**AFRICA IN MOTION FILM FESTIVAL 2017**

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**Symposium: Curating the Global Film Archive**

**Lecture Cinema, Kelvin Hall, Glasgow**

**28 October 2017**

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| 9.30am - 10am | RegistrationCoffee/tea |  |  |
| 10am - 10.15am | WELCOME | Stefanie Van de Peer, Africa’s Lost Classics Project CoordinatorLizelle Bisschoff, Lecturer in Film Studies, University of GlasgowDavid Murphy, Professor of Postcolonial Studies, University of Stirling | Introduction to the Africa’s Lost Classics project and the symposium  |
| 10.15am - 11am | KEYNOTE DIALOGUE | June Givanni, Founder: June Givanni Pan African Cinema Archive  | *Witness* - June Givanni on a Pan African Cinema Archive |
| 11am - 12.30pm | PANEL 1: Global Archives | MaryEllen Higgins, Associate Professor of English, Penn State University | The Silt of the Archives |
|  |  | Catarina Simao, Artist and Researcher | So that new cinema may be called “our” cinema: a disjointed memory. Notes on *Mueda, Memória e Massacre* (1979-80) |
|  |  | Adina Bradeanu, Taylor Institution Library, Oxford | Making sense of an absence, working against it: The afterlife of the ‘Alexandru Sahia’ Documentary Studio in Post-communist Romania |
|  |  | Alexandra-Maria Colta, PhD candidate, University of Glasgow  | Bringing the Film Archive to Life: Marlon Riggs Retrospective at Document Human Rights Film Festival |
| 12.30pm - 2pm | LUNCH & EXHIBITION |  |  |
| 2pm - 3.20pm | PANEL 2: South African Archives  | Emma Sandon, Senior Lecturer in Film and Television, Birkbeck University of London  | Curating the South African film archive: 1910-1960 |
|  |  | Benjamin Cowley, CEO: Gravel Road Distribution Group |  Retro Afrika Bioscope and the restoration of Cult Classics  |
|  |  | Firdoze Bulbulia, Director: Moments Entertainment  | Mandela’s Africa: A TV series based on the exclusive African diary of Nelson Mandela in 1962 |
| 3.20pm - 3.45pm | Coffee/Tea  |  |  |
| 3.45pm - 5.15pm | SCREENING and DISCUSSION | Piotr Cieplak, Filmmaker, Lecturer in Filmmaking, University of Sussex  | *The Faces We Lost* |
| 5.15pm - 5.30pm | CLOSE |  |  |

**ABSTRACTS AND BIOS**

**KEYNOTE DIALOGUE: *Witness* - June Givanni on a Pan African Cinema Archive**

**June Givanni** runs the June Givanni Pan African Cinema Archive (JGPACA) in London. She is a film curator, archivist and consultant in African and African diaspora cinema. June is a leader in this sector where she has worked for over three decades. She has worked to stage major events around African and African diaspora cinema in the UK and internationally and continues to programme at international festivals. She is currently developing her archive based on collections from her years of working in this field. In this dialogue with Lizelle Bisschoff, founder of the Africa in Motion film festival and African film scholar, we will learn more about the contents and potential of her archive.

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**MARYELLEN HIGGINS: The Silt of the Archives**

My presentation takes up a question posed by the conference co-organizers: How do archives and film festivals perform as sites of memory and commemoration? In his Epilogue to *Critique of Black Reason*, Achille Mbembe derives inspiration from Édouard Glissant's reflection on silt, on material composed of "things apparently lost" that bring "new forms to life, labor, and language" (181). Mbembe states that a "collective resurgence of humanity" will be enacted by "a thinking through of life, of the reserves of life, of what must escape sacrifice. It will of necessity be a *thinking in circulation*, *a* *thinking of crossing*, *a world thinking*" (179). One might think similarly about archives and film festivals: those occasions for thinking in circulation, for thinking through the reserves of life. The silt of the archive – material forgotten, temporarily discarded, blocked, or considered lost – has the potential to issue new forms to our film histories. We might also take films themselves as inspiration for our theories of archives and memory (my examples will derive from Jean-Marie Teno, Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, Yamina Bachir Chouikh, Judy Kibinge, and Jean-Pierre Bekolo). Archives can be, as Jacques Derrida suggests, a practice of house arrest, yet they also function as several films by African directors do: as resistance to disposability, as reflections of our very attentions, as stories of border crossings and barriers, as a recuperation of omissions, and as an attempt to imagine the future into being.

**MaryEllen (Ellie) Higgins** teaches film studies and comparative literature at the Pennsylvania State University. Her recent books are *The Western in the Global South* (coedited with Rita Kerestezi and Dayna Oscherwitz), and *Hollywood’s Africa After 1994*. She has published articles on African cinema and literature in *Research in African Literatures*, *African Literature Today, African Studies Review,* and *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature,* among other scholarly avenues. She serves as Chair of the Film, Visual, Media Caucus of the African Literature Association. She has produced two films: Jean-Pierre Bekolo’s *Les Choses et les Mots de* *Mudimbe* (2015) and *Naked Reality* (2016).

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**CATARINA SIMAO: So that new cinema may be called “our” cinema: a disjointed memory. Notes on Mueda, Memória e Massacre (1979-80) by Ruy Guerra.**

 *\*“(...) only in this way, as Fanon said, can decolonisation become possible and culture, cinema, and beauty - at least, what is of greatest importance to us - become our culture, our films, and our sense of beauty”,* citation from “Towards a Third Cinema” by Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino. Tricontinental, nº14, Octubre de 1969. La Habana.

The archive that came out of the first years of film production of independent Mozambique in the late 70s makes up a part of the pedagogical and political experience that started with the nationalists' movements of struggle against Portuguese colonialism. This is an archive about war and victory over colonial oppression. But the fact that these images exist alone is not evidence of such victory, as they also show the opposite: they are proof of the extreme difficulty in the enforcement of one nationalist idea and of gaining consensus over the implementation of a decolonization process. Mozambique remained a geographical space that was artificially designed, containing a multiplicity of very different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This paradoxical character of the archive determines the work of Mozambican historians who focus on rewriting the history of their country by finding the cracks in a powerful official construction. If genealogy is the way to tell the beginning of an archive, it is more unsettling to determine the archive’s meaning today - created mostly by the urge to collectively perform its deconstruction. Equally, very few films reconstitute within themselves those inner qualities of the Mozambican archive. Perhaps Ruy Guerra’s *Mueda, Memory and Massacre*, claimed in 1980 as the first fictional feature film of People's Republic of Mozambique is the only film to have tackled this duality of archive and truth.

This presentation offers significant tools for the understanding of this film, tools from both an artistic and archival perspective, discovered throughout the diverse stages of research conducted at the National Film Institute of Mozambique (INAC). Notes and excerpts taken from different versions of the film and different options in the editing will show trajectories and qualities common to images and history embodied by this film.

**Catarina Simão** is an artist and researcher who lives and works between Maputo and Lisbon. Her practice is built upon long-term research projects that entail collaborative partnerships and different forms of presentation to the public. Simão is known for her essay-like displays, using documentation, writing, video and drawing. She also engages in radio shows and public talks, participatory workshops, curating film screenings and publishing. With her recent projects, she casts her interest on inquiring common cultural and visual heritage of violence and emancipation. Throughout a ‘revisionist’ lens on the history of the Independence Movement in Mozambique, she creates what can be understood as reverse museology.

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**ADINA BRADEANU: Making sense of an absence, working against it: The afterlife of the ‘Alexandru Sahia’ Documentary Studio in Post-communist Romania**

Starting from the late 1990, I have spent more than a decade examining the void left within Romanian society by the gradual collapse of the ‘Alexandru Sahia’ Studio (the only documentary studio of communist Romania). Established in 1950, the studio had been pushed to the margins of public and professional visibility at the beginning of the 1990s, being conventionally regarded as one of the casualties which were part of the post-communist condition. In the mid-2000s, when I started collecting impressions about the studio from members of the film community, I was confronted with an astonishing number of negative, even scathing, retrospective accounts of its ethos and professional culture. It took me years of grappling with the unsettled, and unsettling, memories attached to the studio before I was able to connect them with the larger processes of accountability that emerged in Romanian society at the time, when the institution was still identified with the ‘propaganda’ mission assigned to it in the past by the socialist state. In 2013, I started bringing the archive of this largely forgotten studio back into public visibility through a series of curated seasons embedded in the programme of a documentary festival - One World Romania - and subsequently through a DVD series - VINTAGE SAHIA, currently in its fourth instalment. My paper will examine the ways in which the difficult rediscovery of the Sahia studio in the present has become part of the wider reassessment of Romania’s communism as a lived experience - an experience whose rememoration is inflected by the exigencies of the time when the act of recollection takes place.

**Adina BRĂDEANU** has completed a doctoral degree in Film Studies (University of Westminster), which focused on the professional culture of a film studio active in communist Romania and on the memorial heritage associated with it in the present. In recent years, Bradeanu has taught for the BA in Contemporary Media Practice at the University of Westminster and worked for the DocWest Centre for Production and Research of Documentary and Experimental Film at the same university. Since 2005, she has curated film-related events in London, Oxford, Stockholm, Paris, Madrid, mainly to do with Eastern and Central European cinema. Since 2013, she has co-programmed the One World Romania documentary festival in Bucharest. She has contributed to publications such as *The Journal of South Asian Popular Culture*, *Third Text*, *Sight & Sound,* *Cineaste*, *Kinokultura,* and *The Cinema of the Balkans: 24 Frames* (Wallflower Press, 2006).

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**ALEXANDRA-MARIA COLTA: Bringing the Film Archive to Life: Marlon Riggs Retrospective at Document Human Rights Film Festival**

Document is the longest-running human rights documentary film festival based in Glasgow, which takes place for three days every October. Within this very condensed programme of films and events, each slot is challenging to curate, negotiate and balance between new films alongside historical documentaries, themes and voices. In 2016, the central part of the festival was a retrospective of Marlon Riggs, an American poet, educator, gay rights activist and filmmaker acclaimed for his complex cinematic representations of race and identity in the US in the 1980s and ‘90s. By focusing on this retrospective, this paper examines the festival’s role as site of memory and commemoration and the role of the curator in contextualising films of the past. I will explore different functions and narratives of retrospectives in the festival context, especially at a human rights festival, defined by both activist and cinematic agendas. In this sense, the paper will look at the films programmed and the non-filmic performative events paired during the festival weekend, arguing that storytelling and archival footage in Marlon Riggs’ films were addressed by connecting historical content to contemporary contexts. The paper will also consider the wider exhibition of Marlon Riggs work, its circulation and inclusion in the BFI Black Star programme, a UK-wide yearlong effort to promote black talent on screen. Finally, the paper will address the festival’s interpretation and reception of Marlon Riggs’ work in the context of the awareness, controversy and acclaim gathered from previous circulation.

**Alexandra-Maria Colta** is a PhD student at the University of Glasgow in partnership with the University of St Andrews and Document Human Rights Film Festival, an ARCS funded collaborative framework for the interdisciplinary study of human rights film festivals: politics, programmes and practices. The project focuses on the Glasgow-based Document Film Festival to uncover the way a festival works within the wider context of human rights discourse in cinema and cultural industries. Alexandra studied media and cultural studies at the Centre for British Studies at Humboldt University, Berlin and worked in film production and promotion in Romania and the UK.

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**EMMA SANDON: Curating the South African film archive: 1910-1960**

This presentation will raise questions about the South African film archive: its use, preservation, accessibility and curatorial value. These films are historically important and need to be in the public domain, but many of them are not very accessible and are located in various places, including South African, British and Dutch film archives. They are valuable for research into the history of the motion picture in South Africa. They also have curatorial potential beyond their use as historical documents. This paper will argue that they need to be shown in the context of decolonising the archive. Research at the Archive and Public Culture Research Initiative, University of Cape Town, is at the forefront of arguing the importance of preserving apartheid and colonial archive to interrogate South Africa’s histories. Film makes up but one aspect of such collections. The paper discusses specific examples of films, both fiction and non-fiction. Screenings of the colonial film, *Siliva the Zulu* (1927) with an accompanying composition by Juwon Ogungbe (2014-2015), have shown the potential of performance and context in re-interpreting, re-contextualising and decolonising cinema histories. Non-fiction film in the South African archive illustrates how documentary film and newsreel production developed from the 1910. When screened alongside fiction films of the same era, programmes can reveal the similarities of narrative and styles across film categories, and are important for producing new meanings and critical historical understandings. Currently fiction and non-fiction films have been bought up by MNET and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) at cheap prices as both state and commercial archives profit from selling footage. This commercialisation of the film archive leads to images circulating in de-contextualised ways, whilst rendering the costs of access and use by curators, researchers and independent filmmakers, prohibitive. Questions of access, preservation and curation are inextricably linked with histories and my paper will show how these questions matter in the context of the life of the South African film archive, 1910-1960.

**Emma Sandon** is a Senior Lecturer in film and television at Birkbeck, University of London. Her research and publications are on British colonial film and South African film history. She is on the steering group of the Women’s Film and Television History Network (UK/ Ireland) and on the core management team of the Colonial Film: Moving Images of the British Empire project. She is on the Advisory Committee of the June Givanni Pan African Cinema Archive. She is an Honorary Research Fellow of the Archive and Public Culture Research Initiative at the University of Cape Town.

**BENJAMIN COWLEY: Retro Afrika Bioscope and the restoration of Cult Classics**

Retro Afrika Bioscope is an initiative that was launched by Gravel Road Distribution Group in 2013. As Africa’s only film restoration and preservation facility, it services African and global legacy content owners. Retro Afrika Bioscope is the Film Preservation & Restoration division of Gravel Road Distribution Group that actively locates, acquires, digitally restores and re‑releases discarded and forgotten classic African films to a new generation of audiences worldwide. Join Benjamin Cowley, CEO, as he takes you on their journey from discovering to restoring Joe Bullet, a film banned by the Apartheid government, and pioneering the film preservation in South Africa, to where they are today with over 200 films in their own collection. Ben explains the challenges they face in this endeavor.

**Benjamin Thomas Cowley** is CEO of Gravel Road Entertainment Group & Founder of Gravel Road African Film Legacy Initiative. Ben started in TV more than 14 years ago when he was involved in both live and pre-recorded programs at Namibia’s one and only national broadcaster: NBC. Fast-forward several years, he found himself in the world of TV commercials. But his passion has always been in storytelling and creative filmmaking. Retro Afrika Bioscope has been Ben’s initiative and his role is to nurture it and allow it to grow to its full potential. He works closely with the original filmmakers, film owners and national film, video and sound archives in sourcing/locating all the old films and getting them to Cape Town to restore them and ultimately get them onto a platform where the public can view them.

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**FIRDOZE BULBULIA: Mandela’s Africa: A TV series based on the exclusive Africa diary of Nelson Mandela in 1962**

Mandela’s African diaries come to life in 1962 when he unlawfully left South Africa and travelled through Africa for several months. He toured the continent, and in Ethiopia for example he addressed the Conference of the Pan African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa held in Addis Ababa. He was warmly received by senior political leaders in several African countries, including Algeria, where he underwent guerrilla training. Moments Entertainment is developing this archival material into a 16-part documentary, *Mandela’s Africa*. In this presentation, Firdoze Bulbulia will lay out the difficulties and the opportunities in developing such a large project and dealing with the exclusivity of access. The aim of *Mandela’s Africa* is to map this journey, and in so doing, to assess Africa, its challenges and triumphs, between 1962 and 2012. This journey is aimed at creating an understanding of the developments of the African states with specific reference to leadership, governance, statehood, and the social undertones associated with these theoretical constructs.

**Firdoze Bulbulia** is a director, producer, writer and educator. She is Managing Director at MOMENTS ENTERTAINMENT, Chairperson at CHILDREN & BROADCASTING FOUNDATION FOR AFRICA (CBFA) and Former President at the International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (CIFEJ). At the start of her career, she used theatre and art to express solidarity with women’s and children’s movements. She has worked on several developmental programmes and facilitated workshops on children’s rights. She helped establish the South African Charter on Children’s Rights and represented Africa at human rights conferences internationally. Focusing on television production, she emphasises ideas such as development and empowerment. In the spirit of the African renaissance, she has been actively involved in initiatives which unite, train and empower African producers of children’s programmes, especially with respect to women who work in the field.

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**PIOTR CIEPLAK: *The Faces We Lost***

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda claimed almost a million lives in just 100 days. The world stood by as men, women and children were being hacked to death by machetes. When the international community finally decided it was time to pay attention, it did so through memorable photographs of mutilated bodies and seas of nameless refugees. But many Rwandans remember their loved ones through images of life, not death: a passport or I.D. card photo, an unguarded snap taken in the garden or a group portrait from a wedding or a baptism. The surviving images are precious objects, with so many destroyed and lost forever. A lot of people have only a solitary image of their loved ones. Many have none at all. *The Faces We Lost* follows nine Rwandans (survivors, relatives of victims and professional memory-makers), who guide us through their stories and share their experiences, remembrance and images. It is the first documentary to explore the many functions of these priceless photographs, and one of the few films to engage with Rwandans as users of images, rather than simply their subjects.

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These deeply personal stories are all marked by the terrible experience the genocide and its legacy have left on their owners. Each is unique to the person who tells it. But *The Faces We* *Lost* also explores the professional aspect of memory-making in Rwanda: The Genocide Archive (which holds thousands of original images donated by the victims’ relatives) and the Kigali Genocide Memorial (where many of the photographs are on public display). As the private and the public meet and as each person recounts their relationship with the photographs they have or they wish they had, *The Faces We Lost* moves to paint a complex memorial landscape of contemporary Rwanda.

**Piotr Cieplak**, director, writer and academic, has worked on projects in Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Argentina, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. He is the director of *Memory Places* (UK, 2009) and [*Memory Cards*](https://vimeo.com/123307756) (UK, 2015). *Memory Cards* won the Best Polish Lens Award at Afrykamera 2016. Piotr is also the author of *[Death, Image, Memory: the genocide in Rwanda and its aftermath in photography and documentary film](http://www.palgrave.com/gb/book/9781137579874)* (Palgrave, 2017). He has taught film at the University of Cambridge, SOAS and Brunel University London. He is currently a lecturer in filmmaking at the University of Sussex. He has written extensively about Rwanda, Africa, film and photography and served as a festival jury member. *The Faces We Lost* is part of a bigger research project entitled: ‘Personal archives of trauma and violence. Image and memory in the digital age – Argentina and Rwanda.’ The project is funded by The British Academy/Leverhulme Trust and a BRIEF Award.

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**Where to have lunch?**

**Kelvin Hall Café** – in the same building. Range of sandwiches, wraps, paninis and other light meals.

There are many other nearby cafés in Argyle St and Dumbarton Rd.

***Please also use some of the time during the lunch and coffee/tea breaks to browse the exhibition, African Film: Looking Back Through the Lens, next door to the symposium venue.***

   