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Title:

**„Surveying gender in the audiovisual industry:  
Examples, results, strategies  
and policies to address  
inequality effectively “**

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## **Abstract :**

This thesis examines several studies on gender equality in audiovisual production (Film, Television and Streaming) in different national contexts like Europe (Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom, France, Croatia, Italy and Austria) [EWA Report], Chile [Women's Participation in the National Film Industry] and the United States [Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, The Celluloid Ceiling]. The first objective of this research is to understand the design of studies related to gender and media, to eventually conduct surveys in audiovisual digital production. A second objective is to establish, through the analysis of the quantitative studies, the inequalities of gender that exist in the cinematographic ecosystem, mainly in the top of the most important departments (direction, production, script) and to understand how these results could directly affect the creation of a more diverse content in the different audiovisual media. A third and last objective is to present a source of strategies, actions and good practices that have emerged from these same studies and also from cinematographic or women's organizations and in some cases from governments, all aiming to address the lack of equality in audiovisual production.

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## Introduction:

Whether in the film industry or in new/digital media production, women are underrepresented in almost all areas and around the globe. Among the main roles in a production where we can find them missing is in direction, one of the most affected roles by this gender imbalance. Numbers show that female directors in film are marginalized in several industries. In Europe films directed by women reached a 19% in 2017<sup>1</sup>. In the United states 14% of the directors that worked in the 500 top movies of 2019 were women<sup>2</sup>. In Chile between 2011 and 2016 157 film were made. Only 9 of them were directed by women, a 5,7%<sup>3</sup>.

One of the main objectives of this thesis is to understand why women work less than men in film and media production. The marginalization of women in the creation and production of content could have social consequences that affect the perception of women in their societies, perpetuating stereotypes and restricting the creative diversity that would be undeniably beneficial to the film and audiovisual industry. From this statement, I ask the following questions: **Why do women occupy such a limited space in industries such as film? What would be the impact on society if more female voices were made known and recognized in the same way as their male counterparts?**

There have been many reasons that have encouraged me to investigate and analyze the subject of gender and work in film and media production. Perhaps the personal circumstance is very important, since from my position as a filmmaker I have experienced situations of inequality at all stages of my working life, some to a greater extent as in film school, working in series production and feature films, and to a lesser extent working in new media related to the creation of Internet content or for culture-related institutions. It was here, in this digital transformation, that I found a work environment with a better gender balance, more diversity and opportunities for the creation and distribution of content made by women.

Looking back at the history of cinema, we know that women have been part of its evolution from the very beginning. There is not much information about what happened after the first decades of women's participation in film. It was probably a process of segregation that relegated them to the limited space in which they remain to this day (this happened not only in the cinema, but in many other male-

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<sup>1</sup> Simone, Patrizia. "Female Directors in European Cinema. Key Figures." European Audiovisual Observatory, 2019. <https://rm.coe.int/female-directors-in-european-cinema-key-figures-2019/16809842b9>

<sup>2</sup> Martha M Lauzen. "The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women on the Top 100, 250, and 500 Films of 2019." Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University, 2020. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019\\_Celluloid\\_Ceiling\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019_Celluloid_Ceiling_Report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Ortiz Silva, Valentina. "Poco más del 5% de mujeres acceden a cargos de poder en la industria del cine chileno." El Mostrador, March 23, 2016. <https://www.elmostrador.cl/cultura/2016/03/23/poco-mas-del-5-de-mujeres-acceden-a-cargos-de-poder-en-la-industria-del-cine-chileno/>

dominated work environments). **Why did this phenomenon occur and why has it been so difficult to reverse it?**

Prejudices, responsibilities, social and cultural pressures could be attributed to this absence. In my thesis I want to find out some answers to the question why women are underrepresented in cinema (before and after digital transformation) by looking at three main research questions. First: I will be looking at historical contexts and contributions of women pioneers (how women were part of the creation of the cinematographic language and narrative), then follows the analysis of the different current surveys and academic research on women working in film in several countries (which reveals the scarcity of women working behind the scenes and the myths that surround them) and finally the strategies that arise from different institutions<sup>4</sup> (committed to improving gender equality in audiovisual production) to overcome the lack of equality in the audiovisual media.

Like many of the surveys presented here collected data using the Internet, this study also makes use of its immense capacity as a data source to compare several studies carried out in different parts of the world. By analyzing these various sources, I will be able to learn about how the different research methods function, as well as understanding the conclusions that can be reached depending on the data that is chosen to be collected. This leads me to describe my second objective of this thesis: To identify which study designs (use in gender surveys) would be most appropriate to eventually conduct a gender equality survey that includes not only traditional media such as film or television but also some new media such as streaming, social networks, video games, among others.

Both objectives of the thesis point towards an understanding and a search for opportunities for creative women in an environment that tends to alienate them, to leave them on the periphery of the industry, therefore, leaving out also the issues that affect them, the stories that happen to them, and just as it happens to women, it also happens to non-white men and to a worse extent to women of color.

Dr. Martha Lauzen, executive director of the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film and professor of film and television at San Diego State University, says<sup>5</sup>: "When any group is not featured in media, they have to wonder, What part do I play in this Culture? There is actually an academic term for that, is called symbolic annihilation"<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Institutions such as: ProQuote film, The European women's audiovisual network (EWA), The Annenberg inclusion initiative, The Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, Women In Film & Television International (WIFTI), the Women's Media Center, Asociación de Mujeres Cineastas y de Medios Audiovisuales (CIMA) and the UN Women among others.

<sup>5</sup> Newsom, Jennifer Siebel, and Kimberlee Acquaro. *Miss Representation*. Documentary. Girls' Club Entertainment, Pacific Gas and Electric, The Brin Wojcicki Foundation, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Symbolic annihilation: (noun) The annihilation, absence, or active un-representation of a cultural group, i.e. decimating a culture by disallowing the symbolic representation of that group or misrepresenting that culture within the mainstream media or consciousness. "Symbolic Annihilation Definition." Her Me Out. Accessed May 4, 2020. <https://www.hermeout.com/symbolic-annihilation-definition>.

I am convinced that in order to change things, we must first stop thinking that the equality problem has been dealt with, alluding to the fact that things have improved or that there are simply not as many women interested in directing or telling stories<sup>7</sup>. According to a study from the Female Filmmakers initiative (backed up by the Sundance Institute and Women in Film)<sup>8</sup> there are perceptions like that women are not interested in directing (lack of ambition) or that they do not have the competence to work commanding a large crew, but these notions are just speculation, as there are no studies or evidence available to prove that women are not capable of this. Examples such as Patty Jenkins directing the successful "Wonder Woman"<sup>9</sup> indicate otherwise.

In chapter II (section II.1.2) it is shown that women have fewer chances for funding, which limits their possibilities of production, but it does not tell us anything about their capability of creation or their leadership qualities.

In the year 2020, UN Women decided to take gender equality as its main objective (#GenerationEquality)<sup>10</sup>. As a woman filmmaker, I decided to contribute to this goal through my thesis and as far as possible, help reduce the gender gap in the sectors that are within my competence: Film and new media.

I hope that this investigation will serve as a source of consultation for people interested in know more about the situation of parity in film and what strategies can be put into use, depending on the socio-cultural context of each case, as well as how the new media and its resources can help to improve the visibility of women creators.

## Chapter I.- History of women in the film industry:

### I.1.- The Film industry

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<sup>7</sup> Participants in a qualitative study (59 interviews with 39 man and 20 female) mentioned or questioned the degree of interest women have in 1) the directing position generally and 2) genre-based jobs, including action and Franchise films. However, when asked directly about their ambitions, nearly half of female directors (43.9 percent) interviewed articulated an interest in larger budget, action, or blockbuster films. Smith, Dr. Stacy L., Dr. Katherine Pieper, and Marc Choueiti. "Exploring the Careers of Female Directors: Phase III." California, United States: Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism USC, Sundance Institute, Women In Film, 2015. <http://www.sundance.org/pdf/artist-programs/wfi/phase-iii-research---female-filmmakers-initiative.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Smith, Dr. Stacy L., Dr. Katherine Pieper, and Marc Choueiti. "Exploring the Careers of Female Directors: Phase III." California, United States: Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism USC, Sundance Institute, Women In Film, 2015. <http://www.sundance.org/pdf/artist-programs/wfi/phase-iii-research---female-filmmakers-initiative.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Jenkins, Patty. Wonder Woman. Action, Adventure, Fantasy, Sci-Fi, War. Warner Bros., Atlas Entertainment, Cruel & Unusual Films, 2017.

<sup>10</sup>UN Women. "International Women's Day 2020." UN Women, March 2020. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/international-womens-day>.

Starting with the basic definition of what the film industry is: It comprises all the institutions, technologies and people who work directly with filmmaking: production companies, film studios, cinematography, animation, film production, scriptwriting, pre-production, post-production, film festivals, distribution, actors and film crews<sup>11</sup>.

In addition to the film industry (which varies according to the political and social context in each country), there is also independent filmmaking, which is produced and generally distributed outside the major studio system. They tend to have a smaller budget, a more artistic vision, and most of these films are first released in festivals before being seen in cinemas (or other means of distribution).

Before the existence of the film industry itself, cinema was conceived as a new technology, as an art form and entertainment.

As with many technologies in the late 19th century, film was apparently a male-dominated field, much like it is today, the Lumiere brothers and Thomas Edison are considered the pioneers of cinema, but they were not the only ones experimenting with this new format. Thanks to modern curatorial studies and research, one can conclude that at least during the early days of film, women were almost as much on the set as men, at least in the more developed industries such as the United States and France. Although around the world there were several examples of women working in film, not only as actresses but also behind the scenes or as film critics. The book of Jane Gaines in “Pink slipped: What happened to women in the silent film industries?”<sup>12</sup> and webpage “The women in Film Pioneer project”<sup>13</sup> set out to research those women that were not just screen actresses in the early years of cinema. Women’s participation in the first two decades was both deeper and wider than previously thought.

First they looked for evidence that they had worked as directors but in the process they found that they had been not just directors but also costume designer, hairdresser, camera operators, colorist, script girl, scenarist, cutter, film retouchers, film splicer, laboratory worker, set designer and set dresser, film joiner, supervisor, casting director, executive producer and exhibitors (theatre owner and/or theatre manager).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Collins English Dictionary. s.v. “Film Industry”. by HarperCollins Publishers Ltd. Accessed March 12, 2020. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/film-industry>

<sup>12</sup> Gaines, Jane M. *Pink-Slipped: What Happened to Women in the Silent Film Industries?* University of Illinois Press, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall’Asta. “Women Film Pioneers Project.” Women Film Pioneers Project. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/>.

<sup>14</sup> Gaines, Jane, and Vatsal Radha. “How Women Worked in the US Silent Film Industry.” Women Film Pioneers Project. Columbia University Libraries, 2007. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/essay/how-women-worked-in-the-us-silent-film-industry/>.



Courtesy of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Margaret Herrick Library. "Essanay Film Mfg Co. Laboratory Personnel, Chicago." <sup>15</sup>

One of the most notable examples of women working in the early days of film is Alice Guy-Blanché. She grew up between France, Switzerland and Chile. After completing her secretarial studies, she worked for a company that specialized in photography, where she showed a great interest in photographic animation. Guy-Blanché attended the Lumiere brothers' shows in 1895 and developed a great interest in the emerging cinema.

After convincing her employer Léon Gaumont<sup>16</sup> to let her film outside working hours, she worked on her first fiction film. It is important to remember that during the first days of cinema, the subject matter of the films was mainly documentary, some had a plot, but none played with reality as Guy did.

She wrote, produced and directed "*La Fée aux Choux*" (The Fairy of the Cabbages)<sup>17</sup> in 1896, where she combined moving images, theatrical art and narrative. This is the first film with a fictional narrative in the world, and the first film directed by a woman.

The success of the film was so big that Gaumont assigned her to develop a fiction unit where she directed and produced more than 200 films between 1896 and 1907.

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<sup>15</sup> Courtesy of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Margaret Herrick Library. "Essanay Film Mfg Co. Laboratory Personnel, Chicago." Accessed March 12, 2020. [https://wfpp.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/How\\_Women\\_Worked\\_fig1b\\_WFP-COM011.jpg](https://wfpp.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/How_Women_Worked_fig1b_WFP-COM011.jpg) .

<sup>16</sup> "Léon Gaumont." IMDb. IMDb.com. Accessed March 12, 2020. <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1590757/> . He was a producer, known for *The First Men in the Moon* (1919), *Oscar au bain* (1913) and *Monte Cristo Up-to-Date* (1914). He died on August 10, 1946 in Sainte-Maxime, Var, France.

<sup>17</sup> Guy, Alice. *La Fée Aux Choux*. Short, Family, Fantasy. Société des Etablissements L. Gaumont, 1896.

This opportunity allows her to generate experience and experiment with many new forms of narrative expression and technical advances before anyone else, such as: close-ups, color tints in films and synchronized sound.

In 1910 she moved to the United States where, along with her husband and George Magie, founded the "Solax Film Co" production company. At this time, the film industry was gradually evolving from an entertainment or scientific curiosity to a major economic source. The company not only worked on making its own films but also leased its services to Goldwyn Picture Corporation and Selznick Picture Corp.

Nevertheless, in the mid-1920s, East Coast film production began to decline, while Hollywood productions began to thrive at a rapid pace. The Guy-Blanché couple divorced after declaring bankruptcy in 1920. Alice returned to France and spent the next thirty years giving numerous lectures on film, writing fiction magazines and novelizations of film scripts. She never remarried, nor did she make another film.

Alice was one of the first examples of women commanding spaces as much as their male counterparts in the rising film scenery, however, like many other women at the time, Guy eventually vanished into the background, for reasons that one could argue had to do not only with the socio-economic situation of the time, but also with her gender.

If for at least two decades since the invention of the cinema women worked almost as much as men in media production, what were the first reasons why women slowly ceased working in this incipient art form?, In which moment filmmaking became a serious profession for women?.

Women who worked in the audiovisual industry (to a greater or lesser extent) also had to comply with what was expected of them within their (Western) societies. Being a mother and wife was prevalent at the time, so working in a nascent form of entertainment such as film was a priority for few, in fact filmmaking was more viewed as a pastime, a hobby or something they did only for fun<sup>18</sup>.

At the time, gender roles in Western (and patriarchal) societies determine in advance what women's priorities or skills should be.

The transformation of cinema from a technological experiment to an entertainment industry took on a more conventional structure, relegating women to certain tasks on the set more related to caring, which have been maintained over time. A bias developed over the years, where women were removed from workspaces just for being who they were: Women.

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<sup>18</sup> In 1926 the "Los Angeles Times" published an article entitled "Women make movies for fun", in which they presented Madeline Brandeis as a rich amateur rather than the prolific producer of films. She said: 'In a sense, this picture-making is only a pastime. Perhaps I shouldn't say just that—it was a pastime in the beginning, but the success I have had and the financial returns have been so gratifying that I know I shall make pictures from time to time as long as I live. It is fascinating and keeps one occupied'. Vatsa, Radha. "Madeline Brandeis." Women Film Pioneers Project, 2013. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/pioneer/ccp-madeline-brandeis/>

Like Alice Guy, most pioneering women filmmakers are ignored in the classrooms at film schools. At least during my film studies<sup>19</sup> (2006-2011), I was taught only about one woman filmmaker before the 1980s (see in section I.2 Leni Riefenstahl) and the rest of the references from all classes were men, even in documentary, experimental cinema, independent film and animation. There is a narrowness of perspective in the history of cinema that has been perpetuated over the years. And not only in Film school classrooms such as mine or in places as renowned as Harvard University<sup>20</sup>, but also in the primary literature on cinema<sup>21</sup>, in documentaries on about film<sup>22</sup> and in many websites<sup>23</sup> that contain the history of film. All these references contain the same historical examples of how cinema came about and who were its precursors, all men, in the same classic academic references over and over again: Brothers Lumière and Thomas A. Edison, Georges Méliès and Edwin S. Porter, Léon Gaumont (for whom Alice Guy worked as head of production in his film company, directing almost all of Gaumont films made up to 1905), D.W. Griffith, Fritz Lang, F.W. Murnau, Lev Kuleshov and Sergei Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov, Charles Chaplin, René Clair, Lewis Milestone, Frank Capra, Robert Flaherty, among many others.

While all these men were developing their films and techniques in the early stages of cinema, the women who are described below (and many others who are not named here) also contributed and experimented with important narrative and technological advances. Has the history of cinema been historically fair to them? Has the same importance been given to technical and narrative discoveries made by women as to those made by their male colleagues?.

For many decades, all these women have been invisible, but they were there, and they need to be retraced. For some years now there has been a desire, mainly on the part of researchers and academics<sup>24</sup>, to recover female references in film.

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<sup>19</sup> University of the Arts and Social Sciences ARCIS. Santiago de Chile.

<sup>20</sup> Warren PhD, Charles. "Syllabus for History of Film: 1960 to the Present," 2015.

<https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/4218/assignments/syllabus>.

<sup>21</sup> Examples of primary literature on film are: "Looking at movies, an introduction to film". (Barsam, Richard, and Dave Monahan. Looking at Movies. 3rd ed. New York: Norton, 2010.)

The Oxford History of World Cinema (Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey. The Oxford History of World Cinema: [The Definitive History of Cinema Worldwide. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1999.)

<sup>22</sup> Example of documentary on the history of cinema (which name only 17 women: The Story of Films: An Odyssey (Cousins, Mark. The Story of Film: An Odyssey. Documentary, History. Hopscotch Films, UK Film Council, British Film Institute (BFI), 2011.)

<sup>23</sup> "History of the Motion Picture | History & Facts." Encyclopedia Britannica. Accessed May 16, 2020.

<https://www.britannica.com/art/history-of-the-motion-picture>.

<sup>24</sup> Gwendolyn Audrey Foster, Professor of Film Studies, Cultural Theory, Filmmaker Author of the book: Women Film Directors: An International Bio-Critical Dictionary (1995). Director of the documentary: Women who made the movies (1992).

Jane Gaines, Professor Emeritus of Literature and English at Duke University and currently Professor of Film at Columbia University. One of the founders of The Women Film Pioneers Project (WFPP), a digital publication and resource promoting research on the hundreds of women who worked behind the scenes during the silent film era (since 1993).

It is important to bring these hidden figures to the surface in order to continue enriching the heritage of the cinema by making its history a more comprehensive one, with varied perspectives and creative references. By broadening film references, we can discover different ways of filmmaking (like Counter cinema<sup>25</sup>), besides the Dominant one (The type of narrative construction that prevails in most films and the method of production that follows the mainstream Hollywood guidelines and is replicated around the world by both large and even some smaller film industries), where women work is underrepresented in almost all production departments.

As Professor Jane M. Gaines said in her article “On Not Narrating the History of Feminism and Film”: “What happened to women in the silent motion picture film industries?” leads to our asking, “why didn't we know then that there had been so many women?” If we had known, would it have been possible to argue that narrative cinema was so thoroughly man-made?...Women workers in a male-dominated industry were apparently “there” in the silent era and then suddenly “not there,” and a feminist research project that could have investigated this enigma did not come to fruition, at least not in those Anglophone academic circles that helped to establish film studies”<sup>26</sup>.

The following section focuses on answering some of those questions through the stories of these film pioneers. Their careers and contributions to film will be described, as well as the reasons why some of them stopped making films.

## **I.2.- In Europe and UK**

Europe was the birthplace of film, so in the beginning the number of women participating in it was higher than the average in other places like the United States. There are many cases in which women contributed in an unparalleled way to some technical or narrative aspects of cinema, such as experimenting with animated films or establishing the basis of film movements or genres.

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Annette Kuhn, German historian. From 1966 to 1999 she was a professor of history teaching, and later also of women's studies and film research at Bonn's Pedagogical University. Author of the book: *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (1994)

<sup>25</sup> Counter Cinema refers to the movies which stand in opposition to the mainstream formalistic and ideological domination of Hollywood cinema. It means that discursive means and methods are consciously followed and offers an alternative discourse to mainstream cinema. They offer a different mode of representation as opposed to mainstream Hollywood cinema. “Counter Cinema.” *Film Theory*, October 28, 2014. <https://www.filmtheory.org/counter-cinema/>.

<sup>26</sup> Gaines, J. M. “On Not Narrating the History of Feminism and Film.” *Feminist Media Histories* 2, no. 2 (April 1, 2016): 6–31. <https://doi.org/10.1525/fmh.2016.2.2.6>.

Germaine Dulac was a French pioneer who became, along with Louis Delluc, Marcel L'Herbier and Jean Epstein, one of the key figures of the French avant-garde in the 1920s, mainly in the so-called Impressionist School<sup>27</sup>. She was a feminist, a film critic and a director. Her first work “*Soeurs ennemies*” (The enemy sisters) in 1915 did not show anything special. It was from “*La fête espagnole*” (The Spanish holiday) in 1920, that her name began to sound with great intensity in the French film world.

A large part of her work was self-financed, since the issues and subjects she dealt with were not attractive to the producers of the time. It was a period of theorization, analysis and reflection on language and its creative application to the moving image, in which she attempted to place the cinema in a significant artistic context and to cement its own specificity.

One of her favorite film techniques was overprinting, which can be seen in one of his most important films “*La Souriante Madame Beudet*” (The Smiling Madame Beudet) in 1923. This film established itself as one of the first feminist movies ever made. It revolves around the idea of a working woman in an unwanted relationship. Dulac collaborated throughout the 1920s in various film magazines such as *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Cinégraphie*.

In the 1930s and with the emergence of sound in movies, Dulac's career changed. The last decade of her life was dedicated to documentary filmmaking producing newsreels for Pathé<sup>28</sup> and later made documentaries for Gaumont<sup>29</sup>.

Elvira Notari was the first Italian woman director of silent films; she directed and wrote more than 60 films. Her main artistic focus was the city of Naples, which laid the foundations of what would eventually become the Italian neo-realism movement<sup>30</sup>. In her films she chooses family and friends, and even takes on the role of typical Neapolitan characters herself.

The rise of fascism will complicate her career, and her neorealist films will end up being censored by the regime.

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<sup>27</sup> The French Impressionist cinema is based on the exploration of the process of representation and meaning in the traditional narrative film discourse, derived in part from the beliefs of the directors (The Impressionist school) about cinema as an art form, conveying the personal vision of the artist: art creates an experience, and that experience leads to emotions for the spectator. “CineCollage: French Impressionism.” Accessed May 17, 2020. <http://cinecollage.net/french-impresionism.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Pathé is a major French film production and distribution company. At the beginning of the 20th century, Pathé was the largest film production and equipment company in the world, as well as an important producer of sound records. In 1908, Pathé invented the newsreel that was shown in cinemas before a feature film.

<sup>29</sup> The Gaumont Film Company is a major French film studio founded by engineer-turned-inventor Léon Gaumont in 1895. It is the first and oldest film company in the world, founded before other studios such as Pathé, Universal and Paramount.

<sup>30</sup> Italian neo-realism was a narrative and film movement that emerged in Italy during the post-World War II period. Its aim was to portray a more authentic and humane social condition, moving away from the historical and musical film style that until then had been imposed by Fascist Italy (1922-1945).

Lotte Reiniger was the inventor of silhouette animation, a technique she used to direct one of the first and most famous animated feature films in Germany and Europe.

When she was young, she joined Max Reinhardt's theatre group, to which Paul Wegener belonged, a filmmaker whom she admired after attending a conference given by him where he showcased the possibilities of animated film. She began working with Wegener, making silhouettes for the interleaved labels of the films "*Rübezahls Hochzeit*" (The Wedding of the Giant Ruebezahl), in 1916 and Der "*Rattenfänger von Hameln*" (The Pied Piper of Hamelin) in 1918; as well as the sets and props of the film "*Die Schöne Prinzessin von China*" (The Beautiful Princess of China) in 1916.

Thanks to the success of her work, she was admitted to the Institut für Kulturforschung (Institute for Cultural Research), a Berlin studio dedicated to experimental animation films. There she made her first silhouette film in 1919 "*Das Ornament des verliebten Herzens*" (The Ornament of the Loving Heart). In 1923 the banker Louis Hagen, an admirer of her work, offered to finance her a feature film. The result was "*Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed*" (The Adventures of Prince Achmed), completed in 1926, one of the most important and oldest animated feature films preserved worldwide. The plot showed a selection of several stories based on "Thousand and One Nights"<sup>31</sup> tales. The film was a critical and public success, Reiniger was a decade ahead of both Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks in using the multiplane camera to generate certain effects.

When the Nazi party came to power, Reiniger made the decision to emigrate. During this period, she produced (with her husband Carl Koch) about twelve films. Among the best known are "*Carmen*" in 1933 and "*Papageno*" in 1935, based respectively on the operas Carmen by Bizet and The Magic Flute by Mozart.

In 1949, Reiniger and Koch were able to move to London. After carrying out some projects for the General Post Office, they created the company "Primrose Productions".

Carl Koch died in 1962, but Lotte Reiniger continued to work. During this time, she made twenty silhouette films, most of them for the BBC, and almost all of them based on classic fairy tales.

She inspired internationally renowned filmmakers such as Walt Disney in "*Fantasy*", Michel Ocelot in "*Princes and Princesses*", or even Ben Hibon in his animation "*The Story of the Three Brothers*" in "*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows - Part I*".

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<sup>31</sup> Collection of largely Middle Eastern and Indian stories of uncertain date and authorship. Its tales of Aladdin, Ali Baba, and Sindbad the Sailor have almost become part of Western folklore, though these were added to the collection only in the 18th century in European adaptations. "The Thousand and One Nights | Summary, Themes, & Facts." Encyclopedia Britannica. Accessed May 16, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Thousand-and-One-Nights>.

On the side of the fascist states we find one of the most controversial examples of women directors: Leni Riefenstahl. She contributed immensely to Nazi propaganda and was one of the only women making films at the time. During the Weimar period she produced, directed and starred in her first film "*Das Blaue Licht*" in 1932, through which she was discovered by the Nazis.

She was one of the first filmmakers to use tracking shots in a documentary, placing a camera on rails (the first Dollies) to follow the movement of the athletes on "*Olympia*" in 1938. The film was also notable for its slow-motion shots, underwater diving shots, extremely high and low shooting angles, panoramic aerial shots, and shots with a tracking system to allow for quick action. Many of these shots were unheard of at the time, but the use and the high technical standard that Riefenstahl established caused them to still be used in the sports genre.

During the whole period of the second world war, Riefenstahl worked not only making propaganda, she also made fiction films (where she used concentration camp prisoners as extras) and documentaries, but her greatest works, those that are studied for their technical and narrative innovations, were the ones she created for the Nazi party.

Most of Riefenstahl's unfinished projects were lost towards the end of the war. "*Tiefeland*" (Lowlands) was one of the few that remained almost entirely. She edited and dubbed the remaining material and premiered it on February 11, 1954 in Stuttgart. It was his last feature film<sup>32</sup>. As I described in the introduction, Leni Riefenstahl was the only woman who was studied in detail at my film school. She was presented as this extraordinary director who contributed to the creation of film language. But ignoring the historical social background, which enabled her to direct such films.

The vast technical and narrative effort to find a new way of making propaganda earned Leni a place in many of the books of film history, unlike other film pioneers like Alice Guy (who directed the first fiction film and was in charge of more than 600 films) or Muriel Box (the first woman to win an Academy Award for her co-work in the script of "*The Seventh Veil*" in 1945. She also directed more than 15 films).

Something that should be noted at this point is that the stories that were told in cinema, during its early years, rarely had a woman in the leading role, much less to denote the experiences of the female gender.

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<sup>32</sup>From the 1950s onwards, Riefenstahl began a new professional phase, this time as a photographer. At the end of the next decade she produced a detailed and beautiful photographic documentation of an african village, the Nuba, and in later years she made several productions about underwater life, among them "*Impressions underwater*" released in 2002. In her obituary in the British newspaper *The Guardian*, Richard Falcon says: She was the first female film director to attract international acclaim, but her career was curtailed by public, industry and official antipathy owing to her status as "Hitler's favourite film-maker". Both *Triumph of The Will* and *Olympia* are permeated by Riefenstahl's intense feeling for the expressive power of bodies in motion, whether they be marching Nazis or high divers.

Professor Gwendolyn Audrey Foster make an interesting observation in her book “Women film directors : an international bio-critical dictionary”<sup>33</sup>: Women directors face lack of support not only as a result of their gender but also because they have a remarkable tendency to choose “controversial” or “difficult” subject matter<sup>34</sup>.

A good example of a filmmaker that deal with these topics in her films was Leontine Sagan, an Austrian-Hungarian actress and director of theatre and film, best known for her movie “*Mädchen in Uniform*” (Girl in Uniform) premiered in Berlin in 1934. The film had an all-female cast, it was the first film in Germany to be produced cooperatively (both the crew and cast obtained shares instead of a salary) and is among the first to suggest lesbian relationship in film<sup>35</sup>.

In Denmark, the first feature film (co)directed by a woman was by Alice O' Fredericks and Lau Lauritzen Jr entitled: “*Ud i den kolde sne*” (Out in the Cold Snow) in 1934. O' Fredericks will end up directing more than 70 films, as well as writing scripts for theatre. She is best known for directing the comedy series “*Far til Fire*” (Father of four), as well as the family drama series based on the novels of Morten Korch<sup>36</sup>. One of the most productive directors in Danish cinema, she also was known for making films focused on women's rights. Among them is the 1946 drama “*Så mødes vi hos Tove*” (We Meet at Tove's), about eight women who find themselves ten years after graduation and talk about their lives and “*Det Brændende spørgsmål*” (The Burning Question) in 1943, about abortion and its consequences. She managed to handle several film productions from her wheelchair (due to severe arthritis) with the help of two men who transported her when there were outside shootings, up to her death in early 1968<sup>37</sup>.

Olga Preobrazhenskaya was one of the first Russian film directors, known for her film “*Baby ryazanskie*” (The Peasant Women of Ryazan) in 1927. According to Kenneth Macpherson in his film journal “Close up”<sup>38</sup>, the basic principles this film were that the New Woman (in post-revolutionary times) would be free, brave and strong: “There will be no victimized Annas<sup>39</sup>, no room for cheap

<sup>33</sup> Foster, Gwendolyn Audrey. *Women Film Directors: An International Bio-Critical Dictionary* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995), 21.

<sup>34</sup> She makes this remark about the difficulties in getting funding for film productions, which were raised by many of the women in her book. *ibid*, 21.

<sup>35</sup> Manuela is a teenager who is sent to a strict boarding school after the death of her mother. The director of the facility is convinced that hunger and discipline shape the girls' character, but Manuela has trouble adjusting to the director's rigid discipline. The girl is cared for by teacher Elizabeth Von Bernburg, who is the youngest teacher at the boarding school and with whom Manuela falls in love. Based on a play by Christa Winsloe, it was the first film that clearly dealt with the subject of lesbianism and was a considerable success in both Europe and the United States.

<sup>36</sup> “*De Røde Heste*” (The Red Horses), 1950.

<sup>37</sup> “Alice O'Fredericks | Det Danske Filminstitut.” Accessed May 17, 2020. <https://www.dfi.dk/viden-om-film/filmdatabasen/person/alice-ofredericks>.

<sup>38</sup> Literary magazine devoted to film, published by the Pool Group between 1927 and 1933 in Switzerland.

<sup>39</sup> Anna is one of the of the film's protagonists who is raped and later commits suicide.

scoundrels or men dulled with outdated prejudices in social and marital matters. Equal opportunities, professional training, knowledge and understanding of sex, efficient education, hygiene and common sense, not only in the cities but in every small town. Comradeship, not property”<sup>40</sup>.

After the Russian Revolution she worked mainly as a teacher at the Moscow State Film School (being one of its founding members) and at private film schools.

Violette Muriel Baker, also known as Muriel Box, was an English filmmaker who started acting and dancing in 1905. She also worked as a continuity girl for British International Pictures. In 1935 she met and married the journalist Sydney Box, with whom she collaborated in writing in almost forty plays with mainly female roles for amateur theatre groups. They set up a production company called “Verity Films”, which released short war propaganda films, including “*The English Inn*” in 1941, her first directing work, after which she diversified into fiction. The couple achieved their greatest success together with “*The Seventh Veil*” in 1945, for which they won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay the following year.

After World War II, she was in charge of the stage department, writing the scripts for several light comedies, occasionally helping as a dialogue director, or re-recording scenes during post-production. She worked with controversial topics (at the time), such as Irish politics<sup>41</sup>, teenage sex, abortion, illegitimacy and syphilis, several of her films were banned by the English authorities<sup>42</sup>.

Muriel often experienced prejudice in the male-dominated industry. Many producers questioned her competence to direct large-scale feature films, Michael Balcon (British film producer) doubted her competence to direct a large-scale feature film, a modern Romeo and Juliet story that she had written in 1950, and the project was terminated. In 1952 the Boxes pretended that the direction of “*The Happy Family*” was a joint affair, but when word leaked out that Muriel was directing on her own, one of the principal financial backers withdrew. In 1950, Jean Simmons asked (and succeeded) in replacing her as director in “*So Long at the Fair*”, and Kay Kendall tried unsuccessfully to do the same in “*Simon and Laura*” in 1955 <sup>43</sup>.

She left filmmaking after “*Rattle of a Simple Man*” in 1964 and later founded Britain’s first feminist publisher, Femina Press.

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<sup>40</sup> Macpherson, Kenneth. *Close Up* (Jul-Dec 1928). Territet, Switzerland: Pool Group, 1928.

<http://archive.org/details/closeup03macp>.

<sup>41</sup> “This Other Eden” (1959) raises issues about Irish politics, commemoration, hypocrisy and illegitimacy. BFI Screenonline: Box, Muriel (1905-1991) Biography.” Accessed May 6, 2020.

<http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/479374/index.html>.

<sup>42</sup> “Too Young To Love”, was banned which addressed the problem of teenage sex, abortion and syphilis. It tells the story of a 47-year old man that is caught with a 15-year old girl, and claims he never knew she was so young. *ibid*.

<sup>43</sup> Box, Muriel. *Odd Woman Out: An Autobiography*. London, England: Frewin, 1974. Quoted in “BFI Screenonline: Box, Muriel (1905-1991) Biography.” Accessed May 6, 2020. <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/479374/index.html>.

As we can see from these examples, controversial issues refer to stories that have more to do with the female reality that was rarely portrayed in the narratives of the time.

### 1.2.1. Documentary

The documentary was a place where women were also able to expose the issues that concerned them, or experiment with techniques that they were interested in exploring. A larger presence of women in this genre can be explained by a combination of factors such as having fewer economic resources and the existence of small, horizontal work teams that distance themselves from the hierarchical and vertical practices involved in feature films (with large work crews). Many of the documentary pioneers just took their cameras and produced their films in a much more independent way. They participated actively whether in a narrative, observational, reflective, performative, educational, historical or ethnographic way.

Some of them like Louise Boyd<sup>44</sup> also worked in such remote places like the Arctic and she was not the only one going on adventures in the name of science and filmmaking.

Scottish documentary filmmaker Jenny Gilbertson (also known as Jenny Brown) studied journalism in London and while there, attended an amateur film screening about the Loch Lomond<sup>45</sup>. She taught herself the basics of filmmaking while filming images of squirrels in Kensington Gardens and boats on the River Thames with her 16mm Cine-Kodak camera<sup>46</sup>.

The first film she made (wrote, shot and edited) was the 56-minute documentary “*A Crofter's Life in Shetland*” in 1931. In it we can see portrays a year in the life of the people of the island. The film reveals Brown's great interest in the daily lives of the inhabitants and her ability to establish an intimate relationship with the subject of her work. In the documentary we can see how this director gives equal status to the work of women and men. After a few shots of men fishing at sea, the film is cut into women working in the potato fields, emphasizing the contributions of women to the family economy<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Louise Arner Boyd was an American explorer famous for her contributions to the study of Arctic geography and the analysis of Arctic biodiversity. During her first trip to Spitsbergen in 1926, she took more than 21,000 feet of film and 700 photographs. One of her most important films was “The Search for Roald Amundsen” (United States, 1928). Stenport, Anna Westerstahl, and Mariah Larsson. *Women Arctic Explorers: In Front Of And Behind The Camera*. Accessed May 8, 2020. [https://www.academia.edu/41064376/Women\\_Arctic\\_Explorers\\_In\\_Front\\_Of\\_And\\_Behind\\_The\\_Camera](https://www.academia.edu/41064376/Women_Arctic_Explorers_In_Front_Of_And_Behind_The_Camera).

<sup>45</sup> Lake located in Scotland, south of the Highlands. It is the largest of the lakes on the island of Great Britain, and the second, after Loch Ness, by volume.

<sup>46</sup> Evans, Barbara. “Jenny Gilbertson,” Women Film Pioneers Project, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-53nv-g730>.

<sup>47</sup> We see the women doing the exhausting work of planting potatoes, bending over behind a horse-drawn plow while cutting a deep furrow in the earth. Shots of fishermen unloading their boats are followed by scenes of women cheerfully gutting and packing fish into barrels. Evans, Barbara. “Jenny Gilbertson,” Women Film Pioneers Project, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-53nv-g730>.

During a lecture tour across Canada of her dramatized documentary *"The Rugged Island: A Shetland Lyric"* (1934), Gilbertson met Canadian documentary filmmaker Evelyn Spice Cherry (see in section 1.4), who was the first woman to join her unit and with whom she co-directed *"Prairie Winter"*<sup>48</sup> in 1934.

She went on to make three more films before the Second World War. She taught for 20 years at the local school in Shetland where she also broadcast several short talks on the radio, wrote scripts for the school radio and two one-hour radio plays.

She retired from teaching in 1967 and was able to devote more time to filmmaking.

Since 1970 Gilbertson has made several films about life in the Arctic. She spent 13 months in Grise Fiord, Canada, 900 miles north of the Arctic Circle to make *"Jenny's Arctic Diary"* (1978), which recorded a year in the life of the Inuit community there. She worked alone, doing all the scripting, filming, sound, lighting and directing on her own. Part of what made her films successful was the way she identified with the people she filmed and was clearly accepted by them, what made her work honest and candid.

Ruby Grierson was also a Scottish documentary filmmaker, best known at the time as John Grierson's<sup>49</sup> sister. Scholar and filmmaker Gwendolyn Audrey Foster argues about the consideration that it should be given to them (Ruby and her sister Marion, also a filmmaker) stressing not only their achievements in British documentary history, but also their commitment to the feminist movement: "Their participation has been obscured by their brother's brilliant career. Perhaps the three Griersons should share credit as the founders of the British documentary movement. It is not surprising to uncover women filmmakers' contributions in this area. The movement's ideological support of social reform certainly shares common goals with the feminist movement"<sup>50</sup>.

She sought a fresh approach to documentary filmmaking, one that would give their subjects a voice rather than impose a narrative on them, generate a sense of equality rather than imposition, where the director was not a paternalistic figure, but rather a brother, sister, or partner, in contrast to the way her brother worked. In this sense, we could say that the way she made films had a feminist approach.

Ruby directed *"They Also Serve"*<sup>51</sup> in 1940, a dramatized documentary about a British housewife. The emphasis was on the domestic work of a mother during the war, spending her time attending to the

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<sup>48</sup> A dramatized documentary about the harsh conditions of the winter months on the Canadian prairies.

<sup>49</sup> One of the first and most influential documentary filmmakers in the history of cinema, best known for his film *Drifters* (1929).

<sup>50</sup> Foster, Gwendolyn Audrey. *Women Film Directors: An International Bio-Critical Dictionary*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995.

<sup>51</sup> "BFI Screenonline: *They Also Serve* (1940)." Accessed May 10, 2020. <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/582608/index.html>.

various needs of her family and neighbors. This kind of intimate approach to a subject that was totally ignored by the world at the time was groundbreaking because it showed the importance of the private thoughts, worries and frustrations of ordinary housewives during the war. Ruby Grierson's perspective in documentary film gave the subjects of her films (often invisible within society) the opportunity to speak directly about what mattered to them.<sup>52</sup>

Over and over again we find ourselves at the crossroads between documentary and ethnographic cinema, where women contribute to enrich the language of storytelling in documentary films. It is only fair that these contributions are recovered and analyzed, to understand what happened to them and to regain territories that have always belonged to both genders equally in film production.

### **I.3.- In North America**

As one might expect from a film industry as large and productive as that of the United States, women have worked in it since its inception. Examples of film pioneers exist in considerable numbers at least until the 1930s. After that only a few worked as directors up to the 70s and 80s.

Like many other women that worked with their husbands in film, Frances Hubbard Flaherty, writer and film director worked with hers, Robert J. Flaherty<sup>53</sup>, on several important documentaries. She co-direct and edited "*Moana*" in 1926<sup>54</sup>, and was credited with writing in both "*Louisiana Story*" in 1948<sup>55</sup>(for which she received an Oscar nomination for best original story) and "*The Land*" in 1942<sup>56</sup>. According to her page on IMDb<sup>57</sup>, she was part of the idealization of the famous documentary "*Nanook of the North*", for which her husband would go down in history, but in which she is excluded from the film's credits.

In 1955 she founded the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar<sup>58</sup>, where she gathered a group of filmmakers, critics, curators, musicians and other film enthusiasts at the Flaherty Farm in Vermont. For over sixty years the Flaherty Seminar has been firmly established as a unique institution that seeks to encourage filmmakers and other artists to explore the potential of the moving image.

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<sup>52</sup> She died in 1940 aboard a transatlantic liner that was torpedoed. This happened while she was filming a documentary about the evacuation of children to Canada.

<sup>53</sup> American filmmaker, best known for directing and producing (along with his wife) the first commercially successful feature documentary, *Nanook of the North* (1922). He is one of the pioneers of documentary and ethnographic films.

<sup>54</sup> It presents a docufictional account of a family living in a Samoan village in the early 1920s.

<sup>55</sup> The idyllic life of a young Cajun boy and his pet raccoon is disrupted when the tranquility of the bayou is broken by an oil well drilling near his home.

<sup>56</sup> Documentary showing the poor state that American agriculture had fallen into during the Great Depression.

<sup>57</sup> "Frances H. Flaherty." IMDb. Accessed May 17, 2020. <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0280878/>.

<sup>58</sup> "About Us – The Flaherty," January 14, 2019. <https://web.archive.org/web/20190114100547/http://flahertyseminar.org/about-us/>.

One of the most prominent directors of the early years of cinema was Lois Weber. Actress, screenwriter, producer and director, she is among the most important directors of the silent era and was totally involved in all aspects of production.

She was the first woman to co-direct a full-length fiction film (unlike Alice Guy-Blanché who was the first woman to direct a fiction film, which in terms of length does not fall into the category of a feature film). "*The Merchant of Venice*" premiered in 1914 and was starred and directed by her and her first husband Phillips Smalley.

Before that, in 1913, she worked also with her husband, co-directing, writing the script and acting in the short film "*Suspense*", full of innovative and groundbreaking elements. Weber manages to show us up to three actions simultaneously, which she achieves by using the split-screen technique. The short film includes a car chase and the use of vertical angles, not very common at the time, such as the Cenital and the High angle shot.

In her film "*Hypocrites*" in 1915<sup>59</sup> she caused quite a commotion by presenting for the first time a totally frontal female nude scene. She also uses sequences of multiple exposures and intricate editing. In most of her films she addressed issues related to gender and its concerns within society, all from a distinctive female perspective. One can see examples of these subjects in films such as "*Where are my Children*"<sup>60</sup> from 1916, which talks about abortion and birth control. In "*The People vs. John Doe*" also from 1916, she tackles the question of the death penalty<sup>61</sup>. In "*Hop, the Devil's Brew*" from she discussed alcoholism and drug addiction<sup>62</sup>. Despite the controversial nature of her topics, almost all her films were a box office success, and by 1916, she was one of the highest paid film workers in Hollywood<sup>63</sup>.

She founded her own production company in 1917, "Lois Weber Productions". In spite of this, Weber negotiated important distribution contracts with Universal, thus ensuring the distribution of her work. In 1922 she divorced her husband, which unfortunately contributed to a downturn in her career. It is at this same time that women's presence in important positions in the film industry begins to fade and

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<sup>59</sup> The film tells the parallel stories of a modern preacher and a medieval monk, Gabriel the Ascetic, who is killed by an ignorant mob for making a nude statue representing Truth, which is also represented by a ghostly naked girl who flits throughout the film.

<sup>60</sup> The film tells the story of a district attorney (Power Sr) who, while prosecuting a doctor for illegal abortions, finds out that society people, including his wife, used the doctor's services.

<sup>61</sup> A rich farmer and his sister are killed days after the man hired an uneducated farmer. The assigned detective (eager to collect the reward money) brutally forces a confession out of the poor farmer and his mentally handicapped brother. Both men are sentenced to death. Meanwhile, a lawyer suspects that the men's confessions are false, tracks down the real killer and saves the men from execution.

<sup>62</sup> Inspired by an exposé of opium trafficking in the Saturday Evening Post. In the semi documentary film Smalley starred as a Customs official and Weber as his opium-addicted wife.

<sup>63</sup> Stamp, Shelley. "Lois Weber," 2013. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-zsv8-nf69>. Quoted in Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall'Asta. "Women Film Pioneers Project." Women Film Pioneers Project. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/>.

film became a male-dominated business. Gradually, women producers and directors disappear, leaving behind screenwriters, set and costume designers who often did not even appear in the credits.

It should be noted that, although Weber's career declined sharply after her divorce, she wrote and directed five features over the next decade: "*A Chapter of Her Life*" (1923), "*The Marriage Clause*" (1926), "*Sensation Seekers*" (1927), "*The Broadway Angel*" (1927) and "*White Heat*" (1934). Smalley, in contrast, never again worked in any creative filmmaking capacity other than acting. Her last film "*White Heat*", was about an interracial love drama between an ambitious man and a native Hawaiian woman, shot in 1934. It dealt with miscegenation and racism on a sugar plantation in Hawaii. The critics attacked the film as humorless and distributors rejected it<sup>64</sup>.

Like Lois Weber, many women working in the industry formed their own production companies, in order to secure work and distribution. Unfortunately, most of these companies could not stand the passage of time and the shift in the industry towards women.

One of the few women who managed to work during a clearly harsh period for female filmmakers was Dorothy Arzner. With a film career of more than 15 years directing, spanning from 1919 to 1943, Arzner remains the most prolific studio director in the history of Hollywood.

She entered the world of cinema as a secretary in the scriptwriting department under the direction of director William C. DeMille, brother of Cecil B. DeMille<sup>65</sup>. She progressed quickly and became a scriptwriter, a negative cutter and finally an editor, standing out for her editing of the shooting sequences in "*Blood and Sand*" in 1922 from director Fred Niblo.

In 1927 she began her directorial career with the modest film, "*Fashions for Women*", which was a critical and commercial success. Arzner consolidated this success with two other jazz-era films, "*Ten Modern Commandments*" and "*Get Your Man*".

Her reputation as a filmmaker grew with her following films: "*The Wild Party*" in 1929<sup>66</sup>, the drama "*Christopher Strong*" in 1933<sup>67</sup>, where she introduced a very young Katharine Hepburn, and "*Craig's Wife*" in 1936<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Martínez-Salanova Sánchez, Enrique. "Figuras de Cine: Lois Weber, La Primera Mujer Que Filmó Un Largometraje." Figuras de cine. Accessed May 18, 2020. <https://educomunicacion.es/cineyeducacion/figurasloisweber.htm>.

<sup>65</sup> American film producer and director known because many of his films were box office hits, like: "The King of Kings", "The Ten Commandments", "Cleopatra", "Samson and Delilah", "The Greatest Show on Earth" (for which he won the Oscar for Best Picture) and the second version of "The Ten Commandments", the seventh highest grossing film of all time and the first on the list based on the Bible.

<sup>66</sup> Wild girls at a college pay more attention to parties than their classes. But when one party girl, Stella Ames, goes too far at a local bar and gets in trouble, her professor has to rescue her. Gossip linking the two escalates until Stella proves she is decent by shielding an innocent girl and winning the professor's respect. "Dorothy Arzner." IMDb. Accessed May 18, 2020. <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0002188/>.

<sup>67</sup> A famous female flier and a member of Parliament drift into a potentially disastrous affair. Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> A domineering woman marries a wealthy man for his money, and then uses her position to further her own ambitions for money and power. Ibid.

Due to events such as the censorship of Hollywood (introduced with the Hays Code), the transgression of her cinema (where she delves into issues such as the role of women in society, and making criticism of it) or the fact that she is the only woman director working in the large film studios run mainly by men, Dorothy Arzner's name would end up being practically erased for years.

In 1943 she left Hollywood and made training films for the Women's Army Corps. From there she produced the radio program "*You Were Meant to Be a Star*" worked in theater production, and taught filmmaking at the Pasadena Playhouse and later at UCLA. She also did a series of 50 commercials for Pepsi<sup>69</sup>.

After the end of the Second World War, independent cinema would emerge. It was born out of movements such as the French Nouvelle Vague, experimental or avant-garde films and American independent cinema. Here, women would find their way back to the screen.

### **I.3.1. Experimental genre**

The experimental genre is one of those considered closest to women filmmakers (due to the number of women working and being recognized in it) and where also women's topics were explored.

As described in the book edited by Robin Blaetz "*Women's Experimental Cinema, critical framework*", women enrich the understanding of feminism in cinema and expand the terrain of film history, particularly the history of the American avant-garde"<sup>70</sup>. In this text it is also discusses the tendency of many women towards making documentaries instead of fiction, because it has a non-hierarchical structure and collaborative style of production.

Examples like Maya Deren, Ukraine-born American experimental filmmaker who was an important promoter of the avant-garde in the 40s and 50s.

She believed that the function of cinema was to create an experience. Combining her expertise in dance and choreography, ethnography, the African spirit religion of Haitian Vodou, symbolist poetry and gestalt psychology, she created a series of perceptive black and white short films. Using editing, multiple exposures, jump-cutting, overlay, slow motion and other camera techniques, Deren abandoned established notions of physical space and time, in carefully planned films with specific conceptual objectives<sup>71</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> Field, Allyson Nadia. "Dorothy Arzner," 2013. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-cj7m-bt21>. Quoted in Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall'Asta. "Women Film Pioneers Project." Women Film Pioneers Project. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/>.

<sup>70</sup> Blaetz, Robin, ed. *Women's Experimental Cinema: Critical Frameworks*. Duke University Press, 2007. <http://library.oapen.org/viewer/web/viewer.html?file=/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/25768/1004320.pdf?sequence=1&isA%5Bllowed=y>.

<sup>71</sup> Clark, VèVè A., Maya Deren, Millicent Hodson, Catrina Neiman, and Hollis Melton. *The Legend of Maya Deren: A Documentary Biography and Collected Works*. New York: Anthology Film Archives/Film Culture, 1984.

She collaborated with Alexander Hammid in 1943 on what is considered one of the most influential experimental films in the history of American cinema: "*Meshes of the Afternoon*"<sup>72</sup>, awarded the Grand Prix Internationale at the Cannes International Film Festival in 1947.

Subsequently, she would direct several films on her own, including "*At Land*" in 1944<sup>73</sup>, "*A Study in Choreography for Camera*" in 1945 and "*Ritual in Transfigured Time*" in 1946, writing, producing, directing, editing and photographing with the help of one person, Hella Heyman, his camerawoman. Feminist film scholar Annette Kuhn noted<sup>74</sup> that low investments of money and "professionalism" have meant that avantgarde cinema has historically been much more open than the film industry to women.

Laura Mulvey also highlights an alignment and alliance of experimental and avant-garde cinema with women's interest and feminist politics. Specifically, Mulvey explained how avant-garde cinema is useful for women and feminism because they share "a common interest in the politics of images and the problems of aesthetic language"<sup>75</sup>.

With the arrival of the second wave of feminism, women filmmakers found support in leftist movements against the established mainstream film industry. Both were against sexism, the oppression of women and their objectification, racism and the imperialist ideas promoted by the U.S. market. These biases not only existed within the films narratives, many of them extended to the production side, perpetuating the shortage of female film workers (and of people of color or non-white ethnicity) in the American film industry.

#### **I.4.- Latin America**

By exploring places far from the meccas of cinema (Europe and the United States), we find films made by women in an even more limited position within the emerging industries of Latin America. In many of these places the production system would come pre-established trying to copy the Hollywood studio system, which included that the jobs of women behind the scenes would be mainly those of care and tasks commonly related to conventional gender roles. Very few women had the opportunity to have

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<sup>72</sup> The feminist short film explores the images of the interior of a woman, in whose dreams she has a terror of the objects of her daily life

<sup>73</sup> It has a dreamlike narrative in which a woman, played by Deren, bathes on a beach and then goes on a strange journey where she meets other people and other versions of herself.

<sup>74</sup> Kuhn, Annette. *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema*. Verso, 1993. Quoted in Butler, Alison. *Women's Cinema: The Contested Screen*. Columbia University Press, 2019.

<sup>75</sup> Mulvey, Laura. *Visual and Other Pleasures*. Springer, 1989.

long careers as directors, but this did not mean that they had no influence on the development of cinema in their places of origin.

Just like their European or American counterparts, the topics addressed in their films coincide with the problems faced by women (differing slightly according to the socio-cultural factors of each region and period of time), having an audiovisual look that comes from the marginality due to their gender condition. Being in this position immediately gives a political sense to this cinema, allowing to interlace dimensions of the structuring and subjectivity of the cinematographic creative process, as a way to expose the inequalities and oppressions.

In the case of Latin American cinema, women were almost totally absent from the main works of Latin American film historiography, this being further proof of the way in which women's work in other parts of the world was also hidden. However, thanks to the interest and persistence of several film scholars<sup>76</sup>, we can now know more of the names of Latin American women who made significant contributions during the time of silent film, as screenwriters, actress, editors and directors, as well as in film critics and film exhibitors.

While several Latin American countries rapidly developed national film industries, it was dependent on Europe and the United States for raw material and film technology. In the 1920s, Latin America was Hollywood's largest export market, and companies such as Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 20th Century Fox, Warner Bros. and RKO established distribution centers in Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro in an effort to circulate their films to local exhibitors.

Due to the scarcity of information about women working at this time, it is very difficult to describe in more detail some of these pioneers. The ones mentioned below are a few of those who have been rescued from the historical record that overlooked them.

Gabriela Bussenius was a film director, screenwriter, editor, writer and playwright. She married Italian immigrant Salvador Giambastiani, one of the pioneers of cinema in Chile.

Through the production company "Chile Film Co", which Giambastiani founded with Guillermo Bidwell and Luis Larraín, the couple made the film "*La agonía de Arauco*" or "*El olvido de los muertos*" (Arauco's Agony / The Oblivion of the Dead) in 1917. She was 17 years old at the time and was responsible for the script and direction, while Giambastiani work as a director of photography and

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<sup>76</sup> Hershfield, Joanne, and Patricia Torres San Martín. "Writing the History of Latin American Women Working in the Silent Film Industry." Accessed May 17, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/essay/writing-the-history-of-latin-american-women-working-in-the-silent-film-industry/>. Quoted in Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall'Asta. "Women Film Pioneers Project." Women Film Pioneers Project. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/>.

editor. The film dealt with the capitalist exploitation of the indigenous Mapuche people<sup>77</sup> of Araucania, following a woman who suffers the loss of her beloved husband and son. The production of this film required a series of natural locations, which required an extensive journey throughout the south of Chile to film the traditional practices and costumes, which served as the background for the narration. The film present women as part of a production process in society and as the core of the community through their knowledge and by being the ones who transmit the history.

After the film's release and Giambastiani's death in 1921, Bussenius did not direct again. Her subsequent work consisted of creating and directing magazines dedicated to film, such as "*Cine Magazine*", "*Mundo Social*" and "*Pantallas y bambalinas*"<sup>78</sup>.

Adela Sequeyro was a Mexican journalist, actress, filmmaker and screenwriter. As a child she attended an English and French-speaking school in Mexico City and later began a career in journalism. A pioneer of Mexican cinema, she was a founding member of the "Éxito" cooperative (which supported the development of national productions). In an interview recorded in the book: *Dictionary of Mexican Filmmakers* by Perla Ciuk<sup>79</sup>, she narrated the beginning of her time as a producer: "I made a cooperative with the Banco de Crédito Popular. It was called Éxito, and I invited 10 people to participate in it. I worked on a script with Jorge Cárdena, but the bank's directors rejected it. In one crazy night I rewrote it on a typewriter. A long and frightening time went by when it seemed that they accepted it and then rejected it again. Finally, they agreed to do it. It was then that we formed the cooperative and "*Más allá de la muerte*" (Beyond death) was made in 1935, it was directed by Ramón Peón with my help."

After this organization collapsed financially, Adela founded "Producciones Carola", the company responsible for the only two films she made as a filmmaker: "*La mujer de nadie*" (Nobody's Woman) in 1937, were she produces, writes, directs, acts and edits. According to Patricia Torres San Martín<sup>80</sup>, the film celebrates women's capacity to love. The protagonist, played with great intensity by Sequeyro, projects feelings of equal intensity towards the three gallant bohemian artists who court her. And although the film ends with Sequeyro's character choosing to run away rather than stay and force the

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<sup>77</sup>The largest group of indigenous people in South America. Most of them live in Chile's Central Valley, south of the Biobío River. A smaller group lives in the province of Neuquén, in central-western Argentina.

<sup>78</sup> Donoso, Eliana Jara. *Cine mudo chileno*. Self-published, 1994. Quoted in Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall'Asta. "Gabriela von Bussenius Vega," *Women Film Pioneers Project*, 2013. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-02sb-cn64>.

<sup>79</sup> Ciuk, Perla. *Diccionario de directores del cine mexicano*. México, D.F.: Cineteca Nacional, 2000. Quoted in Solís, Juan. "Festejan los cien años de la cineasta Adela Sequeyro." *El Universal*. 2001. <https://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/cultura/10907.html>.

<sup>80</sup> Torres San Martín, Patricia. "Adela Sequeyro," 2013. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-kgwj-5j23>. Quoted in Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall'Asta. "Women Film Pioneers Project." *Women Film Pioneers Project*. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/>.

three artists to confront the possibility of her refusing to choose between them, the director was able to express a specifically feminine erotic universe in a surprisingly modern film language.

Her second film "*Diablillos de arrabal*" (Little devils from the suburbs) in 1938, failed at the box office.

As was the case with most independent producers of the time, Producciones Carola was unable to sustain itself and had to be declared bankrupt. After that Adela never directed again. The only opportunity she was offered to continue in this field was to become an assistant director, which she turned down. After participating as an actress in a few more films, Adela retired from filmmaking to continue her journalistic career.

Adriana and Dolores Ehlers were pioneers in many areas of Mexican cinema. Forced to leave school due to financial problems, Adriana began working in a photographic studio, where she learned all aspects of the craft. They later opened their own portrait studio, one of the first in Mexico. They took advantage of the visit of the then president Venustiano Carranza in 1915 to the port city of Veracruz, where they lived, and offered to take his picture and show him their work. Grateful for the quality of the job, he gave them a scholarship to study abroad, so in 1916 they traveled to Boston, where they studied cinematography for three years. Thanks to the continuation of the scholarship from the Mexican government, they completed their training in filmmaking at the Universal Pictures Company studios in New York.

During World War I, they worked for the U.S. government creating films about soldiers' health.

On their return from the war in 1919, the Ehlers sisters set up a business selling cameras and projectors from the Nicholas Power Company in Mexico City. At "Casa Ehlers" (name of the establishment), they not only sold equipment, but also provided training to camera operators and projectionists.

They were involved in state programs for the promotion of national culture, being appointed by the Mexican Ministry of the Interior as Head of the Department of Cinematography (Dolores) and Head of the Department of Censorship (Adriana). The latter department was created mainly with the intention of counteracting the degrading images of Mexico and Mexicans that were promoted in American films (negative stereotypes that reinforced the image of the country as a socially and economically backward nation populated by colorful Indians). To contribute to these efforts, they made many newscast style documentaries and produced several films that celebrated the country, filming parades and protests, the Cacahuamilpa caves, the ruins of Teotihuacan and the National Museum of Archaeology, History

and Ethnography<sup>81</sup>. These films were shown in schools, factories, government departments and charitable institutions.

After the assassination of President Venustiano Carranza, Adriana and Dolores were dismissed from their positions. Between 1922 and 1929, they made weekly newsreels called Ehlers Magazines/Ehlers Reviews, which they sold directly to exhibitors<sup>82</sup>. As women working in an exclusively male environment, the Ehlers sisters faced criticism and resistance, in part because they dressed in pants and were self-sufficient. And they were not the only ones being discriminated against because of their gender. Like their European or North American counterparts, there were very few women working as directors after the 1930s. Latin American markets took their example from the Hollywood way of producing and for many years women did not direct any films.

Maria Caridad Cumaná, film director and professor at the University of Havana reaffirms this situation by stating: "For a long time women's work has been invisible in the audiovisual world or subordinated to that of men, due to the hegemony of the male presence not only on the screen but also empowered by the camera during filming"<sup>83</sup>.

It was in the context of the women's rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s that the number of women directors increased significantly, gathered around collectives of women filmmakers in countries such as Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela<sup>84</sup>. They produced both fiction films and documentaries on abortion, domestic work, rape and prostitution.

Patricia Torres San Martín, PhD in Social Anthropology and research professor in Film at the University of Guadalajara, writes in an article in the Latin American magazine "Nueva Sociedad"<sup>85</sup>: "the feminist warriors of the 60s and 70s affirmed a gender identity and a properly feminine authorship. They projected the cinematographic praxis as a political expression and of emancipation"

Within this context, a series of documentary filmmakers emerged who often managed to anticipate the social and political upheavals that were sweeping the region. Most of them had an active role as social agents, they had very clear political positions and feminist awareness in their work.

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<sup>81</sup> Some of the titles were: "El agua potable en la ciudad de México" (Drinking water in Mexico City), 1920; "Un paseo en tranvía en la ciudad de México" (A tram ride through México City), 1920; "Servicio postal en la ciudad de México" (Postal service in Mexico City), 1921; "Las pirámides de Teotihuacán" (The Teotihuacán pyramids), 1921.

<sup>82</sup> Tuñón, Julia. "Adriana and Dolores Ehlers," 2013. <https://doi.org/10.7916/d8-s8kb-1319>. Quoted in Gaines, Jane, Radha Vatsal, and Monica Dall'Asta. "Women Film Pioneers Project." Women Film Pioneers Project. Accessed March 14, 2020. <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/>.

<sup>83</sup> Grogg, Patricia. "CINE-AMÉRICA LATINA: Realizadoras en la web." IPS Agencia de Noticias, March 25, 2009. <http://www.ipsnoticias.net/2009/03/cine-america-latina-realizadoras-en-la-web/>.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Torres San Martín, Patricia. "Mujeres detrás de Cámara historia de Conquistas Victorias En El Cine." Nueva Sociedad | Democracia y Política En América Latina, no. 218 (2008): [https://nuso.org/media/articles/downloads/3574\\_1.pdf](https://nuso.org/media/articles/downloads/3574_1.pdf).

Colombian Marta Rodriguez was a renowned documentary filmmaker, producer, director and writer. Rodriguez is considered a pioneer of anthropological documentaries in Latin America. Her films focus on the living and working conditions of Colombia's lowest socioeconomic working class, with an emphasis on indigenous peoples. Her most notable films include: "*Chircales*" in 1972<sup>86</sup>, "*Campesinos*" (Farmers) in 1975<sup>87</sup>, and "*Nuestra voz de tierra, memoria y futuro*" (Our voice of land, memory and future) in 1982<sup>88</sup> which she co-direct with her husband Jorge Silva.

Marcela Fernández Violante is a Mexican filmmaker known for directing the short documentary "Frida Kahlo" in 1972, about Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, which won an Ariel award for "Best Documentary" and "the special jury award" at the London festival in 1974. That same year she became a professor of screenwriting and filmmaking at the Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos (CUEC) of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

She worked within the independent and university sector, away from the industrial system of production. Thanks to the recognition that her documentary about Frida Kahlo had, she was able to obtain funds to make her first fiction film: "*De todo modos Juan te llamas*"<sup>89</sup> (In any case, your name is Juan), in 1974, the first film produced by the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

In 1977 she directed her second feature film, "Cananea", based on the first strike that took place in Mexico in 1906 and the subsequent repression of Mexican workers by hired killers in Arizona by the owner of the mine, Colonel Green. The film won the prize for best cinematography at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival (Czechoslovakia 1978), and it participated in the 1979 Tashkent Film Festival in the former USSR<sup>90</sup>.

In 1981 he made a foray into the children's genre with the film "En el país de los pies ligero" (In the land of light feet), about a white boy's adventures in the Tarahumara mountains in the state of

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<sup>86</sup> The documentary shows the daily life of a family that is dedicated to the artisan production of bricks. The film highlights the religious, political and social conditions of the brick makers by showing the exploitation they were subjected to by landowners and the permissiveness of the exploited due to their social and cultural condition. For which she won the Golden Dove at the Leipzig Documentary Film Festival in Germany and in 1973 the Grand Prix at the Tampere International Film Festival in Finland.

<sup>87</sup> The documentary analyzes the meaning that the land has for the indigenous people and for the ruling class. It focuses mainly on the struggle between the landownership and the redistribution of land. She won in 1976 the "First Prize" at the Oberhausen International Film Festival, Germany. In 1977 the "Grand Prix" International Festival of Tampere, Finland and the award for "Best Film" Festival of Grenoble, France.

<sup>88</sup> The documentary shows the struggle of the Coconuco indigenous community to preserve their territory, which over time gave in to the advance of civilization. With this documentary I win more than 8 awards for best direction, best film, best photography, best original music, in several international festivals, in Germany, Colombia, Spain and Mexico.

<sup>89</sup> The film tells the story of the Cristero movement, known as the religious war, developed in Western Mexico between 1926 and 1929. It explains its causes, events and the behaviour of the main characters in this episode, which illustrates the social dynamics of that period.

<sup>90</sup> Medrano Platas, Alejandro. *Quince directores del cine mexicano: entrevistas*. México, D.F.: Plaza y Valdés, 1999. <http://archive.org/details/quincedirectores0000medr>.

Chihuahua, denouncing the exploitation of wood and the misery of the Tarahumara Indians. The film won the category of best children's film at the Berlin film festival in 1983<sup>91</sup>.

Chilean filmmaker, scriptwriter and editor, Valeria Sarmiento debut as a director in 1972, with the premiere of the documentary "*Un sueño como de colores*" (A Dream as in Colors), centered on a group of women dedicated to striptease. In an interview for the Chilean Film Studies Magazine "La Fuga" in 2013, Sarmiento describes the way she decided to work on the documentary: "when everyone was making political cinema. I went to another kind of cinema, a more investigative kind of cinema, about the role of women"<sup>92</sup>.

Since 1974 she worked from exile in France, along with her husband, Raul Ruiz. There she continued to focus on political and gender issues. In 1975 she made "*La dueña de casa*" (The Housewife), a documentary that showed how certain women were completely isolated from the outside world during the time of the Unidad Popular<sup>93</sup>. In 1982 she released "*El hombre cuando es hombre*" (The man when he is a man), a documentary that intruded on the relationships of subjection, violence and polygamy in which Latin American women found themselves. According to her, she had presented the project to German Television several times and they rejected it, until finally, when she presented the project for the third time, they told her: "Since you were Raúl's wife, we thought that you wanted to make films, just because your husband made films, but after the third project we realized that you really wanted to make films"<sup>94</sup>.

Like the European documentary filmmakers married to the genre's leading men, Sarmiento experienced bias because she was married to such a prominent filmmaker as Raul Ruiz. During her career, she worked as an editor and co-director on many of her husband's films but was rarely given recognition for this work.

Her first fiction film was "*Notre mariage*" (Our marriage) in 1984, which won the Grand Prize for Best New Director at the San Sebastian International Film Festival.

Her subsequent Films usually working on melodrama or romantic drama, always featuring strong female characters who confront male chauvinism and sexism.

Between the 80s and 90s, one would think that women directors, producers, screenwriters, cinematographers and editors would no longer have to prove that they had mastered the skills of the

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<sup>91</sup> She is currently the General Secretary of the Union of Film Production Workers of the Mexican Republic (STPC), is a member of the General Society of Writers of Mexico (SOGEM) and presides over the cultural association Matilde Landeta.

<sup>92</sup> Pinto Veas, Ivan. "Valeria Sarmiento: 'El machismo una lo sufre en América Latina desde que nace.'" *la Fuga*, 2013. <http://www.lafuga.cl/valeria-sarmiento/638/>.

<sup>93</sup> The Unidad Popular (Popular Unity) or UP was an electoral coalition of leftist political parties in Chile that led the socialist candidate Salvador Allende to the Presidency of the Chilean Republic in 1970.

<sup>94</sup> Pinto Veas, Ivan. "Valeria Sarmiento: 'El machismo una lo sufre en América Latina desde que nace.'" *la Fuga*, 2013. <http://www.lafuga.cl/valeria-sarmiento/638/>.

trade in the same way as men, but unfortunately not everyone was convinced, so another way of making films had to be developed.

The search for a more realistic representation of gender in mainstream media served as a driving force that motivated many women creators to continue producing their own narratives during the last decades of the 20th century.

Scholars specializing in media began to work more actively against inequality, generating studies, surveys and articles that shed light on the reasons behind it. In addition to presenting strategies or ideas to support and encourage the work of women in audiovisual production.

The lack of progress in equality has become more evident and pressing over the years. Movements such as "Time's up" and "Me too" have helped to dismantle the normalization of sexual harassment and discrimination so common in male-dominated work environments.

In addition to being relegated to non-executive roles in film productions for decades and not being credited for their contributions to film history, women have had to endure harassment and prejudice related to their gender. Now that we know more about the reality behind how this industries have worked and their treatment towards the women who work in them, it is necessary to make structural changes and generate policies to equalize working conditions for women (e.g. closing the wage gap, better funding opportunities, gender quotas in festivals and commissions). The opportunities generated from gender equality initiatives will not only contribute to the employment and production of women in audiovisual media, but it will also broaden and diversify the content that is being created in them.

The following chapter focuses on the examination of concrete data on gender equality, in order to demonstrate with statistics, the status of women working in the audiovisual media (mainly in the films). Several studies and observational surveys have been conducted (for the past two decades and in different countries) on the scope and number of women working as directors, producers, screenwriters and in some cases heads of technical department as well.

At the 2nd International Round Table of Women's Organizations in Film and Media at Berlinale 2020, Alessia Sonaglioni, Executive Director of EWA, critically highlighted the importance of the role of profound data collecting for the process of changing the model: "Start counting and then start changing, without concrete data, change cannot be rushed and policies cannot be made"<sup>95</sup>.

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<sup>95</sup> Pro Quote Film. "2nd International Round Table 2020, Shifting the Narrative." Berlinale, Berlin, February 21, 2020.

## **Chapter II.- The space of women in present audiovisual industry (different surveys).**

All the studies presented in this chapter have a number of shared motivations, such as promoting greater gender equality for women audiovisual professionals in terms of access and opportunities for employment and funding, as well as finding ways to provide equal opportunities to tell their stories, express themselves and expand their own talents, and make their stories heard.

Although the study designs are slightly different across the various surveys, most of the conclusions and results reached were similar at all latitudes where the surveys were conducted.

### **II.1.1. - In film (Europe and U.S.)**

There are many surveys conducted in the film industry that aim to shed light on the number of women working in film and media production. One of the first and most important transversal and longitudinal studies is “The Celluloid Ceiling Report” developed by the Center for Women's Studies in Television and Film at San Diego State University, California. Its main author, PhD. Martha Lauzen worked with students whom she trained to do content analysis. In an interview<sup>96</sup> with film critic Jan Lisa Huttner, Dr. Lauzen comment about part of the methodology used in this study. that: “It's very detailed and time-intensive work. A colleague, David Dozier, conducts the data analysis”.

According to “The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women on the Top 100, 250, and 500 Films of 2019”<sup>97</sup>, the figures and data used in this report are obtained from Box Office Mojo on January 1, 2020. Until the submission of this thesis I have not been able to get confirmation that this data collection is consistent in the different versions of this study, but one could assume, (because it is described as the most extensive and comprehensive study available on women's employment behind the scenes in film) that the methodology has been consistent and that all annual reports have been done in the same way.

Dr. Lauzen describe part of her study design in the following way<sup>98</sup>: “One thing we calculate is something called “inter-coder reliability.” That means that 2 different coders view approximately 10%

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<sup>96</sup> Huttner, Jan Lisa. The Celluloid Ceiling (2002): Jan chats with Martha Lauzen. Film 42/FF2 Media, 2002. [http://www.films42.com/chats/chats\\_lauzen.asp](http://www.films42.com/chats/chats_lauzen.asp).

<sup>97</sup> Martha M Lauzen. “The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women on the Top 100, 250, and 500 Films of 2019.” Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University, 2020. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019\\_Celluloid\\_Ceiling\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019_Celluloid_Ceiling_Report.pdf).

<sup>98</sup> Huttner, Jan Lisa. The Celluloid Ceiling (2002): Jan chats with Martha Lauzen. Film 42/FF2 Media, 2002. [http://www.films42.com/chats/chats\\_lauzen.asp](http://www.films42.com/chats/chats_lauzen.asp).

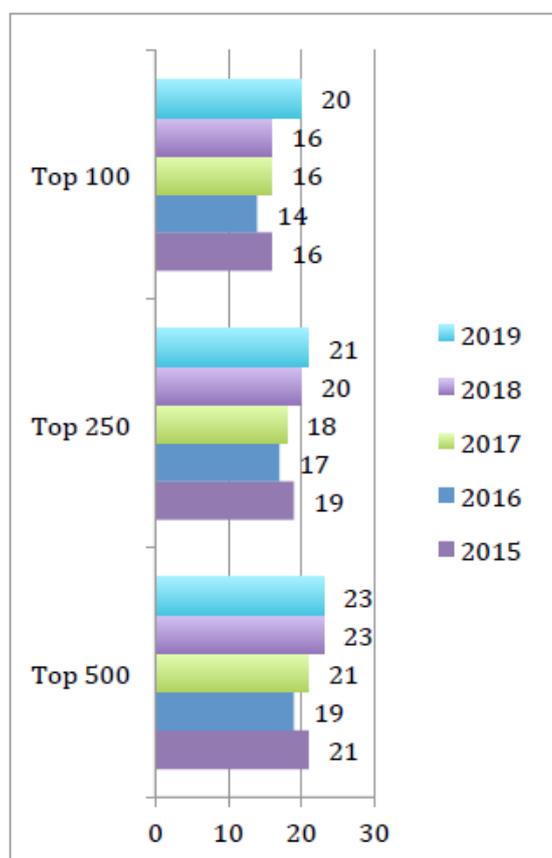
of the sample to insure that, in fact, they are coding what is on-screen in similar ways. We want to make sure the coding doesn't reflect some personal bias that the rater has, or that a coder is seeing something that doesn't exist. There are certain levels of inter-coder reliability that a researcher has to achieve in order to make statements about the data. And our study achieves these levels. So what we publish is not an expression of opinion; it is a quantitative study that uses all of the statistical conventions that are required of any responsible social scientist".

The main objective of the report is to track the employment of women working as directors, writers, producers, cinematographers, and editors on the top 100, 250, and 500 grossing films in the United States. It has been conducted for 22 years in a row and is considered more than 56,000 behind-the-scenes credits in more than 5,500 films.

In order to analyze the results of this research, it will be used the latest version of this study (published in 2020). This version includes (in addition to directors, writers, executive producers, producers, editors, and filmmakers), composers, music supervisors, sound editors, sound designers, production designers, art directors, special effects supervisors, and visual effects supervisors.

Some of its most important results can be observed in the following figures:

Figure 1.  
Comparison of Percentages of Behind the-Scenes Women on Top 100, 250, and 500 Films (Last Five Years)



In the Figure 1 we can see that women made up 20% of all directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors and filmmakers working on the 100 highest-grossing films in 2019, 4% more than in 2018 that was up to 16%.

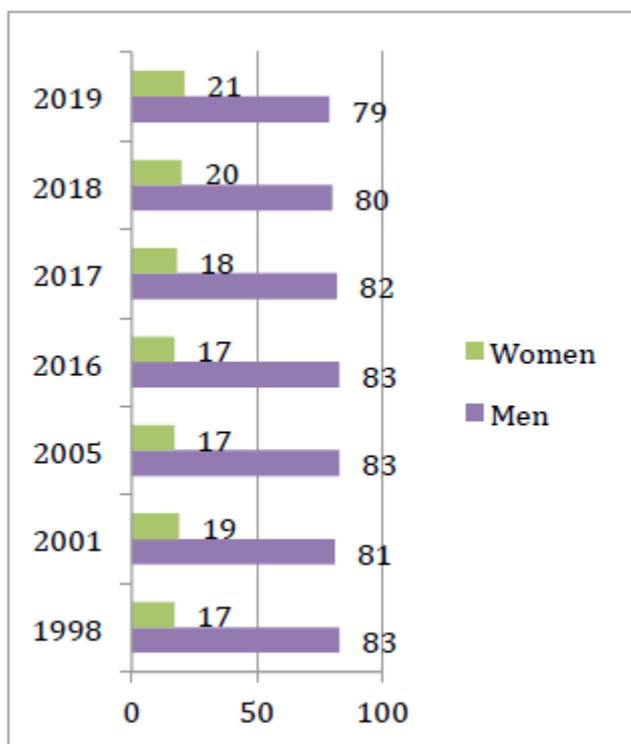
The percentage of women working on the top 500 films remained stable at 23%.

In the top 250 we can see similar results, with a slight difference between 2016 and 2019, but a very close number between 2015 and 2019.

In Figure 2, we can see a broader picture, a historical comparison that includes the results of the top 250 films between 1998 and 2019.

Figure 2.

Historical Comparison of Percentages of Behind-the-Scenes Women on Top 250 Films



This represents an increase of 1 percentage point from 2018 and a recent historic high. It also represents an increase of only 4 percentage points since 1998. These numbers are strong evidence that progress in the number of women working behind the scenes is minimal.

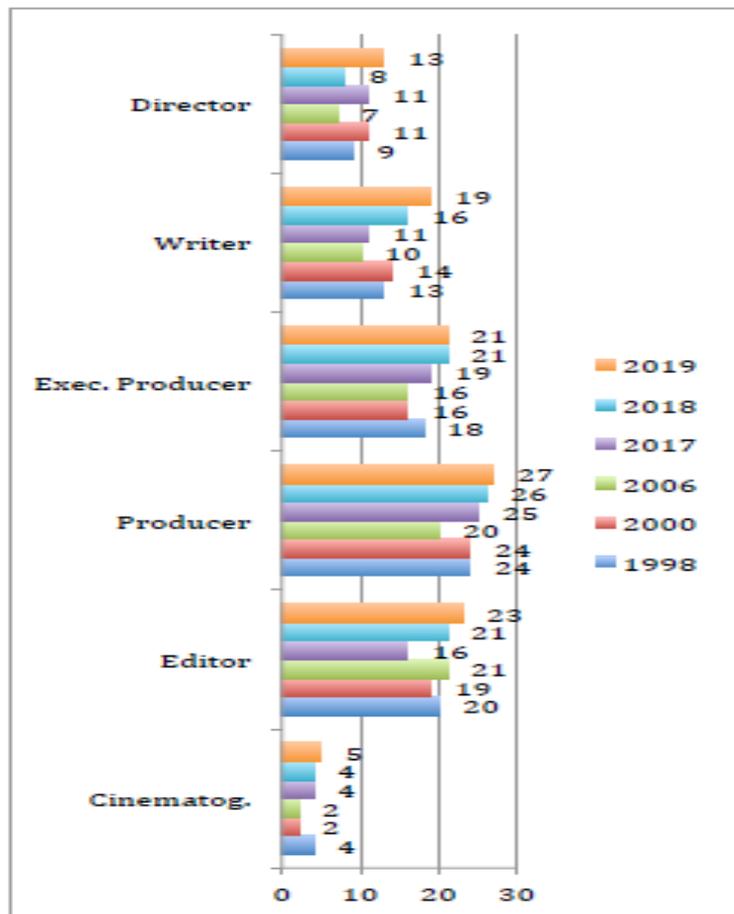
Dr. Lauzen says in an article for The Guardian online newspaper<sup>99</sup>: “It’s easy to think things have improved dramatically when we see high-profile women such as Patty Jenkins and Marielle Heller directing films or when we hear that women are set to direct five superhero studio features in 2020. A few high-profile cases can dramatically skew our perceptions of how women are faring. That’s why it’s so important to count the numbers of women working, so that we’re not acting on perceptions but on reality.”

As discussed in the introduction and developed in the previous chapter, the perception that the problem of gender equality is solved is one of the major obstacles faced by those who want to change the current situation. Ignoring the problem will certainly not make it go away, and in times like these, women are no longer willing to keep normalizing the situation.

In Figure 3 we can see a wider spectrum of women working in film in a longitudinal way.

Figure 3.

Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Employed Behind the Scenes on Top 250 Films by Role



<sup>99</sup> Wheeler, André. “More Women than Ever Working in Film – but Men Still Dominate Key Roles.” *The Guardian*, January 2, 2020, sec. Film. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/jan/02/women-film-industry-hollywood-2019>.

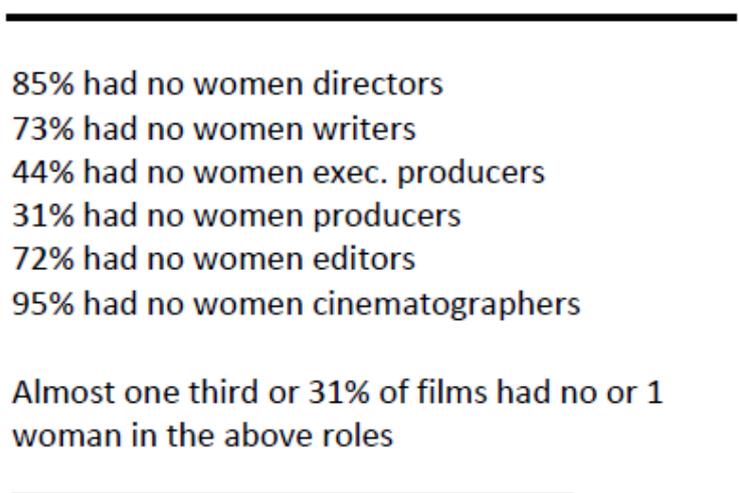
The most common work done by women behind the scenes is that of production (27%), followed by editors (23%), executive producers (21%), writers (19%), directors (13%) and filmmakers (5%). In the case of the role of director we can see an increase that might be interpreted as minor, but still means an historical record.

Women constitute 13% of all the directors (employed on Top 250 in 2019), an increase of 5 percentage points from 8% in 2018, and an increase of 2 percentage points from the previous high of 11% in 2017. The percentages between 2017 (8%) and 1998 (9%) are almost the same, which is curious, since there are 11 years of difference between the two results. It is even more striking that the 2017 result is lower than in 1998, since one would hope that over the years the numbers would increase, which has not been the case for female directors.

In the case of writers, executive producers, publishers, production companies and filmmakers there is no increase of more than 3 points between 2018 and 2019, in the case of executive producers there is no increase at all. In the remaining areas, they all constitute a historical record, although it fluctuates from 3 to 1 point between 2018 and 2019.

To get a broader picture, in the Figure 4 we can observe the proportions where women are not considered to work in film crews in the Top 250 Films from 2019. 95% had no women cinematographers, 85% had no women directors, 73% had no women writers, 72% had no women editors, 44% had no women executive producers, and 31% had no women producers.

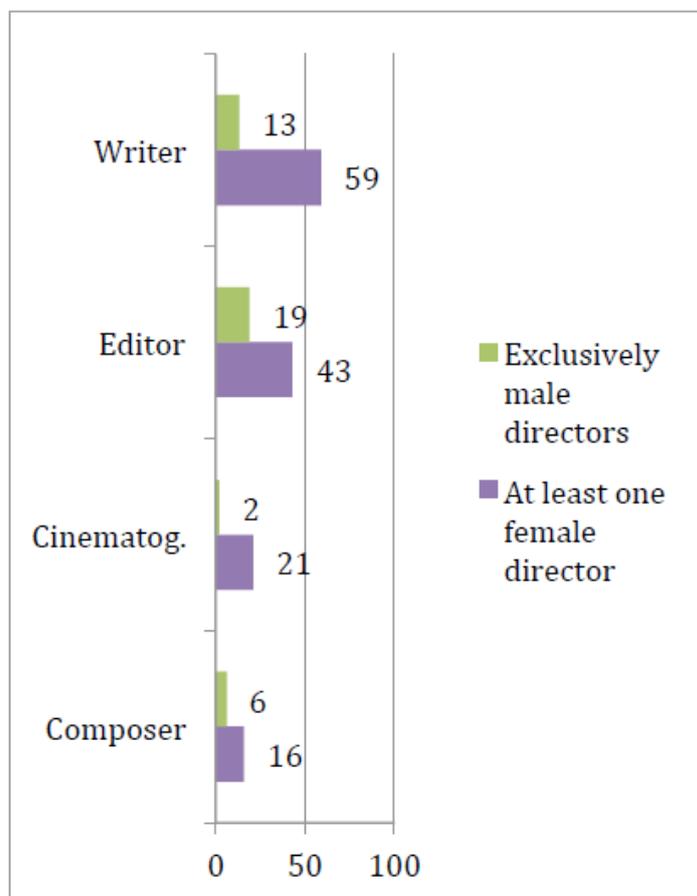
Figure 4.  
Percentages of Top 250 Films with No Women in Roles Considered



More encouraging and very interesting results can be found in the Figure 5, which represents the percentage of women working in film crews, when the direction is held by a man or a woman (in the Top 500 films).

Figure 5.

Comparison of Percentages of Women Working on Films with at Least One Female Director vs. with Exclusively Male Directors



Films with at least one female director employ significantly more women, compared to films where the directors are exclusively men. For example, women screenwriters make up 59%, compared to 13% when directors are exclusively male. In the case of editors there is also a substantial difference of 24 points between male and female directors. Finally, cinematographers see the greatest progress from 2% when they direct exclusively men to 21% when their directors are women.

This tells us that part of the path to equality behind the scenes has to do with having more women as directors or in executive roles.

Another major study from the US film industry is the "Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Analysis of Director Gender & Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019"<sup>100</sup>. Conducted by Dr. Stacy L. Smith, Marc Choueiti, Kevin Yao, Hannah Clark & Dr. Katherine Pieper with the support of the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative<sup>101</sup> at USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. A total of 1,300 of the most popular films from 2007 to 2019 were reviewed, with 1,448 directors examined through two inclusion metrics: gender and race/ethnicity.

In addition, three additional analyses were conducted: an analysis of director inclusion in all films distributed by eight major companies from 2015 to 2019. An assessment of women directors and award nominations over the past 13 years from 4 organizations (Golden Globes, Academy Awards, DGA and Critics' Choice). As well as an analysis of the careers of women show directors (e.g. Sundance Film Festival, episodic television, Netflix films), which will be revised later in the sections on Festivals (section II.1.1), television (section II.2) and streaming (section III.3.1).

The data gathering for this study comes from different sources. First, to determine the top 100 films, profits are reviewed from the releases in the U. S. recovered from the Box Office Mojo<sup>102</sup> up to January 1, 2020.

Secondly, information about the directors of these films is sought through title credits, projectors, production notes, and crew lists from this same source.

All demographic information (gender, race/ethnicity) was retrieved from their own AI databases, as well as from industry subscriptions (i.e., Variety Insight, Studio System, IMDbPro.com), databases (i.e., Directors Guild of America, Writers Guild of America), newspaper articles, and other sources of information (e.g., twitter, Instagram, Facebook, correspondence with a director's representative, and/or direct emails/messages with the directors).

A total of 1,300 of the most popular films between 2007 and 2019 were included in the survey. In this research summary, the 2019 results of the top 100 films are reviewed first, followed by a comparative review of the 2018 and 2007 results of the top 100 films of each year.

Part of the methodology used in this study is to only note results with a 5-percentage point difference or more. This criterion was established to ensure that only substantial changes are accounted for and not the more trivial deviations<sup>103</sup> (1-2%).

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<sup>100</sup> "Study on Gender Inequality in the Film Industry - EWA Network." EWA Women. Accessed May 13, 2020. <https://www.ewawomen.com/gender-inequality-in-the-film-industry-2/>.

<sup>101</sup> According to its website, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative is the world's leading think tank that studies diversity and inclusion in entertainment through original research and sponsored projects. It develops specific research-based solutions to address inequality. Its three main areas are Research, Advocacy for Inclusion and Action.

<sup>102</sup> IMDb. "Box Office Mojo." Box Office Mojo. Accessed May 13, 2020. <https://www.boxofficemojo.com/>.

<sup>103</sup> Smith, Dr. Stacy L., Marc Choueiti, Kevin Yao, Hannah Clark, and Dr. Katherine Pieper. "Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Analysis of Director Gender and Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019." USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, January 2020. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-directors-chair-20200102.pdf>.

Among the results on gender, we can find in Table 1 proportions that follow the trend shown in the previous study (The celluloid ceiling report). Where men work overwhelmingly more than women as directors. A total of 113 directors were assigned across the top 100 films of 2019. 89.4% were men and 10.6% were women.

Over a 12-year period of producing successful blockbusters films, only 4.8% of directors were women. Although in recent years the number of female directors has increased, there are cases like 2015 or 2017 where the number of female directors decreased again, at least in the case of blockbuster films. Of course, this is not as low as the period 2013-2014, when only four women were employed as directors.

As in the previous study, 2019 has a significantly higher percentage and number of female directors than 2018 (4.5%) or 2007 (2.7%). In fact, the number has more than doubled since 2018 and tripled since 2007. It should also be noted that 2019 is virtually the same as 2008 (9 women), the previous peak for female directors working on the top 100 films.

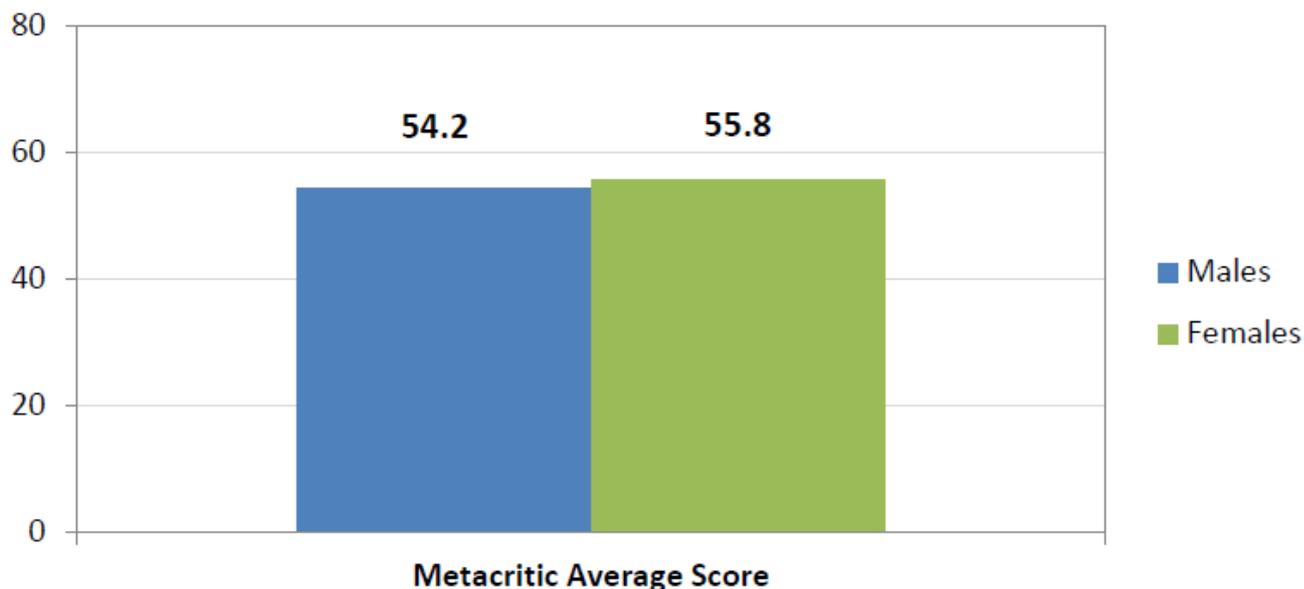
Table 1:  
Director Gender of Fictional Films by Year

Year	Males	Females	Total
2007	97.3% (n=109)	2.7% (n=3)	112
2008	92% (n=103)	8% (n=9)	112
2009	96.4% (n=107)	3.6% (n=4)	111
2010	97.2% (n=106)	2.8% (n=3)	109
2011	96.3% (n=104)	3.7% (n=4)	108
2012	95.9% (n=116)	4.1% (n=5)	121
2013	98.1% (n=105)	1.9% (n=2)	107
2014	98.1% (n=105)	1.9% (n=2)	107
2015	92.5% (n=99)	7.5% (n=8)	107
2016	95.8% (n=115)	4.2% (n=5)	120
2017	92.7% (n=101)	7.3% (n=8)	109
2018	95.5% (n=107)	4.5% (n=5)	112
2019	89.4% (n=101)	10.6% (n=12)	113
Overall	95.2% (n=1,378)	4.8% (n=70)	1,448

An interesting insight can be seen in figure 6, which shows the results of the film critics' scores for these films, separate by the director's gender. For these results, they used Metacritic<sup>104</sup> averages score.

<sup>104</sup> "Metacritic - Movie Reviews, TV Reviews, Game Reviews, and Music Reviews." Metacritic. Accessed May 13, 2020. <https://www.metacritic.com/>.

Figure 6  
Average Metacritic Score by Film Director Gender



With a range between 9 and 100 points given by critics, films with only male directors have 54.2 points on average, which is nearly the same as those with female directors have 55.8, with a range between 22-95 points. This tells us that the critical reception of these two groups is practically identical. In the eyes of film critics, there are no major differences between films made by women and those made by men. This accounts for a strong argument in favor of women directors and provides evidence that women are just as critically acclaimed as men, even though the number of films made by women is much smaller.

Looking not only at gender but also at race/ethnicity, in table 2 we can observe that most of the films in the 12-year period were directed predominantly by white (male) directors.

The information presented here in relation to the number of white men, white women and men from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (UR) was cross referenced with census data (as of 2018) to get a better idea of participation rates. The ratio of women from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups working on the top 100 films is 92 to 1 compared to white males.

Table 2:  
Gender & Underrepresented Status of Directors from 2007-2019

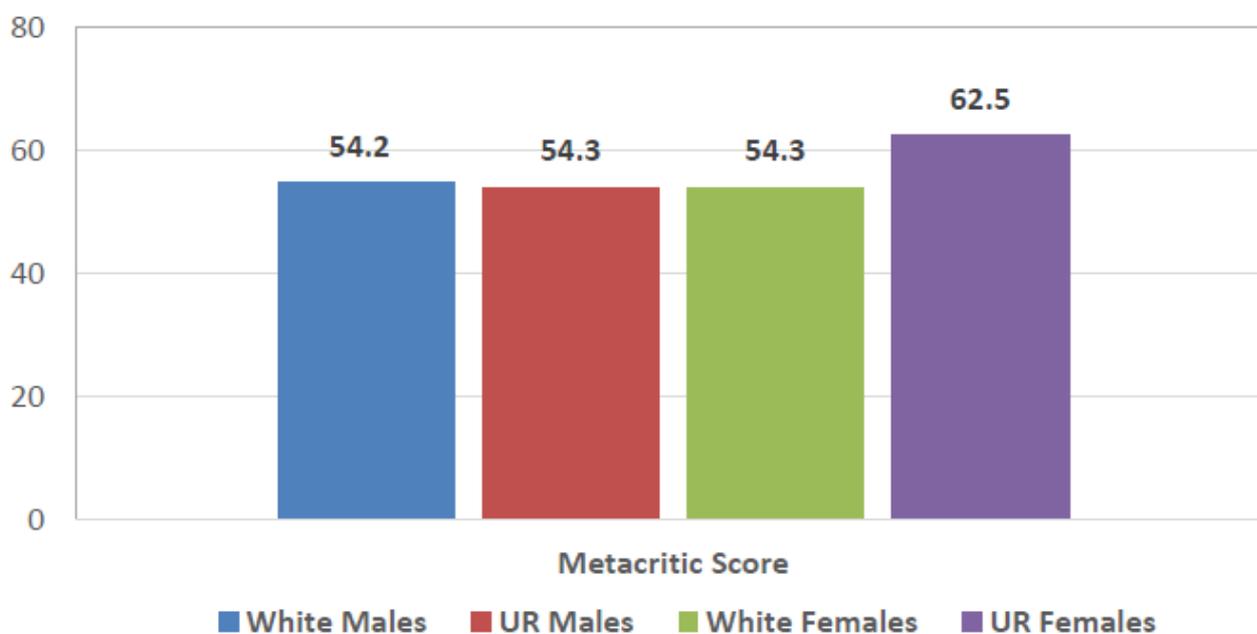
Directors	White Males	White Females	UR Males	UR Females
Total %	82.5%	3.9%	12.6%	<1%
Total #	1,195	57	183	13
U.S. Census (approximate)	29.8%	30.1%	19.5%	20.1%

Another very meaningful finding of this study is the comparison between women of color and their peers (women and men) using the same Metacritic data system. In the average score given by Metacritic (see Figure 7), a very positive average was found for films directed by women of color with an average of 62.5 points in the range of 44-89. Compared to stories directed by white men averaging 54.2 points in the range 9-100, white women averaging 54.3 points in the range 22-95, or underrepresented men averaging 54.3 in the range 11-99.

Although the results may be encouraging, they should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of films directed by women of color.

Figure 7:

Average Metacritic Score by Gender and Underrepresented Status of Director



All these findings suggest two problematic patterns. Women of color were given substantially fewer opportunities than their white female, white male and UR male counterparts to direct major films. Nevertheless, when given access, films directed by women of color received better reviews than those directed by individuals from the other identity groups.

Certainly, there is a disconnect between Hollywood hiring practices and critical acclaim.

As it says in the conclusions of the survey itself: “it is clear that the barrier to seeing more women of color directing is not due to the quality of their filmmaking but rather a biased hiring system”<sup>105</sup>.

<sup>105</sup> Smith, Dr. Stacy L., Marc Choueiti, Kevin Yao, Hannah Clark, and Dr. Katherine Pieper. “Inclusion in the Director’s Chair: Analysis of Director Gender and Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019.” USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, January 2020. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-directors-chair-20200102.pdf>.

In the case of the overall findings regarding female directors, the results of this research reveal that hiring practices have slowly change in ways that are positive for women.

Moving on from the U.S. film industry, we found an extensive and ground-breaking report on gender equality produced in Europe. “Where are the Women Directors in European Films? Gender Equality Report on Female Directors (2006-2013)” was conducted by EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network) is one of the largest of its kind, especially in the number of different territories and industries that covers. Among the institutions that support this study are: the Austrian Film Institute, the Croatian Audiovisual Centre, CNC (France), University of Rostock, Birkbeck College (University of London), Centre d’histoire culturelle des sociétés contemporaines (CHCSC – Université de Versailles/Université Paris-Saclay), Direzione Generale Cinema/MIBACT (Italy), Swedish Film Institute, Creative Skillset (UK), Centre for Regional, Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University and the BFI.

According to the project's description, it is designed to follow the trajectory of women directors throughout their careers<sup>106</sup> and identify the key factors that obstruct their progress in the industry.

EWA data has been gathered through two sources: a comprehensive survey of the national contexts film industries (the statistics were provided by seven research teams from several countries that collected data based on documentary and fiction film releases), and a questionnaire distributed through national organizations to almost 900 professionals, men and women, working and associated with the European film industry. The results were analyzed with the assistance of experts from the universities of Sheffield Hallam and Rostock and the findings were discussed in a series of meetings held during the research period. Both Austria and Germany joined the process late in the summer of 2015. The presentation of the report presents the findings from both sources to complement the emerging picture. It should be noted that the countries included in this report have very different scales of production and belong to different EU classifications for the size of their industry: Croatia (small); Austria and Sweden (medium); France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom (large).

In the case of the United Kingdom, this report only focuses on British independent productions, that is, films made without creative or financial input from major US studio companies (given the large scale of American investment in the UK film industry). Figures for nationally funded production refer only to the British Film Institute’s (BFI) lottery-funded production.

In the case of Germany, figures have only been obtained for fiction between the years 2009 and 2013.

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<sup>106</sup> The report tracks the progression where possible, bringing the results together over two four-year periods: 2006-2009 and 2010-2013 (to compensate for the high annual fluctuations characteristic of the industry).

The design of the quantitative study covers an investigation period between 2006-2013. The participating countries responded to an extensive set of questions that provided information on the contexts and numbers affecting women directors in their own industries. The statistics gathered by the different countries varied considerably and much of the data had to be collected by national researchers. Only key variations were noted, all of which were relevant to the findings.

The report includes documentary and fiction films of 60 minutes and more, both in the film and public broadcasting sectors<sup>107</sup>.

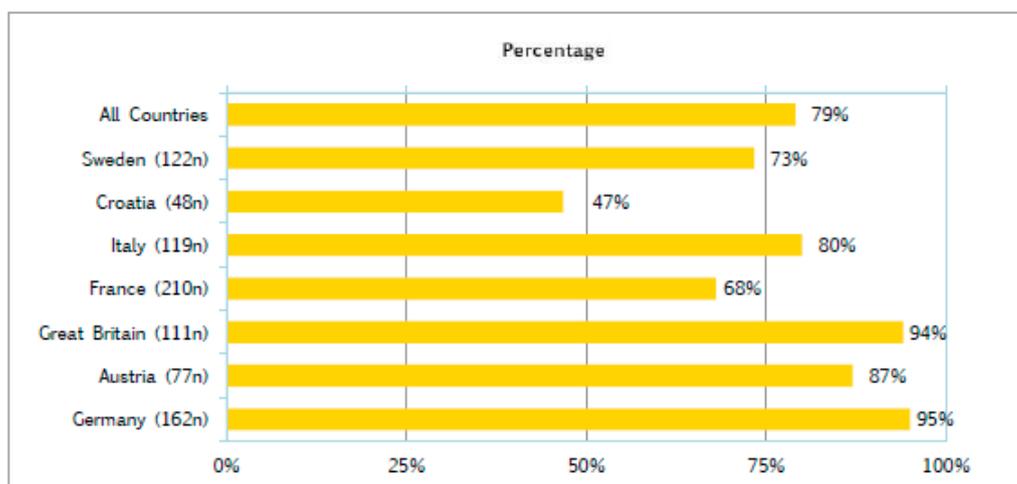
In the cases where films have been directed by more than one director, each director is counted as a fraction of 1. The exception is Austria, where films are ascribed to the gender of the first director listed in the credits, and Germany, where films with more than one director are excluded.

Regarding the methodology of the questionnaire, it was distributed in July 2015 by national researchers through their industry's professional organizations, including directors' unions, trade unions, broadcasting institutions and national film schools.

Most respondents are women (80%) and only 20% are men, therefore any interpretation of the results by gender must take this into account. The question on which this study mainly focuses was: Does gender inequality exist?. Most respondents believe that there is gender inequality in their industries. The highest incidence of inequality is perceived in Germany, the United Kingdom and Austria, and the lowest in Croatia, as we can observe in the Figure 8.

Figure 8:

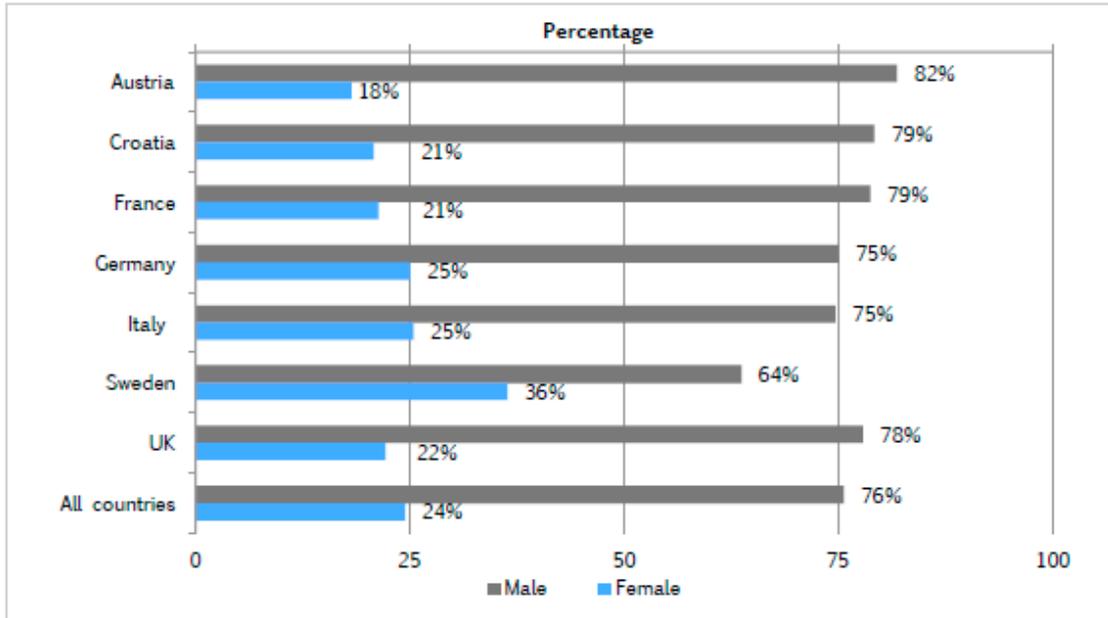
Does gender inequality exist for directors in your national industry? By country, all respondents.



<sup>107</sup> information on gender equality in the broadcasting sector has been particularly difficult to access and is incomplete. EWA. "Where Are the Women Directors? Report on Gender Equality for Directors in the European Film Industry 2006-2013." EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network), 2016. [https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complete-report\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complete-report_compressed.pdf)

The report also investigates the participation of women as directors as we can see in the Figure 9.

Figure 9:  
Share of female directors (2012-2013)



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Note: Numbers for Austria, Croatia, Germany, Sweden and the UK are based on directors' guilds. The Italian figure, based on the Collecting Society register, also includes screenwriters. The figures for France (2008-12) are based on directors benefiting from the national film fund during the stated period.

Here it is revealed that the percentage of female directors ranges between 18.2% in Austria and 36.4% in Sweden<sup>108</sup>.

This results came from different sources depending on the country Some collected them from databases of films released over the period mentioned above, others refer to those listed in the directors' guilds, which include television and commercials, general programming and/or those who have stopped being professionally active in the industry.

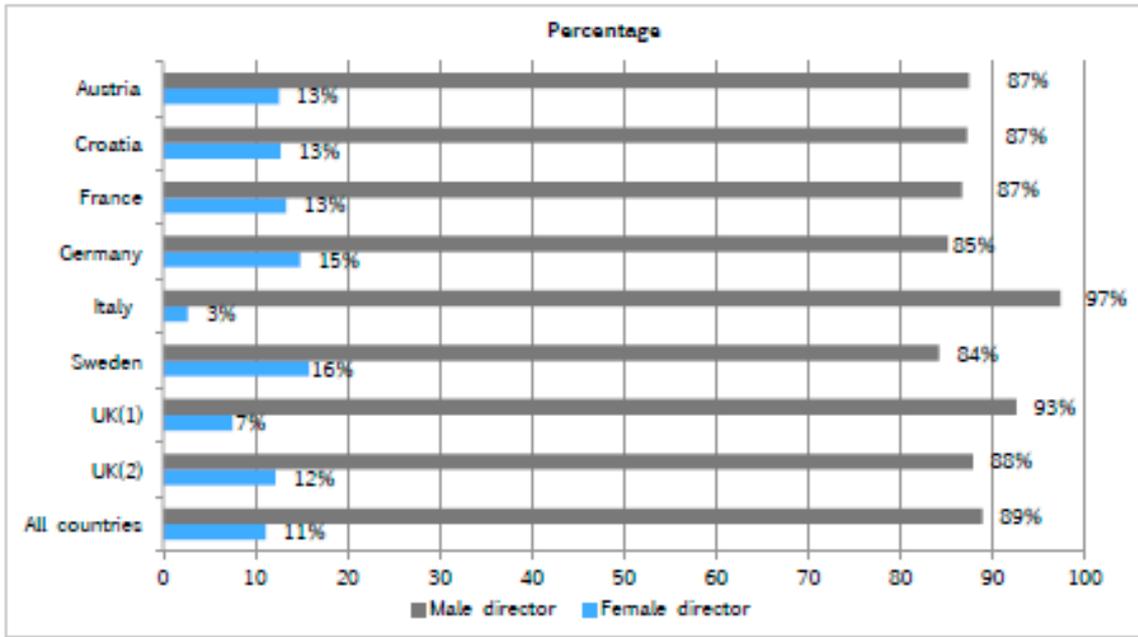
it can be deduced that the presence of women working in film is substantially higher than the number of women directing, represented by the films which have been commissioned and released in the period covered by this report.

As for the releases of films directed by women, this study provides statistics based on all national films released in the seven countries, regardless of whether they were supported by national funds. In the

<sup>108</sup> Sweden's figure stands out and affects EWA's European average, which at 24.4% is high in relation to four of the other countries.

Figure 10 we can see the box office of all films, including documentaries and fiction during the period 2006-2013. In the case of Croatia, the data is from 2008-2013, Germany from 2009-2013, in addition to only counting fiction films.

Figure 10:  
Share of box-office admissions for all films (2006-2013)



One of the conclusions reached in this case study on women directors is that much more contextualization is needed to understand how gender affects film releases. Some factors that are beyond the scope of this report and that are likely to give a better picture of what really affects these numbers would include: the film's genre, the lead actors, distribution strategy and number of release screens.

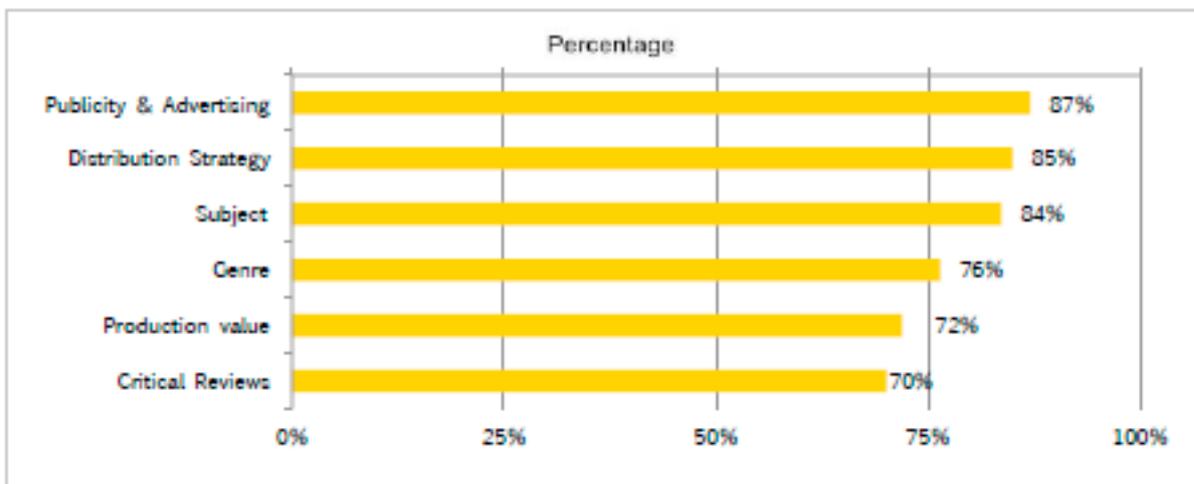
This report reveals that many of these directors worked on small budgets. This can be partly explained by the idea that women at the head of projects attract less funding, under the assumption that they may have less commercial success, which eventually leads to fewer releases.

All these reasons impact their potential to reach an audience, aggravating the assumptions that male directed films inevitably perform better at the box office, a myth that this and the previous report calls into question. According to the results of the Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Analysis of Director Gender and Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019, in the Metacritic section, women perform almost identically as men as far as the critic's reception is concerned.

If we now examine what the filmmakers themselves say about what affects their performance at the box office, we can observe in the Figure 11 that advertising, publicity and distribution strategy are the

main factors. The subject of the film following closely. Some of the comments made by the respondent highlighted that films directed by women need more support to find their way into the market, certainly not less because there are fewer of them.

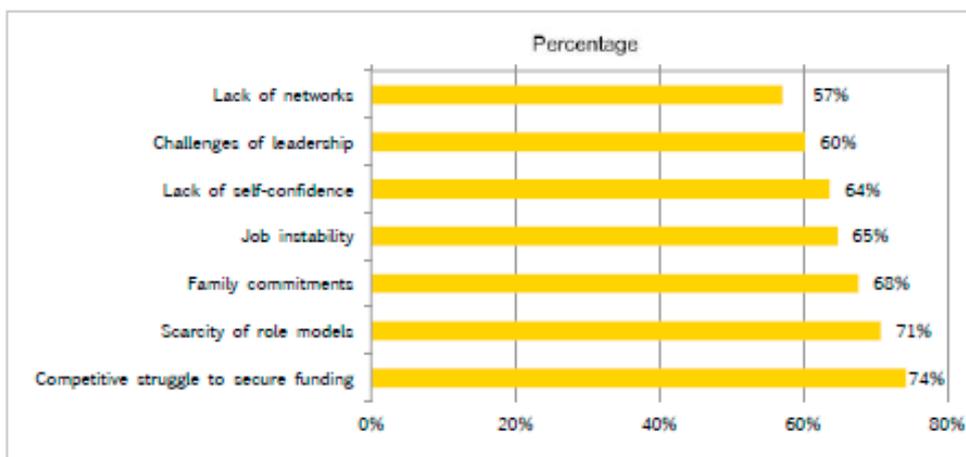
Figure 11:  
What affects box-office performance?



Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire  
Note: on the basis of 898 respondents

The challenges faced by women in filmmaking and the factors that discourage them were also addressed in the questionnaire and can be observed in Figure 12.

Figure 12:  
What factors discourage female directors? All respondents

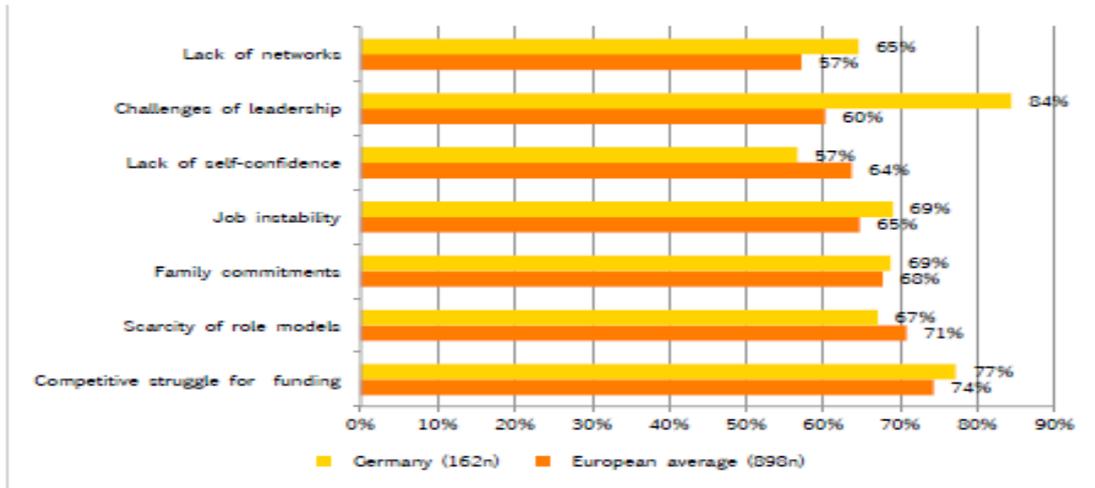


Source: EWA report database - Questionnaire  
Note: on the basis of 898 respondents

These answers vary widely from country to country. Austrian and German women (see Figure 13) are more concerned with the challenge of leadership.

Figure 13:

What discourages women from directing? (Germany)

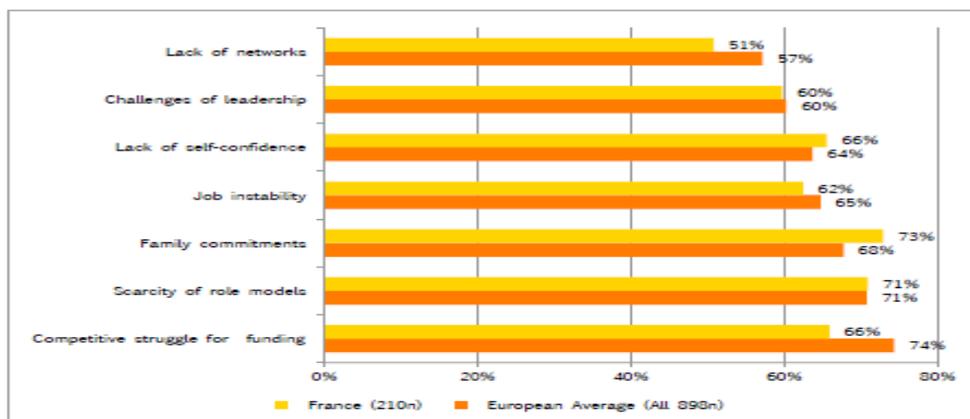


When asked what discourages women from working as directors, the German respondents, mostly women, see their leadership ability questioned (84%). The competitive struggle for funding is also seen as responsible for gender inequality. This was mentioned by 77% of the respondents. It is mentioned that there is a perception that a female director has a negative influence on the financing of a film project.

French (see Figure 14), Croatian and Italian women are more concerned about job stability and family commitments. British and Swedish respondents see the struggle for funding as their main problem. Figure 14 shows that in France most respondents attribute personal factors such as the lack of confidence in their abilities, the impact of family responsibilities (family commitments) and competition for funding as the main reasons discouraging female directors.

Figure 14:

Which factors are discouraging women from directing? (France)



Some of the views in the French national report suggest that the film industry in France is marked by misogyny and sexism. Issues such as gender equality do not seem to be as important to some, as evidenced by comments from male respondents such as: "It's not really a problem of gender". "Considering how men and women appear to have an equal desire to direct films, there seems no reasonable basis for these questions"<sup>109</sup>.

Despite the efforts of organizations like "le Collectif" 50/50<sup>110</sup> proposing equality measures, related parity in commissions, festivals, juries, distribution, top management positions and among others, there are also some people who seem to be in denial of the current discrimination and inequality, claiming that things are better than before and that there is not much more that can be done, as is the case of Thierry Fremaux, artistic director of the Cannes Film Festival, who commented at a press conference on the implementation of the 50/50×2020 gender-parity pledge<sup>111</sup>: "There have never been so many women directors in the official selection because there have never been so many women directors in the industry as a whole"<sup>112</sup>.

Another subject addressed in this questionnaire, which is part of the research interests of this thesis, is the social impact generated by having more women directors, regarding the perception and representation of women in society.

In the Figure 15 participants of the survey were asked to consider several social impacts that could result from achieving greater number of films releases directed by women. More than three quarters of the respondents considered that there would be a positive change in relation to all the statements, except for the issue of violence against women.

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<sup>109</sup> EWA. "Appendix III France. Where Are the Women Directors? Report on Gender Equality for Directors in the European Film Industry 2006-2013." EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network), 2016. [https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/04-France\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/04-France_compressed.pdf).

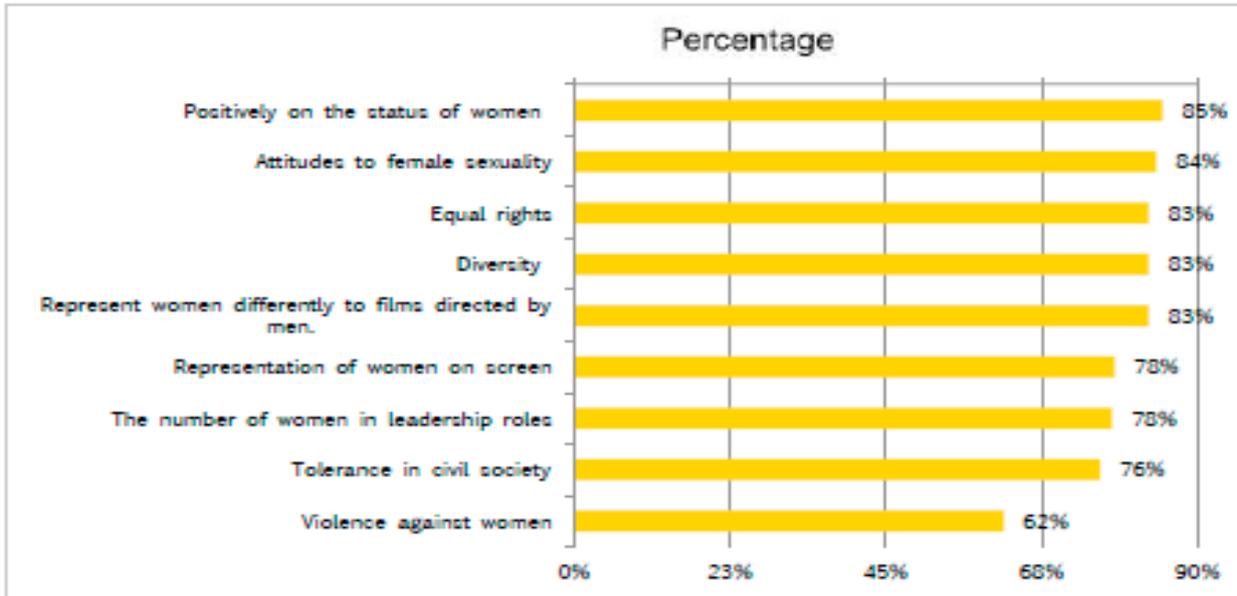
<sup>110</sup> The 50/50 Collectif, formerly Le Deuxième Regard, is an organization based on several assumptions: Equality restores the balance of power, diversity deeply changes representations, the opportunity to work in an egalitarian and inclusive environment must be seized because we are certain that the equal sharing of power will promote profound creative renewal. "Le Collectif 50/50 x 2020." 50/502020. Accessed May 15, 2020. <http://www.collectif5050.com/>.

<sup>111</sup> "Festivals That Have Committed to the Gender Parity Pledge." Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://womenandhollywood.com/resources/festivals-that-have-committed-to-the-gender-parity-pledge/>.

<sup>112</sup> News, A. B. C. "On Eve of Festival, Cannes Defends Its Record on Women." ABC News. Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/wireStory/eve-festival-cannes-defends-record-women-63009313>.

Figure 15:

How would more films by women impact on current social issues?



Source: EWA report database – Questionnaire  
 Note: on the basis of 898 respondents

In the case of Austria, 93% of the respondents feel that more films directed by women would change the representation of women on screen, as well as contribute to equal rights and a decrease in prejudice towards women in general, something that would help changing the current status of women in the audiovisual industry in a positive way.

This new, self-managed representation would help to change the narrative to which we are accustomed, one that limits women's opportunities to tell their stories and express their interests and concerns. Not to mention the lack of opportunities that exist in different industries alike.

**II.1.2. In Film (Chile)**

In other parts of the world, far from the large film markets, there are also similarities in the perception of gender inequality behind the scenes. In Chile, where the film industry is very small compared to most European countries, survey results coincide with the low number of women directors in film.

In 2018, an extensive report<sup>113</sup> was made that had the following question at the center of its research: What elements make it difficult or easier for women in Chile to access filmmaking and film production?.

Its main objective was to analyze the opportunities for access to film production by Chilean women, between 2005 and 2015.

This research was made by Catalina Rojas in contribution with Francisca Davalos and Andrea Hurtado, with the logistical support of the “Ucronía” organization and the financial support of a state research fund granted by the Audiovisual Fund of the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage of Chile.

The report used two methodology involving quantitative and qualitative studies.

The quantitative data allowed to construct a baseline profile that gave an overall account of the numbers of men and women involved in the production of Chilean films.

The data was collected from different sources like reports of films developed with the financial support of CORFO<sup>114</sup> and FONDART<sup>115</sup> (both state funding), through the state transparency webpage. They also used data sheets from the IMDb website of the films made between 2000 and 2015 by Chilean directors<sup>116</sup>. Finally, they complemented the data with the reports from the national multiplex cinema exhibitors' chamber.

Qualitative data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with twenty-one individuals involved in film production. Thirteen interviews were conducted with women in different production roles (direction, script, production, etc.). The interviews were transcribed and analyzed with the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti 7.

335 films and 378 directors were reviewed. The results can be seen in Figure 16 The left side represent the amount of films produce each year and the right side is the distinction between directors by gender. (to clarify the results of the chart, the translation of the color code is as follows: purple represents men, orange represents women and green says no information).

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<sup>113</sup> Rojas, Catalina. “Participación de la mujer en la Industria Cinematográfica Nacional (Women’s Participation in the National Film Industry).” Ucronía, August 31, 2018. <https://cineymujeres.herokuapp.com/PMICChilena.pdf>.

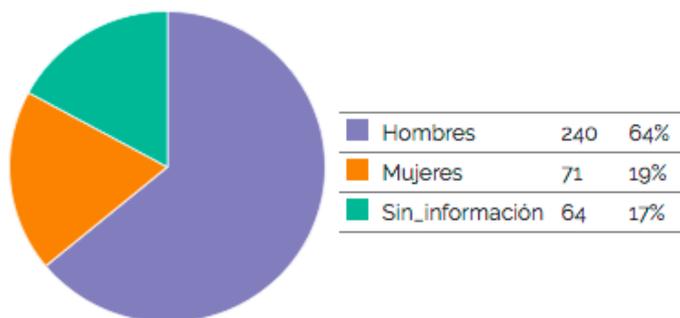
<sup>114</sup> Corfo is the Chilean economic development agency that works daily to improve the competitiveness and the productive diversification of the country by encouraging investment, innovation and entrepreneurship. “CORFO - Corporación de Fomento de La Producción (Production Development Corporation).” Accessed May 16, 2020. <https://www.corfo.cl/sites/cpp/webingles>.

<sup>115</sup>Fondo Nacional de Desarrollo Cultural y las Artes/FONDART (The National Fund for Cultural Development and the Arts) is a competitive fund administered by the Subsecretary of Cultures and Arts of the Government of Chile, which aims to finance artistic creations of all kinds, both regionally and nationally. “FONDART.” Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://www.fondosdecultura.cl>.

<sup>116</sup> However, this data was not complete due to some of the film sheets were not found on that site.

Figure 16:

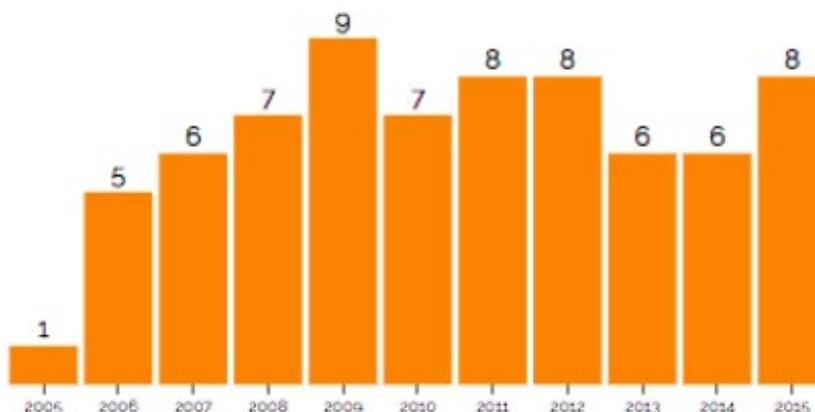
Total number of films analyzed by sex of Director (n = 335 Films and 376 Directors)



In figure 17 we can see a detail of the number of women directing films per year.

Figure 17:

Total number of films made by women (n= 71)

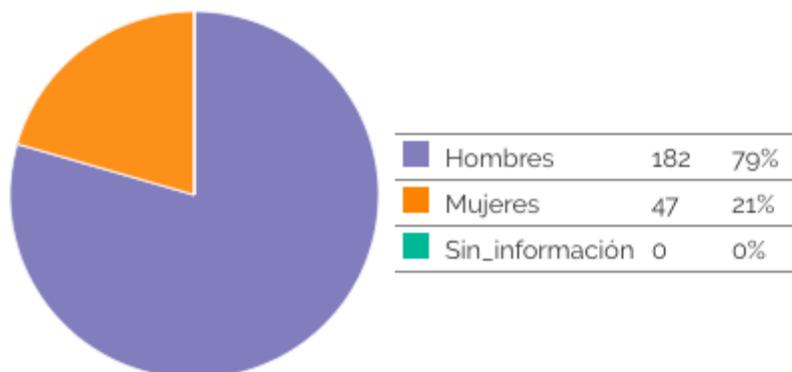


The numbers of films directed remain between 5 and 9, implying that this may be due to repetition by female directors in terms of access to funding. This conclusion is reached by examining the details in state founded films directed by women.

As in the previous report, women directors in Chile suffer from a low number of releases, as can be seen in Figure 18.

Figure 18

Average number of copies for distribution by gender (n= 229)<sup>117</sup>



As in the Celluloid Ceiling report, in this study we can also see inequalities that go beyond the director's position.

In Chile, audiovisual crews are generally composed mainly by men, leaving little room for female workers in places such as heads of technical areas or other executive or decision-making positions.

Figure 19 shows the participation of women in the film industry in general. Out of a total of 5,549 film workers, women occupy 32 per cent of the total, over a 10-year period from 2005 to 2015. One of the aspects that I miss in this study is that no statistics or conclusions have been obtained on the progress of women's participation in the film work environment, which points to the lack of a more in-depth and detailed study of the Chilean film industry; however, this issue will be developed in the conclusion.

Figure 19:

Total number of Roles performed ordered by gender (n= 5.549 roles)

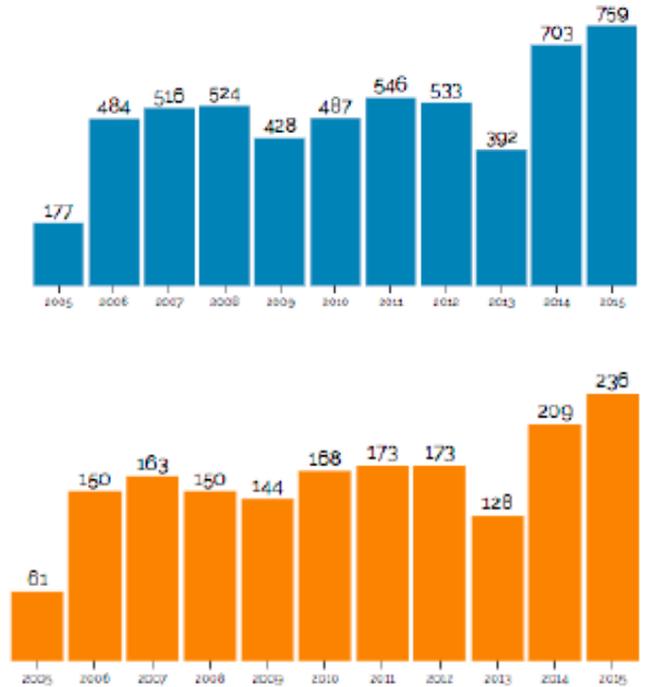


Figure 20 is part of the same results as figure 19 in the original report. It is regrettable that the sample of percentages per year does not exist within the document, since the result of 32% is broad and does not show the participation trends. (in the figure 20 blue represents men and orange women)

<sup>117</sup> The translation of the color code is as follows: purple represents men, orange represents women and green says no information.

Figure 20:

Total number of Roles performed ordered by gender (n= 5.549 roles)

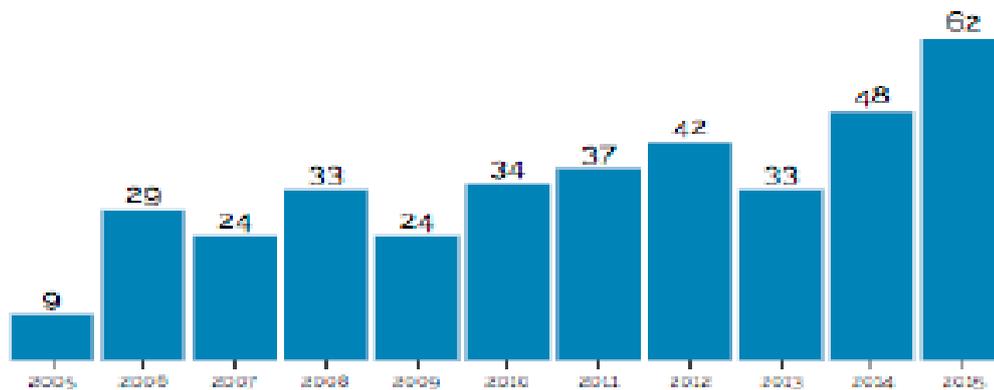


We can infer from the numbers given in these graphs that in more than half of the period consulted, there was an average of more than 30% female participation in films. All of them have similar numbers of participation between both sexes, except for the year 2013 where there was a drop in the number of people working in cinema in general.

In the last two years covered by the study, the number of workers grew exponentially, but the percentage of female participation was low, especially in 2015 (23%). This could be read as a huge drop in participation compared to previous years, which has nothing to do with the number of productions, since more films were made that year than in all previous years (this information can be reviewed in figure 21, which is part of the same graph that figure 17 in the original report ).

Figure 21:

Total number of films analyzed by sex of Director (n = 335 Films and 376 Directors)



The study does provide valuable information on the number of women working in specific roles on a film crew. The following results are averaged over the 10-year period covered by this study

As I said before, the cinematographic working environment in Chile is mostly made up of men, especially in decision-making positions and executive powers, as is the case of the director position (M=64% W=19%) and executive producer (M=71% W=29%). They are also found in technical roles such as Director of Photography (M=94% W=6%) and Sound (M=93% W=6%)<sup>118</sup>. The data shows that women have been able to position themselves in leading positions within the production only in the cases of the Assistant Director position (M=52% W=48%) and Head of Production (M=52% W=48%), roles that are not always related to relevant decision-making in the framework of filmmaking and production in Chile. The areas where women are predominant are those related to Art (M=37% W=63%), Make-up (M=13% W=87%) and Wardrobe (M=10% W=90%)<sup>119</sup>.

Considering these data, a gender equality gap is evident and implies gender roles associated with social and cultural definitions. A historical segregation situates women in jobs connected to care duties, for example, production, clothing, make-up and art; and men with tasks involving decision making such as directing or direction of photography and technical jobs like camera and/or electrical work. Although resistance to such stereotyping can be observed in the qualitative portion<sup>120</sup> of the report,

<sup>118</sup> There is 1% of the result that does not contain information according to the report.

<sup>119</sup> Rojas, Catalina. "Participación de la mujer en la Industria Cinematográfica Nacional (Women's Participation in the National Film Industry)." Ucronía, August 31, 2018. <https://cineymujeres.herokuapp.com/PMICChilena.pdf>.

<sup>120</sup> Due to the small size of the qualitative study (21 interviews, 13 of which were women) and the fact that the detailed responses do not contain new or different information about the situation of women working in film in Chile, that portion of the study was left out.

there is agreement on the existence of highly masculinized roles, areas in which women have had great difficulties breaking in.

This leads us to insights from the first chapter of this thesis, which in part sought to find some reasons why many women working in film were relegated from managerial roles to more conventional ones according to the gender standards of society. These meeting points between the hierarchy on the set and the gender roles in society undoubtedly affect women's opportunities to work in film.

In the next section of the chapter we will see if opportunities such as participating in festivals, winning awards and being part of academic/professional support programs by institutes like Sundance help improve career prospects for women.

### **II.1.3.- In Festivals and Awards**

The surveys related to the festivals and awards aim to determine the situation of women directors mainly in terms of visibility. Some of these studies led to correlations regarding their participation in these events, such as better career prospects<sup>121</sup> and greater audience reach (more screens for releases). Although there are significant percentages of women participating and winning awards at international festivals, there is also a marginalization of the women's directors presence in some very high profile awards like The Academy Awards, The Golden Globes, The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) and the Director's Guild of America awards<sup>122</sup>.

A common conclusion reached from several research organizations is that there is a need for an increase in the number of women in executive positions within these festivals and awards. Some of the findings of the studies show a clear relationship between the number of women working in these festivals and the number of films directed by women that are shown at these festivals<sup>123</sup>.

To overcome this unbalanced reality there are measures that had been put into place in some of the mayor (and also minor) film festivals, like the Gender Parity Pledge initiative (50/50 by 2020), that aims to in first place collect gender and race statistics from the directors of all films submitted for

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<sup>121</sup> The study "Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Gender, Race, & Age of Directors Across 1,200 Top Films from 2007 to 2018" made by the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, found that women not only get fewer opportunities to direct, but also that those opportunities come over a shorter period of time. Men's careers spanned seven decades (from their 20s to their 80s, making one to 17 films) whereas women worked across four decades (from their 30s through their 60s, making one to four films).

<sup>122</sup> In 2019 no woman was nominated for the category of best director in a feature film, in any of these awards.

<sup>123</sup> The USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, and TIME'S UP Foundation. "Inclusion at Film Festivals: Examining the Gender & Race/Ethnicity of Narrative Directors from 2017-2019." USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, TIME'S UP Foundation, January 2020. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-directors-chair-20200102.pdf>.

selection<sup>124</sup>. Second, to make public the gender and race of all selection committee members and programmers, as well as all programming consultants and third to make public the gender and race of executive boards and/or boards of directors and commit to a timetable for achieving parity in these bodies. The ideal behind this kind of initiative is to use the power of numbers to raise awareness, increase the visibility of these issues and feed into the workshops we will lead to produce ideas, solutions and opportunities. More examples and analysis on this type of measures can be found in chapter 3: Strategies.

The study of the Sundance Institute: “Artist Demographics in Submissions & Acceptances” is a collaborative effort between The Sundance Institute and the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative to analyze existing demographic data from submissions and acceptances to the annual Sundance Film Festival. The study analyses data within the period from 2009 to 2018.

The methodology used a standard convention to determine the differences between variables and groups. Only differences of  $\pm 5$  percentage points were highlighted.

It is pertinent to mention a note on the analysis and variability in the percentage of films directed by women or underrepresented directors accepted for The Sundance Film Festival year by year. Trends that increase one year may decrease the next. This variability is likely due to the emphasis on creativity, uniqueness of vision or voice, and decisions of the programming team.

This warning is appreciated as it evidences the precautions to be taken when reaching conclusions that may not be definitive. For these reasons, few conclusions were reached about time patterns in relation to the Festival's acceptance figures. However, the analysis does point to the potential for long-term change and, more importantly, reveals a way forward for women and under-represented directors in film and television.

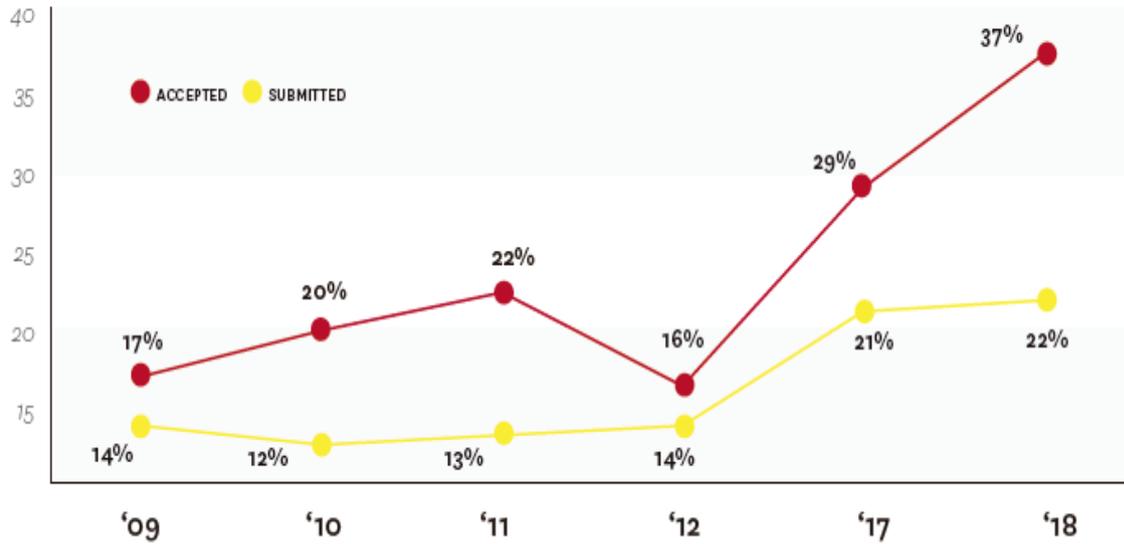
First, we can see the results from one of the main categories of the festival, the Dramatic Feature film. In the Figure 22, we can see the information about submissions and acceptances of women directed movies from a period of 6 years.

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<sup>124</sup> 5050by2020. “5050 by 2020.” 5050 by 2020. Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://site.5050by2020.com>.

Figure 22:

Women Directed U.S. Dramatic Features Submitted & Accepted to Sundance Film Festival



Women directors represent 21.5% of all submissions and 37% of acceptances. A positive finding is the increase in women since the last study in 2009 (from 13.6% to 21.5%).

Women are accepted at higher rates than the submissions. The opposite is true for men in dramatic characteristics, their acceptance rate is lower than presentations. This comparison of data can be seen in Table 3, where the percentages of submissions and acceptances are separated by gender and race/ethnicity over a two-year period (2017-2018).

Table 3:

Intersection of Director Gender & Race/Ethnicity among U.S. Dramatic Submissions & Acceptances 2017-2018

Project Status	White Males	White Females	White GNC	Male Directors of Color	Female Directors of Color	GNC Directors of Color
Submitted	47.2%	11.4%	<1%	22%	5.8%	<1%
Accepted	41.7%	18.5%	0	15.7%	7.4%	0

Note: GNC refers to gender non-conforming.

In the report it is state about this results that: "Projects by white females overperform and those by white and male directors of color underperform relative to their submission percentages"<sup>125</sup>.

The second result retracted from this study was the participation of women in the documentary category. In Table 4 we can see that the percentage of submissions with a female director has increased significantly from 2009 to 2018, but not in 2017. A similar pattern emerged with acceptances. No difference was observed between 2009 and 2017 (>5 percentage points), while 2018 was significantly higher. It is important to note, however, that 2018 was no different from 2012. These kinds of results should be studied in the coming years to really assess whether the increase that occurred in 2018 is a trend that is significant towards equality in this case.

It should also be noted that the percentages of presentations in this category are considerably higher than in the category of dramatic films, which could reinforce one of the insights of chapter one about the space that women occupy in documentary filmmaking, which tends to be more egalitarian than fiction<sup>126</sup>.

Table 4:

Change over time: U.S. Documentary Films Submitted & Accepted w/Female Directors by Year

<b>Year</b>	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
2009	31.6%	33.3%
2010	28.5%	30.6%
2011	29%	34.3%
2012	29.4%	41.9%
2017	36.2%	38.2%
2018	40.6%	44.7%

In summary, the study shows that despite an upward trend in the participation of women directors in the main categories of the festival, none exceed 50%, neither in the submissions nor in the acceptances. This study does not provide follow-up on the careers of these women directors, but it does give results about the women who participate in their programs or labs, concluding that: "Sundance Programs provide a proven talent pipeline from early stage to mainstream commercial success"<sup>127</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> Smith, Dr. Stacy L., Marc Choueiti, Hannah Clark, and Dr. Katherine Pieper. "Sundance Institute: Artist Demographics in Submissions & Acceptances." United States: Sundance Institute and the USC Annenberg inclusion initiative, January 2019. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-study-sundance-institute-jan2019.pdf>.

<sup>126</sup> Mainly for reasons of budget size and crew structures.

<sup>127</sup> 35% of the female directors who worked on a top-grossing film from 2007 to 2018 had a touchpoint with Sundance prior to directing that film. Smith, Dr. Stacy L., Marc Choueiti, Hannah Clark, and Dr. Katherine Pieper. "Sundance Institute: Artist Demographics in Submissions & Acceptances." United States: Sundance Institute and the USC Annenberg inclusion initiative, January 2019. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-study-sundance-institute-jan2019.pdf>.

In the research “Inclusion at Film Festivals: Examining the Gender & Race/Ethnicity of Narrative Directors from 2017-2019” conducted by the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative and The Time’s Up Foundation<sup>128</sup>, there are two main sections: the first one show the inclusion in narrative competition films across the 5 top international film festivals (Berlin International Film Festival; Cannes Film Festival; Sundance Film Festival; Toronto International Film Festival; Venice International Film Festival). The second section focuses on the 10 most prestigious film festivals in North America.

In the case of this study, no further information is given about the methodology used or the authors of the study. However, details of data collection are provided, and it states that: “The sample of narrative competition films were listed on either the Festival websites, press related stories, film guides, and/or online sources (like IMDbpro.com)”.

The main findings of this study related to what we seek to analyze in this section of the thesis have to do with the percentages of participation of primarily female directors and to a lesser extent their involvement as judges and members of committees at international festivals. Not all the results provided by this research will be considered, but the some of the data about the intersection of gender and race/ethnicity will<sup>129</sup>.

The study details that a total of 289 narrative competition movies were programmed across the 5 top films festivals from 2017-2019 with 303 directors attached. Overall, a total of 25% of competition directors were women and 75% were men (see figure 23).

Figure 23:

Directors across the narrative competitions sections at the 5 top film festivals worldwide

	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
MALES	76%	79%	68%	75%
FEMALES	24%	21%	32%	25%

Despite the fact that all these festivals are part of gender equality initiatives, such as the 50/50 by 2020 gender parity pledge<sup>130</sup>, and that there is a clear increase in the percentages of these 3 festivals, Cannes

<sup>128</sup> The USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, and TIME’S UP Foundation. “Inclusion at Film Festivals: Examining the Gender & Race/Ethnicity of Narrative Directors from 2017-2019.” USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, TIME’S UP Foundation, January 2020. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inclusion-directors-chair-20200102.pdf>.

<sup>129</sup> This decision was made due to the large amount of information provided here (and in other studies), which could distract from the main focus of the research. Information related to race and ethnicity is very important, but this thesis seeks to form a more generalized picture, noting interesting findings that intersect race and gender, but not elaborating on these since that analysis should be done in separate research.

<sup>130</sup> “Festivals That Have Committed to the Gender Parity Pledge.” Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://womenandhollywood.com/resources/festivals-that-have-committed-to-the-gender-parity-pledge/>.

and Venice remain far below expectations. Only 16% of directors were women across 3 years of dramatic competition films at Cannes and 7% at Venice. Year-to-year differences can be found in Table 5.

Table 5:  
Female Directors by Festival & Year

<b>Festival</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>Total</b>
Berlin Film Festival	23%	19%	44%	28%
Cannes Film Festival	15%	15%	17%	16%
Sundance Film Festival	32%	33%	48%	38%
Toronto International Film Festival	50%	31%	40%	40%
Venice Film Festival	5%	5%	10%	7%

*Note:* Each cell features the percentage of all directors per year in narrative competition, as defined by the Festival examined.

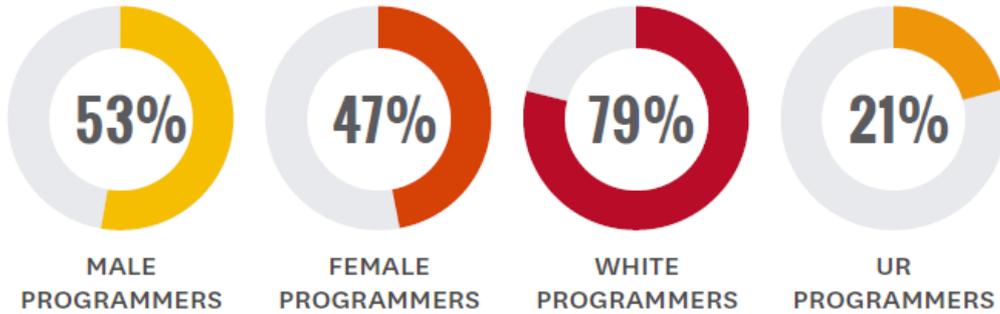
The participation assessment of women in executive positions like president, head/cohead, director/artistic director and programmers of the 5 top global festivals left a total of were run by 10 individuals<sup>131</sup>, 7 males and 3 females. Put differently, 30% of the individuals at the top of these notable cultural institutions are women and 70% are men. Only 1 of the 10 are from an underrepresented racial group (10%). No women of color are at the top of these 5 global institutions.

As far as festival programmers (see figure 24), a full 47% were female as of 2019 across the 5 top film festivals, although programmers were less likely to be from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (14% were women of color). Though, women of color programmers are concentrated primarily at Toronto<sup>132</sup>.

<sup>131</sup> The top executives running each festival were gathered from the organization’s websites, press articles, and other online sources. These posts reflect positions at the festivals as of Fall 2019..

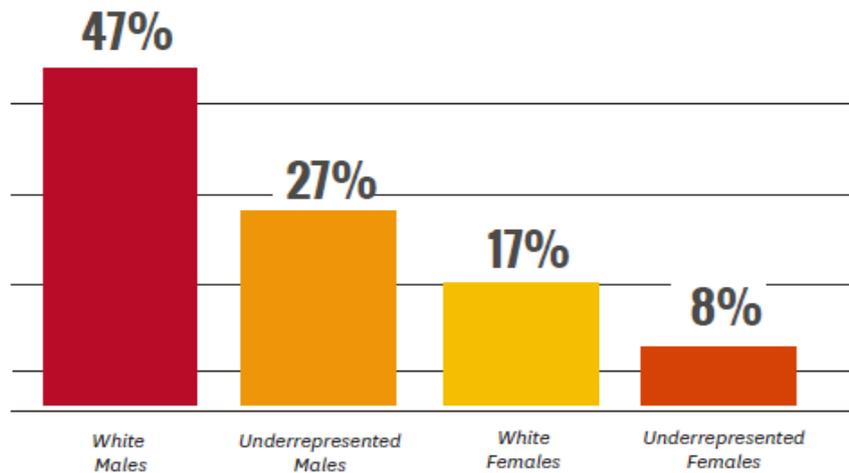
<sup>132</sup> Information on programming teams or selection committees was taken from each of the festivals’ websites or online articles (e.g., Broadway World, Playback). While the submission evaluation and selection process may involve a larger team of people not accounted for online, there was only interest in the top gatekeepers at each festival as profiled on organizations’ websites and in the press. These individuals signal externally who might be valued at a cultural institution thereby affecting submissions of films or to specific programs hosted by festivals.

Figure 24:  
 Programmers at the 5 top Film Festivals Worldwide



Films with women and people of color as directors were being programmed less than their white male peers (see figure 25). This is particularly problematic for women of color, who consistently get less access and opportunity to have their stories screened in the top competitive festival globally. It would be reasonable to examine who directs these festivals as well as the composition of festival teams (including programmers) to a better understanding of these exclusionary practices.

Figure 25:  
 Gender and race/ethnicity of films directors across the top Film Festivals from 2017-2019



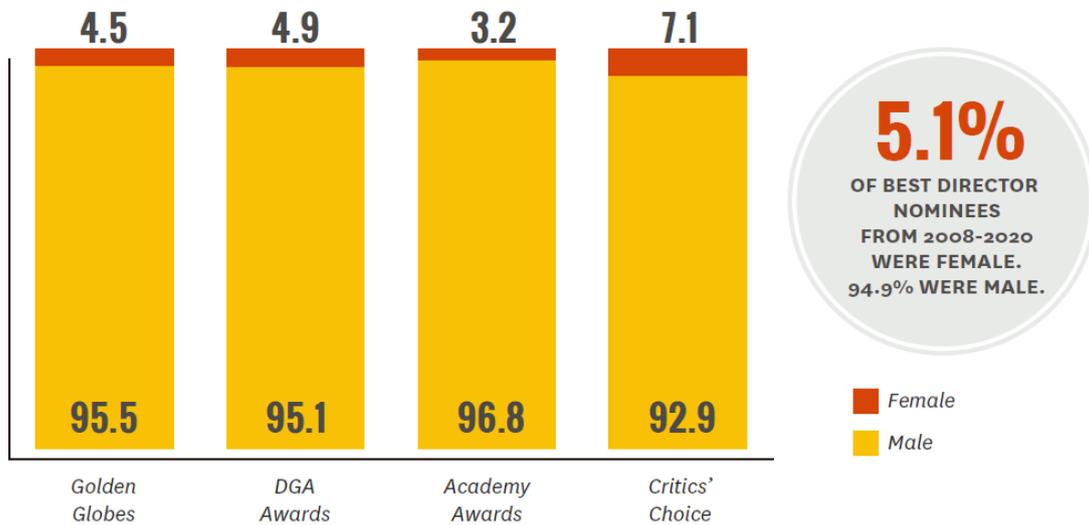
According to the "Inclusion in the Director's Chair: Analysis of Director Gender & Race/Ethnicity Across 1,300 Top Films from 2007 to 2019", recognition from peers and other industry members can provide a critical boost to a director's career. The public prominence that can result from a high-profile nomination can also create new role models for aspiring filmmakers or students.

Regarding a 13-year period (2008-2020), it was examined the category of the directors nominations in 4 award shows: Golden Globe Awards, Directors' Association of America (DGA) awards, Academy Awards/Oscars and Critics' Choice Awards. In the Figure 26 we can see the total of 273 nominations

that were submitted in the 4 main award samples with 94.9% assigned to male directors (n=259) and 5.1% assigned to female directors (n=14). All organizations were problematic in recognizing female talent, with the Critics' Choice Awards (7.1%, n=6) slightly more welcoming to female directors than the Golden Globes (4.5%, n=3), the DGA Awards (4.9%, n=3), or the Oscars (3.2%, n=2).

Figure 26:

Gender Gap in Awards. Percentage of female Directors by Award Type, 2008-2020



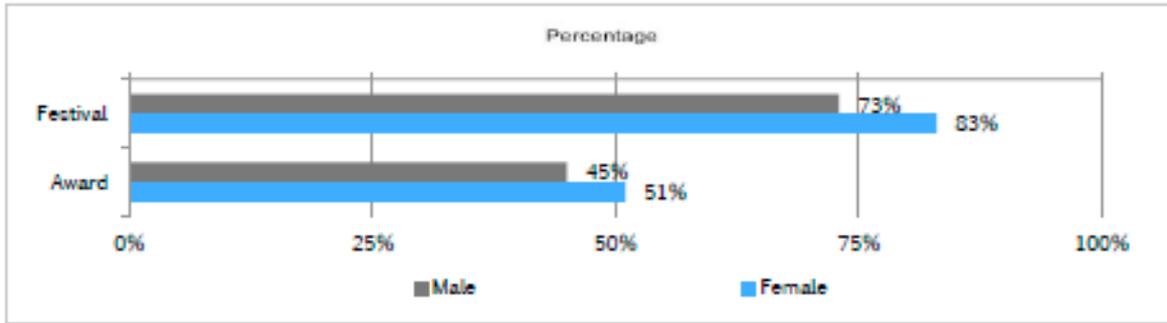
To conclude this section on awards and festivals the case of the EWA study “Where are the women directors? Report on gender equality for directors in the European film industry (2006-2013)” has a few conclusions to acknowledge.

EWA analyzed the films released in 2013 in all seven countries<sup>133</sup>, categorizing the films according to the director's gender, the number of national and international awards associated with the film and the number of festival entries. A total of 668 films were counted, of which 595 were fiction and 93 were documentaries. Those directed by teams were excluded from the base of this study (28).

The overall results display that of all films made by women, 83% (4 out of 5) are shown at national or international festivals, while only 73% of the films made by men are shown at festivals. Of all films made by women about half (51%), are either nominated for or win awards. In comparison, only 45% of films directed by men achieve this target. In the figure 27 we can see the average percentage of participation in festivals (national and international) and awards by gender.

<sup>133</sup> Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and U.K.

Figure 27:  
Overall gender share of festivals participation and film awards, 2013.



Source: EWA report database – Festival and Awards

The figures 28 and 29 shows the participation and awards winnings of both gender in international festivals and awards.

Figure 28:  
International festival participation in 2013: by gender and country

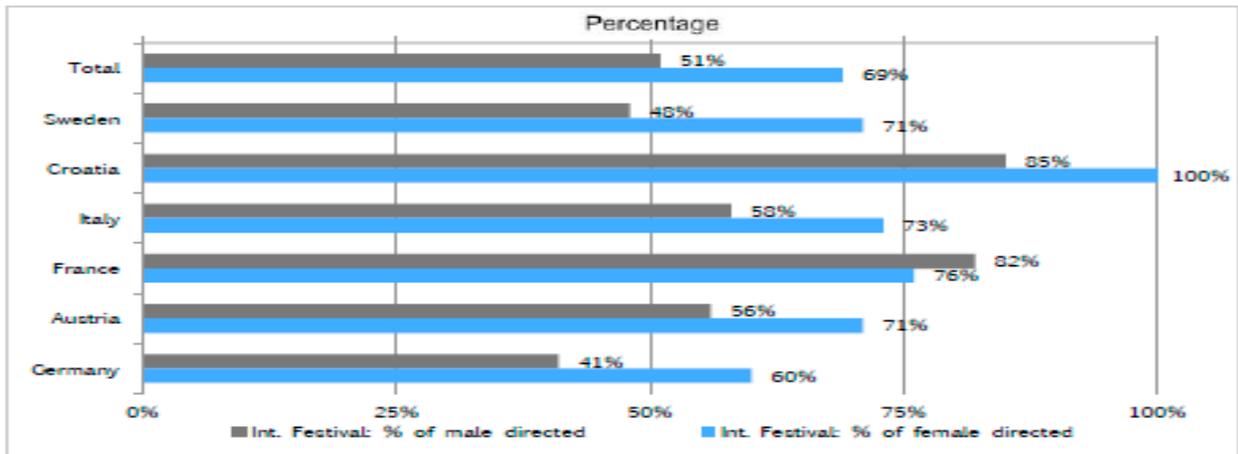
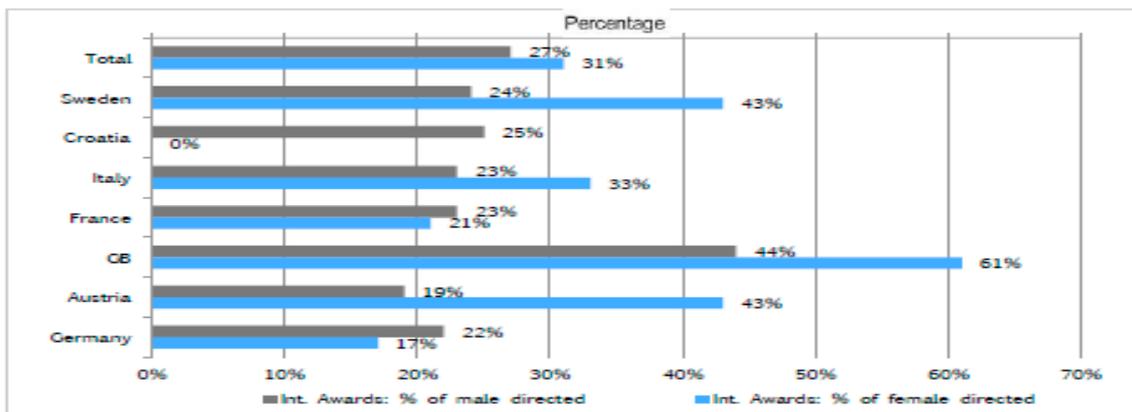


Figure 29:  
International awards for all films released in 2013: gender and country



In Sweden, Germany, Austria, the UK and Italy a film with a female director is more likely than one with a male director to win awards and get invitations to participate in film festivals. More than two thirds are screened at festivals and over half receive awards. Croatia is a total exception, since there is only one film made by a woman in 2013. In the case of France there is also an exception as films with male directors win slightly more awards and are shown at more festivals.

### II.1.3.- Funding

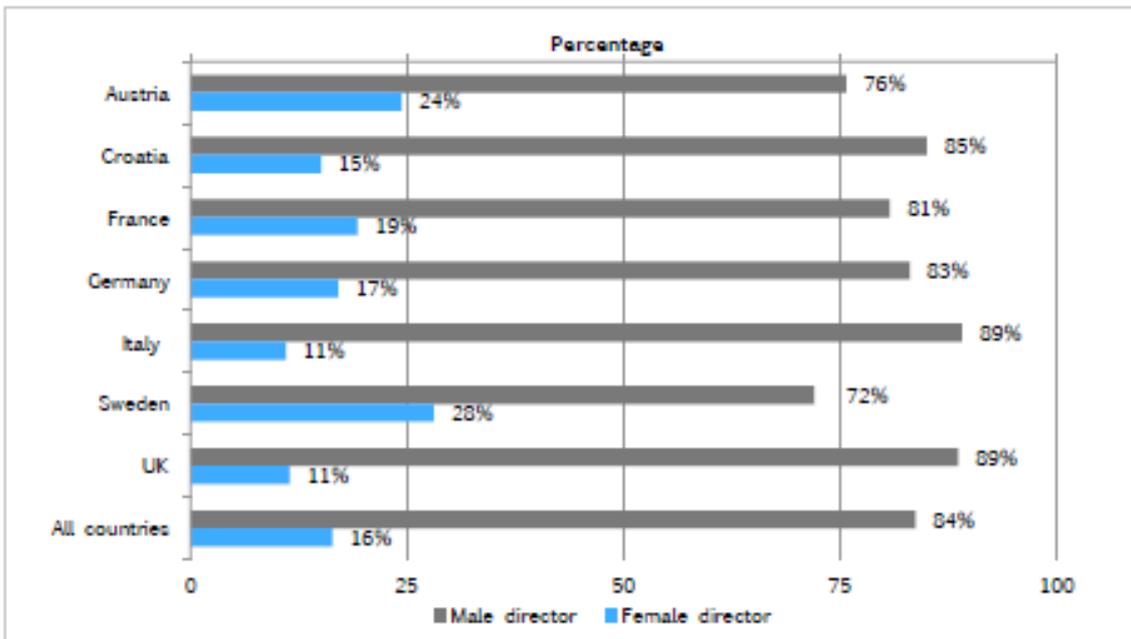
Continuing with the results of the EWA study, in terms of funding and distribution, these are the most relevant findings.

The focus of this report is on the funding managed by the national film institutes and investment from the public and private broadcasting sector. In both cases this refers to investment in fiction and documentaries of 60 minutes or more.

In the Figure 30 we can see the overall share by national film funds between 2006 and 2013.

Figure 30:

Gender share of funding by national film fund (2006-2013)



Source: EWA report database - Survey

Notes:

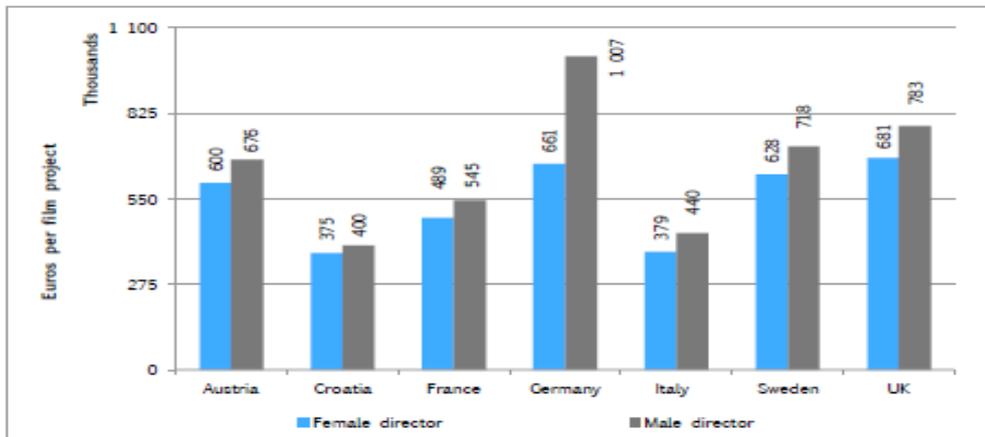
1. Figures for Croatia are for 2008-2013; and for Austria and Germany 2009-2013
2. Figures for Germany relate to fiction films only
3. Figures for Italy, Sweden and Croatia based on year of grant decision; for Austria and the UK on year of first instalment; for France on year of production; for Germany on year of release
4. Croatia, Sweden and the UK include only films or co-productions fully or majority funded by national funds. France, Germany, Italy and Austria also include minority co-productions

Overall, the share of funding awarded to female directors’ ranges from 11%–28% of overall funding, the lowest being in Italy and the highest in Sweden (both for fiction films and documentaries).

EWA’s European average share for women directors is higher in relation to documentaries with an average of 23.8% in all countries, however these funds tend to be smaller amounts, so they represent a lower percentage of the total of funding provided. In the fiction films the imbalance in equality is particularly marked with a 16.1% of average.

The amount of money spend per fiction film from the national fund is lower in all countries for female directors than for men, as can be observed in figure 31. However, these amounts are not necessarily indicative of the size of the final production budget.

Figure 31:  
Average national funds spend per film by gender: Fiction (2006-2013)

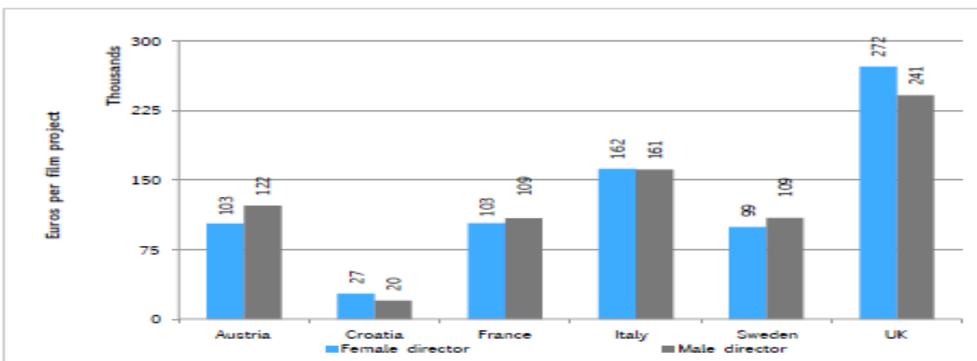


Source: EWA report database - Survey

Notes:

1. Figures for Croatia are for 2008-2013; and for Austria and Germany 2009-2013
2. UK relates to BFI Lottery-funded films only.

Figure 32:  
Average national fund spends per film by gender: documentaries (2006-2013)



In figure 32 are the details of what was noted earlier about the percentages of women receiving funding for documentaries. The results are much more varied than in fiction, for example in Croatia, Italy and

the United Kingdom the amounts in funds are slightly higher for women than for men, but as mentioned before, these amounts are lower than those awarded for fiction.

As a conclusion about the results of this study it can be said that most of the funding resources (namely 84 %) go into films that are not directed by women. Low funding perpetuates the scarcity of female-directed films in circulation, in turn affecting the markets willingness to invest. In the next study based in the Chilean funding the results are not going to be far from this one. Unfortunately, these tendencies evidence to an extent that these of problems faced by women, occur in all sort of industries.

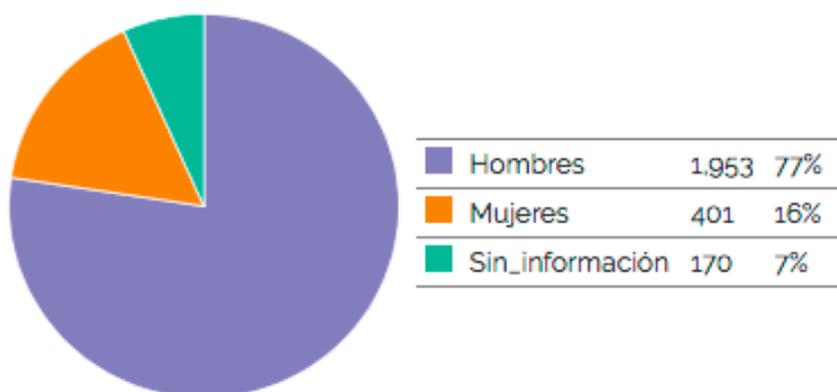
In Chile, according to the "Women's Participation in the National Film Industry"<sup>134</sup> describe in the previous section, the number of films and their financing according to gender during the 15-year period on which this research is based (2005-2015), the two main national funds, CORFO and FONDART, provide funding for 412 feature-length fiction and documentary projects. It is important to establish that the funds do not exclude each other, so there are projects that received both.

Of the total number of state-funded projects, women received 16. 25% corresponding to 2,709 million pesos<sup>135</sup> for 77 projects, while men received 57% with 9,508 million pesos for 267 projects. There are 66 projects without information corresponding to 4,402 million (26%).

The results and graphs on this subject are separated by institution. In figure 33 the results of CORFO show that women received less funding (in fewer projects). While men received more than twice as much funding as women (and the number of projects funded was almost the triple).

Figure 33:

Average amounts granted by CORFO according to the gender of the director (n=2,551 million pesos)



(The translation of the color code is as follows: purple/blue represents men, orange represents women and green says no information).

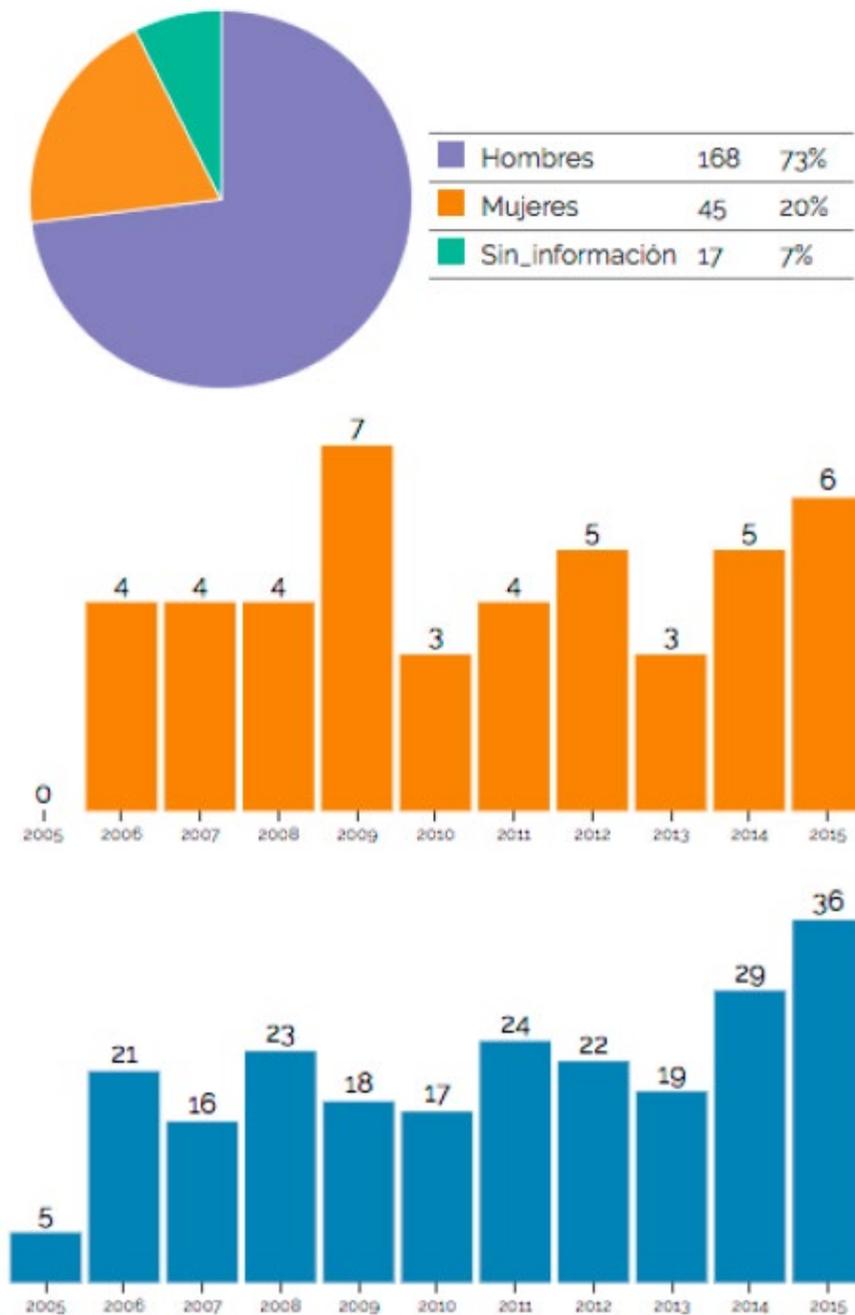
<sup>134</sup> Rojas, Catalina. "Participación de la mujer en la Industria Cinematográfica Nacional (Women's Participation in the National Film Industry)." Ucronía, August 31, 2018. <https://cineymujeres.herokuapp.com/PMICChilena.pdf>.

<sup>135</sup> 1 million Chilean pesos is equivalent to approximately 1132.68 euros (date 20.05.2020).

Details of the number of funded projects by gender of the director are shown in Figure 34<sup>136</sup>.

Figure 34:

Number of films financed by CORFO according to the gender of the director (n= 231)



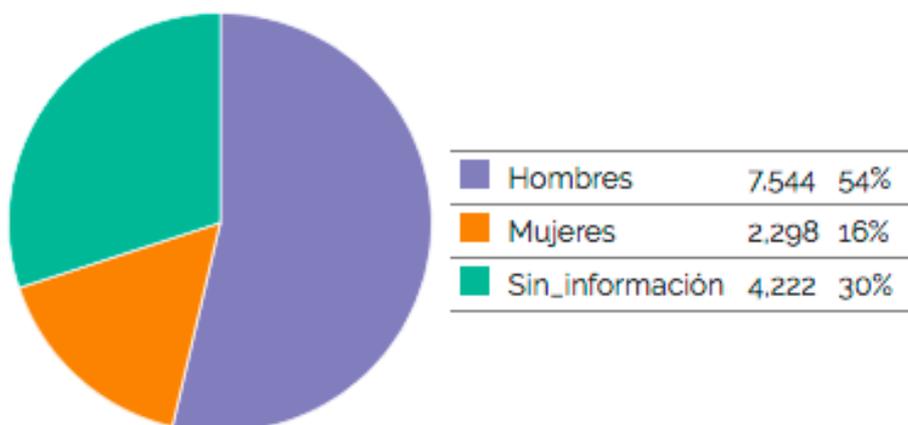
In figure 35 it can be seen that FONDART awarded a total of 14,127 million, of which 16%, corresponding to 2,302 million, was given to 32 projects directed by women, with an average of 71

<sup>136</sup> The original figure includes this three graphics in one. Here they are also identify as one for informational purposes.

million pesos per film, as opposed to men who were awarded 53% of the total, corresponding to 7,549 million for 99 films with an average per film of 76 million pesos.

Figure 35:

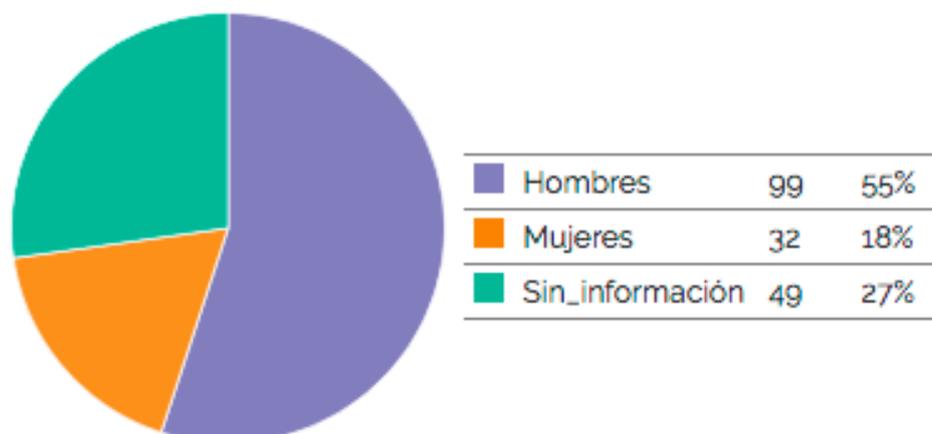
Average in millions of pesos granted by FONDART according to gender (n= 14,126 million pesos)



Once again, we find significant differences in the amount of money spent on funding per gender and the number of projects selected for funding (see figure 36).

Figure 36:

Number of films financed by FONDART institution according to gender (n=181)



Unfortunately the study does not come to any further conclusions concerning these figures, except for the assumption that projects carried out by women perform poorly with the audience, which affects the prospects for women to have more projects funded and for larger amounts of money.

Despite a lack of data in the Chilean study (more than 20% of the results have no information on gender), the conclusions drawn from it are similar to those of the European study. In both studies, fewer projects directed by women were funded, and those that were received smaller amounts of money per project. In the case of documentaries, there are more positive figures in terms of the number of projects supported, however, the amount of money given to these remain lower for women.

## **II.2.- In TV**

Moving on from the film industry, this section will examine studies related to women's participation in television work behind the scenes. Although the central focus of this thesis is the work of women in film, part of it relates with the search for alternatives within the audiovisual industry in which women can have more opportunities, more equality

The first study to be presented is another one conducted by Dr. Martha Lauzen in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University. This study examines the portrayal of female characters and the employment of women in key behind-the-scenes jobs in: drama, comedy and reality shows appearing on U.S. television networks, basic and premium cable channels, and on streaming services from September 2018 to May 2019. To maintain the focus of this section, only the results on women's employment in television will be reviewed, their participation in streaming services will be covered in the next section. Findings related to the portrayal of female characters will be presented, but only those related to the employability of women in this field and the changes in the nature of the content involved in this medium.

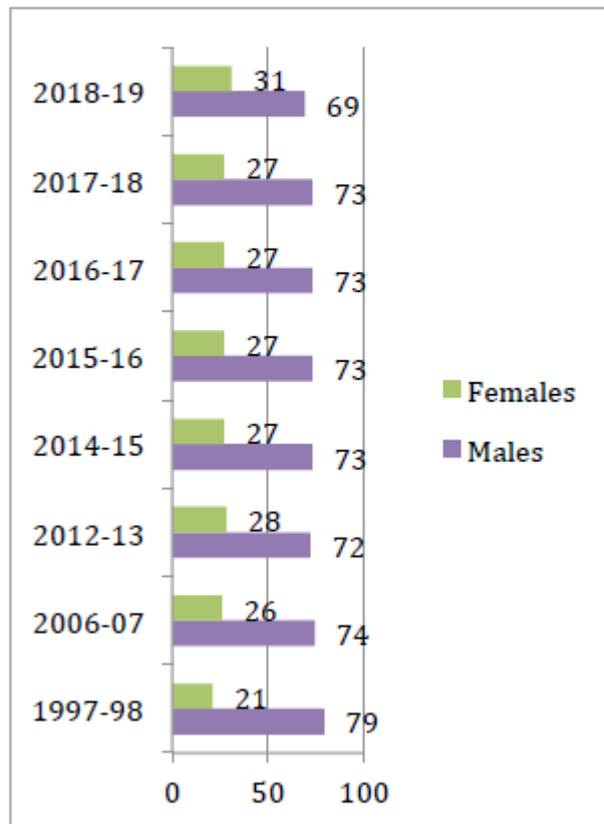
The study considers one randomly selected episode of series appearing on the broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, CW), basic cable channels (A&E, AMC, Animal Planet, Bravo, Discovery, Disney, E, Freeform, FX, HGTV, History, Nickelodeon, TBS, TLC, TNT, USA), premium cable channels (HBO, Showtime).

In 2018-19, the study tracked more than 5,000 behind the-scenes credits. Over 22 years have been monitored (from 1997-98 to 2018-19) and more than 55,000 behind-the-scenes credits have been tracked over time. Information on behind-the-scenes credits was collected by examine every episode in the sample. It considers the following behind-the-scenes credits: creators, directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and directors of photography.

In 2018-19, women accounted for 31% of all creators, directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and directors of photography working on broadcast network programs. This represents an increase of 4 percentage points from 27% in 2017-18 (see Figure 37). This is a recent historic high, up from the previous high of 28% achieved in 2012-13.

Figure 37:

Historical Comparison of women working behind the scenes on Broadcast Network Programs



According to the results in Figure 39, in overall terms, women performed better (in the period 2018-2019) as producers (40%), followed by writers (35%), directors (30%), executive producers (29%), creators (25%), editors (20%).

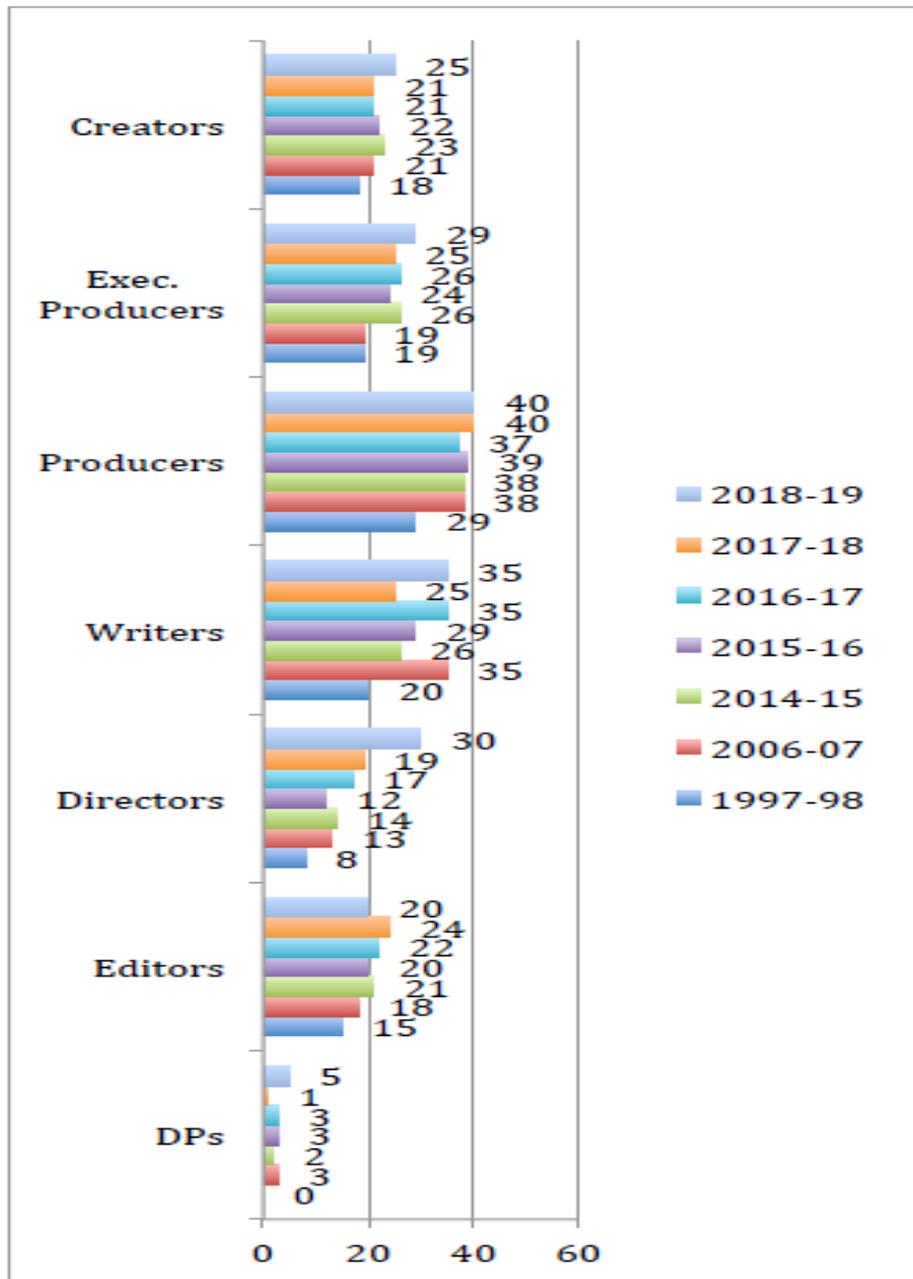
Historical increases in this period are found among creators (25%) and especially in the case of directors (30%) with a difference of 11 points between the last two periods considered.

These two figures (as well as that of writers and executive producers) could have a positive influence on the contents created for TV in terms of better gender representation and a greater space of visibility for women working in audiovisual.

Unfortunately, more technical jobs such as director of photography remain a hostile and difficult place for women to enter. Where the progress that has been made has been almost imperceptible, rising from 0 to 5% in 22 years.

Figure 38:

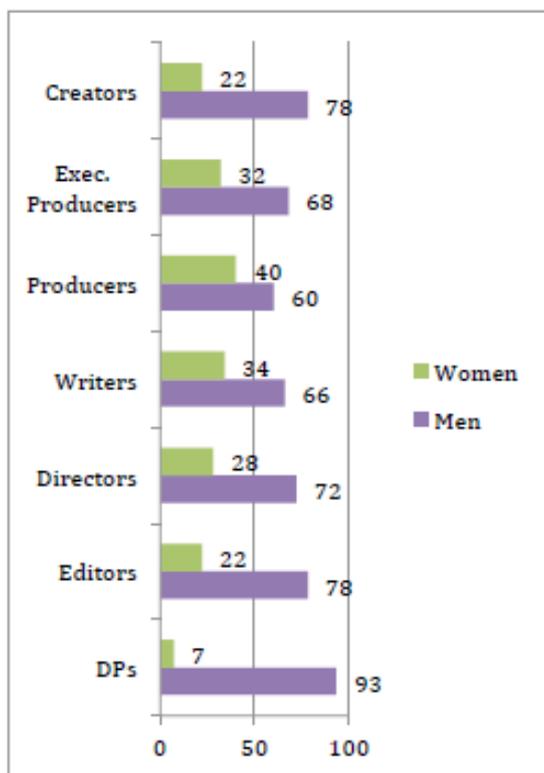
Historical Comparison of percentages of behind-the-scenes women by role one Broadcast Network Programs.



In the case of cable television in Figure 39, information is only available for the period 2018-2019. The roles where women have a higher share are like those of the broadcasting networks results. Production (40%) and script (34%) are the highest percentages, followed by executive producers (32%) and directors (28%). In the case of women creators there is a difference between the two, decreasing to 22%, the opposite happens for directors of photography, with a two-point increase being 7% of the work force in this area.

Figure 39:

Comparison of women and men working in key behind-the-scenes roles on cable programs in 2019-2019



Some important relations that this study made are that programs with at least one woman creator or executive producer, feature more and mayor female characters than those with exclusively male creators. This also goes for hiring practices, where programs with at least one female creator or executive producer have a higher percentage of women directors, writers and editors than programs with exclusively male creators<sup>137</sup>.

The study "Gender and film, gender and television: Parameters and Causes of the Gender Distribution of Film and Television Professionals in Key Positions in Germany" was made by Katharina Hochfeld, Vivien Iffländer Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Prommer in 2017<sup>138</sup> and developed by the University of Rostock and the Fraunhofer Institute on behalf of ARD and ZDF.

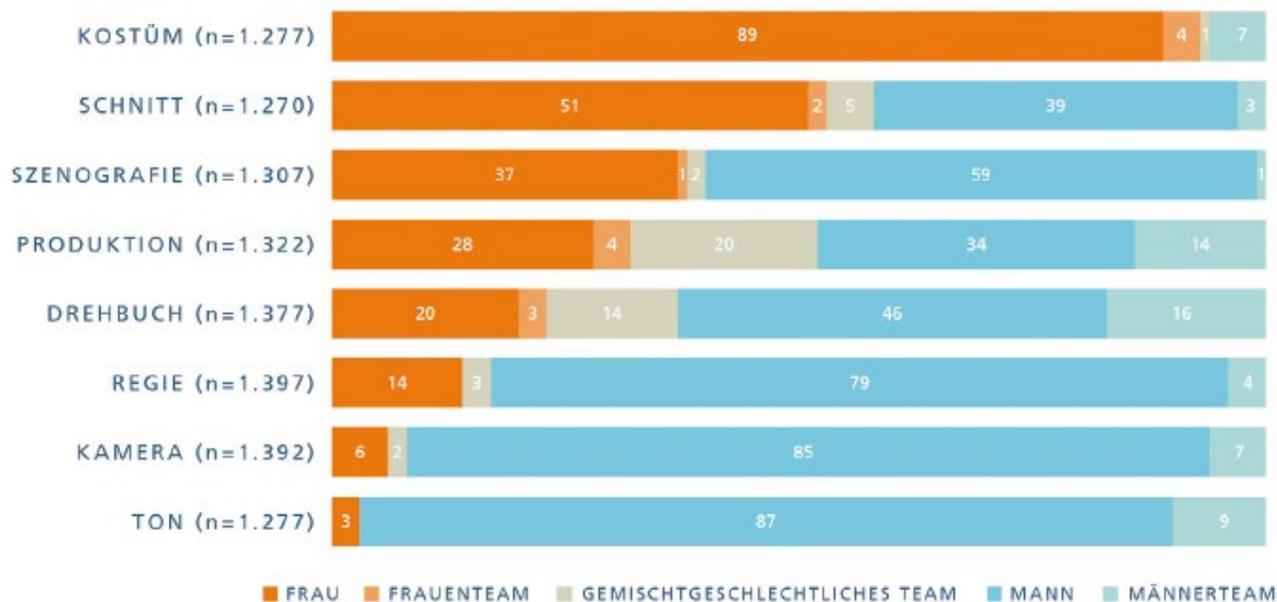
<sup>137</sup> Lauzen, Dr. Martha M. "Boxed In 2018-19: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes In." Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University, September 2019. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2018-19\\_Boxed\\_In\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2018-19_Boxed_In_Report.pdf).

<sup>138</sup> Hochfeld, Katharina, Vivien Iffländer, and Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Prommer. "Gender Und Fernsehfilm (Gender and Film, Gender and Television: Parameters and Causes of the Gender Distribution of Film and Television Professionals in Key Positions in Germany)." Germany: Universität Rostock and Fraunhofer-Institut, 2017. [https://www.ard.de/download/3841216/Gender\\_und\\_Fernsehfilm\\_Eine\\_Studie\\_im\\_Auftrag\\_von\\_ARD\\_und\\_ZDF.pdf](https://www.ard.de/download/3841216/Gender_und_Fernsehfilm_Eine_Studie_im_Auftrag_von_ARD_und_ZDF.pdf).

There is only one figure (Figure 40) on the number of people working in German television separated by gender. The data for this figure was collected from all the public-service commissioned and in-house fiction productions (TV movies, serials, series) according to sex and key creative position broadcast between 2011-2015, from Das Erste and ZDF.

Figure 40:

Gender distribution of creative leadership positions. All fictional commissioned and in-house productions, Das Erste and ZDF (n = 1,397)



There we can observe similar results as in the previous report. Where most of the key creative positions are occupied by men. The exceptions are the costume (89%) and editing (51%) departments, where more women are very active. In the areas of production and scenography, women are almost equally represented.

As in film and in the previous study, women are underrepresented in directing: Only in 14% of all productions are directed by women alone, and 3% of the productions (mostly in series) are working in a mixed-gender team. Conversely, this means that in 83% of the cases only men direct.

To conclude this section, I would like to mention the barriers faced by women working in the German television field, according to the study. Like their colleagues who work in the film industry, the lack of opportunities in directing projects is linked to a notion that projects directed by men are more likely to be successful. This is attributed to the perception in that market (and presumably in others) regarding the factors that are identified as necessary for success in direction: self-confidence, leadership, assertiveness, creative talent and communication skills, characteristics that are more associated with men, which presents them as the safest and most promising option for personnel decisions in general.

These opinions were gathered through interviews<sup>139</sup> and surveys<sup>140</sup> conducted by the study. They reflect the concerns that women have to face, the prejudices that arise in relation to their work and the barriers that they have to endure when working in this field.

### II.3.- In Streaming

The growth of streaming platforms and the popularity of multi-episode series seems to be opening opportunities for women filmmakers, according to a Morning Consult<sup>141</sup> article<sup>142</sup>.

Going back to the study reviewed in the previous section "Boxed In 2018-19: Women on Screen and Behind the Scenes"<sup>143</sup>, we can examine the portrayal of female characters and employment of women in key behind-the-scenes roles. In the case of streaming it were considered original productions from Amazon, Hulu and Netflix. Some of the results from this report that are important to highlight are that women comprised 30% of creators, directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and directors of photography working on streaming programs in 2018-19. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 27% in 2017-18<sup>144</sup>, but a decrease of 2 percentage points from 32% in 2016-17<sup>145</sup>.

In the figure 41 we can see the results from the main creative and technical roles behind the scenes on streaming productions from 2018-2019 separated by gender.

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<sup>139</sup> Ten interviews were conducted. The sample includes 2 screenwriters, 2 producers, 4 editors and 2 directors. The subject matter of the interviews had to do with the analysis of the causes of gender gaps in employment and the barriers faced by women and men.

<sup>140</sup> This survey was distributed online through joint efforts with all relevant industry associations. A total of 483 professionals were reached and consulted about career opportunities and barriers to entry into certain jobs in the television industry. The professionals surveyed work in design/stage (n=20), production (n=95), script (n=82), direction (n=166), camera (n=70), editing (n=22), costume (n=13) and sound (n=15).

<sup>141</sup> Morning consult is a global, privately held technology and media company established in 2013. It specializes in online survey research technology. It provides global survey research tools, data services and news to organizations in business, marketing, policy and politics.

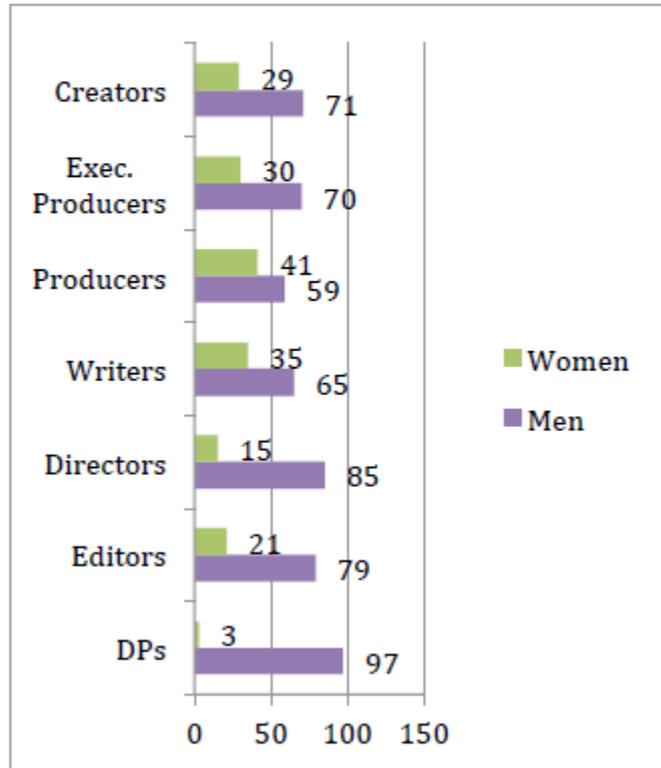
<sup>142</sup> Piacenza, Joanna. "Netflix Gives Female Directors a New Platform." Morning Consult, October 25, 2018. <https://morningconsult.com/2018/10/25/netflix-female-directors/>.

<sup>143</sup> Developed by Dr. Martha Lauzen in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University.

<sup>144</sup> Lauzen, Dr. Martha M. "Boxed In 2017-18: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes In." Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University, September 2018. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2017-18\\_Boxed\\_In\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2017-18_Boxed_In_Report.pdf).

<sup>145</sup> Lauzen, Dr. Martha M. "Boxed In 2016-17: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes In." Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University, September 2017. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2016-17\\_Boxed\\_In\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2016-17_Boxed_In_Report.pdf).

Figure 41:  
 Comparison of Women and Men Working in Key Behind-the-Scenes Roles on Streaming programs  
 in 2018-2019



These results are very similar in some roles to those that showed in the television section regarding women's participation. The area in which they did best in the period 2018-2019, was as producers with 41% participation, followed by writers (35%), executive producers (30%), creators (29%), editors (21%), directors (15%), and again the least represented role (both in television, film and streaming) was the directors of photography representing a dismal 3%, with almost no change in a 22 year period (1997-2019)<sup>146</sup>.

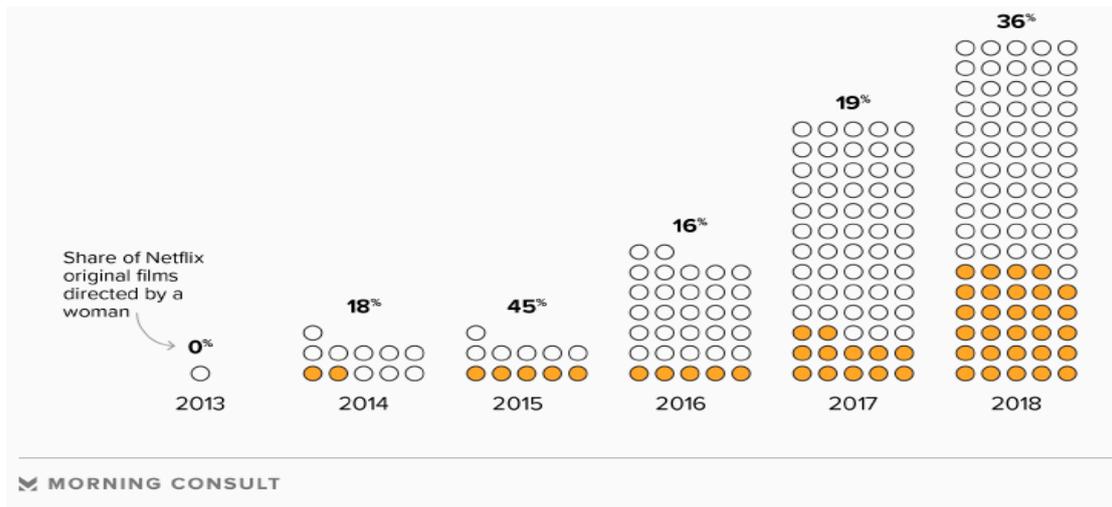
The positive conclusions of this sector can be found (beside production) in the creative part of streaming production, with 29% of the creators and 35% of the writers being women. The second one having a considerable increase of 8 percentage points compared to the previous period (2017-2018). Finally, in terms of female directors, we see that they only work in 15% of the production, which despite being low, is an increase by 5 percentage points compared to the previous period.

<sup>146</sup> Lauzen, Dr. Martha M. "Boxed In 2016-17: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes In." Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University, September 2017. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2016-17\\_Boxed\\_In\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2016-17_Boxed_In_Report.pdf).

As in the Television report, the most important conclusions are related to the correlation between the number of women in positions as creators, producers, executive producers and directors, and the employment of more women in the production crew, as well as the number of female characters or protagonists in the projects.

Other stats on the participation of women directors in streaming productions are those made by Morning Consult company (see figure 42). These figures were gathered from an analysis without description of methodology or data collecting<sup>147</sup>, but that presents some interesting data about the specific case of Netflix<sup>148</sup>.

Figure 42:  
Number of Netflix Films directed by women over time



In recent years, Netflix has focused on recruiting a more diverse workforce overall, in large part to reflect its increasingly diverse audience<sup>149</sup>. In addition, the streaming service has been more willing than established studios to produce films that are not necessarily box office hits. This streaming channel has been outperforming Hollywood in hiring women directors<sup>150</sup>.

In a brief report on how streaming services are representing women (see figure 43) made by Sarah Hollenbeck<sup>151</sup>, Senior Content Marketing Specialist at Siege Media, we find interesting differences regarding the most popular streaming services, in this case Hulu, Netflix and Amazon.

To collect the data, she used the IMDb webpage and analyzed every original series from Hulu, Netflix and Amazon that aired at least one season in 2019. Series that were not aired in English, documentaries,

<sup>147</sup> In the article/analysis only indicates Netflix as its data source.

<sup>148</sup> Piacenza, Joanna. "Netflix Gives Female Directors a New Platform." Morning Consult, October 25, 2018. <https://morningconsult.com/2018/10/25/netflix-female-directors/>.

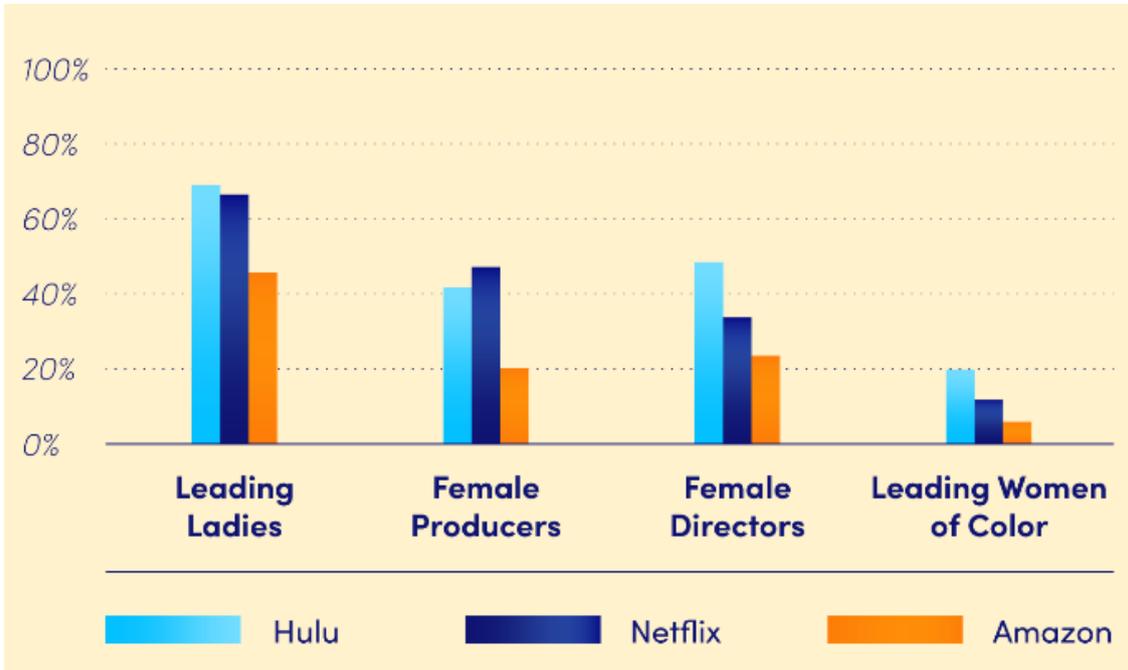
<sup>149</sup> "Netflix Jobs." Accessed May 22, 2020. <https://jobs.netflix.com/diversity>.

<sup>150</sup> Hinrichsen, Katrina. "Why We're in Love with Netflix." Accessed May 22, 2020. <https://www.womenofsiliconvalley.com/blog/why-were-in-love-with-netflix>.

<sup>151</sup> Hollenbeck, Sarah. "Women in TV: Which Streaming Services Are Doing It Best." Hollywood Progressive, March 7, 2020. <http://973b951eb3.nxcli.net/women-in-tv/>.

comedy specials and talk shows were excluded. Full cast and crew from each series was analyzed to get an accurate picture of the women represented on streaming services in 2019. Data on female directors for each episode of every series was gather using IMDb’s director credits by episode.

Figure 43:  
How are the top three streaming services representing women?

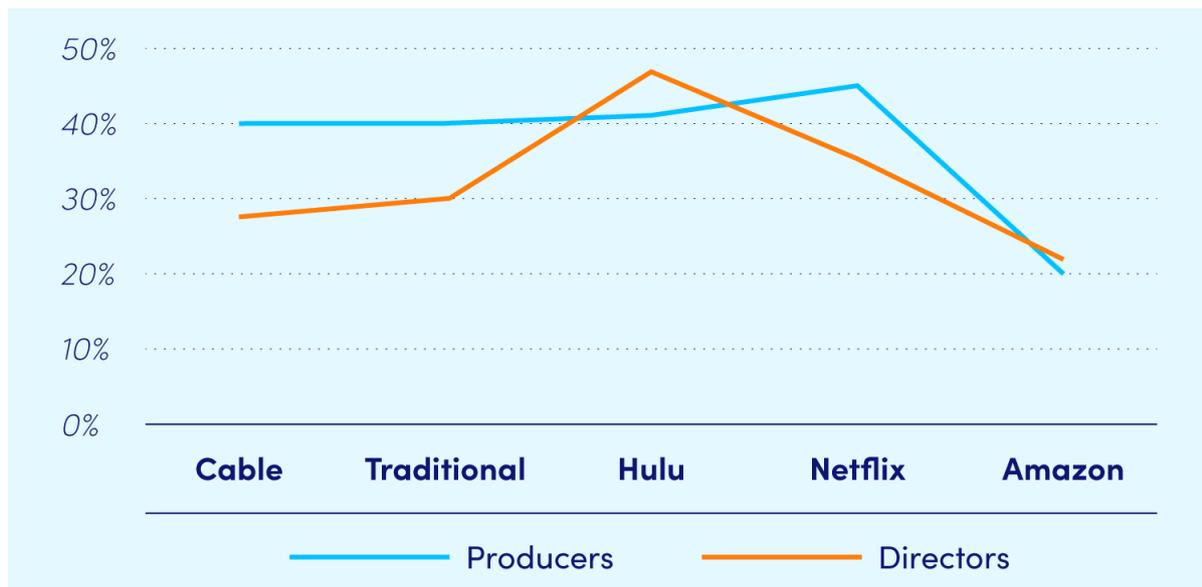


The data comparison found that Amazon had the fewest women on and behind the screen this year. Their most popular shows with female protagonists (and they were also created by women): "Fleabag"<sup>152</sup>, "Marvelous Mrs. Maisel"<sup>153</sup>, "Undone"<sup>154</sup> and "Catastrophe"<sup>155</sup> had only 20% of the episodes produced by women and 21% of the episodes were directed by a woman.

This report also offers a comparative figure (Figure 44) showing the participation of women producers and directors in cable, broadcast TV, Hulu, Netflix, and Amazon. This comparison was achieved by combining their own results with those of the report mentioned earlier ("Boxed in 2018-2019: Women on Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television").

<sup>152</sup> Fleabag, created by Phoebe Waller-Bridge.  
<sup>153</sup> The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel, created by Amy Sherman-Palladino.  
<sup>154</sup> Undone, co-created by Kate Purdy and Raphael Bob-Waksberg.  
<sup>155</sup> Catastrophe, co-created by Sharon Horgan and Rob Delaney.

Figure 44:  
Women Behind the Scenes by the Numbers



Only in Hulu and Netflix can it be seen that a high percentage (almost 50%) of women are involved in roles such as production and direction. In the case of Hulu, we could speculate that it is the closest to equality in terms of direction, however, it is necessary to be careful with the interpretation of these results as no further information could be found, furthermore, I would like to underline the lack of rigor in the presentation of data used in this report and that only one season (2019) of shows was reviewed, which is only a small sample and by no means a projection.

When it comes to original productions of streaming services and the participation by gender within the production crews, it can be said that more empirical research and more data is needed.

For the reader's knowledge, there was an extensive effort (Since the ideation of the thesis in July 2019) to include quantitative studies or statistics on the participation of women in formats such as web series for YouTube, Vimeo or Facebook, but none were found (at least in the search engines: Google Scholar, CORE, WorldCat, ResearchGate, Semantic Scholar and The Universidad de Chile library).

Nevertheless, some observations have been made with respect to the behavior of audiences and the migration from traditional television and movie theatres to computers, tablets and mobile phones, leading to a shift or alternative in the way audiovisual content is consumed, going from a group/family setting to a rather individual one. Hence, alternative production formats such as Web series, Instagram TV or even TikTok could be new opportunities for women to participate in a more equal way. Smaller crews and wide distribution (in platforms like YouTube, Vimeo, Koldkast and social networks like

Instagram or Facebook) are aspects that may support this view. Furthermore, this format is not necessarily aimed towards a mainstream audience. Web series can offer the freedom to explore topics and characters aimed at niche audiences, where viewers are more likely to identify with them.

These conclusions were drawn from a study on gender perspective<sup>156</sup> that covers areas as varied as sociology, human rights, education, health sciences and mass media. The conclusions were based on case studies of the three most successful web series in Spanish-speaking countries in 2017. A final observation that this research provides is on the equality within the production and technical crew in these web series, stating that in these cases there was almost a 50/50 share by gender, but being such a small sample we could not generalize as something that occurs commonly in web series production.

### **Chapter III.- Strategies**

After reviewing surveys and studies in different areas related to women's participation in traditional and new audiovisual media, I can conclude that there is a lack of equality in all forms of production that were covered. In none of the studies women reached a state of equality in creative or executive positions such as in direction or production. Technical jobs are vastly underrepresented by women, especially in the case of direction of photography, sound and music composition.

It is safe to say that increasing opportunities for women to direct and to tell stories is essential to achieve equality, both behind the scenes and in front of the camera, it's all connected, so what do we do after we realize this undeniable truth, what actions can we take about this?, what can we do to change the situation we are in?

The following sections present strategies, recommendations and policies made exactly for this purpose, made by the same people who conducted the surveys and studies presented previously, all in pursuit of achieving gender equality in audiovisual production.

#### **III.1.- Best recommendation from studies**

This section outlines strategies to achieve more equality through good practices, which ideally can be applied in any market that operates under the standard way of audiovisual production. Recommendations made specifically for the areas covered in the studies will not be included in a literal way but are referred to in the footnotes.

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<sup>156</sup> "Investigación Joven Con Perspectiva de Género III (Young Research with a Gender Perspective III)." Instituto de Estudios de Género, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid., 2018. <https://e-archivo.uc3m.es/handle/10016/27831>.

The first recommendations presented are originated from: “Where are the women directors in European films? Gender equality report on female directors (2006-2013)”<sup>157</sup>, that was made by the EWA Network. This study firmly states that a wider circulation of films directed by women would have an impact on the representation of women, promote equality and encourage tolerance in our society. Their recommendations are addressed to public audiovisual funding organizations, broadcasters, and film schools across Europe.

As noted previously, the recommendations presented below are adapted in a neutral manner (no country/government specified). To read the original recommendation, please review the footnotes.

- The government institutions should urgently address equality agendas in the audiovisual industry<sup>158</sup>.
- All film and audiovisual funds should actively address gender equality issues in all their policies, actions, and support programs: these should include training, distribution, exhibition, festivals and public support, as well as media literacy initiatives<sup>159</sup>.
- In any future revision of the Electronic Commerce Directive, attention should be paid to improving measures for gender equality and the visibility of films and audiovisual works directed by women<sup>160</sup>.
- Associations, organizations, agencies, research institutions and media observatories, should do their best to adopt a common approach to data gathering and analysis on gender equality by their members through agreed common indicators and standardized sets of data, as well as committing to the publication of this data on a regular basis and the exchange of best practice<sup>161</sup>.
- These organizations should be strongly encouraged to dedicate a section of their websites to the issue of gender equality where the results of the research and studies can be published.
- Broadcasting unions and/or networks should encourage its members to agree common indicators to analyze gender equality in program output, commissions and acquisitions, with

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<sup>157</sup> EWA. “Where Are the Women Directors? Report on Gender Equality for Directors in the European Film Industry 2006-2013.” EWA (European Women’s Audiovisual Network), 2016. [https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complete-report\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complete-report_compressed.pdf).

<sup>158</sup> The European Commission and the European Parliament.

<sup>159</sup> All European supranational film and audiovisual funds, in particular Creative Europe’s MEDIA Sub-program, noting and emulating where appropriate the Council of Europe’s initiatives.

<sup>160</sup> In any future revision of the European Union’s E-Commerce Directive or the AVMS Directive.

<sup>161</sup> Member funds of pan-European associations, such as the EFAD (European Film Agency Directors), and CineRegio (Association of European Regional Film Funds), drawing on the expertise of EFARN (European Film Agency Research Network) and/or the European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO).

regard to female directors, and this data should be monitored and published on a regular basis in order to track trends and progress<sup>162</sup>.

- Film and Television Schools association should encourage all members to maintain and monitor statistics on gender equality regarding applicants as well as graduates; to ensure gender equality amongst teaching staff; and to ensure greater visibility for female directors in all curricula and source materials<sup>163</sup>.
- National regulatory bodies with responsibility for media and broadcasting, both private and public, terrestrial and online, should adopt measures to encourage gender equality and visibility for works by female directors, including developments in video-on-demand (VOD) and subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) platforms.
- Public service broadcasters should review policies for gender equality and adopt action plans to include: Targets to achieve a minimum 40% share for female directors of feature-length dramas and documentaries of over 60 minutes; Equal gender representation in commissioning and funding committees.
- Measures should be taken to monitor and increase the visibility of female-directed films in school curricula, school film clubs, cinematheques and video-on-demand services.
- All commissioning bodies, policy-making boards, selection panels and juries should be composed on the basis of gender parity.

These are several of the recommendations included in the general summary of the EWA study. There are also some good practices derived from the individual country studies, which are not included in those listed above, but which are also worth mentioning.

From the study conducted in Italy<sup>164</sup>:

- Establishment of inter-institutional dialogue with competent authorities and with stakeholders and professionals.
- Introduction of programs to promote female role models to young Students.

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<sup>162</sup> The European Broadcasting Union.

<sup>163</sup> The International Association of Film and Television Schools (CILECT)

<sup>164</sup> EWA. "Where Are the Women Directors? Report on Gender Equality for Directors in the European Film Industry 2006-2013." EWA (European Women's Audiovisual Network), 2016. [https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complete-report\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.ewawomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complete-report_compressed.pdf).

- Setting up of a database of women professionals.

From the studio in Sweden:

- Put pressure on national film schools to involve the film industry in the education to a higher extent.
- Measures to encourage higher budget, genre movies with female directors.
- Lobby to make distributors and venture capitalists work for gender equality in film investments.
- Lobby to make cinema owners/programmers work for gender equality in film exhibition.
- Measures to increase the interest/self-confidence in and technical knowledge of film/video making amongst girls, for example by supporting film clubs in schools.

The case of Sweden is remarkable, as it is one of the countries that has taken the most measures since 2006 to promote gender equality in the country's cinema. The measures taken by the Swedish Film Institute<sup>165</sup> (deriving from a Film Agreement between the film industry and the Swedish government) included a declaration to work towards increasing gender equality for the first time in the agreement for the period 2006-2012. A target was set that both women and men should be represented by at least 40%, based on the number of projects supported in the screenwriter, director, and producer categories. This target was further increased in the agreement for the period 2013-2015 and set at 50/50.

One of the actions taken was to strengthen the image of women filmmakers by raising awareness of their work and talent to overcome the popular belief that there is a lack of competent women filmmakers. For this purpose, they set up a website<sup>166</sup> to make women filmmakers in the Nordic region more visible, from the early years of filmmaking to the present day. This was done in collaboration between the Swedish Film Institute and Nordic film institutes, researchers, and writers in each country. Mentoring has been proposed as another of the actions to promote gender equality, supporting the strategic training of women where they can exchange knowledge and experiences with each other. The "Moviement" initiative took place between 2013 and 2014 and offered individual development, mentoring and mutual learning to 15 participating directors. The aim of the program was to develop experiences, learn about gender and leadership and jointly identify ways to overcome obstacles that

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<sup>165</sup> Bibby, Matt, trans. "Looking Back and Moving Forward - Gender Equality Report 2017." Sweden: Swedish Film Institute, 2017. [https://www.filminstitutet.se/globalassets/\\_dokument/rapporter/swedish-film-insitute-gender-equality-report-2017\\_eng.pdf](https://www.filminstitutet.se/globalassets/_dokument/rapporter/swedish-film-insitute-gender-equality-report-2017_eng.pdf).

<sup>166</sup> "Nordic Women in Film." nordicwomeninfilmm. Accessed May 23, 2020. <http://www.nordicwomeninfilmm.com/>.

female directors have encountered during their establishment in the film industry. The results of this initiative were positive, highlighting the strengthening of the participants in their positions as directors. They also reached conclusions about the difficulties of women in establishing themselves, being taken seriously by their male counterparts and accessing budgets of the same size as men.

Another study that provided strategies for inclusion and equality behind the scenes was the “Inclusion or Invisibility? Gender media, Diversity & Social Change Initiative” from the Institute for Diversity and Empowerment at Annenberg (IDEA) Comprehensive Annenberg Report on Diversity in Entertainment<sup>167</sup>. It aims to counteract the implicit and explicit biases of the audiovisual (Film, Television and Streaming) industry in the United States. They recommend that production companies adapt new approaches and not just fill in diversity quota slots.

Among the actions suggested to be taken by audiovisual production companies are:

- Decide on target inclusion goals and make them public and transparent to allow for external accountability.
- Recognize and alter stereotypical thinking and imagine counter-stereotypical examples before making a hiring decision or finalizing a script.
- Create checks and balances in the review of qualifications and storytelling decisions by implementing a system that requires careful processing to override cognitive biases.
- Build inclusive consideration lists for writers and directors by ensuring they contain 50% women and 38% people of color.
- Counter mythologizing in decision-making with evidence, especially related to the financial performance of films with female or underrepresented leads and/or directors.

All these strategies point towards good practices and recommended actions to help generate a more egalitarian space behind the scenes that will also lead to a more diverse audiovisual space on the screen. But these are not the only efforts to counteract inequality. There are also concrete policies in some countries in terms of funding to support the creation and distribution of women's audiovisual projects.

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<sup>167</sup> Smith, Stacy L., Marc Choueiti, and Katherine Pieper. “Inclusion or Invisibility? Gender Media, Diversity & Social Change Initiative.” United States: Institute for Diversity and Empowerment at Annenberg (IDEA) Comprehensive Annenberg Report on Diversity in Entertainment, 2016.  
[https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/2017/04/07/MDSCI\\_CARD\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_Exec\\_Summary.pdf](https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/2017/04/07/MDSCI_CARD_Report_FINAL_Exec_Summary.pdf).

### III.2.- Generating motivation through funding

Providing gender and diversity funding is one of the cornerstones for achieving equality. This is due to the established imbalance in public and private funds, which favor in higher quantities and with bigger amounts of money projects submitted by men. As with quotas, not everyone agrees on establishing a gender distribution of resources for production, but in order to counteract the existing inequality, measures such as these seem to be necessary and in some cases effective (I say in some cases, because there is still a lack of information from all the funds about the results of these measures their audiovisual industries).

- Enhanced Production Funding for Female Talent, Fís Éireann/Screen Ireland, Ireland. This fund provides funding only for fiction (live action or animation) and documentary feature film projects. For female directors or writers. It is available only to Irish female talent (born or resident in Ireland).<sup>168</sup>
- The NYC Women's fund for Media, Music and Theatre, City of New York Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment (MOME), United States. <sup>169</sup>
- Funding program for women artists in film/video, Die Kulturverwaltung des Berliner Senats, Germany. <sup>170</sup>

Due to the Corona virus crisis some of the funds previously investigated have been closed (their applications and in some cases even their website), so they were not added to this list, which was cut significantly. Initiatives such as:

- Le Boostcamp, Belgium: a programme that aims to accelerate the development of women's initiative film projects and allow women directors to strengthen their network).
- Venus Victrix, France: Fund that helped finance women's films from around the world.

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<sup>168</sup> "Enhanced Production Funding For Female Talent & Other Funding Schemes | Screen Ireland." Accessed May 24, 2020. <https://www.screenireland.ie/gender-and-diversity/ifb-gender-statistics/enhanced-production-funding-for-female-talent-other-funding-schemes>.

<sup>169</sup> "New York Foundation for the Arts." Accessed May 24, 2020. <https://www.nyfa.org/Content/Show/NYC-Womens-Fund>.

<sup>170</sup> "Funding Programme for Women Artists in Film/Video," April 9, 2020. <https://www.berlin.de/sen/kultur/en/funding/funding-programmes/funding-for-women-artists/artikel.233303.en.php>.

- Dones Visuals Accio Viver, Spain: Its aim is to promote the existence of feature films and encourage the continuity of the professional careers of women filmmakers who have already released their first or second feature film.
- Gender Matters: Brilliant Stories, Australia: It support projects from teams that come from diverse backgrounds and that have bold, original, and compelling story concepts. The fund was open and flexible for projects from all fiction genres (drama, comedy, sci-fi, horror, thriller etc.) across any delivery platform and for any identified audience.

### III.3.- Quotas

Quotas for women or diversity, always arouse some kind of controversy, not only in movies, but also in areas like politics, where they have successfully contributed to equality in places like Latin America (In Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico and Panama the gender quota is 50%; in Honduras 40%, where parity was reached in 2012).

Quota initiatives have also been introduced in other (male-dominated) workplace contexts, as was the case with the Norwegian government in 2006, which introduced quota legislation requiring that both public and state-owned enterprises have 40% female representation on boards of directors by 2008. Non-compliance with the regulations led to fines or company closures and it was not until 2009 that full implementation was achieved. This measure led to the maintenance of a percentage of between 36% and 40% of women on boards of directors to date<sup>171</sup>.

Going back to the audiovisual world, we find a resistance to establish positive affirmative actions towards women, and so far, quotas seem to be the least attractive option when it comes to supporting women by festivals and financial funds. It is a debate that is ongoing and has resulted in suggesting measures, like the 50/50 for 2020 pledge for parity, rather than imposing policies like quotas.

There are institutions like The Pro Quote film (non-profit) organization, that is committed to increasing the proportion of women in all areas of film production. It was created by renaming the gender equality initiative in the film and television industry called ProQuote Director, which was initiated by over 370 directors in Germany. The aim of the initiative was initially to create gender parity in state film funding bodies and to increase the proportion of female directors in German television programs and German film productions.

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<sup>171</sup> Storvik, Aagoth. "Women on Boards - Experience from the Norwegian Quota Reform." Ifo Institute for Economic Research, 2011. <https://www.ifo.de/DocDL/dicereport111-rm2.pdf>.

This organization has accomplished some successes in Germany. A general paragraph on gender equality and the equal number of members of the committees were included a modification to the Filmförderungsgesetz (Film Subsidies Act). As a result, the FFA film funding institution currently has an equal representation in all committees (From the board of directors to the funding juries)<sup>172</sup>.

They have also achieved targets in terms of increased equality within broadcast production, where objectives of 20% female recruitment within production, direction and script were agreed<sup>173</sup>.

In an interview from Deutsche Welle (DW), Barbara Rohm co-founder and member of the board of Pro Quote Film said<sup>174</sup>: “I think introducing quotas really is the only effective way to counter the current imbalance. Mere lip service won't change a thing. A quota would create a fair competition, which we currently don't have...”

On the other side, the question of quotas has retractors in the very places where should be support, like in Film Festivals. Alberto Barbera, director of the Venice Film Festival, said at the opening news conference<sup>175</sup> last year (2019) that the imposing of quotas would be offensive: “It would mean that the only criteria that needs to apply in the selection process, which is the quality of each film, would matter less”

Lucrecia Martel, Argentine filmmaker, and head of the festival Jury for the 2019 version said: “If you ask me if that makes me happy, introducing quotas, no. But I don't see any other way for starting to force this industry into thinking differently and consider films directed by women in another way”

In the last version of the festival was introducing the 50/50 rule as an experiment. Much like his counterpart at the Cannes Film Festival, director Thierry Fremaux<sup>176</sup>, Barbera argued that: “If I had found 50% of films directed by women to include in competition, I would have done it, without the need to introduce quotas”. In another interview for Screen Daily<sup>177</sup> he went as far as to say: “If I'm to consider inclusion when selecting 60 titles from 1800 entries, I should also select a certain number of films by black directors, a certain number by gay directors or other people discriminated for various reasons, this won't make for an exhibition of art but for a civil rights festival”.

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<sup>172</sup> “Stellungnahme zur Novellierung des Filmförderungsgesetzes.” Accessed May 24, 2020. [https://medien-kunst-industrie.verdi.de/ueber-uns/nachrichten/++co++c4812300-c360-11e4-abc5-525400a933ef?057e281c-aad0-11e3-912c-52540059119e.display\\_page=2](https://medien-kunst-industrie.verdi.de/ueber-uns/nachrichten/++co++c4812300-c360-11e4-abc5-525400a933ef?057e281c-aad0-11e3-912c-52540059119e.display_page=2).

<sup>173</sup> “Erfolge - ProQuote Film.” Accessed May 25, 2020. <https://proquote-film.de/#/erfolge/object=page:7>.

<sup>174</sup> Welle (www.dw.com), Deutsche. “Is a Quota for Women in Film Necessary? | DW | 16.11.2018.” DW.COM. Accessed May 24, 2020. <https://www.dw.com/en/is-a-quota-for-women-in-film-necessary/a-46323094>.

<sup>175</sup> “Venice Film Festival Director, Jury Head Disagree on Gender Quotas.” *Reuters*, August 28, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-filmfestival-venice-opening-press-con-idUSKCN1VI21U>.

<sup>176</sup> News, A. B. C. “On Eve of Festival, Cannes Defends Its Record on Women.” ABC News. Accessed May 15, 2020. <https://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/wireStory/eve-festival-cannes-defends-record-women-63009313>.

<sup>177</sup> Niola, Gabriele. “Venice Director Alberto Barbera Responds Bullishly to Provocative Competition Selection.” *Screen*, July 2019. <https://www.screendaily.com/venice-director-alberto-barbera-responds-bullishly-to-provocative-competition-selection/5141532.article>.

These reactions occur while actions such as the previously mentioned 50/50 by 2020 parity pledge are being promoted in different Film Festivals around the world. It was first introduced at the Cannes Film Festival in 2018 and to date 112 festivals from around the world have joined<sup>178</sup>.

This could indicate that the intentions to make a change in the face of inequality are on the right track, but clearly it is necessary to have patience to see results. And when these results start to appear, it is very important that they are monitored, to serve as evidence that actions of this kind contribute to improving the situation of women in the audiovisual media.

This last chapter is a sample of the efforts that are being made to address gender inequality. Many of these actions have been effective and although they are not lacking in critics, the important thing is that they are carried out and replicated in as many industries as possible in order to achieve the equality so desired and necessary in the audiovisual industry.

## **Conclusion**

By revisiting part of the history of women in cinema we can understand that the problem of inequality in film production has existed for a long time. Although pioneering women strived to get their stories out there, innovating in different aspects of the cinematic language, they were pushed to the side of history, which meant an almost permanent state of marginalization. They were hardly taught in film schools and were not honored with awards for many years. But they continued working and from their corners, they contributed to filmmaking regardless. They have told their stories through political statements or by addressing issues relevant to them, they have provided different ways of seeing the world, more diverse visions that we are used to in the mass media. Being a woman and making films is a constant struggle, against the hegemony of the industry, against sexism, against harassment, against prejudice. There is no room for complacency as long as there are no equality of conditions and opportunities.

It is not enough just to say here they are, that they exist, we must support this existence with solid data, with numbers, percentages and statistics that make their potential undeniable and their validation a priority, through similar financing, working conditions, recognition and visibility to that experienced by men.

Good practices have pushed forward the effort to achieve equality. The strategies proposed in favor of women should not be diminished in the face of those who think that such actions have no merit or are not necessary, because they are. Especially in those industries that are more reluctant to take any

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<sup>178</sup> "5050 by 2020: Festivals That Have Signed the Pledge." 5050 by 2020. Accessed May 15, 2020. <http://collectif5050.com/en/the-festivals>.

measures to help balance their audiovisual sector. Ignoring the problem will not make it go away, it will only keep the vicious circle going, feeding the misconceptions about the success of films directed by women, which end up in less funding and less supported projects.

For audiences and for women filmmakers, this issue must be kept in mind until the goal is achieved, or it could slip into the background again. If the numbers have shown us anything, it is that changes in the participation of women in the audiovisual industry have not been as significant as we would like them to be. In many regions, women are still being snubbed by their own colleagues, by their own industry, but not by critics or audiences.

While pledges can be taken and incentives can be provided for others to take part in the fight for equality, it is just as important that women themselves establish networks of contacts, support, circulation, and mentoring, as well as generate instances of discussion and reflection that support and provide guidelines in order to keep the momentum going and ultimately achieve gender equality in the audiovisual media.

It is also worth considering producing in new/digital media as an alternative that can provide creative opportunities to reach audiences through different means. We still do not know for sure if the same imbalances of traditional media are reproduced in these new settings. There is still the possibility of turning them into a more diverse and egalitarian environment. Streaming, web series, virtual reality, interactive media could grow into a space for everyone, not just for (white) men and their notions of reality.

But these speculations do not have a solid basis yet. In the case of Streaming there is a tendency to repeat the bad practices of film and television, where female directors still do not reach 40% participation, but it can be said that in less than a decade of production they have reached (and in some cases surpassed) industries that have been running for many more years.

Regarding the other new/digital media examples, there are still no gender studies that give us a clear idea about women's participation in them.

This and the other reasons mentioned earlier are why it is so important to keep counting, researching, surveying and conducting studies, to know where we are in this new/digital media and also how we continue moving forward in the traditional one. It is crucial to keep monitoring, motivating and supporting equality, in order to have a more diverse and fair audiovisual ecosystem, where the vision of one part of society is not imposed on everyone, and that diverse voices have opportunities to tell their stories and connect with audiences.

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