

**GERM 480: German Swiss Cinema**  
R 5-8:45 in LAB-212

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Office Hours: T 2:30-3.30 & R 2:30-4:30 and by appointment.

The course will focus on distinguished Swiss film productions from 1941 till 1999 from the German speaking part of Switzerland (64 percent of the country). There will be a movie shown in every session throughout the semester, preceded by an introduction based on a written summary in English and followed by a discussion. With the exception of English versions, the movies are German or Swiss German spoken with English subtitles.

Students are expected to be present at all class sessions. Oral participation accounts for one third of the final grade. It is in the interest of every participant to contribute regularly to a vivid class discussion in every session.

Film viewing in a film class is no passive lean back. You should take notes during the screenings since you have to write a journal, consisting of a 1-page type written cohesive brief essay on every movie or topic. The journals account for 25 percent of the final grade.

Swiss cinema is no different from any cinema in the world: it treats the same subjects and themes as everywhere – from Hollywood to 'Bollywood', from Cuba to Italy, from Buenos Aires to Paris: love, hate, tolerance, envy, birth, death, misery, fortune – destiny. I can't imagine a better start for the class than presenting "Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe", "Romeo and Juliet in the Village", romantic 1941 b/w Swiss version of the universal classic "Romeo and Juliet" by William Shakespeare.

As a film maker myself, director and screenwriter, I don't want to miss presenting you three of the films I participated in: "Klassentreffen" (fiction, as writer/director), "Der schwarze Tanner" (fiction, as writer) and "Fading Traces" (documentary, as writer/director).

The program (see next page) will focus on three major issues: 'Award winning films', 'genre films' and 'literature and film'. In April the young writer/director Florian Froschmayer together with his producer Lukas Hobi will join us and present his first feature film "Exclusive" in the genre section. And we expect more guests and one-time visitors from the Swiss community in the LA-area.

The three sections of the program – award winning, genre, literature/film – will be the issues of two special assignments of two 2-page essays (see program). Please note that at the moment Sean Penn's "**The Pledge**", starring Jack Nicholson, is playing in art house theatres. It is an example of Swiss literature based US-movie (re)making (acclaimed late author Friedrich Dürrenmatt wrote the story "Es geschah am hellichten Tag" – "It happened in bright daylight").

Requirements and Grading:

- Regular attendance and oral participation (30%)
- Journal (25%)
- Midterm (20%)
- Final (25%)

Final: Thursday, May 24 at 5-7 pm

Warning: Plagiarism will not be tolerated and has serious consequences. Do not copy without citation.

## GERM 480: GERMAN SWISS CINEMA

<u>Date</u>	<u>Film Shown / Class Activity</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Feb. 1	Introduction: Filmmaking in Switzerland I. Movie: Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe. 1941	
Feb. 8	Filmmaking II. <b>Presenting my own feature movie:</b> Klassentreffen (Class Reunion) 1988	
Feb. 15	Award winning Swiss movies I (Golden Globe) Die letzte Chance (The Last Chance) 1945/46	
Feb. 22	Award winning Swiss movies II (AA nominee) Das Boot ist voll (The Boat is full) 1981	
March 1	Award winning Swiss movies III (AA winner) Reise der Hoffnung (Journey of Hope) 1990 <b>In the presence</b> of Academy Award winning Director <b>Xavier Koller</b> , Santa Monica CA	Hand in a 2-page essay on film and history – its impact on society: compare with US- movies on WW II and Vietnam
March 8	<b>Midterm</b>	Hand in Journals
March 15	Swiss Genre Movies (Drama, Ital. neorealism style) Bäckerei Zürrer (Zürrer's Bakery) 1957	
March 22	Swiss Genre Movies II (Heimatfilm I) Ueli der Knecht (Ueli The Farmhand) 1954	
March 29	Swiss Genre Movies III (Heimatfilm II) Der schwarze Tanner (Black Tanner) 1985	
April 5	Swiss Genre Movies IV (Thriller) Exklusiv (Exclusive) 1999 <b>In the presence of</b> Writer/Director <b>Florian Froschmayer</b> and <b>Lukas Hobi</b> , Producer	Hand in a 2-page comparison of "Ueli der Knecht" and "Der schwarze Tanner"
April 12	<b>Spring Recess</b>	
April 19	Swiss Genre Movies V (Comedy) Schweizermacher (Swiss Makers) 1980	
April 26	Swiss Literature in film I Homo Faber (Voyager) 1990	Currently showing: <b>The Pledge</b> (based on a thriller by Friedrich Dürrenmatt)
May 3	Swiss Literature in film II Der Besuch der alten Dame (The Visit) 1964	
May 10	Swiss Literature in film III Der Besuch der alten Dame (Hyènes) 1990	
May 17	<b>Presenting my documentary:</b> Fading Traces. 1998 <b>In the presence</b> of the Editor <b>Jürg Messmer.</b> <b>Concluding Discussion</b>	Hand in Journals