

**Call for Papers: NEW APPROACHES TO SILENT FILM HISTORIOGRAPHY:  
TECHNOLOGY, SPECTATORSHIP AND THE ARCHIVE.**

The event is a collaboration between the University of Leeds' School of Languages, Cultures, and Societies, the Universities of York and Sheffield, and the Audiovisual Heritage Meeting. The conference is generously funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council and White Rose College of the Arts & Humanities.

**FREE TO ATTEND**

**SMALL PGR TRAVEL BURSARIES AVAILABLE (LIMITED NUMBER)**

**Location:** University of Leeds

**Dates:** 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**Keynote Speakers:** Dr Lawrence Napper (King's College London) and Kieron Webb (British Film Institute).

**Submission Requirements:** 200-300 word abstracts and three key words on topics related to the conference's focus.

**Contact Person/Email:** Laurence Carr/silentfilmhist@gmail.com

**Deadline for Submission:** 10<sup>th</sup> August 2018

**Abstract**

In the years following the death of silent cinema and the rise of the talkies in the early 1930s, there was a supreme lack of interest in silent film preservation and restoration. Due largely to this lack of care and, in some cases, deliberate destruction of silent films, the Library of Congress estimates that about 75% of all silent films are now lost forever. Many of the silent films that managed to survive in archives and private collections are incomplete or suffered significant damage and decay. In more recent times, owing largely to the launch and success of home cinema and the establishment of silent film forums and events (e.g. Pordenone Silent Film Festival) in the 1980s, there has been a renewed interest in silent film. High quality digital restoration technology has given archives and independent silent film restorers new opportunities to compensate for substantial filmic losses. In addition to this, HD home media silent film releases, and internet platforms such as YouTube, have made numerous silent films readily available to the public. Although these current developments have arguably improved the aesthetic qualities of many silent films and made them far more accessible to the public, they have also raised controversial questions surrounding the safeguarding of the filmmakers' artistic intent, the contextualisation and historical reliability of film experiences, and the sustainability of digital preservation,

amongst other issues. This conference will analyse the impact of recent technological and institutional developments on the study, experience, and restoration of silent films and discuss sustainable ways forward.

Potential topics could include, but are not limited to:

- New narrative or technical analyses of specific silent film restorations (case studies)
- Silent film restoration ethics (e.g. preserving silent filmmakers' artistic intent)
- Digitisation, curatorship and reliability of historical evidence
- Silent film experiences, digital archive accessibility and film scholarship
- Silent cinema journalistic writing (past and/or present)
- Theatrical presentation and distribution of silent cinema (past and/or present)
- Home cinema, the internet and silent cinema audiences
- Silent film and sustainable analogue and digital preservation
- Silent film copyright

**We welcome abstract submissions from postgraduate researchers, film scholars, film preservationists, and curators.**

**Please send 200 to 300-word abstracts and three key words to [silentfilmhist@gmail.com](mailto:silentfilmhist@gmail.com) by 10<sup>th</sup> of August 2018.**

**Useful Links:**

- **Our 2018 silent film conference website:** <https://silentfilmhist2018.wordpress.com>
- **The 2017 Audiovisual Heritage Meeting website, containing the names and project titles of all speakers:** <http://media.leeds.ac.uk/events/audiovisual-heritage-and-academic-research-at-the-university-of-leeds/>

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