

Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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The Women Who Built Hollywood: 12 Trailblazers in Front of and Behind the Camera.

By Susan Goldman Rubin

May 2023. 208p. Astra/Calkins Creek, \$18.99 (9781662680106). Gr. 7–10. 791.43

During the first 30 years of the twentieth century, a surprising number of women worked for Hollywood movie companies, where jobs were often available, partly because of openings created by men joining the military during WWI, and later, due to the deadly 1918 flu pandemic. Rubin describes aspects of filmmaking during the era, and chronicles the lives of 12 women who made significant contributions within their fields of expertise. Beginning with the silent-film era, they include white actresses Mary Pickford and Lillian Gish; screenwriter Frances Marion; Black actresses Louise Beavers, Fredi Washington, and Hattie McDaniel; Asian American actresses Marion Wong and Anna May Wong; director Dorothy Arzner; film editor Margaret Booth; costume designer Clare West; and white actress/stuntwoman Helen Holmes. Captioned, black-and-white photos appear on more than half the double-page spreads. Rubin provides a well-researched, smoothly written account of each woman's life, achievements, and legacy, while well-chosen quotes from the women and their contemporaries bring their voices into the narrative. An informative, enjoyable account of women's contributions to the early history of Hollywood movies.

— *Carolyn Phelan*