CTCS 494 - Actors: From the A-List to the D-List

Professor Kate Fortmueller

Tuesday 6-10pm SCA 216

Stars. Character actors. Extras. Reality television cast members. We constantly encounter these performers on-screen, but what are the key differences between their jobs? To what extent do these distinctions matter? This senior seminar seeks to expand students’ understanding of on-screen talent by considering a range of performance types. Some questions will include: How do actors make meaning in film? How do audiences make meaning from actors? What exactly constitutes the work of an actor? This course will attempt to address these questions in a variety of ways and will take up industrial dimensions of acting as well as methods of performance. We will consider the array of ways people make careers out of acting, methods of on-screen performance, the development of off-screen personae, and the ways that actors build their brands.

Screenings will include: All About Eve (1950) Sunset Boulevard (1952), The Room (2003), The Comeback (2005), Strictly Background (2007), Kobe Doin’ Work (2009), RuPaul’s Drag Race (2009--), That Guy... Who Was in That Thing (2012), Life is but a Dream (2012), This is the End (2013).