A Boost in the Doctoral Program

As always, there is plenty of news to report on this time around. The appointment of Prof. Richard Dyer as part-time Professorial Fellow, the arrival of new colleagues (Dr. Tom Rice, Dr. Joshua Yumibe, Dr. Alex Marlow-Mann, and Dr. Alex Fischer), the visits of Prof. Robert Rosenstone and legendary French film critic Jean-Michel Frodon, and a range of new publications and new initiatives.

There is one piece of news, however, that stands out and makes us proud: the significant growth in our doctoral programme. Five new PhD students entered last year. Then, the number doubled this academic year when another ten joined in, thus bringing the total number of doctoral students to eighteen. They come from all over – the United States, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey, South Korea, Uruguay, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Italy (and the UK) – and they bring along massive intellectual energy to the Centre.

Individual profiles of the members of this amazingly diverse group can be viewed at http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/films/studies/phdprofiles.php.

The presence of such a large body of postgraduate research students changes the dynamics of the programme. Talks are so much better attended now, there is an independent doctoral seminar which they run themselves. New possibilities for conferences and publications emerge, and new initiatives come up all the time.

With so many people on board, we may soon be looking to increase the size of this newsletter – there is so much to report. Or, perhaps, it is about time to think of a more robust publication?

Professor Dina Iordanova
Provost
University of St. Andrews

Professor Robert Rosenstone Visits St. Andrews

This fall the Centre for Film Studies was proud to host Professor Robert Rosenstone as its guest. As a lifelong lover of history, it was truly an honour to be one of the PhD students to have a one-on-one meeting with Professor Rosenstone to discuss my doctoral thesis and my role in the broader field of Film Studies. The words of wisdom that he imparted during this meeting have had a lasting impact on my research and role as a Film Scholar: ensure that your work contains a moral purpose, as oftentimes there are scholars who “do not reflect much on the meaning of what they are doing.”

Professor Rosenstone’s St. Andrews visit – a far cry from his sunny, Southern Californian home base – provided our students and staff with an opportunity to meet with him and to participate in “A Symposium with Robert Rosenstone,” a conference on the links between Film Studies and the broader field of History. The issue addressed by the symposium, according to Rosenstone, was how “film should be taken seriously as a tool for examining history due to the limitations of the historical narrative.” Historical narration, he argued, is limited in its ability to express “the historical spirit,” and in presentations by visiting academics – Professor Alun Munslow, Professor Ian Christie, Dr. Jennifer Smyth, Dr. Guy Westwell, and St. Andrews’ own Dr. Bettina Bildhauer – it was demonstrated how film as a historiography offers a counter-discourse with the past and brings into relief the human spirit which is often absent from the historical text.

During his visit, Professor Rosenstone was also a part of the Centre for Film Studies “Tuesday Night Talk” series. His talk, titled “Histories Created Through Film: A Pack of Tricks We Play Upon the Dead,” analysed Warren Beatty’s film Reds, a film that Professor Rosenstone served on as historical consultant, to demonstrate how film can act as a vehicle for analysing history. This approach, he argued, is based on how films can embody national and cultural mythology.
Professor Robert Rosenstone Visits St. Andrews (Continued)

In his last meeting with Postgrad students, Professor Rosenstone discussed the concept of innovative histories, sharing with us some of the works of historians using innovative approaches to examining history and its meaning to the present. Although he was enthusiastic about the direction film studies and historiography was heading, he expressed concerns about the future of academia. Are we, as scholars, destined to become merely priests, he asked. For me, this was a coda to Professor Rosenstone’s visit – one which would change my perspective on my own work as an academic and my role within the academy in general. In short, Professor Rosenstone’s visit was an enriching experience for me and my colleagues. We were grateful to have him as our guest and we wish him all the best.

John Trafton
PhD Student
University of St Andrews

Honorary Degree to Iranian Filmmaker Mohsen Makhmalbaf

In a joint invitation between the Department of Social Anthropology, the Centre for Film Studies and the Institute for Iranian Studies, acclaimed Iranian director Mohsen Makhmalbaf visited the University of St Andrews in June of 2010.

The event involved a screening of Salam Cinema, followed by a Q&A session and a more intimate reception afterward. During these, Makhmalbaf discussed the practical aspects of filmmaking, and the role of cinema and culture in shaping political events, which is particularly important given his prominence in the Green Movement in Iran.

Salam Cinema, which Makhmalbaf made in 1994, follows the auditions of ordinary Iranian citizens who show up in response to an ad placed in the newspapers announcing open auditions for Makhmalbaf’s latest film. Makhmalbaf, played by himself, teases out the participants’ desire to be involved in cinema by asking why they want to be cast in his film – the usual response being a declaration of love for cinema.

In a brief introduction to the film and afterwards during the Q&A, the director explained that he wanted to counter the image of Iran as being home of only religious fanatics. Instead, he wanted to show that most citizens in Iran are ordinary people, just like anywhere else in the world. Later, the director illustrated the more nuanced side of his politics. Before the 1979 Revolution, Makhmalbaf was jailed by the Pahlavi regime. After being freed during the revolution, he went into politics for six months, but decided that he could do more good for the Iranian people working with culture, and so he became a filmmaker.

Makhmalbaf explained that he believes political reform is not enough to solve the problems of a country, but rather that the people’s minds must change first, and political reform will follow. This was clearly seen in Salam Cinema, with the director’s explanation that he wanted to change how the international community viewed the people of Iran.

Makhmalbaf was an extremely generous guest, speaking with a large group of excited cinephiles at the reception, and even taking time to speak one-on-one with anyone interested. I was able to chat with Makhmalbaf about my favorite film of his, Marriage of the Blessed. He excitedly explained the technical details of how he portrayed the protagonists’ insanity through quick cuts and changing makeup. During this these sequences, the protagonist’s makeup actually changes subtly between each shot.

Passionate about the craft of filmmaking and justice for people around the world, Makhmalbaf was an energetic and energizing speaker. He left any aspiring filmmakers with this bit of advice; you can learn the technical side of filmmaking in a three-month course, and with digital filmmaking the equipment is more accessible than ever, but good films come from ‘living’ the subject of the film.

It seems then that Makhmalbaf’s past experience, from being a political prisoner before the Revolution, to acting today as a spokesperson of the Green Movement, is integral to the efficacy of his films as they endeavor to create positive social change by changing the way people think.

Matthew Holmeier
PhD Student
As an important element of world cinema, Chinese-language film has a long history almost as long as film itself. Yet it only started to attract serious scholarly attention in the mid-1980s, and most of the important work thus far has been focused on contemporary Chinese-language films over the last three to four decades.

The 'Rethinking Chinese Film Industry: New Methods, New Histories' conference held on 8-9 October 2010, organized by Hong Kong Baptist University, was a timely intervention in the field to raise awareness regarding the gaps that are not yet filled. It brought scholarly and critical attention to the matters of pre-war Chinese-language film industries. Led by Emilie Yeh (herself a specialist in East Asian cinemas), the conference built on a platform where speakers and participants could discuss new perspectives on Chinese film industries with a focus on, though not limited to, pre-1950 industrial history. It had two aims: to expand the existing scope of industry research and to explore new methodological approaches. It featured experts from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, the UK and USA.

There were six panels altogether over two days. The first day had four panels, bringing us some under-researched periods in the past when Chinese film industries in different localities began to gain momentum, albeit unknown to the world until recently. Panel One set the tone of the conference with 'New Directions in Chinese Film Industry Research'. Feng Xiaoci (Fudan University, China) talked about the possible reconstruction of a synoptic Chinese film history from 1896 to 1976. Hong Kong veteran film critic Law Kar's paper highlighted the close connection between Shanghai's and Hong Kong's film industries during several years (1946-50) of the post-war period.

The second panel was on 'Rethinking Westernization'. Two papers offered us a new vantage point to study the Chinese film industries. Qin Xiqiang's (Chinese National Academy of Arts) paper provided us with a methodological reflection on the comparative film studies between Chinese film industry and Hollywood during the period from the 1900s to 1950. Xiao Zhiwei (California State University, USA) raised questions about the notion of 'cultural imperialism' by reflecting on Hollywood's presence in China during the first half of the twentieth century in his paper 'Translating American Films to a Chinese Audience: Agency and Appropriation in Cross-Cultural Encounters during Republican China'.

Panel Three shift focus from the film industry in mainland China to those in peripheral areas, forming the first part of

'Film Capital and Regional Spheres'. Yung Sai-shing (National University of Singapore) explored the cultural importance and industrial network of Hainan dialect cinema in Southeast Asia between 1949 and 1959. Yang Yuanying (Beijing Film Academy) offered an overview of how Beijing Film Studio has become an important breeding ground for mainland Chinese cinema after 1949 through studying its infrastructure, creative strategy, filmmakers and the film star system as well as the modes of film sale.

Panel Four, 'Industries Mould', discussed several big studios and their impact on Chinese film industry evolution before Chinese-language films were introduced to the world. While Stephanie Chung (Hong Kong Baptist University) painted a concise picture of how the Shaw Brothers expanded their film empire from Shanghai, through Hong Kong, to Singapore in the first half of the twentieth century, Sugawara Yoshino (Kansai University, Japan) revisited the influence of Liucheng Company in the early silent cinema era of China in the 1920s. Liu Hui (Shenzhen University, China) investigated the setup of China Film United, a Shanghainese studio established by Japanese occupation forces between 1937 and 1945.

On the second day of the conference, Panel Five brought to us new research approaches to studying Chinese-language film industries. Robert Chen and Yi-ting Huang (National Chengchi University, Taiwan) employed ideas from business studies to examine the market concentration of the Taiwanese film industry and its evolution over the past twenty years. My paper entitled 'Running Out of Time: From Red Cliff through New Media Platforms Then Back to the Old Days' was included in this panel. It shed new light on audience reception studies among Chinese audiences across various places and in different historical time periods. This paper and the research on which it was based came from the 'Dynamics of World Cinema' project funded by the Leverhulme Trust. I am delighted that this paper was given positive feedback by the panel discussant Lu Feli from National Chengchi University, Taiwan.

Panel six constituted the second part of the discussion on 'Film Capital and Regional Spheres'. Albert Tang's (Fudan Catholic University, Taiwan) study on Chongqing's neglected role in regaining cultural resources from Shanghai in the 1930s before many of them were moved to Taiwan was illuminating. Stephanie Ng (Hong Kong Baptist University) employed post-war sing-song comedy films in Hong Kong as a case study to explore the production modes of the local Cantonese film industry of that period.

Papers were presented in languages with which the presenters were most comfortable, including Mandarin, Cantonese and English – an aspect showing the current international dimension of the study of Chinese-language cinemas. All conference panels were given feedback by specific discussants, including Chen Xile (Shanghai University, China), Lu Feli (National Chengchi University, Taiwan), Sam Hau (Hong Kong Film Archive) and Xiao Zhiwei (California State University, USA). Their constructive comments on individual papers helped generate insightful exchanges that will surely lead to more research in Chinese-language film industries in the near future.

Dr Ruby Cheung
Research Associate
Dynamics of World Cinema
Global Film-Tourism

In 2010 I was awarded a Research Grant by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland to pursue on-going research into film-tourism. This is an emergent area of research, my interest in which grew out of my second monograph, Scotland: Global Cinema (2009). This funding enabled several stimulating, not to mention extremely enjoyable, research visits focused on the transatlantic nature of film-tourism as it impacts on Scotland. This was the first phase of research I am currently conducting into the global phenomenon of film-tourism.

I conducted useful interviews with personnel at VisitScotland in Edinburgh, especially concerning the agreement with Sony Pictures Entertainment surrounding the Da Vinci Code (2006). This was the first time a national tourist agency ever entered into such an agreement with a major studio. In April I visited New York’s annual Tarian Week celebrations and conducted interviews with the founders and organisers of the event (also board members of the American Scottish Association) and the Governor’s Office of Motion Picture and TV Development. Finally, in June I travelled to Canada, speaking to representatives of the Toronto International Film Festival, Telefilm Canada, the St Andrews Society of Montreal, and the Bureau du Cinéma et de la Télévision du Québec. On several occasions I was also fortunate enough to meet and discuss my research with fellow academics – at CUNY, Columbia and Sarah Lawrence in New York, and Carleton, Brock, Ryerson and Western Ontario in Canada.

These visits enabled me to reconsider the way in which Scotland is depicted in film, whether Scottish-made movies, or location shoots from as far afield as the USA, Canada, France and India. In terms of the transatlantic dimension I focused on for this project, tying in with the motivations behind much heritage tourism, film-tourism campaigns in Scotland very often target diasporic fantasies of Scottish identity. Thus films made and set in Scotland, and the campaigns surrounding them, come to function rather like shop windows for future tourists. In this instance fulfilling what we might describe as “genealogical desires”? I was extremely gratified to be invited to present these findings as keynote speaker at the third Carnegie funded Scottish Consortium for Film and Visual Studies event, at the Fairmont Hotel, in May of this year.

Dr David Martin-Jones
Senior Lecturer in Film Studies

Africa in Motion Comes Back to St Andrews

Africa in Motion: Edinburgh African Film Festival, currently the biggest African Film Festival in the UK, was founded by Dr. Lizelle Bischoff (now a Leverhulme postdoctoral fellow in the Centre of African Studies at the University of Edinburgh). This festival, having been through five editions so far, won a United Nation award this year and has been a very important event in the busy calendar of Edinburgh’s Filmhouse Cinema since its inception. This November I was honoured to have had the opportunity to bring the festival to St Andrews. As this event annually tours many places in Scotland (as far as Isle of Skye and Orkney), the fact that St Andrews is a destination for films that are rarely screened is significant.

This two-day event included three film screenings (Sex, Okra and Salted Butter, Waiting for Men and iMANY), an introductory presentation on African cinema by Dr. Lizelle Bischoff, a workshop on the Colonial Film Project led by Dr. Tom Rice (lecturer in Film Studies), and a roundtable discussion led by a PhD candidate in anthropology, Elise de Swaan. As this is a truly interdisciplinary event straddling the interests of film studies, anthropology and international relations among others, we were delighted to see an audience coming from a diverse range of disciplines including the aforementioned subject areas plus sustainability development, marine biology, computer sciences and business. It was also extremely encouraging to see the presence of local people from outside the university, as we are striving to include the participation of the townspeople in our film events to create a flourishing film culture in St Andrews. We truly appreciated everyone’s enthusiastic participation despite the adverse weather over the weekend, their input to the discussion, and the wonderful networking opportunities across disciplines.

The audience particularly enjoyed the screening of Sex, Okra and Salted Butter (Sexe, Gombo et Béurre Salé, Hamadat-Saleh Haroun, France, 2008), a thematic departure for the acclaimed Chadian director, whose previous works such as Hound and Darfur dealt with a much heavier subject matter. This light-hearted comedy of errors touches upon issues of African diasporic presence in France, gender, sexuality and culture identities. It was apparent that the audience had appreciated its humorous treatment of the subject matter as laughter was heard throughout the film.

This event was only made possible by the support of a GRADSkills Innovation Grant and St Andrews Shuttle, which provided us with funding and transportation. We would like to sincerely thank them for their sponsorship. We also appreciate the thorough coverage of the event by St Andrews Radio. If you want to find out more about the annual Africa in Motion: Edinburgh African Film Festival, visit http://www.africa-in-motion.org.uk/2010/.

Yun Hua Chen
PhD Student
Conference Round-Up:  
Fall 2010

"San Francisco State University is a lively, progressive campus cloaked in the fog rolling off the Pacific Ocean – the ideal location for a conference on "Histories Created Through Film." This fall, I had the honour of speaking at SFSU Cinema Studies' 12th annual conference dedicated to exploring how film adds an extra layer of text to the field of History by illuminating the various "histories" of people. As moderator Aaron Kerner remarked on the opening day, "History is always a representation," and I can say that each of the papers, including my own, helped to highlight this point.

On the last day of the conference, I gave a paper on how post-9/11 American culture contributes to the revision of the war film's visual mode – with a particular emphasis on digital videography and internet culture. This was not only a great opportunity for me to share my work with other academics, but it was also an opportunity to absorb other innovative approaches to how history informs filmmaking and vice versa. Papers and panels on cultural memory, ethnic and national identities, revisions of historical record, and history seen through cityscapes all contributed to an enriching and well-rounded conference."  
- John Trafton, PhD Student.

"Attending the Film and History Conference for the first time, I traveled to Milwaukee during Reading Week at St Andrews to read a paper on Oliver Stone's Alexander. The theme of the conference was Love in the Cinema, and featured a keynote address by Laura Mulvey on masculinity and love in the films of Max Ophuls. The talk was a highlight of the conference for me.

My own paper on Alexander was shaped by the powerful dichotomy in the visual style of the film, in particular the split between the panoramic mode of presentation and the phantasmagoric. Alexander's public persona, fixed in images from very early on and reinforced by Ptolemy's pedantic reading of Alexander's life, is countered by the appearance of phantasmatic imagery, which gives us a striking sense of the strangeness and otherness of the past, a world where totem animals and talis-mamic objects evoke a powerful impression of occult significance. I argued that the influence of Olympus expressed through phantasmagoric imagery, pervades the entire text as an undercurrent, the darkness that runs beneath the images, to paraphrase Marguerite Duras.

It was a markedly interdisciplinary conference: Classics, History, Art History, and Film Studies were only a few of the many academic disciplines that were represented here. Well organized, this biannual conference presents a good opportunity for younger film studies scholars."
- Professor Robert Burgoyne, Chair in Film Studies.

"In July of 2010 I participated in the Deleuze Studies conference along with my colleagues from the University of St Andrews, Matthew Holtmeier, William Brown, and David Martin-Jones.

David Fleming (University of Nottingham, Ningbo), Serazer Peckerman and I came up with a panel for the conferences: "Filmic Body and the Digital", chaired by Anneke Smelik (University of Nijmegen). The panel consisted of David Fleming's paper on the digital human character in The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, Serazer Peckerman's paper on the personal identity of a werewolf, and my paper on body transformation in Amores Perros. We had a lively discussion afterwards about various issues concerning different kinds of filmic bodies under different temporal and spatial contexts, as well as the interaction between filmic bodies and screen space.

The conference was a productive, interdisciplinary gathering where Deleuzians from a wide range of disciplines spanning from music studies to biotechnology convened in the beautiful buildings of the University of Amsterdam right at the centre of the city. It was very inspiring to see how Deleuze studies is multiplying and relevant to such an incredible range of fields. The conference provided a valuable opportunity for film and media scholars all over Britain, Europe and the US to interact, share information, and forge new research projects and collaborations."
- Yun-Hua Chen, PhD Student.

Highlights from the 4th Annual Scottish Consortium

The third annual Scottish Consortium, held at the scenic St. Andrews Fairmont Hotel, addressed many issues concerning the state of global cinema. Whether examining the European film policy, Scottish film-tourism, or the Edinburgh-based Africa in Motion festival, the consortium provided an opportunity for film academics from all over Scotland to discuss these issues and share ideas.

Henning Camre (Copenhagen). *The European ThinkTank on Film and Film Policy*: Henning Camre, Danish cinematographer and head of the Think Tank on Film and Film Policy, presented on the challenges facing European film distribution. The primary issue is the missing link between the production industry and the market: there exists little to no audience to attract funding for European productions. The result is a rise of “micro-enterprise industries”—a market digital production and distribution that needs to be exploited by the larger production industry. As films are “exploited in all windows,” it is important that European film policy shifts its focus to ensure that the main priority is that films reach an audience.

Morgan Petrie (Scottish Screen) and Hannah McGill (Artistic Director of Edinburgh Film Festival). *Film Festivals in Scotland*: Petrie pondered the viability of a sustainable industry, covering concerns about Scottish regional film festivals, New Media Scotland and whether film spectatorship can be marketed as a social event. Like Camre, he identifies a need to invest in films about the location they are produced in. One major idea that emerged from this is that the Scottish film scene can take the form of traditional storytelling, a domestic cinema which encourages a coming together of people.

Initially, McGill’s statistics on film festivals (one film festival set up somewhere in the world every 36 hours) seems to contradict Petrie’s suggestion that films and film festivals are lacking in terms of visibility. However, there was some correlation between the two, particularly when McGill suggested that Scotland currently offers almost no formal education in film and filmmaking. Can Creative Scotland and the introduction of film studies to secondary school curriculums do something that could benefit filmmaking and film appreciation in the country?

David Martin-Jones (University of St. Andrews). *Scotland and the World*: Film-tourism, or "set-jetting" has been the focus of Dr. Martin-Jones’s recent research, particularly in relation to filmmaking in Scotland. In his talk on Film-Tourism in Scotland, Dr. Martin-Jones (pictured above) examined how mythical Scottish tropes, often derived in literature on cinema in Scotland, are employed to promote tourism. What is evident in Martin-Jones’s book and presentation is that when analysing the impact of films on this multi-million dollar industry, films shot on location in a small nation like Scotland (from Braveheart to the Da Vinci Code) are equally as illuminating as Scottish films themselves. Such films deploy the mythical structures associated with previous filmic depictions of Scotland to construct 'fantasy identities' that appeal globally to a tourist’s gaze.

Neil Young (Jigsaw Lounge). *Festival Programming: Vocation or Profession*: Young provided a refreshing semi-autobiographical overview of his life in film journalism and film festivals which questioned orthodox approaches to entering the film festival industry. Despite the numerous difficulties of being a film festival programmer (not much pay for instance) Young gave a vivid and absorbing account of programming as a vocation as opposed to a profession. However, Young also offered a warning to the cinemophile - watching too many films may lead to a lack of actual film experience. One may know a lot about films but lack a knowledge of what cinema most often deals with - life.

Lizelle Bisschoff/ Stefanie Van de Peer (University of Stirling and University of Edinburgh). *Festivals and Diasporic Communities*: Our last conference was with the founders of the Edinburgh-based Africa in Motion Festival. The speakers discussed how the festival originated and its evolution over the years. Both this year and last year, St. Andrews hosted a selection from the festival, which was quite popular with the staff and students and helped to broaden the scope of St. Andrew’s film culture. The Africa in Motion initiative is proving to be very successful and encouraging a new spectatorship of films that are not widely distributed in Scotland.

John Trafton and Andrew Dorman
PhD Students
Tuesday Night Talks: Autumn Semester, 2010
Guest Speaker Series

October 12th, 2010 - Professor Robert Rosenstone – *History Created Through Film: “A Pack of Tricks We Play Upon the Dead*

Warren Beatty’s biopic *Reds*, recounting the life and times of leftist journalist John Reed (played by Warren Beatty), provides an interesting case study on how film can serve as a vehicle for examining both History and histories. Historian Robert Rosenstone served as the historical consultant for Beatty’s film and, drawing upon his experiences with the film’s production as well as his own work as a historian, laid out several approaches to examining both history and the historical film.

The historical film, Rosenstone argued, can be seen as “Dramatized History.” The idea of film as dramatized history brings to mind the question often asked of films concerned with past events: did it actually happen that way? The answer, oftentimes, is “no,” which may prompt the viewer to view film as a “violation of the past.” The purpose of dramatized history is, in fact, not to portray history as it actually happened but rather to offer a historiography that engages with Gore Vidal’s view of the historian; both historians and the authors of films which dramatize history are “people who answer questions no one asks.”

*Reds* does not – and perhaps could not – depict events in Reed’s life exactly as they occurred, down to the last minute detail. Instead, the idea behind Beatty’s film is to express what Rosenstone refers to as “the historical spirit.” The role of historical memory in *Reds* is informed by the context of the era in which the film was created, which is why Professor Rosenstone has used Beatty’s film not to teach his students about rise of the Soviet Union or the early 20th century American socialist movements, but rather to examine the 1960s and 1970s counterculture movement.

October 27th 2010 - Professor Liesbet Van Zoonen, *Islam on the Popular Battlefield: How Young People Contest Islamophobia on YouTube*

In late October Professor Liesbet Van Zoonen from the University of Loughborough was kind enough to visit us and deliver a paper dealing specifically with online reactions to the anti-Islam film *Fitna*, made in 2008 by Islamophobic Dutch politician Geert Wilders. Looking at the non-violent but highly critical internet videos generated in response to Wilders’s film, Van Zoonen suggested that the postings made by young people around the world, and particularly young Muslims living in the West, illustrated a strong correlation between faith and secular cosmopolitanism, while also presenting young Muslims as exercising and upholding the value of freedom of speech.

The presentation brought up numerous issues about how young people articulate anxieties over Islamophobia and related happenings, such as Burqa and Minaret bans in France and Switzerland, “Burn the Qur’an Day,” and the prominence of the right-wing in the Netherlands. Clearly, such controversies remain unsettled and will no doubt fuel vibrant academic (and online) reactions in the coming years.

November 9th 2010 - Jean Michel Frodon, *Questioning the Contemporary Development of Film Festivals*

Frodon, a former editor-in-chief for *Cahiers du cinema*, identified film festival studies as an important nexus between film studies and the film industry, while also suggesting that the film festival should be seen as a market in itself rather than just an integral section of the global film industry. Two main areas of focus were brought to the fore: the aesthetic effect of the film festival phenomenon and the economic aspects of contemporary film festivals. Frodon also called for an increased awareness of ‘local specifics’ when marketing films from the ‘peripheral world.’ All in all, Frodon delivered an intriguing and thought-provoking reassessment of the roles film festivals could potentially play in global markets while also highlighting a need to bring sidelined national cinemas to the forefront of the festival scene.
Tuesday Night Talks: Autumn Semester, 2010
Guest Speaker Series

November 19th, 2010 — John Simmons, Moving Image, Moving Minds and Do Horses Really Fly? — A Personal View of Science Filmmaking

In his presentation on the valuable role of film technology in the sciences, John Simmons, Executive Director of the science communication agency ON Communication, sought to address two central problems he faced in his twenty-five years in education: 1) introducing young people to the energy industry and 2) introducing young people to “science filmmaking.” These two challenges are linked on the grounds that film technology has played an important part in the development of other technology used for the betterment of society. The central question derived from this theme is how to use the moving-image in the field of science.

According to Dr. Simmons, the invention of the microscope was an early example of the importance of motion-capture to scientific research, as it was a popular attraction that allowed one to see movements in the biological universe. A striking modern example that Dr. Simmons provided was video footage of an earthquake in Japan, one which interrupted a meeting of the Japanese Farmers Union. Information provided by the way earthquake distorted the composition of the frame assisted a Japanese construction company in building new structures better equipped to absorb the shock of an earthquake. Since then, the moving image has played a role in scientific development, and a viable goal for the future would be to continue the development of such technology to develop sustainable energy and a better understanding of our evolving universe.

November 23rd, 2010 — Serazer Pekerman, Framed Intimacy in Transnational Cinemas

The most recent senior PhD Tuesday talk took place in late November, part of a series of presentations offering PhD candidates coming to the end of their research the opportunity to summarise their project over the course of an hour. Thus, it was the turn of Serazer Pekerman, who has been with the department since 2006, who produced a fascinating investigation of female social resistance in world cinema as framed by the work of Deleuze and Guattari. This was traced throughout disparate films such as 2 Genc Kiz/ Two Girls (Kutlug Ataman, 2003) and the internationally-produced Dogville (Lars Von Trier, 2003) in which ‘decentered women’ search for a form of ‘public space’, which Pekerman related to displaced communities such as Kurdish peoples. What emerges is internationally acknowledged art house filmmakers/ auteurs who make use of female characters in order to create a Deleuzian and Guattarian ‘molecular resistance’ against patriarchal regimes in their films.

Serazer Pekerman is a recent PhD graduate at the University of St Andrews Film Studies department as well as a published novelist in her native Turkey.

December 7th, 2010 — Dr Elisabetta Girelli, Man and Boy: Montgomery Clift, Queer Theory and Wild River

The final Tuesday night talk of the year came from our very own Elisabetta Girelli. Dr. Girelli concentrated on Montgomery Clift’s career following his devastating car accident in 1956 and how Clift’s work in Wild River (Elia Kazan, 1960) exemplifies his later films as it challenges normative notions of masculinity, sexuality and physical attractiveness. This paper stems from Girelli’s current research into Montgomery Clift as a queer film star. This is a subject close to the presenter’s heart and was the first time many of us in the Film Studies department had the chance to see this work presented. On this evidence, her forthcoming publication on Clift will be worth waiting for.

Andrew Dorman and John Trafton
PhD Students
Postgraduate Study Day

In May of 2010, the Centre for Film Studies held its 4th Annual Postgraduate Study Day with Professor Richard Dyer as the keynote speaker. The theme was Film and Music, and we were honoured to have Professor Dyer as our guest, considering his extensive research on the subject. His paper connected to his new book about Nino Rota, and a very interesting and lively paper it was. The topic was subjective music as diegetic music, and how we need to re-think what constitutes diegetic and non-diegetic music. The examples he gave of the complexity of the issue came from a handful of Italian films scored by Nino Rota.

It was a hard act to follow, but four PhD candidates and one MLitt were brave enough to try. My talk was on Howard Hawks and his use of music in relation to group dynamics, exemplified by a clip from Only Angels Have Wings (1939), in which Jean Arthur takes over the piano from Cary Grant and proves to him and the rest of the group that she’s just as good and professional as they are. Andrew Dorman spoke next about the use of music in Radio On (1980) to allude to the strong connections between West Germany and British pop culture in the late 1970s. Andrei Tanasescu then spoke about the modern use of electronic music to score silent German expressionistic films, such as Metropolis (1927), and connected this approach with the writings of Gilles Deleuze. The day continued with Matthew Holtmeier discussing music in two films by Kurdish-Iranian filmmaker Bahman Ghobadi, while the last speaker, Yun-Hua Chen, compared and contrasted the Mexican film Amores Perros (2000) and the music video “De Perros Amores”, made in connection with the film.

After a screening of Amarcord (1973), chosen by Professor Dyer, the day ended with a frank discussion about the topics covered. It was a stimulating and successful day, full of insights and ideas, and I want to thank everybody who participated in making it so.

Fredrik Gustafsson
PhD Student

Postgraduate Conference

On 11 May 2010, the University of St Andrews held its 5th Annual Postgraduate Conference with special guest Martine Beugnet and organized by myself. The conference served as a day long venue for PhD students to present their research in a conference setting, and receive specific feedback from Martine Beugnet. During the morning session, Fredrik Gustafsson, Yun Mi Hwang, Andrew Dorman, and John Traifton presented pieces of their research that worked with film in terms of particular (trans)national contexts. During the afternoon session, Paola Monaldi, Senzer Pekerman, Yun-hua Chen, and myself presented research that examined films which pushed the borders of narrative strategies.

Martine Beugnet’s keynote talk, Mourning in the Age of the Digital: Memory, Loss and Experimental Filmmaking, addressed issues of film-memory, the decay of film, and the haptic visuality associated with these themes. While offering an engaging presentation, Beugnet also proved to be an excellent special guest because of the useful feedback she provided to the presenters. She was also gracious enough to take part in an ongoing project of interviews addressing the place of Deleuze in the field of film studies. After her talk, the film Irma Vep, chosen by Beugnet, was screened so further discussion could take place in regards to the materiality of film and the presence of materiality in films. The University looks forward to continuing this successful tradition of annual conferences in May 2011.

A full list of paper titles and abstract can be found at:
http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/events.php?eventid=110

Matthew Holtmeier
PhD Student
Providing a cinematic showcase for the underrepresented cinemas of the ‘global South,’ the Granada festival has ventured into a remarkable political initiative. Since 2007, the festival has moved with the idea of a fully-fledged and active organisation called the Southern Film Festivals Platform. It brings together key players in the festival circuit from a variety of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with its declared goal to showcase films from these areas.

Taking place in the heart of Spain’s southern province of Andalucia, Granada is home to the magnificent complex of palaces known as Alhambra. *Cines’ del Sur* certainly has its grand location as a major asset: the backdrop of the Arab Caliphate is imposing and stylish. It is not by chance that the festival has been set up as part of the programmes of the Foundation, *El legado andalusí*, a brainchild of an energetic heritage entrepreneur who has managed to bring together the local authorities, the University, and other bodies in order to pull off a range of activities that have revitalised cultural life in the area. Attending a reception at the Arab Institute, another great Oriental style building, provided a fabulous view of the splendid Moorish palaces on the opposite hill. The tapas, the wine, the company – it was all superb and wonderfully, warmly Southern. It is perhaps not a coincidence that one of the young Spanish women attending the event has come up with the view that, in order to study film festivals properly, one needs to start with scrutinising the festival’s partying practices, as they are a key component of a successful festival.

The driving force of the event is its energetic director, José Sánchez Montes, a documentarian who has mostly made films about Andalusia's musical heritage. The mastermind behind the whole consolidation of the 'global South,' however, seems to be Madrid-based encyclopaedic academic Alberto Elena, a high profile cinéphile who is well-known in France and Spain, with a growing reputation in the English-speaking world.

The programme of the festival is perfect for a cinéphile like me: most films came from small peripheral nations, not only had I not seen most of the titles on the programme, but they were films that I really wanted to see. The films I encountered in Granada closely reflected the concept of 'cinema at the periphery' which I have been committed to studying and promoting in recent years.

Professor Dina Iordanova
Provost, University of St. Andrews

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**A Warm Welcome to New Staff**

**Dr. Joshua Yumibe:** As the project coordinator for the Davide Turconi Frame Collection, working on the research and preservation of a collection of nitrate film frames, archives are an important part of Yumibe’s work on early cinema. His forthcoming book *Moving Color: On the History of Color in Mass Culture, Modernism, and Silent Cinema* focuses on colour and modernity in early cinema.

**Dr. Alex Marlow-Mann:** Dr. Marlow-Mann has worked for the British Film Institute and taught film at the Universities of Reading, Cardiff and Leeds. He specialises in Italian cinema but also has a keen interest in Japanese cinema, film preservation and the concept of regional cinema. His monograph *The New Neopolitan Cinema* will be published by Edinburgh University Press in March 2011.

**Dr. Tom Rice:** Dr. Rice’s work focuses on the relationships between film history and social and political movements. Having written extensively on British colonial, world and transnational cinemas, Dr. Rice’s is currently working on two book projects: *Life After Birth: The Ku Klux Klan and Cinema and Governing Empire: The Colonial Film Units, 1940-1960*. He has also contributed over 200 historical essays on films and production companies, which can be found at [www.colonialfilm.org.uk](http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk).

**Dr. Alex Fischer:** Dr. Fischer has an extensive career of organizing film festivals worldwide, including *The Film Bazaar*, USA (1998-99), *The Gold Coast Fantastic*, Australia (2005-2008), and the *Brisbane International Film Festival* (2009). He is currently a Research Associate on the Dynamics of World Cinema project working on film festivals with our provost.
Congratulations

- **Professor Robert Burgoyne** for the publication of *The Epic Film in World Culture* and for his recent induction to professorship at this year’s Winter Graduation.
- **Professor Richard Dyer** for his appointment to the Centre for Film Studies as a Professorial Fellow.
- **PhD student Serazer Pekerman** on the successful completion of her VIVA.
- **PhD student Matthew Holttmeier** who was recently appointed to the Executive Committee of MECCSA. His duties include maintaining the MECCSA website, peer-reviewing for the MECCSA-PGN journal Networking Knowledge and handling the various channels of communication currently utilised by the organisation.
- **Dr. William Brown** for the successful completion and exhibition of his second feature film, *Afterimages*.
- **PhD student Valerie Deacon** for her article on her trip to the British Library, due to be published by St. Leonard College in 2011.
- [http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/postgraduate/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/postgraduate/)
- **PhD student Pasquale Cicchetti** for the publication of his article on Charlie Kaufman “La verità è nella finzione.” *Cineforum*, September 2010, 497:46-49.
- **PhD student John Traffon** for the publication of his article “The ‘Anti-War Film’ and the ‘Anti-War-Film’: a Reading of Brian De Palma’s *Redacted* (2007) and *Casualties of War* (1989).” *Journal of War and Cultural Studies*, 4.1 (2011)
- **Dr. Elisabetta Girelli**’s trip to the Montgomery Clift Archives in New York, funded by the Carnegie Trust.
- **Dr. Tom Rice**’s conference in Pittsburgh on Colonial cinema (September 2010).
- **Professor Dina Iordanova** on her invited talks at Baptist University in Hong Kong and at the Euro Festival meeting in Bologna, Italy.

Future Events—2011

**Centre for Film Studies—Events**

*Queer Cinema screening season (February-May 2011)*

*Cineforum – Italian Film Society screenings (formightly, February-May 2011)*

*60 Hour Film Blitz (22nd-25th February 2011)* - a film festival that facilitates creative and inventive filmmaking. Participants are required to make a short film no longer than 3 minutes in length within a designated 60-hour timeframe. Each film must be shot on location at St Andrews with narratives based around designated 60th anniversary themes. Participants’ films will be screened at a local cinema on the closing night.

*5th Annual Postgraduate Study Day (March 2011)* - with guest Dr. Catherine Grant, University of Sussex.

*6th Annual Postgraduate Conference (May 2011)* - speaker Dr. Sarah Cooper, Kings College, London.

*4th Scottish Consortium for Film and Visual Studies: May 2011, University of Stirling.*

**Centre for Film Studies—Tuesday Night Talk Series:**

**Tuesday 8th February 2011**

*CFS Talk: Yun-hua Chen, Mosaic Auteurs and Mosaic Space*

This talk will focus on the mapping of mosaic auteurs and mosaic space. By “mosaic auteur” I mean filmmakers such as Michael Haneke, Hou Hsiao-hsien, Atom Egoyan and Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu who, according to Mente Hjort’s categorisation of transnational filmmaking modes, can be considered cosmopolitan peripatetic directors.

**Tuesday 22nd February 2011 17:15 to 19:15**

*CFS Talk: Professor Paul McDonald, Prestige vs. Profit? Stardom, the Academy Awards and the Talent Economy*

Firmly embedded in the culture and commerce of Hollywood, the Academy Awards are positioned within the dialectic of artistic status vs. the box office. This talk will examine how the Oscars position film actors between twin value systems of artistic prestige and box office profit, and will explore the transferability of symbolic into economic capital.

**Tuesday 19th April 2011 17:15 to 19:00**

*CFS Talk: Stephanie Denison, Interrogating the Transnational in Contemporary Brazilian Film*

This talk will reframe the lack of attention afforded to Brazilian films by scholars of transnationalism through an analysis of Ray Guerra’s *Entrudo* (Turbulence, 1998), Marcelo Gomes’s *Cinema, Aspirinas e Urubus* (Cinema, Aspirins and Vultures, 2005) and Henrique Goldenberg’s Jean-Charles (2008).
Contributors

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to all of those who contributed to this edition of the Centre for Film Studies Newsletter, and to all those staff and students who are helping to make this a very vibrant academic community. With ten new PhD students this year, and the appointment of new staff members, the future currently looks very promising for our department. We hope that this newsletter conveys a sense of its vibrancy.

Warmest regards,
Co-editors
Mr. Andrew Dorman and Mr. John Trafton
University of St. Andrews
Centre for Film Studies