Making Movement through Motion Pictures

Period films & videos from 1968 to 1975 programmed by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty

FILM played a significant role in conjunction with this conference. In fact, a work-in-progress screening of LEFT ON PEARL ignited the whole idea for A Revolutionary Moment.

The conference featured two evenings of screenings of documentaries about Second Wave feminism, including Joan Braderman’s “Heretics,” Jennifer Lee’s “Feminist: Stories from Women’s Liberation,” Catherine Russo’s “A Moment in Her Story,” Susie Rivo and the 888 Women’s History Project’s “Left on Pearl,” Liane Brandon’s “Anything You Want to Be,” and excerpts from Mary Dore’s “She’s Beautiful When She’s Angry.” A third evening featured a range of films from the early 1970s, selected by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty.

Two workshops focused entirely on women’s filmmaking. Numerous others included film as a component of the context of recording issues of the period.
MAKING A MOVEMENT through MOTION PICTURES

Pioneering Feminist Films from 1968 - 1975
Rarely seen early gems from the Women’s Liberation Movement
programmed by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty

A REVOLUTIONARY MOMENT CONFERENCE

Saturday, March 29, 2014 • 7:30 PM
Boston University • GSU Conf Auditorium

Documentary, fiction, experimental & animated works -
authentic voices from the birth of the Women’s Liberation Movement.

The works are pointedly a response to omission
of voices and/or distortion of viewpoints in mainstream
corporate media that still persists today.
MAKING A MOVEMENT through MOTION PICTURES

PROGRAM NOTES: Films of the Period 1968 – 1975
programmed by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty

Saturday March 29, 2014 7:30 pm GSU Conf Auditorium

This selection of films from the period includes documentary, fiction, experimental & animated works from all over the US. These film clips and shorts will introduce viewers to authentic voices from the birth of the Women’s Liberation Movement. The works are pointedly a response to omission of voices and/or distortion of viewpoints in mainstream corporate media that still persists today. While here we show only US based work, this movement was international. Hurray for independent and radical feminist media making!!

MAKE OUT 5 mins  NYC  Drama
B&W  1970  16mm / DVD  Third World Newsreel
by NY Newsreel Collective
As a young couple make out in a car, we hear the woman's stream of consciousness thoughts. She worries about her reputation and whether he'll try to "go all the way." This film is best used with discussions and/or materials about date rape. The film is a vibrant document of the early second wave women's movement, and the concerns and thinking of young women at that time. This film is unique in the Newsreel collection, as it was filmed with actors, with a voice-over script created from a women's group discussion.

THREE IN THE PARK 7 mins  NYC  Drama
Color  1971  16mm / DVD  provided by filmmaker to Ariel Dougherty  NY Public Library
by Bernadette Beekman, Age 18, YOUTH
Girlfriends out for a day in the Park meet a young man who creates an awkward triangle with racial overtones. The placid, pastoral setting helps smooth over the strong and disturbing undercurrents.

I AM SOMEBODY 30 mins  NYC + NC  Doc
Color  1970  16mm / DVD  Icarus Films
by Madeline Anderson (selection)
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. Supported by such notables as Andrew Young, Charles Abernathy, and Coretta Scott King, the women nonetheless conducted a strike under the guidance of District 1199, the New York based union, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. A testament to the courage of these women who would not be humbled, the now classic I AM SOMEBODY is both an inspiring film and an important historical record.

GROWING UP FEMALE 50 mins  OH  Doc
B&W  1970  16mm / DVD  New Day Films
by Julia Reichert and Jim Klein (selection)
The socialization of the American woman is presented through a personal look into the lives of six females. Their ages range from 4 to 35 and their backgrounds vary from poor black to upper-middle class white. We see in action the many forces that shape women's self-conception: parents, teachers, guidance counselors, media, pop music and the institution of marriage.

In 2012 placed on National Film Registry

NEAR THE BIG CHAKRA 14 mins  OR  Experimental
Color  1972  16mm / DVD  Canyon Cinema
by Anne Severson AKA Alice Anne Parker
"A movie by Oregonian Anne Severson that consisted entirely of vaginas, and what vaginas they were." – Mami Jackson, Women & Film: International Festival Toronto, 1973 "The impression made by this film, its impact – has been enormous. ... This film is a new approach to our femininity.” – Agnes Varda, Image and Sound

IT HAPPENS TO US 32 mins  NYC  Doc
Color  1972  16mm / DVD  New Day Films
by Amalie Rothchild (selection)
Released in 1972, this film remains the classic plea for a woman's legal right to choose. Four methods of abortion are fully described by a physician and pertinent medical statistics are interspersed throughout. It presents the most cogent arguments, through the personal stories of a wide range of women both rich and poor, young and older, black & white, married & unmarried, as to why ending a pregnancy must remain an available choice. It reminds people of the consequences when it was illegal and what life was like before Roe vs Wade.
Icarus Films  
Canyon Cinema  
New Day Films  
Third World Newsreel  

Elizabeth Lay, watched the images of love the characters, if you will. The second half of the film slows down montages in A, B, C, D rolls of "kinaesthetic" editing. by DYKETACTICS

note:
and provocative documentary films from independent producers around the world. Of special interest, Women Make Movies is a multicultural, multiracial, non-profit arts organization which supports, promotes, distributes and preserves cinematic works of art. They are devoted especially to the art of filmmaking by women. Founded in 1972, Women Make Movies is a filmmaker-run cooperative for films about women, empowers filmmakers. Over the years New Day's collection has expanded to include many multi award winning films, with an emphasis on gender, race, history and the environment. New Day's diverse membership of over 100 filmmakers make decisions democratically.

THE DISTRIBUTORS

Third World Newsreel  
New Day Films  
Women Make Movies  
Canyon Cinema  
Icarus Films  

INTERNATIONAL VIDEOLETTERS  
San Francisco  
Doc / News  
B&W  
1975  
½" video EIAJ  
Schlesinger Library  
by Just Us Video ©1976 Interface Productions, Inc.

Jaime of Just Us introduces "the news": A clip in a studio for Margie Adam's album SONGWRITER. Linda Tillyer, on drums; the Lily Theatre troupe rehearsing "Moonlighting"; and a concert, first, Cris Williamson at the piano, followed by Holly & Timothy Near, Meg Christian & Cris performing SISTERSONG. Timothy gives an empowering lesson in deaf signing.

VIDEOLETTERS evolved out of two feminist media conferences in 1975 as an experiment to increase communications and a news exchange among feminist communities. Bi-monthly videotapes were produced and exchanged among 14 women's communities across the US & internationally: Rochester, LA, Tucson, Chicago, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, San Diego, Portland, Tampa, Boston, DC, NYC, Toronto, and Sydney. As many as fifty tapes were produced. Today only three known tapes survive.

CHICANA  
LA  
Doc  
Color  
1979  
16mm  
DVD  
by Sylvia Morales

CHICANA traces the history of Chicana and Mexican women from pre-Columbian times to the present. It covers women's role in Aztec society, their participation in the 1810 struggle for Mexican independence, their involvement in the US labor strikes in 1872, their contributions to the 1910 Mexican revolution & their leadership in contemporary civil rights causes. Using murals, engravings & historical footage, CHICANA shows how women, despite their poverty, have become an active part of the political and work life in both Mexico and the US.

CROCUS  
MN  
Doc  
Color  
1970  
16mm  
MOMA Circulation  
by Suzan Pitt

Naked, a heterosexual couple, aroused, prepare for sex, but the awakened, thirsty baby interrupts. Once the baby is settled again in his crib the couple renews their lovemaking. Vegetables, flowers, and birds float through the doorway, around the room over the pair ten out a window. The conclusion is affirming about the woman's chosen work.

Museum of Modern Art – Circulating Film & Video Library  
by Barbara Hammer available for personal and institutional sales: including Dyketactics and Other Films of the 1970s. Visit www.barbaramhner.com

New York Public Library  
by www.nypl.org/locations/lpa/reserve-film-and-video-collection

Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza, Manhattan, NY 10023-7498 tel. 212.870.1741 NYPL has a large collection of titles of youth films from the 1960s & 1970s. A plan for their restoration and preservation is underway.

Women's Silverscreen Roadshow  
1580 Caballo Road, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901-3013  
575.740.5868 ArielCamera@gmail.com. An evolving tour of a collection of women-made films from communities of 1970s to present. DOMESTIC TRANQUILLITY & a few other early WMM shorts available via the Roadshow.

THE DISTRIBUTORS

Third World Newsreel  
www.twn.org  
545 Eighth Ave, Suite 550, New York, NY 10018 tel. 212.947.9277 fax. 212.947.6417 tw@twn.org  One of two surviving newsreels (the other is California Newsreel), TWN distributes documentaries from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Palestine and the US.

New Day Films  
www.newday.com  
190 Route 17M Suite D, Harriman, NY 10926 tel. 888.367.9154 fax. 845.774.2945 orders@newday.com New Day Films, founded in 1972 as a filmmaker-run cooperative for films about women, empowers filmmakers. Over the years New Day’s collection has expanded to include many multi award winning films, with an emphasis on gender, race, history and the environment. New Day’s diverse membership of over 100 filmmakers make decisions democratically.

Women Make Movies  
www.wmm.com  
115 W 29 St, suite 1200, New York, NY 10001 tel. 212.925.0606 fax. 212.925.2052 orders@wmm.com. Incorporated in 1972; Women Make Movies is a multicultural, multiracial, non-profit arts organization which facilitates the production, promotion, distribution, and exhibition of independent films and videotapes by and about women.

Canyon Cinema  
www.canyoncinema.com  
1777 Yosemite Ave Suite #210 | San Francisco, California 94114 tel. 415.626.2255 info@canyoncinema.com Canyon Cinema is an organization of filmmakers, which supports, promotes, distributes and preserves cinematic works of art. They are devoted especially to the art of film, as opposed to works transfer to video/DVD.

Icarus Films  
www.icarusfilms.com  
32 Court St, Brooklyn, NY 11201 tel. 718.488.8900 fax. 718.488.8642 mail@icarusfilms.com Icarus Films distributes innovative and provocative documentary films from independent producers around the world. Of special note: Fundi: The Story of Ella Baker by Joanne Grant.
Making Movement through Motion Pictures

A sampling of twelve Films and Video produced during the period 1968 to 1975
programmed by Julia Reichert (a founder of New Day Films)
and Ariel Dougherty (a founder of Women Make Movies)

An Introduction
by Ariel Dougherty presented before the film screening,
March 29, 2014, A Revolutionary Moment, Boston University

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<th>Slide</th>
<th>Talk</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Making Movement through Motion Pictures" /></td>
<td>It is fantastic to learn that LEFT ON PEARL has been the impetus for this conference. Let’s all salute the power of film!!</td>
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<td>B&amp;W production still from Suzanne Armstrong shoot, JUST LOOKING (a Women Make Movies production) by Susan Meiselas</td>
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<th>TOOLS:</th>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Women In Focus" /></td>
<td>About half of the films Julia and I have selected, were shot with a Bolex. – the camera held by the woman in the mirror (art by Suzan Pitt). This camera is a 16mm workhorse. It means the picture and voice are not lip-synced to one another. Voice and other sounds are over-laid.</td>
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<td>Left, cover Jeanne Bentancourt book, Women In Focus (1974); right, flyer for screening of Videoletters, Washington, DC, 1976</td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Videoletters" /></td>
<td>On the right is a woman, drawn, carrying a half-inch porta-pak tape deck and in her stretched out arm a camera. These video recorders were revolutionary new tech in the period enabling media activists to record and immediately playback sessions. Some of the most radical and dynamic feminist material was recorded on these porta-paks..</td>
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<td>Film is physical, and tactical. Video is electronic with invisible impulses or waves. The two different media come from and register in our human synapse in different circuitry.</td>
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Film & Video Groups Mid 1970s!

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78 grps
67 US

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VL Videoltrs
•short hist

List (three pages) from Conference of Feminist Film & Video Organizations, Dougherty papers, Schlesinger Library

These were most of the women’s groups operating in film and video in the US at the start of 1975. It’s important to note that these groups were spread out across a good portion of the country.

I quote from a proposal in 1970 by the NY Women’s Video Collective to the NYSCA: “Proposed Project: “Experiment with ways in which videotape can assist in the consciousness-raising of a women’s liberation group over a 6-month period. “

What’s NOT on DVD? Too Much

For this screening tonight we show ONLY works on DVDs. We’ve been through the transfer to VHS phase, now we are in the DVD era. What’s next?

As I worked with a few filmmakers to get their 16mm films transferred to DVD we all chuckled about how the DVD process costs as much as the original productions.

Many important works like Jackie Shearer’s A MINOR ALTERATION or Alile Sharon Larken’s YOUR CHILDREN COME BACK TO YOU – both short narratives by African American women are not on DVD.

Far too much material is not readily available. We need a massive campaign to ensure that the 1970s works remain available to audiences in multiple formats.
Narratives

Feminist filmmakers made far too few narratives. We are still making far too few. Narratives instill visions – provide us opportunity to see where we might go or came from. They can create hope and view of a place we might grow into.

In the 1970s we feminist filmmakers evolved new terms like wishful-filmmaking or fanumentary that you’ve never heard of, in hopes these forms might take and evolve.

This 1975 article by Ann Kaplan discusses the uniqueness of Sheila Paige’s Women’s Happy Time Commune, in a sea of documentaries.

In part, narratives were few due to money.

Maybe today access to money is BETTER than ever – but way NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

Explicit feminist content in films are particularly difficult for funders to grasp and or to want to fund.

Fortunately crowd-funding has emerged. How many have participated in some kind of crowd funding effort??

This enables a range of new works to seek a funding audience. But even here were need a more developed tool or network, so that each project does not begin anew.
Ensuring the History

As the women’s liberation movement dawnded some of us choose films as our tool to make feminist change. At the time, even then, we knew we were making history.

If we are going to ensure a legacy of the women’s liberation movement—all these films need to be added to your university’s media collection. These films need to be put into your budgets and purchased so new generations get to enjoy and learn—in our own words and pictures—what our movement was like.

STUDY & PRESERVATION

I cannot underscore enough the necessity for study of this era and preservation of the films from the birth of women’s liberation. You within academia have an enormous responsibility here.

Unlike publications like Heresies that helped document feminist art, Women & Film was short lived. No central publication exists of feminist film & video. Our archives, works and ephemera are scattered, and in desperate need of historic detectives to unearth and assemble them.

For new historic films to come of the period don’t neglect home movies and amateur filmmakers as source material.

Clockwise, from upper left: Film reels of Joann Elam’s under archiving; one of the five covers of the too short-lived publication, Women & Film; still from Videofreex video on August 1970 Women’s March down Fifth Ave; video class at the Women’s InterArt Center, c. 1974.
Even though New Day Films and Women Make Movies, and others from the early 1970s created new venues to get works before audiences, we need new sister / progressive organizations to augment that work, deepen the channels of distribution and especially exhibition.

We need an active grassroots screening campaign of these works that we are showing tonight and many others including those of the last two nights.

The fiftieth anniversaries of many WLM milestones come up over the next few years. Why not a fifty states feminist film festival to celebrate the great successes of feminism, and the work we still have to do.

Ideas abound. Will power to execute new possibilities is needed.

I'm making this tool to aid us all in this quest.

Please hold & remember in your heart –

+ The Women’s Movement Effected Everyone
+ It took place in All corners of the Country
+ It was Leaderless Allowing The Many to Rise
+ We Women Were Innovative and Grand in Our Visions

Enjoy the films.

ArielCamera@gmail.com
@MediaEquity
Recapping The Post Screening DISCUSSION -- PRESERVATION

MAKING MOVEMENT THROUGH MOTION PICTURES
One evening’s program at A Revolutionary Moment conference BU March 29, 2014

By Ariel Dougherty May 1, 2014

An invigorating discussion emerged at the conclusion of showing the twelve radically different works representing feminist filmmaking of the early women's liberation movement. Regrettably we all (but especially myself) missed Julia's viewpoint and input, as a family emergency had sent her home that morning at the crack of dawn.

As the very last event of A Revolutionary Moment conference our numbers had dwindled to an audience of about fifty, but a dedicated group it was who hung in there. The discussion centered exclusively around preservation.

Jennifer Lee (FEMINIST: STORIES FROM WOMEN'S LIBERATION / http://www.feministstories.com/) broadcast a bit of the discussion out in real-time via Twitter:


I added that the four founders of New Day Films, Julia Reichert, Jim Klein, Liane Brandon and Amalie Rothchild had all decided that their papers and works will go to the Rubenstein Library at Duke University. (http://blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/2012/04/02/new-day-films-events-at-full-frame-to-celebrate-rubenstein-library-acquisition/). And that my own collection is at Schlesinger Library (http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~sch01216). We are currently discussing how some of the film works (http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~sch01360) can be made available via a private Vimeo stream.
Further, I mentioned that the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College had acquired the collection of Alida Walsh (1933-2007) ([http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss486.html](http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss486.html)), a central figure in Women/Artists/Filmmakers. Sophia Smith also has all the videos, over 60, which were produced at the National Congress of Neighborhood Women, including the celebrated documentary by their founder Christine Noschese, WOMEN OF THE NORTH SIDE FIGHT BACK. (1974). The material can all be viewed on line: [http://media.smith.edu/departments/ssc/ncnw/ncnw_playlist.html](http://media.smith.edu/departments/ssc/ncnw/ncnw_playlist.html) Fantastic!

During our discussion in real-time, one of Jennifer’s tweets was ‘favorited’ by the LA based radio show, Feminist Magazine:

![Feminist Magazine](http://catherinerussodocumentaries.com/)

Catherine Russo (A MOMENT IN HERSTORY / [http://catherinerussodocumentaries.com/](http://catherinerussodocumentaries.com/)) raised the concern of how we might be able to pay for all this archiving. My response:

Extra effort now needs to go into the preservation process to ensure that these works are enjoyed by generations to come. The germinal film and video work of the Second Wave generation must be studied and understood in the context of their period. The more and better we collectively know our feminist cinematic history, the greater enabled we will be to effect grander feminist film advances in the future. These works are a vital moving visual record of the labor, burst of ideas and mammoth change that women undertook at the birth of the women’s liberation movement.

To preserve the film & video works of this period there is much work to do and money to raise. Let’s begin.