

WLLC 4980  
Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures  
**The Films of Federico Fellini: A Cinematic  
Voyage**

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Room: Lang 212  
Office: 405K

Time: W 2-4:50  
Office hours: M 2-3 & F 1-2

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### **Course Description:**

In this course, we will examine the development of Federico Fellini's cinematic style and themes from the 1950's to the 1980's. We will survey the cinematic corpus of one of the most universally celebrated and influential filmmakers of the twentieth century from his early films rooted in neorealism to his more surreal, personal and highly stylized cinematic visions.

### **Course objectives:**

Our primary focus will be the analysis of filmic texts that span several decades with emphasis on his evolution as a filmmaker and his development as the *maestro* of Italian cinema. Topics (*subject to change*) to be explored:

- Exploring Fellini's authentic vision. What does that mean and how do we interpret it? How can we define "authentic" as it pertains to Fellini's cinema?
- Early roots: From cartoonist > screenwriter > director.
- Special emphasis on his "artistic peak": *La dolce vita* and *8 ½*
- Fellini's upbringing and personal life: the dueling muses Giulietta Masina and Sandra Milo
- Giulietta Masina: *La strada* / *Il bidone* / *Le notti di Cabiria* / *ecc...*
- Italian language, culture, history through a "Felliniesque" lens: From the post-war "slackers" of *I vitelloni* to the superficiality of Roman high life in *La dolce vita* to a psychedelic vision of Ancient Rome in *Satyricon*
- Common themes and tropes: marital infidelity; boredom and laziness; dreams and dreamscapes; etc.

- Influence of Carl Jung on Fellini's works: Exploring the authentic nature of man through dreams and cinema
- His cinematic and personal relationships: Marcello Mastroianni, Nino Rota, Sandra Milo, etc.

### **Required Reading:**

1. *The Cinema of Federico Fellini* by Peter Bondanella. Princeton University Press, 1992

### **Optional Reading:**

2. *Fellini: The Artist* by Edward Murray. Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1985.
3. *Federico Fellini: His Life and Work* by Kezich, Tullio

### **Required Viewings:**

1. Lo sciecco bianco (*The White Shiek*) (1952)
2. I vitelloni (1953)
3. La strada (1954)
4. Le notti di Cabiria (*The Nights of Cabiria*) (1957)
5. La dolce vita (1960)
6. 8 ½ (1963)
7. Giulietta degli spiriti (*Juliet of the Spirits*) (1965)
8. Spirits of the Dead: Toby Dammit (1968)
9. Satyricon (1969)
10. Roma (1972)
11. Amarcord (1973)
12. Città delle donne (*City of Women*) (1980)
13. E la nave va (*And the Ship Sails on*) (1983)
14. La voce della luna (*The Voice of the Moon*) (1990)
15. Fellini degli spiriti: Documentary (2020)

### **Presentation Viewings:**

1. Il bidone (*The Swindler*) (1955)
2. L'amore in città: *Un'agenzia matrimoniale* (1953)
3. Boccaccio '70: *Le tentazioni del dottor Antonio* (1962)
4. I Clowns (1970)
5. Fellini's Casanova (1976)

**\*Where and how can I watch these movies?** Kanopy / UNT Media Library (online streaming or physical copy) / YouTube or other online platform

### **Course Overview:**

**ATTENDANCE:** You are expected to attend class faithfully except in the case of documented emergencies, illness, or official UNT events, about which I expect to be informed in advance. You are given **one excused absence** that will be tallied at the end of the semester. Missing more than one class in other circumstances will result in a penalty of 3% to your final grade per absence.

**PARTICIPATION AND PREPAREDNESS:** In addition to your physical presence, I also expect you to be intellectually present in class, to stay on topic and engaged with whatever immediate question we have in view. Participation includes reading or watching assigned material thoughtfully and punctually, taking relevant notes, and generally doing

things that contribute toward the creation of a productive learning environment for all of us. In short, please come to class prepared, ready and willing to discuss the topic of the day! All in-class and out-of-class expectations are cited in the weekly schedule below.

**PRESENTATIONS:** At some point in the semester, you will be responsible for analyzing one of the supplemental films or themes in the form of a **20-30 minute Power Point presentation**. The presentations are spaced out over the course of the semester, and the sign-up sheet will circulate in class on **Wednesday, January 28**. The topics are listed below in the weekly breakdown and you are required to reach out to me in regard to your chosen topic. I encourage you to research ahead of time so that you choose the most appropriate topic for you. Be sure to **write down the date of your presentation**. A grading rubric will be posted on Canvas so you are aware of how you will be graded. You must turn in a **two paged typed summary** of your presentation along with the Power Point. Please include a slide with all used sources.

The purpose of these presentations is to analyze the films as coherent works of art, explaining their themes to the historical questions and narrative tropes discussed in class. As such, you should summarize concisely the plot of the main film in order to explicate its particular approach to the world of Fellini. If your research takes a detour, this is fine, just please discuss it with me. Requirements:

- \*You must refer to the section in Bondanella's book (our required text) that covers your film/topic
- \*Each topic requires that you watch **one** additional film that is not listed under "required viewing"
- \*You must show one clip from your film of focus to show students not to exceed 5 minutes
- \*You must turn in a 2-paged typed summary on the day of your presentation

#### **Presentation topics:**

1. **A tyrant, a swindler and a prostitute walk into a bar...: *La strada* / *Il bidone* / *Le notti di Cabiria***
2. **From neorealism to surrealism: Fellini's short films *Un'agenzia matrimoniale* and *Le tentazioni del dottor Antonio***
3. **The Shining Stars of Fellini-verse: Giulietta Masina, Nino Rota, Marcello Mastroianni, Anita Ekberg, etc...**
4. **Life is a Carnival: From *La strada* to *I Clowns***
5. **Sexual (de)evolution?: From Fellini's *Satyricon* to *Casanova***
6. **Impact and influence: Who influenced Fellini and who did he influence? Fellini's impact on global cinema**
7. **Fellini from 1980-1990: The later years**
8. **Feminist or Foe? Fellini and the Woman: The (mis)representation of the female mind/body in Fellini**

**QUIZZES:** We will have **3 online Canvas** quizzes this semester to assess your grasp of essential details and themes. They will be evenly spaced throughout the semester (*see below*). You will have from **8 am- 10 pm on the assigned day** to complete the quiz and no extensions or make-ups will be given.

**FINAL EXAM:** There will be a cumulative final exam administered **online** via Canvas on the designated day: **Wednesday, May 6**

#### **Final Grade**

Your final grade will be the weighted average of the following criteria:

Presentation	30%
Attendance / Participation / Preparedness	30%
Quizzes (3)	20%
Final Exam	20%
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TOTAL	100%

**\*ALWAYS CHECK CANVAS FOR UPDATES AND IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS! \***

#### **Course Policies and General Information:**

**PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS:** You may use electronic devices – tablets, computers, and the like – for note-taking or relevant activities. Do not abuse the privilege.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** I expect you to conform to the highest standard of academic integrity. Any other form of academic misrepresentation (passing off someone else's work as your own, cheating during tests, etc.) will be both punished in this course (at minimum, a grade of zero on the assignment in question) and reported to Academic Affairs. If you are unsure as to whether something is all right, it is probably not, but you are welcome to check with me or consult the University Policy on Academic Dishonesty.

**S.P.O.T. EVALUATIONS:** At the end of term, you will receive an e-mail with a link to a confidential survey to evaluate this class. Please take the time to fill this out: we read the surveys and appreciate your honest feedback.

**DISABILITY ACCOMODATION:** The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Students needing a reasonable academic accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the student will request their letter of accommodation. ODA will provide faculty with a reasonable accommodation letter via email to begin a private discussion regarding a student's specific needs in a course. Students may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding their accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website.

**ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>

**SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, & ASSAULT:** UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources>.

The UNT Survivor Advocates can be reached by emailing [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](mailto:SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or calling 940-565-2648. The UNT Survivor Advocates connect students who have been impacted by violence to resources (counseling, health, safety, academics, legal, etc.), and act as their advocate. They can assist a student by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change (if needed), and connecting students to the many other resources that are available, both on and off campus. They are here to help! For

## **Weekly Syllabus: (16 weeks)**

**I. January 14:** Introduction / Syllabus / Questions / Who is Federico Fellini?

Power Point: Course Overview / Introduction, early life & works

Reading for next week: Ch. 1 & 2: Origins & Neorealist Apprenticeship (pg. 3-67)

**In-class viewing:** *Lo sceicco bianco*

To watch for next week: *I vitelloni*

**II. January 21:** Reading and film discussion: Early life / *Lo sceicco bianco* and *I vitelloni*

Reading for next week: Bottom of pg. 100-114 (*La strada*)

Watch for next week: *La strada*

**III. January 28:** Reading and film discussion: Giulietta Masina and *La strada*

Reading for next week: Bottom of pg. 121- top of 132 (*Le notti di Cabiria*)

**In-class viewing:** *Nights of Cabiria (Le notti di Cabiria)*

**IV. February 4:** Film and reading discussion conclusions: Masina magic: *La strada* / *Le notti di Cabiria*

**Presentation 1:** *Il bidone*

**V. February 11: In class viewing:** *La dolce vita*

Reading for next week: pg. 132-149

**CANVAS QUIZ 1**

**VI. February 18:** Film and reading discussion: *La dolce vita*

**Presentation 2:** Fellini shorts: *L'amore in città* and *Le tentazioni del dottor Antonio*

Reading for next week: Bottom of pg. 163-178

Watch for next week: *8 ½*

**VII. February 25:** Film and reading discussion: *8 ½*

Reading for next week: pg. 298-307

Watch for next week: *Giulietta degli spiriti* (Juliet of the Spirits)

**VIII. March 4:** Film and reading discussion: *Giulietta degli spiriti*

**In class viewing:** *Toby Dammit*

**Presentation 3:** *The Others: The people behind (beside?) Fellini*

**Watch for March 18:** *Satyricon*

Reading for March 18: pg. 239-261

**IX. March 11: SPRING BREAK**

**X. March 18:** Film and reading discussion: *Toby Dammit & Satyricon*

Reading for next week: pg.193-205

Watch for next week: *Roma*

**XI. March 25:** Film and reading discussion: *Roma*

**Presentation 4:** *I Clowns*

**Watch for next week:** *Amarcord*

Read for next week: 264-284

**CANVAS QUIZ 3**

**XII. April 1:** Film and reading discussion: *Amarcord*

**Presentation 5:** *Casanova*

Reading for next week: pg. 318-326

**Watch for next week:** *Città delle donne (City of Women)*

**XIII. April 8:** Film and reading discussion: *Città delle donne*

**In-class viewing:** *E la nave va (And the Ship Sails On)*

Reading for next week: pg. 213-219

**XIV. April 15:** Film and reading discussion: *E la nave va*

**Presentation 6:** *Fellini's impact on global cinema*

Reading for next week: pg. 327-333

**Watch for next week:** *La voce della luna*

**XV. April 22:** Film and reading discussion: *La voce della luna*

**In-class viewing:** *Fellini degli spiriti* (2020 documentary)

**CANVAS QUIZ 3**

**XVI. April 29:** Reflections and Review: In class discussion and conclusions

**Presentation 7:** *Fellini: The later years*

**Presentation 8:** *Fellini and the Woman*

**Final Exam: Online (via Canvas) Wednesday, May 6**