

Barbican Cinema, Barbican Centre
Artists & Activists
Second Wave Feminist Filmmakers
Sat 2 & Sun 3 June, Cinema 3

barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2018/series/artists-activists-second-wave-feminist-filmmakers



The Women's Movement of the 1970s empowered more women to step behind the camera than ever before. Their pioneering work platformed voices, stories and issues previously ignored or misrepresented.

As part of the Art of Change season the Barbican is delighted to present **Artists & Activists: Second Wave Feminists Filmmakers**, curated by the Women's Film Preservation Fund of New York Women in Film & Television, showcasing ground-breaking American directors who made films outside the mainstream industry between 1970 and 1980.

Rarely seen in the UK, their films covered a range of topics – including career progression, motherhood, political activism and sexuality. At the time they were screened at conventions, colleges and in other alternative venues, and became an important tool for social change, allowing women for the first time the opportunity to tell their stories on film and thereby empower a new generation.

The work in this series also reflects the changing times and new order of the day, showing women who were challenging the status quo, fighting for equal pay, pressing for social and political change and taking control of their own sexuality.

Offering an alternate vision to the mainstream, the films introduced subjects of interest to women and reshaped how films were made in ways that continue to be influential. Through cinema vérité, animation, experimentation and autobiographical techniques – such as images from dreams and entries from diaries – a new cinematic language was forged to capture a shared experience.

The Barbican is also delighted to welcome distinguished guests including **Ann Deborah Levy, Sheila Rowbotham, Bonnie Greer, Charlotte Procter, Susie Orbach, Amalie R Rothschild**, and **Stefanie Palewski** to the Barbican stage for introductions and post screening discussions.

Tamara Anderson, Barbican Producer comments, *“With a fourth wave of feminism breaking, and more attention than ever before on the persistent underrepresentation of women in film and television, this is a fascinating moment in which to look back at the work of pioneering second wave feminist filmmakers.*

Outside of academia, these films have been hard to see; we are proud to bring them to London and to collaborate with the Women’s Film Preservation Fund, an organisation that has done so much to preserve and promote this body of work.

The films in this season are important historically, but they are not just historical artefacts – we expect audiences to be impressed with their variety, inventiveness and relevance to contemporary debates in feminism.”

The Women’s Film Preservation Fund (WFPF) has preserved a large portion of these important Second Wave Feminist films, and these form the core of this season. All of the films were originally completed on film.

Being a Woman (12A*) + Introduction by Ann Deborah Levy (Co-chair, Women’s Film Preservation Fund) **and Sheila Rowbotham** (historian)

2 Jun 2018, 12.00 pm, Barbican Cinema 3

A programme of films that examine the collision between the fantasy of womanhood and the reality of women’s lives. Despite the sea-change in women’s expectations that began in the early 1970s, marriage and motherhood were still the presumed goals for women. Opportunities for higher education and career paths existed, but the women who pursued them were not expected to continue a career once they started families.

For those that bucked this trend, there was little if any public and private support. Day care was not widely available, work hours were not flexible, and men were not expected to take on responsibility for parenting and housework.

Programme:

Growing Up Female

US 1971 Dirs Julia Reichert, Kim Klein 53 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT’s Women’s Film Preservation Fund

The film presents teachers, counsellors, advertising executives, and examples of popular culture, influences that point young women to traditional marriage as the pinnacle of female success, while minimising other options and positioning women as competitors rather than supporters of one another. Six women, aged 4 to 35, who have been subjected to all of this, tell their own stories. ***Growing Up Female*** was widely used by consciousness-raising groups to introduce feminism to a sceptical society. It was an inaugural film of the still active distribution co-operative, New Day Films, founded by Reichert and Klein with Liane Brandon and Amalie R. Rothschild.

Anything You Want to Be

US 1971 Dir Liane Brandon 8 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

A teenager's dreams collide with social expectations and gender-based stereotypes when she finds that, despite her parents' assurance that she can be 'anything she wants to be', reality presents another story. One of the first and most widely-used consciousness-raising films of the growing Women's Movement, this film helped give voice to a generation of women whose expectations, opportunities and career choices were extremely limited.

Joyce at 34

US 1972 Dir Joyce Chopra 28 min Video presentation

Preserved by the Reserve Film and Video Collection of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

In what is probably the earliest example of autobiographical documentary filmmaking, Joyce Chopra examines the effect her pregnancy has on her filmmaking career. Her inquiry contrasts an earlier generation of women who limited their job choices so as not to let work interfere with their maternal duties, with her own marriage, as she and her husband struggle to redefine traditional parenting roles.

Women Finding Their Voices (PG*) + Introduction by filmmaker Stephanie Palewski

2 Jun 2018, 14:00,

Film played an important role in mobilising the Women's Movement, sparking discussion on how their needs and aims were often different from those prescribed by the male-dominated society around them. This programme features films that capture the shared experience of Second Wave Feminism, these documentary films were watched in consciousness-raising groups to provoke discussion and thinking on new possibilities for women.

Programme:

Janie's Janie

US 1970 Dirs Newsreel: various, including Geri Ashur, Bev Grant, Marilyn Mulford, Stephanie Palewski, Peter Barton 25 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

After years of abuse, a working-class woman in Newark, New Jersey, comes to realise that she has to take control of her own life. The filmmakers combined interviews and vérité material, to give creative visual form to feminist concerns.

Janie's Janie was produced by The Newsreel collective, an activist collective founded in 1967, with chapters across the US that made films covering the important social movements of the time.

The Woman's Film

US 1970 Dirs Women's Caucus, San Francisco Newsreel: including Louise Alaimo, Judy Smith, Ellen Sorin 40 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

A valuable document of the origins of the modern women's movement in the United States, this film was produced collectively by women. Centring on the consciousness-raising groups synonymous with the early Women's Movement, the film delves into the lives of ordinary women from different races, educational levels and classes who talk personally about their issues and concerns. The film was produced by Newsreel's San Francisco chapter.

Women's Voices: the Gender Gap

US 1984 Dir Jenny Rohrer 16 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

Created as a 'get out the vote' piece to mobilise women, this film was featured at the 1984 Democratic National Convention and screened at the National Convention of the Organization of Women that year. Live footage of a diverse group of women in discussion is punctuated with satirical animated scenes by the cartoonist Nicole Hollander. The film is a product of Kartemquin Films, the Chicago filmmaking collective, and was made by a group of women in lead creative roles at a time when women were underrepresented in film production.

Desire, Beauty and the Gaze (18) + Panel Discussion

2 Jun 2018, 4.00 pm, Barbican Cinema 3

Cinema has 'looked at' women since its dawn, but with women reclaiming their place behind the camera they began to present new ways of looking, at each other, at men and at themselves. The subjects of these short films lent themselves to a variety of innovative approaches to filmmaking. This programme is a smorgasbord of genres: narrative, documentary, animated and experimental films, many of which utilised dreams, diaries, performance or other creative means of storytelling.

With the advent of the birth control pill and the Sexual Revolution, women could now embrace sex as something for their own pleasure, not only for reproduction. As lesbians began to live openly, they voiced their desires. And as women began to ask why they were still judged by how they looked, love relationships between men and women also changed.

Following the film programme, we'll be joined on-stage by Ann Deborah Levy, co-chair of the Women's Film Preservation Fund, Charlotte Procter of feminist distributor Cinenova and other guests to be confirmed to discuss the importance and potential of archiving and preserving women's films. Discussion chaired by Selina Robertson of Club des Femmes.

Programme

Betty Tells Her Story

US 1972 Dir Liane Brandon 20 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

Centred on the purchase of a dress, this classic of documentary filmmaking is a poignant tale of beauty and identity. One of the first films to discuss women's body image, self-worth and beauty in our society and to explore the ways in which clothing and appearance affect a woman's identity.

Hair Piece, a Film for Nappy-Headed People

US 1985 Dir Ayoka Chenzira 10 min Digital presentation

A quick-paced inventory of relaxers, gels and curlers – all-too familiar to African American women – this animated film puts a racial spin on the issue of unrealistic and impractical beauty ideals, in this case, one promoted by the white society they live in. Hair Piece affirms the importance of African American women acknowledging who they are and defining themselves on their own terms.

Make Out

US 1970 Dir Newsreel: various, including Geri Ashur, Andrea Eagan, Marcia Salo

Rizzi, Deborah Shaffer, co-directed by Ashur and Peter Schlaifer 5 min

Digital presentation. Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

A comical but poignant scene of a young woman and her date in a 'romantic' moment. The script was taken from the transcript of a consciousness-raising group's discussions. The very existence of the film resulted from struggles around gender issues within Newsreel, the activist film collective that produced it, and is a document, not only of a time, but of the efforts of feminists to give creative visual form to their concerns.

I-94

US 1974 Dirs Bette Gordon and James Benning 4 min 16mm presentation
Preserved by Anthology Film Archives with support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and The Women's Film Preservation Fund
This experimental film is described by the filmmakers as 'an exploration of sex and male/female identities following two people who never appear on screen together.' It is '...an emblem of the state of male/ female roles during the mid-seventies...' — Scott McDonald, *Afterimage*, 1981

Lipstick

US 1974 Dir Jane Morrison 8 min Digital presentation
Lipstick shows a woman enjoying time to care for her body and to daydream, quiet moments for herself, before she presents herself to the outside world.

Gently Down the Stream

US 1981 Dir Su Friedrich 14 min 16mm presentation
'Friedrich's film becomes a public exorcism, one that continually exposes and infects the viewer with the psychic consequences of religious constraints, familial binds and sexual conflicts.' — Bruce Jenkins, *Millennium Film Journal*

SISTERS!

US 1973 Dir Barbara Hammer 8 min Digital presentation
Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund
The film begins with a woman's voice declaring: 'I had a dream of women where men used to be: building, working, growing strong, and building their bodies into strength for self-defence.' This film collage, a celebration of lesbians, features along with other images, footage of the Women's International Day march in San Francisco and from the second Lesbian Conference where Family of Woman played.

Desire Pie

US 1976 Dir Lisa Crafts 5 min 16mm presentation
Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund
16mm print courtesy of The Museum of Modern Art
Explicitly and unabashedly erotic, this humorous, fantasy-filled cell animation, celebrates the joys of sex from a woman's point of view. Desire Pie is an illustration of how women at that time were beginning to own their own sexual pleasure and appetites, in contrast to the prevailing view of films made by men that a woman's sexual place was solely to satisfy male fantasies.

Determined Women at Work (PG*) + Introduction by Bonnie Greer (playwright and critic)

2 Jun 2018, 6.15 pm, Barbican Cinema 3

Against all odds, some women succeeded in the workplace, often at great personal cost, whether this was denying themselves or having to battle daily for the same worker's rights afforded to men.

Two contrasting cinematic portraits of women in the workplace: a narrative film centred on a light-skinned black studio executive who must hide her race to succeed

in the male-dominated industry; and an oral history of three female unionists in the Great Depression. Female workers, including the few who followed career paths, had little power in the workplace. They were exploited by male bosses, expected to work for lower wages than men in parallel positions, and vulnerable to sexual harassment. And for African-American women, these problems were compounded by racism.

Programme:

Illusions

US 1983 Dir Julie Dash 34 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

Set in 1942, at a fictitious Hollywood studio, this narrative film centres on a light-skinned black studio executive, Mignon Dupree, who hides her racial identity to pursue her career. While focused on racial prejudice, the film also depicts the male-dominated workplace where men with power view women as fair prey and women with ambition and vision face obstacles. As events unfold, Dupree contends with an industry that doesn't want to give Blacks visible roles and a society that perpetuates false images.

Union Maids

US 1976 Dirs Julia Reichert, James Klein, Miles Mogeluscu 53 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

Three older women activists (two white and one an African-American), veterans of the struggle to form industrial unions and fight the Great Depression in the 1930s and early 40s, tell their stories, in what may be the first 'oral history' documentary. An Oscar nominee, the film was widely used on picket lines, in labour education, at union meetings, women's centres, women's studies classes and leftist gatherings.

Taking Action: Ordinary Women at the Epicentre of Change (PG*)

3 Jun 2018, 2.00 pm, Barbican Cinema 3

In these two films, women who did not see themselves as activists are forced by extreme circumstances to fight for what is right, resulting in more far-reaching changes than they could have imagined.

I Am Somebody

US 1970 Dir Madeline Anderson 30 min Digital presentation

Preserved by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

In 1969, 400 poorly paid black women – hospital workers in Charleston, South Carolina – went on strike to demand union recognition and a wage increase, only to find themselves in a confrontation with the National Guard and the state government and supported by such notables as Andrew Young, Charles Abernathy, and Coretta Scott King.

Las Madres: The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo

Argentina 1985 Dir Lourdes Portillo 64 min Digital presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

An Academy Award-nominated film telling the story of a group of mothers who have all lost a son or daughter during Argentina's Dirty War in the 1970s when thousands of people disappeared. In a society where women were expected to be silent, they came together in the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, and demanded to learn the fate of their children.

The Personal is Political (PG*) + Introduction by Susie Orbach (writer and activist) and filmmaker Amalie R Rothschild

3 Jun 2018, 4.00 pm, Barbican Cinema 3

A catchphrase of the Women's Liberation Movement was, 'the personal is political'. Using this belief to shape their films, women pioneered the sub-genre of personal documentary, painting vivid portraits of individual lives that reveal broader truths

The two slices-of-life films in this series bring to life two very different, enlightened women – an account of an older woman ignored by society; and autobiographical family documentary about a daughter and her father.

Programme

Woo Who? May Wilson

US 1970 Dir Amalie R Rothschild 33 min Digital presentation

World premiere of the new 4K digital restoration created by IndieCollect, a non-profit organization in New York City

Cast off by her husband after 40 years of marriage, May Wilson moves to New York City and embarks on a new, independent life in which her art — what her family considered a mere hobby — becomes central. A seemingly off-beat personal story, the film gives dimension to women our society tends to write off, showing that older women can lead full and fruitful lives outside of marriage.

Joe and Maxi

US 1974 Dir Maxi Cohen 80 min 35mm presentation

Preserved with support from NYWIFT's Women's Film Preservation Fund

35mm print courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art

Cohen used her camera as a means of getting to know her father better in the aftermath of her mother's death. The film is an intimate and revealing portrait of the relationship between a pragmatic and cantankerous father and a daughter embarking on a filmmaking career, and about a family adapting after experiencing loss.

Ends

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Ticket prices:

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/cinema> Box Office: 0845 120 7527

Standard: £10.50 Barbican Members: £9.50 Concessions £9.50

ScreenTalks: £13.50 Barbican Members: £10.80 Concessions £12.50

Young Barbican £5

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the Barbican pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over 1.1 million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 staff work onsite.

The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery the Curve, foyers and public spaces, a library, Lakeside Terrace, a glasshouse conservatory, conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra; Associate Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra; Associate Ensembles the Academy of Ancient Music and Britten Sinfonia, Associate Producer Serious, and Artistic Partner Create. Our Artistic Associates include Boy Blue, Cheek by Jowl, Deborah Warner, Drum Works and Michael Clark Company. The Los Angeles Philharmonic are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the Australian Chamber Orchestra are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra are International Associate Ensemble.

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About the Women's Film Preservation Fund:

The Women's Film Preservation Fund (WFPF) is the only program in the world dedicated to preserving the cultural legacy of women in the industry through preserving films made by women. Founded in 1995 by New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) in conjunction with the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), WFPF has preserved nearly 150 American films in which women have played key creative roles. These include works by early feminists, women of colour, social activists and artists that represent unique and irreplaceable contributions to American cinematic heritage. Films already preserved range from those of early pioneers, Lois Weber and Alice Guy Blaché, experimental filmmaker, Maya Deren, animator Mary Ellen Bute, to more contemporary feature director Julie Dash; director and cinematographer Jessie Maple; documentarians Trinh T. Minh-ha and Barbara Koppel, and more. The WFPF is rewriting the film history books, one moving picture at a time.

More information can be found online at: www.womensfilmpreservationfund.org
Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheWFPF> Email us at: wfpf@nywift.org

About New York Women in Film & Television:

New York Women in Film & Television supports women calling the shots in film, television and digital media. NYWIFT energizes the careers of women in entertainment by illuminating their achievements, providing training and professional development, and advocating for equality. The preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York, NYWIFT brings together nearly 2,100 women and men working both above and below the line. NYWIFT is part of a network of 40 women in film chapters worldwide, representing more than 10,000 members.

More information can be found online at: www.NYWIFT.org