

'Italian Cinema and Media: Past and Present, Continuity and Change, Expectations for the Future'

Third edition of the *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies* international conference

In person ONLY

The American University of Rome

16–18 June 2022

Keynote Speaker

Professor Stephen Gundle

University of Warwick, UK

'Looking back, looking forward: The changing shape of Italian cinema and media studies'

This address will explore the way the landscape of Italian film studies has changed in recent decades both in Italy and abroad. It will consider, among other things, the way in which ideas of a canon have been challenged and reinterpreted, evolutions in (and displacements of) efforts to interpret Italian film production as a whole, the impact of the decline of Italian cinema as a commercial and artistic powerhouse on the study of film, and the growing attention to television and new media. The address will re-visit and assess recent and not-so-recent attempts to judge the study of Italian cinema as a field or to shift the agenda in some way. It will conclude by seeking (modestly) to indicate some possible fruitful avenues of future research.

Stephen Gundle is professor of film and television studies at the University of Warwick. A cultural and political historian, he has always paid close attention to Italian cinema and television. Among his books are *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943-91* (Duke, 2000; Italian edition Giunti, 1995); *Mass Culture and Italian Society from Fascism to the Cold War* (with David Forgacs, Indiana, 2007; Italian edition Il Mulino, 2007); *Bellissima: Feminine Beauty and the Idea of Italy* (Yale, 2007; Italian edition Laterza 2007); *Glamour: A History* (OUP, 2008); *Death and the Dolce Vita* (Canongate, 2011; Italian edition Rizzoli, 2012); *Mussolini's Dream Factory* (Berghahn, 2013; Italian edition Kaplan, forthcoming); *Fame amid the Ruins* (Berghahn, 2020).

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The year 2022 marks the 10th anniversary of the publication of the first issue of the *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies*. Published by Intellect (UK) and co-sponsored by Wellesley College (USA), it remains the only English language journal on Italian cinema and media.



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In the past ten years, we have been inclusive in our efforts to establish connections with scholars from several continents. We have also made it our mission to explore the resonance of Italian film in the world across times, themes, styles and genres. After publishing the first four issues – two on Italy and Asia (2:1 & 2:3, 2014), a third on Italy and Latin America (10:2, 2022), and the fourth one on Italy and post-socialist countries (2023), and organizing two international conferences (2017 & 2019), the journal has created a large community of scholars of diverse disciplines, all engaged in studying the artistic intersections between Italy and other countries.

As we celebrate this anniversary, we are prepared to move forward with new explorations and discussions aimed at expanding these interconnected academic communities, with a focus on a broader understanding of Italian cinema and media in international artistic contexts.

The past decade has marked a series of successes for the *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies*. This has coincided with a period during which the global media landscape has undergone remarkable transformations: from the internet and World Wide Web to the rise of social networks and their deep impact on social interactions; from the ubiquitous smartphone emerging as the quintessential example of media convergence to the new conglomerates of a fast-changing panorama of platforms, devices and streaming services.

As media systems are always both driven by and the drivers of technological and social transformations, they are inextricable from new forms of everyday life, politics, society and culture, which scholarship must understand, analyse and challenge.

With evolving media comes the development of new economies, production policies and distribution platforms, which match new and diverse formats, audiences, consumption patterns and modalities of interaction with the moving image. The relation of traditional cinema with evolving technologies, screen media, visual cultures and digital, social and interactive platforms has reconfigured what cinema means as production, consumption and prosumerism take shape under new landscapes of transmedia content and transnational audiences. From Netflix to YouTube and from Instagram to TikTok, cinematic and screen languages have accommodated the messages, interactions, arts and expressions of a changing world. This is a world dominated by an awareness of the urgency of climate, humanitarian, health and economic crises, along with the rise of movements for change and equality, including #MeToo and Black Lives Matter, which take on a global significance as well as cognizance of national- and region-specific approaches.

All of these changes have affected the ways we can and should look at cinema and media broadly speaking, but also how we can conceive of the cultural complexities of Italian histories and cultures and what challenges are faced by scholarship over the next years. Understanding Italian cinema and media cultures today means looking at how Italian cinema finds a place in the new media ecologies and economies at a national and transnational level as well as how YouTube, TikTok and social media have offered audiences new ways to narrate Italian cultures and specificities, how Italians communicate their diverse identities, and how these are shaped by new dynamics of inter-relation and distinction.

Looking at Italian cinema and media today thus also means understanding how the changing landscape of the cinema and media play an essential role in reframing Italian-ness in a changing national and global culture. New media have inherited the traditional forms in which our identities have been communicated, from our histories and the arts traditions on Instagram to YouTubers discussing our food cultures and Made in Italy design sensibilities. Social media have created new symbolic and relational bonds in the transnational web of connections and distinctions that tie Italians at home to those abroad. Media also have played and will play a key role in framing and re-framing the place of Italy in a postcolonial and decolonized perspective, offering visibility and providing points of access for non-White-centric ideas of Italian-ness, new subjectivities, and groups advocating for key issues such as migrants' rights and an inclusive citizenship model for second-generation Italians.

As Italian media and cinema productions, agents and audiences both national and transnational represent a lively and complex terrain of analysis, *JICMS* strives to capture and understand their complexities in all their newly evolving forms.

As we reflect on the state of the disciplines (cinema and media studies), we open this CFP to a wide range of themes, with the intent of offering a unifying horizon that will allow scholars to explore diverse fields and topics in a broad international context and move forward with new studies, building the future of both the discipline and the journal.

With this CFP, the conference organizers invite proposals from scholars, independent researchers, cinema and media professionals, and graduate students for single papers, pre-constituted panels, and roundtables.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Post-cinema (intersectionality of cinema and social media)
- Social media (media ecologies, national branding, Facebook, WhatsApp)
- Cinema and media on demand: Amazon, Hulu, Netflix (from the theatre to the home, watchers as content creators, multiplatform television, algorithms and taste)



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- Non-theatrical cinema and media (industrial cinema and media, commercials, propaganda, didactic cinema and media)
- Immersive technologies (virtual reality, augmented reality, mixed reality, spatial audio and artificial intelligence)
- Series (TV series, web series, pay TV, new frontiers in storytelling, transnational narratives, international circulation of TV series)
- Media, cultures, identity, politics, gender (mass vs. niche media, 'Audience' and practices of participation, representations of power, popular culture, feminism, (in)equities in access and digital divide, politics of media and media in politics, embodiment, multicultural media, identities from stars to selfies, mediation and remediation, ideologies, gender)
- Crime television (crime and crisis, restaging history, social change through popular crime media, challenging stereotypes and discrimination, transnational productions, transcultural formats)
- Popular genres and transnationalism (western, sci-fi)
- Migrant stardom (e.g. Raffaella Carrà)
- Women in media industries (directors, writers, actors, transnational mobility)
- Writing in cinema (screenwriting, revising, translating, subtitling, adaptations)
- Reception (transnational, intermedial, critical, popular)
- Plurimediality and transmediality (cartoons, comics, graphic novels, *fotoromanzi*)
- Political cinema (reality, history, fiction)
- Archives and digital resources
- Cinema and the digital humanities
- Plurilingualism in cinema
- Landscape, environment, urban and rural in cinema
- Comedy and transnational reception
- Italian cinema and Latin American cinema
- Italian cinema and post-socialist cinemas
- Postcolonial Italian cinema
- Italian cinema in dialogue with other art/cultural trends (theatre, visual arts, literature)
- Italian cinema and the labour world/labour activities
- Form(s) in contemporary cinema
- Critical posthumanism and Italian cinema
- Housing and the home in Italian cinema and television
- Cinema schools in Italy (history, curricula, international students' careers) (e.g. Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome, other CSC schools).

The languages of the conference are English and Italian. **Proposals for virtual papers will not be considered.**

Please send an abstract of 250 words plus a short bio of 100 words for single papers, or 350 words for panels (including the aims of the panel and summaries of each contribution specifying the names of filmmakers, artists, films, media etc.) followed by individual titles, panellists' bios, current academic affiliation, and e-mails for pre-constituted panels with three speakers, or roundtables in Italian or in English in a word .doc format, **not .pdf**. We invite proposals for 20-minute presentations (inclusive of film clips). We welcome presentations using both conventional tools and video-essay commentaries.

Abstracts for consideration should be submitted to Flavia Laviosa at flaviosa@wellesley.edu.

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is **5 December 2021**. Notification of acceptance of abstracts will be sent out to authors by **30 December 2021**.

Participants will receive a complimentary copy of *JICMS* and will be able to purchase Intellect publications at a special conference discounted price.

Conference registration fee includes: two lunches, opening and closing receptions.

The deadline for inclusion in the conference programme is **15 March 2022**. Please, make every effort to pay conference fees before this date.

€ 200 regular rate (€ 100 for 1 day)

€ 150 student rate (€ 75 for 1 day)

The registration fee will be paid to AUR and the website will be available in January 2022.

In case of withdrawals the registration fee will not be reimbursed.

In case of cancellation of the conference the registration fee will be reimbursed.

Extra

Post-conference tour. Destination to be determined: Sunday 19 June 2022.



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