

ABSTRACT IN INGLESE

Exhaust the Body. A Conversation with Antonio Rezza and Flavia Mastrella

edited by Alessia Cervini and Andrea Inzerillo

The artistic duo Antonio Rezza and Flavia Mastrella (REZZAMASTRELLA) is born out of an intolerance toward institutions and authority. They constantly stage the body in theatre, cinema and television as the nerve centre of their anarchic work. They completely question the staged body and the body of the stage, the actor's body and the - suffering, irregular - bodies that the actor has to personify. Through a radical experimentation of artistic languages, Antonio Rezza and Flavia Mastrella claim the primacy of body and space over the will and the fiction of the actorial representation. The suffering or exhausted body, the scream, the sound, the automatism of the word give rise to a non-conciliatory art and a non-civil theatre that, through its rhythm, involves the spectator in an original way.

Pasolini's Body: Life, Death, Survivals

Vincenzo Trione

Starting from Pasolini's analysis of football as the last sacred representation of contemporaneity, the essay aims to show how the body is Pasolini's existential and poetic obsession and legacy. Through contemporary artists such as Benassi, Kentridge, Dumas, and Vezzoli, the élan vital of the Pasolinian corpo-corpore survives by translating itself into a visual guerrilla that, between bibliographic fascination and civil tension, introduces a new political vocation in the art world. It seems capable of extracting the Pasolinian legacy from the mythological system that surrounds it, but also of initiating an interrogation of the present that explores and shapes the pervasive disorder of the ongoing apocalypse.

The Body Between Anesthesia and Sensation

Luigi Pezzoli

The aim of this essay is examining the way through which cinema, that depends entirely on *aisthesis*, is able to stage insensitive bodies. Through an archaeological investigation starting from Aristotle in order to clarify the real physiognomy of *anaesthesia*, the author analyzes few films whose protagonists seem to have lost their ability to feel - from the insensitive virgins of *Corpo e anima* (Enyedi, 2017) and *Repulsione* (Polanski, 1965) to *Nymphomaniac* (von Trier, 2013), including *Gerry* (Van Sant, 2002). At the final sensation of this journey an absolute insensibility seems to be implied not because of its identity with *anaesthesia*, but for the zero degree of a *pure* sensation that, no longer belonging to any sensible subject, will show itself in all its *impersonality*.

Immersive Regimes. The Body of the Spectator Between Dictatorship and Freedom

Adriano D'Aloia

The essay explores the potential and the limits of virtual reality, highlighting conceptual issues removed from contemporary debate. The analysis of the deviations, affinities and divergences typical of the role of physical being in virtual reality and at cinema consents to rethink the rhetoric that creates opposition between the “dictatorship” of cinema to the immersive “freedom” of VR. On the one hand, the “empathic machine” of virtual reality will thus be able to show an unthought *emersivity* that will allow us to redefine its specificities. On the other hand, the analysis of the “embodied simulation” and of the “passive” reception of cinema will offer a different form of spectatorial liberation.

Faces Wanted. Agency, Amateurism, Self-representation

Anna Chiara Sabatino

Exploring the expanded digital audiovisual universe, offline and online, it is possible to find multiple figurative manifestations of the face represented through the motif of the mask, which seems to be the only theoretical and operational way to approach it. From this perspective, and considering the digital self-representational configurations, the iconic representation of the face would seem capable of distancing itself from the referent by evolving from its iconic value. The essay examines the concept of the facial device as an iconographic and discursive nexus, but also as a theoretical and methodological lens through which showing the mode of operation and the

human agency activated by the figuration of the face on digital selfscapes, oscillating between visagéité, voltification and de-voltification.

Bodies and Displays

Alessandro Ferraro

With a deeply interdisciplinary approach - including visual studies and contemporary art history - this essay explores the possibility of understanding the human body as a radical form of display. Through two cases of study (Eva and Franco Mattes, Jeremy Bailey among others), the essay problematizes the concept of display according to the two main implications that this term implies in relation to the overexposure of bodies in the contemporary era (a simple screen and, at the same time, an elaborate *attractive strategy*).

The Mutating Super-Bodies of Marvel Heroes

Diego Del Pozzo

The body, with its mutations, is significantly central in superhero narratives. In the early 1960s, the advent of Marvel Comics renewed its representation through the greater realism of the comics. Later, in the third millennium, the development of digital technology and CGI allows Marvel characters to be convincingly protagonists in film and television stories and also the narrative of the superheroic body to have a leading role in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, which is the shared narrative universe successfully coordinated by producer Kevin Feige and based on Marvel Comics.

Homosocial Corporeality in Bromance

Maria Luisa Fagiani

Bromance is a portmanteau of the words “brother” and “romance”. It has been a recurring theme in 21st century public debate and an emerging genre in media representations. In these contexts, homosocial intimacy is represented not only as an emotional feeling, but also through evident bodily expressions that symbolically seal the strength of the narrated bond. This is a way for questioning heteronormative dynamics and creating new homosocial scenarios.

Monstrous feminine in *New French Extremity*

Elvira Del Guercio

This essay attempts to explore how the work of French filmmakers Marina De Van, Claire Denis, and Julia Ducournau fits into the cinematic and aesthetic movement known as the “New French Extremity”. The term “New French Extremity” was coined by the journalist and film critic James Quant to describe a series of French films from the late 1990s and early 2000s that are part of a radical and extreme cinema. Beginning with an analysis of the cinematic current, this paper explores how De Van, Denis and Ducournau, with three very similar films, *Trouble Every Day* (2000), *Dans Ma Peau* (2002) and *Titane* (2021), appropriated the concept of *body horror* and redefined its taxonomy.

Alchemical Bodies. On Some Feminist Archival Practices

Arianna Vergari

Drawing on recent feminist theories that combine an interest in the material dimension of film with a phenomenological approach, this essay aims to explore the complex relationship between visibility and invisibility in selected found footage works. In these films, the female bodies represented on screen establish an osmotic relationship with the cinematic body. Notably, the excessive visibility of the cinematic body results in a diminished legibility of the represented bodies. This process generates new modes of sensual viewing and allows for counter-narratives in which the female body, as a result of performative gestures, is repeatedly constructed and deconstructed in light of a new Antigonian legacy.

The Body of the Voice. A Regressive Path from the Word at the Sound

Alma Mileto

The essay examines the work of Simone Massi (illustrations, short films, animated inserts in films by various authors), starting from the fact that the Italian artist studies the concept of the body (human or inanimate) and its perennial transformations. From an animistic perspective that rejects a hierarchical difference between man, stone and tree, Massi represents the substance of the world as a quantity of matter in which there are no limits and everything is connected and always on the verge of being other than itself. Besides this type of representation, the essay also focuses on the peculiar operation that the artist performs on his drawings: he uses the “one-step”

technique and also a procedure that creates the figures through a gradual subtraction of the pigment used to wet the sheets of paper. In this way, Massi engraves the bodies of his characters and makes them rise directly from a homogeneous substance.

The Queen's Two Bodies: woman, crown (and diva)

Simona Busni

Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, Katherine Hepburn, Bette Davis, Romy Schneider, Vanessa Redgrave, Judi Dench, Cate Blanchett, Helen Mirren, Olivia Colman: they are all *queens* playing the role of queens (most of them for more than once). And that is why their healthy carriers could be defined as “queenliness”, a concept involved in the performance concerning the different interpretations of royalty. Each screen queen is always a double: a person and a majesty, a historical image already portrayed (several times) in the past, a star recognizable for her previous roles. So, how many bodies really *compete* with each other in the female characters belonging to the stories of the *royal biopic*?

Beer and Sausages. The Body Through Food in Italian Cinema

Federico Giordano

Food, nutrition, and body have always been closely linked and they have been used by Italian cinema to narrate contemporary society or to assert a theoretical point of view. Since the silent era, in Italian cinema food and bodies have been used differently depending on the genre and the auteur. The essay traces some important moments along this path: the fascist comedies; the comedies produced during and after the Italian economic miracle; the film d'auteur (Fellini, Ferreri, Pasolini, and Moretti); the genre film; the food industrialization of the 1980s which led to a distorted relationship between food and body (diets and eating disorders); and finally, the contemporary foodification and Slow Food.

Varda Before *Cléo*. Body, Line, Stylization, Sbstraction

Luca Venzi

After discussing a recognizable and shared tendency toward dynamics of essentialization, stylization, and compositional and visual abstraction in the works of Resnais, Marker and Varda in the 1950s and early 1960s, the essay explores these dynamics more deeply - from a theoretical and analytical perspective - and their connections to the element of the body. The essay focuses on the very early cinema of Agnès Varda and in particular on her directorial debut, *La Pointe Courte* (1954-56), and then on her three short films *Ô saisons, ô châteaux* (1958), *L'Opéra-Mouffe* (1958) and *Du côté de la Côte* (1959).

Brian Yuzna. The Horror of the American Social Body

Luciano Attinà

The article analyzes Brian Yuzna's films, *Society - The Horror* (1989), *Re-Animator 2* (1990) and *Return of the Living Dead 3* (1993). *Society* represents the biopolitical concept of a unitary social body through the image of a parasitic elite made up of malleable bodies. *Re-Animator 2* renews the image of Frankenstein's bride body in the context of necropolitical power. Finally, *Return of the Living Dead 3* combines punk aesthetics with the character of a female zombie turned into a cyborg in order to show a symbolic and rebellious body.

Something Akin to Beauty. *Paradies: Liebe* by Ulrich Seidl

Vincenzo Altobelli

Starting from the seminal reflections of Bazin and Kracauer on cinematic realism and crossing the aesthetic paradigm of ugliness by Rosenkranz, the essay discusses the human body as a "socially structuring phenomenon" and director Ulrich Seidl's total repulsion – aesthetic and theoretical – for the "embellished" carnal images conveyed in mass media. Seidl's work – and specifically the film *Paradies: Liebe* (2012) – are totally extraneous to the mainstream and to any hypothesis of repentance; they impose an idea of the body that is clearly inscribed in the current discourse on its media representation and brutally used as a weapon of cultural revolution.

***Su Re*. The Greatest Crisis Ever Told**

Mattia Gritti

In *Su Re* the body is a way to develop an aesthetic discourse that points

to the basis of Western thought, through of its greatest history. In Sardinia Jesus is the ugliest of men and those who surround him and want to condemn him are played by patients of the mental health centre based in Cagliari. Starting from the formal analysis of these elements, the essay uses the concept of ethos to highlight a political questioning of the relationship between the body and the word/word of God, according to a Nietzsche-Foucault-Rancière influence.

Continuous Bodies. *Leviathan* by Castaing-Taylor and Paravel
Filippo Ticozzi

The essay examines *Leviathan* by L. Castaing_Taylor and V. Paravel. Set during a fishing trip, the film stages the body (human and non-human) in a very original way, revealing new connections between cinematography, organic matter and imaginary. This is the beginning of a journey beyond cinema looking for the visible human limit, and the last possible vision in theaters.

Black Body as Alien Body. *Love is the Message, the Message is Death* by Arthur Jafa
Annalisa Pellino

Arthur Jafa (Tupelo, Mississippi, 1960), winner of the Golden Lion at the 2019 Venice Art Biennale, is an African-American artist and filmmaker, who has contributed to the global affirmation of a black audiovisual aesthetic based on the body and its sonic extensions. In particular, the artist identifies the specificity of black culture in what he defines as *black visual intonation*, by constructing the audiovisual phrasing on the temporality of Afro-American music, which configures new possibilities for a black aesthetics based on the *sounding body*. Starting from these premises, the essay analyzes *Love is the Message, the Message is Death* (2016), which intersects the modes of the *essay film* with those of music video, where the *black visual intonation* works as a kinesthetic principle of emotional revival that supports the *audio-tactile* continuity (Iannotta, 2017) between the film and the spectator's body.