



MAS 304

Screens, Images, Ideas

S2 Day 2015

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

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Tutorials

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit analyses issues in film culture by screenings of fictional and non-fictional films (and/or television texts) from a range of countries. Typical topics covered include: the transformation of 1960s New Hollywood into contemporary Hollywood; film and other media; cult/exploitation cinema; the concept of independent cinema; national cinemas; the relation of philosophical-cultural concepts to film.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies

Develop an expanded historical knowledge of (mainly) post 1970s film and film theory
Interpret and analyse a wide range of recent film-cultural theories and practices of filmmaking

Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic standards in written and spoken forms

Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis

Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Class Presentation</u>	20%	As Scheduled
<u>Film Diary (Part One)</u>	15%	Friday 11th September, 5pm
<u>Film Diary (Part Two)</u>	15%	Friday 30th October, 5pm
<u>Final Assignment</u>	40%	Monday 9th November, 9am
<u>Course Participation</u>	10%	Ongoing

Class Presentation

Due: **As Scheduled**

Weighting: **20%**

Class Presentation: You are required to present an oral critical analysis of the film screened as part of the unit schedule in the week prior to your presentation.

You will give your critical analysis contextualising the film as a part of film history and/or contemporary practice, relating it to other films (by that director and/or that genre), to the week's readings, and to show important images/scenes to help demonstrate the points you are making. Your presentation should make use of PowerPoint or similar. Each presentation should be between 10 and 15 minutes in length.

Assessment criteria: You will be assessed on your 1) Oral presentation & communication skills 2) evidence of structure & preparation 3) audience engagement 4) creativity 5) ability to contextualise the film as part of a) film history b) that specific directors' repertoire c) ability to relate the film to one (or more) of the concepts that are evident in the readings 6) evidence of additional research and 7) your ability to respond to questions from your peers.

If for any reason you miss a scheduled presentation not covered by an approved Disruption to Studies, rescheduling will be at your tutor's discretion.

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- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis

Film Diary (Part One)

Due: **Friday 11th September, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

From films screened in the first 7 weeks of the course, select one scene (or one particular aspect) of each film to analyse. Each entry should be 250 words in length. Please submit to ilearn discussion forum as well as Turnitin.

Assessment criteria: You will be assessed on your ability to write clearly and coherently and discuss one (or more) aspects of film style (such as mise-en-scene, sound, cinematography etc), narrative or characterisation of your chosen scene and illustrate how this relates to the film as a whole. Please make sure your work is well structured.

Late assignments without a granted extension will be penalised 5 marks per day late including weekends and holidays.

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- Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic standards in written and spoken forms
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Film Diary (Part Two)

Due: **Friday 30th October, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

Choose 5 films from the second half of the course (weeks 8-12) and then select a scene (or one particular aspect) to analyse. Each entry should be 250 words in length. Please submit to ilearn and Turnitin.

Assessment criteria: You will be assessed on your ability to write clearly and coherently and discuss one (or more) aspects of film style (such as mise-en-scene, sound, cinematography etc),

narrative or characterisation of your chosen scene and illustrate how this relates to the film as a whole. Please make sure your work is well structured.

Late assignments without a granted extension will be penalised 5 marks per day late including weekends and holidays.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Final Assignment

Due: **Monday 9th November, 9am**

Weighting: **40%**

For the major assignment you have the choice of submitting either a written **Academic Essay** or a **Video Essay**.

Academic Essay: you will be required to write an essay of 2000 words [not including footnotes or bibliography] that responds to the following question:

***Choosing one film from the unit schedule, give a critical account of the film's key themes, its concepts and ideas and how these aspects are conveyed by the film itself, with reference to direction, performance, art direction, production design, sound and music etc, and to its place within its genre.**

Your essay will demonstrate an understanding of one or more of the central concepts from the unit, as well as demonstrating your ability to apply these concepts to the film you have chosen for discussion, to additional films outside the unit schedule, while referencing at least two of the course readings, and two from outside it.

Please submit your essay to TURNITIN.

Assessment criteria:

Evidence of **research** and **reading** (critical engagement with our specific curriculum: films, lectures, tutorials, readings).

Demonstrate **further research** beyond the course (minimum of 2 further articles/monographs)

Demonstrate **critical engagement** with some of the **central concepts and theory** of the course and be able to apply these to your film example[s].

Present a clearly **structured** essay and well-supported **argument**.

The use of academic Harvard inline **referencing**.

Video Essay Description: As an alternative to the academic essay, you have the option of producing a **video essay** (VE).

A VE is an essay that takes the form of a short video using some form of narration (intertitles, voice-overs etc) and explores the film in question (style, form, genre, themes, theory, narrative etc).

Taking the footage from one (or more) films, edit this material together using other elements such as text, graphics, music, voice-over or inter-titles to produce insightful commentary and observation in graphically creative and provocative ways.

Kevin Lee says that: "These videos are typically produced independently by using consumer-level equipment, demonstrating that just about anyone with a computer can be both a filmmaker and a critic. The only limits are those of imagination and intelligence" <

<http://www.rogerebert.com/balder-and-dash/the-art-of-the-video-essay-a-page-by-kevin-lee-grandmaster-of-the-form> >

*** As with the Academic Essay you will give a critical account of the film's key themes, its concepts and ideas and how these aspects are conveyed by the film itself, with reference to direction, performance, art direction, production design, sound and music, and to its place within its genre.**

* The length of each VE should be between 8-10 minutes, and should be submitted via Turnitin as a Word document containing a link to the VE on YouTube or Vimeo.

* Citations for the material used in the VE should be submitted as part of the Word Doc via Turnitin.

Please note that late assignments will not be accepted unless for reasons of illness or personal misadventure.

Extensions to assignment deadlines must be applied for and supported with documentation (such as medical certificate) where possible no fewer than 3 days **before** the due date and forwarded to Ask.mq.

Late assignments without an extension will be penalised 5 marks per day late including weekends and holidays.

Please also note that there will be no marker's comments on the late assignment when it is returned.

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Course Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

Participation assessment criteria for this unit will be based on not only your regular **tutorial** and **lecture attendance** and **quality contribution** to discussion but also on your **quality feedback** in tutorial discussion.

Please note: if you have to miss ANY tutorials or lectures, please make sure you inform your tutor prior to the absence and submit all doctor's certificates for unforeseeable absences etc to **Ask.mq** for assessment.

Where possible, all applications for Disruptions to Studies for absences need to be submitted **no longer than 5 days after the missed tutorial or lecture**. Applications submitted longer than five days after the absence may not be considered.

All doctor's certificates etc must be for the dates of the tutorials or lectures missed.

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Delivery and Resources

Classes

Each week there are two x 2.5 hour film screenings, a one hour lecture and a one-hour tutorial.

It is an assessment requirement of this unit that students attend ALL classes.

The timetable for classes can be found online at: <https://timetables.mq.edu.au/2015>

Required and Recommended Texts and/or Materials

Unit readings are listed in this unit guide.

Prescribed textbook(s): None

Technology Used and Required

No special technology required but access to ilearn, to university library databases and a computer to complete written assignments is essential.

Learning and Teaching Activities

In order to participate fully in weekly tutorial discussions students should have watched the previous week's film screening, attended the previous week's lecture, and read the set tutorial readings contained in the MAS 304 Unit Reader. Note: these readings are also intended to assist you in the writing of your essays, and it may not be the case that every reading will be discussed in tutorials.

Unit Schedule

CONTENT WARNING

Screen, Images & Ideas studies the origins and evolution of popular entertainment genres since 1968, studying the auteur theory, regional variations of genre cinema, the concept and practice of independent/art house cinema, with historical and contemporary examples of cinematic horror, science fiction, fantasy and crime.

Please be advised: a number of the films in our study contain graphic on-screen violence, suggested off screen violence and disturbing themes. Although most of the films are widely available on DVD and have been screened in Australian cinemas and on television, **some viewers may find aspects of these films disturbing.**

Weekly schedule: At a Glance

WEEK & LECTURE DATE/ DAY	SCREENINGS THURSDAYS/ FRIDAYS	TUTORIALS TUESDAYS	LECTURES & ASSESSMENT TASKS FRIDAYS

<p>Week 1 July 27</p> <p><i>Easy Rider</i></p> <p>[1969, 95 mins]</p>		<p><i>*No tutorials this week*</i></p>	
<p>Week 2 Aug 03</p> <p><i>Jaws</i></p> <p>[124 mins, 1975]</p>		<p><i>See week one readings. Schedule students for weekly presentations</i></p>	
<p>Week 3 Aug 10</p> <p><i>Mad Max</i></p> <p>[1979, 88 mins]</p>		<p><i>Week two readings and presentations</i></p>	
<p>Week 4 Aug 17</p> <p><i>The Shining</i></p> <p>[1980, 146 mins]</p>		<p><i>Week Three readings and presentations</i></p>	
<p>Week 5 Aug 24</p> <p><i>Blue Velvet</i></p> <p>[1986, 120 mins]</p>		<p><i>Week Four readings and presentations</i></p>	
<p>Week 6 Aug 31</p> <p><i>Romeo & Juliet</i></p> <p>[1996, 120 mins]</p>		<p><i>Week Five readings and presentations</i></p>	
<p>Week 7 Sept 07</p> <p><i>The Boys</i></p> <p>[1998, 86 mins]</p>		<p><i>Week Six readings and presentations</i></p>	<p>First film diary due: Friday September 11: post to iLearn and submit to Turnitin</p>
<p>MID SEMESTER BREAK</p>			
<p>Week 8 Sep 28</p> <p><i>The Host</i></p> <p>[2006, 119 mins]</p>		<p><i>Week Seven readings and presentations</i></p>	

Week 9 Oct 05	<i>Children of Men</i> [2006, 109 mins]	<i>Week Eight readings and presentations</i>	
Week 10 Oct 12	<i>The Babadook</i> [2014, 93 mins]	<i>Week Nine readings and presentations</i>	
Week 11 Oct 19	<i>Room 237</i> [2012, 102 mins]	<i>Week Ten readings and presentations</i>	
Week 12 Oct 26	<i>Escape from Tomorrow</i> [2013, 90 mins]	<i>Week Eleven readings and presentations</i>	Second Film Diary Due: Friday, October 30 - post to iLearn and submit Turnitin
Week 13 Nov 02	NO LECTURE THIS WEEK	<i>Week Twelve readings and presentations</i>	
Week 14 Nov 09			Final Essay due: Monday November 9 (Submit to Turnitin)

Week One

Film: **Easy Rider** [1969, 95 mins, MA 15+]

"Everyone was at AIP [American International Pictures] back then—Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Brian de Palma. It was the only place you could go if you weren't in the union, where they'd give you cameras and let you go out and shoot. They wouldn't pay you, but if you were making a movie for them, you could go out and shoot on weekends. I did one called *The Glory Stompers*, [1968]. But Peter and I were still trying to do a movie. He said, "Let's promise ourselves that we will not do a motorcycle movie." I said, "Absolutely, man. We're going to be like the singing cowboys. I'm going to be the sidekick, and this is going to be ridiculous." So Peter is out on the road promoting *The Trip*, [1967]. He's at the Toronto Film Festival, and he calls me up at three o'clock in the morning and says, "I just left Sam Arkoff"—who was one of the owners of

AIP—“and James Nicholson,” who was the other owner and no relation to Jack. “I told him this story, and they said they’ll let us make a movie and you can direct.” Peter says, “Don’t get angry with me. Just listen: These two guys go over to Mexico on dirt bikes and smuggle back a bunch of marijuana. . . .” Well, you can’t take a lot of marijuana on a dirt bike, but okay. He continues, “They come back and sell the stuff and get these big, gleaming bikes and go cross-country to Mardi Gras. They’re going to retire in Florida, but they get shot by a couple of duck hunters. What do you think?” So I said, “Did they tell you they’d give you the money?” He said, “Yeah.” “And they’ll let me direct and act in it?” “Yeah.” So I said, “Sounds like a great f__ckin’ idea to me.”

Tony Shafrazi and Peter M. Brant, *Dennis*

Hopper, INTERVIEW: http://www.interviewmagazine.com/film/dennis-hopper/#_

Required Readings:

Barbara Klinger, *Landscaping the Nation: The Road to Dystopia in Easy Rider*, in Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark, ed., *The Road Movie Book* (London: Routledge, 1997): 179-203

L. M. Kit Carson, *Easy Rider: A Very American Thing*, Evergreen Review 13, 72 (November 1969): 24, 26-27, 70-72.

Lee Hill, *Easy Rider* (London: BFI, 1996): 8-15, 66-73.

Week Two

Film: Jaws [124 mins, 1975, M]

Steven Spielberg: "I didn't want this film to be a mythological tale and if everybody played as big as the shark weighed and measured nobody would have believed the shark was real if the people hadn't been as real. So, I looked to the community of Martha's Vineyard, and also off into the Boston area, to find local people that would make the audience feel that the story was truly happening not in Hollywood, but on a fictitious island called Amity.

Quint: That was also your reasoning for wanting to actually shoot on the ocean as well, right?

Steven Spielberg: Right, exactly, because if I made the movie in a tank it would have had that same mythological feel that the Spencer Tracy film, *The Old Man and the Sea*, has.

Quint: Or *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. When you see Kirk Douglas fighting a giant squid, as awesome as that is, you know they shot that on a backlot somewhere.

Steven Spielberg: Yeah, exactly. I was naïve about the ocean, basically. I was pretty naïve about mother nature and the hubris of a filmmaker who thinks he can conquer the elements was foolhardy, but I was too young to know I was being foolhardy when I demanded that we shoot the film in the Atlantic Ocean and not in a North Hollywood tank. But had I to do it all over again I

would have gone back to the sea because it was the only way for the audience to feel that these three men were cast adrift with a great white shark hunting them.

Steven Spielberg: Right, right.

Quint: Even if the average filmgoer doesn't know how movies are made, there's something in their brain that clicks, that registers when something is real and sees the difference.

Steven Spielberg: That's so true.

Quint: I know it was a headache, but I would hope looking back on it now you could say all the aggravation and stress was worth it.

Steven Spielberg: It was worth it because, for number one, *Close Encounters*, which was a film I had written and a film nobody seemed to want to make, everybody seemed to want it right after *Jaws* was a hit. So, the first thing *Jaws* did for me was it allowed a studio, namely Columbia, to greenlight *Close Encounters*. For number two, it gave me final cut for the rest of my career. But what I really owe to *Jaws* was creating in me a great deal of humility, about tempering my imagination with just sort of the facts of life."

Steven Spielberg and Quint have an epic chat all about JAWS as it approaches its 36th Anniversary! [Aint it Cool News](http://www.aintitcool.com/node/49921), June 6, 2011: <http://www.aintitcool.com/node/49921>

Required Readings:

Robert Torry, *Therapeutic Narrative: The Wild Bunch, Jaws and Vietnam*, The Velvet Light Trap, No. 31, Spring 1993: 27-38

Christopher R. Trogan & Dean A. Kowalski, *The Paradox of Belief and its moral implications in Jaws*, Steven Spielberg and philosophy: we're going to need a bigger book, Dean A. Kowalski, eds., Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008: 69-81

Tom Shone, Blockbuster, or How Hollywood learned to stop worrying and love the summer, New York: Free Press, 2004: 23-43

Jonathan Lemkin, *Archetypal Landscapes and Jaws*, The Films of Steven Spielberg, Charles L. P. Silet, ed, Lanham: Scarecrow Press 2002: 3-13

Week Three

Film: Mad Max [1979, 88 mins, R18+]

"Before becoming a director, George Miller attended medical school at the University of New South Wales and served as a doctor in Sydney. There, he witnessed the results of Australia's obsessive automobile culture that used abandoned roads like racetracks, often resulting in the viscera that later helped inspire the carnage in *Mad Max*. He had long been interested in filmmaking, and experimented with the medium during his off-hours. Alongside fellow film

enthusiast Byron Kennedy, he soon developed a production company called Kennedy Miller, and together they made a popular 20-minute short called *Violence in the Cinema, Part 1* (1971). He and Kennedy loved the "pure kinetics of chase movies" like *Bullitt* (1968), *Stone* (1974), and Corman's *The Wild One* (1954). They also admired post-apocalyptic fare such as *A Boy and His Dog* (1975). And they explored their enthusiasms when they hired McCausland to co-author *Mad Max*. Together, they achieved a fast-moving exploitation film that broke box-office records for independent cinema. *Mad Max* earned \$5.3 million in Australia and, after its worldwide distribution, brought its earnings to nearly \$100 million. It set long-held records for the most profitable independent film ever produced (a record broken by *The Blair Witch Project* in 1999). The film was purchased for U.S. distribution by American International Pictures (AIP), which was sold to Filmways, Inc. in 1979, and then renamed Filmways Pictures. During the transition, the distributors treated *Mad Max* like a foreign-language film and redubbed the Australian dialogue with American accents, giving the picture the sound and look of a Spaghetti Western. Even Gibson's voice was dubbed, since he was not yet an international star. Regardless, critics recognized Miller's visual talent and Gibson's charisma, even while comparing the film to *Death Wish* (1974) and issuing censures over its unrelenting revenge-based plotting."

Brian Eggert, *Mad Max* [1979], Deep Focus Review: <http://www.deepfocusreview.com/reviews/madmax.asp>

Required Readings:

Adrian Martin, *Mad Max*, The Mad Max Movies, Sydney: Currency Press: 9-33

Dennis H. Barbour (1999) *Heroism and Redemption in the Mad Max Trilogy*, Journal of Popular Film and Television, 27:3, 28-34.

Rebecca Johnke (2001) *Manifestations of masculinities: Mad max and the lure of the forbidden zone*, Journal of Australian Studies, 25:67, 118-125.

Christopher Sharrett, *The Hero as Pastiche: Myth, Male Fantasy, and Simulacra in "Mad Max" and "The Road Warrior"* Journal of Popular Film and Television

Volume 13, Issue 2, July 1985, 80-91

Week Four

Film: *The Shining* [1980, 146 mins, M]

"Stanley Kubrick: I've always been interested in ESP and the paranormal. In addition to the scientific experiments which have been conducted suggesting that we are just short of conclusive proof of its existence, I'm sure we've all had the experience of opening a book at the exact page we're looking for, or thinking of a friend a moment before they ring on the telephone. But *The Shining* didn't originate from any particular desire to do a film about this. The manuscript of the novel was sent to me by John Calley, of Warner Bros. I thought it was one of the most

ingenious and exciting stories of the genre I had read. It seemed to strike an extraordinary balance between the psychological and the supernatural in such a way as to lead you to think that the supernatural would eventually be explained by the psychological: "Jack must be imagining these things because he's crazy". This allowed you to suspend your doubt of the supernatural until you were so thoroughly into the story that you could accept it almost without noticing.

Michel Ciment: Do you think this was an important factor in the success of the novel?

Yes, I do. It's what I found so particularly clever about the way the novel was written. As the supernatural events occurred you searched for an explanation, and the most likely one seemed to be that the strange things that were happening would finally be explained as the products of Jack's imagination. It's not until Grady, the ghost of the former caretaker who axed to death his family, slides open the bolt of the larder door, allowing Jack to escape, that you are left with no other explanation but the supernatural. The novel is by no means a serious literary work, but the plot is for the most part extremely well worked out, and for a film that is often all that really matters.

Don't you think that today it is in this sort of popular literature that you find strong archetypes, symbolic images which have vanished somehow from the more highbrow literary works?

Yes, I do, and I think that it's part of their often phenomenal success. There is no doubt that a good story has always mattered, and the great novelists have generally built their work around strong plots. But I've never been able to decide whether the plot is just a way of keeping people's attention while you do everything else, or whether the plot is really more important than anything else, perhaps communicating with us on an unconscious level which affects us in the way that myths once did. I think, in some ways, the conventions of realistic fiction and drama may impose serious limitations on a story. For one thing, if you play by the rules and respect the preparation and pace required to establish realism, it takes a lot longer to make a point than it does, say, in fantasy. At the same time, it is possible that this very work that contributes to a story's realism may weaken its grip on the unconscious. Realism is probably the best way to dramatize argument and ideas. Fantasy may deal best with themes which lie primarily in the unconscious. I think the unconscious appeal of a ghost story, for instance, lies in its promise of immortality. If you can be frightened by a ghost story, then you must accept the possibility that supernatural beings exist. If they do, then there is more than just oblivion waiting beyond the grave.

This kind of implication is present in much of the fantastic literature.

I believe fantasy stories at their best serve the same function for us that fairy tales and mythology formerly did. The current popularity of fantasy, particularly in films, suggests that popular culture, at least, isn't getting what it wants from realism. The nineteenth century was the golden age of realistic fiction. The twentieth century may be the golden age of fantasy."

Michel Ciment, *Kubrick on The Shining: An interview with Michel Ciment*: <http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/amk/doc/interview.ts.html>

Required Readings:

Amy Nolan, *Labyrinths of Historical Ruin in Stanley Kubrick's The Shining*, Cultural Critique, Vol. 77 (Winter 2011): 180-204

Jeff Smith, *Careening Through Kubrick's Space*, Chicago Review, Vol. 33, No. 1, Summer 1981: 62-74

Colin Young, *The Hollywood War of Independence*, Stanley Kubrick Interviews, Gene D. Phillips, ed. University Press of Mississippi: 3-8

James Naremore, On Kubrick. London: British Film Institute, 2007: 197-207

Week Five

Film: **Blue Velvet** [1986, 120 mins, R18+]

"I always say ideas drive the boat. Ideas are a huge, huge blessing. That's the thing you try to catch – an idea that you fall in love with. Every time that I have made a film that's not from a book or somebody else's screenplay, it happens the same way. The whole thing doesn't come at once, but fragments of things come and these fragments form themselves into a script. You write the idea down and save it until the next idea comes, and little by little the majority of ideas find themselves in a script – which is organized ideas. Then you go and shoot that script and edit it and you mix sounds and music. It's a process. An idea can give a story that is more abstract and not so straight-ahead, and sometimes it gives you a story that is more straight-ahead."

David Lynch, *The Talks*: <http://the-talks.com/interviews/david-lynch/>

Required Readings:

Laurent Bouzereau, *Blue Velvet: An Interview with David Lynch*, Cinéaste Vol. 15, No. 3 (1987), 39

David Copenhafer: *Mourning and Music in Blue Velvet*, Camera Obscura, Vol. 23, No. 3, 2008, 137-157

Dave Hughes, *Blue Velvet*, The Complete David Lynch, London: Virgin Books, 2001: 71-94

Alice A. Kuzniar, *Ears Looking At You: E.T.A. Hoffman's The Sandman and David Lynch's Blue Velvet*, South Atlantic Review, Vol. 54, No. 2, May 1989: 7-21

Week Six

Film: **Romeo + Juliet** [1996, 120 mins, M]

"While we are dealing with Romeo and Juliet, that sequence, the very last shot where the car

leaves, that is in fact a real storm. The thing about creating these theatrical [scenes], what I like to refer to as real artificiality, is that the actual level of control you need to have in the artifice is so great that they're incredibly laboured. They take a lot of labour to get right. For some reason they always seem to run into endless disasters, or acts of God. So on that film (apart from the fact that our wonderful hair and make-up department were kidnapped by bandits, we eventually got them back for \$250, which was a bargain) everything you see in that sequence, every palm tree, every telegraph pole, is built. There is nothing that is in that scene that is not created. It was just a fairly grubby piece of beach in Mexico originally. What happened was we had this very short window in which to shoot this huge amount of text, and then the storm came in. Now, you've got a whole load of young actors down in Mexico, and they'll do anything and it's like they could have said: "Oh, we're doomed! We'll have to go back to San Francisco." But they said: "No. We wanna get out there." So we got out and we shot that one final wide, where you can see the palm trees, and we shot the reverse, which is looking down towards the beach and the ocean. All the crew had goggles on, and the guys had stinging sand in their eyes, and then, after those two shots, the sets were completely blown away by the hurricane."

Geoff Andrew, *The Guardian Interviews at the BFI: Baz Luhrmann*, The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2001/sep/07/1>

Required Readings:

Manuel Casas Guijarro, *The Bard Is no Longer what it Used to Be (or not to Be): Reinterpreting Postmodern Discourses in Baz Luhrmann's William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet (1996) and Michael Almereyda's Hamlet (2000)* Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies, 2008, Issue 17

Philipa Hawker, *DiCaprio, DiCaprio, Wherefore art thou, DiCaprio?* Meanjin Vol. 56, No. 1, 1997: 6-16

Courtney Lehmann, *Strictly Shakespeare? Dead Letters, Ghostly Fathers, and the Cultural Pathology of Authorship in Baz Luhrmann's William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, Shakespeare Quarterly, Volume 52, Number 2, Summer 2001:189-221

Peter Malone, *Baz on the bard: Peter Malone interviews Baz Luhrmann about William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet*. Eureka Street, Vol. 7, No. 2, Mar 1997: 44-46

Week Seven

Film: *The Boys* [1998, 86 mins, MA15+]

"Released in 1998, Rowan Woods' *The Boys* (featuring David Wenham and Toni Collette) is one of the most important films ever made in Australia. An intense and claustrophobic study of working-class suburbia in inexorable limbo, *The Boys* depicts three brothers, one menacingly

dominant, the others wretchedly submissive, spiralling toward the commission of a horrific crime that is only ever alluded to in the narrative. *The Boys* begins superbly: a montage of blurred, late-night urban landscapes dissolving into desolate, furtive images from inside an empty house – a TV set; a power socket; a kitchen sink; a chandelier. This is followed by the initial appearance of the ascendant brother, Brett. On a sullen morning, he is shown being discharged from prison, whereupon he walks out to the highway fronting the jail, places down a wooden table he constructed while inside and sits, waiting for someone to collect him..."

Dean Biron, *The Aesthetics of Conservatism*, Overland, Autumn 2013: <https://overland.org.au/previous-issues/issue-210/feature-dean-biron/>

Required Readings:

Andrew Frost, *Press Play*, The Boys, Sydney: Currency Press, 2010: 25-44

Tina Kaufman, *The Boys: Examination of a Family in Crisis*, Metro Magazine: Media & Education Magazine, No. 115, 1998: 13-18

Nathanael O'Reilly and Jean-François Vernay, *Terror Australis Incognita?: An Introduction to Fear in Australian Literature and Film*, Antipodes, Vol. 23, No. 1, Special Issue: Fear in Australian Literature and Film (June 2009): 5-9

**** MID SEMESTER BREAK ****

Week Eight

Film: *The Host* [2006, 119 mins, MA15+]

"By turns a carnival of horrors and a family melodrama (variations on the same theme), "The Host" is also a rethink of those 1950s cine-quickies in which mondo ants, locusts, wasps, crabs and snails and one seriously ticked off amphibious reptile go on the rampage, visiting punishment on a hapless, guilty humanity. Like *Godzilla* (*Gojira* in the original Japanese), some of these mutants were born under a mushroom cloud; others were hatched in the B-movie hothouse of box-office opportunism. The creature running amok in "The Host," meanwhile, was spawned by a 37-year-old South Korean who has spent his entire life in the shadow of the American military presence. No wonder the bad guys look like character actors on leave from Hollywood. They are. As if in preparation for the carnage to come, the once-upon-a-time story opens in a modern autopsy room with two men, an American and a Korean, dressed in scrubs. Bathed in an eerie, silvery blue light, the American boss (Scott Wilson) orders the Korean (Kim Hak-sun) to dump bottle upon bottle of formaldehyde down the drain, on the pretext that the containers have become too dusty. Stunned, the Korean objects, noting that the chemical will flow from the drain into the Han River, the fat ribbon of water that cuts through Seoul and

empties into the Yellow Sea. The American grimaces, capping his request with a barely veiled threat ("That's an order") that betrays him as an emissary of American military might."

Manhole Dargis, *It Came From the River, Hungry for Humans (Burp)*, The New York Times, March 9, 2007: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/09/movies/09host.html?_r=0

Required Readings:

Nikki J. Lee, *Localised Globalization and a Monster National: The Host and the South Korean Film Industry*, Cinema Journal, Volume 50, Number 3, Spring 2011, 45-61

Adrian Martin, *Bong Joon-ho's 'The Host'*, The Monthly, March, 2007: 54, 56.

Mike Walsh, *Playing Host to Bong Joon-ho*, Metro Magazine: Media & Education Magazine, No. 152, 2007: 54-59.

Week Nine

Film: Children of Men [2006, 109 mins, MA15+]

"Sections of the film showcase the dating cinematography developed by Cuarón, his director of photography Emmanuel Lubezki and the handheldcamera operator George Richmond. There's a spectacular early set-piece in which the principals' car is assailed by a club-wielding mob in the Kent countryside, giving at least the illusion of an impossibly long and complex take. However, the main pyrotechnics are saved for the semi-impressionist action climax. This is set in a refugee concentration camp (supposedly located at Bexhill-on-Sea in Sussex), a miniature war zone where a whole array of "foreign" horrors comes together. Visually, it recalls the Steadicam vision of World War II in *Saving Private Ryan*, but the carnage also echoes contemporary nightmares: Bosnia, Palestine and a sickening glimpse of Abu Ghraib. It becomes a positive relief when we follow Owen pelting desperately across the battlefield, a hapless hero amid thinly fictionalised horror. By this point, he resembles the Tom Cruise protagonist in the similarly evocative post-9/11 *The War of the Worlds* (2005)."

Andrew Osmond, *Children of Men*. Sight & Sound. December, 2006.

Required Readings

Samuel Amago, *Ethics, Aesthetics, and the Future in Alfonso Cuarón's Children of Men*, Discourse, Volume 32, Number 2, Spring 2010, pp. 212-235

Rjurik Davidson, *Hope in Children of Men*, Screen Education, No. 47, 2007: 125-131

Andrew Osmond, *Children of Men*. Sight & Sound. December, 2006, Vol. 16 Issue 12, 50-52.

Week Ten

Film: **The Babadook** [2014, 93 mins, M]

Den of Geek: Was it quite difficult to write, emotionally, because it obviously has some extremely dark moments?

Jennifer Kent: I think what got me through was the love I had for both those characters. It was really important for me that they were loving, and loveable people. I don't mean likeable - I mean that we really felt for them. Without giving the ending away to readers, I couldn't make something that was nihilistic, so I feel like even though the film goes to a very dark place, it's worth it. It reflects something back, something positive about human relationships.

Den of Geek: It does. And it reaches back into those half-forgotten memories of what it's like to be a kid, and how big adults seem when you're small - which is something I hadn't necessarily thought about in years.

It's funny, I have a really dear friend who's really balanced and a loving mother. She came to a screening, and there's a moment where [a figure] glides towards the child, and it's huge. She burst into tears when she saw that, because she thought, wow, I didn't realise how big I must have seemed to my kids when they're that little. And how we all want to be loving and perfect, but we often fail in that. It was very confronting for her - in a good way.

Den of Geek: What was your approach to designing this film, because it looks really carefully constructed from a visual standpoint?

Jennifer Kent: I felt like, for a creature like this to exist, the world itself would have to allow it to happen. So I think if it was a naturalistic-looking world, and these things started happening, it would be quite ridiculous. So it was important that the world of the film reflected the pop-up book at the centre of it. We wanted a world that was heightened, but still felt like a real time and place. I guess one of the ways to slightly heighten it, but still make it accessible, was to approach the colour in a very specific way. Originally I wanted to film in black and white, but I went off the idea in favour of black through to white, but also adding blues and burgundies. Keeping the film very cool. We did all of that in-camera. I had a really genius production designer, Alex Holmes, who created the world in-camera. We were very specific. If we had a brown object in the frame, we got rid of it! So it was a lot of work. But I feel it was really worth it.

Ryan Lambie: *Jennifer Kent: Directing the Babadook*, Den of Geek, October 13, 2014: <http://www.denofgeek.com/movies/the-babadook/32451/jennifer-kent-interview-directing-the-babadook>

Required Readings:

Emily Blatchford, *Things that go bump in the night*, Inside Film: If, No. 159, June 2014, 21

Briony Kidd, *Umbilical fears: Jennifer Kent's 'The Babadook'*, Metro Magazine: Media & Education Magazine, No. 180, July 2014: 6-12

Sandy George, *How Jennifer Kent made The Babadook*, sbs.com.au <http://www.sbs.com.au/movies/article/2014/05/21/how-jennifer-kent-made-babadook>

Week Eleven

Film: **Room 237** [2012, 102 mins, PG]

"The film elicits a complex series of responses, pushing buttons, fellow cineaste, that you might not have known you had. It's all so, like, mind-blowing. Ascher opens with a man (His subjects have names but are otherwise just voices) who's sure that *The Shining* is the story of the U.S. extermination of Native Americans. This is less discerning than it first seems. The massive lodge in which Jack Nicholson and his family are cooped up for the winter was built, we're told, on an "Indian burial ground," a trope that has become so familiar that it's now routinely parodied. Native American motifs abound — they're part of the lodge's kitschy interior. The "shining" that connects the boy and the African American employee predictably enrages the impotent white patriarch. In other words, there's nothing especially novel about a horror picture that roots the supernatural in historical injustice (against people who have "strange" powers) and shows a patriarch driven mad by loss of authority..."

David Edelstein, *Room 237 Is a Cine-Nerd's Vindication and Humiliation*, *Vulture*, March 29, 2013: <http://www.vulture.com/2013/03/movie-review-room-237.html>

Required Readings:

Robert Itojan, *Cracking the Code in 'Heere's Johnny!'* January 25, 2012, *New York Times* <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/29/movies/room-237-documentary-with-theories-about-the-shining.html>

Noel Murray, *ROOM 237*, *AV Club*, March 28, 2013 <http://www.avclub.com/review/room-237-95674>

Listen: *Sundance: Room 237, Interview with Rodney Ascher and Tim Kirk*: NPR <http://kuer.org/post/12512-sundance-room-237>

Week Twelve

Film: **Escape from Tomorrow** [2013, 90 mins, M]

"A labyrinthine descent into the grotesque extremes of a Disneyfied society, "Escape From Tomorrow" is surreal for many reasons and wholly original because of them. It's also a daring attempt to literally assail Disney World from the inside out. This loosely constructed, starkly

black-and-white directorial debut of Randy Moore, which follows a family on their twisted final day of vacation in Disney World, takes place throughout the theme park behemoth and appears to have come together without an iota of permission. Moore portrays Disney World as the ultimate horror show -- and gets the point across in nearly every scene. Beyond the issue of whether or not it has the legal right to exist, however, "Escape from Tomorrow" displays a fascinating ingenuity in its appropriation of the Disney brand. Seeming everyman Jim White (Roy Abramson) awakens at the start of the story to learn that he has lost his job for inexplicable reasons, the first of many hazy events that immediately convey a Kafkaesque feel."

Eroic Kohn, *Sundance Review: Escape from Tomorrow*, [Indiewire](http://www.indiewire.com), January 18, 2013:

<http://www.indiewire.com/article/sundance-review-escape-from-tomorrow-is-a-surreal-indictment-of-disneyfied-society-that-disney-will-never-let-you-see>

Required Readings:

Tim Wu, *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Disney World*, [The New Yorker](http://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/its-a-mad-mad-mad-mad-disney-world), January 22, 2013 <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/its-a-mad-mad-mad-mad-disney-world>

Jason Guerrasio, *How the Director of 'Escape From Tomorrow' Made a Crazy Guerrilla Movie In Disney World – And Got Away With It*, [Indiewire](http://www.indiewire.com) October 9, 2013

<http://www.indiewire.com/article/how-the-director-of-escape-from-tomorrow-made-a-crazy-guerilla-movie-in-disney-land-and-got-away-with-it>

Eric Davis, *Listen: 'Escape from Tomorrow' Cinematographer Explains How He Shot an Entire Movie Secretly in Disney Parks*, [Movies.com](http://www.movies.com), January 21, 2013

<http://www.movies.com/movie-news/listen-39escape-from-tomorrow39-cinematographer-explain-s-how-they-shot-entire-movie-secretly-disney-world/11004>

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special*

Consideration Policy.

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/departments_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application <http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914>

Information is correct at the time of publication

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic standards in written and spoken forms
- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Class Presentation
- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Class Presentation
- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Develop an expanded historical knowledge of (mainly) post 1970s film and film theory
- Interpret and analyse a wide range of recent film-cultural theories and practices of filmmaking
- Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic standards in written and spoken forms
- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Develop an expanded historical knowledge of (mainly) post 1970s film and film theory
- Interpret and analyse a wide range of recent film-cultural theories and practices of filmmaking
- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Class Presentation
- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Develop an expanded historical knowledge of (mainly) post 1970s film and film theory
- Interpret and analyse a wide range of recent film-cultural theories and practices of filmmaking
- Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic standards in written and spoken forms
- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Class Presentation
- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)

- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Develop an expanded historical knowledge of (mainly) post 1970s film and film theory
- Interpret and analyse a wide range of recent film-cultural theories and practices of filmmaking
- Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic standards in written and spoken forms
- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Develop an expanded historical knowledge of (mainly) post 1970s film and film theory
- Interpret and analyse a wide range of recent film-cultural theories and practices of filmmaking
- Produce and communicate work in a manner consistent with accepted academic

standards in written and spoken forms

- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Class Presentation
- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the main debates relevant to specific sub-regions of Film Studies
- Develop skills in film-critical research and film-textual analysis
- Evaluate and appreciate different stylistic modes of writing about films

Assessment tasks

- Class Presentation
- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment
- Course Participation

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Assessment tasks

- Film Diary (Part One)
- Film Diary (Part Two)
- Final Assignment

Changes from Previous Offering

The unit has been developed to reflect a new course focus: the evolution of popular genre cinema since 1968, with general reference to the auteur theory, regional variations of genre, the concept and practice of independent/art house cinema, and with specific reference to popular genres including horror, science fiction, fantasy and crime. New course readings have been developed to reflect this new course focus. Assignments have been retained but reduced from four to three assignments: a class presentation, a film diary delivered in two parts and a choice of either an academic essay or a visual essay.