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Queer Temporalities: Boredom and Bodily Intelligence in Early Italian Slapstick Comedies

Emma Morton

In Italian slapstick comedies, two elements interact to queer the viewing experience: the presence of a cross-dressed body and the subsequent disruption of cinematic time. Some of the most interesting early Italian slapstick comedy films are those with male-to-female cross-dressing, from 1909 - 1914 they were made by every Italian production company, and during this period all Italian male comedy actors cross-dressed in at least one film.¹ This article aims to examine how the construction, movement and filming of the cross-dressed body produces queerness in early Italian slapstick comedies. I will apply Noël Carroll's work on Buster Keaton's bodily intelligence to the construction and movement of cross-dressed characters and discuss how the cross-dressed body disrupts cinematic time queering these films.

Queer temporalities thus goes beyond revising film history in describing some early Italian comedies as gay films. 'Queer' surpasses the notion of binary sexual identities, rather it seeks to undo the heterosexual and gendered assumptions of both the film viewing experience and the study of film. Such a methodology becomes more valuable considering the political, social, and historical time under study. As Lorenzo Benadusi, Paolo L. Bernardini, Elisa Bianco and Paola Guazzo point out, this was a period in which "Italians, as never before, and rarely afterward, multiplied their sexual identities."² Studying these films through a queer perspective enables a broader understanding of the historical period in which they were made and the social and cultural questions that occupied Italian society at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Film Time as a Convention

Film time as a cinematic convention was established very early on in film production. The development of continuity editing enabled time and space to become coherent between shots, formalising our perception of time within the cinematic frame. However, time in the filmic sense is very different from how our consciousness experiences time, or rather, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty would attest, it is the experience of time that necessitates consciousness.³ In film, time is expressed indirectly by the changing imagery and the action within the images. It is the intentionality of the film's structure, one image linking to the next, that gives us a sense of the continuity of time. Our perception is conditioned by the order in which the cinematic images appear and our anticipation of how they will proceed. When this privileged relationship between film narrative and time fails to synchronise with our anticipated understanding of narrative progression, time itself becomes conspicuous. Building on Jack Halberstam's work on queer temporalities, which explores how the adjustment of cinematic time exposes audiences to the hegemonic construction of time, I argue queerness found in early forms of cinema lies not only in the visibility of a queer character but also in the productivity of queerness.⁴ In this article I do not merely count the presence of a queer character as evident of a queer cinema but consider how alternative aesthetic strategies evidence a queering of cinema in the early 1910s. I use two examples, *Cretinetti che bello!* (Itala Film, 1909) and *Butalin spazzacamino per amore* (S. A. Ambrosio, 1912), from Italian silent cinema to discuss the ways in which time has been adjusted, to argue that this disruption of conventional cinematic time queers that temporal moment.

The era of silent cinema was one of vast experimentation and technological advancement. Arguably, some of the most experimental and progressive films in the silent film canon were the slapstick comedies that appeared very early in the history of film, and especially in Italy.

Many Italian slapstick comedies featured astonishing special effects and created surreal worlds for their characters to inhabit. Ivo Blom notes: “In a period when the artistic avant-garde was only slightly involved in cinema [...] Italian comedies may have triggered the imagination of artists around the world.”⁵ For example, *Cretinetti che bello!* (Itala Film, 1909), begins with a chase sequence where Cretinetti (in the role of the dandy) is pursued through the streets by an ever-increasing collection of female, cross-dressed, admirers. When the admirers finally catch up to Cretinetti the film turns surrealist as his limbs are torn from his body. As the admirers walk away, Cretinetti’s limbs reconfigure themselves and Cretinetti walks away, whole again. In *Kri Kri fuma l'oppio* (Cines, 1913), Kri Kri postulates the effects of drugs when he mistakenly smokes opium cigarettes and begins to hallucinate. In this film we see Kri Kri’s point-of-view and experience the hallucinations along with him. The film uses mirrors to create an evil twin that pesters and even fights with Kri Kri.

Alongside experimental film techniques, early Italian comedies also tackled progressive social themes such as giving women the right to vote. This theme was played out most notably in suffragette comedies such as: *Lea femminista* (Cines, 1910) and *Lea modernista* (Cines, 1912). Despite the differing themes tackled by Italian comedies, the binding factor was the energetic performances of their comic stars. Made during the transitional period between the cinema of attractions and the cinema of narrative integration, slapstick comedies incorporated both sight gags and formal storytelling. Although Donald Crafton found the use of sight gags to be a disruptive hang-up from the cinema of attractions, early comedies can also be far more complex in their use the sight gag.⁶ Some comedies would use the entirety of the film to set up the gag using the last few seconds to reveal it, while others would incorporate a range of mini gags within the set up before the final punchline was revealed. Cines’ *Lea* series (1909-1914)

followed the latter pattern, blending the absurd visual joke with a more subversive jab at society to end the film.

To some degree early Italian comedies could thematically go where the diva dramas and historical epics could not. In the name of comedy, Italian slapsticks could have partially dress women onscreen, they could show women doing men's jobs and they could poke fun at social structures. As Eileen Bowser notes: "Silent slapstick film, like feature film, was a commercial commodity of the big business entertainment industry and had its own distinct conventions, yet it [...] functioned as a subversion of the feature film."⁷ For Bowser, the conventions that bound slapstick comedies across Europe and the USA into a distinct genre were the many sight gags such as explosions, chase sequences, pie-throwing, to name a few. However, she clarifies that the most important slapstick comedy convention was that of subversion: "Where many feature films in this period taught a moral lesson, the short slapstick films mocked authority figures and family values, they were amoral and politically incorrect."⁸ The appeal of slapstick comedy was apparent, David Robinson notes that between 1909 and 1914 Italian production companies made around 1,143 comedies, and created "no less than 38 comic personalities" across all film studios.⁹ Short comedies were a staple of film production in every studio, as they were quick to make and successful at the box office; they provided studios with the ability to finance their larger projects and explore more modern ideas.¹⁰

The films which reflected changes in Italian society best were the Italian slapstick comedy films of the 1910s. Reflecting on the increase in alternative sexual identities and lifestyles of the urban areas, some of the most interesting comedy films are those with male-to-female cross-dressing. Not only were they made by every Italian production company, but they featured several prominent male comedy actors. Historically, male-female cross-dressing characters

were often been read as homosexual, Mauro Gori comments that homosexual characters were “conceived according to a repertoire of feminine idiosyncrasies, sensitiveness, fragility and frivolousness already widely established in popular imagery.”¹¹ But beyond this, these works contained were able to portray queerness through the stories of everyday activities, and in some instances blurred the boundary between drama and comedy.

Among these cross-dressing films is a group of films which feature a character that arrests the frenzied performance of the slapstick comedy and allows the audience to gaze upon their queer body. It is at this rupture in the performance that the perception of the body adjusts to a queer aesthetic. The slowing of cinematic time to gaze upon a queer character alerts us to the hegemonic construction of time and puts pressure on the heteronormative status quo that has been retroactively applied to the early cinematic form. In their discussion of Early American cinema, Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin state: “Most of the period’s authorities considered sexual identity to be strongly (if not completely) linked to gender identity, and thus it was theorized that homosexuals desired same-sex affection because they considered themselves (or desired to be) members of the opposite sex.”¹² Gori reflects this idea when we comments on the idea that a “ ‘true’ homosexual [is] a female soul in a male body or the other way around.”¹³ Therefore, the performance of feminine traits by a male character has been understood as a euphemism of homosexuality and because the queer performer can be considered female, it actually reinforces heteronormative gender binaries. However, I would argue this is an oversimplification. As Richard Dyer contends, regardless of the intent, queer characters onscreen make “visible the invisible” through a “repertoire of gestures, expressions, stances, clothing, and even environments that bespeak gayness.”¹⁴ What Dyer is alluding to is the multiple perspectives that are available in a cinema audience. In all the writings I quote the understanding of queerness is almost entirely based on the performance of femininity by a male

character that produces queerness, rather than a historical understanding of queerness through its construction by the filmic form. As Benadusi *et al.* discuss, between unification and the advent of Fascism, “The division male/female traditional became outworn. [...] Rigid Catholic morality abandoned the scene, and a freer sexuality was enjoyed.”¹⁵ The Italian people, more particularly the urban masses, were not only aware of multiple sexual identities and genders but had been accustomed to their presence in Italian society for a significant amount of time by the 1910s. In which case we must turn to Sara Ahmed’s theories of a queer perspective and “how we turn toward that object” or how we orientate ourselves around it.¹⁶ Orientations are at once physical, in the way queer characters inhabit the screen, as well as in how society understands and repeats conventional thought about queer lives. For Ahmed, to break with linearities and be out of sync with conventional cinematic time “produces a queer effect.”¹⁷ Therefore the queerness of these films lies not only in the visibility of the queer characters but also in the production of queerness by the form of the film itself.

Noël Carroll attends to the comedic body in his essay on Buster Keaton’s *The General* (1926). Here Carroll underscores Keaton’s “bodily intelligence”, a concept he derived from Annette Michelson’s concept of “carnal knowledge, ... behaviourally incarnated and manifested in action.”¹⁸ What both these authors suggest is that the body is not a mindful machine; the body possesses an intelligence, or a muscle memory, which allows it to walk and grasp without directed thought. When the body is unable to perform these *mindless* tasks, as it is in the weightless conditions of outer space that Michelson refers to in her discussion of Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), or in Keaton’s trips and falls in *The General*, this draws attention to an innate bodily knowledge that eludes Keaton and the astronauts of *2001*.

For Merleau-Ponty, the body possesses a kind of understanding which is engaged by the cultivation of habit.¹⁹ Bodily behaviour is intentional, according to Merleau-Ponty: the body possesses an understanding of spatial orientation and is purposive in how it interacts with the world around it. The cross-dressed body is first a comedic body that is involved in subverting and disorientating a reflection of the body's knowledge, but it is also a gendered body that mediates between what the male and female body should know. Here it is possible to bring Martin Heidegger's *Dasein*, a way of 'being-in-the-world', into awareness through film, as the cross-dressing film is continuously engaged in the representation, highlighting the inauthentic nature of the performance. It is the interplay between the cross-dressed character and bodily intelligence that is the subject of these films and that appears to alter how time is perceived in them.

The second element is the way in which the cross-dressed body's performance disrupts cinematic time. Detached time as a device for illuminating the world within a film allows it to stand in for something else. The audience is forced to question what these representations might mean for our understanding of the world within the film. In his work on slow cinema, Karl Schoonover discusses arrested cinematic time as essentially queer, writing, "Queerness often looks a lot like wasted time, wasted lives, wasted productivity. Queers luxuriate while others work."²⁰ In early single-reel comedies, the significance of lingering shots of the queer body is heightened as it disengages the audience from the onward progression of the sight gag. It is the viewer who is invited to seek and find meaningful correlations between the film's narrative and the slow-moving representations of time portrayed within it. The queer performer draws attention to the cross-dressed body, and in doing so alters the viewer's perception of time. I will engage with both of these elements of the cross-dressing film, both elements working to create a queer visibility that exposes (or threatens to expose) the queer nature of the

performance. As Jack Halberstam writes, a trans film is “a paradox made up in equal parts of visibility and temporality.”²¹ It is the very structure of these films that queers cinematic time.

Bodies on Show

Dylan Trigg develops Merleau-Ponty’s idea of the body which has agency “prior to cognitive intentionality.”²² This places the body “in a broadly autonomous relationship to mental intentionality” according to which the body can anticipate difference before cognition can intend actions.²³ Trigg goes on to clarify this as an expression of a bodily “prehistory” which allows the body to “discern an orientation in the world of its own accord.”²⁴ The ‘phantom limb’ phenomenon as an aspect of mental intentionality is useful when forming an understanding of the effect of time and experience on the body.²⁵ As Tausif Noor explains, “When a person loses a limb, the neurological condition of feeling pain in that limb is tied to the subject’s past experiences in that limb’s function.”²⁶ In the male-to-female cross-dressing films, the cross-dressed character must disguise not only their appearance, but also their gendered prehistory. The cross-dressed performer’s initial gender can be read as representative of a “phantom limb”, the performer must not only dress as the alternate gender, but also perform as such. In early slapstick films, it was the cross-dressed body’s inability to perform as the chosen gender that alerted the audience to the queer performance.

Società Anonima Ambrosio’s *Butalin spazzacamino per amore* (1912) offers an example of how bodily intelligence and gendered prehistory can be subverted in the service of comedy. In it the cross-dressed comic hero, Butalin, is the mistress of the house whose lover must hide up a chimney to evade her husband. Butalin was a central character in a series of Italian slapstick comedy films that were made between 1911-1913 for the Ambrosio film company. In *Butalin spazzacamino per amore*, Butalin endeavours to disclose the gendered bodily performance by,

on the one hand, exhibiting the movements expected of a female character and, on the other hand, performing these motions in such a way as to slow time, thus drawing attention to their body's gendered prehistory. In much the same way as playing a slapstick sketch at 24 frames-per-second makes the slapstick appear frenetic and spontaneous, purposely slowing the projection speed allows the performed nature of the sight gags to emerge. For example, in *Lea e il gomitolo* (1913) Lea climbs on top of a wardrobe, and the wardrobe then falls, taking Lea with it. When the film is slowed down, one observes Lea must swing her legs away from the wardrobe to adjust the wardrobe's centre of gravity and thus cause it to fall.

Butalin must use a variety of devices to perform the action of slowing time. This is predominantly achieved through eye movements. Many comic actors use dramatic gestures or facial expressions to help the audience see and understand what is being portrayed. This becomes more important with *Butalin spazzacamino per amore* as the camera remains static through the first half of the film. Butalin must remain relatively still, so that the audience can observe the subtle movements of their eyes and hands. It is under this direction that the spectator explores the queer body. With their hands clutching their breast, Butalin's eyes flick towards the camera, ensuring the audience has seen them; then, they address the camera, leading the audience through an examination of their femininity. The film itself becomes queer as the narrative economy is replaced by a revelling in the queer body. Butalin stands, looking down at their skirt as they straighten the folds, being careful to show the audience the smallness of their waist and the absence of the tell-tale bulge that would give away their 'true' gender. Averting their eyes upwards, they adjust their beautifully styled hair. The perfect fit of their clothes and careful styling of their hair creates such a convincing cross-dressing disguise that it is only through the relative popularity of the male comic and the arrest of cinematic time that is alerted to the cross-dressing. Butalin looks directly into the camera, inviting the spectator to

gaze at them, becoming both the agent of the comedy and the object of the gaze, and interrogating the binary constructions of gender and sexuality. However, despite the use of a queer character, the gaze remains heteronormative and upholds the traditional understandings of femininity and masculinity. Therefore, more must be going on to mark these films as queer, and it is the adjustment of cinematic time that allows for a queer perspective to emerge.

There is no unveiling of the disguise, as may be often found in later cross-dressing films, and no heightening of the gendered performance to draw attention to the artifice. Instead, by extending what would be normally a quick glance by the spectator to establish the performers' role in the film, time is adjusted: the quick glance has become a lingering mindful task that creates a new, queer, temporality in the mind of the spectator. The slowing of time through Butalin's appraisal of their body draws attention to the micro-negations of the cross-dressed disguise. This allows gendered prehistory to surface in the elongated glance. There is a sense of dwelling on the moment, making room for the queer orientation through relinquishing time.

As Sara Ahmed reflects in her introduction to *Queer Phenomenology*, "it matters how we arrive at the places we do."²⁷ At first glance, Butalin is a woman seeking to hide her lover as her husband returns home unexpectedly. This narrative could have continued to an effective slapstick ending without Butalin drawing attention to their cross-dressing. Here, the phenomenological model of emotions as intentional helps us to understand how the slapstick humour is heightened by the unsettling of the gender disguise. By drawing attention to the performance of gender, the way in which we apprehend the world is shifted. It is the act of drawing our attention towards the gendered performance itself that is the very heart of queer phenomenology. The devices employed by Butalin reorientate the spectator to a queer way of experiencing the world.

Bodies in Time

The under-cranked nature of the silent film has accustomed us to the hectic visual pleasure of the silent slapstick film. Not only was the speed of the corporeal gags essential to comedy, but the speed of the film was also aligned with the lively nature of the musical accompaniment that ensured films progressed at a rapid pace and immunised audiences against boredom. The actors had to shoot at speeds slower than the intended projection speed, and this meant that they had to adjust how they moved and how props were moved. Actors had to repeat movements to draw the spectator's attention to the props which were important to the story.

As such, it is fair to say that slowing the expected speed of the film would open up the potential for boredom. Sight gags and acrobatic stunts would become monotonous as the mechanics of the set up were made clear to the audience. In *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, Heidegger examines the issue of boredom in detail, delineating its potential for philosophising, positioning boredom as experience and as a tool for tuning into the experience of time.²⁸ Boredom is a concept that is also associated with slow cinema: as Manohla Dargis and Anthony Oliver Scott discuss, arresting cinematic time can initiate a thinking process in the viewer.

An examination of how boredom and slow cinema can be used in silent cinema is relevant to the perception of silent films as primitive and without complex meaning. By utilising these concepts, we can assess how a queer temporality is created. Heidegger's understanding of boredom, thanks to its close link with time, can be a means of arousing thoughts about moving images and questions about our relationship with them. In the cross-dressing comedies it is the interplay between time, the gaze and the speed of the film that creates a queer perspective. Halberstam's *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* discusses

how “queer bodies are deliberately kept in stasis while heteronormative time moves on.”²⁹ This is the case for these early comedies where the cross-dressed body remains in the centre of the frame as much of the action happens around them. However, it is the very centring of the queer body and the slowing of the actions the queer body expresses that queers the film. For Heidegger, boredom was a way to pass the time and a stimulus for thinking; it is this second notion that I want to focus on in the final section. Films in which time is dilated, as it is in slow cinema, can initiate a thinking process in their viewers because the presence of boredom has the function of creating moments in which the audience feels it is ‘being held in limbo’. It is the very act of slowing down time that allows the viewer’s mind to wander. Allowed to wander spectators are given more opportunity to gaze upon the queer body. As Manohla Dargis and A.O. Scott state: “Faced with duration not distraction, your mind may wander, but there’s no need for panic: it will come back. In wandering there can be revelation as you meditate, trance out, bliss out, luxuriate in your thoughts, think.”³⁰ This slowing of time expands the potential for discussion of the ways in which we interact with cinematic images.

An example of this occurs in *Le furberie di Robinet* (1911). Here, the plot is limited to Marcel Fabre walking around a city disguised as a woman. Unlike the more exaggerated male-female cross-dressing Fabre would perform two years later in *Madamigella Robinet* (1913), his performance in *Le furberie di Robinet* does not offer any explanation for his cross-dressing. The film begins in a tree-lined boulevard. Two men talk in the centre-left of the frame; a woman walks slowly from the distance towards the two men and finally past them, and the two men follow her. If the film is slowed down to the speed at which it was shot, most likely between 16-20 frames-per-second, it becomes evident that Fabre purposefully slows his actions. For example, he slowly extends his legs as he walks, creating an almost unnaturally acute bend in

the knee which is at once raised too high and at an angle which is too pronounced. The purpose of this was to highlight the hectic movements of the people around him.

The film amounts to Robinet slowly walking through the city as more people follow them. In contrast to Butalin, Robinet averts their eyes from both the camera and the other characters throughout most of the film. However, the framing of Robinet, who remains in the centre of the frame moving from the background to the foreground in every scene, encourages the spectator to repeatedly look at them as, the closer to the camera they get, more of their body is revealed. The repetitive nature of the shots begins to draw our attention to the details of the protagonist. As our minds can gain no further information about the progression of the narrative from the shots, they begin to wander. Robinet's position as queer is repeatedly restated as they move from a blurred outline of femininity into a sharp-focused realisation that it is Fabre in disguise. The blurring of gendered identities is made more apparent by Fabre's choice of dress. He avoids the ample breasts and excessive bottom that would become a feature of his later cross-dressing performances. Instead, he prefers a light and fluid dress; any hint of his male body is absent as he moves freely through the space, abandoning excessive gestures or expressions. Fabre's costuming denies the audience the knowledge that this is a man dressed as a woman, there is an ambiguity in Fabre's gender that remains throughout the film.

In the repeated sequence, time becomes elongated as we are drawn to the billowing of Robinet's dress. The dress becomes almost a sub-narrative in the film, its perilous nature becoming more apparent the longer the viewer looks at it. Compared to Butalin's costume, which is tight and made of heavy fabric, offering no possibility of Butalin losing their clothing and revealing their 'true' gender, Fabre's dress could easily be torn or blown away. Due to the lack of entertainment in the repeated sequences, time is elongated not by a focus on the actor but on

the object of the dress. The movement and flow of the dress is unbridled by cinematic time. It cannot be adjusted like the actor's performance; it flows out of sync with the adjusted time of the film. The emptiness of the locations, the slowness of the performance and the disharmony of Robinet's dress bring about a threat for the spectator: that of boredom from the repetitive sequences, the confronting of time derailed from expectations, and then a growing sense of anxiety in which the perilous nature of such a costume unsettles the cinematic convention of what 'must' be covered to maintain the cross-dressed illusion and, much like Butalin's look into the camera, creates a blurring of gender and sexual boundaries.

The disruption of cinematic time began in the very early decades of the film industry. This disruption created moments of disorientation: the disoriented feeling of time being altered in *Butalin spazzacamino per amore*; of what we think we know shifting back and forth as Robinet in *Le furberie di Robinet* walks towards the camera over and over again. Ahmed discusses disorientation not as an act of reorientation but as an intentional state of being. According to Laura Marks, perception takes place not only in the phenomenological present but also as a continuous dialogue between the individual and their cultural memories.³¹ The continuous shift that occurs as this dialogue changes reflects why disruption remains a cinematic convention to this day. This process is present not only in cinematic perception but also in cinematic form. The queering of time in the silent films discussed here does not mark them as isolated experiences for the audience. Rather they become part of an exchange, as Vivian Sobchack notes:

As viewers, not only do we spontaneously and invisibly perform these existential acts directly for and as ourselves in relation *to* the film before us, but these same acts are conterminously given to us *as* the film, as mediating acts of perception-cum-expression we take up and *invisibly perform* by appropriating and incorporating them into our own existential performance; we watch them as a *visible performance*.³²

Our perceptions continually shift; queer temporalities allow us moments to perceive the world around us differently, and this in turn creates new cultural memories and new orientations.

Notes

- ¹ For example: Ernesto Vaser in *Fricot soldato*, Italy: S. A. Ambrosio 1913; Lorenzo Soderini in *Il re della moda*, Italy: Cines, 1914
- ² Lorenzo Benadusi, Paolo L. Bernardini, Elisa Bianco and Paola Guazzo, "Preface," in *Homosexuality in Italian Literature, Society, and Culture, 1789-1919*, eds. Lorenzo Benadusi, Paolo L. Bernardini, Elisa Bianco and Paola Guazzo (Newcastle Upon Thames: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), p. iv.
- ³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962), p. 142.
- ⁴ Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*, (New York and London: New York University Press, 2005), p. 77.
- ⁵ Ivo Blom, "All the Same or Strategies of Difference: Early Italian Comedy in International Perspective," in *Italian Silent Cinema. A Reader*, ed. G. Bertellini (New Barnet: John Libbey Publishing, 2013), p. 176.
- ⁶ Donald Crafton, "Pie and Chase: Gag, Spectacle and Narrative in Slapstick Comedy," in *Classical Hollywood Comedy*, eds. Henry Jenkins and Kristine Brunovska Karnick (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 111.
- ⁷ Eileen Bowser, "Subverting the Conventions: Slapstick as Genre", in *The Slapstick Symposium*, ed. Eileen Bowser, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art / Federation Internationale des Archives du Film, 1988), p. 13.
- ⁸ Eileen Bowser, "Foreword", in *Lame Brains and Lunatics: The Good, The Bad and The Forgotten of Silent Comedy*, Steve Massa (Oklahoma: BearManor Media, 2013), p. x.
- ⁹ David Robinson, "The Italian Comedies," *Sight and Sound* 55 (2) (1986): p. 106.
- ¹⁰ For more detail on slapstick comedy convention see: Rob King and Tom Paulus (eds.), *Slapstick Comedy*, (New York: Routledge, 2010); Alena E. Lyons and Ervin Malakaj (eds.), *Slapstick: An Interdisciplinary Companion*, (Berlin/ Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2021).
- ¹¹ Mauro Gori, *Homosexuality and Italian Cinema: From the Fall of Fascism to the Years of Lead* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), p. 32.
- ¹² Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin, *Queer Images: A History of Gay and Lesbian Film in America*, (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), p. 21
- ¹³ Mauro Gori, *ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Richard Dyer, *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representation*, (London: Routledge. 2002), p. 19.
- ¹⁵ Lorenzo Benadusi, *ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (London: Duke University Press, 2006), p. 2.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ¹⁸ Noël Carroll, *Comedy Incarnate: Buster Keaton, Physical Humor, and Bodily Coping* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), p. 5.
- ¹⁹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 144.
- ²⁰ Karl Schoonover, "Wastrels of Time: Slow Cinema's Laboring Body, the Political Spectator, and the Queer," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 53, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 73, accessed April 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41552300>.
- ²¹ Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2005), p. 77.
- ²² Dylan Trigg, "The Return of the New Flesh: Body Memory in David Cronenberg's *The Fly*," *Film-Philosophy* 15 no. 1 (2011): p. 85.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 70.
- ²⁶ Noor Tausif, "Unclean, Unsaid, Undead: Beckett, Merleau-Ponty, and the Degradation of Body and Language," *Inquiries Journal/Student Pulse* 5, no. 9 (2013): accessed April 2022, <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/a?id=764>.
- ²⁷ Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, p. 2.

²⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude (Studies in Continental Thought)* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

²⁹ Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2005) quoted in Michelle M. Wright, "Queer Temporalities Space-ing Time and the Subject" in *Time and Literature*, ed. Thomas M. Allen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 290.

³⁰ Manohla Dargis and A.O. Scott, "In Defense of the Slow and the Boring," *The New York Times*, 3 June 2011, accessed April 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/05/movies/films-in-defense-of-slow-and-boring.html>.

³¹ Laura Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

³² Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 10.

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