

**SERCIA Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
Thursday September 9, 2010, Besançon, France**

**Committee:** President: Melvyn STOKES; Vice-President: Penny STARFIELD; Treasurer: Raphaëlle COSTA DE BEAUREGARD; Assistant Treasurer: Zachary BAQUÉ; Secretary: David ROCHE; Assistant Secretary: Christophe CHAMBOST

**Session reporters:** Zachary BAQUÉ, Christophe CHAMBOST and David ROCHE

**30 members present at the beginning, 32 at the end:** Danièle ANDRÉ, Jean-François BAILLON, Stéphanie BENSON, Trudy BOLTER, Yves CARLET, Petra CHRISTOV-BAKARGIEV, Nicole CLOAREC, Alain COHEN, Anne CRÉMIEUX, Xavier DAVERAT, Wendy EVERETT, Andrea GRUNERT, Jean-Marie LECOMTE, Delphine LETORT, Paula LEVERAGE, Anne-Lise MARIN-LAMELLET, Frank MEHRING, Nolwenn MINGANT, Gilles MENEGALDO, Philippe MORICE, Jaqueline MORICEAU, Céline MURILLO, Gabriel PALETZ, Anne-Marie PAQUET-DEYRIS, Anne PAUPE, Philippe ROGER, Zeenat SALEH, Isabelle SCHMITT-PITOT, Isabelle SINGER, Dominique SIPIÈRE, Suzette TANIS-PLANT, Sina VATANPOUR

**1 proxy:** Elena VON KASSEL

**1. MINUTES of the 2009 SERCIA annual general meeting in Nanterre**

Melvyn Stokes opened the general meeting, introducing the minutes in French and English of the 2009 SERCIA annual general meeting in Nanterre.

**2. Matters arising**

At last year's meeting, Jean-François Baillon brought up the question of organising SERCIA elections in years when the conference took place abroad. Having discussed the issue since, the committee believes that, for one, SERCIA has become an international conference, and that the problem could be dealt with by sending the notification for the annual meeting along with the proxy form three to four weeks in advance. Moreover, the next elections will be in 2012 in Dijon. The committee might consider giving financial aid to PhD candidates so they can attend SERCIA conferences taking place abroad. Trudy Bolter suggested that SERCIA conferences could take place in Paris more often. Melvyn Stokes stated that he did not believe that this would be practical, if one looks at how few people attend the AFEA's autumn meeting.

**3. President's report**

Melvyn Stokes mentioned various ongoing collaborations with SCMS (Society for Cinema and Media Studies) and suggested that SERCIA should attempt to collaborate with NECS (European Network for Cinema and Media Studies) in Germany in the future. He then informed members that the first issue of *Film Journal*, SERCIA's e-journal, had just been put on-line and several articles, which have been reviewed by two readers each, could be read. But the journal is not yet in its definitive form: the articles will be converted to PDF and a logo and a heading will be added. Melvyn Stokes also reminded members that SERCIA had a new website which was bilingual and much more user-friendly. He then added that he had taken advantage of the publication of his BFI book on *Gilda* to mention SERCIA on the back cover as *the* European film studies organisation.

Finally, Melvyn Stokes thanked Zeenat Saleh and Philippe LaPlace for their excellent work in organising the 15th SERCIA conference in Besançon.

Zeenat Saleh warmly thanked David Roche and the Université de Bourgogne, Dijon, for the 1,500 E given by the Centre Interlangues which enabled the organisers to offer Thursday's dinner to all participants.

#### **4. Treasurer's report**

Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard drew attention to the problem concerning the mandates the French Postal Bank had lost. As a consequence, it was not possible to start automatic payments in 2010. So this year's membership would have to be paid by cheque as usual. Moreover, most of the proxies for the 2010 annual meeting were made redundant by this. For legal reasons, it is not possible to vote if you have not paid your membership.

Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard listed the various ways in which membership payments were put to use. First, they help SERCIA organise conferences, although organisers always use grants from their research centres first. When the research centre can cover all expenses, then SERCIA has nothing to pay for (this was the case in Toulouse in 2007). According to Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard, a SERCIA conference costs approximately 5,000 E. These conferences are essential in promoting the association and increasing its visibility. It also gives PhD candidates the opportunity to give talks and test out their work *en cours* among confirmed researchers.

Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard said that expenses for the conferences in Bath and Dijon (2011 and 2012) were already accounted for and that SERCIA was left with 4,221 E. She reminded the members present that we did not yet know what the various grants coming from Bath and Dijon would amount to.

Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard added that, up to now, SERCIA funds were put in a Livret A. This Livret A had been cancelled and now all the money is in a checking account.

The SERCIA budget was **approved unanimously** by a show of hands.

Petra Christov-Bakargiev noted that automatic transfers were very expensive and that it was cheaper to write out a cheque. Anne Paupe pointed out that automatic transfers and direct debits were two completely different operations, and that transfers were indeed very expensive. Zachary Baqué confirmed this and said he would ask Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris, treasurer of the AFEA, about the direct debit system used by the AFEA. Céline Murillo asked whether direct debit was compulsory and said that the committee of APLIUT was against such compulsory payments because they wanted each member to feel involved in the association symbolically. For Gilles Menegaldo, direct debit is undoubtedly the simplest solution. David Roche reminded the meeting that last year the members present had voted that direct debit would be introduced as a possibility for members, not as an obligation.

#### **5. Elections for the Committee**

David Roche said that all present members of the committee wished to stand for re-election, except for the treasurer, Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard. Céline Murillo was the only candidate for the vacant post.

Melvyn Stokes said he wanted further to contribute to developing SERCIA's international network and that he was very pleased that the next conference would take place in Bath, England. He added that he would do his best to make sure that film studies continued to be a dynamic field.

Trudy Bolter asked if it would not save time to vote for the committee as a group, but Gilles Menegaldo indicated that we were legally bound to vote anonymously for the president and the vice-president, and for the treasurer, too, since this was a first-time candidacy. Zachary Baqué confirmed Gilles Menegaldo's statement.

Zeenat Saleh remarked that the convocation was sent a little late, which Melvyn Stokes apologised for. Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard noted that anyone could stand for candidate up

to the start of the AG. Jean-François Baillon said that this was clearly stated in the notification for the annual meeting. Gilles Menegaldo agreed.

Melvyn Stokes was **re-elected president** with 30 votes, 0 abstentions, and 0 against.

Penny Starfield explained she would do her best to contribute to SERCIA's reputation at an international level, including promoting the participation of SERCIA members in international conferences like EAAS (European Association for American Studies).

Penny Starfield was **re-elected vice-president** with 29 votes, 1 abstention and 0 against.

Céline Murillo said she would like to follow in her worthy predecessor's footsteps. She was determined to simplify membership payment by implementing a direct debit system.

Céline Murillo was **elected treasurer** with 30 votes, 0 abstentions and 0 against.

Melvyn Stokes warmly thanked Raphaëlle Costa de Beaugard for all work she had done as a committee member since she co-founded SERCIA.

Zachary Baqué stood for assistant treasurer, David Roche for secretary, and Christophe Chambost for assistant secretary. They were **re-elected unanimously** by a show of hands.

## 6. Publications

Gilles Menegaldo reminded the members present that *Generic Attractions: New Essays on Film Genre Criticism*, edited by Maria del Mar Azcona and Celestino Deleyto, was published by Michel Houdiard this summer. The book is made up of articles that were presented at the conference in Jaca, Spain, in 2008. It is the first SERCIA book to be written entirely in English.

Gilles Menegaldo explained that the delay concerning the SERCIA conference in Bologna, 2006, was partly due to Franco La Polla's unfortunate death. Nevertheless, the articles have been assembled and the book should be published in late 2010 or early 2011. The book will include articles in French and English and will also be published by Michael Houdiard. The articles will be read by members of the committee and by other volunteers.

Zeenat Saleh asked whether Michel Houdiard had a reading committee. Gilles Ménégaldo explained they did not, which is why readings by SERCIA members were so crucial.

Dominique Sipièrè said that Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris and he had received 45 articles in English and in French following the 2009 SERCIA conference in Nanterre. Several possibilities were currently under consideration: either a paper version financed by the Université Paris-Ouest, or an on-line publication, either on the university website (possibly in collaboration with the CNRS) or as an issue of *Film Journal*. Nanterre is willing to pay 3,000 E for the publication. Raphaëlle Costa de Beaugard reminded members that SERCIA could also co-finance the publication. Gilles Menegaldo agreed, saying that SERCIA had given 3,200 E for *Generic Attractions*. However, Anne Crémieux and Dominique Sipièrè thought that Nanterre might frown on a co-publication and that they would have to make do with the 3,000 E. Gilles Menegaldo emphasised that Michel Houdiard did excellent work.

The book that will follow the Besançon conference will most likely also be published by Michel Houdiard. The articles should be sent by April 1, 2011, to Zeenat Saleh and Melvyn Stokes. The style-sheet will be sent shortly. There will be a reading committee to assess the quality of the papers.

## 7. Conferences

The 16th SERCIA conference in Bath, Thursday September 8 to Saturday Sept. 10, 2011

Wendy Everett presented the city of Bath and its university. The theme for the 16th SERCIA conference is "Cinema and the crossing of frontiers." Dominique Sipièrè wondered whether the cost of lodging in the city of Bath might be a little expensive. Finding on-campus lodging might be a solution. Gilles Menegaldo agreed and emphasised that it might be cheaper for Ph.D. candidates to seek lodging in dorms. (This was the case in Lancaster for the

International Gothic Association conference in 2009.) Wendy Everett admitted it was a possibility she would look into, but stated that dorm rooms were sometimes just as expensive as Bed and Breakfasts downtown. She said there was also a very pleasant youth hostel near the campus.

#### The 17th SERCIA conference in Dijon, 2012

David Roche said that the 17th SERCIA in Dijon would probably take place around September 10 as well. The theme is “Cinema of intimacy and/or the intimacy of cinema.”

Melvyn Stokes reminded the members present that the 2010 SERCIA conference took place in Besançon because it had not proved possible to organise the proposed conference in Greece. It would be interesting to try to organise the 2013 conference in Berlin or in Prague, especially since Frank Mehring and Gabriel Paletz were present at Besançon and might be interested. Alain Cohen said it would be possible to organise a conference at San Diego (at the University of California, San Diego) and that purchasing tickets well in advance would considerably reduce the price of plane fare.

Xavier Daverat made a proposal for organising the 2014 conference at Bordeaux IV, which is a law school. The theme could be on the lines of “Contracts on film,” and contract could be interpreted in a variety of ways. Melvyn Stokes suggested that the members present vote that the 2014 conference take place in Bordeaux if SERCIA managed to organise a conference abroad in 2013. Otherwise, it could take place in 2013.

Melvyn Stokes’s proposal, that the conference would take place at Bordeaux IV in 2014, unless there was no proposal for a conference abroad in 2013, in which case the 2013 conference would take place in Bordeaux, was **voted unanimously** by a show of hands.

Frank Mehring said that Berlin would indeed be an appealing possibility for the 2013 SERCIA conference. Berlin is known for its rich archives and film culture and SERCIA members would surely find many treasures there for their own research. Financing the conference via the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, a branch of the Free University of Berlin, would not be a problem. Frank Mehring stated that he could not definitely propose such a project for 2013 as yet, since there was a possibility he might be employed somewhere else by then. The members present were nevertheless very much enthused by the idea of a conference in Berlin and so Frank Mehring said he would ask other tenured members of faculty whether they might be interested. Stéphanie Benson said she knew people in Berlin who might be interested in working on this project.

#### **8. *Film Journal***

Melvyn Stokes said that SERCIA’s e-journal was practically ready (one article still needed to be reviewed), but it should be possible to add articles after the journal’s official publication. Melvyn Stokes emphasised the importance of peer-reviewing in this day and age, which is why he had asked Jean-François Baillon, Nicole Cloarec and Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris to join the reading committee. With the advice of the SERCIA committee, he would be inviting others to participate as well.

Penny Starfield suggested the following theme for the next edition of *Film Journal*: “Youth in American Cinema,” based on the workshop she co-organised at the EAAS in Dublin, 2010. Perhaps other volumes could be based on workshops organised at the SAES and the AFEA.

Gilles Menegaldo then mentioned the ESSE conference (European Society for the Study of English) in Istanbul, 2012. Members could propose a workshop there along with a volume of *Film Journal*.

Jean-François Baillon pointed out that a volume called “Youth in American Cinema” would once again give the impression that SERCIA only focused on American film. Penny Starfield

said it was possible to change the title in order to make room for other English-speaking cultures. Melvyn Stokes said a volume devoted to American film was nevertheless a possibility. Gilles Menegaldo said he agreed with Jean-François Baillon and said it might be possible to propose a second volume on “Youth in Non-American Cinema.” Jean-François Baillon underlined that this was risky business, considering that there are fewer scholars working on English-speaking cinema that is not American. For Penny Starfield, *Film Journal*, like SERCIA, must be open to all English-speaking cinema.

### **9. Website and Message List**

David Roche was pleased to announce that the SERCIA website had been redesigned by Jacques Lerognon, a friend of Stéphanie Benson, both of whom he wanted to thank. However, the website does not yet have a members’ database. As designing one is a lot of work, David Roche suggested members vote whether or not they thought such a database was useful, and if so, that SERCIA was willing to pay Jacques Lerognon 350 E to design it.

The members present **voted unanimously** for this proposal by a show of hands.

As some members had suggested that the mailing list should be replaced by a newsletter, David Roche wanted to get the members’ feeling about this. David Roche admitted he preferred the mailing list, which was easier to deal with both for the webmaster and for the members who could delete messages just by reading the title. Gilles Menegaldo said he thought it might be interesting to create a newsletter in the future, but that it would not replace the mailing list.

The members present **voted unanimously** in favour of maintaining the mailing list by a show of hands.

### **10. Any other business**

Melvyn Stokes said it was important to work closely with CICLAHO and AFECCA, and considered it was essential to try to work with SCMS as well. Indeed, the latter association is organising a conference in Boston, in March 2012. Proposals must be sent by September 1, 2011. Melvyn Stokes encouraged SERCIA members to do so.

Melvyn Stokes then warmly thanked Zeenat Saleh for all the energy she put into the organisation of the 15th SERCIA conference. He also congratulated Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard for all her efforts since the beginning of SERCIA in 1993.