

Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies,
Trinity College Dublin,
Presents an Outreach Programme of Film & Discussions:

Filming the Middle Ages and the Renaissance

ALL WELCOME!

Swift Theatre, Arts Building, Trinity College Dublin
Thursdays at 7pm

Trinity College's Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies is delighted to launch a series of talks and film screenings which will focus on the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. This exciting new series will explore such themes as politics, religion, literature, and legend. Each film screening will be preceded, or followed, by a short lecture (of approximately 30 minutes in length). The discussion will be led by academic staff-members of Trinity College Dublin.

Fee for 7-week Course:

€30 (or €5 per evening) to be paid at the door;

FREE to TCD students on production of a college identity-card.

For further details email Dr Eavan O'Brien (Course Coordinator),
cmrsoutreach@gmail.com

Programme:

1. Thursday 24th March 2011

***The Lion in Winter* (1968): Politics and Power in the Middle Ages**

Speaker: Dr Irene O'Daly

Set in 1183, this film focuses on one of the most interesting dynastic struggles of the Middle Ages - the question of who would inherit the Plantagenet throne after the death of Henry II. Peopled by some of the most dynamic characters of the twelfth century: Henry II, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and Richard the Lionheart - this, if often inaccurate film, is an insight into medieval power politics. We shall discuss the way questions of inheritance, diplomacy, and war are presented in this film.

2. Thursday 31st March 2011

***Kingdom of Heaven* (2005): The Failure of the Kingdom of Jerusalem**

Speaker: Dr Conor Kostick

This film is set during the Crusades of the 12th century. A French village blacksmith goes to aid Jerusalem in its defense against the Muslim leader, Saladin, who is battling to reclaim the city from the Christians. The film is a heavily fictionalised portrayal of Balian of Ibelin. Specifically, the discussion will examine why the Kingdom of Jerusalem failed: the film argues it was due to the narrow-mindedness of some of the leaders of the Christian armies, especially the Knights Templar; there is, in fact, some evidence for this in the sources.

3. Thursday 7th April 2011

***Black Death* (2010): Denunciation of Religious Fanaticism**

Speaker: Dr Stephen Hanaphy

This film is set against the background of the plague of the fourteenth century and tells the story of a group of knights investigating reports of necromancy in a mysterious village. At its core, essentially, is the theme of the destructive force of religion. The historical context of the film will be briefly discussed, with a focus on the roles of its various characters (Sean Bean's Teutonic crusader, Eddie Redmayne's naive young monk, Carice Van Houten's femme fatale/witch) and the locations the film purports to feature. Secondly, the central (and, indeed, topical) "point" of the film will be examined: namely, the denunciation of religious fanaticism. Finally, the idea of "historico-filmography" will be considered: that is, the study of the representation of history through film.

4. Thursday 14th April 2011

***The Name of the Rose* (1986): Intellectual Life in Medieval Times**

Speaker: Dr Irene O'Daly

In this expansive mystery, set in a north Italian monastery in the early fourteenth century, a series of murders take place, seemingly connected with the holdings of the medieval monastic library. Adapted from a novel by Umberto Eco, this film depicts intellectual life in medieval religious circles: what was read, how it was read, and the perceived dangers of knowledge. The principal characters, William of Baskerville (Sean Connery) and his assistant, Adso of Melk (Christian Slater) explore the intellectual labyrinth of accessible medieval knowledge, as well as the physical labyrinth of the medieval library. We shall examine the validity of the depiction of medieval scholasticism in this film.

5. Thursday 21st April 2011

***Lost in La Mancha* (2002): Still Crazy After All These Years?**

Speaker: Dr Eavan O'Brien

This documentary (narrated by Jeff Bridges) charts Terry Gilliam's failed attempt to make *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote*, a film adaptation of one of the greatest works of fiction ever written: Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605, 1615). Once filming began, the delicate schedule and budget unravelled due to flash floods, chronic illness, and other unforeseen, disastrous events. *Lost in La Mancha* presents Gilliam's quest to make this movie as a parallel to Quixote's quest to become a hero. In Gilliam's version of the Quixote story, the character of Sancho Panza would appear only very early in the film, to be replaced by Toby Grisoni (Johnny Depp), a twenty-first-century marketing executive thrown back through time, whom Quixote (Jean Rochefort) mistakes for Panza. Don Quixote embodies many of the themes that run through Gilliam's own work (e.g. the individual versus society, the concept of sanity, etc). The discussion will focus on both *Don Quixote*, the seventeenth-century novel, and on Gilliam's twenty-first-century doomed reimagining of this canonical work.

6. Thursday 28th April 2011

***Elizabeth* (1998): Kingship, Conflict, and Religion in the Renaissance**

Speaker: Dr John Walsh

This film centres on the ascension to the throne and the early years of the reign of Elizabeth I of England and her difficult task of learning what is necessary to be a monarch. The discussion will focus on kingship, conflict and religion during the Renaissance, focusing particularly on early modern England and drawing attention to the ideas of Machiavelli.

7. Thursday 5th May 2011

***Alatriste* (2006): Reimagining Intrigue in Imperial Spain**

Speaker: Dr Eavan O'Brien

Alatriste (in Spanish, with English subtitles) is an epic swashbuckler with high production values, visual flair, and excellent performances. The film is based on a series of extremely popular novels by Arturo Pérez-Reverte. It is the second most expensive Spanish film ever made. As the discussion will reveal, the film portrays Spain of the 17th century through the depiction of both fictional and real characters. Diego Alatriste (Viggo Mortensen) is a fictional heroic soldier in the service of King Felipe IV, during the Eighty Years War. Alatriste has a romance with an actress, who was also the lover of Philip IV. The story begins in Flanders, where Alatriste fights against the Dutch. On returning to Madrid, he is hired to kill the Prince of Wales (future King Charles I of England) and his companion, the Duke of Buckingham. Alatriste finally returns to the Netherlands in 1624 and participates in battles leading to Breda's surrender. The last scenes are at the Battle of Rocroi (May 1643). These and other historical elements of the film will be discussed.

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