# History and Industry of International Cinema

## Prof. Armando Fumagalli

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The aim of this course is to analyse the history of International cinema and its development both as an art and as an industry. Particular emphasis will be placed on the Hollywood system in its complexity and *modus operandi*, by analysing its practices of production.

The special topic of this year will be the cinema of Frank Capra.

At the end of the course, students will be able to identify the most important trends of worldwide cinema, understand the creative path that led to the making of a film starting from the analysis of its historical-industrial background, and “recognise” the essential features of films.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*A summary of the history of cinema and its industry.*

– The birth of cinema and the strengthening of the narrative, visual and audio language.

– Essential stages of the history of cinema, between America and Europe.

– The relationship between cinema and literature, cinema and journalism, cinema and theatre, from the Classic Age to the present.

– Cinema - the emergence of mainstream production as an element of soft power within a country.

– The role of screenwriters, directors, producers.

– The difference between the US and the Italian (and European) system

*The Hollywood system today: major companies, production companies, talents (writers and directors), talent agencies.*

– Professional practices in Hollywood.

– The transformation of major studios and the introduction of new players, such as Netflix and Amazon.

– The role of talent agencies in managing talents and in *packaging* projects; the role of *producers* and *talents*.

– The dialectic exchange between creatives and executives in the making of a film.

– Analysis of different stages of the creative process, production and distribution of a film, from its creation up to distribution to cinemas.

– The importance of development in the Hollywood system.

*Special subject: the cinema of Frank Capra*

– The story of Frank Capra and his battle for creative autonomy.

– Analysis of some masterpieces of the Thirties and the Forties.

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

K. Thompson - D. Bordwell, *Film History. An Introduction*, Mc Graw- Hill, New York 2010; or Italian transl. *Storia del cinema. Un’introduzione,* McGraw-Hill, Milano, 2010 ss.. [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/kristin-thompson-david-bordwell-jeff-smith/storia-del-cinema-unintroduzione-9788838654800-705594.html)

A. Fumagalli, *Creatività al potere. Da Hollywood alla Pixar passando per l’Italia,* Lindau, Torino, 2013 [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/fumagalli-armando/creativita-al-potere-9788867080991-182188.html) or (for those who do not read Italian) E.J. Epstein, *The Big Picture. Money and Power in Hollywood,* Random House, New York 2006.

F. Martel, *Mainstream* (any edition in different language) Feltrinelli, Milano, 2010; if an edition in English is not available, the book can be substituted by Robert Iger, *The Ride of a Lifetime,* Penguin RandomHouse, New York 2019.

F. Capra, *The Name above the Title. An Autobiography,* 1971; or It. transl. *Il nome sopra il titolo*, Minimum fax, Roma 2016. [*Acquista da VP*](https://librerie.unicatt.it/scheda-libro/frank-capra/il-nome-sopra-il-titolo-la-vita-meravigliosa-di-un-maestro-del-cinema-9788833893761-708811.html)

Students are requested to study the books completely (included Bordwell – Thompson)

Students attending a semester course (4, 5 or 6 CFU according to degree and Faculty) are requested to study only the first two texts of the reading list (Thompson-Bordwell and Fumagalli).

Students are recommended to check on lecturer’s webpage further details or changes in the program.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures and discussion in class about the different topics that will be illustrated.

During the single-subject course dedicated to Frank Capra, at least two of his most popular films will be shown and commented in class.

In odd years (2023, 2025, etc…) a summer three weeks optional course of Film making at the School of Visual Arts in New York will be organised for students who freely want to participate. The course program and the time period will be available on the International Relations and Almed websites starting from the beginning of 2023.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral assessment (duration: about 20 minutes) divided into four groups of questions (one for each textbook for students of the annual course; two for each textbook for students of the semester course). After the first question, that is more general, students may be asked to answer more specific questions on the topics emerged during the discussion. The final mark will result from the sum of the points obtained in the four answers (25% for every group of questions for students of annual course; 50% for every group for students of semester course).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending the course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)