MUSICALS AT THE MARGINS: CALL FOR CHAPTER PROPOSALS

While the musical for much of its existence has had a relatively 'strong' generic identity, the genre's central semantic element, the musical number, is also widespread in films not understood to be musicals. Generic transformations since the late 1970s, as well as technological, cultural, and industrial change, have produced greater instability in our collective understanding of what a musical is. Recent research has focused on the song in film (e.g. Dyer 2011; Spring 2013) or on musical moments (Conrich and Tincknell 2006), while recent scholarship on both the musical and on music and film in the context of the musical has begun to look beyond both the usual canonical texts and the genre's usual identification with studio-era Hollywood (e.g. Kessler 2010; Creekmur and Mokdad 2012; Garcia 2014). Yet a narrowly-defined canon still dominates discussions of the musical as a genre and remains the basis of its most influential theorisations.

This collection of essays will focus on the genre's unstable edges and the margins and boundaries of the musical as a genre, seeking to contribute to genre studies by investigating one particular case of the instability of a film genre and how genre can be contested at the levels of industry, text, and/or reception. Why are particular films marginalised in scholarship and public discourse? What is lost through a strong emphasis on the canon? And how do films that challenge established theorisations of the musical become confined to the boundaries of the genre?

We invite proposals for chapters approaching this topic from a range of angles, historical periods, and (inter)national contexts. We are interested in considering why certain films have been marginalised despite their evident commonalities with the genre's canon, as well as what is at stake for films questioning, bending, or playing with the musical genre.

Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Boundary cases in various national cinemas, historical eras, industrial contexts
- Films whose generic status have shifted over time
- The core and the periphery of the musical
- Musicals marginalised in scholarship
- Sub-genres and cycles at the margins
- Stars within these texts
- Authors of boundary cases (directors, screenwriters, producers, music publishers, etc.)
- How gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity impacts on the generic status of these films
• The body and the edges of the musical
• Promotion, publicity, and reception of films at the margins
• Specific film studios or production companies
• Analysis of cultural factors that impact on these marginal cases
• Musicals in media beyond film (television, web series, etc.)
• Animated films as musicals
• Music films (jazz films, rock films, hip hop films, etc.)

Submission Guidelines:

Please submit your abstracts of no more than 500 words and a brief 100-word bio via email to both editors by Monday 17th July 2017. We have already had a positive initial response to this project from a highly respected academic publisher. We anticipate that finished essays will be approximately 6000 words in length, including footnotes. Acceptance of proposals will be sent by email by the end of August 2017.

Please email your abstract and bio to both editors:

Dr Martha Shearer at marthashearer@gmail.com

Dr Julie Lobalzo Wright at j.wright.4@warwick.ac.uk

Please feel free to contact us with any queries