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What We Thought We Were Doing

Jack Greenstein and William Tronzo

Introduction and Acknowledgments

For years, the editors of the present volume, covering the years 2015 and 2016, have engaged in a friendly debate over time and space. One claims that time is a human invention, constructed to help make sense of the infinite complexity of space, which is real. The other responds that time and space are inextricably linked, that the complexity of which his friend speaks is also a human construction, a product of activities shaped by the uniquely human sense of time, of the presentness of the past, of history and habit, culture and memory.

This volume on the fixity and flexibility of images opens our debate to broader discussion. We chose to call for papers on fixity and flexibility, terms that are not usually part of a theoretical discussion, to encourage as broad a range of contributions as possible. We are gratified to be publishing papers in Italian Studies from Roman Antiquity to the present, on architecture, painting, and installation, music, film, and vernacular photography, art theory, history and literature, ranging across diverse topics in religion and politics, tourism and migration, sexuality and symbolism, and, of course, art. Although the organization of the issue follows, as it were, established norms—we have grouped together essays dealing with similar periods, topics, or themes jostling around in this collection—we were also taken by how individual essays on widely different topics had the potential to generate sparks (intellectual, that is) when they brushed up against one another in unexpected ways. It is in this vein that we also offer a few brief excursuses on some of the synergies that the contributions produced. Since we have eschewed the usual practice of summarizing every contribution, we have added to the journal's apparatus a section of précis written by the authors, arranged in the order of the articles.

Fixity and flexibility are relative and complementary terms. It is obvious that flexibility is a matter of degree, since flexible things can break. But what is "not breaking," in this context, if not a sort of fixity, a persistence of function or character until the thing is changed beyond repair or recognition. Fixity of this sort is neither an absolute nor a constant. Rather it is a kind of stability, adaptability, or continuity within the change to which ideas no less than things are subject over time. Two contributions to this volume deal with famous Roman monuments whose prestige is closely linked with their fixity in space. Even before the earthquake of 1349 which collapsed the eastern section of its outer ring, the physical fabric of the Colosseum underwent a kind of slow burn through the ages, notwithstanding the fact that it was perched—and dangerously—on a precipice of material ruin for centuries. It is somewhat ironic, then, that the best known epigram about the Flavian Amphitheater—which like its popular name derived from an adjacent, giant bronze statue, long since perished—made it a symbol of permanence: "as long as the Colosseum stands, so shall Rome; when the Colosseum falls, Rome shall fall; when Rome falls, so falls the world." Swirling around this material symbol of the eternity of Rome, however, was the energetic conversation in the culture at large, both ecclesiastical and secular, whose course Lila Yawn follows in its ups and downs, from nobility to ignominy and caustic jest. Her lively, well documented study traces how Renaissance humanists brought this grand remnant of Antiquity—a monumental fixed form Dante took as a model for the glory of the heavenly court

in Paradise—down-to-earth, through a simple orthographic trick. Writing in a jocular vein, even as they evoked age-old issues about the corruption of the church and society, they changed the orthography of "Coliseo" to "Culiseo," a name whose pronunciation analogized the amphitheater with buried chambers beneath its elliptical arena to a giant, upturned *culo*, or ass, projecting from the ground. This new name for the four-story stadium, on which countless thousands of backsides had rested, she argues, was both a learned, if playful, response to the then standard medieval accounts of the monument as a symbol of Rome as *caput mundi*, and an acknowledgment, sometimes tacit, sometimes overt, that it was used as a site for homosexual liaisons.

The importance of space to this argument is clear. Both the laudatory and the scatological images of the Colosseum are interpretations of its fixed architectonic shape and its fixed location in Rome, prominent among the remains of the ancient city. The two images circulate in distinct, if competing and intersecting, imaginative, cultural spaces: the Flavian Amphitheater is Coliseo for pilgrims, tourists, and ecclesiastics promoting Rome for the faithful as the seat of the Papacy, the capital for the Catholic church; it is Culiseo for humanists, interested in Rome as a living city, a cultural space with comic as well as cosmic traditions descending from the classical past. The humanist image, moreover, draws attention, as it were, to the increased presence of laborers and craftsman working at the Colosseum during the building boom set off by the return of the Papacy and Curia to Rome, when it was used as an urban quarry for materials—a use, we now know, whose regulation by civic and papal authorities has an important place in the history of conservation. On this view, the image of the amphitheater as Culiseo is generated by the production of new social spaces in the ruins of the Flavian Amphitheater.

Yet, time is also important here. The humanists were committed to restoring Latin to its ancient forms and developing a vernacular literature no less richly expressive than the classics written when Latin was the language of everyday life. Such a project is incomprehensible without a keen sense of history, of the past as past and the present as both different from it and its descendant. Moreover, in the "Culiseo" literature, especially in the evocative stories by Benvenuto Cellini, analyzed with such insight by Yawn, the amphitheater is a place of darkness and evil spirits. If tourists, pilgrims, and workers habituated the amphitheater in the light of day, it was at night, in the shadow of its vaults and arches, that occurred the activities making it a Culiseo. There is little question that the contrast between day and night is linked to a sense of time.

Humor, clearly, has a strong emotional underpinning, and in the remarks directed toward the Colosseum narrated by Yawn, there are, it seems to us, the lineaments of another, larger dynamic, namely, the degree to which an exemplum of the classical tradition, particularly when it stood in ruins, could have an affective dimension in medieval Rome. Such a dynamic hardly seems relevant to S. Maria in Trastevere. The church is decidedly unaffecting by contrast, its ponderous physical form, gilded and deluxe, weighed down by an assemblage of rare and obscure marbles from porch to sanctuary. Probably the first church in Rome dedicated to the Virgin Mary, it was founded in the mid-14th century by Pope Julius I on the site of tituli dedicated to Saint Calixtus and rebuilt from the foundations in the 12th century by Pope Innocent II. A century and a half later, the apse was adorned with a mosaic cycle by Pietro Cavallini, cited since Vasari as the founder of the Roman school of art. Since they were installed in the 12th century, the ancient columns and capitals may be considered along with the mosaics part and parcel of the medieval structure, but most everything else seen in the interior— the magnificent gilded ceiling, the gilded pilasters, painted saints of the clerestory, and even the neo-

Cosmatesque floor—is post-medieval. The porch preceding the entrance, a common feature of early basilicas, is also post-medieval as it dates from the 17th century, and the façade rising behind it is composed of 13th- to 14th-, 18th-, and 19th-century elements. Yet, the minor basilica is most often cited, discussed, and appreciated by guides, visitors, and scholars as a prominent example, albeit much restored, of the medieval in Rome.

This focus on the medieval character of the building is all the more interesting in light of larger developments in medieval architecture. S. Maria in Trastevere was rebuilt from the ground up in an era when one of the most powerfully affective architectural formulations of religious experience was in the process of being created, and quite far from the political center of Western Christianity. Gothic architecture arose in the Ile-de-France in the middle of the 12th century, from which point it spread across the Christian oecumene. But its most glorious manifestations were mainly those of the North—in France, England, and Germany. In its capacity to generate empathy, to embrace the viewer and move him or her emotionally with lofty, unified spaces transubstantiated by colored light, the Gothic was matched (perhaps even superseded) by the early Byzantine achievement of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, albeit an architecture in an entirely different mode. What this indicates is the degree to which both of these religious cultures, late medieval Northern European and Early Byzantine, took seriously and desired to capitalize on the affective visual and material dimension of religious experience. Medieval Rome possessed no Chartres, Notre Dame, or Hagia Sophia, and its architecture, exemplified by a church such as S. Maria in Trastevere, seems somewhat chilly and distant by comparison, a rather transparent manifesto of the elevated position of the 1%.

Dale Kinney's elegant study draws some striking parallels between the two interventions that fashioned the medieval image of S. Maria in Trastevere appreciated by viewers today: the 12th-century rebuilding and the floor-to-ceiling renovation by Virgilio Vespagnani in the 1860s–70s. Both were carried out by popes, Innocent II in the 12th century and Pius IX in the 19th, whose claims to power were being tested. Innocent II, who assumed the papacy in a contested election, had the title church of his opponent razed and replaced with a larger, more sumptuous structure. The apse mosaic of Christ and the Virgin as the heavenly bridegroom and bride celebrated the celestial unity of the church, and the granite columns with iconic capitals from the Baths of Caracalla asserted the continuity of the rebuilt church with ancient Rome. Pius IX, who refused to recognize the legitimacy of the new Italian state, chose for the renovation the architect who had overseen the completion of the rebuilding of S. Paolo fuori le mura—then the model for the restoration of an early Christian basilica to its original glory. Here the relation encountered in Yawn's study between the fixity of material form and the flexibility of the discursive context is reversed: it is the historical discourse that has stayed fixed, maintaining its view of the building as a privileged edifice, above all because of its connection to the papacy, whereas the material structure of the building itself has undergone major phases of renovation that have altered its appearance, both within and without.

The balance between time and space also seems to be reversed in this case. The 12th-century rebuilding and 19th-century renovations were consciously shaped by temporal concerns. For Innocent II, a key motive seems to have been to assert a new, trans-historical unity, which obliterated, as it were, all traces of the building where his schismatic opponent had presided; for Pius IX, to renew a more glorious past. Although, as Kinney points out, the papal intentions are conveyed to a very few, while the wide appreciation of the church as medieval is due, in no small part, to an architecture that pulls the building out of the secular temporalities of the city around it and produces a time of its own. But our friendly debate does not end here, for it is surely possible

to argue that it is through space, not just in ground plan and elevation, but in the kind of social activities that the complex produces, that this occurs.

Fixity and flexibility also apply neatly to a central issue of portraiture. Perhaps no animal is, by nature, more adaptable than human beings. Not only has our species spread across a broad swath of the earth, thriving in its many diverse climates and habitats, but we have also created an extraordinary range of languages, rituals, habits, cultures, and built environments which shape to an extraordinary degree, or even determine, how we live and what we are. Nonetheless, throughout history, thinkers have been convinced that there is a human nature common to all of our diverse types. So too with the question of the individual. It is clear that, as social animals, each of us constitute the various roles we play within our society; and yet, the idea that in some way or another, through all these variations in role and behavior, there is a unitary personal identity seems to be as old as history itself.

It is not surprising, therefore, that many of our contributions look, in one way or another, at the issue of portraits and identity. George Gorse explores how the various portraits of Andrea Doria, captain general of the Hapsburg fleet, both furthered his career and shaped for him a historical and mythical identity as founder of the Genoese republic. David Mather also discusses the relationship between images and the outsized human subject to which they refer in his study of the portraits of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti by a dozen early 12th-century artists. In both of these studies, the fixed identity of the subject itself is as flexible as the diversity of portraits representing him. The relationship between image and discourse is reversed in the study by Joshua Reid. Here a change in the likeness used to render Dante from the hatchet-nosed ascetic descending from a spurious death-mask to a gentler visage found in a fresco attributed to Giotto coincides with, if it does not set off, a new interest in Dante as a man living among the men and woman of his own time. Finally, there is Bartolomeo Veneto's *Lady in Green*. For a century, the work was appreciated as the touchstone for the oeuvre of an important, but forgotten North Italian master. But by identifying the sitter, Tatiana Sizonenko restores the painting to its original function as a commemoration of a particular person with a moving life story.

One might move, then, from face to body. Since the early Middle Ages, body parts as relics have constituted one of the ways in which Christian culture in particular has negotiated the past, serving to stabilize the presence of a departed soul in the midst of an ever changing community of believers. The holy relic, at times materially incomprehensible or even repulsive, was often set in an elaborate container, a reliquary, fashioned from precious materials such as gold and jewels. The combined object, relic and container, pointed in two directions: on the one hand the body fragment—brutish, inchoate—belonged to the present, bearing witness to the sinful condition of the world where incompleteness reigned; the container, on the other hand, often meticulously appointed, glistening and perfect, announced the heavenly realm of redemption and wholeness. In light of this deep and widespread tradition, the appearance of the body in J. Nicholas Napoli's essay comes as a bit of a jolt. Through the rising science of archaeology, the bodies of the victims from Pompeii after the eruption of Vesuvius have been retrieved from the past in the entirety of their contours, without any substance however, and have been preserved for us in a vivid and unnatural white. It is on the basis of this type of body that a new historical narrative of Pompeii could be written. It is also a white material serving to fix the form of bodies that, as Claudia Lazzaro reports, assimilates the Medici dukes in their chapel in S. Maria Novella to a prestigious tradition of the ideal image in Western culture. On the other hand, a relic-like portion of an eminent figure was avidly pursued through the ages as a remnant of the seat of his immense originality and talent in Guy P. Raffa's examination of the fate of Dante's skull.

Another category cutting across contexts in this issue might be called the female fantastic. A classic paradigm resides in the work of the early 20th-century art historian, Aby Warburg. Warburg imagined the history of culture in the West as a kind of stage on which played an array of visual archetypes tracing their origins to Antiquity, one of which he termed "Nympha." "Nympha" is the figure of a young woman with exaggerated, windblown drapery and hair, features appropriate to the maenads of classical Antiquity as the inebriated followers of Dionysius, but not so clearly motivated in Italian Renaissance painting, where artists used the ancient maenad type, largely for secondary figures, in solemn religious compositions. Charles Burroughs discusses several instances of this borrowing with an eye to possible meanings that Warburg may have overlooked. In Elena Gertsman's essay, the material manifestation of one of the by-ways of medieval theological thinking is explored with regard to the figure of the Mother of God, whose bodily purity guaranteed by her virginity does not preclude her, nonetheless, from being the carrier of an immensely complex set of symbols, characters, and narratives which are displayed upon the dis-configuration of her bodily form. The body of the Virgin, at once transparent to the grace of God, becomes an opaque container that must be manipulated to be expressive. A similar kind of opacity also governs the composite figure of the siren or mermaid, which is discussed within the context of physical dis-empowerment in the essay of Kate Noson. In Nancy Caciola's essay on a 13th-century *sinopia* of the Trinity in an abbey church near Milan, the depiction of the Holy Spirit as woman is the key to understanding the patrons and historical context for a fresco that was never executed.

And finally, we can move from things seen to things heard. Against the backdrop of the visual, the aural seems infinitely more unmoored, evanescent, and ungraspable. We are grateful to Alison Perchuk, Samuele Briatore, and David Mather for exploring some of the ways in which the two phenomena interacted with one another and created patterns of meaning. In the case of Alison Perchuk's essay on the monastery of St. Elijah in the province of Viterbo in northern Lazio, some of the images in the liturgical space of the church appear to have been constructed so as to resonate with liturgical chants and exhortations, whose form and content was carefully maintained if not regulated by monastic and liturgical traditions. In a sense, this was a relationship of equals, sound and image, both of which strove to depict an imagined, spiritual plane of experience. Samuele Briatore, on the other hand, explores a case where a supremely curious inventor and savant living in 17th-century Rome, Athanasius Kircher, sought to capture the reach and dimension of sound by means of devices, carefully diagrammed, with the magnificent dimensions of the ear of God. Voice, in fact, was one of God's primary material manifestations in the Old Testament (the other being light). David Mather moves us to within shouting distance of the present day by considering the role sound plays in formulating the style of an Italian futurist, FilippoTommaso Marinetti, and his immediate followers.

One result of the use of a non-technical terminology in our call for papers is that most of the essays in this volume do not address the issues of time and space directly. Yet, as we have tried to show, the studies here may be read with these issues in mind and we ask our readers to take this issue as an opportunity to join our friendly debate over the primacy of space versus the inevitable imbrication of time.

In assembling this volume, we have been aided and abetted by the extraordinary generosity, labor, and good advice of our managing editors, Cindy Stanphill and Leslie Elwell, volume 5 editor Jon Snyder of the Department of French and Italian at UCSB, our copy-editors—Margherita Ghetti, Julia Nelsen, Kate Noson, and Timothy Wardell—and especially the large

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Authors' Précis

Issue I: Italy and Images

1. Roman antiquity and antiquarianism

Lila Yawn, " Culiseo: the Roman Colosseum in Early Modern Jest"
This article is about a Renaissance dirty joke: a pun that likened the Flavian amphitheater in Rome ('il Culiseo') to a *culo*, i.e. an ass or anus. Starting in the mid-1400s, comic poets and satirists, especially Tuscans from il Burchiello to Pietro Aretino and Benvenuto Cellini, riffed on the Colosseum's anus-like ground plan (elliptical, with radial walls), mucky interior, and fame as a place for sodomitic trysts. In so doing, they also hilariously inverted a mainstay of medieval guidebooks and romances—that is, the conception of the Colosseum as a celestial temple, an emblem of Rome as *caput mundi*.

Ann Kuttner, "A Tortured Image: The Biography of Lucullus' Dying Hercules"
Praising its visual impact and historical status alike, Pliny the Elder in his first-century C.E. *Natural History* (34.93) gave emphatic place to a now-lost statue in Rome's heart of Hercules dying in the poisoned tunic just before apotheosis. Erected from booty by Republican general Lucullus (late 60s or early 50s B.C.E), the image was multiply inscribed, Pliny recorded, and was re-erected. I examine both Pliny's ekphrasis, and the lost statue: how Lucullus and the statue's restorers inscribed public space with historical memory and its contestation, and constructed a striking visual *exemplum* of a Roman god's human pain and its transcendence.

J. Nicholas Napoli, "Of Plaster Casts and Monks: Images of Cultural Heritage in Risorgimento Italy"
Massimo D'Azeglio memorably articulated modern Italy's challenge: "Italy has been made. Now it remains to make Italians." In a nation formed from regions of differing political traditions and histories, the identification of a historical figure, a work of art, or a building as emblematic of Italian culture proved difficult. Rather than call attention to emblematic figures or monuments for the modern Italian state, the present essay identifies the plaster casts of ancient Pompeii and representations of monks as image types that epitomized the new nation's identity crisis.

Charles Burroughs, "The Nymph in the Doorway: Revisiting a Central Motif of Aby Warburg's Study of Culture"
Aby Warburg critiqued conventional views of classical art by emphasizing recurrent motifs of vehement, even violent movement associated with the figure of the nymph, sometimes in the form of the maenadic "head hunter." Warburg's concern was with generalizable psychological tensions, but questions arise about the functions of "nymph" imagery in specific images. This paper explores the narrative roles and symbolic connotations of Warburg's favorite maenadic figures in widely divergent images, some informed by indications in texts by Ovid. The images have in common the introduction of liminal figures that both evoke and call into question familiar binary categories.

Maria Beatrice Giorio, "Fascismo e classicità. Il recupero iconografico delle opere d'arte non romane a fini propagandistici nell'Italia mussoliniana"
This article aims to offer an original contribution to the question of Fascism and its politics of imagery, with the objective of enlarging the state of present research, exclusively concentrated, until now, on Roman sources of inspiration for Fascist propaganda. It focuses on the reuse in the Fascist period of original masterpieces, and their iconographies, from Ancient Greece to Italian Renaissance and 17th-century Italian classicism. The study will consider various material forms of expression, such as different types of publication (newspapers, periodicals, postcards, propaganda posters) and some significant Fascist artworks from numismatic and philatelic art.

2. The life and afterlife of medieval art

Alison Locke Perchuk, "Multisensory Memories and Monastic Identity at Sant'Elia near Nepi (VT)"
Where meaning resides is a core philosophical problem in the visual arts. Recent work in art history has moved beyond iconology and reception theory to demonstrate a significant role for embodied experience in the creation of meaning. Analysis of wall paintings in the twelfth-century monastic church of Sant'Elia near Nepi (Viterbo) refines such arguments by revealing a highly sophisticated, flexible system. Even as these paintings conveyed information iconographically to non-monastic audiences, liturgical recitations, actions, and movements interacted with details of dress, gesture, and inscription to create a lived experience of transhistorical communal identity accessible only to the monks themselves.

Dale Kinney, “A Building’s Images: Santa Maria in Trastevere”
Buildings are apprehended through images, such as views created by artists and photographers (pictorial images), analytical graphics made by or for architects (analytical images), and digital reproductions. Buildings also generate mental images: sensory impressions (perceptual images), impressions created by contingent factors such as age (projected images), associations instilled by the designer (intended images), and impressions shaped by the norms and expectations of its users (collective images). This essay explores the various types of images produced by the medieval Roman church of Santa Maria in Trastevere in two moments of its history: the twelfth century, when it was constructed, and the nineteenth.

Elina Gertsman, “The Lives and Afterlives of Shrine Madonnas”
This essay explores the turbulent and vibrant afterlives of three Shrine Madonna sculptures, exploring several socio-cultural phenomena that caused the statues to be transformed, mutilated, hidden, and/or stolen. Their reception history betrays a palpable anxiety about divine images, and an equally palpable questioning of their power. Opened and closed, broken and reconstituted, the shifting bodies of the Shrine Madonnas acquired shifting identities, which both reflected and shaped the devotional communities that coalesced around them: communities that spanned the breadth and width of Europe, and, at the close of the Middle Ages, extended well beyond it.

Nancy Mandeville Caciola, “A Guglielmite Trinity”
This article discusses a *sinopia* at the Monastery of Viboldone near Milan, uncovered during a restoration in the 1970s. It is, to date, the sole surviving image that can be directly connected to the Guglielmites, a group repressed for heresy in 1300 in Milan. They are named for the object of their devotion, a woman called Guglielma, whom they regarded as the Holy Spirit incarnate. Though Guglielma died in 1281, her devotees believed she would resurrect to initiate a new age of history, at which time the Church would be led by a female pope. The fresco for which the *sinopia* was an underdrawing was never executed due to the suppression of the cult, but its iconography, starting with the representation of the Holy Spirit as woman, gives graphic testimony to Giglielmite beliefs and aspirations.

3. The cult of Dante

Joshua Reid, “Textual Physiognomy: A New Theory and Brief History of Dantean Portraiture”
Dante Alighieri, the person as we understand him through his poetry, is a construct shaped by posthumous portraiture. Dante’s famous profile appears at a pivotal transition point from icon to image, where the aura of the saint transfers to the poet. In this aesthetic creation of identity, portraits of Dante are influenced by, and in turn influence, commentaries, translations, and biographies of the poet. This visual and textual synergy is called textual physiognomy, and it reaches an important juncture point in the 19th century, when Dante Gabriel Rossetti creates a new and influential alternative to the traditional Dantean identity.

Guy P. Raffa, “Fragments of Freedom: Dante’s Relic in the Re-United States”
Through analysis of unpublished letters and other documents at Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site and Harvard's Houghton Library, this essay provides the first full account of pieces of Dante's coffin gathered upon discovery of the poet's bones in 1865 and enshrined in Longfellow's study in Cambridge in 1872. Placing the relic in dialogue with Longfellow's writings on slavery and the civil war, I show how these traces of Dante's physical afterlife reinforced his role as a prophet of freedom in the "Re-United" States.

4. Images and identities

George Gorse, “Body Politics and Mythic Figures: Andrea Doria in the Mediterranean World”
Andrea Doria’s changing portraits advanced his military and political career from papal admiral to founder (Pater Patriae) of the Genoese republic and captain general of the Hapsburg fleet in the Mediterranean. Issues of the body and mythic identity come into play here. Greek and Roman portrait iconography, the nude Neptune and armored Mars, embody the admiral’s relation to his native port city and Mediterranean kingdom, in the triumphal world of the sixteenth century. Doria’s classical portraiture set major precedents for “body politics” in the early modern period.

Tatiana Sizonenko, “Solving the Mystery of the Sitter in Bartolomeo Veneto’s *Portrait of a Lady in a Green Dress*”
This article proposes an identity for the sitter in Bartolomeo Veneto’s *Portrait of a Lady in a Green Dress,* dated by inscription to 1530. Although a similar striking headdress is seen in some anonymous portraits of the same period from Lombardy and the Veneto, evidence drawn from attributed portraits and diplomatic correspondence reveals that the sitter’s hairstyle closely follows the fashion and proprietary designs of Isabella d’Este. Isabella’s innovations in courtly fashion and her strategic giving of hairdos as gifts are discussed as a mechanism for fashioning her public persona and displaying her political aspirations. The proposed identification is further supported by a discussion of provenance indicated by the original seals on the reverse.

Claudia Lazzaro, “Michelangelo’s Medici Chapel and Its Aftermath: Scattered Bodies and Florentine Identities under the Duchy”
Since the Medici Chapel was not completed in its present state until nearly thirty years after Michelangelo’s departure from Florence in 1534, artists, intellectuals, and patrons had the opportunity to study the sculptures close up and from different points of view, a habit that continued well after their installation through reductions and casts. Both private portraits by Bronzino and Salviati and public sculpture and painting by Danti and Vasari demonstrate Florentine identity not simply through overt reference to Michelangelo’s statues, but also through the distinctive artistic practice of observing them from different angles and scrutinizing body parts in detail.

David Mather, "F.T. Marinetti's Vocalization"
By focusing on representations of the founder of Italian Futurism, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Mather's text explores how different kinds of imagery over several decades captured distinct aspects of this individual and his larger-than-life persona. Marinetti's portraits offer a valuable glimpse of the underlying tensions and outright contradictions within Futurism, including how this domineering figure could signify anarchical tendencies while overshadowing the artistic achievements of others, as well as how early the Futurist's popularity in Italy may have played a role in hastening an authoritarian return to political and ideological traditions, in spite of anti-traditionalist ideas and practices.

Stiliana Milkova, "Artistic Tradition and Feminine Legacy in Elena Ferrante's *L'amore molesto*"
This essay reads Elena Ferrante's *L'amore molesto* as a novel about artists, artist figures, and artistic legacies. I analyze the works of art and artists-at-work as depicted in the text through the lens of the treatment of the female nude in Western art history and criticism, its underlying ideology of male creation, domination, and possession. I argue that the novel reconfigures the androcentric and patrilineal tradition of Western art production into a new system which dispenses altogether with the male artist and with the female nude. Ferrante's novel establishes a feminine artistic legacy based on creative collaboration, mentorship, and exchange between women.

Kate Noson, "That Hateful Tail: The *Sirena* as Figure for Disability in Italian Literature and Beyond"
"That Hateful Tail: The *Sirena* as Figure for Disability in Italian Literature and Beyond" charts the recurrent use of the siren-mermaid as metaphor for disability, from classical texts through Dante and Boiardo to its modern iterations. The mermaid's tail, or *coda*, is figured as both lack and excess: it is both what makes her different from the norm and also her source of power and mobility. Using Agamben, disability theory, and feminist philosophies on voice and the body, Noson marks the *sirena*'s metamorphosis from an Other signifying derailment and disfigurement to a symbol of identity and sexual empowerment—a transformation that mirrors a historical shift in attitudes toward disability.

Clarissa Clò, Valerio Ferme, Áine O'Healy, and Pasquale Verdicchio, "Regarding the Pain of Others: Migrant Self-Narration, Participatory Filmmaking, and Academic Collaborations"
This article provides a collaborative reflection on a series of interrelated cultural projects held at four universities in California between March 2014 and May 2015. Relevant activities were organized around the visit of activists and filmmakers Stefano Liberti, Andrea Segre, and Dagmawi Yimer, all invited from Italy to present their work on human rights abuses in the Mediterranean. The aim was to engage students, colleagues, and local communities in dialogue on transnational migration and refugee issues from their own U.S. location. This shared experience prompted the organizers to consider the role of academic collaboration across diverse institutions, and the pedagogical implications of the overall project.

5. Fixity and flexibility of photographs

Gerardo Doti, "Paesaggi informali. Immagini per un album generazionale (1945–1979)"
Between the Second World War and the seventies of the twentieth century, Italians produced a vast number of images capturing interrupted or recently evoked traditions. This essay argues that such images expressed an aspiration for a new direct contact with the environment, perceived as a valuable laboratory for studies and researches. Abandoning themselves to this reality, architects, artists, and photographers fashioned an imagined world that was not only capricious and rebellious but also historical and archaeological (the reminder of the past) and ethical-ontological (the reunion of past and present).

Paolo Parmeggiani, "Guardare Venezia: la città come dispositivo visuale"
This paper describes how pictures of Venice have become key drivers of the city's unsustainable mass tourism. The author discusses city icons and the remediation of ancient or standard typologies in images made by contemporary tourists. The thesis is that this city has always been an extraordinary example of the apparatus of visual representations. The analysis of how urban visual representations entered the cycle of the production and consumption of cultural capital is based on the methodology of visual sociology, as it focuses on images (from ancient architecture to contemporary resident activists), tourists' sightseeing practices, and residents' reactions.

6. Exemplification

Emily Verla Bovino, "On *Irons, Bones,* and *Stones,* or an Experiment in California-Italian Thinking on the 'Plastic' between Aby Warburg's *Plastic Art*, Gelett Burgess' *Goops*, and Piet Mondrian's *Plasticism*"
The "plastic" is undervalued in recent art history as a designation for sculpture, or, in perception, as a single sense associated with touch. "Plasticity," as popularized by neuroscience, is an elastic adaptability that evades fixity for flexibility. Current philosophy has, therefore, revisited plasticity for its explosive rather than regenerative capacity to receive and produce form; however, this rethinking has neglected the plastic in art. Using scholarly comedy to explore accidents of resemblance (pseudomorphisms) and acausal coincidences (synchronicities) among artist-writer Piet Mondrian's "plasticism," art historian Aby Warburg's "plastic art," and artist-humorist Gelett Burgess' plastic figure called "goop," this essay generates insights on the plastic in art.

Robert Williams, "Repetition, Variation, and the Idea of Art in Renaissance Italy"
The development of Raphael's inventive strategy, especially his technique of maximally efficient variation—the production of images that differ from but at the same time evoke one another—is set against the background of the relationship between invention and repetition as it was contested in the theory and practice of painting and poetry around 1500. Raphael's approach had profound implications—evident, for instance, in the anti-fetishistic effect of his *istorie*—and an influence on the understanding of creative labor that remains essential to our sense of what art is.

Samuele Briatore, “Suono e spettacolo. Athanasius Kircher, un percorso nelle immagini sonore”

The tyranny of the visual over the auditory was overthrown during the Baroque period. Jesuit and Galilean natural philosophy integrated sound studies into mathematics, with the result that sound itself became a topic independent of music, harmony, and auditory number. The new auditory paradigm was immediately applied in the realm of spectacle and the illusory atmosphere. Harmonic fountains, sound machines, automatons, and “speaking rooms” come to life, and everything is enclosed and condensed in the context of Baroque celebrations, which maximize the expression of wonder. Here sounds, songs, thunder, and explosions find their natural theater. These considerations are explored through images of Athanasius Kircher.

Issue II: Open Theme

Paola Bonifazio, “Postfeminist (Dis)Entanglements: Transgression and Conformism in Contemporary Italian Teen Movies”

This essay examines the articulation of discourses of gender and sexuality in three films based on Federico Moccia’s novels, which represent Italian teenagers and their romantic troubles: *Tremetri sopra il cielo* (Luca Lucini, 2004), its sequel *Ho voglia di te* (Luis Prieto, 2007), and *Amore 14* (Federico Moccia, 2009). More specifically, I consider these films as case studies in order to address the conflict between female sexual agency and gender normativity in film narratives, an aspect that is common to many contemporary romantic comedies and dramas both in Italy and abroad.

Tamara Colacicco, “Il fascismo e gli *Italian Studies* in Gran Bretagna: Le strategie e i risultati della propaganda (1921–40)”

Utilizzando in esplorati materiali d'archivio londinesi e romani, questa ricerca individua nei dipartimenti di Italian Studies in Gran Bretagna un perno della propaganda del fascismo all'estero. Affiancando filoni di indagine su cui ha insistito la più recente storiografia (dalla propaganda fascista, alla parabola dei Fasci italiani all'estero), questo articolo ricostruisce per la prima volta le modalità attraverso le quali il fascismo sviluppò composite strategie di propaganda nel Regno Unito. Inoltre, misura gli effettivi risultati conseguiti, identificando fasce di pubblico italofile o fasciste nei circoli cattolici locali e in personalità dell'intellighenzia britannica (dal giornalista James S. Barnes a Harold E. Goad, direttore del British Institute of Florence negli anni 1922–39).

Anne Greeley, “Giorgio de Chirico/Isabella Far, ‘Theater Performance’ (1942/45)”

Published here for the first time in English is Giorgio de Chirico’s first and most extensive discourse on the art of theater, “Il teatro spettacolo,” translated and introduced by Anne Greeley. Known primarily for the metaphysical paintings he created from 1910–18, the artist went on to enjoy a lengthy career in set design. In this illuminating essay, which will be of particular interest to scholars and students of modernist studies, de Chirico writes pointedly about the metaphysical

power of the theater, the faults of both realist and modernist approaches to the medium, and the faddish exploitation of the *manichino* on the modern stage.

Antonio Iannotta, "Le immagini del potere. Note sull'identità italiana nel cinema di Paolo Sorrentino"
Nel saggio, attraverso l'analisi di tre film di Sorrentino, vengono tracciate delle note sull'identità italiana. Si comincia con L'uomo in più che tratta del concetto di nazional-popolare, e degli incroci tra calcio e musica leggera. Si passa poi a indagare le trame politiche attraverso il personaggio-maschera di Andreotti ne Il divo, per finire con l'intreccio di potere e religione. Ne La grande bellezza, infine, si analizza la terza stratificazione identitaria: la trasfigurazione dal brutto al bello e viceversa. In questo senso, le città di Napoli e Roma sono un tutt'uno: un continuum di valori estetici e bassezze umane.

Rosemary Lee, "The Muslim Counter-Reformation Prince?: Pietro della Valle on Shah 'Abbas I"
The Roman orientalist Pietro della Valle, a supporter of the Safavid shah, shaped perceptions of Islamic rulers through his efforts to promote his former patron in Rome during the Ottoman-Safavid war. In his 1628 treatise, Della Valle encouraged readers to see Abbas as a Muslim Counter-Reformation prince: an effective ruler and trustworthy ally for institutions like the Propaganda Fide, a religious congregation that was Della Valle's primary audience. Della Valle's work reveals how new readings on Muslim rulers influenced European understandings of religion's relationship to the early modern state.

Ronald L. Martinez, "Taking the Measure of *La Lena*: Prostitution, the Community of Debt, and the Idea of the Theater in Ariosto's Last Play"
The organizing principle of *Lena* is a network of interrelated debts binding Ferrarese citizens. The plot is built around commodities, of which the most important is Fazio's house, on loan to Lena. The measurement of the house at the play's center establishes that in Ferrara all things have their exact valuation, and furnishes a metaphor, underlying the whole play, for the prostituted body of Lena herself. Framing the debt-driven economy in the play are Ariosto's decades of reflection on the spaces of his city, evoking especially the recent rationally planned *Addizione erculea* willed by Ercole I d'Este.

Francesca Minonne, "Performative Translations in Syria Poletti's *Gente conmigo*"
In this article, I analyze author Syria Poletti's novel, *Genteconmigo*, as an early example of the role of translation in migration. I engage with the field of ethics in translation and work on social interactions as performance as I examine the translator protagonist's interactions with four clients, as well as her own experiences. These interactions highlight identity as performative, and her translations are likewise performative, as she helps her clients immigrate to Argentina and assimilate. Poletti's interrogations into the relationship between language and sense of belonging for immigrants would only be taken up again in Argentina and Italy decades later.

Metello Mugnai, "Fabrizio De André riscrive Edgar Lee Masters: la società italiana dello sviluppo economico in *Non al denaro non all'amore né al cielo*"

Con il "concept album" *Non al denaro non all'amore né al cielo* Fabrizio De André riscrive *Spoon River Anthology* di Edgard Lee Masters alla luce dello sgonfiarsi dei turbamenti del Sessantotto. La mia tesi è che quest'operazione di ritraduzione e riscrittura anticipa temi quali il trionfo del consumismo e dell'individualismo della società italiana. La naturale conseguenza di questa prospettiva implica il soffermarsi sull'operazione non solo artistica e storica, ma anche politica di De André. L'album offre all'ascoltatore un affresco quasi dantesco, in cui i morti riprendono la parola per parlare ai vivi, attraverso il tema dell'invidia e della scienza.

Roberta Panzanelli, "It's About Time: Gaudenzio's *bel composto* at Varallo"

This article explores the pilgrims' reception of the initial chapels (c.1486–1528) at the New Jerusalem at Varallo, the first monumental reproduction of the Holy Sites to contain images aimed at guiding viewers' devotional response. Many chapels of the early project were designed and decorated by Gaudenzio Ferrari and his workshop with illusionistic sculptural ensembles and fresco painting. The ensuing "total environments" were unique spaces where a savvy blending of media and the manipulation of space in real time created a surrogate reality that elevated representation to the category of sensory experience while perfectly attending to the Franciscan ritual emphasis on Christ's suffering.

Fiona M. Stewart, "'Libera nos a malo': Violence and Hope, Image and Word in Rossellini's *Roma città aperta*"

This article argues that in *Roma città aperta* (1945) Rossellini and Amidei, two agnostics, have deliberately and skillfully deployed Christian doctrine to craft a film that would have seemed at once realistic and hopeful to its original Italian audience. Through analysis of the film's final sequence—within the context of the film as a whole—this article seeks to demonstrate that individual and national hope, in line with historic and orthodox Christian eschatology, can be drawn from Rosselini's correlation of the "words" of the liturgical elements delivered in Latin with the "visual" images of Don Pietro's execution.

Gregory Tentler, "Best Most Sensational Balloons: Piero Manzoni's *Corpo d'aria/Fiato d'artista*"

In 1959 the artist Piero Manzoni introduced his pneumatic sculpture kit *Corpo d'aria*. Composed of a prefabricated box, which contained a white balloon, a mouthpiece, a tripod, and instructions, the kit's initial reception was muted. In retrospect, however, *Corpo d'aria* is revealed to be one of the most important works in Manzoni's oeuvre. The sculpture kit established the artist's methods of production for his subsequent conceptual projects and clarified his larger artistic motives. *Corpo d'aria* also inaugurated Manzoni's critique of artistic labor and privilege as currently defined by the continental vanguard.

Daniele Vadalà, "A Bundle of Rods: Transmigration of Symbols and Spatial Rhetoric in the Architecture of Modernity"

This study, dealing with the most flexible symbol of Italian Fascism directly drawn from the ancient Roman Republic, aims to argue that the fascist aesthetic had a substantial afterlife in the making of post-war democracies. Through an analysis of the work of architect Luigi Moretti an attempt is proposed to develop clues to understanding not only the role of the *fascio littorio* in fascist Italy, but its permanence in the existing democratic scenario outside Europe.

John L. Vitale, "Exploring *Canzone Napoletana* and Southern Italian Migration Through Three Lenses"

Through a biographical lens, this article investigates my own personal experiences as a first-generation Italian Canadian and explores how post-World War II southern Italian immigrants in Toronto, Canada, used the *canzone napoletana* as a coping mechanism for the daily hardships and struggles of immigrant life. Through the lens of the Italian diaspora, this article also investigates how Neapolitan song became the metaphorical voice for the vast majority of southern Italian immigrants around the world. Lastly, through the lens of non-Italians, this article examines how the *canzone napoletana* influenced non-Italian perceptions about Italy on a global scale.