

FILM NOIR: "Originally a French term to indicate a film with a gritty, urban setting that deals with dark and violent passions in a down beat way. Especially common in American cinema during the late forties and early fifties." – James Monaco, *How to Read a Film* (1981)

CLASSICAL CINEMA

FILM NOIR

High key (low contrast) lighting

Low key (high contrast) lighting*

Balanced, "three point," lighting

Imbalanced lighting

Day-for-night

Night-for-night

Shallow focus

Deep focus

"Normal" focal length

Wide angle focal length

Symmetrical mise-en-scene

Dissymmetrical mise-en-scene

Eye-level camera

Extreme low and high angles

Open, unobstructed views

Foreground obstructions

—from "Some Visual Motifs of Film Noir" J. A. Place and L. S. Peterson (1974), in *Film Noir Reader*, ed. Alain Silver and James Ursini (1996)

*"In high key lighting, the key light [light on main subject] provides all or most of the light in the scene. In low key lighting, the key light provides much less of the total illumination." –Monaco, *How to Read a Film* (1981)

RECOMMENDED AMERICAN CRIME NOVELISTS (1929 – 1969)

James M. Cain (*Double Indemnity; The Postman Always Rings Twice*)

Horace McCoy (*They Shoot Horses, Don't They; I Should Have Stayed Home; No Pockets in a Shroud*)

Dashiell Hammett (*The Maltese Falcon; Red Harvest*)

William Faulkner (*Sanctuary*)

Raymond Chandler (*The Big Sleep; The Little Sister; The Long Goodbye*)

David Goodis (*Nightfall; Down There; Dark Passage*)

Jim Thompson (*The Killer Inside Me; Savage Night; Pop1280; The Getaway*)

John Franklin Bardin (*Devil Take the Blue-Tail Fly*)

Cornell Woolrich (*I Married a Dead Man*)

Dorothy B. Hughes (*In a Lonely Place*)

Patricia Highsmith (*Strangers on a Train; Deep Water; Suspension of Mercy*)

Margaret Millar (*The Beast in View*)

Evelyn Piper (*Bunny Lake Is Missing*)

Charles Williams (*Hell Hath No Fury/The Hot Spot; The Big Bite*)

Chester Himes (*For Love of Imabelle/A Rage in Harlem; Blind Man with a Pistol*)

Charles Willeford (*Pick-Up; The Black Mass of Brother Springer*)

Richard Stark (*The Hunter/Point Blank*)

Film Noir

www.tomwhalen.com

Summer Semester 2010

Art: Seminar (conducted in English)

Ort + Zeit: Neubau II, Raum 2.08, Beginn Fr 16.4.10, 13:30-16:45 Uhr

Kurzbeschreibung:

A close examination of several representative *films noir* from the classic period (~1941–1959), French *films noir* of the 1960s, and neo-noir (~1960–the present).

Classic noir

April 16

Double Indemnity – Wilder (1944) 103'

April 23

Angel Face – Preminger (1952) 91'

April 30

D.O.A. – Maté (1950) 83'

May 7

Kiss Me Deadly – Aldrich (1955) 106'

May 14

Touch of Evil – Welles (1958) 106'

French noir of the 1960s

May 21

Tirez sur le pianiste – Truffaut (1960) 81' Referat topic due

June 4

Le Doulos – Melville (1962) 109'

June 11

Alphaville – Godard (1965) 99'

Neo-noir

June 18

The Long Goodbye – Altman (1973) 112'

June 25

Chinatown – Polanski (1974) 131'

July 2

Night Moves – Penn (1975) 99'

July 9

Blue Steel – Bigelow (1990) 103'

July 16

Rush – Zanuck (1991) 120'

July 23

TV Noir

Peter Gunn: "The Kill" – Blake Edwards (1958) 28'

* Material for reading assignments will be available at

<http://www.tomwhalen.com/files/filmcoursematerial/fordownload.html>

Teilnahmebedingungen: To obtain a Pro- or Hauptseminarschein: regular attendance (no more than 3 absences), presentation and a critical paper (Proseminar: 1600 – 2000 words, Hauptseminar: 2400 – 5000 words on a film or films from the filmography or on some aspect of film noir). Grade will be based on class participation (20%), in-class quizzes (20%), Referat (30%), papers (30%). Non-credit students are welcome at any of the screenings and discussions.