

SPAN 596/ CMS597/HUM 521 B

Hispanic Film Programming and the Film Festival Phenomenon/ Organizing Film Festivals as Public Scholarship

Class Meeting: Tuesdays 2:30-5:20 in DEN 159

Professor Mercer

Office: Padelford B219

Office Hours: 12:10-1:30 Mondays and by appointment

Email: lmercer@uw.edu

Course Materials:

Films: (All films are available on our Canvas website under "Pages")

- *The Swamp/La ciénaga*, Lucrecia Martel (2001)
- *The Sky Turns/El cielo gira*, Mercedes Álvarez (2004)
- *[REC]*, Jaume Balagueró and Paco Plaza (2007)
- *Nostalgia for the Light/Nostalgia por la luz*, Patricio Guzmán (2010)
- *Snow White/Blancanieves*, Pablo Berger (2012)
- *Heli*, Amat Escalante (2013)
- *Marshland/ La isla mínima*, Alberto Rodríguez (2014)
- *Wild Tales/Relatos salvajes*, Damián Szifron (2014)
- *María and the Others/María (y los demás)*, Nely Reguera (2016)
- *Aquarius*, Kleber Mendonça Filho (2016)

Readings:

Critical readings for our course can be found on our Canvas Website under "Files."

Course Goals and Requirements:

Faculty in area studies and literature and language departments are increasingly asked to organize film series, and yet PhD programs rarely prepare graduate students for such endeavors. Film festivals in particular offer scholars a unique opportunity to connect with broader audiences, and this course will train students in the critical implications of festival organization. Students will develop both practical curatorial experience

and a greater historical understanding of the film festival as a phenomenon, while also examining what it means to translate their area studies expertise for new publics.

The cinema of the Hispanic (and Lusophone) world will be our case study. Students will study recent trends in Spanish and Latin American film, while also connecting with local and international experts in film programming, including personnel at the Guanajuato Film Festival, SIFF, the Seattle Latino Film Festival, and the Sitges Film Festival. Most importantly, students will work throughout our quarter of study in small curatorial groups to prepare a small-scale film festival for Latino and Spanish-speaking high school students in Washington State, with all of the relevant accompanying documentation. The ultimate goal, if funding develops, is to take one or two of our proposed festivals “on the road” to Seattle-area High Schools in Spring 2018.

- Class attendance is essential, because your active participation is required for this course to function properly. Students should come to class having already screened the films and digested the readings, and be ready to participate regularly in discussion. This work will form the basis of each student's class participation grade.
- Students will sign up to be discussion leaders for one class during the quarter, in pairs or groups of three, depending on enrollment. Students will present the readings for that day and guide classmates in discussion for approximately 30 minutes.
- Groups of 3-5 students will create a film festival proposal, around an organizing principle of their choosing. Groups will present for 20 minutes **on February 13**, highlighting the rationale for the curatorial choices of their mini-festival, their engagement objectives, and especially the learning activities they plan to produce in support of their festival. Students will be graded on their preparedness and ability to facilitate class involvement by engaging their classmates in discussion and critical analysis. Presentation grades will be individual.
- **On March 13**, students will submit a group portfolio. This portfolio should include a finalized film festival program, along with an engagement plan and related pedagogical activities. The engagement plan should highlight the larger goals of the festival, and how they will be met. Students will also submit an individual project narrative of 4-5 pp. based on their work on the micro film festival, summarizing and critiquing their collaboration on this project. Students should reflect on the greatest challenges they faced in putting the film festival together, and on the connections that were established through this work. Additionally, this final

- narrative should be a critical consideration of the student's understanding of the value of this type of public-facing scholarship.
- So that accommodations can be made, please let me know as soon as possible if you have a physical or learning disability that you believe may affect your performance in this class.
 - **Late work will not be accepted without a medical excuse.**

Grading:

Class participation: 20%

Discussion Leadership: 20%

Film festival group proposal presentation: 20%

Final film festival individual narrative/group portfolio: 40% (20%/20%)

Course Schedule:

January 9: **Brief introduction to the course. The history of film festivals. The critical implications of film festival organization.**

Readings: "Film Studies Basics" (please read if this is your first film studies course, or if you have taken a film course before, if you'd like a refresher), "Film Festival Networks," "The International Film Festival," "Meeting points."

January 16 : **The politics of the film festival. The legalities of the film festival. What is film programming?**

Visit of Maryam Fakouri (Intellectual Property Librarian) and John Vallier (Head of Media), UW Libraries (3:15-4)

Guest: Prof. Eduardo Viana da Silva (4pm)

Film: *Aquarius*

Readings: "Curating Film Festivals," "Introduction to Film Programming," "Finding Audiences for Films."

Discussion Leaders:

Explore: http://guides.lib.uw.edu/research/av/av_rights

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/aquarius-kleber-mendonca-filho-interview-aquarius-sonia-braga-oscars-cannes-film-festival-boycott-a7639836.html>

<https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/film/aquarius-it-is-the-duty-of-people-of-goodwill-to-boycott-this-film-1.3017560>

January 23:

The film festival and the genre Film. Spanish film festivals and the economic crisis.

Skype Q and A with Mike Hostench, Deputy Director of the Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival.

Film: *[REC]*

Readings: "A Festival Epidemic in Spain," "Ficxixón and Seminci" "Nuevas propuestas, viejos circuitos" (Spanish speakers)

Discussion Leaders:

Explore: <http://sitgesfilmfestival.com/eng>
<http://www.sitgesfilmfestival.com/eng/noticies?id=1003423>
<http://www.sitgesfilmfestival.com/eng/noticies?id=1002765>

January 30:

*****SIFF site visit***, led by Dustin Kaspar. Film dissection exercise. Film programming exercise. Meetings with specialists in educational outreach, marketing, programming and development.**

Film: *Wild Tales*

February 6:

Everything old is new again. The film festival aesthetic in the 21st Century.

Films: *Snow White and Marshland.*

Readings: "Crime, Knowledge," "Interrogating the Real," "Blancanieves: A Film"

Discussion Leaders:

February 13: Visit from Jorge Enrique González Pacheco, Founder and Director of the Seattle Latino Film Festival. The Hispanic film festival in the United States. Challenges and successes. Engaging young people through film.

FILM FESTIVAL PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS.

February 20: The film festival as launching pad for women directors.

Films: *The Swamp* and *María and the Others*

Readings: “Planeta ciénaga: Lucrecia Martel and Contemporary,” “La ciénaga/The Swamp”

Explore:

<http://variety.com/2016/film/festivals/nely-reguera-maria-and-the-others-san-sebastian-fest-1201866043/>

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/maria-others-maria-y-los-932809>

February 27: The film festival: national vs. transnational cinema.

Skype Q and A with Sarah Hoch, Founder and Director of the Guanajuato Film Festival (GIFF).

Film: *Heli*

Explore:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/13/movies/heli-paints-a-harrowing-picture-of-mexico.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/may/25/heli-review-mexican-drugs-drama-ultraviolent>

March 6: New documentaries of crisis. The environmental-political documentary. Course review.

Films: *The Sky Turns* and *Nostalgia for the Light*

Readings: “Más allá de la nostalgia” (Spanish speakers),
“Vision, Authority, Context.”

Discussion Leaders:

Explore: <http://icarusfilms.com/if-nost>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/18/movies/nostalgia-for-the-light-chile-documentary-review.html>

March 13: Submit final film festival narrative and portfolio to Prof. Mercer at lm Mercer@uw.edu before 3 pm.

FILM RESOURCES:

<http://tinyurl.com/y9njyrr5>

I've created this URL to point you to all of the foreign language Spanish DVDs held by UW libraries. Please note that the U of Oregon also owns many Hispanic films that we do not, and that they are available through Summit.

REFERENCE WORKS ON RESERVE AT THE MATH LIBRARY IN PDL, 3rd FLOOR (R) OR AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH THE LIBRARY (O) :

- *100 Years of Spanish Cinema*, Tatjana Pavlovic (O)
- *The Cinema of Latin America*, Alberto Elena and María Díaz López (R)
- *Directory of World Cinema: Latin America*, Isabel Maurer Queipo (R)
- *The History of Spain*, Peter Pierson (O)
- *Latin American Cinema: A Comparative History*, Paul Schroeder Rodríguez (O)
- *The Penguin History of Latin America*, Edwin Williamson (R)
- *Spanish Cinema: A Student's Guide*, Mark Allinson and Barry Jordan (R)
- *Spanish National Cinema*, Núria Triana Toribio (O)
- *Sundance to Sarajevo: Films Festivals and the World They Make*, Kenneth Turan (O)