



Nordamerikastudienprogramm  
Institut für Anglistik, Amerikanistik und Keltologie



## Lecture Series

"Current Issues in North American Studies and Cultural Studies"  
Summer Term 2013

**Prof. Dr. Russell Kilbourn**  
Department of English | Film Studies  
Wilfrid Laurier University

## "Camera Arriving at the Station: Cinematic Memory as Cultural Memory"

Monday • 22 April 2013 • 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Room B • Institut für Anglistik, Amerikanistik und Keltologie • Regina-Pacis-Weg 5

This paper explores the modern metropolis as ironically concrete metaphor for the collective memory and mourning of cinema's passing, as it – the 'city' – is digitally constructed in two recent, auteur-directed, special effects-driven blockbuster films, *Inception* (Christopher Nolan, 2010) and *Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011). The modern city and mass media, such as the cinema, as well as modes of mass transport, especially the train, all originate in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but come into their own in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in their address to a subject as mobilized citizen-consumer who, as Anne Friedberg makes clear, is also always a *viewer*. The advent in Europe of trains and time zones, in their transformation of modern time and space – as Barbara Mennel has recently shown – paved the way for cinema's comparably cataclysmic impact upon modern subjectivity in its iconic reproduction of movement within illusory 3D space. Both films thus in their different ways employ cinematic remediation as a form of cultural memory whose nostalgia for cinema's past is rendered with the latest digital effects, hidden in plain sight in the form of subjective memories (as flashback) and dream. While this reading has been advanced before (at least for *Hugo*), this paper goes further by connecting each film's status as remediated dream-memory to its respective dependence upon the city as a post-cinematic three-dimensional framework within which locative and locomotive desires alike determine a subject whose psyche is indistinguishable from the cityscape that surrounds it.

Russell Kilbourn is Associate Professor in English and Film Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada, specializing in film theory and memory studies. Dr. Kilbourn publishes on film, cultural studies, comparative literature, and German author W. G. Sebald. His book, *Cinema, Memory, Modernity: The Representation of Memory from the Art Film to Transnational Cinema*, appeared with Routledge in 2010. He is also a series editor for the Film and Media Studies series at WLU Press, and is co-editor, with Eleanor Ty, of *The Memory Effect: The Remediation of Memory in Literature and Film* (forthcoming 2013).