CTPR 457 CREATING POETIC CINEMA (8.10.18)

USC School of Cinematic Arts

2 Units Fall '18; Wednesdays 3:00-5:50pm SCA363 (18557R)

Instructor: **Pablo Frasconi**
805-895-5943 (cell)
213-740-7244 (office)
pfrasconi@cinema.usc.edu

Teaching Assistant: **Mingqi Sun (Ann)**
213-332-5324
mingqisu@usc.edu

Taking pictures is savoring life intensely, every hundredth of a second.
–Marc Riboud (France, b. 1923-)

A poem is a mirror walking down a high street full of visual delight. Poetry is the essence of ideas before they are distilled into thought. Poetry is a book of light at night, dispersing clouds of unknowing. Poetry is emotion recollected in emotion.
-Lawrence Ferlinghetti (US. b. 1919-)

The poet makes himself a seer by a long, prodigious, and rational disordering of all senses. –Arthur Rimbaud (France 1854-1891)

When people look at my pictures I want them to feel the way they do when they want to read a line of a poem twice. –Robert Frank (US, b. Switzerland, 1924)

A poem must resist the intelligence
Almost successfully. --Wallace Stevens (US, 1879-1955)

What is poetry? What are poetic images? The poetics of cinema? How are poetics engaged –especially by writer/directors—for intellectual, aesthetic, visceral, structural, emotional, and narrative purposes to create cinematic moments that resonate long after the film is over? Through the production of four short films in HD, students will investigate poetic cinema from four different perspectives: 1) found poetry, 2) applied poetry, 3) poetry as image, and 4) poetry in narrative fiction.

The ***found*** poetry exercise, "From the Street," focuses on the appropriation and manipulation of vernacular text and images; the ***applied*** poetry exercise, "From the Word," translates ideas from written poetry to image; the ***poetry as image*** exercise, "From the Light," explores the image as text—especially in imagistic, expressionist

films; the ***poetry in narrative fiction*** exercise, "From the Eyes," synthesizes the abstract and mimetic traditions of cinema.

During our journeys into film production, we will screen and analyze selected works that embody a breadth of approaches, including works from the acknowledged poets of cinema: Sergei Eisenstein, Yasujiro Ozu, Michelangelo Antonioni, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Stan Brakhage, and Maya Deren; the lesser-known: Raul Ruiz, Chris Marker, Sergei Parajanov, Derek Jarman, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Abbas Kiarostami, Bruce Conner, and Michael Snow; and the younger generation of writer/directors: Hal Hartley, Miranda July, Charlie Kaufman, and Michel Gondry.

With illustrated lectures, creative exercises, and discussions we will explore the relationships among poetic cinemas and the breadth of personal expression, including: painting, still photography, graphic art, music & collage –among them, the works of John Cage, Steve Reich, John Baldessari, Kurt Schwitters, Romare Bearden, Robert Frank, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Jackson Pollock, Ed Ruscha, and Barbara Kruger.

Poetic cinema will be explored in key texts, including David James', "*Allegories of Cinema,*" David Bordwell's *"Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema,"* Raul Ruiz's *"Poetics of Cinema,*" and Andrei Tarkovsky's *"Sculpting in Time,"* and discussions/lectures: *"What is poetic cinema?," "What is found there," "Ideas and things," "New eyes are ears," "Emotion recollected in tranquility," "Poetic images as narrative," and "Light as text."*

The course will provide all needed production equipment and resources including instruction in HD capture, Avid Editing, and sound design. A background in filmmaking is not required to successfully engage with these projects, and students with creative experience in writing, photography, painting, sculpture, textiles, music, and graphic arts will find this approach to filmmaking accessible and cohesive. Students with backgrounds in theory and criticism will have the opportunity to bridge their studies with "hands on" experience.

Individual mentoring in film concept and structure will compliment the technical workshops in production and post-production. This is a unique opportunity to engage with filmmaking at its most refined level while immersed in the crafts of filmmaking.

Office Hours are arranged with Frasconi by appointment. You are required to have at least one pre-production meeting with Frasconi during the semester. The SA is on-call throughout the week to assist you with your projects.

Safety is our highest priority during production. Hazardous Shooting Conditions forms and procedures are required IN ADVANCE for any hazardous shooting conditions, especially scenes involving: vehicles, weapons, violence (real, impending or implied), weapons, water, sand, electricity, minors, animals. Please contact us well in advance if you have any questions about how to shoot anything safely.

PF 8.10.18

Permits: Check with the Student Production Office for the latest rules about shooting in L.A. Many locations do not allow filmmakers; many require permits or fees. In most cases if you are going to be visible by the public (on or off campus), you will need a permit. Many permits are free but are time-consuming.

Strict Limitations are an essential part of fostering creativity. Please so not augment your projects with additional resources and expenses without first getting permission from faculty.

PRODUCTION HANDBOOK AND SAFETY GUIDELINES are available at https://scacommunity.usc.edu/index.cfm

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 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 me (or the TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8:30am5:00pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus,* the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

Grading will be based upon student growth during the semester. It is required that all deadlines on the calendar are met. Incompletes or delays are only acceptable due to illness (Dr's note required).

Grade breakdown:

In-classes exercises, assignments, and readings:	15%
Project 1	15%
Project 2	15%
Project 3	15%
Project 4	20%
Class Participation	10%
Collaboration	10%

PF 8.10.18

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Incomplete Grade (IN) - Grades of incomplete (IN) are given when a student cannot complete the course requirements as a result of a documented illness or an emergency occurring after the twelfth week of the semester. No more than one year is allowed for completion of an IN.

Production Division Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Two unexcused absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (IE: A becomes B). A third unexcused absence will result in a student's grade being lowered by one, additional full letter (IE: B becomes C). A student's grade will be lowered by one full letter for each additional unexcused absence. Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence.

In order for an absence to be excused, the student must have approval from the professor and provide documentation at the next attended class session.

If a student misses class due to an emergency, the student must contact the professor prior to class or contact the Production Office at 213-740-3317.

***

Each student will work on **FOUR HD PROJECTS** (individual or collaborative; feel free to form your own collaborations for each project)

1) **Found Poetry: "From the Street"** will focus on found, observed, and vernacular poets and poetry (5 min max)
2) **Applied Poetry: "From the Word"** will focus on translating written poetry to images (5 min max**)**
3) **Poetry as Image: "From the Light,"** will focus on the image AS poetry (5 min max, silent**)**
4) **Poetry in Narrative Fiction: "From the Eyes,"** will focus on incorporating the poetic image into a narrative scene (7 min max)

COURSE OUTLINE:

1. August 22nd: Orientation; Definitions: ***"What is found there"*** samples of classic poetic cinema; assignment: readings #1

2. August 29th: ***"New eyes and ears"*** (music, visual arts, architecture, performing arts) and their relationship to poetic cinema; assignments: exercises in idea development; readings #2

3. Sept 5th: 4:00pm **SCA B118** Lab & Technical Orientation
Basic editing;
Prepare and shoot project #1

4. Sept 12th: ***"Ideas and things"***
Assignment**:** Edit Project #1: "FROM THE STREET"

5. Sept 19th: Project #1: Screening & Analysis
Assignment: project #2 planning; for next week select text to adapt

6. Sept 26th: ***"Emotion recollected in tranquility"*** the relationship between word & image; Assignment for next week: Shoot Project #2: "FROM THE WORD"

7. Oct 3rd: ***"Poetic images as narrative"*** Brakhage, Deren & the imagistic tradition
Assignment for next week: Edit Project #2

8. Oct 10th: Project #2: Screening & Analysis
Assignment for next week: Project #3 planning & shoot

9. Oct 17th: ***"Light as text;"*** visual abstraction; pure cinema
Edit Project #3; script & visualization for P4

10. Oct 24th: Project #3: Screening & Analysis;
Assignment for next week: Prepare Script/visualization P4

11. Oct 31st: TBA
Assignment for next week: plan & shoot Project #4

12. Nov. 7th: Project #4: Dailies Screening; shoot pick-ups

13. Nov 14th: Project #4: Dailies Screening continued

NO CLASS NOV 21st-26thTHANKSGIVING BREAK

14. Nov 28th: Project #4: Screening & Analysis

FINAL SCREENING: Monday, Dec 11, 2-4pm Loc: TBA

On-Line Resources:
http://www.tasteofcinema.com/2015/20-great-poetic-films-that-are-worth-your-time/2/
http://www.smoc.net/mymindseye/naples/brakhage.html
http://www.poetrymagazine.com
http://www.olivefilms.com
http://www.poets.org
http://www.uwtv.org/programs/displayevent.aspx?rID=4169&fID=871
David Lynch, "Consciousness, Creativity & the Brain" (a book too)
http://egyptiantheatre.com/
http://www.sensesofcinema.com/
http://www.filmlinc.com/
http://www.filmquarterly.org/

Suggested Texts:
Bordwell, David. *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema***.*** BFI Publishing, 1988.
Bordwell, David**,** *Poetics of Cinema.** Routledge, 2007.
Brakhage, Stan. *Essential Brakhage*. Documentext, 2001.
Dowrick, Stephanie. *The Intimacy and Solitude Workbook.* Norton, 1995.
Gross, Philippe and S.I. Shapiro**,** *The Tao of Photography: seeing beyond seeing*.Ten Speed Press, 2001.
James, David. *Allegories of Cinema: American Film in the 1960's***.***Princeton, 1989.
MacDonald, Scott. *The Garden in the Machine*. University of California Press, 2001.
Morley, Simon. *Writing on the Wall; Word and Image in Modern Art***.*** University of California Press, 2005.
Osho. Creativity, *Unleashing the Forces Within*. St. Martin's Griffin, 1999.
Ruiz, Raul. *Poetics of Cinema 1, 2, 3***.** Dis Voir, 2007.

PF 8.10.18

Sitney, P. Adams. *Eye Upside Down: Visionary Filmmakers and the Heritage of Emerson.* Oxford University Press, 2008.
Tarkovsky, Andrei. *Sculpting in Time: reflections on the cinema***.*** University of Texas Press, 1989.

FILMOGRAPHY

Please view *at least one* from each category by the date indicated.

FOUND POETRY: "FROM THE STREET": (view one by week 3)

THE CRUISE (Bennett Miller, 1998, USA)
The philosophy and poetry of a NYC tour guide, Timothy "Speed" Levitch
POETIC JUSTICE (John Singleton, 1993, USA)
fiction with Janet Jackson and Tupac Shakur; cosmetologist turns to writing after/during personal crises; includes poems by Maya Angelou
HENRY FOOL (Hal Hartley, 1997, USA)
fictional story of a poet: from garbage-collector to Nobel Prize-winner; follow-up (10 years later): FAY GRIM (2006)
THE WIND WILL CARRY US (Abbas Kiarostami, 2000, Iran)
fiction: a cameraman searches for a cellphone signal
ME AND YOU AND EVERYONE WE KNOW (Miranda July, 2005, USA)
fiction: love story between a shoe salesman & performance artist
FACTOTUM (Bent Hamer, 2005, USA)
fictional alter-ego of Charles Bukowski with Matt Dillon, Lili Taylor
TRUDELL: INDEPENDENT LENS (Heather Rae, 2006, USA)
documentary on native American poet & activist John Trudell

APPLIED POETRY: "FROM THE WORD": (view one by week 6)

PATTERSON (Jim Jarmusch, 2016, USA)
Adam Driver as a bus driver and aspiring poet; Palm d'Or Cannes)
LE MÉPRIS (CONTEMPT) (Jean-Luc Godard, 1963, France/Italy)
Fiction about a screenwriter who tries to bring Homer's Odyssey to the screen; with Fritz Lang, Brigitte Bardot, Jack Palance, Michel Piccoli
ARIA (Robert Altman, etc, 1988, UK)
Collection of shorts based on operatic "Arias," (songs); Directors include Altman, Godard, Jarman, Russell, Roeg, Beresford
DEAD POETS SOCIETY (Peter Weir, 1989, USA)
fiction: with Robin Williams as a teacher; screenplay won an Oscar
I, THE WORST OF ALL (Maria Luisa Bemberg [1922-1995], 1990, Argentina)
fiction: 17th Century Mexican poet caught between the inquisition & flesh
IL POSTINO (Michael Radford, 1995, France/Italy/Belgium)
fiction: a romantic comedy; a postman learns about love from poet Pablo Neruda
THE UNITED STATES OF POETRY (Joshua Blum, Bob Holman, 1996, USA) *five-part documentary/experimental film includes Ginsberg, Lou*

Reed, Johnny Depp, Leonard Cohen, Lawrence Ferlinghetti; book & CD)

BEFORE NIGHT FALLS (Julian Schnabel, 2000, USA)
based on life of homosexual Cuban poet Reinaldo Arenas; with Javier Bardem and Johnny Depp; director is well-known visual artist, also directed BASQUIAT (1996) with Dennis Hopper and David Bowie; THE DIVING BELL & THE BUTTERFLY (2007; 4 Oscar nominations)

IMAGE AS POETRY: "FROM THE LIGHT": (view one by week 8)

MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON (Maya Deren [1917-1961], Alexander Hammid [1907-2004], 1943, USA) *blending dreams, psychology and feminism; shot in L.A.; very influential; Deren was Brakhage's teacher*

SAYAT NOVA (THE COLOR OF POMEGRANATES) (Sergei Parajanov, [1924-1990] 1968, Soviet Union/Armenia)
life and spiritual odyssey of medieval Armenian poet; banned in Soviet U.

HATSU-YUME (FIRST DREAM) (Bill Viola, 1981, USA)
observations of Asian culture with spiritual metaphors of light & darkness; Viola also a well-known museum installation artist

SANS SOLEIL (Chris Marker, 1983, France)
experimental; thoughts of a world traveler; explores memory & time; Marker also creates gallery installations

JE VOUS SALUE, MARIE (HAIL MARY) (Jean-Luc Godard, 1985, France/Switzerland/UK)
re-telling of the birth of Christ, set in urban France; widely banned

THE WAY THINGS GO (Peter Fischli, David Weiss, 1987, Switzerland)
a Duchampian sculpture-in-motion; an allegory for narrative

BY BRAKHAGE, AN ANTHOLOGY (2003, USA)
key experimental filmmaker (1933-2003) worked with abstract expressionism and visual metaphor; mostly silent, many painted on film

POETRY IN NARRATIVE FICTION: "FROM THE EYES": (view one by week 11)

BLUE (Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1993, France/Poland/Switzerland/UK)
fiction: first of three films based on France's national motto: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity; personal tragedy with Juliette Binoche

CERTIFIED COPY (Abbas Kiarostami, 2010, France/Italy/Belgium)
where art, copies, and relationships intersect; use of subjective camera; with Juliet Binoche; Kiarostami's training is in fine arts

LA NIÑA SANTA (THE HOLY GIRL) (Lucrecia Martel, 2004, Argentina/Italy/Netherlands/Spain)
fiction: teenage sexual awakening in a family-run hotel; explores boundaries; Martel is inspired by sound in the writing process

PARADISE NOW (Hany Abu-Assad, 2005)

Palestine/France/Germany/Netherlands/Israel)
fiction: suicide bombers in Tel-Aviv; complex character-based suspense

LA SCIENCE DE RÊVES (THE SCIENCE OF SLEEP) (Michel Gondry, 2006, France/Italy)
a man can't control his dreams; with Gael Garcia Bernal and Charlotte Gainsbourg; Gondry also creates music-videos, many based on dreams

THE TREE OF LIFE (Terence Malick, 2011)
A son witnesses the struggles of his parents; Brad Pitt, Sean Penn; Oscar noms for Best Picture, Best Director, Best Cinematography
Or

TO THE WONDER (Terence Malick, 2012)
fiction: intertwining stories with Ben Affleck and Javier Bardem

Doheny Memorial Library 3550 Trousdale Parkway University Park Campus, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0185
Phone: (213) 740 3994 Email: **cin@usc.edu** MAP: **DML** (ground floor) ; Research & Reference: 213-740-8906, ctvref@usc.edu

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:
Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:
Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: http://sarc.usc.edu/

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. https://equity.usc.edu/

PF 8.10.18

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations.
http://dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. https://diversity.usc.edu/

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, http://emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. http://dps.usc.edu

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX