The Sydney Film HDR Forum features the unique perspective of postgraduate students at Sydney University and in FASS whose research centres on, or, includes film. Contemporary research into film is truly interdisciplinary and in this regard FASS higher degree researchers are well placed to contribute to a burgeoning and diversifying research field.

The Forum represents an ideal opportunity for new researchers to exchange ideas, and to discover how their own research into film brings them into contact with other disciplines in the Arts and Social Sciences.

It offers supervisors and other interested researchers and scholars an opportunity to see where film research is headed at Sydney University. The diversity of the research is exceptional. Papers will discuss a wide array of topics including but certainly not limited to the Balkan subaltern, the Balkan road movie, the threshold between music and cinema, ethnographic nostalgia in the Hollywood western, a literary subversion of John Carpenter’s The Thing, tragedy and Lars Von trier’s cinema, the problem of immortality in Jim Jarmusch’s Only Lovers Left Alive and Crispin Glover’s directorial work, to name a few.

The Forum also includes a screening of a selection of immediate post-war short films made by filmmakers who would go on to be important figures in the French New Wave unearthed during a research trip to film archives in France.

A full schedule with titles and abstracts and screening time is available here.

All are welcome, the event is free.

The Sydney Film HDR Forum is an initiative of The Film Studies Program, and has been funded by SLAM, The Department of English and the Department of Art History.

Contact Dr Richard Smith r.smith@sydney.edu.au
The 2016 Sydney Film HDR Forum
September 29th & 30th

RC Mills Lecture Theatre 209

Schedule

Day 1
Welcome 9:35 – 9:45

Session 1. 9:50 – 11:20
Eliza Waterhouse. “No nationality listed: stateless film making in Israel and the case of Villa Touma.”


Rachel Cole. “Reasonable Adults and Vulnerable Minors: A History of the Restricted Ratings within the Australian Media Classification System”.

11:20 – 11:40 Morning Tea

Session 2. 11:40 – 1:10
Ben Eldridge. “I Know No Thing: Peter Watts’ Permutation of Alien Voice Syndrome.”

Stuart Cottle. “The Language Lesson in the American West.”


1:10 – 1:50 Lunch

Session 3. 1:50 - 3:20
Angie Contini. “Between time and eternity: liminal modes for music and the human figure in film.”

Elena Sarno. “Surviving Immortality. A vampire’s perspective on living, play and survival strategies in Only Lovers Left Alive.”

Steven Burstow. “This Face, Here, Now: Moving Picture Portraiture.”

3:20 – 3:40 Afternoon tea

Session 4. 3:40 – 5:10 FILM SCREENING

George Franju Notre-Dame Cathedrale de Paris 1957.

The 2016 Sydney Film HDR Forum  
September 29th & 30th  

RC Mills Lecture Theatre 209  

Schedule  

Day 2  

Session 5.  11:00 – 12:30  
Tajna Biscic. “The Commodification of Balkan History: Alienating the Balkan Subaltern in Behind Enemy Lines.”  
Danica Jenkins. “Travelling in circles: The Balkan road movie as the new ‘epic’.”  
Alice Williams. “The Production of luck: the virtual and actual as fragments of social discourse.”  
12:30 – 1:20 Lunch  

Session 6.  1:20 – 2:50  
Keva York. “What do you call me?: Crispin Glover as Auteur.”  

2:50 – 3:10 Afternoon Tea  

Session 7.  3:10 - 4:40  
Alexsander Andreas Wansbrough. “A Melancholy Dane, German framings of Greek tragedy and Film-Studies; or how I stopped worrying (kind of) and submitted my thesis.”  
Close. 4:30 - 4:40
Eliza Waterhouse  
Department of Art History  
The University of Sydney  
No nationality listed: stateless film making in Israel and the case of *Villa Touma*

The transition of Palestinian film from a locally funded, small-scale production unit, to a cinema operating in globalized infrastructure, led to the phenomenon of Palestinian filmmakers working within Israeli infrastructure, creating films of liminal national standing, sometimes described as ‘stateless’. The globalized transition from a Third Cinema to a form of World Cinema gives rise to questions of how to reconcile the prefigured politics of Third Cinema with World Cinema’s institutions of production. Palestinian filmmakers working in Israel bring renewed urgency to such questions, given the institutions of Israeli film production are formed from the very hierarchical forces Palestine’s national movement struggles so forcefully to overcome.

Palestinians working in the infrastructure of Israeli cinema thus provide a microcosm for examining economic and ideological inequities forged in the new exchanges of globalized film cultures. Palestinian films of the interior manifest the strains of three factors: Whilst a film’s identity may be highly determined by its author, the means of its production are bound up with Israeli state funding, whilst its exhibition contexts are located primarily (although not exclusively) outside Israel and Palestine. In the highly politicized regional milieu, these criteria become competing forces that give rise to conflicts and crisis, both private and national. This paper explores the crisis and dilemmas of Palestinians working in Israel using Suha Arraf’s *Villa Touma* as a case study. I argue that the struggles over economic and national ownership conceal a deeper struggle, both for and against a de-colonizing visibility for Palestinians.
Sydney Film HDR Forum 2016
September 29th & 30th
Abstracts

Jyhene Kebsi
The Department of English
The University of Sydney
Gendered Global Narratives: Portraying Unauthorized Migration in Transnational World Literature and Cinema

I work on the representation of unauthorized immigration from the Arab world to Europe, North America and Australia. I explore Third World Arab women’s clandestine journeys to the global North. My study is centred upon the analysis of literary and cinematographic works that shed light on the movement of paperless Arab female citizens, or upon their stay in the countries of origin. The largest context for my research is the immigration narrative as a world literary and cinematographic genre because my theoretical model of transnational world literature is extended to include cinema. The literary and cinematic immigration narratives selected for my project represent border texts that exemplify a world transnational literature and cinema preoccupied with “the politics of the border” (Bennett and Tyler 33). I propose a paradigm of border-crossing world literature and film capable of illuminating the interactions between the geographic, political, demographic, economic and gendered entities of the current so-called global village. My dissertation underlines the contradiction between the unrestricted movement of commercial goods from the Northern zone to the South and the restrictions placed on the movement of people from Third-World countries to the developed world. My approach and methodology draw upon transnational feminism and globalization theories. My main argument is that Third World Arab women have to strive against the subordination generated by male domination, as well as against the poverty and the increased border regulation induced by globalization.
Media classification functions as a set of guidelines on what audiences can gain access to cultural products, and generally categorizes media through audience suitability based on age. In Australia, classification decisions are made by the Australian Classification Board, established in the interests of the public to facilitate the protection of minors. This paper is situated within a larger project engaged in international research into media classification systems as technologies for governing minority. Grealy and Driscoll (2015:63) underscore the utility of a concept of ‘minoritised adolescence’ within classification, based on protecting “minority” itself rather than individual minors’ (Driscoll and Grealy, 2014:97). This particular understanding of adolescence is accessed through the creation of the mutually dependent ‘reasonable adult’ (Grealy and Driscoll, 2014:89) by the Classification Board.

This paper will consider the ‘reasonable adult’ as designated by the R18+ rating, restricted to over-eighteens, through the theory of Foucault’s governmentality and in relation to different representations, using case-studies from the films of director Larry Clark and writer Harmony Korinne. These texts offer particular, and often controversial, representations of minority and adulthood. By mapping these representations onto the development of media classification in the 1990s and early 2000s, the continuing expectations of the citizen appear in relation to minority government according to anxieties around media consumption.
A word is a terrible thing to rely upon, and yet the entirety of human epistemology is shaped by our linguistic relationship to the external world. Human communication only assumes significance through manufactured division: language is based on a categorical separation – between referential signifiers and their corresponding signified referents. This paper will examine a particularly interesting fictional instance of an attempt to transcend a purely human subjectivity, in spite of the constraints of language itself. I’ll be considering Peter Watts’ short story “The Things” (2010); a subversive adaptation of John Carpenter’s cult science fiction/horror film The Thing (1982). Through an examination of the semiotics in both The Thing and “The Things”, I will consider the gap between representation and reality that underlies all language use. The respective texts will, ultimately, be considered as synecdochic examples of the problem of subjectivity that underlies all representational linguistic substrates.
Sydney Film HDR Forum 2016
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Abstracts

RC Mills Lecture Theatre 209

Stuart Cottle
Department of Art History and Film Studies,
The University of Sydney
The Language Lesson in the American West

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida advances a systematic critique of Rousseau’s philosophy of history, language and writing. It functions as the index of a larger issue—that of ‘the ethnographers’ nostalgia’—which he argues characterises all ‘Rousseauist’ thought, especially Levi-Strauss’ anthropology. This paper examines how this insight appears to be ratified in the Hollywood cinematic tradition that imagines colonial encounters with Native American peoples on the Western frontier. Surveying scenes from Malick’s *The New World* (2005), Beresford’s *Black Robe* (1991), Costner’s *Dances with Wolves* (1990) and Cameron’s *Avatar* (2009), it examines how figures of speech and writing are strategically inscribed into Hollywood visions of anthropological contact. It argues that each narrative is structured around a colonial emissary passing from a society characterized by writing, to one characterized by speech. Moreover, it is possible to see the reverse passage, from speech to writing, as the process by which the colonized subject is inducted into the very condition of ‘history’ itself. This paper will consider the extent to which a Rousseauist theory of the ‘perfidy of writing’ continues to subtly inflect a certain strain of the American cinematic imaginary.
Wyatt Moss-Wellington  
Department of English  
The University of Sydney  

Affecting Profundity: Cognitive Dissonance in Lynch, Loach, Linklater and Sayles  

Cognitive dissonance provides a model for understanding how we read film texts as profound. I look at the ways in which filmmakers might motivate or exploit the pleasure of resolving familiar narrative dissonance to inspire affect associated with profundity, sublimity, or transcendence. We can then ask what kind of variation there may be in the severity of mental stress induced, the familiarity of conventions of dissonance in art cinema, and the relative capacity of such conventions to inspire attitudinal or behavioral change in the viewer. I argue that the object of dissonance and upset matters, and can be centered on human or metaphysical problems.

After using David Lynch scholarship as a primary case study in the conflation of cognitive dissonance and transcendence (and in particular a trending focus on his motivation of spatial and temporal upset), I ask what other values his films transmit that are sublimated in the process. I then scrutinise some alternative moral dissonances in a range of different cinematic modes: problematized vigilantism in American revenge and “social cleansing” films, Ken Loach’s social realism, Richard Linklater’s Bernie and John Sayles’s Lone Star are all used to explore variability in the cognition of profundity, along with emergent theories of ethics and filmmaker responsibility.
Angie Contini
Department of Art History
The University of Sydney
Working title of thesis: Between time and eternity: liminal modes for music and the human figure in film

Upon which spiritual thresholds do music and the human figure in film meet? What makes this relation uniquely special for rethinking those existential problems which remain critical to both music and film theory, such as presence, restoration, death, memory, time, eternity, truth, desire, and meaning? Through the concept of liminality, I rethink this relation beyond the hierarchical, binary-ordered system of thought that founds the discipline of film music theory and which remains the dominant perception for this relation. I argue that the relation between music and the human figure in film is primordially existential, complex and unique, its theoretical scope yet to be broached as such. In two parts, I seek to articulate its meaningfulness as firstly a poetics of incertitude through the problem of presence, and secondly, as a pedagogy of feeling through the problem of absence.

Working across an archive of continental philosophy and anthropology, and focusing on experimental, avant-garde, art-house and early silent films, I attempt to articulate an ambivalent, aporetic and polymodal territory between and within music and the human figure in film through the modes of the ineffable, the uncanny, utopian desire, the sublime, magical metamorphoses, the grotesque, and the absurd. As irresolvably paradoxical forces that surge and thrive between music and the human figure, these modes problematise, rather than resolve, poetic relations between the time of the self, the finitude of death, the myth of immortality, and the erasure and re-creation of the soul in a world without God.
Elena Sarno
Film Studies
The University of Sydney
Surviving immortality. A vampire’s perspective on living, play and survival strategies in Only Lovers Left Alive.

The vampires in Only Lovers Left Alive (Jim Jarmusch, 2013), are unlikely cinematic vampires: they don’t kill to access blood, they are not incarnations of evil, no mortal is committed to destroying them and they are even lucky in love. They do feed on blood and they are, of course, immortal. This seems to be the problem. Adam (John Hiddlestone) is a relatively young vampire who has had enough of living. He is an immortal who struggles with surviving in this cruel world. Eve (Tilda Swinton) is an ancient vampire and Adam’s lover, her problem is that Adam is depressed and suicidal.

Most literature on play affirms that one of play’s constitutional identifiers, is that it is superfluous and autotelic. Engaging in play is constructive, even vital, but purposeless when it comes to satisfying biological and survival needs – such as procuring blood, if one is a hemovore.

I will discuss how Eve’s ability to never lose her lust for life, even in the face of continuing horrors, century after century and night after night, is based on transfiguring the concept of survival and using play as a candid, primordial and effective survival strategy. In parallel, I will consider if and how this film adopts a similar perspective in regards to the conventions of storytelling within cinematic realism, by playing with the narrative economy that follows the rules of causality and linear progression.
Stephen Burstow
The University of Sydney
This Face, Here, Now: Moving Image Portraiture

Moving image portraiture has demonstrated distinctive ways of understanding the self as constituted across time and through popular culture and regimes of surveillance and control. This survey of the genre examines the work of Candice Breitz, Rineke Dijkstra, David Rosetzky, Thomas Struth and Fiona Tan in relation to two reference points: Andy Warhol’s Screen Tests and a series of television interstitials, the SBS Face IDs. While the Screen Tests are seminal works in this genre, the Face IDs are employed in this context as they resist any interrogation of character, social typology or self-performance: they are all surface. This paper argues for the value of moving image portraiture that is intricately scripted, highly structured and socially engaged as well as work that is enticingly superficial.
Ivan Cerecina  
Film Studies  
The University of Sydney  
The Economics, Politics and Poetics of the Short Film in the French Fourth Republic, 1946-1958

My dissertation provides an historical account as well as a sustained aesthetic analysis of French short filmmaking in this period. I describe the economic factors influencing the restructuring of the French film industry in the post-war period and the effects of this reorganisation process on the production of short films. Drawing on these diverse currents of economic, cultural and aesthetic history, my dissertation aims to establish a survey of French short filmmaking in this period, particularly the important advances made in documentary film form. Once completed, it would be the first in-depth scholarly work in the English language on this neglected aspect of French film history.

Due to the lack of exposure that these films have received anywhere outside of France, I will be screening and introducing two short films that are representative of the aesthetic dynamism of short filmmaking in this period in French cinema: Mario Ruspoli’s Les hommes de la baleine [The Whale Men, 1956] and Georges Franju’s Notre-Dame, Cathédrale de Paris [1957]. This will be the first time either of these films have been screened outside of France in almost five decades, and their first ever screening in Australia.
When a young Bosniak male, in the 2001 Hollywood film *Behind Enemy Lines*, gushes about his love for both East Coast and West Coast rap, it juxtaposes against an earlier moment in the film when the commander of NATO’s naval forces concedes that he still cannot tell the difference between a Serb, Croat and a Bosniak. That a backward Balkan subject distinguishes factional nuances in a musical genre from a distant country whilst the man appointed charge of naval operations by the international community cannot distinguish between ethnicities in a region he has been stationed in for years, is a deeply subversive moment in an otherwise typical genre film. The moment reminds us how the Other is never allowed the same nuance in representation that is taken for granted in representations of the Western subject.

I define the Balkan subject as a subaltern, and argue that s/he is used by the West as a metaphor against which to make a statement about the ineffable pioneering spirit of the American individual. This reduction to metaphor does the work of abstracting Balkan history from its origins. In this case it is the Bosnian war that is reduced, as always, to a tribal ethnic hatred, abstracting from the politico-economic causes of it, that these people can only be saved from by the civilising force of the West.

Abstraction serves to alienate this subaltern from the capacity to access discourses about the very history that concerns them. Through an analytic model that merges Roland Barthes’ deconstruction of Mythologies and apparatus theory with its focus on technologies and their ideological effect on the spectator, I illustrate the alienation of this subaltern, and how the film *Behind Enemy Lines* does this so to commodify this history as a product entirely in the hands of the West.
Travelling in circles: The Balkan road movie as the new ‘epic’

In this paper, I explore how the ‘road movie’, a classic American cinematic genre born of the post-1945 automobile production boom and climate of post-war existential self-discovery, is rearticulated in the contemporary Balkan context as a means of coming to terms with the historical burden of ethnic conflict. In particular, I investigate how the causal relationship between time and space in the traditional road movie, which is associated with progress, self-knowledge and discovery, is called into question in the Balkan road movie, where the relationship between time and space is often shown to be circular. This narrative circularity corresponds to traditional “epic” understandings of time and conflict in Balkan history, where life is defined by repetition rather than progress. Importantly, however, I demonstrate that the circular conception of Balkan history has been forged over time as a means of making sense of the apparent perpetuity and irrationality of ethnic conflict in the region. I argue that this circularity is both confirmed and questioned in these films: neither Balkan circularity nor Western linearity resolves these problems.

While the Balkan ‘road movie’ can thus be read as a reinterpretation of the genre from within – it retains enough of the themes, forms and style to be able to be classified within the genre – it has, through the process of cultural translation, also created something new which reflects the Balkan cultural context. Hence the Balkan road movie is not simply a Balkan adaptation or cultural translation of the Western/American genre, but rather a hybrid form; an adaptation which suffuses the original with an inherently Balkan narrative based on the rhapsodic or epic poem. This marks the Balkan road movie as not merely a Balkan re-imagination of an existing American genre, but as a Balkan-specific variation of this cinematic genre in its own right.
Alice Williams
Department of Art History and Film
The University of Sydney
The production of luck: the virtual and actual as fragments of social discourse.

This paper briefly outlines the work I have completed so far on my dissertation and the direction of my research from this point on. It consists of two parts. The first part introduces the idea of luck through the anecdote of Ian Pidd’s work on the 2008 Jogja Festival with the Snuff Puppets Ramayana. Drawing on Pidd’s writing about the Ramayana’s unique relationship to Indonesian social and cultural life, it reflects on the lucky moment of that epic’s use to usher in social and political change in Suharto’s resignation in 1997. Through this anecdote it asks what are the qualities of cultural forms that persist through time and yet manage to speak the logic of contemporary moments, in ways that rational social discourses may not be able to? In the second part, this question is explored through the theatrical forms presented at the fifteenth session of the International School of Theatre Anthropology held in April 2016. It introduces this school as part of the practical context in which I have elaborated my research. Exploring the question of the relationship between theatrical forms and daily life at the symposium, this discussion takes in the ideas of cultural dna, anecdote and “organicity” that arose through the school’s work demonstrations, performances, lecture presentations and practical training sessions. These ideas are contextualised within the ongoing interest of scholarly discussions of theatre anthropology in the resilience and evolution of theatrical forms. The topic of learning to learn, which was used at ISTA as the heading for our daily training sessions, will be used to briefly outline what this research has to offer to the notion of luck in an Australian cultural context, which is the endpoint of my PhD research.
“What do you call me?”: Crispin Glover as Auteur

The two completed films in Crispin Hellion Glover’s ‘I$t’ trilogy are part of a conflicted and ambitious multimedia project that succeeds in extending his auteur status from the realm of acting to that of directing. I analyse these films and the events at which they are screened as reactions to the neo-conservative turn in 1980s Hollywood. I outline Glover’s project – the content of the films and the unique mode in which they are distributed – and place it in the context of his career as an actor in Hollywood. Namely, I align his longstanding reputation for eccentricity with the overt strangeness of the films at hand (generally where the paucity of criticism on Glover’s films begins and ends). I argue for a more subtle critical approach that takes into account the conflicts that arise in trying to categorize Glover’s directorial work, which is both deeply anachronistic and contemporary, both elitist and populist, and both an art and business venture. It is furthermore resistant to documentation – and I run through the practical barriers to access that Glover has erected. These contradictions and difficulties of access/interpretation contribute to a portrait of Glover as an auteur in the traditional sense of the term.
Olivia Oliver-Hopkins
Department of Art History
The University of Sydney
Letting the Dead Speak in *The Haunting in Connecticut 2: Ghosts of Georgia* (2013)

Supernatural horror films frequently feature entities which have transcended death, existing outside or beyond it, and certain of these entities return to attempt to redress a wrong from their human lives or warn another who is in danger of which the entity often has knowledge from his/her human life. Hence, films featuring these entities suggest a longing for and a means to construct a history of those who in their life were silenced. In reading Tom Elkins’ *The Haunting in Connecticut 2: Ghosts of Georgia* (2013) through a lens incorporating the work of critics such as Sharon Patricia Holland and anthropologists studying African cultures such as John S. Mbiti and Harriet Ngubane, I argue that allowing the dead to speak not only undermines trenchant Western rationalist notions of the boundaries of existence but utilises traditional African conceptions of time to reconstruct a past and hence add to a sense of purpose and identity for African-American communities. I expand upon this to argue against the pathologizing discourses of disability in Western medical thinking in order to embrace alternate worldviews, and explore the importance of memory in constructing suppressed histories as well as blurring the boundaries between the living and the dead.
Representations of women in crime fiction have developed far from the femme fatales and headless Jane Doe carcasses of Golden Age detective cinema, into some of the most recognisable and popular characters in crime television today. Coming into its own Golden Age, television foregrounding female characters as detectives, amateur sleuths, assault survivors and PI’s such as Homeland, The Killing, The Bridge, Broadchurch, Jessica Jones, Vera and more recently, Stranger Things have flooded the market creating a glut of quality feminist television, each show struggling to stand out from the “Get ‘em girl!” crowd.

Jane Campion’s series Top of the Lake, released on the Sundance channel, stands out as a blatantly feminist show, as does Jenji Kohan’s Orange is the New Black on Netflix, and Alan Cubitt’s The Fall from Ireland’s RTE, all made in 2013. All three shows explore a very particular kind of closed local community, focusing on the teenage, menopausal and traumatic secrets of women and their relation to the complex nature of contemporary feminism. The shows expands a wide range of theoretic ephemera, including parafeminism, postfeminism and popfeminism, all trained on the show’s representations of middle-aged women, teenagers and those strung somewhere in between.

Given the incredible glut of both quality feminist television and its criticism, this paper will conduct a close reading of Top of the Lake, The Fall and Orange is the New Black and their varying concepts of feminism, contextualizing it with reference to the debates on parafeminism, reparative reading and identity that have engaged criticism in regards to feminist auteurs.
Sydney Film HDR Forum 2016
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Abstracts
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Nima Sotoudeh
Master of Philosophy
The University of Sydney
Cinema lives: film criticism in the digital age

Film criticism has been a part of film industry for more than a century since the early years of cinema. In today’s technological world however, film critics find themselves at a complicated state. With first radio and then television, becoming ubiquitous presences in people’s homes, culture was united in the limited number of options available, creating a small number of widely shared cultural reference points. As the influence of cable television and then the Internet started to grow, the number of cultural reference points became comparatively larger and less widely shared. This has extremely wide-ranging implications, but where film criticism is concerned, it has made it more complex than ever before.

These developments have brought up serious questions regarding the purpose and worth of film criticism in the age of bloggers, YouTubers and Twitter feeds. Most of such academic discussions tend to focus on the downside of current trends and rarely on the benefits of digital / online movie culture. Film criticism is an ever evolving skill and is just beginning to receive serious scholar attention. This thesis will concentrate on the bright side of modern approaches to film criticism, with a certain focus on new media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter and Rotten Tomatoes.
Aleksander Andreas Wansbrough  
Sydney College of the Arts  
The University of Sydney  

A Melancholy Dane, German framings of Greek tragedy and Film-Studies; or how I stopped worrying (kind of) and submitted my thesis

My thesis was submitted this year to Sydney College of the Arts. SCA afforded me the freedom to pursue an ambitious project that did not fit within much of contemporary art theory. Using a conception of tragedy derived from late 18th Century German Romanticism, I investigated the difficult question of whether the art form of tragedy could have a metaphysical meaning in a contemporary context by focusing on the films of Lars von Trier. My aim was to offer a response to the theorists and philosophers who have asserted the impossibility of contemporary tragedy which has been tied to the decline of metaphysical structures and to do so on their terms. While other philosophers and literary theorists from Raymond Williams onwards have sought to claim that tragedy as an art form can still exist, they tend to do so by asserting that tragedy has no necessary metaphysical connotation. Rather than debating whether tragedy has to be metaphysical, my thesis argues that even metaphysical conceptions of narrativized suffering can be found in contemporary cinema. Indeed, my claim is that von Trier examines in his films the metaphysical questions of Fate, Being, Freedom and Nature (the nature that links the world to the human subject) and that such themes are explored through the intense suffering of his protagonists. As such, his films conveyed themes that can be found in German Romantic theories of tragedy that can be traced back to F.W.J. Schelling and which remain relevant in literary studies and continental philosophy. Given lack of analysis of tragedy in film-studies, my thesis belongs in the hybrid field of film-philosophy. My research necessarily traversed film studies, continental philosophy and literary theory. Such an enquiry had to confront the death of God, the frequently professed death of art and a postmodern scepticism of grand narratives. This paper will examine my thesis titled Lars von Trier as Tragedian and the difficulties of being stuck between these fields and yet attempting to adhere to their standards of research.