

# Intermediality in Contemporary Central and East European Cinema

WORKSHOP \* May 30-31, 2016 \* Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca



May 30 (Monday) – Contact Zones between Cultures, Bodies and Media	
10.00-10.10	Welcome, morning coffee
10.10-13.00	Christina Stojanova (University of Regina): <i>Methodology and Identity: A Personal Journey into the Cinemas of Central and Eastern Europe</i>
	Ewa Mazierska (University of Central Lancashire): <i>Borowczyk as Pornographer</i>
	Roundtable Discussion: <i>Directions in the Study of Contemporary Central and East European Cinema</i>
13.00-14.00	Lunch break
14.00-14.30	Katalin Sándor (Sapientia University, Babeş–Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, Romania): <i>Border Crossings and Contact Zones in Contemporary Romanian and Hungarian Films</i>
14.30-15.00	Mónika Dánél (ELTE, Budapest): <i>Atmosphere, Contact Zones, Intermediality (Ádám Bodor – Gábor Ferenczi: The Possibilities of Making Friends, 2007)</i>
15.00-15.30	Judit Pieldner (Sapientia University, Miercurea-Ciuc): <i>Cultural Memory, Intermediality and Transculturality in Radu Jude’s Aferim!</i>
15.30-16.30	Discussion + tea/coffee break
16.30-17.00	Balázs Varga (ELTE, Budapest): <i>Theatricality, Performativity and Intermediality in Szabolcs Hajdu’s Films</i>
17.00-17.30	Andrea Virginás (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca): <i>“Technological Spectacles” through Inter- and Transmediation: Communist Science-Fiction and Postcommunist Musical Films</i>
17.30-18.00	Bence Kránicz (independent researcher, Budapest): <i>Superhero Myths and Graphic Storytelling in Contemporary Eastern European Cinema</i>
18.00-18.30	Discussion + short break
18.30-20.00	Welcome Reception
May 31 (Tuesday) – Intermediality in the Post-Media Age	
10.00-10.15	Morning coffee
10.15-11.15	Ágnes Pethó (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca): <i>Post-Media Figurations of Intermediality and the Affects of the Picturesque</i>
11.30-12.00	Discussion + short break
12.00-12.30	Fátima Chinita (Lisbon Polytechnic Institute): <i>A Metaleptic and Immersive Voyage through Media and Time in Alexander Sokurov’s The Russian Ark (2002)</i>
12.30-13.00	Hajnal Király (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania and ELTE Budapest): <i>Sonorous Envelopes and Unlikely Cultural/Media Connections in Liza, the Fox-Fairy</i>
13.00-14.30	Discussion + lunch break
14.30-15.00	Melinda Blos-Jáni (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca): <i>Cinema in Disguise. Staging Video/TV Dispositifs and Masculinities in Crisis in Recent Romanian Films</i>
15.00-15.30	Doru Pop (Faculty of Theatre and Television, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca): <i>The Visceral Sign in Corneliu Porumboiu’s Cinema</i>
15.30-16.00	Zsolt Gyenge (Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest, Hungary): <i>This is Not Magritte: Corneliu Porumboiu’s Theory of Representation</i>
16.00-17.00	Discussion + tea/coffee break

17.00-17.30	Mareike Sera (Humboldt University Berlin): "Mixed" Symbolic Textures in the Work of Jan Švankmajer
17.30-18.00	Szűcs Teri (independent researcher, Budapest): <i>Video Art, Moving Image and Holocaust Remembrance</i>
18.00-18.30	Discussion + Conclusions
18.30-19.00	<p><b>Book Launches / Könyvbemutatók (in Hungarian)</b></p> <p>Pieldner Judit: <i>Szöveg, kép, mozgókép kapcsolatai Bódy Gábor és Jeles András filmművészetében (Relations among Text, Image and Motion Picture in Gábor Bódy's and András Jeles's Cinematic Art)</i>, Egyetemi Műhely, 2015. Presented by/Bemutatója: Dánél Mónika (ELTE, Budapest).</p> <p>Blos-Jáni Melinda: <i>A családi filmezés genealógiája. Amatőr médiagyakorlatok története Erdélyben - a fotózástól az új mozgóképfajtáig (The Genealogy of Home Movies. Transylvanian Amateur Media Practices from Photography to New Media)</i>, EME, 2015. Presented by/Bemutatója: Keszeg Anna (University of Debrecen).</p>
19.30-21.00	Farewell Dinner

The workshop brings together researchers working on topics related to questions of intermediality in contemporary Central and East European Cinema and is organized as a collaboration between the research project of the Film, Photography and Media Department at the Sapientia University in Cluj-Napoca (*Re-Mediated Images as Figurations of Intermediality and Post-Mediality in Central and East European Cinema*, CNCS-UEFISCDI-PCE IDEI, PN-II-ID-PCE-2012-4-0573) and the international research project of the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest (*Space-ing Otherness. Cultural Images of Space, Contact Zones in Contemporary Hungarian and Romanian Cinema and Literature*, financed by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund/OTKA, project nr. 112700).

## ABSTRACTS

**Blos-Jáni Melinda** (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca):

***Cinema in Disguise. Staging Video/TV Dispositifs and Masculinities in Crisis in Recent Romanian Films***

By celebrating the realism and minimalism of the Romanian films from the 2000's as a unified trend, the Romanian films showcasing reflexive plays have received less critical attention until the closure of the so called "new wave". Yet, ever since the beginning of 2000's such films were made that challenge the classical cinematic format and forms and situate the viewer in non-cinematic assemblies, like television and amateur video. In films like Titus Muntean *Exam* (2003), Gabriel Achim's *Adalbert's Dream* (2011), *Bric-Brac* (2008), Radu Jude's *Film for Friends* (2011), Adrian Tofei's *Be My Cat* (2015) or Cristian Porumboiu's *Second Game* (2014) cinema is performed as non-cinema (W. Brown), thus the viewer is invited into the non-discursive aspects behind the ongoing story, as it has to imagine not just the apparatus, but the identity of the medium, and a socio-spatial context as well. In this presentation I propose to look into the ways these dispositifs operate within the films: what kind of medium identities do they represent? What types of characters are attached to such dispositifs? What is the purpose in using these forms for these narratives? My hypothesis is that these remediations are connected to masculinities in crisis, or in the process of being redefined. Following the thoughts of Thomas Elsaesser on the media culture of trauma, it can be argued that these restaged dispositifs perform multiple tasks: on the level of the narrative they allow these masculine subjects to construct or to manifest themselves through visual media; on the level of narration they function as immersive tools, they facilitate spectatorial engagement, they might turn collective historical events into individual stories (might bring to the fore repressed stories). And, as trauma can lead to a revision of theories of referentiality, these dispositifs prompt us to rethink the relation between cinema, film, reality and history.

**Chinita, Fátima** (Lisbon Polytechnic Institute, Theatre and Film School):

***A Metaleptic and Immersive Voyage through Media and Time in Alexander Sokurov's The Russian Ark (2002)***

The British filmmaker Peter Greenaway contends that there is no history, only historians; Alexander Sokurov, in his film *The Russian Ark* seems to agree. By endorsing a guided tour of the Hermitage museum, in Saint Petersburg, where the artistic assets are viewed as part of a diegetic world of multi-temporal re-enactments, three interconnected issues arise: (a) the nature of film characters throughout several media; (b) tableaux vivant as animated wax figures; (c) spectatorial immersion in the art work. All of them are bound by *metalepsis*, which allows for the coexistence of creatures from different ontological strata. Not only can Russian historical figures from different periods inhabit a same overall space – the museum – but they can also relate to three different types of spectators: the intra-diegetic Italian diplomat who acts

as an unofficial guide; the invisible Russian intruder who might be perceived an alter-ego of the film director (ergo a narrator of sorts); and the film viewer himself/herself, hypothetically a citizen of the world as many of the museum's visitors themselves are. This interrelation takes place in a real gallery space, thus making the animated historical figures as much part of the exhibition as all the other art works. This type of animation is enticing since, by following the actors as they walk about the halls, rooms and corridors, as is the use in several current immersive theatre practices, the film viewers collaborate in the art work itself, exploring it from within. This ultimate *metalepsis* that conjoins the intradiegetical with the extradiegetical is what accounts for the complete inter-artistic nature of the film where all the arts and respective media come together in the visit to a place that is an artistic site par excellence, digitally recorded in a film for all ages.

**Dánél Mónika** (ELTE, Budapest): ***Atmosphere, Contact Zones, Intermediality (Ádám Bodor – Gábor Ferenczi: The Possibilities of Making Friends, 2007)***

In my presentation I examine the category of atmosphere, which reflects the correlations of nature, culture and mediality, from a theoretical vantage point. Within this wide theoretical framework, I connect the term to geoculturality, on the grounds that it may become the principle of understanding intercultural contact zones. Further on, I wish to nuance the theoretical aspects and to propose them for debate through the analysis of an example. Gábor Ferenczi's film adaptation based on short stories by Ádám Bodor, is capable of transposing into the filmic medium the atmosphere of the universe of the texts representing Eastern European magic realism as well as the operating mechanism of dictatorship. The atmosphere as the aura of space (Gernot Böhme, 1995) can become perceivable in a culturally coded way (Gertrud Lehnert, 2011); the adaptation of atmosphere creates a specific intermedial self-reflexive "space" in-between film and literature. In my presentation I will survey the medial traces and geopoetical particularities of creating atmosphere through the (general) codes of film language as well as through Romanian and Hungarian (inter)cultural, interpersonal, historical, sociological and geographical specificities. I propose to examine the figurations of public and private space; of the mountain as natural landscape and as Romanian "*mioritic*" space (Lucian Blaga, 1936) hosting narratives; of non-places (Marc Augé, 2012) as places of intimacy in a dictatorial regime. I also reflect on the way in which Ferenczi's film becomes a zone of encounter of the "international" and "regional" (Eastern European?) gazes.

**Gyenge Zsolt** (Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (Budapest, Hungary):  
***This is not Magritte Corneliu Porumboiu's Theory of Representation***

Maria Ionita in her paper on Corneliu Porumboiu compares the director's work to Magritte, arguing that both reflect on a "fundamental incompatibility of the visual and the linguistic". Continuing this train of thought the paper will thoroughly analyze the theoretical implications of his "visual philosophy", and will try to interpret Porumboiu's cinematic quest from this point of view. We will try to understand how the representational possibilities of different communication systems are dealt with in his cinema, how sign, image and symbol are defined by the characters and by the films themselves, how re-enactment, rehearsal and repetition are used as tools of analysis of reality, and how the power relations over the system of signification affect the medium's capacity of representation. Finally, we will discuss Porumboiu's understanding of the issue in the context of several theories of visual and verbal representation developed by Foucault, Barthes, Mitchell, Goodman and Gadamer. An important goal of the paper is to leave behind the usual discourse on realism, neorealism and a non-defined though often mentioned minimalism that has almost completely dominated the critical reception of the new Romanian cinema. Instead we will try to prove that a focus on the mediality of perception, communication and representation can provide a more sophisticated interpretation of at least Porumboiu's cinema.

**Király Hajnal** (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania and ELTE Budapest):  
***Sonorous Envelopes and Unlikely Cultural/Media Connections in Liza, the Fox-Fairy***

At its release in 2015, the film of Károly Ujj Mészáros won its audience with its refreshing "bubble effect:" apparently disconnected from all direct or implied references to a communist past or its aftermath, this compilation of various film genres, enriched with visual and sonorous (pop-musical) connections to Far Eastern (Japanese) and Nordic (Finnish) cultures offered a playful alternative to the narratives of disenchantment and escapism pervasive in contemporary Hungarian cinema. The film tells the story of Liza, a candid "femme fatale" against her will, who, through an imagined relationship with a Japanese pop-star finds herself as a protagonist of the Japanese legend of Fox Fairies about a curse falling upon all men in love with them. Focusing on the film's visual and sonorous (pop-musical) connections to distant cultures, I will argue that Liza's paradoxical nostalgia (instead of longing for a home, *nostos*, she is yearning for an *elsewhere*) is symptomatic of an individual isolation and melancholia. The use of non-Hungarian musical scores creating a fantasy-world attracts the psychoanalytical trope of "sonorous envelope," a replica of the sonorous womb or "a murmuring house." As David Schwarz argues, music conceived as sonorous envelope is a fantasy thing connected with oceanic pleasure (the dissolution of boundaries separating the body from the external world) that can "remind" us of

something we can only imagine and can function as a space "where thresholds are crossed and enunciated." I contend that by isolating the protagonist from the narrative (her own life), the imagined musical moments as sonorous envelopes function as figurations of both an infantile bliss and an entrapment, connecting this film to a wider range of contemporary Hungarian films thematizing social disintegration and melancholic helplessness. Moreover, Liza being rescued by a man living in his own sonorous envelope of Finnish pop ballads attracts the trope of "acoustic mirror," used by Schwarz to describe musical aspects like echo, question-answer, inversion, imitation, variation and repetition. This results in an intermedially orchestrated intercultural dialogue involving book, film, animation and pop music, an imaginary journey both in time and space, from Japanese etchings and pop music to Aki Kaurismäki's films.

**Kránicz Bence** (independent researcher, Budapest):

#### **Superhero Myths and Graphic Storytelling in Contemporary Eastern European Cinema**

The paper examines how certain contemporary Eastern European genre films use superhero myths rooted in American comic books (e. g. Batman, Spider-Man), and apply specific techniques and methods of graphic storytelling. Besides the visual connections between the two media, film and comics, the paper also addresses the subject of intermediality and adaptation through the representation of the protagonist, and deals with questions concerning postcolonial and postsocialist interpretations of superhero adaptations outside of the United States. How can non-American superhero movies be used as cinematic representations of national identity, and how can „nationalized” superheroes be used as tools of criticism of the West? What kind of possibilities do contemporary Eastern European genre films have in the international market, and how do they reflect the particular position of national genre films in a market dominated by Hollywood movies? The paper addresses the questions of connections and continuity between national mass culture, folklore and contemporary national genre films, and briefly examines other ways of intermediality in national genre movies (film and literature, film and video games), dealing with film in an artistic oeuvre or the larger context of big-budget national genre movies produced for both local and international markets. The interpretations focus primarily on *Black Lightning* (Dmitry Kiselev – Aleksandr Voitinsky, Russia, 2009) and *Shaman Vs. Ikarus* (György Pálfi, Hungary, 2002), but also hint at other non-American superhero movies (e.g. *Gagamboy*, *Krrish*), Russian genre films (*Night Watch*, *Hardcore Henry*) and Hungarian art films (*Taxidermia*) as well.

**Mazierska, Ewa** (University of Central Lancashire):

#### ***Borowczyk as Pornographer***

I will discuss Walerian Borowczyk's representation of sex and the erotic body, regarded as his central cinematic interest. I will argue that by deciding to be a pornographer (or a creator of erotic art), the director chose a career path which placed him in conflict with the two dominant ideologies in Poland: Catholicism and state socialism; hence he treated both of them in contempt. That said, something blocks the erotic pleasure of the viewers of Borowczyk's films; the sexual acts take place behind the curtains or other objects blocking our access to vision, such as pieces of furniture. Such a depiction points to the fact that sexual acts constitute a taboo in the times and places presented by the director and, most importantly, they are forbidden in the sites of religious contemplation. Borowczyk breaks this taboo, but only partially, by making his characters engage in sex in churches and convents, but in a coy way. Another specificity of his films is engaging in a discourse about the relationship between body and mind. In Borowczyk's films we observe a reversal of sorts between the spiritual and the corporeal – the spirit is thrown from the pedestal, the body is upgraded. Those who preach about the superiority of mind over body, such as priests and nuns, prove sinful. Those who indulge in corporal pleasures, remain innocent. Such innocence is also attributed to animals and humans with bestial tendencies. Ultimately, however, Borowczyk suggests that the unity of the body and mind cannot be achieved or that it only happens when they are on the verge of perishing, in the moment of death. Death in his films is thus presented not as a tragic incident, but as a salvation.

**Pethő Ágnes** (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca):

#### **Post-Media Figurations of Intermediality and the Affects of the Picturesque**

In this presentation I will try to add new arguments to my interpretation of the cinematic *tableau* as an intermedial image characteristic for the globalized post-media age. What I am looking for are cases in which there is an impression of media fusion prominent in powerfully effective, quasi autonomous images, yet this condensed form unravels into a series of sensations, affects and associations perceptible in a tensional field of "in-betweenness" (between reality and artificiality, flatness and plasticity, abstraction and raw corporeality, the painterly images of arthouse cinema and the "gaudy" picturesque prevalent in popular culture, and so on). Moreover, the examples that I comparatively analyse have been gleaned from contemporary films situated in the in-betweenness of the "periphery" of world cinema (in Eastern Europe and beyond) and the "centre" of a relative visibility within the international festival circuit and arthouse cinema. I will focus on instances in which the *tableau* style performs a movement from particular to universal through an emphasis on pictorial stylisation, and is subordinated to the framework of eschatological narratives that ultimately wrap

up its manifold plays of “in-betweenness” in the overarching theme of human existence, life and death. I will begin with a Hungarian short film that is symptomatic for the process of creating such highly saturated images of emblem-like density, and expand the metaphor for post-mediality proposed by Patricia Pisters in her idea of post-cinematic “metallurgy.” Then (through transnational productions of Russian, Mauritanian and Estonian directors), I will proceed to present two directions in which the *tableau* construction is modulated a) towards a pronounced *photo-pictorial aestheticism* (employing the affective mechanisms of the *photo-filmic tableau*) and b) towards the *photo-sculptural corporealization of the image* (that brings together sculpture, photography and digital cinema).

**Pieldner Judit** (Sapientia University, Miercurea Ciuc):

***Cultural Memory, Intermediality and Transculturality in Radu Jude’s Aferim!***

A historical drama that can be interpreted at the juncture of theoretical discourses (heritage film, auteur film), genres (historical film, western, road movie) and representational modes (connecting to, but subverting the master narrative of Romanian historical film), Radu Jude’s *Aferim!* (2015) has attracted the attention of the international public by the unique response that it gives to the tradition of representation of the (Romanian) historical past. Its unmatched character even within New Romanian Cinema can be assigned to the fact that it does not focus on tensions of the post-communist condition or their antecedents in the recent communist past; instead, it goes back in history to a much earlier period, to the Romanian *ancien régime*, after the Ottoman occupation and before the abolition of the Gypsy slaves, only to point at the historical roots of current social problems. Through its ingenuous (inter)medial solutions (black-and-white film, with an implied media-archaeological purport; period *mise en scène* but with an assumed artificiality and constructedness; a simple linear plot infused with a dense dialogue in archaic Romanian, drawn from a multitude of literary and historical sources; a sweeping panorama of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Walachian society presented in a succession of tableau compositions), Radu Jude’s ironical-critical collage defetishizes the traditional historical iconography and debunks the mythical national imaginary, unveiling the traumatic history of an ethnic and racial mix. The paper proposes to discuss the thematic and formal options of Radu Jude’s film in an East Central European transnational context, in comparison with a product of New Polish Cinema, Joana Kos-Krauze and Krzysztof Krauze’s *Papusza* (2013), a biopic of the Polish-Romani poetess Bronisława Wajs, rendered in black and white photographic-painterly tableaux, centred on the issue of cultural memory and the conflict of individual vs collective identity in the context of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century history of the Polish Romani community.

**Pop, Doru** Faculty of Theatre and Television, Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj

***The Visceral Sign in Corneliu Porumboiu’s Cinema***

This proposal is designed as an analysis of the de-cinematization that takes place in recent Romanian cinema. The hypothesis of is that some of the Romanian filmmakers who were extremely successful in international festivals are now looking for newer ways of expression. The second premise is that these filmmakers are moving towards a type of realism that is beyond the new wave or neorealist tradition and are entering into what can be called a non-cinematic cinema. This current discussion will be centered around the most recent three films of Corneliu Porumboiu: *Când se lasă seara peste București sau Metabolism* (2013), *Al doilea joc* (2014) and *Comoara* (2015). As it is explicit in *Al doilea joc* we are witnessing a purposeful de-dramatization, which is part of a major process of emptying the cinematic. This apparent emptiness becomes an important element if we interpret it as a search for an enigmatic sensation, for the palpable and the sensorial. As Roland Barthes used the term (1957), we can see how Porumboiu searches for “visceral signs”, for a hidden dimension of the signification. Here the use of visceral as the concept is not synonymous with the “carnal cinema” proposed by Bordwell. It is rather a term that supersedes the sensorial and the emotional (inherent to the cinematic) as a search for the invisible nature of representations in cinema.

**Sándor Katalin** (Sapientia University, Babeş-Bolyai University (Cluj-Napoca, Romania):

***Border Crossings and Contact Zones in Contemporary Romanian and Hungarian Films***

In recent “border studies” that respond to the challenge of new global mobilities, borders are conceptualized not only in terms of physical place or as discursive-political “products” that territorialize space, but also as processes, as “waypoints and conduits” in the flow of peoples, ideas, goods or capital, and as “spaces of struggle between inclusion and exclusion wherever such struggles are found” (Wilson–Donnan). The films I discuss – Bálint Kenyeres’s *Before Dawn* (2005), Szabolcs Hajdu’s *Bibliothèque Pascal* (2010), Marian Crişan’s *Morgen* (2010), Răzvan Rădulescu’s and Melissa de Raaf’s *Felicia, înainte de toate* (First of All, Felicia, 2010) and Cristian Mungiu’s *După dealuri* (Beyond the Hills, 2012) – bring up the question of (territorial, cultural) borders in a reflexive-critical way, and thematize the very act of (legal, illegal, possible or impossible) border crossing, focusing on small-scale social interactions affected by broader socio-economic processes (migration, human trafficking, etc.). At the same time, the films expose the more blurred, porous aspect of cultural, linguistic and institutional contact zones, as well as instances of spatial and identity practices that may question the mechanism of border-formation and the territorial, hegemonic understanding of space. The

experience of border crossing and cultural in-betweenness is at times articulated in a filmic discourse that also performs “in-betweenness” through intermedial figurations (e. g. panoramic long shots, tableau compositions). Moreover, *Bibliothèque Pascal* and *Morgen*, as co-produced films (British–German–Hungarian and French–Hungarian–Romanian, respectively) also perform institutional and transcultural connectivity through the cast, the actors and the production process. Thus, besides discussing the way these films conceptualize the act of border crossing itself, the presentation will focus on the socio-cultural, linguistic, representational and (inter)medial displacements this act can be connected to.

**Sera, Mareike** (Humboldt University Berlin):

***“Mixed” Symbolic Textures in the Work of Jan Švankmajer***

The films by Czech animator Jan Švankmajer are remarkable for their innate ability to “mix” ideas, textures, materials, symbols and media: textures like stone, clay, fabric, etc., materials like the short stories of Edgar Allan Poe, the nonsense literature by Lewis Carroll, the music by J. S. Bach, etc., objects like pots, toys, stuffed animals, etc., media like puppets, painting, music, etc., concepts like irrational-concrete, mannerist-surreal, sado-masochism, etc. and symbolic sub-text(ure)s like passion, guilt, desire, etc. intermingle restlessly and relentlessly with each other in his films. The idea of “mixed” textures is most central to understanding Švankmajer’s work. However, what is to “understand” here? Do the “mixed” textures relate to shared ambitions, knowledges, memories, and passions? Shared experiences of whom and what? And how do they relate in this dramatized dynamism to intersubjective and interobjective grounds and aims? As Deleuze asserts: It is not certain that the question “what is this?” is a good question for discovering the essence or the Idea. It may be that questions such as who? how much? how? where? when? are better – as much for discovering the essence as for determining something more important about the Idea. In Švankmajer’s films, the idea of the “mixed” and “hybrid” (Bakhtin) presses through as a shared but vague idea – fragile, visible and invisible, like shadows and ghosts. Yet, the “vagueness” and “weakness” does not only “exhaust” the idea. Actually, quite the contrary is the case. The weaker the figure and thought, the more exhausted and used in a symbolically, ritually “shared” manner, the more it seems possible to enrich and deepen the figures and thoughts in terms of sense(ual)ised subtexts. I focus on this paradox in my research: how “understanding” in surrealist works like Švankmajer’s is intendedly and unintendedly marked by subtlety, confusion and aberration *and* by dedication, effort and rigor. Key to this approach is drawing out methodological as much as performative dynamics (extensions and particularities), how they move erratically and restlessly between dramatizing and dealing with the tensions involved in “understanding” and “arriving at” hybridity and fragility, how the relation between exhaustion and productivity might be explored in relation to the writing of Antonin Artaud, Paul Ricoeur, Gilles Deleuze and Charles Sanders Peirce.

**Stojanova, Christina** (University of Regina):

***Methodology and Identity: A Personal Journey into the Cinemas of Central and Eastern Europe***

According to a popular definition, *methodology* is strategy that identifies the way in which research is to be undertaken, and the methods to be used. Methodology – as I see it – is also an expression of one’s scholarly *weltanschauung*, a scholastic philosophy of sorts, and therefore quite close to one’s identity, both personal and professional. This talk would offer a summary of my search, as a Canadian-Bulgarian scholar, for most adequate ways to glean more meaning from films, made in Central and Eastern Europe since 1948. This personal intellectual journey began with my interdisciplinary and comparative doctoral research in the mid-1990s, when none of the extant – and fashionable then – Western research strategies seemed suitable for my corpus of 450 official films from 7 communist cinemas. Therefore, I constructed an original theoretical grid, paying specific attention to English-language works by Eastern Europeans – historians, writers and philosophers (Niemeyer, Patocka, Havel, Milosz, Koestler, Kundera, Klima), political economists (Polanyi, Kornai, Kolakowski), and political scientists (Djilas, Konrad & Szelenyi, Heller, Keane), ultimately bridging these through structuralist theories of genre (Todorov, Suleiman, Kenez). Since one of the main tenets in my dissertation was the crisis of self-knowledge, in the early 2000s I turned to Kristeva and Žižek for the study of phenomenology of horror and mysticism in Eastern European cinemas, which was additionally prompted by my interest in cultural semiotics, anthropology and comparative mythology (Eliade, Arnaudov). My newly-found fascination with New Romanian Cinema circa 2007, deepened my engagement with Jungian and post-Jungian criticism, including Frye, who has been indispensable for the scrutiny of masculinity crises, reflected in Canadian and post-communist cinemas. And, along with his post-modern disciple Hutcheon, has led me to the study of ironic modes and nostalgia as typically Eastern and Central European responses to the post-communist drama. My current work as the principal editor of the anthology *The New Romanian Cinema*, to be published by Edinburgh University Press later this year, has in turn invigorated my erstwhile concerns with viability of comparative approaches to Balkan and Eastern European identities (Todorova, Bradatan, Dodovski), with ideas and models of aesthetic universalism (Aristotle) and of cultural globalism (Bauman), and ultimately – with the existential question whether ethics is indeed the new aesthetics of post-communist cinemas.

**Szűcs Teri** (independent researcher, Budapest):

***Video Art, Moving Image and Holocaust Remembrance***

In my presentation I would like to discuss recent Hungarian works of visual art that deal with the memory of the Holocaust. All of the selected works present a personal stance taken in the process of individual and societal memorialization, and each of the discussed artists describe their position as belonging to the third generation. Combining conceptual and cinematic art, these works yield a critical view on the modes of remembrance and medialization. The presentation will deal with the following works: Zsuzsi Flohr – *On the Road with Sándor Képiró* and *Für den Zauberen Tisch*; Anna Ádám – *As If*; Eszter Sipos – *Repressed Memories*; Csaba Árpád Horváth – *Jewish Laws*; Mária Chilf – *Transitory Objects*; Marcell Esterházy – *On the Same Day*. Since our workshop focuses on the phenomena of intermediality, my presentation will deal with the intersection of conceptual art and the moving (cinematic, sequential) image. The artists' decision to use the means of film has various purposes. It is a tool to produce and to represent the sequential, repetitive nature of remembrance/forgetting; it is a way to document individual involvement in the processes of remembering/forgetting; it is a critical means of channeling our attention to the medial nature of remembrance; and it is a medium that re-frames and refreshes the familiar and "used" still images of collective memory. As an effect, the viewer will also become more aware of her position as the "consumer" of memorial images.

**Varga Balázs** (ELTE, Budapest):

***Theatricality, Performativity and Intermediality in Szabolcs Hajdu's films***

Cinema's invocation of and appeal for theatricality, the intertwined dynamics and characteristics of cinema and theatre, the multiple modes and uses of theatricality in cinema are usually described from the point of view of artificiality: the interruption of naturalness or the ruptures within reality (Loiselle and Maron, 2012). Timothy Corrigan, differentiating "cinematic theatricality" and theatricality on stage highlights the "imaginary" or "representational" characteristics of cinematic expression (Corrigan, 1999). The proposed paper aims at discussing questions of theatricality and constructedness in Szabolcs Hajdu's films (*Sticky Matters*, *Tamara*, *White Palms*, *Bibliothèque Pascal*, *Mirage*) with special regard to the aspects of performativity, staging. The protagonists of Hajdu's films are usually artists and sportsmen: people whose profession, hobby, practice or identity is strongly connected to creation, presentation and performance. Their practices are richly representing the visual arts, theatre and popular entertainment from photography, cinema, amateur theatre, circus, vaudeville and sports. Creation of images, staging and 'to-be-looked-at-ness' (Mulvey) are their fundamental drive and experience, and Hajdu's films are centred around performances and identity games of these protagonists. The proposed paper will discuss how specific places transform into well-structured and vibrant stage in the diegetic world of the films. Places and stages divided, split and structured by mirrors, walls and veils, masking and (un)covering the scenes and spectacles. Thus the analysis of Hajdu's films will try to concentrate on the intermedial and figurative dimensions of these spectacles and spectators, the bodily practices, performances and embodied spectators on stage – and backstage.

**Virginás Andrea** (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Cluj-Napoca):

***"Technological Spectacles" through Inter- and Transmediation: Communist Science-Fiction and Postcommunist Musical Films***

In his film genre theory – *Film Genre: Hollywood and Beyond* – Barry Langford observes of science fiction and musical films that their modernist core might be equated with the fundamental interest in representing "technological spectacles." I focus on the two genres in such Eastern European national cinemas as the Romanian or the Hungarian one, animated by the emancipatory, basically modernist narrative of communist fulfilment while centered on producing "technological spectacles" in 1960-1980s communist Romania and 1990-2000s postcommunist Hungary. Based on the close-reading of sequences where 'technological spectacles' are created, my main argument will be that in the absence of real representational possibilities to create 'technological spectacles' through specific sets, highly trained performers or special effects, Romanian communist science-fiction and Hungarian postcommunist musical films transform what Hjort and Petrie name "the weakness" of small national cinemas into their biggest asset. Concentrating on issues of medium specificity in relation to communist Romanian science fiction film will allow me to elaborate this idea, as the exploitation of diverse media such as animation, television genres, or theatre within the context of filmic diegesis seems to be a constant feature of the analyzed corpus. As for the postcommunist Hungarian musical films in my corpus: more often than not these films revolve around show business, reminding one of classical Hollywood backstage musicals in addition to building on conventions of screwball comedies. They offer the viewer detailed examinations of how stage appearances, spectacles and (public) star identities are created out of private bodies and persons. Based on these examples I will argue therefore that the fundamentally inter- and transmedial existence of the Eastern European, small national filmic diegesis, always intermingled with theatre, television and animation, is what allows for creating genre-specific "technological spectacles" in the mentioned films.

## NOTES













