

ENG 209: Cinematic Shakespeares

Formal Class Meeting: MTWR—1:00 to 4:00 Hylan 101 / Robbins Library

Instructor: Scott O'Neil **E-Mail:** soneil4@ur.rochester.edu

Office: Robbins Library

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday after class. Individual appointments available on request, in person and on Skype (ProfONeil)

Course Website: <http://www.therenaivalist.com/cinematic-shakespeares.html>

Required Texts: Because of the wide scope and ranging focus of the course, I will provide all course texts. There are no texts for you to purchase. There may be some "suggested readings" on course reserve at Rush Rhees and Robbins Library.

Recommended Texts: On Blackboard, you will find a folder of "recommended" texts. These are articles and/or books that might be useful in your research or work on your final project. Many of these are assigned readings in the year-long version of this course. I hope they may prove useful to you.

Course Description:

Shakespearean actor and Oscar winner Mark Rylance voiced a common view of Shakespeare's plays, noting that they should be performed, and that reading them was "the last thing the author intended." While Shakespeare's texts have been passed down for centuries, they have been kept alive by performances – most recently, by cinematic performances. Since cinema's birth, Shakespearean films have raised many questions about theater's link to cinema. Why have certain plays been filmed at certain historical moments? What cultural, economic, and political factors have caused particular characters or scenes to be deleted or changed? How does reading the play beforehand impact the viewing experience? These and other questions will guide our study of cinematic Shakespeare. Potential course texts include films of *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Tempest*. We will view several kinds of films, including silent films, animation, foreign films, and modern revisions like *Scotland PA* or *10 Things I Hate About You*.

Grading:

Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

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|-----------------------------|-----|
| Three Film/Article Reviews: | 30% |
| Classroom Participation: | 30% |
| Final Project: | 40% |

CALENDAR

Week One (May 22-25): Intros, Film History, *Hamlet*

Monday- Intro

- Course overview/options
- Why Shakespeare? IMDB Challenge
- How to read a film/issues of adaptation
- Genres and different kinds of "Shakespeare" film

Break

- Film work: *Hamlet* 1.3 (Polonius' advice to Laertes)
CLIPS: Gilligan, RSC, 2000, Mundell

- Homework*: Read the Rosenthal introduction and the chapter on *Hamlet* (on Blackboard). Also, please read Russell Jackson's "Introduction: Shakespeare, Films, and the Marketplace" (on Blackboard).

Tuesday- Silent Film Tradition

- Reading a silent film (*King John, RIII*)
- Authenticity and issues of genre
- The connection between scholarship and performance

Break

- Film work: *Hamlet* 1.1 (Opening of the play)
CLIPS: Nielsen, Elsinore, Stratford

- Homework*: There are five "Director Articles" on Blackboard (one each for Olivier, Welles, Kozintsev, Zeffirelli, and Branagh). Please pick ONE of them (ideally not the same one as your classmates), and read it for Wednesday's class).

Wednesday- Big Names

- "The" Shakespearean Actor of his/her generation. Booth, Olivier, Branagh, Welles, etc.
- Signature styles
- The pantheon of roles

Break

- Film work: *Hamlet* 3.1 ("To be or not to be")
CLIPS: Humor clip, Olivier, Branagh, Jacobi, Tennant

- Homework*: Please read the short chapter by Corrigan from *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (on Blackboard). Also, read the Keyishian article, "Shakespeare and Movie Genre: The Case of *Hamlet*" (also on Blackboard).

Thursday- Film Review as a Genre

- Guest speaker on the art of the film review
- Overview of the weekly Film/Article review assignment

Break

- Film work: Practice reviewing with *Hamlet* 5.2 (final scene)
CLIPS: Brook, Zeffirelli, Class choice

-*Homework*: Read the Rosenthal chapters on *King Lear* and *Othello*. There are four productions of *Romeo and Juliet* (Cukor 1936, Rakoff 1978, Castellani 1954, or Luhrmann 1996) available. Select and watch one of these productions, and read the accompanying scholarly article. For Monday, write a film review of the production you watched OR a summary of the article (and your responses to its arguments). Optional: I have also provided a recording of a stage production of *Romeo and Juliet* (Monte 2016).

Week Two (May 29-June 1): Race, Westerns, and King Lear/Othello

Monday- NO CLASS (Memorial Day)

Tuesday- Wild Wild West

- HW discussion
- Westerns as a genre (*The Searchers*, Filmsite)
- Shakespeare and the American West

Break

- Film work: Foundation for *Lear*: *King Lear* 1.1, 1.5, and 5.3
CLIPS: Welles (1953), Olivier (1983), McKellen (2008), Jones (1974)

-*Homework*: Please read Esther French's post on the Folger Shakespeare Blog on Shakespeare and the American West (link on Blackboard). Please also read Neil Taylor's article "National and Racial Stereotypes in Shakespeare Films" (on Blackboard--pay particularly close attention to pages 268 through 271).

Wednesday- King of Texas and Othello Foundations (all day Robbins)

- HW Discussion
- King of Texas* and issues of race/translation choices
- Patrick Stewart and Othello

Break

- Film work: Foundation for *Othello*: 1.3, 3.3 and 5.2
CLIPS: Walker (2008), Fishburne (1995), Olivier (1965), Welles (1951)

-*Homework*: Read Natasha Distiller's fascinating article on Othello, race, and South African performance history (on Blackboard). Watch *Jubal* (on course website).

Thursday- *Jubal*, Blackface, and Omission

-HW discussion
-*Jubal* (and NYT review)

Break

-Overview and discussion of Final Project options.

-*Homework*: Read the Rosenthal chapters on *Twelfth Night* and *Macbeth*. There are four productions of *The Tempest* (*Yellow Sky* 1948, Derek Jarman 1979, Julie Taymor 2010, or *Forbidden Planet* 1956) available. Select and watch one of these productions, and read the accompanying scholarly article. For Monday, write a film review of the production you watched OR a summary of the article (and your responses to its arguments). Optional: I have also provided a recording of a stage production of *The Tempest* (Stratford 2010).

Week Three (June 5-8): Words, Stories, and Influence, *Twelfth Night*/*Macbeth*

Monday- Modern vs. Traditional Adaptations

-Expectations of "Shakespeare."
-Scotland: Necessary or no? (Sugg. Courney Lehmann article)
-Preview for Fiennes' *Coriolanus*
-Looking at *Macbeth*: 3.4, 4.1, and 4.3

Break

-Film work: Clips from Kurzel (2015), Polanski (1971), and Wright (2006).

-*Homework*: Read the *Globe and Mail* review of Mark Rylance's *Twelfth Night* (link on Blackboard).

Tuesday- How "Original" are Original Practices?

-What are "Original Practices"?
-Gendered casting: OP vs. Phyllida Lloyd and Harriet Walter's Prison Trilogy
-Looking at *Twelfth Night*: 1.5, 2.4, and 5.1.

Break

-Film work: Comparing clips from Rylance (2013) and Nunn (1996).

-Homework: Read Tony Howard's article: "Shakespeare's Cinematic Offshoots" (on Blackboard).

Wednesday- Translating Shakespeare (Shakespeare in other words)

- HW Discussion
- Bollywood (*Haider*, *Omkara*, *Maqbool*)--Clips and previews.
- Kurosawa (*Throne of Blood*)
- American translations (*10 Things, She's the Man, Scotland PA*)

Break

-Film work: Clips from *She's the Man* and *Scotland PA*.

-Homework: Read Andre Bazin's "In Defense of Mixed Cinema" (on Blackboard)

Thursday- Theatre to Theater back to Theatre

- HW Discussion
- Creative circulation between stage, screen, and *back* to stage
- Lloyd/Walter trilogy; Wallbyrd R and J; SPR's Steampunk *Tempest*.

Break

-Q and A with Virginia Monte from Wallbyrd Theatre Co. MadMaxMac

-Homework: Read the Rosenthal chapters on *Midsummer* and *Richard III*.

There are four productions of *The Taming of the Shrew* (Ball and Browning 1976, Richards 2005, Miller 1980, or Zeffirelli 1967) available. Select and watch one of these productions, and read the accompanying scholarly article. For Monday, write a film review of the production you watched OR a summary of the article (and your responses to its arguments). Optional: I have also provided a recording of a stage production of *The Taming of the Shrew* (Stratford 2016).

Week Four (June 12-15): Hollywood Blockbusters and Cartoons, *Midsummer/Richard III*

Monday- Marketing Shakespeare: The Hollywood Blockbuster

- Advertising/Marketing
- What is it that "makes" a Hollywood blockbuster?
- Which Shakespeare films, historically, have *been* Hollywood blockbusters?
- Looking at *Midsummer* (1.2, 2.2, 5.1) and *RIII* (1.1, 1.2, 5.4-5)

Break

-Film Work: *Midsummer*: Reinhardt (1935) and Hoffman (1999). *Richard III*: Hollow Crown (2016) and Loncraine/McKellen (1995).

-*Homework*: Read Laurie Osborne's article, "Mixing Media and Animating Shakespeare Tales" (on Blackboard).

Tuesday- Cartoons as art and/or Entertainment?

- HW discussion
- Animation styles and presumptions about animation as a genre
- Animation and audience expectations

Break

-Film Work: *Midsummer* and *RIII* from *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales*

-*Homework*: Watch the Smithsonian short documentary on the finding of Richard III's body (link on Blackboard). Also, read the article from the *Telegraph* describing a forthcoming production of *RIII* at Leicester Cathedral (also on Blackboard). Make top ten list of Shakespeare films you want to see from the file on Blackboard).

Wednesday- History, Pop Culture, Current Events, and Narrative

-FULL DAY IN ROBBINS

- How does history interact with Shakespeare on screen and stage?
- Henry V* (Branagh v. Olivier--Before/After Agincourt clips)
- Richard III* discovery and shows to come.
- Julius Caesar*, Public Theater, and Political Commentary.
- Histories as propaganda
- References and Allusions (Dead Poets, Tiny Toons, etc).

Break

-Time to work on final project.

-*Homework*: Work on your final project.

Thursday- Final Projects, Movie Party, and Evals--AKA: *Exeunt Omnes*

- Presentation of final projects
- Shakespeare Movie party (with food)
- Course evals and fleeing for the remainder of summer