

FM 322

European Nightmares. Horror and the Fantastic in European Films

Seminar Leader: Matthias Hurst
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 13.30 – 15.00

Course Times: Wednesday, 19.30 – 22.00 (film screening); Thursday, 15.45 – 19.00

Course Description

Horror, as well as fantastic, non-realist elements in films seem to come from and bring us into another world. As the history of cinema and film criticism shows us however, these kinds of narrative and visual elements can have their roots in very real social anxieties, historical experiences, and everyday (or rather, normalized) forms of hierarchy, division, and exclusion. The genre of the fantastic and horror has always produced disturbing visions of the uncanny, visions of the *Other* that challenges the norms and values of the modern, bourgeois society and visions of frightful fancies and dreadful realities that subvert the ideas and securities of rationality and enlightenment. The enduring popularity of horror films has given rise to socio-historical, political as well as psychoanalytical interpretations in which topics and themes like ambivalent aspects of culture, history, society and modernity, forms of capitalism and exploitation, strategies of othering, and problems of identity, subjectivity and consciousness play significant parts. While today's popular culture is dominated by American and Asian horror movies we will focus on the European tradition of the fantastic and horror that has spawned its own specific nightmarish representations of the modern age with films as diverse in style and content as *Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (1922, Friedrich W. Murnau), *Dead of Night* (1945, Basil Dearden and Alberto Cavalcanti), *The Wicker Man* (1973, Robin Hardy), *Suspiria* (1977, Dario Argento), *E tu vivrai nel terrore! L'aldilà* (1981, Lucio Fulci), *Funny Games* (1997, Michael Haneke), *Haute tension* (2003, Alexandre Aja), *Calvaire* (2004, Fabrice du Welz) and *Låt den rätte komma in* (2008, Tomas Alfredson).

Please note: Some of the films we will watch and discuss contain disturbing stories, graphic images and strong, bloody violence!

Module: Artists, Genres, Movements

Requirements

Basic knowledge of film history, film theory, and film analysis.

Attendance is mandatory for all seminars and film screenings. Students are expected to come to seminars and film screenings punctually and prepared, to participate actively in the class discussions and to do all the course assignments on time.

* Please, do not use cell phones, smart phones or similar electronic devices during seminars and screenings!

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes and film screenings is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

More than two absences will affect the grade for the course.

Absences are registered in all classes, and lateness is registered as absence. Students should notify the instructor if they are unable to attend class.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Assessment / Assignments

Individual presentations in class, based on individual research and the film screenings, starting in week 5.

Mid-term essay (1500-2000 words), due in week 7, Friday, March 17, 2023, midnight. The topic of the mid-term essay will be a film analysis/interpretation, based on one of the films screened or discussed in the first seven weeks of the course.

Final essay (3000-3500 words), due in week 15, Friday, May 19, 2023, noon (i.e. 12:01 pm)

*** Please note: Graduating students -- Deadline for final essay: Week 15, Monday, May 15, 2023, midnight! ***

The topic of the final essay will be a film analysis/interpretation, based on one of the films screened or discussed throughout the semester.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a

timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours. Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

Participation:	25 %
Presentation :	25 %
Mid-term Essay:	25 %
Final Essay:	25 %

If one of these components is graded F, the final course grade cannot be higher than C-. If two components are graded F, the final grade will be F (i.e. the whole class will be failed).

Schedule

* Tentative schedule depending on availability of films, student presentations and intensity of class discussions

WEEK 1:

Introduction: Why Horror? Elements and Theories of Horror and the Uncanny

Suggested Reading:

Noël Carroll. *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart*. London/New York: Routledge, 1990 (excerpts)

Sigmund Freud. "The 'Uncanny'." In: *Art and Literature. Jensen's Gradiva, Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*. The Penguin Freud Library Vol. 14, edited by Albert Dickson. London/New York: Penguin, pp. 335-376.

S. S. Prawer. *Caligari's Children. The Film as Tale of Terror*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1980 (excerpts)

Film: *Dead of Night* (1945, Basil Dearden and Alberto Cavalcanti)

WEEK 2:

Historical Trauma, National Cinema and the Modern Horror Film – The Return of the Repressed

From Caligari to Hitler: Kracauer's interpretation of Weimar cinema (1)

Reading:

Adam Lowenstein. *Shocking Representation. Historical Trauma, National Cinema, and the Modern Horror Film*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. "Introduction: The Allegorical Moment" (pp. 1-16)

Siegfried Kracauer. *From Caligari to Hitler. A Psychological History of the German Film*. Revised and expanded edition. Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004 (excerpts)

Film: *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920, Robert Wiene)

WEEK 3:

From Caligari to Hitler. Kracauer's interpretation of Weimar cinema (2)
The Undead Vampire

Film: *Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (*Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror*, 1922, Friedrich W. Murnau)

WEEK 4:

"It's Alive!" Frankenstein, Mad Scientists and Mad Science
Hammer Horror

The Curse of Frankenstein (1957, Terence Fisher)

Les Yeux sans visage (*Eyes Without a Face*, 1960, Georges Franju)

WEEK 5:

Don't Look Now (1973, Nicolas Roeg)

WEEK 6:

No film screening on Wednesday, March 8 (Public Holiday!)

The Wicker Man (1973, Robin Hardy)

WEEK 7:

Les Lèvres rouges (*Daughters of Darkness*, 1971, Harry Kümel)

¿ Quien puedo matar a un niño? (*Who Can Kill a Child?*, 1976, Narciso Ibáñez Serrador)

Mid-term essay (1500-2000 words), due on Friday, March 17, 2023, midnight.

WEEK 8:

Possession (1981, Andrzej Zulawski)

WEEK 9:

Suspiria (1977, Dario Argento)

E tu vivrai nel terrore! L'aldilà (*The Beyond*, 1981, Lucio Fulci)

Spring Break: April 3 – April 7, 2023

WEEK 10:

Funny Games (1997, Michael Haneke)

Ich seh Ich seh (*Goodnight Mommy*, 2014, Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala)

WEEK 11:

Haute tension (*Switchblade Romance*, 2003, Alexandre Aja)

Calvaire (*The Ordeal*, 2004, Fabrice du Welz)

WEEK 12:

The Descent (2005, Neil Marshall)

WEEK 13:

El laberinto del fauno (*Pan's Labyrinth*, 2006, Guillermo del Toro)

WEEK 14:

Låt den rätte komma in (*Let the Right One In*, 2008, Tomas Alfredson)

WEEK 15: Completion week (Monday, May 15 – Friday, May 19, 2023)

Essay Deadline: Friday, May 19, 2023, noon (i.e. 12:01 pm)

Graduating students: Deadline for final essay: Monday, May 15, 2023, midnight!

Readings

- Allen, Richard and Murray Smith (eds.). *Film Theory and Philosophy*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Allmer, Patricia, Emily Brick, David Huxley (eds.). *European Nightmares. Horror Cinema in Europe Since 1945*. London/New York: Wallflower Press, 2012.
- Baschiera, Stefano, and Russ Hunter (eds.). *Italian Horror Cinema*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016.
- Baudry, Jean-Louis. "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in the Cinema." In: Philip Rosen (ed.). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology. A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 299-318.
- Bazin, André. "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema". In: André Bazin. *What Is Cinema?* Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1971, pp. 23-40.
- Bazin, André. *What is Cinema?* Vol. I & II. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1971.
- Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." In: Leo Braudy / Marshall Cohen (eds.). *Film Theory and Criticism. Introductory Readings*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 731-751.
- Berenstein, Rhona J. *Attack of the Leading Ladies. Gender, Sexuality, and Spectatorship in Classic Horror Cinema*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Blake, Linnie. *The Wounds of Nations. Horror Cinema, Historical Trauma and National Identity*. Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press, 2008.
- Blandford, Steve, Barry K. Grant and Jim Hillier. *The Film Studies Dictionary*. London/New York: Arnold, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Boot, Andy. *Fragments of Fear. An Illustrated History of British Horror Films*. London/San Francisco: Creation Books, 1996.
- Bordwell, David. "Classical Hollywood Cinema: Narrational Principles and Procedures." In: Philip Rosen (ed.). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology. A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 17-34.
- Bordwell, David. *Narration in the Fiction Film*. London/New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Braudy, Leo, and Marshall Cohen (eds.). *Film Theory and Criticism. Introductory Readings*. Seventh Edition. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Brockman, Stephen. *A Critical History of German Film*. Rochester (N. Y.): Camden House, 2010.
- Brophy, Philip. "Horrority – The Textuality of Contemporary Horror Films." In: Ken Gelder (ed.). *The Horror Reader*. London/New York: Routledge, 2001, pp. 276-284.

- Brown, Larry A. *How Films Tell Stories. The Narratology of Cinema*. Nashville: Creative Arts Press, 2016.
- Butler, Ivan. *Horror in the Cinema*. Third Edition. South Brunswick/New York: A. S. Barnes, 1979.
- Carroll, Noël. *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart*. London/New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Carter, Margaret L. (ed.). *Dracula. The Vampire and the Critics*. Ann Arbor/London: University of Michigan Research Press, 1988.
- Chibnall, Steve, and Julian Petley (eds.). *British Horror Cinema*. London/New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Clover, Carol J. *Men, Women, and Chain Saws. Gender in the Modern Horror Film*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Coates, Paul. *The Gorgon's Gaze: German Cinema, Expressionism and the Image of Horror*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Creed, Barbara. *The Monstrous-Feminine. Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*. London/New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Eisner, Lotte. *The Haunted Screen. Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt*. Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008.
- Elsaesser, Thomas, and Warren Buckland. *Studying Contemporary American Film. A Guide to Movie Analysis*. London: Arnold Publishers, 2002.
- Everson, William K. *Classics of the Horror Film*. New York: Citadel Press, 1988.
- Fisher, Mark. *The Weird and the Eerie*. London: Repeater Books, 2016.
- Frampton, Daniel. *Filmosophy*. London: Wallflower Press, 2006.
- Freeland, Cynthia A. *The Naked and the Undead. Evil and the Appeal of Horror*. Boulder/Oxford: Westview Press, 2000.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny'." In: *Art and Literature. Jensen's Gradiva, Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*. The Penguin Freud Library Vol. 14, edited by Albert Dickson. London/New York: Penguin, pp. 335-376.
- Gelder, Ken (ed.). *The Horror Reader*. London/New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Gibbs, John. *Mise-en-Scène. Film Style and Interpretation*. London/New York: Wallflower Press 2003.
- Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies. The Key Concepts*. Third Edition. London/New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Hill, John, and Pamela Church Gibson (eds.). *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Hogan, David J. *Dark Romance. Sexuality in the Horror Film*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company 1997.
- Hunter, Jack (ed.). *House of Horror. The Complete Hammer Films Story*. Second revised and expanded edition. London/San Francisco: Creation Books, 1996.
- Hutchings, Peter. *The Horror Film*. Harlow/London/New York: Longman Publishing Group, 2004.

- Isenberg, Noah (ed.). *Weimar Cinema: An Essential Guide to Classic Films of the Era*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
- Jancovich, Mark (ed.). *Horror. The Film Reader*. London/New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Jones, Michael E. *Monsters from the ID. The Rise of Horror in Fiction and Film*. Dallas: Spence Publishing Company, 2000.
- Kardish, Laurence. *Weimar Cinema, 1919 – 1933. Daydreams and Nightmares*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2010.
- Kearney, Richard. *Strangers, Gods and Monsters. Interpreting Otherness*. London/New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Kracauer, Siegfried. *From Caligari to Hitler. A Psychological History of the German Film*. Revised and expanded edition. Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Kracauer, Siegfried. *Theory of Film. The Redemption of Physical Reality*. [1960] Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Lebeau, Vicky. *Psychoanalysis and Cinema. The Play of Shadows*. London: Wallflower Press, 2002.
- Litch, Mary M. *Philosophy Through Film*. New York/London: Routledge, 2002.
- Lowenstein, Adam. *Shocking Representation. Historical Trauma, National Cinema, and the Modern Horror Film*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- McCarty, John. *The Modern Horror Film. 50 Contemporary Classics from “The Curse of Frankenstein” to “The Lair of the White Worm”*. New York: Citadel Press, 1990.
- McFarlane, Brian. *Novel to Film. An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press/Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Metz, Christian. *Film Language. A Semiotics of the Cinema*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier. Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1982.
- Modleski, Tania. “The Terror of Pleasure. The contemporary horror film and postmodern theory.” In: Ken Gelder (ed.): *The Horror Reader*. London/New York: Routledge, 2001, pp. 285-293.
- Monaco, James. *How To Read a Film. Movies, Media, Multimedia*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Mulvey, Laura. “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.” In Philip Rosen (ed.). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology. A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 198-209.
- Nelmes, Jill (ed.). *An Introduction to Film Studies*. Third edition. London/New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Newton, Michael, and Evert Jan van Leeuwen (eds.). *Haunted Europe. Continental Connections in English-Language Gothic Writing, Film and New Media*. New York/London: Routledge, 2020.
- Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey (ed.). *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

- Olney, Ian. *Euro Horror. Classic European Horror Cinema in Contemporary American Culture*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Porter, Burton F. *Philosophy Through Fiction and Film*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education/Prentice Hall, 2004.
- Prawer, S. S. *Caligari's Children. The Film as Tale of Terror*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- Read, Rupert, and Jerry Goodenough (eds.). *Film as Philosophy. Essays in Cinema after Wittgenstein and Cavell*. Houndmills Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Rigby, Jonathan. *Euro Gothic. Classics of Continental Horror Cinema*. [2016] Cambridge: Signum Books, 2021.
- Roberts, Ian. *German Expressionist Cinema. The World of Light and Shadow*. London/New York: Wallflower, 2008.
- Rosen, Philip (ed.). *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology. A Film Theory Reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Scheunemann, Dietrich (ed.). *Expressionist Film: New Perspectives*. Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2011.
- Schneider, Steven Jay (ed.). *Horror Film and Psychoanalysis: Freud's Worst Nightmare*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Schneider, Steven Jay (ed.). *100 European Horror Films*. BFI Screen Guides. London: British Film Institute, 2007.
- Siddique, Sophia, and Raphael Raphael (eds.). *Transnational Horror Cinema. Bodies of Excess and the Global Grotesque*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Skal, David J. *The Monster Show. A Cultural History of Horror*. London: Plexus, 1994.
- Smith, Murray, and Thomas E. Wartenberg (eds.). *Thinking Through Cinema. Film as Philosophy*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2006.
- Thompson, Kristin, and David Bordwell. *Film History. An Introduction*. Second edition. New York: McGraw-Hill (Higher Education), 2003.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic. A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1975.
- Towson, Jon. *Subversive Horror Cinema. Countercultural Messages of Films from Frankenstein to the Present*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2014.
- Tudor, Andrew. *Monsters and Mad Scientists. A Cultural History of the Horror Movie*. Oxford/Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Twitchell, James B. *Dreadful Pleasures. An Anatomy of Modern Horror*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Wartenberg, Thomas E., and Angela Curran (eds.). *The Philosophy of Film. Introductory Text and Readings*. Oxford/Malden: Blackwell, 2005.
- Wells, Paul. *The Horror Genre. From Beelzebub to Blair Witch*. London/New York: Wallflower, 2000.
- Wood, Robin. "The American Nightmare: Horror in the 70s." In: Robin Wood: *Hollywood From Vietnam To Reagan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 70-94.

Essay Deadlines

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Deadline for final essay (3000-3500 words): Friday, May 19, 2023, noon (i.e. 12:01 pm)

Graduating students: Deadline for final essay: Monday, May 15, 2023, midnight!