When a Star is (Re)Born

*A Star is Born* is now a Hollywood mythology. A tale of a woman rising to stardom as the man who discovered her finds his own star burning out. This is a staple that constantly welcomes screen reinventions. Over the decades all iterations of the film (1937 starring Janet Gaynor, 1954 starring Judy Garland, 1976 starring Barbara Streisand, and the latest from 2018 starring Lady Gaga) present the same tune, but each version has new variations on the theme, flourishes and inversions that reinterpret the old story.

In my presentation I would like to invite to an open discussion about the significance of a heroine figure in *A Star is Born* movie versions as being the essence of the reinventing story. I treat the main feminine character as an “open identity” paying particular attention to defining it in gendered and sociocultural aspects. I am mainly interested in how the screen presence of an actual star persona (Gaynor, Garland, Streisand, Lady Gaga) shapes the development of the cinematic narrative and the depiction of the heroine. Thus, I treat her presence as open in the sense that “reflectivity” (in such motifs as fame, fear, femininity) of her reinventions is not reduced but demonstrates the tensions of a particular social and historical moment.