

Foreword

Fuelled with new energy, film education is again the focus of Polish film studies and Polish studies. Recently published monographs by Witold Bobiński (2011, 2016) and volumes released by various academic institutions (Jaskulski, Koryciński, 2016; Ciszewska, Klejsa, 2016) prove that researchers keenly explore practical and theoretical issues connected with this phenomenon. During the 2nd Congress of Film and Media Scholars titled “Discourses of Visibility” (Cracow, December 2016) two panel sessions were devoted to film education. There is no shortage of activities aimed at promoting film education among students of humanities programmes, suffice to mention the Think!Film project conducted by the Film Studies Student Society in the Chair for Media and Audiovisual Culture at the University of Lodz. Open meetings with film education theoreticians and practitioners held in the Department of Philology at the University of Lodz in 2015–2016, featuring e.g. Prof. Dr. Habil. Piotr Sitarski, Dr. Habil. Konrad Klejsa, Dr. Michał Pabiś-Orzeszyna, Dr. Jadwiga Mostowska, Dr. Małgorzata Kozubek, Anna Równy and Agata Sotomska, stimulated much critical reflection, whose echoes can be found in the texts collected in the present volume.

The central issue in the field of film education is the tension between history and traditional methods of obtaining educational results, and the changing reality, which forces us to redefine the very goals of film education and ways of implementing it. In Polish academic tradition but also educational practice, we are used to perceiving film education as strongly integrated with the school system. As a result, as Ewa Ciszewska explains, film scholars and teachers advocate for an educational reform consisting in the creation of a separate school subject devoted to film (or media) education. This goal has never been fully accomplished. At present, film history and aesthetics can be discussed as part of several school subjects. Usually, film education is conducted during Polish language classes; nevertheless, it can be successfully implemented within other subjects as well as within extracurricular activities. This is proposed by teaching method specialists (see the article by the team of the **Central Cabinet for Film Education**), who offer a whole range of teaching techniques to be applied in film education.

On the other hand, as Małgorzata Jakubowska points out, film education is increasingly often addressed at other people besides school students, namely at small children, university students and adults (including senior citizens). Consequently – and in line with EU guidelines – it has become part of the lifelong learning process. Problems and challenges involved in providing kindergarten children with film education are discussed by Kamila Żyto, who presents activities conducted by the New Horizons Association as an interesting educational offer addressed at the youngest learners.

Jadwiga Mostowska shows that legal and organisational framework conditioning film education in Poland makes it largely a domain of enthusiasts (both in schools and outside them), who are brave enough to initiate film-oriented events despite substantial obstacles and difficulties. Teachers and educators keep perfecting their skills and gaining new knowledge concerning film education; still, as **Anna Równy** points out, their access to various forms of supplemental education and in-service training largely depends on their location. Hence, film education has been transferring to cinemas, which is analysed by **Justyna Hanna Budzik**. This tendency can be interpreted as a consequence of insufficient teacher training and objective difficulties connected with conducting film education activities in schools.

Still, film education is very much needed in Poland, since, as **Monika Rawska** suggests, active film commentators still lack necessary knowledge. This, in turn, results in the instrumental use of films in quasi-therapeutic ventures, which the author describes in detail. Some optimism is to be found, however, in the instances of creative exploration of the educational potential of Polish animation by institutions, NGOs and inventive cultural managers (as is presented by **Mateusz Żebrowski**). In **Katarzyna Figat's** opinion, the quality of film education in Poland would improve if film studies and culture studies university curricula included aspects pertaining to audiosphere and film sound.

Film education is presently conducted by a number of specialised institutions, e.g. by the National Film Archive in Warsaw (since 1 June 2017 functioning as the National Film Archive – Audiovisual Institute), whose educational activities focused on Polish pre-World War II cinema are discussed by **Katarzyna Turczyn**. This raises hope about the possibility of improving the viewers' competences and shows to what extent modern film education relies on history and canonical works. The question of film canon, possible interpretations of rankings and lists as well as potential educational merits offered by events like the "12/120" poll conducted by the Film Museum in Lodz to commemorate the 120th anniversary of cinema are discussed by **Konrad Klejsa and Krzysztof Jajko**.

During the editing of this volume, significant changes were introduced in the Polish school system. Starting from 2017, the hitherto existing types of schools were replaced with eight-year primary education, four-year secondary school (or five-year technical school) and two-tier occupational schools. Lower-secondary education is being gradually eliminated. Consequently, new curricula are substituted for the ones used previously. The fast pace of these changes (announced in early 2016, they have since already been implemented) have made some of the authors' comments based on the existing legal regulations or structures partly outdated. Nevertheless, as of yet, it is extremely difficult to comment on these changes. The ministerial regulations concerning the new school curriculum for early childhood and primary school education since 2017/2018 were only signed on 14 February 2017 and solely involved changes concerning the abovementioned stages of education. Since 1 September 2017, the new curriculum has

regulated the scope of education for 1st, 4th and 7th grade primary school students; in the years to come, new material will be used by older students as well. At present, it is virtually impossible to estimate the reform's impact on film education opportunities in schools, and, indirectly, on the education conducted in cinemas and other institutions, which is meant to supplement the material covered by schools. As a result, in many respects this volume, even on the date of its publication, offers a historical rather than up-to-date discussion on the topic. On the other hand, it may be used as a reference for comparisons and a point of departure for debate on film education in reformed schools, which should commence in due time.

The publication of this volume was possible thanks to the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership for Youth funds; we are much indebted to Adéla Mrázová and Terezie Křížková from the National Film Museum (Národní Filmové Muzeum) in Prague for inviting us to join the programme. On behalf of the whole team, we would like to express our gratitude for this inspiring three-year adventure; we wish you much success with creating an innovative, educational and exhibition space. We would also like to thank the Dean of the Department of Philology, Prof. Dr. Joanna Jabłkowska for her financial support. Last but not least, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the entire Think!Film team – Agnieszka Barczyk, Patrycja Chuszcz, Katarzyna Figat, Mikołaj Góralik, Marta Kasprzak, Sylwia Kubera, Małgorzata Lisiecka-Muniak, Renata Nolbrzak, Olga Łabendowicz, Honorata Małaszkiwicz, Monika Rawska, Weronika Rumas, Justyna Szaferska, Zuzanna Woźniak, Oktawia Wierzejska, Katarzyna Żakieta and Mateusz Żebrowski – for their efforts and genuine commitment.

September 2017, Ewa Ciszewska, Jadwiga Mostowska

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