

Narcissistic Art: Twentieth Century British Metafiction, Metadrama and Metacinema

What happens when fictional characters write about their author, when theatre-goers take the stage and become part of the play or when film characters look straight at the camera and ask *you* what they should do next? All of these instances reveal the self-reflexive nature of a type of art that looks at itself in the mirror and plays paradoxical games with its own image.

This elective course takes a transmedial approach to analyzing metanarratives and aims at reaching students who are interested in learning about the specific devices of metafiction, metadrama and metacinema, their typology, as well as the effects they produce on their audience. Apart from establishing a theoretical framework through the modules listed below, the course will engender discussions which revolve around specific examples of twentieth-century British fictional works, in particular Flann O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds* (1939), Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966) and *The Real Inspector Hound* (1968), *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (dir. Terry Gilliam, 1975), *Peeping Tom* (dir. Michael Powell, 1960) and *The Tango Lesson* (dir. Sally Potter, 1997).

1. Metafiction – Self-Reflexivity, Mimesis and Aesthetic Illusion
2. Metafictional Devices – Metalepsis, Paradox and *Mise en abyme*
3. Metadrama – Playing with and within the Role
4. Metacinema – Entering and Exiting the Screen

Attendance:

50% minimum

Grade computation:

10 % class participation

45% applied presentation OR applied essay

45% theoretical quiz

Minimum grade:

5 overall