

Annemarie Heinrich: Photographer of Classic Argentine Cinema and Agent of Cultural Modernization

Annemarie Heinrich: fotógrafa del cine clásico argentino y agente de modernización cultural

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Abstract:

This article presents the progress of an ongoing investigation into the artistic and commercial contribution of the German nationalized Argentinian photographer Annemarie Heinrich to local cinema during the classic period (1933-1959). The general objective of the research in which this article is included is to reconnect her professional career with the artistic, social and commercial context of an industry in full modernization, restoring the complex and varied evolution of the practices, collaborations, relationships, interests, concerns and commitments that she maintained throughout for many years.

In this text we present the contextual keys that led to the emergence of the photographer's profile and analyzed a series of counterpoints that constitute the facets of that profile. We seek to understand the way in which this multifaceted mix was the creator of a visual regime transversal to the entertainment industries that functioned as social mediation and favored dynamic feedback between different series of cultural production. Our hypothesis is that Annemarie Heinrich was a true agent of aesthetic modernization and a synergistic protagonist of the cultural industry, both in iconographic, commercial, and human matters: two characterizations that give her back the agency that corresponds to her and that were not considered until now in the Argentine cinema history.

Resumen:

Este artículo presenta el avance de una investigación en curso sobre la contribución artística y comercial de la fotógrafa alemana nacionalizada argentina Annemarie Heinrich al cine local durante el período clásico (1933-1959). El objetivo general de la pesquisa en la que este artículo se enmarca es reconectar su trayectoria profesional con el suelo artístico, social y económico de una industria en plena modernización, restituyendo el devenir complejo y variado de las prácticas, colaboraciones, trama de relaciones, intereses, preocupaciones y compromisos que mantuvo a lo largo de muchos años de forma ininterrumpida.

En este trabajo se presentan las claves contextuales que hicieron a la emergencia del perfil de la fotógrafa y se analizan una serie de contrapuntos que constituyen las facetas de ese perfil. Buscamos comprender el modo en que ese maridaje polifacético fue el creador de un régimen visual transversal a las industrias del espectáculo que funcionó como mediación social y favoreció una retroalimentación dinámica entre distintas series de producción cultural. Sostenemos que Annemarie Heinrich fue una verdadera agente de modernización estética y protagonista sinérgica de la industria cultural, tanto en materia iconográfica, comercial, como humana: dos caracterizaciones que le devuelven el agenciamiento que le corresponde y que no fueron consideradas hasta el momento en nuestras historias del cine.

Keywords: Photography; Women; Argentine cinema; History of cinema; Historiography.

Palabras clave: Fotografía; mujeres; cine argentino; historia del cine; historiografía.

1. Introduction and positioning

Although her name seems familiar, and there have been tens of pictures seen thanks to her eyes, the eyes of Annemarie Heinrich, this does not imply that there has been enough attention, from the Argentine cinema history field, towards the conditions of that way of seeing, working, imagining and writing with the light. That is to say: that her craft (her skills) and her procedures have been positioned, by modeling and being modeled by the audiovisual industry in the 30s and the 50s. Why should her photographs be broken off from the material and contextual keys that made them possible, making a hardworking and sustained career journey independent from the journey of a business that she helped build at iconographic, commercial and even historiographical levels? What is the heuristic power of keeping on to assert in a noncritical way that Heinrich regularly worked on the covers of the highest printing and most massive show business magazines, when there is no question on how her wide insertion in a complex and motley ecology of media happened in the first place? Far away from the problematic figure of the pioneer, can this photographer, born in Germany in 1912, who arrived in Argentina in 1926, with a stablished craft in 1930 (when she was only 18) be considered as one of the agents of esthetic modernization of popular culture between 1933 and 1959?

This work is about the progress of an ongoing research on the artistic and commercial contribution of the photographer Annemarie Heinrich to Argentine cinema during the classic period (1933-1959,) aiming at reconnecting her career path with the artistic, social and economic field of an industry in process of modernization, restoring the complex and diverse development of the practice, collaborations, relationships, interests, concerns and commitments she has had over many years. Now, continuing from a previous presentation (Aimaretti, 2024) where we set the critical-historiographical posing guiding our research from an materialist and no androcentric approach, and where we proposed a periodization of Heinrich's work, the specific purpose is to problematize the contextual keys leading to the emergence of the photographer's profile and to discuss a series of counterpoints that make up the different sides of such profile. Our intent is to understand how this versatile blend created a visual regime across the show business industries, which served as social mediator (Martín-

Barbero, 1987) and favored a dynamic feedback among various series of cultural production, even between a central product (a film) and its derivative work (postcards, posters, fashion publicity).

By carrying out a discussion on studies about the Argentine classic films (Di Núbila, 1959; España 2000, 2000b; Kriger, 2014), our work perspective is based on the cultural history (Burke, 1996, 2006), the feminist criticism to art history (Cordero Reiman y Sáenz, 2001; Mayayo, 2003; Pollock, 2001, 2002, 2013; Gluzman, 2016; Nochlin, 2020) and situated epistemologies (Haraway, 1995; Harding, 2012; Despret, 2022), using, also, the systematization of information that comes from the paper document files the artist kept during her entire career and which had barely been used before in a methodical and extensive way. These materials are the empirical basis on which it is possible to go beyond the biographical summary or the anecdote, to rebuild a dense and materially positioned trajectory: they describe the time and energy, the not so mythical or idyllic life that made those hypnotic photos possible.

Indeed, the Heinrich-Sanguinetti¹ archive is a living reservoir of materials for historiography (Devés, 2017; Esteves y Devés, 2018; Aimaretti, 2024). Not only because of its 400,000 negatives in glass, acetate and nitrate, slides and contacts, corresponding to the full work of the photographer between 1930 and 1987, and among which there is a very significant proportion of materials related to film industry. Not, either, due to the physical preservation of technologies with which she worked, such as cameras, enlargers and supplies to make from one shot to retouch and printing at large scale. There are materials there that, together with the images of the daily activities in the studio, are the privileged documentary access to a key period in history of show business in

¹ The Heinrich-Sanguinetti Photographic Studio is run by Alicia and Ricardo Sanguinetti, Annemarie's children, in the city of Buenos Aires. The photographer herself lived for decades in the same property. Thanks to the economic commitment of the British Library of London (2014, 2016), the UNTREF digitalized more than 12 thousand negatives (of between 6x6 and 35 mm) from the 1935-1960 period, which was supplemented by the treatment of some catalogues and albums, and part of the personal documents of the photographer. See Belej and Hrycyk (2017) and also: <https://archivoiiac.untref.edu.ar/fondo-de-annemarie-heinrich> When we arrived at the Studio, in November 2022, although the general conservation condition was good, the set of printed materials was disorganized and distributed in different boxes and in different physical locations in the property, with no systematization. Since then, we have dedicated to put everything in conditions to be accessed, to be able to identify the actual volume, extension over time and different supports; and also to be able to review its contents, because we did not even know exactly what each document kept was about. We have surveyed more than 15 thousand of them.

Argentina. The “Anne’s papers” —personal, professional and institutional correspondence; postcards, cards; commercial invoices and sales check; notebooks and personal diaries; posters and binders with publicity ads; scripted participation in radio shows and interviews; newspaper articles written by Heinrich; newspaper documents; collections of fashion magazines and library; professional cards; exhibition catalogues; sketches and drawings, among others— are sources that require a converging reading and a relational interpretation with “Anne’s pictures”. These papers are an original supply to keep on thinking and making cultural, materialist and non androcentric history of the Argentine cinema, as long as the epistemic inertia is disrupted: that is to say, going to the files of a photographer, decentering “the” canonic source. These documents show a worker and artist procuring a space as media agent; and papers with their own agency, allowing to rebuild with higher material complexity the professional journey of Heinrich, to tie it again to its conditions of possibility and from there, to better understand how the classic period films work. Positioning her creative life and, from there, producing positioned knowledge.

2. Contexts in context

Annemarie Heinrich came to Argentina from Germany when she was 14; she had experienced war and had been witness to how her mother and female relatives and neighbors implemented different strategies of survival, replacing males in different jobs, widening their practices and sociability spaces, and learning to be the decision makers. This transformative experience of Wilhelmine Weber —“Non”—, her mother², that shaped Annemarie’s character and her perspective of the world was articulated with her living in the urban environment both in Berlin and in Buenos Aires, where she lived during her teenage years and defined her tastes and personality in a time of fast social-cultural transformations. María Isabel Baldassarre has stated that:

² Unlike her father -whose name, career path and anecdotes appear in all catalogues and reviews biographies- the memories about Wilhelmine have been virtually absent, and the parent-child genealogy prevailed (Aimaretti, 2024).

During the 1920s and 1930s, the existence of a “new woman” taking on new social roles in the public sphere, beyond the reduced domestic scope, not without conflicts, was already seen in the Argentine society: a new place in the working world and in the intellectual and academic staffs, to which we can add also the intent of active participation in politics. (2011, p. 29)

In fact, during the periods between wars, with more access to education and information, and flexibility in labor world insertion guidelines, a process started, in which many women turned photography into a channel to professionalism. This very special (and timely) context is where we can place the first steps of Heinrich’s career, who, not being yet entirely fluent in Spanish, started in this career path due to economic needs and her will to work. But soon enough, she turned photography into her creative calling.

Andrea Nelson states that two of the key aspects of invoking the New Woman (NW) model when thinking about modern photography and insertion of professionals, are that it provides complexity and ambiguity to the analytical perspective. Although it was originated in USA and Europe, it became a global phenomenon with local cultural manifestations; and, far away from the myth, it was a dynamic social reality with live and imaginary components: going back to the art critic Abigail Salomon-Godeau’s opinion, it was a “locus of anxieties and fantasies”. That is to say:

Yet the self-assured and cosmopolitan New Woman was more than a marketable image. She was a contested symbol of liberation from traditional gender roles (...) was a global phenomenon that embodied an ideal of female empowerment based on real women making revolutionary changes. For many of these “new” women, the camera became an effective tool for self-determination and, more practically, income generation. (...) she represented on the one hand an economically independent and self-sufficient contributor to society and on the other a threat to men’s control of the workplace and reliance on familiar definitions of femininity and motherhood (...) [but, although] helped break down monolithic constructions of gender (...) did not automatically secure legitimacy or equality. (Nelson, 2020, pp. 21-22)

Precisely, in line with Salomon-Godeau, Nelson explains that it is not possible to schematically affirm that all female photographers of the period between wars related to the NW ideal, that they did it in the same way, and without internal and external resistance. On the contrary, what happened was, instead, that there was a diverse myriad of contradicting experiences of embodiment of a model while autonomy and equity remained elusive. Therefore: “(...) women’s lives were a mix of emancipating and confining experiences that varied country by country, woman by woman. Underlying this variability were disparities between women’s public and private status as well as imagined and lived realities”. (Nelson, 2020, p. 24)

Indeed, the first years of Annemarie’s profession weren’t easy: not only due to the limitation of material resources, but also due to prevailing male sexism. In many interviews, she remembered that there were many occasions when she had to “advocate for herself all the time”, regarding precautions, even when she was a girl with a complexion and attitude of a woman, that were necessary in order not to suffer violence, mistreatment, harassment or physical abuse; and there were also circumstances of discrimination she suffered when male clients of social photography refused to be portrayed by her, just because she was a woman, and on top of it all, too young³. However, the fact of her being a foreigner could also have been an advantage, moderating that dual subordination: in a city that was so European, her German accent may have been a safe passage to be able to perform with a certain amount of authority and personal confidence.

So, considering the powers and tensions caused by political, sociocultural and sex-generic transformations connected to the NW model, to understand the position of Anne as a photographer in the entertainment industry in Buenos Aires, it is required to go beyond the black-and-white dichotomies—male=dominant/female=submissive—; and specifically, this requires a

³ It is worth remembering that, until the first quarter of 20th century, the position of women in civil and labor rights was extremely unfavorable. Alejandra Niedermaier pointed out that “In the 1914 census, and under category 13 (Fine Arts) we found: 20 Argentine female photographers, out of 619 people registered and 33 foreigners out of the 1172 surveyed people (...) It was not until 1926 that the regime of civil capacity of women was amended in Argentina” (2008, p. 70); that women were, until then, considered as unable and dependent. We should remember that, precisely, in 1926, was when Annemarie Heinrich arrived in Argentina.

reimagination of the cinematography field at the beginning of the classic period “as a space susceptible of multiple occupation” (Pollock, 2002, p. 39). This perspective enables restoring the importance and multiple values of the artist’s profile in its context, as well as review (and analysis) of the contributions from the photographic field to the cinematography one – a task being made by Andrea Cuarterolo (2014) for quite some time.⁴

In the first place, it is worth mentioning that the beginning of Annemarie’s career in 1930 approximately coincides with a moment of smooth integration between mass consumption, sociability and “unparallel inter-penetration of economic and cultural forces. The intersection of developing markets with new cultural logics of commercial publicity, mass marketing and new forms of merchandising in the context of leisure development” (Montaldo, 2016, p. 73). She makes a contribution to the development of a blooming industry –talking pictures– in the context of a consumer society and in the middle of a larger process of industrialization by replacement of imports that was widening the entertainment market and turning its consumers into cultural citizens (Romero, 2001; Pujol, 2016).

During the macro period when we study Heinrich’s career (1930-1959), and especially in the urban nodes, cinema had an absolutely central place in daily life of huge sectors of the population: it was “the” cultural modern cosmopolitan experience where consumption, viewership, experimentation, imagination, power and identity were articulated. According to Vicente Benet, it was a “highly intense media” (in Peirano, 2023), that is to say, an hegemonic entertainment in a diverse, motley and interconnected constellation of mass series and sociability spaces that shaped a thriving leisure industry. Precisely, under the notion of poly-consumption marketing, Cecilia Gil Mariño (2015) has explained the effective way of organization of the sector, which allowed a net-shaped order in

⁴ In the 21st century, three exhibitions were especially significant in Buenos Aires, due to their volume and public resonance: “Annemarie Heinrich. Un cuerpo, una luz, un reflejo” (2004, Centro Cultural Recoleta), “Annemarie Heinrich. Intenciones secretas” (2015, MALBA), y “Estrategias de la mirada. Annemarie Heinrich, inédita” (2015, MUNTREF). See studies-catalogues in bibliography references. During 2024, in Berlin, there were three exhibitions: “Annemarie Heinrich-Fotografien zwischen Deutschland und Argentinien 1933-1987” (Willy-Brandt-Haus); “De Berlín a Buenos Aires: la fotógrafa Annemarie Heinrich y la vida literaria argentina” (Ibero-American Institute), y “Annemarie Heinrich: Berlín - Buenos Aires – Berlín” (Argentine Embassy in Germany). Recently, was presented the study-catalogue *Annemarie Heinrich Inkomplett*.

the market, so that questions to the users were multipurpose ones —users who are readers, listeners, spectators and participants, all at once. On the other hand, with this notion, the author noticed a degree of continuous and daily spread and penetration of leisure industries, all of them affected and driven by publicity.

So, when the movies with sound started in Argentina, in 1933, public had a well-established affective and intellectual commitment to show business, and expertise in smooth use and interaction with massive cultural series. If theatre and sports had provided viewers with powerful interactive experiences, and the discographic market and radio had provided a “listening culture” (D’Lugo, 2007), editorial market and popular drama had made available a visual culture of star faces and bodies, vectors of desire and generic identification that could even turn into daily presences thanks to posters, publicities, magazines and autographed photos. Annemarie joined this network of industries as a freelance photographer, contributing more and more, and influencing this images environment. In fact, her work was key to model the iconic dimension of star texts of theater, radio and, mostly, of movie artists, with economic and commercial implications for individuals and companies —that is to say: with impact on cachets and contracts. Also, her work’s relevance in the media was such, that visiting her studio became mandatory for symbolic acquisition of the citizenship card in show business: a symbol of belonging and prestige.⁵

At the beginning, Heinrich worked for Opera singers at Teatro Colón, and soon after that, because her first studio was near Radio El Mundo, its director tasked her photos for posters of tango singers, who, after meeting her, kept on visiting her space. This led to her involvement in the discographic market, and the score press, so that covers and publicity posters had her pictures on them. So then, Julio Korn called her to work regularly in *Radiolandia* magazine, and after that, she was also invited to work by *Antena* and *Sintonía*⁶ —not forgetting that initially, she had worked in *La Novela Semanal*, *El Hogar* and *Mundo Social* as social and fashion photographer. Almost at the same time, she arrives into the

⁵ According to Sara Facio, she created the show business photo genre (1987, p. 9). See the photo book *Annemarie Heinrich. El espectáculo en Argentina 1930-1970*, with pictures of Heinrich, and text and curation of Facio.

⁶ Hand coloring in her famous covers was the work of Osvaldo Venturi (poster worker), and Vitucho (illustrator).

(nascent) film industry, thanks to two contacts: Mr. Ángel Mentasti, founder of Argentina Sono Film study, who requested her help with the *Tango!* (Luis Moglia Barth, 1933) negatives and publicity posters of the company. And Luis Saslavsky, journalist of *La Nación* newspaper, a man connected to plastics and intellectual groups, added her to his first projects as a producer and director of SIFAL —*Crimen a las tres* (Alberto de Zavalía, 1934) and *Escala en la ciudad* (1934) respectively—, and enabled her to be in contact with dancers, models and actresses, who afterwards visited her studio and became even her personal friends, as in the case of Niní Gambier.

Considering the above contexts, which made possible and conditioned the emergence of Heinrich as a professional photographer in show business in Buenos Aires, in the next section, we propose a reading figure for her versatile profile.



F1

3. Cosmopolitan citizen with modernizing eye

Immersing herself, unprejudiced, in cultural and social heterogenic circles – from variety shows to “cultured” literature, from visual arts to tango, from left-wing intellectuals to popular performers—, it was the complex profile of worker

and consumer, the self-taught pupil *and* informal teacher, the author *and* archivist –aspects to be addressed in item 4– what enabled Annemarie Heinrich to be an agent of modernization and the synergic protagonist of cultural industry, in iconographic matters, commercial and human matters: two characterizations that give her the agency she deserves and which were not considered so far in the cinema history. In her pictures, there is a modernizing impulse through which a certain visual regime of the global cinematography world was imported and got local figurations: that is to say, there were patterns of global quality, with a local anchorage. A phenomenon called by Beatriz Sarlo ([1986] 2020) as peripheral modernity, and by Miriam Hansen ([1999] 2023) vernacular modernism or global vernacular.⁷ These images, inserted in the filming world and the popular print media, contributed to process and mediate the experience of ongoing modernism: they were the local answer to a global phenomenon of cosmopolitan nature and capitalizing changes in senses, social collective imagination and experience.

In her creations there is a process of modernization, glamouring, internationalization and cross action of mass industries (publicity, fashion, printed media, radio, records, films). Heinrich combines the actual record and the commercial commitment, with a language of her own, in sync with patterns of Hollywood global-transnational quality and close to the formal approaches of New Vision movement whose “the goal was to use the camera to discover rather than to record, creating with it unnerving sensations and getting in the images a estrangement of what is real life or routine” (Cuarterolo, 2014, p. 226). Away from the traditional pictorialism in order to aim at a structural vision of reality, Heinrich produces modernism marks in mass products based on displacement of clichés and gradual installation of esthetics combining glamour with estrangement, perfection with a certain subtle distortion and/or accentuation of certain features of the face or body. Her pictures are surprising, captivating, attractive with accented angulations, oblique vanishing points and an exquisite composition work given by textures, lights and shadows contrasts.

⁷ Recovering both of them to consider the discographic production, radio and film production of the 30s in Argentina, Matew Karush (2013) has proposed the category of alternate modernisms: that is to say, contradicting blends where novelty elements coexist with traditional/local patterns.

It is worth noting that Annemarie's contribution to films was (at the beginning) concurrent with a very rich moment in photography in Argentina, where, while this was getting its autonomy –more and more photo clubs and specialized media–, the fashion, art and publicity fields were not compartmentalized or contradicting one another (Zuviría, 2019). Precisely in this situation where, also, the advertisement business was growing and photography was in dispute with illustrations regarding their supremacy in designs; using a modern technology serving as both cultural modernization instrument and genre roles –in front of and behind the lens–, Heinrich appears producing fascination and imagination. In the early stages, she intuitively performed optic tests, observing the morphology of objects, faces, bodies, spaces, surfaces, volumes and movements, and worked on textures as abstracts, getting closer, not systematically, to the avant-garde language. Experimentation –in shots, in the lab, in retouch and in developing– was one of the constant features in her entire career, showing that photography was her profession –her job and how she made her living–, and also the space where she could expand her vitality, curiosity and inventiveness. Accumulation of time, observation and empiric experience allowed her to crystallize adjustments and be closer to her goal of excellence and, by means of a strict work routine and creativity, she soon became a symbol of modern photography. In fact, she was the only woman to be included in the first anthology of modern photography edited by the cinema critic, intellectual and photographer Carlos Alberto Pessano in 1939 in the book *Fotografías argentinas*, where he gathered 120 works from different authors⁸.

Annemarie created a diffuse visual regime, across all industries of show business and multi-channel circulation, that ranged from magazine covers to film posters, from marquees of theaters to store windows, from graphic publicity to playbills, from posters to postcards, from souvenirs to press dossiers. She provided visual and portable entity to a star system in training, offering what radio couldn't, and what brevity of films could not provide: stable images where to learn to look, reflect oneself and see others, dreaming and desiring. Images of haptic quality that, in their same composition, thanks to the planes, directions and textures, led to a compulsion to touch and manipulate

⁸ Pessano knew Annemarie very well, since he had requested her services many times for his magazine *Cinegraf*.

what was being watched, turning it into a true surface (support) of contact and connection between stars and the public. Annemarie’s pictures caused another relationship with the stars: a more intimate and fascinating one.

The documents in her archive show that she was in her element in the artistic and mediatic environment⁹. Being an immigrant —although later became Argentinian citizen—, Annemarie found in many artists creative accomplices and dear friends: she early made bonds of affection and solidarity with the wide spectrum of local workers of movies, radio and theater who, also, beyond the working relationship mediated by production companies, sought her out so that she portrayed their families or themselves in significant personal situations. She had relationships and exchanged correspondence with different personalities of the artistic and popular culture, —from Mirta Legrand to Saulo Benavente, from María Rosa Olivier and María del Carmen Portela to Blaquie-Paloma Efron, from Juan Carlos Castagnino, Raúl Soldi y Nina Aberle to Delia Garcés, among others—: she offered help and collaboration, and every time they requested from her the connection with another artists, she gladly agreed. So she did not only serve as visual and cultural modernization agent, synergic actor between industries, but also, she served as a liaison between professionals¹⁰.

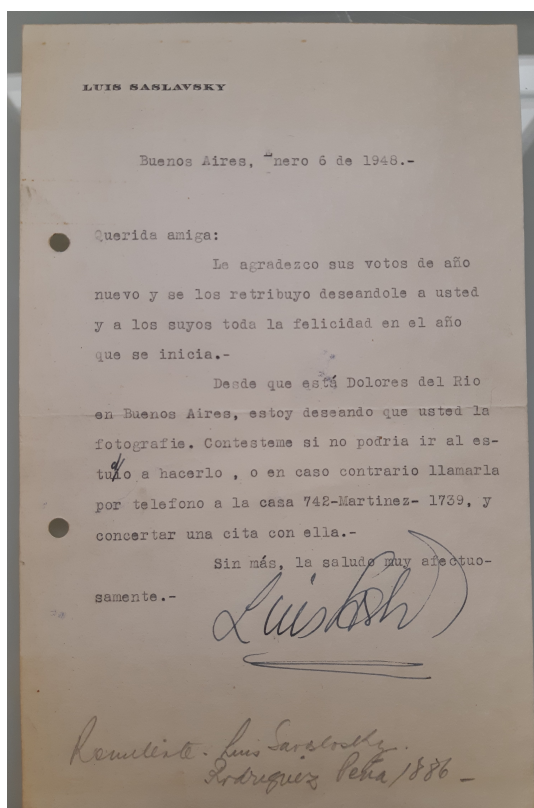


F2

⁹ The picture of *Revista Radiolandia* (F2) is powerful regarding the mediatic involvement of Heinrich: the photo captures her being the star of a “Meeting of artists in the new micro-theater of Chas de Cruz”, in Radio Belgrano. There, “Annemarie Heinrich exhibits her photographic works” surrounded by first class actors, actresses and musicians such as Charlo, Tania, Sabina Olmos, Hugo Del Carril and Ana María Linch; Delia Garcés and Chas de Cruz; Ángel Magaña, Agustín Irusta, Polo Zavalía and Juan Carlos Thorry.

¹⁰ As it can be seen in the letter from the director Luis Saslavsky (F 3).

For the combination of work and family to be compatible –a really delicate goal for a working woman like her– the photographer had the support of her husband, the writer Álvaro Sol, who, when marrying her in 1939, became her unconditional partner, in charge of the administrative and financial organization of the business, and thinking, together with her, about the economic sustainability of the project¹¹.



4. A multifaceted profile

In this item, we will develop a brief series of counterpoints that shape the profile of this woman that walks around the city and joins the consumer market, works independently and becomes the owner of her own business; adds techniques and procedures, mainly based on self-taught instances, and trains her collaborators; connects the masses with the stars through a singular creativity by means of a modern technology/machine; and takes responsibility for the right to the memory of her work.

¹¹ To approach the figure of Álvaro Sol as the person in charge of social relations and friendship between Heinrich and left-wing intellectuals/progressist artists; and as partner in joint editorial projects, see Esteves and Devés (2018). With the economic support of the National Arts Fund (Fondo Nacional de las Artes), maybe the most important editorial initiative of the couple was the book *Ballet en la Argentina* published in 1962, with Anne's photos and Sol's text.

4.1 Worker and consumer: in front of and behind the camera

When, in 1930, with a large format wooden camera with glass plates of 12 x 16,5 brought by his father from Germany, she decided to set up her own space in Villa Ballester, to then move out to the City of Buenos Aires downtown, Annemarie Heinrich was already an show business fan, but would soon become an expert: during her career, she worked for the show business and enjoyed it at the same time, causing feedback between both dimensions. We should not forget the strategic location of her studio —first on Paraguay 800; then around the corner, on Avenida Córdoba 728; and later, on Santa Fe 1026— which was very near theaters and radio stations. In her personal and professional correspondence, she always includes comments on the artistic world, theater shows critics and/or film reviews.

Frequent visits to the theaters gave her the information to be able to take publicity photos of the same shows, and also a direct contact with the public. That's why we can think that the time she spent on the theater seat was good to have inspiration and learn (from what she was seeing on screen) and also to capture the tone and temperature of public facing stimulus (what she saw in the adjacent seats, what she heard and “felt” in the surroundings). Heinrich was a proud audience woman. And although, in her beginnings, Walter, her father, was her partner, after becoming independent and throughout her married life, she went out by herself at night and visited theaters and went to the movies, and Sol supported her and helped her organize the household chores and care tasks so that she could keep on having close contact with contemporary artistic productions and their creators¹².

In fact, Anne and Sol relativized certain rules and practices of family obligations and parenting; for instance, due to operational needs, their children lived part of their childhood in a boarding school and, when starting high school, and went back to their parents' house, they spent half a day in the studio, learning to work with their parents. What can be seen in the exchange of letters between the

¹² The “card album” object found in the printed files of AH reveals how the cinema, publicity and merchandising industries had a powerful synergy: all of the pictures of the album were taken by Heinrich. Preservation of such object was not only for professional purposes, but also for the sentimental value-personal attachment. She handwrote: “Work done with Sol who was working with Chaz de Cruz = movie critic in radio. Thanks to this work, we got married” (that means: with this work, we got the money to be able to get married).

couple and their children is a relationship based on respect and trust: caring, humor and friendship did not affect freedom and mutual responsibility. In personal conversations, Ricardo and Alicia evoked a close and honest bond with their parents, where politics and social sensibility, passion for arts and commitment to work were permanent subject of dialogue –something, maybe, that was unusual in the domestic and female model of those times.



F4

Going back to the beginnings of the studio, let's highlight that they were really modest, to the extent of using usually the photographic camera to buy supplies for developing photos and printing copies (papers and chemicals): the money with which they paid for those copies was then used to recover the device. In turn, it is worth noting that, with her work, Anne was the main economic provider of her family of origin, and supported her mother and sister for many years, although they also worked as models and performed tasks in the studio¹³.

Heinrich was the editor of her own pictures, through the cutting of the shot to be finally printed and through the retouch. Her meticulous work was combined with the awareness of the fact that what she did was part of a larger business, so she was self-driven and promoted herself by creating binders/catalogues,

¹³ While she was living with them until 1937-1939, she also supported her father, but when Walter's personality made living with him impossible, his older daughter was the one to demand him to leave.

showing the extension of her expressive possibilities, the quality of her productions and the visual-commercial appeal of her pictures. Alicia and Ricardo Sanguinetti said, in personal communication, that she was reserved with the work planning: she combined enjoyment with concentration, spontaneity with thoughtful organization. Some productions such as studio cards or covers of end of the year, could take her a little more time to complete, but she never lived this process as a burden, but with responsibility and joy¹⁴. Since the glass plates were expensive, she did not take too many shots; maybe a dozen for a cover, and half of it for a portrait. As time went by, and she earned *expertise*, it was frequent that, after a paid task, she spent her available time with the model to experiment, play with pose, rehearse a certain light or set design. Also, she was the one who regularly sought for decorative items for the studio, that she combined as the production demanded; although, when it was promotional photos for a film, she used to receive the decorative items and attire and the actresses and actors played some scenes *in situ*.



F5

As it can be appreciated, from a very young age, Anne did not need any male endorsement (father or husband) to pursue her career or to be a culture world worker: she got and maintained her economic independence based on a very

¹⁴ Diana Weschler said that some critic called her “a light choreographer” (2015, p. 41). As Juan Travnik said, early calling for dance and scenography is seen in her photographic style: “The choice of elements surrounding each character, the accurate management of light, and care for relationship between model, attire and background, to achieve the exact environment in each shot, is a constant of her work” (2004, p. 12).

austere starting point, she made decisions and self-managed her career, leveraged the dynamics and mechanisms of cultural industry, contributing at the same time to its expansion and strengthening¹⁵. She always was responsible for her business' economy, for the employees or the daily maintenance and update of equipment. Heinrich did not place herself in a high horse to “create” while waiting for her employees and husband —who had administrative background due to his prior jobs— to solve problems and ordinary and operational issues, but actually, she thought that part of her profession dealt with taking care of those aspects of the studio materials.



F6

4.2. Self-taught student and informal teacher

With no professional studies, Anne took advantage of her native language to work in photography studios whose owners were also European immigrants, and who paid her the minimum wage –or nothing at all. There, in exchange for assistance tasks and works of reproduction of the studio, she learned techniques

¹⁵ In that exercise committed to her profession, the excellence of results obtained brought not only economic profitability but also trust, respect and love from colleagues and entrepreneurs, as it can be seen in image 5.2, a cover of Revista Sintonía in which we can read this handwritten acknowledgement from her director: “To my dear friend and valuable artistic collaborator Annemarie Heinrich. Sincerely, KARTULO Bs As 8/25/42”.

and procedures: once she was proficient in that, she sought for another place where she could learn something else, and maybe that's why she never especially defended any teacher, highlighting "the" training experience of "paying her dues" (starting low). If with Rita Branger she learned the lab practice and ways of staging of femineity, since she was dedicated to social photography in wealthy society of Buenos Aires —in fact, according to Georgina Gluzman (2021, pp. 228-229), her pictures were specially appreciated in media such as *La novela semanal*—; with Melitta Lang, she learned the portrait technique. Then, with Sívul Wilenski, she learned the secrets of retouch and with Nicolás Schönfeld the *flo*. These last two, soon after her learning, already considered her as a colleague and helped her start working in the media related to show business.

At the same time, Annemarie pursued a self-taught method that continued throughout her entire life: that is to say, the systematic analysis of photographs through fashion magazines, news and cinema magazines¹⁶. In construction of captivating female images, George Hurrell was one of her "teachers": "Hurrell reaffirmed, in the 30s stars photographs, the idea of glamour (...) [which, besides seductive, sophisticated and distant beauty] meant also a sensual photograph" (Travnik, 2004, p. 16). Let's not forget that the tilting of the camera, a distinctive mark in her work, was an inspiration from Hollywood movies global culture, where "the photographers (...) were keen on tilting the great cameras of 20x25 cm plates that were used, to frame their portraits. In this way, they played with the axis of head and body of the people portrayed, or moved the vertical fall of columns or the set" (Travnik, 2004, p. 16).

Although with Wilenski and Schönfeld, they created the genre of star portrait in Argentina, it was her who fully dedicated to this task, developing and maintaining a high productivity and quality business for decades. The demand of pictures, from entrepreneurs, studios, stars and the public, require that caused that, from being a family project, the studio started to have a larger structure, more organized and efficient: therefore, employing more people,

¹⁶ In the 50s, and to be able to keep on growing professionally, Annemarie started and became part of "La Carpeta de los 10" (1952/53-1959): a group of photographers that wanted to generate a critical space of peer sharing, meeting regularly to discuss their own work and to organize joint exhibitions. For the analysis of this experience (members, practices, purposes, methods of work and exhibition,) see Pistarino (2023).

refining operational logistics and providing financial and administrative order to the business.

The employees at the studio at one point were as many as eight: a significant indicator of the importance of the project (Sanguinetti in Travnik, 2004, pp. 28, 31). Their admission and preparation were responsibility of Annemarie and she was, like others had been when she was starting, the technical trainer in developing tasks and in negatives retouch and printing, which she early did with her own husband, who was a writer, and then with her two children. Correspondence between Anne and her collaborators, and photographs taken by Sol and Úrsula, Heinrich's sister, in different informal situations of daily work on the studio –specially in the Avenida Córdoba location, where she worked between 1933 and the end of the decade– show a closeness and friendship bond between women that is very powerful: lots of humor, play, histrionics, spontaneity. This affectionate environment made possible that multiple and intense daily tasks were performed with enthusiasm and commitment: respect and care were mutual and also included Non and her children.



F7

4.3 Author and archivist (*avant la lettre*)

Heinrich was aware, from the very beginning, of the relevance of giving her productions a distinctive symbol, making the place of her statement explicit:

that is why she placed her signature in all her photographs¹⁷. We believe that this gesture responds not to repositioning certain aura in the picture as suggested by Paola Cortés Rocca (2015); but to a double materialistic meaning, in line with what we have been discussing.

On one hand, affirming that it was her, and not someone else –not a man– who created this picture and that the artistic credit and economic right on this product were hers: each photo was a product of a consensual agreement and the result of a hard working research process. It took her hours to test the lights, placing the staging and experimenting with the model, and she also spent the same time retouching the negatives and preparing the developed copy. But also, the graphy of the signature, the repetition in all and every developed photos, could have been building an anchorage and self-affirmation, a sense in itself, an identity and authority: it was she, herself, self-creating (and naming herself) in each work.

Also, it is worth mentioning that, together with all the above initiatives, Anne told the story of her practical tasks and of the movies industry, building a archive of hemerographic and photographic documents; thanks to her, we know the face of tens of main and supporting actors, artistic staff of international fame, but also local technicians. Heinrich took care of all her works in glass support and negatives, and to a great extent in paper support once they were printed in magazines, programs, brochures and newspapers: she cut publicities and covers, kept calendars and cards. But she also kept several documents that allow us knowing her contact with the public, who not only knew her work but knew her as a professional; for instance, through radio shows where she was invited, or in interviews where the background of her job and also her personal life were commented. Heinrich virtually archived all the documents in which her name or her photos appeared; she did not do that out of vanity or pride, but because of her methodical personality, and due to the need of having a material record of her work and labor to which she dedicated all her time and existence.

¹⁷ The graphic series corresponding to the magazine called *Revista Cine Argentino* informs about, precisely, the appeal and spread of the images of Anne in the media and publicity; her consistent will to mark each production of hers, especially those ones where her name was not on the credits. That was the reason of her manual pointers.

5. Conclusions

In these pages, we proposed to analyze Annemarie Heinrich's figure as an agent of esthetic modernization and synergic protagonist of the cultural industry between the 30s and the 50s, away from the "pioneer" paradigm that, from our point of view, can derive in individualistic, success-obsessed and heroic narratives that close the analysis of conditionings and privileges, articulations of class, race, genre and age, and omit social-political enclaves, resulting in images of exceptional although outsider women. Although she was proposed for the North American context, the warning (and provocation) of Kiki Loveday (2022) turns out to be productive to enrich our position.

According to Loveday, we, the female feminist movie historians, need to question the omnipresence of the figure of "pioneer" to watch closely its paradoxical ideological derivations. Although, towards the beginning of the nineties, this figure was an acute historiographical intervention that implied the strategic re-ownership of a fashionable term to make the creative practices of women visible, she states that this metaphor must be removed from the center of our explanatory paradigms and its positive association must be denaturalized so that, instead, we can understand its mythical layers and notice its problematic colonial, imperialistic and patriarchal genealogy.

Indeed, for non androcentric female historians, the idea of "pioneers" would be a contradiction of terms, due to its close connection to manly, meritocratic and white supremacy that "obscures the racialized violence of U.S. settler colonialism in tandem with its structuring sexism" (2022, p. 172). Although it is important not to ignore the initial critical power of the figure of "movie female pioneer", for Loveday, it is necessary to be in touch with plurality of the past in its intersectional dimensions and of alliance systems, creating new metaphors: "There are ways to remember that do not involve trans-historical identification with colonialism and genocide. It is past time to construct more ethical, varied, and politically potent forms of analysis, remembering, and imagining" (2022, p. 175). We think it is important for historiography of the Argentine cinema to aim at new sources of investigation and to use figures that are not so grandiloquent, but more empiric and materially situated.

As we have seen, Heinrich's work constituted an industrial machinery that multiplied in different supports a desire: of seeing the stars, of being close to them. At the same time, her pictures could also have implied, especially for female audiences, uses that deviate from the dominating genre models: pictures where there were active and wishing subjectivity mirrors, learning to see the world, to see themselves and to see other women from a more free and less submissive perspective regarding domestic imperatives and exclusive care for the family.

Summing up, away from the label of "cover woman", when we use new sources of investigation, repositioning her in one of her galaxies of belonging -national movies- and using other conceptual figures to understand her, the multifaceted "Annemarie Heinrich constellation" is increasingly brighter: it appears as powerful, plastic, multi-shaped and most importantly, leading to new insights and perspectives.

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