

Arctic Photography, Film Exploration and the Archive (online, 2-3 Dec 21)

online / National Maritime Museum Greenwich, University of Leeds, Dec 2-03, 2021
Registration deadline: Dec 3, 2021

Liz Watkins, University of Leeds

This interdisciplinary conference examines the role of photography and film narratives in shaping cultural perceptions of the Arctic, Antarctic and the history of polar exploration. Museum collections and archives store photographs and films that were produced using a diverse range of technologies and techniques from scientific experiments with telephoto lenses, flashlight photography, chrono-photography, photomicrography, early colour processes (Autochromes, Paget Plates) remain among the time-lapse and animated studies of wildlife and inhospitable polar climates that were made contemporary to the emergence of cinema. The conference brings together scholars, curators and artists whose work examines the histories, theories, and memory photography and film which intersect with narratives of exploration: its politics, ideologies (gender, class, imperialism) their subversion and subtexts through to its use in educational and entertainment forms both past and present.

Organised by the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich and the University of Leeds.

Contact: Dr Liz Watkins, Research Fellow, University of Leeds e.i.watkins@leeds.ac.uk or Sally Archer, Research and Heritage Partnerships Manager sarcher@rmg.co.uk or Jeremy Michell, Senior Curator, Maritime Technologies jmichell@rmg.co.uk

Registration: free (please book to receive Zoom links)

The full conference programme and abstracts can be found here: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/whats-on/online/conference-arctic-photography-film-exploration-archive>

PROGRAMME

Each session consists of 3 x 15mins presentation, with 30 mins questions to all three speakers at the end of the session. The times on the schedule are according to (GMT Greenwich Meantime, UK).

DAY ONE: Thursday 2 December

10.50am -11am.

Opening remarks: Julian Dowdeswell, Trustee of Royal Museums Greenwich.

SESSION 1: 11am-12.15pm GMT: Re-examining Histories of Polar Expedition Photography

Chair: Jeremy Michell, Senior Curator, National Maritime Museum.

- Geir Kløver. Director, The Fram Museum. 'The Nansen Photographs: Images from the First Fram Expedition.'
- Mark Pharaoh, Mawson Centre South Australian Museum. "'According to Hoyle": Official Photographer Frank Hurley's Re-writing the of the Rules on the Mawson Aurora Expedition 1911-14.'
- Anne Lydiat Wainwright, Central St. Martins, University of Arts London and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. 'In the Wake of Louise Arner Boyd (1887-1992).'

SESSION 2: 2pm – 3.15pm: New Perspectives on Polar Expedition Films

Chair: Liz Watkins, University of Leeds.

- Bryony Dixon. Curator of Silent Film, BFI National Archive. 'A Journey Back to Sub-Zero.'
- Ian Christie, Birkbeck College. 'Ponting's 'Monumentary': Film Footage Through Time.'
- Gregory A Waller, Indiana University, USA. 'Mawson in America: The Australasian Antarctic Expedition (1911-13) as Illustrated Lecture and Repurposable Footage.'

--

DAY TWO: Friday 3 December

SESSION 3: 11am-12.15pm: (In)visibilities and Antarctica

Chair: Ian Christie, Birkbeck College.

- Lisa Roberts, Artist in Residence in the Faculty of Science at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and Visiting Scientist (a.k.a. Artist) at the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD). 'Combining scientific data and cultural connections.'
- Megan Jenkinson, photographer, 'The Certainty of Their Vanishing.'
- Liz Watkins, Research Fellow, University of Leeds and Caird Short-term Fellow, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. 'Darkrooms: photographic records of polar expeditions from film laboratories to cinema auditoriums and lecture halls.'

Social break: 1.15pm–1.45pm bring your own coffee/ informal online discussion session.

SESSION 4: 2pm-3.15pm: Archives and Exhibitions: Photographic Collections at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Chair: Claire Warrior, Senior Exhibitions and Interpretation Curator, National Maritime Museum.

- Jeremy Michell, Senior Curator, Maritime Technologies. 'The Photographic Collection at Royal Museums Greenwich: 'with a peep into the Polar basin' (and apologies to E. A. Inglefield).'
- Sascia Nieuwenkamp, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. 'The W. Bruce Collection of Magic Lantern Slides'.

Reference:

CONF: Arctic Photography, Film Exploration and the Archive (online, 2-3 Dec 21). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 19, 2021 (accessed Apr 19, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/35371>>.