Contributors

Professor Dina Iordanova
Provost of the University of St Andrews

Dr David Martin-Jones
Senior Lecturer in Film Studies

Professor Robert Burgoyne
Chair of Film Studies

Dr Soër Mary Bâ
Teaching Fellow in Film Studies

Dr Leshu Torchin
Lecturer in Film Studies

Dr Elisabetta Girelli
Lecturer in Film Studies

Dr Ruby Cheung
The Leverhulme Trust Research Associate

Ms Yun Mi Hwang
PhD Student in Film Studies

Ms Yun-hua Chen
PhD Student in Film Studies

Mr Matthew Holtmeier
PhD Student in Film Studies

Mr Fredrik Gustafsson
PhD Student in Film Studies

Mr Andrew Dorman
PhD Student in Film Studies

Mr John Trafton
PhD Student in Film Studies

Newsletter Editor

Acknowledgements

• Congratulations to Dr Canan Balan on the completion of her PhD thesis, “Istanbulite Pleasure Seekers at the Turn of the Century: Early Cinema Spectatorship in Istanbul from the 1890s to 1930s.” We wish her the best in her future endeavours.

• Congratulations to Dr David Fleming on his appointment at Nottingham Ningbo.

• Well done to staff and students on their recent publications and many thanks for their contributions to the newsletter.

Andrew Dorman and John Trafton
Editors
On Sunday, March 7, the Centre for Film Studies hosted a reception at the British Film Institute to celebrate the vitality of film cultures in the UK. Around 200 people attended, happy to have the opportunity to see old friends, to meet new people, and to connect with the vibrant range of cultural activities that film studies now embraces. Festival programmers, curators, fellow academics, and people from many other professions came to share a glass of wine and to talk about film projects, festivals, new venues, and publishing possibilities. I was surprised and impressed by the extraordinary turnout and by the sense of excitement we all shared.

The faculty associated with St Andrews Centre for Film Studies have had a remarkable year of publishing success, with some eleven books appearing in the last year. The Book Launch was originally conceived as a way of recognizing and marking the occasion. The day quickly turned into something far more important, however, providing the occasion for forming new friendships and potential collaborations. It was certainly the highlight of my first semester here at St Andrews.

Professor Robert Burgoyne
Chair in Film Studies

Queer Cinema Screening Series

Queer cinema remains one of the most intriguing and complex areas in film studies ever since the inception of queer theory and the New Queer Cinema in the early 1990s, and has increased in scope to account for popular and transnational cinemas, as well as revisionist studies of classical Hollywood texts.

Part of the complexity or problem of studying the ‘queer’ aspects of cinema is having to take into account what is at stake: namely the representation of sexual minorities who for so long have been denied a clear voice in major cinemas. Although it is debatable whether homosexuality has been fully accepted into the mainstream, the success of films like Philadelphia (1993), The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert (1994), and Brokeback Mountain (2005) suggests significant and lasting changes in the industry. At the same time, it is also worthwhile to ponder over queer films that do not seek acceptance as they slip under the radar of mainstream cinema.

It was with these concerns in mind that Dr. Elisabetta Girelli and myself embarked on the second Queer Cinema screening season which took place between February and May this year. What we wanted to do was give students and staff the opportunity to watch lesser-known examples of queer cinema, films that approach issues of sexuality, identity, and patriarchy from a variety of national, political, cultural, and social contexts. It was also important for us to mix sensitive, more sympathetic treatments of homosexuality with less ‘gay-friendly’ fare like William Friedkin’s controversial Cruising (1980) along with more ambiguous and politicised films such as Ignorant Fairies (2001) and Caravaggio (1986). The selected films were organised according to specific topics – for example homophobia in the case of Cruising, AIDS cinema and Parting Glances (1986), and British Queer heritage cinema in relation to Derek Jarman’s Caravaggio.

Hoping for a good attendance and lively debates, we were pleased to see a steady stream of students and tutors from numerous disciplines turning out to see the films and a large thank you is due to them for making the season an engaging and beneficial experience. Thanks also to Dr. Elisabetta Girelli (as it was her idea after all) for her advice, guidance, and organisation.

Andrew Dorman
PhD Student in Film Studies
The ‘Mix’: St Andrews Film Studies Screens ‘Africa’, the ‘Caribbean’ and their Diasporas

Creating a film culture around Africa and the Caribbean has been a three-act drama, the last two of which are still in motion:

Act 1: I introduced undergraduate students to Lizelle Bischoff, *Africa in Motion* film festival’s Director. This has resulted in African films being screened for a whole week-end at the New Picture House, in St Andrews.

Act 2: I introduced films into the Film Studies curriculum – from Sub-honours to Masters level. Some of these films, like *De Voortrekkers/Winning a Continent* (Harold Shaw, South Africa, 1915), are very rare items not widely available or seen outside film archives. Additionally, I have ordered dozens of books, and DVDs for the library.

Act 3: I launched a series of informal screenings. The aim is to show past and contemporary films about, made in-and-out of, Africa and the Caribbean (since 1908). The series’ approach combines global and local perspectives on two complex geo-cultural spaces, and a set of cultures, through film.

The series is conceived as a ‘mix’ in the sonic Afro-modern sense of the term. Like a DJ I try to bring together discreet, heretofore marginally explored places and times into the discursive arena. This series focuses on cultural criticism and practice with a difference: this screening series is not a postmodern exercise in pastiche or bricolage. Instead, it offers what A. Wellek has called “a strategy for the construction of [...] temporality that results not from randomness or irony evoked by [pastiche and bricolage].” Stated differently, the series creates a form of transversal space that coexists with other screening series at St Andrews. At the same time, the screening ‘Africa’, the ‘Caribbean’ and their Diasporas series is the volume/sound that swallows up distance and negates irony. Thus, no previous or specialised knowledge is required for attendance, and post-screening discussion is optional – people are invited to be swallowed up by the sounds and sights.

One of the most appreciated films was the comedy *Max and Mona*. Its visionary director, South African filmmaker Teddy Mattera (pictured above), offers a story on a professional village mourner, Max Bus, who journeys to a big city in order to become a “white doctor” (i.e. to study medicine). Max’s encounters with a sacred sacrificial goat (Mona), a beautiful girl, and a transvestite mortician, among others, make Mattera’s text an “outrageously funny Zoe Jolt!”. *Max and Mona* has won awards, including the (highly sought-after) *Prix Ouarourou Gando* for best new film at Fespaco 2005.

Dr Saër Maty Bâ, Teaching Fellow in Film Studies

My Time as Visiting Professor at Queen Mary University of London

Spring 2010

Sandwiched between The City and Canary Wharf, *Queen Mary*’s campus is a quintessential East End location. The proximity of some of London’s key markets – Brick Lane, Petticoat Lane, Spitalfields, Columbia Flower Market, and Roman Road Market – marks the character of the area. The nearby cinema, The Genesis, programs a mixture of arthouse and mainstream fare; the most recent release was *My Name is Khan*. The cinema at Canary Wharf hosts an annual film festival, a private undertaking dedicated to short films by young Londoners.

My stay at Sir Christopher France House QMULs campus came in the context of QMULs Distinguished Visiting Scholars scheme. It is an excellent arrangement, which offers visitors a free residence for a term and comes along with tenure linked to a specific department on campus. I was affiliated with the Film Studies department whereas the other two visiting fellows, Tracy Davies from Northwestern and Miranda Joseph from Arizona, were affiliated with QMULs acclaimed Drama department.

Film Studies at QMUL started about a decade ago on the initiative of Prof. Peter Evans, a leading specialist on Buñuel and Spanish cinema (and a St. Andrews alumnus). The department currently employs about ten academics, most of whom have backgrounds in European national film traditions. There are several colleagues whose expertise is primarily in film, such as Prof. Annette Kuhn or Dr. Guy Westwell; in addition to a number of colleagues work on film-related matters but are based in other contexts, such as Prof. Elise Vieira (a Brazilian specialist), Dr. Jeremy Hicks (Russian), Dr. Mark Glancy (History), or Prof. Maria Delgado (Drama). The library hosts a nice collection of DVDs and videos; it was a particular delight to find a range of rare examples of Luaphone cinema. The Hitchcock theatre on the ground floor of the Arts Building, albeit small, provides an excellent viewing experience, and served as a nice setting for the two sessions on film festivals and global distribution that I taught to a group of wonderful MA students. A few years back, the department started a successful production strand for their undergraduate students; currently theirs is a growing postgraduate programme. The next REF may provide an opportunity to develop a research identity, so far work has been submitted for assessment under a variety of other panels, mostly within the languages range. While on campus, I had the chance to meet with a range of interesting colleagues from other departments, such as Prof. Stefano Hearney from Management, Prof. Colin Jones from History, Prof. Evelyn Welch and Prof. Morag Shiach from English, Prof. Michael Moriarty from French, and Professor Andreas Schönhle from Russian. Thank you, colleagues!

Professor Dina Iordanova
Living with Bergman

During the autumn of 2008, I was at a restaurant in São Paulo, Brazil, when a tall man put his hand on my shoulder and said "Hello Fredrik, I'm Wim Wenders." Now, why was I in São Paulo talking to Wim Wenders, and what were we talking about? The short answer is Ingmar Bergman.

After several years working at the Swedish Film Institute and the last year and a half at the Ingmar Bergman Archives, I was recruited by the Swedish Institute to organise Ingmar Bergman film festivals all over the world. It’s sometimes said that Bergman’s first international breakthrough came in South America, Uruguay and Brazil, in the early 1950s, so that as a Bergman festival coordinator I would be active on that continent should then not come as a surprise.

What I’ve learned over these many years working exclusively with Bergman’s legacy is what immense status he has all over the world, both when he was alive and now after his passing in 2007. In fact, his death has, if anything, heightened the international interest. And another thing I’ve learnt is that the mentioning of his name opens many doors (the fact that I had a drink with Theo Angelopoulos in Athens last year has of course nothing to do with me but everything to do with Bergman). But I’ve also come to understand the lack of knowledge of the historical background and context among many Bergman scholars and Bergman enthusiasts. You sometimes get the feeling that people think Bergman came out of nothing, that there was no Swedish cinematic context in which he worked, and that the Swedish cinema was a nonentity until "the master" appeared. But Bergman was very much part of a tradition and a context, he was after all a contracted studio director, and he made his first film as writer/director in the middle of what I’d call a renaissance for Swedish cinema, the 1940s.

When I had spent all the money I had at my disposal for organising the festival, I decided to do a PhD, and what I wanted to do was look at this context and this renaissance. But instead of Bergman I wanted to look at Hasse Ekman, who was of the same generation, but started five years earlier, and in different ways can be said to have influenced Bergman. There are three aims of the thesis: firstly to put a spotlight on a forgotten part of cinema history, secondly to look at a particular artist who’s equally forgotten, and thirdly to discuss and challenge ideas about authorship and auteurs. Hence the title of the thesis is "Hasse Ekman: A Question of Authorship in a National Context".

During my time as Bergman coordinator, I spent a lot of time talking up Hasse Ekman, sometimes to the shock and surprise of the audience. But they were usually intrigued after a while, and in São Paulo they even decided to do an Ekman retrospective. So from now on I hope to give Bergman a rest and travel the world spreading the word of Ekman.

Fredrik Gustafsson
PhD Student in Film Studies

'Book Is Good But Film Is Better': Tromso Film Festival

This was my favourite slogan at the Tromso International Film Festival (Norway), where I was a guest in January 2010. Located on a fjord more than 200 miles north of the Polar Circle (the Norwegian classic *N Liv was shot in the area) and perhaps the northernmost film festival in the world, Tromso celebrates its twentieth anniversary with this edition, entitled *Frozen Land-Moving Images*. Started in 1991 by a local cinema exhibitor, the festival has grown to become one of the largest most important events in Scandinavia and, run today by Martha Otte, a transplanted American, functions as one of the earliest events on the global festival circuit, taking place in a literally dark period when the sun is nowhere to be seen. It uses multiple venues around town: the six-screen multiplex, the old cinema (a 1915 building, the oldest functioning cinema in Northern Europe), as well as various other adapted locations.

The most interesting venue, perhaps, is the ice screen, a giant snowy sculpture of sorts, located in the middle of a small square downtown. The viewing experience is not exactly cosy, true, but it is perhaps one of the most interesting open-air events that I have come across. This year the main attraction was the screening of Robert Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North*, accompanied by a special score by Swedish composer Matti Bye. Every morning during the festival, at 9 am (still before dawn), teachers bring groups of 6 to 7 year olds to the ice screen to view a film in open air. Some of them are seated on bean-bags in front of the screen, on the icy ground, while others, who bring along colourful cushions, are orderly positioned at the three-tier seating area that had been cut out of ice at the back of this improvised open-air theatre.

The festival sells over 50,000 tickets, a particularly noteworthy fact, given the population of Tromso itself is about 65,000 in total – and indeed, local people are to be seen at all screenings. Another noteworthy detail is that the six-screen multiplex in town is entirely dedicated to festival screenings during the week of the event, a rare instance where commercial interests and obligations are suspended in order to make way for public service type cultural activity (ultimately possible because the city has got a big say in the way the cinema is run). My own involvement was in a panel discussion on film festivals, which Chicago’s own Jonathan Rosenbaum and Variety's Rome correspondent Jay Weissberg also participated. The most instructive part of the panel was the presentation of another participant, Frenchman Christophe Mercier, vice-president of Fox Searchlight’s European arm; it revealed how he uses his European savvy to assist Hollywood in strategically playing the festival circuit when rolling out new titles in order to enhance subsequent box office performance.

Professor Dina Iordanova
New Activist Approaches: *The New Ten Commandments* and *The Yes Men Fix the World*

Making good on last semester's promise to continue exploring the intersection between film and politics, we welcomed two filmmakers to St Andrews this term.

On 24th February, Dr Nick Higgins, an award-winning filmmaker and lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, joined us for a screening of *The New Ten Commandments*, a feature-length documentary created from 10 film 'chapters' that explores the meaning of Human Rights in Scotland today. Originally conceived as a means to celebrate and explore the UN's 60-year-old Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the film united Scottish artists and filmmakers including Tilda Swinton, Irvine Welsh, Douglas Gordon and Kenny Glenaan. This powerful and occasionally humorous array of shorts reminded us that human rights are not simply 'out there'. That is, human rights are not simply realized in the courtroom or in philosophizing, but are part of daily practice, a daily practice that occurs just as much in Scotland as it does in the global south.

The screening was followed by a discussion with Dr Higgins. We addressed a range of topics including the challenges of managing a portmanteau project and of visualising human rights, the impact of Scottish nationalism and the year of homecoming on this project, and the continued uses of this film for activist programmes. Dr Higgins' lively manner and compelling stories kept us in the room until the porters had us leave. A St Andrews graduate in Moral Philosophy and International Relations and now a filmmaker, Dr Higgins stands as an exciting reminder of the potential of interdisciplinary and the impact of film and film studies.

Dr Leshu Torchin, Lecturer in Film Studies

On March 9th Yes Man 'Mike Bonanno' brought his new film *The Yes Men Fix the World* to the University of St Andrews. Lecturer Dr. Leshu Torchin of Film Studies invited Bonanno to a packed screening and discussion afterward, where Bonanno answered questions regarding the production of the film, its politics, and what he hopes the film will inspire in its audiences. Bonanno is currently in the process of editing the film to screen on UK's Channel Four – which he remarked as being exceedingly difficult because of strict requirements.

The 'Yes Men' are popularly known for pretending to be people who they are not, as exemplified in their feature film debut *The Yes Men* (2003). During the discussion, Bonanno described two main approaches the Yes Men take in their 'culture jamming': either they show up to corporate conferences promoting new - and ridiculously fake - products that they pass off as real, or they show up to press releases as delegates from major corporations or government agencies to reveal news that is most often antithetical to the true intentions of the people they supposedly represent. Surprisingly, however, Bonanno described these events as being "often depressing" - while the Yes Men might have fun planning the elaborate hoaxes, the hoaxes usually yield little response from the individuals they target. Apparently not only are their targets soulless, but so clueless to the extreme it seems like there is no hope of positively impacting them.

The Yes Men's project is less about changing the mindset of responsible individuals, however, than it is about impacting and motivating people on a grassroots level. Bonanno explained how the Yes Men rarely act on their own anymore, but get involved with larger environmental and human rights organizations. They often act as a sort of catalyst for these groups, targeting specific issues that the groups are working with and finding ways to promote media coverage for the targeted issue. In this respect, even if their individual actions may seem depressing, the Yes Men find a way for constructive action. And for Bonanno, actually a professor of Media Arts in his day job, what better way to mobilize positive action than by using film and media?

The Yes Men aren't always depressed by the results of their actions though. On November 12th 2008 they printed 80,000 copies of a special edition of the New York Times with the help of their mailing list/activist network. As one recipient of the papers filmed in *The Yes Men Fix the World* states, "It is as if they printed everything you ever wanted to come true". As with many of their pranks, once those duped find out that the wonderful news they've just received was a lie, they are amused more than anything else. It seems that in a media environment that offers so little optimism, people are happy to hear a bit of good news even if it is only in defiant rejection of the pessimist's truth.

Responding to a question about how St. Andrews students can get involved, Bonanno answered:

"Radicalize... I wish my generation had done more to change the world."

Matthew Holmeyer, PhD
Student in Film Studies
national cinema into transnational cinema, and thus presenting Greece to international audiences in a way that emphasises the country’s history and cultural heritage. The films of Theo Angelopoulos (The Travelling Players, Ulysses Gaze, and Eternity and a Day) serve as an example of the reach of Greek transnational cinema.

Defining transnational Greek cinema, Dr. Papadimitriou contends, is centred around the criteria of style, themes, and funding/distribution. Several contemporary films were examined in her presentation to illustrate this. For example, Loafing and Camouflage: Sirens of the Aegean (2005) was shot in Greece, filmed in three languages, and contained a multi-national cast. El Greco was a production with multinational funding and distribution, filmed in multiple locations and in multiple languages, and contained an international cast – serving as a stellar example of what transnational Greek cinema has become.

Dr. Papadimitriou has written for Cineaste, the Journal of Modern Greek Studies (Johns Hopkins), and Screen. She is the author of The Greek Film Musical (2006) and is currently working on a project entitled Greek Cinema: Texts, Forms, and Identities (forthcoming 2011).

April 27th, 2010

Dr. Chi-Yun Shin—Excessive* Remake: From The Quiet Family to The Happiness of the Katakuris*

Released in 1998, the South Korean comedy-horror The Quiet Family, directed by Ji-woon Kim, tells the story of an extended family whose move to the solitude of a rural hiker’s lodge is marred by a series of mysterious deaths befalling their guests. Released in 2001, Takashi Miike’s The Happiness of the Katakuris is a loose remake that defies categorisation: switching from comedy to farce, from murder to musical numbers, and blending humour and horror with abandon.

Dr. Chi-Yun Shin presented a comparative study of the two films, identifying them as examples of cross-cultural filmmaking in a pan-Asian context. She looked at the remake as a textual concern while also taking into account production and distribution, and the contrasting statuses of the films’ directors. In the process, numerous issues of cultural hybridity were raised: Korean-Japanese remakes, originality and pastiche, the combination of horror and comedy conventions, and the inclusion of Korean and Japanese-specific in-jokes and cultural references.

Both The Quiet Family and The Happiness of the Katakuris self-consciously play with genre conventions, or ‘genre grammar’, in ways that test the spectator’s enjoyment of the films. Leading on from this, Chi-Yun recalled Jeffrey Sconce’s concept of paracinema, pointing out Katakuris’s blatant disregard for narrative logic, genre parameters, and good-taste aesthetics.

All in all, this was yet another worthy addition to the growing list of Tuesday night talks which the centre for film studies have organised during the last couple of years. A big thank you is due to Dr. Chi-Yun Shin for coming to see us and I am sure there were many in attendance who will take much from what was said.

Chi-Yun is a senior lecturer in film studies at Sheffield Hallam University and has produced work on a variety of areas including the recent rise of Korean cinema and issues of post-national hybridity in British diaspora filmmaking. Along with Julian Stringer, she is the co-editor of New Korean Cinema (2005) published by Edinburgh University Press.

John Trafion and Andrew Dorman
PhD Students in Film Studies
University of St Andrews
February 23rd, 2010

Dr. Melanie Williams — “Ryan’s Daughter”: authorship, embarrassment, and femininity

The first talk of this semester’s lecture series was from University of East Anglia lecturer in film studies Dr. Melanie Williams and centred on David Lean’s 1970 film Ryan’s Daughter. Dr. Williams argued that standard analyses of Lean’s films often neglect the presentation of the dilemma of women. Lean’s female characters tend to “remain earthbound [and are] victims of their own design,” constituting a clash between the interest of femininity and the development of epic mode (a traditionally masculine form). Alongside a progressive change of structure in Lean’s work, his films — both early (Great Expectations, 1946) and late (A Passage to India, 1984) are interconnected through changes in the presentation of female characters, a link, Dr. Williams argues, from which we can progress to more advanced ideas on analysing Lean’s work.

In the production of Ryan’s Daughter, Lean and screenwriter Robert Bolt were drawn to the idealism of Rosy — a female character unable to accept her circumstances. This could suggest that the filmmakers applied a presentist view regarding the women’s rights movement of the 1970s in the film by using an old world reflection as present-day commentary. To support this approach, Dr. William’s argued, Lean’s epic form is present in Ryan’s Daughter’s emotion rather than the story’s parameters or its location. Long-time Lean collaborator Maurice Jarre, for example, uses an overtly “Irish” score used to exhibit the mood of the characters, rather than underscore these emotions. The film, though critically panned upon release, is a moment in David Lean’s career that reflects a clash between old world films styles and evolving social mores — a conflict inherent to the history of 1960 and 1970s cinema.

March 23rd, 2010

Dr. Lydia Papadimitriou — The National and the Transnational in Contemporary Greek Cinema

Next, the film department hosted Dr. Lydia Papadimitriou, Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at Liverpool John Moores University. Her presentation focused on the contribution and influence of Greek film to World cinema, from silent to contemporay films, using the epic El Greco (Yannis Smaragdis, 2007) as a case study. Her presentation charted aspects of Greek cinema like the national and the transnational. National Greek cinema, Dr. Papadimitriou argues, has been historically linked to Greek politics and a rejection of other cinema — in particular Hollywood cinema. Dr Papadimitriou identified the tradition of national Greek cinema as being rooted in 1930s intellectual movements, ones that emphasised Greek identity and “Greekness.” National Greek cinema in later years attempted to counter a “commercialised presentation” of Greek life by emphasising the “other Greece” — a “non-tourist” version of the country. Transnational Greek cinema developed alongside national Greek cinema, as films were characterized by the morphing of
In March 2010 I attended the SCMS conference in Los Angeles, California, and presented a paper on folded time and layered space in Hou Hsiao-hsien’s *Three Times* (2005). It was a unique occasion to look at the past and the future of the field at the same time, as papers from the canceled Tokyo conference (Mobilizing the Future/Screening the Past) in 2009 and new papers for this year’s conference (Archiving the Future/Mobilizing the Past) were juxtaposed. The conference examined film history and established subfields in films studies as well as explored new terrains of interest. It seems to me that transnational cinema and new media are the two hot topics; they were very present both in the panels and in the conversations outside conference rooms. I was personally inspired by Dr. Marimar Azcona-Montoloi’s talk on scrambled narratives in the films of Alejandro González Iñárritu, which was directly related to my research interest in alternative narrative strategies and cosmopolitan peripatetic directors. In terms of the location, this conference was especially interesting for it took place in Westin Bonaventure Hotel, which is “the populist insertion into the city fabric” of Fredric Jameson, and in a truly cinematic city. Coming from Scotland, I was definitely spoiled by the beautiful sunshine, mild weather and remarkable food in Los Angeles! - Yun Hua Chen, PhD Student, University of St Andrews

I was doubly looking forward to the SCMS event this year, after the disappointing cancellation of last year’s Tokyo conference. Los Angeles welcomed me with bright sunny skies and tall palm trees. The shiny installation-like Bonaventure Hotel, famously analysed by Fredric Jameson, stood out from the row of usual skyscrapers. My first destination in LA was the Hollywood hills and the walk of fame (surprise!). Although I was a bit disappointed by its tacky tourist atmosphere, I tried to imagine what the place would have been like at the peak of the studio system. With 18 concurrent panels running from 8am into the early evening, the conference itself was overwhelmingly big and busy. It was almost hit and miss, trying to find really interesting and relevant papers. I was pleased to see a sizeable presence of panels on Korean cinema, many of which focused on the films from the colonial-period. I was also happy to meet a number of famous scholars, whose works I am familiar with; it was a real ‘matching-name-with-face’ moment. For someone who is based in a UK institution, it was refreshing to see what scholars from other regions are working on. My paper on the reception of pan-Asian epic films was well-received and I’ve even been offered to get it published in an edited collection. Overall I believe my first experience of SCMS was a success and I can’t help thinking 2011 New Orleans will be just as worthwhile… - Yun Mi Hwang, PhD Student, University of St Andrews

SCMS was especially important for me this year, as it was my first chance to present the work I have been doing on a brand new project; I couldn’t have asked for a better opportunity, given the international nature and high profile of the conference, although that also made it a bit nerve-wracking! Everything went really well, however; I gave a paper entitled ‘Man and Boy: Montgomery Clift as a Queer Star in *Wild River*’, and it was great to get positive feedback from the audience. The conference was, as it always is, absolutely packed with panels, so it was a real challenge to decide which ones to attend. The atmosphere was very friendly, and it was good to meet up with people in Film Studies whom I hadn’t seen for a while. And of course, it was important to find some time for sightseeing, though I didn’t achieve much in that sphere, limiting myself to walking around Downtown LA, which I found quite deserted and odd. Nobody walks, everyone drives, as I had been warned, but I still could not believe it! I feel I ought to go back to California and visit more places, although the next SCMS conference is in New Orleans…which sounds very interesting indeed! - Dr Elisabetta Girelli, Lecturer in Film Studies, University of St Andrews
Film Festival Yearbook 2: Film Festivals and Imagined Communities

Film Festivals are usually associated with big cities’ most glamorous sites where celebrities showcase designer-branded outfits on miles of red carpet, all lit up by press flashlights. But what about the other film festivals, those organised by minority groups for minority audiences? In this volume, the festivals that do not trade in glamour but focus on a variety of political and social agendas instead? There is the UK’s largest African film festival held annually in Edinburgh, the Migrant Worker Film Festival in South Korea, and the festivals set up by ethnic minority or human rights activists to cater to displaced populations in the Sahara or promote stateless Kurdish culture in the diaspora. Furthermore, these are grand showcases staged by wealthy industrialised nations in extension of their cultural diplomacy efforts. These film festivals may be far from the limelight, yet in creating live encounters they bring together a host of imagined communities and are of at least equal importance in regard to our understanding of the dynamics in the global circulation of cinema.

Film Festivals and Imagined Communities (2010), the second volume of the Film Festival Yearbook from St Andrews Film Studies, comes timely to shed light on these issues. The latest volume brings together essays about festivals that use international cinema to facilitate transnationally ‘imagined communities’ for diverse socio-cultural-ethnic interactions in a vast range of places, from Vienna, San Francisco, and Havana to Seoul, Bradford, and Dakklu. The ‘Contexts’ section includes texts highlighting aspects of festival organisation, cultural politics, and funding models, as well as analysing programming practices related to these often highly politicised events.

The diverse range of contributors and contributions to the volume reflect the series’ transnational focus. Authors include Ruby Cheung, Linda Dovey, Michael Guilé, Yun Mi Hwang, Dina Jordanova, Miriam Ross, Isabel Santolalla and Stefan Simonowitz, Mustafa Güngördü, Jérôme Segal, and Roy Stafford. The book features the 2009 update of the film festival research bibliography by Skadi Loist and Marjoke de Valck, and an extensive thematically organised listing of a variety of transnational festivals.

‘The very ambitious aspiration of the Film Festival Yearbook is, quite literally, to define a new area of film study.’
— Jonathan Rosenbaum (www.jonathansrosenbaum.com)

‘Film Festivals and Imagined Communities’ — the second volume in the series — opens up new horizons both for those who study media and those who create the significant but often overlooked “media worlds” where films first get launched: film festivals from the “periphery”.
— Faye Ginsburg (Director, Center for Media, Culture and History, New York University)

The book is available to order at http://www.g-nt-andrews.ac.uk/filmbooks

“When Academics Attack!” Postgraduate Workshop

This year’s annual postgraduate workshop (Wednesday 10th March) was devoted to the subject of how to successfully manage question and answer sessions during conferences. This event was awarded funding from the University of St Andrews’ GRADSKILLS Innovation Award scheme, due to its specific focus on the training of the Film Studies postgraduate community. This enabled us to employ the Edinburgh based Forum Interactive, a company who specialize in interactive, theatrical role-playing workshops designed to train faculty and graduate students in UK universities.

The workshop was designed in response to feedback from PhD students, tailored specifically to their desire to learn more about how to respond to questions after giving academic papers. The workshop provided our assembled PhD students with the opportunity to practice answering extremely difficult questions, receive feedback on their performance, and learn techniques for future development. It also enabled the doctoral students to participate as questioners in the audience, performing roles designed to provide an insight into the reasons why some questions are asked, and the ways in which they are asked. It also gave them direct access to the experiences and advice of the assembled faculty in the audience, who performed the roles of outrageous conference delegates.

The range of skills practiced was extremely broad, and included — how to deal with aggressive questioning, how to spot a friendly question when it may not at first appear as such, when to defend your work in relation to the development of the field, what to say in response to overly-long questions or several questions at once, how to ensure audience discussion does not exclude the speaker, how to respond to questions that are shaped by political agendas beyond the scope of your paper, how to interpret body language, and so on. At the close of the workshop, a group discussion enabled each speaker to receive feedback on their performance during questions, and suggestions from faculty as to which techniques to adopt in the future.

The workshop will be repeated in two or three years time, so that participants are able to gauge their development in the interim. We also made a recording of events on DV, and a DVD of the workshop will be made available to all Film Studies PhD students for future review. Serving as a successful pilot course, in future the format for this workshop will be used for generic skills training across the University.

Dr Ruby Cheung
The Leverhulme Trust Research Associate
Dynamics of World Cinema

Dr David Martin-Jones
Senior Lecturer in Film Studies
Centre For Film Studies Newsletter
Spring Edition 2010

Book Launch: BFI, Southbank, London
March 2010

A host of new titles by members of the Centre, all released in the space of several months, were featured at the shared book launch at the BFI Southbank in London, a venue that we thought would give good exposure to our work. And indeed, an estimated two hundred guests turned up for the event on this sunny Sunday afternoon in early March. Some had travelled from as far as Manchester and Nottingham, some were visiting from Italy and the USA, and the majority were postgraduate students, journalists, and younger academics from London-based universities. A number of contributors to edited collections we published recently were also in attendance, interacting with those of us who had travelled down to London for the day. We were really pleased to welcome friends such as Prof. Richard Dyer and Prof. Ginette Vincendeau from Kings College, Prof. Yosefa Loshitzky from the University of East London, and Heidi Renton from the British Board of Film Classification.

In-between glasses of wine and lively conversations, we made a brief presentation and unveiled the new titles, copies of which were available for sale at the event:

- Dina Iordanova with Ragan Rhynce (eds) *Film Festival Yearbook 1: The Festival Circuit* (St. Andrews Film Studies, 2009)
- Dina Iordanova, *New Bulgarian Cinema* (Blurb, 2009)
- Dina Iordanova, David Martin-Jones and Belen Vidal (eds) *Cinema at the Periphery* (Wayne State University Press, 2010)
- Dina Iordanova with Ruby Cheung (eds) *Film Festival Yearbook 2: Film Festivals and Imagined Communities* (SAFS, 2010)

Ian Ryan, manager of BFI’s Filmstore at the Southbank and his staff helped us to set up and sold a number of copies on our behalf. Leshu Torchin, Will Brown’s, and Dina Iordanova’s *Moving People, Moving Images*, a co-written monograph on representations of human trafficking in transnational cinema, was the commercial hit at the event. Well done, folks! Thank you!

Professor Dina Iordanova
Provost of the University of St Andrews