

Irish Screen Studies Seminar 2014

9-10 May 2014, Trinity College Dublin

Final Version

All of the participants in this listed presented papers at the seminar

For more, go to: irishscreenstudies.ie/postgraduate-seminar

Participant Abstracts and Biographies (alphabetical list)

Ciara Barrett

Title: The Voice of a Girl: Adolescent Female Performance in the post-Code Hollywood Musical

Panel: Gender II

Institution: Trinity College Dublin

Abstract: To be confirmed.

Biographical Information

Ciara Barrett is in the final stages of her PhD thesis on *Moral Music: Female Performance and Representations in Hollywood Musicals, 1929-1940*. In 2012, she co-organized the international film studies conference *Genres in Transit: Rethinking Genre in Contemporary Cinemas* and is currently preparing a collection of essays for publication based on this theme. She has lectured in Early and Classical Hollywood Cinema, Transnational Cinemas and Screening-Irish America at Trinity College Dublin. Her research interests include feminist film theory and star performance with a particular focus on Classical Hollywood and contemporary Irish filmmaking.

Stephen Boyd

Title: This Surfing Life: The Emergence of the Irish Surf Film

Panel: New Irish Cinema

Institution: Institute of Art, Design and Technology/Trinity College Dublin

This paper will offer a comprehensive history and a critical analysis of the Irish surf film from its beginnings in the early 2000s. The surf film is an unexplored area of Irish and global film studies that has a large subcultural local and international audience. The genre includes feature films, community based 'folk' films, an emerging online film short film culture, and has evolved to such an extent that the 'Shore Shots' 1st annual Irish Surf film festival was held in early 2013.

Whilst Joel Conroy's *Waveriders* (2009) is the most familiar Irish surf movie, this analysis will examine the film in the wider context of local and global examples of the

genre; beginning with early examples such as *Eye of the Storm* (Conroy, 2002) and *Driven* (Mr. B. Productions, 2007) and concluding with the most contemporary films such as *Wet Dreams* (PFOWP, 2014).

Methodologically, the paper will examine the form of Irish surf film (narrative, documentary and commercial) in relation to the major debates within Irish film studies, contending that the surf film represents an ideological development away from a national/modern depiction of Irish identity towards the post-national/postmodern. Employing the films of Mickey Smith as an example, the paper will interrogate how surf film has attempted to break from traditional discourses surrounding romanticism and realism in Irish cinema. The analysis will also consider the broader social, cultural and economic impact that the films have made to Irish coastal regions.

Biographical Information

Stephen Boyd is a lecturer in Media Studies, Visual Culture, Popular Culture and Non-Western Cinema at the Institute of Art, Design and Technology in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin and is also a PhD student at Trinity College Dublin. His most recent publication is entitled 'Surfing a Postnationalist Wave: Surfing and Irish Popular Culture'.

Elizabeth Carville

Title Johnny Be Good: Violence and Celtic Tiger Irish Masculinity in *The Tudors* (2007-10)

Panel: Gender I

Institution NUI Maynooth

Arguably remembered as one of the most violent men to have existed, Henry Tudor was infamous for marrying and executing multiple wives in succession and severing all religious ties between England and Papal Rome. On being approached by US Network *Showtime* to create a series based on the Tudor dynasty, writer Michael Hirst agreed, on condition that he could rewrite Henry VIII, not so much by altering the king's character, but by seriously rebranding his appearance. What is noteworthy is that of all the British (or even American) actors available, Hirst selected Irish actor, Jonathan Rhys Meyer, for the part. Irishness and Irish masculinity has long been employed by Hollywood to speak of a set of characteristics, most notably those of the 'barbarous Celt,' prone to volatile demonstrations of anger, usually, though not always, related to a zealous appetite for alcohol. What is significant in this case is how Meyers' Irishness, while still rooted in the classical stereotype of Irish savagery, betrays a particular kind of ferocity that is influenced by the very specific economic, social and cultural climate of Celtic Tiger Ireland. By selecting Meyers as Henry VIII, Hirst availed of the attributes associated with Irishness to sublimate the dark and inauspicious side of the English monarchical past. Hirst delivered a monarch who appealed to a contemporary US audience while still remaining, according to his own

approximation, around 85% faithful to historical truth. By drawing attention to the immaturity, the appetite for bloodshed, and the interior rather than somatic locus of the 'new' Henry's ire, this paper shall isolate the aspects of Celtic Tiger male violence, and the traits which made Meyers 'instinctually' the choice for Hirst's contemporary historical drama.

Biographical Information

My name is Liz Carville and I'm a research candidate at NUI Maynooth under the supervision of Professor Luke Gibbons and Dr. Denis Condon. My research concerns the representations of Irish masculinity in Hollywood during the Celtic Tiger period, most specifically in terms of the popularity of metrosexual Irish actors such as Colin Farrell, Jonathan Rhys Meyers and Cillian Murphy in the U.S. during this period.

Eileen Culloty

Title Remediating Reality: the Rhetoric of Conspiracy in Political Documentaries

Panel: Reuse and Recycle

Institution: Dublin City University

The uncertainty of the post-9/11 period coupled with the advent of digital technologies has led to a proliferation of political documentaries by professional and amateur filmmakers. Much of this content is conspiratorial in its narrative and stylistic rhetoric. While conspiracy films previously remained on the fringes of news media, in what Daniel Hallin (1986) calls the 'sphere of deviance', it is now a predominate mode of political filmmaking.

Much like the conspiracy theorists, high-profile filmmakers like Adam Curtis and Charles Ferguson play heavily into the paranoid-surveillance aesthetics of political thrillers. In addition, they draw extensively on remediated news images to fashion apparently obvious political narratives. Although the ironic repurposing of archive footage is not a new phenomenon, the sheer volume of remediated imagery, and the diverging ends for which it is used, greatly complicates notions of documentary reality. Furthermore, documentary filmmakers seeking to articulate 'film truth' (Musser 2007) often undermine their own claims to authority and credibility by relying on the same dramatic techniques as conspiracy filmmakers.

These problems are evident in the explosion of TV and online documentaries relating to the 'war on terror' and the on-going conflict in Syria: unverified images are recycled for various narrative ends, loose connections are drawn between disparate events and viewers are urged to recognise and fight against the hidden work of elite power. Consequently, contemporary political documentaries give rise to a complex entanglement of verified truth-claims, misinformation, and ideologically-driven vested interests.

Biographical Information

I am currently finishing my PhD on Iraq War documentaries titled 'Embedded Online: Iraq War Documentaries in the Online Public Sphere'. I have published

articles on this subject and am currently working on a book chapter on ‘New Uses of Bourdieu in Film and Media’ which will be published next September by Berghahn. My research interests are in the areas of audience studies and war media - in particular viewer responses to war films and documentaries.

Aidan Delaney

Title Film Theory as Praxis: The Potential of the Video Essay as a Means of Film Criticism

Panel: Critique and Praxis

Institution: ATRL/Trinity College Dublin

Recent years have witnessed a growing impulse to use the video essay as a means of film criticism, as exemplified by notable publishers such as Sight & Sound now recognising the form. This tendency can be rooted in the audio commentary of DVD add-ons and has nurtured with consumer video editing and ripping software developments. These technological advancements have democratised the practice of video essay creation and allowed it to transmute into a sophisticated means of close textual analysis. Furthermore, by using the very substance of the source under examination, i.e. moving footage, the video essay is advantageous as a means of criticism or close textual analysis because it bypasses the mediation of the separate semiotic system of the written word. It is therefore analogous to what Edward S. Small calls ‘direct theory’ or creating theory/praxis arguments related to experimental film. Fundamentally the video essay functions as a visual essay on a visual source.

My paper will address the effectiveness of the video essay in film criticism, identifying and exemplifying its obvious advantages over the written word. Furthermore, it will reframe Small’s ‘direct theory’ and show its usefulness as theory beyond the experimental film genre.

Biographical Information

Aidan Delaney is currently part of the DAH (Digital Arts and Humanities) PhD programme and undertaking his studies at the ATRL in Trinity College Dublin as part of their arts strand intake. His dissertation examines the cultural impact of copyright and remixed video. Aidan’s practice-based research focuses on remix practice and the video essay; whilst his theory interests are in digital art, remix culture, space (virtual and urban), street art, post-Marxism, film theory, author studies and experimental film.

Nora Duggan

Title: *Quad* (20-minute video projection)

Panel: Critique and Praxis

Institution: Huston School of Film & Digital Media, Galway

The 20-minute single channel video projection titled *Quad* (2013) investigates

temporal relations between stillness and movement which constantly drive Nora Duggan's art practice. Taking the original Quadrangle building of NUI Galway as her subject, Nora compiled a series of digital photographs and videos over twelve months, recording the movement of light around the building. These images were then reconfigured, manipulated, cut and collaged together in order to construct the video. The images slide from stillness to movement and back again with no discernible separation point between the two states. The imagery cannot be read as entirely 'photographic' or 'cinematic', rather they stand on a precipice between the two. In this way the work attempts to engage with a relationship between past, present and future that can be read as an ever expanding and contracting series of temporal relations. As she reaches the mid-point of her practice-based PhD, Nora looks to *Quad* for evidence of how her research has progressed to date, but also to inform her future direction. The work questions how our experience of time can be informed and influenced through combined stillness and movement in digital imagery. Here, linear and chronological time are abandoned, and replaced by the possibilities suggested when time is understood as a multitude of simultaneous temporal relations that expand and contract, existing not merely as past, present and future but as future pasts, present futures, and so on...

Summary of Research Interests

Biographical Information

DAH (Digital Arts & Humanities) PhD researcher.

My research investigates contemporary images that combine stillness and movement. Such works challenge traditional readings of temporal relations in photographic and cinematic imagery.

I suggest that digital technologies facilitate the coalescence of still and moving imagery in such a way that, while retaining their individual specificities, bring to the surface the complex overlapping temporal relations at play within such imagery. There is potential here for a third image to emerge, an image that suggests multiple temporalities running concurrently. Drawing from my own art practice, the film philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, and a history of image making that engages with simultaneous presentation of stillness and movement, I argue that this third image could further challenge our understanding of the relationship between time and the image.

Sarah Durcan

Title Documentary Fictions: Steve McQueen's *Gravesend* (2007)

Panel: Reuse and Recycle

Institution: Birkbeck College, University of London/National College of Art and Design

This presentation is based on research into contemporary artists' moving image installations that create a form of documentary fiction. The context to this project is the expansion of moving image installations in contemporary art during the mid

nineties and 2000s. In this ‘cinematic turn’ artists began to bring cinematic forms into the gallery. The intersection between the gallery and cinema is the starting point for this research. By employing cinematic genres and strategies, artists’ moving image installations bring the reflexive frame of art history and theory to the cinematic.

Taking Steve McQueen’s *Gravesend* (2007) as a case study, this presentation shows how McQueen uses an apparently documentary approach and then undermines it by means of a fictionalising aesthetic. *Gravesend* is a seventeen-minute film installation based on miners in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The gallery spectator is placed between the physical space of the installation, the screen image and references to other times and spaces suggested by the filmic image. It is the spectator who holds together the diverse geopolitical references suggested by *Gravesend*, becoming an engaged witness who is physically affected by the film’s sound and visual effects.

The presentation explores how McQueen creates his own cinematic apparatus, based on an embodied form of spectatorship and a materialist approach to narrative. McQueen’s disjunctive aesthetic, which merges the documentary and the fictional, is situated in relation to André Bazin’s writings on neo-realist film and recent theorisations of artists’ moving image installations.

Biographical Information

Sarah Durcan is a PhD student in the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies at Birkbeck College, University of London. Her research topic is *Falsifying Narratives: an Aesthetic beyond Fiction and Documentary* – a study of selected moving image installations by contemporary artists.

She is a lecturer in Media, Faculty of Fine Art, National College of Art & Design, Dublin. She has exhibited work as an artist in solo and group exhibitions in Ireland and Europe and received awards from the Arts Council of Ireland and EVA International biennial exhibition, Limerick among others.

Recent activities include a review article: ‘Steve McQueen: The Go Between’ published in *Screening the Past*, Issue 38, December 2013 and the presentation of a paper on ‘Cinema in the Gallery’ at the *White Cube / Dark Cube Symposium*, February 2014, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, UK.

<http://www.sarahdurcan.net>

Niall Flynn

Title: An Intimate Encounter: Reading Subtitles through Deleuze

Panel: Fictive Materials

Institution: Independent Scholar

Subtitled films consist of a series of encounters of discursive and formal elements that do not operate according to the same logic. Viewers undertake a process of negotiation between these elements when watching subtitled films. I bring this process into dialogue with the approach Gilles Deleuze takes in his two *Cinema* books; their shared methodology of negotiation shed light on each other in critically productive ways. Next, I describe the series of encounters that takes place in subtitled

films: specifically those between text and image, and between the original film and the subtitled film. Finally, I explain how this process of negotiation leads to an affective as well as linguistic response to subtitled films. In fact, subtitles reconcile those disparate discursive and formal elements.

Biographical Information

Independent Scholar.

2011–2012: MA (Film Studies), University College Cork

Publications include: A Review of *Ex-Cinema: From a Theory of Experimental Film* by Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Alphaville Journal of Film and Screen Media* 6.

Alison Fornell

Title: *Life and Death on Television: David Fagan's Prelude to Nothing (2012) and Suspension (2011)*

Panel: Critique and Praxis

Institution: National College of Art & Design

Television has long been theorized as the infinite medium. Its never-ending stream of narratives incites endless consumption, conceptualized as *flow*—Raymond Williams' term which acts as the cornerstone for television theory and analysis. In this way, television works as a medium of immortality: for example, when series end they nevertheless have a second life, or continued life, in syndicated re-runs and fan fiction. Television's immortality can also be understood according to desire: Beverle Houston argues that television is structured by the "repetitive reformulation of desire," likening televisual engagement to a process of nourishment and survival. Dublin-based artist David Fagan, however, disrupts this conventional understanding and notably interrogates the death of television in some of his most significant works, such as *Prelude to Nothing* (2012) and *Suspension* (2011). He focuses on the moments of ending that occur within the realm of broadcast, such as Europe's final analogue broadcast signal in April 2012. With Fagan's works as my objects of focus I seek to interrogate television's relationship to life and death. Neither immortal nor dead, I argue that television ultimately functions in a comatose state—a state the viewer embodies when viewing television and a state the medium itself inhabits. Fagan's works invite an inspection of the tension between immortality and death and allow for a critical investigation of the viewer's own life and death in relation to television's complicated immortality and finitude.

Biographical Information

Completing a Master of Arts at University College Dublin / National College of Art and Design in Art in the Contemporary World as a Visual Culture Scholar, 2013-2014. She has also studied at the University of Cambridge (Screen Media and Cultures, Faculty of Modern & Medieval Languages) and at Amherst College. Her most recent publication is "Connective Tissue: *The Bridge* and the Body in

Contemporary Global Television” which will appear this year in the film journal *Spectator* (Vol.33.2).

Peter Jameson

Title: The Hysteria of Exile: Cy Endfield’s *Hell Drivers* and Joseph Losey’s *Time Without Pity*

Panel: Radicalism and Conservatism

Institution: Queen’s University Belfast

In 1957, two intense, explosive dramas hit British cinema screens, both made by fugitives from Hollywood’s anti-communist blacklist. Cy Endfield’s *Hell Drivers* and Joseph Losey’s *Time Without Pity* represent an eccentric side-branch in a British film industry looking back towards Michael Balcon and forward to the “social realism” movement. The two films offer violent, emotional and iconoclastic perspectives on nineteen-fifties Britain from two men who both came to attention as genre filmmakers leaning towards “social conscience” messages. *Hell Drivers* is an ensemble piece where new faces and new sensibilities – including Sean Connery and Patrick McGoohan – combined with character stalwarts like William Hartnell and Wilfred Lawson. It is startlingly raw in its depiction of lorry drivers competing over the fastest runs to and from a quarry, not least because of the leading performance of Stanley Baker. As Andrew Higson and others have noted, Baker represented a new kind of film star in British cinema, a change made possible by *Hell Drivers*. In *Time Without Pity*, British class prejudices are ever-present in a melodrama about an alcoholic trying to save his wrongly convicted son from the gallows. The formal devices Losey employs to intensify the emotions are at times almost excruciating. This paper shows how, in different ways, the films present a heightened, almost hysterical, rendering of faultlines in British society from the point of view of two insider-outsiders. Their response to exile reveals much about the countries that expelled and adopted them.

Biographical Information

Peter Jameson is a PhD student at Queen’s University Belfast researching the theatrical origins of Joseph Losey’s filmmaking style. His research interests include Losey, post-war British Cinema and screen performance.

Eileen Leahy

Title: *Today* (Pom Boyd, 2009) as a response to *Adam and Paul* (Lenny Abrahamson, 2004)

Panel: New Irish Cinema

Institution: Trinity College Dublin

Today is a community film made by writer/director Pom Boyd in collaboration with a group of drug users participating in a RADE (Recovery through Art, Drama and Education) cultural programme. This paper examines how the film can be read as a

response to, or dialogue with, Abrahamson's *Adam and Paul* in its representation of drug use and its construction of an alienating urban space. The paper looks at how *Today* uses a variety of intersecting narratives relating to a number of characters who wander through Dublin's inner city. It shows that the film constructs the city from the vantage point of its inhabitants, as a site of possibility, where connections are forged and maintained through culture and social engagement.

In this way the relationship between community film and national cinema is investigated and the paper questions whether communities dialogue with their stereotyping by mainstream representation or appropriate these tropes and remake them for themselves.

Biographical Information

Eileen Leahy received a PhD in Film Studies from Trinity College in early 2014, which she completed with an IRC scholarship. She has also studied at Dublin City University and Liberties College Dublin. She is involved in various media, art and community related events.

Michael Leonard

Title: Surrealist motifs and the narrative turn in Philippe Garrel's post-underground cinema.

Panel: Radicalism and Conservatism

Institution: Queen's University Belfast

Philippe Garrel is one of the most significant directors among a heterogeneous group of film-makers that emerged in France in the mid 1960's, designated with the term 'post-Nouvelle Vague' by Gilles Deleuze. In his early years Garrel was associated with political dissidence, bound to the formal experimentation of his cinema, and he was strongly influenced by the events of May '68. However, following a decade of underground experimentation in the 1970s, he turned towards what he himself has termed a narrative period, marked by a less austere style and codes more familiar with mainstream cinema. This paper will consider the significance of the shift that took place in Garrel's cinema in the 1980s. In particular, it will ask whether the change signifies a conservative development, or if aspects of Garrel's post-underground work point to a continued engagement. Central to this question will be a consideration of the relationship between his later cinema and Surrealism.

Biographical Information

Michael Leonard completed his PhD in Film and Visual Studies at Queen's University Belfast in 2013, which focused on the work of the French film-maker Philippe Garrel. He is currently working as a lecteur at the Université Paris-Sorbonne in France. Michael is particularly interested in theorising the relationship between cinema and politics, and other current research areas of interest include the cinema and cultural politics of Guy Debord and the Situationists.

Bernard McCarron

Title: Horror in Real-time: Impressions of Hitchcock in the Visual Art of Douglas Gordon

Panel: Reuse and Recycle

Institution: Queen's University Belfast

This paper examines the presence of Alfred Hitchcock's cinema in contemporary visual culture, and more particularly, in the work of Scottish visual artist, Douglas Gordon. The migration of art cinema into the gallery has been facilitated by both new technologies and contemporary cultural politics. This phenomenon has also been associated with speculations about 'the death of cinema', and the increased dissolution of disciplinary boundaries between the arts, generally. In the midst of these transformations, artists such as Douglas Gordon have been returning to Hitchcock-related images, sequences, and iconography with remarkable regularity, and ingenuity. The world of Hitchcock's cinema – a classical cinema of formal unities and narrative coherence – represents more than the spectre of a supposedly dead art form, it transcends its own filmic and institutional contexts, becoming for these artists an important audiovisual lexicon of desire, loss, mystery, and suspense. This paper proposes to examine Gordon's creative appropriation of the impressions he has received from Hitchcock's films and how they inform the wider scope of his work, a labyrinthine edifice which organises pre-existing information into an autonomous whole offering the spectator a space to reflect on the contemporary world as a discerning subject. Of crucial importance to Gordon's work are the many expressive elements and motifs in Hitchcock's cinema – in particular, the relationship between *mise en scène* and the mechanics of suspense, time, memory, history, and death. With this in mind, the paper probes further the disproportionate amount of interest shown by contemporary visual artists towards Hitchcock's cinema ahead of other, but no less important, auteur filmmakers such as Douglas Sirk, Vincente Minnelli, John Ford, Billy Wilder and Howard Hawks working in Hollywood hitherto the end of the classical era.

Biographical Information

Dr. McCarron gained the accreditation of Doctor of Philosophy in Film in 2012, and Masters in Film and Visual Studies in 2008 – both at The Queen's University of Belfast. His doctoral research studies artists and art works that respond to the cinema of Alfred Hitchcock. He is currently affiliated with the Queen's University and over the past academic year he has acted as module convenor for the university's Introduction to Hollywood Cinema. He continues to teach Critical Approaches to Cinema during this current semester and his current research interests are in cinema and contemporary visual art, aesthetics of expressionist cinema and particularly the presence of Russian émigré directors in France during the 1920s.

Anthony McIntyre

Title: A Man for All Regions: Chris O’Dowd’s Multi-National Stardom and White Irish Masculinity

Panel: Fictive Materials

Institution: University College Dublin

Chris O’Dowd is a rising star whose status was consolidated in his breakout performance in the comedy *Bridesmaids* (2011). In the wake of this success, O’Dowd opted to play the role of the Irish agent of a Maori girl group in Australian period comedy-drama *The Sapphires* (2012) as well as work on Sky 1 comedy, *Moone Boy* (2012-), a series based on his childhood in rural Ireland in which the actor plays Sean Murphy, the imaginary friend of the young central character, Martin Moone (David Rawle). Although excellent scholarship exists on the impact of Irish stars on Hollywood (and vice versa), with his recent acting projects spanning Ireland, Australia, Britain and the US, O’Dowd is perfectly situated to provide a contemporary case study in how a nationalized star text activates and inflects assumptions of whiteness and nationality depending on spectatorial position in a number of different contexts.

One of the features of Irishness noted in recent scholarship is its shifting ethnic identity in terms of whiteness. The claim that “Irishness often authorizes a location and celebration of whiteness that would otherwise be problematic” shall inform this paper’s analysis. In considering *Bridesmaids*, *The Sapphires* and *Moone Boy* we see how the complex signifier of Irish whiteness is repackaged in different national contexts and the challenge of this paper shall be to delineate the impact of such different iterations.

Biographical Information

Anthony P. McIntyre is a PhD student in UCD currently working on a thesis entitled “Leaning Toward the Horizontal?: Screen Culture, Celebrity and the Shaping of Political Subjectivities among “Millennial” Generation Youth Cultures.” He has work forthcoming in the journal *Television and New Media*, and an edited collection on the use of French theorist Pierre Bourdieu in Film and Media studies.

Denis Murphy

Title: *Off the Table*: Screen Producers Ireland, Irish Actors Equity, and the Buyout of Residual Payments

Panel: Film Production Practice in Ireland

Institution: Dublin City University

For the last fourteen years, the actors union Irish Equity has conducted on-again, off-again talks with film and television producers in order to renegotiate the 1990s labour agreement still largely in place today. The failure of these negotiations thus far has extended the status quo in relation to actor compensation for on-going performance rights. This is based on an advance “buyout” system rather than “pay per play” or

residual payments, the latter a “long tail” system spreading compensation over the entire commercial life of the film or television performance.

Screen Producers Ireland (SPI) have therefore precluded conditions similar to those in the US, where residuals have shown to be especially valuable to those at the lower end of the pay scale (Paul and Kleingartner 1994). Arguably, SPI has also avoided a further important concession of power to screen labour: the US residuals system for actors is so complex that the major entertainment corporations rely on SAG-AFTRA for its administration. The union has therefore retained an integral role in the employment relationship, despite the decline in labour bargaining power generally following the industry’s vertical disintegration and transition towards “post fordist” flexibilisation (Christopherson and Storper 1989).

It would appear that Irish Actors Equity, already in a symbiotic relationship with Irish producers over the administration of casting and payment of screen extras, have so far failed to extend their representational role in relation to principal actors. The SPI’s successful prevention of Equity’s bid to reinstate residual payments is thus reflective of the general decline of labour power in the 21st century Irish screen industries.

Biographical Information

I am currently researching my PhD topic, which deals with the labour history of Irish film and television production, 1958-2013. Broadly, the research tracks the evolution of trade union power in the industry over the past fifty years. I have presented some of my research findings in a paper entitled “Ardmore Studios, film labour and the Irish state”, at the ECREA European Film Cultures Conference, in the University of Lund, November 2013. In addition to my research, I have lectured in Cultural Studies, Film and TV Finance, Media and Power, and Irish Cinema at DCU. Research interests include creative labour, critical media industry studies, short film, and the Irish film industry.

Jack Murray

Title: Authorship, Game Design and Narrative Theory

Panel: Technics

Institution: University College Cork

Roger Ebert's assertion that 'Video games can never be art' and the controversy and argument that it prompted is a well documented moment in ongoing debate regarding the status of digital games as an art form. The article for which the above quotation serves as a title was published in 2010 but of greater interest to me is a quotation from an article five years earlier in which Ebert writes:

I [...] consider video games inherently inferior to film and literature. There is a structural reason for that: Video games by their nature require player choices, which is the opposite of the strategy of serious film and literature, which requires authorial control. [...] I believe the nature of the medium prevents it from moving beyond

craftsmanship to the stature of art. (Ebert, 2005)

Ebert's argument that the formal necessity for player choice makes games unsuited to the exercise of authorial control seems intuitive. Player agency seems to present a clear challenge to traditional authorial control. How can one claim a meaningful authority over something designed to facilitate play?

This paper will draw on film's Auteur theory as well post-structuralist theories of authorship in conjunction with game design and narrative theory in order to develop a more comprehensive model of game authorship. Where Ebert argues that the nature of the medium is anti-authorial, I intend to demonstrate that games are formally predisposed to favorable engagement with the network of concepts and ideas that surround the figure of the Author.

Biographical Information

Jack Murray is a third year PhD candidate currently studying full time in University College Cork. My research is in the field of game studies and is specifically concerned with game authorship. My research is supported by a grant from the Digital Arts and Humanities PhD program.

Publications include: "Auteurist Strategies in the Work of Hideo Kojima" – The Marginalised Mainstream: Literature, Culture and Society. Institute of English Studies, Senate House, London (2012).

Maria O'Brien

Title: A comparative look at film finance and gaming finance in Ireland and Canada

Panel: Film Production Practice in Ireland

Institution: Trinity College Dublin

Traditionally the film industry and the gaming industry (by which I mean broadly computer games) have very little in common. Both industries are very different in both their method of production and output. However, cross over between these industries should be encouraged. I look at the different approaches to film and gaming finance in two very different jurisdictions to explore how and why these industries could become bedfellows.

The film industry in Ireland is primarily driven by an investor driven tax relief known as Section 481. It is being phased out and will be replaced by a tax credit system in 2016. As an incentive, it emphasises the nebulous concept of cultural value through a (admittedly broad) cultural test. In contrast, the gaming industry in Ireland doesn't have specific investor reliefs or tax credit systems. Instead it relies on general research and development tax credits.

In Canada, film finance works on a tax credit system similar to that to be introduced in Ireland in 2016. However, the gaming industry in Canada works in a significantly different way. Canada offers generous tax incentives for what is termed SD&ER (scientific development and experimental research) in companies that advance science or technology in the gaming industry. These areas cross over in the Canada Media

Fund (CMF) which ‘fosters, develops, finances and promotes the production of Canadian content and applications for all audio-visual media platforms’ (from CMF website).

This comparative approach highlights the fundamental issue of understanding of computer games whether it is an industrial product which comes within scientific R&D or whether it is a cultural product. The gaming industry in Ireland is reluctant to move away from R&D type incentives towards any incentive that may require a cultural test such as that within the film industry.

However, I believe that within Ireland both the film industry and gaming industry could work in a more symbiotic way which reflects the interconnectedness of these areas. My approach examines the different approaches to film and gaming incentives in two different jurisdictions. This approach is informed by my background as a solicitor and tax advisor, but is not limited to taxation policy only. Through my M.A. in Screen Studies (Goldsmiths) and my M. Litt in Film Studies (on Ang Lee) my approach is informed by theories within cultural studies.

Biographical Information

I trained as a solicitor and tax advisor and worked for a decade in property and tax law. Then I broadened my academic background by studying film to postgraduate level, completing an M.A. in Screen Studies. Goldsmiths, University of London and an M.Litt in Trinity College Dublin on the work of director Ang Lee.

Jennifer O’Meara

Title: Cate Blanchett’s Deconstruction of Performance through Performance

Panel: Fictive Materials

Institution: Trinity College Dublin

Despite widespread acclaim since her break-out performance in *Elizabeth* (Shekar Kapur, 1998), Cate Blanchett has received little attention within film studies. My paper focuses on a sub-set of performances that reveal Blanchett’s talent for embodying roles that deconstruct the performance process. I argue that the actress is particularly drawn to reflexive parts that make a feature of the character’s own performances.

In a discussion of ‘performing performing’, Charles Affron (1980) explains how, unlike classical Hollywood style that is meant to ‘hide the fiction-effect altogether’, when an actor is performing a role within a role ‘we become conscious of a high level of fictivity’ (42). Although Affron was concerned with overtly reflexive performances (when the character is also an actor), I focus on three roles that require Blanchett to perform characters whose own performances are failing, and who are ‘split’ in different ways. In *Coffee and Cigarettes* (Jim Jarmusch, 2003) she plays a fictionalised version of herself and her cousin. In providing a unique opportunity to see an actress do an impersonation of her own impersonation of herself, the dual roles offer rich insights into screen acting. In *I’m Not There* (Todd Haynes, 2007) Blanchett

plays one aspect of a character (Bob Dylan) who is split across six performers. While in *Blue Jasmine* (Woody Allen, 2013) Blanchett performs a character whose internal breakdown requires her to convey a mental split through external signs. In each case, I demonstrate how Blanchett creates a sense that the character is also performing, through layered nuances of voice and body.

Biographical Information

Jennifer O'Meara is a Ph.D. candidate in Film Studies at Trinity College Dublin, where her research focuses on verbal style in the work of selected writer-directors. Jennifer's work has appeared, or is forthcoming, in *Cinema Journal*, *The Soundtrack*, *The Films of Wes Anderson: Critical Essays on an Indiewood Icon* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) and *Verse, Voice and Vision: Poetry and the Cinema* (Scarecrow Press, 2013).

Nicholas O'Riordan

Title: Accent in Contemporary Irish Film

Panel: New Irish Cinema

Institution: University College Cork

Accent is one of the most intimate and powerful markers of group identity and solidarity as well as of individual difference –Hamid Nacify

My paper examines the position of accent in contemporary Irish film, with a particular focus on cinematic Dublin. Looking at several key texts from the new wave of Irish film, I will analyse these categories to explore the representation and ideological application of accents as semiotic categories in recent cinema.

Over the past 25 years there has been a notable shift in accent in the country, with South Dublin widely recognised as the nexus of a 'new accent'. Robert Moore claims that the new Dublin accent is one which "nobody in the country would claim as their own", having "no community of 'native speakers,' only people who are pretending to be something they aren't", an accent which has been created to dissociate the speaker from local Dublin. When one considers that "many features of 'local Dublin English' go back further than the 17th century" there is an implication that as this accent is far more historically, socially and geographically rooted, that it, and its speaker are therefore more 'authentic'. As Geoff Nunberg writes, "our idea of an authentic accent reflects our idea of an authentic self", I therefore intend to examine the use of accent as an ideological device in the respective films, by challenging the methods, modes and motivations behind the ways in which "authenticity" becomes an ideologically-empowered semiotic and textually-performative device, and by analysing the ways in which the formation of recorded cinematic accents have been unproblematically yoked to notions of "authenticity".

Biographical Information

Nicholas O'Riordan is a PhD Film Studies candidate under the supervision of Dr. Barry Monahan at University College Cork, where he is also an undergraduate tutor in the School of English and a board member of the Alphaville Journal of Film Studies. Prior to this he completed a BA in English and Geography, and an MA in Film Studies, both in UCC, where his MA thesis was titled 'Dublin's Fair City?: Representations of Dublin City in Contemporary Irish Film'. His research interests include Irish cinema, urban space in cinema, sound and the voice in cinema, and representations of national identity in cinema. He also works as a filmmaker.

Noel O'Shea

Title: Digitally-Captured Criminals: Demolishing Cinematic Spaces in the Search for the Self in Michael Mann's *Miami Vice*

Panel: Gender I

Institution: University of Limerick

While classical thrillers have traditionally posited two separate cinematic spaces in a relationship played out as conflict between characters on opposing sides of the law, Michael Mann's digital genre films collapse these spaces down into an internal battle of characters grappling with the maintenance of a single self. Reflecting a postmodern world of social disintegration, *Miami Vice* (2006) deals with disciplined, professional men struggling to align their own personal codes of masculinity with an increasingly indifferent urban environment. For these obsessive men betrayal of self is the ultimate crime; but commitment to their codes brings with it an unavoidable erosion of self and Other. While these male professionals work hard to maintain self-ownership, Mann's mise-en-scène places them, crucially, against highly stylised, often hyperreal backgrounds, aesthetically denying them their stable male identity and working to position them outside of normal relationships and society as a whole. In fact, the digital aesthetic on show in *Miami Vice* throws the crime thriller's classical spaces built from the city's shadows and light into hyper-relief, essentially collapsing the generically motivated cinematic spaces in favour of a mise-en-scène that privileges the screen's surface as an abstract, unreal space where identity is configured.

Although Mann throws his characters into cinematic worlds of vast, quasi-infinite spatial textures – perhaps *too* vast for the spatial conventions of classical crime films to contain the Mann men – *Miami Vice* nonetheless allows the viewer to contemplate its relationship with earlier crime genre cinema. The film evoking a mood of nostalgia on the part of its unstable male protagonists – a longing for an identity that could only be satisfied if they perhaps stalked the hallways of a classical Hawks rather than floating through the neon-lit infinities of a modernist Mann.

Biographical Information

Structured PhD candidate in New Media & Film (Fourth Year). I am studying the changes in genre cinema, particularly the more affective genres of horror and the thriller, resulting from the use of digital cameras instead of film to capture the film's

images. I posit a changing relationship between film text and spectator based on the digitally captured genre film's enunciation of screen realism.

Giovanna Rampazzo

Title: Representing Transnational Masculinity: Identity and Gender Roles in No-budget Irish-Indian Films

Panel: Ireland Away

Institution: Dublin Institute of Technology

This paper examines the short films produced by a group of self-taught filmmakers belonging to the Keralite community in Dublin. The South-Indian state of Kerala has a longstanding tradition of producing independent films and of using cinema to address social issues. These practices are now replicated in an Irish context, where film is used to articulate the transnational experience of a particular kind of Indian immigrant to Ireland. In fact, most of these filmmakers are married to Indian women working as nurses in Dublin; despite being highly educated and skilled, they find it difficult to gain employment, so their wives have become the main breadwinners in their households. Keralite men based in Ireland, however, are very active in their close-knit community and often organize cultural and educational events, which inform and contribute to their filmmaking activities.

Films like *Short Sight* (2011) by Biju Mullakuzhithadathil, Jijo Palatty's *Happy Independence Day* (2009) and *Parakayapravesham* (To Take Another Human Form, 2013) deal with gender and generational conflicts, as well as difficulties of adapting to life in Ireland. In this paper I will illustrate how film is used to address the shifts in gender roles and challenges to traditional masculinity experienced by Keralite men, along with issues of deterritorialization and cultural difference. I argue that through this avenue, Keralite filmmakers not only shed light on the lived experience of Indian communities in Ireland, but also find a way to reassert their masculinity by becoming active producers of cultural media.

Biographical Information

My research falls within the developing area of Transnational/Transcultural Cinema, looking at Indian cinema as a case study in the Irish context. My research looks to examine Indian cinema through its performativity and the socio-cultural mediations and encounters that 'Bollywood' in its formation as a broader cultural - not film - industry as argued by Rajadhyaksha (2002) facilitates. The question central to this research is to probe the place and role of film as commodity within Ireland, examining if, how, and in what ways cinema functions as an agent of dialogue and a catalyst for socio-cultural and economic exchange. My research involves a study of sites/events branded around 'Bollywood' as a commodity, including exhibition spaces, film festivals (especially the Indian Film Festival of Ireland), production ventures, and key social actors involved with these.

I completed my BA in Film Studies at the University of Wolverhampton in England, where I developed an interest in Hindi film.

I have also directed and produced several short films set in Dublin. In 2009 I was awarded a MPhil in Film Theory and History by Trinity College Dublin.

Edel Robinson

Title: Via Writing: Irish missionary Films and Filmmaking 1930-1997. A Study Search

Panel: Ireland Away

Institution: Institute of Art, Design and Technology

As implied in the title it is by and through writing that patterns of filmmaking and narratives of the historical foundation and work of Irish missionary societies will be developed and passed on.

Since 2009 I have worked as an independent researcher in the IFI, Irish Film Archive, researching and cataloguing previously undocumented films made by and commissioned by Irish missionary societies. I have called on religious to participate in this Film Research Project and deposit their important film collections in the Irish Film Archive for research, preservation and safekeeping. The purpose of this work is to make a critical study of films and filmmaking by religious societies for publication. There are eighty-four societies with registered membership in the Irish Missionary Union. To date thirteen societies have participated in this Project, providing more than one hundred films. Eight are societies of religious women. Irish Missionary Films are forgotten and neglected. The aim of this Research Project is to find them and to document them.

Key Questions

- How do these films made by and commissioned by religious successfully cross the traditional boundary between ‘amateur’ and ‘professional’ filmmaking?
- How might films made and commissioned by religious be unique and peculiar to Ireland and what is the significance of their contribution to Irish film and mission history?

It is planned to extend the scope of this Film Research Project to other missionary denominations on the island of Ireland.

Biographical Information

Edel Robinson has an MA in Visual Arts Practices from the Institute of Art, Design and Technology. Dublin. She has directed several films on 8mm, 16mm and 35mm formats and has received many awards from the Arts Council and other bodies. Her research interests include experimental/independent cinema; the importance of place and landscapes; and local history.

Jennie Rothwell

Title: Irish-Iberian Co-productions: Recent Case Studies

Panel: Film Production Practice in Ireland

Institution: Trinity College Dublin

Veteran Spanish filmmaker José Luis Borau argued that co-productions are an invented category, noting that a film's finances can come from different national sources, while the artistic elements cannot. In contrast, this paper will try to reveal the textual and industrial positives that result from co-production, and explore any that are particular to the Irish/Iberian relationship in two recent releases. *The Food Guide to Love* (Dominic Harari and Teresa de Pelegrí, 2012) is set in a recession-free contemporary Dublin, while *Menú degustació/Tasting Menu* (Roger Gual, 2013) takes place in a famous Catalan restaurant, with food, eating and pleasure as central to both plots and to each film's expression of the national.

On a textual level, national or regional identity will be discussed in relation to food, locations and the nationalities identified in each film. I will examine the casting of established stars familiar to both audiences such as Stephen Rea and Fionnuala Flanagan (*Menu degustació*), and performers known on their home turf like Leonor Watling or Simon Delaney (*The Food Guide to Love*), and assess how this presence impacts on the perception of national identity within each production. This paper will explore whether these co-productions were a marriage of convenience or if they can offer any new interpretations of Irish, Iberian or European identities.

Biographical Information

Jennie Rothwell is a PhD candidate in the Department of Hispanic Studies, Trinity College Dublin where she is researching English-language cinema by Spanish women directors. Publications include an article in the *Journal of Catalan Studies* and a chapter on Isabel Coixet in *(Re)viewing Creative, Critical and Commercial Practices in Contemporary Spanish Cinema* (Intellect, forthcoming 2014). Jennie also works as a literary translator. Jennie's research interests include film authorship, adaptation, stardom, performance and translation.

Colm Whelan

Title: *Avatar's Living Network*

Panel: Technics

Institution: National University of Ireland, Galway

The aim of this paper is to look at James Cameron's *Avatar* as an example of a network of presence-objects. *Avatar* highlights a new space involving text and audience as equal parts of the same object unfolding simultaneously. *Avatar* is highly coded with elements of network living: the Na'vi people physically connect to their surroundings, not to use them, but to *be* them; to become equal parts of the overall operations of the object system. The text, due to the motion capture and 3D technologies, becomes a network in which the viewer is enmeshed (relating to the use of 3D glasses). I want to look at how this form of objet-network offers up an equality of viewing between subject/object/text/technology and how a meaning based in the presence of the network offers up a new mode of physical understanding.

Biographical Information

I am currently undertaking a structured 4 year research PhD in the areas of film studies and philosophy (relating to the philosophy of presence). I intend to focus on the Occupy Wall Street movement and James Cameron's *Avatar* as cultural phenomena relating to the emergence of a meaning that is primarily rooted in presence. Having completed my Masters on a similar topic, I wish to expand it and make it a novel approach to both fields of study. I have given a number of papers based in this area and feel that this conference is another invaluable addition.
