



# ITALIAN CINEMA REFRAMED

REVISITING PAST & PRESENT



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Week 1

## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER



# Introduction: Who We Are

- Val Anania: Lecturer in Media and Italian at Nottingham Trent University + PhD Research Candidate at the University of Nottingham doing cultural studies – my research is on transmedia universes and the media industries. My favourite movie is Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968).
- Nick Davie: PhD Research Candidate at the University of Nottingham, studying film & television – I explore arthouse cinema and its television form, 'arthouse television'. I have taught at the University of Nottingham for two years on various film & television modules that cover politics, culture, and production. My favourite film is David Lynch's Mulholland Drive (2001).

# What about you?

Before we introduce the course, let's have a quick group discussion:

- How familiar are you with Italian cinema?  
(Don't worry if you haven't seen any Italian films yet)
- What are your favorite Italian or non-Italian films?
- Who are your favorite directors and actors?

# Italian cinema... 'framed'

- What are the things you think of when we say Italian cinema?

Use the post-its to write your keywords,  
then we'll stick them to the 'board' and discuss.



**MOST BEAUTIFUL  
AND  
ICONIC SHOT  
OF**

**ITALIAN CINEMA**

# The Course: Italian Cinema Reframed

Two aims:

- Defining the 'B-side'
- Reframing Italian Cinema, Italy and 'Italianness'

# The Course: B-sides...?

- It's a metaphor!
- Underrated Italian films: successful/iconic in Italy, unloved internationally
- Often overshadowed internationally by more well-known Italian classics, but equally important in understanding the full spectrum of Italy's cinematic contributions.
- Might exhibit unique storytelling and experimentation.
- Might be fairly straightforward, but offer a deeper, richer understanding of a nation's cultural and cinematic landscape.
- A definition we can co-create!



# The Course: B-sides...?



# The Course: Reframing

- As we explore contemporary and underrated Italian films, we will focus on the intricacies of their production and the diverse ways they represent Italy. This investigation is not just about viewing films but understanding how they are made and the stories they tell about Italian society.
- We'll look behind the scenes to examine how these films are produced. From directorial choices to location scouting and funding, each aspect plays a crucial role in the storytelling process.
- How do these films depict Italy? Do they align with traditional images of Italian life or challenge these perceptions? We will discuss how filmmakers use their craft to portray Italy, potentially reshaping our understanding of what Italian culture means.

# For example...

We are going to watch a clip and a trailer from two different movies

- Are you familiar with either of them?
- Do they paint similar images of Italy?
- What do you think each example is trying to represent? What feelings do you get from each?

**Remember:** there are no right or wrong answers, only your personal response to what you are watching!



# CORPO CELESTE





# The Course: Italian Cinema Reframed

## WARNING:

- Because of the nature of the movies we are going to talk about, many of them can be difficult to source
- We promise each week there'll be at least one movie that is easy to find

- We will look at the following topics/genres/themes:
  - **Allegorical Realism:** Exploring deeper symbolic meanings beneath the surface of realistic narratives.
  - **Comedy/Satire:** Understanding the social and political critiques often hidden in humour.
  - **Fantasy and Sci-Fi:** Probing the imaginative ways filmmakers envision Italian myths, legacies and futures
  - **Horror:** Investigating regional fears and historical traumas through chilling tales.
  - **Thriller:** Capturing the tension and suspense that grips modern Italian society.
  - **Crime:** Reflecting on the moral complexities and dilemmas within Italian legal and societal norms.
  - **Historical:** Recounting pivotal events and periods that have shaped the nation.
  - **Romance:** Celebrating the passionate expressions of love, both traditional and contemporary.
- Each genre not only shapes the narrative and aesthetic of the films but also serves as a vehicle for cultural reflection and critique, providing us with a multifaceted view of Italian cinema.

# History

- As we introduce the essential historical movements of Italian Cinema, we will see how these elements set the foundation for exploring its lesser-known films.
- Historical Overview:
  - **Early Cinema** (Early 1900s): The pioneering days featured epic historical films, establishing a base for creative storytelling.
  - **Neorealism** (Post-WWII): Directors like Rossellini and De Sica captured the stark realities of life, influencing filmmakers worldwide.
  - **Commedia all'Italiana** (1950s-60s): This genre blended comedy with social critique, mirroring the societal shifts in post-war Italy.
  - **Genre Cinema** (1960s-80s): Giallo, Spaghetti Westerns, and Poliziotteschi demonstrated Italy's flair for diverse cinematic styles.
  - **Modern Era**: Today's filmmakers continue to address contemporary issues, upholding a tradition of realism combined with innovative narratives.
- These historical movements are not only foundational but may reappear as we discuss influences, production methods, and the cultural contexts of the films we will explore. This understanding enriches our appreciation and provides a comprehensive backdrop for our exploration of lesser-known Italian cinema.



# Introducing allegorical realism

A tendency in this 'Renaissance' of contemporary Italian cinema, of which Matteo Garrone (*Gomorrah*, *Dogman*, *Io Capitano*) can be recognised as a precursor and inspiration.

- Representations of the 'margins' – of cities, society, history.
- No-exit scenarios – settings act symbolically to represent characters' hopelessness
- Vivid characters, created sometimes through grotesque, over-the-top performances by actors with peculiar faces and expressions
- Yet – they can become contemporary archetypes, representing a generation of lost hopes (a very millennial movement)

CLIP

THE  
UP  
COMING

HD  
FULL 1080P





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This week's watchlist:

- **La Chimera, A. Rohrwacher (2023)**
- *Big Deal on Madonna Street, M. Monicelli (1958)*
  - *Happy as Lazzaro, A. Rohrwacher (2018)*
- *Ovunque Proteggimi/ Wherever You Are, B. Angius (2018)*
  - *Bicycle Thieves, V. De Sica (1948)*

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