



Fall 2012 :: School of the Art Institute of Chicago :: MC 517
Instructor :: Michelle Puetz :: mpuetz@saic.edu
Class meets Monday 1-4pm :: office hours by appointment
Writing Fellow :: Emily Kettner :: ekettner@saic.edu

This section of FVNM 2004 <EDITING STRATEGIES, CRITICAL HISTORIES> is a rigorous investigation of the art of film editing. The course is structured to provide a historical and theoretical understanding of film editing based on the study of past works. Close readings of films will reveal the core aesthetic decisions, structures, strategies, and demands of the practice of editing. Practically, this strategy of close reading will involve screening films and videos in their entirety as well as analyzing these works through a shot by shot examination of selected scenes. We will read numerous articles and texts, and will discuss these texts in relation to the works shown in class. This is a theory-based seminar in which film screenings, readings, discussion, and critical analysis will form the bulk of the class.

Students taking FVNM 2005 <FILM 1: FILM AS CAPTURE> must be concurrently registered in FVNM 2004 <EDITING STRATEGIES, CRITICAL HISTORIES>. This is a theoretically based seminar course and is not designed to offer critiques for works-in-progress. Instead, you will use ideas learned from this class along with material shot in <FILM 1: FILM AS CAPTURE> to prepare for next semester when you will take one of the upper level editing classes which are designed to assist in the editing and completion of a personal project.

In addition to the careful analysis of films, this class will offer a forum for critical thinking and discussion about the works screened. We will question, critique and explore various strategies of storytelling and communicating political, religious, psychological, and elemental human issues, desires, and struggles. This emphasis on critical thinking is not intended to distract from or discount the gut and instinctual aspects of the filmic process that many brilliant editors acknowledge. Rather, it is intended to encourage empathy, the expansion of understanding, and a thoughtful reception from us as artists and viewers.

CLASS STRUCTURE

This course is structured as a series of selected film screenings. Each day will be devoted to an editing topic which will guide our viewing. Weekly readings will be assigned and a short lecture / introduction will precede the screening. A discussion of the film and assigned reading will follow the screening. **BE PREPARED BY READING ALL OF THE ASSIGNED TEXTS PRIOR TO CLASS!** Full participation in class discussions is expected.

In the spirit of group critique and participation, you should come to class prepared to share ideas, thoughts, reactions, and questions with your fellow students. We will work together to maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to lively discussions, and that maintains, at all times, a respect for one another.

The class will meet every Monday from 1–4pm. Class will not meet during Graduate Critique Week. Attendance and punctuality are required. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class and you will be considered late if you arrive after 1:15pm or if you return to class late from break. Two “lates” are considered one absence. More than 3 absences, whether or not these are for a reasonable cause, mean NO CREDIT for the course. If you are ill or hospitalized, you need to contact Health Services (312-499-4288) and they will relay the appropriate information regarding your absence. If you know that you will miss a class for any reason, you are expected to email me prior to your absence.

Late papers are graded at ½ credit – no exceptions.

2 “lates” = 1 absence more than 3 absences = NO CREDIT

In this class you will be working with a writing fellow, Emily Kettner. This is an amazing opportunity to improve and refine your writing! The writing fellow will not grade your papers, but will rather serve as a sympathetic reader and provide informed, constructive criticism directed toward the argumentation, analysis, organization, clarity and style of your papers. When paper drafts are due on 11/19, they will be turned in during class and given to the writing fellow who will spend one week reading them and writing comments. During the subsequent week you will meet individually with the fellow to review your paper and her comments, and to work together on the development of your writing. At the end of that second week, the papers, as second drafts, will be turned in along with the first draft containing the fellow’s comments.

PLAGIARISM

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago prohibits "dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the School" (Students' Rights and Responsibilities, Student Handbook). Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. One plagiarizes when one presents another's work as one's own, even if one does not intend to. The penalty for plagiarizing may also result in some loss of some types of financial aid (for example, a No Credit in a course can lead to a loss of the Presidential Scholarship), and repeat offenses can lead to expulsion from the School. To find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, you can (1) go to the portal, select the "Services" tab, and click on "Plagiarism" under "Academic Advising and Student Success"; (2) go to the SAIC Web site, select "Departments, Degrees, and Academic Resources," then select "Libraries," then select "Flaxman Library," and then click on the plagiarism links under the "For Our Faculty" tab; or (3) read about it in the Student Handbook under the section "Academic Misconduct." A quick and useful guide can be found here: <http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/portal/library/plagiarism.pdf>

If you plagiarize in this class you will receive a grade of "no credit" and be reported to the Department Chair and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for Academic Advising.

ACCOMMODATIONS

SAIC is committed to full compliance with all laws regarding equal opportunities for students with disabilities. Students with known or suspected disabilities, such as a Reading/Writing Disorder, ADD/ADHD, and/or a mental health or chronic physical condition who think they would benefit from assistance or accommodations should first contact the Disability and Learning Resource Center (DLRC) by phone at 312.499.4278 or email at <http://www.dlrc.saic.edu>. DLRC staff will review your disability documentation and work with you to determine reasonable accommodations. They will then provide you with a letter outlining the approved accommodations for you to deliver to all of your instructors. This letter must be presented before any accommodations will be implemented. You should

contact the DLRC as early in the semester as possible. The DLRC is located on the 13th floor of 116 S. Michigan Ave.

CREDIT

Credit for this course is earned by completing a “C” level or above. If you need a letter grade for this course, please notify me no later than week 10.

Grades are based on the following criteria and assignments:

- 30% Editing Analysis Paper
- 25% Editing Analysis Presentation & Supporting Materials
- 20% Reading Presentation & Leading Class Discussion
- 15% Class Participation
- 10% Response Paper

REQUIRED READINGS

All readings will be posted on the SAIC Portal under the “Files” section of the course homepage. In addition to these readings, you will need to purchase one text, *In the Blink of an Eye* by Walter Murch (2nd edition). *In the Blink of an Eye* is available in the textbook section of the DePaul University Barnes and Noble (at the corner State and Jackson) or online at various booksellers (amazon.com, powells.com, abebooks.com, alibris.com). You will need to have purchased this text no later than October 3rd. *In the Blink of an Eye* is on reserve at the Flaxman library.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. READING PRESENTATION & LEADING CLASS DISCUSSION

You will come to class prepared to summarize, critique, and lead a discussion on one text from the week’s assigned readings. You will bring a typed outline and/or notes on the article, in addition to at least one original question to ask the class. The typed outline, notes, and question will be handed in after the discussion. We will sign up for reading presentations on the first day of class, September 10th.

2. EDITING ANALYSIS PAPER & PRESENTATION

You will select a film and do an in-class presentation of the editing stylistics of a sequence of your choosing. On September 17th, time slots for the presentations will be selected and guidelines for the paper and presentation will be distributed. The presentation and accompanying paper will contextualize the sequence *and* emphasize the specific editing aesthetics, techniques, and strategies of the sequence that make it a “stand out” example for you. Your presentation will last approximately 20 minutes. Supporting materials will be due on the same day as your assigned presentation. The first draft of the paper will be 5-7 pages in length (1” margins, double-spaced, 12pt font, proofread) and is due at 1pm on November 19th. During class on November 19th you will schedule a meeting with the writing fellow. The writing fellow will read your paper, and will provide constructive criticism directed toward the argumentation, analysis, organization, clarity, and style of your essay. You will discuss the fellow’s comments and suggestions during your meeting. The final draft of your 5-7 page editing analysis paper is due in class on December 10th.

3. VIDEO INSTALLATION RESPONSE PAPER

You will write a short, 2 page response (1” margins, double-spaced, 12pt font, proofread) to the Steve McQueen exhibition seen in class on 10/22. The paper will be due at 1pm in class on 10/29. The response can be focused on one piece, the work in relationship to the exhibition space, or the show as a whole.

- 1 September 10 INTRODUCTIONS, COURSE OBJECTIVES & OUTLINE**
 Screening: *Passage à l'acte* (Martin Arnold, 1993, 12m)
 excerpt from *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Robert Mulligan, 1962)
Tribulation 99: Alien Anomalies Under America (Craig Baldwin, 1991, 48m)
 Reading for 9/17: "The Essence of the Cinema: The Visual Idea" Germaine Dulac
- 2 September 17 EARLY CINEMA, CONTINUITY, ONTOLOGY & REALISM**
 Screening: *The Great Train Robbery* (Edwin S. Porter, 1903, excerpt)
Rescued by Rover (Cecil Hepworth, 1905, excerpt)
Intolerance (D.W. Griffith, 1916, excerpt)
L'Atalante (Jean Vigo, 1947, 89m)
 Reading for 9/24: "Film Technique (On Editing)" Vsevolod Pudovkin
 "A Dialectical Approach to Film Form" Sergei Eisenstein
- 3 September 24 MONTAGE & THE SOVIET AVANT-GARDE**
 Screening: *The Man With a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, 1929, excerpt)
The Battleship Potemkin (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925, 75m)
 Reading for 10/1: "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram" Sergei Eisenstein
 "The Theory of Metrical Film" Peter Kubelka
 "Interview with Animal Charm" Lori Surfer
<http://www.animalcharm.com/webarticles/Other%20Cinema2.htm>
- 4 October 1 RADICAL COLLISIONS: MONTAGE & AVANT-GARDE PRACTICE**
A Movie (Bruce Conner, 1958, 12m)
Unsere Afrikareise (Peter Kubelka, 1966, 13m)
Mercy (Abigail Child, 1989, 10m)
Ashley (Animal Charm, 1997, 9m)
The Eternal Quarter Inch (Jesse McLean, 2008, 9m)
Somewhere only we know (Jesse McLean, 2009, 5m)
 Reading for 10/15: *In the Blink of an Eye* Walter Murch, pp. 1-31
 "Montage, mon beau souci" Jean-Luc Godard
- 5 October 8 NO CLASS**
- 6 October 15 SOUND AND SPACE**
 Screening: *The Conversation* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1974, 113m)
 Reading for 10/22: *In the Blink of an Eye* Walter Murch, pp. 32-72

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- 7 October 22 VIDEO IN SPACE: STEVE MCQUEEN AT THE ART INSTITUTE**
 We will meet in class at 1pm and go to the Art Institute to see the Steve McQueen exhibition. You will write a 2 page response to the exhibition which will be due in class on 10/29. McQueen's *Shame* (8pm) and *Hunger* (4pm) will screen in the Rubloff Auditorium on 10/19. You are strongly encouraged to attend one of these two screenings.
- 8 October 29 SEQUENCE ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS**
 6 EDITING ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS
- 9 November 5 SEQUENCE ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS**
 5 EDITING ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS
 Reading for 11/12: "Metaphors on Vision" Stan Brakhage
 "Creative Cutting" Maya Deren
- 10 November 12 RHYTHM & ABSTRACTION**
 Screening: *Outer Space* (Peter Tscherkassky, 1999, 10m)
 Cat's Cradle (Stan Brakhage, 1959, 6m)
 My Name is Oona (Gunvor Nelson, 1969, 10m)
 Valentin de las Sierras (Bruce Baillie, 1966-67, 10m)
- 11 November 19 TELLING STORIES 1: PRESENCE / FACT & FICTION**
 EDITING ANALYSIS FINAL PAPER DRAFTS DUE
 Screening: *The Black Tower* (John Smith, 1987, 24m)
 Soft Fiction (Chick Strand, 1979, 54m)
 Reading for 11/26: "Projections of Sound on Image" Michel Chion
 "The Material Heterogeneity of Recorded Sound" Rick Altman
- 12 November 26 TELLING STORIES 2: THE EXQUISITE CORPSE**
 Screening: *Mysterious Object at Noon* (Apichatpong Weerasethakul, 2003, 85m)
- 13 December 3 TELLING STORIES 3: PARTS & THE WHOLE**
 [GRAD CRITIQUE WEEK]
 Screening: *In Order Not To Be Here* (Deborah Stratman, 2002, 33m)
 O'er the Land (Deborah Stratman, 2009, 52m)
- 14 December 10 FRAGMENTS & SHARDS**
 Screening: *Incendies* (Dennis Villeneuve, 2010, 130m)
 EDITING ANALYSIS FINAL PAPERS DUE

Selected Bibliography

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- Child, Abigail. *This is Called Moving: A Critical Poetics of Film*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2005.
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- Weis, Elisabeth & John Belton, eds. *Film Sound: Theory and Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.