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## BRECHT & FILM in Fall 2018 (CL3080)

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|----------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Course Code    | CL3080                      | Professor(s)     | Alice Craven                        |
| Prerequisites  | None                        | Office Number    | G-110                               |
| Class Schedule | TF: 10:35-11:55 in<br>G-102 | Office Hours     | Tuesdays and Fridays<br>16:45-17:55 |
| Credits        | 4                           | Email            | acraven@aup.edu                     |
| Semester       | Fall 2018                   | Office Tel. Ext. | 680                                 |

## Course Description

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Bertolt Brecht from Stage to Screen. Why was the tremendous success of Brecht as playwright and poet so difficult for him to transfer to the screen? He greatly influenced theatrical aesthetics, dramatic and cinematic production and the ideologies underpinning theatrical creation in the period between the two wars. But Brecht's desire to apply some of the central tenets of his work to the cinema nonetheless clashed with the prevailing trends in the evolution of cinema during his lifetime. This is notably the case in his tense relationship with Hollywood in the 1940's. This course examines some of Brecht's pivotal works particularly in the context of his project for a non-Aristotelian or epic theater. We examine Brecht's successes and failures in his application of his theories and plays to his work in German and Hollywood cinema. Central to our concerns are his collaborative work with Fritz Lang, Charles Laughton, G.W. Pabst, Joseph Losey and others. We begin with Brecht's film **Kuhle Wampe**, his work with G.W. Pabst on the filming of **The Threepenny Opera** and his collaboration with Fritz Lang on **The Hangman Also Dies** in Hollywood. We also consider his influence on later filmmakers such as Jean Luc Godard, Andre Techine, R.W. Fassbinder, Michael Haeneke, and Lars von Trier as well as on the audiences of films produced in the latter half of the 20th century. There will be a practical workshop component which involves the participation of the entire class.

## Course Learning Outcomes

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learn about the innovative theatrical aesthetics of the Brechtian non-Aristotelian theater  
study the influence of those innovations on cinematic production of the early to late 20th century.

focus on a close analysis of the cultural and political concerns of the Brechtian filmmakers  
learn how to work together to produce a Brechtian script or film in the hands-on practicum section of the class.

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## General Education

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[PLEASE EDIT OR REMOVE THE FOLLOWING TEXT AS APPLICABLE]

The general education program at AUP consists of four requirements: Speaking the World, Modeling the World, Mapping the World, and Comparing Worlds Past and Present.

This course can be used to fulfill the [INDICATE THE REQUIREMENT(S) FULFILLED BY THE COURSE] requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

[INDICATE THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES]

## Course Outline

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The following outline is intended primarily for you to have an initial breakdown of the class sessions. **Exact reading and viewing assignments will still be subject to modification in order to accommodate our practicum work in the second half of the semester and actual progress made in the class.** Although only certain plays by Brecht have been assigned for reading, since they are the ones most directly linked to our project, you are encouraged to read other works by Brecht.

### Week 1

Key texts of the classic debate within German Marxism. Brecht in context.

Film viewing: *Kuhle Wampe*.

Reading-*A Man's a Man* and *The Elephant Calf* (the preface to Berlin Alexanderplatz novel and Roland Barthes' *The Poor and the Proletariat*)

### Weeks 2 and 3.

Reading-*Man Equals Man*; Review of the Dramatic versus Epic Theater chart handed out in the first week.

Viewing-*Man Equals Man*.

### Week 4

Reading-*Threepenny Opera*

Viewing-*Threepenny Opera* by G.W. Pabst; *the Controversy over Threepenny Opera*; *Excerpts*

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from *M* by Fritz Lang

## **Weeks 5 and 6**

Viewing-*The Hangman Also Dies* (Fritz Lang). Introduction to the Ballads, *Stories of Mr. Keuner* and Instructions for the Class Project

## **Week 7 OCTOBER 23 MID-TERM PAPER DUE**

Excerpts from *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* by Fritz Lang

## **Week 8**

*Life of Galileo*. Charles Laughton and the Brechtian Actor

Reading-*Life of Galileo*; Article on to be provided in class and "Writing the Truth: the Five Difficulties"

Viewing: *Life of Galileo* (Losey)

Performance and Filming workshop. Precise schedule for workshopping to be determined at this time. Presentations or Panel Discussions begin.

## **Week 9**

Brecht and Jean-Luc Godard

Viewing: *La Chinoise* ; Selected Excerpts from Godard

Reading-excerpts from Peter Wollen

## **Week 10**

Brecht and R.W. Fassbinder

Viewing: The early Fassbinder student films (if possible); Fassbinder's student filming; *Third Generation*; excerpts from *Berlin Alexanderplatz*

## **Week 11**

Brecht and Andre Techine

Viewing-*The Girl on the RER*; Excerpts from Techine

Reading: script of *Hitler: A Film About Germany*; *The Measures Taken*

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## Week 12

Brecht and second overview of directors influenced by his work: Focus on Syberburg; Haeneke, Ozon, Buñuel, Alexander Kluge

Viewing: Excerpts of film actors influenced by Brecht; *The Girl on the RER*

Reading: TBD

## Week 13 FINAL PAPER DUE DECEMBER 7

Brecht and Beyond

Viewing-Excerpts from the Second Degree-*Reservoir Dogs* and other excerpts to be determined

Reading-Articles by Darko Suvin

## Textbooks

| Title                            | Author                                                         | Publisher               | ISBN          | Required |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------|
| Brecht Collected Plays Volume 2  | Brecht, Bertolt<br>(Edited by Ralph Mannheim and John Willett) | Methuen<br>(Bloomsbury) | 9780413685605 | Yes      |
| Brecht collected Plays, Volume 5 | Bertolt Brecht<br>(Edited Ralph Mannheim, John Willett)        | Methuen/Bloomsbury      | 9780413699701 | Yes      |

## Attendance Policy

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**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance for this course is in accordance with the University Policy given below.

student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled

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classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

## Grading Policy

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### GRADING:

The following assignments will be evaluated according to the percentages given:

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Participation, collaboration on the class film project and presentation/panel discussions | 30% |
| 1 midterm paper due October 23                                                            | 25% |
| 1 final research paper due December 7                                                     | 25% |
| 1 final exam Friday <b>December 21 8:30-11:00</b>                                         | 20% |

## Other

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