

Code: BMI-FLMD-232E.19

Course title: Contemporary Fantastic Genres

Course convenors: Bence Kránicz

Class time and place: Friday 10.45-12.15

Course type: seminar

Course content: This course in genre theory in and genre history focusses on key fantastic genres in contemporary cinema: science fiction, fantasy, superhero and horror films. After outlining the literary (and in the case of the superhero genre, comicbook-based) backgrounds of said genres the course details the most relevant theoretical concepts and historical changes, emphasizing the contemporary forms of these genres. For students' participation it is essential to watch the compulsory films for the assigned weeks.

In class, every required film is presented by a student, followed by group discussions of the required films. Every class starts with a quick test that checks if the participants have actually watched the films required for that week's seminar. Three missed classes/tests are permitted. Further requirements to get a grade on this class is writing a final exam during last week's class.

1. Film and genre (Introduction). Generic classification in storytelling media.
2. Brief history of generic classification in the Hollywood film industry. Basic concepts: auteur cinema, genre cinema, popular film, art film. Typologies of genre. Genres outside Hollywood.
3. Science fiction 1. Literary and early filmic variations.
4. Science fiction 2. Subgenres and historical outline. Sci-fi in global cinema.
5. Science fiction 3. Contemporary science fiction.
6. Fantasy 1. Mythology, folklore, fable, fantasy in literature and film.
7. Fantasy 2. Fantasy in animation film and in contemporary global cinema.
8. Superhero film 1. Superhero genre in comics and the generification of the superhero film.
9. Superhero film 2. Superhero film in contemporary global cinema.
10. Horror 1. Literary roots of horror. Theory of the „black fantasy“. Early horror films and the generification of horror in Hollywood.
11. Horror 2. Historical outline of the Hollywood horror and the independent American horror film. Horror in contemporary global cinema.
12. Final exam

Requirements:

- In-class presentation
- Written exam at the end of the semester
- Three missed classes/tests permitted

Learning outcomes: The aim of this course is to introduce students to key concepts of genre theory and brief historical outlines of the fantastic genres. Participants also learn about the role of the fantastic genres in contemporary global cinema.

Compulsory films: *Edge of Tomorrow* (Liman, 2014)
The Congress (Folman, 2013)
Blade Runner 2049 (Villeneuve, 2017)
Stardust (Vaughn, 2007)
Spirited Away (Miyazaki, 2001)
The Green Knight (Lowery, 2021)
Unbreakable (Shyamalan, 2000)
Black Lightning (Kiselev – Voitinsky, 2009)
Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse (Persichetti – Ramsey – Rothman, 2018)
Get Out (Peele, 2017)
Frontière(s) (Gens, 2007)
The Wailing (Na Hong-jin, 2016)

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- Indicative reading:** Bould, Mark et al. (eds.): *The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction*. London – New York: Routledge, 2009.
- Cawelti, John G.: The Concept of Formula in the Study of Popular Literature. *The Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Vol. 5, Papers of the Midwest Modern Language Association, Number 2. Criticism and Culture (1972), pp. 115–123.
- Fowkes, Katherine A.: *The Fantasy Film*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. pp. 38–54.
- Gray, Richard J. – Betty Kaklamanidou (eds.): *The 21st Century Superhero. Essays on Gender, Genre and Globalization in Film*. Jefferson – London: McFarland, 2011.
- King, Geoff: *Spectacular Narratives. Hollywood in the Age of the Blockbuster*. London – New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000.
- Neale, Steve: Questions of genre. *Screen*, Volume 31, Issue 1, Spring 1990, pp. 45–66.
- Sobchack, Vivian: *Screening Space. The American Science Fiction Film*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997.
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