

Liverpool Film Seminar

2019 – 2020 series

Every year, Liverpool Film Seminar invites experts to deliver a series of talks. Topics vary greatly and the series does not focus on a specific aspect of film. Instead, a range of genres and approaches are celebrated, from historical reach to the internet's impact on cinematic material.

Dr Glyn Davis (University of Edinburgh)

Fragments of a Film: Sunil Gupta's London Gay Switchboard

In 1980 the London-based queer photographer Sunil Gupta made the sound-and-image installation London Gay Switchboard as a student art project; the work focused on the eponymous volunteer-run organisation. The completed tape-slide work, a deconstructed form of cinema, was received with shock and objections by Switchboard's staff. Gupta never staged the work again, and its component elements were seemingly lost, though some fragments (individual images, a short reconstruction of part of the original) have been circulated in various subsequent exhibitions. Using Gupta's "film" as a central example, this talk will explore the archival and philosophical challenges of working with lost and fractured instances of cinema, in particular considering the queer potential of the fragment as a conceptual and political tool.

Biography:

Dr Glyn Davis is Chancellor's Fellow and Reader at the University of Edinburgh (Edinburgh School of Art). He is the project leader of 'Cruising the 1970s: Unearthing Pre-HIV/AIDS Queer Sexual Cultures', funded by HERA.