

INDS 594: JESUS AT THE MOVIES

Iwan Russell-Jones and Gerry Schoberg

May 9 – 20, 1:15 – 3:45 pm

2 or 3 graduate credit hours; or 2 audit hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Jesus is an endlessly fascinating subject for artists, having inspired many of the greatest works of art throughout history. There has been an extraordinary range of cinematic portrayals of Jesus, including a growing number of non-western films. Join us as we study depictions of Jesus in film and examine the cinematic reimagining of centuries-old Christian images. Reflect on how the research of the last two hundred years into the gospels and life of Jesus can inform our appreciation of these “Jesus films.”

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the class are fourfold:

1. To develop a broad understanding of the way in which Jesus has been portrayed in the history of film.
2. To identify the major questions and issues related to the portrayal of Jesus in specific movies.
3. To bring these movies into conversation with an informed study of the New Testament and with key theological and Christological ideas.
4. To cultivate a nuanced and practical understanding of the richness of Jesus movies as both works of art and as theological statements.

COURSE OUTLINE

After three introductory lectures surveying some of the major questions and issues related to the study of Jesus movies, the sessions will be devoted to specific films.

Day 1 “Who do you say that I am?” A hundred years of cinematic responses to Jesus; Cecil B. DeMille, *The King of Kings* (1927) – 155 minutes (available on Youtube)

Day 2 “In the cinema the eyes are everything”: Classical Christology and Franco Zeffirelli’s *Jesus of Nazareth* (1977)

Day 3 Beyond the Passion: Wrestling with the Resurrection in Jesus Movies

Day 4 Pier Paolo Pasolini, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (1964) – 136 minutes

Day 5 Norman Jewison, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1973) – 102 minutes

Day 6 Terry Jones, *The Life of Brian* (1979) – 93 minutes

Day 7 Martin Scorsese, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) – 156 minutes

Day 8 Denys Arcand, *Jesus of Montreal* (1989) – 115 minutes

Day 9 Mel Gibson, *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) – 121 minutes

Day 10 Mark Dornford-May, *Son of Man* (2007) – 91 minutes

REQUIRED TEXTS

Baugh, Lloyd. *Imaging the Divine: Jesus and Christ-Figures in Film*. Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1997. ISBN: 1556128360. \$39.95

Additional selected readings will be available on the course Moodle site or on reserve at the Regent College Library. Consult the full syllabus on Moodle for a complete bibliography.

Students are strongly advised to view the required films (above) and complete the assigned reading prior to the beginning of the course. Film viewings will be made available following each class.

All prices subject to change without notice. The Regent College Bookstore offers a 20% discount on regularly priced books (some exceptions may apply).

Please Note: The Course Information Sheet is meant to assist in selecting courses.

The official syllabus should be consulted for more detailed information. Full syllabus with drop deadlines, policies, and course assignment details, is available on Moodle: moodle.regent-college.edu/login

