Negotiated Identities, Histories and Public Cultures

The Centre for Transcultural Research and Media Practice invites you to a series of six public conversations in the Irish Film Institute and Alliance Française between March-May 2009. In hosting the series we explore questions of participatory media, public memory, cultural identity, heritage and difference. The presentations unpack the ways in which constructions of place, space and cultural heritage are shaped by both individual and collective memories that are multi-layered and contested; how cross-cultural translation is underpinned by asymmetrical relations of power; how public spaces mobilise the potential for communal empowerment, simultaneous with technologies of control and regulation; and the role that the cultural and creative industries play in conserving or re-imagining past, present and future understandings of cultural identity and belonging.

Located in the School of Media, DIT, the Centre for Transcultural Research and Media Practice (http://www.ctmp.ie) offers a distinctive interdisciplinary postgraduate and research environment situated at the interface between cultural studies and social documentary practice, emphasising the innovative use of lens and screen-based practice (film, photography and multimedia), allied to ethnographic methods in social research.

Further information: Dr Rashmi Sawhney, CTMP. Email: rashmi.sawhney@dit.ie; Tel: 402 3108

ALL WELCOME

12 March / 6 pm
Katherine Goodnow, University of Bergen, Norway

Museums and Participatory Practice

This presentation will address work focused on forms of migrant, refugee and minority participation within museums and galleries, alongside issues surrounding access and participation with special attention to online gaming and interactive documentaries.

Katherine Goodnow is Professor in the Department of Information Science and Media Studies, University of Bergen. She has published widely in the area of museums and cultural diversity and her most recent books include Museums, the Media and Refugees: Stories of Crisis, Control and Compassion (2008); Human Remains and Museum Practice: Scandinavian Museums and Cultural Diversity (2007); Challenge and Transformation: Museums in Cape Town and Sydney (2008). She is series editor for the UNESCO Museums and Diversity series. She combines research with filmmaking and has produced television series and documentaries in Australia and Norway.

Venue: Irish Film Institute, Meeting Room, 6 Eustace Street, Temple Bar

20 March / 3 pm
Alan Marcus, University of Aberdeen, Scotland

In Time of Place

The In Time of Place project investigates selected symbolic sites associated with Jewish identity, the diaspora and the Holocaust. It focuses on the creation of four practice-as-research films made in Dachau, Venice, Prague and Boston, and a series of publications. The films adopt an observational approach to consider the statures and significance of place, its layering, reinvention and interpretation. The weight of history, the role of public memory and the act of memorialisation are repositioned in the films through documenting both private and public engagement with diverse urban environments.

Alan Marcus is a cultural historian, filmmaker and Head of Film and Visual Culture, University of Aberdeen. The statures and role of the urban environment in society as featured in film, photography, pictorial art and other forms of visual culture, occupy key areas of his current research. His most recent book, Visualising the City (2007), presents a range of interdisciplinary explorations that illustrate our fascination with the urban experience, modernity and different architectural idioms. His guest edited journal issues on various aspects of ‘Visualising the City’ include History of Photography (2006), The Journal of Architecture (2006) and Film Studies (2007).

Venue: Irish Film Institute, Meeting Room, 6 Eustace Street, Temple Bar

25 March / 6 pm
Melanie Friend, University of Sussex, UK

‘Border Country’: Strategies of Representation

The photographic practices of representing the orderly landscapes and institutional interiors (Visiting Rooms) of Immigration Removal Centres are foregrounded in this presentation, together with soundtracks of voice recordings conveying the complex identifications of detainees and the physical, psychological and emotional aspects of life in detention. ‘Border Country’ offers insight into the experiences of immigration detainees, particularly through the use of the voice as an emotional force acting as a counterpart to the formal images of the institutions.

Melanie Friend is a Senior Lecturer in Photography, Department of Film and Media, University of Sussex. She has worked as a photographer and journalist from the mid-80s. Her exhibitions include ‘Border Country’, ‘The Guide’, ‘Homes and Gardens: Documenting the Invisible’. Her recent publications include No Place Like Home: Echoes From Kosovo (2001) and Border Country (2007).

Venue: Irish Film Institute, Meeting Room, 6 Eustace Street, Temple Bar
24 April / 3 pm
Anuradha Dingwaney Needham, Oberlin College, USA

The Place of Difference in Cross-Cultural Literacy
This presentation examines problems that inhere in invocations of ‘difference’ – minority, racial, ethnic, or gender difference – a term/concept that occupies a contested place in discussions of cross-cultural texts considered central to a multicultural or culturally diverse curriculum in the Anglo-American academy. The discussion is shaped by attention to the social location of subjects, simultaneous with critical interpretations marked by difference.

Anuradha Dingwaney Needham is Longman Professor of English and Director of the Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies Institute, Oberlin College, USA. She has published on Anglophone Third World Literatures, including individual writers such as C.L.R. James, Arundhati Roy and Salman Rushdie, Cross-Cultural Translation, (Indian) Secularism, and Third World Feminisms.

Venue: Irish Film Institute, Meeting Room, 6 Eustace Street, Temple Bar

7 May / 6 pm
Glenn Jordan, University of Glamorgan, Wales
Satwinder Singh, DIT

A Sikh Face in Ireland: Photography and Life History
This seminar will present the first systematic exploration of the Sikh presence on the island of Ireland – providing both a profile of the present and a social and cultural history of Sikh immigrants and their descendants. This collaborative, FOMACS project, drawing on the combined use of photography, life history and ethnographic observation, engages with the lived experience and narratives of people often perceived as ‘Other’ since 9/11.

* This presentation is supported by the Forum on Migration and Communications (FOMACS)

Glenn Jordan is Reader in Cultural Studies, Cardiff Centre for Creative and Cultural Industries, University of Glamorgan, and Director of the Bute Town History and Arts Centre in Cardiff, a community-based archive, gallery and educational space. He is an experienced ethnographer with a longstanding background of documentary photographic work within immigrant communities. He has published widely on race, identity, visual culture and immigrants and minorities in Wales.

Satwinder Singh is an active member in the Irish Sikh Council and the Gurdwara in Dublin. He is an MPhil student in the Centre for Transcultural Research and Media Practice, DIT. His research engages with the Dublin Gurdwara as a political, social, communal and spiritual site.

Venue: Alliance Française, 1 Kildare Street, Dublin 2

14 May / 6 pm
John Caughie, University of Glasgow, Scotland

Culture, Creativity and Innovation: Threats and Opportunities
The seminar will be based on the experience of working with the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in developing new British and European research programmes. It will consider the implications for practice-based and traditional academic researchers of the new mantra, ‘innovation’, its linkage with culture and creativity, and the new faith in the ‘creative industries’ as the agent of economic impact.

John Caughie is Professor of Film and Television Studies, University of Glasgow. He serves on the AHRC Council and is a member of the Scottish Funding Council’s Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Group. His research is in the areas of film theory, television drama and early cinema history. Publications include Television Drama: Realism, Modernism and British Culture (2000) and a monograph on Troy Kennedy Martin’s Edge of Darkness (2007). He is on the editorial board of Screen and was co-editor of the OUP Television Studies series.

Venue: Irish Film Institute, Meeting Room, 6 Eustace Street, Temple Bar