

**MINUTES OF THE SERCIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY,  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2015, ARRAS, FRANCE**

**COMMITTEE:** President : Jean-François BAILLON ; Vice-President : David ROCHE ; Treasurer : Céline MURILLO; Assistant Treasurer: Nicole CLOAREC; Secretary: Isabelle SCHMITT; Assistant Secretary: Zachary BAQUÉ; Relations with other organizations, associations and institutions: Anne-Marie PAQUET-DEYRIS; Mailing list: Stephanie BENSON (excused)

**SECRETARIES:** Isabelle SCHMITT and Zachary BAQUÉ

**PRESENT MEMBERS:** Sabrina BOUAROUR, Jean-Baptiste CHANTOISEAU, Hélène CHARLERY, Myriam CHATOT, Alain J.J. COHEN, Raphaëlle COSTA DE BEAUREGARD, Xavier DAVERAT, Emmanuelle DELANOË-BRUN, Celestino DELEYTO, Phillip DRUMMOND, Claire DUTRIAUX, Kevin DWYER, Georges-Claude GUILBERT, Ariane HUDELET, Marie-Pierre HUILLET, Charles JOSEPH, Marianne KAC-VERGNE, Yola LE CAÏNEC, Isabelle LE CORFF, Delphine LETORT, Stella LOUIS, Gilles MENEGALDO, Julie MICHOT, Nolwenn MINGANT, Elizabeth MULLEN, Anne PAUPE, Elise PEREIRA NUNES, Dominique SIPIÈRE, Penny STARFIELD, Yvonne TASKER, Taina TUKHUNEN, Justin WADLOW

**PROXIES:** Fatima CHINITA, Christophe GELLY, Grégoire HALBOUT, Patricia KRUTH, Anne-Lise MARIN-LAMELLET, Cristelle MAURY, Yann ROBLOU, Brigitte TROYE-SAINT-GEORGES, Zeenat SALEH.

The General Assembly is opened at 9:10 by Jean-François Baillon, who explains that the session will be conducted in English.

### **1. MINUTES OF 2014 CONFERENCE**

The first order of business is the approval of the minutes of last year's conference in Nijmegen. No objection is raised. Jean-François Baillon suggests that the vote be made by show of hands. Two members do not take part in the vote. The minutes are adopted.

### **2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Jean-François Baillon begins by paying tribute to Melvyn Stokes as former president and the co-organizer of last year's conference. It attracted many international participants and is already one of the memorable pages in the history of SERCIA.

This year's conference is already a success and Jean-François Baillon thanks the organizers, everyone who helped in the organization, the students, and those who offered technical support. He is struck by the attraction SERCIA is managing to draw on many film scholars from different generations and other parts of the world, as proved by an increase in membership. Furthermore, SERCIA has been present and active in its partner societies like SAES (*Société des Anglicistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur*) and AFEA (*Association Française d'Études Américaines*) and has participated in other conferences, such as Isabelle Tréard's in Angers, the one organized by Gilles Menegaldo and Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris on the Hammer Studio, and the phenomenally successful conference organized by Melvyn Stokes in London on *Birth of a Nation*.

Jean-François Baillon explains, as one of the few downsides, that some partnerships could be improved, notably with SCMS (Society for Cinema and Media Studies). If some individual members have managed to enter the fortress, it has not been the case at a collective level.

He then describes some new perspectives for SERCIA. The relationship with SAES concerning the *agrégation concours* seems to have improved. SAES is now supportive of SERCIA's plea to have more interesting and varied films to study, as evidenced by a meeting last June in Toulon.

SAES has launched a general study of research with the intent of publishing a survey. The presidents of every society had to answer online questions about the situation of their respective societies. For SERCIA, the answers showed that we were doing serious, legitimate research and that we were improving.

The SERCIA website has been repeatedly hacked but this problem seems to have been solved for a fairly reasonable time. Thanks to Penny Starfield's great job, *Film Journal* has been progressing rapidly in the past 12 months and several issues are in preparation.

As a conclusion, Jean-François Baillon says that SERCIA is now a very mature society thanks to the influence of all members and all past presidents and members of the committee and that suggestions about a few new issues should be further discussed.

### 3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Céline Murillo is happy to note that membership is on the rise. However, she regrets that the use of direct debit is not on the rise. Only a minority of members actually uses it. She thus encourages all members who have not already done it, to give her their bank statements and to fill in the very simple form.

She then presents the account of SERCIA, which has a stable balance. Expenditures include maintaining *Film Journal* and the site, as well as the support of conferences bearing the SERCIA logo. It may look as if the association had a lot of money in the bank but Céline explains that part of that sum is already committed. Marianne Kac-Vergne wonders about the publication of the Bath conference as this may create uncertainties about the final sums in SERCIA's account. Jean-François Baillon adds that the same remark could be made about this year's conference and suggests that these are all prudent numbers.

Céline Murillo explains why there are different figures for the various publications. She reminds everyone that last year, it was decided that SERCIA would give € 1000 for the actual conference and € 1000 for the subsequent publication. David Roche explains that in the past bigger sums, which the association was not necessarily ready to give, used to be promised. On the contrary, now, the figures represent exactly the amount that SERCIA will give.

Céline Murillo clarifies the work of the assistant treasurer, a position now held by Nicole Cloarec: she will be in charge of membership fees.

The SERCIA budget is then put to the vote and is unanimously approved.

### 4. RENEWAL OF TWO COMMITTEE POSITIONS

Jean-François announces that two positions are up for votes: the webmaster and the person in charge of relations with other institutions or societies.

Up until the general assembly, Stéphanie Benson, who could not attend the conference in Arras, was the webmaster but she does not wish to remain in charge. Jean-François Baillon officially thanks Stéphanie in the name of all SERCIA members for not only doing

her job (sending messages) but also for finding the person who helped solve the hacking problem (Jacques Lerognon, whom Stéphanie knew to be technically qualified). He then announces that he received Julie Assouly's official letter of candidacy, which is unanimously accepted by show of hands.

As for the relation with other institutions, Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris wishes to remain in charge. Her candidacy is unanimously accepted by show of hands.

## 5. FILM JOURNAL

Penny Starfield, editor of *Film Journal*, explains that the articles of next two issues of *Film Journal* (one on "Railway and Locomotive Language in Film" and the other entitled "Terms that Matter: Naming and Labeling in Film") are going through the reviewing process and will be online in the next 6-8 months. A new call for papers on "Screening the Supernatural" has gone out already. The delay can be explained by the new design of the website. Originally, *Film Journal* was published on the University College London website, where the first two issues can still be read. Now, *Film Journal* will be published on an independent website.

Penny Starfield then encourages members to submit proposals as guest editors for future issues, as well as book reviews and occasional papers. The guidelines for formatting texts are available on the UCL website. Each article is peer-reviewed twice. Penny specifies that the reviewers of the reading committee will be mentioned on the website once the new design is finalized. All proposals should be sent to the editor at: [penny.starfield@gmail.com](mailto:penny.starfield@gmail.com) and [filmjournal.sercia@gmail.com](mailto:filmjournal.sercia@gmail.com).

She then proceeds to describe the nature and role of the current editorial board. When *Film Journal* was created, the editing work was done by three co-editors (Melvyn Stokes, Gilles Menegaldo, and Penny Starfield). It then moved to a single editor in chief, with Penny first being elected in 2012. Last year, it was decided that the editor would be a joined by an assistant editor. The question remained as to whether the editor in chief would be a member of the SERCIA committee. Penny feels that, as an academic journal, *Film Journal* should have a more supple way of functioning. Obviously, this could be changed in the future as *Film Journal* evolves.

Penny Starfield then discusses future changes in the functioning of *Film Journal* and its new design. *Film Journal's* current editorial board (composed of past and present presidents of SERCIA) will become an editorial committee and will be consulted on scientific matters, such as appointments and issue proposals. She also mentions that *Film Journal* has an international advisory board, which may be referred to on scientific matters. Penny Starfield finally suggests that two new editorial positions be created: an editor of book reviews and an editor of occasional papers. They would be part of what will now be called the editorial board, composed of the editor in chief, the assistant editor and these two new positions. Positions are renewable on a 2-year basis, the conditions of which will depend on *Film Journal's* new functioning. An official recruitment announcement will be announced shortly.

Marianne Kac-Vergne asks how the editorial assistant was chosen and whether SERCIA would have a say in the selection of members of the editorial board. Penny Starfield replies that she is still working on the functioning of technicalities and that members of the editorial board all have to be members of SERCIA. Furthermore, SERCIA will be present through the editorial committee whose members are past and present SERCIA presidents. Jean-François Baillon explains that the decision was made last year in Nijmegen. The editorial committee would have to vet and approve all candidacies that

would then be voted by the general assembly, which would give the whole process full transparency. Raphaëlle Costa de Beauregard feels that it is still quite unclear how independent *Film Journal* should be. She feels that to ensure a degree of independence and so that the journal is not only a product of SERCIA, *Film Journal* should not be entirely ruled by SERCIA members.

Penny Starfield says that all calls for papers are sent out internationally. David Roche encourages members to read what was said last year in the minutes of the last conference. Marianne Kac-Vergne then asks if *Film Journal* will be published on the SERCIA website. Penny Starfield replies that it will be published on its own website but that it would have a link to the SERCIA website. The full http address is not available yet. Penny Starfield is warmly thanked by Jean-François Baillon in the name of all SERCIA members.

Jean-François Baillon then asks members to vote on a new point in the SERCIA constitution: the creation of the position of assistant editor and how s/he is recruited. The general assembly gives its unanimous approval. Jean-François Baillon clarifies that new constitutional changes will be put to the vote next year.

It is then asked to vote on Fabrice Lyczba's candidacy with the following result: with the exception of one member who does not wish to take part in the vote, Fabrice Lyczba is approved by the general assembly.

More information being asked for, Fabrice Lyczba is presented: he works on the silent period, has attended SERCIA conferences in the past, is a *Maître de Conférences* at Paris Dauphine and has some experience with online journals. Marianne Kac-Vergne suggests that applications be announced on the mailing list. David Roche replies that vacant positions are already announced on the mailing list but not necessarily the applications. He says that SERCIA should make a point of doing it in the future. Once things have been made clear for everyone, Fabrice Lyczba's candidacy is once again put to the vote and receives unanimous approval.

Jean-François asks the general assembly whether the change in the constitution (the creation of two new editorial positions) should be put to the vote next year. Someone asks if editors and assistant editors are automatically elected members of the SERCIA committee. Jean-François Baillon replies that he feels they shouldn't for two reasons: first, because it would violate the present constitution, second, because it wouldn't guarantee the independence of *Film Journal*. David Roche adds that the committee looked into what other associations were doing. Elizabeth Mullen wonders what would happen if a member of the SERCIA committee decided to run to be editor. David Roche replies that this person should resign from the committee as it's impossible to do both at the same time. Penny Starfield explains that it has already happened in the past when she was Vice President and editor in chief of *Film Journal*. David Roche explains that this had been the case at the time because *Film Journal* was just starting and so it was a transitional period of sorts. Now everything is clarified. Alain J.J. Cohen feels that SERCIA is autonomous and should not copy what other institutions do as SERCIA can very well set its own models. Jean-François Baillon replies that the point is not to mimic what other associations are doing but that their model was actually working very well. His proposition that the editor and the assistant editor should not be part of the SERCIA committee is approved by the assembly, with the exception of one member who does not wish to take part in the vote.

## 6. WEBSITE

Two years ago, the SERCIA website was hacked. A solution was found and the website underwent a major redesign. Last summer, the website was hacked once again. The

problem has now been solved. The list of members was taken out of the website because it is believed that it was hacked through that list. There is now a basic alphabetical list of names to which hyperlinks can be added.

## 7. RELATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris begins by mentioning the complicated relation with SCMS. Melvyn Stokes started something with the intent of establishing a formal partnership but SERCIA's collective effort to attend the conference has been unfruitful. Anne-Marie wishes that a later SERCIA committee meeting discuss the possibility to have a SERCIA representative sent there (either at this year's conference in Atlanta or at the one next year).

Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris then announces that she will attend a meeting on September 11 at Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle, organized by Françoise Bort, head of the *agrégation* jury. The purpose of that meeting, to which associations such as AFEA and SERCIA have been invited, is to discuss how the program can be chosen. The main problem for SERCIA has been that the program has included almost exactly the same type of film for the past ten years, mostly costume dramas adapting 19th century novels. It is hoped that there will be a more open dialogue with the different presidents of the jury and that SERCIA, if possible, may have a say in the selection of films. Jean-François Baillon thanks Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris and wishes her good luck for this assignment.

## 8. NEXT CONFERENCES

Ariane Hudelet, who will organize next year's conference at Paris Diderot, explains that there is not yet a precise title but that the conference will be focused on Films and Series or on Cinema and Seriality. The conference will be held between September 8 and 10. Jean-François Baillon then explains why SERCIA will not go abroad next year: there is first of all the issue of the deadlines potential organizers can or cannot meet. He also believes that it is more important to keep the overall rhythm of conferences than to strictly respect the tradition of a conference abroad every other year. He adds that for the conference at Paris Diderot, it will be necessary to achieve a balance between SERCIA and GUEST (*Groupe Universitaire d'Études sur les Séries Télévisées*), the association on TV series co-organizing the conference, so as not to lose SERCIA's specificity, which is why "Cinema and Seriality" is the better option. The dates of next year's conference are then approved by the general assembly.

For the following year, Jean-François Baillon mentions the offer of Sara Pesce, who had to leave before the general assembly. SERCIA would be welcomed at the University of Bologna but the date would be probably later than early September, when SERCIA conferences are traditionally held. Sara Pesce said that the conference could probably be organized in October 2017 so as to make sure that students are present. She has a couple of themes in mind but she wants to discuss them with her colleagues in Bologna before announcing her projects to SERCIA. Some members feel that this absence of a clear topic for this conference may be an issue as the topic must be approved by the general assembly long before the conference itself. It is promised that, once it is settled, the topic will be announced through the mailing list.

For the 2018 conference, Jean-François Baillon restates that it is not absolutely necessary to go abroad again because compensating for two years in a row in France does not make sense in that context. He then lists the three offers he has received:

- A dual French offer from Brest and Rennes;
- An offer from Girona, which is not as firm as the preceding one due to some institutional issues;
- There is finally the offer made by a colleague from Portugal, who will be doing post-doctoral work in Sweden until 2018. She may organize a conference either in Sweden in 2018 or later in Portugal.

Celestino Deleyto agrees that the alternation between France and abroad should not be construed as something strict and suggests that the South of France could be appealing.

## 9. PUBLICATIONS

Xavier Daverat announces that 24 papers from the Bordeaux conference will be published by the Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux. There is, however, no update on the publication of the papers given in Bath.

Jean-François Baillon then suggests that SERCIA could use some of its funds to support publications by young scholars. He says that € 500 could be used to support one or two publications. Applications would be sent to the president and the secretary. For that effect, a special committee should be created: it could include 5 members, 2 being members of the SERCIA committee. This committee could be created this year so that applications could be sent next year once the committee has been approved. Jean-François Baillon's proposal is approved by the general assembly.

## 10. OTHER ISSUES

Jean-François Baillon mentions that next year, the AFECCAV (*Association Française des Enseignants et Chercheurs en Cinéma et Audiovisuel*) conference, focusing on Sequels and Prequels (« *Images pour/suite : remake, franchise, filiation* »), will be held in Bordeaux on July 6-8 2016.

He reminds the audience that last year SERCIA decided to grant a total of € 800 to conferences organized by SERCIA members. SERCIA members are warmly encouraged to send applications to the president and the secretary before late November. This proposition receives a unanimous vote.

He proposes that SERCIA try to meet more than once a year to discuss some pressing issues. This meeting could be held in Paris following a CICLAHO meeting and would be open to all SERCIA members.

The General Assembly closes at 10:30. Jean-François once again thanks Julie Assouly, Marianne Kac-Vergne and the University of Arras for a wonderful conference.