, mise-en-scène, and sound work together to produce particular meanings and effects.

Reading and Viewing Assignments:

Readings will be posted on Moodle (<https://moodle.purchase.edu/>) as PDFs. Films/videos assigned for viewing outside class will be available via online streaming (using the library website or other platforms freely accessible to students), as specified by the instructor. (Whatever devices you choose to use to watch films/videos outside of class, I encourage you to do so in an environment free of distractions so you may concentrate on the creators' work.) Texts and film/video offered on a weekly basis as "Recommended" sources are optional and meant for students

with a particular interest in the topic, possibly for later reference as part of the Final Essay assignment.

Discussion Platform:

Students will be periodically required to respond to the assigned viewing and reading material, analyzing the form and content of given cinematic works, and incorporating the historical contexts, theories, or arguments of the texts. This is not an informal film review, but an opportunity to demonstrate the modes of analysis we are learning in the course: briefly describe the work while offering your own thoughtful observations and questions. Your posts to Moodle should be informal, offering thoughtful observations and questions (300 words minimum) based on a prompt question. The following day, students are required to post a response to a classmate's post with further analysis (100 words minimum). (Students are encouraged to comment on these additional contributions with constructive responses, but are not required).

The initial post is due by 9 AM on the day of class, with the second response to another student due two days afterwards by 9 AM (as listed on the weekly syllabus entries), and submitted via Moodle. Students may skip one of the required responses, or complete all of them for extra credit.

Midterm Project: Shot Breakdown and Scene Overview:

Students are required to put their skills of cinematic analysis to intensive use in this assignment, in which they select a film from a list of potential titles, and using extensive application of terminology learned until midway through the semester, create a detailed breakdown of each shot in a scene (Shot Breakdown), as well as an overview of the scenes that compose the film (Scene Overview). Students will all work on different films and scenes. This detail-oriented assignment will be good preparation for the cohesive cinematic analysis required in the Final Essay. *Due at the start of class midway through the semester (as listed on the weekly syllabus entries), and submitted via Moodle.*

Final Essay:

Students are required to write a final essay analyzing a cinematic work and topic related to material from the class (10 pages, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, Chicago Manual of Style citations with footnotes and a bibliography: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html). I will distribute a prompt listing potential films/videos and topics, along with further guidelines. Students are expected to consult with me during office hours to choose from the suggested films/videos/topics and discuss their approach, or propose a new one. Students are encouraged to choose which works and theoretical models they engage with, but if you would like to pursue titles and topics outside the list of prompts, it must be discussed with and approved by the instructor in advance. The "Recommended" readings each week will be useful in furthering students' original research. *Due at the start of the final class meeting, submitted via Moodle.*

Majors Exam (Cinema & Television Studies majors only):

The Cinema Studies Exam is a one-credit requirement for Cinema and Television Studies majors. The exam is administered at the end of every semester, and students become eligible to take the

exam after successfully completing CIN1500: Introduction to Cinema Studies I and CIN1510: Introduction to Cinema Studies II with a B- or higher. This is a take-home exam, is graded as pass/fail, and covers materials from the Intro series. Therefore, it is intended as a review that will prepare you for advanced coursework in the major and serves as a pre-requisite for CIN3890: Cinema Studies Junior Seminar. All material related to the Majors Exam will be available via Moodle once students register for this one-credit requirement as part of Introduction to Cinema Studies II.

Grading:

Participation: 20% of final grade

Discussion Platform: 20%

Midterm Project: Shot Breakdown: 15%

Midterm Project: Scene Overview: 15%

Final Essay: 30%

Policies and Guidelines:

- Respecting Yourself and Others: You are expected to treat others in the class with respect. This means listening to their words and choosing your own with care. Students violating this policy will be dismissed from class.
- Preparation and Participation: Approximately two to three hours of screening material, in addition to one to two articles or book chapters will be assigned each week for students to watch and read outside class. Students are expected to review the material in detail, and come prepared to participate in discussion. Your thoughts are valuable to me and your fellow students. Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent, unless otherwise discussed.
- Attendance: Your attendance at each class is mandatory. Be sure to sign the attendance sheet. A single absence will be excused without question, however repeated absences will result in a lowered letter grade: 2 will result in a B as a maximum possible grade, 3 in a C, and 4 absences will result in automatic failure of the course. Arriving to class after the start time on two occasions will be recorded as one absence. Arriving more than 20 minutes after the start time will be considered an absence. Excusing absences will require consultation with the instructor and may require documentation, such as a doctor's note following a medical visit. If you do miss class, please also check with the instructor or your peers to catch up on assignments and handouts—this will be your responsibility.
- Breaks: There will generally be a short break during class. Returning after the class resumes will count as a late arrival. Please only leave the class outside of this set break time in case of emergencies. It is not necessary to ask for the instructor's permission, but please return within five minutes, and do not leave more than once. Inform the instructor at the start of the semester if you require an accommodation.
- Email Correspondence: Please check your university email regularly for announcements and updates to the syllabus and assignments.
- Moodle: Moodle will be an important resource for this class, and students should check it regularly for announcements.

- **Instructor Delay:** In rare instances, the instructor may be delayed arriving to class due to an emergency. If the instructor has not arrived by the time class is scheduled to start, students must wait a minimum of thirty minutes for the instructor's arrival before leaving. In the event that the instructor will miss class entirely, students will be contacted in advance via email or a sign will be posted at the classroom.
- **Food and Drinks:** The Center for Media, Film, and Theatre and Music Building facilities have strict rules regarding food and drink due to the sensitivity of technology. You may eat a snack outside the building during the break, though please note there will not be time to run and purchase a snack outside the classroom building during break. Please prepare accordingly. Students violating this policy will be dismissed from class.
- **Classroom Technology:** Please bring a notebook and pen or pencil to class. Laptops, tablets, and mobile phones are not to be used once class has begun. Laptops or tablets may be used during class presentations.
- **Notes on Zoom Usage in Case of Virtual Sessions:**
 - Remain engaged during lectures and discussions conducted via the Zoom video chat platform, and keep your webcam on as much as your situation permits.
 - When attending class via Zoom, please do your best to contribute to a positive and accepting learning environment. As much as possible, create a dedicated space for class time, with ample light. Find a comfortable position and physical posture, feel free to use a virtual background, and use your own best judgment regarding attire, etc.
 - Be prepared to take notes, whether using a desktop app or a notebook and pen/pencil.
 - Do not become distracted by other desktop windows or electronic devices. Please keep mobile phones in a separate location or ensure they are turned off.
 - Please adjust how your name displays on the Zoom interface to reflect how you would like to be addressed (including for example your preferred pronouns).
 - Keep track of your Zoom meeting links and passwords. It's helpful to store links in a calendar application with each class or meeting entered into the correct day/time.
 - If you encounter any issues with internet connectivity or computer performance, please quit any unnecessary applications or temporarily mute your webcam.
 - Please contact the instructor if you have any issues regarding access to the internet or a reliable computer in order to find a solution in coordination with Campus Technology Services (CTS): <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/cts/>
 - If any difficulties arise, don't hesitate to inform the instructor in order to discuss potential accommodations. We'll figure it out together.

Academic Integrity Policy:

The Purchase College academic integrity policy explicitly forbids cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another person and the representation of them as one's own original work. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the definition of plagiarism and the acceptable methods of attribution. These are serious matters and you need to be aware of what is and is not permissible. See <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/community-standards/student-code-of-conduct/section-a-academic-integrity/index.php> and related links for more information.

Tutoring Support:

All students at Purchase College can take advantage of tutoring services in the Learning Center. These are free peer-to-peer tutoring sessions in a variety of subjects and in writing across the disciplines. I encourage you to take advantage of this service to help you excel in this class, as well as your other courses. Please visit the Learning Center website for more information: <https://www.purchase.edu/offices/learning-center/>.

Community Health During COVID-19:

To ensure that each of us has a healthy and safe learning experience, all students are required to remain informed and follow Purchase College Policy and/or any departmental, local, state, or federal laws, rules, or regulations for attending classes on campus and in a remote learning environment. Within courses that involve in-person contact, all students, faculty members, staff, and visitors are required to adhere to the expectations outlined on the College's COVID-19 website (<https://www.purchase.edu/covid-19-updates-and-plans/>). Failure to comply with requirements (e.g. wearing masks, maintaining social distancing where applicable) will result in the request to leave the classroom for that in-person class session. Students may also be referred to the Office of Community Standards (<https://www.purchase.edu/offices/community-standards/>). Do not enter campus buildings if you test positive for or are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19. Contact your faculty and Health Services (<https://www.purchase.edu/offices/health-services/index.php>) if you need to miss class because of COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result. The conservatory/school will address on a case by case basis student absences due to COVID-19, while awaiting test results, or during quarantine.

Accessibility:

It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities. You are welcome to talk to me at any point in the semester about course design concerns, but it is always best if we can talk as soon as possible about the need for any modifications. The Office of Disability Resources collaborates directly with students who identify documented disabilities to create accommodation plans, including testing accommodations, in order for students to access course content and validly demonstrate learning. For those students who may require accommodations, please call or email the Office of Disability Resources, (914) 251-6035, odr@purchase.edu, www.purchase.edu/odr.

Counseling:

Help is available at the Counseling Center on campus for difficulties with emotional wellbeing and psychological functioning. If distress is interfering in relationships, academics, work, or daily life, confidential support can be had right away. Contact the Counseling Center at (914) 251-6390 or COU.counseling.center@purchase.edu on M-F, 9 AM -5 PM. The Counseling Center's website lists after hours emergency resources for mental health crises, sexual assault or interpersonal violence emergencies (Campus Advocacy Services), self-help, and additional coping resources. <https://www.purchase.edu/counseling-center>.

Religious Accommodations:

If you require academic accommodations for a religious observance, please speak with me as soon as possible to consider a reasonable modification.

Course Schedule:

(Note: all readings/screenings should be completed *before* the class for which they are assigned)

Week 1 (August 30): Course Overview & Introduction: Early Cinema's Pre-Histories

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Fred Ott's Sneeze* (Edison Studios, 1894); *Annabelle Butterfly Dance* (Edison, 1894); *The John C. Rice-May Irwin Kiss* (Edison, 1896); *Something Good* (William Selig, 1898); *Boxing Cats* (Edison, 1894); *Demolition of a Wall* (Auguste and Louis Lumière, 1895); *Baby Meal* (Lumière Brothers, 1895); *The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station* (Lumière Brothers, 1896); *Mounted Police Charge* (Edison, 1896); *The Vanishing Lady* (Georges Méliès, 1896); *The Gay Shoe Clerk* (Edwin S. Porter, 1903); *Decasia* (Bill Morrison, 2002, excerpt).

Week 2 (September 6): The Cinema of Attractions

In-class screening: *Black Drop* (Simon Starling, 2012); phantom ride shorts; *Workers Leaving the Factory* (Harun Farocki, 1995); *Workers Leaving the Job Site* (Kevin Jerome Everson, 2013).

Read by today: Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction* (4th edition), 1-21; Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde."

Watch by today: *A Trip to the Moon* (Méliès, 1902); *The Great Train Robbery* (Porter, 1903); Lumière Brothers shorts.

Recommended viewing: *Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer* (Thom Andersen, 1974).

Recommended reading: Jennifer M. Bean, "Toward a Feminist Historiography of Early Cinema."

*** Discussion Platform (via Moodle): First post due today (Tuesday, 9 AM), second post responding to another student due within two days (Thursday, 9 AM).**

Week 3 (September 13): Narrative Style & Roots of Hollywood

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *The Lonely Villa* (D.W. Griffith, 1909); *The Lonedale Operator* (Griffith, 1911); *Suspense* (Phillips Smalley & Lois Weber, 1913); *Within Our Gates* (Oscar Micheaux, 1915, clip); *Body and Soul* (Oscar Micheaux, 1920).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 22-69.

Watch by today: *Making an American Citizen* (Alice Guy-Blaché, 1912); *Falling Leaves* (Alice Guy-Blaché, 1912); *A House Divided* (Alice Guy-Blaché, 1913); *Musketeers of Pig Alley* (Griffith, 1912).

Recommended reading: Allyson Nadia Field, introduction to *Uplift Cinema: The Emergence of African American Film and the Possibility of Black Modernity*.

Recommended viewing: *Pioneers of African American Cinema* (Blu-ray 259) and *Pioneers: First Women Filmmakers* (Blu-ray 260) box sets in Purchase Library.

Week 4 (September 20): Expressionism & Weimar Cinema

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 71-102; Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler* (excerpt).

Watch by today: *The Last Laugh* (F. W. Murnau, 1924); *A Page of Madness* (Teinosuke Kinugasa, 1926).

Recommended reading: Aaron Gerow, *A Page of Madness: Cinema and Modernity in 1920s Japan* (excerpt).

*** Discussion Platform (via Moodle): First post due today (Tuesday, 9 AM), second post responding to another student due within two days (Thursday, 9 AM).**

Week 5 (September 27): Soviet Montage

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925); contemporary Kuleshov effect examples; *Abstract* (Hito Steyerl, 2012).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 103-123; Sergei Eisenstein, “A Dialectical Approach to Film Form,” “Methods of Montage.”

Watch by today: *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927).

Recommended viewing: *Strike* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925).

Recommended reading: Andreas Huyssen, “The Vamp and the Machine: Technology and Sexuality in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*.”

Week 6 (October 4): Radical Documentary

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, 1929).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 153-164; Vsevolod Pudovkin “The Plastic Material,” Dziga Vertov, *Kino-Eye* (excerpts).

Watch by today: *October: Ten Days That Shook the World* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925).

Recommended viewing: *Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* (Esfir Shub, 1927).

Recommended reading: Malcolm Turvey, “City Symphony and *Man with a Movie Camera*.”

*** Discussion Platform (via Moodle): First post due today (Tuesday, 9 AM), second post responding to another student due within two days (Thursday, 9 AM).**

*** Guidelines for Shot Breakdown and Scene Overview assignment distributed today.**

*** Schedule meetings with instructor next week to discuss Midterm Project: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>**

Week 7 (October 11): Documentary's “Invention”

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, 1922); *Dislocation Blues* (Sky Hopinka, 2017); *Housing Problems* (Arthur Elton and Edgar Anstey, 1935, clip); *Why We Fight:*

Prelude to War (Frank Capra, 1942, clip); *Zora Neale Hurston Fieldwork Footage* (Zora Neale Hurston, US, 1928).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 124-146, 164; Fatimah Tobing Rony, “Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography: Robert Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North*.”

Watch by today: *The Gold Rush* (Charlie Chaplin, 1925).

Recommended viewing: *The Gathering Place* (Zacharias Kunuk, 1989).

Recommended reading: Erik Barnouw, *Documentary: A History of the Non-fiction Film*, 33-50; Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary* (excerpts: Ch. 6-7).

* **Schedule meetings with instructor this week to discuss Midterm Project: <https://calendly.com/joelnanderson/>**

Week 8 (October 18): Impressionism, Dada, & Surrealism (Guest Lecture: Learning Assistant Fê Fernandes)

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Les Vampires, Episode 1: The Severed Head* (Louis Feuillade, 1915-16), *Judex, Episode 1: The Mysterious Shadow* (Feuillade, 1918), *Ballet Mécanique* (Ferdinand Léger, 1924); *Entr’acte* (René Clair, 1924); *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (Germaine Dulac, 1928); *Un Chien Andalou* (Louis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí, 1929).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 153-162; Tristan Tzara, “Dada Manifesto” (1918); André Breton, “Manifesto of Surrealism” (1924); The Surrealist Group, “Manifesto of the Surrealists Concerning *L’Age d’Or*” (1930).

Watch by today: *Sherlock Jr.* (Buster Keaton, 1924).

Recommended viewing: *Avant-Garde: Experimental Cinema of the 1920s and ‘30s* (DVD 717) and *Unseen Cinema: Early American Avant-Garde Film, 1894-1941* (DVD 879) box sets in Purchase Library.

Recommended reading: Malcolm Turvey, “Surrealism and *Un Chien Andalou*,” *The Filming of Modern Life*, 105-134.

* **Discussion Platform (via Moodle): First post due today (Tuesday, 9 AM), second post responding to another student due within two days (Thursday, 9 AM).**

Musical accompaniment #1:

Wed., Oct. 19, 8:30 PM in Choral Hall (MUS1002): *The Gold Rush* (Charlie Chaplin, 1925), accompanied by Cary Brown on piano, as part of the weekly FMS Screening Series
Students are expected to draft a Discussion Platform response to one of the two screenings offered with musical accompaniment this semester, and have the option of responding to both for extra credit.

Week 9 (October 25): Writing Workshop for Final Essay

* **Shot Breakdown and Scene Overview assignment due today. (No Weekly Response due.)**

* **Potential films/videos and topics for Final Essay assignment distributed by today.**

Week 10 (November 1): Mise-en-scène, Performance, & Star Systems

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (Carl Theodor Dreyer, 1928); *Vampyr* (Dreyer, 1930, clip); *Gold Diggers of 1933* (Mervyn LeRoy, Busby Berkeley, 1933, clip).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 147-152, 189-210.

Watch by today: *Footlight Parade* (Lloyd Bacon, Busby Berkeley, 1933).

Recommended reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art* (12th edition), chapter 4.

*** Schedule meetings with Learning Assistant this week to discuss Final Project: <https://calendly.com/m-fernandespereira/>**

Musical accompaniment #2:

Wed., Nov. 2, 8:30 PM in Choral Hall (MUS1002): *Modern Times* (Charlie Chaplin, 1936), accompanied by Cary Brown on piano, as part of the weekly FMS Screening Series. *Students are expected to draft a Discussion Platform response to one of the two screenings offered with musical accompaniment this semester, and have the option of responding to both for extra credit.*

Advising Week November 7-11

Week 11 (November 8): Sound

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *M* (Fritz Lang, 1931); *Blackmail* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1929, clips); *The Sea is a Stereo, part II: Paris Without a Sea* (Mounira Al Solh, 2007-2008); *Fainting Spells* (Sky Hopinka, 2018).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 172-188; René Clair, “The Art of Sound;” Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Alexandrov, “Statement on Sound;” Béla Balázs, “Sound.”

Watch by today: *Illusions* (Julie Dash, 1982).

Recommended reading: Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler* (excerpt); Bordwell and Thompson, *Film Art*, chapter 7.

*** Discussion Platform (via Moodle): First post due today (Tuesday, 9 AM), second post responding to another student due within two days (Thursday, 9 AM).**

Week 12 (November 15): Fascism, Spectacle, & Marxist Critique

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Modern Times* (Charlie Chaplin, 1936).

Read by today: Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility.”

Watch by today: *À nous la liberté* (René Clair, 1931).

Recommended viewing: *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl, 1935).

Recommended reading: Benjamin on Chaplin and Mickey Mouse.

*** Students should have chosen topics for the Final Essay by today.**

Week 13 (November 22): Cinema & War

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl, 1935, clip); *Why We Fight* (Frank Capra, 1943, clip); *The Daughter of the Samurai* (Arnold Fanck, Mansaku Itami, 1937, clip), *The Great Dictator* (Charlie Chaplin, 1940).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 213-251; Siegfried Kracauer, “The Mass Ornament;” Andre Bazin, “On Why We Fight: History, Documentation, and the Newsreel.”

Watch by today: *Zero for Conduct* (Jean Vigo, 1933).

Recommended reading: Miriam Bratu Hansen, “Actuality, Antinomies.”

*** Discussion Platform (via Moodle): First post due today (Tuesday, 9 AM), second post responding to another student due within two days (Thursday, 9 AM).**

Week 14 (November 29): No class in advance of autumn break

Self-Directed Field Trip to the Museum of the Moving Image with Discussion Platform response to the “Behind the Screen” permanent exhibition due by end of the semester.

Alternate assignment: Discussion Platform response to *Citizen Kane*. Complete both for extra credit.

Watch by today: *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941).

Read by today: Rick Altman, “Deep-focus sound: *Citizen Kane* and the radio aesthetic.”

Week 15 (December 6): Realism & Neorealism

Class format: In-person on campus.

In-class screening: *The Rules of the Game* (Jean Renoir, France, 1939).

Read by today: Thompson and Bordwell, *Film History*, 252-269; André Bazin, “The Ontology of the Photographic Image,” “The Myth of Total Cinema,” “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema,” “An Aesthetic of Reality: Neorealism,” “Umberto D: A Great Work,” *What is Cinema?*

Watch by today: *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica, 1948).

Recommended viewing: *Umberto D.* (Vittorio De Sica, 1952).

Recommended reading: Cesare Zavattini, “Some Ideas on the Cinema”; Robert Stam, “The Question of Realism.”

Week 16 (December 13): No class during exam week

*** Final Essays due by start of class today via Moodle.**