

CALL FOR PAPERS

CFP: Classical Antiquity: Golden Ages, Silver Screens, Bronze Armor, Iron Men

An area of multiple panels for the 2014 *Film & History* Conference:

Golden Ages: Styles and Personalities, Genres and Histories

October 29-November 2, 2014

The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club

Madison, WI (USA)

DEADLINE for abstracts: June 1, 2014

AREA: Classical Antiquity: Golden Ages, Silver Screens, Bronze Armor, Iron Men

From Hesiod to Ovid, the concept of the “golden age” is familiar to scholars of classical antiquity, whence it became a common trope in Western culture. While always ideal, different authors ascribe various criteria to the “golden age”: human closeness to divinity; absence of corrupting technologies; flourishing of culture; apogee of peace, but also power. This “golden” quality is often identified in retrospect, entailing not only celebration but also deterioration, secondarity, belatedness, nostalgia—or even hope of its eventual return or recovery.

The cultural authority still granted to classical antiquity has also rendered it “golden” for artistic, political, and financial reasons. Newly ascendant ideologies have used classical antiquity as a forum for reinforcing or challenging the status quo in various historical periods (e.g. Kubrick's *Spartacus* as a medium for a “golden age” of progressive politics in the mid-twentieth century). New technologies have been employed to make that ancient “golden age” of narrative inventiveness ever more vivid for new audiences (e.g. *Wrath of the Titans*; *Pompeii*; BBC's *Atlantis*).

This area invites 20-minute papers dealing with all aspects of the relationship between the concept of a “golden age” and classical antiquity. Topics for papers submitted to this area may include (but are not limited to):

- The “golden age” on screen: depictions of mythical “golden ages” and/or representations of “golden age” historical periods (e.g. Classical Athens, Augustan Rome)
- Counterfeit “gold”: representations of a commonly recognized “golden age” as intrinsically flawed, as from non-elite perspectives or other ideologically “alternative” readings of the past
- Silver, bronze, iron: focus on *loss* of a golden age in antiquity (narratives of decline, corruption); *desire to return* to the golden age (secondarity, belatedness, nostalgia); and/or *recovery* of a “golden age” (restoration narratives)
- “Golden ages” of genres: e.g. Roman Bible epics; “sword and sandal” films; disaster films
- Classical antiquity and the new “golden age” of television: how classical antiquity has been implicated in the recent “new golden age of television”, as shows ranging from *Battlestar Galactica* to *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* draw upon classical antiquity to shape narrative and mythology

- Technological “gold”, from Cinemascope to CGI: how technological advances have contributed to a new “golden age” of classical antiquity on screen by making possible the visualization of ancient spectacle, from battle scenes to gods and monsters
- Who decides what’s “golden”: Does the increased representation of classical antiquity on screen entail a new “golden age” for the field of Classics off screen? Does the “gold” of box office receipts for films based on classical antiquity necessarily entail a golden age of quality?

Proposals for complete panels (three related presentations) are also welcome, so long as they include an abstract and contact information (including e-mail address) for each presenter. For updates and registration information about the upcoming meeting, see the *Film & History* website (www.filmandhistory.org).

Please e-mail your 200-word proposal by 1 June 2014, to the area chair:

Meredith Safran
Trinity College
meredith.safran@gmail.com