

# CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES

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Department Website: <http://cms.uchicago.edu>

## PROGRAM OF STUDY

The major program in Cinema and Media Studies provides a framework within which students can approach the history of film and related media from a variety of historical, critical, and theoretical perspectives. Focusing on the study of the moving image, as well as sound, the program enables students to analyze how cinema creates meanings through particular forms, techniques, and styles; how industrial organization affects the way films are produced and received; and how the social context in which they are made and circulated influences our understanding of the medium.

At the same time, the goal is to situate the cinema and related media in broader contexts: modernity, modernism, and the avant-garde; narrative theory, poetics, and rhetoric; commercial entertainment forms and consumer culture; sexuality and gender; constructions of ethnic, racial, and national identities; and international media production and circulation.

Students focusing their studies in the Cinema and Media Studies major will be trained in critical, formal, theoretical, and historical thinking and analysis. The curriculum fosters discussion and writing skills, and students will gain the tools to approach film history as well as today's media environment within specific cultural contexts and broad transnational perspectives.

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## MAJOR PROGRAM IN CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES: STANDARD TRACK

Students wishing to major in Cinema and Media Studies may approach the Director of Undergraduate Studies early in their second year to help construct their course plan going forward; this meeting should take place by the end of Spring Quarter of a student's second year. Participation in the major must be declared by submitting the Major Requirements Approval Form (<https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/cms/prod/2022-07/Major%20Course%20Agreement%20Form%202023.pdf>) to the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the subsequent approved paperwork will be sent to the student's College adviser for official registration.

The Standard Track in Cinema and Media Studies is designed for students who wish to complete the major, but not complete a BA thesis project. This track is ineligible for honors. Students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies must receive quality grades (not P/F) in all twelve (12) courses to meet the requirements of the program.

### The following courses are required:

CMST 10100 Introduction to Film Analysis: This course provides an introduction to the basic concepts of film analysis. It should be completed before other Cinema and Media Studies courses.

CMST 28500 History of International Cinema I: Silent Era

CMST 28600 History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960

CMST 28700 History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present

**Elective Courses:** The seven (7) electives should be chosen based upon the student's interest, and must either originate in or be cross-listed with Cinema and Media Studies. Students are welcome to consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies on course selections. Students are encouraged to consider broad survey courses as well as those with more focused topics (e.g., courses devoted to a single genre, director, or national cinema).

CMST 29201 Advanced Seminar: The Chinese New Year Film or CMST 29202 Advanced Seminar: Spring: Open only to upper-year students who have declared a major in Cinema and Media Studies, the Advanced Seminar functions as a capstone course. It will allow students the opportunity to explore in more depth key disciplinary and methodological questions related to the study of cinema and media. Particular topics will be determined by the individual faculty instructor and will vary from the Autumn to Spring Quarters and from instructor to instructor. Majors are required to enroll in one section, but are welcome to use the second as an elective for their major requirements if the subject matter is of interest.

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## MAJOR PROGRAM IN CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES: INTENSIVE TRACK, WRITTEN THESIS OR INTENSIVE TRACK, PRODUCTION THESIS

The Intensive Tracks of the Cinema and Media Studies major are designed for students who wish to complete the major with a senior thesis, making them eligible to receive honors. **Intensive Track students will complete all coursework required under the Standard Track major;** they will also elect to complete either a written project or a production project and will complete one Thesis Workshop series over the course of their final year. The workshops will be supplemented with one-on-one meetings with their dedicated BA Preceptor,

who will help the student with the formation and execution of the student's project. Students must also enroll in CMST 29900 Senior Thesis during the quarter they intend to graduate.

Students in the Intensive Track major must take one (1) of the following workshop series, depending on whether they are completing a Written or Production Thesis. Please note that pursuing a Production Thesis requires approval of a written proposal (see below).

CMST 27299 Intensive Track - Written Thesis Workshop: This series of workshops—comprised of approximately 10 meetings across the whole academic year—will provide support for students focusing on the Written Thesis Project through the entire academic year. It is taught by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and supplemented by regular meetings with a designated preceptor. The workshops are intended to guide students through the process of thesis writing, from developing a research question to determining the most appropriate research method for its exploration to integrating suitable theoretical insights to writing compellingly about media objects to the nuts and bolts of exposition. Students will enroll in this 100-unit course in Autumn Quarter and will receive their grade at the completion of Spring Quarter.

CMST 28999 Intensive Track - Production Thesis Workshop: This series of workshops—comprised of approximately 10 meetings across the whole academic year—will provide support for students focusing on the Production Thesis Project through the entire academic year. It is taught by a production-focused faculty member and supplemented by regular meetings with a designated preceptor. The workshops are intended to guide students through the necessary steps in the realization of a film project, from pre-production to production to post-production. Students will enroll in this 100-unit course in Autumn Quarter and will receive their grade at the completion of Spring Quarter.

CMST 29900 Senior Thesis: Students completing an Intensive Track major must also enroll in the zero-credit course CMST 29900 during the quarter in which they intend to submit their thesis project and graduate. Students enroll in CMST 29900 using the section number of their BA thesis adviser, which can be obtained from the departmental coordinator in Cinema and Media Studies or the student's College adviser. CMST 29900 cannot be used to fulfill any other major coursework requirements.

### Proposing a Production Thesis Project

To be considered for the Production Thesis, students must have taken at least three production courses by the end of Autumn Quarter of their fourth year. Of these courses, two must originate (<https://cms.uchicago.edu/courses/>) within the Department of Cinema and Media Studies and be taught by Cinema and Media Studies faculty—*cross-listed courses taught outside of Cinema and Media Studies do not fulfill this requirement*. The third course can originate in either Cinema and Media Studies, Visual Arts, or Theater and Performance Studies, but must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

#### *Some additional notes:*

- Students should prioritize enrolling in two production courses taught by Cinema and Media Studies faculty (<https://cms.uchicago.edu/courses/>) before submitting a thesis proposal in year 3.
- One production course may be taken during Autumn Quarter of the student's fourth year if necessary.
- Two-quarter courses must be taken in sequence (ex. CMST 23930 + CMST 23931 or CMST 28921 + CMST 28922), and prerequisites must be met prior to enrollment.

In Spring Quarter of year 3, students must meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to declare their intention to complete an Intensive Track major and discuss the focus of their required Production Thesis. **By the seventh week of the quarter**, students submit a written proposal that describes the project and suggests a timeline for the work to be accomplished. The writing of screenplays/storyboards alone will not be considered for the Production Thesis.

#### *Some guidelines for the form and substance of the Production Thesis proposal:*

- The proposal should be no more than three (3) pages single-spaced.
- The proposal should contain three (3) sections:
  - Section 1: A synopsis of the project and an explanation of the significance of the project.
  - Section 2: A list of production courses taken; estimated length of the project; a description of the locations, actors, and/or social actors for the project and whether or not the student has access to these; and equipment required.
  - Section 3: A short plan and timeline of the project to be completed.

The Director of Undergraduate Studies and other Cinema and Media Studies faculty members will evaluate all proposals, and decisions will be made by the last week of Spring Quarter. Decisions are based primarily on the feasibility of the project, the quality of the proposal, and the student's performance in required production courses. **Priority will be given to projects proposing a documentary or experimental short.** The number of projects approved may be limited by the advising capacity of the Cinema and Media Studies faculty.

Production Thesis students will work closely with the production advisor for the duration of their project, from conceptualization to the end result. The final version is due by the fourth week of the quarter in which the student plans to graduate (most often in Spring Quarter).

The Production Thesis Project must be accompanied by a supplemental paper establishing the relationship of the film or video component of the project to film, video, or media history, theory, or modes of production. This paper may incorporate an analysis of the production and post-production process. The paper will be submitted at the time of final submission of the creative work.

### Double Majors and the Senior Thesis Project

Whether or not a single BA thesis can satisfy the requirements for a double major in Cinema and Media Studies and another program is decided by the department on a case-by-case basis. The criteria on which the decision is based include:

- The degree to which the resulting thesis is likely to speak from and to cinema and media studies, even as it necessarily speaks from and to another field.
- The feasibility of the proposed advising arrangements for the proposed joint thesis.
- The department's estimation of the student's track record for independent work that bodes well for writing a successful thesis while navigating between two majors.

A student who wishes to write a single BA thesis for a double major in Cinema and Media Studies and another program must meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, as well as submit a letter (one page, double-spaced) explaining the student's request for the department's approval. The letter should be addressed to the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

### SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS: MAJOR TRACKS

#### Standard Track Major

CMST 10100	Introduction to Film Analysis	100
CMST 28500	History of International Cinema I: Silent Era	100
CMST 28600	History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960	100
CMST 28700	History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present	100
Seven (7) electives originating in or cross-listed with Cinema and Media Studies *		700
One of the following:		100
CMST 29201	Advanced Seminar: The Chinese New Year Film	
CMST 29202	Advanced Seminar: Spring	
Total Units		1200

#### Intensive Track - Written Thesis Project

CMST 10100	Introduction to Film Analysis	100
CMST 28500	History of International Cinema I: Silent Era	100
CMST 28600	History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960	100
CMST 28700	History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present	100
Seven (7) electives originating in or cross-listed with Cinema and Media Studies *		700
CMST 27299	Intensive Track - Written Thesis Workshop ¶	100
CMST 29900	Senior Thesis §	000
One of the following:		100
CMST 29201	Advanced Seminar: The Chinese New Year Film	
CMST 29202	Advanced Seminar: Spring	
Total Units		1300

#### Intensive Track - Production Thesis Project

CMST 10100	Introduction to Film Analysis	100
CMST 28500	History of International Cinema I: Silent Era	100
CMST 28600	History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960	100
CMST 28700	History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present	100
Seven (7) electives originating in or cross-listed with Cinema and Media Studies *		700
CMST 28999	Intensive Track - Production Thesis Workshop ¶	100
CMST 29900	Senior Thesis §	000
One of the following:		100
CMST 29201	Advanced Seminar: The Chinese New Year Film	

CMST 29202	Advanced Seminar: Spring	
Total Units		1300
* Cinema and Media Studies courses eligible for the general education requirement in the arts (CMST 14400 Film and the Moving Image; CMST 14500-14599) may not be used to satisfy requirements in the Cinema and Media Studies major or minor.		
¶ Enrollment for Intensive Track Workshops is open only for students completing a thesis project in Cinema and Media Studies. Student enroll in Autumn Quarter and workshop meetings continue through the whole academic year. Student receive a final grade at the conclusion of Spring Quarter.		
§ Students completing an Intensive Track major must enroll in CMST 29900 (zero-unit course) in the quarter they are graduating. This course allows for the Thesis Project grade to appear on the transcript.		

## STUDY ABROAD

The College's Winter Quarter Cinema and Media Studies program in Paris provides undergraduate students with an opportunity to explore the study of film and related media at the University of Chicago Center in Paris. The program includes two courses that can be used toward the College's general education requirement in the arts, while the third course may be used as either an elective or within the Cinema and Media Studies major. The first two courses may also be eligible for credit within the Cinema and Media Studies major if the general education requirement in the arts has already been fulfilled and with approval from the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Cinema and Media Studies. Program participants also take a French language course. For more information or to apply, visit the Study Abroad website (<http://study-abroad.uchicago.edu/programs/paris-cinema-and-media-studies/>).

## GRADING

With the exception of the Intensive Track workshops (CMST 27299 and CMST 28999) students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies must receive a quality grade in all courses required to fulfill requirements. With prior consent of the instructor, non-majors may take Cinema and Media Studies courses for P/F grading.

## ADVISING

In order for students to declare a major in Cinema and Media Studies, they must have a Major Course Agreement Form approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies; this form grants approval for elective courses. It is also when the student can decide which track to follow through the major—the Standard (non-thesis) Track, the Intensive Track Written Thesis, or the Intensive Track Production Thesis. Students looking to do one of the intensive tracks must declare during their third year in the College.

## HONORS

Students who have earned an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher and a Cinema and Media Studies major GPA of 3.5 or higher are eligible for honors. To receive honors, the BA thesis must demonstrate exceptional intellectual and/or creative merit in the judgement of the faculty adviser (and second reader, if necessary), the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Master of the Humanities Collegiate Division. If the student's BA thesis adviser is not currently a Cinema and Media Studies faculty member or affiliate, a CMST faculty member or affiliate must act as a second reader.

## MINOR PROGRAM IN CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES

The minor program in Cinema and Media Studies is designed for students who wish to develop substantial knowledge in the discipline. Students minoring in Cinema and Media Studies must receive quality grades (not P/F) in all six (6) courses taken to meet the requirements of the program.

Courses in the minor (1) may not be double counted with the students major(s) or with other minors; and (2) may not be counted toward general education requirements.

The following three (3) courses are required:

CMST 10100 Introduction to Film Analysis: This course provides an introduction to the basic concepts of film analysis. It should be completed before other Cinema and Media Studies courses.

Students in the minor must take **two (2)** of the three offered History of International Cinema courses:

CMST 28500 History of International Cinema I: Silent Era

CMST 28600 History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960

CMST 28700 History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present

**Elective Courses:** The three (3) remaining courses must be at the 20000-level or above and must originate in or be cross-listed with Cinema and Media Studies. Students are encouraged to select courses that develop a sustained area of inquiry (e.g., film theory or new media) or demonstrate a breadth of knowledge in the field.

Students should choose courses based upon their interest and should discuss their elective choices with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

#### SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS: MINOR TRACK

CMST 10100	Introduction to Film Analysis	100
Two of the following:		200
CMST 28500	History of International Cinema I: Silent Era	
CMST 28600	History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960	
CMST 28700	History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present	
Three electives at the 20000 level or above that originate in or have a recognized cross-list with CMST *		300
Total Units		600

\* Cinema and Media Studies courses eligible for the general education requirement in the arts (CMST 14400 Film and the Moving Image; CMST 14500-14599) may not be used to satisfy requirements in the Cinema and Media Studies major or minor.

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#### CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES COURSES

*Please also visit the Courses page on the Cinema and Media Studies website at [cms.uchicago.edu/courses](http://cms.uchicago.edu/courses) (<http://cms.uchicago.edu/courses/>).*

##### **CMST 10100. Introduction to Film Analysis. 100 Units.**

This course introduces basic concepts of film analysis, which students will discuss through examples from different national cinemas, genres, and directorial oeuvres. We will consider film as an art form, medium, and industry, and cover all the major film types: silent, classical, and contemporary narrative cinema, art cinema, animation, documentary, and experimental film. We will study the cinematic techniques: mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound, and learn how filmmakers design their works. Nicolas Rueda-Sabater, Clint Froehlich 2025-2026 Winter

Instructor(s): Clint Froehlich, Nicolas Rueda-Sabater Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter

Note(s): Required of students taking a major or minor in Cinema and Media Studies.

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 10800, ARTV 20300

##### **CMST 14350. Videogame Level Design. 100 Units.**

Level design is the process of creating interactive virtual environments and scenarios. Through the deliberate placement of game assets, a level designer can evoke emotions and a sense of flow for the player. Similarly, in architecture, considerations are made into how aesthetics and form impact the experience of built environments. In this course, we will explore the level design of 3D games through an architectural lens and investigate how these conditions incentivize gameplay. With a focus on theories and techniques, we will develop a language to examine and analyze virtual worlds and the purpose behind their design. Course materials include foundational architecture texts, writings on games, talks by practicing designers, and gameplay.

Instructor(s): William Chyr Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 14350

##### **CMST 14400. Film and the Moving Image. 100 Units.**

This course seeks to develop skills in perception, comprehension, and interpretation when dealing with film and other moving image media. It encourages the close analysis of audiovisual forms, their materials and formal attributes, and explores the range of questions and methods appropriate to the explication of a given film or moving image text. It also examines the intellectual structures basic to the systematic study and understanding of moving images. Most importantly, the course aims to foster in students the ability to translate this understanding into verbal expression, both oral and written. Texts and films are drawn from the history of narrative, experimental, animated, and documentary or non-fiction cinema. Screenings are a mandatory course component.

Instructor(s): Allyson Field, Richard Neer, staff Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter

Note(s): Attendance in first class is mandatory to confirm enrollment. Open only to non-CMS majors; may not count towards CMS major requirements. For non-majors, any CMST 14400 through 14599 course meets the general education requirement in the arts.

##### **CMST 14503. Cinema in Theory and Practice. 100 Units.**

This class is only offered through the Study Abroad Program in Paris. This course looks at film theory through the lens of film practice. Readings, screenings, and exercises focus on fundamental cinematic parameters and their complex practical uses. We look at several masterpieces of French cinema to compare film theory to film practice, read testimonies from filmmakers, and develop sophisticated skills of film appreciation, critique, and analysis.

Instructor(s): Maria Belodubrovskaya Terms Offered: Winter. Study Abroad in Paris

Note(s): For nonmajors, any CMST 14400 through 14599 course meets the general education requirement in the arts. This class is only offered through the Study Abroad Program in Paris.

**CMST 14505. Visual Style in Still and Moving Images. 100 Units.**

The aim of this course is first to introduce students to the world of French-language animation and comics (BD or bandes dessinées) by providing a historical overview of both forms. In addition, the course provides an alternative genealogy of cinema by exploring how common techniques and elements of style have emerged through ongoing processes of adaptation, coproduction, and intercommunication between still and moving images, between comics and animation. Screenings will highlight animated films inspired by popular BD as well as films directed by "bédéistes" who have moved into the world of animation production. The final unit will consider how French comics and animation in recent years have repurposed Japanese manga and anime techniques and styles, rather swiftly and resourcefully. This course will only be offered through the Study Abroad program in Paris.

Instructor(s): T. Lamarre Terms Offered: Winter

**CMST 14514. Chicago Studies Arts Core. 100 Units.**

This Arts Core course examines the rich and vibrant cultures surrounding cinema in Chicago, from depictions of the city on screen, to film production from the silent era to the present day, to moviegoing culture from movie palaces to microcinemas. Students will study past and current film cultures in Chicago by examining particular films, events, venues, and critics. Topics covered will include the cinematic image of Chicago, film exhibition, audience and fan culture studies (with attention to Chicago's particular demographic contours), and contemporary television and digital media production in the city.

Instructor(s): Allyson Nadia Field Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Fulfills Art Core requirement

**CMST 14534. French and Francophone Cinema. 100 Units.**

This class is a survey of French and Francophone Cinema from the first years of cinema to the contemporary moment. In it, we will focus on three distinct moments: the idea of a "poetic" cinema in the 1920s that saw a heightened emphasis experiences unique to cinema; the rise of the "nouvelle vague" (New Wave) in the 1960s and the growth of cinephilia and art cinema; and the emergence of a "banlieue" or "beur" cinema of the 1990s and 2000s that focused on immigrant communities surrounding Paris. Our discussions will engage the formal developments of French and Francophone cinema, the history of film culture, and the historical discourse of national cinema that negotiates the politics of immigration, urbanization, and globalization.

Instructor(s): Daniel Morgan Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Offered specifically as part of CMS Study Abroad in Paris program.

**CMST 14565. Special Topics: The Films of Alfred Hitchcock. 100 Units.**

This course focuses on the films of Alfred Hitchcock, one of the greatest filmmakers of the 20th century. We study both his films and a variety of approaches to them. We investigate the enduring power of his movies; his contributions to genre and popular cinema; his storytelling techniques; his stylistic command; his approach to romance, suspense, and action; his status as a master and auteur; and his remarkable control over the audience's thoughts and feelings.

Instructor(s): Maria Belodubrovskaya Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

**CMST 14570. Special Topics: Animation Theory. 100 Units.**

Due to the ubiquity and pervasiveness of animation in contemporary media ecologies, recent years have seen a surge of interest in animation theory. But animation theory presents a vast and turbulent domain of inquiry, because animation may be narrowly defined as a set of objects or techniques or broadly conceptualized to embrace questions about life and death, about more-than-human animals, artificial life, and animism, for instance. This topics course has two aims. The first aim is to provide an overview of the key problematics of and approaches to animation theory in a global and historical perspective. The second aim is to develop tools for doing animation theory in a more localized manner. To this end, course will highlight theories of character and characterization with an emphasis on how the inherent tension between individual and type in animation affects our understanding race and racism.

Instructor(s): Thomas Lamarre Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Not offered in 2023-24.

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 14570, MADD 14570

**CMST 14578. Media Technologies. 100 Units.**

This class is only offered through the Study Abroad Program in Paris. This course offers tools for understanding and theorizing media by attending to technology. Students will learn to think about the materiality of media, asking how media technologies—such as television, the mp3 format, or a mobile phone app— influence the contents or meanings they transmit, as well as the ways in which discourses and practices shape the nature of media and its technical infrastructures. What forms have culture and knowledge taken as the emergence of new media has reconfigured lived experience, social life, and power relations? We will consider the ways in which technology extends beyond the realm of machinery—how practices, regulations, beliefs and environments become part of the systematic deployment of media from content moderation to the cooling of servers. Examples of media discussed in class will include student-curated collections of social media content, videogames and television by French creators, and even infrastructural systems, including a failed project to create an automated train system in Paris.

Instructor(s): Katherine Buse Terms Offered: Winter. Study Abroad in Paris

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-2025. For nonmajors, any CMST 14400 through 14599 course meets the general education requirement in the arts. This class is only offered through the Study Abroad Program in Paris.

**CMST 14580. Special Topics: Uncanny. 100 Units.**

TBD

Instructor(s): James Lastra Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

**CMST 14920. Comparative Media Poetics: Horror. 100 Units.**

Cinema, videogames, and VR: all moving-image media, which have at times exerted multi-directional aesthetic influences on each other. This course will investigate the raw materials and basic forms at the disposal of artists working in and across these media, with a special focus on horror as a genre. Along with fundamental questions regarding the social, psychological, and political uses (and abuses) of horror as a genre, this course will also look at how horror works across a variety of media. In what way do the possibilities available to game developers differ from those available to filmmakers, and vice versa? How are space, time, and action presented and segmented differently across moving images (cinema), interactive moving images (games), and fully-immersive virtual environments (VR)? How do techniques ranging from psychological identification to jump scares work in each medium, and what aesthetic effects are open to one that are not open to the other? Course materials will include horror cinema, horror games (video and otherwise), VR experiences, and written horror literature.

Instructor(s): Ian Bryce Jones Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 14920, CMLT 14920

**CMST 15200. Design History. 100 Units.**

Design is one of the most pervasive and influential forms of human communication, shaping everything from ancient symbols carved in stone to the digital interfaces that define modern life. This course offers a survey of design's history, examining design's evolution across cultural, artistic, and technological revolutions. This course traces the ways in which design has functioned as a critical tool for information exchange, artistic expression, and ideological influence. Beginning with the origins of writing systems and illuminated manuscripts, we will progress through the development of typography and printing during the Renaissance, the industrialization of design in the 19th century, the radical experimentation of modernist movements, and the global impact of digital media in the 21st century. This course examines both the dominant cultural ideas embodied by design, as well as the counter-narratives it generates to express diverse cultural identities.

Instructor(s): Sarah Martin Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Open to undergraduates, MA students, and PhD students.

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 15200, CMST 35200, MADD 35200

**CMST 15500. Beginning Screenwriting. 100 Units.**

This course introduces the basic elements of a literate screenplay, including format, exposition, characterization, dialog, voice-over, adaptation, and the vagaries of the three-act structure. Weekly meetings include a brief lecture period, screenings of scenes from selected films, extended discussion, and assorted readings of class assignments. Because this is primarily a writing class, students write a four- to five-page weekly assignment related to the script topic of the week. Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 27102

Instructor(s): P. Wimp Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 25500, TAPS 15500

**CMST 17900. Machine, Museum, Medium: The Collections of Paris through the Eyes of the Computer. 100 Units.**

TBD

Instructor(s): Marc Downie Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): This class is only offered through the Study Abroad Program in Paris. Not offered in 2024-25.

**CMST 19200. Comedy and Social Change in Chinese Moving Image Media. 100 Units.**

What is comedy, where is comedy, and to what end? This course foregrounds the function of comedy as a critical lens on and political catalyst for social change. We will explore how comedy and laughter emerge across both media and location, centering on Mainland Chinese moving image history. Rather than studying "China" and "comedy" as pre-established entities that then interact, the course investigates how area, genre, and media each come into being through their dynamic relations. Each week centers on theoretical readings that conceptualize the functional definition of comedy and/or media. These readings are paired with primary texts ranging from films and animation to television shows and Internet shorts, organized chronologically from the early 20th century onwards. By the end of the course, students will have learned to (1) identify and engage a genealogy of Chinese comedy in moving image media, (2) articulate intricate relationships among area, genre, and media, and (3) produce their own critical position on the global-situated sociopolitical functions of comedy.

Instructor(s): L. Kong Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Designed for undergraduate students across disciplines, the course requires no preliminary knowledge of Chinese language or history.

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 19200

**CMST 20110. Intro to Porn Studies. 100 Units.**

This course is a multi-media introduction to the Western history and study of the mode/label/genre of aesthetic production called pornography and its other appearances as "obscenity," "erotica," "porn," "filth," "art," "adult,"

"hardcore," "softcore," "trash," and "extremity." We will study how others have approached this form, how they have sought to control it, uplift it, analyze it, destroy it, take it seriously, or learn to live with it. This course is both an introduction to the academic field of "porn studies" and to its equal and opposite: the endless repository of historical and current attempts to get pornography out of the way, to keep it somewhere else out of sight, to destroy it, or to deem it unworthy of study. We begin with a conversation about what the stakes are and have been in studying porn and how we might go about doing it, and then move through history and media technologies beginning with the category of pornography's invention with regards to drawings from Pompeii. The course is meant to introduce students to various forms pornography has taken, various historical moments in its sociocultural existence, and various themes that have continued to trouble or enchant looking at pornography. The goal of this course is not to make an argument for or against porn wholesale, but to give students the ability to take this contentious form and its continued life seriously, intelligently, and ethically. Course consent from the instructor is required.(Theory)

Instructor(s): Gabriel Ojeda-Sague Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Course consent from the instructor is required.

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 10110, ENGL 10110, GNSE 23143

**CMST 20122. From Bollywood to Made in Heaven: Marriage and Sexuality on Indian Screens. 100 Units.**

From reality shows like Indian Matchmaking and Made in Heaven to the meme of the "Big Fat Indian Wedding" to the preoccupations of Bollywood films like DDLJ and Rocky aur Rani ki Prem Kahani and crossover ones such as Monsoon Wedding, marriage is an obsession in South Asian culture. Focusing on Hindi cinema, this course will explore the socio-political dynamics of this cultural focus on marriage and couple formation. With examples ranging from classical Hindi films from the 1950s-60s to the star-studded melodramas of 1970s and 1980s and the "new Bollywood" era (post-1991), this cinema exhibited and analyzed the central dynamics of marriage: sexual compatibility, fidelity, reproductive futures, and so on. Debates around class, caste, diaspora, and sexuality are equally anchored in issues of marriage and couple formation. In this course, we ask why it is that marriage—its success and failure—has been so central to Indian on-screen identities. Even as screens multiply on computers, cell phones, and in the multiplex—marriage continues to dominate. No prior knowledge of Indian languages is required, but you must enjoy watching and talking about movies and popular culture.

Instructor(s): Rochona Majumdar Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): SALC 20122, HIST 36616, CMST 30122, SALC 30122, GNSE 30142, HIST 26616, GNSE 20142

**CMST 20203. Branding and Counterbranding. 100 Units.**

A practical and theoretical introduction to the design of brand identity, from logos to copy to moving image. In addition to experimenting with practical applications of branding, students will also use history and theory to engage with anti-consumerist post-branding approaches championed by artists and designers such as Jason Grant, Oliver Vodeb, The Yes Men, Barbara Kruger, and Adbusters. Students will practice the process and strategies used to benchmark, research, and ideate effective brand systems through assembled logo, type, color, illustration, imagery, and graphic elements while negotiating the ethically complex histories of branding in practice.

Instructor(s): Sarah Martin Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 20200

**CMST 20550. Writing the TV Pilot. 100 Units.**

The creation of a TV Pilot is a unique, exciting, and demanding task for a writer. In addition to the responsibility of telling a compelling story, writers are also charged with setting up a "world" and establishing characters and plotlines that will sustain the show over multiple episodes and seasons. In this class, we will delve into the processes required to succeed in this challenging endeavor. This includes creation of pitch materials, plot and character development, outlining, creation of a show bible, and ultimately, writing the pilot episode of an original TV series. The classroom will function as part development workshop and part informal TV writer's room. Through weekly reading and writing assignments we will dissect successful entries into the TV space and tap into our artistic inspirations to evolve our show concepts. From there, we would collaborate as a class by actively brainstorming and workshopping our scripts and series. By the end of the quarter, each student will complete a draft of an original pilot script, as well as a short "Series Bible" detailing the broader scope of the show.

Instructor(s): K. O'Brien Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 25550, MADD 20550

**CMST 20600. Gender, Race, and Horror. 100 Units.**

This course will contend with the ways that horror as a film genre constructs and deconstructs notions of gender and race in society. We will attend to texts across decades and subgenres that will illustrate how gender and race are made and regulated through notions of confusion, fear, and repulsion. By attending to these universal human feelings, students will learn how emotions are evoked through the construction of the text, its portrayal of the disruption of gender norms and its construction of racial boundaries. Students will learn the necessary vocabulary and methodologies to be able to critically analyze (audio)visual texts. In order to do this, students will be guided through how to construct argumentative critical papers through proper utilization of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. By the end of the course, students will be well versed in cinematographic terms such that they will be able to critically analyze texts to understand the impact of perspective, interpretation, and judgment. This course is meant to help students navigate and make sense of an increasingly scary world by learning to appreciate fear as a necessary human expression. Finally, and most importantly, students will be able to engage with the age-old notion of terror to be able lead a more ethical and intellectually richer life.

Instructor(s): AE Stevenson Terms Offered: Autumn  
Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

**CMST 20602. Queer/Trans/Media. 100 Units.**

This seminar stages a sustained dialogue between theories of queer, trans, and media, exploring how each of these disciplines animate and challenge one another. This course explores the possibilities of an expanded understanding of queerness, following queer scholar Eve Sedgwick's claim that "work around 'queer' spins the term outward along dimensions that can't be subsumed under gender and sexuality at all." More recently, queer scholars like David Eng have read "queerness as a critical methodology based not on content but rather on form and style" while trans scholars like Toby Beauchamp similarly engage "the transgender of transgender studies as a mode of critique" and "not as a predetermined category into which identities or bodies are slotted." What might it mean to consider "queer" and "trans" not as a field with a delimited object of study (sexuality or gender), but as an analytic, a methodology, a critical sensibility, a conceptual strategy, a reading practice, a politics, an aesthetic, etc. Throughout the course, we explore often-unconventional pairings of media objects and scholarly readings to work through these challenging questions. Ultimately, this course is designed to help students read for the similarities within the aesthetic forms of film/media and queer/trans theories to understand their force of expression.

Instructor(s): Basil Dababneh Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 23169

**CMST 21003. Early Black Film and its Afterlives. 100 Units.**

In an oft-cited statistic, the Library of Congress has estimated that over 70% of the films produced between 1912 and 1929, are now lost forever. The outcomes for black film during this period are even more stark. This course takes on the challenge of narrating a history dominated by absence, pairing careful historiographic methods with creative and speculative approaches to construct the life and afterlife of early black filmmaking. In this class, we will explore the historical development of black film and black film performance throughout the silent era and its boundaries, from the earliest fragments to the beginnings of the sound era. We will explore key figures such as Oscar Micheaux, Richard E. Norman, and William D. Foster, as well as key performers like Paul Robeson, Bert Williams, Evelyn Preer and Josephine Baker. In addition to watching and engaging with the films themselves, we will explore the contexts of their production, the theatrical and musical traditions that informed them, and material life of the celluloid that carries them. We will also attend to the films now "lost forever." What can we know about a film we cannot watch, and how? We will consider partial film material, news reporting and other ephemera in an attempt to peer into the space left behind in the absence of a surviving film print. Lastly, we will study the citation, sampling, remaking, and reimagining of this material from this era in contemporary work.

Instructor(s): Avery LaFlamme Terms Offered: Winter

**CMST 21025. Creating a Different Image: Black Women's Filmmaking of the 1970s-90s. 100 Units.**

This course will explore the rich intersections between African American women's filmmaking, literary production, and feminist thought from the 1970s to the early 1990s, with an emphasis on the formation of a Black women's film culture beginning in the 1970s. We will examine the range of Black feminisms presented through film and the ways that these films have challenged, countered, and reimagined dominant narratives about race, class, gender, and sexuality in America. We will explore the power and limitations of filmmaking as a mode of Black feminist activism; the range of Black feminisms presented through film; and the specific filmic engagements of well-known Black feminist critics such as bell hooks, Toni Cade Bambara, and Michele Wallace. As many Black feminist writers were engaged with filmmaking and film culture, we will look at these films alongside Black women's creative and critical writing from the period. Approaching filmmaking in the context of Black feminist thought will allow us to examine the possibilities of interdisciplinary approaches to film studies broadly, as well as to think specifically about the research methods and theories that are demanded by Black women's filmmaking in particular.

Instructor(s): Allyson Field Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): This course is open to graduate and undergraduate students from across the disciplines; our conversations and presentations of the films will both depend on and be energized by different disciplinary perspectives.

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25. Please email Professor Field at anfield@uchicago.edu before enrolling. Course Description Continued: We will discuss the form, aesthetics, and politics of individual films and we will examine larger efforts by artists and activists to build a Black women's film culture, asking such questions as: What does a film history of Black feminism look like, and what scholarly and creative methods does such a history demand? To begin to answer these questions, we will revisit the 1976 Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts—believed to be the first ever Black women's film festival—organized by Michele Wallace, Faith Ringgold, Patricia Jones, Margo Jefferson, and Monica Freeman. The class will collectively participate in a homage series inspired by the 1976 festival, featuring work by filmmakers from the original festival such as Monica Freeman, Madeline Anderson, Michelle Parkerson, Ayoka Chenzira, Carol Munday Lawrence, Edie Lynch, and Camille Billops; as well as others including Julie Dash, Zeinabu irene Davis, Maya Angelou, and Yvonne Welbon. The weekly course screenings will be open to the public and students will gain experience in the public presentation of films by actively engaging in public-facing aspects of film exhibition (writing program notes, delivering introductions, participating in discussions, etc.). The class will culminate with a two-day symposium that will bring together around 35 Black feminist filmmakers and artists, including a number from the 1976 festival, to revisit the threads and legacies of the original event and discuss the present and future of Black women's film practices.

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 21025, GNSE 30128, HIST 27415, GNSE 20128, KNOW 31025, HIST 37415, CMST 31025, HMRT 31025

**CMST 21301. Introduction au cinéma français et francophone. 100 Units.**

Ce cours vise à donner une vue d'ensemble du cinéma français et francophone à travers une approche thématique. À l'appui de textes dont nous priviléierons ceux originellement publiés en français, nous examinerons une grande variété de films dont le point commun se situe à leur opposition à la norme, au centre, à la métropole, au mainstream. L'œuvre de cinéastes issus des rives gauche et droite de la Nouvelle Vague, tels que Chabrol, Duras, Godard et Varda, celle de cinéastes africains, et de cinéastes de l'âge classique et moderne comme Alice et Mati Diop, permettra de passer du macro au micro, du personnel à l'autoréférentiel. Nous étudierons ainsi comment ces cinéastes utilisent l'outil cinématographique pour aborder des thèmes tels que la colonisation, la géographie, le genre et la sexualité, et le medium du cinéma lui-même. En mettant en lien l'image et le texte, nous étudierons la tension entre le langage du cinéma et celui de la littérature et leur différente capacité à traiter de ces sujets.

Instructor(s): Etienne Labbouz Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): FREN 20300 or placement into 20500

Note(s): Taught in French

Equivalent Course(s): FREN 21300

**CMST 21401. Refresh, Reload, Reboot, Remake: What are film remakes good for? 100 Units.**

Film remakes are, and have been, a ubiquitous phenomenon in popular cinema. Film remakes take many shapes and forms: transnational (from Japan to the US), transcultural (from French to American), trans-modal (from animation to live action), and trans-medial (from games to the cinema screen). This course takes up the remake as not merely a citation, but as a new object that, in repeating, creates new meanings. It treats the remake as a repository where one can not only find new technologies of seeing and showing, but also track changing ways of imagining the world on cinema. For this course, then, the film remake serves as an emblem of difference, one which contains the situated imaginations of films past and present. By studying the remake, the goal of this class is to come out with a better understanding of cinema's difference from the other arts in its capacity to repeat the same story to produce different results.

Instructor(s): Shubham Shivang Terms Offered: Autumn

**CMST 21402. South Side Home Movies: Amateur Cinema and the Politics of Preservation. 100 Units.**

This course traces the history of amateur filmmaking on Chicago's South Side as a robust creative practice and mode of documentation revealing realms of moving image production and presentation grounded in everyday life. With the rise of scholarship on nontheatrical media, home movies have become a critical area of cinema studies and archiving. This course centers on the South Side Home Movie Project, founded by the instructor, housed at the University of Chicago's Arts + Public initiative/Film Studies Center. The collection has more than 1,000 reels of small-gauge (8mm, 16mm) films from the 1930s-1970s from a diverse range of South Side residents, with scenes of family and community gatherings, life milestones and more. We will engage in close readings of films in the archive to consider their styles and intended audiences. We will examine how they picture the South Side in an era of intense racial segregation, as discussed by writers, e.g., Horace Cayton, St. Clair Drake, etc. We will also discuss the SSHMP's approaches to stewarding this footage in relation to developments in film archival praxis, and tensions that crop up between preservation and access. Lectures and discussions with SSHMP staff, donors and collaborators will cover digitization, cataloguing, oral history, public programming, and engagement with filmmaker families, educators, and artists. Students will have opportunities to contribute original research and creative re-use projects to the SSHMP website.

Instructor(s): Jacqueline Stewart Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 31402, CMST 31402, CHST 21402, RDIN 21402

**CMST 21421. Modern Greek History Through Cinema and Literature. 100 Units.**

This course examines how modern Greek cinema and literature have shaped and reflected evolving views of Hellenism in the long twentieth century, exploring how filmmakers and writers have grappled with questions of identity, memory, and historical trauma. We will analyze films such as *America America*, *Never on Sunday*, *Smyrna*, *My Beloved*, *Little England*, and *1968*. Our course will focus on pivotal moments in modern Greek history, including the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922, the Second World War, and the Greek military dictatorship (1967-1974). In addition to film analysis, students will engage with modern Greek literature, exploring texts that offer deeper historical and cultural context, including selected writings by two renowned Nobel laureates, Odysseas Elytis and Giorgos Seferis; Dido Sotiriou's *Farewell Anatolia*; Ioanna Karystiani's *The Jasmine Isle*; and Maro Doukas' *Fool's Gold*. Students will explore themes of displacement, diaspora, collective identity, and shifting perceptions of the past, developing a nuanced, interdisciplinary understanding of modern Greece. No prior knowledge of Greek is required, and all readings will be provided in English translation.

Instructor(s): Calliope Dourou Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MOGK 31421, MOGK 21421

**CMST 21650. Irish Literature and Cinema. 100 Units.**

Major works of poetry, fiction, drama, and film. In literature, the course ranges from Jonathan Swift and Maria Edgeworth to Seamus Heaney and Anna Burns, and, in cinema, from silent film to Neil Jordan and Lenny Abramson. Literature and cinema are intertwined through all the weeks of the quarter in various connections

(including Hitchcock's adaptation of O'Casey's JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK). (Fiction, Poetry, Drama, 1650-1830, 1830-1990)

Instructor(s): Jim Chandler Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 18250

**CMST 22119. Richard Wagner's Ring of the Nibelung in Performance. 100 Units.**

This seminar, open to undergraduates and beginning graduate students, serves as a critical introduction to and intensive exploration of Richard Wagner's 19th century tetralogy. In addition to critical readings (e.g., by Wagner, Adorno, Nietzsche, Badiou, Dahlhaus, et al.) and screenings of a host of productions, we will travel downtown to Lyric Opera to attend performances of the Ring cycle in David Pountney's new production. Our discussions of the Chicago production will be supplemented by conversations with members of the Lyric Opera production team, including Anthony Freud, Lyric Opera's General Director. No previous knowledge is required although a curiosity about opera, German culture, media history, and/or theater & performance studies will be essential.

Instructor(s): David Levin Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 24520, GRMN 33419, MUSI 32520, GRMN 23419, CMST 32119, FNDL 23419

**CMST 22322. Introduction to Game Design. 100 Units.**

This studio course introduces students to key theories and practices of game design. Our emphasis will be on board games, roleplaying games, and other analogue games. Through a series of collaborative projects, students will get hands-on experience with the iterative loop - ideation, prototyping, playtesting, and evaluation - while developing familiarity with common mechanics and genres. These making opportunities will be paired with critical play sessions of preexisting games.

Instructor(s): Cameron Mankin Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Students should have taken "Critical Videogame Studies" or another comparable game studies or design course.

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 22322

**CMST 22440. Women in Italian Organized Crime Through Cinema. 100 Units.**

In this course, we will study filmic representations of women in Italian organized crime, and the implications these portrayals have on the understanding of gender and the mafias through Italian cinema. Sociological and psychological studies have underscored the importance of female roles in relation to mafia organizations, notwithstanding the rigid patriarchal structure that allows only male affiliation. One of the main goals of this class is for students to gain an understanding of different Italian mafias and to get a deeper comprehension of the construction of gender in a selection of films centered around these organizations. We will also discuss how movies contribute to the perception of organized crime. This class will draw on a variety of fields, including sociology, gender studies, and film studies.

Instructor(s): Veronica Végna Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Taught in English. Students seeking credit for the Italian major/minor must complete a substantial part of the course work (e.g., readings, writing) in Italian.

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 22440, ITAL 22440

**CMST 22500. Seeing Islam and the Politics of Visual Culture. 100 Units.**

From terrorists to "good Muslims," standards in the racial, cultural, and religious representations surrounding Islam have fluctuated across U.S. media. How do we conceptualize the nature of visual perception and reception? The history of colonialism, secular modernity, gender, patriarchy, and the blurred distinctions between religion and racialization have all contributed to a milieu of visual cultures that stage visions of and arguments about Islam. Hostility towards Muslims has not abated as we venture well into the 21st century, and many remain quick to blame an amorphous media for fomenting animosity towards the "real" Islam. We use these terms of engagement as the start of our inquiry: what is the promise of a meaningful image? What processes of secular translation are at work in its creation and consumption? Is there room for resistance, legibility, and representation in U.S. popular culture, and what does representation buy you in this age? We will pair theoretical methods for thinking about imagery, optics, perception, and perspective alongside case studies from film, stage, comedy, streaming content, and television shows, among others. Students will critically engage and analyze these theories in the contexts from which these works emerge and meld into a mobile and diasporic U.S. context. Together, we will reflect on the moral, political, and categorical commitments vested in different forms of media against historical trends of the 20th and 21st century.

Instructor(s): Samah Choudhury Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Undergrad students register for Section 1; Grad students register for section 2

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 27555, ISLM 37555, ENGL 22505, CMST 32500, GNSE 32511, RDIN 32500, GNSE 22511, ARTV 20667, ENGL 32505, RDIN 22500

**CMST 22510. African American Cinema. 100 Units.**

TBD

Instructor(s): AE Stevenson Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 32510, RDIN 22510

**CMST 23255. Adapting East Asia. 100 Units.**

In an era of globalization and rapid technological innovation, "adaptations" are becoming increasingly widespread and diverse. In addition to discussions of an adapted work's fidelity to the prior material, this advanced seminar aims to develop multiple approaches to adaptation by conceptualizing it as a process of

negotiating with changes across time, space and medium. By examining a variety of selected media objects including films, TV series, animations, short stories, theater performances, online games and short form videos from or about East Asia, students will practice analyzing a cultural product's narrative and form in relation to the sociopolitical contexts of its production, circulation and reception. In the course of the quarter, students will de-Westernize adaptation studies while generating nuanced understandings of Korea, China, and Japan as relational constructs emerging as a result of negotiating with other cultures and wielding various technologies. All required readings will be in English, either originally or in translation, and all viewing materials will be available with English subtitles. This seminar is for advanced undergraduate students and graduate students in East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Cinema and Media Studies, and the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

Instructor(s): Y. Cho Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 33255, EALC 23255

**CMST 23321. Bollywood Beats: Music and Sound in Popular Hindi Cinema. 100 Units.**

This course explores the music and sound of popular Hindi cinema from aesthetic, social, cultural, economic, historical, and political perspectives. Students will be introduced to the musical conventions and practices of the genre, and to changes in Bollywood musical style over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries. We will watch select films with keen attention to music's imbrication with cinematic visuality, narrative, technology, and dance, and with consideration of issues like emplacement, gender, caste, religion, capitalism, nationalism, and transnationalism. Bollywood is a cosmopolitan music, drawing from and contributing to a range of regional and international music practices; we also venture into some of those streams.

Instructor(s): Anna Schultz Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 23321, CMST 33321, MUSI 33321, SALC 23321, SALC 33321

**CMST 23500. Pasolini. 100 Units.**

This course examines each aspect of Pasolini's artistic production according to the most recent literary and cultural theories, including Gender Studies. We shall analyze his poetry (in particular "Le Ceneri di Gramsci" and "Poesie informa di rosa"), some of his novels ("Ragazzi di vita," "Una vita violenta," "Teorema," "Petrolio"), and his numerous essays on the relationship between standard Italian and dialects, semiotics and cinema, and the role of intellectuals in contemporary Western culture. We shall also discuss the following films: "Accattone," "La ricotta," "Edipo Re," "Teorema," and "Salo".

Instructor(s): Armando Maggi Terms Offered: Course not offered in 2025-26

Note(s): Taught in English.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 33500, FNDL 28401, ITAL 38400, GNSE 38600, ITAL 28400, GNSE 28600

**CMST 23930. Documentary Production I. 100 Units.**

Documentary Video Production focuses on the making of independent documentary video. Examples of various modes of documentary production will be screened and discussed. Issues embedded in the genre, such as the ethics, the politics of representation, and the shifting lines between "the real" and "fiction" will be explored. Story development, pre-production strategies, and production techniques will be our focus, in particular research, relationships, the camera, interviews and sound recording, shooting in available light, working in crews, and post-production editing. Students will work in crews and be expected to purchase a portable hard drive. A five-minute string-out/rough-cut will be screened at the end of the quarter. Students are strongly encouraged to take CMST 23931 Documentary Production II to complete their work. Consent of instructor is required to enroll.

Instructor(s): Marco Ferrari Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Prior or concurrent enrollment in CMST 10100 recommended for undergraduate students.

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 23930, HMRT 35106, CMST 33930, CHST 23930, ARTV 33930, ARTV 23930, HMRT 25106

**CMST 23931. Documentary Production II. 100 Units.**

Documentary Production II focuses on the shaping and crafting of a non-fiction video. Enrollment will be limited to those students who have taken CMST 23930 Documentary Production I. The class will discuss issues of ethics, power, and representation in this most philosophical and problematic of genres. Students will be expected to write a treatment outline detailing their project and learn about granting agencies and budgeting. Production techniques will concentrate on the language of handheld camera versus tripod, interview methodologies, microphone placement including working with wireless systems and mixers, and lighting for the interview. Post-production will cover editing techniques including color correction and audio sweetening, how to prepare for exhibition, and distribution strategies. Consent of instructor is required to enroll.

Instructor(s): Marco Ferrari Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): CMST 23930, HMRT 25106, or ARTV 23930

Equivalent Course(s): CHST 23931, HMRT 25107, ARTV 33931, MADD 23931, CMST 33931, HMRT 35107, ARTV 23931

**CMST 24010. Vernacular Image Forensics: Everyday Spectatorship of State Violence. 100 Units.**

This course explores the rise of a vernacular mode of forensic spectatorship through the relationship between two contradictory facets of contemporary visual culture. On the one hand, our screens are flooded with audio-visual documents of state violence, like livestreams of police killings and GoPro footage of Israeli soldiers in Gaza. We rely upon these images to hold perpetrators accountable and to make sense of the increasing complexity and abstraction of global capitalism. On the other hand, our so-called "post-truth" era and its attendant AI and

deep fake anxieties has eroded the belief that these images can meaningfully reference a shared reality. While we urgently rely upon photographic images to make sense of the world, we also look at them with suspicion. From this tension arises an everyday fixation with image forensics, registered by cultural texts as wide ranging as true crime shows, conspiracy theory videos, investigative reporting, and popular documentaries. Surrounded with visual evidence, audiences have become forensic analysts. In this class we will explore this tension and mode of spectatorship, grounding both in debates across film and media theory surrounding the evidentiary value of photographic-based images. Through reading primary sources from the history of photography and film, and texts in film theory, documentary studies, critical theory, and forensic science, we will historicize and theorize this popular forensic gaze.

Instructor(s): Wolfgang Boehm Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 24010

#### **CMST 24110. India on Film. 100 Units.**

This course introduces you to the different ways in which we might think about India through films. What was/is India on-screen? To what extent was India produced by these filmic imaginations? To be sure, there was/is no monolithic India represented in film. Over the course of the quarter, we will focus on some important films to chart the idea of India they constructed and held up for critique. We will also focus on the region within the nation. In what ways does "Bombay" cinema overlap with "Tamil" "Bengali" and/or Malayalam cinemas? What are its overlaps with "Lahore" cinema both before and after India and Pakistan became sovereign states? Our films will cover a wide temporal range: from the classical period of Indian cinema into the era of globalization in the 21st century. They will include popular, documentary, and art films. Our goal will be to understand the relationship between films and emergent ideas of nationhood, modernity, and citizenship in a decolonial world. Open to all students, both undergraduate and graduate.

Instructor(s): Rochona Majumdar Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 34110

#### **CMST 24119. Claude Lanzmann's Shoah Project. 100 Units.**

Claude Lanzmann's Shoah (1985) is a 9 ½ hour film comprised of Holocaust testimonies - by survivors, perpetrators, and bystanders. It represents the streamlining of 150 hours of film footage collected over the course of nearly a decade all over the world. In this class, we will explore the film and the discourses that have grown up around it, such as the nature of Holocaust representation, the ontology of Holocaust testimonies, and the limits of translation in understanding the history of the Holocaust. We will work with the outtakes from the film at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to better understand the narrative Lanzmann constructed not only through what he chose to include in the final cut, but also what he chose to exclude. As we analyze Lanzmann's magnum opus, we will also explore associated films - by Lanzmann and by others - that grew out of Shoah and that shed further light on it. A final "Outtakes" project will give students the opportunity to suggest their own version of the film, with materials from the archive.

Instructor(s): Sheila Jelen Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 34109, RLST 24109, FNLD 24109, HIJD 34109, JWSC 24109, GRMN 24109

#### **CMST 24405. Kieslowski's French Cinema. 100 Units.**

Krzysztof Kieślowski's The Decalogue and The Double Life of Veronique catapulted the Polish director to the international scene. His subsequent French triptych Blue, White, Red turned out to be his last works that altered his image and legacy to affirm his status as an auteur and a representative of the transnational cinema. We discuss how in his virtual universe of parallel histories and repeated chances, captured with visually and aurally dazzling artistry, the possibility of reconstituting one's identity, triggered by tragic loss and betrayal, reveals an ever-ambiguous reality. By focusing on the filmmaker's dissolution of the thing-world, often portrayed on the verge of vague abstraction of (in)audibility or (un)transparency, this course bridges his cinema with the larger concepts of postmodern subjectivity and possibility of metaphysics. The course concludes with the filmmaker's contribution to world cinema. All along, we read selections from Kieślowski's and Piesiewicz's screen scripts, Kieślowski's own writings and interviews, as well as from the abundant criticism of his French movies. All materials are in English.

Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: TBD

Equivalent Course(s): FNLD 25312, REES 21002, REES 31002, CMST 34405, CMLT 24405

#### **CMST 24507. Soviet Cinema and the Avant-Garde. 100 Units.**

This course examines some of the most ambitious claims about what cinema as a medium can do by early Soviet filmmakers. We look at the extraordinary flourishing of cinema in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 30s including films by Eisenstein, Vertov, Shub, Pudovkin and Dovzhenko, their theoretical writings, their collaborations with avant-garde artists and theater designers, and their far-reaching influence on film and film theory. We will also consider the political and historical context of the films and their creators.

Instructor(s): Anne E. Moss Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): REES 26603, REES 36603

#### **CMST 24608. Beijing through the Lens. 100 Units.**

This class offers an introduction to the development of mainland Chinese cinema through films that depict, negotiate, and critically respond to the capital city of Beijing. Together, we will examine the symbiosis between

film and urban space, with a particular focus on the Chinese experiences of globalization and urbanization, taken as part of a broader problematic concerned with representations of space and spaces of representation.

Instructor(s): Cassandra Guan Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 34608

**CMST 24649. Science Fiction Cinema: Asia. 100 Units.**

SFF Asia centers on science fiction and fantasy cinema and media in Asia. Through an exploration of key films, media franchises, and subgenres, the course will delve into genre criticism, sf theory, and the history of moving image technologies, to consider what is meant by "sff" and "Asia" at different places and times. Thus, while structured around "sff in Asia," the course aims to foster a critical understanding of cinema and media as distributed, polycentric, transnational processes.

Instructor(s): Thomas Lamarre Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 14649, EALC 34649, EALC 24649, CMST 34649

**CMST 24910. INSECT MEDIA. 100 Units.**

How have insects affected ways of knowing and relating to the world? This course opens a dialogue between insects and Japanese audiovisual cultures, including fiction, poetry, visual art, manga, anime, and film. We aim to address the important and profound challenge that recent trends in animal studies, environmental humanities, and eco-criticism pose to received ways of studying human cultures and societies. The challenge lies in offering alternatives to the entrenched reliance on a nature-culture divide, which gives culture explanatory preference over nature. In the case of Japan and insects, for instance, there exists a fairly significant body of scholarship on how Japanese people respond to, interact with, and represent insects, and yet priority is generally given to culture, and Japan is treated monolithically. To offer alternatives to this monolithic culturalism, in this course we will (a) open dialogue between culture accounts of insects and scientific accounts and (b) explore different forms of media offering different milieus where human animals and more-than-human insects come into relation without assuming the ascendancy of one over the other.

Instructor(s): Chelsea Foxwell and Thomas Lamarre Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Consent of Instructor required: interested students should submit one paragraph of interest to Professors Foxwell and Lamarre.

Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 24910, CMST 34915, ARTH 34910, CDIN 34910, EALC 34910, CDIN 24910

**CMST 24914. Japanese Cinema. 100 Units.**

TBD.

Instructor(s): Hsin-Yuan Peng Terms Offered: Spring

**CMST 24935. Introduction to Immersive Environments. 100 Units.**

Virtual reality is expanding from just being utilized for games into an exploration of extended realities.

Introduction to Immersive Environments will explore the theory and applications of virtual reality environments. Students will learn how to construct their VR environments using Blender and Unity. Students will offer and receive constructive feedback during instructor-led critiques of their works throughout this course. Students will also explore the genre with readings and discussions. By the end of this course, students will feel comfortable utilizing different developmental processes to create.

Instructor(s): Crystal Beiersdorfer Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 24935

**CMST 25025. Mexican Cinema. 100 Units.**

This course is intended as an overview of Mexican cinema, from its famed "Golden Age" in the 1940s and 1950s, up to contemporary productions. The aim is to reflect simultaneously on Mexican culture, history, and society, and on the language of film and its interpretation. Our goal is to expand what we know about Mexico through the way its cinema has tackled questions of difference (class, gender, regional, and race-based), modernization, political unrest, inequality, violence, and love. Crucial to our academic setting, we will ask what films offer as objects of knowledge in their own right, and not merely as illustrations. What does it mean to analyze a film? What are the tools we use to read and write about them as cultural products? We will consider classic fiction features along short, experimental, and documentary films. Works discussed include *El* (Luis Buñuel, 1953), *Macario* (Roberto Gavaldón, 1960), *Canoa* (Felipe Cazals, 1975), *Perfume de violetas* (Marisa Sistach, 2001), *Tempestad* (Tatiana Huezo, 2016), among others.

Instructor(s): Luis Madrigal Terms Offered: Course not taught in 2025-26

Equivalent Course(s): LACS 25025, SPAN 25025

**CMST 25041. Cinemas of the Global South. 100 Units.**

This course focusing on "world cinema" from Latin America, Africa, and South Asia, includes an array of cinematic forms-films and other moving-image media, cultural artifacts, viewing practices, even theories themselves- that took shape amongst and between these areas. Combining viewings and readings, archival research and theoretical translations, we will explore the vibrant forms and circulation of cinema outside its imperial nodes. The course focuses on three historical moments in South Asia, Latin America, and Africa: the "global sixties" and its revolutionary ambitions; the politics of domestic spaces in the 1980s and early 1990s; and contemporary negotiations of gender, sexuality, and migration.

Instructor(s): Rochona Majumdar and Daniel Morgan Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): SALC 35041, HIST 26908, CMST 35041, CCCT 25041, HIST 36908, CCCT 35041, SALC 25041

**CMST 25121. Intimacy and Desire in German Cinema. 100 Units.**

This seminar explores representations of intimacy, sensuality and private life through the lens of German-language cinema from the Weimar period to New German Cinema of the 1960s. Departing from Richard Wagner's revolutionary darkening of the auditorium in the late 19th century, this course considers the emergence of cinema as a social institution and site of desire, fantasy and fulfilment in the broader German cultural context. Close readings of canonic films including *Der blaue Engel*, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, *La Habanera* and *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* will be guided by literary and theoretical texts on the formation of the film viewer as a sensuous subject. We will integrate journalistic writings on sexuality, degeneracy and bourgeois morality in the public sphere and the historical phenomenon of modern stardom associated with the careers of Marlene Dietrich, Louise Brooks and Zarah Leander. Films by Joseph von Sternberg, G. W. Pabst, Douglas Sirk, Helmut Kautner and Rainer Werner Fassbinder are accompanied by texts by Irmgard Keun, Lotte H. Eisner, Siegfried Kracauer, Thomas Elsaesser and Erica Carter. Class will be conducted in English.

Instructor(s): Nicole Burgoyne Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 25121, GRMN 25121

**CMST 25363. Experimental Cinema. 100 Units.**

TBD

Instructor(s): James Lastra Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 35363

**CMST 25450. Writing the Feature Film. 100 Units.**

This course is designed to help the emerging writer focus their creativity into a viable feature film project and screenplay. This includes structure, format, exposition, characterization, dialogue, voice-over, and other aspects of visual storytelling for the screen. Weekly meetings include a brief lecture period, screenings of scenes from selected films, extended discussion, assorted readings and writing assignments. Because this is primarily a writing class, students should expect to deliver four to five pages of written material-including story development materials or screenplay pages-each week.

Instructor(s): K. O'Brien Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 25450, TAPS 25450

**CMST 25507. Gender, Race, and Horror. 100 Units.**

This course will contend with the ways that horror as a film genre constructs and deconstructs notions of gender and race in society. We will attend to texts across decades and subgenres that will illustrate how gender and race are made and regulated through notions of confusion, fear, and repulsion. By attending to these universal human feelings, students will learn how emotions are evoked through the construction of the text, its portrayal of the disruption of gender norms and its construction of racial boundaries. Students will learn the necessary vocabulary and methodologies to be able to critically analyze (audio)visual texts. In order to do this, students will be guided through how to construct argumentative critical papers through proper utilization of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. By the end of the course, students will be well versed in cinematographic terms such that they will be able to critically analyze texts to understand the impact of perspective, interpretation, and judgment. This course is meant to help students navigate and make sense of an increasingly scary world by learning to appreciate fear as a necessary human expression. Finally, and most importantly, students will be able to engage with the age-old notion of terror to be able lead a more ethical and intellectually richer life.

Instructor(s): AE Stevenson Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 35507, MADD 10507, GNSE 20132

**CMST 25602. Animation: Practices & Principles. 100 Units.**

Sitting at the intersection of fine arts and filmmaking, animation has held a unique place in visual culture since its inception and has more recently become a ubiquitous presence in our society. Through a combination of workshops, screenings, and discussions, this course will examine the advantages and particularities that come with the art form as well as the diverse range of technologies and techniques that it can include. Students learn both analog and digital animation methods-including cut-out, hand-drawn, and stop motion, among others-to explore their own artistic voice through moving image, culminating with a final project in the medium of their choice. Works screened for discussion will range from the traditional and studio-based to the experimental and alternative. No previous drawing experience required.

Instructor(s): Elizabeth Rogers Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 20602, ARTV 20035, CMST 35602

**CMST 25603. What Is Animation? 100 Units.**

This course will provide students with an introduction to the objects and theories of animation.

Instructor(s): Cassandra Guan Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 35603, MADD 10603

**CMST 25604. How to Draw Things on the Computer. 100 Units.**

TBD

Instructor(s): Marc Downie Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 25604

**CMST 25605. Advanced Animation. 100 Units.**

TBD.

Instructor(s): Lizzy Rogers Terms Offered: Spring  
 Equivalent Course(s): MADD 20605

**CMST 25606. Animation: Practices and Principles. 100 Units.**  
 TBD

**CMST 25610. Line, Trace, Motion: Computation and Experiment in Animation. 100 Units.**

Interpreting what we mean by animation broadly, this course will investigate computational moving-image making through the lens of experimental animation. We will take as our point of departure the films of Rettinger, Ruttman, Fischinger, McLaren, and Breer, but will also draw upon artifacts and 'animated lines' taken from further afield: found footage films and algorithmic editing, dance drawings of Trisha Brown, kinetic sculptures of Bit International, early plotter art, avant-garde music notation, and contemporary techniques of motion and performance capture. This course will develop theoretical lines of inquiry that run in two directions: an excavation of a "pre-history" of contemporary new media and a reinterpretation / re-invigoration of our understanding of early animation. Any film production, hand-animation or computer programming experiences are welcome - but none are perquisites for the course. Students will be expected to complete regular short creative "sketches" of techniques culminating in a final short animated project.

Instructor(s): Marc Downie Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 35610, MADD 20610

**CMST 25620. Japanese Animation: The Making of a Global Media. 100 Units.**

This course offers an introduction to Japanese animation, from its origins in the 1910s to its emergence as global culture in the 1990s. The goal is not only to provide insight into Japanese animation within the context of Japan but also to consider those factors that have transformed it into a global cultural form with a diverse, worldwide fanbase. As such, the course approaches Japanese animation from three distinct perspectives on Japanese animation, which are designed to introduce students to three important methodological approaches to contemporary media - film studies, media studies, and fan studies or cultural studies. As we look at Japanese animation in light of these different conceptual frameworks, we will also consider how its transnational dissemination and 'Asianization' challenge some of our basic assumptions about global culture, which have been shaped primarily through the lens of Americanization.

Instructor(s): Thomas Lamarre Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 35620, SIGN 26070, EALC 35620, EALC 25620, MADD 15620

**CMST 25954. Alternate Reality Games: Theory and Production. 100 Units.**

Games are one of the most prominent and influential media of our time. This experimental course explores the emerging genre of "alternate reality" or "transmedia" gaming. Throughout the quarter, we will approach new media theory through the history, aesthetics, and design of transmedia games. These games build on the narrative strategies of novels, the performative role-playing of theater, the branching techniques of electronic literature, the procedural qualities of video games, and the team dynamics of sports. Beyond the subject matter, students will design modules of an Alternate Reality Game in small groups. Students need not have a background in media or technology, but a wide-ranging imagination, interest in new media culture, or arts practice will make for a more exciting quarter.

Instructor(s): Patrick Jagoda, Heidi Coleman Terms Offered: Not offered in 2025-2026

Prerequisite(s): PQ: Third- or fourth-year standing. Instructor consent required. To apply, submit writing through online form: <https://forms.gle/QvRCKN6MjBtcteWy5>; see course description. Once given consent, attendance on the first day is mandatory. Questions: mb31@uchicago.edu

Note(s): Note(s): English majors: this course fulfills the Theory (H) distribution requirement.

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 25970, ENGL 32314, MADD 20700, ARTV 20700, BPRO 28700, ARTV 30700, TAPS 28466, CMST 35954

**CMST 26001. AI + Video. 100 Units.**

AI Video sits at a collision point: where polished promises meet unexpected errors and infinite slop. In this studio course, we'll explore the chaotic potentials of AI in video art-its quirks, cultural impact, and untapped possibilities. Using cutting-edge AI tools and techniques like prompt engineering, style transfer, and compositing, we'll create experimental time-based media projects. With a critical lens and playful approach, we'll embrace the weird, challenge the hype, and rethink the ethics and aesthetics of this emergent form. #

Instructor(s): Jon Satrom Terms Offered: Autumn Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 20601

**CMST 26043. The Aesthetics of Artificial Intelligence. 100 Units.**

With the emergence of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, DALL-E, and Midjourney, the production of computer-generated content has become accessible to a wide range of users and use cases. Knowledge institutions are particularly challenged to find adequate responses to changing notions of authorship as the mainstreaming of 'artificial' texts, audio-visual artifacts, and code is transforming our paradigms of communication in real-time. This course offers a survey of scholarship from the nascent field of critical AI studies to investigate the impact of AI, machine learning, and big data on knowledge production, representation, and consumption. In addition to theoretical discussions, we will conduct research-creation experiments aimed at documenting and evaluating emerging methods of AI-augmented content creation across text, image, and sound.

Prospective students should demonstrate a substantial interest in media art and design and its connections to digital humanities, critical theory, and pedagogy. Experience with artistic and/or engineering practice is a plus. Please submit a 300 word max statement of interest to [uhl@uchicago.edu](mailto:uhl@uchicago.edu) by 12/22 in order to be considered for enrollment.

Instructor(s): Andre Uhl Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 36043, HIPS 26043, CMST 36043, KNOW 36043, MADD 12043, CHSS 36043, MACS 36043, ANTH 26043, KNOW 26043

**CMST 26074. The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky. 100 Units.**

Filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky (1932-1986) is widely considered to be one of Soviet cinema's great auteurs, a fiercely independent creative artist and thinker. Known for his long takes, visual imagery, intertextuality, and philosophical self-reflexiveness, Tarkovsky has profoundly shaped the evolution of modern art cinema over the past fifty years and his legacy is still very much alive in both the Slavic world and the west. In this course, we will study Tarkovsky's major films focusing particularly on their aesthetic characteristics, spiritual and philosophical dimensions, and cultural and political context.

Instructor(s): David Molina Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 36074, REES 26074, REES 36074

**CMST 26089. Movies and Minds: Scientific Approaches in Cinema Studies. 100 Units.**

This course provides an overview of the state-of-the-art knowledge on how human minds and brains engage with and respond to film and media. Using such interdisciplinary approaches as neuroscience, experimental psychology, linguistics, analytical philosophy, film theory, and cognitive film studies, we will try to understand why we like to watch movies; how we process what we see and hear on the screen; why some movies attract more than others; how identity, politics, and culture may affect the viewer response; and what the nature of the mind's engagement with art might be.

Instructor(s): Maria Belodubrovskaya Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): SIGN 26089, CMST 36089, COGS 26001

**CMST 26505. Straight-line sensibilities. A hidden history of 20th Century Art. 100 Units.**

The proliferation of straight lines in 20th Century art and architecture is generally associated with rational and universalist procedures and perspectives, and closely associated with the rise of industrial society. This course will look at straight lines in modern art from a very different perspective. We will study a hidden genealogy of straight lines that all seem to evoke the vagaries of sensory realities and capacities and that are aesthetic through and through. These type of straight lines are all, in their various ways, related to the close interaction between bodies and media technologies - one of the major themes in modern art. The question, of course, is how and why straight lines comes to express this relationship. To look at this question, we will study artworks and ideas that extend from the mid 19th-century to 21st century art and that includes a wide range of media and expressions, including architecture, painting, drawing, film, video and computer art.

Instructor(s): I. Bloom Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Fulfills the following requirements in the ARTH major and minor: European and American, modern (post-1800), Theory and Historiography

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 26501, CMST 36505, ARTH 26501, ARTH 36501

**CMST 26578. Black Cinema and Media in Chicago. 100 Units.**

TBD

Instructor(s): Jacqueline Stewart Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): SIGN 26578, CHST 26578, RDIN 26578

**CMST 26603. The Cinema of Miloš Forman. 100 Units.**

The films of Miloš Forman (1932-2018) reflect the turbulence of the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s, and 2000s by focusing on the underdog, the pariah, the eccentric. The subject matter to which Forman was drawn translated into his cinema with a signature bittersweet tone, emphatic narrative cogency, and lush spontaneity. This course is an intensive study of Forman's work from his "New Wave" work in Czechoslovakia (*Loves of a Blonde*, *The Fireman's Ball*) to his U.S. studio successes (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Amadeus*), to his idiosyncratic and parabolic last films (*Man on the Moon*, *Goya's Ghosts*). Among other topics, the course contemplate the value of a dark sense of humor, cinematic gorgeousness, and artistic dissidence.

Instructor(s): Malyne Sternstein Terms Offered: TBD

Equivalent Course(s): REES 32010, CMST 36603, REES 22010, FNDL 22010

**CMST 26611. Materiality and Socialist Cinema. 100 Units.**

What constitutes the materiality of film? How do we understand the "material world" in relation to cinema, and how does the film camera mediate it? What does the process of mediation look like when the goal of cinema is not solely to represent but also change the world? This course will pair theoretical readings on new materialist approaches to cinema with select case studies drawn from Chinese and Soviet revolutionary cinema. Our primary aim is twofold: to introduce students to the "material turn" in cinema and media studies, and to reflect on what the specific fields of Soviet and Chinese Film Studies bring to the discussion. We will look closely at works by socialist filmmakers in the twentieth century who argued that cinema had a special role to play in mediating and transforming the material world. How does socialist cinema seek to orient its viewer to a particular relationship to objects? How does it treat the human relationship to the environment? How does it regard the material of film and the process of filmmaking itself? Ultimately, the course will familiarize students

with diverse understandings of materiality and materialism and with key figures and works in global socialist cinema. Readings and screenings will range from the Soviet avant-garde of the 1920s to Chinese revolutionary cinema of the early 1970s, and conclude with recent documentary and video experiments that engage with their legacies.

Instructor(s): Anne Eakin Moss and Paola Iovene Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): REES 36600, REES 26600, CMST 36611, CMLT 36602, EALC 36611, EALC 26611, CMLT 26602

**CMST 27006. Cinema and Incarceration. 100 Units.**

With case studies that include fiction films, documentaries, and personal filmmaking by presently or formerly incarcerated filmmakers, this course examines the relationship between cinema and the carceral state. Major animating questions include: How do the fantasies of incarceration presented in fictional films emerge from and feed into societal-wide ideologies around mass incarceration? How can the relationship between cinematic technologies and surveillance society best be interrogated? Can documentary filmmaking affect radical change around issues of incarceration-and how can incarcerated people tell their own stories and represent their own lives?

Instructor(s): Ian Jones Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 37006

**CMST 27021. Performance Captured. 100 Units.**

Technologies that turn human action, appearance and performance into data for storage, transformation and redisplay have a long history inside and outside of moving image arts. This class will look at the opportunities, aesthetics and politics of these approaches running through contemporary special effects, traditional and experimental animation, dance on camera and live performance at a moment when boundaries between these categories have become especially porous.

Instructor(s): Marc Downie Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 67021, MADD 20721

**CMST 27105. Mediating War. 100 Units.**

This course will explore the reciprocal relationships between war and media. At the core of this class we will ask: how is war itself a medium? In doing so, we will consider not only the technologies used to wage war, but also how war operates as a material and conditioning substrate for experiences of time, space, and power. Indeed, war is not simply a state of armed conflict, but a mode of aesthetic and political communication that shapes modern sensoria. Beginning with key frameworks for war in media studies, we will proceed by examining a range of medial sites used to wage war, as well as documentary and entertainment practices that represent war for the public. Along the way, we will interrogate how the mediating processes of war conflate civilian and soldier, violence and entertainment, weapon and communication device. With historical references, this course will focus primarily on global experiences of armed conflict in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In addition to specific war technologies like drones, we will also analyze key media forms like photography, cinema, television, computers, and video games.

Instructor(s): G. Kafer Terms Offered: Autumn

**CMST 27208. Screenings of the Dark: Topics in Black Feminist Film Theory. 100 Units.**

This course will address historical and contemporary arcs in the expansive field of Black feminism by centering on representations by and of Black women on screen. The central pursuit off this course will be to elevate the theories of Black feminism that exist within and outside of film studies to anticipate future ruptures in creative output and emerging epistemologies. The course will center around such topics as performance, refusal, aesthetics, transness, and girlhood.

Instructor(s): AE Stevenson Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 30140, CMST 37208, GNSE 20140

**CMST 27255. Climate Change Cinema. 100 Units.**

Climate change is one of the most important and challenging problems of our times. How is cinema involved? This course introduces students to environmental cinema and to ecocritical approaches to film studies. Beginning with explicit representations of climate change in eco-documentaries and recent post-apocalyptic fantasies, we will interrogate cinema's broader relationship to the environment through questions of film materiality, resource extraction, and climate control. Additional topics include extinction, weather, waste, infrastructure, toxicity, nonhuman life, and the Anthropocene. Each week, we will watch and discuss a film - from genres spanning science fiction, documentaries, anime, eco-thrillers, and propaganda - alongside key theoretical debates about energy and natural resources (oil, water, coal, electricity), the politics and ethics of visualization, and the materiality of analog and digital cinema. Filmmakers include Werner Herzog, Jia Zhangke, Bong Joon Ho, and Agnès Varda, while written texts are taken from Dipesh Chakrabarty, Donna Haraway, Rob Nixon, Anna Tsing, and others.

Instructor(s): Nat Modlin Terms Offered: Spring

**CMST 27291. Knowledge Through Moving Images. 100 Units.**

Consciously or unconsciously, we learn a great deal about the world through moving image media. Programs such as *Blue Planet* (2001) teach viewers about ocean ecologies; YouTube videos offer knowledge on any number of skills, from changing a tire to cooking; but films like *Conclave* (2014) or *Coco* (2017) also seem to offer insight

into real world practices, despite their fictional status. In this course, we will interrogate the various ways in which film, television, and video inform our beliefs and when those beliefs may be called knowledge. Key questions we will encounter in this course include: What kinds of knowledge do we gain from moving images? When do we recognize that we're learning or learned something from moving images? When do we learn 'on accident' and how may we come to recognize it?

Instructor(s): Arcadio Oranday Terms Offered: Winter

**CMST 27299. Intensive Track - Written Thesis Workshop. 100 Units.**

This series of workshops - comprised of approximately 10 meetings - will provide support for thesis writers across the entire academic year. It is taught by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and supplemented by regular meetings with a designated preceptor. The workshops are intended to guide students through the process of thesis writing from developing a research question to determining the most appropriate research method for its exploration to integrating suitable theoretical insights to writing compellingly about media objects to the nuts and bolts of exposition.

Instructor(s): Maria Belodubrovskaya Terms Offered: Autumn. Enrollment takes place only in Autumn Quarter, but the workshop is held throughout the academic year

Note(s): Course is only open to students completing a Written Thesis Project in their final year in the College. This course counts towards major coursework requirements for Intensive Track students.

**CMST 27301. Philosophy of Comedy: Classic Hollywood Film. 100 Units.**

What does comedy do to us? What is the nature of our corporeal response of laughter and how does it relate to our intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional responses? What kind of philosophical perspective does the mode of comedy provide on issues of self-knowledge, agency, identity, taste, free will, gender, race, the relation of body to mind? In this course, we will use classic Hollywood film comedies as a field for exploring these questions. From the slapstick acrobatics of Chaplin and Keaton in the silent comedies, to the madcap horseplay of the Marx Brothers and the tapdancing of the Nicholas Brothers in the musical comedies, to the spitfire exchanges on the topic of sex and love in the screwball comedies and the metatheatrical Nazi impersonations in the wartime comedies, these films of the first half of the 20th century offer a wealth of performances, narratives, and gags for philosophical investigation. The course will provide an introduction to the major comedic directors and performers of this period. We will engage closely with the formal construction of individual films as well as on the nature of comedy itself. A major theme will be the contradictory power of the film comedy, its capacity for transgression and its reliance on stereotypes, its utopian transformative potential and its entanglements with death, despair, and violence.

Instructor(s): Tanya Desai Terms Offered: Spring

**CMST 27302. Projections of the Self: Acting on Film. 100 Units.**

In this course, we will study the topic of acting and performance on film through philosophical understandings of selfhood: is to be a self simply to play a role (existentialism)? Are we driven to act in ways we don't control (psychoanalysis)? What is the relation between the mind and the body (phenomenology)? Can the inner be accessed only through the outer (behaviorism)? Does gender exist only in performance (feminism)? What are the responsibilities of the self to the other (moral philosophy)? We will trace the history of theories and practices of film acting, covering topics around the transformations of actor into character, degrees of emotional inhabitation and the powers of stardom. Concurrently, we will analyze individual films and the perspectives they offer on questions of agency, will, consciousness, emotional expression, the unconscious, and social roles. Readings will include philosophical texts, film theory, as well as acting manuals and star interviews. Screenings will range across different movements and styles of international cinema.

Instructor(s): Tanya Desai Terms Offered: Autumn

**CMST 27806. Algorithmic Culture. 100 Units.**

The term algorithm has existed for centuries. However as technical systems, algorithms have only more recently started to shape contemporary social relations. From PredPol to ChatGPT, algorithms have inserted themselves into human knowledge and social experience across global information systems. In doing so, they have become the new site of culture insofar as they modulate human experiences and construct normative ways of meaning-making by correlating new relations among data, optimizing outputs, and automating decisions. Through the lens of digital media studies, this class will track how algorithms have reshaped culture relations by reconfiguring received frameworks of objectivity, identity, and power. Beginning with historical and technical accounts of algorithms, we will explore their impact through key issues including: personalization, discrimination, violence, labor, infrastructure, and the environment. The course will conclude by examining how algorithms open up new paths for resistance and sovereignty. Along the way, we will engage algorithms through vectors of social identity, including race, gender, class, and sexuality. As algorithms are a complex and multifaceted concept, our study of it will be interdisciplinary. In addition to foundational texts in digital media studies, we will engage a variety of materials from computer science, critical race studies, social sciences, queer and feminist studies, history, communications, and more.

Instructor(s): Gary Kafer Terms Offered: Spring

**CMST 27807. Work and Play in the Digital Age: Video Games and Social Media. 100 Units.**

Digital media has changed what work looks like across all sectors while simultaneously facilitating more play than ever before. The particularities of mediation are key to the current blurring of work and play: in our play time, video games and social media are feeling more and more like work, as gamification and content creation

increasingly become the primary modes of interaction. And work feels more like a game as bosses are replaced by algorithms and all anyone wants to do is 'game the system.' Surveillance ecosystems abound, capturing our data and quantifying our actions, rendering us all working players in a socially mediated video game of life. Making video games for a living or becoming a social media star are jobs that, while fun and highly sought after, are paradigmatic of the contemporary work environment: precarious, aspirational, passion driven, and full of work and play. What happens to us when we're working and playing, at the same time, all the time? How can the frameworks of mass gameplay and ubiquitous sociality help us theorize the contemporary moment?

Instructor(s): Bret Hart

Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 10807

**CMST 27809. Repeat, Remake, Refresh: Authenticity and Authorship in the 21st Century. 100 Units.**

What makes an artwork "original" today? How do we decide if a food dish is "authentic"? Who is the author of a digital meme? Is there a common metric which can rate the originality and authenticity of a film or a piece of music (Tomato-meter and IMDB ratings notwithstanding)? This course will investigate these and other questions to understand why and how authenticity and originality continue to matter in today's world of global information and capital flows. Taking three case studies - cultural performance genres like traditional music/dance, cross-cultural film remakes, and digital publics - we will unpack how an ostensibly "foreign" cultural object becomes domiciled in a new cultural location. We will also discuss which practices and objects resist such adaptation. We will read scholars and writers from a range of disciplines - anthropology, cinema and media studies, history - dealing with the construction of cultural authenticity and circulation. Our readings will be supplemented each week by a class screening where we will encounter materials which will serve as examples to analyze authenticity and authorship in today's world. For instance, through the screening materials, students will be encouraged to examine if a film remake can ever be original, if the musical traditions of an itinerant community can be claimed as national, and how a globally circulating digital meme can come to acquire different meanings and significances in different places.

Instructor(s): Shubham Shivang

Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 37809, ANTH 37809, ANTH 27809

**CMST 27817. Sonic the Hedgehog. 100 Units.**

In this course, we will use a single franchise - Sonic the Hedgehog - as an access point to study media history, aesthetics, social and cultural practice, and the relationships between games, film, and other artforms. Originally released in 1991 for Sega's Genesis console, the Sonic series has spawned over three decades of games, cartoons, manga, novels, films, music, board games, action figures, fan art, cosplay, and merchandizing. Both the volume and the variety of these texts allow the Sonic corpus to be a focal point for questions with broader stakes for the study of games and media in general. Some of the questions we will be considering in this course include: What has been the relationship between particular videogame characters and franchises and the business practices and strategies of entertainment industries? What form does stardom take in the world of digital games, and is it an appropriate concept to apply to a mascot like Sonic? How have established game franchises responded to major technological and aesthetic shifts in the medium? How might we understand the concept and practice of adaptation as applied to the digital games, and what does it reveal about the medium specificity of and the relationship between games, film, comics, novels, and other forms? What can a game franchise that has taken a wide variety of generic forms (platforming, racing, fighting, and pinball, to name just a few) tell us about how genre works as concept and system in digital games?

Instructor(s): Chris Carloy

Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MAPH 37817, MADD 17817, CMST 37817

**CMST 27830. A Workshop on Creative Coding for New Media. 100 Units.**

This project-based, workshop-style course will offer a close look at how we can be creative with code at a crucial moment in the always-shifting relationships between computation, creativity, material, and audience. En route, we'll examine a dizzying array of contemporary creative-coding environments in both production and live performance, explore historical dead-ends, half-baked visions, long-forgotten programming languages, as well as yet-to-emerge interfaces and altogether imaginary futures. And we'll draw on examples from new media, music and sound art, cinema and VR, computer games, architecture and CAD/CAM. Our work together will be done in the context of extending and reworking Field --- an open-source environment for creative coding developed for use in a teaching role here at UChicago. As the barriers between making things with computers and consuming content served up by them grow, we'll step into today's computational surplus and reclaim some viable space for creation.

Instructor(s): Marc Downie

Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

**CMST 27845. The Transmedia Franchise: Alien (1979) and Its Offspring. 100 Units.**

We live in a franchise era where popular narratives unfold across multiple different media platforms: cinema, television, games, comics, novels, theme park rides, and more. This course explores the cultural, industrial, and technological factors driving this situation, as well as the opportunities and challenges that it presents for media creators. As our main example, we will delve into the Alien franchise, launched by the science fiction-horror film *Alien* (1979) and continuing across an increasing number of extensions, including a new film (*Alien: Romulus* [2024]), television series (*Alien: Earth* [2025]), and VR video game (*Alien: Rogue Incursion* [2024]). Each week, we will watch one of the Alien feature films, analyze its visual and narrative style, situate it in the historical development of transmedia strategies, and connect it to related works in other media. Screenings will

be complemented by game play sessions at the Weston Game Lab. Readings will survey the vast literature on the Alien franchise while also introducing key theoretical concepts (e.g. transmedia, remediation, intertextuality, subcreation, convergence etc.). Therefore, although it is organized around Alien media, by the end of this course students will be prepared to think critically and creatively about the many franchises that structure our media environment.

Instructor(s): Cooper Long Terms Offered: Winter

**CMST 27859. Science and Games. 100 Units.**

City planning simulators. Environmental advocacy projects. Citizen-science research platforms. Whether to engage and communicate with wider publics, as tools for modelling scientific concepts and processes, or as objects of study in their own right, games have been employed by innumerable research communities across the 20th and 21st centuries. This course will explore how a variety of scientific disciplines and research cultures have thought with, about, and through games. Examining and evaluating these connections can teach us about research and communication practices in these fields and about the multifaceted nature of game-based media. Each week we will address a different subfield in the physical, biological, or social sciences, each positioned to draw out a unique aspect of games' connections to scientific research, communication, and knowledge production. Readings will be inter-disciplinary, drawing from game studies, social studies of science, and the various research fields themselves. Many examples considered through our weekly case studies will be video games, but not exclusively, and students will also develop skills to address the material- and medium-specific affordances of different forms of games in both class discussions and through a tabletop game design project.

Instructor(s): Zachary Yost Terms Offered: Autumn

**CMST 27867. 1990s Videogame History. 100 Units.**

This course will trace developments in the videogame medium and videogame cultures in the final decade of the 20th century, discuss the unique possibilities and difficulties arising from the study of recent history, and put these discussions into practice through research-based assignments. Questions that will guide our study include: what was the relationship between technological innovations and stylistic changes in the videogame medium? How did the entry of new corporate and creative players into the business affect industrial structures and strategies? What do we make of "freedom," "realism," and other concepts that dominated videogame press coverage - and how were they connected to broader cultural discourses? How did understandings of what it meant to play videogames, and the types of experiences that videogames could offer, change over the course of the decade? What was the relationship between developments in the videogame medium and other media - from film and fiction to virtual reality and the Internet? How has this decade been remembered, conceptualized, preserved, and repackaged in subsequent decades?

Instructor(s): Chris Carloy Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 15416, MAPH 34516, CMST 37867

**CMST 27879. Fictional Worlds. 100 Units.**

A portal opens: you step into a fictional world. This enduring fantasy of engaging with art involves a number of ideas that often go unaddressed. What is a "world," and how do movies, games, TV, and books try to offer us one? Focusing primarily on cases from cinema and video games, this class takes a multifaceted and critical approach to fictional worlds. We'll ask how different media formations and technologies support them, interrogate the theoretical concept of "world" and its cognates ("diegesis," "worldbuilding"), and consider the politics of making, policing, and breaking worlds, from sci-fi games to art cinema to fan creation. Over the course of the quarter, you'll undertake an ongoing study of a world of your choosing, delivering your report at our final session-a Worlds Fair.

**CMST 27880. Videogame Consoles: A Platform Studies Approach. 100 Units.**

While videogames' mix of art, play, and advanced technology gives game studies much of its vitality, the technological and computational aspects of the medium can be daunting for many would-be students and designers. And yet no approach to the study of videogames can be exhaustive without some consideration of the material and technological grounds that make games possible. With this in mind, this course will introduce approaches to videogame studies that emphasize the platforms - the hardware, operating systems, etc. - on which games are played, and is intended for students with all levels of familiarity with the technological side of videogames. How do the various components of game platforms, from computer architecture to controllers to the underlying code, affect how games look, sound, and feel, how they are played, who designs them and how, how they are marketed and to whom, and how they are preserved? How do platforms emerge from particular technological, industrial, social, and cultural contexts, and how do they in turn affect the course of game history and culture? Classroom lectures and discussions of readings will be accompanied by weekly gameplay sessions at the MADD Center, which will provide close, hands-on engagement with game platforms. Possible objects of study include the Atari 2600 (1977), ColecoVision (1982), Sega Game Gear (1990) and Genesis/CD/32X (1988-94), Panasonic 3DO (1993), Nintendo 64 (1996) and Wii (2006), and PlayStation 4/VR (2013-16).

Instructor(s): Christopher Carloy Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required.

Equivalent Course(s): MAPH 37880, CMST 37880, MADD 17880

**CMST 27887. The Platformer: History and Theory of a Videogame Genre. 100 Units.**

This course will provide an introduction to genre history and theory in videogame studies through a focus on the "platformer." Though not a common name outside of videogame culture, the platformer has introduced

or popularized some of the medium's most recognizable figures (Mario, Sonic the Hedgehog, Donkey Kong) and gameplay mechanics (running, jumping, avoiding enemies, and collecting items). The genre has also been instrumental in and reflective of changes across the videogame medium. This course will cover two decades (roughly 1990 - 2010), emphasizing both historical details and theoretical questions, such as: How have game genres been defined? How do distinct genres emerge and change over time? How do broader trends (technological, formal, industrial, discursive, experiential, etc.) influence individual genres, and what roles do individual genres play in these broader trends? What resources and methodologies exist for studying videogame genres? Throughout the course we'll see the platformer alternate between an emphasis on linear, acrobatic movement across two-dimensional spaces and the free exploration of three-dimensional virtual worlds; between providing mascots for the biggest game companies and becoming a marker of independent, small-team production; and between being hailed as "revolutionary" and epitomizing the retro-nostalgic. Classroom lecture and discussion of readings will be accompanied by weekly gameplay sessions on original hardware at the MADD Center.

Instructor(s): Christopher Carloy Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required

Equivalent Course(s): MAPH 37887, CMST 37887, MADD 17887

**CMST 27910. Virtual Ethnography: Encounters in Mediation. 100 Units.**

From everyday social media platforms like Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and WeChat, to more complex real-time immersive social and gaming sites, virtual realms are propagating at a fantastic rate while transforming what it means to live and interact in the physical world. As such virtual world, communities, and spaces increasingly command our attention, time, and money, scholars from various fields have begun to tackle questions concerning the ethics, logics, patterns, and social specificity of the virtual through experimental forms of virtual ethnography. This advanced undergraduate course introduces students to some these recent ethnographies and corresponding theoretical interventions into the nature of collective techno-life within virtual realms. Students will build on this material in order to develop an ethnographic inquiry into a virtual world of their choosing. In so doing, they will work individually and as a class through the processes of pre-field planning, fieldwork, and post-field analysis and writing.

Instructor(s): Thomas Lamarre and Michael Fisch Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor required; email Professors Fisch and Lamarre a paragraph long description about what you bring and what you hope to get out of this seminar.

Note(s): Enrollment limit: 25

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 27910, MADD 12910, CDIN 27910, ANTH 27910

**CMST 27911. Augmented Reality Production. 100 Units.**

Focusing on experimental moving-image approaches at a crucial moment in the emerging medium of augmented reality, this class will explore and interrogate each stage of production of AR works. Students in this production-based class will examine the techniques and opportunities of this new kind of moving image. During this class we'll study the construction of examples across a gamut from locative media, journalism, and gameplay-based works to museum installations. Students will complete a series of critical essays and sketches towards a final augmented reality project using a custom set of software tools developed in and for the class.

Instructor(s): Marc Downie Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 37921, ARTV 27921, CMST 37911, MADD 22911

**CMST 27916. Critical Videogame Studies. 100 Units.**

Since the 1960s, games have arguably blossomed into the world's most profitable and experimental medium. This course attends specifically to video games, including popular arcade and console games, experimental art games, and educational serious games. Students will analyze both the formal properties and sociopolitical dynamics of video games. Readings by theorists such as Ian Bogost, Roger Caillois, Alenda Chang, Nick Dyer-Witheford, Mary Flanagan, Jane McGonigal, Soraya Murray, Lisa Nakamura, Amanda Phillips, and Trea Andrea Russworm will help us think about the growing field of video game studies. Students will have opportunities to learn about game analysis and apply these lessons to a collaborative game design project. Students need not be technologically gifted or savvy, but a wide-ranging imagination and interest in digital media or game cultures will make for a more exciting quarter. This is a 2021-22 Signature Course in the College. (Literary/Critical Theory)

Instructor(s): Patrick Jagoda, Ashlyn Sparrow Terms Offered: Autumn Summer

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 22320, MADD 12320, ENGL 12320, SIGN 26038

**CMST 27920. Virtual Reality Production. 100 Units.**

Focusing on experimental moving-image approaches at a crucial moment in the emerging medium of virtual reality, this class will explore and interrogate each stage of production for VR. By hacking their way around the barriers and conventions of current software and hardware to create new optical experiences, students will design, construct and deploy new ways of capturing the world with cameras and develop new strategies and interactive logics for placing images into virtual spaces. Underpinning these explorations will be a careful discussion, dissection and reconstruction of techniques found in the emerging VR "canon" that spans new modes of journalism and documentary, computer games, and narrative "VR cinema." Film production and computer programming experience is welcome but not a prerequisite for the course. Students will be expected to complete short "sketches" of approaches in VR towards a final short VR experience.

Instructor(s): Marc Downie Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Film production and computer programming experience is welcome but not a prerequisite for the course. Students will be expected to complete short "sketches" of approaches in VR towards a final short VR experience.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 37920, MADD 24920, ARTV 37920, ARTV 27920

**CMST 27931. Re-Imagining Health in Immersive Media Environments. 100 Units.**

Virtual Reality (VR) as a storytelling medium is often discussed in terms of immersion and presence and how these media specificities tend to instill greater empathy. The common argument suggests that VR allows participants to experience someone else's lived reality as if it were their own. This capacity of VR to increase empathy has been contested by scholars in various fields. In light of this critique, we will examine the potential of VR to tell stories of illness and debility beyond empathy. Using concepts from critical disability studies, phenomenology, narrative medicine, and media theory, we will learn to distinguish the roles that VR narratives offer their participants, ranging from being a witness to becoming the first-person experiencer of non-normative embodiments. Exemplary questions are: what are the limitations of empathy in VR illness narratives? How can illness narratives in VR critically reflect on binaries between healthy/ill? Each week, we will focus on particular health issues as they are taken up by VR artists. We will delve into the ways VR enables experiences of pain in the absence of tissue damage or offer multisensory and nonlinear stories to give a sense of the ups and downs of living with bipolar disorder. The literature provided will help guide us through the exploration of these VR experiences. We will also try out some of these VR experiences ourselves.

Instructor(s): Desreee Foerster Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 37931, MADD 24931

**CMST 28103. Popular Music on Film. 100 Units.**

The rockumentary, concert, or popular music film remains an enduring object across the 20th and 21st centuries. From Bob Dylan's *Don't Look Back* to Wattstax to Taylor Swift: The Era's Tour, these films stage an essential encounter between two key forms of mass media: popular music and cinema. Starting with this relationship, this class asks, "What can popular music and cinema teach us about each other?" Across readings borrowed from cultural studies, music, and cinema-in addition to weekly film screenings-this course will help students develop a robust understanding of the common ground the popular music film constructs. We will explore how this genre exposes a network of concepts relating to media technology, race, and music culture through close reading and focused film analysis. While this class expects participants to have a basic awareness of the language of film analysis, this class does not assume its students to have formal musical training. Instead, this course encourages and teaches to develop basic skills in competently writing about music on film from a cultural studies perspective. Beginning with common theoretical and cultural concerns shared between film and music, we will learn to describe on-screen music and sound using focused, meaningful, and accurate language. As an extension of this project, we will also learn approaches to incorporating discussions of media culture that reflect and embrace an enduring legacy of popular writing on music.

Instructor(s): Joel Sutherland Terms Offered: Winter

**CMST 28205. Feminist Documentary Filmmaking. 100 Units.**

This course examines the ways that women-identifying documentary makers have given cinematic form to feminist thought. Drawing from film and media theory and history, we will focus on the formal and narrative techniques that have been employed by filmmakers to reflect on questions pertaining to gender and sexuality, with an emphasis on the specific ways that non-fiction filmmaking expanded feminist theoretical frameworks and research methodologies. Considering topics such as cinematic realism, film spectatorship, viewing pleasure, counter-cinema, and theories of intersectionality and diaspora, we will ask questions such as: What are the stylistic devices that feminist documentary films have mobilized, and for what purposes and ends? What is documentary's relation to the history of fiction film, particularly of Hollywood cinema? How have women documentary makers understood cinema's role in social processes of transformation? What are the possibilities and limitations of collaborative methods, appropriation strategies, and oppositional techniques? We will watch films with a critical eye and engage closely with academic and popular writings to survey the aesthetic, social, and political genealogies operating in the history of feminist documentary production. In this discussion-based course, we will cover a variety of non-fiction film and media forms: film diaries, docu-fictions, home-movies, video essays, auto-ethnographies, ethno-fictions, collage, and found-footage films.

Instructor(s): Cinta Peleja Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 18205, GNSE 23164

**CMST 28360. Screendance: Movement and New Media. 100 Units.**

This course will explore the evolving relationship between moving bodies and video technologies. From early filmmakers using dancers as test subjects, to movie musicals and contemporary dance for the camera festivals, mediatization of the body continues to challenge the ephemerality of live dance performance. This course focuses on the growing field of screendance, videodance, or dance-on-camera, working to define this hybrid genre and to understand the collaborative roles of choreographer, director, dancer, cameraman, and video editor. This course is both a practical and scholarly approach to the genre of screendance, each component essential to a full understanding and mastery of the other. Course work will be divided between the studio and the classroom. For the studio component, students will learn basic video editing and filming techniques. For the classroom component, students will be asked to watch screendance and read a cross-section of criticism. Assignments will be both technological and choreographic (making screendance) and scholarly (written reflections and a seminar paper).

Instructor(s): L. Leopold Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Attendance at first class is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 28360, TAPS 38360, MADD 23860

**CMST 28500-28600-28700. History of International Cinema I-II-III.**

This sequence is required of students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies. Taking these courses in sequence is strongly recommended but not required.

**CMST 28500. History of International Cinema I: Silent Era. 100 Units.**

This course provides a survey of the history of cinema from its emergence in the mid-1890s to the transition to sound in the late 1920s. We will examine the cinema as a set of aesthetic, social, technological, national, cultural, and industrial practices as they were exercised and developed during this 30-year span. Especially important for our examination will be the exchange of film techniques, practices, and cultures in an international context. We will also pursue questions related to the historiography of the cinema, and examine early attempts to theorize and account for the cinema as an artistic and social phenomenon.

Instructor(s): Daniel Morgan Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 is required. Course is required for students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies.

Note(s): For students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies, the entire History of International Cinema three-course sequence must be taken.

Equivalent Course(s): MAPH 33600, ARTH 38500, CMST 48500, ENGL 48700, MADD 18500, CMLT 32400, CMLT 22400, ARTH 28500, ARTV 20002, ENGL 29300

**CMST 28600. History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960. 100 Units.**

The center of this course is film style, from the classical scene breakdown to the introduction of deep focus, stylistic experimentation, and technical innovation (sound, wide screen, location shooting). The development of a film culture is also discussed. Texts include Thompson and Bordwell's *Film History: An Introduction*; and works by Bazin, Belton, Sitney, and Godard. Screenings include films by Hitchcock, Welles, Rossellini, Bresson, Ozu, Antonioni, and Renoir.

Instructor(s): James Lastra Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies.

Note(s): CMST 28500/48500 strongly recommended

Equivalent Course(s): REES 25005, CMLT 32500, REES 45005, CMLT 22500, ENGL 48900, CMST 48600, ARTH 38600, ARTV 20003, MADD 18600, ENGL 29600, ARTH 28600, MAPH 33700

**CMST 28700. History of International Cinema, Part III: 1960 to Present. 100 Units.**

This course will continue the study of cinema around the world from the 1960s to the 2000s. The continued development of film style and form over this period - one of seismic changes in audio-visual aesthetics - will be one of the primary themes of the course. Additionally, lectures and discussions will wrestle with the rise of global film cultures, technological innovations and their effects on style (such as post-magnetic sound, and visual effects techniques), major international directors and the solidification of auteurnism as both a commercial and aesthetic imperative, the increasing internationalization of Hollywood, and post-1970s genre reorientation elevating horror, science-fiction, and other genres to the highest levels of mainstream respectability, critical appraisal, and/or commercial success. Screenings are mandatory and include work by filmmakers including Pedro Almodovar, Michael Bay, Kathryn Bigelow, Claire Denis, Federico Fellini, Hollis Frampton, Kiyoshi Kurosawa, Djibril Diop Mambety, Cristian Mungiu, and more, in addition to a selection of music videos.

Instructor(s): Clint Froehlich Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course follows the subject matter taught in CMST 28500/48500 and CMST 28600/48600, but these are not prerequisites.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 38700, MADD 18700

**CMST 28805. Politics and Cinema under Authority. 100 Units.**

Why do authoritarian regimes take interest in art and culture? How do citizens respond to these efforts? Between authoritarian propaganda and outright contestation of authoritarianism is a wide niche of art and media production that is just independent enough to capture the attention of the citizens and yet subtle enough to not alarm authoritarian rulers. This is relevant for film and television in particular, which cannot function under authoritarian regimes without official approval. In this course, we explore the compromises filmmakers make to continue their creative practice and the concessions state actors grant to accommodate artistic work using the 10-episode television series, *Dekalog* (1988), by the acclaimed Polish director Krzysztof Kieślowski. To answer our questions, we draw on literature and methodology from political science and film and media studies. We investigate what is to be gained by combining approaches from two disciplines that are rarely in conversation with each other.

Instructor(s): Maria Belodubrovskaya and Monika Nalepa Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Enrollment limit: 18

Equivalent Course(s): CDIN 28801, CMST 38800, REES 38800, PLSC 38801, CDIN 38800, PLSC 28805, REES 28800

**CMST 27812. Critical Worldbuilding. 100 Units.**

Worldbuilding has many connotations: the conceptual process of imagining a fictional world, the spatialization of that world (e.g. 3D modeling and level design in a game engine, production design for television or film) and the way details and ideas from that world are expressed to players and viewers. In general, worldbuilding suggests an attention to systems, an affinity with genre fiction, and the aggregation of small details to create senses of time and place that extend beyond a single narrative or experience. But what counts as a world? How is worldbuilding distinct from other forms of imagination? Why and how has it become so popular as a way of making and thinking about media now? In this theory-practice hybrid course, we will critically interrogate these questions through the process of building our own fictional worlds. You will bring to this course an idea for a fictional world, and over the course of nine weeks we will pay sustained attention to it through a series of small assignments and exercises. In the process, we will learn about the history of worldbuilding, the many academic and creative disciplines with which it intersects, and how we might use those theories and methods to imagine worlds differently.

**CMST 28906. Contemporary Cinematic Special Effects. 100 Units.**

The highest-grossing films of the twenty-first century are, without exception, showcases for special effects. How did special effects become so central to mass-audience movies? What are the consequences of this shift? In this course, we will track the historical and stylistic development of contemporary effects-driven filmmaking, bridging practitioner discourse by effects industry workers with the theories of cinema and media scholars. While our screenings will primarily comprise narrative feature films, we will also explore how special effects draw upon diverse media forms and practices, including experimental cinema, installation art, amusement parks, television advertising, and, above all, digital technologies. Screenings will include Hollywood blockbusters (e.g., *The Matrix* [1999]), "failed" blockbusters (e.g., *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* [2001]), and effects-driven films from other national/regional cinemas (e.g., *The Mermaid* [China, 2016]).

Instructor(s): Cooper Long Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 10906

**CMST 28910. Planetary Media. 100 Units.**

This course is about how planets are imagined through media as environmental and social systems, with a focus on exchanges between science fictional "world building" practices and scientific ways of knowing. We study the history of science fiction and science borrowing from one another to explain how Earth and other planets work, and how both fields have used media to depict planets. When science fiction creates imaginary worlds, are its tools similar or different to those used by exoplanet astronomers or Mars rover teams? How do these shared planetary imaginaries affect the public's understanding of the climate crisis? Examples will be drawn from both fiction and nonfiction, and both technical and aesthetic media, including climate models, video games, television, pulp magazines, and film. The course culminates with a creative, group planetary world building assignment.

Instructor(s): Katherine Buse Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 12980

**CMST 28915. Short Form Digital Storytelling: Creating a Web Series. 100 Units.**

This course examines the short form storytelling of the digital web series. Through lectures, viewings and discussions in weekly meetings students will determine what makes a strong web series and apply the findings to writing and polishing the pilot episode of their own web series. Students will write weekly 4-5 page assignments building toward the creation of a 5-6 episode series.

Instructor(s): P. Wimp Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Attendance at first class session is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 24910, TAPS 25910

**CMST 28921. Introduction to 16mm Filmmaking. 100 Units.**

The goal of this intensive laboratory course is to give its students a working knowledge of film production using the 16mm gauge. The course will emphasize how students can use 16mm technology towards successful cinematography and image design (for use in both analog and digital postproduction scenarios) and how to develop their ideas towards constructing meaning through moving pictures. Through a series of group exercises, students will put their hands on equipment and solve technical and aesthetic problems, learning to operate and care for the 16mm Bolex film camera; prime lenses; Sekonic light meter; Sachtler tripod; and Arri light kit and accessories. For a final project, students will plan and produce footage for an individual or small group short film. The first half the course will be highly structured, with demonstrations, in-class shoots, and lectures. As the semester continues, class time will open up to more of a workshop format to address the specific concerns and issues that arise in the production of the final projects. This course is made possible by the Charles Roven Fund for Cinema and Media Studies. Students will need written permission to enroll in the course. To bid for entry into the class, please email the instructor with your name, major and year -- and please list any other media production or photography experience.

Instructor(s): Thomas Comerford Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Students will need written permission to enroll in the course. To bid for entry into the class, please email the instructor with your name, major and year -- and please list any other media production or photography experience. Enrollment priority will be given to graduate and undergraduate CMS students, beginning with seniors, then to DoVA graduates and undergraduates, then to students in other departments.

Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 33808, ARTV 23808, CMST 38921, MADD 23808

**CMST 28922. Intermediate 16mm Filmmaking. 100 Units.**

This course will allow students to continue working on projects begun in the Intro to 16mm Production course (or developing a new small-scale project), in addition to developing skills with the following: sophisticated approaches to cinematography (comparative and reflective light metering, color negative exposure); varying workflows for post-production editing (analog and digital); and sound recording and design. Students will meet as a group for lectures, technical demonstrations and a shooting workshop. Course meeting time will also be set aside for individual conferences with the instructor to address project development and completion. Students should expect to budget between 120.00-500.00 for their filmstock and processing costs, depending on the project. This course is made possible by the Charles Roven Fund for Cinema and Media Studies. Permission from instructor is required for registration. Students will bid for entry to the class by emailing the instructor, listing their year, major and previous production experience. Priority will be given to students who have previously completed the Intro to 16mm course, followed by CMS and DOVA majors, from graduate students to first-years. Students whose bids are accepted will be registered officially by the instructor at the first class meeting.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Permission from instructor is required for registration. Students will bid for entry to the class by emailing the instructor, listing their year, major and previous production experience. Priority will be given to students who have previously completed the Intro to 16mm course, followed by CMS and DOVA majors, from graduate students to first-years. Students whose bids are accepted will be registered officially by the instructor at the first class meeting.

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 38922, ARTV 38001, ARTV 28001

**CMST 28925. Expanded Cinema. 100 Units.**

Though often overlooked, the act of projection is at the heart of cinema (the act or process of causing a picture to appear on a surface). This studio course focuses on the creation of moving image-based work, exploring how time and space are used as materials to create form and inspire content within the contemporary film genre known as expanded cinema. The technical, historical and political aspects of the projected image will be studied in order to re-think cinema as a group and investigate how the projected image can find meaning outside the black box of theaters or the white cube of galleries. Two personal experimental video projects will lead to a third final collective video installation that will use the environment within the vicinity of UChicago's campus to inspire the work while also become the location of the final outdoor projection event. Note(s): Students will need written permission to enroll in the course. To bid for entry into the class, please email the instructor with your name, major, year, and list any other media production experience. Enrollment priority will be given to graduate and undergraduate CMS students, beginning with seniors, then to students in other departments.

Instructor(s): Marco Ferrari Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 33861, CHST 28925, CMST 38925, MADD 20925, ARTV 23861

**CMST 28999. Intensive Track - Production Thesis Workshop. 100 Units.**

This series of workshops-comprised of approximately 10 meetings-will provide support for students working on production theses across the entire academic year. It is taught by a production faculty member and supplemented by regular meetings with a designated preceptor. The workshops are intended to systematically guide students through the necessary steps in the realization of a film project from pre-production to production to post-production.

Instructor(s): Thomas Comerford Terms Offered: Autumn. Enrollment takes place only in Autumn Quarter, but workshop is held throughout the academic year

Prerequisite(s): Approval to complete a Production Thesis Project.

Note(s): Course is only open to students completing a Production Thesis Project in their final year in the College. This course takes the place of CMST 23907 and CMST 23908, and counts towards major coursework requirements for Intensive Track majors. Two sections of this course will be taught - one focusing in film production and one focusing in new media. Please ensure you enroll in the appropriate section.

**CMST 29000. Cinema and the Speculative Archive: Theory & Practice Seminar. 100 Units.**

Recent years have seen the flourishing of work by experimental filmmakers that imaginatively engages with absences in the historical record, especially around the visual history of African Americans. How might scholarship adapt methodologies from these creative practices? How can scholarly methods, in turn, inform art making (as the formation of another kind of history)? Engaging theory and practice, this course investigates these questions through-and-against-African American media history's precarious archival condition. Students interested in enrolling should contact Professor Field at [atfield@uchicago.edu](mailto:atfield@uchicago.edu).

Instructor(s): Allyson Nadia Field & Christopher Harris Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Not offered in 2024-25.

Equivalent Course(s): RDIN 29000, RDIN 39000, CHST 29000, CMST 39000, CCCT 39000

**CMST 29201. Advanced Seminar: The Chinese New Year Film. 100 Units.**

This class introduces students to the popular forms of Sinophone cinema through the aperture of the New Year Film (hesuipian). The first movies advertised as New Year films date to the 1930s, when cinema-going became a part of the Chinese urban holiday routine in commercial port cities such as Shanghai and Hong Kong. Today, the popular movies that top Chinese domestic box office are almost always released in January or February as Spring Festival offerings. The New Year Film is thus both a holiday marketing category in Sinophone territories and a mass cultural phenomenon that vividly illustrates the cinematic organization of space and time. Over the nine-week winter quarter, we will launch a comprehensive inquiry into the kind of experiences-globalization,

urbanization, migration, and diaspora—that mediate the transformations of the Chinese New Year Film, while enjoying a number of its incarnations together over the course of the Lunar New Year holidays. Open to upper-level CMS students: Instructor consent required for all other students.

Instructor(s): Cassandra Guan Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open to upper-level CMS students: Instructor consent required for all other students.

**CMST 29202. Advanced Seminar: Spring. 100 Units.**

Cinema Chicago: Producers, Audiences, Films This Advanced Seminar explores the history and development of Chicago film cultures from the silent era to the present day. We will begin with the emergence of film producers at the turn of the twentieth century, looking at the development of comedy shorts and the activities of Black film producers on the South Side in the silent era. We will then look at documentary film production through the case of Kartemquin and the engagement of local filmmakers with the practice of chronicling the city. Following film production, we will examine Chicago as a site of film festivals and contemporary film production, including the mission of the Chicago Film Office. The second part of the course will turn to moviegoing culture across the city, from movie palaces to microcinemas, examining moviegoing audiences in Chicago's neighborhoods. The last part of the course will focus on the city on screen through four themes: the migrant city, the gangster and Noir city, the working and union city, and the youthful city. Through the case of Chicago, we will examine methods of doing local film history, approaches to reception, and questions of cinema and the urbanscape.

Instructor(s): Cassandra Guan Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open to upper-level CMS students: Instructor consent required for all other students.

Note(s): The Advanced Seminar will be offered twice during each academic year - as CMST 29201 in Autumn and CMST 29202 in Spring. Students majoring in CMST are required who wish to enroll in one section (preferably during Spring Quarter of Year 3) but are welcome to use the second as an elective for their major requirements if the subject-matter is of interest.

**CMST 29379. Interactive Environments. 100 Units.**

This is a course about how environmental concepts and aesthetics are mediated using interactive technologies, from video games to computer models. The environment has long been imagined as something constituted by interactions. We can think of Charles Darwin's figuration of a "tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth... dependent upon each other in so complex a manner" to produce new and divergent species over time. Later, such interactions were captured in mathematical and computational models, e.g. of predator-prey dynamics. In this course, we will consider the history and theory of the interactive environment alongside interactive media, a genre that includes entertainment media like video games, ecological modeling software, analog toys/games, and social media platforms. The class explores the interactivity of environments through hands-on play, tinkering, argumentation and experimentation with interactive media. Students will learn to critically analyze popular imaginaries, aesthetic objects, and the tools of scientific knowledge production, and interrogate how each contributes to urgent conversations about how we interact with nature.

Instructor(s): Katherine Buse Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CEGU 29369, MADD 10379, CEGU 39379, CMST 39379

**CMST 29700. Reading and Research, CMST. 100 Units.**

This course is primarily intended for students who are majoring in Cinema and Media Studies and who can best meet program requirements by studying under a faculty member's individual supervision. The subject matter, course of study, and requirements must be arranged with the instructor prior to registration.

Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter

Prerequisite(s): Consent of faculty instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies required.

Note(s): Students must submit the College Reading and Research Form to register. This course may be counted toward distribution requirements for the major.

**CMST 29900. Senior Thesis. 000 Units.**

Students in the CMS Intensive Track - both Written and Production streams - must enroll in CMST 29900 during the quarter they intend to graduate. Students enroll in 29900 using the section number of their BA thesis adviser which can be obtained from the department staff in CMS or the student's College advisor. This course can not be counted toward requirements for the Intensive Track major.

Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor. Required of students in the Intensive Track majors in Cinema and Media Studies (Written Thesis and Production Thesis)

