

**PHIL 288gp: Love and its Representation in Western Literature, Film and  
Philosophy                      Fall 2020                      Covid-19 edition**

Class #49491R

TuTh 2:00 p.m-3:20 p.m. (all times given in this syllabus are Pacific Time (PDT until 0200  
hours on 1 November 2020, PST after that)

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All lectures and discussion section meetings will be ONLINE

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Lecturer: Professor Edwin McCann

School of Philosophy MHP-205, mc. 0451, [mccann@usc.edu](mailto:mccann@usc.edu)

Office hours: Tuesdays 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. and Thursdays 3:20 to 4:30 p.m.; and by  
appointment.

Teaching Assistants and discussion sections

Charlotte Figueroa ([cf90936@usc.edu](mailto:cf90936@usc.edu))   Mondays 8:00-8:50 a.m. and 9:00-9:50 a.m.

Christa Peterson ([cwpeters@usc.edu](mailto:cwpeters@usc.edu))   Mondays 10:00-10:50 a.m. and 11:00-11:50 a.m.

Jesse Wilson ([jesse.jn.wilson@gmail.com](mailto:jesse.jn.wilson@gmail.com))   Mondays 12:00-12:50 p.m. and 1:00-1:50 p.m.

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Carries General Education credit in Category GE-B (Humanistic Inquiry) and in Category GE-H  
(Traditions and Historical Foundations) in the new GE program and Category I in the old GE  
program

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**Course Overview:**

Love is one of the principal sources of value in most people's lives. To love and to be loved ranks with some of the most basic needs, almost on a level with physical well-being; and for many people it is a basic element in their sense of their own identity. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the development of the Western cultural tradition there has been a central concern with love as a thematic motif or an object of investigation. In this course we will track some of the more important changes in the treatment of love through the course of development of Western culture, focusing on particularly influential works that constitute high points in this development, including works in the (relatively) new medium of film. We will look at love as a cultural artifact forged over a long period and in a variety of different cultural contexts; perhaps we will emerge from this investigation with a better idea of what love is, and isn't, and why we should want it, or not.

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**Course Learning Objectives:**

1. To introduce students to some of the key works that have shaped the European and American cultural inheritance. We will be reading works by such authors as Plato, Ovid, Shakespeare, and Kierkegaard, who have been formative influences in the development of the European-inspired

cultural tradition that has, to a considerable extent, played a role in shaping some leading aspects of contemporary American culture.

2. To help students develop critical and analytical skills through close reading and analysis of complex texts, and communication skills in both contribution to group discussion and in argumentative and critical writing in essay form.
  3. To demonstrate that critical analysis of key texts and attention to the historical development and cultural role of key concepts (in this case, love) can bring us to a deeper understanding of the concept.
  4. To provide the tools for analyzing the way different media of representation and communication (philosophical dialogues, theological works, epic poems, dramatic works, and films) shape our understanding of the underlying meaning of the work, and, consequently, our understanding of our own experience and lives.
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### **Course Requirements:**

1. Regular attendance at lectures and your assigned discussion section and participation in the discussion section. Attendance and participation in discussion sections counts for 20% of the course grade. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** the discussion sections **WILL** meet on Monday, August 17; at this first meeting of the sections, the discussion leader will explain the mechanics of remote discussion section meetings.
2. Four 1-2 page (250-500 words) response papers. On Thursday evenings each week, beginning in the third week of the term, I will post two or three prompts for short critical response papers on particular points or themes in the readings for the following week. Papers will be due by the following Monday at 11:59 p.m. Students will choose which weeks they submit papers; no more than one paper can be submitted in any given week. Every student must have submitted at least one response paper by the beginning of the seventh week, and at least one more response paper by the beginning of the eleventh week. The average grade of the top three of these papers counts for 20% of the overall course grade.
3. Two critical/analytical papers, length 5-6 pages (1250 -1500 words) each, with the first paper due September 20 and the second due November 1. Each counts for 20% of the course grade, so the two papers taken together count for 40% of the course grade. (See policy on late papers in the Course Policies section of the syllabus.)
3. Final examination: take-home essay exam. I will distribute study sheet distributed in advance containing three prompts; the student chooses two from the list on which to write essays of 2-3 pages each (500-750 words). Final exam counts for 20% of course grade.

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**Course books:**

The books listed below are available through the USC Bookstore. They are the best (in terms of accuracy and readability) translations available in student editions at low price, with highly informative introductions and explanatory notes. If you prefer working with electronic versions of these texts, many of them are available as e-books directly from the publisher. For free online versions that are serviceable alternatives to the editions of texts listed in the booklist (not as good either as regards accuracy and readability of the translation and/or apparatus (notes, introduction, etc.)) see the Booknote in the Syllabus section of the course Blackboard website; you may wish to consult this Booknote before you purchase texts for the course.

1. C. D. C. Reeve, ed. *Plato on Love*. Hackett. ISBN: 978-0-87220-788-2
2. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. Tr. Stanley Lombardo. Hackett. ISBN: 978-1-60384-307-2
3. Abelard and Heloise, *The Letters and Other Writings* Tr. William Levitan. Hackett. ISBN: 978-0-87220-875-9.
4. William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. Bernice W. Kliman and Laury Magnus Hackett. ISBN: 978-1-58510-163-4
5. William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. John Ford. Hackett. ISBN: 978-1-58510-165-8
6. Soren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life*. Tr. Alastair Hannay. Penguin Classics. ISBN: 978-0140445770
7. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*. Tr. Hazel Barnes. Washington Square Press, ISBN: 978-0671867805
8. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. Tr. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. Vintage. ISBN: 978-0307277787  
CAUTION: do NOT use the Parshley translation of *The Second Sex*, part or all of which is available online for free, and of which there may be many used print copies available. It is an exceedingly poor translation as well as being (silently) abridged from the French original, so much so that it is highly misleading, and a waste of time to read

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**Schedule of readings and lectures:**

Note: reading/viewing is to be completed *before* the lecture session in which it will be covered, i.e. before the date listed in the syllabus.

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### Week 1

**1 Tu Aug 18** Introduction and overview of course

### PART ONE: CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

**2 Th Aug 20** Plato on love and madness; desire, spirit, and reason in the self.

[Both *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* are standardly dated to the middle, or second, period of Plato's literary activity, lasting from **388 to 367 BCE**. Many other important Platonic dialogues, such as *Republic*, *Phaedo*, *Theatetus*, *Parmenides*, and *Meno* date from this period.] Reading: *Phaedrus* 227a-257b5, in Reeve, pp. 88-122.

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### Week 2

**3 Tu Aug 25** Socrates and the banquet about love.

Reading: *Symposium* 172a-223d10 (complete), in Reeve pp. 26-87.

**4 Th Aug 27** Ovid on the transformations of nature and love [**late 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE**, approximately 350-375 years after Plato's writings].

Reading: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Bk. I—includes the stories of Apollo and Daphne, and Apollo and Io, in Lombardo pp. 5-29

Bk. II lines 445-593—the story of Callisto in Lombardo pp. 45-49

Bk. III lines 147-562—the stories of Diana and Actaeon, Jupiter and Semele, and Narcissus and Echo in Lombardo pp. 69-81

Bk. IV lines 1-456, 623-668—the stories of the daughters of Minyas: Pyramus and Thisbe, Mars and Venus, Lycothoe and the sun, Clytie and the sun, and Salmacis and Hermaphroditus; and the story of Cadmus and Harmonia in Lombardo pp. 91-104, 109-110

Bk. V lines 385-657—the story of Ceres, Proserpina and Pluto in Lombardo pp. 133-140

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### Week 3

**5 Tu Sep 1** Ovid on the derangements of love

Reading: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Bk. VI lines 473-780—the story of Procne and Philomela in Lombardo pp. 161-169

Bk. VII lines 1-485, 755-960—the stories of Jason and Medea and Procris and Cephalus in Lombardo pp. 175-188, 196-202

Bk. IX lines 518-915—the stories of Byblis and her brother, and of Iphis and Ianthe in Lombardo pp. 252-263

Bk. X—the stories of Orpheus and Eurydice, Cyparissus and the stag, and the Songs of Orpheus (including the stories of Pygmalion, Myrrha and Cinryas, Venus and Adonis, and Atalanta and Hippomenes) in Lombardo pp. 267-291

Bk. XIV lines 1-149—the stories of Glaucus, Circe and Scylla, and Aeneas and Dido in Lombardo pp. 385-389.

## PART TWO: ROMANTIC OR EROTIC LOVE IN A CHRISTIAN CONTEXT

**6 Th Sep 3** Illicit love and Christian duty: St. Augustine on love and lust, and the story of Abelard and Heloise

Reading: St. Augustine, *The City of God* [full original title: *The City of God against the Pagans* [*Dē cīvitāte Deī contrā pāgānōs*] published **426 CE**, approximately 450-475 years after Ovid's writings.] Book 14; tr. Marcus Dods (The Modern Library, 1950), Book XIV. pp. 441-477, available online at <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120114.htm>;

Levitan, *Letters of Abelard and Heloise* [letters written (in Latin) **ca. 1128 CE**, approximately 700 years after St. Augustine's writing]; first published in Paris in 1616], selections as follows: *The Calamities of Peter Abelard* [*Historia Calamitatum*] (Levitan, pp. 1-46)

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### Week 4

**7 Tu Sep 8** Lust and love: Héloïse and Abelard interpret the meaning of their love.

Reading: Levitan, pp. 49-170, as follows:

*First Letter: Heloise to Abelard* (pp. 49-62)

*Second Letter: Abelard to Heloise* (pp. 63-67)

*Third Letter: Heloise to Abelard* (pp. 71-84)

*Fourth Letter: Abelard to Heloise* (pp. 85-104)

*Fifth Letter: Heloise to Abelard* (pp. 105-106)

*Sixth Letter: Abelard to Heloise* (pp. 127-170)

## PART THREE: COURTLY LOVE

**8 Th Sep 10** Courtly love and chivalry: short stories/songs; Tristan and Iseult

Reading: *The Lays of Marie de France* [**late 12<sup>th</sup> century CE**, approximately 50 years after Heloise and Abelard's writings]: Prologue; Equitan; Lanval; Chevrefoil; available at

[https://people.clas.ufl.edu/jshoaf/marie\\_lais/](https://people.clas.ufl.edu/jshoaf/marie_lais/); Joseph Bédier, *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult* [**12<sup>th</sup> century CE**, approximately contemporaneous with Marie de France], available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14244/14244-h/14244-h.htm>: Part the First

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**Week 5**

**9 Tu Sep 15** Courtly love: chivalry and the invention of romantic love

Reading: Bédier, *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult*, available at

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/14244/14244-h/14244-h.htm>: Part the Second and Part the Third

Film viewing: *Casablanca* (dir. Michael Curtiz; Warner Bros. 1942)

**PART FOUR: A RENAISSANCE VIEW OF LOVE**

**10 Th Sep 17** A Renaissance comedy of love.

Reading: Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* [1595-1597]

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 11:59 P.M.: FIRST PAPER DUE****Week 6**

**11 Tu Sep 22** A Renaissance tragedy of love. [1597]

Reading: Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*; Arthur Brooke, *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet* (1562) available at <http://www.shakespeare-navigators.com/romeo/BrookeIndex.html>

**12 Th Sep 24** Romeo and Juliet at the movies.

Viewing: *Romeo and Juliet* (dir. Franco Zeffirelli, Paramount, 1968); *Romeo + Juliet* (dir. Baz Luhrmann, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1996); if you have time, *West Side Story* (dir. Robert Wise, choreographer Jerome Robbins, composer Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim, MGM, 1961); and if you have time, *Romeo and Juliet* (dir. George Cukor, MGM, 1936)

**PART FIVE: LOVE AND EXISTENTIALISM****Week 7**

**13 Tu Sep 29** Kierkegaard and the aesthetics of seduction.

Reading: *Either/Or* Part One: Preface, Crop Rotation, The Diary of a Seducer (Hannay pp. 27-37, 225-241, 245-322).

**14 Th Oct 1** Kierkegaard on the aesthetics of seduction, cont. Reading: The Diary of a Seducer (cont.), Hannay, pp. 322-378

**Week 8**

**15 Tu Oct 6** Kierkegaard on the aesthetic, ethical, and religious ways of life. Reading: *Either/Or* Part Two: Judge Vilhelm on The Aesthetic Validity of Marriage (Hannay, pp. 384-474); The Banquet (*In vino veritas*) from *Stages on Life's Way*, available in the Content section of the course Blackboard website.

**16 Th Oct 8** Sartre on the nature of consciousness; anguish and freedom. Reading: Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* [1943] pp. 21-44, 65-85.

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**Week 9**

**17 Tu Oct 13** Sartre on bad faith, value, the Look and the Other. Reading: Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* pp. 86-116, 133-146, 340-400.

**18 Th Oct 15** Sartre on concrete relations with others: love and sexual desire. Reading: Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* pp. 471-534.

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**Week 10**

**19 Tu Oct 20** A foundational feminist existentialist philosophy: Simone de Beauvoir. Reading: Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* [1949] (page numbers in the Borde and Malovany-Chevallier translation): Introduction (pp.3-17); Vol. I Part Three ('Myths'): Chapter 3 (pp. 266-274); Volume II ('Lived Experience') opening pages (pp. 277-284); Volume II, Part Two, Chapter 10, 'Woman's situation and character' (pp. 638-664).

**20 Th Oct 22** Beauvoir on the narcissist, the woman in love, and the mystic. Reading: Volume II, Part Three ('Justifications') Chapters 11, 12, and 13 (pp. 667-717).

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**PART SIX: LOVE GOES TO THE MOVIES****Week 11**

**21 Tu Oct 27** Classic '40s film comedies about love and marriage. Viewing: *The Lady Eve* (dir. Preston Sturges, 1941); *The Philadelphia Story* (dir. George Cukor, 1940)

**22 Th Oct 29** Negotiating marriage  
Viewing: *L'Atalante* (dir. Jean Vigo, 1934)

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**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 11:59 P.M.: SECOND PAPER DUE (REMINDER: PACIFIC DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME REVERTS TO PACIFIC STANDARD TIME AT 2:00 A.M. NOVEMBER 1)**

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**Week 12**

**23 Tu Nov 3** Doomed love in 1930s San Francisco and 1960s Paris.

Viewing: *The Maltese Falcon* (dir. John Huston, 1941); *Breathless (À bout de souffle)* (dir. Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)

**24 Th Nov 5** Film noir gives love another twist.

Viewing: *Double Indemnity* (dir. Billy Wilder, 1944)

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**Week 13**

**25 Tu Nov 10** Fairy tales about a ‘dying’ and reviving female.

Reading: Two versions of the Brothers Grimm’s fairy tale ‘Snow White’ (from the first edition, and the revised in the second and later editions) available in the Content section of the course Blackboard website; Jack Zipes, ‘Breaking the Disney Spell’, also available in the course Blackboard website.

Viewing: *Snow White* (dir. David Hand, Walt Disney Studios, 1937);  
*Titanic* (dir. James Cameron, 1997)

**26 Th Nov 12** A Nonfiction look at race, sex and marriage in the U.S. Reading: listen to, or read the transcript of, the oral arguments in the Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 US 1 (1967) at <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1966/395>; Read the decision (unanimous, written by Chief Justice Earl Warren) at <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/388/1/#4>  
Viewing: *Loving* (dir. Jeff Nichols, 2016)

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**Tuesday November 17: Final exam due via Turnitin at 4:00 p.m.**

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**Course policies****Students with disabilities**

Any student who has registered with the office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP) and who has been identified by DSP as needing specific accommodations will gladly be afforded those accommodations. Please meet with the instructor as early as possible in the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations. I am happy to work with you to tailor course requirements to your specific needs subject to considerations of fairness for all students in the class.



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**Academic integrity**

Be sure to familiarize yourself with Section 11 of *SCampus*

(<http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>). If you are unsure about what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, please see the instructor or your Teaching Assistant. Any violation of academic integrity standards will result in a grade of ‘F’ for the piece of work or, for more serious violations, ‘F’ for the course, and a referral to Judicial Affairs, so please be very careful about this.

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**Paper submission, deadlines and format**

Please submit your papers through Blackboard. Please format your papers as follows: at least 12 point font, double-spaced, at least one inch margins all around, your name and your section meeting time on the top right hand corner of the first page. All electronically submitted papers must have a filename of the format ‘<yourname> 288 paper <n>.doc’ (or ‘.docx’ or ‘.pdf’) where <yourname> is replaced by your surname as it appears in the course roster and the other part indicates whether it’s paper 1 or 2. The University strongly recommends that you do not include your student ID number or any other possibly sensitive identifying information on your papers or any other correspondence with instructors; as long as you include your name as it appears on the course roster we will be able to identify you. Papers submitted after the due date will receive a reduction in grade of one notch (e.g. a paper that would merit the grade of ‘A-’ will receive a ‘B+’) for each week past the due date. Example: if an A- paper is submitted anytime after the due date but before the next week, it will earn a B+; if it is submitted within a week after that, it will earn a B. Documented illness or emergency or specific disability accommodations constitute exceptions, which will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

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**Communication**

I will strive to respond promptly to your e-mail inquiries. All email messages you send to me must begin the subject line with ‘288 <yourname>’ where <yourname> is replaced by your name as it is given in the official class roster. Examples: ‘288 Albert Einstein request for a meeting’ or ‘288 Albert Einstein question about submitting the paper’. (No, Einstein is not a student in the course; that’s just an example.) Please avoid including any sensitive personal information (such as your USC Student ID number) in either the subject line or the body of your message.

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**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” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://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.

[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://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. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](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. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://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: [sarc.usc.edu](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.

[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://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.

[dsp.usc.edu](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. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://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.

[diversity.usc.edu](http://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. [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Film viewings due dates:

<i>Casablanca</i> (dir. Michael Curtiz; Warner Bros., 1942)	Tu Sep 15
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (dir. Franco Zeffirelli, Paramount, 1968)	Th Sep 24
<i>Romeo + Juliet</i> (dir. Baz Luhrmann, 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1996)	Th Sep 24
(Optional) <i>West Side Story</i> (dir. Robert Wise, choreographer Jerome Robbins, composer Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim, MGM, 1961)	Th Sep 24
(Optional): <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (dir. George Cukor, MGM, 1936)	Th Sep 24
<i>The Lady Eve</i> (dir. Preston Sturges, Paramount, 1941)	Tu Oct 27
<i>The Philadelphia Story</i> (dir. George Cukor, 1940)	Tu Oct 27
<i>L'Atalante</i> (dir. Jean Vigo, Gaumont, 1934)	Th Oct 29
<i>The Maltese Falcon</i> (dir. John Huston, 1941)	Tu Nov 3
<i>Breathless (À bout de souffle)</i> (dir. Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)	Tu Nov 3
<i>Double Indemnity</i> (dir. Billy Wilder, Paramount, 1944)	Th Nov 5
<i>Snow White</i> (dir. David Hand, Walt Disney Studios, 1937)	Tu Nov 10
<i>Titanic</i> (dir. James Cameron, Paramount and 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1997)	Tu Nov 10
<i>Loving</i> (dir. Jeff Nichols, 2016)	Th Nov 12