

***technē* Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) studentship – ‘Moving Pictures, Music, and Theatrical Exhibition in London, 1914-1930’**

Start date: **18 September 2023**

Application deadline: **Wednesday 25th January 2023**

Interviews will take place on **Thursday 9 February 2023**

Royal Holloway, University of London (a member of the *technē* consortium*), and the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) are delighted to announce a call for applicants for a fully funded collaborative doctoral studentship from 18 September 2023, under the AHRC’s Collaborative Doctoral Award scheme funded by *technē*.

The studentship will contribute to the field of ‘silent cinema’ and early twentieth-century popular theatre studies and the successful applicant will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the field in both academic and heritage & archiving contexts. The project will be supervised by Professor Julie Brown (RH), Wendy Hawke, Senior Archivist in the LMA Collections, and Dr Sophie Nield (RH). The student will be expected to spend time at both RH and the London Metropolitan Archives, as well as becoming part of the wider cohort of CDA funded students across the UK. The studentship can be undertaken on either a full or part-time basis.

We encourage the widest range of potential students to study for this studentship and are committed to welcoming students from different backgrounds and non-standard pathways. Students should have a Master’s Degree in a relevant subject or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience in a professional setting.

Project Overview

a) Research context: Following their emergence around 1896, moving pictures rapidly developed their own presentational cultures. Music was part of the typical moving picture show, providing both accompaniment to the pictures as well as separate performances within a mixed entertainment programme. Initially, moving picture culture developed fairly randomly in UK venues, but the 1909 Cinematograph Act provided its first legislative framework. Bizarrely, the legislation said nothing about music, having been designed to deal principally with safety matters, above all fire safety. Musical provision was regulated by theatre licensing laws, over which local authorities had control. Jon Burrows’ research of the ‘Penny Theatre’ period up to c.1914 revealed that soon after 1910 solo piano accompaniment to film came to be tolerated by the police, even in venues without specific music licenses. However, his surprising discovery was that any other music beyond a solo piano needed to be covered by a specific music license. This is completely unlike the context in which cinema culture developed in the United States, and so lies at the heart of the different story attaching to early cinema culture in the United Kingdom.

Among the LMA’s extensive local government archive repository for the Greater London area are the minutes and discussions documenting licensing decisions for London’s theatres, including its picture theatres. As LMA also contains records about building planning decisions, there is rich potential to enhance this study with consideration of theatre planning applications during the Great War, and during the short period in which ‘luxury building’ was regulated by ‘The Housing (Additional Powers) Act, 1919’.

b) Core research aims/ questions: This project aims to use LMA records to explore the development of performance practices in theatres showing moving pictures. Its significance will be its insights into the early development in London of the twentieth-century's newest audiovisual cultural form. It will radically expand Burrows' research into the 1920s, and lay the foundations for a study of how early cinema performance developed across the UK in contrast with how it developed in other countries.

The research questions will be developed in consultation with the student, but may include the following:

- How did planning and regulatory committees of the various London councils influence the development of cinema as a cultural form involving music and performance?
- How did LCC develop its approach to licensing picture shows to include music and dance?
- How did restrictions on luxury building during and immediate after the Great War impact upon the development of theatrical practices around moving pictures?

c) Key methods: Archival research involving the examination of previously unresearched material in the LMA collections underpins this research project, above all:

- the records around licensing decisions by the LCC Theatres and Music Hall Committee
- records around new theatre planning decisions stopped or interrupted by wartime restrictions
- graphic collections associated with picture theatres of this period.

Historical and cultural contextualisation, as well as critical analysis will help to place the findings within

- London's theatre history
- the development of approaches to early film exhibition such as currently understood in other countries.
- emerging theorisations of early cinema as a theatrical form.

The project could be limited to arrangements c. 1914 to 1921 and take in both venue licensing and planning issues; or it could focus specifically on licensing and investigate a longer period.

In addition to conventional academic supervision via the supervisory team at RHUL (Professor Julie Brown and Dr Sophie Nield), this studentship offers training and mentoring from the London Metropolitan Archives. The successful applicant will spend 1–2 days per week at the London Metropolitan Archives throughout the PhD, with their day-to-day work in the archive supervised by Wendy Hawke, though others may also be involved. Joint supervision will therefore offer the student an integrated combination of skills required in research and in the library/archive sector.

The successful applicant will receive training on the use of existing archives, and their research will increase knowledge of the collection and help to make the significance of these archives more visible. The student will index entertainment venues in the minutes and this information will be added to the catalogue enhancing access providing a targeted way in which to explore these records leaving a lasting legacy delivered through a permanent open online resource. The student will have the opportunity to create material for social media postings, and towards the

end of their project also the opportunity to give a public talk or run a workshop at LMA based around their research; this may involve an online presentation to provide a more lasting legacy.

Details of Award if Successful**

The *technē* CDA Studentship will fund a full-time studentship for 3.5 years (42 months), with an option to extend this by up to a further 6 months for placement/career enhancing activity. Students must submit their thesis within their funded period.

The award pays tuition fees up to the value of the full-time home UKRI rate for PhD degrees. Research Councils UK Indicative Fee Level for 2023/24 is £4,596. Note for international applicants: where an international student is successful, RHUL will waive the difference between the home and the international fee.

The award pays full maintenance for both home and international students. The National Minimum Doctoral Stipend for 2022/23 is £17,668/year, plus London Weighting of £2,000/year (=total £19,668), plus an additional CDA maintenance payment of £550/year to enable travel and engagement with the partner organisation, as well as Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) of £1,750 over the lifetime of the award.

Further details can be found on the UKRI website <https://www.ukri.org/skills/funding-for-research-training/>

The successful candidate will be a *technē* DTP student and will be required to attend mandatory events as part of their studentship terms and conditions with *technē*. Please see the *technē* website <http://www.techne.ac.uk/> for more information.

Eligibility

- This studentship is open to both Home and International applicants.
- To be classed as a home student, candidates must meet the following criteria:
 - o Be a UK National (meeting residency requirements), or
 - o Have settled status, or
 - o Have pre-settled status (meeting residency requirements), or
 - o Have indefinite leave to remain or enter

Further guidance can be found here - [UKRI-15102021-InternationalEligibilityImplementation-Guidance.pdf](#)

- Applicants should ideally have or expect to receive a relevant Masters-level qualification by the time of taking up the appointment, or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience in a professional setting (potential candidates may, for instance, already be working in the museum/heritage sector). Suitable disciplines are Music, Theatre Studies, Film Studies, History.
- The envisaged project is deeply rooted in two disciplinary **areas**: silent film exhibition (including music) studies, and theatre history. Students with expertise or experience in either of these areas are especially encouraged to apply (this may be in an academic or professional context).
- Applicants with experience and knowledge (in an academic or professional setting) in the following areas are particularly encouraged to apply:
 - Working in archives

- Experience of undertaking community engagement
- Organising and/or delivering events, especially for public or community audiences
- Ability to communicate effectively – both verbally and in writing – with a diverse range of audiences
- The studentship offers a distinctive opportunity to undertake a collaborative doctorate with a university and an archive. As such, students should demonstrate their interests and aptitude for exploiting the unique possibilities of a studentship that will allow them to develop career-enhancing skills in public history and public engagement, and to contribute to the cultural and intellectual life of both institutions.
- As part of our commitment to challenging the under-representation of Black and Global Majority students amongst doctoral researchers, we particularly welcome applications from applicants who identify as POC, BAME and/or part of Black and Global Majority racial and ethnic groups.

NB. All applicants must meet UKRI terms and conditions for funding. See: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/>

Project details and how to apply

Please include in your application:

- Your CV.
- A statement (max. 1,500 words) explaining why you are interested in researching this topic, including what you would bring to the project and how you think you would take it forward. (The part about taking the project forward may take the form of a research proposal: with research questions, contribution to knowledge and knowledge of key literature made clear, and methods and approaches described.)
- A sample of writing (ideally this should be between 5,000 and 10,000 words but this is flexible). This could be a piece of academic writing (e.g. a BA/BMus or MA/MMus dissertation)
- Candidates invited to interview will be asked to supply a transcript of their university-level grades.
- The successful applicant will then be expected to apply formally through RHUL's doctoral school.
- All prospective students are strongly advised to first make informal contact with the lead supervisor Professor Julie Brown (Julie.Brown@rhul.ac.uk)
- Candidates must apply online to Royal Holloway via <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/applying/research-degrees/how-to-apply/>. Please specify '*technē* collaborative studentship with London Metropolitan Archives' as your source of financial support.

Closing date: Wednesday 25th January 2023

Interview date: Thursday 9 February 2023

The chosen candidate will immediately be invited to complete an application form for *technē* funding, and the studentship is subject to final approval by the *technē* board in April 2023.

Candidates could also apply for the [general *technē* funding competition](#) by the earlier **deadline of 16th January** if they wish. This would open up two possible routes to a funded PhD.

Further Information

- For informal enquiries about the project, please contact Professor Julie Brown (Julie.Brown@rhul.ac.uk)
- For information or queries about the RHUL application process, please contact Professor Tina K. Ramnarine (Tina.Ramnarine@rhul.ac.uk)

*The Techne consortium is comprised of Royal Holloway, University of London; Brunel University, London; Kingston University; University of Brighton; University of Roehampton; University of the Arts London; University of Surrey; University of Westminster)

**The project has been shortlisted in the Techne Collaborative Doctoral Award competition and, as such, still has to progress