

Sample Syllabus:

Week 1: Postwar Japan and the Occupation

Readings:

- Brett Walker, ch 13: “The Pacific War, 1931-1945” in *A Concise History of Japan* (2015), pp. 240-260
- Kiyoko Hirano, “Introduction” in *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo: the Japanese Cinema Under the American Occupation, 1945-1952* (1992), pp. 1-11

Week 2: Rewriting History and Literature for Film

Screening: *Rashōmon*, dir. Kurosawa Akira, 1950

Lab Session: Intro. to the Language of Cinema and Assignment of Filmmaking Groups.

*Digital Media Specialist to visit class and discuss filmmaking project.

Readings:

- Akutagawa Reinosuke, “Rashōmon” and “In a Grove” in *Focus on Rashōmon* (1972), pp. 151-165
- Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, “Rashōmon” in *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema* (2000), pp. 182-189
- Keiko McDonald, “The Dialectic of Light and Dark in Kurosawa’s Rashōmon” in *Cinema East: A Critical Study of Major Japanese Films* (1983), pp. 23-35
- *Rashōmon* (1950) dir. Kurosawa Akira, Film Script, pp. 35-91

Week 3: Hard Boiled Tokyo

Screening: *Nora Inu* (Stray Dog), dir. Kurosawa Akira, 1949

Lab Session: Pre-production – Intro. to script writing and story boards.

Readings:

- Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, “Akira Kurosawa” and “Stray Dog” in *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema* (2000), pp. 53-68 & 147-178
- Paul Schrader, “Notes on Film Noir” in *Film Noir Reader* (2000), pp. 53-64
- Janey Place and Lowell Peterson, “Some Visual Motifs of Film Noir” in *Film Noir Reader* (2000), pp. 65-74

Week 4: Life in the Present

Screening: *Banshun* (Late Spring), dir. Ozu Yasujirō, 1949

Readings:

- Donald Richie, “Introduction,” and “Biographical Filmography” (excerpt), “Late Spring” in *Ozu* (1974), pp. 1-17, 234-235, 238-239 [Moodle]

- Kathe Geist, “The Role of Marriage in the Films of Yasujiro Ozu,” *East-West Film Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (January, 1990): 44-52 [Moodle]
- David Bordwell, “Towards Intrinsic Norms” in *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema* (1988), pp. 73-108 [Moodle]

Week 5: The Modern Woman

Screening: *Bakushū* (Early Summer), dir. Ozu Yasujirō, 1951

Lab Session: Pre-production cont. review storyboards and scripts; discuss actors, locations, set, props, etc.

Readings:

- Alastair Phillips, “Pictures of the Past in the Present: Modernity, Femininity and Stardom in the Postwar Films of Ozu Yasujirō,” *Screen*, 44 (2), 2003; pp. 154-166 [Moodle]
- Kathe Geist, “Playing with Space: Ozu and Two-dimensional Design in Japan” in *Cinematic Landscapes* (2008), pp. 283-298 [Moodle]
- Kathe Geist, “Narrative Strategies in Ozu’s Late Films,” in *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, (1992), pp. 92-112 [Moodle]

Week 6: Family Dynamics

Screening: *Tokyo monogatari* (Tokyo Story), dir. Ozu Yasujirō, 1953

Lab Session: Production – camera training and shooting. *Storyboards and scripts due.

Readings:

- Ozu Yasujirō and Kōgo Noda. *Tokyo Story: The Ozu/Noda Screenplay* (2003)
- Joan Mellen, “Ozu: The Family Upheld” in *The Waves at Genji’s Door: Japan through its Cinema* (1976), pp. 316-330
- Keiko McDonald, “A Basic Narrative Mode in Yasujirō Ozu’s Tokyo Story” in *Cinema East: A Critical Study of Major Japanese Films* (1983), pp. 201-227

Week 7: Cinema and Landscape

Screening: *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of Moonlight and Rain), dir. Mizoguchi Kenji, 1953

Lab Session: Production – begin shooting films

Readings:

- Keiko McDonald, “Atmosphere and Thematic Conflict in Mizoguchi’s Ugetsu” in *Cinema East: A Critical Study of Major Japanese Films* (1983), pp. 103-122
- Paul Spicer, “Japanese Cinema and Landscape” in *Cinema and Landscape* (2010), pp. 233-242

Week 8: The Atomic Age

Screening: *Gojira* (Godzilla), dir. Honda Ishirō, 1954

Lab Session: Post-production – Intro. to Adobe Premiere

Readings:

- Yomota Inuhiko, “The Menace from the South Seas: Honda Ishirō’s Godzilla” in *Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts* (2007), pp. 102-111
- Chon Noriega, “Godzilla and the Japanese Nightmare: When *Them* is U.S.,” *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Autumn, 1987): pp. 63-77

Week 9: Hostile Environments

Screening: *Tsuna no Onna* (Woman in the Dunes), dir. Teshigahara Hiroshi, 1964

Readings:

- William Currie, “Abe Kobo’s Nightmare World of Sand” in *Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel* (1976), pp. 1-12
- Gregory Stephens, “Sisyphus in the Sand Pit” *Kinema*, no. 31 (Spring, 2009): 5-36

Week 10: Animating the Environment

Screening: *Kaze no Tani no Naushika* (Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind),
dir. Miyazaki Hayao, 1984

Readings:

- Susan Napier, “Anime and Local/Global Identity” in *Anime: From Akira to Howl’s Moving Castle* (2005) pp. 15-34
- Susan Napier, “Confronting Master Narratives: History as Vision in Miyazaki Hayao’s Cinema of De-assurance” *Positions* vol. 9, no. 2 (Fall, 2001): 467-493
- Mayumi Kozo, “The Ecological and Consumption Themes of the Films of Miyazaki Hayao” *Ecological Economics* 54 (2005): 1-7

Week 11: The Ramen Western

Screening: *Tampopo* (Dandelion) dir. Itami Juzo, 1985

Lab Session: Post-Production – begin film editing.

Readings:

- Linda Ehrlich, “Community and Connection: Itami Juzō’s *Tampopo*” in *Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts* (2007), pp. 263-272
- John Bruns “Refiguring Pleasure: Itami and the Postmodern Japanese Film” in *Postmodernism in the Cinema*, (1998), 93-112

Week 12: Cinema of Memory

Screening: *Wandafuru Raifu* (After Life), dir. Kore'eda Hirokazu, 1998

Lab Session: Post-production – Rough cut due. Screening in-class with feedback.

Readings:

- Alanna Thain, "Death Every Sunday Afternoon: The Virtual Memories of Hirokazu Kore'eda's *Afterlife*," in *Millennial Cinema: Memory in Global Film* (2011), pp. 55-70 [Moodle]
- Mark Schilling, "Hirokazu Kore'eda" in *Contemporary Japanese Film* (1999), pp. 116-118 [Moodle]
- Kristi McKim, "Learning to Love What Passes: Sensual Perception, Temporal Transformation, and Epistemic Production in Hirokazu Kore-eda's *After Life*" *Camera Obscura* 68, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2008): 69-101 [Moodle]

Week 13: Shōjo Culture

Screening: *Shimotsuma monogatari* (Kamikaze Girls) dir. Nakashima Tetsuya, 2004.

Lab Session: Post-production – in-class editing.

Readings:

- Sharalyn Orbaugh, "Busty, Battlin' Babes: The Evolution of the Shōjo in 1990s Visual Culture" *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field* (2003), pp. 201-227

Week 14: Memory, Loss, and Nature

Screening: *Mogari no mori* (The Mourning Forest), dir. Kawase Naomi, 2007

Lab Session: Post-production – Fine cut due. Screening in-class with feedback.

Readings:

- Karatsu Rie, "Questions for a Women's Cinema: Fact, Fiction and Memory in the Films of Naomi Kawase" *Visual Anthropology*, 22 (2009): 167-181
- Aaron Gerow, "Documentarists of Japan, No. 14: Kawase Naomi" *Documentary Box* 16 (2000): 2-16. (<http://www.yidff.jp/docbox/16/box16-1-1-e.html>)

Week 15: Film Screenings and Presentations

Lab Session: Post-production – Final cut due.