

UC Davis - Florence Quarter Abroad Program

Fall 2016

FILM STUDIES 121S / ITALIAN 121S

New Italian Cinema



*Terraferma [Dry Land]*, by Emanuele Crialesi (2011)

- Instructor:** Prof. Margherita Heyer-Caput ([mheyercaput@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mheyercaput@ucdavis.edu))  
**Office :** Conference Room, CEA Florence Center  
**Office Hours:** M/W 2:30-3:30 PM (TBC) and/or by appointment  
**CRN:** FMS 121S: TBD  
ITA 121S: TBD
- UC Davis Quarter Units:** 4  
**GE:** ArtHum, Oral Literacy, Visual Literacy, World Cultures, Writing Experience  
**Lecture/Discussion:** M/W 1-2:30 PM (TBC), Aula Vasari, CEA Florence Center  
**Film viewing:** T 5-8 PM, Aula Vasari, CEA Florence Center
- **Required Textbooks:**
    - Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*. New York: Longman, 2010 (8th edition). (Available for purchase **prior to departure** at the UC Davis Bookstore)
    - Heyer-Caput, Margherita (ed). *New Italian Cinema. A Reader* (to be purchased **prior to June 1** at Davis Copy Max, 232 Third Street).
  - **References** (available for consultation at the CEA Florence Center Library):
    - Bondanella, Peter. *A History of Italian Cinema*. New York: Continuum, 2009. (Ch. 17, p. 557-66)
    - Brunetta, Gian Piero. *A Story of Italian Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009. (Ch. 5 and Epilogue, p. 245-321).

**Description:**

This course explores the thriving Italian cinema of the twenty-first century in relationship with the deep cultural and social changes that Italy has undergone in the last two decades. This class will be particularly interesting for QA students. Immersed in the vibrant urban life of Florence, QA participants will analyze filmic representations of the Italian reality that they will experience in their daily life and in the three related site visits included in the class (s. p. 4).

In the course of the quarter we investigate how a young generation of Italian filmmakers, from Marco Tullio Giordana to Cristina Comencini and Ferzan Ozpetek, has overcome a paralyzing sense of “afterness.” They have infused Italian cinema with a new vitality and international recognition, as the 2014 Best Foreign Language Film Academy Award for Paolo Sorrentino’s *La grande bellezza* underlined. These directors-writers-producers-lead actors have successfully integrated in their works the inspiring but also challenging legacy of the great *auteurs* of Italian Neorealism of the ‘40s and ‘50s (Rossellini, De Sica, etc.) and of the art cinema of the ‘60s and ‘70s (Antonioni, Fellini, etc.). Moreover, these directors have creatively overcome the disillusionments suffered by the political cinema of the ‘80s and ‘90s (Rosi, Petri, the Taviani Brothers, etc.). The movies analyzed in this course revisit classic genres of Italian cinema, from the *commedia all’italiana* to historical productions, and reinvent **film as a powerful art form with a social reference and a moral accountability**.

**Goals:**

The goals of this course are threefold. First of all, students will become acquainted with the multifaceted developments of Italian cinema of the twenty-first century within a **cultural studies perspective that will emphasize the historical and cultural changes of Italian society in the era of globalization**. Secondly, students will acquire **analytical and critical skills** with regard to different film genres, from romantic comedy to psychological drama. Last but not least, participants will strengthen their **composition skills** by writing **weekly film journals** and **two versions of a critical essay** (approximately 5-6 pages) on a central theme, character, or stylistic feature of a film viewed in class or chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor.

**Attendance and Participation:**

In order to fully enjoy and perform at your best in this course, your **attendance** and **participation** are crucial. Attendance of both lecture/discussion sessions and screening sessions is **mandatory** (please see “**Absences**”). DVDs of the course films will be on reserve at the CEA Library to be checked out ON THE CEA Global Campus PREMISES for students working on their critical essays.

During class time, **all mobile phones and laptops must be switched off**. In case of family emergency, students can keep their phones on (silent mode) after asking for permission before class starts. In case you need to use your laptop for note taking, please ask your professor for authorization during the first week of the quarter.

**Written Assignments:**

FMS 121S/ITA 121S is a GE course that fulfills the **Writing Experience** requirement (in addition to ArtHum, Oral Literacy, Visual Literacy, World Cultures). For this reason, you should pay particular attention to the quality of your writing, including structure and organization, presentation of concrete examples to support your assertions, style, grammar, and punctuation. The writing assignments consist of:

- 1) **WEEKLY FILM JOURNALS accompanied by a REFLECTIVE QUESTION related to the film of the week in the context of the broader (Italian) study abroad experience.**

2) **TWO VERSIONS of a CRITICAL ESSAY** on the films or topics discussed in the course of the quarter. The essay has to be **5-6 pages long, typed in 12-point font, double-spaced with 1-1.25 inch margins, and proofread for spelling and grammatical errors.**

Any sources used in the paper for quotations or indirect references should be credited by using footnotes, endnotes or parenthetical citations that refer to the List of Works Cited at the end of your text according to the **MLA Style Format**.

Detailed **Essay Guidelines** are posted on SmartSite. Please read them carefully. Students can draw on information and samples of film analysis from Timothy Corrigan's handbook *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, particularly chapters three, four, five, and seven.

**Papers turned in late will be marked down a full letter grade for each day of delay (see "Late Work Policy").**

### *Academic Integrity*

The **Code of Academic Conduct** emphasizes the relevance of academic integrity at UC Davis and the shared responsibility of faculty and students in maintaining an honest academic environment. Plagiarism is a serious offense.

#### **To avoid plagiarism:**

- Never use someone else's words or ideas without properly citing your sources;
- Unless specifically cleared by the professor, no outside assistance is permitted on work submitted for a grade (e.g. help from a friend, tutor, parent, or teacher);
- Online translation services are a form of plagiarism (limit internet resources to reputable online dictionaries, such as Oxford Dictionaries and Merriam-Webster, and/or grammar references);
- If you need help, count on your professor! For more information on the university policy, visit <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>.
- **Plagiarism of any kind on any writing assignment or exam will result in an automatic F and will be referred to Student Judicial Affairs.**

### *Grading:*

|   |                   |             |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Active Participation:</b>                | <b>20 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Weekly Film Journals:</b>                | <b>20 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Essays:</b>                              | <b>40 points</b>  | <b>40%</b>  |
| <b>Essay #1 (First Version) (due 11/23)</b> | 20/40 points      |             |
| <b>Essay #2 (Second Version) (due 12/4)</b> | 20/40 points      |             |
| <b>Final Exam (11/16)</b>                   | <b>20 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                               | <b>100 points</b> | <b>100%</b> |

### *Grading Scale:*

|          |          |          |          |        |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| A 93-100 | B+ 87-89 | C+ 77-79 | D+ 67-69 | F 0-59 |
| A- 90-92 | B 83-86  | C 73-76  | D 63-66  |        |
|          | B- 80-82 | C- 70-72 | D- 60-62 |        |

### *Late Work Policy:*

**50% of the point score will be deducted for each day of delay in submitting your weekly film journals, while your critical essays will be marked down a full letter grade for each day of delay.** If you need to ask for a **JUSTIFIED EXTENSION**, you may do so by contacting your professor in person or via email **no later than 24 hours prior to the due date/time.**

### *Absences:*

As stated in the *UC Davis QA Florence Guidebook*, "a maximum equivalent of one week of accumulated absences due to sickness, personal emergency, inevitable transport delay and other related

impediments will be tolerated. **Illness may be tolerated if students provide written justification signed by health care provider [no photocopies, please]. Your final course grade will drop one full letter grade (e.g. A- to B-) for each additional class missed beyond this one-week period**, regardless as of the reason. You will automatically fail a course if your absences exceed the equivalent of two weeks of class” (p. 9). **NOTA BENE:**

1. There will be **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS** unless **an original medical/official justification is provided (no photocopies, please) at least one week in advance.**  
**PLEASE AVOID BEING OUT OF TOWN ON MONDAY, 11/16, when the FINAL EXAM WILL TAKE PLACE. Even if you have made travel arrangements for that day there will be NO MAKE UP FINAL EXAM.**
2. Students are responsible for **checking their grades** through SmartSite on a weekly basis and for informing their professor of any discrepancy that they might notice **no later than one week after a specific class session.**
3. As a courtesy to the whole class, students are required to arrive **on time**, to **remain in the classroom** during the entire duration of a session, and to **turn off all their electronic devices.** GRAZIE!

#### **FEATURE FILMS and SITE VISITS INCLUDED in the COURSE (subject to change):**

- Week 1: *La meglio gioventù [The Best of Youth (2003)]* by M.T. Giordana, (Part 1)
- Week 2: *La meglio gioventù [The Best of Youth (2003)]*, (Part 2)  
**SITE VISIT: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Firenze** [National Central Library of Florence, shooting location of *La meglio gioventù*]
- Week 3: *Bianco e Nero [Black and White, 2008]* by Cristina Comencini
- Week 4: *Terraferma [Dry Land (2012)]*, by Emanuele Crialese  
**SITE VISIT: Museo Nazionale del Cinema Torino** [National Museum of Cinema, Turin, included in the overnight trip to Turin, shooting location in *La meglio gioventù*]
- Week 5: *Io sono Li [Shun Li and the Poet (2011)]*, by Andrea Segre
- Week 6: *Nuovomondo [The Golden Door (2006)]*, by E. Crialese
- Week 7: *I cento passi [The One Hundred Steps (2000)]*, by M.T. Giordana
- Week 8: *La finestra di fronte [Facing Windows (2003)]* by Ferzan Ozpetek
- Week 9: ☺ FALL BREAK ☺**
- Week 10: *Fortezza Bastiani [The Bastiani Fortress (2002)]*, by Mellara e Rossi  
**SITE VISIT: Università degli Studi di Bologna** [included in the day trip to Bologna, the exclusive shooting location of *Fortezza Bastiani*]
- Week 11: *Mine vaganti [Loose Cannons (2010)]*, by Ferzan Ozpetek
- Week 12: FINAL EXAM !!! ☺**
- Week 13: ESSAY # 1 (1. Version) DUE**
- Week 14: ESSAY # 2 (Second Version – based on graded # 1) DUE**