

CTCS 469

THE STYLE OF STEVEN SPIELBERG

FALL 2009

Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Norris Theater

Instructor: Dr. Drew Casper
The Alma and Alfred Hitchcock Professor of American Film

Course Description:

An in-depth analysis of the Spielberg style: its periods and developments; its extra-cinematic determinants (major historical events, economic situations, societal issues and other popular leisure activities) & cinematic determinants (business, technology, censorship, generic patterns and other pre-existent/coexistent styles, the star and the star system); production methods; techniques; themes; and its significance to popular culture.

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Course Requirements:

- I. Required Readings: Copies of each of these books will be on reserve on the ground level of Leavey Library. All books are available at the bookstore and on reserve.
 - A. Barrie, James M. Peter Pan. New York: Bantam, 1994.
 - B. Friedman, Lester D. and Brent Notbohm, editors. Steven Spielberg Interviews. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000.
 - C. Moore, Alan and Dave Gibbons. Watchmen. New York: Warner Books, 1995.
 - D. Walker, Alice. The Color Purple. New York: Pocket Books, 1996.

Required Screenings: Complete these screenings on your own. All DVDs will be available for viewing at the Cinematic Arts Library; you may also rent them.

- A. *Jules et Jim* (Francois Truffaut, Janus Films, 1962)
- B. *Ran* (Akira Kurosawa, Orion Pictures, 1985)
- C. *The Birds* (Alfred Hitchcock, Universal, 1963)
- D. *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (Paramount, 1984)
- E. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (Paramount, 1989)
- F. *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (Paramount, 2008)
- G. *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (Universal, 1997)
- H. *They Were Expendable* (John Ford, MGM, 1945)
- I. *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, Warner Bros., 1971)
- J. *War of the Worlds* (Byron Haskin, Paramount, 1953) ***The original***
- K. *Hook* (TriStar Pictures, 1991)
- L. *Amistad* (DreamWorks, 1997)

- II. **Attendance:** Prompt and regular attendance for the full class period is of extreme importance. Missing the screening of any film will seriously limit your success in the course. NOT ALL OF THE FILMS AND/OR TELEVISION PROGRAMS SCREENED IN CLASS ARE AVAILABLE ON VIDEOTAPE, LASERDISC, OR DVD. It is your responsibility to make up any missed screenings and to obtain detailed notes from another student.
- III. **Papers:** Papers are to be turned in by the end of the screenings on the date they are due. Do not turn in papers to the TA office, do not drop it in someone's mailbox, and do not e-mail your papers. Late papers will be excused only in those cases of documented illness or family emergency. A late paper will drop one full letter grade if 1-7 days late, two letter grades if 8-14 days late, and three letter grades if 15-21 days late. Any paper turned in 22 days or more after the due date will automatically receive a failing grade. All papers must be turned in by the last lecture. FAILURE TO WRITE A PAPER WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC F GRADE FOR THE COURSE.
- IV. **Academic integrity:** Be sure to read the attached sheet outlining "Academic Integrity Violations." PLAGIARISM WILL BE REPORTED TO THE OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT (see your SCampus), WILL RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE COURSE, AND COULD LEAD TO DISMISSAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY. If you have any questions or doubts about how to properly cite a source, see the TA or drop by the Writing Center (Taper Hall 310)

Grade Breakdown:

- Undergraduates:

Paper One: 25%
 Paper Two: 25%
 Midterm Exam: 25%
 Final Exam: 25%

- Graduates:

Term Paper: 50%
 Midterm Exam: 25%
 Final Exam: 25%

Dr. Casper's Office Hours:

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00pm-2:00pm; Wednesdays, 12:00pm-2:00pm
 School of Cinematic Arts Building 323 – (213) 740-3334

If you wish to see Dr. Casper during his office hours, you must make an appointment in advance by signing up on the appointment sheet at the front desk of the Critical Studies office.

Norris Cinema Theatre: We are privileged to have the Norris Cinema Theatre as our classroom. The Dean of the School of Cinematic Arts has requested that Norris's "no food, no beverage" policy be strictly enforced in all classes to help preserve this theatre. Please abstain from eating or drinking in the theatre. Only bottled water will be permitted. Violation of this policy is grounds for dismissal from the class.

Disability Services: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the TA by the third week of classes. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am - 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, phone number (213) 740-0776.

English-as-a-Second-Language Students: ESL students are afforded special exam accommodations (extended time for test-taking), but these accommodations must be arranged in advance of the midterm. Please notify the T.A. by the third week of classes if you

qualify for and require such accommodations, and be sure to ask the T.A. BEFORE the day of the midterm and final to learn the place and time of the ESL exam.

Undergraduate Student Papers:

Two Papers (5-7 pages each, typed, double-spaced).

Paper One -- Due: October 21. Choose 1 of the following 3 topics:

- a. Contrast Spielberg's *The Color Purple* with its literary source in terms of thematics and formal strategies. Why do you think these changes were made?
- b. Contrast Spielberg's *Always* with its 1943 source *A Guy Named Joe* in terms of thematics and formal strategies. Why do you think these changes were made?
- c. Contrast Spielberg's *War of the Worlds* with its 1953 source *War of the Worlds* in terms of thematics and formal strategies. Why do you think these changes were made?

Paper Two -- Due: November 25

In what ways is Steven Spielberg a "postmodern constructor" as well as a "postmodern auteur"? Second, assess his contribution to the business practices, technology, and especially the aesthetics of postmodern Hollywood films.

Graduate Student Term Papers:

Graduate students will write a 12-15 page Term Paper (typed, double spaced) on a topic of their choice. The paper topic must be cleared with Dr. Casper prior to writing the paper.

One Paragraph Proposal of Thesis and Outline Due: October 21.
Final Paper Due: November 25.

CTCS 469 SYLLABUS FOR FALL 2009

August 26

**Introduction: Classification and Periodic Division of the Career;
The Critical Dialectic; Biographical Overview**

I. Spreading Wings: From Home Movies to TV (1957-1972) - Determinants: Television

Eyes (Universal, 1969)

- Writer: Rod Serling (from his short story)
- Cinematographer: Richard Batcheller, William Margulies
- Editor: Edward M. Abrams, David Rawlins
- Art Direction: Howard E. Johnson
- Music: William Goldenberg
- With: Joan Crawford, Barry Sullivan, Tom Bosley

Duel (Universal, 1971)

- Executive Producer: George Eckstein
- Writer: Richard Matheson
- Cinematographer: Jack A. Marta
- Editor: Frank Morriss
- Art Direction: Robert S. Smith
- Music: Billy Goldenberg
- With: Dennis Weaver

Read: Friedman, pp. vi-xxxii.

September 2

II. First Flight (1974-1976) - Determinants: The Cinema of David Lean

Lawrence of Arabia (David Lean, Columbia, 1962)

- Producer: Sam Spiegel
- Writers: Robert Bolt, Michael Wilson (from the writings of T.E. Lawrence)
- Cinematographer: F.A. Young
- Editor: Anne V. Coates
- Production Designer: John Box
- Music: Maurice Jarre
- With: Peter O'Toole, Alec Guinness, Anthony Quinn, Jack Hawkins, Omar Sharif

Read: Friedman, pp. 18-29.

Screen on your own: *Ran* (Akira Kurosawa, Orion Pictures, 1985)

September 9

- The Advent of "Postmodern" Hollywood
- Determinants: The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock

Jaws (Universal, 1975)

- Executive Producers: David Brown, Richard D. Zanuck
- Writers: Carl Gottlieb, Peter Benchley (from the novel by Peter Benchley)
- Cinematographer: Bill Butler
- Editor: Verna Fields
- Production Designer: Joe Alves
- Special Effects: Robert A. Matthey
- Music: John Williams
- With: Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw, Richard Dreyfuss

Read: Friedman, pp. 3-17.

Screen on your own: *The Birds* (Alfred Hitchcock, Universal, 1963)

September 16

III. Flying (1977-1992)

- The Advent of "Postmodern" Hollywood (cont.)

Close Encounters of the Third Kind: The Special Edition (Columbia, 1977)

- Executive Producers: Julia Phillips, Michael Phillips
- Writer: Steven Spielberg
- Cinematographer: Vilmos Zsigmond
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Joe Alves
- Special Effects: Douglas Trumbull
- Music: John Williams
- With: Richard Dreyfuss, Francois Truffaut, Teri Garr

Read: Friedman, pp. 30-69.

Screen on your own: *Jules et Jim* (Francois Truffaut, Janus Films, 1962)

September 19 (Saturday, in Norris Theater)

- Attendance at these screenings is optional, though the films are required for the course

11:00am - *The Sugarland Express* (Universal, 1974)

- Executive Producers: David Brown, Richard D. Zanuck
- Writers: Steven Spielberg, Hal Barwood, Matthew Robbins
- Cinematographer: Vilmos Zsigmond
- Editing: Edward M. Abrams, Verna Fields
- Art Direction: Joe Alves
- Special Effects: Frank Brendel
- Music: John Williams
- With: Ben Johnson, Goldie Hawn

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1:00pm - 1941 (Universal, 1979)

- Executive Producer: Buzz Feitshans
- Writers: Robert Zemeckis, Bob Gale
- Cinematographer: William A. Fraker
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Dean Edward Mitzner
- Special Effects: A.D. Flowers
- Music: John Williams
- With: Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi

3:00pm – *A/ways* (United Artists/Universal, 1989)

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Frank Marshall, Kathleen Kennedy
- Writer: Jerry Belson (from the screenplay *A Guy Named Joe* by Dalton Trumbo, and the original story *A Guy Named Joe* by Chandler Sprague & David Boehm)
- Cinematographer: Mikael Solomon
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Design: James D. Bissell
- Special Effects: Mike Edmonson
- Music: John Williams
- With: Richard Dreyfuss, Holly Hunter

September 23

- **The Lucas-Spielberg Connection (with special emphasis on the Indiana Jones trilogy)**
- **Determinants: The Comic Strip/Comic Book/Movie Cartoon/Graphic Novel**

Beep, Beep! (Chuck Jones, Warner Bros., 1952)

***Raiders of the Lost Ark* (Paramount, 1981)**

- Executive Producer: Frank Marshall
- Writer: Lawrence Kasdan (story by George Lucas and Philip Kaufman)
- Cinematographer: Douglas Slocombe
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Norman Reynolds
- Special Visual Effects: Industrial Light and Magic
- Music: John Williams
- With: Harrison Ford

Read: Friedman, pp. 70-83.
Moore & Gibbons, *Watchmen*.

Screen on your own:

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (Paramount, 1984)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (Paramount, 1989)

Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (Paramount, 2008)

September 30

- **Determinants: The Cinema of Walt Disney**
- **Executive Producer Spielberg and the Establishment of Amblin**

Pinocchio (Hamilton Luske & Ben Sharpsteen, USA, Disney, 1940)

- Executive Producer: Walt Disney
- Writers: Aurelius Battaglia, William Cottrell, Otto Englander, Erdman Penner, Joseph Sabo, Ted Sears, Webb Smith (based on the novel *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi)
- Art Direction: Ken Anderson, Hugh Hennesy, John Hubley, Dick Kelsey, Kendall O'Connor, Charles Philippi, Thor Putnam, Terrell Stapp, McLaren Stewart, Al Zinnen
- Music: Leigh Harline, Paul J. Smith, Ned Washington

Poltergeist (Tobe Hooper, USA, MGM, 1982)

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Frank Marshall
- Writers: Steven Spielberg, Michael Grais, Mark Victor
- Cinematographer: Matthew F. Leonetti
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: James H. Spencer
- Special Effects: Jeff Jarvis, Thaine Morris
- Music: Jerry Goldsmith
- With: Craig T. Nelson, JoBeth Williams

Read: Friedman, pp.84-106.

October 7

- **Spielberg and The Genre of the Fairy Tale**

E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (Universal, 1982)

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy
- Writer: Melissa Mathison
- Cinematographer: Allen Daviau
- Editor: Carol Littleton
- Production Designer: James D. Bissell
- Special Effects: Dale L. Martin
- Music: John Williams
- With: Dee Wallace Stone, Henry Thomas, Drew Barrymore

"Kick The Can" - Twilight Zone: The Movie (Warner Bros., 1983)

- Executive Producers: Kathleen Kennedy, Steven Spielberg
- Writers: George Clayton Johnson, Richard Matheson
- Cinematographer: Allen Daviau
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: James D. Bissell
- Special Effects: Kevin Pike
- Music: Jerry Goldsmith
- With: Scatman Crothers

Read: Friedman, pp. 107-119.

October 14

- **Determinants: The MGM House Style**
- **“Classicism” vs. “Postmodernism”**

*****Q&A with Steven Spielberg*****

The Color Purple (Warner Bros., 1985)

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, Quincy Jones
- Writer: Menno Meyjes (from the novel by Alice Walker)
- Cinematographer: Allen Daviau
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: J. Michael Riva
- Special Effects: Greg Jensen
- Music: Quincy Jones
- With: Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Glover, Oprah Winfrey

Read: Walker, The Color Purple

October 21

- **Midterm Exam (followed by required screening)**
 - **Undergraduates: Paper #1 Due**
 - **Graduates: One Paragraph Paper Proposal Due**

Empire of the Sun (Warner Bros., 1987)

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall
- Writer: Tom Stoppard (from the novel by J.G. Ballard)
- Cinematographer: Allen Daviau
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Norman Reynolds, Fred Hole
- Special Effects: Kit West
- Music: John Williams
- With: Christian Bale, John Malkovich

Read: No readings for this week

October 28

- **The Spielberg Signature: Themes**
- **Back to Television**

Jurassic Park (Universal, 1993)

- Executive Producer: Kathleen Kennedy, Gerald R. Molen
- Writers: Michael Crichton and David Koepp (from the novel by Michael Crichton)
- Cinematographer: Dean Cundey
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Rick Carter
- Special Effects: Dennis Muren, Stan Winston, Phil Tippett
- Music: John Williams
- With: Sam Neill, Jeff Goldblum, Laura Dern, Richard Attenborough

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"Ghost Train" - *Amazing Stories* (Universal, NBC, 1985)

- Executive Producer: David E. Vogel
- Writers: Frank Deese, Steven Spielberg
- Cinematographer: Allen Daviau
- Editor: Joe Ann Fogle, Steven Kemper
- Production Designer: Rick Carter
- Special Effects: David Blitstein
- Music: John Williams
- With: Ray Walston

Read: Friedman, pp. 120-132.
Begin reading Peter Pan.

Screen on your own: *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (Universal, 1997)

October 31 (Saturday, in Norris Theater)

- Attendance at these screenings is optional, though the films are required for the course

12:00pm – *Minority Report* (Twentieth Century-Fox, 2002)

- Executive Producers: Gary Goldman, Ronald Shusett
- Writers: Scott Frank, Jon Cohen, based on the short story by Philip K. Dick
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminski
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Alex McDowell
- Special Effects: Michael Lantieri
- Music: John Williams
- With: Tom Cruise, Colin Farrell

2:00pm – *War of the Worlds* (Paramount, 2005)

- Executive Producer: Paula Wagner
- Writers: David Koepp, Josh Friedman (based on the novel by H.G. Wells)
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminsky
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Rick Carter
- Special Effects: David Blitstein
- Music: John Williams
- With Tom Cruise, Tim Robbins

November 4

-The Spielberg Signature: Themes (cont.)

***Schindler's List* (Universal, 1993)**

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Gerald R. Molen, Branko Lustig
- Writer: Steven Zaillian (from the book by Thomas Keneally)
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminski
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Allan Starski
- Music: John Williams
- With: Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley, Ralph Fiennes

Read: Friedman, pp. 133-156.
Finish reading Peter Pan.

Screen on your own: *Hook* (TriStar Pictures, 1991)

November 11

- **The Spielberg Signature: Formal Strategies**
- **Determinants: John Ford and Respective Uses of History**

***Saving Private Ryan* (Paramount/Dreamworks, 1998)**

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Ian Bryce, Mark Gordon, Gary Levinsohn
- Writer: Robert Rodat
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminski
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Thomas E. Sanders
- Special Effects: David Brighton
- Music: John Williams
- With: Tom Hanks, Matt Damon

Read: Friedman, pp. 193-206.

Screen on your own: *They Were Expendable* (John Ford, MGM, 1945)
Amistad (DreamWorks, 1997)

November 18

IV: Soaring (1993-Present)

- **The Spielberg Signature: Formal Strategies (cont.)**
- **Determinants: The Cinema of Stanley Kubrick**

***A.I. - Artificial Intelligence* (Warner Bros./Dreamworks, 2001)**

- Executive Producers: Steven Spielberg, Kathleen Kennedy, Bonnie Curtis
- Writer: Steven Spielberg (from the short story "Super Toys Last All Summer Long" by Brian Aldiss)
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminski
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Rick Carter
- Special Effects: Michael Lanlieri, Jim Charmatz
- Music: John Williams
- With: Haley Joel Osment, Jude Law

Read: Friedman, pp. 157-192.

Screen on your own: *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, Warner Bros., 1971)

November 25

- **The Establishment of Dreamworks, 1993**
- **Undergraduates: Paper #2 Due**
- **Graduates: Term Paper Due**

***Catch Me If You Can* (Dreamworks, 2002)**

- Executive Producers: Barry Kemp, Laurie McDonald, Tony Romano, Michael Shane
- Writer: Jeff Nathanson, based on the book by Frank Abagnale Jr. and Stan Redding
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminski
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Jeannine Oppewall
- Special Effects: John C. Hartigan
- Music: John Williams
- With: Leonardo DiCaprio, Tom Hanks

Read: Friedman, pp. 207-222.

December 2

- **Spielberg's Significance to the Industry and Art of American Film, and to American/Global Culture**

***Munich* (Dreamworks/Universal, 2005)**

- Executive Producers: Kathleen Kennedy, Barry Mendel, Steven Spielberg, Colin Wilson
- Writer: Tony Kushner and Eric Roth, from the book *Vengeance: The True Story of an Israeli Counter-Terrorist Team* by George Jonas)
- Cinematographer: Janusz Kaminski
- Editor: Michael Kahn
- Production Designer: Rick Carter
- Music: John Williams
- With: Eric Bana, Daniel Craig

Read: Friedman, pp. 223-241.

Screen on your own: *War of the Worlds* (Byron Haskin, Paramount, 1953)

FINAL EXAM

TBA, Norris Cinema Theater

Any student with a valid conflict on this date should contact the course TA. Vacations are NOT valid conflicts with exams.