

The Big Screen: Art History and British cinema

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Ever since its earliest iterations, British cinema has generated exceptionally ambitious and experimental forms of visual representation; equally, it has stimulated outstanding critical and historical interpretation from within the discipline of film studies. In recent years, art historians and film historians have, within higher education, regularly been grouped within single departments, a combination which would seem rational given their shared focus on visual culture. Frequently, however, the two disciplines remain separate and only occasionally do they draw on each other's forms and methodologies. Furthermore, though art-historical scholarship has recently been directed at artists' films, and at artists' moving practice work more generally, less attention has been granted by the discipline to the imagery and histories of British cinema, both mainstream and independent.

Given this situation, now seems a good moment to take stock of the relationship between British art studies and British film studies, and to think anew about how we might work between and across these areas of scholarship to produce exciting new studies of British art and cinema, drawing on the finest historical scrutiny and interpretation within both subject fields. How, we can ask, does working across art (in its broadest sense) and cinema expand and enrich our understanding of the visual arts, and what new insights can be developed by putting different kinds of artistic practice and cultural production into dialogue?

This session is underpinned by such concerns, and encourages papers that pursue one or more of the following approaches or topics:

- New art-historical perspectives on both mainstream and independent British cinema
- The relationships between British cinema and the wider realm of visual art practice
- The opportunities and challenges of bringing art-historical methods into dialogue with the critical apparatus of film studies
- Close or contextual readings of individual examples of British film
- Inter-medial and formal relationships between British art and cinema
- Thematic and subject-specific relationships between British art and cinema
- Institutional and historical contexts for British art and cinema
- The issue of genres across art and cinema: landscape; history; portraiture
- The imagery of the body
- Viewers and viewing
- Movement and stasis
- Greyscale and colour; shadow and light.