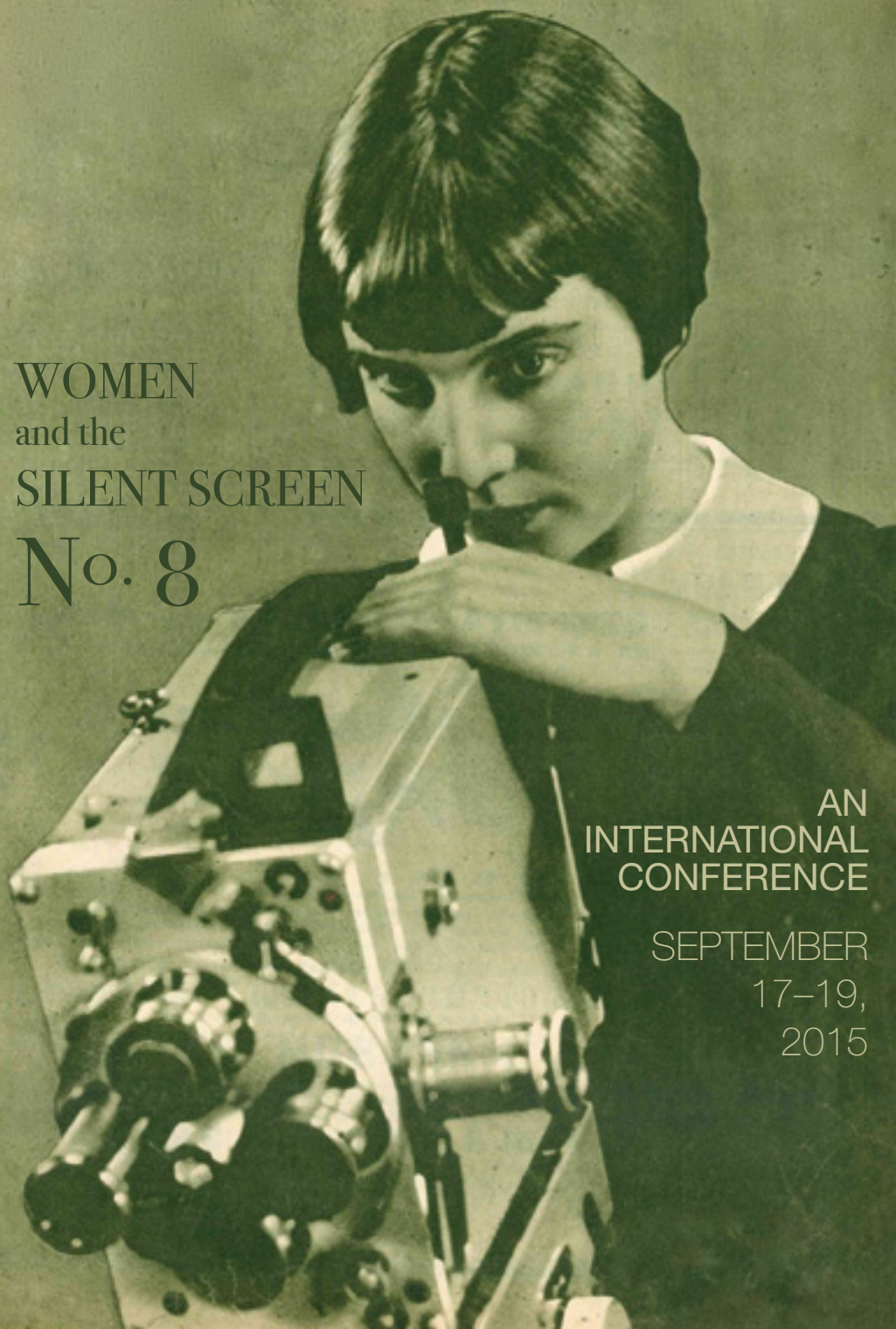


UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

WOMEN
and the
SILENT SCREEN
No. 8

AN
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER
17-19,
2015





Lois Weber on the set of *The Angel of Broadway* (1927)
with cinematographer Arthur C. Miller.

WOMEN and the SILENT SCREEN No. 8

AN
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

Women, Labor, and Working-Class Cultures

SEPTEMBER
17–19,
2015

EIGHTH WOMEN AND SILENT SCREEN CONFERENCE

Sponsored by:



Carnegie Museum of Art

Department of English,
University of Pittsburgh

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

The **DIETRICH** School of
Arts & Sciences



Film Studies Program,
University of Pittsburgh



Senator John Heinz History Center



Humanities Center,
University of Pittsburgh



Women and Film History International



LABOR

Director: **Mark Lynn Anderson**

Organizers: **Katie Bird, Natalie Ryabchikova, and Laura Stamm**

Librarian and Archival Researcher: **John Riddle**

Program Committee: **Mary Desjardins and Victoria Duckett**

Editor: **Lynn Arner**

Film Programming: **Mark Garrett Cooper, Annette Förster, Martin Johnson, Heather Linville, Greg Pierce, Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, and Shelley Stamp**

Piano Accompaniment: **Philip C. Carli**

Musician: **Michael Johnsen**

Projectionists: **Emily Davis and Greg Pierce**

Theater Operations: **Emily Davis and Lucy Stewart**

Steering Committee of Women and Film History International:

Mark Lynn Anderson, Vicki Callahan, Victoria Duckett, Hilary Hallett (member at large), Michele Leigh (co-executive secretary), Susan Potter (co-executive secretary), Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi (member at large), Mary Simonson (member at large), Kristen Anderson Wagner, and Yiman Wang (member at large)

Administrative Assistance: **Jen Florian and Alyssa Hesse**

Volunteers: **Jordan Bernsmeier, Jedd Hakimi, Sonia Lopher, and Julie Nakama**



The final shot of *Baby Face* (Warner Bros., 1933).

PROLOGUE

In 1933, the Production Code Administration required Warner Bros. to change the ending of *Baby Face* so that the film's central character, played by Barbara Stanwyck, is suitably punished for her gold-digging ways by being banished to the mill towns of Pittsburgh from whence she came. The city was already well established in the American cultural imaginary as a sort of crucible of modernity where the daily sufferings of miners and factory workers were deemed the necessary cost for an ever-expanding consumer society defined as much by exclusive luxury goods as by its extensive industrial infrastructure. Whatever James Parton may have intended when he infamously described the city in the pages of *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1868 as "hell with the lid taken off," the writer conjured a vast geography where the fire and smoke of the mills and foundries constituted not only a spectacular inferno but a more expansive vista in which the different living and working conditions of Pittsburgh's various social classes could be glimpsed from a single vantage point, a sort of associational montage of the extreme wealth of a leisured class and the abjection of the working poor, a perspective still readily available today from different locations around the city.

Bringing the Women and Silent Screen conference to Pittsburgh affords us an opportunity to reexamine what has remained a deeply important and determining concern of feminist film history and historiography from its dispersed beginnings: How are social and economic class meaningful to any historical consideration of women and the international cinema? To return to the question of class so explicitly means remembering a particular commitment to social history that propelled much of the research of the late 1970s and 1980s, well before the historical turn in film studies supposedly happened or became celebrated. The sheer volume of publications on women and early cinema that have appeared even in the last couple of years attests to the enduring perspicacity of the questions we ask, the research we pursue, and the courses we teach. Yet, this eighth international conference is not just a chance to look back and take stock of where we come from and where we are going. Rather, convening in Pittsburgh entails an astonished looking around: looking around at the different types of the work we perform as historians but also looking at the contestations, antagonisms, and tensions that productively exist among us, relations that neither wholly divide nor unite us but that account for our being in this world together. Welcome to the hell that is Pittsburgh. I think you are going to like it. 🍷

Mark Lynn Anderson, Director
Women and the Silent Screen VIII



From *The Pittsburgh Survey*, Russell Sage Foundation, 1914.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM: DAY N^o. I

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

The University Club, University of Pittsburgh, 123 University Place

WELCOME TO WOMEN AND THE SILENT SCREEN VIII

9:30–10:50 A.M.

BALLROOM B

Session A

10–11:30 A.M.

A 1: PERFORMING WOMEN

GOLD ROOM

Chair: Kristen Anderson Wagner (Menlo College)

Johanna Schmertz (University of Houston-Downtown) “Leatrice Joy’s ‘Haircut Films,’ the Program Film, and Cultural Histories of Gender.”

Kristen Anderson Wagner (Menlo College) “The Silent Comedienne as Mimic and the Fluidity of Modern Identity.”

Yiman Wang (University of California, Santa Cruz) “From Star Studies to ‘Minor’ Performer-worker Studies: Regarding Anna May Wong’s Labor.”

A 2: WRITING AND REVISING THE CINEMA

CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Christine Gledhill (University of Sunderland)

Donna R. Casella (Minnesota State University) “Mary Manning: The Woman behind Ireland’s Silent Art House Films.”

Liz Clarke (University of California, Santa Cruz) “Scenario Writing Manuals and Representing Creative Labor.”

Jennifer Bean (University of Washington) “Serial Scribblers: Mass Culture as Play.”

Lunch

11:45 A.M.–1 P.M.

BALLROOM B

Session B

1:15–3 P.M.

Session B 1: THE LABOR OF EDUCATION, REFORM, AND UPLIFT

GOLD ROOM

Chair: Jennifer Horne (University of California, Santa Cruz)

Christina Lane (University of Miami) “The Politics of Community, Work, Class, and Place: The Making of *Once Upon a Time* (1922).”

Constance Balides (Tulane University) “Reform Publicity, The Visibility of Labor, and the Secular Spectator.”

Jennifer Horne (University of California, Santa Cruz) “Coming to Terms: Political Socialization and Better Films Workers.”



Harry Carey and Grace Henderson in *The Unseen Enemy* (Biograph, 1912).

Session B 2: MARRIED TO THE PROFESSION

CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Susan Potter (The University of Sydney)

Susan Potter (University of Sydney) “Griffith’s Modern Families: The Late Biograph Films and the Emergence of Sexuality.”

JoAnne Ruvoli (Ball State University) “The ‘New Woman’ in Victorian Marriage: Lois Weber’s *The Blot*, *Shoes*, and *Two Wise Wives*.”

Anke Brouwers (University of Antwerp, KASK Ghent) “Making it Work: Mary Pickford’s Ambivalent Discourse of Professionalism and Domesticity.”

Session C

3:15–5 P.M.

Session C 1: TRIALS AND TRAILS OF THE ADVENTURESS

BALLROOM B

Chair: Amy Shore (State University of New York at Oswego)

Luciana Corrêa de Araújo (Federal University of São Carlos) “Eva Nil, a Brazilian Film Star between the Ingénue-type and the Action Heroine.”

Aurore Spiers (Columbia University) “Berthe Dagmar from the Circus to Cinema: The Acting and Directing Career of a French *Femme Nouvelle*.”

Amy Shore (State University of New York at Oswego) “Labor or Commodity? The Case of Nell Shipman’s Animal Performers.”

Session C 2: EXPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE: DANCE, MUSIC, AND VOICE
CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Mary Simonson (Colgate University)

Christopher Natzén (National Library of Sweden) “Female Cinema Musicians in Sweden, 1905-1915.”

Elisa Uffreduzzi (University of Florence) “Tango Lessons in Italian Silent Cinema: Passive Women and Catholic Censorship.”

Laraine Porter (De Montfort University) “‘Have You a Happy Voice?’ Women Stars on the Cusp of the ‘Talkie’ Revolution in Britain.”

Session C 3: COLLECTION AND RECOLLECTION

GOLD ROOM

Chair: Kristen Fallica (University of Pittsburgh)

Christina Burr (University of Windsor) “Working Girls’ Fan Culture and Gendered Modernity in the US in the Early Twentieth Century.”

Kim Tomadjoglou (New York University) “A Labor of Love and a Cult of Fragments: Maria Adriana Prolo’s Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Torino.”

Diana Anselmo-Sequeira (University of California, Irvine) “Labor of Love: The Craft Work of Moving-Loving Girls, 1914–1921.”

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Frick Fine Arts Building, University of Pittsburgh, 6:30–7:45 P.M.

SUMIKO HIGASHI “The Decline of Middlebrow Taste in Celebrity Culture: The First Fan Magazines”

Introduced by: Lucy Fischer (University of Pittsburgh)

Sumiko Higashi is professor emerita in the Department of History, The College at Brockport, State University of New York. She is the author of *Virgins, Vamps, and Flappers: The American Silent Film Heroine* (1978) and *Cecil B. DeMille and American Culture: The Silent Era* (1994), as well as numerous essays on women in film and television, film as historical representation, and film history as cultural history. She addresses fan magazine culture for crossover readers in her latest book, *Stars, Fans, and Consumption in the 1950s: Reading Photoplay* (2014). 🌸

CONFERENCE PROGRAM: DAY N^o. 2

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

The University Club, University of Pittsburgh, 123 University Place

Session D

10–11:30 A.M.

Session D 1: GENDER AND THE AESTHETIC CRITICISM OF CINEMA CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Charles Exley (University of Pittsburgh)

Mary Simonson (Colgate University) “Laboring Bodies: The *Ballets Russes* On Screen.”

Canan Balan (Istanbul Şehir University) “Marxism, Gender and Poetry:
Nazım Hikmet’s Writings on Early Film Culture in Turkey.”

Dorin Schumacher (Independent scholar) “Helen Gardner: Philosopher of Early Cinema.”

Session D 2: CREATING CULTURE AND CLASS IN SILENT ERA CINEMA GOLD ROOM

Chair: Hilary A. Hallett (Columbia University)

Hilary A. Hallett (Columbia University) “Reshaping Sexual Cultures: Elinor Glyn
as Auteur.”

Lynn Arner (Brock University) “Absence by Association: The American Silent
Cinema and the Gendering of Chaucer.”

Lois W. Banner (University of Southern California) “Greta Garbo and the Creation of
Ideal Beauty—the Making of a Prototype.”

Session D 3: WORLDWIDE WOMEN AND THE SILENT SCREEN: THE USES, USERS, AND FUTURES OF THE WOMEN FILM PIONEERS PROJECT

BALLROOM B

Chair: **Kate Saccone** (University of Warwick)

Kate Saccone (Columbia University) “The Women Film Pioneers Project: Two Years Later.”

Sofia Bull (University of Warwick) “Creating Context: The Women Film Pioneers Project’s Overview Essays.”

Laura Horak (Carleton University) “Teaching with the Women Film Pioneers Project.”

Lunch

NOON–1:15 P.M.

BALLROOM B

Session E

1:30–3:15 P.M.

Session E 1: WHITHER WOMEN’S WORK?

BALLROOM B

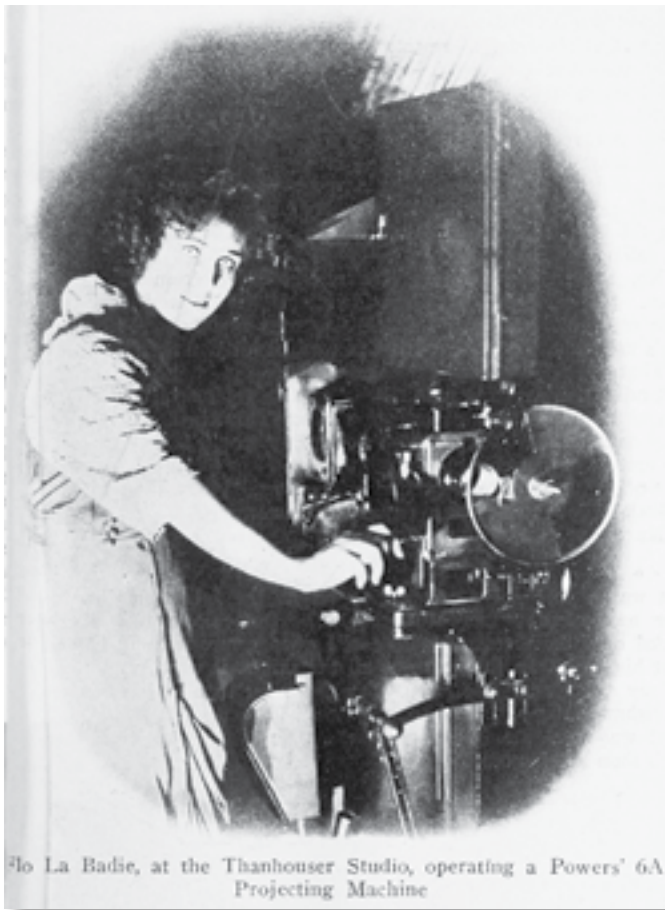
Chair: **Jennifer Bean** (University of Washington)

Michele Leigh (Southern Illinois University Carbondale) “Women’s Work?: Uncovering Female Labor in Early Russian Cinema.”

Mark Garrett Copper (University of South Carolina) “Recovery Work.”

Aimee Dixon Anthony (George Mason University) “Absence in Film History: African American Women in Early Cinema.”

Jane M. Gaines (Columbia University) “On Counting vs. Telling: Silent Film Era Payroll Data.”



Florence La Badie in *Reel Life*, January 24, 1914.

Session E 2: A DIFFICULT LIFE: RECONSIDERATIONS OF BIOGRAPHY
GOLD ROOM

Chair: Gloria Monti (California State University, Fullerton)

Anupama Kapse (Queens College, City University of New York)
“Remembering Kamlabai.”

Ned Thanhouser (Thanhouser Company Film Preservation, Inc.) and Bryan Smith
(Independent scholar) “Florence La Badie: Silent Film Star and Presidential Courtesan?”

Heather Linville (Academy Film Archive) “Aloha Wanderwell Baker: The World’s
Most Travelled Girl.”

Session E 3: SCREENING MODERNITY: WOMEN, WORK, AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Kathleen Murray (University of Pittsburgh)

Annette Förster (Independent scholar) “Women, Work, and Money in Rosa Porten’s Films.”

Yuanyuan Li (Zhejiang University) “What Is a Modern Woman?: The Silent Film, School for Chinese Women.”

Emiliana Losma (Independent scholar) “Women’s Place: The Representation of Working Women in the Italian Silent Cinema.”

Session F

3:30–5 P.M.

BALLROOM B

Meeting of Women and Film History International

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Frick Fine Arts Building, University of Pittsburgh, 6:30–7:45 P.M.

VANESSA TOULMIN “Lady Boxers, Sorceresses, and Amazonians—Women in Illegitimate Entertainment Culture, 1900 to 1930.”

Introduced by: Kathy Fuller-Seeley (University of Texas at Austin)

Vanessa Toulmin is director of the National Fairground Archive at the University of Sheffield and chair in early film and popular entertainment. Her work has appeared in internationally recognized journals where she has published articles on early film; Edwardian and Victorian entertainments and popular culture; the history of freak shows, carnivals and British fairgrounds; and the culture and society of travelling showpeople. Toulmin is the author of several books, including *The Lost World of Mitchell and Kenyon: Edwardian Britain on Film* (2004), *Electric Edwardians: The Film of Mitchell and Kenyon* (2007), and *Pleasurelands: All the Fun of the Fair* (2003). Her recent publications include four major works on the architecture and history of Blackpool’s attractions: *Winter Gardens Blackpool: The Most Magnificent Palace of Amusement in the World* (2009), *Blackpool Tower: Wonderland of the World* (2011), *Blackpool Pleasure Beach: More than Just an Amusement Park* (2011), and the *Blackpool Illuminations: The Greatest Free Show on Earth* (2012). She also has acted as historical consultant for seven major television productions since 2000, including the Mitchell & Kenyon series on BBC 2 and has co-produced five major radio programs with BBC Radio 4 on popular entertainment, the history of fairs, and early cinema. She recently worked with BBC 4 *Timeshift*, producing two programs on the history of fairs and circuses and has also appeared on *Who Do You Think You Are?* and *Reel History of Britain* with Melvyn Bragg. 🌟

CONFERENCE PROGRAM: DAY N^o. 3

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

The University Club, University of Pittsburgh, 123 University Place

Session G

10–11:45 A.M.

Session G 1: THE TRAFFIC IN FILM: WOMEN IN DISTRIBUTION, EXHIBIT, AND ITINERANT PRODUCTION

BALLROOM B

Chair: Martin L. Johnson (The Catholic University of America)

Kathy Fuller-Seeley (University of Texas at Austin) “Working Class Culture and Small Town Silent Film Exhibition—Fannie Shaw Cook’s Adventures, 1902-1917.”

Donald Crafton (University of Notre Dame) “Edna Williams, Pioneer Film Distribution Executive.”

Martin L. Johnson (The Catholic University of America) “‘She Is The Show’: Women Itinerant Filmmakers in the Classical Hollywood Era, 1935-1940.”

Session G 2: CLASS, GENDER, AND COMIC PERFORMANCE

GOLD ROOM

Chair: Maggie Henefeld (University of Minnesota)

Maggie Henefeld (University of Minnesota) “‘All That Is Solid’ Spontaneously Combusts: On the Catastrophe of Comedienne Productivity.”

Joanna E. Rapf (University of Oklahoma) “‘A Versatile Comedienne’: Anne Cornwall.”

Laura Stamm (University of Pittsburgh) “Power Plays: Male Impersonation in Alice Guy Blaché’s Crossdressing Comedies.”

Session G 3: WOMEN, WORK, AND WAR: ON THE CINEMAS OF FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, ITALY, AND THE UNITED STATES DURING WWI

CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Neepa Majumdar (University of Pittsburgh)

Elena Mosconi (Università degli studi di Pavia) “At War in Skirts: Cinema and Female Labor in Italy, 1914-1918.”

Annie Fee (University College London) “Defending a Common Cinema: Participative Film Culture in 1920s Montmartre.”

Kristin Nicole Harper (New York University) “Love’s Labor’s Lost: Women’s War Work and Class in WWI American Cinema.”

Lunch

NOON–1:15 P.M.

BALLROOM B

Session: H: Saturday, September 19

1:30–3:15 P.M.

SPECIAL SESSION: LOIS WEBER: NEW PERSPECTIVES

BALLROOM B

Panel Chair: Shelley Stamp (University of California, Santa Cruz)

Paul Young (Dartmouth College) “The Aesthetic Politics of Dancing: Pirouetting Through Grand Opera with Lois Weber.”

Marcia Landy (University of Pittsburgh) “Reflections on a Chapter in Film History through Lois Weber’s Filmmaking in *A Chapter in Her Life*.”

Martin F. Norden (University of Massachusetts Amherst) “The International Marketing and Reception of *Where Are My Children?*”

Session I: Saturday, September 19

3:30–5:00 P.M.

Session I 1: COSTUME DESIGN AND FASHION

GOLD ROOM

Chair: Julie Nakama (University of Pittsburgh)

Lucy Fischer (University of Pittsburgh) “Nazimova and Art Nouveau in *Salome* and *Madame Peacock*.”

Drake Stutesman (New York University) “On the Career of Costume Designer Clare West.”

Louise Wallenberg (Stockholm University) and Torkild Thanem (Stockholm University) “Factory-workers, Shop-girls, and Mannequins: Fashion as Cinematic Scenery and as Real-Life Work Place in the 1920s.”



From Homer Croy, *How Motion Pictures Are Made* (Harper and Brothers, 1918).

Session I 2: REGULATING TALENT: WOMEN'S SCREEN WORK AND THE PROBLEM OF THE EXTRA

CONFERENCE ROOM A

Chair: Mary Desjardins (Dartmouth College)

Kerry McElroy (Concordia University) "Too Many Girls: The Discourse of the 'Actress Saturation Problem' in Early Hollywood."

Denise McKenna and (University of California, San Diego) and Charlie Keil (University of Toronto) "Working for Laughs: Comic Performance as Gendered Labor in Early Hollywood."

Heidi Kenaga (Wayne State University) "'The True Story of a Real Hollywood Extra Girl': Newspaper Discourse on Women's Studio Labor, 1925."

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Frick Fine Arts Building, University of Pittsburgh, 5:45–7 P.M.

KATHY PEISS "Silent Film and the Hidden Histories of Working-Class Women."

Introduced by: Susan Andrade (University of Pittsburgh)

Kathy Peiss is the Roy F. and Jeannette P. Nichols Professor of American History at the University of Pennsylvania, where she specializes in modern American cultural history and the history of women, gender, and sexuality. She is the author of *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn of the Century New York* (1986), *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (1998), and *Zoot Suit: The Enigmatic Career of an Extreme Style* (2011). 📖



Pittsburgh Motion Picture Bulletin, October 18, 1916.

Courtesy of Detre Library and Archives, Senator John Heinz History Center.

FILM SCREENINGS

CMOA Theater, Carnegie Museum of Art, 4400 Forbes Avenue

Film program notes by: Mark Lynn Anderson, Katie Bird, Mark Garrett Cooper, Martin Johnson, Heather Linville, Greg Pierce, Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, and Shelley Stamp

Thursday, September 17, 2015, 8:15 p.m.

PROGRAM 1. LOCAL, ITINERANT, AND NONTHEATRICAL

Curated by: Mark Garrett Cooper, Martin Johnson, Heather Linville, and Greg Pierce

Itinerate 16mm projection by: **Greg Pierce***

(Please look to **page 22** for footnote.)

The Movie Queen [Lincoln, Maine] (US 1935) 33 minutes. 16mm.
Print courtesy of Northeast Historic Film.

Piano accompaniment by: Philip C. Carli†

The Movie Queen exists at the intersection of two widespread, if little known, small town cultural practices in the United States in the early twentieth century—the home talent play and the local film. Home talent plays were formulaic scripted dramas written by commercial theater organizations who employed traveling directors, mostly women, to produce them in small towns. At their peak, home talent theater companies (who sold their plays as fundraising vehicles for civic and service organizations) were producing hundreds of plays every year, with the most popular play, *Aunt Lucia*, featuring a scene in which the town’s businessmen appear in drag. Local films, whose primary attraction is to give audiences an opportunity to see themselves in the movies, date to the beginnings of cinema, but the mode was transformed in the early 1930s when 16mm equipment and more powerful projectors made it possible for itinerant filmmakers to visit even the smallest towns to produce non-fiction, non-narrative motion pictures that captured everyday life. As a fictional work that includes many non-fiction scenes, *The Movie Queen* is best understood as a representation of movie culture through the prism of small town life. 🍷

MJ

Laconia Trip (1923, Claudia Lea and Eleanor Sheffield Phelps) 11 minutes. 16mm.
Print courtesy of Moving Image Research Collections, University of South Carolina.

This home movie documents the voyage of the S. S. Laconia on the first round-the-world package tour sponsored by American Express. It is part two of a reel that begins with footage of Claudia Lea Phelps’s West Highland Terriers, a breed she helped introduce to North America. In addition to dogs and travels, the Phelps Sisters filmed their Aiken, S.C., home, Rose Hill, and its environs. Many of their films may be seen online at mirc.sc.edu. In addition to filming the trip, the Phelps sisters created scrapbooks documenting the experience, which may also be found online at digital.tcl.sc.edu. Eleanor is more visible in the scrapbook photographs than Claudia Lea, which may suggest the latter as the primary cameraperson, but this and other key details of their filmmaking practice will likely never be definitively known. 🍷

MGC

Rediscovering the films of Aloha Wanderwell Baker: The World’s Most Widely Travelled Girl. Digital. Courtesy of Academy Film Archive.

In the 1920s, travel films became a popular attraction for American movie audiences. Hollywood studios saw the profit potential and backed the release of many travel films, including those made by notable filmmakers like the “father” of the travelogue, Burton Holmes, or adventurers Martin and Osa Johnson. Since their films were widely distributed theatrically, their contribution to the evolution of documentary filmmaking is known today. However, few modern scholars are familiar with the name Aloha Wander-



Aloha Wanderwell Baker.
Courtesy of Academy Film Archive.

well Baker. Over the course of her lifetime as a successful independent travel filmmaker and lecturer, Aloha's films gave audiences a snapshot of the people, culture, and historic landmarks across 80 countries.

Aloha's foray into travel filmmaking began early in life. Named Idris Hall at birth, Aloha joined self-proclaimed "Captain" Walter Wanderwell's around-the-globe expedition in 1922 at the age of 14. Crisscrossing 43 countries in a caravan of Ford Model Ts, the crew moved efficiently from country to country, strategically shooting interesting footage with the limited supply of 35mm nitrate negative film stock they had in tow. Despite her youth, Aloha's six-foot tall stature and commanding personality quickly elevated her role in the expedition to star and lead ambassador. Taking the stage name Aloha Wanderwell, she and the crew coordinated and presented special engagement screenings along the route, editing on the fly the best footage for a given audience. She would ultimately take the reins as camera assistant and operator, editor, actress, interpreter, driver, and negotiator. Aloha would continue to present her travel films on the lecture circuit into the 1970s.

This screening includes excerpts from Aloha's first expedition, which resulted in Aloha and Walter's first silent film, *With Car and Camera around the World* (1929). The film was presented and narrated from the stage by the Wanderwells as part of a screening tour across the United States. In addition to presenting these recently preserved excerpts, Heather Linville explores Aloha's life and her place in film history. ❁

HL

The Little Swiss Wood-Carver (US 1928, Madeline Brandeis Productions, Madeline Brandeis) 18 minutes. 16mm. Print courtesy of Orgone Archive.❁

Accompaniment by: Michael Johnsen[§]

Madeline Brandeis has become something of a historiographical problem for women's film history.^{||} A well-to-do children's literature author, Brandeis seems to have considered her filmmaking activities in the 1920s as little more than a hobby rather than a serious vocation, even though she operated her own production company, directed an important series of films, and apparently had connections with Hollywood insiders. She first turned one of her fairy tales, *The Star Prince*, into a feature in 1918, but her most prolific filmmaking occurred in the late 1920s when she produced and directed a series of shorts called "Children of the World" (1927–29) that was distributed by Pathé. With individual titles such as *The Little Indian Weaver*, *The Little Dutch Tulip Girl*, and *The Wee Scotch Piper*, these films sought to create points of identification for both child and adult audiences across cultures and geographies by telling simple stories of individual children with cinematic attention to ethnographic details. Traveling through Europe and the United States with her young daughter Marie, collecting artifacts, taking photographs, writing scenarios, and shooting footage, Brandeis made these films in conjunction with a series of children's books bearing the same titles. Likely viewed as educational films for

classroom use, films such as *The Little Swiss Wood-Carver* show how Brandeis cultivated a special admiration for craft labor, as in the sequences that magically reveal the hands behind the artifacts purchased by an American tourist who is a stand-in of sorts for the filmmaker, represented not as a crafter herself but as one who appreciates, collects, and reveals the talents of others. 🌿

MLA

Xmas – Saugua + 1939 Summer + July 4, 1941

(US 1938-1941) 3 minutes. Color 16mm. Print courtesy of Orgone Archive.

This color home movie of unknown provenance reveals its author in two visually creative bursts of self-reflection. The film depicts several quiet moments in the life of a New England family. 🌿

GP

Friday, September 18, 2015, 8:15 p.m.

PROGRAM 2. WOMEN'S HANDS

Curated by: Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi

Piano accompaniment by: Philip C. Carli

Introduced by: Annette Förster

Note: This evening's program is compiled from the EYE Film Museum collection and includes some of the most recently preserved works. Over the decades, EYE (and its predecessor Nederlands Film Museum) has focused on the representation of women on screen, favoring films featuring unconventional female characters even when the films or the performers were totally unknown. This selection for the WSS conference shows working women in a variety of film genres, ranging from non-fiction footage to comedy and drama. 🌿

ERK

Telephone Girl (US 1912, Vitagraph Company) 9 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE. [World premiere of the 2015 restoration.]



Telephone Girl (1912).

Courtesy of EYE.

This film starring Edith Storey as a self-sacrificing telephone operator was discovered and preserved in 2015. The tinted nitrate print arrived to the EYE archive as part of a very large donation in the year 2000 and had been previously stored under very compromising conditions. As a result, the emulsion is heavily damaged in parts and the footage is not entirely complete, missing the head and tail titles. The film was screened in the Netherlands from July 1912 on, advertised

Der neueste Stern vom Variété [*The Latest Variety Sensation*]

(Germany 1917, Treumann-Larsen-Film GmbH) 32 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE.

WSS VIII is host to the U.S. premiere of the 2014 nitrate print restoration. This rare film premiered last summer at the 2014 Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna as part of the Rosa Porten program, cocurated by Annette Förster. An almost complete comedy, the picture was codirected by and stars Rosa Porten as the plucky variety performer Stella Orlanda, a pants-wearing fighter who navigates the stage as well as class politics. Her bourgeois suitor tests her seeming desires for upward mobility. Scene after scene builds upon the film's satiric play with the serious and comedic gaffs between Stella's competing social worlds. Porten's performance enlivens Stella's character with charisma, wit, and laughable hijinks. 🌿

KB

Herstellung von Granatzündern [Grenade Manufacture]

(Germany 1918, Deutsche Lichtbild-Gesellschaft) 8 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE.

This WWI documentary shows women working in heavy metal industry at the Körting factory in Hannover-Linden, Germany. The various women assemble munitions and other weaponry, including grenade detonators. The intertitles, which remain untranslated, detail the consecutive manufacturing steps of milling and drilling. The film focuses heavily on the industrial machinery and stages of production, but also documents the manual labor of the women workers. The women lift heavy parts into place, hammer metal, and pour hot alloy into molds. Close-ups of darkened working hands are juxtaposed to the machinery's shine and gloss. In addition to individual assembly, the film shows the wider floor activity of multiple women workers in the background and a foreman's inspection. 🌿

KB

Una Notta a Calcutta [A Night in Calcutta] (Italy 1918, Società Italiana Cines,

Mario Caserini) 9 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE. [US premiere of the 2014 restoration.]



Lyda Borelli in *Una Notta a Calcutta* (1918).
Courtesy of EYE.

Among EYE's latest discoveries, perhaps the fragment of *Una notte a Calcutta* starring the incomparable Lyda Borelli in one of her last films is the most spectacular. Borelli portrays an American "woman of pleasure" working in Calcutta to financially support her ill mother. Following her mother's death, she moves to Europe in an attempt to leave behind her reputation. However, just before her wedding, she is recognized by the brother of her fiancé, a marine officer who had met her back in Calcutta.

The rediscovered reel amounts to only 11 minutes (about 1/6 of the film), but Borelli's presence is magnificent and the film's elegance evident. The restoration makes use of the detailed newspaper reports of the time to reconstruct the plot. Since the narration relies on flashbacks, the missing scenes become even more problematic; unfortunately the crucial scene where the two protagonists meet is missing. 🌿

ERK

Soir de Noël dans un salon de mode [*Christmas Eve at the Millinery Shop*] (France 1911, Gaumont) 11 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE.

This comedy features a group of women engaged in the hand manufacture of women's hats who are scolded by the shop owner for their inefficiency. His surveillance abruptly ends once he falls for one of the millinery's wealthy clients, becoming more inclined to reverie and poetic recitations than to managing his unruly staff. Eventually foiled in his romantic aspirations by a vexing rival, the milliner returns to his shop for a Christmas Eve dinner where he discovers that he is just as content to be "one of the girls." 🌿

MLA

Fabricatie van kanten waaiers [*Manufacturing Folding Fans*] (France 1911, Pathé) 5 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE.



Fabricatie van kanten waaiers (1911).
Courtesy of EYE.

This delightful actuality film features primarily women working in a handmade fan factory. The film showcases the individual steps of fan production, from decoration to cutting to folding to the final product, with an emphasis on individual women working with the materials and the fast, skillful movement of their hands. Along with the simple but fascinating act of craft production, the audience might also enjoy a detailed look into the women workers' hair, fashion, and workstations. The film culminates in a joyful play sequence with fully constructed Spanish-style fans, as a "saleswoman" demonstrates to the

camera their various styles and operations. The woman teases the audience by opening and closing the fan in front of her face, magically changing its patterns before our eyes. 🌿

KB

Saturday, September 19, 2015, 8:30 p.m.

PROGRAM 3. LOIS WEBER

Curated and introduced by: Shelley Stamp

Piano accompaniment by: Philip C. Carli

Fine Feathers (US 1912, Rex Motion Picture Company, Lois Weber) 12 minutes. 16mm. Print courtesy of Shelley Stamp.

When an artist falls in love with his maid after painting her portrait, scandal ensues as her role shifts from employee to live-in companion. With the art world at its center, the film provides a sustained investigation of the production and circulation of images of women, an investigation that emerges as much through the film's visual systems—its use of space, composition, and sightlines—as through its narrative trajectory. Class mobility is also figured through the young woman's re-appropriation of fashion and costume. "Fine feathers make fine birds," the saying goes. 🌸

SS

Shoes (US 1916, Universal Bluebird Photoplays, Lois Weber) 60 minutes. Digital. Courtesy of EYE.



Shoes (1916).

As Universal's top director in the mid-1910s, Lois Weber wrote and directed a series of ambitious features on highly topical, deeply contentious social issues such as drug addiction, capital punishment, and contraception. *Shoes*, released the same year as Weber's better-known film *Where Are My Children?*, paints a bleak portrait of urban poverty, tracing its particular effects on women. Eva, the film's protagonist, is a shop girl whose meager earnings support her parents and three younger sisters. Standing on her feet all day without adequate breaks, Eva quickly wears out the thin

soles on her boots, but her family's impoverished circumstances do not permit her to replace them. A pair of boots on display in a shop window she passes on her way to work everyday becomes an emblem of Eva's deprivation and longing. Surrounded by merchandise in the store where she works, and in the larger commercial district she travels through, Eva is unable to participate in the consumer economy her labor supports. Progressive-era reformers worried openly about the fashion tastes and spending habits of underpaid female workers like Eva, as well as the sexual economy spawned by wage inequities between young men and women. Yet even as *Shoes* shares many of the alarmist concerns voiced by contemporary reformers, its cinematic techniques foster an unusual empathy with Eva's plight, pointing to the unique role that cinema might play in discussions of contemporary social issues. Woven throughout the film are moments when we are encouraged to share Eva's viewpoint, to understand what it means to work hard, to feel ashamed of one's circumstances and fearful about the future, and to long for one potent symbol of escape—a new pair of shoes. 🌸

SS



Lottie Lyell stars as Eileen in *The Church and The Woman* (Australia 1917, Raymond Longford).

From the collection of the National Archives of Australia.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Women and the Silent Screen VII Publication: Special Dossier,
Screening the Past Issue 40

A selection of papers from the previous conference, hosted by the University of Melbourne, will be published in the next issue of the Australian-based online journal *Screening the Past*. Co-edited by Victoria Duckett and Susan Potter, the special issue includes papers by keynote speakers Shelley Stamp, Hilary Hallett, Richard Abel, and Pam Cook, as well as other essays and notes, several with a focus on the history of women and the silent screen in Australia and New Zealand. The issue goes live on September 15, 2015, and will be available at www.screeningthepast.com.

Footnotes:

- * **Greg Pierce**. 1965: Born. 1983: First movie camera (super-8). 1985: Moved to Pittsburgh. 1993: Started The Orgone Cinema and Archive with Jeff Armstrong and Michael Johnsen; married Alisa Dix. 1997: Merce Anna Pierce born. 2000: Orla Kren Pierce born. 2001: First vasectomy. 2006: First scuba dive. 2008: First mid-life crisis. 2013: Merce Lemon born. Presently: Soccer coach of the Pittsburgh Dynamite U14 girls; stunted guitarist of The Working Poor; custodian of The Orgone Archive; Associate Curator of Film and Video at The Andy Warhol Museum.
- † **Philip Carli** brings both prodigious musical talent and a committed scholarly outlook to his lifelong passion for the music and culture of the turn of the 20th century. He began his accompaniment career at age 13 with a performance for Lon Chaney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. While at college he programmed and accompanied an annual series of silent films and organized and conducted a 50-piece student orchestra using nineteenth-century performance practice. Since then, he has continued his studies of the film, music, and culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, earning a doctorate from the Eastman School of Music. He has at the same time toured extensively as a film accompanist throughout North America and Europe, performing on keyboard and with orchestra. He also is the staff accompanist for the George Eastman House in Rochester, N.Y., and teaches an annual course on early film history at the University of Rochester.
- ‡ **The Orgone Archive** is a motion picture archive and screening outfit based in Pittsburgh, Pa., specializing in inscrutable epiphanies, toilet trims, unknown what-have-yous, perfect industrial rolls, home movie printing tests, corporate comedies, Warholian strikebreaking screeds, the all-around beautiful, and everything else. Originally founded in 1993 as Orgone Cinema by Jeff Armstrong, Michael Johnsen, and Greg Pierce as a break-even motion picture exhibition group dedicated to a sincere film culture in Pittsburgh, it presented unique monthly shows of home movies, industrial, educational, experimental, and documentary films; light and sound performances; and visiting film and video-makers at the Silver Eye Center for Photography on the city's South Side. Orgone also is (and was) a travelling cinema band that screens and performs films at home and nationally. Greg Pierce is the current custodian of this proudly fringe collection.
- § Instrument builder and performer **Michael Johnsen** draws on the rich American tradition of experimentation and cobbling. He performs with integrated menagerie of devices whose idiosyncratic behaviors are revealed through their complex interactions. His work is characterized by a relative lack of ideas *per se*, and an intense focus on observation, the way a shepherd watches sheep. The extensive patching of large numbers of devices produces teeming chirps, sudden transients, and charming failure modes—embracing the dirt in pure electronics.
- || See **Radha Vastal's** "Reevaluating Footnotes: Women Directors of the Silent Era," in *A Feminist Reader in Early Cinema*, edited by Jennifer M. Bean and Diane Negra. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002) 119-38, as well as her entry on Madeline Brandeis for *The Women Film Pioneers Project*, <wfp.cdrs.columbia.edu/pioneer/ccp-madeline-brandeis/>.

BEAUTIFUL HAND
OF LOIS WEBER
IN FILM PLAY

In the photoplay entitled "The Eye of God," theatre goers will have an opportunity of seeing the wonderful hand of Miss Lois Weber, who wrote the psychological story and who also plays opposite Tyrone Power as the featured lead.

Miss Weber's hand is photographed in the film play as she holds it up before Olaf, the part played by Pow-



er, and thus patrons of the motion picture play houses will be able to see a hand which has been considered one of the most remarkable in the United States and which has been sought by artists all over the world.

Before engaging in photoplay work, Miss Weber was a concert pianist, but she still finds time to keep up with her music, although she confesses her studio work both as an actress and co-directress with Phillips Smalley take about all her strength.

"Reel Ammunition," insert to *Pittsburgh Motion Picture Bulletin*, April 26, 1916.

Courtesy of Detre Library and Archives,
Senator John Heinz History Center.



University of Pittsburgh

The University of Pittsburgh is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution. Published in cooperation with the Department of Communications Services. DCS103323-0915