

RE-SENSITISING THE IMAGE IN THE POSTDIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTES



ERIKA BALSOM, Reader in Film and Media Studies, King's College London (UK). She is the author of five books, including *After Uniqueness: A History of Film and Video Art in Circulation* (2017; Russian translation 2026), *TEN SKIES* (2021, shortlisted for the Kraszna Krausz Prize; Korean translation forthcoming), and *The Edges of Cinema: Essays on 21st Century Film Culture* (2026), a collection of ten years of criticism that will be published later this year by Columbia University Press. Her writing has appeared in publications including *4Columns*, *Bookforum*, *Camera Obscura*, *e-flux*, *frieze*, *Film Comment*, *New Left Review*, and *Screen*, as well as in numerous exhibition catalogues. She is the co-editor of four edited volumes and, with Genevieve Yue, the series editor of *Cutaways* at Fordham University Press. Her curatorial practice extends across the cinema and the gallery and includes the major survey exhibition *No Master Territories: Feminist Worldmaking and the Moving Image* (co-curated with Hila Peleg), which began at Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, in 2022 and has since toured internationally.

RE-ENTERING THE CINEMA

The space of the cinema has been compared to both a prison and a paradise, but it is the first notion that has won out in the history of film theory. In 1970s' apparatus theory, the collective viewing situation of cinema stood as an emblem of capitalist mass culture's imposition of groupthink conformity, and the pleasures of being held captive to the screen were decried as

undeniably regressive and complicit. Such ideas were resuscitated by curators and art critics in the 2000s seeking to valorise the ambulatory spectator of moving-image installations over and above the captive of the cinema. This talk proposes that the time has come to put aside accounts of the cinema as a space of stupor, hypnosis, and isolation and instead proposes four interlocking approaches to the cinema space that together aim to conceptualise the import of this dispositif today: cinema as performance, cinema as public intimacy, cinema as discussion forum, and cinema as sanctuary.



TIAGO DE LUCA, Professor of Film Studies, University of Warwick (UK). He is the author of *Planetary Cinema: Film, Media and the Earth* (2022) and *Realism of the Senses in World Cinema: The Experience of Physical Reality* (2014), and the co-editor of *Elemental World Cinema: Cinematic Entanglements of Earth, Fire, Water and Air* (2025), *Towards an Intermedial History of Brazilian Cinema* (2022) and *Slow Cinema* (2016). He is the series editor, with Lúcia Nagib, of *Film Thinks: How Cinema Inspires Writers and Thinkers* (Bloomsbury).

THE POLITICS OF ATTENTION

The crisis of the image today is often framed as a crisis of attention, understood as an incapacity to stay with an image for very long. From digital tools that allow users to speed up content to eye-tracking technologies measuring our "gaze time", attentional deficit is understood as a problem of time. This bias is reflected in the scholarly literature, which tends to privilege temporal markers such as the long take, running time and average shot length in discussions of cinematic pacing and speed. Important though these discussions have been, they have neglected the role of spatial, compositional and focal relations *within* an image. In fact, in André Bazin's foundational reflections on the topic, prolonged attention was less an end in itself than a byproduct of specific representational and staging strategies that reinforced relationality and interdependence. Today, these ideas take on added meaning in our fractured world. Yet the apparent egalitarianism of the image also begins to dissolve when we consider how certain portions of it – such as its edges or the background – have historically operated as sites where power relations become, paradoxically, most visible. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's notion of the "partiality of perception" and specific examples across film history, this talk will argue that attention is not simply a matter of how long we look, but also where we look, what an image allows us to see and what it relegates to the background.

PANEL PRESENTATIONS

AGOSTINI, Riccardo, independent researcher, Trebaseleghe, Italy.
FILM AS INTERMEDIAL LANDSCAPE. THE CASE OF MICHELANGELO FRAMMARTINO'S *IL BUCO* (*THE HOLE*, 2021)

This paper invites a reading of Michelangelo Frammartino's film *Il buco* (*The Hole, 2021)* as an entire ecosystem containing various kinds of interlinked intermedial approaches. Through a close textual reading of the film's scenes, it will become apparent how *The Hole* explores intermediality both as an incorporation of different media (TV, magazines, ink drawings) into a single film and as a combination of sensory impressions and coordinates (light and darkness, height and depth, noise and language). This research will also consider Frammartino's film from a three-dimensional point of view. Along the vertical, one can find the juxtaposition between the speleologists' underground exploration of the titular cave in Southern Italy against the rising skyscrapers of 1960s Northern Italy. Along the horizontal lies the ailing shepherd's body, while the third dimension corresponds to the film's duration. These axes are enveloped by the landscape, regarded as a medium in itself. This division, ultimately, indicates how *The Hole* subtly redefines intermediality: not simply as the sum of multiple media, but as an environment that can be perceived through the film's various layers, where diverse forms of medial entanglement are possible.

AGOSTINI, Riccardo (Italy, 1998) is an independent researcher and artist graduated from IUAV University of Venice with an M.A. in Visual Arts. Specialised in Film Studies, he is currently researching the relationship between slow cinema and the visual arts. He has presented a paper at the *Ethics and Spectatorship in Film and Screen Media* conference held at UCC Cork in November 2025. In his practice, he has created short films – documentaries and video-essays – and has experimented with archive footage to craft "recycled" films. Most recently, he has realised a photographic series for a collective exhibition at M9 Museum in Venice.

AKAVICKAITĖ, Viktorija, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Vilnius, Lithuania.
TRAVEL AS A WAY OF SURVIVING: THE REPRESENTATION OF SUICIDALITY IN MARIJA KAVTARADZĖ'S *SUMMER SURVIVORS*

In Lithuania, an increasing number of films feature characters who openly discuss experiences of depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and other mental health conditions. Suicide and its prevention remain among the most significant issues in mental health policy, as suicide is one of the leading causes of death worldwide, and Lithuania continues to rank among the highest in this regard. One way to deepen the understanding of suicide as a phenomenon is through audiovisual art. In cinema, suicide is represented across a wide range of genres, in both documentary and

fiction films. It may dominate the entire narrative, serve as a moral and dramatic turning point or climax, or function more subtly as one of the narrative's thematic elements. Director Marija Kavtaradzė's film *Summer Survivors* (2018) stands out as one of the most notable examples of contemporary Lithuanian cinema exploring the theme of suicide. The object of this research is the representation of suicide in contemporary Lithuanian film. The aim is to reveal how the motif of a journey in the film depicts not only physical movement through space but also psychological healing processes, relationships between the protagonists and other characters, mechanisms of self-knowledge, and the issue of suicide itself. The study applies a qualitative analysis of the audiovisual work, combining approaches from narrative, genre, and representation analysis. The film is examined as a cultural object in which the theme of suicide is conveyed not through direct depiction of the act of death but through characters' emotional states, interpersonal relationships, and the structural function of the journey motif.

AKAVICKAITĖ, Viktorija is a PhD candidate in History and Theory of Arts at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, an emerging researcher and film producer working at the intersection of film production and film studies. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Arts Management (Film Management, 2018) and a Master's degree in Film Art (Film Production, 2020), both from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. Since 2014, she has been working in the Lithuanian film industry as a production manager and producer on various national audiovisual projects. Her research interests focus on the representation of suicidality and women with mental health conditions in contemporary cinema, with an emphasis on affect, vulnerability, and the ethics of representation.

ATKINSON, Nicole, Birkbeck, University of London, London, United Kingdom.

THE IMAGE AFTER BROADCAST: RE-SENSITISING ARTISTS' MOVING IMAGE ON CHANNEL 4 (1982-1992) IN THE POSTDIGITAL AGE

Between 1982 and 1992, Channel 4 commissioned and broadcast approximately 260 artists' moving-image works, an unprecedented move in British television at the time. Broadcast within a four-channel landscape, many of these works reached audiences of over a million viewers, bringing experimental film and video into domestic space and interrupting the routines of mainstream television. Many of the works demanded contemplation, ambiguity and sustained attention through manipulation and interrogation of television conventions. Today, these works circulate within a radically different media ecology, where broadcast has given way to on-demand and platform-based viewing and an abundance of endlessly reproducible digital images. This paper asks how our relationship to these works has changed as their modes of circulation and spectatorship have shifted. What happens to experimental television images when they are no longer encountered through shared broadcast but through fragmented archival collections, digitised recordings and institutional memory? And how might these archival and material

encounters offer new forms of attention in an age characterised by the circulation of digital images? Drawing on Catherine Russell's concept of archiveology, Erika Balsom's writing on the afterlives of moving images, Laura U. Marks's theory of haptic visuality, Giuliana Bruno's work on material encounters with images, and Rick Prelinger's reflections on archival circulation, I argue that these works continue to resist the logics of speed and distraction that define postdigital visual culture. Rather than treating the archive as a site of preservation alone, I propose that archival research can become a form of slow, embodied spectatorship, one that reconstructs relationships between moving images, their histories and their original contexts of exhibition. In doing so, the paper positions the archival encounter as a contemporary mode of re-sensitising artists' moving image, demonstrating how historical television can illuminate changing cultures of attention in the postdigital age.

ATKINSON, Nicole is in her final year of her AHRC/CHASE funded PhD Collaborative Doctoral Award at Birkbeck, University of London, and LUX. Her research explores the corpus of moving image and artists' films and videos affiliated with Channel 4 between the years of 1982–1992. Through researching the commissioning of artists' film and moving image and enriching this largely ignored history, this practice-based project aims to animate the archival material and moving image works through curatorial practice. She recently curated a 5-week film season of experimental archival work from her research titled Echoes from the Static with accompanying archival zine, and has presented her research at multiple conferences including the *Women in Revolt!: Radical Acts, Contemporary Resonances* at the Tate Britain as part of the *Women in Revolt!* exhibition, and most recently at the University of Bologna at the *Media Mutations 16: Unlocking Television Archives in the Digital Era*. She has recently had her research published in the latest Cinergie special edition journal, *Tele-Archives. Reframing Archival Research on Local Televisions Across Europe*.

AVRAM, Horea, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

COMMANDING ILLUSIONS: REFLECTIONS ON META-CINEMA AND ARTIFICE – FROM TRUFFAUT AND SMITH TO AI AND GENERATIVE CINEMA

This presentation argues that self-reflexive films of the 1970s serve as vital conceptual and aesthetic precursors to contemporary AI-generated cinema. Films such as John Smith's *The Girl Chewing Gum (1976)* and François Truffaut's *Day for Night (La Nuit Américaine, 1973)* prefigure the ontological and creative shifts introduced by generative AI by foregrounding the director's (or prompter's) illusory control over reality, the constructed nature of cinematic illusion, and the tension between authorship, representation, and artifice. In exposing their own mechanisms, both films anticipate AI cinema visualization strategies: *The Girl Chewing Gum* deconstructs documentary authority through a voiceover that seems to direct a London street in real time, only to reveal it as retroactively narrating prior events. This exposes language's power to

magically generate worlds while exposing their artifice. By making the production of cinematic illusion its central subject, *La Nuit Américaine* demystifies cinema while simultaneously celebrating its seductive power. This meta-cinematic gesture prefigures AI filmmaking's radical compression of that apparatus. By examining these films alongside a number of recent AI film experiments by Mark Wachholz, Jacob Adler, George Huang, Olio Imaginarium, this paper contends that generative technologies did not emerge as a rupture but as the culmination of cinema's longstanding investigation into its own artifice. Smith and Truffaut established key questions—Who (or what) is directing? What is the status of the real in a mediated world? How does authorship function when creation is collaborative with systems or chance? —that define the aesthetic and ethical stakes of AI film. Ultimately, I argue, these precursors suggest that AI cinema represents not the death of film but its latest self-reflexive evolution, one in which the director's voice or prompt's message continues to command a world it only appears to control.

AVRAM, Horea is Associate Professor at the Department of Cinema and Media, Faculty of Theatre and Film, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. He researches and writes about art and visual culture in relationship with media technology. He has contributed to: *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), Theorizing Visual Studies: *Writing Through the Discipline* (Routledge, 2013), *Encyclopedia of the imaginaries in Romania*. (Polirom, 2020). Curator for Romania at the Venice Biennale, 1999. President of AICA-Romania (International Association of Art Critics) 2020-2026.

BOJINOV, Olesea, University of Udine, Udine, Italia.

FROM IMAGE TO SPACE: PHOTOGRAMMETRY AND THE EMERGENCE OF AFFECTIVE TOPOGRAPHIES

Today, images are increasingly synthetic, yet they continue to produce reality. Over the past decades, a radical transformation has taken place: from simple representational surfaces confined to the cinematic screen, images have become perceptual environments, experiential spaces, and territories of sensation. Cinema has undergone a process of expansion – in its installation-based, performative, and immersive forms – that has transformed the very nature of the visual, turning it into an infrastructure with atmospheric and affective qualities, a space of the sensorium. But what happens when the space of the image is emptied of referents, becomes fragmented, or perceptually unstable? When the architecture of a film is no longer merely a set, but a psychic, traversable, and affective device? Is it possible to read contemporary images – not only cinematic, but also volumetric, computational, and simulated – as an extension of cinema's spatial thinking? *Shining360* is a work created by Claire Hentschker in 2016 using thousands of frames from Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* to reconstruct the Overlook Hotel through photogrammetry; at the same time, a 360-degree camera follows in real time the original path of the camera used to shoot the film. The work lays bare the process through which a cinematic

sequence can become a synthetic, fragmented space – wherever the camera recorded nothing and information is missing, black voids appear – and a navigable environment. Through Claire Hentschker's work, this paper proposes to read photogrammetric reconstruction as a device capable of reconfiguring the relationship between image, space, and the body. It argues that this practice marks the transition from the optical image as a representational surface to the image as an affective topography.

BOJINOV, Olesea is a PhD candidate at the University of Udine, where her research is situated at the intersection of art and cinema. She investigates how contemporary audiovisual practices generate affective atmospheric architectures that reconfigure ways of perceiving and inhabiting space. Her work intertwines expanded cinema practices and visual culture, with connections to architecture and the aesthetics of space.

BOUVET-ZIELESKIEWICZ, Louise, Aix-Marseille University and Sorbonne University, Paris, France.

ATMOSPHERIC SITUATIONS: PROJECTION, SCREEN, AND THE MOVING IMAGE AS EVENT

This communication examines how contemporary moving-image installations re-sensitise the image by foregrounding the atmospheric conditions of projection/exhibition. The encounter with the projected image is not understood here as the singular apparition implied by classical philosophical and phenomenological conceptions of the event (*l'événement*), but as a lived, situated occurrence shaped by the apparatus, the screen surface, and the bodily disposition of the spectator. To describe this, I mobilise the notion of the evental situation rather than the strong sense of the event as rupture. The "atmosphere of projection" (Bruno) is precisely what allows the event to emerge as a situation unfolding within a specific milieu (Benjamin Thomas): repeatable, yet irreducibly different in each iteration, much like the experience of fog, heat, or mist. The migration of the moving image into the gallery has often been narrated in binary terms: either cinema dissolves into the expanded intermedial field of contemporary art or the museum rescues it from technological obsolescence. Rather than dissolution or salvation, I approach the gallery as a site where projection becomes an evental situation, that is an atmospheric configuration in which screen, space, and spectator are co-constitutive. Drawing on Erika Balsom's reading of Francesco Casetti and Andrew V. Uroskie's formulation of the cinematic event as existing "between the black box and the white cube", I argue that what is at stake is not the relocation of cinema, but the production of situated perceptual environments in which moving images are experienced as atmospheric occurrences. Peter Welz's installation, *Untitled (Monica Vitti)* (2016/2026) exemplifies this condition. Recycling discarded footage from Antonioni's *Red Desert* and projecting it onto steel slatted screens derived from the architecture of Berlin's Kino International, the work resists frontal vision and compels a restless bodily negotiation of space. The installation presents three colour-separated projections of the same sequence – red, green, and yellow – so that the image is no longer confined to the screen but

diffuses across the entire exhibition space as a shifting chromatic field. This triadic projection produces a shared hue that envelops both architectural environment and spectators' bodies, establishing a common atmospheric coloration in which perception itself is immersed. The gaze becomes a mode of touching (Pallasmaa), guided by peripheral vision and frustrated by the impossibility of frontal grasp. The screen transforms the image, rendering the apparatus perceptible and enabling a self-reflexive awareness of both projection and spectatorship. The installation thus generates an atmosphere of frustrated proximity, but also of "chromatic sameness", in which image and spectator remain in continuous relation while never fully coinciding. Liza Alvares Zimmer's 2026 *Untitled photographs of Ken McMullen's Ghost Dance* (1983) shift this inquiry from the projected apparatus to the domestic screen. Photographing her monitor while the film plays, Zimmer records both Jacques Derrida's televised apparition and the residual traces of physical contact on the glass surface—fingerprints, smudges, and micro-reflections produced through handling. These material inscriptions of use indexes the repeated contact between body and interface at the moment of viewing. Reading through Gernot Böhme's notion of atmospheric quasi-things, these elements do not belong exclusively to either subject or object but emerge in the zone of their co-presence. The screen becomes a stratified surface of inscription in which cinematic image and bodily contact are superimposed without fusion, producing an atmosphere of layered presence in which different temporalities of touch and projection coexist within the same perceptual field. By reconceiving projection as an evental situation, this paper proposes an atmospheric phenomenology of paracinematic installation attentive to the milieu which moving images come to inhabit.

BOUVET-ZIELESKIEWICZ, Louise: following studies at the EHESS and the School for Curatorial Studies in Venice, she is a PhD researcher in Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics at LESA (Laboratory of Studies in Arts and Sciences), affiliated with Aix-Marseille University and Sorbonne University. Her doctoral research examines the historical and theoretical dimensions of cinematic eventality and its ideological critique. She teaches cinema and social sciences at Aix-Marseille University and is the artistic director of Situations Projections, an exhibition series of paracinematic installations.

BRODSKI, Michael, University of Mainz, Heidelberg, Germany.

TOYING WITH NOSTALGIA: MATERIALITY AND THE MOVING IMAGE IN CONTEMPORARY CINEMA

This paper examines how contemporary films employ cinematic imagery to evoke a specific form of material nostalgia: nostalgia for physical toys and the embodied practices of toy play. It argues that material nostalgia is generated not only through the representation of toys themselves but also through cinematic strategies that create moving images which foreground physical construction, practical effects, and analogue animation techniques. Central to this study is a theoretical distinction between potentially regressive and progressive modes of nostalgic longing

for toys. As a first step, the paper draws on an interdisciplinary range of approaches, integrating Svetlana Boym's distinction between restorative and reflective nostalgia (2001), Gilles Deleuze's and Félix Guattari's differentiation between infantile regression and the creative process of "becoming-child" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987; Guattari 2008), and recent conceptualizations of toyification (Hiltkaja & Thibaut 2018). By critically re-examining and synthesizing these perspectives, the paper argues that cinematic strategies of toy nostalgia operate in two divergent ways. On the one hand, they may promote a discourse of fetishized toy preservation closely aligned with practices of collection and consumption. Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* (USA, 2023) serves as the primary example. Gerwig has stated that she wanted *Barbie*land, its objects, and its props to be physically constructed rather than digitally generated in order to convey "that these toys were real." In doing so, the film also foregrounds toys as material commodities that can be purchased beyond the cinematic experience. On the other hand, cinematic visual strategies may invite creativity and free play by encouraging spectators to imagine uses of toys beyond their intended design. As a key example, *Dave Made a Maze* (2017) and *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (2022) are discussed as presenting an understanding of free toy play through their incorporation or imitation of deliberately low-tech techniques such as stop-motion animation as a creative aesthetic. Ultimately, the paper demonstrates how contemporary films simultaneously foster a longing for fetishized consumption while also gesturing toward non-commercial, imaginative modes of engaging with toys.

BRODSKI, Michael is a PhD candidate at the University of Mainz (Germany). He is working on a thesis on cinematic spectatorship in relation to various portrayals of childhood and child figures. He worked as an Associate Lecturer at the Universities of Mainz and Vienna and also works as a co-editor for the Journal for Fantastic Research. His main research interests include children's film and intermedia representations of childhood and children's culture, affect theory, Eastern European cinema as well as fairy tale and folklore studies. His publications include the articles *DEFA Adaptations of the Grimm Brothers' Children's and Household Tales* (2025; title translated from German), *Re-orienting Fairy Tale Childhood: Child Protagonists as Critical Signifiers of Fairy Tale Tropes in Transnational Contemporary Cinema* (2020), and *Contemporary Children's Film and Television, CGI, and the Child Viewer's Response* (2019).

CHEN, Kerong, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan.

THE IMPENETRABLE DENSITY OF MEMORY: THE CONFESSION THAT CANNOT BYPASS THE DAMP GREEN IN SOLARIS (1972) AND MEMORIA (2021)

Jorge Luis Borges envisioned such a point containing all the places on earth without confusion or blending—the Aleph. It is a locatable, physical sphere, and seems penetrable, allowing the observer to enter a transparent vision. Everything that happens, regardless of temporal and spatial constraints, is folded into this point. Synchronicity obstructs the illusory flow of time. The

Aleph shows an ultimate density, the absolute memory. However, as the story suggests, oblivion always permeates memory. The observer, who never truly penetrates but is forced to the threshold, can never retrieve the memory as a whole. Every peek into it turns into a quest for what is missing, or what has been forgotten, which ends up being obstructed by the density of what can be remembered and what has been left. The intimacy between cinema and memory has long been examined on the fluidity of memory and its reciprocal dynamic with the present. Deleuze's "time-image" has explored this thoroughly. What has been forgotten – which has not disappeared, but become the virtual dimension of memory – is regarded a difference in repetition and a creative force acting upon the present. However, fully aware that recollection can never be complete, we sometimes deliberately, and even compulsively, search for what has been forgotten, not for the sake of creating but the obsession with the loss. Yet, some traces are ossified into concrete images, becoming the memory, whose density can hardly be penetrated, nor it needs to be. The memory thus no longer points to the reciprocity with the present, but performs a confession, seeking to reconcile with the forgotten (the opaque) amid what has remained as material traces. By studying how memory operates as an impenetrable density in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Solaris* (1972) and Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Memoria* (2021), both of which represent memory through dampness and plants within a sci-fi setting, this research hopes to interrogate the confession of an obstructed self.

CHEN, Kerong has finished her undergraduate study in English and Comparative Literature at the Pennsylvania State University. After obtaining her first Master's Degree in Creative Writing (Fiction) at Penn State, she completed another graduate study in International Culture and Communication Studies, specializing in Visual Culture, at Waseda University. Currently, she is pursuing her doctoral study at Waseda. Her research interests cover postmodernism, urban space, political philosophy, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and visual culture.

CROSSLEY, Laura, Bournemouth University, United Kingdom.

FROM SPECTACLE TO SKIN: RE-SENSITISING THE IMAGE IN *CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE FIRST AVENGER*

The Marvel Cinematic Universe is arguably the paradigmatic case of the desensitising image of the postdigital condition: high-gloss, digitally fabricated, endlessly circulated content. This paper takes that suspicion as its starting point, arguing that *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011) stages, from within the blockbuster apparatus itself, a fable about the exhaustion and possible re-sensitisation of the image. Steve Rogers first appears after his transformation not as a soldier but as a propaganda instrument: a USO performer and the star of staged films in which he leads soldiers into combat. This is the operational image in Harun Farocki's sense and the weaponised image in Hito Steyerl's – warfare and marketing collapsed into a single spectacle. The film then doubles this image. When Rogers actually rescues the captured 107th, the sequence visually

rhymes with its staged precursor only to undo it: exhausted bodies, visible wounds, a uniform improvised and torn rather than pristine. The slick surface gives way to an image that is more grounded, more recognisably real. Re-sensitisation is dramatized here as a passage from the spectacular image to the sensuous, embodied one – and it is through this passage that Rogers 'becomes' Captain America, a transformation of personal and national identity at once. A secondary strand reads this ordering through Baudrillard: the film offers the simulation before the real, echoing the precession of simulacra, yet then nostalgically restores the referent it had displaced. The irony deepens once we recall that this material image is itself part of a highly digitised, mediated film cycle – re-sensitisation achieved through the very means that desensitise. The paper asks what it means for a mainstream digital spectacle to mourn, and briefly reclaim, an image it cannot finally escape.

CROSSLEY, Laura's research interests include national identity, British film, nostalgia, postmodernism and post-colonialism. Her specific areas of interest are on British spy fiction and the American superhero, particularly on film and television. She is currently researching aspects of Captain America in relation to contemporary geopolitics. Laura is founding co-editor of 'Routledge Studies in Espionage and Culture' (Routledge) and is part of the BAFTSS Special Interest Group on British Film and Television.

DĄBROWSKI, Igor, University of Gdańsk, Poland.

REJECTING THE MONOMYTH THROUGH INTERMEDIA NARRATIVE AS EXEMPLIFIED BY DANCE CINEMA

The monomyth described by Joseph Campbell in the late 1940s is relevant in mainstream cinema but it falls short to describe what else is possible in cinema as a medium, especially when it is paired with other arts. Campbell's idea is deeply rooted in a humanistic way of thinking which dominates Western worldview but not necessarily describes the world as it is. Even though Campbell juxtaposed numerous religious texts and concluded a universal narrative it does not describe every mode of narrative possible. In this aspect, a post humanist way of thinking might be helpful. The classic three-act structure or its twelve-step variation proposed by Campbell is a reflection of the West's value system and the way this society is organized. Despite that, there are phenomena which break through this scheme and are clearly visible in dance cinema among others. In this kind of narrative, which is intermedia by its nature as it connects the formal systems of cinema, dance and music, the narrative development is fuelled by emotion and associations rather than intellectual recreation of the plot from the syuzhet. Thanks to that reception works on a different, more intuitive and intangible level and because of that it shows different aspects of humanity. The clue is not to value one mode of narrative more than the other but to notice them and describe in their own essence. An example of a transitional approach is Gaspar Noe's *Climax* (2018) in which despite the classic narrative frame the main part of the story

is told through the movement. The disorientation is a dynamic that perfectly captures how narrative structures become lost within a value system for which they were not intended.

DĄBROWSKI, Igor is a film studies graduate and a certified screenwriter from Gdansk, Poland. At the University of Gdańsk, I teach courses on sound in cinema. Apart from that I work in schools in my region educating through cinema. My main interest is exploring different modes of narrative cinema through the analysis of different media, such as music and dance. I believe that a post humanist approach is helpful in this exploration.

DAHLSTROM, Rosie, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland.

CARING FOR BEAUTY

"Together we labour to realise images." This talk brings together contemporary artists' film, philosophy and cultural theory to explore how creating an experience of beauty can connect us to a wider view of humanity, expand nuance and empathy, and enable emotional and intellectual transformation. I have found the subject of beauty to be an ignored and underutilised topic in current cultural discourse, when in fact this word has enormous power over our daily existence, functioning as a new kind of ethical ideal (Widdows, 2018). Whether we talk about it explicitly in art or not, conforming to the beauty ideal is increasingly not optional, and can be used as a tool in the service of white supremacy, colonialism and intolerance of nonconforming bodies. However, my research argues that we can use beauty a different way. If we consider beauty as a tool, much as Barthes considered mythology to function as a language, then we can use it in ways that open up strategies to combat social ills such as intolerance and alienation; beauty being a phenomenon that is inherently disposed to social justice and meaningful connection (Scarry, 1999). I refer to Kant's theories of aesthetic judgement, and his conception of beauty as being at the heart of the human condition, calling beauty "that which pleases in the mere experience of it"; and the pleasure referred to as a result of the experience of beauty, "the feeling of an enhancement of life". I consider some recent artists' moving image that I believe attempts to create an experience of beauty in the viewer which aligns with themes of social justice, empathy and transcendence. I have chosen artist film as a methodology because of its more explicit aesthetic considerations, film's ability to combine narrative with image, and the temporal aspect of sharing an experience.

DAHLSTROM, Rosie is an artist and writer from Glasgow, currently living and working between Glasgow and London. Studying Painting & Printmaking at Glasgow School of Art until 2014, in 2020 she completed MA Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts (UAL). Her practice comes from a painting background, but as the work is narrative-driven the stories can also take the forms of collage, film, sculpture, text and installation. Rosie is now researching a practice-based PhD with the Glasgow School of Art, interested in the relationship between beauty and the ancient world, and its implications for contemporary art.

DAVIE, Nick, University of Nottingham.

THE IMAGINED IMAGE: ENIGMA AND WITHHOLDING IN TWIN PEAKS

Images now exist mainly as versions, endlessly modifiable, scrolled past rather than looked at. David Lynch's film and television work refuses this. *Twin Peaks* (1990-91) and *Twin Peaks: The Return* (2017), his final longform work, build a mythology around an image that will not resolve: the identity of Laura Palmer's killer is never made visible. BOB appears without explanation. The mysterious Black Lodge is entered but never charted. What the camera shows and what the story needs to know pull apart, and the gap between them is where the image starts to work. This paper argues that Lynch's art cinema style depends on that gap. David Bordwell's account of art cinema narration (1985), recently extended by Paul Taberham (2023), reads this kind of unresolved ambiguity as authorial vision, not failure. The viewer has to complete the image imaginatively, because the frame will not do it for them. Harun Farocki's operational image (2000), stripped of aesthetic purpose and built only to be read by a machine or procedure, names precisely what Lynch's images refuse to be. *Twin Peaks* constantly borrows procedural image forms, the crime-scene photograph, the surveillance still, then empties them of their evidentiary function. The paper draws on Bruce Block's formalist account of visual structure (2020), especially space and tone, to track how shadow and restricted framing build a visual field defined by what stays outside the frame. The result is a spectator asked to do more than pay attention: to imagine what the image itself cannot show. Across three decades, from 1990s network television to a 2017 revival that resists streaming-era pace, *Twin Peaks* offers an early and a late account of what a genuinely re-sensitised image might demand of a viewer, and what it costs a medium built on resolution to withhold one.

DAVIE, Nick completed his PhD in Film and Television Studies at the University of Nottingham in 2026, with a thesis, 'Designing Arthouse Television: David Lynch'. The thesis develops an arthouse design brief methodology, combining Julian Stringer's industrial concept of “the brief” with Bruce Block's formalist visual analysis and his own concept of “counter-televisuality”, to examine how arthouse cinema’s institution and prestige television construct authorial distinction through visual style. His work on Lynch and television intermediality is published in peer-reviewed journals REN and Panoptikum (forthcoming) and his other research avenues include animation studies, gender in television, and National and Polish cinema.

DE DONATO, Lorenzo, Universities of Milan-Bicocca and Cagliari, Milan, Italy.

IN SEARCH OF THE AUDIOVISUAL BEAUTY

In a contemporary landscape marked by digital dystopias, generational anxieties, catastrophic global scenarios, unbridled and inhumane capitalism, uncontrolled consumerism, and the exploitation of the planet's resources – and in a world where all these phenomena are constantly amplified by their audiovisual transmission via digital platforms and technological devices of all

kinds – cinema, the quintessential audiovisual art form, needs to reclaim its aesthetic centrality and its potential for both philosophical-conceptual and affective-meditative depth. One way to achieve this is to persist – bringing it to full fruition – in exploring the bond between the moving image and music; in the century since the advent of sound cinema, music has often been overlooked as a fundamental and indispensable component of the cinematic art. Conceiving cinema in union with music is not merely an intermedial strategy or a synesthetic revitalization of the image, but an extraordinary way for re-sensitising the human experience and re-connecting the visible with the unseen. Taking Hanslick's "musical beauty" (1854) and Chion's concept of "audiovision" (1990) as two historical poles, this paper focuses on proposing an original concept of "audiovisual beauty." It seeks to trace the origins of this concept to a time well before the birth of cinema – rooting it in musical theatre, melodrama, and opera – before engaging in a philosophical reflection on the link between representation and music, between mimesis and phoné. It reveals that representation and music – together with the third fundamental element, narration – can forge a new alchemy: a goal toward which the history of cinema is moving, but which, given the medium's relative youth compared to other art forms, it has yet to fully realize.

DE DONATO, Lorenzo works in Aesthetics at the universities of Milan-Bicocca and Cagliari (Italy). He also collaborates with the Unitre Institute in Milan, where he teaches Philosophy of Art. His current research interests are: Cinematographical Aesthetics and Philosophy of Cinema, Adorno's Aesthetics and Critical Theory, archive research on Adorno and Cinema. His academic studies took him through Italy and Germany (Freie Universität Berlin), obtaining a Philosophy degree with honors from the State University of Milan and a Piano degree from the Giuseppe Martucci State Academy of Music in Salerno, as well as a specialization diploma in Bologna. He has been a research fellow at the Italian Institute for Philosophical Studies in Naples. He has delivered lectures and participated in international conferences in Italy, Germany, Spain, Poland, Serbia, Malta and India. He has published extensively (37 publications, many in preparation), with articles and essays appearing in books, academic journals and edited volumes in Italy (Mimesis publisher, Inschibboleth publisher, Critical Hermeneutics journal, Informazione filosofica journal), Belgium (Brepols publisher) and Brazil (Clareira journal). He has taught History and Aesthetics of Music at the Luigi Canepa State Academy of Music in Sassari. He is a member of the International Research Group in Ethics, Aesthetics and Philosophy of Literature at the Federal University of Rondonia (Brazil); a founding member of the International Research Group Mousikè, based in Paris (France); a member of both the Italian Society of Aesthetics and the Italian Philosophical Society; he is also secretary of the Academy of Human and Social Sciences in Rome. He was awarded with the 2022 Italian National Philosophy Prize Le figure del pensiero.

DEGIM FLANNAGAN, I. Alev, Başkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

VIBRATIONAL WORLDS: RE-SENSITISING PERCEPTION THROUGH CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE FICTION CINEMA

In an era characterized by algorithmically mediated attention, the proliferation of digital images, and increasing sensory exhaustion, contemporary cinema continues to offer spaces for renewed perception and affective engagement. This paper examines how selected science fiction films function as technologies of re-sensitisation, inviting spectators to encounter reality through expanded modes of perception that challenge habitual ways of seeing and knowing. Drawing on Vivian Sobchack's phenomenology of embodied spectatorship, Gilles Deleuze's concept of the time-image, and contemporary discussions surrounding atmosphere, affect, and more-than-human perception, the paper analyses *Arrival* (Denis Villeneuve, 2016), *Annihilation (*Alex Garland, 2018), and *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, 2022). Rather than treating scientific concepts as explanatory frameworks, these films are approached as affective and sensory experiences that destabilize anthropocentric assumptions and encourage viewers to engage with alternative temporalities, relationalities, and modes of existence. Through visual, auditory, and narrative strategies, these films construct what this paper terms "vibrational worlds": cinematic environments in which perception extends beyond the limits of ordinary experience. In *Arrival*, language becomes a means of reconfiguring temporal consciousness; in *Annihilation*, encounters with a transforming environment foreground the permeability of bodily and ecological boundaries; and in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, fragmented realities are ultimately reassembled through affective connection and attention to the everyday. Across these examples, the cinematic image operates not merely as representation but as an experiential event that enables spectators to sense what remains unseen, uncertain, or otherwise inaccessible. By positioning contemporary science fiction cinema within ongoing debates on postdigital spectatorship and the recovery of sensuous experience, this paper argues that these films offer forms of quiet resistance to the desensitising effects of digital culture. They invite audiences to cultivate renewed attentiveness toward both human and more-than-human realities, demonstrating cinema's continued capacity to restore sensitivity in a fragmented visual landscape.

DEGIM FLANNAGAN, I. Alev is a faculty member in the Department of Animation at Başkent University, Türkiye, and Administrator of the UNESCO Chair on Cultural Heritage and Digital Memory. Her research focuses on film-philosophy, digital media, animation, affect, and visual culture. Her publications include works on virtual identity in film, Lacanian approaches to social media, fantasy cinema, and reviews published in Film-Philosophy and Film & History. Her current research explores embodied spectatorship, postdigital visuality, and contemporary science fiction cinema. She is also actively involved in projects related to digital heritage, animation studies, and emerging media technologies.

DE ROO, Ludo, Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, Potsdam, Germany

IN MEDIA RES: POST-CINEMATIC ATMOSPHERES OF ANCIENT TIMES

As part of CATNEMI's third research objective, I investigate the atmospheric operations in two post-cinematic media, both mediating the classic Greek world, yet enabling radically different phenomenological structures of engagement. I compare a permanent museum exhibition showing the ancient city of Pergamon (State Museums Berlin 2018) with the digital single-player game *Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* (Ubisoft 2018). The museum's highlight is a 360° panorama of the city curated by artist Yadegar Asisi: an almost 100-meter-wide, 23-meter-high digital print enveloping the visitor (McCormack). Though its encircling image is wholly static, its exhibiting space combines various elemental media – an elaborate lighting scheme and spatial acoustics as well circadian rhythms – to bring life to the vista of the ancient metropole. Visitors can also physically change perspectives by walking around or climbing a platform (up to 15 metres high), thus turning a non-moving image and momentary impression – one specific day in 129 AD – into a "projective environment" (Bruno). Alternatively, *Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* is highly dynamic: one plays a Spartan mercenary navigating the Aegean archipelago in the shadow of the Peloponnesian War (ca. 400 years before Pergamonon's heyday). Rather than slow, physical envelopment, its distinctive medial feature is embodied-phenomenological interaction with non-playable characters and in a virtual world (Klevjer; Vella). Moreover, exploring this open-world game is marked by a distinctly cinematographic use of atmospheric filters, meteorological detail, and regionally-qualified soundscapes – to such a degree that its affective world-building becomes the effective means through which one accesses the quasi-historical environment. Accordingly, both post-cinematic media objects stage the Ancient Greek world squarely within Böhme's paradigm of aesthetic atmospheres, yet since each activates specific media affordances, each media object therefore engages their respective audiences in very different ways. Contrasting these types of engagement – slow enveloping and inactivist immersion – provides insight into the expansion of cinematic atmospheres beyond the cinematic dispositif."

DE ROO, Ludo studied media studies at the University of Amsterdam and obtained a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Macquarie University (Sydney, Australia). Currently he is a Postdoctoral Researcher on the ERC-funded project CATNEMI, at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF (Potsdam, Germany). His publications combine phenomenological philosophy and eco-cinema theory, with research on film-philosophical topics such as elemental mediation, the structure of immersion, and cinematic imagination. For the CATNEMI project, Ludo investigates how various other media forms adopt the operations of cinematic atmosphere.

DVOŘÁČKOVÁ, Markéta, Tomas Bata University, Zlín, Czech Republic.

RE-SENSITISING WITHOUT RESTORATION: FILM PEDAGOGY ACROSS VARIED REGIMES OF ATTENTION

The language of re-sensitisation often implies a prior loss: scrolling and ubiquitous screens are said to have weakened sustained attention and reduced moving images to disposable content. This paper questions that deficit model from the perspective of film pedagogy in practice-based higher education. It draws on reflexive practitioner inquiry within a five-semester film history and theory course for BA students in six filmmaking specialisations at Tomas Bata University in Zlín. This pedagogical laboratory treats students' encounters with films, concepts, and audiovisual practice not simply as outcomes of instruction, but as situations in which contemporary film experience becomes available for inquiry. Drawing on teaching notes, assignments, student reflections, and classroom situations, the paper examines moments in which attention is dispersed, sustained, redirected, or reorganised. Particular attention is paid to collective film screenings in the school's cinema auditorium—not as attempts to restore an idealised cinematic dispositif, but as deliberately composed projection environments in which shared time, bodily co-presence, and the social organisation of attention acquire pedagogical significance. Rather than positioning cinema as a corrective to postdigital distraction, the paper asks how pedagogy can make heterogeneous regimes of attention perceptible and negotiable. Historical and canonical films are approached neither as stable objects whose proper meaning must be restored nor as inaccessible remnants of a lost cinematic culture, but as elements in situated constellations involving present viewing practices, creative work, theoretical concepts, and institutional expectations. Re-sensitising, I argue, need not mean recovering an idealised attentive spectator. It can instead describe a pedagogical practice of differentiation: learning to notice how images solicit, distribute, and transform attention, and how these processes participate in the production of film knowledge. The pedagogical laboratory thus functions as an epistemic site where uncertainty, resistance, and divergent responses become resources rather than failures.

DVOŘÁČKOVÁ, Markéta is a lecturer in film history and theory and a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Multimedia Communications, Tomas Bata University in Zlín. Her research focuses on film pedagogy in practice-based higher education, contemporary audiovisual experience, screen cultures, and the changing relations between film theory and creative practice. Drawing on reflective practitioner inquiry, she treats the classroom as a pedagogical and epistemic laboratory in which students' encounters with films, concepts, institutional expectations, and their own creative work become material for research.

FALLS, Evan, independent researcher

***WAITING FOR IT TO WORK*: USING AFFECTIVE INTERMEDIALITY TO CONTEMPLATE THE PAINFUL SENSITIVITY OF STILLNESS IN *QUEER* (2024)**

At the rough midpoint of Luca Guadagnino's *Queer* (2024), a five-minute continuous shot shows Daniel Craig as William Burroughs while he takes heroin. This paper analyses how Guadagnino uses set dressing and static composition to make intermedial reference to painting, priming the viewer to meditate on a slow ritual. But Craig's face is out of frame, his hands consistently rupturing the painterly quality of the table in front of him; in this tension between painterly stillness and cinematic action, viewers are not just made "pensive" (Bellour) by the uncanny shifting, but also emotionally disturbed by ambiguity. This paper argues that through the tactility of slow ritual, viewers are brought into contact with not just the image, but what is inside it, as "raw, material presence" (Rancière) and therefore prepared for the empathetic labor and emotional demands of the second half of the sequence depicting the protagonist as he waits for the heroin to numb his pain. In the second half, an anachronistic music choice again confronts us with the "unreality" of what we are watching, but also immerses us more deeply into the mood of the film, where sensual pleasures collide with cerebral loneliness and shape his sense of reality. By engaging with Ágnes Pethő's concept of the "performativity" of affective intermediality, I will bring neuroaesthetics and cinematic intermediality into dialogue to explore how Guadagnino hijacks our focus over the course of one slow scene. In doing so, he paints a Hopper-esque picture of loneliness and encourages a mind-body connection where we empathize with the character because our senses match theirs, and ask questions because answers are withheld from us. In the face of drug addiction, queerness, and other forms of marginalization, it is perhaps most empathetic to abandon our (moral) certainty and surrender instead to an empathetic curiosity.

FALLS, Evan is co-chair of Cultural Literacy Research Network's special interest group on Intermediality and Care. He holds a BA (Hons.) in Cinema Art + Science with a Minor in Fiction Writing from Columbia College Chicago and a MSc in Intermediality with Distinction from University of Edinburgh. He is currently submitting a PhD proposal titled *Affective Intermediality as Care: Opaque Expressions of Grief, Trauma, and Identity in Contemporary Cinematic Autofiction.* Most recently, he presented *(Pop)ulism Art: Trump, Obama, and the Artification of Populist Political Movements* at IMBXL 2026.

FARRAGHER-HANKS, Milo, University of St Andrews, United Kingdom

I WALKED WITHOUT THINKING': AMBIVALENCES OF THE AESTHETIC IN *SIRĀT*

In our fractious media culture, in which screens have shrunk in size and proliferated in number, what is the role of the cinema? Does the pervasiveness of short-form media and its attrition of the attention span leave a place for modes of cinema and spectatorship which have traditionally relied upon rapt sensory attention – Laura U. Marks "haptic visuality" (Marks 2000) or Martine

Beugnet's "cinema of sensation" (Beugnet, 2007)? And moreover, in the face of numerous overlapping (and widely visually documented) global ecological and humanitarian crises, does this kind of aesthetic absorption in an image's sensorial properties constitute irresponsible solipsism? This paper looks at how these questions are self-reflexively examined in Oliver Laxe's *Sirāt* (2025). Set in the deserts of Morocco, this film involves a group of itinerant European ravers who live a life of sensory absorption in music, dance, and landscape - even amidst the outbreak of war. These figures are contrasted with their reluctant companion Luis (Sergí Lopez), strictly practically minded, and baffled by what he sees as the ravers' naive hedonism. Foregrounding this epistemic schism, *Sirāt* reflects a wider ambivalence about aestheticism in contemporary moving-image culture - what I would term aesthetophobia. The film thus encourages its audience to reflect upon their own (embodied/aesthetic, political/ethical) relationship to the film's own highly sensuous and atmospheric audio-visual address. Dramatizing this conflict through its form and narrative, *Sirāt* reaches an elliptical conclusion which suggests the possibility of a reconciliation; of the intense attentiveness and suspension of thought required by aesthetic experience allowing us to transcend crisis and more ably navigate a fraught world. My analysis argues that *Sirāt* productively visualises the disputed current state of sensory cinema while also suggesting the continued relevance of art cinema's traditional modes of affective engagement in meeting this moment of fragmentation and crisis.

CHATTOPADHYAY, Sanskriti, HDK-Valand Academy of Art and Design, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

THE NON-VISUAL LIFE OF IMAGES: CONCEPT-IMAGES AND SPECULATIVE EXISTENCE AFTER THE POST-DIGITAL

The post-digital condition has rendered the image increasingly volatile, mutable and operational, dissolving its apparent ontological stability into algorithmic processes, data performances and endlessly revisable versions. Rather than treating this as a technological rupture, this paper argues that the post-digital re-sensitises us to a constitutive yet historically under-theorised condition of the image itself. Twentieth-century film theory repeatedly recognised the image as a paradoxical coexistence of presence and absence, like Bazin's ontology of the photographic image, or Cavell's acknowledgment of the world's simultaneous presence and withdrawal. Yet the ontology of absence gradually became subordinated to the dominance of representation, perception, phenomenological presence and the discourses around signs, psychology and historicity. The apparent stability of the celluloid image may itself have functioned as an aesthetic ideology for these presence-affirming categories of thought. The paper proposes the notion of the concept-image as a way of recovering the non-visual life of images. A "concept-image" is neither an image of a concept nor an image interpreted conceptually. It is an image-event whose mode of existence cannot be exhaustively located within available ontological categories: representation, memory, dream, narrative, body, archive or simulation. Rather than signifying

absence alone, it opens speculative relations with forms of non-existence, paradoxical existence and ontological non-locatability. Read alongside reflections on technicity of images (Flusser), transindividual becoming (Simondon) and the contemporary groundlessness of hybrid images (Balsom), the concept-image names those moments when images cease merely to represent the world and instead become speculative hypotheses of existence. With the examples of David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, Hirokazu Kore-eda's *After Life* and Stelarc's body-art works, distinct trajectories of the 'concept-image' would be proposed: images whose ontological indeterminacy generates speculative thought, ethical acknowledgment through thin images and poor representations, and hybridity of human-machine embodiments. The paper argues that re-sensitising the image in the post-digital age ultimately requires re-sensitising speculation itself. Within scrolling interfaces, algorithmic image flows and networked archives, "concept-images" disclose emergent clusters of desire, boredom, withdrawal and shared affective intensities that increasingly tend to exceed the threshold of the individual self, giving rise to provisional shared-bodied, human-machinic assemblages and speculative modes of existence that remain unavailable readily to the dominant vocabularies of representation, affect, memory or sensory-motor experience.

CHATTOPADHYAY, Sanskriti has two post-graduate degrees in Film Direction and Screenplay Writing (Film and Television Institute India, India) and in Literary and Cultural Studies (The English and Foreign Language University, India). Currently she is a PhD student in film studies at HDK-Valand Academy of Art and Design, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Her project is centred on decolonial possibilities of the cinematic image. She is interested in the cultural heritage of the landscape she was born into which informs her work. Her publications include various articles in journals like *Anales de history del arte*, *Swaraantar*, and *Caesurae*. She has also been a part of several artistic research projects at the Hungarian School of Fine Arts (Budapest), at SAAR Gothenburg, Lucerne School of Art and Design, Switzerland; at The Film University Babelsberg, etc.

GEORGESCU, Lucian, UNATC, Bucharest, Romania.

REFUSAL OF THE ALGORITHM VS. TOXIC NOSTALGIA

The paper dwells on the heritage-film image in the context of no policy correctly framing it in the streaming environment. I research from within the experimental platform cinepub.ro, an independent Romanian platform streaming over 400 legally cleared titles, free of charge, to more than fifty million spectators a year, some four million in diaspora. Taking data from the platform analytics we research the heritage circulating without context, feeding what Boym (2001) called restorative nostalgia: degraded pirate copies (e.g.: 550 identified from a corpus of just 46 classics, totalling over 72 million illegal views, mistitled, fragmented, and even colourised against their directors' deliberate black-and-white (Morometii, Gulea, 1987). They supply a distorted past

whose political consequences Romania's annulled presidential election of December 2024 made brutally concrete. The demand side of this nostalgia economy has meanwhile reached the very centre of European film culture: Cristian Mungiu's second Palme d'Or, for *Fjord* (2026), speaks — whatever its author's intentions — to the same blue-collar diaspora whose frustrations with the West have lately found nationalist political expression. Escalating the case against "digital lethargy" (Hu 2022), I formulate an answer via infrastructure, rather than the films themselves. Cinepub's refusal of algorithmic recommendation is usually read as an aesthetic gesture; it is in fact a governance decision: a non-personalised, archival ordering logic — "we do not impose, we only propose" (Cinepub 2026) — constituting a counter-archival infrastructure that works against state enclosure and commercial capture alike. To refuse the algorithm is also to refuse the genre machine of prefabricated "video content" engineered to feed recommendation engines. Where MUBI curates to differentiate (Frey 2021), Cinepub curates to exist. Written from the dual position of founder-operator and researcher, and drawing on internal platform data and a decade of practitioner research, my paper argues that at the European periphery (Szczepanik et al. 2020) re-sensitising the image is beyond an aesthetic programme: it is a survival plan, for the platform, and for the public memory it carries.

GEORGESCU, Lucian is a Professor of film and media at UNATC, coordinator of CARA Research Centre in Creative Writing and Screenwriting, member of EFA, FIPRESCI, EACWP, CC, and co-chair of the Executive Board of the Screenwriters Research Network. A filmmaker and media expert, he is the founder of the independent AVOD cinepub.ro (2015). He was awarded the title of Knight of the Romanian National Order of Cultural Merit (2024), and the Screenwriting Research Network' Teaching Innovation Award (2025). His work explores the road movie as a metaphor for human displacement, the streaming industry's impact on audiovisual language, and digital distribution models in peripheral cultures.

GHAOUI, Imene, University of 8 May 1945, Guelma, Algeria.

RE-SENSITISING THE COSMIC IMAGE: ELEMENTAL CINEMA AND MORE-THAN-HUMAN ENTANGLEMENT IN CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S *INTERSTELLAR* (2014)

In the post digital age, where images often function as ephemeral data streams and operational tools that numb sensory engagement, certain cinematic works retain the capacity to re-sensitise perception and foster awareness of a more-than-human world. This paper examines Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* (2014) through the framework of Tiago de Luca's image-conscious "elemental cinema." The film portrays ecological collapse on Earth and the hostile materiality of extra-terrestrial environments (dust, ice, water, and the black hole's gravitational distortions) not as mere backdrops but as active, sensuous forces that dwarf human agency. Through its immersive IMAX cinematography, haptic sound design, and manipulation of temporal perception, *Interstellar* creates a synesthetic experience of cosmic and planetary scales that invites embodied

contemplation rather than detached spectatorship. Drawing on ecocritical theory and concepts such as the aesthetics of atmospheres (Gernot Böhme) and elemental entanglement, the paper argues that the film's visual and sensory strategies counteract digital lethargy and anthropocentric numbness. By rendering gravity, time, and planetary materiality as tangible cinematic events, *Interstellar* demonstrates cinema's potential to restore the image as a site of affective reconnection with physical reality and a more-than-human universe.

GHAOUI, Imene is a doctoral student in English literature at the University of 8 May 1945, Guelma, Algeria. Her research focuses on postcolonial African literature, ecocriticism, and postcolonial studies, with a broader interest in literary theory and critical approaches to texts.

GHOBADLOU, Shahrzad, William & Mary, Williamsburg, United States.

THE DEATH OF A STAR, DIGITAL SURFACE AND THE FOLDED WOUND: THE ROLE OF MULTIPLICITY IN RE-SENSITIZING GRIEF

Can moving images still foster a space for contemplation and affective connection against the numbing, dopamine-driven multiplicity of social media reels? Moving from Judith Mayne's scepticism towards multiplicity as insufficient for liberatory conversations (*Paradoxes of Spectatorship,* 171) to Laura Mark's emphasis on the actionable qualities of multiplicity within a cinematic assemblage (*The Fold*, 39), I examine the tension between digital hyper-multiplicity and the slow, tactile engagement required to process an unfolding grief. I argue that social media's hyper-multiplicity is not inherently a silencing mechanism. Despite systemic forces that flatten real experiences into didactic binaries of "good and bad," marginalized stories resist digital flattening. I analyse Satrapi and Paronnaud's film *Chicken with Plums* (2012) as a gateway to this tension. The protagonist, Nasser-Ali, dies of a broken heart after losing hope of being recognized by his beloved woman, Iran. Satrapi's extradiegetic narrator refuses to settle for superficial interpretations of this demise, instead dissects the profound pessimism that leaves Nasser-Ali alone with his choice. This narrative mirrors Satrapi's own grief following the state-enforced violence against Iranian youth (since 2022) and the loss of her husband in 2025. During the post-2022 Iranian uprisings, a diaspora disconnected from loved ones yet fixated on screens waiting for news resembled René Magritte's *The Lovers*, touching desperately through the veil of a digital interface. How do we connect with and interpret such grief? While Laura Marks advocates for "strategic enfoldment" and waiting for the appropriate audience (97), echoing Hélène Cixous's patient moment of "*arrival*," contemporary digital artists and traditional creators like Satrapi bypassed this patience. Their resistance relied on posting hastily unfinished, fragmented works, trusting algorithms to bring these messages like waves to the shore. The death of a star in this paper demands a radical critical approach whereby critics "re-sensitize" the images of grief, pulling open wounds back into human understanding.

GHOBADLOU, Shahrzad is a Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor of French and Francophone Studies at William & Mary. Her research focuses on contemporary visual culture, graphic narratives, and transnational feminisms, examining themes of exile, migration, and minority liminality. She teaches courses on French, graphic novels and French cinema. Her recent article, *A Touch of Liminality: The Phenomenology of the Threshold in Shirin Neshat's Artworks,* appears in *Affective Intermediality: Moving Images Between Media, Sensation and Reality* (ed.Ágnes Pethő).

GORYAINOVA, Ira, Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema & Sounds (RITCS), Brussels, Belgium.
DE/SYNCING REALITY

Asynchrony is one of cinema's defining devices. Through montage, a film can separate sound from image, allowing us to encounter something that is nearly impossible in everyday life: a sound detached from its source, a voice that escapes the mouth that produces it. Outside the cinema, such asynchrony occurs only exceptionally – in the delayed rumble of thunder or in a lingering echo. Everything that is alive is in sync; everything that is dead can be desynchronised. We have no choice but to seek coherence, meaning, and unity. If lip-sync is delayed or dubbing fails to match the movement of the mouth, our brains automatically correct the discrepancy, or the lie. The voice, however, can become an act of undoing. In essay film, the voice-over is bodiless: the bearer of the voice is never seen. The voice runs against the image, approaching it, brushing against its surface, while never fully coinciding with it. In doing so, it re-sensitises the image, making it almost haptic. The voice functions differently in a lecture performance: it shares the same space as the body and the projected images. Here, it is embodied and transforms the images differently – it lends them a mouth from which to speak. A singular utterance, spoken here and now, reveals where the images come from. In this presentation, which takes the form of an artistic intervention – a lecture performance – the relation between embodied and disembodied voice and image is explored. Here, the voice addresses the ongoing war in Ukraine, death, and loss. Fragmented reality is not restored but enunciated and negotiated through the act of speaking.

GORYAINOVA, Ira is a film director, audiovisual artist, and researcher based in Brussels. The relationship between body, camera, screen, and spectator is her main area of interest, which she explores in essay- and montage films, video installations, and performances. Thematically her focus is on the body under extreme conditions — such as illness, death, and suffering — and how they can be read as political metaphors while still conveying explicit bodily, non-narrative meanings. Her work has been shown at IDFA, Hot Docs, Visions du Réel, Halle für Kunst Steiermark, among others. Currently she is a researcher and teacher of hybrid and documentary film making.

HORÁNYI, Péter, Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest, Hungary

RE-SENSITISING REALITY: EMBODIED WITNESSING AS TRUTH CLAIM IN MSTYSLAV CHERNOV'S WAR DOCUMENTARIES

Although many have argued that in the age of digital manipulation the photographic image no longer possesses an ontologically grounded connection to the referent world, the concepts of indexical realism and observation have not disappeared from documentary filmmaking's truth claims (Hight 2018). Drawing on Erika Balsom's essay *The Reality-Based Community* (2017), I argue that contemporary observational documentary has preserved its credibility in the twenty-first century not by maintaining the illusion of an objective representation of reality, but by foregrounding its own situated and partial perspective. In my presentation, I will examine how this tendency becomes particularly visible through the embodied nature of witnessing in contemporary war documentaries. While contemporary warfare is increasingly mediated through non-anthropomorphic forms of vision produced by military surveillance technologies (Virilio, 1989), the truth claims of many recent war documentaries rely on the filmmaker's heightened embodied presence: a sensory, affective, and physically lived engagement with unfolding events. Following Stella Bruzzi's (2006) understanding of documentary as a process of negotiation with reality rather than its transparent recording, I suggest that documentary truth emerges through the filmmaker's situated encounter with the filmed warzone. I explore this argument through Mstyslav Chernov's two recent films about the Russian-Ukrainian war: *20 Days in Mariupol* (2023) and *2000 Meters to Andriivka* (2025). I argue that in these films the documentary truth claim is articulated through the filmmakers' and camera operators' determination to bear witness to the reality of war through fragmented, unstable, and increasingly embodied modes of perception. Thus, while the proliferation of images destabilises reality and vision is no longer an exclusively human capacity, war documentaries of embodied witnessing reaffirm personal presence as a crucial ground for documentary truth claims.

HORÁNYI, Péter was born in Budapest in 1993. He earned his master's degree from the Department of Film Studies at ELTE, and in 2026 he received his Ph.D. in Art Theory from the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design. The title of his dissertation is: Forms of Presence in the Digital Age—Performativity and Remedialized Presence in Contemporary Documentary Film.

HUBER, Joe, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland.

***MANDY* AND THE AESTHETICS OF SLOW HORROR**

While horror, particularly of the revenge-fuelled kind, has become a genre dictated by fast pace and attention-grabbing sequences, *Mandy* differentiates itself by lingering on aesthetically pleasing yet disturbing shots, which create a psychedelic horror experience. I am looking to determine how the film utilises aesthetics and pacing to create its entrancing horror. Through its unusual structure, segmented into three parts with the film's title card only appearing at the

midpoint, it relies largely on its aesthetic and the tension it builds to command the audience's attention. While the slowness of the first two segments contrasts with the faster action of the third part, it is a deliberate choice which slowly increases the tension, differentiating the film from other contemporary horror films. Despite its violent elements, it separates itself from the "attention economy", locating the action-filled segment at the end of the movie, continuing to imbue them with aesthetic value. The film creates horror not only through what is shown, but also through what is left unseen in its highly coloured, psychedelic slow movements, creating narrative and empathy with the main characters despite the low amount of dialogue. The audiovisual experience, particularly in the first two segments, creates an experience which feels immersive and entrancing, the film's sound working alongside the psychedelic colours to result in a dream-like state.

HUBER, Joe is currently working on a PhD in Film and Screen Media at University College Cork. His dissertation topic is Queer Cinema of the Weimar Republic, and his overall interests include everything *queer* history and representation, with a particular focus on film history and historical research overall.

HVEN, Steffen, Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, Potsdam, Germany.

ATMOSPHERE AND THE NEW ECOLOGY OF THE MOVING IMAGE

Situated within the recent surge of interdisciplinary research on atmosphere, CATNEMI brings together perspectives from new materialism, ecocriticism, affect theory, contemporary approaches in phenomenology, and research on transmedial world-making in a move away from stable ontologies and discrete substances, towards processes, relations, networks, and assemblages. As an example of how these perspectives are brought together, I introduce The *Oxford Handbook of Moving-Image Atmospheres and Felt Environments* (ed. Hven & Yacavone, 2027). Bolstering 30 original essays, this volume sets a diverse stage for atmosphere theory, with the editors also providing an extensive mapping of the theoretical field of (moving-image) atmospheres, along with an additional exploration of the various modalities of pre-cinematic, cinematic, and post-cinematic atmospheres. At its core, is the current rediscovery of the elemental legacy of the concept of medium, pre-dating its technological association. As a mediated environment, the concept of atmosphere not only captures the aesthetic, affectively-charged world of moving-image works; it also initiates a fundamental re-conceptualization of the core notion of medium in the post-digital age. This combination is a guiding thread in our published research, which covers work on cinematic operationalities (such as so-called "shithole filters") and media-ecologies "arborescent cinema", while revisiting important media concepts such as Aristotle's diaphanous and periokhon and Benjamin's optical unconscious. Finally, showcasing a more targeted effort to understand the complex relations between elemental media philosophy and atmosphere theory, I will present the project's second edited volume,

Atmospheres and their Media/Elements (ed. Hven, Moser, & Ufer, Kadmos forth.). This volume examines how the post-Aristotelian legacy of media diaphanous has informed early 20th century theories on atmosphere—including related terms like milieu, mood, ambience, Stimmung, and aura—and how it remains a conceptual cornerstone in contemporary theories not just of atmosphere but also 'elemental' and 'natural' media such as water to air, wind, fire, and fog.

Since 2023 Steffen Hven has been a Visiting Professor and PI of the ERC-StG research-project, *Cinematic Atmospheres: Towards a New Ecology of the Moving Image (CATNEMI)* at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF. Receiving his doctoral degree at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar in 2015, he was a research fellow at Bauhaus Universität Weimar, the University of Chicago and *Cinepoetics* (Freie Universität Berlin). Hven is the author of two books—*Cinema and Narrative Complexity* (Amsterdam UP, 2017) and Enacting the Worlds of Cinema (Oxford UP, 2022)—and he is currently co-editing *The Oxford Handbook of Moving Image Atmospheres and Felt Environments* (with Yacavone).

KIRÁLY, Hajnal, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

THE EVENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN NURI BILGE CEYLAN'S FILMS

Nuri Bilge Ceylan's oeuvre spanning over 30 years, from *The Cocoon* (Koza, 1995) to *About Dry Grasses* (2023), comes across as a series of episodes of an Odyssey featuring the same type of male character lost on his way towards a home, an emotional centre and a mysterious, sensual femininity. In Ceylan's films photographs, the act of taking photographs and the photographic, still(ed) images are instances meant to connect the intellectual, overthinking male character – often a teacher, an artist, an aspiring writer – with his peers and emotions, and anchor him in the "here and now" of a reality that he is reluctant to accept. While these male characters seem lost in monumental, remote landscapes, photographs and the act of taking photographs helps them bring closer what is distant and inaccessible through language. Excessive verbosity or its opposite, the ostensive lack of speech epitomizes W. J. Thomas Mitchell's description of ekphrastic fear (1994), arising from the possibility that the verbal could ever replace the visual. In the dull, eventless lives of these characters, photography becomes an event in the sense that Alain Badiou confers to the term: it "compels the subject to invent a new way of being and acting in the situation." (2005, 21) Relying on close analyses of *Distant* (*Uzak*, 2002), *The Wild Pear Tree* (*Ahlat Ağacı*, 2018) and *About Dry Grasses* (*Kuru Otlar Üstüne*, 2023), in my presentation I will argue that in these films photography and the photographic are emotional events that open the possibility of change and revelation of truth for the male characters. However, in cinema and in Ceylan's films in particular, the dramatic event of a photographic, still image is different from the *punctum* of Roland Barthes (1993): it does not relate to death and loss, but rather to the possibility of life unfolding from these images. The coming-into-being of the image, as Gilles

Deleuze and Félix Guattari put it (1987), coexists with an emotional becoming and a new way of seeing, for both the character and the spectator.

KIRÁLY, Hajnal is Associate Professor at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania in Cluj-Napoca, where she teaches film theory and film history in the Media Department. Her latest research focuses on the cinema of Manoel de Oliveira, intermediality in Eastern European films, comparative cultural interpretations of contemporary Hungarian and Romanian cinema, the relationship between film and psychology, and the possibilities of applied film studies. She is author of the volumes *Between Book and Film. Beyond the Principle of Fidelity* (*Könyv és film között. A hűségelven innen és túl*, Koinónia, 2010), *The Cinema of Manoel de Oliveira. Modernity, Intermediality and the Uncanny* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2022), *Film at the Border* (*Film a határon*, Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 2022), and co-editor of the study collections *Space-Theory-Culture* (Eötvös Kiadó, 2019), *Postsocialist Mobilities* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021) and *Intermedial Encounters. Studies in Honor of Ágnes Pethő*, 2023. She has published numerous articles in foreign and domestic journals and collections on intermediality and contemporary Hungarian and Romanian cinema.

KÖRÖSVÖLGYI, Zoltán, Eötvös Loránd University, Eger, Hungary.
THE MOVING IMAGE AS ICON

In *The Scent of Time*, Byung-Chul Han claims, “the temporal crisis will only be overcome once the vita activa, in the midst of its crisis, again incorporates the vita contemplativa.” The current accelerated way of seeing (and making) images in general, even images categorised as art, leaves no room for real encounters with what the work might reveal. The proposal wishes to address the topic through past (like Bill Viola’s video art and Adam’s Passion by Arvo Pärt and Robert Wilson) and recent examples (from Ildikó Enyedi’s *Silent Friend* to Viktória Pamuki-Balogh and Kíra Krász’s recently exhibited videos, or the *Hortus Conclusus* theatrical live music and light art events), all offering novel ways of contemplative practices through art, decelerating and thus re-sensitising the makers and beholders alike, allowing them to experience the aesthetic sublime.

KÖRÖSVÖLGYI, Zoltán in an art historian and art theorist. MA in Art History, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest, 1992. PhD in Art Theory (Design Theory) / Design Culture Studies, Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME), Budapest, 2022, with the dissertation *Art, Religion, and Spirituality in the Design Culture of the Postsecular Age.* Researches contemporary art and design related to religious and spiritual experiences. Regularly writes and speaks about and curates art. Works as Associate Professor at the Eszterházy Károly Catholic University (EKKE), Eger.

LAKATOS, Róbert – Árpád, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

PARTISANS OF THE ANALOGUE

Based on artistic and pedagogical research, this study examines the creative process behind the remake of the silent film *Dracula's Death* (originally produced in 1921 but lost during the Second World War). The author of this paper coordinated the six-year project as creative producer and artistic tutor. Each of the film's eight chapters was produced by a different team of students using vintage, spring-wound 16mm cameras – equipment previously considered semi-professional – and black-and-white film. The film negatives were also hand-developed by the students, using a developer they had mixed themselves from chemical raw materials. The world premiere of the film, entitled *The Death of Dracula*, took place in the Cinema Regained section of the prestigious International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2025. The author considers the film's creators as co-researchers and integrates their insights to formulate conclusions. This approach not only examines the significance of celluloid filmmaking from an artistic pedagogical perspective, but also explores the expressive power of photochemical film material – specifically the potential inherent in its imperfections arising from its specific nature – within today's digital era. In the methodological section, given that debates surrounding the scientific nature of artistic research are still ongoing, the author aims to demonstrate that artistic research based on filmmaking is not the antithesis of scientific research, but can indeed possess a rigorous scientific character.

LAKATOS, Róbert – Árpád is an associate Professor, film director and cinematographer with core cinematic studies in cinematography at the Polish National Film School in Łódź. His most acclaimed films as director *Land of Silence, Bahrtalo!* (Europa Cinemas Label Award at Karlovy Vary IFF), and *Whose Dog Am I?* operate on the borderline between observational documentary and fiction film. His main publications and textbooks are also closely tied to this domain. His current research fields focus on the artistic expressive power inherent in analogue film technologies (including both photochemical raw material and analogue video) and the reinterpretation of archival visual materials in new creative works.

LAKATOS, Mihály, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

THE DIGNITY OF THE DIGITAL IMAGE: ATTENTION AND RESISTANCE IN PEDRO COSTA'S CINEMA

Pedro Costa's cinema offers a compelling response to the crisis of the image in the postdigital age: as contemporary visual culture becomes increasingly shaped by algorithmic circulation, the visual regimes of digital capitalism, and a hierarchical economy of visibility that determines which images acquire value and which remain disposable, Costa's films insist on the digital image as a site of duration and ethical encounter. Focusing primarily on *In Vanda's Room* (*No Quarto da Vanda*, 2000), *Colossal Youth* (*Juventude em Marcha*, 2006), *Horse Money* (*Cavalo Dinheiro*,

2014) and *Vitalina Varela* (2019), this paper argues that Costa's austere digital aesthetics reconfigure digital imagery into a contemplative visual experience that resists the logic of accelerated consumption by using long takes, pictorial/sculptural compositions and carefully modulated darkness to restore the image's sensuous and affective density. His films cultivate an ethics of sustained attention: rather than simply observing marginalised lives, viewers are asked to inhabit an audiovisual space in which perception itself becomes politically charged. Costa's oeuvre demonstrates how contemporary cinema can reclaim the digital image as an experience of intimacy and contemplation, articulating an ethics of representation that refuses the commodification and spectacularisation of marginalised lives, instead foregrounding their dignity, agency, and presence.

LAKATOS, Mihály is a PhD candidate close to completing his dissertation. His research focuses on the relationship between post-socialist Romanian music videos and social reality. He is also a visiting assistant professor at the Department of Film, Photography and Media of the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania. Alongside his academic work, he works as a filmmaker with a special interest in social issues.

LAMBERTI, Paola, University of Salerno, Battipaglia, Italy.

THE DURATION OF ATMOSPHERE. *LE QUATTRO VOLTE* AND GREEN CINEMATIC VLOGS

The aesthetics of atmospheres has illuminated the spectator's affective immersion (Böhme, 2017; Griffero, 2020; Bruno, 2022), while paying little attention to the perception of film form. This question is especially relevant to slow cinema, whose poetics of duration has been understood either as sensory intensification or as reflexive exercise, rarely as their convergence. This contribution advances a specific hypothesis: in slow cinema, the duration of the shot renders atmosphere perceptible together with the mediation through which it is produced. Sensory engagement with the image and awareness of its formal construction become inseparable within a single perceptual act. Reflexivity therefore emerges from the film's formal organization rather than from a cognitive disposition attributed to the spectator. The hypothesis is tested through *Le quattro volte* (Frammartino, 2010), focusing on three sequences in which the aerial element functions simultaneously as narrative motif and figural principle: the church dust ingested as a remedy, the mist covering the Serra and the smoke rising from the charcoal kiln, through which the transmigration of matter across the film's four forms of life becomes visible. Air operates both as the medium of life and as the material substance of the image; duration renders both perceptible, together with the temporality of the frame. *The Green Cinematic Vlogs* of TikTok (Lamberti, 2025), short-form videos that aestheticize rural environments and ecological practices through platform-native visual conventions, provide a counterpoint. The same iconography circulates within the logic of the scroll. Atmosphere precedes the image rather than emerging from it: applied as a visual preset, it is consumed before perception develops into experience.

Within plural attention regimes (Citton, 2017), slow cinema preserves a slowness that transforms atmospheric sensibility into ecological awareness of the more-than-human world (de Luca, 2022), opposing the digital lethargy described by Hu (2022) through a reflexive experience grounded in cinematic form.

LAMBERTI, Paola is a PhD candidate in Visual Culture at the University of Salerno and has been a visiting researcher at the Université de Lausanne (Section d'Histoire et Esthétique du Cinéma). Her research examines how ecological crisis becomes perceptible across cinema and digital platforms. Recent publications include articles in *Aisthesis* (2025), *Comunicazioni sociali* (2025) and *Medicina nei Secoli* (2026), and a *Routledge chapter on eco-anxiety and post-traumatic growth* (2026). She is also an adjunct lecturer in Digital Media Storytelling and collaborates with LABSAV (the audiovisual storytelling laboratory) at the University of Salerno.

LI, Xi, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong, China.

THE OFF-SCREEN: TOWARDS A THOUGHT WITHOUT IMAGES

In cinema, the frame, instead of delimiting and enclosing a space, perpetually opens to an indefinite outside. From André Bazin's assertion that "a frame is centripetal, the screen centrifugal" to Noel Burch's six "segments" of the off-screen space to Gilles Deleuze's proposition that "all framing determines an out-of-field", the potential of the image to transcend the limitations of its own frame and evoke the invisible, the imperceptible, the unpresentable, and the unthinkable has been repeatedly emphasized in film studies. Nevertheless, the off-screen of cinema, this enigmatic and potential-rich domain, has yet to receive the sustained and systematic attention it merits. Rather than merely constituting a negative space or an extension of the onscreen world, the off-screen encompasses two of cinema's most fundamental capacities: first, to render the invisible perceptible; second, to create ruptures and voids that mobilize the image's potential to force to think (Deleuze). This paper introduces Deleuze's discussion of the out-of-field and visibility, the Epicurean and Lucretian notion of clinamen, and the disjunctions between sound and image, such as the *acousmêtre* (as theorized by Michel Chion) and the voice-out (as discussed by Justin Horton), to examine how images evoke the off-screen and to investigate the uncanny affinity between this realm of pure virtuality/potentiality and affects, thoughts, and images themselves. This paper argues that a rethinking of cinema and film studies through the off-screen and its reference to the perceptual outside provides a critical framework for reassessing cinema's uniqueness and will to art amid the crisis precipitated by AI and the digital revolution. Such an approach holds the potential to provide new answers to the question, "What is cinema?" in the contemporary era.

LI, Xi has recently obtained her PhD in film studies at the Department of Humanities and Creative Writing at Hong Kong Baptist University. Holding a prior master's degree in media studies from the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, her main research interests are film sound studies, the off-

screen of cinema, Deleuzian film-philosophy, and Asian cinema studies. Her doctoral research focuses on the off-screen and how it disorients the spatial-temporal experience and perception within East Asian Cinema. Her peer-reviewed research works have appeared in Ekphrasis and Australasian Journal of Popular Culture. Her current research focuses on the disembodied voices and strategic silences as creative sonic practices in contemporary Asian cinema.

LIPIŃSKI, Kamil, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland.

UN(REAL) AI -GENERATED IMAGES SEEN AND HEARD IN THE LOOP. NON-*ANTHROPOCENTRIC LIMINALS* BY PIERRE HUYGHE.

The aim of this paper is to re-examine the project entitled *Liminals* by Pierre Huyghe presented at Halle am Berghaim in Berlin from 23.01 to 8.03. 2026. The exhibition in the abandoned factory is part of widescreen installation installed in the former industrial building, post-industrial space to trigger an interest of the visitors by unusual place where it has been presented. The work delivered by the French artists brings together the constant emotions reflecting his interests in AI-generated content and quantum theory developed along with Tomasson Calarco and the group of scientists from Jülich Supercomputer Center. The project is marked by overbearing sounds which reverberate beginning from the entrance which imitates both techno parties located on the upper floors of the building and renders the space highly unreal, as well as oddly disturbing. This ambiance makes this work not only unheimlich but also exceptionally enigmatic whenever we take a look at the faceless character walking through the desert in the extra-terrestrial surroundings. The rhythm of bursts of sound, very heavy bass recurring in the abandoned and empty hall generated with the aid of quantum computing is both extremely vivid and stimulates psychosis. The walk by humanoid person through the desert seen in the extremely huge screen in the loop defines contemporary strategy of exhibiting the artworks in the post-industrial environments to bring them closer to real life unlike 4D cinema halls marked by comfort and fixed observation points. The tension in this work is created, on one hand, by AI-images stimulated by quantum machines alongside non-anthropocentric persona inhabiting the extra-terrestrial planet and, on the other hand, the wild exhibition space where you may walk around and experience the living space in very different ways without fixed ways of perceiving the sound and the image.

LIPIŃSKI, Kamil is an older assistant at the University of Warsaw. He received his PhD at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. His first monograph *Mapowanie obrazu. Między estetyczną teorią a praktyką* (eng. *Image mapping. Between aesthetic theory and practice*), examines the intricate relations between French philosophy, spatial turn and visual culture. He has published various pieces about aesthetics, cultural studies and audiovisual culture in SubStance, Kultura Współczesna, Journal of Aesthetics and Culture, French Cultural Studies, Open Cultural Studies, Film-Philosophy, Cinéma & Cie. Runner-up in Postcolonial Studies Association/Journal of

Postcolonial Writing PG Essay Prize 2019. Ex-Co-Chair of NECS Film-Philosophy workgroup 2020-2025. Co-Editor of Derrida and Film Studies, Brill, Leiden 2025. Lipiński is currently working on the collective volume Sensual Aesthetics of Jean-Luc Nancy and the moving images for Edinburgh University Press 2026 (in production), Édouard Glissant and the Visions of Transcultural Archipelogos of dialogues and a volume based on the interviews with experimental filmmakers for CEU Press.

LOTFI, Behzad, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, United Kingdom.

RE-SENSITISING SUFFERING: ENCODED CAUSALITY AND BLOCKED CATHARSIS IN CONTEMPORARY IRANIAN CINEMA

This paper examines how contemporary Iranian cinema renders social crisis perceptible when its causes cannot be fully named within the Islamic Republic's aesthetic and political order. Drawing on Jacques Rancière's concept of the "distribution of the sensible," I use the term "Islamic sensible" to describe a regime that renders bodies, suffering, morality, gender, and social marginality visible and meaningful within a religious-revolutionary horizon. Whereas earlier post-revolutionary cinema often absorbed suffering into narratives of repentance, sacrifice, and moral transformation, the films discussed here belong to a later moment in which suffering can no longer be fully redeemed by that framework. The paper compares Dariush Mehrjui's *Good to Be Back* (*Che khube ke bargashti*, 2013) with Hesam Farahmand's *Raha* (*My Daughter's Hair*, 2025). In Mehrjui's film, crisis is encoded through grotesque comedy, failed sociability, and a mysterious decorative object whose meaning remains unresolved within the diegesis. The object's inscribed numerical structure repeatedly yields the number thirty-four; read against the thirty-four years between the 1979 Revolution and the film's production year, it becomes available as a cypher for the Islamic Republic itself: opaque, hybrid, conflict-producing, and resistant to available categories of naming. The film thus displaces a politically forbidden question "*What is the Islamic Republic?"* — into the comic-grotesque question of what the object is. By contrast, *Raha* presents suffering as the cumulative result of interpersonal failures: the father's incompetence, the mother's humiliation of him, the brother's inexperience, and the cruelty of ordinary people. Yet the film remains largely at the level of consequences, withholding the structural causes that produce such desperation. If *Good to Be Back* encodes causality through comic indirection, Raha transforms suffering into affective exhaustion and blocked catharsis by concealing the structural cause. The paper argues that these films resist the Islamic sensible not by fully exposing the causes of crisis, but by re-sensitising suffering while leaving catharsis incomplete. Their political force lies in making the crisis intensely felt, even when its causes remain only partially legible.

LOTFI, Behzad is a PhD candidate in Persian Cultural Studies and Film Studies at the University of St Andrews. His research examines the Islamic Republic's aesthetic regime in post-revolutionary Iranian cinema, with particular attention to censorship, visibility, revolutionary subject

formation, gender, affect, and the politics of the sensible. He has taught Persian at the University of St Andrews and previously taught screenwriting, art aesthetics, and documentary directing in Iran.

MACHAJ, Justyna, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland.

THEATRICAL OPACITY: ARTIFICE AND ABSORPTION IN *BLUE* AND *BERBERIAN SOUND STUDIO*

Theatricality has long been cast as the enemy of absorption. From Michael Fried's account of anti-theatrical painting to film-theoretical approaches that associate reflexive form with critical distance, visible artifice is often assumed to cool perception and distance the spectator from the image. Challenging this opposition, the paper draws on Richard Rushton to argue that theatrical artifice can intensify embodied and sensory engagement. Under postdigital conditions, theatricality thus becomes a mode of re-sensitisation. The argument responds to the perceptual transparency of contemporary digital imagery: its smoothness, mutability, and apparent immateriality encourage viewers to look through images rather than attend to their material and sensory qualities. On Drawing Jean-Louis Comolli's critique of cinematic transparency, the paper proposes that theatrical opacity redirects attention to the image's surface. The spectator's tacit agreement to encounter an openly constructed world – a relation termed here "contractual distance" – does not preclude absorption. Instead, it allows perception to dwell on texture, colour, grain, and sound. The paper develops this argument through two contrasting case studies. Derek Jarman's *Blue* (1993) restricts vision to a continuous field of colour, intensifying listening and generating an imagined image at the threshold of the digital. Peter Strickland's *Berberian Sound Studio* (2012), by contrast, exposes the analogue apparatus and re-attunes the ear to sound as bodily matter. Read through haptic, embodied, and intermedial approaches associated with Laura U. Marks, Vivian Sobchack, Giuliana Bruno, and Ágnes Pethő, both films foreground their own constructedness while cultivating sensory absorption. Their theatrical opacity offers a form of quiet resistance to postdigital desensitisation, reasserting the moving image as a singular, sensuous, and contemplative presence.

MACHAJ, Justyna is a film and theatre scholar and a doctoral researcher at the Doctoral School in the Humanities, Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Her dissertation develops a theory of theatricality as a relational mode of experience in contemporary cinema. She holds degrees in Film Studies, Theatre Studies, and Creative Writing from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. She has published in the film journals Images and Studia Filmoznawcze. Her research interests include contemporary cinema, theatre–film relations, intermediality, and the phenomenology of film spectatorship.

MADEMLI, Geli, University of Aegean, Athens, Greece.

SUSPENSION OF BELIEF: ANALOGUE FILMMAKING IN THE AGE OF THE POST-DIGITAL

Can we re-sensitise the cinematic image by shaking the ground of its technical evolution and troubling the enjoyment of the narrative? This paper attempts a reading of the recent film *Chronovisor* (Kevin Walker & Jack Auen, USA, 2026) as a prototype of a critical ecology of finite media (Cubitt 2017, 7) – "[media] inevitably tied to physics, especially the dimension of time" – one that opens new channels for interrelation within closed systems of knowledge. Openly alluding to a myth around an optical device commissioned by the Vatican in the 1950s to access and record images of the past (and therefore provide 'proof' behind foundational stories in religious faith), the film brings together an array of analogue formats and textures (16mm film, VHS footage, white noise, tape overlays, text superimposition),language-oriented imagery (press clippings) and archival, yet often non-figurative footage to narrate a mystery story where a woman academic seeks the traces of a machine that not only seized to operate, but perhaps never existed in the first place: a visual technology spectral par excellence.
This research approaches analogue filmmaking – and more specifically the use of magnetic media, whose "continuous undulations" were predominantly considered "signatures of the real" (Kittler 1999, 118) – less as a manifestation of nostalgia and more as a field that invites not only experimental methodologies, but rather experimental epistemologies of the image. Echoing Tom Gunning's understanding of the origins of the Ontology of Mediated Vision as "a convergence of modern media of communication with occult systems" (Gunning 2007, 102), my analysis will test the boundaries of indexicality and credibility in a post-digital condition. Materiality (and tangibility, as an adjunct property), I argue, is no longer a token of belief, but a valuable tool that allows us to "stay with the trouble" (Haraway 2016): to experience representations that help us doubt and unlearn what we see in the age of Post-Truth.

MADEMLI, Geli is currently completing her dissertation on landscapes of crisis in Greek film heritage *Cinema of Marbles*, supervisors: Robin Boast and Giovanna Fossati. She is the Head of Publications and programmer at the Thessaloniki IFF, and she teaches documentary production at the University of Aegean. She has co-edited the issue *Going Viral: Chronotopes of Disaster in Film and Visual Media* of EJES (26:2, 2022), and co-led the workshop Desktop Shortcuts in HKW (2020–2022). She has worked as a freelance journalist and film critic for Greek media since 2008.

MANOJLOVIC, Maja, UCLA, Los Angeles, United States.

AESTHETICS OF PLASTICITY AND AQUASYMPOIESIS: ELEMENTAL SENSORIUM IN THE EXPERIMENTAL WORKS OF NATAŠA PROSENC STEARNS

Bringing together Catherine Malabou's notion of plasticity as "the formation of the figure and explosion of all form" and Astrida Neimanis's idea of water as "always becoming, always different," this presentation explores the transformative materiality of water in the recent works

of Slovenian filmmaker and video artist Nataša Prosenc Stearns. According to Gaston Bachelard, each of the four elements offers the material imagination "its own matter, its own specific rules and poetics." I call the generative force of water's material imagination aquasympoiesis. Informed by Donna Haraway's notion of "sympoiesis" as "making-with," aquasympoiesis designates a process of creating with water: a plastic, transformative process, which is, like water, in continuous flux. By ceaselessly generating, altering, or even destroying form, aquasympoietic processes give rise to what I call the elemental sensorium. Grounded in Gilles Deleuze's discussion of sensation in The Logic of the Sensation, the elemental sensorium is necessarily encountered through human perception, yet emerges from the natural elements and their material forces. For example, in *Calla* (2026), one of the iterations of a series on *Water Signs* (2026), we see leaf-like, light-violet- and green-coloured figures, sometimes curving into feminine body-like shapes, intertwining, shaping, and transforming one another in a watery substance. From the aquasympoiesis of the wavy, digitally rendered layering and fragmenting of leaves and bodies and the continuous refractions and reflections of the image emerges a nonhuman elemental sensorium. Water materially and aesthetically participates in the production and transformation of the image, while the elemental sensorium both implicates and dislocates the human senses. The aquasympoietic processes thus render the image a site of encounter with more-than-human modes of sensing. In this sense, Prosenc Stearns's work re-sensitizes the post-digital image, plastically reshaping our sensory, perceptual, and interpretive capacities while reconfiguring the relationship between human perception, elemental forces, and imaging processes.

MANOJLOVIC, Maja is a Continuing Lecturer and Writing in the Disciplines Coordinator at UCLA Writing Programs. Her research and teaching focus on film and media aesthetics, experimental and emerging media, environmental humanities, critical posthumanism, and feminist new materialism. She contributed *Feeling a Life: Sympoietic Aesthetics in Honeyland* to *Honeyland*: A Docalogue (Routledge, 2022). Her forthcoming chapter, *Aesthetics of Plasticity: Eco-aisthēsis and the Elemental and Cosmic Sensoria in Ema Kugler's Films,* will appear in Contemporary Women Directors and Posthumanism, published by Edinburgh University Press. Her work also explores video games, immersive media, environmental storytelling, multimodal composition, and pedagogy.

MITSOU, Yannis, Hellenic Open University, Athens, Greece.

DREAM MOTIFS A IN JIM JARMUSCH'S *PATERSON* (2016) AND WIM WENDERS *PERFECT DAYS* (2023). A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

This essay explores the subtle interplay between dream and everyday life in two poetic films from the past decade: *Paterson* by Jim Jarmusch, a story built on the tradition of American lyricism and modernist poetry, particularly the work of William Carlos Williams, and the melancholic *Perfect*

Days by Wim Wenders. While the latter offers a restrained and lucid portrayal of contemporary Japan, it remains deeply rooted in the tradition of 1970s German and European poetic cinema. In both films, the dream operates as a structuring force: at times explicitly, as a narrative device in *Perfect Days*, and at others more obliquely, diffused into the fabric of everyday experience, as in *Paterson*, where the protagonist repeatedly encounters pairs of twins during his walks. Intertextuality proves central to this dynamic: *Paterson* engages directly with poetry, while *Perfect Days* constructs its world through music and auditory memory. Both protagonists inhabit existence as a form of wandering, a sustained, oneiric drift, yet remain bound to the material conditions of working life. As figures rooted in the working class, yet curiously estranged from it through their aesthetic sensibilities, they occupy a position of fundamental ambiguity. It is within this ambiguity that the dream finds its most resonant and fully realized expression. When it comes to theoretical grounding, both films seem closer to Henri Bergson's emphasis on intuition (linked to authenticity and poetic perception, as developed in his reflections on dream and consciousness) than to Sigmund Freud's more familiar symbolic understanding of dreams. Jarmusch and Wenders tend to resist overt symbolism in their narratives, favouring instead a mode of attention grounded in immediacy and sensation. In this sense, a poetic apprehension of everyday life begins to blur the limits between transcendence and sensory experience.

MITSOU, Yannis is a Teaching Associate in Film Philosophy at the Hellenic Open University. Since 2018, he has taught the Film Narrative course in the Creative Writing MA program within the Humanities Department. Since 2023, he has also been teaching Film Philosophy in the Film Studies program of the School of Applied Arts and Sustainable Design (Hellenic Open University), a course for which he authored the syllabus—one of three modules he has developed for the same faculty. In the academic year 2014–2015, he completed his MA in the Department of Film Studies (Philosophy Pathway) at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, King's College London. In 2020, he was awarded a Ph.D. with distinction from the Philosophy Department of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, with a dissertation focusing on existential themes and motifs in the films of Andrei Tarkovsky. His academic interests centre on film aesthetics, with particular emphasis on phenomenology and the relationship between cinema and various traditions of European Continental philosophy.

MOSER, Jamie Lee, Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, Potsdam, Germany.

ANAMORPHIC ATMOSPHERES AND THE ELEMENTAL OPERATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CINEMATIC ART

"Situated between the second and third research objective of CATNEMI, this paper examines the mediating capacities of water in contemporary experimental and expanded cinematic art as an expressive and atmospheric element. Within the spatiotemporal and affective configurations of moving image atmospheres, water in all its elemental expressivity allows for a reflection of how

its particular mediality is intertwined with that of the cinematic medium. The fascination with water has been an attraction from early cinema (e.g. Vitascope loops) up until our current post-digital condition, where digital imagery rediscovers its complex material properties (Schonig 2022). Drawing on the post-Aristotelian tradition of media diaphana, I aim to show how in the cinematic dispositif the sensuous and material combines with the elemental and media-technological in their mutual shaping of an atmospheric, mediated environment that affects our bodily felt, multisensorial experience (Böhme 2016, Hven/Yacavone 2027, de Luca/Mroz 2025). However, as moving image media paradoxically tend to withdraw their mediating conditions and materialities, I examine ways in which they can be revealed through artistic strategies that open up "the oblique angle from the side by plumbing the depths of their contradictions." Within this context, the oblique angle defining an "anamorphosis" (in Greek ana means "again," morphoun means "to form"), not as an optical technique, but as an operational principle that refers back to the mediality and materiality of the medium, becomes important (cf. Mersch 2013). In analysing how this relation is expressed by contemporary works, like *Soot Breath / Corpus Infinitum* (2021) by Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman and *When you Fall into a Trance* (2014) by Emily Wardill, I aim to render visible their "elemental operations," i.e. how they distort, destabilize, and transmute the quality of the image, leaving it in the atmospheric state of anamorphic."

MOSER, Jamie Lee: has been a Doctoral Researcher in the ERC-StG project *Cinematic Atmospheres: Towards a New Ecology of the Moving Image (CATNEMI)* led by Dr. Steffen Hven at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF since 2024. Moser holds a Master of Arts in Film Studies from the University of Zurich. Her PhD project, entitled Atmospheric Refractions: Elemental Operations in Moving Image Practices, focuses on the political and material expressivity of elemental media. Recent publication, Hven, Steffen, Jamie Lee Moser, and Alexander Wiese. *Atmosfere arborescenti: un'incursione nella foresta cinematografica.* Fata Morgana, Quadrimestrali di Cinema e Visioni 56, Atmosfere (2025).

NILL, Emily, Berlin University of the Arts, Berlin, Germany.

RESURRECTING THE IMAGE THROUGH WITHDRAWAL

Running throughout the *Histoire(s),* Godard's claims, "The image will come at the time of its resurrection." Michael Witt describes this as "[killing] off the real so as to redeem and resurrect it through its imagery." The image as a normative instance capable of redeeming reality can never exist on its own. Individual images, Godard argues, merely show violence, they do not speak about it. This condition is intensified by the circulation of digital image-objects, their invisible-determining algorithmicity, as well as „practically infinite manipulability" (Rosen), resulting in a neutralisation of image value. Within Godard's Benjaminian conception, the image is always a product of montage: a reflexive constellation, a thinking in images. Whereas Godard negates the individual image's claim to truth through an "aesthetics of overwhelming" (Theweleit), recent

films develop "slower" practices for re-sensitising the image beyond mere visibility. Koberidze's *Dry Leaf* (2026), shot in 4:3 on an old phone also withdraws from the unified image in transforming pixelated digital aesthetics into a seemingly impressionistic sublime. These images of rurality point to an unrealised potential and materialize as apparitions of the past, inherently broken but peaceful. The film centers an active experience of time by drifting across literally painterly landscapes bathed in golden light, following a father's unsuccessful yet never embittered search for his daughter. Although *Dry Leaf* contains some plot, it ultimately proposes a re-learning of seeing: Not a mastering vision, rather a mode of discovery. Football goals become frames within nature; water on a windscreen becomes ornament; environmental and civilizational signs appear as historically formed abstractions, both as spontaneous aesthetic appearance and radically constructed (recalling Godard's *2 or 3 Things I Know about Her*, which reads the urban landscape as one might read the surface of coffee). The presentation aims to analyze this dialectic of imagelessness/ image and its potential to "resurrect" the image.

NILL, Emily is a research associate at the Institute of Art History and Aesthetics at the Berlin University of the Arts, where she is pursuing a PhD (advisor: Angela Harutyunyan). Her research examines how historicity is negotiated in moving-image art of the "digital age" and its ideology of immateriality. The thesis asks how time and memory/ "the archive" can be artistically worked through within conditions of digital presentism and the apparent foreclosure of history. Works range from Jean-Luc Godard's late video essays and Chris Marker's *Level Five* (1997) to Jeremy Shaw's *Quantification Trilogy* (2014-2018).

ORUÇ, Defne, UW-Madison, Madison, WI, United States.

IN THE SHADOW OF IMAGES: AFFECTIVE ENCOUNTERS IN *THE FLOWERS STAND SILENTLY, WITNESSING* (2024) AND *IN HER VIEW* (2022)

This paper poses the affective encounter as a key event and method to re-sensitize images against the narrative textures of colonial archival media in its study of two experimental short films drawing on parallel histories of occupation in the Middle East: *The Flowers Stand Silently, Witnessing* (2024) by Theo Panagopoulos, and *In Her View* (2022) from Helene Kazan's long-term multimedia investigation, *Frame of Accountability*. I draw on affect theory and practice-based theories of found footage to unpack how the filmmakers' subjectivities bleed into the filmic testimonies. Panagopoulos intervenes in two 16mm color films shot by a Scottish missionary in the 30s and 40s in Palestine as a means of contending with "what can't be trapped in a frame" (11:44). Provoked by a profilmic shadow, the disjuncture between the filmmaker's "I" and the camera's eye highlights the violence in the original footage- an idyllic view of landscapes covered in wildflowers. Breaking with the voyeuristic pleasures of viewing is a shared concern for Kazan. By analyzing representational strategies rooted in defamiliarization, I argue that these short films challenge their violent reference material by holding a double sense of affective encounter

rooted in the creative possibilities of refusal, shaped by the filmmakers' disidentification with the image, and, consequently, by the films' reflexivity, which triggers an affective response from the audience.

DEFNE Oruç is a PhD student in Art History at UW-Madison. Her research focuses on alternative mobilizations of testimony in politically engaged contemporary artworks, tracing visual media's role in counter-historiography, representations of violence and imaginaries of truth and justice, particularly in the Middle East and Latin America. Her article *Mediating the Past, Making (in) the Present: Contemporary Artistic Practices from Türkiye and the Construction of Memory Around 6-7 September 1955* was published in the peer-reviewed journal Archivo Papers in 2025. Defne was a Junior Fellow in the Art Department at Goldsmiths for the 2022-2023 academic year.

PAVLÍK, Ondřej, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic.

THE ETHICAL SHIELD OF NOISE: RE-SENSITISING THE SPECTATOR IN *THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB*

In films about Gaza, audiovisual noise often functions as an index of the unequal distribution of power. Glitches can be seen as discorrelated images, signaling the presence of drone surveillance. However, in Kaouther Ben Hania's acclaimed docudrama *The Voice of Hind Rajab* (2025) – centering on a Palestinian girl trapped in a car with her deceased relatives – noise is more intimately tied to a human perspective. On the one hand, the film demonstrates how technologies of war relativize and marginalize the status of innocent victims. Hind remains invisible both to the Israeli soldiers and to the Red Crescent volunteers who try their best to save her. She is reduced to a barely comprehensible voice, visually mediated on monitors as an abstract digital sound wave. On the other hand, the film uses noise – in the form of blurred images of destruction and death – as an ethical shield to preserve Hind's dignity. Drawing on Hito Steyerl, these represent poor images and sounds: the technological proletariat. Yet, they are not merely poor; they are generative and transformative. In *The Voice of Hind Rajab*, noise creates possibilities, restructuring the sensible and ultimately re-sensitising the spectator to the human tragedy.

PAVLÍK, Ondřej is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Film Studies and Audiovisual Culture at Masaryk University (Brno, Czech Republic). His research focuses on the intersection of art cinema and digital aesthetics, ecocinema, and the aesthetics of artificial intelligence. His previous academic work, including research on the *slow cinema* of Angela Schanelec, has been published in the peer-reviewed journal Iluminace. Alongside his academic pursuits, he is an active film critic and a programmer for the BRNO16 International Short Film Festival.

PETHŐ, Ágnes, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.
CINEMATIC "*SOUL-ASSEMBLAGES*" AND PHOTOFILMIC GESTURES

This presentation builds on the idea of "affective intermediality". This concept challenges the core assumption of the concept of intermediality, as we know from semiotics, namely that intermediality is something that occurs between media, and instead, it centres on a more expansive set of interactions: the enfoldments between the affordances of media, the phenomenology of embodied experiences and the agency of material reality. It recognizes the mediating power of sensations, bodies, technologies and all kinds of matter. In such an "affective turn" of intermedial studies, the emphasis shifts from dissecting relations between media viewed in abstraction towards unravelling how art and life are enmeshed through particular art practices, gestures, and sensuous layers of mediation. Rethinking the relationship between media without disconnecting it from the tangible, real world, highlights intermediality as a way to experience our position within what Laura U. Marks has poetically named as our deeply "folded cosmos". From this perspective, I would like address some questions related to photofilmic images that emerge in the in-betweenness of photography and film. I would like to argue that the affective performativity of such images hinges not only on formal qualities through which we perceive them in a state of ambivalence, but also on particular gestures that actively seek to communicate between image and reality, and accordingly, between humans and non-humans, culture and nature, mind and body, aesthetics and science, ultimately between the visible and the invisible, the tangible and the intangible. After a brief overview of different directions that such gestures may take us, I will look more closely at two films made in 2025, by Ildikó Enyedi (*Silent Friend*) and Sophy Romvari (*Blue Heron*).

PETHŐ, Ágnes is Professor of Film Studies at the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She is the author *of Cinema and Intermediality: The Passion for the In-Between* (2011, enlarged second edition published in 2020) and of many articles and book chapters on cinematic intermediality. Her edited books include *Affective Intermediality. Moving Images between Media, Sensation and Reality* (2026), *Caught In-Between. Intermediality in Eastern European and Russian Cinema* (2020), *The Cinema of Sensations* (2015), *Film in the Post-Media Age* (2012), *Words and Images on the Screen* (2008). She is the executive editor of the journal *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies* published by Springer Nature.

PEZZETTI TONION, Fabio, independent researcher, Torino, Italy.
LONGING FOR IMPERFECTION: ANALOGUE NOSTALGIA AS A CRITIQUE OF POST-DIGITAL VISUALITY

One of the most significant aspects of the contemporary post-digital condition concerns the status of the image. It ceases to be a stable entity and reveals itself to be part of a fluid, process-driven mechanism, integrated into algorithmic systems characterized by incessant modification,

distribution and consumption. The image never presents itself as something completely fixed, certain or immutable: rather, it is constantly updatable, always open to modification; it has lost its ontological identity and becomes a vehicle for continuous transformation that profoundly challenges it. Situated between aesthetic and phenomenological experience, yet also understood as a "sum" of data, how does the image fit into the contemporary media landscape? Do proliferation and an excess of visibility risk leading to perceptual desensitization on the part of the viewer, whose senses become distracted? This presentation aims to explore the resurgence of analogue practices and aesthetics in cinema. Are we really witnessing forms of technological nostalgia – with the return of film, the use of found-footage, and the interest in home movies – which go hand in hand with a desire to rediscover a sort of authenticity? Or might this analogue nostalgia for images be understood not so much as a lament for obsolete media but rather as a desire to explore alternative possibilities for visual experience? By drawing on the concept of "imperfection" – linked to the residue of a technological and aesthetic past that is re-emerging – this paper aims to demonstrate how the tangible presence of the image can once again be made perceptible, by interrupting the digital flow and reactivating more reflective forms of vision. In this sense, analogue nostalgia is an attempt to re-establish a more intense and contemplative relationship with the image and with the world, diverting the gaze away from a horizon of indeterminate and vacuous images.

PEZZETTI TONION, Fabio is Assistant Curator at the Museo Nazionale del Cinema in Turin (Italy). His research interests focus on Scandinavian cinema, with particular reference to the work of Ingmar Bergman, the phenomenological realism of Amedée Ayfre, Italian silent cinema, and the work of socially engaged filmmakers such as Francesco Rosi and Gillo Pontecorvo. He has published essays in the journals *La Valle dell'Eden*, *Bianco e Nero*, *Fata Morgana*, *North-West Passage*, *Arabeschi* and *Acta Sapientiae*. A member of the AISRC – the Italian Association for Research into the History of Cinema – he sits on the editorial board of "Immagine".

PIELDNER, Judit, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

AFFECTIVE SPACES OF INTERMEDIALITY IN CONTEMPORARY ROMANIAN AND HUNGARIAN GENERATION FILMS

After the turn of the millennium, the confrontation between young generations and socio-political regimes has been addressed in numerous Eastern European films. This presentation examines a selection of Romanian and Hungarian films, in the chronology of historical settings – the communist regime, the regime change and the post-communist period: *Metronom* (Alexandru Belc, 2022), *Moscow Square* (*Moszkva tér*, Ferenc Török, 2001) and *Graduation* (*Bacalaureat*, Cristian Mungiu, 2016). This selection allows for a comparative analysis of how the young protagonists, on the threshold of *graduation*, face the anomalies of the socio-political system. The analysis focuses on the multiple roles of media environments and dispositifs in

revealing power relations and in shaping the films' affective atmospheres. It also examines how intermediality contributes to the construction of affective spaces in these films. In *Metronom*, the media of radio (Radio Free Europe) and music clash with the surveillance media of the Securitate aimed at intimidation. In *Moscow Square*, a distinct generational attitude emerges, disconnected from the current turning-point events broadcast on television. In *Graduation*, the legacy of communism persists through mechanisms of corruption, against the backdrop of social realities rendered in austere photo-filmic images. What connects these films, beyond their shared focus on *graduation* as an expression of systemic malfunctioning, is the creation of affect through distinct intermedial relations in film (involving radio, music, television, photography) which "redistribute the sensible" (Rancière). These films offer endings without closure and show the youth caught in-between agency and inertia, connection and disconnection, past and future, old and new, East and West – while engaging spectators through the affective power of media connections and entanglements.

PIELDNER, Judit is Associate Professor at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her research interests are related to intermediality, remediation, and screen adaptation. Her latest volume entitled *Adaptation, Remediation and Intermediality: Forms of In-Betweenness in Cinema* was published by Cluj University Press (2020). She has been a member of three exploratory research projects on intermediality, has published numerous articles on cinematic intermediality and contributed to several edited volumes resulting from these projects.

QUARIO, Francesco, King's College, London, United Kingdom.

RE-TEMPORALISING THE WEB INTERFACE WITH SLOW CINEMA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TSAI MING-LIANG'S 'WALKER' SHORTS AND INTERNET MEDIA

How does *slow cinema* interact with the interface of a website? On the internet, slowness is synonymous with frustration: poor bandwidth, buffering, staggered downloads. Yet there is also a proliferation of 'slow' videos online that encourage wellness, mindfulness, or relaxation: natural soundscapes, videos of trains rolling down their tracks, livestreams of city streets. Such aesthetics speaks to an effort to elevate slowness as a counter to the rhythms of digital capitalism, echoed by Tung-Hui Hu's call for turning our 'digital lethargy' into an act of resistance. However, how can we rethink slowness not merely as a form of countering the internet, but as a force working within it in an age when most media, including artists' video and experimental cinema, can be consumed online? In my proposed paper, I engender a dialogue between *slow cinema* studies, film-philosophy, and network studies to explore how slow films reframe the web interface and our temporal relationality to it. Through Gilles Deleuze, I view the interface in a state of inter-becoming with both the image and the spectator. Meanwhile, I treat *slow cinema* as a mode of mindful contemplation, but also a potential cause of frustration: in doing so, I look for ways in which both its positive and negative effects can become generative forces for new

thoughts. As a case study, I analyse Tsai Ming-Liang's *No No Sleep* (2015) as it is presented on a video hosting website: alongside pop-ups, comments, and interactable components. I look at how the aesthetics of the film can make the viewer mindful of the operations of the machine, reconfiguring their attention span and sense of time. I then compare the film to the aforementioned slow online videos, to find ways in which the language of *slow cinema* can proliferate and evolve in the age of internet media.

QUARIO, Francesco is a PhD student at King's College London, where he is writing a thesis on the intersection of slow temporalities and the internet. His research interests include film-philosophy, media studies, *slow cinema*, and Asian cinema. He was previously published in the book *The Films of Apichatpong Weerasethakul* (Liverpool University Press, 2024). He is also a co-founder of *ReMind: A Film Festival on Healing*, a festival showcasing practices of mindfulness and community-building in independent Asian cinema.

RODRÍGUEZ, Aleix and **GRANDES, Dani**, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain.

RE-EDITING TRAUMA: DOCUMENTARY, JUMP SCARES AND AGENCY IN *MY MULHOLLAND* (2019)

This study proposes an interpretation of *My Mulholland* (Jessica McGoff) based on the relationship between domestic space, trauma, and agency in the context of adolescent digital culture. This approach brings together film theory, media studies, and psychoanalysis. Through the desktop documentary format, the film reconstructs the experience of a young viewer confronted with the disturbing images of *Mulholland Drive* (David Lynch, 2001) from the privacy of her bedroom. The starting point is to consider this space as a territory traditionally associated with autonomy, privacy, and identity exploration. The internet connection, however, renders that protection permeable: the screen introduces unexpected images, sounds, and presences into the protagonist's connected room of one's own, destabilizing her sense of control. The analysis focuses on the jump scare as a condensed form of this loss of sovereignty. More than a simple scare tactic, its sudden intrusion suspends the subject's ability to anticipate and reveals the disconnect between technical control of the interface and the impossibility of fully mastering the affective experience. From a Freudian perspective, this intrusion can be understood as a formal miniature of the traumatic structure: an unexpected event that momentarily exceeds the capacity to respond and later returns through repetition, searching, and memory. Faced with this loss of agency, the desktop documentary emerges as a device for re-agencing. By revisiting the images, pausing them, organizing them, and re-inscribing them, McGoff transforms an experience that was initially endured into a practice of elaboration—and, ultimately, a desk into an editing room. The film does not bring the trauma to a close; rather, it transforms the screen that allowed the intrusion into the surface from which that intrusion can be reorganized (and re-

edited). Thus, *My Mulholland* reveals the digital desktop as a cinematic space of vulnerability, memory, and the production of subjectivity.

RODRÍGUEZ, Aleix is a PhD candidate in the CINEMA group at Pompeu Fabra University. His dissertation examines Chekhov's influence on cinema. He has delivered lectures and published articles on cinema and literature and on the ethics of representation.
GRANDES, Dani is a PhD candidate in the CINEMA group and is part of the research project *Visual Motifs Identification and Comparative Image Learning* at Pompeu Fabra University. His work focuses on the aesthetic possibilities of the synergies between digital imagery and hallucinogenic narratives.

RYBINA, Polina, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia

THEATRE RE-SENSITISING SCREEN WORLDS: BODIES AND RHYTHMS IN *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?*

The intermedial dialogue between theatre and film has been analysed through lenses prioritising production, intertextuality, or media specificity [Bazin 1951; Sontag 1966; Knopf 2004; Loiselle and Maron 2012; Loiselle 2019; Sullivan 2022; Lowe 2023]. Phenomenologically distinct from cinema, theatre relies on the embodied co-presence of actors and audiences, atmospheric spaces with complex affective ecologies, felt rhythms, and a heightened sense of eventfulness that simultaneously immerses and distances the viewers. Amidst the contemporary digital landscape – comprising live theatre broadcasting, born-digital social media performances, and VR theatre – the mid-20th-century classic *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* emerges as a foundational case study, drawing our attention to how films make viewers feel the weight of a performance when they are separated by a screen. Throughout 20th-century media history, several periods have been defined by cinema's heightened engagement with theatrical forms [Palmer and Bray 2009; Kunze 2023]. American cinema of the 1950s–60s represents one such era, when theatre enriched the pre-New Hollywood, Hays Code-exhausted industry with risky topics, creative freedom, and cunning ways to bypass censorship [Doherty 2007]. By importing theatrical approaches to events, characters, space, and time, filmmakers intensified the screen image. This paper focuses on two aspects of the theatricalised film poetics in Mike Nichols's *Virginia Woolf* (1966). With the emphasis on character embodiment ["charactor", Wilkins 2022] and performance rhythm, I explore how two icons – Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton – were re-sensitised by Albee's theatrical dialogue, dramatic plot, and Nichols's theatre-informed *mise-en-scène*. Fresh from the set of Cleopatra, a tabloid scandal, and a sensational marriage [Gefter 2024], Liz and Dick – through a film adaptation of a theatrical source – acquired "new" bodies and expanded their performance techniques rhythmically, at the same time taking a Warner Bros. production to an unprecedented artistic level.

RYBINA, Polina is an associate professor at the Department of Discourse and Communication Studies, Faculty of Philology, Lomonosov Moscow State University; member of the Association of Adaptation Studies (AAS). Her primary interests include film adaptation, film phenomenology, and atmosphere research, as well as adaptation in contemporary theatre.

SAHU, Ipsita, independent researcher, Singapore.

FROM PHOOL KHILE HAIN (1972-1991) TO TABASSUM TALKIES (2016-2023): DIGITAL REBOOT AND SPECTRALITY

My paper analyses the reboot of India's first talk show *Phool Khile Hain* (1972-1991; PKH) into the YouTube channel *Tabassum Talkies*, examining intermediality, affect, memory, and digital spectrality. Launched in 2016, *Tabassum Talkies* has grown into more than six hundred videos showcasing posthumous biographies of film personalities spanning the silent era to the 1990s. This range reflects anchor Tabassum's exceptionally long career in the Indian entertainment industry as a child artist in the 1950s to becoming a well-known YouTuber in her seventies. In contrast to the official television archive that organises online content as catalogues, *Tabassum Talkies* repurposes archival footage as a distinct mode of digital storytelling and experiential memory with intergenerational appeal (Russell 2018). Tabassum's journey unfolds as a portal to a lesser-known history of Bombay cinema, creating relics of a bygone era in the form of people, stories, technologies and object worlds. Although the channel draws on diverse analogue reserves, the rare monochrome interviews of PKH constitutes its key attraction, producing a distinctive spectral affect that sets it apart from other forms of nostalgia culture (Baron 2014). In the 1970s, monochrome television competed with the dominance of colour, through extreme close-ups, liveness, and the new agenda of film classicism. PKH's fixation on the forgotten, outmoded, and transient however invoked the future-present in uncanny ways in its digital reboot. I focus on two highly viewed videos that exemplify this spectrality: focusing on adolescent star-singer Nazia Hassan's intimate portraiture and 1950s-star Shyama's vertiginous technological framing. I argue that these encounters confront the moving image as a return of the repressed, where the at-once familiar and strange media artefact acquires a metonymic power of "transhistorical presence" (Sobchack 2010). I finally analyse viewers' engagement as horizontal collectivity among networked users, reflecting on how amateur digital archives gain significance through their impermanence, reshaping social memory and offering new ways of recognizing generational histories (Cvetkovich 2003; Blom 2016).

SAHU, Ipsita recently completed her PhD thesis, *Television Before Colour: Intermedial Networks and Imaginations* on the *arrival* of television in India, examining the changing audiovisual landscape linked to the entry of television. Sahu's scholarship spans television history, film exhibition, women and technology, urban memory, and digital ethnography. Her work has

appeared in leading peer-reviewed journals, including the History of Film, Radio and Television, BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies, Women's History Review, and Critical Studies in Television.

SÁNDOR, Katalin, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

INTERMEDIALITY AND INTER-AFFECTIVITY IN SZABOLCS HAJDU'S CHAMBER FILM TRILOGY

The presentation discusses the affective intermediality of Szabolcs Hajdu's chamber film trilogy (*It's Not the Time of My Life*, 2016; *Kálmán's Day*, 2023; *Vulture's Wake*, 2024) adapted to screen from his three eponymous chamber plays. The diegetic spaces of the three films are constructed as contemporary East-Central-European middle-class homes that "host" and engender various instances of crisis inseparable from political, socio-economic and class issues (familial and marital alienation, financial insecurity, emigration, social mobility and class differences, latent and manifest domestic violence). Addressing these interrelated crises, the films enfold the theatricality of site-specific theatre within cinema, connecting life and art, media and the affective experience of objects. In the chamber film format, interiors are assembled cinematographically in a manner that foregrounds the "agentic capacity" (Jane Bennett, 2010) and the affective entanglement of characters, everyday objects and spaces in the (un)homeliness of the domestic. The presentation will focus on the (inter)medial affordances of the three films that enable a reflective, ethical and inter-affective spectatorial engagement: the metaleptic folds between the cinematic and the theatrical, between art and life, image and body (*It's Not the Time of My Life*); the still images that reveal the agentic presence of domestic interiors and objects (*Kálmán's Day*); the haptic black-and-white close-ups that – as vehicles of affect – enact the "vibrant" materiality (see Bennett, 2010) of human and non-human bodies (*Vulture's Wake*).

SÁNDOR, Katalin is Assistant Professor at Babeș-Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, Romania). Her research interests include contemporary Romanian and Hungarian cinema, intermediality in film and literature. She has published a volume on intermediality in Hungarian, Unsettling Image/Texts. On the Intermediality of Visual Poetry, has edited the collective volume Intermedial Encounters and has contributed, among others, to the journals *Eastern European Screen Studies, Acta Universitatis Sapientiae*, *Film and Media Studies*, *Metropolis, Ekphrasis* and to several volumes of studies, including: *Caught In-Between. Intermediality in Eastern European and Russian Cinema* (2020); *Post Socialist Mobilities*. *Studies in Eastern European Cinema* (2021); *The New Romanian Cinema* (2019).

SEMENOVA, Alexandra, Autonomous University of Madrid, Madrid, Spain.

BULLRING UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: THE CONSTRUCTION OF ATMOSPHERE IN ALBERT SERRA'S *AFTERNOONS OF SOLITUDE*

Filmic atmosphere can, following Gernot Böhme, be understood as a "between" phenomenon, conceived as something between the subject and the object (2016: 29). Meanwhile, Robert

Spadoni, drawing on another aspect of Böhme's conception, according to which atmospheres are "totalities," argues that atmosphere functions as a unifying principle that may save a film "from the centrifugal force of its own heterogeneity" (2020: 55). The question then arises: how can atmosphere serve as a source of coherence despite remaining fundamentally "between" and "vague, indeterminate, intangible" (Böhme 2016: 29)? Throughout his career, Albert Serra has repeatedly stated that one of his primary artistic concerns is the creation of atmospheres. This paper focuses on how the atmospheric totality of his recent works – the documentary *Afternoons of Solitude* (2024) and the video art piece *Tauromaquia* (2025) – is constructed. It examines how, by negating conventional hierarchies, atmosphere emerges between the subject and the object, as well as between image and sound, an approach that also resonates with the idea of a "flat ontology" (DeLanda 2002: 102) of the digital moving image: Steven Shaviro suggests that "digitization undermines the traditional hierarchy of the senses, in which sight is ranked above hearing" (2016: 370). This becomes particularly evident in *Afternoons of Solitude*, where close listening reshapes the act of seeing, becoming a fundamental component of atmosphere and performing its own "acoustic zoom," thus extending André Bazin's observation that the camera puts at the disposal of the director the resources of both the telescope and the microscope (1967: 412). Drawing on Böhme's idea that the aesthetics of atmosphere mediates between the aesthetics of reception and the aesthetics of production (2016: 25), the study focuses on several elements in Serra's work on bullfighting, including darkness, disorientation, the organization of space, and breathing – both animal and human, on and off screen.

SEMENOVA, Alexandra is a PhD candidate in the Department of History and Theory of Art at the Autonomous University of Madrid, as well as a multidisciplinary artist, researcher, and translator. Her research interests include contemporary European auteur cinema, cinematic space, and the intersections of the moving image with painting and literature. Her recent publications include Collective Sex as a Collective Text: Liberté by Albert Serra Through the Optics of Roland Barthes in *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies* (2025) and The Logic of Disorientation: Exploring Space in Albert Serra's Afternoons of Solitude in *Frames Cinema Journal* (2025).

SERENA, Pillitu, University of Antwerp, Belgium.

RE-SENSITISING DISTANCE: TOWARDS AN ETHICS OF ATTENTION IN THE POSTDIGITAL IMAGE

Contemporary images of conflict are increasingly produced through technologies that mediate perception from a distance: drones, satellites, algorithmic systems, and, more recently, generative AI. Rather than simply documenting violence, these images reshape the conditions under which violence becomes visible, thinkable, and emotionally apprehensible. While postdigital visuality is often associated with desensitisation and affective fatigue, this paper argues that the central issue is not the disappearance of sensibility but its transformation. I propose to reconsider distance as an aesthetic and ethical category. In the postdigital condition, distance is no longer merely spatial; it is technological, perceptual, and political. Images produced

through remote vision generate a paradoxical form of spectatorship in which intimacy and detachment coexist, requiring viewers to negotiate new modes of attention and responsibility. Re-sensitising the image, therefore, cannot mean recovering an allegedly authentic or immediate visual experience. Instead, it entails developing a critical form of spectatorship capable of engaging with the complex mediations through which contemporary images operate. Drawing on visual Studies, media theory, and aesthetics, the paper examines visual material from recent armed conflicts to explore how operational and AI-generated images redefine the relationship between visibility, affect, and ethical engagement. Bringing into dialogue Harun Farocki, Hito Steyerl, Jacques Rancière, Susan Sontag, and Emmanuel Alloa, I argue that the postdigital image should be understood not as the endpoint of human perception but as the site where new forms of aesthetic experience – and new possibilities for ethical attention – are continuously negotiated.

SERENA, Pillitu is an art historian and independent researcher working at the intersection of Visual Studies, media theory, and contemporary aesthetics. She holds an MA in Art History from the University of Cagliari and a second-level Master's degree in Neuroaesthetics from the University of Rome Tor Vergata. Her academic training also included a study period at the University of Tübingen. She conducted research at the Visual Studies Center in Zagreb and is currently an affiliated independent researcher at the ViDi Research Centre, University of Antwerp, where she collaborates with Professor Paolo Favero. Her current research explores technologically mediated images, visual culture, and the ethics of representing contemporary conflicts, while she prepares her PhD project.

SIMOR, Kamilla, University of Pécs, Hungary.

TWO AMSTERDAMS: SOUND-IMAGE DISCREPANCIES IN *OCCUPIED CITY* (2023)

In this presentation I examine the ways in which documentary film can depict the complex relationship between the past and the present. I place particular emphasis on the film *Occupied City* (Steve McQueen, 2023), which was based on the book *Atlas of an Occupied City, Amsterdam 1940–1945* (Bianca Stigter, 2019). On the film's audio level, Melanie Hyams narrates the occupation of the Netherlands by Nazi Germany; simultaneously, on the visual level, viewers see footage of modern-day Amsterdam. The film sets up a contradictory interplay between sound and image. Since it contains no archival footage, viewers must slowly and imaginatively construct their own mental images of the past events being narrated – it is a slow act of imagination in opposition to the disposable images in the postdigital economy. I believe that the film functions as a multi-layered archive of the city and foregrounds the divide between past and present, as well as the difficulty of representing our relationship to history. In this analysis, I draw on the concept of “reflective nostalgia” as proposed by Svetlana Boym (2001): reflective nostalgia highlights the discrepancy between past and present, challenging the “absolute truths” that Boym associates with the other type she identifies, “restorative nostalgia”. The theorist

distinguishes national memory, built on a single narrative of national identity, from social memory, whose collective framework shapes but does not determine individual memory (Boym 2001, 18). In McQueen's film, I examine how reflective nostalgia operates through documentary and cartographic methods that interweave historical material with images of the contemporary city.

SIMOR, Kamilla is an Assistant Lecturer at the Department of Film Studies, University of Pécs (Hungary). Her research field is the analysis of documentary films about wars from the perspective of phenomenology, media theory and archival studies. Her publications include: Wars in Colour. Critical Perspectives on Digital Colourisation in Historical Documentaries. *Visual Studies* 40 (2025) no. 1. 30-40; (Re)Constructing Collective Memory. Mobile Media Based Documentaries on the Siege of Mariupol. *Eastern European Screen Studies* (2024), Uncanny Colours of the Past. Phenomenological Notes on Remediation and Colourization of Black-and-White Footage. *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae Film and Media Studies* (2023) no. 24. 15-38

SMITS, Matthew, independent researcher, Wilmington, United States.

THE EVERYDAY AND REVELATION IN *IL BUCO*

At its core, Michelangelo Frammartino's *Il Buco* (2021) is an attempt to depict the death of a traditionalist way of life at the hands of a creeping modernism. This is accomplished by pairing two simultaneous narratives: the gradual mapping of a previously unexplored cave and the passing of an elderly shepherd who occupied the surrounding land. In contrast to the film's monumental thematic ambition, *Il Buco* is presented in a slow style that clouds its narrative weight in a realistic aesthetic of the everyday. However, there is a particular moment near the film's conclusion that threatens *Il Buco*'s realist approach. Shortly before his death, a doctor peers into the shepherd's eyes with a medical pen light. At the same time, an unsourced glowing beam illuminates the cavers, who appear unaware of its existence. This bizarre moment seems to suggest something impossible: that the cavers are not descending a natural hole in the earth, but instead the very body of the shepherd. Contrary to what might be expected, this sudden interjection of poetic surrealist logic does not create stylistic incoherence. Instead, Frammartino demonstrates how brief ruptures in realist cinema encourage spectators to wonder at the meditative potential of the world around them. In other words, by momentarily complicating everyday aesthetics, *Il Buco* showcases how transcendence can best be found in the everyday.

SMITS, Matthew is a film scholar specializing in the study of slow cinema, minimalism, and the American avant-garde. He was an adjunct professor at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, and has presented at conferences hosted by the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image and the Society for Cinema and Media Studies.

TESCARI, Vega, USI - Università della Svizzera italiana, Lugano/Mendrisio, Switzerland.
OFF-SCREEN VOICES: FROM HUMAN TO MORE-THAN-HUMAN HORIZONS (WORKING TITLE)

This study highlights the expressive, conceptual and sensory potential of the off-screen space in the cinematic context, by examining the work of Marguerite Duras – in particular *Les Mains négatives* (1979) and *India Song* (1975) – and of Terrence Malick, particularly *Days of Heaven* (1978) and *The Thin Red Line* (1998). Their poetics exemplify a way of conceiving and making cinema that questions the status of individuals and their relationship with reality. At the same time, through aesthetic and stylistic strategies, the viewer's experience is challenged and intensified by the multiplicity of expressive and sensorial elements. Through the use of off-screen voices and the disconnection between word and image, their works succeed – albeit with different styles and intentions – in placing the individual within a universe of meaning that explores the finitude of the human condition in relation to the vastness and boundlessness – both spatial and temporal – of reality and nature, looking towards more-than-human horizons. In the case of both Duras and Malick, there is an intermedial dimension at play, whereby cinema dialogues with the photographic, pictorial and theatrical realms, as well as with the evocative power of the spoken word and the voice. The use of voice-over in Malick's *Days of Heaven* serves a primarily narrative function, which becomes more complex and intimate in *The Thin Red Line*, where the inner monologue constantly opens up the image to something beyond and inexpressible, in which the human experience is set in relation to and contrast with the natural world. In Duras's case, the use of off-screen voices carries with it a more spectral dimension and takes ekphrasis to the extreme, closely interrogating the visible and the invisible, as well as the very status of image and word.

TESCARI, Vega is a writer and a lecturer at USI - Università della Svizzera italiana (Switzerland), where she teaches courses in film studies, history and theory of photography, contemporary art, and comparative literature. She is the author of critical studies (*En Suspens. Scenari di tempo. Marguerite Duras, Claudio Parmiggiani, Luigi Ghirri*, 2018) and literary texts (*Come*, 2018; *Territori* forthcoming 2027). She has been working, inter alia, on the oeuvre of Duras, Pasolini, Tarkovskij, Marker, Jarman, Chen Chieh-jen. Her research primarily looks at the links between the visual and audiovisual arts, literature, and philosophy, particularly focusing on questions of time, space and the concept of off-screen.

TÖRÖK, Ervin, University of Szeged, Szeged, Hungary.
ART AND MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES: AN ANALYSIS OF *DARK CHAMBER* (OTTÓ BÁNOVITS, 2019)

Through an analysis of Ottó Bánovits's 2019 short film *Dark Chamber*, I would like to formulate some hypotheses regarding the connections between artists' efforts to "revitalize" images, media convergence in the (post)digital age, and the psychopolitics of contemporary image consumption. Bánovits's work alludes to a tragic event in which 71 illegal border crossers

suffocated to death in a truck container on the Austrian-Hungarian border in 2015. The short film focuses on the moment when the container is opened. At the same time, it does not narrate this event – we learn about the content of the scene from an insert at the end of the film. The work consists of a single long take that simulates and interweaves various media techniques and artistic practices: hyperrealistic painting, the magic lantern, digital image synthesis, *slow cinema*, and so on. The film treats the container as the dark chamber of a magic lantern, onto whose wall an image of the outside world is projected. As it passes through the aperture, the camera rises, and then the image flips again, creating a symmetrical counterpart to the camera obscura effect that occurs inside the container. The film was also screened as an expanded film – on that occasion, 71 viewers were admitted into a container, onto whose wall the film was projected. The effect was overwhelming. This screening practice makes it clear that the film's media experiment is based primarily on the affective and physical impact of the visual experience, and it maintains a very special relationship with contemporary media technologies that seek to maximize immersion. The film weaves together visual regimes almost imperceptibly: its effect is based on the mutual framing between the automatisms/operations of image-making and the phenomenon of the image, between the imagination that runs ahead and the technical infrastructure that imperceptibly frames it. The presentation provides further examples of the possible connections between the transmedia simulations of digital media convergence and contemporary art practices, which – by weaving together some of the ideas of Rosalind Krauss and Manovich – increasingly coincide with the exploration of relationships between media technologies and practices.

TÖRÖK, Ervin is an associate professor at the Department of Visual Culture and Literary Theory at the University of Szeged. He has been the editor of the journal *Apertúra* since 2010. His research focuses on narratology, the history of documentary film, and issues in media theory and aesthetics. His book *Discourses of Satire in Modernity* (Szeged: Pompeji) was published in 2014, followed in 2015 by *Shifting Images: Linguistic Image and Understanding in the Works of Heinrich von Kleist* (Budapest: Ráció), titles translated from Hungarian.

TROON, Simon, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.

SHIMMERING THROUGH POLYCRISIS WITH SHADY NASTY'S MUSIC VIDEOS

Australian band Shady Nasty's song *SCREWDRIVA* alludes to the war boys of George Miller's *Mad Max* films with the refrain "got chrome on my lips." In the song's 2025 music video the lyric is accompanied by a rapidly shifting montage of ostensibly petro-masculinist imagery: a mise-en-scène of suburban service stations dissolves into glitchy effects as souped-up cars careen through cities and bushland, and the band's frontman stunts during an extreme weather event. This presentation begins by posing *SCREWDRIVA* as an intermedial prequel to the *Mad Max* franchise. It then moves to analyse how an array of the band's music videos, released mostly between 2024

and 2026, catalogue a contemporary experience of quotidian life characterised by a feeling of compounding crises: fuel crisis, climate crisis, housing crisis, crisis of masculinity, cost of living crisis, etc. These music videos share a rhythmic aesthetic that intercuts traversal of suburban and peri-urban Sydney (mostly by car) with glitch art, augmented reality, and visuality appropriated from smartphone and social media interfaces. Exploring the intense affective capacities of this aesthetic, and its resonances with the sculptural and moving image work of celebrated Antipodean visual artists Daniel Crooks and Steve Carr, the presentation contends that Shady Nasty's videos shimmer against their petrocultural surfaces and toward vital ways of making do in the shadow places of these crises. As their intermediality intermeshes with the indexicality of their artful automobility, they reconstitute mundane imagery of suburban and digital life to invoke strategic detachment and masculine care for an Australia on the brink.

TROON, Simon researches at the intersections of screen aesthetics and environmental politics, focussing especially on issues of indexicality, emotionality, and masculine subjectivities, and with particular interest in cinema and media from Oceania. He is the author of Cinematic Encounters with Disaster, published in Bloomsbury's *Thinking Cinema* series (2024), as well as articles in Continuum Journal of Media and Cultural Studies, Studies in Documentary Film, Media International Australia and elsewhere. He works as a Lecturer in Film, Screen & Culture at Monash University on unceded Boonwurrung land in Melbourne, Australia.

ZHANG, Keting, University of Cambridge, Ningbo, China.

CHROMATIC ATMOSPHERE: COLOUR, AFFECT, AND DOMESTIC SPACE IN CHINESE FAMILY CINEMA

From photochemical on-set colour production to contemporary digital colour grading, film colour has undergone profound technological and aesthetic transformations. Focusing on the family meal-table scene, this paper compares *Eat Drink Man Woman* (1994) and *All About My Mother* (2021) to argue that colour functions as an affective and atmospheric medium through which cinema renders emotional and relational dynamics perceptible beyond dialogue and narrative action. Rather than treating colour as symbolic decoration or expressive enhancement, this paper conceptualises colour as an atmospheric medium, drawing on the notion of atmosphere as a quasi-material presence that is bodily experienced before it is cognitively interpreted. Building on Street's and Yumibe's accounts of chromatic modernity, the paper develops the concept of chromatic domesticity to examine how colour shapes the affective texture of domestic space. Within Chinese family cinema, the meal table becomes a site saturated with care, hierarchy, silence, and reproductive labour – social relations that remain largely unspoken yet are continuously sensed through carefully constructed chromatic environments. Atmospheric colour therefore mediates invisible structures of intimacy and power, translating emotional and relational conditions into sensuous experience. The comparison also historicises changing colour

practices. In *Eat Drink Man Woman*, atmosphere emerges through the material coordination of lighting, costume, set design, and food styling within a photochemical workflow. By contrast, *All About My Mother* relies on digital colour grading to reorganise chromatic relations in post-production. Through a comparative analysis of meal-table scenes, this paper examines how digital grading relocates atmospheric intensity within new technological processes, transforming atmosphere into a manipulable aesthetic variable while retaining its affective force. In doing so, it proposes chromatic atmosphere as an analytical framework for revealing invisible domestic power relations, contributing to debates on sensuous cinema, feminist film theory, and the digital transformation of Chinese family cinema.

ZHANG, Keting is an MPhil student in Film and Screen Studies at the University of Cambridge. Her interdisciplinary research spans film and media studies, artificial intelligence, digital heritage, immersive media, and communication, with particular interests in film colour, AI-mediated intimacy, and XR applications in cultural heritage. Her work has been accepted for presentation by multiple international conferences and explores how emerging technologies reshape visual aesthetics and human relationships. She also combines academic research with creative practice in filmmaking, virtual production, and digital storytelling.

ZHENG WANG, Joule, Lund University, Lund, Sweden.

RECLAIMING AGENCY: REPRESENTATION AND CRITIQUE OF AI CINEMA IN RADU JUDE'S *DRACULA*

This paper argues that AI-generated imagery is not intrinsically desensitizing; rather, AI aesthetics can be mobilized for self-reflexive critique and for reclaiming agency from the algorithmic logic of digital capitalism. I will begin with an overview of recent critical discourse concerning AI-generated cinema. While some scholars explore the questions of authorship and artistic integrity, I will focus on how creative agency and labour are estranged in AI-generated image production under contemporary digital capitalism. This will be engaged with Siyaves Azeri's conceptualization of agency as grounded in social relations and political economy. For Azeri, agency is asserted through imagination, namely the capacity to "think the non-existent, to negate the actual, to constitute the ideal" (2026, 12). I will therefore reorient the formal, aesthetic, and ontological critique of AI cinema toward the critique of the capitalist logic that reduces imagination to data and algorithms. This process is dramatized in Radu Jude's *Dracula* (2025) through satire and caricature. The various films-within-a-film are made and presented by The Director, who strives to make "the most commercialised version" of Dracula with the help of a generative AI called *Dr AI Judex 0.0* (a wink at the actual director of the film), ridiculing the commercial model of film production and tourism in Romania. I will argue that it is precisely in the sloppy, repetitive, and inconsistent AI-generated moving images – or the live-action mimesis of them – that the film simultaneously desensitizes and resensitizes the image. By engaging with

(rather than avoiding) AI-generated imagery, the film reclaims the agency to imagine and to create images in the very technological form that appears to negate such agency.

ZHENG WANG, Joule, originally from Guangdong, China, is a PhD candidate in Film Studies at Lund University, Sweden. Their ongoing doctoral project, Cinema of Intrusion, examines the filmic mediation and representation of “intrusion,” theorizing it as both a narrative trope across film history and a critical concept through which cinema engages with sociopolitical and philosophical issues. Their recent publications include an article on David Wojnarowicz’s experimental and intermedial writing in Journal for Literary and Intermedial Crossings and a chapter on Digimon Adventure in Cybernetic Imaginations.