

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### *Contemporary Women's Cinema and Media: Aesthetics, Identities, and Imaginaries* XXV International Conference of Film Studies

Rome, November 21-22, 2019  
Department of Philosophy, Communication, and Performing Arts  
University of Roma Tre

*Confirmed keynote speakers:*  
Kathleen McHugh (UCLA), Lingzhen Wang (Brown University)

### **EXTENDED DEADLINE: September 15**

The interplay of global economic aspects, cultural and geopolitical positioning, and specific forms of aesthetic expression and imagination plays an increasingly important role in today's audio-visual environment. The XXV International Conference of Film Studies, *Contemporary Women's Cinema and Media*, aims to address the contemporary production of women's cinema, with a spotlight on other audio-visual media such as television and the Internet.

The conference's primary topic is female authorship: which aesthetic approaches, which imaginaries, and which identities do women express and produce? How do they tackle the relationship between individual and collective identities and between women and "reality"? Which features distinguish Italian and European film production from those in other geopolitical environments? Women's cinema is, in fact, a globally established reality with specific characteristics in how it moves between local, global, domestic, and international contexts and imaginaries.

The study of female authorship has developed since the early 1970s, addressing both theoretical and historical perspectives, and has mainly focused on: 1) the subversive and counter-hegemonic gaze of women directors and spectators; 2) historical research on the role of professional and creative women in production, distribution, and movie-going activities; and 3) the relationship between female authorship and the production of new and transgressive imaginaries.

Contemporary perspectives saw further extension and offshoots along these lines, underlining the relationship between women's gaze and the images they produce within all audio-visual forms, as well as production and movie-going activities. During the past twenty years or so, scholars have focused in particular on "minoritarian" groups both in relation to intersectional perspectives and to transnational dimensions, enhancing the interplay between female authorship and global and postcolonial dynamics.

Even though, historically speaking, women occupying leading positions in media industries have been rare, they have always played a fundamental creative role in approaching the most complex and problematic aspects of their experience through their narratives. The expression 'women's cinema and media' is thus an ideological choice that focuses on the way in which female authors approach differences – of gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation, religion, etc. – during different phases – from production to writing, and from directing to distribution and cultural dissemination.

Against this background, attention is focused on how the processes resulting from globalisation have shaped and continue to shape women's experiences differently from men's, as well as among women.

We suggest, in particular, the following topics:

- How women's language, including those forms attributable to *écriture féminine*, changes in relation to geopolitical dynamics marked by globalisation and trans/national contexts. It will be useful to take into account not only experiences such as those found in Latin America, North Africa, and the Middle East, but also Asian and, in particular, Chinese productions. By comparing styles and imaginaries, one would hope to detect both the dominant trajectories within various national cinemas, as well as the recurrent interplay and trespasses brought about by 'accented', diasporic, transcultural, and other narrative forms.

- How Production Studies address the role of female professionals in top creative positions. Using quantitative and qualitative studies, we can analyse women's experience in film and the audio-visual industry in general, including those realities in which diversity policies and other positive actions were taken to mitigate gender asymmetries in creative and high-level positions.

- The way in which contemporary festival circuits have created a network of 'alternative' distribution for women's productions, beginning with festivals with a long history, such as the Festival International de Films de Femmes de Créteil, the Sundance Film Festival, the Toronto International Film Festival, the Seoul International Women's Film Festival, and other case studies.

- Female authorship takes different forms. Besides the role of women directors, we would like to explore women's contribution in other creative positions such as cinematography, editing, composing, etc.. Particular attention will be paid to screenwriters, who hold a relevant and special position in the contemporary creative landscape, also in Italy. Another aspect to consider is the interplay between female authorship and stardom/celebrity.

- How the psychoanalytic approach can be rearticulated to interpret contemporary women's cinema and media, especially in relation to post-colonial dynamics.

- The relationship between authorship and ideological positioning. We would like to discuss how women's creative practices position them as politically aware in the contemporary scenario, above all in relation to issues such as feminism and post-feminism, racial politics, the LGBTQIA+ community, neoliberalism, etc.. Fundamental in this context will be the contribution of queer theories and intersectionality, without ignoring the transformative impact the transnational feminist *#metoo* movement has had on the various settings where it intervened.

- The role of female authors and the production of the imaginary in non-cinematographic and serial narratives. In particular, TV serial narratives; experimental narratives produced for online distribution; narrations of the self and self-portraits mixing traditional and experimental formal-linguistic aspects. This includes technological media such as gaming, in which female authorship is still considered controversial.

- The various forms of documentary, including the 'cinema of the real'. Historically, documentary has been one of women's privileged filmic genres. We are interested in the most intimate and personal forms, but also in political documentaries; documentary productions for the Internet as well as reportages for TV or other hegemonic media; found-footage films and films dealing with history, memory and the archive, etc.

- Experimental film and video especially made for or screened in museums; more generally, we are interested in the ways experimental film and video participate and are part of contemporary visual culture.

Proposals of 300-500 words should be sent to [roma3conference@uniroma3.it](mailto:roma3conference@uniroma3.it), accompanied by 3-5 keywords, a brief bio, and contact information.

The **extended deadline** to present abstracts is **September 15, 2019**. Acceptance will be communicated by September 22.

Speakers' fee: 50 Euros.

Presentations shall be 20 minutes in length. Talks can be in English or Italian.

Organisation: Department of Philosophy, Communication, and Performing Arts – University of Roma Tre

Conference Directors: Ilaria A. De Pascalis and Veronica Pravadelli

Scientific Committee: Leonardo De Franceschi, Stefania Parigi, Ivelise Perniola, Marta Perrotta