



THE BILL DOUGLAS CINEMA MUSEUM ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

Foreword by the Chair of the Board of The Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, Patrick Swaffer.

The academic year 2019/20 started very positively. Student and public engagement with the museum were at excellent levels and plans were well advanced for us to participate in the development of a new museum building at the heart of the University as part of a cultural hub. It hardly needs saying that the Covid crisis has entirely disrupted what should have been a year of real advancement. Naturally all significant capital expenditure has been put on hold although we have fortunately been allowed to pursue a much needed extension to the museum's storage facilities.

Notwithstanding these difficulties the museum has had a reasonably successful year. We have benefitted from a number of attractive donations including rare early film posters, pre and early cinema items and many film scripts from the Rank Script Archive. Teaching using the collections covered a broad range of courses and disciplines and the museum was again involved in classes for the MA International Film Business and worked with the new MA Creativity: Innovation and Business Strategy programme. We continued to work with community organisations on a variety of projects and conducted tours for a diverse group of local schools and associations.

It has been a very difficult year for the staff at the museum and I would therefore like to thank the Curator, other staff members and volunteers for their dedicated work during this period. Much of the summer of 2020 was spent by the Curator preparing strategies to assist online delivery of teaching necessitated by the pandemic and in prioritising digitisation of materials from the collection to facilitate this delivery. I am certain this will all prove to be invaluable, both in the short and long term.

Finally can I say how delighted I am that the film writer, blogger and critic Pamela Hutchinson has joined us as a new external member of the museum board.

Executive Summary

It has been a difficult year for all due to the outbreak of Covid-19. Owing to illness the Curator was asked to take on added duties across the Heritage Collections team. He has continued to provide invaluable support in the team since. Notwithstanding this, a great deal has been achieved.

Item 1.2 notes that Covid-19 has delayed capital works and so plans to develop the museum as part of a cultural hub with the Northcott Theatre are on hold. However, essential storage expansion works, delivering a further 19 bays of space will take place early in 2021, enabling the museum to continue to collect (1.3). Other positive news includes introduction of our new external Board member, Pamela Hutchinson (1.4), and the Cinema Museum continues to receive some extra funding in royalties, including generous donations from the Principal Donor, Peter Jewell (1.5; 1.6).

The Curator has applied for Designation of the collections by the Arts Council. We will know in May 2021, whether the application can progress to the second stage of the two-stage process (2.1). The collections themselves continue to grow with some significant acquisitions including books, items from the film collector Bill Barnes, the Rank Organization Script Archive from Pinewood Studios and posters from the US (2.2). The Museum Curator has also been commissioned to write an article on the collections in the *Journal of British Film and Television* (2.4), but very sadly we heard of the death of one of the Museum's key donors, Roy Fowler in August 2019 (2.3, 2.4, 2.5).

There has been significant research activity and highlights include the appointment of an Arts & Culture Creative Fellow working with Prof John Plunkett on the pre-Cinema collection and a new SWDC Partnership doctoral studentship on immersive media (3.2-3.3). The Museum was also partner in three AHRC funded projects totalling nearly £1 million in funding (3.5-3.6). In addition the Curator provided advice on preserving cataloguing and interpreting moving image heritage for an AHRC funded Cinema Memories Digital Archive project with Lancaster (3.2-3.4). An innovative digital initiative by University of Oxford used items from the collection as part of a project to create three-dimensional images and a proposed academic book on Bill Douglas by the Curator and Amelia Seely, is due for publication by early 2022 (3.7-3.10).

Teaching has suffered some disruption and cancellation due to Covid-19 and industrial action. However, classes that ran included the MA International Film Business and the new MA Creativity: Innovation and Business Strategy, including lecture and TV contribution by the Curator (4.1-4.2). The British Screens module (Autumn 2019) was commended by the external examiner for a fourth year running (4.7). A particularly positive development has been re-naming and refurbishment of a lecture theatre in Queens, as The Bill Douglas Cinema (4.4).

Community engagement continues to grow with participation in two NHLF projects with the Northcott Theatre and the Phoenix, respectively (5.1-5.3). Other partners in outreach activities include University of Plymouth, Bristol Museum, The Box in Plymouth, Exeter College, Isca Heritage Group, the Devonshire Association, South West Heritage Trust and community groups (5.4-5.8).

The lockdowns and restrictions have affected access. However, the Museum's profile has been maintained via press and social media (5.9) and the Curator ran a survey of visitors (August 2019-Feb 2020), gaining valuable information for audience development and museum improvements (6.2-6.3). We also said goodbye to long-standing volunteer, Alice Clements, but welcomed new Special Collections assistant, Anna Harding, who helps maintain and improve displays on her half day in the Museum (6.4). We also hosted new temporary displays celebrating Black History Month and the centenary of Fellini's birth (6.5-6.6).

Whilst this year has proved a challenge, the Cinema Museum continues to be resilient in contributing to the University's exceptional research, teaching and public offer.

Dr Christine Fauch, Head Of Heritage Collections, University of Exeter.

Annual Report 2019-20

1. *Mission, Governance and Resource*

Aim: To ensure that the museum is able to secure its place as a leading national and global resource for research and public participation in the history of the moving image.

1.1 The museum's annual report for 2018-19 was approved by the University Council in April 2020.

1.2 Plans to develop the museum and create a new home for the collection as part of a cultural hub on the Northcott Theatre site proceeded in 2019. To reduce costs, new plans and costings (at £6.1 Million) were drawn up for proposals by architects Austin Smith Lord and quantity surveyors Welling. . This proposal was then sent to the Dual Assurance committee in October for review prior to submission to the Capital Infrastructure Group. The proposal was declined, principally on cost grounds. It was then decided to plan a further feasibility stage aligning the designs further with the Northcott and looking at governance and operations for a new cultural hub containing both the museum and the theatre and some meetings took place towards this end. However the Coronavirus crisis and resultant economic concerns has meant that all capital projects in development have been paused for up to two years so these plans will not be progressed at this stage, although there is still a belief in the importance of the cultural hub concept and in developing the museum when the financial situation may allow.

1.3 As the proposals to relocate the museum have been paused and thus new premises will not be realistically available for at least 5 years it was recognised that it is imperative that the storage capacity for the museum is improved at its existing site. A proposal to expand into the library upper stack next door so bringing in an additional 19 bays of existing shelving into the museum space was agreed by the museum's board in June and by the Capital Infrastructure Group. Costs for this work will come from the ring-fenced designated fund controlled by the board. Quotes for this work of £39,000 have been received and we hope that the works can be undertaken early in 2021 as the pandemic allows.

1.4 We are delighted that the film writer, blogger and critic Pamela Hutchinson joined us as a new external member of the museum board.

1.5 We have received further payments to the ring-fenced fund 163, administered by Global Advancement, thanks to the generosity of Principal Donor Peter Jewell. This comprised £896.75 royalties from the Author's Licensing and Collecting Society and earlier payments from them in University

accounts that were identified by Finance and moved into the fund and £617.09 in royalties from the BFI. We also received a cheque for £289.58 from the Ilfracombe Film Festival which was the residual of their accounts when they decided to cease operating.

1.6 We also received a royalty payment of £2,169.00 from Adam Matthew Digital with a further £1,227.55 to be invoiced in August. An additional agreement has been made with Adam Matthew that for a small fee of £250 they will reuse 5 of the images they made previously for a new publication on research methods.

1.7 Due to illness the museum's curator had to take on extra duties in managing the Heritage Collections team for much of this year.

2. *The Collection*

For the Collection to be recognised as one of the leading resources on the moving image in the world.

2.1 We submitted an application for the first stage of the process for the collection to receive Designation status from Arts Council England in July. The Curator has discussed the application with ACE's museums officer for the region, Sam Rowlands and with Jo Elsworth at the Theatre Collection at Bristol who successfully attained designation last year. Assessment has been delayed by now expect to hear whether we have been successful in May 2021. It is a 2 stage process which could take another year or so to complete but achieving Designation Status could unlock more funding streams as well as evidencing the importance of the collection.

2.2 We have made a number of significant acquisitions in 2019-20:

a/ Following the need for the British Universities Film and Video Library to relocate and for them to dispose of their book library, we acquired over 100 books from their collection. This enhanced areas of strength for the collection but also improved our holdings in other areas, notably television and documentary.

b/ We were contacted by Pinewood Studios around Christmas and collected an acquisition of over 1500 scripts belonging to the Rank Script Archive, which would otherwise have been destroyed.

c/ The organisation Reclaim the Frame, which promotes women's filmmaking, donated a beautiful embroidered banner by artist Ruby Wright celebrating the work of film pioneer Alice Guy-Blache.

d/ The curator also acquired a large number of original items on pre and early cinema from the Barnes Collection, following the death of collector and great friend of Peter Jewell, Bill Barnes. We are in consultation with some other institutions over these donations.

e/ We received a wonderful collection of 13 rare early British film posters from leading US collector Dwight Cleveland. Dwight had visited the museum the previous year and been impressed with our collections.

2.3 We loaned a number of artefacts on optical toys and shadow play to the Grundy Art Gallery in Blackpool over the winter for an exhibition on light combining our collection with contemporary art works.

2.4 The Curator has been commissioned to write an article on the collections and its value to researchers for an issue of *Journal of British Film and Television* on British archives and film research to be published in 2022.

2.5 We were sad to hear of the death in August 2019 of one of our most generous donors, Roy Fowler.

3. *Research*

For the museum to be a source of research projects and funding and to be aligned with the University's research strategy.

3.1 A Research Policy for the museum was approved by the board. This was submitted as part of our designation application.

3.2 The University's Arts and Culture team advertised for creative fellows to work with the museum's pre-cinema collection and leading choreographer Lea Anderson was appointed. Lea, who is working with academic Professor John Plunkett, made a number of research visits to the museum to look through our holdings. A number of digital outputs are planned and public events and funding bids inspired by her research on optical illusions are in development.

3.3 Isabel Alexander commenced her PHD studies on immersive media in the collection in a studentship funded by the South West Doctoral Partnership scheme. She is supervised by Professor John Plunkett, the Curator, and Professor Julia Thomas from the University of Cardiff.

3.4 We hosted a visit from the AHRC funded Cinema Memories Digital Archive in the autumn. This project is led by Professor Annette Kuhn at Lancaster and is creating a digital archive of her fieldwork in the 1990s on cinema-going memories from older people across the UK; the museum's Academic Director Helen Hanson is on the project's advisory board. The project team visited the museum because they wished to receive advice on preserving, cataloguing and interpreting material on moving image heritage.

3.5 The museum was a partner and participant in an AHRC funded project led by Dr Lisa Stead on Vivien Leigh's representation through a number of museum and archive collections (total award value £182,000). The Curator was interviewed for a podcast series on our holdings and items from the

collection featured on an interactive website <http://reframingvivienleigh.exeter.ac.uk/>. The project culminated in an international conference in February which included papers using the collection and the Curator was on a panel of experts in a workshop on curating Vivien Leigh collections.

3.6 We were also working as a partner on two further AHRC funded projects within the University. Dr Ting Gao (Senior Lecturer in Chinese) is running a project called “Translating for Changes: Anglophone Queer Cinema and Chinese LGBT+ Movement” (total award value £200,000) and we had planned a student curated exhibition and interactive activities for a conference in April, that has had to be postponed due to the pandemic. A physical and virtual exhibition is now planned for early summer using museum volunteers as interns. Similarly our planned large exhibition and related activities around the international conference supporting Professor Kate Newey in Drama’s project “Theatre and Visual Culture in the long 19th century” in June (total award value £600,000) has been postponed and will now run in August 2021.

3.7 The book on Bill Douglas proposed by the Curator and Amelia Seely has been accepted by University of Exeter Press with contracts signed and contributors attached. The date for delivery is April 2021 with publication in late 2021 or early 2022. The donation of the early 8mm work by Bill Douglas and Peter Jewell has also created interest and filmmaker Andy Kimpton-Nye has received development money for a documentary based on the material. This has enabled digitisation of the films.

3.8 We hosted visits from a number of stipend researchers following the latest round of awards generously funded by Peter Jewell in 2019. These included Chris O’Rourke (University of Lincoln) on Queer readings of 1950s fan magazines; Dr Andrea Mariani (University of Udine in Italy) on scrapbooks; Dr Carla Mereu Keating (University of Bristol) on translation and the popularity of foreign language films in the UK in the 1950s and 60s; Colm McAuliffe (Birkbeck College, London) on the development of theory in Film Studies; Dr Malcolm Cook (University of Southampton) on ‘useful’ animation in optical media and Dr Clive Nwonka (LSE) on Black British cinema using the material on *Babylon* in the Gavrik Losey Archive. Other stipend holders had to postpone their research due to the pandemic and so the period until the next round of awards will be extended until they have been able to visit.

3.9 The Curator participated in a new Campus Heritage Group, bringing together various people in the University working on Heritage projects and particularly focused on funding bids.

4. Teaching and Student Experience

4.1 Teaching using the collections covered a broad range of courses and disciplines. Appendix A lists all the classes in which the museum participated

in 2019-20; however as there was disruption during this academic year in November-December and February-March due to industrial action and to the coronavirus pandemic classes that were scheduled but were unable to run are also listed.

4.2 The museum was again involved in classes for the MA International Film Business and hosted a group's pop-up cinema event. We also worked with the new MA Creativity: Innovation and Business Strategy programme, which included a lecture from the Curator, who also contributed to a new Film Studies module on television.

4.3 Much of the summer of 2020 was spent preparing strategies to assist online delivery of teaching necessitated by the pandemic. We worked in conjunction with academic colleagues to prioritise digitisation of some materials from the collection on our return to campus to facilitate this delivery.

4.4 It has been agreed with the College of Humanities that a lecture theatre in the Queen's Building that has been refitted with cinema facilities for screenings is to be renamed 'The Bill Douglas Cinema'. The foyer entrance has been decorated with images from the collection and a plaque commemorating Bill and we were hoping to launch the venue in late March with Peter Jewell opening the cinema. Unfortunately this had to be postponed due to the pandemic but we hope to reschedule the launch when distancing restrictions allow.

4.5 We hosted tours and research visits for students from the University of Plymouth (twice) and Bath Spa University in 2019-20.

4.6 We participated in a number of University open days, offering tours to sometimes very large numbers of prospective students and their families. Some events were unable to go ahead as planned due to industrial action and coronavirus closure. We also ran a widening participation session for school students using the collections and ran a virtual session for a similar event in July. Filming took place in the galleries on behalf of the College of Humanities' marketing department to produce materials aiding recruitment to Exeter.

4.7 The Curator's module based in the museum, 'British Screens', which is co-convened with Professor Linda Williams, ran successfully in the autumn term with four student exhibitions subsequently on public display. It was again commended by the external examiner.

5. Community Engagement

5.1 The museum is a partner in a funded National Heritage Lottery Fund award to the Northcott Theatre to interpret their archive. We are facilitating public workshops looking the relationship between cinema and theatre. The progress of the project has been delayed due to the pandemic.

5.2 We are also a partner in a funded National Heritage Lottery Fund award to Exeter Phoenix to create a digital resource and run workshops on Exeter's cinema history. We are also working with filmmakers based at the University of

Plymouth who are organising activities around Plymouth's cinema history. The Curator was due to speak at an event in the city in March but again this had to be postponed because of the pandemic.

5.3 We organised a successful screening of Sean Martin and Louise Milne's film 'Charlie Chaplin Lived Here', based on Bill Douglas's love of Charlie Chaplin, at the Exeter Phoenix in November. This inspired further discussions with Claire Horrocks, who runs film programming at the Phoenix, on ways we can collaborate together. As part of this initiative the Curator introduced a screening of 'La Dolce Vita' at the Phoenix in February.

5.4 The Curator gave a talk in Bristol Museum's public lecture series in January on the museum and its collections as a way to understand moving image history.

5.5 Curatorial assistant Mike Rickard led a collaboration to loan materials to create an exhibition celebrating the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's journey to America. This was able to open to the public for a period in the autumn and was part of the opening of The Box, a prestigious new heritage venue in Plymouth.

5.6 We continued to work with community groups and hosted a reception and gave a tour to volunteers for a helpline for survivors of sexual violence and abuse in January. The charity had to dissolve due to the end of its funding streams so its organisers wanted to thank their volunteers.

5.8 We conducted tours over the last few months for a variety of groups, including Exeter College (the Curator also gave his annual lecture on the collection to art foundation students at the college), Isca Heritage Group, Blundell's School, the Devon Association, the Curious Club and the South West Heritage Trust. Further scheduled tours have had to be cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic; social distancing restrictions may mean that guided tours may not be possible for a while after we are able to reopen to the public.

5.9 Press coverage of the collections included appearances by the Curator on Radio Devon and a feature on the museum in Devon Life. We continued to maintain our social media profile.

6. Stewardship

6.1 The museum closed to the public on Tuesday 17th March as staff on campus were instructed to leave the workplace and the University shut to prevent the spread of coronavirus as part of a national lockdown. We were able to restore some research access at the end of the summer and reopened to the public for two spells in autumn 2020. This obviously had a huge effect on our visitor numbers.

6.2 With the support of the South West Museums Development service we created a questionnaire for visitors to the galleries. We received over 60 responses between late August and the end of February and volunteer Amy

Borchard analysed the data and created a report in collaboration with the Curator which interpreted the results, incorporating feedback from the museum's visitor's book. This report offers valuable evidence of our users and their reactions to the museum and is proving a useful tool in developing our audience. An internship funded by philanthropy in 2021 will seek to engage groups we have not sufficiently reached previously and to maximise the impact of the collections on other parts of our audience.

6.3 We have responded to some of the suggestions by visitors to improve elements of our operations and public offer, for instance by adding instructions on the use of our popular interactive replicas and by working to provide a large-print book of the object descriptions within the cases that could be used by visitors with sight issues.

6.4 Volunteer Alice Clements, who had worked with us for 5 years, including three after her graduation as an Exeter student, left the museum to pursue her career goals. Alice made a very important contribution to the museum, especially in improving and maintaining our displays, and we were lucky to benefit from her skills for so long. Fortunately the new appointment as Special Collections Assistant, Anna Harding, who works with us half a day a week, also has a design background and has been able to take on some of these tasks.

6.5 In early autumn the Curator rearranged the museum's book stock into a new organisation that better reflected research areas and needs. This has been successful in making more material accessible to researchers.

6.6 Temporary displays were created this year to celebrate Black History Month (in collaboration with the University's Equality and Diversity Unit) and to mark the centenary of Fellini's birth.

Appendix A: Classes using The Bill Douglas Cinema Museum in 2019-20

British Screens (1 group, 16 sessions (+2 not held due to industrial action) Phil Wickham and Linda Williams 3rd Year Film Studies

Something to See: War and Visual Media (2 groups, 1 session) Debra Ramsay 3rd Year Film Studies

Introduction to Film History (1 group, 3 sessions) Aidan Power 1st Year Film Studies

Performance Entertainments and Performance Documentation (1 group, 1 session) Kate Holmes 2nd year Drama

Shots in the Dark (8 groups, 2 sessions) Helen Hanson 2nd Year Film Studies

MA Creativity Ideas Generation Module (2 groups, 1 session) Olya Brown

Hearing Film (1 Group, 1 Session) Helen Hanson MA Film Studies Pathway

Global Art and Empire (2 groups, 1 Session) Fiona Allen 3rd Year Art History and Visual Culture

Them and Us (1 group, 1 session) Mike Finn 3rd year History

Creative Industries (2 groups, 1 session + Field Trip) Gabriella Giannachi 2nd Year English

Queering British Cinema (1 group, 1 session) Benedict Morrison 3rd Year Film Studies

Heroes (2 groups, 1 session) Hester Schadee 3rd year History

Critical Approaches to War, State and Society (1 group, 1 session) Claire McCallum MA History

MA International Film Business (2 groups, 2 sessions + 2 sessions not held due to industrial action) Will Higbee

Art, Industry and the Modern (1 group, 3 sessions) John Plunkett 3rd Year Art History and Visual Culture

Shakespeare's Spectacular Bodies (2 groups, 4 sessions - + further 2 not held due to industrial action) Pascale Aebischer 3rd Year English

Female Screens (3 groups, 1 session + 1 not held due to industrial action) Helen Hanson 3rd Year Film Studies

Introduction to Visual Media (2 groups, 1 session) John Plunkett 1st Year Art History and Visual Culture

Imagining Social Worlds (1 Group, 1 session) Michael Schillmaier 1st Year Sociology

The Yes Minister Files (1 Group, 1 session) David Thackeray 2nd Year History

Adaptation: Text, Image, Culture (7 groups, 2 sessions) Joe Kember 2nd Year English and Film Studies

Literature of the Cold War (1 group, 1 session) Sinead Moynihan MA English American Pathway

Harlem and After (2 Groups, 1 session) Sinead Moynihan 3rd Year English

Contemporary Film and TV Studies (2 groups, 1 session) Linda Williams 1st Year Film Studies

Global Modernisms (2 groups, 1 session) Fiona Allen 3rd Year Art History and Visual Culture

Research and Performance (1 group, 1 session) Kate Newey MA Drama

Scheduled classes not held due to industrial action or Covid 19 closure:

Against the Mainstream (1 group, 1 session) Paul Williams (3rd Year English)

European Cinema: Art, Industry, Entertainment (1 Group, 1 session) Fiona Handyside 2nd Year Film Studies

Victorian Things (1 group, 1 session) Trish Zakreski 3rd Year English

Film Studies An Introduction (7 groups, 1 session) James Lyons 1st Year English

Appendix B

Statistics by Academic Year

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 *
Number of BDC items consulted by researchers	2113	1775	1767	1956	2745	2593	6891	4827	4025	2077
Number of visitors looking at BDC Material	267	276	322	273	262	259	289	333	280	172
Number of BDC Seminars	46	63	55	103	159	132	122	104 (7 cancelled due to industrial action)	139	107 + 21 cancelled due to strikes or Covid 19 lockdown
Number of students attending BDC Seminars	705	1072	869	1723	2451	1962	1819	1699	2135	1498

Number of BDC items used in seminars	1219	1414	1493	2479	4562	3929	3843	3385	4570	3317
Number of Visitors to Galleries	1927	2188	2550	3163	3302	4893	8044	8032	9311	5416*
Number of outreach events/tours to public	52	58	73	49	69	64	75	60	76	Not available
Number of people attending outreach events/tours to public	550	1455	1968	1341	1122 (+over 100,000 at Central Library exhibition)	1289	1421	1142	1358	Not available
Number of Collection enquiries	168	207	204	210 (Est)	230*(est)	220*est	246	285	250est*	200 est
Number of Website Users	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	27,534	34,912	28,249	24,673	27,145	29,094#
Number of Website Sessions	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	32,583	41,613	35,798	32,190	35,160	35,565#
Number of Website Pageviews	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	116,716	124,496	121,171	102,982	113,710	100,181#

*=up to 18th March

= up to 31 July 2020

Dr Phil Wickham, Curator, The Bill Douglas Cinema Museum

January 2021

