



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Federico Fellini and contemporary Italian cinema

PROF. MARA PERBELLINI

OVERVIEW

Area: Cultural Studies

Dates: 3– 27 July (4 weeks)

Campus: Milan

Course Number: FS / CMS 310

Term: Summer School 2018

Credits: 6 ECTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will introduce students to the magic world of the “director superstar” Federico Fellini, who influenced the art of cinema all over the world.

Here’s a quotation from American director David Lynch, to give an example of how influential Fellini was to international directors: “If I had to choose films that represent, for me, examples of perfect filmmaking, the first would be $8\frac{1}{2}$, for the way Federico Fellini managed to accomplish with film what mostly abstract painters do – namely, to communicate an emotion without ever saying anything in a direct manner, without ever explaining anything, just by a sort of sheer magic”.

After “meeting” the Master, students will discover the main trends and filmmakers in contemporary Italian cinema. Since cinema is a mirror to our world, students will learn a lot about contemporary Italian society through the seventh art.

COURSE CONTENTS

In the first part of the course, after an introduction to cinema language and Italian cinema, we will focus on Federico Fellini’s career, from his debut as screenwriter during Neorealism to the masterpieces of the ‘50s and ‘60s.

We will then explore the boundaries of contemporary Italian cinema with the most significant directors and their movies: Roberto Benigni, Gabriele Salvatores, Matteo Garrone and Paolo Sorrentino (who won for best film in a foreign language at the Academy Awards 2014).

PREREQUISITES

None

METHOD OF TEACHING

Screenings of clips from films, Lecture and film analysis, discussion of 7 mandatory films to be watched before class.

Starting from the second mandatory film, a student will lead the film discussion together with the Professor (students will rotate in this role).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Students will watch the 7 mandatory films that will be screened at Università Cattolica, in days and hours to be scheduled. The film will then be discussed in class with the Professor.

It is crucial that students watch the film prior to discussion in class.

GRADING

Class participation (including film discussions and presentations)	50 % of final grade
Final written exam	50 % of final grade

RULES OF CONDUCT

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and no absence/s will be excused. Unexcused absences will prevent students from being admitted to the final exam. In case of health issues, students will need to inform both UCSC International Office (at international.advisor@unicatt.it) and the professor and provide a medical certificate.

Exam Date: The exam date cannot be re-scheduled. Unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. In cases of unforeseeable circumstances such as illness or injury on the day of the exams, the student must submit a medical certificate and communicate his/her absence to the Professor and UCSC International Office via email prior to the exam. If the student does not justify his/her absence through sufficient documentation and with adequate notice before the final test, the student will receive an automatic Failed.

COURSE READING AND MATERIALS

All the required readings will be available in a course pack and the lecturer's slides will be available on Blackboard.

Required reading (excerpts):

- Peter Bondanella, *The cinema of Federico Fellini*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1992.
- William Hope, *Italian Film Directors in the New Millennium*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2010.

Required films (with English subtitles):

- *Le notti di Cabiria* (1956) by F. Fellini (screened in class)
- *La dolce vita* (1959) by F. Fellini
- *Otto e mezzo 8 ½* (1962) by F. Fellini
- *La vita è bella* (1998) by Roberto Benigni
- *Io non ho paura* (2003) by Gabriele Salvatores
- *Gomorra* (2008) by Matteo Garrone
- *Youth* (2015) by Paolo Sorrentino.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Lesson 1: 3 July (2 h, 2-3.50 pm)

Introduction to cinema language.
Introduction to Italian cinema.
Guidelines to film analysis.



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Lesson 2: 4 July (2 h, 12.10-2 pm)

Screening of *Le notti di Cabiria* (1956) by F. Fellini.

Lesson 3: 5 July (3 h, 11.10 am-2 pm)

More on Fellini.

Discussion and film analysis of (1): *Le notti di Cabiria* (1956) by F. Fellini

- *Film to be watched before 6 July: La dolce vita* (1959) by F. Fellini

Lesson 4: 6 July (3 h, 11.10 am-2 pm)

More on Fellini.

Discussion and film analysis (2): *La dolce vita* (1959) by F. Fellini

WEEK 2

Lesson 5: 9 July (3 h, 11.10 am-2 pm)

More on Fellini. Opening of *Otto e mezzo 8 ½* (1962) by F. Fellini.

- *Film to be watched before 10 July: Otto e mezzo 8 ½* (1962) by F. Fellini

Lesson 6: 10 July (3 h, 11.10 am-2 pm)

More on Fellini.

Discussion and film analysis (3): *Otto e mezzo 8 ½* (1962) by F. Fellini

Lesson 7: 11 July (3 h, 11.10 am-2 pm)

More on Fellini.

Contemporary Italian cinema.

Lesson 8: 12 July (2 h, 12.10-2 pm)

Cultural activity: pre-production of the TV-series “Penny on Mars – season 2” [Disney and 3zero2] (N.B. this event’s date is subject to change, due to the production company’s and the actors’ needs).

- *Film to be watched before 16 July: La vita è bella* (1998) by Roberto Benigni.

WEEK 3

Lesson 9: 16 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

Benigni. Discussion and film analysis (4): *La vita è bella* (1998) by Roberto Benigni.

- *Film to be watched before 17 July: Youth* (2015) by Paolo Sorrentino.

Lesson 10: 17 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

Sorrentino. Discussion and film analysis (7): *Youth* (2013) by Paolo Sorrentino.

- *Film to be watched before 19 July: Io non ho paura* (2003) by Gabriele Salvatores.

Lesson 11: 18 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

More on Sorrentino.

Lesson 12: 19 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

Salvatores.

Discussion and film analysis (5): *Io non ho paura* (2003) by Gabriele Salvatores



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

WEEK 4

Lesson 13: 23 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

More on Salvatores.

- *Film to be watched before 25 July: Gomorra (2008) by Matteo Garrone*

Lesson 14: 24 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

Garrone.

Lesson 15: 25 July (2 h, 11.35 am -1.25 pm)

Discussion and film analysis (6): *Gomorra* (2008) by Matteo Garrone

Lesson 16: 26 July (2 h, 12.30 -2.30 pm)

Written in class FINAL EXAM.

FINAL EXAM It will be a written exam with 2 film analysis on 2 of the 7 mandatory films (as explained in class) and 2 essay questions on the issues discussed in class: all the slides from blackboard; the selected chapters from your textbooks (on your course-pack).

BIO OF INSTRUCTOR

Mara Perbellini is a scriptwriter and story analyst for major film and TV production Companies. After her B.A. in Italian Literature and her Master's Degree in Screenwriting at the Università Cattolica of Milan, she began to write screenplays and work as a story analyst for Rai Fiction and Eagle Pictures. She also worked as assistant director on the TV-movie "Una famiglia per caso" for RAI 1.

She also attended the Film School at the New York Film Academy, both in NYC and in L.A. (at Universal Studios) and the London Academy of Radio, Film & TV: while there, she directed, wrote and edited 4 short films.

She has had over twelve feature film stories and screenplays commissioned, purchased or optioned. In 2009 she got an Award for best screenplay at the Fiuggi International Family Film Festival with the film "Il sirenetto". After that she wrote many episodes for the animated series "Uffa che Pazienza!" (Rai 2, season 1 and 2, which earned the Pulcinella Award at Cartoons on the Bay 2008 as best TV series for children) and several prime-time mini-series and series, such as "Distretto di polizia 8" (Canale 5), "Ci vediamo a Portofino" (Rai 1), "La vita che corre" (Rai 1), "Eleonora Duse" (Publispei), "Ombre sulla neve" (Casanova Multimedia), "Front Row" (TaoDue Film), "Penny on Mars" (3zero2 TV, Disney Italia and Disney U.K.).

Mara is also a playwright. In 2012-3 she wrote 5 plays for "Decalogo parte prima" that premiered at the Spoleto "Festival dei due mondi" in 2013.

She's currently writing a historical epic film and she's head-writer of the second season of the TV-series "Penny on Mars".

In 2006, Mara joined the Faculty of IES Abroad Milan where she teaches History of Italian Cinema and Visual Storytelling. She also collaborates with MISP (Master in International Screenwriting and Production) at UCSC; tutors Italian film students in the film-making summer course at the School of Visual Arts in NYC (since 2009); teaches "Federico Fellini and contemporary Italian cinema" and "Creative storytelling" at UCSC (since 2012).

@: maperbellini@gmail.com