

Research program:
“Cinema as Collection: Objects of Affection and Memory Practices”

Annex C

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Research program

The project aims to analyse the cultural impact of cinema from a different perspective from that of film reception in the accepted sense, focusing on the way the imaginary world of cinema is objectified and becomes a medium for memorial practices involving cultural appropriation and self-narrative. Stage photographs, movie posters, magazines, gadgets and other kinds of memorabilia (including digital ones) will form the material basis for an enquiry that will highlight a dialectical relationship between the cinema industry and the audience, where the latter is not just a passive end-user of the supply chain, but an active participant.

Taking as a starting point how film reception is undergoing a process of “remediation”, which is to say a multiplication and redefinition of its conditions and an integration of cinematic experience within the exposure to a constant flow of images, the research will enquire into how this experience is extended and redefined in everyday life by the audiences through collecting and sharing its concrete relics. The enquiry will take into account traditional and new forms of collecting, giving particular attention to those cases where an active and creative relationship with cinema is developed through these kinds of memory objects. The description of various collecting practices (based on historical data as well as on fieldwork material) will trace the different ways in which these objects, primarily conceived for promotional purposes, set up a complex bond that links consumerism, fandom and cultural re-appropriation and create the occasion for giving new meanings to contents and materials produced by the industry, according to personal memories and narrations that are often unpredictable for marketing strategies.

The theoretical perspective – concerning particularly the relationship between still and moving image – will be verified by means of a distinctly experimental approach: the fieldwork will produce a mapping of collecting practices and spectatorial memory in Bergamo area and will culminate in an exhibition that will highlight the selected pieces in terms of their potential to build social memory and redefine collective meanings.