Mobility and Creativity: Narrative, Representation and Performance
3 - 4 July 2009

Programme • Abstracts • Speakers

A two-day international workshop hosted by the Department of English, University of Surrey

Sponsored by: Institute of Advanced Studies
Mobilities has increasingly become central to the analysis of social relations in contemporary society where it often appears that ‘all the world is on the move,’ from the movement of diasporas, tourists, migrants and refugees. While the emergence of this new ‘mobility paradigm’ (Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry 2002, 2007) originated within the social sciences, this conference focuses on how such a ‘mobility turn’ has been narrated, represented and performed within the arts and humanities. The two-day international conference aims to explore creative responses to these diverse mobilities in literature, art, film, and theatre for example. How have these complex mobilities been negotiated and critiqued through creative practice? Is creativity dependent upon mobility?
Timetable
Friday 3 July - Saturday 4 July

All sessions will take place in CEC, which is located on the 2nd floor of Senate House

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| 9.45am - 10.45am | Keynote Lecture  
|                 | Professor John Urry  
|                 | ‘Mobility Futures’ |
| 10.45am - 12.15pm | Panel 1: Postcolonial Encounters  
|                   | Panel 2: Mobility and Aesthetics |
| 12.15pm - 12.45pm | Talk by Elly Clarke |
| 12.45pm - 1.45pm | Lunch |
| 1.45pm - 2.45pm | Keynote Lecture  
|                 | Professor Ginette Verstraete  
|                 | ‘Movement, Convergence and Creativity: A Critical Introduction’ |
| 2.45pm - 4.15pm | Panel 3: Asylum and Refugees  
|                 | Panel 4: Cinema of Borders |
| 4.15pm - 4.30pm | Coffee break |
| 4.30pm - 5.30pm | Keynote Cabaret  
|                 | Professor Reina Lewis  
|                 | ‘Wandering Wardrobes: the pleasures, dangers, and indeterminacies of the mobile queer body’ |
| 5.30pm - 6.30pm | Wine Reception |
| 7.30pm         | Dinner at Olivio’s in Guildford |

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| 11.15am - 11.30am | Coffee break |
| 11.30am - 1pm | Panel 7: Creative Dis/Locations  
|                 | Panel 8: Travel Writing |
| 1pm - 2pm | Lunch & Discussion |
Panel 1: Postcolonial Encounters

Corinne Fowler, Lancaster University

'Replete with danger': travel writing, news media coverage and the history of British ideas about Afghanistan.

As the military situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate, an investigation of recent mainstream news media coverage reveals the extent to which British travel writing continues to inform and influence reporting on ‘Afghan’ conflicts. Despite researchers’ interest in travel writing’s capacity for experimentation and reflexivity, journalists continue to enlist the help of travel narratives in their analyses of the present conflict. Since the turn of the twentieth century, it has been the well-established habit of travellers to superimpose nineteenth-century contexts of traumatic Afghan-British encounter onto contemporary Afghan settings. This paper examines the way in which travel narratives, which are heavily dependent on the works of Rudyard Kipling, have helped set present day news agendas. Above all, it considers the consequences of this reliance.

Patricia Johnson, University of Newcastle, Australia

The Politics of Landscape

Adventure and imagination are constant companions in creating landscapes and geographies in travel writing. In narratives of mobility the ‘arrival’ scene appears as a defining moment: one must cross a threshold and maintain a movement or passage which involves the temporal and spatial dimensions of liminality. The travel writer often documents this point as a defining, and sometimes dramatic, moment and how they script this moment tells the reader much about how the rest of the story will be framed. The liminal space of the traveller is a personal space and deeply influenced by preconceived notions about place – notions which influence the position from which the traveller assumes to view the foreign. The author casts a gaze from a particular ‘viewing platform’ which is informed by Western discourse and engages aesthetic dimensions of time and space to position the liminal in the narrative. This paper examines the writings of three women authors who wrote about their travels to the Islamic Republic of Iran. These writings are set within a particular historical moment – between the Islamic Revolution and U.S. President Bush’s ‘Axis of Evil’ declaration in 2002. Examples of texts are used to explore the various ways the writers frame their narratives according to the ‘I’ of the self who focuses the ‘eye’ (gaze) through a lens oriented by their cosmopolitical imagination or worldview. The texts are analysed by positioning the narrator as an aesthetic cosmopolitan figure who discursively constructs a gaze over the landscape by mobilising notions of gender and power. Political imageries and political discourse are not only used as metaphors to describe landscapes but also appear as devices to build character as cosmopolitan traveller.

Nishevita Murthy and Sudha Shastri, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India

Politics of the Headscarf in Orhan Pamuk’s Snow

Our paper considers mobility with respect to the peregrination of cultural symbols, namely the female headscarf, deriving its argument from Pamuk’s novel Snow (2002), which explores a series of suicides among young girls in the 1990s, in the town of Kars in Turkey. The suicides bring to light a conflict raging between the government’s injunction to women forbidding headscarves, and the will of these women to retain them as part of their identity. This phenomenon is investigated by the protagonist Ka, a young Turkish political exile, returning from Germany after twelve years ostensibly to report on this event; who gets embroiled in the debates surrounding the suicides. Are the suicides simply retaliation by women to the orchestration of their lives by ideologues, or can they be interpreted as acts of agency?

We examine how ideas transform through displacement. At one level, the connotations of the headscarf change dramatically from East to West and back, accruing layers of meaning from its movement. What becomes a symbol of tradition in Turkey is interpreted as a symbol of constraint in Germany. Ka, a traveler and the reader’s point of identification in the novel, becomes a prism through which gender constructions are filtered to reveal the politics of representation.

The second level of movement involves oscillation of the headscarf between the private and public realms. From a personal symbol of ritual piety, the headscarf comes to be dramatized in the form of a play called ‘My Fatherland or My Headscarf’ in Snow, thereby driven by ideology within the public space. Besides adding the dimension of spectacle to the debate, this reinvention presupposes an audience, and raises the possibility of deliberateness. Our paper takes the argument ahead by considering the implications of the metaphor of theatre and performance in this debate, as the personal and the political intersect.
Panels and Abstracts

Panel 2: Mobility and Aesthetics

Stefan Höhne, Centre for Metropolitan Studies, Germany

The Perception of the Passenger: Transitory practices and perceptions in works by Hopper, Cornell and Gondry

Through industrialized infrastructures of mobility, the experience of transit became an essential part of everyday life, constituting the figure of the modern passenger. New cultural techniques and modes of perception emerged, altering performance and sensual habits. The transitory perceptions and practices of the passenger where constituted by and constitutive for studies of phenomenology and the arts in the 20th century. Drawing on works by Edward Hopper, Joseph Cornell and Michel Gondry, my presentation will deal with the ways these phenomena are reflected on in visual art. Foremost, I will focus on how these perceptions are constituted in relation to the interior of transit vehicles (Hopper), the interrelations of transit vehicle and space (Cornell) and the perception of transit space itself (Gondry). Edward Hoppers paintings “Compartment C, Car 193” (1938) and “Chair Car” (1965) emphasize the spatial codes and materialities of transit interiors in its relations to techniques of gazing and interaction as well as the phenomenon of reading in transit. In his film “Gnir Rednow” (1955) Joseph Cornell deals with the passengers’ experience of deand reterritorialization (Deleuze) in a New York subway train. By capturing the reflections in the windows, Cornell creates effects of superimpositions and blurring between transit vehicle and transit space. Finally, I will discuss the transitory perception of the passenger by looking at the work “Star Guitar” (2001) by the French visual artist Michel Gondry. In this animated film, Gondry intertwines the gaze on urban transit space with the acoustic experience of repetition and rhythm. By relating these artistic approaches towards the modes of perceptions in transit and linking them with academic works by Simmel, Goffman and Husserl, among others, I will show how the experience of transit and mobility shaped artistic practice in both modes of production and inspiration.

Emma Cocker, Nottingham Trent University

From Passivity to Potentiality: The Communitas of Stillness

Referring to my collaboration with the artist-led project, Open City, I will investigate the (im)mobility of stillness as a creative strategy. I will explore the potential of an active and resistant - rather than passive or acquiescent - form of stillness that can be activated strategically within a performance-based practice; in turn producing conditions in which a radically dissenting - yet affirmative - model of subjectivity might be developed. Stillness is often presented as antithetical to the velocity, mobility, speed and freedom proposed by new technologies and the various accelerated modes by which we are encouraged to engage with the world. Stillness and slowness have been deemed outmoded or anachronistic forms of mobility, as fastness and efficiency have become the privileged terms. Alternatively, stillness has been reclaimed within a resistant - or at least reactive - counter-culture for challenging the enforced and increased pace that we are required to perform. Rather than focusing on a model of stillness based on the attempt to ‘opt out’ of the accelerated time-zones, mobilities and narratives of contemporary capitalism - the move towards a more spiritual or meditative existence by removal or denial of contemporary societal pressures - this paper will explore the potential within forms of stillness specifically produced in and by contemporary capitalism, by reflecting on how they might be (re)inhabited as sites of critical action. With reference to the writing of Gilles Deleuze - especially in relation to Spinoza’s Ethics - I want to explore how the asignifying or affective possibilities produced by the collective performance of stillness can be understood as a mode of playful resistance to or refusal of habitual social norms; additionally producing the germinal conditions for a nascent community of experience no longer bound by existing protocol, a model of “communitas” emerging from the shared act of being still.
Petra Hroch, University of Alberta, Canada  
*Mobility and Critique in Paul Klee's “Creative Writing”*

Swiss-born artist Paul Klee (1879-1940) is known primarily for his work as a painter. Klee is also known for having been a formative instructor at the Bauhaus in Germany from 1921 until 1931, when his work there became increasingly difficult due to the rise of the Nazi party (the Bauhaus was closed down by the Nazis in 1933). Although Klee is well-known for his contribution to visual art during this period, he less widely recognized – despite his prolific theoretical writings – for his work as a theorist. A closer examination of Klee’s written work demonstrates, however, that he has much to contribute to the contemporary “turn to mobility.”

In his writing, Klee likened artistic creation to the processes of genesis in nature – he saw the created and the creative world as being fundamentally related through mobility, movement, and performance. For Klee, “movement is at the very root of all becoming” (Güse 146). The many dancers, singers, acrobats, puppets and other actors that Klee drew and painted (most recently exhibited together in the 2007 collection entitled Überall Theater [Theatre Everywhere] at the Zentrum Paul Klee in Bern) demonstrate that Klee was interested in performing and theatrical figures as a way of making visually explicit that his canvases were performance spaces that played out the “all-embracing ‘movement’ that governs the entire cosmos” (Güse “Foreword”).

This paper focuses on Klee’s “creative” writing – that is, his theoretical reflections on the creative process – that so informed his artistic practice (and aspects of which Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have emphasized in A Thousand Plateaus). I examine Klee’s reflections in his critical and quirky published diaries, his engaging personal letters, and his theoretically rich pedagogical notebooks in order to understand how his textual narratives and very “performative” visual practices inform one another. I bring together Klee’s written work and visual art to show how mobility is fundamental to his theory of creativity, and even more importantly, how his thinking about creativity in terms of mobility contributes to a critical practice. What is critical about Klee’s work is that the movement that underlies the creative process gives rise to a constant negotiation between the everyday, the “given,” or the created world, and the creative, the new, and the possible.
Panel 3: Asylum and Refugees

Alex Rotas, University of Cardiff

*Necessary Journeys: Visual Explorations by Contemporary Artists from Refugee Populations in the UK*

This visual paper draws on research into the work of visual artists who have come to the UK as refugees or asylum seekers over the last 30 years. As well as considering the range of ways that visual artists have responded to their experience of forced mobility, it addresses the reception their work has been given by the UK art academy.

Refugee artists have explored their experiences in their practice in various ways, including focusing on the events leading to their flight, the responses they received on arrival in the UK ‘host-nation’, their feelings of nostalgia, or of alienation or of the complexity of negotiating their own, now multiple, identities. Some artists may appear to ignore any personal experiences in their artwork, remaining preoccupied with aesthetic issues. Alternatively, or additionally, they may celebrate the contrapuntal feelings and opportunities that seeking refuge in another culture has opened up for them.

How have funders, curators, critics and viewers responded to this variegated body of work? In a climate dominated by the politics of cultural diversity, ‘otherness’ has been prioritised in terms of funding from the Arts Council. Emphasising difference has meant that foreign-born artists have found themselves simultaneously supported and marginalised. They have been able to obtain financial support by drawing attention to their ethnic roots, but showing their work as ‘Iraqi artists’ or ‘asylum artists’ has marginalised them by keeping them separate from the mainstream occupied by ‘artists’ pure and simple. Recently, however, major exhibitions of ‘British art’ have defined British artists as those living and practising in the UK. This curatorial shift suggests an encouraging and more generous definition of Britishness that embraces all artists working in the UK, irrespective of why, when or from where they came. This move impacts significantly on both artists and viewers alike.

Francis Maravillas, University of Technology, Australia

*Geography and the Politics of Mobility in Contemporary Art*

In 2001, a Norwegian cargo ship, the M.V. Tampa, rescued over four hundred refugees from a boat that had began to sink off the Indonesian archipelago en route to Australia. As the Tampa made its way towards the island-continent, it was refused entry into Australian waters by a government declaring it was not “a soft touch and [not one] whose sovereign rights in relation to who comes here are going to be trampled on”. Within days, the image of the giant ochre hulk of the Tampa was projected onto the national imaginary, etching itself against a national consciousness already inured to – though still prone to panic at the sight of – the flotilla of rickety boats packed with people heading south towards Australian shores.

In this paper, I present a number of ‘frames’ through which the passage of the Tampa may be viewed. In particular, I examine selected works of contemporary artists in order to show how the issues of mobility and migration overlap and converge with the wider questions of space, place and identity in an increasingly globalised world. I argue that these ‘frames’ represent crucial sites for articulating and enacting a politics of mobility and spatiality, one that attends to the ways in which the space of ‘Australia’ may been imagined not as an enclaved territory; but as an evolving cartography, constructed out of a particular constellation of relations and trajectories that come together at a particular site, but are defined within a wider network of vectors, both local and global, past and present. In so doing, I wish to activate a mode of inquiry that draws on the insights of the ‘mobility paradigm’, while re-asserting the centrality of spatial thinking to an understanding of recent representations of mobility in contemporary art.

Sarah Gibson, University of Surrey

*Testimony in a Culture of Disbelief: Staging Asylum Drama in Britain*

The ability to bear witness is crucial for those forced migrants who seek asylum in Britain. Within the context of a wider ‘culture of disbelief’, those others are often greeted with suspicion and are categorised as ‘bogus’ asylum seekers if they cannot provide credible testimony in support of their application. Despite the importance of such narratives, testimonies and life stories, asylum seekers are frequently silenced and rendered speechless within the public sphere. The aporia of bearing witness is dramatised in Kay Adshead’s The Bogus Woman and Timberlake Wertenbaker’s Credible Witness in order to reveal the hostile conditions in Britain and the impossibility of testifying to a ‘well-founded fear of persecution’ in the process of seeking asylum. This article examines the ethics and politics of speaking and hearing life stories following Jacques Derrida’s ethical writings on hospitality, testimony, and witnessing.
Panels and Abstracts

Panel 4: Cinema of Borders

Elisa Antz, Justus Liebig University, Germany

Root Trips: Tony Gatlif’s movie Exiles as a contemporary “geneobile” journey

In this presentation, I will focus on the movie Exiles written, directed and produced by Tony Gatlif in 2004. In generic terms, one might consider Exiles as an example of cinema’s most prototypical representation of mobility, that is to say as a Road Movie. The film depicts the adventurous journey of Zano and Naima, a young and rather unruly couple, who are headed from Paris to Algeria. However, motivation, direction, and representation of the trip differ significantly from an accelerating journey into an unknown future. Rather, Zano and Naima have a concrete destination, which lies in the geographical distance, as well as in the chronological past. The two children of Algerian émigrés travel to their ancestors’ homeland, desiring to awaken memories and reconnect to their family roots. By seeking their genealogical roots, the protagonists traverse current borders and foreign spaces. Thus, Exiles represents a peculiar ‘genealogical-mobile’ kind of journey narrative – what I call a ‘geneobile’ Root Trip.

While anthropologist Paul Basu has already written on the cultural phenomenon of “roots-tourism”, I am interested in the stylistic devices that narrate the ‘geneobile’ trip. ‘Accented cinema’ which film scholar Hamid Naficy conceptualizes as featuring “home-seeking journeys, journeys of homelessness, and homecoming journeys” that “are also deeply psychological and philosophical” (Naficy 2001), form a theoretical and analytical background for my investigation.

To examine the specificities of Exiles as ‘geneobile’ Root Trip, the presentation will focus on three major stages of mobility:

• The start – How is the journey motivated? How do distance and past interrelate?
• The journey – What are the most remarkable devices depicting this trip? How is mobility portrayed and (how) do these representations say anything about contemporary processes of identification?
• The end – Can one speak of a ‘home-coming’ or of an arrival?

Hing Tsang, University of Surrey

The mobile phone, mobility, and war in Van der Keuken’s Amsterdam Global Village

This paper considers how both mobility and cosmopolitanism has and can be represented through transnational documentary film. We explore this through the work of the late Dutch filmmaker Van der Keuken whose film Amsterdam Global Village (1994) featured emigration back and forth between his own home city Amsterdam and different parts of the world. This film was a documentary made on the move, a post-modern road movie which featured air travel, canals and computer screens - gadgets large and small in age of both corporeal and social mobility. It engages very much with the ideas of openness and multiculturalism (Hannerz, 1996), paying more than lip service to McLuhan’s earlier ideas of ‘all-at-onceness’ (1962).

This paper looks at one particular narrative which is juxtaposed amongst many other narratives of travel. We analyse one strand featuring a Chechenian emigrant and businessman, whose business involves the mobile phone and travel within Amsterdam, and eventually a return to his native war-stricken Chechenia. We propose that this particular moment, which is emblematic of Van der Keuken’s overall world view, both upholds current ideas about hyper-modernity and mobility, while also reminding us that the human agent exists within limited biological cycles, that the continued existence of genetic biological ties are, pace Pinker (2002) Wilson (1998), strengthened rather than weakened in an age of technological mobility.
Panels and Abstracts

Therefore, could it be possible that human mobility and an increasing number of technical gadgets are literally ‘an extension of man’ in a way that McLuhan had not imagined or articulated, and this might now serve instead to remind us of what man is. The emergence of hyper-modernity and virtuality then does not remove us into some equivalent of ‘timeless time’ Castells (1999), but in some cases as suggested here by Van der Keuken remind us of our own mortality, and the affective and biological ties which link ourselves to other human beings.

Arne Saeys, University of Amsterdam / Kadir Has University Istanbul

*Migrant Filmmakers and the Creative Economy. A comparison between Brussels and Amsterdam*

Hamid Naficy (2001) described how exilic and diasporic filmmakers translate their personal experiences of displacement into what he called ‘an accented cinema’. The notions of exile and diaspora, including the dichotomy between host and home societies, can be criticized from the perspective of mobilities and post-society sociology (Urry 2000). Migration seems to be only one aspect on a continuum of mobility types including tourism, virtual travels and other movements. In this paper, I want to present a different view on migrant filmmakers. Instead of looking at migrant filmmakers as ‘exilic’, ‘diasporic’ or ‘ethnic’, I take the cultural economy as a starting point. In contemporary metropolitan cities, mass production has declined in favor of an economy where more and more ‘cultural goods’ are produced and consumed (Lash & Urry, 1994). The production and consumption of unique symbolic experiences has attracted the attention of the United Nations (2008) who recognized the importance of creativity and cultural diversity for the growth of the global economy.

My hypothesis is that the cultural economy with its demand for unique if not exotic images creates opportunities for migrant filmmakers. By crossing boundaries, migrants are expected to produce new ways of thinking, seeing, imagining and creating. Therefore, migrants can be called ‘intercultural innovators’ (Bloomfield & Bianchini 2004). Using the theoretical framework of migrant entrepreneurship (Rath & Kloosterman, 2000), I investigate how migrant filmmakers use their social, human and cultural capital to pursue a career in local and global film industries. I argue that migrants who are exploiting their transnational networks have more chances to make a career as a filmmaker than those who do not use these mobilities. In order to point out how local cultural policies shape the content and the narratives of migrant filmmakers, I compare filmmakers in two smaller world cities, Brussels and Amsterdam, and their links to other places in the world.
Panels and Abstracts

Panel 5: Mobile Methods

Corinne Fowler and Robert Crawshaw, Lancaster University

Alternative cartographies of social space: using literary narratives of migration in social science research

As the blurred boundaries between documentary, memory and ‘re-imaginings’ of personal experience have become more intensively theorized, creative writing is re-emerging as an important potential resource for Social Science research. This is especially true with regard to the type of mobility entailed in migration. This paper advances a methodology for utilising creative fiction in mobilities research, arguing that certain types of literary text offer fresh perspectives on the overlapping layers of experience which characterise the condition of cultural displacement, bringing together the historical, the global and the local within a single, multiply constituted, ‘imagined space’. We argue that such literary accounts can be considered as a data source in their own right, complementing social science research methodologies grounded in ‘real-life’ observation and offering hypotheses for subsequent ethnographic verification.

Through the narrative processes of metaphorical transfer and space-time compression, Joe Pemberton’s auto-bio-graphical novel Forever and Ever Amen (2000) demonstrates the potential of narratives informed by the experience of migration to present “alternative cartographies of social space” (Rouse 1991), most particularly Caribbean Manchester. The social relevance of such narrative representations is further demonstrated by their ‘envelopment’ within mainstream discourses, thereby illustrating how they ‘articulate’ with existing social norms.

Anu Hirsiaho, University of Tampere, Finland

On the writing process of Paperland: Ethnographic Fiction between Auto-Moments and Alienation Effects

Paperland is a fictional saga of a Finnish multicultural suburb in transit. Multiculturalism in a peripheral EU country such as Finland is still a recent entry into the national vocabulary and imagery; a much contested set of ideas that does not become accepted overnight. The challenges to multiculturalism do not only rise from the extreme right groups. There are also more subtle processes of exclusion happening at the level of everyday life, some of which are institutionally produced and maintained.

Paperland refers to the machinery that keeps some migrants firmly in the realm of re-training and third sector employment, whereas others are not required the same initiation rites into Finnishness and Finnish language, based on their higher education and professional specialization. In addition to Finnish and English language skills, literacy in the Western alphabet is one key determining factor in defining wanted and unwanted new arrivals.

I have chosen to compress the findings of my three-year-long fieldwork in the form of ethnographic fiction. In this paper, I discuss the writing process of Paperland, and the choice between different genres of ethnographic writing. On one hand, to what extent do theories of auto/ethnography support the writing process, and, on the other hand, what kinds of processes of alienation, distancing, or citing Ruth Behar, “tenderminded toughmindedness” are needed to make the text communicate with various audiences?
Panels and Abstracts

Paul Booth, Manchester Metropolitan University

Travel Blogging: Narrative Commodity

…A man is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his life as if he were recounting it. But you have to choose: to live or to recount…

Jean-Paul Sartre

In traveller enclaves around the world a tradition of verbal storytelling exists. Stories of adventure, the authentic and the exotic commodify the travel experience. Drawing on Bourdieu, Desforges discusses travel as a form of cultural capital, which serves as a sign of distinction and enables the traveller to gain access to elevated social classes both during and following the travel experience. In these ways, cultural capital is viewed almost as a negative, or something that further separates the power class differential between tourist and Other. The obsession with the periphery within travellers ‘is often bound to the collection and appropriation of identities of the exotic Other, through touristic commodities, experiences and stories that collectively lead to the reconstitution of embodied identity’. The adventure therefore commodifies the experience, but further distances itself from the authentic.

Blogging sites provide us with a simulation of the travel journey. The narrative created by the travel blogger is one that condenses time and space to recall and give structure to the adventure journey. To quote Jean-Paul Satre ‘For an occurrence to become an adventure, it is necessary for one to recount it’. For the writer it is the creation of the narrative of experience that justifies, and gives existence to, the adventure. The travel adventure narrative therefore works on two levels: that of the remote experience of travel and travel in its actuality. The skill of the blogger is to recall these travel narratives that live up to the remote fantasy by ordering narrative time. For the reader the fantasy of travel remains the adventure through the simulation of the experience.
Panels and Abstracts

Panel 6: The Invisible City

Lei Chin Pang, University of Sussex

An Absent Presence: Mobility in Wong Kar Wai’s Cinematic Hong Kong

When urban issues and the Hong Kong director Wong Kar Wai’s films are both taken into consideration in cultural studies, a question is posed: if his films are such key texts to understand contemporary Hong Kong as many scholars and critics have stated, why is the current Hong Kong so often absent from these films? He has so far made ten films, of which only three of their narratives happen in the current Hong Kong. The rest of his films are either set in a foreign country, as in Happy Together, or in the past of Hong Kong, as in 2046, or even in an imaginary ancient world, as in Ashley of Time.

To explore the implication of Hong Kong’s absence in the films, I argue that it is necessary for Wong to use the spatial others and temporal others to present Hong Kong since it is a city in mobility due to its colonial history, migrant population, and its position in today’s globalization. In other words, Wong’s films are often the stories about somewhere else because the definition of Hong Kong is better clarified by mobility: travel, migration and fluid identity. Hong Kong’s mobility can be seen as pathology—as a migrant city occupied by the British colonizers, invaded by the Japanese imperialists, handed-over to the Chinese Communists, Hong Kong has always been in instability and uncertainty with its extraordinary history. However, it is not the only way to understand Hong Kong’s culture. The culture of mobility, homelessness and hybridity in Wong’s cinematic Hong Kong is also common, universal and paradigmatic in the age of globalization. More radically, Hong Kong’s culture, often known as a marginal one, can even be seen as the centre of the new culture in our time of mobility.

Tai-Chiung Chang, St. John’s University, Taipei, Taiwan

Moving Subjectivity: Rewriting Hong Kong in Wong Kar-wai’s 2046

This study appropriates Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva’s reflections on “writing” to investigate the dialectic structure of Wong’s film narrative in 2046 (2004). Wong Kar-wai’s earlier films have shown his obsessive attention to Hong Kong and his autobiographical desire for revising its history. In the Mood for Love (2000) nostalgically represents a 1960s Hong Kong and explores the protagonists, Chou and Su’s haunting opaque desire and love. 2046 continues the nostalgic setting of Hong Kong by Chou’s wandering life in a small hotel in Hong Kong. Later in room 2047 of the hotel, Chou finishes his autobiographical novel about an ideal space and time, 2046, “where nothing ever changes.”

Taking Chou’s novel writing as the “poetic element” in Wong’s films, which intermittently displaces Wong’s narrative of 1960s Hong Kong, this study shifts Chou in 2046 from a knight figure of the courtly love in IML to what Julia Kristeva calls “subject in process.” That is, with the sensory codes in Chou’s novel writing such as the scientific dreamscape of Hong Kong, the ecstatic distortion of people from Chou’s life in the 1960s, and the laggard robot attendant on the express, 2046 displays both Chou’s repressed inner world and the rhythmic patterns of his new subjectivity.

In his writing process, Chou comes to realize his unconscious search for the haunting old love. With Chou’s endless search, Wong explores the wounded minds of the people in the post-handover Hong Kong: “how long does it take to leave 2046?” Wong’s narrative shifts between the turmoil of the 1960s and the eternal promise of 2046 expose his anxiety over Hong Kong’s uncertain subjectivity after 2046, which is one year before the scheduled end of China’s “one country, two systems” agreement regarding the administration of the region. In this sense, the uncertain poetic elements in the film can be Wong’s attempts to rewrite Hong Kong’s disrupted history.
Panels and Abstracts

Nicola Mann, University of Rochester, New York, USA
*Portal: A Journey through the Subterranean World of Daniel Roth’s Cabrini Green Forest*

In 2004, Daniel Roth exhibited Cabrini Green Forest at the Donald Young Gallery in Chicago. Roth’s installation included documentary evidence of a mythic forest which exists within a secret underground tunnel connecting the Metropolitan Correctional Facility in Chicago’s Loop with the Cabrini-Green housing project in the city’s Near North Side. Central to Roth’s installation is a fibreglass well or, as the artist refers to it, Portal. Portal invites the gallery visitor to cross the threshold to the subterranean world and explore the unseen catacombs below. Accepting Roth’s invitation, my paper interprets a ‘journey’ through the artist’s underground world.

In making clear the relationship between fantastic dislocations of space and the site specificity of the housing project, Roth identifies a current conflict which is all too real in the hearts and minds of many Cabrini-Green residents. Today, the project is filled with heavy-duty demolition equipment in the late stages of a ten-year urban renewal initiative entitled The Plan for Transformation. This $1.6 billion scheme demands that 60,000 public housing residents move into mixed-income neighbourhoods scattered around the city.

Ordered to pack up and leave behind not only their homes but also lifelong friends and support networks, the residents have, quite literally, had their roots yanked from beneath their feet. Reflecting the scholarship of sociologist Mindy Fullilove who asserts that the relocation process involved in urban renewal causes “root shock,” my paper charts the ‘journey’ of a community rising up to defend its turf. From the quiet protests of independent shop owners who refuse to sell up to the bulldozing moneymen, to the dogged determination of church leaders who advocate for the preservation of local murals, I highlight the need to recognize some tenants as “spatial actors” who “use the space” of public housing as a productive site of social action, mobility and hope (Kevin Fox Gotham & Krista Brumley, 2002; Gotham, 2003).
Panel 7: Creative Dis/Locations

Creative practices are inextricable from processes of socio-economic mobility. The movement from one place to another, whether from ‘home’ to ‘host’ or between classed, racialised and gendered spaces in the same local or national context, involves processes of dislocation and emplacement that not only foreground but are in part constituted by differences in cultural and creative practices. Such dislocations are mobilising forces – comprised of productive mobilities that involve meetings between different practices, paradigms and forms that may be ‘alien’ to each other, that are sometimes hostile, sometimes difficult, but deeply creative, as the complex processes of everyday life and cultural hybridisation always are. Moreover, such mobilities are both hampered and energised by the movement between the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ of the spaces of social and cultural power. These spaces are both tangible and intangible; they are inscribed on the physical landscape, in the structures of institutions, in the workings of the creative industries.

The work that the members of this panel are involved with could all be seen as tracing and facilitating these mobilities between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ – that have the aim not of the assimilation of subaltern creativities to the ‘inside’, but that strive to enable a lasting mobile process between creative forms, social and cultural spaces, disciplines and institutions. At the same time, both mobility and creativity, like the ‘projects’ of community, identity and belonging in which they are often employed, also require ‘anchoring’, a point of fixity. When projects end, do the multiple mobilities engaged and produced dissipate? How can the shifting and other-worldly energies of creativity and mobility be translated into enduring social and cultural change?

Nessa O’Mahony, Artist in Residence, John Hume Institute of Global Irish Studies, University College Dublin
Anne Mulhall, School of English, Drama & Film, University College Dublin

Multiple Mobilities and the Migrant Woman Writer: The Women Writers in the New Ireland Network

The migrant woman writer is multiply mobile: potentially marked by multiple categories of ‘otherness’, her movements between margins and centres of power are complex and diverse. While ‘mobility’ might suggest a straightforwardly positive capability, this kind of mobility, like Chela Sandoval’s “differential consciousness”, can be hard-won from experiences of dislocation and exclusion. The initial journey between home place and host country is, perhaps, never finished, but rather continues as a permanent mobility between multiple material, affective and psychic spaces. However difficult, there is much creative potential intrinsic to such diverse mobilities. Nonetheless, the problems facing the migrant woman writer are as multiple as the mobilities she engages. How does a woman writer in a new country negotiate the dislocations and exclusions she might experience so that she might continue her creative work? In 2007, the Women Writers in the New Ireland (WWINI) Network was established as a space for the facilitation of creative work by migrant women writers in Ireland. Drawing on the experiences of network members, as well as of those of the network facilitators, this paper explores the multiple mobilities that are central to the network. The network includes women who are positioned very differently in relation to cultural, social and political power. How does the network negotiate these differential experiences of dislocation and emplacement between the network members and between the women writers and network facilitators? How do issues of physical mobility impact upon women’s access to the network? In what way is the work of these women writers mobilising change in hegemonic paradigms of Irish writing and identity? How does the act of writing that the network facilitates mobilise energies within the women writers themselves?

Alice Feldman, School of Sociology, University College Dublin

Placing Voices, Voicing Places: Community Stories and Multicultural Belongings

An interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration, the Placing Voices, Voicing Places project sought to trace the voices silent in and arguably silenced by the machinations of state-based formations central in the reproduction of hegemonic notions of Irish ‘heritage’, history and national identity. Through their narrative and artistic renderings gained by means of participatory research methods involving oral history, local folklore, photography and digital storytelling, this work illuminates the ‘belongings’ of working class ‘locals’ and migrants new to the area – what they carry with them and what they pass along: what they remember, keep, perform and share on their journeys toward finding their glocalised ‘place’ in contemporary Irish society. Their stories are marked by both the undercurrents of constant change and transformation, and their capacities to also ‘move’ others as their tellers negotiate the complex dynamics and transitions involved in being both ‘from’ and ‘of’ a place(s) (Brah 1999). This work also considers the role of the local community cultural workers and ‘community stewards’ who are endeavouring to move and re/position these voices from the hidden contexts of everyday lives into the visible, public arenas of local and national debate. Reflecting on both the process and the artistic output, this paper explores the role of creative agency – of residents, community practitioners and academics -- in terms of knowledge outcomes as well as personal transformation, in the cultivation of communities of practice and belonging.
Panels and Abstracts

Ian Russell, Curator, Placing Voices – Voicing Places
Curating Collaborative Heritages: Dissonance, Relational Aesthetics and Some Lessons from Inner-City Dublin

Heritage spaces are often assumed to be ‘from the past’ or ‘just about the past’. Heritage is assumed to be a ‘stoppage’ of time. The choice to create ‘heritage’ is, however, a contemporary decision requiring collaboration and social partnership. Through a recalibration of temporal expectations of ‘heritages’ or ‘heritage spaces’, the sentiments of heritage can be approached as highly contested, fluid and mobile desires to create discursive spaces for the interrogation and negotiation of social life. Approaching heritage as a contemporary, performative choice within social spaces, this paper will illustrate the value of iterative conversations, relational aesthetics and collaborative arts in the opening of heritage spaces to collaborative curation. It will explore synergies between curatorial practices in both heritage and the arts and reflect on my growing body of curatorial work in contemporary art undertaken since a departure from academic archaeological theory. A case study will be made of the collaborative arts project ‘Placing Voices – Voicing Places: Dublin’s Contemporary Past’ (www.projecthumedia.com/ucdcp.html). Engaging issues of mobility, dislocation, and change inherent to the expressions of self and community within contemporary life, the project explored the fluidity of heritage spaces and the ubiquitous presence of ‘heritages’ in the negotiation of social spaces in Inner-City Dublin. More information on my academic and curatorial work can be found at: www.iarchitectures.com.
Panels and Abstracts

Panel 8: Travel Writing

David Ashford, University of Surrey
“Piccadilly Circus is my Playground”: The Birth of British Pop Culture in Sam Selvon’s London Underground

Focussing on the London-based fiction of Sam Selvon, this paper suggests that the city’s public transit system has acted as the crucible for a cultural metamorphosis: for that intense phase of cross-cultural interaction between immigrants from the West Indies and the white working-classes in the UK that has since been identified by critics like Dick Hebdige as the basis for Britain’s Pop Culture. Our embryonic Pop Culture is shown making its home in a space that previous writers and artists had consistently represented as an oppressive non-place. In celebrating this surprising relationship between the new popular culture & London’s aging metropolitan transport networks, it will revealed that Selvon’s fictional material was in fact paving the way for a novel and revolutionary Urban Aesthetic, in which the Tube has played a prominent part.

Estela Marine Roig, Escola Universitaria de Turisme i Oci - Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain
Narratives, images and identities on the move. Study of the Catalan coast through more than one century of tourist guidebooks

Tourism is one of the major and most powerful expressions of the present hyper-mobile world. It carries with it and reflects the main changes our society has undertaken in relation to mobility. The beach and the coast (tourist places par excellence) are symbols of the shift in the conception of space and the ‘mobility turn’ (Urry 2007). Thus, the aim of this study is to see how narratives, myths, representations/images and identities of the coastal tourists have evolved over the past century and to determine which has been the role of transport and movement in such transformations. Actually, the importance of the auto-mobility embodied in the car is widely evident within tourist narratives.

The Catalan Coast, as one of the major tourist areas in the world, has been chosen as the geographical space of analysis. The best object of study for this purpose has been found to be the tourist guidebook. This has existed for more than one century (thus being suitable for evolutionary analysis) and belongs to the visual technologies of reproduction (Urry 2007), inseparable from mobility and tourism. Guidebooks direct the tourists’ attention to certain points, and therefore propel a foreign image of a region. As its very same name indicates, they do not just “guide” tourists to certain places but also through definite paths. Moreover, guidebooks respond or adapt to tourists’ expectations reflecting their perceptions, in a way. Guidebooks contain both valuable visual and written information that complement each other. Such information has been content analysed, the latter being the more suitable methodology of study. The chosen guidebooks proceed from four major editorials (two French and two German), two of them (one of each nationality) belonging to auto-mobile/car associations.

Fiona Doloughan, University of Surrey
Spaces of the imagination: mobility and creativity in contemporary narratives of travel

This paper will reflect on aspects of the creative imagination in relation to notions of mobility and stasis, narrative consciousness and image-making. In the context of a discussion of two works, Alain de Botton’s The Art of Travel and Geoff Dyer’s Yoga For People Who Can’t Be Bothered To Do It, it will seek to investigate the relationship between writing and movement; writing and critical reflection; image and imagination; and the creative tensions around genre. It will compare and contrast the episodic and picaresque character of Dyer's work with the narrative framing of de Botton’s meditations on travel and discuss their effects on the construction of spaces of the imagination.
<table>
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<th>Speakers</th>
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| **Elisa Antz**  
Justus Liebig University, Germany            |
| **David Ashford**  
University of Surrey, UK                      |
| **Paul Booth**  
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK         |
| **Tai-Chiung Chang**  
St. John's University, Taipei, Taiwan          |
| **Elly Clarke**  
Artist and Curator, Germany/UK                 |
| **Emma Cocker**  
Nottingham Trent University, UK                |
| **Fiona Doloughan**  
University of Surrey, UK                       |
| **Alice Feldman**  
University College Dublin, Ireland              |
| **Corinne Fowler**  
Lancaster University, UK                       |
| **Sarah Gibson**  
University of Surrey, UK                       |
| **Anu Hirsiaho**  
University of Tampere, Finland                  |
| **Stefan Höhne**  
Centre for Metropolitan Studies, Germany       |
| **Petra Hroch**  
University of Alberta, Canada                   |
| **Patricia Johnson**  
University of Newcastle, Australia               |
| **Reina Lewis**  
London College of Fashion, UK                   |
| **Churnjeet Mahn**  
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| **Nicola Mann**  
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| **Anne Mulhall**  
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| **Nishevita Murthy**  
Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India     |
| **Nessa O'Mahony**  
University College Dublin, Ireland               |
| **Alex Rotas**  
University of Cardiff, UK                        |
| **Ian Russell**  
Independent Curator, Ireland                    |
| **Arne Saeyes**  
University of Amsterdam / Kadir Has University Istanbul |
| **Hing Tsang**  
University of Surrey, UK                          |
| **John Urry**  
Lancaster University, UK                          |
| **Ginette Verstraete**  
VU University Amsterdam, Holland                    |
| **Marion Wynne-Davies**  
University of Surrey, UK                           |
| **Li Zhanpong**  
University of Sussex, UK                         |
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