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CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Creative Italian Storytelling: from literature to Cinema to other Forms of Fiction

PROF. MARA PERBELLINI, ILENIA PROVENZI

OVERVIEW

Area: Cultural Studies
Dates: 4 – 28 July (4 weeks)
Campus: Milan
Course Number: LT/AR 320
Term: Summer School 2017
Credits: 6 ECTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Adaptations have long been a mainstay of Hollywood, Cinecittà and the television networks. Many of the most successful international films are indeed adaptations of novels, plays or true-life stories.

We will analyze important adaptations for the seventh art, understanding the changes from the source material to the new text and identifying the resistance of literature and true life story.

This course includes a creative experience through literature and cinema: the writer's lab. Each student will be given tools to write a short story and develop it into a short film screenplay.

This course provides the student with a new knowledge of Italian humanities, from literature to cinema to biography. It is a great opportunity to discover the Italian culture through the arts of time: literature and screenwriting. And also a great opportunity to learn creative techniques in writing.

PREREQUISITES

None

METHOD OF TEACHING

Lecture and Lab.

Readings of stories and excerpts of novels. Screening and analysis of clips of important films adapted from literature and true-life stories. The source material will be compared to the adaptation, revealing the essence of each medium.



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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The reading of the book *Pinocchio* (Carlo Collodi) is recommended prior to the beginning of the course. Ideally students should read the novel (which can be found in the course readings below) from beginning to end, before it is analyzed in class.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn narrative techniques and how Literature and Biography can be manipulated to create an original piece of art: the screenplay. Students will discover great examples of Italian novels and films and, through them, they'll acquire a deeper knowledge of the Italian Culture

GRADING

Attendance and class participation	20%
Final exam	40%
Creative work: Short story	20%
Short film script	20%

COURSE READING AND MATERIALS

All the required readings will be available in a course pack and the lecturer's slides will be available on Blackboard.

Required reading (excerpts):

- Linda Seger, *The art of adaptation: turning fact and fiction into film*, Owl Book, NYC 1992.
- Robert Mc Kee, *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and The Principles of Screenwriting*, Harper Collins Publishers, NYC
- Luigi Pirandello, *The wheelbarrow* (short story)
- James Joyce, *The Dead*
- Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (some excerpts)
- Banana Yoshimoto, *Kitchen* (an excerpt)

Some excerpts from the following Italian novel (in English, to be read prior to course):

- Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio*.

Required films:

- *Pinocchio* (2002) by Roberto Benigni.
- *Il divo* (2008) by Paolo Sorrentino (some clips in class).



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SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Lesson 1 part 1: 4 July (1 h: 5.05-6 pm)

Introduction to narrative techniques: clear vision.

Lesson 1 part 2: 4 July (1 h: 6.05-7 pm)

Why we need stories and the beginning of the writing process: concept and premise.

Lesson 2: 5 July (2 h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

Guidelines to short film: The dramatic moment.

Screening of short film.

Exercise on location.

Lesson 3: 6 July (2 h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

The importance of having a theme: what is a theme and how to find it in a book.

Exercises in class.

Lesson 4: 7 July (2 h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

Structure.

Text and subtext.

Script format.

WEEK 2

Lesson 5: 10 July (2 h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

The structure of a story: the Hero's journey as a pattern for epic tales and fairy tales. The example of Pinocchio.

Exercise on fairytales/epic tales

* Deadline for submitting your short story summary (Monday before midnight)

Lesson 6: 11 July (2h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

The story triangle.

Exercise on character. The example of "The wheelbarrow" by Pirandello.

Lesson 7: 12 July (2h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

Narrator and point of view. How to begin a story (example: Kitchen by Banana Yoshimoto)

Discussion on your story ideas.

Lesson 8: 13 July (2h: 12.10-2 p.m.):

Field study.

* Watch Pinocchio before Tuesday 18th

* Deadline for short film outline (Thursday before midnight)

WEEK 3

Lesson 9: 17 July (2 h: 12.10-2 p.m.)

Feedback on outline.

Scene analysis.

* Deadline for submitting the first draft of your short story (Monday before midnight)



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Lesson 10: 18 July (2h: 11.10 am-1 p.m.)

The art of adaptation: literature & cinema.
The case of "Pinocchio" by Benigni

Lesson 11: 19 July (2h: 11.10 am-1 p.m.)

Description and dialogue: examples and exercises.
Feedback on your short stories.

* Deadline for short film screenplay (first draft) (Thursday 20 by 2pm)

WEEK 4

Lesson 12: July 24 (4 h: 9.30 am – 1.30 pm)

Feedback on your screenplays.
Rewriting your script.

Lesson 13: July 25 (4 h: 9.30 am – 1.30 pm)

Creating and shading style, mood and tone.
More feedback on your screenplays.

Lesson 14: July 26 (3 h: 10.30 am – 1.30 pm)

Adaptation from true life stories: the case of Andreotti.
Analysis of "Il Divo" by Sorrentino as an example of adaptation from a true life story.

Lesson 15: July 27 (2 h: 10.30 am-12.30 pm) - FINAL EXAM.

28 July (before midnight) DEADLINE FOR YOUR SHORT STORY AND YOUR SHORT FILM SCRIPT.

Note: Prof. Provenzi will teach during lessons highlighted in gray. Prof. Perbellini will teach during all the other classes.

BIO OF INSTRUCTOR

Mara Perbellini is a scriptwriter and story analyst for major film and TV production Companies. After her B.A. in Italian Literature and her Master's Degree in Screenwriting at the Università Cattolica of Milan, she began to write screenplays and work as a story analyst for Rai Fiction and Eagle Pictures. She also worked as assistant director on the TV-movie "Una famiglia per caso" for RAI 1.

She has had over twelve feature film stories and screenplays purchased or optioned, including the treatment of "Bugie e miracoli" for Academy Award Winner Producer Marina Cicogna. In addition to her screenplays, Mara has had a number of scripts produced for animated series, such as "The Lord of Shadows" and "Uffa che Pazienza!" (Rai 2, season 1 and 2, which earned the Pulcinella Award at Cartoons on the Bay 2008 as best TV series for children).

She also attended the Film School at the New York Film Academy, both in NYC and in LA. (at Universal Studios) and the London Academy of Radio, Film & TV: while there, she directed, wrote and edited 4 short films.

In 2006 Mara joined the Faculty of IES Abroad Milan, where she teaches History of Italian Cinema and filmmaking. In 2012 she joined the Faculty of Università Cattolica where she teaches creative storytelling with Prof. Provenzi. She's also tutoring Italian film students at Università Cattolica, both for the Screenwriting Master Program and the film-making summer course at the School of Visual Arts in NYC.

In 2009 she got an Award for best screenplay at the Fiuggi International Family Film Festival with the film "Il sirenetto". After that she wrote several prime-time mini-series and series, such as "Distretto di polizia 8" (Canale 5),



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"Ci vediamo a Portofino" (Rai 1), "La vita che corre" (Rai 1), "Eleonora Duse" (Publispei) and "Ombre sulla neve" (Casanova Multimedia).

In 2012 she wrote 5 plays for "Decalogo parte prima" that premiered at the Spoleto "Festival dei due mondi". She's currently writing an epic historical film and working on other cinematic projects.

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Ilenia Provenzi graduated in Modern Literature and attended a Master's Degree in Screenwriting. She began working for production companies in Rome and New York, and while there, she started developing scripts and editorial projects (animation and live action series for children, tv movies, adaptations).

Her first novel for young readers, "La discesa dei Luminosi", was published by Giunti Editore in January 2012. In the same year she joined the Faculty of Università Cattolica, where she teaches Creative Storytelling with Prof. Perbellini.

Besides working as a scriptwriter on animated series for children ("Julio Bunny", "YoYo"), Ilenia is a freelance journalist specialized in film reviews. She's currently working as a script translator and consulting editor for publishing companies.

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