

SIXTH ANNUAL

# SCREEN INDUSTRIES

IN EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE CONFERENCE:

## The Long 1990s

3-5 November 2016, the National Film Archive, Prague, Czech Republic



Sponsored by the Czech Society of Film Studies,  
National Film Archive, Prague, and Charles University

The Sixth Annual *Screen Industries in East-Central Europe* Conference (SIECE) shifts attention from structural transformations to the longer-term continuities shaping post-socialist media in the last 26 years. Instead of isolated changes, it focuses on slower historical time, evolving beneath the visible surface of “big” historical events. The topic of the “Long 1990s” (usually defined by historians as the period between November 1989 and September 11, 2001) aims at both historicizing the turbulent decade and at identifying ways it is still shaping current industry practices, although often in an unacknowledged or hidden way. The decade’s improvisational, informal, anachronistic, do-it-yourself, and ad-hoc practices that emerged from the ruins of state-owned media institutions gradually solidified into a system of values and norms which we are still witnessing today. The conference invites participants to adopt a critical perspective: to test an assumption that, in many ways, the heritage of the 1990s limits the way “things are done” in film and television today, and that it has cemented the image of Central and Eastern European audiovisual culture in the West. (For example, how is it that the era of political upheavals gave birth to such an apolitical media culture and politically fragmented professional community which are suspicious of any collective action?) The conference also opens the floor for more positive views of the period: its experimental ethos and the awareness that rules of the game can be changed. As an ECREA pre-conference, SIECE aims to be more interdisciplinary than ever before, welcoming topics from all cultural industries, especially those which transverse institutionalized boundaries and categories.

Potential topics for papers and panels include, but are not limited to:

- Geo-politics and historicity of the 1990s: The end of grand polar narratives; Europeanization and provincialization of the post-socialist screen industries
- The Long 1980s: Persistence of state-socialist practices; survival of underground and/or alternative cultural and aesthetic patterns and communities
- Culture as pure business, and its adversaries: Negotiations between show business and so-called „anti-commercialism“; the ways Václav Klaus and other ideologues of the free market influenced approaches to audiovisual culture policies of the respective national states; the cultural field struggling to resist “commercialism” while often trapping itself in anachronistic cultural ghettos
- Centers and peripheries: Reshuffling of high and low, official and suppressed, or dominant and alternative cultural forms, while cementing new, often analogical hierarchies and stereotypes
- The “corrupted” artist: Practices of negotiating and adapting to the new heteronomous power; tactics of defending or re-gaining symbolic capital endangered by the change of the political regime
- Post-socialist popular film and television: The re-emergence of commercial genres, stars, and fans
- “Exploitation” as a metaphor of the 1990s: The rise of “crude commercialism,” partisan financing practices, and pornography
- Cultural intermediaries: The re-emergence of producers, managers, marketers, publishers and other cultural brokers, and the ways their (often non-standard) practices have conditioned cultural markets
- “Old new” media: The “newness” of 1990s media as a phenomenon of the history of material culture; the hype of video rentals; pirated video/CD distribution; video games; media art
- Post-socialist politics of taste: Persisting taste patterns from the past underpinning the craze for Western entertainment
- Apolitical media: The erosion of collective action, the reticence of public discussion, and the ideological conformity of screen media’s professional community as a heritage of the 1990s
- The 1990s as an epistemological framework: how has the decade been shaping the reflexivity of screen industries and the methods of studying them

The conference will be preceded by the Czech Society for Film Studies’ pre-conference meeting, which will be held on 3

The Sixth Annual *Screen Industries in East-Central Europe* Conference investigates the historical and contemporary dimensions of the region's audiovisual media industries from all angles – local, transnational, economic, cultural, social, and political – and through a broad range of original scholarship delivered in the form of conceptual papers and empirical case-studies. A selection of the conference proceedings will be published in a special English-language issue of the Czech Film Studies journal *Illuminace* ([www.iluminace.cz](http://www.iluminace.cz)).

The 2016 SIECE Program Committee (consisting of the Steering Committee members of the Czech Society of Film Studies – see [www.cefs.cz](http://www.cefs.cz)) invites proposals for twenty-minute conference papers and for panels of three or four speakers focusing on any topic related to the 1990s and East-Central European audiovisual industries. Panels of three to four papers will include a brief summarizing reflection of between five and ten minutes, which will be delivered by an assigned respondent to facilitate discussion. Proposals for conference papers should include a title, an abstract of up to 150 words, and between three and five key bibliographical references, along with the presenter's name, the presenter's institutional affiliation, and a concise academic bio. Panel proposals should include a panel title, a short description of up to 100 words on the panel's focus, and proposals of all of the papers to be delivered (including the information described above). Please submit proposals **no later than 15 September 2016** to [petrszczepanik@gmail.com](mailto:petrszczepanik@gmail.com).

Conference attendance is free, and the conference will be conducted in English (except the pre-conference meeting on 3 November).

Conference Organizers: Petr Szczepanik, Kateřina Svatoňová, and Lucie Česálková, in association with the Czech Society of Film Studies, the Film Studies Department, Charles University, and the National Film Archive, Prague.

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