

CILECT CONGRESS – Artificial Intelligence and Film Education

CILECT KONGRESİ – Yapay Zekâ ve Film Eğitimi

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Abstract

The International Association of Film and Television Schools (CILECT) functions as a global network, uniting 186 film and television educational institutions across 64 nations. This organization annually facilitates general congresses, hosted by academic institutions in diverse international locations, within the framework of evolving themes. This review aims to share the events at the CILECT congress held in China in October 2024. A range of activities, designed to explore the intersection of artificial intelligence and film education under this year's theme, are intended to provide researchers and educators in the field, alongside practitioners in the creative sectors, with a platform for understanding varied international perspectives and experiences.

Keywords: Cinema, Television, Education, Artificial intelligence, International collaborations

Öz

Uluslararası Film ve Televizyon Okulları Birliği (CILECT), 64 ülkeden 186 film ve televizyon okulunun üye olduğu bir organizasyondur. Her yıl değişen temalar çerçevesinde farklı ülkelerdeki üniversitelerin ev sahipliğinde genel kongreler düzenlemektedir. Bu incelemenin amacı 2024 Ekim ayında Çin'de gerçekleştirilen CILECT kongresindeki etkinlikleri paylaşmaktır. Bu yılın teması çerçevesinde yapay zekâ ve film eğitimi odağında tasarlanan pek çok etkinlik, bu alanda çalışan araştırmacılara ve eğitimcilere olduğu kadar yaratıcı sektörlerde çalışanlara da farklı ülkelerdeki bakış açılarını ve deneyimlerini öğrenme fırsatı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sinema, Televizyon, Eğitim, Yapay zekâ, Uluslararası iş birlikleri

Initial Remarks

Celebrating its 70th anniversary, the International Association of Film and Television Schools (CILECT) held its Congress in Beijing, China, from 21-25 October 2024, hosted by

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the Communication University of China (CUC). The Congress's thematic focus centered on Artificial Intelligence, a subject of increasing salience within various creative industries, including cinema and television production. The program encompassed a diverse array of seminars and workshops, alongside regional and general association assemblies, with the contribution of 174 participants representing 84 institutions across 42 countries. As a representative of the Faculty of Communication at Yaşar University, one of three full-member institutions from Türkiye, I had the privilege of attending numerous scholarly activities dedicated to the intersection of artificial intelligence and film education, an area of significant institutional concern. I also value the opportunity to exchange observations and experiences with colleagues back in Yaşar University during formal and/or social gatherings, which often catalyze innovative ideas and broaden intellectual perspectives.

1. The Opening Ceremony and the Hospitality of CUC

The Congress convened in Beijing, China, hosted by the Communication University of China (CUC), which demonstrated exceptional organizational proficiency and hospitality throughout the event. Established in 1954 as the Beijing Broadcasting Institute, CUC holds the distinction of being China's leading communication university. As a preeminent institution of higher education in China, CUC offers a comprehensive curriculum encompassing communication studies, including journalism, film and television arts, information science and technology, further augmented by interdisciplinary programs in design studies, Chinese language and literature, foreign language and literature, computer science and technology, and management science and engineering, across bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. The university's architecturally distinctive campus features state-of-the-art studios and classrooms, complemented by cultural, housing, dining, sports, and healthcare facilities for its student body. CUC has maintained full membership in CILECT since 2004.

On behalf of CILECT, the Communication University of China (CUC) initiated the Congress with a welcome reception on Sunday, October 20th, extending hospitality to participants, including airport transfers, free Wi-fi, and personal WeChat contacts. Subsequently, the Congress commenced on the following day with a formal opening ceremony. As the institution commemorated its 70th anniversary, just like CILECT, the opening ceremony assumed significant prominence, characterized by a fusion of Chinese cultural elements with contemporary international aesthetics. The program featured diverse artistic presentations, including vocal and choreographic performances by students, alongside instrumental musical renditions by young musicians utilizing traditional Chinese instruments. The integration of advanced audiovisual effects enhanced the dynamic and spirited student performances. Following the artistic segment, formal inaugural addresses were delivered by Zhang Shuting, President of CUC, and Bruce Sheridan, President of CILECT. The morning session of the opening day culminated in the screening of

institutional inauguration videos, moderated by Stanislav Semerdjiev, Executive Director of CILECT, and Yu Ran, Chair of the CILECT Asia-Pacific Association (CAPA) and Head of the CILECT Congress Team 2024, who subsequently facilitated a ceremonial group photograph.

Participants were afforded opportunities for cultural immersion, notably through exposure to Chinese gastronomy, cultural performances, and traditional handicrafts during the welcome and farewell dinners, lunches, and refreshment intervals. Throughout the Congress, comprehensive photographic and video documentation of all activities was meticulously conducted by students from the Communication University of China (CUC). The CUC students and academic and administrative staff demonstrated exceptional diligence and professionalism, addressing any logistical challenges with sincere courtesy and hospitality.

2. Keynote Speakers – Saloni Shukla *The Future is Here: Navigating the Age of AI (October 21st, 2024)*

Saloni Shukla is a member of Whistling Woods International in Mumbai, where she investigates the intersection of art, technology, and culture. With over 18 years of professional experience in the media and entertainment industry, she has contributed extensively as a producer, cinematographer, and creative director across film, fashion, advertising, and theatre. Her current research explores emerging media, digital asset creation, and artificial intelligence-driven prompt engineering, integrating these fields with the traditional and evolving practices of filmmaking, storytelling, and immersive experiences. As the first keynote speaker of the congress, Saloni Shukla delivered her speech following the opening ceremonies and official addresses. Her presentation provided an in-depth analysis of the transformative impact of artificial intelligence on contemporary filmmaking, art, and design, with a particular focus on its implications for the next generation of creators. By examining technological advancements, creative opportunities, and ethical considerations, Shukla offered a critical overview of the current state and projected trajectory of AI-driven filmmaking, alongside its broader influence on academia and film education. She concluded by underscoring the necessity of maintaining a balance between AI and human creativity, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration among artists, scholars, and technologists, and promoting AI literacy as an essential competency for future creative professionals.

3. Keynote Speakers: Tao Jing – *Responsible AI in Cinematic Sound Art: A Human-Centric Approach (October 21st, 2024)*

Tao Jing, a prominent sound mixer and supervisor within the Chinese film industry, boasts a distinguished career marked by contributions to numerous award-winning films and the sound design for the 29th Summer Olympics (Beijing, 2008) opening and closing ceremonies. His accolades include recognition from the U.S. MPSE Awards, the Cannes International

Film Festival, the Golden Rooster Awards, and the Hong Kong Film Awards. Furthermore, he holds a senior professorship at the College of Music Recording Arts, Communication University of China. In his speech, Tao Jing offered his perspective on the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) within cinematic art, emphasizing the enduring significance of artistic expression. He posited that AI systems possess the capacity to discern and interpret the nuanced personalities and emotional content embedded within artistic creations, while concurrently acknowledging the indispensable contributions of human artists. To illustrate his arguments, Tao Jing presented sample scenes from his sound design portfolio (House of Flying Daggers, 2004, Yimou Zhang and Hero, 2002, Yimou Zhang) showcasing the sonic landscape prior to AI implementation, thereby prompting audience speculation regarding potential AI-driven augmentations. Simultaneous English interpretation was facilitated for Tao Jing's presentation, which was delivered in Chinese.

4. Keynote Speakers: Qin Shaozheng – *Decoding Human Emotion Representations: A Lens of AI-inspired Neurocinematics* (October 22nd, 2024)

Qin Shaozheng holds professorial appointments at both the State Key Laboratory of Cognitive Neuroscience and Learning, Beijing Normal University, and the IDG/McGovern Institute for Brain Research. Furthermore, he is an awardee of the National High-Level Talent Program for Scientific and Technological Innovation. His research investigates the impact of emotional stress on learning and memory, employing emotional stress induction paradigms with cinematic stimuli and multimodal neurocognitive assessments. Qin Shaozheng commenced his presentation with a definition of emotions grounded in contemporary neurobiological principles, subsequently elucidating the chronological representation of human emotions within the brain. His discourse centered on the inquiry: "Can AI agents, specifically large language models (LLMs), have human-like emotions?" He concluded by presenting empirical evidence derived from cognitive psychology and neurocinematics-based research, juxtaposing the emotional recognition and inference capabilities of human participants with those of the GPT-4 model.

5. Keynote Speakers: Stine Helen Pettersen – *European Fairytale of Copyright and AI* (October 23rd, 2024)

Stine Helén Pettersen is an expert lawyer in copyright, privacy, media law, and contractual agreements about the utilization and regulation of artificial intelligence (AI) within production contexts. Her practice primarily serves international producers, with a focus on cross-border financing and production initiatives related to the financing, production, and distribution of audiovisual and musical content. Additionally, she holds lecturing positions at various academic institutions, including the University of Oslo.

Stine Helén Pettersen immediately engaged the audience by employing a narrative-driven approach, incorporating humor to frame the complex legal issues. She presented a

chronological overview of copyright evolution in Europe, tracing its development from early creator rights protection gatherings to contemporary regulatory frameworks, encompassing various legislative acts and directives. Emphasizing the central tension between protection and freedom, she explored the ongoing debate concerning the potential for excessive protection to stifle creativity, innovation, and the free dissemination of ideas, juxtaposed with the necessity of safeguarding creators' works and livelihoods. Furthermore, she addressed the commercial dimensions of copyright, introducing the concept of fair use as articulated within US legal precedent. Moving towards contemporary legal developments, Pettersen discussed subsequent legislative efforts, including telecommunication regulation, copyright, and data protection, culminating in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which aims to protect personal data. She contextualized these legal developments within the framework of concurrent technological advancements, foreshadowing the implications of artificial intelligence (AI), which she metaphorically characterized as a 'magical spell'. Pettersen mentioned two pivotal legislative instruments, the Copyright Directive and the AI Act, emphasizing their core principles of transparency, accountability, and safety. In conclusion, she presented a four-tiered pyramidal diagram illustrating risk stratification as a regulatory framework for European stakeholders. This framework categorized AI systems based on risk level, ranging from: (1) unacceptable risk, defined as systems that violate fundamental EU rights and values, necessitating prohibition; (2) high risk, encompassing systems with potential impacts on health, safety, and fundamental rights, requiring stringent oversight; (3) limited risk, about systems that pose risks of impersonation, manipulation, and deception, mandating transparency obligations; and (4) minimal risk, encompassing common AI systems, permitting unrestricted utilization.

6. Seminars

Throughout the congress week, the overarching theme was delineated into several thematic subtopics, structured across six seminar sessions. These seminars covered a range of perspectives concerning the educational dimensions of AI, encompassing the integration of AI tools within various film and television production domains, ethical and pedagogical considerations, and strategic proposals for AI implementation within creative industries. Following expert presentations, question and answer sessions were conducted to facilitate critical analysis, scholarly discourse, and comprehensive understanding.

AI & Creativity: AI and Teaching Directing (October 22nd, 2024)

Manuel Flurin Hendry / Switzerland: *Artificial "Intelligence"*

Maria Fernanda Herrera Morales / Mexico: *AI, Screenwriting and Directing*

Amala Akkineni / India: *Screen Pilot – AI Tool for Teaching and Learning*

Kenneth Kaplan / South Africa: *AI & Creativity*

Brigid Maher / USA

Moderator: Theodore Regge Life



AI & Ethics (October 22nd, 2024)

Peter C. Slansky & Sylvia Rothe / Germany: *Teaching and Research on AI Topics at the HFF Munich*

Shen Wei / China: *The K-Machine: The AI Subjectivity Problem*

Valentin Huber / Switzerland: *Heaven or Hype? Demystifying AI in Film Education*

Moderator: Manuel Jose Damasio

AI & VR & Games (October 22nd, 2024)

Almir Almas & Deisy Fernanda Feitosa / Brazil: *Artificial Intelligence and Film Education: Reflections and Adaptations to the New Reality*

AI & Creativity (October 23rd, 2024)

Nahuel Srnec & Ana Laura Monserrat / Argentina: *Digital Cinema and AI: Cultivating a New Nouvelle Vague and How to Adapt Film School Pedagogy*

Sipho Ngcizela / South Africa: *4th Industrial Revolution and Its Creation of AI Powered Director*

Alfonso Alejandro Coronel Vega / Mexico: *The Impact of AI on Historical Representation and Narratives La Bola A Documentary Project*

Moderator: Raul Lopez Echeverria

AI & VFX & Animation (October 23rd, 2024)

Ho ChunFai / China: *Innovation and Development of Film and Television Education Based on AI Technology Reshaping the Film and Television Education Model: Opportunities and Challenges Empowered by AI*

Moderator: Michael Kowalski

AI & Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (October 23rd, 2024)

Temara Prem / South Africa: *Leveraging AI in Film Education in the Global South: Considerations in Innovation, Integration and Cultural Bias*

Neill Jordaan / South Africa: *Preparing Academic Institutions for the Integration of Artificial Intelligence, Gamification and Peer Evaluation: A Strategic Approach for Educating Generation Alpha in the Fourth Industrial Revolution*

Youhan Ding / China: *AI and Education A Strategic Exploration Through the Lens of UNESCO*

Moderator: Theodore Regge Life)

7. Workshops

Three workshop sessions were scheduled, during which the experts presented exemplars of creative ideation translated into audiovisual content across diverse applications, including narrative development, screenwriting, virtual environment production, and post-production.

Justin Trevor Winters / USA: *Artificial Intelligence and Film Education* (October 22nd, 2024)

Moderator: Michael Kowalski

Jenny Huang / Germany: *wr-AL-ter: A User Friendly Approach to Screenwriting in Collaboration with AI* (October 22nd, 2024)

Moderator: Raul Lopez Echeverria

Pauline Leininger / Germany: *Exploring the Use of AI-Generated Environments for Virtual Film Production* (October 22nd, 2024)

Moderator: Raul Lopez Echeverria

Justin Harvey / Australia: *Creative Generative Artificial Intelligence* (October 23rd, 2024)

Moderator: Manuel Jose Damasio

Thomas Brennan / Sweden: *Artificial Intelligence: Sustainability, Ethics, and Pedagogy from a Postproduction Perspective* (October 23rd, 2024)

Moderator: Manuel Jose Damasio

8. Presentations and Screenings

Sophie Normand / Singapore: *StoryBoard Hero Generate Professional Storyboards with AI* (October 22nd, 2024)

Stanislav Semerdjiev / Bulgaria: *21C Books Project Presentation* (October 22nd, 2024)

Tuomas Auvinen / Finland: *"Radical Creatives" – the Power of Film in Aalto University's Impact Work* (October 23rd, 2024)

Screening "Radical Creatives" (October 23rd, 2024)

9. Cultural Day – October 24th, 2024

The host institution facilitated a cultural excursion to the Forbidden City, a significant historical heritage site and prominent tourist destination in China. For those participants who opted not to participate in the Forbidden City visit, alternative itineraries were provided, namely a tour of the Beijing Film Academy and screenings of animated films at the Communication University of China (CUC). Participants undertaking these alternative excursions were accompanied by volunteer guides or faculty members. The majority of participants preferred to visit the Forbidden City.

The CUC Team of CILECT Congress arranged transportation via two buses, departing at 10:00 hours from designated hotels accommodating the participants. Comprehensive schedules and informational materials were distributed to each participant. Six English-speaking guides provided interpretive narration throughout the journey through the capital city and within the Forbidden City complex. Participants were provided with refreshments and were instructed to carry passports and small backpacks. The excursion was meticulously organized, despite the high volume of visitors beyond the CILECT

members. The guided tour of the imperial palace, the former residence of dynastic members and the political and ceremonial center for over five centuries, occupied more than three hours. This palace, which has functioned as a museum since 1928 and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, constitutes the world's largest preserved palace complex, housing an extensive collection of Chinese historical artifacts. The guides furnished contextual background information, facilitating the participants' comprehension of the historical artifacts' cultural significance. The excursion afforded participants a profound experience of the deep-rooted Chinese culture embodied within the palace's imposing walls, expansive courtyards, and meticulously landscaped gardens, adorned with intricate cultural motifs. Participants were offered the option of returning to their respective hotels via the buses. Alternatively, they were granted leisure time to sample local cuisine and acquire souvenirs from nearby artisanal shops.

10. The CILECT Prize and The CILECT Teaching Awards

The CILECT Prize, an international accolade recognizing student films across three categories (fiction, documentary, and animation), has been awarded since 2005. The recipients are selected through a collective voting process involving the entire CILECT community, encompassing both teachers and students. The awards are conferred upon the winners during the CILECT annual congress, accompanied by screenings of the winning films. This year, in Beijing, China, the CILECT Prize 2024 ceremony was conducted, which also included the presentation of awards to winners from preceding years who were unable to receive them due to COVID-19 related restrictions in 2020 and 2021.

- The CILECT Prize 2024 Winner in Animation: Electra (Daria Kashcheeva / FAMU / Czechia)
- The CILECT Prize 2024 Winner in Fiction: The Voice of Others (Lena Bapt / La FÉMIS / France)
- The CILECT Prize 2024 Winner in Documentary: Paul and Paul (Hugo Drechsler / NFA / Netherlands)

The CILECT Teaching Awards, established in 2014, recognize faculty members for their pedagogical excellence in film and television education. The 2023 award was conferred upon Prof. Dr. Peter C. Slansky of HFF, Germany, who received the accolade during the awards ceremony. Notably, in 2024, no other nominees were deemed to meet the established criteria for the award. Commencing in 2025, the CILECT Teaching Awards will be restructured into two distinct categories: The Lifetime Educational Achievement (LEA) Award and the Promising Young Teacher (PYT) Award, thereby expanding the pool of eligible candidates.

11. Regional and General Assemblies

The CILECT Congress transcends the function of an event for presentations and workshops, serving also as a formal assembly for the conduct of essential organizational governance for an international association comprising 186 member institutions across 64 countries. Throughout the congress week, regional assemblies, namely CAPA (CILECT Asia-Pacific Regional Association), CARA (CILECT African Regional Association), CIBA (CILECT Ibero-American Regional Association), CNA (CILECT North-American Regional Association), and GEECT (European Grouping of Film and Television Schools), convened during parallel meetings in the afternoon sessions to address administrative obligations. The evaluation of candidate member applications, subsequent membership voting, and resolution of membership cancellations were undertaken. Deliberations concerning legislative and financial matters were also conducted. Elections for council members, including the CILECT presidency, were executed. Two specialized committees shared their reports and action plans, and a new one was established. Updates regarding the 21st Century Film, TV, and Media School Book Project were disseminated. Furthermore, calls for collaborative projects were underscored as a strategic priority for the organization.

12. Final Remarks

CILECT, which has convened creators and academicians from disparate geographical locations and varied industrial and historical backgrounds, concluded its congress in China with yet another successful event. This significant organization which facilitates not only networking, intellectual discourse, and collaborative partnerships but also a remarkable cultural exchange, encourages the creation of a platform where film schools engage in critical discussions regarding current issues and collectively explore potential resolutions, all within the framework of a new theme each year. This year's almost week-long congress in China provided a valuable opportunity to connect with creators and academics worldwide, fostering collaborative discussions on shared concerns and exploring solutions to AI-related challenges in film production and education. In the context of this year's theme, Artificial Intelligence and Film Education, it is evident that this discussion will extend to encompass diverse perspectives, especially within creative domains. Consequently, interdisciplinary collaborations and the exchange of international experiences are indispensable in the formulation and enforcement of requisite foundational regulatory frameworks and principles.

Note: The sources from the websites below contributed supplementary information to specific segments of my review.

<https://cilect.org/>

<https://www.cilectcongress2024.cn/>

<https://en.cuc.edu.cn/>

https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yasak_%C5%9Echir

