

FILM & SCREEN MEDIA

Creative Practice Symposium

4th May 2018

Film and Screen Media Auditorium,
Basement, Kane Building

9.30am

But HOW is it not *just* practice?

Or *Do I Not Know Practice as Research?*

Professor Julian McDougall, Head of the Centre for Excellence in Media Practice at Bournemouth University

In this presentation I will share experiences from editing an academic journal *publishing* media practice research, *assessing* doctoral media practice research and *reviewing* media practice research (including my own) against external standards for 'rigour'.

Taking our acceptance of practice as research as read, we will move beyond that. We will, then, explore a) how practice research can best be 'signposted' as such; b) how we, as a community of practice, can do more to establish our own criteria for the work we do and c) practice research as a political project.

These lines of enquiry will be illustrated by examples of media practice research and those attending will be invited to discuss them as 'not just practice' and consider how they show the working, as well as to share their own examples, ask questions or just share their pain!

Julian McDougall is Professor in Media and Education and Head of the Centre for Excellence in Media Practice at Bournemouth University, which offers Professional Doctorate programmes in Creative Media Education and Creative Media Practice. Julian is Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and *edits Media Practice and Education* (formerly the Journal of Media Practice). He convenes the annual International Media Education Summit, held in a different country each year. Julian is the author / editor of a range of books, chapters, journal articles and reports and has completed externally funded research and knowledge exchange projects in the fields of media, education, practice and pedagogy, literacies, cultural theory and technology. His latest book (with John Potter) *Digital Media, Culture and Education: Theorising Third Space Literacies*, has been shortlisted for the United Kingdom Literacy Association's Academic Book Award for 2018 and he is co-editor (with Pete Bennett) of the *Routledge Research in Media Literacy and Education* international book series.

10.30am

Case Studies I: Alan Hook and Romana Turina

Speculations on the human and non-human animal.

Alan Hook, Ulster University/Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts

What is it like to be a horse? - Using philosopher Thomas Nagel's essay *What Is It Like To Be A Bat* as a starting point, and drawing on Speculative Design, Animal Computer Interaction (ACI), Game Studies and Post-Humanist discourse, Alan Hook will discuss some of his latest practice based research which explores the benefits and limitations of using games and play to help build inter-species empathy and understanding. The talk will present a body of emerging practice-based, interdisciplinary research which uses 'making' as a way to challenge anthropocentrism, explore how we might better understand the experiences of other species and reflect on animality. The talk will showcase new research into how immersive platforms and gaming technology could help us explore what it might be like to live as a different species and how it could be used to reflect on what it is like to be a human-animal.

Alan Hook is a Lecturer in Interactive Media and Researcher in New Media and Play at Ulster University. His research explores how play can be used to explore complex topics and examine important social, cultural and political ideas. Alan is currently studying towards a PhD in Speculative Design and Play at one of the UK's leading design institutes, Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts.

Thinking through Film/Thinking on Film:

The Essay Films *Lunch with Family* and *San Sabba* (Turina 2016)

Romana Turina, Senior Lecturer in Screenwriting at the Arts University Bournemouth

Orthodox academic research and creative practice articulate different discursive moments and relational experiences. Practice as Research (PaR), and Practice-led Research (Sullivan, 2005; Smith, 2009) are both implemented in several disciplines. In my work, the methodological route takes the investigation from personal experience to archive and to film. My essay films investigate the space in-between conflicts of identity, memory, and postmemory. Based on the archival research that unearthed the silenced history of one city, Trieste, they map multiple levels of signification, which by juxtaposition and discontinuity break the structure of the teleological narrative and address policies of memorialisation and historiography. Both films deploy varied strategies and techniques to create first-person narratives, which are both autobiographical and autoethnographic in their interweaving of personal, political and cultural histories.

Dr Romana Turina is a filmmaker and screenwriter and works on the translation of history, memory, and subjectivity in documentary and fiction. Her films have been shortlisted and won several awards, among them *Lunch with Family* (AHRC Research in Film, 2016) and *San Sabba* (Hollywood International Independent Documentary Awards, 2018). She is currently Senior Lecturer in Screenwriting at the Arts University Bournemouth.

11.30am Coffee

12pm **Roundtable Discussion** on the Challenges and Opportunities of Creative Practice

12.45pm Lunch

2pm

Blurred Boundaries: Hybrid Strategies and the Subjective Voice in Non-Fiction Film-making.

Jill Daniels, Senior Lecturer in Film, University of East London

The primary aim of my current research is to advance a critical understanding of the opportunities and limitations in the cinematic strategies that are available to film-makers in the mediation of place and memory, including trauma and autobiography through the production of essay films. I propose that an essay film may deploy disparate cinematic strategies and techniques in the mediation of place and memory, including critical realism, metaphor, allegory and fiction, yet still remain identifiably a non-fiction film.

Dr Jill Daniels has been making films since 1989 and has won many international awards, including most recently, Best Experimental Film for *My Private Life II* (2015) at Ann Arbor Film Festival, USA, in 2016. She gained her practice-led PhD in 2014 and her research focuses on memory, place and subjectivities in experimental documentary films. She is co-editor of *Truth, Dare or Promise: Art and Documentary Revisited* (2013) and a member of the editorial board of *Journal of Media Practice*. Her films have been published in *Screenworks* and *Sightlines*. She is a Senior Lecturer in Film at the University of East London. Her website is www.jilldanielsfilms.com

3pm **Case Studies II:** Laura O'Connor and Davide

Fake it 'til you make it and other mantras for surviving a PhD with practice/
Practice-led/-based/-as PhD

Laura O'Connor, Ulster University

The terms to describe this form of study are confusing. PhD's are not easy, this is evident from the amount of forums I have visited as I googled phrases like "PhD imposter", "how to drop out of a PhD", "what is a practice-based PhD", "how to write a thesis in 3 months". This paper will look at various guidelines and models produced by Universities to assist PhD with practice students. It will also give an insight into my own journey as a practicing

artist who entered this academic field without having written an academic essay in five years.

Laura O'Connor has recently completed a DEL funded PhD with practice from Ulster University (awaiting summer graduation). O'Connor's research focused on the practices of female artists on social media who respond to and challenge representations of femininity aligned with post-feminist sensibilities. Through her own performance and video practice, and research of the field, O'Connor developed a practice that dealt with modes of spectatorship and fragmented identity on social media and in gallery-based work.

Young Filmmakers in the Time of the Great Recession: A Focus on the Irish and Italian Film Industries

Daide Abbatescianni, University College Cork

This research investigates the effects of the Great Recession on the European film industries, focusing on the work and career prospects of young Irish and Italian filmmakers today. Starting from 2007, an unprecedented economic crisis affected Europe and, in particular, the most indebted countries known as PIIGS. These nations have had to face exceptional economic and socio-political challenges, among which was a dramatic decrease in funding for the film industry. Young, not-yet-established filmmakers in particular have been penalised.

The impressive diversity of structural problems in terms of funding, competitiveness, technological development, distribution, inequalities, employment, and production dynamics make Italy and Ireland two highly representative case studies.

This research will explore what financial solutions have been found by *débutant* filmmakers to produce and/or distribute their films, and whether these have influenced their artistic output and left visible traces in their works, through aesthetic, technical or narrative choices.

The theoretical and analytical study will proceed with specifically-related fieldwork using the interview as a research methodology, **aimed to support the development of a feature-length documentary film.**

Daide Abbatescianni is a PhD candidate in Film and Screen Media at University College Cork, where he holds an Excellence Doctoral Scholarship. His doctoral project is entitled *Young Filmmakers in the Time of the Great Recession: A Focus on the Irish and Italian Film Industries* and comprises an academic dissertation and the making of a feature documentary. He holds a Professional Diploma in Stage Directing (International Theatre Academy of the Adriatic), a BA in Communication Studies (University of Bari Aldo Moro) and an MA in Documentary Film Directing (Tallinn University Baltic Film, Media, Arts, and Communication School). His research interests principally focus on European cinema, the European film industry, creative practice and the documentary film. He currently works as a foreign correspondent for the EU-funded film magazine *Cineuropa*. He is also a film practitioner active as a director and assistant director.

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