

VES 70: The Art of Film

Spring 2016

Film Festival Project Instructions

I. VISION FOR THE FILM FESTIVAL PROJECT

The Film Festival Project is designed to further enhance your visual competencies, to deepen your knowledge of film history and the different cinematic movements that we discussed in class, and to practice a new form of collaboration with your fellow classmates. Starting this week, you are asked to form **project groups of 4-5 students**, ideally within your sections, and to produce a short **6-8 minute film** that captures your main conceptual idea through a montage of film excerpts from the films that you want to feature in your film festival.

II. SELECTING THE FILMS FOR YOUR FILM FESTIVAL PROJECT

In order to select the films for your festival project, you can choose between three options:

- (1) Curating a festival that focuses exclusively on contemporary cinema.
- (2) Curating a festival that compares contemporary films to earlier cinematic movements.
- (3) Curating a festival that explores one (or more) cinematic movement(s) in film history.

Whether you choose to curate a festival of contemporary cinema or to incorporate examples from earlier cinematic movements, your festival project should feature a range of **8-10 films** (that might include, but are not limited to, fiction films, short films, documentaries, experimental films, animation films, essay films, online film projects, media installations, visual arts, etc.), which you consider crucial for your project. As a starting point, you should think about the main idea and the concept of your film festival project and select a **strong, compelling theme**, which will help you select your films that you want to incorporate into your festival.

III. BUILDING A PROJECT TEAM AND PRODUCING THE PROJECT

For your festival project, you will have to consider **different stages of preparation and production**. You will most likely start with a broader group discussion in order to decide on the specific topic and films that you would like to focus on. After that, you will have to do some research, look into publications or archival material, watch and discuss different film examples before you start conceptualizing your film festival project (e.g. by designing a storyboard), working on the editing, and finalizing your project with opening titles, transitions, sound etc.

While it is possible to do all these different steps together as a group, you might want to discuss building a **'film team'**—just as in a professional film production—and assign different tasks to different members of the group, e.g. the film curator (research, leading the discussions), the scriptwriter (writing a voice-over that conveys the group's vision), the visual artist (designing the storyboard, the general 'look' of the trailer), the editor (conceptualizing the montage, editing the trailer), and the sound editor (writing a sound script, recording the sounds), or any other specific tasks that you consider to be useful for producing your project. Please make sure to write a short **project proposal** and discuss it with us before you start working on your project.

IV. WORKING WITH THE COLLABORATIVE TOOL SLACK

In order to organize your collaboration in an effective way, you will get access to the **online collaboration tool Slack**, which is specifically designed for group projects. We will offer an introduction to using this online collaboration tool, and you will learn how to organize and manage your collaboration with your fellow classmates (e.g. by defining different tasks, keeping track of conversations, creating to-do-lists, fine-tuning the production process, etc.). By using this online collaboration tool, your collaboration will be both clearly organized and transparent, keeping track of the individual input and contributions by every single member of the group.

V. WRITTEN COMPONENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA FOR THE FILM FESTIVAL PROJECT

In order to evaluate your Film Festival Project—both in terms of the group project and your individual contributions—we would like you to submit the following three documents:

- (1) **A Group Vision** (1-2 pages): the group vision should introduce the main concept of your film festival project, offer a concise and critical discussion of the selected films and their interrelations as well as discuss the position of your project within the history of film.
- (2) **A Production List** (2 pages): the production list should show how you organized your group, how you collaborated in the project, and how you distributed the different tasks within the stages of producing your project (e.g. by listing all group members with 1-2 paragraphs detailing their individual and/or overlapping tasks).
- (3) **An Individual Statement** (2-3 pages): your individual statement should discuss your contribution in more detail as well as provide your vision for the project and your larger idea for the festival, the selection of films, etc. Please also take some time to reflect on the process of collaboration—how did it change the overall concept of the festival, how did it affect the final project, and what did you learn in this process? This individual statement is particularly important to evaluate your contribution—conceptually and artistically—to the group project.

In order to grade your Film Festival Projects, we will use the following categories:

- (1) Depth of research and critical engagement with the material – 35%
- (2) Understanding of film history and/or contemporary cinema – 30%
- (3) Collaboration and reflection on the collaborative process – 15%
- (4) Creativity and proficiency in film production – 20%

VI. SUBMISSION DATE FOR THE FILM FESTIVAL PROJECT

The deadline for your Film Festival Projects will be **Friday, April 15, 2016 at 10pm**.

At that time, you should upload your Film Festival Projects to the course website (in a designated area), which will allow us to review the projects in preparation of our screening.

Please send all documents as a PDF file (Project Title_Name_Individual Statement, etc.) both to your section leader and to my email address: frahm@fas.harvard.edu.

All projects will be screened on **Tuesday, April 26, 2016, at 7pm** (our regular screening time), and every group will be asked to give a **short, 5-minute presentation** prior to the screening.

I hope that you'll all enjoy the Film Festival Projects!