



Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg
Institute for Advanced Study

HWK Postdoc Program Workshop

Yugoslav women film workers and their films

Delmenhorst, April 9-10, 2026

Organizers

Dr. Vesi Vukovic, University of Bremen & Associate
Junior Fellow at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg

Prof. Dr. Winfried Pauleit, University of Bremen

Prof. Dr. Sanja Bahun, University of Essex

Venue:


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Program

Thursday, April 9

9:45 Arrival HWK

10:00 – 10:20 Welcome and Introduction

Vesi Vuković, Winfried Pauleit, Sanja Bahun, and Steffen Bandlow-Raffalski (HWK)

Session 1

Chair: Winfried Pauleit

10:20 – 10:45 **The screening of *Pionir i dvojka/ Pioneer and the Bad Grade (Vera Jocić & Ljubiša Jocić, 1949)*, with the introduction of Sanja Bahun (University of Essex, United Kingdom)**

10:50 – 11:10 Borjana Gaković (curator, Germany)

Irena Vrkljan, in the Spotlight

11:10 – 11:40 Q&A

11:40 – 12:10 Coffee break

Session 2

Chair: Sanja Bahun

12:10 – 12:30 Nikica Gilić (University of Zagreb, Croatia)

Ljiljana Jojić – the first feature film author from socialist Croatia

12:35 – 12:55 Adrian Pelc (University of Vienna, Austria)

The Monstrous Feminine Revised: Zora Dirnbach and Yugoslav Horror Cinema

12:55 – 13:25 Q&A

13:25 – 14:55 Lunch break

Session 3

Chair: Vesi Vuković

14:55 – 15:15 Nebojša Jovanović (University of Sarajevo – Academy of Performing Arts, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Defiant Desire of Vesna Ljubić

- 15:20 – 15:40 Damjana Patcheva (Kinoteka na Severna Makedonija, North Macedonia)
Pioneering Filmmakers: Vera Klichkova and Afrodita Markovich
- 15:40 – 16:10 Q&A
- 16:10 – 16:40 Coffee break
- Session 4**
Moderator: Vesi Vuković
- 16:40 – 17:20 **Film screenings: *Idea* (1987) and *Čovjek "S" / Man "S"* (1989), directed by Ines Tanović**
- 17:20 – 17:50 Q&A with director Ines Tanović
- 18:00 Workshop Dinner

Friday, April 10

- 9:15 Arrival HWK
- Session 1**
Chair: Winfried Pauleit
- 09:29 – 10:20 **The screening of *Home Movies* (Vukica Đilas, 1970-199?)**
10:25 – 10:45 Petra Belc Krnjaić (VERN' University/Universität Klagenfurt, Croatia)
Mitra Mitrović and Vukica Đilas: Reframing authorship in Yugoslav Cinema
- 10:50 – 11:10 Katja Stamboldžioski (TV Ljubljana, Slovenia)
Women documentary filmmakers at TV Ljubljana (1958–1991): Documenting Social Inequalities and Undermining the Myth of Socialist Equality
- 11:10 – 11:40 Q&A
- 11:40 – 12:10 Coffee break

Session 2

Chair: Vesi Vuković

- 12:10 – 12:30 Anja Banko (the Slovenian Cinematheque, Slovenia)
Silent Cuts: Milka Badjura
- 12:35 – 12:55 Gal Kirn (University of Ljubljana/European University Viadrina, Slovenia/Germany) (presenting online)
On forgotten heritage of Ana Nuša Dragan
- 12:55 – 13:25 Q&A
- 13:25 – 15:05 Lunch break

Session 3

Chair: Sanja Bahun

- 15:05 – 15:25 Dušan Radunović (Durham University, United Kingdom)
**“I believe that the worker should be respected in socialism”:
Images of Labour in Bojana Marijan’s *Vesela klasa (The Jolly Class, 1969)***
- 15:30 – 15:50 Nevena Daković (participating online) (Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Serbia)
Soja Jovanovic: the game of adaptations or from stage to screen
- 15:50 – 16:20 Q&A
- 16:20 – 16:50 Coffee break

Session 4

Chair: Vesi Vuković

- 16:50 – 17:10 Ana Grgić (participating online) (Babes-Bolyai University, Romania)
The Cinema of In-Betweenness: the case of Yugoslav filmmaker Marija Marić
- 17:15 – 17:35 Dijana Jelača (participating online) (Brooklyn College, CUNY, The United States of America)
Film Editing and Women’s Labor in Yugoslav Socialist Film
- 17:35 – 18:05 Q&A
- 18:05 Dinner

Workshop: Yugoslav Women Film Workers and Their Films

This workshop focuses on Yugoslav women film workers, who are largely overlooked in the historical accounts of the cinema of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (approximately from 1945 to 1991). It examines the work behind the camera, for instance of film directors, editors, and screenwriters.

The cinema of the SFR Yugoslavia, was overwhelmingly male-dominated, with far fewer female directors, scriptwriters, and directors of photography. In contrast, Yugoslav women film editors were numerous, but their work was also underappreciated. Today, these women from all film professions (behind the scenes) are mostly absent from film historiographies. Their films are rarely digitised (especially the ones by women directors), making them difficult to access. Furthermore, they are at risk of being lost forever due to the deterioration of analogue film stock. The workshop aims to change this. Its goals include raising awareness of forgotten Yugoslav women film workers and their films, exploring archival work and memory, and examining the politics of film digitisation.

The workshop will take place on 9th and 10th April 2026, at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in Delmenhorst (Germany). Through this workshop, the organisers Dr. Vesi Vuković (University of Bremen), Prof. Dr. Winfried Pauleit (University of Bremen), and Prof. Dr. Sanja Bahun (University of Essex) seek to spark interest in these film workers, advocate for their recognition and support the preservation of their films. In order to disseminate knowledge on these forgotten women, the organisers plan to bring renowned international speakers on Yugoslav cinema, such as Yugoslav film scholars, programmers, and a film director. The workshop will highlight the importance of curating and screening in order to preserve the cultural memory of Yugoslav women filmmakers. It will also stress the urgency and necessity of digitising works by Yugoslav women filmmakers.

The focus of the workshop is on the opuses of women filmmakers in the period of FNR/SFR Yugoslavia (1945-1991). Proposals on topics engaging with all the types of Yugoslav cinema are warmly welcome: of professional and amateur, of short-length and feature-length, and of all genres (such as: experimental, documentary, fiction, and animation).

Topics may address (but are not limited to) the following thematic clusters:

- Yugoslav women behind camera, such as: directors, editors, directors of photography, and screenwriters
- Films by Yugoslav women film workers
- Representations of gender in Yugoslav films directed by women

- Yugoslav women film workers and gender equality politics of the socialist state
- Yugoslav women film workers, memory, and archives
- Screening, programming, and curating films by Yugoslav women filmmakers
- Yugoslav women film policy makers

The workshop will be a small-scale event, lasting two days. Due to its hybrid format (in person and online), it will be open to the students of the University of Bremen, scholars, HWK alumni, and fellows, as well as to the general film-interested public, upon registration.

Through this planned workshop in 2026, forgotten women's perspectives in Yugoslav filmmaking will be made visible and hopefully preserved from loss.

This workshop is supported by the Hanse Wissenschaftskolleg: Institute for Advanced Study, Delmenhorst (Germany). The research of Dr. Vesi Vuković is supported by EU Horizon Europe under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND grant No 101081327 YUFE4Postdocs. The organisers: Vesi Vuković, Winfried Pauleit, and Sanja Bahun would like to thank to Akademski filmski centar (Belgrade, Serbia) and Filmski centar Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Ljiljana Jojić – the first feature film author from socialist Croatia

By Nikica Gilić, University of Zagreb

In contradiction with social and political goals of socialist society, only one female author from Croatia made a feature film during the four decades of well organised Yugoslav cinema production. As opposed to some quite popular films directed by Soja Jovanović from Serbia, Jojić's only feature film – *Priko sinjeg mora /Across the great blue sea, 1979* - existed on the margins of cinema, produced within one of the smaller companies (Zagreb film), compiled from her three similarly focused short films (with connecting scenes added for this occasion). The film will be approached with regards to its structure and implications, but also within the context of the production strategies and the imagery. Jojić shares the production context with Petar Krelja (and his first feature film), while some aspects of the topics and style are shared with other authors working in Yugoslavia in 1960s and 1970s, with Jojić's screenwriter Kruno Quien being one of the key elements of the puzzle. Since Jojić's output in feature film is so limited, the short analysis of her major television feature work from 1980 – *Lidija* (cowritten by Zora Dirnbach, a very important contributor to Yugoslav cinema and television) - also seems interesting. In *Lidija*, Ljiljana Jojić's work actually focused directly on female protagonist of a seemingly typical World War II story from Yugoslavia and the occupied Zagreb, where local fascists (Ustaše) worked to pacify the occupied territory for their Nazi overlords. Whereas *Across the great blue sea* goes deeply into the Mediterranean exoticism, a tendency fruitful across different poetics and genre of cinema, *Lidija* (starring Zdravka Krstulović) deals with the possibilities of middle class resistance in Zagreb that anticipate later, much more renowned documentarist work by Dana Budisavljević.

Biography

Born in Split (1973), Gilić got his Ph.D. in film studies in Zagreb and works as full professor of film studies at University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. He also teaches at Academy of dramatic arts in Zagreb and was a guest lecturer at Berlin Humboldt University, University of Vienna and other institutions. His publications include books such as *Predavanja o filmskom modernizmu* (Lectures on cinema modernism, 2024) and *Uvod u povijest hrvatskog igranog filma* (Introduction to the history of Croatian fiction film, 2010), as well as editorial work in *Hrvatski filmski ljetopis* (Croatian Cinema Chronicle), *Apparatus Journal*, some other journals, and several books, such as *Fifty Years of World Festival of Animated film – Animafest Zagreb, 1972-2022* (2022), *Global Animation Theory. International Perspectives at Animafest Zagreb* (2019) and *Partisans in Yugoslavia. Literature, Film and Visual Culture* (2015).

Soja Jovanovic: the game of adaptations or from stage to screen

By Prof. Nevena Dakovic, PhD, MAE

FDA, UoA, Belgrade

Serbia

The paper analyses the cinematic oeuvre of Sofija Soja Jovanovic (1922-2002) first woman film director in SFRY mainly in relation to her work in theater or as the screen adaptations of the Yugoslav classic comedy writers (such as Nusic or Sterija). However the special emphasis is placed on her popular but neglected film *Dilizansa snova* (1960, The Stagecoach of Dreams).

Biography:

Nevena DAKOVIĆ, PhD, is full professor of Film and Media Studies at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Belgrade; the Chair of PhD Studies and Director of the Institute for Theater, Film, Radio and Television, FDA. Nevena Daković has written (most recent *Images without Memory: trauma, film, transmission / Slike bez sećanja: trauma, film, transmisija*, 2020), and edited a number of books (*The Atlas of Ithaca*, 2024; *Film and Screen Media Studies: Serbia 3.0 / Studije filma i ekranskih medija: Srbija 3.0*, 2019; *Soft Power of the Balkan Screens*, 2023 etc.) and chapters (in *Geopolitics to Geocriticism: A Study of TV Series in Türkiye, Serbia, Romania and Beyond*, 2024; *Migrants and Refugees in Contemporary Film, Art and Media*, 2022). She has published more than 120 texts in national and international journals (*Cahiers du cinema, Sight and Sounds, Serbian Studies, Umjetnost riječi, European review, Književna istorija, Zbornik radova FDU*,...). She is often invited as a guest lecturer at European and American Universities (Istanbul, Ohio, Birkbeck, Vienna, Rome, Sorbonne, Ljubljana, Yale....). She is a member of *Academia Europaea* and associate editor of *European Review*.

Film Editing and Women's Labor in Yugoslav Socialist Film By Dijana Jelača

The presentation will explore women's film authorship in Yugoslav socialist film beyond the conventional frameworks of directing and screenwriting. By using Lingzhen Wang's concept of "embedded authorship" (2015), which she develops in her analysis of women's work in Chinese socialist cinema, I will discuss career trajectories and contributions of several notable Yugoslav female film editors. The presentation will specifically focus on women's labor in film editing as a form of—with a few exceptions—heretofore largely under-recognized creative contribution to socialist film history and authorship writ large (Kaganovsky 2018, Jelača 2025).

Short Bio:

Dijana Jelača is a Lecturer in the Film Department at Brooklyn College. She is the author of *Dislocated Screen Memory: Narrating Trauma in Post-Yugoslav Cinema* (2016) and co-author of *Film Feminisms: A Global Introduction* (2019). She co-edited several scholarly volumes, including *The Routledge Companion to Cinema and Gender* (2017), and *The Cultural Life of Capitalism in Yugoslavia* (2017). Jelača's research interests include feminist film studies, cinema and trauma, socialist women's cinema, and South Slavic film cultures. Her essays have appeared in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *Camera Obscura*, *Feminist Media Studies*, *Senses of Cinema*, *Jump Cut*, *Studies in World Cinema*, *Apparatus*, and elsewhere. She is currently editing a volume titled *Screening Women Filmmakers* (forthcoming, Routledge).

Defiant Desire of Vesna Ljubić

By Nebojša Jovanović

Although Vesna Ljubić was the most prominent woman director in Yugoslavia from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, her films remain largely absent from dominant historiographies of Yugoslav cinema. This paper reintroduces her work, arguing that Ljubić's sustained authorial presence within late-socialist production structures represents a structurally significant feminist intervention, particularly through her focus on female protagonists and gendered subjectivities across diverse historical periods and social contexts.

Drawing on a combined feminist, psychoanalytic, and Marxist framework, the paper offers close readings of Ljubić's films *Simha* (her debut TV film, 1975), *Defiant Delta* (*Prkosna delta*, 1980), and *The Last Switchman of the Narrow-Gauge Railway* (*Posljednji skretničar uzanog kolosijeka*, 1986). Special attention is given to the positioning of female protagonists in relation to social obligation and historical change, as well as to the films' narrative strategies and mise-en-scène. The analysis positions Ljubić's cinema as a critical site for rethinking the relationship between gender and history in late Yugoslav film, while reassessing the limits and contradictions of socialist modernity from a feminist perspective.

Biography:

Nebojša Jovanović is a senior teaching assistant at the Production Department of University of Sarajevo – Academy of Performing Arts. He edited monograph *Hajrudin Krvavac* (2019), the volume on one of the most popular Yugoslav directors of the socialist era. His essays on film theory and history have been published in edited volumes – such as *Retracing Images: Visual Culture after Yugoslavia* (ed. Daniel Šuber and Slobodan Karamanić, Brill, 2012), *Partisans in Yugoslavia: Literature, Film and Visual Culture* (eds. Miranda Jakiša, Nikica Gilić, Transcript Verlag, 2015), and *The Cinematic Bodies of Eastern Europe and Russia: Between Pleasure and Pain* (eds. Ewa Mazierska, Matidla Mroz, Elzbieta Ostrowska, Edinburgh University Press, 2016) – and film magazines and journals (*Studies in Eastern European Cinema*, *KINO!*, and *Hrvatski filmski ljetopis*). From 2019 to 2024 he was project manager of Talents Sarajevo, the talent development programme of the Sarajevo Film Festival.

On forgotten heritage of Ana Nuša Dragan

By Gal Kirn

The presentation will take a closer look at the artistic trajectory of Ana Nuša Dragan (1943–2011), tracing her evolution from early collaborative works with Srečo Dragan in the late 1960s through to her own independent video art practices and installations from the late 1980s into the early 1990s. As one of the pioneers of video art in Yugoslavia, Dragan's practice challenges conventional media formats and rhythmic structures, positioning her within the experimental and conceptual currents of Yugoslav neo-avant-garde art (OHO). This text shall focus on her innovative use of intermediary and experimental formats and rhythms, aiming to recuperate an important "forgotten heritage" that expands our understanding of Yugoslav media art history.

Biography:

Gal Kirn is an Assistant Professor of Cultural Sociology, Slovenia, currently a research associate at the Chair of Cultural Philosophy at the European University Viadrina. He primarily works in the fields of cultural sociology, anthropology, critical memory studies, and theories of decolonial, ecological, and social transformation. One of his main research areas is Southeast Europe, which he attempts to place within broader postsocialist and decolonial currents. Most recently, Gal Kirn led the research group "Protests, Art Practices, and Memory Culture in the Post-Yugoslav Context" (University of Ljubljana, 2021–2025). His publications include *Partisan Ruptures* (Pluto Press, 2019), *Partisan Counter-Archive* (De Gruyter, 2020), *Memory of Liberation* (Ljubljana University Press, 2025) and *Nights of the Dispossessed: Riots Unbound* (edited with Natasha Ginwala and Niloufar Tajeri, Columbia Press, 2021).

Mitra Mitrović and Vukica Đilas: Reframing authorship in Yugoslav Cinema

By Petra Belc Krnjaić

This presentation examines two radically different yet structurally connected forms of cinematic labor in socialist Yugoslavia through the intertwined figures of Mitra Mitrović and her daughter Vukica Đilas. Retroactively, both women can be understood as important agents in Yugoslav film history, whose “cinematic” work unfolded in two distinct, if not even oppositional, spheres.

As the first woman secretary of the Yugoslav Ministry of Education, it seems that Mitrović played a decisive role in the earliest postwar organization of Yugoslav cinema, overseeing the institutional, infrastructural, and policy frameworks that enabled film production, circulation, and cultural legitimacy. While her work initially shaped the very conditions of Yugoslav cinema, it has remained largely invisible within dominant film-historiographical narratives, which privilege directorial authorship over infrastructural labour.

Almost a quarter of a century later, her daughter Vukica Đilas began filming what is today known as *Home Movies* (1970–199?), an significant body of Super 8mm film footage edited posthumously by Slobodan Šijan into a 50-minute film. Aesthetically grounded in family-film practices and the recording of fleeting everyday moments — some of them depicting Mitrović herself preparing lunch for her daughter — the film belongs simultaneously to the spheres of amateur cinema and the radical cinematic avant-garde of the 1960s.

Since both home/experimental movies and cultural institutions played an important role in shaping the Yugoslav film culture, this presentation brings institutional power and amateur filmmaking into the same analytical frame, ultimately proposing an expanded understanding of authorship and cinematic labour within contemporary feminist approaches to socialist film history.

Biography

Petra Belc Krnjaić is a researcher, writer, and occasional curator exploring avant-garde art and film culture, with a focus on amateur cinema, experimental film, and feminist perspectives. At Kinoklub Zagreb, she is responsible for the heritage department, coordinating the preservation of analogue film and film-related materials. In addition to teaching at the university level, she is committed to non-institutional pedagogy, developing experimental film practices with preschoolers. Belc Krnjaić holds a PhD from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb.

**The Monstrous Feminine Revised:
Zora Dirnbach and Yugoslav Horror Cinema
By Adrian Pelc**

The paper proposes an analysis of Zora Dirnbach's contribution to the horror genre in Yugoslav cinema. Dirnbach was a multifaceted cultural worker: she wrote fictional prose, worked as a journalist, and was an editor of Radiotelevizija Zagreb's drama program. In the latter role, she produced an array of important TV films and series, such as *Mačak pod šljemom*, *Kapelski kresovi*, *Prosjaci i sinovi*, etc. Most importantly, Dirnbach was a prominent scriptwriter; she rose to fame with the script for the film *Deveti krug* (*The Ninth Circle*, France Štiglic, 1960), which was an Oscar nominee. This paper, however, will focus on an aspect of Dirnbach's work that received almost no critical attention: the films *Noć poslije smrti* (*The Night after Death*, Branko Ivanda, 1974) and *Đavolje sjeme* (*Devil's Seed*, Vanča Kljaković, 1979). Although both were TV films, *Noć poslije smrti* was also distributed in cinemas in 1983. The two films are connected through two common traits: in both cases, Dirnbach (co)wrote the script, and both films appertain to the horror genre. Dirnbach's script for *Noć poslije smrti* was based on the novella *Notturmo*, written by the prominent realist writer Ksaver Šandor Gjalski, while she cowrote the script for *Đavolje sjeme* with Kljaković. Being horror movies, the two films make strong use of what Barbara Creed termed the "monstrous-feminine": a threatening female ghost in the case of *Noć poslije smrti*, and a lust-crazed prostitute spreading syphilis in the case of *Đavolje sjeme*. The paper will enquire into how Dirnbach – squeezed between the male writer and the male director – was able to insert reinterpretations of the monstrous feminine into Yugoslav horror cinema. Although never fully successful, her reinterpretative gestures can be regarded as a sign of women's agency in a male-dominated cultural field. The paper will therefore focus on a highly important yet heavily understudied aspect of the work of one of the major women in Yugoslav cinema, while contextualizing it within the broader scope of her activities.

Biography

Adrian Pelc is a postdoc assistant at the University of Vienna's Department of Slavic Studies. His interests include Yugoslav cinema, cultural studies, and critical theory. He has published articles in journals such as *Studies in East European Cinema*, *The Journal of Avant-Garde Studies*, and *Studies in East European Thought*. His first monograph, entitled *The Archaic in the Yugoslav Cinema of the 1960s*, is scheduled to appear with

Routledge in 2026. He is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Eastern European Screen Studies*.

Silent Cuts: Milka Badjura

By Anja Banko

The contribution focuses on the work and recognition of one of the pioneers of Slovenian cinema – Milka Badjura (1902–1992). She was the forerunner in the field of film editing and, for most of her career, worked in close collaboration with her husband, Metod Badjura, with whom they made more than 100 films. She also worked with other leading directors of the time, from František Čap, France Štiglic and Igor Pretnar to Matjaž Klopčič, on some of the most popular titles of Slovenian film and television history. The Badjuras mastered the documentary, reportage and newsreel genres, in which the power of narrative structures particularly stands out – it is the fine touch of Milka Badjura's film editing that greatly contributes to the documentary verisimilitude in works such as **Slovensko primorje** (1948), **Naši lipicanci** (1951) and **Pomlad v Beli krajini** (1952). Yet, despite being a key figure in the development of film art and the film industry in Slovenia, there are few written records about her or her work. Only in 2023, after the initiative of Slovenian film workers, was the Slovenian Film Festival's lifetime achievement award renamed in recognition of her pioneering role: Milka's name was added to the then Metod Badjura Lifetime Achievement Award. The case of Milka Badjura not only opens a discussion about the overlooked feminised film professions but also shows the necessity of a more comprehensive research of Slovenian film history, which, until now, has mainly been presented through the lens of auteur theory, foregrounding the role of the (mostly male) film director.

Anja Banko (she/her) is a film critic, pedagogue and programmer. She publishes in specialized journals such as *Ekran, Magazine for Filma and Television* and was a long-time editor of *Temna zvezda*, a radio show specialized for film on Radio Študent. She is one of the co-creators and mentors of *Do zadnje besede*, Ekran's workshop for film criticism. She collaborates with various youth film programs, preparing a wide range of educational film materials. Since 2022, she has been co-programmer at the Slovenian Cinematheque. She is also a member of the program teams of the international festival of experimental audiovisual practices *V-F-X Ljubljana* and *Animateka*.

The Cinema of In-Betweenness: the case of Yugoslav filmmaker Marija Marić By Dr Ana Grgić (Babes-Bolyai University)

Recent research has started to shed light on the work of a handful of women who made feature-length fiction films during the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, a much neglected and over-shadowed space of European and Yugoslav film heritage, which direly needs scholarly and critical attention (see Vuković, 2025). These women and their works have literally fallen through the cracks of national film historiographies, further exacerbated by the political and technological transitions. Similar to the case of Vesna Ljubić, whose films have not been restored or digitised (Vuković, 2025), Marija Marić's works belong to the state of "in-betweenness" of cultures and languages (Homi Bhabha) and fit productively within the paradigm of "paranational" cinema (see Radić, 2024; Widmann 2024). Marić studied filmmaking at the film school in Bucharest in the 1970s, and made dozens of documentaries, TV shows, and short films for TV Novi Sad and a feature-length fiction film in 1990. Her feature-length fiction film *Tinerete Franta/Broken Youth*, a co-production between TV Novi Sad and Romaniaiafilm, is based on the eponymous novel by a Romanian author, and tells the story of two unhappy marriages within Romanian rural community in Serbia just before the start of the Second World War. A poor copy of the film is available on YouTube, while two of Marić's student short films are preserved at the film archive in Bucharest. One of the short student films, *Anunt Matrimonial* from 1974, is a short sketch of a middle-aged woman, who after placing an advert in the newspaper looking for a romantic partner, experiences a bad date and is finally left feeling lonely. Though I have recently managed to obtain contact for the director Marija Marić who had emigrated to the USA, the preliminary findings reveal that her fiction work focuses on women protagonists, and that she had made several Romanian-language works. For this talk, I aim to discuss how this space of "in-betweenness" of Marija Marić as a woman creative worker during SFRY, is both an ambivalent and productive cultural and aesthetic notion, which resists binary categories of the nation-space or national cinema, and offers new perspectives of envisaging a critical Balkan cinema history and audiovisual heritage, which continually crosses borders, especially as we research and uncover women's film heritage from the region.

Short bio

Ana Grgić is a film scholar and cultural worker specialising in the Balkan region, cultural heritage and moving image history. She studied Cinema and Audiovisual Studies at the Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris before obtaining a PhD in Film Studies at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. She teaches documentary cinema and production and European audiovisual heritage at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She has published widely on different aspects of Balkan and East European cinema, women's film heritage, visual culture and film history in peer-reviewed international journals such as *Early Popular Visual Culture*, *Studies in Eastern European Cinema* and *Continuum*. She is author of *Early Cinema, Modernity and Visual Culture: The Imaginary of the Balkans* (Amsterdam University Press, 2022). She has co-edited *Stretching the Archive - Global Women's Film Heritage* (Archive Books, 2024) and *Contemporary Balkan Cinema: Transnational Exchanges and Global Circuits* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020). She has also held numerous leadership and advisory roles, including on film festival juries (Thessaloniki International Film Festival, Astra Documentary Film Festival, Golden Rose Film Festival), and collaborated on film heritage projects (the Creative Media funded 5C project, Archives in Motion and Feminist Film Heritage).

Dušan Radunović
Durham University, UK

**“I believe that the worker should be respected in socialism”:
Images of Labour in Bojana Marijan’s *Vesela klasa* (*The Jolly Class*, 1969)**

Abstract

Prefaced by a close-up of a plaque reading “Factories to the Workers,” Bojana Marijan’s *Vesela klasa* (*The Jolly Class*, 1969) opens with a three-minute sequence of workers streaming out of a factory. For a few seconds, this unmistakable reference to *La Sortie de l’Usine Lumière à Lyon* appears as an act of cinephilia: footage that registers labour while leaving its social conditions unspecified, thus evoking a visible yet undifferentiated collective. This apparent neutrality is disrupted when, some thirty seconds into the film, mariachi sounds—performed by one of the workers—suddenly emerge, satirising in tongue-in-cheek Serbo-Croat lyrics the issue of workers’ rights in Yugoslav socialism. Produced at a turning point in post-World War II Yugoslav history, when the country was grappling with dramatic socioeconomic changes, from transition to “market socialism” to political decentralisation, the film offers an illuminating articulation of the problem of labour. While displaying the recognisable rhetoric of Yugoslav cinematic modernism—such as the valorisation of “low” forms, social critique, and gender emancipation—*Vesela klasa* also promulgates an original philosophy of labour, potentially unique to Yugoslav socialism. Through montages that juxtapose factory work with playful performance—amateur poetry, vocal imitation, satirical song—it reconceives labour not as heroic production or pure alienation, but as a collective creative practice. In doing so, the film articulates a specifically Yugoslav form of social utopianism grounded in spontaneity and everyday performativity.

Biography:

Dušan Radunović is Associate Professor at Durham University (UK), where he teaches Russian intellectual and cultural history, visual art and film studies. He is the author of

monographs on the genesis of the concept of form in the twentieth-century Russian humanities (forthcoming) and Mikhail Bakhtin (in Serbo-Croat, 2012). Dušan is also the editor of the volume *Language, Ideology, and the Human: New Interventions* (with Sanja Bahun, Routledge, 2012) and of Volume 4 of the *Collected Works* by Vlada Petrić (Belgrade 2026).

Pioneering Filmmakers: Vera Klichkova and Afrodita Markovich

By Damjana Patcheva

Abstract

The period between 1945 and 1991 in socialist Yugoslavia was historically and culturally specific for the development of national film production in Macedonia. Within this context, it is absolutely necessary to examine the roles of women in film production and their participation. Although Yugoslavia promoted official narratives of gender equality, filmmaking—like most cultural industries worldwide—remained predominantly structured around male authorship. Directing, screenwriting, cinematography, and composing were largely considered male professions, while women were “placed” into more supportive or adjacent professions such as editing and costume design. Considering this, the work of pioneering female filmmakers is of great significance, especially given that they have worked away from film sets.

My presentation will focus on two distinctive figures: Vera Klichkova, an ethnologist and filmmaker whose work bridged academic research and visual anthropology, and Afrodita Markovic, whose contributions to animation expanded the creative and aesthetic possibilities of the medium. Klichkova’s films demonstrate how ethnographic cinema could serve both as cultural documentation and as an authorial expression, positioning a woman scholar behind the camera in a field doubly dominated by men—both in academia and in film production. Markovic’s animation practice, meanwhile, illustrates how animation studios were often perceived as marginal within mainstream film hierarchies—and we should bear in mind that in 1995 she became head and producer of the Animated Film Studio at Vardar Film (A national production company in Macedonia), and in 1999 she was appointed as acting director.

By examining their work within the institutional and ideological structures of the then-developing film industry, I will explore how women navigated authorship, professional legitimacy, and creative autonomy. Despite systemic limitations, these filmmakers carved

out spaces of visibility and authorship that became integral to dominant narratives of Macedonian film history. Their careers reveal both the constraints imposed by a male-centered industry and the subtle strategies through which women asserted their presence and reshaped cinematic culture in the second half of the twentieth century.

Biography

Damjana Patcheva is a senior filmologist at the Cinematheque of North Macedonia and works in the department of research, publishing, public and international activities, library activities, and film programs.

Following her undergraduate studies at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius, Faculty of General and Comparative Literature, she worked from 2010 to 2012 as a journalist in the Culture and Entertainment Department of the national daily newspaper *Vreme*. In November 2012, she began volunteering at the Cinematheque of Macedonia, where she remained until 2015, when she became an external associate. In December 2016, she was appointed as a filmologist at the Cinematheque of Macedonia; in 2020, she was promoted to Senior Filmologist.

In 2016, she attended the L'Immagine Ritrovata – Film Restoration and Conservation Summer School in Bologna, earning a diploma in film restoration. Since 2015, she has contributed to organizing the Manaki Brothers International Cinematographers' Film Festival and has collaborated with various national film festivals.

In 2016, she also attended the FIAF Film Restoration Summer School. She was selected to participate in the Innovation and Audience Development Lab for exhibitors, organized by Europa Cinemas in Seville (2021) and Bologna (2022 and 2024).

Since 2020, she participated in the digitization and digital restoration of the Macedonian films "Frosina", "Miss Stone", and "Ethnological films from Macedonia" within the project of "Season of classic films", a project led by ACE ([Association des Cinémathèques Européennes](#)).

Title:

Women documentary filmmakers at TV Ljubljana (1958–1991): Documenting Social Inequalities and Undermining the Myth of Socialist Equality

Dr. Katja Stamboldžioski

Abstract

This article examines the early development of documentary film production at TV Ljubljana (later TV Slovenija) and the key social themes addressed by its most prominent female filmmakers—Dorica Makuc, Helena Koder, and Alenka Auersperger—who entered television from journalism and later became screenwriters and directors. All three demonstrated an exceptional sensitivity to social issues that their male colleagues often overlooked, thereby making a significant contribution to the public representation of social inequalities.

In *Cranes Fly South* (1976), Dorica Makuc publicly addressed for the first time the phenomenon of the Aleksandrinke, a specific form of female economic migration in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when girls and women—primarily from the Goriška region—left for Egypt to work as maids, nannies, babysitters, and wet nurses in wealthy European households. Helena Koder's *Kolizej*, directed by Žare Lužnik (1984), reveals the precarious lives of socially vulnerable residents living in a dilapidated building without

water or heating because they have nowhere else to go. Through individual stories, the film exposes the erosion of the socialist social order, which failed to fulfill its promises of equality for all citizens.

Alenka Auersperger's *Saturday, Sunday for Marija* (directed by Slavko Hren, 1983) approaches Roma life through an observational, dialogue-free style. The film follows Marija, a Roma single mother who seeks to improve her living conditions by working in a factory, yet continues to face prejudice and social exclusion within her community. Through multilayered narratives depicting everyday life, the films of all three filmmakers offered a socially critical perspective and challenged the myth of socialist equality.

Biography:

Dr. Katja Stamboldžioski is a documentary film screenwriter and journalist at the national broadcaster TV Slovenija, where she has been the Head of the Educational Programme within the Culture and Arts Department since 2018.

Her research examines the transformation of production, text and audience in documentary film at TV Ljubljana (1958-2011) within the framework of Yugoslav Radio Television (JRT), as well as its development at TV Slovenija after the breakup of the common state. A central part of her work focuses on women documentary filmmakers whose contributions have often been overlooked, situating their work within broader discussions of media history and gender, and highlighting the role of the national broadcaster as a key producer of documentary film.

Combining archival research, analytical inquiry, and creative practice, she brings new perspectives to documentary film as a culturally, historically, and socially significant medium.

Title: Irena Vrkljan, in the Spotlight

By Borjana Gaković

Irena Vrkljan (born 1930 in Belgrade, died 2021 in Zagreb) was an extremely productive writer, audiobook and television author, filmmaker and translator, who moved in her life and in her art work between Germany, Yugoslavia, and Croatia. She left behind a bilingual, rich, aesthetically and politically significant body of work that has been received very differently historically in Germany and (the former) Yugoslavia, but whose cross-disciplinary diversity is still largely unexplored.

When Irena Vrkljan moved from Zagreb to Berlin in 1966 to study at the newly founded Film and Television Academy (DFFB), she was not only significantly older than most students in what would later become the legendary first class (Harun Farocki, Helke Sander, Hartmut Bitomsky etc.), but she also brought with her life experiences that created a certain distance between her and her fellow students. She had experienced Nazi occupation and war in Belgrade and Zagreb and had already made a name for herself and a living as a poet and television writer in what was now socialist Yugoslavia. The lecture will concentrate on works and contexts of her early Zagreb years, including the TV cultural series she initiated *Portreti i susreti (Portraits and encounters)*, as well as four films that Irena Vrkljan made in Berlin at the DFFB in the 1960s.

This research on the work of Irena Vrkljan is a result of collaboration between Borjana Gaković and Tobias Hering.

Biography:

Borjana Gaković is a film and media scholar, curator and author. Her work focuses on representations of history and medialities of historiography, European cinema of the 1960s, feminisms in film history and war and trauma in film.

Special Guest Director Ines Tanović - Film Screenings

IDEA (Ines Tanović, 1987)

ČOVJEK "S" / Man "S" (Ines Tanović, 1989)

Ines Tanović – Biography

Born in Sarajevo. Director, writer and producer. Founder of the production company Dokument Sarajevo in 1990. Graduated from the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo, department of dramaturgy. In two mandates she was president of the Association of Film Workers of BiH.

Currently, Ines Tanović is CEO of the Film Centar Sarajevo.

She directed and wrote a script for 6 short feature films in the period from 1986 to 2010 - KRUGOVI (1985), IDEA (1987), ČOVJEK "S" (1989), SINDROM (1998), BEZ KALORIJA (2002), ISPOČETKA (2010), as well as many TV shows, children's programs, documentaries, spots, advertising campaigns ...

In 2004, she was given a Hubert Ball Fund reward for the script ENTANGLEMENT.

She was at Berlinale Talent Campus 2006. and her project Decision was selected in Berlin Today Award 2011.

Directed the Bosnian part of the long feature omnibus SOME OTHER STORIES in 2010 (co-production btw. production companies from B&H, Serbia, Macedonia, Slovenia, Croatia and Ireland, supported by EUROIMAGES). The Film has been invited on more than 40 world festivals and won six international prizes.

For the project OUR EVERY DAY LIFE which was a part of CineLink market at the Sarajevo Film Festival in 2010, she was rewarded with INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ARTE PRIZE. Author of the documentaries EXHIBITION 26' (2010) - Short Film Corner in Cannes Film Festival, LIVING MONUMENT, 26' (2012), COAL MINE, 30' (2012), GETO 59 (2013) and A DAY ON THE DRINA 17' (2011) which was rewarded with Big Stamp for Best Film in Regional Competition Program at ZAGREBDOX International Documentary Film Festival 2012.

At CineLink program SFF – Work In Progress 2014. She was awarded with postproduction award for OUR EVERYDAY LIFE. In 2015. she finished realization of the feature film OUR EVERYDAY LIFE which was supported by BiH Film Fund, Slovenian and Croatian Film Fund and Eurimages. The film was invited to over 40 international film festivals and won 15 awards. The film was a Bosnian candidate for an Oscar for 2015.

In 2019. she finished her new feature film THE SON, which received production funds from the BiH Film Fund, Film Center Montenegro, Croatian Audiovisual Center, Slovenian Film Center, CNC Romania, Eurimages and HBO. This project was also supported by the Media Development Fund (2017), as well as the CINELINK SFF Award 2015. The film had its world premiere at the 25th Sarajevo Film Festival (August 2019) in the competition program and was also the film of the opening of the Festival. THE SON is the 2019 Oscar nominee for Bosnia and Herzegovina. THE SON was invited to over 20 international festivals.

In 2022, Ines received funds for the production of a third feature film entitled THE WAY HOME from the BiH Film Funds. In 2024 this project got funding from Croatian Audiovisual Center. THE WAY HOME is currently in the pre-production phase.