

Eighteenth International Domitor Conference Vienna, Austria, June 12-15, 2024



A Long Early Cinema?

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Welcome to the Eighteenth International Domitor Conference! It has been six long years since we last met in Rochester, so we are especially excited to finally be convening in person again. After two fantastic online conferences, which helped broaden the reach of our organization across the globe, we are particularly delighted to present a conference program that reflects Domitor's commitment to an expansive vision of early cinema studies. At a time when the discipline of film history—alongside forward-thinking and public-facing archival projects and curatorial initiatives—is undergoing significant transformations, this conference seeks to interrogate the meanings of "early cinema" today: How well does the dichotomy between "early cinema" (typically understood as 1895–1915) and later periods help us understand early film history? Can the insistence on that historical separation account for more global film histories, especially the timelines of early filmmaking practices outside of Europe and North America? And what echoes, continuities, or revivals of early cinema spill over into later periods, whether through 1920s silent cinema, the 1970s avant-gardes, or contemporary archival film spectatorship? In short, can we think productively of a "long early cinema"—or even "long early cinemas"—in analogy to the concept of a "long nineteenth century"?

This conference presents panels that address questions of periodization and allow us to think through the changing relevance of a historiographical approach that was foundational to the very identity of Domitor as a society for the study of "early cinema." Reassessing early cinema's relation to the avant-garde is also an especially fitting topic as we meet in Vienna— a longstanding European center for avant-garde activity from the fin-de-siècle to the post-WWII period and beyond—and indeed at the Austrian Film Museum, well-known for its mission of shaping and preserving the history of avant-garde film.

"A Long Early Cinema?" continues the tradition of our small, thematic conferences, with this year's schedule being even richer and fuller than usual: the program includes over sixty presentations across eighteen panels, as well as a roundtable, a special presentation, our general assembly, an evening reception, and five evening screenings, co-programmed by the Museum. Over a hundred participants will join us over the course of the week, which we expect will be full of lively exchange and camaraderie. The conference will also be preceded by our third graduate workshop, and we hope you'll take an opportunity to welcome the student participants to our growing community of early cinema enthusiasts.

The conference committee is grateful to the Austrian Film Museum—and especially Michael Loebenstein, Jurij Meden, and Tom Waibel—for being wonderful partners and making this year's meeting possible. Along with our hosts, we're thrilled to welcome you to Vienna! We hope you'll find the conference generative and inspiring, and that you'll have a wonderful week in this beautiful city. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance during your stay.

The Domitor 2024 Conference Committee

- Ian Christie, Birkbeck College, University of London
- Michael Cowan, University of Iowa
- Ana Grgić, Babes-Bolyai University
- Dimitrios Latsis, University of Alabama
- Hugo Ljungbäck, University of Chicago
- Tami Williams, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee



CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Ian Christie Michael Cowan Ana Grgić Dimitrios Latsis Hugo Ljungbäck Tami Williams

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Berlin Horse (Malcolm Le Grice, UK, 1970)

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Tuesday, June 11

20:30-22:00

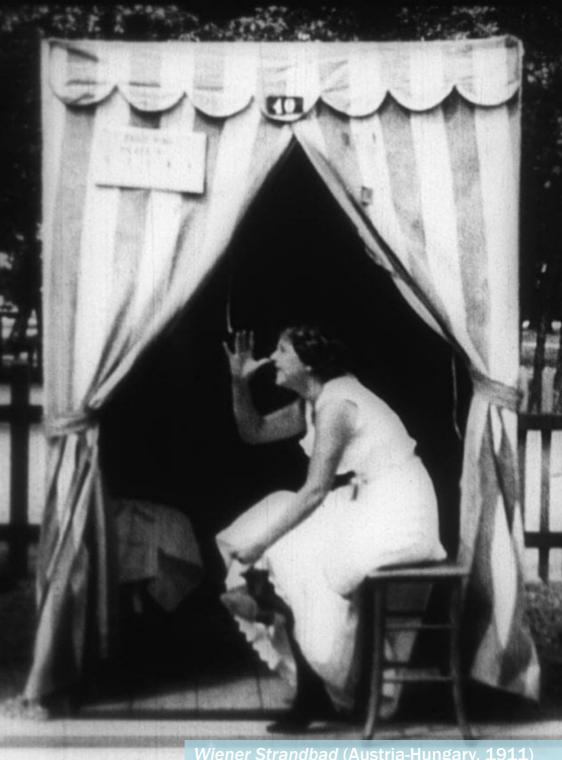
Screening 1: Head First, Eyes Open (Shorts program)

Introduced by Janneke van Dalen, Florian Haag, and Lena Stötzel Piano accompaniment by Elaine Loebenstein

Curtains up for a lively and wet revue of bodies in motion. Dive with us into a spectacle of diversity in the shape of early silent films. Bathing beauties, bruisers and star athletes seduce, hassle and carry us away. Head first, eyes open! They vanish and transform, hop, dance, climb, dive and splash. They are clumsy and bowl us over. But then again, they are delicate and keep us in balance. They conjure butterflies and show us what colors really are. And they also tell us when it is enough. The end, it's over, thank you for your attention. (J.D./F.H.)

- Wiener Strandbad Austria-Hungary, 1911, 35mm, b/w, 1 min
- Im Herrenbad, Strandunterhaltungen, Familienidylle Austria-Hungary, 1911, 35mm, b/w, 3 min
- Les Équilibristes Godayou FR, 1911, 35mm, stencil-colored, 8 min
- Danses cosmopolites FR, 1902, 35mm, hand-colored, 1 min
- Strandleben in Baden bei Wien AT, 1926, 35mm, b/w, 10 min
- Wonders of the Sea [Fragment] John Ernest Williamson, US, 1922; Cinematography: Jay Rescher; Cast: Jack Gardner, John Ernest Williamson, Lulu McGrath; DCP (from 35mm), tinted, ca. 20 min, French intertitles with English subtitles

...and other films!



Wiener Strandbad (Austria-Hungary, 1911)

Wednesday, June 12

9:00-9:15

Opening Remarks

9:15-10:15

Panel 1: Vienna and the Avant-garde

Chair: Ian Christie (Birkbeck College, University of London)

- Ian Christie (Birkbeck College, University of London)
 "How Vienna Could Be Considered a Cradle of Avant-garde Cinema"
- Vito Adriaensens (New York University)

 "From Wien to William Randolph Hearst: Joseph Urban's Intermedial Scenography"
- Janelle Blankenship (University of Western Ontario)
 "Glowing Color: Hedwig Wollner-Beuk, Secessionist Artist and World Panorama Proprietor"

10:30-11:45

Panel 2: Early Cinema, Historiography, and the Avant-garde

Chair: William Boddy (Baruch College, City University of New York)

- Paula Amad (University of Iowa)
 - "'A Matter of Making Images Seen': Modern Media, the View from Above, and 'Long' History"
- Dimitrios Latsis (University of Alabama)
 - "What is Old is New Again: A Historiographical Perspective on Avant-garde and Early Cinema"
- William Boddy (Baruch College, City University of New York)
 "Tracking the Pseudomorph: The Persistent Intrigue of Early Cinema and the Avant-garde"
- Elyse Singer (The Graduate Center, City University of New York)
 "Human Flickers: Avant-garde Gestures in Useful Early Medical Film"

11:45-13:00

Lunch

13:00-14:00

Panel 3: Nontheatrical, Amateur, and Useful Cinemas

Chair: Martin Johnson (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

- Martin Johnson (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
 "Toward a Persistent Cinema: Nontheatrical Film and the Rejection of Timelines"
- Liri Chapelan (I. L. Caragiale National University of Theatre and Film)

 "Replaying Early Cinema with Each Film: The Vantage Point Provided by Amateur Production"
- Louis Pelletier (Université de Montréal)
 "Another Long Early Cinema? Amateur Cinema and Home Movie Shows"

14:30-15:30

Panel 4: Early Cinema Today: From Pedagogy to Diplomacy

Chair: Aurore Spiers (University of Chicago)

- Aurore Spiers (University of Chicago) "Teaching 'Early Cinema' Today"
- Jiří Anger (Queen Mary University of London / National Film Archive, Prague)

 "The Beginnings of Cinema Are Never Finished: Early Film and Videographic Scholarship"
- **Doron Galili** (Stockholm University / University of Gothenburg) "De-aging Early Cinema"

16:00-17:00

Panel 5: Encounters with Screen Media

Chair: Eszter Polónyi (University of Nova Gorica / University of Udine)

- Eszter Polónyi (University of Nova Gorica / University of Udine)

 "Béla Balázs, Plot, and the Emergent Body of the Silent Film Spectator"
- Nezih Erdogan (Istinye University)
 "Hayal (Imaginal) and Hayret (Amazement) at the Threshold of Modernity:
 Visual Culture, Early Cinema, and the Audiences Marveling at Moving Pictures"
- Sejung Ahn (Yonsei University)

 "Battleship Effect: From Cinemas of Attraction to Sublime Cinemas"

20:30-22:00

Screening 2: Wienfilm 1896-1976 by Ernst Schmidt Jr.

Introduced by Janneke van Dalen and Florian Haag

Ernst Schmidt jr. scatters the city and reassembles it in 130 segments as something new. Wienfilm 1896–1976, in Ernst Schmidt jr.'s words "a kind of anthology about Vienna from the invention of film to the present," combines and contrasts archival footage reaching back to the first moving images of Vienna from the Lumières' era, with contributions by and in collaboration with contemporary artists (including Friedrich Achleitner, Marc Adrian, H.C. Artmann, Moucle Blackout, VALIE EXPORT, Padhi Frieberger, Ernst Jandl, Friederike Mayröcker and Peter Weibel). Ernst Schmidt jr. and his collaborators trace out a "cinema of attractions" full of sensationalism and the joy of presentation while also mapping a who's who of Vienna's late 1970s avant-garde scene. (J.D./F.H.)

Wienfilm 1896–1976 Ernst Schmidt jr., AT, 1977; Screenplay: Ernst Schmidt jr.; DCP (from 16mm), color and b/w, 121 min, German with English subtitles

47 years after its world premiere at the Film Museum, we are pleased to present the Vienna premiere of our 2K digital restoration from the original 16mm negative in our collection. The English subtitles are based on a translation from Eve Heller and Peter Ahorner, which sixpackfilm made available to us and was adjusted for the restored version of the film.



Thursday, June 13

9:00-10:15

Panel 6: Media Archaeological Perspectives on a Long Early Cinema

Chair: Bart G. Moens (University of Antwerp)

- Bart G. Moens (University of Antwerp)
 - "Four Decades of Catholic Screen Practices: Maison de la Bonne Presse's 'Service des projections' (1895–1938)"
- Dominique Nasta (Université libre de Bruxelles)
 - "Re-writing the Aesthetics of Early Film Melodrama: Empathetic Momentum in Four Maison de la Bonne Presse Films and Their Corresponding Life Model Slides"
- Céline Ruivo (Université libre de Bruxelles)
 - "Japonism in Photographic Slides and Films between 1906 and 1924: The Influence of Pierre Loti's Novel Pêcheur d'Islande"
- Frank Ming (University of Chicago)

 "The Pacing-Horse Lantern and its Cinematic Afterlives"

10:30-11:45

Panel 7: Geographies of Early Cinema

Chair: Ansje van Beusekom (Utrecht University)

- Luciana Corrêa de Araújo (Federal University of São Carlos)

 "Nonfiction Film and Early Cinema in the 1920s in the Brazilian Northeast"
- Maria Magdalena Brotons (Universitat de les Illes Balears), Maria Soliña Barreiro (Universidade de Santiago de Compostela), and Belal Doufesh (Birzeit University) "Albert Kahn's Lens on Palestine: Human Geography of a Geostrategic Region"
- Caroline Damiens (Paris Nanterre University)
 "Persistence of Traveling Cinema in Mid-century Rural France: For a Geo-social Approach of Cinema History"
- Cara Caddoo (Indiana University Bloomington)
 "Early Native American Film Exhibition and Filmgoing"

11:45-13:00

Lunch

13:00-14:15

Roundtable: Curating Early Cinema for Today

Chair: Maggie Hennefeld (University of Minnesota)

Participants: Enrique Moreno Ceballos (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), Pamela Hutchinson (independent curator), Grazia Ingravalle (Queen Mary University of London), Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi (Eye Filmmuseum), and Kate Saccone (University of Amsterdam)

14:30-15:30

Panel 8: Educational Film

Chair: Joachim Schätz (University of Vienna / Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital History)

- Joachim Schätz (University of Vienna / Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital History)
 "Looping Back to the Alto Arche Archive: Uses of 'Early Cinema' in Educational Film Practice"
- Antonia Lant (New York University)
 "The Pyramid Pictures Corporation (1920–1922): Visual Education from Bronzeville"
- Oliver Gaycken (University of Maryland, College Park)
 "'The Living Book of Knowledge': On the Emergence and Persistence of Encyclopedic Cinema"

15:45-17:00

Panel 9: Eastern European and Balkan Cinemas

Chair: Mario Slugan (Queen Mary University of London)

- Mario Slugan (Queen Mary University of London)
 "The Applicability of 'Early Cinema' to the European Periphery: The Liminal Case of Croatia"
- Andrei Rus (I. L. Caragiale National University of Theatre and Film)

 "The Avant-garde Connections in Romanian Cinema's First Decades of Existence"
- Mélisande Leventopoulos (Université Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis)
 "Reconsidering the Periodization of Early Cinema through the Prism of Population Exchanges: Eastern Macedonia before the Lausanne Convention (1923)"
- Geli Mademli (University of Amsterdam)

 "Exhibiting Early Film History in Greece: A Visit to the Thessaloniki Cinema Museum"

20:30-22:00

Screening 3: Crosswired Cinema: American Artist Joseph Cornell, Film Collector-Filmmaker

Presented by **Bruce Posner** (independent curator) and **André Habib** (Université de Montréal)

This program offers a virtual "studienfilm" primer of the ways and means used by American artist Joseph Cornell (1905-1972) to express himself creatively on film. His cinematic oeuvre was closely tied to his role as an obsessive collector and exhibitor of early silent cinema, promotional film still photographs, and LP music recordings, but also testifies to his longtime friendship with artists, filmmakers, critics, gallery dealers, and museum curators. The eclectic program of shorts will include completed titles, selected extracts, and study film compilation reels. It proposes an incisive overview of Cornell's unique appreciation of early cinema and the works he liberally appropriated into his silent film collages. Several influential and extremely rare contemporary works perhaps consequential to Cornell's cinema are also featured. In a Cornelian spirit that leans towards ineffable, unexplained and startling gestures, the adventurous cine-flaneur will discover a dreamlike, enigmatic and novel experimental approach to the "long" early cinema. (B.P.)

Curated by Bruce Posner with the collaboration of André Habib. Courtesy of "Unseen Cinema: Early American Avant-Garde Film 1894-1941," a collaborative preservation project of Anthology Film Archives, DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum, and Filmmakers Showcase with sixty of the world's leading film archives and sponsored by Cineric, Inc., New York.



Friday, June 14

9:00-10:15

Panel 10: Parallel Histories: Nontheatrical Screen Practices beyond Early Cinema

Chair: Frank Kessler (Utrecht University)

- Nico de Klerk (Utrecht University / Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital History)
 "A Tradition Runs Through It: Film- and Slide-illustrated Lectures in the Netherlands, 1890s-1990s"
- Frank Kessler (Utrecht University)

 "Exploring the Invisible: Photomicrography and Microcinematography"
- Sabine Lenk (Philipps University of Marburg) "Revisiting Chronophotography"
- Artemis Willis (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
 "Nine New Muses for Feminist Media History"

10:30-11:45

Panel 11: Cinemas of Abstraction: Color Light Shows from the 1840s to the 1990s

Chair: Yvonne Zimmermann (Philipps University of Marburg) Respondent: Michael Cowan (University of Iowa)

- Martin Loiperdinger (University of Trier)
 - "Chromatropes: A Cinema of Abstractions Preluding the Attractions of Early Cinema for Decades"
- Yvonne Zimmermann (Philipps University of Marburg)
 "Moving in Circles with Richter and Duchamp: Keeping the 1920s Avant-garde Cinemas of Abstraction Alive into the 1960s"
- Megan Phipps (Goethe University Frankfurt)

 "Psychedelic Avant-garde Aesthetics: A Journey Through the Peter Rubin Collection"

11:45-13:00

Lunch

13:00-14:00

Panel 12: Sound and Early Cinema

Chair: Martin Barnier (Université Lumière Lyon 2)

- Eva Krivanec (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar)
 - "Song Scenes: Entertainment Stars, Synchronized Sound Pictures (1902–1914), and the 'Longue durée' of the Music Clip"
- Martin Barnier (Université Lumière Lyon 2)
 "Un long cinéma des premiers parlants?"
- Özge Özyılmaz (independent researcher)
 - "Echoes of Diversity: Unveiling the Soundscapes of Early Cinema in Istanbul"

14:15-15:30

Panel 13: Distribution, Disruption, Decoloniality

Chair: Rafael de Luna Freire (Federal Fluminense University)

- Rafael de Luna Freire (Federal Fluminense University)
 "Was World War I a Watershed for Brazilian Film History?"
- Panivong Norindr (University of Southern California)

 "Early Cinema and Censorship: The Pitfalls of Distribution and Exhibition in
 French Colonial Indochina"
- Morgan Corriou (Université Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis)
 "Regional Markets and Colonial Economy in North Africa in the Early 20th Century"
- Alison Griffiths (Baruch College, City University of New York) "Indigenous Sámi Film as Cultural Heritage: Decolonial Strategies Across a Long Early Cinema"

16:00-17:00 General Assembly

17:00 – 19:00 **Reception**

20:30-22:00

Screening 4: A Long Cinema in the Early Years? Reflections on the Relationship between the Avant-Garde in 1970s France and Early Cinema

Presented by Prosper Hillairet and Christian Lebrat (Paris Expérimental)

In 1970s France, a group of filmmakers based around the distribution cooperative Paris Films Coop and the journal Melba (1976–1979) formed a new current which Christian Lebrat has labelled "post-structural cinema." They stood apart from their structuralist predecessors by defining film from the outset as a preexisting process that should be pushed to maximum intensity. While the avant-garde movements of the 1920s with Germaine Dulac and her concept of motion or Jean Epstein and photogénie referenced the Lumière brothers, the French post-structuralist filmmakers wanted to re-invent cinema by going back to its origins: the first experiments with film by Étienne-Jules Marey and proto-cinematic devices (Zoetrope, 3D experiments). By experimenting in their films with fragmentation, repetition, multiplication and color, they managed to increase cinema's potential. (P.H./C.L.)

- Intermittences non régulées d'Étienne-Jules Marey Jean-Michel Bouhours, FR, 1978, 16mm, b/w, 14 min
- Sécan ciel Jean-Michel Bouhours, FR, 1979, 16mm, color, 4 min
- Autoportrait au dispositif Christian Lebrat, FR, 1981, 16mm, color, 9 min (18 fps)
- Trama Christian Lebrat, FR, 1978-80, 16mm, color, 12 min
- D'Art moderne Dominique Willoughby, FR, 1977, 16mm, color, 9 min
- La Petite Fille Pascal Auger, FR, 1978, 16mm, color, 9 min
- Ultrarouge Infraviolet Guy Fihman, FR, 1974, 16mm, color, 31 min





Saturday, June 15

9:00-10:15

Panel 14: Domitor's Databases: Early Cinema and its Digital Afterlife

Chair: Peter Bagrov (George Eastman Museum)

- Yuri Tsivian (University of Chicago)
 "Pace in the Movies: A Slow History of Faster Cutting"
- Daria Khitrova (Harvard University)
 "Comic Cutting and Avant-garde Montage"
- Anna Kovalova (University of Pittsburgh)
 "Digitizing Daydreams: The Database of Cinema of the Russian Empire and Beyond"
- Peter Bagrov (George Eastman Museum)
 "What in the World is Early Russian Cinema?"

10:30-11:30

Panel 15: Intermediality and Appropriation

Chair: Enrique Moreno Ceballos (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

- Livio Belloï (Université de Liège)
 "Blow-ups: Réanimations du cinéma des premiers temps dans l'œuvre de Siegfried A. Fruhauf"
- Enrique Moreno Ceballos (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

 "Archives of an Earlier Cinema: Optical Spectacles, Transnational Entanglements, and Mexico's Very First Woman Exhibitor in the Mid-nineteenth Century"
- Danielle Genevro (University of Rochester)

 "Underground Actualities: Phantom Rides, Panoramas, and Process Films in Classical Hollywood Cinema"

11:30-12:30

Lunch

12:30-13:00

Special Presentation: My Early Cinema Collection and Others

Presented by **Stephen Bottomore** (independent researcher)

13:15-14:15

Panel 16: South Asian Cinemas

Chair: Rutuja Deshmukh (Michigan State University)

- Rutuja Deshmukh (Michigan State University)
 - "Kolhapur Film Enterprise: A History of Feudal Patronage in India"
- C. Yamini Krishna (FLAME University)
 - "Princely Cinema and the World"
- James Burns (Clemson University)
 - "Early Cinema in Colonial Mauritius, 1897–1940"

14:30-15:30

Panel 17: Contemporary Avant-gardes

Chair: Oksana Chefranova (Yale University)

- Marie-Pierre Burquier (Université Paris Cité)
 - "Back to First Kisses: Traffic in Kisses by Kiki Loveday and Susan Potter (2022)"
- Oksana Chefranova (Yale University)
 - "The Composite Image From Early Cinema to Installation Art and Historiography as Spatial Montage"
- Hugo Ljungbäck (University of Chicago)
 - "Black Film Historiography and Archival Fabulation in Ina Archer's Lincoln Film Conspiracy"

15:45-16:45

Panel 18: What is Early Cinema?

Chair: **Sarah Gleeson-White** (University of Sydney)

- Sarah Gleeson-White (University of Sydney)
 - "Early Race Film and the Problem of Periodisation"
- Nadi Tofighian (Linnaeus University)
 - "What Year is it There? Late 'Early Cinema' in Southeast Asia"
- **Sofia Sampaio** (Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon)
 - "The Persistence of 'Early Cinema' in Two Portuguese Silent Documentaries (1921)"

16:45-17:00

Closing Remarks

20:30-22:00

Screening 5: Stumble and Marvel (Shorts program)

Introduced by Janneke van Dalen, Florian Haag, and Stefanie Zingl Piano accompaniment by Elaine Loebenstein

An invitation to take a filmic stroll, setting off without a destination to discover the city. After crossing the circle of the Ringstrasse, we zigzag to test the scope of the city and perhaps also let go of control. A factory for carbon arc lamps shows the dark side of early cinema, the lethargic, gloomy faces and bodies of workers who provide projectors with light. Shoe choice shows escape is possible. Shoes connect people to the earth and inappropriate footwear leads to the collapse of the existing order. And finally, the way Vienna's amateur filmmaker and cinematic magician Friedrich Kuplent looks at his city constitutes a kind of destination. (J.D./F.H.)

- Vienne en tramway Pathé Frères, FR, 1906, 35mm, b/w, 4 min
- Erdbergerkino / Austria Kinematograf Theater Austria-Hungary, 1912, 35mm, b/w, 8 min
- Die Fabrikation von Kino-Lichtkohlen in einem österreichischen Werke Karl Köfinger, AT, 1927, DCP (from 35mm), tinted, 11 min
- Le chemineau rinckeur Jean Durand, FR, 1911, 35mm, tinted, 4 min
- Chaussure trop étroite Pathé Frères, FR, 1907, 35mm, tinted, 3 min
- Une bonne histoire Pathé Frères, FR, 1903, 35mm, b/w, 1 min
- Prater Friedrich Kuplent, AT, 1929, 35mm, b/w and hand-colored, 13 min
- Die Stadt Friedrich Kuplent, AT, 1929, DCP (from 9,5mm), b/w, 4 min

...and other films!





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Schedule at a glance

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13:00-14:00	Panel 3: Nontheatrical, Amateur, and Useful Cinemas	
14:30-15:30	Panel 4: Early Cinema Today: From Pedagogy to Diplomacy	
16:00-17:00	Panel 5: Encounters with Screen Media	
20:30-22:00	Screening 2: Wienfilm 1896–1976 by Ernst Schmidt Jr	
Thursday June 12		
Thursday, June 9:00–10:15	Panel 6: Media Archaeological Perspectives on a Long Early Cinema	
10:30-10:13	Panel 7: Geographies of Early Cinema	
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13:00-14:15	Roundtable: Curating Early Cinema for Today	
14:30-15:30	Panel 8: Educational Film	
15:45-17:00	Panel 9: Eastern European and Balkan Cinemas	
20:30-22:00	Screening 3: Crosswired Cinema: Joseph Cornell, Film Collector-Filmmaker	
Friday luna 44		
Friday, June 14		
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13:00-14:00	Panel 12: Sound and Early Cinema	
14:15-15:30	Panel 13: Distribution, Disruption, Decoloniality	
16:00-17:00	General Assembly	
17:00-19:00	Reception	
20:30-22:00	Screening 4: A Long Cinema in the Early Years? 1970s France and Early Cinema	
Saturday, June 15		
9:00-10:15	Panel 14: Domitor's Databases: Early Cinema and its Digital Afterlife	
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10:30-11:30	Panel 15: Intermediality and Appropriation
11:30-12:30	Lunch
12:30-13:00	Special Presentation: My Early Cinema Collection and Others
13:15-14:15	Panel 16: South Asian Cinemas
14:30-15:30	Panel 17: Contemporary Avant-gardes
15:45-16:45	Panel 18: What is Early Cinema?
16:45-17:00	Closing Remarks
20:30-22:00	Screening 5: Stumble and Marvel (Shorts program)