

ARTHEMIS

is pleased to present a lecture with

Andrew Shail, Newcastle University

The Language of the Cinematograph

When: November 9 @ 16h30

EV-5-615 1515 Ste-Catherine W.



In my recent collection on short fiction about cinema before the First World War, I surmised that a rich and virtually untapped vein of evidence about historical perceptions of the new entity had been laid down in fiction, and not just in instances where fictional characters encounter film production or exhibition, but also where authors made use of cinematographs, animatographs, bioscopes etc. in metaphor and simile. In this paper I will move on to look at the latter, surveying over 150 references to the new technology in Anglophone fiction in the period before 1920, to identify the proto-theory – the ideas that were applied to projected motion photography, the phenomena with which it was associated, the sensations which it was deemed to provoke – of this period when cinema's conceptual profile was formed by both its own raw novelty and its continuities with parent and sibling entertainments forms, and during which it underwent the transformation of acquiring a media identity of its own. The result is a shifting picture of a complex array of characteristics associated with cinema, an array that shifted not just at the point of cinema's second birth c.1910 but during the supposedly stable periods both before and after.

Andrew Shail's is the co-editor of *Menstruation: A Cultural History* (co-edited with Gillian Howie, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and *Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems, 1800-1950* (co-edited with Laura Salisbury, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) and *Back to the Future* (co-edited with Robin Stoate, British Film Institute, 2010). He is also the editor of *Reading the Cinematograph: The cinema in British Short Fiction 1896-1912* (University of Exeter Press 2010) and the author of *The Cinema and the Origins of Literary Modernism* (Routledge, 2012).

