Cine-Excess VII - Conference Report

Posted on Monday 25th November 2013

Cine-Excess VII: European Erotic Cinema: Identity, Desire and Disgust was a three-day academic conference and film festival staged at mac birmingham from 15-17 November 2013. A joint collaboration between B-Film: The Birmingham Centre for Film Studies and the University of Brighton, the event was co-organised by **Dr. Alex Marlow-Mann (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/historyofart/marlow-mann-alex.aspx)** and **Dr. Xavier Mendik (http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/staff/xavier-mendik)** and brought in a range of external partners including local arts organisations like Vivid Projects, academic partners like Birmingham City University, and in-kind sponsorship from Silver Ferox, Arc Media and Classic Miniatures.

Conceived as a cross-over industry into academia event aimed at both scholars and the general film-going public, the event brought a number of high-profile industry figures and special guests to Birmingham for the first time.

We were delighted to welcome the internationally acclaimed French filmmaker **Catherine Breillat (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0106924/?ref_=nv_sr_1)**, who introduced a rare UK screening of her 1988 film **36 fillette / Virgin (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094596/?ref_=nm_flmg_wr_22)** and delivered a public Q&A about her controversial explorations of female sexuality (*Romance*, *Anatomy of Hell*, *Fat Girl*, *Brief Crossing*).

Catherine Breillat in conversation with Xavier Mendik and B-Film's **Kate Ince (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/french/ince-kate.aspx)**.

The event also featured cult Italian actor-auteur**Francesco Barilli (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0054672/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1)**, who discussed working with figures like Bernardo Bertolucci and his own career as both a filmmaker and painter. Barilli also introduced the first ever UK screening of his long-lost masterpiece **Pensione paura / Hotel Fear (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0076884/?ref_=nm_flmg_dr_11)** (1977) in a new version subtitled by Alex Marlow-Mann (B-Film) and **Oliver Carter (http://www.bcu.ac.uk/research/-centres-of-excellence/centre-for-media-and-culture-studies/our-people/oliver-carter)** (Birmingham City University) especially for this screening. Both filmmakers received Lifetime Achievement Awards courtesy of Cine-Excess & B-Film.

Francesco Barilli receives his award from Xavier Mendik and B-Film's Alex Marlow-Mann

Alongside the Breillat-Barilli retrospectives local audiences were also able to sample our 'Dark Desires, Dark Obsessions: Dark Romance' season which explored the darker sides of filmic eroticism through a number UK premieres of films from around the globe including **Tulpa (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2250282/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)** (2012, Italy, Federico Zampaglione), **Rouge sang / The Storm Within (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2342287/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)** (2012, Canada, Martin Doepner), **Para Elisa / For Elisa (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2403419/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)** (2013, Spain, Juanra Fernández) and **Siren (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2083332/?ref_=fn_al_tt_2)** (2013, USA, Jesse Peyronel).

The film industry was also present for a public panel event entitled 'Echoes Of Excess: Cult Film Creation, Financing And The New Digital Economy' which brought international filmmakers like **Federica Martino (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0553902/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1)** together with local industry figures like producer and academic **Roger Shannon (http://www.edgehill.ac.uk/profiles/roger-shannon)** (of Edge Hill University and formerly of BFI Production and Scottish Screen) and Daniel Lawson (of Creative Skillset and formerly of Screen West Midlands). The debate was chaired by **Prof. Gillian Youngs (http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/staff/gillian-youngs)** (University of Brighton) and yielded exciting prospects for the production and dissemination of regional cult filmmaking in the digital age.

Roger Shannon, Gillian Youngs, Federica Martino and Daniel Lawson on the 'Echoes of Excess' industry panel.

All of these events ran alongside the academic conference proper, which featured parallel sessions on a wide-range of subjects throughout the three-days. Internationally renowned and emerging academics explored different national traditions of filmic eroticism while also exploring questions around representation, taste and boundaries. Participating members of B-Film included **Michele Aaron (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/acs/aaron-michele.aspx)** speaking on 'The Art of Killing' and **Rob Stone (http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/historyofart/stone-rob.aspx)** surveying scenes of torture in Basque cinema. There were also three very successful networking events devoted to 'Major Research Funding' (run by Rob Stone of B-Film and Gillian Youngs of the University of Brighton), 'PG Networking' (run by B-Film's **John Horne (http://bham.academia.edu/JohnHorne)** and **John Mercer (http://www.bcu.ac.uk/pme/school-of-media/applying-to-us/our-staff/john-mercer)** and Oliver Carter from Birmingham City University) and 'Film Programming' (run by Xavier Mendik of the University of Brighton) that aimed to encourage and facilitate future academic and film-cultural initiatives and involved the participation of external partners like Ian Francis (**Flatpack Festival (http://www.flatpackfestival.org.uk/)**) and Yasmeen Baig-Clifford (**Vivid Projects/ Gallery Birmingham (http://www.vividprojects.org.uk/)**) as well as colleagues from Birmingham City University and B-Film.

The three-day conference was attended by 35 fee-paying delegates, together with 11 special guests and 12 volunteer staff from the University of Birmingham postgraduate community. Over a quarter of delegates hailed from outside the UK, with visitors coming from as far afield as Romania and Canada.

Audience interaction during the 'Echoes of Excess' panel.

The event received wide coverage in local press (**Birmingham Mail (http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/whats-on/films/xavier-mendik-brings-cine-excess-birminghams-6309121)** ; Sunday Mercury; **Visit Heart of England (http://www.visitheartofengland.com/news/article/?id=1574)**), specialist press and websites (**Love Horror (http://lovehorror.co.uk/cine-excess-cult-film-conference-to-honour-catherine-breillat-francisco-barilli)** ; **IMDb (http://www.imdb.com/news/ni56398755/)** ; *The Dark Side* magazine) and even international press (**La Repubblica di Parma (http://parma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2013/11/18/foto/premio_alla_carriera_per_barilli-71292722/1/?rss)**) while conference reports are expected to appear in academic journals in due course. A special issue of the peer-reviewed **Cine-Excess e-journal (http://www.cine-excess.co.uk/subverting-the-senses.html)** based around the conference is now in preparation, under the editorship of Alex Marlow-Mann and Xavier Mendik, for publication in 2014. Further outputs and research projects resulting from the conference are in development and will also be announced in due course.

B-Film is delighted to have been responsible for bringing Cine-Excess from London's West End, where it has been staged for the past six years, to the Midlands in order to bolster both local film culture and academic research culture in the region. It is anticipated that this event will be the start of an on-going collaboration between B-Film at the University of Birmingham and the University of Brighton based around an annual Cine-Excess conference-festival event plus regular screenings and special guests throughout the year, with venues alternating between the two cities.

To find out more about the Cine-Excess conference, journal and related projects, please visit the **Cine-Excess website (http://www.cine-excess.co.uk/)** .

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