

JOSEPH MAI

PROFESSOR  
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY  
jmai@clemson.edu

### **ACADEMIC AND TEACHING POSITIONS**

Full Professor of French, Clemson University (2022)  
Associate Chair, Languages Department, Clemson University (2021-)  
Associate Professor of French, Clemson University (2010-)  
Assistant Professor of French, Clemson University (2004-2010)  
Visiting Professor (USAC @ Lyon II) (Spring 2015; Spring 2017)  
Visiting Assistant Professor of French, Tulane University (2003-2004)  
Teaching Fellow: Yale University, French Department (1999-2003)

### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D., French Literature, Yale University  
Dissertation: “Lost Order: Repercussions of Secularization on Catholic  
Literary and Film Rhetoric. Péguy, Bernanos, Bresson”  
(Pensionnaire étranger, École Normale Supérieure, Paris)  
MA and M. Phil., French Literature, Yale University  
MA, French, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
BA, French, Northern Illinois University

### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Ethical issues in French and Francophone cinema and literature; Cambodian cinema;  
contemporary French society, immigration, refugee studies; studies of attention and  
curiosity in contemporary literature and audio-visual media; animal studies

### **PUBLICATIONS**

#### **Books**

#### Monographs

*Robert Guédiguian*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017. reviewed in: *H-France Review*, *French Forum*, *Contemporary French Civilization*

*Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne*. Urbana IL: University of Illinois Press, 2010. reviewed  
in: *H-France Review*, *Film-Philosophy*, *Sight and Sound*, *Contemporary French  
Civilization*, *The French Review*, *Modern & Contemporary France*, *Choice*

## Edited volume

With Leslie Barnes. *Everything Has a Soul: The Cinema of Rithy Panh*. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2021. <https://www.rutgersuniversitypress.org/the-cinema-of-rithy-panh/9781978809796>  
(nominated SAML A best edited volume)

## **Articles and Book Chapters**

Forthcoming: "Ordinary Ghosts: Care, Attention, and Media Critique in *Cerno, une anti-enquête*." *Contemporary French Civilization*, Vol. 48.2 (2023).

"In Praise of Cinema: Stanley Cavell, Arnaud Desplechin, and Telling What Counts (*Trois Souvenirs de ma jeunesse*)." In LaRocca, David, ed. *Movies with Stanley Cavell in Mind*, 112-128. London: Bloomsbury, 2021.

With Leslie Barnes. "Introduction: Rithy Panh and the Cinematic Image." In *Everything Has a Soul: The Cinema of Rithy Panh*, edited by Leslie Barnes and Joseph Mai, 1-14. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2021.

"Resilience in the Ruins: Artistic Practice in *The Burnt Theater*," In *Everything Has a Soul: The Cinema of Rithy Panh*, edited by Leslie Barnes and Joseph Mai, 32-45. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2021.

"Infinity and Home: Exploring Moral Action in *Les misérables*." In *Approaches to Teaching Victor Hugo's Les misérables*, edited by Michal Ginsberg and Bradley Stevens, 161-168. New York: Modern Languages Association of America. 2018.

"Site 2: Style and Encounter in Rithy Panh's Cinéma-monde." In *Cinéma-monde: Decentred Perspectives on Global Filmmaking in French*, edited by Michael Gott and Thibaut Schilt, 25-44. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2018.

"*Un tissu de mots*": Writing Human and Animal Lives in Olivia Rosenthal's *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*" *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, vol. 49.3 (2016). 55-70.

"Wang Bing's *Til Madness Do Us Part* (2013): An Apprenticeship in Seeing." *LOLA* vol. 6. (2016) <http://www.lolajournal.com/6/index.html>

"The Ideal of Ararat: Friendship, Politics, and National Origins in Robert Guédiguian's *Le voyage en Arménie*." In *East, West, and Centre: Reframing post-European Cinema Since 1989*, edited by Michael Gott and Todd Herzog, 179-192. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

“‘Humanity’s True Moral Test’: Shame, Idyll, and Animal Vulnerability in Milan Kundera’s *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*,” *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 46.1 (2014), 100-116.

“The Dardennes’s *Lorna’s Silence*: Form, viewer, and Levinas’ ethical alternative,” *New Review of Television and Film Studies*, vol. 9.4 (2011), 435-453.

“*Corps-Caméra*: The Evocation of Touch in the Dardennes’ *La promesse* (1996),” *Esprit Créateur*, vol. 47. 3, Fall (2007), 133-144.

“New(er) stories”: Narrative and De-figuration in Robert Bresson’s *Mouchette* (1967),” *Studies in French Cinema* vol. 7. 1 (2007), 31-42.

### **Book Reviews and Other Publications**

#### *Book reviews*

Evrard, Audrey. *Precarious Sociality, Ethics and Politics : French Documentary Cinema in the Early Twenty-First Century*. *H-France Review*.

Ly, Boreth. *Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual Culture and National Identity in the Aftermath of Genocide*. *The Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, vol. 32 (2022).  
[Link](#)

Dorlin, Elsa. *Se défendre. Contemporary French Civilization*. vol. 44, 1 (2019). 125-128.

Abderrezak, Hakim. *Ex-Centric Migrations: Europe and the Maghreb in Mediterranean Cinema, Literature, and Music*. *Contemporary French Civilization*. Vol 43, 3-4 (2019). 505-506.

Früchtl, Josef. *Trust in the World: A Philosophy of Film*. *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, February 2018. (2,500 words)

Schmid, Marion. *Chantal Akerman*. *New Review of Television and Film Studies* vol 10.4 (2012). Review.

Mullarkey, John. *Refractions of Reality: Philosophy and the Moving Image*. *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*, June 2009. (2,500 words)

Dardenne, Luc. *Au dos de nos images*. *Film-Philosophy*, vol 11.1 (2007), 70-74.

#### *Essays and entries*

“The Building: *White Building* by Kavich Neang,” *The Mekong Review*. Review essay: November 2021.

“Wandering Souls: Rithy Panh’s *Graves Without a Name*,” *The Mekong Review*. Review essay: October, 2018.

“Anthony Bourdain in Cambodia,” *The Mekong Review*. Essay: August 2018.

Charles Boyer, in *French Cinema in Close-Up*. Edited by Michael Abecassis and Marceline Block. Dublin: Phaeton Press, 2015.

Claude Brasseur, in *French Cinema in Close-Up*. Edited by Michael Abecassis and Marceline Block. Dublin: Phaeton Press, 2015.

Robert Meylan, in *French Cinema in Close -Up*. Edited by Michael Abecassis and Marceline Block. Dublin: Phaeton Press, 2015.

“A Sentimental Re-Education: Flaubert and the Job Market,” *ADFL Bulletin* vol. 38. 2 (2007), 52-55.

## **CONFERENCES, INVITED PAPERS, KEYNOTE ADDRESSES, RESPONSES, MEDIA**

- “Attention, Curiosity, and Public: Julien Cernobori Revisits the *Affaire Paulin*.” 20th and 21st century French Studies Colloquium, Pittsburgh, PA. Panel: *Sur Yves Citton* (Citton was conference plenary speaker) (**panel chair**). (March 26, 2022)
- **Invited Book Launch:** *The Cinema of Rithy Panh: Everything Has a Soul*. Asian Cinema Research Lab, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. online. Seven presenters. (Nov. 12, 2021)
- **Invited:** New Books Network podcast. Discussion of *The Cinema of Rithy Panh* with host Michael Vann and my co-editor, Leslie Barnes. (Sept 24, 2021)
- **Invited:** “The Language of Welcome in *Cour de Babel*.” Zoom discussion of the film with Karina Jeronimides, American University, Washington DC. (Sept. 23, 2020)
- **Invited Clemson lecture:** “The Missing Picture: Rithy Panh’s Filmmaking in the Wake of the Khmer Rouge Genocide. *RCID Research Colloquium*, Clemson. (Fall 2019)
- **Organizer, Symposium:** *Everything has a Soul: The Cinema of Rithy Panh*, Phnom Penh (July 22, 2019). (one day workshop devoted to the volume. 8 participants.)
- “Resilience in the Ruins: Rithy Panh’s *The Burnt Theatre*.” Symposium *Everything has a Soul: The Cinema of Rithy Panh*, Phnom Penh (July 22, 2019)
- “Framing “Broken Courage” in Two Films of Contemporary Cambodia.” Panel Chair. International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) conference, Phnom Penh (July 2019)
- **Invited Public Lecture:** “Framing *The Human Affair*.” Bophana Center, Phnom Penh, Cambodia (July 12, 2017)
- **Invited (in French):** “Cadrer *L’affaire humaine*. La philosophie de Luc Dardenne” *ARIMES*. Université Lyon 2. Lyon, France (April 7, 2017)

- Respondent: “Philosophical Approaches to the Dardenne Brothers.” *Society for Media and Cinema Studies*. Atlanta (March 30-April 3, 2016)
- Panel Chair: “Cartoon and Critique in Contemporary France.” *ASAP/7 Arts and the Public*. Greenville, SC (Sept. 24-27, 2015)
- French in Rithy Panh’s *cinéma-monde*. Contemporary French Civilization, Baltimore (Sept. 2-5, 2015)
- **Keynote Address:** “Friendship in French Cinema.” Cincinnati Conference on Romance Languages. (March 27-29, 2014)
- **Invited** “From *littérature monde* to “World Cinema”: a roundtable discussion. Cincinnati Conference on Romance Languages. (March 27-29, 2014)
- “Friendship in Robert Guédiguian’s *A la vie, à la mort!* and *Les neiges du Killimandjaro*.” 20th and 21st century French Studies Colloquium, New York (March 2014)
- “Traces of Animals: Olivia Rosenthal’s *Que font les rennes après Noël ?* 20th and 21st century French Studies Colloquium, Atlanta (March 2013)
- “Bodies in Time: Robert Guédiguian’s actors.” Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference, Chicago (March 2013)
- “Work, Maternity, and Levinasian Ethics in the Dardenne Brothers.” Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference, Boston (March 2012)
- “Variations on Shame: Milan Kundera’s human animality.” *Human-Animality*: 20th and 21st century French Studies Colloquium, San Francisco (March 2011)
- Chair and organizer: “Dialogues with Documentary at the Horizon of Cinema.” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Lexington (April 2009)
- “From Documentary to Fiction: The Dardenne Brothers,” Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Lexington (April 2009)
- “‘I don’t know’: Paternity in the Films of Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne,” Society for French Studies Conference, Birmingham, England (July 2007)
- “The Work of Touch in the Dardennes,” Studies in French Cinema Conference, London, England (April 2007)
- “Robert Bresson, Style, and the Return to the Human,” American Comparative Literature Conference, Princeton (March 2006)
- “A Sentimental Re-Education: Lessons from the Job Market,” Modern Language Association Convention, Washington DC (December 2005)
- “Films of Christian Atheism: Robert Bresson’s Turn to Rhetoric.” Modern Language Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA (December 2004)
- “Science Creating Absence: Michel de Certeau, Religion, and Mystic Rhetoric,” Tulane University, New Orleans, LA (Invited by Tulane Graduate Students, September 2003)
- Panel Chair, “French History and Film,” Twentieth-Century French Studies Colloquium, University of Illinois (March 2003)
- “L’utopie en fragments : La répétition chez Charles Péguy.” Mount Holyoke College (January 2003)

## TEACHING

Clemson University, Department of Languages (2004-)

History of French Cinema (in the Languages and English departments)

Introduction to World Cinemas

Contemporary French Civilization

French New Wave *auteurs*: Godard/Truffaut/Varda

Animals in French Thought and Literature

Creative Writing in French

French Language from Intermediate to Advanced Levels

French Civilization to the Twentieth Century

Introduction to French Poetry

Introduction to French Theater

Dixon fellows reading group:

Cervantès, *Don Quichotte*; Victor Hugo, *Les misérables* and moral reasoning

Senior Honors Thesis (2013):

*Ca devient rare!:* Societal Reform and Discontent in the Golden Age of French Cinema. Mike Levine; 40 pages

Independent Studies on the following themes:

Victor Hugo's *Les misérables*; literature, film and *l'enquête*; French film of the 1930s; *Patrick Modiano*; *Emmanuel Carrère et la Russie*.

Creative Inquiry:

Co-directed undergraduate research project (Fall 2019-Spring 2021): *Stories of Refuge, Detention, and Hospitality*: research and service-learning project. I accompany students on a visit and interview migrant detainees at the Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin GA; other forms of research on immigration, detention, and activism.

Co-directed undergraduate research project (Fall 2022-ongoing) *Every Campus a Refuge at Clemson*: research and service-learning project. Research into improving ties between Clemson University and refugee and other resettled people in the Clemson area. Inquiries into improving access to facilities at Clemson. Language (ESL) instruction. Health and wellness projects.

Lyon 2, USAC program, visiting professor (Spring 2015; Spring 2017)

Le roman policier (the crime novel); French cinema from its beginnings to sound (includes on-site visit to the *Centre Lumière* in Lyon); La bande dessinée (French graphic narrative art); Survey of French Lit 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries

Visiting Assistant Professor: Tulane University (2003-2004)

Memory and Form in the French Novel since Proust (Graduate Seminar); French Culture and Institutions from the Middle Ages to the Present; Intermediate French

Teaching Fellow: Yale University, French Department (1999-2002)

Introduction to Modern French Literature; Intermediate and Advanced French

## **SELECTED SERVICE**

### **to the profession:**

- Book review editor *Contemporary French Civilization* (May 2021- **ongoing**)
- International Editorial Board: Ex-Position. And article editor (1-2 per year) 2018-**ongoing**. Formerly: Advisory Board, *National Taiwan University Studies in Language and Literature* (2015- 2018)
- External reviewer: *Comparative Literature; New Review of Film and Television Studies; Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literature; Asian Cinema Journal; Mosaic; Alphaville; French Screen Studies; The Polish Journal of Aesthetics; Contemporary French Civilization*
- Organizing committee of the World Cinema in French Conference, University of Cincinnati, September 9-10, 2016.
- External tenure and promotion referee: University of \*\*\*, 2016; University of \*\*\*, 2017

### **to the Department and College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities (selection):**

- Associate Chair Languages Department (January 2022-ongoing)
- Search committee CAAH Student Services Director search May 2022
- Tenure, Promotion, Reappointment committee: Chair (elected, 2017, 2018, 19, 20, 21-for three-year period).
- Chair review committee (2021, elected Chair) (2015)
- Modern Languages steering committee (2021-)
- 7-Point scale ad hoc committee chair: rewriting criteria for merit raises
- Post-tenure review committee (elected, 2018-2020)
- World Cinema Major steering committee (2012-present)
- Student advisor French Modern Languages Majors (2005-present)
- Modern Languages French curriculum revision: thorough revision to the curriculum and its advanced requirements (Fall 2021)
- Faculty Senator (2016-2019): Welfare committee, Scholastic policy committee, monthly Dean meetings
- Humanities Hub advisory committee (2018-present)
- Manuscript Workshop program (Hum Hub)-2020 (one of two readers/commentators on Dr. Kumiko Saito's manuscript with on-campus discussion with a third outside reviewer)
- Coordinator of French Section (2007-2014)
- Department Chair search committees (2009, 2012, 2013)
- Search Committees, French Assistant Professor (Chair, 2014), French Assistant Professor (2004-5), Italian Lecturer (2006); French Lecturer (2009, 2014), Spanish Assistant Professor (2009-10), Japanese Assistant Professor (2016), Interim Director World Cinema (2019, Chair), Assistant Professor English

- Department World Cinema (2020), Assistant Professor in Spanish Latinx and migration (2022).
- Invitation and organization of scholarly visits of Profs Ronald Tiersky (Amherst, 2013), Richard Neupert (UGA, 2014), Michael Gott (U of Cincinnati 2018), immigration activist Amilcar Valencia (2019)
  - Courses in World Cinema Committee departmental chair (2011-2012)
  - Peer Evaluation Committee (elected; former TPR) (2011-2015)
  - Faculty Advisory Committee to the Dean (2010-2012)
  - Faculty Advisory Committee to the Department Chair (2006-2010)
  - College Curriculum Committee AAH, and department curriculum chair (elected 2005-2007)
  - Department Curriculum Committee (2005-2014 [dept chair, 06-07], 2018-19)
  - Ph.D. in Film Studies Exploration Committee (2004-2008)

## **RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE**

Editorial Assistant, *Yale French Studies* (2001-2003)

Assistant d'anglais, Lycée Henri Bergson, Angers, France (1993-1994)

## **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

### **Service**

- Creation of the Jordan A. Dean, Sr. Travel in Aid in French grant, (\$11,000), the Jordan A. Dean, Sr. student award in French (funded for 15 years), and an activity fund for French at Clemson (invited speakers etc.) (2013, renewed 2015; renewed 2017; renewed 2019) Turning into endowed grant via verbal agreement 2020 with additional private donation.
- Tournées Film Series Grant 2016 (\$2,200): Spring 2006; Spring 2012; Fall 2017; Spring 2018; Spring 2019. Funded by the French Consulate.
- Member, Michelin Engineering Endowment Committee. Scholarship Endowment for Engineering students (with colleagues in Engineering and the Clemson Foundation): establishes a scholarship and internships abroad.
- Vending Committee Grant. Additional funding for the FACES series (2006)
- Nominated for Excellence in Teaching Award by Student Senate, Clemson University (Fall 2004)

### **Academic fellowships and grants**

CU-SEED grant, Clemson, 2021. \$1,500 project completion

Humanities Hub Research Grant for work in Cambodia, Clemson, 2018: \$2,800

Grant for summer research in Cambodia, CAAH, Clemson Summer 2017: \$3,000

Faculty Research Development Award, CAAH, Clemson, 2011-2012: Course reduction

Faculty Research Development Award, CAAH, Clemson, 2007-2008: Course reduction, \$2,500 travel stipend



Faculty Research Development Award, CAAH, Clemson, 2006-2007: Three  
course reduction

Mrs. Gilles Whiting Dissertation Fellowship (2001-2002)

John F. Enders Summer Research Fellowship, Yale University (1999)