

## **Selected Topics in Fine and Performing Arts**

Contemporary Arts 887

Section: G100

Term: 2010 Fall

Instructor: Dr. Laura U. Marks  
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**Discussion Topics:** This seminar examines some of the most important movements in cinema theory in our time. Cinema, for our purposes, means time-based audiovisual media. Broadly conceived in this way, cinema theory is a very lively and exciting intellectual field these days. The approaches we will examine are primarily developed in reference to the experience of movies shown in theaters, but they extend to small-screen media, algorithmic media, and other contemporary variations on screen-based media. The instructor is an internationally recognized cinema and media theorist with particular expertise in Deleuze, phenomenology, artists' media, and the senses.

\x09One enduring issue in cinema theory is realism, which draws on the foundational theories of André Bazin, Béla Balsz, and others and extends forward to questions of verisimilitude and immersion in new media, while recognizing that the object of realism entirely depends on how we define the real. Montage is another classical subject of film theory that we will draw forward to examine digital editing and the ways cinema does not reproduce but constructs a world. Interestingly, an embodied analysis enhances each of these approaches. Part of the seminar will be devoted to the cinematic philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, which understands cinema as a model of perception in time and sheds light on many aspects of contemporary cinema. We will examine questions of cinematic ontology, developed with respect to documentary cinema and drawing on phenomenology and the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce. Psychoanalytic film theory, recently revived with more nuanced theories of subjectivity, continues to shed light on the way cinema engages desire and belief. The ethics and aesthetics of reception will ground our examination of identity issues, such as gender and nation. Finally, weighing recent theories that cinema constitutes part of the totalizing spectacle of late capitalism, we will seek moments of freedom for perception and thought. \x09Prior study of film theory and permission of the instructor are required.

Grading: 25%\x09Student seminar  
10%\x09Proposal for final paper\x09  
10%\x09Peer comments  
35%\x09Final paper  
20%\x09Participation

**Required Texts:** FPA 887 SFU custom courseware

**Recommended Texts:**

**Materials/Supplies:**

**Prerequisite/Corequisite:**

**Notes:**

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