



THE BILL DOUGLAS CINEMA MUSEUM ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

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

All too obviously during the academic year 2020/21 the Covid crisis has been the dominating event. What is a museum without a regular and free flow of visitors, students, and academics to view, work with and study the artefacts? Although much was achieved on-line, indeed much more than was anticipated, it does not, cannot, replace the visceral enjoyment of being in the presence of a special and rare object.

Notwithstanding this the museum continued to develop and grow. In June, The Bill Douglas Cinema was launched. This lecture theatre has been fitted out to the best specifications to see films for students. Also in the summer a badly needed extension area for storage was completed allowing the museum to continue to acquire new collections. Every year we are fortunate to receive a number of significant donations and this year has been no different with gifts, among others, from the Linda Ruth Williams and Mark Kermode Collection and further items from Peter Jewell relating to Bill Douglas and his career.

Whilst this past year has proved a challenge, the determination and hard work of the Curator, his colleagues and volunteers has meant that the museum has continued to provide online, and to a limited extent in person, opportunities for students and academics to use the collection for their studies. It continued to contribute significantly to the University's teaching and research activities. As I write this the Covid restrictions are being lifted and we can only hope for a more normal year in 2021/22.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary BDC Museum Annual Report

Despite the continued disruption to services by COVID-19 restrictions the Museum has had cause for celebration during 2020/21, not least the completion of a storage

extension in the Old Library an uplift in the operating budget from £6,500 to £11,500 (1.2; 1.3) and the launch of a new Cinema (4.3). The re-opening in August 2021 of the reading room enabled researchers to access physical materials and the Curator is producing a new draft Forward Plan with the support of the Board's Working Group (1.5).

An initial application for Designation of the collection under Stage 1 of the Arts Council Scheme was unsuccessful. However, the Curator was encouraged to re-apply in January 2022, based on the advice provided by the Arts Council (2.1). Acquisitions continue to augment the collection and include a donation of books and ephemera from Professor Linda Williams and film critic Mark Kermode. Other donations include publicity material, viewmaster reels from India and the Caribbean and festival programmes (2.2). Long-term donor, Anthony Attard sadly died in October. His widow kindly donated the final pieces of his archive to the museum (2.5). Loans out to other institutions include items for the delayed Mayflower 400 exhibition at The Box, Plymouth (2.3).

Internships are of vital importance to the museum and some of these were able to go ahead in compliance with COVID-safe restrictions. Schemes such as the Access to Internship Scheme and donor funding have provided significant support, including scoping and initial cataloguing of a very extensive collection of film scripts from the Rank Organization by Izzy Bostock, scoping for community group activity by Rosanna Armstrong and a report on digital strategy by Ailsa Bailey (2.4; 5.1; 6.1).

Research activity this year includes the AHRC project 'Theatre and Visual Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century', and 'Translating for Change: Anglophone Queer Cinema in China'. A new AHRC bid is currently in development relating to women's film history. The Curator also provided a case study for Research Libraries UK on research and teaching with academics, together with a paper on the topic for the Archives and Records Association. A book on Bill Douglas, edited by the curator and postgraduate Amelia Watts, is in publication (3.1-3.5).

Much of the teaching for 2020-21 was conducted online and access to items from the collection was provided via scanned digital surrogates (4.1). Students were still able to create physical displays for the British Screens module in May 2021, however, and Vice-Chancellor Professor Lisa Roberts visited the collections and saw them at work (4.2). The launch in June of the new Bill Douglas Cinema in Queens Building was another happy event in a difficult year and provides access to high-quality screening equipment. The launch was attended by our Provost, Professor Janice Kay, on behalf of the University and principal donor Peter Jewell, with invited guests (4.3).

Community engagement continues to increase. Strategic focus is on reaching out to older people, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds, with advice and support from South-West Museums Development, and events will take place in 2021-22 (5.1). The curator appeared in several radio stations to publicise the re-opening of the Museum in May 2021 (5.2). The summer saw an encouraging stream of UK tourists, despite restricted access, which had an adverse effect on statistics this year. We expect these to be close to normal by the end of 2022 (5.3).

We said goodbye to former Team Leader Gemma Poulton and hello to Sarah-Jayne Ainsworth. Sarah-Jayne will be leading on the Museum's important community liaison work (6.3).

Dr Christine Faunch, Head of Heritage Collections

Annual Report

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 2019-2020 annual report was approved by the University Council in April 2021.

1.2 An extension area for storage for the museum adjacent to the existing office space was completed in summer 2021. This allows the museum to continue to acquire new collections in the short to medium term by increasing capacity by 19 further bays of shelving and space for more filing cabinets for artefacts. This expansion was necessary as the museum was full. Works were funded by contributions from the Exeter University Foundation funds ringfenced for the museum and controlled by the board and residuals from the museum's annual budgets over the last two years.

1.3 The museum's operating budget was increased by £5,000 from £6,500 to £11,500. We are grateful for this support.

1.4 The museum received £2,911.84 in royalties from Adam Matthew Digital in 2020-21. In addition we also received the following royalty sums relating to Bill Douglas's work.: £567.74 from the BFI; £337.10 from Directors UK and £104.74 from ALCS. Principal donor Peter Jewell has kindly donated the royalties he is owed from Bill Douglas's work to the museum, and this is directed to a fund administered by Global advancement to pay for stipends and other agreed museum projects.

1.5 Work on a new forward plan to replace the previous plan for 2016-21 has commenced and a working group of board members was formed to formulate ideas and produce a draft.

2. *The Collection*

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

2.1 The museum applied for the first stage of designation for the collection through Arts Council England in July 2020. We were surprised to learn in August 2021 that our application was unsuccessful. The scheme is shortly undergoing review, but we have agreed to reapply prior to this in January 2022.

2.2 There have been a number of significant acquisitions this year. These include: Ongoing donations of books and ephemera from Professor Linda Williams and film critic Mark Kermode, forming the Linda Ruth Williams and Mark Kermode Collection; a large donation of publicity material from the UK and Japan from Mr David Wilson of Liskeard; books and festival programmes from the estate of respected filmographer Markku Salmi; viewmaster reels from India and the Caribbean from Mrs Pearson of Nottingham and further items from Peter Jewell relating to Bill Douglas and his career.

2.3 The Box, the new archive and museum in Plymouth, loaned items from the museum for their Mayflower 400 exhibition, which was finally able to open to the public in 2021.

2.4 Funding from the College of Humanities enabled a paid internship in May-June 2021 to begin scoping the very extensive Rank scripts donation. Intern Izzy Bostock identified women writers and themes to be explored for future teaching and research within the collection. She also set up a system for further work on the scripts and began the process of cataloguing them. This work will prove important for the research work on making archives visible currently being undertaken in the museum.

2.5 Sadly our long-term donor Anthony Attard died in October 2020. His widow, Barbara, kindly donated final pieces from his archive of his work in film and collection of ephemera to the museum.

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 The museum has been a partner in the AHRC awarded project 'Theatre and Visual Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century', run by Professor Kate Newey of the University of Exeter's Drama department in collaboration

with the University of Warwick. This year, in the concluding phase of the project, the museum hosted and facilitated an exhibition and online content by the post-doctoral student attached to the scheme. We also gave tours of the collections to delegates at the conference in late Summer 2021.

3.2 We were also a partner in the AHRC funded project 'Translating for Change: Anglophone Queer Cinema in China' whose principal investigator is Dr Ting Guo from the Modern Languages department at Exeter. Two museum student volunteers were appointed as interns and curated a physical exhibition as well as a virtual online exhibition and an online trail through the museum galleries on LGBT history.

3.3 The curator is working with Professor Linda Williams, the academic director and other colleagues in film to develop a large bid to the AHRC which will seek to open up film archives to women's film history, both through making existing collections more visible and by acquiring new material that fills in some of the gaps both in the past and for the future. The curator will be a co-investigator on this bid.

3.4 The book about Bill Douglas co-edited by the Curator and PhD student Amelia Watts has been submitted to the publishers for reader's reports. A documentary by filmmaker Andy Kimpton-Nye and Hopscotch Films which uses the 8mm films held at the museum shot in the 1960s by Douglas and Peter Jewell is in development and as part of this process all the films were digitised.

3.5 A case study on the museum and its research and teaching with academics, was published on the website of Research Libraries UK (RLUK). Following this, the Curator was asked to present a paper on the topic to the regional meeting of the Archives and Record Management Association.

4. Teaching and Student Experience

4.1 Due to the coronavirus pandemic the bulk of teaching in 2020-21 was conducted online. The museum still ensured that students were able to use the collection for their studies and items were scanned to be used in electronic learning sites for a number of modules, which are listed in appendix one below.

4.2 The British Screens module, co-convened by the Curator, was able to run some face-to-face sessions and delayed its curatorial component until May to better allow students to participate. The students' exhibitions were put on public display and the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Lisa

Roberts, was able to see them at work. The course again had excellent feedback from the external examiner, who said that it was a 'great module that promotes a range of transferrable skills'.

4.3 In June, The Bill Douglas Cinema was launched. This lecture theatre has been fitted out to the best specifications to see films for students and named in honour of Bill Douglas. The foyer area has been decorated with images from the museum collection and there is also a display showing the range of material the museum holds within the space. The launch was attended by Peter Jewell and the museum provost as well as invited guests. Film work by Bill Douglas and Exeter students was screened.

4.4 The Curator took part in virtual teaching sessions for the Exeter progressions classes to prepare school students for University and also for Exeter College's Art foundation programme.

5. Community Engagement

5.1 Following our visitor survey in 2019, we have developed plans for community projects working with two particular groups; older people and local people from ethnic minorities. An internship generously funded by the Bill Douglas and Peter Jewell Trust scoped the possibilities of undertaking these activities. Intern Rosanna Armstrong identified community contacts and researched activities that could take place. In making these plans we received help and advice from South West Museums development. Events have been planned with both groups for 2021-22.

5.2 The curator has made appearances on Radio Devon and Radio Somerset to publicise the reopening of the museum to visitors and to discuss events in film. There were also stories on the museum in Devon Life and Exeter Express and Echo (along with the Devon Hour website). There was national coverage of the museum in the magazine 'Film Stories', with a piece written by former student volunteer Elliana Jay.

5.3 The coronavirus pandemic has inevitably affected visitor numbers; as well as the closures outlined below there were restrictions on numbers for much of the time that we were able to open. However, despite the inability of overseas visitors to come here we did see a steady stream of tourists from elsewhere in the UK visit during the summer. We are aiming to restore visitor numbers to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022.

6. Stewardship

6.1 Ailsa Bailey was appointed on a student internship under the A2I (Access to internships) scheme and produced a report on the digital options and strategies for the museum to take forward. The report listed both options that could be actioned immediately or relatively cheaply in the near future

and longer-term aspirations if investment and premises allowed. The report was presented at the board in July 2021 and Ailsa's work was strongly praised.

6.2 Government closures of public attractions meant that the museum was closed to visitors from 17 March - 20 September 2020; 4 November - 2nd December 2020; Christmas 2020 – 16 May 2021. We were able to offer a limited reading room service from August 2020 for researchers.

6.3 Gemma Poulton, who worked in Special Collections but assisted the museum on many matters, especially related to digital work and design, gained a new post at the University in Digital Humanities. She made a great contribution to the success of the museum and is much missed. Her replacement Sarah-Jayne Ainsworth is also working some hours for the museum and has brought considerable experience as an educator and in running events. She is leading on our community liaison work.

Appendix A: Classes using The Bill Douglas Cinema Museum materials in 2020-21

British Screens (1 group, 16 sessions) Phil Wickham and Linda Williams 3rd Year Film Studies. Physical items and Digital images were supplied.

The Following courses used digital images we created for use:

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

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

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

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

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

Heroes (2 groups, 1 session) Claire McCallum 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) 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, 2 sessions) Helen Hanson 3rd Year Film Studies

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

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

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

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

Appendix B

Statistics by Academic Year

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	Not Possible
Number of Collection enquiries	168	207	204	210 (Est)	230*(est)	220* est	246	285	250 est*	200 est	170 est
Number of Website Users	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	27,534	34,912	28,249	24,673	27,145	24,027^	19,265
Number of Website Sessions	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	32,583	41,613	35,798	32,190	35,160	29,734^	23,851
Number of Website Pageviews	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	116,716	124,496	121,171	102,982	113,710	84,994^	34,947

