

Sara Murray: A Woman Contractor

*Igea Troiani*

This paper argues that in order to improve the number of women in higher, influential positions in architecture, we need to undertake research on women professionals who are not architects but who have achieved success working in the construction industry. For this reason, it centres on the only female co-managing director of a building contracting company in Oxfordshire, Sara Murray.

This research emerges from a documentary film directed by Troiani which records a normal workday for Murray – on site, in site meetings and in the office – and includes testimonies from her co-managing director, office colleagues, client, building foremen and tradesmen. The paper concludes that empowering women in the construction industry is dependent on changing the expectations and everyday behaviour of men and women in the industries of architecture at large. It refers to the writings of Simone de Beauvoir, Helene Cixous and Virginia Woolf.

Biography:

Igea Troiani PhD is an academic, architect-filmmaker based at Oxford Brookes University. She is founding director of Caryatid Films and the Oxford-based architectural practice Original Field of Architecture Ltd. She is co-editor of *The Politics of Making* and editor-in-chief of the interdisciplinary journal, *Architecture and Culture*.