

**ORIENTATION WEEK**  
**BA FILM**  
**SEPTEMBER 2018**  
**FULL-TIME**

Congratulations on being accepted on the Film BA Honours degree. We hope that you will enjoy your time at Westminster, and we look forward to working with you over the next few years. We will do our best to ensure your time at university is creative, exciting and fulfilling.

On the attached pages you will find details of your time with us at the start of the year. During Orientation week we will go through the course programme with you in detail. We have arranged a number of activities to help you settle in and prepare for your time with us. This will include familiarising you with workspaces, who you will be working with, the campus and its community before you start the formal, scheduled learning weeks. Some of the activities during orientation week are course-related, and others are organised by the School and by the Students' Union.

Film and television practice is mainly timetabled on two days a week (Monday and Tuesday for 1<sup>st</sup> years). However, it is important to be aware that production work continues from October until May, and shooting, editing and technical workshops will often need to be scheduled through the week. The official online University timetable that you will be given access to does not include these additional activities, which will be listed in the module timetables given to you by your module leader. Most practice work in the first year is done in groups of between four and six students and requires collaborative teamwork in the majority of our productions and practical exercises. The year for written work is divided into autumn and spring semesters.

The accompanying reading and viewing list contains suggestions for books, films and television programmes that will help you prepare for your arrival in September. You won't be able to read or view everything on it, and it may be difficult for some of you to access some of the books or films, but do dip into it, to extend your knowledge of film and television.

Orientation Week begins on Monday September 17<sup>th</sup>, and it is essential that you attend. The Film BA Course Induction starts promptly at 9.30am on Monday 17<sup>th</sup>, in the Film Studio in Studio M. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address below.

Best wishes and welcome to University life. We look forward to seeing you in September.

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## UNDERGRADUATE ORIENTATION WEEK 2018

During this first week with us you will attend a number of sessions that will provide you with the information and resources you will require to begin your studies. It is essential that you attend each of these sessions to ensure you receive all relevant material, such as your student ID card, module selection and timetable, and details of where to access the resources you will need. Please bring something with which you can take notes.

### TIMETABLE

#### MONDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2018

9.30am – 12.30pm	<b>BA Film Course Induction</b>	Studio 2, M Block
1pm	<b>Campus Welcome Meeting</b>	Auditorium
2.30pm	<b>Enrolment</b>	The Forum
5-6:30pm	<b>Screening: Graduation Films 2018</b>	M Block, Dubbing Theatre

#### TUESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

2-4pm	<b>Library Introduction Introduction to Online Tools and Reflective Learning</b>	M Block, Dubbing Th
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#### WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2018

10am-5pm	<b>Film Festival</b>	M Block, Dubbing Theatre
5-7pm	<b>Film School Barbeque and Drinks</b>	Forum Courtyard

#### THURSDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2018

1am – 1pm	<b>M Block Edit Suite Inductions (3 Groups)</b>	M Block M1.01
Afternoon	<b>Guided visits to Central London campuses (optional)</b>	

#### FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2018

11am all day	<b>Student Union Arrivals Fair</b>	The Forum
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Please note:

Attendance at all the events in this timetable is essential apart from the Freshers' Fair.

For the **Film Festival** on Wednesday, please can you bring (maximum 10 minutes) something to show us and your new colleagues that gives us an idea of your interests and work to date. It could be a short film, an animation, an extract of a longer film ... photographs if you have not done any film work yet. Please do not bring showreels of edited clips. Material should be on an authored DVD (not as a file on a disc). If you have any questions about this, please contact Zoe Allsop: [z.allsop@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:z.allsop@westminster.ac.uk)

## PREPARATION FOR FILM BA

Teaching starts on Monday 24th September

### Teaching Week 1

Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> September		
10.00 – 17.00	Introduction to Film and Television Practice	M Block, Studio 2
	Introduction to Module and Exercise 1	M Block, Studio 2

Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> September		
10.00 – 17.00	Introduction to Film and Television Practice	M Block, Studio 2
	Introduction to Video Cameras	M Block, Studio 2

Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> September		
10.00 – 17.00	Independent Study: Video Camera Practice	Film Edit/On Campus
10.00 – 17.00	3D Workshop Inductions (tbc)	3D Workshop

Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> September		
10.00 – 13.00	Constructing the Real	Lecture Theatre 3 (LT3)
14.00 – 17.00	The Art of Cinema	Auditorium

Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> September		
tbc	Adobe Creative Cloud introductions	tbc

## READING LIST

The following list contains suggestions for books, films and television programmes that will help you prepare for your entry into the course in September. The list isn't comprehensive nor do we expect that you will be able to read or view everything on it and it may be difficult for some of you to access the books or films, but if you can, you will find it useful to dip into some of these to extend your knowledge of film and television.

Don't rush out and buy all of these books. All of them could be useful, but some of them are expensive and some of them won't be for you. Have a look at them online and decide which ones (if any) are likely to be particularly relevant to you. You'll find them in our library.

They are in alphabetical order by author – not in order of importance.

Books on Film and Television Theory and History:

- Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Manchester University Press, 2009) **Most of this isn't specifically about film, but it's a lucid and readable intro to some serious theory, from structuralism to postmodernism - Marxist, feminist, lesbian/gay, post-colonial and ecological criticism - plus sections on style and narratology.**
- André Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. I*, (University of California Press, 2005) **This is where it all started, and we still use it right from the start.**
- David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* (9<sup>th</sup> edition, McGraw Hill, 2010) **A perennial favourite of neo-formalism. We might not agree with everything here, but it's all relevant.**
- Michael Hammond and Lucy Mazdon (eds), *The Contemporary Television Series* (Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2005) **An excellent collection of essays on the rise of Quality Television. Not just media studies.**
- Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener, *Film Theory: An Introduction Through the Senses* (Routledge, 2015) **Using the relationship between cinema and spectator to introduce the major theories of film.**
- Richard Maltby, *Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (Blackwell, 2003) **Thick, but readable and very comprehensive. Maltby is one of the best writers on cinema as industry and art form. The ideas here are applicable beyond Hollywood.**
- Jason Mittell, *Complex TV: The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling* (NYU Press, 2015) **Cutting edge television drama theory.**
- Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 3rd edition (Indiana University Press, 2017) **An overview of the most important topics and issues in documentary history and criticism.**
- Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed), *the Oxford History of World Cinema* (Oxford University Press, 1996) **'World' here meaning the whole of cinema from around the world. Does what it says on the tin. (848 pages.)**
- V.F. Perkins, *Film as Film* (Penguin, 1972) **An accessible and very sensible introduction to thinking analytically about film. A bargain, and not too long.**

Books on practical filmmaking:

- Ken Dancyger, *The Techniques of Film and Video Editing* (Focal Press, 2006)
- Michael Langford, *Basic Photography* (Focal Press, 2000)
- Alexander Mackendrick, *On Film-making* Faber & Faber 2004
- Walter Murch, *In the Blink of an Eye* (Silman-James 2001)

Try Amazon and e-bay for second hand-hand books as well as your local library. If you can't find these titles, see what else is available that covers the same material.

## VIEWING

As well as going to the cinema regularly over the next couple of months, watch television, particularly dramas, sitcoms and documentaries. Try to see things you might not normally watch and think about them critically. If you have access to cable or satellite television, it can serve as an archive of older programmes. More and more material is becoming available online.

For example, there is an interesting selection of documentaries from the 1960s onwards on the BBC iPlayer <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/categories/documentaries/all>

While many students are familiar with current popular film genres, they are often less familiar with older film classics. If your background in film is limited try to watch some of the following:

- Silent Hollywood:  
Films of Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, DW Griffith (*Intolerance*, *The Birth of a Nation*)
- Classical Hollywood (1930s, 40s and 50s):  
The films of Orson Wells (*Citizen Kane*, *Touch of Evil*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*) and Alfred Hitchcock (*North by Northwest*, *Vertigo*, *Psycho*)
- Genre films such as:
  - o Musicals (*On the Town*, *Singing in the Rain*, *The Band Wagon*)
  - o Crime/Gangster films (*I was a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, the original *Scarface*, *Public Enemy*)
  - o Westerns (*Stagecoach*, *The Searchers*, *Red River*)
- European Cinema:
  - o Soviet Cinema of the 1920s:
    - Sergei Eisenstein (*Strike*, *Battleship Potemkin*, *October*, *Alexander Nevsky*)
    - V. Pudovkin (*Mother*, *The End of St. Petersburg*)
    - Dziga Vertov (*Man with a Movie Camera*)
  - o Italian Neo-Realism:
    - Roberto Rossellini (*Paisa*, *Rome Open City*, *Germany Year Zero*),
    - Vittorio De Sica (*Bicycle Thieves*, *Umberto D.*),
    - Federico Fellini (*La Strada*, *I Vitelloni*)
  - o The films of Jean Renoir (*La Grande Illusion*, *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange*, *La Regle du Jeu*)
  - o The films of Jean Luc Godard and the French New Wave, including filmmakers such as Francois Truffaut, Eric Rohmer, Claude Chabrol
- British Cinema:
  - o Ealing Comedies (*Kind Hearts and Coronets*, *The Ladykillers*, *Whisky Galore*)

- The films of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger (*The Red Shoes, A Matter of Life and Death, A Canterbury Tale*)
- New Wave films of the 50s and 60s: *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning, A Taste of Honey, This Sporting Life, The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*
- Dogme films: *The Idiots, Festen*.

## TELEVISION

- *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997) season 1, The WB.
- *The Sopranos* (1999), season 1, HBO.
- *The Wire* (2002), season 1, HBO.
- *Mad Men* (2007), season 1, AMC.
- *Red Riding* (2009), Channel 4.
- *Louie* (2010), season 1, FX.
- *Bojack Horseman* (2014) season 1, Netflix.
- *Mr Robot* (2015), season 1, USA Network

## SOME CONTEMPORARY FILMMAKERS

- Paul Thomas Anderson: *Boogie Nights, Magnolia, There Will Be Blood, The Master*.
- Wes Anderson: *Rushmore, The Royal Tennenbaums, Moonrise Kingdom, The Grand Budapest Hotel*.
- Asghar Farhadi: *About Elly, A Separation, The Past*.
- Michael Winterbottom: *The Trip, The Killer Inside Me, The Road to Guantanamo, 24-Hour Party People*.
- Charlie Kaufman (writer): *Adaptation, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*.
- Spike Jonze: *Being John Malkovitch, Adaptation, Her*.
- Pedro Almodovar: *Volver, All about my Mother, Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, The Skin I Live In*.
- Wong Kar Wai: *Happy Together, In the Mood for Love, Chungking Express*.
- Asif Kapadia: *Senna; Amy*
- Andrea Arnold (*Fish Tank, Wuthering Heights, American Honey*)
- Kelly Reichardt (*Wendy and Lucy, Meek's Cutoff, Certain Women*)
- Nuri Bilge Ceylan (*Distant, Once Upon a Time in Anatolia, Winter Sleep*)

You might keep a journal of the films/programmes you watch and comment on and assess them in terms of script, structure, performance, visual style, etc. See if you can make connections between what you've read and what you see.

## EQUIPMENT

As there is a wide variety of equipment available from the University equipment stores for film making, workshops and practical exercises, there are no specific requirements for students to purchase any equipment in advance of the course. If you have either a manual or digital SLR stills camera it would be useful to bring, and some students find Apple laptops useful for coursework, but these should by no means be considered 'essentials'. A portable hard drive on which to store and archive copies of your work would be

a very good idea. (It is worth noting that students on the course receive a better-than-standard discount on Apple products once they are enrolled on the course and have a Student ID number and email address)