Beyond the Multiplex: audiences for specialised film in English regions

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1. Film Hub North and Showroom: Anna Kime, Annabel Grundy and Ian Wild
2. FHNWC and HOME Sally Folkard
3. FHSWWM and Watershed Madeleine Probst
4. Audience Agency Leo Sharrock

Background and project context

- Funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Addresses how audiences engage with and form in different ways around specialised films in English regions
- The project developed out of a collaborative pilot project with FHN: 'How Audiences Form' https://filmhubnorth.org.uk/how-audiences-form
- Independent and collaborative
- Innovative digital methodology in audience research: ontology and mixed methods approach

Aims of the project

1. Understand how to enable a wider range of audiences to participate in a more diverse film culture that embraces the wealth of films beyond the mainstream

2. How to optimise the cultural value of engaging with those less familiar films, identified here as 'specialised' films

3. Support those working in film and with film audiences by providing: evidence, analytical data tools, and digital methodology for audience research
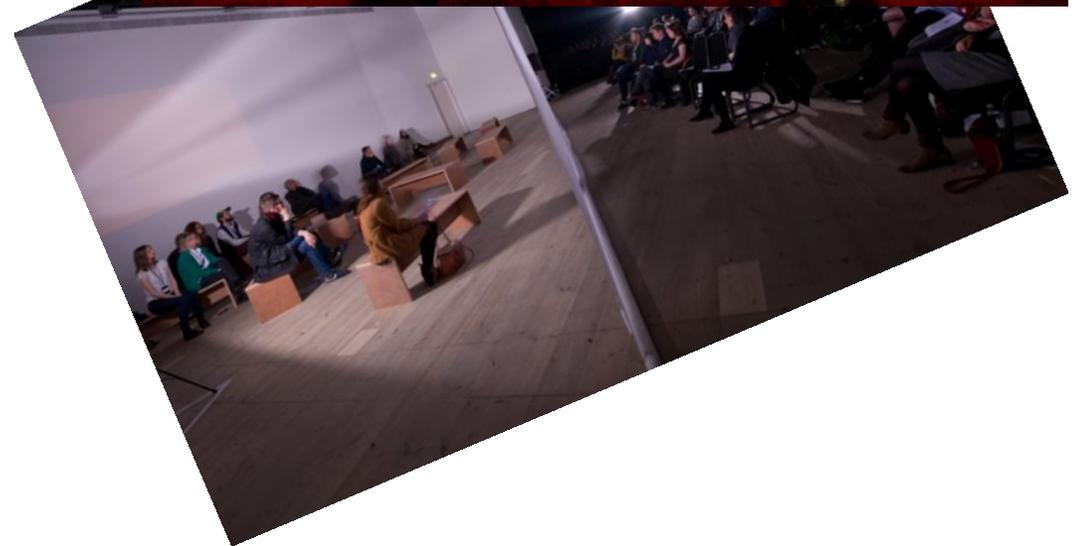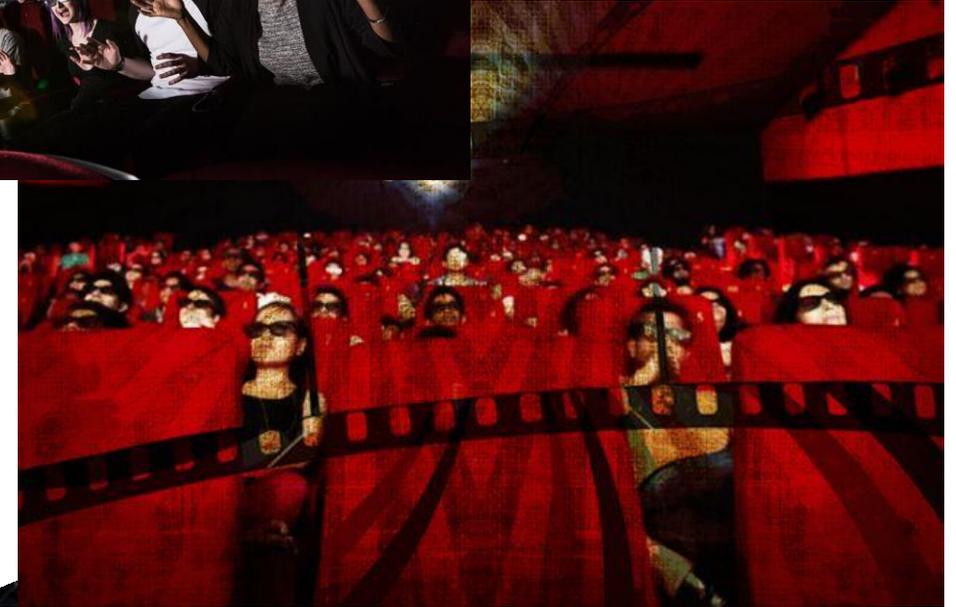
Researching relationships between audiences and specialised film

- Examine practices of venue-based and online film consumption

- Examine audience experience of specialised films

- Create a new socio-cultural index of audience profiles

- Examine funding, distribution and exhibition, including online, of specialised films

- Field research in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber, North West and Greater Manchester, and South West England

- Innovative digital methodology to identify the relationships between audiences and film

Research timeline

Jun - Oct 2017   Industry and policy document analysis
Jun - Nov 2017   Socio-cultural Index
Nov - Apr 2018   Audience Interviews (200)
June   2018   Policy Interviews (28)
May - Oct 2018   Longitudinal Survey (5,000 people x 3 in each region)
Jun - Dec 2018   Focus Groups (16) using film elicitation
2019   Data integration, analysis and visualisations
2019   Delphi Reviews, writing up , online resource
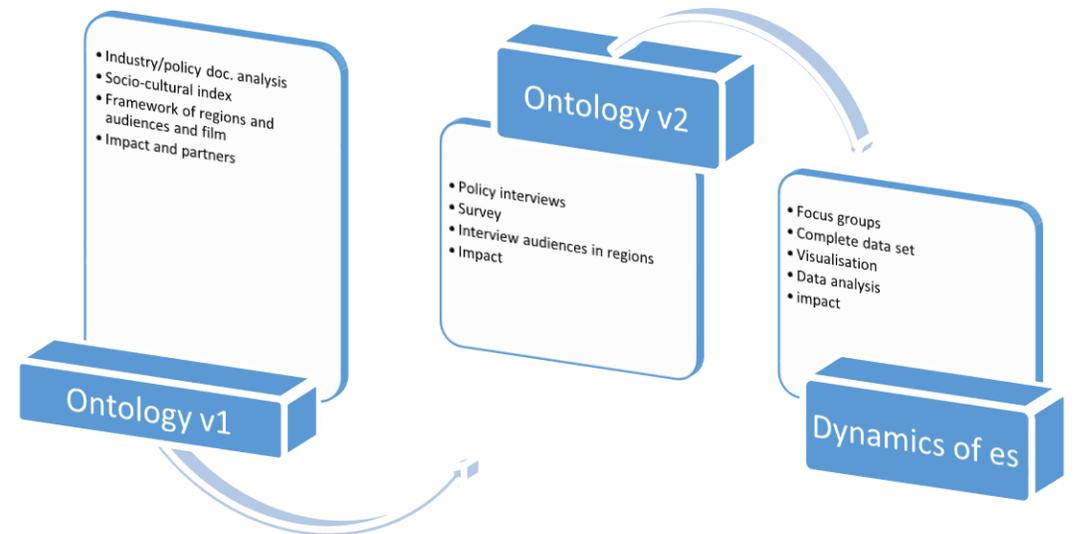
Stakeholders and benefits

- Strategic: BFI, FAN, FHLO, FHs and stakeholders more broadly, including ICO, Into Film and many others

- Applied: Film Hub members, regional cinemas, film clubs and community cinemas

- Creative industry and digital economy, including the Creative Fuse and Digital Creativity Hub

- Inform audience development policy, access to anonymised audience data, analytical tools and new methodology

- Support cultural leadership and FH members' activities; develop measures for identifying, attracting and sustaining audiences

Stakeholder activities

- Year June 2017- May 2018: Launch, communication strategy for stakeholders (website, members area, newsletter, social media networking) and establish a dedicated stakeholder working group

- June 2018 - May 2019: Develop impact exploitation plan for stakeholders; stakeholder workshop to present initial findings; panel session at *This Way Up*

- June 2019 - May 2020: Delphi workshops with stakeholders; panel session at *This Way Up*; methodology workshop, final conference
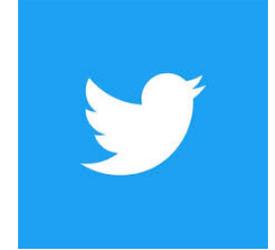
Outputs for stakeholders

- Freely available online resource providing access to data collected in the project for re-use

- Search and visualisation tools for the online resource

- A regional map that links to data sources for studying audiences and regional film provision

- Online open source guidebook on implementing audience ontology

- Workshop on digital analysis and audience ontologies

- Recommendations for developing audiences

- Book and 12 papers

- Final conference bringing together stakeholders and academics, papers will be published online and open source

A collaborative approach

- BFI's regional Film Audience Network (FAN)
- FHN, FHNWC, FH SWWM
- FHLOs Showroom Workstation, Sheffield; HOME, Manchester and Watershed, Bristol
- Film Hub member organisations
- Stakeholder Working Group
- Audience Agency
- Project website and newsletters: https://www.beyondthemultiplex.net
- Twitter @BeyondMultiplex
- Other AHRC projects
- Audience members themselves

Thank you and any questions