

Guardian

17 June 2009

Leading ladies kept out of the limelight

Female actors, especially those over 40, are still under-represented on TV, film and in theatre and when they do get a break it is often in a stereotypical role, a conference on the subject heard today.

Hundreds of women, from actors to directors to writers, gathered at the National Theatre to hear depressing statistics reeled off: 17% of playwrights are women; 38% of stage roles are for women; 35% of TV roles are for women; of the top 250 films last year only 9% were directed by women.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/jun/16/women-arts-film-television-stage>

The Daily Telegraph

9 June 2009

TV panel shows are too 'male dominated', claims Victoria Wood

Wood, one of Britain's most respected comedy writers, has become the latest television personality to criticise the laddish culture of "testosterone-fuelled" comedy panel shows like 'Never Mind the Buzzcocks' and the 'Mock the Week'.

"A lot of panel programmes are very male-dominated, because they rely on men topping each other, or sparring with each other, which is not generally a very female thing," she told the Radio Times.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/culturenews/5478241/TV-panel-shows-are-too-male-dominated-claims-Victoria-Wood.html>

Independent

6 June 2009

Let our female stars act their age, McKellen demands

Playwrights accused of failing to create roles for mature women

It is a complaint common among actresses of a certain age: the dearth of meaty roles for women over 40. Now the elder statesman of the theatre, Sir Ian McKellen, has joined the protesting chorus and urged playwrights to start penning interesting roles for older actresses if they want to attract bigger audiences.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/news/let-our-female-stars-act-their-age-mckellen-demands-1698145.html>

BBC

5 June 2009

Sir Ian call for more women roles

Actor Sir Ian McKellen has made a plea for fresh stage roles to be created for older actresses.

The 70-year-old told The Stage that "everybody wants to see actresses like Judi Dench, it's just up to people to provide the material".

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/arts_and_culture/8084699.stm

Guardian

26 May 2009

At last, theatre is shedding more light on feminism

The exploration of sisterhood in work by Nic Green at BAC and Bryony Lavery at the Arcola is a breath of fresh air

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2009/may/24/theatre-more-light-feminism>

The Guardian

20 May 2009

Wanted: female film-makers

In Cannes last week, Jane Campion was on fighting form, urging women to take up arms against the "old boys' network" of the film industry. The 55-year-old New Zealand director, who won the Palme D'Or for *The Piano* in 1993, was at the festival for the premiere of her new film, *Bright Star*. "I would love to see more women directors because they represent half of the population and gave birth to the whole world," she said. "Without them the rest [of the world] are not getting to know the whole story." Becoming a film-maker means developing a thick skin, she added. "My suspicion is that women aren't used to that. They must put on their coats of armour and get going."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/may/20/profile-women-film-directors>

Daily Telegraph

14 May 2009

'I'm not some kind of tragic widow'

Despite suffering from stage fright all her life, Sheila Hancock is starring in a musical at the age of 76. She tells Roya Nikkhah about singing nuns, feminism and life with – and without – John Thaw

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/5301036/Im-not-some-kind-of-tragic-widow.html>

The Guardian

13 May 2009

The ladies vanish

Women have been the driving force behind modern dance for decades. So where have all the female choreographers gone, asks Judith Mackrell

This week's announcement of the autumn programme at Sadler's Wells throws a spotlight on something I started worrying about a few years ago - the dominance of modern dance by men. Of all the new pieces commissioned by the Wells, none are by female choreographers; and while a few familiar names - Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, for instance - will appear on stage, the list of featured men far outnumber the women.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/may/13/dance-sadlers-wells-southbank>

Guardian

12 May 2009

Dance world 'failing to celebrate women'

The contemporary dance world has been accused of "fawning over" athletic, powerful images of masculinity as projected by artists such as Wayne McGregor and Hofesh Shechter, at the expense of promoting female choreographers.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/may/11/dance-choreographers-women-sadlers-wells>

Guardian

17 April 2009

Maureen Lipman is right: actors should be reviewed on their performance, not their appearance

Maureen Lipman has complained about the Telegraph's Charles Spencer calling her too 'angular' to be a seductress. Quite right too

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2009/apr/15/theatre-charles-spencer-lipman>

Independent on Sunday

12 April 2009

You won't see women going grey in front of the cameras

Female broadcasters speak out against sexism and ageism in industry

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/tv-radio/you-wont-see-women-going-grey-in-front-of-the-cameras-1667518.html>

Guardian

3 April 2009

Madame De Sade: let's hear it for all-female casts

It was given a critical mauling. But, argues Viv Groskop Madame de Sade is a brave and all too rare example of all-women casting

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/apr/02/madame-de-sade-theatre>

Guardian

17 March 2009

What happened to great stage roles for older women?

In the next few months we'll see high-profile appearances from Judi Dench, Diana Rigg and Helen Mirren – all in revivals of old plays. So who's writing new parts for women over the age of 40?

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2009/mar/16/stage-roles-older-women>

Observer

15 March 2009

Fonda takes centre stage as ageing stars triumph in theatre

A wonderfully talented generation of female actors in their sixties and beyond have returned to the stage. Vanessa Thorpe reports on the defiant success of Angela Lansbury, Jane Fonda, Hodge, Judi Dench and Siân Phillips and others

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/mar/15/jane-fonda-angela-lansbury-theatre>

Daily Telegraph

13 March 2009

Margaret Tyzack champions older actresses

In language that is hardly becoming, Margaret Tyzack, the Olivier award-winning actress, has condemned the ageism that she feels is blighting the career of women in her profession.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/mandrake/4980543/Margaret-Tyzack-champions-older-actresses.html>

Daily Telegraph

5 March 2009

Miranda Richardson's moan at Meryl Streep's monopoly

While it is great for the 59-year-old Meryl Streep that she has cornered the rather slender market in roles for older women, it isn't great for other actresses d'un certain âge such as Miranda Richardson.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/mandrake/4938696/Miranda-Richardsons-moan-at-Meryl-Streeps-monopoly.html>

Evening Standard

27 February 2009

Julie calls for more women's roles on TV

TOP performers led by Julie Walters, Simon Callow, Charles Dance and David Soul are calling for more roles for women on television.

For every two male roles in a drama there is one female, research by Deborah Dean at the University of Warwick Business School has shown.

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23655138-details/Julie+calls+for+more+ womens+roles+on+TV/article.do>

Observer

1 March 2009

Where are Britain's drama queens?

Whether as actors or writers, women are still under-represented in television. When Equity, the actors' union, had the brilliant idea of analysing the TV schedules - they studied the cast lists of every drama that went out on terrestrial channels for a week - they discovered that two-thirds of all fictional characters on TV are men.

Women were markedly under-represented and this was alarming, particularly since women make up more than half the nation's TV audience.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/mar/01/women-television-mistresses-mamma-mia>

Independent

27 February 2009

Whatever happened to the femme fatale?

Sultry, smouldering temptresses lit up the screen in cinema's golden age – but where are they now? Sheila Johnston pays tribute to the femme fatale

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/whatever-happened-to-the-femme-fatale-1633088.html>

The Stage

26 February 2009

Exclusive: Broadcasters don't want older women, say writers

Leading screenwriters have accused UK broadcasters of being ageist, claiming commissioners are not interested in scripts with female characters over 40.

The writers, who are all members of the Writers' Guild of Great Britain, said their scripts are often rejected or have to be rewritten completely if they feature women who are over 40, and have claimed commissioners are only interested in younger female characters who are "slim and attractive".

<http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/newsstory.php/23602/exclusive-broadcasters-dont-want-older>

BBC Radio 4 - Weekend Women's Hour

21 February 2009

Is there a lack of roles for older women on stage and screen?

According to a new report from the International Research Unit at the Warwick Business School, male actors have longer careers than their female counterparts.

The research suggests that when it comes to the availability of meaningful roles, if you are an actress over 40, then your age and gender are going to count against you.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/womanshour/02/2009_07_tue.shtml

BBC Radio 4 – PM Programme

20 February 2009

Penelope Wilton talks about Equity's petition on the employment of actresses.

Click "Listen to the latest edition" and scroll to minute 41.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/news/pm/>

The Stage

4 December 2008

EU funds research into roles for older female performers

Global union the International Federation of Actors has won EU backing for a Europe-wide investigation into television and theatre opportunities for female performers over 40.

<http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/newsstory.php/19056/eu-funds-research-into-roles-for-older-female>