

DOMITOR

the international society for the study of early cinema



Viscera, Skin, and Physical Form: Corporeality and Early Cinema

Fourteenth International Domitor Conference

Stockholm, Sweden

14–17 June 2016

Moving pictures fascinated early audiences by depicting inanimate objects in motion; rolling waves and phantom rides were lasting favorites. First and foremost, however, the film camera captured bodies moving about in everyday life as well as bodies performing for the camera: workers leaving the factory, Sandow flexing his muscles, Annabelle dancing. Film's wondrous and uncanny capacity to deliver imaginary corporeal presence took advantage of and amplified modernity's novel forms of body culture. Indeed, even the naming of the medium's machines and corporations indicated its organic impulse (bio, vita, living, animated). As the medium industrialized and accelerated its intermedial cross-pollination, it supplanted unnamed "models" with stars and superstars while it presented everyday bodies in non-fiction genres. Over time, producers tested storytelling techniques, acting styles, programming approaches, and exhibition practices, thereby negotiating and transforming the relationships between screen bodies and audience response. From the "cinema of attractions" to the feature film, spectatorship has always been corporeal.

Against this backdrop, this Domitor conference seeks to explore the role of the body in all its glory: grotesque or "deviant" bodies; dismembered bodies and corpses; erotic bodies, ideal bodies; bodies that display gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, race, class, national origin; imperiled bodies; bodies at work; bodies at play; conspicuously fashioned bodies; bodies in the audience; and so on.

Possible topics include:

- Early theories or debates about the nature of screen bodies and their relations to bodies in attendance
- Modern theories or debates about the same: the cinema of attractions, body genres, spectatorship and the imaginary
- Cinema's negotiation of gender relations and the body's social space, such as the representation of "the new woman" or cross-cultural body notions inside and outside the western world
- Vitalism and the cinematic apparatus
- Bodies (human and animal) filmed in labs as objects of scientific or medical experiments; institutionalized or incarcerated film bodies
- Cinematic disseminations of physical ideals, body norms, and corporeal imaginings
- Non-fiction gore in the wake of disasters, accidents, and wars
- The acting body from anonymity to stardom
- Undressed, fashioned, in drag, or otherwise (un)adorned screen bodies

- Film censorship and the regulation of cinema's physicality
- Bodily excitements in the dark: mashers, prostitutes, dating cultures
- Imperiled audience bodies: fire regulations and other means for safeguarding exhibition spaces
- Audience discipline: daylight theaters and other techniques for monitoring audiences
- Bodily representation and movement in early animation films
- Cinema's simulated bodies: mechanical corporeality and body tricks
- Mapping bodies for analyzing physical movements: from Muybridge and Marey to Gilbreth
- Peep culture and corporeality in non-projected moving images
- Hand-operated optical toys, automata, or other tactile apparatuses
- Film bodies studied/situated in intermedial and intertextual relationships with other performance/representational practices (vaudeville, circus, pantomime, chronophotography, lantern slides, painting, postcards, advertisements, and theatre)

Although we imagine the general time frame for the period covered by papers in the conference to be 1890 through 1915, we realize that cinema developed unevenly across the global stage. For that reason, papers treating cinema after 1915 in countries where early cinema practices postdate the proposed time frame will be given full consideration. Similarly, papers that examine the history and current status of early cinema's place in the archive and museum are also welcomed.

Proposal Submission Process: Those wishing to submit a proposal should do so no later than **1 October 2015** to: domitor2016@gmail.com. Any questions about the process should also be sent to that address.

Proposals for individual papers should be no longer than 300 words and be written in either English or French. Only a paper written in one of those two languages can be presented at the conference. Papers prepared for conference delivery should be no longer than 3300 words and must fit within a 25-minute presentation time (including any audiovisual material used to supplement the paper). We request that all papers be submitted by 30 April 2016 to allow for simultaneous translation.

Proposals for pre-constituted panels of three participants will also be considered; such proposals should be submitted by the panel chair and consist of the collected individual paper proposals in addition to a brief rationale for the pre-constituted panel.

Unfortunately, proposals for presentations that are not in keeping with the theme will not be considered.

While membership in Domitor is not required to submit a proposal, anyone presenting a paper at the conference must be a member. To become a member, please visit this site: <http://www.domitor.org/en/About/member.html>.

For more information on Domitor, the international society for the study of early cinema, visit www.domitor.org.