

2015—16 Research Newsletter

Welcome to the Department of Film and Television Studies' research newsletter, offering a snapshot of our many research activities – individual scholarship, externally-funded projects, public engagement and impact, international keynotes and conferences – in order to give a flavour of the department and what we do.

Professor Stella Bruzzi FBA
Director of Research

External Research Projects

Focus: Producers and Production Practice in the History of Italian Cinema, 1949-1975

AHRC Major Research Project. Grant received £718,500
March 2016 - February 2019

Principal Investigator: Stephen Gundle (Warwick)

Co-Investigators: Karl Schoonover (Warwick), Stefano Baschiera (Queens, Belfast), Christopher Wagstaff (formerly Reading)

This AHRC-funded project brings together a core group of researchers with established expertise in different aspects of the film industry to examine the way Italian producers shaped global film production and distribution between the late 1940s and the mid 1970s. It explores a wide range of business practices and the domestic and international contexts in which these developed.



The practices in question played a crucial role in building international markets for Italian films and creating production and distribution strategies which turned Italian cinema into a global force. They set a vital precedent for other emerging national cinemas in Europe and the world. The importance of producers has not been recognised in conventional scholarship and therefore the activities of these key players have been inadequately

investigated and analysed. Project research will establish what their goals were, how they operated to achieve those goals, and what conditioning factors framed their activities. The papers of several major producers from the most successful period of the Italian

cinema and of the main industry association have recently become available for study, providing a unique opportunity to investigate hitherto obscure practices and to research a particular production culture in unprecedented depth. The project will produce a range of outputs that will reinterpret the history of postwar Italian cinema and benefit both present and future scholars and those interested in Italian and international film culture more generally, as well as sectors of the cinema industry itself.

In June 2016, Stephen Gundle, Karl Schoonover and the other co-investigators organised the project's inaugural open workshop at Warwick. External speakers included Andrew Spicer (UWE) and Mark Betz (KCL). Please see the department's research pages for more details.

Continuing: The Projection Project

The Projection Project is a research project funded by the AHRC which investigates cinematic projection. It documents the projectionist's role as it passes into history, following the switch of most cinemas to digital projection between 2010 and 2012. It also looks at the contemporary expansion of projected images outside of the cinema.

In April 2016, The Projection Project had a prominent presence at Flatpack Film Festival in Birmingham. Photographer and project partner Richard Nicholson exhibited his collection of photographic portraits of projectionists and projection boxes in the Birmingham Museum and Gallery's Gas Hall, at the centre of the Festival.



Richard has been travelling the country, gaining privileged access to a realm where most cinema-goers never venture; the projection box. As film has made way for digital, both the job and the work-place have changed fundamentally, and Richard's beautifully detailed images capture this pivotal moment. The exhibition was extremely successful and gained national and international press in venues such as BBC Radio 4, BBC website, Wired magazine, the Guardian, and Creative Review.

The Projection Project also maintained a separate section of the Festival space where the public could use our Virtual Projection Box (available here: <https://projectionproject.warwick.ac.uk/>), and was the focus of several live events during the 'Celluloid City' day of the festival.

Throughout 2016, members of the Projection Project presented research at a number of conferences and events including: NECS (University of Potsdam), Hands on History (London), Oral History Society (University of Roehampton), and a plenary at Besides the Screen (Coventry). Team members hosted a public event, including a screening of *Cinema Paradiso* and a rare opportunity to have a look inside a working projection box, at the Warwick Arts Centre, and gave a special talk at the National Theatre to accompany the play *The Flick*.

Individual Scholarship

Focus: New members of staff

Julie Lobalzo Wright (Teaching Fellow)

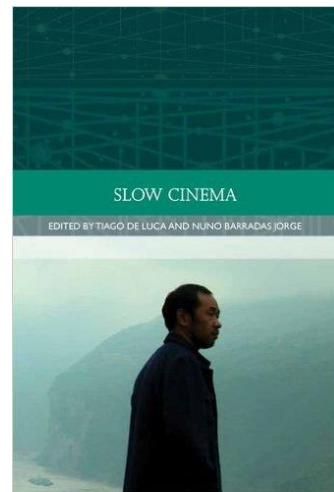


About her current research Julie says: 'My research has been focused on popular music stars in British and American cinema, considering how popular music stardom, through specific case studies, has been accommodated in various cinematic periods and contexts (My monograph, *Crossover Stardom: Popular Male Music Stars in American Cinema* is forthcoming from Bloomsbury and will feature chapters on Bing Crosby, Elvis Presley, Kris Kristofferson, Will Smith and Justin Timberlake). I have published on David Bowie's film stardom, in addition to more widely on the overlap between popular music and cinema. My research has also examined film stardom- the

longevity and fading of particular star images (as co-editor of *Lasting Screen Stars: Images that Fade and Personas that Endure* (Palgrave, 2016); the blonde male star in Hollywood (through a case study of Robert Redford); and recently, an exploration of Kirk Douglas' masculine star image'.

Tiago de Luca (Assistant Professor)

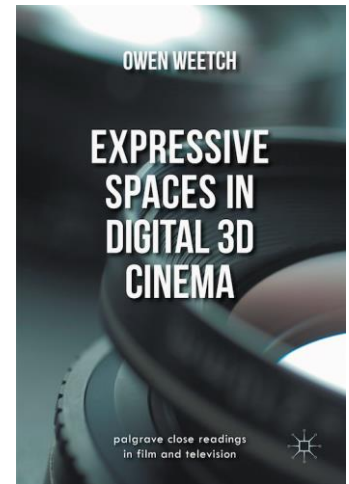
Tiago is writing his new single-authored book, provisionally entitled *Envisioning the World: Film, Visual Culture and the Earth*. The book explores the ways in the world as a totality has been imaged and imagined in the cinema and related media, and proposes that the global imaginaries of early modernity provide a valuable point of reference against which contemporary ones can be held up and deconstructed, and vice versa. Looking at a wide range of visual and audiovisual forms (including panoramas, film, photography, and TV and digital programmes), the book charts how a discourse of visual appropriation of the planet becomes haunted by the prospect of its disappearance in the wake of our global environmental crisis. Two outputs related to this research are forthcoming: the article 'Figuring a Global Humanity: Cinematic Universalism and the Multi-Narrative Film', to appear in the Spring issue of the journal *Screen* in 2017; and a book chapter entitled 'Cosmovisions: Globalism and Visual Culture in Early Modernity', in Louis Bayman and Natalia Pinazza (eds.) *Journeys on Screen: Theory, Ethics and Aesthetics* (EUP, 2017).



Tiago has also just published an article in *Cinema Journal* (Winter 2016) entitled 'Slow Cinema: Duration, Experience, and Spectatorship', and he is guest-editing a themed dossier on 'Long Duration' for *Aniki: Portuguese Journal of the Moving Image*, to be published in July 2017.

Owen Weetch (Senior Teaching Fellow)

Owen has just published his monograph *Expressive Spaces in Digital 3D Cinema* (Palgrave MacMillan). This book puts forward a considered perspective on 3D, which is often seen as a distracting gimmick at odds with artful cinematic storytelling. Owen's book looks at how stereography brings added significance and expressivity to individual films that all showcase remarkable uses of the format. *Avatar*, *Gravity*, *The Hole*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Frozen* all demonstrate that stereography is a rich and sophisticated process that has the potential to bring extra meaning to a film's narrative and themes. Through close reading of these five very different examples, *Expressive Spaces in Digital 3D Cinema* shows how being sensitive to stereographic manipulation can nuance and enrich the critical appreciation of stereoscopic films. It demonstrates that the expressive placement of characters and objects within 3D film worlds can construct meaning in ways that are unavailable to 'flat' cinema.



Focus: Dr Jon Burrows



Jon is currently writing a book about the transformation of the cinema into a mass medium in Britain during the Edwardian era, and am also co-investigator on the £512,000 AHRC-funded '[Projection Project](#)', which examines the changing roles and professional status of cinema projectionists throughout the history of the British film industry. Jon has also taken over from **Charlotte Brunson** as Principal Investigator on the Projection Project.

Focus: Dr Michael Pigott



Michael Pigott is co-investigator on *The Projection Project*, and co-investigator on *Sensing the City*, which was awarded a £330,500 grant from the AHRC in 2016. This 3 year project will begin in 2017, and will see Michael undertaking a practical investigation into the urban space of Coventry using filmmaking and field recording.

As **Michael Lightborne**, Michael works with video, sound and print, and has exhibited around the UK and internationally, in exhibitions and film festivals. His work engages with questions of landscape, popular culture, memory, and technology.

2016 work includes:

The Future is a Waste of Time selected for Cork Film Festival, Nov 2016, Arte Non Stop Festival Buenos Aires, Sept 2016 and *Flatpack Film Festival*, Birmingham, April 2016.

Video design for **punkplay** at Southwark Playhouse, London, Sept. 2016

Abandonware Jungle, single screen generative video, part of *#ArtistsCompute* group exhibition at City Arcadia, Coventry, Sept 2016.

Obscura Island performance installation on a traffic island in the centre of Birmingham city, commissioned by Birmingham Camera Obscura, June 2016.

Lost Cities headline live AV performance at Test Card, Texture, Manchester, June 2016.

Realness (bifurcation) selected for *Parachute Light Zero III International Short Film Festival*, Paris, April 2016.

Real Slow (Realness Iteration 2) video installation at Digbeth First Friday, Vivid Projects, Birmingham, March 2016.

Sound design for **Diabolical Roses**, immersive dining experience produced by Kaye Winwood and Sarah Baker-Groves, Birmingham, February 2016.

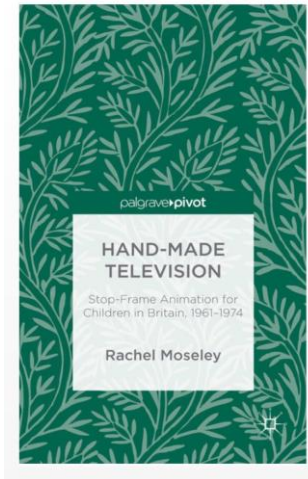
Focus: Other Recent Publications



Karl Schoonover has co-authored with Rosalind Galt *Queer Cinema in the World* (Duke University Press, 2016).

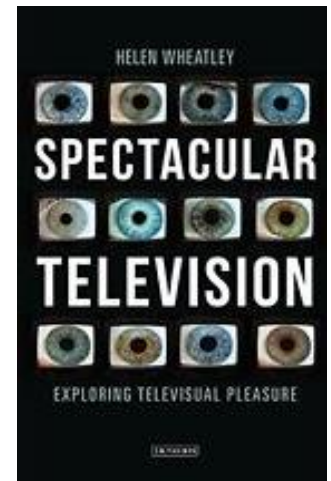
Proposing a radical vision of cinema's queer globalism, Karl Schoonover and Rosalind Galt explore how queer filmmaking intersects with international sexual cultures, geopolitics, and aesthetics to disrupt dominant modes of world making. Whether in its exploration of queer cinematic temporality, the paradox of the queer popular, or the deviant ecologies of the queer pastoral, Schoonover and Galt reimagine the scope of queer film studies. The authors move beyond the gay art cinema canon to consider a broad range of films from Chinese lesbian drama and Swedish genderqueer documentary to Bangladeshi melodrama and Bolivian activist video.

Schoonover and Galt make a case for the centrality of queerness in cinema and trace how queer cinema circulates around the globe—institutionally via film festivals, online consumption, and human rights campaigns, but also affectively in the production of a queer sensorium. In this account, cinema creates a uniquely potent mode of queer worldliness, one that disrupts normative ways of being in the world and forges revised modes of belonging.

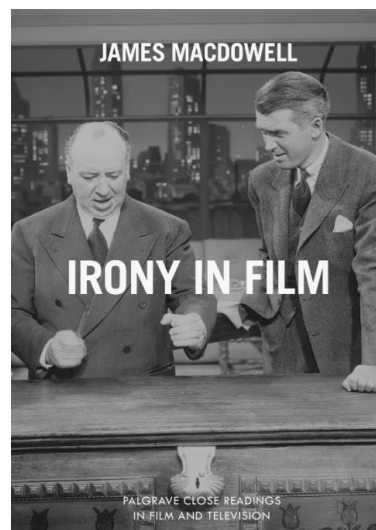
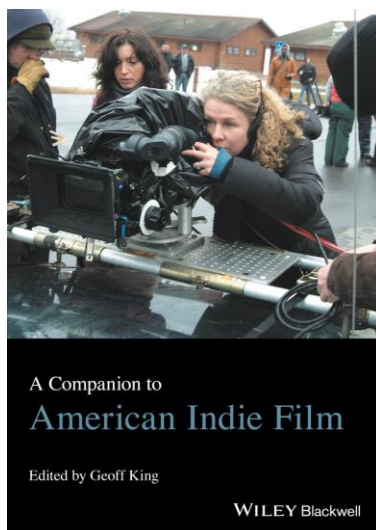


Rachel Moseley's *Hand-Made Television: Stop-Frame Animation for Children in Britain, 1961-1974* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) explores the ongoing enchantment of much-loved stop-frame children's television programming of the 1960s and 1970s. *Hand-Made Television* analyses programmes in the social and historical contexts of their production, examining the power of their hand-made aesthetics and relationship to the world of children's play.

Helen Wheatley's monograph *Spectacular Television: Exploring Television Pleasure* has been published by I.B. Tauris this year. This book combines research on the history of particular television technologies as spectacular, with analysis of the ways in which, for example, landscape, bodies (both human and animal), and action are rendered visually pleasurable or spectacular on the small screen. In terms of visual impact, television has often been regarded as inferior to cinema, characterised as sound-led and consumed by a distracted audience. However, not only in the era of HD, television has been 'spectacular' and *Spectacular Television* traces a history of television as spectacular attraction, from its launch to the contemporary age of surround sound, digital effects and HD screens.



James MacDowell and **Stella Bruzzi** both have chapters in *A Companion to American Indie Film* (Wiley Blackwell, 2016), edited by Geoff King. Stella's chapter on *Reservoir Dogs* returns to her earlier research on costume as well as incorporating more recent work on masculinity and mise-en-scene. James' chapter is entitled 'Quirky Culture: Tone, Sensibility, and Structure of Feeling'. This builds upon James' recent research into irony, which will also lead to the publication later in 2016 of the first book about ironic expression in this medium, *Irony in Film* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2016).



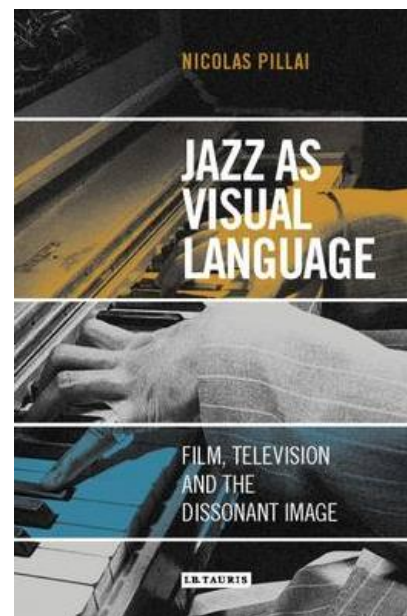
Alastair Phillips co-edited (with Ginette Vincendeau) another Wiley Blackwell companion: *A Companion to Jean Renoir* (2013). Of this volume Judith Mayne (Ohio State University) wrote:

“Alastair Phillips and Ginette Vincendeau have brought together essays that bring new perspectives to both the best-known and the lesser-known of Renoir’s films. Both French cinema specialists and viewers new to Renoir’s work will find much of interest in this outstanding collection.”

With Ginette Vincendeau, **Alastair Phillips** has also just finalised *Paris in the Cinema: Beyond the Flaneur* (co-edited with Ginette Vincendeau) for the BFI, which is to be published in Spring 2017.



Nicolas Pillai (Associate Fellow) is about to publish *Jazz as Visual Language: Film, Television and the Dissonant Image* (I. B. Tauris, 2016). This monograph provides a timely analysis of the relationship between jazz and recording and broadcast technologies in the early twentieth century. Jazz histories have traditionally privileged qualities such as authenticity, naturalness and spontaneity, but to do so overlooks jazz's status as a modernist, mechanised art form that evolved alongside the moving image and visual cultures. *Jazz as Visual Language* shows that the moving image is crucial to our understanding of what the materiality of jazz really is. Focusing on Len Lye's direct animation, Gjon Mili's experimental footage of musicians performing and the BBC's *Jazz 625* series, this book places emphasis on film and television that conveys the 'sound of surprise' through formal innovation, rather than narrative structure. Nicolas seeks to refine a critical vocabulary of jazz and visual culture whilst arguing that jazz was never just a new sound; it was also a new way of seeing the world.



Public Engagement and Impact

Focus: *notesonfilm1.com*

Blog by José Arroyo



About his popular film blog, José writes:

*My blog, notesonfilm1.com developed as a means of my just noting down observations and insights on viewing that were free of external constraints, would otherwise be forgotten, and could accommodate whatever time I could squeeze in for writing: some are blurbs, some are longer and more textured, some are now videos essays. Over the years, one can trace a series of obsessions in them: American cinema of a new economic depression that questions the very idea of what America has become (**The Place Beyond the Pines, Winter's Bone, Killing Them Softly, Winter's Bone**), the cinema of Claude Sautet (**César et Rosalie, Les choses de la vie**), the uses of costuming in film (**Orry Kelly, Yves St. Laurent, Adrian**), Pedro Almodóvar (**Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, Live Flesh, Bad Education**), particular stars (**Romy Schneider, Lino Ventura, Bette Davis, Simone Signoret**), film star biographies (**Anjelica Huston, Ava Gardner, Robert Ryan**) and the relationship of gay cultures to cinema (this runs throughout). It's writing that then seeps into my teaching and in turn finds its way back into the blog. It's garnered a steady readership of between 2500-3000 people and I'm rather proud of it!*

For more information, and to follow the blog, see: <https://notesonfilm1.com/>.

Focus: *The Story of Children's Television*

Helen Wheatley recently initiated and consulted on the large-scale touring exhibition [The Story of Children's Television, From 1946 to Now](#) which was curated by colleagues at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum which will tour the UK from May 2015 until December 2018, and for which she and **Rachel Moseley** won the University of Warwick's Community Contribution award.

The exhibition can be seen at the [Derby Museum](#) from October 15th to January 29th.



Department Research Centre

Focus: The Centre for Television History, Heritage and Memory Research

<https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/film/cthhmr/>

The aims of this Centre focus on television history, heritage and memory and the development of research, learning and training, and engagement, impact and collaboration with industry.

The Centre was ratified by Senate at the beginning of the year and will be launched officially in October 2015, with a lecture by Professor Christine Geraghty on Television History and Memory, and a short speech by an industry partner (either Tony Ageh, BBC Archives or Iain Logie-Baird, Bradford Media Museum) and a drinks reception. Indicative of the considerable interest and support across the university is the Centre's growing interdisciplinary membership (see website). The Centre, closely affiliated to the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, will provide the perfect framework within which to develop the department's connections with scholars inside and outside the university and the home field, and with industry partners who might collaborate with us, eventually, in providing unique opportunities for training and industry experience for our students, thus aiding recruitment. The Centre is partnered with the Connecting Cultures GRP and is collaborating with colleagues at Warwick working on memory studies more generally. There are a number of research funding bids in preparation, including: a CDA with the ITV Archives; a research network; a project on representations of gypsies, roamers, and travellers.

Department International Conference

Focus: Rome, Open City: Examining the legacy after seventy years

<https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/film/news/romeopencity>

Thursday 12 November - Friday 13 November 2015



Organised by Louis Bayman, Stephen Gundle, Karl Schoonover

The release of Roberto Rossellini's *Rome, Open City* in September 1945, just months after the Liberation of Italy, is a landmark in both cinema and Italian history. The film's tale of popular resistance in Nazi-occupied Rome brought Italy to international audiences. It announced a new aesthetics of cinema - neorealism - that would have a global impact, attracting attention and often controversy for its bold assertion of the necessary

relationship between art and politics. The film is a central reference point for cinematic realism and aesthetic radicalism, influencing movements from the French New Wave to Brazilian Cinema Novo, British social realism and Dogme 95. It remains a key influence for contemporary filmmakers as well as an important reference point in areas as diverse as cultural geography, gender studies, performance, historiography, aesthetic philosophy, and the study of war, fascism and torture.

Keynote speaker: David Forgacs,

Guido and Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò Chair in Contemporary Italian Studies, NYU

Co-sponsored by



Web and social media

For a more comprehensive list of our recent publications and all our research-related events, see the News section of our website:

<https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/film/news/>.

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