CALL FOR PAPERS

Feminist Media Histories: An International Journal

Special Issue on the Women of IMAX
Guest Editors: Jessica Mulvogue and Allison Whitney

In 2022 the International Union of Cinemas named IMAX Corporation as sponsor of their Womens' Cinema Leadership Programme, tasked with addressing pay disparities among cinema operators. While this form of industrial recognition, and the goals it represents, might seem like the most modest of feminist endeavors, it points to a deeper history of women's technical, creative, and emotional labor that has created and maintained the largest film format in history. IMAX is a corporate entity, but it is also an array of film production and exhibition systems and spaces, and it has produced an extensive giant-screen filmography. Not only is IMAX a relatively under-studied phenomenon, but the origins of the format in experimental and documentary practice, state-sponsored filmmaking institutions, and World's Fairs allowed for women to have unusually prominent roles in its conceptualization and proliferation. Further, unique structures of the industry, such as the rare power of largely museum-based exhibition venues, often directed by women, as well as the prominence of filmmaking families with all of the gendered dynamics therein, invite the particular analytic frameworks offered by feminist historiography. Althea Douglas, Phyllis Ferguson, Diane Carlson, Sally Dundas, Toni Myers, Emma Thomas, Diane Roberts, and Zaha Hadid are among the many women who played crucial roles in the development, production, distribution, and exhibition of IMAX cinema.

This issue of FMH will illuminate the intersections of women's labor in industrial processes, professional organizations, and screen cultures. We welcome pieces that locate IMAX within lineages of women’s work and gendered discourses in immersive
media, production and exhibition technologies, educational film, audience and reception studies, industry studies, and more. While article topics may address the careers of women directors and producers, we will also transcend auteurist frameworks in favor of a more holistic view. We are especially interested in global and transnational perspectives, and we welcome scholars from every sub-field of media studies to contribute. As IMAX and other giant-screen exhibition systems become increasingly prominent in the global film industry, we believe it is important to foreground women’s key positions in IMAX’s history, such that critical frameworks grounded in intersectional feminist historiography can better inform future scholarship in this growing field.

Potential topics include but are not limited to:
- Profiles of women filmmakers, with a broad understanding of the work of making films
- Gender analysis of IMAX audiences
- Sound studies, including Voice-Overs, IMAX acoustics, and more
- Women and IMAX cinema architecture
- Gender and reception of IMAX films
- Women theater managers and technicians
- Commentaries on gender in specific IMAX films and/or categories of documentary
- Women and IMAX as educational cinema
- Women’s contributions to IMAX experiments at World’s Fairs and Expos
- Animation and IMAX

In addition to standard essays of 7000-8000 words, we are interested in photo and video essays, roundtables, oral histories, and other alternative forms of media scholarship. We encourage prospective contributors to contact the editors with ideas for this volume, and to discuss topics before proposal submission.

Proposals should be roughly 300 words, include a short bio, and be submitted no later than September 30, 2024 to Allison Whitney (allison.whitney@ttu.edu) and Jessica
Mulvogue (jsm38@st-andrews.ac.uk). Contributors will be notified by October 15, 2024; article drafts will be due January 15, 2025 and then will be sent out for anonymous peer review.

Feminist Media Histories publishes original research, oral histories, primary documents, conference reports, and archival news on radio, television, film, video, digital technologies, and other media across a range of historical periods and global contexts. Inter-medial and trans-national in its approach, Feminist Media Histories examines the historical role gender and sexuality have played in varied media technologies, and documents the engagement of women and LGBTQ communities with these media as audiences, users and consumers, creators and executives, critics, writers and theorists, technicians and laborers, educators, activists, and librarians. Feminist Media Histories is published quarterly by the University of California Press. More information is available here: online.ucpress.edu/fmh.