

ARTHEMIS

Is pleased to present a lecture by

Veronica Pravadelli

Classical Hollywood Cinema and Film Studies: Historicizing Theory, Theorizing History

March 14, 16h00
MB 2,270 (1450GuySt)

Classical Hollywood cinema has been the key filmic form in shaping up Film Studies in the last 40 years or so. One can actually argue that the discipline itself has developed through the study of Hollywood cinema during the Studio Era. From Bellour's semiotic-psychoanalytic approach to the theory of the "progressive text", from Feminist Film Theory to Bordwell's neo-formalist approach, etc. each new methodology has built up its conceptual framework by considering first of all classical American cinema. The centrality of Hollywood cinema is first put into question by the new historical approach that emerged in the late '80s and which took early cinema as its object of study. Working within the domain of modernity, scholars like Gunning and Hansen redefined the field in many ways. Besides working primarily on early cinema they also displaced the centrality of theory and of film analysis by advocating a convergence of theory and history. This "paradigm shift" heavily redefined Feminist Film Theory and spurred a new historical trend in Women/Gender Film Studies which keeps producing important work.

Starting from these assumptions my talk will offer a critical reading of the different methodologies that have developed in Film Studies in relation to Hollywood cinema. Then I will show why, to my mind, a convergence of history and theory along the lines initiated by Gunning and Hansen also suits an interpretation of classical Hollywood cinema. I will detail my position by historicizing the most influential concept, namely Gunning's notion of attraction.

Veronica Pravadelli is Professor of Cinema at Roma Tre University where she directs the Center for American Studies (CRISA). She has been Visiting Professor at Brown University. She is the author of several books and essays on Hollywood cinema, Gender Studies and Italian post-neorealist cinema. Among her publications: *Il cinema di Luchino Visconti* (2000), *Performance, Rewriting, Identity: Chantal Akerman's Postmodern Cinema* (2000) and *Alfred Hitchcock: Notorious* (2003). Her work in English include essays on Hollywood cinema, Visconti, Chantal Akerman and Feminist Theory. Her book on classical Hollywood cinema *La grande Hollywood* (2007) received the Limina Award and the Maurizio Grande International Award for Best Essay in Film Studies for the year 2007 and will be published in the US in 2015 by University of Illinois Press.

