

Workshop : Film Museums and Cinematic Exhibition

Rafał Syska, Jagiellonian University in Kraków

19th November 2025, Department of Film Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, room P429

Lectures: 9:10-10:40; 10:50-12:20

Seminar session: 12:30-14:00

Participation is mandatory in all 3 sessions. To pass the exam you need to actively participate in the seminar/workshop session and submit elaborated written version of your exhibition design (by 30th November, 2025).

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The lectures will address the phenomenon of film museums and the presence of cinematic techniques and narrations within the exhibitionary space. The course will be divided into three main parts.

The first will trace the history of film's appearance in the exhibitionary context, beginning with the *exhibitionary complex*, world's fairs, and industrial exhibitions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, followed by the emergence of science and technology museums, in which the film medium quickly became one of the most widely used. This historical trajectory will lead to an examination of the presence of film and post-cinematic techniques in contemporary narrative, educational, performative, and multimedia exhibitions. Selected case studies—such as the House of Terror (*Terror Háza Múzeum*) in Budapest and the *Harry Potter Exhibition*—will serve to illustrate how cinema manifests itself both in exhibitions devoted to its heritage and in those where film functions primarily as a narrative tool or as an instrument intensifying the persuasive dimension of space.

The second lecture will focus on the institutionalization of the film museum, which—from the collections of the Smithsonian Institution, through the first exhibition at the Science Museum in London, first state film archives, and Henri Langlois's pioneering projects at the Cinémathèque Française—evolved into the museum boom of the 1980s. During this period, model institutions were established, such as the Museum of the Moving Image in New York, the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford, and the Deutsches Filmmuseum in Frankfurt. On the basis of these institutions, as well as other prominent museums in Beijing, Amsterdam, Los Angeles, Łódź, Lyon, Girona, Düsseldorf, and Mumbai, I will discuss the fundamental characteristics of such institutions and the ontological challenges they confront. I will also propose a typology of film museums, distinguishing four categories: archives, objects, processes, and screens. Key features of the film museum as an institution—collections, film archives, permanent exhibitions, spaces for temporary displays, screening rooms, libraries, cafés, and areas for relaxation and encounters with artists—will also be outlined.

The workshop component will involve a **practical exercise**: the creation of a film exhibition project developed from scratch on a chosen theme. For this purpose, we will design a monographic exhibition devoted to Quentin Tarantino (selected due to the filmmaker's broad cultural recognition). Together, we will construct the narrative of the visitor's pathway, define exhibition forms and the identity of the space, identify the target audience, and propose accompanying events to complement the exhibition experience.