

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### **Antiqui-tech: invention in (and of) the ancient Mediterranean world on screen**

*A multi-panel area of the 2019 Film & History Conference:*

*“Technology in Film, Television, and New Media”*

**13-17 November 2019**

**Madison Concourse Hotel in Madison, WI (USA)**

*Full details at: [www.filmandhistory.org/conference](http://www.filmandhistory.org/conference)*

**DEADLINE for abstracts: 1 June 2019**

Invention has fascinated audiences at least since the god Hephaestus created self-locomoting robot-women as workshop assistants—and Prometheus’ theft of fire allowed humans to develop their own technology. From Méliès’ re-creation of Lucian’s trip to the moon, to myriad takes on Pygmalion fabricating the “perfect woman,” to Hypatia’s fatal scientific inquiry in Amenábar’s *Agora*, on-screen depictions of invention and technology in the ancient Mediterranean world and the classical tradition have dramatized their potential to delight, empower, and enlighten—as well as the ethical and moral concerns they stimulate.

How do invention and technology stabilize or disrupt social order or tradition—for good or ill? What happens when new tech supplants the once-new? We enjoy the wit of Percy Jackson substituting an iPhone’s reflective surface for Perseus’ shield; can the wonder Ray Harryhausen wrought in *Jason & the Argonauts* survive the domination of green-screen motion capture animation? What aesthetic or ethical questions arise from eliding realism and the hyperreal in generating Spartan musculature, the Roman Colosseum, or the Olympians? Conversely, is democratization of knowledge spurring viewers’ expectations of “authenticity” in on-screen representations of technology in antiquity, e.g. in architecture or warfare—and if so, to what effects? How does film as a technology rival e.g. archaeology in representing the “reality” of the past?

The Classical Antiquity area solicits abstracts for papers that discuss how film, television, and various other screen-media engage with technology and invention, on topics including, but not limited to:

- representation of invention/technology in narratives set in the ancient Mediterranean world, or informed by the classical tradition (e.g. through plot, character, theme, *mise en scène*)
- how technology figures in characterization, in combination with morality, racial or cultural identity, and/or the social status of its inventors and/or users

- the ethics of invention/technology within on-screen narratives and in the creation of convincingly realistic or hyperreal worlds on screen
- innovation/technological invention as metaphor for generational or cultural succession
- audience (in)tolerance of anachronisms/interest in “authentic” on-screen worlds

Proposals for complete panels of three related presentations are also welcome, but should include an abstract and contact information (including email) for *each* presenter.

Please e-mail your proposal (200-400 words per paper) to the area chair:

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