

## Syllabus

Course title: Avant-garde Cinema: Experimental Film and Video Art

Language of instruction: English

Study year and semester: MA, Spring 2020

Course coordinator(s) / lecturer(s): Zsolt Gyenge

Contact details: zsgyenge@mome.hu

Level and Code: ER-THEO-BA- ELM-2019202- 01	Position in the Curriculum: Thursday, 10-12.10	Recommended semester:	Credits:	Teaching hours: 3 Student workload: 7
Related codes:	Type: (lecture/ seminar/practice /consultation etc.)	Is it open to sign-up as an elective? YES	Specific pre-conditions to sign-up as an elective:	

Interlinkages: (prerequisites, parallel units)

### Aims and Principles:

Does film as a form of art has any future in the contemporary media landscape? Starting from the discussion of the premise of visual illiteracy formulated by Greenaway in his film *Rembrandt's J'accuse*, the course will provide an overview of those moving image experiments that broke with the traditions of narrative filmmaking and tested in several different ways the limits of filmic expression. The course will try to interpret within one unified framework most, if not all forms of the so-called avant-garde film, that experimented with the visual expression, structure, spectatorship and apparatus of moving images. This is why during the semester we will watch and analyze in detail experimental films, lyrical, non-narrative short films, experimental documentaries, self-reflective music videos, works of video art and experiments of interactive cinema. During the lectures and discussions we will regularly reflect on the question of the future of cinema and film in the contemporary media and artistic landscape.

The goal of the course is to make students aware of those unusual filmic forms and tools of expression that are unknown to the general public, but are an integral part of the tradition of avant-garde film. It is also important to provide students a theoretical, historical and analytical frame for the interpretation and contextualized analysis of such kind of works of art. It is also an important and declared goal of the course to develop in students an avant-garde and experimental attitude, the culture of questioning and transgressing established frames, rules and structures.

The course proposes a method that integrates theory and practice, thus students will have the possibility the approach some of the problems tackled by artists and filmmakers through the creation of several short video pieces based on briefs provided during the classes. This will enable students to understand the main problems of the field both from the perspective of the viewers and of the artists.

Intended learning outcomes (professional and transitive competencies):

Knowledge: an overview of the most important tendencies and artists in experimental cinema and video art

Skills: ability to provide an informed analysis of experimental film works

Attitudes/attributes: openness to unusual, non-narrative filmic forms of expression

Autonomy and Responsibility: developing a critical, avant-garde attitude open to the transgression of established frames, rules and structures.

Course content (topics and themes):

1. Place and role of experimental film: cinema, museum, gallery, web?
2. Transgressing film's intrinsic photographic realism: abstract films
3. The temptation of the celluloid: dadaist and surrealist approach to cinema
4. The concept above all: minimalist-structuralist films
5. Recycling: found footage, private recordings in experimental films
6. Installing the moving image - video art and its redesigned spectatorship
7. Interactive cinema - film in a digital media environment

Some of the artists to be analyzed during the semester: Vito Acconci, Kenneth Anger, Kutlug Ataman, Stan Brakhage, Chris Cunningham, Peter Greenaway, Hollis Frampton, Fernand Léger, Lev Manovich, Norman McLaren, Bruce Nauman, Nam June Paik, Man Ray, Michael Snow, Marco Ferreri, Maya Deren, Matthew Barney, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Tacita Dean, Sharon Lockhart, etc.

Specificity of the learning process:

Teaching method: Interactive tasks leading to topics presented by the teacher.

Schedule: The classes will begin with students presenting their video works, after which a lecture presenting and analyzing a period, artist or style will follow. The lecture will contain film projections.

Tasks and assignments (with student notional workload): students will have to prepare a short video piece for each week, and attend to a final classroom test at the end of the semester.

Learning environment: (e.g. classroom / workshop / external spot / online platform / apprenticeship etc.) classroom

Assessment:

Assignments:

- short video pieces – following the brief provided at the end of each class students will have to produce and present every week a very short video piece tackling the main issue to be discussed on the week that follows (2 weeks can be skipped without penalty) – weight of task: 40%
- classroom test – a one and a half hour written test related to the films and topics discussed during the semester– weight of task: 60%

Assessment method: (e.g. test / paper / oral exam / presentation / public demonstration etc.): test and presentation

Assessment criteria: The small videos will not be evaluated from a quality perspective, as the goal is to provide a spirit of freedom and experimentation that allows students to freely express themselves and transgress boundaries: only the number of required videos will be checked. The final classroom test will check the awareness of the most important experimental films and video art works, and also the students' interpretive and analytical skills.

Calculation of grade: (weights of the achievements, assignments; ranges of rates or points)  
Video pieces: 40% Final classroom test: 60%

Recommended readings:

Access to an online reader will be provided to students.

Further readings, documents, sources:

Experimental Film

Michael O'Pray: *Avant-garde Film. Forms, Themes and Passions*. London, New York: Wallflower. 2003.

[https://docs.google.com/viewer?](https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=explorer&chrome=true&srcid=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMTA2MDM3ZGQtNzUwNS00ZWQ5LTlhYmYtMjMxNDZlMWNkMmFk&hl=en)

[a=v&pid=explorer&chrome=true&srcid=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMTA2MDM3ZGQtNzUwNS00ZWQ5LTlhYmYtMjMxNDZlMWNkMmFk&hl=en](https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=explorer&chrome=true&srcid=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMTA2MDM3ZGQtNzUwNS00ZWQ5LTlhYmYtMjMxNDZlMWNkMmFk&hl=en)

Edward S. Small: *Direct Theory Experimental Film/Video as Major Genre*. Southern Illinois University Press. 1994. [http://docs.google.com/fileview?](http://docs.google.com/fileview?id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMjAwNzlmNTAtODUwNy00MTUyLWI1MDEtNjA0Nzk2OTM2Njky&hl=en)

[id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMjAwNzlmNTAtODUwNy00MTUyLWI1MDEtNjA0Nzk2OTM2Njky&hl=en](http://docs.google.com/fileview?id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMjAwNzlmNTAtODUwNy00MTUyLWI1MDEtNjA0Nzk2OTM2Njky&hl=en)

L. Rees: *A History of Experimental Film and Video. From the Canonical Avant-Garde to Contemporary British Practice*. London: British Film Institute. 1999.

Bürger, Peter: *Az avantgárd elmélete*. Szeged: Universitas Szeged Kiadó. 2010.

Holly Willis: *New Digital Cinema. Reinventing the Moving Image*. London, New York: Wallflower. 2005.

P. Adams Sitney: *Visionary Film. The American Avant-Garde 1943-2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2002.

Tscherkassky, Peter (szerk.): *Film Unframed. A History of Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema*. Wien: FilmmuseumSynemaPublikationen. 2012.

Elwes, Catherine: *Installation and the Moving Image*. London: Wallflower Press. 2015.

Michael Rush: *Video Art. Thames and Hudson*. [https://docs.google.com/viewer?](https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=explorer&chrome=true&srcid=0B9pRZxkBP0AeNDMyMGE3NDEtZGFiMi00MjA1LTg5NzEtMzE3Zjg3M2U3MzMz&hl=en)  
[a=v&pid=explorer&chrome=true&srcid=0B9pRZxkBP0AeNDMyMGE3NDEtZGFiMi00MjA1LTg5NzEtMzE3Zjg3M2U3MzMz&hl=en](https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=explorer&chrome=true&srcid=0B9pRZxkBP0AeNDMyMGE3NDEtZGFiMi00MjA1LTg5NzEtMzE3Zjg3M2U3MzMz&hl=en)

Gene Youngblood: *Expanded Cinema*. New York: P. Dutton & Co. 1970. [https://docs.google.com/leaf?](https://docs.google.com/leaf?id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeZGMxOGU1ZTQtMzA1YS00NjNkLTkzYjUtY2JkZjE3ZjkwYTky&hl=en&authkey=CP6NzbcN)

[id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeZGMxOGU1ZTQtMzA1YS00NjNkLTkzYjUtY2JkZjE3ZjkwYTky&hl=en&authkey=CP6NzbcN](https://docs.google.com/leaf?id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeZGMxOGU1ZTQtMzA1YS00NjNkLTkzYjUtY2JkZjE3ZjkwYTky&hl=en&authkey=CP6NzbcN)

Sophie-Isabelle Dufour: *L'image vidéo. D'Ovide a Bill Viola*. Paris: Archibooks. 2008.

Matt Hanson: *The End of Celluloid. Film Futures in the Digital Age*. Rotovision. 2004. [http://docs.google.com/fileview?](http://docs.google.com/fileview?id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMjZhMjQ2MjItZDZlMjY0ZjYyLTk2MzUtNzI4YjVhYzhiMmNl&hl=en)

[id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMjZhMjQ2MjItZDZlMjY0ZjYyLTk2MzUtNzI4YjVhYzhiMmNl&hl=en](http://docs.google.com/fileview?id=0B9pRZxkBP0AeMjZhMjQ2MjItZDZlMjY0ZjYyLTk2MzUtNzI4YjVhYzhiMmNl&hl=en)

Carroll, N. 1996. *Theorizing the Moving Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Manovich, Lev. 2001. The Language of New Media. MIT Press.

Manovich, Lev. 2008. The Software Takes Command.  
[http://softwarestudies.com/softbook/manovich\\_softbook11\\_20\\_2008.doc](http://softwarestudies.com/softbook/manovich_softbook11_20_2008.doc)

Gallery cinema

Rancière, Jacques: Le cinéma dans la „fin" de l'art. Cahiers du Cinéma, no. 552, 2000 december, 51.

Dubois, Philippe: Un „effet cinéma" dans l'art contemporain. Cinema & Cie, no. 8, 2006 ősz, 15-26.

Royoux, Jean-Christophe Royoux: Cinéma d'exposition: l'espacement de la durée. Art Press, no. 262, 2000 október, 36-41.

Andrin, Muriel: Le cinéma pétrifié. Petites réflexions sur la mise en scène d'oeuvres filmiques comme objets d'exposition. In Exposer l'image en mouvement?, Brüsszel, Iselp, 2004, 97-107. Magyarul: A megkövesedett mozi. Elmékedések a kiállítási tárgyként bemutatott filmes művek színre állításáról In: Apertúra. 2010/tavaszi. <http://apertura.hu/2010/tavaszi/andrin> (ford. Tóth Andrea Éva).

Giannouri, Evgenia: La marche des images. Cinema & Cie, no. 8, 2006 ősz, 58-69.

Daney, Serge: Du défilement au défilé. La Recherche Photographique, no. 7, 1989, 49.

Bellour, Raymond: La querelle des dispositifs. Art press, no. 262, 2000 október, 48.  
<http://www.ac-nancy-metz.fr/cinemav/pointsdevue/doc1.htm>

Walsh, Maria: Cinema in the Gallery - Discontinuity and Potential Space in Salla Tykka's Trilogy. Sense of cinema, no. 28, 2003 szeptember-október. A cikk elérhető ezen a honlapon is: [www.senseofcinema.com](http://www.senseofcinema.com)

Beauvais, Yann: Mouvement de la passion. In Projections, les transports de l'image. Hazan/Le Fresnoy/AFAA, 1997, 151.

Vancheri, Luc: Cinémas contemporains. Du film à l'installation. Lyon, Aléas Éditeur, 2009.

Tóth Andrea Éva: És-effektus, avagy mozi a kiállítóterekben. In: Apertúra. 2009. tavasz. <http://apertura.hu/2009/tavaszi/toth>

Terri Cohn: Moving Objects: The Protected Image in the Gallery Space. Senses of cinema

Chris Dercon: Gleaning the Future from the Gallery Floor. Senses of cinema (első megjelenés: Vertigo, 2002. tavasz)

Additional information:

Prior learning recognition (based on application):

- *recognition is not applicable*
- *partial recognition may apply*
- *full recognition may apply*

Schedule and venue for personal consultation:

