*Suspirias Symposium: Covering Trauma, Memory and the Body* – Event Report

**Queen Mary University of London**

**Organised by Alice Pember and Archie Wolfman (QMUL)**

On Saturday the 11th of June 2022 postgraduate researchers and ECRs at Queen Mary, University of London held a day-long symposium about Dario Argento’s 1977 film *Suspiria* andLuca Guadagnino’s 2018 remake of the same name. The 2018 film has been positioned in a cycle of ‘serious’ horror films, an arthouse spin on Argento’s original cult classic that solicits more complex philosophical engagement with trauma, memory and the body that its gory predecessor. Praised in some quarters for its ‘elevation’ of the original’s sparse thematics, Guadagnino’s ‘cover version’ was also criticised for heavy handedly shoehorning in complex historical allusions to the ‘German Autumn’ of 1977 in its pursuit of prestige horror credentials.This symposium gathered established scholars, ECRS and postgraduate researchers to explore the ways in which Guadagnino’s film, in dialogue with Argento’s original, can (or perhaps cannot) be taken seriously. BAFTSS funding enabled us to offer tickets for free, this meant that there were 20 attendees at the event, many of whom were postgraduates and members of the public. Advertising the event as free on twitter meant that we were able to create a buzz about the symposium and attract attention from film publicity channels, including the London film listings website Radiant Circus, who were keen to promote the event artwork, which we commissioned from local artist Cathy Lomax. As we were funded by BAFTSS, we were able to provide Cathy a £75 fee for her artwork, which we felt ethically obliged to do given her precarious employment as a freelance artist. Thanks to the support of BAFTSS we were pleased to be able to fund IT support, which enabled the participation of international scholars (from India, Mexico and the US), who were able to deliver their papers remotely and participate in subsequent Q&AS thanks to a hybrid set-up.  
 The first panel, ‘Intersectionality’, featured papers examining the dialogue between the two versionS of *Suspiria* and featured papers by Laurent Shelvington (Notre Dame University and University of Western Australia), Alexander Howard and Julian Murphet (University of Sydney and University of Adelaide) and Louis Bayman (University of Southampton). Following a short lunch break, the second panel featured Lexi Turner (Cornell University) A. Samyukthah and K. Sanskriti (Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur) and Alice Pember (Queen Mary, University of London), who each discussed the feminist and political resonance of dance in the remake of *Suspiria.* Panel Three focused on the films’ negotiation of politics and memory, with papers from Archie Wolfman (Queen Mary University of London), Xavier Mendik (Birmingham City University) and Romano Ponce-Diaz and Karina Monserrat Acuña Murillo (Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo). Following a short coffee break, panels concluded with papers focused on the ‘Embodiment and Motherhood’, with papers given by Virginie Sélavy (London Film School and National Film and Television School), Nicole Hamilton (Ulster University) and Darren Gray.

Following a rich and exhilarating day of papers and discussions, we moved from the Hitchcock Cinema out to the adjacent courtyard where, thanks to the support of BAFTSS, attendees enjoyed a short wine reception, continuing their discussions in a more informal environment. The conference forged connections between a diverse and interdisciplinary community of scholars, as well as members of the public, which we plan to continue as we edit a special journal special edition featuring work from the conference.