

COMMUNICATING CREATIVITY (Film History) – Seville, Spain
America's Best Spanish Directors

COM 489

FALL 2020

Prof. Marc Moody, MFA

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DESCRIPTION

This course will survey the history of narrative tradition and visual aesthetics of film, and the relationship between **Spanish film directors** and their successful accomplishments in American cinema.

The student will learn and explore the deep relationship of Spanish filmmakers and how they influenced American cinema by their films produced in Spain or financed in America, achieving success in one or both countries.

ASSESSMENT

1) **FILM SHOWING**

A feature film each week made in Spain by a Spanish Director, and (2) films starring renowned Spanish actors, will be shown in each class. (*For further details, please see Method, pg. 2*)

2) **EXAMS**

There will be (3) exams during the semester. Two exams and one final exam. They will consist of *multiple choice, true or false and fill in the blank, and short answers*. All questions will come from lectures, book chapters, assigned readings, and questions on the films viewed in the class. Questions can be as follows:

- Questions concerning the films narrative thread.
- Questions on lecture notes before each film shown.
- Questions from Chapter assignments in your textbook.

At a closer look, these film questions will be on scenes or plot description within the narrative, lecture notes on the film shown, as well as, character's names, actors who played these characters, and above the line crew (i.e. Director, Director of Photography, Screenwriter & Editor).

3) **RESPONSE PAPER**

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the diversity of perspectives about American/Spanish films by writing a response paper after every viewing. Critical thinking and self-understanding are goals of the response paper to promote thinking at a deeper level. You will be expected to hand in your reader response sheet the next class period.

4) GROUP PROJECT

One project will be given for two groups to see a Spanish (non-American) film that has English subtitles presently showing in the theatres or other venue in Seville. You will present this to the class with the following:

- (1) *Logline*
- (2) *One page narrative* (storyline) of the film.
- (3) *Compare and Contrast* films viewed and its experience in a Spanish cinema vs. an American cinema theatre house.
- (4) *Influences* – A list of examples one might discover from America, Spain or both and how it influences the films viewed from your point of view.
- (5) *Personal Testimony* – Members will write a (1) page essay on how the film affected them, personally. There is no “right or wrong” answer, it is your chance to express your feelings about the film, absent of any academic footholds.

METHOD

Classroom activities will be:

- A lecture related to the film showing that night.
- A showing of the film.
- A Q&A session after the film.

A guest speaker can be introduced when applicable and/or available to contribute a better understanding of their relationship to the film being shown. This relationship either is connected to the aesthetic components of the film or backstory when the film was made with regards to time, place and influences.

OBJECTIVES, GOALS and OUTCOMES

A dynamic portrayal of how Spanish directors shared a strong bond within America will be taught. This learning is not only displayed in films, but off camera as well. Actors, directors and cinematographers both crossed the Atlantic, influencing one another. A deep exploration of this cinematic marriage is explored.

Students are EXPECTED from your weekly schedule to develop an understanding through:

Film Analysis

Discover by viewing films how cinematic styles came about through both countries. We will explore what type of cinema styles were shared between both countries, and what differences might have evolved from American and Spanish filmmaking.

When analyzing a Spanish director’s film, you will be conducting a microanalysis of one’s aesthetic work in Spanish filmmaking.

Readings from your textbook

Readings from your textbook is supplementing an “overall” expansive learning of film history in Spain.

Knowledge of the history and current affairs during the time these films were made will be taught. Why? Because current affairs, the history and culture of any country is a major component in film aesthetics for any given film made at any given time.

These components come from your textbook and other assigned readings, as you will develop a better understanding in contemporary Spanish cinema.

WORTH REPEATING:

When you are **analyzing** a Spanish director's film viewed in class you are focusing on the individual and her/his contributions in Spanish filmmaking. When **reading** your textbook, you are learning the history of filmmaking in Spain.

REGARDING FILM ANALYSIS, AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER YOU WILL (KNOW) BE ABLE TO:

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives *Adaptation: Pepperdine University Film Studies*

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the critical and technical language associated with film studies, including genres, classic narrative form and non-narrative forms, mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, sound, and modes of screen reality.
2. Demonstrate their critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate to the discipline of film studies.
3. Demonstrate their ability to employ research skills, including the use of appropriate print and technology sources in the discipline.
4. Demonstrate their public presentation and listening skills.
5. Demonstrate their ability to articulate, through close reading and writing, their own worldviews. They will be able to explain and respond thoughtfully to the religious, social, ideological, spiritual, moral, and ethical values implied in film texts through their close readings and reflections.

REGARDING YOUR RESPONSE PAPER AND GROUP PRESENTATION, AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER YOU WILL (KNOW) BE ABLE TO:

Study Abroad Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate awareness of your own cultural values and biases when responding to films about Spain or Spanish filmmakers.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of diversity from the films you are reviewing with a focus on the population in Spain from an American perspective.
3. Communicate appropriately and effectively on diverse films concerning the Spanish experience within the story structure of the film.
4. Demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze issues with appreciation for disparate viewpoints.

RUBRICS

#1

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR RESPONSE PAPER & GROUP PROJECT

Adapted from PB Works Movie Review

Dimension	BELOW	APPROACHING	MEETS	ABOVE
Knowledge – Demonstrates an understanding of the film’s political, economic, social, and / or cultural context.	Demonstrates a limited understanding of the political, economic, social, and / or cultural context.	Demonstrates some understanding of the political, economic, social, and / or cultural context.	Demonstrates a clear and sufficient understanding of the political, economic, social, and / or cultural context.	Demonstrates a thorough, detailed, and insightful understanding of the political, economic, social, and / or cultural context
Thinking – Evidence of relevant and useful research; appropriate selection of examples from the movie.	Limited evidence of relevant and useful research; questionable selection of examples from the movie.	Some evidence of relevant and useful research; fair selection of examples from the movie.	Sufficient evidence of relevant and useful research; clear selection of examples from the movie.	Evidence of thorough and detailed relevant and useful research; insightful selection of examples from the movie
Communication – The film review is structured and organized clearly in a way that enhances the overall meaning and argument.	The film review has limited structure and organization but does not enhance the overall meaning and argument.	The film review has some structure and organization and somewhat enhances the overall meaning and argument.	The film review is structured and organized in a way that sufficiently enhances the overall meaning and argument.	Demonstrates insightful and persuasive interpretation and analysis of the film’s historical accuracy and relevance

RUBRICS

#2

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR STUDENT'S CULTURAL BIASES/DIVERSITY EXPERIENCES
FOR RESPONSE PAPER & GROUP PROJECT**

SLOs	UNACCEPTABLE	MARGINAL	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
<p>SLO 1</p> <p>Design communication to make meaningful contributions to diverse social communities in Spain, communicating effectively from the viewing experience in reviewing films.</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.</p> <p>Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.</p> <p>Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas.</p>	<p>Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.</p> <p>Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline for basic organization, content, and presentation</p> <p>Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline in reviewing films.</p>	<p>Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.</p> <p>Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a film review, including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices.</p> <p>Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre pertaining to Spain and cross-cultural observation.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the film's understanding, and shape.</p> <p>Demonstrates successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a film review, including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices.</p> <p>Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre pertaining to Spain and cross-cultural observation.</p>

RUBRICS

#2 (Cont'd)

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR STUDENT'S CULTURAL BIASES/DIVERSITY EXPERIENCES
FOR RESPONSE PAPER & GROUP PROJECT**

SLOs	UNACCEPTABLE	MARGINAL	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
<p>SLO2</p> <p>Demonstrate an awareness of cultures in Spain and issues related to cross-cultural communication.</p>	<p>Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage</p> <p>Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.</p>	<p>Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses language that generally conveys meaning to the audience with clarity, although it may include some errors.</p> <p>Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.</p>	<p>Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to the audience. The language in the portfolio has few errors.</p> <p>Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose.</p> <p>Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to the audience with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.</p> <p>Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.</p>
<p>SLO3</p> <p>Analyze the ethical dimensions of communication.</p>	<p>No evidence of consideration of ethical principles.</p>	<p>Marginal evidence of consideration of ethical principles.</p>	<p>Substantial evidence of consideration of ethical principles. Various viewpoints are articulated.</p>	<p>Detailed evidence of consideration of ethical principles. Various viewpoints are well articulated.</p>

Important Note: This class can be available for students who are NOT Communication majors. The course could be of great interest to ACM, Theatre, History, and American Studies students.

EVALUATION and GRADING SYSTEM

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Points</i>
Participation	20
EXAMS	30 (ea.) Total 90
Response Paper	20/220 TOTAL
Group Project	70
TOTAL points	400

400 Point Scale

A	93-100%	368-400
A-	90-92%	358-367
B+	88-89%	350-357
B	83-87%	330-349
B-	80-82%	318-329
C+	78-79%	310-317
C	73-77%	291-309
C-	70-72%	278-290
D+	68-69%	270-277
D	63-67%	251-269
D-	60-62%	238-250
F	0-59%	001-237

CLASS GUIDELINES

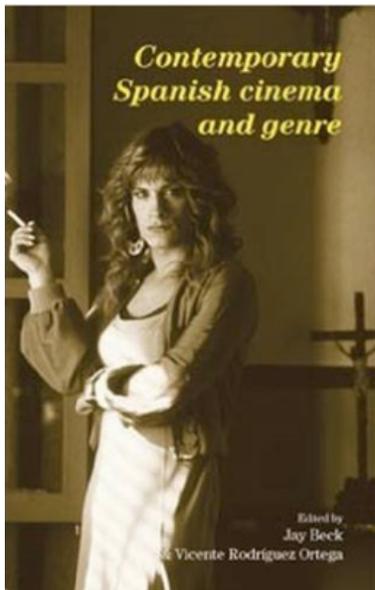
1. Participation is mandatory. This class is conducted in a workshop environment. Your participation and critique of your fellow classmate's analysis is essential.
2. Writing assignments (film reviews) must be turned in on its DUE DATE. If you are late, your grade will be taken down to half a credit until it is turned in.
3. No plagiarism is allowed. Plagiarized material is an automatic F for the assignment.

SCHEDULED CLASS VISITS:

TBA

READINGS & SOURCES

- **Textbook –**



Contemporary Spanish cinema and genre

Barry Jordan, Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas
On Amazon.com

https://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Spanish-Insights-Economic-History/dp/0719044138/ref=pd_sim_14_4?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=SN0G9KDR2WTA33AWTSKD

CLASS SCHEDULE – (Tentative)

Class time is constructed with a lecture about the film director and their film that will be viewed “in class” that day/night. Following the film, the class will have a Q&A on the film that was viewed.

Additional readings of the film director and the film that is shown in class will be made available. Also, if possible, guest artist connected to the director, film or the subject matter of the film’s story may be invited to class for a Q&A, if possible.

What is expected from you during the weekly schedule:

You will be watching and analyzing Spanish films by Spanish directors.
You will be writing a Response Paper for each film.
You will be discussing your reaction, from your opinions, on each film viewed in class.
You will be taking (3) exams that will be focused on your readings from the textbook assigned and from the lecture, films viewed and Q&A after each film viewed in class.

Also, I expect you to:

- Learn how to construct an auteur’s aesthetic delivery of her/his creative piece.
- Explaining, in your opinion, the film director’s intent of their work.
- Artistic execution of subject matter.
- Historical effect connected with the film upon its release.
- Compare/Contrast the film’s story from a Spanish point of view vs. an American point of view.
- Compare/Contrast Spanish filmmaking vs. American filmmaking
Execution of subject matter / Mise- en-scène / Acting

- Week 1** Presentation of the course; introduction to the class syllabus /
Information on assignments and projects / student Introductions
- Director, Alejandro Amenabar
Won nine Goyas, two European Film Award and an Oscar – not bad!
- Amenabar is not only a film director, but also a screenwriter and composer. We will look at his contributions in these fields, as well as, his work, which extends beyond Spain to an international audience.
- Reading: Introduction: The Spanish film industry in the 1980s and 1990s
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- Week 2** Director, Luis Buñuel
The father of cinematic surrealism and one of the most original directors in the history of the film medium.
- Called “an iconoclast, oralist, and revolutionary...leader of avant-garde surrealism...”, Buñuel’s work will be explored through his contributions outside of mainstream filmmaking yet still achieving mainstream success.
- Reading: Reconstructing the past: historical cinema in post-Franco Spain 1, pgs. 15 – 30.
- Week 3** Director, J.A. Bayona
Not just film, he directed Television commercials and music videos.
- One of Spain’s new generation of filmmakers, Bayona’s work began in television commercials, then personal film stories of Spain yet spoken in English allowing for international appeal. Bayona’s new breed of filmmaking is not just theatrical, but entrenched in other avenues of today’s new visual medium for a global market.
- Reading: Reconstructing the past: historical cinema in post-Franco Spain 1, pgs. 31 – 52.
- Week 4** Director, Isabel Coixet
One of the most prolific directors of contemporary Spain.
- In a business still dominated by men, Coixet is considered to be another “multifaceted” film auteur. We will explore her contributions in Spanish films from their national context and her different perspectives in emotions, feelings and existential conflicts - what she is known for.
- Reading: Cultural reinscription: popular genre film in post-Franco Spain 2, pgs. 61 – 85.
- Week 5** GROUP PROJECT 1
- Week 6** GROUP PROJECT 2

Week 7**EXAM 1**

Director, Fernando Fernan Gomez
Spanish actor and director of cinema and theater.

Gomez long contribution in Spanish filmmaking extends to the theatre through his contributions as a theatre director and theatre actor which all began in 1942. His lifetime contribution will be explored, analyzing what changes (if any) with his creative expression through his work beginning in the 40s with continued success well into the 1990s.

Reading: Cultural reinscription: popular genre film in post-Franco Spain
 2, pgs. 86 – 107.

Week 8

Actor, Antonio Banderas
Oh, we're not leaving him out.

From our Actor's corner, Banderas first came to America's attention not from a film he was in, but from a film in which he was "stalked" by performer Madonna in "Truth or Dare". Since then, Banderas' international fame has risen to stage and screen. His life long career will be explored.

Week 9

Actor, Penelope Cruz
Oh, we're not leaving her out either.

Like Antonio Banderas, Penelope Cruz's work will be visited which has left a remarkable body of work not only in her home country of Spain, but America - all beginning at the age of 16.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Being a "movie star" in the reality of filmmaking is very important and applicable.

"Movie stars" can maintain control (power) with how the film is made and how it is developed. For right or wrong, it is a reality in the film industry and should not be ignored.

Since the theme of this course is on Spain and America and how they influenced each other, an exploration of actor's Banderas and Cruz is essential since they were successful film actors in Spain, then "crossed the pond" now becoming part of a very exclusive club known as "international stars".

How can one study American cinema without Charlie Chaplin, Sophia Loren, Omar Sharif, or Greer Garson? "International stars" are the backbone of this industry when delving into film aesthetics when exploring global film history.

- Week 10** Sergio Leone
Not only Spanish influence, but Italian with a lot of Spaghetti Westerns.
- Leone is a favorite of film historians with his contributions that extend from his home country in Italy, to his film work in Spain, and creating a new genre known as Spaghetti Westerns – storylines about the American West, yet filmed in locations around southern Italy and Spain, and starring American actors - notably Clint Eastwood.
- Reading: Gender and sexuality in post-Franco Spain
 3, pgs. 112 – 116.
- Week 11** Film, *The Valley of Gwangi*
It's about Mexico, Dinosaurs, a miniature horse and creature effects by the master – Ray Harryhausen!
- There's something in this film for everybody. Taking place in Mexico, *Gwangi* was filmed in Almeria and Cuenca, Spain. It is also the last dinosaur-themed film by the great animated genius Ray Harryhausen! Several scenes of this 1969 classic would be stolen (in a good way) by Steven Spielberg in *Jurassic Park*, honoring Harryhausen.
- Reading: Gender and sexuality in post-Franco Spain
 3, pgs. 117 – 140.
- Week 12** **EXAM 2**
 Director, Pedro Almodovar
Talk to Her
- Noted for being one of the most internationally successful Spanish filmmakers, Almodovar and his films have gained worldwide interest and has developed a cult following. We will explore this filmmaker's work who, as an artist, is also a screenwriter, producer, and former actor.
- Reading: Recuperating nationalist identities
 4, pgs. 156 – 157.
- Week 13** Director, Guillermo del Toro
Pan Labyrinth
- A critically praised Mexican filmmaker whose stories, at times, have been set in Spain - we will look at the aesthetic delivery of Del Toro's work in dark fantasy pieces.
- Reading: Recuperating nationalist identities
 4, pgs. 158 – 205.
- Week 14** **FINAL EXAM**
FINAL FILM / TBA