

20th CENTURY ITALIAN CULTURAL HISTORY

BCSP – Spring 2024

University of Bologna Faculty

HOURS:

From February 6 to May 16
Tuesdays & Thursdays 5pm – 7pm
BCSP Classroom

DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to offer an historical overview of 20th Century Italian Cultural History with focus on film, design, music, and fashion. Students will be provided with chronologically ordered articles, documents, images, videos, etc. demonstrating the role that each of these arts and industries played in the formation of what we now call contemporary Italian culture. By the end of the course students will have acquired the ability to recognize, analyze and fully understand the influence that contemporary Italian culture, its brand names and manufacturers, have had on the rest of the world.

The course will be divided into sections (History, Fashion, Music, Design and Film), and each section will be taught by a different professor (all are University of Bologna professors and experts in their fields). Each section will consist of four lectures. At the end of each section, students will take a written test that will be graded by each professor.

Professor Salvatore Botta will begin the course and explain the historical context, with emphasis on the industrialization process in Italy. Professor Giancarlo Benevolo will teach the following section on Italian fashion. Professor Anna Scalfaro will teach the third section on the history of Italian music. Professor Matteo Cassani Simonetti will cover Italian Design and Architecture and the final part, on Italian film, will be taught by Professor Marco Cucco.

INSTRUCTORS: **Salvatore Botta**, Associate Professor, Department of Arts; **Giancarlo Benevolo**, Curator, Museum of Textile and Tapestry, Civic Museums of Bologna; **Anna Scalfaro**, Associate Professor, Department of Arts; **Matteo Cassani Simonetti**, Associate Professor, Department of Architecture; **Marco Cucco**, Associate professor, Department of Arts.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION: Classroom lectures and group discussions.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Italian

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT: the result of the test or assigned written work at the end each section will count as **20%** of the final grade

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is mandatory. Only one absence will be tolerated. Additional absences due to illness must be justified by a doctor's note. **½ point will be reduced from the final grade** for every other absence.

If you cannot attend class, you will be expected to get information from your classmates about readings and assignments and to be prepared for the next class. Unjustified lateness will negatively affect your grade in class participation.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Course material will be available on the website:

<https://sites.google.com/bcspbologna.it/cultura-italiana-xx-secolo/home>

Each instructor will provide material according to their set of lectures. Most of this material will be formed by academic articles, extracts from books, film clips, images and slides, all provided through the above link.

CALENDAR:

First section: Salvatore Botta - History

Lesson 1 – Tuesday, February 6

Italy from the age of Belle Époque to the eve of WWI. The Giolitti age

Lesson 2 – Thursday, February 8

WWI and the Red Biennium: the age of catastrophe

Lesson 3 – Tuesday, February 13

Fascism and WWII: the age of totalitarianisms

Lesson 4 – Thursday, February 15

Birth and History of the Italian Republic: the age of Democracy

Test: Tuesday, February 20

Second section: Giancarlo Benevolo – Fashion & Style

Lesson 1 – Thursday, February 22

From the Belle Époque to WWI. Parisian influence and the idea of Italian fashion as art and excellence in tailoring: Rosa Genoni. The role of fashion magazines.

Lesson 2 – Tuesday, February 27

The 1920's and lifestyle revolution, autarchy and Italian fashion during the Fascist regime, textile and fashion organizations after WWII: Turin, Florence, Rome, Milan.

Lesson 3 – Thursday, February 29

The 1950's and 60's: high fashion, boutique fashion and the beginnings of industrial ready-to-wear fashion. From "Hollywood on the Tiber" to international affirmation of "Italian style": clothing and accessories. The fashion of youth and rebellion.

Lesson 4 – Tuesday, March 5

The 1970's and 80's: the international popularity of Italian designers. Milan: fashion capital and the "Made in Italy" until the plateau of the 90's. Focus on historical brands: Ferragamo, Gucci, Albini, Valentino, Armani, Versace.

Test: Thursday, March 7

Third section: Anna Scalfaro - Music

Lesson 1 – Tuesday, March 12

Il verismo and the Italian opera: themes, characters and musical style

Lesson 2 – Thursday, March 14

Italian musical avant-garde between daring experimentation and return of tradition

Lesson 3 – Tuesday, March 19

Birth and development of the singer-songwriter movement in Italy

Lesson 4 – Thursday, March 21

“Protest” music in Italy between the 60’s and 70’s

Test: Tuesday, March 26

Fourth section: Matteo Cassani Simonetti – Design & Architecture

Lesson 1 – Thursday, April 11

From decoration arts to the project of space and the objects in the period between the two world wars.

Lesson 2 – Tuesday, April 16

Architecture, Design and Reconstruction

Lesson 3 – Thursday, April 18

Design, Architecture, Utopia

Lesson 4 – Tuesday, April 23

The Postmodern period; the experiences and the masters of the end of the century

Test: Tuesday, April 30

Fifth section: Marco Cucco - Film

Lesson 1 – Tuesday, May 2

Fascism and Neorealism

Lesson 2 – Thursday, May 7

Italian film genres (Comedy Italian Style, Spaghetti Western, Italian Giallo)

Lesson 3 – Tuesday, May 9

The great authors of Italian cinema

Lesson 4 – Thursday, May 14

Contemporary Italian cinema

Test: Tuesday, May 16