

LitSciMed Film Competition

The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at University College London invites you to enter this competition.

The Centre organised a successful film competition, the History of Medicine in Motion, in 2009. The content and creativity of the entries was very impressive and can be viewed at: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/histmedinmotion/>

Why did we do it?

Some of our PhD students had been inspired by the work of Shigehisa Kuriyama, Professor of Cultural History at Harvard University, and his students. Shigehisa assigns students (undergraduates and postgraduates) weekly readings, at the end of which half make movies or podcasts based on their interpretation of the reading, and the other half critique them. The objective is to explore alternative media (ie. alternative to stand-alone text) in the presentation of scholarly content, to improve expression and concision by restricting media clips to three minutes or so, and to encourage critical analysis of visual material.

Most tutors are wary of multi-media as a method of scholarly presentation, believing that it cannot compete with written texts in terms of academic rigour. 'Academic rigour' generally refers to footnotes and bibliographical data. Kuriyama argues that all of his students' movie / podcast scripts have to be presented in a footnoted and booknoted academic format.

We ran several workshops to teach students basic editing skills and included an assignment workshop whereby they worked in groups to produce edited movies of varying technical complexity.

Then we opened up the History of Medicine in Motion competition to students throughout the world.

This year, Harvard University is running a similar programme, called Harvard Shorts Film Festival. Entry has been restricted to Harvard staff and students. Take a look at: <http://shorts.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do>

What we want to see from LitSciMed Film Competition entries

Short movies – up to 5 minutes duration – on a topic related to your research. You can enter more than one movie. We're offering prizes for the top 3 entries. Closing date for uploading your movie(s) to YouTube is 1 June 2010 but we'd like to see as many uploaded before that date as possible so that people can use the social space to comment on individual movies

Copyright & Resources information

Copyright protects your own creations and also those of other artists, writers, composers, inventors, etc.

A straightforward guide to UK copyright, issued by the Intellectual Property Office is at: <http://www.ipa.gov.uk/copy.htm>

Creative Commons provides free resources, with the proviso that the resources are acknowledged. This is a legal requirement. On videos this will mean putting a caption at the end, listing all sources.

The caption not only acknowledges other people's property but it also gives the provenance of the material so that others may find it, and also ensures that the movie itself becomes an historical creation.

More about Creative Commons can be found at: <http://creativecommons.org/>

Any original material that you film or photograph for your Movie becomes your own copyright as does your iMovie, even though it might contain material from other sources. It is your creation. However, you should be aware that copying other people's material from books, etc. for inclusion in your Movie will be a breach of copyright if the material is still in copyright. The same goes for music and sound effects.

Resources that you can use under the Creative Commons license are becoming increasingly available. They include:

Wellcome Images: <http://images.wellcome.ac.uk/>

There are about 200,000 images on this site, covering global health, medicine, culture, war, life, science and the natural world. The historical images are mainly from the Wellcome Library's vast archive of iconographic and other illustrative material. However, the collection also includes modern images by artists and photographers who use Wellcome Images as an agent for their work. They allow their work to be used under the Creative Commons license providing it is duly acknowledged. Look for the credit line when you view these images. The historical images are more straightforward and the credit line usually just reads: 'Wellcome Library, London.'

Many Flickr contributors have chosen to offer their work under a Creative Commons license: <http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>

Also see Wikimedia Commons: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Or just google 'royalty free images' to find a number of sites offering these.

The Wellcome Library is also a major contributor to Film and Sound Online:

<http://www.filmandsound.ac.uk>

This is a JISC-funded resource to which many universities are subscribed. There are hundreds of historical clips on this database, from the very earliest use of film in the late 19th century. The clips are available to stream / download either as .wmv or .mov files. User licence agreement is outlined as you click through.

Also search the Wellcome Library Moving Images and Sound digital collections online:

<http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/wellcomefilm.htm>

Prelinger Archives, a US-based service, has over 2000 public domain films free to download and re-use: <http://www.archive.org/details/prelinger> . You can browse by subject / keywords – it is a very comprehensive collection – everything from automobiles to youth culture.

NASA Images offers public access to images, video and audio collections:

<http://www.nasaimages.org/>

This collection contains material on the universe, solar system, earth, aeronautics and astronauts but you can search by keyword and come up with amazing stuff. Images from the Hubble telescope, for example.

Warning! If you google ‘free images’ you’ll find a number of sites offering free downloads but this does not mean free re-use.

Tip – create your own sound effects. In iMovie / Movie Maker you can slow down or speed up sound to create unique effects including voices.

If you upload to YouTube, the onus is on you to declare that you either entirely own the copyright of your movie or that you have permission to upload it.