

Newsreel

Newsletter for Film Studies at Southampton | Summer 2013



Director Alejandro Areal Velez filming a lighthouse in Patagonia

Filmmaking in Patagonia

Dr Claudia Sandberg, Research Fellow in Film at Southampton, was invited to document the making of a documentary film series about lighthouses along the coast of Argentina, a project that was financed by the Argentine film institute: INCAA. She travelled with director Alejandro Areal Velez and other members of his film team to research the socio-cultural history of the area around Cabo Virgenes which is located near the entry to the Strait of Magellan. Apart from interviewing the lighthouse keepers and filming the replica of Magellan's ship *Nao Victoria* in Puerto St Julian, the film crew was kept busy photographing the windswept Patagonian landscape and the variety of the wildlife there, such as penguins, guanacos, armadillos and many different birds.

Welcome

In the following pages, we focus on some of the many activities, with which our Film students – undergraduate and postgraduate – are involved, both on and off campus. Despite the central importance we place on academic progress, many of our students find time to extend their interest in film through organising events, such as a conference, or a film festival, or getting work experience that often leads to future employment.

We are very pleased that our students' satisfaction with their courses has once again been confirmed by the most recent National Student Survey. BA Film students rated us 100 per cent positive for the level of advice and support they received with their studies.

It is always a pleasure to welcome back former students to hear what they are doing. The latest Alumni event, which features prominently in this *Newsreel*, was a great success, and will be held annually from now on.

Staff in Film have also been very busy undertaking high quality research, and are sought after internationally for their expertise. Our high standard of scholarship and teaching is recognised independently, and is demonstrated by our consistent high ranking in the UK in the influential *Guardian* University Guide.

Anne Hogan, Film Lecturer, Editor

New digital Film lab on campus

The University of Southampton's Student Centredness Fund has supported the revamping of two laboratory spaces at Avenue campus, where most Film teaching takes place. They have been comprehensively refitted, with the lab in the main building

now dedicated to film and music editing. Both rooms can be booked for digital humanities teaching but the main focus is on self and group study, with the layout being particularly suited to collaborative learning. We hope that the space, equipment and

software in Building 65 will encourage more students to become involved in filmmaking and digital projects whatever their background. Further details are available at: <http://digitalhumanities.soton.ac.uk/tag/dhdl/>.



Head of Film Studies Professor Tim Bergfelder and actor Warwick Davis

Film Professor in television documentary

Professor Tim Bergfelder took part in the shooting of a documentary for ITV in October 2012. It followed the actor Warwick Davis (who plays Professor Flitwick in the *Harry Potter* series) as he learned about the story of dwarfs called the Ovitzes, who ended up in Auschwitz in 1944. As part of this quest, Warwick found out about a series of German fairytale films produced by the Nazis in the late 1930s, which featured dwarf actors. In the programme, Tim and Warwick discussed the propaganda aspects of Nazi cinema.

Teaching Film Studies in Korea

Dr Daniel O'Brien exchanged Southampton for Seoul in June 2012.

"I travelled to South Korea to teach at the International Summer School at Dongguk University, in Seoul. I lectured on European film to a class of Korean and Chinese students, which proved highly enjoyable and presented me with the challenge of teaching a group with English as a second language: my lectures had to be clear and unambiguous without assuming familiarity with European culture. The staff at Dongguk were unfailingly courteous and helpful, and I had the chance to experience the wider Korean culture and hospitality, including the exceptional cuisine."



from left to right: Ann Dixon, Ed Morris, Nick Brown, Tessa Inkelaar, Alex Heaton, Derek Pike

Film Alumni Event

An Alumni Event 'Voices of Experience' was held in May 2012 for more than 50 undergraduate and postgraduate students. Six recent Film graduates spoke about their career paths since graduation. On the panel were Ann Dixon (BA Film and English 2007) who is now a Production Co-ordinator for Raw TV, Ed Morris (MA Film Studies 2005) who is Video Producer for Netro42 Ltd, Nicholas Brown (BA Film and English 2008) who is Editorial and VOD Compliance Co-ordinator for Channel Four Television; Tessa Inkelaar (BA Film and History of Art 2007) who is Production and Development Officer for Film London; Alexandra Heaton (BA Film and French 2009) who is Events Co-ordinator and Administrator at River Cottage HQ, HFW Interactive Ltd and Derek Pike (MA Film Studies) who is a Film Studies teacher at Barton Peveril College, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Film at Southampton. They all gave lively and stimulating responses to such questions as: how they made the transition from university to working life, what is the nature of their current jobs and what skills and talents are needed in their chosen careers and how their academic courses and experiences have benefitted them.

A very stimulating question and answer session followed the panel discussion and students seized their opportunity to speak to the alumni individually.

Sally Keenan

Southampton hosts postgraduate conference

Film students organised a conference specifically for postgraduates and early career researchers in July 2012: *Genre Beyond Hollywood*. One of the lead organisers, Beth Carroll gives her view of the event:

"The main aim of the conference was to update genre theory and analyse its theoretical contexts outside the Hollywood paradigm. It was a great opportunity to see the range of research that has been taking place globally, which challenges preconceived notions of genre theory. It was a truly international conference with attendees from as far afield as India, North America and East Asia."

"The conference was supported by the Faculty of Humanities, British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies (BAFTSS), as well as the Film department at Southampton. The committee wanted the conference to be as helpful as possible to postgraduates, and, with this in mind, we were able to run a 'How to get published' session, where a panel of established academics provided much valued practical advice on this all important topic for researchers."

"The conference was honoured to have as its keynote speaker, Professor Yvonne Tasker; her paper, 'Exploring Action Cinema in a Global Context,' provided a great end to the conference, that had included papers covering a wide range of topics: from the British Biopic to the Holocaust films, from migrant cinema to Korean crime films."

"Throughout the day the debates, prompted by these papers, were always stimulating, and the day finished with a congratulatory dinner, making *Genre Beyond Hollywood* a great success for everyone involved."



Two new publications from Film Studies

The rise of Hollywood's Gods

A new book by Film Lecturer, Dr Michael Williams aims to offer a different perspective on the origins of film stardom. In *Film Stardom, Myth and Classicism: The Rise of Hollywood's Gods* (Palgrave Macmillan), Michael explores how Hollywood used the myth and iconography of ancient Greece and Rome, particularly its sculpture, as inspiration for the new idols of modernity. This construction of stars as if works of art from a distant, unreachable, past was key to the way stars became divinised as ever-elusive, ethereal beings, through publicity photographs, fan-magazines, and of course in the narratives and cinematography of their films themselves.

These star images often seem frivolous, but this masks a serious industrial purpose. By linking past and present, the book argues, stars were able to speak to the present and represent cinema as the art of the future, while simultaneously connecting the developing medium of cinema to a culturally valued history of Western art and civilisation. Thus leading stars such as Gloria Swanson and Greta Garbo, as well as Rudolph Valentino and Ramon Novarro, became the new Venuses and Apollos of the screen through a mythic discourse with international appeal.

The research for this book involved visiting leading film archives in the UK and US to examine studio files and thousands of items of publicity and reception material from the 1910s and 20s. Michael is now working on a follow-up book that examines how stardom's links to pasts both ancient and more recent, has developed since the silent era.



Music for Science Fiction Television: Tuned to the Future

Film Lecturer, Dr Kevin Donnelly has published a co-edited book about music in television science fiction called *Music for Science Fiction Television: Tuned to the Future*: it is the first book on the subject and was a cross-continental project, edited and co-ordinated between Southampton and Australia, where co-editor Philip Hayward lives and works at Southern Cross University.

The edited collection, published by Routledge, includes material about music in television programmes, running from *Star Trek* to *The Twilight Zone* to *The Clangers*, *Dr Who* and *Lost*. A chapter written by Kevin focuses on music in one of recently-deceased British producer Gerry Anderson's productions. As the book points out, we should not simply imagine that music in television drama is the same as film music, as it often has different functions and different modes of production, and in the majority of cases a far lower budget.



Film music expertise in demand

The release of the James Bond film *Skyfall* stimulated interest in all things 'Bond.' Dr Kevin Donnelly, Lecturer in Film at Southampton, was a consultant on a feature about Bond music for BBC1's prime time programme 'The One Show'; while also appearing on a programme about Bond films for Swedish national radio. He was consulted on the use of 'Bond songs' as cross-media products and publicity for films, and also the scores used during the 51 years of the film franchise.

Pride and Prejudice at 200

Film and English Lecturer, Shelley Cobb gave a paper – *Pride and Prejudice on Screen* – at a study day in February 2013 organised at Chawton House Library to celebrate Jane Austen's famous novel, published 200 years ago. She is the author of several articles on screen adaptations, including those of Austen's novels. Her book *Women, Adaptation and Post-Feminist Filmmaking* will be published in 2014.

Postgraduate takes lead role in promoting Taiwanese film

Jim Liu (Liu, Chu-Ying) is a PhD student from Taiwan who has found a way to help widen knowledge about Taiwanese films.

"Each year Taiwan produces around 50 feature films for release within Asia and around the world. However not all of these films will be shown at international film festivals, such as Cannes or Berlin. So, with a view to finding more audiences for Taiwanese films, I have become involved, as New Talent Director, with the London Taiwanese Film Festival. Since 2009, this has been staged annually in London to showcase Taiwanese talent, and has proved so successful that it expanded to Paris in May 2012, and, from Spring 2013, there are exciting plans to hold festivals in Los Angeles and New York."

For more information about the Taiwanese Film Festival, see: www.taiwancinefest.com.

Film student gets experience working in the film business

Sam Everard, BA Film and English, Year 3, goes behind the scenes



"In the Easter holidays of last year, I spent two weeks shadowing professional runners at the production company, Working Title Films. Tasks ranged from simply buying food for the week to picking up film scripts, and even visiting the London headquarters of Universal Studios. The two main films in production were *Anna Karenina* and *Les Misérables*, and one day I was asked to serve coffee to the director of *Anna Karenina*, Joe Wright. It was an experience I would highly recommend to anybody interested in working for the industry.

"Also I spent three days this January as an intern at *Empire* magazine, one of the most popular film publications in the world. It has been fantastic to meet so many of the writers and editors, having been reading their work for almost 10 years now. They have all been very welcoming and open to questions, and I could not have asked for a better working environment.

"My duties ranged from the standard – sending mail – to the unusual, including helping one of the writers research a feature on the Oscars, and transcribing an interview with a very famous musician. Non-disclosure dictates that I can't reveal him, but he's often described as the 'nicest man in rock.' I even made David Morrissey a cup of tea!"

New Research Fellow for Film

Dr Angela Prysthon's research project, supported by CAPES foundation (one of the main Federal Research Funding Agencies in Brazil), concerns the links between the city and cinema through the reading of urban space in various stages and from different aspects of British cinema. The project is structured in three thematic parts: the first concerning the role of London in British cinema; the second more focused on the cities in British films of the sixties and the last one related to contemporary British cinema and the emergence of multicultural contexts.

As Angela explains: "This project encompasses multifaceted perceptions of the urban space reflected in British cinema, relating both to the study of the more empirical constitution of the city in the United Kingdom and to the emergence of cinema itself. Being in Britain and specifically in the Film Studies Department in the University of Southampton has already modified and enriched many of the initial hypotheses of the project. I am absolutely convinced of the seminal contribution that this period will play in my work and on the Cinema Department at the Federal University of Pernambuco, where I teach."



Research Fellow, Dr Angela Prysthon

Talks and Seminars

Leading researchers continue to engage staff and students at Southampton through the Research Seminar series. This year's presentations include:

Duncan Petrie (University of York)

"But what kind of Film School do we need?"

'The Rise and Fall of Moving Image Education at the Royal College of Art'

Mark Connelly (University of Kent)

'The Battles of the Coronel and Falkland Island (1927): The Creation of a Celluloid War Memorial'

Murray Pomerance (Ryerson University)

'Vertigo in Space'

Lester Friedman (Hobart and William Smith College, New York)

Co-hosted with English

'Spielberg/Munich'

Damian Sutton (University of Middlesex)

'Articulating the pan-European studio dream: Studio Canal and Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy'

Ryan Bishop (Winchester School of Art) and Sean Cubitt (Goldsmiths, University of London)

'The Changing Features of Realism and Destiny from Greed to Source Code'

Emiliano Perra (University of Winchester)

'The Holocaust as a Palimpsest for Cinematic Representations of Genocide in Armenia, Bosnia and Rwanda'

Daniel Wildmann (Queen Mary, University of London)

Co-hosted with the Parkes Centre the study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations

'The German Crime TV Series and German Emotions – Jews in Tatort'

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