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## FOT 3930 – Latín Cinemas

**Dr. Santiago Juan-Navarro**

*Department of Modern Languages*

### Course Description

Latin cinemas have recently enjoyed a high degree of international attention, led by the success of Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina and Brazil. This course provides students with an introduction to the vitality and diversity of these cinematic traditions. Rather than focusing on one country or a strictly chronological order, this course offers a general view of the cinemas of Spain and Latin America in a national and transnational context; it therefore encompasses two continents and for the most part two languages (Spanish and Portuguese), although some films in other languages will certainly be mentioned.

Although the films will be viewed in their original language (Spanish or Portuguese) with English subtitles, **the class will be conducted entirely in English.**

*This is a discipline-specific global learning course that counts toward your GL graduation requirement.*

### Objectives

- To introduce students to the cinematic work of several Spanish Latin American film artists.
- To develop a more detailed and creative reception of each film in its local and global contexts.
- To explore cinema as an expression of the dominant trends in Latin culture.
- To gain an understanding of films' relationship to the Spanish and Latin American social, economic, and political milieus.
- To understand the role of Latin film industry in contemporary world culture.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Explain how Spanish and Latin American film are central to contemporary culture.
- Explain how film functions as a mode of artistic expression that evolves and changes as individuals, societies, and cultures evolve and change.
- Discuss, synthesize and analyze key points associated with Latin films within the contents of the social, political and economic settings in which they were produced.
- Describe and evaluate films using primary and secondary sources.
- Evaluate and apply a range of critical approaches to the material covered.
- Understand and use, in written and oral contexts, a range of film critical terms.

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- Access and use critically printed and, where appropriate, electronic learning resources identified as useful by the course's instructor, and, to a limited extent, discover other useful materials independently.
- Demonstrate visual literacy skills appropriate to the level, such as the ability to relate images to meanings beyond the images themselves and an understanding that the cinematic image is the product of a combination of personal values, technological practices and cultural and industrial contexts.

### **Global Learning Course Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, the student:

- will be able to analyze and interpret the interrelatedness of local, global, international and intercultural issues, trends, and systems as they pertain to cinematic expression, as well as of the origins and nature of cultural differences of film production between Hispanic countries and the rest of the world. (**Global Awareness**)
- will acquire the ability to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural issues as they relate to Latin Film. (**Global Perspective**)
- will be prepared to engage in local, global, international and intercultural problems solving involving Latin cinemas. (**Global Engagement**)

### **Active Learning Strategies**

- Students will engage in topics related to Hispanic diversity (national, religious, cultural) through class and online discussion groups.
- Students will share information on their *VoiceThread* and the discussion boards.
- Students will be involved in peer evaluation. They will use a rubric to evaluate group presentations and projects and they will provide written feedback.

### **Major Topics**

- Nationalism and Postnationalism in Spain and Latin America
- Relations between cinema and the State
- Expression of national identity in a globalized world
- The legacy of colonialism and postcolonialism
- Race and ethnicity
- The construction of gender
- Rewriting history through film
- The politics of memory and postmemory
- Migration, exile and diaspora
- Latin cinema and Glocalization
- Developing coproduction formulas in Latin cinema
- Latin cinemas in the Digital Age

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### Textbooks

Delgado, Maria M., Stephen M. Hart, and Randal Johnson (eds). *A Companion to Latin American Cinema*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2017). Referred to as **CLAC** in the schedule. Available in digital format at the FIU Library (free access).

D'Lugo, Marvin, Anna M. López, and Laura Podalsky. *The Routledge Companion to Latin American Cinema*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2017). Referred to as **RCLAC** in the schedule. On reserve at the FIU Library.

Labanyi, Jo, and Tatjana Pavlović (eds). *A Companion to Spanish Cinema*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2015. Referred to as **CSC** in the schedule. On reserve at the FIU Library.

Additional Readings will be available each week on the course's web site (Blackboard - [bb](#)). All required readings and film screenings are included in the course calendar below.

### Other Recommended Bibliography

Bermúdez Barrios, Nayibe (ed). *Latin American Cinemas: Local Views and Transnational Connection*. University of Calgary Press, 2011.

Delgado, Maria M., and Robin Fiddian (eds). *Spanish Cinema 1975-2010: Auteurism, Politics, Landscape and Memory*. Manchester University Press, 2014.

Dennison, Stephanie. *Contemporary Hispanic Cinema*. BOYE6, 2013.

Faulkner, Sally. *A History of Spanish Film: Cinema and Society, 1910-2010*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

King, John. *Magical Reels: A History of Cinema in Latin America*. Verso, 2000

Schroeder Rodríguez, Paul. *Latin American Cinema: A Comparative History*. University of California Press, 2016.

Shaw, Deborah. *Contemporary Latin American Cinema: Breaking into the Global Market*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007.

### Assignments

#### **Blackboard/Canvas Discussion Forum (Weekly Online Posting)**

Every week students will have to post a one-paragraph personal commentary on each of the assigned films and reply to at least two of their classmates' comments. The purpose of these commentaries is to challenge students to think about the films and their contexts. How do the films serve as historical artifacts, commenting upon specific social, political, and cultural dynamics? And/or how do they express the philosophies of their makers?

Postings will be done via the course bulletin board by the deadlines specified below. No commentaries will be accepted after the due date. The rubric used by the instructor to grade

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weekly posting in this course is available on the Reference section of Blackboard's Course Content.

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post. If you need to send a private message to the instructor or a student, please use Blackboard messages.

### ***Papers***

Students will be expanding their discussion forum response comments into two longer form papers.

- **Paper 1** will require a two-part individual analysis that examines a filmmaker's writings in relationship with his film. Students will analyze the filmmaker's theory to establish a specific claim he makes about filmmaking and a goal he wants to achieve and then students will look at how the film's formal structure realizes – or fails to realize – the filmmaker's claims or stated goal.
- **Paper 2** will ask students to think about at least four films covered in the class from a comparative perspective. How do films from different countries resemble one another? How do they differ? Why? Do these differences/similarities arise from social/political factors or cultural flows? And do these films and filmmakers signify collective new cinematic forms that represent a specifically Latin mode of filmmaking? Or should they be viewed in terms of their own particularities and nationalities?

### ***Group project***

Working in teams of three, students will perform a debate in front of the class, then present a final synthesis of ideas based on the interconnections among scholarly opinions. The aim of the group project is to develop a critical reflection on the topic and to promote class discussion. The grade of the group projects will be based on peer evaluations.

Whenever the class is delivered fully online, groups will use *VoiceThread*. VT is a new social network tool that is accessed through Blackboard or Canvas. Students can upload videos of themselves talking, or papers written, and respond in voice, film, or text. It's a very simulating way to facilitate real dialogue and exchange in the online space, and it is in tune with the media focus of this course.

### ***Context reports***

We will use context reports to help us get the most out of each week's material without overloading our already overloaded schedules. Teaming in pairs, students will choose one week where they will present contextual material for the assigned film and filmmaker. Then, they will provide us with a brief historical background of the country we are looking at and a history of filmmaking in that country. Finally, students will share with us what people are saying about the film we have viewed (this includes a big-picture view of what scholars say about the film and what the filmmaker says about it). Lots of "Recommended" readings have been included in the course's web site (Blackboard) that students may find helpful in preparing these reports. Students should plan on a 5-10 minute (10-minute maximum) oral presentation using *VoiceThread*.

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### **Quizzes**

The quizzes will be conducted on Blackboard/Canvas and will be based on a selected aspect of the weekly assigned readings. There will be a total of four quizzes.

### **Grade Distribution**

Context Reports	15%
Blackboard Discussion Forum	20%
Paper 1 (4 pages)	15%
Paper 2 (10 pages)	25%
Group project	15%
Quizzes (4)	10%

### **Grading Scale**

A 95 – 100%; A- 90 – 94%; B+ 87 – 89%; B 83 – 86%; B- 80 – 82%; C+ 77 – 79%; C 70 -76%; C- 77 – 79%; D 60-69%; F 59 – 0%

### **Course guidelines**

Participation is crucial to learning and will thus be a determining factor in final grade calculation, both positively (comments and questions offered in class, quality of work completed and deadlines met) and negatively (negligence in work, not showing up). If students don't show up, they cannot participate, which means we lose their insights and they will miss out on ours. Students will have two "free passes" for unexcused absences, but after that, each unexcused absence will result in a deduction from the course average. Excused absences include college-approved holidays/breaks and sickness or emergencies excused by a note from the student health center or your dean. Also, film screenings are mandatory. If students are not able to make the scheduled screenings, they are responsible for finding and viewing the film before the relevant class meeting. (Students can even watch the film before the scheduled screening. Each film can be found at the Film Library).

Policy on late work: I do not accept late work except in the case of documented medical or family emergencies. For each day a paper is late, 1/3 letter grade will be deducted.

Policy for assigning an Incomplete ("I") grade: An Incomplete may not be used as a shelter from a potentially low grade in the class. Please see FIU's Policy for Assigning an Incomplete "I" Grade.

Academic misconduct: It is imperative for you to turn in original work. According to the FIU Student Code of Standards, "The term 'academic misconduct' is academic dishonesty and shall include . . . Plagiarism, consisting of the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the passing off of such work as the student's own." Any student who turns in plagiarized material, or who is involved in any way with another student's

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plagiarized material, will receive a failing grade in the course. If you turn in copied or cut and paste material, even indicating the source, you will receive a zero on the assignment.

On using internet sources: I have listed quite a lot of online sources – websites as well as journal articles on JSTOR and MUSE. These are intended to supplement (not substitute) your wider research and reading, since library resources can often be limited when a lot of students are trying to read the same books.

Make sure to fully reference all web resources that you use in your essays, just as you would for books and articles. You do not need to include the html address when referencing articles from journals that you have accessed via JSTOR or MUSE. You MUST include html addresses, plus all author, webpage and website information when you refer to any other online resource.

I strongly advise that you refrain from cutting-and-pasting material from websites into your notes, as this can lead to accidental plagiarism if you then copy this material from your notes into your essays unacknowledged or unchanged.

Finally, most of the websites I have included are traceable to recognized academic sources such as universities, scholarly organizations and libraries and, as such, are reliable and of a high scholarly standard. Wikipedia or commercial film review sites have no guarantee of reliability and are generally quite basic in their levels of analysis. Use of websites such as these should only be used as an initial, introductory source and should not be relied upon to provide material for essays.

## Schedule

### **Week 1: Reframing the National**

Readings: J. Poblete, “Silent and Early Sound Cinema in Latin America: Local, National, and Transnational Perspectives”; G. Dapena, M. D’Lugo, and A. Elena, “Transnational Frameworks” (CLAC); J. Colmeiro and J. Gabilondo, “Negotiating the Local and the Global: Andalus, the Basque Country, and Galicia” (CSC)

Screenings: El Gran Rey, *La aldea maldita* (Spain, 1930); and Enrique Rosas (*El automóvil gris*, Mexico, 1919)

### **Week 2: The Legacy of Colonialism and Postcolonialism**

Readings: D. Wheeler, “*También la lluvia/Even the Rain* (Iciar Bollain, 2010): Social Realism, Transnationalism and (Neo) Colonialism” (Bb); G. Blasini, “*The Last Supper* (1976): Cinema, History, and Decolonization” (Bb)

Screenings: Iciar Bollain, *También la lluvia* (Spain/Mexico, 2010); Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, *The Last Supper* (Cuba, 1976).

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### **Week 3: Relations between Cinema and the State**

Readings: J. Cerdán, “Censorship, Film Studios, and Production Companies” (CSC); R. Navitski, “National Cinemas (Re)Ignated: Film and the State” (RCLAC); I. Sánchez Prado, “The Reinvention of the State in Neoliberal Mexican Cinema” (RCLAC)

Screenings: J.L. Sáenz de Heredia, *Raza* (Spain, 1942); Alejandro González Iñárritu, *Amores perros* (Mexico, 2000)

QUIZ 1

### **Week 4: Expressions of National Identity in a Globalized World**

Readings: G. Dapena, “Transnational Frameworks” (CSC); M. Kantar, “From Modernity to Post-Identity: Latin American Film after the Great Divide” (CLAC); E. Toledo, “Spanish Cultural Identity in the Eyes of Almodóvar’s *Volver*” (CLAC)

Screenings: Pedro Almodóvar, *Volver* (Spain, 2006); Fernando Meirelles, *Cidade de Deus* (Brazil/France, 2002)

### **Week 5: Race and Ethnicity**

Readings: S. Aguilera, “Notes About Race and Representation in Latin American Cinema” (Bb); I. Santaolalla, “The Representation of Ethnicity and 'Race' in Contemporary Spanish Cinema” (Bb)

Screenings: Chus Gutiérrez, *Coniencin* (Spain, 2002); Sarah Gómez, *Iré a Santiago* (Cuba, 1964)

PAPER 1 DUE

### **Week 6: The Construction of Gender**

Readings: S. Martín-Márquez, “Isabel Coixet’s Engagement with Feminist Film Theory: From *Graveyard Book* to *H (the Haptic)*” (CSC);

Screenings: Isabel Coixet, *My Life without Me* (Spain/Canada, 2003).

### **Week 7: Queer Cinemas**

Readings: J. D. Gutiérrez-Albilla, “Becoming a Queer (M)Other in/and/through Film: Transsexuality, Trans-subjectivity, and Maternal Relationality in Almodóvar’s *Todo sobre mi madre*” (CSC);

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Screenings: Pedro Almodóvar, *Todo sobre mi madre* (Spain, 1999); Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, *Fresa y Chocolate* (Cuba, 1993)

QUIZ 2

### **Week 8: Rewriting History Through Film**

Readings: J. Labanyi, A. Martín, and V. Rodríguez, “Melodrama and Historical Film (CSC)”; S. Juan-Navarro, “The Absolution of His(S)tory: The Mythologization of the Past in Cuban Cinema” (Bb)

Screenings: Juan de Orduña, *Locura de amor* (Spain, 1950); Manuel Gutiérrez, *La primera carga al machete* (Cuba, 1969)

### **Week 9: The Politics of Memory and Postmemory**

Readings: C. Coronado, “Postmemory of the Spanish Civil War: Cinematographic Constructions of the Conflict in the Twenty-First Century” (CSC); S. Tandeciarz, “Secrets, Trauma, and the Memory Market (or the Return of the Repressed in Recent Argentine Post-Dictatorship Cultural Production)”

Screenings: David Trueba, *Soldados de Salamina* (Spain, 2004); Juan José Campanella, *El secreto de sus ojos* (Argentina, 2009)

### **Week 10: Migration, Exile and Diaspora**

Readings: V. Berger, “New Transnational Perspectives: Early Spanish and Italian Contributions to the Cinema of Regular Migration (Giordana, Marra, Soler, Uribe)” (CSC); H. Fernández, “Nationalism as Burden: Rituals of Migration and Exile in Contemporary Latin American Cinema” (Bb)

Screenings: Gonzalo Uribe, *Bwana* (Spain, 1999); Israel Adrián Caetano, *Bolivia* (Argentina, 1999)

QUIZ 3

### **Week 11: Latin Cinema and Glocalization**

Readings: Mads Anders Baggesgaard, “Picturing the World: Cinematic Globalization in the Deserts of Babel”; Laura Podalsky, “Migrant Feelings: Melodrama, Babel and Affective Communities” (Blackboard)

Screenings: Alejandro González Iñárritu, *Babel* (2006)

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### **Week 12: Relations with Other Media**

Readings: S. Faulkner et al. "Cinema, Popular Entertainment, Literature, and Television" (CSC); P. J. Smith, "Spanish Visual Culture: Cinema, Television, Internet" (Bb)

Screenings: Mauricio Cruz and Walter Doehner, *La Reina del Sur* (Spain/Mexico/Colombia/USA, 2011)

### **Week 13: Film Noir, the Thriller, and Horror**

Readings: J. Labanyi et al, "Film Noir, the Thriller, and Horror" (CSC); S. Juan Navarro, "Trapped in the House of Mirrors: The Others as a Transnational Postmodern Gothic Thriller" (Bb)

Screenings: Guillermo del Toro, *Pan's Labyrinth* (Spain/Mexico, 2006); Alejandro Amenábar, *The Others* (Spain/USA/France/Italy, 2001)

### **Week 14: Group Projects**

DEBATES AND PRESENTATIONS

### **Week 15: Latin Cinemas in the Digital Age**

Readings: G. Aguiar, "Analog *pueblo*, digital *pueblo*: the contemporary image confronts today's politics" (RCLAC); M. Macunza, "Digital Bolivia and New Subjectivities" (RCLAC); N. Thornton, "Online Distribution and Access: The Case of Netflix" (RCLAC)

Screenings: Patricio Guzmán, *Nostalgia de la luz* (Chile, 2010); Esteban Insausti, *Existen* (Cuba, 2005).

QUIZ 4

**Final Exams Week: PAPER 2 DUE**