ARTS-UG 1604

Native American Film and Video: Performing Self-representation Through Media

Classes: Fridays 12:30-3:15pm
1 Washington Place, Room 601

Instructor: Amalia Cordova, amalia@nyu.edu
Office hours: Fridays, 4-5pm, 1 Wash Pl. Room 613, tel. 212.998.7340

Course Description: This course focuses on the practices of film, video, and digital expressions emerging in the past decades from indigenous communities and independent Native artists in the Americas. Notions of Third and Fourth cinema, indigenous self-representation, collective authorship, Indigenous people’s representation in mainstream films and other forms of exhibition such as museums, installation and photography will be explored.

Students will research specific authors or media projects, and how institutions present this work through exhibitions, events, festivals, and publications. The course features guest lecturers and requires class and off-site viewing of films and videos that are otherwise unavailable on the market.

Course Objectives:
This course will provide students with an introduction to both the history and theory of indigenous cinema. Students will gain not only an understanding of the motivating factors that led to the emergence of this cinema and become acquainted with both its major movements and representative filmmakers, but also be able to recognize several of the aesthetic and narrative practices in these films. In addition, we will revisit the concepts of Fourth cinema and imperfect cinema, examining at the significance of these concepts in contemporary cultural and political debates. A key goal of this course is to introduce and gain familiarity with the critical tools that might help us situate indigenous audiovisual practices against our experiences with Hollywood and European cinemas.

Course policies:
Active participation is strongly encouraged. Attendance to all class lectures and screenings is mandatory. Absences and tardiness will be penalized. If you unable to come to class due to illness or some extenuating circumstance, contact me by e-mail as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements may be made. If you must leave early due to illness or for any other cause, it is your responsibility to inform me as to the reason. All work must be handed in on time except in the case of serious illness, medical emergency, or unforeseen circumstances. Incompletes will not be granted unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

Films shown during class are a key part of class. Turn off cell phones and all other portable electronic devices during class time and screenings.
Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html.

Required reading:

- Gonzalez, Jennifer, “Introduction” (pp.1-20) in Subject to Display, Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art, MIT Press, 2008.
- Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn, Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film, University of Nebraska Press, 1999.
- Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian’s Native Networks website on Native Media: www.nativenetworks.si.edu (selections).
- Wortham, Erica, Between the state and Indigenous autonomy: Unpacking video Indigena in Mexico, American Anthropologist, 106 (2), 2004.
Recommended readings:

- Worth, Sol, and Adair, John, Through Navajo Eyes: An Exploration in Film and Communication and Anthropology, University of New Mexico Press, 1997.

Requirements:

- Class attendance and participation: 20%
- Midterm paper (5-6 pages) on a media project/director, film or screening attended: **25% due October 7**.
- One class presentation on one film/filmmaker or event review: **25% due Nov. 18**
- One site visit to the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian’s Film + Video Center.
- Proposals for final research project **due Oct. 21 for class workshop**.
- Final Research Project and class presentation: **30%, due December 2.**
- Proposals for final papers will require an in-class presentation and sign off from the professor. Assignments will be submitted in both paper and electronic form.
COURSE SCHEDULE

CLASS 1- Sept. 9, 2011: Native Americans on Film: silent and contested spaces
Reading: Gonzalez, J., Subject to Display, Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art, Introduction; Singer, B., Wiping the War Paint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video, Introduction.

CLASS 2- Sept. 16: Experimental ethnographies
Screen: selections from Through Navajo Eyes (1966): The Navajo Silversmith (20 min.) by John Nelson; Intrepid Shadows (18 min.), by Al Clah; The Laughing Alligator (1979, 28 min.) by Juan Downey.

CLASS 3- Sept. 23: Native Narratives in American Cinema
Screen: The Exiles (1961, 72 min.), USA. Director: Kent Mackenzie; House Made of Dawn, (1972, 90 min.) US. Director: Richardson Morse [clips].
Reading: Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn, Celluloid Indians ch. 4 (pp. 65-100) and ch.6 (pp 178-232); Ginsburg, Faye, “Embedded Aesthetics: creating a space for indigenous media”; Shohat & Stam, Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the media, pp.1-54.
www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/rose/hmod.htm#introduction

CLASS 4- Sept. 30: We who speak the complete language
*Oct. 1, Recommended free screening of Conversations with the Earth, at NMAI.

CLASS 5- Oct. 7: Inuit Knowledge: from preservation to projecting the future
Director: Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit), Producer: Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit), Norman Cohn, Paul Apak Angilirq (Inuit), Germaine Wong, produced by Igloolik Isuma Productions; *Qulliq* (1992, 12 min. Documentary) Canada. Director: Susan Avigaaq (Inuit), Madeline Ivalu (Inuit), Mathilda Hanniliqq (Inuit), Martha Maktar (Inuit), Marie-Hélène Cousineau. *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* (2010, 54 min.) Canada [clip] Director: Zacharias Kunuk (Inuit) and Ian Mauro.


CLASS 6- Oct. 14: **Pioneering Women’s Documentaries**
Guest: Beck Cole (Luritja/Warrumunga), Australian director. (To be confirmed.)
Recommended: Lewis, Randolph, *Alanis Obamsawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker*, Preface, ch.1 (pp.1-35), ch. 4 (pp. 88-121).

** First paper due**

CLASS 7- Oct. 21: **Latin America: forms of resistance and collective voice**

** Final research project proposals due.**

CLASS 8- Oct. 28: **Video Mexico Indígena**
Guest speaker: filmmakers Pedro Daniel López (Tzotzil), with Dolores Santiz (Tzotzil) and Jeff Arak.
Screen: *Xanini* (1999, 8 min.) Mexico, directed by Dante Cerano (Purepecha); Collectively directed and produced by Ojo de Agua Comunicación; *The Land Belongs to
Those who Work it (2006, 11 min.) Mexico, produced by the Chiapas Media Project-Promedios; clips from selected works by Pedro Daniel López.
Readings: Wilson and Stewart, Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics, chapters 8 (Halkin) & 9 (Smith); Wortham, E., “Between the state and Indigenous autonomy: Unpacking video Indígena in Mexico.”
Recommended: Cordova and Zamorano, NMAI, “Mapping Mexican Media”
http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/rose/mexico.htm;

CLASS 9 - Nov. 4: Indigenous performance and the museum space
Site visit to the National Museum of the American Indian’s (NMAI) Film and Video Center, One Bowling Green (Lower Manhattan).
Screening: 4-Wheel War Pony (2008, 8 min.) US. Director: Dustinn Craig (White Mountain Apache/Navajo); Emendatio [clips], video-performance of James Luna (Luiseño) at the 2005 Venice Art Biennale and at NMAI.

CLASS 10- Nov. 11: Class will attend screenings at AMNH Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival and prepare reviews.

CLASS 11 – Nov. 18: Spaces of Circulation: Festivals and Distribution
Screen: Trailers and clips from CLACPI indigenous festivals, 2006-2010; EntreCulturas: VI Festival en Oaxaca, (2006, 56 min.) Bolivia, directed by Nicolas Ipamo (Chiquitano), produced by CEFREC-CAIB.
Readings: review Festival websites from Festival section of Native Networks:
http://www.nativenetworks.si.edu/eng/yellow/festivals.htm.

**Film/screening review due.

Nov. 25- No class, Thanksgiving Break

CLASS 12 – Dec. 2: Emerging Filmmakers in New York
Guest Speaker: filmmaker Sally Kewayosh.
Screen: Cousins (2010, 17 min.) US. Sally Kewayosh (Ojibwe/Cree); Sikumi/On the Ice, (2008, 15 min.) US. Director: Andrew Okpeaha MacLean (Inupiat); Little Caughnawaga: To Brooklyn and Back (2008, 56:46 min.) Canada/US. Reaghan Tarbell (Mohawk).
Reading: Machiorlatti, J., “Indigenous women in Film and video: Three generations of Storytellers and an Interview with emerging filmmaker Sally Kewayosh.”

CLASS 13 – FINAL PRESENTATIONS

CLASS 14 - FINAL PRESENTATIONS AND CLASS EVALUATION