World Cinemas: Contemporary Chinese Cinema

FILMSTD/ENGLISH/COMPLIT 316 SEC 001

Online Partly Synchronous, Weekly Virtual Session on Thursday 2:00-3:50

Professor Jian Xu (jianxu@uwm.edu)

**Course Description** :

The course explores Chinese cinematic imagination through a series of films produced in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The point of entry is the surge of creative innovations taking place in the 1980s as the Chinese-speaking communities began to re-imagine their world and history, forming new cultural identities and building a symbolic universe that interfaces with the world at large. Focusing on some earlier contemporary works that have achieved classic status in the field as well as new works that came out in the 21st century, the course examines how the region’s transnational filmmaking addresses the pressing issues of the world through cinematic affects and sensations unique to Chinese-language cinema. Our goal is twofold: as we study film forms and visual signs, we learn too the system of ideas, symbols, and beliefs by which modern Chinese societies justify rapid changes while also perpetuating an old way of life. The students learn to analyze Chinese-language films at the same time as they acquire an understanding of modern Chinese cultures that are plural and keep evolving. The course is jointly offered by English, Film Studies, and Comparative Literature and satisfies the L&S international requirement.