

# THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH FILM STUDIES PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



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## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR BY LUCY FISCHER

On July 18, 2005 Andrea Campbell, who had been the Film Studies Administrative Assistant since the summer of 2000, passed away after battling a long illness. Andrea was our colleague and our friend and contributed a great deal to the Program. She adored the movies and so was interested in broader aspects of the field in which she worked. That love of film came through in the many conversations we all had with Andrea over the years, both inside and outside the office. She was dedicated to her work as Administrative Assistant and pursued it as long as possible, even while seriously ill. We all continue to miss her tremendously and, in her honor, we are republishing an obituary which ran in the Sept. 1, 2005 issue of the *University Times*. My thanks to editor-in-chief Nancy Brown, for making it available to us.



Dr. Lucy Fischer

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## IN MEMORIAM: ANDREA L. CAMPBELL

*The following is an article printed by the University Times Sept. 2005 honoring the life of department administrative assistant Andrea Campbell.*

Andrea L. Campbell, administrative assistant in the film studies program, died July 18, 2005, of cancer. She was 52. Campbell joined the University staff in 1980 as an auditor and processor in the Invoice Audit department. She served as assistant manager of the department from 1987 to 1989, when she took a position as billing manager in Pitt's Center for Instructional Development and Distance Education. Campbell worked there until

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Andrea L. Campbell

## OWLS AT NOON: THE HOLLOW MEN

### BY COLIN MACCABE

*This summer, Colin MacCabe, Distinguished Professor of Film and English, co-curated the film exhibition, *Owls at Noon* Prelude: *The Hollow Men*, about filmmaker Chris Marker, from April 27-June 13 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. The following is MacCabe's artistic statement from MoMA's literature on the project.*

Chris Marker makes films like a beachcomber. For fifty years he has wandered along the shores of memory picking images which would act like Proust's Madeleines and dissolve us into our real memories, our real lives. His films have always dealt with the paradoxes of time—think of the future that is made of memories in *La Jetée*—but his films have always been limited by the linearity of the film reel. No filmmaker has embraced the digital image more enthusiastically for it has promised a release from the pre-determined sequence, opened

up the possibility of ever fresh connections.

In 1997 he produced his masterwork *Immemory* a CD ROM that took us through the texts and images of his life, each trip a new set of relations. His current work in progress *Owls at Noon* attempts in a



Dr. Colin MacCabe

more interactive digital form to tell the story of the twentieth century through unexpected connections and chance encounters. *Owls at Noon: The Hollow Men* is the first element of this work in progress and is exhibited specially for the re-opening of MoMA as a two-screen installation. The 20-minute piece takes its starting point and its title from T.S. Eliot's famous 1925 poem *The Hollow Men* that reflected on the European wasteland of the First World War. Marker's meditation mixes the poem with images of wounded veterans and achingly beautiful women to evoke the hopelessness of those who had lived through Europe's shambles of a suicide. As the First World War comes back to haunt us in both the Balkans and the Middle East, Marker combs the beach of images to create an echo-chamber in which the player (a better word than spectator or viewer) can remember again and for the first time the reality of a civilization's self-slaughter.

## CHE GUEVARA AND THE ROLE OF THE IMAGE

*Alejandro Bruzual, originally from Venezuela, is currently finishing his dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh in the Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures.*

Alejandro Bruzual recently won an award for a film studies essay that he submitted to the Venezuelan National Cinematheque 2005 Film Essay Contest. This was the first national contest held for a film studies paper written entirely in Spanish. Two essays were chosen and Bruzual will receive five hundred dollars along with a certificate. His paper is entitled, *El rostro de Prome-*

*teo resistente. Imagen en la filmografía sobre el Che Guevara (The Visage of a Resistant Prometheus: Image in the Films on Che Guevara).* Bruzual uses his paper to



Alejandro Bruzual

examine sixteen films that both monumentalize and criticize Che Guevara through their use of, or relationship to, a pair of famous pictures displaying Guevara. The first picture shows him at the height of his popularity and power while the second displays his dead body. Bruzual outlines how the photos symbolically take the place of Che Guevara the character. For one of his films he uses the more recent *The Motorcycle Diaries* (Salles 2004) and examines how that film attempts to rebuild the Che Guevara image in an effort to disclaim him as more of an everyday man.

## THE GRADUATE INTERVIEW: HUGH MANON

*Hugh S. Manon is in his fourth year as Assistant Professor in the Screen Studies Program at Oklahoma State University, where he specializes in Lacanian theory and film noir. He received his Ph.D. in Critical and Cultural Studies from the University of Pittsburgh in 2002. His dissertation, "As Far As Anyone Knows: Fetishism and the Anti-Televisual Paradoxes of Film Noir" was written under the direction of Lucy Fischer, and is currently under revision as a book project. Manon's recent article "Some Like It Cold: Fetishism in Billy Wilder's Double Indemnity" appears in the Summer 2005 issue of Cinema Journal. Another article, "Seeing Through Seeing Through: The Trompe L'Oeil Effect and Bodily Difference in the Cinema of Tod Browning," will appear in the Spring 2006 issue of Framework. He is interested in Lo-Fi aesthetics, and recently led a graduate seminar entitled "Theorizing Punk."*

*Nathan Koob is a first year masters student in the University of Pittsburgh's English Department/Film Studies Program. He edits The News Reel, co-organizes The Cinematheque, and is current co-president of the English Department GSO. For his undergraduate degree he had the privilege of studying under Hugh Manon at Oklahoma State University.*

**Nathan Koob:** What is the status of film studies at Oklahoma State University?

**Hugh Manon:** I think people would be surprised by the sophistication of our program. Founded in the 1970s by Peter Rollins and Leonard Leff, the OSU Screen Studies Program now has seven faculty members, including two new hires in Fall 2005: Demetria Shabazz (Alabama),

who specializes in race and gender in media, and Brian Price (NYU) who specializes in color and French and Soviet cinema. Our undergraduate program offers a full range of Film and Television Studies courses, and our graduate Screen Studies seminars have increased both in number and range. To give you some idea, our next three seminars are entitled "Chromophobia" (Price), "African and Asian Women of Cinema" (Shabazz), and "Lacan and His Followers" (Manon). I've had a hand in a lot of our recent hiring decisions and programmatic changes—including the change of the program's title—and I'm really delighted with our new direction.

**NK:** I admit that I don't exactly know what Lo-Fi Aesthetics is. Can you elaborate?

**HM:** Way back in the early 1990s, a post-post-punk musical subgenre emerged called "Lo-Fi"—bands like Guided by Voices, Pavement and The Grifters, to name just a few. In the shadow of the emergence of inexpensive, yet very sophisticated, digital recording devices, these groups deliberately opted to record their music more primitively. The icon of the Lo-Fi movement was the TASCAM Portastudio—a multi-track mixer that recorded on standard analog cassette tapes instead of on large format reel-to-reel or digital tape. The result was often highly melodic, even "pretty" music, that emerged through a wash of tape hiss, strange equalization and magnetic drop-outs. This Lo-Fi aesthetic of course has its parallels in cinema and other art forms. In cinematic terms, I'm particularly interested in do-it-yourself-ism, micro-budget filmmaking, unrepaired failures, authorial self-sabotage, textual *detourne-*

*ment*, certain Punk artifacts, and early (but not recent, Sundance-era) "indie" filmmaking, etc. So when I signal my investment in "Low-Fi" aesthetics in cinema, I mean that I'm working to theorize texts whose fidelity with original photographed or recorded reality is degraded—failing either intentionally, or because of a lack of access to anything like state of the art technology.

**NK:** What advice do you have for graduate students ready to enter the job market?

**HM:** I've seen the job market from both sides, in fairly rapid succession. I was hired my first year out in 2002, and chaired our most recent film search in 2004-05. I'll offer three pieces of advice, one for each major phase of the search: 1) Regarding letters of application, I suggest the dragnet approach. Apply for any and every job for which you are even marginally qualified. Don't start ruling out schools because of location, size, etc., until you actually get some offers. The market is obviously very competitive, and even the best candidates usually have to make compromises their first time out. 2) In an MLA interview, become an aggressive participant in the discussion, not a passive interviewee. A search committee is concerned not only with what you answer, but also with *how* you respond. I recall one candidate who, when asked how he would advise a student who wanted to write a thesis about Kurosawa, replied "I would advise the student not to write a thesis about Kurosawa." A dramatic and memorable response, but also a good answer because the candidate had a real rationale to back it up. 3) On a campus visit, and specifically the so called "job talk," you've got to win over both the experts in your field and, in  
(Cont. on page 8)

## JANE FEUER VISITS GERMANY

*In 2005, Professor Jane Feuer (English) made two academic lecture tours of Germany (and Switzerland) under the auspices of the US Embassy Cultural Affairs Division (Amerika Haus) in Berlin.*

In the spring of 2005, Feuer lectured on topics related to Hollywood musicals at Ruhr Universität, Frei Universität (Berlin) and the University of Zurich. She was also on the faculty of the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual American Studies Conference held each year for German teachers in Berlin.



Dr. Jane Feuer

In the fall of 2005, Feuer returned to Germany to deliver the W.E. B. Dubois Lecture at Humboldt University (Berlin) and to lecture in Frankfurt, Leipzig and Nuremberg, all on topics related to television. She was a featured speaker at a two-day symposium on "Six Feet Under and the American Way of Death" sponsored by the Atlantisches Academie in Kaiserslautern. During this trip, Dr. Feuer stayed at a convent in the Rhineland after which she recuperated at the Savoy Hotel in downtown West Berlin.

## IN MEMORIAM (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

2000, when she transferred to the film studies program.

By all accounts, film studies was a dream job for Campbell, who on her resumé listed movies as one of her main interests. Lucy Fischer, director of film studies, says Campbell's interest in film dated back many years. In fact, after Campbell was hired in film studies, she told Fischer that she had been a student in her film comedy course years earlier. She took the class as part of her studies in English literature, earning her B.A. magna cum laude from Pitt in 1983.

Fischer said when Campbell took the film studies job five years ago, "she moved into her office and made it her own." Campbell's office was very much a reflection of her interests, Fischer noted. Not surprisingly, film posters adorned the walls. She'd often come into work early and spend the time chatting with faculty and students about

films. Her duties included setting up for film studies receptions and lectures; then she'd use her lunch hour to attend the lecture, Fischer said.

Art was another interest, evident in the art books that lined the shelves of her office. Campbell would often put her art interest to use when designing film studies invitations or the program's newsletter. Her office also hinted at what Fischer called her "great sense of humor," with whimsical items such as her Charlie Chaplin finger puppet. "She was very youthful in her attitude, even with the illness," Fischer said.

"On some level, she was an expert juggler," Fischer said of Campbell, who had to schedule classes, order the right kind of equipment for different kinds of films, plan food for receptions and keeps tabs on the technical suitability of classrooms assigned to film studies. She also helped out with the student film

club, Pitt in Hollywood. Whatever was needed, "she always pitched in," Fischer said. "She was a great fit for the job."

Campbell's office also had the requisite photos of her two daughters, Mallory and Willa, as well as examples of their artwork. But she took it a step further, often bringing her older daughter to film studies events. "She was a very devoted parent," Fischer said. Fischer said there has been a "tremendous response" to Campbell's death: "We were tremendously fond of her." Film studies faculty plan to discuss how the program might honor Campbell's memory. In addition to her two daughters, Campbell is survived by her husband, Glenn R. Campbell; her mother, Lydia Natale Tierno; two brothers, Mark and Alan Tierno, and a sister, Anita Carson.

## OUR HIGHER FACULTIES

*These faculty members have shared some of their most recent accomplishments.*

**Lucy Fischer** is at work editing *American Film of the 1920s* for Rutgers University Press. The Board of the Modern Language Association has also approved her volume (co-edited with Patrice Petro) on *Teaching Film* for their "Options in Teaching Series." She recently contributed a section on Pittsburgh to Robert Haller's *Crossroads: Avant-garde Film In Pittsburgh in the 1970s*. Also forthcoming is an article of hers on "Women in Cinema" for Oxford University Press' *Encyclopedia of Women in World History*. This past summer and fall, she gave talks at: the Columbia Film Seminar (NYC), the Irish Film Institute (Dublin, Ireland), the John Huston School of Film and Digital Media (Galway, Ireland) and the 17th Annual Bioethics Retreat at Asilomar, California,

**Neepa Majumdar** recently, published a review of *The River* (Alekssei Balabanov, 2002) in *Kinokultura*. Majumdar was invited to present "Falling Women: Stunt Stars and female Performance in Indian Cinema of the 1930s" as the keynote lecture for the conference, "Materializing India: Globalization, Gender, and Media" at Indiana University-Bloomington in February. She presented "Dead Stars and Film Form" at the Media in Transition 4 Conference at MIT in May as well as "Film Fragments, Documentary History, and Colonial Indian Cinema" at the Visible Evidence XII Documentary Studies conference in Montreal in August. She also won a Hewlett International Small Grant for travel

to the Asian Cinema Studies Society Conference in Beijing and Shanghai in June, where she presented "Ethnographic Doctoring: Crosscultural Negotiations in *Dr. Kotnis ki Amar Kahani* (V. Shantaram, India, 1946)"

**John Beverley** is currently chair of the Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pittsburgh. He co-edits the University of Pittsburgh Press book series, *Illuminations: Cultural Formations of the Americas*. His book, *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*, was published last year by the University of Minnesota Press; and a Spanish translation of his 1999 book, *Subalternity and Representation*, appeared (Madrid: Veruert-Iberoamericana Editores, 2005). He has also published recently on the Colombian filmmaker Victor Gaviria, and taught film studies related courses on Film and Armed Struggle in Latin America and Narratives of Torture. With the sponsorship of the Social Science Research Council, he gave a series of lectures this summer at the Ludwig Foundation in Havana, Cuba, on Latin American film and cultural theory.

**Adam Lowenstein** was awarded a George A. and Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation Fellowship for the 2005-2006 academic year. The fellowship supports research related to his current book in progress, tentatively entitled "Cinema Lost and Found: Spectatorship, Surrealism, and the Age of New Media." He is spending the year in residence in New York, where is a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Cinema Studies at New York University. His book *Shocking Representation:*

*Historical Trauma, National Cinema, and the Modern Horror Film* was published by Columbia University Press in October 2005 as an entry in their "Film and Culture" series. He presented the paper "Cinematic Spectatorship's Digital Afterlife: *The Sweet Hereafter* as Intermediated Object" at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference in London (April 2005) after presenting an earlier version at the Pittsburgh Film Colloquium (February 2005). Upcoming conference presentations include "America, *Land of the Dead*. Cinema, Trauma, and the Summer of 2005" at the "Documenting Trauma, Documenting Terror" Film and Literature Conference at Florida State University (February 2006).

**Nancy Condee** recently published two essay-reviews in *Kinokultura*: "As Much Happiness as Unhappiness", which is about Sergei Ursuliak's *Dolgoe proshchanie* (Long Farewell), and "Muratova's Well-Tempered Scam", an essay-review of Kira Muratova's *Nastroishchik* (The Tuner). She has also recently written reviews of John Haynes, *New Soviet Man: Gender and Masculinity in Stalinist Soviet Cinema*. *Modern Language Review*, Aleksandr Sokurov, Dir. *Solntse* [The Sun], as well as a review of Alex Erjavec's *Postmodernism and the Postsocialist Condition: Politicized Art under Late Socialism*. She was the co-founder and co-organizer of *Sex, Race, and Globalization*, the Third Annual Conference of the Cultural Studies Association—held at the University of Arizona. She has been the chair for the board of directors for the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research from 2002-2006. This April, Nancy Condee will be the keynote speaker at the Southern Conference of AAASS at the University of South Carolina.

## GRADUATE STUDENT ACTIVITIES

*Several graduate students relate their recent experiences in presenting their work at national and international conferences.*

**Clint Bergeson** (English)

Visible Evidence XII

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

August 22-25, 2005

Clint Bergeson presented "Looking Under Mind: The Embodiment of Anthropological Knowledge" in Neepa Majumdar's Film and Ethnography course (Fall 2004). One of the many consequences of the ongoing critique of the social sciences has been a re-evaluation of the concept of ethnographic knowledge: what it is, how it's presented, its value and its validity. Building on the works of such critics as Bill Nichols and Johannes Fabian, this paper attempts to sort out the complexities of visual ethnography and explore alternative methods of producing and experiencing anthropological knowledge. Through the theoretical and historical writings of Georges Bataille, Michel Foucault, and Fatimah Tobing Rony, as well as through a reading of Robert Gardner's controversial film *Fortress of Bliss*, Bergeson examines the possibilities of an ethnography that exceeds the limits of rational, visual, and linguistic systems of thought in an attempt to approach a "truer" experience of non-Western cultures.

**Rick Warner** (English)

Cinema Europe:

Networks in Progress

Amsterdam

June 22-26, 2005

Rick Warner presented "Rethinking the Remake in Contemporary European Cinema," which expands on an essay he wrote for Dr. Lucy Fischer on Neil Jordan's *The Good Thief* (2003), a reworking of Jean-Pierre Melville's *Bob le flambeur* (France, 1955). He added Olivier Assayas' *Irma Vep* (France, 1996), which remakes (or stages the remaking of) Louis Feuillade's crime serial *Les Vampires* (France, 1915-1916), and Jorgen Leth's *The Five Obstructions* (Denmark, 2004), which remakes Leth's own *The Perfect Human* (Denmark, 1967) five times according to different constraints imposed by Lars von Trier. Remakes, of course, are often dismissed as unoriginal, if not criminal, undertakings. By contrast, Rick's paper tries to provide a more nuanced view which accounts for the remake's unique abilities to monitor national cinemas and to unmask and interrogate, rather than conceal, suspicious cultural and textual politics.

**Jill Dione** (English)

Society for Cinema and Media Studies

London, England

March 31-April 3, 2005

As a member of the *Global Hollywood and the Cold War* panel at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference Jill Dione presented her paper "Foundations in Hollywood: Underwear and the Red Scare." By examining cold war media images of female undergarments, the paper argues that the girdle-as-chastity-belt (con)formed postwar American women into homebound stabilizers of the nuclear family and that the missile-shaped brassiere effaced the woman's work of breast-feeding in favor of the man's work of waging. Moreover, by performing the suburban housewife's duties in dresses that emphasized their girdle-enhanced sleekness and their brassiere-honed bosoms, American women distinguished themselves from their Russian counterparts, who, as Susan Bordo observes in *Where the Girls Are*, were jobs...outside the home...[while] their kids were raised in state-run child-care centers...[and] brainwashed...to be good little comrades." Finally, Dione argues that America's concerns regarding communist infiltration were enacted upon the postwar female body by virtue of the particular way in which undergarments secured its porous boundaries: by defensively sealing off the vagina from foreign penetration and by buttressing the breasts with formidable facsimiles of offensive weaponry

## WHAT'S NEW? THE CINEMATHEQUE

Graduate students at University of Pittsburgh expressed the desire for an on-campus context to help build the film community here at Pitt and to explore as well as “explode” the film canon and share ideas, interests and ongoing work. Department of English graduate students Alison Patterson, Kathleen Murray, Amanda Klein, and Nathan Koob accepted the challenge to create such a forum, now known as the Cinematheque.

The mission statement for the Cinematheque is as follows: “In organizing the Cinematheque, we wish to provide graduate students studying film a regular forum for watching and discussing films together and to provide a larger context for undergraduates and graduate students in other departments to understand the goals and interests of film studies.” Coordinator Ali Patterson has this to say about Cinematheque’s relationship to the canon “Through the Cinematheque, we hope to widen our base of film knowledge and to question assumptions about the inevitability of a canon. By pairing short films with feature length films, the Cinematheque can offer films that will challenge each other and trouble the notion that a single film, or a mode of production, can stand for a genre, a movement, an era, or a national cinema. We are also able to screen film texts that are unlikely to be screened somewhere else, as well as to show frequently screened films in unlikely and intriguing combinations.

In the first semester of the Cinematheque coordinators experimented on a format even as the

program attracted a broad range of students. The Cinematheque now boasts attendees from the English PhD, MA, and MFA programs, as well as undergraduate students. This first term has seen presentations by first year MA student Nathan Koob on scopophilia, and by more advanced graduate students Amy Borden on cannibalism in the cinema, and Kara Andersen on varieties of early animation.



The spring semester brings exciting changes to the Cinematheque, including moving the screenings to Friday nights and instituting the standard format of a short film preceding a feature length film. The new semester will also boast an overarching theme, the “Cine-city.” Patterson looks forward to these changes and to the Cinematheque’s second season, “In the spring semester, organized around the relationship between cinema and city, we’ll offer the campus community an even wider range of respondents, from scholars currently writing their dissertations to students completing their undergraduate education in film studies. We are confident in the contributions each will make to a successful season of the Cinematheque.” The first Cinematheque screening of the spring semester will be held on January 13 at 6:30 PM in 1501 WWPB and will include the theme, *The (Dystopian) City of Tomorrow*. Further screenings will be held bi-weekly and include some of the following themes: *Sex and the (Cinematic) City*, *The City of Love*, and *the Musical City*.

Cinematheque coordinators are currently working on a website to be launched in the spring semester, as well as a tri-fold listing of the screening schedule for the spring. If you have any interest in attending or presenting at Cinematheque please email the team at:

**[pittcinematheque@gmail.com](mailto:pittcinematheque@gmail.com)**.

The team is particularly interested in recruiting speakers, attendees, and coordinating team members among film students from departments not yet represented in the Cinematheque.



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## INTERVIEW (CONT. FROM PAGE 3)

many cases, faculty members whose area of specialization is far removed from your own. Do not fail to connect with either group. "Dumbing down" your entire talk for instance, never mentioning Lacan when in fact you specialize in Lacan) will hopelessly alienate the specialists. On the other hand, talking for fifteen minutes about the finer points of *Vorstellungrepräsentanz* will put to sleep all the sway votes—i.e. all the faculty members who are not already pulling for you. In a sense, then, the audience at a job talk is much like the audience at any Hollywood film. Most anyone is willing to forgive thirty seconds or

a minute of boredom, but if you haven't made any real, meaningful contact in five minutes, the game is over. A job talk, for the most part, must be pitched somewhere in the middle, but without fail must include *both* a period of overly simplistic explanation *and* a period of highly specialized "jargon." To avoid either of these would be a fatal mistake, in my view.

**NK:** What are some good life experiences for a film studies student?

**HM:** So "omnivorously watching films" doesn't count, right? This is a very strange question indeed, but in the spirit of the Proust Questionnaire I'll attempt to answer it any-

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way. Master all the basic functions of a pre-1977 (i.e. *sans* autofocus) 35mm single lens reflex camera. Shoot, develop and edit a short film on 8mm or 16mm. Ritualistically canvas local flea markets, garage sales, book stores, antique fairs and, yes, eBay—some of my most valuable research materials cannot be found in any library. Periodically attend a local drive-in (the Kane Road in Hopewell/Aliquippa is my favorite). Also, attempt to befriend my former OSU student, and current Pitt grad student Nathan Koob, to whom I have bequeathed my list of favorite dive restaurants in the greater Pittsburgh area.