

SEAN KENNETH FORREST

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

Film is the ultimate expression of the human spirit. My yearning to educate the next generation of film scholars, producers, and enthusiasts is immeasurable. I have had the distinct honor of beginning my film studies teaching career at the University of Colorado-Colorado Springs in January 2016, gaining the experience, confidence, and intuition to continue charting my path of mentoring tomorrow's film scholars and makers. In my education, I was among the first MA graduates from the University of Colorado at Boulder's Film Studies program. I have long possessed a boundless passion for cinema and the education thereof. My personal film background and interests are diverse, including history, critical analysis, theory, and examination of Hollywood and American film history, as well as multicultural perspectives including Asian, Latin American, and other non-western cinema. It is an art form not only for entertainment, but a fundamental tool for teaching and learning. Indeed, film is a conduit for different cultures to share and connect with one another and broadens human perspective unlike any other media or method of communication.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Colorado-Colorado Springs (UCCS)

Lecturer of Film Studies & Film History, January 2016 to May 2020

Half-time Instructor of Film Studies & Film History, May 2020 to present

Film Studies Program

Department of Visual & Performing Arts

1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway

Colorado Springs, CO 80918

FILM 3550: Hollywood History, Spring 2016/2018/2020

A chronological exploration of American film history, primarily through the Hollywood tradition. Beginning with the turn of the century silent-era trailblazers such as Edwin S. Porter and D.W. Griffith, to the birth and expansion of Hollywood as the filmmaking epicenter, its mode of production, studio system, and prominent directors, performers, and genres.

FILM 3520: Horror, Fall 2016/2018

A historical and analytical examination of the Horror film genre, from its roots in Gothic Literature of Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker, and H.P. Lovecraft to real-world inspirations such as Edward Gein and Ted Bundy. The course charts the genre's birth in German Expressionism and early Hollywood formation during the Great Depression and traces its evolution and sub-genres through the ensuing decades, including the "monster movie," the "Slasher," gender roles, and "prestigious" Horror. Also delves into the background of genre-associated filmmakers, ranging from F.W. Murnau, James Whale, Alfred Hitchcock, John Carpenter, Jonathan Demme, and Jordan Peele, while posing an investigation of why and how Horror has remained such an endearing and steadfast, albeit controversial, genre for production companies, audiences, and global cultures since the beginning of Cinema itself.

FILM 3530: The Gangster Film, Spring 2017/2019

A study of the Gangster film genre and inherent characters, charting their foundations in the silent era, their solidification in 1930s Depression-era Hollywood Cinema with Cagney, Bogart, and Robinson, and beyond into modern and contemporary portrayals. The gangster has been a formidable presence in Cinema since its earliest days. From Prohibition racketeers, small-time hoodlums and cronies, to wise guys, the Italian Mafia, and professional heist crews, gangsters represent folktales often depicted in films as larger than life, at times demonized, censored, and romanticized by critics and audiences. The course follows a chronological and analytical approach to the Gangster film genre, as well as delving into key influences, trends, performers, and filmmakers therein.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

FILM 3500: The Hollywood Musical, Fall 2017/Spring 2019/Fall 2020

Historical survey of the most fundamental and definitive Hollywood genre, perhaps cinematic escapism at its purest. The genre steals away audiences from their troubles and guides them from the ordinary and mundane to the extraordinary and fantastic. It is also a highly adaptable genre to suit the social contexts in which films are produced and released. The traditional conventions of the “fancy free” Musical later give way to more somber, stylized tones, mirroring social turmoil or heightening realities of our world. The course explored its roots in early “Talkie” pictures, finding its voice and footing in the 1930s with the Busby Berkeley/Warner Bros. and Rogers-Astaire/RKO traditions, and carrying on into the Technicolor dreamworlds of Judy Garland, Vincente Minelli, Gene Kelly, and Julie Andrews. The course then examines the genre’s more cynical, deconstructed eras in the 1960s and 1970s, through the cameras of Robert Wise, Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse, Liza Minelli, Martin Scorsese, and others.

FILM 3510: Comedy Film History, Spring 2018/Spring 2020

Laughter has continuously proven to be the best remedy for world-weary audiences across the span of human history, most potently in Cinema. No other genre or style exemplifies this more than the Comedy Film, where the real world can be left behind and rendered into something absurd, farcical, and, above all, funny. The Comedy Film depicts a place where it is acceptable and necessary to laugh at, and with, the characters therein, figuratively emblematic of *our* world in a heightened, satirical fashion. The course approaches Comedy from the silent era pioneers to renowned contemporary practitioners.

FILM 3900: Directors in Focus: The Films of Martin Scorsese, Fall 2018

An inquiring and biographical approach to a master of cinematic technique, Martin Scorsese has been one of the quintessential filmmakers of Americana and rebel of the Hollywood tradition for over fifty years. A purveyor of the American Dream, be it hopes for a better life, self-redemption, or, in his own words, depicting it as “completely mad and twisted.” He imbues his films with multi-faceted characters, not just in human beings, but fashioning settings into characters as well, especially his home of New York City. A disciple of Cinema to his very core, proclaiming that he will “die behind a camera,” Scorsese is in tune with global genres and styles, never limiting himself to one realm, and brings his trademark visual aesthetic and passion to each, be it Gangster films, historical dramas, Biblical epics, studies of ethnic identity and the human condition, as well as meditations on masculinity, violence, and faith, or even documentaries and family films.

HIST/HUM 3900: History and Film, Summer 2019

Teaching with Professor Samantha Christiansen of the UCCS Department of History, we led a two-week intensive cross-disciplinary summer course, emphasizing historical events, periods, and figures as depicted in global cinema. Students were asked to consider how history impacts a film’s production and reception, and if films can be treated as texts to both entertain and factually inform audiences. Subjects broadly ranged from feudal Japan in Hollywood films such as *The Last Samurai* and from Japanese filmmaker Kenji Mizoguchi. We also delved into perspectives of war, post-colonialism, and politics in film with *Casablanca*, *The Battle of Algiers*, and *Apocalypse Now*. Furthermore, the course dealt with race and representation throughout film history, including “Blaxploitation” of the 1970s, with *Cleopatra Jones*, and themes of control, hysteria, and consumerism in *The Thing from Another World* and *They Live*.

FILM 3900: Special Topics: War on Film, Fall 2019

As war has been depicted, glorified, and condemned in history and art, so, too, has it been in filmmaking. This course took a historical, investigative, and contextual approach to the War film genre and its portrayals of cultural/national ideologies, heroism, farce, horror, atrocities, and collective amnesia, with fundamental and evolving notions of courage, nobility, patriotism, honor, morality, and futility. Case study films included *La Grande Illusion*, *Casablanca*, *Dr. Strangelove*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Thin Red Line*, and *Dunkirk*.

FILM 3900: Special Topics: Visual Effects History in Cinema, Fall 2019

Films are pure magic in the sense of seeing a world unspool before our very eyes. Those who make them are the magicians, and those who craft painstaking illusions to enhance this experience are true wizards. Prevailing wisdom may teach us that the incorporation of visual effects into filmmaking is a relatively new process in the history of Cinema. Quite the contrary; they have bolstered motion picture stories nearly since the art form’s inception. Over the past century, these effects and the artists who conceive, construct, and generate them have filled our eyes with the awe and splendor of the moving visual image. The course tackled the vivid history of visual effects in films, from *Metropolis*, *The Invisible Man*, to *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Jurassic Park*, uncovering the myriad methods, techniques and figures responsible for some of the most iconic, unforgettable images in motion pictures.

HUM 3900: Disney: History & Mystery (Online), Spring 2020

Online course designed with newly appointed Humanities department lecturer Sydney Pearson online via the Canvas digital platform. We approached Walt Disney as a historical figure, along with facts and myths associated with him and the multi-billion-dollar entertainment company that bears his name. Students were expected to conduct independent research and investigations of Disney's history, film analyses, and his formula for unprecedented success in, and beyond, his lifetime.

FILM 3900: Special Topics: From Panel to Screen: The History of Comic Book Cinema, Fall 2020

A course that will trace the long-standing origin stories of comic book and graphic novel adaptations in Cinema, dating back to serials of the 1920s and 1930s, the creators and artists behind definitive heroes and villains in the DC and Marvel canons, along with the themes and metaphors represented therein.

RELATED PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE**Guest Lecturer, Philosophy Through Film, December 2019**

Invited by Professor of Philosophy, Sonja Tanner, Ph.D., to converse and debate with her students about perspectives of morality and humanity raised by the film topic of the week: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*.

Faculty Liaison, "90-Day Film Series," August 2019-present

Appointed as faculty support member for monthly joint community-campus events focusing on various aspects of film production and studies. Role included programming films and lecture topics, hosting, contacting and securing guest speakers, such as regional filmmakers.

College Preparation Seminar, June 2019

Co-led two-day intensive summer session alongside Professor Fernando Feliu-Moggi for area high schoolers and prospective UCCS students. Focusing on the film *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006) by director Guillermo del Toro, pupils were tasked with analysis of themes, narrative, and characters, as a primer for college level film studies, and coached to voice their perspectives in class discussion, group work, and writing assignments.

Guest Speaker, "Schlock Empire: Roger Corman and the B-movie Tradition," May 2019

Prepared and presented a public prologue for the evening theatrical production of *Little Shop of Horrors* at the Ent Center for the Arts, briefing attendees on Roger Corman's low-budget, high-energy aesthetic as a filmmaker and producer who launched the careers of many New Hollywood-era talents, while inspiring Howard Ashman and Alan Menken to write the music and lyrics for their acclaimed Off-Broadway adaptation, as performed at UCCS.

Spokesperson, "UCCS Visual and Performing Arts Newsletter," January 2019-present

Collected, synthesized, and wrote entries commenting on notable Film Studies Program achievements and occurrences. Distributed in print across the campus as part of the department's monthly information bulletin.

EDUCATION**University of Colorado at Boulder, 2010**

Master of Arts in Film History
Thesis: "The Catholic Hitchcock"
Honors: Dean of Arts & Sciences Academic List

University of Colorado at Boulder, 2009

Bachelor of Arts in Film Studies & Production
Honors: Dean of Arts & Sciences Academic List

ACADEMIC DISTINCITIONS**University of Colorado at Boulder, December 2008-August 2010/graduation**

Dean of College of Arts & Sciences Academic List: 3.9/4.0 GPA

PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS**The Catholic Hitchcock**

MA thesis U of Colorado, Boulder: 2010. *Masters Abstracts International 49-01*. Web. 7 Aug 2010

Alfred Hitchcock, among the most well-known and influential Hollywood filmmakers, was known primarily for his mastery of the suspense and thriller genres. His most famous and oft-cited films, such as *Rear Window*, *Vertigo*, and *Psycho*, dominate the discourse in regard to cinematic and critical studies of his work while a number of other films, and the themes therein, remain largely neglected. Hitchcock's Catholic faith played an integral role in such films, specifically *I Confess* and *The Wrong Man*. Both films center on characters of high moral resolve. A priest and a religious family man respectively find themselves embroiled in events and circumstances as wrongfully accused individuals. By Hitchcock's devices, their moral codes and theological beliefs ultimately clear the characters' names and restore their reputations. Using these case studies, as well as *The Lodger* and *Rope*, this thesis argues that Hitchcock himself took his Catholic upbringing and religious beliefs very seriously throughout his career. He implemented his faith into these films to create Catholic narratives, complementing his cognomen as "The Master of Suspense."

Strange Bedfellows: Ang Lee's Investigation of Food, Sex, and Culture

University of Colorado Journal: 14-18. Print. 2010.

Focusing on his films *Eat Drink Man Woman* and *Lust, Caution*, this essay explores internationally celebrated director Ang Lee's portrayal of Chinese culture and tradition through the prisms of food, family, sexuality, and ultimately, love.

The Cinematic Window: Looking Through the Fantasy

Consortium: A Record of Cross-disciplinary Inquiry: 111-116. Print. 2009

An analysis and delineation of film theory, from Hugo Munsterberg to Andre Bazin, and a hypothetical assertion that filmgoing is no passive, stationary experience, but an opportunity to peer through the "window" of the screen and become an active participant in the fantasy of cinema.

Eternal Struggle of the Moral Mind

Palimpsest: A Creative Journal of the Humanities: 241-245. Print. 2009.

Framing an argument with *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (dir. Michel Gondry/auth. Charlie Kaufman), this paper discusses cultural views regarding social norms relating to morality and immorality as presented by the film's characters

LANGUAGES

English— native language

Spanish—some proficiency in speaking and reading

MISCELLANEOUS

Developed and drafted all course syllabi and schedules

Programmed and projected all film screenings

Wrote, administered, and graded all quizzes, exams, and essay/paper prompts

Collaborated on joint topics and syllabi in co-taught courses

Facilitated and frequently worked with Special Needs Students and Students with Disabilities in the classroom

Average Faculty Course Questionnaire (FCQ) scores of 5.7 (of 6) across nine consecutive semesters

Aptitude in the Canvas digital teaching platform

Recording and editing audio/video lectures in Panopto application

Composed several student letters of recommendation for graduate studies or career opportunities

Nominee for the UCCS Student Government Association's Teacher of the Year, 2016

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Robert von Dassanowsky, Ph.D.
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Director, Film Studies Program
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