

B.A. Seminar
Serial Shakespeare
HS 2017, Wed. 16.15-18.00
Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen

As Jan Kott writes in *Shakespeare, Our Contemporary*: “Sometimes one has the impression that Shakespeare has in fact written three or four plays and kept repeating the same themes in different registers and keys.” The provocative claim of this seminar is the following: given this tendency toward repetition, the four Shakespeare plays we will focus on can fruitfully be read as a series. On the one hand, we will explore the serial reworking of key themes (abandonment and return) and figural constellations (matching and rematching of lovers) within this select group of romantic comedies. On the other hand, we will look at the adaptation of Shakespearean thinking by Hollywood cinema, making him, indeed, our contemporary.

(01./ 20 Sep): Introduction

(02./ 27 Sep): *Intolerable Cruelty* (2003). Joel and Ethan Cohen

A HEROINE LOST AND RETURNED

(03./ 04 Oct): *Two Gentlemen of Verona*

(04./ 11 Oct): Theories of repetition

-- Sigmund Freud, “Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten”*, *Jenseits des Lustprinzips* Kapitel 2*

-- Shlomith Rimón-Kenan, “The Paradoxical Status of Repetition”*

(05./ 18 Oct): *Much Ado About Nothing*

(06./ 25 Oct): *Guestlecture*: Urszula Kizelbach “The War of the Sexes on Page and Screen in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Taming of the Shrew*”

(07./ 01 Nov): Theories of cultural survival

-- Walter Benjamin, “Der Erzähler”

-- Elisabeth Bronfen, “Crossmapping”

(08./ 08 Nov): *Closer* (2004). Mike Nichols

POSSIBILITIES OF REMARRIAGE

(09./ 15 Nov): *All’s Well that Ends Well*

(10./ 22 Nov): *All’s Well that Ends Well*

(11./ 29 Nov): *Gone Girl* (2014). David Fincher

(12./ 06 Dec): *Winter’s Tale*

(13./ 13 Dec): *Winter’s Tale*

(14./ 20 Dec): *Some Like It Hot* (1959). Billy Wilder

Background Reading:

Adelman, Janet. *Suffocating Mothers. Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to The Tempest*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Stanley Cavell zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 2009.

Cavell, Stanley. *Disowning Knowledge in Seven Plays of Shakespeare*. updated edition. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987.

-- *Pursuits of Happiness. The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard UP, 1981.

Doren, Mark van. *Shakespeare*. (1939). New York: New York Review Books, 2005.

Freedman, Barbara. *Staging the Gaze: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, and Shakespearean Comedy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1991.

Garber, Marjorie. *Shakespeare After All*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2004.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Shakespearean Negotiations. The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

-- *The Norton Shakespeare*. based on The Oxford Edition, second edition. New York: Norton, 2008.

Maus, Katherine Eisaman. *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance*. Chicago: Chicago U.P., 1995.

Requirements for the class:

- All students must prepare a thesis statement for each class, to be posted on Olat (course forum) by Tuesday 9 am of the respective week. This can also entail a series of questions, comments or associations; it will facilitate class discussion and allow me to see in what directions you have been thinking while preparing for the class sessions. **Neglecting to hand in 13 thesis papers will result in a fail.**
- In addition, all students must compile written minutes (*Sitzungsprotokoll*) for one of the class sessions (to be sent to my assistant Morgane Ghilardi morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch one week after the respective session at the latest).
- Students taking the class for 6 KP must write an essay to be handed in on **February 19, 2018** (hard copy in my pigeonhole in the secretary's office, and a pdf version to my assistant Morgane Ghilardi (morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch)).
- BA thesis students are asked to present their project in the final session. You will have to hand in your **BA thesis by April 13, 2018** (hard copy in my pigeonhole in the secretary's office, and a pdf version to my assistant Morgane Ghilardi (morgane.ghilardi@es.uzh.ch)). It is wise to use the class discussions to test your ideas for this written assignment.
- Plagiarism is a serious offense and pertains to all assignments.
- All texts marked with * will be on OLAT.