

SLOVAK 0890 – Slovak, Czech, and Central European Film

Class number 24407

Meets A & S general education requirements:

- 2nd Course in Literature, the Arts, or Creative Expression (A&S); Literature (CGS)
- International/Foreign Culture — regional (A&S); 7 - International perspective (CGS)
- Writing intensive course (A&S); DS:H - Humanities requirement (CGS)
- Historical change (A&S); 6 - History (CGS)

Spring 2017, Tuesdays 2:30 – 5:25; 327 CL

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Office hours:

W 4:45-5:45, Th 4:45–5:45

Part I: SOCIETY AROUND THE FILMMAKERS UNDER COMMUNISM		
1/10 D-6277	<i>Engineers of human souls</i> Germany - The Lives of Others (2006) A (West) German take on the place in society assigned to artists by the Communist authorities and the artists' reactions to power and perceptions of their own mission.	2h 17'
0 0 1/17	<i>Film vocabulary</i> SK - Photo Brought to Life (student shorts) Practice using words and phrases to provide tangible details which will support your arguments that segments of a film do indeed convey the perception, emotion, meaning that you say they do.	
Part II: CENTRAL EUROPE THROUGH FILM — THE PAST 50 YEARS		
0 1 1/24 D-2857	<i>World War II</i> SK (CZ) - The Shop on Main Street (1965) The first Slovak and Central European film to receive an Oscar; a burning topic of guilt, complicity, and helplessness. (V-0682)	2h 8'
0 2 1/31 D-713	<i>Relaxation of communist rule</i> H - Love Film (1970) An early film by a director who went on to reach international recognition; politically sensitive topics buried under highly personal filmmaking – “beyond the flashback”: associative rather than temporal sequencing; “East and West shall never meet” – a plausible, or mandated conclusion?	2h 10'
2/7	Writing	
0 3 2/14 D-3978	<i>Communism</i> PL - Camouflage (1976) A contemporary version of medieval discourses on ethics, and the transition from college to career, accompanied by a characteristic East-Central European theme of “the idealized West meets the ‘mysterious East.’”	1h 46'
0 4 2/21 D-2116	<i>Collapse of communism</i> CZ (SK) - Kolya (1996) A quirky Czech thespian goes Hollywood: comedy and emotional commitment; a plot designed to please; contemporary filmmaking; Central European handling of love. (D-0545)	1h 45'

Part III: HOW THE FILMMAKERS COPEd		
0 5 2/28 D-6582	<i>The non- political revolution</i> SK - The Sun in a Net (1962) Ranked as one of the 10 best films in the history of Czechoslovak filmmaking; the truth and lies through the experiences of urban teenagers; a forerunner of the ‘Czech New Wave’; Communist officials threatened by an overload of symbolism.	1h 40’
0 6 3/14 D-0986	<i>Relax and experiment</i> CZ - Daisies (1966); (Dudes and the Hops , 1964; D-5368; V-6097) Considered one of the most innovative experiments in world cinema; is there really a morality play under all the razzle-dazzle, as the director claims? (V-6130)	1h 14’
3/21 Hillman D-2886 D-5487	Your midterm paper: CZ - Closely Watched Trains (1966) SK - Birds, Orphans and Fools (1969)	1h 29’ 1h 20’
0 7 3/28 D-0843 D-2895	<i>Ordinary lives or allegories?</i> CZ - Loves of a Blond (1965); Firemen’s Ball (1968) Early films by a director who was showered with Oscars after he defected to Hollywood; mating rituals of the adolescent working class; use of non-actors; quasi-documentary techniques; incompetence in charge spells fun and cruelty; a film with no starring roles. (V-0671) (V-0698)	1h 28’ 1h 13’
0 8 4/4 D-6196	<i>Comedy and realism</i> SK - She Grazed Horses on Concrete (1982) The leading actress also wrote the screenplay based on her own book; one of the most popular films in Slovakia; a single mother fend for herself and her teenage daughter; all starring roles are female; first use of dialect; first discussion of abortion; handling of violence in film under Communism. (V-3928)	1h 18’
0 9 4/11 D-6585	<i>An esoteric romance?</i> SK - Rosy Dreams (1976) The first Central and West European feature film aiming at a realistic – rather than romanticized – portrayal of the Roma (Gypsies). A Romani girl and a Slovak boy fall in love with their fantasies of the stereotypical “other.” (V-3926)	1h 28’
1 0 4/18 D-11451	<i>Sci-fi and politics</i> PL - Sexmission (1984) The film has remained unsurpassed in Polish domestic ticket sales since its release and was enormously popular in other Central European Communist countries; two male astronauts land in a world of women; expectations of Central European audiences; comparison with Hollywood science fiction; anti-feminist, or anti-authoritarian? (V-4117)	1h 53’
4/25	Finals.	

Grading

- Weekly assignments (3 pages minimum, on a pass/fail basis; you may choose to skip two of the 10 papers and submit only 8).
 - This is an all-or-nothing part of the final grade. If you submit the required number of the weekly assignments (8, 9, or 10), their sum total will count as an A that will calculate as 20% of your final grade. If you submit only 7 or fewer, this 20% of the final grade will calculate as an F.
 - You must submit your weekly assignments electronically by Friday, 5 p.m., after each class. If asked to do so, you must revise your assignment and bring the revision to class, or e-mail it again *before* you begin work on the next assignment.
- Class participation: Exceptional class participation may compensate for an occasional failed weekly assignment, especially if it was caused by extenuating circumstances, and it will move the final grade up to the next higher option if the calculated final grade ends up close to it but not high enough to mathematically meet it.
- Midterm paper (pages: 10 minimum, 12 maximum): 37.5%.
- Final paper (pages: 12 minimum, 14 maximum): 42.5%.