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Editorial

Expanding the Field

It is a frustrating task to write an editorial from research leave. To scan the table of contents is to recognise how very much I’ve missed by not being in St Andrews this semester. As always, our community has been active with their research, attending conferences and film festivals and visiting archives around the world. Their reports provide glimpses into their work and remind us all of how rich and diverse the field of Film Studies can be.

Meanwhile, events continued to expand the approaches one could take to film. Aida Vallejo, Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Global Cinema and Creative Cultures, organised an Interactive Film Festival workshop before presenting on documentary film festivals a few days later. Author Reif Larsen shared his experiences of having his novel, The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet, adapted for the screen by Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Mumbai-based filmmaker Nishtha Jain returned to screen more of her films and answer questions for an enthusiastic audience and as an exciting treat, Hollywood producer and director Joe Russo came to discuss his experiences and offer a master class. And ensuring that we never forget that scholarship, too, has its glamour, was Professor Will Brooker, discussing the many figures of David Bowie.

Next semester has already begun to take shape, with talks coming up from (our own) Dr Michael Cowan on Cinephilia, Professor Cahal McLauglin on the Prisons Memory Archive, and Professor Maria Pramaggiore on military cuteness. And other projects are already in the works, including a workshop on affect, and a symposium on male stars (co-organised by Dr Elisabetta Girelli). St Andrews may be small, but there is a lot going on!
I arrived at Tehran airport in the middle of the night, on a plane from Doha. Wearing a long manteau-style top garment, which was meant to be in line with the prescribed dress code, I also put a scarf over my head (“hijab”). This was the uniform that I was to wear for the duration of my visit – at least three layers of clothing at all times, and head covered in any situation where I might be in public view. As this is not the habitual way in which I would dress, it felt quite bizarre. On the other hand, however, already on the second day I found advantages to not having to spend time styling my hair. And, indeed, things have moved on in Iran – whilst the hijab is a must, it could be of whatever colour and style, and worn quite loosely. The only part of the body that was legitimate to bear were the feet, so at the hotel one could see elegantly dressed and nicely pedicured women, wearing stiletto sandals. The hotel where we stayed, Parsian Azadi, was full of stylish women from the local high life who looked no worse than top models and knew how to be as elegant as one can be, even within the prescribed and presumably oppressive dress code.

Many other unusual things, too. A woman and a man are not allowed to shake hands in public, for example. The hotel’s swimming pool is open to women only in the mornings, and for men only in the afternoons (but all day on Friday for men only, and no women should be in sight on that day). However, all in all, I did find Iran of today much more open and friendly than what the western media had prepared me for. Iranian friends, mainly directors and critics, were great company. The food was fantastic, and so was the accommodation. My talk, on “Paris as Hub for Global Cinema”, was attended by an audience of about 200 cinephiles, many of whom wanted to have a discussion with me afterwards. They were all quite eager to make friends – including Professor Rohullah Hossaini at the University of Tehran, who is the director of their newly established Film School. Critic Kamyar Mohsenin did not hesitate to talk to me about the various ways in which censorship manifests itself in regard to cinema in Iran. And, of course, there were many other international guests and an opportunity to spend time with documentarians Yann Arthus-Bernard, Myrna Tsapa, and Stefano Savona, and with Italian director Aureliano Amadei, as well as to meet festival folks from a number of far away countries.

This was at the end of May 2015, and I was a guest of the 5th Urban International Film Festival, which was taking place at the imposing Azadi Mellat complex in the vast Iranian capital. The festival has branched out of the venerable Fajr, which takes place in the winter, and is directed by cultural entrepreneur Amir Esfandiari, a foreign affairs officer from the Farabi Film Foundation. The foundation is a venerable institution with palatial offices in a nice part of Tehran which I had the opportunity to visit for a day of viewing of the newest and most diverse Iranian films.
Paris, more than any other city on earth, offers a feast for cinema-goers. Cinema’s place among the arts is special and far superior to that found anywhere else. The sheer number and variety of theatres dedicated to the diversity of the cinematic art and its pleasures, ensure an enduring festive spirit. Cineastes and cinéphiles from the world over gather in Paris to indulge their appetites for film. Global cinema lives in the city’s screening rooms. This book delights in revealing some of the fascinating details of this life, for to celebrate the film theatres of Paris is to celebrate film culture itself.

Conceived by film scholar Dina Iordanova and film critic and author Jean-Michel Frodon, known here, respectively, as “the privileged outsider” and “the cognisant insider”, Cinemas of Paris is a compendium of writings by specialists in both film and the city. Lavishly illustrated tales are told of the unique places where film is screened, chiefly the independent theatres with their often idiosyncratic backgrounds (and occasionally a few ghosts), but also about the city’s unique cultural institutions and its ubiquitous multiplexes. And there are stories, too, of the men and the women who have made these places strongholds of cinematic discovery and delight, and who continue to keep cinema alive.

The 372 pages of the richly illustrated book feature contributions by international academics Sue Harris, William Brown, Daniel Fairfax, Michael Gott, Frances Guerin, Renaud Olivero, Ana Grgic, Flora Lichaa, and Yoana Pavlova, as well as by a number of world-renowned directors such as Amos Gitai, Gaston Kabore, Naomi Kawase, Jia Zhangke, Abbas Kiarostami, Ken Loach, Cristian Mungiu, Walter Salles, Gus Van Sant, and Apichatpong Weerasethakul.

It depicts and explains the complete system that allows such a diversity. The book includes essays on a variety of cinematic institutions, including majors (UGC, Gaumont, Pathé), minimajors (MK2), prominent cultural venues (Cinémathèque Française, Forum des Images, Centre Pompidou), clusters of cinemas (Odéon Cinemas, les cinemas Action), essays on a wide selection of 35 unique cinemas (from L’Arlequin to Les Ursulines, from Luminor to Etoile Lilas, from Le Grand Rex to Le Louxor...), and much more.
Michael, how would you describe the changes in your professional and academic experience as a film scholar shifting from a language and literature department – where you worked at McGill University – to the Film Studies Department at St Andrews?

I helped set up the World Cinemas programme at McGill, so it wasn’t a complete change. But it is true that departmental affiliations make a difference. They bring with them certain investments and expectations, which impose limits even as they enable exploration. That goes especially for teaching. Film Studies allows you to frame topics with no expectation to represent a given geography or cultural tradition. On the other hand, Film Studies stakes its identity on a relatively short-lived medium, and I sometimes miss the ‘deep time’ of traditional humanities departments, where one is free to explore intellectual genealogies that don’t need to be framed as prehistories of cinema.

Your book Walter Ruttmann and the Cinema of Multiplicity: Avant-Garde, Advertising, Modernity investigates the work of experimental filmmaker Walter Ruttmann from his animated advertisements in the 1920s to his propaganda “steel” films in the service of the Nazi regime. Your reading of Ruttmann’s approach to film as “a medium for managing mass society and its multiplicities” and his artistic output as guided by the practical ideal of “applicable art,” invokes a rethinking of ossified historical categories, such as that of “avant-garde,” but also questions hypostatised notions, including that of “aesthetic sphere” and “auteur.” What led you to explore the work of Ruttmann, and how did you get to the elaboration of this historical interpretative methodology?

Ruttmann is a fascinating figure and a major pioneer of experimental film. But I didn’t approach this as an auteur study. His films became a litmus test for several broader questions I had been working through. I could name many influences here, such as Jonathan Crary’s work on techniques of vision, Mary Ann Doane on the epistemology of early cinema poised between competing values of contingency and order, the recent emergence of studies on “useful” cinema, as well as intellectual histories of information management but I would emphasise that the book’s theoretical framework was something that could only emerge between disciplines.

German Studies scholars have thought a lot about the relations between Weimar cinema and film under fascism; film scholars about the development of abstraction, animation and montage; art and design historians about the role of visual culture in modern institutions and everyday life; intellectual historians about the links between mass society, governmentality and the Welfare State. It is when these theoretical frameworks collide (as Eisenstein might say) that new questions begin to take shape. Mine were something like this: How can we understand the emergence of experimental film beyond assumptions about autonomous art and medium specificity or romanticising narratives of individual innovators? What epistemologies of vision, institutional frameworks and models of professional image-making had to be in place for experimental forms to become
It turns out that aesthetics was only part of the picture. Just as important were the ideas of ‘management’ (of information, perception and bodies) at work in emerging fields of visual culture like advertising psychology. This is part and parcel of mass modernity, and it is hardly surprising that film—as a medium for forging time-based order from a multitude of images and shots—could be conceived as an art of governmentality. This was the intellectual framework in which someone like Ruttmann could forge a certain brand of filmic expertise, and it’s why the advertising films shouldn’t be discounted as a sideshow. To be sure, my book is still about Ruttmann the author. But it’s not biographical. I am interested in how a certain model of the expert filmmaker—linked to what I called “applied filmmaking”—became possible in the 1920s. So you might say that it’s a book about the “Ruttmann effect”.

How has Ruttmann’s work been presented in film archives, museums, and cinémathèques? Which narratives have accompanied its documentation and exhibition?

As you know, the institutional dynamics of museums and festivals often favour cinephilic frameworks. Ruttmann is a more ambivalent figure here than, say, Dulac, Richter, or Vertov; I think this is partly why he is known outside of Germany almost exclusively for his Berlin film and his Opus shorts, which occasionally figure in public screenings as classics of documentary, animation, or avant-garde. Within Germany, scholars such as Jeanpaul Goergen have been discussing Ruttmann’s work under fascism since the 1980s. More recently, the interest in “useful” cinema has created a space to revisit Ruttmann’s advertising work. My own project was partly made possible by the restoration of his Weimar advertisements for the Edition Filmmuseum DVD series, and that material has also found its way into selected archival screenings (e.g. at the Pordenone festival in 2012). Interestingly, Ruttmann’s post-1933 work has been all but absent from this framework.

The volume The Promise of Cinema: German Film Theory 1907-1933, on which you have been working with Anton Kaes and Nicholas Baer is scheduled to come out in February 2016. How was this ambitious project conceived?

In part, it goes back to a project to translate Tony’s book Kino-Debate (1978), which documented the reception of cinema by German intellectuals. I got involved in that project in 2001 while I was a student at Berkeley. At that point, we already started to rethink the conceptual framework. Since then, the project has gone through many phases. In early 2014, Tony, Nick and I decided it was time to see it through. In hindsight, I think our guiding question became this: How should one reconceive the film theory “sourcebook” in light of all the far reaching transformations in film studies from the past two decades: the attention to new media and their feedback effects on our understanding of that other “new media” moment of early cinema, the expansion of legitimate film historical objects, and not least of all the new found interest in historicising early film theory (e.g. Casetti, Rodowick)? All of those questions were present as we organised the book. It covers some familiar categories, such as left-wing filmmaking and avant-garde, but also lots of material that likely wouldn’t have made it into earlier sourcebooks, such as colonial cinema, science and television. Above all, we wanted to create a book relevant to the state of a field in transition.

Following György Lukács, Rodowick has defined film theory historically as “a lifeline thrown to us in the storms of modernity, where art expresses the disjunction of reason from reality as well as the utopian possibility of their reconciliation.” Holding on to this evocative image, what do you think are the “promises” of theory when we shift from film to (new) media?

This is an urgent question, and it overlaps with one that motivated our book. Why study early cinema today? Many would answer because we hope to find a ‘lifeline’ for navigating the digital displacements of cinema. But this isn’t simply a question of cinema’s survival as an art form. It is also about all of the broader forces we associate with new media (surveillance, datamining, economic convergence, etc.). These phenomena have their own precursors in early writings on film, which is why it was so important to us to expand the frame of the sourcebook. One point to emphasise here is that many of the promises attached to new media turn out to have long histories. That’s true of things like virtual reality, for example, but also many of the promises of big data, which build on the history of statistics. To take one example, “predictive policing” is in the air again, but that idea has been around since at least the 19th century, closely linked to photography and cinema.
Another point is that not all promises from early cinema have the same relevance today. Lukács’ utopia of reconciling “reason and reality” looks back to a tenet of 18th century aesthetics: that art might reconcile abstract thought and sensuous experience. That promise took on new relevance in the context of industrialisation and mass bureaucratisation, and it was one often attached to moving images. Think of Balázs on the power of visible gestures, which would replace the abstractions of the ‘Gutenberg era,’ or the many references to film as ‘picture writing’ for the masses. But digital media operate invisibly in a way that wasn’t true for cinema. As a result, few would invoke the metaphor of the ‘hieroglyph’ today (though I would point to interesting work by Kristen Whissel on emblems and CGI effects). Many other promises from early cinema draw on ideas about planning that were ascendant in the early 20th century: programmes of public hygiene, efficiency and rationalisation movements, the League of Nations, and so on. That framework also has less traction in our new media environment. In fact, many of the earliest utopias around new media were aimed against the old ideas of mass modernity. One could cite all the utopias of individual freedom and overcoming of borders that accompanied the rise of Internet, the discourse on sharing economies (replacing conformist broadcast economies), etc. Today, such promises are already wearing thin, and just as cinephilia was never without its counterpart cinephobia, so the early hopes of new media are accompanied by darker scenarios of surveillance, new forms of biopolitics, etc. Scholars like Wendy Chun have done a good job of analysing the shortcomings, but also the tenacity, of such cultural narratives.

So why study early cinema at all? Not because it provides any empirical directives for the development of media today. But it can help to put the very gesture of the ‘promise’ into perspective. The best work on new media comes from an awareness of the tenuousness of such imaginaries. It’s aware that new media aren’t as new as they claim to be—and that they won’t change the face of the earth overnight. Nonetheless, these promises do tell us a lot about ourselves and in this sense they’re worth studying.

Thank you very much Michael!
Andean political filmmaking is an amazing and scarcely studied field. Imagine a vibrant community composed of tribes of young intellectuals, devoting their lives to the creation of cinema in the most precarious economic situation—in countries without any kind of film industry, even without laboratories or film suppliers—and under horrific political circumstances—military dictatorships under the influence of American imperialism—but striving to make gorgeous films, which were recognised by their own people and internationally awarded.

Unearthing and writing that history is my current life objective. Moreover, I am doing it from a counter-patriarchal approach. This implies that I am not putting male directors in the center. What I am doing, instead, is analysing all areas of the cinematic process—the idea, the shooting experience, the editing process, the distribution and the reception—through a frame that interrogates power structures, especially gender relations.
Inquiring in a feminist way sheds light on previously unexplored aspects of these modalities of collective or collaborative filmmaking, delving into how it was actually practiced and highlighting the gap between political filmic theory and its practice. Furthermore, my analysis of power relations is not limited to those between men and women, I also look at the power differences between dominant and subaltern men within the crews, and between white/mestizo intellectuals and indigenous actors of the movies. Needles to say, this information is not written anywhere, and only a conscientious fieldwork can provide it.

For that reason, last summer I undertook a ten week trip to Bolivia and Peru. I worked in the Bolivian and the Peruvian film archives, both underfunded and precarious non-state institutions, but where I nevertheless found relevant documents. However, the most important part of my research was conducted at the Ukamau Foundation where Jorge Sanjinés preserves his personal archive, to which I have the privilege of free access. This was the second time I worked in this archive, and the purpose of my research was to clarify the role of Beatriz Palacios, Sanjinés’ second wife, and the producer of Ukamau films from 1977 to her death in 2003.

My findings during this fieldwork were better than expected, because I found three personal projects of Palacios at different levels of development—from a pre-script to a full filmic project with a detailed week-by-week shooting plan—which she was never able to finish. This confirmed my hypothesis about her having renounced her personal projects for the sake of her husband’s.

I was also looking for testimonies from the spectators of Ukamau films, that Palacios recorded, transcribed and archived carefully. A significant number of these unpublished testimonies can be found in the archive. The Ukamau Group used this information to verify the actual results of their political and cinematic aims. Palacios collected these testimonies throughout all her professional life—in Q&A sessions or just by interviewing members of the audience at the end of the screening—and that programmatic effort and popular commitment marks a significant distinction between her and other militant filmmakers of the time (including her own husband) and gives us priceless information about the actual reception of the films.

I completed my investigation of this understudied practice and others, through interviews with Sanjinés himself. But, besides interviewing him at length on several aspects of my research, I also interviewed other members of the different crews of Ukamau group. These other voices allow me to broaden the picture of militant filmmaking in Bolivia under dictatorships, which, to date, is generally focused only on Jorge Sanjinés, the white male creator. To compensate and balance the narrative, I tried to speak with as many participants in these cinematic processes as possible, always willing to confront the well known discourse of the director with the different versions portrayed by other subaltern protagonists. To accomplish this goal, I also traveled to Peru to meet non-Bolivian crew members who worked on Sanjinés’ films made during the exile.

In Peru, I opened the scope of my research to include Kuntur, a filmic group whose cinematic practices were parallel to those of Ukamau. Federico García Hurtado, the director, and Pilar Roca, his wife and producer, made a series of films with Andean peasants that thematically, methodologically, and ideologically resemble Ukamau filmmaking. It is also striking how the core of the group is comprised of a couple, with the leading artistic role assumed by the husband and the leading practical role by the wife. In Lima, I visited Pilar Roca and Federico García in order to interview them and acquire their films—only available through direct purchase from the filmmakers—with English subtitles, for deposit in the University of St Andrews library.

Besides, I took advantage of my stay in Peru and Bolivia for networking with film historians and critics of both countries. With the same aim I attended the Bi-Annual Conference of the Society of Bolivian Studies held in Sucre and the Radical Film Festival of La Paz. The information and network of contacts I have managed to gather during this trip will allow me to further my research and the writing of my thesis while in St Andrews. It will also help me develop other interesting initiatives, for instance, I will be curating a retrospective of Peruvian films starring the indigenous leader Saturnino Huillca in the upcoming Censurados Film Festival in Lima and Cusco.

Last, but not least, fieldwork helps you stay rooted. Any research that aims to return to society, is frequently underpinned somewhere beyond the intellectual realm. For that reason, it is fundamental to build and take care of the emotional, political and spiritual bond with the studied landscape and people. That is the source which will allow you to continue working with passion and love, despite doing it in another language, and being in another hemisphere.
Researching Affect and Film Design in Los Angeles

Lucy Fife Donaldson

This summer I received a Research Incentive Grant from the Carnegie Trust. The grant was to fund a trip to the Margaret Herrick Library in Los Angeles, the specialised research library devoted to motion pictures, for archival research on a project entitled Feeling and Filmmaking: The Contribution of Audio-Visual Designers to the Affect of Film. The purpose of the trip was to investigate the library’s holdings of materials related to production and sound design, looking for details that shed light on the intentions of designers and their role in the production of affect.

Visiting the Margaret Herrick library’s special collections room, which is named after Katharine Hepburn, was a tremendously exciting experience. The sheer range of materials and collections that they have is quite astonishing (and somewhat overwhelming if you’re trying to choose what to look at). During my two week visit I spent every moment possible in the library looking at a range of resources, from sound effects lists for Alice Adams (George Stevens, 1935) to hundreds of photographs of location research for Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (George Roy Hill, 1969), from letters to the director written by the costume designers of The Day of the Jackal (Fred Zinnemann, 1973) to paint samples for the sets of Face/Off (John Woo, 1997). I was able to look at many different kinds of archives, including set blueprints, wardrobe plots (often including samples of fabric or text photos), annotated scripts, designs and sketches, location research and so on, which gave me a very valuable insight into the working processes of production and sound design from the studio era to the 1990s. I was able to explore wonderfully rare and singular materials, such as the MGM wig logbook (which is literally a list of wigs owned and used, by who and when), which give a fascinating glimpse into the workings of the industry. I also discovered the joy of the memo, and learned to value those who excelled in writing them, such as George Hoyningen-Huene, whose missives to George Cukor in particular were a rich source for explicating film design and the very particular decisions made.

While in LA I was also fortunate to have the opportunity to visit the Sony Pictures Studios and talk with Oscar winning sound designer Richard King. Mr King was very generous with his time, and our conversation was extremely helpful for me and had many connections with my project. He took me around the studios a bit, which are on the site of the old MGM lot, so I got another peek into Hollywood’s history, including the old school where Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney were taught.

The librarian team at the Margaret Herrick were incredibly helpful and accommodating, and I would really like to thank them for their generous and welcoming attitude. The library is a truly inspiring place to work, and I am delighted to have had the opportunity, as granted by the support of the Carnegie Trust, to spend time there and certainly hope to return soon. Although I haven’t fully processed all my findings, I certainly returned from LA with a huge amount of notes and ideas to inform my research into the connections between design and affect.
Archival work amidst a Film School Strike in India

This August, I spent time at the National Film Archive in Pune, India. I was looking at film magazines from the 1950s and 1980s, to trace the conversations that happened around Hindi film music, which is the subject of my PhD research. The timing was interesting as the students and staff at the film school in Pune — the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) — were on strike. They were protesting against the decisions of the Indian government to appoint a couple of people at the helm, including the chairman of the Governing Council, who had little to do with cinema and were known mostly for their association with the government. While the institute was in the midst of this heated, passionate and frustrating time, the atmosphere at the film archive building, which is on the same street as the institute but far away from it, was staid and calm.

Sitting at one of the only two computers available for researchers to browse through the magazines, this staid atmosphere was broken occasionally when one could hear some of the students studying in the reading room discussing the strike in their conversations.

On one of the first few days I was there, the striking students were picked up by the Pune police in a bizarre midnight raid. Wanting to get a sense of what was happening, I went to the campus but was stopped by a policewoman at the gate who didn’t allow outsiders to enter. A couple of days later, I managed to enter the institute with a friend who was a part of the strike. This was for an evening session via skype with Professor Shivaji Panikkar who had faced a similar situation in the MS University in Baroda in 2007. He had been suspended from the university when he stood up for a student who had made a painting which was called “obscene” by VHP and BJP activists. Panikkar seemed a bit cynical, even as he applauded the strike which was into its third month now. The students’ frustration about continuing the strike in the face of a government which was not willing to listen was palpable.

Coming back to the archive the next day, and the days after, was coming to a world which seemed far removed from the strike, even though it wasn’t because the archive would also benefit if the strike’s demands were met. This static world of the film archive is symbolic of everything that needs correction in the way film archives and film schools in India are run. There are limited resources, internet access is slow, and the infrastructure suggests that the archive itself doesn’t take the work it is set up for seriously. In the months that followed, the FTII strike was called off after 139 days despite none of its concerns being addressed by the government. Meanwhile, more film researchers will flock to the archive, I too will make one more trip there, waiting for the day the two worlds will talk to each other.
Films and Filmmakers

From Greendale to St Andrews - A Special Visit by Joe Russo

Amber Shields & Eileen Rositzka

Acclaimed movie and TV director and producer Joe Russo visited St Andrews on 19 and 20 November 2015 to talk about his exciting career in the industry which has included work ranging from TV shows Community (2009-15) and Arrested Development (2003-) to blockbuster films like Captain America: Winter Soldier (2014). The visit started with a student led interview conducted by St Andrews film undergraduates Kit Klaes, Sam Mills, and Fiona Pollock. Speaking of his own start, Russo narrated how he moved from studying acting at Case Western to directing and producing film and TV with his brother Anthony Russo. Inspired by the possibilities of making a film on a budget, as extolled by Robert Rodriguez in his book Rebel Without a Crew, and directed by his passion in film, Russo was moved to make films and enter them into festivals like Slamdance, where his work was noticed by Steven Soderbergh. This led to his first film, Welcome to Collinwood (2002), and a diverse career in which he has been able to experiment with the different shooting styles of TV programmes and films.

Russo emphasised that throughout all of this, his background in Film Studies and the ability to carry out film analysis has taught him to write and direct, forever serving as a reference point for his work. Looking to the future, he provided some interesting insights on new directions of the industry which is becoming more involved in serialized storytelling through film and innovate TV programmes. He also encouraged the students on how they could get more involved in filmmaking by working on their own projects and ultimately heading west to LA.

Russo’s visit continued with a masterclass, where Professor Robert Burgoyne talked to Russo about his latest film Captain America: The Winter Soldier. Offering a detailed visual and acoustic analysis of a film scene including a comparison to Brian De Palma’s The Untouchables (1987), Russo gave valuable insights into the work of a film director and explained how Winter Soldier moves beyond what audiences might expect from a superhero movie. The film was in fact conceptualised as a political thriller in the tradition of 1970s conspiracy films—an important point that also puts the casting of Robert Redford as a villain into an interesting referential perspective, as he had been starring in films like Three Days of the Condor (Sydney Pollack, 1975) and All the President’s Men (Alan J. Pakula, 1976). With this framework, a sense of paranoia not only pervades Winter Soldier as a whole, but also makes Captain America a complex character who has to cope with a world where, according to Russo, “nothing is simply black and white anymore”. The director treats violence as an “expression of inner struggle”, which is also demonstrated by the fact that, especially in Winter Soldier, storytelling and character development is favoured over stylisation.

The session ended with an intriguing excursus into art history as parallels were drawn between Russo’s visual techniques and Futurist painting, sparking a further discussion on the influence of art history and film studies on his work. Russo also responded to student questions in an additional Q&A and proved to be an eloquent and delightfully approachable expert in the field of media culture and production.
As part of the Byre World series celebrating the films of the French director Jean-Pierre Jeunet, the CFS hosted a talk by author Reif Larsen on Wednesday 21 October, titled “What was mine is now yours”. The talk was on the collaborative process of the cinematic adaption of his novel *The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet*, which has been translated into numerous languages and was adapted for the screen by Jean-Pierre Jeunet in the 2013 film, *The Young and Prodigious T.S. Spivet*.

The Journey of T.S. Spivet made for a fascinating case-study of a successful cross-over across two mediums and two languages. Jeunet had read the French translation of the book, which was rendered by him into a French script and was finally translated into an English script. The author spoke at length about his initial concerns that the translated script would be stilted, but Jeunet ensured that the film would retain the emotional essence of the book. Larsen recalled how Jeunet would send him pictures of the book neatly divided into segments; which he called a “reordering of time” that helped Jeunet distill the elements from the novel that would translate beautifully onto the screen, without losing the core of the source material. The author and the auteur also developed a habit of sending each other short videos to bond over the creative process of adaptation. Jeunet would send across a video of him re-enacting a scene from the novel, while the author responded with one of him attempting to write in the shower.

The author also took the audience through his surreal experience of visiting the sets of the film, which he called a “materialisation of his imagination”. Jeunet had brought the book world of T.S. Spivet to life through wondrous objects, encyclopaedias, insects in jars, magical attics and a suitcase packed to the brim with the promise of adventure. In a pivotal scene, the T.S. Spivet of the novel processes the grief of a sibling’s death by an accidental gunshot through drawing the sound wave of the moment he hears the shot. Larsen elaborated how the film successfully used 3D to translate the emotional impact of these book illustrations and the interior narration of the characters onto the screen. Another instance of re-imagining the source material was the rechristening of the family pet. The pet dog in the source material called ‘Verywell’ had acquired many names in the numerous translations of the book. Jeunet wanted a new name for the pet in the film. After many iterations, Larsen’s suggestion, Tapioca, was chosen for the film.

The author concluded his talk by sharing how satisfied he was with the filmic version - something he credits to the act of seceding control over his creation and trusting Jeunet’s vision to do justice to it. Successful adaptation is clearly a two way process. Though Jeunet was under no obligation to take Dr Larsen’s input into account for the film, the director chose to make the author an integral part of the process.

As a result, the charming TS Spivet of the book and the film both thrive in a fertile, imaginative universe - distinct, yet bound together by the same magic.
One Director, Two Approaches:
Nishtha Jain documentaries shown in St Andrews

Connor McMorran

The documentary film is currently going through multiple transitions. Formally, the increased application of fictional footage, animation and interactive elements challenge traditional notions of what constitutes documentary cinema. At the same time, documentary continues to rise in the public consciousness through critical praise, festivals, and distribution channels. It is therefore fitting that the Centre for Film Studies hosted a screening of two more films by Indian documentary director Nishtha Jain* this October. Both City of Photos (2005) and Lakshmi and Me (2007) seek to interrogate and understand better the ontology of the documentary, whilst also presenting observations on wider political and societal problems.

Lakshmi and Me exists as something of a free-form documentary, in which Jain had a specific, personal subject in mind, with the final piece ultimately ending up discussing wider societal issues. The film follows Jain’s own housemaid, Lakshmi, as she begins to grow apart from her family and becomes engaged in promoting and supporting the unionisation of maids. Throughout the course of this narrative, Jain also becomes a figure within the film, as she discusses the problematic duality of providing a job for someone, whilst also being part of a power structure which often exploits and underpays its employees.

In contrast to this, City of Photos is far more consistent in its theoretical approach, as it attempts to highlight the inherent differences between the photographic and the moving image. By calling attention to the performative actions and rituals that constitute the taking of a photo, such as grooming and posing, Jain’s film interrogates the desire to capture a specific, singular and staged moment in time in spite of the fact that technology exists to record the duration of time. With the arrival of digital media, the artifice of photos grew stronger; now not only were photographs staged, but they could easily be further manipulated in order to provide an image of fantasy. Jain links this current trend of photo-manipulation through analogue processes of manipulation (such as painted backdrops or painting on the photograph itself), arguing that there is a certain charm to the artifice of the photo.

Both these films, whether initially intentional or not, question the idea of a documentary and its function within society. In Lakshmi and Me there is a clear attempt to focus on introspection and the personal household, but the very act of observing and recording a person as they move between households and predicaments results in the emergence of a narrative which deals with wider issues. Likewise, the theoretical approach of City of Photos argues that photos serve as much purpose as visualisations of hopes and dreams as they function as a locus for memory. At the same time, the film searches for a purpose for the moving image, positioning its ability to capture the “before” and the “after” of the photographic image as worthy of further examination.

The follow up Q&A session with Jain, joined by her cinematographer Deepti Gupta, was particularly enlightening. Firstly, the level of honesty when discussing the degree of control and structure during the filming of Lakshmi and Me further emphasised its improvised production history. Secondly, the discussion highlighted a clear incentive to use documentary films to interrogate the idea and the function of documentaries, whilst also attempting to provide political and societal commentary. As documentary films continue to grow in prominence, not only in terms of mainstream exposure but also as an area of research, there is a need reconsider the style and the form of the documentary itself.

*Nishtha Jain’s Gulabi Gang (2012) was screened by the Centre for Film Studies last November. For more information about that event, as well as an interview with the director, please see the Winter 2014 edition of Cine-Files.
“Also Like Life”- Hou Hsiao-Hsien in Richard L. Suchenski’s Eyes

On Friday 25 September 2015, the Institute for Global Cinema and Creative Cultures (IGCCC) invited Richard I. Suchenski, the Founder and Director of The Centre for Moving Image Arts and Assistant Professor of Film and Electronic Arts at Bard College, for a talk on Hou Hsiao-Hsien’s films. The talk was titled “Also like Life: the Films of Hou Hsiao-Hsien” and was held at the Byre Theatre in St Andrews. Hou Hsiao-Hsien is one of the most important Taiwanese filmmakers of recent times.

Richard Suchenski’s work focuses on the development of cinematic modernism and on film’s relationship with the other arts. He is the author of *Projections of Memory: Romanticism, Modernism, and the Aesthetics of Film* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), the editor of *Hou Hsiao-Hsien* (Austrian Filmmuseum/Columbia, 2014), and the curator of a touring retrospective of Hou’s films that is traveling to museums, festivals, and cinematheques in more than twenty-five cities worldwide.

**Jinuo: When did you get interested in Hou Hsiao-Hsien’s films and why?**

**Richard:** For a cinephile of my generation, Hou is a key reference point and the new Taiwanese cinema that began in the 1980s has a special status as a cinema that was (and is) in the midst of introducing an innovative sensibility and a fresh perspective. Hou is the most important Taiwanese filmmaker and his sensuous, richly nuanced work is at the heart of everything that is vigorous and genuine in contemporary film culture. This made him an ideal subject for my first integrated book and retrospective project.

Salient features of Hou’s cinema include elegantly staged long takes, the precise delineation of quotidian life, and a radically, even vertiginously, elliptical mode of storytelling. His films place unusual demands on the viewer, but their sophistication is understated and their formal innovations are irreducibly bound up with the sympathetic observation of everyday experience. In the book, I argue that by combining multiple forms of tradition with a unique approach to space and time, Hou has created a body of work that, through its stylistic originality and historical gravity, opens up new possibilities for the medium and redefines the relationship between realism and modernism.

One often has the peculiar sensation when watching Hou’s films of looking backwards and forwards simultaneously, continually refining an understanding of preceding scenes even when immersed in the unfolding present. He goes furthest in this direction with *The Puppetmaster* (1993), but there are already extraordinary examples in his breakthrough film *The Boys from Fengkuei* (1983).

**Jinuo: Three of Hou’s films- Coming of Age, Taiwan History and Urban Female Youth (also called Hou’s ‘trilogies’) - have been conventionally seen as his representative works by western scholars. Now scholars like you have started paying more attention to some of his other works. Could you elaborate on your perspective on his films.**

**Richard:** When I first started watching Hou’s films, I was struck above all by his prismatic treatment of Taiwanese history and the way in which he links that – formally and thematically – to questions of point of view. His sensitivity to character, location, and geopolitical nuance has enabled him to explore very complex issues with a remarkable degree of perspicuity and deftness.

I think these historical concerns are shared by all of Hou’s films, even the contemporary dramas (which often address the seemingly invisible legacies of earlier periods). For example, *Café Lumière* (2003) is about a Japanese woman researching a Taiwanese composer of the colonial era who wrote a piece (under his Japanese name) that won a special...
prize at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Similarly, our understanding of the final, present-day section of *Three Times* (2005) is inevitably shaped by the earlier representations of two decisive historical moments: 1966 (the onset of the Cultural Revolution) and 1911 (the birth of modern China).

**Jinuo:** Hou’s first Wuxia epic, *The Assassin* (2015), won him the Best Director prize at the 2015 Cannes film festival. Do you think the Wuxia epic could be easily understood by the West despite cultural differences?

**Richard:** Actually, Hou’s films have regularly been winning awards at major international film festivals since the mid-1980s. *A City of Sadness* won the Golden Lion at Venice in 1989, which was then the most prestigious award given to any Chinese-language film. *The Puppetmaster* received the Special Jury Prize at Cannes four years later.

I have an essay on *The Assassin* in the current (October) issue of *Artforum*, which might help with the other aspects of this question.

**Jinuo:** In the end, do you have anything you want to tell students in St Andrews through this interview.

**Richard:** It was an honour to present on Hou’s films at the University of St Andrews and I was very grateful for the thoughtful questions.
Professor Will Brooker made headlines earlier this year with his “immersive research” in the life and art of David Bowie. Brooker, a Professor of Film and Cultural Studies at Kingston University, London, has committed himself to living as Bowie (go to the places Bowie has been, read the books he has read, see the films he has seen) in order to understand the complex interplay between the performer’s various personas and their relationship to Bowie’s identity and to his overall artistic output. On Tuesday 17 November, Brooker was the guest of the St Andrews Centre for Film Studies, where he gave a talk titled “The David Bowie Chronotope”, a reiteration of a presentation he made at the Melbourne stop of the travelling David Bowie Is exhibition.

Brooker’s CFS intervention, which elicited passionate reactions from the audience, made use of Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope (meant to designate the connectedness of time and space relationships artistically expressed in literature), in order to make connections between the private person David Robert Jones (Bowie’s birth name), David Bowie the public performer, and the various personas he assumed throughout his career (for example Ziggy Stardust). In Brooker’s words, one needs to refer to David Bowie as “David Bowie” (with a stress on the quotation marks), as there isn’t just one such person.

David Bowie’s texts speak to one another through time, according to Brooker, and this was the avenue he first explored in his presentation. When discussing chronotopes, Bakhtin insisted on the fact that these are essentially dialogical, or mutually inclusive, and that they co-exist. Based on this, Brooker argued that several connections and associations, not necessarily intentional, can be made between various moments in Bowie’s career, which he saw as a linear horizontal, with these “moments” as sidesteps into different roles at different times, but also connections with other artistic or cultural products. For example, Bowie’s 1970 single (and album) *The Man Who Sold the World* may remind one of the 1951 Robert A. Heinlein novella *The Man Who Sold the Moon*, of Nicolas Roeg’s 1976 film *The Man Who Fell to Earth* in which Bowie played the lead, but also of Bowie’s own lyric “I’ll give you men who want to rule the world” from his 1983 single *China Girl*.

In essence, Brooker argued, the different levels of autobiographical confession and of fictional constructions create a matrix of meaning that also shows that, despite thematic consistencies, David Bowie changes, evolves and develops. It was not Brooker’s intention to fully unpack this matrix of meaning, but rather to encourage the keeping alive of these meanings, their negotiation and exploration – things that the film community at St Andrews actively and critically embraced.

Andrei Gadalean
Conference and Festival Reports

The St Andrews Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, April 2015

Isabel Seguí

The Department of Film Studies of the University of St Andrews held its Annual Postgraduate Conference on Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 April 2015, at Parliament Hall. During the two days, and across five panels, the department’s postgraduate research students had the opportunity to present their current work. The conference, organised by Isabel Seguí and Connor McMorran, covered a wide range of topics, providing reconsiderations and new approaches to film history, Indian and Eastern European cinema, memory and trauma in Latin American cinema, film genres, and Korean cinema.

Dr. James Walters, Senior Lecturer in Film and Television Studies and head of the Department of Film and Creative Writing at the University of Birmingham. Dr. Walters' research focusses on film and television aesthetics, in particular the relationship between close analysis of film style and questions of value and achievement. He has written extensively on both the aesthetics of film and television, as well as the fantasy film. He has thus far written two books – Fantasy Film: A Critical Introduction and Alternative Worlds in Hollywood Cinema – as well as co-edited Film Moments: Criticism, History, Theory with Dr. Tom Brown. His keynote address, titled “Quantum Media: The Many Worlds of Film and Television”, was not only an exposition of his current work, but a useful guide to navigate through a PhD.

The staff participated intensely during the Q&A sessions, helping to enrich and nuance the information and hypotheses put forward in the student presentations. Dr. Walters, in his conclusions and feedback to the community of researchers, highlighted the confidence of the postgraduate students in defining new avenues for research, with theoretical rigour, but also with creativity and critical distance from theory.

The main objective of this annual event is to give us, the postgraduate researchers, the chance to present our ongoing work in a friendly environment, in order to empower us as speakers and researchers, and it can be easily concluded that the 2015 conference met its goal. The entire event unfolded in a flowing and smooth work atmosphere, which was an excellent opportunity to deepen the communication between the department members and generated the possibility for further collaboration.

We are already looking forward to next year’s conference, organised by our colleagues Shruti Narayanswamy and Eileen Rositzka.
Exarcheia neighbourhood, the “home” of the anarchists. Nevertheless, we only missed the bursting of the bubble (the peak of the Greek financial crisis in mid-June) by a few days.

The atmosphere at the conference was much calmer, but it certainly did not lack in vitality. The range of the scholars’ ideas and presentations, as well as their individual backgrounds and experience, led to vivid and complex exchanges, with each participant being given the opportunity to articulate their interests, as well as themselves, in relation to the very similar yet at the same time very different perspectives put forward by the others. It would be extremely difficult to list and comment on all the individual presentations, not least because the parallel sessions structure made it impossible to keep up with each and every undoubtedly fascinating presentation. Enough to say that the themes of the panels provided both heterogeneity and unity of the vast domain inhabited by early cinema across the region. For illustration, there were sessions on early Greek cinema, early Serbian cinema, colonial cinema in the Greek Islands, urban modernity, cinematic otherness, uses of the cinematic image, cinematic perception and intertextualities, the idea of “the national”, and preservation and archival memory. United by their research and scholarly interests, the participants came from the Balkans, the Near East, Europe, and North America, with our own Department of Film Studies at the University of St Andrews represented by myself and Ana Grgic as PhD students, alumnna Canan Balan (member of the conference committee, currently based at Istanbul Şehir University), and of course by Professor Dina Iordanova, who delivered the first of the three keynote addresses.

Singing in Key(notes)

Dina’s intervention focussed on the ways in which researchers of early cinema in the Balkans and the Near East could “tell the story”, and the three motifs she considered key when discussing this topic: alternative geographies (seeing the geographical area as an interstitial space, a Proche-Orient, but...
at the same time not “oriental enough”), entangled histories (encouraging a
disentangling of the various forces shaping both substance and form, such as
empires, wars and transnational itineraries) and triumphant nationalism (or the
perceived “abhorrence” of being in the Balkan region). Essentially, Dina cast
an effective spell on the whole conference, that of keeping an open mind and
making connections while “looking” across borders.

Dr. Viola Shafik (Humboldt University and Ludwig Maximilian University
of Munich) delivered the second keynote address, and spoke about the
challenges of writing a “national” film history, particularly in relation to the
visual decodification of topics otherwise surrounded by “zones of silence” in
early cinema, in a similar manner to the experience of inaccessible worlds that
early cinema offered in the form of travelogues. The final keynote address was
provided by Professor Hamid Naficy (Northwestern University, Illinois), who
problematised the homogeneity of the concept of “national cinema” through
a fascinating discussion of the artisanal production mode and its transnational
attributes as applied to Iranian Silent Cinema.

All these ideas were put under further scrutiny during a roundtable discussion
at the end of the conference, where both participants and organisers reflected
upon the event and its prospects for the future. A few key
themes emerged from this: the possibility of creating an
institutional association for the study of early cinema in
the Balkans; the encouragement to work within national-
transnational dynamics rather than disregard one or the
other; the insufficient scholarship on pre-cinema in the
region; a need to also look at trans imperialism rather than
just transnationalism. The real project though, according
to Vassiliki Tsitsopolou (Adjunct Lecturer at University
of Indiana, Bloomington, and one of the conference
organisers) would be to “establish facts”. In her words, “the
knowledge exists, but translation from non-hegemonic
languages is crucial”. In other words, breaking down the
language barrier as far as scholarship is concerned would
add weight, depth and breadth to endeavours such as this
conference, and would open up the discussion even more.

Cross-Border Acoustics

Finally, I can’t not mention the stimulating auxiliary
events, particularly the evening screenings at the Greek
Film Archive of early short films from the Balkans, with
live accompaniment by 8HM2/3, Parallel Universe and
Christos A. Goussios from the Aristotle University in
Thessaloniki. These truly made the semi-inaccessible
worlds of early cinema in the region more lively and
complex than previously imagined.

Undoubtedly a cosmopolitan affair, the conference on the
whole was like an anti-concerto in the Tower of Babel, where
individual musicians play their own music, but somehow
create harmony, despite not finishing the construction of
the tower. But if the tower was finalised, where would the
music go, and would we still call ourselves scholars?
For film researchers, there could be nothing better than enjoying their Halloween afternoon in an interesting workshop called “Film Festivals behind the Scenes: an interactive workshop on the thrills and spills of presenting a successful event”. Held at the Byre Theatre in St Andrews on Saturday 31 October, the participants at the workshop included students and academics from the University of St Andrews and University of Glasgow, as well as filmmakers and film festival programme co-ordinators. It had two sections: short talks about Film Festival Studies followed by a film festival simulation in which all participants had a hands-on opportunity to experience a ‘real’ film festival. It began with five presenters giving a general introduction to how a film festival works. Professor Dina Iordanova opened with an overview of festival agenda management. “The film festival is already beyond an event of exhibiting films…People start focusing on the festival itself rather than films shown in the festival”, she said. It was interesting to discover the delicate and thoughtful engagement that is required for a good film festival, a theme that has become a popular research topic in Film Studies.

Visiting scholar Aida Vallejo (University of the Basque Country) who was the force behind this workshop, gave a specific introduction to using programming practices and building the identity of a film festival. Sarah Smyth (St Andrews) and Bilge Taş (TUBITAK visiting fellow to the IGCCC), both of whom have extensive experience as festival professionals from Ireland and Turkey respectively, presented on matters like working with sponsors and the staffing of film festivals. Alexandra Maria Colta (University of Glasgow) then shared her experience on engaging audiences during the Document Human Rights Film Festival. The first section gave the audience a general idea about film festivals, which led their attention to the next section where they would take roles in a ‘real’ film festival.

The second section of the workshop was role play of a festival set, inspired by Lars Von Trier’s film *Dogville* (2003). Aida Vallejo organised the event so that every participant could join and play a dedicated role in the festival. There were thirteen roles including directors, programmers, filmmakers, critics, producers, sponsors, press representatives, volunteers and so on to reproduce a film festival. Typical agendas such as an opening gala and screening section in a film festival were simulated in the workshop so there were many different scenes in this film festival simulation play.

Every participant was able to experience different angles of the film festival and understand how stakeholders and agendas interact and evolve. The success of a film festival is determined by contributions from every role in the festival: audiences contribute to the box-office; fans’ enthusiasm contributes to the popularity of a film festival; stars contribute to raising the profile of the festival; film directors contribute to the content of the festival by exhibiting their works; programmers contribute to coordinating agendas; sponsors contribute to the finance of the festival; press representatives report the film festival to other people who are not able to attend the festival in person; and we cannot forget contributions from all other service personnel such as volunteers, security personnel, engineers and so on.

It was like two hours of laughter yoga! And even though every participant felt physically exhausted because of their high levels of participation, everyone enjoyed and was inspired by this experience.
CFS Talks, Successes, Conferences, Publications

CFS Talks

13 October 2015 : Nishtha Jain, Screening and Q&A
Following a screening of two of her documentaries, Lakshmi and Me (2008) and City of Photos (2005), independent Indian filmmaker Nishtha Jain held a Q & A session along with her cinematographer Deepti Gupta. In this interactive session, they elaborated on the delicate balance between familiarity and objectivity with the subject in documentary filmmaking and the challenge of confronting one’s own privilege - as a person and as a filmmaker - during the process.

21 October 2015: Reif Larsen “What Was Mine is Now Yours”
In this talk, author of the bestselling novel The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet, Reif Larsen walked the audience through the journey of the cinematic adaptation of the novel to the film The Young and Prodigious T. S. Spivet by French director Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Along with the challenges of effectively translating a story from the book to the screen, the author also explored the process of seceding control over one’s creative material, collaboration, and striking the right balance between the literary and cinematic medium.

3 November 2015 : Aida Vallejo “Breeding Documentary in the Festival Ecosystem”
Aida Vallejo’s talk outlined the growing reciprocal relationship between the film festival ecosystem and documentary filmmaking by charting the evolution of documentary films within film festivals, the influence of selection procedures and the increasing contribution of documentaries towards the success of film festivals. Reflecting on her own research in this area, she illustrated her talk with case studies of documentaries such as Fahrenheit 9/11 ( Moore, 2004) and Leviathan (Castaing-Taylor & Paravel, 2012).

From Ziggy Stardust to the Thin White Duke, each of David Bowie’s shape-shifting avatars are cultural touchstones. In his talk, Will Booker demonstrated the use of Mikhail Bakhtin’s chronotope to reveal insights into Bowie’s iconic identities, his influences across time and space, and the lasting cultural imprints of his work. A highlight of the talk was the footage from Will Booker’s immersive research project where he took on the persona of Bowie to get a glimpse of the man who was once David Jones.

Congratulations

Lucy Fife Donaldson’ s research project on “Feeling and Filmmaking: The Contribution of Audio-Visual Designers to the Affect of Film” was awarded Carnegie Trust Incentive Grant in July 2015.

Ana Grgić was funded by the European Commission Creative Media Film Literacy for her regional project: ‘Cine- carvan: culture_city_cinema’ in association with Balkan Cultural Centre (Croatia) in July 2015.

Natthanai Prasannam won a scholarship provided by the project of Empowering for International Thai and ASEAN Studies (ENITAS), Institute of Thai Studies, Chulalongkorn University, with support from the Thailand Research Fund (TRF) in June 2015.
Invited Talks

**Robert Burgoyne**


“The Body at Risk: Genre Memory in the work of Tim Hetherington.” Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 5 June 2015.


**Jean-Michel Frodon**

Introducing and discussing “The Great Communist Robbery” closing evening of DOKEST 89, Symposium and Retrospective about Eastern Europe Socialist countries filmed by themselves, Paris/Montreuil, 7 November 2015.

Roundtable with and about Im Kwontaek, as part of the tribute by Festival des 3 Continents, Nantes, 29 November 2015.

Introduction and Discussion about Alain Resnais’ “Mon oncle d’Amérique” with Bruno Latour, Grand Action, 2 December 2015.


**Chris Fujiwara**

“What Is Contemporary Cinema?” Athénée Français Cultural Center, Tokyo, 22 August 2015


**Dina Iordanova**

“Movies and Methods.” Summer of V’s: Volume, Velocity, Variety, Veracity, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 1 September 2015.


“Paris as hub for Global Cinema.” 5th Urban International Film Festival, Teheran, 30 May 2015.

**Ana Grgić**

“L’imaginaire de la rivière: a journey through Balkan cinema.” Divan Film Festival Symposium Roads and Crossroads in the Balkans, Cetate, August 2015.

“Gr(r)azing over the image: stories of food in Balkan cinema.” Seminar at Balkan Film and Food Festival, Pogradec, September 2015.


Jeffrey Murer


“Right-Wing Violence and the Creation of the Other in the film Der Kick” Cambridge Festival of Ideas, University of Cambridge, 30 October 2015.

Shruti Narayanswamy

“Silent Sirens.” PG Exchange, Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 23 October 2015.

“The resurgence of online feminism in India.” Pangea 2015, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 14 November 2015.

Natthanai Prasannam

“How to re-read online cultural texts.” Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thepsatri Rajabhat University, Lopburi, June 2015

“Romancing the War: Politics of Genre Memory in Sun and Sunrise (2013).” Institute of Thai Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, 4 July 2015.


“From Historicism to New Historicism.” Department of Thai, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, 27 August 2015.

“Graduate Seminars on Contemporary Thai Literature, Cultural Memory and Adaptation Studies.” Graduate School, Burapha University, Chonburi, July-August 2015.

“Literature, Screen Culture and Adaptation Studies.” Department of Thai, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University, Bangkok, 3 September 2015.

Tom Rice

“Locating Educational Film: Film and the Creation of Imperial Citizens.” Film, Trade and Empire Workshop, University of Exeter, 8 June 2015.

Gill Plain

“Life on Mars, the TV series” a seminar at the University of Freiburg, Freiburg, July 2015.


“Reconstructing postwar masculinities: David Lean’s The Sound Barrier (1952).” Modern Britain Research Group, Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies, Yale University, New Haven, October 2015.
Conference Papers

Michael Cowan

“Animation and Atmosphere in Germany 1910-1933.” Goethe Universität Mainz, 1 December 2015.

Rohan Berry Crickmar
“‘Thanks to him, this evil would at last be able to spread across the world’: Examining Roman Polański’s Hollywood and post Hollywood Career for Correspondences Between the US and Other Global Film Industries at Production Level.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.

Lucy Fife Donaldson
“‘You have to feel a sound for it to be effective’: Sonic Surfaces in Film.” Haptic Narratives: Touching Sounds Through the Screen, University of Greenwich, May 2015.

“Surface and Affect: The Texture of the Film World.” Film-Philosophy, St Annes College, University of Oxford, July 2015.

“Feeling and Filmmaking: The Design and Affect of Film Sound.” Sound and the Screen, University of West London, November 2015.

“Mapping the Materiality of Off-screen Sound.” Sound and Image, University of Greenwich, November 2015.

Jean-Michel Frodon
“Excessive Cinema.” Estoril and Lisboa Film Festival, 9 November 2015.


Chris Fujiwara
“Roundtable on Sam Peckinpah.” Locarno Film Festival, Switzerland, August 2015.

Andrei Gadalean
“Sexuality as a Class War Weapon in 1950s Romanian Cinema.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.

Ana Grgić
“Histoire(s) of World Cinema; or what we can still learn from neglected cinema topographies.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.
Grazia Ingravalle


“Seductive Film History Writing: Curatorship at the Eastman House and the EYE Film Institute.” What is Cinema History?: History of Movie Going, Exhibition and Reception Network Conference, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, 22-24 June 2015.

Aakshi Magazine

“Tracing the female song in Hindi cinema.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.

Phillip Mann


Connor McMorran

“Rethinking Korean Cinema History.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.

Shorna Pal


Natthanai Prasannam

“Romancing the War: Memory of World War II in Thai Teenpic and Politics of Genre.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.


Tom Rice

“‘Of the Scholars Nothing is to be expected, I’m Afraid’. ” What is Cinema History?: History of Movie Going, Exhibition and Reception Network Conference, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, 22-24 June 2015.

Eileen Rositzka

“Tales from the Birdcage: The Illusion of Overview in Raoul Walsh’s Objective, Burma!” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.
Isabel Seguí


Sanghita Sen

“Masculine heroism of the Naxal/Maoist activists VS the hegemonic masculinity of the State: a study of competitive patriarchy in Indian films on Naxal/Maoist Movements.” Film Studies Postgraduate Conference, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, 27-28 April 2015.

Amber Shields


“Telling Trauma Fairytales: Approaching Contested Realities in Emir Kusturica’s *Underground*.” Ethics of Storytelling: Historical Imagination in Contemporary Literature, Media and Visual Arts Conference, University of Turku, Turku, 4-6 June 2015.

Leshu Torchin


Publications

Robert Burgoyne and Eileen Rositzka

Jean-Michel Frodon

Jean-Michel Frodon and Dina Iordanova (eds.)
*Cinemas of Paris*. St Andrews: St Andrews Film Studies, 2015.

Chris Fujiwara


Ana Grgić

“Gustative Sensorium: Food as Transnational Object in Balkan Cinema.” *East European Film Bulletin* (October 2015)

Aakshi Magazine
“A filmmaker’s fearless perspective : Taxi”. 46th International Film Festival of Goa Festival bulletin (November 2015)
Elisabetta Girelli


Dina Iordanova


Dina Iordanova, Darae Kim and Chris Berry

“The Busan International Film Festival in Crisis, or What Should a Film Festival Be?.” Film Quarterly 69: 1 (Fall 2015): 80-90.

Tom Rice

“‘Are you proud to be British?’: Mobile film shows, local voices and the demise of the British Empire in Africa.” Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television (early online, June 2015)

Tom Rice and Joshua Yumibe


Eileen Rositzka


Leshu Torchin


Contributions to Souciant, an online magazine of culture and politics on Mr Robot and Amazon, Amy Winehouse, and Magic Mike XXL in July and November 2015 issues.

Shorna Pal

Other Activities

Michael Cowan
Participation in German Film Institute, University of Michigan, 31 May-6 June 2015

Chris Fujiwara
Film programming:
“What Is Contemporary Cinema?” Athénée Français Cultural Center, Tokyo, August 2015
“The Slashing Swords of Daisuke Ito,” Mar del Plata International Film Festival, Mar del Plata, Argentina, October-November 2015

Screening introductions and Q&A sessions:
The Story of the Late Chrysanthemums (Mizoguchi Kenji) EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam, 26 September 2015.
The Thoughts That Once We Had (Thom Andersen) Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, 13 October 2015.
A Diary of Chuji’s Travels, Jirokichi the Rat, and a programme of short fragments (all by Ito Daisuke) Mar del Plata International Film Festival, Mar del Plata, Argentina, October-November 2015.
Moderator, “Documentary as Experimental Cinema.” Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Yamagata, Japan, 12 October 2015.

Festival Jurying and Mentoring:
Festival juror for Taiwan Competition Jury, Taipei International Film Festival, July 2015.
Workshop mentor for Film Criticism Workshop, Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, Yamagata, Japan, October 2015.
Festival juror for Asiana International Short Film Festival, Seoul, November 2015.