THE CINEMA OF ATTRACTIONS/ H72.0106
Spring 2011
Department of Cinema Studies
Tuesdays, 6pm-10pm

Professor Gregory Zinman, gzinman@mac.com
Office hours: by appointment

COURSE BLOG: http://thecinemaofattractions.wordpress.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Tom Gunning’s theory of a “cinema of attractions” has led to a considerable reexamination of early film and its relationship to the cinematic avant-garde. This course seeks to extend the notion of an “attractions”-based cinema through the present day, via an investigation of diverse moving image practices that foreground spectacle via technological innovation. Cinema practices to be considered will include avant-garde film, video art, music video, online video, and Hollywood blockbusters. Such considerations will illuminate formal convergences while highlighting ideological differences, and will help to shape an understanding of how mainstream and avant-garde moving image practices operate as interpenetrating cinemas that inform one another. Readings will draw on film and cultural theory, with an emphasis on issues of aesthetics, visual pleasure, and the technologies that have shaped and refined spectacular cinema in its various manifestations.

REQUIRED TEXT:
*The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007) Available at the NYU Bookstore

*All other readings will be available as PDFs and weblinks on the course blog.*
Password for course readings: attractions

SYLLABUS

1/25: The Cinema of Attractions
Readings:


Screenings:
Chuck Jones, *Duck Amuck* (1953)
Lumiere Bros.:
Workers Exiting the Factory (1895)
Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat (1895)
Serpentine Dance (1899)

Méliès shorts:
The Vanishing Lady (1896)
The Conjurer (1899)
A Trip to the Moon (1902)
The Magic Lantern (1903)

Edwin S. Porter, The Gay Shoe Clerk (1903)
Emile Cohl, Fantasmagorie (1908), The Hasher’s Delirium (1910)

Feature:
Edgar Wright, Scott Pilgrim vs. The World (2010)

2/1: User-generated: early cinema exhibition practices and new media
FIRST BLOG POST DUE BEFORE CLASS

Readings:
Rick Altman, “Lectures, sound effects, and the itinerant exhibition model,” in Silent Film Sound (New York: Columbia, 2005), 133-156.


Screenings:
Andy C. and MC GQ, Slayer Goes to Church (2010)

Lumière bros:
1. Workers Coming out of the Factory
2. Congress of Photographers
3. Gardener & the Hose
4. Card Game
5. Cavalrymen
6. Feeding the Baby
7. Knocking Down the Wall
8. Train Pulling into the Station
9. The Meat Vendor
10. Three Slapstick Films
11. The Inauguration of President McKinley
Artist Javier Morales’ YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/crystalsculpture

*In Bb 2.0* (2010)
Michael Bell Smith, *Chapters 1-12 of R. Kelly's Trapped in the Closet Synced and Played Simultaneously* (2005)
Marshmellow/Yeah Yeah Yeahs “Cheated Hearts” music video (2006)

**Feature:**

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**2/8: Avant-Garde I: avant-garde attractions**

**Readings:**


**Screenings**

Walther Ruttmann, *Opus I* (1921)
Hans Richter, *Rhythmus 21* (1921)
Man Ray, *Le Retour à la Raison* (1923)
Viking Eggeling, *Symphonie Diagonale* (1924)
Fernand Léger and Dudley Murphy, *Ballet mecanique* (1924)
Dziga Vertov, *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929) (clip)
Len Lye, *Rainbow Dance* (1936)
Oskar Fischinger, *Motion Painting no. 1* (1947)

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**2/15: Avant-Garde II: Third Eye Attractions: perception and psychedelia**

**3-5 PAGE FORMAL ANALYSIS DUE**

**Readings:**


**Screenings:**

Carolee Schneeman, *Fuses* (1968)
Jordan Belson, *Samadhi* (1972)
José Antonio Sistiaga, *...ere erera baleibu izik subua aruaren...*, (1968-1970) (clip)
Frank Mouris, *Frank Film* (1973)

Feature:

2/22: Mainstream attractions I: The Musical
Readings:


Screening:
Lloyd Bacon and Busby Berkeley, “By a Waterfall” sequence, *Footlight Parade* (1933)
Stanley Donen, *Royal Wedding* (1951) (clip)
Jean-Luc Godard, *A Woman is a Woman* (1961) (clip)
Mani Ratnam, *Dil Se* (1998) (clip)

Feature:

3/1: Spectacle scrutinized


Screenings:
Leni Riefenstahl, *Olympia* (1938) (clip)
Maurice Lemaître, *Le film est déjà commencé?* (1951) (clip)
Bruce Connor, *A MOVIE* (1958)
Nam June Paik, *Zen for Film* (1962)
Andy Warhol, *Sleep* (1963)

Feature:
3/8: Crossing Over or Selling Out? Attractions for Sale

SECOND BLOG POST DUE BEFORE CLASS

Screenings:
Oskar Fischinger, Muratti cigarettes commercial (1934)
Norman McLaren, Dollar Dance, NFB Canada war bond ad (1943)
Alfred Hitchcock/Salvador Dali, Spellbound (1945) (clip)
Joshua Light Show/John Schlesinger Midnight Cowboy (1968) (clip)
Jeremy Blake, “Round the Bend” music video for Beck (2002)


Feature:
Bob Rafelson, Head (1968)

3/15: NO CLASS/SPRING BREAK

3/22: Mainstream Attractions II: The Music Video

Readings:

John Mundy, I Want My MTV…and my movies with music,” in Popular Music on Screen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 221-247.

Screenings (most will be on the class blog):
Max Fleischer, Betty Boop in Minnie the Moocher (1935)
Norman McLaren and Evelyn Lambart, Begone Dull Care (1949)
Bruce Connor, Breakaway (1966)
Mick Rock, David Bowie’s “The Jean Genie” (1972)
Kit Fitzgerald and John Sanborn with Dean Winkler, “Big Electric Cat” (1982)
James Rizzi, Tom Tom Club’s “Pleasure of Love” (1983)
Philip Michael Thomas, “Just the Way I Planned It” (1985)
Jim Blashfield, Michael Jackson’s “Leave Me Alone,” (1987)
Hype Williams, Missy Elliott’s “The Rain (Supa Dupa Fly)” (1997)
Shynola, Junior Senior’s “Move Your Feet” (2003)
SAAM TV, Simian Mobile Disco’s “Hustler” (2007)
Jim Swaffield, R. Kelly, Victor Mignatti, Trapped in the Closet (2007), (clip)
Eric Wareheim, Major Lazer’s “Pon de Floor” (2009)
Gaspar Noé, Enter the Void title sequence (2010)
Kanye West, “Runaway” (2010)

Feature:

3/29: Art World Attractions I: the cinematic avant-garde goes to the gallery
Reading:


Screenings (some will be on the class blog):
Yoko Ono, Sky TV (1966)
Anthony McCall, Line Describing a Cone (1973)
Dan Graham, Helix/Spiral (1973)
Peter Campus, Three Transitions (1973)
Richard Serra, Boomerang (1974)
Salla Tykkä, Lasso (2001)
Jennifer Steinkamp, X-Ray Eyes (2001)
Cory Archangel, Super Mario Clouds (2002)
Andrea Fraser, Official Welcome (2003)
Young Hae-Chang Heavy Industries, Cunnilingus in North Korea (2003)
Pipilotti Rist, Pour Your Body Out (7354 Cubic Meters), (2008)
Ryan Trecartin, Sibling Topics (section a) (2009)

Feature:
Matthew Barney, Cremaster 3 (2002)

4/5: Art World Attractions II: appropriations
Readings:


Screenings:
Joseph Cornell, Rose Hobart (1936)
Dana Birnbaum, Technology/Transformations (1976)
Jean-Luc Godard, *Histoire(s) du Cinema* (1989) (clip)

Hitchcock (on the class blog):
Martijn Hendrik, *Untitled* (The Birds without the birds, or give us today our daily terror) (2007)

4/12: Transnational Attractions

**ONE-PAGE FINAL PROPOSAL/CLIP SELECTION DUE ON BLOG BEFORE START OF CLASS**

Readings:


Screenings:
Ramesh Sippy, *Sholay* (1975) (clip)

Feature:

4/19: Narrative Attractions I: pre-digital blockbusters

Readings:

http://canopycanopycanopy.com/4/star_wars__a_new_heap
Screenings:
Ray Harryhausen, *Jason and the Argonauts* (1963) (clip)
Steven Spielberg, *Jaws* (1975) (clip)

Feature:
George Lucas, *Star Wars* (1977)

4/26: Narrative Attractions II: the digital revolution
Reading:

Screenings:

Feature:

5/3: Crowdsourced: Make Your Own Attractions

Readings:

Screenings:
PS 260, *The Shining* mash up trailer (2005)
Downfall mashups
Zidane headbutt gifs
James Blagden, Dock Ellis and the LSD No-No (2009)

**FINAL PAPERS/ANALYSIS OF CLASS YOUTUBE PAGE**

**DUE FRIDAY, MAY 6TH**

**GRADING:**
Attendance, in class/online participation (20%)
Formal analysis, 3-5 pages (15%)
2 Blog posts (25%)
Final essay, 15 pages (40%)