

BST 450u/550 - K02: African Cinema/Cultures

Winter 2010, NH 209

Fridays, 5:30-9:10 PM

Office Hours: Fridays: 4:30-5:15 PM

BST Conference Rm, 308 NH

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description:

African cultures are explored via experience of African cinema at the 2010 Cascade Festival of African Films (CFAF) and in-class film screenings. The CFAF is in its 20th season at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, and will present, from February 5 to March 6, 2010, "award-winning films from every region of the African continent," in celebration of Black History Month and Women's History Month. Key among course requirements is attendance at five Friday evening screenings of feature length films. Leading up to the CFAF, the nature of African cinema and African culture are examined along with approaches to film review and interpretation. The course will conclude with an assessment of the CFAF and its impacts on or contributions to our understanding of Africa and Africans generally and, of African cinema and African cultures specifically.

Course Objectives:

Examine the nature/correlation of African cinema and African cultures.

Prepare participants for a productive experience at the Cascade Festival of African Films.

Prepare participants to speak intelligently about African cinema and African cultures.

Participate in the 2010 Cascade Festival of African Films and experience African cinema.

Augment diversity skills and increase understanding/awareness of Africa and Africans.

Required Texts:

A textbook is not required. Readings will be available in a packet, ACC Reader, at Smart Copy in week 2.

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. Participants are required to complete the assigned readings and participate in class and CFAF discussions. We will begin each class with discussion of the readings and/or CFAF issues.
2. Approximately one hour of in-class time may be traded for one extra hour of preparation for class. To make that time up, participants are required to spend an extra hour per week preparing for class, preparing discussion questions, gathering information on African cinema/CFAF issues, or reacting to African cinema screenings.
3. Six CFAF commentaries will be required, one for each Friday evening screening. See commentary forms in the reading packet. Commentaries are due one week after assignment.
4. Participants are required to prepare and submit reaction papers, or reviews, for three of five Friday evening CFAF screenings. Reviews should answer all of the following questions. First, how is the story told? What issues or groups are represented by the major and minor characters? Second,

how are time and space manipulated? How would you describe the rhythm of editing? Third, how are the settings/events in/of the narrative organized and used? Fourth, how are the main plots and sub plots organized and structured? Fifth, how does the narrative show meaning and explain events? In the end, do we know what happened; are issues and characters resolved?

- Participants are required to submit a final portfolio at the final session of the course, in week 11. The final portfolio will document participation at the 20th CFAF and should account for three types of evidence. The first type of evidence is the CFAF commentary. All graded commentaries are to be included. The second type of evidence is artifacts pertaining to Friday screenings. These maybe the CFAF's film and country notes and related publications. The third type of evidence is the participant's three Friday film reviews and the *final exam*.

Course grades will be assigned as follows:

- 40% - participation (10 points) and Friday film reviews (30 points)
- 35% - CFAF commentaries
- 25% - final portfolio

Grade Curve: 90 – 100% = A; 80 – 89% = B; 70 – 79% = C; 60 – 69% = D; 0 – 59% = F

CFAF 2010: February 5 – March 6, 2010

The 2010 CFAF schedule is at www.africafilmfestival.org. Attendance is required at screenings and after-film discussions. Please note the dates and locations and, see schedule for other details.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Film</u>	<u>Location</u>
2-05-2010	TEZA (Ethiopia, *)	Hollywood Theatre
2-12-2010	NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH (South Africa, *)	Hollywood Theatre
2-19-2010	THE YACOUBIAN BUILDING (Egypt)	Hollywood Theatre
2-26-2010	SEX, OKRA AND SALTED BUTTER (Chad/France)	PCC Cascade
3-05-2010	PARIS OR NOTHING (Cameroon/France, *)	PCC Cascade

* with Director/Filmmaker

Hollywood Theatre is located at 4122 NE Sandy Blvd. PCC Cascade Campus is located at 705 N. Killingsworth Street. The CFAF will be in the Moriarty Arts and Humanities Building (MAHB), Room 104. Please see the attached brochure and schedule for starting times and other details. The festival also screens films on Thursday (documentaries) and Saturday (special events, tributes, etc). Participants are encouraged to attend these additional screenings for a more complete festival experience.

References

- The Cascade Festival of African Films website at <http://www.africafilmfestival.org/>
- The Library of African Cinema at <http://www.newsreel.org/nav/topics.asp?cat=4>
- The Internet Movie Database at <http://www.imdb.com/>

Please Note: University policy requires that disabilities will be accommodated, plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and PSU classrooms will be spaces that are hospitable to all participants.