

**Codes: BMA-FLMD-312:69
BMI-FLMD-312E.13
BMA-FLMD-212:19
BMA-FLMD16-312.02
BMA-FLMD16-212.02**

Title: Film History Seminar: Topical Trends and Genres in Classical Hollywood Cinema

Course convenor: Hirsch, Tibor

Class time and place: Tuesday, Museum 6-8 -137

Course type: Seminar

Course content: The course will use the social-historical, industry- and genre-minded approach to discuss Hollywood in the 1930s 40s and 50s, focusing on:

1. Pre-code and post-code tendencies
2. The raise of the horror-, the cop-, and gangster movies
3. Films reflecting on New Deal
4. The financial and artistic crisis of Hollywood, and the desperate technological experiments to break out
5. The activity of HUAC and the witch-hunt's effects on American film industry and its artistic consequences such as the "monster age" and the rise of the "sword and sandal" epics

In general: we are attempting to explain rising genres, themes and topics through the continuously changing social and political backgrounds of the film industry.

Although the course tries to offer a chronological survey on the development of classical Hollywood from the age of early talkies to the "monster age" too, our basic purpose is just to indicate tendencies and demonstrate them. So again: we are not to discuss masterpieces or the career of stars and filmmakers, rather the topics which could characterize the age when they were fashionable, and the genres which got popular or less popular in accordance with social and political changes.

Requirements: Students will prove their knowledge concerning some obligatory films in regular presentations and write a term-paper after the ending of the semester.

Films: Whale, James: Frankenstein (1931)
Littel Caesar (1931) or Scareface (1932) or Public Enemy (1931)
Cooper, C. Merian: King Kong (1933)
Capra, Frank: Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)
Ford, John: The Grapes of the Wrath (1940)
Lang, Fritz: Fury (1936)
Chaplin, Charlie Great Dictator (1940)
Hitchcock, Alfred: Notorius (1946)
Michael Curtiz: Casablanca (1942)
Wilder, Billy: Sunset Blvd. (1950)
Wyler, William: The Best Years of Our Lives (1946)
Richard Fleischer: 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (1954)
Mervyn LeRoy, Anthony Mann: Quo Vadis (1951)
Lubitsch, Ernst: Ninotchka (1939)
Don Siegel: The Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)
Zinnemann, Fred: High Noon (1952)
Elia Kazan: On the Waterfront (1954)
Stanley Cramer: Inherit the Wind (1960)

Indicative Reading: Kristin Thompson-David Bordwell: Film History. An Introduction. New York: McGraw-Hill.
Bordwell-Staigenr-Thompson: The Classical Hollywood Cinema. London: 1985. pp. 309-385. (Part III., IV., V.)

Wright, William: Six guns and society : a structural study of the Western.
London : 1975.
Doherty, Thomas: Pre-code Hollywood. Columbia Univ. Press, 1999.
