AS.100.367 The Age of Baroque on the Silver Screen

Wednesdays, 3:00-5:30

Classroom:
Prof. Pawel Maciejko
Classroom: online
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: pmaciej1@jhu.edu

Course Description:

This course shall focus on selected cinematic representations of the Age of Baroque. As a matter of course, professional academic historians are not satisfied with most representations of historical events in the movies. Most historical dramas, they argue, including the ones avowing historical accuracy, present simplified accounts of the past, privileging one interpretation, eliminating contingencies, and reducing complex processes to a simple story line. We shall explore the question if the movies are indeed bound to be historically inaccurate or if the cinematic representation does in fact have some advantages over traditional academic monographs. In particular, we shall inquire whether films can accurately render an atmosphere of a historical period rather than narrate an event.

Learning Goals:

This course has two main goals. First is to acquaint the student with the historical period of the Baroque. The other one is to discuss the problem of accurate representation of historical past in different media.

Course Requirements:

This seminar puts heavy emphasis on close reading and careful analysis of the reading assignments.

The final decision on any grade derives from my global assessment of your work and cannot be quantified exactly. Roughly speaking, however, the breakdown is as follows:

- Participation: 40%
- One 10-page final paper: 60%

No extensions will be granted without my prior permission, and late papers will be graded lower at the rate of one grade-step per day (A to A-, A- to B+, etc). Needless to say, complete honesty and probity in your work is a must. For information, see http://ethics.jhu.edu

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Dr. Richard Sanders, in Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.
09/02:

Readings:


09/09:

Movie:

Derek Jarman, Caravaggio (1996)

09/16:

Readings:


09/23:

Movies:

Georg Wilhelm Pabst, The Adventures of Don Quixote (1933)

09/30:

Readings:
Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote*. I recommend using the Edith Grossman transaltion

10/07:

Movie:

10/14:

Readings:
Jan Kott, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2000, Chapter “Macbeth or Death Infected”.

10/21:


10/28:

Readings:
Jan Kott, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2000, Chapter “King Lear or Endgame”.

11/04:
Movies:

Ken Russel, The Devils (1971)
Nicholas Hytner, The Crucible (1996)

11/17:

Readings:

Aldous Huxley, The Devils of Loudun


12/02:

Movies:

Peter Greenaway, Prospero's Books (1991)

12:09:

Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2000, Chapter “Prospero’s Staff”