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An Eye on Italy: Continuities and transformations in Italian visual culture

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The conference *An Eye on Italy: Continuities and transformations in Italian visual culture* (held at Flinders University, Adelaide, 24-25 November 2016) brought together creative artists and established and early-career researchers from Italy, the UK, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand with interests in visual representations in various media and the visual dimension of adaptations across media. Associate Professor Clodagh Brook (then of Birmingham University, now at Trinity College Dublin) opened the program with a key-note address titled “Cinema and the Arts in Italy: Creativity, Conflict and Collaboration”, exploring the ways in which Italian cinema has collaborated with the other visual arts from the 1960s through to our current era of digital contemporaneity, breaking boundaries and challenging established ideas of cultural centres and peripheries. She drew on her work as principal investigator in the “Interdisciplinary Italy” project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in the UK, which also informed her seminar and forum for Italian teachers on “The Future of Italian Interdisciplinary and Visual Studies Teaching” which closed the conference program. Information on the project, concerned with “interartistic and intermedial practice in modern and contemporary Italy”, can be found at www.interdisciplinaryitaly.org. Our second fascinating key-note presentation was by Giancarlo De Cataldo, judge and acclaimed novelist and scriptwriter based in Rome, who spoke on “The Dark Side: raccontare il crimine tra letteratura e fiction TV”. He later discussed his work further at a Q&A session after a public screening of the film *Romanzo criminale*, based on his highly successful novel and for which he was one of the screenwriters. An interview with De Cataldo is included in this issue. Other participants’ presentations included performances as well as papers on topics ranging from post-colonial identities to LGBT rights campaigns, with several addressing aspects of intersemiotic translation.

We are very grateful to *FULGOR*'s editors for the opportunity to dedicate this issue to articles based on a selection of the conference papers. As is normal in these situations, not all papers were available for publication, especially as various speakers were international PhD students. Of those submitted and accepted, the presence of the words ‘violence’, ‘massacre’ and ‘fatalmente’ in four of the titles is striking, and indeed all five articles make reference to *oeuvres* in which women are abused and/or killed. While this is a peculiar coincidence, it must be noted that the theme of violence against women had been in the headlines for a long time prior to the conference, and has certainly been at the centre of attention since. We hope that this issue of *FULGOR* will help continue research in this area.

The conference was funded by the Australasian Centre for Italian Studies (ACIS), which also generously provided a scholarship fund for PhD student participants, and Flinders University, while Griffith University and Victoria University of Wellington gave in-kind support. Clodagh Brook's visit to Australia was sponsored by ACIS and Giancarlo De Cataldo's by the Istituto Italiano di Cultura Melbourne, while the Dante Alighieri Society of South Australia and Radio Italia Uno Adelaide sponsored the community event. We particularly thank Prof. David Moss, ACIS Chair, for his inspiration regarding the conference theme, as well as for guidance and practical assistance in numerous areas, and the Italian Consul Roberta Ronzitti for her support. Our warm thanks also go to Prof. Diana Glenn, at the time Dean of Humanities and Creative Arts at Flinders University, for her generous support, and to the University's professional staff who ensured proceedings went smoothly. Dr Laura Lori also gave her time and energy generously in various organisational tasks, and helped arrange the program so that the conference could be scheduled contiguously with the symposium *Postcolonial Italy: Between assimilation and integration* that she convened as part of the project "There ain't no black in the Tricolore!". Dr Barbara Pezzotti also made an invaluable contribution in suggesting Giancarlo De Cataldo as key-note speaker and in organising his visit to Australia. And of course we sincerely thank all those who participated, coming from near and far.

The best conferences enrich us as academics and as people, allowing us to share and soundboard ideas, test our mettle as organisers and extend our professional networks; they can also create new friendships. *An Eye on Italy: Continuities and transformations in Italian visual culture* was certainly one such gathering. We are proud to share this issue in the spirit of the conference, and hope you will enjoy reading the finished articles as much as we enjoyed listening to them *in nuce*.