INSTRUCTOR: John Szwed

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Regular attendance and participation
2) Attendance at film showings
3) Read all assigned texts
4) 1-page paper on each week's film, due in class the week of the showing, beginning Sept 19
5) A short classroom presentation on one of the scheduled films or related material
6) Final paper of 15-20 pages (based on a topic that has been discussed with the instructor)

REQUIRED READING

Krin Gabbard. *Jammin’ at the Margins: Jazz and the American Cinema*

SUGGESTED READING

John Szwed. *Jazz 101*

Additional course readings in packet

Bibliographies and Filmographies


The Internet Movie Base: [http://www.imdb.com/search](http://www.imdb.com/search)


Klaus Stratemann. *Duke Ellington: Day by Day and Film by Film*. (1992)

Other Reference Materials


Peter Stanfield. *Body and Soul: Jazz and Blues in American Film 1927-63.* (2005)

**WEEKLY TOPICS**

**Week 1: Introduction: Concepts, Genres**

Excerpts to be shown in class: samples of short films, soundies, artist films, cartoons, TV dramas. (including Oskar Fischinger and Max Fleischer films; Walt Disney’s *Music Land*)

**Week 2: Beginnings**

Film: *The Jazz Singer* (1927)

Excerpts to be shown in class: *The Jazz Singer* (1952 & 1980 versions); *The King of Jazz* (1930); *Hallelujah* (1928)


**Week 3: Jazz Histories From Hollywood**

Film: *New Orleans* (1947)

Excerpts to be shown in class: *It's All True* (1993 [1942]); *Birth of the Blues* (1941); *Syncopation* (1942); *Pretty Baby* (1977); *A Song is Born* (1948); *Cotton Club* (1984)

Readings: Gabbard, *Jammin’ at the Margins*, 101-37, 204-238; Scott DeVeaux, "Introduction” from *Birth of Bebop* (1997); Sidney Bechet, “A Bend in the Road” and "Omar” from *Treat It Gentle* (1960)
**Week 4: Biopics: Jazz Romance**

Films: *The Gene Krupa Story* (1959); *Young Man With a Horn* (1950)

Excerpts to be shown in class: *'Mo Better Blues* (1990), *Some Like It Hot* (1959); *A Man Called Adam* (1966); Miles Davis performance clips


**Week 5: Biopics: Jazz Tragedy**

Film: *Bird* (1988)

Excerpts to be shown in class: *The Man With the Golden Arm* (1955) *Sweet Love, Bitter* (1967); *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951); jazz on sound tracks (example: Miles Davis)


**Week 6: The Musical**

Film: *Cabin in the Sky* (1942)

Excerpts to be shown in class: *Check & Double Check* (1930) *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944); *Green Pastures* (1936); *Carmen Jones* (1954); *The Gospel at Colonus* (1988); *Creole Giselle* (1987)

Week 7: The Musical (cont’d)

Film: *New York, New York* (1977)


Readings: Gabbard, *Jammin’ at the Margins*, 266-295; Rick Altman, “Saving the Dying Myth: Reflexivity as Reinforcement,” from *The American Film Musical*

Week 8: The Influence of Jazz on the Underground Film

Films: *Pull My Daisy* (1958); *Shadows* (1960)

Excerpts to be shown in class: Harry Smith, *Early Abstractions* (1946-57); *Too Late Blues* (1961); *Ornette: Made in America* (1986)


Week 9: Jazz as Emblem and Symptom: The Beats and Teenagers

Films: *The Connection* (1960); *The Subterraneans* (1960)

Excerpts to be shown in class: *The Beat Generation* (1960); *The Wild One* (1953); *Beach Party* (1963); *Beat Girl* (1962); *Heart Beat* (1980); Jack Kerouac interviewed by William Buckley

Readings: Bob Kaufman, "Bagel Shop Jazz" from *Solitudes Crowded With Loneliness*, 1965; David Sterritt, "Hollywood and It's Discontents" and "Inside the Beatcave"

Recommended Reading: Jack Kerouac, *The Subterraneans*, 1958

Week 10: Loving the Alien: Blaxploitation Meets Science Fiction

Film: *Space is the Place* (1974)

Excerpts to be shown in class: Sun Ra Arkestra, *The Cry of Jazz* (1985), the Arkestra's home movies; *Brother From Another Planet* (1984); George Clinton’s
The Mothership Tour; Hawkwind, Love in Space; Chappaqua (1966); Zachariah (1971)

Reading: John F. Szwed, Space is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra, pp. xv-xviii, 228-239, 330-333, 382-388

**Week 11: Jazz Films Overseas**

Film: 'Round Midnight (1986)

Excerpts to be shown in class: Swing Kids (1993); Ces’t la vie, mon cher (1993); Stormy Monday (1988); Jazzman (1984); Bix (1990)


**Week 12: Documentaries**

Films: Let’s Get Lost (1988); Great Day in Harlem (1994)

Excerpts to be shown in class: Mingus (1968); Jazz On a Summer Day (1960); Jammin’ the Blues (1944); Straight No Chaser (1988); Ken Burns’ Jazz (2000); Under the Lizards (1993)


**Week 13: Films Made on the Principles of Jazz**

Film: Time Code (2000)

Excerpts: Happy Together (1997)

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