

C Lit 303 - Black Contemporary Cinemas

Instructor: Tamara Cooper SLN 11716 T/R 1:30-3:20p



C Lit 303 - Black Contemporary Cinemas is open to AIS, AES, CHID, ENGL, GWSS, DRAMA students during Period 1 registration along with students in performance studies. No prior film analysis knowledge is necessary.

“Black Contemporary Cinemas” runs 4 days per week with M/W screening and T/R lecture. In this class we will look at a broad range of contemporary filmmakers from around the world who for whatever reason self-identify as Black from the 1970s to the present. Some of them were born in the US, some of were trained in the US and share citizenship elsewhere.

If post-Obama does not mean post-racial, then what does it mean? With all of the films recently released, which deal with histories of slavery - are we in a different racial moment? What does it mean to an American public who sees black faces more frequently on screens than ever before, screens where black men are allowed to kiss white women and black men are allowed to kiss each other. We will look at the challenges of black film authorship and will ask: What is at stake in African American cinema? What is the visceral, gut-level function of motion pictures in African American and Black communities? Can we speak of a distinctive practice given the diverse experiences and variable conditions that affect Black lives? What do motion pictures mean for people whose sense of home has been dislocated by migrations and fraught with attacks on their citizenship and humanity, largely through visual representation?

We will also trouble notions of nation, ability, gender, sexuality and class as they locate and destabilize blackness.

Together through film watching and interactive lecture, we will explore our present moment and ask ourselves if black citizenship is still in question in America in the same ways it may or may not be around the world?

