



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

Federico Fellini and Contemporary Italian Cinema

PROF. MARA PERBELLINI

Area of study:	Media and Communications
Area Code:	FS/CM310
Method of Instruction:	in-person and live-streaming (dual mode)
Participation:	synchronous/live only

Description

The course will introduce students to the magic world of the “director superstar” Federico Fellini, who influenced the art of cinema all over the world. Here’s a quotation from American director David Lynch, to give an example of how influential Fellini was to international directors: “If I had to choose films that represent, for me, examples of perfect filmmaking, the first would be 8 ½, for the way Federico Fellini managed to accomplish with film what mostly abstract painters do –namely, to communicate an emotion without ever saying anything in a direct manner, without ever explaining anything, just by a sort of sheer magic”. After “meeting” the Master, students will discover the main trends and filmmakers in contemporary Italian cinema. Since cinema is a mirror to our world, students will learn a lot about contemporary Italian society through the seventh art.

Course contents

In the first part of the course, after an introduction on cinema language and Italian cinema, we will focus on Federico Fellini’s career, from his debut as screenwriter during Neorealism to the masterpieces of the ‘50s and ‘60s. We will then explore the boundaries of contemporary Italian cinema with the most significant directors and their movies: Roberto Benigni, Gabriele Salvatores, Nanni Moretti, Matteo Garrone and Paolo Sorrentino.

Prerequisites

None

Method of instruction

Screenings of clips from films, lecture and film analysis, weekly discussion of films to be watched before class. Each week, starting from week 3, a couple of students will lead the film discussion together with the Professor (students will rotate in this role).

Course requirements

Each week students will watch a given film (available at the Mediateca). The following week the film will be discussed in class with the Professor. It is crucial that students watch the film prior to discussion in class. There will be a total of 9 mandatory films. Students will be asked to watch 1 other optional film for final exam: either by Fellini or by 1 of the contemporary directors presented in class (a list of optional films will be provided). Each student will also analyze and present in class an optional film (chosen by the Professor). The student will choose if the film will be by Fellini or a contemporary filmmaker.



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Credits

6 ECTS

Grading

Attendance	10% of final grade
Class participation (including film discussions and film presentation).	30% of final grade
Midterm written exam	30% of final grade
Final written exam	30% of final grade

Course readings and materials

All the readings will be available in a course pack and the lecturer's slides will be available on Blackboard.

Required reading (excerpts):

Peter Bondanella, *The cinema of Federico Fellini*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1992.
William Hope, *Italian Film Directors in the New Millennium*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2010.

Required films (with English subtitles):

Le notti di Cabiria(1956) by F. Fellini
La dolce vita(1959) by F. Fellini
Otto e mezzo 8 ½(1962) by F. Fellini
Roma (Fellini's Roma, 1972) by F. Fellini
La vita è bella (1998) by Roberto Benigni.
Educazione siberiana (2013) by Gabriele Salvatores
Gomorra (Gomorra, 2008) by Matteo Garrone
Mia Madre (2015) by Nanni Moretti.
La grande bellezza (2013) by Paolo Sorrentino.

Instructor bio

Prof. Mara Perbellini is a dramatist, headwriter and scriptwriter for major film and TV production companies. After her B.A. in Italian Humanities and her master's degree in Screenwriting at UCSC of Milan, she studied filmmaking at the New York Film Academy (NYC and L.A.-Universal Studios) and at the London Academy of Radio, Film & TV: while there, she directed, wrote and edited 4 short films.

In 2006 Mara joined the Faculty of IES Abroad Milan, where she teaches History of Italian Cinema and filmmaking. In 2012 she joined the Faculty of Università Cattolica where she also teaches creative storytelling with Prof. Provenzi. She's also tutoring Italian film students at Università Cattolica, both for the Screenwriting Master Program and the film-making summer course at the School of Visual Arts in NYC.

She worked as a story analyst for Rai Fiction and Eagle Pictures. She also worked as assistant director on the TV-movie "Una famiglia per caso" for RAI 1.

Her first commissioned work was the TV animation series *Uffa che Pazienza!* (Rai) which earned the Pulcinella Award at Cartoons on the Bay 2008. Since then, she wrote many prime-time mini-series and series, such as *Distretto di polizia 8* (Canale 5), *Ci vediamo a Portofino* (DAP), *La vita che corre* (Rai 1), *Eleonora Duse* (Publispei) and *Ombre sulla neve* (Casanova Multimedia). In 2009 she got an Award for best screenplay at the Fiuggi International Family Film Festival with the film "Il sirenetto".



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Recent filmography

- 2020: Head-writer of the tv series *Marta & Eva* (20 episodes; 3zero2 / Rai)
- 2020: Writer of 7 episodes of the animated tv series *Nina & Olga* (enanimation / Rai)
- 2019: Screenwriter of *The last days of the Republic*, an epic historical film that won the StoryLab competition 2019.
- 2016-19: Writer of 2 episodes of the TV series *Made in Italy* (Taodue – The family for Mediaset / Amazon Prime, 2016-19).
- 2018-19: Head-writer of the TV series *Penny on M.A.R.S.*, seasons 2 (10 eps) and 3 (13 eps; 3zero2-The Walt Disney Company Italia).

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