UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

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All the World's a Screen

Before the days of streaming, most Americans imagined Hollywood as the center of entertainment production for the world. Launch your favorite streaming platform, however, and you might be greeted with an entirely different picture.

International megahits like the French crime caper "Lupin" equal and even outpace audience numbers of American shows, and every year companies like Netflix spend more money and labor to expand this global catalog of programming.

How did we get here?

UC Santa Barbara's Carsey-Wolf Center (CWC) will explore this brave new world during the fall and winter terms with "Global TV," a public programming series that examines how some programs and formats today have decoupled from their national bases of production and distribution. The four events currently scheduled for fall will include discussions with UCSB scholars and principals from the shows.

"The modern television landscape is evolving, and we want to explore our changing viewing habits as contemporary television is uprooted from domestic contexts and travels across national boundaries," said Patrice Petro, the Dick Wolf Director of the CWC who holds the Presidential Chair in media studies. "As we developed this series, we were curious about why certain programs are able to find loyal audiences outside their national origins, and we wanted to ask questions about the role of streaming and creative labor in shaping this new and exciting television landscape."

Each event is free and will take place via Zoom. Registration is required.

“Global TV” begins Thursday, Oct. 7, from 4 to 5 p.m. with “Richard III” from “The Hollow Crown,” a British series of full-length adaptions of Shakespeare’s plays about the Wars of the Roses. Writer Ben Power will join James McNamara, a lecturer in UCSB’s Department of Film and Media Studies, for a discussion of the production, which stars Benedict Cumberbatch.

The event itself will not include a screening. “The Hollow Crown” may be streamed in advance on Amazon Prime. The CWC will offer a free Zoom screening of the episode Wednesday, Oct. 6 at 7 p.m.

Next up is “Shadow,” Saturday, Oct. 9, from 1 to 2 p.m. The gritty crime drama is Netflix’s first from South Africa. Series co-creator Gareth Crocker will join Wendy Eley Jackson, a lecturer in film and media studies, for a virtual discussion about the show. “Shadow” is available for streaming on Netflix.

Third in the series is “Babylon Berlin,” Thursday, Oct. 28, from 4 to 5 p.m. The German neo-noir, set in the Weimar Republic, is viewed in more than 100 countries. Petro will join Emmy-winning UCSB alum Scott Frank, a filmmaker who co-created “The Queen’s Gambit,” to talk about “Babylon Berlin.” The show is available on Netflix for streaming in advance. Registration will close one hour before the event.

The fall series concludes with the French hit “Lupin,” Tuesday, Nov. 9, from 7 to 8 p.m. Based on the early 20th-century books by Maurice Leblanc, the show is a contemporary spin on gentleman thief Arsène Lupin. Discussing the series will be UCSB scholars Lisa Parks, a distinguished professor of film and media studies; Jean Beaman, an associate professor of sociology; and France Winddance Twine, a professor of sociology. They will discuss the series’ success and the way it deals with issues of race, immigrant culture and contemporary Paris.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.