

Reassessing Chinese Independent Cinema: Past, Present... and Future?

Conference

5-6 June 2020

Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne

Call for Paper Proposals:

If Wu Wenguang's *Bumming in Beijing* (流浪北京, 1990) is considered to mark the birth of independent cinema in the People's Republic of China (hereafter China) that cinema will be celebrating its 30th birthday in 2020. But if independence is defined as meaning production without government permission, China's first film law in 2017 was understood by many as making that practice illegal. The intervening decades saw the emergence of a broader film culture supporting this filmmaking, from film festivals to film criticism, but also this culture's metamorphosis under pressure from both state and market. Can we still speak of independent cinema in the PRC, and if so, what does it mean to do so?

This seems to be a good moment to take stock of the past, present and future of Chinese independent film. We seek papers that address the current and future state of independent filmmaking in China, but also our understanding of this practice and its history. After thirty years, there is a significant body of literature on the subject, in a range of languages. What have we learned? What is missing? And what is still to be done?

Topics addressed could include, but are not limited to: the history of the definition of independent film in China and its current transformation; the distribution and exhibition of Chinese independent film inside and outside China; the production practices of independent filmmakers; the role of emerging independent film producers and production companies; independent film's relationship to the media industries and visual arts; Chinese independent cinema's trans-border connections; gender, sexuality, ethnicity and other identity questions in front of and behind the Chinese independent cinema camera; the ethics and politics of independent production in China; the preservation and legacy of Chinese independent film culture, and more.

The confirmed speakers include Chris Berry, Markus Nornes, Luke Robinson, Wu Wenguang, Sabrina Q. Yu, Xianmin Zhang, Yingjin Zhang and Zhen Zhang.

We accept both proposals for individual papers (200 words) and for pre-formed panels (200 words per paper and 200 words for the panel). All proposal should not be previously published or committed, as our intention is to edit a book based on the papers presented at the conference. Please include a bio for each speaker (70 words).

Deadline for Receipt of Papers: 10 December 2019. Please send to: cifnuk@outlook.com

This conference is part of a UK Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project entitled '[Independent Cinema in China: State, Market and Film Culture](#)'.