

Panel B4

Sala Emiciclo

National Experiences in Animation II

Chris Pallant

Do you speak Clanger? – An introductory history of the Smallfilms studio



The iconic animations produced by Canterbury-based Smallfilms studio between 1958-1984, including *Ivor the Engine*, *Noggin the Nog*, *Pingwings*, *Pogles' Wood*, *Clangers*, and *Bagpuss*, amongst others, constitute a significant thread of British cultural history. Furthermore, a show like *Clangers*, which enjoyed a reboot in 2015 (BBC/NBC), confirms the lasting popular appeal of the story worlds – and the animation aesthetics contained therein – created by Smallfilms. However, these works are largely overlooked in the existing scholarly literature and are even less well known internationally. To help remedy this, I am currently initiating a Leverhulme Trust-funded research project to establish a comprehensive historical record of Smallfilms and their animated films. As part of this project I have been granted access to the surviving studio site and all archival documents, as well as the full co-operation of Smallfilms co-founder Peter Firmin. Consequently, this paper will serve a double purpose: to provide a bitesize historical account of the Smallfilms studio as well as providing an up-to-date account of this ongoing research project. Audience members can look forward to short clips from the animated shows, pictures from the archive, and original interview footage filmed with Peter Firmin.

Biography

Dr [Chris Pallant](#) is a Senior Lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University. He is the author of [Demystifying Disney: A History of Disney Feature Animation](#) (2011), co-author of [Storyboarding: A Critical History](#) (2015) and editor of [Animated Landscapes: History, Form and Function](#) (2015) and the forthcoming four-volume *Animation: Collected Published Writings* (2017). He is also the Founder and Series Editor of Bloomsbury's [Animation: Key Films/Filmmakers](#), which will launch in 2017. Chris has published in book chapter and journal form on a range of topics, including Disney animation, the 'cartoonism' of Quentin Tarantino's live-action films, performance capture technology, the animated landscape of New York City, and the work of Rockstar Games. He currently serves as Vice-President for the [Society for Animation Studies](#). Twitter: @cjpallant.