**COMM 274: SYLLABUS**  
**INTRODUCTION TO CINEMA:**  
**DISCOVERING ROME THROUGH THE LENSES OF ITALIAN FILM DIRECTORS**

John Felice Rome Center  
Fall 2020  
Mondays & Wednesdays | 5:15pm - 6:30pm  
Dr. Mariarosy Calleri  
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Office Hours: Mon., 4:15pm - 5:15pm

**Course Description**

COMM 274 offers the unique opportunity to study Italian Cinema from the birth of Cinecittà Studios in 1937 to the present, visiting the settings, studios and real locations where some landmark Italian films were shot. The selected movies share the characteristic of having being all filmed in Rome, which can be considered the capital of the Italian film industry. Therefore Rome will be explored through the eyes of some of the most influential film directors and revealed as a source of inspiration for directors such as De Sica, Rossellini, Fellini, Pasolini, Wertmuller, Moretti and Sorrentino. The selected films will be discussed in class through an extensive historical analysis and a critical approach in order to understand the contribution of Italian cinema to the development of world cinema and the role of cinema in shaping Italian society and culture. Students will visit some of the locations used to shoot the movies analyzed in class in order to understand how they were filmed and learn the specific elements of film language and film techniques utilized by the different directors.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the course students should be able to:  
- understand the history of Italian Cinema from end of Fascism to present;  
- describe the historical, social and economic contexts in Italy and in Rome in which the selected films were produced;  
- identify social and cultural implications in the development of Italian cinema;  
- analyse a film from an artistic and technical point of view;  
- develop critical skills in evaluating movies;  
- recognize locations and sites made popular by Italian cinema filmed in Rome;  
- explain why and how particular locations were used in filmmaking by different Italian directors.

**Required Textbook:**


Towards the end of the semester the readings will shift from books to press reviews because we will be analysing contemporary filmmakers whose work and artistic career has not yet become the subject of books or official publications.
Suggested Reading:


Films:

*Roma Città Aperta (Rome open city)* by Roberto Rossellini, 1945
*Ladri di Biciclette (Bicycle Thieves)* by Vittorio De Sica, 1948
*La Dolce Vita* by Federico Fellini, 1960
*Mamma Roma* by Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962
*Per un Pugno di Dollari (A Fistful of Dollars)* by Sergio Leone, 1964
*C’era una volta il West (Once Upon a Time)* by Sergio Leone, 1968
*Swept Away* by Lina Wertmuller, 1974
*Seven Beauties* by Lina Wertmuller, 1975
*Caro Diario (Dear Diary)* by Nanni Moretti, 1993
*My Voyage to Italy* by Martin Scorsese, 2001
*Habemus Papam (We Have a Pope)* by Nanni Moretti, 2012
*La Grande Bellezza (The Great Beauty)*, by Paolo Sorrentino, 2013
*The Hateful Eight* by Quentin Tarantino, 2015

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets twice a week, thus a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”**.

Note: course attendance is based on prompt class attendance, preparation and active participation in class discussions.

DETAILS OF REQUIRED WORK:

Film review on movie chosen from a range of films proposed by the professor and research paper on its director *: students will work on different movies and different directors and will summarize their research in a presentation to be delivered in front of the class at the end of the semester.

- Students will analyze the chosen movie from a technical and critical point of view, and will contextualize the movie in its director’s life and artistic career.
**Midterm Exam:**

Students will be asked to write short answers to a questionnaire on specific movies and topics about Italian Cinema discussed in class.

**Final Exam:**

Multiple-choice test covering the topics analyzed in class and during the field studies. Short essays on some of the films watched during the course - directors’ poetics, film language used, historical and cultural context, image of Rome and Italian society provided by selected movies.

**Assessment Components**

Class attendance and participation (20%); oral presentation (max 5 minutes pitch) of at least 1,000 words film review on movie chosen by student and at least 500 word research paper on its director (20%); midterm exam (30%); final exam (30%).

**Grading**

94-100: A  
90-93: A-  
87-89: B+  
84-86: B  
80-83: B-  
77-79: C+  
74-76: C  
70-73: C-  
67-69: D+  
60-66: D  
59 or lower: F

**Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

**Late or Missed Assignments**

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

**Accessibility Accommodations**

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.
Course Schedule

Week One

**August 31, 2020. From silent cinema to the birth of Cinecittà** - An overview of the origins of cinema as an art form to the creation of Cinecittà studios. Excerpts from the films: *Cabiria* (1914); *Scipio Africanus* (1937).


**Sept. 2, 2020. From Fascist Propaganda to Realism.** Screening of selected scenes from *Ossessione* by Luchino Visconti.


Week Two

**Sept. 7, 2020. Roberto Rossellini, the father of Neorealism** – Overview of the characteristics of neorealist cinema.

_Film viewing (before next class): Rome, Open City* by Roberto Rossellini

**Sept. 9, 2020. Religion and Politics in Rossellini’s movies.** Analysis of selected scenes from Rossellini’s films


Week Three


_Film viewing (before next class): Bicycle Thieves*, by Vittorio De Sica.

**Sept. 16, 2020. Cinecittà Studios** – Field study: visit to Cinecittà studios to discover the secrets of cinema.

Week Four

**Sept. 21, 2020. – The visual language of Vittorio De Sica in his cinema of feelings.** Class discussion.

Sept. 23, 2020. **Federico Fellini and his films** - The most relevant changes in Italian and European society in the 60s represented by Federico Fellini, one of the most well known Italian directors of all times, winner of 4 Oscars. Screening of selected scenes from *La Dolce Vita* by Federico Fellini.

Film viewing (before next class): *La Dolce Vita*, by Federico Fellini

**Week Five**

Sept. 28, 2020. **NO CLASS**


Sept. 30, 2020. **The Locations of La Dolce Vita and the star system of the Golden Age of Italian Cinema** - Field study: visit to some of the locations where *La Dolce Vita* was filmed. Discussion on the new stars system that made Italian Cinema international.


**Week Six**

Oct. 5, 2020. **Pier Paolo Pasolini and the political film** - Presentation and analysis of Pasolini’s artistic and intellectual contributions to Italian culture and politics through his films.

Film viewings (before next class): *Mamma Roma*, by Pier Paolo Pasolini.


**Week Seven**


**Assignment:** Study for Midterm

Week Eight


Oct. 28, 2020. Analysis of Lina Wertmuller’s films. Lina Wertmuller portrays Italian society and its take on gender roles with satire and farce. In 1977 she was the first woman nominated for an academy award for Best Director and in 2019 she received the Academy Honorary Award for the career.


Week Nine

Nov. 2, 2020. Sergio Leone and The Spaghetti Western - Presentation of the Italian version of a classic American Genre that launched many international movie stars. Discussion and analysis of the films: Per un Pugno di Dollari (A Fistful of Dollars, 1964) and C’era una volta il West (Once Upon a Time, 1968) by Sergio Leone.

Film viewings (before next class): A Fistful of Dollars and Once Upon a Time by Sergio Leone

Nov. 4, 2020. The influence of Italian Cinema on Quentin Tarantino - Quentin Tarantino is a great fan of Sergio Leone’s Spaghetti Westerns and admires the Italian B-movies by Mario Bava and Dario Argento. Analysis of how Tarantino transposes the elements of main Italian film genres into his films.

Film viewing: Hateful Eight by Quentin Tarantino

Week Ten

Nov. 9, 2020. Nanni Moretti between sacred and profane - Presentation of director Nanni Moretti’s independent, opinionated and humorous perspective on Italian Society.

Film viewings (before next class): Caro Dairo, by Nanni Moretti.

Nov. 11, 2020. The Locations of Caro Diario - Field study: visit to the real locations where the film was shot in the Garbatella neighborhood.

Week Eleven

Nov. 16, 2020. NO CLASS

Film viewings (before next class): Habemus Papa (We have a Pope), by Nanni Moretti

Nov 18, 2020. How to write a Film Review. Presentation of film reviews’ key elements and main styles.

Homework: Research for film review on chosen film and paper on its director’s bio.

Week Twelve

Nov 23, 2020. The Great Beauty: the resurrection of Italian Cinema at the Oscars 2013 - La Grande Bellezza described as “La Dolce Vita” 2.0 explores the relationships among culture, politics and aesthetics through a kaleidoscopic journey set against the photogenic backdrop of Rome.

Film viewing (before next class): La Grande Bellezza (The Great Beauty) by Paolo Sorrentino


Week Thirteen

Nov. 30, 2020. NO CLASS

Homework: Prepare presentation of film Review on chosen film and research paper on its director’s bio.

Dec. 2, 2020. Oral presentation in class of students’ research papers - Each student will present the 1,500 words research paper to the class. Each student will have 5 min minutes for his/her oral presentation and can use graphs or power points.

Week Fourteen


Dec. 9, 2020. Final exam