

## Call for Proposals: Kinema Club XIX A2—20 Years On

*Place: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*

*Dates: November 1-3, 2019*

*Deadline for Proposals: June 30, 2019*

*Organizer: Markus Nornes (nornes@umich.edu)*

In 1999, Kinema Club members met in Ann Arbor for their first gathering to talk about how Japanese film studies developed, where it was, and where we should aim for moving forward. This fall we will meet once again to take stock of the field 20 years on and discuss our bright future. In the spirit of the original Kinema Club, we will discuss our past precisely to forge a collective path ahead.

- 1) Silence=Sound (Michael Raine & Daisuke Miyao)
- 2) Theories Histories (Aaron Gerow)
- 3) Media+ (Stephanie DeBoer & Yuki Nakayama)
- 4) Animating (Christine Marran & Tom Lamarre)
- 5) Imperium (Kate Taylor-Jones & Irhe Sohn)
- 6) Embodied ♀♂ Desired (Jennifer Coates & Sharon Hayashi)
- 7) Possible Futures→ [and Pedagogies] (Alex Zahlten & Chika Kinoshita)
- 8) ✂ : *Onward* (Anne McKnight & Markus Nornes)

**XIX A2 will take a novel form based entirely on discussion.** There will be no papers delivered. We invite *phantom papers*, proposals for topics of discussion under the rubrics above and led by the listed scholars.

While there will be no presentations or speeches allowed; this Kinema Club will be a precious opportunity for dialogue. The discussions will last 90 minutes, will be consecutive and not simultaneous. They will be kickstarted by free-format, pre-circulated position papers, *which may be listed on people's CVs as any other conference paper*. These will be collected three weeks before the gathering, and can be of any length. Two weeks before, we will distribute the entire collection. At UM, discussions will be led by the colleagues above, but everyone will freely participate. Again, *no presentations allowed*.

Additionally, *we are soliciting two graduate students* to act as social media secretaries and blog the discussions as we go along. They will be paid for their efforts. Contact Markus if you are interested in this role.

***Please send a proposal to Markus Nornes ([nornes@umich.edu](mailto:nornes@umich.edu)), with a position paper title and a short, one-paragraph abstract that proposes a topic of discussion by June 30, 2019.***

## Some historical background...

Younger scholars and students may not be aware of Kinema Club's origin story (a full version is on our website: <https://kinemaclub.org/about-us/history>). We coalesced in the early 1990s, mostly graduate students interested in Japanese cinema and vaguely aware there were like-minded people out there. Somewhere.

As we found each other, we shared some of the same practical problems, starting with the paucity of bibliographic information on film. Our first collaborative effort was to split up major film journals to copy and share the tables of contents; new people could become "members" by copying a new journal and adding it to the packet. Eventually it was a couple inches thick.

Along the way, the Japanese bibliographer at OSU, Maureen Donovan, encouraged us to go digital and exploit this new thing called the internet to expand our collaboration. We gave ourselves the name Kinema Club—after a Taisho era movie theater—and went online in January 1995.

Four years later, we met in person at a workshop on the campus of University of Michigan. The idea was to get together and talk about how Japanese film studies came about. Ask what is *was*. And think about where we might take it from there. This was all happening at an interesting moment. Japanese film had been a space for the discipline of film studies to work out many basic theoretical issues over the years, thanks to the work of stellar scholars like Noël Burch, Stephen Heath, Dudley Andrew, David Desser, Kristin Thompson, Maureen Turim, Robin Wood, Peter Lehman, Dana Polan, Scott Nygren, Philip Rosen, David Bordwell, Paul Willemen, Edward Branigan and others. Just as Kinema Club appeared as if by nature, the discipline of film studies was pushing Japanese film to the margins while Japanese studies, broadly construed, opened new spaces for it.

Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto and Markus Nornes organized the first Kinema Club workshop on this morphing disciplinary landscape to take stock of the situation and chart a course into an unknown future. You can find the original announcement and a summary of the meeting on the Kinema Club website (<https://kinemaclub.org/conference/kinema-club-workshop>). After the workshop was over, we concluded,

We are, in a certain sense, "euphoric." We face multiple possibilities and that's good. We don't mourn the passing of that old field and its sense of institutional comfort. And despite the fact that it has left us groping to comprehend the consequences for our lives as teachers, intellectuals and as intellectual workers, we sense something very interesting on the horizon in a decade or so. The senior scholars who have already done a lot of research on Japanese film will be publishing the best work of their careers. Many newly arriving people will have published books and secured tenure. We will have read and engaged each other's work. It will not configure itself in a discipline, but we will have a much easier time talking to each other.

Twenty years after this first meeting, Kinema Club has gathered 18 times and taken many different forms in just as many far-flung places. This fall, let us gather again to look into the rear-view mirror as we barrel toward KCXXXVI in 2039, 20 years on from now!