

Ewha International Winter School 2025
Contemporary Korean Cinema

Herstories

Instructor: JungBong Choi
Class Meeting: M~F 9:00-11:30am
Venue: TBA
Office Hours: F 3:00-4:30pm
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Overview

Im Kwontaek, Park Chanwook, Hong Sangsoo, Kim Kiduk, Lee Changdong, and Bong Junho. These are six of the most outstanding and internationally acclaimed directors of South Korea. Course examines key works of these 'male' auteurs of Korean cinema with special attention to the female protagonist of each film we examine.

The goal of this course is to help students 1) grasp each auteur's unique themes, styles, and perspectives manifested in their representative works; 2) understand what it means and takes to be a woman in Korean society; 3) situate the female characters within a larger context of the nation's collective hope, aspiration or fear; and 4) see how these consciousness and emotions resonate with or deviate from global zeitgeist of our time.

Course requirements

1) Film Viewing and Analytic Essays: 60%

- For each director, 2-3 films are assigned, with at least one mandatory for personal online viewing.
- Write a total of three analytical essays, each focusing on 2-3 keywords central to a film and roughly 1,200-1,500 words in length.
- Keywords can be based on styles, themes, images, issues, or ideologies that are relevant to the film being discussed.
- Submit essays online (docx file only, no text messages) via email by the due date listed below.

2) Class Participation and Presentations: 40%

- There will be 6 feature-length screening in class (subject to change)
- Students must maintain good standing and active participation at all time.
- A significant portion of class will be dedicated to discussions based on your analytic pieces. Therefore, please come prepared to share your findings, interpretations, and questions with other students.
- Depending on class enrollment, each student may be responsible for one or two presentations (Introducing director and film analysis).
- The length of presentation is 10-15 minutes, and you may use a power-point, though not necessary.

Proposed Schedule & Topics

	Topic & Key Words	Feature Screening	Films for Personal Viewing
S 1 12/26	National Cinema, Auteur, & "Korean Women"		
S 2 12/27	Im Kwontaek: <i>Han</i> (한, 恨) & Art Tradition vs. Modernity	<i>Sopyonje</i> (1993)	<i>The Surrogate Woman</i> (1987), <i>Come Come Come Upward</i> (1989), <i>Downfall</i> (1997)
S 3 12/30	Park Chanwook: Vengeance vs. Redemption	<i>Lady Vengeance</i> (2005)	<i>Handmaiden</i> (2016), <i>Thirst</i> (2009), <i>Decision to Leave</i> (2022)
S 4 12/31	<i>Presentation & Discussion & Analysis</i>		<i>Essay #1 Due</i>

S 5 1/2	Kim Kiduk: Love or Violence Territory vs. Sanctuary	<i>3-Iron</i> (2004)	<i>Bad Guy (2001)</i> , <i>Isle</i> (2000), <i>Pieta</i> (2013), <i>Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring</i> (2003)
S 6 1/3	Hong Sangsoo: Libido, Male Psyche & Female Desire	<i>Woman is the Future of Man</i> (2004)	<i>The Day a Pig Fell into a Well</i> (1996) , <i>Woman on the Beach</i> (2007), <i>Power of Kangwon Province</i> (1998)
S 7 1/6	<i>Presentation & Discussion & Analysis</i>		<i>Essay #2 Due</i>
S 8 1/7	Bong Junho: Paradox Family or Monster	<i>Mother</i> (2009)	<i>Parasite (2019)</i> , <i>The Host</i> (2006), <i>Memories of Murder</i> (2003)
S 9 1/8	Lee Changdong: Burden of Community Light vs. Shadow	<i>Oasis</i> (2002)	<i>Secret Sunshine (2007)</i> , <i>Poem</i> (2011), <i>Peppermint Candy</i> (2000)
S 10 1/9	<i>Presentation & Discussion & Analysis Review</i>		<i>Essay #3 Due</i>