

Toni Myers, Who Turned Astronauts Into Filmmakers, Dies at 75

Toni Myers at Imax Headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario, in 2016. She directed three feature-length films using Imax technology. [via Imax](#)

By **Neil Genzlinger**

Feb. 22, 2019



Toni Myers, who directed Imax space documentaries, like “Space Station 3D,” which required her to turn astronauts into cinematographers, died on Monday at her home in Toronto. She was 75.

Her family said the cause was cancer.

Ms. Myers’s half-century in filmmaking included credits as writer, producer, narrator and editor as well as director. Much of that work involved documentaries that made use of Imax technology, which, with a bigger screen and enhanced sound, creates a more vivid viewing experience than a conventional movie offers.

“Toni’s incredible contributions to Imax’s legacy and the world of film are only matched by her passion, kindness and unique ability to inspire hope in others through storytelling,” Rich Gelfond, chief executive of the Imax Corporation, said in a statement.

Ms. Myers directed three feature-length Imax films: “Space Station 3D” (2002), about the construction and occupation of the International Space Station; [“Hubble 3D”](#) (2010), which documented a 2009 shuttle flight to repair the Hubble telescope; and [“A Beautiful Planet”](#) (2016), which concentrated on [images of Earth](#) shot from space.

All had marquee narrators — Tom Cruise for the first, Leonardo DiCaprio for the second, Jennifer Lawrence for the last — but the real star of each was the imagery, whether of spacewalks, astronauts inside a spacecraft or the stunning views out a window. Of necessity, much of this footage had to be shot by the astronauts themselves, which made cinematography part of their preflight training.

“That’s really easy because astronauts are really smart,” Ms. Myers told NPR in 2010, “and they wouldn’t be astronauts if they weren’t the best learners in the world.”

For some astronauts, she was more than just a director; her early space films had made them want to be astronauts in the first place.

Ms. Myers was with Leonardo DiCaprio as he recorded the narration for the Imax film “Hubble 3D” (2010). via Imax and Warner Bros.

“Her Imax movies inspired generations, and inspired me as a teenager,” the Italian astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti said on Twitter. “Being part of her last movie, ‘A Beautiful Planet,’ was an honor.”

Antoinette Trow was born on Sept. 29, 1943, in Toronto to Douglas and Norah (Nodie) Trow. She studied at the Ontario College of Art before beginning her career as an assistant editor on television commercials and shows in Canada.

After moving to New York in 1965, she met Graeme Ferguson, who within a few years would be one of the developers of Imax technology. She moved to England for a time, working for, among others, the Beatles’ company, Apple, and Yoko Ono, but Mr. Ferguson brought her back to Canada to help edit “North of Superior,” a short documentary about the Canadian outdoors that was the first work to showcase the potential of Imax.

Ms. Myers in an editing room with Yoko Ono and John Lennon in 1969. She worked briefly for Ms. Ono and 1
via Myers family

She worked on a number of shorter Imax projects, including the space-shuttle film “Hail Columbia!” (1982), which she edited, and “Blue Planet” (1990), which she wrote and narrated. When she worked with astronauts, she said, she did more than simply show them how to use a camera. She would sketch out and even rehearse shots she wanted them to try to get. That was especially important because of the limitations of shooting in orbit.

“The sun rises and sets every 90 minutes in space, which means there wasn’t much time to capture the shots we asked them to get,” she explained in a 2010 interview with The Gazette of Montreal. And, of course, the astronauts had other, more important things to tend to, and quarters were cramped.

“There was no time or room to say: ‘Could you move to the right? It would make a better shot,’ ” she said.

Ms. Myers’s husband of many years, Michael Myers, died in 2010. She is survived by a son, Jackson; a stepdaughter, Micki Myers; and a granddaughter.

In a 2016 interview with Independent Print, Ms. Myers was asked if, after bringing the images of space to millions of moviegoers, she harbored a desire to shoot film in space herself.

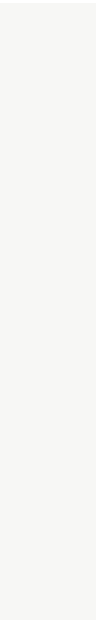
“I’d go absolutely,” she said, “but you have to have about nine Ph.D.s and to be extremely fit, neither of which I qualify for.”



Related Coverage

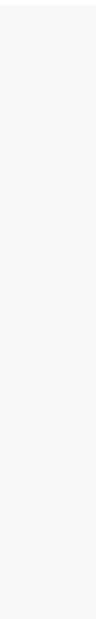
The Universe Up There

March 18, 2010



Review: ‘A Beautiful Planet’ Shows a Dazzling Earth From Space

April 28, 2016



ADVERTISEMENT

The New York Times [Go to Home Page »](#)

NEWS

Open in the app

OPINION

ARTS

LIVING

LISTINGS & MORE

© 2019 The New York Times Company

[Contact Us](#)

[Work with us](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Your Ad Choices](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Terms of Service](#)

[Terms of Sale](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Help](#)

[Subscriptions](#)