



Eastern European Cinema Workshop

24th March 2014
Gilmorehill Center,
Room 408

Are you interested in the cinema of Eastern Europe? Do you want to know more about this neglected area? Are you curious what happened to the film industry in the socialist decades and what is happening now? Do you want to try how to shoot in an 'Eastern European way'? Then come along! Scotland's first Eastern European Cinema Workshop in the Gilmorehill Center!

Workshop Programme

9.45-10.00 Registration (tea and coffee provided)

10.00-10.10 Welcome (Anna Batori, University of Glasgow)

10.10-10.40 Zsuzsanna Varga (Lecturer, University of Glasgow): Socialist Censorship and Self-Censorship

10.40-11.10 Malgorzata Bugaj (PhD candidate, University of Edinburgh): Between historical symbols and sensual details: the films of György Pálfi and Jan Jakub Kolski

11.10-12.10 Andras W. Forgacs (Screenwriter): Why Are Hungarian Films Bad? (Screenwriting 1945-1989)

12.10-13.30 Lunch

Workshop

13.30-15.00 Csaba Bollók (Director): *The Palm Under Pressure* – Connotative Filmmaking Methods (Lecture and Workshop)

15.00-15.15 Break (tea and coffee provided)

15.15-16.30 Csaba Bollók (Director): *The Palm Under Pressure* – Connotative Filmmaking Methods (Lecture and Workshop)

Proposals

Dr Zsuzsanna Varga (University of Glasgow): Socialist Censorship and Self-Censorship

The talk will focus on the diverse aspects of censorship and self-censorship Hungary's state socialism. Contextualising the processes within the institutional and legislative regulations introduced in the aftermath of the 1956 revolution, the paper will first offer a comparative description of the controlling mechanisms that ruled the domestic production of culture as well as the import of foreign cultural products, arguing that the most developed strategies aimed at the control of textual production rather than the visual one. The paper will most specifically revisit the period of the late 1970s-early 1980s and show examples of lifted censorship, primarily in the film industry. The focus will be on the representation of the 1950s, which provided a fertile ground for directors to negotiate the need to comply with expectations of the party bureaucracy, whilst, subverting such expectations, also enabled them to represent well-known but previously unspoken truths about Stalinism and 1956.

Dr Zsuzsanna Varga (University of Glasgow, Central and Eastern European Studies) is a lecturer in Hungarian Studies at the University of Glasgow. Her research interests focus around Hungarian culture and literature, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Malgorzata Bugaj (University of Edinburgh): Between historical symbols and sensual details: the films of György Pálfi and Jan Jakub Kolski

The paper explores the works of György Pálfi and Jan Jakub Kolski, filmmakers born, respectively, in communist Hungary and Poland, who directed their debut features in the post-communist era. I begin with a broader discussion of the films which deal with the difficult political past of both countries, frequently commenting on twentieth century history through allegories and symbols. Here I analyse Pálfi's *Taxidermia* (2006) and Kolski's *Burial of a Potato* (1990) and *Keep Away from the Window* (2000). I then move on to consider the depictions of simple, hermetic worlds presented with a tint of magic realism, specifically in Pálfi's *Hukkle* (2002) and Kolski's *Jasminum* (2006). I suggest that their inquiry into the haptic capacity of cinema (in particular the appeal to smell and touch) and attention to minute details dispel stereotypes about Eastern European films simultaneously revealing some of the unconventional storytelling practices of the region.

Malgorzata Bugaj (PhD Student in Film Studies, University of Edinburgh) is a Film Studies tutor and a film curator based at the University of Edinburgh. She has received MA degrees in English Literature and Culture Studies from the University of Gdansk, Poland. She is currently completing her PhD thesis on the presentation of the body in the films of Alexander Sokurov, György Pálfi and Athina Rachel Tsangari. Her academic interests also revolve around Eastern European cinema, expanded cinema, and avant-garde films. She is a co-founder of KinoKlub, a cinema collective regularly screening works by such artists as Walerian Borowczyk, Jan Lenica, Jan Svankmajer, and the Quay Brothers

Andras W. Forgacs (Screenwriter): Why Are Hungarian Films Bad? (Screenwriting 1945-1989)

The lecture will examine the role and the contributions of screenwriters and dramaturgists through their work and contemporary sources between 1945 and 1989 – with an outlook of the current state of Hungarian screenwriting. We'll get an overview of the ever changing role of the screenwriter and dramaturgist in filmmaking throughout the period.

The inner workings and practices of film studios in Hungary will also be examined along with the relationships between filmmakers and decision makers. By introducing key figures of the censoring superstructure, we'll have a chance to see the philosophy, policy and practical everyday workings of oversight of this prestigious and therefore closely observed segment of the arts. Also the question will be asked: is there such a phenomenon as 'self-censorship'?

Through personal recollections the lecture attempts to paint portraits of these screenwriters and dramaturgists, the mostly unknown and unrecognised people who worked on the best known examples of Hungarian cinema.

Andras W. Forgacs (Screenwriter) has worked on a number of film, television and theatre productions, most recently writing two episodes of critically acclaimed police drama Hacktion in his native Hungary. His latest short film, 'A Strange Kind of Love' has been officially selected at over a dozen film festivals worldwide. It was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the Long Island International Film Expo 2013, also won the award for Best Original Score. 'Candlestick' is András's debut feature as a writer. He is currently involved with a number of ongoing feature film projects.

Further information: <http://amegofilm.com/management/screenwriters/w-forgacs-andras/17>

**Csaba Bollók (Director): Lecture and Workshop
The Palm Under Pressure – Connotative Filmmaking Methods**

Workshop - For a smaller group of students (10-12 participants) who are interested in modelling a movie scene situation, a workshop will be held. Signing up can be after the lecture, so you could see if you feel like working with Csaba Bollók as actors and director (in three hours).

A strange thing in certain historical times of dictatorship and censorship that we had gone through in Hungary during the decades of Communism (1948-1989), and what might come back even in weaker democracies when economic times get tough, is that political pressure actually inspires artists to find their own freedom in different codes, hidden meanings and subversive ways of expression. In the long run, this new language well understood for all

under political pressure will necessarily lead to the erosion of monolithic structures as this has happened in East Europe and is happening all over the world where artistic freedom is limited or constrained to serve political games.

Csaba Bólok will show examples of how filmmakers of the period played with and against political power and also what has happened after „the change” when, getting rid of the enemy by overnight, filmmakers had to realize that the real enemy, always been referred to as „them” or „the other”, actually lingers on and exists within - themselves.

Some striking cultural connections will be revealed, as how British singer Paul Weller comes together with legendary Hungarian filmmaker Miklós Jancsó, plus some other surprises!

Csaba Bólok (Writer-Director) started as an independent filmmaker and graduated as a film director at the Hungarian Film Academy in 1994. He studied filmmaking several times in the United States, and made some shorts at the legendary Béla Balázs Stúdió. *North by North* (1999) was awarded the Hungarian Critics' Prize as best debut feature, *Iska's Journey* (2007) won Grand Prize at the Hungarian Film Week, world premiered at the Berlinale, and has been a great international success since then. In 2009, he's been Hungary's official Academy Award nominee at „best foreign language movie” competition. At present, he is working on a contemporary Trilogy (*Sophie and The Secrets of The Sun* - in pre-production, 2014), while giving lectures at the Eszterházy Károly College, Hungary, running workshops at Midpoint Central European Scriptwriting Centre, Praha and elsewhere in Europe.