Women in Italian Film Production: Industrial Histories & Archival Sources
A study day organised by Karl Schoonover and Stephen Gundle
Friday 15 March 2019
Wolfson Research Exchange, Main Library, University of Warwick

Event sponsored by the AHRC-funded major research project: “Producers and Production Practices in the History of Italian Cinema, 1949-1975”

The study day aims to shed light on the labour of women in Italian cinema production from 1940s to 1970s. The conference will focus on craftswomen and other women working below the line on major studio productions. It will also look at women producers and directors, though in a less sustained manner. In both cases, however, the approach will remain an industrial one in order to facilitate questions about how to re-write production history. These questions will include: Through what methods can we find women working behind the scenes in cinema production in this period? How can film history best attest to the creative labour of women in the film industry in Italy during its golden years? How can we adjust or expand our given methods of industrial film history to recognise the work of women? Are there particular archival sources or methods which are most useful for revealing these otherwise obscured histories? Given the lack of scholarship on this topic and the erasure of women’s work in the existing accounts of the film industry, one aim of the conference will be to provide space for new and even experimental modes of historiography, modes that extend, complicate and even challenge conventional histories of Italian cinema.

Registration is free and open to all, but those wishing to attend must register in advance by emailing P.Watkins@warwick.ac.uk before 8 March. Space is limited and once all places are filled, registration will close. Please write ‘15 March event’ in the subject box and indicate your name, institutional affiliation and status (e.g. PG student, lecturer etc.).

Papers will be delivered either in English or in Italian. Abstracts in English will be available for papers delivered in Italian.

9:45 – 10:00  Coffee and welcome

10:00  Opening Remarks from Karl Schoonover

10:10 – 11:45  Identifying Subjects and Practices
• Rosa Barotsi (independent scholar): ‘Seamstresses, cutters, editors: How to look for women workers in the Italian film industry’
• Rossana Capitano (University of Warwick): ‘Suso Cecchi D’Amico: the work of the scriptwriters’ workshop’
• Ilaria De Pascalis (Roma Tre): ‘Women Editors in Italy: The Challenges of Film Herstory’

11:45 – 12:00 Coffee break

12:00 – 13:00 Short Takes
• Stephen Gundle (University of Warwick): ‘Reading the Credits of Italian Films’
• Clara Giannini (Oxford Brookes University): ‘Women behind the scenes: owners of production companies founded between 1945 and 1959’
• Karl Schoonover (University of Warwick): ‘Gendered infrastructure and infrastructures of gender: rethinking the architecture of production institutions’
• Silvia Magistrali (University of Warwick): ‘Women working at Rizzoli and Cineriz’

13:00 – 13:45 Buffet lunch for speakers

13:45 – 14:45 Roles and Itineraries
• Barbara Corsi (University of Warwick): ‘Comparsa o compagne: il mondo al maschile della produzione cinematografica italiana 1945-75 e la (parziale) eccezione di Marina Cicogna’
• Daniela Treveri Gennari (Oxford Brookes University): ‘Reconstructing film industrial history of women through personal memories and artefacts’

14:45 – 14:50 Short Break

14:50 – 15:50 Mara Blasetti: Testimony and Archive
• Michela Zegna (Cineteca di Bologna): ‘“Ci sarebbe una donna...”: Mara Blasetti: storia della figlia di Alessandro, padre del cinema italiano sonoro’
• Dalila Missero (University of Milan): ‘Mara Blasetti’s Personal Archive and Other Fragments: For a Feminist Perspective on Italian Production Studies’

16:15 – 16:30 Tea break

16:30 - 17:30 Concluding Roundtable
• Catherine O’Rawe, University of Bristol
• Rachel Moseley, University of Warwick
• Karl Schoonover, University of Warwick
• Stephen Gundle, University of Warwick