

Chinese Cinema. Focus on a filmmaker: Jia Zhangke
CHIN 357.03 SYLLABUS

Instructor	Claire Huot
Lectures	TU, TR: 14:00-15:15 in ST 130
Screenings (NOT compulsory)	TU: 15:30-18:15 in MS 217
Office	Craigie Hall C-104
Consultation	WED 13:00-14:45 or by appointment: chuot@ucalgary.ca

Description: Jia Zhangke is “one of the 10 filmmakers that will define cinema’s next decade” (Artforum). Jia “may well be the most important filmmaker working in the world today” (NPR). We will study all of Jia’s available films, feature films and documentaries that have English subtitles. Objective: To study Jia’s contribution to Chinese cinema and to study contemporary Chinese society through his films. **Format:** Classes will take the form of lectures on Tuesdays to present and contextualize that week’s film. Discussion of films and related readings will take place on Thursdays. Films must have been viewed before the Thursday class. While the “lab” screenings are not compulsory, it is compulsory to view all films. They are available at the Media Centre, 3rd Fl. TFDL. The required readings, indicated for each week below, are mostly from Jia Zhangke’s own book: *Jia Zhangke Speaks Out*. [English translation of 贾樟柯“贾想”]. Los Angeles: Bridge 21 Publications. 2015.

EVALUATION	DATES	BRIEF EXPLANATION
Pop quiz (3) 10% 3, 3 & 4%	Unannounced, at beginning of class	2-minute; 3 simple questions anyone who has been in class can answer
Tests (4) 40% 10% x 4	Oct. 8 Oct. 22 Nov. 19 Dec. 8	20-minute; short answer questions based on the films and readings studied up to that date
Report (1) 20%	Oral / written presentation: Staggered from Sept. 22-Dec. 3 If written, deadline Nov. 17	Oral or written critical report of one film of your choice May be solo or group (3 max.) oral presentation: 15' with copy of PPT; written 5 pages double-spaced
Essay (1) 5% + 25%	Nov. 19 Dec. 8	Topic of your choice but approved by the instructor by Nov. 14 (title, abstract & references) 10 pages double-spaced

Grading Scale	A+ 96-100	A 92-95	A- 86-91	B+ 81-85	B 77-80	B- 71-76	C+ 65-70	C 62-64	C- 59-61	D+ 55-58	D 50-54	F 0-49
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DATE	TOPICS, SCREENINGS, ASSIGNMENTS	READINGS
WEEK 1 Sept. 8 & 10	Introduction to the course; overview of Chinese cinema	"Jia Zhangke: an entirely different animal" by Chen Danqing
Sept. 8	Screening of YELLOW EARTH (89') by Chen Kaige w. Zhang Yimou 1988	
WEEK 2 Sept. 15 & 17	XIAO WU 小武 1998	"The Director's Notes on His Films: XIAO WU" "A People's director from the grassroots of China" Q & A Lin Xudong and Jia Zhangke
Sept. 15	Screening of XIAO WU (107') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 R46 1999	
WEEK 3 Sept. 22 & 24	PLATFORM 站台 2000	"The Director's Notes on His Films: PLATFORM" "Have You Bought Jia Kezhang's Platform?" "Images Taken From The World Of Experience: Experiences of Life and Experience in Film" Interview by Correspondence between Sun Jianmin and Jia Zhangke
Sept. 22	Screening of PLATFORM (154') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 Z436 2000	
WEEK 4 Sept. 29 & Oct. 1	UNKNOWN PLEASURES 任逍遥 2002	"The Director's Notes on His Films: UNKNOWN PLEASURES" "The Unstoppable Movement of Images" "Now That We Have VCDs and Digital Cameras"
Sept. 29	Screening of UNKNOWN PLEASURES (113') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 R469 2002	

WEEK 5 Oct. 6 & 8	Test #1 Oct. 8 [10%] THE WORLD 世界 2004	"The Director's Notes on His Films: THE WORLD" "We Need to Recognize the Defect in Our Genes"
Oct. 6	Screening of THE WORLD (120') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 S55 2004	
WEEK 6 Oct. 13 & 15	STILL LIFE 三峡好人 2006	"The Director's Notes on His Films: STILL LIFE" "It's a Narrative As Well As a Documentary: A Conversation Between Tsai Ming-liang and Jia Zhangke" "Make Films According to Your Own Beliefs A Conversation Between Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Jia Zhangke" "The Cowardice of Our Entire Generation: A Lecture at Peking University"
Oct. 13	Screening of STILL LIFE (108') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 S36 2006	
WEEK 7 Oct. 20 & 22	Test #2 Oct. 22 [10%] DONG 东 2006	"The Director's Notes on His Films: DONG" "Recognizing the Beauty of One's Own Body: A Dialogue between Tony Rayns and Jia Zhangke" "Everyone's Body Is a Work of Art In Itself: A Conversation Between Liu Xiaodong and Jia Zhangke"
Oct. 20	Screening of DONG (70') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 S36 2006	
WEEK 8 Oct. 27 & 29	IN PUBLIC 公共场所 2001 USELESS 无用 2007	"The Director's Notes on His Films: IN PUBLIC" " <i>IN PUBLIC</i> In My Own Words" "The Director's Notes on His Films: USELESS" " <i>ON USELESS</i> : A Conversation between Tony Rayns and Jia Zhangke"
Oct. 27	Screening of IN PUBLIC (30') and of USELESS (80') by Jia Zhangke IN PUBLIC:	

	PN1993.43 .J466 2009 DISC 2; USELESS: PN1995.9 .C47 W896 2008	
WEEK 9 Nov. 3 & 5	Jia's short docs: THE CONDITION OF DOGS 狗的状况 2001 (6'); CRY ME A RIVER 河上的愛情 2008 (19'); BLACK BREAKFAST 黑色早餐 2011 (4:53') [Available on Youtube] Antonioni's documentary on China, CHUNG KUO 1972	"The Age of Amateur Cinema Is About to Return" Alice Xiang, "'When Ordinary Seeing Fails': Reclaiming the Art of Documentary in Michelangelo Antonioni's 1972 China Film <i>Chung Kuo</i> ." <i>Senses of Cinema</i> 67 (July 2013). http://sensesofcinema.com/2013/feature-articles/when-ordinary-seeing-fails-reclaiming-the-art-of-documentary-in-michelangelo-antonionis-1972-china-film-chung-kuo/
Nov. 3	Screening of CHUNG KUO (N.B.: 3h.28') by Michelangelo Antonioni	
WEEK 10 Nov. 10 Nov. 12	Jia's views on Chinese cinema Presentation of requirements for the essay NO CLASS ON NOV. 12: Reading day	"Blockbusters Are Like a Contagion and Destroy Social Values: A Dialogue between Xu Baike and Jia Zhangke" "Who Is Ushering Chinese-Language Cinema Into The New Century?"
Nov. 10	NO screenings unless by demand	
WEEK 11 Nov. 17 & 19	Test #3 Nov. 19 [10%] Topic for essay Nov. 19 [5%] Report due Nov. 19 [15%] 24 CITY 二十四城记 2008	"The Director's Notes on His Films: 24 CITY" "Deciphering China Through the Eyes of a Film-Poet A Conversation with Dudley Andrew, Ouyang Jianghe, Zhai Yongming, Lu Xinyu, and Jia Zhangke"
Nov. 17	Screening of 24 CITY (152') by Jia Zhangke HN733.5 .E77 2009	
WEEK 12 Nov. 24	I WISH I KNEW 海上传奇 2010	Andrew, Dudley, and Xu Jing. "The Lion's Gaze: truth and legend in I Wish I Knew." <i>Film Criticism</i> 36.1 (2011), pp.24- 43. [UofC e-journal]

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Nov. 24	Screening of I WISH I KNEW (138') by Jia Zhangke DS796 .S257 J53 2010 Blu-Ray DVD	
WEEK 13 Dec. 1 & 3	A TOUCH OF SIN 天注定 2013	"Building No. 7: Jia Zhangke at Work" 2014 interview Jiwei Xiao, "China Unraveled: Violence, Sin, and Art in Jia Zhangke's <i>A Touch of Sin</i> " <i>Film Quarterly</i> , Vol. 68, No. 4, Summer 2015 [UofC library]
Dec. 1	Screening of A TOUCH OF SIN 天注定 (143') by Jia Zhangke PN1995.9 .C47 T536 2014	
WEEK 14 Dec. 8	Essay due Dec. 8 [20%] Quiz #4 Dec. 8 [10%]	

- N.B: 1.** It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.
- 2.** There will be no remakes of quizzes; tests can be done within the week, but only if an official note (doctor's, immigration, for eg.) is provided.
- 3.** Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.
- 4.** If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca
- 5.** Making and receiving calls on cell phones are not allowed in class. During quizzes **no electronic device** is allowed.
- 6.** Plagiarism, i.e. the use of other people's work without acknowledging it and for deceitful purposes, will result in a zero.
- 7.** Cheating on quizzes will result in a zero.