EALC 125g: Introduction to Contemporary East Asian Film and Culture (4.0 units)
Spring 2015
Prof David Desser
Office and hours: THH 356 K (in EALC office) Wed: 1:30-2:30

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An introduction to and overview of the contemporary cinemas of East Asia: China (Hong Kong, the People's Republic, and Taiwan), Japan, and Korea.

- **General Education:** This course satisfies the university's general education requirement.

25365R 001 Lecture 10:00-11:50am Wednesday David Desser THH114
         10:00-12:50pm Friday

25366R 001 Discussion 9:00-9:50am Wednesday Gladys Mac THH217

25367R 001 Discussion 9:00-9:50am Friday Gladys Mac THH215

**Course Requirements**

This is a film studies class and therefore the films are the primary texts of this course. You are required to see these films. The best solution to this is to attend the Friday screenings. Failing that (and there will be lecture material presented on Fridays as well) you should see the films on your own. You are responsible for the film content as much as you are responsible for the secondary readings in culture and cinematic analysis. Most of the readings are posted on BlackBoard under “course content.” Other readings are derived from websites with the url provided. You should have the readings done at the listed class date and time.

**Attendance**

Attendance is absolutely required at both the lectures and the discussion section. Attendance will be taken each week. Though you should attend each week, you are permitted one (1) unexcused absence per lecture and discussion. Every absence above one for each will result in a penalty of -1/3 of your final grade. That is severe, but it will be enforced. Excused absences may be the result of illness, unavoidable conflict or family issues. Do your best to let the instructor or the TA know if any issue along these lines should arise.

**Assignments**

*Quizzes* (unannounced) in lecture section. (15%) You CANNOT make up a quiz. Even illness or other legitimate absence will not be an excuse to make up a quiz. Therefore you need to attend lectures each week.

*Two papers 5-6 pp each (1500-1800 words)*

First paper *(25%)* due: Mar. 4
Second paper (30%) due: April 22

Final exam (in-class) (30%): May 11 (8:00 – 10:00 am)

Students with Disabilities: Students who need to request accommodations based on a disability are required to register each semester with the Disability Services and Programs office (Student Union, Room 301). In addition, a letter of verification to the course instructor from the Disability Services and Programs office is needed for the semester in which you are enrolled for this course. If you have questions concerning this procedure, please contact both the instructor of the course and the Disability Services and Programs office at (213) 740—776.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Plagiarism and/or cheating on exams are subject to the sanctions set forth in the Student Conduct Code and may include expulsion or suspension from the university. The Trojan Integrity Guide defines plagiarism as the following:

Using someone else’s work in any academic assignment without appropriate acknowledgement (such as paraphrasing another’s idea or copying text, phrases or ideas from a book, journal, electronic source or another person’s paper, without acknowledgment.

For a detailed description of plagiarism, you are referred to the Undergraduate Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism at http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tig.pdf. If you have any questions please feel free to ask your instructor.

Readings
Youngmin Choe, “Affective Sites: Hur Jin-ho’s Cinema and Film Induced Tourism in Korea” (from Tom Winter, et. al. eds., Asia on Tour: Exploring the Rise of Asian Tourism)
Kathleen McHugh, “South Korean Film Melodrama and the Question of National Cinema” (from Quarterly Review of Film and Video 18, 1, 2001)
David Desser. “Toward a Structural Analysis of the Postwar Samurai Film” (Quarterly Review of Film Studies 8, 1 [1983])
Stephen Teo, “The Sword and the Fist” (from Teo, Hong Kong Cinema: The Extra Dimensions)
Chi—yun Shin and Julian Stringer, “Storming the Big Screen: The Shiri Syndrome” (from Frances Gateward, ed. Seoul Searching: Culture and Identity in South Korean Cinema)
Keiko McDonald, “Atmosphere and Thematic Conflict in Mizoguchi’s Ugetsu” (from McDonald, Cinema East: A Critical Study of Major Japanese Films)
Mark Le Fanu, “The Great Triptych” (from Le Fanu, Mizoguchi and Japan)
Alison Peirse, “Tracing Tradition in Korean Horror Film” (from Asian Cinema 22, 1 [March 2001])
Stephen Teo, “The Aesthetics of Mythical Violence in Hong Kong Action Films” (from New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film 8, 3 2010)
David Desser, “The Place of Dodeskaden” (Post Script 20, 1, 2000)
### Course Schedule

**Ozu, Art Cinema and the Ozu Effect**

1/14  Introduction to the course

1/16:  *Tokyo Story* (Ozu Yasujiro, 1953)

1/21:  Desser, “A Filmmaker for All Seasons”

1/23:  *Café Lumiere* (Hou Hsiao-hsien, 2003)

1/28:  Tony McKibbin, “Situations over Stories: Café Lumiere and Hou Hsiao-hsien”
       Shigehiko Hasumi, “Café Lumiere”

1/30:  *Christmas in August* (Hur Jin-ho, 1998)

2/4:   Choe, “Affective Sites: Hur Jin-ho’s Cinema and Film Induced Tourism in Korea”
       McHugh, “South Korean Film Melodrama and the Question of National Cinema”

**Martial Arts, Violence and National Identity**

2/6:   *Lone Wolf and Cub II: Baby Cart at the River Styx* (Misumi Kenji, 1972)

2/11:  Desser, “Structural Analysis of the Postwar Samurai Film”
       White, “Samurai”

2/13:  *5 Fingers of Death* (Cheng Chang Ho, 1972)

2/18:  Teo, “Chapter Seven: The Sword and the Fist”
       “Wu Xia: heaven or hell? part 2: Chung Chang-Hwa's Way”
       [http://www.koreasociety.org/essays/wu_xia_heaven_or_hell_part_2_chung_chang-hwas_way.html](http://www.koreasociety.org/essays/wu_xia_heaven_or_hell_part_2_chung_chang-hwas_way.html)

2/20:  *Shiri* (Kang Je Gyu, 1999)

       Bo-Myung Seo, “Reunifying Identities: North and South in Contemporary South Korean Cinema”

**Ghostly Asia**

2/27:  *Ugetsu* (Mizoguchi Kenji, 1953)

3/4:   McDonald, “Atmosphere and Thematic Conflict in Mizoguchi’s *Ugetsu*”
       Le Fanu, “The Great Triptych”


3/11:  “Ghost Lovers and Fox Spirits”
       Sek Kei, “Achievement and Crisis: Hong Kong Cinema in the ’80s”
3/13:  
Hello Ghost (Kim Young-Tak, 2010)

3/16 - 3/20:  
Spring Break

3/25:  
Peirse, “Tracing Tradition in Korean Horror Film”
Vick, “Cinema as a Window on Contemporary Korea”

Heroes Never Die?
3/27:  
Hana-bi (Kitano Takeshi, 1997)
4/1:  
Dan Edwards, “Never Yielding Entirely into Art: Performance and Self-Obsession in Takeshi Kitano’s Hana-bi”
Kate Taylor-Jones, “Film Analysis: Hana-bi (pp. 116-122)
https://books.google.com/books?id=A9SrAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA119&lpg=PA119&dq=hana-bi+film+analysis&source=bl&ots=8yYk5tFYTd&sig=B8akMVFqHqEbgj4K10UWImVj9E&hl=en&sa=X&ei=fTKqVPO5CIxogSbqoDQCA&ved=0CFMQ6AEwCTge#v=onepage&q=hana-bi%20film%20analysis&f=false
Chuck Stephens, “Comedy plus Massacre: The Films of Takeshi Kitano”

4/3:  
A Hero Never Dies (Johnnie To, 1999)

4/8:  
Teo, “Mythical Violence”
“Johnnie To’s A Hero Never Dies Review”

4/10:  
Man from Nowhere (Lee Jeong-beom, 2010)
4/15:  
“K-movie review: The Man From Nowhere/Ahjussi”
http://saryre.blogspot.com/2012/06/k-movie-review-man-from-nowhereahjussi.html
Joyojeet Pal, “The Korean Quest for Revenge: The Traditions Behind Two Films”

Dailiness, Place and the Cinema
4/17:  
Dodeskaden (Kurosawa Akira, 1970)
4/22:  
Desser, “The Place of Dodeskaden”
Prince, “Dodeskaden: True Colors”

4/24:  
Chungking Express (Wong Kar-wai, 1995)
4/29:  
Wright, “Wong Kar-Wai”
Taubin, “Chungking Express: Electric Youth”
http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/766-chungking-express-electric-youth
Van Camp, “Piecing Together Chungking Express”

5/1: Sad Movie (Kwon Jong-kwan, 2005)