

Liverpool Film Seminar

2019 – 2020 series

Every year, Liverpool Film Seminar invites experts to deliver a series of talks. Topics vary greatly and the series does not focus on a specific aspect of film. Instead, a range of genres and approaches are celebrated, from historical reach to the internet's impact on cinematic material.

Professor Erica Carter (King's College, London)

Locating Decolonisation: Kwame Nkrumah in Cold War Media Memory

Drawing on the DAAD-funded German Screen Studies Network project *Circulating Cinema*, this lecture explores archival traces from the Global North of Ghana's postwar transition to independence. Documentary film holdings in East German and British archives reveal independence as a fully mediatized process embedded in Cold War struggles for influence in postcolonial Africa. Bringing together films from both sides of Cold War European divides, the lecture considers the competing visions of African modernity that emerge from this documentary corpus. Drawing on writing by Tina Campt and others on the black body, stillness and motion, the lecture explores the films' location of the African body as a site of mutually antagonistic geopolitical temporalities. Particular attention will be paid to Ghana's first Prime Minister and President, Kwame Nkrumah, as a media icon whose image becomes a proxy site of Cold War contestation between East and West. The lecture concludes by asking what new insights might emerge from a repurposing of this transnational archive for a decolonial history of West Africa's Cold War.

Biography:

Erica Carter is Professor of German and Film at King's College London and Chair of the German Screen Studies Network. Her books include the co-edited BFI *German Cinema Book* (2nd edn 2019); Béla Balázs. *Early Film Theory* (2010) and *Dietrich's Ghosts. The Sublime and the Beautiful in Third Reich Film* (2004). She is currently working on a new monograph on colonial subjectivities and media memory.