

## **BAFTSS Special Interest Group on Documentary Film Report on Activities 2016-18**

The BAFTSS Documentary SIG has resumed operation, with a renewed commitment expressed by a few dozen BAFTSS members. Alisa Lebow (University of Sussex) and Silke Panse (University for the Creative Arts) have taken over the stewardship of the SIG from Brian Winston. Their first act as conveners of the Documentary Special Interest Group was to reconnect with the initial SIG members to ensure that there was a continued interest. With enthusiastic confirmation from many of the original members and further interest from new members, Lebow and Panse then teamed up with three further film scholars to revive another dormant ‘institution’ on the UK documentary scene, *Documentary Now!*. Together with Anabelle Honess Roe (University of Surrey), Leshu Torchin (University of St. Andrews) and Tianqi Yu (University of the West of Scotland), the two documentary SIG leaders organised a one day symposium at Birkbeck College, University of London, in December of 2018 entitled “Has Documentary Failed?”:

<https://documentarynow.wordpress.com/2018/11/30/documentary-now-2018-programme/>

The symposium was made possible with the support of BAFTSS, along with the University of Surrey and BIMl (Birkbeck Institute of the Moving Image). With 10 presenters and a full house, the event was a tremendous success. There was lively discussion about relevant approaches to thinking about documentary—and making it—at this point in history, and several ideas were solicited from the audience for future events. The next event the conveners will organise for BAFTSS Doc SIG members under the dual auspices with *Documentary Now!* will likely be on “Decolonizing Documentary.”