

Professor Lant, Rm 642, 8-1612, antonia.lant@nyu.edu. office hours: Tuesdays, 11:00 to 12:00 pm, 4:30-5:30pm.

Fall 2005, Department of Cinema Studies, NYU

Meets Mondays, 12:30-4:30 pm, Rm 643.

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H72.3048: Advanced Seminar: The Collection, The Archive, The Museum

This seminar encourages a very broad perspective of the phenomenon of collecting. It surveys psychological, anthropological, and cultural theories of collecting, in relation to the history of art and the amassing of moving images. It studies specific historical instances of moving image collecting in the light of these theories, and particularly the genesis of major cinémathèques in Europe and the United States. Topics covered include: the museum as a model for collecting; the privacy of the collector; cinema and ethnography; the destruction of film; collections as spoils of war. Several experts who are professionally concerned with moving image collections will visit the seminar. The course is required for students in the MA in Moving Image Archiving and Preservation.

**Required texts:**

- 1) John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, The Cultures of Collecting (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1994). (Abb below: CC). This text is not available in the USA this semester. But try to get hold of a copy if you can!
- 2) Paolo Cherchi Usai, The Death of Cinema: history, cultural memory and the digital dark age (London : British Film Institute, 2001).

**Recommended Texts:**

- 1) Anthony Slide, Nitrate Won't Wait: A History of Film Preservation in the United States (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1992)
- 2) Roger Smither and Catherine A. Surowiec, eds This Film is Dangerous: A Celebration of Nitrate Film (FIAF: Brussels, 2002)
- 3) McGreevey, Tom and Joanne L. Yeck. Our Movie Heritage (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, 1997).
- 4) Pearce, Susan. Collecting in Contemporary Practice (London: Sage, 1998).

All readings will be put on reserve at both Bobst and FSC.

**Student requirements:** Students are required to keep up with the readings and contribute to class discussion (30%); make a mini-presentation either on a book or substantial article on the topic of collecting (20%); and pursue an individual research project for presentation to the seminar, to be written up and turned in at the end of the class, 10-15 pages long. NB MIAP students: this project can be part of your final thesis.

**Syllabus: the course has three parts: Collecting; History of Moving Image Archiving; Spoils of War.**

**PartI: Collecting**

**Wk.1 12 Sept Introduction**

Read: Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library: A Talk about Book Collecting" [1931]  
Pearce, Susan M. "Collecting in Time" in On Collecting: An Investigation into collecting in the European tradition. (New York: Routledge, 1995): 235-254.  
Screen: The Falls (clip) (Peter Greenaway, 1980, UK)

**Wk. 2 Sept 19 Theories of Collecting**

Read: Cavell, Stanley. "The World as Things: Collecting Thoughts on Collecting"  
Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting" (CC)  
Pearce, Ch. 1 in Collecting Culture.  
Rec: Pearce, "Collecting Processes" in On Collecting  
Screen: Le Mépris/Contempt, clip (Godard), mentioned in Baudrillard essay.  
San Soleil (Chris Marker) clip.

**Wk. 3 Sept 26 Freud and Collecting: Privacy and/of the Collector**

Read: Interview with Robert Opie (CC)  
Pearce, "Body and Soul" in Collecting Culture  
Forrester "Freud and Collecting" (CC)  
Optional: Torgovnick, "Entering Freud's Study"  
Davies, "The Secret Collection of Dr. Barnes"  
Nieves, Evelyn, "Archaeologist of Himself."  
On gender and sexuality:  
Bright, "Warhol's Collecting"  
Schor, "Collecting Paris" (CC)  
Screen: God's Comedy (João César Monteiro, Portugal, 1995)

**Wk. 4 Oct 3 Guest Speaker: David Francis, Consultant to Library of Congress, Former Chief, Motion Picture and Recorded Sound Division, LC. Needs travel**

Read: McGreevey/Yeck, Our Movie Heritage, Ch. 8, 9.  
Francis, "Second Century Forum," Journal of Film Preservation (June 2004): 2-9.  
Francis, "Challenges of Film Archiving in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."  
Brownlow, Kevin. "Magnificent Obsession; A Collector and the Archives."  
Rec: McGreevey/Yeck, "Other friends of preservation," Our Movie Heritage, Ch. 6.  
No screening

See documentary film on Henri Langlois, playing for two weeks beginning October 5<sup>th</sup> at Film Forum. <http://www.filmforum.org/films/henri.html>. We may arrange a class outing to this. Re: class on Nov 7<sup>th</sup>.

No class, 10 Oct. Holiday

**Wk. 5 Oct 17 The Museum as Model**

Read: Elsner "A Collector's Model of Desire" (CC)  
Kaufmann, "From Treasury to Museum" (CC)  
Stewart, "Death and Life" (CC)

Rec: Belk, Russell W. "A Brief History of Collecting," in Collecting in a Consumer Society (New York: Routledge, 1995): 22-64

**No Screening Student mini-presentations**

**Part II: History of Moving Image Archiving**

**Wk. 6 Oct 24 The Birth of Museums of the Moving Image**

Read: Trope, "Le Cinéma pour le Cinéma."  
Rotha, "A Museum for the Cinema" [1930]  
Sargeant, "Wanted—A Museum" [1916]  
Matuszewski, "A New Source of History [1898]"  
Goerke, "Proposal for Establishing an Archive for Moving Pictures" [1912]

**Screen:** The Gleaners and I (Agnes Varda, 2000, 82 min)

**Wk. 7. Oct 31 The Archive Movement I**

Read: Myrent/Langlois, Henri Langlois: First Citizen of Cinema, Ch. 1-3.  
Aurich, "Cinéaste, Collector, National Socialist"

Screen: Make sure you went to Film Forum to see Langlois documentary earlier in October  
**NB:** Make an appointment with me this week to discuss your final project.

**Wk. 8. Nov 7 The Archive Movement II: MoMA**

**Eileen Bowser, guest**

Read: Wasson, "The Cinematic Subtext of the Modern Museum"  
Decherney, "Iris Barry, Hollywood Imperialism, and the Gender of the Nation."  
Barry/Abbott, "An outline of a project for the founding of the Film Library of the  
Museum of Modern Art"

Rec: Barry, "Film Collecting at the Museum of Modern Art, 1935-1941,"  
McGreevey/Yeck, Our Movie Heritage Chs. 4 and 5

Screen: Tribulation 99 (USA, Craig Baldwin, 1991)

**Wk. 9 Nov 14 Visit to Motion Picture and recorded Sound Division, LC, Washington DC.**

Read: McGreevey/Yeck, Our Movie Heritage, Ch. 3.  
Cooper, "The Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, Library of Congress."

**Wk. 10 Nov 21 The Spoils of War. Possible guest visit by Patrick Loughney**

Read: Clifford "On Collecting Art and Culture" in The Predicament of Culture, 215-251.

Nicholas, The Rape of Europa, ch. III, V, XIII.  
Myrent/Langlois, Henri Langlois: First Citizen of Cinema, Ch.4 “War and Occupation,” 62-89.  
Eyo, “Repatriation of Cultural Heritage: The African Experience” 330-350 in Museums and the Making of Ourselves, Kaplan, ed.  
Deocampo, Nick. “Zamboanga: ‘Lost’ Philippine-made film discovered in U.S. Archive,” Movement (Feb 2004): 2-7.

**Screening:** TBA

Wk.11 Nov 23 **Class cancelled.**

Wk. 12 Nov 28 **The Destruction of Film**  
Read: Paolo Cherchi Usai, The Death of Cinema  
Zryd, Mike. “Found Footage Film as Discursive Metahistory”  
Screen: Nostalgia (Hollis Frampton, US, 1972, 36 min).  
Decasia (Bill Morrison, US, 2002, 67 min) **clip**

**[AMIA Nov 30- Dec 3]**

Wk.13 Dec 5 **Student presentations**

Wk.14 Dec 12 **Student presentations**

**Final paper due in Prof. Lant’s mailbox**