DAY ONE:

SESSION ONE:

1. AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF EARLY PHILIPPINE FILM DISCOURSES

Louise Jashil R. Sonido

This study aims to contribute to the development of an intellectual history of film criticism in the Philippines through the constitution and examination of a corpus of film writings from the early years of cinema in the Philippines. To study the production of knowledge through film writings is valuable in several ways. Foremost, it circumvents the problem of the archival crisis that haunts Philippine film historiography and scholarship, such that “what we can know of the past is limited to the historical traces of it that exist in the present”; hence, “the absence or inaccessibility of traditional sources of data should be an invitation to the historian to look for evidence in unusual, if not exotic, places" (Allen and Gomery 1985).

Rescuing history and memory from what imprints of Filipinos’ historical experiences of cinema can be culled from writings opens up a new path of historical investigation. The study of film knowledge through film writings “increases our sense of the participants in [film] history” (Smoodin 2007), and locates cinema within a broad and complex web of discursive practices. Examining film through archival writings is an effort “to expand the number of interpretable texts [in film studies] and to begin to chart the relationships between, and make meaning from, various discursive practices...to treat movies as aspects of a complex system of cultural production” (Lewis and Smoodin 2007). This interdisciplinary approach to evidence and history allows, not only for a means to reach for an otherwise fragmented history of Philippine cinema, but for the expansion and revision of current notions, methodological practices, and historiographic approaches to film and cinema studies.

LOUISE JASHIL R. SONIDO teaches at the University of the Philippines Department of English and Comparative Literature. As a teacher, scholar, multimedia artist, and cultural worker, she has a range of research interests transecting literary criticism, intellectual historiography, media and film scholarship, performance curation, and ethnographies of multimedia production. lrsonido@up.edu.ph

**2. Constructing a Barren Desert: The Misremembering of Early Hebrew Film Theory**

Boaz Hagin

Israeli writers have claimed that Hebrew film theory and the serious study of cinema only began in the 1970s, with the establishment of film journals, the first university film department, cinematheques, and a national film institute. They claimed—sometimes based on personal memory—that, before these, film theory in Hebrew was almost a “barren desert.”

The proposed talk seeks to show that, in fact, substantial film theorizing did take place in Hebrew in British-ruled Mandatory Palestine and the young State of Israel. Thanks to a growing body of scanned and indexed works, we can now see that Hebrew intellectuals explored issues in film theory in books, popular magazines, prestigious literary and art journals, and daily newspapers as well as at public events.

The talk argues that this discourse was forgotten for several reasons. Academic film studies distanced itself from its predecessors, belittled them, and thus disincentivized studying them. Some of the theory was imparted verbally in film clubs and lectures and has been difficult to reconstruct. Moreover, the theorizing was often done by first and second-generation Jewish immigrants—including Holocaust survivors and refugees from Nazi Europe—who were encouraged to view Israel as their homeland and deny the difficulties of immigrating. They could, however, express their pain by describing Israeli film theory as lacking and comparing local film culture in the “periphery” to an idealized account of European centres. They instilled this frustration into their discourse, and its young cinephile audience perpetuated it in historical accounts that denied its existence.

Bio:

Boaz Hagin is chair of the graduate film studies program at the Steve Tisch School of Film and Television, Tel Aviv University, and is co-editor of the Depth of Field book series published by the Steve Tisch School with Am Oved. He is the author of *Death in Classical Hollywood Cinema*, co-author, with Thomas Elsaesser, of *Memory, Trauma, and Fantasy in American Cinema*, and co-editor of *Just Images: Ethics and the Cinematic* and *Deeper Than Oblivion: Trauma and Memory in Israeli Cinema*. He is currently studying the history of film discourse in Israel and the Jewish settlement in Palestine.

**3. Title: "The "Start" Film Society: Cinephile Culture, Film Theory, and Political Activism in 1930s Poland"**

Abstract:

I explore into the multifaceted role played by the "Start" film society in 1930s Warsaw, Poland. Founded by a generation born around 1910, who were nurtured in the era of film, "Start" operated during a period characterized by the Great Depression, the advent of sound cinema, and the escalating tensions in society. The legacy of "Start" extended well beyond its active years, with several of its members, including Jerzy Toeplitz, Aleksander Ford, and Wanda Jakubowska, assuming influential roles in art, politics, and cinema in the post-World War II era.

In contrast to the abstract and pure cinema embraced by the avant-gardes of the 1920s, the cinephiles of the 1930s exhibited distinct attitudes towards institutionalization, politicization, and theorization of cinema. This paper underscores the profound impact that local contexts and personal interactions exerted in shaping cinematic discourse. "Start" film society serves as a compelling exemplar of how cinephile initiatives operated outside the Western European cities of modernism, as extensively researched by Malte Hagener. As such this examination contributes into the dynamics of film theorizing from the global perspective.

Comprising an exclusive cohort of middle and upper-class young adults, "Start" promoted cinema through diverse means, including film screenings, debates, writing, and active engagement in filmmaking, often conducted outside any institutionalized framework. Notably, their fervent interest lay in films that melded artistic excellence with a commitment to addressing pressing societal concerns. Despite contending with constraints such as limited access to avant-garde cinematic works and reliance on second-hand accounts of films and theories, the members of "Start" adeptly navigated these challenges. Their endeavors contributed significantly to the development of grassroots film theory aligned with their unique vision of the desired nature of cinema.

**Łukasz Biskupski**, PhD is an associate professor at the Faculty of Cultural Research, University of Łódź, Poland. His research primarily focuses on the history of cinema and popular culture, particularly emphasizing the economic, social, and cultural aspects of Polish cinema. Dr. Biskupski completed his PhD at SWPS University, Warsaw, and pursued a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Gdańsk. His notable publications include "Miasto atrakcji. Narodziny kultury masowej na przełomie XIX i XX wieku. Kino w systemie rozrywkowym Łodzi" (2013), an exploration of cinema's rise in Łódź and its influence on popular culture around 1900. His 2017 work, "Kinofilia zaangażowana. Stowarzyszenie Miłośników Filmu Artystycznego 'Start' i upowszechnianie kultury filmowej w latach 30. XX w.," examines the 1930s activities of the "Start" film society. Additionally, he co-edited "Papierowi bandyci. Wypisy z powieści obiegu brukowego do 1939 roku" (2017), which delves into Polish pulp fiction up to 1939.

# 4. A Language for Cinema: Circulating and Translating Film theory within the Urdu public sphere in India (1930-50)

Urdu language and its literary culture had a considerable influence in shaping the narrative and aesthetic vocabularies of cinematic practice in India. While film scholars have recognized the role of Urdu in film dialogues and lyrics, few have attempted to understand the crucial processes by which film culture was fashioned within the Urdu public sphere. This paper aims to show a few of those entanglements and bring forth the vibrant debates of the Urdu public sphere on cinema from 1930 to 1950.

The overlaps between the cinematic public sphere and Urdu literary culture produced a series of fascinating texts that fed into and shaped an Urdu discourse around film. Despite the rise in English education, Urdu was an important medium through which individuals and institutions were able to articulate the ideas emerging from the complexities of negotiating with colonial modernity. In this paper, I focus on two Urdu books, Film Acting Guide by Prithi Singh (1935) and Filmī Adakāri (Film Acting), a translation of Vsevolod Pudovkin in Urdu by Balam Firdausi (1937). These textual artefacts highlight how cinema as an institution was formalized and disseminated in Urdu with an active engagement in values and codes of etiquette borrowed from an Urdu cultural milieu. I show how these texts were produced with serious pedagogical intent to ‘refine’ the taste of cinephiles and at the same time make accessible global film theories through translocation and translation. Through these texts, I interrogate the ways in which the Urdu public sphere was responding to cinema (imagined as a ‘western’ import) and domesticating film theories on acting, stardom and performance.

# Author Bio:

Sarah Rahman Niazi is an Assistant Professor at Flame University in Pune. She received her PhD from the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Media (CREAM) at the University of Westminster in London. Her work maps the entangled history of cinema’s relationship to the Urdu public sphere in India (1930- 1950) and explores questions of language, literary culture, performance and gender. Her work has been published in international peer-reviewed journals such as Widescreen, Culture Unbound, BioScope and in books by Sage, Bloomsbury, and Routledge, among others.

SESSION TWO:

### 1. Afro-Asian Film Theory in the Age of Bandung

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#### Elena Razlogova

Histories of militant cinema from the Global South usually begin in the late 1960s, when filmmakers coalesced around the Third Cinema movement that spread from Latin America to international festivals and conferences. Yet several key points advanced in these later manifestos and meetings—about cinema as an instrument of liberation, the divergent aims of political and commercial cinemas, and proper revolutionary film aesthetics—were already debated on the Afro-Asian film festival circuit in the late 1950s.

This article analyzes the early writings of cinema intellectuals who theorized film as an instrument of nation-building after the famous 1955 Bandung Asian-African conference in Indonesia, including Senegalese filmmaker and film historian Paulin Soumanou Vieyra and Indonesian filmmaker and film theorist Bachtiar Siagian. It will then discuss how early Asian, African, and Asian-African film festivals put these ideas into practice. These include the Asian Film Week in China (1957); the Fourth Festival lnternazionale di Cinematografia Africana in Mogadishu, Somalia and the First International Film Festival in Ibadan, Nigeria (both in 1961); and the Afro-Asian Film Festival in Tashkent (1958), Cairo (1960), and Jakarta (1964). Unlike later Third Cinema manifestos, the early film writings and festival manifestos argued for the key role of the state in shaping anticolonial cinema theory, and for the value of entertainment cinema—what Bishnupriya Ghosh and Bhaskar Sarkar call “global-popular”—for national sovereignty in the Global South. These earlier Asian and African roots for the Third Cinema movement locate the birth of cinematic Third Worldism in the age of Bandung.

### Bio

Elena Razlogova is an Associate Professor of History at Concordia University in Montreal. Her book, *The Listener’s Voice: Early Radio and the American Public*, came out from University of Pennsylvania Press in 2011. She has published articles in *Russian Review*, *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*, *Cultural Studies*, *Studies in European Cinema*, *SubStance*, *Black Camera*, and several edited collections. Her work has appeared in Russian, Italian, and Czech as well as English. Her research interests include U.S. radio history; music recommendation, recognition, and mastering algorithms; the Global Cold War; film translation; Global South cinema networks; and Soviet international film festivals.

**2. Translating Third Cinema in Cold War South Korea**

Hieyoon Kim

Starting in the early 1980s in South Korea, young filmmakers influenced by the Third Cinema movement radically reframed cinema as tool of political dissent. Through collaborative projects such as filmmaking and publication, they defined cinema as a mode of communication that facilitated the grassroots growth of a progressive society against the authoritarian power’s control. Among their activities, I focus on the complex economies of cultural exchange in their translation of Third Cinema theories into Korean. During the Cold War, South Korea’s geopolitical condition as a US satellite state obstructed not only coeval but also *direct* engagements with radical film works from the Global South. It yielded what appeared to be a paradoxical juncture in which even anti-colonial and anti-capitalist film discourses were introduced through the mediation of English—a hegemonic language. I examine such a juncture in “Third Cinema,” a hitherto unstudied zine that included Korean translations of key theoretical texts, such as Octavio Getino and Fernando Solanas’s “Towards a Third Cinema” and A Third World Cinema Committee’s “Resolutions of the Third World Filmmakers Meeting.” Produced by a group of student activists in 1986, the zine shows that they assumed the task of translation not to facilitate bilateral cultural exchange but to act as ideological agents of cultural change in their country. Their emphasis on the national, I argue, obstructed a radical reckoning with either the material conditions they shared with other postcolonial societies or the contradictions they faced in translating Third Cinema theories via the language of the neo-colonizer.

Bio: Hieyoon Kim is a scholar of dissident culture and media with a focus on Korea. Her first book, *Celluloid Democracy: Cinema and Politics in Cold War South Korea* (UC Press, 2023), examines how Korean filmmakers, distributors, and exhibitors reshaped cinema in radically empowering ways amid political turbulence from liberation through the decades of military rule (1945–1987). Her articles have appeared in the *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, *Feminist Media Histories*, and *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*. She teaches in the Department of East Asian Studies at Brown University.

**3. The Postcolonial Crisis of Political Modernism: Ideology, Third Cinema, and the Cinema of Hou Hsiao-hsien**

This paper details Taiwanese intellectuals’ second encounter with the idea of cinematic modernism—both as a historical designation and a theoretical apparatus—throughout the course of the 1980s. My first corpus here is *Dianyingxinshang* (Film Appreciation Journal), the official periodical of the National Film Library (now Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Center), so as to examine the hermeneutic conditions created before and by the release of *All for Tomorrow*, a military propaganda short produced by Hou Hsiao-hsien. This alliance between a supposedly liberal artist and a deeply authoritarian state provoked immediate critical backlashes in newspapers. This excavation into the Taiwanese reception of third cinema and apparatus theory will help us understand how *City of Sadness* was debated and disclaimed by critics at the time of its release. These criticisms adopt a political modernist reading and, in so doing, demand to establish a “paradigm” for Taiwanese film studies. In the push for a legitimate film scholarship, Hou’s film was read as not confrontational enough; his nativist or poetic realism was regarded as a failure of his cinema to dismantle the ideology of the Nationalist government or proof of his conformism. Political modernism is regarded, for the distant observers on the island, as an idealized means of protest in the political repression that was cracking open in the post-military law era. I contend that the fact that the critics were criticizing Hou with third cinema and Godard in mind can be seen as a postcolonial symptom of modernism’s imperialism.

Chang-Min Yu is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at National Taiwan University. He received his PhD in Film Studies from the University of Iowa. His articles have appeared or are forthcoming in *Film Criticism, Quarterly Review of Film and Video, NECSUS, The Cine-Files, Journal of Chinese Cinemas, and positions*. His current research interests lie in corporeal cinema, contemporary digital cinema, and Sinophone film historiography. He is currently finishing a book manuscript, tentatively entitled *Modernism Disclaimed: Taiwanese Film Historiography Before and Beyond the New Cinema*.

**4. Third Cinema: African Archaeologies and Manifestations**

**Dr. Aboubakar Sanogo, Carleton University**

This paper is a contribution toward a revised historiography of third cinema. Officially emerging over five decades ago, third cinema has been recognized as of the most potent contributions of the then Third World to film theoretical debates. Standard histories trace its early manifestations to Brazilian Cine-Novo and the early days of the Cuban revolution, with its quasi-official birthdate coinciding with the two filmed and written manifestoes, *La hora de los hornos* (1968) and “Towards a Third Cinema” (1969), authored by of the Grupo Cine Liberación spearheaded by Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, offering a primarily Latin American emphasis. While the centrality of the Latin American presence, influence, and manifestations of third cinema is incontrovertible, it may be argued that much less emphasis has been placed on the equally central role played by Africa in the third cinema project.

This paper seeks to address this gap and offer a more complex historiography of third cinema beyond what may be termed “the diffusionist hypothesis,” by insisting not only on the letter of third cinema but also on the spirit of third cinema. The spirit of third cinema arguably precedes by several decades the elaboration of the filmed and written manifestoes. In that regard, the paper will explore some of the archaeologies and manifestations of third cinema in an African and Afro-diasporic context taking into account the discursive, the institutional, practices, apparatuses and individuals and figures. These will include Pan Africanism and the broader African emancipation library (the discursive); figures ranging from Toussaint Louverture to DuBois and Garvey alongside Fanon, Césaire, Senghor, Cheikh Anta Diop, Cabral and others; film personalities such as Paulin Soumanou Vieyra, Ousmane Sembène, Med Hondo, Teshome Gabriel and Haile Gerima; such institutions as Présence Africaine, the Organization of African Unity and its Coordination Committee for the Liberation of Africa among others.

Bio:

Aboubakar Sanogo is Associate Professor in Film Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. His research interests include African cinema, Afro-diasporic cinema, colonial cinema, postcolonialism, and the relationships between film form, history, and theory. His work has appeared in Cinema Journal, Framework, Moving Image Review & Art Journal, Rethinking History, Journal of Film Preservation, Film Quarterly, Sight and Sound and Film Comment. He is currently completing two book projects on the history of documentary in Africa and on the cinema of Med Hondo, as well as an anthology on the legendary director. He is CoI for the AHRC-funded Global Circulations of Film Theory network project.

SESSION THREE:

1. Proposal: **Živojin Pavlović as film theorist** (John MacKay)

At once a filmmaker, prose writer, painter, memoirist and pedagogue, the Serbian director Živojin Pavlović (1933-1998) is regarded by many cognoscente as the greatest figure in the history of Yugoslav cinema. To be sure, his films, which include masterworks like *When I am Dead and Gone* (1967), *The Ambush* (1969), and *Manhunt* (1977), remain far too poorly known. His extensive writing on film, however - which commenced in 1956, became especially abundant in the 1960s, and was collected twice in book form (in 1969 and 1996) – has been barely recognized at all outside of the former Yugoslavia, largely because of an apparently total absence of translations. In this presentation, I hope to provide some of the outlines of Pavlović’s highly erudite reflections on film, focusing on his engagement with Soviet film and film theory (particularly Eisenstein), his critical engagement with contemporary directors like Wajda and Buñuel, and the radical theorizations of realism offered in his major essays *Poetry of Cruelty* and *Take Aim!* (both 1961), which exercised a major influence on the Yugoslav Black Wave to come, in which Pavlović’s films would play a central role.

Bio:

John MacKay is the Henry S. McNeil Professor of Film and Media Studies and Slavic Languages and Literatures and at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA. He completed a BA in English at the University of British Columbia in 1987, and a PhD in Comparative Literature at Yale in 1998. He teaches a wide variety of courses on literature, Russian culture, cultural theory, and film and moving image media. His current research interests include documentary and experimental film, early Soviet culture and its later reception, Yugoslav film culture, Marxist theory, the comparative and cross-linguistic study of film and media concepts, fictionality and non-fictionality, and the comparative study of the short story form.

Publications (among others): *Inscription and Modernity: From Wordsworth to Mandelstam*(Indiana University Press, 2006), *Four Russian Serf Narratives* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), *True Songs of Freedom: Uncle Tom's Cabin in Russian Culture and Society* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), the first volume of *Dziga Vertov: Life and Work*  (Academic Studies Press, 2018) and *Film Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (forthcoming from Oxford University Press). Samples of his work can be found at https://yale.academia.edu/JohnMacKay.

**2. Thinking Through Film: Ritwik Ghatak’s Cinematic Practice**

Abstract

This essay explores the idea of filmmaking as a collaborative practice through which film theory materializes, hybridizes, and circulates, by examining the links between the films, theoretical writings, creative collaborations, and intermedial inspirations of Ritwik Ghatak (1925-1976), widely considered to be one of the most original, politically committed, and formally innovative filmmakers from India.

Ghatak’s films and writings on the cinematic medium are animated by a heightened awareness of film form and a passionate interest in experimenting with it. His experimental urge “to find the limit, the end, the border, up to which the expression of film can go” was also a deeply political one, stemming from what he described as his “commitment to contemporary reality” (Ghatak, “My Films”). His formal innovations were part of an attempt to forge a cinematic idiom capable of registering the devastating emotional impact and continuing socio-economic aftershocks of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, and of jolting Bengali viewers, his primary target audience, into a critical engagement with both the cinematic image and with their contemporary reality.

How did Ghatak’s experimental cinematic practice intersect with his theoretical reflections, creative partnerships, and engagement with political theatre, leading to a unique formulation of film theory? How might these intersections -- and the intertwined histories of cinephilia, cosmopolitanism, and left-wing cultural politics in 1940s-60s Kolkata that shaped Ghatak’s eclectic critical sensibility -- help us think about the convergence between film practice and film theory, especially in the era of Afro-Asian decolonization?

**Bio**

Manishita Dass is Reader in Film & Global Media at Royal Holloway, University of London. Her publications include *Outside the Lettered City: Cinema, Modernity, and the Public Sphere in Late Colonial India* (OUP, 2015), *The Cloud-Capped Star* (BFI Film Classics Series, Bloomsbury, 2020), & essays in *JCMS*, *Screen*, *positions*, & edited volumes such as *Global Art Cinema* (OUP). She is currently writing a book about the impact of left radicalism & internationalism on Indian film cultures. Her research explores the relationship between aesthetics & politics, questions of modernity and cosmopolitanism, and intersections of film and political cultures in South Asia.

3. Speculative Inventions of Southeast Asian Cinemas: Theorizing Through Practice

Recent fiction films across Southeast Asia have used inventive modes of storytelling including cosmic tropes, nonlinear temporalities, and ways of showing proximities between the living, dead, and almost-dead. This chapter considers these works as speculative films that convey theories of cinema, Southeast Asia, and relational possibilities. The chapter focuses on 4 films: *The Seen and the Unseen* (Dir. Kamila Andini, Indonesia, 2017), *The Tree House* (Truong Minh Quy, Vietnam, 2019), *Stone Turtle* (Woo Ming Jin, Malaysia, 2022) and *Solids by the Seashore* (Dir. Patiparn Boontarig, Thailand, 2023). In Andini’s film, two cosmically-connected twins dance with the human and nonhuman spirits of their world at the edge of life and death. The film’s communal concerns are echoed in its feminist mode of production. *The Tree House* is set in 2045, where a filmmaker on Mars asking a question about home opens up an interrogation of time and memory, which weaves together the intimacies of indigeneity, war, ecology, displacement and legacies of colonialism. With *Stone Turtle*, the Malaysian New Wave director, Woo Ming Jin uses the cyclical narrative structure to probe the connections between gendered forms of violence and statelessness in Malaysia. In *Solids by the Seashore*, a cosmic ending connects the threat of climate change with a gentle story of love between two Muslim women. The chapter shows how these filmmakers theorize what cinema could be by inventing renewed visions of seeing, sensing, and solidarities and finally, the chapter raises questions on how the unseen could be considered within film theory.

Bio:

Elizabeth Wijaya is an Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto. She is the Director of the Southeast Asian Seminar Series at the Asian Institute, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. Her work has been published in *Verge*, *Cultural Critique*, *Discourse*, *Parallax*, *Derrida Today*, *Pacific Affairs* and *Ecology and Chinese-Language Cinema*. She is the Associate Producer for *Taste* (dir. Lê Bảo, 2021), Co-Producer for *Mongrel* (dir. Chiang Wei Liang, in post-production) and Assistant Producer for *Viet and Nam* (dir. Truong Minh Quý, in post-production). She is a co-founder of E&W Films and co-editor of *World Picture Journal*.

4. Theorizing moving images through intermedial encounters − the example of screenlife movies

According to James Clifford, theorizing is a kind of travelling, i.e. “situating the self in a space or spaces grown too large”, the acts of locating, displacing, comparing and making meaningful the differences arising from different forms of situatedness. However, it is not only geographical locations, gender, race, class, sexuality and historical experiences that determine our situatedness understood as a process and struggle, but also the media that locate, displace and circulate identities. In understanding the repositioning of moving images in digital spaces as digital objects, I turn to the new genre of screenlife movies situated in the interstices of fiction film and digitally networked media. In screenlife movies (e. g. *Searching.* Aneesh Chaganty, 2018; *Profile.* Timur Bekmambetov, 2018) events unfold within the frames of the electronic display used by a main character. Both character actions and narrative procedures are confined to the screen, identities and narrative transactions are effects of digital operations. These films can be interpreted as dramatised stories, i.e. fiction films, based on the psychological motivations of the characters, but also as recordings of the mediatised interactions of agents invested with digital identities.

Screenlife movies establish a passage between the networked, virtual space and cinematic narrative space, mediating between the two kinds of spatio-temporal and bodily presence through concrete translation operations and by limiting the source of narrative information to the protagonist’s digital operations (use of search engines, navigation through hyperlinks in the infinite space and the eternal present of the network, audio and visual means of communication, self-filming and broadcasting, etc.). The incorporation of video chats, video selfies and the computer screen in general into feature films can be thought of as an intermedial act that stretches the differences between the cinematic screen and the digital interface, mapping the boundary between the narrative and the digital identity of the character, and extending the fictional space into the network space, linking narrative temporality to the simultaneity of the network.

In this paper, I want to explore the challenges that screenlife movies pose to traditional descriptions of the cinematic apparatus and spectatorship by integrating geolocated mobile communication and (simultaneous or delayed, two-way or multi-directional) telecommunication into the narrative.

Izabella Füzi is an associate professor at the Visual Culture and Literary Theory Department, University of Szeged (Hungary). She is chief editor of the online film studies and visual culture journal *Apertúra* (www.apertura.hu). She has previously written on narrative theories in film, mediality, and spectatorship and is co-author, with Ervin Török, of *Introduction to the Analysis of Epic Fiction and Narrative Film* (2006, in Hungarian). Her book entitled *Rhetoric, Language, Theory* (2009, in Hungarian) includes studies on language philosophy and writings on Hungarian and world literature. Her recent publications include a historical monograph entitled *From the Fairground to Cinema: The Emergence of Visual Mass Culture in Hungary* (1896-1914) (2022, in Hungarian) and a handbook summarizing the media history of moving images entitled *Moving Images and Mobility ‒ A Historical Catalogue* (trilingual edition, 2022).

SESSION FOUR:

1. **Media Studies Goes Environmental:**

**What Chinese Socialist Science Education Film Can Teach Us**

Yiman Wang (yw3@ucsc.edu)

Film and media studies is witnessing an environmental and new materialist shift. This turn underscores the techne, the relational, and the more-than-human (if not posthuman) materiality.

 What remains unclear is how this new materialist turn does not turn out to be yet another exercise of interpretation and hermeneutics, albeit of different objects. That is, what is materialist about the new materialist turn? How might it stimulate new methods of doing film and media theories? My essay probes these questions by studying socialist Chinese science education film culture—a fertile site to test the new materialist turn in that it shows filmmaking, distribution and exhibition in maximal entanglement with the material conditions with the goal of harnessing and transforming the environment for socialist modernity.

 My paper explores the construction of sociopolitical units and their feedback relations with more-than-human elements. These feedback relations came into being through the technological practices of filmmaking, exhibition and sharing that brought a wide range of human and more-than-human participants into interactions.

 By unpacking these entangled feedback relations, I delineate environmental discourses embedded in socialist science education films. My goal is to situate the environment turn in the thick of multi-registered media analysis and interpretation. The new materialist turn can thus be strengthened by intersecting with more “traditional” approaches, rather than jettisoning them.

Yiman Wang is Professor of Film & Digital Media, and Kenneth R. Corday Family Presidential Chair in Writing for Television & Film at University of California, Santa Cruz. She is author of Remaking Chinese Cinema: Through the Prism of Shanghai, Hong Kong and Hollywood (2013), and To Be an Actress: Labor and Performance in Anna May Wong’s Cross-Media World (2024). She has published numerous articles in journals and edited volumes on topics of eco-cinema and environmental media, Chinese cinema, independent documentary, ethnic border-crossing stardom, film remakes and adaptation. She is editor of a special issue of Feminist Media Histories on Asian Feminist Media (2019), co-editor of an InFocus Dossier on Queering Asian Media in Journal of Cinema and Media Studies (2023), co-editor of Chinese Animation: Multiplicities in Motion (forthcoming 2024), and co-editor of the Global East Asian Screen Cultures book series published by Bloomsbury.

2. Examining Film Theory in a non-institutionalised State: Film Theory Curricula in Taiwan Higher Education

Mr Junwei Lu

PhD candidate in film & TV studies

University of Glasgow

Abstract

What do we mean when it comes to film theory? And how do we teach film theory? This paper delves into the questions rooted in Taiwan’s film higher education, revealing the picture of film theory education. Besides this paper also points out some problems that Taiwan’s film education faces and its difficulties. This paper commences with a succinct overview of the historical trajectory of film education in Taiwan, probing into the nebulous positioning of film as an academic discipline within the domain of higher education. Given the centrality of film theory in the field of film studies, its contours are inevitably shaped by the structural dynamics of the academic frameworks. Consequently, an examination ensues, scrutinising the extant curriculum modules of film-related courses in Taiwan, with particular emphasis on the proportional distribution between film theory and practical film production. Notably, the prevailing trend in Taiwanese film education appears to underscore a pragmatic orientation. Subsequently, we turn to focus on curriculum designs that pivot around film theory. This investigation encompasses an exploration of the predominant theoretical paradigms chosen for inclusion, the periodisation of the theories, and a comprehensive discussion of the academic pedigrees of the instructors. Moreover, attention is directed towards an examination of the primary reference textbooks utilised in these courses, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the pedagogical landscape shaping film theory education in Taiwan. In so doing, this critical review serves not only as an appraisal of current shortcomings but also as a catalyst for a transformative and intellectually rigorous future in the domain of Taiwanese film theory research.

Bio

Junwei Lu is currently a PhD candidate in Film & TV studies at the University of Glasgow, UK. His research interests include Sinophone cinema, popular culture, stardom and film festivals. His ongoing doctoral project concerns the genealogy of childhood cinema in Taiwan or considering what that means in Chinese language cinema and pan-East Asian cinema. This project will broadly examine different representations of childhood/ children in the cinema and their relationship with the cinema.

3. The *scene* of film theory: An Approach to Decolonising Film Studies

The analysis of film scenes is core to the theorising of films. It is also a key skill we teach in film studies courses. In *Film Theory: An Introduction Through the Senses* Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener write that “the emblematic film scenes” that they discuss in their book “should not be understood as ‘examples’ or ‘illustrations’, but rather as an opportunity to think with a given film (not just about it)” (Elsaesser and Hagener 2010, 8). I take a similar approach to teaching the analysis of film scenes in my Australian Cinema course. Students select scenes from films to not only say something about a film, and Australian cinema, but to say something about film theory itself. Throughout the course students examine films directed by Australian First Nations peoples and read articles by Australian First Nations scholars. In her seminal essay named after lyrics from a Yothu Yindi protest song “Treaty” (1991), “Well, I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television,” Marcia Langton argues: “Freedom in the world of film and the arts can only thrive if there is also a strong critique, and in relation to Aboriginal matters, if the critique is anti-colonist. […] Can we ever decolonise Australian institutions? Can we decolonise our minds? Probably not. But we can try to find ways to undermine the colonial hegemony” (Langton 1993, 8). In this paper I discuss my approach to the teaching Australian Cinema, an approach that is deeply informed by the following questions: How can the curating of scenes from films directed by First Nations Australians encourage students to be critical of the representative frameworks that support Australian colonialist cultural hegemony? And, in turn, how can an analysis and discussion of these scenes contribute to the development of new film theories, theories that are created in, and through, intersubjective relationships that non-Indigenous students have with these films? In this paper I also provide three examples of scenes from films directed by Rachel Perkins, Ivan Sen, and Warwick Thornton, so that we can discuss how effective such examples might be for decolonising film theory outside the Australian teaching context.

Short Bio

**Luke Robinson** teaches film studies at UNSW Sydney and University of Technology Sydney. He completed his PhD in film studies at UNSW Sydney with a thesis on “Facing Erasure: The Disappearing Faces of 1940s Hollywood Gothic Cinema.” He has co-edited two collections: *Sound Affects: A User’s Guide* (Bloomsbury, 2023), and *One Shot Hitchcock: A Contemporary Approach to the Screen* (forthcoming: Oxford University Press, 2024). He has published and given papers on teaching pedagogy for film and media studies, and he is a video artist working with Move in Pictures (https://www.move-in-pictures.com).

SESSION FIVE:

1. **On *Rasa* Theory, Affect, and Indian Film Aesthetics**

**Proposal :**

 In his 2022 book *Appreciating Melodrama*, Piyush Roy describes how the history of Indian cinema is infused by *rasa* theory. *Rasa* theory describes and models the methodological circulation and transmutations of affects in the performative arts. For Roy (and many Indian film scholars like C.S.H.N. Murthy or O.B. Meitei), Indian film aesthetics cannot be adequately engaged with without an understanding of the logic of *rasa*.

 In this paper I argue not only that *rasa* is necessary to understand Indian film aesthetics but also that it provides a necessary framework to understand the important film theoretical question of film’s political abilities.

 Western film theory has historically measured film’s political abilities by the light of its political effects. However, as Jacques Rancière argues in the *Gaps of Cinema* (2011), this approach only deprives film of any political potential: an anti-colonial film cannot by itself produce decolonization. Political film scholars have thus focused either on how a film’s aesthetics can lend itself to political weaponizing – cf. *Trash* (Harrow, 2013) – or on ethical questions of adequate representation – described in “On the Necessity of Bad Trans Objects” (Keegan, 2022). Both approaches thus offload the political question from film and wholly onto its relational qualities.

 By attending to *rasa* and the dance aesthetics of *Devdas* (Bhansali, 2002) and *Vanaprastham* (Karun, 1999), I find a third solution: in the same way that *rasa* deploys affective power through the circulation of affects, the political powers of film are deployed in the transmutations it unfolds.

**Bio :**

Augustin is a PhD student in Film and Screen Studies at the University of Cambridge. Their work examines how a processual understanding of film thought reveals the production of a film politics. They draw from medieval Shaivist alchemical thought and its contemporary resurgence through Indian theories on dance and affect, to investigate decolonization, revolution, and political interventions.

Shifting focus from questions about what a film’s politics are and towards questions of what politics a film enacts, Augustin turns towards transmutations developed through the material conflicts every film embodies.

2. Film Perception: When Yijing meets Affect

Xi W. Liu
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**Abstract**

Affect theory has arisen in Euro-American film criticism to turn to track the force, intensity, and impulse that flow and pass between bodies and (re)locate Spinoza, Kant, Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze and others’ ideas on aesthetics, sensation, and perception within a new paradigm of film theory. With a similar affective concern, this paper departs from a Chinese Daoist and Buddhist aesthetic-based idea - yijing (milieu of ideation), which takes mindfulness as the central concern.

This theoretical framework doesn't aim solely for a semantic translation of yijing into English, nor does it limit itself to mere comparative discussions that attempt to fit affect theory into the Chinese context. This paper aims to demonstrate how the concepts of yijing and affect cooperatively interact to unlock the mindfulness inherent in film perception. Instead of merely stating "there is mindfulness in the film" or "that film demonstrates yijing," which accentuates the representation of mindfulness in films and contradicts the aim of this study, this paper unites yijing and affect to reassess the role of film within its intricate relationship with the body and consciousness.

The first part of this paper will show the theorisation of the yijing to understand it within its historical context. The second part will present the theoretical dialogue between yijing and affect. Then drawing on one of the key concepts about yijing in the early stage - *chaoyue xing* (transcendence), this paper will chart the affect of yijing in John Woo’s *Red Cliff* (2008) and examine how the film manifests the idea of transcendence as a state of none-ness.

**Bio**

Dr Xi Liu is a teaching associate at the University of Sheffield. Xi’s research engages with Chinese cinema, film-philosophy, affect theory and queer theory and has broad research interests in screen and media studies. Xi’s works focus on the display of aesthetics, sensation, and perception in various visual forms. Currently, she is working on her monograph concerning film perception and mindfulness. She recently published articles in the peer-reviewed journals *Studies in Documentary Film* and *East Asian Journal of Popular Culture*.

3. Author:

Naoki Yamamoto (UCSB)

Title:

Politics of Bracketing: Phenomenology and Japanese Film Theory

Abstract:

One of the most notable trends in film theory over the past decade has been an impressive revival of phenomenology. But how can we assess this ongoing “phenomenological turn” in our discipline in a less Euro-centric, historically accurate, and self-reflexive manner? To tackle this pressing question, the present paper examines a contemporaneous but previously unrecognized development of phenomenological approaches in Japanese film theory. My choice of Japan is arbitrary but should be justified for this country’s peculiar but informed engagement with phenomenology as a theory or a method, as a branch of 20th-century Western philosophy, and even as a manner or style of thinking. Unlike existing accounts on this topic, my historical narrative begins in the 1920s and ’30s when a bunch of state-sponsored Japanese scholars were sent to Germany to study philosophy and aesthetics under the direct supervision of leading German phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. Thus, the first section of this paper looks at how such a direct and prolonged collaboration between Japan and Germany led to the formation of what I call prototypes of phenomenological film theory in wartime Japan. In the following section, I inquire into an unusual synthesis of phenomenology and avant-garde film aesthetics that took place in 1960s Japan. Our protagonist is experimental filmmaker Matsumoto Toshio, who aimed to establish his own “Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary” by drawing on the major texts by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Sigmund Freud, and Japanese critic Hanada Kiyoteru. I will then conclude my exploration with reference to Hasumi Shigehiko, arguably the most influential film critic in Japan in the last three decades of the 20th century. It may sound odd to associate Hasumi with phenomenology, as he is usually known as an advocate of French post structuralism. But I argue that Hasumi adopted some major phenomenological methods like bracketing to bring Japanese film viewers back to the “film” itself, stimulating them to describe what they actually experienced through their embodied confrontation with moving images. Given the fact that Hasumi was writing against the radicalization of Japanese film theory and criticism at the turn of the 1970s, we could even see him as a precursor of scholars like Vivian Sobchack and Laura Marks who have set out the ongoing revival of phenomenology in our discipline.

Bio:

Naoki Yamamoto is Associate Professor in the Department of Film and Media Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the author of *Dialectics without Synthesis: Realism, Film Theory, and Japanese Cinema* (University of California Press, 2020) and a co-editor of *Tenkeki no mediorojii: 1950-nendai Nihon no geijutsu to media* (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2019). He is currently working on a new project that explores the conjunction of media theory, Marxism, and the discourse of postmodernism in 1970s Japan.

DAY TWO:

SESSION SIX:

1. Decolonizing Film Theory Today – Thinking from the Chinese Situation

Chris Berry

What does it mean to decolonize film theory today? This presentation is inspired by Victor Fan’s workshop at the BFI Southbank on 6 February this year, in which he and the audience reflected on the risk that the terms of the debate were on a recursive loop from the 1980s and 1990s, ranging from the impossibility of erasing colonialism to the question of whether “theory” is always already part of Western imperialism. The English-language debate may be on repeat, but the global geopolitical context has changed. China is a new global superpower, and we may be in a multipolar world of competing globalisations. Is imperialism only Western? Shih Shu-mei’s work on the Sinophone notes China’s own imperial history, and Wang Hui has pointed out that the borders of the contemporary Chinese nation-state preserve those of the old Empire. While affirming the importance of continuing to decolonize the impact of Western imperialism and refusing to be drawn into neo-Cold War polemics, we need to ask what it would mean to extend decolonizing to China – not only by questioning the dominance of European film theory in Chinese film theory courses but also by questioning the legacies of Chinese empire. This presentation will interrogate this question, beginning with the related concepts of “*minzu dianying*” (“national cinema”) and “*shaoshu minzu dianying*” (“minority national cinema”) as terms that teeter between the territorial expansionist history of Chinese empire and the denial of its legacy in the modern nation-state. Given the Chinese state’s position that imperialism is Western, can we ask these questions? Or does the state of dependency of our universities on China mark our own subjugation?

Bio:

Chris Berry is Professor of Film Studies at King’s College London. His most recent publications include *Public Space, Media Space* (2013) (edited with Janet Harbord and Rachel Moore), *Routledge Handbook of East Asian Popular Culture* (2016) (co-edited with Koichi Iwabuchi and Eva Tsai), and *Chinese Film Festivals: Sites of Translation* (2017) (co-edited with Luke Robinson). His curating work includes the 2011 Cultural Revolution in Cinema season in Vienna (with Katja Wiederspahn) and the 2017 Taiwan’s Lost Commercial Cinema: Recovered and Restored project on taiyupian (with Ming-Yeh Rawnsley). Film Festival jury service has included Golden Horse, Hawai’i, Pusan, and Singapore.

2. Let the Chips Fall Where They May: An Unapologetic Decolonized Approach to Film Theorizing.

# Abstract

In 2020, a ‘Decolonizing Film and Screen Studies’ workshop I attended in Nigeria was mostly pre-occupied with answering such questions as: what would a (more) decolonized African film studies look like? How do we get there? How is it conceptualized and taught? One of the key reveals of the workshop is that, as time has proven, we have been successful at coming up with appropriate and relevant decolonization questions. The ongoing challenge, however, is that we are still largely in search of viable and eﬀective answers. We are still asking, like Kessi, Marks and Ramugondo (2020) that “if everyone is decolonizing, why has so little changed?” (273)1.

This paper is a continuation and response to those very salient concerns from the workshop. I borrow from Sandra Harding, Esiaba Irobi, and Nick Redfern to present that Western universalization of its definitions of science and theorization have generated a degree of conditioning that non-Western understandings of film must also ‘toe the line’ if replicability remains a cardinal feature of ‘scientific’ findings. Consequently, an adherence to this mindset has necessitated a willing adoption of Western, ethnocentric frameworks upon which African film scholars then build their ‘decolonial’ analysis. I present that a radicality may be necessary to break from this hierarchical structure of knowledge production, and African film scholars unapologetically explore vernacular and indigenous ways of conceptualizing film. That if the approaches neither conform to Western scientific processes, nor connect with or resemble anything Western-oriented Film Studies is saying, then so be it.

# Bio-Bibliography

Lani Akande is an Assistant Professor in the Film Department at UNCW. He teaches courses in Nigerian cinema, African cinemas, postcolonial cinema and film aesthetics and style. His interests include the formal and aesthetic characteristics of African cinemas as a site for formulating newer and more indigenously informed theories. His articles have appeared in *Film Education, Journal of African Cultural Studies* and *Quarterly Review of Film and Video.*

1 Shose Kessi, Zoe Marks & Elelwani Ramugondo, “Decolonizing African Studies”, *Critical African Studies*, Vol. 12, no.3 (2020), 271-282.

3. **Title:** Ruptured Intertextuality: The ‘Chinese Community of Film Intellectuals’, the Nationalisation of the Western Film Theories and the formation of (Si-)neorealism in the 1920s

**Abstract:**

The conceptual notion of the ‘Chinese Community of Film Intellectuals’ was proposed by film historian Qing Ai in recent years. Whilst noting its contribution to the earliest introduction of Western Film Theories in China in the 1920s on the first batch of professional film publications they founded, existing scholarship does not include a systematical analysis of the ontological and sociopolitical inclination of this group, with Cheng Bugao being a notable figure, and the aesthetic wave they led. My research, by the rediscovery and canonisation of this intellectual group, considers its instrumental role in the transition of Chinese visual culture in the 1920s. It suggests that the ongoing ‘ruptured intertextuality’ in that period —as the authority of narrative tradition consolidated by dramatists in the film industry was replaced by those intellectuals with knowledge of Western film theories to construct visual paradigms— paves the way for the nationalisation of film theories that laid the groundwork for film movements from the 1920s to the 1930s. Against the backdrop of war and colonisation, the intensity of these movements’ manifestation of their political nature in film creation grew with time, leading the ‘Left-wing Cinema Movement’ to crystallise at the beginning of the 1930s. My research illuminates the significance of the ‘Chinese Community of Film Intellectuals’ not only in interpreting Western theories through a Chinese lens but also in arguing that they fostered an aesthetic foundation that is commonly misunderstood as originating from Italian Neorealism, yet I demonstrate originated earlier in a (Si-)neorealism or nationalist realism nurtured in Chinese sociopolitics.

**bio-bibliography**

Haotian is a Master’s student in Cambridge Film & Screen as a Rhodes Scholar finalist. He received his BA degree in film studies at Shanghai Jiao Tong University supervised by Chinese film historians Prof Yizhong Li and Dr Qing Ai. He currently focuses on the politics of aesthetics of Chinese film history supervised by Dr Heather Inwood. He is also a freelance Chinese translator for the mainstream film publications like *Cahiers du Cinema* and *Varsity*. As a photographer and documentary filmmaker, his works won international laurels including the European Cinematography Awards and the Tokyo International Foto Awards.

Publications:

·*The Plight of the Counties under the Radiation of ‘Modern Shanghai’*, New Film, first author, 2023(02)

·*Comprehensive Perspectives on Early Chinese Cinema*, Shanghai Culture Publishing, 2023, as the assistant editor in cooperation with editor Professor Yizhong Li

·*Video Gathering and Editing in the Pandemic: The Mechanism of Collaboration between Journalists and the Public in China*, 2020 University of Nebraska Conference report, Dec. 2020

4. **Nativizing the Electric Shadowplay: A Genealogy of Postwar Media Theory**

This paper is a genealogy of “shadowplay theory,” coined by mainland film scholars in the 1980s to name what they saw to be a specifically Chinese way of thinking about film. This native film theory, according to them, was rooted in an early word for cinema—*yingxi—*which connected film images (*ying*)indelibly to drama (*xi*) and moreover film to shadow puppetry. Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh criticizes the theory as a willfully nativizing gesture that ignores the multiplicity of film’s early reception*.* We could also historicize it as China’s answer to Western film theory shaped by the “theory complex” (as Aaron Gerow calls it) of the reform era translation network.

I elaborate a different genealogy of *yingxi*, located not in the 1920s or the 1980s but in the Sino-U.S. media collaboration of the 1940s. Very few early texts explicitly associated cinema with shadow puppetry, but film practitioners in Chongqing, the Nationalist capital during the War of Resistance, repeatedly did, particularly when writing in English. I situate the discursive work of this nativizing gesture in transpacific cultural politics and in the emergence of *media* as a keyword of the postwar order (which took film, radio, and print as differentiated information channels rather than culturally rooted practices). I argue that by nativizing cinema, Chongqing’s shadowplay theorists paradoxically separated it from current cultural practices and relocated it in a linear history of media (*meijie*), where film was an industrial instance of *yingxi.* I examine implications of this for film theory and media history.

**Bio**: Hongwei Thorn Chen is an Assistant Professor in Communication and Asian Studies at Tulane University. He received his PhD in Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Minnesota. Chen’s research examines nontheatrical film, media history, and the trajectories of colonial modernity in China and East Asia. Chen has been the recipient of the Mellon-International Dissertation Research Fellowship and the Louisiana ATLAS Grant, and his writing has appeared in *Wide Screen*, *The Journal of Chinese Cinemas,* and the *Journal of E-Media Studies.*

SESSION SEVEN:

1. Networks of Women in the Circulation of Soviet Film Theory in Ibero-America

The aim of this presentation is twofold: to map the circulation of Battleship Potemkin in Spain, Mexico, and Argentina and to highlight the participation of key women mediators in the programming of the screenings. My hypothesis is that retracing the circulation of Potemkin in Ibero-America allows us to unearth the role of some women in facilitating the circulation of this type of cinema, and Soviet cinema theory, in both commercial and alternative exhibition spaces. This, in turn, helps us to reconstruct the strategies of support among women that emerged during the first decades of the twentieth century in the Western cultural field.

I will mention María Luz Morales, the first woman who made a living as a cinema journalist in Spain and was appointed a newspaper director. I will refer to Lola Álvarez Bravo, Tina Modotti, and Alexandra Kollontai as a genealogy of women who enabled the circulation of Soviet film theory in Mexico. The last of my case studies is Victoria Ocampo, a patron of the arts and writer, who facilitated the circulation of Potemkin and other avant-garde films in Argentina.

My case studies prove that women actively participated in the first film clubs, not only as audiences but also as programmers, founders, and promoters. The three women I will discuss in this presentation served as models for other women in their environment. Through their work, they not only programmed Battleship Potemkin and other films but also wrote about cinema, generating theory that subsequently circulated thanks to the practice of programming and discussions in the film clubs they were part of.

Bio-bibliography

Ainamar Clariana-Rodagut is a postdoctoral research fellow and part of the ERC project StG ‘Social Networks of the Past. Mapping Hispanic and Lusophone Modernity, 1898-1959’. Ainamar is part of the GlobaLS research group (Global Literary Studies Research Lab), where she leads the Global Cinema research line. She published her research in *Arbor*, *Aisthesis*, *Cultural Analytics* and is currently preparing a special issue on film clubs for Film History. She also published chapters in collective volumes in Palgrave and De Gruyter. She has presented her research at international conferences.

2. **Global Circulations of Film Theory Conference**

**Ideas and Theoretical Perspectives on Documentary in the Origins of the International Association of Documentary Filmmakers**

**Mariano Mestman**

**Abstract:**

Between 1963 and 1964 the Association Internationale des Documentaristes (AID) was created by some of the world’s most prominent documentarists: John Grierson, Joris Ivens, Georges Rouquier, Richard Leacock, Gian Vittorio Baldi, Henri Storck, as authorities; and the following members: Jean Rouch, Edgar Anstey, Roger Leenhardt, Roussos Coundouros, Jerzy Bossak, Margot Benacerraf, Nelo Risi, and Jørgen Roos. During the following years the association incorporated other documentary filmmakers from all over the world, and brought together political perspectives that were often diverse, as well as different schools of documentary filmmaking.

The years of AID's creation - and the previous years in which it was taking shape - were the same as those of the emergence of *direct cinema* and *cinéma vérité,* trends that converged in the same festivals (mainly European, but also Third World) in which AID held its meetings or promoted the films of its members. In the same way, the association established relations with organizations (such as UNESCO) that promoted the meetings where these new documentary trends were being developed. The AID was open from early on to documentary filmmakers who played a leading role in these new searches for documentary film, but its main members came from previous documentary film traditions (such as its first president, Grierson, among many others).

My proposal is firstly to analyse the circulation and discussion of ideas and theories on documentary (associated with *direct cinema* and *cinéma vérité*, and others) at those meetings and festivals, secondly to study their presence in the AID documents and internal correspondence during its first years.

**Mariano Mestman** is Researcher at the National Council of Scientific Research (CONICET) and the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he teaches about Media History, and Latin American and Third World cinemas. He has a Phd. in Film History at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain) and he did research work in film archives in Canada, Cuba, France, Italy, Mexico and Scotland. He is author or editor of the following books: *Masas, pueblo, multitud en cine y televisión* (with M.Varela,2013); *Estados Generales del Tercer Cine* (2014); *Las rupturas del 68 en el cine de América Latina* (2016); *“Los condenados de la tierra: un film entre Italia y el Tercer Mundo”* (with A.Filippi,2022).

3. Theorizing Incompleteness and Exile: The “non-cinema” of Hussein Shariffe’s *Of Dust and Rubies*

When Sudanese filmmaker/artist Hussein Shariffe tragically died in 2005, he left behind the unfinished film, *Of Dust and Rubies*. This was to be a visual translation of poems of Sudanese exile, itself filmed while Shariffe was in exile in Egypt. As part of a recent project on Shariffe’s archives, we looked to contemporary film theoretical explorations of incompleteness to try to understand this work; Janet Harbord writes that “the incomplete film is the site of a potentiality retained in its state of possibility”, where this “non-cinema” becomes a form of refusal to a logic of completeness through a “revelatory decontextualization”. However, when incompleteness and exile are violent forms of dispossession, the circulation of these ideas requires sensitive political reorientation.

This paper will analyse this in relation to what Shariffe’s daughter, Eiman Hussein, calls his “resistance through art”. Similar to incompletion’s dual status as loss and opportunity, exile sits in-between the violence of expulsion and a mode of existence “in which exile is an experimental undertaking”, as described by Laura Harris. Anthropologist and friend of Shariffe, Sondra Hale writes on Sudanese film practices during exile that, “No longer bound to the ‘homeland,’ but nourished by the metaphor of return, they are freed up to engage with an infinity of strategies.” To analyse how this manifests in Shariffe’s work, my paper will look to both the existing rushes and the film script for *Of Dust and Rubies*, which mixes lyrical shot descriptions with exilic poetry, itself constituting a model of cinema’s imbrication with other art forms. This will help to situate Shariffe’s open-ended aesthetics and its political imperatives within and against contemporary film theoretical debates.

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Bio

*Laurence Kent is a Lecturer in Digital Film and Television at the University of Bristol. He completed his PhD on metaphysics and cinema at King’s College London in 2020, and has subsequently published work on various topics within film theory and philosophy, including Deleuzian ethics, experimental cinema, Hollywood action film, archiving practices, and anticolonial aesthetics. His articles and book reviews have appeared in* Film-Philosophy*,* Alphaville*,* Studies in World Cinema*,* Pli*:* The Warwick Journal of Philosophy*,* Frames Cinema Journal*, and* Cinema*:* Journal of Philosophy and the Moving Image*, amongst others.*

4. **Defining African Cinema in 1980s Nigeria: A Reconstruction of the Nigerian Film Corporation’s 1988 Workshop on Film Theory in Jos**

Vinzenz Hediger (Frankfurt)

To oppose the dominance of Hollywood, the resolutions of the Third World Filmmaker’s meeting in Algiers in 1973 called for a key role of the state in film production. One of the countries where the government assumed this responsibility, albeit not necessarily in response to this call, was Nigeria. In the late 1970s, Nigeria’s state film agency, a successor of the British Colonial Film Unit, was transformed into the Nigerian Film Corporation. Headquartered in Jos, a thriving cultural center and production site of Nigeria’s National Television Authority in the middle of the country, the NFC ran production facilities and a 35mm lab. The NFC later added the National Film Institute, a film school, and the National Archive of Film, Video and Sound. From the start the NFC cooperated with the University of Jos and became a site not just for film production, but for film theory. In a series of workshops in the late 1980s academics and practitioners worked towards a definition of African cinema designed to inform the NFC’s feature and documentary production. In the early 1990s due to austerity measures imposed by the IMF the NFC’s role was limited to training, and Nigeria’s film production shifted from 35mm to video films and “Nollywood”. Based on transcriptions of sound recordings of the 1988 workshop on African cinema which is preserved in the NAFVS, this contribution will retrace and contextualize the arguments for an autochthonous African cinema proposed by scholars such as Augustine-Enahoro, a long-time professor of cinema at UniJos.

Vinzenz Hediger is professor of cinema studies at Goethe Universität Frankfurt, where he directs the Research Training Program “Konfigurationen des Films” ([www.konfigurationen-des-films.de](http://www.konfigurationen-des-films.de)). He is a PI at the Research Center Normative Orders at Goethe-Universität and a co-founder of NECS – European Network of Cinema and Media Studies ([www.necs.org](http://www.necs.org)). His most recent publications include “Films That Work Harder. The Circulation of Industrial Film” (ed. with Yvonne Zimmerman et al., Amsterdam University Press 2023) and “Accidental Archivism. Shaping Cinema’s Futures with Remnants of the Past” (ed. with Stefanie Schulte Strathaus, meson press 2023).

SESSION EIGHT:

1. **Hypothesis of a Stolen Title: On Raul Ruiz’s *Poetics of Cinema***

My presentation will begin with a hypothetical question: what would happen if every pedagogical use of David Bordwell’s *Poetics of Cinema* (2007) was replaced with Raul Ruiz’s two volume work of film theory of the same name? What if students turned to Ruiz’s *Poetics of Cinema* (1995 & 2006) for a model of theorizing film instead of Bordwell’s? In playing out this hypothetical situation, I want to claim that a less empirical, more generative understanding of (global) cinema would emerge. Bordwell’s book shows a nominal interest in global cinema (with sections on Japanese films), but the work is motived by, as he writes, a fear of film theory “remaining provincial.” Perhaps remaining provincial, or at the very least, not remaining monocultural is what film theory needs. In turning to Ruiz, a Chilean filmmaker and theorist, one finds not only resistance to hegemonic ideas about how films signify but also what one could call an investment in theorizing film poetics from a global perspective. Ruiz carries this out with a commitment to utilizing thought and writing from thinkers across the world as grounds for his theory. This means that the ideas of Majorcan philosopher Ramon Llull, the Italian writer Cristina Campo, and Chinese painter Shih-T’ao sit alongside those of Walter Benjamin’s. Opting for Ruiz’s *Poetics of Cinema* over Bordwell’s would circulate the notion that film can and should be theorized from a global perspective, that is to say film theory can and moreover must call upon ideas from anywhere and everywhere.

Thomas Quist is a PhD student at the University of Toronto at the Cinema Studies Institute. He is interested in global cinema, film theory, theories of the image, and the work of Jean Louis Schefer. He has written film criticism at various publications, and he co-created The Critical Function, a writing workshop for works-in-progress.

2. **‘Postcolonial and Post-socialist Obliques’**

**Nicolas Helm-Grovas**

This paper focuses on a specific punctuation mark as a theoretical figure in writing and filmmaking: the /. This mark (known by various names, such as a slash, oblique or virgule) appears in canonical European works of film theory such as Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni’s ‘Cinema/Ideology/Criticism’ or Raymond Bellour’s ‘To Segment/To Analyze’. In my paper, though, I will begin from Trinh T. Minh-ha’s use of it in ‘Documentary Is/Not A Name’ (1990), a shortened version of the chapter ‘The Totalizing Quest of Meaning’ published in her book *When the Moon Waxes Red*. Here, I argue, the oblique exemplifies a desire to think identity and non-identity simultaneously, and is closely related to the essay’s critique of what Trinh calls ‘theorising about’, which is rejected in favour of ‘theorising with’. I will explore this in light of two reference points: Gloria Anzaldúa’s development of the / as a political and theoretical figure in her book *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987), and Jacques Derrida’s reflections on the word ‘sur’ (‘on’ or ‘about’) in the essay ‘Living On’ (1979). From here I will turn to this punctuation mark’s appearance shortly after Trinh’s essay in a different context: in Shelly Silver’s 1994 documentary-artwork *Former East / Former West*, made in Berlin shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. By following these associations I will explore how this thought-figure moves across cinema theory and practice, and its intimate relation to critical thinking about borders and geopolitics.

**Bio-bibliography**

Nicolas Helm-Grovas is Lecturer in Film Studies at King’s College London. His book *Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen: Towards Counter-cinema* is forthcoming in Brill’s Historical Materialism book series. His writing has appeared in publications such as *Radical Philosophy*, *Oxford Art Journal*, *Trafic* and *Moving Image Review and Art Journal*, and in various books. With Oliver Fuke he has curated several exhibitions, most recently ‘Intersections in Theory, Film and Art’ at Camera Austria in Graz in 2022. With Kodwo Eshun and Oliver Fuke he is currently editing a multi-volume collection of writing

3. Transatlantic *Vérité*’s Caribbean Layover or, the Other Chronicle of a Summer

The transnational history of *cinéma-vérité* is often told through its aesthetic negotiation at the early Flaherty Seminars. According to Patricia Zimmerman, these seminars served as an incubator for the emergent film form, bringing together major proponents of a new mode of filmmaking in the North Atlantic that promised immediacy, objectivity, and realism. Two Flaherty alumni—Canadian filmmaker Michel Brault and ethnographer Jean Rouch—would collaborate on the 1960 production of *Chronicle of a Summer*, whose blend of mobile cinematography, synchronous sound, and artist-subject interaction resulted in vérité’s first onscreen manifestation. Before this encounter between old world and new, however, Brault had already been tasked with chronicling the summer of ‘60, where views of the *arrondisements* would be replaced by the stone walls and concert halls of Old San Juan. In *Festival in Puerto Rico,* Brault rehearses the same theatricality of process that would forcefully distinguish the French vérité from other, ostensibly “purer” variants of observational cinema. Part ode to a Caribbean modernity and part show of inter-institutional collaboration between the National Film Board and its Puerto Rican counterpart—the Division of Community Education (DivEdCo)—the film is an examination of the island’s political status, Free Associated Statehood, as a model for French-Canadian decolonization, drawing parallels between the two stateless nations’ muted revolutions. Ultimately, this unlikely collaboration inverts the presumed film-theoretical triangulations of cinematic New Waves between North America, Europe, and Latin America and re-centers the South in the proliferation of global vérité—not as its debtor, but as collaborator.

**Pedro Noel Doreste** is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Diaspora Solidarities Lab and incoming Assistant Professor in Film Studies at Michigan State University. He received his PhD in Cinema and Media Studies from the University of Chicago. He is a historian of Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx film and media whose research surveys cinematic encounters between the global North and South, diasporic and exile filmmaking, and avant-garde film cultures in the Hispanic Caribbean. His work has appeared in *Reception, Aniki, Atenea, Studies in Spanish & Latin American Cinemas* (forthcoming), and in the edited collection *Latinx Media*.

SESSION NINE:

**1. Title:** What is cinema? The case of *Hamile: The Tongo Hamlet* (1965)

**Author:** Jennifer Blaylock

**Abstract:**

One of the few feature films made by Ghana’s state film industry that is accessible today is a Ghanaian interpretation of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. *Hamile: The Tongo Hamlet* (1965) is a film adaptation of a University of Ghana stage production by the Ghanaian playwright Joe De Graft that is one of many African appropriations of the Shakespearian canon. This paper will focus on the history of *Hamile*’s distribution and preservation across a variety of media formats to situate film theory’s preoccupations with ‘what is cinema?’ and medium specific arguments in in general, historically and geographically. African artistic practice has never been medium-specific. As Toyin Falola points out poetry, proverbs, music, and dance can all be combined into one art form and African artists can be at once a poet, a singer, a musician, and an actor.\*

In this paper, I argue that preoccupations with medium specificity in Africa mark the lingering structures of coloniality, whereas postcolonial approaches to film texts that move across mediums offer historical genealogies of remediation that lead away from ontological concerns and towards new political potentialities. The postcolonial reading of *Hamile* offered here resists medium specific readings, insisting instead on the centrality of *Hamile*’s mobility and hybridity as important for reimagining the contours of film historiography, the film archive, and the adequacy of film theory.

**Biography:** Dr. Blaylock is an assistant professor in the Department of Radio, Television & Film at Rowan University. She is a media historian and theorist with research interests in African studies, audio-visual archives, and postcolonial and decolonial theory. Dr. Blaylock is currently working on a book manuscript where she examines representations of different media technologies—gramophones, radio, cinema, television, and mobile phones—in Africa to highlight the ways racial difference has been central to conceptions of new media across colonial and postcolonial contexts. Her work has appeared in *Screen*, *Feminist Media Histories*, *Journal of African Cinemas*, and *boundary 2*.

\* Toyin Falola, *Decolonizing African Studies: Knowledge Production, Agency, and Voice* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2022), 643.

2. **“Open Cinema”: The Korean New Wave’s Last National Film Theory**

Seung-hoon Jeong

This paper delves into a neglected chapter of pre-global history in South Korean cinema to trace its local roots from within by focusing on the Seoul Film Collective. Established in 1982 by key film club members at Seoul National University, the Collective played a pivotal role in inspiring numerous university film clubs to embrace an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist stance against Hollywood and the commercial Korean film industry. But while the Collective is recognized as a driving force in the 1980s alternative filmmaking movement, its ambitious pursuit of creating an authentic Korean film theory has often been overlooked. By closely examining the critical formulation of “Open Cinema” by Jang Sun-woo, a leader of the Korean New Wave within the Collective, I shed light on its organic leftist-nationalist film aesthetics, rooted in the Korean oral performance tradition, and its unexpectedly potential resonance with Jacque Rancière’s perspective on the aesthetic regime that fuses life and art to challenge bourgeois conventions of representation and spectatorship. Despite its universal potential, however, this indigenous theory neither gained traction in film academia nor materialized in film production. The abrupt decline of the New Wave in the 1990s, overshadowed by the new millennial Korean film renaissance recognized internationally, left the dream of a national Korean film theory unrealized in the rapidly globalizing Korean landscape. In this paper, I re-contextualize its implications and limitations within this complex shifting scenario, aiming to contribute to a more nuanced genealogy of global Korean cinema.

**Seung-hoon Jeong** is an assistant professor of film and electronic arts at California State University Long Beach. He is the author of *Cinematic Interfaces: Film Theory after New Media*(Routledge, 2013) and *Biopolitical Ethics in Global Cinema* (Oxford University Press, 2023). He also co-edited *The Global Auteur: The Politics of Authorship in 21st Century Cinema*(Bloomsbury, 2016) and Thomas Elsaesser’s *The Mind-Game Film: Distributed Agency, Time Travel, and Productive Pathology* (Routledge, 2021), guest-edited the special issue of *Studies in the Humanities* titled “Global East Asian Cinema: Abjection and Agency” (2019), and co-translated Jacques Derrida’s *Acts of Literature* into Korean (Moonji, 2013).

3. **An Art of Sharing: Digital Poetics and Political Praxis in Pedro Costa’s Fontainhas Films**

Claims about the differences between analog and digital cinema are multifaceted, yet film theorists have often agreed that digitality is defined in part by its inherent manipulability. As D.N. Rodowick argues, “analogical causality” has given way to a graphism which has more in common with painting than with the traditional camera arts. While this claim is certainly valid for mainstream cinema, it neglects the low-budget art cinema that has flourished in the past two-and-a-half decades. Pedro Costa’s shift to digital filmmaking is indicative of a trajectory that is underexplored in post-filmic film theory. His focus on the largely immigrant neighborhood of Fontainhas on the outskirts of Lisbon required a scaled-down approach typified by mid-range digital video cameras and non-professional actors. However, his 21st century films are by no means mere digital resurrections of neorealist or direct cinema. Instead, they are marked by profilmic abstraction (which is distinct from Rodowick’s claim of post-production graphism) and a goal of portraying marginalized communities without speaking for them. As Jacques Rancière argues, Costa’s digital films are political precisely because they lack an overt political critique. Instead, they function as “an art of sharing, an art inseparable from the life and experience of the displaced…” While Costa has far from resolved the problem of representation—of the slippage between representation as proxy and re-presentation as art—I argue that his haptic digitality and quasi-painterly compositions refuse the fallacy of the European intellectual’s attempted transparency in relation to the subaltern that Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak famously deconstructed.

Alex Denison is a Visiting Assistant Professor in Boston University’s Cinema & Media Studies program. He received his Ph.D. in Film Studies from the University of Iowa in 2023. As a scholar, his research and teaching center on topics such as critical theory, post-filmic film theory, and political cinema. He also works in filmmaking and film programming with a focus on experimental and no-budget cinema. Films he has collaborated on have screened at the Cannes Film Festival, the Leeds International Film Festival, and Anthology Film Archives.

4. Approaching *Nahual* Cinema in Oaxaca: Salón de Cines Múltiples (SACIMU)

Since its inception in 2023, the Oaxaca, Mexico-based film exhibition collective Salón de Cines Múltiples (SACIMU) has already emerged as among the most significant non-profit, anti- hegemonic experimental film exhibition collectives in Mexico. Consisting of a small group of filmmakers, writers, philosophers, researchers, and distributors, SACIMU has distinguished itself for giving a special role to film theory and film-philosophy in events, screenings, and even an international colloquium dedicated to themes of trance and liminality in Latin American experimental film. Also, to mark the collective’s first *Muestra Nahual* in September 2023—the first major exhibition of Oaxacan experimental film—one of the collective’s founding members, experimental filmmaker and video artist Bruno Varela, wrote of how the Mesoamerican concept of the *nahual* (a person with the capacity to transform into their tonal animal) guides SACIMU’s programming: “A Oaxacan cinema—as such an entity might try to define itself—without contours or maps. The pretence of conjuring the unpronounceable, always a foreign and strange construction. Aways other, pleated, never what it seems. […] A very specific other, a body different from ours but which belongs to us.” This hybrid presentation of SACIMU’s activities and the significance of *nahual* cinema as film theory or film-philosophy will involve in-person participation by two members of SACIMU who will be based in Europe from August 2024 to August 2026, as well as virtual participation from those members based in Oaxaca.

Presentation will be coordinated by SACIMU member Byron Davies, a researcher in philosophy and film originally from the U.S. and based in Mexico since 2017. Davies’s writings on film and media have appeared in *Screen*, *Millenium Film Journal*, *The Baffler*, *Desistfilm*, and *Los Experimentos*. Davies received his PhD in philosophy from Harvard University in 2018, and afterwards was a postdoctoral researcher at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). From 2024 to 2026 he will hold a Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellowship in Murcia, Spain, with the project “Materialism and Geographic Specificity in the Philosophy of Film.”

Salón de Cines Múltiples (SACIMU), in Oaxaca, Mexico, is a working group that aims to generate experimental film practices based on exhibition and pedagogical activities.

SESSION TEN:

**1. African cinemas in film history and theory: challenging hegemonic approaches**

Ana Camila Esteves – Federal University of Bahia (Brazil)

Jusciele Oliveira – Federal University of Bahia (Brazil) / University of Algarve (Portugal)

In this contemporary exploration of African cinematography, this paper seeks to present a nuanced examination of Film History and Theory, emphasizing the significance of African films within the realm of Film Studies. Our main goal is to provide a contextualized perspective that transcends conventional theoretical frameworks such as "World Cinema," "Third Cinema," "Transnational Cinema," and "Accented Cinema." Despite its notable contributions since the 1960s, African films have often been overlooked in mainstream discussions of film history and theory. Drawing from key academic references in Film History and Theory, encompassing both European and American perspectives – such as Michel Marie, Jacques Aumount, Dudley Andrew, Robert Stam, Ismail Xavier –, and acknowledging the efforts of researchers and scholars who have championed a more decolonial approach – such as Manthia Diawara, Nwachukwu Frank Ukadike, Alexie Tcheuyap, Sheila Petty, Lindiwe Dovey, Lucia Nagib –, our aim is to propose a critical reevaluation. We assert the need to recognize African cinemas not as a specific cinematography relegated to “theoretical ghettos”, but as an integral part of the cinematic landscape. This paper contends that African films should be studied and appreciated within the broader context of Film History and Theory, challenging the tendency to marginalize them within hegemonic theoretical paradigms.

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Ana Camila Esteves holds a master’s degree in film studies and a PhD on contemporary African cinemas at the Federal University of Bahia (Brazil), with a thesis on Netflix’s foray into Nollywood, in Nigeria. In 2023, she was a Post-Doctoral Research Associate at King’s College London with research on African Film Festivals. She is the co-founder, director and curator of Mostra de Cinemas Africanos / Brazil African Film Festival, and she collaborates as curator, programmer, teacher, panelist and translator with several institutions and festivals in Brazil and abroad. She has published on African Cinemas in Brazil, Portugal and Spain in recent years.

Jusciele Oliveira, holds a master’s degree in Literature and Culture (UFBA, 2013) and a PhD in Communication, Culture, and Arts from the University of Algarve, Portugal (2018), specialized in the work of filmmaker Flora Gomes. Co-editor of the ebook "Cinemas Africanos Contemporâneos: perspectivas críticas" (Contemporary African Cinemas: Critical Approaches - 2020), she is currently a collaborating researcher at the Center for Research in Arts and Communication at the University of Algarve, and a member of the Film Analysis Laboratory research group (UFBA), focusing on genre studies in African cinemas. Her expertise is evident in numerous publications on African cultures and cinemas in reputable journals both in Brazil and internationally.

2. Justin Foster, “Like and Subscribe”: Emergent Black Voices in Film Theorization and Decolonization Through the Video Essay Format

Abstract : It is widely accepted that there is an established hierarchy in film scholarship, with

peer-reviewed publications taking notable priority over amateur digital media research. However, my project interrogates this extant conceptualization by positing that this hierarchy of scholarship is a reinforcement of the localized restriction of marginalized voices from the field of film theory, further strengthening a Eurocentric hegemony within academia. Thus, I examine the recent phenomenon of digital media platforms which, through the accessibility of the informal “video essay” format, provide an alternative pathway distinctly for young Black creators to participate in a field that is historically designed to exclude their subjectivity. Due to the unique ability of platforms such as *YouTube* and *TikTok* to transcend geographic borders, I argue that the growing rise of filmic video essays are a currently overlooked avenue for globalizing theoretical exchange and in turn decolonizing our current approaches to film research. Utilizing three selected Black video essayists as my case studies, this project will elucidate the appeal of this new format for marginalized creators and posit that the contemporary online circulation of cinematic discourse, through its accessible and modernized nature, forces us to problematize antiquated assumptions around traditional ‘film theory’ as both a term and a paradigm.

Biography : Justin Foster is a graduate student in the School of Theater, Film, and Television at UCLA. As a Black student who spent his life in predominantly White institutions, Justin has centered racial epidermalization and decolonial studies in his work. His research interests focus on analyzing popular culture through the lens of representation and diversity. He hopes to implicitly explore and critique how the Black image has been (and continues to be) constructed through the White gaze within hegemonic structures of entertainment. Outside the field of academia, Justin is passionate about his own video essay content, which examines topics such as cultural appropriation, performative activism, and gun violence.

3. ‘Dis/obedience, Survivance and Sumud: theorising film through indigenous and black cultural critique’

The enduring structures of antiblackness and colonialism shape the dominating themes, practice and theorisation of film. ‘Ways out’ of these structures have emerged within radical cultural critique in the last twenty years. Latin American decolonial philosophy and US-centred critical race and queer theory demand a break with colonial, antiblack or normative systems of knowledge that sustain inequity and stifle hope for the future. Through an ethics of refusal (Moten) and re-existence (Mignolo) new ways of thinking and feeling, grounded in the truths of both the body and history’s omissions, are generated and increasingly related to the Arts.

In this paper, I want to combine such epistemological disobedience with older and more recent generative critiques from both Native American and Palestinian contexts. As well as creating dialogue between different arenas (and a possible alternative global circuit of critical coalition), I want to use this dialogue to theorise how contemporary moving image artists—working under and in response to settler colonialism—‘open history to potentiality, imagination, and speculation’ (Hochberg, 2021). More specifically, I will look at Palestinian and indigenous work by TJ Cuthand, New Red Order, Jumana Manna and Razan AlSaleh, in relation to ‘survivance’ (Vizenor, 1999), ‘sumud’ (Shahedeh, 1982) and futurity. These terms, and these filmmakers, break with the stronghold, or enduring structures, of both film and history and in so doing unfetter the afterlife of atrocity.

Michele Aaron is Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Warwick. Publications include the award-winning book, Death and the Moving Image: Ideology, Iconography and I (2014), and essay ‘Love’s Revival: Film Practice and the Art of Dying’ (2020). Her current research and next book centre on and promote radical poetics and ethical praxis in audio-visual culture and include the UKRI/AHRC-funded ‘Life:Moving’ projects, about terminal illness, and the social justice film festival, Screening Rights, which she setup in 2015.