



THE CAMERA IS OURS

The Camera Is Ours: Study Day + Independent Miss Craigie

For the first half of the day we have talks from specialist speakers, including Invisible Women, the archive activist film collective championing the work of female filmmakers, Toby Haggith from the Imperial War Museum, film archivist Sarah Easen and season curator Ros Cranston. The second part of the day is a screening of a fascinating new documentary.

Independent Miss Craigie + Q&A with director Lizzie Thynne and associate producer Hollie Price

For the second part of The Camera Is Ours study day we have a screening of a new documentary, *Independent Miss Craigie*. Years after her death, film director Jill Craigie (1911 – 99) reopens an old suitcase, left behind in her house. The contents prompt memories of the extraordinary life and loves of this forceful, charismatic woman, better known in later life as the wife of former Labour leader, Michael Foot. Working outside the British Documentary Movement in the 1940s and early 50s, Craigie's films tackled new subjects for the cinema through a unique blend of drama, polemic and often humour.

To Be Woman (1951) passionately advocates equal pay for women and *Out of Chaos* (1944), featuring Henry Moore and Paul Nash is the first film on artists at work. *Independent Miss Craigie* tells the story of the director's remarkable career, drawing on her own words, newly discovered letters, and extensive clips from her work and other shorts written or produced by women from the period.

Narrated by Hayley Atwell

We're delighted to be joined by director Lizzie Thynne and associate producer Hollie Price for a post-screening discussion.

Schedule

- 12:00 – Introduction from season curator Ros Cranston
- 12:20 – Pre-recorded presentation from Invisible Women looking at the careers of Marion Grierson and Ruby Grierson
- 12:40 – Live presentation from Sarah Easen looking at the careers of Mary Field and Margaret Thomson
- 13:00 – Live presentation Toby Haggith looking at the careers of Brigid 'Budge' Cooper and Kay Mander
- 13:20 – Discussion with Sarah Easen and Toby Haggith, chaired by Ros Cranston
- 13:45 – Lunch
- 14:45 – *Independent Miss Craigie* film screening
- 16:20 – Q&A with director Lizzie Thynne and associate producer Hollie Price, moderated by Ros Cranston
- 17:00 – Event ends

Supported by the Art and Humanities Research Council and The University of Sussex.

Ros Cranston is a Curator of Non-Fiction Film and Television at the BFI National Archive. She has a special interest in women documentary filmmakers, and she led the BFI project *This Working Life*, which celebrates Britain's coalmining, shipbuilding and steelmaking heritage on film. Her other interests include political and campaigning film, and the documentary and fiction work of Ken Loach. She contributed chapters to *Shadows of Progress: Documentary Films of Post-War Britain* (Palgrave/BFI, 2010), and has contributed to *Sight & Sound*, BFI Player, Mediatheques, Screenonline, and DVD releases.

Invisible Women was co-founded in 2017 by Rachel Pronger and Camilla Baier. Since their first event, they have screened programmes at cinemas, festivals and galleries across the UK and Europe. They have presented events with partners including Flatpack Birmingham, Scottish Catalan Film Festival, Cinema Rediscovered, EYE Filmmuseum Amsterdam, BFI Southbank, Balkan Can Kino Athens and T A P E Collective. In 2021, they were part of Berlinale Talents. Alongside screenings, they regularly publish research and writing about women in film history and send out a monthly newsletter.

Sarah Easen trained as a film archivist at the University of East Anglia in 1994. While researching her MA dissertation on British women documentary filmmakers, she became aware of how poorly acknowledged many of these women's careers were. Concentrating on filmmakers Margaret Thomson and Kay Mander, she continued investigating their lives after completing her MA and presented seasons of their work at the BFI and Imperial War Museum as well as at various conferences. Other interests include films made for the Festival of Britain in 1951 and the many other neglected women filmmakers of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. She has worked as a film archivist for over 20 years, at the Imperial War Museum, BFI, British Universities Film and Video Council and the ITN Archive.

Dr Toby Haggith is a historian who joined the Imperial War Museum in 1988, where he has mainly worked as a film archivist and curator. During the early 1990s, while researching for his PhD about films on slum clearance and town planning, he became aware of the important but barely acknowledged contribution made by women to the development of the housing film genre but also, more widely, to British documentary. This led him to conduct recorded interviews with women filmmakers (held in IWM's Sound Archive) and to seasons at the IWM cinema, jointly programmed with Sarah Easen, showcasing the work of women documentarians. He is currently working on a study of the use of film in war crimes trials and in synthesising a script for the long-forgotten pacifist film *Peace on the Western Front* (1930).

Hollie Price is a Lecturer in Film and Television Studies at Keele University. Hollie was Research Fellow on the AHRC-funded 'Jill Craigie: Film Pioneer' project and Associate Producer on the project's feature documentary, *Independent Miss Craigie*. She has published on aspects of British film and culture including depictions of domestic life, stardom, wartime propaganda and mobile film shows. Her first monograph *Picturing Home: Domestic life and modernity in 1940s British film* was published by Manchester University Press in 2021, and her article 'Post-war girlhoods: Jill Craigie, British social realism and local stardom' is forthcoming in *Screen* (Spring 2022).

Lizzie Thynne is a filmmaker and writer on media and film. She is Professor of Film at Sussex University. Her work often explores women's life histories and has been widely shown in galleries, exhibitions, festivals, and on

television. Her film, *Independent Miss Craigie*, and the current exhibition on Jill Craigie in the Mezzanine Gallery at BFI Southbank are outcomes from the AHRC-funded project *Jill Craigie: Film Pioneer* which she leads. Thynne's other feature documentaries include *On the Border* (2012, on her Finnish mother's history) *JMP Screenworks 4* and *Brighton: Symphony of A City* (Brighton Festival 2016/Symphonic Visions, Metier 2018), and *Playing a Part: The Story of Claude Cahun* (2005). She has written widely on women's representation in film, television and photography.

<https://www.jillcraigiefilmpioneer.org/>

**THE CAMERA IS OURS:
BRITAIN'S WOMEN DOCUMENTARY MAKERS**

From the Sea to the Land Beyond

Sat 5 Mar 18:15

Seniors Free Archive Matinee: White Riot + discussion

Mon 7 Mar 14:00

Cow

Tue 8 Mar 20:40

The Hermit of Treig + Q&A with director Lizzie MacKenzie

Fri 11 Mar 18:10

From Birth-Day to Something Nice to Eat: Restoration Programme 2 + intro by BFI curator Ros Cranston

Mon 14 Mar 18:15

Hostile + director Sonita Gale in conversation with journalist Jon Snow

Tue 15 Mar 18:00

SEEN & HEARD: DARING FEMALE COMING-OF-AGE FILMS

Skate Kitchen

Tue 1 Mar 20:40; Sun 13 Mar 20:45

Divines

Wed 2 Mar 20:50; Tue 15 Mar 20:50

Jinn

Sat 5 Mar 17:45; Tue 8 Mar 21:00

37 Seconds (37 sekanzu)

Sat 5 Mar 20:30; Sat 12 Mar 20:45

Water Lilies (Naissance des pieuvres)

Sun 6 Mar 18:45; Mon 14 Mar 20:50

Marie Antoinette

Tue 8 Mar 18:10 (+ intro by Hannah Strong, Little White Lies Digital Editor and author of *Sofia Coppola: Forever Young*); Sun 13 Mar 18:00

Somersault

Fri 11 Mar 20:50; Mon 14 Mar 18:10

IN THE EYES OF A SILENT STAR: THE FILMS OF ASTA NIELSEN

In the Eyes of the Law (Nach dem Gesetz)

Tue 1 Mar 20:50; Mon 7 Mar 18:15

Hamlet

Wed 2 Mar 18:15; Sat 5 Mar 17:00 (+ Intro by Prof Judith Buchanan)

Earth Spirit (Erdgeist)

Sat 5 Mar 12:10 (+ intro by Season Curator Pamela Hutchinson); Wed 9 Mar 20:50

The Decline (AKA Downfall) (Der Absturz)

Sat 5 Mar 14:30 (+ intro by season curator Pamela Hutchinson); Tue 15 Mar 18:20

The Joyless Street (Die freudlose Gasse)

Sun 6 Mar 17:40 (+ intro by BFI Inclusion Team Coordinator, Miranda Gower-Qian); Wed 16 Mar 18:00

Impossible Love (Unmögliche Liebe)

Wed 9 Mar 18:20; Tue 15 Mar 20:45

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