

Film Programme

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies

Te Kura Tānga Kōrero Ingaruhi, Kiriata, Whakaari, Pāpāho

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences



## FILM 306 The Art of Film

### Trimester 1 2016

29 February to 29 June 2016

20 Points



*Heat* (Michael Mann, 1995)

#### IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24 to 30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Last assessment item due: 13 June 2016

Withdrawal dates: Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds).

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, you may be able to apply for an aegrotat (refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)).

#### CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

**Screenings:** Tuesday 9.00-11.50 HMLT 104

**Lectures:** Wednesday 11.00-12.50 HMLT 104

#### Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the FILM 306 site on Blackboard: go to "Tutorial instructions" and then follow the instructions carefully. Remember to record your tutorial time, day and

room for future reference. Tutorial rooms will be listed on Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

#### **NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS**

**Staff:** Tim Groves

**Email:** tim.groves@vuw.ac.nz

**Phone:** (04) 463 5410

**Room:** 83 Fairlie Terrace, 303

**Office Hours:** TBA

Tutor details will be posted.

#### **COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information will be communicated in lectures and posted via Blackboard.

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

#### **PRESCRIPTION**

This course examines the artistic dimensions of cinema at an advanced level. It may focus on specific film styles, aspects of the medium, individual directors, avant-garde and experimental cinema, or historical trends.

#### **COURSE CONTENT**

In 2016 this course will focus on some of the key artistic features of post-classical Hollywood cinema from 1967 to the present. Drawing on films by Martin Scorsese, Robert Altman, Michael Mann and Tony Scott, it will explore topics such as genre revisionism, narrative, the representation of masculinity, and stylistic developments.

#### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)**

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, terms and debates in Film Studies about post-classical American cinema.
2. Characterise and evaluate relevant scholarly and visual texts.
3. Demonstrate advanced critical and textual analysis skills.
4. Produce and persuasive arguments in written, oral, and/or visual form.

### TEACHING FORMAT

This course will be delivered through a combination of screenings, lectures and tutorials. Lectures and tutorials will involve student participation.

### MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

Make a credible attempt at each of the assignments and submit them on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work). [Any student who is concerned that they have been \(or might be\) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.](#)

### WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the trimester. This should be organised as follows:

Classes: 6 hours per teaching week	69
Class Preparation: 5 hours per week	60
Hollywood Renaissance Essay:	28
Creative Assignment:	15
Contemporary Hollywood Essay:	28

**Please note: there will be no tutorials in weeks 1, 9, and 13**

### ASSESSMENT

There will be three assignments in this course.

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1 Hollywood Renaissance Essay (2500 words)	40%	1, 2, 3, 4	11 <sup>th</sup> April
2 Creative Exercise	20%	1, 2, 3, 4	6 <sup>th</sup> May
3 Contemporary Hollywood Essay (2500 words)	40%	1, 2, 3, 4	13 <sup>th</sup> June

#### Assignment One: Hollywood Renaissance Essay (2500 words)

**Due Date: Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> April**

**Weighting: 40%**

**Commented [MG1]:** All MCRs should be related to the CLOs and show their relevance. There has also been discussion around the term "submit". Please see the [MCRs and Student Feedback document](#) from the Academic Office, the [memo from FLTC](#), and the [Guidelines for MCRs](#) for assistance. Some course coordinators have decided not to have MCRs which is another option open to you (in which case, just delete this section).

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**Description:**

This assignment will cover topics such as the transformation of genres in the Hollywood Renaissance period, as well as changes to character and narrative.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of your engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 306
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to conduct independent research from reputable academic sources, synthesise research materials, engage in textual analysis, and develop and express your ideas
- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your essay
- Quality and fluency of written expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will improve your knowledge of one of the topics studied in the first phase of the course. It will enable you to develop your textual analysis, independent research, critical and argumentation skills. It will also improve your written expression.

**Assignment Two: Creative Exercise**

**Due Date: Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> May**

**Weighting: 20%**

**Description:**

This creative exercise will cover weeks 6-8 in the course, including topics such as intertextuality, high concept style, and the representation of masculinity. Further details will be provided early in the course.

Assessment Criteria:

- Completing the set task in a clear, direct, relevant, and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 306
- The originality and quality of your findings, including creativity and communication
- Technical skill where appropriate
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis where appropriate
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will enhance your knowledge of key concepts, ideas and debates about post-classical Hollywood cinema. It will develop your creative, critical, and/or practical skills.

**Assignment Three: Contemporary Hollywood Essay (2500 words)**

**Due Date: Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> June**

**Weighting: 40%**

**Description:**

This essay will cover the third phase of the course, including topics such as post-classical narration, the representation of masculinity, and style in the films of Michael Mann, Tony Scott, and Steven Soderbergh.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of your engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 306
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to conduct independent research from reputable academic sources, synthesise research materials, engage in textual analysis, and develop and express your ideas
- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your essay
- Quality and fluency of written expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will improve your knowledge of one of the topics studied in the third phase of the course. It will enable you to develop your textual analysis, independent research, critical and argumentation skills. It will also improve your written expression.

**SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK**

The essays for this course should be submitted in hard copy form to the administrative office in 83 Fairlie Terrace. Instructions for the create assignment will be posted.

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the "Assignments and Turnitin" section of Blackboard.

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your tutor in tutorials or during their office hours. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of

teaching. Assignments will be held in the administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show ID when collecting assignments from the office.

#### EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

##### Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Wednesday 29 June 2016.**

##### Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

#### SET TEXTS

There are no set texts for this course.

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#### RECOMMENDED READING

A list of recommended readings will be posted on Blackboard.

#### CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

#### STUDENT FEEDBACK

This course has not been taught previously. Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)

**COURSE PROGRAMME: READINGS AND SCREENINGS**

Please note that there are no tutorials in weeks 1, 9, and 13.

- Week 1:**                   **Introduction; *The Searchers***
- Screenings:**           *The Searchers* (John Ford, 1956)
- Readings:**             McBride, Joseph and Michael Wilmington. "Prisoner of the Desert." *Sight and Sound* 60.4 (1971): 210-214.
- Kramer, Peter. "Post-Classical Hollywood." *American Cinema and Hollywood: Critical Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. 63-83.
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- Week 2:**                   **The Hollywood Renaissance; Auteurist Cinema**
- Screenings:**           *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967)
- Readings:**             King, Geoff. *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. 36-48.
- Cook, David A. "The Film School Generation." *The New American Cinema*. Ed. Jon Lewis. Durham, SC and London: Duke University Press, 1998. 11-37.
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- Week 3:**                   **1970s Cinema: Character, Narrative, Masculinity**
- Screenings:**           *Two-Blacktop* (Monte Hellman, 1971)
- Readings:**             Elsaesser, Thomas. "The Pathos of Failure: Notes on the Unmotivated Hero." *The Persistence of Hollywood*. New York and Oxford: Routledge, 2012. 225-236.
- Laderman, David. *Driving Visions: Exploring the Road Movie*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002. 93-105.
- Laderman, David. "What a Trip: The Road Film and American Culture." *Journal of Film and Video* 48.1/2 (Spring-Summer 1996): 41-57.
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- Week 4:**                   **Genre Transformations**
- Screenings:**           *The Long Goodbye* (Robert Altman, 1973)
- Readings:**             Kolker, Robert. *A Cinema of Loneliness: Penn, Stone, Kubrick, Scorsese, Spielberg, Altman*. Third Edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980. 344-346; 363-373 [excerpts].
- Cawelti, John G. "Chinatown and Generic Transformation in Recent American Films." *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*. Eds. Gerald Mast and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979. 559-579.
- Berliner, Todd. "The Genre Film as Booby Trap: 1970s Genre Bending and *The French Connection*." *Cinema Journal* 40.3 (Spring 2001): 25-46.



- Week 6:** 'Left Cycle', Conspiracy and Paranoia Films
- Screenings:** *The Parallax View* (Alan Pakula, 1974)
- Readings:** Keathley, Christian. "The Post-Traumatic Cycle." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*. Eds. Thomas Elsaesser, Alexander Horwath and Noel King. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004. 298-308.
- Ray, Robert. *A Certain Tendency of the Hollywood Cinema, 1930-1980*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985. 296-325.
- Week 7:** Scorsese, Intertextuality, Expressive Aesthetics, and 'Right Cycle Films
- Screenings:** *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1975)
- Readings:** Carroll, Noel. "The Future of Allusion: Hollywood in the Seventies (and Beyond)." *October* 20 (Spring 1982): 51-81.
- Grist, Leighton. *The Films of Martin Scorsese, 1963-1977: Authorship and Context*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000. 123-157.
- Week 8:** High Concept Aesthetics
- Screenings:** *Top Gun* (Tony Scott, 1986)
- Readings:** Wyatt, Justin. *High Concept: Movies and Marketing in Hollywood*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. 23-64.
- Week 9:** Mann, Masculinity, Style
- Screenings:** *Heat* (Michael Mann, 1995)
- Readings:** Thoret, Jean-Baptiste. "The Aquarium Syndrome: On the Films of Michael Mann." Trans. Anna Dzenis and Adrian Martin. *Screening the Past* 37 (2013)
- Dzenis, Anna. "Michael Mann's Cinema of Images." *Screening the Past* 12 (2002)
- [www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/firstrelease/fr0902/adfr14b.html](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/firstrelease/fr0902/adfr14b.html)
- Sharrett, Christopher. "Michael Mann: Elegies for a Post-Industrial Landscape." *Fifty Contemporary Filmmakers*. Ed. Yvonne Tasker. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. 253-263.
- Lindstrom, J.A. "Heat: Work and Genre." *Jump Cut* 43 (July 2000): 21-37.
- <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinesays/JC43folder/Heat.html>

**Week 10: Soderbergh, Colour, and Complex Temporality**

**Screenings:** *The Limey* (Steven Soderbergh, 1999)

**Readings:** Carruthers, Lee. "Biding our Time: Rethinking the Familiar in Steven Soderbergh's *The Limey*." *Film Studies* 9 (Winter 2006): 9-21.  
Thanouli, Eleftheria. "Post-Classical Time: The Temporal Qualities of the Cinematic Image." *Post-Classical Cinema: An International Poetics of Film Narration*. 113-136.  
King, Geoff. "Consciousness, Temporality, and the Crime-Revenge Genre in *The Limey*." *The Philosophy of Steven Soderbergh*. Eds. R. Barton Palmer and Steven Sanders. 91-105.

**Week 11: Tony Scott, Post-Classical Narration, and Post-Continuity Cinema**

**Screenings:** *Domino* (Tony Scott, 2005)

**Readings:** Knapp, Larry. "Tony Scott and *Domino*: Say Hello (and Goodbye) to the Postclassical." *Jump Cut* 50 (2008)  
<http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/ic50.2008/DominoKnapp/>  
Thanouli, Eleftheria. "Post-Classical Narration: A New Paradigm in Contemporary Cinema." *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 4.3 (December 2006): 183-196.  
Shaviro, Steven. "Post-Continuity." *The Pinocchio Theory*.  
<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=1034>

**Week 12: Towards Postclassical Cinema**

**Screenings:** *The Insider* (Michael Mann, 1999)

**Readings:** McCann, Ben. "Bliss in Blueness: Colour Strategies in the Films of Michael Mann." *Questions of Colour in Cinema: From Paintbrush to Pixel*. Ed. Wendy Everett. Bern: Peter Lang, 2007. 141-160.

**Week 13: Conclusion**

**Screenings:** TBA

**Readings:** TBA

**Final Assignment Due: Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup>**