Course title: Discovering Rome through Cinema
Course code: CINE 3001 ROIT
Programs offering course: Summer in Rome
Open Campus Track: Language, Literature, and Culture
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Summer Session I 2020

Course Description

Rome, the “Eternal City”, being not only the capital of Italy but also the capital of the Italian film industry, has been and still is a source of inspiration for the most important Italian film directors. Many successful movies have used Rome as their scenario, or the city directly inspired the most visionaries stories. The course will focus on films made by directors such as De Sica, Rossellini, Fellini, Moretti, and Sorrentino, from the end of the World War II (during Neorealism, the artistic movement that made Italian cinema world-famous) to nowadays. Students will have the opportunity to watch them and explore the real locations where these films were shot. Therefore students will have the opportunity to learn about history of Italian cinema and the main urban, social and cultural developments in Rome and Italy during 20th-century.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Outline the history of Italian cinema from the end of World War II to the present;
- Evaluate social implications of Italian cinema;
- Analyze the representations of Italian society shown in the movies screened;
- Investigate the relationship between cinema and culture;
- Examine the key role that the city of Rome played within Italian cinematographic culture;
- Develop the ability to research, critically analyze and interpret film reviews published in Italian and international media;
• Manage an appropriate use of specific vocabulary relevant to film production;
• Test the basic techniques of documentary-making.

Course Prerequisites
None.

Methods of Instruction
This course will combine lectures, class debate, group projects, walking tours, site visits, and film screenings.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Written Film Review (1) 10%
2. Group Project 20%
3. Oral Presentation 15%
4. Quizzes 10%
5. Final Exam 25%
6. Class Participation 20%

TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements
Written Film Review (1)

Students will be asked to write a film review by analyzing, interpreting and commenting on specific movies with clear references to the directors’ poetics, the historical and cultural contexts and the technical specifications, as discussed in class. Professor will provide extensive and precise guidelines. The assignments are to be submitted through Canvas.

Group Project

The class will be divided into groups, and each group (3 to 4 students) will make a Video Film Review. Step 1: students will be filming the real locations employed as setting for the films screened during class using simple techniques and students’ mobiles or digital cameras. They will film also oral presentations and interviews about the film, on site. Step 2: Students will be taught simple editing techniques in order to
edit all the materials shot (locations, interviews and oral presentations). The final video film reviews will be screened and discuss in class.

Oral Presentation

Individual student oral presentations will be delivered during walking tour and “Your movie about Rome” session (see Week 4-Class 4.3). Each student will hold a brief talk on a specific aspect of one the films screened and discussed in class. Topics will be individually discussed and agreed upon with the instructor. The instructor will provide extensive and precise guidelines.

Quizzes

True/False Questions and Short Answers test.

In lieu of a midterm examination for this course, two (2) quizzes will be administered (one in class and one on line), in order to provide students with additional opportunities to gauge their own assimilation and retention of information and concepts from class discussions and debates, weekly reading assignments, oral presentations and on-site visits.

Final Exam

Students will take a final exam at the end of the course. The exam (True/False Questions and Short Answers tests + short film review) will include all topics analyzed in class.

Class Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.
Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:
N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Class: 1.1 The Postwar Era in Italian Cinema: Neorealism**

**Introduction to the Course**

The syllabus will be presented and reviewed, with emphasis on assessment methods and course requirements. Time will be given for Q&A.

**Rome Through Cinema**
Students will be introduced to how Rome has been one of the iconic locations of Italian cinema since the end of World War II and how Rome became the capital of film industry.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Two: Italian Neorealism.

Screenings: scenes from several films and from Martin Scorsese’s documentary My Voyage to Italy (2001).

Class: 1.2 Rome in Neorealist Films

Italian Neorealism represents a watershed in the evolution of worldwide cinema for its aesthetics and poetics. After World War II and the end of the Mussolini’s regime, cinema stimulated social, political and cultural change. Topics, techniques, main directors and emblematic examples of the Italian Neorealism movement will be analyzed and interpreted in their historical context and cultural value. Introduction to Rome, Open City (1945) by Roberto Rossellini that marks the beginning of the neorealist era and to The Bicycle Thief -(1948) by Vittorio De Sica – considered the peak of that era.

Readings: Bondanella, Chapter 3 – Masters of Neorealism: Rossellini section.

Film Screening: The Bicycle Thieves (1948).

Class: 1.3 How to Watch a Film & How to Review it

Discussion of The Bicycle Thief (1948) by Vittorio De Sica. The critical reception will be analyzed through reviews published in Italian and international newspapers and magazines.

Introduction to cinematographic language through the analysis of The Bicycle Thief and other Italian films’ selected scenes focusing on how they were shot and edit.
Readings: Bondanella, Part Two: Chapter 3 – Masters of Neorealism: De Sica section.

Due date for submission of Assignment 1: Film Review – “Bicycle Thieves” (1948)

Week 2
Class: 2.1 The Rebirth of Italian Film Industry & the Break with Neorealism

Rome in Cinema: The Bicycle Thief on site.

Walking tour: Student will visit some of the locations where The Bicycle Thief was actually shot in 1948.

Group Project. How to make a video students’ film review: filming. Students will be divided in small group (3/4 students each group) and they will be filming the locations employed as setting in The Bicycle Thief using simple techniques and students’ mobiles or digital cameras. They will film also oral presentations and while interviewing each other about the film.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Two: Chapter 4 – Exploring the Boundaries of Neorealism.

Due date for Oral presentation (The Bicycle Thief)

Class: 2.2 Group Project: How to Make a Video Students' Film Review / Editing

Students will perform the editing of all the scenes shot (locations, interviews and oral presentations) using very simple editing techniques. They can also add The Bicycle Thief ‘photos and clips to the final editing.

Screening and discussion of the final video film review.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Two: Chapter 5. 1 – The Break with Neorealism.
Class: 2.3 On-site Visit: Cinecittà Studios

Built in 1937 during the Fascist era, the studios are unanimously still considered the hub of Italian cinema. Historical and political aspects will be discussed before and during the visit.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Two: Chapter 5.2 – The Cinema of Reconstruction.

Class: 2.4 Federico Fellini / La Dolce Vita

The most relevant changes in Italian and European society of the 60’s will be evident through the international blockbuster La Dolce Vita by Federico Fellini, the dominant director of the golden age of Italian cinema. Critical reception will be analyzed through reviews published on Italian and International newspapers and magazines.

Readings: Kezich T., Federico Fellini. His life and work, Chapter 3: Rome; Chapter 11: Discovering Italy; Chapter 18: Reality is a Fairy Tale

Film Screening: La Dolce Vita (1960)

Due date for in class Quiz 1 (T.F. questions and S.A.)

Week 3

Class: 3.1 Rome at the Heart of Two Landmark Films

La Dolce Vita (1960) and La Grande Bellezza (2013)

Fellini’s and Sorrentino’s Rome: magic and dreams

Two different journeys through Rome to explore and discover the city’s and Italy’s cultural and political transformations from the 1960s up to the present. Rome plays a key role in these two films that attracted major international attention. Fellini’s La Dolce Vita (1960) became
synonymous with Art Cinema. Sorrentino’s The Great Beauty (2013) has been described as “La Dolce Vita” 2.0 and won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film in the 2014 Academy Awards.

Readings: Kezich T. Federico Fellini. His life and work, Chapters 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 on La Dolce Vita.


Class: 3.2 The Combination of Great Art with Maximum Profit

The industry’s dream comes true.

La Dolce Vita and The Great Beauty were both art films and financially successful. Analysis of how Italian film industry works and have changed during the time.

The Great Beauty’s critical reception will be analyzed through reviews published in Italian and international newspapers, magazines and film website taking into consideration the influence Fellini’s work had on Paolo Sorrentino’s work.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Three :Chapter 8 The Golden Age of Italian Cinema Fellini: The Director as Superstar.

Class: 3.3 Walking Tour

Students will participate in an interactive tour of the locations used as setting for Fellini’s and for Sorrentino's films, such as St. Peter’s Square, Castel S. Angelo and the Tiber banks, the Trevi fountain, Piazza Navona, Via Veneto.

Group Project. How to make a video students’ film review: filming. Students will be divided in small group (3/4 students each group) and they will be filming: the locations employed as setting for La Dolce Vita and The Great Beauty, interviews and oral presentations on both films.
Readings: Interviews to Paolo Sorrentino and reviews published in Italian and international newspapers and magazines on The Great Beauty.

Due date for Oral presentation (La Dolce Vita and The Great Beauty)

Class: 3.4 Group Project: How to Make a Video Students' Film Review / Editing

Students will perform the editing of all the scenes shot (locations, interviews and oral presentations) using very simple editing techniques. They can also add both films’ photos and clips to the final editing.

Screening and discussion on the final videos film reviews.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Four: Generational Change In The Contemporary Italian Cinema.

Due date for Online quiz 2 (T.F. questions and S.A.)

Week 4

Class: 4.1 Laughter & Tears in Rome: The Commedia all'Italiana

Italian-style Comedy and the Cinema of Nanni Moretti

An overview of the most popular film genre in Italy, from its legacy to Neorealism to its subsequent reinvigoration, modernization and personalization over a span of 40 years. Key figures and codes will be studied.

Nanni Moretti’s Cinema: a counter-current comedian.

An independent, opinionated and humorous film perspective on Italian society by a Roman-born filmmaker. Scenes from his most important films.
Readings: Bondanella, Chapter 7: Commedia all’Italiana – Comedy and Social Criticism; Chapter 16: The third wave. A New Generation of Auteurs: Nanni Moretti

Film screening: Habemus Papam (We Have a Pope), 2012.

Class: 4.2 Habemus Papam’s Film Discussion

Critical reception will be analyzed through reviews published in Italian and international newspapers, magazines and film website.

Walking Tour: Students will participate in an interactive tour of locations where several scenes from Italian comedies and Habemus Papam were shot.

Readings: Bondanella, Part Four: Chapter 17: Italian Cinema Enters the Third Millennium.

Due date for Oral presentation Habemus Papam

Class: 4.3 Your Movie about Rome / Oral Presentations & Debate

This session will be dedicated to contrasting and comparing the images of the city constructed by the different movies examined during the course, and the current representations of Rome through international cinema.

Students will be encouraged to reflect upon their own perception of the city before and at the end of the course.

Course Review: students will be guided to revise the lessons of this course for the final exam.

Class: 4.4 Final Exam

Course Materials
Readings


Online Resources

Further reading materials will be assigned on a week-by-week basis. Professor will provide a complete list of complementary readings, media sources and articles published in national and international media in order to stimulate class debates and activities.

Media Resources

Big Deal on Madonna Street (1958) – Mario Monicelli

Caterina in the Big City (2003) Paolo Virzì

Her All Life Ahead (2008) – Paolo Virzì

La Dolce Vita (1960) – Federico Fellini

My Voyage to Italy (2001) - Martin Scorsese’s documentary

Rome, Open City (1945) – Roberto Rossellini

The Bicycle Thieves (1948) – Vittorio De Sica

The Great Beauty (2013) – Paolo Sorrentino

We All Loved Each Other Very Much (1974) – Ettore Scola

We Have a Pope (2012) – Nanni Moretti