

Cinematic History of Toronto: Toronto Plays Itself

Tuesday, October 22 to December 10, 2024, 10am to noon

Zoom Session

www.learningunlimitedetobicoke.com

Coordinator and Presenter: Adam Nayman

Course Overview: This course will narrate the cinematic history of Toronto, both as a haven for visiting American productions and a complex, contradictory backdrop for films about race, class, sex, music and modernity itself. By analyzing the gradual transformation of a wasteland into Hollywood North, our speaker will introduce students to a number of crucial, obscure Torontonians works, while also paying attention to masters like David Cronenberg, Sarah Polley and Michael Snow. The classes will include clips from feature films, documentaries, television shows and music videos; titles include *Goin' Down the Road*, *I've heard the Mermaids Singing*, *Rude* and *Scott Pilgrim vs the World*.

Tuesday, October 22: They Make Movies in Toronto?

A close look at Edgar Wright's 2011 blockbuster *Scott Pilgrim vs the World* as an early point into the history and optics of filmmaking in Toronto.

Tuesday, October 29 : Toronto Hides Itself

Featuring two essay films *Los Angeles Plays Itself* and *Toronto Hides Itself* that show us how to study cinematic cities, and an early Torontonians horror movie that turns into a hit (*The Mask*).

Tuesday, November 5: Toronto Boom Town

In the 1950's and early 60's, Toronto's nascent film industry struggles to keep pace with larger trends in development and industrialization: *Nobody Waved Goodbye* gives the NFB an outlaw masterpiece.

Tuesday, November 12: The Weather Underground

Countercultural tensions come to the fore in student-made features *Christopher's Movie Matinee* and *Winter Kept Us Warm*. Michael Snow forces the avant-garde to get on his wavelength. Glenn Gould sees Toronto spiralling into the future.

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Tuesday, November 19: The High Cost of Living

Goin' Down the Road and *The Silent Partner* exemplify two very different schools of Toronto filmmaking. The tax shelter era transforms the city into Hollywood North.

Tuesday, November 26: Surfing the New Wave

Cronenberg, Egoyan, McDonald, McKellar, Virgo, Mehta: the Titans of Toronto cinema arrive and thrive in the 80's, although by the 90's their output starts to wane.

Tuesday, December 3: Torontopia?

The emergence of various exciting new social scenes (musical, artistic and pop-cultural) casts Toronto cinema in a Utopian light, but there are dark undercurrents as well – and skepticism about what it means to write a 'love letter' to a city.

Tuesday, December 10: Catching Up

A survey of key millennial Toronto movies, including award-winning work by Sophy Bodhanowicz, Sophy Romvari and others.

Biography

Adam Nayman has an MA in Cinema Studies from the University of Toronto. He is a contributing editor for *Cinema Scope* and *POV*. He reviews regularly for *Sight and Sound*, *Little White Lies*, and *Reverse Shot* and been published in *The Globe and Mail*, *The Grid*, *The Walrus*, *The Village Voice*, *Elle Canada*, *Film Comment* and *Cineaste*. He has programmed films (and hosted) for TIFF's Reel Talk series and The Toronto Jewish Film Society. He lectures on film at the University of Toronto and Ryerson University and hosts talks on directors and genres for the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. His first book, *It Doesn't Suck: Showgirls* was published in 2014 by ECW Press. Adam has been a member of the Toronto Film Critics Association since 2002. He lives in Toronto with his wife and their cat, Fellini.

Curriculum Committee Contact: Deb Forsyth-Petrov