



*Nosferatu*, 1922, dir. F.W. Murnau

*Please read the following Outline carefully.*

## **GMST 335: German Cinema (Shadows and Screams: German Horror)**

### **Winter Term 2, 2024-25**

Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-4:50 online via ZOOM. Unsure how to access through Canvas, click [here](#).

Instructor: [Dr. Jason Lieblang](#)

TA: [Ajibola Fabusuyi](#)

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#### **Dr. Lieblang's Office Hours**

In-person in [Buchanan Tower](#) 906 (ninth floor).

Tuesdays: 10-12

Fridays: 11-2

Please drop by at any point during my two hour window on Tuesdays and three hour window on Fridays.

Advising during office hours lasts approximately 15 minutes per student. Advising beyond 15 minutes is at my discretion.

### **Dr. Lieblang's Email**

[jason.lieblang@ubc.ca](mailto:jason.lieblang@ubc.ca)

Please review the course outline before emailing your question. The answer you are looking for is often to be found there.

Please limit your email inquiries to regular business hours, i.e., between 9 and 5 Monday through Friday. **I do not read emails outside of those times.**

### **TA Ajibola Fabusuyi's Email**

[ajibola.fabusuyi@ubc.ca](mailto:ajibola.fabusuyi@ubc.ca)

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## **Dr. Lieblang's Educational Philosophy**

At the heart of my approach to teaching and learning is a commitment to challenging a transactional and instrumental education. It's my opinion that over that the past 25 years (that's how long I've been a postsecondary teacher) the university has steadily and increasingly become a place ruled by financial imperatives rather than pedagogical ones. The university has become a place, again in my opinion (perhaps you disagree), where students pay ever higher fees to enter and then toil in a system the goal of which is to do what it takes to get the next credit in order to be able to move on to the next level, and on it goes. It's become less and less about thinking critically, then, more and more about accumulation. There are a host of reasons why this has happened, too many to get into here, and many of them are exogenous and so especially difficult to challenge let alone change. I'll end by saying that you are likely to attend plenty of courses that fit the description I've just offered. My goal at this point in my career is to offer something different, which will undoubtedly at times involve challenging certain contemporary academic orthodoxies. (I'm not afraid to offer perspectives you may not hear elsewhere.) That being said, you are at every turn encouraged to challenge back. Indeed, your doing so with passion and commitment is my goal.

I hope what I've outlined here sounds like something you might need or at least be interested in.

# Course Description

The films of German Expressionism are some of the earliest examples of the horror genre and have undoubtedly influenced horror cinema worldwide right up to the present day. That being said, the development of the genre in Germany is fascinatingly problematic, with politics interrupting continuity to such an extent that one has to search hard to find horror films made there between 1932 and the 1980s. In this course we will find, discuss and write about such isolated examples in addition to some Expressionist masterpieces and the best of a recent crop of horror films from the German-speaking countries.

# Learning Objectives

My hope is that by the end of this course you'll be able to understand and explain the development of the horror genre in the German-speaking countries, as well as take with you some understanding of the cultural, social and political contexts within which these works were produced. You'll be challenged to think, and communicate clearly, respectfully and convincingly, and the course will endeavour to improve your (academic) writing skills, too. Additionally, as this is a film course, you'll be introduced to and will apply some of the basic analytical skills needed to understand films and communicate convincingly about them in the academic context.

# Required Materials

There are no textbooks for this course. All course materials will be available on Canvas. You will watch the majority of the films at home, either through Canvas, or through links to my personal copies. (You will be able to navigate to any of these viewing opportunities through Canvas.) Please see the Course Schedule for a detailed description of what to read and/or watch for when.

# What to Expect from the Classes

In my classes it's **really important to keep up on the reading/viewing**, and to **attend and participate as much as possible**. Each session will engage directly with whatever texts were assigned for that day. Classes start on-time, and I'm pretty good at ending them on-time, too. I certainly lecture, but even in larger classes like this one, and even when meetings are online, I also provide questions that I ask you to consider in groups, and then report back on what your group discussed and/or concluded.

My courses also tend to develop somewhat organically. For example, I sometimes get ideas for questions I'd like you to consider while I reread and/or rewatch in preparation for the next day's class. I'll sometimes send out a Canvas announcement asking you to consider the questions my rereading/rewatching generates in me. When I do this, I'll never expect you to prepare anything

to submit - that wouldn't be fair. My hope is that you might scribble down some of your own thoughts in response, and bring them to class with you. When I re-ask the questions in-class, my hope is that you'll have a few things to contribute in response. I also sometimes go on what might be considered tangents - sometimes these are politically or philosophically motivated, as those are two areas I'm always thinking about, and especially the older I get. Former students have told me that these tangents can be some of the most memorable and rewarding moments in my classes. I think other students can find them frustrating though.

I post my slide decks after class, usually right after.

## Assessment

Assessment in this course is straightforward and consists of an attendance/participation grade, five online quizzes, and a cumulative final exam.

### Attendance (10) & Participation (5): 15% total

I start taking **attendance** during the first class after the add/drop deadline.

Attending class is important in this course, for the reasons I mentioned above, but if you think about it it's also an easy 10%.

You'll sign in on Top Hat at the beginning of each class with a code I provide. Please also be on time, as I'll close Top Hat after 5 minutes, after which time you will be marked absent. If you are coming from a class at the other end of campus, and so will find it challenging to arrive on time, please contact your TA, who will arrange a concession in consultation with me.

Attendance grading is also straightforward and simply based on the ratio of classes you attend, i.e., if you attend 21/21 possible classes, you'll receive a grade of 100%; attending 11/21 classes would see you receive a grade of 52% for attendance, etc.

I will excuse you up to a total of 3 times without penalty. I understand that sometimes we just aren't up to attending, for whatever reason, and often on account of our other courses or jobs. Note that there is no need to contact me if you need to be absent. Absences beyond 3 will require an official doctor's note (in the case of a health issue) or 'coach's note' (in the case of student athletes). Please supply Ajibola (our TA) with your doctor's/coach's note(s) as an email attachment. He will file them and make sure that the absences they excuse are reflected in the attendance gradebook.

In the case of approved absences, your attendance ratio will be adjusted as appropriate. For example, if you need to miss 4 classes, one of which is for an excused health concern with note, you will be graded out of 17 classes (rather than the total possible 21). An example involving some unexcused absences might be: you miss 6 classes, the 3 excused ones and 3 that are unexcused, and so your attendance grade would be 15/18.

As for **participation**, a good first step is to keep your camera on. I cannot of course require you to do this, but I have found that it's easier for us to remain engaged with one another when we can see each other's faces. If we were meeting in person, you wouldn't cover your face, and you would likely agree that it would be harder to communicate with those students in the group that did cover their faces. (I believe in trying to create a sense of community in a class, even when it has to be virtual.)

Another way to participate is by commenting, ideally by putting up your hand and speaking, although submitting meaningful comments in the chat also counts. (lol / wtf / Good point Joe! / Way to go? I hadn't thought about that ... / None of those constitute participation-worthy contributions.)

You'll sometimes be asked to work in breakout groups. A good way to accumulate some participation credit is to act as a group spokesperson sometimes.

## **Quizzes: 50% (five total, each worth 10%)**

These cover material in the readings, my lectures, and plenum class discussions. Paying attention, participating, taking notes, and reviewing my slides should allow you to do very well on these quizzes. Indeed, in past courses the average grade on my quizzes tends to be above 85%.

Each quiz will consist of between 10 and 20 questions and be worth 10% of the course grade. The majority of questions will be multiple choice, which may include choosing between True and False; choosing one of three to five possible answers; or choosing more than one of three to five possible answers. You will get 30 seconds to answer each multiple choice question. Quizzes may also include a single short answer question, which will be worth 5 points, and for which, of course, you will be given significantly more time. You will complete the quizzes in Lockdown Browser, with which I expect you are already familiar. If you aren't, please visit the following site to learn about it: <https://lthub.ubc.ca/guides/lockdown-browser-student-guide/>

## **Final Exam: 35%**

The final exam is cumulative, and will be written in-class during the exam period.

You'll complete it in Lockdown Browser on Canvas, and will have 2 1/2 hours (150 minutes) to complete it.

The final exam will consist of two sections, the first comprised of multiple choice questions and worth 40%; the second comprised of an essay question worth 60%, and in response to which you will be expected to write between 500 and 800 words.

I will provide you with a list of possible multiple choice topics well in advance of the exam. You will also receive a list of 3-5 possible essay questions, 1 of which will appear on your exam. This approach means very few surprises but also rewards careful preparation.

I'll announce the date, time, and location of the final exam as soon as these are released.

## Technology Policy

**I do not ordinarily allow smart phone or iPad use in my class.** If you have no other means by which to take notes, i.e., no laptop or you are unable to take notes by hand, please let your TA know. They will approve exceptions in consultation with me. (Obviously in an online class like this one I'll have to trust that you honour my policy. If you don't and intend to spend class time on other apps and or/websites, then I'd prefer you didn't come to class.)

Please also note that **I don't allow any recording of my classes.**

## Academic Integrity

**I will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form.** If I suspect you of engaging in it, I will immediately make my department head aware and they will begin the process of investigating.

Some things I won't accept:

- The inappropriate use of generative AI. Please visit the following website to educate yourself on what counts as appropriate use of generative AI:  
<https://academicintegrity.ubc.ca/generative-ai/>
- Dishonest attendance practices, for example sharing a code with someone who is not actually in attendance
- Passing off the work of another as your own

I expect you to familiarize yourself with UBC's expectations regarding academic integrity. Please do so by thoroughly reviewing [this website](#)

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## Content and Trigger Warnings

This is a course on horror and contains written and/or visual content that depicts psychological and physical violence, as well as sexuality. None of our course texts were chosen to engage gratuitously in violence and/or sexuality, and in all cases, we will approach them intellectually, always aiming to assess why violent and/or sexual content has been deployed. I will try to make you aware in advance of course content that might be especially triggering. If you are concerned about any particular text potentially being a trigger for you, please let me know.

# Instructions for Signing-up to Top Hat (for Attendance)

Go to <https://tophat.com>

Click on Login if you have an existing account, or Sign-up > Student sign-up

Click on the Search by School link at the bottom

Enter the University of British Columbia – Faculty of Arts

When you are met with the join code field, enter [906987]

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Angst, 1983, dir. Gerald Kargl

***Please read over the schedule very carefully.***

You'll need to have the reading and/or viewing completed before arriving to class.

For example, we'll discuss Murray Leeder's "Introduction" to his book *The Modern Supernatural* during our January 21 class, so you'll need to have that read in advance of that class. Please come to class prepared!

There's no textbook. Readings are all available via Canvas, in most cases as a PDF (marked as Canvas PDF on the schedule below) but in some cases via a URL (marked Canvas URL on the schedule below).

I've tried to keep the amount of reading manageable, and in most cases you'll be reading between 10 and 20 pages for each class, but often even less. Please read actively. Take note of what strikes you as interesting, important, curious, confusing, or where you just don't understand. Generate questions as you read. Don't get bogged down if something you read isn't immediately clear to you. Making sure we move on from each reading with a useful sense of its central themes and concerns is what our time together in class is for.

You'll watch a number of films in the class, too. Access will be via a Canvas URL in the case of older films (marked Canvas URL on the schedule below), for more recent films you'll access them via my One Drive collection (marked Course One Drive on the schedule below).

Same advice as for reading goes for viewing. Watch actively. Take notes as you watch. Be precise when you reference, i.e., note from when to when something you find interesting happens in the film. Be an analytical film viewer. It's not only important to think critically about a film's narrative/plot. A film's form is also important: Think about how a particular shot has been staged, pay attention to what the camera's doing, think about how a particular scene is being edited - that sort of thing.

Note that the schedule also announces the date by which each of **the quizzes** will need to be completed on Canvas. See, for example, T 28 January below, and that "**Quiz 1 due before next class**". This means that the quiz will be opened right after that class (T 28 January) and that it will have to be completed no later than the beginning of our next class (so, by 3:30) on Th 30 January. (See the [Course Outline](#) for more information on the quizzes.)

Note that a couple of things are still TBA. I'll work to confirm these things ASAP.

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## **Course Schedule (subject to change with notice)**

### **January**

**Tues. 7:** Introduction

**Thurs. 9:** What is horror? / Reading: Jones, "Introduction" to *Horror: A Very Short Introduction*, [Canvas PDF](#)

T 14: What is horror? / Viewing: *Stranger Things*, Season 4, Episode 2, [Netflix](#)

Th 16: Horror histories / [No reading/viewing](#)

### **Add/drop deadline is January 17**

T 21: Ghostly projections / Reading: Leeder, "Introduction" to *The Modern Supernatural*; Gordon, "Introduction" to *Theatre of Fear and Horror*, [Canvas PDFs](#)

Th 23: How to watch a horror film / Reading: [Canvas Pages & URLs](#)

T 28: How to watch a horror film / Reading: [Canvas Pages & URLs](#) / **Quiz 1 due before next class**

Th 30: Uncanny doppelgangers / Reading: Excerpts from Klein, *Doppelganger: A Trip into the Mirror World*, [Canvas PDF](#)

### **February**

T 4: Uncanny doppelgangers / Reading: Excerpts from Freud, "The Uncanny", [Canvas PDF](#)

Th 6: Uncanny doppelgangers / Viewing: *The Student of Prague*, 1913, dir. Paul Wegener, [Canvas URL](#)

T 11: You must become Caligari / Reading: Excerpts from Krakauer, *Caligari to Hitler* and Eisner, *The Haunted Screen* / [Canvas PDFs](#) / Viewing: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920, dir. Robert Wiene, [Canvas URL](#)

Th 13: You must become Caligari / Reading: Excerpts from Kaes, *Shell Shock Cinema*, [Canvas PDF](#) / Viewing: *Nosferatu*, 1922, dir. F.W. Murnau, [Canvas URL](#) / **Quiz 2 due before next class**

### **Reading Break (Feb. 17-21)**

T 25: The horrors of Nazi cinema / Viewing: Excerpts from *Architecture of Doom*, 1989, dir. Peter Cohen, [Canvas URL](#)

Th 27: An absence of horror / Reading: Hantke, "Introduction" to *Caligari's Heirs*, [Canvas PDF](#) / Viewing: *The Head*, 1959, dir. Victor Trivas, [Canvas URL](#)

## March

T 4: Slashers and video nasties, German style! / No reading/viewing

Th 6: Slashers and video nasties, German style! / Viewing: *The Fan*, 1982, dir. Eckhart Schmidt / Course One Drive

T 11: Slashers and video nasties, Austrian style! / Viewing: *Angst*, 1983, dir. Gerald Kargl / Course One Drive / **Quiz 3 due before next class**

Th 13: Is it horror (part one)? Michael Haneke / Reading: Michael Haneke Quotes, Canvas PDF / Viewing: Haneke Interview, Canvas URL / Viewing, *Funny Games*, 1997, dir. Michael Haneke, Course One Drive

T 18: Is it horror (part one)? Michael Haneke / Reading: Kord, "Introduction" to *Little Horrors* / Viewing: *The White Ribbon*, 2009, dir. Haneke, Course One Drive

Th 20: Post horror / Reading: Church, "Introduction" to Post-Horror, Canvas PDF / Viewing: all viewing in-class

T 25: Post horror? / Reading: Fisher, TBA / Viewing: TBA / **Quiz 4 due before next class**

Th 27: Post horror? / Viewing: *Goodnight Mommy*, 2014, dir. Franz and Fiala, Course One Drive

## April

T 1: Post horror? / Viewing: TBA

Th 3: Is it horror (part two)? Reading, TBA / Viewing: *The Zone of Interest*, 2024, dir. Jonathon Glazer, Course One Drive / **Quiz 5 due before next class**

T 8: Summing up and thinking about the final exam

## Exam Period (April 12-27)

I'll let you know the date, time and location of your final exam as soon as that information is released.