



CALANDRA
ITALIAN
AMERICAN
INSTITUTE

Corporeal Restrictions, Embodied Freedoms

Italian Interventions on the Body

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

APRIL 26–28, 2018

Corporeal Restrictions, Embodied Freedoms

Italian Interventions on the Body

The 1935 song “Faccetta Nera,” a paean to the Fascist imperialist enterprise in Africa, addresses the “little black face” that is the anonymous Abyssinian woman, an object of Italian colonial desire. This jaunty march with its suggestive miscegenation proclaims a gendered liberation of African women with the line “our law is slavery of love” (*la legge nostra è schiavitù d’amore*). The song was made famous by tenor Carlo Buti and eventually became a staple of *fiesta* band repertoires among the diaspora. In contemporary Italy black women are routinely taunted and humiliated with this Fascist-era tune.

The song is but one example of the myriad ways in which the body figures in discourses and cultural productions concerning Italy’s histories and identities, within and well beyond the country’s geopolitical boundaries.

This interdisciplinary conference recognizes the body in its literal, metaphorical, and hybrid constitutions as found in the modern nation-state of Italy, the larger Italian diaspora, and among former colonies. It builds on the array of seminal work on body politics mainly developed in women’s and gender studies where corporeal imaginaries construct and reposition identity and agency.

Italy and *italianità*, with its complex position within a Western hegemony—connected to colonialism, transnational migration, and larger discourses of power—is a particularly interesting locus for focusing a series of critical interventions around the body.

Cover painting: *Casa degli Uccelli* (2013), acrylic and raw pigment on unstretched canvas, 98 x 86 inches, by Angela Valeria. Collection of Richard Charm.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018

6:00–8:00 pm

Welcome and Reception

ANTHONY JULIAN TAMBURRI, John D. Calandra
Italian American Institute

JANICE SMITH, Acting Dean of Faculty, Division of Arts
and Humanities, Queens College

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 2018

9:30–10:45 am

Corporeal Inscriptions

Chair: Annemarie Tamis-Nasello, Fashion Institute of
Technology, SUNY

The Body Damned, the Body Saved, the Body Glorified:
Portrayals of the Body in Dante's *Commedia*, ALFRED
CRUDALE, University of Rhode Island

Paola Masino's Short Story "A Modo Loro": A Critique of the
Effects of Fascism's Gender Policies and the Demographic
Campaign on Italian Women, TRISTANA RORANDELLI,
Sarah Lawrence College

A Shade of Black in Italian Women's Writing: Body, Food,
and Identity in Igiaba Scego's "Salsicce," FRANCESCA
CALAMITA, University of Virginia

11am–12:15 pm

Keynote: Colonial Heritage, Aspirations, and Embodied Representations in Martina Melilli's *Mum, I'm sorry* (2017), GIULIA GRECHI, Academy of Fine Arts of Naples

12:15–1:30 pm Lunch on your own

1:30–2:45 pm

Italian Biopolitical Tales of Contamination, Migration, and Colonialism

Chair: George De Stefano, Author

Fascist Bodies on the Fourth Shore: Societal Entanglement within the Imperial Space, ROBERTA BIASILLO, Rachel Carson Center

Belgian Carbon Metabolism and Coal Lives: Italian Miners' Corporeal Experience and Their Bodily Resistance Practices, DANIELE VALISENA, Royal Institute of Technology

Toxic Bios: Storytelling as Subversive Bodily Experience, MARCO ARMIERO and ILENIA IENGO, KTH Environmental Humanities Laboratory

3–4:15 pm

Italian Women: Their Bodies Are Our Bodies

Chair: Mary Ann Carolan, Fairfield University

Quando Sono Italiana (When I am Italian), JOANNA CLAPPS HERMAN, Author

The Cripple, EDVIGE GIUNTA, New Jersey City University

The Body and Blood, NANCY CARNEVALE, Montclair State University

In/animate Bodies La Galleria

Chair: Alfred Crudale, University of Rhode Island

Pio Fedi's Tomb of Giovanni Battista Niccolini and the Creation of National Sentiment in Post-Risorgimento Italy, CATERINA PIERRE, Kingsborough Community College, CUNY

Animating the Inanimate: Fortunato Depero's Futurist Toys and Marionettes, SOPHIA MAXINE ABRAMS FARMER, University of Wisconsin-Madison

4:30–5:45 pm

Bodies On and Off Screen

Chair: Jacqueline Reich, Fordham University

The Racialized Body: *Under the Southern Cross* (1938), ANNEMARIE TAMIS-NASELLO, Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY

Disembodied Dubbing: The Hybrid Body or the Myth of Aristophanes, ANTONELLA SISTO, Brown University

The Italian Actor as Body in American Cinema, GIULIANA MUSCIO, University of Padua

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2018

9:30–10:45 am

Performing Bodies

Chair: Danielle Battisti, University of Nebraska Omaha

Tattoos, Italians, and *Italianità*, JOANN DELMONICO
LUHRS, Brooklyn College, CUNY

Italian American Performance, Healing, and Hip Hop,
NATALIE MARRONE, Duke University

Me, Myself, and I: Defining the Individual According to Vito
Acconci, ANTHONY CAVALUZZI, SUNY Adirondack

11am–12:15 pm

Bodies in History and Memory

Chair: Joseph Sciorra, John D. Calandra Italian American
Institute

Material Intimacies and Remembrance as Embodiment:
Women and Transnational Migrancy between Appalachia and
Calabria, JOAN SAVERINO, University of Pennsylvania

Illegal Bodies? Unauthorized Italian Immigration to the
United States and Adjustment of Status in the Twentieth
Century, DANIELLE BATTISTI, University of Nebraska
Omaha

Embodied Memory and Oral History: The Bronx Italian
American History Initiative, JACQUELINE REICH and
KATHLEEN LAPENTA, Fordham University

12:15–1:30 pm Lunch on your own

1:30–2:45 pm

Violations and Resistance

Chair: Joan Saverino, University of Pennsylvania

The Violation of a Nation: Rosetta and Cesira in Vittorio De Sica's *La ciociara*, CHIARA DE SANTI, Farmingdale State College

"I Do Not Love You!" How Franca Viola Used Her Body To End the Medieval Code of *Matrimonio Riparatore*, LION CALANDRA, Journalist

The Practice of Infibulation Among Migrant Baby Girls in Italy, MICHELA VALMORI, Notre Dame University

3–3:50 pm

Sexuality and Gender

Chair: Colleen Marie Ryan, Indiana University

The Scandalous Bodies of Guglielmo Plüschow: Constructing a Homoerotic Mediterranean through Photography, GEORGE DE STEFANO, Author

WinxClub, or the "Angelification" of Girls: A Neoliberal-Catholic Project, NICOLETTA MARINI-MAIO, Dickinson College, and ELLEN NERENBERG, Wesleyan University

4:05–5:20 pm

Written on the Body: Intersectionality in Italian American Women's Narratives

Chair: Donna Chirico, York College, CUNY

Traces of Trauma: Disability and Maternity in Tina De Rosa's Archive, MARY JO BONA, Stony Brook University, SUNY

"The Very Tenuousness of Every Moment": Maternal (Inter)subjectivity and the Body of the Beloved Child in Joelle Biele's *Broom*, CHRISTA BAIADA, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY

"The Time Bomb Sitting Inside my Own Body": How Corpo-reality Defies Death in Stories by Rita Ciresi, COLLEEN MARIE RYAN, Indiana University