**FMST 665J: Topics in Film Studies: Cinema and Exploration**

**Tuesdays, 6-10 pm in FB-250**

Instructor: Luca Caminati

Office: FB 421-7

Office Hours: Tuesday. 3-5, or by appointment.\*

\*For appointments during office hours please sign up in FB 319, or call (514) 848-2424, ext. 4666. For appointments outside office hours contact me directly.

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**Objective:**

This class will examine the notion of cinema as a mode of exploration of reality. We will address a historical overview of the Western tradition of travel films from early anthropological reportages to different contemporary variations on the theme of the travelogue, presented to the students through a wide array of modes of filmmaking (anthropological, “national geographic”, experimental, avant-garde, “fakes”, etc.) and auteurs (Akerman, Buñuel, Gianikian & Ricci Lucchi, Marker, Pasolini, Rouch, Trinh T. Minh-ha, etc.). Finally, and following Dudley Andrew’s lead, we will turn to exploration of reality as the structuring principle of art cinema, focusing our attention on modernist open narratives as a way of “searching the world with the camera”. The course will consist of weekly web-posts addressing the reading, occasional additional screenings, a critical bibliography and a final research paper of 20-25 pages.

**Reading:**

Text will be provided to students in .pdf form. Three volumes recommended for purchase are:

\*Andrew, Dudley. *What Cinema Is*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010; and

\*Russell, Catherine. *Experimental Ethnography*. Durham and London. Duke University Press, 1999.

\* Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture; Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988.

**Course Requirements:**

**1. Attendance, Participation, and Weekly Responses: 30%**

Attendance and participation in class are mandatory, and will be counted toward your final grade. Every week you will be asked to write a **one-page response paper** on an assigned topic. This response should be posted on Moodle by 10 pm on Monday. In this class there will be no formal presentations, since students are required to come to each class prepared to discuss the reading.

**2. Critical Bibliography: 20%**

Students will prepare a critical bibliography on the topic of their final paper. The topic can be delimited geographically, temporally, or theoretically, and it has to be approved beforehand by the instructor. Students are expected to present in one paragraph the thesis of their paper, a concise summary of one paragraph of the argument of at least 1 or 2 volumes, or/and 4 or 5 articles on the topic of their research. The Critical Bibliography is **due on March 23rd** **by 4 pm** in the main office.

**3. Final Paper: 50%.**

This 20-25 page paper will ask students to expand on one of the topics dealt with in class. This is a research paper for which a comprehensive bibliography is expected. The final paper is **due April 10 at 3 pm.**

**Schedule**

**Jan. 3, Unit 1**: *On Ethnography*

Reading:

\*Clifford, James. “Introduction” and “On Ethnographic Authority”. *The Predicament of Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988, 1-54.

Clips from *Dead Birds* (dir. Robert Gardner, 1965, US, 85 min.)

Screening: *Land Without Bread*, dir. Luis Buñuel (*Las Hurdes*, Spain, 1932, 30 min.)

**Jan. 10, Unit 2:** *Surrealist Ethnography*

\*Russell, Catherine. “Another Look” and “Surrealist Ethnography”. *Experimental Ethnography*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999, 3-47.

\*Clifford, James. “Traveling Cultures”, in Grossberg, Lawrence, ed. *Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge, 1992, 96-111.

Screening: *From the Pole to the Equator*, dir. Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi, 1987, Italy, 96 min.

**Jan. 17, Unit 3:** *Early Travelogues*

\* Russell, Catherine. “The Body as the Main Attraction”. *Experimental Ethnography*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999, 51-75.

\* Gunning, Tom. “The Whole World Within Reach”. Ruoff, Jeffrey, ed. *Virtual Voyages*, Durham: Duke UP, 2006, 25-41.

Guest Speaker: Katie Russell

Clips from Lumiere’s *Panoramas* (ch. 6 and ch. 8 from *The Lumiere Brothers’ First Films*, DVD 1085)

Screening: A Tarzan Extravaganza: clips from *Tarzan of the Apes*, dir. Scott Sidney with Elmo Lincoln, 1918, 73 min.; *Tarzan the Tiger*, dir. Henry MacRae with Frank Miller, 1929, episode 1, “Call of the Jungle”; and *Tarzan the Ape Man*, dir. W.S. Van Dyke with Johnny Weissmuller, 1932, 100 min.

**Jan. 24, Unit 4**: *Primitive Encounters*

\*Torgovnick, Marianna. “Defining the Primitive” and “Taking Tarzan Seriously”. *Gone Primitive*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1990, 1-74.

\*Foster, Hal. “The ‘Primitive’ Unconscious of Modern Art.” *October*, 34 (1985): 15-70.

Guest Speaker: Shahin Parhami presents *Amin* (2010)

\*Extra-Screening: *Grass: A Nation’s Battle for Life* (dir. Merian C. Cooper and Erne Schoedsack, 1925, 71 min.). A **screening** for this film will be available at VMR on **Friday, Jan. 27th at 2 pm**. Also, the film will be on reserve at VMR for private viewing.

**Jan. 31, Unit 5**: *Lured by the East*

\*Said, Edward. Introduction and Chapter 1 (sect. I). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979, 1-48

\*Hamid Naficy, “Lured by the East” in Ruoff, Jeffrey. *Virtual Voyages*. Durham: Duke UP, 2006, 116-138.

Screening: *Jaguar*, dir. Jean Rouch (France, 1967, 110 min)

**Feb. 7, Unit 6**:

\*Reading on Jaguar

\*Kaplan, Caren. “Becoming Nomad”, in *Questions of Travel*. Durham: Duke UP, 1996, 65-100.

Screenings: *Cannibal Tours*, dir. Dennis O’Rourke (1989, Australia, 70 min.); and *Reassemblage* (dir. Trinh-T. Minh-ha, USA, 1982, 40 min.)

**Feb, 14, Unit 7:**

Reading:

\*Trinh T. Min-ha. “Documentary Is/Not a Name”. *October* 52, 1990, 76-98.

\*Bruner, Edward M. “Of Cannibals, Tourists, and Ethnographers: *Cannibal Tours* by Dennis O'Rourke”. *Cultural Anthropology* , 4, 4 (Nov., 1989), 438-445.

Screening: *Encounters at the End of the World*, dir. Werner Herzog, 2008, 99 min.

**Break** (exploration of self and underwater relaxation is recommended)

**Feb. 28, Unit 8:** *Auteur as Explorer I*

Reading:

\*Andrew, Dudley, “The Camera Searching in the World”, in *What Cinema Is,* 1-28.

\*Bazin, Andre. “Cinema and Exploration”, in *What Is Cinema*, vol. 1, pp

Guest Speaker: Kaia Scott

Clips from *La Soufrier*, dir. Werner Herzog, 1977, Germany, 100 min. (DVD5351)

Clips from Kon-Tiki, dir. Thor Heyerdahl, 1951, Norway, 77 min

Screening: *From the East* (*D’Est*, dir. Chantal Akerman, Belgium, 1993, 107 min)

**March 6, Unit 9**: *Auteur as Explorer II*

Reading:

\*Russell, Catherine. “Autoethnography: Journey of the Self”. *Experimental Ethnography*. Durham: Duke UP, 1999, 275-314.

\*Andrew, Dudley, “The Projector As Spectator’s Searchlight, in *What Cinema Is*, 66-97

Screening: *Notes towards an African Orestis* (dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1970, Italy, 65 min)

**March 13, Unit 10**: *Auteur as Explorer III*

Reading:

\*Rohdie, Sam. “And Africa?” *The Passion of Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995, 81-117.

\*Andrew, Dudley, “The Evolution of the Subjects of Cinema”, in *What Cinema Is*, 98-145.

Screening: A selection of film of Jean Painlevé from *Science is Fiction*

**March 20, Unit 11**: SCMS in Boston. **Critical Bibliography** must be turned in the office by **Friday 23rd at 4 pm**.

**March 27, Unit 12:** *Underwater I: Painlevé*

Reading:

\*Brigitte Berg, “Contradictory Forces”, pp. 3-45; and Ralph Rugoff, “Fluid Mechanics”, pp. 49-57. In Bellows, Andy M. et al., eds. *Science is Fiction. The Films of Jean Painlevé*. Cambridge: MIT, 2000.

Clips from

\*Pierre Huyghe’s *Aquarium Project Live Marine Ecosystem* (2011);

\**Fantasia sottomarina* (1938-9, dir. Roberto Rossellini, 8 min.);

Screening: *The Silent World* (*Le monde du silence*, 1957, dir. L. Malle and J. Cousteau, 86 min)

**April 3, Unit 13:** *Underwater II: Cousteau*

**Students present their final paper projects (5 min. each)**

Reading:

\*O'Grady, David. “This is an adventure’: *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* and the spectacle of nature documentary”. *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, 2011: 1-17.

Clips from *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou* (dir. Wes Anderson, USA, 2004, 119 min.)

Screening: *Oceans* (*Océans*, 2011, dir. J. Perrin and J. Cluzaud, France, 84 min.)

**Papers are due April 13 at 12 noon**