

Film day schools: 1967 – Crest of the British New Wave

Start date 11 November 2017 **End date** 10:00 – 16:45

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge

Tutor Henry K. Miller **Course code** 1718NDX005

Director of Programmes Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contact Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr
clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 746237

To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Henry K. Miller teaches film at the University of Cambridge, and is an Honorary Research Associate at the Slade School of Fine Art. He has a PhD from Birkbeck College, University of London. His has appeared in *Screen* and *Critical Quarterly*, among other journals, and he is a regular contributor to *Sight and Sound*. In 2014 he edited *The Essential Raymond Durgat* for the British Film Institute.

Course Programme

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	The Great British Phantasmagoria This introductory session looks at how the British New Wave has been imagined – including the argument that there was no such thing. The most influential writer on British cinema in the 1960s, Alexander Walker, charged the New Wave filmmakers with a ‘slide unto unreality and fantasy’. This day course takes a more positive view.
11:15	Coffee
11:45 – 13:00	The Past 1960s Britain liked to imagine itself as freed from the past. This session looks at the British New Wave’s treatment of history, in particular the ‘traditional’ class structure and the legacy of the Second World War, in such films as <i>Far From the Madding Crowd</i> , <i>How I Won the War</i> , <i>Accident</i> , and <i>Charlie Bubbles</i> .
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:15	The Present: Swinging London The British New Wave was thoroughly bound up with the phenomenon of Swinging London, shading into psychedelia by 1967. This session looks at its relationship with fashion and pop music through a discussion of films including <i>Blow-Up</i> , <i>Smashing Time</i> , <i>Tonite Let’s All Make Love in London</i> , and <i>Privilege</i> .
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	The Future: Frozen Food and Supersonic Bangs 1960s Britain may have cast off the shackles of the past, but the future was not necessarily rosy. This session looks at how filmmakers imagined the state of things to come, in films such as <i>Bedazzled</i> , <i>Billion Dollar Brain</i> , and <i>Point Blank</i> . This final session also looks at how and why the British New Wave broke, and what it portended for the country and its cinema.
16:45	Day-school ends

Course Syllabus:

Aims:

- to introduce students to the British New Wave of the 1960s
- to relate cinematic style to historical context
- to examine British filmmakers in relation to their European and American contemporaries
- to foster an enjoyable atmosphere in which to appreciate classic films from a new perspective

Day school content:

Britain, and British cinema, reached a turning point in 1967, a year of last gasps and fresh starts. London was the centre of international youth culture, and the Labour government introduced liberal legislation on homosexuality and abortion. The nation's seeming modernity, physically expressed in the new landscape of high-rises, motorways, and new towns, was, however, not the whole story. In November the prime minister Harold Wilson had to announce a currency devaluation, and Britain's application to join the EEC (forerunner of the EU) was rejected on grounds of the country's financial decrepitude.

British cinema, meanwhile, greatly boosted by the success of British pop music, and to a great extent funded by the Hollywood system, was enjoying a golden age in the mid-1960s. In 1967 it reached its peak, in a series of startlingly inventive films that caught the restless mood of the times: Antonioni's *Blow-Up*, Joseph Losey's *Accident* (written by Harold Pinter) Richard Lester's *How I Won the War* (starring John Lennon), Peter Watkins's *Privilege*, Ken Russell's *Billion Dollar Brain*, Stanley Donen's *Bedazzled* (written by Peter Cook), Peter Yates's *Robbery*, and – made in Los Angeles – John Boorman's *Point Blank*.

This day course will set them in context, treating them as responses to the condition of Britain, and account for their enduring interest exactly half a century later, paying particular attention to their stylistic novelty. Strongly influenced by the continental cinema of the era – *Blow-Up* being a full-blown European art film – the films will be considered as a New Wave just as significant as the French *nouvelle vague*. The day course will also consider why the British New Wave came to an end, and so abruptly.

Presentation:

The course will be taught through a series of four lectures, illustrated with film clips. Discussion is encouraged, and students will be encouraged to bring their own perspectives to bear. The course will be taught with the expectation that attendees will have some acquaintance with British cinema of the 1960s, especially those films named above and below; but many more will be discussed, and no specialized knowledge is required.

Outcomes:

As a result of the course, students should be able

- to understand the British New Wave in its cultural and historical context
- to be able to analyse and discuss its core themes and stylistic tendencies
- to make connections between British and European cinema

Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Alexander Walker	<i>Hollywood, England</i>	Michael Joseph, 1974
Robert Murphy	<i>Sixties British Cinema</i>	BFI, 1992
Michel Ciment	<i>Conversations With Losey</i>	Methuen, 1985
Steven Soderbergh	<i>Getting Away With It</i>	Faber and Faber, 1999
John Boorman	<i>Adventures of a Suburban Boy</i>	Faber and Faber, 2003
Paul Sutton	<i>Talking About Ken Russell</i>	Buffalo Books, 2016

Website addresses

<http://pwatkins.mnsi.net/index.htm> (Peter Watkins)

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of: 05 October 2017