

Film Studies Program

National Cinemas: Japanese Cinema
Film Studies 2243G (001)
Winter 2017

Instructor: Michael Raine
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Office: AHB 1G31
Office Hours: Monday, 4:30-5:20, or by
appointment

Course Date/Time:
Screening: Monday 5:30-8:30 AHB 3B04
Lecture/tutorial: Wednesday 11:30-1:30
AHB 3B04

Course Location: Arts & Humanities 3B04

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in Film Studies 1020E or Film Studies 1022 or permission of the Department. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you do not pass this course. For a full list of prerequisites, see the course website at www.uwo.ca/arts/humanities/filmstudies/.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understanding, capacity for argument, judgement and analysis will be fostered by essays, presentations and assignments, and by in-class small-group and whole-class discussion.
2. Communication skills will be imparted through in-class discussion and credit given for frequency and quality of contributions, and by essays and other assignments marked in accordance with a grading scale given to the students and including benchmarks for the expectations associated with each grade, from A+ to F.
3. Awareness of the limits of knowledge will be enhanced by exploring the legitimate differences of opinion and methodology within the field, and by requiring students to negotiate the formulation of their own opinions in-class with the terms and knowledge brought to that discussion by other students and the instructor.
4. The ability to argue and decide on complex issues will be fostered by essays and in-class discussion; that to manage time, by the need to prepare properly for class and to deliver assignments in a timely manner; and that for academic responsibility, by the need to source assignments accurately.

Course Materials

Required Reading:

All readings for the course will be posted to the resources section of the class web site.

Recommended online texts: (linked from OWL)

David Bordwell. *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*

Noel Burch. *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema*

Recommended Texts: (library reserve, or order your personal copy)

Andrew GORDON. *The Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present.*

Discussion board, small-group discussion, and group presentation:

Most weeks you will be asked to post your thoughts on films and readings to the class web site. Those postings will be evaluated and will count toward your final grade.

Small-group discussions will be a feature of every class. You will discuss assigned topics related to the film or one of the readings with a group of fellow students and then report back to the class.

Those groups will also present on one or two films or readings during the term. This will involve researching the background to the film route by which the film arrived on a world stage (film festival, commercial release, retrospective, DVD release, etc) and the critical reception of the film. It will also involve presenting an analytic summary of that research, using whatever visual aids are necessary. The group will decide what work each member should do and will be asked to report on levels of participation. Each member of the group who is recognized as pulling their weight will get the same grade.

In-class quizzes:

Most weeks there will be pop quizzes of approximately five questions, in the form that will be used in the final examination. Quizzes will be evaluated and will count toward your final grade.

Close analysis essay:

This 1,500 word essay will be a close analysis of the material qualities (cinematography, editing, performance, sound, etc.) of a film, so that you can practice and demonstrate your mastery of ing,

E-Mail Policy:

Generally, all emails will be responded to within 24-48 hours during weekdays (not including holidays). Don't be shy about reminding me if you don't hear back.

Laptops and Cell Phones Policy:

Laptops are not to be used during screenings. You will need to take notes using paper and pen so be sure to bring those materials with you. Exceptions may be granted in the case of students with special needs, but this will only come with official approval from academic counseling. Laptops are useful for making notes and reading material from the web site but they are also a source of distraction, to you and to others. Any indication that you are not doing class work will result in laptops being banned for in-class use. Please remember that, and remind your classmates. In addition, be sure to turn off cell phones. Text messaging during class is unacceptable.

Complaints:

If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are still not satisfied, they should then take the complaint to the Film Studies Office, IGAB, Room 0N64. These regulations are in place because a failure to follow these procedures creates the potential for injustices of various kinds affecting either the instructor or the students themselves, or both parties. Concerns should not be allowed to fester but should be raised with the instructor in a timely manner, so that they can be addressed in time to make a difference to the course.

Timetable

[Note: to make things clear, the family name of every author in this syllabus is CAPITALIZED.]

Week 1 (January 9/11): The prewar period film

Cinematic antecedents. Utsushi-e and gento. Film technology and "wonders from abroad."

Week 3 (January 23/25): Mizoguchi, sound, and mise-en-scène

Realism in film and literature. Class consciousness in the cinema. Modern girls and modern boys. Syuzhet, style, and narration. Sound, image, and mise-en-scene. The voice and Japanese radio drama. Celebrity and performance. Theater and film. Making the invisible visible: intensity and psychological depth. Subtitling, accent, and dialect.

Screening: *The Downfall of Osen* (Orizuru Osen, Mizoguchi Kenji, ???, 1935, ??? mins)

Readings: Noel BURCH. "Mizoguchi Kenji" [in *To the Distant Observer*, pp. 217-246]
Chika KINOSHITA. "The Benshi Track: Mizoguchi Kenji's *The Downfall of Osen* and the Sound Transition"

Week 4 (January 30/February 1): Wartime image culture

Cinema in the Japanese empire. Documentary, ethnography, kulturfilm. Physical culture and the body in film. Mass Ornaments and Media Events. Documentary diegesis. Wartime cinephilia: "Film-like" films and "subject-based" films. "National Policy films and People's films. Recapturing the cinematic sky: special effects and wartime spectaculars. Science as wonder. Pan-Asian cinema.

Screening: *Can You Become a Pilot*

The War at Sea from Hawaii to Malaya (Hawai-Marei okikaisen, YAMAMOTO Kajir

Readings: *Kokutai no hongji* [Fundamentals of our National Polity] [excerpt]

Aaron GEROW. "Narrating the Nation-ality of a Cinema: The Case of Japanese Prewar Film"

***** CLOSE ANALYSIS ESSAY DUE: January *****

Week 5 (February 6/8): Occupation cinema

Occupation culture. Trauma and defeat. Democratic-Enlightenment films. The community of contrition.

Week 8 (February 27/March 1): Postwar entertainment cinema

Politics, censorship, and independent cinema. Copying and resistance. Genre theory and film style. History of the jidai-geki. Japanese cinema and western film studies. Remembering and forgetting. Film festivals and cultural flow. Art Cinema and the elevated style. Mise-en-scene and the French nouvelle vague. Wartime genres in the postwar. Action Cinema. Kurosawa and the visual syllogism.

Screening: *Seven Samurai* (Shichinin no samurai, KUROSAWA)

Readings: Mitsuhiro YOSHIMOTO. "Seven Samurai"

Luc MOULLET, André BAZIN, Jacques RIVETTE. "Exchanges About Kurosawa and Mizoguchi"

***** RESEARCH ESSAY TOPIC DUE: March 2 *****

Week 9 (March 6/8): The popular song film

Import substitution and exported cinema. High economic growth and postwar popular culture. Radio, records, television. Teen musicals and juvenile delinquency. Americanization and postwar cul

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in

