



The Media Studies Conference 2006

Plenary Sessions

1. **Whatever Next? Media Learning 14-19**
Cary Bazalgette, Head of bfi Education UK-Wide
Wednesday 5th July 11.30am – 12.30pm

If media learning continues to get established in the literacy curriculum from Foundation to Key Stage 3, and if media literacy continues to be promoted as a basic skill for all citizens, where does that leave the formal courses in film and media that we all know and love? And what kinds of media learning do young people really want? Will they be attracted to the new Creative and Media Diploma for the 14-19 phase, to the new Moving Image Arts specification, or to informal media learning opportunities in Extended Schools and other non-curricular settings? Will these finally offer a real alternative to academic courses, viable enough to impact upon the growing numbers of candidates for Film and Media Studies? And if these courses do take off, who will teach them – or perhaps it is more appropriate to ask, who will pay for the training of those who teach them? Cary Bazalgette will review this changing landscape, point out the opportunities and the pitfalls, and invite debate.

Cary Bazalgette has worked at the *bfi* since 1979, having previously been a teacher of English and film-making in London secondary schools. She has written and edited a number of classroom resources for media education and has published and spoken widely on this topic in the UK and around the world. She is now Head of *bfi* Education UK-Wide, leading the *bfi*'s commitment to developing new approaches to teaching and learning about the moving image media and gaining a higher profile for this area of education at policy level. She is the General Secretary of the eight-nation Steering Group for the European Charter for Media Literacy.

2. **Film Director - tba**
Thursday 6th July 9.30am – 10.45am

3. **Female Stars in Contemporary Hollywood**
Dr Linda Ruth Williams, Senior Lecturer, English, School of Humanities, University of Southampton
Thursday 6th July 2.15pm – 3.30pm

Despite the popular notion that female stars in contemporary Hollywood mostly conform to a standard model of youthful glamour, women performers in the USA have developed a wide range of star images. In this talk Linda Ruth Williams looks at some of these images - 'thespians' respected for their actorly skill (Meryl Streep; Kathy Bates; Jodie Foster); stars who have been identified with particular genres such as comedy/contemporary 'women's films' (Meg Ryan, Sandra Bullock, Julia Roberts, Whoopi Goldberg), the erotic thriller (Sharon Stone, Gina Gershon, Linda Fiorentino) or action cinema (Halle Berry, Carrie-Anne Moss, Sigourney Weaver); stars as celebrities, figuring heavily in wider popular culture (Angelina Jolie, Catherine Zeta

Jones, Demi Moore). I will then discuss performers at opposite ends of the career-spectrum, focusing on how child- and teen- stars negotiate the transition to mature work (Christina Ricci, Reese Witherspoon, Alicia Silverstone, Drew Barrymore), and on how A-list stars in mid-career negotiate the process of ageing (Susan Sarandon, Goldie Hawn, Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda). The talk will be illustrated using a range of material such as publicity, promotional and paparazzi items as well as film clips, all of which contribute to the contradictory 'text' which is the contemporary star image.

Dr Linda Ruth Williams is author of four books, including *The Erotic Thriller in Contemporary Cinema* (2005), as well as numerous chapters and articles on gender, genre and contemporary culture, and is co-editor of *Contemporary American Cinema* (2006). She writes regularly for *Sight and Sound*, and is a regular contributor to tv and radio programmes on film issues. She is now writing two new books, one on the 1970s director Hal Ashby, the other on female stars in contemporary US cinema.

4. Dawn Airey in conversation

Managing Director, Channels and Services, British Sky Broadcasting

Friday 7th July 11.15am – 12.30pm

Dawn Airey joined British Sky Broadcasting in January 2003 as Managing Director, and Sky Networks. Her portfolio of channels includes Sky One, Sky Three, Sky News, Sky Movies, Arts world and Sky Travel. In February 2006, Dawn became Managing Director, Channels and Services, expanding her role to include overall responsibility for Sky's multi-platform content strategy. The role also incorporates responsibility for Sky's joint ventures, wholesale distribution arrangements with cable companies and commercial relationships with third-party channels on the satellite platform.

Dawn has worked in television for 21 years since joining Central TV as a Management Trainee in 1985. Other key dates in her career include: 1988: Controller of Programme Planning, Central TV; 1989: Director of Programme Planning, Central TV; 1993: Controller of Network Children's and Daytime Programmes, ITV; 1994: Controller of Arts & Entertainment, Channel 4; 1996: Director of Programmes, Channel 5; 2000: Chief Executive, Channel 5.

Dawn was born in Lancashire in 1960 and was educated at Kelly College and Girton College, Cambridge. She was awarded a Fellowship by the Royal Television Society in June 1998 and in 2001 became a Vice President of the RTS. From 1999-2002, Dawn was a member of the government's Film Council and in 1999 was appointed a governor of the Banff Television Festival. In addition, Dawn is an Honorary Committee Member of the Monte Carlo Television Festival and in 2002 joined the Board of the International Emmy Awards. In 2003, she took over the Executive Chair of the Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival. Dawn is a Trustee of the Media Trust and a director of the Community Channel.