Fantasy And The Cinema

James Donald

British cinema is often celebrated for its social realism, yet has made significant and influential contributions to the worlds of horror, fantasy and science fiction. From the Gothic tradition of Dracula to nightmarish visions of London in 28 Days Later and the spectacular popular fantasies of Doctor Who and Harry Potter, this course investigates this alternative history or “repressed underside” of British cinema and the ways in which these films have responded to their social and cultural production contexts. Introducing you to a range of critical approaches to film and literature and making the overall effect is to create a self-contained fantasy world quite separate from everyday reality, a world imbued with angst and paranoia in the face of that which cannot be rationally explained. Annette Kuhn, History of the Cinema, The Cinema Book, edited by Pam Cook. The first feature film that we will watch is F. W. Murnau’s vampire classic Nosferatu (1922). I picked this film to start us off because we will see the influence that it had on classical Hollywood film and it also draws a direct connection between the power of film and fantasy. The influence of German Expressionism is especially significant in their defiance of the premises of Western animation and their presentation of a highly personal commentary on both individual and collective identities in the 20th and 21st centuries. Special emphasis is placed on Oshii’s revolutionary film techniques, including the stylistically and thematically diverse features of productions ranging from animation to live action to Original Video A.