

Elective Course “**Hong Kong Cinema through a Global Lens**”

Abstract: Hong Kong Cinema has a global reach. Let’s explore how it reached you... Perhaps you know the films of martial arts icons Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan or the heroic bloodshed films of John Woo. Perhaps you are a fan of stars such as Maggie Cheung or Chow Yun Fat. Maybe you admire works by directors such as Wong Kar Wai. Whatever you know and wherever you are we invite you to join us on a journey to consider how the local and the global intersect to make Hong Kong cinema an integral part of popular culture around the world as well as a leading force in the development of world cinematic art. Our location in the cultural crossroads of Hong Kong allows us to introduce you to film professionals such as director Mabel Cheung and Andrew Lau, producer John Sham, film festival director Roger Garcia, and other guests, talking candidly about the industry. During your weeks with us you’ll see demonstrations of martial arts choreography, participate in close analysis of film techniques, investigate Hong Kong global stardom, uncover the reasons for the worldwide appeal of genres such as the kung fu film, and nurture a comparative and critical understanding of issues of gender, race, migration. Best of all you’ll partner with leading researchers in the field to appreciate Hong Kong’s contribution to world cinema.

Learning Objectives: In this course you’ll learn how flows of capital, people, technologies, ideas and creativity circulate and shape the cultural industry of filmmaking, resulting in transnational co-productions and cross-cultural co-operations. You’ll see how these dynamic processes are inflected in characterization, plot development, and space-time configurations on Hong Kong screens.

Learning Outcomes: Develop your critical and historical thinking skills through analyzing the interconnected relationship between the global scene and local lives in HK films;

Broaden your perspectives on identity issues through finding the familiar in the foreign in Hong Kong cinema;

Deepen your perspective on the impact of globalization on your own society through analyzing Hong Kong cinema.

Plan:

- a. Introduction / Jackie Chan In this unit, we look at Hong Kong as portrayed by Hollywood, and how Jackie Chan defines his own global image.
- b. Bruce Lee and the Global Kung Fu Craze. Bruce Lee is a global icon who represents the worldwide fascination with kung fu. We look at his life, works, and lasting impact in cinema and popular culture
- c. Melodramas of Migration: Mabel Cheung Yuen-Ting’s *An Autumn’s Tale* Themes of identity, race, gender, and culture in migration intersect to create stories with historical significance. We examine the role of migration melodramas in documenting the diasporic experience. John Woo’s *Heroic Bloodshed Films: Hong Kong vs. Hollywood* We discuss the evolution of masculinity and selfhood from early

Hong Kong Shaw Brothers films to *The Killer*, and how Confucianism offers an alternative understanding of relationships and hierarchy.

d. Hong Kong on Postmodern Screens: *Infernal Affairs*

We examine postmodernism in *Infernal Affairs* as reflected through themes of capitalism, crisis cinema, and political allegory.

e. Hong Kong Cinema as World Cinema / *In the Mood for Love*

Wong Kar Wai is an example of an auteur filmmaker. We trace how his works influence Hollywood, and specifically discuss festival films and *In the Mood for Love*.

Reading List: Lee V.P.Y. (2009) *Hong Kong cinema since 1997: the post-nostalgic imagination*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ren H. (2010) *Neoliberalism and culture in China and Hong Kong: the countdown of time*. London; New York: Routledge.

Grading System: 80% Cumulative Grade +20% Exam

Methods of Instruction: Video lectures