

The Visual Studies Platform (VSP)
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HOW TO BE A FILM HISTORY DETECTIVE

My life journey telling stories through orphan films

Public lecture by James Forsher

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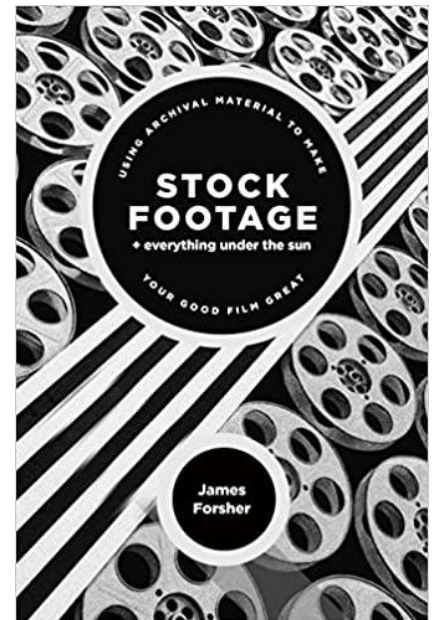
Time: Tuesday, May 2, 2023, 17.40-19.20

Place: Central European University, Auditorium

Over the course of nearly 5 decades, I've focused on collecting orphan films and telling contemporary stories using old footage. I am proud to call myself an archival filmmaker.

Using examples from my documentary projects over the years, we will look at how archival footage and paper material was integrated into stories about such wide-ranging topics as US-Russia Propaganda Wars (*The Red Nightmare*-in production), history of Hollywood Studio System (*The Hollywood Mogul Wars*-in production), the story of how Star Trek was created (*Roddenberry's Trek*, 2022), Elvis Presley's early years in Hollywood (*Elvis und das Madschen aus Wien*, 2017) and scandals in Hollywood (*Faded Dreams, Hollywood's Unsolved Mysteries*, 1987).

We will explore where the footage comes from, how to legally use it, how to write a narrative that ties the old and the new as well as how to make the footage - no matter how old – feel contemporary in its usage.



James Forsher has been producing non-fiction programming focusing on Hollywood for over 4 decades. His television programs include the twenty-six part series *Hollywood Chronicles* for the Discovery Channel (1990), the eight-part *Changing Culture of the Workplace* (1995), *The Hollywood Censorship Wars* for the Arts & Entertainment Network (1994), *Lost Warriors* for PBS (1998) and the thirteen part *The 1960's* for Encore. Feature length specials include *Hollywood Uncensored* and *Hollywood Ghost Stories* (which have aired on such systems as Cinemax and The Movie Channel). He recently developed and narrated the ORF/ Langbein production of *Elvis und das Madschen aus Wien* (2017). Dr. Forsher wrote *The Community of Cinema: How cinema and spectacle transformed the American downtown* (Praeger, 2002).

He has served as a consultant for a number of organizations, including ABC News, PBS Marketplace. He also was a producer of visual content for Pearson and Allyn & Bacon Publishers. James Forsher is also a retired Associate Professor in Communication, having taught at The University of Vienna; California State University, East Bay; Seattle University; Temple University and Florida State University. He has also served as a Fulbright Specialist at the University of Vienna and Klagenfurt University in 2015. His background is a blend of an interest in American cultural institutions and communication studies, which he has examined both in written works and as a television producer.