



CIEE Global Institute – Rome

Course name:	The Great Beauty: Pride and Politics in the Italian Film Industry
Course number:	CINE 3002 ROIT
Programs offering course:	Rome Open Campus (Communications, Journalism and New Media Track)
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

This course will analyze the history, political environments, thematic concentrations, and economic trends of the Italian film industry, from the early 20th century to the present. Analyses will be conducted through the readings and by looking at a selection of paradigmatic, influential, or particularly successful works that were brought forth by the big players on the Italian film market. Among these films of major cultural relevance that reflect – and have in turn shaped – the discourse on Italian national identity, are the Oscar-winning movie *The Great Beauty* (2013), shot in and dedicated to Rome; *Rome, Open City* (1945), by Roberto Rossellini, a classic work of Italian Neorealism; and several examples of Italian Comedies and Spaghetti Westerns. We will learn about the production history and critical reception of these works, as well as about the political and historical context in which they were produced. A visit to the Cinecittà Studios and debates with local film students / experts will complement knowledge acquired in class.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Appraise the history of Italian cinema from the end of Fascism to the present;
- Understand social implications of Italian cinema;
- Analyze the representations of Italian society shown in the movies screened;
- Analyze the relationship between cinema and culture;
- Demonstrate a clear knowledge of specific vocabulary relevant to film production;
- Develop consistent interpretations and evaluations of movies;
- Demonstrate the ability to research, critically analyze and interpret film reviews published in Italian and international media
- Use the basic techniques of the making of a film

Course Prerequisites

No specific pre-requisites are needed for this course, besides a general interest in cinema as a cultural and social product.



Methods of Instruction

This course will combine lectures, class debates, walking tours, film screenings, press reviews and conversations with guest speakers.

Assessment and Final Grade

Weekly Film Review:	25%
Quiz	15%
Group Project	15%
Final Exam:	25%
Class Participation:	20%

Course Requirements

Film Reviews (2)

Students will be asked to write 2 film reviews by analyzing, interpreting and commenting on specific movies with clear references to the directors' poetics, the historical and cultural contexts and the technical specifications, as discussed in class. Professor will provide extensive and precise guidelines.

Quiz (1)

True/False Questions and Short Answers test

Group Project

The class will be divided into groups, and each group (4 to 8 students) will choose one scene from *Perfetti Sconosciuti (Perfect Strangers)* and re-film it under the instructor's guide using simple techniques and mobiles or digital video cameras. The students will prepare, act, direct and perform as a film company. Finally, they will be taught simple editing techniques in order to present and discuss the film done.

Final Exam

Students will take a final exam at the end of the course. The exam (True/False Questions and Short Answers tests + film review) will include all topics analyzed in class.

Participation and Attendance Policy

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance Policy



Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:

<i>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</i>	<i>Equivalent Number of Open Campus Semester classes</i>	<i>Minimum Penalty</i>
Up to 10%	1 content classes, or up to 2 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements.
10 – 20%	2 content classes, or 3-4 language classes	Participation graded as per class requirements; written warning
More than 20%	3 content classes, or 5 language classes	Automatic course failure , and possible expulsion

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class 1:1

Italy seen through its films

This class will introduce and discuss the concept of national cinema in Italy. Syllabus will be presented and reviewed, with emphasis on assessment methods and course requirements.



Class 1:2

Italians go to Hollywood

The role of filmmakers, producers and critics in the film industry will be discussed within the framework of contemporary film studies, resources and analytical tools will be provided too. By analyzing scenes from many of the Italian films Academy Award and International Film Festival Winners such as *La Strada*, *Divorce Italian Style*, *Cinema Paradiso*, *Mediterraneo*, *The Great Beauty*, *Call me by your name* and **La Vita è Bella (Life is beautiful)** by **Roberto Benigni's**, students will explore and discuss the notion of Italian identity that Italian cinema has created and exported abroad from the end of II W.W. until now.

Readings: Bondanella, Peter. *A History of Italian Cinema*, Chapter 16, "The Third Wave. A New Generations of Auteurs".

Week 2

Neorealism: the phenomenon that changed the history of worldwide cinema

Class 2:1

The Postwar era: Neorealism

Italian Neorealism represents a watershed in the evolution of worldwide cinema for its aesthetics and poetics. After World War II and the end of the Mussolini's regime, cinema stimulated social, political and cultural change. Topics, techniques, main directors and emblematic examples of the Italian Neorealism movement will be analyzed and interpreted in their historical context and cultural value. Introduction to *Rome, Open City* (1945) by Roberto Rossellini that marks the beginning of the neorealist era and to *The Bicycle Thief* -(1948) by Vittorio De Sica – considered the peak of that era.

Class 2:1

How to watch a film and how to review it.

Discussion of *Life is Beautiful* (1997) by Roberto Benigni and *The Bicycle Thief* (1948) by Vittorio De Sica through the comparison among different film reviews.

Introduction to cinematographic language, editing and cinematography through the analysis of *Life is Beautiful*, *The Bicycle Thief* and other Italian films' selected scenes.

Due date for submission of Film Review 1. *La Vita è Bella (Life is Beautiful, 1997)*

Reading: Bondanella, Peter. *A History of Italian Cinema*. PART TWO: Chapter 3 – Masters of Neorealism: Rossellini, De Sica, and Visconti (pp. 61-97).

Media resources: *My Voyage to Italy* (documentary) by Martin Scorsese: a selection of clips.



era, the studios are unanimously still considered the hub of Italian cinema. Historical and political aspects will be discussed before and during the visit.

Class 4:2

La Dolce Vita. The most relevant changes in Italian and European society of the 60's will be evident through the international blockbuster by Federico Fellini, the dominant director of the golden age of Italian cinema. Critical reception will be analyzed through reviews published on Italian and International newspapers and magazines taking into consideration the influence Fellini's work had on Paolo Sorrentino's *The Great Beauty* (2013).

Quiz 1

Reading: Bondanella, Part Three, Chapter 9: "The Mateur Auteurs. Fellini, the Director as a Super Star: La Dolce Vita". Kezich T. *Federico Fellini. His life and work*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2006. Print.

Week 5

The combination of great art with maximum profit: the industry's dream comes true. (part 2)

Class 5:1

The Great Beauty. The Italian film directed by Paolo Sorrentino won in the foreign language category at the Oscars 2013. *La Grande Bellezza* described as "La Dolce Vita" 2.0 explores the relationships among culture, politics and aesthetics through a kaleidoscopic journey set against the photogenic backdrop of Rome. Critical reception will be analyzed through reviews published on Italian and International newspapers and magazines.

Class 5:2

Group Project. How to make a film: Final shooting and editing the selected scenes.

Walking tour: students will shoot one very simple scene in one of the locations used as setting for *Perfect Strangers* or Sorrentino's *The Great Beauty* such as Castel S. Angelo, Piazza Navona, etc. Students will then perform the editing of all the scenes shot (on location and in class) using very simple editing techniques.

Reading: Sorrentino P. *La Grande Bellezza. Diario del Film*. Milano: Feltrinelli, 2013.



Week 6

Pride and Beauty.

Class 6:1

Presentation, Screening and Discussion of the scenes re-filmed by students from *Perfetti Sconosciuti*. (Final **Group Project**)

Class 6:2

Course Review: an excursus on the social , cultural, aesthetic and critical elements that contributed to the shaping of the Italian cinema identity.

Class 6:3

Final Exam

Course Materials

Readings

Bondanella P. *A History of Italian Cinema*. London and New York: Continuum, 2009. Print.

Kezich T. *Federico Fellini. His life and work*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2006. Print.

Marcus M. *Italian film in the light of Neorealism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Print.

Forgacs D. and Lumley L. *Italian Cultural Studies. An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Print.

Sorrentino P. *La Grande Bellezza. Diario del Film*. Milano: Feltrinelli, 2013. Print.

Further reading materials will be assigned on a week-by-week basis.

Professor will provide a complete list of complementary readings, media sources and articles published in national and international media in order to stimulate class debates and activities.

Media Resources

Benigni, R. (Director). (1997). *La Vita è Bella*

De Sica, V. (Director). (1948). *Bicycle thieves*

Fellini, F. (Director). (1960). *La dolce vita*

Genovese, P. (Director) (2016) *Perfetti Sconosciuti (Perfect Strangers)*

Germi, P. (Director). (1962). *Divorce Italian Style*

“ “ “ (1964). *Sedotta e Abbandonata (Seduced and Abandoned)*

Lucini, L. (Director) . (2005) *L'uomo perfetto (The Perfect Man)*

Moretti, N. (Director). (2010). *Habemus Papam*

Rossellini, R. (Director). (1945). *Roma, città aperta*

Scorsese, Martin (Director) (2001). *My Voyage to Italy* (documentary)

Sorrentino, P. (Director). (2013). *The Great Beauty*.

Sybilla, S. (Director). (2014). *I can quit whenever I want (Smetto quando voglio)*

Virzi, P. (Director).(2003). *Caterina in the big City*