

# Migrant Voices in Contemporary European Cinema

University of Kent, 17-19 April 2024

## Timetable

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Day 1 (17 <sup>th</sup> April)		
	Strand One (Sibson Lecture Theatre 2)	Strand Two (Ida Lupino Cinema)
9.30-10.00	<b>Conference Welcome</b> (Kaveh Abbasian, Tobias Heinrich & Alex Marlow-Mann)	
10.00-11.30	<b>1. Gender, Identity &amp; Sexuality</b> Chair: Olga Kourelou  Conceptualising Migrant Women's Cinema in Europe (Bengisu Kepsutlu)  'You're just watching the ocean. You're not even looking at me.' Waves and Failed Migration in Mati Diop's <i>Atlantics</i> (Lydia Tuan) [online]	<b>Screening 1</b> Chair: Kaveh Abbasian  <i>Fifteenth Person</i> (Alireza Behbahani) (40 min)  <i>Nummer 11</i> (Azad Larki) (13 min)
11.30-12.00	<b>Refreshments</b> (Sibson Foyer)	
12.00-1.30	<b>2. Participatory filmmaking</b> Chair: Valentina Ippolito  Participatory Filmmaking in the Refugee Narrative: Interrogating Methodologies, Agency, and Sustainability (Zozan Yasar)  Me Too: A documentary Created Collectively and Anonymously by Queer Migrants in Lesbos Island (Nagehan Uskan) [online]  Io, capitano (Virginia Jewiss) [online]	<b>Screening 2</b> Chair: Alex Marlow-Mann  The Blood and the Border - Rituals of the Khyrim People (Wanphrang K. Diengdoh) (52 min)  <i>No One Will Shed Tears</i> (Katarzyna Lukasik) (10 min) [online]
1.30-2.30	<b>Lunch</b> (Sibson Foyer)	

2.30-4.00	<p><b>3. Iranian Women Filmmakers in the Diaspora: Affective Responses to Misinformation</b> Chair: Kaveh Abbasian</p> <p>Born in Evin: A Bridge Between the Political and the Personal (Tania Ahmadi) [online]</p> <p>From Immigration to a Female-led Revolution: Iranian Women Making Experimental Documentaries (Shahrzad Ghobadlou) [online]</p> <p>'Transit', a Perilous Journey to the UK: Khoshnoudi's View on Afghan Refugees (Amin Pakparvar) [online]</p>	<p><b>Screening 3</b> Chair: Tobias Heinrich</p> <p><i>Rerooting</i> + the Post Collective discussion (Elli Vassalou) (19min) [online]</p> <p><i>Waiting</i> + reflection on collective practice (Ioanna Manoussaki-Adamopoulou) (30-40min)</p>
4.00-4.30	<p><b>Refreshments</b> (Sibson Foyer)</p>	
4.30-5.30	<p><b>Keynote</b></p> <p>Far-flung Families in Contemporary European Cinema (Daniela Berghahn)</p> <p>Chair: Alex Marlow-Mann</p>	
6.00-8.00		<p><b>Special Screening</b></p> <p><i>Purple Sea</i> (2020) Introduction + Q&amp;A with filmmakers Amel Alzakout &amp; Khaled Abdulwahed [online]</p> <p>Chair: Kaveh Abbasian</p>

<b>Day 2 (18<sup>th</sup> April)</b>		
	<b>Strand One (Academic Papers) (Sibson Lecture Theatre 2)</b>	<b>Strand Two (Screening &amp; Practice) (Ida Lupino Cinema)</b>
9.30-11.00	<p><b>4. Decolonisation</b> Chair: Zozan Yasar</p> <p>Smuggling Memories: The Politics of Remembrance in Rabah Ameur-Zaïmeche's <i>Smugglers' Songs</i> (Maxime Bey-Rozet)</p> <p>Unveiling the Political Economy of Migration in Jumana Manna's <i>Wild Relatives: A Border Abolitionist and Decolonial Perspective</i> (Hera Lorandos)</p>	<p><b>Screening 4</b> Chair: Tobias Heinrich</p> <p><i>Let's Call Her Adriana + Far Is Here</i> (Barbara Oettinger) (10min + 6min)</p> <p><i>Recognizing and Deconstructing the 'Humanitarian Gaze' in Refugee Documentaries: A Videographic Paper</i> (Qinrang Wang) (12min)</p>

	Migrants' Performative Filmmaking in the Decolonization of Border Landscapes (Keina Espiñeira)	
11.00-11.30	<b>Refreshments</b> (Sibson Foyer)	
11.30-1.00	<p><b>5. Biographical perspectives on migrant filmmakers and performers</b> Chair: Ruxandra Trandafoiu</p> <p>Beyond the 'Accented' Canon: the Cosmopolitan Trajectories of Bujar Alimani (Philip E. Phillis)</p> <p>'I am Afro Greek': The Rise of Black Greek Performers in Contemporary Greek Cinema and Television (Olga Kourelou)</p> <p>Diasporic Filmmaking and Public Funding in Flanders: the Case of Kadir Ferati Balci (Alexander De Man)</p>	<p><b>Screening 5</b> Chair: Kaveh Abbasian</p> <p><i>Only Voice Remains: Making Collective Prophecies</i> (Only Voice Remains) (60 min) [online]</p> <p><i>The Sparrow Is Free</i> (Niki Kohandel) (14 min)</p>
1.00-2.30	<b>Lunch</b> (Sibson Foyer)	
2.30-3.30	<p><b>Roundtable</b></p> <p>Khaled Abdulwahed, Amel Alzakout, Daniela Berghahn &amp; Arash T. Riahi</p> <p>Chair: Alex Marlow-Mann</p>	
3.30-4.00	<b>Refreshments</b> (Sibson Foyer)	
4.00-6.00		<p><b>Special Screening</b></p> <p><i>For a Moment, Freedom</i> (2008) Introduction + Q&amp;A with filmmaker Arash T. Riahi</p> <p>Chair: Tobias Heinrich</p>
8.00	<b>Conference Dinner</b> (Ye Olde Beverlie, Canterbury)	

<b>Day 3 (19<sup>th</sup> April)</b>	
<b>Strand One (Academic Papers)</b> (Sibson Lecture Theatre 2)	<b>Strand Two (Screening &amp; Practice)</b>

9.30-11.00	<p><b>6. Archives of Migration</b> Chair: Kamil Zapasnik</p> <p>Trans-Mediterranean Musical Videography: the Harraga Songs of Small-boat Migration (Ed Emery)</p> <p>What Do Pictures Deserve? Archive, Evidence, and Essay Film (Boris Ružić)</p>	<p><b>[Ida Lupino Cinema]</b> <b>Screening 6</b> Chair: Alex Marlow-Mann</p> <p><i>Rajavyöhyke 1947: Provocations on Belonging and Displacement</i> (Kirsten Adkins) (40min)</p> <p><i>Our Italy / La nostra Italia</i> (Valentina Ippolito) (15min)</p> <p>The Ultimate Guide to Listening (Young People Together) (10min) [online]</p>
11.00-11.30	<p><b>Refreshments</b> (Sibson Foyer)</p>	
11.30-1.00	<p><b>7. Conceptualising Migrant Filmmaking</b> Chair: Ewa Fuik</p> <p>Returning Is Leaving (Valentin Via) [online]</p> <p>Migrants' Film Practice: 'Embodied Knowledge'? (Anthony Blanc) [online]</p> <p>The Disorder of Borders: Transgressions of Common Migration Narratives in <i>Adú</i> (Salvador Calvo, 2020) and <i>La jaula de oro</i> (Diego Quemada-Díez, 2013) (Anna-Lena Hauser)</p>	<p><b>[Ida Lupino Cinema]</b> <b>Screening 7</b> Chair: Kaveh Abbasian</p> <p><i>On the Roads of Freedom</i> (Maria Ghalvazi &amp; Shiva Ghalvazi) (35min) [online]</p> <p><i>Seven Minutes and Thirty One Seconds &amp; Gassi Gassi</i> (Solmaz Gholami) (12min + 11min) [online]</p>
1.00-2.30	<p><b>Lunch</b> (Sibson Foyer)</p>	
2.30-4.00	<p><b>8. German Migrant Cinema</b> Chair: Tobias Heinrich</p> <p>Transnational Memory in Recent Turkish German Cinema: How Do Memories Resonate Across Borders? (Pinar Yıldız)</p> <p>The Possibility of Challenging the Dominant Narrative: The Case of Burhan Qurbanî's <i>Berlin Alexanderplatz</i> (Ewa Fuik)</p> <p>Two Lenses Looking at Refugees: German Mainstream Media vs. Afghan Filmmakers (Hamid Nazemi Yazdi) [online]</p>	<p><b>[Sibson Seminar Room]</b> <b>9. The Gaze</b> Chair: Kirsten Adkins</p> <p>The 'Third 'Eye of the Dislocated Filmmaker: Two Conversations with Egyptian-British Director Khaled El Hagar (Ruxandra Trandafoiu &amp; Roger Shannon)</p> <p>Dismantling Othering Gaze Dynamics. The Case Study of <i>Lala</i> (Ludovica Fales)</p> <p>Migrant Documentary Filmmakers beyond the Archive of Migrant Memories in Italy (Giovanna Faleschini Lerner) [online]</p>

	(Post)-Migrant Queers of Today: Sexuality and Migration in Faraz Shariat's <i>Futur Drei</i> (Kamil Zapasnik)	
4.00-4.30	<b>Closing Address</b> (Kaveh Abbasian, Tobias Heinrich & Alex Marlow-Mann)	

## Abstracts

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### **Rajavyöhyke 1947: Provocations on belonging and displacement – An interdisciplinary paper that combines film, poetry and song**

A journey to a border zone, in search of a wooden house provokes questions on selfhood and national identity, place and belonging and the lasting implications of flight and return.

Rajavyöhyke translates from Finnish to English as borderzone. Signs that line an 800-mile border, cross the forests and lakes of Finland and Russia. They operate as a modest indication of who belongs and where. In April 2023 I travelled with a camera to a wooden house near the border town of Imatra, in the region of Karelia. The area was fought over during the Winter War between 1939 and 1940, and the Continuation War between 1941 and 1944. My mother and her family, who lived in the house were neither Finnish nor Russian. They were exiled to Sweden and never returned: some 400,000 people were evacuated as the border between Finland and the Soviet Union shifted. With a new war in Europe, *rajavyöhyke* articulates an increasing tension between opposing geopolitical forces. This year, Finland joined NATO. Sanctions were issued against Russia and the wooden house now owned by a family from St Petersburg is once again abandoned. In November 2023, at the time of writing, Finland closed the entire border to Russia, for the first time in its history. There is an unsettling stillness and marked absence of people near the *rajavyöhyke*. A few voices carry across the lakes on the border – it is unclear whether they are Russian or Finnish.

Kirsten Adkins  
University of Glasgow

### **Iranian Women Filmmakers In The Diaspora: Affective Responses To Misinformation**

**Panel:**

In the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian revolution, the uncertain political relationships of Iran with the rest of the world have cast a shadow on migration studies to and from Iran. Media coverage of the Iranian diaspora failed to bridge the communication gap; rather, negative stereotypes were adopted to further isolate Iranians in the diaspora (Roodechi, 2014; Ronaghi, 2021; Fayyaz and Shirazi, 2022). In order to ensure ethical representation, emigré artists made Iranian voices visible in a cross-cultural context. Our panel shines a spotlight on a groundbreaking reevaluation of Iranian cinema, focusing on Iranian female filmmakers in the diaspora in the post-1979 period. Taking inspiration from feminist debates in the UK in the 70s (Mulvey 2008), the featured films in our panel pivot on the importance of “affect” to incorporate subjective truths and counter misinformation about Iran and its people, while also actively engaging with feminist debates. There is a broad range of styles in these films, from experimental, to documentaries, to fiction, which challenge the mainstream boundaries of visual grammar through emotional depth and aesthetic appeal.

Panel members:

Tania Ahmadi

Shahzad Ghobadlou

Amin Pakparvar

### **Born in Evin: A Bridge Between The Political And The Personal**

In the opening moments of the documentary *Born in Evin*, director Maryam Zaree states, “Something about my birth was not personal,” echoing the iconic second-wave feminist phrase “the personal is political,” which was popularized in the late 1960s. At the age of 12, Zaree discovered that she was born in Evin, Iran’s infamous political prison. Now, at 35, this actress-filmmaker embarks on a profound journey to explore the circumstances of her birth, offering a personal perspective on a traumatic element of national history. Her vulnerable, lyrical investigation examines the transmission of trauma across generations and its impact on survivors’ bodies and souls.

The paper delves into the French feminist expression of “The personal is political” as embodied in Zaree’s narrative. The examination unfolds in two interconnected parts: Firstly, by breaking three decades of silence and narrating her story within the context of the political oppression her family faced, Zaree dismantles the barrier between the personal and the political. Her narrative emerges as a potent confrontation against the systemic, gendered violence and oppression perpetuated by the Islamic regime, giving a voice to the silenced and instilling hope and courage in those with similar experiences. Secondly, by questioning her career as an actress in Germany, where she often finds herself typecast into clichéd roles portraying refugees with tragic fates and victimized personalities, Zaree challenges and reshapes existing power dynamics. The film becomes a platform to assert her agency, redefine her identity beyond stereotypical narratives, and contribute to a broader feminist and radical conversation about empowerment and representation.

Tania Ahmadi

## **From Immigration to A Female-led Revolution: Iranian Women Making Experimental Documentaries**

After the Iranian revolution in 1979, the hijab mandate changed the significance of veiling in Iran from a sartorial choice to a symbol of systemic gender oppression. Hengameh Golestan's photographs (2015) suggest that approximately 100,000 women protested the mandate on 8 March 1979. Iranian media did not cover the event. In France, the French feminist journal *Des Femmes en Mouvements* aired the protests in a fifteen-minute video report and Hélène Cixous reflected on it in her article "Poésie e(s)t Politique?" (1979). The video captured the "zero hour" of a mass feminist movement in Iran. In contrast, Cixous' article steered clear of media coverage by arguing that poetry must first mature women's political plight.

Since 1979, several Iranian émigré filmmakers, including Sepideh Farsi, Sanaz Azari, and Maaman Rezaee, reflected on "un-veiling" as a dynamic process for documenting silenced truths. I argue that experimental documentaries by and about Iranian immigrants expose systemic gender oppression and orientalist perspectives through layered subjective truths. Using examples from *Harat* (2007), *I for Iran* (2014), and *Minuet for A Disappearance* (2015), I demonstrate how these documentaries gather unspoken pieces of history through letters to parents, abstract drawings, and Farsi writing lessons.

Shahrzad Ghobadlou

## **"Transit", A Perilous Journey To The UK: Khoshnoudi's view on Afghan refugees**

In their essay, "The Cultural Politics of Aspiration: Family Photography's Mixed Feelings" (2015), Thy Phu and Elspeth H. Brown provide a nuanced description of "aspiration" as an affective state deeply entwined with the past and future experiences of ethnic minorities. The authors introduce a collaborative research project to reexamine archives in search of aspirations to better the life of displaced people and immigrants.

Phu and Brown's methodology proves applicable beyond the realm of archives, extending to the analysis of diaspora films that capture the struggles of displaced communities. In the same vein, Bani Khoshnoudi's short film, *Transit* (2004), offers a case study to discuss Iranian and Afghan refugee's clandestine life in Europe. The film vividly portrays their precarious journey and endeavors to cross European borders and to seek asylum with the assistance of smugglers. By looking at the similarities and differences between the two terms of "aspiration" and "Transit" through a close analysis of the film, we can see the coping mechanism that these minorities employ

to to survive and to rid themselves of the chain of underground and clandestine violence.

Amin Pakparvar

### ***Our Italy / La nostra Italia* (in development)**

Over the past 30 years, Italian cinema of migration has been concerned with the representation of female migration to Italy by filmmakers including Andrea Segre (*Io sono Li*, 2011), Carlo Mazzacurati (*Vesna va veloce*, 1998), and Federico Bondi (*Mar Nero*, 2008). However, far less critical attention has been given to the voice of migrant women and the representation of their own journey of migration to Italy.

This short-documentary represents the journey of migration to Italy from the point of view of 23-year-old Afghan journalist and refugee Rahel Saya in conversation with Valentina Ippolito, an Italian-born migrant documentary filmmaker living and working in London. Filmed in Rahel's host family's basement, this intimate interview reveals her reasons for escaping Afghanistan after the arrival of the Talibans banning Afghan women from University education. The film explores Rahel's hopes for her future in Italy while she waits for her student visa to be approved to be able to study at La Sapienza University in Rome. This is one of the episodes forming part of *Our Italy / La nostra Italia*, a documentary research project about female migration to Italy led by Dr Valentina Ippolito (DPhil, University of Oxford). By engaging with accented, exilic and diasporic modes of representation, the film offers opportunities for critical reflection on the role of art in addressing global issues of female migration to Italy.

Dr Valentina Ippolito  
Kingston University London

### **Keynote: Far-Flung Families in Contemporary European Cinema**

In this keynote, I will make a case for the centrality of migrant and diasporic families in contemporary European cinema. The emergence of migrant and diasporic cinema in Europe and, especially, the rise to prominence of diasporic families on screen, are directly linked to the social history of post-war immigration and European legislation on family reunification, which resulted in the transformation of temporary migrant into diasporic settler communities. The coming-of-age of the second and subsequent generations that were born and/or raised in the host society has, in turn, led to the development of a vibrant diasporic film culture.

Examining the preponderance of family narratives in Turkish German, British Asian and Maghrebi French cinema, I propose that the family functions as a trope of national



belonging. As cinema tends to depict social conflicts and transitions indirectly through affective relations in the family, migrant and diasporic families crystallise the emotionally ambivalent response to growing ethnic diversity in Europe. Constructed as Other on account of their ethnicity, language and religion, these far-flung families are frequently perceived as a threat to the social cohesion of Western societies. Thus, filmic narratives about the inclusion or exclusion of diasporic families make important discursive interventions in topical and highly contested public debates about immigration and cultural diversity.

Daniela Berghahn

### **Diasporic filmmaking and Public Funding In Flanders: The Case of Kadir Ferati Balci**

The prevailing body of literature on diasporic cinema mainly focuses on the analysis of textual representations, and often overlooks the political, industrial, and socio-cultural dynamics that surround its production and dissemination. This paper goes beyond a text-centric approach and features a cultural production analysis of *Turquaze* (2009) and *Marry Me [Trouw met mij]* (2014) by Kadir Ferati Balci, a Flemish filmmaker of Turkish and Albanian descent. Both films revolve around cross-cultural relationships among second generation migrants, and contemplate themes of displacement, identity, interstitiality, and belonging. Despite the filmmakers avoidance of such labels, they were marketed (and celebrated) as the first professional films by and about migrants in Flanders, with the support of the Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF).

Drawing on a discourse analysis of production documents and funding applications and two expert interviews with the filmmaker, I unravel how Balci engaged with debates of multiculturalism, difference, and identity, whilst strategically navigating the industry and securing public funding. In pointing out the dialectic co-existence of universalist and particularist discourses, I will reveal the complex, ambivalent, and contradicting context in which diasporic minoritized filmmakers operate, and provide a more nuanced and contextual understanding of the cultural significance of diasporic filmmaking in Europe.

Alexander De Man

### **Trans-Mediterranean musical videography – the Harraga songs of small-boat migration [Working title]**

A historically unique genre of music has developed in the maritime space of the Mediterranean during the past 10 years. The closure of Europe's borders in the face of movements of migrants and refugees has led to an increase in clandestine

small-boat migration. This has a parallel development of music and songs that reflect this movement, which is summed up in the word “harraga” – those who “burn” their past to start a new and uncertain future overseas. Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco are the principal locations of production.

The “harraga” genre is powerfully rooted in videography. The migrants film themselves, both in transit and while making onshore landings, and then post the clips to online video platforms (YouTube etc), where they garner huge numbers of views. These clips are essentially ephemeral, since government pressures result in them being taken down. As such they urgently need to be archived.

The online videos are not separate from the accompanying trend, both in the home countries and in the metropolitan reception countries, for the production of music videos that problematise migration in terms of social alienation, unemployment, colonialism, etc. At one end the technically simple boat-crossing selfie-videos, and at the other music industry videos with the highest of production values.

This paper will give a broad view of the field, while at the same time attempting to establish a contextually defined approach to further analysis.

Ed Emery

### **Dismantling Othering Gaze Dynamics: The Case Study of “LALA”**

Integrating the documentary genre-specific approach with material archive and the use of staging, the film LALA investigates the grey areas of the laws regulating Italian citizenship for second generation Roma children. This is the result of a long collaborative project, which lasted five years. The project was set up by me after a very important encounter with Roma girl I started making a documentary with. It involved a group of Roma teenagers in the sharing and re-elaboration of stories of invisibility which became the basis upon which the film was built. The material archive related to the story of a paperless girl trying to obtain her documents in the passage to 18 years old, shot about ten years before in MiniDV format, represents the red thread that holds the fictional elements sewn together with the issues addressed by the documentary material shared in a participatory way. Through the exploration of Boal's theatre of the oppress "forum" and the construction of Brechtian mechanism of dismantling of the "third wall", the film builds the relationship with the viewer on a familiarization/defamiliarization mechanism. The audience is put in the middle of the discussions that took place in the creation of the project and then brought back to the story in a seemingly transparent way, thus questioning deeply viewers in relation to

their position to the story - the story of the group vs the approach of the system to their stories. This process is aimed at creating a displacement that reproduces the disorientating experience of those seeking to obtain documents in a bureaucratic labyrinth; at the same time, it becomes a disclosure of "othering" gaze dynamics and an experience of recognition of the invisibility erased from our society. Analysing my own approach as an filmmaker through auto-ethnography and the forms of participation of all actors (participants, crew, audience members) through ethnographic means, I aim identifying the specific turning points and the elements in the film that allow the "othering" gaze dynamics to be dismantled and define the way in which we were able to create a shared truth in the project, which necessarily implies the audience's involvement.

Ludovica Fales

### **Migrant Documentary Filmmakers Beyond the Archive of Migrant Memories in Italy**

In this paper, I discuss the history of the Archivio delle Memorie Migranti in Rome and its role in supporting migrant audiovisual self-narrations. In particular, I analyze Dag Yimer's *Va' pensiero*, *CARA Italia*, and *Soltanto il mare*, Mohamed Zakaria Ali's *To Whom It May Concern*, and the five-director collaboration *Benvenuti in Italia*, all documentaries from the 2010s that elevate migrant voices and reclaim narrative agency in framing stories of displacement, diaspora, and migration. In looking at these documentaries, I consider the centrality of language, including Yimer's titles and the ways in which they stake a claim to Italian cultural patrimony; the issue of bureaucratic dehumanization; and analyze in depth the question of access and genre. The audiovisual narrative tools that migrant filmmakers have access to, that is, tend to be documentary in nature; this has implications at the level of funding, marketing, and distribution, that often do not afford them the broad audiences that could effectively generate a cultural and social change in mentality and approaches to thinking about migration, migrant rights, citizenship, and belonging.

Giovanna Faleschini Lerner

### **The Possibility of Challenging the Dominant Narrative: The Case of Burhan Qurbani's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (2020)**

In 1929, German psychiatrist and author Alfred Döblin wrote the novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz: The Story of Franz Biberkopf*. Almost one hundred years later, German-born director Burhan Qurbani – whose parents fled from Afghanistan – showed his excellent adaptation of this literary classic at the Berlin Film Festival. Are there any parallels between the life in the Weimar Republic and in present-day Germany? Is the fate of a labourer living in Berlin at the end of the 1920s comparable

to the existence of an African refugee in the German capital today? And finally: how can contemporary migration across the Mediterranean Sea be inscribed in the history of a West-European country so as to achieve socio-political convergence between two eras? In my paper, I would like to focus on some similarities and differences between the novel by Alfred Döblin and the film by Burhan Qurbani in the context of postcolonial theory, social determinism, and the categories of the abject and victim introduced by Thomas Elsaesser in his article “Das Kino der abjekten Affekte” (“The Cinema of Abject Affects”) from 2019. Analysing these elements, I will try to answer the question of whether a dominant narrative can be challenged, and if so: how.

Ewa Fiuk

### **Io Capitano: Matteo Garrone**

Matteo Garrone’s 2023 film *Io Capitano* (Me Captain) is the story of two teenage boys who, mesmerized by images of Europe they see on life social media, decide to leave their village in Senegal to make their way to Italy. Garrone, whose screenplay is based on actual accounts of those who have made the arduous voyage, has also called his film a “Homeric fairy tale,” thus making for a poignant mix of brutal reality and epic fable. *Io Capitano* won the Silver Lion for direction at the Venice Film Festival and is Italy’s entry for Best International Feature Film at the 96<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards. Pope Francis requested a special screening at the Vatican, and it is being shown in Italian high schools as a way of exposing students to the migrants’ plight.

Garrone has repeatedly explained that the film is the result of a collaborative effort with migrants, in particular the young men who play the lead roles. This paper considers the compelling and yet controversial collaboration—what Garrone has called a reverse shot—that generated this film and propelled the Senegalese Seydou Sarr to stardom, transforming him into a migrant in the process.

Virginia Jewiss

### **Conceptualising Migrant Women’s Cinema in Europe**

Migrant and diasporic filmmaking in Europe has gained wider academic recognition over the past decades for challenging the notions of national cinema and raising questions about the issues of space, place, and identity (Naficy, 2001; Berghahn and Sternberg, 2010; Bayraktar, 2015). However, despite the broad scope of previous research both on the representation of migrant women (Ponzanesi, 2011) and the work of migrant women filmmakers (Freedman and Tarr, 2000; Eren, 2003; Ballesteros, 2015), there remains a notable absence of a comprehensive conceptualisation of migrant women’s cinema in a wider context outside the borders

of national cinemas. This paper locates migrant women's cinema at the intersection of the concepts of European cinema, world cinema, and women's cinema, considering it to be a distinctive mode of filmmaking. Through examples such as *Inch'Allah Dimanche* (Yamina Benguigui, France, 2000), *Fremde Haut* (Angelina Maccarone, Germany, 2005), and *I am Nasrine* (Tina Gharavi, the UK, 2012), this paper explores how migrant women's cinema addresses the questions of border-crossing and displacement through a gendered perspective by concentrating on the female characters as an 'active protagonist of migration' (Morokvasic, 2014). Furthermore, this paper posits a cinematic language that offers an alternative voice for the representation and subjectification of female migration.

Bengisu Kepsutlu

### **'I am Afro Greek': The Rise of Black Greek Performers in Contemporary Greek Cinema and Television**

Migrants, especially non-whites, have long been marginalised in Greek society and cultural production. Yet, over the past decade, a remarkable change has taken place: an increasing number of second-generation Greeks of African descent, emerging mainly from a rising black music scene, have acquired mainstream appeal and success on film and TV. Fuelled by Giannis Antetokounmpo's phenomenal ascent to NBA stardom, encouraged by the outlawing of right-wing party, Golden Dawn, and facilitated by the support of cultural institutions, such as the Onassis Foundation, the rise of AfroGreek performers reflects a shift in Greek society towards an acknowledgment of the multi-ethnic composition of its population.

Taking its cue from the documentary, *I am Afro Greek: Black Portraiture in Greece* (Adéolá Naomi Adérèmi, 2022), my presentation will focus on two distinct AfroGreek crossover stars, Jerome Kaluta and Negros Tou Moria. By looking at their performance style across diverse mediums; their language and speech; and the role of comedy in the construction of their image, I am interested in examining the types of black masculinity they embody, how these change according to the medium in which they appear – music, TV (Kaluta), art cinema (Negros Tou Moria) – and the ideological implications arising from such mutations. In doing so, my aim is to explore what their rise to prominence says about Greek-ness, belonging, and identity at a time when citizenship rights are still contested for AfroGreeks.

Olga Kourelou

### **Refugee representations in Greek school movies**

Greece, first country of entry for asylum seeking persons, became Europe's focal point during the recent "refugee crisis" in 2015. The presence of asylum seekers reminded Greeks of the meanings of hospitality and solidarity. On the other hand, their presence exacerbated xenophobic discrimination and modern racism, emphasizing the polarization between Europe's identity and refugee "otherness" (Triantafyllidou, 2018). Such conflict is a common phenomenon in Greek school life as well (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017-2018). Greek media represent refugees as either victims, or dangerous strangers, amplifying the identitarian polarization (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017; Fotopoulos & Kaimaklioti, 2016).

Audiovisual literacy is a key factor in awareness, as well as acceptance and inclusion of refugees (Trencsényi & Naumescu, 2021). There are many audiovisual activities, in coordination with the Greek compulsory education, for and with refugees (EKOME, 2018).

The main question of this paper: The visual rhetoric of Greek high school students when they represent refugees in their audiovisual texts. Do they portrait refugees as stereotypical victims or as dangerous others? Do they include in their narrative a conflict and solution?

Our analysis is based on social semiotics theory (Kress & vanLeeuwen, 1996) as well as Barthes' (1977) theory on connotation. Our corpus is an award-winning short school film *Esmigia* (6<sup>th</sup> High School of Heraklion, Crete, 2016) which was one of the winners in the acclaimed Greek annual school movie festival *Cinema ...diavases?* (2010- ).

Key Words: Greek school movies, Audiovisual Literacy, Refugee representations

Valsamidis Pavlos

### **Beyond the 'accented' canon: the cosmopolitan trajectories of Bujar Alimani**

Following the collapse of Albania's communist regime in 1989, nearly half the country's population, including filmmakers and crew of the famous Kinostudio, departed to neighboring countries. Hence on, what we call Albanian cinema has been by and large transnational, exilic and diasporic, pertaining to Hamid Naficy's 'Accented Cinema'. This presentation however will attempt to revise major frameworks of exilic and diasporic cinema by exploring the work and trajectory of Albanian director Bujar Alimani.

In 1991, as a graduate of Albania's national Academy of Theatre, Alimani left to Greece where he experienced the hardships of being an immigrant in 'Fortress Europe'. Thanks to his friendship and collaboration with local filmmakers, Alimani obtained the necessary skills of the craft and eventually moved out of the margins to become a household name in Greek arthouse circles. In Greece, he pursued to make films with a Greek-Albanian cast, in Greek, on topics unrelated to migration save for his 2003

short, *The Kennel*. With his first feature film *Amnesty* (2010), he became an ambassador for Greek-Albanian coproductions and today makes feature films both in the US and Albania. This presentation will demonstrate the varying contours of Alimani's transition from 'accented' to cosmopolitan filmmaker as a way of challenging mainstream expectations around 'accented cinema' which often casts respective practitioners as marginal purveyors of migration and statelessness.

Philip E. Phillis

### **What do pictures deserve? Archive, *evidence*, and essay film**

Current scholarship points to the landscapes of dominant media systems as representing migration either in a stereotypical manner, by reducing them to the images of individualized suffering or generalized threat; or by circumventing migrant presence altogether. In response to that, this talk will provide a countervisual (Mirzoeff) approach to "the migrant image" (Nail, 2019) by emphasizing the importance of images not made *of* them, but those made *by* them. The aim is to explore the practice of sharing memories of migrants in the form of fragmented or personal images and videos, focused on two case studies –films *Asmat – Names* (Dagmawi Yimer, 2015) and *Purple Sea* (Alzakout, Abdulwahed, 2020). This talk will explore the potential of personal migrant memories (images and videos) in eliciting affective responses from "the civics" (Azoulay, 2008). Documentary film, and essay film especially, have historically been potent ground for researching the relation between subjectivity and representation, or production and reception of images. I will present a short analysis of two documentary films that use first person narration in an epistolary form claiming they open a space of possible reworking of the hegemonic scopic regime of generalisation, victimization or polarization, outside of the "regime of suffering", towards creating specific (although heterogenous) archives and sites of memory and communication.

Boris Ružić

### **The 'Third 'Eye of the Dislocated Filmmaker – Two Conversations with Egyptian-British Director Khaled El Hagar**

In this paper we reflect on two interviews with Egyptian-British filmmaker Khaled El Hagar (*Room to Rent*, *El Shooq/Lust*, *Shihana*), conducted almost a decade apart. Together with El Hagar, we explore the doubleness of diasporic filmmaking, which allows dislocated filmmakers to develop a 'third eye', a 'diasporic optic'. This

multiplicity is the conduit through which migrant filmmakers begin to inhabit, often uncomfortably, several cultures and identity spaces, and gives them a certain acuity, criticality, and reflexivity. Consequently, in the paper we develop several contingent themes linked to El Hagar's work and his hybrid aesthetic, such as simultaneous inclusion and exclusion, the desire for universality and responding as a writer and filmmaker to current events observed through the lens of the politics of distance. We contextualize these themes by using a postcolonial theoretical perspective, which, we argue, remains constraining to diasporic filmmakers in the UK and Europe today.

Roger Shannon and Ruxandra Trandafoiu

### The Ethical Limits of European Migration Cinema

The majority of recent European films dealing implicitly or explicitly with migration and/or the refugee crisis share a preoccupation with the *ethical* limits of Europeans' responsibility to the 'illegal' Other rather than with the Other's *cultural* difference. What is at stake in these films is the aporia, articulated by Derrida, between 'unconditional' and 'conditional' hospitality. Not only has 'co-presence' gradually emerged as the dominant theoretical paradigm to describe the migrant's/refugee's deregulated experience of time and space, but 'co-presence' has also come to dramatize a heightened historical consciousness, as evidenced by European films' growing tendency to frame the ethical questions raised by migrants and refugees in terms of past forms of oppression and marginalization, with the Holocaust serving as the ultimate ground for legitimization. Thus, perhaps not surprisingly, the trope of 'ghosting' or 'haunting' recurs regularly in these films. Esther Peeren has explored 'spectrality', with which Derrida's 'hauntology' shares obvious similarities, as a metaphor of both dispossession and empowerment of certain subjects, including migrants and refugees, who are regularly perceived as 'living ghosts.' Films like *Transit* (Christian Petzold, 2018), *Happy as Lazzaro* (Alice Rohrwacher, 2018) and *Dead Europe* (Tony Krawitz, 2012)—in which the past is *literally* made present—can be read as responding to a long-standing debate about the relationship between representation and the 'unrepresentable', for which the Shoah serves as the ultimate model. By blurring the boundaries between past, present and future, and approaching contemporary problems through a magical/fabulist/farcical/absurdist lens, these films foreground the historical continuity between various forms of injustice and exploitation, ultimately revealing the relentless reproduction of violence as a cycle seemingly without end. My paper will examine the sometimes problematic ways in which films like Otar Iosseliani's *La chasse aux papillons* (1992), Gianni Amelio's *Lamerica* (1994), Nick Broomfield's *Ghosts* (2006), Tony Krawitz's *Dead Europe* (2012), Christian Petzold's *Transit* (2018), Alice Rohrwacher's *Happy as Lazzaro* (2018), Karl Markovics' *Nobadi* (2019) and Peter Brosens and Jessica Woodworth's *The Barefoot Emperor* (2019) engage with the *ethical* limits of Europeans' responsibility to the



'illegal' Other by relying on the trope of spectrality to underscore the co-presence of past and present.

Temenuga Trifonova

### **'You're just watching the ocean. You're not even looking at me.' Waves and Failed Migration in Mati Diop's *Atlantics* (2019)**

Framing water as an aqueous, mediating border that facilitates the representation of migration on film, my discussion of water in Mati Diop's *Atlantics* (2019) borrows significantly from the analysis of water in the Blue Humanities, wherein media theorists have critically analyzed the space of the sea as a media environment. I initiate a discussion of water's mediating properties in *Atlantics* by focusing on how the wave features recurrently in scenes that frame water surfaces. Diop's particular representation of the sea suggests its presence as a physical impasse, a border that contradicts and even negates its liquid, fluid properties as a state of matter, and by reading the film's representation of the sea a decimating and divisive aqueous border, particularly through the lenses of Stefan Helmreich's anthropological study of waves, this talk argues that the ocean wave and its iconicity in Diop's film function altogether as a fragmentary force that structures the spatial logics of the film and further reinforces *Atlantics* as a film about migration that narrates the futility and impossibility of a successful migrant crossing.

Lydia Tuan

### **(Post)-Migrant Queers of Today: Sexuality and Migration in Faraz Shariat's *Futur Drei***

Faraz Shariat's 2020 directorial debut, *Futur Drei* is a bold cinematic text which brings together a myriad of plotlines centred on the issue of migration in contemporary Europe. The film touches on, amongst other things, the 'refugee crisis' of 2015, the reality of the everyday lives of migrants living in present-day Germany, and the migrants' complicated relationships with their "native" and "adopted" homelands. Most interestingly, however, it also offers a nuanced and multi-dimensional representation of the main characters' sexualities and the ways in which it affects their day-to-day lives.

Drawing on the theoretical work of Fatima El-Tayeb, this paper will investigate how, and to what extent, Shariat's film renegotiates the representation of queer (post)-migrants in contemporary European cinema by continuously exploring the intersections between the main characters' sexualities, their (post)-migrant identities and their socio-political standing within contemporary Germany. I shall argue that

rather than resuscitating a set of cinematic clichés (e.g., homophobic migrant family vs. accepting Western-Europeans), the film paints a much more multi-faceted and ambiguous picture of contemporary Europe's socio-political dynamics, as it repeatedly highlights the ongoing resurgence and proliferation of various forms of "othering" and exclusion.

Kamil Zapasnik

### **Bright Life – Film Screening**

The documentary "Bright Life" is about a woman named Atafeh who was forced to marry a man ten years older than her at the age of sixteen. The harsh environment of her life in the village and the pressures from her husband's family led her to seek independence; however, her husband did not divorce her, and she decided to secretly enter into a relationship with another man, but this affair caused her to lose her dignity. She continued her efforts until her children grew up and convinced him to immigrate to the Karaj suburb to live separately, but he withheld all financial support for their shared life. Despite all the difficulties she faced, she finally managed to get a divorce.

Anna Amirhassani

### **Grand Tour – a film in-debt(ed) – Film Screening**

Grand Tour is an essayistic documentary that exists in two forms, as an online interactive film and an offline film. The film has taken ten years to make, involving extensive archive research and experimentation with motion graphics and interactivity. Grand Tour explores an alternative reading of the last two hundred years of Greek history, since the birth of modern Greece. Grand Tour is inspired by the writings of foreign travellers who visited Greece in the 18th and 19th centuries. Through a multi-dimensional, interactive journey in space and time, the film explores the origins of the modern Greek state by looking at the accumulation of foreign debts. This debt is juxtaposed with a long cultural debt, voiced by the stories of foreign travellers and their dreams about ancient Greece. Following the essayistic filmmaking tradition, the film dialectically associates the financial debt with the cultural debt of ancient Greece, suggesting modes of ambiguity and speculative thinking that describe Greece as a place in a constantly disjointed state, defined by a series of fragmented political, and economic and cultural past and present encounters. Grand Toru has been to several film festivals in Greece and was a finalist in the Universal Film Festival Samothraki 2023.

Fotis Begklis

### **Fifteenth Person – Film Screening**

This documentary is focused on a ten-day part of the life of Shahla Entesari, a women's activist and a political activist, the film shows her everyday life during the Mahsa Amini(Jina) Revolution. Shahla Entesari is one of the signatories of Statement 14, and in Iran, for signing that statement, she has been sentenced to 7 years in prison. As a result, she was forced to immigrate to Turkey illegally and continued her life in the city of Sivas.

Alireza Behbahani

### **The Blood and the Border - Rituals of the Khyrim People - Film Screening**

'The Blood and the Border- rituals of the Khyrim people' is a documentary on the rituals of the Khyrim kingdom in North East India and their encounters with Christian missionary activities in the 1800s, nation-states, and the current challenges posed by increasing authoritarianism in India. It represents the culmination of a trilogy of films by Wanphrang K Diengdoh, a Khasi filmmaker. This trilogy undertakes a comprehensive re-examination of Khasi society in North East India, Diengdoh's place of origin. Preceding "The Blood and the Border," the trilogy includes "Because We Did Not Choose" (2017), which delves into the experience of indigenous labour during World War I and their encounters with modernity, and "Where the Clouds End" (2015), an exploration of themes such as race, purity, insider-outsider politics, belonging, and the international border.

Wanphrang K Diengdoh

### **On The Roads Of Freedom – Film Screening**

"On The Roads Of Freedom" is the story of Maria, a journalist and activist, who has been threatened and arrested for her activities in line with women's rights. She is a master's student in the media and has lived in Norway as a political refugee since 2018.

Maria's search for insight into the Iranian women's movement leads her to meet two women's rights activists from earlier generations, trying to answer her questions regarding Iranian women's struggle against oppression. Asieh Amini, a journalist, poet and board member at Norwegian-PEN, is a women's rights activist who fought against the death penalty and stoning of women and minors in Iran. Golrokh Ghobadi, a writer and one of the first groups of female Komala Peshmerga, Golrokh had fought for freedom and equality in Kurdistan before the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and witnessed the struggles and developments before and after the Islamic Revolution in Kurdistan.

Thus, this 35-minute documentary offers a multi-generational perspective on the Iranian women's movement as Iran stands on the brink of a revolution led by women.

Maria and Shiva Ghalvazi

### **Young People Together – Film Screening**

Young People Together is a creative empowerment programme for people seeking sanctuary in Sheffield aged 16-30. Weekly workshops are held in a relaxed, social space for members to explore a range of creative skills in order to build confidence, make new friends, practise English and become agents of change in their lives and communities. Members collaborate with Stand and Be Counted Theatre artists, researchers from the University of Sheffield, filmmakers, migrant support and youth sector organisations to influence local and regional strategic work towards the inclusion of migrant youth, and the integration of young people in their communities. This session will acknowledge the digital productions created throughout the Young People Together project which include two documentaries about the participatory arts process; and four short films which were co-produced by the group.

The 'Young People Together' documentary shares the story of the origin of the group, from the perspective of the group members and follows their first production together. The film discusses themes of migration, friendship, isolation, prejudice while exploring the world they want for their futures and how creativity can bring people together.

Asma Kabadeh

### ***The Sparrow is free* (2021) – Film Screening**

content warning: domestic, sexual abuse

In an empty house, a young woman hears a voice. The tales it evokes lead her to recreate scenes from her grandmother's past life.

Through a window into the life of the filmmaker's grandmother, Kohandel's short interview-film explores gender roles in early 20th-century Iran. As a young girl, marriage to her older cousin leads to years of control and frustration. Rebelling against her husband, she eventually relocates to France with her sons, building a new life. As she voices her own story, the film weaves her experiences together into a broader narrative of self-determination. She carves out her independence in Paris and finds comfort in the everyday. A simple kind of happiness follows, the sparrow is free.

Niki Kohandel

### **Nummer 11 – Film Screening**

The film follows Maryam on tram 11 in Gothenburg, Sweden, revealing unsettling elements as she receives a mysterious job offer, highlighting the disparities in her life compared to others in the community.

The film has garnered acclaim, winning three awards at prestigious festivals, including Frame Film Festival and Sweden's Short Film Festival and a regional prize from Kulturringdom.

Azad Larki

### **No One Will Shed Tears for the Sovereign Figure 1 of 3 – Film Screening**

No One Will Shed Tears for the Sovereign Figure 1 of 3 revisits the former sites of Eastern Orthodox Churches. From 1918 till 1939, during the Second Polish Republic, many of such structures were destroyed or repurposed as part of the policy of 'polonisation' of the Ukrainian population under Polish rule – the forceful imposition of Polish cultural elements, especially conversion to Catholicism.

The film focuses on a single location of Prehoryłe, contemporarily located at the border with Ukraine to uncover Polish imperial policies directed at the Ukrainian minorities. Using a fictional narrative to introduce a micro perspective on those violent events, the work tries to re-visit the site and contemplate on the act of erasure, destruction and loss.

The work positions itself as part of a broader inquiry into how the historical presence of Eastern European imperialism reverberates.

Katarzyna Lukasik

### **Let's call her Adriana – Film Screening**

This film delves into the intersection of food and immigration, employment, and the aspirations of a woman working in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, NY, preparing quesadillas on the street.

Barbara Oettinger

### **Far is here – Film Screening**

In 'Far is Here,' a Haitian man shares his immigration experience to Chile while working in a bakery. His silent testimony depicts the complex situations he has encountered since leaving the city of Fort Liberty in Haiti until his arrival in Santiago, Chile.

Barbara Oettinger

### **Only Voice Remains – Sound Piece**

Only Voice Remains is an Iranian collective operating with transnational, queer and feminist values. They came together in response to the current revolution taking place in Iran and Kurdistan against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Their most recent project sets out to amplify the radical narratives of the current moment and seek collective strategies of resistance. Materials were gathered from an open call and online research, then into a 1 hour sound piece comprising of voice notes, poetry, music, readings, reflections, protest sounds and speeches. Only Voice Remains hopes to use their sonic projects as an archive as well as a starting point for workshops and collective reflections.

Collective (including Niki Kohandel)

### **Recognizing and Deconstructing the “Humanitarian Gaze” in refugee documentaries: a videographic paper**

This self-contained research would focus on the recognition of the “humanitarian gaze” phenomenon existing in refugee documentaries, in the form of a 10-15 minute video essay. As refugee documentaries are being made in response to the increasing attention on refugees in this century, studies about the power imbalance among filmmakers, participants and audiences, and attempts on empowering the refugee participants, are constantly being conducted. The “Humanitarian Gaze”, the subject of this research, is a theory developed by Tascon (2015, 34-42) that argues that pictures showing abuse, violence and poverty of the refugees are not representing the human rights of refugee participants. This theory provides a new, creative perspective to inspect refugee films, however it has yet to be applied in a wider analysis of refugee documentaries. Therefore, In my research, I plan to perform a comparative case study on contemporary influential refugee documentaries, identifying specific audio-visual elements that present or intensify the “humanitarian gaze” and do not manifest or revoke such a gaze. This research is significant because it would refine a theory that has the potential of re-balancing the power hierarchy in refugee documentaries, and thus strengthen documentaries’ function as a medium advocating refugees’ human rights.

Qinran Wang (Leo)

### **Smuggling Memories: The Politics of Remembrance in Rabah Ameur-Zaïmeche's Smugglers' Songs**

Smugglers' Songs, the fourth feature film of Algerian-born director Rabah Ameur-Zaïmeche, tells and partially reinvents the story of Louis Mandrin, a Robin Hood-esque figure who was publicly executed in 1755. In the years leading up to the French Revolution, the film follows the exploits and intrepid adventures of Mandrin's faithfuls as they fight to print and publish a booklet of poetic songs to honor the memory of their deceased leader. Starring actors of mostly North African origin, Smugglers' Songs traces a thin line between historical verisimilitude and invention, over the course of a plot that treats the act of memorializing itself as transgressive and dangerous.

This presentation will examine the political ramifications of using anachronism and invention in a work of historical fiction that situates remembrance as its narrative goal. Can former colonial subjects insert themselves in a moment of French history from which they were technically absent? How does this act of "smuggling" invented memories into the historical past alter our perception of it? How important is historical verisimilitude to the act of memorializing? This presentation will discuss these questions through close aesthetic and narrative analyses of Smugglers' Songs, in order to interrogate the concept of postcolonial memory more broadly.

Maxime Bey-Rozet

### **Title: Migrants' film practice: "embodied knowledge"?**

This talk explores migrants' film practices through the concept of "embodied knowledge", as defined by film critic Bill Nichols (2017). This form of knowledge, rooted in personal experience, challenges dehumanizing narratives often perpetuated by mainstream and institutional media. Migrant film practices offer a distinctive perspective on European migration, drawing parallels with traditions in poetry, literature, art, and rhetoric, thus enriching the discourse. Through collaboration with European professionals, documentaries such as *Les Sauteurs* (2016) and *Midnight Traveler* (2019) become platforms for migrants to express their personal and collective experiences of exile in the Mediterranean. We aim to underscore how these documentaries empower migrants, challenging stereotypes and reclaiming a singular voice that matters in the public arena. The identified "embodied knowledge", framed as a "counter-strategy" (Deleuze, 2003), not only facilitates understanding of societal processes but also embodies "subjectivation" (Foucault, 1984), representing an act of resistance. Ultimately, this examination seeks to shed light on how migrants, through their film practices, contribute to a more nuanced and humanized discourse surrounding European migration.

Anthony Blanc

### **Migrants' performative filmmaking in the decolonization of border landscapes**

Exploring the transformative potential of performative filmmaking in decolonizing the Spain-Morocco contemporary border, this project draws inspiration from the experimental film "Tout le monde aime le bord de la mer" (Españeira, 2016), set in the Spanish enclave of Ceuta in North Africa. The film portrays this migratory crossroads as a racialized limbo. The landscape has a pivotal role in shaping narratives and by embracing the performative nature of fiction aesthetics, the project seeks to challenge the dominance of white-male Western knowledge production. This contribution delves into the filmmaking process, focusing on three key aspects that can help conceptualise performative cinema as a decolonial methodology. Firstly, it explores the crisis of representation through experimental approaches to fiction and visual grammar, leading to a blurred distinction between self and other. Secondly, it examines the creation of migrants' counter-spaces that foster self-fiction. Lastly, the study highlights the deliberate choice of non-representational landscapes, disrupting conventional geographical references and normative imaginaries related to political borders. Keywords: Filmmaking, decolonialism, borders, exile, migration, Mediterranean.

Keina Españeira



### **The Disordering of Borders: Transgressions of Common Migration Narratives in Adú (by Salvador Calvo, 2020) and La jaula de oro (by Diego Quemada-Díez, 2013)**

The road movie topos is subverted and varied in the films Adú and La jaula de oro and used in order to (de-)construct migration discourses. While Adú shows a European perspective on migration in Africa, Mexican film La jaula de oro provides a perspective from within. The aesthetic dimensions of cinematic violence show how the subversion of the genre stages borders differently to challenge discourses of displacement and migration.

The analysis will focus on how each film establishes connections between structural and subjective levels, while critically questioning the staging of violence as a form of social and political action keeping in mind the films' and producers' different perspectives on migration. In this context, Michael Gott's definition of borderlines and borderspaces provides a theoretical framework to the portrayal of precarious underage characters caught between external categorization and self-empowerment. While borderlines, influenced by Western necro-politics, bring the underaged characters in a state of homo sacer contrary to Western premises, borderspaces provide room for hospitality and the performance of community, crucial for survival.

Anna-Lena Hauser

### **Me too: A documentary created collectively and anonymously by queer migrants in Lesbos Island**

Kino is a grassroots collective of video activism founded in Lesbos Island in 2018 that produces videos on various issues concerning the violence of European border policies and its consequences on the lives of illegalized migrants. Its main goal is to turn the visual perspective of migrants into a form of resistance.

In the documentary Me Too by Kino, Lesbos LGBTQI + Refugee Solidarity members talk about the difficulties of LGBTQI + migrants in Lesbos by changing roles between interviewers, interviewees, camera operators, sound technicians, translators and editors. How to visually talk about our situation without the need for someone else to come and film us? How to have a collective queer identity with pride when we have to hide your identity for security reasons? The documentary is a search for self-representation while remaining anonymous; it is the expression of the complex dynamics of queer migrants' lives on the island of Lesbos.

This presentation will analyze the collective video within the framework of theories such as video-activism, militant cinema, accented cinema, and minor cinema. It will also discuss the new dimensions introduced by video-activism in the autonomous struggle of migrants.

Nagehan Uskan

### **Returning is leaving**

Returning is Leaving addresses a critical reflection on the paradox of the invisibility of migratory violence and its hyper-mediatization stimulated by obscene provocations. Thus, using the symbolic capacity that defines art confers deterritorialized and displaced bodies a substantial charge of representation. "Returning is leaving" proposes the construction of a visual memory of individual and collective migrant transit.

This dissertation takes its title from the poem "Regresar es irse" (Returning is Leaving) by the Spanish artist María Luisa Elío (Pamplona, 1926 – Mexico City, 2009). Elío produced her artistic universe around exile and the home return. In 1962, she co-directed the film *En el balcón vacío* (On the Empty Balcony), a work considered one of the most transcendental Spanish films during the exile. Starting from this germinal concept, *Returning is leaving* portrays the rhizomatic wandering of the migrant in aimless cartography. Returning will never be to come back to the starting point, but will mutate into an *ad infinitum* leaving. The paradigms of belonging and identity become fluid and volatile. Living memories are constructed from the imprint of an individual and collective experience in a constantly unstable territory.

The moving image can represent the flow loyally to its reference. Thereby the concept turns not only into the plot but also into the medium itself. Moving image and migration explain each other by intrinsically hosting the concepts of movement, time, space and memory. The nature of this medium allows, like no other, to capture the traces of the world in time, whether these are an artificial construction or a reappropriation of reality. In order to complete this research, it is proposed to take a deep look into the filmographies of transnational and contemporary filmmakers such as Guldem Durmaz, Sameh Alaa, Valentin Noujaïm, Ismail Bahri, Basma Alshariff and Melisa Liebenthal, among others.

Valentin Via

### **Unveiling the Political Economy of Migration in Jumana Manna's "Wild Relatives" (2018): A Border Abolitionist and Decolonial Perspective**

I scrutinize the interplay of economic, industrial, and political factors influencing the creation and festival circulation of Jumana Manna's film, "Wild Relatives" (2018). This film focuses on the relocation of a seed bank from Syria to Lebanon amidst the Syrian conflict, and its subsequent withdrawal from the Global Seed Vault in Norway. Manna weaves together the experiences of refugees and farmers associated with the seed bank.

I reveal the enactment of national borders, e.g, the film's funding, its inclusion of people from migrant backgrounds, and its exhibition at the London Migration Film Festival (LMFF). Central to this exploration is an examination of Manna's aesthetic choices, their contribution to the construction of the migrant figure and their experiences around the film's political economy.

By using a border abolitionist and decolonising framework (Bradley and de Noronha [2022]; Mbembe, [2019]), I deepen our understanding of the connections between the representation of migration and the political economy of film production and exhibition, while centring the migrant subject and decentring questions of European identity and whiteness. The research draws on data (in progress) from semi-structured interviews with Jumana Manna and organisers of the London Migration Film Festival (LMFF), and the LMFF's archive.

Hera Lorandos

## **Two Lenses looking at Refugees: German Mainstream Media vs. Afghan Filmmakers**

Discourses about refugees and migrants have included varied portrayals ranging from sensationalist accounts in some documentaries to frequently impersonal and emotionally detached representations in German mainstream media. These have typically ascribed, intentionally or not, to a Eurocentric perspective wherein the 'figure of the refugee' has been understood within an orientalist framework (Anishchenkova 2018, Peterson & Keinz 2017). In contrast, documentaries and other reality-based fiction films by refugee and migrant filmmakers are especially powerful in giving voice to a refugee-centered subjectivity and positionality.

To highlight this discrepancy, I contrast narratives in print and visual German-language media with Hassan Fazili's documentary *Midnight Traveler* (2019) and Siamak Parsa's short feature film *Zahnschmerzen* (2022). These low-budget films reflect an authenticity that is opposed to sensationalism and an egalitarian approach to filmmaking that acknowledges the different people in the films. For example, *Midnight Traveler* was filmed on mobile phones in real time and gives equal voice to the adults and children. In *Zahnschmerzen*, Parsa focuses on a story of a perpetual refugee who was born and raised in Iran after his family fled Afghanistan. Now in Germany and

lacking any legal documents, his asylum application has been denied and he has been ordered back to Afghanistan, a country which he has never been to. Such personal, first-hand, and nuanced accounts have too often been lacking in mainstream German media.

Hamid Nazemi Yazdi

### **Rerooting – Film Screening**

The act of filmmaking needs to be reassembled. Foregrounding the social and open-ended process of filmmaking, the Belgium based Post (Film) Collective is trying to formulate a language that correlates to collective experience. In REROOTING a spider is weaving a home while images of nature are juxtaposed with a reflection on who has access to the pleasures of strolling through nature and who simply needs to survive its harshness to cross borders. Who does space belong to? Who gets to draw borders, producing subjects inside and outside and thereby the conditions of migration? The collective describes their work as a rehearsal of “the capacity to hold space for each other”, which includes first and foremost to accept and encourage the otherness of each perspective while holding onto the desire to make images together. The Post (Film) Collective uses the format of a Ciné-Assembly: a practice of cinema as a form of gathering and communal assembly (between the audience, the films, the filmmakers and the cinema space) which opens up collective knowledge-production, reciprocal exchange and ethics of connectedness.

Collective – Elli Vassalou

### **Title: Participatory Filmmaking in the Refugee Narrative: Interrogating Methodologies, Agency, and Sustainability**

This study explores the concept of participatory filmmaking in the context of refugee storytelling, emphasising the empowering impact of individuals actively shaping their own narratives. It scrutinises the methodologies employed in participatory filmmaking, focusing specifically on decision-making processes, narrative viewpoints, and the avoidance of victimhood stereotypes.

Two participatory filmmaking programs will be analysed as case studies to explore the benefits, challenges, and diverse approaches to this filmmaking methodology. The first case study documentary “My (Refugee) Life”, the Shadow Program, involved refugees in the filmmaking process while documenting their experiences. This program will be examined to identify the benefits and drawbacks of participatory filmmaking, particularly in the context of refugee storytelling and the relationship between

storytellers and production entities. The second case study, the short documentary "We Depend on Each Other," serves as an example of a self-funded, self-organised, and co-directed participatory filmmaking initiative. This case study will focus on the collaborative dynamics among the four refugee/migrant women who took on decision-making roles throughout the film production process. The sustainability of this self-organised approach and the decision to use a less structured framework will also be discussed.

Beyond theoretical aspects, the research delves into project management, collaboration, and the evolution of self-perceptions within the filmmaking realm. It concludes with strategies to strengthen sustainability, improve accessibility, and optimise organisational effectiveness in participatory and refugee filmmaking. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the intricate connection between agency, narrative construction, and sustainability in participatory filmmaking.

Zozanm Yasar

### **Transnational Memory in Recent Turkish German Cinema: How Do Memories Resonate Across Borders?**

Over the past 60 years, immigration from Turkey has taken on new forms, and Turkish-German cinema has similarly continued to change in content and form. In this long history, one of the defining developments of the last decade of migration cinema has been the current wave of migration that emerged due to Turkey's rapid authoritarianism, especially after the Gezi Park protests in 2013 and the subsequent coup attempt in 2016. Current migration has brought new encounters, new narratives, and, accordingly, new aesthetic forms, not only to the 60-year history of migration, but also to Turkish German cinema.

In this presentation, focusing on what is "new" in recent Turkish-German films, I will analyze Pınar Öğrenci's *Aşit/Avalanche*, and Gizem Aksu's *9/8 Fight41* within the concept of transnational memory. I will try to answer the following questions: How does recent Turkish-German cinema go beyond ethnic-based memory? With what kind of aesthetics do recent films displace the established memory? What does recent Turkish-German cinema tell us about the multidimensional and transnational dimension of memory?

Pınar Yıldız

# Bios

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## **Adkins, Kirsten**

Kirsten Adkins is an artist and filmmaker who has a professional background in documentary television. Kirsten's filmmaking and writing practice is concerned with stories of home, belonging and migration. She is currently working on a forthcoming edited anthology (Routledge 2024), and curated project space that is concerned with ways that artists and filmmakers use hybrid practices in film, poetry, song and dance to provoke questions on place, identity and belonging. Her interdisciplinary practice is informed by her work in news and factual programmes at the BBC where she worked as a producer and director. Kirsten has exhibited, presented, published, and broadcast nationally and internationally. She teaches experimental filmmaking and artists moving image at the University of Glasgow.

## **Ahmadi, Tania**

Educated in Tehran, Berkeley, and New York, Tania Ahmadi holds a B.A. degree from the University of California, Berkeley and an M.A. from Columbia University both in Film Studies. In 2019, Woodville Press published *Godfrey Cheshire's Conversations with Kiarostami*, which featured Tania's translations from Persian into English. Her other publication includes an essay called 'Tehran Has No Soul!' which was published in the essay collection *Narrating the City: Mediated Representations of Architecture, Urban Forms and Social Life*. Tania is also the head of the editorial team at Docunight, an online streaming platform that showcases Persian-language documentaries. In 2021, Tania and a colleague organised and curated the first Iranian Women's Film Festival in the USA, hosted online with the support of the Iranian American Women Foundation and Venera Films. Tania currently teaches and translates in New York City.

## **Barbara Oettinger**

Barbara Oettinger (Santiago, 1981) holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Chile and a Master of Arts from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. She is also a graduate of the Master of Fine Arts in Integrated Practices program at Pratt Institute, New York, United States, a program funded by Becas Chile / CONICYT. She has participated in various exhibitions and screenings in cultural centres, galleries, and museums in Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, the United States, India, Indonesia, Ukraine, Slovenia, Spain, France, Portugal, Korea, and Taiwan. Recently, she received a scholarship from the Chilean government (ANID) to pursue a PhD in Creative and Critical Practice at the University of Sussex in Brighton, United Kingdom.

### **Begklis, Fotis**

I was born in Greece, and I live and work in the UK. I have developed a body of creative work making independent documentaries, interactive multimedia projects, non-fiction films and personal experimental projects. In my work, I am primarily interested in cinema's ability to evoke poetry and memory and the power of film montage. I have worked with many artists, musicians and local communities and collaborated on innovative educational, historical and artistic projects. I love working and collaborating with local communities and have worked with various underrepresented groups and migrant voices.

### **Behbahani, Alireza**

Alireza Behbahani, a graduate in Cinema from Limkokwing University in Malaysia, has been actively engaged in the documentary filmmaking field for the past two decades. His notable works include *The Lost*, *Maryam's World*, and *Houses In The Wind*, garnering recognition at various festivals and platforms, including BBC Persian. Currently residing in Turkey, he is completing his latest film, *We Are Dancing*, produced for BBC Persian. His filmography consistently addresses themes of women's issues, oppression, and discrimination in both political and social realms. Behbahani's commitment to shedding light on these topics reflects in his impactful contributions to the cinematic landscape.

### **Berghahn, Daniela**

Daniela Berghahn is Professor of Film Studies at Royal Holloway, University of London. She has widely published on cultural difference and exoticism in global art cinema ([www.exotic-cinema.org](http://www.exotic-cinema.org)), post-war German cinema, the relationship between film, history and cultural memory and transnational cinema. Her extensive work on migrant and diasporic cinema in Europe was supported by a Research Fellowship ([www.farflungfamilies.net](http://www.farflungfamilies.net)) and a Research Network Grant ([www.migrantcinema.net](http://www.migrantcinema.net)) by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain. Her books include *Exotic Cinema: Encounters with Cultural Difference in Contemporary Transnational Film* (2024), *Head On* (2015), *Far-Flung Families in Film: The Diasporic Family in Contemporary European Cinema* (2013), *European Cinema in Motion: Migrant and Diasporic Film in Contemporary Europe* (2010), a special issue of *New Cinemas* on Turkish German film, *Hollywood Behind the Wall: The Cinema of East Germany* (2005) and *Unity and Diversity in the New Europe* (2000).

### **Bey-Rozet, Maxime**

Maxime Bey-Rozet is an Assistant Professor of French in the Department of European Studies and Languages at the University of California, Irvine. His book project, *Irredeemable: Trauma, History, French Extremity* discusses the ethical ramifications of seeking to 'redeem' historical trauma through representation. His research has appeared in *Écrans* and *French Screen Studies*.

### **Blanc, Anthony**

Anthony Blanc has been a PhD Candidate at the Institut de recherche sur le cinéma et l'audiovisuel (Sorbonne Nouvelle University) since 2020. He is currently working on his thesis, titled *Images and Words of Migrants in the Mediterranean. 2013 – 2020* (Images et paroles de migrants en Méditerranée. 2013 – 2020), under the supervision of Guillaume Soulez. His research delves into the discourses and images produced in the Mediterranean migratory context from 2013, with a focus on documentary film. He is a lecturer at Sorbonne Nouvelle University, where he teaches courses on the history and aesthetics of non-fiction cinema, as well as ethical considerations within the documentary and media field.

### **De Man, Alexander**

Alexander De Man is a PhD fellow of the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) conducting research in a joint fellowship at the Centre for Cinema and Media Studies (CIMS, Ghent University) and the Visual and Digital Cultures Research Center (ViDi, University of Antwerp). His research revolves around the political, industrial, and socio-cultural dynamics of diasporic film practices in the region of Flanders and specifically focuses on the role of film policy institutions in shaping them. He holds a master's degree in Communication Sciences at Ghent University, specialising in Film and Television Studies (magna cum laude).

### **Diengdoh, Wanphrang K**

I am Wanphrang K Diengdoh, a visually impaired filmmaker from the Khasi people, one of the world's last matrilineal societies. Based between India and the UK, I draw inspiration from my Khasi roots with over a decade of experience in film production as a director and writer. My films are committed to showcasing indigenous knowledge systems and navigating the intersectionality of my Indian heritage and the transnational identity of the Khasi people. The films address aspects such as identity, traditional knowledge, post-colonialism, and urbanity. As a father in the UK, my commitment deepens, fuelled by my daughter's curiosity about our Khasi identity.



### **Espiñeira, Keina**

Keina Espiñeira, PhD in Political Science, lectures in Migration Studies at the University of A Coruña. Her research explores migration and border policies through critical post-colonial perspectives and race studies. With postdoctoral roles and research at Harvard, UC Berkeley, Radboud University, King's College London, and universities in Morocco, she examines contemporary border transformations as socio-spatial processes. Her focus extends to analysing internal borders and reception policies for migrants and refugees in Europe. Her scholarly endeavours intertwine anthropological fieldwork and audio-visual methods with a sophisticated blend of research and artistic expression.

### **Fales, Ludovica**

After a degree in Philosophy between Rome and Berlin, Ludovica graduated in Documentary Direction at the UK National Film and Television School in 2011 and started working as a documentary filmmaker. Following a PhD in Audiovisual Studies between Italy and the UK, she started lecturing in documentary, experimental and interactive storytelling at University College London. Ludovica is active both as a filmmaker and researcher, exploring forms of subjectivity through participatory narratives and forms of emancipation of personal and collective spectatoriality, through the relationship with new media and expanded cinema. With an approach combining Film studies, Media studies and Postcolonial studies, she also programs documentary and experimental films for 'Festival dei Popoli'.

### **Faleschini Lerner, Giovanna**

Giovanna Faleschini Lerner is Professor of Italian at Franklin & Marshall College, where she also chairs the program in Comparative Literary Studies and contributes to Film Studies, Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies, and Africana Studies. Her most recent book is *Women and Migration in Contemporary Italian Cinema: Screening Hospitality* (Liverpool University Press Transnational Italian Cultures Series, 2022). She has published numerous articles on contemporary Italian cinema and its representation of transnational migration. She has also co-edited *Italian Motherhood on Screen* (Palgrave 2017), and served as co-editor for special issues of *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies* and *gender/sexuality/Italy*.

### **Fiuk, Ewa**

Film scholar, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw); film writer and contributor to many magazines, periodicals and books; translator and interpreter working in Polish and German; editor of *Kwartalnik Filmowy*, a leading Polish film journal. Author of the books *Inicjacje, tożsamość, pamięć. Kino niemieckie na przełomie wieków* [Initiations, Identity, Memory: German Cinema at the Turn of Centuries] (2012) and *Obrazo-światy, dźwięko-przestrzenie. Kino Toma Tykwera* [Worlds of Images, Dimensions of

Sounds: Cinematic Work of Tom Tykwer] (2016). Fields of research: German film, transculturalism, affect theory and minority narratives (with particular emphasis on migration) in the context of filmmaking.

### **Ghalvazi, Maria and Shiva**

Maria and Shiva Ghalvazi are Kurdish journalists and activists from Iran, strongly dedicated to promoting human and women's rights. Faced with challenging circumstances in their home country, they sought refuge in Norway, a country that embraced them with open arms. With a shared passion for media, they pursued higher education at Volda University College. During their studies, they specialised in filmmaking. For their master's project, they chose to focus on a powerful documentary about the women's rights movement in Iran. Their work as filmmakers and advocates continues to shed light on critical issues, using storytelling and media to positively impact the world and give a voice to those most needing it.

### **Ghobadlou, Shahrzad**

Shahrzad Ghobadlou is a PhD candidate in comparative literature, and a secondary field of film and visual studies at Arizona State University (ASU). Her research interests include 20th and 21st century French literature, theory of cinema and media. Confronting the themes of exile, non-belonging, and cultural (mis)understanding in contemporary multicultural societies, her doctoral thesis compares representations of fluid identities and code-switching in works of female émigré authors. As a French and Iranian Studies specialist, Ghobadlou seeks to develop a nuanced reading of understudied, yet ground-breaking artistic creations, which challenge stereotypes pertaining to gender, class, ethnicity, race, and religion.

### **Gholami, Solmaz**

Is an Iranian filmmaker who has been living in Germany for about seven years.

### **Hauser, Anna-Lena**

Anna-Lena Hauser completed her bachelor's degree in Spanish Literature and Media Studies & Business Administration at the University of Mannheim from 2017 to 2021, during which she studied at the University of Alicante. She completed her degree with the thesis "The representation of family structure and childhood discourse in *Las bicicletas son para el verano*

(Jaime Chávarri) and *Las largas vacaciones del 36* (Jaime Camino) as critical means of processing official discourses of the Spanish Civil War. She is currently completing her master's degree in Spanish Literature and Media Studies and Business Administration with a thesis on migration and cinema and has already been offered the possibility to pursue a doctorate within the same field of research afterwards. She has been working as a research assistant at the Chair of Romance Literature and Media Studies since 2021, regularly teaches an introductory course as a tutor and gives workshops on academic writing.

### **Ippolito, Valentina**

I'm a Senior Lecturer in Filmmaking and award-winning filmmaker with a PhD in Cinema of Migration from the University of Oxford, Pembroke College. I have an internationally recognised profile in practice as research as a documentary filmmaker and photographer focusing on the ethical and poetic representation of minorities and marginalised communities. My filmmaking work is centred around the representation of otherness: indigenous cultures in Thailand, Nepal and India; men as warriors in Basha Miao Village (China); women and babies in prison and the migrant identity. My academic publications have examined topics including the cinematic representation of the journey of migration and the emancipatory potentials of fantasy in migration cinema. My published monograph titled *The dialogical gaze: the migratory journey to Italy in contemporary Italian and Romanian cinema* investigates the way in which the character of the Romanian migrant is represented in their encounter with Italy, on their physical, temporary, or imaginary journey between memory and desire.

### **Jewiss, Virginia**

Virginia Jewiss is the Associate Director of the Alexander Grass Humanities Institute and Teaching Professor in the Humanities at Johns Hopkins University. A medievalist and literary translator, she helped launch the Margellos World Republic of Letters at Yale University Press. Her own translations include Dante's *Vita Nuova*, Luigi Pirandello's *Stories for the Years*, Roberto Saviano's *Gomorra*, and Melania Mazzucco's *Vita*. She collaborates with Italian directors, adapting their screenplays into English. Her film projects include *Me Captain* and *Tale of Tales* by Matteo Garrone and *The Young Pope, Youth*, and *This Must Be the Place* by Paolo Sorrentino.

### **Kabadeh, Asma**

Asma Kabadeh is a member of Young People Together (YPT), a creative empowerment programme for people seeking sanctuary in Sheffield aged 16-30. Weekly workshops are held in a relaxed, social space for members to explore a range of creative skills in order to build confidence, make new friends, practise English and become agents of change in their lives and communities. Members collaborate with Stand and Be Counted Theatre artists,

researchers from the University of Sheffield, filmmakers, migrant support and youth sector organisations to influence local and regional strategic work towards the inclusion of migrant youth. This interactive session will share two short films co-produced by the group 'The Ultimate Guide to Listening' and 'The Journey', will engage delegates in some of the participatory activities central to our ways of making, and will profile the learning tool emerging from our collaboration to promote four principles of participatory arts co-creation: welcome, ownership, flexibility and listening.

### **Kepsutlu, Bengisu**

Su Kepsutlu is a PhD Candidate in the Centre for World Cinemas and Digital Cultures at the University of Leeds. Her thesis explores the representation of female migration in European cinema with a particular focus on migrant women's filmmaking. Her research interests include transnational cinema, feminism, migration, and issues of identity in film. Beyond research, she is currently teaching in the School of Media and Communication, contributing to modules such as Introduction to Cinema, Visual Communication, and Feminism and Identity.

### **Kohandel, Niki**

Niki Kohandel is an artist, filmmaker and facilitator based in London. She is a resident at the Arts and Media School of Islington, as part of Cubitt gallery's Reclaim Islington programme. Working at the interplay between the analogue and the digital, she uses obsolete recording devices and her imperfect knowledge of languages to document stories and re-narrate her family's tales. She graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL. Her films have been shown in group screenings and exhibitions, at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Anthology Film Archives, ICA London and online through Another Screen. Her last shorts were included in programmes as part of the BFI London Film Festival, Open City Documentary Festival, Istanbul Documentary Days, London Short Film Festival and Aesthetica Short Film Festival amongst others.

### **Kourelou, Olga**

Olga Kourelou is a film scholar with a PhD in Film Studies from King's College London. Having held positions as Teaching Fellow at King's College London and Sussex University, she is now a Research Fellow at the University of Nicosia and an independent film curator, while also serving as an Honorary Member of the Cyprus Cinema Advisory Committee. Olga's research interests are in star studies, gender, precarity, and European cinema, with an emphasis on Greek-language film. She has contributed chapters and articles to publications including *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* (2014), *Celebrity Studies Journal* (2015) and *Journal of Greek Media and Culture* (2020).

### **Larki, Azad**

Born on April 4, 2001, in Karaj near Tehran, Azad fled Iran at 17 due to his family's anti-regime history. In 2019, seeking asylum in Sweden, he faced mental strain from the Migration Agency's decisions. Connecting with the Göthenburgo Film Association, he expressed his struggles in the debut short film "Number 11," winning accolades at prestigious events such as the Frame Film Festival, Kultur Ungdoms Film Day, and Sweden's Short Film Festival, securing three prizes. Despite three rejections and lacking a residence permit, Azad pursued education at Ljungskile Folk High School. Enrolled in the International Culture Project Leader course at Kulturverkstan, he initiates the project "The Writings on the Wall,".

### **Lorandos, Hera**

Hera Lorandos is a PhD candidate at King's College London, supervised by Belén Vidal and Chris Berry, exploring how inclusive migrant films and film cultures can drive change in wider cultural understandings of migration and migrants. In partnership with the London Migration Film Festival, the project uses the festival as a case study of what an inclusive space could look like and how that influences attitudes around migration. Her PhD builds on her multidisciplinary academic background (in English, Film Studies, Cultural Studies and Sociology) and experience with organisations that campaign for the refugee rights (e.g. Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network).

### **Lukasik, Katarzyna**

My practice looks at the relationship between imperialism and periphery. Through drawing, film and writing, I examine conflicting political imaginaries as both means of erasure and potential. My research investigates the economic and cultural subjugation of Eastern Europe, treated as the testing ground for the realisation of Western and Eastern imperial fantasies, tracing histories of imperial formations, capitalism and neoliberalism. Through fictional narratives I seek to retrieve the political possibility of worldly cocitizenship and the commons, re-writing the periphery as a site of resistance and potential. I often collaborate jointly on publications with other practitioners, researchers and musicians which reflects how I think of my practice in an extended sense, stemming from my conviction in the importance of collaborative approaches to art making. Together with friends, I co-curate Mascara Film Club, which creates a space for screening artists' works outside of institutional organisations, in a more convivial setting, fostering a self-organised infrastructure for moving image practitioners.

### **Manoussaki-Adamopoulou, Ioanna**

Ioanna Manoussaki-Adamopoulou is a PhD researcher in Anthropology, looking at refugee rights, self-organised care, and communal integration in Athens. She holds an MA in Visual Anthropology from Goldsmiths and has worked globally in vulnerable community settings, exploring the effects of forced migration, gender inequality and political violence through collaborative visual production. She has screened work at the Tate, the Southbank Centre, UNESCO's Museums and Cultural Section European Conference, as well as in festivals and conferences across Europe, India and Turkey. She is a project lead of PAPER: Power and Politics in/of Ethnographic Research, a decolonising pedagogical project based at UCL Anthropology and a research assistant on a multi-disciplinary project documenting the impact of the 'hotspot' refugee management approach on the Aegean islands, at UCL's Development Planning Unit.

### **Nazemi Yazdi, Hamid**

Hamid Nazemi Yazdi earned his Bachelor of Arts in German Studies at the Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon in the US and more recently his Master of Arts at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst where he is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of German and Scandinavian Studies. The topic of his dissertation includes an exploration of the relationships between integration, empathy, and belonging with emphasis on three iterations of German film: The New German Cinema, Berlin Films, and migrant and Turkish German films.

### **Pakparvar, Amin**

Amin Pakparvar is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Visual and Critical Studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. With a Bachelors of Art in Cinema from Tehran University of Art, Pakparvar also practices filmmaking. His first short documentary, *Death and the Dragon* (2020), won the best research prize at the 38th Tehran Short Film Festival. His new documentary, *Height of the Kite* (2023), is a visual sonic ethnography concerning the ban on women's singing in Iran, and is scheduled for screening in 2024. Pakparvar also writes critical essays for Fidan Short Film Magazine in Tehran and F News Student Magazine in Chicago.

### **Pavlos, Valsamidis**

Dr Pavlos Valsamidis is primary education teacher and film director. He holds master's degree in Children's Literature, from the Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education, Athens University (2006) and in Cultural Management from the Department of Communication, Media and Culture, Panteion University (2015). His Ph.D in Film Studies (2023, Department of Communication, Media and Culture, Panteion University), focuses on children's cinema and refugee representation.

### **Phillis, Philip E.**

Philip E. Phillis holds a PhD in Film Studies from the University of Glasgow. He is the author of *Greek Cinema and Migration (1991-2016)* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020) and has also published extensively on European cinema and migrant representation, Greek film culture and transnationalism in several peer reviewed journals. He has taught Film and Media Studies at The University of Glasgow and Glasgow Caledonian University and currently teaches Film and Media Studies at Sciences Po Collège in the city of Le Havre.

### **Ružić, Boris**

Boris Ružić, PhD, is an assistant professor at the Department of Cultural Studies, University of Rijeka, Croatia. He teaches four courses engaged with film studies and visual culture. His interests lie at the intersection of politics of emancipation, (amateur) moving image, migrations, and digital technologies. Publishes scientific articles in books and journals. Co-authored a book regarding film and media analysis. Coordinates three international projects in the domains of humanities, film and visual culture, and memory studies.

### **Shannon, Roger**

Exec Producer and Film Professor, Roger Shannon is a film industry professional and a published academic of over 40 years standing. Shannon has headed up film production funds at both regional and national level, including at the British Film Institute, the UK Film Council, Scottish Screen, and the Moving Image Development Agency in Liverpool. His academic roles include Visiting Professor of International Film Business at Glasgow Caledonian University, International Film Professor at the Cuban Film School, and Professor of Film and Television at Lancashire's Edge Hill University, where as Director he established the Research Institute for Creative Enterprise. He is currently a Visiting Professor at Birmingham City University, Visiting Exec Producer at the Screen and Film University in Birmingham and Associate Director of the Institute for Creative Enterprise.

### **Trandafoiu, Ruxandra**

Ruxandra Trandafoiu is Professor of Media and Communications at Edge Hill University, UK. She researches the role of social media in the political engagement and activism of Eastern European diasporas, the impact of music festivals and music policy on place identity in Eastern Europe and transmedia practices seen as practices of migration. She is the author of *Diaspora Online: Identity Politics and Romanian Migrants* (Berghahn) and *The Politics of Migration and Diaspora in Eastern Europe: Media, Public Discourse and Policy* (Routledge), as well as several edited collections and numerous articles exploring the relationship between media and

migration. Her next edited collection is entitled *Migration, Dislocation and Movement on Screen*, published by Berghahn in 2024.

### **Trifonova, Temenuga**

Temenuga Trifonova is Associate Professor of Creative Arts and Humanities at University College London. She is the author of the monographs *The Figure of the Migrant in Contemporary European Cinema* (2020), *Warped Minds: Cinema and Psychopathology* (2014), and *The Image in French Philosophy* (2007), and editor/contributor of the volumes *Screening the Art World* (forthcoming in 2021), *Contemporary Visual Culture and the Sublime* (2017), and *European Film Theory* (2008).

### **Tuan, Lydia**

Lydia Tuan is a PhD candidate in Film and Media Studies and Italian at Yale University, completing a thesis entitled, *Elemental Resistance in Contemporary European Cinema*. Her thesis offers a resistant reading of cinematic representation of natural elements on screen by linking them to geopolitical issues encountered in contemporary Europe and Italy, such as migration, depopulation, and environmental disasters.

### **Uskan, Nagehan**

Nagehan Uskan lives and works on Lesbos Island. She is board member at Off University (University without Borders) and teaching Filmmaking in Exile at the Department of Gender and Media Studies for the South Asian Region at IAAW-Humboldt University of Berlin. Since October 2022 she is a post-doctoral visiting fellow *Beyond Social Cohesion: Global Repertoires of Living Together* (RePLITO) project, supported by Berlin University Alliance. She is a co-writer of the *Multilingual Dictionary: Living Together in a Refugee Camp* and *I Escaped to my Future*. She is co-founder and member of Kino, a grassroots migrant video collective based in Lesbos, which has produced different videos such as *Natives of the New World*, *Khalas (Silence)*, *What is a Pushback?* and the awarded *Me Too*. She also works as film programmer and as documentary filmmaker.

### **Vassalou, Elli**

Ellie Vassalou is part of The Post Collective (2018), an autonomous platform for commoning, co-creation, co-learning and cultural activism created by Marcus Bergner, Sawsan Maher, Mirra Markhaeva, and Elli Vassalou, artists with different access to artistic production due to their legal status (refugees, asylum seekers, sans-papiers, accomplices). Generative modes of kinship, solidarity, dialogue and storytelling form the basis of their speculative and



experiential approaches to art + design, creating a space where they do not struggle to be assimilated but instead rethink and re-conceptualize critically a future together as community. Since 2020, in collaboration with Robin Vanbesien, The Post (Film) Collective elaborates on the work and experiences of The Post Collective in the realm of cinema. <https://www.thepostcollective.be/>

### **Via, Valentin**

Valentin Via (Barcelona, 1993) is an independent curator and researcher on documentary and experimental films around eco-cinema theories. He is currently a early career researcher in PhD anthropology and documentary at Rovira i Virgili University and one of his latest projects has been the artistic direction and curatorship of the Casa de Lava 2020, countryside meetings on non-fiction cinema. In addition to practicing written criticism and academic research he has published articles in spanish and international cinema journals such as *Tecmerin*, *Proyecto Galaxia*, *Cine Transit*, *In media Res* or *Comparat/ive Cinema*, has also contributed his experience as a communicator, researcher and programmer to the Tabakalera cultural center, the Tarragona REC Festival, the Loop Festival/Loop Fair or the Mostra de Films de Dones of Barcelona.

### **Wang (Leo), Qinran**

My name is Qinran Wang (Leo), and I am from China. I completed my master's degree in Film and TV at the University of Birmingham in 2021. Currently, I am a first-year Ph.D. student at the same university, focusing on film and creative writing. As a migrant from an autocratic state, I have personally experienced government threats. This has given me strong empathy for the refugees I collaborate with here. I am passionate about making and studying documentaries, and I aspire to be a voice for them through film.

### **Yasar, Zozan**

Zozan Yasar, is an exiled kurdish journalist/filmmaker based in the UK. She produced the documentary *My (Refugee) Life* and co-directed *We Depend on Each Other*. Her insightful contributions have graced prominent media outlets in the UK and the US, including *The Guardian*, *BBC*, *Vice News*, and *Humanitarian Practice*. With a background at *The New Humanitarian* and *Internews*, she boasts a wealth of experience. A graduate of the University of Oxford's Refugee and Forced Migration pathway course, Zozan has conducted significant projects focusing on refugees in Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. Notably, she documented Little Amal's journey in the UK, shedding light on the plight of refugees.

### **Yıldız, Pınar**

She completed her doctoral dissertation named *Images of Remembering and Forgetting* at the Institute of Social Sciences at Ankara University in 2016. Her doctoral dissertation was published as a book named *On the Trace of Lost Memory: Confronting with Past, Mourning and Denial in Cinema* in 2021. In 2019, she completed her post-doc titled *Gendered Memories: How Migrant Women Narrate Their Migrant Experiences* at Kadir Has University Gender and Women Studies Center. Between 2020 Jan-June, she worked as a visiting researcher with her work *Mourning and Melancholia: How Emotions Construct Collective Memory* at the French Anatolian Research Institute. In 2022, as an Academy in Exile scholar, she completed her post-doctoral research project named *Gendered Memories and Emotions in Migrant Cinema* at Berlin Freie University. Since February 2023, she has been at Berlin Freie University with her post-doctoral research named *Political Aesthetic of Recent Turkish German Cinema*.

### **Zapasnik, Kamil**

I completed my PhD in Film Studies at the Department of European Cultures and Languages at Birkbeck, University of London in 2014. After completing my PhD, I moved to Berlin where I worked in the media industry. In 2022, I relocated to New York City and returned to academia full-time. I am currently working on turning my PhD into a book, which is under contract with Peter Lang Ltd, and which will come out at the beginning of 2024. I teach part-time in the Film Department at Drew University in New Jersey.