

The symposium is organized by the Institut für Theater-, Film- und Medienwissenschaft of Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main (Prof. Sonia Campanini). It is being made possible through the support of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), the Hessische Film- und Medienakademie (hFMA), the Vereinigung von Freunden und Förderern der Goethe-Universität and under the patronage of the Italian Consulate General Frankfurt.

Organized by: Sonia Campanini, Andrea Haller, Bianka-Isabell Scharmman and Michelle Rafaela Kamolz

In cooperation with: Kinothek Asta Nielsen e.V., ZDF/ARTE, Pupille e.V. – Kino in der Uni

Partners: Philipps-Universität Marburg, Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach am Main, Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Frankfurt am Main

Design: Mathias Bär, Karin Rekowski

The film festival Transito. Elvira Notari – Cinema of Passage will take place from December 14th–17th. Curated by Karola Gramann and Heide Schlüpmann, organized by the Kinothek Asta Nielsen e.V. Festival location: Pupille – Kino in der Uni. More information on [kinothek-asta-nielsen.de/notari.html](http://kinothek-asta-nielsen.de/notari.html).

In cooperation with the Kinothek Asta Nielsen e.V. and ZDF/ARTE, a workshop with the musicians and composers involved in the live music accompaniment during the film festival will be offered for students and doctoral candidates. The approaches and working methods used in the new compositions and live performances for Elvira Notari's films will be discussed by guests Lucilla Galeazzi, Dolores Melodia, Enrico Melozzi, Maud Nelissen, Federico Odling, Michele Signore, Lorenzo Riessler and Michael Riesslerer with Nina Goslar (ZDF/ARTE) and Simona Frasca as hosts.

The workshop will take place on December 16th from 9.00 till 11.30 at the Pupille e.V. – Kino in der Uni and is supported by the hessische Film- und Medienakademie (hFMA). Registration: [info@elviranotarisymposium.de](mailto:info@elviranotarisymposium.de)



Interdisciplinary  
Symposium  
Goethe-Universität  
Frankfurt am Main

Elvira Notari's  
Cinema and  
Neapolitan  
Popular Culture

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Elvira Notari, the earliest Italian woman filmmaker, worked between 1906 and 1930 in Naples, where she managed the production company Dora Film together with her husband Nicola Notari. She wrote, directed and produced around sixty feature films and a hundred documentaries and short films. Unfortunately, as is very often the case in early cinema, almost all of Notari's films have been lost. Forgotten or underestimated for a long time by film historiography, the figure of Elvira Notari was rediscovered thanks to the efforts of film historians such as Enza Troianelli, Mario Franco and Giuliana Bruno, among others, although her work still remains unknown outside of Italy.

Notari's films tell stories about scugnizzi and piccerelle, guappi and malafemmine, men and women living in the slums, populating the streets of Naples and earning a living with modest jobs. In the Italian cinematographic production of the time, dominated by historical and diva films, Notari's work notably offered a realistic depiction of everyday life among the lower classes. The stories were often inspired by or directly transposed from other popular cultural forms, like serialized novels,

Neapolitan songs or café-concerts and scenggate, a form of musical theatre played and sung in the Neapolitan dialect. Being for the most part shot outdoors in Naples and starting non-professional actors, Notari's films offer glimpses of that city and its people and were therefore acclaimed by the local audience. With the establishment of a distribution company in the USA, Dora Film D'America, Notari's films began to be regularly distributed overseas, garnering great success among the immigrant Italo-American community.

Starting from the work of Elvira Notari and Dora Film productions, the symposium will put its main emphasis on the following topics: the role of women in film and cultural production in the Neapolitan and Mediterranean context during the first decades of the Twentieth Century; the interconnections between cinema and Neapolitan popular culture in the musical, theatrical and literary fields; the media representations of Naples and Neapolitan city life contributing to the consolidation of a worldwide recognized imaginary and symbolic urban space; the configuration of cinema as a form of transit and as part of identity constructions in migration processes.

These subjects will be discussed from the perspective of film history, media theory, performance studies, musicology, literature, cultural studies and gender studies. Looking at Elvira Notari and her work, the symposium aims to explore topics that can still be detected today in cultural production and media representations. It will attempt to find the echoes of Parthenope, the siren who, according to Greek mythology, failed to bewitch Ulysses with her song and gave the name to the ancient Greek settlement that became Naples.

Interdisciplinary Symposium

# Echoes of Parthenope Elvira Notari's Cinema and Neapolitan Popular Culture

**Registration:**  
info@elviranotarisymposium.de

**Conference Location:**  
Goethe-Universität  
Frankfurt am Main  
Institut für Theater-, Film- und Medienwissenschaft  
IG Farben-Haus  
Norbert-Wollheim-Platz 1  
60323 Frankfurt am Main

## Sunday, 17 December

(Eisenhower-Saal IG 1.314)

16:00 – 18:00 Registration

18:15 – 20:00 **Opening and Welcome**

Giuliana Muscio (Padua)  
Elvira Notari within a Re-contextualization of “Neapolitan” Cinema

20:00 – 22:00 Reception

14:15 – 17:45

**Neapolitan Popular Culture In and Through Early Cinema**

Chair:

Yvonne Zimmermann (Marburg)

Sonia Campanini (Frankfurt/Main)  
Scene sulle canzoni: Neapolitan Songs in Elvira Notari's Sceneggiata Films

Simona Frasca (Naples)  
Elvira and Friends: Music and Migration from a Female Perspective

Coffee Break

Katharine Mitchell (Glasgow)  
Matilde Serao's Naples on Page and Screen

Elisa Uffreduzzi (Florence)  
Tarantella in Silent Cinema: Women, Regional Variants and Dance Styles

10:45 – 11:15

Coffee Break

Anna Masecchia (Naples)  
Leda Gys in Naples, Between Tradition and Modernity

Gina Annunziata (Naples)  
Women Pioneers of Silent Cinema in North Africa

12:45 – 14:15

Lunch Break (Room IG 1.418)

15:45 – 16:15

Coffee Break

Katharine Mitchell (Glasgow)  
Matilde Serao's Naples on Page and Screen

Elisa Uffreduzzi (Florence)  
Tarantella in Silent Cinema: Women, Regional Variants and Dance Styles

14:15 – 17:45

**Transito: A Cinema of Passages**

Chair:

Kalani Michell (Frankfurt/Main)

Heide Schlüpmann (Frankfurt/Main)  
Cinematic Transit: Possibilities of the Silent Screen

Andrea Mariani (Udine)  
A Passage to Media. The Ghostly Shadow of Cinema and the Media Cosmos of an Explorer

15:45 – 16:15

Coffee Break

Kim Tomadjoglou (Washington, D.C.)  
The Sounds of Images and Songs: Rethinking Elvira Notari's Cinema of the 1920s

Karianne Fiorini (Bologna)  
Home Movies from the Italian-American Community: the Lombardi Family, a Case Study

18:00 – 18:30

Comments and Closing Discussion

## Tuesday, 19 December

(Filmraum IG 7.312)

09:15 – 12:45 **Naples: A Cinematographic Topography**

Chair:

Marc Ries (Offenbach/Main)

Lucia Di Girolamo (Naples)  
Parthenope's Memory: For a New Mythopoetics of Urban Space

Rembert Hüser (Frankfurt/Main)  
Chicken in Paper Bins. Frankfurt Goes Naples

10:45 – 11:15

Coffee Break

Martin Loiperdinger (Trier)  
Iconographies of Naples and Its Inhabitants

Angela Maria Fornaro (Naples)  
Woman and the City in Elvira Notari's Cinema

12:45 – 14:15

Lunch Break (Room IG 1.418)