

Cult Cinema

Winter 2016

**C LIT 303A
SLN: 11841**

**T/Th lectures
M/W film screenings
(screenings optional if
viewed on your own)**

11:30-1:20

**Instructor:
Sudhir Mahadevan**



What is cult cinema? How and when does a movie become a "cult classic"? Are certain genres (horror, sci-fi, obscure foreign films, disaster films, exploitation films) predisposed to producing "cult" hits? Cult films attract devoted and defiant fan activity; challenge established norms of taste and aesthetics ("camp", "kitsch" and "trash"); often have or acquire distinctive exhibition practices (singalong Sound of Music, Halloween screenings of The Rocky Horror Picture Show); and engage with socio-political issues and ideologies in ways that can be distinct from mainstream films. The emergence of BitTorrent and YouTube mashups raises new questions regarding the relation between technology and cultural value. Course work will be a combination of film analysis and research into the contexts around particular films and how they acquired cult status. Readings include a textbook and a course pack.

We will consider a wide range of US and international films: Toxic Avenger, Sins of the Fleshapoids, Holy Mountain, Night of the Living Dead, Suspiria, Plan 9 from Outer Space, Office Space, Branded to Kill, Zinda Laash and more.

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