



FS 300 FROM CINECITTÀ STUDIOS TO REAL LOCATIONS: A JOURNEY THROUGH ITALIAN CINEMA MADE IN ROME

IES Abroad Rome – Language & Area Studies

DESCRIPTION:

The course offers the unique opportunity to study Italian Cinema from the birth of Cinecittà Studios in 1937 to the present, visiting the settings, studios and real locations where some landmark films were shot. The selected movies share the characteristic of having being all filmed in Rome, which can be considered the capital of the Italian film industry. Therefore, Rome will be explored through the eyes of some of the most influential film directors and revealed as a source of inspiration for directors such as De Sica, Rossellini, Fellini, Scola, Monicelli, Pasolini, Leone, Moretti, Virzi and Sorrentino.

The selected films will be discussed in class through an extensive historical analysis and a critical approach in order to understand the contribution of Italian cinema to the development of world cinema and the role of cinema in shaping of Italian society and culture. Students will visit the locations used to shoot the movies analyzed in class in order to understand how they were filmed and to learn the specific elements of film language and film techniques utilized by the different directors.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION: Lectures, screenings, individual or group film watching at IES multimedia lab after class, course-related trips, use of multimedia and Internet resources for research purposes, film analysis and class debates on main Italian film directors and their work.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Class participation - 10%
- Film review – 20%
- Oral presentation of film review – 10%
- Midterm exam – 30%
- Final exam – 35%

Film Review on movie chosen by the student

Students will analyze a chosen film from a technical and critical point of view and will contextualize the movie in its director's life and artistic career. Guidelines for film reviews and research can be found below. Students must submit a 1500-2000-word paper, which should include a review of the film and research on the director.

Oral Presentation

Students will present (5 minutes max) their film review to the class.

Midterm Exam

Students will be asked to write short answers to a questionnaire on specific movies and topics about Italian Cinema discussed in class.

Final Exam

Short essays on some of the films watched during the course - directors' poetics, film language used, historical and cultural context, image of Rome and Italian society provided by selected movies.

GUIDELINES FOR FILM REVIEWS AND RESEARCH PAPERS:

Film review:

- Prepare a plot summary of the film.
- Distil the main points of the articles into short, succinct sentences.
- Ask your classmates to turn to a particular page of an article if you are quoting from a passage. If you are unsure about a concept, say you don't know. It is okay to not know. It will serve as discussion.
- Your investigation will explore the social, political, technological, industrial, aesthetic, and cultural elements that relate to the film (including production and reception). You can engage with popular and scholarly sources, books and periodicals, DVDs and websites, trailers and advertisements, statistics and movie reviews and any historical document that informs us about the period.
- Select a few clips from the film to illustrate your argument. After presenting your analysis, ask questions of your classmates. They may observe something about the film that you hadn't imagined.
- Speaking in front of a class for many students can be a harrowing experience. For others, it comes easy. Recognize this fact by calling on as many different people as possible and do so by name. Be patient when awaiting answers. Give time for your question to sink in. Be ready to rephrase your question if it seems confusing to your classmates. Don't answer your own question.
- If you ask a question, always wait for a response. Listeners, don't be afraid to write down your words before presenting them to class. Use your notes taken during the film to assist you in recalling information and thoughts.

Film research:

- Prepare a brief biography of the director
- What is the historical context of the film? Why is the City in which the film was shot so important in this film?
- What were the conditions of the film's production?
- What elements of the film itself are of artistic importance?
- Cultural and social importance?
- Historical importance?
- Analyze each character of the film
- What are the main issues that the film deals with?
- What was the reception of the film?
- How was the film reviewed when it opened?
- How did it do at the box office?
- Does the film engage with any particular technology or storytelling aesthetics?
- How does it compare to the other films we have viewed?
- Prepare a few questions for class discussion
- Bring a printed version of your notes to me

Grading Rubric for Course Participation:

A	Excellent participation The student's contributions reflect an active reading of the assigned bibliography. Skillfully synthesizes the main ideas of the readings and raises questions about the applications and implications of the material. Demonstrates, through questions and comments, that he or she has been capable of relating the main ideas in the readings to the other information discussed in the course, and with his or her own life experience. The student makes informed judgments about the readings and other ideas discussed in class, providing evidence and reasons. He/she respectfully states his/her reactions about other classmates' opinions, and is capable of contributing to the inquiry spiral with other questions. The student gets fully involved in the completion of the class activities.
B	Very good participation The student's contributions show that the assigned materials are usually read. Most of the time the main ideas are identified, even though sometimes it seems that applications and

	implications of the information read were not properly reflected upon. The student is able to construct over others' contributions, but sometimes seems to interrupt the shared construction to go over tangents. He/she is respectful of others' ideas. Regularly involved in the activities but occasionally loses concentration or energy.
C	Regular participation The participant evidences a regular reading of the bibliography, but in a superficial way. He/she tries to construct over others' ideas, but commonly provides comments that indicate lack of preparation about the material. Frequently, contributions are shallow or unarticulated with the discussion in hand.
F	Insufficient participation Consistently, the participant reads in a shallow way or does not read at all. Does not participate in an informed way, and shows lack of interest in constructing over others' ideas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course the students will be able to:

- Describe the development of Italian Cinema from end of Fascism to present;
- Understand the historical, social and economic contexts in Italy and Rome in which the selected films were produced;
- Identify social and cultural implications in the development of Italian cinema;
- Analyze a film from an artistic and technical point of view;
- Evaluate movies based on critiquing skills learned over the semester;
- Recognize locations and sites made popular by Italian cinema filmed in Rome;
- Explain why and how particular locations were used in filmmaking by different Italian directors.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES classes, including course-related excursions. If a student misses more than two classes, 2 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical emergencies or family emergencies.

CONTENT:

Week & Session	Content	Assignments & Reading
<u>Week 1</u> Session 1	The birth of Cinecittà: April 21st 1937 An overview of Cinecittà studios and the Italian film industry from the 1930s to present. Excerpts from the films: <i>Cabiria</i> (1914); <i>Scipio Africanus</i> (1937).	• Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 1 "The Silent Era and the Fascist Period", pp. 1-30
Session 2	Guided tour of Cinecittà Studios to discover the secrets of great cinema	• Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 2 "The Masters of Neorealism: Rossellini, De Sica and Visconti", pp.31-73.

Week 2 Session 1	Italian Cinema after Fascism From “Realism” to “Neorealism”. Roberto Rossellini and his “cinema of facts”. Screening of selected scenes from <i>Paisà</i> by Roberto Rossellini and <i>Ossessione</i> by Luchino Visconti	- Arijon, Daniel. <i>Grammar of the Film Language</i> Chapter 3 “Defining the basic tools”, pp.12-23 - Film: <i>Rome Open City</i>, by Roberto Rossellini
Session 2	The locations of Rome, Open City Course-Related Trip: Pigneto, the neighborhood where <i>Open City</i> was filmed	Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 3 “Exploring the Boundaries of Neorealism”, pp.74-102.
Week 3 Session 1	An Odyssey through Rome with <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> Class discussion on Vittorio De Sica’s cinema defined as “a cinema of feelings”. Discussion and analysis of the historical and social context of the movie <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> by Vittorio De Sica.	- Arijon, Daniel. <i>Grammar of the Film Language</i> Chapter 2 “The importance of parallel film editing”, pp. 6-11; Chapter 8 “Editing patterns for static dialogue scenes”, pp.135-159. - Film: <i>Bicycle Thieves</i>, by Vittorio De Sica
Session 2	The locations of <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> Course-Related Trip: Locations where <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> was filmed: Porta Portese, Trastevere, Piazza Vittorio, Tiber River’s banks.	Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 4 “The break with Neorealism: Rossellini in Transition, early Antonioni and Fellini”, pp.103-141.
Week 4 Session 1	The Golden Age of Italian Cinema The most relevant changes in Italian and European society in the 60s represented by Federico Fellini, one of the most well-known Italian directors of all times, winner of 4 Oscars. Presentation and analysis of Federico Fellini’s <i>La Dolce Vita</i> (1960).	- Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 6 “The Mature Auteurs: New Dimension in Film Narrative with Visconti, Antonioni, and Fellini”, pp.196-252. - Film: <i>La Dolce Vita</i>, by Federico Fellini
Session 2	The Locations of <i>La Dolce Vita</i> Course-Related Trip: Locations where <i>La Dolce Vita</i> was filmed: Fontana di Trevi, Via Veneto, Piazza Barberini, Piazza di Spagna, Piazza del Popolo and Quirinale.	Film: <i>My Voyage to Italy</i>, a documentary by Martin Scorsese

Week 5 Session 1	Martin Scorsese on Italian Cinema Discussion on Martin Scorsese's documentary <i>My Voyage to Italy</i> , the point of view of a great Italian-American director on the Masters of Italian Cinema	- Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 5 "Commedia all'Italiana. Comedy and Social Criticism", pp.142-195. - Film: <i>Il sorpasso (The Easy Life)</i> by Dino Risi - Film: <i>Divorzio all'Italiana (Divorce Italian Style)</i> by Pietro Germi.
Session 2	Comedy Italian Style: the most popular film genre in Italy Class discussion on the characteristics of Italian comedy through the analysis of <i>Divorce Italian Style</i> (1961) and <i>The Easy Life</i> (1962).	
Week 6 Session 1	The Cinema of Ettore Scola Ettore Scola portrays 50 years of Italian history, its society and its changes with satire and farce. Analysis of Scola's comedy films: <i>We All Loved Each Other Very Much</i> , 1974 and <i>The Family</i> 1987.	- Film: <i>C'eravamo tanto amati (We All Loved Each Other Very Much)</i> and <i>La Famiglia (The Family)</i> by Ettore Scola. - Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 11 "Italian Cinema in the 1980s", pp.384-424; Chapter 8 "Myth and Marx: Pier Paolo Pasolini e Bernardo Bertolucci", pp.275-317.
Session 2	Mid-term	
Week 7 Session 1	Pier Paolo Pasolini and the political film Presentation and analysis of Pasolini's artistic and intellectual contributions to Italian culture and politics through his films: <i>Accattone (Beggar)</i> , 1961) and <i>Mamma Roma</i> (1962).	- Arijon, Daniel. <i>Grammar of the Film Language</i> Chapter 14 "Using master shots to cover motions on the screen", pp.276-288; Chapter 15 "Irregular cases", pp.289-299. - Film: <i>Accattone</i> and <i>Mamma Roma</i>, by Pier Paolo Pasolini.
Session 2	The Locations of <i>Accattone</i> and <i>Mamma Roma</i> Course-Related Trip: Locations where the films were shot: Ponte degli Angeli e Ponte Testaccio, Via Casilina e il Pigneto, Appia Antica, Via Portuense e Via Baccina	Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 7 "A Fistful of Pasta", pp.253-274.

Week 8 Session 1	Sergio Leone and The Spaghetti Western Presentation of the Italian version of a classic American Genre that launched many international movie stars. Discussion and analysis of the films: <i>Per un Pugno di Dollari (A Fistful of Dollars, 1964)</i> and <i>C'era una volta il West (Once Upon a Time, 1968)</i> by Sergio Leone.	• Arijon, Daniel. <i>Grammar of the Film Language</i> Chapter 20 “Twenty basic rules for camera movement”, pp.380-384; Chapter 21 “The panning camera”, pp.385-421. • Film: <i>A Fistful of Dollars</i> and <i>Once Upon a Time</i> by Sergio Leone
Session 2	The influence of Italian Cinema on Quentin Tarantino Quentin Tarantino is a great fan of Sergio Leone’s Spaghetti Westerns and admires the Italian B-movies by Mario Bava and Dario Argento. Analysis of how Tarantino transposes the elements of main Italian film genres into his films.	• Film: <i>Hateful Eight</i> by Quentin Tarantino • Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 9 “Politics and ideology in the Contemporary Italian Cinema”, pp.318-346.
Week 9 Session 1	Nanni Moretti between sacred and profane Presentation and analysis of Nanni Moretti’s films: from <i>Caro Diario (Dear Diary, 1993)</i> to <i>Habemus Papam (We have a Pope, 2011)</i> with their independent, opinionated and humorous perspective on Italian Society.	• Arijon, Daniel. <i>Grammar of the Film Language</i> Chapter 22 “The travelling camera”, pp.424-464. • Film: <i>Caro Dairo and Habemus Papa, by Nanni Moretti.</i>
Session 2	The Locations of <i>Caro Diario</i> Course-Related Trip: Locations where the films were shot in the Garbatella neighborhood (via Obizzo Guidotti, the elementary school <i>Cesare Battisti</i> , via delle Sette Chiese, Piazza Sant'Eurosia, via Rubino, Via Tosi, via Rho, Piazza Sauli and the courtyard in via Magnaghi)	• Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 11 “The Contemporary Scene and New Italian Comedy”, pp.347-383.
Week 10 Session 1	Reinvigorating the “Commedia All'italiana” genre Analysis of Paolo Virzi’s cinema as a bittersweet picture of modern society with a special combination of compassionate laughter and social critique. Presentation of Virzi’s film: <i>Tutta la Vita Davanti (Your Whole Life Ahead of You, 2009)</i> .	• Bondanella, Peter. <i>A History of Italian Cinema</i>. Chapter 12 “The Italian Cinema Enters the Third Millennium”, pp.384-447. • Film: <i>Tutta la Vita Davanti (Your Whole Life Ahead of You)</i> by Paolo Virzi

Session 2	The Locations of <i>Your Whole Life Ahead of You</i> Course-Related Trip: Location where the film was shot at the Fiera di Roma (Rome Exhibition Center)	- A selection of national and international articles and press reviews on contemporary Italian Oscar Winner director Paolo Sorrentino. - Arijon, Daniel. <i>Grammar of the Film Language</i>, Chapter 28 "Film Punctuation", pp.579-614.
<u>Week 11</u> Session 1	<i>The Great Beauty</i>: The Resurrection of Italian Cinema at the Oscars 2013 <i>La Grande Bellezza</i> described as " <i>La Dolce Vita</i> " 2.0 explores the relationships among culture, politics and aesthetics through a kaleidoscopic journey set against the photogenic backdrop of Rome. Analysis of Fellini's legacy in Sorrentino's cinema.	Film: <i>La Grande Bellezza (The Great Beauty)</i> by Paolo Sorrentino
Session 2	The Location of <i>The Great Beauty</i> Course-Related Trip: Location where the film was shot in the very heart of Rome	A selection of national and international articles and press reviews on Italian contemporary film director Gabriele Mainetti.
<u>Week 12</u> Session 1	The Rebirth of Italian Film Genre: "<i>The Superhero Jeeg Robot</i>" Presentation of <i>Lo Chiamavano Jeeg Robot</i> (<i>They Call me Jeeg</i> , 2016), Gabriele Mainetti's first feature film that premiered successfully at the Rome International Film Festival in 2016. An original mix of social critique and heroic deeds set in a Rome that resembles Gotham City.	Film: <i>They Call me Jeeg</i> by Gabriele Mainetti Homework: Film Review on chosen film and research paper on its director's bio.
Session 2	Each student will present film review and research paper to the class. Each student will have 5 minutes for his/her oral presentation and can use PowerPoints.	
	Final Exam	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Pigneto, the neighborhood where *Open City* was filmed
- Locations where *Bicycle Thieves* was filmed: Porta Portese, Trastevere, Piazza Vittorio, Tiber River's banks.
- Locations where *La Dolce Vita* was filmed: Fontana di Trevi, Via Veneto, Piazza Barberini, Piazza di Spagna, Piazza del Popolo and Quirinale
- Locations where the films were shot: Ponte degli Angeli e Ponte Testaccio, Via Casilina e il Pigneto, Appia Antica, Via Portuense e Via Baccina

- Locations where the films were shot in the Garbatella neighborhood (via Obizzo Guidotti, the elementary school *Cesare Battisti*, via delle Sette Chiese, Piazza Sant'Eurosia, via Rubino, Via Tosi, via Rho, Piazza Sauli and the courtyard in via Magnaghi)
- Location where *Your Whole Life Ahead of You* was shot at the Fiera di Roma (Rome Exhibition Center)
- Location where *The Great Beauty* was shot in the very heart of Rome

FILMOGRAPHY:

- *Rome Open City*, by Roberto Rossellini
- *Roma Città Aperta (Rome open city)* by Roberto Rossellini, 1945
- *Ladri di Biciclette (Bicycle Thieves)* by Vittorio De Sica, 1948
- *La Dolce Vita* by Federico Fellini, 1960
- *Accattone (Beggar)* by Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1961
- *Mamma Roma* by Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962
- *Il sorpasso (The Easy Life)* by Dino Risi, 1962
- *Per un Pugno di Dollari (A Fistful of Dollars)* by Sergio Leone, 1964
- *C'era una volta il West (Once Upon a Time)* by Sergio Leone, 1968
- *C'eravamo Tanto Amati (We All Loved Each Other Very Much)* by Ettore Scola, 1974
- *Caro Diario (Dear Diary)* by Nanni Moretti, 1993
- *My Voyage to Italy* by Martin Scorsese, 2001
- *Tutta la Vita Davanti (Your Whole Life Ahead of You)* by Paolo Virzì, 2009
- *Habemus Papam (We Have a Pope)* by Nanni Moretti, 2012
- *La Grande Bellezza (The Great Beauty)*, by Paolo Sorrentino, 2013
- *Lo Chiamavano Jeeg Robot (They Call me Jeeg)*, by Gabriele Mainetti, 2015

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Arijon, Daniel. *Grammar of Film Language*. Silman-James Press, 1991 (624 pages)
- Bondanella, Peter. *A History of Italian Cinema*. The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2009 (546 pages).

Towards the end of the semester the readings will shift from books to press reviews because we will be analyzing contemporary filmmakers whose work and artistic career has not yet become the subject of books or official publications.