Genre has been a key business strategy for the entertainment industry. Tapping into an existing community of viewers who are fans of a genre, commercial media products rely on a template of conventions, which have proven to be successful in the past. Viewers are said to enjoy consuming a genre because its guaranteed fulfillment of their expectations provides them with familiarity and comfort amid precarious economic, political, and social conditions.

The mass production of this generic template allows media companies to be cost effective in selling standardized products to disparate markets. It is this repetition of successful generic conventions which creates the impression that the entertainment industry has a homogenizing effect on global audiences. However, increased media convergence, digital interconnectivity, and participatory consumption from technological innovations have facilitated the extensive circulation and reinvention of entertainment products and their generic conventions across geographic borders.

This course takes as its point of departure the mobility and iteration of media genres around the world. It is interested not only in their reproduction but in their variation across different contexts. The course will examine each genre as a distinct medley of cultural attitudes, stylistic gestures, and thematic strands, which can be modified, arranged, and communicated in various ways. Instead of being restricted to a specific media platform like film, generic conventions can be reinterpreted over multiple platforms including visual art and social media, where they are given new functions, affordances, and significations.
SCHEDULE

Week 1: Revisiting Genre (Jan 9)

Required:
- Rick Altman, “How are Genres Used?” in Film/Genre (London: British Film Institute, 1999), 100-122

Recommended:

Week 2: From Action Blockbuster to Superhero World-Making (Jan 16)

Required:

Recommended:

Week 3: Science Fiction Anime (Jan 23)

Required:

Recommended:

Week 4: Film Viewing (Jan 30)

- Martina the Murderer in Four Acts (Mouly Surya, 2017)

Week 5: Lunar New Year Holiday (Feb 6)

Week 6: Western and Wuxia (Feb 13)

Required:
Recommended:

Week 7: Film Noir (Feb 20)

Required:

Recommended:

Tutorial: Producing a social media campaign

Week 8: Social Melodrama (Feb 27)

Required:

Recommended:

Tutorial: Presentation of critical reflection

Week 9: Documentary Truth (Mar 8)

Required:

Recommended:

Tutorial: Presentation of critical reflection
Week 10: Network and Database Aesthetics (Mar 13)

Required:
- Lev Manovich, “Database as Symbolic Form”, in Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. 39-60

Recommended:

Week 11: Bildungsroman and Development (Mar 20)

Required:

Recommended:

Submission of summary of final project (Mar 24)

Week 12: Consultation on final project (Mar 27)

Week 13: Reading week / Submission of individual critical reflection (Apr 4)

Week 14: Presentation of final project (Apr 10)

Week 15: Submission of final project (Apr 17)

ASSESSMENT

Class participation = 20%
- You are expected to participate actively during lectures, presentations, and discussions by asking salient questions and sharing relevant insights.

Individual critical reflection (400-600 words) (20%), presentation (5-7 mins.) (10%), and response (2 comments or questions) (5%) = 35%

- For your mid-term paper, you will submit an individual critical reflection that analyzes an example of digital media from the Asian context using the ideas about generic conventions discussed in class.
- In every tutorial session starting with week 7, 3-4 students will be assigned to share with the rest of the class their insights from their critical reflection. Each
presenter should prepare a presentation of 5-7 minutes. Another student will be assigned to respond to the presentation with salient comments or questions.

**Group paper (2000-3000 words) (35%) and presentation (10 mins.) (10%) - 45%**

For your final project, you will work in groups to produce a detailed written proposal for a social media campaign that applies three different sets of generic conventions to raise awareness about an important social issue in Hong Kong. Your proposal should describe: 1) how the campaign would be implemented; 2) what objectives would be sought; 3) which audiences would be addressed; 4) what materials and/or activities would be used; and 4) how the campaign is unique in relation to similar campaigns. The proposal should include at least five sample images of your envisioned campaign.

By the end of week 11, your group should submit a brief summary of your proposed project, which concisely describes your plans for the campaign, the issue to be addressed, and the genres to be utilized. In week 14, the groups will give a presentation in class about their social media campaign, which will be their last opportunity to receive feedback before submitting the final version of their paper.

As a vital component of this final requirement, students will perform a self-evaluation of their individual contribution to the group project.

**GRADING RUBRIC**

**Exceptional = A**
The paper or project greatly exceeds the expectations for this requirement. Fresh insights are presented not only about the chosen example but also about the concepts used. The paper or project displays a comprehensive understanding of the chosen example and the concepts used that goes beyond the scope of the class discussion. The language used to explain the concept and its application is complex yet lucid. The writing is grammatically correct and coherently organized. The chosen example is unique for the topic. The paper or project was submitted by the deadline.

**Outstanding = A-**
The paper or project exceeds the expectations for this requirement. Fresh insights are presented about the chosen example. The paper or project displays a comprehensive understanding of either the chosen example or the theory used that goes beyond the scope of the class discussion. The language used to explain the theory and its application is complex yet lucid. The writing is grammatically correct and coherently organized. The chosen example is unique for the topic. The paper or project was submitted by the deadline.

**Very good = B+**
The paper or project more than meets the expectations for this requirement. Fresh insights are presented about the chosen example. The paper or project displays a comprehensive understanding of the chosen example and the theory used. The language used to explain the theory and its application is lucid. The writing is coherently organized. The chosen example is suitable for the topic. The paper or project was submitted by the deadline.
**Good = B**
The paper or project more than meets the expectations for this requirement. The insights presented about the chosen example could have been developed further. The paper or project displays a sufficient understanding of the chosen example and the theory used. The language used to explain the theory and its application is lucid. The writing is moderately coherent. The chosen example is suitable for the topic. The paper or project was submitted by the deadline.

**More than satisfactory = B-**
The paper or project meets the expectations for this requirement. The insights presented about the chosen example or theory used lack elaboration or development. The paper or project displays a sufficient understanding of either the chosen example or the theory used. The language used to explain the theory and its application is understandable. The writing is moderately coherent. The chosen example is suitable for the topic. The paper or project may have been submitted late.

**Satisfactory = C+**
The paper or project meets the expectations for this requirement. The insights presented about the chosen example or theory used lack elaboration or development. The paper or project displays a basic understanding of the chosen example and the theory used. The language used to explain the theory and its application is understandable. The writing is slightly coherent. The chosen example may not be suitable for the topic. The paper or project may have been submitted late.

**Fair = C, C-**
The paper or project barely meets the expectations for this requirement. The insights presented about the chosen example or theory used are vaguely elaborated. The paper or project fails to display a sufficient understanding of the chosen example and the theory used. The language used to explain the theory and its application is virtually understandable. The writing is incoherent. The chosen example may not be suitable for the topic. The paper or project may have been submitted late.

**Pass = D+, D**
The paper or project does not meet the expectations for this requirement. No additional insights are presented about the chosen example or the theory used on top of what was discussed in class. The language used to explain the theory and its application are almost incomprehensible. The writing is incoherent. The chosen example is irrelevant. The paper or project may have been submitted late.

**Fail = F**
The paper or project does not meet the expectations for this requirement. The language and writing are poor. The chosen example is irrelevant. The theory used was not covered in class. The paper or project may have been submitted long past the deadline.
ACADEMIC ETHICS

You are expected to abide by the university’s principles and regulations on academic dishonesty. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the information on the following webpage: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/. Violations such as plagiarized work or multiple submissions will not be tolerated in any form and will be subject to disciplinary action. Remember that all words, phrases, or ideas taken from sources other than your own submitted assignment must be properly cited.

Students are required to submit their assignments with a signed declaration, acknowledging their awareness of and subscription to the university’s policies and regulations. Assignments submitted without a signed declaration will not be graded. When in doubt about an assignment with a possible violation, please feel free to consult me.