

Lecturer: Dr. Rieke Jordan

(I answer emails Mon-Fri)

Tuesdays 2 pm - 4 pm

Room: SH 4.107

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4:15 pm – 5:15 pm

Los Angeles Plays Itself

- 15/10 Introduction
Syllabus, Course Material, Credit Requirements
- 22/10 Los Angeles, by Mike Davis
- Reading material: *City of Quartz*, excerpts (“Sunshine or Noir?”); *Ecologies of Fear* (“The Literary Destruction of Los Angeles”) (question mandatory)
- 29/10 Thinking about Hell A
- Reading material: Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, “The Culture Industry” (question mandatory); Ehrhard Bahr, *Weimar on the Pacific*, excerpts (the book is available as ebook through the library); Quinn Latimer, “Kalifornienträumen” (from eastofborneo.com)
- 05/11 Screening and Archiving Los Angeles Today
- Screening: parts of *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (in class)
 - Basis for discussion - your research: what are the arts, intellectual life, and the movie industry doing in the twenty-first century? (i.e., Netflix, LACMA)

Social Realities

- 12/11 LA Pastiche: Chinatown (directed by Roman Polanski)
- Reading material: “The Story of Water in Los Angeles” (online link)
 - Joan Didion, “Holy Water” (from esquire.com)
 - Please note: this movie is available on amazon prime, DVD in my shelf
- 19/11 LA Neorealism: Killer of Sheep (directed by Charles Burnett) — double session
- 12-14 Uhr: Screening of the movie in class
 - 14-16 Uhr: discussion
 - Reading to be announced on OLAT
 - FYI viewing: *The Exiles* (1961): <https://archive.org/details/theexiles>
- 26/11 Los Angeles, 2019 - 2049: Blade Runner (directed by Ridley Scott) and Blade Runner 2049 (directed by Denis Villeneuve)
- Reading material: Guiliana Bruno, “Ramble City”; Edward Soja, *Thirdspaces*, excerpts
 - Please note: *Blade Runner 2049* is available on Netflix, *Blade Runner* is in my shelf

Hollywood Elegies

- 03/12 F. Scott Fitzgerald's Hollywood
- F. Scott Fitzgerald - *The Pat Hobby Stories*: <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks04/0400821h.html>
 - Look at / listen to Eisler and Brecht's Hollywood Elegies / Hollywoodelegien

- 10/12 Los Angeles with Dr. Jan Wilm — double session
- Nathanael West - *Day of the Locust*
 - David Ulin, “The Literature of Los Angeles”
 - Jan Wilm will be presenting his novel, *Winterjabrbuch / The Yearbook of Winter*
- 14/01 Stardom I: *A Can of Beans.... ubm... Sunset Blvd* (directed by Billy Wilder)
- Basis for discussion - your research on the star & studio system;
 - Reading material: Billy Wilder (with an introduction by J. Meyers), *Sunset Blvd* (the book is available as ebook through the library);
 - interactive article: <https://cinephiliabeyond.org/sunset-boulevard-billy-wilder-charles-bracketts-sobering-exposure-dark-side-hollywood/>
 - FYI podcast: “You Must Remember This” (available on spotify)
- 21/01 Stardom II: *Mulholland Drive* (directed by David Lynch) and *Maps to the Stars* (directed by David Cronenberg)
- Reading material: David Lynch, “Los Angeles” & “Mulholland Drive” (from *Catching the Big Fish*); Bruce Wagner, “My film about the dark side of Hollywood” (from theguardian.com)
 - Additional viewing: *Mesbes of the Afternoon* (available on youtube)
 - Please note: *Maps to the Stars* is available on filmfriend.de
- 28/01 Wrap up and Review: Stardom in Hollywood: *BoJack Horseman*
- Jan Wilm, “Kommt ein Kentaur in eine Bar” (from *Pop. Kultur und Kritik*)
- 03/02 & **Symposium: Spending Time With/In the Nineteenth Century**
04/02

About this Class

Los Angeles is a city of global images and signs: of its stars, disasters, boulevards, health crazes, studios and sprawl at the limit of the North American continent. This MA-level seminar will devote itself to the many ways Los Angeles stages itself in the visual arts. How to approach the quotidian, defined by the city’s facades and fictions? By way of a close study of films such as *Sunset Boulevard*, *Mulholland Drive* and *Maps to the Stars*, the seminar will relate these artistic efforts to the social reality of the city. Topics will include the star and studio systems, urban geography, and the mundane.

LEARNING GOALS:

- developing skills for close reading and critical examination of cultural objects and the visual arts
- situating the objects into a broader context of American cultural and literary and urban history
- employing these skills in written form in the final paper, independent study, and the writing fellow assignments