

Abstracts (Provisional)

Schizoanalysis and Visual Culture, Cardiff University 2010

Hanjo Berressem (Cologne University)

“Actual image | Virtual cut:’ Schizoanalysis and Montage”

If a machine is something that cuts into a continual material flow, schizoanalysis can be read, quite literally, as an analysis of cuts. In cinematic registers, it is an analysis of montage. Looking closely at a number of modes and moments of montage in the work of Alfred Hitchcock, the paper shows how his strategies of 'reciprocally presupposing' actual image and virtual montage relate to a Deleuzian poetics and politics of the cinema.

Nadine Boljkovac (Aberdeen University)

“Signs without Name”

A seemingly otherworldly, fleeting yet haunting series of visual, voice and sound assemblages amassed with the ‘relentlessness of a bounty hunter’ constitute the opening moments of Chris Marker’s 1982 *Sans Soleil* during which the narration announces: ‘He wrote: I’ve been round the world several times and now only banality still interests me’. At once specific, explicit and cryptic, the film’s narration and images of time deftly manifest doublings and paradoxes of life, creation and experience: death and survival, memory and forgetting, horror and beauty, fragility and indestructibility, joy and loss, layers of life that simultaneously, collectively comprise, as *Sans Soleil* suggests, familiar *and* indecipherable aspects of existence that the films of this thesis seek to momentarily glimpse and distinguish. Via its embrace of spiritual cosmic ‘worlds’ within our own whose language of ‘electronic graffiti’ delineates ‘the contours of what is not, or is no longer, or is not yet’ (SS), *Sans Soleil* evokes a melancholy whose disembodied wounds bespeak the loss of actual limits and survival of virtual remains. By such affecting embodiment, *Sans Soleil* effectively unearths the untranslatable and impermanent, that invisible *between* or ‘poignancy of things’, the ‘Japanese secret’ that implies ‘the faculty of communion with things, of entering into them, of being them for a moment’ so that, ‘in their turn[,] they should be like us: perishable and immortal’ (SS). This presentation will endeavour to assess and evoke Marker and Deleuze’s own interrogative methods that thoroughly explore, in the manner of a revelatory ‘schizoanalysis’ or empiricism, molecular and variable operations beneath our ‘molar’ structures and organisations.

F.J.Colman (Manchester Metropolitan University)

“The Family Manifesto: Theorum - Introitus Requiem Aeternam (Grant them eternal rest)”

With and against forms of capital designated trajectories, every family offers its own ways of living, forming family manifestos. These consist of pockets and fissures and forms of schizo-life that offer a-signifying modalities for existence, and mark the political processes of escape and entrapment. What is a screen-schizoanalyst to do? In

this paper I consider the family group on screen as a model of the socially produced schizo-group. In particular, I'm interested in how the historical time frame of the family unit's production causes it to assume different kinds of duplicitous models of extreme modes of living, from the desire to reproduce life alternating with the refusal of life. My focus for the paper is through the events and ideas produced in the family manifesto form composed in three films: Pasolini's 1968 film *Teorama* (a political-religious allegory with Terence Stamp signalling a Christ-Devil in fawn-coloured polyester); Bruce Wagner's film, *Women in Film* (2001), where "Hollywood" provides the a-signifying conditions for the 'family' of women, one of whom (played by Beverly D'Angelo), is trying to produce a remake of Pasolini's *Teorama*; and *Moon* (Duncan Jones 2009), where the family offers a stabilising temporal mode for the time unit of the human worker-body. The characters in these films are subject to the dynamic politics that beset any group, and their modes of response to their familial narratives offer different methods for accessing the historical details of the constraintment of subjectivities. My starting point for a schizoanalysis of these films' political affects will be Deleuze's processual method of the forms of cinema. Deleuze's ciné-semiology is anoedipal and drawing from Peircean methodology, focusses upon the ethical relations of the film world. I want to then extend this model by considering the schizo-theorum offered in these films to be an audit of the political realities central to the agency of the family manifesto, and look to Guattari's work on the relationships between desire and territory in order to think about the affect of depression, suicide, and death within the family manifesto.

Tom Conley (Harvard University)

TBA

Jan Harris

"Beyond the Time-Image? The Films of Benedek Fliegauf"

It is perhaps the case that insufficient notice has been taken of the historical context of Deleuze's Cinema studies; to the fact, attested to by both their opening reflections and closing commentary, that they are in part occasioned by the 'question of a crisis of cinema – under the pressure...of the electronic image', which threatens to 'either transform cinema or...mark its death'. This effective bracketing of the anatomy of the forms of the movement- and time-image can be understood in the light of Foucaultian archaeology, wherein the characteristics of historical strata are available only under the condition of their erasure; from which naturally follows the refusal to produce an 'analysis of the new images, which would be beyond our aims, but only to indicate certain effects whose relation to the cinematographic image has yet to be determined'.

Twenty five years on the consequences of these new images are manifest. This paper will attempt to contribute to their analysis by examining, through the optic Deleuzian cinema theory, the work of the Hungarian director Benedek Fliegauf. Fliegauf's value, within this context, resides in the fact that his films (or at least his 2005 *Dealer*) appear to simultaneously operate within the domain of the time-image while at the same time exploring the cinematic potential afforded by the digital image. Consequently, in its' reading of his work, this presentation will seek to demonstrate the continuing utility of elements (not least *Cinema I*'s reflection on the 'molecular

image' and *Cinema 2*'s equation of chronos with sickness) of Deleuze's analysis of cinema, while at the same time noting the emergence 'images' that potentially exceed the bounds of Deleuzian cine-theory. Apropos of the latter, attention will be directed to the centrality of the audiovisual in Fliegau's work, which draws on extra-cinematic influences such as electro-acoustic music, to create a unique diegetic soundscape. The coupling of this soundscape with the visual language of the cinematic image generates novel synaesthetic modalities, allowing new forms of the co-articulation of the aural and visual, in particular the rhythmic organization of diegetic sound in manner recalling the functions traditionally assumed by non-diegetic music. It will be argued that this audio-visual regime arises from the possibilities opened up by the digitisation of the audio-visual.

Jan Jagodzinski (University of Alberta)

“Flaying the Senses: The Films of Kim Ki-Duk”

The myth of Apollo flaying the skin off the Satyr Marsyas presents us with the image of exposing the inner bodily senses, the turning of the skin inside out to expose the nerve ending as such—the BwO as ‘creative skin’ in the context of this presentation. This is the creative canvas on which an artist’s work. The Korean sense of *han*, the suffering and trauma of a people due to its historical circumstances (the residual of a history of (neo)colonization by China, Japan and the West as well as the repression of the persistent divided state of North versus south Korea) is staged through the films of Kim-Ki-Duk in such a specific way that has caused him to be both revered and loathed by the Korean populace. As part of the Korean Wave (*Hallyu*) he presents a stark contrast to the usual melodramas, music hip-hop and other films that have made Korea so revered but also accused as being an exporter of cultural hegemony throughout Southeast Asia. In this presentation I look at a number of specific films (*Bow*, *Time*, *The Isle*) to show how Kim Ki-Duk is flaying the sensibility of the public to raise issues around patriarchy, beauty culture and prostitution that are the repressed of the culture’s neoliberal policies at the high cost of economic growth. Kim Ki-Duk explores the implicit body that tears at the nerves ‘speaking’ its own language—his characters speak very little. His filmography presents an exemplary case of what Deleuze was after when speaking of the performative force of the body after Artaud. I hope to show this through a select number of clips during my presentation.

Graham Jones (Monash University)

“Every Name in History is Me’: Schizoanalysis and The Thing”

In its diverse attempts at examining what bodies, signs, and relations 'do' and how they do them, Deleuze and Guattari's *schizoanalysis* offers up a plethora of conceptual tools [desiring-machines, the body without organs, assemblages, diagrams, etc.] that reconfigure such well-known psychoanalytic notions as the unconscious, desire, neurosis, schizophrenia, the Real, and so forth. However, the key feature which D & G seem to repeatedly emphasise above all others about schizoanalysis is that it is NOT a method of interpretation, if by interpretation we refer to the pursuit of a final, 'fixed', unifying or unified meaning. If this is indeed so, then what does schizoanalysis have to offer Film Studies, given that the latter is institutionally and pedagogically driven, even today, primarily by a search for the 'meaning' of the text? Perhaps the

only way to answer this question and remain true to the spirit of schizoanalysis is to show what schizoanalysis itself does and how it does it. In short, it must be presented as a praxis, and moreover, one that only really exists and is viable when put into action. With this claim in mind I will examine John Carpenter's film *The Thing* [1982] as a kind of litmus-test in respect to concepts highlighted in the two volumes of 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia', for what makes the film a useful case-study in this regard, I believe, is its foregrounding [and literalizing] of notions of delirium, becoming, and multiplicity that seem indispensable to D & G's account of schizoanalysis.

Barbara Kennedy (Staffordshire University)

TBA

Taru Leppänen (University of Turku)

“Race and Sound in Disney’s *Jungle Book*”

The word ‘race’ is often put in inverted commas in order to emphasize the constructiveness of race or even to argue, that “*there is no such thing as race*” (Nayak 2006). However, as some scholars have noted, it is not enough to talk about the constructivity of race, leaving materiality and bodies out of the analysis. In this paper, I suggest a way of looking at race as a material process, made and remade not only by exclusions and erasures, but by its ongoing connections (Saldanha 2006). This paper examines raciality in the soundscape of Disney’s *Jungle Book* (1967) by considering sound’s and music’s power to engender molecular becomings.

Patricia MacCormack (Anglia Ruskin University)

“Inhuman Ecstasy”

Can we speak of an ecstasy of spectatorship? Can cinema make sorcerers and mystics of us through redeeming us from the human? In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari call to the imperative to becoming-inhuman through art as an entrance into the ethics of thought. The encounter with desire, with art, with bodies, can be understood as one of ecstasy. Ecstasy is enough to itself but cannot be present to itself. In *Coldness and Cruelty* masochism waits for the coming, the BwO is a becoming desiring the coming that never comes. Ecstasy affirms the inevitable impossibility of self in events of encounters with desire, art and thought, the inflective fold of spectatorship. The most simple, ordinary, undramatic love hurts because we are filled with it without knowing it, ourselves, our situation. Love is a mystery, which is where it collides with mysticism. Unlike the voracious lover who seeks an object upon which to alight, love for cinematic ecstasy demands a kind of inattention which also acknowledges the desperate and hurtful truth that the image, the work, the intensifier, that is the other in proximity, within and extricated from the spectator, is inattentive.

Iain Mackenzie (University of Kent) and Robert Porter (University of Ulster)

“Dramatizing the Political: On Deleuze and Guattari’s Method”

While certainly not a common-place in all quarters, it is nonetheless fair to say that contemporary political theorists, of various stripes, are becoming increasingly interested in aesthetic and cultural forms. Not coincidentally, we are also witnessing a growing interest in the explicitly political analysis of a broad range of particular aesthetic and cultural forms and experiences. One of the forms showing a recent surge in this respect is drama. While play-scripts and productions have long been poured over by literary scholars with an eye for the political meanings contained within them, political theorists are turning their attention to this art form in order to examine its effects within the political domain. In this paper we aim to contribute to these discussions by excavating, and elaborating upon, an account of the methodological link between drama and political theory. This account is drawn primarily from the early philosophical work of Deleuze but also from his later texts, including his collaborative projects with Guattari. Following Deleuze, we will refer to it as 'the method of dramatization'. We will argue that dramatization is a method aimed at determining the dynamic nature of political concepts by 'bringing them to life', in the way that dramatic performances bring to life the characters and themes of a play-script. As the nature of dramatization as method in political theory is unfolded, we will lend our support to the view that political thought must adopt an aesthetic or cultural form in order to access its 'object of study': the political.

Patricia Pisters (University of Amsterdam)

"Synaptic Signals - Time Traveling Through the Brain in the Neuro-Image "

In this presentation I will investigate how a schizoanalysis of cinema can account for the "encounter between the brain and a color" (Deleuze) by referring to insights of modern neuroscience on schizophrenia that relates the clinical disease to chaos theory. I will investigate the philosophical potentials of these experimental insights by referring to *The Butterfly Effect* (Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber, 2004), a film which allows its main character, who suffers from epileptic seizures and black outs, to travel through time, change one small thing in the past, and thus change the future present. I will argue that a schizoanalysis of cinema is particularly appropriate for contemporary digital screen culture and what could be called the "neuro-image".

Stamatia Portanova (University of Birkbeck)

"A symptomatology of the digital idea"

What, or 'who', is behind a tic? Lacanian psychoanalysis proposes the definition of a repressed desire striving to express itself in the twitching of an eyelid or in the stuttering of a speaking mouth. Distinguishing, after Nietzsche and Deleuze, between the active and reactive character of phenomena and their originating forces, we can understand the psychoanalytic definition as the reduction of a creative gesture to a 'reactive' form of expression. This paper investigates the 'active' nature of symptoms: rather than 'saying' through repression, the body creates despite and beyond it, a creativity that is not only of the human but of all 'machines'. Under this light, tics (or germs of creativity) appear everywhere: even in computers. Take a digital short-film like Antonin DeBemels' *Se Fondre* (2006): conventional everyday movements and

sentences unfold on the screen; at certain points, the movements are infinitesimally disturbed, accelerated or distorted, opening little gaps in the narrative line. This audiovisual symptomatology reveals the capacity of digital editing to multiply cuts, tics, twitchings and stutterings, a capacity that is not a mere reaction to conventions of linearity and meaning (video as the repressed unconscious of mainstream cinema) but that affirms its own logic. The symptomato-logic of the digital is related to the computer as an idea: the idea to cut and recombine things ad infinitum. In this sense, the repeated cuts and recombinations of digital video appear as the concrete applications and affirmations of an autonomous abstract thought: the ‘technical tic’ as symptom of a ‘digital idea’.

Anna Powell (Manchester Metropolitan University)

“From bio-port to strait-jacket: Oedipus revisited in *Spider*”

Deleuze and Guattari remap the unconscious by intensive cartographies. Schizoanalytic maps do not depend on the archaeological foundations of buried trauma but produce themselves in process. Rejecting traditional models of the body’s organic layout, they chart a shifting ‘constellation’ of affects’. Neither centralising the ego nor pathologising mental anomalies, they seek the autonomy of an orphan unconscious. For Guattari, schizoanalysis should approach complexity not by reductionism, but by working towards its increased ‘complexification, its processual enrichment, towards the consistency of its virtual lines of bifurcation and differentiation, in short towards its ontological heterogeneity’.

Applied to film, schizoanalysis avoids translating symbolic representation into a definite set of meanings, aiming instead to replace the ‘theatre of representation’ by desiring-production. Melding style with form and theme, it traces assemblages in process. The affective force of film exceeds the symbolic properties of language and image content. It works to release us from the schemata of representational equations and motivates us to think in new ways, freeing up the desire to become. The Oedipal scenarios mapped onto films by psychoanalytical theory are abstract deep structures rather than embodied actions. Sensory–motor responses to light, sound, colour and motion lead thought away from preconceptions into the realm of non-symbolic ideation, or ‘intuition’. Schizoanalysis does not approach mental anomaly via the cine-clinical ‘apparatus of capture’, but instead seeks an ‘intense feeling of transition, states of pure, naked intensity stripped of all shape and form’.

This paper explores the cinematic style of the two films and asks whether Cronenberg’s case-study of a schizophrenic has become less schizo than his phantasmatic world of games.

D.N. Rodowick (Harvard University)

TBA

Dennis Rothermel (California State University, Chico)

“The Tones of Judgment in Local Evening News”

Local evening television news broadcasts in the United States follow refrains designed to evince our judgments. The refrains consist in sequences of affects – each step cues a judgment with a calibrated impact. It is plainsong composed in judgmental tones with exact dynamics. The modern evening ritual resembles the invocation of evening prayers, following patterns as rigidly defined as the order of chant, psalms and hymns in traditional religious rites. Deleuze and Guattari's exposition of the refrain and its relationship to territory and milieu provides the framework for understanding this daily palliative of judgmental vespers. The broadcaster's practiced delivery suggests sympathy and condemnation, but ever so carefully not quite overtly. The more restrained is the hint of judgment, the more intense the affect. The production of the program follows a script that lines up a sequence of judgment-evincing affects. That quotidian script is the formative and repetitive structure. The stories anchor us at home, in the community we know, where we need to feel secure against the brunt of the world's chaos. They assure us that we live in the best locale in the world, and they invite us to share the judgments of a day's events.

Richard Rushton (Lancaster University)

“A Deleuzian Imaginary: On the cinema of Jean Renoir”

The category of the ‘imaginary’ – most often derived from Lacan – is perhaps the most maligned in the history of film studies. The cinematic imaginary either covers over the complexities of the symbolic order, or it blocks access to the Real. Even worse, it is the imaginary that allows the distortions of ideology to make their mark. For a certain generation of film scholars, the imaginary came to signify everything that was bad for the cinema and its apparatus.

For Deleuze, on the contrary, the imaginary in the cinema need not invoke that which is unreal: the imaginary does not hide or distort anything. For Deleuze, therefore, the imaginary is not opposed to the real. ‘The imaginary isn't the unreal’, he claims at one point. Rather, ‘it's the indiscernibility of real and unreal’. The outcome of this position for Deleuze is that the imaginary becomes a category of investigation and experimentation, both for films themselves and for the spectators who go to see films. I investigate the stakes of these claims with particular reference to the films of Jean Renoir, especially *The Golden Coach* (1956).

Mirjam Schaub (The Free University of Berlin)

"The Corrections: David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*."

I'll argue that David Lynch's film *Mulholland Drive* presents at the same time a thrilling revenge phantasy (of the Hollywood system) and the possibility to correct one's own misled life. While the common interpretations try to "re-oedipalize" the plot in tracing it back to a guilt complex of a murderer (and disappointed lover), I'll concentrate on the fact, that due to the realistically shown fractions that the chronological time frame faces in this film, even innocence re-appears as an accidental gift – and makes the effort to overcome the guilt complex plausible. The double edged sense of total determination and of total openness may be traced back to the split and scattered time images that force the different personae to overlap with

their own lives. Lynch further exploits here the clichés and fractions that the film noir and the fragile audio-visual contract are based upon.

Pasi Valiaho (Goldsmiths, University of London)

“The Filmic Envelope: Affectivity, Hypnosis and the Transindividual”

Taking its cue from the period of early film where hypnosis was considered an effective model for cinema as a type of technology of the self, this paper conceptualizes cinematic subjectivity from a perspective occluded by linguistically and optically oriented theorizations: the moving image as rhythms of intense corporeal and attentive investment that suspend the subject between movement and immobility, the interior and the exterior, the self and the others. Just like in hypnotic induction (according to Francois Roustang, among others), in cinema the question of experience becomes how the image generates and triggers preindividual affectivity that every subject contains within itself as potentiality. This paper models cinema through this analogy with hypnosis which, following Félix Guattari, entails “pre-egoic, pre-identificatory agglomeration” in experience. The paper then analyzes how cinema has since its inception produced psychosocial realities that can be characterized, borrowing a concept from Gilbert Simondon, as “transindividual.” This means the construction of collective bodies on screen that – with varying political consequences – envelop the individual and engulf her/him into webs of emotional significance.