

Coda

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As any proper music piece,¹ albeit *remediated* in the form of a book, this reflection ends with a *coda* that aims at recapping the main points proposed throughout, as well as at drawing a few conclusions. Firstly, the essays collected in this volume shall be seen as the symptom of a broader and increasing interest in the exchanges and productive connections between film and opera. This is most definitely not a new area of inquiry but the editors, alongside all the contributors, propose new readings that offer fresh insights and open up debate on the basis of an innovative framework. More specifically, coupling film studies and musicology has allowed for the articulation of a multilayered view, whereby remediation processes complement each other onto various levels: the model that guided the structure of this book, besides offering a counter play amongst texts in each section as illustrated in the introduction, has been designed in a three-fold fashion, so as to focus on three aspects that can be used a lens to look at the processes at stake. At a *medium level*, the flow from one expressive for to another entails a reconfiguration that doesn't simply translates opera into a film (or new media artefacts) but rather intervenes critically in the features of the film or the opera pièce, creating room to nest musical/performative elements in the former or, in turn, cinematic elements in the latter. At a more *linguistic level*, the filmic grammar as well as the operatic structure allow for another set of intermedial exchanges, which allow to identify parallels between sequences and acts, camera movements and refrains or arias, etc. In this sense the centrality of the actors' body on set and that of the singers' performance on stage offer interesting materials to observe. If on the one hand taking advantage, for example, of the editing allows for a well thought through framing of actors and their evocative gestures on screen, on the other an exacerbated gesturality fills the cuts on the film strip with an original sense of owning and inhabiting of the scene typical of live spectacle. Finally, at a *semantic level* the essays gathered in this volume show how remediation elicits a deep reflection impacting on the wider cultural context

1 Whilst this text was conceived jointly by the authors, Miriam De Rosa wrote paragraphs 1 and 4, and Vincenzina C. Ottomano wrote paragraphs 2 and 3.

of the operas and films selected as case studies, shedding light on the ability to operate appropriation and re-appropriation processes across time. Such a model, which shall be mapped against the three parts of the volume – each with its own film and music pair (Elena Mosconi and Chiara Casarin, Giorgio Biancorosso and Laura Cesaro, Matteo Giuggioli and Lorenzo Rossi) – serves as a contribution to the rich literature on the relationship between film studies and musicology, in a way that takes critical advantage of the complex overlapping territories between the two. It taps into the specific area of intermediality and adopts the classic concept of remediation not as a linear mechanism but rather trying to highlight its prismatic nature.

A brief survey of the main publications from the past fifteen years reveals that the dialogue between opera and cinema – both in musicology and in film studies – can no longer be regarded as a marginal field of research. The urgency to reconsider operatic works in relation to new cinematic and media configurations aligns with recent methodological approaches that investigate opera's cultural influence beyond the historical and geographical contexts that originally shaped its production and reception. On top of that, technical boundaries traditionally associated with the genre shall also be considered, and they represent a key element to be related to moving image forms, too. What emerges is a highly diversified landscape that confronts the challenge of relocating opera within the new spaces created by the advent (and subsequent morphing dynamics) of cinema, television, and, more recently, digital imaging experiences. Recent scholarship tends to focus on specific composers,² stylistic or genre borrowings in Italian cinema (Targa 2011; Baymann 2014), or, again, distinct forms of remediation – ranging from the film opera to the live-streaming of performances at opera houses, including hybrid phenomena such as operas conceived for DVD, television, or digital platforms and social media.³ The theoretical and methodological framework that takes shape in these studies could, however, be fruitfully extended to less canonical composers or to filmographies that mark crucial historical transitions.

Following this trajectory, the present volume aims to propose an innovative approach in at least two respects. First, as rehearsed, it brings together scholars from both musicology and film studies, but it does so challenging them to transcend the disciplinary boundaries: the three-fold model mentioned above offers room for experiment to embrace the two perspectives at once, so as to enrich current research on remediation as well as on the role of opera within the mediascape of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Secondly, the two interviews interspersed across the volume demonstrate how our understanding of remediation processes is nourished not only by scholarly inquiry but also by the living practice of opera and cinema – each of them being continually reshaped by such research. These dialogues offer multiple vantage points: from a 'state of the art' overview of remediation theory – not limited to nineteenth-century melodrama but extended to the vocal experiments of contemporary musical

2 See in particular Giuggioli 2011; Vincent 2014; Miceli 2014; Verona 2016; Giuggioli 2019; Marchelli 2021; Sala 2024.

3 See in particular Senici 2009; Esse 2010; Girardi 2015; Senici 2019; Cenciarelli 2021; Mantica 2022; Chapple 2006; Dixon 2007; Balzola 2011; Vazzaz 2012; Galla 2020; Pernice 2023. Amongst the most recent studies around the connection between film and opera, please refer to the ongoing research by Giulia Carluccio and Stefania Rimini: Carluccio 2024.

theatre, as in the conversation with Michal Grover-Friedlander – to the first-hand testimony of a musicologist, Vincenzo Borghetti, who collaborated with director Mario Martone as consultant for the musical choices in his reinterpretations of the Risorgimento and of opera's role within it. In a kind of *contrappunto*, the voices of Roberto Chiesi and Roberto Calabretto, in the closing section of the volume, further the discussion toward questions of production, preservation, and reconstruction, exploring seemingly distant yet conceptually related case studies: Pasolini's *Medea* and the *miniature scores* from the Venice-based collection of the Levi family. Despite their diversity, both underscore the necessity of a holistic vision for the analysis of remediation phenomena understood within their broader cultural context.

The kaleidoscopic landscape outlined by these contributions animates a volume which invites the readers to understand remediation not merely as a technical or aesthetic process, but as an interpretative act, capable of redefining both the operatic and the cinematic experience. In this sense, the encounter between opera and cinema does not crystallise in an artwork – be it a film or a music piece – resulting once for all from a convergence process, but rather produces an open and dynamic field of cultural negotiation, whose meanings continue to evolve. This has historically been the case of 'video-theatre' back in the 1980s⁴ and it is now the case of live cinema where new technologies are employed to remediate both film and performance in a complex spectacle combining recorded and live media in a unique whole. It is the case of *Living Cabiria*,⁵ produced in the frame of the same PNRR-funded project that allowed to develop this very research and conducted by the research team based at the Universities of Turin and Catania. This project implicitly moved from a process of remediation of the filmic text with the aim of elaborating innovative strategies able to combine multiple arts, including music and new media that consequently mobilise musicological and media studies scholarly traditions which are bridged together seamlessly. From operatic to filmic, then, up to video, digital image and new media configurations, the rich intermedia tapestry that is sketched is a threshold that asks to be crossed over and over again, venturing towards yet new expressive forms.

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4 On video-theatre, please see at least Malvezzi 2015; Monteverdi 2012; Del Gaudio 2021.

5 Please refer to https://www.fondazionechanges.org/progetti/il-contributo-dell'esperienza-digitale-nelle-strategie-di-valorizzazione-del-bene-culturale-intangibile-il-progetto-living-cabiria/#pll_switcher.

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