

Institution: University of Brighton		
Unit of Assessment: D34 - Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management		
Title of case study: Transforming Screen Cultures		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2004 – 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Frank Gray	Principal Lecturer	1985 – to date
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Y		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>University of Brighton (UoB) research into screen texts and archival development has expanded the cultural role of Screen Archive South East and Cinecity (SASE/CC) leading to the growth, nationally and internationally, of mainstream and marginalised audiences for film heritage and film curation. SASE's film collection and Cinecity's curated programmes are now used by an expanded community of beneficiaries - film-makers, broadcasters, artists, curators, researchers and audiences. In this period SASE/CC also created and directed a funding agency dedicated to nurturing the region's independent film exhibition sector. Since 2014, SASE/CC's audience engagement and sectoral development activities have been sustained by the generation of over GBP2,200,000 and their venue-based, online and broadcast audience totals 55,000,000.</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>Frank Gray is the Director of SASE and the Co-Director of Cinecity, both at UoB. SASE (est. 1992) is a publicly-funded regional screen archive operating in the South East of England. Cinecity (est. 2003) curates and presents an annual film festival dedicated to contemporary independent film and screen heritage. Gray's research focusses primarily on the rise of film and film culture around 1900 and it provides a detailed analysis of a multitude of interactions between screen texts, their production and exhibition and their cultural and commercial contexts. This research methodology with its emphasis on 'cine-ecosystems', networks and supply chains is applied directly to SASE's collection development policies and strategies and to CC's curatorial development.</p> <p>Gray's significant research project has concentrated on early British film production and exhibition, in particular the Brighton pioneers, George Albert Smith and James Williamson, and their respective contributions to the birth of film language, the beginnings of the film trade and the invention of Kinemacolor, the first viable 35mm colour film system [references 3.1, 3.2]. This research situates their practices within a dynamic set of cultural, aesthetic, economic, technological and geographical relationships that influenced their activities as film-makers, the exhibition of their films, the reception of their work by audiences and shaped the emergence of a new industry. Gray's monograph (2019) on Smith and Williamson is the first devoted to their work, legacies and influence [3.2].</p> <p>Gray's research, given its dedication to the use of primary sources in the generation of new histories, concentrates on the detailed study of surviving lantern slides, 35mm films, business records, family records, catalogues, programmes and apparatus (eg cameras and projectors). This emphasis on the 'artefactual' has had a direct bearing on the archival development of SASE and its dedication to the systematic identification, collection, preservation, digitisation and public use of screen artefacts (eg lantern slides, films,</p>		

videotapes and digital files) as found in the South East. His historicisation of archived 'objects' found within the SASE collection has also generated an understanding of the work of particular screen practitioners and media organisations (eg the Church Army), their ideologies, their uses of screen technology and their engagement with audiences in a variety of public contexts [3.3].

Gray's new insights into the multiple exchanges between screen heritage collections, the production of screen histories and the exhibition of screen works have also nurtured the genesis and on-going development of Cinecity - Brighton and Hove's film festival. CC's curatorial strategy expresses these inter-relationships through the careful crafting of research-informed programmes that blend the contemporary with the historical. Gray's research has had a major influence on the festival's commitment to its production of 'live cinema' events (ie performances that fuse silent film with live music).

Gray has utilised research and knowledge of archival practices and screen history to continue to ensure that research shapes the UK's film culture through his active contribution to policies, strategies and projects dedicated to the development of the UK's screen heritage especially through its digitisation and online availability. [3.4, 3.5] He served as a member of the British Film Institute's national Steering Group for film audience development (2013-17) and was the elected Chair of Film Archives UK (2012 – 18), the national body for the promotion and development of UK's publicly funded film archives. He has also influenced the development of a research agenda for the study of magic lantern slides in Europe. [3.6] This work is exemplified by SASE's involvement in the co-creation of *Lucerna*, the online resource at the University of Exeter that is dedicated to the study of the magic lantern.

3. References to the research

[3.1] Gray, F., (2018). 'Kinemacolor and Kodak: The Enterprise of Colour,' in Fossati, G., Jackson, V., Lameris, B., Rongen-Kaynakçi, E., Street, S. & Yumibe, J. (eds.), *The Colour Fantastic: Chromatic Worlds of Silent Colour*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp. 145-159. ISBN 9789462983014. [Quality validation: peer-reviewed chapter within monograph dedicated to *The Colour Fantastic* (2015), an international conference at the Eye, Amsterdam].

[3.2] Gray, F., (2019). *The Brighton School and the Birth of British Film*, Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-17505-4> [Quality validation: a peer-reviewer selected by this academic publisher referred to it as, "an impeccably researched history." It was long-listed for the 2020 Kraszna-Krausz Photography and Moving Image Book Awards].

[3.3] Gray, F., (2012). 'Mission on Screen: the Church Army and its multi-media activities' in M. Braun, C. Kell, & P. Moore (Eds.), *Beyond the screen: institutions, networks, and publics of early cinema*, John Libbey, New Barnett, UK, pp. 27-34. [Quality validation: peer-reviewed chapter within the monograph dedicated to the Domitor conference at the University of Toronto (2010)].

[3.4] Gray, F., and Sheppard, E., (2004). Moving History: Promoting moving image archive collections in an emerging digital age. *The Moving Image*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp.110-18. [Quality validation: double blind peer review for article within the journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists].

[3.5] Gray, F., (2016). "Regional Archives – Negotiating the Actual and the Virtual in Changing Times," *Journal of Film Preservation*, Vol. 95, No. 10, pp. 63-68. [Quality validation: peer-reviewed article for the journal of FIAF – the International Federation of Film Archives]

[3.6] Gray, F., (2013). 'Engaging with the magic lantern's history' in L. Vogl-Bienek, and R. Crangle (eds.), *Screen culture and the social question 1880-1914*, John Libbey, New Barnett, UK, pp. 173-180. ISBN: 9780861967094 [Quality validation: peer-reviewed chapter within the monograph dedicated to a symposium at the German Historical Institute, London (2011)].

4. Details of the impact

SASE, led by Gray, and Cinecity (CC), co-directed by Gray and Tim Brown, with a shared staff team of 6 (4.5 FTE), provides a powerful cultural presence within the screen culture of South East England and across the UK. Gray's research both shapes and underpins SASE/CC's rare and distinctive blend of a public screen archive collection with leadership in curation and audience development and a research-led knowledge base dedicated to screen history, heritage and exhibition. This work continues to attract and influence an ever-expanding community of researchers, producers, film-makers, artists, curators and audiences who all chose to engage with the work of the archive and the festival. This community's actions range from online viewings to physical screenings in cinemas to creative re-use and reinterpretation within both public and commercial contexts.

SASE/CC's total audience/visitor number for the period up to 2014 was 25,000,000. The audience/visitor total for the years 2014 – 2020 is 55,220,691, an increase of 120%. A corollary of this demand has been the significant and sustained support SASE/CC have received from national funders, especially the British Film Institute. SASE/CC have generated over GBP2,200,000 in public funding since August 2013, creating 29.75 FTE employment years and enabling it to provide archive services for a range of public and commercial organisations and deliver high-quality cultural activities [source 5.1].

4.1 Significant national and international demand

There is a strong demand from creative, commercial, curatorial and community users and audiences for SASE's unique collection and its research-informed collection knowledge. Fifty-seven television producers (regional and national UK, European, American and Asian) selected films from SASE in order to create news packages and documentaries on many aspects of British life in the 20th Century. The selected SASE material has ranged from iconic national events (eg a unique newsreel of the funeral of the Suffragette Emily Davison in 1913) to early colour films of pre-mechanised agricultural life, VE Day street parties and British street fashion. The most significant international production was 'China on Film' (Channel News Asia, 2018), a series that highlighted SASE's unparalleled collection of what are believed to be the earliest colour films of China [5.2]. Films were also chosen by Netflix for its documentary *Tell Me Who I Am* (2019) and for Channel 5's *A Wartime Christmas* (2020, viewing numbers: 3,665,160). SASE material has also featured in three internationally distributed British feature films: *Suffragette* (2016), *God's Own Country* (2017) and *Arcadia* (2018). The British film-maker Andrew Köttig has made extensive use of SASE's collection. He notes that: '*rarely does a year go by when I don't find myself drawn to the treasures that offer themselves up for consideration when researching a project at SASE. [...] And then when the work goes out into the world, to cinemas, galleries or as film grabs in bookworks, I feel truly proud and indebted to the resource*' [5.3, 5.4].

By generating GBP309,000 from competitive awards, SASE was able to curate and digitise 504 films from its collection for the British Film Institute's Player, the new national online platform for screen heritage. Between July 2015 to November 2019 it attracted over 138,000 views of SASE films by the British public. Eleven SASE films on the BFI's Facebook page received 772,800 views. A SASE film, *Chichester Tour*, featured in the top ten of most watched films on this platform and was referred to in a *Guardian* editorial dedicated to the national significance of film archives [5.1, 5.5, 5.6].

Curators of UK museums continue to choose SASE's films for display within new displays & exhibitions. An indicative example is the exhibition *Twixt Two Worlds* (2014) at London's Whitechapel Gallery. It drew upon Gray's research and explored the magic lantern and early film (62,105 visitors) [5.7]. Demand is also expressed through the use of SASE's archive services. Until 2020, four major national charities chose to deposit their screen collections with SASE for preservation, cataloguing and digitisation: the Church Army, Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for Disabled People, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Sightsavers UK.

4.2 Developing the region's film exhibition sector

From 2013 to 2017, Gray and Brown first founded and then directed Film Hub South East, a new funding agency dedicated to developing new audiences for non-mainstream film (part of a new national film audience network established by the BFI). With an award of GBP1,050,000, SASE/CC instituted a programme of activity that focussed on providing professional development opportunities for film exhibitors within the region's independent cinema sector. The Hub's research-informed staff provided knowledge, mentoring, advice and business support. It awarded 165 Travel and Training Bursaries to exhibitors and supported the research and delivery of 70 new curatorial projects by exhibitors for festivals and cinemas. These projects addressed social and cultural inclusion by focussing on neglected and marginalised subjects and audiences including Black History, LGBTIQ+, the elderly with dementia and young people with learning difficulties. The Hub also supported the opening of two new independent cinemas in the region: Depot in Lewes and the Auditorium within the Towner Art Gallery at Eastbourne. Over its lifetime, the Hub reached an audience in excess of 170,000. The BFI acknowledges SASE/CC's crucial role in the Hub's five-year history: *'They provided the necessary leadership, knowledge and creativity required to both create and lead Film Hub South East - the region's first film audience network Hub. Their strategic approach to capacity building for the exhibition sector served as a catalyst for members of this new film hub to develop new curatorial projects, embark on training programmes and become more ambitious and confident about their work'* [5.8].

4.3 Nurturing Brighton & Hove's screen culture

SASE/CC continue to both lead and nurture the city's independent screen culture. Cinecity's annual film festival, the city's only film festival, showcases world cinema and new archive restorations. It is described as, *'a world recognised platform for the dissemination of exceptional moving image work'* [5.3]. Designed to attract new and diverse audiences and regularly funded by Arts Council England and the BFI, it drew a paying audience of 114,702 in the period 2013 to 2020. CC also expressed itself through a set of well-received exhibitions within the UoB's Gallery. They included the first large-scale UK exhibition dedicated to the Czech surrealist Jan Svankmajer (2013) and *Fake News: The British Cinema Newspapers* (2017) [5.9]. An audience member referred to the festival as, *'life affirming and inspirational'*.

Alongside the CC festival, SASE's collection was utilised within a wide range of projects in the city. Brighton Museum & Art Gallery's temporary display *Experimental Motion* (22 October 2016 to 4 June 2017) employed both films from the SASE collection and Gray's research to explore innovative film-making in the city from the pioneers to the present day (20,000+ visitors). Carousel is a charity dedicated to supporting learning disabled artists develop their practices. Its Heritage Lottery funded community project *Silver Screen* (2018) used Smith and Williamson films from the SASE collection as the inspiration for the creation of new films by young people with learning disabilities. The resulting touring programme (entitled *Modern Marvels*) visited ten venues in Sussex and introduced young audiences to early British films (audience: 5,212) [5.10].

The BFI provides a synoptic perspective on SASE's importance to screen culture nationally and internationally: *'The BFI recognises SASE's great achievement in being able to deliver a professional and highly valued screen heritage service to the South East of England and generate an impressive demand for its collection both in the UK and the world. [...] SASE's excellent range of impacts demonstrates why the BFI, as the national agency for film, identifies it as "a significant UK collection" and has continued to fund it year-on-year'* [5.11].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[5.1] Report on all externally verified sources relating to total audience figures, income sources and BFI projects. PDF available.

[5.2] ARTE: https://sales.arte.tv/fiche/5863/BRITISH_STYLE [Accessed: 8th Jan. 2021]; 'China on Film' (Channel News Asia, 2018) <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/video-on-demand/china-on-film/the-war-years-9831448> [Accessed: 8 Jan. 2021]

[5.3] Testimonial, Professor Andrew Kötting, University of the Creative Arts (2 Dec. 2020). This confirms extensive use of the archive and how it inspires the creation of further projects.

[5.4] McGill, H., 'Film of the week: Edith Walks makes England loopy again', *Sight and Sound*, 23 June 2017: <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/reviews-recommendations/edith-walks-andrew-kotting-makes-england-loopy-again> [Accessed: 8th Jan. 2021]. Discusses the significance of Kötting's use of a SASE film.

[5.5] The National Lottery (4 Dec 2019). 'Top 10 most watched films you have never heard of' [Press release]. <https://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/news/view/bfi-and-paul-merton-unveil-top-10-most-watched-films-you-have-never-heard-of-to-celebrate-25-years-of-national-lottery-funding> [Accessed: 8th Jan. 2021]. This confirms the significance of the film No. 5, 'Chichester Tour' (1962), with 376,961 views to date.

[5.6] *The Guardian*, (5 Dec 2019), 'The Guardian view on looking back: in search of lost time': https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/dec/04/the-guardian-view-on-looking-back-in-search-of-lost-time?CMP=share_btn_link [Accessed: 8th Jan. 2021]. An editorial on the BFI's 'much-loved film archives' that remind readers that exploring the past can enhance the present.

[5.7] *Twixt Two Worlds*, Whitechapel Gallery (11 June – 31 August 2014, 62,105 visitors) and the Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne (11 October – 4 January 2015, 20,487 visitors). Catalogue: *The Best is Not Too Good for You* (London: Contemporary Art Society and the Whitechapel Gallery, 2014); Review: <http://www.apollo-magazine.com/twixt-two-worlds-spirit-photography-magic-lanterns-whitechapel-gallery/> [Accessed: 8th Jan. 2021].

[5.8] Testimonial, Ben Luxford, Head of UK Wide Audiences, British Film Institute (9 Dec. 2020). This details the contribution of UoB researchers to the development of Film Hub South East.

[5.9] Brooke, M., 'Keeping it Surreal', *Sight and Sound*, Nov. 2013, pp. 6-7. Review of Cinecity's exhibition, 'Jan Švankmajer - The Inner Life of Objects'.

[5.10] Relevant webpages from Carousel: <http://www.carousel.org.uk/silver-screen/> [Accessed: 7 Jan. 2021]; <https://www.carousel.org.uk/events/modern-marvels-travelling-film-booth/> [Accessed: 8th Jan. 2021] These detail the outcomes of this charity's project.

[5.11] Testimonial, Sue Todd, UK Partnership Manager, Programme and Archive, British Film Institute (4 Dec. 2020). This details the achievements of SASE in delivering a film heritage service regionally and nationally.