



Advanced Trajectory

Screen Cultures in Transition



This booklet provides information about the advanced trajectory (verdiepingspakket) Screen Cultures in Transition within the BA programme Media and Culture. An advanced trajectory is a coherent selection of four courses. In the trajectory Screen Cultures in Transition all four courses are in English and build skills central to film and TV studies, as well as interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary digital transformations of these media. Having completed both basic trajectories (basispakket 1 and 2) it is now time to further deepen your knowledge and to further develop your skills. This booklet describes what is on offer in this trajectory, how the programme is composed, and what knowledge and skills you will develop. After completion of this trajectory you will take the Research Seminar (Onderzoeksseminar) and finally write your BA thesis on a topic in line with this trajectory.

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Picture cover
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FOR WHOM?

The advanced trajectory of *Screen Cultures in Transition* is meant for students who want to develop a firm grounding in traditions of film and TV studies while also gaining experience in mobilizing this expertise for the contemporary screen environment as it is characterized by dynamic interrelations between old and new media forms. More specifically, students following this advanced trajectory are interested in understanding how more established concepts such as the apparatus, shot analysis, flow, liveness, and genre function along-side new concepts in relation to more current developments in digital TV, interactive film, and virtual reality.

PROGRAMME

Hollywood Cinema and Beyond (Block 1): what structures underlie Hollywood filmic practices?

Television Genres and Representation (Block 2): in what way do genres structure TV programming and audience expectations in relation to patterns of representation?

Convergence Cultures: Television after TV (Block 3): what are the major shifts in the development of television in relation to contemporary digital and mobile screen technologies?

Spaces and Screens (Block 4): how are screen practices impacted by spatial, material, and performative aspects of the screen technologies and the situations in which we use them? How has the relationship between screens and their spectators transformed in the contemporary media environment?

TOPICS AND CONCEPTS

Hollywood Cinema and Beyond

In this course, students strengthen their analytical skills and deepen their knowledge of classic and recent Hollywood film, its formal characteristics,

and its narrative principles. This knowledge then serves as a background for considering other forms of filmmaking such as Asian and European art film. The main analytical perspective of the course is neo-formalist film analysis, enriched by cognitive film analysis. During the course, you will practise your analytical skills in tutorials. At the end of the course, you will formulate a research question and write a paper in line with a neo-formalist or cognitive perspective.

Television Genres and Representation

In this course you examine television genres such as sitcoms, news, reality TV, sports or youth television from the perspective of social representation. In so doing, you study the concept of genre as a cultural category and how genre shapes the portrayal of social groups such as women, racial minorities, and socio-economic classes. For instance, the course examines the manner in which the crime genre may frame some social classes as victims and others as criminals.

4 Convergence Cultures

This course examines the unique technological and social shifts that result from the interrelation between the internet, mobile media, digital technologies, and TV, and thus helps to theorize the culture of screen media. As such you will reflect on technologies, regulatory regimes, industrial practices, and national contexts that shape the evolution of TV, both historically and in contemporary digital culture. These forces characterize the emergence and transformations of new media and play a vital role in ongoing debates about media identity, change, and convergence. The course surveys five themes: transmedia storytelling; transnational television; media regulation; participatory television and user-generated content (UGC); and media citizenship.

Spaces and Screens

This course investigates the relationship between screen technologies and culturally embedded screen practices, specifically in public and urban contexts. Screen phenomena beside the classical "cinematic" and "televisual" screen that will be discussed and analysed are, for example,

urban screens, mobile screens, VR, AR and XR, video mapping and projections, interactive installations, media architecture, and the staging of screens in live performances. The focus of our analyses will be instances of change and innovation, as well as the comparison of different and/or converging media forms. Zooming in on moments when new spaces are created by new screens, screen-based constellations, and their spatial design, the perspective that we will develop in this course is a historically-informed comparative analysis of screening situations. For this, we will reflect on theories about the specificity of particular screen technologies and location-based and situated screen practices. In particular we will examine the spatial, material, physical, and performative aspects of various screen uses and the forms of spectatorship these produce. Starting points for our inquiries will be offered by current debates about technological innovation, cultural change, as well as questions about medium specificity, hybridity, and transformation.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

In this advanced trajectory, you will deepen and enrich your **knowledge** about the repertory, genres and formats of film, television, and other screen media, and develop your understanding of the role of diverse new and changing screen technologies and practices in how they shape contemporary screen cultures. Moreover, in this advanced trajectory, you will deepen your skills to analyse film, television, and other related screen media as text, genre, and discourse, and examine how various screening situations produce specific forms of spectatorship. Together these courses prepare you to tackle the independent construction of an original piece of research in your BA thesis for the field of film, television, and comparative screen media studies.

In the courses of this trajectory, you will develop your **skills** to analyse films, television programs, as well as content for online screening platforms, mobile screens, interactive screens, installations, and urban screens. This ranges from fiction to non-fiction, and from commercial and mainstream products to “sidestream” or experimental content, as well as bottom-up, participatory practices. Historical and traditional film and



television genres will be enriched by new forms of (audiovisual) storytelling and by interactive, transmedia, and participatory screen content. Moreover, in order to understand traditional as well as novel forms of spectatorship of film, television, and other screen media, we will analyze the affordances of screen technologies and the spatial and temporal characteristics of screening situations.

In a first step in this trajectory (Blocks 1-2), we zoom in on how film and television in their form, content, and genres are shaped by both aesthetic ambitions and commercially-driven institutions and industries that have historically structured the production and distribution of film and television in a dynamic push and pull between formalization and innovation. Thus, *Hollywood Cinema and Beyond* and *Television Genres and Representation* develop theoretical and methodological tools for analyzing the narrative and commercial structures of screen media.

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In a second step (Blocks 3-4), we shift our perspective to also include new screens, platforms, and screening situations that transform the contract between screen and public. Contributing to what has been called “convergence culture” and “participatory culture,” film, television and other screen media in transition produce changing and novel forms of spectatorship and screen spaces for their publics. As a result, *Convergence Cultures and Spaces and Screens* provide practice in theorizing and analyzing modern transmedia and mobile screening environments.

PERSPECTIVE, APPROACHES, METHODS

The main research focus in this track is on medium-specific textual forms and genres, on transmedia and converging forms and formats, and on a comparative **perspective** for new and changing screen phenomena. For this, this advanced trajectory organizes an order of **approaches**, **methods**, and theoretical **concepts** that together build a robust historical, theoretical, and analytical perspective for understanding the dynamics of contemporary screen cultures.

Central **approaches** and **methods** include the analysis of film and television content using disciplinary approaches of textual analysis and genre criticism, as well as comparative approaches to various screen media, including mobile and urban screens, interactive installations, online platforms, and transmedia storytelling. In addition to analysing textual form and content, you will analyse the distribution and circulation of audiovisual content across screens, and the specificity of various screening situations. As such, you will develop your knowledge about, and critical perspective on, changing and transforming cultures of production, distribution, reception, and participation in film, TV and other screen media. At the end of this trajectory, you will be prepared to write a BA-thesis on screen cultures in transition.

In blocks 1 and 2 we focus primarily on developing your experience with textual analysis and discourse analysis. In Block 3 we focus on academic debate and the ability to position a research question within existing scholarly literature by developing and writing a theoretical framework. In block 4 students focus on the development of analytical questions in a concept-driven dispositif analysis for a comparative approach to various screening situations. As a result, you will gain a flexible and advanced understanding of how to develop precise analytical questions for a diverse array of media objects and how to operationalize key theoretical concepts in film studies, TV studies, screen studies, and comparative media studies.

| BLOCK | COURSE | FOCUS | METHOD | RESEARCH SKILLS |
|-------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Hollywood Cinema and Beyond | Methods in Film Analysis | Close Reading: Neo-formalist | Development of a research question and application of close reading techniques for film |
| 2 | Television Genres and Representation | Methods in TV Analysis | Close Reading: Genre and Representation | Paper structure and application of close reading techniques for TV |
| 3 | Convergence Cultures | Theories of Media Transformation | Theoretical Framework | Develop and enter an academic debate |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|
| 4 | Spaces and Screens | Theories and Analysis of Media Reception | Analysis of Screening Situations | Apply theoretical concepts to a reception analysis and write flexibly for different rhetorical situations |
|---|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|

BESIDES?

Next to two *basispakketten* and a *verdiepingspakket* (like this advanced trajectory **Screen Cultures in Transition**), each bachelor programme entails a *profielingsruimte* (profiling space) of 60 ects. Half of this space is needed for a mandatory *profielingspakket*, a profiling trajectory, which may consist of:

- a minor programme – a package of four thematically related courses – within Utrecht University, *or*
- studying abroad (a valuable option for those who would like to live abroad and get a sense of the international orientation of academic life), *or*
- a second *verdiepingspakket* within *Media and Culture*.

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In exceptional cases the student may choose a combination of four courses not entailed in the options above as their profiling trajectory. For this option the student needs the permission of the exam committee in advance.

The other half of the profiling space may consist of

- an [internship](#) (7,5 of 15 ec)
- a [workshop](#) (only in Dutch) (one or more)
- an [honours programme](#)
- a (second/third) *verdiepingspakket* within *Media and culture*
- free courses

We recommend that students following this trajectory choose an internship and/or a practicum. Both are relevant for professional orientation, learning

by experience, and developing a deeper understanding of how theory and practice could relate to one another.

AND THEN?

With the knowledge and skills mentioned above you should be well prepared at the end of this advanced trajectory of four courses to write – in combination with the *onderzoeksseminar* or research seminar – a BA thesis on a topic related to TV, film, and evolving screen cultures. This program and thesis provides background appropriate for the MA in Film and Television Studies and the two-year programme of the research master Media, Art and Performance Studies.

MORE INFORMATION?

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REFERENCES

Oxford Bibliographies: Cinema and Media Studies

Oxford Bibliographies provides comprehensive overviews of the best available scholarship across a wide variety of subjects in film and media studies (https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/browse?module_0=obo-9780199791286).

Television and its Transmedia Extensions

Butler, Jeremy G. 2010. *Television Style*. New York: Routledge.

This book provides an overview of different television styles as well as a very good introduction on how you could analyse textual elements of television. You will find, for example, a discussion on how soap operas are filmed and how websites of television series are graphically designed.

Es, Karin van Es. 2016. *The Future of Live*. London: Polity Press.

The book discusses the concept of liveness in the context of television, and screen media beyond TV.

Holt, Jennifer, and Alisa Perren (eds.). 2009. *Media Industries. History, Theory, and Method*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

The authors of this book explain the relevance of media industries as a separate field of research by integrating existing approaches of television, which might help to get a sense of the complex forces by which media industries are guided and restricted.

Jenkins, Henry. 2006. *Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York Univ. Press.

In this book, Jenkins, one of the leading scholars in contemporary media studies, examines which important cultural transformations occur in a period in which old and new media come together and become intertwined. Jenkins particularly pays attention to the changing role and the increasing power of the media consumer and to what this means for commercial media companies.

Lotz, Amanda. 2007. *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. New York: New York Univ. Press.

Lotz explains how the media landscape in the United States of America has recently changed and how the television industry responds to these changes. She discusses how the television industry has reacted on the introduction of new technologies, which new forms of production and distribution have emerged and how modes of advertising and of watching television have changed.

Allen, Robert C. (ed.). 1992. *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled. Television and Contemporary Criticism*. Chapel Hill/London: Univ. of North Carolina Press.

This collection of eight essays introduces the reader into several important theories within the domain of culture studies, from semiotics, narrative theory, reception theory, feminist theory to genre theory. It shows how these theories could be used for a critical study of television.

Bignell, Jonathan, and Andreas Fickers (eds.). 2008. *A European Television History*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

First collection of essays in which the authors specifically pay attention to the European television history and to the complex role television plays in technological, economic, political, cultural and social changes in European societies.

Gray, Jonathan, and Amanda D. Lotz. 2011. *Television Studies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Provides an overview of the history of television studies and of its main theories and methods.

Thompson, Ethan, and Jason Mittel (eds.). 2013. *How To Watch Television*. New York: New York Univ. Press.

The authors of this collective edition discuss different approaches of studying television and demonstrate by means of specific examples different ways of analysing television programmes.

Film and other Screen Media

Bordwell, David. 2006. *The Way Hollywood Tells It*. (Berkeley: University of California Press.

The author discusses developments in the classical and the new Hollywood style.

Buckley, Craig, Rudiger Campe, Francesco Casetti (eds). 2019. *Screen Genealogies: From Optical Device to Environmental Medium*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019.

<http://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=1006433>

As the title indicates, this collection discusses various screen technologies and practices from a shared perspective on how these produce various screening environments or situations.

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Chateau, Dominique and José Moure (eds.) 2015. *Screens: From Materiality to Spectatorship – A Historical and Theoretical Reassessment*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015.

<http://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=620651>

This collection brings together and compares various screening technologies and practices.

Colangelo, Dave. 2020. *The Building as Screen: A History, Theory, and Practice of Massive Media*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020.

<https://bit.ly/2QZAvv9>

The book explores various forms of media architecture and urban screens and introduces new, and also mobilizes more established concepts and perspectives from film studies.

Friedberg, Anne. 2009. *The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft* (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

The author explores different conceptions about the cinema screen and other screens.

Huhtamo, Erkki and Jussi Parikka (eds.). 2011. *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, Ca and London: University of California Press.

This book introduces an archaeological approach to the study of media - one that sifts through the evidence to learn how media were written about, used, designed, preserved, and sometimes discarded.

Thompson, Kristin. 1988. *Breaking the Glass Armor: Neoformalist Film Analysis*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

The author discusses the principles of a neo-formalist text analysis.

Verhoeff, Nanna. 2012. *Mobile Screens: The Visual Regime of Navigation*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/34549>

The book investigates various screen media from a comparative perspective and zooms in on tropes of mobility that we can recognize in (early) cinema, mobile screen media, urban screens and installations.

Journals

- Please consult the "Research Guide Film and Media Studies" for a [comprehensive list of film and media journals](https://guides.lib.uci.edu/film/journals) (<https://guides.lib.uci.edu/film/journals>)
- *JCMS: Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* (<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jcms/>)
- *Film Criticism* (<https://journals.publishing.umich.edu/fc/>)
- *Screen* (<https://academic.oup.com/screen>)
- *Critical Studies in Television* (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/cst>)
- *Television & New Media* (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/tvn>)

- *The Journal of Popular Film and Television* (<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/vjpf20/current>)
- *Convergence* (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/con>)
- *Transformative Works and Cultures* (<https://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc>)
- *Media, Culture and Society* (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/mcs>)
- *First Monday* (<https://firstmonday.org>)
- *Flow* (<http://www.flowjournal.org>)
- *NECSUS* (<https://necsus-ejms.org>)
- *Television and New Media* (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/tvn>)
- *View* (<http://viewjournal.eu>)