

School of Culture & Communication

Work in Progress Day

Thursday 6 November 2008

All panel sessions will be held in the Economics and Commerce Building (Theatrettes 1, 2 or 3; and the Wood Theatre)

Keynote Speaker

Macgeorge Honorary Fellow
Professor Donald Preziosi

345 pm - 445 pm

Old Arts, Theatre D

Chair: Professor Charles Green

Donald Preziosi is a member of the History Faculty at Oxford and Emeritus Professor of art history and critical theory at UCLA. Educated at Harvard, he is the author of a dozen books on art history, archaeology, and the history of museums and cultural institutions. His new book, *Enchanted Credulities* (2008), examines the relations between art and religion.

New Postgraduate Journal

PLATFORM

Journal of Media and Communication

PLATFORM: Journal of Media and Communication is a biannual open-access online publication started by the Media and Communications Program, School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne. It is planned to develop this journal as an international journal.

PLATFORM aims:

- to provide a platform for Media and Communication postgraduates to showcase, share and support the work of one another through publication, peer-review and comments
- to provide a platform for emerging Media and Communication scholars to build a publication record, and to subsequently contribute to other academic publications
- to increase scholarly appreciation of Media and Communication research across diverse theoretical, methodological and empirical platforms
- to encourage international awareness and collaboration through the discussion of issues associated with the rising significance of multiple media and communication platforms for societies and individuals across various globalized and localized environments.

PLATFORM invites postgraduate submissions for its first issue, to be published online in June 2009. Submissions will be refereed by an international board of established and emerging scholars working across diverse paradigms in Media and Communication. We also invite postgraduate researchers to volunteer to peer-review submissions.

For more information and the Call for Papers, visit:

<http://www.culture-communication.unimelb.edu.au/platform>

Esther Chin, Amira Firdaus, Elias Mokuia Nyatete & Gin Chee Tong
Editors

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Panel 1*G13 (Th. 3)*

Chair: Scott McQuire

Anna Drummond, *Art History*

“A Revamped Wedding: The Marriage of the Virgin in Italian Art of the Counter-Reformation.”

Many glorious works of art portraying the Virgin Mary's wedding to Joseph were produced in Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Yet in the sixteenth century, the way in which Marriage of the Virgin was represented changed dramatically. The comic and curious motifs from the Apocrypha which had previously graced such images disappeared, and artists instead portrayed a calm and reverent image of holy matrimony. This paper examines these changes to the iconography of the Marriage of the Virgin produced in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Italy. It relates them to the artistic and social reforms introduced by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), as well as contemporary changes in popular devotion.

Rita Horanyi, *English*

“Melancholy, Memory and Beauty in J.M. Ledgard's *Giraffe* and Péter Nádas's *A Book of Memories*.”

This paper will examine the way in which beauty and melancholy are related in J.M. Ledgard's *Giraffe* by drawing on Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic explanation of melancholia. This paper will suggest that the desire for transcendent beauty stemming from melancholy, presented throughout the novel as an escapist drive from the banality of communist Czechoslovakia towards death, is problematic, as the resignation of this position is both caused by and plays into the hands of a totalitarian regime. I will then move on to consider the relationship between melancholy and memory, and the politics of memory under communism, particularly focusing on the Hungary and Péter Nádas's novel *A Book of Memories*.

Alexander Lambert, *Cultural Studies*

“Embedded Identity in Online Social Networks: the case of Facebook”

My thesis addresses questions of network structure that arise through novel online identity practices. That is, I examine how the organization of complex, dynamic and expansive online social networks come about. For many the internet was meant to be the antithesis of the place-based community, where users could easily negotiate an expansive array of weak and fleeting, yet information rich social ties. Yet networks are increasingly becoming organized through place-based strong ties and various forms of social capital drawn from offline behaviour. I argue that new forms of identity performance are critical to understanding these new forms of organization and the online architectures that support them. Facebook is a tool for expanding weak social ties, yet it is also embedded in ‘strong’ social histories. It is also by nature a device where sociality is accomplished through a dynamic articulation of identity statements. I base my research questions on Facebook’s primary function of interaction through observation - to see and be seen, to read and be read. I argue that it engenders both ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ identity. The former emerges through its influence on confidence, competitive self-evaluation and belonging. The latter through the social manipulation of brands contained within ‘invitations’, ‘fandom’, ‘gifts’ and ‘groups’ with possibilities for creative individuality and bricolage.

I ask first, how both strong and weak identities arise through individuals’ use of these facilities. Second, I ask how this logic of embedded, confident and competitive identity relates to other dominant social networks like Myspace, where identity seems to involve the self-fashioning of celebrity and the internalisation of the logic of commodity culture. Third, I propose a framework for understanding these questions through the field of critical internet studies and the work of Clay Shirky, Michel Bauwens and Yokai Benkler. These thinkers address the emergence of networks structures through user activity on the content layer, through popularity and through reputation. I argue that these ‘reputation economies’ can be understood through prevailing trends in embedded identity, and propose this theme as a key analytical theory to understanding the relationship between the interconnected social networks that form the topology of the internet.

Christopher Rowe, *Screen (Cinema) Studies*

“Playing with Time: Self-representation in Narrative Cinema”

Self-representation as an artistic and literary trope, such as the *mise en abyme* or the story-within-the-story, has existed for centuries. My thesis examines the implications of cinematic self-representation through a study of films which incorporate into their narratives the very fact that they are products of filmmaking. I address self-representation as the site of a gap in the work’s mimetic or narrative structure, as in pictorial and literary self-representation, and, further, as the opening of a temporal paradox through which we may apprehend the manifold forms and operations of time in cinema. My analysis draws upon Deleuze’s application of the Bergsonian time-image to modern cinema; however, while Deleuze was primarily interested in the philosophical and cognitive structures signified in cinematic expression, my study focuses primarily upon experiences such as shame, desire, and dreaming.

915 am - 1045 am

Session 1

Panel 2

G12 (Th. 2)

Chair: Sean Cubitt

Peter Chambers, *Media & Communications*

“A Crabwise Walk Across A Broken Dream: Christmas Island And The Construction Of The Immigration Reception And Processing Centre”

There are several ways of approaching Christmas Island: as a unique habitat protecting several endangered species of flora and fauna; as the famous migratory site of the red crab; as a promising yet problematic eco-tourism destination; and as a ‘non-self-governing territory’ of the Commonwealth of Australia. The last of these common understandings was thrown into stark relief in 2001 with the events surrounding the Tampa debacle, which included the scramble to excise Christmas Island from the Australian migration zone. The excision of Christmas Island may have been an opportunistic, temporary solution to an unfolding political crisis, but opening the cut also presented the Australian government with an opportunity to implant a permanent ‘solution’ deep inside the wound. With the 2003 construction of Christmas Island’s flexible,

multi-use 'Immigration Reception and Processing Centre' (IRPC) in the excluded heart of Australia's administrative apparatus, the Howard government concretised a long-standing governmental desire, rendering operative Australia's first permanent, purpose-built centre for the efficient, banoptic, pre-emptive management of as yet unknown 'arrivals'. Augmented by the implantation of the IRPC, the importance of Christmas Island has exceeded its diminutive size, marginal geography and the specialised scientific interest. Christmas Island has become integral: as a site for the articulation and separation of Australian territory, a limit of governmental planning and care, a delineating machine for the recognition of alienage, and a privileged site made ready for prolonged periods of abandonment punctuated by arbitrary spasms of governmental intervention and the cold, indefinite embrace of administrative detention. This paper will traverse 'crabwise' across this Christmas Island, first by outlining the general conditions that made the implantation of the IRPC possible, desirable, and 'necessary', before zooming in on some of the specific features of the Centre itself and speculating on what they might tell us about what happens to dreams when dreams become concrete, then break.

Danny Butt, *Media & Communications*

"Creative Practice and Research Assessment"

The possibility for supporting creative practice as a form of research has received extensive consideration both among creative academic practitioners and research policy-makers. This has been driven by a number of factors, among them an organisational need to account for professional creative practice among and expanding academic staff whose work contained an exploratory and innovative component; and growth in postgraduate programmes in the creative sector requiring equivalents to the knowledge-transfer models that have structured postgraduate study in other fields (UKCGE, 2002). In countries built on the British education model, the development of research assessment exercises (including the UK's RAE, New Zealand's PBRF, and Australia's RQF) have enabled recognition of the homologies between creative practice and research and facilitated the entry of creative practitioners into a formal Research Science and Technology (RS&T) support system for policy purposes. These countries have also rapidly developed various forms of doctoral study, including the PhD, with substantial

creative practice components. In North American higher education, no such policy framework exists and this has caused commentators such as James Elkins to suggest that the entire discussion about creative practice and research is a waste of time in that system. However, collaborations between the art and science domains (and more specifically new media art) have raised interesting practitioner-led dialogues on the kinds of knowledge created and shared between and within these domains. This paper considers the points of tension between these traditions and proposes that creative practices highlight fundamental areas of tension in dominant institutional ways of thinking about knowledge, and recognition of creative practices within RS&T systems represents an opportunity to rethink the systems by which research is undertaken and supported.

Jodi Gallagher, *English*

“Possession and the Seance: The Body of the Witch.”

This paper focuses on a comparison between early modern narratives of possession and descriptions of the Victorian séance in order to explore and define the spectacle of the female body when it is placed within occult discourse. The relationship of the spectacle of exorcism in Loudun to theatrical practice has always been acknowledged, and the theatricality of the nineteenth-century séance is clear, albeit on a smaller, generally domestic, scale - but the continuity between the two has rarely been examined. Differences of geographical and historical setting, cultural milieu, and religious meaning are only a few of the factors that divide these two phenomena, and often prevent all but the most general comparisons relying on discussions of hysteria. This paper argues that there is a continuity between these apparently disparate events in the embodied presence of the designated witch/medium, and the ways in which her body is examined for an apparently authentic 'proof' of its otherness. Reading through the lens of de Certeau's theories of possession and the Foucauldian 'spectacle of the scaffold', and descriptions of mesmerism and the séance in the nineteenth century, I argue that the possessed nuns at Loudun and the mediums of the nineteenth century both display attributes of the witch figure - fragmentation, dehumanisation, and a fracturing of the autonomous individual self that allows for the 'residence' of the supernatural. This analysis will explicate the ways

in which the nineteenth century adapts the subject position of the witch to a changing political and cultural landscape.

Michael Dieter, *Cultural Studies*

“Database Portraits: Visualisation and Noopolitics.”

The management and processing of complex data is an important organisational dynamic that determines governance within network societies. Founded on practices from science, economics and interface design, information visualisation is routinely used as predictive graphic technique for a diverse range of disciplinary fields, from modelling biological formations to devising social policy. The selection, filtering and statistical analysis of data is, as a consequence, a highly political activity, but one that implies a break with traditional forms of representation. As artists Tom Corby and Gavin Bailey observe, this mode of visuality is less concerned with simply indexing an image to an external referent, but with abstracting an entire environment, which is then measured and organised graphically through a multi-layered process. This intensive domain is neither strictly physical nor cultural, but opens onto a new dimension of aesthetics that structures and constrains the virtuality of the social. In particular, data visualisation enables an orientation toward the constitution of actual worlds that, despite harnessing natural processes, is never a neutral operation: these activities inform and double sociality, but also allow for emergent possibilities of creativity and innovation.

The techniques of information visualisation can, as a result, be theorised as layering machinic perception within a particular regime of control ('patterns' for modulation) or what Maurizio Lazzarato has identified as the importance of precepts, affective and asignifying registers throughout contemporary capitalism. According to his extension of the biopolitical as 'noopolitics', these expressions of digital software can be seen as ushering through a new ontology of power where programmability is harnessed to steer innovation and amplify cognition, while obscuring the hybrid forums carried along with such technological actions. In this paper, I examine the recent database portraiture of Golan Levin in the context of Lazzarato's reading of control societies. On differing scales of intervention, I suggest that pieces such as 'The Secret Lives of Numbers' (2002) and 'The Dumpster' (2006) effectively reveal the collective interweaving of affective, cognitive and

material levels central to network cultures (the noopolitical). However, in doing so, I also argue that they demonstrate something of the contingency underlying these informational paradigms: their insistence on visual knowledge, their fundamental obscurity.

915 am - 1045 am

Session 1

Panel 3

G11 (Th. 1)

Chair: Deirdre Coleman

Linda Weste, *Creative Writing*

“Toward a provisional typology of the verse novel”

Literary analyses of verse novels appear to problematically reflect the past privileging - of narrative genres over poetic genres; plot over character; and the interiority, consciousness, and actions of characters over character embodiment - that has been recently identified in narratological research. Nevertheless, by bringing together insights across disciplinary lines, a rich understanding of the concept of narrative as it pertains to the verse novel could be produced. What is the relationship between narrative and poetry, and plot and character in the verse novel? How might a typology of narrative organising strategies utilised in verse novels provide a framework for verse novel critique? This study will design and develop a set of visual tools (continua) with corresponding descriptive categories for narratological phenomena that are identifiable in verse novels. The applicability of the continua will then be discussed in relation to a diverse sample of verse novels. The anticipated efficacy of the typology will be the framework it provides critics, reviewers and readers for understanding narrative phenomena within the verse novel, a framework that reflects, yet does not delimit the changing possibilities of the verse novel's convergent narrative and poetic form. This paper presents some provisional ideas in the early stages of the development of this typology.

Nicola Hyland

Theatre Studies

“Wherefore Art Thou, Bro’? - Youth and Hybridity in *Romeo and Tusi*”

What happens when you relocate the mythic conflict between the Capulet and Montague clans to the doorsteps of ordinary 'Brown' New Zealanders? Oscar Kightley and Erolia Ifopo's 1997 play "Romeo and Tusi" finds the romantic pursuits of two idealistic teens hindered by a not-so-ancient grudge between Maori and Pasifika communities. This paper focuses on ways that the two protagonists exemplify Homi Bhabha's concept of Cultural Hybridity through their youth, cultural memberships and 'glocal' attitudes. It explores the politics of a forbidden relationship between members of two subjugated communities; where "difference" signifies a threat to the stability of an imagined pure or authentic culture. A hybrid text in its very form, the paper will also explore the way that this adaptation undermines the ideological power of Shakespeare's text in denying its 'universality' for a youthful and othered audience. The discussion will argue that the representation of hybrid youth in the play functions as a means of resistance against fixed constructions of the Other. The seemingly 'rebellious' actions of the two star-crossed lovers are instead interpreted as crucial acts required to lift communities out of insularity and abjection. The discussion is developed from a wider research project exploring four theatre texts which adapt the Romeo and Juliet story into localised cross-cultural narratives in order to explore conflict between indigenous and diasporic communities.

Sashi Nair, English

“‘Not a word of it gets into print’: Public Discourse and the Aestheticization of Desire in Virginia Woolf's 'Orlando'”

Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928) foregrounds its location on the boundary between public and private, the roman à clef genre providing the vehicle for an artistic intervention into public discourse about gender and same-sex desire. While Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, published three years earlier, frames lesbian desire with a sexological narrative that renders it socially and psychologically acceptable, *Orlando* is the public manifestation of a personal relationship, and it betrays Woolf's skepticism toward any naturalized organization of sex, gender and sexuality. Obviously, *Orlando* is not simply biographical, and I will argue that Woolf mobilized the roman à clef genre strategically, in order to facilitate a critical engagement with the institutionalized moral and scientific discourses that dominated the representation of non-normative sexuality in the 1920s.

Orlando's subject is the lesbian aristocrat Vita Sackville-West, and Woolf parodically appropriates the aristocratic code of secrecy that facilitated her affairs. Yet the will to ignorance was also pervasive beyond the bounds of the upper classes, and in a censorious socio-political climate, Woolf was able to represent same-sex desire by self-consciously referencing the epistemological paradox whereby the definitional impossibility of lesbianism comes to denote lesbianism itself. Woolf is concerned with the mechanisms that mediate the public disclosure of sexuality, and in *Orlando* she denaturalizes both moralizing and medicalizing narratives of same-sex eroticism, drawing attention to the hypocrisy and illogic of their regulatory frames. I will argue that Woolf's relationship with Sackville-West impacted upon her aesthetic sensibilities, providing her with the conceptual tools with which to undermine the carefully policed boundaries between that which could be spoken and that which was deemed unsuitable for public consumption.

Jessica Wilkinson, *Creative Writing*
“*Marionette: The Life and Times of Marion Davies*”

My creative thesis is a poetic biography on the life of silent cinema actress Marion Davies. I will discuss the genesis of this project, and briefly outline the content and thematic concerns of this creative thesis. I will also read a selection of poems from this work.

915 am - 1045 am

Session 1

Panel 4
Wood Theatre

Chair: Barbara Creed

Jack Teiwes, *Screen (Cinema) Studies*
“Alan Moore's contribution to the Superman mythos.”

My PhD seeks to examine the Superman multimedia franchise as both a cultural and corporate entity that has undergone many shifts in meaning and interpretation over its seven-decade history and multitude of incarnations across radio,

film, television, and of course the comics that started it all, which have been in continuous publication for seven decades. In examining the many prominent contributors to the Superman mythos across different generations of creators over the decades, one case of particular interest is the contributions of acclaimed comics writer Alan Moore.

Arguably the single most significant contributor to the field of American comics in the last thirty years, Moore's specific body of work on Superman is eclectic, having never been a major ongoing writer on the official property yet providing an important contribution to the character through some memorable standalone tales and two major works that explored the concept of Superman via the use of metafiction, pastiche and analogous themes.

This paper will briefly contextualise Moore's importance in the industry and outline his disparate body of work on the Superman topic before concentrating on an analysis of his late 1990s work on the comic "Supreme", a thinly-veiled analogue of Superman which Moore made even more blatantly an ersatz version of the Man of Steel. Through his use of homage and extensive pastiche, Moore creates a metacommentary about the history of the Superhero genre and the concept of continuity revisionism.

Jocelyn Hargrave, *Publishing & Communications* "Disruptive technology and educational publishing"

To date, the multinationals have monopolised the educational publishing industry. Large multinationals, with their considerable infrastructure, inflexible processes and staff, have high overhead costs. To meet these costs, they publish mostly titles with high-earning potential, while quality books that target a smaller audience, and thus have limited earning potential, are overlooked. Ostensibly, it appears that smaller, independent publishers are unable to compete. This imbalanced relationship may no longer be sustained owing to the disruptive influence of new technologies available to smaller, less financially equipped publishers, and to the fact that multinationals continue to cling to their traditional publishing practices. Originating from Clayton M. Christensen, disruptive technology is 'a technological innovation, product or service that eventually overturns the existing dominant technology or status quo product in the market'. For this qualitative purpose, the traditional publisher represents the 'status

quo', where traditional methods are utilised, such as off-set printing. The smaller, independent publishers represent the 'technological innovation', where new technologies are embraced to both their and their clients' (authors and readers) mutual advantage. Will traditional publishers embrace these new technologies in a similar way, or is it more cost effective to continue with the status quo, thus ironically bringing about their possible decline?

Carina Nandlal, *Art History*

““Carmen” and Goya: Influences on Picasso's designs for “The Three Cornered Hat” (1919)”

The second ballet Picasso designed was an ostensibly Spanish work “The Three-Cornered Hat” (1919). While he collaborated with Spain's foremost composer Manuel de Falla and the choreographer of the Ballets Russes Leonide Massine, Picasso's designs suggest he was interacting more with the ideas of Spain generated by two diverse sources. Firstly, he interpreted and presented his idea of Goya, an artist he had studied as a art student in Madrid and one of Spain's most widely recognised artists. Secondly, Bizet's opera “Carmen” circulated widely during this period and Picasso's designs respond to the powerful ideas it presented about Spain. This paper will engage with Picasso's designs for “The Three-Cornered Hat” as a reworking of two diverse sources both interested in represented Spain in different facets. Thus, “The Three-Cornered Hat” documents Picasso's interactions with his homeland and the cliches that circulated about this nation.

Katarina Damjanov, *Cultural Studies*

“Global heterotopias: cultural production of global common spaces.”

Antarctica, the ocean, the atmosphere (with its host of telecommunications), and outer space are all classified as global commons. They are all large-scale extreme environments in which humans are alien, but they are annexed as an extension of human spaces. Today, the concept of the global commons lies at the crux of contemporary intellectual thought and public concerns, as the nexus that generates global spatial desires, hopes, fears and anxieties. Their present uses, regulation and representation enable alternative ways of mapping the spaces that are currently situated

beyond the local and the national. Along with the expansion of culture's processes into heightened global interconnection, the global commons have emerged as spaces of great importance for humankind's overall progress. The idea of a unified global culture depends on the existence of an opposing global other; Foucault's notion of 'other spaces' exposes the global commons as culture's global counter-sites, as contemporary heterotopias par excellence. These are the frontiers that culture has been cultivating through legal-economic, techno-scientific, and socio-cultural means, attempting to make them 'be'. Yet they are full of the potential to always 'become', while resisting the complete erasure of their otherness. Through reference to the cases studies of Antarctica and the High Seas, this paper will examine how culture currently mediates its own 'globality' through these global heterotopias.

1045 am - 1115 am Morning Tea,
 Eco & Comm Ground Floor Foyer

1115 am - 1245 pm Session 2

Panel 5
G13 (Th. 3)

Chair: Anthony White

Adam Goatley, *Art History*
"Vasari's *Grazia*: A Sceptical Approach"

As we well know Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* falls within a long literary tradition of offering exemplary figures of moral and ethical pedagogy and helped codify, in ideal, the rise of the artists to the courts of Italy. But subtleties found within the text, or upon the textual surface elucidate a more problematic and paradoxical argument centred on rhetorical irony as a foundation for scepticism. Focusing particularly on life writing as a critical practice the aim of my thesis is to research and develop an argument centred on the inherent paradox found within the *Lives*; being the dialectic between artistic freedom and the surveillance and subordination of artists and thus art. This is not simply to propose a repertoire or play off between artist and patron but to interrogate the textual surface of the *Lives* whilst evaluating the

rhetorical strategies arguably employed to artificially transcend the banalities of material existence.

Caitlyn Lehmann, *English*

“Heinel and the Macaronis: Ballet, Patronage and the Gendering of Fashionable Authority”

During the late eighteenth century, two of the most popular ballet dancers to visit London were Anne Heinel and Auguste Vestris. The initial visits of the dancers (in 1771-2 and 1780-81 respectively) were hotly anticipated and both dancers found themselves feted by the city's fashionable elite. The two enjoyed a degree of celebrity which made them household names, and each dancer also caused some increase in the overall popularity of ballet. However, it was the celebrity of Vestris, rather than that of Heinel, which was to have the greatest impact on ballet's appeal in England. This paper will contrast the fashionable elite's responses to the two dancers in order to consider why Heinel's popularity prompted only a small increase in ballet's appeal. The particular focus of this paper will be the way in which elite men and women contested each other's ability to grant fashionable status to dancers. Although Heinel served as a model for women, I shall argue that her celebrity was strongly influenced by her associations with fashionable men, especially the Macaronis. This, in turn, altered the nature of her celebrity and her ability to inspire lasting interest in ballet.

Astarte Rowe, *Fine Arts*

“From Semiotics to Solipsism: A Metacritique of the Discourses of Indigenous Australian Art”

The purpose of this paper - based on research from my first-year of candidature - is to examine the various discourses that have emerged from and been applied to the study of Aboriginal art. Drawing upon implications of Benjamin's theory of translation, I problematise how "translation" in its various modulations has been the *modus operandi* in approaching another culture's creativity. I will analyse what the outcomes of Jennifer Biddle's theory, that a direct engagement with Aboriginal art must bypass a translation into the language of the dominant culture, may obtain.

Nicole Hayes, *Creative Writing*

“Whose Story Is It? Envy, Competitiveness and Ownership of Ideas Among Contemporary Literary Couples”

Acknowledgements of mutual attraction between writers linked to, or even instigated by, the other writer’s work have emerged throughout literary history. Robert Browning famously fell in love with Elizabeth Barrett’s poetry long before he’d met her, while Leonard and Virginia Woolf fashioned their romantic relationship out of a shared love of words. Accordingly, this dynamic continues among many writers today. Kathryn Chetkovich felt a deeper connection with her soon-to-be partner Jonathan Franzen after she’d “met him on the page” , and Franzen himself admitted to falling in love with his first wife, poet Valerie Cornell, because of her ability to deliver smart, insightful analyses of literature. But what happens to their writing when these writers choose to live together and share their lives? How do they negotiate the potentially treacherous waters of envy and competition in the literary world --- or, as Lynette Felber says, “disengage the personal from the professional”? And, of the writers who produce autobiographical fiction, how do these writers negotiate “ownership” of ideas and experiences, when so many of these experiences might be shared between both writers in the relationship? These are the questions I will consider in this paper.

1115 am - 1245 pm

Session 2

Panel 6

G12 (Th. 2)

Chair: Ingrid Volkmer

Dan Torre, *Screen (Cinema) Studies*

“Processing the Animated Documentary”

In its investigation of the animated documentary, this paper will consider linkages between animation, process philosophy, cognition and documentary film. Initially, this paper will propose a new model through which to frame the animation form and process, drawing loosely upon Deleuze’s notion of the film-image. This model will then be applied to the animated documentary film and its interrogation of actuality. It will further

consider the animated documentary in terms of ‘fictional objects’, the ‘subjunctive’, and a new hybrid body; the icon-index dialectic.

The discussion will be focused, not upon the animated representation of actuality, but instead upon the process of actuality becoming animation. Ultimately, it will demonstrate that the animated documentary enjoys a privileged position of multifarious complexity that locates it beyond the traditional interpretation of the documentary film.

Tanja Meyerhofer, *Media & Communications*

“Constructions of ‘the National’ among Transnational Public Service Content Providers”

Constructions of ‘the National’ among Transnational Public Service Content Providers Originally, transnational public broadcasting such as the BBC World Service, Voice of America or Deutsche Welle - to name just a few examples - was meant to support foreign policy and public diplomacy. As governmental institutions their missions were mainly ideologically justified. However, the fall of the Iron Curtain, the terror attacks of 9/11, globalization and digitalization entailed ideological, geopolitical, economic and technological transformations (Thussu, 2006; Price, 2002). Transnational public service content providers revised their remit accordingly. In the context of a multicultural, multichannel ‘global village’ they now aim to serve a global and cosmopolitan audience with a national perspective. My thesis discusses from a phenomenological perspective how transnationally operating public content providers construct ‘the national’ within a “new global symbolic space” (Volkmer, 2006, p.1; see also Schütz and Luckmann, 2003; Berger and Luckmann, 1966). How do they integrate constructions of ‘the national’ in their organizational structure, management, strategies, rational, policies, processes, decision-making, and behavior patterns? And, how do these constructions affect managers’ actions and activities? Alvesson, M. (2002). *Understanding Organizational Culture*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage. Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Doubleday & Company. Calhoun, C. (2007). *Nation matters. Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan dream*. London and New York: Routledge. Küng-Shankleman, L. (2000). *Inside the BBC and CNN. Managing Media Organisations*. London and

New York: Routledge. Price, M. E. (2002). *Media and Sovereignty. The Global Information Revolution and Its Challenge to State Power*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Schütz, A., & Luckmann, T. (2003). *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*. Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft mbH. Thussu, D. K. (2006). *International Communication* (2. ed.). London: Hodder Headline Group.

Melissa Periasamy, *English*

“Advertising - A department of Literature. An Approach to the Study of Dramatic Forms in Malaysian Television Advertisements”

In a world steeped in commodity culture which is driven by commercialization and consumerism, placing advertisements and the field of advertising (the heartland of commodity culture), within a literary sphere might seem unconventional or an unlikely notion. However, if given some thought it is not too foreign to consider the ties between the realm of literature and advertisements. In this research, I approach television advertisements (TV Ads) as a cultural and literary form which has a high aesthetic value and is open to interpretation. In this approach, TV Ads are considered to be much more than a just a marketing construct that are rigidly designed to persuade the masses, although this still remains a major function of advertisements.

In this thesis, I am attempting to “read” TV Ads as literary text, focusing particularly on embedded dramatic forms shaped not only by literal expressions but also through myriad forms of cultural, social and ideological signs and symbols. This research is directed at a multimodal analysis of TV Ads incorporating semiotic, literary and formalist frameworks to unearth the multitude literary devices weaved in contemporary Malaysian TV Ads. This research is a literary analysis of dramatic devices found in contemporary Malaysian TV Ad texts and aims to produce a multifaceted framework to analyze the use and function of conventional literary structures in popular marketing texts.

Andrew Smith, *English*

“Labouring-Class Ruins: Alternative Ruin Sentiment in England, 1750 - 1830.”

This paper describes a research project into the motif of the ruin in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British literature. This motif has been extensively researched over the

years, but most studies conceive of ruins as being the remains of either the Classical Age or of the medieval period, and both categories of ruins tend to be linked in some way to the socially or politically powerful; the ruins contemplated in such studies, for example, are typically those of castles, temples, abbeys, or manor houses. By contrast, this project focuses on ruins associated with the rural labouring-classes - an 'order' of ruins that has received much less critical attention. Wordsworth provides some familiar examples of such ruins in his descriptions of the dilapidated home of the war widow Margaret in 'The Ruined Cottage', or the abandoned sheepfold in 'Michael'. There are also numerous descriptions of rural ruins in the works of labouring-class writers themselves, such as Robert Bloomfield and John Clare, which display affinities with 'traditional' ruin sentiment while describing a very different type of ruin. My research is focused not only on tracing the development of writing about the ruins of the rural poor and the theoretical implications of this counter-movement, but is also interested in writing by the labouring-classes about more traditional ruins. My research attempts to address questions about how the descriptions of such ruins affect understandings of 'traditional' ruin sentiment, and what the consequences of labouring-class poets writing about 'traditional' ruins might be; are they seeking to legitimize their position as poets by imitating an elite literary genre, or are they actually critiquing this literary form by appropriating it for their own use?

1115 am - 1245 pm

Session 2

Panel 7

G11 (Th. 1)

Chair: Peter Eckersall

Stephen Sheehan, *English*

"Death and the Automaton Detective, the Specular Double of Poe"

In the early years of his relatively short writing career, Edgar Allan Poe wrote an essay denouncing as fraudulent the exhibition of an automaton that was supposed to be capable of playing chess. Various commentators have remarked that this essay presents an early example of the technique of 'ratiocination' that Poe was to influentially dramatise in his detective stories featuring

the Chevalier C. August Dupin; stories that are traditionally regarded as the origin of the modern genre of detective fiction. A detailed comparison of the essay and the Dupin stories reveals that Poe's critique of the automaton not only provides an early example of the investigative techniques that would come to fruition with his detective but that his critique also contains various tropes and narrative techniques that have become part and parcel of the conventions of the genre itself. Poe's critique of the automaton thus comes to be perpetuated not only in his own detective fiction but in the detective fiction that closely imitated him as well as those variations on the genre that find their ultimate reference in the form he first established.

If we turn this generative path from the automaton to detective fiction around, detective fiction functions as a literary model that dramatises Poe's critique of the automaton, a critique directed towards the mechanical technology through which the illusion of the automaton was created. Poe's ambivalent attitude towards industrialisation and the advance of mechanical technology, particularly with regard to their trespass into the fields of art and entertainment, may be read into his Dupin stories.

Antonia Pont, *Creative Writing*

"Why doing nothing might be doing something - Grief and the movement of the event in Badiou."

This paper will make playful use of Badiou's evental mathematics in order to propose that a missed-event may also be treated with fidelity, and that this practice produces something akin to subjectivity, albeit not a Badiouian version thereof. It will propose, consequently, that a commitment to the void, of Badiou's Being, is a necessary preliminary practice, akin to practising deconstruction's approach to 'text', for other aspects of political engagement, and one that, if neglected, renders these politics pointless, or worse, irresponsible.

Lyn Phelan, *Cultural Studies*

"Hollywood and the Self-Commodifying Woman"

Dorothy Parker notoriously quipped that you could take a whore to culture, but that you could not make her think. The frequency with which Hollywood, the 20th Century's most important mass cultural producer, took the whore to the centre of

its popular attractions, however, does get the contemporary film and culture theorist thinking. That films featuring these figures so often reflect simultaneously on the emergence of exemplarily modern femininities and the Hollywood system compels not just thinking, but a response. What is it about the prostititional commodity-seller that generates screen typologies capable of figuring new feminine identities and the Hollywood apparatus itself? What conclusions can be drawn from the movies' activation of these typologies to map a world in which everyone needed to learn to sell themselves in the marketplaces they inhabited or perish? This paper defines the movie star as a prostititional, market-driven femininity and explores the Hollywood success story her willing self-commodification enacts.

Beth Driscoll, *English*

“The Production of Value in the Contemporary Literary Economy”

My key interest is in the gay bachelor's ambivalent relationship with the semantically charged spaces of elite British culture, and his disgraced expulsion at the height of economic downturn and AIDS crisis. Rather than just an artful tableau for gazing at the attractions of an English past, heritage space works here to tell a figurative history of inclusion and exclusion, of the homophobic spectacle of AIDS, and its relationship with the disciplinary mechanisms of the closet. BBC2's adaptation draws on Meta-, Post-, Revisionist, Queer and Gothic appropriations of heritage, subversively inhabiting a genre once considered close to the heart of a reactionary nationalist agenda.

1245 pm - 145 pm Lunch,
Eco & Comm Ground Floor Foyer

Panel 8*G13 (Th. 3)*

Chair: Tony Birch

Brandon Chua, *English***“Authorship, the Passions, and Theatrical Spectatorship in Nicholas Rowe’s *The Fair Penitent*.”**

In reassessing the plot device involving the circulation of Calista’s letter that brings about the play’s tragic conclusion, this paper proposes Nicholas Rowe’s *The Fair Penitent* (1703) as a contribution to early eighteenth century debates on political obligation. The early eighteenth century’s investment in scenes of heightened feeling advanced ideas of a basis for political obligation based on the healthy circulation of the passions along appropriate channels of compassion and sympathy. This emphasis on the passionate subject as providing the grounds for a consensual subjection to political authority relies heavily on the public readability of individual passions. In this context where political order becomes reliant on a proper accounting of visible passions and desire, Calista’s primary transgression, this paper contends, is not illicit sexual desire, as has been commonly understood, but rather, her melancholic understanding and questioning of the disparity between private desires and public representation. This paper focuses on Rowe’s revelations of the contradictions involved in staging the passions of political obligation through his presentation of Calista as an author of a letter, which while signifying her acquiescence to her father’s will, also gives voice to her desire to indulge her private appetites. This theatrical representation of female private authorship reveals the uneasy relation of the theatre to political representation. Calista’s letter thus provides a useful starting point for a discussion on the intersections between theatrical and political representation amid an emerging celebrity culture and its fascination with the body of the passionate actress.

Aren Aizura, *Cultural Studies***“Provincialising the Trans Autological”**

It’s a truism that trans theory and politics involve a critique of the constraining and regulating properties of the category

'transsexual'. Simultaneously, others argue that the emergence of transsexuality as an identifiable condition also enabled those diagnosed with transsexualism to access surgery, hormone therapy and some social recognition or legitimacy. Even now, debates rage on trans community email lists about whether a politics of seeking [medical] recognition, or seeking deregulated access to gender-transformative technologies, are more likely to improve gender variant lives.

These debates exemplify what Elizabeth Povinelli names as a modern preoccupation with, and framing of political questions within, discourses of autology and genealogy, or freedom and constraint. But from a geocultural location outside Euro-America, such discourses manifestly fail to account for the complexities of negotiating gender variant existence. My paper reframes the attempt to fight for gender variant autonomy by taking up a historiographical analysis of what might be called the 'trans autological', beginning with the emergence of transsexuality as a sexological category in the 1950s. The 'trans autological' is not a somatic technology in a material sense; rather it describes an affective technology, a way of thinking and experiencing transness. Reading the emergence of transsexuality in the 1950s against theories of modernity, I draw on Harry Benjamin's sexological text *The Transsexual Phenomenon* and media representations of the popular performer and 'first celebrity transwoman', Christine Jorgenson. Riffing off previous readings of Benjamin and Jorgenson (Stryker and Meyerowitz, in particular), I argue that the formation of a subject legible as 'transsexual' was specific to the cultural conditions of 1950s USA, and an emphasis on the modern citizen as part of an 'international class', upwardly mobile and engaged in the liberal utopian project of self-invention. As Harry Benjamin wrote, the marker of a 'suitable candidate' for gender reassignment was someone who transitioned to an appropriate, respectable career and/or marriage. Crucially, the suitable candidate also passed perfectly as either gender. These accounts dovetail neatly with the increased emphasis in the post-war era on consuming the means to transform and perfect the physical body, as a symbol of one's internal aspirationalism.

Thus, rather than theorizing 'transgender' or 'transsexuality' as a transhistorical experience of embodiment that developed through the 20th century along with the invention of

medical technologies, I attempt to ‘provincialise’ transsexuality: to place it within the geocultural context in which it emerges, and to map the affective registers of its emergence. I argue that what we can identify as ‘transsexuality’ today (and, by extension, even identifications and practices that emerge in resistance to transsexuality, such as forms of ‘transgender’) still carry that liberal preoccupation with self-transformation and aspirationalism. This depends on an understanding of the subject as privatized and sovereign: it renders gender variant people individually responsible for their ‘transformation’ into ‘better’ subjects, rather than understanding gender variance as immanent to sociality itself.

Tina Giannoukos, *Creative Writing*

“Identity at the margins”

My presentaion will take the idea of identity as being performative and hence fluid.

Alison Horbury, *Media & Communications*

“Identity in the age of postfeminism: an exploration of the postfeminist subject in JJ Abrams *ALIAS*.”

We often hear it said that we are living in a postfeminist world. The term postfeminism can be understood in several different contexts; as Angela McRobbie argues, one of these is the moment in which one acknowledges feminism as a political project through recognition of its demise, where one accounts for feminism as that which is no longer needed or useful. McRobbie further notes that in many instances, the postfeminist position often calls feminism’s death into being by openly embracing values and objectives which are in opposition to feminist imperatives. This postfeminist position can be found in a wide range of popular media and culture, for example the television programs *Ladette to Lady*, and *Two and a Half Men*. Yet the postfeminist position is not always as explicitly negative toward feminist agendas and ideals; indeed upon closer inspection, postfeminism is a complicated position to negotiate. What does it mean to live in a postfeminist world? More importantly, what does it mean for the female subject to be positioned as postfeminist in this world? Through an exploration of J. J. Abrams’ television series *ALIAS*, I will examine the representation of the postfeminist subject through *ALIAS*’ female protagonist Sydney Bristow, to elaborate and interrogate

the cultural expression of the postfeminist position in popular media.

145 pm - 315 pm

Session 3

Panel 9

G12 (Th. 2)

Chair: Ken Gelder

Alexandra Knell, *English*

“Bodies in Flux: the Mutability of the Irish in the works of Edmund Spenser”

In *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, Edmund Spenser, through the figure of ‘Irenius,’ promotes an aggressive program of British imperialist expansion which recommends the systematic destruction of Irish culture in the name of civilizing reform. In so far as Book Five of Spenser’s *magnum opus*, *The Faerie Queene*, stages a narrative whose protagonist pacifies a foreign land whose ruler is named ‘Irena,’ many Spenserian scholars make a convincing argument for interpreting the fifth book of the *Faerie Queene* as a straightforward allegorisation of the politics set out in the *View*.

According to this analysis, book five’s Knight of Justice, Artegall, acts as a poetic agent of Spenser’s pro-imperialist politics, or even more literally, as a figuration of Arthur Lord Grey de Wilton’s Deputyship of Ireland during the time of the second Desmond rebellion. (1579-82) Importantly, much of this criticism sees Spenser’s representation of Anglo-Irish relations as mapping onto book five’s chivalric romance plot by locating a number of poetic and political occurrences made virtually equivalent in Spenser’s allegory: Artegall’s just and noble quest is undertaken to win the favor of Gloriana/Elizabeth, who commissions him to liberate Irena/Ireland through an aggressive program of righteous pacification and moral edification.

Given that much Spenser scholarship has identified the potential for reading Spenser’s colonial politics and the *View* through the prism of chivalric romance, and has done this convincingly in its consideration of the fifth book of *The Faerie Queene*, there is surprisingly little material which considers the *View* alongside Book Three of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser’s

romantic book *par excellence*. Therefore, I would like to focus on two things today: first, I would like to suggest some of the critical conditions under which Book Three of *The Faerie Queene* has tended to be read outside of what scholars call Spenser's "Irish connection", which is baffling if only because the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* were certainly penned in Ireland, Spenser's own 'salvage soyl.' Second, I would like to evaluate the status of some of the material that has examined Book Three alongside Spenser's Irish connection and his other works, including the *View*, and to locate my own research interests inside this context.

Esther Chin, *Media & Communications*

"Reconceptualizing 'Cosmopolitanism': Mediated Citizenship in The Globalizing World"

Through globalizing media and mobility, the globalization of biographies locates subjects in 'world' spaces rather than distinct 'home' and 'host' coordinates. Globalization positions its new 'cosmopolitans' not just as participants in global culture, but also as global political publics. This paper reviews literature on 'cosmopolitanism', reconceptualizing 'cosmopolitanism' to explore mediated citizenship in the globalizing world. I distinguish two 'cosmopolitan frames' through which globalized publics may experience the contemporary networked world. 'Cosmopolitan gaze' defines subjective awareness of location amid diverse cultures while 'cosmopolitan vision' involves more complex modes of engagement with other subjective realities within a globalized public sphere.

Christina Natsis, *Creative Writing*

"Poesis: The Cryonic Furnace"

AIM The central aim of this dissertation is to establish a relationship between mood and poetic parturiency. Specifically, this thesis will seek to explore the extent to which Bi-polar Affective states, clinical and non-clinical, form the creative crucible or aetiological underpinning in the making of poetry. Whilst acknowledging that not all poets are manic-depressive, there appears to be a disproportionately high number of poets, as opposed to other artists, who have suffered from a significant mood disorder, or that "fine madness" that Michael Drayton writes of in his poem: "To my dearly loved friend, Henry Reynolds." This

dissertation will constitute a literary exploration and exegesis of that “fine madness,” as it relates to affective states and the making of poetry, focusing specifically on the female poet. However, the term Affective Disorder, will not merely encompass the more debilitating forms of the illness, such as Bi Polar one and Bi Polar two, but will also incorporate subtle variations of mood vulnerability or volatility that present in Cyclothymia, Melancholia, Hypomania and Seasonal Affective Disorder which may not necessarily be classified as “disorders” in the clinical sense of the word.

The central postulation of this thesis is that it is within the hypo-manic, rather than the manic state, that the optimum creative crucible for poetic expression and productivity is manifested. Antithetically, I will also argue, that it is within the realm of melancholia, rather than clinical depression, in which the creative scaffolding for poesy is birthed. Furthermore, I also propose to develop and extend my theoretical exegesis on rage in literature, as presented in my Master’s thesis, in that not only do I acknowledge rage as integral in allowing women writers and poets the freedom to speak from their own true voices, but as a classical and clinical manifestation of hypo mania, as well as full blown mania, rage will be posited as aetiologically integral in the process of poetic parturiency in the female poet.

The fine line between artistic productivity and the onset of artistic fragmentation, manifested at the polar extremities of Bi-polar Affective Disorder will also be explored, (Hershman and Leib, 1988, 200-203) together for the propensity and predisposition for rhyme and alliteration in the speech and thinking patterns of the Bi polar poet. (1) So too, the discernible increase in unusually creative thinking and productivity that characterizes those afflicted will also be explored. Examination of the tensions and transitions between the changing mood states as they relate to seasonal mood patterns manifest in Seasonal Affective Disorder, in order to explore the ramifications thereof upon poetic productivity or aridity.

Whilst conceding with Gelernter, that the kind of sensitivity that lay at the root of creativity (Gelernter, 1994, p90) is to be found in reference to the capacity for subtle discrimination of emotional nuances, I will argue that it is within the bi polar mind’s capacity to experience fire and ice: the cryonic furnace,

in significant and sustained sequences, that the wax and wane of poetic parturiency is accounted for, and, more significantly, it is that which imbues poetry with powerful kinesthetic and affective potentiality that sets it apart from the pedestrian. Therefore, whilst acknowledging that not all poets suffer from Bi-polar Affective Disorder, the extraordinary capacity to feel and to have experienced the wildly antithetical pain of the cryonic furnace: the ecstatic and the paralytic is a critical catalyst in the making of fine poetry as it facilitates access to a richness and intensity of experience that sets these individuals apart.

The notion of madness in art and literature is a tantalising one. Definitions of madness, including divine madness, that is, the fine line between inspiration, genius, and madness will be explored as they relate to poetry and Bi polar Disorder. (3) I will examine, however, the point at which madness stultifies the creative process in the making of poetry. So too, the romantic notion of madness, which has its roots in the Romantic Era, will be juxtaposed against the harsh reality of mental illness.

A significant body of research has focused on the relationship between creativity and schizophrenia. However, very little scholarly work has explored the relationship between poetic creativity and Bi-polar mood states, clinical or non-clinical, with or without its psychotic or schizoid manifestations.

The proposal above evolved as a direct consequence of my deep interest in madness. For years I was haunted by the spectre of mental instability. My mother, a highly gifted, neurasthenic, woman suffered depression and existential anguish. To me she is the classical Freudian hysteric, unsettled, finely tuned and displaying symptoms of "superstimulatabilities, to the point that she has always been extraordinarily difficult to live with. As a painfully shy and deeply sensitive individual myself, who had a passion for the creative arts, in particular, dance, drama, poetry and painting, I suffered recurrent bouts of deep mental torment. Having studied art at high school, I was struck by the disproportionately high number of creative artist that suffered depression, psychosis and ultimately attempted or committed suicide. However, my subsequent journey into the literary arts and in particular, my love for poetry, sparked a fascination with the cryonic furnace of the poet's affective states.

As an undiagnosed manic-depressive myself who has borne

a son who suffers from the more debilitating psychotic manifestation of this illness, and who becomes linguistically parturient when he is ill, I also propose to present a poetry anthology in addition to the research component. This poetry will be inspired by the fragile beauty of pain, together with the furnace of joy.

Bridget Haylock, *Creative Writing*

“Thinking it Through”

The aim of this thesis will be to examine the literary expression of traumatic legacy and to create a novel and dissertation exploring the relation between the gendered temporality of trauma and narrative strategies with a particular emphasis within the survival meta-narrative of contemporary Australian literature.

145 pm - 315 pm

Session 3

Panel 10

G11 (Th. 1)

Chair: Barb Bolt

Ricci-Jane Adams, *Theatre Studies*

“Seeing in Unordinary Ways: Magical Realism in Australian Theatre”

Using three playwrights from Australia as a focal lens, my thesis introduces the notion of a magical realism in the context of theatre. I contend that magic realist theatre offers a public site for the cultural mediation of binaries: self and other, margin and centre, life and death, western and non-western, pragmatic and spiritual. Australia, because of its history, geographical location and cultural positioning provides a fascinating case study. In this paper I introduce a reading practice for magical realist theatre, and contextualise its emergence in Australia at this time.

Angela Hesson, *English & Art History*

“Sirens on the Sideboard: The Femme Fatale and Fin-de-Siècle Decorative Arts”

This paper will position the fin-de-siècle femme fatale as a

figure in conflict, poised between the provocative exclusivity of such 'high art' movements as Decadence and Symbolism, and the comparative accessibility of nineteenth-century commodity culture. When the femme fatale entered the public consciousness in the mid nineteenth century she was a marginal figure inextricably linked to sexual dissonance and depravity, much of whose appeal lay in her detachment from the mundane realms of the practical and the everyday. However, with the emergence of Art Nouveau in the 1880s a new version of the femme fatale developed: at once sensual and practical, exotic and domesticated. It is anomalous that this icon of sexual predation should have been designed and produced so deliberately not for the avant-garde space of the gallery, but for the comparative conventionality of the bourgeois home. Art Nouveau encouraged the aestheticization and eroticisation of the utilitarian object, and this had the dual effect of transforming the practical object into the fetish, and also, potentially, of defusing and sanitizing subjects previously deemed insalubrious. The mysticism and ethereality of the femme fatale was arguably compromised by her new status as domestic object; however, the breadth of exposure afforded by this role facilitated the survival and continued evolution of the figure. This paper will trace the development of the femme fatale's specific visual iconography across the diverse media of fin-de-siècle decorative arts, and question whether her significant and subversive power could survive the transition from canvas to tableware.

Elizabeth Avram, *Screen (Cinema) Studies*

"The History Wars Cycle: An Archaeology of the Contemporary Australian Historical Film (2001-2006)"

In this paper I introduce the History Wars Cycle, a cycle of twelve films in the historical film genre that form the focus of my PhD thesis. The films in the History Wars Cycle were all produced and released during a period in Australia influenced by the discourses of the history wars. The cycle begins in 2001 with *One Night the Moon* (Rachel Perkins) and *Moulin Rouge* (Baz Luhrman) and ends in 2006 with *Kokoda* and *Ten Canoes* (Rolf de Heer and Peter Djigirr). It also includes *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (Philip Noyce 2002), *The Tracker* (Rolf de Heer 2002), *Black and White* (Craig Lahiff 2002), *Travelling Light* (Kathryn Millard 2003), *Preservation* (Sofya Gollan 2003), *Ned* (Abe Forsythe 2003), *Ned Kelly* (Gregor

Jordan 2003) and *The Proposition* (John Hillcoat 2005).

One feature that distinguishes the Australian history wars from other national history wars is the wide range of issues encompassed in the disputes. These issues include: the national significance of Australian war efforts; the representation of Aboriginal history; the role of history in the process of reconciliation; the inclusion of women in the national narratives of history; the role of political correctness in speaking about the past; and museum curatorship. Each chapter in my thesis engages one or more of these issues in relation to the films in the History Wars Cycle.

However, if you are familiar with the films identified in the History Wars Cycle you may be wondering what exactly some of them have to do with the history wars. Indeed, these films are not all about specific issues debated in the history wars. Furthermore, many of them do not form simple coalitions with warring factions of historians, journalists and politicians on the left or right of the wars in Australia. Rather, they represent a cacophony of political resonances, reflecting and contributing to the complexity of the currents underlying the Australian history wars themselves. As such, this paper outlines my methodology for defining and analysing the history wars cycle as well as presenting some of the findings in relation to the interaction between these films and the context of their production and release during a key period in the history wars in Australia.

Clare Rhoden, *Creative Writing*

“It’s not all bad: Australian writers and the disillusionment tradition of First World War fiction”

There is a problem in the way Australian war literature has been received and commented upon. The dominance of the ‘disillusion’ canon means that other works have been either dismissed, or corrected by historians as arbiters of the ‘truth’, to the extent that almost all criticism concentrates on ‘truth’ as the only measure of worth. This reduces the importance of other values such as literary merit, cultural insight, or commemorative reflection. This paper briefly explores Australian responses to the First World War with reference to the disillusionment tradition, focussing on recent novels by Metzenthien, Yeldham, and McConnell.

Panel 11*Wood Theatre*

Chair: Clara Tuite

Romana Byrne, *English*

“Superlative slaughter and sadomasochism in Mirbeau’s ‘Torture Garden’.”

Two central tenets of nineteenth-century aestheticism, that art should be valued for its own sake and that lived experience should be treated as art, are outlined in Walter Pater’s ‘The Renaissance’ (1873). This paper will explore the way in which Pater’s aestheticism is deployed in Octave Mirbeau’s novel ‘Torture Garden’ (1899), in which the sadomasochist exercises aesthetic apprehension upon the lived experience of torture. Torture’s beautiful form produces a pleasurable somatic experience of aesthetic appreciation. This paper conceives aesthetic pleasure as the basis of sadomasochistic pleasure, pleasure that is derived from art and that forms art itself, marking the sadomasochist’s transition from art critic to artist. With its aesthetic form in the flower figure, sadomasochistic pleasure achieves Pater’s artistic ideal of monstrous matter that materialises through beautiful form. Sadomasochistic pleasure is endowed with an elite status that positions the sadomasochist outside the boundaries of what is deemed vulgar bourgeois society. Europe, particularly France and Britain, is condemned for the government-sanctioned abuse and murder carried out within the state and in its colonies abroad. In ‘Torture Garden’, the aesthetic functions as a trope for the moral. As the flower figure, sadomasochistic pleasure colonises the aesthetic superiority of the Chinese garden to condemn the aesthetic and moral inferiority of Europe. The aesthetic sophistication of Chinese torture is also elevated above vulgar European butchery. As an expression of appreciation for the former, I will argue, sadomasochistic pleasure personalises this critique within the body, illuminating the elitist disdain and intentional immorality that underscores Pater’s later account of aestheticism in ‘Appreciations’ (1890) and ‘Marius the Epicurean’ (1904, 1910). The politics of pleasure are, however, plagued with contradictions, echoing the inconsistencies of Pater’s aesthetic

exposition. These rifts constitute the chief characteristic of sadomasochistic pleasure: its cultivated and contrived artificiality.

Dion Kagan, *Cultural Studies*

“‘Homeless Love’: Heritage Place and Gay Placelessness in BBC2’s *The Line of Beauty*”

Although “AIDS” and “heritage” might seem like a strange coupling, they recently came together in BBC2’s *The Line of Beauty* (2006), a three-part prestige adaptation of Alan Hollinghurst’s Booker award winning novel, written for the small screen by ‘adaptation maestro’ Andrew Davies, and directed by Saul Dibb.

This paper is interested in the adaptation’s use of heritage style to present a critical history of the socially conservative, Tory elite of 1980s Britain. *The Line of Beauty* deploys all the classic conceits of Anglophillic heritage cinema - a genre often regarded as nationalist, reactionary and nostalgic. However, heritage style here works to produce a powerful critique of Thatcherite Britain, and a scathing denunciation of the murderous indifference of its powerbrokers to the emergence of HIV/AIDS.

Nathaniel Tkacz, *Cultural Studies*

“Open Source and The Rhetoric of Collaboration.”

Working together to produce socio-technological objects based on emergent platforms of economic production is of great importance in the task of political transformation and the creation of new subjectivities. Within this process, collaboration has become a veritable buzzword, used to describe the human associations that create these new media objects. Historically, collaboration has been defined in two ways: one, as working together in cooperative unison toward a shared goal; and two, as cooperating willingly with an enemy (in a traitorous act). The first definition posits its subjects as sharing common visions and desires, a priori, who then work together to overcome barriers preventing actualisation. The only problem is how to achieve. The second assumes social unrest; an antagonistic setting where parties have very different desires and the only subject able to move between (or mediate) sides is that of the traitor.

Wikipedia is perhaps the largest open source (content)

project described as collaborative. The thousands of contributors on this project are a disparate bunch, with visibly differing goals and beliefs that regularly manifest in vociferous conflicts. Because of this Wikipedia cannot be understood within the parameters of the first definition. Neither, though, is the type of conflict present here adequately accounted for in the second. Using Wikipedia as a case study, this paper highlights how so-called mass-collaborative projects are rife with conflicts based on fundamental difference. If collaboration is to have continued descriptive relevance for open source projects, it is argued that a third definition must be developed - one able to posit such difference as immanent, and foreground how collaboration is contingent on agonistic (Mouffe) processes of mediation.

Iain Sutherland, *Media & Communications*

“Mobile Media and the Socio-technical Protocols of the Supermarket”

This paper is concerned with a well known but little discussed contemporary phenomenon enabled by wireless communication technologies: the phone calls between household members, one of whom is at the supermarket, discussing prices, brand names and packaging of consumer goods. Drawing on ethnographic work carried out in Melbourne, Australia and adopting an Actor-Network (Latour, 2005) inspired perspective, the specific constraints and opportunities for mobile media interactions and the ways in which these are performed are analysed from three spatial perspectives: the material space of the supermarket; the relationships between people in social space; and the spatialities of mobile media systems. All of these spaces, it is suggested, are contingent on one another, making for a complex coalescence of social and technical protocols which constitute a qualitative, intensive and distributed experience of place.

315 pm - 345 pm

Afternoon Tea,
Eco & Comm Ground Floor Foyer

345 pm - 445 pm
Plenary Address

Professor Donald Preziosi,
MacGeorge Honorary Fellow
Old Arts, Theatre D.
Chair: Prof. Charles Green