

RE:FOCUS W/O/R/K/S/H/O/P

Film Heritage Through the De/Post/Anti-colonial Lenses:
New Perspectives in Research and Teaching

June 28-30, 2023, Blinken OSA Archivum, Budapest

JUNE 28

10:00 **Welcome / introductions**

10:30-12:30 **RE:FOCUS / Vocabulary**

/// Almira Ousmanova (Vilnius) *The vocabulary of resistance: epistemic and political virtue of decolonial optics in Visual Studies*

/// Dāvis Sīmanis (Riga) *In-Between Historical and Non-Historical Spaces: Models of Self-Colonialism in Eastern European Cinema* (ONLINE)

/// Chair and discussant: Oksana Sarkisova

14:00-16:00 **RE:FOCUS / History**

/// Nino Dzandzava (Tbilisi), *(Pre-)Soviet Georgian Cinema Studies: Observations, Challenges and the Colonial Legacy*

/// Ivan Kozlenko (Kyiv/Amherst) *Decolonizing Ukrainian Cinema: 1986-2016*

/// Andrei Gornyxh (Vilnius) *Whose De/Colonization? Visual Anthropology of post-Soviet Cinema in Russia and Belarus* (ONLINE)

/// Chair and discussant: Almira Ousmanova

16:30-19:30 **SCREENINGS**

Selection of Georgian films introduced by Nino Dzandzava

Selection of Uzbek films introduced by Alexei Ulko

Selection of Ukrainian films introduced by Ivan Kozlenko

JUNE 29

10:00-12:00 **RE:FOCUS / Geography**

/// Alexei Ulko (Samarkand) *Decolonising Soviet Heritage in Contemporary Experimental Uzbek Cinema*

/// Caroline Damiens (Paris) *Decolonising Cinema History in Soviet Siberia: Placing Indigenous Experiences at the Centre of the Narrative*

Supported by **CEU Conferences and Academic Events Fund, Blinken OSA Archivum, and Visual Studies Platform**

/// Sultan Usualiev (Bishkek) *Film Studies in Kyrgyzstan: Legacy and Challenges* (ONLINE)

/// Chair and discussant: Birgit Beumers (Passau)

14:00-16:00 **RE:FOCUS / Audiences**

/// Luna Hupperetz (Amsterdam) *Cineclub Freedomfilms and Women of Suriname: Reconstructing a Militant Cinema Network*

/// Konstanty Kuzma (Munich) *Film Criticism Beyond the Nation Framework: Designing New Communication Platforms*

/// Mila Turajlić (Belgrade/Paris), *Archival Treasures: Filmski Novosti and the Production of the Documentaries on the Non-Aligned Movement and War in Algeria*

/// Chair and discussant: Lucy Szemetova (St. Andrews)

16:30 **SCREENINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

/// *Strijd op 16mm* (A Battle Restored, 2022) *Oema foe Sranan* (Women of Surinam, 1978)

/// Fragments from the "Labudovic Reels" with introduction and commentary by Mila Turajlić

JUNE 30

10:00-12:00 **RE:FOCUS / Teaching**

/// Asli Özgen-Havekotte (Amsterdam) *Decolonising Media Studies: A New Course in the Making* (ONLINE)

/// Oksana Sarkisova (Budapest) *Changing the Optics: Teaching Film History and Heuristic Potential of the Decolonial Paradigm(s)*

/// Chair and discussant: Caroline Damiens

12:15-13:45 **CLOSING ROUNDTABLE**
MOVING FORWARD

RE:FOCUS PARTICIPANTS BIOS

Birgit Beumers is Professor emeritus in Film Studies, Aberystwyth University (UK) and affiliated with the University of Passau (Germany). Previously, she has taught in Russian Studies at Cambridge and Bristol universities. She specialises in Russian culture, cinema and theatre, and the cinemas of the former Soviet territories, especially Central Asia. She has published widely on Russian and Central Asian cinema, including *A History of Russian Cinema* (2009); she has (co-)edited, among other titles, *A Companion to Russian Cinema* (2016) and *Cinema in Central Asia: Rewriting Cultural Histories* (with Gulnara Abikeyeva, Michael Rouland, 2013). She is series editor of KINO (Bloomsbury) and KinoSputniks (intellect), and editor-in-chief of the journals *KinoKultura* (online) and *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* (Taylor & Francis).

Caroline Damiens is Assistant Professor in film studies at the University of Paris Nanterre. Her contributions on film and Indigenous peoples, expedition film and Siberian Indigenous cinema have appeared in such journals as *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, *Mise au Point*, *Revue d'histoire culturelle*, *Etudes Inuit Studies* and *Early Popular Visual Culture*. She edited the volume *Ciné-expéditions: une zone de contact cinématographique* (Paris: AFRHC, 2022) and co-edited (with Csaba Mészáros) the *KinoKultura* special issue on Sakha (Yakutia) cinema (2022). Her forthcoming monograph (in press in French with Presses Universitaires de Rennes and under contract in English with Bloomsbury) focuses on the cinematic manufacturing of Northern Indigenous peoples in Soviet films. Her current work looks at itinerant cinema in Soviet Siberia and in rural France in the mid-twentieth century.

Nino Dzandzava studied at the Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film State University of Georgia from 2001 to 2006, where she obtained a Master's Degree in film studies. From 2010 to 2011, she completed a film conservation course at the L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation (George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film, Rochester, New York). She has worked as a film critic and cultural commentator for various magazines and newspapers in Georgia. She has also published academic and research papers in journals and catalogues internationally. While working at the Film Heritage Department at the Georgian National Film Centre (2006–2009) and at the National Archives of Georgia (2011–2019), Nino carried out several film preservation and publication projects. She is the author and editor of several books on Georgian cinema and early photography in Georgia.

Andrei Gornyykh, PhD, is Professor at the European Humanities University, Vilnius, Lithuania. He is the author of *Formalism: from Form to Text and Beyond* (2002), *Media and Society* (2013). His research interests include critical theory, psychoanalysis, cultural and visual studies. Recent publications include articles "Lacan's image theory: lack, exchange, meaning" (*Palgrave Handbook of Image Studies*, 2022); "Organizing fantasies: ideology of late capitalism in media" (*Athena*, 2021); "Trava – Trata – Travlia: Tarkovsky's Psychobiography à la lettre" (*REFOCUS: The Films of Andrei Tarkovsky*, 2021).

Luna Hupperetz is an independent researcher, producer, and curator specializing in the field of documentary cinema and archival methodologies. She completed her Master's degree in Curating Arts and Cultures at the University of Amsterdam. Luna is currently working as a program producer for the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), where she contributes her expertise to curating and organizing film programs. In addition to her work at IDFA, she has dedicated her research efforts to reconstructing the activist 16mm film circuit and its cinema by delving into the Cineclub Vrijheidsfilms archive at the International Institute of Social History (IISG) and making the short film *A Battle Restored* (2022). She is currently involved in the restoration process of *Oema foe Sranan / Women of Suriname* (1978), the documentary by Cineclub Vrijheidsfilms and LOSON, made in the context of the then recent independence of Suriname.

Ivan Kozlenko is a film scholar and a culture manager, a founder of the Mute Nights Festival silent film festival in Odesa (2010–2020), a former director of the Kyiv-based Dovzhenko Center, Ukraine's largest film archive, containing some 7,000 films. During his 10 years long service, he succeeded to transform the former film-developing factory into one of Ukraine's most popular and flourishing culture hubs with more than 60 000 attendees (2019) of its film, theater, museum and educational programs. As Curator of the Centre's collection in 2011–2014 he headed Ukraine's national film restoration program. More than 70 Ukrainian films (some of them believed to be lost before) were restored within the frameworks of the program. He had been programming the restored films re-premiered at Ukraine's and international film festivals such as Odesa IFF, Molodist Kyiv IFF, Karlovy Vary IFF, Pordenone Silent Film Festival and within the retrospectives in the world's most famous Cinematheques. His novel *Tangier* was shortlisted for national most prestigious BBC Book of The Year Award in 2017.

Konstanty Kuzma is a PhD student and lecturer at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, and the co-founder and co-editor of the *East European Film Bulletin* (<http://eefb.org/>). His research interests are tied between epistemology and the philosophy of language on the one hand, and the cinemas of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe on the other. His PhD project is fully funded by the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

Asli Özgen-Havekotte is Assistant Professor of Media and Culture in the University of Amsterdam's Media Studies Department, teaching at the undergraduate level as well as in the MA in Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image. Her doctoral research, conducted at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis, explored the aesthetics and politics of cinematic pedestrianism. Earlier, she studied English Language and Literature and obtained her master's in Critical Theory. Her current research focuses on the contested and precarious film heritage of ethnicized, racialized, and migrant communities. She specializes in film historiography, particularly feminist and decolonial interventions. She is also internationally accredited film critic and a regular contributor to magazines, catalogues, and festivals. Since 2014, she is serving in the editorial board of *Altyazi* (TR), a film magazine and cultural NGO with a focus on politics of cinema and freedom of expression.

Almira Ousmanova is Professor at the Department of Media and director of the MA program in Cultural Studies at the European Humanities University (Vilnius, Lithuania). Since 1998 she has also been working at the Center for Gender Studies at EHU and organized a series of conferences and workshops, including seminars on Feminist Art in Eastern Europe (2001 – 2003) and a conference on Simone de Beauvoir and Feminist Philosophy (2009). From 2002 to 2004 she was a Fellow at KWI (Essen), working in a research project directed by Luisa Passerini on the topic of "Europe: Emotions, Identity, and Politics." She published *Umberto Eco: Paradoxes of Interpretation* (2000); *Gender Histories from Eastern Europe* (co-edited with Elena Gapova and Andrea Peto, 2002); *Bi-Textuality and Cinema* (2003), *Gender and Transgression in Visual Arts* (2006), *Visual (as) Violence* (ed., 2007), and *Belarusian Format: Invisible Reality* (ed., 2008). She is currently working on a book project on Representation and History: The Cinematic Images of "the Soviet".

Oksana Sarkisova is Research Fellow at Blinken OSA Archive at Central European University, Head of Visual Studies Platform at CEU, and Director of Verzio International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival. Her fields of research are cultural history, memory and representation, film history, amateur photography, and visual studies. Her publications include *In Visible Presence: Soviet Afterlives in Family Photos* (with Olga Shevchenko, 2023), *Screening Soviet Nationalities: Kulturfilms from the Far North to Central Asia* (2017), *Past for the Eyes: East European Representations of Communism in Cinema and Museums after 1989* (co-edited with Peter Apor, 2008). She directed CEU Summer Schools *Documentary Cinema in the Digital Century* (2013), *Screened Memories: Historical Narratives and Contemporary Visual Culture* (2016), and *Fields of Vision: Memory, Identity, and Images of the Past* (2019) and participated as tutor in the workshops *Cinema Without Borders* (by Movies that Matter), *Caucadoc*, and *Summer School on Cinema and Human Rights* (Galway).

Dāvis Sīmanis is an award-winning director and screenwriter and tenured professor of film directing in the National Film School of Latvia. He served as commissioning editor for The National Film Centre of Latvia for several terms. His documentary films has been selected to IDFA; CPH:DOX; DOK Leipzig; Visions du Réel; Venice International Film Festival and others. His feature film *The Mover* participated in over 50 festivals around the world and was Latvia's submission for Academy Awards Best Foreign Film 2019. His *The Year Before the War* was selected for official competition of International Film Festival Rotterdam 2021 as well as won numerous awards around the world. His most recently released film, *D is for Division*, explores two worlds defined by a dividing line and deals with tensions on the borders between Europe and Russia. Currently, Sīmanis works on a new project, *Frankenstein 2.0*, a film exploring the rich theme of immortality.

Lucy Szemetova holds MA from CEU Nationalism Studies Program and is currently doing her PhD in Film Studies at the University of St Andrews, UK with the project on the use of archival footage in Hungarian documentary films across three different socio-political contexts. At CEU, she wrote her master's thesis on national narratives in contemporary Hungarian cinema and audience reception. Prior to CEU Lucy studied English and American Studies at Charles University in Prague and graduated in 2016. Her research interests include the intersection of nationhood and cinema, post-socialist identity politics, archival studies, and found footage appropriation in documentary films. She was OSA Visegrad Fellow in 2020 with research project "Archiving on the Screen – Hungarian Documentary Films During Socialism."

Mila Turajlic is a documentary filmmaker, visual artist and archive scholar born in Belgrade. She studied politics and IR at the London School of Economics, and obtained her PhD at the University in Westminster on the subject of the use of cinema in the construction of political narratives. Her films have screened at Toronto, Venice and Tribeca and have been released theatrically in France, UK, and Germany. Her debut feature documentary *Cinena Komunista* (2011) won 16 awards including the Gold Hugo and the FOCAL Award for Creative Use of Archival Footage in 2011. Her next documentary, *The Other Side of Everything* (2017) won the IDFA Award for Best Documentary Film. Her work includes a series of archive-based video installations commissioned by MoMA in New York for their landmark exhibition on Yugoslav modernist architecture that opened in July 2018. An archive researcher and scholar, Mila explores ways of engaging memory and history with found footage.

Alexey Ulko is a consultant on contemporary art, researcher and filmmaker from Samarkand. He works with a wide range of issues from postcolonial studies and contemporary Central Asian art to new metaphysics and esotericism. In recent years he wrote, or contributed to several books, including *ἄγῶνη* (2021), *Censoring Art* (2018), *Culture Smart! Uzbekistan* (2017), made research for the award-winning exhibition *We Treasure Our Lucid Dreams* (2020) at Garage Museum of Contemporary Art. He has co-curated several exhibitions, artistic, musical and educational projects in Central Asia, has written over 40 articles and made more than 20 experimental films. Previously, he obtained his Master's degree from the University of Exeter, taught at the Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages and translated for the International Institute for Central Asian Studies in Samarkand. Alexey Ulko is a member of the European Society for Central Asian Studies, the Association for Art History and the Central Eurasian Studies Society.

Sultan Usualiev is film historian and film critic, leader of the young film critics' laboratory within the framework of the first Central Asian Cinema Forum organized by AUCA, Bishkek. His research interests include history of Kyrgyz cinema, contemporary film criticism and documentary filmmaking. He graduated from the screenwriting and film studies department and postgraduate studies at the All-Russian State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK). In 2022, he co-directed documentary *Who is Next?* (with Nurzhamal Karamoldoeva), which investigates the tragic case of Aizada Kanatbekova, kidnapped by a group of men for a forced marriage in April 2021 in Bishkek.