

# Southern Screens Symposium

Transnational zones and transcultural histories on the screens of the South

BankWest Lecture Theatre, John Curtin Art Gallery, Curtin University

## PRESENTERS

Mick Broderick	Murdoch University	Australia
Carlos Flores	Universidad de Chile	Chile
John Hartley	Curtin University	Australia
Suvendrini Perera	Curtin University	Australia
Walescka Pino-Ojeda	University of Auckland	New Zealand
Juan Salazar	University of Western Sydney	Australia
Kim Scott	Curtin University	Australia
Keyan Tomaselli	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South Africa
Mirta Varela	Universidad de Buenos Aires	Argentina
Deane Williams	Monash University	Australia

## PROGRAM

### Tuesday 12 November

<b>8:00</b>	<b>Registration</b>
9:00	Welcome to Country
9:15	MCCA Head of School Welcome
9:30	Convenor Introduction
10:00	John Hartley
10:30	Juan Salazar
11:00	Discussion
<b>11:30</b>	<b>Morning Tea</b>
12:00	Kim Scott
12:30	Suvendrini Perera
13:00	Discussion
<b>13:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
14:30	Walescka Pino-Ojeda
15:00	Deane Williams
15:30	Discussion
<b>16:00</b>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b>
16:30	Discussion: Southern Screens Network & 1 <sup>st</sup> International Conference
<b>17:00</b>	<b>Closing</b>

### Wednesday 13 November

<b>8:00</b>	<b>Registration</b>
9:00	Convenor Introduction
9:15	The films of Carlos Flores
10:30	Carlos Flores
11:00	Discussion
<b>11:30</b>	<b>Morning Tea</b>
12:00	Keyan Tomaselli

12:30	Discussion
<b>13:00</b>	<b>Musical Performance</b>
<b>13:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
14:30	Mirta Varela
15:00	Mick Broderick
15:30	Discussion
<b>16:00</b>	<b>Afternoon Tea</b>
16:30	Plenary
<b>15:00</b>	<b>Closing</b>

18:30 Dinner by the Swan River, Fremantle (presenters only)

## ABSTRACTS

### Mick Broderick

Assoc Prof of Film and Media Studies, School of Media, Communication and Culture  
Murdoch University

Editor, *IM: Interactive Media* (online journal)

#### **Apocalypse Australis: From *Terra Nullius* to Nuclear Terror on Southern Screens**

This essay explores the historical range of Australian and New Zealand film and television productions that evoke apocalypse and genocide, often in relation to the threat of nuclear war. The latent apocalyptic imagination in the Antipodes emerged from colonial dispossession alongside the Enlightenment's merger of progress with manifest destiny. But from the mid-Twentieth Century onwards, Southern screen texts increasingly presented apocalyptic narratives that either challenged, or reinforced, representations of rational modernity, post-colonial alliances and the nation-state.

### Carlos Flores

Documentary filmmaker

Director, Department of Film & Television, Visual Communication Institute (ICEI)  
Universidad de Chile

#### **Parody and Suspicion in Raúl Ruiz's *Palomita blanca* (Chile, 1973)**

When Raúl Ruiz made *Palomita blanca* in 1973, Chilean cinema was overwhelmed by an excessive emphasis on social and political themes. This activist cinema had started in 1967 with the *1<sup>st</sup> Latin American Film Festival of Viña del Mar*, and continued in the Unidad Popular's 1971 film manifesto, which proposed a cinema unambiguously committed to the cause of the Revolution. Thus, in the midst of a cinematic culture entirely devoted to a project of radical social transformation, Ruiz's *Palomita blanca* installed irony, parody and suspicion. Against a cinema that intended to change the world, Ruiz proposed to change cinema.

### John Hartley

John Curtin Distinguished Professor/Professor of Cultural Science

Director of the Centre for Culture and Technology, Faculty of Humanities  
Curtin University

#### **Storytelling and the Creation of the Polity: From Gobekli Tepe to Gallipoli**

Digital storytelling is an international movement for self-representation and advocacy, especially in educational, arts, and therapeutic communities. It has begun to attract a significant body of scholarship including publications and conferences. Australia has been an important player in all of these developments. In this presentation, I summarise some of the issues that have emerged for activists and scholars, including the problem of how to 'scale up' from self-expression to communication (i.e. marketing), and the question of the role that stories play in constituting 'we'-communities. The paper pursues the relationship between storytelling and political narrative over the

long term, using well-known and lesser-known connections between Australia and Turkey to tell the tale. It considers how digital self-representation intersects with that political process, and what activists need to know in order to intervene more effectively.

### **Suvendrini Perera**

Professor of Media and Cultural Studies, School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts  
Acting Director, Australia-Asia-Pacific Institute (AAPI)  
Curtin University

#### **Post-War Screen Cultures and the Representation of Atrocity-Events**

This essay examines how atrocity-events are commemorated and represented across a series of southern screen cultures. The context for this essay is my current research on atrocity images. I have argued that contemporary atrocities in Sri Lanka or the Middle East owe much to iconologies of atrocity images from the Holocaust. In this paper, I would like to consider whether this visual imaginary of atrocity extends to cinemas and other screen forms of the south.

### **Walescka Pino-Ojeda**

Director, New Zealand Centre for Latin American Studies  
The University of Auckland, New Zealand

#### **Across Troubled Waters: Unease in the Cinema of New Zealand and Chile**

Feelings of anxiety seem to traverse both the creative imaginary as well as the sociological analysis of contemporary New Zealand. In the documentary *Cinema of Unease* (1993), co-director and narrator Sam Neill describes the cinema culture of New Zealand as being obsessively infused by a “haunting emptiness” —one in which travel narratives are employed not as an impassioned quest for the new, but rather as an escape from a “suffocatingly dull” quotidian reality. In his analysis of British ‘colonies of settlement’ such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, David Pearson for his part describes them as “states of unease.” 250 years earlier, the colonisation of Latin America contrasted wildly with such settlement societies, being dependant instead on the exploitation of pre-existent natural resources and indigenous knowledges and labour. Far from having been able to overturn this violent foundation, Latin American nations, such as Chile, have been subjected to subsequent political/economic forms of control, sometimes exerted through formalised (though exploitative) trading agreements or other ostensibly amicable forms of power, but often also carried out through more direct means, such as economic embargos, co-optation of political classes, or by supporting and appointing dictatorial regimes when more subtle means of securing hegemony have been challenged. These diverse forms of social angst are present in a significant corpus of films from both nations. This paper will focus on two films, *B-Happy* (Chile, Gonzalo Justiniano, Chile, 2003) and *In My Fathers Den* (New Zealand, Brad McGann, 2004), which centre on adolescent girls who struggle to find a place within a society that consistently denies them social and familiar protection. Paradoxically, these films seem to suggest that identity displacement appears to engender more tragic results than those gestated by socio-economic exclusion, indicating perhaps that socio-psychological anxieties require more complex and intricate strategies of recognition and eradication than those created by structural forms of social abuse.

### **Juan Francisco Salazar**

Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities & Communication Arts  
Institute for Culture and Society  
University of Western Sydney

#### **Picturing Antarctica: Digital Storytelling and Citizens’ Science**

This paper presents an account of an ongoing initiative being undertaken by the author since 2012 in collaboration with the Chilean Antarctic Institute (INACH) around digital storytelling in King George Island, in the Antarctic Peninsula. *Relatos Digitales Antárticos* is a digital storytelling project that has become an important part of the annual Antarctic School Expedition, a flagship science communication program which INACH has undertaken since 2004 and where groups of Chilean high

school students travel to Antarctica for one week to perform science activities. The first 9 digital stories were produced in Antarctica 2012 and 2013 by young people from several Chilean cities (Antofagasta, Valparaiso, Santiago and Punta Arenas). These are the first digital storytelling projects to come out of Antarctica and include a story by a young girl which had been living permanently with her family in Antarctica for two years. The digital stories enact a form of citizens' media where the notion of citizenship comes to be understood as a form of cultural identification and something to be constructed, rather than empirically given. These digital stories are a vernacular testimony of the subjective experiences and voices of young people, imprinted into a digital canvas that conveys the depth and breadth of the Antarctic experiences of these future scientists. In this case digital storytelling enacts an emerging mode of cultural identity and a particular sense of belonging in relation to Antarctica. They also point toward a different conceptualization of citizens' science as a transformative practice, whereby citizens are defined as such by the ways through which they enact their political subjectivities and voice out their ways of producing and enacting spaces for a creative engagement with science. The paper concludes by pointing out future opportunities already underway to engage Australian and Chilean young people in collaborative Antarctic digital storytelling projects.

### **Kim Scott**

Professor of Writing, School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts  
Curtin University

#### **Dry Streams and Welling Rock Pools**

This paper consists of meditative reflections on a series of images and quotations drawn from community-based language and story revitalization workshops conducted between 2007 and 2013 as part of the Wirlomin Noongar Language and Stories Project.

### **Keyan G. Tomaselli**

Senior Professor, School of Applied Human Sciences  
Director, The Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS)  
Research Leader, Culture, Health and Communication  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Founder and Co-Editor, *Journal of African Cinemas*  
Editor, *Critical Arts: South-North Cultural and Media Studies*

### **Nyasha Mboti**

Post-Doctoral Fellow in The Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS)  
Editorial Board Member, *Journal of African Cinemas*  
University of Kwazulu-Natal

#### **New Cinema Business Model, New Audiences, and New Political Economies:**

##### **Small-mall-plex Exhibition for South Africa's Black Townships**

*ReaGilès* are pre-fabricated, self-contained, education and entertainment complexes situated on a 400m<sup>2</sup> site at local schools or public open spaces consisting of a 60-seat cinema theatre, 30-seat computer and internet centre, community care aid centre and community policing centre. These complexes are planned to service historically under-served South African townships, peri-urban and rural areas and help create jobs, especially amongst the youth, women and the disabled. Based on the philosophy that *money and wealth cannot be taken from the poor to give to the rich*, and applying a dialogic strategic partnership co-operative model, each *ReaGilè* will provide auditorium and computer education facilities to black township and rural schools, be owned and run by 27 local community members, provide a basic salary, medical-aid and an equitable share of all distributable profits to each member/employee, give preference to women, youth and the disabled, structure prices affordable to each community, offer free sport, edutainment, community news and advertising on 5 outdoor screens and be financed through government, other grants and/or term loans. This paper discusses the potential of the *ReaGilè* concept to offer important solutions to two related crises: firstly, the crisis of representation brought on by the fact that existing film distribution networks limit and

disenfranchise micro-budget filmmakers; and, secondly, the crisis of development brought on by the government's escalating tendency towards an uncreative 'path dependence'. The authors posit that the *ReaGilè* concept has the potential to creatively redesign formal distribution models and the narrow modernisation paradigm they deploy, replacing them with a responsive communication re-ordering and flexible distribution that restores subjectivity to the disenfranchised South African subject (the filmmaker from the township). While government departments and local municipalities seem intent on what Foucault called 'dividing practices' – practices for 'objectivising' the subject through dismissing and frustrating *ReaGilè* via a communication order that works through delays, paperwork, never-ending meetings, fees, endless formalities and legalities, and red-tape – the paper argues that such an unresponsive communication order (or path, hence path dependence) is unsustainable and needs re-ordering.

### **Mirta Varela**

Senior Lecturer in Social Communication, Faculty of Social Science  
Research Leader, CONICET projects; Gino Germani Research Institute  
Universidad de Buenos Aires

Director, *Red de Historia de los Medios (ReHiMe)* <http://www.rehime.com.ar>

### **Memory and Childhood in the Melodrama of the Malvinas War: Adrián Caetano's *Los niños que escriben en el cielo* (The children who write on the sky, Argentina, 2010)**

In order to celebrate the Bicentenary of Argentina's Republic in 2010, many films were produced that depicted this country's Independence war heroes and episodes in nineteenth century. *Lo que el tiempo nos dejó* (What Time Left Behind), a six-episode television drama series for Channel Telefe, rather chose to depict events of the 20th century, half of which were set within the periods of dictatorship. This paper focuses on one of the series' episodes, Adrián Caetano's *Los niños que escriben en el cielo* (The children who write on the sky), whose central story takes place against the backdrop of the Malvinas War. In view of placing this program within the general context of Argentine audiovisual production during recent years, three main ideas are proposed in this analysis. The first is the relationship between memory and childhood, as the story assumes the point of view of a boy who struggles with the dilemma of whether he should reveal a military fraud. Secondly, the analysis highlights the use of archival documentary footage within the fiction and the resulting hybridisation of the film text. Finally, the paper focuses on the function of the movement from social to political undertones in television melodrama.

### **Deane Williams**

Associate Professor in Film and Television Studies  
School of English, Communications and Performance Studies  
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Arts  
Monash University  
Editor, *Studies in Documentary Film*

### **Southern Exposure: For a Comparative Documentary Film Studies**

In his 1995 article for *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, Paul Willemen proposed a theoretical framework for film studies utilizing a model borrowed from Literary Studies. For Willemen, this comparative film studies would be beneficial because cinema is "particularly well suited to provide a way into the question of how socio-economic dynamics and pressures are translated into discursive formations". Willemen's intriguing and generative article, however, relies on a notion of cinema that is industrialized and globalised in economic terms. This paper will instead focus on documentary, the most artisanal, immediate and localized of audio-visual forms, in order to adapt Willemen's framework to (re)propose that in the South, the images and sounds of the lived, historical world can contribute to the "generation, sharing and circulation of new knowledge that is both southern and about the South". While Willemen was writing at the emergence of digital technologies he was able to foresee that this comparative approach "must necessarily proceed by way of a collaboration between intellectuals from different geo-historical formations."