

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE: EVOLVING STRATEGIES FOR FILM AND TELEVISION EDUCATION

The Four Panels



Documentary in the teaching of fiction

Chair: Michael Rabiger

We often tend to think of documentary and fiction as two distinct genres, and the “docu-drama” as a special exception. If, as Aristotle wrote, “art is the imitation of life,” is there an argument for using the documentary, which is about the people, objects and events of real life, as a way into the art of fiction film and television?

Triangle, Six Years Later

Chair: Lauri Törhönen, UIAH

In 1996, CILECT began to address the issue of communication and collaboration among the creative triangle of writers, directors, and producers. Some viewed the Triangle project as a necessary corrective to the 1960's *auteur* ideology that dominated many film schools. Others saw it as diminishing the role of the individual film artist in an increasingly market-oriented system. How has *Triangle* affected the film and television school curriculum, and what lessons can be learned from the process as well as the outcomes?



School and Student: The conflicts between harmony and invention

Chair: Annabelle Sheehan, AFTRS

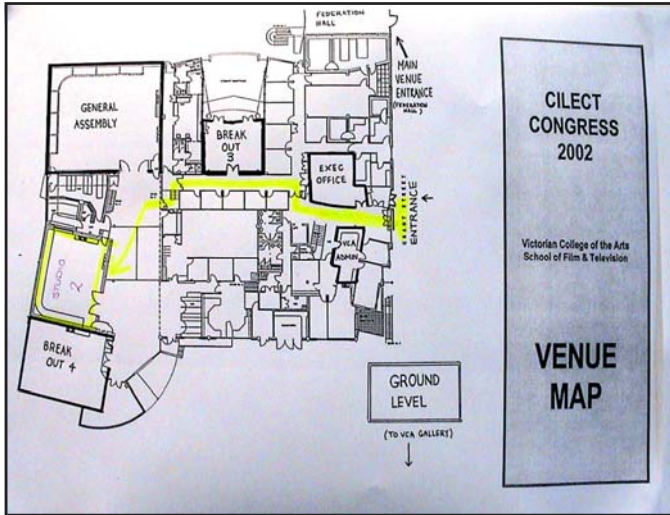
Student priorities and school philosophies often disagree. Students want the utmost freedom, schools want artistic and organizational structure and discipline. Students live in the present, while schools honor the past and work for the future. Film and Television school is inevitably a balance between the classroom world of ideas and the studio world of action. Negotiating a balance that meets the needs of the students and the goals of the school is a continuing theme in film and television education. Read Panelist Doe Meyer's Presentation on page 11.



Curriculum Change and Technological Evolution

Chair: Alain Auclair, La Fémis

Evolving technology gives us new creative means, and this has been reflected in the curriculum of many schools. Have new sound and image technologies made older technologies obsolete, or is an understanding of traditional ways of film making necessary in order to master the art of the cinema? How have sound, camera, editing, animation, and other curricula changes as a result of evolving technology? What is the potential for distance education to radically alter the ways in which we think about teaching and learning?







servation by Tarkovsky's teacher "that the most important thing for a director is his health".

The discussions begun in the panels continued into the coffee break, and onto dinner that night. My circle of acquaintances grew with each beverage consumed and by the end of Sunday I was feeling quite at home.

Theme three was **Triangle** presented by Lauri Törhönen, UIAH, Pavel Jech, FAMU, Renen Schorr, Sam Spiegel Film and Television School, and Malte Wadman, Den Norske Filmskolen.

For me, as a first timer to CILECT, this session was very significant. For the last five years, in reasonable isolation from the theoreticians in my department, I had been developing a curriculum that encouraged creative collaboration, and broke with the auteur model of filmmaking that had been taught before my arrival at Flinders. As a producer, who had ended up teaching production, the producing of producers is dear to my heart and in this panel I found my research spiritual home! The question of how to create and manage this collaboration within a film school is pedagogically challenging. Malte stated for the implementation of Triangle to work all teaching staff in every department have to agree to support the concept and system.

More lunch, more debate and onto theme four where Michael Rabiger, Columbia College, Jim Awindor, NAFTI, Silvio Fischbein, University of Buenos Aires, Malte Wadman, Den Norske Filmskolen, and film makers Michael Rubbo and Juan

Paco Urrusti presented – **Documentary in the Teaching of Fiction**. As a documentary producer and lecturer Monday, just got better and better! The logic of teaching documentary to inform drama was well established and I was proud to note that the order in which I delivered my topics was in keeping with the best film schools in the world (and I

got to hear Michael Rabiger speak without going to Sydney and had a chat with Alan Rosenthal over coffee at the foyer). My only gripe about Monday was the complete lack of women on stage. It was quite strange having only male speakers in both sessions given the number of women working in film schools and as documentary filmmakers – it was a bit like going back in time. It was, however, at the end of the day extremely interesting to reflect on the differences between schools, the range of funding available to them, as well as the different training agendas and requirements school throughout the world are responding to.

By the congress dinner on the Monday night (where we got to dress up, drink generous quantities of wine, smoke far too many cigarettes, and dance energetically to scary 70's disco hits – or not if one was sensible) I was feeling like part of the family.

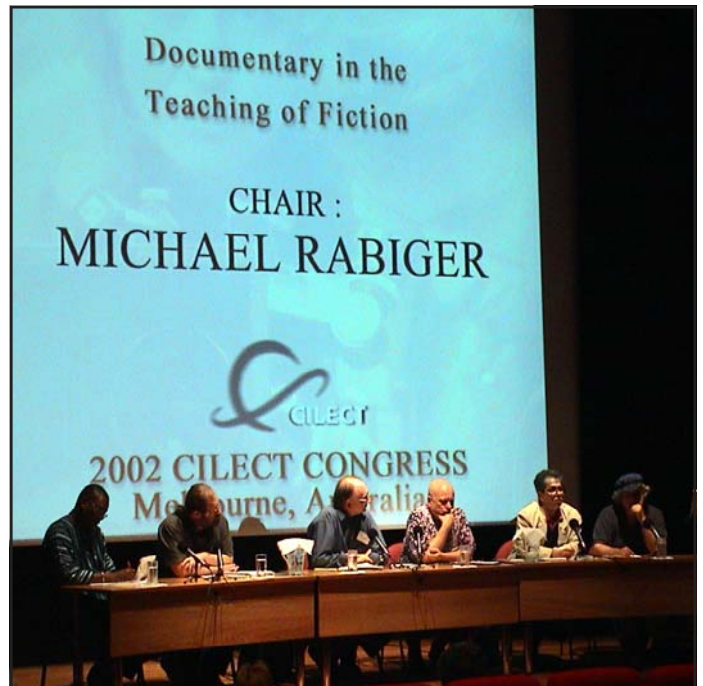
After the **Digital Cinema** presentation on Tuesday morning I knew that in the future I could contact Nenad Puhovski, Chair Standing Committee on New Technologies, for advice on what is the best mix of production and post production equipment within the budget limitations of my university. The rest of the day passed quickly with plenary discussions, TDC, and Regional Association Meetings, and it was time to fly home.

Attending CILECT was an

extraordinary opportunity to meet a wide range of people teaching screen production under very diverse conditions through out the world. It had a significant impact on me in a number of unexpected ways. It made me reassess what we do at Flinders and see it in a global context that was interesting to consider – we may not be a film school but we teach and struggle with pedagogical issues that are common to film schools everywhere. Funding is difficult and problematic world wide. The paradoxical question of how you teach creativity while training people for an industry that is about commerce and business is constant and ongoing. It allowed me to make people aware of Flinders University in Adelaide, which to them may seem as exotic and wonderful as FAMU in Prague does to me.

I came back from the congress inspired – I applied for corresponding membership of CILECT which I am very pleased to say was approved, re-enrolled in my PHD, was energized about teaching and was much nicer to students for most of April and May, have been in email contact with CILECT delegates all over the world and am saving for Helsinki 2004.





GEECT WORKSHOP

Producing Producers, 19 - 24 March 02

UIAH Helsinki; DDF Copenhagen; DI Stockholm; Turku Polytechnic



The “Producing Producers” workshop explored one of the most controversial and multi-faceted disciplines in film schools. How do you train producers? While it is not too difficult to reproduce the conditions of a real shoot in a school, putting the producing student in a real world environment is quite another matter.

The workshop examined the various approaches to the training of producers in GEECT schools, invited experts from the industry and graduates. The workshop started in the Dramatiska Institutet (DI) in Stockholm, Sweden, continued in Turku Polytechnic, Finland and concluded at the UIAH Helsinki, Finland

Schools were asked a number of questions on how they train producers. The workshop organizers drafted this summary based on the answers given by sixteen schools.

<p>Status of your institution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public 14 • Private 1 • Unknown 1 <p>Teaching producing as a discipline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in all but one establishment producing is a discipline <p>Years to graduation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower degree 2 – 4 years • Higher degree 2 – 7 years <p>Level of degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA • MA, Diploma, Master's degree or equivalent • Doctor of Arts <p>Total budget of school: • € 250 000 – € 10 000 000</p> <p>Cost per student per year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average € 13 409 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range € 2 000 – € 34 000 <p>Financing of student films as percentage of budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average 22,19 % • Range 10 – 43% <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students ranges between 50 – 900 • Number of production students 6 – 135 <p>Films produced per year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average 60 • Number of films 12 – 250 <p>Films per student per year (directors or producers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average 2 – 3 • Range 1 – 5 <p>Films per student throughout studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range 2–14
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- Average 7,1

PRODUCTION STAGE OF STUDENT FILMS

Who controls the budget?

- school
- executive producer who is a staff member
- staff and students together

Who has the right of final cut?

Most commonly it is the director.

'The director under the supervision of the department.'

'A staff member.'

'The pedagogical committee.'

'The Project co-ordinator.'

'The producer.'

Are there contracts with non-students involved in production?

- Usually the staff is in charge of signing these contracts.
- In some schools students make these agreements alone.

'Sometimes students are responsible for making these contracts with advice from staff supervisor.'

Are there contracts between students and the school?

- yes 9
- no 2

What is the production reserve % of the total budget of the film?

- Most commonly it is 10 %.

'Contingencies are not provided'; '5%'.

Are projects ever brought to halt in mid-production?

- Yes 3
- No 2

'Hardly ever'.

'Only when the situation is really destructive'.

'Once, but then the student was thrown out of school'.

'Would like to do it but haven't.'

Shooting ratio

- ranges between 1:2 – 1:15

'Fiction 1:8, documentaries 1:20'.

Graduation film – Anything in particular?

'Students organise themselves into a production company'.

'These films are technically and financially more extensive. Normally a 35 mm blow-up is guaranteed. Sometimes they are co-productions with professional funding sources'.

Co-productions

- 90 % of schools are involved in co-productions

Sponsoring

- majority of schools approves sponsoring

'That is up to the students to decide. The School does not support product placement.'

'Product placement is prohibited because the film would be then turned down by the national television.'

'In regard to the graduation films and only if the sponsor has no demands at all.'

FESTIVALS, SALES AND DISTRIBUTION

Is there a film festival office in your school?

- yes 10
- no 3

Selling of films and distribution of revenues

- Staff is usually in charge of distribution
- Examples of the distribution of revenues:
 - 35 % to the student and 65 % to the school
 - 35 % to the student and 65 % to the school once the expenses are covered

'Revenues are shared between the school and the authors.'

'In principle the films are not sold, but if they were the revenue would return to the school.'

Use of sales agents

- Most schools do not use sales agents.
- Some do and a few others would like to.

Prizes

- The student usually gets at least the cash prize
- 'Production-related awards go to the school.'*
- 'Certificates, plaques, statuettes belong to the school.'*
- 'The school gets all the prizes but gives them out as grants to students'.*
- 'The school takes it all'.*
- 'Only personal prizes go to students.'*
- 'According to the festival rules- personal prizes go to the director.'*
- 'The regulations of the festival are decisive.'*