

CALL FOR PAPERS

From Vincennes to the Paris Films Coop (1970–1980)
origins of the rebirth of experimental cinema in France
conference, discussions, screening series, exhibition



Fête de femmes à l'Université de Vincennes, de Barbara Glowczewska (1977)

Topic(s) and objectives of the event:

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Paris Films Coop – founded in January 1974 by Claudine Eizykman and Guy Fihman, filmmaker-professors in the department of Film Studies at Vincennes, together with an initial group of students and artist-filmmakers – this conference proposes to revisit the origins of this rebirth of independent/experimental cinema in France. It will address how the legacy of this moment persists in the form of multiple groups and structures active throughout France, as well as in the development of workshops for cinematographic experimentation in universities.

Among the numerous innovations in research methods, creation, and pedagogy that the Centre Expérimental de Vincennes made possible, the cinema department was the first attempt at integrating cinema as an area of investigation in its own right within the French educational landscape, and did so by aligning theory and practice.

In the context of the global movement of independent/experimental film cooperatives that began to emerge in the 1960s (New York, London, Rome, Hamburg, Sydney, Tokyo..) and the academic and cinematographic situation specific to France after 1968, the cinema department at Vincennes became, from the beginning of the 1970 academic year, an active context for different forms of independent cinema, in particular non-NRI (Narrative Representational Industrial) forms, as defined by Claudine Eizykman.

“The independent cinema movement in France actually emerged from teaching groups or internal working groups at the university, notably with the entry of cinema into the universities after 1968... In this regard, Vincennes was revelatory for numerous students who went there: it was a place where things were brewing, where one could study, watch, show, and make films, and discover independent cinema. Within the first department entirely dedicated to cinema, from the beginning of the 1970 academic year we created a series of workshop-courses devoted to experimental cinema.”

[Claudine Eizykman et Guy Fihman, *Un Mouvement se constitue*]

In addition to its break with the established frameworks of the film industry and the art world, a unique point of the Vincennes movement was its philosophical formation, which stemmed from Jean-François Lyotard’s doctoral seminar at Nanterre after 1968. This would lead the philosopher to make two films at the Service de la recherche de l’ORTF in collaboration with Guy Fihman, Claudine Eizykman, and Dominique Avron: *L’autre Scène* (1969-70) and *Mao Gillette* (1974). Teaching at Vincennes from 1972 on, Lyotard published “L’Acinéma,” a seminal text informed by practices of independent / experimental cinema.

This conference will equally be an occasion to convene two roundtables with former students from the experimental cinema course at Vincennes (some of whom have become filmmakers), as well as former collaborators of the Paris Film Coop. Some of the papers will be by invitation, but we also look forward to contributions from younger researchers who are interested in this history of teaching, making, organizing and promoting experimental cinema in France at the turn of the 70’s-80’s.

Conference themes:

Paper topics might include but are not limited to:

- **The pedagogy and practice of cinema, from Vincennes to Saint-Denis:** The evolution of the contexts of film pedagogy, film theory, film criticism, and the film industry in France after 1968; the workshop courses and programmes of experimental cinema led by Claudine Eizykman and Guy Fihman; the legacy of the the Vincennes film courses in the film department at l’Université Paris 8;
- **The history of co-ops / Histories of the Paris Film Coop:** The international context of the movement of independent film cooperatives that began in the 1960s; the genealogy and dissemination of experimental film in Europe and more particularly in

France since 1974 (festivals, structures, groups, sites, events); the reception and organization of experimental / independent cinema in France from the end of the 1960s onwards;

- **A genealogical and critical inquiry into the theory of experimental cinema at Paris 8** : From “Acinema” (Lyotard) to “la Jouissance Cinéma” (Eizykman), passing through Zeno of Elea (Fihman) and Bergson (Eizykman and Fihman).



Catalogue Paris Film Coop n°1, 1975.
(Imprimerie spéciale Paris VIII)

Submission details:

Proposals for papers of approximately 30 minutes should be sent to colloque.cinedoc@gmail.com by **June 15 2024**.

These should include:

- a title;
- an abstract (500 words maximum);
- a short biography (150 words maximum).

Selected individuals will be informed by the beginning of September 2024 at the latest.

Provisional dates:

Wednesday 20 November at the Centre Pompidou;
Friday 22 November at l'Université Paris 8 Vincennes – Saint-Denis;
Monday 25 November at l'Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA).

Scientific committee :

Erika Balsom (Reader in Film Studies, King's College, London)
Enrico Camporesi (Researcher at MNAM, experimental cinema service, Centre Pompidou)
Mélanie Forret (Assistant professor, Université Paris 8)
Barbara Glowczewski (Director of research CNRS emerita, Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, Collège de France)
Patrick de Haas (Historian of cinematic avant-gardes)
Prosper Hillairet (Independent researcher)
Dominique Willoughby (President of Cinédoc et professor emeritus, Université Paris 8)

Organizing committee:

Mélanie Forret
Prosper Hillairet
Bárbara Janicas
Beatriz Rodovalho
Dominique Willoughby

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Indicative bibliography:

- Jean-François Lyotard, "L'Acinéma", dans Dominique Noguez (Dir.), *Cinéma, Théories, Lectures*, Klincksieck, Paris, 1971.
- Catalogue de la Paris Films Coop, Paris, 1974 (réédition augmentée, en 1976).
- Claudine Eizykman, *La Jouissance cinéma*, UGE, Paris, 1976.
- Revue Melba, N°1, Paris, 1976.
- Claudine Eizykman et Guy Fihman, *Un Mouvement se constitue*, dans "Une Histoire du Cinéma", Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou – Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1976.

- Collectif, *Du Cinéma selon Vincennes*, Département d'études cinématographiques et audiovisuelles de l'Université Paris VIII, Lherminier, Filméditations, Paris, 1979.
- Claudine Eizykman et Guy Fihman, *Images d'un mouvement*, dans Dominique Willoughby (Dir.), "Cinéma Expérimental / Experimentalni Film", Ed. Letni filmove skoly, Uherské Hradiste, République tchèque. Bilingue Tchèque – français. Uherské Hradiste, Juillet 2002.
- Claudine Eizykman, *Le Film-après-coup*, Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, Saint-Denis, 2018.
- Prosper Hillairet, *Passages du Cinéma*, recueil de textes établi par Mélanie Forret et Arthur Côme, Paris Expérimental, Paris, 2021.
- Graham Jones et Ashley Woodward (Dir.), *Acinemas. Lyotard's Philosophy of Film*, Edinburgh University Press, 2017.
- Enrico Camporesi et Jonathan Pouthier (Dir.), *L'histoire d'une histoire du cinéma*, Paris expérimental, Paris, 2023.

Textes available upon request.