



Silent Women: Pioneers of Cinema

Cheryl Robson

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It now emerges that more women were working at every level in the first 20 years of the film industry in the USA than at any point since. Early pioneers, such as Alice Guy Blaché, directed hundreds of films, invented techniques, ran businesses and set up distribution but with the rise of the male-dominated studio system, their significant contribution to the dawn of the movies has long been forgotten.

With chapters on the writers, directors, producers, stars, film editors, designers and camera women of the silent era this book acknowledges and celebrates the many talented women who were significantly involved in the rise of the industry and explains why the coming of the talkies and big business led to the inequality which exists today.

Melody Bridges studied English and Drama at Cambridge University and has written, acted and directed for theatre before working in TV where she developed, wrote, produced and directed two television series. In addition to contributing to *Celluloid Ceiling*, she writes a weekly page for a newspaper, and is artistic director of Worthing's WOW Festival. In 2014, she was a Finalist as Influential Woman of the Year at the NatWest Venus Awards. She has recently given a TEDx talk.

Cheryl Robson is a producer/director of several short independent films, most recently *Rock n Roll Island*. She worked at the BBC for several years and then taught filmmaking at the University of Westminster, before setting up a theatre company. She also created a publishing company where she has edited over fifty books and published over 150 international writers. As a writer, she has won the Croydon Warehouse International Playwriting Competition and as an editor, she worked with Gabrielle Kelly to publish *Celluloid Ceiling: women film directors breaking through*, the first global overview of women film directors. She also received a Special Jury Prize for Peace with author Robin Soans, for *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*.

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