Abstract:

The purpose of my thesis is to study the process of a play-to-film adaptation of William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark*. It deals with the issues concerning film adaptation, the complexity of transferring drama onto the screen, and, consequently, analyses the individual filmic readings of Shakespeare’s play. The four British and American film adaptations discussed in this thesis are: the black-and-white version of *Hamlet* by Laurence Olivier (1948), the popularized *Hamlet* by Franco Zeffirelli (1990), the four-hour *Hamlet* by Kenneth Branagh (1996), and a modern version directed by Michael Almereyda in 2000. This study will focus on the comparison of two forms of art, theatre and cinema, and explore the given adaptations not only as an instrument of transition and improved audio-visual experience, but as a separate work of artistry. The thesis demonstrates how one play alters and redefines its narrative depending on the time period, cultural factors, and enhanced technologies.