

Budapest through Cinema, People and Streets

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Instructor(s):

Mariann Schiller
Anna Gács

Short Description of the Course:

This course provides an overview of Hungarian history and culture through watching films, walking in the city and discussing literary, art and cinematic heritage.

The *Hungary through Hungarian Cinema* component gives an overview of Hungarian film history and invites students to discuss aesthetic, social, moral, political and psychological issues raised in some of the most influential old and recent Hungarian movies. Films to be discussed include the banned satire, *The Witness* (1969), the evergreen comedy on Hungarian's football enthusiasm, *Football of the Good Old Days* (1973), the cult drama about the 1956 uprising and the following disillusionment, *Time Stands Still* (1981), the beautiful, lyrical account on personal history from a female perspective, *My Twentieth Century* (1989), the international animation hit, *Ruben Brandt, Collector* (2018) and the understated hyperrealist drama, *One Day* (2018), that tackles complex social issues through depicting the quotidian.

The *Budapest Studies* component, which can also be taken on its own, offers a glimpse into the Hungarian way of life, past and present, through learning about the history of the city, visiting famous and lesser-known sites, and some intricate and surprising secrets of Hungarian cultural heritage.

Aim of the Course:

Students get introduced to Hungarian history through their own cultural experience. Movies, texts, art works, city walks offer many aspects of understanding Hungarian cultural heritage and contemporary social and cultural issues.

Method of Instruction:

Students will be encouraged to compare newly acquired information on Hungarian history, culture and society to their own experience. Teachers' presentations, reading short texts, watching short films will all be aimed at a comparative discussion of cultural heritage.

Grading Principles:

Grading will be based on

1. class participation and activity (both classes!)
2. watching the film scheduled for the week either at AIT Screenings or on own device
3. short (appr. 300 word) response papers or presentations about the films

Instructors' bio:

Mariann Schiller is a secondary school teacher and teacher trainer in one of the most prestigious grammar schools in Budapest run by L. Eötvös University. Apart from teaching youngsters she is active in mentoring and educating teachers in a teachers' association and occasionally at university. She is also the editor of several teaching materials. She has been active in developing new ways of teaching Hungarian. For years she was responsible for the national board of the European Youth Parliament. She is a true Budapest dweller: born, brought up, and has been living in downtown in historic buildings.

Anna Gács is a critic and translator. She studied literature and art theory. Her research interests include contemporary literature, digitalisation and literary culture, literary and media theory, and contemporary autobiographic culture. She is an associate professor at the Institute for Art Theory and Media Studies, ELTE Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. In 1999-2000 she was the Hungarian lector at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College of London. From 2015 to 2018 she was the president of Szépírók Társasága (Hungarian Society of Writers, Critics and Literary Translators). In 2015 she won the Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.