



SUBJECT DESCRIPTION**50915 Mise en scène**

Course Name:	Graduate Program in Media Arts and Production
Level:	400
Number of Credit points:	8
Prerequisites:	None
Grading:	Graded

HANDBOOK DESCRIPTION

Students develop advanced skills in visual style. Students have the opportunity to examine mise-en-scene in a range of screen works. They study in depth the interrelationship of elements which comprise a particular "look" in film and video and the way this contributes to film genre. Through individual research, seminar presentations and production exercises students develop skills in planning a visual and sound style for their film and video or new media work.

CONTRIBUTION TO GRADUATE PROFILE

Students who complete this subject should:-

- have developed skills in film production with an emphasis on visual style
- have had the opportunity to develop their conceptual skills and critical thinking in relation to the visual style area of media production
- have some knowledge of screen culture, aesthetic and industry issues with relation to screen production
- have had the opportunity to develop a short film or video project

OBJECTIVES

- a) To give the students a specialised background in mise en scene and to develop their skills in planning a visual and sound style for film and video works with an emphasis on narrative drama. Most of these skills are applicable also to multi-media and formalised, pre-planned documentary.
- b) To acquaint students with film theory, analysis and criticism and the study of screen works with respect to mise-en-scène
- c) To allow students the opportunity to develop a planned visual style for their upcoming media productions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Lecture and seminars will introduce students to various visual regimes and styles of mise en scene through the study of existing film, video and new media works. Students will develop presentations to be delivered in class analysing the styles of selected media productions. Students undertake in and out of class exercises to develop skills in understanding, choosing and planning visual styles and in analysing and researching mise en scene.

CONTENT

Regimes of mise en scene including Naturalism, Realism, Surrealism, Minimalism, Abstraction and Animation
Elements of visual style: directors' use of space, time, framing, camera movement, use of lenses, camera height, film and video stocks, exposure, lighting styles, art direction including costume and set design, editing styles and performance styles

Conventional and alternative coverage (or direction) of scenes

Viewing of selected works and excerpts which demonstrate particular styles of direction

How to design storyboards and floor plans and written proposals for the mise en scene of a film, video or new media work

ASSESSMENT

Assessment item 1. In class presentation of an analysis of the visual style of a recognised film or video work, accompanied by a written 1000 word essay

Objectives: a, b

Value: 30%

(This consists of 50% by peer assessment of group presentation and 50% essay)

Due: In class as scheduled with your lecturer

Task: In groups, students choose an existing, well-recognised film, video or new media work and give a 10-15 minute presentation analysing the elements of visual/aural style particular to the work. Each student in the group is to write an analytical essay on one or more elements of the film's style after class discussion of the presentation. Each student's essay is to be on a different aspect or analysis of the film. These essays are due ONE WEEK after the presentation. Length 1,000 words. Essays must be clearly presented: typed, double-spaced with proper margins. No emails will be accepted.

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of understanding of the concepts and elements of mise en scene/style
- Evidence of relevant research and reading on the chosen work
- Ability to select and organise material, present clearly and within the time allotted for the presentation.
- Evidence of ability to analyse and write a well-organised, original essay.
- Evidence of active engagement in your own group and in feedback to other groups in class.

Assessment item 2: Directing Exercise

Objectives: a, c

Value: 20%

Due: In class as scheduled with your lecturer

Task: The detailed parameters for this exercise will be given in class, and will include your drawing a storyboard and floor plan (with notes on the lighting style) for an original scene, including brief dialogue. Your preparation will involve analysing changes in characters' emotional moods and answering a list of "who-where-why" questions which will be given in class. Students may work in pairs on this assignment, if they wish. Students will be expected to hand in their completed exercise. Some may be presented in class for discussion and feedback. In this instance, storyboards are to be photocopied so that everyone in class can follow them during your presentation.

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of understanding of the concepts and elements of mise en scene/style
- Evidence of knowledge of how as a director to cover a scene to convey the needed information and desired emotional impact
- Evidence of competence and originality in choosing an appropriate coverage style and relevant shots

Assessment item 3: Portfolio or Essay

Objectives: a, b, c

Value: 50%

Due: Week 13

Task

Portfolio: A portfolio of work outlining the visual style for a short media project which students plan to make, preferably in preparation for an MA project or possibly for a film planned for production

outside of UTS. This should be a quality submission, and a useful tool for pre-production and for presentation in obtaining finance, crew and cast. If a film or video it should include:

- A sample storyboard of a scene or scenes
- Copies of visual sources which you have drawn upon in research and which communicate more about the style of the planned work
- A well-written rationale for the style chosen, considering theme, genre, emotional intent or other relevant issues
- A clear, written description of the style, encompassing issues relevant to the work such as design, interface, overall look, visual genre, lens plan, framing, camera movement, editing style, lighting and stock, sets, locations, costume, drawing style and colour.
- A discussion of your planned approaches to sound in production and post-production. Your own photographs and/or drawings of relevant aspects of the intended work
- If visual sources are presented on video, this reel should be no more than 5 minutes in length

If the project is a new media work the required portfolio items should be discussed with the lecturer.

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of student's skills in planning a visual and sound style for a film and video work with reference to all aspects of mise-en-scène.
- Evidence of original research and analysis of mise-en-scène as it relates to their visual media production work.
- Evidence of the student's capacity to reference similar or contrasting screen works in developing their own approach to mise-en-scène.
- The development of a portfolio that in all respects is clear and well presented.

OR

Essay: An analytical essay of no less than 2000 words and no more than 2500 words, analyzing the mise-en-scène of a film chosen by you. It should be a different film to the one you presented in class. This essay requires foot-noted research, original thought, and should cover all relevant aspects of the film's style.

Assessment criteria:

- Demonstrated knowledge of mise-en-scène in relationship to concepts discussed in seminars and in the relevant context of screen theory analysis and criticism.
- Evidence of a clear and well supported argument that indicates an understanding of all aspects of mise-en-scène.
- Demonstrated ability to present a coherently written and articulate essay which shows evidence of thorough research and original thought.
- The quality of the written essay, which should be grammatically and typographically correct, with consistent referencing of sources.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Completion of all three assessment tasks listed above.

Since class discussion and participation in activities form an integral part of this subject, students are expected to attend a minimum of 80% of classes. Should students experience difficulties fulfilling this requirement, they are advised to contact their lecturer. Students who have a valid reason for extended absence from class (e.g. illness) may be required to complete additional assignment work to ensure they achieve the subject objectives.

TEXT AND REFERENCES

A Subject Reader will be available

Albrecht, Donald. *Designing Dreams. Modern Architecture in The Movies* Harper & Rowe 1989

Anobile, Richard J (ed) *The Maltese Falcon - A frame reconstruction*. Flare Books/Published by Avon 1974

Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics Of Space* -. Beacon Press 1964

Barsacq, Leon *Caligari's Cabinet and Other Grand Illusions - The History of Film Design*, A Plume Book 1970

Bordwell, D & Thompson, K, *Film Art - An introduction (5th Edition)* David Bordwell/Kristen Thompson. Alfred A Knopf. 19

Bordwell, David, *On The History of Film Style*. Harvard University Press. 1997

Bresson, Robert, *Notes on Cinematography* Copenhagen, 1997 edn

Geduld, Harry M, *Film Makers on Film Making* ed. Indiana University Press. 1969

Kawin, Bruce F, *How Movies Work* University of California Press, 1992

Katz, Stephen, *Cinematic Motion - Film Directing. A workshop for staging scenes*_. A Michael Wiese Production Book 1992

Katz, Stephen, *Film Directing Shot By Shot - Visualising from Concept to Screen*_. Michael Wiese Productions. 1991

Lumet, Sidney *Making Movies*, London 1995

Martin, Adrian (ed) *Film: Matters Of Style* (NB Mise En Scene Is Dead. Adrian Martin,

The Mystique Of Mise En Scene Revisited. Barrett Hodsdon, Thanks for your Heart, Bart, John Flaus) Continuum Vol 5 No 2

Monaco, James, *How to Read a Movie* Oxford university Press, New York, 2000

projector.