

## The Hollywood Studios

**Start date**      Friday 30 July 2021                      **End date**                      Sunday 1 August 2021

**Venue**              Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge  
CB23 8AQ

**Tutor**              **Dr Colin Shindler**                      **Course code**              2021NRX094

**Director of ISP and LL**                      Sarah Ormrod

**For further information on this  
course, please contact**                      Sarah Ormrod  
[intenq@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:intenq@ice.cam.ac.uk)

**To book**                      See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/residential-weekend-courses](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/residential-weekend-courses)

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### Tutor biography

**Dr Colin Shindler** has maintained an active interest in 20th century American and British social and cultural history whilst pursuing a wide-ranging career as a writer and producer in television, radio and motion pictures, and as an author of books and journalism for forty years. His latest book *Barbed Wire and Cucumber Sandwiches: The Controversial South Africa Cricket Tour of 1970* was published in May 2020 and has just been short listed for the MCC/Wisden Cricket Book of the Year. He is probably best known for his childhood memoir *Manchester United Ruined My Life* which was shortlisted for the William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award. He wrote the screenplay for the feature film *Buster* starring Phil Collins and Julie Walters and was the producer of such television dramas as *Lovejoy*, *Wish Me Luck* and *A Little Princess*, for which he won a Bafta award, and *Young Charlie Chaplin* starring Twiggy which was nominated for a US Prime Time Emmy. He has written three novels as well as numerous television scripts and radio plays but regards his greatest cultural contribution as choosing the title music for the police series *Juliet Bravo*. He was awarded his PhD by Cambridge University and has been lecturing for the History Faculty there on film and history since 1998. His recent radio plays on P G Wodehouse (*How To Be An Internee*) and *Private Eye* and *The Profumo Affair (Rumours)* were both selected by the BBC as Drama Podcast of the Week and he is currently writing another one for Radio Four about Leni Riefenstahl called *Hitler's Cutie*. *Four Lions*, his book on the relationship between four England football captains and post-war English social and cultural history was published in May

2016 and *I'm Sure I speak for Thousands of Others*, a history of unpublished letters written to the BBC, appeared in 2017. His other publications include *Hollywood Goes To War: Films and American Society, 1939-1952* and *Hollywood in Crisis: Films and American Society, 1929-1939*. His non-fiction novel *Garbo and Gilbert in Love* was an imaginative reconstruction of the infamous relationship of the two MGM stars. He has just completed a non-fiction novel set in Hollywood during the making of the controversial Warner Brothers film *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*. He is now writing an Afternoon Drama for BBC R4 on Leni Riefenstahl.

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## Course programme

### Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00 Dinner

**20:30 – 22:00 Screening: *Sullivan's Travels* directed by Preston Sturges, Paramount 1941**

22:00 Terrace bar open for informal discussion

### Saturday

07:30 Breakfast

**09:00 – 10:30 The Story of Paramount**

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30 The Story of R.K.O**

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00 Free \*\*

16:00 Tea

**16:30 – 18:00 The Story of Twentieth Century Fox**

18:00 – 18:30 Free

18:30 Dinner

**20:00 – 21:30 Screening: *Two Seconds* directed by Mervyn LeRoy, Warner Brothers 1932 \*\***

21:30 Terrace bar open for informal discussion

### Sunday

07:30 Breakfast

**09:00 – 10:30 The Story of Warner Brothers**

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30 The Story of MGM**

12:45	Lunch	
<b>The course will disperse after lunch</b>		
<b>** Please note:</b> the timings of these two sessions may be switched to accommodate another independent cinema screening event taking place at Madingley that evening		

## Course syllabus

### Aims:

1. To make students aware of the different look of each studio
2. To see how the corporate story impacts on the films the studio makes
3. To acquaint students with the working and impact of the contract system

### Content:

There were eight studios in Hollywood during its Golden Age although United Artists wasn't a four wall establishment like the others and Universal largely restricted itself to horror movies and musicals and was always on the verge of bankruptcy. The other six are dealt with in detail from the early, tentative beginnings through their full glory in the 1930s and 1940s to their decline and dissolution in the 1950s and 1960s with the deaths of the founding movie moguls. Two screenings will be added which convey the very best of the two studios involved and illustrate the bonus that accrued from the tight contract system for both actors and technicians. The decline of the studios and their takeover by conglomerates like Sony and Murdoch's News Corporation forms the last part of each lecture.

### Presentation of the course:

The course will involve full screenings of two Hollywood feature films, illustrated lectures, group discussion and analysis of film clips from the period.

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

1. Identify immediately the look of each studio through its films.
2. Understand why the Hollywood studio system was not replicated elsewhere.
3. Appreciate the negative as well as the positive consequences of imposing such a tight contractually based studio system

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## Reading and resources list

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Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course. Any essential reading is marked with an asterisk \*

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Thomas Schatz	The Genius of the System	Simon & Schuster 1989
Frederick Wasser	Twentieth Century Fox	Routledge 2020

### Website addresses

[www.hollywoodlexicon.com/studiosystem.html](http://www.hollywoodlexicon.com/studiosystem.html).

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## Additional information

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### Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:  
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

### Refreshments

Tea and coffee, lunch and dinner will be provided as outlined in the timetable. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform us on [intenq@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:intenq@ice.cam.ac.uk).

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 18 May 2021