

International symposium

24 and 25 September 2024

Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, University of Ljubljana

Mednarodni znanstveni simpozij

24. in 25. september 2024

Akademija za gledališče, radio, film in televizijo, Univerza v Ljubljani



Vojna in mir na zasloneh War and Peace on Screen



AGRFT

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television

The symposium is being organised within the framework of the research programme UL AGRFT Theatre and Interart Studies (Gledališke in medumetnostne raziskave – P6-0376) with the financial support from the Slovenian Research Agency (Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije – ARIS).

Simpozij pripravljamo v okviru raziskovalnega programa UL AGRFT Gledališke in medumetnostne raziskave (P6-0376), ki ga sofinancira Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije (ARIS) iz državnega proračuna.

War and Peace on Screen

We live in uncertain times. War zones are multiplying, military conflicts and war crimes, which are happening increasingly close to us, cannot be ignored, there are too many screens constantly conveying them to us. If the Gulf War with its representations in mainstream media had already encouraged Baudrillard to postulate its hyperreality, the live broadcast, made possible by new communication technologies at any moment and on a wide variety of channels, only intensifies this ontological effect. Technological capabilities, which have taken image (and sound) far beyond indexicality and at the same time made it possible for humans to leave the most lethal decisions to artificial intelligence, fill audiences with scepticism, distrust and fear. The increasingly tangible possibility of a devastating global conflict has shrunk the space for philosophical distance, and it demands commitment and action from all of us.

Our international symposium will therefore shed light on the complexity of the present moment through multi- and interdisciplinary approaches and it will also put it in a historical perspective. The common denominator of the contributions will be visualising war and imagining peace on screens of all shapes and sizes, hence we shall be interested in questions such as:

- Technological development, which has radically transformed audiovisual media, too, can be understood as a paradigmatic shift that paves the way for posthumanism or the posthuman gaze. How does this affect the roles and responsibility of audiovisual media in relation to war? Is the range of these roles expanding or contracting? Is their responsibility greater or has it become impossible?
- It is a well-known and well-documented fact that, throughout history, screens have often been called upon to serve as propaganda, especially when the latter's goal was warmongering or incitement of hatred. What about screens as anti-war, peace-making platforms or even as facilitators of conflict resolution? Does the noble goal as such guarantee their credibility, resonance and therefore also influence?
- Are viewers of images of war becoming more literate and better informed through historical experience and increasingly complex theoretical reflection? Are technological development and the ensuing paradigmatic transformation making us more critically engaged or desensitised, more empathetic or apathetic?
- What is the role of art in the present-day deluge of images of war? Is the space of artistic reflection the ultimate site of genuine contact with human tragedy, which is being dehumanised, willy-nilly, by the inevitable hyperproduction of current-affairs content?

The symposium will take place in a hybrid format (in-person and online). Participants will present papers in English, Slovenian and other languages of our region.

A selection of up to eight papers will be published as a **special issue of *Studies in European Cinema***; each article will be required to successfully undergo the peer-review process managed by the journal. Another selection of papers will be published in a book format (publisher to be announced at a later stage); the **book** will be peer-reviewed, too.

For additional information, follow the updates on our [AGRFT webpage](#) or contact the head of the symposium, Asst Prof [Polona Petek](#). You can also follow us on our [Facebook page](#).

The symposium is being organised within the framework of the research programme UL AGRFT *Theatre and Interart Studies (Gledališke in medumetništvene raziskave – P6-0376)* with the financial support from the Slovenian Research Agency (Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije – ARIS).

Vojna in mir na zaslonih

Živimo v negotovih časih. Vojna žarišča se množijo, vojaških spopadov in vojnih zločinov, ki se dogajajo tudi zelo blizu nas, ni mogoče odmisлити, preveč je zaslonov, ki nam jih nenehno posredujejo. Če je že zalivska vojna z reprezentacijami v osrednjih medijih Baudrillarda spodbudila k postuliranju njene hiperrealnosti, prenos v živo, ki ga sedaj v vsakem trenutku in na najrazličnejših kanalih omogočajo nove komunikacijske tehnologije, le še stopnjuje ta ontološki učinek. Tehnološke zmogljivosti, ki so podobo (in zvok) ponesle daleč onkraj indeksikalnosti ter hkrati omogočile, da človek najbolj smrtonosne odločitve prepušča umetni inteligenci, občinstva navdajajo s skepso, nezaupanjem in strahom. Čedalje bolj oprijemljiva možnost uničujočega svetovnega spopada krči prostor za filozofsko distanco in od slehernika terja angažma in akcijo.

Na mednarodnem znanstvenem simpoziju bomo zato kompleksnost sedanjega trenutka osvetljevali skozi multi- in interdisciplinarne pristope ter ga postavljali tudi v zgodovinsko perspektivo. Skupni imenovalec prispevkov bo torej vizualiziranje vojne in zamišljanje miru na zaslonih vseh oblik in velikosti, pri čemer nas bodo zanimala vprašanja, kot so:

- Tehnološki razvoj, ki v temelju spreminja tudi avdiovizualne medije, je mogoče razumeti kot paradigmatški premik, ki utira pot posthumanizmu oziroma postčloveškemu pogledu. Kako to zaznamuje vloge in odgovornost avdiovizualnih medijev v odnosu do vojn? Se nabor teh vlog širi ali krči? Je njihova odgovornost večja ali je postala nemogoča?
- Dobro znano in dokumentirano je dejstvo, da so bili zaslони skozi zgodovino pogosto vpoklicani v službo propagande, zlasti ko je bil cilj slednje vojno hujskaštvo oziroma podžiganje sovraštva. Kako pa se zaslони obnesejo kot protivojne, mirovniške platforme ali celo kot posredniki v razreševanju vojnih konfliktov? Jim plemenitejši cilj že sam po sebi zagotavlja kredibilnost, odmevnost in torej tudi vplivnost?
- Ali postajamo gledalci podob vojne skozi zgodovinsko izkušnjo in s čedalje kompleksnejšo teoretsko refleksijo bolj pismeni in bolje informirani? Nas tehnološki razvoj in paradigmatška transformacija, ki jo poganja, delata bolj kritično angažirane ali bolj otopele, bolj empatične ali bolj apatične?
- Kakšna je vloga umetnosti v sodobni poplavi podob vojne? Je prostor umetniške refleksije zadnje prizorišče pristnega stika s človeško tragedijo, ki jo neizbežna hiperprodukcija dnevnoinformativnih vsebin hočeš nočeš dehumanizira?

Simpozij bo potekal v hibridni obliki (v živo in na daljavo). Sodelujoči bodo referate predstavili v angleščini, slovenščini in drugih jezikih naše regije.

Izbor največ osmih prispevkov (v angleščini) bo objavljen kot **posebna številka znanstvenega časopisa *Studies in European Cinema***; vsak predlagani članek bo moral uspešno prestati anonimni recenzentski postopek, za katerega izvedbo bo poskrbel časopis. Še en izbor prispevkov (ravno tako v angleščini) bo objavljen v knjižni obliki (založnika bomo najavili kasneje); tudi **monografija** bo recenzirana.

Za dodatne informacije spremljajte našo **akademijsko spletno stran** ali kontaktirajte vodjo simpozija, doc. dr. **Polono Petek**. Sledite nam lahko tudi na **Facebook strani simpozija**.

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Symposium schedule

Tuesday, 24 September

09:00 – 09:45	REGISTRATION		
09:45 – 10:00	Welcome from the Dean of UL AGRFT Prof Žanina Mirčevska Introduction by Symposium Organiser Asst Prof Polona Petek AV Lecture Theatre 1		
10:00 – 12:00	Panel 1.1 (in English) AV Lecture Theatre 1 Chair: Asst Prof Primož Krašovec 10:00 Assoc Prof Lidija Dujić and Asst Prof Irena Radej Miličić 10:30 Dr Chris Roberts 11:00 Asst Prof Burat Polak and Dr Ufuk Özden 11:30 discussion	Panel 1.2 (in English) AV Lecture Theatre 2 Chair: Prof Darko Štrajn 10:00 Ms Lucy Lu (online) 10:30 Mr Michael Brodski 11:00 Asst Prof Zala Dobovšek 11:30 discussion	
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17:00 – 18:30	Keynote Lecture (in English) AV Lecture Theatre 1 Prof Owen Evans: Anthems for Doomed Youth?: <i>The Bridge</i> (Die Brücke, dir. Bernhard Wicki, 1959) and <i>Land of Mine</i> (Under sandet, dir. Martin Pieter Zandvliet, 2015) as antiwar art cinema		
19:00	SYMPOSIUM DINNER		

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LUNCH BREAK		
13:00 – 16:00	<p>Panel 4 (in English) Movie Theatre AGRFT Chair: Asst Prof Maja Krajnc</p> <p>13:00 Ms Tina Reid Peršin 13:45 Asst Prof German Andres Duarte Penaranda 14:30 Prof Steve Hawley 15:30 discussion</p>	
COFFEE BREAK		
17:00 – 21:00	<p>War and Peace on Screen in collaboration with Festival of Migrant Cinema and KINOFILM – screening Movie Theatre AGRFT</p> <p><i>Do You Get Me?</i> (<i>¿Me Entiendes?</i>, dir. Otto Lazić-Reuschel, 2022, 30 mins) <i>This Jungo Life</i> (dir. David Fedele, 2024, 77 mins)</p>	

Programme with abstracts

Keynote lecture (in English)

AV Lecture Theatre 1, Tuesday, 24 September, 17:00–18:30

Prof Owen Evans (Edge Hill University, United Kingdom)

Anthems for Doomed Youth?: *The Bridge* (*Die Brücke*, dir. Bernhard Wicki, 1959) and *Land of Mine* (*Under sandet*, dir. Martin Pieter Zandvliet, 2015) as antiwar art cinema

This lecture will focus in particular on the German-Danish co-production *Land of Mine* (*Under sandet*, dir. Martin Pieter Zandvliet, 2015), which explores the problematic period in Denmark in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, when German prisoners-of-war were deployed by the Danish army to clear the country's western beaches of landmines. These mines were laid by the German forces in anticipation of the Allied assault on Europe coming in West Jutland, rather than Normandy. In direct contravention of the Geneva Convention, and with tacit British support, the Danish army set German POWs to hazardous work.

Land of Mine embodies an interestingly alternative take on typical German 'war narratives of normalisation', such as *Der Untergang* (*Downfall*, dir. Oliver Hirschbiegel, 2004) from the early 2000s, presented as it is from an outside perspective, eschewing any spectacle of war, whilst echoing in interesting ways Bernhard Wicki's *Die Brücke* (*The Bridge*, 1959). Although *Land of Mine* in some ways follows an unsurprising narrative arc, its interest in the context of this symposium is twofold. Firstly, Zandvliet deploys a series of formal devices and tropes which anchor the film firmly in Bordwellian art cinema territory, which one might not typically expect from a seemingly conventional antiwar narrative. As such it also unsettles the difficult challenges that more conventionally conceived war film narratives such as *The Bridge* face, simply by including often graphic representations of combat on screen. Secondly, in view of its release during the year of the Europe-wide migration crisis, it is impossible not to read the film more broadly as a meditation on the plight of migrants, not only because of its exploration of unalloyed xenophobia, but also its reflection on the kinds of state-sanctioned oppression or conditions people are forced to flee from during, or immediately after, war. As such then, *Land of Mine* also anticipates the ongoing issues that can make the immediate peacetime period problematic too. What unites the two case study films of the title, however, is their focus on German teenagers conscripted into the army during the dying days of the war. As such then, they might both be seen as anthems for doomed youth, to allude to Wilfried Owen's famous poem of 1917, highlighting the senselessness of war and its toll on children. It is sadly as relevant now as ever it was.

Owen Evans is Professor of Film at Edge Hill University (United Kingdom). He has published on GDR literature, German and European Cinema, and German literary autobiography. He is co-founding editor of the international journal *Studies in European Cinema* with Graeme Harper. His current research also explores the field of arts, health and wellbeing and he is co-investigator of an AHRC-funded research network on everyday creativity (2022-24). He conducted an evaluation of Wakefield Council's 'Culture Cures' programme in 2017-18 and published on the wellbeing benefits of community arts festivals in *Health and Place* in November 2019.

Panel 1.1 (in English)

AV Lecture Theatre 1, Tuesday, 24 September, 10:00–12:00

Chair: Asst Prof Primož Krašovec

Assoc Prof Lidija Dujić and Asst Prof Irena Radej Miličić (University North, Croatia)

The Second Casualty: can voice survive the screen?

On the grounds of qualitative content analysis this paper aims to explore metadiscourse, i.e. the means of language in journalistic articles covering the two wars on European soil (or in its vicinity) – the Ukrainian and the Israeli-Palestinian ones. We are especially interested in communication models which empower – or not – social engagement of readers; because of this we chose two centre-left mainstream portals (comparable to *The Guardian*): index.hr and telegram.hr, specifically their columns and/or comments where they reaffirm their authors' position and relationship with their readers. We intend to analyse interactive and interactional dimensions of metadiscourse paying special attention to language hedges and boosters. We will try to address both questions of this symposium: the one on war and peace, and the one on 'behaviour' of the screen; by doing so we recall the seminal book by Phillip Knightly on war correspondence. We also continue to explore the capacities of Croatian journalistic space for constructive journalism, that is, whether or not it is able and willing to change professional perspective by reflection and action from inside. In this context, we are especially interested in stylistic tools, which, on the one hand, empower the readers' voice, their critical thinking and/or acting out, while on the other hand produce topical and generic distractions which go along with the lack of professionalism indirectly causing exit, that is, news avoidance.

Lidija Dujić is Associate Professor in the Department of Communicology, Media and Journalism at the University North (Croatia). Her academic interests are media literacy, gender studies, and history of Croatian literature and theatre. She has authored several belletrist books and two literary studies *Women's Side of Croatian Literature (Ženskom stranom hrvatske književnosti)* and *They call them Writers (Zovu ih književnicama)* and coauthored several textbooks and handbooks.

Irena Radej Miličić is Assistant Professor in the Department of Communicology, Media and Journalism at the University North (Croatia). Her academic interests are radio journalism, especially techniques of interview, culture of governance, politics of history and media politics, and psychology of media. She has nearly ten years of experience in radio hosting on HR3, and she has been a nonfiction book editor for more than seventy books. She loves to translate from Slovenian.

Dr Chris Roberts (Maidstone TV Studios, University for the Creative Arts, United Kingdom)

'Get me a villain a day': Television and conflict in British television news

As Gadi Wolfsfeld (*Understanding Peace Journalism*, 2007) reminds us, news journalism has a structural, discursive and organisational problem when it comes to covering and representing 'peace':

... there is an inherent contradiction between the logic of peace process[es] and the professional demands of journalists. A peace process is complicated; journalists demand simplicity. A peace process takes time to unfold and develop; journalists demand immediate results. Most of a peace process is marked by dull, tedious negotiations; journalists require drama. A successful peace process leads to a reduction in tensions; journalists focus on conflict. Many of the significant developments within a peace process must take place behind closed doors; journalists demand information and action.

Building on the above observation, this paper poses the question: Is what is true for print journalism similarly true for television journalism? Are representations of war and conflict in British television broadcast news and current affairs additionally constrained by the very apparatus and machinery of television?

The paper pays particular attention to the techniques and tropes appropriated from other modes of representation. In this instance, attention will be paid to the representational modalities of drama – character, archetypes, casting, narrative, non-diegetic score – to assess the extent to which these tropes are evident in news and current affairs broadcast television pertaining to war and conflict – of which, tragically, there is a wealth. What role do these modalities play in the discursive formation, the epistemology of war and conflict? Do such forms reproduce normative assumptions regarding the benign ‘civilising’ nature of ‘our boys’, whilst conversely reproducing mendacious normative assumptions regarding ‘our’ officially designated ‘enemies’?

Chris Roberts teaches television production theory on the BA Hons Television Production degree programme at Maidstone (University for the Creative Arts, United Kingdom). He adopts a cultural studies approach to television studies and television production, and most often uses discourse and critical discourse analysis as his analytical method. He has expertise in theories of ideology, representation, and cultural hegemony.

Asst Prof Burak Polat (Marmara University, Turkey) and Dr Ufuk Özden (Gümüşhane University, Turkey)

On the Use of Deepfakes in Wars

Deepfakes are highly realistic fake images and videos generated using artificial intelligence and machine learning techniques. The widespread dissemination of such content in the public domain poses significant threats, particularly by creating information disorder. The use of deepfakes for disinformation has emerged as an asymmetric psychological warfare method employed by conflicting parties. Beyond being a strategic tool in conflict processes, deepfakes are utilised within a rational strategy for computational propaganda, aiming to influence the public sphere and disrupt healthy public discourse on a global scale. The disinformative use of deepfakes undermines trust in information, leading to communicative crises, complicating verification processes, and endangering the democratic principles that govern societal processes.

This study critically examines the effects of deepfakes in the public domain through examples from the Ukraine-Russia and Israel-Palestine conflicts. It aims to reveal the adverse impacts of using deepfakes without a universal ethical framework on international security and social stability within the context of contemporary digital capabilities. Despite the pervasive pragmatism ethos that instrumentalises and subjugates reason, encompassing all layers of social life starting from the individual, this study will also focus on strategy proposals that have the potential to combat the disinformative use of deepfakes. These strategies aim to ensure the preservation of an information environment necessary for the healthy functioning of the public sphere. In conclusion, this study will discuss the development and applicability of multi-layered technical and political solutions to counter the use of deepfakes in conflicts, taking into account societal consensus. These solutions include ethical usage, algorithmic transparency, verification and validation through artificial intelligence, and the development of transparent, pluralistic, and libertarian policies necessary to combat deepfakes.

Burak Polat completed his undergraduate studies in Industrial Engineering at Doğuş University, his master’s degree in the Business and Technology Management at Istanbul Technical University, and his PhD in Informatics at Marmara University. Since 2014, he has been continuing his academic career at Marmara University’s Faculty of Communication. In 2015, he worked as a Visiting Scholar at the Central European University’s Center of Network Science. As Assistant

Professor at Marmara University, he lectures a variety of courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels, including Media Literacy, Society and Social Networks, Artificial Intelligence, and Media Analysis. Dr Polat's research explores the individual and societal impacts of information technologies, with a particular focus on the dissemination of information/misinformation on social media.

Ufuk Özden graduated from the Journalism Department of Atatürk University in 2008. In 2016, he completed his master's degree with a thesis titled 'Mediatic Production of Obscenity as an Industrial Form' in the Media Economics and Business Administration programme of Marmara University's Institute of Social Sciences. In 2023, he earned his doctoral degree from the same programme at Marmara University with a thesis titled 'Examination of Creative and Cultural Industries through Field and Capital in the Context of Political Economy Approach'. Between 2013 and 2023, he worked as a research assistant in the Journalism Department of Marmara University's Faculty of Communication. He currently continues his work as a doctoral research assistant in the Journalism Department of Gümüşhane University's Faculty of Communication.

Panel 1.2 (in English)

AV Lecture Theatre 2, Tuesday, 24 September, 10:00–12:00

Chair: Prof Darko Štrajn

Ms Lucy Lu (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom)

German First-World-War Films and the Absurd

According to German film theorist Siegfried Kracauer, the German government during the First World War put 'effort to make the German film a propaganda weapon ...', and the German authorities took it for granted that public opinion could be moulded into any pattern they desired'. The belligerent German authorities were apparently aware of the existential challenges and feelings of absurdity that the German people might face ensuing the war. Therefore, they sought to imbue the conflict with meaning and purpose as a means to bolster national morale and sustain support for the war effort. To achieve this, they harnessed film as a propaganda tool. Germany produced several films during WWI, such as *The Diary of Dr Hart* (*Das Tagebuch des Dr. Hart*, dir. Paul Leni, 1917) and *The Field Gray Dime* (*Der feldgraue Groschen*, dir. Georg Jacoby, 1917). Both films were produced by the Projektions-AG Union (PAGU), a film production company known for its propaganda films during the First World War at the request of the German government. Anti-war films emerged only after the conclusion of the First World War, such as G. W. Pabst's *Westfront 1918* (1930) and the recent First-World-War film *All Quiet on the Western Front* (*Im Westen nichts Neues*, dir. Edward Berger, 2022), both of which represent the unambiguous absurdity of war. This paper will explore how German First-World-War films from different historical periods address the absurdity resulting from war through the lens of Sartre's existentialist concept of the absurd.

Lucy Lu is a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom). Her research explores the relationship between the war film genre and Existentialism, with a particular focus on films set during the First World War. She has experience working as a producer in the video production industry and has presented her research at international conferences.

Mr Michael Brodski (University of Mainz, Germany)

Child Figures in Post-Second World War Spaces in the Cinema of the Thaw

This paper aims to ask how to intertwine historical film analysis, namely engaging with the figure of the child in former Soviet cinema, with the recent image production of children in the war in Ukraine. It sets out to analyse child protagonists in works portraying the Second World War or its aftermath, which were produced during the Soviet Thaw, especially *The Two Fedors* (*Dva Fyodora*, Ukrainian SSR, dir. Marlen Khutsiev, 1959), *Ivan's Childhood* (*Ivanovo Detstvo*, Russian SSR, dir. Andrei Tarkovsky, 1962) and *The Land of the Fathers* (*Zemlya Ottsov*, Kazakh SSR, dir. Shaken Aimanov, 1966). These works portray the child figure encountering the material consequences of the mayhem of combat in derelict (post-)war spaces like ruins and traces of acts of military confrontation (such as tank barriers) left behind. This paper intends to demonstrate how child figures cannot be understood simply as innocent and helpless victims. Instead, they are portrayed as agents who are both passively affected (and potentially traumatised) but at the same time also actively engage with their surroundings as if looking for ways to deal with the unbearable status quo. Besides clarifying the historical role of the Thaw for the emergence of such a child figure, this paper will employ Robert Sinnerbrink's 'ethical proximity' as a mode of cinematic perception, which adapts Emmanuel Levinas's understanding of the face as something which can never be fully rationally and emotionally grasped or understood. Furthermore, several concepts from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, particularly becoming-child as a variation of becoming-minoritarian, will be utilized. It will be argued that the child's encounter with the war-torn space can likewise never be fully interpreted by the spectator but remains open to a mode of ethical contemplation apart from a vertical-hierarchical relation between adult recipient and cinematic child figure.

Michael Brodski is a PhD candidate at the University of Mainz (Germany). He is working on a thesis on cinematic spectatorship in relation to various portrayals of childhood and child figures. Michael holds a BA in Film Studies and Philosophy and a MA in Film Studies. His main research interests include children's film and intermedial representations of childhood and children's culture, affect theory, Eastern European cinema as well as fairy tale and folklore studies. He also works as an associate lecturer at the University of Vienna and as a co-editor for the *Journal for Fantastic Research*.

Asst Prof Zala Dobovšek (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Endless Syntheses of the Documentary: *Srbkinja* as a documentary film imprint of the monitoring of the process of (documentary) theatre performance *Aleksandra Zec*

In 2015, theatre director Oliver Frljić created an original project *Aleksandra Zec* (HKD Teatar, Rijeka), in which the central dramatic-documentary event of the production was a then 25-year-old nationalist crime. In 1991, five Croatian special forces (members of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia) broke into the home of 12-year-old Aleksandra Zec and her family of Serbian ethnicity in Zagreb, unjustifiably killed her father, and then – because they witnessed the murder – took Aleksandra Zec and her mother to Sljeme and shot them on the same night. In the subsequent trials, the so-called 'procedural errors' were made which left the perpetrators of the killing unpunished, and no one was held accountable for these miscarriages of justice. Frljić's intention in staging the play was 'to speak about a crime in war and *not* about a war crime', thus deliberately avoiding the predictable direct criticism; the play did not directly confront those responsible for the attempted cover-up of this crime. His aim was to represent in the theatre, in a critical and analytical way, a form of structural violence.

In 2018, the engaged film director Nebojša Slijepčević made a documentary film *Srbkinja* (*Srbenka*), which followed the process of studying the production of *Aleksandra Zec*. In making *Srbenka*, the director looked for details and filmed the participants even when they were not aware of it, exposing apparently 'passive' shots, i.e. looking for strong psychological activity where it is not visible at the first glance. The film shows a detailed insight into the group dynamics

of the cast, the discomfort, stress, compassion and hardships of responsibility of the whole creative team, but especially the cast. It also unpacks the dramaturgical, that is, the ‘political’ question, so to speak: who is the protagonist of this film? It is a multi-layered cinematic depiction of psychological processes that relate to both professional challenges and purely personal aspects, but above all it offers a realistic and thus de-romanticised and de-mythicised view of the making of a (documentary) theatre production, which, in an environment still deeply marked by the aftermath of war and war crimes, has a political effect in itself.

Zala Dobovšek is a dramaturge, theatre critic, theatre scholar and Assistant Professor of dramaturgy and performing arts studies at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). Her artistic and scientific interests focus on research that crosses artistic and sociological fields, with an emphasis on the theatrological reflection of social phenomena such as war, LGBTQ+ practices, feminism and class relations, and on the critical analysis of their representation in performing arts. In 2022, she published the book *Theatre and War: Performing Responses to the Wars of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia*. For the past fifteen years, she has worked extensively in the field of theatre criticism and journalism (Radio Študent, *Delo*, *Dnevnik*, etc.), has mentored critical workshops and has been a selector at various festivals. As a practising dramaturge, she has worked on various forms of creation in both institutional and non-governmental productions: puppetry, (post)drama, dance and performance projects. She is the current President of the Association of Theatre Critics and Theatrolgists of Slovenia and the Editor-in-Chief of the *Kritika* portal.

Panel 2.1 (in English, Montenegrin and Slovenian)

AV Lecture Theatre 1, Tuesday, 24 September, 14:00–16:30

Chair: Assoc Prof Natalija Majsova

Asst Prof Jelena Mišeljić (University of Montenegro, Montenegro)

Dehumanizovano čulo: Harun Farocki i operative slike

Automatizovana slika je, u širem smislu, ona slika koja je generisana od strane neljudskog izvora – algoritma mašine. Čini se da te indiferentne slike, bez ljudskih intencija, ne mogu biti pripisane nikakvom posebnom događaju ili osobi. Međutim, svjedočimo da se u ovom načinu registrovanja i reprodukcije svijeta ogleda naše savremeno iskustvo. Pored toga što u njenom stvaranju nema ljudskog posredovanja, pitanje je da li je i namijenjena ljudskom vidu i pogledu, te ako jeste – u kojoj mjeri. Automatizovanim slikama možemo obuhvatiti i one koje su kreirane tehnologijama sigurnosnih i vojnih sistema, one čiji nastanak nije uslovljen neposrednim ljudskim djelovanjem. U tom smislu, automatizovanu sliku proizvode unaprijed osmišljeni i samostalni mehanizmi i algoritmi različitih uređaja za snimanje, bez ljudske intencije, predodređene algoritmom kojim se uslovljava i njihov zadatak.

Dehumanised Sense: Harun Farocki and operational images

An automated image is, in a broader sense, an image that is generated from a non-human origin – the algorithm of a machine. It is believed that these indifferent images, without human intentions, cannot be attributed to any particular event or person. Yet, we see that this manner of registering and reproducing the world reflects our contemporary experience. In addition to human intervention being absent from its creation, the automated image poses the question of whether or not it is at all intended for human vision and gaze – and if it is, to what extent. Automated images can be extended to include those created by the technologies of security and military systems, but whose creation is not based on direct human action. In this sense, the automated image is produced by pre-designed and independent mechanisms and algorithms of different recording devices, without human intention, predetermined by the algorithm that

Studija 'Dehumanizovano čulo: Harun Farocki i operativne slike' preispituje fenomen automatizovanih slika kao pojave koja drastično utiče na promjenu režima percepcije svijeta koji nas okružuje. U radu Haruna Farokija pronalazimo jednu od ključnih referentnih tačaka za definiciju operativne slike, koja za osnovnu svrhu ima samo bilježenje operacija i procesa, determinisanih automatizmom mašine. Na temelju teorijskog rada Pola Virilija, Faroki usmjerava pažnju na društveno-političke implikacije slikovnog režima operativne slike. Ovaj rad se bavi osnovnim svojstvima operativne slike, vizuelnim režimom koji je, samim tim što nije ni namijenjen ljudskom oku, već drugoj, egzekutivnoj mašini, lišen šire društvene namjere. Kao što je isticao i Virilio, glavna odlika operativne slike se najviše dovodi u vezu sa tehnologijama ratovanja, ukazujući na dehumanizujući kontekst njihove proizvodnje. Ovim radom imam za cilj da ukažem na to kako upotreba automatizovanih slika ogleda savremeni trenutak u kojem iskustvo vizuelnih tehnologija preuzima ulogu ljudskog iskustva, time dovodeći u pitanje stabilnost ljudskog subjekta u vremenu sveprisutnih audiovizualnih predstava postljudskog stanja.

Jelena Mišeljić je diplomirala i magistrirala na Fakultetu dramskih umjetnosti Cetinje, na studijskom programu Produkcija. Doktorirala je na Fakultetu za medije i komunikacije Univerziteta Singidunum (Belgrade, Serbia), odbranivši disertaciju pod nazivom Postljudski pogled: uticaj automatizovanih slika na savremeni film. Autorka je više članaka iz oblasti teorije i istorije filma u međunarodnim časopisima i zbornicima. Od 2018-e godine, članica je Evropske filmske akademije (EFA).

conditions their task.

The paper 'Dehumanised sense: Harun Farocki and operational images' examines the phenomenon of automated images as a phenomenon that drastically affects the change in the regime of perception of the world that surrounds us. In the work of Harun Farocki, we find one of the key reference points for the definition of the operational image, which has as its basic purpose only the recording of operations and processes determined by machine automation. Based on the theoretical work of Paul Virilio, Farocki directs attention to the socio-political implications of the pictorial regime of the operational image. This paper deals with the basic properties of the operative image, a visual regime which, by the very fact that it is not intended for the human eye, but for another, executive machine, is devoid of a wider social intention. As also pointed out by Virilio, the main feature of the operational image is mostly associated with the technologies of warfare, pointing to the dehumanising context of their production. With this work, I aim to point out how the use of automated images reflects the contemporary moment in which the experience of visual technologies takes over the role of human experience, thus calling into question the stability of the human subject in the time of ubiquitous audiovisual representations of the posthuman condition.

Jelena Mišeljić completed her BA and MA studies in Production at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Cetinje. She was awarded her PhD from the Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University (Belgrade, Serbia), where she successfully defended her doctoral dissertation titled Posthuman view: the influence of automated images on contemporary film. She is the author of several articles in the field of film theory and history in international journals and anthologies. Since 2018, she has been a member of the European Film Academy (EFA).

Asst Prof Primož Krašovec (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Umetna inteligenca kot *intelligence*

Zgodnja kibernetika in začetki razvoja umetne inteligence (UI) so bili tesno zvezani s kontekstom vojne, najprej druge svetovne in nato hladne, in moja teza v prispevku bo, da nam ravno ta (pred)zgodovina UI lahko pomaga razumeti tudi današnje komercialno delovanje UI oziroma posebnosti njene (socialne) percepcije. Namreč, za vojno *intelligence* v izvornem angleškem pomenu (zbiranje podatkov o in opazovanje sovražnika) v vojni je odločilnega

Artificial Intelligence as *Intelligence*

Early cybernetics and the beginnings of the development of artificial intelligence (AI) were closely tied to the context of war, first the Second World War and then the Cold War, and my thesis in this paper will be that it is precisely this (pre)history of AI that can help us understand the commercial functioning of AI today and the specifics of its (social) perception. Namely, it is the otherness of the enemy that is crucial for war intelligence in its original

pomena ravno drugost oziroma tujost sovražnika – ta ne skriva in kamuflira le svojih enot in premikov, temveč tudi in (s perspektive *intelligence* predvsem) svoj način razmišljanja in odločanja. Vojna strategija tako pomeni delovanje brez vednosti o sovražnikovi psihološki notranjosti ali brez njenega poznavanja, kar je tudi odločilna poteza trenutne UI, globokega učenja (GU).

Globoko v GU ne pomeni ravno psihološke globine, temveč kompleksnost in sestavljenost nevronske mreže, ki pa se učijo na podatkih, sestavljenih iz površinskih sledi obnašanja uporabnikov in v njih iščejo čisto empirične vzorce oziroma korelacije. Z drugimi besedami, UI je učinkovita, ne da bi imela kakršen koli vpogled v psihične globine uporabnikov, oziroma se razvija na način, za katerega so te globine irelevantne, saj tudi v komercialni rabi ohrani svojo prvotno vojno-strateško zasnovo. Uporabniki so, v tej perspektivi, sovražniki UI, ki delujejo v 'vojni megli', in (socialna) percepcija UI je ustrojena tako, da lahko prenese negotovost, nepredvidljivost in šum kulture. UI tako v razmerju do uporabnikov še vedno ostaja *intelligence* v vojnem pomenu, kar v kapitalističnem kontekstu omogoči prehod iz Foucaultove discipline v Deleuzov nadzor, tj. v neprogramirano, shizo kulturo, dostopno kapitalističnemu zajetju.

meaning (gathering information about and observing the enemy) – the enemy hides and camouflages not only its troops and movements, but also and (from an intelligence perspective above all) its way of thinking and decision-making. War strategy thus means acting without knowledge or awareness of the enemy's psychological interiority, which is also a decisive feature of the current AI, deep learning (GU).

Deep in GU does not mean psychological depth, but rather the complexity and composition of neural networks, which in turn learn from data consisting of surface traces of user behaviour and look for purely empirical patterns or correlations in them. In other words, AI is effective without having any insight into the psychic depths of users and is developed in a way for which these depths are irrelevant, because even in commercial use it retains its original war-strategy design. Users, in this perspective, are the enemies of AI, operating in a 'fog of war', and the (social) perception of AI is structured in such a way that it can withstand the uncertainty, unpredictability and noise of culture. Thus, in relation to users, AI remains intelligence in the war sense, which, in a capitalist context, allows for the transition from Foucault's discipline to Deleuze's surveillance, i.e. a schizo culture accessible to capitalist capture.

Primož Krašovec je docent na Oddelku za sociologijo na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani, kjer predava predmete Epistemologija, Teorije ideologije, Teorija tehnologije in Digitalna kultura. Njegova trenutna raziskovalna področja so: kapitalistična avtomatizacija in realna subsumpcija; umetna inteligenca; in kultura novih medijev. V 2021 je objavil svojo prvo knjigo *Tujost kapitala*.

Primož Krašovec is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, the Faculty of Arts, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), where he teaches courses on epistemology, ideology, theory of technology and digital cultures. His current research interests are: capitalist automation and real subsumption; artificial intelligence; and new media cultures. In 2021 he published his first book *Tujost kapitala* (*Alien Capital*).

Prof Darko Štrajn (Educational Research Institute, Slovenia)

The Powerlessness of Representation and the Truth of War

Jean-Luc Godard and Gilles Deleuze almost simultaneously expressed their respective critiques of representation. Godard did so in his contribution to the omnibus film *Far from Vietnam* (*Loin du Vietnam*, 1967), while Deleuze did so in his ground-breaking book *Difference and Repetition* (*Différence et répétition*, 1968). Godard's fragment is a multi-layered monologue that culminates in the question about what one can do with a camera. In his answering he aligned with the government in Hanoi, which did not grant him a visa to come and film in Vietnam. Deleuze recognized the fallacy of the primacy of identity, which defines the world of representation. However, identity in the world of simulacra is nothing more than an 'optical "effect" of a deeper play between difference and repetition'. The intertwining of Israeli aggression and civil war was the backdrop for Volker Schlöndorff's film *Circle of Deceit* (*Die Fälschung*, 1981), in which a

journalist confronted the question of whether it was even possible to convey the truth about war. The journalist's existential dilemma – frequently staged in various films of the unique genre about journalists in war zones – is the drama of the powerlessness of representation when faced with events that, in recordings, fail to communicate the truth of war. Both examples of analogue films anticipate the spans of fake news in the digital age, which reduce the very possibility of visual representation as evidence of the truth. Amid the flood of films based on war spectacles, in which the assumptions of banalised patriotism merge with the physical power and lethal capacity of weapons, films that aim to approach the incommunicable truth of war have no choice but to insist on the differences between appearances.

Darko Štrajn graduated in philosophy and sociology at the Faculty of Arts, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), where he acquired his doctorate on Fichte's philosophy. Along with his work at the Educational Research Institute in Ljubljana he lectures on film theory at the Faculty of Arts, the University of Nova Gorica, and on the epistemology of humanities at the graduate School for Studies in Humanities (AMEU – ISH) in Ljubljana. His research comprises topics like philosophy, aesthetics, film studies, politics, education and social change. He has authored six books and many book chapters as well as hundreds of other publications. His recent book was published in English under the title *From Walter Benjamin to the End of Cinema* (2017).

Mr Domen Dimovski (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

War as Metaphor and That Which is *A Hidden Life*

The world is permeated by the presence of discourses and images of war, which bring increasingly tangible premonitions of possible confrontations with the issues and dilemmas of war. How we will personally act in moments of imminent entry into war, and what we can do about it today, are questions that are becoming increasingly topical.

In this paper I will reflect on the reality of war and war as metaphor. I will draw on the theory of conceptual metaphors that George Lakoff and Mark Johnson began to develop in their book *Metaphors We Live By*. They reveal that metaphors shape the way we think, act and experience the world. War as metaphor structures broader areas of our lives, beyond the strictly taken real wars. The metaphor of war thus occupies different media and domains, such as intimate relationships, public discourse, political definitions, children's games, trading, or confronting diseases and viruses, while contemporary forms of hybrid war rely on visual moving images to influence populations. Understanding and investigating metaphors is therefore crucial to understanding their impact on our social and psychological worlds, as they both illuminate and conceal aspects of the experiential field. I will touch upon the effects of the use of the metaphor of war on people's subjectivity and present the role of the art of film, which, in the contemporary media hyper-semiotisation, can offer a space for reflection on the ethical issues that the metaphor of war trivialises, exacerbates or obscures. I will present a confrontation with the dilemma of war through a discussion of the intimate-poetic film *A Hidden Life* (dir. Terrence Malick, 2019), a poignant confrontation with the questions and tensions that war necessarily brings. Interested in all that is hidden, it seeks to reflect on war, duty, ethics and the power of the 'enemy within', which the discourse of war seeks to nullify through propaganda.

Domen Dimovski graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in the Department of Painting in the programme for Video and New Media in 2017 with his thesis *The Authoritarianism of Media Society*. In 2019, he obtained his master's degree at the same faculty with an animated film *The Sand Passage* and his theoretical work *Transition out of the cave: on the track of Plato*. In addition to his practical involvement in film and art, he is completing his PhD in Philosophy and Film at the Faculty of Arts, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). He is studying the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of film experience through the phenomenology of film, psychoanalysis and film theory.

Panel 2.2 (in English)

AV Lecture Theatre 2, Tuesday, 24 September, 14:00–16:30

Chair: Asst Prof Jasmina Šepetavc

Ms Ana Šturm (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Death, 24 Frames per Second

Death and photography have been inseparably linked since the invention of the camera in 1839. This fact is highlighted by Susan Sontag in her book *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), where she also writes that capturing death at the exact moment in which it happens and embalming it for eternity is something only a camera can do. Images taken at the moment of death (or just before it) are considered the most valued and often reproduced war photographs. *Civil War* (2024), a film by screenwriter and director Alex Garland, at the same time a dystopian thriller, a war drama, and a tribute to journalism – especially war photographers – as a profession ends with such a photograph: an image of the last breath of the American president, who is being eliminated in the White House by ‘Western forces (WF)’, taken with an *analogue* Nikon by photographer Jessie Cullen. In the film, Garland, similar to Sontag in her book, presents numerous questions for contemplation regarding the visual representation of war and violence in contemporary society and art. There are also interesting parallels between the two; from the fact that the American Civil War (1861–1865) was one of the first wars to be documented photographically, to the fact that many of the best war photographs were staged. Most of us, living in the privileged Western world, experience war exclusively through images. Our media-mediated society is saturated with images of violence, horror, and cruelty. How does the spectacle of the suffering of others, which we follow day after day in the media, affect us? What is the connection between wartime violence and media visibility – how do images shape and are simultaneously shaped by acts of violence? With the help of Garland’s film and Sontag’s book, this paper will – from a historical perspective (technology, aesthetics, ideology) – reflect on the role of image production during times of crisis. What is the purpose of depicting war crimes and violence? How can it be contextualised? What is the value of photography when it loses its indexical or documentary value?

Ana Šturm is a historian and sociologist with a master’s degree in film and television studies and a special interest in the invisible affairs of everyday life. Film spectator, critic and curator, lost in the movies, addicted to coffee, ginger and first snow. Founding member and host of the first Slovenian film and popular culture themed podcast FilmFlow (2011–2021). Berlinale and Sarajevo Talent Campus alumna. Since 2023, she has also been collaborating with the Sarajevo Film Festival as one of the mentors of the Talents Press programme. As a member of the International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI) she has participated in several international juries (Annecy, Karlovy Vary, Berlinale, Rotterdam). She currently works as the editor-in-chief of *Ekran*, a magazine for film and television, and is a PhD student at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia).

Asst Prof Nina Cvar (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

What Images of War-Torn Necrosapes Want in Condition of Immediacy, the Cultural Style of 21st Century Capitalism

In *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), Susan Sontag’s last published book before her death, Sontag critically examines the status of images of war – how they shape our understanding of the suffering and pain of (O)thers. Writing before the rise of social media, Sontag already sensed that something started to change in mediation, especially in regard to the potential desensitisation and detachment, resulting from overexposure to these images. But what does Sontag’s call

to (critical) thinking mean in contemporary times? These are, according to Anna Kornbluh (2024), characterised by immediacy, which undermines the potential for critical thought, reflection and innovation, resulting in a cultural landscape of immersive spectacle, where immediacy crushes representation into direct messaging, favouring images and creating a specific 21st century immediacy cultural style logic. In this manner, one could argue, the contemporary style of the 21st century immediacy, which underscores emanative intensity, inherently privileges images of suffering, particularly from war photography. Yet, if representation has been undermined by immediacy, how can an image be replaced by a political statement? Or, to go even further, if representation is constitutive for politics, and – in Western philosophical tradition – aesthetics is the horizon where subjectivity is formed, with certain subjects being de-formed by it via exclusion, representation itself needs to be rearticulated. Occidental aesthetics in its various medium forms has created a number of different knowledge regimes and formalisms, including procedures and strategies of critical thought; to name the finest ones, e.g. Benjamin's (1968) reconstruction of experience to Sontag's (2003) plea to take on the narrative of the (lost) context.

Yet, these noble pursuits are being buried with hundreds of dead bodies under the rubble in the so-called necrosapes, screening on our social media accounts 24/7. Something is apparently missing in our analysis. Referring to Rizvana Bradley's study on anteasthetics (2023), I will try to show, how critical analysis of images of worn-torn necrosapes needs to include an element of the form, as this will allow this paper to shed light on three intertwined levels: i.e. the reproduction of the (excluded) modes of being, the racial regime of aesthetics and the workings of the form itself. To demonstrate it concretely: in which manner are images of war-torn necrosapes of Gaza and films, like *The Zone of Interest* (2023), constituted by aesthetics?

Nina Cvar is Assistant Professor at the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). Since 2019, she has been working as an associate researcher at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at University of Ljubljana, where she is involved in research projects on digitalisation. Since 2022, she also works in the Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana. Between 2008 and 2017 she was a professional film critic, contributing to all major Slovenian publications and she received grants and an award (Nika Bohinc's award). In 2021, she published a scientific monograph *Digital image and global capitalism: Technology, politics, resistance* for one of the central Slovenian humanities and social sciences publishers, Sophia.

Dr Reza John Vedadi (Loughborough University London, Institute for Media and Creative Industries, United Kingdom)

Reframing Iraqi Identity: Analysing Hollywood's depiction through the lens of US Foreign Policy

Hollywood's portrayal of Iraqi identity has been fraught with challenges and turmoil, often shaped by Orientalist perspectives and the fear and animosity promoted by US foreign policy. This study seeks to critically examine the representation of Iraqis in Hollywood films, utilising the Representation Contextualisation Framework (RCF) and critical discourse analysis.

The research employs the RCF formula to categorise films into levels of representation and depiction, focusing on those with the highest levels of representation for critical analysis. The study examines twenty-four movies that feature Iraqi identities released by major Hollywood studios, analysing their thematic content and character portrayals. The analysis reveals that out of the twenty-four films, only three do not depict Iraq in a state of war or conflict with the US military. One film presents a positive representation of Iraqi women, and three offer positive depictions of Iraqi men. Notably, only two films provide nuanced and fair portrayals of Iraqis, showing characters who both support and oppose US military actions.

The findings indicate a significant alignment between Hollywood's depiction of US-Iraqi relations and US foreign policy, especially since the Persian Gulf War of 1991. The absence of Iraqi representations in Hollywood during the 1980s underscores this connection. As the cradle of civilisation, Iraqi identity warrants a more diverse and respectful representation in Hollywood films. There is potential for a broader range of narratives set in Iraq beyond the recurrent theme of US military conflicts. This study underscores the need for Hollywood to explore these untapped narratives, offering a richer, more balanced depiction of Iraqi culture and experiences.

Dr Reza John Vedadi has dedicated the past 12 years to directing, producing, and filming more than fifty documentaries on West Asian and Muslim identity and culture. He began his academic journey with a degree in Media Studies from London Guildhall University. This was followed by master's degrees in Film Production from London Metropolitan University and Islamic Studies from Middlesex University. In 2023, he earned a PhD from Loughborough University London, specialising in communication, politics, and culture, and has conducted most of his research in affiliation with Loughborough University London. His research delves into the intersection of socio-political dynamics and the representation of West Asian and Muslim identity in US and UK media, as well as the broader cultural and foreign policy contexts of these countries. His work also extensively examines Iranian politics, culture, and foreign policy in relation to its neighbours and Western countries. In addition to his filmmaking career, Reza John Vedadi is an active academic, presenting papers at various international conferences. He is deeply involved in researching and writing about the complex relationship between film industry and international relations. Furthermore, he actively promotes decolonial frameworks and approaches to Western pedagogy, showcasing his commitment to enriching understanding and fostering more inclusive perspectives.

Panel 2.3 (in English and Slovenian)

AV Lecture Theatre 3, Tuesday, 24 September, 14:00–16:30

Chair: Asst Prof Polona Petek

Prof Laeed Zaghlami (University of Algiers III, Algeria)

Algerians' Perception of War in Gaza

In this paper, a range of views and attitudes of Algerian audiences towards the war in Gaza are discussed. The heavy exposure to a flux of images from the scene enables Algerians to be well aware of the dramatic events. It is virtually impossible to find an Algerian unaware of the tragedy in Gaza. This paper will offer an explanation of why Algerian authorities have supported the Palestinians and how this policy is enshrined in the official texts as well as incrustated in the minds and hearts of the people. Importantly, Algerian media have always reported, extensively and intensively, on the situation in Gaza with the help of their 'Palestinian correspondents', who contribute to more balanced representations of the situation on the ground. As a result, despite worldwide media coverage of the war in Gaza, viewers in Algeria prefer watching TV channels that they perceive as supporting the Palestinian cause. Most western TV stations are seen as biased towards Israel, therefore the audiences tend to shift to select Arab TV channels, mainly Al Jazeera, Al Mayadeen, Al Araby, Palestine Today and Al Ghad TV, whereas TV channels like Skynews Arabic and Arabiya TV are also perceived as biased towards Israel. Algerian viewers also tend to trust videos and footage coming from the military media of Palestinian resistance, particularly their media icon Abou Oubaida, who is perceived as the leader, the saviour and the pride of the Palestinians and the Arabs. This paper will discuss the Algerians' admiration of his personality

and charisma; despite rather different portrayals of this leader on Western TV channels, his speeches are recognised as a source of inspiration, trust and relief in Algeria.

Laeed Zaghlami obtained a PhD degree from Algiers University III (Algeria), a MPhil degree from the University of Surrey (Guildford, United Kingdom) and a Diploma from the International Academy of Broadcasting Montreux (Switzerland). He is Professor at the Faculty of Information and Communication, Algiers University III, and Associate Professor at the Algerian Institute of Diplomacy and International Relations, National High School of Politics, Algiers. He has previously worked as a reporter, editor-in-chief and manager at the Algerian Broadcasting Enterprise and the Algerian Radio Net.

Dr Yayu Zheng (Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, United Kingdom)

Being in Time: The refugee crisis in political documentary film and web documentary

This project offers a comparative study of the rhetorical powers and the impetus for social change presented by traditional documentary films and web documentaries as applied to the European refugee crisis. A key feature of these documentaries is that they examine a level of political engagement that goes beyond national boundaries and becomes a transnational phenomenon. The crisis under examination is characterised by refugees leaving the Middle East, Africa, etc. for northern and western Europe. The migration process inevitably concerns many countries and involves multiple physical border-crossings. On a virtual level, the mounting media exposure via the global internet creates an impression of a thoroughly interconnected world for both participants and witnesses. The border-crossings are not merely a physical action but also a virtual experience. People living outside impacted geographical areas are exposed to news about the refugee crisis, which often invites a certain degree of participation and engagement from information receivers.

I examine how traditional documentary film, represented here by Chinese contemporary artist and activist Ai Weiwei's *Human Flow* (2017) and the web documentary *Life on Hold*, tell the story of the European refugee issue. This is achieved through mapping the intersection between formal exploration and the representation of social and political events. In particular, I investigate how the web-based *Life on Hold* initiates changes in the form of documentary filmmaking and in the transmission of political and social messages at the convergence of political events. I also discuss the impact of technological advancements on the nature of documentary film. By applying classic documentary theory and drawing on recent scholarship on digital media, I explore how these developments contribute to movements for social change and argue that the very core of evaluating social change brought about by each documentary project lies in how we define change and how we measure that change, as in an age of digital connectedness change can also be both physical and virtual.

Yayu Zheng is the Asymmetry Postdoctoral Fellow at the Courtauld Institute of Art (University of London, United Kingdom). She holds a Ph.D. in Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Southern California. Her fields of interest are global queer cinema, media industries, and contemporary Sinophone visual culture.

Dr Justine Pignato (University of Montreal, Canada)

The Infrastructure of Independent Syrian Documentary Films in a Context of War

The revolution-turned-war in Syria (2011–) has led a new generation of documentary filmmakers to make documentary films as a means to conduct their own experience of those events (e.g. *Still recording* by Ghiath Ayoub and Saeed al-Batal, *300 miles* by Orwa al-Mokdad), as well as to present a perspective on the situation which is different from both

the regime's narrative and the coverage by mainstream media. In my presentation, I will focus on the conditions of possibility of making a documentary film in a context of war within which filmmakers are deliberately targeted by the regime. In this situation, filmmakers have to create the conditions allowing the making of their own films. In particular, I will present the documentary infrastructure that independent Syrian filmmakers have put in place and used to support the production process of their documentary films. This documentary infrastructure includes crucial elements that can be classified into four families: primary, material, informational, and human. I will review the different families of infrastructural elements I have identified and discuss how this model of documentary infrastructure can be relevant in other war contexts, such as Ukraine for instance.

Justine Pignato has recently completed her PhD in Communication Studies at the Université de Montréal (Canada). Over the past few years, she has analysed the production process of Syrian documentary films since 2011, in the context of a revolution turned war. She also works in the documentary film industry as a distributor and programmer.

Assoc Prof Andrej Lukšič and Asst Prof Polona Petek (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Sekuritizacija in filmske de(kon)strukcije ogrožene entitete v izraelsko-palestinskem konfliktu

Ta prispevek je poskus razumevanja distribucije in recepcije nedavnih dokumentarnih filmov, katerih prelomna odkritja in/ali iskrena pričevanja iz prve roke bi morda lahko spremenila tok zgodovine, če bi javno mnenje po vsem svetu odvrnila od podpore vojni in ga usmerila h glasnejšim zahtevam po mirovnih pogajanjih. Referat se osredotoča na dva takšna primera, ki se nanašata na vojno v Gazi – *Tantura* (rež. Aron Schwarz, 2022) in *Lobi* (*The Lobby*, rež. Clayton Swisher, Al Jazeera, 2017) –, in obravnava njuno omejeno cirkulacijo skozi prizmo sekuritizacije.

Po kratkem orisu konceptualnega okvira, ki izvira iz politologije oziroma, natančneje, iz mednarodnih odnosov, bomo izbrana primera najprej interpretirali kot filmsko grožnjo diskurzivni konstrukciji Izraela/sionizma kot nemočne in nedolžne entitete (tj. kot ogrožanje dragocenega referenčnega predmeta). Nato bomo orisali njihovo recepcijo: *Tanturo* so kritiki in festivalske žirije dobro sprejeli, ustvarjalci televizijske serije *Lobi* pa so uspešno zavrnilo očitke in obtožbe pristranskosti, goljufanja in manipulativnosti. To bomo nato dopolnili s hipotezo, da je omejeni doseg teh filmov mogoče razumeti kot posledico sekuritizacijskih potez, katerih cilj je zagotoviti neomajno podporo državi Izrael. Z raziskovanjem identitete akterja oziroma akterjev sekuritizacije se v tem referatu ne bomo ukvarjali (kot tudi ne s podrobno analizo drugih podobnih sekuritizacijskih potez na področju medijev). Zagovarjali pa bomo tezo, da omejena zmožnost teh filmov, da bi dosegli širše občinstvo in tako onemogočili poenostavljeno

Securitisation and filmic de(con)structions of the endangered entity in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

This paper is an attempt to understand the distribution and reception of some recent documentaries whose groundbreaking discoveries and/or candid first-hand accounts could, potentially, change the course of history by steering public opinion across the globe away from support for war and towards stronger demands for peace talks. The paper focuses on two such examples pertaining to the war in Gaza – *Tantura* (dir. Aron Schwarz, 2022) and *The Lobby* (dir. Clayton Swisher, Al Jazeera, 2017) – and considers their limited circulation through the prism of securitisation.

After briefly outlining the conceptual framework imported from International Relations, the subdiscipline of political science, the paper will show that insofar as these films can be interpreted as undermining the discursive construction of Israel/Zionism as a helpless and blameless entity (i.e. a valued referent object), the limited reach of these films (despite critical acclaim and awards or, in the case of Al Jazeera's series, successful refutation of accusations of bias, fraudulence and manipulation) may be seen as a result of the securitising moves whose aim is to ensure unwavering support for the state of Israel. Investigation into the identity of the securitising agent(s) is beyond the scope of this paper (as is a detailed analysis of other securitising moves aimed in the same direction in the domain of media); we shall, however, argue that the limited ability of these films to reach wider audiences and thus complicate the simplistic construction of victims and perpetrators (which is, currently, not only prevalent in

upodabljanje žrtev in storilcev (ki trenutno prevladuje v poročanju o vojni v Gazi v osrednjih medijih, hkrati pa se tudi popolnoma ujema z uradno izraelsko razlago razmer), omejuje tudi zmožnost svetovne javnosti, da bi zahtevala mirno rešitev, ki bi omogočila preživetje obeh vpletenih strani.

Andrej Lukšič je predavatelj v programu politologija na Fakulteti za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani (Slovenija) in raziskovalec v Centru za politično teorijo ter direktor Inštituta za ekologijo. Njegova raziskovalna pozornost je usmerjena predvsem v razmerja med stroko, politiko in javnostjo, deliberativno demokracijo, sodobno državo in nenazadnje kritiko politične ekologije, okolijske diskurze, okoljsko in ekološko pravičnost ter samoniklo organiziranje skupnosti. Je urednik zbirke OIKOS, ki izhaja v okviru *Časopisa za kritiko znanosti, domišljijo in novo antropologijo*, ter iniciator Mednarodne poletne šole politične ekologije na Fakulteti za družbene vede Univerze v Ljubljani.

Polona Petek je predstojnica Katedre za filmske in televizijske študije na Akademiji za gledališče, radio, film in televizijo Univerze v Ljubljani (Slovenija). Po doktorskem študiju na Univerzi v Melbournu (Avstralija) se je raziskovalno sprva osredotočala na vprašanja transkulturalnosti, kozmopolitstva in mobilnosti na področju filma, s posebnim poudarkom na položaju žensk v slovenski in drugih evropskih kinematografijah. V zadnjem času so se njeni raziskovalni in pedagoški interesi razvejali in razširili še na druge avdiovizualne medije: nekaj pozornosti je posvetila položaju in vlogi televizije v medijski krajini 21. stoletja (*Film, radio in televizija med pandemijo*, Založba Univerze v Ljubljani, 2024) in razvoju učnih načrtov za učitelje filmskega in televizijskega opismenjevanja, v njenih analizah slovenskega filma pa v ospredje čedalje bolj prihajajo dekolonialni konceptualni premiki v filmski vedi.

mainstream media representations of the war in Gaza, but also in perfect agreement with the official Israeli interpretation of the situation) also limits the ability of global publics to demand a peaceful resolution which would enable both warring parties to survive.

Andrej Lukšič is a lecturer in the political science programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), a researcher at the Centre for Political Theory and director of the Institute of Ecology. His research attention focuses mainly on the relationships between science, politics and the public, deliberative democracy, modern state and, last but not least, critique of political ecology, environmental discourse, environmental and ecological justice and grass-roots organisations. He is the editor of the OIKOS collection, published by the *Journal for the Critique of Science, Imagination and New Anthropology*, and an initiator of the International Summer School of Political Ecology at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the University of Ljubljana.

Polona Petek is Head of Film and Television Studies at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). After completing her doctoral studies at the University of Melbourne (Australia), she initially focused her research on issues of transculturality, cosmopolitanism and mobility in the field of cinema, with a particular focus on the position of women in Slovenian and other European cinemas. More recently, her research and teaching interests have diversified and extended to include other audiovisual media: she has dedicated some attention to the position and role of television in the 21st century mediascape (*Film, Radio and Television during the Pandemic*, University of Ljubljana Press, 2024) and to developing the curriculum for teachers of film and television literacy, while decolonial conceptual shifts in film scholarship are occupying an increasingly pivotal role in her analyses of Slovenian cinema.

Panel 3.1 (in English and Slovenian)

AV Lecture Theatre 1, Wednesday, 25 September, 09:00–11:00

Chair: Asst Prof Jelena Mišeljić

Asst Prof Maja Krajnc (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Politični pokrajinski film in prazni prostori kot živi organizmi

V osrčje prispevka postavljam 'politični pokrajinski film', ki je v zadnjem desetletju vzniknil na območju držav nekdanje Jugoslavije oziroma t. i. 'jugosfere' s specifično tendenco, da na kompleksen način prevprašuje odnos filmskega medija, vojne in masovnega zločina (Pavle Levi). Na nizu študij primerov izbranih sodobnih post-jugoslovanskih dokumentarcev bom skozi specifične formalne prijeme, poetike z izhodiščem v pokrajini, iz katere se izgubljajo ljudje ali pa jo povsem zaznamuje njihova odsotnost, razmišljala o etiki in političnosti filmske podobe. Na osnovi študij dveh filmskih primerov – *Domovine* (2020) Jelene Maksimović in *Rampart* (2021) Marka Grbe Singha – bom s fenomenološke perspektive (onkraj pokrajine) razmislila še o praznih/izpraznjenih prostorih kot živih organizmih.

Maja Krajnc, docentka na Oddelku za film in televizijo Akademije za gledališče, radio, film in televizijo, Univerza v Ljubljani (Slovenija), je urednica prevodov filmsko-teoretskih monografij in zbornikov, publicistka in raziskovalka, odgovorna urednica revije *KINO!* in glavna mentorica ter snovalka izobraževalnega programa *Ostrenje pogleda*.

Political Landscape Documentary and Empty Spaces as Living Organisms

The focus of this paper is the 'political landscape film' that has emerged in the last decade in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, or the so-called 'post-Yugoslav sphere', with a specific tendency to interrogate in a complex way the relationship between the medium of film, war and massive crime (Pavle Levi). Through a series of case studies of selected contemporary post-Yugoslav documentaries, I will reflect on the ethics and politics of the cinematic image through specific formal approaches, poetics that take as their point of departure a landscape from which people are disappearing or which is completely marked by their absence. Based on two cinematic case studies – Jelena Maksimović's *Homelands* (*Domovine*, 2020) and Mark Grba Singh's *Rampart* (2021) – I will further consider empty/emptied spaces as living organisms from a phenomenological perspective (beyond landscape).

Maja Krajnc, Assistant Professor in the Department of Film and Television at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), is the editor of translations of monographs and anthologies of film theory, publicist and researcher, editor-in-chief of the journal *KINO!* and the chief supervisor and creator of the educational programme *Sharpening the Gaze*.

Assoc Prof Natalija Majsova (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

The Implicated Subject as a Posthuman Category: Re-Visiting wartime agency through post-Yugoslav film

This presentation analyses video recording and projection technologies' effect on our understanding of implicated subjects and implication as a prevalent mode of subjectivity in societies entangled with war and its aftermath. The concept of the implicated subject has been introduced by Michael Rothberg (2019) to facilitate a move beyond the victim/perpetrator framework dominant in memory studies scholarship, by considering the people 'on the margins' of war; those whose subjectivity has been enabled by the very same sociopolitical and cultural systems that produce violence, discrimination, inequalities, and war on the one hand, and privilege on the other. Numerous literary, cinematic,

and other artistic, popular cultural and historical accounts of war and other crises indicate that these are lived by many people who are neither direct perpetrators nor victims of these events, and yet cannot be disregarded as bystanders with no agency. While implicated subject's (often memory) narratives of war have been analysed in detail by Rothberg, the role of the ever-evolving media ecology in our understanding of the implicated subject remains under-researched. To address this shortcoming and to foreground the posthuman agency of the camera, film, and the photograph, this presentation harnesses the 'memory turn' in recent post-Yugoslav cinema to explore the relationship between implication and media memory. Specifically, films addressing the wars of the Yugoslav succession of the 1990s and their aftermath, produced in the 2020s – *The Eclipse (Pomračenje)*, dir. Nataša Urban, 2022), *The Happiest Man in the World (Najsrečnjot chovek na svetot)*, dir. Teona Strugar Mitevska, 2022; and *Souvenirs of War*, dir. Georg Zeller, 2023 – are analysed. In addition to foregrounding different modalities of implication by focusing on the stories of different protagonists, these case studies also offer valuable insights into the film camera as a pedagogical technology that situates implicated subject agency within multilayered contexts, while at the same time precluding apolitical spectatorship.

Natalija Majsova is Associate Professor in the Department of Cultural Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). Her research interests span from cultural and film theory to memory studies, media archaeology, and (post)socialist cultural studies. Her research has been published in journals like *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, *Studies in Soviet and Russian Cinema*, *Apparatus*, etc. Her last monograph *Soviet Science Fiction Cinema and the Space Age: Memorable Futures* was published by Lexington Books in 2021; she has also co-edited (with Sabine Lenk) the volume *Faith in a Beam of Light: Magic Lantern and Belief in Western Europe, 1860–1940* (Brepols, 2022).

Asst Prof Jasmina Šepetavc (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Queer Traumas of War and Utopias of Peace

In war memoirs and cinematic representations of conflict, queerness appears primarily as an absence, a subtle trace of repression in the hypermasculinity and heteronormativity of violent conflict. As Dijana Jelača (2016) writes, the theme of queer trauma is rarely mentioned in studies of post-Yugoslav cinema. At the same time, the example of regional film history shows that some of the more interesting films about ethno-nationalist violence and war conflicts are those that deal with queer narratives (although these often act as metaphors for war). Queer filmic images have significant potential to 'intervene in processes [of collective constructions of national trauma] whereby the enactment of trauma is usually only made possible for those citizens who successfully re/produce, literally and figuratively, the "ideal" heterosexual body that is inevitably associated with ethnonationalist ideology' (Jelača, 2016). An example is, for example, one of the first queer films realised after the break-up of Yugoslavia, *Marmorna Ass (Dupe od mramora)*, dir. Želimir Žilnik, 1995), in which two transgender sex workers try to navigate aggressive men (clients and lovers) during the war by establishing their own queer time and space in an abandoned house on the outskirts of Belgrade; or the regional hit *Parade (Parada)*, dir. Srđan Dragojević, 2011), which fleshes out memories of Yugoslav relations and conflicts, albeit superficially but visibly, by focusing on war veterans trying to protect participants in a Belgrade Pride parade from bullies.

The paper analyses the complex relationships between the subjects, war and peace, as manifested in the filmic images. In doing so, it focuses on and establishes a dialogue between contemporary film examples from Ukraine and post-Yugoslav cinema, where many works deal with the (im)possibilities of queerness in periods of murderous violence. Through selected film case studies, it addresses not only the concept of queer (war) trauma and the position of queerness in (nationalist) collective memories of conflict, but also the potential of queer interventions in heteronormative images of war and in imagining alternative futures.

Jasmina Šepetavc holds a PhD in gender studies and is a researcher at the Centre for Cultural and Religious Studies, the Faculty of Social Sciences, the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia). Her research interests include film, popular music, feminist and queer theory. She has written on film theory as well as other topics for various magazines and journals (*Ekran, Dialogi, Kino!, Družboslovne razprave, Studies in European Cinema*). She is a member of editorial teams at the Slovenian academic journal *Družboslovne razprave*, the academic journal *Feminist Encounters* – where she is currently co-editing (with N. Majsova and K. Čičigoj) a special issue titled *Peripheral Visions of Alternative Futures: Feminist Technoimaginaries* – and the Slovenian magazine for film and television *Ekran*. She also works as a film critic and film festival selector and is a member of FIPRESCI – International federation of film critics.

Panel 3.2 (in English)

AV Lecture Theatre 2, Wednesday, 25 September, 09:00–11:00

Chair: Asst Prof Zala Dobovšek

Asst Prof Samuel Antichi (University of Calabria, Italy)

Countering the Visual Dominance: Camera as a weapon and a shield in the Middle East

The role of digital and social media in mediating political conflicts has become more evident especially since the Arab spring started in the early 2010s. Three years before, in 2007, B'Tselem, an independent, non-partisan organization, which, since its inception in 1989, has been researching and publishing statistics, testimonies, video footage, and reports on human rights violations committed by Israel in the Occupied Territories, launched the Camera Project providing video cameras to Palestinian people in order to document the situation they are going through.

Alongside collecting images from video activism practices, B'Tselem are remediating and reconfiguring the networked images from a digital archive, opening up to multiple new connections, intervening in the space of cultural memories, sharing the act of testimony and the use of media for social justice.

Besides trauma and memory studies theoretical framework, this research will refer to media literacy approach, as a set of perspectives in order to understand media environment and, in this case, critically reflect on the role of citizen camera-witnessing as both an individual and a member of a culture and a society and its counterdominant practice of capturing and archiving visual documentation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Samuel Antichi holds a PhD in Music and Performing Arts from “Sapienza” University of Rome. He has written papers in Italian academic journals and attended several national and international conferences. His research interests concern mainly memory and trauma studies, as well as post-war Italian cinema and contemporary documentary films. Currently, he is Assistant Professor at University of Calabria, working on the project “Media and Visual Literacy in the Digital Age”. He has been a visiting researcher in Bethlehem working on B'Tselem video archive. His last monograph is entitled *Shooting Back. Documentary Cinema and Contemporary Warfare*.

Dr Flavia Garrigós Cabañero (Complutense University of Madrid, Spain)

Camille: Debates relating to photojournalism and cinema on African conflicts

The wars in Ukraine and Gaza are currently the focus of media attention. The Ukrainian war began in February 2022, a year when 56 states faced conflicts of varying intensity (SIPRI Yearbook 2003). The Gaza conflict, which has already been described as a genocide, started in October 2023. In April of that same year, conflict broke out in Sudan and, like the other two, continues to be active. This conflict has caused the internal displacement of eleven million people, an unprecedented figure (Amnesty International, 2024). However, the media scarcely report on Sudan or other African countries, which have experienced the highest number of conflicts for years. This issue is one of the debated addressed in the French film *Camille* (Lojkine, 2019), which tells the story of a photojournalist in the Central African Republic during the conflict that began in 2012 and is still ongoing.

The primary objective of this study is to explore the ideas presented in *Camille* regarding the media representation of the conflict in the Central African Republic which can be extended to the representation of most African conflicts. This examination aligns with Susan Sontag's deontological and social reflections in *Regarding the Pain of Others* in 2003. Furthermore, given that *Camille* is a cinematic portrayal of a photojournalist in an African conflict, it is essential to consider the history of African conflict representation in Western cinema. Thus, a secondary objective is to identify common elements and novel aspects offered by this film. This study employs a qualitative, interdisciplinary audiovisual text analysis influenced by Edward Said's work *Orientalism* (1978).

Dr Flavia Garrigós Cabañero holds a degree in Audiovisual Communication from Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) and a master's degree in International Relations and African Studies from Autonomous University of Madrid (UAM). She holds a PhD in Audiovisual Communication, Advertising, and Public Relations (UCM). Among her activities, she is a member of the Centre for Afro-Hispanic Studies (CEAH) at UNED, former Secretary of the Spanish Association of Africanists (AEA), former collaborator of the UNESCO Chair of Afro-Ibero-American Studies (UAH), and occasional columnist for the magazine *África Fundación Sur*. She has organized and participated in various congresses and has presented and published scientific works on African studies, cinema, and communication.

Asst Prof Polona Petek (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

The Eyes and Ears of a Filmmaker: A decolonial approach to representing Nuba and their plight in the collaborative documentary projects of Tomo Križnar and Maja Weiss

The aim of this paper is twofold: firstly, it shares the desire of the filmmakers under consideration to draw attention to the atrocities endured for decades, largely outside the spotlight of global media, by the Nuba people of Sudan; secondly, it aims to interpret Križnar and Weiss's work as a filmmaking project with a recognisably decolonial ethos and, as such, a significant departure from other representations of the Sudanese people and their plight.

This paper takes as its starting point the work of Slovenian documentary filmmaker and activist Tomo Križnar, spanning almost three decades, which he has dedicated almost entirely to projects involving the Nuba people in Sudan. Nuba have attracted the attention of researchers, photographers and filmmakers for decades; however, with Križnar – who first visited Sudan as an activist in 1980 and then started returning two decades later, having established a creative partnership with Slovenian film director and screenwriter Maja Weiss in 1999 – the role of the Sudanese people in these projects has shifted decidedly. Focusing on *Darfur: War for Water* (*Darfur – vojna za vodo*, 2007) and *Eyes and Ears of God – Video surveillance of Sudan* (*Oči in ušesa boga – video nadzor Sudana*, 2012), but also referring to Križnar's other projects and other documentary projects featuring Nuba, this paper discusses how the collaboration between Nuba and the Slovenian filmmakers has transformed this Sudanese people from an object of ethnographic fascination (albeit, indeed, often coupled with sincere sympathy) into an active collaborator. In Križnar and Weiss's work, Nuba have gained

visibility, voice and agency in the efforts for peace and for bringing to international attention the real causes and perpetrators of horror in this war-torn region of Africa.

Polona Petek is Head of Film and Television Studies at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, the University of Ljubljana. After completing her doctoral studies at the University of Melbourne (Australia), she initially focused her research on issues of transculturality, cosmopolitanism and mobility in the field of cinema, with a particular focus on the position of women in Slovenian and other European cinemas. More recently, her research and teaching interests have diversified and extended to include other audiovisual media: she has dedicated some attention to the position and role of television in the 21st century mediascape (*Film, Radio and Television during the Pandemic*, University of Ljubljana Press, 2024) and to developing the curriculum for teachers of film and television literacy, while decolonial conceptual shifts in film scholarship are occupying an increasingly pivotal role in her analyses of Slovenian cinema.

Panel 4 (in English)

Movie Theatre AGRFT, Wednesday, 25 September, 13:00–16:00

Chair: Asst Prof Maja Krajnc

Ms Tina Reid-Peršič (United Kingdom)

Reassessing Personal History in a Contested Space

I am making a feature length artist-led documentary film about my late father's story of being a teenage boy in the Second World War and why he became an exile from former Yugoslavia. The presentation shows excerpts from the film and deals with the issues and challenges the production of the film presents within changing political and social contexts.

My father Miha survived a wartime death sentence, as his family attended a funeral of an anti communist. He was then, by default, pushed into the home guard (*domobranci*), fled to Austria and was returned to the death camp at Teharje. He ultimately left Yugoslavia in 1947 and lived a quiet life in exile in London; understandably, he never forgave the loss of his homeland. Almost uniquely, two of his diaries written age 16 in 1944, survived. They document the daily life of a teenager in 1944, the victimisation by communists, but also the films and radio broadcasts he heard and their influence. My film seeks to explore how film can be an artistic space for reflection and genuine contact with human tragedy, by looking at the experience of an ordinary boy. My film hopes to investigate the act of censorship on a nation during the Second World War. The push to position the opposition to an opposing extreme political position. The erasure of a point of view, both ideologically and physically.

Tina Reid-Peršič lives in London, England. Her ethnicity is Slovenian and German. She is a multi-media artist working in sculpture, performance, photography and film. She has a BA in Art and Design and an MA in Art in Architecture (site-specific sculpture). Her last project, a performance spanning over a few years, specifically for the camera, was titled *Photos I'll never take*. The subject was involuntary childlessness and it was exhibited in several exhibitions in England and internationally. She is currently working on a feature length, artist-led documentary about her father, who had been an exile from Yugoslavia, because he served, as a teenager, in the Second-World-War Slovenian home guard. This was an anti-communist unit, which allied with the Germans. This is her first feature film and first documentary. The preparatory work has been titled 'Forgiveness' and 'My father's land'.

Asst Prof German Andres Duarte Penaranda (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy)

Chiquinquirá: 15 May (Chiquinquirá: 15 de mayo, 2023)

film duration: 15 min, DCP, English subtitles

In 1998, Colombian government made a risky decision: to demilitarise a part of the national territory to negotiate peace with the terrorist group FARC-EP. The demilitarised zone extended over 42000 square kilometres, an area larger than Switzerland. Soon this area turned into a violent territory in which civilians started to constantly denounce extortions, murders and kidnappings perpetrated by the FARC. By the year 2000, the demilitarised zone became a true lawless territory. However, a tragic and brutal event that occurred that year changed the course of the country's history. This film, based on archival TV images from *El noticiero de las Siete*, recounts the atrocious event that marked a turning point in the history of Colombia.

After the screening of the film, the director will present a series of reflections upon the critical points of considering an audiovisual text as a historical document, even a piece of evidence in a law system. Through the experience of realising the film, the director will open a series of reflections on the mechanism of representations of violence, on the way collective memory constructs and reproduces this mechanism, and above all, on the way the collective imaginary deals with traumatic events and their visual representation.

German A. Duarte is Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. His research interests include the history of media, film history, critical media studies, cognitive-cultural economy, and philosophy. He is a film editor, film director and the author of several publications, including authored books, edited volumes, and essays and papers in international journals. Among them is the book *Fractal Narrative: About the Relationship Between Geometries and Technology and Its Impact on Narrative Spaces* (Transcript, 2014). He has recently co-edited the volumes *Towards the Realm of Materiality. Designing Philip K. Dick's Non-Existing Technologies* (Nero, 2024), *Péritexte & Transmédialité* (PUB, 2023) and *Reading 'Black Mirror'. Insights into Technology and the Post-Media Condition* (Transcript, 2021).

Prof Steven Hawley (United Kingdom/Slovenia)

Unheard Voices from a Colonial War: The *Calling Blighty* films of the Second World War

The *Calling Blighty* films made between 1943 and 1946 in Burma and India are the first ever films in the world, where the voice and image of the ordinary soldier can be heard and seen, speaking in their own regional accents, seemingly uncensored. Sixty of these films survive where around one thousand servicemen, and a few women, send 35mm messages home to be screened in their local cinemas in the UK to their wives and families, a kind of one-way Zoom of their day, from eighty years ago.

The films raise all sorts of issues, the self-presentation of men and masculinity in wartime, the erasure of the Indian and ethnic troops glimpsed only as servants in the background of the films, and what can be said and crucially left unsaid from the front line. They are collectively a unique document of a colonial war, waged in Burma to regain the country, then part of the British Empire, from a Japanese invasion. Produced originally as a morale booster for the British troops in the Forgotten Army, in terrible conditions of monsoon rains, illness and death, they become both propaganda and the face of the forgotten.

The films were made in high quality 35mm and excellent sound; watching them today is like looking into the living eyes of the dead. Often awkward, but also emotional, funny and sarcastic, in their direct address to camera they are moving documents which reveal much about how men can show humour and emotion.

The presentation will explain the background to these unique films and show on screen compelling examples which show how, despite the propaganda element of these 'living letters', they reveal much about war, colonialism, and remembrance, and the men and women who fought in it.

War Memorial (2016)

film duration: 35 min, DCP, English subtitles

The paper will be followed by a screening of Steve Hawley's own 30-minute experimental film *War Memorial*, which is a different take on these strange and emotional films, where the messages themselves recede to the background to show a different view to the reassuring and brave faces of the men. *War Memorial* was nominated for Best Short Documentary Film at Sheffield Docfest 2017.

Steve Hawley is an artist and filmmaker and Emeritus Professor at the Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University (United Kingdom). His book *Men, War and Film*, about the *Calling Blighty* films, was published by Intellect in 2021. He has organised recreated screenings of the films to the families of the men who appear in them in many British regional cities, emotional occasions to connect relatives with the past in communal remembrance. He has also edited a version of the films which was shown on Remembrance Day 2016 at the military cemetery in Rangoon, where some of the fallen soldiers who appeared in the films are memorialised. As an experimental filmmaker he has shown films at numerous festivals, galleries, and on broadcast TV since the early 1980s, including Cannes Directors Fortnight, MoMA New York, the Stedelijk, Tate Britain, and the BBC and Channel 4. He also screened work at the first Slovenian video art festival at the Cankarjev Dom in 1984. He lives in Ljubljana and Žiri and is a Slovenian speaker.