AIWAC: Interrogating the Female Gaze (Rome/online, 4-6 Nov 25)

Rome, University of Arkansas Rome Center / online, Nov 4–06, 2025
Deadline: Jul 14, 2025

Consuelo Lollobrigida

Fifth Edition of AIWAC (Annual International Women in the Arts Conference): Spectacle and Spectatorship. Interrogating the Female Gaze.

Convened by Consuelo Lollobrigida and Adelina Modesti.
Organized by: University of Arkansas Rome Program.

Laura Mulvey in her pioneering analysis of visual pleasure ("Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", 1973) posited filmic creation, artistic practice and cultural representation as the projection of patriarchal fantasy and product of a male gaze that objectifies the body of woman as spectacle. Similarly John Berger in his Ways of Seeing (1972) defined Western art history as primarily a history of the representation of women by men for the gratification of the male spectator. But what implications does this have for the female creator, viewer of art, or reader? What about the female gaze? Or the female body as represented by women, or even the male body for the female spectator? What about women's visual pleasure?

AIWAC 5's theme invites papers that interrogate the "look" for women as makers (artistic practitioners, writers, performers, musicians), as patrons of art, and/or as spectators. The historical time frame and geographical area is open, including up to contemporary times.

Topics to be addressed can include:
- female visual (and other) pleasures in the arts
- the female "eye": women as patrons and collectors of art
- definitions of spectacle, including theatre (spettacolo), music and film, and women's engagement as dramatists, filmmakers, actors, performers, scriptwriters, musicians and composers
- woman as spectacle
- the female gaze: women artists and makers; women and architecture
- female spectatorship
- writing and reading women
- female models and agency

Conference papers will be published in the "AIWAC acta colloquia" postprint series in collaboration with Brepols Publishers, after a peer review process.

To submit a proposal:
- Write an abstract in English in word; max. 500 words (excl. authors name(s) and contact details).

- Include a short bio of 150 words max. –
- Save the proposal as following: AIWAC5_name and family name
- Include a short CV –
- E-mail to: clollobr@uark.edu - amodesti@unimelb.edu.au

Practical information:
- Call for papers deadline: July 14, 2025.
- Successful applicants will receive a notification by July 31, 2025.
- A remote presentation might be considered, even if in-presence presentation will have priority.
- The talk should be no longer than 20 minutes.
- The organizers cannot contribute towards transport and/or accommodation costs of speakers or attendees.
- A registration fee will be communicated along with the acceptance of papers. Excluded papers won't be notified.
- The conference will take place at University of Arkansas Rome Center and will combine selected paper presentations with keynote speakers.
- The final program will be communicated by beginning of October 2025.

Reference:

CFP: AIWAC: Interrogating the Female Gaze (Rome/online, 4-6 Nov 25). In: ArtHist.net, May 31, 2025 (accessed Nov 13, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/49396>.