SPRING 2017

ITAL 392

Course taught in English

Filmmaking by the Book: Italian Cinema and Literary Adaptation

Professor Margaret Rosenthal

Do you love watching films and reading wonderful novels? Why not combine both in one course?

As long as the cinematic medium has existed, the movie industry has looked to literature for inspiration, content, and a guaranteed audience. Many filmic adaptations enhance an existing story or completely supersede it through the creative process. Since filmmakers have a number of choices they have to make when developing a novel into a film, one goal of this course is to re-evaluate the value of the age-old question of whether the book was better than the movie by examining how film directors employ literary texts to resolve specific artistic problems within their own works. Making a good adaptation is about using the language of film to convey what the language of literature does not or cannot portray, not simply presenting the story but creating something entirely different.

This interdisciplinary course offers you the opportunity to develop a rich understanding of the transformation of literary narrative into cinematic discourse through close readings of modern and contemporary Italian fiction in relation to a selection of Italy's most important films from post-World War II and the contemporary periods.

We will take an expanded approach to the question of adaptation, seeing film as not simply based on literary antecedents but also as an art form drawing on other forms of art. Italian filmmakers will include Ludovico Visconti, Vittorio De Sica, Bernardo Bertolucci, and Gabriele Salvatores. Authors will include Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, Alberto Moravia, Giorgio Bassani, Niccolo` Ammaniti and Elena Ferrante.

Tuesday/Thursday

2:00p.m.- 3:20 p.m.

THH 211

Please e-mail Dr. Rosenthal at mrosenth@usc.edu for any questions.