The New Cinema Studies

In October 2008, Prof. Robert Burgoyne visited the department for an exciting three weeks. During this time, he met with PhD students, conducted lectures for the MLitt programme and gave a thought-provoking talk on the haunting of the present by the past in the war films of Clint Eastwood. The following article was written by Robert to recount his stay at St Andrews.

My visit to St. Andrews over the month of October proved to be one of the highlights of my professional life. Perhaps the most picturesque place I’ve ever visited, St. Andrews is a city of quiet sophistication and exceptionally friendly people. I did my best to emulate the local style, but I’m afraid I fell short in both the sophistication and the congeniality departments. My offers to buy rounds at the pub, for one thing, were consistently rebuffed, so I’m obviously not quite up to speed in that regard.

I found bits of street poetry everywhere. I was especially amused by the name of the road that runs to the golf course, “The Sours,” by the old church with a ground level shop called “Unknown Pleasures,” and by the t-shirt I saw with “Pink Freud” inscribed on it. I should have asked the guy wearing it if he was coming from “The Couch.” I had a lot of fun just walking around.

The professional side of my visit was equally fulfilling. For me, to teach in a Department of Film Studies was like the fulfillment of my earliest expectations of what my professional life would be. Upon entering the Department of Cinema Studies at New York University more than a few years ago, I was convinced that film Studies was the incoming wave of the future, and that the field would soon have an eminent place among humanities disciplines, comparable to English or history. Such proved not to be the case. Rather than being cast in the mold of the past, however, the Department of Film Studies at St. Andrews seems to have reinvented the discipline. The international focus of the department, its commitment to non-canonical and non-Western cinemas, and the fresh scholarly projects that the graduate students and young faculty were engaging with gave me a sense that this was a department that had a unique scholarly profile. Far from imitating the established models of Uk or American departments of film and media, St. Andrews has focused on an emerging field of scholarly inquiry, and has already established an exemplary reputation in one of the three main areas of contemporary research in film: global cinema and culture.

The Department has a fine and inspiring leader in Dina Iordanova, and I was equally impressed with the smart, ambitious young faculty and graduate students I met. Begin a mere four or five years ago, the Department of Film Studies at St. Andrews has already carved a significant reputation for itself in the world of film and media studies. The direction the department has set gives it a broad, international visibility, an approach that will become even more important in the coming years. I expect the department, with the exemplary support of the upper administration, will rise to a position of prominence in Film Studies in the near future.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to visit St. Andrews, and to add my small bit to the conversation. I found it a bracing and intellectually stimulating place to be.

Robert Burgoyne

News from Film Studies at St Andrews

New Chair. In the Fall of 2008 we advertised for a second full Professorship in Film Studies. The approval of the new appointment by the University came as a matter of great recognition to our hard work and success. We expect to interview applicants for the new Chair in January. We hope that things will go smoothly and the new Professor will be in position as of August 2009.

Forthcoming Guests. Prof. Stuart Cunningham, Australia's leading international specialist on the cultural industries, will be our guest as a collaborator on the Dynamics of World Cinema project in April 2009.

Our favourite film critic, Chicago's own Jonathan Rosenbaum, has accepted our invitation to spend a period as a guest of the Centre and the department in the Fall of 2009. He will teach on our MLitt degree, will meet with PhD students and hold sessions with undergraduates.

Dina Iordanova
This was the first of a series of conferences and workshops scheduled to take place over the next five years, dedicated to bringing together scholars throughout Scotland working in the fields of film and visual studies. The Consortium was established by Professor Dina Iordanova (University of St Andrews) and Dr Dimitris Eleftheriotis (University of Glasgow), and has been very generously funded by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. In the whole I found it an extremely enjoyable experience.

I was privileged to be invited to participate in the opening plenary round table discussion, in which four scholars, with a diverse range of interests and backgrounds presented their research. The aim of the plenary was to open up discussion as to how the research environment for film and visual studies is likely to develop over the next few years. Professor Elizabeth Ezra (University of Stirling) and Professor Stephen Partridge (Duncan of Jordanstone College), Dr Karen Boyle (University of Glasgow) and myself, put forward perspectives from modern languages, art and design, film and television, and film studies respectively.

This diversity reflected the inter-institutional and interdisciplinary nature of the conference, with scholars from over fifteen of Scotland’s Universities and Art School’s being joined by representatives of Scottish Screen, Scottish Arts Council, BBC Scotland, the Association for Media Education in Scotland, National Library of Scotland, and so on. The audience — in fact consisting of over sixty scholars, industry insiders, postgraduate students and practitioners — then engaged in a broad ranging discussion covering a diverse field of topics. Of particular interest was the need to establish the international presence of Scotland’s Universities in terms of the research currently being undertaken into film and other forms of visual media throughout the country. This topic came up on several occasions, although in the sessions I attended the role of Scottish Universities in relation to the UK, Europe, the US and broader markets remained only a sub-current in this conference. Rather, focus remained on concrete steps that could be taken, such as establishing a website.

Common ground was also found on many issues relating to funding, how best to obtain it, and the different variety of projects for which it could be used - from the more traditional needs, such as archival research, to more community based knowledge transfer activities related to women in society, to Professor Partridge’s £433,350 AHRC funded four-year project, “REWIND”, dedicated to preserving and analysing artists’ video work from the 1960s to the 1980s. This theme continued throughout the day in one form or another, in particular in relation to the smaller and larger possibilities for establishing networks, collaborative PhD studentships, and other forms of pooling funds through the interaction between scholars from different institutions facilitated by the Consortium. Indeed, in terms of funding, much was learned from Professor Ian Christie’s (Birkbeck, University of London) plenary immediately after lunch. Professor Christie shared his knowledge and experience of his time establishing and running the AHRC (or as it was then, AHRB) funded, predominantly London-based Centre for British Film and Television Studies.

Breakout sessions occurred throughout the day on a range of topics of interest to the delegates, to try to establish the common ground from which different projects could develop in the future. Understandably, film and television production in Scotland was a primary focus of at least one of these, with a shift in emphasis towards industry-linked, institutionally collaborative research into television production being one intriguing outcome for future consideration. Others, which I was not able to attend solely due to their parallel nature, included World Cinema, Industry and Policy, Digital Technology, and Gender and Sexuality. Here discussion was given freshness by input from the numerous postgraduate students who attended, for whom travel bursaries were made available by the Consortium. This was testament to the thriving research culture currently developing in the field of film and visual studies in the various Universities of Scotland.

Speaking personally, the day passed in something of a blur, mainly due to the difficulty of trying to talk to everyone in such a concentrated burst. This was certainly the first conference I have been to in the past five years when I did not find myself alone or at a loose end even for a second, as people grasped every opportunity to meet and talk between sessions, over lunch and so on. Vitally, the conference concluded in Stravaigin, the local pub and restaurant, as scheduled on the programme. Unlike some major international conferences, then, it was good to have time specifically built in for the type of informal networking that the Consortium is supposed to facilitate. I appreciated, for example, being able to speak not only to the numerous other scholars researching Scottish cinema — a research interest of mine — but also to talk to Janet McBain (National Libraries of Scotland), the curator of the Scottish Screen archives in Glasgow in the same location. I left with several new contacts with whom to explore new ideas and interfaces in the future.

‘Mapping Scotland’ did exactly what it set out to do, which was to establish the parameters of research into film and visual media currently taking place in Scotland, discover the mutual interests, synergies and potential points for collaboration, and ultimately, prepare the ground for future projects. The final plenary, chaired by Professor John Caughie (University of Glasgow, and co-organiser along with Professor Christine Geraghty), discovered many voices calling for more, smaller-scale, focused workshops in future; as opposed to fewer, larger scale conferences. Of most immediate note, the need to raise the profile of the Consortium internationally through the rapid establishing of a website, was one of the primary goals for the next few months. Due to the Consortium funding, the next five years will see a surge in activity in this area. However, hopefully this increased activity will relate to both the content of our research and the manner in which we can enhance activity through collaboration, but also to the broader concerns that we face as a field in relation to the outside world. Fingers crossed the establishing of the Consortium website — on which we can set out our stall for all to see — will be only the first step in this regard.

David Martin-Jones

The website address of Scottish Consortium: http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/sfvs/
Centre for Film Studies Launches Project on World Cinema
International scholars collaborate on Leverhulme-sponsored research

This summer, Professor Dina Iordanova was awarded generous funding by the Leverhulme Trust, one of the most prestigious and largest research funding bodies in the UK, to conduct investigation into the global distribution of World Cinema.

The study, Dynamics of World Cinema: Transnational Channels of Global Film Distribution will examine the cycles of four distinctly active circuits of contemporary film distribution, and the dynamic pattern of complex interaction between them. These four aspects of investigation will explore the mainstream distribution of international blockbusters from around the world, the film festival circuit, film circulation amongst diasporic communities, as well as various new Internet-enabled forms of film dissemination like You-Tube.

Unlike existing studies that focus primarily on only one of these circulation methods, this research will regard Hollywood blockbuster distribution as just one among many other underreported channels of film circulation. The project's distinctiveness is in the endeavor to correlate diverse strands of film circulation.

"In the course of our study, we will establish how much money non-Hollywood films actually make, and are likely to reveal that they enjoy a growing domestic and international commercial success," Professor Iordanova explained in an interview with BBC News, which recently profiled the two-and-a-half year project.

The research team includes project director Prof. Iordanova, Prof. Stuart Cunningham of Queensland University, and research associates Ruby Cheung and Ragan Rhyne (see sidebar). Their research findings will be released in various publications, including an edited volume, a co-authored book, an annual series on film festivals, and an interactive website, among others.

As the project gets underway, team members are already planning the project's first event - a workshop on the international film festival circuit. The event will be held on April 4, 2009 at St. Andrews, as the Centre for Film Studies welcomes top scholars in the field of film festival research for an intensive conversation about this growing area of inquiry.

Dynamics of World Cinema is the first major research project to be undertaken by the Centre for Film Studies at St. Andrews University. Founded in 2005 by Professor Iordanova, the center is already counted among the premier research centers on cinema in the UK.

Professor Stuart Cunningham, Co-Investigator

Stuart Cunningham is Professor of Media and Communications, Queensland University of Technology, and Director of the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation. He recently completed a term as President of the Council of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS). Prof. Cunningham is well known for his contributions to media, communications and cultural studies and to their relevance to industry practice and government policy and has published widely on the topic, including Framing Culture (1992) and Contemporary Australian Television, with Toby Miller (1993). He co-wrote or co-edited a number of studies of the global dimensions of audio-visual culture with John Sinclair and Elizabeth Jacka, including New Patterns in Global Television (1996) and Floating Lives: The Media and Asian Diasporas (2001). His most recent work includes The Media and Communications in Australia (with Graeme Turner, Allen & Unwin, 2006), What Price a Creative Economy? (Platform Papers, 2006), Beyond the creative industries: mapping the creative economy in the United Kingdom (with Peter Higgs and Hasan Bakshi, NESTA, 2008) and In the Vernacular: A Generation of Australian Culture and Controversy (University of Queensland Press, 2008).

Dr. Ruby Cheung, Research Associate

Dr. Cheung was awarded a PhD in Film Studies by the University of St Andrews, where she completed her thesis, "Hong Kong Cinema 1982-2002: The Quest for Identity during Transition." Dr. Cheung has written about films and cultures of such Asian and Asian-Pacific countries as China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Australia, and is co-editing a book entitled Cinema, Identities and Beyond, which explores the vast scope and dimension of 'identity' in film. After completing her doctoral studies, Dr. Cheung spent a semester teaching and conducting research at Lingnan University in Hong Kong.

Dr. Ragan Rhyne, Research Associate

Dr. Rhyne recently received her Ph.D. from New York University's Department of Cinema Studies. Her work is focused on the political economy of not-for-profit media institutions, like film festivals, and the ways that those institutions negotiate their political and artistic missions with the demands of fundraising, national cultural policy and the commercial film industry in an increasingly international and neoliberal landscape of arts funding. She is currently completing a manuscript on the history of gay and lesbian film festivals, which is based on her dissertation research. Dr. Rhyne's work has been published in Velvet Light Trap, GLQ, Journal of Homosexuality, and Scope. She has taught film and cultural studies at NYU and at the City University of New York.
Meeting the New Faculty Faces – I
Lecturer
Dr. William Brown

It is an honour to take up the position of Lecturer in Film Studies at St Andrews, where I was also working as a Teaching Fellow in Film Studies during 2007-2008.

Prior to my arrival at St Andrews, I completed a DPhil in Film Studies at the University of Oxford with a thesis entitled Towards a New Realism: the depiction of space and time in digital cinema. This was a Deleuze-inspired theoretical approach to digital technology and cinema, a book version of which, entitled Supercinema, I am currently trying to place with publishers.

During my post-graduate studies, I also ran a successful Film Society in Oxford, where I organised/co-organised a series of visits by filmmakers, including Stephen Frears (The Queen), Alex Cox (Repo Man), Pawel Pawlikowski (My Summer of Love), screenwriter Tony Grisoni (Brothers of the Head), producer Peter Tudakowski (Tsotsi), and young directors Mat Whitecross (The Road to Guantanamo), Christian James (Freak Out) and Edward McHenry (Jackboots on Whitehall).

I am keen to continue organising film events in St Andrews, especially special screenings of rarely seen films and guest events (so far including a visit from screenwriter Don Snyder). I am also helping to organise an Italian and a French Film Festival, due respectively to take place in St Andrews in early May and early December 2009.

While I am trying to publish Supercinema, I have also been developing a portfolio of publications, which have so far included a handful of reviews in New Review of Film and Television Studies, New Cinemas, Film Philosophy and Science Fiction Film and Television, as well as articles and book chapters on a variety of topics.

These include texts on (both published and forthcoming): Luc Besson (Studies in French Cinema), Steven Spielberg (New Review of Film and Television Studies), digital cinema and posthumanism (Film Theory and Contemporary Hollywood Movies), postnationalism in recent British cinema (The British Cinema Book – 3rd Edition), Iranian cinema (Third Text), Audrey Hepburn (Star Decades: The 1950s) transnational cinema (Cinemas, Identities and Beyond).

I am also trying to place articles on topics as diverse as the ethics of spectatorship, the portrayal of fatherhood in recent Russian cinema, the links between Surrealism and digital cinema, Quentin Tarantino, Gilles Deleuze and digital cinema, Anglo-French transnational actresses, Motion Capture and Beowulf, and representations of private (‘public’) schools in British and American cinema.

While this may seem varied, my research interests centre around digital technology and its applications in cinema in a variety of contexts, and, increasingly, cinema and cognitive neuroscience. This latter was inspired by a year spent working in the Clinical Psychology department at UCL. To this end, I am hoping to teach modules on both topics in the near future.

I have also worked as a legal journalist, as an editor at The Daily Telegraph (reviewing computer games, among other things), as a freelance filmmaker (corporate promos, shooting documentaries in southern Africa and China – the latter is still being edited), and as a co-organiser of a car rally across South America.

I have also done film industry penance (working for pittance in production companies; as a ‘background artist’; etc), and am trying – with only limited success so far – to forge a career as a screenwriter (and novelist). My original degree was in French and Spanish and I am hoping that Film Studies does not force me to forget these languages!

You might also want to check out and/or take part in my collaborative cinema blog, which can be found at http://cinemasalon.ning.com.

William Brown
Meeting the New Faculty Faces –2
Teaching Fellow
Dr. Saër Maty Bâ

In September 2008, Dr Saër Maty Bâ joined Film Studies St Andrews from the National Institute for Excellence in the Creative Industries, Bangor University (North Wales). He holds an MA in English, an MPhil in American Cultural Studies, and a PhD in Film Studies. Dr Bâ’s HE teaching, academic administrative experience and research in Film Studies are broadly based. Part of Dr Bâ’s research programme is committed to connecting French/Francophone, Anglophone/American and Lusophone visual cultures.

Within the past twenty four months, his achievements have included the following: a Visiting Research Fellowship appointment in Film and Media (University of East London) while lecturing at Exeter University’s Film Studies Department; a Research Fellowship (Post-Doctoral) combined with a Lectureship in Film Studies at Bangor University. During this period, Dr Bâ has also been awarded three grants: one each from The British Academy and The Information Society Network to co-direct and co-organize the international conference ‘Representing Diasporas in Cinema and New (Digital) Media’ (Exeter, 24th- 25th July 2007) and a third grant, from the British Academy (April 2008) to conduct archival research in New York, Paris and Dakar (Senegal) for his forthcoming single-authored book on French Cinema.

Dr Bâ would like to draw on his record of generic and research-based teaching – for example, Approaches to Film, Black Documentary Aesthetics, and French Cinema – in order to help develop the Department in Film Studies’ programme. This process would include contributing modules to its portfolio of degree programmes, and working towards developing a range of links with international partners in the film and media industries. Indeed, Dr Bâ has personal contacts in the independent Film and Media sectors, and overseas academic institutions. Examples include John Akomfrah OBE (filmmaker and critic), June Giovannotti (curator, film producer, writer), Flow Motion (Edward George and Anna Piva: filmmakers, sound artists and electronic musicians), and the Université Lyon II (France).

Dr Bâ’s research interests and activities focus on two connected themes:

French and Francophone Cinemas – focus is on the representation of ‘black’ presence/absence in ‘mainstream’ cinemas; authorship, history and memory in the French documentary film; and Postcolonial Francophone Cinemas. Within this framework, there is a strand conceptualizing film as an archive and ‘site’ of memory, with focus on representations of genocide.

‘Documentary’ Voices and the Afro-Diaspora – focus is on inter-texts, theory and practice, ethics and aesthetics; contemporary discourses within film and new/digital media (especially J.A.’s ‘digitopia’, and the idea of ‘kaleidoscopic’ digital imagery); ‘race’, media, and cultural representation. Within this framework, Dr Bâ’s focus includes ‘black’ Hollywood and ‘black’ Film Collectives work with television channels/networks in the UK and the USA.

Whilst maintaining a clear focus on his own research, Dr Bâ is moreover keen to play an active role in research quality-level enhancement. Similarly, Dr Bâ welcomes the opportunities at St Andrews to learn from and collaborate with colleagues at Departmental, School and Faculty levels.

Saër Maty Bâ
This AHRC sponsored conference is organised jointly by the Centre for Film Studies and the Centre for Russian, Soviet and Eastern European Studies at the University of St. Andrews. It will bring together doctoral students from the United Kingdom and Europe, whose work is focused on the visual culture and cinema of the post-Communist period. The main objective is to launch a productive dialogue on methodological and practical issues affecting all those engaged in the study of the film and visual culture of the postcommunist period.

We invite participants from across Social Sciences and Humanities: Language, Literature, Culture, Law, International Relations, Politics, Media, Film and Television Studies, Art History, Architecture, Design, Museum Studies, Russian, German, East European languages and cultures, Law, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Publishing, and other disciplines.

Opening on Friday afternoon (5 pm) and continuing throughout the day on Saturday, the conference will feature thematic talks dedicated to the status of the field and the profession. Postgraduate participants will be able to present their work in the context of two sessions, at panels moderated by the featured speakers. You are welcome to discuss aspects of your work, and talk of its challenging and exciting moments.

We propose to structure the discussion in the context of the following questions:

- How are post-Cold War divisions reflected in cultural production in the former communist world?
- What are its specificities and what are the challenges for researching cultural production?
- How do the global and the local interplay in the region?
- Can the umbrella of "postcommunism" be explored as shared experience?

Confirmed speakers/convenors include:

- Prof. Ib Bondubjerg (Film and Media, University of Copenhagen)
- Prof. Ewa Mazierska (Film Studies, University of Central Lancashire)
- Prof. Brian McNair (Media Sociology, University of Strathclyde)

Conference opening

- Prof. Andrew Wachtel (Slavic and Cultural Sociology, Graduate Dean, Northwestern University, Chicago, USA)
- Prof. Dina Jordanova (Film Studies, University of St. Andrews).

Please send an abstract of 150 words outlining the theme of your intended presentation (about 15 min. length), together with your contact details and a brief biographical note to Lars Kristensen at llfk@st-andrews.ac.uk

Ten bursaries of £50 will be awarded to selected participants (please indicate you would like to be considered for a bursary at the time you send in your abstract).

Closing date of abstract submission: 15 December 2008

Further information will be available at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/films/studies/

Lars Kristensen

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**Conference Report**

**Peripheral Early Cinema**

The International Society for the Study of Early Cinema, Domitor, has been organizing biennial international conferences since 1985. Each conference was dedicated to a different aspect of early cinema, this summer it was the 'Peripheral Early Cinemas' held in the Catalan Region. Organized by two different institutes in two different cities (and countries) the conference not only offered a thought-provoking environment for early film enthusiasts but also a chance to enjoy surprising visual delights. The first half of the conference took place at Museu del Cinema in Girona, where the participants could attend an authentic magic lantern show on Casanova along with a tour at the film museum. In the second part of the conference we were taken to an open air silent film screening with live accompaniment by an orchestra in Perpignan.

The notion of peripheral early cinema was used as an umbrella term to describe both films from 'outside of the institutional centres' and from the margins of developing industrial and cultural institutions. The term did not only mean to cover geographical margins; but also the social and economic margins. Inevitably, the most prevailing understanding of the 'regional peripheries' occurred to be those in relation to the centres. Yet, presentations showed a wide range of topics from the travelling showmen in the Netherlands to small town slapsticks in the USA, or from the beginnings of Spanish cinema to cross-gender casting in American early cinema. The leading marginal roles in our panel were given to Calcutta, Teheran and Istanbul, the peripheries of both Europe and the USA. To a film student of St Andrews, 'Cinema and the Periphery' is indeed a familiar area of study, in addition if this student focuses on early Turkish cinema then she highly likely finds her habitat at such a conference!

Canan Balan
Conference Round-Up: Summer 2008

This summer I was fortunate enough to attend a series of most enjoyable conferences, each of which provided a fantastic opportunity to meet fellow academics from around the globe and to appreciate both the research that they are doing and the fantastic organisation work that goes in to bringing Film Studies academics together.

In May, my fellow St Andrews representative Lars Kristensen and I presented papers at Russia On Screen: Identity and Appropriation/Inter-disciplinary Perspectives on Russia and Cinema, hosted by Queen Mary University, London.

This was a fascinating day-long event that included insightful talks from scholars including Julian Graffy (SSEES) and James Chapman (University of Leicester). Thanks should go to Jeremy Hicks, Lucy Bolton and Miranda Shaw for organising such a fantastic event.

This was followed in June by the opportunity to visit Vancouver for the Film Studies Association of Canada (FSAC) conference, hosted by the University of British Columbia.

What was fantastic about this conference was to see such a strong integration of tenured scholars alongside postgraduate students. There was a wealth of illuminating talks on all manner of topics, suggesting that Film Studies is in rude health in Canada.

I was delighted to give my paper (on Anglo-French transnational stars) as part of a panel on acting styles and performance, a panel that included presentations by Ernest Mathis (UBC), Murray Pumerance (Ryerson) and Aaron Taylor (Lethbridge). I should offer many thanks to Aaron for putting this panel together and for including me on it.

Come July, and I was fortunate enough to attend the annual Screen Conference in Glasgow for the first time – and here again I was overwhelmed by the range of exciting work being done in Film Studies.

I chaired a panel on ‘Sound Graphics’, featuring contributions on Saul Bass from Neil Smyntong (a Glasgow-based writer and curator) and on subtitling from Carol O’Sullivan (Portsmouth).

In a conference dedicated to film sound, Screen also included room for a Deleuze panel, which was pleasingly well-attended (some people even sat on the floor). Here I managed to ride on the coattails of esteemed fellow panelists Deleuzians Patricia Pisters (Amsterdam) and David Martin-Jones (St Andrews), giving a talk on Deleuze and the digital image.

Screen was swiftly followed by the European Cinema Research Forum (ECRF) at the Dublin Institute of Technology. Here I chaired a panel with diverse papers from Dorota Ostrowska (birkbeck), Joanna Rydzewska (Swansea) and William Hope (Salford), before presenting on the concept of ‘monstrousness’ in recent European cinema in a panel that included presentations by Wendy Everett (Bath) and Esther Pérez-Villalba (Zaragoza).

The highlight of the conference was for me keynote on French Surrealist star, Pierre Batcheff, delivered by Phil Powrie (Newcastle). Thanks should go to organisers Simon Holloway and Graeme Harper (both Bangor), as well as to Owen Evans (Swansea), whose absence meant that he was sorely missed.

Finally, in September I attended Continuity and Innovation at the University of Reading. Here I presented on Robert Zemeckis’ Beowulf in a ‘digital’ panel with James Zborowski and Tom Hughes (both Warwick).

William Brown

Conference Round-Up: Non-Deleuze-Proof

Recently I had the pleasure of attending two exciting events in which I had the chance to talk about the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze more or less non-stop. The first one was the Deleuze Camp 2008, organized by veteran Deleuzian scholar, Ian Buchanan, in Cardiff. This camp, a full week, consisted of lectures given by Hanjo Berressem, Eugene Holland, Dorothea Olkowski, John Protevi and James Williams, which were followed by discussions and student presentations in one of the nicest rooms in Cardiff University. Thanks to the lively interdisciplinary atmosphere provided by more than fifty participants, discussion continued beyond the lecture room until we remembered to go to sleep. Many important concepts such as the event from Logic of Sense, the war machine from A Thousand plateaus, the dark precursor, becoming, body without organs, Deleuze’s solo works and his works with Felix Guattari were discussed without time limits. Deleuze Camp 2009 will take place in Cologne, in August. The second event that I attended was the Deleuze2008 Philosophy conference in the beautiful city of Stavanger, Norway. This unique two day event was organized by Arne Fredlund as a part of Stavanger2008 cultural events in Folkets Hus. In this conference I had the chance to present a paper on ‘transnational surveillance films’, mainly focusing on a Norwegian Swedish co-production Kitchen Stories (Bent Hamer, 2003). Both events were very satisfying particularly because there was a chance to discuss Deleuze with people from different disciplines including philosophy, politics, poetry, art, architecture, mathematics, even biology and they provided non-Deleuze-proof environments where nobody had to waste any time to explain ‘Why Deleuze?’.

Serazer Pekerman
Round-up of this Semester's Research Seminar

After Prof. Robert Burgoyne's thought-provoking talk on Clint Eastwood's Flags of our Fathers, Letters from Iwo Jima, and historical trauma, we were delighted to have the presentation by Prof. Janina Falkowska on "Michael Haneke: Mourning and Melancholia in European Cinema". The paper worked to demonstrate melancholia and mourning in Haneke's films in relation to their social and political context, considering the dissolution of the communist system, German unification, migratory flows in Europe and increasing terrorist paranoia. Engaging with issues of family and defunct nation-states as Freudian lost objects, Prof. Falkowska drew a wide range of examples spanning from Haneke's early TV films such as Drei Wege zum See (1976); Wer war Edgar Allan? (1984), Schmutz (1985) and Fraulein (1986), to his recent films The Seventh Continent (1989), 71 Fragments of a Chronology of Time (1994), Funny Games (1997), Code Inconnu (2000), The Time of the Wolf (2003) and Caché (2005). Issues of borders, identities, alienation, dejection, inertia and entrapment, discussed in the psychoanalytical framework generated a dynamic discussion which continued during our customary dinner and drink afterwards.

Yun-hua Chen

On the 18th November the Centre for Film Studies was glad to welcome Lars Kristensen back to the department for an interesting and insightful presentation on 'Bicycle Cinema: Bikes, Racing and Master Narratives'. Here, Kristensen investigated multiple moving images of bicycles and their riders that spanned the 'first' cinematic encounter within Leaving the Lumière Factory, 1895, to the post-war classics such as Bicycle Thieves (1948) and its post-communist remake Beijing Bicycle (2001) and beyond. The talk aimed to illuminate certain affinities and parallels between cinema and the bicycle that included its use as a framing device, a camera-dolly, as a narrative object, and as a metaphor and on-screen surrogate for the cinematic apparatus itself. The bicycle was further examined as a symbol of Western modernity and as an industrially manufactured mass machine that anticipated and predated Fordism. Throughout the paper Kristensen maintained an emphasis upon movement and the bike race as narrative event; whilst considering the docu-

mentary films of Danish Jørgen Leth, The Stars and the Water Carriers (1974) and A Sunday in Hell (1976), and the fictionalized American Flyers (1985) and (autobiographical) The Flying Scotsman (2006) among others. The different connotations the bicycle and its fluid movements offered to male and female riders from different contexts was also explored. For grouping the films together and structuring the investigation Kristensen offered a series of three broad categories which included a 'Disavowal of the Machine', 'Man as Machine', and a 'Champion of the Machine' proto narrative. In discussions after the talk the concept of the bicycle was discussed as a new vehicle that could replace or augment the traditional notion of the train as metaphor for cinema. Others saw the potential for an interface with notions of the 'assemblage' and 'becoming' as a useful theoretical paradigm for working through and understanding certain issues. As a relatively new topic and burgeoning area of research, multiple narratives, methodologies, and avenues of exploration were also discussed which suggest that there may be a lot more to say about the interface between bicycles and cinema both in the past and future.

David Fleming

Editors: Yun-hua Chen, Serazer Pekerman