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## **Understanding the Audio-Visual**

90 + 90 min

English

Mgr. Matej Gyárfáš, ArtD.

lecture + seminar

## **Prerequisites**

None

## **Course Objectives**

The aim of the course is to teach students to understand the means of perception, interpretation and communication of the audio-visual with the audience. Students will become acquainted with the basics of film language and the communication of film with the audience through image and sound. The topics of manipulation and construction of stereotypes through the audio-visual media will also be discussed, using a theoretical background of psychology and other social sciences.

## **Contents**

The course is delivered in English language. Within the lectures the students will become acquainted with a short historical background of film as well as basic concepts and terminology of the film language. The focus will be on the visual, represented by aspects of camera, mise en scene and editing, and the auditive, represented by film sound and film music. The theoretical knowledge will be supported by numerous direct examples from films.

Within the seminars the students will discuss the required readings and films in regard to the topic of the lecture. The students are obliged to do a final presentation (including audiovisual examples supporting the theses) on a film of their choice, analysing and interpreting the narrative structure, film language and ideological aspects of the film.

## **Topics**

1. Love at First Sight – The History of the Phenomenon of Film
2. Understanding the story – Film narration
3. The Mesmerizing Image – Camera and Mise en Scene
4. The Invisible Cut – Editing and the creation of the story
5. Anchoring Reality – The Case of Film Sound
6. The Overheard – Film Music and Manipulation
7. Truth, Reality and Deceit – The Case of Documentary Films
8. The Cinematic Apparatus – Film as Ideology
9. The Weapon of Mass Destruction – Film as Propaganda
10. Visual Pleasures – The Female Body as Object of Desire
11. The Others – Creating Stereotypes Through Film
12. Presentations of Final Projects

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### Required Readings

Bordwell, D., *Three dimensions of Film Narrative*, In: Poetics of Cinema, Routledge, 2007  
Bordwell, D., Thompson, K.,: *Fundamental Aesthetics of Sound in Cinema*, In: Film Sound: Theory and Practice, Columbia University Press, 1985  
Bordwell, D., Thompson, K., *The Shot: Mise-en-scene*, In: Film Art – An Introduction., McGraw-Hill, 2012  
Gorbman, C., *Introduction*, In: Unheard Melodies – Narrative Film Music, Indiana University Press, 1987  
Holte, J., Unmelting Images: *Film, Television, and Ethnic Stereotyping*, In: MELUS, no. 3, 1984  
Juel, H., *Defining Documentary Film*, In: P.O.V. no. 22, University of Aarhus, 2006  
Mulvey, L., *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, In: Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings, Oxford University Press, 1999  
Raskin, R., *Varieties of Film Sound: Towards a New Typology*, Aarhus Universitet, 1992  
Smith, S., Cook, C., *Gender Stereotypes: An Analysis of Popular Films and TV*, Online: [http://www.thegeenadavisinstitute.org/downloads/GDIGM\\_Gender\\_Stereotypes.pdf](http://www.thegeenadavisinstitute.org/downloads/GDIGM_Gender_Stereotypes.pdf)

### Required Films

*American Beauty* (d. Sam Mendes, 1999)  
*Capturing the Friedmans* (d. Andrew Jarecki, 2003)  
*Fahrenheit 9/11* (d. Michael Moore, 2004)  
*Propaganda* (d. Slavko Martinov, 2012)  
*The Act of Killing* (d. Joshua Oppenheimer, 2012)  
*The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing* (d. Wendy Apple, 2004)  
*The Pervert's Guide to Cinema* (d. Sophie Fennes, 2006)  
*Triumph of the Will* (d. Leni Riefenstahl, 1935)

### Primary Sources

Bordwell, D., Thompson, K., *Film Art – An Introduction*, McGraw-Hill, 2012  
Forrester, M. *Psychology of the Image*, Routledge, 2000  
Gorbman, C., *Unheard Melodies – Narrative Film Music*, Indiana University Press, 1987

### Additional Readings and Sources – texts and articles

Ruoff, J. *Conventions of Sound in Documentary.*, Routledge, 1992  
Jordan, R., *The Gap: Documentary Truth between Reality and Perception*, Online: [http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new\\_offscreen/documentary\\_truth.html](http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/documentary_truth.html)

### Evaluation Criteria

50% Final presentation (prepared in written form and presented at the seminar, including audiovisual excerpts supporting the theses)

30% Active attendance at seminars, participation in discussion

20% Written class preparation (questions and comments on respective text or abstracts of required readings, selection and evaluation of an interesting paper)

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**Course Evaluation (%)**

A – excellent: 100-93%  
B – very good: , 92-84%,  
C – good: 83-74%,  
D – satisfactory: 73-63%,  
E – sufficient: 62-51%,  
Fx – fail: 50-0%.

Passing a course assumes that student was not absent at more than 4 lessons.