

fantasy and lived experience, revealing nostalgia not as a source of authenticity or continuity but as something constructed, fragile, and ultimately contradictory.

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Cold War nostalgia and political utopia in Nanni Moretti's *Il sol dell'avvenire* (2023)

This paper seeks to offer a critical reading of Nanni Moretti's recent film *Il sol dell'avvenire* (2023) – *A Brighter Tomorrow* (in English) – and, more specifically, the ways in which the film engages with the important tradition of Italian Communism and the world-historical events of the Soviet crushing of the Hungarian uprising in November 1956. By making direct reference to the events in Budapest in 1956, and by playfully providing an alternative historical direction for the Italian Communist Party (PCI) itself, it will be suggested that the film, quite paradoxically, both seeks to provoke a serious engagement with this important historical moment but, at the same time, reduces the representation of it, by nature of its general comedic tone, to one of parody or 'pastiche' (Jameson 1991). The paper intends to analyse the way in which the film uses décor, costumes and props as well as historical footage to stage its playful representation of the past and will consider the ways in which such representation conforms to, as well as contradicts, Fredric Jameson's conception of the 'nostalgia film' (1991, 2007). It will be suggested that the film to some extent problematises this notion through its perceived interest in political utopia and its alternative, optimistic vision of the future, something that Jameson suggested had been lost in the postmodern. At the same time, however, with its overarching playful tone, the film can be seen to effectively neutralise its own radical utopianism by falling back into characteristic 'postmodern' irony.

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Dalla pagina allo schermo: adattamento e narrazione transmediale nei media italiani contemporanei

Questo intervento analizza il ruolo dell'adattamento e della transmedialità nel cinema e nella televisione italiani contemporanei, collocandoli all'interno dei più recenti dibattiti negli studi sui media. Negli ultimi vent'anni, la produzione audiovisiva italiana ha intensificato il ricorso alle pratiche di adattamento — da opere letterarie e romanzi storici a *graphic novel* e format internazionali — sperimentando al contempo forme di narrazione transmediale che attraversano cinema, televisione, piattaforme di *streaming* e paratesti digitali. L'adattamento in Italia non è solo trasferimento da un *medium* all'altro, ma processo dinamico di negoziazione tra immaginari culturali, strategie industriali e ambienti tecnologici. Attraverso casi di studio che spaziano dal fenomeno di *Il commissario Montalbano* fino a produzioni recenti come *Noi* (adattamento italiano di *This Is Us*) e format transculturali quali *Skam Italia*, l'intervento indaga come le pratiche adattive riconfigurino le narrazioni nazionali per pubblici domestici e globali. La transmedialità complica ulteriormente questi processi: campagne social, podcast, piattaforme interattive e circuiti festivalieri contribuiscono a creare mondi narrativi estesi, trasformando gli adattamenti tradizionali in esperienze partecipative. Queste strategie avvicinano la produzione italiana alle tendenze internazionali, mantenendo però caratteristiche distintive radicate in tradizioni, generi e forme di *branding* culturale nazionale. Combinando gli *adaptation studies* con la teoria transmediale, l'intervento mostra come la narrazione audiovisiva italiana contemporanea funzioni come laboratorio di traduzione culturale e innovazione narrativa, ridefinendo il concetto stesso di “media italiani” in un contesto di circolazione globale e mettendo in discussione le nozioni di autorialità e coinvolgimento del pubblico.

Francesca Medaglia è Ricercatore a tempo determinato di “Critica letteraria e Letterature comparate” presso il Dipartimento di Lettere e Culture Moderne di Sapienza Università di Roma. Si occupa di autorialità, di personaggi e di transmedialità. Ha pubblicato, cinque volumi sulla scrittura a quattro mani e collettiva *La scrittura a quattro mani* (Pensa MultiMedia, 2014); *Asimmetrie ibride nella critica di Antonino Contiliano* (CFR, 2014); *Il ritmo dei tempi in Antonino Contiliano* (Empiria, 2014), sulla questione dell'autore *Autore/personaggio: interferenze, complicazioni e scambi di ruolo. Autori e personaggi complessi nella contemporaneità letteraria e transmediale* (Lithos, 2020) e su intermedialità e transmedialità *Intermedialità diffusa: la narrazione transculturale metamoderna* (Peter Lang, 2024).

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Una narrazione polifonica? La rappresentazione filmica della pandemia in Italia

A quasi tre anni di distanza dalla fine dello stato di emergenza, la pandemia di Covid-19 sembra essere solo un ricordo lontano, per lo più rimosso dalla memoria culturale (cfr. Assmann) italiana. La pandemia, tuttavia, non solo ha colpito la salute di milioni di persone e il sistema socio-economico italiano, ma ha costituito anche una sfida narrativa, portando le storie individuali a confrontarsi con un evento di proporzioni globali. Nonostante anche l'industria cinematografica italiana sia stata duramente colpita dalla pandemia, sono molti i film che hanno

cercato di raccontare questo momento storico complesso, adattandosi alle mutate condizioni ambientali (paesaggi vuoti, film girati interamente in interni o produzioni corali). Tra questi ricordiamo *Fuori era primavera* (Gabriele Salvatores 2020), *Molecole* (Andrea Segre 2020) e *State a casa* (Roan Johnson 2021). L'intervento si propone di analizzare i tre film attraverso il concetto di polifonia, per rispondere alla domanda seguente: in che modo il cinema italiano ha cercato di offrire una rappresentazione polifonica della pandemia, mettendo in dialogo prospettive diverse su questo fenomeno e superando semplici polarizzazioni ideologiche? Il concetto di polifonia, teorizzato nell'ambito degli studi letterari da Michail Michajlovič Bachtin, è stato poi applicato anche nell'ambito dell'analisi filmica (Lotman, Stam), non solo da un punto di vista tematico-narrativo, ma anche per indagare l'interazione tra i diversi sistemi semiotici che costituiscono il linguaggio audiovisuale (inquadratura, immagini in movimento, rapporto immagini-musica). L'intervento si propone dunque di indagare il corpus sia da un punto di vista tematico-narrativo che estetico.

Tommaso Meozzi è Professore Assistente all'Istituto di Romanistica dell'Università di Vienna, dove si occupa di letteratura e media italiani. I suoi principali interessi di ricerca sono la distopia letteraria e cinematografica, la narrazione autobiografica relativa a esperienze di migrazione (sia dall'Italia che verso l'Italia) e la rappresentazione della pandemia di Covid-19 nella cultura italiana. Oltre a vari articoli, ha pubblicato un volume sulla distopia letteraria e cinematografica *Visioni dell'alienazione* (Pacini, 2017) ed è stato membro del progetto *Corona Fictions*, finanziato dall'*Austrian Science Fund*, dedicato alla rappresentazione culturale della Pandemia di Covid-19 in area anglofona e romanza.

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Anna Miller-Klejsa, University of Lodz (Poland)

The reception of Luchino Visconti's films in the Polish press from the late 1950s to the late 1970s

Among the great masters of Italian cinema whose films were released in Poland, Luchino Visconti was surpassed only by Federico Fellini in the number of films he distributed. All of Visconti's films were shown through normal distribution channels (unlike Pier Paolo Pasolini's films, many of which were never released in the People's Republic of Poland). Of Visconti's feature films, only *Ossessione* (1943) – considered a precursor to neorealism – never reached Polish screens. Visconti's filmography, initially associated with the neorealist movement (*La terra trema* [1948]; *Bellissima* [1951]) and over time evolving into a distinctive artistic idiom, was well known and widely discussed in Poland. Based on an analysis of reviews and other forms of film criticism, such as essays and columns, I will examine the image of Visconti that arose in national trade magazines (*Film*, *Ekran*), socio-cultural magazines and selected local press titles. In my paper, I will attempt to determine what kind of image the Polish press constructed for Luchino Visconti and which themes of his oeuvre were particularly highlighted. I will pay close attention to the film *Morte a Venezia* (1971), which was widely commented on in the Polish press, not only because Visconti received a jubilee award for it at the Cannes Film Festival, but also because of its Polish connection (the character of Tadzio) and the fact that Visconti visited Warsaw in 1970 in search of an appropriate actor for the role.

Anna Miller-Klejsa is Assistant Professor in the Department of Italian Studies at the University of Lodz (Poland). Her research interests include Italian cinema with a focus on Polish-Italian film relations and the history of twentieth-century Italy represented in fiction films. She is the author of two books: *Resistenza we włoskim filmie fabularnym* (Resistenza in Italian Feature Film) (University of Lodz Publishing, 2013) and *Dekada ołowiu na ekranie: Polityczny terrorizm lat 70: we włoskim filmie fabularnym* (The Decade of Lead on the Screen: Political Terrorism of the 1970s in Italian Feature Film) (University of Lodz Publishing, 2016). She is also a member of the Polish Society for Film and Media Studies and of the Association of Polish Italianists.

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Alternative spatial imaginaries of Venice and its hinterlands in contemporary Italian cinema

In global audiovisual productions, Venice is often depicted as an iconic playground detached from reality, serving as the setting for international blockbusters. In this context, several Italian authors have attempted to recontextualize the city and its surrounding areas by countering this dominant imagery, reframing Venice as a contested and unstable place, marked by social displacement and the progressive abandonment of its inhabitants due to tourist gentrification (Genç et al. 2022). This paper examines how recent Italian cinema represents Venice and its provincial areas not as a static postcard, but as a lived environment undergoing profound transformation, in which the inhabitants themselves struggle to recognize the city as their own. Focusing on *Welcome Venice* (Andrea Segre 2021), *Atlantide* (Yuri Ancarani 2021), and *Le città di pianura* (Francesco Sossai 2025), the analysis explores different cinematic approaches to the erosion of urban identity, from family to economic conflict to youth marginalization and the expansion of post-urban peripheral spaces, drawing on the notion of *non-place* (Augé 1995). Emphasizing a spatial reading of cinema (Shiel and Fitzmaurice 2001), the paper investigates how these films construct alternative spatial imaginaries that focus on local perspectives and everyday practices. In doing so, they articulate a counter-narrative to the globalized and touristic vision of Venice, revealing the city as a place of loss, resistance, and unresolved tensions between the visible and the invisible.

Mario Monopoli is a PhD candidate in the Department of Communication and Social Research at Sapienza University of Rome. His current research, conducted within the framework of a European-funded NRRP scholarship, explores risk communication through a bottom-up, practice-oriented approach, with particular attention to social movements.

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The changing body in Gabriele Mainetti's films

In both his shorts and in his feature-length films, Gabriele Mainetti has always shown a deep interest in the human body and in its mutations. In *Basette* (2006) and *Tiger Boy* (2012) the inspiration source comes from Japanese manga like *Rupan Sansei* and *Taigā Masuku* (later turned into successful anime series); while in *They Call Me Jeeg* (2015) – in spite of the title paying homage to the Japanese manga (later also an anime) *Kōtetsu Jiigu* – the films propose an Italianized version of the Hollywood superhero movie's classic formula. Hence, while spectators at first enjoy the typical and exhilarating protagonist's "origin story" (which openly echoes Sam Raimi's 2002 *Spiderman*) they are also quickly taken into unfamiliar territory, as soon as they realize that the movie's protagonist is actually an anti-hero with characteristically Italian traits. The trend continues with Mainetti's following films *Freaks Out* (2021) (clearly inspired by Tod Browning's 1932 *Freaks*) and *The Forbidden City* (2025) (which pay tribute to the karate movies popular in the 1970s). This paper will explore how Mainetti's bodies undergo a constant transformation process that crosses national cinemas and Hollywood, film genres and different media, giving the audience an ever-changing gaze on Italian culture and Italians in the new millennium.

Fulvio Orsitto is the Director of the Georgetown University study center in Fiesole (Italy). He has published more than thirty essays on Italian and Italian American cinema and literature and has edited and co-edited several volumes, including *Pier Paolo Pasolini. American Perspectives* (with F. Pacchioni) (Metauro, 2015.), *Cultural Crossings* (with S. Wright) (Vecchiarelli, 2016) *TOTALitarian ARTs: The Visual Arts, Fascism(s), and Mass-Society* with M. Epstein & A. Righi), (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), *Boom. The Italian Economic Miracle in Cinema, Television and Literature* (with I. Lanslots, L. Martinelli, and U. Perolino) (Peter Lang, 2019), *Italian Americans in Films* (with D. Fioretti) (Palgrave, 2023) and *Italian Americans in Films and Other Media* (with D. Fioretti) (Palgrave, 2024).

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A certain tendency in Italian cinema: *Palazzina LAF* (2023) and the survival of Italian social critique

This paper examines the nature of contemporary Italian cinema, focusing particularly on the enduring presence of socially conscious, artistic films. Features with a strong sense of social critique are becoming a rarity in the industry, and the 2025 tax credit reform threatens to eliminate the few remaining examples. Against this backdrop, and despite the commercial pressures of the comedy-blockbuster era, some directors continue to create socially aware films, such as Michele Vannucci's *Delta* (2022), and Alessandro Marzullo's *Non credo in niente* (2023). One notable contribution to this trend is Michele Riondino's directorial debut, *Palazzina LAF* (2023), which succeeds as a potent activist film centered on ILVA, the controversial steel plant in Taranto. The film offers a subtle critique of societal structures that prioritize surveillance and control within industrial landscapes. Through its portrayal of isolation, psychological stress, and the fragmentation of human connection, *Palazzina LAF* serves as a stark metaphor for workplace

mobbing. By analyzing these themes, this essay establishes a thematic lineage between Riordino's depiction of industrial desolation and the environmental and existential anxieties pioneered in Michelangelo Antonioni's 1964 masterpiece, *Red Desert*.

Barbara Ottaviani Jones is an adjunct faculty member within the Department of Communication and Media at John Cabot University in Rome. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on independent cinema, gender studies, global film movements, and social problems in film. Her work has been featured in a variety of peer-reviewed publications, including the *Journal of Religion & Film*, *Rivista Luci e Ombre*, *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, and *Northeast Conference for Teachers for Languages for Cultures*. She presented her findings at international conferences, notably at John Cabot University in Rome and Indiana University Bloomington.

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Anti-fascist media, a comparative analysis of democratic politics in Italy and the United States

In this article, I examine comparatively a selection of anti-fascist media in Italy and the United States. The input for this analysis arises from the contemporary political closeness between the two elected governments in the USA and Italy. Yet, the two countries' histories, and the nature of the ultra-right, are considerably different. Thus, by comparing and contrasting the two experiences, this paper aims at highlighting similarities as well as differences. In Italy, where a former neo-fascist militant has been serving as the country's Prime Minister since 2022, anti-fascism is deeply rooted in the memory of World War II and the Resistance. As such, anti-fascism continues to inform initiatives that counter the various far-right, and explicitly neo fascist, narratives. Italian anti-fascist media (in particular, radio stations, digital media and publications) have historically operated across grassroots platforms, independent journalism, and activist networks. In contrast, fascism has always been considered a 'foreign' element in the narrative of American politics, until the contemporary Republican President has heightened the fear of authoritarianism, and even fascism, among many. Traditionally, U.S. anti-fascist practices have focused on exposing white supremacist networks and mobilizing decentralized activism, particularly in response to the resurgence of far-right movements. In more contemporary times, anti-fascist communicative practices have been waived in among more mainstream oppositional movements. The article argues that anti-fascist media are productive sites of political identity, where democratic values, historical memory, and oppositional publics are actively constructed. More research in this area is necessary to better understand the function and importance of this kind of activism for contemporary democratic politics.

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Italian algorithmic femininity. Corpi digitali, culture visive e regimi computazionali della femminilità

Le *computer generated influencer* (CGI) italiane costituiscono un oggetto di studio utile per indagare come, nell'ecosistema digitale contemporaneo, si ridefiniscano i regimi di visibilità e le forme di rappresentazione delle donne nell'intreccio (Cronqvist & Hilgert 2017) tra design computazionale del corpo, culture visuali locali e logiche infrastrutturali delle piattaforme. Tale oggetto è letto attraverso la lente dei *feminist media studies* (Gill 2007; Banet-Weiser 2018), i *platform studies* (Gillespie 2014) e la *technoscience femminista* (Haraway 1991; Braidotti 2013), utili per leggere le CGI come *corpi algoritmici* generati dall'intra-azione fra attori umani e non umani. Su questo sfondo teorico si colloca un'analisi del contenuto di oltre trecento immagini tratte dai profili Instagram di quattro CGI/AI influencer attive nel mercato italiano. Dall'esame del corpus emerge una configurazione visuale ricorrente, definita *femminilità algoritmica italiana*: un modello di rappresentazione delle donne in cui la standardizzazione estetica globale delle piattaforme (Manovich 2017; Bucher 2018) si combina con elementi riconoscibili dell'iconografia femminile nazionale e la tradizione estetica del Made in Italy. Tale configurazione non si limita a riprodurre i canoni computazionali dominanti, ma li ricalibra attraverso marcatori culturali locali, generando corpi digitali giovani, iper-curati e altamente normati, in continuità con le genealogie storiche della rappresentazione femminile italiana (Gundle 2007; 2019). Il concetto di femminilità algoritmica italiana offre così una chiave critica per comprendere come l'intreccio fra tecnologia e italianità visuale automatizzi - più che trasformi - modelli rappresentativi profondamente radicati nella media culture contemporanea.

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La "Cena Coreana": Esplorando l'identità localizzata nell'adattamento cinematografico di *Perfetti Sconosciuti*

Il film italiano del 2016 *Perfetti Sconosciuti* di Paolo Genovese, riconosciuto come l'opera cinematografica con più remake nella storia, è stato reinterpretato nel film sudcoreano del 2018 *Wanbyeokhan ta-in (Intimate Strangers)*. La presente relazione analizza la versione coreana non come una semplice traduzione linguistica, ma come un paradigma di "transcreazione culturale". Attraverso le lenti teoriche della "domesticazione" di Lawrence Venuti e dell'"ibridismo" di Homi K. Bhabha, lo studio esamina come la narrazione originale sia stata profondamente localizzata per riflettere le gerarchie sociali, le norme patriarcali e le ansie di classe (come l'elitismo accademico e il fardello della cura familiare) specifiche della Corea contemporanea. L'analisi evidenzia la trasformazione fondamentale del genere: dalla "black comedy" intellettuale e cinica dell'originale a un "melodramma emotivo" fondato sul concetto coreano di *yeon-go* (legami geografici). Inoltre, il saggio discute come la risonanza del film sia stata amplificata da un contesto mediatico unico, caratterizzato dall'ecosistema OSMU (*One-Source Multiple Uses*), dall'apice del movimento #MeToo e dall'evoluzione della rappresentazione LGBTQ+ nel cinema mainstream coreano. Infine, l'articolo contrappone il nichilismo filosofico del finale italiano al "pragmatismo sociale" della versione coreana, sostenendo che quest'ultima privilegia la conservazione della stabilità comunitaria rispetto alla rivelazione della verità individuale, offrendo così una critica complessa sulla natura delle relazioni nella moderna società coreana.

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A song and a dance to find a woman's voice: Paola Cortellesi's *There's Still Tomorrow* (2023)

With an ironic take on Disney's *Cinderella* (1950), Paola Cortellesi's directorial debut, *There's Still Tomorrow* (2023), begins with an all-but-idyllic matrimonial scene where Prince Charming, already awake in bed, responds to his awakening wife's "Buongiorno" with a back-handed slap. As the voice of Fiorella Bini encourages women to open the windows to spring and love ("Aprite le finestre," 1956), a now-awakened Delia opens the windows of her basement apartment on street dust, people's feet, and a peeing dog. It is the opposite of the "happily ever after" that marriage is supposed to bring, even according to the song. Cortellesi's choice of songs, culminating in the last scene where the extradiegetic song "A bocca chiusa" (Daniele Silvestri) briefly becomes diegetic, contributes substantially to the way the grim and all-too-contemporary theme of the abuse of women is treated in the film. Instead of choosing to show, voyeuristically,

the numerous beatings Delia endures, the film turns routine violence into a choreographed ballet, the missed opportunity of a true love story into a Chabrol-reminiscent orbit shot, the presence of American MPs into De Sica-esque magic neorealism, exposing the objective limitations to women's freedom on the verge of the new political asset of post-Second World War Italy in 1946. Cortellesi's treatment of the abused bodies of her protagonists exposes the patriarchal reasons to keep women captives for what they are – a song and a dance – while songs underscore the incongruence of romantic dreams when one of the two elements of a couple is subordinate and without legal rights.

Gloria Pastorino is Professor Emerita of Italian and French at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Her publications include *Othello. As Interpreted by Luigi Lo Cascio* (Bordighera, 2020), *Beyond the Grave: Zombies and the Romero Legacy* (with B. Peabody) (McFarland, 2021), *Per amor di battuta. Dario Fo e la reinvenzione della lingua scenica (For Love of the Punchline. Dario Fo and the Reinvention of Stage Language* (Biblion/Scriba, 2023), *L'Eden mancato: traslazioni letterarie nell'immaginario del corpo migrante* (Biblion, 2024), articles on Italian cinema, cinema and migration, Italian theatre, and translations for American productions of plays by Italian authors, including Dario Fo and Luigi Pirandello.

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Fabio Pezzetti Tonion, Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino (Italy)

‘La più grande storia mai raccontata?’: Appunti per un film su Gesù (non) diretto da Gillo Pontecorvo

La posizione di Gillo Pontecorvo nella storia del cinema italiano appare ancora oggi parzialmente defilata, nonostante il riconoscimento del suo ruolo centrale nella definizione di un cinema politicamente impegnato. Tale marginalità è riconducibile sia al numero limitato di opere realizzate, sia a una pratica autoriale fondata su un rigoroso lavoro di documentazione e su una concezione del cinema come strumento di indagine critica della realtà. Formatosi nel solco del Neorealismo, Pontecorvo sviluppa uno stile che coniuga essenzialità formale e tensione cronachistica. L'intervento si concentra sull'analisi di parte del Fondo Gillo Pontecorvo (conservato presso il Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino) con particolare attenzione ai progetti cinematografici non realizzati, finora poco indagati. Tra questi emerge un nucleo di soggetti accomunati da tematiche “religiose”, che trova la sua espressione più compiuta nel progetto *I tempi della fine*, sviluppato tra il 1971 e il 1975. Attraverso l'esame dei materiali d'archivio — appunti, documenti di produzione e diverse stesure della sceneggiatura — questo contributo intende ricostruire la genesi e l'evoluzione di un film che il regista indicava come il suo “grande film non fatto”. Il progetto rivela l'elaborazione di una figura di Gesù radicalmente umana, priva di attributi messianici, attraversata dal dubbio e immersa in una crisi storica totale, in cui l'elemento religioso, seppure presente, non definisce il personaggio nella sua totalità. In continuità con l'intera filmografia del regista, *I tempi della fine* si configura come un ulteriore tentativo di indagare i momenti di rottura della Storia e di riaffermare il cinema come spazio di verità storica, politica ed etica.

Fabio Pezzetti Tonion è Conservatore Aggiunto presso il Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino, dove dal 2013 lavora presso la bibliomediateca “Mario Gromo”. I suoi interessi di ricerca riguardano il cinema scandinavo con particolare riferimento all’opera di Ingmar Bergman, il realismo fenomenologico di Amedée Ayfre, il cinema muto italiano e quello di autori di impegno civile come Francesco Rosi e Gillo Pontecorvo. Ha pubblicato saggi sulle riviste *La Valle dell’Eden*, *Bianco e Nero*, *Fata Morgana*, *North-West Passage*, *Arabeschi* e *Acta Sapientiae*. Socio dell’AISRC – Associazione Italiana per le Ricerche di Storia del Cinema, è membro della segreteria di redazione di *Immagine – Note di Storia del Cinema*.

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Emanuela Piovano, Italian Filmmaker, Roma (Italy)

Finale allegro (2026) (1h 13 min)

Karina, a retired pianist, lives alone among memories, past loves, and the challenges of ageing. With the help of Suliko, a young and mysterious Georgian woman, she embarks on a journey that will lead her to her destination. An intimate path through memory, autonomy, and the desire for an end chosen consciously. A choice towards the end... or perhaps towards a new beginning.

Emanuela Piovano is an author, director, producer and distributor. She worked for several years for Paolo Gobetti’s Archivio Nazionale Cinematografico della Resistenza, Rai and the film journal *Il nuovo spettatore*. Piovano started her career as the producer of *Processo a Caterina Ross* (1982) by Gabriella Rosaleva. In 1988 she founded her own production company KitchenFilm to promote international independent cinema by young and women filmmakers. Together with Anna Gasco and Tiziana Pellerano, she also directed the documentary *Le rose blu* (1989) about the fire that destroyed the Le Vallette women’s prison in Turin and killed eleven inmates on 3 June 1989. Her feature debut, *Le complici* (1998), was the adaptation of Maria Rosa Cutrufelli’s novel *Complice il dubbio* (1992). This was followed by the romantic drama *Amourfù* (2003), the drama *Le stelle inquiete* (2010) on Simone Weil and Gustave Thibon, *L’età d’oro* (2016) an homage to filmmaker Annabella Miscuglio, and the docu-film *Con voce di Nilde* (2023) on Nilde Iotti, one of the founding mothers of the Italian Constitution and President of the Chamber of Deputies. Piovano’s most recent film *Finale allegro* is an adaptation of Margherita Giacobino’s novel *L’età ridicola* (2018).

Damien Pollard, Northumbria University (UK)

As thick as thieves: Donald Mugisha’s *The Boda Boda Thieves* (2015) and neorealism’s legacy in Uganda

It has been suggested that neorealism has had minimal influence on the development of national cinemas in sub-Saharan Africa: these films have circulated little on the continent and their presence is felt only distantly via the influence of Latin American third cinema (Gabara 2006). This generalised impression, however, risks overlooking the complex ways in which neorealism has been engaged and reanimated in a small number of African films. Donald Mugisha’s *The Boda Boda Thietransves* (2015) was foundational to the early development of Ugandan cinema

and loosely reworks De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* (1948), transposing the setting to Kampala and replacing the bicycle with a Boda Boda – a Ugandan moto-taxi. As well as closely reading both films, this presentation draws upon in-depth conversations that I have held with Mugisha and fieldwork I have conducted in Kampala. It analyses the influence of De Sica's film on *Boda Boda*'s genesis, narrative and form and it also examines how the original film and the principles of neorealism are reworked by Mugisha so that they may speak to and about twenty first-century Africa. I argue that *Boda Boda* displays the dialogic legacy of neorealism in Uganda in the sense that the neorealist mode is esteemed but also engaged critically by the country's directors, who continue to revisit, reappraise and rework it. In this way, neorealism's presumed universalism is constructively rethought across continents and decades. Broadly, this paper aims to revive and nuance the broader discussion around Italian neorealism's African legacy.

Damien Pollard is Assistant Professor of Film at Northumbria University. His teaching and research interests include Italian cinema, East African cinema, film sound and the horror film. He is the co-editor of *Film Exhibition: The Italian Context* (with Edward Bowen) (Legenda, 2024) and author of *Sound and Horror in the Giallo Film* (Indiana University Press, 2025). His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies*, *L'avventura*, *Screen*, *Sound Studies*, *Discourse* and *The Soundtrack*.

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Angela Porcarelli, Emory University (USA)

***Invelle* (2024): Memory and resistance in Simone Massi's animated cinema**

In this paper I read Simone Massi's *Invelle* (2024), his first feature-length animated film, as a privileged site for rethinking temporality in contemporary Italian media. His work, shaped by nostalgia and memory, offers a counter-narrative to the digital acceleration that characterizes our present. Massi embraces an artisanal, hand-crafted technique—oil pastels scratched frame by frame into black-and-white surfaces—that constitutes not only an aesthetic choice but also a temporal gesture. His cinema enacts resistance through slowness while reactivating visual memories rooted in Italy's rural past. Drawing from stories transmitted orally by elders in his native village in Le Marche region, Massi creates a visual space grounded in the real yet suspended in the abstract temporality of dreams: a space that lives outside linear history and yet speaks insistently to the present. The term *Invelle*, meaning “nowhere” in the local dialect, captures his temporal poetics: a non-place situated between disappearance and survival, absence and return. Through an analysis of Massi's interplay of image, sound, and narrative structure, I illustrate how his temporal practice recovers the marginalized rural culture of the peasants from his region—an act he conceives as an ethical necessity. Remembering becomes a way of understanding the present, perhaps even of shaping it. Like the partisan who “holds his position” in *Tengo la posizione* (2001), immobilized in the snow, Massi uses his art as a stance of resilience and moral persistence, linking the rural past to new possibilities for reimagining the present.

Angela Porcarelli is a Teaching Professor of Italian in the Department of French and Italian and Director of Undergraduate Italian Studies at Emory University. Her research focuses on early

modern theories and literary expressions of comedy—especially *the beffa* tradition in Boccaccio—and on the relationship between cultural processes and spatial forms in Italian urban history. She is the co-editor with A. Scapolo of *Interpreting Urban Spaces in Italian Cultures* (Amsterdam University Press, 2022). She also works in Italian film studies, with particular attention to the cinemas of Federico Fellini and Pier Paolo Pasolini.

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Sumithra Prasanna, Birkbeck, University of London (UK)

Framing ‘Honour’ through a patriarchal lens: The politics of seeing in *Oor Iravu* (2020)

Honour crimes are not isolated acts of violence but culturally sanctioned practices embedded within systemic patriarchy. Yet, when they are represented on screen, they are seldom constructed from the standpoint of the women who endure them. Male authorship often centres these narratives on men, turning women’s trauma into a mere backdrop to a crime. This paper examines how actors and directors, in translating embodied perception into cinematic expression, can erase women’s subjectivity and withhold sensory and emotional depth from the women they depict. It explores how cinematic language renders some bodies perceptible while leaving others invisible. Utilizing Zarilli’s notion of acting as an embodied practice and Sobchack’s view that cinematic language employs patterns of lived experience to articulate its vision, I analyse *Oor Iravu*, directed by Vetrimaaran and featured in the Tamil-language anthology *Paava Kadhaigal* (2020). Although framed as a tragedy, the film uses aesthetic and narrative techniques to humanize the perpetrator and foreground male psychological turmoil, without interrogating the patriarchal logic that underpins the violence. The film’s body takes on a gendered orientation as the honour crime is staged through a father’s moral struggle, while the woman’s body appears only as a surface onto which male affect is projected, thus mirroring the patriarchal framework within which the film is conceived.

Sumithra Prasanna is a CHASE-funded doctoral researcher at Birkbeck, University of London. An award-winning documentary filmmaker and journalist, her work includes *India’s Broken Generation* (2022), examining child trafficking during COVID-19; *Stateless in India* (2021), addressing India’s citizenship law crisis; *Kashmir: A War of Stones* (2019), on youth militancy in the Kashmir Valley; and *Manufactured Orphans* (2018), investigating the global orphan trade. Drawing on extensive media background, her doctoral research explores Dalit rape survivors’ perceptions of their media representation. Bridging documentary storytelling and academic research, her work offers a layered perspective to the politics of voice, visibility and marginalization in media.

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Veronica Pravadelli, Università di Roma Tre (Italy)

Art cinema and the gender of modernity

This paper begins from the premise that feminist film theory has been uninterested in devising theoretical frameworks for studying art cinema. I propose that the trope of modernity/modernization is a viable one for initiating such a discussion, and I analyze three films: *Lo sceicco bianco* (Fellini 1952), *Il posto* (Olmi 1961) and *Prima della rivoluzione* (Bertolucci 1964). In all three films, female characters embrace modernity as a vehicle for emancipation, while male characters do not. And all three directors make formal choices that distance the camera from the male characters—the protagonists—while cultivating empathy for the female characters. By contrast, a figure like Antonioni has been justly appreciated for his choice of a female protagonist in Monica Vitti, but even in this case, Vitti remains as alienated as the male characters. *Lo sceicco bianco*, *Il posto* and *Prima della rivoluzione* reconfigure the gendered relation between alienation and emancipation—the founding dichotomy of modernity—to make possible an emancipated modern woman.

Veronica Pravadelli is Professor of Film Studies at Roma Tre University. Her research blends historical and theoretical frameworks especially in relation to the transformations of the filmic form. Her publications include *The New Woman in European Silent Cinema* (Bulzoni, 2022), *Dal classico al postmoderno al global. Teoria e analisi delle forme filmiche* (Marsilio, 2019), *Contemporary Women's Cinema, Global Scenarios and Transnational Contexts* (Mimesis, 2017), *Classic Hollywood: Lifestyles and Film Styles of American Cinema, 1930-1960* (University of Illinois Press, 2015), *Le donne del cinema. Dive, registe, spettatrici* (Laterza, 2014). She is working on a manuscript tentatively titled *Italian Art Cinema and the Issue of Modernity*.

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Rajko Radović, Independent Scholar and Filmmaker, Ottawa (Canada)

Blood feud and the female gaze: Živko Nikolić's *The Beauty of Vice* (1986) as an experimental zone

Živko Nikolić's *Lepota poroka* (*The Beauty of Vice*) (1986), a film centered on the Montenegrin tradition of *krvna osveta* (blood feud) does not open with ritualized violence but with a face: the close-up of Jaglinka (Mira Furlan), a new bride whose luminous yet unsettled expression establishes the film's central ethical and ideological tension. I argue that Nikolić stages the disintegration of Yugoslavia's socialist symbolic order not through the male economy of honor and revenge, but through Jaglinka's female gaze—an optic that destabilizes both patriarchal tradition and the emerging liberal marketplace of bodies. Drawing on Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection, I propose that Jaglinka's gaze articulates a "revolt of being": not desire in the libidinal sense, but a form of subjective excess saturated with shame, disgust, and existential dilemma. This gaze stands in radical contrast to the male gaze embodied by the bridegroom Luka (Mima Karadžić), whose subjectivity appears fully colonized by what Lacan terms the Big Other of patriarchal law and honor. The conflict between these two gazes structures the film's dramatic and ideological core. I further argue that Jaglinka's perspective opens an experimental zone situated between two regimes of power: the rural Montenegrin highlands governed by honor killing, patriarchy, and symbolic shame, and the coastal nudist colony where she later finds work—a space organized as a proto-late-capitalist economy of visibility, pleasure, and shamelessness.

Rajko Radović is a Filmmaker and Film Studies scholar based in Ottawa, Canada. His work explores political imagination, cinematic form and cultural memory, with a focus on Balkan histories and global dystopian narratives. He won the Best Direction award at the Festival of Serbian Fantastic Film for the short dystopian horror film *Last Day on Earth* (2023). He is a guest lecturer at the Faculty for Montenegrin Language and Literature (FCJK) in Cetinje, Montenegro, and the author of *Escape from Brazil—Writings on Film and Globalization* (Prometheus, 2021) and *Characters of Montenegrin Politics* (Čigoja Press, 2025).

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Catherine Ramsey-Portolano, The American University in Rome (Italy)

A gendered portrayal of neurosis in Italian cinema of the economic boom

This presentation explores neurosis in Italian cinema during the years of Italy's economic boom, analysing its role in Michelangelo Antonioni's *Il deserto rosso* (1964) and Elio Petri's *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto* (1969) and *La classe operaia va in paradiso* (1971). The emotional and psychological turmoil of characters suffering from neurosis reflects their reaction to changes affecting Italian society of the time. As members of a community transformed by new social values and gender roles, neurotic characters embody and become spokespeople for the revolution of cultural norms taking place. I consider the differing factors that influence a gendered portrayal of neurosis in certain films of the 1960s and 1970s through a comparative analysis of female and male characters demonstrating neurotic symptoms and tendencies. Demonstrating how neurosis serves in the films examined to counter predominant gender models for Italian women and men of the time, I argue that these films propose reevaluations of traditional forms of femininity and masculinity. Narrating the neurotic functions in these films to transform narratives of normalcy, portraying neurosis as a source of agency and knowledge rather than individual or social liability.

Catherine Ramsey-Portolano is Associate Professor and Director of the Italian Studies and Modern Languages Program at The American University of Rome. Her fields of research include Gender Studies, nineteenth- and twentieth-century Italian literature and Italian cinema, with special focus on women writers and the portrayal of gender in literature and film. In addition to numerous peer-reviewed articles and essays in the above fields, her books include *Female Cultural Production in Modern Italy: Literature, Art and Intellectual History*, edited with Sharon Hecker (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023); *Nineteenth-Century Italian Women Writers and the Woman Question: The Case of Neera* (Routledge, 2020); *Performing Bodies: Female Illness in Italian Literature and Cinema 1860-1920* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2017); *The Future of Italian Teaching: Media, New Technologies and Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015) and *The Italianist Special Issue Rethinking Neera*, edited with K. Mitchell (2010).

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Dagmar Reichardt, Latvian Academy of Culture, Riga (Latvia)

Transcultural cinema: The Italo-Anglophone-Japanese biopic *Haiku on a Plum Tree* (Maraini-Melehi 2016)

This contribution focuses on the family history of Italy's internationally renowned writer Dacia Maraini (1936), her sister, art historian and author Toni Maraini (1941), as well as of Toni's daughter Mujah Maraini-Melehi (1970), who directed, produced and co-authored the transgenerational film *Haiku on a Plum Tree* (2016/2018). Maraini-Melehi mixes in her work genres, time periods, spaces and cultural spheres to pinpoint the Japanese experience of the Maraini family, thus concentrating on its migration history. The first part of this paper will introduce the cosmopolitical genealogy of the Maraini family. Tracing its *nomadism* (Deleuze and Guattari 1980) and matriarchal impact, the film's storyline clearly unveils the incomplete representation of the past and missing narrative links to fill blind spots of history, while rounding out the so-called HERstory. The second part takes up the concept of *Transcultural Cinema*, coined by the American-Australian visual anthropologist David MacDougall (1998). It becomes clear that migration narratives often address trauma and border dimensions (Anzaldúa 2000), situated "between" storytelling and historical-documentary recording. Maraini-Melehi's biopic unites a combination of historical and emotional elements, whose authenticity is characterized by the search for *post-memory* (Hirsch 2012) as an embrace of time that questions post-migratory situations which go beyond the transitions from the first to the second, third or fourth generation.

Dagmar Reichardt is Professor for Creative Industries at the Latvian Academy of Culture in Riga, Latvia. Author of more than 400 publications in English, Italian, German and French, she specializes on specific sociological and globalization aspects of Contemporary Italian Studies, Sociocultural Relations, and Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies. An expert in Transcultural Studies, she has received numerous awards for her scientific work, starting with the International Flaiano Prize (2007). Among her publications: *Icone della transculturalità* (Cesati, 2022); *Porno—Theo—Kolossal. Pasolinis letztes Filmprojekt* (Schüren, 2022); *Benvenuti al Nuovo Sud* (Cesati, 2024); and *Le tante traduzioni dell'opera di Dacia Maraini* (Peter Lang, 2024).

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Milena Sabato, Università del Salento (Italy)

Raccontare il Settecento: “Questione meridionale” e conflittualità di genere nel cinema e nella televisione italiana

La “questione meridionale” è stata a lungo interpretata come una problematica nata con l'Unità d'Italia; tuttavia, il Settecento rappresenta un momento cruciale nella formazione del divario culturale ed economico tra Nord e Sud. Questo paper analizza come il cinema e la televisione italiana abbiano rappresentato il Settecento e, al loro interno, l'esperienza femminile nel Mezzogiorno. Attraverso l'analisi di opere come *Ferdinando e Carolina* (1999) di Lina Wertmüller, *Il resto di niente* (2004) di Antonietta De Lillo e la miniserie televisiva *Luisa Sanfelice* (2004) dei fratelli Taviani, si evidenzia come le narrazioni oscillino tra celebrazione folclorica, tragedia rivoluzionaria e rimozione delle complesse dinamiche sociali ed economiche del tempo. Particolare attenzione è dedicata alle rappresentazioni di genere del potere e alla

persistenza di stereotipi, ormai lontani dagli attuali orizzonti della storiografia, che continuano a modellare l'immaginario del Sud e delle sue protagoniste femminili. Parallelamente, si osserva come cinema e televisione si confrontino sempre più con le figure di donne italiane dell'età moderna attraverso la lente della *biofiction*, negoziando tra riscrittura storica e mito popolare. Infine, si intende mostrare come le recenti forme transmediali — docufilm, progetti digitali e narrazioni interattive — possano offrire nuove modalità per rileggere il Settecento e le sue geografie di genere. In questa prospettiva, cinema e media italiani non solo arricchiscono il dibattito storiografico, ma invitano a ripensare il Settecento come momento chiave nella genealogia del divario Nord-Sud.

Milena Sabato è Docente a contratto di Storia sociale dei media (Storia moderna) presso l'Università del Salento e ha conseguito l'Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale a Professore Associato in Storia moderna. Le sue ricerche si concentrano principalmente sulla censura libraria, sulle donne lettrici, sulle viaggiatrici e sulla storia religiosa, politica e culturale dell'Italia meridionale in età moderna. È autrice di due monografie dedicate alla censura, alla circolazione libraria e ai rapporti Stato-Chiesa nell'Italia meridionale d'età moderna *Il sapere che brucia* (Congedo, 2009) *Poteri censori* (Congedo, 2007). È Co-Editor della rivista *Modern Italy* (Cambridge University Press).

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Alexandra Semenova, Autonomous University of Madrid (Spain)

The city under a violet haze: Analysing space in Luca Guadagnino's *Queer* (2024)

To situate a protagonist's longing for the *other* within a distinctive landscape has a long tradition in literature and cinema, as exemplified by *Death in Venice*, in both its literary and filmic versions. More broadly, the connection between the notions of journey and desire is deeply rooted in cultural history, from the myth of Orpheus to contemporary cinematic forms such as Bi Gan's *Long Day's Journey into Night* (2018). In Luca Guadagnino's *oeuvre*, journey, space, and desire also constitute a central concern of his cinematic practice. This paper focuses on the distribution of space in *Queer* (2024), examining how it is reconfigured in relation to William Burroughs's original novel (1953) as well as to Guadagnino's earlier works, particularly *Io sono l'amore* (2009). In *Queer*, the director constructs a specific spatial dynamic that can be analysed through the notion of levels: whereas the novel is essentially *flat* in its spatial organisation, the film is structured as a pronounced, even spiral-like ascent. Another key aspect is Guadagnino's aesthetic decision to create a deliberately artificial, postcard-like environment. A manipulated colour palette and sustained references to the history of art—most notably to Surrealism, and particularly to René Magritte—contribute to the film's ambiguous Lynchian atmosphere. This unstable spatial conception is further reinforced by the presence of a film-within-the-film—Jean Cocteau's *Orpheus* (1950)—and especially by the mirror scene, which emphasises a conception of space that is not only optical but also haptic: a space that can, and must, be intruded upon through touch.

Alexandra Semenova is a PhD student in the Department of History and Theory of Art at the Autonomous University of Madrid, and a multidisciplinary artist and researcher. Alongside her

work in illustration, *Laurel y Marfil* (Ediciones Kalos, 2021) and stage design, *Ifigenia in Aulide* (Innsbruck Festival of Early Music, 2025), she focuses on film philosophy and aesthetics, examining *auteur* cinema in dialogue with art and literature, through structuralist and post-structuralist approaches. Her publications appear in *Schermi tra lingue, letterature e culture* (edited by A. Nagini, I. Orlandazzi, and E. Verra (Ledizioni, 2024), and in the journals *Acta Univ. Sapientiae Film Media Studies* and *Frames Cinema Journal*.

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Danilo Siragusa, Università di Torino (Italy)

Nascita di una rivoluzione. *La battaglia di Algeri* (1966) nelle carte dell'archivio Pontecorvo

La presente proposta di intervento intende illustrare la storia produttiva de *La battaglia di Algeri* (1966) di Gillo Pontecorvo attraverso l'analisi del fondo Pontecorvo, custodito presso l'Archivio storico del Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino. L'indagine si basa in larga parte su fonti inedite d'archivio (trattamenti, sceneggiature, appunti di lavoro, repertori fotografici, corrispondenze, documentazione amministrativa) e sulla ricca rassegna stampa inerente al film, messa insieme dallo stesso Pontecorvo e disponibile presso la Bibliomediateca 'Mario Gromo' di Torino. Tale documentazione permette di ripercorrere le fasi salienti di ideazione e realizzazione del capolavoro del cineasta pisano, la cui origine va collocata all'inizio degli anni '60, in un iniziale soggetto cinematografico sulla liberazione dell'Algeria dal dominio francese, scritto a quattro mani dal regista insieme allo sceneggiatore Franco Solinas e mai realizzato. La svolta si ebbe grazie all'incontro con una delegazione algerina, giunta in Italia alla ricerca di un regista in grado di realizzare un film sulla nascita della nuova nazione; raggiunto l'accordo, si procedette alla stesura della sceneggiatura e alle riprese nella *casbah* di Algeri. La vittoria del Leone d'Oro alla XXVII Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica di Venezia del 1966 avrebbe consacrato il successo del film, pur tra le polemiche scaturite dalla sua diffusione internazionale. Lo studio del fondo Pontecorvo consente dunque di ricostruire la tormentata genesi di un'opera che ha rappresentato non solo una pietra miliare della storia del cinema, ma anche una rappresentazione, divenuta nel tempo paradigmatica, di un momento cruciale di storia della decolonizzazione.

Danilo Siragusa è Dottore di Ricerca in Storia Moderna e culture della materia presso il Dipartimento di Studi Storici dell'Università di Torino. Le sue ricerche vertono principalmente sulla storia culturale e politica del XVIII secolo, sul falso storico in età moderna e sul rapporto tra storia e cinema. È *section editor* della rivista scientifica *Diciottesimo Secolo*. È autore della monografia *Lo storico e il falsario. Rosario Gregorio e l'«arabica impostura» (1782-1796)* (FrancoAngeli, 2019) e di saggi pubblicati in volumi collettanei e sulle riviste scientifiche *Diciottesimo Secolo*, *Didattica della Storia – Journal of Research and Didactics of History* e *Zapruder. Storie in movimento*.

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Antonella Sisto, Rhode Island College (USA)

***E la nave va*: The non-cinematic afterlife of Fellini's labour**

This paper considers the relocation of Federico Fellini's office from Cinecittà to Toronto as a case study in the afterlives of cinematic material culture and the limits of institutional care. Reconstructing the circumstances through interviews with key characters, including the producer who inherited and sold the office; Fellini's principal heir, Francesca Fellini; and the director of the Fellini Museum in Rimini, Marco Leonetti; the paper situates the event within broader debates through the lenses of prop theory and care ethics. Rather than treating the office materials as memorabilia or archival residue, I draw on Elena Gorfinkel and John David Rhodes's theorization of the prop as an object that performs labor and generates meaning beyond the screen, and I propose to think the cargo ship that transported Fellini's office across the Atlantic as the largest Fellinian "prop" to appear offscreen. In contrast to the spectacular ships of his cinema, the ideological Rex in *Amarcord* and the allegorical vessel in *E la nave va*, this real-life cargo ship works logistically to enable the disposability of his creative labor's heritage and its transformation into a mobile asset. Framing transport itself as a speculative act, I argue that the transatlantic voyage functions as a symptom: a material trace of cultural disposability and a critical tool that invites rethinking the public care/cultural economy of the creative materiality that makes filmmaking.

Antonella Sisto teaches at Rhode Island College. She has presented and published internationally on dubbing; the politics of sound and the voice; and the works of Michelangelo Antonioni, Federico Fellini, Tonino Guerra and Pier Paolo Pasolini. Her first book *Film Sound in Italy: Listening to the Screen* (Palgrave-McMillan, 2014) engages in a critical re-thinking of the primacy of the visual in film studies, to re-discover the sonic dimension of the cinematic experience. Her current project and articles link cinematic creativity to ecological awareness and acoustic ecology.

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Adrianna Sowińska, Università di Breslavia (Poland)

La rappresentazione dell'immigrazione nella serie televisiva *Il commissario Montalbano*

Andrea Camilleri (1925-2019) è uno dei più importanti esponenti della letteratura italiana contemporanea. La fama mondiale gli è stata assicurata dalla serie di romanzi e racconti dedicati al personaggio del commissario Salvo Montalbano. Nelle sue opere l'autore dimostra un particolare impegno nel dibattito sulla crisi migratoria europea. Il nuovo veicolo espressivo dell'opera letteraria di Camilleri e del messaggio sociale in essa contenuto è diventata una trasposizione televisiva della serie sul capo della polizia siciliana e il relativo circuito mediatico-culturale. La serie *Il commissario Montalbano*, diretta da Alberto Sironi, è stata trasmessa dalla rete televisiva italiana Rai dal 1999 al 2021. Questo paper analizza come il tema dell'immigrazione in Italia presente in alcuni romanzi di Camilleri [*Il ladro di merendine* (1996), *Il giro di boa* (2003) e *L'altro capo del filo* (2016)] sia stato messo in evidenza e sviluppato nelle loro trasposizioni televisive, che si inseriscono nella più recente corrente del cinema postcoloniale. La mia ricerca dimostra che la prospettiva postcoloniale visibile in queste adattamenti non solo comprende la rappresentazione dei problemi di discriminazione etnica e

razziale degli immigrati in Italia attraverso il prisma delle vicende individuali, ma implica anche la necessità per gli italiani di riconoscere e confrontarsi con la propria identità mediterranea – un’identità inclusiva ed esclusiva della marginalizzazione dell’altro in un mondo il cui presente e futuro saranno sempre più influenzati dai movimenti migratori.

Adrianna Sowińska è studentessa di dottorato presso la Scuola di Dottorato della facoltà di Comunicazione Sociale e Media dell’Università di Breslavia (Polonia). La sua tesi di dottorato esamina l’opera letteraria di Andrea Camilleri come esempio dell’impatto culturale e sociale dei mass media. I suoi interessi di ricerca includono la letteratura poliziesca italiana e le sue trasposizioni cinematografiche e televisive, nonché i fenomeni intermediali nella cultura popolare contemporanea. È autrice di un articolo pubblicato nel 2022 sulla rivista *Italica Wratislaviensia* sul tema della ricezione delle opere di Andrea Camilleri in Polonia fino all’anno 2021.

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Damien Spiccia, Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (Australia)

Breaking the spell: Bozzetto’s *Allegro non troppo* (1976) as metacritical deconstruction of Disney’s *Fantasia* (1940)

This paper argues that Bruno Bozzetto’s *Allegro non troppo* (1976) functions as a key work of cinematic metacriticism, positioning itself as a postmodern antithesis to the cultural authority and aesthetic ideology of Disney’s *Fantasia* (1940). While inheriting *Fantasia*’s structure of dialogue-free animated vignettes set to classical music, Bozzetto repurposes the form as a vehicle for structural, barbed satire, offering a sophisticated critique of the relationship between high art and its populist visual interpretation. The analysis focuses on three central strategies. First, the film actively de-sentimentalises music, rejecting Disney’s pursuit of visual harmony and emotional uplift. Classical compositions are frequently paired with vulgar, mundane, or destructive imagery, producing critical distance rather than emotional immersion. Bozzetto’s *Boléro* sequence, which charts cyclical evolution and environmental ruin, reframes humanity as the ultimate agent of destruction, forcing viewers toward structural interpretation rather than reverence. Second, *Allegro non troppo* embraces stylistic pluralism and aesthetic rupture. Each segment adopts a distinct, often abrasive visual style, undermining the seamless unity central to Disney’s model and foregrounding animation as a series of visible, ideological choices rather than an invisible craft. Finally, the film’s black-and-white live-action framing device foregrounds the material labour of animation. Through its Brechtian depiction of exhausted bodies, crude tools, and chaotic production conditions, Bozzetto dismantles the myth of magical creation promoted by Disney. In doing so, *Allegro non troppo* asserts animation as a self-aware medium capable of rigorous cultural critique.

Damien Spiccia is Lecturer in Screen Studies at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. His research interests include film surrealism, fairy-tale cinema, and the cinematic adaptation and subversion of folkloric narratives. His work has been published in *Senses of Cinema* and *FilmInk*. He is the creator of the popular BOOK TO FILM screening series which has run at The Backlot, Perth, since 2020. His professional experience encompasses script

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New maternal realism: Representation of motherhood and care in contemporary Italian cinema

This paper examines how contemporary Italian cinema redefines motherhood and the concept of care through a comparative analysis of Mimmo Verdesca's *Per il mio bene* (2024) and Laura Bispuri's *Figlia mia* (2018). In *Figlia mia*, set in Sardinia, ten-year-old Vittoria discovers that her biological mother is the impulsive Angelica, not the protective Tina who raised her. The film contrasts nature and nurture to suggest that maternal care is an ethical act rather than a biological inheritance. In *Per il mio bene*, Giovanna, an adult woman, learns that her devoted mother Lilia is not her biological parent when illness forces her to seek a transplant from a blood relative. Here, the revelation unfolds within middle-class domesticity, exposing the complexity of care and identity in late adulthood. Juxtaposing these films, directed respectively by a woman and a man, the paper explores how gendered and generational perspectives shape Italian cinema's evolving language of motherhood. Both Bispuri and Verdesca depict the maternal as a site of ambivalence, where love, resentment, and desire coexist. Methodologically, the paper draws on Laura Lazzari's theorization of "new maternal realism" and the maternal as a site of trauma and transmission (Lazzari 2021, 2023). Through this lens, *Figlia mia* and *Per il mio bene* unmask the complexity of motherhood, revealing care as a contested practice of belonging and autonomy. Lazzari's integration of reproductive justice and maternal ethics (2025) situates these narratives within broader cultural negotiations of agency and intergenerational care in postfeminist Italy.

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Power, (un)visibility, and content regulation in socialist and platform-era media

This paper examines the transformation of media regulation and censorship by comparing two historically distinct yet structurally comparable systems of control: the state-driven censorship apparatus of socialist Czechoslovakia (1945 – 1989) and the contemporary regulatory mechanisms of global streaming platforms such as Netflix. While the former relied on explicit political supervision, centralized production structures, and ideological oversight of television and cinema, today’s media landscape is shaped by more diffuse but equally influential forms of platform governance – internal content guidelines, algorithmic visibility, global market expectations, and standardization of themes, formats, and narratives. The study highlights how socialist-era institutions, including film committees, script approval boards, and broadcasting councils, dictated representational norms and suppressed alternative perspectives. This form of “vertical control” is contrasted with modern “horizontal control”, in which platforms regulate content through opaque policies, data-driven commissioning, compliance with global audience metrics, and the commercial prioritization of certain cultural narratives. These mechanisms shape filmmaking practices by limiting thematic diversity, influencing pacing and structure, and encouraging creative self-censorship among creators seeking platform visibility. By integrating media history with contemporary European production trends, the paper argues that the locus of power has shifted from the state to corporate entities, but the effects – constraints, incentives, and narrative shaping – remain comparable. The analysis situates this shift within broader debates on media sovereignty, cultural identity, and the balance between artistic freedom and regulatory frameworks. Ultimately, the paper proposes that studying past models of censorship provides valuable insight into understanding today’s less explicit but pervasive forms of media control.

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The power of the (bisexual) erotic: Modesta's journey in the *The Art of Joy* (Golino 2025)

The Art of Joy (2025) is a television series produced by Sky Studios and directed by Valeria Golino, who also co-wrote the screenplay. Adapted from the first part of Goliarda Sapienza's eponymous novel, the series recounts the first twenty years of the protagonist Modesta's (Tecla Insolia) life, a trajectory of self-emancipation from patriarchal violence set in early twentieth-century rural Sicily. Thanks also to the powerful performances of its female cast, the series succeeds in translating the novel's radical politics of subjectivity into an audiovisual language that foregrounds the body and face of its protagonist, constructing Modesta as a disruptive figure whose vitality exceeds normative frameworks of femininity. Drawing on Audre Lorde's seminal theorization of "the erotic as power" (1978), the paper approaches *The Art of Joy* as a narrative organized around the erotic understood as a generative resource, and as a form of knowledge capable of sustaining resistance to oppression and enabling new modes of being in the world. Engaging with feminist and queer scholarship on Sapienza and her work (Farnetti, 2011; Ross, 2012; Rizzarelli, 2018), this paper argues that Modesta embodies an erotic politics that dislocates normative regimes of gender, sexuality, labor, and care. Within this framework, her bisexuality is understood not as a stable identity but as an epistemological position (Garber, 1995; Pramaggiore, 1996; Storr, 1999): a mode of knowing and inhabiting desire that resists monosexual logics. Moreover, through Modesta's unapologetic non-monosexual desire, *The Art of Joy* challenges the persistent (in)visibility and bi-assimilation of bisexuality in media culture (San Filippo, 2013; Eisner, 2013).

Lucia Tralli is Assistant Professor in Communication and Digital Media at The American University of Rome. She is a gender and media studies scholar; her primary research focuses are media fandom practices, popular culture, bisexual representation and intersectionality in the media. Among her recent publications: a monograph, *Vidding Grrls. Nuovi sguardi sulle pratiche di genere nei fandom* (Meltemi, 2021), chapters in *Routledge Companion to Fan Video and Digital Authorship* (Routledge, 2025), *Routledge Companion to Remix Studies* (Routledge, 2024), *Media and Gender. History, Representation, Reception* (BUP, 2023); *Politiche della bisessualità* (ETS, 2023), and articles in *Arabeschi*, *Cinergie*, *Comunicazioni Sociali*, *Feminist Media Histories*, *Film, Fashion and Consumption*, *Quaderni del CSCI*. She is a member of the Leading Team of the International Bisexual Research Group.

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Maria Bonaria Urban, Royal Netherlands Institute Rome (Italy)

Imagining the future of democracy through transmedial fascism in *M. Son of the Century* (Wright 2024)

This paper focuses on the television series *M. Son of the Century* (Wright 2024), a TV adaptation of Antonio Scurati's eponymous "documentary novel" (2018), in order to investigate whether

this fictionalised narrative of fascism can generate a transcultural and transnational political imaginary in contrast to the contemporary crisis of democracy. Firstly, it shows that Mussolini's character shifts between the diegetic and extradiegetic dimensions of the narrative. By placing himself in both the fascist past and the television audience's present, his body occupies a symbolic space where historicity and "engagement" converge. Secondly, the paper argues that *M. Son of the Century* is a "serial pastiche" and its radical aesthetic mainly serves to highlight the tension between "spectacle" and moral judgement. Overall, *M. Son of the Century* reimagines Italian fascism as a wake-up call to the crisis of democracy, presenting Mussolini as a metaphor for "eternal fascism" (Eco, 1995). As the "great puppeteer" of History, in fact, Wright's *Duce* establishes a strong connection with both the masses of his time and the television audience, proving that his fascination endures worldwide. In doing so, the paper questions the potential of artistic and media practices to address a key issue in contemporary social science: the rise of populist authoritarianism. Furthermore, it reflects on how television series contribute to the rebranding of Italian culture for a global audience by blending literature, traditional imagery, national stereotypes, and contemporary mass culture.

Maria Bonaria Urban is Senior Lecturer in Italian language and culture at the University of Amsterdam and currently serves as a Director of Studies in History to the Royal Netherlands Institute Rome (2021-2027). She has published, among others, the monograph *Sardinia on Screen. The Construction of the Sardinian Character in Italian Cinema* (Rodopi/Brill, 2013), and co-edited the volumes *Transatlantic Practices of Fascism(s) and Populism(s) from the Margins: The Cultural Politics of 'Us' versus 'Them'* (Routledge, 2025) and *Televisionismo. Narrazioni televisive della storia italiana durante la Seconda Repubblica* (Ca' Foscari/'Innesti', 2015), the special issues "Postsecular Italy: Transnational and Interdisciplinary Approaches" (*Italica* 2024) and "Spanish Exile and Italian Immigration in Argentina (1930–76): Gender, Politics, and Culture" (*Romance Studies* 2020).

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Nuov(issim)o cinema italiano al femminile. Il caso delle attrici-registe

Nel capitolo conclusivo del suo libro *Storia del cinema italiano. Regie, autori e linguaggi dal muto a oggi* (Rubettino, 2023), Vito Zagarrìo dedica alcune pagine al cinema realizzato dalle donne, chiedendosi già dal titolo se la nuova direzione del cinema italiano sarà quella di un "cinema al femminile". Dal 2023 ad oggi, questa tendenza si conferma pienamente. Alle registe nominate nel libro (Maura Delpero, Cristina Comencini, Francesca Comencini, Francesca Archibugi) o dimenticate (Carolina Cavalli), che continuano a realizzare film, si aggiungono nuove registe (Lyda Patitucci, Ludovica Rampoldi). Ma quello che colpisce e meraviglia di più è che, all'interno di questa tendenza, prende forma e si sviluppa una sotto-tendenza di cui Vito Zagarrìo non parla, sebbene menzioni un nome (Giulia Steigerwalt). Si tratta di un cinema realizzato da attrici italiane che, pur proseguendo la loro carriera nel campo della recitazione cinematografica, diventano anche registe, in alcuni casi con grande successo (Paola Cortellesi). Questa sotto-tendenza in corso, ricchissima e potente, costituisce l'oggetto privilegiato del mio intervento. In un primo tempo, propongo di tracciare un panorama dei film realizzati da attrici

italiane, identificandone alcune caratteristiche. In un secondo tempo, vorrei avviare una riflessione sulla questione se questa tendenza possa essere considerata sintomatica di un divenire-minoritario del nuov(issim)o cinema italiano.

Marina Vargau è docente a contratto in Studi Italiani presso il Dipartimento di Letterature e Lingue del Mondo dell'Università di Montreal. I suoi interessi di ricerca includono il cinema italiano, le relazioni tra arte e media, le rappresentazioni delle città nel cinema e nella letteratura. Il suo libro, *Romarcord: flânerie, spectacle et mémoire dans la Rome de Federico Fellini* (Guernica Editions, 2021) analizza la poetica cinematografica della Roma felliniana e il suo effetto nel cinema e nella letteratura. Ha inoltre pubblicato capitoli nei volumi *Federico Fellini: Riprese, riletture, (re)visioni* (a cura di P. Bernardini, J. Granata, T. Lobalsamo e A. Zambenedetti) (Franco Cesati Editore, 2016), *Fellini Centenary Essays* (a cura di A. Zambenedetti, J. Whitehead e M. Malvestio) (University of Toronto Press, 2023) e articoli in riviste accademiche tra cui *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies* e *Art Research Journal*.

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Le nuove politiche della rappresentazione LGBTQ+ italiana: Note sul dialogo tra media e gender studies

Nell'ultimo decennio, il panorama mediale italiano - non diversamente da quello di numerosi altri Paesi europei e d'oltreoceano - ha conosciuto un'inedita trasformazione sul piano della rappresentazione delle minoranze socioculturali e, più in generale, della diversità nelle sue varie forme e sfaccettature. Lungi dal doversi considerare un fenomeno di mera proliferazione numerica di trame e personaggi non- o anti-normativi, il processo di *mainstreaming* di identità precedentemente silenziate o relegate ai margini ha dato impulso non solo alla diversificazione dell'offerta audiovisiva in sé per sé, ma anche - crucialmente - all'interesse di pubblico, critica e accademia nei confronti di quelle che sono note come "politiche della rappresentazione". Con frequenza e dimestichezza sempre maggiori, ci interroghiamo su chi e cosa sia appropriato rappresentare, e su quali siano i tempi più consoni, le modalità più soddisfacenti, le motivazioni più condivisibili per farlo. Il contributo qui proposto vuole perciò offrire una mappatura dell'attuale dibattito italiano sui significati sociali, culturali e politici delle rappresentazioni della diversità, soffermandosi, in particolare, sullo sguardo che le produzioni italiane più recenti hanno riservato alla mediazione di personaggi, temi, ambienti e discorsi LGBTQ+. Nodo centrale della riflessione sarà il crescente dialogo cross-disciplinare tra studi sui media, studi di genere e *media psychology*, e dunque alleanze, tensioni e scontri fra prospettive umanistiche, sociologiche e psicologiche nel definire quali siano o debbano essere le politiche della rappresentazione della diversità sessuale e di genere.

Tristan Venturi è Dottorando in Arti visive, performative, mediali presso il Dipartimento delle Arti dell'Università di Bologna, dove conduce un progetto di ricerca volto a investigare la rappresentazione dell'ambiguità di genere nel filone cinematografico del giallo all'italiana. I suoi interessi di ricerca si collocano all'intersezione tra studi cinematografici e studi queer, LGBT e trans.

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Representation of caste-based honour crimes in Indian cinema

This paper examines the representation of caste-based honour crimes in Indian cinema through a critical, interdisciplinary framework that incorporates feminist film theory, critical caste studies and visual culture analysis. Honour crimes in India function as violent mechanisms to reinforce caste and gender hierarchies. While mainstream discourse often renders caste invisible in honour-related violence, this study sheds light on its centrality. Three films were critically analysed in this context: Hindi-language *Achhut Kanya (Untouchable Girl/Untouchable Maiden)* (1936), directed by Franz Osten; Hindi-language *Khap* (2011) directed by Ajai Sinha; and Marathi-language *Sairat* ('Wild') (2016), directed by Nagraj Manjule. Together they trace a historical trajectory in cinematic depictions of caste, love and violence. The analysis reveals that early reformist cinema acknowledged caste barriers but ultimately reaffirmed dominant social norms through melodramatic sacrifice. Later cinematic efforts offered a more explicit critique of caste-based oppression and patriarchal institutions, though their narratives often remained constrained by melodrama and the recurring figure of the dominant-caste saviour. In contrast, recent works by filmmakers from marginalised communities represent a radical departure, portraying caste-based honour killing as a manifestation of structural violence. This paper critically examines the ethics of representation, focusing on how cinematic gaze, authorship and audience reception influence the political impact of depicting caste-based honour crimes. It advocates for a caste-conscious cinematic practice to resist both liberal sentimentality and voyeuristic spectacle. This chapter aims to situate honour crime cinema within the larger contest over caste, gender and narrative authority in contemporary India.

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