

Cinematic Arts Newsletter

2023-24

<https://cinematicarts.uiowa.edu/>

CAN

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEO:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 Academic Year!

Dear Friends of Cinematic Arts,

I've promised myself to keep the introduction short this year, but I cannot resist expressing my excitement about the accomplishments of both our faculty and students. As I think readers will see from the items below, we have now bounced back from the pandemic. Both our faculty and students organized some absolutely amazing events this year, ranging from scholarly talks and symposia to film festivals and live film screenings with musical accompaniment. Our faculty also published two major books, which you can read more about below, as well as a roster of shorter studies and screenplay work. And we have more books and major film productions in progress, which you look for in the coming years. We also had several awards this year, including Chris Harris's prestigious Herb Alpert Award.

The department continues to grow and change. This year, we welcomed Associate Professor Hope Tucker to the Film Production program, about whom you can read more below, as well as Visiting Assistant Professors Bruce Elgin (in screenwriting) and Auden Lincoln-Vogel (in production). We also had two successful promotions: Chris Goetz's promotion to Associate Professor and Andy Owens' promotion to Associate Professor of Instruction. Congratulations, Chris and Andy!

I am already looking forward to another exciting year in 2023-24. Our majors continue to rise quickly, and I'm happy to announce that we will be joined by two additional new instructional colleagues: Associate Professor Dean Bakopoulos in Screenwriting and Assistant Professor of Instruction Laura Gede in Film and Video Production. We also have plans to relaunch the IC-Docs festival next year (after it was paused during the pandemic), and there are several events already in the pre-planning stage. Please keep your eye on our "events" page for announcements.

Before signing off, I also want to call attention to a new feature in the newsletter this year. We would love to hear from our many alumni across the US and the world. So please see the call for alumni contributions below and consider submitting your news for a future newsletter. We look forward to sharing alumni news in our newsletter next summer. In the meantime, I wish everyone a restful summer 2023 and a wonderful academic year 2023-24!



Michael Cowan
Professor and Chair, Department of Cinematic Arts

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New Faculty Spotlight: Hope Tucker



This past year, Hope Tucker joined Cinematic Arts as Associate Professor of Film and Video Production. Professor Tucker graciously agreed to answer a few questions for the Cinematic Arts Newsletter.

CAN: Please tell us a little bit about yourself!

Hope: I'm an artist-filmmaker. I use the form of the obituary as a starting point for approaching socially-engaged topics in ways that formally respond to the content. I perform most production roles myself, from research to cinematography and sound.

I'm interested in how the moving image can engage audiences with the environmental humanities and issues of policy and nuclearity in ways that are conceptual as well as factual. My recent film *What Travelers Are Saying About Jornada del Muerto* addresses the role of public memory in comprehending the history of nuclear weapons and what it means to document a visit to the Trinity site [the New Mexico test site where the very first nuclear explosion took place].



CAN: What drew you to the University of Iowa?

Hope: I received my MFA in Film and Video Production from Iowa. There is still a deep interest in cinematic forms, incredible faculty, staff, and students, and a curriculum where theory and praxis are intertwined. Experimental nonfiction, analog filmmaking, and attention to sound as well as image are among our strengths.

CAN: How was your first year at Iowa? What did you teach and how are you enjoying Iowa City?

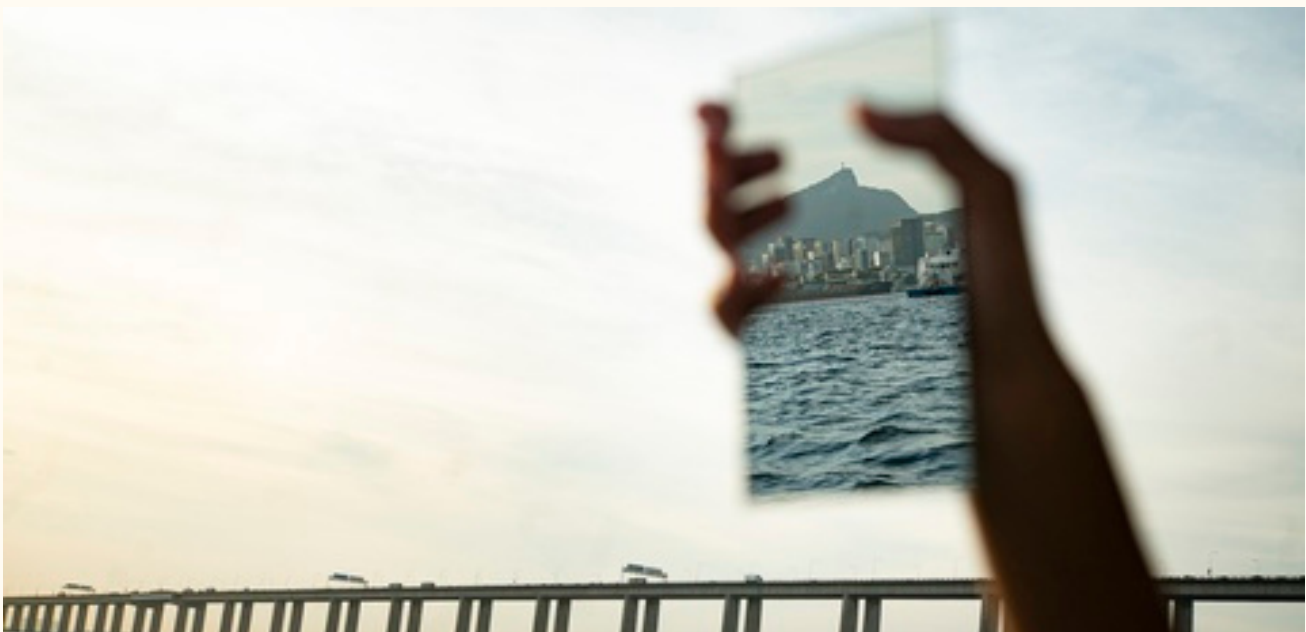
Hope: I appreciated the opportunity to be in the classroom and think about how to respond most effectively to this moment in time, as living and studying during a pandemic has shifted how students learn, particularly in production. I teach media arts courses that encourage close reading, viewing, and listening, and students here are thoughtful and curious and value the opportunity to collaborate. In the Fall colloquium, the grad students and I studied the past and imagined the future of collective viewing. In Image Design, the students sharpened their ability to construct an image. In Sound Design, students' sense of how sound can expand space and influence our perception of the world grew in ways that were exciting to hear, particularly as winter turned to spring. And students who wish to pursue Animation in the future now have access to a giant multi-plane animation rostrum, originally built by MFA graduate Charlotte Taylor for shadow puppetry, and updated this semester by Angie Looney, Randy Schildmeyer, and Nikki Linderholm. I am grateful for the resources of the University libraries, particularly the staff in course reserves, ILL, acquisitions, and behind the circ desk who helped me locate teaching and research materials.

CAN: Tell us about your current work or any recent accomplishments.

Hope: I'll soon head to New Hampshire for an artist residency to advance a work in progress. Most of the festivals my work screened in the past several years were virtual, so I look forward to in person festival-going in 2024.

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Cinematic Arts Associate Professor Co-Organizes “Frequências” symposium on Contemporary Afro-Brazilian Cinema & the Black Diaspora



Earlier this spring, the University of Iowa and Film Scene hosted a series of at-capacity screenings, scholarly presentations, artist performances, and installations featuring emerging Afro-Brazilian filmmakers, curators, programmers, and scholars whose art and scholarship have already had an impact on international cinema. The event, which drew participants from around the world, was co-organized by Christopher Harris, F. Wendell Miller Associate Professor of Cinematic Arts (along with Janaína Oliveira and Cristiane Lira). In an interview, Harris has spoken to his hope that discussions of Black diaspora go beyond the expected binary locales (i.e., the U.S. and Africa) to include diaspora within the broader “global south,” including

Brazil. Thus, the event’s international focus seeks to emphasize parallels and similarities across Black diasporic populations. In interview, Harris shares the prompt that he asked all participants to reflect upon: a quote by Tina Campt, who defines “frequency” as “a practice of attunement—an attunement to waves, rhythms, and cycles of return that create new formations and new points of departure”. The event was also meant to emphasize and celebrate the “richness and vitality of contemporary Afro-Brazilian cinema”, as Harris put it. The symposium featured work by Cauleen Smith, Miryam Charles, Michael B. Gillespie, Grace Passô and others.

For more information on the event,

or to read the entirety of Daniel Vorwerk's interview with Harris, Oliveira, and Lira, please visit the University of Iowa's International Programs story: <https://international.uiowa.edu/news/2023/02/frequencias-symposium-discussion>

***Within Our Gates* Screened with New Score**



On January 19th, 2023, the earliest surviving feature directed by an African American, Oscar Micheaux's *Within Our Gates* (1920) screened to a sold-out crowd at Film Scene in Iowa City. The event, which was organized in part by Cinematic Arts PhD student, Zachary Vanes, featured a live original score written and performed by the Alvin Cobb Jr. Trio, a Chicago

musical group that includes drummer Alvin Cobb Jr., bassist Katie Ernst, and pianist Julius Tucker.

After the screening, Indiana University film scholar Cara Caddoo gave a short presentation on her recent discovery of a clip from the Noble Johnson film *The Trooper of Troop K* (1917). The evening concluded with a roundtable discussion of *Within Our Gates*, which was moderated by Zachary Vanes. The panel featured Caddoo and Cobb Jr. as well as University of Iowa faculty members Caroline Clay, Ashley Johnson, and Nathan Platte. The event was presented by the Department of Cinematic Arts with sponsorship from a wide range of departments and organizations across campus.

Re-Launching the James McLaughlin Scholarship

A huge thank you to Cinema Studies alumni, Clark Bender and Kim Kerbis, for their generous support of our Film Studies graduate programs. This year, that support allowed us to re-launch the James McLaughlin Scholarship for Film Studies graduate students. The first McLaughlin scholarship recipient is PhD student Zachary Vanes, who works on the history of useful cinema and slide lectures in post-WWII United States. Congratulations, Zach!



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Cinematic Arts Associate Professor Leads Mellon Sawyer Seminar on “Racial Reckoning Through Comics”



In 2022-23, Associate Professor of Cinematic Arts Corey Creekmur, along with collaborators Ana Merino, Rachel Williams, and Post-Doctoral scholar Esther Claudio, led and organized a Mellon Sawyer Seminar on “Racial Reckoning Through Comics,” which was hosted locally by The Obermann Center for Advanced Studies with generous support from the Iowa City Public Library and FilmScene. In addition to funding the Post-Doctoral Scholar, the program supported the advanced graduate work of two UI students, Nicole Amato (Teaching and Learning) and Matthew Griffin (Communication Studies).

While holding an ongoing series of small workshops with faculty and graduate students across the year, the Mellon Sawyer Seminar staged four public events designed to bring prominent comics scholars and artists together with local audiences

to discuss the troubling history of racial and ethnic representation in comics, often through offensive stereotypes, as well as to celebrate contemporary work that boldly questions and creatively challenges that past. Notable comics scholars hosted in Iowa City included José Alaniz, Frederick Luis Aldama, Julian Chambliss, Candida Rifkind, Lara Saguisag, Jorge J. Santos, Jr., Darieck Scott, Rebecca Wanzo, Qiana Whitted. Artists who shared their powerful work included Gilbert, Jaime, and Natalia Hernandez, MariNaomi, Stacey Robinson, Joe Sacco, Bishakh Som, and Rachel Williams. The events drew diverse audiences and investigated important questions while pointing to rich and groundbreaking being done by current creators to offer progressive and positive alternatives to historically demeaning representations.

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Vertical Cinema is Back!

BY ALEX DENISON:



Vertical Cinema is a University of Iowa graduate student organization housed by the Department of Cinematic Arts with the mission of drawing internationally recognized experimental and avant-garde cinema to campus for the benefit of students and the Iowa City community. Vertical Cinema was founded in 2015 and ran until a brief hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This past year, for the first time since 2020, Vertical Cinema featured a full slate of recent experimental cinema.

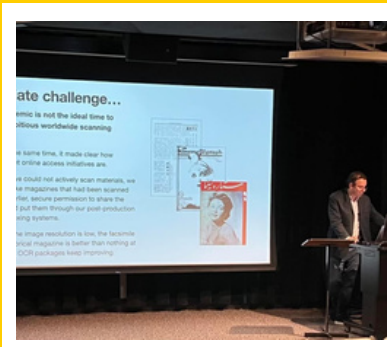
The first event of Fall 2022 was an exciting homecoming, with MFA alumni and founders of Vertical Cinema, Emily Drummer and Carl Elsaesser, both returning to their alma mater to screen work that has played at prestigious festivals around the world. Then, in late October, Vertical Cinema screened works from the Cosmic Rays Film Festival by lauded contemporary experimental filmmakers such as Anna Kipervaser and Deborah Stratman. In November, Vertical Cinema co-organized an encore event to honor Ana Mendieta's life on her birthday with several of her family members in attendance. The Fall semester concluded with Vertical Cinema's first ever narrative program, a collaboration with the Iranian Student Organization to screen Panah Panahi's *Hit the Road*, a film which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2021 to critical acclaim. The screening was followed by a Q&A with Cinematic Arts faculty Anahita Ghazvinizadeh and Auden Lincoln-Vogel, both of whom are veterans of Cannes and friends of Panahi.

In Spring 2023, Vertical Cinema worked with the local arts nonprofit Public Space One to screen an imageless film by Lawrence Andrews, titled *mythicPotentialities*. The screening was followed by a virtual Q&A with the artist. In April, the organization collaborated with the Bijou Film Board for a screening of Derek Jarman's *Blue*. That screening was followed by a discussion facilitated by Andrew Owens and myself.



The semester concluded with a program of films by MFA students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. All of the filmmakers were in attendance and spoke about their work after the screening.

Many thanks to the members of the cinema community at the University of Iowa and Iowa City who were able to attend any of these events. Our goal to push the boundaries of cinema cannot happen in a vacuum, and watching and talking about these films with the rich cinema community here has been a tremendous pleasure. I want to extend a special thanks to the graduate students who organized and found funding for these events: Jenelle Stafford, Hannah Bonner, Arman Hodasefat, Zachary Vanes, Rachel Lazar, Andrea Schuster, and Ben Dulavitch.



Global Movie Magazine Networks ...and the Media History Digital Library

This past fall, University of Wisconsin-Madison professors Kelley Conway and Eric Hoyt visited the University of Iowa campus to promote and discuss their “Globalizing and Enhancing the Media History Digital Library” initiative, which

seeks to digitize and research global movie magazines.

Such publications are a rich resource for scholars of cinema’s history. Conway and Hoyt are speaking as media historians when they remind us that “While movie magazines are frequently cited as sources, they are far less often centered as the objects of study. By analyzing specific magazines such as *Pour Vous*, *Cinéma 55*, and *Gente de Cine* for their hybridity and heterogeneity, and by situating these publications globally as part of an exchange of information and ideas about cinema, our work seeks to reframe and expand our field’s understanding of historic movie magazines”

The two scholars were part of an ongoing speaker series bringing film scholars and makers to campus to share and discuss their work. As always, these events are free and open to the public.

More information about the Media History Digital Library, which is freely accessible to the public, can be found here: <https://mediahistoryproject.org/>

Out of the Archive: Black Women Behind the Lens



UNIVERSITY OF IOWA ASSISTANT PROFESSOR CO-CURATES SPECIAL SCREENING AND DISCUSSION SERIES CELEBRATING THE HISTORY OF BLACK WOMEN'S FILMMAKING.

Assistant Professor of Cinematic Arts, Hayley O'Malley, co-curated a special screening and discussion series that celebrated the rich history of Black women's cinema, presenting films from the 1970s to today. On the program, which ran for 3 weeks this past April, were rare and recently restored works by pioneering directors, including Maya Angelou, Michelle Parkerson, Ayoka Chenzira, Kathleen Collins, Monica Freeman, Zeinabu Irene Davis, and others. Most of the

screenings also featured conversations with the filmmakers or special guests after the film. In a comment for the CAN, O'Malley thanks her co-curators (Ben Delgado and Jane Keranen) as well as students in her graduate seminar for contributions to the series, adding that "Most of the films we screened are difficult to access and/or rarely shown on the big screen, and it was exciting to share them with Iowa City audiences of all ages. The series was such a success that it's going to continue during the 2023-24 academic year as part of the Film Scene's regular programming". The series was inspired by the first-ever Black women' film festival, the 1976 Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts, and is a direct extension of the 2023 Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts, held at the University of Chicago (and co-organized by O'Malley). The "Out of the Archive" series offered local audiences an opportunity to see films that are often difficult to access and rarely screened in theaters. Appropriate for Iowa City, the series also celebrates intersections between cinema and the other arts, especially literature, making it a fitting follow-up to FilmScene's Refocus Film Festival from the fall.

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The Counterfeit Coin: Videogames and Fantasies of Empowerment

AUTHOR: CHRISTOPHER GOETZ
PRESS: RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS

EARLIER THIS SPRING, CINEMATIC ARTS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, CHRISTOPHER GOETZ, PUBLISHED HIS FIRST BOOK. FOR THE NEWSLETTER, CINEMATIC ARTS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR COREY CREEKMUR INTERVIEWED CHRIS ABOUT THE BOOK.

Corey: Your book began as a dissertation: what remains in place from that earlier incarnation, and what changed most significantly as you revised towards the final version? What motivated any of those changes?

Chris: It was a daunting task, but, for the book, everything stemming from the dissertation had to be rewritten at least twice. I've (thankfully) grown as a writer since graduating. My goal in

revising was to translate the research for anybody interested in deepening their understanding of games, even non-academics. The book's core argument is similar to the dissertation's: that games and related entertainment media have become almost inseparable from fantasy. In turn, these media are making fantasy itself visible in new ways. I've really valued the opportunity to bring some of my ideas into University of Iowa classrooms—to the generally positive response of students. This has especially helped me develop my thinking about film-game convergence (or what cinema and videogames seem to share in common). Of course, not everything from the dissertation made it into the book.



The dissertation's research about pinball illegality, for instance, will be developed and (hopefully) published in another format!

Corey: Your work on video games is grounded in theories of play, or ludology, that extend well beyond (and historically before) contemporary video games. How do you balance that underlying, larger context (the long history of human play) with the ever-evolving transformations of video games, a topic that threatens to continually shift even as you seek to contain it through focused analysis and interpretation?

Chris: Figuring out this balance has been a challenge, at least when it comes to framing the research for different audiences. You only mention theories of play, but I would also add fantasy, which I think of as a kind of play. I was drawn to play theory and fantasy as frameworks right from the start because they seemed to offer useful tools for studying and describing videogame systems (i.e., a game's rules and the patterns repeated in play). In early game studies scholarship, videogames were generally discussed in logical and computational terms: they were algorithmic loops, and they looped in players too, making us more machine-like. These ideas were important, but I think videogames ultimately differ from other kinds of software systems—our relationship with games is defined less by logic than by intimacy. To address what is special about videogames requires thinking about play and fantasy. Spending so much time with digital games may make us more machine-like, but the reverse is also true (i.e., the machine may indeed be in the mind, but the mind is also in the machine).

Writing about the present is certainly a challenge—it's like trying to aim at a constantly moving target. It has, at times, been a struggle to stay on top of new software releases (this is its own kind of full-time commitment). But I guess I've been lucky in that my "targets" have been moving in mostly expected ways. To date, very recent games like *Elden Ring* (2022) or *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* (2023) offer the strongest proof of the relevance of the play/fantasy traditions I write about.

Corey: One intriguing aspect of your book that might surprise some readers is your use of concepts drawn from psychoanalysis—especially notions of fantasy—to understand them. What drew you to that interpretive model as a way to better understand this new media? Would Freud have been intrigued by video games?

Chris: I love to imagine that Freud would be fascinated by videogames—that, if alive today, he would see the clear application of his theory of the psyche, and even that games would spur him to rethink fantasy and play. Honestly, Freud would probably have needed to grow up with games to care about them. He was even disdainful of that contemporary invention of modernity: cinema. Videogames would have probably seemed more opaque and nonsensical to Freud than they do to my parents' generation. For my own generation of media scholars (who were among the first to grow up with videogames as a normal part of home entertainment), games were the battleground of what counted as an appropriate use of leisure time—a big source of conflict with parents who did not grow up with games. I think this makes videogames even more interesting objects from a psychoanalytic perspective.

Corey: You have one foot in video game studies and another in film studies: aside from the fact that these now often feed upon one another to attract audiences to both, how do you view a critical conversation between these fields? How does your ability to

traverse both impact your teaching?

Chris: As an undergraduate film studies student in the early 2000s, I built my own connections between the games I was playing and the film theory I was reading. I carried this habit into graduate school, where I started to trace a dialogue with game studies, which was still just emerging as a field. One key idea from my film studies training was the notion that in fantasy there is an absence of subjectivization. This means that you're not necessarily identified with the subject of an imagined scenario. Though Freudian in origin, the theory was adopted by feminist film scholars in the late 1980s and early 1990s who were attempting to move away from Laura Mulvey's rigid, binary theory of identification. Mulvey famously argued that classical cinema denied women subjectivity (trapping them only as objects for the viewing pleasure of men). In turn, fantasy (with its absence of subjectivization) helped us see our relationship with media texts as more complex. Media texts are actually porous: there are multiple points of entry for identification. This idea seemed perfect for thinking about videogames. In my book, I talk about Mario games, where we don't tend to think of ourselves as invested in Mario as a subject (as a cisgendered, middle-aged white plumber). Rather, when we play, we're invested in other elements of the gameplay scenario, especially the verbs Mario enables (such as to jump). I argue that jumping helps stage an enabling wish (or fantasy) about the body's ability to transcend constraint.

Of course, not everyone is taught to think about their body in this way (as something that overcomes opposition), so the question of gender returns in a new form. My hope for this conversation between film and game studies is to render questions of gender and identity more relevant to game scholars who resist representational analysis—scholars who, in the first place, would challenge the idea that Mario's gender matters for our investment in gameplay.

With teaching, there are some courses where my expertise in both game studies and film studies is key (e.g., my "Lively Arts" course on new ways of thinking about cinema and games as "converging" or becoming more alike). But, in pretty much all my teaching, I move fluidly across different kinds of media texts, from cinema to television, comics, fanfiction, and videogames. To most of my students, this fluidity is second-nature. But there is, I think, a moment early in each semester when students who identify as "gamers" realize, "Oh—he gets references to gamer culture and plays the same sorts of games I do!" I think that's still initially surprising to them, though the novelty does wear off. In the end, my hope is that the inclusion of games as a legitimate object of study in a film studies classroom speaks to students who think of their interests as not worthy of inclusion on a syllabus. Trying to change that narrative of shame attached to games might be one of the most important things I do in my teaching.

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Film Societies in Germany and Austria 1910–1933: Tracing the Social Life of Cinema

AUTHOR: MICHAEL COWAN
PRESS: AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

EARLIER THIS SPRING, CINEMATIC ARTS CHAIR AND PROFESSOR, MICHAEL COWAN, PUBLISHED HIS FOURTH MONOGRAPH, A BOOK ABOUT FILM SOCIETIES IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA. FOR THE CINEMATIC ARTS NEWSLETTER, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR PAULA AMAD INTERVIEWED MICHAEL ABOUT THE BOOK.

Paula: Where did the impetus for this book come from and how is it related to your previous research?

Michael: The book grew partly out of a growing interest I've had in film magazines, which are becoming more and more accessible through digitization projects and can teach us

so much about early movie audiences. (Those audiences were not that different from participatory internet users today!) Movie magazines and film clubs were often interrelated, and I became increasingly interested in the latter. That, in turn, overlapped with a longstanding interest I've had in forms of modern selfhood and embodiment. One of the through-lines in the book examines how different film societies proposed various templates for what I call "cinematic selves" in those early decades. The book is also informed by an interest I shared with many scholars in lesser-known sectors of film history (e.g. scientific film), and I wanted to extend that research films themselves to audiences.



Early film societies let me bring these various interests together while making what I hope is a real contribution to knowledge about these groups.

Paula: What is the book's key argument and how does each chapter reveal different aspects of this argument?

Michael: The book has multiple threads, but one key argument is that film societies – especially in the early decades – came in a more diverse array of forms than our post-1950s cliché of the Parisian arthouse scene would suggest. Hence, each chapter is devoted to a different type of film society. Art-house societies make an appearance (though actually as latecomers in the story), but

but also groups better described as educational, technological and political (to use some all-too-reductive labels). At the same time, the book argues that all of these groups grew out of older forms of associational culture and had affinities with things like amateur science and professional associations. It's no coincidence that film societies emerged from this larger associational culture when they did around 1910. They were responding to a new medium that was becoming urgent, and they worked to define that new medium and develop its place in public life by forging certain types of audiences with certain expectations and habits.

Paula: Your book has a particularly fascinating subtitle: "Tracing the Social Life of Cinema." Could you explain exactly what you mean by "the social life of cinema"? And what is happening in this wonderful party on the cover of the book?

Michael: This is an astute question because that subtitle was originally the main title of the book. "Social life" refers to several things here, but it's certainly part of a methodological argument that we should understand film history as social history. That is, influential ideas about cinema (as a political force, as art, as national industry, etc.) didn't just pop out from the heads of individual theorists. Nor did they inherently flow from the technology. Rather, they've always needed a kind of social foothold, and film societies are one place (not the only one, but a fascinating one) where you can observe how ideas about cinema take hold and spread.

They do so partly through various rituals, activities, protocols and shared forms of knowledge and exchange that make up the social life of film clubs. There's a provocative part of this book that wants to push against the idea that the "passion for the movies" is simply an individual or spontaneous trait. People had to learn how to cultivate a passion for the movies (how to curate their viewing, how to behave in the cinema, how to talk about film, what to know, what to feel, what to read, and so on), and that happens in a social context. As for the party on the cover, it's one of many soirees and costume parties organized by cinephilic film clubs in the mid-1920s, which were doing work of reclaiming film as an artform (with affinities to the performing arts of theater, dance and variété), but also helping to solidify the sense of shared belonging to particular type of "cinema community" (as the Viennese film club shown in that picture called itself).

Paula: Your book has important implications for how we think about the boundaries of film history. Could you explain further the book's implications in this regard?

Michael: My work often seeks to defamiliarize objects of film history, and this necessarily pushes against boundaries. In this book, for example, there would be little to gain by approaching a history of early film-societies with the assumption that we already know what a "film society" even was. Instead, I borrowed an idea from Gregg Waller that we need to be asking what company these groups have kept, and that "company" often takes you

into very different types of reading (scientific, educational, technological, associational, managerial, and so on). One thing about these early film societies is that almost everyone came from somewhere else, and I became increasingly interested in understanding why they turned to cinema when they did, and what kinds of questions they brought to bear upon this medium. To a certain extent, I would extend this idea to any type of film-historical object: instead of assuming we know what something was before starting our research, we should be looking at how people confronted it, how they tried to understand it, what questions and assumptions they brought to bear on it and why. Of course, this kind of expansion of the reading list can also be challenging, and we all need to know our limits. No one can be an expert in everything, and I can't read texts in early 20th century science and economics the same way a historian of those domains would. Still, engaging with those kinds of sources does allow me to see cinema afresh.

Paula: Thinking about the contemporary relevance of your work, where would you see the spirit of the early film clubs and societies continuing today?

Michael: One thing I say in the book – though I don't spend enough time on it – is that if we want to understand the spirit of early film societies, probably the last place to look is to a self-proclaimed "film society" today (at least those operating in the nostalgic mode).

We'd do better to think about new media groups like campus VR clubs, data visualization societies, and so on. Indeed, early film societies were new media groups: as stated, they were confronting a medium that had become quite urgent by the 1910s and which many believed would revolutionize society. They were trying to understand its possibilities and its ramifications for different spheres (learning, politics, art, national industry, etc.). In this sense, these early societies were future-oriented, curious and exploratory.



2023 Cinematic Arts Faculty Accomplishments

Paula Amad presented a keynote talk at the international conference “Instruments for peace? Albert Kahn, Henri Bergson and the legacy of belle époque cosmopolitanism” held at the Albert Kahn Museum in Paris in October 2022. She also delivered the Martin Walsh Memorial Keynote Lecture at the annual conference of the Film and Media Studies Association of Canada, held this year in Toronto in May 2023.

Michael Cowan’s new book, *Film Societies in Germany and Austria 1910-1933: Tracking the Social Life of Cinema*, appeared this spring. He also had some invited talks this year, including a keynote address at the conference “Rethinking Film History through Global and Digital Approaches” in Barcelona in October 2022.

Corey Creekmur co-led the Mellon Sawyer Seminar on Racial Reckoning through Comics, including 4 public events with scholars and artists this year. He also served as President of Comics Studies Society (including conferences in Summer 2022 at Michigan State University and 2023 at University of North Texas).

Bruce Elgin organized visits to Cinematic Arts from animator Steve Jennings and Senior Agent Martin Spencer from A3 agency. He also won an award for outstanding teaching presentation at TYCA (Two-Year College Association) in its 2022 Midwest Conference

Anahita Ghazvinizadeh finished production of her new feature film *Sojourner*, which is currently at the post-production stage. She also had numerous prestigious screenings and invitations, including a presentation and screening at Princeton University; a screening of her short film *Needle* at the Sony Park short film playground in Tokyo; and the inclusion of her film *When the Kid was a Kid* in an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Busan titled *The Post-Modern Child*.

Chris Goetz's book *The Counterfeit Coin: Videogames and Fantasies of Empowerment*, was published with Rutgers University Press. Chris gave a presentation at SCMS titled "Idle Fingers: Player Subjectivity in Light of 'Zero-Player' Games."

Chris Harris has several prestigious screenings this year, including a solo screening at the Academy Museum and a two-person screening with Su Friedrich at the Cinémathèque Française. He is also the 2023 winner of the prestigious Herb Alpert Award in the Arts in the category of Film/Video. From the Herb Alpert Award website: "The Herb Alpert Award honors and supports artists respected for their creativity, ingenuity, and bodies of work, at a moment in their lives when they are poised to propel their art in new and unpredictable directions. The Herb Alpert Award recognizes experimenters who are making something that matters within and beyond their field."

Auden Lincoln-Vogel was the co-director of photography on Anahita Ghazvinizadeh's feature film *Sojourner* and Anna Morrison's short film *Toothache*. His own work screened at various festivals & online services, including NoBudge, the Montreal Independent Film Festival, and Iowa City's own Public Space One art gallery.

Anna Morrison's first book of poems, *Long Exposure*, was named the winner of the Moon City Poetry Prize and will be published this year through Moon City Press. She also finished production on her short film, *Toothache*, in collaboration with Jenelle Stafford and Auden Lincoln-Vogel. The film is currently in post-production and will be completed this summer.

Hayley O'Malley published an essay in *Feminist Media Histories* on the 1976 Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts, as part of a double issue on *Speculative Approaches to Media Histories*, as well as a book review in *Film Quarterly*. She also co-organized the 2023 Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts in Chicago in collaboration with Allyson Nadia Field, Yvonne Welbon, Michael Phillips, and Monica Freeman. And there was a related series that screened at Iowa City's FilmScene under the title "Out of the Archive: Black Women Behind the Lens," organized in collaboration with our Film Studies graduate students.

Andy Owens was promoted to Associate Professor of Instruction, making him the first senior colleague on the Instructional Track in our department. He also published a chapter titled "Spellcasting Camp" in the edited collection *Camp TV of the 1960s: Reassessing the Vast Wasteland* (Oxford University Press).

Hope Tucker's film *What Travelers Are Saying About Jornada del Muerto* screened at festivals in Macedonia, India, Sweden, Mexico, Canada, the US. The film was also awarded Best Short Documentary at the Newburyport Documentary Film Festival in Massachusetts.

Emeritus Faculty Rick Altman and Steven Ungar were both honored, alongside affiliated faculty member Garrett Stewart, at the university's inaugural "Highly Prestigious Faculty Investiture" at the Hancher Auditorium on April 25th 2023.

2023 Cinematic Arts Graduate Student Accomplishments

Dana Alston passed his comprehensive exams and presented at 3 conferences, including our discipline's major scholarly conference, SCMS. Dana also has a book review forthcoming in *Film Quarterly*.

Sam Bowden served as a volunteer for the Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts in Chicago.

Lydia Brubaker volunteered at the Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts in Chicago, and at the Out of the Archive series at FilmScene in Iowa City.

Alex Denison successfully defended his dissertation and will teach film studies and production at Boston University next year. Alex also helped organized screenings, acted in Auden Lincoln-Vogel's film (*Bill and Joe Go Duck Hunting*), and presented original research at SCMS.

Jonathan Lack has been awarded a Graduate College Summer Fellowship and presented original research at SCMS. He is also revising original research for a major media studies journal.

Andrea Schuster participated in an SCMS pre-conference workshop and volunteered at the Out of the Archives event at FilmScene, which included producing a podcast and moderating discussions with filmmakers.

Parker Stenseth volunteered at the Out of the Archives event at FilmScene, including moderating discussions with filmmakers, and at the Sojourner Truth Festival of the Arts in Chicago, for which he wrote program notes; he also presented at two conferences, including an SCMS pre-conference seminar.

Zach Vanes presented original research at SCMS, organized a screening of Oscar Micheaux's *Within Our Gates* with live music at FilmScene, and moderated a podcast with filmmakers for the Out of the Archives event.

Chris Wei passed his Comprehensive Exams and had his Dissertation Prospectus approved. He has two forthcoming essays in scholarly journals.

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2023 Cinematic Arts Undergraduate Student Accomplishments

Danny Cummins will begin an MFA in Screenwriting at UCLA this fall.

James Altschul's film "Assembly Required" won best student film at the Lake County Film Festival in Illinois.

Matthew Huh will begin an MA in Film & Media Studies at Columbia University this fall.

Dillon Jacobson's Modes project was selected for Bijou's Open Screen Film Festival, the Cedar Rapids Independent Film Festival, and the Farm to Film Fest. He will also edit and assistant direct a period piece set to start production in mid-May 2023 in Hampton, IA. This film is spearheaded by Iowa producers Bernd Wittneben and Jörg Rochlitzer.

Blake Kellinger was an intern for the Cedar Rapids Independent Film Festival. He also recently accepted an post-production internship at Eleven Dollar Bill in Chicago.

Hailey Marx will soon begin an internship with Blue Sky Productions as a Store Equipment Manager and as a Production Assistant.

Hannah Olsson received a fully-funded offer to pursue her MFA in Fiction at the University of Colorado-Boulder in the fall.

Andrew Senneff's work was recently nominated for Best Student Production (Undergraduate) for the 32nd Annual Iowa Motion Picture Awards.

Carter Wells's film, The Human Etch-A-Sketch Documentary – Running for Armstrong (made in a Nonfiction Filmmaking course), was selected as an honorable mention for the 3rd Annual NYU Sports Film Festival.

Dana Woolery received the Sean Wu Scholarship.

Benen Witkop was accepted for an internship at Your Clear Next Step.

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<https://cinematicarts.uiowa.edu/>CAN

CALLING ALL ALUMNI!

Looking for More Alumni Updates

Please write to Cinematic Arts DEO (michael-cowan@uiowa.edu) to share any alumni news you would like included in our next annual newsletter. If selected, we will ask for a short blurb about your news as well as an accompanying image.

Examples of relevant alumni news can include (but are not limited to):

- A mention of where you are today (e.g. an academic position, work with a production company, work in a different field...)
- Mention of a major accomplishment from the past five years related in some way to cinema (a film, a published book, etc.)
- Mention of other accomplishments since 2020 (articles, chapters, film work, etc.)

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