

WORKSHOP PAPER SYNOPSES

‘Caged Song-Bird: The Queer Diary of a Stalin-Era Soviet Popular Singer’ (Dan Healey)

Vadim Kozin was a Soviet singer-songwriter superstar of the 1930s-40s, whose arrest in 1945 on charges of sodomy and anti-Soviet agitation led to imprisonment in the Gulag. Released in 1950 he tried to rebuild his career touring Siberia with a Gulag-town musical-dance company. Kozin's queer diary of his life 'on tour' reveals the homophobia and the hope he experienced in Russia after Stalin.

‘Embarrassed or Shameless? Sexualities and the Pet Shop Boys from *It's A Sin* to Alan Turing’ (Eve Colpus)

This paper explores interpretations of sexualities in the music of the Pet Shop Boys since the 1980s. Now known as self-consciously alternative, the Pet Shop Boys started out in the world of mainstream (often gay) successful British pop, sharing their first manager with Bros. This paper traces evolving expressions of sexual sensibilities in their work through four songs – *It's A Sin* (1987); *Being Boring* (1990); *In Private* (1990); *He Dreamed of Machines* (2012). In discussing these, the paper touches upon several themes: gay cultural patronage; technological modernity; fashion photography; genderless lyrics; AIDS; Thatcherism; sex scandals; lesbianism; biographies and forgotten lives.

‘Towards a Gay Anglo-Jewish History?’ (Tony Kushner)

‘In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group (JGLG) in Britain proposed a historical project with the aim of exploring what it was like to be both Jewish and gay in Britain since the readmission of the Jews in the seventeenth century. Sadly, without funding, this project was never realised. This presentation will return to this idea and ask what sort of history would it/could it produce? What would be the methodological problems, especially sources, and how would it be organised and structured? How would it relate to gay studies, Jewish studies and British studies? Is this a project that would be worth reviving?’

‘Be My Lennon: LGBT Bournemouth and the Beatles’ (James Cole)

This paper explores themes of LGBT and music history on England's south coast. It will include a reading of my short story, *Be My Lennon*, about Bournemouth's unique relationship with the Beatles, commissioned as part of a writing residency within Bournemouth's LGBT community. I will also discuss my role in this residency and what it can tell us about an evolving modern LGBT community.

‘Queering Holocaust Memory: *Aimee und Jaguar* and the Representation of the Third Reich’ (Neil Gregor)

This paper places the 1999 film *Aimee und Jaguar*, which focuses on the affair between two women - one a Nazi-supporting gentile, the other a German Jew - during the Second World War, within the wider context of the memory politics of the reunification era. It examines both the more generic aspects of the representation of the Third Reich in the film and the treatment of the main love affair, contrasting mass media representations and the commercial imperatives which shape them with the memory cultures of persecuted groups since 1945.

‘New York versus San Francisco: Gay American Poets and the Politics of Group Identity’ (Peter Middleton)

In the 1950s and early 1960s two major poetic movements emerged in the United States. They took their somewhat ironic names from the cities where they were based: The New York School and the San Francisco Renaissance. Both groups centred on a circle of gay men friends all too aware of the dangers they faced from discrimination against homosexuals. They differed greatly however in the way they organised themselves. The West Coast group were relatively open about their sexuality, yet emulated a secret society with their use of occult symbols and mystical concepts. The East coast group celebrated friendship itself in all its guises, while remaining publically discreet about their homosexuality. Out of these different group dynamics came two quite different theories of poetry, both of which have proved enormously influential. From the east coast group, black and feminist poets learned much about how to create poetic counter publics; from the west coast group, left-wing poets learned how to construct a poetics capable of creating political cohesion amongst themselves.