FILM-PHILOSOPHY

CONFERENCE
PROGRAMME
9-11 July 2019
#FP2019
Conference Director
Dr Dario Llinares

Conference Committee
Dr Lucy Bolton
Dr William Brown
Dr Holly Chard
Dr Ewan Kirkland
Dr Matilda Mroz
Dr Patricia Prieto Blanco
Dr David Sorfa

Conference Assistants
Laura Williams
Alison Monge
And all of the Southcoast Conferences team

Venue: Grand Parade Campus & Edward St Campus, University of Brighton

Keynote Lectures: Sallis Benney Lecture Theatre, Grand Parade Campus

Panel Presentations: Edward Street Campus ES102, ES103, ES105, ES309, ES305

Catering and Coffee: Grand Parade Café and Edward St Floor 1

Scan QR codes with your phone for Online Maps:  

Online Details:
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It is an honour to welcome you to the 12th annual Film-Philosophy Conference at the University of Brighton. Ever since I was asked to take on the directorship of the conference I have been working with a kind of trepidatious excitement in bringing so many fantastic colleagues the south coast to share their research. Myself, the conference committee and the organisation team have been working really hard to create a fantastic experience over the three days. This would not have been possible however without the amazing breadth and quality of submissions we have had. I’m very much looking forward to listening to as many papers as possible.

I would like to thank the conference committee for their support, particularly during through the initial selection process. With of 260 initial abstracts, programming was an extremely difficult task, both in terms of quantity and the high level of submissions we received. I specifically want to thank David Sorfa whose collaboration and counsel has been an anchoring point for me through the organisation process.

Obviously the conference is focus of your time here, however I hope you have a chance to get out and explore Brighton. There is wealth of attractions to go visit: the Brighton Palace Pier for some old school British Seaside entertainment, the narrow streets of The Lanes offer plethora of cool shops, cafes and artwork, the Royal Pavilion designed by John Nash is based on Indo-Saracenic Revival architecture, and Fabrica Art Gallery currently features an exhibition by sculptor Susie MacMurray. Of course, for those of you who have booked we will be going to the fabulous i360 for the conference dinner. Anyone who suffers from vertigo may have to forego the initial ‘flight’ however.

Myself, Neil Fox (Falmouth University) and Kat Zebecka (University of Edinburgh) are going to be taping some audio for a special edition of The Cinematologists Podcast. This episode will be released in September and if you would like to be involved by giving us a short interview about your research, please let one of us know.

I hope you all have an amazing conference. Please don’t hesitate to ask me or any of the conference team for any further help or advice you might need.

Dario Linares
Conference Director
The conference will be held at the University of Brighton City Campus using spaces in both Grand Parade and Edward Street buildings. The buildings are a short 10 minute walk away from each other and directional signage will map out the route.

WALKING DIRECTIONS TO EDWARD STREET
Leaving Grand Parade through the quad exit: Walk through the gate and turn left to the top of Grand Parade Mews. Turn right onto William Street. At the end of William Street, turn left onto Edward Street.
Leaving from the main entrance of Grand Parade: turn left and follow Grand Parade towards the seafront. The Pavilion will be on your right hand side, at the lights, turn left up Edward Street.
**Registration:** On the first morning registration will take place outside the Sallis Benney lecture theatre (Grand Parade Campus). For the rest of the conference the registration desk will be in Edward Street campus where the Panel Sessions are taking place.

**Tuesday Night Drinks reception:** Tuesday evenings drinks reception will take place in Grand Parade Café. The evening will feature a book launch: *Visionaries: Thinking Through Female Filmmakers* hosted by Edinburgh University Press. During the reception we will also announce the winner of the 2019 Film-Philosophy Annual article award. The nominees, in alphabetical order, are:

Max Bowens, “*The Flesh of The Perceptible*: The New Materialism of *Leviathan*’

Catherine Constable, *Surfaces of Science Fiction: Enacting Gender and “Humanness“ in Ex Machina*’

Jenny Gunn, ‘*Deleuze, Žižek, Spring Breakers and the Question of Ethics in Late Capitalism*’

John Charles Hill, ‘*The Creaturely Life of Carol Reed’s Cities: Eric Santner and Walter Benjamin*’

Gordon Sullivan, ‘*We Do Not Look At Them As They Really Are*: Technics and *Photogénie in Jean Epstein’s Film-Philosophy*’

**Wednesday Conference Dinner:** The conference dinner will take place at the amazing British Airways i360 restaurant which is along the seafront about 20mins walk from Grand Parade Campus. The dinner starts at 7:30pm but I will be setting off from Grand Parade at 7:00pm so anyone who wants to can meet me there and we can walk together.

**Audio recordings:** During the conference we intend to record interviews will delegates for a special edition of The Cinematologists Podcast, the will come out after the conference. Myself and Dr Neil Fox will be conducting short interviews with delegates who are interested is discussing your work for the episode please let either myself or Neil know.
**Twitter:** We would really like to see some interaction on social media regarding the conference. We will have some screens around the venues with the conference Twitter feed on display. The conference Hashtag is #FP2019 so please add this to any messages you post.

**Panel Sessions:**

All the panel sessions will take place in the Edward Street Campus.
- All the rooms in Edward Street are equipped with Audio/Visual projectors run on a P/C system. There is also the facility to connect laptops (MAC and PC) via VGA and HDMI (It's a good idea to bring your own MAC adaptor).
- Please go to the panel you are speaking at 15mins early to check that your presentation works whether you are bringing a flash drive or presenting from your own Laptop (especially if you are running clips) –
- There will be tech assistants on hand to help with any issues.
- Chairs, please also arrive early for your sessions to introduce yourself to the speakers.
- Please keep your presentation under 20mins so there is time for questions (chairs, please endeavour to keep people to time).
- If any of you have a last-minute problem and you need to cancel, please let me know as soon as you are able.
**TUESDAY 9 JULY**
09:30 – 10:15 Registration
Grand Parade Building
10:15 -10:30 Welcome Introduction
Helen Kennedy, Dario Llinares (University of Brighton) and
David Sorfa (University of Edinburgh)
Sallis Benney Theatre, Grand Parade Building
10:30 – 11:45 Keynote 1 - Janet Harbord:
Film as a Training for Neurotypical life
Sallis Benney Theatre, Grand Parade Building
11:45 – 13:00 Lunch
Grand Parade Café
13:00 – 14:30 Panel Session A (see page 8-9 for panel information)
Edward Street Rooms
14:30 – 15:00 Coffee Break
Edward Street First Floor
15:00 – 16:30 Panel Session B
Edward Street Rooms
16:30 – 17:00 Coffee Break
Edward Street First Floor
17:00 – 18:30 Panel Session C
Edward Street Rooms
19:00 – 23:00 Drinks Reception and Book Launch
Film-Philosophy Annual Article Award
Book Launch: Visionaries: Thinking Through Female Filmmakers (Edinburgh University Press)
Grand Parade Café
11:00 – 12:30 Keynote 2 – Andrew Klevan:
Ordinary Language Film Studies
Sallis Benney Theatre, Grand Parade Building
12:30 – 13:45 Lunch
Grand Parade Café
13:45 – 15:15 Panel Session E
Edward Street Rooms
15:15 – 15:45 Coffee Break
Edward Street First Floor
15:45 – 17:15 Panel Session F
Edward Street First Floor
17:15 – 17:30 Coffee to go
Collect from Edward Street to take to Grand Parade
17:30 – 18:45 Keynote 3 - Victor Fan: Time and Nothingness: Image and Temporality through the Lens of Buddhism
Sallis Benney Theatre, Grand Parade Building
19:30 – 23:00 Conference Gala Dinner
British Airways i360, Brighton Seafront

**WEDNESDAY 10 JULY**
08:00 – 09:00 Arrival coffees
Edward Street First Floor
09:00 – 10:30 Panel Session D (see page 10-11 for panel information)
Edward Street Rooms
10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break
Grand Parade Café

**THURSDAY 11 JULY**
09:00 – 09:30 Arrival coffee
Edward Street First Floor
09:30 – 11:00 Panel Session G (see page 12-13 for panel information)
Edward Street Rooms
11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break
Edward Street First Floor
11:30 – 13:00 Panel Session H
Edward Street Rooms
13:00 – 14:00 Lunch
Grand Parade Café
14:00 – 15:15 Keynote 4 - Jane Stadler
Deepfakes, Bad Actors, and Synthespians: Ethics and Embodiment Technologies
Sallis Benney Theatre, Grand Parade Building
15:15 – 16:00 Closing Remarks – Dario Llinares
Sallis Benney Theatre, Grand Parade Building
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<td>Welcome Introduction Helen Kennedy (Head of School of Media, University of Brighton) David Sorfa (Editor-in-Chief, Film-Philosophy) &amp; Dario Llinares (Conference Director, University of Brighton)</td>
<td>Keynote 1 Chair Lucy Bolton Janet Harbord: Film as a Training for Neurotypical Life</td>
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**Open** Chair: Richard Rushton
Lara Pereski – Must We Say What We See: Keywording as Ordinary Language
Jules O’Dwyer - Bodies/being/landscapes: on Alain Guiraudie’s environs
Jiemin Tina Wei - Slippery Genetic Determinism: Gattaca and the Staging of a Probabilistic Genome Science

**Aesthetics** Chair: Laura Di Summa
Francesca Massarenti - The impractical, diminutive feminine in Jane Campion’s filmic 19th century
Alessi Rennes - Aesthetics of Life (and Death): Deleuze, Mandico, and the Problem of Animism
Claudia Kappenberg - Screenic Rituals

**Horror** Chair: Hedwig Fraunhofer
Ece Uçoluk Krane - Posthuman Cannibalism: The Non/Human Politics and Aesthetics of Antiviral (2012)
Rebecca Rosenberg - Vampiric Transformations in Dans ma peau (2002) and Grave (2016)
Tarja Laine - It Follows: Trauma in Contemporary Horror Film

**Ethics** Chair: Ben Tyrer
Christine Jakobson - Ethics as Aesthetic World: Levinas and Heidegger on Art
Sylvie Magerstaedt - Lies, Stories, Myths – creative power and ethical dilemmas in Big Fish (2003) and Amélie (2001)
Savina Petkova - Real Metaphors. Animals in the Films of Yorgos Lanthimos
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<td><strong>Love/Relationships</strong> Chair: Tarja Laine</td>
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<td>Maryam Tafakory - Contact at Distance - Ihám and Eroticism in Iranian Sacred Defence Cinema</td>
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<td>Richard Rushton - Love in five films by Agnes Varda</td>
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<td>Mila Zuo - The Girlfriend Experience: Virtual Beauty and Love in Post-Cinematic Times</td>
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<td>15:00 – 16:30</td>
<td><strong>Open</strong> Chair: Joseph Jenner</td>
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<td>Neil Fox - Rethinking film education: What can we learn from filmmakers?</td>
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<td>Fred Brayard - Meillassoux, Perconte and realism: digital time as hyperchaos</td>
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<td>Lina Jurdeczka - Untimely Cinephilia and Spectral Images in Phoenix and Ida</td>
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<td>16:30 – 17:00</td>
<td><strong>Stanley Cavell Workshop</strong> Chair: Andrew Klevan (University of Oxford)</td>
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<td>Catherine Wheatley (King’s College London)</td>
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<td>Sandra Laugier (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)</td>
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<td>Trevor Mowchun (University of Florida)</td>
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<td>Daniele Rugo (BrunelUniversity London)</td>
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<td>Kate Rennebohm (Harvard University)</td>
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<td>17:00 – 18:30</td>
<td><strong>Phenomenology</strong> Chair: Christine Jakobson</td>
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<td>Ben Tyrer - &quot;The picture is in my eye but I am in the picture&quot;: Lacan, Merleau-Ponty and Film-philosophy</td>
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<td>Alice Pember - ‘Shame on you, If you can’t dance too’: The Intersectional Politics of Dance in Contemporary Cinema</td>
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<td>Susannah Ramsey - An Exploration of my Phenomenological Approach to the Exhibition of the Filmpoem.</td>
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<td>18:30 – 20:30</td>
<td><strong>Open</strong> Chair: Victoria Walden</td>
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<td>Angelos Koutsourakis - The Present as a Problem: Reenactment and Critical History</td>
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<td>Martin Hall - ‘The inexistent of the world’: British Cinema, 1968 and the symptom</td>
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<td>Alicja Kowalska - Trauma and Rebellion. 1968 reflected in Polish and German Film.</td>
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<td><strong>Feminist Film Practice/criticism</strong></td>
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<td>Ulrike Hanstein - Feminist Videoletters: Affection and Address in Epistolary Exchanges</td>
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<td>Anjo-mari Gouws - Love Waits, Love Conjures: Anne Charlotte Robertson’s Five Year Diary</td>
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<td>Jenelle Troxell - In Praise of the “dreadful” Female Spectator: Close Up and the Emergence of a Feminist Counter-Cinema</td>
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<td>Serena Moscardelli - The mosquitoes stayed - Paolo Sorrentino’s 'L'Amico di Famiglia' and the dialectics of space and time in the Pontine Marshes and the new towns</td>
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<td>Victoria Grace Walden- Cinema’s apocalyptic essence</td>
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<td>Laura Di Summa-Knoop - Recording the Future of Memories: An Overview</td>
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**Coffee Break, Edward Street First Floor**

**Drinks Reception & Book Launch, Grand Parade Cafe**

**Space and Time** Chair: William Brown

John Ó Maoliarca - The Defragmenting Image: Stories in Cinematic Time Travel

Hedwig Fraunhofer - Dark: Philosophy, Culture, and Environment

Benjamin Dalton - Encountering the Multiverse Through Film and Philosophy: Space Travels with Claire Denis and Aurélien Barrau in High Life (2018)

**Open** Chair: Holly Chard

Serena Moscardelli - The mosquitoes stayed - Paolo Sorrentino’s ‘L’Amico di Famiglia’ and the dialectics of space and time in the Pontine Marshes and the new towns

Victoria Grace Walden - Cinema’s apocalyptic essence

Laura Di Summa-Knoop - Recording the Future of Memories: An Overview
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**Keynote 2**
Chair: David Sorfa
Andrew Klevan (University of Oxford):
Ordinary Language Film Studies

**105 Edward Street**

**Open** Chair: Neil Fox
Evy Varsamopoulou - The Prometheus Syndrome: Ridley Scott’s Alien prequels
Chantal Poch - “So far from everything”: The Fall of Man according to Andrei Tarkovsky, Werner Herzog and Terrence Malick
Hee-seung Lee - “Father, don’t you see that I am burning?” From Melancholy to Burning (2018)

**102 Edward Street**

**Ethics** Chair: Gabriella Calchi Novati
Kate Rennebohm - The Modern Conscience as the Moving Self-Image
Francesco Sticchi - The Precarious Conscience of People to Come: Cartographies of Precarity in Contemporary Cinema
Kate Ince - Ethics and Vulnerability in the Films of Mia Hansen-Løve

**103 Edward Street**

**Documentary** Chair: Dominic Lash
Eliot Besstte - Why there are no Affects
Finn Daniels-Yeomans - Notes of Cinematic Fallism: Aryan Kaganof’s Metalepsis in Black and Beyond
Christian Sancto - Architectures of the Queer Archive: Documentary, Dance, and Disjunctive Spatiality in Patrick Staff’s The Foundation

**309 Edward Street**

**Embodiedness** Chair Hedwig Fraunhofer
David Fleming - Actant en Set: Regarding two or three oneified bodies of (DØmhnal Gleeson)
Anette Svane - The embodied (hungry) female subject in Julia Ducournau’s Raw

**104 Edward Street**

**Open** Chair: Ewan Kirkland
Dani Landau - Sense as Surfacing and the Cinematic Thought of A.N. Whitehead
Adelaide McGinty - “He’s not from our tribe!”, The construction of Jewish and Muslim identities in the post-Soviet Russian space of Balagov’s Tesnota/Closeness (2017)
Olivia Belton - Posthuman Womanhood in Science Fiction Television

Coffee break, Grand Parade Café
Lunch, Grand Parade Café
### WEDNESDAY 10 JULY AFTERNOON

#### 13:45 – 15:15

**Sound** Chair: Tarja Laine
- Murray Pomerance - *The Sound of Silence*
- Hannah Paveck - *Sounding Colonial Encounters: Strategies of Subtitle Translation*
- Michael Goddard - *Between Music and Film: Coil’s Queer and Transhuman Cinematic Encounters*

#### 15:15 – 17:15

**Workshop: How to think about Europe through a Mythopoetics of Cinema**
- Participants:
  - Chair: Dusan Bjelic
  - Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli
  - Dragan Kujundzic
  - Maria Koundoura
  - Sean Homer

**Eco-cinema 1** Chair: Christine Jakobson
- Sarah Cooper - *How Like a Flower: The Ecologies of Rose Lowder’s Bouquets*
- Gabriella Calchi Novati - "What is "The Shape of Water" in the Age of Global Warming? Anthropocene’s ‘Monstros Ontologies’ / Performing Otherwise"
- Alex Forbes - *Cartography of Paradise: The Danube Delta as space of Transition*

**Feminist Poetics** Chair: Anjo-mari Gouws
- Laura Staab - *Title: coming to cinema with Hélène Cixous*
- Saige Walton - *A ’most revolutionary reality’: from Maya Deren’s poetic thinking to Strange Colours*
- Melenia Arouh - *Food Films and the Female Chef: a philosophical analysis*

**Video essays** Chair: Catherine Grant
- William Brown - *Golden Gate*
- Matthew Holtmeier - *Vital Coasts, Mortal Oceans: The Pearl Button as Media Environmental Philosophy (a video essay)*
- Catherine Grant - *Performing Film-Philosophy Videographically: Three short examples (SO IS THIS [A Demonstrative Concordance]; AT THE LIMIT [Or, Vice Versa]; and FATED TO BE MATED: An Architectural Promenade)*

**Open** Chair: David Deamer
- Jeff Fort - *Bazin’s Eternal Returns?*
- David Sorfa - *Our Imaginary Person in Havana: Fiction Film Between Jean-Paul Sartre and Kathleen Stock*
- Lia Turtas - *The Phantasm of Style: Cinema’s ubiquitous, yet unlocalizable, form of life.*

#### 17:15 – 17:30

Keynote 3 Chair: David Martin-Jones
**Victor Fan** (King’s College London): Time and Nothingness: Image and Temporality through the Lens of Buddhism

#### 17:30 – 18:45

**Installation experiences** Chair: Emre Caglayan
- Cato Wittusen - *Virtual Presence and Cavellian Skepticism*
- Jihoon Kim - *Documentary’s Expanded Dispositifs: Contemporary Documentary Installations and the Operations of Relocation and Redistribution*
- Hudson Moura - *The Cambridge Squatter’s Liminal Filmic Space*

**Open** Chair: Shai Bidermam
- Daniel Pérez-Pamies - *Glitch: a Potency of an Event - Gilles Deleuze’s Concept of Diagram and Digital Cinema Aesthetics*
- Joff Bradley - *Deleuze, heccéité and the rising wind: A reading of Miyazaki’s 風立ちぬ (The Wind Rises)*
- Xiao Cai - *Flowing Cinema, Flowing Aesthetics: Hallucination, Phantom, or Apichatpong’s Montage Video essays*

**Television** Chair: Michael Goddard
- David Martin-Jones - *Columbo: Paying Close Attention to Television.*
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| **Sallis Benney Theatre**  
Grand Parade | | | Aesthetics/Slow Cinema  
Chair: Neil Fox | Eco Cinema 2  
Chair: Matt Holtmeier |
| 105 Edward Street | | | Hui-Han Chen  - Slow Cinema’s Cacophony and Flux in Carlos Reygadas’ Japón  
Emre Caglayan  - Dead, Silent, Slow: Notes Towards a Cinematic Minimalism | Tyler Parks  - Thinking with the World About History: On Landscape and James Benning’s Deseret (1995)  
Ludo de Roo  - Elemental Imagination in the Phenomenology of the Film Experience: From Cinematic Immersion to Environmental Engagement  
Orna Raviv  - Embodied Responsibility |
| **Open**  
Chair: Gabriella Calchi Novati | Coffee break, Edward Street First Floor | Open  
Chair: Gabi Calchi Novati | **Documentary**  
Chair: Christian Sancto |
| 102 Edward Street | Conn Holohan  - The Key that Fits: Melodrama’s Uncanny Objects  
David Deamer  - The Death of God (At Five in the Afternoon)  
Mario Slogan  - A Philosophical Approach to Fiction in Early Cinema | Jack Williams  - The Flow of Things Seen: Conflicts of Purpose and Practice in the Documentary Film of John Grierson  
Michael Holly  - Shake, noise and bad resolution: strategic uses of the poor image in contemporary ethnographic documentary film  
Thomas Austin  - Benefaction, processing, exclusion: documentary representations of refugees and migrants in Fortress Europe | Open  
Chair: Richard Rushton |
| **Open**  
Chair: Richard Rushton | | Kris Ravetto  - The Image That Comes Back to Haunt Us  
Samira Makki  - Palestine through Exilic Kino-Eye: Reclaiming Space in Palestinian Fiction Film  
Michael Grace  - Folds in the Continuity: Catherine Malabou, Plasticity and Cinema | **Open**  
Chair: Eva Sancho |
| 103 Edward Street | | Open  
Chair: Richard Rushton | Tamas Nagypal  - Myroslav Slaboshpytskiy’s The Tribe and The Post-Socialist Cinema of Cruel Pessimism  
Mark Cauchi  - Paterson and the Renewal of American Secularity in the Age of Trump  
Dionysios Kapsaskis  - Representations of translation in the films of Jim Jarmusch | Open  
Chair: Richard Rushton |
| **Open**  
Chair: Tarja Laine | | Open  
Chair: Richard Rushton | | Open  
Chair: Evi Varsamopoulou |
James Slattery  - Cutting Through: Coding Trauma in Sharp Objects | Shai Biderman  - The sound of philosophical rhetoric: fables and parables in the Coen brothers’ The Ballad of Buster Scruggs (2018)  
James Jackson  - The World as Poetry in Cocteau’s Orphée  
Chiara Quaranta  - Icons and Idols: Philosophical Iconoclasm in the Cinema | | |
**THURSDAY 11 JULY AFTERNOON**

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Giorgio Agamben’s essay ‘Notes on gesture’ (1991) locates for cinema a dual legacy in the medical imaging techniques of Giles de la Tourette and the locomotion studies of Eadweard Muybridge, both of whom were fascinated by bodies in motion. Their practices of documentation provide for a protocinematic history in which cinema emerges through the question of what the body can do and how it can be made intelligible in a newly mediatized environment. If gesture exhibits the body’s capacity for communication (‘communication of a communicability’), cinema is the medium that uniquely exhibits this ethos, and has the capacity to capture and deaden gestures in repetitive recordings. But what of the bodies that fail the test of intelligibility, whose gestures remain ‘out of control’?

This paper explores gesture in medical film, focusing on the autistic gesture as a practice that resists interpretation through conventional means, troubling the terms of intention and agency. Autism, first named in 1911 (Eugen Bleuler) and significantly redefined in 1943 (Leo Kanner), appears in postwar medical film as a condition of social isolation, communicative incapacity and language deficit. Yet tracing the gestures of autistic subjects across a number of medical films in the postwar period reveals an ontological alterity that challenges the boundary between subject and world, autonomy and dependency, volition and passivity, fashioning relations and opening new manners of expression for which Fernand Deligny found the neologism Arachnean, and Erin Manning more recently has named autistic perception. Medical film as it is conceived here is not a ‘useful’ cinema running parallel to entertainment cinema, but a foundational exclusion of all that is unintelligible.
beneficial applications of OLP for film study; argue that despite being methodological, and based in linguistic and conceptual clarification, it can enable substantial insight into films; and, relatedly, will offer some final remarks about its relationship to psychoanalysis and politics by way of addressing accusations of ‘quietism’.

Andrew Klevan is Associate Professor of Film Studies at the University of Oxford. He is the author of Disclosure of the Everyday: Undramatic Achievement in Narrative Film (2000), Film Performance: From Achievement to Appreciation (2005), Barbara Stanwyck (2013), and the recently published Aesthetic Evaluation and Film (2018). He is co-editor of The Language and Style of Film Criticism (2011), and is on the editorial board of Movie: A Journal of Film Criticism.

Dr Victor Fan (University of Oxford)
Chair: Dr David Martin-Jones

**Keynote 3: Wednesday 10 July 2019 – 5:30pm – Sallis Benney Theatre**

**Time and Nothingness: Image and Temporality through the Lens of Buddhism**

If Deleuze could write a book on cinema by using Bergson’s philosophy as his conceptual framework, and if Sobchack could do the same with Merleau-Ponty’s thoughts, can one do the same with Buddhism? Buddhism is best understood as a discursive space where contesting notions on ontology, epistemology, and logical reasoning have been historically debated. All schools of Buddhism share one common underlying assumption: that conventional reality is constituted by a set of interdependent relationships. Hence, existence/non-existence, time/timelessness, spatial unity/disunity, and movement/stasis are considered forms and appearances, which are empty of fundamental values. Therefore, Buddhism brings our attention to the emptiness of individuality, subjectivity, and agency. It brings to the fore the process of interdependent constitution and mediation on the level of consciousness(es), and the unreliability of the very concept of reality.

In this presentation, I first expound how Buddhist philosophy can help scholars reevaluate what cinema and media are and what exactly they are constituting and mediating. I then focus on one issue as a case study: time. Time is a fundamental dimension in the photographic and cinematographic images, which, I argue, instantiate two temporalities. First, there is technical time: the process in which our consciousnesses initiate an image as a duration, and as a temporal difference between the actual and the virtual, memories from the past and potentialities for the future. Yet, being animated and perceived as a spatiotemporal continuum, the image also instantiates another kind of time: poetic time. The term poetic refers to poeisis, i.e. the process of pro-duce something in our mode of existence, which would otherwise remain concealed. Understood in terms of European transcendental philosophy, this something has been historically understood as the will, the spirit, or the soul. Yet, according to Buddhist scholars, what remains concealed in poeisis is tathātā: the way it is.
Victor Fan is Senior Lecturer at Film Studies, King’s College London and Film Consultant of the Chinese Visual Festival. His articles appeared in journals including *Camera Obscura, Journal of Chinese Cinemas, Screen, and Film History*. His first book *Cinema Approaching Reality: Locating Chinese Film Theory* was published in 2015 by the University of Minnesota Press. His second book, *Extraterritoriality: Locating Hong Kong Cinema and Media* will be published in June 2019 by the Edinburg University Press.

Dr Jane Stadler (Queensland University of Technology)
Chair: Dr Dario Llinares

**Keynote 4: Thursday 11 July 2019 – 5:30pm – Sallis Benney Theatre**

Deepfakes, Bad Actors, and Synthespians: Ethics and Embodiment Technologies

The screen is the material and imaginative interface where biology meets technology. It is the nexus between science and fiction, where technological and ethical concerns surrounding synthespians, representations of replicants, and virtual humans manifest. This analysis of digital imaging and cinematic imagining of virtual actors and synthetic humans in films such as *Blade Runner 2049* (Villeneuve 2017) examines the ethical implications of digital embodiment technologies and cybernetics. I argue that virtual humans developed for companionship, assistive, informational, and therapeutic purposes on screen often serve as narrative prototypes that enculturate new technologies and test their ethical limits, while also driving the development of media technologies. Hence, the ethical concerns that play out so vividly in fictional screen narratives need to be self-reflexively redirected to critique the screen technologies and techniques themselves. In doing so, I explore commonalities between ethical issues associated with techno-biological bodies in cultural and scientific discourse and developments such as the creation of virtual humans and “Deepfake” digital doubles in screen media.

Jane Stadler is Visiting Professor at Hong Kong Baptist University and recently appointed Head of the School of Communication at Queensland University of Technology in Australia, where she is Professor of Film and Media Studies. She is author of *Pulling Focus: Intersubjective Experience, Narrative Film and Ethics* (2008) and co-author of *Screen Media* (2009), *Imagined Landscapes: Geovisualizing Australian Spatial Narratives* (2016), and *Media and Society* (2016). Her research interests include phenomenological and
philosophical approaches to film and television spectatorship with a focus on technology, ethics, screen aesthetics, imagination, and empathy.
Kaveh Abbasian (University of Roehampton) - abbsiak@roehampton.ac.uk

Title: “Illuminationist Cinema”: The Rise and Fall of an Islamic Film Theory

Abstract: Despite its international celebration, there are many aspects of Iranian cinema that have remained unknown outside the country. The ‘Sacred Defence cinema’ is the official title given to the pro-establishment war films concerning mainly the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). The most prominent figure of this cinema who both made films and wrote about them was the documentary filmmaker, Morteza Avini. In his search for a new Islamic inspired cinematic language, he argued that Islamic mysticism and Revolutionary Shi’ism could lead to a specific cinema which he called ‘Illuminationist cinema’. He used this term mainly in order to reflect on the filmmaking techniques he developed and used during the making of his own documentaries, but also proposed it as a filmmaking method to be adopted by other Islamic filmmakers. Avini’s early death in 1993 put a stop in his theorisation of the ‘Illuminationist cinema’. As a result, his followers remained guessing, each of them coming up with a different definition. In this paper, I refer to Avini’s own writings and films and demonstrate why none of his followers seem to agree on the definition of his theories. I argue that this is due to Avini’s intentional covering of his non-Islamic sources of influence and show that despite his claim of not being influenced by any other film, his filmmaking techniques were inspired by European film movements as well as several non-Islamic pre-revolutionary Iranian arthouse films. I also argue that his ‘Illuminationist cinema’ inevitably inherited and reproduced the authoritarian aspect of the political philosophies that inspired it.

In the end I reflect on the influence of Avini’s film theory on the Islamic Republic’s current propaganda film productions in a new wave of ‘Sacred Defense’ films which was instigated as a result of Iran’s involvement in recent wars in the Middle East.

Biography: Having graduated in Film Studies from the Tehran University of Art, Kaveh Abbasian started his MA in documentary practices at the Roehampton University of London in 2008 and continued with a PhD in Film and Television studies at the same institution in 2014. His practice based PhD research is titled Chronicle of Triumph: Iranian National Identity and Revolutionary Shi’ism in Morteza Avini’s Sacred Defence Documentaries. After submitting his PhD thesis in early January 2019, Kaveh Abbasian continues to work at the department of Media, Culture and Language as a visiting lecturer in film studies and practice.

Melenia Arouh (American College of Greece) – m.arouh@acg.edu

Title: Food Films and the Female Chef: a philosophical analysis

Abstract: The food film has become in the last decades one of the most interesting and popular genres in both European and Hollywood cinema, as narratives about food and eating offer insight into different cultures, social class dynamics, gender roles, and often value systems. Although food films place both men and women at the center of their stories, a certain subsection of the genre that is written and/or directed by women, gives special attention to the female chef. For instance, in the films Woman on Top (2000), Tortilla Soup (2001), Waitress (2007), Mostly Martha(2001), No Reservations (2007) and Julie and Julia (2009), we see dynamic women who command the narrative, are surrounded by food, and use food in many different ways to enrich their lives or find meaning. In this paper I wish to present an analysis of food films with a female chef protagonist that relies on both feminist writings but also the philosophy of food. Specifically, I will focus on certain visual and narrative traits that are noticed in these films and propose an interpretation. The women in these films are strong, independent professionals; yet, frequently, the visual composition objectifies them, linking their bodies with the food prepared and eaten, and allowing the viewers to voyeur both. At the same time, the stories told in these films hold philosophical interest: these are narratives of eating, where food is not simply a routine part of life, but instead holds moral significance as it becomes a means of ordering the world, connecting with other
people, and, in these cases especially, of finding romantic love. As such, it is interesting to explicate these themes and visual cues together so as to determine the overall meaning communicated.

**Biography:** Assistant Professor, Communication and Philosophy departments

**Thomas Austin** (University of Sussex) – t.r.austin@sussex.ac.uk

**Title:** Benefaction, processing, exclusion: documentary representations of refugees and migrants in Fortress Europe

**Abstract:** This paper examines representations of migrants and asylum seekers in some recent documentaries, largely made by white Europeans. I pay particular attention to questions of agency, voice and individuation, and the mediation, distribution, or evacuation of these elements of subjectivity. (The terms “refugee” and “migrant” have often been arranged in a hierarchy which elevates the “deserving” refugee above the “undeserving” migrant. Nevertheless, such designations are best understood as porous and overlapping. See Andersson, Kingsley.) In contrast to the indifference or outright hostility with which migrants and refugees have been treated, a well-intentioned but Eurocentric trope, evident in, for instance, Ode to Lesvos (2016), is the attempt made by “ordinary” citizens to offer hospitality to those arriving at the continent’s borders. On the other hand, Les Sauteurs (Those Who Jump) (2016) presents migrants’ own actions as in part a form of political resistance. Furthermore, if hospitality may implicitly call for gratitude on the part of the recipient, then ingratitude in some contexts can become an act of disruption and resistance, as manifest in Les Arrivants (2009). Finally, I consider how Gianfranco Rosi’s Fuocoammare (Fire at Sea) (2016) and Thomas østbye’s Imagining Emanuel (2011) interrogate the scrutiny, discipline and control endured by asylum seekers and migrants, processes that form part of the unmarked Žižekian “objective violence” that sustains the European system. These documentaries also offer reminders of the common technologies and routine procedures shared by filmmakers and the modern state’s legal apparatus, as both test veracity and attempt to produce the human subject as knowable.

**Biography:** Reader in Media & Film Studies

**Olivia Belton** (University of East Anglia) – olivia.belton@gmail.com

**Title:** Posthuman Womanhood in Science Fiction Television

**Abstract:** In this paper, I will discuss representations of posthuman womanhood in the TV series Westworld (HBO, 2016 - ) and Humans (Channel 4, 2015 - ). Both series draw on ideas associated with posthumanism, such as the significance of embodied information (Hayles 1999, 13) and the idea of women and technology as less-than-human (Braidotti 2013, 15). Unlike Donna Haraway’s cyborg, which is “post-gender,” (Haraway 1991, 150) these posthuman women are definitively women. It is their posthuman femininity that allows them to resist corporate oppression via their creation of coalitions and their unruly embodiment. Westworld’s robotic Hosts and the synths of Humans are, unlike the cyborg which emerges from the military-industrial complex, largely designed for consumer use. This speaks to the changing role of technology in day-to-day life, extrapolating from real-world analogues such as video games and AI assistants. It has often been contended that visual, and particularly televisual, representations of cyborgs are conservative in terms of gender politics (Kakoudaki 2000, 166). This paper departs from this view, arguing that these programmes explore highly relevant issues to do with the intersection of emergent technology and feminist issues. For instance, both programmes emphasise the gendered exploitation of posthuman women, tapping into contemporary fears around so-called ‘sex robots.’ The television medium enables rather than hinders the exploration of posthuman existence. The
necessity of using human actors emphasises the importance of embodiment to the posthuman woman, and contemporary television’s ensemble casts and semi-serialised narrative structures allow for a more diverse exploration of the implications of new technologies. Thus, it represents how ‘this stark contrast between embodiment and disembodiment has fractured into more complex and varied formations.’ (Hayles 2005, 2) Thus, I will argue that televisual representations present a striking and important intervention into popular understandings of the posthuman.

Biography: I currently work as an associate tutor in the Film, Television and Media Studies department at the University of East Anglia, having recently submitted a PhD thesis in representations of posthuman women in contemporary American science fiction television.

Eliot Besstte (University of California, Berkeley) – erbessette@berkeley.edu

Title: Why there are no Affects

Abstract: In this presentation, adapted from my dissertation, I offer a concise case that there are no affects, only emotions, and that scholarly language should reflect this. Amidst affect theory’s salutary efforts in the last twenty years to infuse first-personal sensation and subjective color into film and literary criticism, there has been little pushback against its overreaches and missteps. In the interest of phenomenologically accurate and scientifically unobjectionable humanistic work, I offer sharp pushback. I argue that a great deal of affect theory is marred by four shortcomings: [1] a tendentious relationship to science (with reference to Deleuze and Massumi), [2] a convoluted and overpopulated ontology (Guattari and Massumi), [3] a denial of psychological experience (Ahmed), and [4] untranslatability from textual worlds to lived experience (Brinkema). For the sake of brevity, I will stress the second and third points. Though there are affect theorists who by and large avoid these problems (Gibbs, Probyn, Stewart), these exceptions do not warrant preserving the term. I complement the preceding negative case against affect with a positive case for emotion: the phenomena that “affect” purports to cover, such as mental states lacking intentional objects, are covered as well or better by “emotion” or other common-language terms like “mood” or “atmosphere.” I conclude that “affect” may either be used as a catchall term, in which case it is benign and unnecessary, or as a metaphysically onerous term with a dubious relation to the common experiences it seems to describe, in which case it is misleading and unnecessary. My overall impetus is to restore causal power and phenomenological depth to humanists’ construals of “emotion” and to make discussions of emotions in film studies more consonant with actual viewers’ experiences.

Biography: Eliot Besstte is a doctoral candidate in Film and Media at the University of California, Berkeley, where he is writing a dissertation, “Thinking Through Fear in Film and Haunts,” that develops a philosophy of fear (as an emotion, not an affect) through close readings of horror films and haunted house attractions. He also works on film and philosophy and the boxing film genre. His scholarship has appeared in ReFocus: The Films of William Castle and the New Review of Film and Television Studies.

Shai Biderman (Beit Berl College & Tel Aviv University) – bidermans@beitberl.ac.il

Title: The sound of philosophical rhetoric: fables and parables in the Coen brothers’ The Ballad of Buster Scruggs (2018)

Fables and parables—two storytelling devices designed to elicit folk wisdom and moral understanding of human situations and predicaments—gained a stronghold in contemporary film-philosophy. From Cavell’s idea of movies as ‘spiritual parables’ (1981) to Rancière’s idea of ‘film fables’ (2006), the theoretical capacity of filmic imagery to embrace the symbolism of the parabolic model in order to
promote and enhance contemplative discourses and philosophical argumentation, has found home in a variety of films. Among these, the use of fables and parables in the Coen Brothers’ oeuvre is worthy of special attention, if only because of their sheer abundance. One can recall the two fable-like dream scenarios which end No Country for Old Men (2007); the mystical ‘dybbuk fable’ and the three rabbinical parables in a serious man (2009); the numerous alluding to Schrödinger’s cat, and the recent reconstruction of this list in the TV series Fargo (2014-), to name a few.

In the recent The Ballad of Buster Scruggs (2018) the Coen brothers exceeds their previous use of the parabolic format. Built as a six-part episodic collection of individual parables, which share nothing other than the scenery and mythological background of American frontier, Buster Scruggs is, in fact, also one unified cinematic fable—and, simultaneously, an endless resource for parabolic references from the corpus of western culture (from biblical references, to Aesop’s, to Kafka’s). This ingenious treefold construction (a parable within a parable within a parable) is, by far, the most elaborated extension of both Cavell’s and Rancière’s respective models. Since for Cavell the cinematic parable is “[a] phase of the development of consciousness” (1981: 7, 18), and for Rancière the film fable is a thwarted indication to the inherent indecisiveness of cinema’s artistic nature (2006: 11), we are liable to see Buster Scruggs as their point of collision.

Biography: Shai Biderman (PhD, Philosophy; Boston University, 2012) is an assistant professor for film and philosophy at Beit-Berl College and a lecturer at Tel Aviv University, Israel. He is the co-editor of The Philosophy of David Lynch (University Press of Kentucky, 2011), Mediamorphosis: Kafka and the Moving Image (Columbia University Press, 2016) and the forthcoming Plato and the Moving Image (Brill, 2019). He published numerous articles and book chapters in philosophy of film, film analysis and film-philosophy, in journals such as Film and Philosophy and Cinema: journal of philosophy and the moving image, and in edited volumes such as Inter- Art Journey (Sussex Academic Press, 2015), The Philosophy of the Western (University Press of Kentucky, 2010), The Philosophy of Science Fiction Film (University Press of Kentucky, 2008), Lost and Philosophy (Blackwell, 2008) and Movies and the Meaning of Life (Open Court, 2005).

Joff P.N. Bradley (Teikyo, University of Tokyo) - joff@main.teikyo-u.ac.jp

Title: Deleuze, heccéité and the rising wind: A reading of Miyazaki’s 風立ちぬ (The Wind Rises)

Abstract: In this exploration of Miyazaki Hayao’s last animation 風立ちぬ [The Wind Rises], my intention is not to write a moral critique of Hayao Miyazaki, the man. Nor am I not making a case for Miyazaki as an apologist for the nightmare of European and Japanese fascism. Instead, I concern myself with the possibility of an ethology found in the animated images and the overall concern with technology that one finds there. This is undertaken from a Deleuzian point of view. As a first step, I differentiate this approach from Bernard Stiegler’s and Martin Heidegger’s respective philosophies to understand The Wind Rises from an aesthetic, ethological and ecosophical perspective. The main thrust of the paper will be to contrast 1) Heidegger’s philosophy of technology and concept of Gestell (enframing) in which we find a concern with the wind (power); 2) Bernard Stiegler’s position on The Wind Rises which shows how technology, design and madness (disruption) have become intertwined; and 3) Deleuze’s strange description of the “rising wind” as heccéité or thisness which appears in the following quote: “This primacy of lines of flight must not be understood chronologically, or in the sense of an eternal generality. It is rather the fact and the right of the untimely: a time which is not pulsed, a haecceity like a wind which rises up, a midnight, a midday.”

Biography: Joff P.N. Bradley, associate professor in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Teikyo University in Tokyo, Japan, is the co-author of Deleuze and Buddhism with Tony See and co-writer of A Pedagogy of Cinema with David R. Cole. With Cole, he has co-edited both Educational Philosophy and
New French Thought and Principles of Transversality in Globalization and Education. Bradley is a member of the New Tokyo Group in Japan, a committed group of language scholars working on critical pedagogy projects in the nation’s capital and beyond.

Fred Brayard (University of Central Lancashire) – frederic.brayard@yahoo.com

Title: Meillassoux, Perconte and realism: digital time as hyperchaos.

Abstract: Numerous scholars (William Brown, David Flemming, Lev Manovich, Steven Shaviro) have argued that digital cinema has the ability to provide a non-human, realist perspective in which all the elements that constitute the experienced world are characterised by their entanglement rather than by the fact that they are distinct entities. Digital cameras can cruise seamlessly through time and matter, explore and represent the world as a flow of energy, in which entities are not stable singularities but facts that emerge from, and transform through the processes at work in the general becoming of the world. Digital cinema is thus considered as realist since it suggests a world of entanglement challenging our intuitive anthropocentric perspective that tends to establish separations, distinctions, taxonomies, and dual oppositions through which we extract ourselves from the unity of the universe. Paradoxically, the very power of contemporary cinema to suggest a world of entanglement emerges from the binary logic of the digital. The digital world is not entangled, but on the contrary, is a world in which every change is the consequence of binary choices. How can we, therefore assess the ‘realism’ of digital cinema? In this paper, I argue that the philosophy of Quentin Meillassoux provides concepts that are useful when engaging with this paradox. Meillassoux suggests that the absolute is not the fact that all things are entangled, but rather than they are contingent and regulated by the principle of non-contradiction. Through my analysis of Or/Or, Hawick (Jacques Perconte, France, 2018) a film which uses various compression technics (datamoshing), I discuss how this change of paradigm enables the development of a theory in which digital entanglement and binarity are not in opposition, but are two interlinked outcomes that resonate with what Meillassoux calls hyperchaos. This leads me to my main argument that a Meillassouxian perspective on digital cinema offers new directions when thinking the links between film and realism.

Biography: Frederic Brayard is a Lecturer in French Language and Culture at the University of Central Lancashire. His research on issues related to film ethics and speculative realism, engages with contemporary cinema and the philosophy of Quentin Meillassoux.

William Brown (University of Roehampton) - wjrcbrown@gmail.com

Title: Golden Gate

Abstract: In this video-essay I shall be analysing the way in which numerous films repeatedly associate the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco with the end of human life, and/or with the limits of human thought. From It Came from Beneath the Sea(Robert Gordon, USA, 1955) through to San Andreas(Brad Peyton, USA, 2015), the Golden Gate Bridge has repeatedly been destroyed by non-human forces - while from The Love Bug(Robert Stevenson, USA, 1968) through to Bicentennial Man(Christopher Columbus, Canada/USA, 1999), X-Men: The Last Stand(Brett Ratner, USA, 2006) and Rise of the Planet of the Apes(Rupert Wyatt, USA, 2011), the landmark construction is signalled as a point of contact between humans and other (often man-made) intelligences. A liminal place, often shrouded iconically in change-announcing fog, the Golden Gate equally is situated in a space where the desert meets the ocean. That is, the video essay will suggest how the bridge is indeed linked to the future destruction of humanity as ecological cataclysm causes our oceans to rise and our deserts to spread. What is more, on a geological fault line and at the heart of mankind’s development of artificial intelligence (Silicon Valley), the Golden
Gate exists in a famously queer place (San Francisco) in which patriarchy struggles with/confront otherness - as per Scottie in what is perhaps the Golden Gate ur-text, Vertigo (Alfred Hitchcock, USA, 1958). What is more, the video essay will propose that it is not just that cinema captures the way in which the Golden Gate channels non-human, life-ending and/or patriarchy-challenging energies (as per The Bridge, Eric Steel, USA, 2006) - but that the cinema itself is such an energy, an intelligent alien that signals a non-human world - as perhaps made clear by the incomprehensible and alien film par excellence, The Room (Tommy Wiseau, USA, 2003).

**Biography:** William Brown is a Senior Lecturer in Film at the University of Roehampton, London. He is the author of Non-Cinema: Global Digital Filmmaking and the Multitude (Bloomsbury, 2018) and Supercinema: Film-Philosophy for the Digital Age (Berghahn, 2013). He also is a maker of zero-budget films including En Attendant Godard (2009), Common Ground (2012), Selfie(2014), Circle/Line(2017), and This is Cinema (forthcoming). He is also currently co-writing a book on cephalopods and cinema with David H. Fleming called Kinoteuthis Infernalis: The Emergence of Chthulumedia.

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**Emre Caglayan** (Newcastle University) – oecaglayan@gmail.com

**Title:** Dead, Silent, Slow: Notes Towards a Cinematic Minimalism

**Abstract:** Minimalism can broadly be defined as a transnational artistic phenomenon based on aesthetics of reduction. But how can such a definition be applied to a cinema - dubbed the artistic medium of modernity, a medium whose strengths lie in its maximalist potential, as demonstrated by the contemporary blockbuster? How can a medium that captures movement and engages most of our senses be considered minimalist? This paper aims to explore the ways in which filmmakers engaged with aesthetics of minimalism, through focusing on dead time, a soundtrack marked by silence and narrative progression that can at best be described as slow. The case study I will examine is the American experimental filmmaker James Benning, whose career began as a structural filmmaker in the mid-1970s, but since then developed into a unique example of cinematic minimalism. My focus will be Benning’s landscape films, which through fixed long takes permit a profound engagement with space (both architectural and natural) and its articulation through temporality and explore questions around collective memory. While analyzing Benning’s works, I will also offer a reconsideration of the relationship between cinematic modernism and minimalism: these two terms have been revoked together throughout film scholarship, and yet in today’s perspective entail completely different means of expression. Indeed, the history of avant-garde cinema is ripe with films that seem to belong to both artistic traditions, and I will suggest that distinctions around how cinematic temporality and space are treated could be one way forward for a more accurate differentiation.

**Biography:** Emre Caglayan is currently Teaching Fellow in Film Theory at Newcastle University and is the author of Poetics of Slow Cinema: Nostalgia, Absurdism, Boredom. His research explores global art cinema in its aesthetic, political and industrial context

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**Xiao Cai** (Shanghai University of Engineering Science) - tobecx@163.com

**Title:** Flowing Cinema, Flowing Aesthetics: Hallucination, Phantom, or Apichatpong’s Montage

**Abstract:** Since the new century, the most remarkable phenomenon in Asia films is the emergence of a number of independent films with experimental qualities. Among them, Apichatpong Weerasethakul is the one of the most excellent and unique. In his cinema and visual art, memory often runs along with other ephemeral elements such as light and phantoms, which also suggest the malleable nature of history and storytelling. In the recent years Apichatpong has created shifted narratives around his
region, fusing his memories and others’. His new ongoing projects continue the practice while also explore Thailand’s political remnants through the use of pyrotechnics. In this piece, I will take his some images to probe the relation between history representation and flowing cinema, and this kind of short-movies how can evoke the dynamics of history. As we will see, each image uses different methods of working with images from the past in ways that cause them to open onto the present. This creates other kinds of temporal relationships between past and present, allowing new possibilities for representing the past that go beyond theatrical re-creation. Such represented approaches also have their theoretical counterparts, and throughout this piece I use such theories to elucidate my readings of the images. In keeping with the idea of bringing past and present into dialogue with each other, I have brought together two major ideas from opposite ends of the twentieth century. One is an approach to history, Walter Benjamin’s “historical materialism” and the activity of “allegoresis,” and the other is an approach to cinema—Stephen Buick created these two terms in 2002: “flow cinema” or “flow aesthetics”. The aesthetics of these films are to emphasize the immersion of people into everyday time and space, in which the time omitting and visual blurring create uncertainty. And this kind of uncertainty makes the audience immerse themselves in the time and space of the scene with a new movie sense, pushing them to perceive and then thinking. Flow cinema detailed probes daily life, presents the “melancholy truth” in life, pay attention to ordinary and trifle.

Biography: Xiao Cai, graduated from Theaterwissenschaft im Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz (Germany), received the doctoral degree in Performance and Media studies. Now she is an associate professor in Shanghai University of Engineering Science. Her research focus on film philosophy, media theory, performance and cultural studies.

Gabriella Calchi Novati (C.G. Jung Institute, Zurich) - calchinovatig@gmail.com

Title: What is “The Shape of Water” in the Age of Global Warming? Anthropocene’s “Monstrous Ontologies” / Performing Otherwise

Abstract: ‘If desubjugating knowledge depends on a certain sort of person who is either ethically otherwise and seeks to persevere in being so or who seeks to be ethically otherwise and acts on this desire, from where does this person - or this will - come?’ – Elisabeth Povinelli

In the age of the Anthropocene, in which ‘humans have become geological agents, [interacting with] the most basic physical processes of the earth’, the arts and humanities are presented with a tremendous challenge, for ‘the climate crisis is also a crisis of culture, and thus of imagination’ (Amitav Gosh). Climate change, global warming and the sixth mass extinction are proving peculiarly resistant to artistic practices. Guillermo del Toro’s The Shape of Water (2017), however, does address, both poetically and critically, the main contemporary Anthropocene issue, namely who is, and what is, “a life”. By philosophically engaging with the film, I will show that cinema can perform what Michel Foucault calls ‘the insurrection of subjugated knowledges’. The Shape of Water, with its constellation of “monsters” (from the amphibian man to the sadistic character of Richard Strickland from the Department of Defence), and its sophisticated problematisation of what a monster actually is in our time of environme

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**Biography:** Dr. Gabriella Calchi Novati works at the intersections of performance studies, biopolitics and psychoanalytic theory. Her essays on digital cultures, film, theatre, contemporary art, activism and politics have been published in peer-reviewed journals such as Theatre Research International, Performance Research, Performance Paradigm, About Performance, and edited collections. She is a member of ‘The Anthropocene Atlas of Geneva’ (TAAG) Advisory Research Group: https://head.hesge.ch/taag/en/ and a member of the organising and scientific committee of the international and interdisciplinary academic-artistic network “Terror on Tour”. She earned her PhD from Trinity College Dublin in 2012, and is currently a psychoanalyst in training at the C.G. Jung Institute, Zurich. See also: [https://tcd.academia.edu/GabriellaCalchiNovati](https://tcd.academia.edu/GabriellaCalchiNovati)

**Claudia Kappenberg** (University of Brighton) - C.Kappenberg@brighton.ac.uk

**Title:** Screenic Rituals

**Abstract:** Current, ritualistic uses of screens are no doubt related to the screen as ritual space. An exploration of cinematic ritual has often informed choreographic ventures in cinema, such as René Clair’s Entr’acte (1924), Maya Deren’s experimental films and more recent works such as Sally Potter’s Play (1970) or Mathilde Rosier’s In Revolution (2016). On the occasion of a solo show at the Camden Arts Center in London in 2011, Mathilde Rosier argued that modernity has reduced our capacity for and commitment to rituals, and that her work aims to reactivate archaic rituals and invite active participation in them. To examine the nature and potential of cinematic rituals this paper will probe the history of ritualistic cinematography and related choreographic strategies. The pioneer of choreocinema Maya Deren wrote in The Divine Horsemen (1953), that the Haitian understanding of the relation between segments is different to ours in that for the Voudoun ritualist one and one make three. Numerous screenic worlds are governed by laws like those we find in Voudoun, which confuse its audiences and appear as trickery. Deren’s research and work may well have inspired Sally Potter and her double-screen work Play, in which six children - comprised of three sets of twins - interact on the street in a way that appears to distort time and space. Deren frequently used game-like structures in her work and she herself was influenced by Duchamp and his love of chess, and both Duchamp and chess also feature in Clair’s Entr’acte, an irreverent dadaistic film from 1924. Furthermore, the filmmakers cited here share an interest not in the symbolic, but in actual movement within screen space and time. Drawing on the writing of N. Seremetakis, The Sense Still (1994), Rachel O. Moore’s Savage Theory, Cinema as Modern Magic (1999) and Ute Holl’s Cinema, Trance and Cybernetics (2017), I intend to reflect on ritualistic devices such as the repetition and doubling of elements and their potential to build relations and identities for the 21st century.

**Biography:** Dr Claudia Kappenberg is a performance and media artist and Principal Lecturer at the University of Brighton, UK. She is a founder-editor of The International Journal of Screendance. Her writing has been published in Anarchic Dance (Routledge 2006), International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media (5, 2-3, 2009), Art in Motion: Current Research in Screendance (Cambridge Publishers 2015), The Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies (Oxford University Press 2016), and Syncope in Performing and Visual Arts (Editions Le Manuscrit 2017). In her visual and performance practice Claudia draws on a background of dance and visual arts to create minimal choreographies which examine patterns of the everyday. The work is often developed for particular sites and reconfigured in their relocation to other sites, and to the screen. At the heart of the practice is an interrogation into that which makes us human.

**Mark Cauchi** (York University, Canada) - mcauchi@yorku.ca
**Title:** Paterson and the Renewal of American Secularity in the Age of Trump

**Abstract:** During the 2015/16 American presidential campaign - during which time Jim Jarmusch began making Paterson- then-candidate Donald Trump often repeated the fake news story of Muslim immigrants who celebrated in the streets of America after the terror attacks of 9/11. The location of that alleged incident was Paterson, NJ, the setting and subject of Jarmusch’s film. In my paper, I shall argue that Jarmusch’s Paterson is an effort to counteract Trumpism and the chauvinistic secularism it embodies, not merely by negatively criticizing it, as Richard Rorty lamented the Left usually does but by drawing upon and revamping a tradition of American thought and culture in order to re-envision positively what a distinctly American secularity could and should be. Jarmusch locates Paterson to this tradition, not only by explicitly taking the very concept of his film from William Carlos Williams’s epic poem of the same name, but by including, like Williams’s own poem, many historical and literary references and allusions. Connecting these references to a tradition of thought, within which I may discuss Alexander Hamilton, Walt Whitman, W. E. B. Dubois, Stanley Cavell, and Cornell West, among others, I want to show that Paterson presents to us an American secularity that emphasizes everydayness, collectivity, and pluralism, but which nevertheless is not averse to all forms of religiosity and transcendence. I will pursue this secularity as it manifests in two ways: first, by looking at the film’s representation of relations among different ethnic and racialized communities in the film, about which we can say what bell hooks said about Jarmusch’s earlier films, namely, that they deconstruct the racism and colonialism evident in much American cinema. Second, I will attend to the presentation of creative inspiration in the film, which will include a discussion of the film’s temporality and the film’s aesthetic presentation of the poet’s relation to his community.

**Biography:** Mark Cauchi is an Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities at York University, Toronto.

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Hui-Han Chen (University of Birmingham) - HXC634@student.bham.ac.uk

**Title:** Slow Cinema's Cacophony and Flux in Carlos Reygadas' Japón

**Abstract:** This paper will re-evaluate a paradoxical reception of the contemporary Slow Cinema from film critics and scholars. Slow Cinema is deemed an emerging cinematic movement, one that both inherits and restores the aesthetics of the European modernist and realist canon. However, Slow Cinema is also a genre that facilitates indigenous and culturally specific representations, which then circulate around international film festivals, where those same film critics and scholars tend to claim them a satellites or imitations of the European canon. The paradox is clear in relation to Japón (Carlos Reygadas, 2002), which found international festival success under Slow Cinema’s banner and a critical reaction which implicitly invokes the domination of Westernised and Eurocentric film studies. Japón utilises the aesthetics of long takes and realist devices to depict the journey of a middle-aged man from the city. He is planning to end his own life in a rural Mexican village. It presents an encounter, a conflict, and finally an “interconnectedness” (Shohat and Stam 1994: 6) between the Westernised modernity and the marginalised indigenousness. Indeed, it is this very notion of “interconnectedness” that invokes the pre-eminent idea of de-Westernising film studies. As this paper will argue, Japón departs from a centralised axiom and embraces the differences which keep the world incessantly in flux. It therefore dismantles the essentialist binary between “the West and the Rest” (1994: 2) by embodying the fluidity of aesthetic exchange between different films from different historical, geographical, and cultural aspects.

**Biography:** Hui-Han Chen is currently undertaking his third year PhD research in Film Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK. His research interests lie in European, Hispanic, and Taiwanese Slow Cinema with the theoretical frameworks of Deleuzian and Bergsonian discourse. His PhD thesis examines the emergence of transnational Slow Cinema, the dynamics between its widely believed European
predecessors, and its phenomenon of transcending its geographical specificity of local culture and value
to reaching wider international audience.

**Sarah Cooper** (King's College London) – sarah.cooper@kcl.ac.uk

**Title:** How Like a Flower: The Ecologies of Rose Lowder’s Bouquets

**Abstract:** Throughout her Bouquets series, which she began in 1994, experimental director Rose Lowder has turned increasingly to the portrayal of specific subjects in ecological places, with the Bouquets 21-30 (2001-2005) referred to as “bouquets écologiques” (ecological bouquets). Filmed mainly across France, Italy, and Switzerland, the predominant subjects of her Bouquets are flowers in their natural habitat: each “bouquet” is an exquisite one-minute film, shot on 16mm and made in camera. The quivering quality of the films that derives not only from changes in focus, frame by frame, of her floral subjects shot successively within the same time period, but also from non-chronological juxtapositions, foregrounds the role that film plays in establishing her creative engagement with reality to show more than can be perceived with the naked eye. Yet it also forges a repeated, insistent connection to the filmic flowers that bloom through her lens and to the broader ecology they belong to, entwining human, animal, and insect life with the vegetal world. In attending to Lowder’s flora in this paper, I join first and foremost with philosophers Michael Marder and Luce Irigaray who have reflected recently on the significance of the vegetal for our lives (Through Vegetal Being, 2016), taking up their concerns in a filmic context in order to ask what it means to put the vegetal, especially flowers, centre screen. This focus on flowers is not however intended to cut them off from the ways in which Lowder links them to other aspects of the ecosystem in her films. Indeed, it is through such linkages that what Donna Haraway terms “multispecies becoming-with’ (Staying with the Trouble, 2016) takes shape here as I acknowledge difference while exploring alikeness through the ecologies of Lowder’s Bouquets.

**Biography:** Sarah Cooper is Professor of Film Studies at King’s College London. Her books include The Soul of Film Theory (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), Chris Marker (Manchester University Press, 2008), and Selfless Cinema? Ethics and French Documentary (Legenda, 2006). Her next book, Film and the Imagined Image, is forthcoming with Edinburgh University Press. Her current research focuses on flowers in film.

**Benjamin Dalton** (King’s College London) - benjamin.dalton@kcl.ac.uk

**Title:** Encountering the Multiverse Through Film and Philosophy: Space Travels with Claire Denis and Aurélien Barrau in High Life (2018)

**Abstract:** Claire Denis’s latest film High Life (2018) is set entirely in space, following a group of criminals on a mission to harness a black hole’s energy. Whilst the film demonstrates Denis’s signature interest in the materiality of bodies and organic life forms, exploring the sexual and sensuous being of the criminal-astronauts as well as the growth of plant life in an artificial space-garden, the camera also leaves behind the terrestrial territory of the spacecraft in pursuit of alien forms in the void: black holes, star clusters, gas clouds, and nothingness. I argue that Denis’s shift from terrestrial, biological materiality to cosmological forms and astrological processes necessarily also heralds a shift in her film philosophy. Denis’s engagement with philosophy has been explored predominantly in relation to her collaborations with the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy. Laura McMahon, for example, suggests that Denis and Nancy together propose a philosophy of touch, mapping interactions between bodies, surfaces and textures (2012). Approaching a black hole, however, Denis is forced to confront the warping, bending, and disappearing of materiality on a much different scale, decentring and deprivileging organic materiality altogether in the movement towards cosmological, quantum life. The physicist and philosopher Aurélien Barrau - listed in the film’s credits as “cosmic companion” - designed the spacecraft and
advised on deep space environments. Interested primarily in astroparticle physics and cosmology, Barrau has written theoretical texts on black holes and multiverse theories. I explore how Barrau’s philosophical and scientific involvement with the film warps Denis’s film philosophy in introducing her tactile materiality to the plasticity of space-time elaborated by astrophysics. I argue that reading Denis’s cinema alongside Barrau elucidates not only High Life but Denis’s previous films, where multiple simultaneous worlds seem possible. Together, Denis and Barrau approach new event-horizons for film philosophy at the limits of cinema, philosophy, and astrophysics.

Biography: Benjamin is in the final year of his PhD at King’s College London in the French department, funded by the AHRC. His thesis is entitled: ‘Plasticity in Contemporary French Thought, Literature and Film: Witnessing Transformation with Catherine Malabou’. Bringing the philosophy of Catherine Malabou into dialogue with contemporary writers and filmmakers, Benjamin argues broadly that current French thought and culture are bearing witness to the plasticity and mutability of organic life being discovered in the sciences, exploring new forms and narratives through which to communicate and figure responses to this plasticity. Benjamin’s project also seeks to engage across the Medical Humanities, and he is the leader of a project entitled ‘Narrating Plasticity: Stories of Transformation across the Plastic Arts and Neuroscience’, funded by the Cultural Institute at King’s. Benjamin has published on horror film and has forthcoming publications on plasticity in the work of Marie Darrieussecq and Alain Guiraudie, as well as an interview with Catherine Malabou.

Finn Daniels-Yeomans (University of Glasgow) – f.daniels-yeomans.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Title: Notes of Cinematic Fallism: Aryan Kaganof’s Metalepsis in Black and Beyond

Abstract: Aryan Kaganof’s Metalepsis in Black (2017) is an unsettling documentary meditation on the student protests that have rocked universities across the filmmaker’s native South Africa since 2015. The film - a non-linear and disjunctive but carefully curated series of fragments - follows the unfolding narrative of the ‘Fallist’ movement: the youth collective that has rallied around the mottos of RhodesMustFall and FeesMustFall, and whose objective is to decolonise South Africa in its neo-colonial present. “Fallism’, argues Mphutlane Wa Bofelo (2016), designates a philosophy of resistance that both draws on the history of the anti-apartheid struggle, and renegotiates its strict organizational protocols, favouring a volatile and extemporaneous responsiveness to material conditions. Fallism’s potential, on this view, is a mode of resistance that locates spontaneity and organization on a continuum: one that lies at the intersection between the planned and the impromptu. In this paper, I bring this conception of Fallist philosophy to bear on the formal construction of Kaganof’s film. In the meticulous volatility of Metalepsis in Black, I argue that it is possible to discern the dialogue of spontaneity and structure to which Wa Bofelo refers. Thus, Kaganof’s film not only relays a Fallist narrative, but embodies Fallist philosophy in aesthetic terms. As a result, I suggest in conclusion, Metalepsis in Black emerges as a new and radical cinematic form of anti-colonial resistance for the neo-colonial age.

Biography: PhD Film and TV Studies, University of Glasgow.

David Deamer (Manchester Metropolitan University) – david.deamer@bt.com

Title: The Death of God (At Five in the Afternoon)

Abstract:
The grandfather digs in the desert with a shard of rock. Beneath a bruised sky, the old man all the while laments the death of god. ‘Blasphemy reigns in Kabul’ he murmurs; it is ‘as if God had died.’ - The Taliban
are gone. Refugees – those who fled the new Afghanistan – are returning. Music blares from radios. Infidel soldiers walk the streets. Women leave home faces uncovered. Girls are schooled. He had to lead his family away from Kabul. Thus the final sequence of Samira Makhmalbaf’s *At Five in the Afternoon* (2003): the old man crouched in the sand, digging a little grave for his son’s dead baby, all the while bemoaning the death of god.

The film begins very differently. Nogreh, the old man’s daughter and the centre of the film, sees such a death of god as a new dawn. Both perspectives are expressed in the opening aphorism of book five of Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science* (1882/1887). Yet the aphorism is with Nogreh, the death of god is liberation and affirmation. This final chapter of the book, however, was written some five years after the original edition. *The Gay Science* is thus an exemplary moment of Nietzsche’s shifting of perspectives. Chapter five overcomes the more horrifying encounters with the death of god in the original. The cave of shadows in ‘New battles’ (III§108) and the tale of ‘The madman’ (III§125) appears resolved with ‘How to understand our cheerfulness’ (V§343).

**Biography:** Dr David Deamer is a writer and free scholar associated with Manchester Metropolitan University. His interests lie at the intersection of cinema and culture with theory, history and politics, centring on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Friedrich Nietzsche. He is the author of Deleuze’s Cinema Books: Three Introductions to the Taxonomy of Images (EUP, 2016); and Deleuze, Japanese Cinema and the Atom Bomb: The Spectre of Impossibility (Bloomsbury, 2014). He has published here and there in various journals and edited collections; was co-founder of the once cutting-edge, now defunct online journal A/V (2005-2014); and currently serves on the executive committee of the British Society for Phenomenology. He also blogs online, and is currently working on a book on Nietzsche and film.

**Ludo de Roo** (Macquarie University) – ludo-beau.de-roo@hdr.mq.edu.au

**Title:** Elemental Imagination in the Phenomenology of the Film Experience: From Cinematic Immersion to Environmental Engagement

**Abstract:** Due to increasing ecological crises, I propose an elemental phenomenology of film experience, arguing how the spectator’s sensory-affective process of cinematic immersion offers a deeper foundation for engaging environmental ethics for the future. The sub-discipline of “ecocinema” has recently explored how various aesthetic tactics of environmentalist films involve the spectator’s cognitive processes (cf. Rust et al 2013), together with various aspects of the affect-experience (cf. Ivakhiv 2013, Weik von Mossner 2014). While ecocriticism is an important addition to film theory, many of its approaches remain focused on cinema’s narrative level. Yet, as several phenomenologists of film have pointed out (cf. Ferencz-Flatz and Hanich 2016), the cinematic experience is rooted at a much deeper level: e.g., Sobchack addresses the importance of the spectator’s body (cf. 1992) while Loht (2017) shows how film experience is “fostered” by the Heideggerian structure of being-in-the-world. Complementing and combining these two approaches, then, I suggest (a) expanding ecocinema with a phenomenological analysis that looks specifically at cinema’s representation of the natural elements - earth, water, air, and wind. In a cinematic form of Bachelard’s “material imagination” (1943/1988) or Sallis’ “force of imagination” (2000), what I call film’s “elemental imagination” helps us to dynamically reconnect with the (film)world - i.e., fundamentally immersing the spectator on a deeper, affective level. Furthermore, this phenomenology of film-immersion has ecocritical potential, for (b) this elemental imagination plays an essential part in invoking environmental engagement on an ethical-existential level. The boldest argument here - inverting Heidegger’s essay on technology (1962/1977) - is that it is specifically the technological nature of cinema that affectively discloses this originary relation to the natural world (e.g., 3D-effects in Avatar [2009]). Thus, by navigating the interdisciplinary contexts of film-philosophy, phenomenological aesthetics, and ecocinema, my aim is to clarify the link between the connected processes of cinematic and ecological involvement in experience.
Title: Recording the Future of Memories: An Overview

Abstract: This paper is concerned with memories and, more broadly, with how film records and consequently displays time. More narrowly, I will focus on three modalities in which autobiographical memories have appeared in film. The first mode, adopted by filmmakers such as Stan Brakhage and Jonas Mekas, captures memories in a non-narrative fashion - an interesting point especially when investigating the differences between literary and filmic approaches - with a strong emphasis on avant-garde techniques. Memories are rendered through poetic images, images that, in turn, evoke the kind of contemplative stance that at times characterizes remembering. The second mode, a staple of the documentary approach from cinéma-vérité on, appears instead to reject the esoteric approach championed by the first mode and is instead concerned with a factual, or evidentiary (to adopt the term Bill Nichols used to describe the nature of the documentary) rendition of memories. Extremely popular in the 1970s to the mid-1980s, the evidentiary approach to recollection is often animated by the desire to document not only personal memories, but also to underline a connection between those memories and the collective with attention to social and political issues such as the Vietnam war, gender and race identity, the AIDS epidemic, etc. Memories are here not only for the sake of the individual who is remembering: they constitute the heritage of a community and carry, for this reason, a political and often revolutionary message. Lastly, I will consider how our present is recorded, how it is becoming a memory. Avant-garde and documentary techniques have morphed into different modalities of capturing present life, modalities that include social media and platform such as YouTube. The world captured in Eight Grade (Burnham, 2018), or the immense popularity of social media stars such as Ice Poseidon are significant examples of this shift. There is a future to the recording of memory, one worth exploring.

Biography: Laura T. Di Summa-Knoop is an Assistant Professor at William Paterson University. Her research interests include narrative theory, philosophy of film, everyday aesthetics, and issues related to the cognitive analysis of visual arts. Her work has been presented at a number of national and international conferences and published in peer-reviewed journals such as Projections, Contemporary Aesthetics, Aesthetics and Phenomenology, Film and Philosophy, The Journal of Somaesthetics, and The Philosophical Forum. She has been the Managing Editor of The Philosophical Forum since 2010.
discrete, discontinuous parts and thus separating its spectator from duration’s vital becoming. Examining the role of the comic in the development of both cinematic and post-cinematic media, this paper reverses the mock-suggestion made in "Film-Philosophy" by turning not to *Laughter*, but a related yet neglected text: Bergson’s account of déjà vu. Anticipating those who would, from Faure to Deleuze to Marks, seek Bergsonian theories of cinema despite the philosopher’s cinephobia, Bergson here presents memory as explicitly cinematic, describing it as an instantaneous, serial photography of virtual details. In actualizing such memory in the present, the self-alienating experiences of déjà vu, hypnosis, and hysterical laughter do not separate perception, but rather fractures it into two “different selves, one of which…erects itself into an independent spectator of a scene which the other seems to be playing in a mechanical way.” Bergson thereby suggests a specific kind of mediated perception, one in which the spectator oscillates between observation and action, vitality and mechanism, action and submission. In doing so, he offers a powerful theory for elucidating the schizophrenic oscillation between spectator and agent at stake in not only film genres like Keaton’s slapstick, but later post-cinematic forms ranging from the side-scrolling video game to VR.

**Biography:** Paul Flaig is Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of St. Andrews. He has published on comedy, psychoanalysis and media theory in numerous journals and edited collections, including Cinema Journal, Screen, Camera Obscura, and animation. He is co-editor of and contributor to New Silent Cinema (Routledge / AFI Film Reader, 2016) and is currently completing a monograph entitled Weimar Slapstick: American Eccentrics, German Grotesques and Hollywood Comedy Re-Functioned

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**David Fleming** (University of Stirling) – david.fleming@stir.ac.uk

**Title:** Actant en Set: Regarding two or three oneified bodies of (DØmhnal Gleeson)

**Abstract:** The entangled relationship emerging between a screen-actor and their fictional characters has fascinated theorists and philosophers since the advent of cinema. Amongst countless others Andre Bazin, Richard Dyer, and Johannes Riis have all weighed in on the complicated issue. Resonating with Stanley Cavell’s views on Bogart, Leo Braudy sees stars accruing a form of “residual’ self-image, ‘which the actor, the scriptwriter, and the director can play as they wish.’ Recalling Gilles Deleuze’s description of the actor-character as a monstrous and mutating conjoined-twin, Edgar Morin noted that when a given star incarnates himself in a character, the character also “become incarnate in him.” Building on such views, this paper maintains that set theory not only opens up a valuable new vantage onto this phenomena, but also helps describe the operations of another ‘body’ form increasingly found performing within real and fictional milieus today, to wit: the data body. The work of the Irish star Domhnal Gleeson here offers the ideal focaliser, not least because in Black Mirror’s “Be Right Back” (Owen Harris, 2013) episode and Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014) Gleeson embodies everyday characters whose commodified social network data and internet browsing history are exploited by corporations associated with AI development. In the former, a lifetime of SMS interactions are bestowed with new algorithmic agency after his character’s death, eventually becoming uploaded into an uncanny biotech-cyborg body purchased by his widow. In Ex Machina, the online history of Gleeson’s unwitting programmer is data-mined to help anticipate and/or manipulate his actions and responses in an upturned Turing test. Besides the obvious and interesting intertextual dialogue emerging between these two films and performances, the relationship between data structures and agential algorithms, when detoured through set theory, also helps cast fresh light on the operations of the actor-character hypernarrative/continuum in today’s digitised era.

**Biography:** David H. Fleming is Senior Lecturer in Film and Media at the University of Stirling, Scotland. His research interests crisscross the intersectionalities of global cinema, philosophy, and technology. He is the author of Unbecoming Cinema (2017), and has published in journals such as SubStance, Film-Philosophy, and Deleuze Studies. He is currently working with Mariaelena Indelicato (Ningbo Institute of Technology, Zhejiang University) on a forthcoming special issue of the Transnational Cinemas Journal.
Alex Forbes (Independent) – forbesalexanderfilm@googlemail.com

Title: Cartography of Paradise: The Danube Delta as space of Transition

Abstract: This paper studies the representation on film of the Danube Delta, the largest wetland habitat on the territory of the European Union and of its principal town, Sulina. ‘Europolis’ is a 1933 novel by the Romanian author Eugeniu Botez. The work fictionalises its author’s observations as harbourmaster of this town, at the time an important port administered by a multinational European Commission. The novel ends with a prophecy of the port’s decline, a prophecy taken up by the recent Bulgarian documentary ‘Europolis: City of the Delta’ (<<Европолис - градът на делтата>>, Kostadin Bonev, 2010), and Romanian feature film ‘Europolis’ (Cornel Gheorghita, 2010). Like Botez’ novel, these films see the locality as a synecdoche of Europe, and present it as a harbinger of terminal decline.

Consciously or otherwise, these films’ cinematic representation of the wilderness surrounding Sulina recalls earlier film representations of the Danube Delta, such as ‘Porto-Franco’ (Anca Damian, 2001) and ‘Asta E’ (Tomas Ciulei, 2001). Contrasting the idyllic wildness of the expanse of the Delta with the decaying postcommunist infrastructure of the town, I derive the suggestion that the possibility for renewal comes from the undisturbed natural habitat rather than from the restoration of former glories. In critical relation with notions of a deep ecology or a wild ethics, I draw environmentalist thinking into dialogue with thinking about the notions of ‘Europe’ and ‘the Balkans’. In light of Étienne Balibar’s consistent injunctions to examine Europe ‘on its borders’ (1991, 2001, 2017), and of Zlatan Krajina’s call (2016) ‘to understand Europe and the Balkans as co-constitutive of each other’. The cinematic representation of this limitrophic European place suggests imbricating environmentalism with a renewed examination of post-communism, and instrumentalising both in articulating a response to the ongoing European crisis.

Biography: Alex Forbes obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen in 2016. Since then, he has addressed the 2nd and 3rd International Conferences on Balkan Cinema in Belgrade and Bucharest respectively, as well as Film-Philosophy 2018 and other conferences in the UK and Europe. He is the author of an article on the application to film of Jan Patočka’s philosophy (Contradictions/Kontradicke 3, forthcoming). Taking in categories such as European Crisis, Balkan cinema, and the post-Cold War, his work also engages with theoretical scholarship that seeks to expand the definition of ‘the Europe’.

Jeff Fort (University of California, Davis) – jfourt@ucdavis.edu

Title: Bazin’s Eternal Returns?

Abstract: With the recent publication of André Bazin’s Ecrits complets (2018), an enormous two-volume edition of 3000 pages which increases ten-fold Bazin’s readily available corpus, we now have the opportunity to form a much fuller and more nuanced reading of this foundational figure. One can approach this reading with a specific, philosophically oriented question: what does this publication reveal to us regarding a “philosophy of film” to be read in Bazin’s writing? Is the well known “ontology of the photographic image” provided with a more developed, perhaps more solid, foundation, or does it rather appear, within this much larger landscape of writings, to be less a philosophical foundation than a marginal theoretical proposition, far outstripped by the mutliplicity of de facto, and possibly contradictory, critical affirmations? This paper will offer a few proposals regarding the possibility of a coherent philosophical dimension to be drawn from Bazin’s writings, including but also well beyond the “ontology” essay, by asking too whether there is an implicit but equivocal theology at work in Bazin, in
his choice of praiseworthy film-objects (beginning with Bresson’s Diary of a Country Priest) and in his figurative and poetic refrains - a strange and anxious theology which in turn may draw his thinking into a grey zone that is neither strictly philosophical nor theological. As Hervé Joubert-Laurencin shows in Le sommeil paradoxal (literally, The Paradoxical Sleep; i.e. REM sleep, or: The Deep-Woken Sleep), one formula that can sum up Bazin’s thought was borrowed by the latter from Mallarmé: “Tel qu’en lui-même l’éternité le change...” (as into himself eternity changes him). Is there a (rather literary) thinking of eternity in Bazin? Perhaps even, for this essayist who saw film as death forever and repeatedly returned to its moment of animation, a Nietzschean mode of eternal return - but a specifically cinematographic one?

**Biography:** Associate Professor of French, University of California, Davis.

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**Neil Fox** (Falmouth University) - [neil.fox@falmouth.ac.uk](mailto:neil.fox@falmouth.ac.uk)

**Title:** Rethinking film education: What can we learn from filmmakers?

**Abstract:** “What the student should be taught is as much of our whole culture as we are capable of synthesizing. Synthesizing, not specializing. To make a film for today’s world, we should strive to comprehend as much as possible of the human accomplishment in these last twenty thousand years instead of seminars on Howard Hawks or Orson Welles or anybody else’ (Welles and Bogdanovich, 1992: 258). The extent to which the teaching of film, predominantly film production, reflects the philosophy and practical realities of filmmaking and filmmakers is debatable, and has been since the earliest days of film education. Much of what is commonly understood as film education has developed and become ingrained separate from filmmaking practice - through industrial and academic prioritising and decision-making. What would a film education look like that took as its starting point the experiences and beliefs of filmmakers? Through an analysis of new and archive interviews with filmmakers, academics and industry figures this paper discusses whether or not dominant approaches to film practice education adequately serve the film industry, film culture and film students and explores alternative approaches. The idea that film education should not be solely based on the study of film is one important theme. This paper seeks to suggest future strategies for film education at a time when film production, distribution and consumption have undergone major technological evolution, the structures that were once in place to facilitate graduate movement into the workplace are changing and shifting and the identity of the university as a place of skills training and/or critical development is under scrutiny. This paper proposes resistance, diversification and a new philosophical approach to film education.

**Biography:** Dr. Neil Fox (PGCHE, FHEA) is a senior lecturer and course coordinator for BA (Hons) Film at Falmouth University’s School of Film & Television. His doctoral thesis focused on film education. His debut feature film as writer/producer, “Wilderness” (2017) has played over 15 international festivals, winning over 10 awards including two for Best Screenplay. He is the co-founder and co-host of the successful film podcast The Cinematologists. He writes about film for The Quietus, Beneficial Shock, The Big Picture, Directors Notes and others. He has published work on film education in Media Practice and Education, Manchester in the Movies in The Directory of World Cinema: Great Britain Vol. 2 and the Beastie Boys concert film Awesome! I Fuckin’ Shot That for the Bloomsbury published The Arena Spectacle. He is the co-editor of Podcasting: New Aural Cultures and Digital Media (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). He is currently preparing a book on rock documentaries & concert films whilst living by the sea with his wife Beth, their daughter Tessa and dog Bailey.

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**Hedwig Fraunhofer** (Georgia College) – [hedwig.fraunhofer@gcsu.edu](mailto:hedwig.fraunhofer@gcsu.edu)

**Title:** Dark: Philosophy, Culture, and Environment
Abstract: This paper puts the hugely popular German Netflix series, Dark, in conversation with twentieth and twenty-first century discoveries in quantum physics. The series presents space and time as an eternal circle in which the present and the future can mutually influence each other. The characters as well gradually discover that they can go back to the past. They try (unsuccessfully) to change the events that follow, an idea that also fuels the recent U.S. American Netflix series, Travelers. While quantum entanglement is mentioned occasionally, it is however not a concept explored in depth in the U.S. series. In contrast, quantum physics is central to fully understanding Dark. Together with time travel, Dark problematizes such physical or theoretical phenomena as black holes, wormholes, quantum leaps, light, and nuclear energy. Questioning the distinction between nature and culture as well as disrupting conventional notions of causality, Dark enacts an ongoing flow of agency and a making of spacetime that continuously reconfigures four intra-connected time periods (from 1953 to 2052), each 33 years apart. Dark thus meets physicist-philosopher Karen Barad’s description of iterative “intra-actions” as “the dynamics through which temporality and spatiality are produced and iteratively reconfigured in the materialization of phenomena and the (re)making of material-discursive boundaries and their constitutive exclusions.” (Meeting the Universe Halfway 179) In Dark, topological questions of boundaries, connectivity, interiority and exteriority abound. For the understanding of time, the issue is thus not merely that time and space are relative in Einstein’s sense, but rather that intra-active relations reconfigure space and time. This material reconfiguration is part of the suspense and mystery of Dark, posing questions of identity, responsibility, and accountability in an ongoing reconfiguration of the real and the possible.

Biography: Hedy Fraunhofer is Professor of French and German at Georgia College (U.S.). She has published on the dramatic work of Strindberg, Brecht, and Sartre, the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School, Foucault, and the Austrian writer Daniel Kehlmann. Her teaching and research interests include modern European literature, theater, and philosophy, with a recent emphasis on new materialist philosophy and film.

Michael Goddard (University of Westminster) – m.goddard@westminster.ac.uk

Title: Between Music and Film: Coil’s Queer and Transhuman Cinematic Encounters

Abstract: Breath is a significantly underexplored topic in cinema studies. As feminist thinker and philosopher Luce Irigaray suggests, in a critique of Martin Heidegger, perhaps we have indeed “forgotten air.” In this presentation I examine the notion of breath using a non-Western interdisciplinary aesthetic approach to enquire into breath in experimental cinema. Building on Davina Quinlivan’s The Place of Breath in Cinema (2015), which draws from the work of Vivian Sobchack, Laura Marks, and Irigaray, I further conceptualize breath in cinema, integrating Deleuzian concepts of non-representation, feminist theories of embodiment and Yoga philosophy. It is fruitful, in my opinion, to bring into the discourse, knowledge of breath cultivated through the ancient but living tradition of Yoga. The writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, allow for comparison between Western and non-Western phenomenological traditions as explored by Sundar Sarukkai and James Morley. Both scholars argue for the study of yoga as a means to enquire into the phenomenology of the “inner body.” Building on their concepts, and on Deleuze and Irigaray, I propose a new subject, the ‘yogic subject,’ to bring in a non-Western perspective into the contemporary discourse of embodiment. Conversant with the Body Without Organs and Irigaray’s ‘sensible transcendental,’ the ‘yogic subject,’ I argue, can reconcile the differences and amplify resonances between subjectivities in Deleuze and Irigaray. I also discuss yogic models of the body to elucidate the ontology of breath in Irigaray’s thought, connecting it with theories of sensory cinema postulated by Sobchack and Marks. To conclude, I illustrate all these connections in an analysis of a short film Meridian Plain (2016) by American experimental filmmaker Laura Kraning. Through this, I attempt to locate breath in a film that employs machinic vision to build a portrait of planet Mars, thereby also tracing an alternative genealogy of breath in contemporary experimental film.
**Biography:** I am a Reader in Film and Television at the University of Westminster and research film, television, post-cinema media, critical theory and philosophy

**Anjo-mari Gouws** (University of Toronto) – anjomari.gouws@mail.utoronto.ca

**Title:** Love Waits, Love Conjures: Anne Charlotte Robertson’s Five Year Diary

**Abstract:** Experimental filmmaker Anne Charlotte Robertson (1949–2012) begins her Five Year Diary in 1981, at the tail end of the women’s liberation movements that coursed through the United States in the 1960s and 70s. The multimodal diary project takes up many of the concerns of second wave feminism: gendered labour, women’s time, feminist desire. Robertson thus uses the diary, historically one of the few forms easily accessible to women, for the project of feminist world-making that Five Year Diary engages in. Yet the filmmaker also frames the project as having an explicit goal: a cinematic diary she’ll present to her “one true love” when they finally meet, and he asks, “So, what have you been doing all your life?” Robertson presents the forty-hour diary film as a “trousseau” intended for this man, whom she believed to be Tom Baker, the fourth incarnation of the time-traveling doctor in the BBC’s television show Doctor Who. Robertson’s obsession with Baker is a through line of the work, reflected not only in its cinematic portion but also in the written and audio diary entries that form part of the larger whole, many of which are explicitly addressed to Baker and which were sent to him as written or recorded letters over the course of almost two decades. Starting from Simone de Beauvoir’s notion that “The woman in love is the one who waits,” this paper considers the conditions of possibility of Robertson’s trousseau. It does so by outlining the radical way in which Robertson transforms the gendered labour of waiting - central to the very premise of the trousseau as that which one is engaged in as one waits for marriage - not as a passive endeavour to which women are resigned (as is sketched in second-wave discourse), but as active agency, as a form of work. For Robertson, who in periods of mental breakdown believed she was the reincarnated White Goddess, this work takes the form of watching for clues that speak to Baker’s coming, a vigilant lying in wait. Just as the diary becomes a record of these clues, so the act of recording and editing the clues becomes a way for Robertson to try and contract the distance between her and what she is waiting for, between the clue and the man himself: a means of cinematic conjuring.

**Biography:** Anjo-mari Gouws is a PhD-candidate at the University of Toronto’s Cinema Studies Institute, where her research explores philosophies of cinematic world-making. She is interested in how cinema records and articulates the making of the self, the home, and the world, through questions related to gendered labour, mental illness, and transnational trauma and diaspora. Her dissertation, Recording the Work of a World: Anne Charlotte Robertson’s Diary Film and the Domestication of Cinema, takes on some of these concerns.

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**Michael Grace** (King’s College London) – michael.grace@kcl.ac.uk

**Title:** Folds in the Continuity: Catherine Malabou, Plasticity and Cinema

**Abstract:** Despite the 90 years that separate the release of Fritz Lang’s Metropolis (1927) and Alex Garland’s Ex Machina (2014), both films turn around a moment of fusion of human brain and machine, in the rapid montage of Maria and the Maschinen-Mensch for Lang or Alicia Vikander as Garland’s CGI robot, Ava. What is however only a temporary illusion of continuity in Metropolis becomes a lasting impression of Garland’s work, as he draws on contemporary fantasies of AI technology to give to the robot that which was inassimilable in the first science-fiction feature: that centre of affect, “das Herz’ (the heart). These poles of thinking the (non-)relation of human thought and emotion to (the brain’s)
machinal wirings mirror strands of film theory relying either on the separation of a transcendental, even if embodied, consciousness, or a complete reduction to cognitive, mappable, “hardwired dispositions” (Grødal, 2009). This paper will turn to Catherine Malabou, her attention to Ex Machina and “metabolism” of film more generally, as a starting point for a different approach to affect, the brain and the image through her philosophy of plasticity. By thinking biological materiality and philosophical mind together in a form of plastic self-contact, “a hinging, both breaking the continuity and letting it appear” (Self and Emotional Life, 2013), Malabou does not repeat a positivistic mapping of one to the other. Instead she sees the synaptic gap as a resource for difference, where neither the image of thought nor the subject that thinks take precedence, but emerge together, changed. This interrupted continuity will aid in rethinking the brain into film beyond the most visible science-fiction fantasies of fusion of human and automaton, where the relation of intellect and cerebrality, spectator and screen - and philosophy and film - exist instead in productive, even disruptive contact: both continuity and a cut.

Biography: Michael Grace is King’s A&H PGR Scholarship-funded PhD student at King’s College London. Under the supervision of Professor Sarah Cooper, he is writing on the relation of Catherine Malabou’s materialist philosophy of plasticity to cinema, with a particular focus on French arthouse cinema of the body.

Catherine Grant (Birkbeck, University of London) –

Title: Performing Film-Philosophy Videographically. Three short examples (SO IS THIS [A Demonstrative Concordance]; AT THE LIMIT [Or, Vice Versa]; and FATED TO BE MATED: An Architectural Promenade)

Abstract:

Martin Hall (University of Salford) - martinjhall1969@gmail.com

Title: ‘The inexistent of the world’: British Cinema, 1968 and the symptom

Abstract: This paper will examine a number of British films from the long 1968 - Morgan (Karel Reisz, 1966); if….(Lindsay Anderson, 1968); Herostratus (Don Levy, 1967) and Performance (Donald Cammell/Nic Roeg, 1970) - in order to argue that the British radical feature film of that period represents two subjects: those who are founded as subject by their fidelity to the Event that took place on the site where the symptom is located; and those who attempt to efface the symptom through a utopian belief in what Žižek describes as a “universality without its symptom’ (1989: 23). This entails a marrying of Lacanian and Badiouian theories of the subject in order to interrogate a binary pertaining to 1968 that is set up by the forms of the subject in the films: an idealist subject who disavows the material conditions of existence; and a materialist subject who is cognisant of them and wishes to change them. The forms of the subject present in the texts align with Badiou’s (2010: 35-40) differing forms of 1968, allowing us to situate the texts historically. Furthermore, following Bell’s postulate that the difference between Lacan and Badiou’s subject pertains to their relationship to the void (2011: 111-112), and that this is a movement from ontology to philosophy, we will argue that it is actually a movement from ontology to politics, allowing us to posit our two subjects of 1968: one faithful to it whose subjectivity is subtracted from fidelity to what Hallward (2003: 150) calls the “symptomal real’ and a utopian one who attempts to erase the symptom, but is finally resigned to it, and to their finitude and mortality.

Biography: I am currently teaching hourly paid on then Film Studies and Film Production degrees, having just finished a temporary contract at the University of Manchester.
Ulrike Hanstein (Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena) - ulrikehanstein@web.de

Title: Feminist Videoletters: Affection and Address in Epistolary Exchanges

Abstract: Redefining art-making as a social process, feminist art education in the 1970s was - like political activism - rooted in the dialogical practice of consciousness-raising. Consciousness-raising was an organizing tool based on the imperative “to learn to relate.” The interaction in consciousness-raising groups promised to link the care for the self to social liberation, personal experience to theoretical knowledge production, and artistic creation to political action. With regard to feminist video practices of the 1970s, my paper explores the interconnections between the emotional culture of consciousness-raising and the organization of alternative communication networks. My discussion of the Feminist Studio Workshop Videoletter (1975), a collaborative work by Pam MacDonald, Susan Mogul, and Sheila Ruth, focuses on the role of video technology in creating attachments and articulating senses of belonging. Reviewing the evident interrelationships between self-examination and performance, first-person video production, and collective documentary making, I attempt to specify the embodied performances of political engagement, which take shape at the intersection of video art and video activism. The Feminist Studio Workshop Videoletter is a tour of the Los Angeles Woman's Building. Performing in front of the camera MacDonald and Mogul, then members of the Feminist Studio Workshop, act as informants and commentators for the viewers. In a style that is unpretentious, informal, and improvisatory, the video presents brief interviews with artists and documentary glimpses of the spaces, gatherings of visitors, and exhibited art objects at the Woman's Building. My paper considers the emotional behaviour, which appears as affection and cooperation in the video's production process and the tapes' audiovisual forms of representation. Further, I show how the format of the “videoletter” offers a model for an alternative channel of distribution for videos, the postal system. The Feminist Studio Workshop Videoletter was a contribution to the International Videoleters project and it was screened at the New York Women's Video Festival in 1975. My discussion of the Feminist Studio Workshop Videoletter engages with the (epistolary) desire to connect subjects separated by distance, the alternative mode of producing, exchanging, and circulating the videotape, and the reorientation of artistic video practices towards participatory and community-building acts.

Biography: Ulrike Hanstein is a research fellow at the Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, Germany. She has held academic positions at the Bauhaus University in Weimar, at the Leipzig Academy of Music and Theater, at the University of Vienna, and was a fellow at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. Her research interests include experimental film and video practices, performance art, and the materials and methods of art and media historiography.

Colin Heber-Percy (Independent) - colinheberpercy@gmail.com

Title: “The Flesh is Weak.” Empathy and becoming human in Jonathan Glazer's Under the Skin.

Abstract: Cinema has sometimes (speciously, I argue here) offered itself as presentation of the world to us without requiring us to be present to the world; it teases us with a taste of transcendence. Jonathan Glazer’s Under the Skin (2013) seems to reveal this as false, even hubristic. In this paper I argue that Under the Skin offers a complex meditation on the nature of human personhood - and it’s a necessarily cinematic meditation. By this I mean, the film realises its dramatic thesis by problematising cinema itself, repeatedly calling into question the locus of the screen and the viewer. The film’s narrative, I suggest, asks us to consider what it is that makes us human, and it seems to offer an answer that draws us into the "mechanics" of illusion, cinema itself, reversing the gaze of the viewer: this is a film that observes us. In the process, notions of predator and prey, watcher and watched, human and alien are overturned and disrupted. I set out to explore - through the works of Martins Heidegger and Buber, as well as the theology of Gregory of Nyssa (c.335-c.395) - how a possible interpretation of what it means to be a human person is gradually delineated in the journey of Scarlett Johannson’s alien from killer to victim.
This delineation will lead us to focus on the theme of empathy as it develops through the film’s story. A rich notion of empathy sits at the conjunction of the film’s cinematic form and its narrative content. So, Under the Skin draws us towards defining personhood as public, shared, superficial. In conclusion I draw a comparison between the cinema screen and the religious icon: neither are windows on another, exalted world or kingdom. Both are actually watchful reflective surfaces, revealing us to ourselves - as screens.

**Biography:** Colin is a long-established screenwriter working mainly for television. His film *Saving the Titanic* for Channel 4 won Best Feature Film at the Independent British Film Festival. His tv series ACT OF GOD about a Christian cult in Wales is currently in development. He is a priest in the Church of England and lectures and publishes on the relationship between religion and culture, film and faith, and spirituality. His recent article for *Mission Studies* was about the experience of writing an Easter drama for BBC1. His new book *Perfect in Weakness: Faith in Tarkovsky’s Stalker* is out now.

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Michael Holly (University College Cork) – michael.holly@umail.ucc.ie

**Title:** Shake, noise and bad resolution: strategic uses of the poor image in contemporary ethnographic documentary film

**Abstract:** In her essay on the “poor image”, artist Hito Steyerl argues that in visual culture there exists a “class system of images”, where high-end, high-resolution “rich” images exist in opposition to low-end, low-resolution, compressed and degraded “poor” images. As visual literacy develops alongside Internet technology, this class system has become recognisable to all. Technological progress has made it possible for many people to afford to buy high-resolution, high-quality, video equipment. Seamless autofocus, anti-shake and stabilisation mechanisms, and high-resolution capture in cameras make it easier to make high quality, professional-grade videos for relatively little money. This conference presentation seeks to examine the use-value in a repudiation of the ever-growing standards of image quality and resolution in experimental ethnographic documentary film. Through an examination of the work of artists and filmmakers who incorporate the limitations and faults of the technology they use into their films, such as installation artist Ben Russell and filmmakers from the Sensory Ethnography Lab at Harvard University, this presentation will ask what an aesthetic of ‘poor imagery’ brings to ethnographic documentary film. It will argue that the qualities that are desirable in ethnographic film, such as reflexivity, spontaneity and authenticity are amplified with lower image quality, and that an oppositional standpoint to video with high-production value which has become synonymous with corporate marketing and big-budget film can be useful to creative ethnographic filmmakers.

**Biography:** Michael Holly is a PhD candidate in Film and Screen Media at University College Cork, where he is in his first year of developing a practice-based study on participatory documentary filmmaking. He holds a MA in Visual Arts Practice from D&uuml;laighaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology. Michael has exhibited widely as a video, sound and installation artist, in parafictional and documentary investigations into cultural, national and local identities. His research interests focus on the intersection of contemporary art and documentary film, new technologies and strategies in participatory filmmaking, and representations of the GAA as a cultural institution in contemporary documentary film.

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Conn Holohan (NUI Galway) – conn.holohan@nuigalway.ie

**Title:** The Key that Fits: Melodrama’s Uncanny Objects

**Abstract:** The connection between objects and excess has been central to the theorization of melodrama on film through the focus on mise-en-scène by critics such as Thomas Elsaesser and
Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. For Elsaesser, the claustrophobic atmosphere of the domestic melodrama generates a narrative and emotional "pressure" that is diffused outwards into the mise-en-scène, imbuing ordinary objects with excess through "concentrated visual metaphors" that externalize inner states and present the object world as a symptom of human actions and desires. Yet as Stanley Cavell argues, the cinematische figuration of objects always contains a potential for surplus or excess, a surfeit of meaning that is rooted in the ontological status of the object on film and its mute resistance to human intentionality. By making visible the structures of desire through which objects come to signify on film, this paper argues, melodrama simultaneously reveals the potential for objects to resist incorporation into human structures of meaning. To echo the claim that Dylan Trigg makes for phenomenology, inasmuch as melodrama “calls our attention to the fact that there are things in the first instance, then its fundamental movement is oriented toward the strange and the uncanny.” The capacity of melodrama to expose the intentional structures through which objects are evaluated into existence will be exemplified via the disruptive presence of a door key in the life of wealthy industrialist Charles Rainier (Ronald Coleman) in the 1942 release Random Harvest. Drawing on Heidegger’s distinction between the “ready-to-hand’ and the “present-at-hand,’ the paper argues that the trajectory of the key from object of use to object of fascination exposes the manner in which objects are taken up as meaningful on screen, whilst the fractured psyche of the film’s amnesiac protagonist destabilizes our faith in human subjectivity as the locus of meaning within a stable object world.

Biography: Conn Holohan is Lecturer in Film at the Huston School of Film & Digital Media, NUI Galway. His current research focuses on the home space in Hollywood melodrama, including the recent publication “All that is Solid: Producing the homespace in John Stahl’s Imitation of Life”, Quarterly Review of Film & Video (2018). Previous publications include the monograph Cinema on the Periphery: Contemporary Irish and Spanish Film (Irish Academic Press, 2009).

Matthew Holtmeier (East Tennessee State University) – mholtmeier@gmail.com

Title: Vital Coasts, Mortal Oceans: The Pearl Button as Media Environmental Philosophy (a video essay)

Abstract: In The Pearl Button, Patricio Guzman explores the role water played in shaping how the Selk’nam inhabited the coasts of the Tierra del Fuego in Patagonia through ‘cosmovisions,’ sequences that extend beyond human perception, even as they link the habitation of indigenous peoples to subsequent colonial and political projects. Guzman’s “cosmovisual aesthetic” warrants dissection in the form of a video essay because of its complicated interplay between editing and shot distance, which establishes a critical bioregionalism that acknowledges the unique qualities of place, here the Tierra del Fuego, as well as the forces of globalization that threaten it. Guzman’s cosmovisual aesthetic ranges from extreme close-ups to reveal minute details in objects to aerial shots that articulate the shapes of coasts and even to telescopic shots depicting planets and nebulae. He works with archival photography and the superimposition of images/sounds in order to create a pluriverse of peoples and environments, which moves beyond human audiovisual and temporal perception. In doing so, The Pearl Button links the ways in which the Selk’nam inhabited Chile, depending on its waters, to the ocean as the source of the colonial project of Spain and site of political murders under the later dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Guzman’s cinematic elaboration of Indigenous worldviews resonates with contemporary Chilean philosophers Humberto Maturana, Francisco Varela, and Ricardo Rozzi. From cybernetics to ecological philosophy, this video essay weaves the insights of these Chilean philosophers with Guzman’s cosmovisions in order to highlight the complex ecological insights at the intersection of Indigenous thought and film form. In particular, it extends Rozzi’s practical model of Field Environmental Philosophy to communicating ecological philosophy through media.

Biography: Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Film Studies, Department of Literature and Language.
Kate Ince (University of Birmingham) - k.lince@bham.ac.uk

Title: Ethics and Vulnerability in the Films of Mia Hansen-Løve

Abstract: Now with six feature films to her name, Mia Hansen-Løve is one of France’s most acclaimed young directors, and winner of the Louis Delluc prize for Best First Film in 2007 (for All Is Forgiven, shared with Céline Sciamma for Waterlilies), the Cannes film festival’s Special Jury prize in 2009 (for Father of My Children), and the Berlin Silver Bear for Best Director of (Things to Come) in 2016. Hansen-Løve’s films are meditative dramas about family relationships, love, growing up and growing old, all filmed with exceptional attention to film’s ability to convey the passing of time, separation, loss and vulnerability. The study of this director I am writing, Mia Hansen-Løve: candour and vulnerability, argues that Hansen-Løve’s attention to her protagonists’ vulnerability makes her a filmer of the ethical, particularly in tune with ‘the ethical turn’ that has marked Western cultures and philosophy since the 1990s. Acute awareness of the emotional and social vulnerability of individuals (Victor in All Is Forgiven, Camille in Goodbye First Love, Paul in Eden) and of the precarity of the family (All Is Forgiven, Father of My Children, Things to Come) combines with a constant tension between adversity and resilience in the lives of her protagonists, all of whom have artistic or intellectual occupations (film producer, architect, DJ, philosopher teacher, war reporter) to which they cleave out of a faith in vocation that they feel will protect them from the contingencies of temporal existence. Drawing on the philosophical writing on vulnerability and relationality of Martha Fineman, Judith Butler, Zygmunt Bauman and others, the paper will examine and draw out the ethical focus of Hansen-Løve’s cinematic vision.

Biography: Reader in French Film and Gender Studies

James Jackson (University of Southampton) – jj1q16@soton.ac.uk

Title: The World as Poetry in Cocteau’s Orphée

Abstract: Jean Cocteau’s philosophy held that film constitutes a form of poetry. Nowhere did the director demonstrate this idea than more, & in both style and content, than in his Orphic Trilogy (Le Sang d’un Poète&, Orphée, Le testament d’Orphée&). I shall appraise Orphée& (1951), a film which sees a poet named Orpheus caught between the world of 1950s, existential Paris and the mythological underworld after being summoned by Death as a witness to Cégeste’s & incident. The film is an allegory on a poet’s quest to attribute meaning to the world, with Orpheus finding what meaning exists beyond “nothingness,” to invoke Heidegger, in the underworld beyond his comprehension and, when he is not there, in the meaningless poetry broadcasts he listens to in the car. Cocteau found himself at odds with Surrealism - which Le Sang d’un Poète was seen as deriving from - because it was intentionally illogical, dreamlike and Freudian. He wanted to construct meaning rather than obscure it, believing that films are similar to dreams with their images and events that we cannot take control of; we can only overpower the verisimilitude of that world if there is a lapse in the audio-visual syntax or the narrative we have immersed ourselves in; the things we think of as all too real at the time disappear, as in dreams themselves. Orphée is a film about finding meaning and truth. Irving Singer said that the hark back to the myths of classical antiquity in Cocteau’s films help to substantiate this quest for meaning; the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is beautifully intertwined with the story of the poet’s desire to find meaning in perplexing things to help him save the woman he loves, but when looking at the film as a whole, it is the archetype of Cocteau’s film as poetry.

Biography: James is a second year PhD Film Studies candidate in the University of Southampton’s Film Department. His thesis explores how French history, from the era of Louis XIV onwards, has been
represented in French film to comment on themes of national identity, especially in the period just before, and the two decades after the Second World War, when this identity was in crisis. His broader interests include: aesthetics, authorship, aesthetics, French and European cinema, modernity and the connections between film, literature and the arts.

Christine Jakobson (University of Cambridge) – cj395@cam.ac.uk

Title: Ethics as Aesthetic World: Levinas and Heidegger on Art

Abstract: Even though a considerable volume and variety of scholarly attention has been given to Emmanuel Levinas’s ethical philosophy of “the other”, in particular, his notion of “the face”, very little research has focused on the relation between ethics and aesthetics within his work, as well as the relevance thereof for film scholarship. Therefore, I argue that a re-reading of Levinas’s theory of art in “Reality and Its Shadow” (1948) through the lens of his theory of temporality allows the relationship between art and ethics to emerge in a new light and resolve Levinas’s often misunderstood critique of the ethical absence in the presence of the aesthetic. Subsequently, the question of “What is the value of art” is analyzed through Levinas’s aesthetic theory of criticism and his phenomenological account of an artwork as world-creating. This paper explores in detail Levinas’s previously neglected view on art through his theory of an artwork’s engagement and disengagement with the world, as well as his theory of criticism, which he divides into art criticism and philosophical exegesis as encompassing two essential elements of an artwork. In addition, Levinas’s resonances and divergences to Martin Heidegger’s account of a work of art in terms of world giving and finite presentation, therefore under the sign of finitude, is contrasted with Levinas’s ethical concept of infinity, which is pivotal as a counterpart to his notion of the aesthetic temporality of entretemps or “instant” in a work of art. Out of this analysis arises the possibility to critically reflect on the idea of film as world or as Weltanschauung, the relationship between film and philosophy with regards to the role of the critic or scholar and the significance of both art and criticism, as well as their intricate relationship.

Biography: Christine Jakobson is a first-year PhD student in Film and Screen Studies at the University of Cambridge.

Lina Jurdeczka (King’s College London) – karolina.jurdeczka@kcl.ac.uk

Title: Untimely Cinephilia and Spectral Images in Phoenix and Ida

Abstract: This paper proposes a rethinking of the critical potential of cinephilia in historical cinema. Using Phoenix (Christian Petzold, 2014) and Ida (Pawel Pawlikowski, 2013) as case studies, my research explores cinephilia as a mode of historical consciousness that challenges teleological perceptions of time. Both films are set in cultural climates that seek to move on from the trauma of the Holocaust: Germany in 1945 and Poland in 1961. Yet formally their film-historical imaginaries emphasise the co-existence of past and present, dismantling the possibility of closure. References to other films have frequently been understood as aestheticising politics and sanitising events, individuals or entire epochs. Some scholars have interpreted them in a more favourable light, as the archaeological uncovering of older filmmaking styles to assess contemporary times. My work seeks to reposition cinephilia not as a stylistic device but as the very location of a film’s temporal politics. The presence of older films within Phoenix’ and Ida’s visual textures is a crucial part of their historical projects. Cinephilia is no longer that which hinders historical thought but the force that generates it. Both films’ internal philosophies of time become apparent in the temporal dissonances within the texture of their images: photographs, mirrors, and the cinematic frame itself. Paying attention to the politics of time within these images reveals history as multi-directional and inconclusive, which puts them at odds with the climate of amnesia in both films’
historical settings. Phoenix and Ida both abide by a crystalline logic in the Deleuzian sense and insist on the presence of the past, thus renegotiating the question of accountability. The cinematic frame and the cinephilic references within it give visual expression to this immaterial and invisible lingering of history. The history of the medium and history as told through it are intertwined rather than separate entities.

**Biography:** Lina Jurdeczka is a PhD candidate in Film Studies at King’s College London. She won a LAHP studentship for her project “Out of Time: Temporality and Cinephilia in Contemporary Historical Film” (Supervisor: Dr Belén Vidal). She holds an MA in Film Studies (King’s College London) and a BA in North American Studies and Theatre Studies (Ludwig Maximilian University Munich).

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**Dionysios Kapsaskis** (University of Roehampton) - d.kapsakis@roehampton.ac.uk

**Title:** Representations of translation in the films of Jim Jarmusch

**Abstract:** In this paper, I will identify and critically analyse representations of translation in Jim Jarmusch’s films. Drawing on recent scholarship on the relationship between film and translation, and on critical writings on translation by Derrida and Benjamin among others, I will focus on several scenes from Jarmusch’s films in which translation is represented or referred to. Along with highlighting the frequency and variety of translation occurrences in these films, I will discuss these occurrences as clues that provide insights into Jarmusch’s cinematic poetics and philosophy. Untranslatability will emerge as a key concept that, while operationalised to emphasise linguistic and cultural difference between characters, ultimately animates a broader tension between two poles that seem to be crucial for Jarmusch’s creative thought: on the one hand, the perceived imperatives of authenticity and action, and, on the other, the postmodern realities of irony and abstraction. My argument will be that Jarmusch uses translation literally and metaphorically in order to situate his film characters and narratives somewhere in the spectrum between these two poles and explain their transformations. Eventually, the question of translation will ramify in three directions suggesting topics for further research. First, Jarmusch insists on the untranslatability of proper names, a theme that points to certain theological preoccupations in his work. A second theme is the (un)translatability of the work of art and specifically of cinema, which is related to the policies of subtitling that Jarmusch has used in his films. The third direction refers to translation as a creative paradigm for Jarmusch’s filmmaking method: I will propose that his films can be understood as cultural translation events insofar as they are explicitly based on the appropriation, adaptation and repurposing of disparate resources that are encountered in the global cultural space.

**Biography:** Dionysios Kapsaskis is Senior Lecturer in Translation at the University of Roehampton, (Department of Media, Culture and Language), where he is programme director of the MA Audiovisual Translation and the MA Intercultural Communication in the Creative Industries. Kapsaskis lectures on translation theory, audiovisual translation and transcreation, as well as on French literature and culture. His research has appeared in various journals including Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice, Translation Studies, and Dalhousie French Studies. His editorial work includes guest-edited issues in the journals Synthesis (2012), and The Journal of Specialised Translation (2018). Kapsaskis is currently co-editing The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Globalization (forthcoming 2020).

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**Joseph Kickasola** (Baylor University) – Joe_Kickasola@baylor.edu

**Title:** The Feeling of Cinematic Temporality: a Phenomeno-Cognitive Approach

**Abstract:** There is no lack of writing on movement or time in cinema, especially since the publication of Deleuze’s monumental cinema volumes. However, as illuminating as Deleuze’s perspective has been, it remains a bound to its particular philosophical vantage point (Bergson qua Deleuze) and the author’s
overarching concerns (i.e., exploring the cinema as something like an illuminating and evolving mode of thought, with wide implications for philosophy in general). Quite apart from Deleuzean conceptions, two other important streams of thought on time and movement have developed in the last hundred years which, I will argue, have not been adequately considered in film-theoretic discussion of these matters: the phenomenological and the cognitive-scientific. They are, in numerous respects complementary to Deleuze, though their divergences are instructive and critical. One of those divergences is the way that Deleuze forces us to consider movement and time apart from each other, a separation that can be illuminating of those particular dimensions, but also trades away insights to our more holistic experience of the cinematic experience. For purposes of this essay, and following the lead of Matilda Mroz, I shall refer to this holistic phenomenon as Cinematic Temporality. Husserl’s model for temporal experience (via philosopher Evan Thompson), Merleau-Ponty’s enmeshing of time and subject, as well as several key scientific studies on time perception will prove foundational to this approach. This small essay cannot develop a comprehensive theory of cinematic temporality, but it can serve as a proposal for a phenomeno-cognitive theory that fruitfully dialogues with the Deleuzean account still dominating film studies. This dialogue shows its promise in the emergence of some important concepts (e.g., temporal elasticity, experiential understanding) and at least three future research trajectories, to be briefly considered: Cinematic Temporality as Multisensory Experience, as Relational/Emotional, and as Existentially Dialogical.

Biography: Joseph G. Kickasola is Professor of Film and Digital Media and Director of the Baylor in New York program, Baylor University. He is the author of The Films of Krzysztof Kieslowski: The Liminal Image and numerous essays in various journals and anthologies, including Film Quarterly, The Quarterly Review of Film and Video, and the Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film.

Jihoon Kim (Chung-ang University, South Korea) – jihoonfelix@gmail.com

Title: Documentary’s Expanded Dispositifs : Contemporary Documentary Installations and the Operations of Relocation and Redistribution

Abstract: This paper characterizes documentary moving image installations produced and exhibited globally since the 1990s as documentary’s “expanded dispositif,’ while also theorizing their aesthetic and technical strategies and their viewers’ experiences in terms of the ideas of ‘relocation’ and ‘redistribution.’ Developed from the ideas of Thomas Elsaesser, Raymond Bellour, and Adrian Martin, documentary’s ‘expanded dispositif’ refers to the installations’ arrangement of heterogeneous technical and aesthetic elements, which results in the various moving image expressions that are linked to the theater-based standardized documentary cinema but at the same time not totally identical to it. The concept of relocation, originally coined by Francesco Casetti, points to the double operation of documentary installations through which some elements of the standardized documentary cinema are maintained while other material, technical, and spectatorial elements inherent in the installations are added. The idea of redistribution, derived from Jacques Rancière’s concept of the ‘distribution of the sensible,’ refers to the ways in which the material, technical, and architectural elements of documentary installations, including their screens, exhibition space, and audiovisual devices, transform and rearrange not simply the system of distinguishing fact and fiction in documentary cinema but also its formal, sensory, and rhetorical components. Investigating an array of installation works by Steve McQueen, Ben Rivers, Omer Fast, and John Akomfrah, this paper illuminates how the operations of dislocation and redistribution are applied to the poetic, observational, reflexive, essayistic, and performative modes of documentary practice.

Biography: Jihoon Kim is associate professor of cinema and media studies at Chung-ang University, South Korea. He is the author of Between Film, Video, and the Digital: Hybrid Moving Images in the Post-media Age (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016). His essays on film theory, experimental film and video, art of the moving image, cinema and contemporary art, digital cinema, and experimental

Angelos Koutsourakis (University of Leeds) - a.koutsourakis@leeds.ac.uk

Title: The Present as a Problem: Reenactment and Critical History

Abstract: Much of the scholarly discussion on reenactments has focused on the desire to come to terms with a traumatic past. Yet, for the most part, the conversation has privileged an analysis of films that thematise the relationship between history and the re-enacted events themselves, or the effects of reenactment on the individuals involved in the restaging of the past. Less attention has been devoted to films that emphasise the process of attempting to restage something rather than the re-enacted material itself. In this paper, I focus on two films - Anja Kofmel’s Chris the Swiss (2018) and Radu Jude’s “I Do Not Care If We Go Down in History as Barbarians” (2018). Both problematise the whole idea of reenactment by placing more emphasis on the process of collecting materials/evidence that can enable one to access the past for the benefit of the present. The first film is a documentary that intentionally incorporates animated fiction in its attempt to visualise the events that led to the death of a Swiss war correspondent in former Yugoslavia, who died after joining a right-wing group of foreign mercenaries fighting on the side of the Croatians. The second film is a fictional one and focuses on a female theatre director who is in charge of staging a public spectacle related to contemporary Romanian history. She chooses to re-enact the execution of tens of thousands of Jews following the capture of Odessa by Romanian forces in 1941. The paper explores how the films’ emphasis on the process rather than on the restaging of the facts does not aim to fetishize the events themselves, but to explore the persistence of history in the present. In doing so, the films do not just mourn the past horrors but enable a critical historical approach as per Nietzsche, according to which history should not be a matter of accumulating details about the past, but a way of servicing the present and the future

Biography: Angelos Koutsourakis is the author of Rethinking Brechtian Film Theory and Cinema (Edinburgh: EUP, 2018), Politics as Form in Lars von Trier (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), and the co-editor of The Cinema of Theo Angelopoulos (Edinburgh: EUP, 2015). He is currently working on a project on the Kafkaesque in world cinema and co-editing a book (with Thomas Austin) titled Cinema of Crisis: Film and Contemporary Europe (forthcoming with EUP in 2020).

Alicja Kowalska (Presovska Univerzita, Slovakia) – anjomari.gouws@mail.utoronto.ca

Title: Trauma and Rebellion. 1968 reflected in Polish and German Film.

Abstract: In my proposed paper I will focus on the question of how two cinematic depictions of political and cultural movements and events associated with 1968 can be linked to current political and cultural discourses in Europe. Focusing on two German and Polish films, I will suggest how starkly different, if not chaotically reversed, the impact of 68 has been in the respective cultures. Both films are literary adaptations. The choice of the literary material as well as cinematic styles speak to the cultural and political shifts that both films reflect upon. For example, in his adaptation of Heinrich von Kleist’s novella Michael Kohlhaas “Michael Kohlhaas-Der Rebell” (1969) Völker Schlöndorff includes an authentic compilation of footage of protests from around the world. Jerzy Has’ take on Bruno Schulz’ “The Hourglass Sanatorium” (1973), on the other hand, uses surrealism to depict Jewish life in Poland as well
as to allude to its destruction during the Holocaust. The student movements of 68 in Western Europe have been understood as an emancipatory upheaval directed against authority, bourgeois morality, and the oppression of women, consumerism and war. The culture of critique and rebellion in West Germany was a response to the atrocities committed by National Socialists. The attempts of students’ protests against censorship in Poland, on the other hand, resulted in the curtailing of freedom of speech and other civil liberties as well as an Anti-Semitic campaign. To put this comparison into perspective, while a new generation of citizens in West Germany demanded a critical engagement with their past, citizens of Jewish heritage in Poland were victimized again. My working hypothesis in analyzing both films is that this outlined divergence continues to influence the political discourses of today as well as narratives of national identity formation.

Biography: Alicja Kowalska received her PhD in 2013 form NYU and is currently a DAAD-lecturer in Presov, Slovakia. In her book project "Bildung and Rebellion. Youth in Literary and Philosophical Texts from Johann G. Herder to Witold Gombrowicz" she investigates the revaluation of youth in 18th and 19th century German texts with respect to its implications for notions of modernity, theories of literary production, subject formation, and 20th century polish literature. She has published on Heinrich von Kleist and Stanley Cavell, and is interested in representations of Germanness in American popular culture with respect to questions of trauma and memory.

Ece Üçoluk Krane (Georgia State University) – eucoluk@gmail.com

Title: Posthuman Cannibalism: The Non/Human Politics and Aesthetics of Antiviral (2012)

Abstract: Scholarship on cannibalism in film has focused on the human subject in the context of wider social, economic and political structures. What has been overlooked is the ways cinematic cannibalism addresses the nonhuman (i.e. animals, plants, and nature) and the human’s relation to the nonhuman. Yet such themes frequently exist in films featuring cannibalism. This paper will re-envision cannibalism in contemporary cinema through the lenses of posthumanism and critical animal studies in order to unravel the tangled webs of relationships between human and nonhuman that this trope brings to bear. Although cannibalism is among the goriest actions depicted in cinema, I will argue that cannibalism, in this posthuman application that I term “posthuman cannibalism,” is a fundamentally non-violent and ethically-oriented trope. By transgressing the boundary between the human and nonhuman that lies at the heart of speciesism and anthropocentrism, posthuman cannibalism critiques the discrimination, exploitation and commodification of nonhuman lifeforms. What insights can posthuman cannibalism offer to help us think critically about, and potentially alter, humans’ normalized speciesist perceptions and (mis)treatments of animals? How does posthuman cannibalism point to cross-species oppression by putting human-nonhuman relations into dialogue with intrahuman oppression, both of which are presented as the products of patriarchy and corporate capitalism? To answer these questions I will textually analyze Brandon Cronenberg’s sci-fi thriller Antiviral (2012) and trace the unseen but always present animal stuck between the lines of the text. Antiviral imagines a dystopian future where humankind has turned to cannibalism by consuming celebrity meat and disease manufactured by corporate companies. I will argue for cannibalism’s function to metaphorically dissolve the boundary between human and animal whereby celebrities of the future serve as proxies for their nonhuman counterparts in the current meat, pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. The outcome is a posthuman aesthetic, reified in hybrid images that amalgamate human and its cryptic animal other. Such posthuman aesthetics not only problematize and reconfigure sensibilities about institutional speciesism in the commodification and consumption of the nonhuman bodies in the meat and biotechnological industries, but also of human female bodies in media, all within the larger context of patriarchal capitalism.
Biography: I am a PhD candidate in the school of Film, Media and Theatre at Georgia State University. My dissertation analyzes cannibalism in cinema through a combination of cognitive film theory, posthumanist and animal studies approaches.

Tarja Laine (University of Amsterdam) – T.Laine@uva.nl

Title: It Follows: Trauma in Contemporary Horror Film

Abstract: It Follows (2014) revolves around a young woman left with a haunting sense of traumatising horror after a seemingly innocent sexual encounter. A similar traumatic effect seems to lie at the heart of contemporary horror film (Get Out, Thelma). Trauma occurs when extreme experiences resist cognitive processing and become stored in sensorimotor sensations, persistently repeated as flashbacks and nightmares. This forms the organizational logic of cinematic aesthetics in It Follows. Its cinematography signals haunting persistence of traumatic horror, tormenting the protagonist through following shots and extreme long shots that isolate her in wide-open environments, rendering her vulnerable to surrounding threat. The interior shots are characterised by darkness and suffocation, with the effect of enclosing horror. The lurking presence of an invisible threat is made palpable by directing the focus beyond the edge of the frame. And the relentless presence of a jaunty soundscape with its pulsating, throbbing rhythm, evokes a sense of anxious anticipation. Julian Hanich has discussed anxious anticipation as dread that persists until it gives way to horror or otherwise disappears; yet the traumatic effect of It Follows is based on privileging dread to horror. Usually dread comes with a sense of urgency, signifying it is high time that the protagonist becomes aware of the threat and takes action. By contrast, It Follows maintains a sense of urgency throughout with no relief by action so that the dread lingers and persists. In the context of melodrama, Thomas Elsaesser has defined such emotional urgency as failure to influence the events that act upon the protagonists. In this was this affect is linked to trauma. Similarly, a horror film can embody trauma insofar as it denies relief of dread both for the protagonists and for the spectators, who may experience the effect of such denial long after the film has finished.

Biography: Dr. Tarja Laine is Assistant Professor of Film Studies at the University of Amsterdam and Adjunct Professor at the University of Turku, Finland. She is the author of Bodies in Pain: Emotion and the Cinema of Darren Aronofsky (2015), Feeling Cinema: Emotional Dynamics in Film Studies (2011) and Shame and Desire: Emotion, Intersubjectivity, Cinema (2007). Her research interests include cinematic emotions, film aesthetics and film phenomenology. In addition, she works as a visual artist, after having graduated from the Wackers Academy of Fine Arts (Amsterdam) in 2018.

Dani Landau (University of the West of England) – danilandau@gmail.com

Title: Sense as Surfacing and the Cinematic Thought of A.N. Whitehead

Abstract:
Recent research indicates relationships between experience of surface in film and understandings of sense perception (Coleman and Oakley-Brown, 2017, Constable and Vermeulen eds. 2018, Ingold, T. 2017). These develop ideas of haptic visuality (Marks, L. 2014) as well as texture in film surface (Donaldson L. 2014). Camera prehension of textured surfaces combine with display technologies that layer images in to specific places. They act in the production of understandings of sense perception. The cinematic quality of the thought from Alfred North Whitehead will be employed to produce a post-phenomenological understanding of moving image. Both humans and other societies are understood as feeling through processes of prehension. By applying Whiteheads process philosophy we are offered a
way of understanding how film can enable us to see seeing. That cameras force us to think relational events differently. As with frames in film actual occasions manifest as unfolding created by difference.

In this presentation I will draw briefly on examples from my experimental film practice. Making semi-abstract highly textured moving image in works I deliberately extend the time it takes for viewers to move through stages of presentational immediacy to causal efficacy slowing the recognition process; creating the situation for reflecting on those movements in thought. The digital image is made analogue object by using hardware-hacked semi-transparent screens made from discarded computer monitors - again to point towards thinking of images acting in spatial relation https://vimeo.com/145854904. The presentation will demonstrate constructivist methodology recounting how in this research propositions inspire experimentation thinking with film which in turn lead to speculative thought. The layers of screen substrate, depicted surface, and screen site oscillate to produce understandings of sense relations as continual, textured surfacing. Here the subject object differentiation is simultaneously produced through textured difference by degree and also dissolved through prehension.

Biography: PhD candidate School of Film and Journalism, UWE. Supervised by Jon Dovey, Ian Hamilton Grant, and Katie Davies. Previously working in experimental documentary film. Research interests include - performative ontologies of moving image and documentary practice. Currently doing research in to moving images and the production of understandings of sense through site-specific praxis.

Dominic Lash (University of Bristol) - domlash@hotmail.com

Title: The danger of getting what you asked for: expectation and reflexivity in “Twin Peaks: The Return”

Abstract: The long-anticipated third season of Twin Peaks that finally appeared in 2017 is chock-full of uncanny doublings, echoes, and shadows. These include, most obviously, the various roles played by Kyle MacLachlan (Dale Cooper, Mr. C., Dougie), as well as the prominent role the narrative gives to the notion of artificially created persons called tulpas. Duplications and layerings are also deployed stylistically and rhetorically, such as when a large close-up of Agent Cooper’s uneasy face is superimposed on the scene showing the aftermath of the defeat of the villain BOB. Crucially, however, all these duplications are deployed in the context of the desires and expectations that the audience has had twenty-five years to develop. This paper will explore reflexivity in Twin Peaks: The Return as itself a form of doubling, as an acknowledgement by the series of its relationship to the projections of its audience, which have had the chance to develop an almost unprecedented intensity given the unique situation of continuing a series after a quarter-century gap. The Return engages with audience expectation in ways that span the widest possible emotional gamut, from the most satisfying indulgence to the cruellest tantalisation. It will be argued not only that the series wryly demonstrates some of the dangers of getting what one asks for, but that, at the season’s conclusion, Agent Cooper’s certainty of self-belief, and the audience’s certainty of its belief in him, are radically undercut. In doing so Twin Peaks reflexively manipulates expectation in order savagely to satirise the confidence of men in the rightness of their actions and their most cherished plans; Agent Cooper gets exactly what he asked for but is undone in the process.

Biography: Dominic Lash recently submitted a PhD thesis on confusion and disorientation in film at the University of Bristol. He has articles forthcoming on Nicole Brenez and Tarkovsky’s Stalker.

Hee-seung Lee (University of Auckland) – irene.lee@auckland.ac.nz

Title: “Father, don’t you see that I am burning?” From Melancholy to Burning(2018)
Abstract: The presentation explores one of the most prominent thematic and aesthetic characteristics found in the filmography of a South Korean director Lee Chang-dong. Starting from his directorial debut Green Fish (1997), Lee’s opus seems devoted to realistically express the acute sense of loss and suffering under historical, socio-economical, and political changes constantly shaping and shaking the lives of contemporary Koreans. The bleak and depressive tone of his films corroborates the writer-director’s pessimistic view on neo-liberal South Korean society, yet international critics and audiences also capture the affective resonance of isolation and marginalisation, rejection and humiliation, and the lethal dose of melancholy, all of which seem universal in today’s world of global capitalism. However, the paper reads the paradoxical affinity between melancholy, which is a pathological condition of detachment and inaction, and creative productivity proven by the director’s vigorous engagement with contemporary problems. While interlacing the reading of Lee’s works with various conceptual approaches to melancholy as a malaise of modernity the paper attempts a detailed analysis of the director’s recent film Burning (2018) in order to trace both internal and external conflation between melancholic indulgence of loss and artistic yearning for expression. To me, Burning epitomises a new, possible direction of the latent energy of melancholy underlying his previous films with its protagonist - a young novelist who violently breaks free from the cocoon of morbid narcissism and inherited melancholy at the film’s end in opposition to the diminuendo closure of Haruki Murakami’s original short story the film is based on.

Bruno Lessard (Ryerson University) – lessard@ryerson.ca

Title: The Monumentality of Evil: Wang Bing’s Dead Souls (2018)

Abstract: This paper will examine Chinese documentary filmmaker Wang Bing’s latest work, the 506-minute long Dead Souls (Si linghun 死灵魂, 2018). Described as a Chinese Shoah by the film press, Dead Souls is a film-fleuve, a cinematic tour de force documenting the life experiences and traumatic memories of those who survived the Chinese Communist Party’s Anti-Rightist Campaign (1958-1961). Wang’s interviewees - most of whom are in their 80s - are survivors of the Jiabiangou and Mingshui re-education camps located in the Gobi Desert (Gansu Province). Over eight hours of sit-down interviews, Wang erects a visual monument to the survivors and pays homage to the dead souls of those who were murdered and starved to death in the camps, as documented in oral histories of the period’s great famine. In this paper, I will argue that Wang’s visual monument to the survivors offers vivid illustrations of the aforementioned published documentary histories of the period, and further refines the notion of “slow cinema” because of its unique embodied, affective experience of historical rectification predicated on duration. The paper will focus on the affects (boredom, frustration, despair, etc.) associated with duration to better understand how testimony, oral history, and collective memory work in Wang’s revisionist film. As a monumental documentary, Dead Souls faces similar challenges to other long works such as The Sorrow and the Pity, The Battle of Chile, Shoah, and Wang Bing’s own breakthrough epic, the nine-hour long West of the Tracks (Tiexi qu 铁西区, 2003). Needless to say, all these films have their longueurs, but I will argue that the value of such extreme visual masterpieces lies in how they structure the work of collective memory and testimony as a series of experiential moments to be shared over a long period of time. Wang’s film is an additive and affective experience of duration, which functions as a monumental vehicle for experiencing the evils of the Communist regime and sharing the survivors’ lived time.

Biography: Bruno Lessard is Associate Professor in the School of Image Arts at Ryerson University (Toronto), where he also serves as the Director of the Documentary Media MFA program. He is the author of The Art of Subtraction: Digital Adaptation and the Object Image (University of Toronto Press, 2017), and co-editor of the collection Critical Distance in Documentary Media (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). He is currently writing a book on Chinese documentary filmmaker Wang Bing.
Sylvie Magerstaedt (University of Hertfordshire) – s.magerstaedt@herts.ac.uk

Title: Lies, Stories, Myths – creative power and ethical dilemmas in Big Fish (2003) and Amélie (2001)

Abstract: Tim Burton’s film Big Fish evolves around Edward Bloom’s son William, who tries to find out the truth behind the colourful stories his father has been telling all his life. William’s desire for honesty - for facts rather stories - has led to a considerable break between the two. In Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s Amélie, the titular character uses a series of deceptions in order to improve the life of her fellow citizens. While these examples seem to extol the beauty and power of storytelling and myth creation, and by extension the power of cinema itself, they also raise certain ethical issues when it comes to honesty and truthfulness. Drawing on texts by Friedrich Nietzsche (On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense) and Oscar Wilde (The Decay of Lying) I aim to outline the positive, creative potential of deception. Yet, as both writers emphasise the extra-moral status of lying in their theories, the question remains if there can also be a moral value in the forms of deception portrayed in these films. And if yes, then what are the conditions for this? Here, looking at Nietzsche’s idea that myths or stories have an important purpose in saving us from suffering, I will argue that the moral worth of the actions as described in the above films can be understood by looking at virtues such as goodwill or compassion. Moreover, Nancy Sherman’s essay The Virtues of Common Pursuit, introduces the idea of social virtues and she makes explicit reference to the idea of shared myth creation. As the films highlight, stories may fulfil an important social function beyond the demands for honesty, a function that may be no less virtuous. It is exactly at the moment when William Bloom overcomes his scepticism in Big Fish and embraces his father’s story, making it a shared experience at the end of the film, that he is reconciled with his father. Similarly, it is when Amélie’s father accepts the implausible idea that his garden gnome has travelled the world, that he slowly starts to emerge from his grief and embrace life, just as the creation of the various deceptions helps Amélie to come out of her shell. As this paper will demonstrate, although they may be telling lies, the characters of these films may nevertheless behave virtuously by creating what Deleuze called vital illusions, “which are more true than pure truth” (The Movement-Image, 1986).

Biography: Sylvie Magerstaedt currently works as Principal Lecturer in Media Cultures at the University of Hertfordshire. She has a passion for interdisciplinary research and scholarship, not just between film and philosophy, but also relating to other areas such as history and religion, with a particular interest in myth. She has previously published two monographs on film and philosophy: ‘Philosophy, Myth and Epic Cinema – Beyond Mere Illusions’ and ‘Body, Soul and Cyberspace in Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema’. Her recently published new book ‘TV Antiquity’ explores serial television drama set in the ancient world over the last five decades. Her conference presentation is part of a new project on Virtues and Characters on Screen.

Samira Makki (American University of Beirut) – mak.samira@gmail.com

Title: Palestine through Exilic Kino-Eye: Reclaiming Space in Palestinian Fiction Film

Abstract: In my research, I focus on Elia Suleiman’s exilic fiction films as the medium through which Palestine is being reclaimed through spatio-temporal re-narrations, ones that disrupt the official narratives of both the Palestinian nationalist and the Zionist. By situating Palestine in post-colonialism, I show how the latter serves as a discourse through which Palestine emerges as a multi-layered entity. Here, the use of post-colonialism is two-fold. First, through questioning the construction of the national image propagated through official rhetoric. Second, and more specifically, through a depiction of a post-colonial image, one that ensures the departure from a totalitarian duality into a manifestation of narratives that are often hindered by both national and colonial chronicles. Based on Hamid Naficy’s notion of exile, I examine fiction film as a form of narration that allows exilic filmmakers to grapple with Palestine as an occupied space, within and beyond territorial boundaries of land. Here, Gilles Deleuze’s notion of the “time-image” becomes essential in the disruption of linearity and the introduction of a
hybrid model, one that breaks the one-dimensional image of Palestine and allows fragments of tales to be woven and dispersed. The alternative visualization of Palestine is delineated through three main components: Home/Homeland, Time and Gender. The fluctuation of these entities both physically and symbolically, allows a re-imagination of Palestine via the Kino-eye of Elia Suleiman. Although Dziga Vertov’s infamous term Kino-eye is more likely to be associated with documentary films seen as an extension of reality, I argue that Palestine can and is being documented through fiction, as my research treats the latter as an alternative version of reality rather than a dismissal of it. Contending with Palestine both as a physical and filmic space, allows the shift from a brutal reality to hyperspaces unfolding via fiction films. By so doing, the lens of Elia Suleiman becomes the tool that re-invents Palestine. This shows that resistance is not to be reduced only to an armed struggle, rather it is undeniably a cultural product. Suleiman’s films allow a fragmented version of the struggle to prevail through alternative spaces and by extension, alternative narratives that are not denying or escaping reality, but rather resisting it by way of a filmic re-interpretation, within the liminalities of reality and imagination.

Biography: Samira Makki, completed my Master’s degree in Media Studies at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in the Fall of 2017 and I currently work as the Digital Media and Events coordinator at the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) at AUB.

David Martin-Jones (University of Glasgow) - David.Martin-Jones@glasgow.ac.uk

Title: Columbo: Paying Close Attention to Television.

Abstract: A long-running show like Columbo (69 episodes from 1968 to 2003) can be fruitfully analysed with respect to the way in which the societal mediation of attention has transformed - along with the transformation of neoliberal society - in the latter decades of the 20th Century. As such, the TV show can function rather like an archival object, capable of illuminating broader theoretical concerns around attention (following Jonathan Crary’s influential work on attention and modernity and Jonathan Beller’s update of this with regards to the now prevalent attention economy). However, here due care is necessary. Television Studies also has a long tradition of exploring how the medium mediates attention. From John Ellis through Patricia Mellencamp to Amanda Lotz, this heritage can create an illuminating intersection with these existing theories of attention (i.e. those of Crary and Beller), if both trajectories are brought to bear on a show like Columbo. Such an interdisciplinary approach can more accurately unlock both Columbo, and how it reflects the kind of attentiveness which neoliberalism requires. Of all the many ways to explore Columbo, then, for this presentation the focus will be on how Peter Falk’s distinctive performance of the Lieutenant emphasises how we are to pay attention in society, and, simultaneously, how this performance is also integral to how the show calls the viewer’s attention to this. Thus, the character of Columbo played by Falk is seen to perform the embodiment of the thinking process which typifies the attention economy, in particular, his loveable, gently invasive, unofficial intrusion, into all aspects of a suspect’s life (effectively police surveillance of the everyday) casts doubt on whether the law assumes innocence or guilt due to the always-on-trial - at work, at home, in public - nature of contemporary life in the attention economy.

Biography: David Martin-Jones is Professor of Film Studies, University of Glasgow. His specialisms are film-philosophy, and world cinemas. He is the author/editor of eight books, including Deleuze and World Cinemas (2011) [shortlisted for BAFTSS Annual Book Award], and Cinema Against Doublethink (2018). He serves on the editorial boards of Deleuze Studies and Film-Philosophy, and edits the Bloomsbury monograph series Thinking Cinema and deleuzecinema.com.

Francesca Massarenti (Ca’ Foscari University of Venice) – francesca.massarenti@unive.it
**Title:** The impractical, diminutive feminine in Jane Campion’s filmic 19th century

**Abstract:** Jane Campion’s adaptation practice favours a seemingly heuristic and extended approach to source texts within the Anglophone literary tradition of the 19th century. Films such as The Piano (1993), Portrait of a Lady (1996) and Bright Star (2009) draw from a wide range of visual and narrative ciphers linking to 19th century literary culture. Campion’s quaint ambiances and daintily-robed heroines are consistently characterized with the help of a noticeable array of cute, tiny objects - including, but not limited to clothes and accessories - that cinch, clasp and gird onscreen movement. In her treatise on contemporary aesthetic categories (Our Aesthetic Categories, Harvard UP, 2012), Sianne Ngai defines “cuteness” - or rather, the specific attitude towards cute objects - as “not just an anesthetization of powerlessness, evoking tenderness for ‘small things’ but also, sometimes, a desire to belittle or diminish them further” (3); “cute things evoke a desire in us not just to lovingly molest but also to aggressively protect them” (4). Ngai’s sharp treatment of the “cute” realm is particularly useful in understanding to what extent Campion’s “cute” aesthetics allows for cinematic representations of the stereotypically unfranchised woman existing in what audiences are lead to understand as an obsolete framework. This paper will attempt to trace how Campion’s heavily crafted and “prettified” screen elaboration of scenes and characters’ appearances influences narrative structures in her period films. It will also advance hypothesis as to whether “cute aesthetics” can reiterate, highlight or hide problematic attitudes on screen, such as a seemingly unobtrusive form of colonialism and unchallenged gendered domestic roles and norms.

**Biography:** Francesca Massarenti is a second-year Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, Italy. Her research focuses on representations of the British 19th century and its literary heritage in contemporary women-directed cinema. Her critical writing (in English and Italian) on literature and cinema has appeared on magazines Il Tascabile, minima&moralia and Another Gaze Journal, as well as in Ghinea, the feminist newsletter she co-authors.

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**Adelaide McGinty** (University of Manchester) - adelaide.rmp@gmail.com

**Title:** “He’s not from our tribe!”: The construction of Jewish and Muslim identities in the post-Soviet Russian space of Balagov’s Tesnota/Closeness (2017)

**Abstract:** Russia is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world, yet the relationships of its numerous peoples to the nation-state have often been complex and fraught. For centuries, Jewish people have been constructed as Russia’s main “internal enemy” in official nationhood discourse, a representation which has been both propagated and condemned in Russian cultural works. From the 2000s, “Muslims” have been increasingly racialised in official narratives of Russian nationhood, replacing Jews as Russia’s main internal “other”. Following this trend, 21st century cinematic representations of both Muslims and Jews living in Russia typically sentimentalise or perpetuate the crudest stereotypes. Tesnota (2017), the debut film from Kantemir Balagov, has attracted international acclaim and controversy in its portrayal of ethnic tensions between Muslims and Jewish people living in one of the most conflict-ridden areas of the world: the North Caucasus. Set in 1998, when inter-ethnic tensions post-Chechnya remained acute, Tesnota focuses on a young Jewish girl who struggles to reconcile her desire for independence (dating a Muslim North Caucasian lad) with her Jewish family’s cultural and religious expectations. Despite the film’s controversies, this paper will demonstrate that Tesnota can be read as a hymn for a pan-Russian national identity within which individual cultures are celebrated, rather than erased or reviled. This itself has resonance for today for both Russia and countries in “the West”: in both instances, official discourse on the nation continues to be framed from an increasingly ethno-nationalist standpoint.
Biography: I am a PhD researcher in the Department of Russian and East European Studies at The University of Manchester. My PhD focuses on representations of the provinces in contemporary Russian cinema, specifically the 2010s. My broader research interests include cinema in relation to national and local identities, trauma theory, queer theory, race and gender.

Serena Moscardelli (Goldsmiths) – serenamoscardelli@yahoo.it

Title: The mosquitoes stayed - Paolo Sorrentino’s 'L’Amico di Famiglia' and the dialectics of space and time in the Pontine Marshes and the new towns

Abstract: In this paper, I explore the interconnections between Paolo Sorrentino’s L’Amico di Famiglia (2006) and Italian fascism’s spatial politics, by focusing on how the film deals with space and time. The film is set in four of the five new towns (Latina former Littoria, Sabaudia, Pontinia and Aprilia) built in the 1930s under the fascist regime after the land reclamation of the Pontine Marshes, in southern Lazio. In particular, I take into consideration the artificiality of the built environment of the new towns, suggesting that Sorrentino presents it as “abstract”, “unreal” and “unlived” - an effect achieved through the use of lighting, the absence of cars, and a peculiar camerawork. I suggest to analyse these operations through Henri Lefebvre’s The Production of Space and Space and the State, and especially looking at the relationship between a “conceived space” - the space planned by architects, urban planners, but also the space of the political power - and the “lived space” - the space of everyday life. Secondly, I analyse how time functions within the film and how this is used to manifest the haunting presence of fascism. Indeed, through Jacques Derrida’s concept of hauntology (as in Spectres of Marx), I analyse Sorrentino’s displacement of time/space references by way of filmic and pro-filmic strategies (such as scenography, costumes, dialogues, the expressive use of montage etc.) to suggest how time can be described as spectral. The absent presence of the regime emerges as a ‘haunting mosquito’, at the same time gesturing to the memory of the lost marshes and acting as an insidious reminder of (a present) history.

Biography: I am a graduate from Goldsmiths University of London, where I studied for the MA degree Contemporary Art Theory, in 2016-17. I previously studied History of Art at Ca' Foscari University, in Venice (Italy), and at University College London - UCL. I recently worked for the 16. International Architecture Exhibition Freespace - Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia, as a cultural mediator. I currently live and work in Venice, Italy.

Hudson Moura (Ryerson University) - hmoura@politics.ryerson.ca

Title: The Cambridge Squatter’s Liminal Filmic Space

Abstract: The film The Cambridge Squatter (Eliane Caffé) blurs fiction and documentary and assembles several film sequences created originally by other filmmakers for distinctive purposes. The film’s creators and producers straddle the boundary between real and representational spaces, using sets constructed on site in the midst of renovations being carried out on the building by the squatters themselves. Thus, is constructed a liminal space overlapping the filmic space, and effecting a continuity between the on-and off-screen. In this liminal space, essentially both temporary and mobile, the filmmakers were able to chart the territory, understand some of the squatter’s community dynamics, and get to know their participants. Dealing with the ephemeral, fragile, and the transitory nature of refugee and homeless conditions living in a squat, the filmmakers opted for what they called a ‘representation of the representation.’ This meta-representational strategy shares affinities with Deleuze’s notion that certain characters—threshold characters or characters of becoming—have the ability to enter into the film/fiction and leave it, and in so doing, to mark the temporal and spatial boundary of before the film/after the
In the film, real and virtual spaces blend into a quasi-fictional cinematic narrative that brings the viewer closer to the figure of the refugee. The strong sensory, affective, ideological, and linguistic references of the refugee-actors contribute to a sense of an alteration in the contours of the local, human geography. The film attempts to reveal who is behind the ideological mask that transforms the figure of the refugee into a single and diffuse archetype. Because the film story does not refer to an ideal of the true which constitutes its veracity, the question raised is whether or not this real situation becomes a pseudo-story (Deleuze). Is this a story which simulates (fictionally truthful) or a simulation of the story?

**Biography:** Hudson Moura is an assistant professor at the Department of Politics and Yeates School of Graduate Studies at Ryerson University and an associate faculty of the Latin American program at the University of Toronto. His publications and research focus on diaspora cinema, politics, and intermediality. Recently he completed a short-documentary on Brazilian Guarani indigenous culture entitled “Forgotten Traditions.”

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**Jules O’Dwyer** (Trinity Hall, Cambridge) – jipo2@cam.ac.uk

**Title:** Bodies/being/landscapes: on Alain Guiraudie’s environs

**Abstract:** While French director Alain Guiraudie has been making films for over twenty years, it was his 2013 breakthrough film, Stranger by the Lake that assured his place in European queer cinema. The socio-sexual milieux that are explored in his films throw into sharp relief more visible (and actively theorised) modes of urban queerness. Guiraudie steadfastly resists the gravitational pull of Paris, the primary locus of French gay culture, to negotiate questions of desire in the rural spaces of the south. This paper considers how cinema might contribute to emerging discourses on queer rurality and ecologies (Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson 2010; Gandy 2015) by exploring the interrelationship between landscapes and bodies, space and time. Though this film is essentially a chamber piece, it is marked by spatiotemporal ambiguity; the lakefront setting is at once a spatially expansive and narratively restricted field, and while the film’s temporality is similarly unmoored and distended, the recursive editing patterns and diurnal rhythms function loosely as a metronome. I offer an account of how Guiraudie’s framing of cinematic landscapes serves to shape the film’s form and calibrate its affective relations as well as gesturing to modes of queerness beyond the human. Further, I suggest that Guiraudie’s carefully crafted visual grammar re-casts the sensations of fleetingness and contingency that have typically been imputed to the urban cruising encounter, reterritorializing them in the register of the rural.

**Biography:** Jules O’Dwyer is a third-year PhD candidate and Wolfson Scholar working across French and Film Studies at Trinity Hall. His research addresses questions of sexuality, subjectivity and cinematic space in contemporary French film. He has written articles in journals including Screen, Alphaville and Studies in French Cinema, and reviews for Film-Philosophy and French Studies. Jules currently serves as assistant editor at the critical theory journal, World Picture.

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**John Ó Maoilearca** (Kingston University) – j.mullarkey@kingston.ac.uk

**Title:** The Defragmenting Image: Stories in Cinematic Time Travel

**Abstract:** Can we will ourselves to go back in time? In one sense, Henri Bergson thought that we could do so. He was an advocate of attention training - educating our senses to the specificities of every image in order to expand our experience of time (“duration”) - or what he called an “attention to life’. This image perception was not simply about noticing spatial differences alone however, for, in expanding
one's attention, one also expands one's temporal horizon - at least according to Bergson. One "travels' into the so-called past (if only for a few "moments") by expanding, or defragmenting, one's present. This is not a supersensuous escape from perceiving the present, but rather an expansion of the present through a deepening of the senses - an excess of materiality rather than a disembowering spirit. This paper will cross-examine Bergson's "attention to life" by intersecting it with Jeannot Szwarc's cult film of 1980, Somewhere in Time. We do this in order to unearth the strange conception of time-travel underlying the story (one different to Bergson's in part, but still kindred). From Richard Matheson's film script (adapted from his own 1975 novel, Bid Time Return), through to the ideas of time, attention, and memory that it relays via the metaphysical theories of J.W. Dunne and J.B. Priestley, we will see that, as with Bergson, it is not through any disembodied, supernatural will alone that the hero of the story (played by Christopher Reeve) operates his time machine. Rather, it is also through his use of ordinary objects and performative acts (self-hypnosis being one) and an attention to reversing certain discontinuities within his surrounding imagery that a kind of Proustian space-time-travel is activated: not by escaping the present, but by expanding and multiplying "it", in a manner compatible with Bergson's theories. And, indeed, it is Szwarc's film itself - taken as a set of actual images in the process of defragmenting themselves - that demonstrates how we might create a new (dis)continuity with a so-called "past", thereby offering us a model for image-based time travel that is both material and spiritual, at once.

Biography: John ó Maoilearca is Professor of Film and Television Studies at Kingston University, London. He has also taught philosophy and film theory at the University of Sunderland, England and the University of Dundee, Scotland. He has published ten books, including (as author) Post-Continental Philosophy (2006), Philosophy and the Moving Image (2010), All Thoughts Are Equal (2015), and (as editor) Laruelle and Non-Philosophy (2012) and The Bloomsbury Companion to Continental Philosophy (2013). His latest work deals ordinary methods of time-travel in film and philosophy.

Martin O'Shaughnessy (Nottingham Trent University) – martin.oshaughnessy@ntu.ac.uk

Title: Mediating collective subjects or the encounter between the machineries of political mobilisation

Abstract: This paper will bring together the work of important contemporary critical theorists to probe the encounter of the machinery of oppositional assembly with that of cinema in two films by important avant-garde film-maker, Sylvain George: Vers Madrid, the Burning Bright (2012) and Paris est une fête(2014). In her State of Insecurity (2015, Isabell Lorey analyses how contemporary neoliberalism deploys apparatuses of ‘precarisation’ (the withdrawal of protections, undoing of solidarities and individualisation of workplace statuses and rewards) to produce a differentiated field of exposure to vulnerability. In her Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly (2015), Judith Butler investigates how the coming together of precarious(mortal, needy) bodies can ground a politics not on an impossible existential security but on an egalitarian interdependence that paradoxically builds its strength from shared recognition of vulnerability. Her account brings bodies and their needs out of the private sphere to which, for example, an Arendtian understanding of political action and subjectivity condemns them. It invites us to analyse mobilisations as embodied phenomena requiring a place and infrastructure to take place while simultaneously transforming that place to resist the kind of privatization of public space and shrinking of the sphere of democratic control characteristic of neoliberalism (Wendy Brown, 2015). Butler notes that assemblies produce a constituent (not constituted) people not simply through words but through the complex interplay of performance, image, acoustics, associated technologies etc. She insists that the active presence of media is necessary to diffuse the mobilisation and to present its enclosed self-presence. Curiously though, she has little else to say about the process of mediation. This is why I also turn to Maurizio Lazzarato, a Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari-inspired analyst of not only neoliberalism but also of modern media including cinema. Lazzarato lambasts most contemporary critical theorists, including Butler, for their excessive focus on
subjectivation and language and neglect of the machinic with its ‘a-signifying’ semiologies which are increasingly dominant vectors of contemporary subjection. He notes how machinisms can shatter our politically disabling enclosure in individuated subjects and how cinema’s machinic powers and plural semiologies are typically subordinated to individualising narratives. Drawing on Butler and Lazzarato, I will probe George’s cinema’s capacity to engineer a productive coming together of its own productive machineries and plural semiologies with those of the political assembly to make itself the self-consciousness of a newly emergent, de-individuated and embodied collective subject.

Biography: Martin O’Shaughnessy is Professor of Film Studies at Nottingham Trent. He is particular interested in political cinema but also engages happily with other areas especially in the context of French and European cinema. He has written books on Jean Renoir (2000), Renoir’s La Grande Illusion (2009) and the films of Laurent Cantet (2014). He is the author of The New Face of Political Cinema (2007) and is now working on a book on French and Francophone cinema in and beyond the Crisis due to be published by EUP in 2020.

Tamas Nagypal (Ryerson University) – tamas.nagypal@gmail.com

Title: Myroslav Slaboshpytskyi’s The Tribe and The Post-Socialist Cinema of Cruel Pessimism

Abstract: Myroslav Slaboshpytskyi’s The Tribe (2014) is set in a Ukrainian boarding school for deaf teenagers, has an all deaf cast, and dialogues entirely in sign language with no subtitles. It follows a new student Sergey as he is drawn into the school’s sinister and ultra violent network of organized crime involved in robbery and prostitution in which one way or another everyone in the school participates. While the narrative reveals a male teacher as the leader of the operations, the film accomplishes more than the self-orientalizing exploitation of post-socialist Ukraine’s reputation for oligarchic capitalism and patriarchal despotism. On the one hand, the characters are depicted as part of a tribal organism; the camera tracks them in a series of long takes as they move together in a synchronized rhythm to perform complex criminal operations on their designated victims of outsiders. On the other hand, they constantly break apart and erupt in individual gestures of inexplicable violence against each other. As an allegory for the civil war-torn Ukraine divided between the influence of Western neoliberalism and Russia’s authoritarian capitalism, the film’s all encompassing universe of mute cruelty exposes the biopolitical violence at the core of all forms of post-socialist capital accumulation. Setting an affective tone of what I call cruel pessimism, instead of offering either the Western liberal-individualist or the Eastern illiberal-nationalist model of sovereignty as a project of emancipation, it rather short circuits their apparent antinomy, revealing them as two sides of the same crisis of the social characterized by what Lauren Berlant calls cruel optimism. While cruel optimism is an affective attachment to “compromised conditions of possibility,” that is, the masochistic belief in one’s success in a playing field rigged against him, cruel pessimism is the violent affect that erupts once that attachment is severed. For this reason, The Tribe’s post-socialist cinema of cruel pessimism carries the seeds of emancipation from what Slavoj Zizek calls the double blackmail of liberal and illiberal capitalism.

Tyler Parks (University of St Andrews) – tp36@st-andrews.ac.uk

Title: Thinking with the World About History: On Landscape and James Benning’s Deseret (1995)

Abstract: James Benning’s Deseret (1995) is a film that prompts us to reflect on the varied and often unpredictable relations into which images and words can enter. In this paper, I argue that it also tantalizingly offers an opportunity to imagine how cinema might produce experimental histories in the age of the Anthropocene, wherein, as Dipesh Chakravarty (2009) has contended, the venerable distinction between human history and natural history has collapsed. In particular, I am interested here
in how the experience with landscape images organised by the film links up with both the narrative of Utah presented in voiceover, and roles played by landscapes of the American West within film history. How, I ask, do the film’s images affect the way we understand the version of Utah history that appears in the voiceover, which consists of New York Times reports on the territory dating back to the newspaper’s inception? How, on the other hand, do they both draw on and deflate the mythical functions played by landscape in the western genre? Ultimately, I aim to understand the form of potentialised cinematic thinking made operative by the film through Donna Haraway’s notion of ‘sympoiesis’, as a ‘thinking with’ the world that both draws some images into ‘reasoned’ chains and allows others to retain the uncoded aesthetic address of the locations that they picture. What emerges, I conclude, is a strategy of doing history that illuminates particular entanglements of the human and the natural.

**Biography:** I am a Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of St Andrews, where I currently teach on modules dealing with film history, genre, and questions of atmosphere, landscape, and cosmopolitan cinema. I received my PhD in Film Studies from the University of Edinburgh, and I am currently developing my thesis as a monograph exploring the potential and ramifications of Deleuze’s claims about thinking in modern cinema taking the form of free indirect discourse. My arguments are developed through analysis of works of contemporary global art cinema, and generally speaking I aim at grounding and expanding on some of Deleuze’s claims through close analysis of film style, and reflections on its relation to cinematic thinking and ethics.

**Hannah Paveck** (King’s College London) – hannah.paveck@kcl.ac.uk

**Title:** Sounding Colonial Encounters: Strategies of Subtitle Translation

**Abstract:** This paper concerns the role of subtitle translation and linguistic difference in contemporary global art cinema, specifically in recent films that stage colonial encounters between white European settlers and Indigenous peoples. Engaging with philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy’s consideration of sound and listening, I analyze how three female filmmakers - Lucrecia Martel, Kelly Reichardt, and Valeska Grisebach - deploy strategies of (non-)translation to destabilize a colonialist ethos of (male) mastery, both within the narrative’s discursive economy and within the spectatorial experience. Whether by part-subtitling or refusing to subtitle Indigenous speech, these strategies ask us to consider the political dimensions of to and with whom we are listening. This paper centers on three distinct colonial settings: 18th century Spanish Latin America in Martel’s Zama (2017); 19th century Oregon Territory in Reichardt’s Meek’s Cutoff (2010); and the neo-colonial dimensions of 21st century EU infrastructure projects in Grisebach’s Western (2017). From the gendered perspectives of Zama and Meek’s Cutoff, to linguistic conventions of the Western genre in Meek’s Cutoff and Western, I explore how each film interrogates what Ella Shohat and Robert Stam call, “the colonial habit of linguistic nonreciprocity’. While Zama and Meek’s Cutoff deploy a non-translation strategy to aurally align the spectator with the settler characters; Western deploys a strategy of part-subtitling grounded in spectator/character non-alignment, directing us to communication across linguistic difference. Drawing on Nancy’s “Sharing Voices” and Listening, I examine how each strategy shifts the spectator from a mode of aural engagement fixed on semantic sense or linguistic sense-making, what Nancy calls hearing as understanding; towards one that encompasses the multiple dimensions of sense at work in any communication – in Nancean terms, listening. In doing so, I address the political stakes of subtitle translation and linguistic difference in the sounding of settler colonial encounters and their invocation of a listening spectator.

**Biography:** Hannah Paveck is a PhD Candidate in the Film Studies Department at King’s College London. Funded by the King’s Canada Scholarship, her doctoral research explores the role of sound and listening in contemporary global art cinema, drawing on the work of French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy.
Alice Pember (Queen Mary University of London) – al.pember@googlemail.com

**Title:** ‘Shame on you, If you can't dance too’: The Intersectional Politics of Dance in Contemporary Cinema

**Abstract:** This paper proposes a phenomenological framework through which screendance can be read as political, examining its scope through an analysis of the dance sequences in *Pride* (2014) and *120 BPM* (2017). These films insist on the intersectional politics of dance. In *Pride*, an LGBT activist’s flamboyant disco dance forges an alliance between working class miners and their queer allies. Similarly, in *120 BPM*, the queer nightclub is a space of intersectional connection for a diverse group of ACT UP activists. Though the dancefloors depicted in these films function as spaces of solidarity for the characters on screen, I argue that they do not necessarily function as politics, as both films present the viewer with a barrier to phenomenological connection. *Pride’s* dance sequence functions as a spectacular performance that distances the viewer by putting them in the position of disembodied spectator. In contrast, the unrelenting over-proximity of *120 BPM’s* nightclub sequences make it impossible for the viewer to connect with the activists in these scenes. My comparison of these films to ones in which the viewer shares ‘proximity at a distance’ with the screen suggests that it when the sameness and difference of on and off-screen bodies is stressed that a moment of intersectional, embodied politics can be located. I will further suggest that these moments exist in dance sequences that do not necessarily encourage political readings. Thus, whilst this paper will call into question the politics of the dance sequences in *Pride* and *120 BPM*, it also proposes that an intersectional politics can be found in the dance sequences of less overtly political films. My analyses of dance in *Girlhood* (2014), *Fish Tank* (2009) and *American Honey* (2015) will, therefore, stress the necessity of looking beyond the obvious in the search for political dance in contemporary cinema.

**Biography:** Alice Pember is a PhD researcher in Film Studies at Queen Mary, University of London. Her research examines the politics of the dancing girl in contemporary cinema. She has published articles and film reviews in Arty and Garageland magazines and in the Iris Murdoch Review. She co-edits the Oxford Queer Studies Network blog. She has presented her research at BAFTSS, Film-Philosophy and SCMS. She organised the first ever symposium on Robin Campillo’s 2017 film 120 BPM in May 2019.

Daniel Pérez-Pamies (Universitat Pompeu Fabra) - danielperez.pamies@gmail.com

**Title:** Glitch: a Potency of an Event - Gilles Deleuze’s Concept of Diagram and Digital Cinema Aesthetics

**Abstract:** Produced by accident or by consciously manipulating the numeric codes which constitute digital images’ DNA, the ‘glitch’ has opened a newer path in visual representation which needs to be carefully examined. Distortion of the digital image has been tackled from a perspective both creative (employed by contemporary artists from Denis Volnov or Takeshi Murata to consecrated filmmakers such as David Lynch or Jean-Luc Godard) and theoretical-materialist, in which has been called a post-digital aesthetic (Betancourt: 2016). In this regard, as an aesthetic category, glitches have been frequently related to abjection by depicting its ability to provoke a disfiguring of the image (Cameron: 2017). Nonetheless, the uncertainty of the glitch recalls Deleuze’s concept of “diagram”, as it implies above anything else a potency of an event (Deleuze: 2008). Understanding the glitch not only as a mechanism of disruption but also as a process of modulation allows us to relate it with painting, particularly with the artworks of artists such as Cézanne, Turner or Francis Bacon. By paring from Deleuze’s concept of “catastrophe” and Zizek’s notion of “event” as the effect that seems to exceed its causes (Zizek: 2014), the current presentation intends to follow and update Deleuzian theories in order to approach glitch’s aesthetics and its in-between position within philosophy, painting and cinema.
Biography: Daniel Pérez-Pamies is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Communication Department of Universitat Pompeu Fabra where he is undertaking a thesis on digital cinema aesthetics. He has a B.A. on Audiovisual Communication, M.A. on Filmmaking, and M.A. in Contemporary Film and Audiovisual studies. He is also a grade Assistant at Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Pérez-Pamies has also worked as Film Critic, Graduate Teacher Assistant and Technical Specialist Support Researcher.

Lara Perski (University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf) – lara.perski@gmail.com

Title: Must We Say What We See: Keywording as Ordinary Language Philosophy

Abstract: The heterogenous and steadily growing body of online film and art databases and archives sheds a new light on the importance of keywording practices. Increasingly, we find databases that list more than just verifiable metadata, but also feature descriptive keywords which may denote, for example, a film’s genre (a notoriously fluid category) or point to the presence of specific aesthetic categories (e.g. “affective” or “sublime” in Digital Art Archive). Because databases generally raise the claim of objectivity, fixed indexing systems such as the US Library of Congress Subject Headings have been developed to ensure the researcher can rely on a so-called controlled vocabulary or a thesaurus. However, such indexing systems rarely accommodate jargon pertinent to more niche subjects such as film studies. A dictionary of film terms can certainly be helpful when it comes to creating a film studies thesaurus but will often fall short when it comes to more specialised aesthetic terms needed to describe the formalist leanings of artist’s cinema or video art. In a database, keywords carry both descriptive and normative functions as by using specialised terms as annotations we also prescribe meanings to them. A researcher - and that is the focal point of my paper - keen on finding the correct descriptive vocabulary will need to verify their semantic claims (relying, for example, on extensional or intensional approaches, to fall back on Benson Bates’s terms), question their own expert knowledge and explore the tension between “what we ordinarily mean by the terms we use” and “what we ought to mean when we use these terms”; in short, to perform ordinary language philosophy. Drawing on examples from my current research, I want to explore how scholars might approach keywording from the perspective of ordinary language philosophy and, more generally, how we articulate what we see onscreen.

Biography: Lara Perski is a Researcher at the University of Applied Sciences in Dusseldorf, Germany. She is currently working on a project funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Online Video Platform - Archiving / Presentation / Communication, and is studying the video art archive of the imai - inter media art institute. Before, she was a Research Associate at the University of Marburg where she organised the annual Cinematographer’s Award.

Savina Petkova (King’s College London) – savina.petkov@gmail.com

Title: Real Metaphors. Animals in the Films of Yorgos Lanthimos

Abstract: In its ostensibly rigid and sterile, stylised social order, the film corpus of Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos undoubtedly says something about our contemporary. The amount of scholarly research dedicated to his works is accumulating with every passing year, with a generously represented crowd at this conference as well. I will scale down my attention to the role of animals as animetaphors in his last three films, The Lobster (2015), The Killing of a Sacred Deer (2017), and The Favourite (2018), all of which bear no production links to his home country, and are realised as part of the tendency of “extroversion” of Greek cinema, as called by Lydia Papadimitriou. (Papadimitriou 2018:9). Shot in the English language with production input by UK and US, his last three films have made it to the festival circuit, and Academy Awards. The narrative employment of ontologically real animals in these case studies already positions them in a reversible transition to and
from humanity. Rooted in Giorgio Agamben’s political philosophy, his notion of anthropological machine is the backbone of my research, which points out the intrinsic dangers of defining human nature as exclusion of animality in overcoming the human/animal divide. In this paper, I will investigate the role of animetaphors, Akira Lippit’s eloquent way of describing a non-anthropocentric way to look at animals. My methodology is rooted in film-philosophy, thus analytic in the choice of sequence analysis and will focus on narrative to contribute to an understanding of film as thought experiment (Wartenberg 2007). I will start with the most recent work, The Favourite, and use to explicate the representation of animals in their metaphoric strata as readily apparent. Then I will move on to its predecessor, The Killing of a Sacred Deer, to explore the idea of transference by its allusion to Ancient mythology and its consequent reversal of the myth. To conclude, I will attempt to bridge metaphor with metamorphosis by taking a closer look at the filmic world of The Lobster. I argue that all these elements are latent in Akira Lippit’s concept of animetaphor and ultimately their interconnected features can ‘jam’ the carnivorous anthropological machine in relation to cinema, thus reconfiguring the relationship between film and ethics.

Biography: Graduated MA Film Studies at Centre or Interdisciplinary and Multimedia Inquiry, University College London. Now, PhD applicant with the provisional title: "Humanimalistic Worlds. A Study of New Extremism Cinema and the Weird Greek Wave"

Chantal Poch (Pompeu Fabra University) - chantalpr@gmail.com

Title: "So far from everything": The Fall of Man according to Andrei Tarkovski, Werner Herzog and Terrence Malick

Abstract: The aim of this proposal is to partly present my PhD thesis, a comparative study of the work by Andrei Tarkovski, Werner Herzog and Terrence Malick through the concept of the Fall of Man, which I will argue is a central concern for the three filmmakers that lead them to concur in similar visual motifs or character archetypes - for the sake of briefness, I will focus my presentation on the second one. By exploring how different directors approach the same theme in similar ways we are able to discover collective narratives in the same spirit of Durand, Jung, Eliade or Bachelard. The idea of a Fall of Man is deeply rooted in the Christian imaginary, a context that the three of them share. But their look into the past is not necessarily Christian: as examples of what we could identify as a "postsecular cinema", they have ceased to trust the scientific progress narrative but also an institutionalized faith regarded as artificial in opposition to a direct, personal faith strongly linked to the primacy of experience and thus to mysticism. The notion of a lost deeper link with the world flows throughout their works, where humans struggle to find meaningful relations with their surroundings, including both people and land. The homonymous protagonist of Kaspar Hauser (Werner Herzog, 1974) puts it very clearly in words when he says “mother, I’m so far from everything” to later add "birth was a painful fall". Some of the archetypes we will explore as portrayed by Tarkovsky, Herzog and Malick are those of the noble savage, the holy fool or the innocent, as well as the depiction of incommunication and loneliness, always having in mind the role they have in this wider idea of the Fall.

Biography: Chantal Poch holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Audiovisual Communication and a Master’s Degree in Contemporary Film and Audiovisual Studies. Currently she’s working on her PhD thesis, a comparative study of the work of Tarkovski, Herzog and Malick through the concept of the Fall of Man within the Center for Aesthetic Research on Audiovisual Media at Pompeu Fabra University.

Murray Pomerance (Ryerson University) - murraypomerance@hotmail.com
**Title:** The Sound of Silence

**Abstract:** This paper will examine a particular silence differentiable from that of silent film, from the m.o.s. shot of sound film, from speechlessness or dramatically situated silence in narrative (such as the silence of an audience during a concert). I refer to a case of what I would term "screaming silence," to be found in the shower scene of Hitchcock’s Psycho (1960). (When she invokes the “silent scream” Elisabeth Weis is making reference to a different kind of moment than I will treat here.) Three types of sound are used in conjunction with this "screaming silence" to frame, emphasize, and condition it. Conventional diegetic room fill includes the flushing toilet, the pulled shower curtain, the stream of water increasing in volume. Vocality is principally rendered through Marion Crane’s (Janet Leigh) shriek, ensuing screams while being stabbed, and vocal diminution as the draining voice couples with the draining water to reflect the draining life. And supradiegetic orchestration, principally sharp attaca on the violins, imitates the knife thrusts on one hand and Marion’s panicky helplessness on the other, as well as cuing the audience to the moment and adding through its own high-pitched treble sound to viewer panic while watching. These are the accompaniments. But there is a particular silence when, standing inside the shower with Marion and letting our eyes gaze at, and through, the semi-opaque curtain, we see the hint, and soon the reality, of a moving form, this occupying roughly three or four screen seconds and culminating in the quick parting of the curtain. When this form enters the room and moves toward us, we can hear only the water, in a constant stream, but the shadowy shape and its motion invoke a sound that is not recorded, yet one that we hear as part of the organized reception of the moment.

**Biography:** Murray Pomerance is an independent scholar living in Toronto and the author, recently, of A Dream of Hitchcock (2019), Cinema, If You Please: The Memory of Taste, the Taste of Memory (2018), and Moment of Action: Riddles of Cinematic Performance (2016).

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**Chiara Quaranta** (University of Edinburgh) – chi.quaranta@gmail.com

**Title:** Icons and Idols: Philosophical Iconoclasm in the Cinema

**Abstract:** The history of Western thought about images presents itself as a result of contradictory influences that sink their roots in the Platonic suspicion of artistic mimesis, Plotinus’s partial rehabilitation of images and the Byzantine crisis over sacred icons. Accordingly, contemporary Western societies are experiencing an incessant production of images, and yet continue to relegate imagination to the Platonic level of inferior knowledge. My contention is that iconoclasm, etymologically the breaking of images, can be an effective means for exploring contemporary attitudes towards visual representation. Via the binary between the Greek *eikôn* (icon) and *eidôlon* (idol), which express two peculiar relationships that the image can establish with its prototype, I will outline an iconoclastic thinking that runs through Western philosophy up to the cinema. Like in philosophy, also in cinema the same image can be understood as an intermediary between two elements otherwise separated (*eikôn*), or as an inadequate, blasphemous or obscene representation (*eidôlon*). After delineating the main turning points in philosophical iconoclasm, I will illustrate how cinema addresses the dichotomy between the *eikôn/icon* and the *eidôlon/idol* that has haunted Western understandings of images since at least Plato. To this end, I will draw on a variety of films which present iconoclastic images (such as blank screens, altered motion, or image-sound disjunctions) to demonstrate how iconoclasm in cinema can be a way to question our modes of producing and consuming what is visible. That is, the rejection of the self-evident meaning of traditionally mimetic film images has the potential to stimulate critical reflections on the ways we interact with images and on the responsibility of one’s look, thereby investigating the limits of our right to see and show everything on a screen.
Biography: I am a film academic, currently teaching at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Stirling. My research investigates the issue of iconoclasm in a number of post-World War II Western European films, examining the problematic relationship between the cinematic image and its model implicated in the works.

Susannah Ramsey (University of Stirling) - susannah.ramsay@stir.ac.uk

Title: An Exploration of my Phenomenological Approach to the Exhibition of the Filmpoem.

Abstract: Chrissie Iles’ (2000) seminal work established a criticism surrounding the inclusion of artists’ moving image work in traditional static art galleries and museums. This widely acknowledged criticism derives in part from the development of the site-specific Minimalist art installation movement during the 1960s and 1970s. Throughout this period, existential phenomenology became a significant mode of criticism, a notion that typically underscores the significance of the gallery-goer’s heightened sense of perception and awareness of space in relation to themselves and the artwork or film installation, in situ. Recent research has galvanised critical analyses surrounding artists’ moving image exhibition practices, foregrounding the idea of inter-subjective relationships evolving between the gallery-goer and the in-between spaces of both single and multi-screen audio-visual installations (Balsom 2013; Bruno 2007; Connolly 2009). My practice-based doctoral project comprises a phenomenological inquiry into the production and exhibition of the filmpoem. The filmpoem is a hybrid art form combining poetry and experimental cinematic techniques, which typically seeks to create personal affect and intimacy with the subject matter. Historically, the filmpoem would have been projected on 16mm film stock and screened in small venues, at film festivals, or via touring cinema programmes. Currently, the dominant mode of viewing filmpoetry is via the Internet. This presentation, therefore, explores the phenomenological significance of artists’ moving image exhibition practices, in an attempt to re-contextualise how the viewer can experience the filmpoem. Through critical reflection, this paper illustrates the phenomenological approach I employed to produce my own filmpoem exhibition. An exploration of my single and multi-screen installations, in situ, will provide the basis for examining the filmpoem as an inter-subjective form of artists’ moving image. More broadly, this presentation seeks to provide a platform for discussion concerning different ways to advance a critical framework in which to study the filmpoem.

Biography: AHRC and SGSAH Funded final year PhD practice-based researcher. Department of Communications, Media and Culture, University of Stirling. Graduate Teaching Assistant, filmmaker and Avid Editor .www.susannahramsay.co.uk

Rebecca Rosenberg (King’s College London) – rebecca.rosenberg@kcl.ac.uk

Title: Vampiric Transformations in Dans ma peau (2002) and Grave (2016)

Abstract: Dans ma peau (2002), written, directed, and featuring writer Marina de Van, can be seen as a cannibalistic precursor to Julia Ducournau’s Grave (2016) which she screenwrote and directed. Both feature female protagonists who after a traumatic event (a leg injury for de Van, and a vegetarian forced to take part in a raw meat-eating hazing ritual for Ducournau) become “infected” with a desire and hunger for flesh. Both protagonists experience a type of vampiric awakening that can be compared allegorically to a sexual awakening, a coming-of-age experience (although belated for de Van’s protagonist who is in late twenties), or a type of bodily transformation. The body, its appetites and affects play a significant role in the representation of transformation in the two films. The abundant close-ups, and the attention to the faces of the protagonists which are covered in blood, sweat, paint, while showing facial expressions of hunger, desire, curiosity, ‘jouissance’, and satiation.
These faces are also shown biting, sucking, and licking flesh and blood of their own bodies, as well as the bodies of others. This paper will aim to nuance these representations of transformation and hunger through the concepts of infection and aetiology, as the bodies become self-mutilating and cannibalistic through an exterior event puncturing the integral status (quo) of the bodies. These infections, and subsequent transformations of the bodies occur in contexts of social normativity, rituals, and traditions. The protagonist of Dans ma peau exists in a distinctly normative, privileged and bourgeois setting; a young woman with a good job, and a long-term boyfriend. Key moments in the progression of her automutilation occur in visual and symbolic transgression of bourgeois social codes. For example, during a business dinner, and a doctor's appointment. The protagonist of Grave finds herself becoming more popular among her classmates, and family after her transformation. She conforms to the rituals and norms of the stratified culture of the university, and she seems to be succeeding, but her cannibalism also progresses dramatically. This paper will explore the staging of the female protagonists’ transformations, with particular focus on the filming of their faces, which operate as indexes of the progression of their (auto)cannibalism. This paper will also nuance the transformations as infections, and as representations of the potential parasitic effects of taking part in normative behaviours.

**Biography:** Rebecca Rosenberg is a doctoral candidate in French studies. Her research explores representations of mental illnesses in contemporary female-authored autobiographies and autofictions.

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**Kriss Ravetto** (UC Davis Cinema and Technoculture) - ravetto@ucdavis.edu

**Title:** The Image That Comes Back to Haunt Us

**Abstract:** In Alfred Hitchcock’s Vertigo (1958) we are confronted by ghosts - of women who are thrown away by powerful men, of men obsessed with ideal images - and haunted by music - that conjures memories of tragic romance and portals of the past that look onto a game of seduction, control, and stare back with a murderous gaze. This haunting takes vertiginous turns: Scottie is haunted by Madeleine, who is haunted by Carlotta, who is haunted by the powerful man who takes away their child. Powerful men are haunted by a need to control women and get away with murder. But hidden in this act of control is an act of forgery. “There is no unique forger,” as Deleuze argues, “if the forger reveals something it is the existence behind him [or her] of another forger.” This paper will look at Lynn Hershman’s installation Vertighost (2017) and its ghostly returns to a long history of supplements or forgeries of Vertigo. VertiGhost demonstrates how the ghosts of Vertigo are themselves what Rousseau and Derrida after him, have called “dangerous supplements,” “threatening us with death,” or worse still, as Rousseau fears, “cohabitation with women.” Rousseau’s reading of the dangerous supplement as a seductive, but “fatal advantage” that “leads desire away from the good path,” reveals the underlying relation of the supplement to what Laura Mulvey calls “fetishistic scopophilia.” Hershman’s VertiGhost is based on a simple concept that starts with going into the same gallery room in the Legion of Honor that Hitchcock filmed in 1958. But the VertiGhost installation does not simply remake or reprocess these iconic scenes as, for instance, Les LeVeque’s four channel video installation 4 Vertigo (2000) does. Instead, Hershman multiplies the images of Madeleine, confusing it with the image of Carlotta by having three different actresses play Madeleine and return to the Legion of Honor only to look into a mirror rather than at a painting of Carlotta. VertiGhost is a contemporary example of how the appropriation and contemplation of some the film’s most iconic motifs (the figures of Madeleine Elster, the spiral, the copy or fake, and the fetish), themes (liebestod, obsession, the uncanny) and strategies (mirroring, duplicity, and disorientation) ask us to rethink the relation of fetishism to supplementarity, dissimulation, and social engineering.

**Biography:** Professor of Cinema and Digital Media, Director of Critical Theory UC Davis.
**Orna Raviv** (Shenkar College and Haifa University) – ornarviv@zahav.net.il

**Title:** Embodied Responsibility

**Abstract:** In this paper I will discuss the film viewer’s responsibility in the context of an ongoing discussion of viewer responses to screen characters. I show how the viewer’s scale of embodied responses and reactions to film characters can be extended from one of care and compassion toward them (Stadler 2008) to include feeling responsibility with them. The neuroscientific discovery of mirror-neurons led to the understanding that when we see someone, we perceive her actions, the emotions she displays, and the sensations she seems to experience as if they were our own (Gallese 2003, 552). This mirror neuron mechanism is seen as promoting embodied simulation (ES), a kind of involvement prior to cognitive engagement through modes of conceptualizing, theorizing and interpreting (Walsh, 2014, 215). Looking at viewers’ engagement with screen characters through Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, Dan Zahavi (2014, 158) emphasizes the role of embodiment in both directly embodied simulative response and in responses which are cognitively driven. Zahavi describes film viewers’ responses in terms of integrated embodied relationships between viewer and character - mediated by the film itself. Following Zahavi, Stadler (2017, 325) says that both kinds of response constitute what she calls the “compassionate gaze,” and sees intersubjectivity as “a key ingredient of the compassionate gaze that manifests in film and film spectatorship.” Carl Platinga builds on this discourse, arguing that by encouraging an emotional response to the film characters, viewers become “tied to an acceptance of the goals” of the characters and their concerns which “become congruent with the audience’s concerns (2009, 89). Treading a similar path to that of Stadler and Platinga, I propose extending the range of the film viewer’s embodied responses and reactions to film characters from feeling care and compassion towards them, and attunement to their goals and concerns, to feeling responsibility along with them.

**Biography:** Lecturer, Unit for History and Philosophy of Art, Design and Technology. Shenkar College. Teaching Fellow, Haifa University, Philosophy Department.

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**Kate Rennebohm** (Harvard University) - krennebohm@fas.harvard.edu

**Title:** The Modern Conscience as the Moving Self-Image

**Abstract:** This paper will address the relationship between the cinematic self-image and modern understandings of the conscience, arguing for the influence of the former on the latter. To begin, I will outline an overriding assumption in film theory: that the actual self of the viewing spectator will always be absent from the cinematic image. I argue that this assumption denies the long and consistent history of cinematic images being put in service of self-viewing and self-consideration. I will briefly outline this history - from early “local” cinema through home movies through 1970s videotape-based art and activism - in order to advocate for a theoretical model that acknowledges the influence of this history of the cinematic self-image on wider ethical thought. In developing this model and making this claim, I look to Michel Foucault’s late writings on media and the ethical concept of the conscience. To Foucault’s thinking, the extant media of different historical periods - including notebooks, scrolls, and letters - inform both the notion of the conscience and wider ethical thought in those periods. In this paper, I extend Foucault’s claim to the cinematic, arguing that cinema’s self-images and their related forms of spectatorial encounter have fundamentally shifted wider understandings of the conscience and its ethical functioning. Where the conscience in earlier periods had drawn on a largely private model of reading and writing, after cinema’s self images, the conscience now includes connotations of...
publicness and extra-linguistic forms of expression. In order to examine this claim, I draw examples from two films: the Maysles' brothers 1970 film Gimme Shelter and Filipa César's 2017 film Spell Reel. Both films enact and attest to the notion of cinema-as-conscience, as they organize themselves around sequences in which individuals encounter their self-images on screen. In doing so, they speak to the sense that, in the current moment, the hope for knowing what one has done wrong and what one might do differently in the future can now only be thought in relation to cinema.

Biography: Kate Rennebohm is a Visiting Lecturer in Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard University. She is currently transforming her dissertation, “Re-Vision: Moving Image Media, The Self, and Ethical Thought in the 20th Century,” into a book. She has written for Cinema Scope, CJFS, Film & History, Offscreen, and Synoptique.

Aleksi Rennes (University of Turku) – atrenn@utu.fi

Title: Aesthetics of Life (and Death): Deleuze, Mandico, and the Problem of Animism

Abstract: André Bazin suggests that the history of the visual arts can be interpreted as an expression of the deep-seated human need to resist mortality. Accordingly, pictorial representations of life amount to a desire to preserve that life against the decaying effects of the passage of time. This desire finally culminates in the cinematographic image capable of preserving time itself. An opposite approach, evident particularly throughout the history of avant-garde film, grants cinema the power not to preserve life but rather to extend its domain by bringing inanimate things to life. In the view of Jean Epstein, such an ability posits film as an essentially animistic medium. Bertrand Mandico’s two short films Boro in the Box (2011) and Living Still Life (2012) are characterised by an interrogation of the distinction between the organic and the inorganic. Demonstrating the porosity of the boundary between these two categorisations, the films proceed into speculation about animism in cinema and its promise of overcoming death. This paper will conduct an analysis of these themes by relating Mandico’s work to Gilles Deleuze’s conceptualisations of life as an impersonal and non-organic force and of death as it emerges in Deleuze’s engagement with the philosophy of Maurice Blanchot. For Deleuze, life exhibits both a power of abstraction (of virtual singularities) and a power of creation (of syntheses between singularities). Furthermore, art as the invention of sensible assemblages appears as one possible instantiation of this fundamental creativity of life. Referring to such a convergence of life and art in the domain of sensibility, my paper suggests that the connection between animism and cinema should be approached principally as an aesthetic phenomenon, not an ontological one.

Biography: Aleksi Rennes is a PhD candidate in Media Studies at the University of Turku. His current research examines cinema’s relationship to utopia through the films of Jean Epstein, Roberto Rossellini and Ingmar Bergman.

Eva Sancho Rodriguez (University of Amsterdam) – evasancho@gmail.com

Title: Looking for Political Engagement in the Aftermath of Discreditation

Abstract: Mumblecore cinema caused a short-lived furore in the last decade, launching filmmakers such as Greta Gerwig, Lena Dunham and Andrew Bujalski. While its history is still being written, this paper contends that Mumblecore’s vitality centres on a distinctly new ethical tone and style. The films experimented with ‘sincere’ aesthetics drawing on naturalistic performance, emotional intimacy and everyday situations. They shared a preoccupation with ethical deliberation amongst each other, but also with contemporaneous Indiewood auteurs such as Miranda July, Nicole Holofcener and Brit Marling. Two reasons drive the need for paying close, hermeneutic attention to cinema such as
Mumblecore. Firstly, sincerity aesthetics illuminate a new cycle in the central, evolving Western ideal described by Lionel Trilling in Sincerity and Authenticity (1972) and by Charles Taylor (1989, 1991). Both philosophers described how the late 20th century saw a problematic solidification of a personal ideal of authenticity-autonomy. However, in the 21st century, it is transforming once again in paradoxical forms. After Postmodernism as a set of practices and ideas was able to thoroughly challenge notions of “authenticity”, it nevertheless persevered. Authenticity thrives in various modalities, ranging from ubiquitous popular credo (“Become your true self”) to innovative aesthetic styles of “sincerity” emerging in the 21st century - a transformation that echoes an older, more relational ethic of sincerity. Secondly, sincerity aesthetics prompt us to rethink how we imagine political engagement. Appealing to the ideal of authenticity was central to 20th century artistic modes of critique within capitalist democracies (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005/2018), but these have been discredited, neutralized and recuperated in various forms. Via its focus on the politics of the ordinary (Cavell) Mumblecore seems to sidestep this legacy. So, how does this new cycle imagine political engagement and its problems?

Biography: Eva Sancho Rodriguez is in the last year of her independent PhD research project titled “The Politics of the Apolitical” at the University of Amsterdam, where she also studied Film and Philosophy. As part of this PhD research, she obtained a masters in Film Aesthetics at the University of Oxford, in order to deepen her understanding of the work of Stanley Cavell by studying with Andrew Klevan and Stephen Mulhall. Apart from the PhD, she has been a Lecturer for seven years and is one of the editors of Krisis: Journal for Contemporary Philosophy.

Richard Rushton (Lancaster University) – r.rushton@lancaster.ac.uk

Title: Love in five films by Agnes Varda

Abstract: This paper focuses on five films made by Agnès Varda La Pointe Courte (1955), Cleo from 5 to 7 (1962), Le Bonheur (1964), One Sings, the Other Doesn’t (1976), and Vagabond (1985). These are films that deal, in various ways, with romantic relationships between human beings. The notion of the romantic couple is central to these films and Varda herself has reflected on issues of the romantic couple when discussing these films. My paper will therefore examine the treatment of the “couple” in these films. Much of my guidance for thinking through these issues comes from American philosopher Stanley Cavell. In his writings on cinema (and elsewhere) Cavell often examines conceptions of the romantic couple and I examine some of these themes in relation to Varda’s films. What becomes apparent is that the earlier films advocate notions of the romantic (heterosexual) couple, whereas the later films move away from a restricted notion of the couple so as to accept a more open conception of human relationships.

Biography: Senior Lecturer in Film Studies, Lancaster University

Christian Sancto (University of Rochester) - csancto@ur.rochester.edu

Title: Architectures of the Queer Archive: Documentary, Dance, and Disjunctive Spatiality in Patrick Staff’s The Foundation

Abstract: British artist Patrick Staff’s 2015 film installation The Foundation is a part-documentary, part-choreography work, roughly half an hour in length, produced during the artist’s period of research at the Tom of Finland Foundation in Los Angeles. Tom of Finland (1920-1991) was an artist best known for his homoerotic S/M drawings and cartoons. The Tom of Finland Foundation is an archive of Tom’s artistic work, as well as the house that Tom lived and worked in during the later years.
of his life. It continues to be occupied and run by Durk Dehner, Tom’s friend and former business partner, and remains a hub for Los Angeles’s contemporary queer community. As Staff’s film shows, the Foundation functions as a relay between present and historical configurations of queer community and cultural production. In this paper I investigate how Staff’s filmmaking strategies—particularly his juxtaposition of documentary and choreographic material—articulate these historical and subjective drifts. The film’s temporal complexity is explored on two fronts. First, I argue that the concept of queer archive challenges the conventional assumption that the archive’s main function is to preserve the past for the sake of the future. I do so through a comparative reading of the interrelation of futurity and the death drive in Jacques Derrida’s Archive Fever and Lee Edelman’s No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive. Second, with reference to Elizabeth Freeman’s work on transgenerational bodily encounter in the constitution of queer communities, I analyse how queer archival dynamics are at play in Staff’s filmed choreographic sequences (in which the artist, in his 20s, performs with an older male dancer). I conclude by proposing that The Foundation conveys a set of temporal, ethical, and political ambivalences a propos of the question of transgenerational relationality through the form of queer archive.

**Biography:** Christian Sancto is a PhD student in the Visual and Cultural Studies program at the University of Rochester. He researches film, photography, and sound media practices in contemporary art, with theoretical focuses on temporality and history, gender and sexuality, continental philosophy, and critical theory.

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**Greg Singh** (University of Stirling) – [greg.singh@stir.ac.uk](mailto:greg.singh@stir.ac.uk)

**Title:** Iterative Television, Connected Viewing and Moral Architecture: The Bandersnatch Variations.

**Abstract:** The metatextual Netflix event, Black Mirror: Bandersnatch has already proven divisive in terms of its critical and popular reception. Indeed, this divisiveness became apparent within hours of its initial release on 28th December 2018, as viewers/users took to Reddit, Twitter and other online platforms to express opinions all-too-familiar in the academic subdiscipline of gamestudies. As Matt Hills has recently described, roughly along the lines of a split between so-called narratological or ludological arguments, critical reactions amongst connected viewers/users occurred within a remarkably limited range: “it doesn’t have enough of a story, with its game element implicitly acting as a distraction, or the game mechanic explicitly gets in the way of narrative immersion/suspension of disbelief etc.’ (2019). However, I argue that a more productive (and metatextual) approach to the tensions between freedom and containment, in both the represented context of Bandersnatch’s videogame design plotline, and in the “viewing” and replaying process of the episode, would help to demystify the narratological/ludological split response. One way to demystify these cardinal notions of narration and ludus, emphasising the co-relation between them rather than the temptations of binary opposition, would be to consider the dialectical framing of agency as a notion within both gaming and interactive drama; as an iterative, opera aperta of televisual storytelling. Such framing would open a vista for exploring the metatextual elements of agency in the vicarious ergodic interaction, in the representational and textual strategies of the stand-alone television drama as morality tale, and in the connected viewing culture, associated with Bandersnatch and Black Mirror more generally. From there, I wish to speculate on the various elements of textual and paratextual materials as providing fertile grounds upon which the moral architecture of iterative television conditions, and is conditioned by, the agency of the connected viewer, and the architectonics of videogame play.

**Biography:** Greg Singh is Associate Professor in Media and Communications, and Programme Director of Digital Media in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Stirling, UK. He has published extensively on a wide range of topics, from celebrity, YouTube and lifestyle television, to
Robert Sinnerbrink (Macquarie University) – robert.sinnerbrink@mq.edu.au

Title: Through a Glass Darkly: Black Mirror, Thought Experiments, and ‘Television as Philosophy’

Abstract: The award-winning television show Black Mirror (Brooker, 2011-) has attracted widespread praise and critical attention. Recalling the episodic anthology format of The Twilight Zone, Black Mirror presents compelling depictions of near future scenarios exploring the dark side of contemporary digital technology. With its focus on the ethical implications of current and future technological possibilities, Black Mirror offers a fascinating case study for the idea of “television as philosophy’. I shall explore this idea via three aspects: 1) Black Mirror as thought experiment; 2) as a critique of modern technology; 3) as engaged in critical self-reflection on audiovisual media and on its own status as episodic television. The episodes of Black Mirror pose televisual thought experiments concerning the ethical implications of modern technology that can engage philosophical thinking. Here I draw on Kung’s recent critique of “counterexample thought experiments’ as depending on “forced choices and fixed outcomes’, and argue that Black Mirror’s televisual experiments are more attuned to the complexity of contemporary moral-cultural experience and ethical reflection. Black Mirror offers critical reflections on the ethical implications of modern technology. Drawing on Heidegger, I suggest that Black Mirror reveals the ambivalent potentiality of modern technology: threatening to reduce human beings to a stock of manipulable resources and promising the possibility of a transformed way inhabiting the technological world. Black Mirror goes further than Heidegger, however, by enacting these ambivalent potentials of modern technology in its own forms of audiovisual expression and narrative presentation. Finally, Black Mirror also allows us to revisit the debate concerning ‘film in the condition of philosophy’ (Mulhall) thanks to its self-reflexive engagement with contemporary media technologies. Here I focus on the ‘twist’ endings prominent in many episodes, which not only offer narrative surprise but prompt us to reframe our moral and cultural assumptions about the role of media technologies - including the medium of television -- in our experience of digitised social realities.

Biography: Associate Professor in Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, Macquarie University

James Slattery (Independent) – ilovejamesls@gmail.com

Title: Cutting Through: Coding Trauma in Sharp Objects

Abstract: HBO’s mini-series Sharp Objects (2018), created by Marti Noxon, follows journalist Camille Preaker (Amy Adams) as she returns to her family home in Wind Gap, Missouri in order to report on the recent murders of young girls that have taken place in the town. Whilst there, Camille journeys back through the traumatic events that occurred during her adolescence and early adult life. Throughout the series, trauma is both repressed and (re)activated through the inscription of words. Camille’s occupation as a journalist directs the narrative through her struggle to word the article concerning the Wind Gap murders for the newspaper she writes for. In tandem with this narrative focus, each episode’s title corresponds to a word Camille has previously cut into her body in an act of self-harm. Not only does the act of writing provide direction for action, the show formally literalises language specific to the narrative through its noticeable and jarring “cutting” and “editing”. The show...
smoothly oscillates between the literalisation of the word in form and representing trauma through Camille’s linguistic actions and coding. The main philosophical framework for the analysis of the show comes from the Lacanian argument that understands the construction of language as symbiotic to the construction of subjectivity, with special attention paid to Joan Copjec’s analysis of language from her book Read My Desire: Lacan Against the Historicists. Through a psychoanalytical lens, this paper will argue that it is the economy of the word that organises the complex and palimpsestic trauma at the centre of Sharp Objects. The linguistic tableau of trauma runs through the visual environment, Camille’s body, her psyche and the form of the show itself. Sharp Objects articulates the integration and splitting produced by language in the subject through narrative, aesthetics, and form.

Biography: Independent scholar living and working in London. Main topics of interest: queer temporalities, neoliberal subjectivities, film analysis. Beginning a PhD in October 2019. Holds a BA in Fine Art (Goldsmiths, University of London) and a MSt in Film Aesthetics (University of Oxford).

Mario Slugan (Ghent University) – marioslugan@yahoo.com

Title: A Philosophical Approach to Fiction in Early Cinema

Abstract: This presentation argues that fiction, and by extension film fiction, is a temporally unstable category. I propose that there are films from c. 1900 which present-day audiences treat as fiction but were regarded as their contemporaries as non-fiction and vice-versa. The article argues that to understand this ontological fluidity of early cinema, film studies and philosophy need to work together - whereas philosophy offers a robust theory of fiction as mandated imagining, film studies are best-equipped for historicizing these mandates. I start off the presentation with a discussion of the two standard criteria for determining whether something is fiction or not: the intentionalist (preferred by the majority of philosophers interested in film) and the textual (espoused by the majority of film scholars). Whereas according to the former something is fiction if the author intends it as fiction (and non-fiction if the author intends it otherwise), according to the latter fiction and non-fiction are distinguishable based on the film’s content and style. By pointing out that there are cultural texts which can migrate across fiction/non-fiction boundaries I put forward an alternative model: it is the institutional context - the interplay of production, distribution, exhibition, and reception - that determines a text’s fictional status. The same, I claim, holds true for two paradigmatic early cinema genres - train and trick films. Whereas nowadays The Arrival of a Train is regularly cited as an actuality and Méliès’ trick films as fictions, around 1900 these genres were billed and engaged with in very much the opposite terms. At the time trick films like Four Troublesome Heads / Un homme de têtes (Méliès, 1898) were advertised and construed as recordings of famous magic tricks performed in popular magic theatres. (We, by contrast, imagine the fiction of the magician taking his head off.) Similarly, when the turn-of-the-nineteenth-century audiences watched the earliest train films they imagined that the train is going to crash through the screen and into the auditorium, i.e. they saw them as fictions. (We, by contrast, see these films simply as actualities of trains pulling into stations.)

Biography: Marie Sklodowska Curie Fellow, Centre for Cinema and Media Studies.

David Sorfa (University of Edinburgh) – david.sorfa@ed.ac.uk

Title: Our Imaginary Person in Havana: Fiction Film Between Jean-Paul Sartre and Kathleen Stock

Abstract: In The Imaginary (1940) Jean-Paul Sartre sketches out the beginnings of his existentialist project by thinking through the process of imagination and the significance of fiction. Fiction, for Sartre, occupies a salutary space of freedom, of nihilation, since it paradoxically both exists and does
not exist. In Only Imagine (2017), the analytic philosopher Kathleen Stock calls for an “extreme intentionalism” in our understanding of fiction and engages with the problem of “fictional truth”. Stock makes an argument that “imagining is a flexible action which can be directed at a variety of useful and pleasurable ends, both cognitive and non-cognitive”. In this paper, I will argue that there is a way of bringing the continental and analytic traditions of thinking about imagining and about fiction together in a productive manner. For both Stock and Sartre, fiction is an emblem of possibility and I will explore this rapprochement with reference to Our Man in Havana(1959), Carol Reed’s adaptation of Graham Greene’s novel of imaginary spying. The non-existent spy who has very real effects in the world is an exemplary instance of the power of imagination and of cinema.

**Biography:** Senior Lecturer in Film Studies, Editor-in-Chief of Film-Philosophy

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**Laura Staab** (King’s College London) - laura.staab@kcl.ac.uk

**Title:** coming to cinema with Hélène Cixous

**Abstract:** Often, the image of woman stands as metaphor for something else, something other than woman: extremes of, for example, the ethereal or the terrestrial. Little of woman endures (something literalised in early psychoanalytic discourse, in which the feminine signifies absence par excellence). Hélène Cixous’ writings in the 1970s and the 1980s confront an age-old tradition of woman as muse, as medium, as cipher. Gleaning from the environment in which we live (our bodies, but also our houses, our libraries), Cixous gathers a poetic palette of images with which to write women - not as vessel, but as women. With such inclination towards contextualisation and the everyday, Cixous’ poetic process, though imaginative, takes off from the actual. More than metaphoric, it is metonymic. Otherwise put, Cixous’ poetics requires co-existence, a prepositional ‘with’ (creativity is not synonymous, here, with romantic isolation). And Cixous’ poetics shares with a cinema of lens-based capture, in particular, an image-making which stems from the actual, the real. Cixous’ texts - isomorphic bodies from which lactic, lachrymal, and haematic fluids sometimes spill - could be entwined with recent film-phenomenologies with ease. I propose coming to cinema with Cixous, however, with an emphasis on poetics: coming to cinema with Cixous is a hybrid approach which does not exclude either the philosophical or the phenomenological, but which positions the scholar as creative, critical writer (as much as embodied spectator), attending to and translating images. In the paper, I elucidate Cixous’ poetics intermedially and intertextually, by reading images of the lemon in the films of Laida Lertxundi via Cixous’ ‘calling’ of the orange through the literature of Clarice Lispector.

**Biography:** Laura Staab is a PhD candidate in the Film Studies department at King’s College London, supervised by Professor Sarah Cooper and Dr. Erika Balsom.

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**Francesco Sticchi** (Oxford Brookes University) – francescosticchi@gmail.com

**Title:** The Precarious People to Come: Cartographies of Precarity in Contemporary Cinema

**Abstract:** Precarity is one of the most crucial and debated issues in current socio-economical, philosophical and political studies. With this paper I aim to outline an approach to investigate this issue in contemporary cinema, by using three recent case studies: Sorry to Bother (Riley, 2018) Certain Women (Reichardt, 2016); The Florida Project (Baker, 2017). To this purpose I will rely on current film-philosophy and affective/embodied film analyses that demonstrate the possibility of cinema, television, and visual arts to generate concrete ethical and intellectual systems, overcoming the distinction between viewers’ conceptual interaction with films, and their sensorial and affective
engagement. To discuss how contemporary cinema addresses the issue of precarity beyond the traditional Nature-Culture split, I will also employ Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of chronotope, thus focusing on the power audiovisual experience has in displaying experiential dimensions and modes of inhabiting them. I argue that the main chronotopes characterising contemporary audiovisual media are based on affective and intellectual dimensions of Anxiety, Depression, and Expulsion, which reveal and directly relate to the current transformations in the capitalistic mode of production (bio-cognitive capitalism). The second aim of my discussion would be, then, to demonstrate how these films do not simply show specific precarious lives and existential dimensions. They display and produce subjectivities, spaces of contemporary lives, which do not exist as abstract and symbolic representations, but as becoming for the viewer/users to experience in order to transform themselves and, possibly, to enact and reinvent an ethical relation with the world.

**Biography:** Francesco Sticchi has a Ph.D in Film Studies at Oxford Brookes University, obtained under the supervision of prof. Warren Buckland. He works as Associate Lecturer in the same institution and at the SAE Institute, and authored the book: Melancholy Emotion in Contemporary Cinema: A Spinozian Analysis of Film Experience (Routledge, 2019). He is also interested in an experiential use of Mikhail Bakhtin’s chronotope, and he is currently working on an affective-ethical approach to examine how contemporary media culture addresses the concept of precarity.

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**Kalpana Subramanian** (SUNY Buffalo) – kalpanas@buffalo.edu

**Title:** The Locus of Breath in Experimental Film - Phenomenology, Irigaray and Yoga

**Abstract:** Breath is a significantly underexplored topic in cinema studies. As feminist thinker and philosopher Luce Irigaray suggests, in a critique of Martin Heidegger, perhaps we have indeed “forgotten air.’ In this presentation I examine the notion of breath using a non-Western interdisciplinary aesthetic approach to enquire into breath in experimental cinema. Building on Davina Quinlivan’s The Place of Breath in Cinema (2015), which draws from the work of Vivian Sobchack, Laura Marks, and Irigaray, I further conceptualize breath in cinema, integrating Deleuzian concepts of non-representation, feminist theories of embodiment and Yoga philosophy. It is fruitful, in my opinion, to bring into the discourse, knowledge of breath cultivated through the ancient but living tradition of Yoga. The writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, allow for comparison between Western and non-Western phenomenological traditions as explored by Sundar Sarukkai and James Morley. Both scholars argue for the study of yoga as a means to enquire into the phenomenology of the “inner body.” Building on their concepts, and on Deleuze and Irigaray, I propose a new subject, the “yogic subject,” to bring in a non-Western perspective into the contemporary discourse of embodiment. Conversant with the Body Without Organs and Irigaray’s “sensible transcendental,” the “yogic subject,” I argue, can reconcile the differences and amplify resonances between subjectivities in Deleuze and Irigaray. I also discuss yogic models of the body to elucidate the ontology of breath in Irigaray’s thought, connecting it with theories of sensory cinema postulated by Sobchack and Marks. To conclude, I illustrate all these connections in an analysis of a short film Meridian Plain (2016) by American experimental filmmaker Laura Kraning. Through this, I attempt to locate breath in a film that employs machinic vision to build a portrait of planet Mars, thereby also tracing an alternative genealogy of breath in contemporary experimental film.

**Biography:** Kalpana Subramanian is a PHD candidate (3rd year) at the Department of Media Study at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She is an internationally recognized artist-filmmaker and researcher interested in transcultural and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of experimental film and media. Her dissertation focuses on the poetics of light and breath in experimental cinema.
Anette Svane (Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)) - anette.svane@gmail.com

Title: The embodied (hungry) female subject in Julia Ducournau’s Raw

Abstract: By applying Simone de Beauvoir’s perspectives on women as situated embodied subjects and other feminist and phenomenological perspectives of embodiment, I will explore how Raw (Ducournau, 2017) portrays and enacts different forms of female embodied subjectivity. Raw depicts Justine’s coming of age and sexual awakening through her sudden change from vegetarianism to uncontrollable urges and cravings for human flesh. Her sexuality is also portrayed as an unstoppable urge, and during sexual or romantic encounters she ends up biting or even eating the men. I will explore the depictions of these bodily urges through the way Justine inhabits film space as an embodied subject, and also how she as a character manages what Iris M. Young calls “the contradictory modalities of feminine existence “. Justine is not the object of the motion, rather she is its originator. She moves through the film space with confidence, and I will discuss how her movements and physical (and visual) presence constitute her as a free subject. Through the uncompromising portrayal of its lead female character, Raw provides an alternative to both historical and current depictions of female characters and to feminine existence in general. With this presentation I aim to demonstrate how a feminist phenomenological approach to film characters as embodied subjects can supplement and expand our understanding of depictions of women on film.

Biography: Anette Svane is a filmmaker and a lecturer at the Department of Art and Media Studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). She holds an MA in film studies and a BA in film production.

Maryam Tafakory (Kingston University) - maryam@tafakory.com

Title: Contact at Distance - İhām and Eroticism in Iranian Sacred Defence Cinema

Abstract: A largely neglected genre with over two hundred films, Sacred Defense Cinema - little known outside Iran - is the cinematic output of the eight-year Iran-Iraq war. At its emergence, women and love were almost entirely absent or fragmentary in the media, suggesting that Feqh-based ideology considers earthly love threatening and thus in need of cleansing or elimination in the name of national security. Post-revolutionary Islamic values, such as modesty of women and compulsory hejab, denoted a new form of distance, an Islamic disconnect between genders to protect women from the apparently inevitable voyeuristic male gaze. However, if the direct contact between genders is forbidden, the force of their gaze remains and if according to Didi-Huberman, gaze is both tactility and contact, the Iranian purification system had an impossible task. Through a detailed analysis of several seemingly religious and innocent yet sexually-charged scenes in films made between 1980 and 1999, I argue that the excessive veiling of intimacy, not only was incapable of safeguarding and promoting Islamic values, on the contrary, it gave rise to an erotic contact at a distance through which full jouissance is possible.

Biography: Maryam Tafakory is an artist-filmmaker based in London. Part performance, her work draws on womanhood and rites of passage, interweaving poetry, (self)censorship and religion, combining a formal minimalist syntax and figurative mode of representation. She studied her MFA at Oxford University and she is currently writing up her fully funded PhD by practice at Kingston University.www.maryamtafakory.com
Jiemin Tina Wei (Harvard University) – jtwei@g.harvard.edu

**Title:** Slippery Genetic Determinism: Gattaca and the Staging of a Probabilistic Genome Science

**Abstract:** Underlying discussions about the ethics of gene editing is the concept of genetic determinism: that a person’s achievement capacities, life potentials, and idiosyncratic dispositions may have been programmed by the individual’s genetic code, and therefore fixed to the extent that our biological nature is fixed. A common, almost unavoidable referent in these public and classroom discourses has been Andrew Niccol’s 1997 film Gattaca, critiqued at times by scientific and popular audiences for its supposedly simplistic, reductive depiction of what totalitarianism built on genetic determinism might look like, and how it can be picked apart by a persevering, ascientific “human spirit.” In this talk, I argue that contrary to these easy interpretations, the genetic determinism in Gattaca is a troubled one. Mirage-like and anxious, it is always less stable than it announces itself to be, and it is out of its slippages that the film constructs and dilates its major ethical dilemmas. The film’s tyrannical social caste system is in fact simultaneously more totalizing and pliable - and therefore more resistant to subversion - than is presumed by its critics. I will give a formal analysis of how the film is able to remain agnostic regarding the truth of genetic determinism while provocatively staging the possible consequences of a certain version of its logics - that based on a probabilistic genome science. I will conclude by using the film’s critiques of genome science to reflect back on innovations in gene editing technologies, such as CRISPR, that have emerged in the two decades following the film’s initial release. The film’s continued and augmented significance lies in its illustration that genetic deterministic beliefs and its concomitant societal consequences are not fringe concerns, but rather a lifeblood of contemporary statistics-based genome science.

**Biography:** Jiemin Tina Wei is a first year doctoral student in Harvard’s History of Department. Pursuing a secondary field in American Studies, Tina is currently researching the use of film and evolving film reception as a prism for parsing the ethics of gene editing. Additionally, she is working on a project at the intersection of feminist political thought, reproductive biology, and speculative future-making. Prior to Harvard, Tina graduated from Princeton University with an AB in Philosophy of Science.

Jenelle Troxell (Union College) – jenelletroxell@gmail.com

**Title:** In Praise of the “dreadful” Female Spectator: Close Up and the Emergence of a Feminist Counter-Cinema

**Abstract:** Begun in 1927 by Bryher, Kenneth Macpherson, and H.D., the transnational film journal Close Up constitutes an important founding moment of feminist film criticism. With its emphasis on political activism, aesthetic experimentation, and psychoanalysis, Close Up, anticipates the feminist film criticism of the 1970s. Some of the challenges facing the journal’s collaborators, however, differed substantially from those confronting Seventies critics concerned with the male gaze and the custom-fitted narrative cinema. Close Up editors wrote in a critical arena where rather than being masculinized, the cinema spectator was hyperbolically feminized and treated as a repository of bad taste. Their polemics are accordingly aimed at challenging dismissive conceptions of the female spectator and defending modes of immersive viewing, negatively associated with the female audience. Rather than dismissing this propensity for cinematic absorption as naively susceptible, the writers for Close Up develop what I term a “contemplative aesthetic” - focusing on film’s capacity to generate states of deep contemplative absorption in the viewer. Close Up writers’ novel critical approach emerged from their interest in psychoanalysis and mysticism but also from their critical engagement with films addressed to female spectators, whom they recognized as “educated, ready, and waiting” and capable of newfound critical agency.
**Biography:** Jenelle Troxell is Assistant Professor of English and Film Studies at Union College in New York. She is currently completing a book manuscript “What Does She See When She Shuts Her Eyes: Transnationalism, Feminism, and the Cinematic Avant-Garde” and has work forthcoming or in such venues as Screen, Camera Obscura, Modernism/Modernity, Framework, and Afterimage.

Lia Turtas (Cornell University) – lt373@cornell.edu

**Title:** The Phantasm of Style: Cinema’s ubiquitous, yet unlocalizable, form of life.

**Abstract:** In The World Viewed (1979), Stanley Cavell asserts “the task of the modern artist as one of creating not a new instance of his art but a new medium in it.” Creating a new medium can also be thought of as “establishing a new automatism.” One of the meanings of such “automatism” is “the experience of the work of art “as happening of itself.” “Happening of itself” as a medium and as an automatism also reminds of Giorgio Agamben’s definition of form-of-life as “gesture” and “pure mediality” in Means Without Ends (2000). In The Use of Bodies (2015), Agamben states that form-of-life is a “style by which the author leaves his mark on the work.” Analogously, in Averroism, each singular individual connects to the one intellect through the phantasms of imagination and vice versa, so that phantasm as form-of-life and style is, in fact, at once the mark that the singular body leaves on the one intellect, and what the one intellect “marks in the singular.” As such, it is “ubiquitous,” yet “unlocalizable,” just as style is (Metz 2016). Since Stanzas (1993), such phantasm is placed under the sign of love, as also in psychoanalysis, for which fantasy is the script and mise-en-scène of a subject’s desire (Laplanche-Pontalis 1974). Precisely such dimension of fantasy with its phantasms - a sort of hypnotic state between dream and wakefulness, according to Christian Metz (1982) and Raymond Bellour (2009) - is the closest experience we can get to cinema. I therefore propose to discuss cinema as the medium whose automatism is animated by the phantasm of style; that is, by the tension between the singular body of a subject, and the one intellect of an intelligent machine: a medium in which there is no subject nor object, but “permutations of roles and attributions are possible.”

**Biography:** Lia Turtas is a Ph.D. candidate in Italian and Film Studies in the Department of Romance Studies at Cornell University, and she works across cinema, literature and philosophy. She received her M.A. degree in Visual Arts and Aesthetics from the Istituto Universitario di Architettura (IUAV) in Venice, and also holds degrees in Classics, and Arts Criticism and Management. At Cornell, she is completing a dissertation that aims to reinterpret a few key moments of the history of Italian cinema from a post-humanist and non-human perspective, stemming from an innovative encounter between film theory, Italian thought, and archival research.

Ben Tyrer (Middlesex University) – tyrer.ben@gmail.com

**Title:** “The picture is in my eye but I am in the picture”: Lacan, Merleau-Ponty and Film-Philosophy

**Abstract:** The philosophical turn in Film Studies was predicated largely upon a movement away from psychoanalysis. Steven Shaviro’s The Cinematic Body exploded what he saw as the stultifying orthodoxy of Lacanian film theory, in favour of embodied and affective thinking via Deleuze; while Vivian Sobchack similarly set out a new project for phenomenological engagement with cinema through the work of Merleau-Ponty and, like Shaviro, explicitly positioned her intervention in The Address of the Eye in opposition to Lacan (or at least a certain version thereof). Even prior to this, however, Joan Copjec had already begun to make the case for the Lacanian critique of the paradigm of Screen theory - that was based as much in Althusser and Foucault as much as it was in a recognisably Freudian model - and more recently Todd McGowan has begun to elaborate the
possibilities of a properly Lacanian account of the film experience in The Real Gaze. And while Shaviro - in “The Cinematic Body: Redux”, and inspired by Žižek’s revivification of psychoanalysis through German Idealism - rallied together with his speculative (psychoanalytic) comrades in the face of a threat from the so-called Post-Theory paradigm, what has so far perhaps been lost in this complex intellectual history is the possibility of reading Lacanian psychoanalysis and phenomenology together in our approaches to film. We know, for example, that Lacan and Merleau-Ponty were in communication, and that the former pays tribute to his recently deceased colleague’s The Visible and the Invisible in his landmark eleventh seminar on The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis. Indeed, Lacan’s formulation of “the gaze” - that much maligned and frequently misunderstood concept - occurs under the avowed influence of Merleau-Ponty’s thought. In this paper, then, I will attempt to draw out some of the possible connections between psychoanalysis and phenomenology that have arguably been overlooked so far in their hitherto separate deployments in and against film-philosophy.

**Biography:** Ben Tyrer is the author of Out of the Past: Lacan and Film Noir (Palgrave, 2016), and co-editor of Psychoanalysis and the Unrepresentable (Routledge, 2016) and Femininity and Psychoanalysis (forthcoming). He is co-coordinator of the Psychoanalysis in Our Time international research network.

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**Evy Varsamopoulou** (University of Cyprus) – evyvarsa@ucy.ac.cy

**Title:** The Prometheus Syndrome: Ridley Scott’s Alien prequels

**Abstract:** Ridley Scott’s Prometheus (2012) and Alien: Covenant (2017) introduced a philosophical problematic into a cluster of interrelated and (still) topical issues and debates concerning the origin of humanity, procreation and posthuman futures. Apart from these ontological quests and questions, the films delve further into anxieties of natality, birth and parasitic or monstrous incubation, which in their ethical dimension relate to gender and hospitality. The films, especially Prometheus, clearly allude to the historical legacy of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin Shelley’s novel, Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus (1818), of which they are arguably the most engaged cinematic adaptation-responses. This paper will explore the cinematic reconfigurations of this literary, philosophical and scientific legacy as part of what will be described as a “Prometheus syndrome”, with specific reference to Scott’s films.

**Biography:** I am Associate Professor in English and Comparative Literature in the Department of English Studies at the University of Cyprus. I have published and presented papers on Romantic literature and aesthetics, the sublime, ethics and the fantastic in contemporary film, bullying, cosmopolitanism and issues in identity and community.

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**Leigh Viner** (Indiana University Southeast) – vviner@ius.edu

**Title:** Freedom, Desire, and Motherhood in Agnès Varda’s “Kung Fu Master”

**Abstract:** Agnès Varda, nicknamed, at age 30, the grandmother of French New Wave Cinema, although less well known than some of her male peers like Goddard and Truffaut, is one of the most creative and radical artists of her generation. Her experimental approach to filmmaking, which she calls cinécriture or “cinematic writing”, blurs the boundaries between documentary and fiction, moving picture and still photography. She is political, but also playful and humorous. And, although Varda is generally classified a feminist filmmaker, in part due to her focus on female characters, their experiences, fears and desires, some of her films, like “Le Bonheur” and “Kung Fu Master” present
challenges to a feminist reading. In this project, I examine “Kung Fu Master”, her 1988 film starring Jane Birkin as a 40-year-old woman who falls in love and pursues an erotic relationship with a 15-year-old boy, her daughter’s classmate, played by Varda’s own son, Mathieu Demy. Already, we see a double-transgression of motherhood, both within the story and external to it. However, the film’s portrayal of this transgressive female desire violates the artistic and moral boundaries with a humor and casual relentlessness that makes it even more disturbing and compelling. Utilizing descriptions of motherhood, feminine identity formation, and liberation from Beauvoir’s The Second Sex and her Ethics of Ambiguity, as well as the obvious oedipal dynamics from Freudian theory, I will trace the many disruptions and subversions presented in this intriguing film and attempt to offer some interpretations. A brief comparison of this film with more traditionally transgressive romances between an older man and a young girl, like Woody Allen’s “Manhattan”, reveal interesting differences regarding power and gender as well.

Biography: Leigh Viner earned her PhD in Philosophy at Duquesne University writing on the Ancient Greek Stoics. She is an assistant professor at Indiana University Southeast, teaching a wide variety of courses, including Aesthetics, Asian Philosophy, Philosophy of Gender and Sexuality, and recently, a seminar on Michel Foucault. She is also a musician in the experimental music scene in her hometown, Louisville, Kentucky.

Victoria Walden (University of Sussex) - v.walden@sussex.ac.uk

Title: Cinema’s apocalyptic essence

Abstract: At the end of Avengers: Infinity Wars, the antagonist Thanos fulfils his quest to save the universe by indiscriminately wiping out 50% of the population with the five, bright infinity stones collectively imbued with the power to allow him to do this. At the click of his fingers, their light turns half of all living creatures to dust. Thanos is portrayed as the villain, yet he enables a rapture without judgement. Although this is the end for many of the Marvel Cinematic Universe’s characters it is not for half of them, and indeed as we know (spoiler alert), some of the dead will come back to life in future films. The end created in a flash of light by Thanos is also a new beginning. This paper offers some initial ruminations about the enfolding of endings and beginnings, and the significance of light to apocalyptic thought to argue that cinema is essentially apocalyptic. Whilst Peter Szendy argues that apocalyptic films help us to see what cinema is by revealing the end of cinema. I consider apocalyptic thought as a discourse that enriches our understanding of cinema as simultaneously creative and destructive. This paper works particularly with Georges Didi-Huberman’s book Survival of the Fireflies not to argue that all films fit into the (post-)apocalyptic genre, but rather to suggest that cinema is ontologically apocalyptic. Whilst public discourse increasingly suggests the future of our world as we know it is doomed because of the Anthropocene, nuclear war or the collapse of capitalism, I want to encourage a more optimistic readjustment in our thinking about the apocalypse. This paper is part of a broader project I am developing which hopes to bring a range of theological, philosophical and cinematic interpretations of the apocalypse to a new ontology of cinema.

Biography: Victoria Grace Walden is a Teaching Fellow in the School of Media, Film and Music at the University of Sussex. She works particularly with the writing of Georges Didi-Huberman, Giorgio Agamben, and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to explore issues related to materiality, temporality and memory in film and the digital.

Saige Walton (University of South Australia) – saige.walton@unisa.edu.au

Title: A ‘most revolutionary reality’: from Maya Deren’s poetic thinking to Strange Colours
Abstract: During the 1940s-1960s, the American experimental filmmaker and theorist, Maya Deren, developed a complex, ritualistic conception of the image and its connections with film-as-poetry. Rejecting uses of naturalism and surrealism in film as well as the lauding of art/film as personal expression, Deren’s critical writings celebrate cinema as the creative manipulation and re-combination of reality (a reality comprised of different material elements). Influenced by poetic symbolist movements, also, Deren was careful to distinguish her conception of the image from symbolisation. Whereas the symbol substitutes one thing for another in a one-to-one relationship, Deren’s conception of the poetic image involves a dynamic constellation of film form, ideas and emotions. While rich in film-philosophical scope and potential, Deren’s thought is rarely discussed outside of avant-garde contexts or mobilised beyond her own body of work. In this paper, I draw upon Deren’s “An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film” (1946) and other select texts to argue for the aesthetic and environmental relevance of Deren’s thinking to the contemporary, especially those films that manifest a ‘poetic’ approach to narration. Bringing Deren’s thought into dialogue with Strange Colours (the debut Australian feature from Russian-born director, Alena Lodkina), I explore how the film’s attention to bodies, landscape and non-human life generates what Deren calls a “mythical reality” (1946: 24). Set in the remote black opal-mining town of Lightning Ridge, Strange Colours follows its central female character, Milena, through the Australian landscape, subterranean and darkened spaces (creating captivating, meditative and unnerving effects). Herein, to recall Deren, the human functions as a de-personalised component within a larger whole (the filming of gem life, rock formations, skyscapes, desert and water). As with Deren’s earlier theorisations, Lodkina’s re-configuration of reality (the Australian outback, mining towns) calls attention to material life while raising unanswered questions. Concept and feeling-driven rather than narrational, Strange Colours lends contemporary valence to Deren’s poetic and ritualistic thinking on the image.

Biography: Senior Lecturer: Screen Studies School of Creative Industries, University of South Australia
Saige Walton is the author of Cinema’s Baroque Flesh: Film, Phenomenology and the Art of Entanglement (Amsterdam University Press, 2016) and Co-Editor of a Special Dossier on “Materialising Absence in Film and Media” with Screening the Past (2018). Her articles on film-philosophy, film-phenomenology and the embodiment of film/media aesthetics appear in journals such as Culture, Theory and Critique, Cinéma & Cie, NECSUS, Senses of Cinema, The Cine-Files and the New Review of Film and Television Studies, amongst others. Her current book in development deals with the embodiment and ethics of a contemporary cinema of poetry.

Jack Williams (University of Aberdeen) – r01jhw16@abdn.ac.uk

Title: The Flow of Things Seen: Conflicts of Purpose and Practice in the Documentary Film of John Grierson

Abstract: There is a conflict in the British Documentary Film Movement between philosophy and practicality, where John Grierson’s Idealistic aspiration to realise film’s potential for social purpose contrasts dramatically with the production constraints of state-sponsored propaganda made in the 30s/40s. As such, the difference in how Grierson perceived and ‘sold’ the films made during his time heading the EMB and GPO Film Units compared to the recollections of those he employed as production staff shows a sharp divide between the prioritisation of either theory or practice. The ‘success’ of these units in enacting social change is often questionable, but the products of this mission to evolve cinema beyond a sensationalist medium exemplifies what makes Grierson’s filmography engaging as both didactic and experiential objects. With this divide can come the consideration of the influential value of environmental factors and technological limitation in the creation of a documentary that is both philosophically and socially engaged. Whist realism is never directly real, the interpretation of reality afforded by the creative film practice of the British.
Documentary Film Movement presents an opportunity to explore how theory and practice might not be divisive concepts in how we perceive the history of Grierson’s cinema. Using recently acquired materials from the Grierson Archive at Stirling University, this conference paper will examine the way in which theory and practice can coalesce to show documentary film's innate capacity to perceive underrepresented voices through both a staunch theoretical stimulus and the formal elements that may occur purely by accident or necessary creativity due to technological limitation. This argument will look at how theories of phenomena are pervasive in ways beyond the general analysis of Grierson’s philosophical writing, revealing itself in anecdotes, student documents and personal letters which do not have the primary aim of espousing the primacy of theory.

**Biography:** I am a Philosophy of Film PhD student at the University of Aberdeen in my final year of study. I work as a teaching assistant at the university, providing support for theoretical and practical courses in the film and visual culture programme. My topic of choice is John Grierson’s involvement in the British Documentary Film Movement of the 30s/40s, examining the influences and limitations of German Idealism in his production methodology.

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**Cato Wittusen** (University of Stavanger) – cato.wittusen@uis.no

**Title:** Virtual Presence and Cavellian Skepticism

**Abstract:** This paper discusses Alejandro González Iñárritu’s 2017 installation CARNE y ARENA (Virtually present, Physically invisible), which is based on the director’s conversations with immigrants that have made it across the Mexico border. The installation is divided into three parts: a cold room similar to the “freezers” in which detained immigrants are often kept for hours, a 6$$\frac{1}{2}$$-minute virtual-reality (VR) movie in which the viewer experiences immigrants being stopped by the US Border Patrol, and video portraits of some of the real immigrants that have inspired the work. In the VR experience, the viewer, equipped with a headset, walks around with bare feet on cold sand. The spectator then becomes witness to the immigrants’ dramatic confrontation with the US Border Patrol. A surrealist scene alluding to the crisis in and around the Mediterranean Sea follows. Finally, the viewer is left alone in the desert. The spectator can move freely around in the barren landscape for the entire time. Yet, while the viewer is virtually present, they are physically invisible. According to the director, this work represents a completely new art form. There is, for instance, no frame, and the VR technology immerses us in ways not available in cinema. Moreover, critics have argued that these technologies help us explore the human condition and increase our empathy for other people. This paper will relate these claims to Stanley Cavell’s discussion of film as a moving image of skepticism. For Cavell, film permits us to view the world unseen, which also means that in the face of a tragedy, the spectator’s helplessness is “mechanically assured.” An important question is whether this experience of helplessness is in fact radicalized in the immersive VR experience. In conclusion, this paper will discuss whether this installation constitutes a step toward fulfilling what André Bazin has described as the myth of total cinema.

**Biography:** Associate Professor of Philosophy

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**Mila Zuo** (University of British Columbia) – mila.zuo@oregonstate.edu

**Title:** The Girlfriend Experience: Virtual Beauty and Love in Post-Cinematic Times

**Abstract:** Indicting mass culture, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer write: “the culture industry endlessly cheats its consumers out of what it endlessly promises.” In Lacanian terms, the lure of entertainment rests upon dangling promises that are perpetually unsatisfied, generating objet petit a.
Pursuing the logic of jouissance, this presentation examines how the fantasy of heterosexual love inscribed within virtual promises of beauty and love produces persistent longing to court new technologies. Western films like Weird Science (John Hughes, 1985), S1mone (Andrew Niccol, 2002), Her (Spike Jonze, 2013), Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2015), and Blade Runner 2049 (Denis Villeneuve, 2017) explore these ideas through science-fiction, while the phenomenon of the virtual girlfriend in Japanese otaku (obsessed fandom) cultures is attributed to unhealthy attachments to digital gaming and animé. The spread of CGI models (see Balmain’s 2018 “racially-diverse” campaign) also indicate that the seductions of post-humanism, as expressed through post-cinematic technologies, are intimately related to erotic post-racial fantasies, unfulfillable promise, and, following Wendy Chun, a “sexuality-paranoia” that undergirds our experience of the Internet. Echoing the romanticized significations of the recurring prefix “post” in the previous sentence, the virtual girlfriend also signals a time beyond the need for a “real” human lover. From the suspicious optics of critical theory, if the virtual girlfriend is always cheating and promising its ostensible male suitor, conversely, how might we apply psychoanalytic and affective approaches to courtly (masochistic) love to comprehend our fraught erotic relationship with new media? This presentation examines some ways in which new media technologies (broadly defined as high-definition, virtual and augmented realities, and social media platforms) enable a fetishistic disavowal (“I know very well, but all the same”) in virtual displays of feminine beauty and unfaithful love, as well as discusses some of the affective, social, and material consequences of such mediated infatuations.

Biography: Mila Zuo is an assistant professor of film in the School of Writing, Literature, and Film at Oregon State University. Her research interests include transnational cinemas and media; film philosophy; affect theory; and feminist, queer, and critical race approaches to cinema. Her current book project is concerned with the affective world-making of Chinese women film stars, and her essays appear or are forthcoming in Journal of Chinese Cinemas, Celebrity Studies journal, Feminist Media Histories journal, and the volumes Exploiting East Asian Cinemas: Genre, Circulation, Reception and The Palgrave Handbook of Asian Cinema. Zuo is also a filmmaker whose work has screened in international film festivals, theaters, galleries, and universities.

Workshops

Title: How to think Europe through a Mythopoetics of Cinema?

Abstract: The recent book by Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli, Mythopoetic Cinema: On the Ruins of European Identity (2017) would serve as a general framework for the workshop’s on how to interrogate European identity through the aesthetics of cinema. The political tensions and conceptual problems surrounding the identity of contemporary Europe have only grown tragically more relevant in the last few years, making it even more urgent to question our thinking about political and cultural identity. This workshop questions, to what extent have audio visual representations contributed to Europe’s tragic history of wars, revolutions and genocides? Despite its apparent commitment to inclusiveness and hybridity many films about European history and contemporary identity politics continue to be divisive. For example, former Eastern Bloc and Balkan countries quickly and forcefully erased their “non-European” and “undemocratic” socialist past, replacing it with historical narratives connecting them to Europe, the genealogy of that concept, the democratic values associated with it, and the historiographical myths that, over millennia, have sustained the idea of Europe by severing its many and amply documented ties to the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. However, this recent mix of historical erasure and revisionism has not turned these people into “new Europeans,” but has rather propelled a resurgence of neo-nationalist sentiments (quite antithetical to tolerant and inclusive visions of a “new” Europe) that have fueled and continue to fuel not only the erection of new political and cultural boundaries but also violent ethnic warfare (in the former Yugoslavia and now the Ukraine) as well as anti-immigrant policies and increasingly successful right-wing nationalist parties throughout Europe.
Similarly, the recent attacks in Belgium and France cannot be understood simply as a reaction to Western interventions in the Middle East, but also as an effect of the “New European” identity’s inability to include large swaths of immigrant urban populations, or to make them feel even more excluded by treating cultural practices like wearing the veil as “non-European”. This workshop seeks to address a cinema that counters the politics of opposition.

Chair: Dusan Bjelic (University of Maine, Portland)
Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli (UC Davis)
Dragan Kujundzic (University of South Florida)
Maria Koundoura (Emerson College)
Sean Homer (American University, Blagoevgrad)

Title: Stanley Cavell and Contemporary Film-Philosophy

Abstract: In a career spanning six decades, Stanley Cavell provided us with some of the most lucid thoughts about cinema - what the medium is, what films mean and why they matter to us. In his seminal writings about film, Cavell was guided by his intuition that the marriage of philosophy and film theory and criticism he aspired to and achieved has an essential part to play in the serious study of film. There is no thinker to whom the field of film-philosophy is more profoundly indebted. Perhaps it is not an overstatement to say that the field itself is part of his legacy. This workshop will assess the continuing relevance and usefulness of Cavell’s work for film-philosophy today. There will be between five and seven panellists, each of whom will make a five-minute statement about Cavell’s importance to her or his own research. Then discussion will be opened out to the floor on such topics as Cavell’s relevance to contemporary film, television, digital and interactive media; to the teaching of film-philosophy; and to issues involving gender, global politics and ideology.

Chair: Andrew Klevan (University of Oxford),
Catherine Wheatley (King’s College London),
Sandra Laugier (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne),
Trevor Mowchun (University of Florida),
Daniele Rugo (Brunel University London),
Kate Rennebohm (Harvard University)