

The University of Toronto

RECENT TRENDS IN GERMAN CINEMA

German 250 / Spring 2015

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| Instructor: | ANGELICA FENNER | Dept: | German |
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Class meets on **WED 1 – 5 (Includes screening) in Innis 205**



DESCRIPTION

In this 25th anniversary year of the Berlin Republic, this course takes stock of the extraordinary proliferation and diversification of output in recent German cinema. We will examine how these films engage key issues facing the state and its populace since unification, but also trends in how they've been theorized and interpreted in historiographical scholarship of the past decade. Topics explored will include the legacy of East German communism, the commodification of history on film as well as the cinephilic citation of film history itself, globalization processes and their economic and social impact, the consolidation of the European Union, and Germany's emerging status as multicultural nation. We will also take account of the transformation of film financing and material production circumstances as a result of European funding structures, and contemplate whether it is possible to discern an emergent 'transnational aesthetic.' Both big budget blockbusters and independent films will be considered in regard to the implications for film content, style, and social content.

COURSE GOALS

Students will develop a familiarity with recent German social and political history as well as with its refraction, interrogation, and rearticulation in German cinema. In the process, we will review a variety of stylistic and aesthetic approaches and familiarize ourselves with key vocabulary of film form and analysis. Knowledge of the German language is by no means required, as all films are subtitled and course readings and class discussion are in English. However, the aural immersion in weekly screenings will certainly enhance and reinforce any language study you may be pursuing concurrently.

Our weekly meetings will involve a combination of lecture, sequence analysis, small group work, and class discussions guided by student work groups. Our four-hour meetings involve a two-hour seminar format followed by a short break before the ensuing screening, structured to introduce the film that will then be discussed in class the following week.

REQUIREMENTS / EVALUATION

Participation and Attendance / 15%

Panel Discussion of One Assigned Reading / 15%

Sequence Analysis / 20%

Film Review / 10%

Book Review / 10%

Take Home Essay Exam / 30 %

MATERIALS

Two or three textbooks for purchase as well as scanned readings available on our Blackboard website.