

MAP Expressive Culture: *Science Fiction Cinema*
Weds. 12:30 to 4:30, (V55.0750)
Office Hrs. Tues. 12-2 p.m. and by Appointment
Rm. 652, Cinema Studies, 721 Broadway, x8-1609

Science fiction cinema is clearly one of America's most popular and lucrative genres, and one that has evolved from the campy, comic book inspired B grade flicks of the '50s, into the blockbuster, computer imaged "space operas" and utopian-dystopian spectacles of the contemporary imagination. While multivalent and far ranging in their themes and visionary horizons, science fiction movies' great appeal and power have always been at least twofold. One attraction of the genre is its ability to explore the political and cultural issues, the psychic fears and hopes of the social present, masked and subtly woven into 'future world' narratives. As importantly, science fiction cinema has the power to imagine our future in dystopian or utopian, outcomes, in societies and worlds driven by the ever quickening demands and pace of technological innovation, an accelerating sense of time compression, an encroaching sense of the 'post-human,' cyborg condition and the possibility of ecological exhaustion. Following a roughly historical trajectory starting in the 'Cold War' '50s, we will explore the representational and aesthetic styles, and expressive trends of the genre as it rockets us into the social, and off-planet worlds of our techno-future.

Course Requirements:

- [1] Approximately 15 page minimum, final essay due (tba). (50% of the final grade).
- [2] Four short 'critical response' papers (5 pages minimum) that will provide, and develop, the concept, premise or argument of your final paper. (30% of final grade)
- [3] Participation in the class and seminar discussions and regular attendance are essential. Each student will bring to class two written questions about the screenings/readings. (20% of final grade)
- [4] All work must be word processed and come in on time. *No late papers will be accepted.*

Required Readings:

Science Fiction Cinema. by Geoff King & Tanya Krzywinska
The Society of Spectacle. by Guy DeBord
Art & Fear. by Paul Virilio
Liquid Metal: The Science Fiction Reader. Sean Redmond ed.

Expressive Culture: *Science Fiction Cinema*
Screenings & Readings

- 9/6 The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)
Reading: Science Fiction Cinema by Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska
- 9/13 Forbidden Planet (1956)
Reading: Science Fiction Cinema; Liquid Metal, Chapter 8
- 9/20 Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1953)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapter 8; Society of Spectacle by Guy DeBord
- 9/27 The Incredible Shrinking Man (1957)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. I; Society of Spectacle
Critical Response Paper due Today
- 10/4 Demon Seed (1977)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 1
- 10/11 Barbarella (1968)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 2
Critical Response Paper due Today
- 10/18 Zardoz (1974)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 2
- 10/25 Coma (1978)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 2
- 11/1 Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 3
Critical Response Paper due Today
- 11/8 Koyaanisqatsi (1983)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 3
- 11/15 Minority Report (2002)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 3
- 11/29 Blade Runner (1982)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 5; Art and Fear by Paul Virilio
Critical Response Paper due Today
- 12/6 Solaris (2002)
Reading: Art and Fear; Liquid Metal, Chapt. 5
- 12/13 Killer Klowns from Outer Space (1988)
Reading: Liquid Metal, Chapt. 6; Art and Fear