

CFP: WHAT IS CINEMA HISTORY? A HoMER Network conference

presented by the Early Cinema in Scotland research project

call for papers

University of Glasgow

22-24 June, 2015

Over the last three decades, our understanding of cinema as a historical phenomenon has been subject to a series of 'turns' – empirical, spatial, and digital, to name a few. This conference, organised by the Early Cinema in Scotland research project in collaboration with the HoMER Network (History of Moviegoing, Exhibition and Reception), will investigate the shifting positions and imperatives of cinema history and its relationships with other approaches and disciplines. As cinema itself unravels or merges into a diversity of media forms and reception contexts, the centrifugal impulse of cinema history is amplified by scholarly engagement with new technologies. At this pivotal point, we need to understand the contradictory legacies and perspectives of film studies, film history, media archaeology, cultural studies, and other cognate fields, transcending the discourse of 'newness' that has underpinned the development of these methods. Thirty years after *Film History: Theory and Practice* (Allen and Gomery, 1985), what is new in the theory and practice of film and cinema history? To that end, this conference welcomes papers on the rhetoric and methods of cinema history from all periods, as well as empirical research projects that engage with these questions through case studies or comparative analysis.

Some of the topics proposed for consideration include:

- The place of cinema history in relation to other disciplines and research fields, such as geography or social history;
- Teaching cinema history and understanding its specialist skill-set;
- Archives, sources, and the consequences of digitisation for different types of cinematic heritage;
- Historical geographies of cinema and the use of digital mapping as analytical tool;
- Non-metropolitan and non-theatrical exhibition studies as a historiographical challenge;
- The rhetoric of 'newness' and revisionist historiography;
- Text, 'distant reading', and the digital humanities;
- Data sharing, comparative approaches, and micro-history.

Confirmed keynotes:

- Richard Maltby
- Haidee Wasson
- John Caughie
- Judith Thissen

Research on the history of exhibition, distribution and reception emphasises cinema's imbrication in the fabric of social experience, championing relational and contextual approaches. Since 2004 the HoMER Network (homernetwork.org) has functioned as an international forum for researchers working in these areas, supporting a series of conferences, events, and publications. Participation in the 2015 event is not restricted to previous HoMER participants.

The conference will be preceded by a workshop on Historical Network Analysis, organised by the DICIS (Digital Cinema Studies) Network, and the second day will also feature a reflexive round-table on the past and prospects for cinema history. There will also be a HoMER general meeting during the conference, to decide on future structures and goals for the Network. This meeting is open to all conference participants interested in the future of HoMER. The Early Cinema in Scotland project will fund ten student/unwaged bursaries to cover registration costs.

Submissions are invited for individual papers and pre-constituted panels or workshops. For papers, please submit an abstract of no more than 500 words and a short biographical note to both Maria Velez-Serna (maria.velez-serna@glasgow.ac.uk) and Lies Van de Vijver (Liesbeth.VandeVijver@UGent.be) before **9 January 2015**. For panels, please send the abstracts together with a 200-word note on the title and topic of the panel or workshop.

You will be notified of the acceptance or decline of your proposal by **5 March 2015**.