

**Code: FLMD-213E.09  
FLMD16-111.18  
FLMD-211.3**

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**Course title: American Cinema in the 1930-s and 40-s**

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**Course convenors:** Tibor Hirsch

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**Class time and place:** Monday 09:00-10:30  
**This course will be hold in online form**

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**Course type:** Film History Lecture

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**Course content:** The course introduces students to the most important tendencies of the American film-history between 1927 and 1946. The lectures use two main approaches to understand historical developments of the Hollywood Cinema. The first approach focuses on the social-historical aspect: looking more closely at the changing economic characteristics of the film industry, the changing social and political expectations of the so called "pre-code" and "post-code years" of the examined period, and also the rising genres of the early talkies like the horror, like the mob- and cop movies, the musical, the screwball comedy, the early film noir. The other approach puts the emphasis on the most remarkable filmmakers and their special influence in the age: e.g. on Hawks, Ford, Capra or Lubitsch. We will also discuss the effects and reflections of the most important political and economical impacts on American Cinema within the two decades: such as the Great Depression or the World War II.

During the course students will get a general picture of the most important directors of the age: about e.g. Hawks, Ford, Capra, Lubitsch, Hawks, etc. 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 rise of the horror-, the cop-, and gangster movies,
3. Films reflecting on New Deal,
4. New genres in post-code years
5. The rise of the early Film Noir

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**Requirements:** Students are required to watch the films assigned for each class. Grades will be given on the basis of the term end test

**Films to watch:**

*Crosland, Alan: The Jazz Singer (1927)*

*Whale, James: Frankenstein (1931)*

*Littel Caesar (1931) or Scareface (1932) or Public Enemy (1931)*

*Cooper, C. Merian: King Kong (1933)*

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Capra, Frank: *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936)  
Capra, Frank: *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939)  
Ford, John: *The Grapes of the Wrath* (1940)  
Ford John: *Fort Apache* (1948)  
Lang, Fritz: *Fury* (1936)  
Chaplin, Charlie: *The Great Dictator* (1940)  
Lubitsch, Ernst: *Ninocska – Ninochka* (1939)  
Disney, Walt: *Hófehérke - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937)  
Fleming, Viktor: *Gone with the Wind* (1939)  
Kertész Mihály: *Casablanca – Casablanca* (1942)  
Huston, John: *A máltai sólyom – The Maltese Falcon* (1941)  
Wilder, Billy: *Sunset Blvd.* (1950)

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**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.

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