

Decentering German Cinema
November 13-14, 2020
Call for Papers

Keynote address by Dr. Sabine Hake (The University of Texas at Austin)

In 1996, Marc Silberman asked, “What is German in the German cinema?” In challenging the easy definition of national cinemas based on linguistic or geo-political borders, he illustrated the difficulty of pinpointing exactly what is “German” cinema, especially when taking into account the often multi- and transnational aspects of its history. His conclusion that “the form of the question tends to determine the way it is answered” suggested that the way German cinema was understood largely owed to the limitations scholars put on it in the framing of their own scholarship.¹ The categories of German cinema, then, are self-defined and, thus, self-limiting. Similarly, both Anton Kaes and Sabine Hake have wrestled with how to define German cinema, both issuing calls to action to develop case studies (Sabine Hake) and “new cinema history” (Anton Kaes) to explore new ways of approaching and defining the what and who that comprise German cinema.

This conference extends these and other calls to interrogate the limits of and will create a space to decenter German cinema. Collectively, presenters will examine where and how German cinema exists outside of its linguistic or geo-political borders. We actively seek proposals that will present new ways of conceptualizing German cinema and that will push against definitions that keep it confined to German-speaking countries (primarily Switzerland, Austria, and Germany) or the prominent cinematic exchanges between Hollywood and Germany—i.e., we look to work that is more inclusive and polyvocal. What groups, spaces, and objects are part of this decentered German cinema? What innovations in intersectional, transnational, subcultural, or migrant frameworks to German cinema continue to provide exciting venues to decenter it? What decentered German new cinema histories (a la Maltby, Biltereyst, and Meers) are still to be written? How can attention to intermediality and new streaming and web-based distribution networks shed new light on and produce new models for a decentered German cinema studies?

We invite proposals that address these and other questions related to decentering German cinema. In addition to 20-minute paper presentations, we also encourage alternative formats, e.g., short films/videos, posters, etc.

To apply: Please submit a 300 word abstract and abbreviated CV by **MARCH 31st, 2020** to Nichole Neuman (nmneuman@iu.edu) and Ervin Malakaj (ervin.malakaj@ubc.ca).

The conference will take place at Indiana University - Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI), near downtown Indianapolis. There is an international airport in Indianapolis, and the city is approximately a three hour drive from Chicago.

We are actively seeking funding to subsidize the travel and lodging costs of participants. There is no conference registration fee. Organizers will facilitate a block of rooms at a nearby hotel at a reduced price.

Selected participants may be asked to contribute to an edited volume following the conference.

¹ Marc Silberman, “What is German in the German cinema?” *Film History* 8, no. 3 (1996), 313.