

<p>Institution: University of St. Andrews</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 35</p>
<p>Title of case study: Understanding and Linking Global Film Festivals</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The first film festival, in Venice, was established in 1932. Today, the global festival circuit counts 10,000+ – a disparate and loosely linked galaxy of events – and it is still growing. Yet up until 2009, when our first collection of film festival studies was published, research into festivals was next to non-existent. Our project connects the community of festival practitioners and systematically analyses the work they produce. We enable them to learn from shared experience and improve operations. Five years into the project, we are recognised as ‘the global hub of film festival research’ (as per U.S. critic B. Ruby Rich) and enjoy worldwide visibility and brand recognition for our <i>Film Festival Yearbook</i> series. At least a third of the festivals around the world have heard of our work or have used our publications; the majority of leading festivals have taken part in it. We already see massive recognition as festival directors get in touch to ask us to work with them.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The study of film culture as mediated through film festivals is a new and rapidly growing area of scholarship, in which St. Andrews is the global leader. We ‘literally aspire to define a new area of film study’ (as per American critic Jonathan Rosenbaum), which creates insights into the ways individual festivals function and into the ways they connect and relate to each other in a global system. Enabled by a generous grant by the Leverhulme Trust and subsequent funding from other bodies, this project was the first to give a coherent overview of the way in which global cinema circulates through film festivals, and to create scholarship that assists practitioners in seeing the far reaching consequences of their individual festivals within a global framework. We have produced substantial scholarship, triggering a high degree of interest in industry circles: more than 150 international festival organisers and film critics have been involved with our work (see http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/our-global-network/). Yet this is still early days; the work has many more years to run. Its impact will be felt in the decades to come.</p> <p>The work was carried out by a team under the conceptual leadership of Prof. Dina Iordanova, based at the University of St Andrews since 2004. It initially formed around the Leverhulme-funded Dynamics of World Cinema project but then grew to encompass other colleagues such as Dr Leshu Torchin (since 2006), PhD students, and external contributors. Post-doctoral fellows Ragan Rhyne (2008-2010), Ruby Cheung (2008-2011), Alex Fischer (2010-2011), Alex Marlow-Mann (2010-2012), and Stefanie Van de Peer (since 2012) coordinated, researched, authored, co-edited, and worked with festivals: http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/our-public-presence/. In 2012 we were joined by renowned French film critic Jean-Michel Frodon, formerly editor of <i>Cahiers du cinema</i>, who had expressed interest in the project and had gradually become involved; he was appointed as Professorial Fellow at 0.25 fte.</p> <p>The published volumes identified how film festivals operate as a series of interlocking networks, showing how these fit into broader patterns, and then mapping the nodes occupied by individual festivals, charting their inter-dependencies (ref. 1) and their operation within larger systems (ref. 5). Much of our underpinning research focuses on specific areas, such as Asia (ref. 3) and the Middle East (forthcoming), as well as within distinctive networks – diasporic (ref. 2), activist (ref. 4), and preservationist (ref. 6). Festivals were categorised within a broader system of global film dissemination, from mainstream channels to marginal circuits and internet-enabled platforms. The overarching conceptual work was supported by the creation of over 50 case studies, which are used by festivals to adjust and plan according to models that we brought to public light. We also engaged in extensive groundwork, yielding unique reference material on the spread of the film festival phenomenon.</p> <p>We advanced this research by organising a number of symposia and events that brought together scholars and practitioners for informal and mutually beneficial exchanges. These include ‘The Film</p>

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Festival Circuit (4 April 2009, St Andrews), **Film Festivals and Scotland** (14 May 2010, St Andrews), **Film Festivals in Scotland and Beyond: Activism and Social Impact** (7 November 2011, Edinburgh) and **Programming Film Festivals: From Europe to Asia** (10/11 September 2012, Venice, Italy).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

We established St Andrews Film Studies as a new publishing house (www.stafs.org) and were successful in securing a number of grants that enabled us to publish important peer-reviewed topical texts. Our published work focused on topics that had not been previously considered in the critical literature, including discussions of the film festival circuit (1), on the role of festivals in mediating transnational communities (2), on the dynamics of the growing Asian circuit (3), on film and activism (4), on festival management (5) and on the role of festivals in preservation (6). The quality of this research has been recognised internationally. Our publications and events have been praised in a range of journals, including *Cineaste* (US), *Wide Screen* (India), *Secuncias* (Spain), *Film International* (Norway), *Canadian Journal of Cinema Studies* (Montreal), *Screening the Past* (Melbourne), *Rotterdam Festival News* (Netherlands). Some of our work on film festivals has been translated into Croatian, Chinese, Danish, Korean, and featured as part of festival websites; three of our books are now in the process of being translated into Chinese, and all of our books have been featured in the context of international festivals: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/our-involvement/>.

Key Outputs (a selection) - These books are available upon request.

1. D. Iordanova & R. Rhyne (eds) *The Festival Circuit/ Film Festival Yearbook 1* (StAFS 2009) ISBN 978-1-906678-04-3 (ppb). 260 pp.
2. D. Iordanova & R. Cheung (eds) *Film Festivals and Imagined Communities/ Film Festival Yearbook 2* (StAFS 2010) ISBN: 978-0-9563730-1-4 (ppb). 270 pp.
3. D. Iordanova & R. Cheung (eds) *Film Festivals and East Asia/ Film Festivals Yearbook 3* (StAFS, 2011). ISBN: 978-0-9563730-3-8 (ppb). 330 pp.
4. D. Iordanova & L. Torchin (eds) *Film Festivals and Activism: Film Festival Yearbook 4* (StAFS, 2012). ISBN 978-0-9563730-5-2 (ppb). 317 pp.
5. A. Fischer. *Sustainable Projections: Concepts in Film Festival Management* (StAFS, 2013). ISBN 978-0-9563730-8-3 (ppb). 160 pp.
6. A. Marlow-Mann (ed.) *Archival Film Festivals/ Film Festival Yearbook 5* (StAFS, 2013). ISBN 978-1-908437-06-8 (ppb). 340 pp.

Grants:

The importance and quality of our work has been recognised by a range of funding bodies, whose support ensured the continuity of the festival project. A selection of these grants is listed below:

- 'Dynamics of World Cinema'. Leverhulme Trust to Iordanova. Amount: £241,011. October 2008 – December 2011. Included two post-doctoral positions @ 30 months each.
- 'Scottish Film Festival Studies Network'. Royal Society of Edinburgh to Iordanova and Marlow-Mann/Van de Peer. Amount: £14,000. March 2011-March 2013.
- 'Veteran Film Festivals in East Asia'. Carnegie Trust to Iordanova. Amount: £2,500. November 2007.
- 'Film Festivals in France,' Caledonian Research Foundation to Iordanova. £3,000. March-May 2008.
- 'Film Festivals in European Countries: Switzerland.' Carnegie Trust to Iordanova. £2,000. April 2012.
- 'South Korea's Booming Cultural Industries'. Carnegie Trust to Iordanova. £2,200. November 2012.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Whatever co-operation between festivals and the academic world there is today, it exists largely thanks to this wonderful work, says the Chief Programmer the Doha Film Institute in Qatar in her letter (supporting doc. 1). Our project has been described as 'groundbreaking' by a notable Australian critic who, in his letter, claimed that it *impacts deeply on the professional work of film critics, journalists, film festival programmers and managers, art museum curators, cultural events*

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organisers, and all manner of councils, boards and funding bodies involved with the subsidizing of festivals (doc. 2). We interact with over 150 festival practitioners and work closely with over twenty leading international festivals, whose response to our work has been particularly encouraging. We impact the galaxy of festivals by charting the diversity, by facilitating dialogues, by foregrounding the festivals' leverage in the system of transnational film circulation, and by assisting the understanding of their global dynamics. Iordanova and Frodon use their extensive international contacts to take up new initiatives, in particular with prestigious French and Asian institutions and festivals. The importance of our work for contemporary festival operations is evidenced by the wide range of our global affiliates, by the widespread acceptance of our work, as well as in the testimonies from associates (docs. 1 - 5). The impact of our work so far is manifest both globally and locally.

GLOBALLY

Facilitating dialogue between practitioners. From the onset we worked with practitioners, who took part in discussions and contributed by writing case studies and giving interviews highlighting the specifics of their work to the global community of other festivals. Major critics and programmers use our forums to air views on key matters of festival operation, creating dialogue and exchange among festivals with distinct agendas and emphases. As one influential critic and film festival consultant writes, *I am personally involved as a consultant with Festival Directors and Programmers in many parts of the world ... and I can vouch for the fact that the best informed professional workers in this field are completely 'tuned in' to this work ... the Film Festival Yearbooks ... are eagerly sought out and passed around within the professional field of festival organization.* (doc. 2).

The fact that a wide range of **practitioners** from around the world contribute to our volumes – from Canada, Greece, Italy, Russia, Germany, France, Austria, Serbia, Israel, Cuba, Chile, Kurdistan, India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Kazakhstan, Japan, Thailand, Qatar, Australia, the US, the UK and elsewhere – confirms that they see our outputs as a potent transmitter of new knowledge that helps deepen understanding of the festival universe. Reviews of our work written by festival practitioners, such as Beijing-based Shelly Kraicer (programmer of the Vancouver IFF) in *Cineaste* (New York, 2012), and the corroborating letter by the editor-in-chief at *Cineaste* (doc. 3) have attested to the fact that festivals eagerly await our assessments, learn from our views and implement some of the models that we have publicised, especially as we present the views of *film festival directors and programmers, whose opinions are not always honoured within the groves of academe* (doc. 3).

Sought out by beneficiaries. Monitoring Amazon and our own web-shop sales, indicates that most of our books are ordered by and shipped to international festivals. Books are shipped to Telluride (Colorado), Berlin, Turkey, Amsterdam etc. As word of our work spreads, more and more users get in touch and get involved; they see us as the most potent node in the festival circuit. One example is the donation of a collection of festival catalogues dating back to the 1970s by a Cannes-winning producer (and former Director of the Rotterdam IFF) in 2012: he felt that his archive would have its best home with us. Another approach was from the Deutsche Kinemathek/Berlinale for a project on film festival catalogues (2013). Festival stakeholders frequently seek us out in a consulting capacity: Frodon and Iordanova are involved with French-based and international festivals (e.g. Cannes, Shanghai, La Rochelle, Berlinale, Locarno, etc.). In 2011 Iordanova worked with the director of the Paris-based festival accreditation body FIAPF, on matters related to policy. What comes out of this systematic work is the recognition that the knowledge base created by researchers is of direct use in planning and developing further festival operations (docs. 1 and 5).

Promotion by festivals. International film festivals – from America to Asia – have not only embraced our work but also sponsored its promotion. Members of the team are regularly invited by film festivals to present our underpinning research in talks, round tables, and panel discussions. Such appearances have been initiated and underwritten by the festivals to an amount that we estimate cumulatively at c. £15,000. Each one of our publications is launched and sold in the context of festivals, including special events in conjunction with the Tromsø IFF (Norway 2010), Jeonju IFF (South Korea 2011), Edinburgh IFF, 2011, Venice (Italy, 2012), Cinema Ritrovato (Bologna, Italy 2013), Busan IFF (South Korea, 2011; 2013 – Busan IFF's Artistic Director is a

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member of our editorial advisory board). Members of the team are invited to present in the context of industry training (e.g. the Film Festival Summit Amsterdam 2010 and Las Vegas 2011 or the Film Festival Academy, New York 2012) (See: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/our-involvement/>).

WITHIN SCOTLAND Our work started before Scotland's government adopted the slogan 'Scotland Festival Nation' as a tagline for its cultural policy; yet this adoption enhanced the significance of our focus. Our activities in Scotland influence the work of several film festivals, as corroborated by Creative Scotland, who acknowledge our joint work toward 'strengthening the Edinburgh IFF' and 'enhancing understanding in the wider film industry' (doc. 4). Iordanova has served, since 2011, as Trustee of the of the Centre of the Moving Image, the umbrella company of the world's oldest continuously running film festival in Edinburgh (EIFF). Joining the board at a critical period for the EIFF's fortunes, she helped improve the Board's grasp of the dynamics of the global festival scene and of the importance of artistic curation for future editions. She led the search for a new Artistic Director, resulting in the appointment of a globally acclaimed curator as artistic director, who writes that our publications and events 'have implications ... that affect the practice of film festival programming' (doc. 5). In 2011 we secured funding that enabled us to develop the Scottish Film Festivals Studies Network (See <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/scottish-film-festivals-studies-network-2011-2013/>) and bring together the 60-strong community of practitioners for events that took place in Edinburgh (November 2011) and in Venice (September 2012). Our take on festival policy in Scotland has been publicised by *The Scotsman* (e.g. Iordanova's opinion piece 'Think of the Bigger Picture on Film Festivals, *The Scotsman*, 23 May 2012, available at <http://www.scotsman.com/news/dina-iordanova-think-of-the-bigger-picture-for-film-festivals-1-23103>) and in the context of the policy events at the Edinburgh Festival since 2011. Creative Scotland, the main arts funding body, recognised our influence on the international circuit by funding a special practitioners panel as part of our Venice event (2012) (doc. 4).

CONCLUSION

The festival project has, from the outset, involved different global users as part of an integrated approach to festival study. Our approach and our outreach activities allowed us to create a multitude of frameworks, case studies and resource listings that are recognised to be of immediate relevance to both the practical work of festival operations. Publishing revenues, grants, and assistance from festivals generated income streams that ensure work can continue and become sustainable (£267,000 total as of October, 2013). We already act as a global hub for film festival studies – involving academics and practitioners – and plan to continue setting the tone within the community. The fact that programmers and filmmakers now willingly take part in our initiatives is a key indicator of success: it is they who seek to associate with us. In the next stage, we expect to partner up with specific festivals, like those in Busan and Edinburgh, for the delivery of focused programmes.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Corroborating letter from the Director of the DOHA Film Festival, Qatar. (Corroborates the influence our research has on festival programming decisions.)
2. Corroborating letter from Film Critic and Editor of *Lola* film journal, Australia. (Corroborates the reach of our impact, and the broad mix of practitioners, academics, and journalists who make use of our research.)
3. Corroborating letter from the Editor-in-Chief of *Cineaste* journal, U.S. (Corroborates the importance of the events we have staged that bring journalists, programmers, and academics together.)
4. Corroborating letter from the Director of Creative Development at Creative Scotland. (Corroborates the impact of our research on production companies and the film industry.)
5. Corroborating letter from the Artistic Director of the Edinburgh International Film Festival. (Corroborates the impact of our work on film criticism and on film festivals worldwide.)
6. An example of an event organised and led by Dina Iordanova at the EIFF in 2012: <http://www.edfilmfest.org.uk/films/2012/film-festivals-in-the-digital-age>