The Performative is Political in Naples: Lina Mangiacapre's Avant-Garde Feminist Films

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
(Italian)

at the
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
2022

Date of final oral examination: 5/19/2022

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the Nemesiache and friends for guiding me through public and private archives in Naples and Rome: Silvana Campese/Medea, Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa, Bruna Felletti/ Karma, Fausta Base, Anna Grieco/Dafne, Maria Matteucci/Marea, Rosa Sannino, Nadia Nappo at the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, Nadia Pizzuti, Stefania Tarantino, and Franca Farina at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia. I am especially grateful to Silvana Campese/Medea, without whom this project would not have been possible.

For early inspiration, I thank the faculty at Wheaton College in Massachusetts: Tommasina Gabriele and Alberto Bianchi. For a strong foundation and several years of stimulating study, I thank the faculty in the Department of French and Italian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison: Patrick Rumble, Grazia Menechella, Kristin Phillips-Court, Stefania Buccini, Ernesto Livorni, Jelena Todorovic, and Loren Eadie.

I thank Paola Bonifazio, Ryan Calabretta-Sajder, Danielle Hipkins, and Millicent Marcus for thought-provoking correspondence during my years of graduate study. Thanks to Grazia Menechella for the Naples Seminar. A special thanks to Jeff Smith for sharing insights and ongoing support. Most of all, I thank my dissertation advisor and mentor Patrick Rumble for continued guidance, support, intellectual inspiration, and exchange.

Last but not least I thank my family and friends in Connecticut, Wisconsin, Italy, and beyond for their encouragement, enthusiasm, and support.

Support for this research was provided by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of French and Italian and Graduate School, part of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, with funding from the Mellon Foundation and the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation.

Note on Translations

Regarding translations, all English translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own and are aimed at facilitating the reading and discussion of this dissertation by the members of the committee. As such, they do not preserve any specific literary or historical characteristics of the original text.

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Introduction

Tucked away among manifestos and avant-garde works of art lay the Neapolitan feminist films of Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesi [Nemesis] (1946-2002). Born in Naples, Mangiacapre was a dynamic force of creation: an avant-garde artist and philosopher, painter and poet, composer and playwright,[1] pacifist and feminist, editor and organizer, novelist and journalist,[2] film theorist and filmmaker. Mangiacapre promoted a world with fewer borders, boundaries, and controls in which harmony reigns supreme and women may explore and express themselves free of the fear of the established order bearing down upon them. Mangiacapre, who also went by Nemesis, practiced politics by making art with the aim of advancing a more peaceful, harmonious, inclusive way-of-being-in-the-world centered around avant-garde creativity, kinship, and care. In 1970, Mangiacapre inaugurated Le Nemesiache, a network of pacifist, feminist, avant-garde artists, and, in 1974, she began making films with them. Mangiacapre's filmography comprises

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1. As a dramaturge, Mangiacapre wrote and directed innovative theatrical works that defy genre conventions. Rather than comedies or tragedies, Mangiacapre wrote psicofavole [psychofairytales] and psicotragedie [psychotragedies], which are plays that served as a means of practicing performative autocoscienza, a feminist praxis for coming to consciousness by means of artistic creation specific to Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. La psicofavola – or, in other words, performative autocoscienza – requires artistic and corporeal engagement in a way that more orthodox autocoscienza does not. While traditional Italian feminist autocoscienza is conversational in nature, requiring only vocal and gestural performance, Mangiacapre's method incorporates creative costume, movement, and performance art. Mangiacapre's theatrical works include: *Cenerella: Psicofavola femminista* [*Cinderella: A Feminist Psychofairytale*] (1973), *Siamo tutte prigioniere politiche* [*We're All Political Prisoners*] (1978), *Faro* [*Lighthouse*] (1979), *Per Ofelia* [*For Ophelia*] (1980), *Eliogabalo*, or *La caduta dell'androgino* [*Heliogabalus*, or *The Fall of the Androgyne*] (1982), *Eleniade* [*The Heleniad*] (1983), *Biancaneve: Psicofavola* [*Snow White: A Psychofairytale*] (1984), and *Viaggio nel Mito di Capri* [*A Journey through Capresian Myth*] (1992). Of the aforementioned theatrical works, Mangiacapre created filmic adaptions of: *Cenerella: Psicofavola di Nemesi* [*Cinderella: Nemesis' Psychofairytale*] (1974), *Biancaneve/La Strega* (1982), and *Eliogabalo*, or *La caduta dell'androgino* (1985). For more on Mangiacapre's psicofavole and psicotragedie, see Marco Calogero Battaglia, "Il primo teatro femminista d'Italia – Lina Mangiacapre (1973-1984)," (Master's thesis, Università della Svizzera italiana, 2019); Dino Todoverto, "Artiste del femminismo: Le Nemesiache fra teatro e cinema negli anni settanta" (Master's thesis, Università di Parma, 2019).

2. As a journalist, Mangiacapre wrote for various French and Italian periodicals, including *Unità*, *Paese sera*, *Quotidiano donna*, *Effe*, *Femmes en Mouvement*, and *Paese delle donne*. Another journalistic venture that Mangiacapre spearheaded was the inception of the Neapolitan feminist art and culture zine *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*. In addition to composing essays and poetry for the zine, Mangiacapre served as editor-in-chief and published two to three editions per year from 1988-1995 and 1997-1999.

of fourteen feminist and transfeminist[3] films, three of which can be found at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome. While her full-length feature films – *Didone non è morta* [*Dido Never Died*] (1987), *Faust/Fausta* (1991), and *Donna di cuori* [*Queen of Hearts*] (1994) – are available for viewing at the Centro Sperimentale, the majority of Mangiacapre's filmworks – *Cenerella* [*Cinderella*] (1974), *Antistrip* [*The Opposite of Stripping*] (1976), *Le Sibille* [*The Sibyls*] (1977), *Follia come poesia* [*Madness Is Poetry*] (1979), and seven other films – are more difficult to access as they are held in private archives in the homes of a few Nemesiache across Naples. My dissertation project led me to Naples and Rome and, in the summer of 2019, afforded me the honor of interviewing a number of Nemesiache, without whom this project would not have been possible. This dissertation project took shape in public and private archives, on the streets of Naples and Rome, at the seaside café that Mangiacapre herself used to frequent in Mergellina, and in a number of locations in and around Naples where Mangiacapre shot her films. It is thanks to Silvana Campese/Medea,[4] who guided me through her

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3. A skeptic of sexual difference theory, Mangiacapre postulated what she calls a transfeminist theory of sexuality and gender in the early 1990s. According to Mangiacapre's transfeminist philosophy, the self is multiple and forever in flux in terms of gender identity and sexual desire. For more on Mangiacapran "transfemminismo," also known as "pensiero androgino," see Mangiacapre's avant-garde transfeminist novel *Faust/Fausta* (Florence: L'Autore Libri, 1990. See also Lina Mangiacapre and Angela Putino, "Androgina/Amazzone: Il mito della donna guerriera: Premessa," *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*, June 1988, 1-3; Silvana Campese, "Lina Mangiacapre: *Faust/Fausta*," *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*, June 1990, 12-14; Lina Mangiacapre, "Androgina/Amazzone: Il mito della donna guerriera: Civiltà dell'Immagine," *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*, March 1991, 1-3.

4. Lawyer, novelist, costume designer, painter, and dramatist Silvana Campese/Medea met Mangiacapre and began her journey as a Nemesiaca in 1972. In addition to writing for *Manifesta*, Campese has published narrative and poetic works independently of the Nemesiache: *La cittadina impossibile* (1997), *Prisma* (2001), *Strada facendo* (2002), *Contrappunto per soli timpani e oboe* (2010), *Il ritorno di Cisarò* (2012), *La Nemesi di Medea: Una storia femminista lungo mezzo secolo* (2019), *Parthenope Inferno Celeste: I molteplici volti dell'umanità* (2020), and, most recently, *Memorie dal futuro: Il mondo dopo l'apocalisse* (2021). As a costume designer and performer, Campese contributed to Mangiacapre's avant-garde theatre and filmmaking. Campese's most recent performance was in a dramatic production, authored by herself, directed by Teresa Mangiacapra, and performed in Palazzo Serra di Cassano in Naples: *Lilith l'Origine* (2016). Campese, like many of the Nemesiache, has a mythical name: Medea. As was often the case, the anonym bestowed upon Campese was not rooted in Classical Myth. Rather than the Medea of Euripides, it is the feminist revisionist Medea of Christa Wolf, that is, a fiercely dedicated mother figure, that Mangiacapre recognized within Campese. See Christa Wolf, *Medea: A Modern Retelling*, trans. John Cullen (New York: Nan. A. Talese, 1998).

own personal archive, Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa,[5] who provided detailed examples of Mangiacapran theory and praxis, Bruna Felletti/Karma,[6] who shared financial and organizational information on Mangiacapre's film productions, and Fausta Base, who accompanied me on a tour of filming sites in and around Naples, that I was able to bring this dissertation to fruition. Stopping for a coffee at the café where Mangiacapre once talked philosophy with fishermen, viewing the volcanic crater in which Mangiacapre's feminist Orpheus seeks to recover a dormant Dido, visiting the craggy peak where Mangiacapre's transfeminist Fausta deals with the devil, walking in the footsteps of Mangiacapre, her characters, and crew, I was able to glean insights about Mangiacapre, her characters, the people and places that inspired her, and her network of creativity, kinship, and care. With this dissertation, my aim is to make Mangiacapre's filmic body of work known to the world, starting within the realm of academia.

Mangiacapre's cinema is the site of avant-garde storytelling, feminist myth-making, and self-reflection. In her films, she mixes and mingles nonlinear, avant-garde narrativity with her own brand of feminism, which involves mythopoeia. Mangiacapre's myth-making is aimed at

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5. Dancer, actor, writer, and costume designer Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa met Mangiacapre and joined ranks with the Nemesiache in the late 1970s after years of leftist activism in league with L'Associazione Mensa Proletari Bambini. Capobianco performed in several of Mangiacapre's theatrical and filmic productions, featuring as Biancaneve in *Biancaneve/La Strega* (1982) and Primula in *Faust/Fausta* (1991). As a writer, Capobianco regularly contributed to the "Ho fatto un sogno" ["I dreamed a dream"] column of *Manifesta* and has published a historical account of the Neapolitan Feminist Movement, entitled *Interpreti e protagoniste del movimento femminista napoletano 1970-1990* (1994) as well as an avant-garde novel intertwining poetry, prose, dreams, and reality, entitled *Talismano* (2013). Capobianco, like many of the Nemesiache, goes by a mythical anonym: Nausicaa.

6. Performer, filmmaker, production manager, and former factory worker Bruna Felletti/Karma met Mangiacapre in 1971, after years of activist work in Milan in league with the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro and Il Gruppo Anabasi. By 1972, Felletti had begun her lifelong collaboration with Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. After participating in the planning of the theatrical production of *Cenerella* in Milan, Felletti proceeded to help organize the *Rassegna del Cinema Femminista* and design the layout for the booklets. Felletti worked on a number of Mangiacapre's films with her as a cameo performer, production manager, and camerawoman. In conversation with Felletti in Rome in May 2019, she specified that when Mangiacapre was in front of the camera, especially in her early work, in *Antistrip* (1976) for example, Felletti was behind it. Felletti served as a camerawoman for a number of Mangiacapre's avant-garde shorts, including *Follia come poesia* (1979), and a production manager for her feature films *Didone non è morta* (1987) and *Faust/Fausta* (1991). Like Mangiacapre and Capobianco, Felletti has a mythical name: Karma.

cultivating inner and outer peace for women and the world. In line with P. Adams Sitney's definition of mythopoeic films, Mangiacapre's cinema is one in which "imagination triumphs over actuality"[7] and old Myths[8] are made new again. By recasting characters who once served to uphold and reinforce the established order as subversive heralds of change, Mangiacapre opens a window for her spectators to gaze through, inviting them to ponder the possibilities that a new, more harmonious, pacifist, feminist world order could offer. Mangiacapre's film screen not only serves as a window providing spectators with a glimpse of the profoundly harmonious, avant-garde, feminist dimension in which Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache operate but, for certain spectators, also a mirror. For Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, the film screen is a looking glass reflecting back their own acts of sistership, persistence, avant-garde creativity, and care. Profoundly reflexive, Mangiacapre's cinema showcases her fellow artists and self engaging in acts of artistic creation: donning costumes, painting faces, moving to the beat, performing, making music, exploring, and expressing themselves. Mangiacapre's cinema is a means of self-exploration, self-expression, and self-fashioning. When it comes to Mangiacapre's collaborative filmmaking praxis, the lines between the director, production manager, composer, performers, set designers, costume designers, and actors fade away. Mangiacapre and co. fulfill several such roles at once, challenging the more traditional hierarchal structure of film production. For

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7. P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde 1943-2000*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 136.

8. By *Mythology* or *Myth* with a capital *M,* this dissertation refers to a concept I have elaborated based on that of History with a capital H (i.e., the official narrative of great men, great wars, domination, and death). Like History with a capital H, Mythology with a capital M comprises of a set of officially recognized stories steeped in dominant ideology that spotlight male prominence, dominance, violence, and death and serve to uphold the system of cisheteropatriarchy. For a brief overview of the "tortured history" of the term Myth, see Cynthia Eller, "The Travels and Travails of Matriarchal Myth," in *Gentlemen and Amazons: The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory, 1861-1900*, 1-14 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). See also Robert Ellwood, *The Politics of Myth* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture* (New York: Schocken, 1979); Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality* (New York: Harper & Row Inc., 1963); Bruce Lincoln, *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

example, Mangiacapre, the director and composer of *Didone non è morta*, makes a cameo appearance and dances up a storm with the actors in the opening sequence of the film. Felletti, the production manager of *Faust/Fausta*, is also cast as a barista and appears within the diegesis of the film. While Mangiacapre does direct, woman the camera, compose scores, perform cameos, and more, she does so with the aim of challenging structures that rank and file, breaking down barriers, blurring the lines, and advancing an alternate, avant-garde way-of-being-in-the-world. Cinema, for Mangiacapre, is a form of art that has the potential to transcend limits. As Robert Sklar aptly puts it, "Cinema is a medium that refuses boundaries. Filmmakers move between countries; films combine genres; film practices overstep the limits of terms such as documentary, fiction, avant-garde."[9] Indeed, Mangiacapre's cinema breaks barriers and oversteps boundaries by making use of both avant-garde and narrative technique. In her films, Mangiacapre incorporates characters, events, nonlinear storytelling, heavy editing, rapid cutting, montage, physical manipulation of the celluloid, and audiovisual overlay. Her cinematography, editing, sound, cast, and crew transcend the limits of traditional, commercial filmmaking. Mangiacapre's cinema is the coalescence of avant-garde storytelling, feminist mythopoeia, and self-fashioning and her fourteen films merit more scholarly attention.

For the past fifty years, Mangiacapre's self-reflexive, mythopoeic films have been hanging in the margins, largely overlooked by film scholars and feminist theorists alike. Despite

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9. Robert Sklar, *Film: An International History of the Medium* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1993), 12.

recent growth in the disciplines of trans and nonbinary studies,[10] Neapolitan screen studies,[11] and Italian feminist film studies,[12] Mangiacapre's Neapolitan feminist and transfeminist cinema remains a neglected area of study. By investigating the interplay of performance, mythos, and selfhood in Mangiacapre's short and full-length films, this study throws new light on the artistic and political prowess of an understudied filmmaker from Naples. Through a critical analysis of the ideologically-infused form and content of the films, this dissertation expounds Mangiacapre's subversive theory and praxis, which challenge mainstream categorizations and dichotomies. Rather than rank and file human beings and works of art, Mangiacapre's nonnormative philosophies of art, sexuality, and self transcend ideological boundary lines intent on separating

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10. See L. H. Stallings, *Funk the Erotic: Transaesthetics and Black Sexual Cultures* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2015); Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel and Sarah Tobias, *Trans Studies: The Challenge to Hetero/ Homo Normativities* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2016); Michelle Tolini Finamore, *Gender Bending Fashion* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2019); Eliza Steinbock, *Shimmering Images: Trans Cinema, Embodiment, and the Aesthetics of Change* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); Porpora Marcasciano et al., *Tra le rose e le viole: La storia e le storie di transessuali e trasvestiti* (Rome: Edizioni Alegre, 2020); Aren Z. Aizura et al., "Thinking with Trans Now," *Social Text* 38, 4 (2020): 125-147; Marquis Bey, "Trouble Genders: 'LGBT' Collapse and Trans Fundamentality," *Hypatia* 36, 1 (2021): 191-206; Marquis Bey, *Black Trans Feminism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2022), et al.

11. See Roberta Tabanelli, *I "pori" di Napoli: Il cinema di Mario Martone, Antonio Capuano e Pappi Corsicato* (Ravenna: Longo, 2011); Alex Marlow-Mann, *The New Neapolitan Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012); Dana Renga, *Unfinished Business: Screening the Italian Mafia in the New Millennium* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014); Elena Past, "Volcanic Matters: Magmatic Cinema, Ecocriticism, and Italy," *L'analisi linguistica e letteraria* 24, no. 2 (2016): 135-146; Ruth Glynn, "The Camorra Comedy," *The Italianist* 39, no. 2 (2019): 191-215; Dana Renga, "Casting My Brilliant Friend's Authentic Stardom," *Series - International Journal of TV Serial Narratives* 6, no. 1 (2020): 77-90; et al.

12. See Anikó Imre, Áine O'Healy, et al., *Transnational Feminism in Film and Media* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Paola Bonifazio, "Feminism, Postmodernism, Intertextuality," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 38, 3 (2010): 171-182; Stefania Benini, " 'A face, a name, a story,' " *Studies in European Cinema* 8, 2 (2012): 129-139; Bernadette Luciano and Susana Scarparo, "Contemporary Women Filmmakers," in *New Perspectives in Italian Cultural Studies*, ed. Graziella Parati, 112-125, vol. 2 (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012); Bernadette Luciano and Susana Scarparo, "Re-inventing the Women's Liberation Movement" *Annali d'Italianistica* 30 (2012): 243-253; Lucia Cardone and Sara Filippelli, *Cinema e scritture femminili: Letterate italiane fra la pagina e lo schermo* (Pavona di Albano Laziale: Iacobelli, 2012); *Reframing Italy: New Trends in Italian Women's Filmmaking*, ed. Bernadette Luciano and Susana Scarparo (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2013); *Italian Women Filmmakers and the Gendered Screen*, ed. Mariastella Cantini (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Cristina Jandelli, "Nostalgie del Novecento: Un'ora sola ti vorrei," in *Sguardi differenti*, ed. Lucia Cardone and Sandra Lischi, 251-262 (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2014); Lucia Cardone, Cristina Jandelli, and Chiara Tognolotti, *Storie in divenire: Le donne nel cinema italiano* (Barcelona: Aronica, 2015); *Filmare il femminismo: Studi sulle donne nel cinema e nei media*, ed. Lucia Cardone and Sara Filippelli (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2015); *Italian Motherhood on Screen*, ed. Giovanna Faleschini Lerner and Maria Elena D'Amelio (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017); et al.

the personal from the political, painting from poetry, Myth from reality, and Woman[13] from Man. In examining Mangiacapre's transdisciplinary art theory, androgynous warrior woman aesthetic, novel conception of feminist revisionist myth, new metaphysics, and politics of care, this dissertation stimulates scholarly debate surrounding the intersection of art and politics, the aesthetics of revolutionaries, the liberatory potential of stunning yet precarious landscapes, and creativity as a methodology of resistance.

1. Italian Feminist Film Studies

In the past decade, there has been notable growth in the field of Italian feminist film studies. Thanks to the foundational work of Bernadette Luciano, Susana Scarparo, Lucia Cardone, Cristina Jandelli, and a few others, new wave feminist filmmakers like Alina Marazzi have been successfully written into Italian film history. The critical work carried out by Luciano, Scarparo, et al. largely focuses on the most recent wave of Italian feminist production in Italy, which is largely documentarian in nature and is characterized by a constructivist approach. The new wave has been active since the early 2000s and continues to produce films today. Since the start of the new millennium, Erik Gandini, Alina Marazzi, Nadia Pizzuti, Paola Sangiovanni, Fabiana Sargentini, Marina Spada, and others have been stitching together multifarious fragments of audio-visual material and making new meaning through montage. Often branded docudiary or docufilm, new wave Italian feminist films often incorporate: found footage, family

13. Throughout my dissertation when referring to real women, that is, to heterogeneous socio-historical subjects, I use *woman* or *women* with a lowercase *w*. When, on the other hand, referencing the false Myth of Woman, or, in other words, the eroticized spectacle engendered by the projection of male desire, I use *Woman* with a capital *W*. The distinction I make is inspired by Teresa de Lauretis's differentiation between between Woman as "the other-from-man (nature and Mother, site of sexuality and masculine desire, sign and object of men's social exchange)" and women as historical subjects in *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 5. While de Lauretis uses italics to distinguish between the fantasmatic projection and real social subjects, I use capitalization.

photos, diary entries, archival material, footage from first wave feminist films, interviews, songs, advertisements, and pages from fotoromanzi [photoromances].[14] A number of new wave feminist filmmakers make film with the aim of shaking the consciousness of Gen Y and Z; educating spectators about sex, motherhood, and the hard-earned rights won during the first and second waves of the Italian Feminist Movement;[15] combatting Silvio Berlusconi's retrograde

14. For more on the hybrid genre of the fotoromanzo, see Paola Bonifazio, "Political Photoromances: The Italian Communist Party, Famiglia Cristiana, and the Struggle for Women's Hearts," *Italian Studies* 72, 4 (2017): 393-413; Paola Bonifazio, *The Photoromance: A Feminist Reading of Popular Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020).

15. The first wave of the Italian Feminist Movement took place from 1944-1945. Priorities of first wave feminists include: fighting fascist rule, establishing universal suffrage, and obtaining fair conditions for women in the workplace. In 1944, women of all classes came together to form the Unione donne italiane [Italian Women's Union]. At the end of the war, women broke off to form smaller communist, socialist, or catholic-oriented groups. In 1945, women won the right to vote. While the first wave was largely concerned with emancipation (suffrage) the second wave focused on liberation (sexual liberation and self-determination). During the dynamic second wave of the Italian Feminist Movement, from 1968-1978, the struggle revolved around sexual difference, birth control, abortion, divorce, equitable rights and responsibilities among spouses, the cost of nursery school, separatism, coming to know oneself, and relationships among women. In the span of ten years, thanks to feminist creativity, organization, protest, and performance art, over a dozen laws were repealed or changed. In 1968, a law punishing women (and only women) for adultery was repealed. In 1970, divorce was legalized. In 1971, the law criminalizing birth control was repealed and legislation subsidizing nursery schools and protecting working mothers was passed. In 1975, mothers were granted equal rights as fathers. In 1977, a law guaranteeing equal pay and treatment of women workers was passed. In 1978, abortion was legalized. Women of different classes were involved in the second wave and came to consciousness by practicing autocoscienza together in groups. By the early 2000s, new forms of feminism had emerged across the Italian peninsula. As noted by Roxana Barbulescu in *Migrant Integration in a Changing Europe* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019), 57, foreign residents only made up 0.2% of the population in 1970. According to I.Stat, "Stranieri residenti al 1° gennaio," http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_POPRES1, that percentage increased by 43.5 fold by 2020. Considering the drastic change in demographics in the post-economic boom period, it follows that the third and most recent wave of Italian feminism has broadened the discourse surrounding sex and sexuality to converse with queer, critical race, postcolonial, aging, and disability theory. Thus far, third wave activists, who may or may not adopt the label of feminist, have concentrated their efforts on: queer and transgender rights, immigrant rights, reproductive rights, trafficking of and violence against women, and precarity in the workplace. While same sex unions were successfully legalized in 2016 and a law denouncing discrimination and homophobic, transphobic, sexist, and racist discrimination hate crimes passed in 2020, there has been significant resistance to recognizing the rights of queer, trans, straight, migrant, noncitizen, and citizen Italian women over the past twenty years. In 2005, amendments to a law aimed at legalizing donor insemination and allowing women more of a voice in in vitro fertilization did not pass. In 2016, the ius soli bill to extend citizenship to those born an raised on Italian soil did not make it to a vote. In 2018, the city council of Verona declared the city pro-life. In 2020, new restrictions were placed on medical abortions in Umbria. The fight for women's rights in Italy is far from over. For more on first and second wave Italian feminism, see Lucia Chiavola Birnbaum, *Liberazione della donna* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1986); Sharon Wood, *Italian Women's Writing* (London: Athlone, 1995); LeNove: Studi e ricerche, ed., *Donne protagoniste a Napoli* (Naples: Casa della cultura delle differenze, 2013). For more on third wave activism, see Teresa Bertilotti et al., ed., *Altri femminismi: corpi culture lavoro* (Rome: Manifestolibri, 2006), Tristana Dini and Stefania Tarantino, ed., *Femminismo e neoliberalismo* (Rome: Natan Edizioni, 2014); Laura Fantone, "Precarious changes: Gender and Generational Politics in Contemporary Italy," *Feminist Review* 87 (2007): 5-20.

"rivoluzione culturale"[16] ["cultural revolution"],[17] or, in other words, the widespread sociocultural shift back toward the commodification of women's bodies stoked on by Berlusconi and his media empire;[18] and calling women and men of the twenty-first century to action to fight for the dignity and rights of Italian women. Characterized by a constructivist approach and pseudo-documentary style, the most recent wave of feminist film production in Italy, which began in the early 2000s and continues today, has garnered considerable attention from scholars.[19] Radical in form and content, the constructivist works of new wave filmmakers epitomize Claire Johnston's concept of counter-cinema. For Johnston, a revolutionary women's

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16. *Videocracy*, directed by Gandini.

17. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

18. Misogynist media mogul, self-proclaimed playboy, and three time prime minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi (1936-) has had a profound and lasting impact on Italian culture. Despite accusations of engaging in sexual conduct for a fee and money laundering, purported ties to the Sicilian Mafia, and fascist and racist sympathies, Berlusconi rose to power for the second time in 2001 and served as prime minister until 2006. Berlusconi presented himself as a rich, powerful playboy who went to bat for the common man. His media empire redoubled this message by catering to the common heterosexual man's sexual desire. Berlusconi's very first quiz show *Spogliamoci insieme* [*Let's Strip Together*] broadcast on Tele Torino International in 1977. From the quiz show, which asked local, masked housewives to perform a strip tease if those who called in answered questions correctly, to a network that regularly projected crude images of veline – everyday young women turned showgirls – dancing, stripping naked, jumping into bubble-filled baby pools, etc., Berlusconi and his media empire have had a profound impact on Italian culture. In Erik Gandini's 2009 film, *Videocracy*, the Swedish Italian director identifies *Spogliamoci insieme* as "l'inizio della rivoluzione culturale" ["the beginning of the cultural revolution"]. By regularly broadcasting sexualized, carnivalesque images of the female form across the airwaves, Berlusconi molded his viewers into consumers of misogynist media and cultivated their craving for a daily dose of objectification. Berlusconi, who is currently serving as a member of the European Parliament, still wields enormous sociopolitical power. As such, the cultural shift toward the widespread commodification and sexualization of young women that began with *Spogliamoci insieme* is still playing out today. For more on Berlusconi's rise to power and cultural revolution, see Paul Ginsborg, *Silvio Berlusconi: Television, Power and Patrimony* (London: Verso, 2005); Manuela Galetto et al., "Feminist Activism and Practice: Autonomy and Resisting Precarity" in *Resisting the Tide: Cultures of Opposition under Berlusconi (2001-06)*, ed. Daniele Albertazzi et al., 190-203 (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2009); *Videocracy*, directed by Erik Gandini (2009; Sweden: Folkets Bio, 2009).

19. Films produced by new wave feminist filmmakers include: Alina Marazzi's docufilm *Un'ora sola ti vorrei* [*For One More Hour with You*] (2002); Antonietta De Lillo's *Il resto di niente* [*The Remains of Nothing*] (2004); Giovanna Gagliardo's *Bellissime 1* [*Beautiful 1*] (2004); Fabiana Sargentini's *Di madre in figlia* [*From Mother to Daughter*] (2005); Gagliardo's *Bellissime 2* [*Beautiful 2*] (2006); Lorella Reale's *Storia del movimento femminista in Italia* [*History of the Feminist Movement in Italy*] (2006); Marazzi's docudiary *Vogliamo anche le rose* [*We Want Roses Too*] (2007); Francesca Comencini's *Lo spazio bianco* [*The White Space*] (2009); Erik Gandini's *Videocracy* (2009); Stefania Sandrelli's *Christine Christina* (2009); Susanna Nicchiarelli's *Cosmonauta* (2009); Paola Sangiovanni's *Ragazze la vita trema* [*Ladies, Life is Trembling*] (2009); Marina Spada's *Poesia che mi guardi* [*Poetry, You See Me*] (2009); Marazzi's experimental narrative film *Tutto parla di te* [*Everything Reminds Me of You*] (2012); and Nadia Pizzuti's docufilm *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo* [*Lina Mangiacape: Artist of Feminism*] (2015).

cinema requires the eschewing of traditional narrative technique in favor of an avant-garde, constructivist approach. Johnston affirms that the tools and techniques employed to produce narrative cinema are steeped in dominant ideology and therefore incapable of depicting a reality capable of unveiling hidden truths. In order to make the unknown known and the invisible visible to spectators, new meaning "has to be constructed/manufactured"[20] by the filmmaker. While a number of new wave feminist filmmakers make use of the avant-garde approach prescribed by both Johnston and Mulvey, not all have renounced the use of narrative. Antonietta De Lillo, Alina Marazzi, and Stefania Sandrelli have, on occasion, incorporated narrative conventions into their films. As such, some of their work falls in line with Teresa de Lauretis's film theory which condemns neither narrative nor non-narrative film, as the use of avant-garde meaning making in no way guarantees the production of a non-scopophilic work.[21] Marazzi's *Tutto parla di te* is an exemplar of a new wave Italian feminist film employing narrative. Utilizing a fictional, narrative arc and folding in fragments of interviews, photography, and claymation, Marazzi's film proves an intriguing hybrid that combines conventions of Italian feminist docufilm and narrative film. In her hybrid feminist docu-narrative-film, Marazzi explores motherhood without rose-colored glasses and puts the strength of female friendship on view. Innovative in form, Marazzi's hybrid film merits future scholarship.

Increased critical attention directed toward new wave feminist docufilm has sparked renewed scholarly interest in films made during the prior wave of feminist film production, from

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20. Claire Johnston, "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema," in *Notes on Women's Cinema*, 24-31 (London: Society for Education in Film and Television, 1973), 28.

21. See Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, semiotics, cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

the mid 1960s to the early 1980s.[22] This foundational wave of Italian feminist filmmaking took place during a dynamic period of social and sexual revolution, closely tied to the second wave of the Italian Feminist Movement. Independent filmmakers active at the time include: Armenia Balducci, Cecilia Mangini, Dacia Maraini, and others. Collectives active at the time include: Annabella Miscuglio and Il Collettivo Femminista Cinema [Feminist Film Collective], Isabella Bruno and Il Collettivo Alice Guy [The Alice Guy Collective], La Cooperativa Arcobaleno [The Rainbow Collective], and Lina Mangiacapre and Le Nemesiache. These filmmakers produced a mix of documentary, docufilm, narrative film, and – although less common – avant-garde art film.[23] Notwithstanding the notable increase in Italian feminist film scholarship we have seen

22. See Sara Filippelli, "Pioniere della differenza, cinema e femminismo tra gli anni Settanta e Ottanta," in *Filmare il femminismo*, 162-197; Annamaria Licciardello, "Io sono mia," *Zapruder*, 39 (2016), 86-93; Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile* (Padua: Mastogiacomo, 1980); Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile 2* (Naples: Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee, 1994); Annabella Miscuglio, "An affectionate and irreverent account of eighty years of women's cinema in Italy," in *Off Screen: Women and Film in Italy*, ed. Giuliana Bruno and Maria Nadotti (New York: Routledge, 1988), 151-164; Dalila Missero, "Cecilia Mangini," *Feminist Media Histories*, 3 (2016), 54-72; Dalila Missero, *Women, Feminism, and Italian Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022).

23. Films produced by Italian feminist film collectives and filmmakers during the foundational wave include: communist feminist Cecilia Mangini's docufilm *Essere donne* [*Being Women*] (1965); the Rome-based Collettivo Femminista Cinema (Maria Grazia Belmonti, Anna Carini, Rony Daopoulo, Paola De Martiis, Annabella Miscuglio, and Loredana Rotondo)'s *L'Aggettivo Donna* [*The Adjective Woman*] (1971) and *La lotta non è finita!...* [*The Fight Never Ended!...*] (1973); Adriana Monti, Grazia Zerman, Franca Barda, and Chiara Gamba,'s *Siamo tante, siamo donne, siamo stufe!* [*We Are Many, We Are Women, We Have Had It!*] (1974); Maurizia Giusti and Antonietta Laterza's *Vanessa e le bambole* [*Vanessa and Dolls*] and *Prima del tradimento e dell'abbandono* [*Before Betrayal and Abandonment*] (1974-1975); Il Collettivo Alice Guy (Isabella Bruno, Loredana Fanigliulo, Manuela e Susanna Garroni, Alida Giardina, Liliana Ginanneschi, Federica Giulietti, and Enza Tolla)'s *Donne emergete* [*Ladies, Come out!*] (1975), *È solo a noi che sta la decisione* [*The Decision is Ours Alone*], and *La cavia* [*The Guinea Pig*] (1976); internationally renowned feminist writer and filmmaker Dacia Maraini's *Aborto: Parlano le donne* [*Abortion: Women Speak Out*] (1976) and *Le ragazze di Capo Verde* [*The Young Women of Cape Verde*] (1976); La Cooperativa arcobaleno's *8 Marzo, giornata di festa e di lotta* [*The Eighth of March: A Holiday and a Struggle*] (1976); Maricla Boggio *Marisa della Magliana* [*Marisa from the Magliana Quarter*] (1976); Anna Carini and Annabella Miscuglio's documentary on motherhood *Il rischio di vivere* [*The Risk of Living*] (1976); Armenia Balducci's *Destino casalingo* [*Destined for Housework*] (1976); Adriana Monti's *Le casalinghe di via Plinio* [*The Housewives of Plinio Street*] (1976); Argentinian Italian Rosalia Polizzi's *La donna è cambiata l'Italia deve cambiare* [*Women Have Changed, Italy Must Change*] (1976), *Non ci regalano niente* [*Nothing Is Given Away*] (1977), *Madre, ma come?* [*Mother, But How?*] (1977), and *Madri e figli* [*Mothers and Children*] (1977); Sofia Scandurra's *Io sono mia* [*I Am My Own*] (1977); The Alice Guy Collective's *Affettuosamente Ciak* [*Action! with Affection*] (1977); Giovanna Gagliardo's *Maternale* [*Maternal*] (1977); Maraini's *Le Donne Lobi* [*Lobed Women*] (1977); Adriana Monti's *Il piacere del testo* [*The Pleasure of the Text*] (1977); Balducci's *Donne da slegare* [*Women Must Be Unshackled*] (1978) and *Io amo tu ami* [*I Love, You Love*] (1978); The Feminist Film Collective's *Processo per stupro* [*A Trial for Rape*] (1979); Maraini's *Ricostruzione di mio padre amore mio* [*Reconstruction of My Beloved Father*] (1979), *Trio* (1980), and *Lo scialle azzurro* [*The Azure Shawl*] (1981); The Feminist Film Collective's *A.A.A. Offresi* [*Triple A Grade Women for Sale*] (1981); Monti's *Bagagli* [*Luggage*] (1981) and *Scuola senza fine* [*School Without End*] (1979-1983).

over the past decade, the trailblazing work of Lina Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache has fallen through the cracks of both Italian film and critical gender scholarship. Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist art films have yet to be fully examined by scholars and merit more critical attention.

2. The Neapolitan Feminist Avant-Garde

While the activity of most groundbreaking feminist film collectives waned in the late 1970s, one notable exception occurred in Naples where Lina Mangiacapre and her fellow feminist artists, Le Nemesiache, were far from dormant. Where the shock of domestic terrorism, restricted access to public space, and increased attention to multiple differences contributed to the fracturing of a number of collectives across the peninsula, differences among women proved a source of inspiration in Naples. As confirmed by Nemesiaca Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa, "Il movimento a Napoli era assai vivace e produttivo, i contrasti interni ne hanno saputo anche stimolare la creatività" ["The Feminist Movement in Naples was an incredibly productive one. Differences among feminists fueled our creativity."][24] Differences among feminists were and continue to be embraced by the Nemesiache. Nemesiaca Silvana Campese/Medea clarifies, "Uguaglianza non significa emancipazione, clonazione, colonizzazione, assimilazione... Bisogna lottare ancora moltissimo per la parità delle e nelle diversità e differenze, che è la sola 'uguaglianza' per me accettabile."[25] ["Being equal does not mean being emancipated only to be cloned, colonized, and assimilated... We must continue the struggle and fight for equality of and

24. Conni Capobianco, *Interpreti e protagoniste del movimento femminista napoletano 1970-1990*, ed. Conni Capobianco (Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee, 1994), 11.

25. Silvana Campese. " 'Parthenope Inferno Celeste' della nemesiaca Silvana Campese," interview by M. S., *Roma*, November 27, 2020.

in our differences. This is the only type of 'equality' that I deem acceptable."] As attested to by Capobianco and Campese, the Nemesiache celebrate differences among feminists. Mangiacapre and co., who emphasized the value of individuality, personality, and multiple differences from the start, began making avant-garde films during the second wave of the Italian Feminist Movement and, unlike most film collectives active at the time, continued their collaborative filmmaking practice into the early 1990s.

The Nemesiache practiced politics by making art and came to consciousness through creative movement, performance, and avant-garde motion pictures. Avant-garde filmmaking in Italy, including the work of the Neapolitan feminist avant-garde, has received "surprising little attention"[26] from scholars and remains a neglected area of study. As noted by Patrick Rumble, a great deal is known about "avant-garde films in France, Germany, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain, and yet Italy's contributions in this area have been almost entirely neglected."[27] Among Italy's understudied avant-gardes is Lina Mangiacapre, a Neapolitan artist and philosopher, whose filmography comprises of fourteen avant-garde feminist art films: ten 8mm short films – *Cenerella*: *Psicofavola di Nemesi* [*Cinderella: Nemesis' Psychofairytale*] (1974), *Antistrip* [*The Opposite of Stripping*] (1976), *Autocoscienza* (1976), *Il rito segreto di Nemesi* [*Nemesis' Secret Ritual*] (1976), *Le Sibille* [*The Sibyls*] (1977), *Il mare ci ha chiamate* [*The Sea Called Us*] (1978), *Biancaneve/La Strega* [*Snow White/The Witch*] (1982), *Eliogabalo*, or *La caduta dell'androgino* [*Heliogabalus*, or *The Fall of the Androgyne*] (1985), *Io/il mistero/le S* [*I/the Mystery/the S's*] (1986); one 8mm featurette – *Follia come poesia* [*Madness Is Poetry*] (1979);

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26. Patrick Rumble, "Free Film Made Freely: Paolo Gioli and Experimental Filmmaking in Italy," *CineAction*, 78 (2009): 10-16, 10.

27. Rumble, "Free Film Made Freely," 10.

one multi-media short – *Ricciocapriccio* (1981); and three 35mm feature films – *Didone non è morta* [*Dido Never Died*] (1987), *Faust/Fausta* (1991), and *Donna di cuori* [*Queen of Hearts*] (1994). Mangiacapre's filmography was produced and distributed by Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee [The Nemesiache/Three Guineas Cooperative][28] with the exception of her final film, which was produced by L'Arsenale Cinevideo TV s.r.l. and codirected with Luciano Crovato. Mangiacapre's films have been screened at the Sorrento International Film Festival, the Romaeuropa Festival, the Florence International Festival of Women's Cinema, and were even slated to be shown in the Colosseum as a part of the "Carthago: Il mito immortale" ["Carthage: The Immortal Myth"] exhibition in March 2020.[29]

In addition to writing and directing fourteen films of her own, Mangiacapre ideated and organized the first international feminist film festival in Europe in 1976. Held in conjunction with the Sorrento International Film Festival from 1976-1991, Mangiacapre's Rassegna del Cinema Femminista: "L'altro sguardo" [Feminist Film Festival: "Another Gaze"] showcased a series of feminist films produced across Italy – from Annabella Miscuglio's *Fughe lineari in progressione psichica* [*Lines Leading to the Vanishing Point of Psychological Development*] (1975) to Isabella Bruno and Il Collettivo Alice Guy's *Affettuosamente Ciak* [*Action! - With*

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28. Mangiacapre established Le Nemesiache in 1970. The network of avant-garde feminist artists became a cooperative in 1977 and later a cultural association. Both the cooperative and association were named after Virginia Woolf's epistolary novel *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt Inc., 1938), 43. For more on the relation between Mangiacapre's network of feminist artists and Woolf's work, see chapter 1 of this dissertation. The Nemesiache have been working on philosophical and artistic projects together for more than half a century now. Although L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee was legally dissolved in 2018, six months after the death of Teresa Mangiacapra, the remaining Nemesiache continue to collaborate, in the words of Woolf, "finding new words and creating new methods" together.

29. While the "Carthago: Il mito immortale" exhibit was closed down and the screenings – including that of *Didone non è morta* – canceled due to the global COVID19 pandemic, Mangiacapre's films have been screened on a number of occasions across the peninsula: *Le Sibille* was shown in 1977, *Follia come poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare* (the original full-length feature film) in 1979, and *Ricciocapriccio* in 1981 at Mangiacapre's Rassegna del Cinema Femminista held in conjunction with the Sorrento International Film Festival; *Faust/Fausta* in 1997 at the Romaeuropa Festival; and, more recently, *Follia come poesia* (the featurette) in 2019 at the Florence International Festival of Women's Cinema.

Affection] (1977), Dacia Maraini's *Ricostruzione di mio padre amore mio* [*Reconstruction of My Beloved Father*] (1979) to Lina Wertmüller's *È una domenica sera di novembre* [*It's a Sunday Evening in November*] (1981) – and around the world – from Japanese Sachiko Hidari's *Toi ippon no michi* [*The Far Road*] (1978) to Australian Martha Ansara's *Secret Storm* (1978), Algerian Assia Djebbar's *La nouba des femmes du Mont Chenoua* [*The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua*] (1979) to Lebanese Jocelyne Saab's *Lettre de Beyrouth* [*A Letter from Beirut*] (1979), Senegalese Safi Faye's *Fad'jal* [*Tell Us, Grandfather*] (1979) to Swiss Isa Hesse-Rabinovitch's *Siren-Eiland* [*Siren Island*] (1981), French Marguerite Duras's *Agatha et les lectures illimitées* [*Agatha and the Limitless Readings*] (1981) to Belgian Agnès Varda's *Mur Murs* [*Wall Walls*] (1981), British Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen's *Crystal Gazing* (1982) to Venezuelan Fina Torres's *Oriana* (1985). For a span of fifteen years, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache brought films, filmmakers, actors, and spectators together to partake in the viewing and discussion of representations of women depicting more than what Laura Mulvey later terms "to-be-looked-at-ness."[30] In her work organizing the festival, Mangiacapre successfully carved out space for diverse feminist voices. A champion of diversity and inclusion, Mangiacapre showcased and celebrated films shot across six continents: Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America. On top of planning and carrying out the international feminist film festival, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache designed and published multi-media booklets tied to

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30. Laura Mulvey's term "to-be-looked-at-ness" appears for the first time in her groundbreaking essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, 3 (1975): 6-18, 11. The compound noun describes a female figure whose body has been stylized by patriarchy and offered up as an erotic spectacle for the enjoyment of the male director, protagonist, and spectator. Mulvey focuses her analysis on the Classical Hollywood Tradition and affirms that women on screen in Hollywood films are stripped of personhood, fetishized thrice over by a controlling and narcissistic heteronormative male gaze, and redefined in relation to the voyeur. Mulvey's concept of to-be-looked-at-ness calls attention to the false reduction of meaning applied to certain bodies on screen in a hierarchical society. For Mulvey and Mangiacapre, the function of female bodies on screen is not merely to-be-looked-at. Rather than erasing the personhood of women on screen and suturing false meaning to their bodies, Mangiacapre eschews dominant ideology and celebrates the individuality and personality of heterogeneous women on screen.

each rassegna, incorporating the program of screenings as well as photography, prose, poetry, and sheet music. The title of the first two booklets, "Non solo figure di donne" ["Women Are More Than Just Characters"], brilliantly conveys the drive behind Mangiacapre's venture: to make space for women to express themselves creatively both on and off screen. Mangiacapre succeeded in making room for feminist reflections, queries, stories, collaborations, debates, art, and cinema in Sorrento by showcasing and celebrating the personal and political films of feminist directors hailing from a number of nations stretching across the globe.

Mangiacapre promoted a cinema that defies conventional representation, on the one hand, by organizing the Sorrento International Feminist Film Festival for fifteen years, and on the other, by establishing an award in league with the Venice International Film Festival. Conferred annually at the International Film Festival in Venice, the "Lina Mangiacapre Award" recognizes and promotes films that render the invisible visible by portraying women as protagonists of their own stories. The Mangiacapre Award has honored scores of international films exploring femininity, masculinity, desire, sexuality, violence, domination, despair, solitude, beauty, friendship, sistership, and love since its inception in 1987.[31] Originally christened the "Elvira Notari Award" by Mangiacapre as an homage to the trailblazing turn-of-the-century Campanian filmmaker,[32] the prize was rebaptized upon Mangiacapre's death to honor the legacy of the filmmaker who laid the foundations of the award. The "Lina Mangiacapre Award" continues to throw light on films that portray women as protagonists of their own stories today.

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31. For a list of recipients of the Lina Mangiacapre Award, previously known as the Elvira Notari Award, see Appendix B.

32. For more on Elvira Notari, the first female filmmaker to shoot films in Italy, see Giuliana Bruno, *Streetwalking on a Ruined Map: Cultural Theory and the City Films of Elvira Notari* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Micaela Veronesi, "Femminismi pionieri: Scrivere la vita di una donna che non c'era," in *Filmare il femminismo*, 26-53.

Mangiacapre's legacy of raising up voices that represent women as savvy, desiring subjects; bringing diverse filmmakers from around the world together to dialogue; and making avant-garde art films in collaboration with her network of creativity, kinship, and care – otherwise known as Le Nemesiache – merits more attention from scholars. Despite constituting, in the words of Sara Filippelli, "un esempio unico" ["an unparalleled body of work"[33]] that "merita di essere ricostruito e studiato nel prosieguo della ricerca"[34] ["deserves to be studied and made the focus of future research"], Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist filmography has yet to be written into Italian film history. As the sole Italian feminist collective, or network, to have shot on 35mm film, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are "un unicum"[35] ["a unique case"] in both the Neapolitan and Italian context. A nonpareil piece in the patchwork of film history, Mangiacapre's filmography merits more critical attention.

3. Recent Scholarship and Art

Since Mangiacapre's passing in 2002, twenty years ago, interest in her artistic and philosophical works has surged. Critical interest in Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache emerged in the mid 1990s, intensified during the first two decades of the 2000s, and continues to build

33. Filippelli, "Pioniere della differenza," 182.

34. Ibid., 182.

35. Active since 1980, LeNove [The Nine] is an association of researchers with a particular interest in female subjectivity, gender identity, migrant women, women in urban space, women in the workplace, women at home, and violence against women. The independent scholars in sociology and history of LeNove include: Alessandra Bozzoli, Stefania Elisei, Giulia Gandini, Monica Mancini, Maria Merelli, Stefania Pizzonia, Maria Grazia Ruggerini, and Souad Gharbi. For more on LeNove, see lenove.org. See also *Donne protagoniste a Napoli*, ed. LeNove (Naples: Casa della cultura delle differenze, 2013), 15.

today.[36] In addition to rousing interest within the academy, Mangiacapre's avant-garde body of work has also inspired a transnational wave of creative work among feminist artists. For filmmaker Nadia Pizzuti, scholar and dramaturge Giulia Damiani, mixed-media artist and performer Ginny Sykes, and philosopher and musician Stefania Tarantino, the Nemesiache and their body of work have served as a fruitful impetus for artistic endeavors. In 2015, Pizzuti released her new wave Italian feminist docufilm *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo* [*Lina Mangiacapre: Artist of Feminism*][37] celebrating Mangiacapre's theoretical and artistic production as well as her dynamic personality. Also in 2015, Damiani composed an English adaption of Mangiacapre's psicofavola[38] [psychofairytale] *Biancaneve* [*Snow White*]. Two years later, in 2017, Damiani went on to write, perform, and direct *How to Sing a Prophecy*,[39] a theatrical work inspired by one of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache's philosophical booklets: "Cicli solari."[40] Also in 2017, Sykes designed and directed an experimental theatrical

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36. See Capobianco; Nadia Nappo, "Napoli Frontale: Intervista a Lina Mangiacapre," *Manifesta*: *Il diverso della scrittura*, July 1998, 4; Piera Mattei, "La persistenza del Mito: Lina Mangiacapre, Amazzoni e Minotauri," in *L'immaginazione critica* (Florence: Zone, 2009), 101-104; Stefania Tarantino, "Créativité et politique chez trois femmes napolitaines du XXe siècle: Lina Mangiacapre, Lucia Mastrodomenico et Angela Putino," presentation at Séminaire Genre, Politique, Sexualité(s) Orient/Occident (Paris, France, April 12, 2012); Filippelli "Pioniere della differenza;" LeNove, *Donne protagoniste a Napoli*; Giulia Damiani, "Napoli in the Unmapped Practice of Le Nemesiache: A Feminist Gazetteer," *Salt Magazine*, August 2014; Maud Anne Bracke, "Naples," in *Women and the Reinvention of the Political* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 156-184; Battaglia, "Il primo teatro femminista d'Italia;" Todoverto, "Artiste del femminismo;" Lucia Di Girolamo, "L'origine imprevedibile e la nemesi del tempo," *Arabeschi* 16 (2020): http://www.arabeschi.it/52-lorigine-imprevedibile-e-la-nemesi-del-tempo-/; Hilary Althea Emerson, "Reframing Madness with Avant-Garde Film: Lina Mangiacapre's Feminist Collaboration at the Asylum," *The Italianist* 41, 2 (2021): 323-337, doi: 10.1080/02614340.2021.1967645.

37. *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo*, directed by Pizzuti.

38. Mangiacapre's psicofavole [psychofairytales] are dramaturgical works performed in the theatre or in the piazza that serve as a means of practicing performative autocoscienza, a feminist praxis for coming to consciousness specific to Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. La psicofavola – or, in other words, performative autocoscienza – requires artistic and corporeal engagement in a way that more orthodox autocoscienza does not.

39. *How to Sing a Prophecy*, written by Giulia Damiani, directed by Giulia Damiani, Goldsmiths University, London, June 2017.

40. Le Nemesiache, "Cicli solari" (booklet, Naples, 1975).

performance in collaboration with Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe.[41] The work, which was initially titled *La certezza è il dubbio* [*Certainty Is Doubt*] (2017), was performed and filmed in Naples. After Teresa Mangiacapra's passing in 2018, the film was shortened, rebaptized *Maddalena, pescatrice di anime* [*Mary Magdalene, Fisherwoman of Souls*] (2019), and screened in Venice. In 2019, Tarantino and her musical group Ardesia released a song putting Mangiacapre's poem "Dove non potrò"[42] ["Where I cannot go"] to music. Tarantino's song, intriguingly, features prominently in Pizzuti's docufilm. Feminist artists and filmmakers from Naples to Rome, London to Chicago, and other parts of the world have and continue to be roused by the philosophical and creative work of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. A source of inspiration for artists and scholars alike, Mangiacapre's œuvre continues to spur critical studies within the academy today.

Presently investigating the work of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are: Stefania Tarantino, Giulia Damiani, Marco Calogero Battaglia, Dino Todoverto, Lucia Di Girolamo, Giada Cipollone, and a few others. These scholars are engaging in important critical work: exploring the aesthetics of understudied avant-garde feminist artists; analyzing the intersection of mythos, politics, performance, and landscape in Mangiacapre's creative works; and examining

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41. Award-winning sculptor, photographer, actor, novelist, and poet Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe (1948-2018) was an accomplished Neapolitan artist. Best known for her mixed media angel sculptures, Mangiacapra created aesthetically and conceptually compelling works plaiting together mythos, glass, light, volcanic tuff, iron, and wood. Exhibited several times in Naples, Herculaneum, Capri, and Rome, Mangiacapra's sculpture work merits future scholarship. Mangiacapra was deeply inspired by mythopoeia and involved with the Nemesiache since the inception of the feminist dimension in 1970. Teresa Mangiacapra acted in many of her sister Lina Mangiacapre's films, appearing as La Strega in *Biancaneve/La Strega* (1982), Anna in *Didone non è morta* (1987), and Margherita in *Faust/Fausta* (1991). Following the loss of her sister in 2002, Mangiacapra continued making art with the Nemesiache, performing in a number of multi-media projects, until she herself passed in 2018. For more on Mangiacapra's œuvre, see *Il tempo e gli Angeli* (Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee, 1991) and *L'antro degli Angeli* (Naples: Le Nemesiache/L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee, 2005). Like many of the Nemesiache, Mangiacapra went by mythical name: Niobe.

42. Lina Mangiacapre, "Dove non potrò," in *Donne e unicorni*, 53 (Naples: Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee, 1995).

the central role of corporeality in her liberatory theory and praxis.[43] Through innovative research on Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, scholars are contributing to a burgeoning body of criticism and bringing her philosophical and creative brilliance to the fore. With my dissertation on the metamorphosis of Myth and self in Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist films, I join Tarantino, Damiani, Battaglia, and others in developing the body of criticism on Mangiacapre's œuvre, focusing my analysis on an avenue yet to be fully explored: her filmography.

4. Chapter Organization and Methodology

This dissertation throws light on the avant-garde feminist and transfeminist art and theory of an understudied Neapolitan filmmaker. Through a critical analysis of the ideologically-infused form and content of her films, I demonstrate that Mangiacapre's subversive philosophies of art, sexuality, and self transcend ideological boundary lines intent on separating the personal from the political, painting from poetry, and Myth from reality. As Mangiacapre was a painter,[44] poet,

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43. For a comprehensive overview of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache's artistic, philosophical, and political engagement, see Silvana Campese, *La Nemesi di Medea*: *Una storia femminista lungo mezzo secolo* (Naples: L'Inedito, 2019) and *Lina Mangiacapre*: *Artista del femminismo*, directed by Nadia Pizzuti (2015; Italy: FogliadiLimone, 2015). For more on Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache within the context of the Neapolitan Feminist Movement, see Capobianco; Bracke, "Naples," and LeNove. For more on Mangiacapre's metaphysics and philosophical stance, see Nappo, "Intervista a Lina Mangiacapre" and Tarantino, "Lina Mangiacapre, Lucia Mastrodomenico et Angela Putino." For more on Mangiacapre's poetics, see Mattei, "La persistenza del Mito." For more on her theatrical works and performance art, see Battaglia and Todoverto. For more on her filmography, see Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile*; Filippelli; Pizzuti; Todoverto; Di Girolamo; and Emerson. For an ecofeminist reflection on the Nemesiache and Neapolitan landscape, see Damiani, "Napoli in the Unmapped Practice of Le Nemesiache."

44. Mangiacapre identified first and foremost as a painter and signed her oil, acrylic, and multi-media work as Màlina. For more on the name Màlina, see Ingeborg Bachmann, *Malina*, trans. Philip Boehm (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1990). Mangiacapre explored mythos, the aesthetics of androgyny, metaphysics, and the female form through painting. Curves and circles feature prominently in Mangiacapre's abstract expressionist paintings and many of the canvases are, in fact, tondi. By employing circular canvases to create her art, Mangiacapre celebrates the curvature of the female form and at the same time vindicates a shape that has been stripped of all symbolic importance: the circle. Mangiacapre rejects the long-standing association of the circle with nothingness and pays tribute to the beauty of curves in her work. With both her abstract expressionist paintings and multi-media portraits, in the words of John Perchard, Mangiacapre "ci offre un'originalità sorprendente" ["offers astonishing originality"]. Mangiacapre's paintings have been exhibited across Italy and Europe: in Naples (at the Castel dell'Ovo), Rome, Bergamo, Venice, Paris, Munster, and Patras. For more on Mangiacapre's paintings, see the post-mortem catalogue of her artwork: *Lina Mangiacapre: Dipingere la poesia*, trans. John Perchard (Naples: Altrastampa, 2004), 9.

and film theorist[45] on top of the most prolific feminist filmmaker the Italian peninsula has ever seen, her feminist expressionist paintings, manifestos, visual poems, [46] antinovels,[47] films, and film theory are incorporated into analysis.

Chapter 1, "Nemesis in Naples: An Avant-Garde Artist and Her Subversive Theory," delineates Mangiacapre's transdisciplinary theory of art, transfeminist theory of sexuality and gender, and performative praxis for coming to consciousness through a critical analysis of manifestos, interviews, visual poetry, and film. After elaborating the concept of *hyrmyth*, i.e., mythological tales that make room for characters who derail rather than uphold dominant

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45. As a film theorist, Mangiacapre pushes beyond questions that dominate classical and contemporary film theory concerning the nature the medium and spectatorship. Rather than theorize about the final product or its ability to manipulate or arouse, Mangiacapre takes a more holistic approach, analyzing the filmmaking and viewing processes from multiple perspectives. In *Cinema al femminile*, Mangiacapre affirms that the process of filmmaking has "la potenzialità di liberazione" ["liberatory potential"] for women gazing through and at the camera. For Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, filmmaking is a dynamic process of coming to know the self by means of artistic collaboration. By composing screen plays, making costumes, capturing images, performing, and later spectating, the Nemesiache engage in performative autocoscienza, a process of self-discovery and actualization among women linked to both art and the corporeal. Like Mangiacapre's unique, artistic form of autocoscienza, her theorization is also highly original, bridging a theoretical chasm between her own particular brand of feminist metaphysics and contemporary feminist film theory. For more on Mangiacapre's film and image theory, see Le Nemesiache, *Rassegna del Cinema Femminista*, 13 vols. (Naples, 1976-1988); Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile* (Padova: Mastogiacomo, 1980), 7; Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile 2* (Naples: Le Tre Ghinee, 1994); Lina Mangiacapre, "La vendetta dell'immagine" *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*, December 1998, 13; Lina Mangiacapre, "Un cinema della poesia," *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*, December 1988, 22-23.

46. Mangiacapre's first collection of poetry, *Donne e unicorne* [*Women and Unicorns*] (Naples: Coop. "Le Tre Ghinee," 1995), came out in 1995. Her second collection, *Amazzoni e minotauri* [*Amazons and Minotaurs*] (Rimini: Raffaelli Editore, 2008), was published post-mortem in 2008. Several of Mangiacapre's visual poems can be found in *Manifesto delle Nemesiache* (Naples: 1970), "Cicli lunari" ["Lunar Cycles"] (booklet, Naples, 1973), "Cicli solari" ["Solar Cycles"] (booklet, Naples, 1975), *Manifesta* – her feminist art and culture zine founded in 1988, her transfeminist antinovel *Faust/Fausta*, and her art catalogue *Dipingere la poesia*.

47. As a novelist, Mangiacapre takes an avant-garde approach, composing works that she likens to alchemical concoctions. Blurring the lines between painting, poetry, and prose in her novelistic composition, Mangiacapre utilizes nonnormative punctuation, capitalization, and language in order to transform her abstract expressionist art into written form. In her fragmentary, philosophical novel *Il mare sarà solo* [*The Sea Shall Be Alone*] (Calcata: Edizioni del Giano, 1993), 3, for example, Mangiacapre eliminates codified language and employs capitalization and punctuation in a non-traditional way in order to express a shattered ego and the pieces that remain. Rather than normative language and a linear plot, Mangiacapre opts in favor of a spiraling, "linguaggio circolare" ["circular language"] and a fragmentary plot that twists and turns back upon itself. Mangiacapre eschews linearity, writing a novel "in fuga di ogni linguaggio codificato" ["breaking away from any and every sort of codified language"]. In addition to the avant-garde novel *Il mare sarà solo*, which, in the words of Mangiacapre, constitutes "una diversa forma di scrittura" [a different form of writing"], she published three others: *Il diverso* [*The Different One*] (Roma: Pro Deo, 1973), *Faust/Fausta*, and *Pentesilea* [*Penthesilea*] (Naples: Le Nemesiache / Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee, 1996).

ideology, the chapter argues that hyrmyth, performance art, and the "bodymind"[48] are central to Mangiacapre's method for coming to consciousness. Chapter 2, "Dido Lives On: Sistership, Persistence, and the Politics of Care," analyzes Mangiacapre's nonlinear treatment of time in her first feature film, *Didone non è morta* [*Dido Never Died*] (1987). After establishing Mangiacapre's spatiotemporal relations as "porous,"[49] like the spongy volcanic bedrock of the Campanian coast, the chapter contends that because her *porous time* allows for the intermingling of a remote, mythical past with the present Dido's politics of care and penchant for peace live on. Chapter 3, "Beyond the Binary: Androgyny and Self-Reflexivity in Mangiacapre's Transfeminist Faust," examines gender nonconformity and nonbinary aesthetics in her second feature film, *Faust/Fausta* (1991). After delineating female-bodied Fausta's decision to deal with the devil and become Faust with the aim of embodying her inner masculinity, the chapter demonstrates that the protagonist's attempt to navigate gender as a binary impedes her in her quest for equilibrium of body and soul and that Faust/Fausta's path to peace lies beyond the binary. Chapter 4, "Conclusions," analyzes Mangiacapre's use of avant-garde narrativity and stunning yet precarious landscape in her avant-garde feature films as well as *Cenerella*: *Psicofavola di Nemesi* (1974), *Le Sibille* (1977), *Il mare ci ha chiamate* (1978), *Follia come poesia* (1979), and

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48. Mangiacapre's method for coming to consciousness engages what Babette Rothschild and Margaret Price later refer to as *the bodymind*. Theorized by Rothschild in *The Body Remembers* (New York: Norton, 2000) and further elaborated upon by Price in "The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain," *Hypatia* 30, 1 (2015): 268-284, 261, the concept of the bodymind refers the interconnectedness of one's mental and physical experience in a world governed by hierarchies. Although often considered two distinct and separate realms, body and mind are interconnected for Price, Rothschild, and Mangiacapre. Like Price, who affirms that "mental and physical processes not only affect each other but also give rise to each other," Mangiacapre maintains that creative movement of the body can stimulate the psyche and precipitate liberatory movement of the mind, thereby giving rise to a new, harmonious sense of self. For Mangiacapre, the physical and psychic parts of the self are in concert with one another and always in motion, constantly morphing and changing based on one's experiences in the world.

49. Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis, "Naples," in *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB, 1979), 169. For more on the porosity of Naples and Neapolitans, see Benjamin and Lacis "Naples;" Tabanelli, *I "pori" di Napoli*; Serenella Iovino, "Bodies of Naples," in *Ecocriticism and Italy* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic Gordonsville, 2016), 13-46.

Biancaneve/La Strega (1982). After exploring the concept of *indomitable beauty*, i.e., beauty that cannot be dictated or dominated by Man, the chapter argues that volcanic and maritime landscapes constitute transformative, subversive spaces for Mangiacapre's protagonists. Through a comparative analysis of Claire Johnston's, Laura Mulvey's, Teresa de Lauretis's, and Lina Mangiacapre's film theory, the chapter demonstrates the power of performance onscreen and spectatorship offscreen for Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. After underlining the specularity of their spectatorship, the chapter concludes that Mangiacapre's collaborative filmic praxis constitutes an artistic apparatus for self-actualization. In sum, this dissertation investigates the performative metamorphosis of Myth and self in Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist films.

This dissertation analyzes a vast array of materials across disciplines: Berber History,[50] Greek Myth, Roman epic, German tragedy, Soviet fiction, Italian opera, French film, Tunisian novel, Neapolitan cultural studies, Mangiacapran metaphysics, transnational feminist politics, ecofeminist theory, mad and disability studies, avant-garde performance, trans and nonbinary studies, film theory, and spectatorship studies. The study also covers a vast chronological scope, from the seventh century BCE to present day, offering an approach to scholarship that challenges norms surrounding orthodox disciplinarity and periodization. By taking a transdisciplinary, transnational, transtemporal approach in my analysis of Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist films, I aim to broaden the bounds of the Italian literary and cinematic canon and stimulate debate surrounding transnational feminist scholarship, the intersection of art and politics, and creativity as a methodology of resistance. In sum, with this dissertation on Lina Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist filmography, I throw new light on the artistic and political prowess of a

50. By *History* with a capital *H* this dissertation refers to the official narrative of great men, great wars, domination, and death.

neglected avant-garde filmmaker and her feminist filmmaking praxis, thereby bridging the gap between Italian avant-garde, feminist, and film studies.

Chapter 1

Nemesis in Naples:
An Avant-Garde Artist and Her Subversive Theory

Visionary Neapolitan artist and philosopher Lina Mangiacapre took an avant-garde approach to art and life. Like other avant-gardes, Mangiacapre challenged dominant culture and advanced a particular vision of the world by means of making art. Mangiacapre's œuvre, including her filmworks, promotes a world with fewer borders, boundaries, and controls in which harmony reigns supreme and beauty in its many forms can flourish without the threat of violence. Mangiacapran theory and praxis do not abide by ideological boundary lines bent on separating, ranking, and filing human beings or works of art. Blurring the lines between painting and poetry, homosexuality and heterosexuality, and Woman and Man, Mangiacapre postulates nonnormative theories of art, sexuality, and self. With her transdiciplinary art theory, Mangiacapre calls into question the division and hierarchy of artistic disciplines within the Arts System. With her philosophy of sexuality and gender, she challenges the notion of the binary, elaborating a theory stipulating that both sexual desire and gender identity are forever in flux, ever shifting and changing. With her new feminist metaphysics, Mangiacapre plaits together mythos, performance, and selfhood, wearing away the lines of demarcation separating art, politics, Myth,[51] and reality. While points of contact do exist between Mangiacapre and other pioneering Italian feminist philosophers like Carla Lonzi, Adriana Cavarero, and Luisa Muraro, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache do not subscribe to sexual difference theory nor do they

51. When using the term *Mythology* or *Myth* with a capital *M*, this dissertation refers to a concept that I have elaborated based on that of History with a capital H (i.e., the official narrative of great men, great wars, domination, and death). For more, see chapter 1.

practice orthodox[52] autocoscienza[53] or la doppia militanza[54] [double militancy] the same way that other Italian feminists do. Espousing Mangiacapran metaphysics and art theory, Mangiacapre

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52. By *mainstream* or *orthodox* Italian feminism, this dissertation intends those strands of feminism that dominate Italian feminist anthologies: central and northern Italian feminist theory and practice. While central and northern Italian feminist artists and philosophers (e.g., Lia Cigarini, Luisa Muraro, and the Libreria delle Donne di Milano [The Milan Bookstore Collective]; Adriana Cavarero, Luisa Muraro, Chiara Zamboni, and the Verona-based Diotima Group; Carla Lonzi and Rivolta Femminile [Female Rebellion]; Annabella Miscuglio, Rony Daopoulo, Loredana Rotondo, and the Rome-based Collettivo Cinema Femminista [Feminist Film Collective]; et al.) are featured in volumes dedicated to Italian feminist thought, their southern Italian counterparts (e.g., Lina Mangiacapre and Le Nemesiache; Angela Putino, Lucia Mastrodomenico, and the Naples-based AdATeoriaFemminista; Letizia Battaglia; Noemi Saggioli and the Catania-based Volpagina; Olga Badalato Orsini, Emma Baeri Parisi, and the Catania-based RivoltaPagina; et al.) have received comparatively little attention. Southern Italian feminism is a multifaceted project with varied philosophical, artistic, personal, and political, erotic objectives, and yet many Italian feminist anthologies have relegated philosophy engendered in the Mezzogiorno region to the margins. Southern Italian voices, including the voices of Southern Italian feminists, merit more critical attention. While briefly mentioned in "Introduction: Coming from the South," in *Italian Feminist Thought*, ed. Paola Bono and Sandra Kemp, 1-29 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are often excluded from volumes on Italian feminism, e.g., *Italian Feminist Theory and Practice*, ed. Parati and West (Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2002); *Le filosofe femministe*, ed. Adriana Cavarero and Franco Restaino (Turin: Paravia Scriptorium, 1999). Mangiacapre's metaphysics and other feminist philosophies elaborated in Naples can generally be found in works concentrating specifically on Naples and Neapolitan feminism. See Conni Capobianco, *Interpreti e protagoniste del movimento femminista napoletano 1970-1990* (Naples: Le Tre Ghinee - Nemesiache, 1994); LeNove, *Donne protagoniste a Napoli: Un contributo alla ricostruzione del movimento delle donne dagli anni Settanta ad oggi*, ed. LeNove: Studi e richerche (Naples: Casa della cultura delle differenze, 2013); Anne Maud Bracke's "Naples," in *Women and the Reinvention of the Political*, (New York: Routledge, 2014), 156-184. See also Libreria delle Donne di Milano, *Sottosopra: Esperienze dei gruppi femministi in Italia* (Milan: Effeti-Rozzano, 1974).

53. La doppia militanza [double militancy] refers to the involvement of feminists in a second struggle on top of the feminist one, namely, active participation in a political party. While mainstream feminists practiced double militancy and participated in two movements at once, their engagement with larger, more established organizations often required the sacrifice of their personal priorities in the name of a greater good. Opting not to affiliate with any political party, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache pursue their agenda while privileging peace, beauty, individuality, and personality. Several of the Nemesiache, including Conni Capobianco and Bruna Felletti came from a doubly militant background, however, upon joining the Nemesiache shifted gears. The Nemesiache most certainly collaborated with other organizations like L'Associazione Mensa Proletari Bambini but did not consider themselves doubly militant. For more on double militancy, see *Italian Feminist Thought*, ed. Paola Bono and Sandra Kemp (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991).

54. While the concept of autocoscienza [consciousness-raising] originated in the United States, trailblazing Italian feminist theorists, like Carla Lonzi, elaborated upon the praxis and made it their own. In 1970, Lonzi fleshed out and prescribed the practice of autocoscienza in order for women to achieve a way-of-being-in-the-world independent of the influences of dominant ideology. Lonzi and Rivolta Femminile along with a number of other feminist collectives across the peninsula practiced autocoscienza by sitting and talking with one another and reflecting upon personal and collective experiences. In speaking and hearing their own life stories, Italian feminists succeeded in recognizing hierarchies governing their lives, obtaining a fresh outlook on their own particular uniqueness, and actualizing a strong sense of self not tied to the world of men. While for Lonzi and Muraro, the aim of coming to consciousness was achieving an authentic sense of self unfettered by heteropatriarchal culture, for Mangiacapre, it was a fresh, harmonious sense of self and profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world. See Carla Lonzi, "Significato dell'autocoscienza nei gruppi femministi," in *Sputiamo su Hegel* (Milan: Scritti di rivolta femminile, 1978), 125-132; Il Gruppo Anabasi, *Donne è bello* (Milan: Il Gruppo Anabasi, 1972); Libreria delle donne di Milano, *Non credere di avere dei diritti* (Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1987); Giovanna Zapperi, *Carla Lonzi: Un'arte della vita* (Roma: DeriveApprodi, 2017).

and co. take a strictly artistic approach to practicing politics. "Arte è politica"[55] ["Art is politics"] for Mangiacapre: "Vuol dire un diverso modo di fare politica."[56] ["It's a different way of practicing politics."] Donning costumes, painting faces, making avant-garde motion pictures, and moving to the beat, the Nemesiache practice art with the aim of achieving *cosmic harmony*, or, in other words, a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world. In pursuit of inner and outer peace for women and for all, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache make art and philosophy together in and around Naples.

In theory and praxis, Mangiacapre pushed the boundaries and broke the barriers between Myth and reality, body and mind, female and male, the personal and the political, and the working class and the academic elite. Nicknamed "Socrate"[57] ["Socrates"] by local fishermen in Mergellina, Mangiacapre was known for exchanging ideas with members of the working class and collaborating with any and all genders on filmmaking projects. In a 1998 interview with Nadia Nappo, Mangiacapre described how her interest in philosophy was born from encounters with local baristas and fisherman thirty years prior:

> In quel momento la lotta era per es., fuggire dall'Università, andare a Mergellina e fare filosofia con i pescatori e i camerieri dei bar che mi chiamavano Socrate. Appena arrivavo si radunavano attorno a me, cominciavano a parlare di questioni filosofiche. Questo è il mio '68, aver voluto eliminare caste e rigidità, che ancora c'erano tra gli intellettuali e la gente che lavorava: operai, artigiani, è li che ho trovato la mia passione filosofica. Ogni giorno si partiva dal concreto, dal particolare e si arrivava all'universale.
>
> [One way that I participated in the struggle was by going off campus and philosophizing with local fishermen and baristas in Mergellina. They called me

55. *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo*, directed by Nadia Pizzuti (2015; Italy: FogliadiLimone, 2015).

56. *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo*, directed by Pizzuti.

57. Nadia Nappo, "Napoli Frontale: Intervista a Lina Mangiacapre," *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*, July 1998, 4.

> Socrates. As soon as I arrived, they would gather around me and start talking philosophy. That's how I spent my '68 – aspiring to break down and do away with barriers between intellectuals and artisans, factory workers, and others who worked for a living. This is how I first experienced my affinity for philosophy. Conversations about real, concrete, lived experiences led to later discussions surrounding more abstract, universal ideas.]

Taking a counterhegemonic approach to practicing politics, Mangiacapre elaborated nonnormative philosophies of art, sexuality, and self that neither reinscribe nor perpetuate categories dreamt up dominant ideology. In challenging the validity of dividing lines drawn by a racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, ageist society – lines separating the personal from the political, homosexuality from heterosexuality, etc. – Mangiacapre reminds us that it is by separating, categorizing, ranking, and filing that hegemony takes root. A brilliant and creative thinker, Mangiacapre recognized and deconstructed the societal constraints designed to contain her and envisioned an alternate world order in which beauty in its many forms, including the nonnormative ones, can be explored and celebrated without the threat of being bridled or put down by cisheteropatriarchy. Whether dialoguing with local fishermen in Mergellina, making music with the institutionalized at a local asylum, or making avant-garde short and feature films with fellow feminists by the sea, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache talked philosophy and practiced art in order to bring their particular vision of the world to fruition: a world in which women and the rest of the world may explore and express themselves through art, achieve inner and outer peace through performance, celebrate beauty in its many forms, and live at harmony with oneself, one's kin, one's collaborators, and the cosmos.

This chapter begins with an analysis of Mangiacapre's art theory, which calls into question the imaginary lines drawn between the disciplines in the modern Arts System. First, expounding on the idea of ideological dividing lines, the chapter draws upon the pacifist

ponderings of Virginia Woolf, specifically on portions of her *Three Guineas*.[58] Just as Woolf denounces borders and boundaries dreamt up to rank and file human beings, Mangiacapre too spurns ideological boundary lines aimed at hierarchy. The chapter argues that Mangiacapre's approach to practicing politics is an embodiment of the radical, new kind of advocacy group that Woolf calls for in her epistolary novel: individuals who privilege peace and employ innovative, avant-garde means of making change. Second, the chapter examines Mangiacapre's philosophy of sexuality and gender, outlining what she calls "transfemminismo"[59] ["transfeminism"] or "pensiero androgino"[60] ["androgynous theory"]. The chapter argues that in putting forth a flexible, changeable theory of sexuality and gender Mangiacapre exposes cracks in fabric of cisheteropatriarchy and presents an alternative framework for understanding nonnormative desire and gender identity. Third, the chapter turns its attention to Mangiacapre's metaphysics. Both pacifist and feminist, Mangiacapre's metaphysical trajectory spirals deep within each feminist and involves both mythopoeia and avant-garde performance. The chapter explicates core concepts of Mangiacapran metaphysics such as *nemesis* and argues that the aim of Mangiacapre's metaphysical philosophy is inner and outer peace for women and for all. Drawing upon the philosophy of Simone Weil, one of Mangiacapre's theoretical points of reference, the chapter demonstrates that Mangiacapre rejects the concept of revenge as a legitimate recourse to violence. After demonstrating the stark differences between Greco-Roman and Neapolitan Nemesis, the chapter makes plain that Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are avant-garde porters of peace, not punishment. In addition, the chapter analyzes Mangiacapre's feminist and

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58. Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt Inc., 1938).

59. Lina Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta* (Florence: L'Autore Libri, 1990), 9.

60. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 9.

transfeminist myth-making and develops a concept that I term *hyrmyth*. The chapter argues that, by writing, performing, and filming feminist and transfeminist hyrmyths, Mangiacapre and co. make room for characters who chip away at the foundation of cisheteropatriarchy, thereby rendering the unimaginable imaginable for themselves and spectators alike. Fourth, the chapter examines points of contact and divergence between Mangiacapran theory and practice and the Italian feminist fold. The chapter outlines Mangiacapre's blurring of art, politics, public, private, body, and mind in her unorthodox praxis and argues that creative movement, costume, and filmmaking play a critical role in Mangiacapre's practice of *performative autocoscienza.* In sum, the chapter throws light on Mangiacapre's subversive theory and praxis and demonstrates that through avant-garde feminist art and philosophy, Mangiacapre promotes a world with fewer borders and boundaries in which women can express their beauty and creativity in its many forms and peace and harmony reigns supreme.

1. Transdisciplinary Art Theory

Over the past six hundred years, a number of philosophers have put forth frameworks ranking and filing works of art based on medium and in so doing have had a hand in the codification and hierarchy of the arts. While Leon Battista Alberti proclaimed painting the highest and most noble form of art, nearly five hundred years later, Ricciotto Canudo declared cinema the most superb.[61] Although various theorists have honed in on one particular artistic discipline and attempted to establish its ascendency, Mangiacapre does not follow suit. For

61. See Leon Battista Alberti, *Della pittura* (Rome: Librerie Dedalo, 2009) – originally published in 1435; Ricciotto Canudo, "The Birth of a Sixth Art" in *French Film Theory and Criticism: 1907-1929*, ed. Richard Abel, trans. Ben Gibson, Sergio Sokota, and Deborah Young, 58-66, Vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988) – originally published in 1911.

Mangiacapre, painting and cinema are no nobler than performance art or visual poetry. Mangiacapre's counterhegemonic, transdisciplinary approach to art theory challenges lines of delimitation within the modern system of fine arts dividing filmmaking from painting and painting from poetry.[62] By plaiting together seemingly disparate artistic disciplines, Mangiacapre demonstrates that works of art need not be categorized, ranked, or filed by medium in order to make sense of them. Mangiacapre was by no means alone in her resolve to transcend the system during the "crogiuolo di sperimentazioni" ["crucible of experimentation"][63] otherwise known as the 1960s-1970s. As noted by Riccardo Notte, the impulse to deconstruct and reimagine the established order was espoused by a number of artists active at the time. Rather than accept the traditional system of the fine arts as is, Mangiacapre and others questioned the legitimacy of the framework. As an artist and art theorist, Mangiacapre elaborated a theory and praxis of her own aimed at erasing the barriers between filmmaking and painting as well as painting and poetry. For Mangiacapre and her fellow feminist artists, art is more than a mere product. In other words, art is more than the paint or celluloid that physically constitutes the artistic object of creation. For the Nemesiache, art, whether captured on camera, performed in the piazza, or painted on canvas, is a collaborative, feminist praxis for the exploration and expression of self, realization of inner and outer peace, and establishment of a more harmonious cosmic order.

Questing for inner and outer peace for women and for all, Mangiacapre blurred the lines between filmmaking, painting, and poetry. Mangiacapre "diceva di 'recitare i suoi quadri' e di 'dipingere le sue poesie' " ["used to say that she 'recited her paintings' and 'painted her

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62. For more on *Le système des beaux-arts* [the system of fine arts], see Abbé Batteaux, *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe* (Paris: Chez Durand, 1747) – originally published in 1746; Paul Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (II)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13, 1 (1952): 17-46.

63. Riccardo Notte, "I ritratti-rifratti di Lina Mangiacapre," in *Lina Mangiacapre*: *Dipingere la poesia* (Naples: Altrastampa, 2004), 9-12, 9.

poems.'"][64] Practically speaking, *reciting paintings* and *painting poetry* entailed the making of avant-garde art. Mangiacapre composed visual poetry, painted poetry onto banners, made feminist expressionist oil paintings, created kaleidoscopic and grid format mixed media portrait montages, and directed feminist short and feature films. In theory, *painting poetry* involved a removal of barriers, specifically the lines of demarcation separating one artistic discipline from the next on which the system of fine art relies. In reconceptualizing painting as the art of *painting poetry* and filmmaking as the art of *painting beauty*, Mangiacapre embraces transdisciplinarity. Considering her transdisciplinary framework, it may not come as a surprise that when Mangiacapre refers to *poesia* [*poetry*] she is not pointing to the orthodox art of versification. *Poesia*, for Mangiacapre, is akin to artistic inspiration. It signifies that which drives the making of art: *beauty*. *Painting beauty*, *painting poetry* with her brushes or camera, Mangiacapre breaks the barriers separating poetry from painting and painting from filmmaking, challenges traditional disciplinarity, and offers an alternative, counterhegemonic approach to art theory and practice.

In the same vein as Virginia Woolf, Mangiacapre spurns lines of delimitation conjured up in order to stratify, rank, and file human beings. Woolf condemns those "loud of voice, hard of fist, childishly intent upon scoring the floor of the earth with chalk marks, within whose mystic boundaries human beings are penned, rigidly, desperately, artificially."[65] Just as Woolf recognizes and denounces the artificiality of border and boundary lines drawn to divide and conquer, so too does Mangiacapre. In fact, Mangiacapre and co. refer to their network of artists as both Le Nemesiache as well as Le Tre Ghinee [Three Guineas]. In Woolf's epistolary novel, *Three Guineas*, the narrative voice is a champion of counterhegemonic education who provides counsel

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64. Notte, "I ritratti-rifratti," 9.

65. Woolf, *Three Guineas*, 105.

on how to build a more peaceful society. First, she recommends tearing down the women's college and rebuilding a new, experimental, affordable institution in its place that teaches "[n]ot the arts of dominating other people; not the arts of ruling, of killing, of acquiring land and capital"[66] but rather "the arts of human intercourse; the art of understanding other people's lives and the little arts of talk, of dress, of cookery that are allied with them"[67] as well as painting, literature, and music. Second, the narrator recommends providing women with access to employment. Third, she calls for the coming together of an advocacy group the likes of which, in 1938, had never before been seen. In order to prevent war and build a more harmonious society, Woolf's narrator endorses the formation of a pacifist, adventurous, new advocacy group that promotes peace in creative, innovative ways, or, in other words, an unconventional network of counterhegemonic thinkers who employ creative, artistic, novel methods in pursuit of cosmic harmony. For Mangiacapre and Woolf, peace is possible but cannot be achieved by repeating the words, actions, and types of advocacy groups of those in power. Creative, nonnormative forms of practicing politics are the way to peace. Mangiacapre's network of creativity, kinship, and care do just that: come together and practice politics by making avant-garde art with the aim of building a more harmonious world. The Nemesiache/Tre Ghinee are an embodiment, one of many potential materializations, of Woolf's adventurous, peace-oriented advocacy group. Just as Woolf endeavors to create a more peaceful, harmonious world "by finding new words and creating new methods,"[68] so too does Mangiacapre. Mangiacapre and co. take an antihierarchical, avant-garde approach to their advocacy and spurn traditional methods that

66. Ibid., 34.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., 143.

reinforce artificial boundary lines drawn by dominant ideology. For Mangiacapre, imaginary dividing lines – whether it be one separating Naples from Caserta, homosexuality from heterosexuality, or painting from filmmaking – are redolent of "una prigione" ["a prison."][69] Indeed, like the bars of a prison cell, lines separating one artistic discipline from the next serve as an instrument of dominant ideology: they make different, keep apart, and subordinate. Rather than reinscribing "chalk marks"[70] drawn by dominant ideology in her philosophical work, Mangiacapre calls into question the validity of such lines. Nonconformist in her artwork and nonbinary in her theorization, Mangiacapre creates avant-garde works of art that are fluid and not easily categorizeable. As an artist, art theorist, and philosopher of sexuality and gender, Mangiacapre interrogates mainstream categorizations and dichotomies designed to rank and file.

2. Transfeminist Theory of Sexuality and Gender

Mangiacapre eschews binaries and embraces fluidity in her creative and theoretical work. As a philosopher of sexuality and gender, rather than acknowledge the existence of two sexed beings with distinct roles to play in society, Mangiacapre rejects the binary, elaborating a theory that all human beings are in flux, constantly shifting and changing, both in terms of sexual desire and gender identity. Mangiacapre's "transfemminismo"[71] ["transfeminist theory"], also known as "pensiero androgino"[72] ["androgynous theory"], is expounded in the front matter of her avant-garde antinovel *Faust/Fausta*. Mangiacapre specifies that, "[n]on si tratta più solo dell'uomo e

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69. Lina Mangiacapre, *Lina Mangiacapre*: *Dipingere la poesia* (Naples: Altrastampa, 2004), 25.

70. Woolf, *Three Guineas*, 105.

71. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 9.

72. Ibid.

della donna moderna, ma della nascita di un essere in mutazione la cui identità sessuata[73] sarà in continua metamorfosi nel senso della passione e del desiderio"[74] ["the focus is no longer solely on the modern Woman and Man but on the birth of a new, metamorphic being whose relationship to biological sex, gender identity, and sexuality is in constant metamorphosis."] Skeptical of binary thinking, Mangiacapre and her transfeminist philosophy annul unnecessary categorizations that rank and file human beings according to cisgender heteronormativity. According to Mangiacapre's theory, published in the early 1990s, the self is multiple, fluid in terms of sexuality and gender, and in constant motion. At the heart of Mangiacapre's transfeminist thought lies the notion that human sexuality is in perpetual motion, like molten rock beneath the slopes of Mount Vesuvia[75] or the waves in the Bay of Naples splashing to and fro. With her transfeminist philosophy, Mangiacapre promotes a flexible, changeable conception

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73. *Identità sessuata* [*sexuate identity*] entails one's relationship to one's own physical body. For example, a child born with a female body who identifies and presents as a Woman has a cisgender sexuate identity. A child born with a female body who identifies and presents as a Man has a transgender sexuate identity. A child born with a female body who identifies and presents as a nonbinary person may identify as either trans or cisgender. Sexuate identity refers to whether the gender (i.e., Woman, Man, or nonbinary) with which one identifies and presents corresponds with one's biological sex (i.e., female, male, or intersex). As the term *sexuate identity* has fallen out of use, I employ the terms "biological sex" and "gender identity" in my translation. Contemporary scholars of trans and nonbinary studies overwhelmingly refer to the concept of sexuate identity as *gender identity*. This can create confusion, however, as gender identity has two distinct meanings. When the concept first arose, gender identity pointed to the gender role (i.e., Woman, Man, or nonbinary) one plays in society. Today, owing to the recent surge in trans and nonbinary studies, gender identity has taken on a second meaning, that of sexuate identity. A case could be made for reintroducing the term *sexuate identity* into scholarly discourse in order to call attention to the identity category of trans- and cisgenderedness and distinguish it from: biological sex (i.e., female, male, or intersex), gender identity (i.e. Woman, Man, or nonbinary), and sexual identity (i.e., homosexual, heterosexual, or pansexual), however, that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. See Martínez-San Miguel et al., *Trans Studies*; "Exploding the (Gender) Binary;" Aizura et al., "Thinking with Trans Now;" and Bey, "Trouble Genders: 'LGBT' Collapse and Trans Fundamentality."

74. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 9.

75. While volcanic lore is oft associated with the masculine, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache refer to the dangerous beauty on the Bay of Naples as a she: la Vesuvia. Like the female body, la Vesuvia is capable of creation and exists in a state of constant metamorphosis. Lying dormant for a time and then violently giving birth to new terrain, la Vesuvia erupts, discharging red hot fluid, not unlike blood shed by women during childbirth. Female human beings and la Vesuvia are equip with the power of creation and their bodies are constantly shifting and changing: capable but not always actively secreting steam, smoke, magma, milk, menstrual blood, vaginal or amniotic fluid, et al. As the Nemesiache refer to this metamorphic beauty as a she, I use the feminine form, *la Vesuvia*, in this dissertation. For more on the association of volcanic myth with the masculine, see Elena Past, "Volcanic Matters," *L'analisi linguistica e letteraria* 24, 2 (2016): 135-146.

of sexuality and gender that challenges the established order and delegitimizes the notion that all humans born female are beholden to one model and all born male to another. From her elaboration of transfeminist theory to her reconceptualization of filmmaking as the art of painting beauty, Mangiacapre proves a unique avant-garde artist and philosopher.

3. A New Feminist Metaphysics

In addition to giving birth to subversive theory and works of art, in 1970, Mangiacapre inaugurated Le Nemesiache, an unorthodox network of avant-garde feminist artists. The Nemesiache have practiced politics together for a span of fifty-two years now.[76] Prior to her death in 2002, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache engaged in avant-garde performance and filmmaking; composed and published poetry and film theory in their feminist art and culture zine *Manifesta: Il diverso della scrittura*;[77] founded and organized Europe's first international feminist film festival;[78] established and conferred the "Lina Mangiacapre Award"[79] at the Venice

76. Although Le Nemesiache/L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee legally dissolved in 2018, the Nemesiache continue to realize philosophical and artistic projects together still today.

77. Another venture spearheaded by Mangiacapre was the feminist art and culture zine *Manifesta*: *Il diverso della scrittura*. In addition to composing philosophical musings, film theory, and poetry for the zine, Mangiacapre served as editor-in-chief, putting out issues bi- or triannually from 1988-1995 and 1997-1999.

78. In addition to writing and directing fourteen films of her own, Mangiacapre ideated and founded Europe's first international feminist film festival. Organized and held in conjunction with the Sorrento Film Festival from 1976-1991, Mangiacapre's Rassegna del Cinema Femminista showcased a series of feminist films produced across the Italian peninsula and around the world. For more on Mangiacapre's Rassegna, see the introduction.

79. Conferred annually at the Venice Film Festival, the Lina Mangiacapre Award recognizes and promotes films that render the invisible visible by portraying women as protagonists of their own stories. The Mangiacapre Award has honored scores of international films exploring femininity, masculinity, desire, sexuality, violence, domination, despair, solitude, beauty, friendship, sistership, and love since its inception in 1987. Originally christened the Elvira Notari Award by Mangiacapre as an homage to the trailblazing turn-of-the-century Campanian filmmaker, the prize was rebaptized the Lina Mangiacapre Award upon her death to honor the legacy of the very filmmaker who laid the foundations of the award. For more on the Lina Mangiacapre Award, see Appendix B and Le Nemesiache, 'Le Nemesiache,' http://www.lenemesiache.it.

Film Festival; directed fourteen short and feature films;[80] and elaborated a new feminist metaphysics, steeped in mythos. Rather than describe themselves a collective or group, Mangiacapre and her fellow feminist artists refer to their collaboration as "una realtà del femminismo" ["a feminist reality"],[81] "un modo di essere nel mondo" ["a way-of-being-in-the-world"], or "una mitica ragnatela che si estende all'infinito" ["a never-ending mythical gossamer"]. As put forth on their website, "Le Nemesiache non sono solo un gruppo, sono una realtà del femminismo, una realtà che si ricollega a Napoli, a Cuma, alla Sibilla."[82] ["The Nemesiache are not merely a group, they are a feminist reality, a reality linked to Naples, to Cuma, and to the Sybil."] This mythical feminist reality, created by Mangiacapre and co., connects past to present through feminist Myth revision and performance. For Capobianco, "Le Nemesiache sono una mitica ragnatela che si estende all'infinito e che sono sicura vivrà anche molto dopo di me perché è una dimensione, un modo di essere nel mondo"[83] ["The Nemesiache are a never-ending mythical gossamer that tends toward infinity, which I am sure will outlive me

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80. Although Mangiacapre wrote screenplays, directed films, made cameo appearances, and, at times, womaned the camera, she did not take an authoritarian approach as a director. In conversation with the Nemesiache via Skype in October 2018, Campese and Capobianco described Mangiacapre's approach to avant-garde filmmaking as "maieutico" ["maieutic"]. Campese specified that Mangiacapre did not bark commands or act like a big shot. For Campese, Mangiacapre's approach to directing calls to mind Socrates for she demonstrated the ability "di mettere insieme quello che veniva fuori e di creare al momento come fosse a punto la regista senza essere però lei la sicura che dirigeva" ["to work with whatever it was that came out and put it together, spontaneously create, and direct without being a big shot running the show."] Capobianco confirmed that Mangiacapre, "non aveva un ruolo nel senso tradizionale del termine perché lei era un essere a punto che sprigionava energie, creatività, idee" ["did not have a traditional leadership role because what she was was a creative being who emanated energy and ideas."] Rather than a big shot director barking orders, Mangiacapre was a creative force to be reckoned with who collaboratively, collectively approached the making of motion pictures with the aim of promoting a more peaceful, harmonious world for women and for all.

81. Le Nemesiache, http://www.lenemesiache.it.

82. Ibid.

83. In correspondence with Silvana Campese and Conni Capobianco, a testimonial written by Capobianco in May 2015 was forwarded to me. In this testimonial Capobianco writes that "Le Nemesiache sono una mitica ragnatela che si estende all'infinito e che sono sicura vivrà anche molto dopo di me perché è una dimensione, un modo di essere nel mondo." ["The Nemesiache are a never-ending mythical gossamer that tends toward infinity, which I am sure will outlive me because it is a dimension, a way-of-being-in-the-world."]

because it is a dimension, a way-of-being-in-the-world."] Rather than a collective or a group, the Nemesiache constitute an avant-garde feminist way-of-being, or, in other words, a network of creativity, kinship, and care.

The artists who take part in weaving this mythical web of creativity, kinship, and care take an avant-garde approach to art and life. Operating in their "nuova dimensione"[84] ["new dimension"], the Nemesiache challenge borders and boundaries, rethinking the ideological dividing lines separating the personal from the political, art from politics, and imagination from reality. As demonstrated in the closing line of the *Manifesto delle Nemesiache*, imagination and creative capacity are central to the nemesian[85] way-of-being-in-the-world:

> noi Nemesiache sappiamo che la nostra nuova dimensione o, diciamo pure, nuova metafisica, capovolge tutto e la nostra creatività è il nostro mondo che emerge e esplode capovolgendo e scoprendo infinite fantastiche imprevedibili dimensioni[86]
>
> [We Nemesiache know that our new dimension or, let's go ahead and say, new metaphysics, overturns everything. Our creativity is our world, a world which gives way to the discovery of infinite, fantastic, unforeseeable dimensions.]

Being a Nemesiaca,[87] that is, a part of Mangiacapre's nonnormative feminist network, entails the plaiting together of mythos, creativity, performance, and selfhood. The mythical is personal and the performative is political for Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. By collaboratively crafting and performing what this dissertation terms *hyrmyths* – feminist revisionist myths that make

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84. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto delle Nemesiache* (Naples: 1970), 2.

85. In order to distinguish from the nominal term *Nemesaica*, I make use of *nemesiaca* with a lowercase *n* as an adjective. The adjectival term *nemesiaca* [*nemesian*] refers to belonging to Mangiacapre and co., that is, to the women who have brought the Neapolitan feminist reality to fruition.

86. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto delle Nemesiache*, 2.

87. I use the term *Nemesiaca* with a capital *N* as a noun to denote a feminist artist who has adopted the nemesian way-of-being-in-the-world who may or may not also go by a mythical anonym.

room for trans and cisgender [88]characters who subvert and derail rather than uphold or reproduce the established order, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache come to define themselves by their own creation, that is, by the new mythical characters, performance art, and films they create together.

The term *hyrmyth* is a distant cousin of *herstory*, which is a concept that originated in the United States in the 1970s. First used by feminist poet and activist Robin Morgan and later elaborated upon by feminist authors Kate Swift and Casey Miller, a herstory refers to a fictional or nonfictional story that gives voice to the experience of being women.[89] As the stories of women's lives are not included in the official version of History, the telling of herstories is meant to counter and vindicate the historical silence surrounding the unique and varied lives women have lived over time, thereby shifting women's historical existence from the margins to the mainstream. The concept of History with a capital H refers to the official narrative of humankind throughout the ages, written by men, for men, and about men. This set of cisheteropatriarchal stories is stitched together to tell the narrative of humanity as a one of male reason, power, dominance, and violence. While accepted as objective fact, the notion of History is at best a self-congratulatory tradition of phallologocentric storytelling and at worst a mechanism for upholding patriarchy and perpetuating the subordination of women. While the notion of historical silence resonates with heterogeneous communities of women across the Italian peninsula, it is not a universally applicable concept. As delineated by bell hooks, American women "in black

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88. As delineated by Gayle Salamon, *trans* or *transgender* people experience a "disjunction between the 'felt sense' of the body and the body's corporeal contours." *Cisgender* people experience a "felt sense" of their body that corresponds to the sex (i.e., intersex, female, male) assigned at birth. Gayle Salamon, *Assuming a Body: Transgender and Rhetorics of Materiality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 2.

89. See Robin Morgan, "Goodbye to All That," *RAT Subterranean News* (February 6-23, 1970); Casey Miller and Kate Swift, *Words and Women* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1976) and *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing* (New York: Lippincott & Crowell, 1980).

communities [. . .] have not been silent."[90] In the Italian context, herstories serve as an artistic means of giving voice to multifarious female perspectives and experiences of women whose stories have been excluded or erased from History. While the concept of History with a capital H (i.e., the story of great men, great wars, domination, and death) can be challenged with that of herstory, there is not yet a term that foregrounds the hierarchical structures at play within the canon of Mythology. As such, this dissertation employs the term hyrmyth when referring to a feminist or transfeminist revisionist myth that does not conform to the genre of Mythology with a capital M. Myths are unverifiable stories steeped in dominant ideology, often wielded to reinforce hegemonic relations. Hyrmyths, on the other hand, are mythological tales that make room for characters who destabilize rather than uphold the established order. Like a number of Mangiacapre's characters, the prefix *hyr-* transcends the gender binary. Mangiacapre's hyrmythical characters include cisgender heterosexual female figures (e.g., Dido in *Didone non è morta*), cisgender pansexual female figures (e.g., Primula in *Faust/Fausta*), nonbinary lesbian female figures (e.g., Occhi d'oro in *Faust/Fausta*), nonbinary FTM (female-to-male) transgender figures (e.g., Faust in *Faust/Fausta*), and nonbinary MTF (male-to-female) transgender figures (e.g., Margherita in *Faust/Fausta*). Hyrmythical characters subvert hegemonic social and sexual codes and give voice to those who may or may not conform to the gender role assigned to them at birth. Mangiacapran hyrmyths call attention to the dominance of cisgender straight male language and power relations within the realm of Mythology, pointing to the patriarchal representation of both male and female figures within the canon. Further, it allows for creation of a new type of tale showcasing a world not dominated nor determined by the cultural norms. By

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90. bell hooks, *Talking Back. Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black.* (Boston: South End Press, 1989), 6.

engaging with Classical Mythology and inserting new and improved characters into the canon who do not play by the rules of patriarchy, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache artistically challenge the grand narrative of androcentrism. Hyrmyths, like herstories, subvert and derail sexual hierarchy in allowing for the performance and inscription of disruptive, heterogeneous intersex, female, and male figures into the story. Collaboratively coming to consciousness by performing feminist and transfeminist hyrmyths on stage and on screen, Mangiacapre and co. give birth to a harmonious, mythical, dimension, pursue a sort of metaphysical sistership of the self, and work toward the establishment a profoundly peaceful world order.

Central to Mangiacapre's mythical feminist reality is the endeavor to create, or, better yet, to recreate a sense of harmony that existed prior to patriarchy through avant-garde filmmaking and performance art. As expounded by Adriana Cavarero, patriarchy, also known as phallocracy, is a society ruled by cisgender men in which those born male are treated as superior to those born female. In a patriarchal society, the male body and all that is associated with the masculine (e.g., strength, logic, linearity, individuality, independence) are rendered the norm, while the female body and that which is considered feminine (e.g., delicacy, fragility, passion, circularity, cyclicity, commitment, community) are categorized as lesser than, as they deviate from the established baseline of maleness. This androcentric, exclusionary system of society has dominated Western civilization for thousands of years and prevails still today.[91] The notion of a *return to harmony* or *re-establishment of peace* that existed prior to cisheteropatriarchy is how Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache define *nemesis*, a core tenet of Mangiacapran metaphysics. While the moniker may call to mind the vengeful goddess of the Greco-Roman tradition,

91. For an illuminating overview of the deep-seated system of patriarchy and the "meccanismo di esclusione" ["mechanism of exclusion"] on which it depends, see *Le filosofie femministe*, ed. Cavarero, 115.

Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache avoid strict association with the goddess of retribution by recasting Nemesis as a hyrmythical porter of peace who endeavors to restore harmony for one and all.

Unlike Mangiacapre's Nemesis, the goddess of the Greco-Roman tradition is known as a vindictive figure bent on retribution. Thought to be mothered by Nyx [Night] and fathered by Erebus [Darkness],[92] Greco-Roman Nemesis is portrayed as justice incarnate and, in the words of Deborah Lyons, "often associated with various instruments of punishment and torture, such as bridles, cudgels, swords, and whips."[93] According to Lyons, the goddess of retribution was worshiped in temples near modern-day Athens, Greece (Rhamnous in Attica) and in Izmir, Turkey (Smyrna). Although Nemesis served as a reminder that no misdeed goes unpunished, the root of her name is only loosely linked to the concept of revenge. As explicated by Lyons, the Greek root nem/nom is married to the notion of distribution or apportionment rather than that of violent retribution:

> The verb *nemein* means "to apportion, distribute, or graze." Related words are *nomós*, meaning "pasture," and *nómos* meaning "law, established custom." [. . .] The verb *nemesan* means "to begrudge," and by extension, to be indignant at another's undeserved good fortune.[94]

While the connection between the Greco-Roman goddess and *nómos* [the law] is clear, the link between Neapolitan Nemesis and the law is less direct. Greco-Roman Nemesis inflicts punishment upon those who transgress and disobey the law, helping to police and enforce the

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92. See Hesiod, "Theogony," in *Theogony and Work and Days*, trans. M. L. West (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 1-33.

93. Deborah Lyons, "Nemesis," in *Gods and Goddesses of Greece and Rome* (Tarrytown: Marshall Cavendish Reference, 2012), 201.

94. Lyons, "Nemesis," 201-202. For more on the Greek goddess of "resentment," see Hesiod, "Theogony," 9.

established order. Rather than uphold and enforce laws or customs as they are written, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache rethink and rewrite them in a way that promotes harmony for women and for all. As it is the reparation and restoration of harmony that is the priority for Mangiacapre and co., Neapolitan Nemesis is in fact more closely related to the notion of *nemein* [apportionment] than to that of *nómos* [the law], as her role is one of restorative redistribution or reorganization.

According to the Greco-Roman tradition, Nemesis took on the role of redresser after being pursued and overpowered by Zeus on the island of Ischia. Although she changed form in the hope of eluding her attacker, Nemesis was overtaken and impregnated by Zeus: "Per sfuggirgli Nemesi si trasformò in un'anatra e Zeus per afferarla in un cigno, il risultato di questo accoppiamento fu per gli uomini la donna più bella e il destino più terribile: Elena"[95] ["In the attempt of evading her attacker, Nemesis metamorphosed into a duck. Zeus, in turn, turned himself into a swan in order to take her. There was a child born from the copulation: Helen. She grew into a most beautiful woman and brought about a terrible turn for the fate of men."] As explicated by Mangiacapre, the brutalization of the body of Nemesis had a profound impact on the cosmos: Zeus's heteropatriarchal violence established a new world order. His overpowering of Nemesis resulted, on the one hand, in the overturning of her role from porter of peace to inflictor of punishment and, on the other, in the birth of a dangerous beauty whose pulchritude is faulted for sparking centuries of bellicosity and devastation: Helen of Troy. Before undergoing sexual violence and giving birth to Helen, Nemesis' primary concern was the cultivation of peace, not the delivery of retribution. For the Nemesiache, the figure of Nemesis is more than

95. Lina Mangiacapre, "Napoli: Nell'occhio di Partenope," in *Immagini d'Italia*, ed. Marcella Continanza (Frankfurt am Main: Die Buche-Verlag, 1994), 38.

what heteropatriarchal violence has made of her: she remains steadfast in her dedication to balance and equilibrium despite the horrors inflicted upon her. Neapolitan Nemesis is a porter of peace, not punishment, who works to restore and repair cosmic harmony, not exact revenge on felons.

For the Nemesiache, the concept of nemesis is not divorced from the flesh, but rather embodied knowledge, situated in the body of Lina Mangiacapre. For this reason, nemesis refers to a particular idea (nemesis = a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world), a hyrmythical figure (Nemesis = the porter of peace and restorer of cosmic harmony), and a flesh and blood individual: Lina Mangiacapre. A living, breathing embodiment of the restorer of cosmic harmony, Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis pursued and promoted a peaceful world order, one that allows beauty to flourish and women, like Helen, to show and express themselves free from the threat of violence or restraint. As specified by Mangiacapre, it is harmony, not vendetta, that drives the Nemesiache:

> Non vogliamo arrivare alla vendetta come concetto di giustizia legale. Il nostro concetto di Nemesi, del ristabilire l'armonia, è un concetto che si pone nel senso dei cicli cosmici della vita. Non c'è nessuna possibilità per nessuna legge di ridare la vita o di impedire la violenza già compiuta.[96]
>
> [Our focus is not revenge. We do not wish for a society that considers vendetta a form of justice in the eyes of the law. Our focus is restoration. No law has the power to bring back those whose lives have already been taken or to undo violence that has already been done. As such, we work toward nemesis, or, in other words, the re-establishment of cosmic harmony.]

Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache reject revenge as a solution to violence and instead pursue an alternate agenda centered around creativity, restoration, and peace. Privileging peace,

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96. Nadia Pizzuti's *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo* incorporates a number of quotes from Mangiacapre's philosophical works voiced by Teresa Mangiacapra in a voiceover.

Mangiacapre and co. follow in the footsteps of Simone Weil. According to Weil,

> Force is not a machine for automatically creating justice. It is a blind mechanism which produces indiscriminately and impartially just or unjust results, but, by all the laws of probability, nearly always unjust ones.[97]

Mangiacapre agrees with Weil on this point and for this reason underscores the fact that payback is not the crux of her feminist dimension: "Non vogliamo arrivare alla vendetta come concetto di giustizia legale."[98] ["Our focus is not revenge. We do not wish for a society that considers vendetta a form of justice in the eyes of the law."] For Mangiacapre, violence done cannot be undone. Additional acts of violence cannot be used to correct wrongdoings, deliver just reward, or restore peace. Rather than striving toward vendetta, like Greco-Roman Nemesis, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache seek harmony and privilege peace. As put forth in their manifesto, Mangiacapre and co. seek a way back to pre-cisheteropatriarchal harmony: "Insieme ritroveremo il sentiero calpestato violentato nascosto il nostro sentiero bruciato."[99] ["Together we will find the hidden path – that oppressed, violated, burnt path of ours – once more."] Although reduced to metaphysical ashes, the path to peace endures for Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. Finding their way back to a pre-historical, profoundly harmonious way-of-being-in-the-world is possible for Mangiacapre and co. by means of imaginatively engaging with History through feminist and transfeminist revision and creatively retracing and recasting their roots.

To accomplish nemesis, that is, a harmonious way-of-being previously accessible in the "sistema cosmico precedente al patriarcato"[100] ["cosmic system prior to patriarchy"], the first

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97. Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots*, trans. Arthur Wills (New York: Routledge, 2002), 240. This work was originally published in French in 1949. See *L'Enracinement* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1949).

98. *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo*, directed by Pizzuti.

99. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto delle Nemesiache*, 1.

100. Nappo, "Intervista a Lina Mangiacapre," 5.

step is to contemplate Myth. Myth, for Mangiacapre, constitutes a pre-conceptual form of embodied knowledge. Before Plato situated knowledge within the realm of the abstract it was squarely situated in the physical, specifically in the body. Embodied knowledge was transmitted from one generation to the next through re-enactment or performance. Whether it be a mythical story explaining the origin of the cosmos or a primordial tale about events that led human beings to be who and what we are today, the body was instrumental in the dissemination of knowledge. While Plato did divorce the concept from the flesh, stripping the body of its prior epistemological value, Lina Mangiacapre and Mircea Eliade before her point to Myth as corporeal, embodied knowledge. For Eliade, Myth "is not an 'external,' 'abstract' knowledge but a knowledge that one 'experiences' ritually, either by ceremonially recounting the myth or by performing the ritual for which it is the justification."[101] For both philosophers, the retelling and embodiment of mythical tales has the potential to transform the performers. While Mangiacapre and Eliade concur on the metamorphic potential of the embodied knowledge, they diverge in making sense of Myth. For Eliade, Myth, "as experienced by archaic societies, (1) constitutes the History of the acts of the Supernaturals; (2) that this History is considered to be absolutely *true* (because it is concerned with realities) and *sacred* (because it is the work of the Supernaturals)."[102] Meanwhile, for Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, Myths are neither inescapably true nor sacred: they are tales steeped in dominant ideology that play a part in reinforcing hegemonic relations. Approaching Mythology with a capital M as they do History with a capital H, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache interrogate mythological tellings and retellings. Rather than represent enactments and re-enactments of violence against women,

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101. Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, 18-19.

102. Ibid., 18.

Mangiacapre and co. denounce cisheteropatriarchal relations and imagine alternatives that allow for women to live free from the threats of violence and incarceration. After critically examining Myth and analyzing the underlying power structures at play, the Nemesiache take the second step of Mangiacapre's metaphysical trajectory toward cosmic harmony: the infusion of Myth with feminist ideology and creative composition of hyrmyths.

Seeking to establish a sense of rootedness and yet fully aware of the systematic erasure[103] of the stories of Neapolitan women's[104] lives from the official narrative of History, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache mythically reconstitute a long-forgotten female genealogy. The concept of rootedness, for Mangiacapre, draws upon the philosophy of Simone Weil rather than that of Adolf Bastian and Wilhelm Wundt. According to Bastian and Wundt's "*völkergedanken*"[105] ["folk ideas"], rooted people are individuals with an authentic, long-standing connection to the soil, for instance, peasants who live on and cultivate the very land their fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers did. For Bastian and Wundt, male peasants who inherit land from their fathers and know the story of how they relate to the land they own serve as an exemplum of rootedness. As women across the Italian peninsula were denied the right to own property and not permitted to pass land from mother to daughter or aunt to niece for centuries, Bastian and Wundt's notion falls short when put in conversation with Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. Mangiacapre's

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103. While the notion of historical silence has resonance with heterogeneous communities of women across the Italian peninsula, it is not a universally applicable concept. See bell hooks, *Talking Back*.

104. When referring to real women, or, in other words, sociohistorical subjects, this dissertation uses the term *woman* or *women* with a lowercase *w*. When, on the other hand, referencing the false Myth of Woman, that is, a female human reduced to an eroticized spectacle, defined by and in relation to men, the dissertation employs the term *Woman* with a capital *W*. This distinction follows the one made by Teresa de Lauretis in *Alice Doesn't*. While de Lauretis uses italics to distinguish between the fantasmatic projection of heteronormative male desire and real social subjects, this dissertation utilizes capitalization. See Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: feminism, semiotics, cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

105. Klaus-Peter Köpping, *Adolf Bastian and the psychic unity of mankind: the foundations of anthropology in nineteenth century Germany* (New York: University of Queensland Press, 1983), 30.

conception of rootedness is linked to Neapolitan land, city, and seascapes, however, has a major metaphysical component to it. For Mangiacapre and for Weil, rootedness is linked to a sense of historical connectedness, a feeling of being a part of a trajectory from past to present to future.[106] Rather than opting to go through life in a historical vacuum, isolated and disconnected from any sort of past, the Nemesiache write and perform their way into the story. The Nemesiache revise and perform their mythical origins. In so doing so, they establish a sense of kinship with the mythical figures they embody. By linking their own living, breathing bodies to the bodies of others, whose stories have been historically erased and mythically reconstituted, the Nemesiache forge a sort of metaphysical bond with the characters they embody, engendering a sense of sisterhood unfettered by the bounds of time or rationality. Rootedness for the Nemesiache is not physical but metaphysical in nature. Rather than achieving a sense of historicity through a connection to a specific plot of land, in the absence of a bond to the physical soil, the Nemesiache generate their own metaphysical anchorage and pursue a sense of kinship through imagination and performance. While certainly not lords of the land linked by blood to patches of soil and ancestors who presided over that land, the Nemesiache are not without kin: they have a network of kinship, creativity, and care who comes together to talk philosophy and make avant-garde art.

Instead of featuring traditional androcentric tales from the canon of Mythology in their productions, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache dream up and perform hyrmyths. By performing hyrmyths on stage and on screen, Mangiacapre and co. make room for trans, nonbinary, lesbian, pansexual, straight, cis, female, and male characters whose function is to derail rather than

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106. See Weil, *The Need for Roots*.

perpetuate hierarchy. Through avant-garde performance and filmmaking, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache destabilize the grand narrative of phallologocentrism[107] and make something more of Myth. In writing, performing, and filming hyrmyths, the Nemesiache not only revise the official canon of Mythology but also render the unimaginable imaginable for themselves and for spectators alike. Just as Dziga Vertov rendered the inconceivable conceivable and the unthinkable thinkable, so too did Lina Mangiacapre. For the Soviet Marxist filmmaker, cinema was an art of motion to be used to awaken the proletariat to the truth of their oppression. The aim of his filmmaking was *kinopravada*, or in other words, displaying the truth by means of the mechanical gaze of the camera. Vertov aimed to make "the invisible visible, the unclear clear, the hidden manifest, the disguised overt."[108] While Vertov aims to stupefy the spectator and then to implant ideas in the subconscious with his kino-eye, that is, with the mechanical gaze of the camera, Mangiacapre's relationship with the spectator diverges from the Soviet Constructivist as does her conception of filmmaking as the art of painting beauty. Through the inclusion of forgotten or reimagined mythical figures, the Nemesiache show and tell stories of empowered women living under non-patriarchal conditions. What was once practically inconceivable,

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107. Phallologocentrism is a way of thinking elaborated by male humans which casts those born with a phallus as the norm, that is, as the measuring stick by which difference is produced. In pretending that the male human is the universal and can stand in for any member of the human race, including female humans, the phallologocentric subject subordinates and subsumes female and intersex humans into a false grouping that the philosopher with the phallus created: Mankind. Those born male are cast as the standard while those born female or intersex are cast as an inferior rank, a rank that is denied representation. For the phallologocentric subject, *Man* not only gives representation to male humans but also stands in for and in so doing erases female and intersex humans.

108. Dziga Vertov, *Kino-eye: the Writings of Dziga Vertov*, ed. Annette Michelson, trans. Kevin O'Brien (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 41.

women living under a matriarchal or, better yet, gynocratic system[109] in which they are neither punished nor demeaned for nonnormativity, is rendered conceivable through performance.

The performance, or, in other words, artistic embodiment of hyrmythical figures is the third step on Mangiacapre's metaphysical trajectory toward cosmic harmony. By incarnating nonnormative hyrmythical figures who transcend the role afforded to the second sex,[110] the Nemesiache present and perform alternatives to stereotypical gender roles and at the same time

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109. Matriarchy is a society ruled by women in which those capable of bearing and nurturing children are categorized as and treated like superior. As there is no historical documentation attesting to the existence of a matriarchal order prior to the patriarchal one, the concept of gynocracy (rule by women) is prehistorical and mythical in nature. As expounded by Cynthia Eller, the Myth of matriarchy has received much attention over the years. During the classical period, in order to caution their women to toe the patriarchal line, Ancient Greeks told stories about the Amazons, a bloodthirsty society of women who revered women and slaughtered men, including their own sons, dressed for and partook in battle, and were ultimately bested by men through combat or seduction. Although the Greek Myth of the Amazons is a tale of gynocracy, there is nothing feminist about it. It was employed by the Greeks to reinforce the established order: that women are not to rule over men. As Eller affirms, matriarchal Myth changes over time and is most certainly shaped by the ideological stance of the narrator. While the Myth of matriarchal society stretches back to the classical era, Johann Jakob Bachofen was the first to elaborate "a coherent narrative that gave women and goddesses primacy in an early phase of human history only to stipulate their complete overthrow by a later social system that favored men and male gods." In her study on matriarchal prehistory, Eller calls attention to the novelty and impact of Bachofen's *Das Mutterrecht* [*Mother Right*] (n.b., in the introduction to his translation of *Das Mutterrect*, David Partenheimer in his introduction that the German term mutterrecht signifies "at once maternal rights, birthrights, justice, laws, interests, authority, and privileges"), noting that before publication in 1861 "most of the Western world was convinced that the patriarchal family was the original human society, since it was laid out as such in the book of Genesis." Following Bachofen's influential work on gynecocracy, anthropologists, socialists, and first-wave feminists took an interest in matriarchal Myth. While some theorized the shift from matriarchy to patriarchy as evolutionary, others, including Friedrich Engels and Elizabeth Cady Stanton categorized it as a regression. In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* Engels casts prehistoric matriarchy as an original utopian state, reachable once more upon the fall of capitalism. Like Engels, first-wave feminists, including Stanton, continue to frame the transition to patriarchy as a narrative of degeneration. Rather than predict a progression from matriarchy to patriarchy and back, however, Stanton anticipates a shift from the Matriarchate to the Patriarchate, to a period in which both sexes are equal. Between the first and second wave of feminism, matriarchal Myth remains mainly in male hands, however once in the hands of second-wavers, it becomes definitively purposed for feminist means. For more on the metamorphosis of Myth of matriarchy over time, see Eller's in-depth study on matriarchal prehistory, Cynthia Eller, *Gentlemen and Amazons*, 15. See also Johann Jakob Bachofen, *An English translation of Bachofen's Mutterrecht (Mother right) (1861)*, trans. David Partenheimer (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), iii; Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (New York: International Publishers, [1884] 1972; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "The Matriarchate or Mother-Age," Address of Mrs. Stanton before the National Council of Women (February 1891).

110. The notion of the second sex, as elaborated by groundbreaking French feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir, speaks to the alienating experience of being a female human in a patriarchal society, that is, in one in which the status of the female sex is lesser than the male sex and in which Woman is defined androcentrically. In her foundational feminist writing, de Beauvoir calls attention to the falsities of the biological, psychoanalytical, and historical materialist constructions of Woman, shedding light on the systematic alienation of the female human and on the male's androcentric conception of her as the second sex. The male defines the female in terms of her relation to himself, and in doing so establishes his position as one of universality and hers as one of Otherness or lack. De Beauvoir's critique of male universality as well as her demystification of the "multi-faceted Myth" of Woman are ideas that are further extrapolated in the theory of sexual difference. See Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 211.

construct a sense of kinship with the mythical figures they embody. Mangiacapre's feminist metaphysics constructs a sort of ontological anchorage that cuts across space and time. This anchorage connects a flesh and blood Nemesiaca to a long-forgotten figure and in doing so dissipates the sense of historical disconnectedness experienced by many a marginalized people.[111] The kinship between a Nemesiaca and her mythical counterpart precipitates a fictional yet felt sense of sistership, rootedness, and lineage and dispels the feeling of historical estrangement. Kinship of the hyrmythical, or, in other words, sistership of the self permits those feeling isolated by the exclusionary androcentric past, in this case the Nemesiache, to plant and nurture metaphysical roots reaching all the way back in time to gynocratic prehistory when women were not treated as lesser than.

Mangiacapre holds mythos[112] in high regard and endeavors for her myth revision to serve as a source of strength for those who have been estranged by History and Mythology. In fact, Mangiacapre aspires for fellow feminists to wield the power of mythos, embrace themselves for all of who they are, and live fiercely. Mangiacapre affirms that her interest is:

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111. While this study focuses on a very specific group of marginalized people, Mangiacapre's network of kinship, creativity, and care, it should be noted that the sense of historical estrangement to which I refer is deeply felt in many other marginalized groups of people across space, time, and place as well. For example, activist, writer, and director Reina Gossett express her personal struggle with a sort of "historical isolation" as a trans woman of color in *Reina Gossett: Historical Erasure as Violence*, interview by Hope Detector and Dean Spade, Barnard Center for Research on Women, October 30, 2015. Gossett described a feeling of disconnectedness "from any kind of past" prior to her work in the archives and her efforts to reconstruct a lineage of trans women of color. Gossett uses performance art as well as film, e.g., *Happy Birthday, Marsha!* directed by Reina Gossett and Sasha Wortzel (2018; Seattle), to reconstruct and share the stories of the lives of trans women activists Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson. Gossett's yearning for a sense of historical rootedness as well as her impulse to creatively reconstitute a marginalized genealogy are mirrored in Mangiacapre's filmography.

112. When using the term *mythos*, this dissertation refers to the raw and ancient power that lays at the heart of mythological tales.

> mettere al nudo il mito, cioè dare, prendere quella forza attraverso il mito per esserci con una potenza totale, per riprendere le proprie radici e per attingere un'identità forte.[113]
>
> [in laying Myth bare, that is, in gaining access to the strength at its core in order *to be* in a full and powerful way, to take hold of one's own roots once more, and to establish a strong sense of self.][114]

In pursuit of inner strength and a sense of rootedness, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache strip Myths of their cisheteropatriarchal dressing and subsequently reclothe them in new feminist attire. In writing and performing hyrmyths, the Nemesiache tap into the power situated at the heart of mythological tales and capitalize on this raw, naked strength in order to build a strong sense of self. The Nemesiache access and build their inner strength and retrace their roots by creatively re-remembering their origins and imaginatively writing themselves,[115] or better yet, performing themselves into the story.

In performing, embodying, and becoming one with their mythical selves, the Nemesiache achieve nemesis, or, in other words, cosmic harmony. They operate in a harmonious, mythical dimension and come to define themselves by their own creation. On the creative, metaphysical journey to cosmic harmony, the Nemesiache embody a hyrmythical figure and, in an act of sistership, embrace a part of themselves that had been laying dormant. Sistership of the self is the fourth and final step in Mangiacapre's metaphysical trajectory toward achieving nemesis. It is

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113. *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo*, directed by Pizzuti.

114. Translation and emphasis are my own.

115. Hélène Cixous urges female humans to write their bodies, or, in other words, themselves into the story. For Cixous, it is by transforming one's own bodily, lived experiences into words on the page that a female human may "return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display -- the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions." According to Cixous, all hope is not lost for female humans who have been alienated from their own bodies. By writing, female humans may come to reclaim their own bodies, abrogate the false conception that their bodies are meant to be touched and caressed by straight, male hands and not their own. Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa" in *New French Feminisms*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, 245-264 (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 27-31.

through the discovery, embrace, and fusion with their mythical selves that the Nemesiache accomplish harmony of body and spirit and a fresh sense of self. To recap, Mangiacapre's metaphysical trajectory proceeds as follows: first, a Nemesiaca contemplates a tale from the officially recognized canon of Mythology and reflects upon how dominant ideology has shaped that tale; second, the avant-garde feminist artist creatively revises that Myth, making room for characters who challenge and subvert the established order; third, the artist embodies and espouses a hyrmythical character of her own creation; and fourth, the artist achieves sistership of the self and nemesis. By means of critical inquiry, feminist creativity, and avant-garde performance, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache reconstitute the hidden path. Mangiacapre and co. find their way back to harmony all the while promoting a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world.

Promoting inner and outer peace for women and the world, Lina Mangiacapre's gynocentric metaphysical philosophy runs counter to that of Marisilio Ficino.[116] For Ficinian neoplatonists, the aim is union with the Christian God Jesus Christ. The first step in Ficino's androcentric metaphysical trajectory is to gaze upon and appreciate the beautiful body of a woman. Here Ficino's gazer must overcome his own physical attraction and recognize that the beauty of the object of his desire exists beyond the realm of the physical. If successful in this endeavor, the gazer may proceed to the second step: the consideration and admiration of her beautiful soul. In these first two steps, Ficinian metaphysics treats the female body as a sexual temptation to-be-resisted and a tool to-be-used in the quest of the male gazer for a union with a male deity. Rather than define the female body in terms of its use value in the eyes of another,

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116. See Marsilio Ficino, *El libro dell'amore*, ed. Sandra Niccoli (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1987).

Mangiacapre incorporates the physical body at an integral stage of her trajectory: in the third step, the step directly preceding the accomplishment of cosmic harmony. For Mangiacapre, the body is neither to-be-fetishized nor to-be-overcome. In addition, it is not the body of another but one's own that is required to complete the third step of her trajectory, a step which entails the embodiment and artistic performance of a hyrmythical figure. The third and fourth steps in the Ficinian metaphysical trajectory take the male gazer farther and father into the metaphysical realm and farther and farther away from his own body: contemplation of the world soul and finally apotheosis with the One, who, for Ficino, is the definitive, ultimate source of beauty. While Ficinian neoplatonism follows a linear trajectory upward, toward an external source of beauty, the directionality of Mangiacapran metaphysics is not straight and does not rise like the male sex. Mangiacapre's gynocentric metaphysical philosophy is creative, artistic, mythical, embodied, performative, and far from linear. It spirals inward, deep within the spirit. For Mangiacapran metaphysicians, harmony is accomplished through the union of one's own body and soul. While questing Ficinian neoplatonists seem to rise and take a linear path toward an all-powerful male deity, Mangiacapran feminists dance their way inward. When their journey is complete, they start anew: living life in a fresh, new, harmonious feminist dimension. Where neoplatonism is linear and the neoplatonist reaches an apotheotic climax, Mangiacapran feminism is atemporal, reaching back to mythical times, and nonlinear, concluding with commencement. For Mangiacapre, the source of harmony is art, not apotheosis. For this reason, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache do not follow the fold in the hope of salvation being bestowed upon them but rather work toward achieving unity of self and harmony with the cosmos by making art. Rather than seeking a union with Christ or attempting to reach peace by means of

apotheosis with a markedly male father, son, and holy spirit, Mangiacapre and co. pursue cosmic harmony through art and strive to achieve balance through a metaphysical union with a hyrmythical figure within. Looking inside oneself, embracing both the physical and metaphysical, valuing art, and striving toward harmony of body and spirit, Mangiacapre and her metaphysics have profoundly shaped the lives of a number of feminist artists in her network of creativity, kinship, and care otherwise known as Le Nemesiache.

A number of Nemesiache go by mythical anonyms. Their mythical names were bestowed upon them by Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesi [Nemesis].[117] According to Conni Capobianco/ Nausicaa, Silvana Campese/Medea,[118] and Bruna Felletti/Karma, mythical parallels came to Mangiacapre while listening to or observing the mannerisms of fellow feminists. Mangiacapre would recognize a mythical or hyrmythical figure within a particular Nemesiaca and bestow that name upon her. Capobianco, Campese, and Felletti affirm that their mythical identities permeate their sense of selfhood: Conni is never without Nausicaa, Silvana without Medea, or Bruna without Karma. The mythical names link particular life experiences and expressions to corresponding mythical figures and, as such, are intimately tied to the nemesian sense of self. Capobianco avers that, like all Nemesiache, her mythical identity is an integral part of her:

> Ogni donna che ha condiviso il percorso delle Nemesiache, compresa me, si è definita Nemesiaca ed anche quando si è allontanata ha portato con sé questa identità, di molte conosco solo i nomi mitici, altre le ho viste solo in foto, altre ancora in sogno...ma so che esistono.[119]

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117. In conversation with the Nemesiache via Skype in October 2018, Campese, Felletti, and Capobianco specified that their mythical names were given to them by Mangiacapre.

118. Campese, like many of the Nemesiache, has a mythical name: Medea. As was often the case, the anonym bestowed upon her was not rooted in Classical Myth. Rather than the Medea of Euripides, it is the feminist revisionist Medea of Christa Wolf, that is, a fiercely dedicated mother figure, that Mangiacapre recognized within Campese. See Christa Wolf, *Medea: A Modern Retelling*, trans. John Cullen (New York: Nan. A. Talese, 1998).

119. In correspondence with the Nemesiache, Capobianco specified that with or without a mythical name each Nemesiaca carries their unique feminist way-of-being with her wherever she goes.

> [Every woman who walks the way, who takes the path of the Nemesiache, myself included, identifies as a Nemesiaca and brings this mythical identity along with her no matter where she may go. I know many Nemesiache only by their mythical names, others I have seen in photos, others yet I have met in dreams...but I know that they exist.]

As Capobianco intimates, her nemesian identity permeates her sense of being and accompanies her wherever she goes. Becoming a Nemesiaca is life-altering and transformative in terms of selfhood. It is because their mythical identities percolate through their sense of self that Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache choose to go by their given name in conjunction with their mythical anonym: Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesi [Nemesis], Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe, Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa, Silvana Campese/Medea, Bruna Felletti/Karma, Claudia Aglione/Helena, Rosalba Conte/Tike, et al.[120] Operating in a mythical feminist dimension of their own creation – talking philosophy, making music, dancing to the beat, engaging in performance art, and shooting avant-garde short and feature films – Mangiacapre and co. walk to the beat of their own drum and do not fit the Italian feminist mold.

4. Branching Off From the Italian Feminist Mainstream

With regards to theory and praxis, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache push the boundaries, bending and breaking the Italian feminist mold. While points of contact do exist between Mangiacapre and pioneering Italian feminist philosophers such as Carla Lonzi, Adriana Cavarero, and Luisa Muraro, Mangiacapre and co. do not subscribe to sexual difference theory or

120. The list of Nemesiache published on their website includes: "Nemesi, Aracne, Aretusa, Astrea, Camilla, Cassandra, Coca, Dafne, Elsa/Maga, Circe, Eco, Fausta, Helena, Ilizia, Ippolita, Karma, Marea, Medea, Nausicaa, Niobe, Tike, Adele, Angela, Angela Rosa, Anna, Anna N., Antonella, Carmen, Caroline, Chantal, Cicci, Cinzia, Caterina, Catherine, Consuelo, Cosima, Despina, Dina, Dolores, Elisabeth, Elisabetta, Elsa M., Esther, Gianni, Giuliana, Giuditta, Gloria, Isabel, Laura, Lilly, Lucia, Lucia M., Luisita, Lydia, Maria, Marie Laurence, Matilde, Monica, Nadia, Nazarena, Rita, Rosalba, Rosella, Rossana, Rossella, Sabine, Tonia, Vittoria..." See http://www.lenemesiache.it/nemesiache.php,

partake in double militancy. In infusing the process of autocoscienza[121] with performance and engaging with History through feminist and transfeminist myth revision, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache distinguish their framework and approach. Blurring the lines between art and politics, body and mind, public and private, and hyrmyth and reality, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache diverge from the feminist mainstream in both theory and practice.

Distinct in their approach to practicing politics, Mangiacapre and the co. come to consciousness by engaging themselves creatively: donning costumes, painting faces, and performing feminist revisionist fairy tales both on screen and off. Mangiacapre confirms that while, "Il discorso che si faceva: 'tutto è politica' il nostro discorso era: 'tutto deve essere arte,' la stessa politica doveva diventare arte."[122] ["While discourse at the time was concentrated on 'everything being politics' our concern was for 'everything to become art.' The politics everyone was talking about had to become art."] As such, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache take an artistic approach to the Italian feminist praxis of autocoscienza. Widely practiced by feminists across the Italian peninsula, orthodox autocoscienza, which centers around conversation, does not lend itself particularly well to corporeal or artistic expression. Orthodox autocoscienza leaves the Nemesiache, for whom performance art and the body are paramount, feeling pigeonholed in the realm of the verbal. Rather than providing a path to liberation for the Nemesiache, the practice of mainstream autocoscienza proves "un esercizio inconcludente di parole che lasciava correre via

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121. Although oft referred to as consciousness-raising, the multifaceted concept *autocoscienza* is difficult to translate. The Italian feminist praxis entails a process of getting to know oneself through self-reflection, which leads to an individualized enlightenment and realization of a strong sense of self. This process, however, does not occur in isolation, for the presa di coscienza [personal enlightenment] of each woman, in fact, is fostered by the presence of others. Women across the Italian peninsula came together and regularly met in small gruppi di autocoscienza [consciousness-raising groups]. As the process takes place in a group setting, each woman completes a process of self-actualization but also develops a new inner strength that is collective in nature. In sum, the Italian feminist praxis of autocoscienza is a process of self-discovery and actualization by means of individual and group reflection upon one feminist individual and how she has experienced life through the interface of her body.

122. See Nappo, "Intervista a Lina Mangiacapre," 4.

la vita"[123] ["an unsolvable word game that sucks the life out of you"]. Mangiacapre's method for coming to consciousness, on the other hand, which involves making music, moving to the beat, dressing up, and improvising feminist revisionist fairy tales, does possess "la potenzialità di liberazione"[124] ["liberatory potential"] for the Nemesiache as it engages both their bodies and minds in acts of artistic creation. As confirmed by Capobianco, Mangiacapre's performative process of autocoscienza, "la psicofavola/fantasia"[125] ["psychofairytales/psychofantasy"] allows for self-expression that pushes beyond the confines of the verbal: "Con la psicofavola chi voleva poteva parlare però c'era la gestualità, il guardarsi, il visualizzarsi; c'era la danza, la musica. Tutto il creativo che poteva esprimere, ognuno esprimeva e partiva da sé"[126] ["With psychofairytales, those who wanted to talk could talk. But there was also gesturality. Those who wanted to look could look – they could look at and see themselves. And there was dancing and music. Each and every one of us expressed all of our creativity by whatever means. This is how we came to consciousness."] Whether musical ("la psicomusica"[127] ["psychomusic"]), theatrical (la psicofavola), or cinematic ("lo psicocinema"[128] ["psychocinema"]) in form, Mangiacapre's performative method for self-exploration and discovery engages the "bodymind"[129] in acts of

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123. LeNove, "Movimenti, rappresentanza politica, rapporti con le istituzioni," 17.

124. Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile* (Padua: Mastogiacomo, 1980), 7.

125. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto metaspaziale: Oltre i confini dello spazio in cui si vive* (Naples: 1973), 3. For more on Mangiacapre's psicofavola, see Capobianco, *Interpreti e protagoniste*; Le Nemesiache, "Cicli lunari" (Booklet, Naples, 1973); Le Nemesiache, "Cicli solari" (Booklet, Naples, 1975); Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto metaspaziale*.

126. In conversation with the Nemesiache via Skype in October 2018, Capobianco underlined the importance of corporeality and creativity in Mangiacapre's method of autocoscienza.

127. Le Nemesiache, "Follia come poesia," in *Rassegna del Cinema Femminista*, 3-4 (Naples: So.gra.me, 1978-1979), 9.

128. Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile*, 7.

129. See Babette Rothschild in *The Body Remembers* (New York: Norton, 2000); Margaret Price, "The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain," *Hypatia* 30, 1 (2015): 268-284.

artistic creation, allowing for self-expression that pushes beyond the confines of the verbal. Theorized by Babette Rothschild and elaborated upon by Margaret Price, the bodymind points to the interconnectedness of one's mental and physical experiences in a world governed by hierarchies. Although oft considered two distinct and separate realms, body and mind are interconnected for Rothschild, Price, and Mangiacapre. Like Price, who affirms that "mental and physical processes not only affect each other but also give rise to each other,"[130] Mangiacapre maintains that creative movement can stimulate the psyche and liberate the mind, giving rise to a new, harmonious sense of self. For Mangiacapre, the physical and psychic parts of the self are in concert with one another and always in motion, constantly morphing and changing based on one's experiences in the world.

Mangiacapre's method of self-exploration and discovery breaks off from the Italian feminist mainstream by stressing the importance of performance art and the bodymind as well as blurring the public and private spheres. Rather than coming to consciousness in the privacy of their own homes through conversation, as did more orthodox collectives, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took to the streets and practiced autocoscienza through avant-garde art. Performing in the theatre or the piazza, filming in Cuma or the Campi Flegrei, making music at the asylum or by the bay, the Nemesiache brought a practice considered private by the mainstream into the public sphere, performing la psicofavola across the "porous"[131] city. The ebb and flow between the public and private in Naples manifests itself in Mangiacapran feminist praxis. As noted by Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis after visiting Naples in the 1920s, Neapolitan architecture and

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130. Price, "The Bodymind Problem," 261.

131. Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis, "Naples," in *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB, 1979), 169. For more on the porosity of Naples and Neapolitans, see Benjamin and Lacis; Serenella Iovino, "Bodies of Naples," in *Ecocriticism and Italy* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic Gordonsville, 2016), 13-46.

socio-spatiality – like the volcanic tuff serving as the bedrock of the city – are permeated by porosity. "Just as the living room reappears on the street, with chairs, hearth, and altar, so, only much more loudly, the street migrates into the living room."[132] The public is private and the private is public in Naples. Porous in their treatment of social spaces, Mangiacapre and co. blur the boundaries between public and private feminist praxis, performing "l'autocoscienza attraverso la cinepresa"[133] ["autocoscienza through filmmaking"] in and around the city of Naples.

Mangiacapre's method for coming to consciousness differs from orthodox autocoscienza not only in terms of where and how it is practiced but also in why: while the majority of second-wave feminists came to consciousness in order to recognize and dismantle the hierarchy of the sexes, establish a strong sense of self not tied to the world of men, and achieve an authentic way-of-being-in-the-world, Mangiacapre and co. practiced *performative autocoscienza* in order to discover and embrace the multiple parts that constitute the self, achieve nemesis (i.e., a fresh, harmonious way-of-being-in-the-world), and restore both inner and outer peace – among companions, collaborators, and the cosmos. For Mangiacapre, although nemesis begins as a personal transformation, its realization has ramifications beyond the inner world of a particular individual: as thought turns to action and action to reaction, inner peace becomes outer peace and the sense of harmony achieved within spreads to the outer world of animate and inanimate

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132. Benjamin and Lacis, "Naples," 174.

133. Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile*, 7.

objects. Partendo da sé [Starting from themselves][134] in the piazza, on stage, or by the sea, Mangiacapre and co. come to consciousness by accessing their inner creativity and expressing themselves with more than words. Practicing performative autocoscienza, Mangiacapre and co. reflect upon their psychic and physical selves and accomplish nemesis through creative movement, performance art, and avant-garde motion pictures.

Exceptionally creative, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache do not fit the Italian feminist mold. In artistically approaching their feminist praxis and promoting inner and outer peace for women and for all, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache branch off from the Italian feminist mainstream. Mangiacapre's interest in mythos as well as her creative engagement with the past distinguish her framework and approach. According to Adriana Cavarero, feminists across the Italian peninsula tend to demonstrate a disinterest in the hypothetical, mythical past. Cavarero suggests that the tendency to cast the hypothetical aside in order to analyze the real is a rational, practical approach for enacting change.

> In tutto il suo sviluppo, il pensiero femminista mostra comunque scarso interesse per il risvolto "archeologico" delle indagini sul mitico diritto delle madri e per l'eventuale nostalgia di un ipotetico matriarcato originario che esse ispirano. La domanda che le femministe per lo più si pongono non è "come, quando e perché il patriarcato ha vinto," ma piuttosto "come funziona l'ordine patriarcale." In altri termini, essendo una realtà a forte motivazione politica, il pensiero femminista è soprattutto interessato a comprendere il presente, a svelare i suoi meccanismi oppressivi e cambiarlo.[135]

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134. Elaborated by Luisa Muraro, the feminist praxis of partire da sé serves as a practical kickstart to the process of autocoscienza. Muraro advocates for starting the process with reflection upon one's own sense of self, thoughts, emotions, and embodied experiences in the world. Muraro describes partire da sé like a voyage that "ti fa allontanare dai luoghi familiari e vedere cose che altrimenti non avresti visto" ["allows you to distance yourself from the familiar and see things that you may not have otherwise seen"]. According to Muraro, this inner voyage yields a new and profound understanding of self which, in turn, allows for an authentic way-of-being-in-the-world. This authentic way-of-being cannot come to fruition in isolation, however, as both the praxis of partire da sé and autocoscienza are relational and practiced in group settings. For more on partire da sé, see Luisa Muraro, "Partire da sé e non farsi trovare...," in *La sapienza di partire da sé* (Naples: Liguori, 1996), 5-21, 8-9.

135. *Le filosofe femministe*, ed. Cavarero, 114.

> [In the course of its development, feminist theory has shown little interest in an "archeological" inquiry into the mythical mother right or nostalgia for the hypothetical matriarchy on which said inquiry would be based. The question that feminists tend to pose is not "how, when, and why did the patriarchy win," but rather "how does the patriarchy work." In other words, as a politically-oriented program, feminism is interested, above all, in understanding the present and unveiling current mechanisms of oppression in order to make change.]

According to Cavarero, the project of Italian feminism is above all interested in the present. Cavarero contends that the majority of feminists cut ties with the racist, sexist, transphobic, homophobic, ableist, ageist past and hold fast to the present in hopes of transforming it.[136] By underlining the fact that feminists seldom express interest in mythopoeia or pre-patriarchal history, Cavarero suggests that feminist theory is fundamentally based on rationality and facts. While it is true that there is a lack of evidence of a gynocratic order prior to the current patriarchal one, does this render such a past irrelevant? Much has been cleansed from the annals of History. Much has been cleansed from the canon of Mythology. Although Cavarero seems to suggest that rational, practical feminists focus on the present while those who choose otherwise may not succeed in making change, Mangiacapre does not agree with her on this point.

Mangiacapre and co. show interest in past and present, myth and reality, rational and irrational, and history and prehistory. Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are intrigued by the myth

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136. Mangiacapre is by no means the only feminist who engages with History through myth-making and metaphysics. A contemporary example of an American feminist philosopher who explores her metaphysical roots and establishes a sort of sistership of the self is M. Jacqui Alexander. Alexander, a black lesbian feminist theorist, acknowledges her postmodernist aversion to the sacrosanct and yet argues that without metaphysics one cannot come to know oneself. In her study on the politics of sexuality, Alexander veers off in the final chapter into the realm of metaphysics describing how her own life became inexplicably interlaced with the spirit of a divine yet fictive character, Kitsimba, who surfaced within her. Alexander writes about herself through the voice of her mythical spiritual companion and in doing so forges a connection with the sacredness within. Despite the largely political, sociological, and economic concerns discussed in previous chapters, Alexander elects to close her work of transnational feminist theory with creative writing and free verse. Alexander's *Pedagogies of Crossing* serves as an exemplar of the recent trend of political philosophers of sex and gender infusing politics with art. As Alexander capitalizes on creativity and pursues metaphysics through imagination, her work can be put in conversation with the theoretical and filmic production of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. See M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

of matriarchal prehistory, which can be considered as "an enormous thought experiment, a play with reversals, an endeavor to visualize a past radically different from the present,"[137] in the words of Cynthia Eller. What Eller refers to fondly as a "thought experiment,"[138] Cavarero terms "un po' d'immaginazione"[139] ["a bit of imagination"]. Mangiacapre and co. value this thought experiment and advocate for creative, critical thinking surrounding the imagining and reimagining of culture, sexuality, and relations among human beings from a faraway mythical past. Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache do not concern themselves with falling on a particular side of the ideological dividing line separating the rational from the irrational, the real from the imaginary. Rather than insist upon the limited and partial set of facts logged away in the official annals of History, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache make room for imagination and also their stories. In their second manifesto, the Nemesiache affirm: "La nostra storia è da costruire."[140] ["Our history is for us to create."] Mangiacapre and co. draw upon creativity, reimagine the past, and in doing so write themselves into the story.[141] Creative, innovative thinking is central to Mangiacapre's feminist praxis: "Inventeremo e creeremo la nostra lotta come la nostra sessualità come la nostra cultura"[142] ["We shall invent and define our struggle, our sexuality, and our

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137. Eller, *Gentlemen and Amazons*, 8.

138. Ibid.

139. Cavarero affirms that "Quel che è certo è che, se si va in cerca del matriarcato, è necessario lavorare con un po' di immaginazione su tracce e indizi che il sistema patriarcale ha già inglobato nella sua logica." ["What is certain is that, if you go looking for matriarchy, you will need work with a bit of imagination to track down and follow the trail buried by the logic of the patriarchal system."] *Le filosofie femministe*, ed. Cavarero, 114.

140. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto metaspaziale*, 3.

141. Women who attempt to insert themselves into History through writing not only face the challenge breaking in and changing the content of the story being told, but also have the difficulty of finding a way to express their own story. Bono and Kemp reflect upon the dual difficulty of amending History to include the stories of women's lives by citing Gianna Pomata: "The historian Gianna Pomata comments: 'Our problem is not simply *what* to write (changing the content of history), but *how* to write: experimenting with new forms of historical narrative more adequate to the cognitive aims of women's history." Bono and Kemp, *Italian Feminist Thought*, 19.

142. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto delle Nemesiache*, 1.

culture."] Mangiacapre and co. advocate for novel ways of thinking and relating to one another. While the majority of Italian feminists may show little interest in creatively engaging with a mythical past, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache do not cut ties with History or prehistory in order to hold fast to the present. They show interest in past, present, myth, dreams, reality, rationality, irrationality, body, spirit, and mind. They cross borders and boundaries drawn by others and engage creatively with History and Mythology, infusing and enriching the androcentric tales with fresh, new perspectives in the form of hyrmythical figures.

Mangiacapran theory and praxis stimulate the Nemesiache to express their bodyminds creatively, redesign the established order through feminist and transfeminist myth revision, accomplish sistership of the self by inventing and embodying hyrmythical figures, and achieve nemesis, or, in the words of Felletti, "un senso di libertà totale"[143] ["a feeling of complete and utter freedom."] In the pursuit of liberty and cosmic harmony, the Nemesiache make avant-garde art together and cross metaphysical and physical boundaries. Ontologically, they cross over from the regimented, normative, everyday metaphysical grind riddled with rules and regulations into a more fluid, harmonious realm allowing for the acceptance and embrace of all of who they are – the normative and nonnormative parts alike. Materially, they enter and occupy volcanic,

143. Bruna Felletti, "Bruna Felletti," in *Interpreti e protagoniste del movimento femminista napoletano 1970-1990*, ed. Capobianco, 69–75 (Naples: Le Tre Ghinee - Nemesiache, 1994), 70.

underground, maritime, and carceral spaces, like the local Frullone Facility,[144] dismantling hierarchy and transforming spaces into environs of artistic creation, expression, and discovery as they go. A unique network of avant-garde artists, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache weave together art, politics, philosophy, film, performance, mythos, and selfhood in their mythical dimension. Blurring the lines between art and politics, painting and poetry, homosexuality and heterosexuality, Woman and Man, public and private, hyrmyth and reality, and, body and mind, Mangiacapre postulates nonnormative theories of art, sexuality, and self. With her transdiciplinary art theory, transfeminist theory of sexuality and gender, new feminist metaphysics, and praxis of performative autocoscienza, Mangiacapre advances a vision of the world in which there are fewer borders, boundaries, rules, or controls. Whether talking philosophy with local fisherman, painting poetry, donning nonnormative costume, dreaming up a feminist Dido who champions a politics of inclusion and care, imagining a transfeminist Faust whose path to peace lies beyond the gender binary, shooting an art film in collaboration with the women interned at a local asylum, or directing avant-garde feminist shorts with her network of

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144. L'Ospedale psichiatrico Frullone is a local asylum that Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache artistically occupied from 1977-1979. Mangiacapre and co. visited and made avant-garde art with the women, who were interned for a variety of reasons including but not limited to: pregnancy out of wedlock, exhibition of androgyny, lesbianism, postpartum or other types of depression, post-traumatic stress, or psychosis. In protest of local women being sentenced without appeal, confined, deprived of liberty and property, isolated, and subjected to torturous treatment from coma-inducing insulin shock to brain-damaging electroshock, "Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took to the asylum with costumes, musical instruments, and their Super 8 mm camera in tow. [. . .] During their two-year artistic occupation of the Frullone Asylum, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took a creative approach to interacting with the institutionalised women: they donned costumes and painted faces, played music and moved to the beat, and performed and made an avant-garde film with them. While Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache did direct the film, woman the camera, bring the costumes, provide the musical instruments, and encourage the collaborative making of art, they did so with the aim of collectively exploring [. . .] Rather than pressuring the [. . .] nonconformist women – to bridle and quash their purported madness, Mangiacapre encouraged them to express it and themselves for all of who they were – normative and nonnormative parts alike – by engaging in artistic acts of creation." See Emerson, "Reframing Madness with Avant-Garde Film: Lina Mangiacapre's Feminist Collaboration at the Asylum," 324-325. See also M. Colluci, B. Norcio, and C. Sindici, "De-institutionalisation in Italy: between ethics and politics" (paper presented at the European Conference on Mental Health, Rotterdam, March 7-10, 2000), 6; Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 68-85; Lina Mangiacapre, "Follia come poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare," *Non solo figura di donna*: *Rassegna del Cinema Femminista* 3-4, ed. Lina Mangiacapre, 9-11 (Naples: So.gra.me, 1978-1979); Paolo Russo, "Chiude il manicomio 'Così uccidono il nostro amore,' " *Repubblica*, Dec. 29, 1996.

kinship, creativity, and care, Mangiacapre practiced and promoted a counterhegemonic politics of peace through the making of avant-garde feminist art.

Chapter 2

Dido Lives On: Sistership, Persistence, and the Politics of Care

Refugee and voyager, negotiator and settler, leader and sovereign, the figure of Elissa (Phoenician *Alashiya*),[145] princess of Tyre,[146] later known as Dido, queen of Carthage, has roused the creativity of a number of artists over the past two and a half thousand years. The Myth[147] of Dido has proven a fertile source of inspiration, indeed, and has captured the imagination of historians, painters, poets, tragedians, composers, and filmmakers from several continents around the world. From Virgil to Ovid, Dante to Petrarch, Boccaccio to Chaucer, Christine de Pizan to John Lydgate, Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nash to Lucrezia Marinella, Pietro Metastasio to Joseph Mallord William Turner, Hector Berlioz to Luigi Maggi, Gertrude Atherton to Giuseppe Ungaretti, Léopold Sédar Senghor to Lina Mangiacapre, Fawzi Mellah to Sophie El Goulli, a great many have tried their hand at representing the refugee princess with oil paints, music, dance, drama, and even celluloid. Among the scores of masterful literary, symphonic,

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145. A descendant of the Ithobaal Dynasty, Elissa (Phoenician *Alashiya*, Greek *Theiosso* or *Θειοσσώ*) was the great-granddaughter of Ithobaal, king of Tyre, great-niece of Jezebel, the Phoenician queen of Israel, and daughter of Matan Baal, king of Tyre. For more on Elissa's genealogy, see Karen Haegemans, "Elissa, the First Queen of Carthage, Through Timaeus' Eyes," *Ancient Society* 30 (2000): 277-291; Vicki León, *Uppity Women of Ancient Times* (Berkeley: Conari Press, 1995), 116; and J. Brian Peckham, *Phoenicia* (Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns, 2014), 349.

146. Elissa's homeland of Tyre, a Phoenician island city located in present-day Lebanon, was founded in *c*. 2756 BCE. Known to be an ancient seafaring people, the Phoenicians were shipbuilders, sailors, and traders. They were a learned people and are credited, by Herodotus, as the inventors of the alphabet. In addition to their mercantile dealings, the Phoenicians were skilled textile makers, known for their signature purple dye, made from the shells of Murex sea snails. For more on "Tyrian purple," see Orville H. Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*: *A Thousand Years to Oblivion* (Philadelphia: Dorrance & Company, 1978), 3.

147. When using the term *Mythology* or *Myth* with a capital *M*, this dissertation refers to a concept that I have elaborated based on that of History with a capital H (i.e., the official narrative of great men, great wars, domination, and death). For more, see chapter 1.

figurative, and cinematic works that attest to the artistic fecundity of the Dido Myth[148] is a full-length feature film by Lina Mangiacapre: *Didone non è morta* [*Dido Never Died*] (1987). In

148. The following is a partial list of works inspired by the Dido Myth: Book 5 of Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius's *Saturnalia* (500-300 BCE); Gnaeus Naevius's largely lost *Bellum Poenicum* (c. 270-201 BCE); Book 1, Book 4, and Book 6 of Virgil's *Aeneid* (c. 29-19 BCE); Book 3 of Ovid's *Fasti* and Epistle 7 of his *Heroides* (43 BCE-17 CE); Pompeius Trogus's lost *Historiae Philippicae* (c. 2 BCE-2 CE); Book 2 and Book 8 of Tiberius Catius Asconius Silius Italicus's *Punica* (c. 25-101 CE); Canto 5 of Dante Alighieri's *Inferno* (c.1304-1321); Francesco Petrarca's poem *Triumphus Pudicitie* [*Triumph of Chastity*] (c. 1340-1374); Giovanni Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* [*The Fates of Illustrious Men*] and *De mulieribus claris* [*On Famous Women*] (c. 1361-1375); Geoffrey Chaucer's dream-poems *The House of Fame* (c. 1374-1385) and *Legend of Good Women* (c.1386); Christine de Pizan's biographical catalogue *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames* [*The Book of the City of Ladies*] (1405); John Lydgate's poem "Fall of Princes" (c. 1431-1438); Dosso Dossi's oil painting *Dido Crying over Aeneas* (c. 1519); Renaissance musical settings of *Dulces exuviae* by Jacques Arcadelt, Orlando de Lassus, Marbriano de Orto, Theodoricus Gerarde, Johannes Ghiselin, Jacob Handl, Josquin des Prez, Jean Mouton, Jacob Vaet, and Adrian Willaert (c.1519-1633); Giambattista Giraldi Cinzio's tragedy *Didone* (1543); Ludovico Dolce's tragedy *Didone* (1547); Etienne Jodelle's tragedy *Didon se sacrifiant* (1558); Cipriano de Rore's *Il cicalamento delle donne al bucato* (1567); William Gager's tragedy *Dido* (1583); Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nash's tragedy *Dido, Queene of Carthage* (1594); Lucrezia Marinella's treatise *La nobiltà et l'eccellenza delle donne co' diffetti et mancamenti de gli huomini* (1600); Alexandre Hardy's tragedy *Didon se sacrifiant* (1603); Jean Tabouret's tragedy *Dido, sive Amor insanus* (1609); Thomas Heywood's *Gynaikeion*, or *Nine Bookes of Various History Concerninge Women*: *Inscribed by Ye Names of Ye Nine Muses* (1624); George de Scudéry's tragedy *Didon* (1637); François le Métel de Boisrobert's tragedy *La Vraye Didon ou la Didon chaste* (1643); Paul Scarron's burlesque *Virgile travesti* (1648); Giovanni Francesco Busenello's libretto for Francesco Cavalli's *La Didone* (1640s); Antoine Jacob Montfleury's tragedy *L'Ambigu comique ou les Amours de Didon et Aenée* (1673); Nahum Tate's libretto *Dido and Aeneas* for Henry Purcell (1680s); Alessandro Scarlatti's opera *Didone delirante* (1696); Barton Booth's masque *The Death of Dido* (1716); Pietro Metastasio's opera seria libretto *Didone abbandonata* first put to music by Domenico Sarro (1724) and subsequently by Domenico Scarlatti (1724), Tomaso Albinoni (1725), Nicola Porpora (1725), Leonardo Vinci (1726), Baldassarre Galuppi (1741), Johan Adol Hasse (1742), Niccolò Jommelli (1746), Traetta, Nicolò Piccini (1770), Giovanni Paisiello (1794), Kozeluh, and Saverio Mercadante (1823); Giuseppe Tartini's violin sonata Op. 1, No. 10: *Didone abbandonata* (1734); Gasparo Angiolini's ballet *Didone abbandonata* (1766); James Gillray's satirical print *Dido Forsaken* (1787); Gioachino Rossini's cantata "La morte di Didone" (1811); Joseph Mallord William Turner's ten oil paintings on the history of Carthage, including *Dido and Aeneas* (1814), *Dido Building Carthage* or *The Rise of the Carthaginian Empire* (1815), and *The Decline of the Carthaginian Empire* (1817); Pierre-Narcisse Guérin's oil painting *Énée racontant à Didon les malheurs de la ville de Troie* [*Aeneas Telling Dido the Misfortunes of Troy*] (1819); Salvatore Viganò's ballet (1821); Muzio Clementi's piano sonata Op. 50, No. 3: *Didone abbandonata* (1821); Juan Cruz Varela's tragedy *Dido* (1823); Hector Berlioz's opera *Les Troyens* (1890); Lucie Delarue-Mardrus's dramatic work *La prêtresse de Tanit* (1907); Luigi Maggi's film *Didone abbandonata* (1910); Gertrude Atherton's historical novel *Dido, Queen of Hearts* (1929); Albert Roussel's ballet *Aenéas* (1935); F.L. Lucas's *Doctor Dido* (1938); Hermann Broch's novel *Der Tod Vergil* [*The Death of Virgil*] (1945); Osbert Lancaster's parodic pastiche poem "Aeneas on the Saxophone" in *Drayneflete Revealed* (1949); Giuseppe Ungaretti's Virgilian poems in *La Terra Promessa* (1952), some of which were put to music by Luigi Nono in his *Cori di Didone* (1958); Edouard Glissant's "Carthage" suite in *Le sel noir* (1960); Bechir Kahwaji's dramatic work *Le guerrier berbère* (1968); Rachid Ferchiou's film *Yussa* (1970); Franco Rossi's filmic episodes *Eneide* [*Aeneid*] (1971); Noureddine Chouchane's film *Elissa* (1972); Canto 2 of Léopold Sédar Senghor's *Élégie de Carthage* (1975); David MacNaughton's *Dido: A Love Story* (1977); Sophie El Goulli's poem *Immortelle Carthage* (1980); Ahmed Kedidi's dramatic work *Rêve de Carthage* (1986); Abdelhakim Alimi's play *Nid d'aigles* (1986); Najit El Adwani's poem *La maison du retour* (1986); Lina Mangiacapre's film *Didone non è morta* (1987); Fawzi Mellah's *Elissa*: *La Reine Vagabonde* (1988); Moncef Ghachem's poems in *Cap Africa* (1989); Karine Safa's novel *La folle odyssée de Didon* (2002); Gilles Massardier's *Les brûlures de Didon* (2005); Sophie El Goulli's *Hashtart*: *á la naissance de Carthage* (2004); Lina Mangiacapre's poem "Cartago delenda est" in *Amazzoni e Minotauri* (2008); and James Mitchell's incorporation of Marlowe and Nash's tragic lyrics in *Good Gay Poems* (2009). For more, see René Martin, ed., *Énée et Didon*: *Naissance, fonctionnement et survie d'un mythe* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1990).

Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist take on the Dido Myth, the protagonist takes a strong stance against heteropatriarchal violence and champions a politics of counterhegemony and care. Although Dido takes her own life in Virgil's, Dante's, and Marlowe's takes on the Dido and Aeneas Myth, as suggested by the title of Mangiacapre's transnational feminist film, her protagonist ultimately does not die. Mangiacapre's feminist Dido and her politics of peace, inclusion, and care persist.

First, the chapter provides an historical account of Elissa's flight from Tyre, voyage across the Mediterranean, adoption of a new name, and reign in Carthage. Next, it outlines Aeneas's flight from Troy and journey westward. Although the historical Dido and Aeneas never crossed paths, the chapter demonstrates that the legacies of these two historical figures are tied. Second, the chapter examines Mangiacapre's break with tradition in representing Dido as both a desiring subject and capable leader. By casting the sovereign as neither a sinner (a lusty, erratic, out-of-her-depths leader) nor a saint (a chaste, capable, logical one), Mangiacapre delegitimizes the hackneyed, discriminatory dividing line produced by many an artist before her that casts the queen as erratic and incapable if she had sex or cunning and capable if she did not. Third, the chapter includes a close reading and analysis of the opening sequence of the film in which Anna, a feminist Orphic figure, consults the Sibyl and traverses a porous, volcanic landscape to reawaken her beloved sister Dido. In addition, drawing upon Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis's concept of porosity, Giambattista Vico's philosophy of time, and Mangiacapre's metaphysics, the chapter argues that, like the bedrock of the city of Naples, time in Mangiacapre's film is porous. For Mangiacapre, the remote past is not out of reach, the present is multiple, and the future not yet written. Fourth, the chapter argues that Mangiacapre's protagonist promotes a politics of

peace and inclusion. Analysis focuses on the scenes in which Elissa denounces her brother's tyrannical reign and flees her native Tyre, stops over in Cyprus and asks local women belonging to a culture different than her own to join her on her journey, traverses the Mediterranean with a diverse cohort of women with the aim of building a new society in which women are free to engage sexually as they see fit, arrives on the modern-day shores of Tunisia and bargains for a tract of land on which to build an anti-tyrannical society, becomes Dido, and offers refugees from Troy shared governance and care. By examining Dido's dealings with her murderous brother Pygmalion, the Cypriot women, Chieftan Hiarbas, and the Trojans, the chapter demonstrates that, in offering asylum, shared governance, and care to Cypriots and Trojans alike, Elissa/Dido practices a politics of peace and inclusion and advances a multicultural feminist society. Finally, through an examination of temporality and film form, the chapter concludes that, although she takes her own life in two of the three consecutive endings, Dido lives on: she and her politics of counterhegemony and care persist.

1. Ancient History

Situated in modern-day Tunisia, the coastal city of Carthage (Phoenician *Qart Ḥadasht*)[149] was settled by Phoenician refugees and their fugitive princess in *c*. 814 BCE.[150] Princess Elissa became fled her native island city of Tyre, located just off the coast of modern-day Lebanon, in the aftermath of her father's death. Following the death of Matan Baal, king of the Phoenician island city of Tyre, Elissa's brother illegally usurped the throne, which was

149. The city of Carthage (Phoenician *Qart Ḥadasht*, Greek *Karchidón* or *Καρχηδών*, Latin *Carthāgo*, Italian *Cartagine*) is referred to by several names. See, Gilbert Picard, *Carthage*, trans. Miriam Kochan and Lionel Kochan (London: Elek Books Limited, 1964), 31.

150. Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*, xiii.

purportedly to pass to both siblings,[151] and assassinated her beloved husband Acherbas.[152] After Pygmalion wrested power by means of violence and intimidation, the royal princess took flight, absconding from her brother's tyrannical rule. Elissa set sail with a band of Phoenicians who also sought asylum from Pygmalion's tyranny. The Phoenician refugees stopped over in Cyprus and then proceeded to travel more than a thousand miles across the Mediterranean in search of a faraway land on which to establish a new capital. When the Phoenician refugees eventually reached the modern-day Gulf of Tunis, Princess Elissa set about negotiating for land on which to build a new city with local leadership. Elissa successfully negotiated with Hiarbas,[153] a local chieftain, for a tract of land the size of an ox-hide on which to establish a new society. By cutting the hide into thin strips, the Phoenician settlers cunningly obtained ample land to found their new city: Qart Ḥadasht. It was here, in their nascent capital, that Elissa, princess of Tyre became Dido, queen of Carthage. The royal princess adopted a new name that was ostensibly bestowed upon her by the locals: Dido.[154] Dido, meaning *fugitive* or *wanderer*, founded the city of Qart

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151. León, *Uppity Women of Ancient Times*, 116.

152. Acherbas (Latin *Sychaeus*, Phoenician *Sicharbas*, *Sicherbas*, or *Zakarbaal*), Elissa's husband and uncle was the high priest of Tyre. See Haegemans, "Elissa, the First Queen of Carthage," 277-291.

153. Hiarbas (Italian *Iarba*), was a local chieftan who may or may not have been a Berber. As explicated by Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress in *The Berbers* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1996), the Berbers are a Mediterranean people, "more closely related to Sicilians, Spaniards and Egyptians than to Nigerians, Saudi Arabians or Ethiopians," (4) indigenous to North Africa. After their domestication of the horse and adoption of nomadic pastoralism, sometime between 7000 and 2500 BCE, the Berber society subjugated and exploited the black indigenous population. According to Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress, the Berber warrior aristocracy's enslavement of black people of the Sahara "is the first instance of a pattern which has been repeated until the present day." (21) It is unclear whether Hiarbas was a Berber or not, partially because of Greek and Roman historians' identification of the chieftan as Libyan and their liberal use of the term. What is known about Hiarbas is that he was a local chieftan and indigenous North African who came to an agreement with Elissa and accepted goods in exchange for letting the foreign refugees settle on a tract of land on the Gulf of Tunis.

154. While Bullitt translates Dido (Greek *Deido* or *Δείδω*, Italian *Didone*) as *the fugitive* and Savage settles on *the wanderer*, Bono and Tessitore suggest a possible etymological link to *virago*, that is, to *warrior woman*. See Paola Bono and M. Vittoria Tessitore, *Il mito di Didone* (Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 1998), 10; Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*, 25; Roger Savage, "Dido Dies Again" in *A Woman Scorn'd*: *Responses to the Dido Myth*, ed. Michael Burden, 3-38 (London: Faber, 1998), 4.

Ḥadasht in *c.* 814 BCE.[155] After the founding of Carthage (Phoenician *Qart Ḥadasht*), as Roger Savage aptly puts it, what remains of the Dido Myth is "a thicket of question marks."[156] It has been suggested that historical Dido's demise was precipitated by unwanted advances from a predatory, power-hungry suitor. Rather than accept a forced union endorsed by the male priests and senators of the city, Dido is said to have sacrificed herself to the gods with the aim of protecting the new capital from suffering the same fate as Tyre: tyrannical rule. In protest of another usurper – not entirely unlike her power-hungry brother Pygmalion – seeking to wrest power and reign supreme over her capital, historical Dido purportedly threw herself upon a funeral pyre and died, consumed by flame. A champion of personal and political autonomy, Dido, queen of Carthage refused tyrannical domination of her city and self.

Approximately two to four hundred years after Queen Dido's self-immolation, Prince Aeneas[157] made his way across the Mediterranean from the fallen city of Troy, located on the northwest coast of modern-day Turkey. Although Virgil and a slew of artists in his wake claim otherwise, Dido and Aeneas never met. Taking extreme poetic license, Virgil aged Dido by centuries so that his epic prince of Troy could cross paths with the famed queen of Carthage. Anachronisms aside, the historical Aeneas likely never stopped in Carthage. Some historians

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155. Picard, *Carthage*, 31.

156. Savage, "Dido Dies Again," 4.

157. Aeneas, who hailed from Dardania, a city to the immediate north of Troy, is said to be the son of Aphrodite (Latin *Venus*) and Anchises, king of Dardania. Aeneas purportedly descends from Zeus (Latin *Jupiter*), the river god Skamandros (Latin *Scamander*), and the titans Okeanos (Latin *Oceanus*) and Tethys. Aeneas's fourth great grandfather, Dardanus, king of Dardania, is supposedly: the son of Elektra (Latin *Electra*) and Zeus and the grandson of Okeanos and Tethys. King Dardanus married Bateia (Batia), who is: the daughter of Teucer, king of Teucria (later known as Dardania), the granddaughter of the river god Skamandros and Idaia (Latin *Idaea*), and the great granddaughter of Okeanos and Tethys. Priam, the king and founder of Troy, is Aeneas's first cousin once-removed. As such, despite Aeneas's city of origin, he is a prince of Troy. For more on Aeneas's lineage, see Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. James George Frazer, Volume 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1921), 35-37; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, trans. Earnest Cary and Edward Spelman, Volume 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935-1950), 207; and Hesiod, "Theogony" in *Theogony and Work and Days*, trans. M. L. West (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 13.

claim Aeneas made it as far as Thrace, others take him to Arcadia, others yet bring him all the way to the Italian peninsula, to a hill in Latium.[158] According to Dionysus of Halicarnassus, the errant prince's wanderings ended in Latium where he forged a military alliance with a local king and founded the city of Lavinium. Unlike Dido, who obtained land for her people through cunning negotiation, Aeneas purchased his domain with a pledge to spill blood. Aligning himself with King Latinus, Aeneas and his Trojans promised to wage war against the Rutulians in exchange for land and autonomy. After slaughtering his way to sovereignty, Aeneas was granted Princess Lavinia's hand in marriage. Taking a local princess to bear his progeny, the prince of Troy became king of Latium. King Aeneas and Queen Lavinia's bloodline supposedly trickles down to Romulus, the first king of Rome.[159] The questionable family lineage notwithstanding, Aeneas's legacy is tied to that of Rome: hegemony, empire, and the decimation of Carthage.

As the influence and power of Greece and Rome spread across the Mediterranean, Carthage too aspired to empire. Five centuries after the death of Dido, the Phoenician (also known as Punic) civilization at Carthage permutated from a seafaring, trade-oriented people to a naval, bellicist one. As the Greeks escalated their colonizing efforts, violent clashes between Greeks and Phoenicians became more and more frequent, surfacing for the first time in 750 BCE and intensifying in the sixth century. While the Phoenicians were previously a sea people who favored trade over war, due to the increasing conflicts with the Greeks and later the Romans,

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158. As delineated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in *Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, trans. Earnest Cary and Edward Spelman, Volume 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935-1950), "some historians affirm that Aeneas did not even come into Italy with the Trojans, and some that it was another Aeneas, not the son of Anchises and Aphrodite, while yet others say that it was Ascanius, Aeneas' son, and others name still other persons." (177)

159. In Christine de Pizan's biographical catalogue *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames* (1405), she affirms that Lavinia bore Aeneas a son, named Julius Silvius. Since Aeneas passed away while she was still pregnant, Lavinia "ruled the country with supreme skill until her son came of age. The child's descendants were Romulus and Remus, who later founded the city of Rome." (87) For an English translation, see Christine De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, trans. Rosalind Brown-Grant. (New York: Penguin Books, 1999).

they built up a mighty navy and became a maritime force to be reckoned with.[160] In fact, at one point in time, the Phoenicians not only controlled cities on the coasts of Africa and Spain but also "dominated the islands of Malta, Sicily, Sardinia and the Balearics, with cities in Corsica, Elba and Cyprus, Rhodes and Crete."[161] While not particularly inclined toward war, the Phoenicians became the foremost maritime power in the Mediterranean and were responsible, according to Greek historians, for the massacre and decimation of entire towns.[162] It has been suggested that Greek historians may have exaggerated the viciousness of the Carthaginian forces in order to aggrandize their defeat of the adversary,[163] however, such a supposition is impossible to prove, considering that the History of the winners (of the Greeks and the Romans) is the only account that remains. Extant sources providing insight on the Phoenician civilizations at Tyre, Sidon, and Carthage are limited to accounts written in the Bible and by Greek and Roman historians (e.g., Heterodotus, Polybius, Strabo, Diodorus, Livy, Justin, Appian).[164] Not a single Phoenician historical or literary work has survived. Bearing in mind that the historical and anthropological accounts of Phoenicia were penned by the Greeks, who met the Phoenicians in battle many a time, and the Romans, who razed the Phoenician civilization at Carthage to the ground, such accounts are to be taken critically, with several grains of salt, the very mineral allegedly sown into the soil after the decimation of the grandest of all Phoenician civilizations: Carthage.[165]

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160. According to Picard, "Necessity had forced Carthage to become a military power. By nature the Phoenicians were sailors or merchants and did not like war." (57) See Picard, *Carthage*.

161. Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*, 2.

162. Ibid., 58.

163. Picard asserts that the "cruelty of the Carthaginians in the destruction of captured towns, the massacres of large numbers of prisoners and the refined tortures inflicted on others, may have been exaggerated by Greek historians but not invented from nothing." (58) See Picard, *Carthage*.

164. Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*, 15-16.

165. Picard, *Carthage*, 152.

According to History with a capital H, or, in other words, the story of great men, great wars, domination, and death, it was not until the fifth century BCE that the Phoenicians began to expand their sphere of influence inland. Culturally and commercially, Carthage established a far reach spanning cities in present-day Libya in the east to cities on the shores of present-day Algeria in the west.[166] Carthage extended its administrative control during this period and, by the end of the fourth century BCE, was either directly or indirectly exploiting the greater part of modern-day Tunisia.[167] From the third to second century BCE, military conflicts between the Roman and Carthaginian Empires ensued, resulting in the decimation of Carthage, slaughter of six hundred fifty thousand Carthaginians, and enslavement of the remaining fifty thousand.[168] The First Punic War between Carthage and Rome took place from 264-241 BCE. Following the war, the prominent Barca family of Carthage claimed to be direct descendants of Dido.[169] The Barca bloodline includes both Hamilcar Barca, who served as a general during the First Punic War, and his son Hannibal the Great, who served as Commander-in-Chief in Spain during the Second Punic War from 219-201 BCE, and is known for crossing the Alps on elephant-back.[170] The peace made at the end of the Second Punic War in 201 BCE was short-lived. Despite the

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166. Serge Lancel, *Carthage*: *A History*, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1995), 258.

167. Carthage also its administrative control during this period and, by the end of the fourth century BCE, directly oversaw and "exploited economically in either direct or indirect fashion more than half of present-day Tunisia, including the richest or most fertile regions, from Tabarka and the forests of Kroumiria in the north-west to the olive groves and fishing-grounds of Sfax in the south-east." (269) See Lancel, *Carthage*: *A History*.

168. According to Strabo, the population of Carthage had reached seven hundred thousand at the time of its surrender in 146 BCE. Bagnall confirms that fifty thousand "terrified men, women and children nearing the limits of exhaustion and starvation" (319) yielded to Roman rule and rather than being dispatched were sold into slavery. See Nigel Bagnall, *The Punic Wars* (London: Hutchinson, 1990), 319 and Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, trans. Horace Leonard Jones and John Robert Sitlington Sterrett, Volume 17 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015) 185.

169. Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*, 50.

170. Ibid., xv-xvi.

concessions the Phoenicians made at the conclusion of the war[171] and the fact that Carthage had effectively been reduced to "a client state, utterly dependent on Roman good will for her future existence,"[172] the Romans soon resolved to annihilate Carthage once and for all in order to cement their hegemony. Stoked on by Marcus Porcius Cato, an austere Tuscan farmer turned censor, who feared the economic vibrancy of Carthage and abhorred the decadence and signature purple dye of Phoenician culture, the Roman Senate resolved to raze Carthage to the ground.[173] Whether driven by the desire for military, economic, or cultural ascendency,[174] the Romans, led by Scipio Africanus, took Cato the Elder's counsel in stride that "Carthage must be

171. According to Appian, in exchange for a cease-fire, Carthage conceded to the Roman demands that "Mago should leave Liguria immediately and the Carthaginians should not recruit mercenaries in future; the Carthaginians should have no more than thirty warships; they should not interfere at all outside the territory they held within the so-called Phoencian Trenches; they should return all Roman prisoners and deserters; they should pay Rome one thousand six hundred talets of gold within a specified time; Massinissa should rule the Massylians and have as much of Syphax's kingdom as he could manage." (51-52) See Appian, *Roman History*, ed. Brian McGing, trans. Brian McGing, Volume 8: The African Book (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019).

172. Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage*, 297.

173. After visiting Carthage as an arbiter and witnessing the Phoenician city's speedy economic recovery shortly after the Second Punic War, Cato returned to Rome and advocated for the total destruction of Carthage. In Appian's *Roman History*, he affirms that "When the senate heard this, they decided on war, but still needing a pretext, kept their decision secret." (117)

174. While Polybius states that Rome perceived Carthage as a serious military threat, Bullitt asserts that Cato the Elder and the Roman Senate could not really have considered Carthage as an imperial threat as "Rome had just defeated the armies of Philip, Antiochus and Perseus." (306) Bullitt cites Carthage's military might, economic prosperity, and "the decadence of her culture and citizens," (306) as the root of Cato's abhorrence of the Phoenicians. See Bullitt, *Phoenicia and Carthage* and Polybius, *The Histories of Polybius*, trans. W. R. Paton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), ebook.

destroyed" (Latin "*Delenda est Carthago*")[175] and, in 146 BCE,[176] obliterated the city and exterminated its people, committing the first recorded mass murder that conforms to our modern-day definition of genocide.[177] After the Phoenicians reluctantly surrendered two hundred thousand suits of armor and three thousand catapults,[178] the Romans, in league with local Massyli forces,[179] decimated the city and slaughtered over ninety percent of the population, effectively eliminating an entire culture. From a nascent town of seafaring refugees, to a prosperous trade-oriented city, from a bellicist, expansionist empire, to a satellite state owing its allegiance to Rome, Dido's Qart Ḥadasht eventually met the same fate as its queen and was reduced to ashes. Approximately six and a half centuries after Queen Dido threw herself into the fire, forfeiting her life in the name of personal and political autonomy, the Phoenician civilization

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175. According to Plutarch, Cato declared that, in his opinion, Carthage must be destroyed (Latin *Delenda est Carthago*, Greek "*Δοκεῖ δέ μοι καὶ Καρχηδόνα μὴ εἶναι*"). Cato's iconic phrase has given rise to poetry composed by Moncef Ghachem and Lina Mangiacapre. Mangiacapre's poem, "Cartago delenda est," was published postmortem as a part of her second collection of poetry: *Amazzoni e minotauri*. Mangiacapre's poem, written in free verse, draws parallels between the genocide against the Phoenicians in Carthage and the contemporary mass murder and ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Yugoslavia. By connecting the Romans to the Serbians and the Phoenicians to the Albanians, Mangiacapre laments the "ipocrisia" and continuing violence of hierarchical regimes bent on division, stratification, subordination, and exclusion. In *Didone non è morta*, rather than a politics of elimination or exclusion, Queen Dido champions a politics of compassion, inclusivity, and multiculturalism. For Mangiacapre, although patriarchal regimes continue to enact violence, the impulse for peace persists: neither Dido nor her radical politics ever died. See Moncef Ghachem "Delenda est Cartago" in *Cap Africa* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989); Lina Mangiacapre, "Cartago delenda est" in *Amazzoni e minotauri* (Rimini: Raffaelli Editore, 2008), 85; Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, ed. Jeffrey Henderson, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, Volume 2: Themistocles and Camillus, Aristides and Cato major, Cimon and Lucullus (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), 382-383.

176. As noted by Bullitt in *Phoenicia and Carthage*, the Third Punic War took place from 149-146 BCE (xvi).

177. As expounded by Kiernan in "The First Genocide: Carthage, 146 BC" *Diogenes* 51, 3 (2004): 27-39, mass killing combined with the intent to eliminate an entire civilization is consistent with the definition of genocide put forth by the United Nations Genocide Convention in 1948.

178. Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, 185-186.

179. There were three Numidian kingdoms by the end of the third century BCE: the Massyli, the Masaesyli, and the Mauri. After the skilled diplomat Masinissa, king of the Massyli passed away, the peace he had proctored with the Phoenicians was rejected. Although two of his sons sided with Carthage, one of his grandsons along with two new Massyli generals endorsed the razing of Carthage. The Massyli joined the Romans in decimating the city and in doing so expanded the domain of their kingdom. For more, see Brett and Fentress, *The Berbers*, 25.

at Carthage was "utterly wiped out"[180] by the Romans, that is, by the purported descendants of Aeneas. While Dido and Aeneas neither met nor made love in the annals of History, the errant lovers' paths most certainly did cross in the literary and filmic imaginary of Virgil, Metastasio, Mangiacapre, et al.

2. Dido the Sinner, Dido the Saint, or . . . ?

Over the past two and a half millennia, the Myth of Dido and Aeneas has been interpreted, re-interpreted, presented, and re-presented in epic, verse, epistle, biographical catalogue, oil painting, tragedy, opera, sonata, novel, ballet, and film. Whether epic or tragic, operatic or novelistic, the artistic renditions of the Dido Myth put forth over the past three thousands years offer two main characterizations of the "dux femina"[181]: Dido the sinner and Dido the saint. As noted by Savage, the figure of Dido has been debated in a highly polarized fashion over the years: she is either lusty or chaste.[182] While Virgil, Dante, and Metastasio represent Dido as a passionate, duplicitous lover, Petrarch and Lydgate cast her as a faithful, childless widow. For millennia, Dido has been painted and defined not in terms of who she is or what aspirations she might have but rather in relation to the men in her life: the daughter of a king (Matan), the sister of a tyrant (Pygmalion), the widow of a high priest (Acherbas), the chosen wife of a power-hungry chieftain (Hiarbas), and the scorned lover of a fugitive prince (Aeneas). Scores of representations of the queen of Carthage in which the she does not express thoughts, feelings, or ambitions of her own that are unrelated to the world of men have fallen

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180. Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, 185.

181. Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, ed. R. D. Williams (London: MacMillan Education Limited, 1972), 12.

182. Savage, "Dido Dies Again."

short. While works portraying Dido the sinner and Dido the saint are reductive representations of the famed regal refugee, versions of the Dido Myth that shine the spotlight on her values, musings, and motivations do exist. For example, Fawzi Mellah's epistolary novel *Elissa*: *La Reine Vagabonde* [*Elissa: The Wandering Queen*] (1988)[183] foregrounds the princess's thoughts, feelings, desires, and dreams. In a fictional letter addressed to her tyrannical brother, presumably composed immediately prior to self-immolation, Mellah's Dido reflects upon her childhood and decision to leave Tyre, her love of liberty, the human condition, her appreciation for beauty, her take on the aesthetics of asymmetry, her leadership, the challenges she faced during her arduous trip across the sea, her feelings surrounding pregnancy, life, and death, and the political strategies she used to sort out conflicts in Tyre, Cyprus, Sabratha, Hadrumet, and Carthage. By selecting the epistolary genre and writing in a diaristic tone,[184] Mellah pens a female protagonist into being who prominently displays her personhood through reflection upon her past and present selves.

Rather than cast Dido as an oversexed, wayward queen or a sexless, chaste widow, Mangiacapre, like Mellah, portrays a complex female character who looks, observes, perceives, analyzes, intuits, hopes, dreams, desires, appreciates, expresses, communicates, and negotiates. Both Mellah's and Mangiacapre's representations of the fugitive princess blur the lines between Dido the sinner and Dido the saint, calling into question a number of binary juxtapositions embraced and propagated by scores of authors over the years: bad vs. good, lusty vs. chaste, compassionate vs. strategic, womanly vs. manly, emotional vs. logical, etc. In the same vein as

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183. *Elissa* was first published in French in 1988. The English translation was released in 1990. For more on Mellah's *Elissa*, see Bernadette Cailler, "Regards autres sur Carthage," in *Carthage ou la flamme du brasier*, 89-131 (New York: Rodopi, 2007) and Fawzi Mellah, *Elissa*, trans. Howard Curtis (New York: Quartet Books, 1990).

184. For more on genre of the diary and its connection to feminist communication and community-building, see Cynthia Huff, " 'The Profoundly Female, and Feminist Genre': The Diary as Feminist Practice," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 17, 3/4 (1989): 6-14.

Mellah's novel, Mangiacapre's film transcends the dichotomy of the Didos by representing neither a cool, chaste, calm, collected, logical leader who sacrifices herself for the good of the state nor a lusty, emotional, out-of-her-depths one who commits suicide as an act of desperation. In her film, Mangiacapre portrays a complex protagonist who privileges peace and partnership. Mangiacapre's Dido leads her people with compassion and guile. She is no stranger to emotion and yet proves an adept negotiator and cunning strategist. A desiring subject, Mangiacapre's Dido pursues a passionate affair with Aeneas. Even when others scoff at her politics of peace and inclusion, criticizing her for taking in refugees and granting them asylum, Dido persists. Driven in her pursuit of a peaceful, harmonious society in which liberty, beauty, and compassion reign supreme, Dido offers the Trojan refugees food, shelter, and shared governance. When her offer of partnership is rejected and her heart is broken, she endures. She considers ending her life, however chooses to carry on. In the end, Mangiacapre's Dido opts to continue on with her life and political agenda, staying true to herself and politics of care, despite the pain inflicted on her by her power-hungry brother and lover.

In *Didone non è morta*, Dido is neither a sinner nor a saint. Mangiacapre does not pigeonhole her protagonist on the basis of her sexual desire. Rather than resort to an outdated, hackneyed representation, Mangiacapre portrays Dido as passionate, caring, cunning, and perseverant. Although she is a desiring subject and practices a politics of care, Dido is not cast as an erratic, failed leader. The all-too-familiar sexist assumptions directed at women who choose to engage sexually (e.g., such women are foolish, unruly, and indiscriminate in who they have sex with) are largely absent here. Mangiacapre casts aside stereotypes about what it means for a woman to be sexual and allows her protagonist to be both a desiring subject and a success. In

Mangiacapre's feminist take on the Dido and Aeneas Myth, the protagonist's sexual desire does not go hand in hand with making poor decisions or coming undone. A female character need not be stripped of perseverance or any other attribute because she had sex. In representing Dido as a "dux femmina"[185] who rules with logic and compassion, Mangiacapre challenges the boundary lines between sinner and saint, emotion and reason, and sexual and sexless. In her philosophical and artistic work, Mangiacapre eschews false binaries and categorizations, challenges the status quo, and crafts characters who are not confined by dividing lines determined by dominant ideology.

While Mellah selects the epistolary novel and Virgil the epic, and Mangiacapre makes use of feminist revisionist film to interpret the Dido and Aeneas Myth. Mangiacapre casts Dido as the protagonist of her own story, a story in which procreative sex, the role of Woman[186] as childbearer, and bloodline are no longer central. As Aeneas and his progeny are no longer of consequence, the emphasis shifts from the procreative to the erotic. Moreover, the linear, dynastic thrust of the epic is washed away and replaced with a porous, mythical temporality. In Mangiacapre's film, there are multiple temporalities: one remote past, one past, and one present – in 1987. There are three timelines that turn and shift. While the scenes that take place in the remote past are flashbacks, the relationship between the other two temporalities is ambiguous. The mythical past bursts through and intermingles with the present. The film shifts from the

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185. Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, 12.

186. When referring to real women, or, in other words, sociohistorical subjects, this dissertation uses the term *woman* or *women* with a lowercase *w*. When, on the other hand, referencing the false Myth of Woman, that is, a female human reduced to an eroticized spectacle, defined by and in relation to men, the dissertation employs the term *Woman* with a capital *W*. This distinction follows the one made by Teresa de Lauretis in *Alice Doesn't*. While de Lauretis uses italics to distinguish between the fantasmatic projection of heteronormative male desire and real social subjects, this dissertation utilizes capitalization. See Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: feminism, semiotics, cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

present to a mythical past to the remote past and back again. While the majority of the film takes place in Carthage, time and place shift and change, ebb and flow. Scenes are set in Tyre, Cyprus, Carthage, a stunning, craggy, otherworldly space apart, a discoteca just outside of Naples, and a Neapolitan subway station. Time is not linear in Mangiacapre's film. In fact, there are three consecutive endings to the film, one of which takes place in the past and two alternate endings which transpire in the present.

3. A Feminist Orpheus Seeks Her Sister

In the opening shot of *Didone non è morta* Dido is nowhere to be seen. She lays dormant in a mythical space apart, awaiting her reawakening. Her statuesque, naked body, covered from head to toe in gray-green volcanic mud, rests on a craggy shelf in a stunning, otherworldly, volcanic expanse. Before Dido's sister Anna traverses a light-toned, craggy crater and takes a porous portal to a mythical past, Dido's feminist network of kinship and care gingerly extracts her motionless body from the volcanic landscape, or Dido's nursemaid takes her in her arms and gently wakes her, Anna seeks out the Sibyl and embarks on an Orphic journey to recover her dear sister. The diegesis begins at an avant-garde art exhibit in a local discoteca not far from Naples. Modern-day Anna exhibits her sculptures, dances joyfully among friends, toasts to Dido's return, and heads for the Grotto of the Sibyl.

Before the diegesis begins, an extreme long shot of the sky as a new day dawns is put on view. This extradiegetic shot exemplifies Mangiacapre's unconventional, transdisciplinary approach to filmmaking.[187] For Mangiacapre, the art of filmmaking is the art of *painting beauty*.

187. For more on Mangiacapre's transdisciplinary art theory, see chapter 1, p. 30-34.

In her filmmaking, Mangiacapre blurs the lines between the disciplines of painting and cinema. The opening shot of the title sequence is an excellent example of this approach as it illustrates what *painting beauty* with a 35 mm camera can look like: darkness covering the lower half of the canvas, a brushstroke of vivid coral red, strokes of smoky vermillion clouds on top of a periwinkle sky. Here Mangiacapre has painted the beauty of the rising sun. Whether filming sunrise, sunset, hands, faces, bodies, or stunning yet precarious landscapes, Mangiacapre uses the camera to paint beauty in its many forms. As the title and credits roll, volcanic and maritime landscapes are put on display: closeups of steam rising from the fumaroles in the Campi Flegrei Caldera,[188] very long shots of the Solfatara Crater,[189] and views of the Bay of Pozzuoli[190] as well as the Campanian coastline. Stunning and otherworldly, the slopes and crags featured in the opening sequence are spaces of indomitable beauty: magnificent, awe-inspiring landscapes that cannot be conquered or ruled by Man. In a steamy, craggy crater or on the stormy, swelling sea,

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188. The Campi Flegrei are one of the two volcanic epicenters of the Campania region, a region which has been acclaimed for its temperate climate and fertile land since the times of Pliny the Elder. The Phlegraean (or Burning) Fields are situated in an eight-mile wide volcanic caldera just north of Naples. The caldera stretches from the edge of the city of Naples to Cuma and contains numerous craters, fumaroles, boiling pools of mud, and grottos. The Phlegraean Fields have been represented in many works of art over the years, including Virgil's *Aeneid* and Mangiacapre's *Didone non è morta*. In Virgil's epic, Aeneas visits la Grotta della Sibilla [Grotto of the Sibyl] and then journeys to the underworld to visit his forefathers and future progeny by way of a path originating beside il Lago d'Averno [Lake Avernus], which is a crater that has filled with water. Like Virgil before her, Mangiacapre represents volcanic landscape in her telling of the Dido and Aeneas Myth. Almost the entirety of Mangiacapre's film was shot in the Phlegraean Fields: the Solfatara crater, the Macellum, and the Rione Terra Quarter in Pozzuoli, the Grotto of the Sibyl and Acropolis in Cuma, and the Baths of Nero and the Temple of Mercury in Baia. Even Discoteca Tongue, which features in the first scene is located in the vicinity, in the nearby Posillipo Quarter. The super volcano which lies beneath the surface of the Campi Flegrei remains active and, according to Antonio Denti, has the potential to give rise to a cataclysmic event, many times worse than the incineration of Pompeii. For more on the Campi Flegrei caldera in Campania, see Antonio Denti, " 'Super volcano,' global danger, lurks near Pompeii," *Reuters*, August 3, 2012, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-volcano-idUSBRE8720WI20120803; Giuseppe Consoli Fiego, *Cumae and the Phlegraean Fields*, ed. Alma Reed, trans. Alma Reed (Naples: Mary E. Raiola, 1927); and Pliny, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham, Volume 2: Books 3-7 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), ebook.

189. The Solfatara crater is one of several situated in the Campi Flegrei caldera. For more on the Phlegraean (or Burning) Fields, see note 182.

190. Pozzuoli (Latin *Puteoli*, Greek *Dicaearchia* or *Δικαιαρχία*) was settled by the Greeks sometime after Cuma and Napoli.

Man cannot establish dominion or reign supreme. Neither Man nor his Ideological State Apparatuses[191] can take root on the waves of the Tyrrhenian Sea, among the fumaroles in the Campi Flegrei, or on the craggy peak of Mount Vesuvia.[192] Human life, civilization, and hierarchy find themselves under constant siege in such spaces, threatened by uneven terrain and cracks in the earth, magma and boiling mud, and surges of the sea. The surges and swells of the Tyrrhenian Sea make the Bay of Pozzuoli a space of indomitable beauty. A dangerous beauty, indeed, the Tyrrhenian Sea swallowed up a portion of the seaside town of Baia[193] in the fifteenth century. The sunken civilization, now located beneath the waves of the Bay of Pozzuoli is a testament of the threat such magnificent landscapes pose. Like the Bay of Pozzuoli and the Tyrrhenian Sea, la Vesuvia is a stunning space that cannot be tamed by Man. La Vesuvia is situated among the clouds, perched high above the domain of men. Her perilous nature discourages men from inhabiting her craggy slopes, particularly her peak, thereby stunting the spread of manmade structures and social norms on her terrain. La Vesuvia is a dangerous beauty, a space in which breathtaking, otherworldly crags are not subject to social convention and beauty

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191. As theorized by Louis Althusser, Ideological State Apparatuses (e.g., religion, education, family, the law, politics, trade-unions, communications, culture) are sociocultural institutions wielded by the ruling class in order to subdue the will of the individual and uphold power. For more on the weaponization of ideology by those in power, see Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 127-186, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971).

192. While volcanic lore is oft associated with the masculine, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache refer to the dangerous beauty on the southern side of the Bay of Naples as a she: la Vesuvia. Like the female body, la Vesuvia exists in a state of continual metamorphosis, its creative potential dormant for some time and then periodically active: always capable and sometime secreting steam, smoke, magma, milk, menstrual blood, vaginal or amniotic fluid, et al. As the Nemesiache refer to this metamorphic beauty as a she, I use the feminine form, *la Vesuvia*, in this dissertation.

193. The town of Baia (*Baiae* Latin) is located on the Bay of Pozzuoli. Originally settled by the Greeks, Baia is said to be named after Ulysses's helmsman Baius who purportedly drown in the bay and is buried in the vicinity. When Baia later passed under Roman control, it became a summer vacation destination for upper class statesmen. Luxurious villas were built and occupied by Marcus Linius Crassus, Pompey, Domitian, Piso and Arria, Nero, Agrippina, Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar and Livia, Quintus Hortensius, and others. Sometime after the fall of Rome, Baia sank. A portion of the city now lies beneath the waves of the Tyrrhenian, a landscape of indomitable beauty. For more on Baia, see Fiego, "The Romans in the Phlegraean Fields," in *Cumae and the Phlegraean Fields*, 310-381.

cannot be dictated or dominated by Man. Like the spectacular slopes of la Vesuvia, the Solfatara Crater is an awe-inspiring, otherworldly space. La Solfatara is a space apart, detached from human civilization and social norms. It is in this space of indomitable beauty, La Solfatara, that Dido is discovered, motionless and statuesque. Her naked body painted with a coat of laurel green mud. Dido, like the volcanic landscape on which she lies, rests dormant, waiting.

Following the title sequence featuring landscapes of indomitable beauty, the diegesis begins with a hand delicately removing a diaphanous, black veil from a golden head sculpture of Dido. The sculpture is one of many in Anna's avant-garde exhibition. Rather than show her work in a gallery, Anna displays her work in a space that allows for admiration as well as creation of art. Those at Anna's avant-garde art show not only gaze at the sculptures and listen to music, they also dance. They engage in corporeal acts of artistic creation, that is, creative movement. After admiring the golden head sculpture, Sofonisba [Sophonisba][194] and Anna hit the dance floor, decked in unorthodox, theatrical attire: Anna, wearing a purple wig, short black veil, shiny, black leather dress with cutouts, shiny, black gloves, and tall, silver boots, and Sophonisba, a long, golden jacket, white sailor hat, white vest, white diaphanous skirt, and white slacks. Shortly after the two join in on the creative movement, Lina Mangiacapre leaps into the frame, making a cameo appearance. Mangiacapre, wearing a black top hat, black leather jacket, black and white

194. The historical Sophonisba was a savvy, sexy political player hailing from Carthage. According to Picard, Sophonisba was "very beautiful, endowed with a charm and spirit which no man could withstand, well educated into the bargain, and a good musician." (144) Between the Second and Third Punic Wars, as the threat of Rome grew near, Sophonisba assented to marry Syphax, king of the Masaesyli, in order to forge an alliance with one of the three extant Numidian kingdoms and prevent the fall of her city. For a time, Syphax subjugated the other two Numidian kingdoms and ruled over one nation, with Sophonisba by his side. While Sophonisba's union with Syphax temporarily held the Romans at bay, Masinissa, king of the Massyli, who was backed by the Romans, met and conquered Syphax in battle. After slaughtering Syphax, Masinissa met Sophonisba and "fell into instant lust." (80) Masinissa took her as his wife, however, the Romans refused to recognize the marriage of their new ally to a "defiant" (80), "uppity" (81) woman from Carthage. When Scipio declared Sophonisba the property of Rome and insisted that Masinissa hand her over, the king delivered a cup of poison to his new bride, giving her the choice between taking her own life and becoming a slave of Rome. Sophonisba chose to forfeit her life rather than her liberty. Mangiacapre's Sophonisba, like Dido, never died. For more on the historical Sophonisba, see Picard, *Carthage* and León, *Uppity Women of Ancient Times*.

striped blouse, black vest, black leather pants, black leather boots, and light-blue, funky eyewear, joins the cast in dancing to the song "Joy Time." After Mangiacapre's cameo on the dance floor, Annibale [Hannibal][195] enters, wearing sweatpants, a dark blue hoodie, and an army green jacket, a color evoking the military background of the historical figure. After greeting Anna, Annibale confides in her that he misses Dido: "Da quando lei non c'è più mi sento solo." ["Since she left us, I feel so alone."] Anna tells Annibale that he is mistaken and that "Lei ci sarà per sempre." ["She will always be with us."] As the music fades, Anna raises a glass to Dido, more specifically, to her golden artistic rendering of Dido (the sculpture): "Brindiamo a lei, al suo ritorno." ["Cheers to her, to her return."] Anna runs out of the discoteca and shortly thereafter the narrative shifts from present to past.

Before this temporal shift takes place, there is a scene in which modern-day Anna is shown on a pathway with a switchblade in hand. After opening the knife, she combs through her hair with the blade, contemplating how to put the tool to use. While suicide is the end that Anna meets in Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nash's tragic take on Dido, in Mangiacapre's feminist revision, Anna does not do violence upon herself. Marlowe and Nash's Anna falls madly in love with Iarbas and upon witnessing the double suicide of her sister and her beloved resolves to kill herself. Marlowe and Nash's Anna specifies that she has chosen death in order to join her dearly departed Iarbas. By amplifying Iarbas's role and writing a love triangle into their tragedy, Marlowe and Nash frame heterosexual love and lust as the *sine qua non* of Dido's, Iarbas's, and

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195. The historical Hannibal was a brilliant military man from Carthage, who was eventually bested by Scipio. Born centuries after Dido's time, Hannibal was the son of Hamilcar Barca, who was a general during the First Punic War. During the Second Punic War, Hannibal the Great served as Commander-in-Chief in Spain and proved an adept strategist, crossing the Alps on elephant-back. During the Third Punic War, after losing the Battle of Zama, Hannibal the Great fled. While History's Hannibal is vanquished and flees Carthage, Mangiacapre's Annibale remains steadfast in his devotion to Dido and her city. For more on the historical Hannibal, see Picard, *Carthage* and Polybius, *The Histories of Polybius*.

Anna's lives. Having been abandoned by Aeneas, Dido no longer values her life and kills herself in hopes of making "[. . .] Aeneas famous through the world / For perjury and slaughter of a queen."[196] (Act V, Scene I, vv. 293-294) While heterosexual unions need not be an essential condition for life, when Aeneas refused to follow through and stand by Dido, Marlowe and Nash's queen of Carthage came undone. Torment, desperation, and maleficence dominated her final moments. Upon witnessing the queen of Carthage consumed by flames, Iarbas, in turn, loses interest in his own life. When Dido, whom he holds dear, kills herself, Iarbas follows suit, in order to join his beloved in death. Marlowe and Nash's tragedy ends with a triple suicide, the last of which is Anna. At the loss of "O sweet Iarbas, Anna's sole delight!"[197] (Act V, Scene I, v. 322), Anna experiences a loss of meaning of her own life and kills herself. For Marlowe and Nash's Dido, Iarbas, and Anna, unreciprocated heterosexual love is their undoing. Unlike Marlowe and Nash's tragic take on Dido, Mangiacapre's revisionist film does not present heterosexual love and procreative sex as the *sine qua non*. Mangiacapre's Anna does not demonstrate romantic interest in Iarbas or any of the male characters in the film. Her life being worth living is presented as entirely unrelated to romance. For Anna, it is not heterosexual relations that makes life bearable but rather familial, sororal bonds among women. Mangiacapre's Anna does not do violence upon herself with the switchblade. Instead, she employs the knife to create, that is, to make art. Anna carves a wind instrument with the blade and begins to play a few notes. Anna's decision to make art instead of enact violence exemplifies Mangiacapre's pacifist feminist philosophy. Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache promote a

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196. Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nash, "The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage," in *The Life of Marlowe and The Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage*, ed. C. F. Tucker Brooke, 115-232 (New York: Gordian Press, Inc., 1966), 230.

197. Marlowe and Nash, "The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage," 232.

peaceful world order. Violence, whether inflicted on oneself or another, is not a solution as it is not a possible path to peace. In line with Mangiacapre's philosophy, Anna rejects violence as a response to adversity, putting a tool that has the capacity to take life to use creatively.

Tranquil, mystical music plays asynchronously, long before Anna puts the recorder to her lips. The soundtrack, composed and performed by Mangiacapre, accompanies footage of Anna playing the recorder and approaching the Grotto of the Sibyl.[198] While making music, Anna notices a golden bough among other foliage, mirthfully picks it up, and, after examining it, makes a break for the dark hollow. Rather than finding herself lost "per una selva oscura / che la diritta via era smarrita"[199] (Canto 1, vv. 2-3) ["in a dark wood, / for the straight way was lost"],[200] Anna sees the darkness and approaches it head-on. More like Virgil's dynastic hero than Dante's pilgrim, Anna enters the underground of her own volition in search of a loved one. Like Anna, Virgil's Aeneas seeks the Cumean Sibyl in order to make contact with a lost family member and willfully descends into the darkness with a golden bough in hand. In Virgil's epic, Aeneas enters the Grotto and asks the Sibyl to help him navigate the Underworld so that he can look upon the face of his father once more:

> unum oro: quando hic inferni ianua regis
> dicitur et tenebrosa palus Acheronte refuso,

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198. The Grotto or Cave of the Sibyl is the ancient hollow from which the Cumean sibyl once forecast the future. Although Hyperocus referred to her as Demo and Virgil as Deiphobe, "her proper name seems to have been Amalthea." From the chambers and passages of her arcane and expansive hollow, Amalthea prophesied either with the spoken or written word. Still in existence, the grotto itself can be found alongside Lake Avernus in Cuma. Cuma (Latin *Cumae*, Greek *Kyme* or *Κύμη*) was the first Greek settlement on the Italian peninsula. Approximately twenty-five years after establishing a Greek trading-post of Pithecusa (Latin *Pithecusae*, Greek *Pithēkoũssai*) on the island of Ischia, the Greeks crossed over to the mainland and inaugurated Cuma. Founded in c. 725 BC, Cuma rests on the Campi Flegrei [Phlegraean Fields], one of two volcanic epicenters in the Campania Region. For more on the Cumean Sibyl, see Fiego, *Cumae and the Phlegraean Fields*, 190 and Colin McEvedy, "Cumae" in *Cities of the Classical World*, ed. Douglas Stuart Oles, (New York: Allen Lane, 2011), 128-131.

199. Dante Alighieri, *The Inferno*, trans. Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), 2.

200. Alighieri, *Inferno*, 3.

> ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora contingat;
> doceas iter et sacra ostia pandas.[201] (Book 6, vv. 106-109)
>
> This let me crave, since near your Grove the Road
> To Hell lies open, and the dark Abode,
> Which *Acheron* surrounds, th'innavigable Flood:
> Conduct me thro' the Regions void of Light,
> And lead me longing to my Father's sight.[202] (Book 6, vv. 159-163)

Aeneas asks the Sibyl to serve as his guide and to lead him through the pitch black provinces of the Underworld and she acquiesces his request. While Virgil's Aeneas descends into darkness accompanied by the Sibyl and gifts his branch of gold to Proserpina,[203] Mangiacapre's Anna makes her own way and presents the golden bough to the Sibyl before embarking on her journey. When addressing the Sibyl, Anna challenges and implores her: "Io chiedo a te, Sibilla,[204] di

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201. Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil: Books 1-6*, ed. R. D. Williams, Vol. 1. (London: MacMillan Education Limited, 1972), 128.

202. Virgil, "The First Book of the Aeneis" in *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Alan Roper, 343-377, Vol. 5, ed. William Frost, trans. John Dryden (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 531.

203. As put forth by Hesiod and Ovid, Persephone (Latin *Proserpina*), the daughter of Demeter (Latin *Ceres*) and Zeus (Latin *Jupiter*), aspired to follow in the footsteps of the virgin goddess Artemis (Latin *Diana*). Aphrodite (Latin *Venus*), however, took issue with such a decision and resolved to take her virginity. After receiving orders from his mother, Cupid shot the tyrant of the Underworld through the heart with one of his arrows. Aïdoneus (Latin *Pluto* or *Hades*) abducted Persephone while she was picking wildflowers, overpowered and violated her, and forcibly took her to his realm. Demeter approached Zeus for help in recovering their child and Zeus reached an agreement with his brother Aïdoneus: Persephone "*cum matre est totidem, totidem cum coniuge menses*" (276) ["spends as many months with her mother as she does with her husband."] The time that Persephone spends on earth with her mother each year corresponds to the season of spring while the time she spends down below correlates to winter. While in the Underworld, Persephone serves as queen. When Orpheus loses Eurydice, it is Persephone who grants him permission to complete his katabatic journey. Persephone is not the one, however, to permit the soul of Dido to enter. When Virgil's Dido stabs herself to death with the sword that Aeneas left behind, Persephone does not cut a lock of Dido's hair to release her soul. Since Persephone considered Dido's suicide unexpected and unwarranted, Hera (Latin *Juno*) employs Iris to do so. For more on Persephone, see Hesiod, "Theogony," 30; Book 4 of Ovid, *Fasti*, trans. James George Frazer, George Patrick Goold, et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 2014), ebook; and Book 5 of Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. George Patrick Goold and Frank Justus Miller, Vol. 1: Books 1-8 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 2014), ebook, 276.

204. Addressed as *Sibilla* within the diegesis yet listed as *Batbaal* in the credits, Mangiacapre's sibylline figure has an affinity with both Amalthea, the Sibyl of Cuma and Batbaal, the former priestess of Carthage. The historical Batbaal was the chief priestess of Carthage and daughter of Himilkat. For more, see Karl Moore and David Lewis, *The Origins of Globalization* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 147. By calling her sibyl by two names, Mangiacapre dialogues with authors and historians who previously incorporated the prophetic figures into their work. Rather than reproducing a sibyl of the past, Mangiacapre elaborates a new figure by drawing upon multiple sources. In combining elements of two sibylline figures into one, Mangiacapre creates a transnational character whose faculty of foresight stretches across state boundaries, borders, space, and time.

raggiungere Didone. Se Orfeo poté vedere Euridice, perché io simile a te per sangue non posso compiere per amore di un'altra donna questo viaggio?"[205] ["I beseech you, Sibyl, for permission to reach Dido. If Orpheus was allowed to go see Eurydice, why can't I, a woman like you, make the trip out of love for another woman?"] Anna requests access to the nearby otherworldly realm in which her sister Dido lies dormant. Driven by sororal affection rather than connubial passion, as was the case for Orpheus,[206] or paternal devotion, as was the case for Aeneas, Anna seeks her sister.

While Orpheus was allowed to journey to the Underworld to recover his wife and Aeneas to reach his beloved father, no female figure has ever been granted permission to enter and navigate the realm of Hades. When Proserpina was overpowered by Hades and forcibly dragged down to his realm, Ceres[207] was not granted permission to make a katabatic journey in pursuit of her daughter. Jupiter, on the other hand, was not barred from entering his brother's realm. The two heterosexual male Gods negotiated and came to a decision that stripped Proserpina of her autonomy for six months of every year, effectively reducing her to an erotic object at the mercy of her uncle for half of her remaining days. The power structure at play, by which decisions were

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205. *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1987; Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee).

206. Upon the loss of his beloved Eurydice, Orpheus journeys to the Underworld in an attempt to recover and revive her. The gifted poet and musician charms the queen of the Underworld with lyrics evoking his lost loved one and is permitted to enter the realm of Hades. Proserpina grants him permission to take his wife back to the mortal realm on the condition that he not lay eyes on her until on the journey back. Overzealous and fearful, Orpheus glances back at Eurydice just before reaching the mortal realm in the attempt to prevent a cataclysmic failure. In laying eyes on Eurydice, however, Orpheus breaks Proserpina's rule and fulfills the very fate he was attempting to avoid: he loses Eurydice for once and all. Fore the remainder of his life, Orpheus shuns women and dedicates himself to composing and singing verses sublimating his grief. Orpheus's decision to withdraw from heterosexual life does not sit well with the Baccantes, who desire him. Ultimately, Orpheus is ripped to shreds by the ravenous Baccantes. See Book 10 of Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. George Patrick Goold and Frank Justus Miller, Vol. 2: Books 9-15 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press: 2014), ebook and Virgil, "The Fourth Book of the Georgics," in *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Alan Roper, 239-266, Vol. 5, ed William Frost, trans. John Dryden (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

207. As put forth by Hesiod and Ovid, Demeter (Latin *Ceres*) is the mother of Persephone (Latin *Proserpina*). For more, see note 200.

made, was that of heteropatriarchy. The interests of the heterosexual male gods were served with the decision to deprive Proserpina of her liberty. Whether male or female, figures of divine authority in Classical Greek and Roman Myth play by the rules of heteropatriarchy. For example, Venus colludes with Hades to enable the breaking of Proserpina's will and stripping of her autonomy, Hades regulates and restricts the movement of Ceres, and Jupiter and Hades see to it that Hades be permitted to perform repeated acts of sexual violence upon Proserpina each and every year. While characters are subjected to the whims of the heteropatriarchal Gods in Classical Greek and Roman Myth, in Mangiacapran hyrmyth,[208] Anna, Dido, et al. are not subjected to divine totality of any type.

Mangiacapre's characters do not submit to divine authority and instead make their own way, unhindered by hegemony. Revising the rules of admission to the otherworldly realm, Mangiacapre imagines a beyond that is not regulated or controlled by hierarchy. In the realm where Dido lies, there are no authority figures to police and reinforce the practice of heteropatriarchy. Through Anna's provocative query, Mangiacapre throws light on the longstanding heteropatriarchal norms surrounding admission to the realm of Hades and suggests that the hierarchy of sexes and sexualities need not govern our lives, myths, or narratives. Orpheus, a gifted poet and musician, was granted permission to enter the Underworld to seek his lost loved one. Why not Ceres? Why not Anna? Mangiacapre's Sibyl does not play by the rules

208. The term *hyrmyth* refers to a concept I elaborated in reference to a particular type of tale that foregrounds power dynamics at play within the canon of Mythology. A Mangiacapran hyrmyth is a feminist or transfeminist revisionist myth that makes room for characters who subvert and derail rather than uphold cisheteropatriarchy. Mangiacapran hyrmyths call attention to the dominance of cisgender straight male language and power relations within the realm of Mythology, pointing to the patriarchal representation of both male and female figures within the canon. Hyrmythical characters subvert hegemonic social and sexual codes and give voice to those who may or may not conform to the gender role assigned to them at birth. For more, see chapter 1.

of patriarchy and, as such, grants the feminist orphic figure[209] permission to proceed. The Sibyl affords Anna the same opportunity that Orpheus and Aeneas were granted by the Greek and Roman powers that be: to seek a loved one in a space apart. With this heartfelt, feminist revision, Mangiacapre celebrates the depth of sororal love and affords opportunity to a character who would have been denied and discriminated against on the basis of her sex in other texts. Through Anna's provocative query and the Sibyl's response, Mangiacapre makes plain that a male poet and musician like Orpheus is no more entitled to seek his loved one than a female sculptor and musician like Anna. Mangiacapre's Sibyl offers Anna advice, however does not lead her to the Underworld or serve as her guide. Echoing the words closing Dante's *Inferno*[210] the Sibyl forewarns Anna: "È facile attraversare l'Averno. Difficile è ritrovare le stelle."[211] ["The easy part is crossing Lake Avernus. The hard part is finding your way back to see the stars once more."] Anna hands the golden bough to the Sibyl and the montage cuts from the dark interior of the Antro della Sibilla [Hollow of the Sibyl] to a shot displaying light, bright, wispy clouds. The

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209. Anna, like Orpheus, is an artist: she sculpts, dances, and makes music. Orpheus turns to poetic production after the definitive loss of his wife, sublimating his grief and unfulfilled heterosexual desire into verse. For Orpheus, artistic production is diametrically opposed with reproduction, that is, the making of art is spurred on by the impossibility, loss, or lack of heteronormative, procreative sexual relations. While the drive behind Orpheus's poetic production is the loss of his object of desire, Anna is motivated to make art for an entirely different reason. For Anna, sculpting and making music is not intrinsically tied to heterosexual relations, procreation, and reproduction, nor is it related to the loss of an erotic object. Anna's art sublimates familial love for a sister who lives on. A feminist artist, Anna makes room for new, creative, antihierarchical ways of exploring and expressing herself and her love for her sister. Both Anna's golden sculpture and Mangiacapre's film celebrate and sublimate bonds of sororal love. Just as Anna, played by Teresa Mangiacapra, creates a sculpture that represents and honors her sister, Lina Mangiacapre creates a film that features and showcases hers. In creating works of art that sublimate sisterly love, the two feminist orphic figures make clear that artistic creation need not be tied to the perishing of a female object of desire. While for Orpheus poetic production may be driven by the loss of connubial relations, for Anna and Mangiacapre artistic vitality is contingent on the presence of sisterly love.

210. The Sibyl's words of caution evoke the final verse of Dante's *Inferno*: "E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle." ["The we came forth to see again the stars"] (Canto 34, v. 139). In *Inferno*, Dante the Pilgrim treks through Hell with Virgil's shade as his guide. At the very end of their journey, after coming upon a three-faced Lucifer, Virgil leads Dante back to earth by way of a passage cut by the Lethe, more specifically, by the runoff of the Lethe which has trickled down from Purgatory and eroded the rock. By calling to mind Dante the Pilgrim's long, difficult journey through Hell, the Sibyl intimates that Anna's path will be no less arduous. Unlike Dante, who is accompanied by Virgil on his katabasis, Anna makes her own way. See Alighieri, *Inferno*, 634-635.

211. *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

footage of the whitewashed sky puts the beginning of a new journey on display, one that does follow in the katabatic footsteps of Virgil's or Dante's male protagonists. Anna's path does not lead her deep into the bowels of the earth for her dear sister Dido never died. Her body, spirit, and politics of peace and care persist. Dido lives on, dormant, lying in wait for her reawakening.

Rather than a katabasis to the realm of Hades, Anna's journey takes her to the Solfatara Crater, a space of indomitable beauty. She walks across the crater, climbs up an otherworldly slope, and makes her way through a natural archway before happening upon her statuesque, sleeping sister. A starkly different door than Dante's entryway to Hell,[212] Mangiacapre's open air arch is not inscribed with chilling words of warning and does not lead to "la città dolente"[213] ["the city of woe."][214] While Dante the Poet's doorway shall last for all of eternity, the future of Mangiacapre's arch is uncertain. Situated in the Campi Flegrei, Mangiacapre's archway is in a precarious position, its existence threatened by the volcano that lies beneath. Cloud-colored, with tawny streaks of brown, the parlous archway bears no ominous inscription demanding that Anna abandon "ogni speranza"[215] ["all hope"][216] upon crossing over to the other side. Rather than a backdrop dominated by darkness, the archway is a part of a light-toned volcanic landscape. The

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212. Dante the Poet's doorway leading to the Ante-Inferno and later on the Inferno is inscribed with the following words of warning: "Per me si va ne la città dolente, / per me si va ne l'etterno dolore, / per me si va tra la perduta gente. / Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore / fecemi la divina podestate, / la somma sapïenza e 'l primo amore. / Dinanzi a me non fuor cose create / se non etterne, e io etterno duro. / Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'intrate." (Canto 3, vv. 1-9) "Through me the way to the city of woe, / through me the way to eternal pain, / through me the way among the lost. / Justice moved my maker on high. / Divine power made me, / wisdom supreme, and primal love. / Before me nothing was but things eternal, / and I endure eternally. / Abandon all hope, you who enter here." Dante the Pilgrim, accompanied by Virgil, crosses a foreboding threshold in Canto 3 of *Inferno*. See Alighieri, *Inferno*, 46-47.

213. Alighieri, *Inferno*, 46.

214. Ibid., 47.

215. Ibid., 46.

216. Ibid., 47.

footage displays a light blue sky with wispy white clouds, a tan hill dotted with dark green trees, and cloud-colored, otherworldly rock formations made of volcanic tuff.

Tuff, the bedrock of Cuma, Baia, Pozzuoli, and Naples is light in color and "porous."[217] Porosity not only permeates the bedrock of the Campanian coastline but also sociospatial and temporal relations in the area. After visiting Naples in the 1920s, Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis noted:

> As porous as this stone is the architecture. Building and action interpenetrate in the courtyards, arcades, and stairways. In everything they preserve the scope to become a theatre of new, unfor[e]seen constellations. The stamp of the definitive is avoided.[218]

Neapolitan architecture and socio-spatiality are porous. In other words, the public is private and the private is public in Naples. Benjamin and Lacis confirm that the private pours into the public and vice versa: "Just as the living room reappears on the street, with chairs, hearth, and altar, so, only much more loudly, the street migrates into the living room."[219] The ebb and flow of the personal and political in Naples results in the corrosion of the concept of firm, definite boundaries. Rather than a threshold or a dividing line between the public and private realms, Neapolitan doorways serve as passageways or thoroughfares, linking one place to another. Often mounted with strands of beads rather than solid wooden slabs, doorframes in Naples are portals that facilitate fluid movement and social relations, in other words, the commingling of comings

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217. Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis, "Naples," in *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB, 1979), 167-176, 169.

218. Benjamin and Lacis, "Naples," 169.

219. For more on Naples as a porous urban landscape in which the private pours out into the public sphere and the public permeates the private, see Benjamin and Lacis, "Naples," 174. For more on bodies of Neapolitans as porous, see Serenella Iovino, "Bodies of Naples: Stories, Matter, and the Landscapes of Porosity," in *Ecocriticism and Italy* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic Gordonsville, 2016), 13-46.

and goings and the plaiting together of the personal and political. Like the architectural features, sociospatiality, and bedrock of the city, ontology also tends toward porosity in Naples.

As the public and private commingle in the porous city, so too do the living and the dead. Neapolitans do not banish or definitively displace the departed. While the deceased may rest underground, they are not condemned to abide there forevermore. The dividing line between the living and the dead remains hazy. The dead are not identified as Other in Naples. They are neither siphoned off nor locked away in the vast network of subterranean hollows, tunnels, and catacombs that lie beneath the city. The Neapolitan underground does not function as a mechanism of division, segregation, or hierarchy but as a thoroughfare, making possible a flow between the realm of the living and that of the dead. The way is not shut to the Catacombs of San Gennaro, the Catacombs of San Severo, the Catacombs of San Gaudioso, or the Cimitero delle Fontanelle. Rather than a threshold or dividing line between life and death there is a thoroughfare, a link, allowing the living to enter the realm of the dead and the dead that of the living. For example, beginning in the late nineteenth century, a number of Neapolitans practiced "il rito delle anime pezzentelle e l'adozione delle capuzzelle"[220] [the Rite of the Souls of Purgatory and Skull Adoption]. This socioreligious practice, accepted by the Catholic Church until the late 1960s, entails selecting an unidentified, abandoned skull from the Cimitero delle Fontanelle, taking it home, and looking after it. Those who practiced the rite cared for their skulls as if they were a part of the family: they fashioned altars decked with candles, rosaries, embroidered handkerchiefs, and pillows for the skulls to sit on, prayed for the lost souls of their skulls, and sometimes even interacted with those souls in their dreams. As demonstrated by the

220. Sabrina Parigi, "Cimitero delle fontanelle: Leggende e Rito delle Anime Pezzentelle," *3 Pietre: Leggende, Curiosità e Misteri*, March 14, 2019.

Neapolitan practice of adopting and cohabitating with human remains, there is a nexus between the living and the dead, past and present, and dreams and reality in Naples.

Boundaries between History and Myth also blur together in Parthenope,[221] a city we now call Naples (Greek *Νεάπολις* or *Neapolis*; Italian *Napoli*). The origins of the porous city are steeped in mythos. According to Lycophron, the siren Parthenope and her two sisters Leucosia and Ligeia[222] ventured to seduce Ulysses but failed to lure him from his ship.[223] After failing in their endeavor to ensnare the object of their desire, the pulchritudinous trio purportedly threw themselves off a cliff, drowning in the waves below. While popular legend and classical poets concur that the sepulcher of the siren Parthenope is situated in Naples, the exact location of her final resting place remains unresolved. For some, Parthenope's lifeless body washed ashore and metamorphosed into the Islet of Megaride (the present-day peninsula on which Castel dell'Ovo is located). For others, she is entombed in the Church of San Giovanni Maggiore. For others yet,

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221. The first Greek colony on the Italic peninsula was that of Cuma (Latin *Cumae*, Greek *Kyme* or *Κύμη*), established in c. 725 BCE. The Greeks expanded to the south in the early seventh century, founding a trading post on Island of Megaride [Megaris], the modern-day peninsula on which Castel dell'Ovo rests, as well as a hill-top town overlooking the Port of Santa Lucia, Parthenope. After a series of victories against the Etruscans in the early fifth century, the Greeks continued to expand and established a colony on the Bay of Naples. They christened the settlement Neapolis (New Town) and began to refer to their earlier hill-top settlement as Palaeopolis (Old Town). For more on the ancient colonies of Cuma, Parthenope, and Neapolis, see McEvedy, "Cumae" and "Naples" in *Cities of the Classical World*, ed. Douglas Stuart Oles, (New York: Allen Lane, 2011), 128-131 and 222-226.

222. Leucosia, Ligeia (Italian *Ligea*), and Parthenope (Italian *Partenope*) are also known as Agalope (Aglaophonos, Aglaopheme), Pasinoe (Peisinoe), and Thelxiope (Thelxiepeia, Thelxinoe). For more on the etymology surrounding the names of the trio of sirens, see Dario Nicolella, *Partenope: La sirena di Napoli* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1999), 23.

223. See Lycophron, "Alexandra" in *Callimachus and Lycophron*, trans. Alexander William Mair and Gilbert Robinson Mair, (London: Heinemann, 1921), 320-443.

she never drowned.[224] Whether transformed into an islet, laid to rest in the Neapolitan underground, or metamorphosed into a most beautiful city, the body of Parthenope is said to serve as a source of fertility and good fortune for the locals. Despite her transformed or defunct status, Parthenope and her pulchritude are not divorced from the living. Her body, which lies beneath, affects that which lies and unfolds above. Life, death, birth, and rebirth are closely linked in Naples. Just as the mythical founder of the city is purportedly endowed with a generative quality, the bedrock of the city – in which Parthenope's body may or may not be ensconced – is as well. The Neapolitan underground, composed largely of volcanic tuff, has been excavated and put to use in constructing the metropolis. The majority of the cityscape has been built from the bedrock of the city, giving, in the words of Serenella Iovino, "the feeling of a city rising from its own womb."[225] The dark, generative hollows left behind from excavation mirror the womb of their mythical founder: a source of prosperity for the Neapolitan people. The Neapolitan conception of their "città-sirena,"[226] Parthenope, as well as their practice of the Rite of the Souls of Purgatory illustrate the close relationship Neapolitans have with death and their dearly departed. In Naples, neither ontological nor temporal boundaries are unyielding: the ideological dividing line between life and death as well as the one between past and present are faint, dotted lines at most.

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224. According to one legend, Parthenope neither threw herself off a cliff nor perished: "Si racconta che la sirena viveva nelle acque di Baia, e amata da Ercole avesse da lui un figlio di nome Everrète; e ancora, che il centauro Vesuvio, innamorato pazzamente di lei, suscitasse le ire di Zeus che, trasformandolo in un vulcano, lo costrinse per sempre ad ammirare Partenope senza poterla possedere (trasformata a sua volta in una bellissima città), sfogando la sua eterna ira con disastrose eruzioni." ["It is said that Parthenope dwelled in the waters of Baia. She was loved by Hercules and had a son with him named Everett. The siren was also desired by the centaur Vesuvius, who after provoking the wrath of Zeus, was transformed into a volcano. Unable to possess Parthenope (who was metamorphosed, in turn, into a most beautiful city), Vesuvius was left to brood alone and let off steam through calamitous eruptions."] See Nicolella, *Partenope*, 33.

225. Iovino, "Bodies of Naples," 17.

226. Nicolella, *Partenope*, 7.

Past, present, and future are not bound to proceed in a sequential, linear fashion in the porous city. Neapolitan philosophers Giambattista Vico[227] and Lina Mangiacapre postulate theories of time that privilege curves and defy convention. Porous and nonlinear, both Mangiacapre's and Vico's philosophies of time tend toward circularity and cylicity. Although Cartesianism was all the rage in early eighteenth-century Naples, philosopher of history Giambattista Vico went against the grain, elaborating a theory subverting René Descartes's grand narrative of Man forever marching toward a better tomorrow. Like Descartes, Vico does acknowledge Man's capacity to reason. The Neapolitan philosopher, however, does not cast Man as the absolute master of his fate. For Vico, each nation or civilization follows a circular trajectory at its own particular rate. Society passes through an infancy stage, an adolescent stage, adulthood, and then it falls.[228] After the three phases of civilization have come to an end, the society falls and returns to phase one: infancy. Each culture takes a circular, cyclical path that results in rebirth and recurrence rather than development or progress. Following a curved course as opposed to a straight one, Vico's philosophy of history calls into question the prospect of progress as well as the forward-thrusting trajectory of time. Nations experience the same phase at

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227. Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), known for his *Scienza nuova* [*New Science*] (1725) and *Autobiografia* [*Autobiography*] (1728-1729), was an eminent eighteenth-century philosopher of history whose theory went against the grain. Pulling inspiration from Plato, Tacitus, Francis Bacon, and Huigh de Groot (also known as Hugo Grotius) rather than Aristotle or René Descartes like his contemporaries, Vico elaborated a theory that history is cyclical and progress is a fallacy.

228. According to Vico, the phases of a nation's or civilization's history mirror the cycle of human life: beginning with infancy, passing to adolescence, advancing to maturity, and then falling. During the infancy phase, the Age of the Gods, humans feel without truly processing their emotions, communicate using symbols and hieroglyphs, and are governed by a theocracy. During the teenage phase, the Age of Heroes, humans get in touch with their emotions, communicate via poetry, and are governed by an aristocracy. During the mature phase, the Age of Men, humans reason and think with clarity, communicate in an articulate, logical manner, and are governed by a monarchy. Once all three phases have come to an end, there is a fall and the nation's historical trajectory cycles back to the first phase: infancy. Vico's cyclical theory of history suggests that progress in its rigid linearity is a fallacy and that no nation has ever or will ever truly reign supreme. Vico dismantles the hierarchy of nations by affirming that each nation follows the same trajectory at different rates. While a mature nation may claim to be superior, before long the phase will end, and it will fall. Vico is an anti-hierarchical thinker whose philosophy embraces cylicity and curvature over linearity. Like her fellow Neapolitan, Mangiacapre was a radical thinker whose philosophy dismantles hierarchy, privileges curves, and goes against the grain.

multiple points across time, meaning a given phase belongs no more to the past than it does to the present or future. When a nation re-experiences its infancy phase, for example, past and present overlap and intermingle. Much like the skulls of the anime pezzentelle, Vico's completed phases of society are not doomed to gather dust in the realm of the defunct: rather, they are fated to reemerge and commingle with the living once more. Absorbed by and retained in the porous fabric of time for a while, Vico's phases do return, thereby subverting the limits imposed by sequentiality. Vico postulates a philosophy in which temporality hangs in ambiguity. The fabric of time is porous and allows for moments passed to reemerge and break through into the present. Like volcanic tuff, Vico's temporality is permeable: it absorbs, retains, and releases. In accordance with Vico's philosophical framework, neither civilizations nor time proceed in a unidirectional, linear fashion.

Like Vico, Mangiacapre eschews linearity and defies sequentiality in her philosophy of being. For Mangiacapre, the fabric of time is permeable: the remote past is not out of reach, the present is multiple and unfolding, and the future is shifting and unwritten. Mangiacapre's metaphysical philosophy plaits together mythos, creativity, and selfhood, making figures from a faraway past an integral part of the present by means of avant-garde performance. The trajectory of Mangiacapre's metaphysics spirals inwards, deep within the bodies and spirits of the feminist artists who are a part of the nemesian network. Mangiacapre's metaphysical trajectory begins with collective contemplation of Myth and self. Next it proceeds to feminist myth revision, that is, the rewriting of mythological tales in a way that makes room for subversive characters who disrupt dominant ideology. Following the artistic creation of counterhegemonic hyrmythical figures, the feminist artists embody the new figures through avant-garde performance in the

piazza, on stage, or on camera. In doing so, the Nemesiache establish a sense of kinship with the subversive female figures. In artistically embodying and espousing a hyrmythical figure, each Nemesiaca folds together her contemporary identity with a remote (yet revised) mythological one. In other words, by linking her own living, breathing body to the body of another, whose story has been historically erased and mythically reconstituted, each Nemesiaca engenders a sort of sistership of the self, unfettered by the bounds of time or rationality. The hyrmythological identities of the Nemesiache are not assigned at random, but rather, intimately tied to their life stories and sense of being.[229] As such, sistership of the real, contemporary self and imagined, remote one gives rise to nemesis,[230] or, in other words, cosmic harmony: a sense of inner and outer peace that pervades both the metaphysical and physical realms. Mythological figures from a faraway past break through into the present and play an integral role in the nemesian dimension. For Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, the remote past is not out of reach. The dreaming up, performance, and embodiment of hyrmythical figures allows the Nemesiache to

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229. Far from random, the mythical identities of the Nemesiache are entwined with their life stories and sense of being. It was Mangiacapre who established the pairings. After recognizing parallels between the life stories of her fellow feminists and certain mythological (or hyrmythical) tales, Mangiacapre bestowed anonyms upon a number of Nemesiache. While not all Nemesiache received anonyms, for those who did, their mythical identities were by no means an imposition. According to Silvana Campese/Medea, Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa, Bruna Felletti/Karma, et al., their mythical selves dwelled within them even before they were revealed to them. As their nemesian identities were already a part of them, laying dormant, when the Nemesiache embrace and embody their mythical selves, in an act of sistership, they unite the known and unknown, in other words, the familiar and the fantastic parts of themselves. For more on the mythical anonyms of the Nemesiache, see chapter 1.

230. Mangiacapre and her fellow feminists conceive of *nemesis* as a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world. Reaching and living in this harmonious metaphysical dimension involves the contemplation, creative revision, and embodiment of a mythical figure. The trajectory of nemesian metaphysics begins with the consideration of a mythical female figure as characterized by the canon. Rather than accept the orthodox representation of this female figure, the character is reimagined and recast as one that challenges rather than upholds dominant ideology. In meditating on a canonical Myth and then bringing a feminist revisionist myth into existence, the nemesian feminist artist comes to reconsider her own story and the potential revision of her own reality. Journeying inward, to the metaphysical core of her being, the feminist artist comes to recognize resonances between her life and that of the mythical female figure of her own creation. Through contemplation, and in many cases artistic creation, she fathoms that this mythical figure is and always has been a part of her and she begins to live her life with a newfound sense of harmony. Embracing and embodying the mythical within, the feminist artist achieves a new consciousness of self and profound sense of equilibrium. In other words, she accomplishes nemesis, entering into the nemesian metaphysical dimension, a reality steeped in harmony, art, and feminism.

establish a genealogy of counterhegemonic female figures who were never recorded in the official canons of History or Mythology. By engaging with the past creatively, the Nemesiache fictively recover a long-forgotten lineage of subversive female figures linked by ideology rather than bloodline. Foregrounding neither procreative nor blood relations, the nemesian genealogy, gossamer, or network of feminist artists and hyrmythical figures are related to one another through a shared ideological agenda: the pursuit of cosmic harmony.[231] By planting marvelous metaphysical roots and elaborating a fantastical family tree, the Nemesiache establish a sort of metaphysical anchorage that cuts across time and provides a sense of community and connectedness for the network of artists. The only way to dispel the feeling of historical disconnectedness endured by peoples whose stories have been eradicated from the annals of History is through imagination. In other words, unrecorded, counterhegemonic, remote histories can only be imagined and creatively written into being as they were never made historical record of in the first place. It is through creative composition and avant-garde performance that Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache access the unrecorded, remote past, a past which comes bursting into the present as Anna seeks her sister in *Didone non è morta*.

After earning the favor of the Sibyl, wandering across the otherworldly Solfatara Crater, climbing the craggy slope, and happening upon an archway of volcanic tuff, Anna takes the thoroughfare. Rather than a threshold or dividing line, the natural archway through which Anna passes serves as a linkage, a portal connecting one temporality to the next, allowing for a dynamic ebb and flow of time. The present recedes, like the tide, into the background and the

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231. As elaborated by Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, the concept of *cosmic harmony* refers to individual and collective harmony, or, in other words, balance and wellbeing for women and for all. What begins as a fresh, harmonious sense of self has ramifications beyond the individual's inner world. As thought turns to action and action to reaction, inner peace becomes outer peace and the sense of harmony achieved within spreads to the outer world of animate and inanimate objects.

diegesis shifts to a mythical time and space apart. Shortly after Anna passes through the archway and into the mythical space, she comes across her sister, Dido, whose motionless, statuesque body lays tucked away on a craggy shelf of volcanic tuff. Painted with laurel green mud from head to toe, Dido's immobile, beautiful, naked body blends in with the surrounding landscape as if she and the stunning rock formation were cut from the same cloth. While the mud coating Dido's naked body may recall the mire enveloping the wrathful and sullen in the fifth circle of Dante's *Inferno*, Dante the Poet places the Queen of Carthage in the second circle among the sinners of the flesh: "L'altra è colei che s'ancise amorosa, / e ruppe fede al cener di Sicheo;"[232] (Canto V, vv. 61-62) ["Here is she who broke faith with the ashes of Sichaeus and slew herself for love."] Dante the Poet follows Virgil the Poet's lead in his treatment of the figure of Dido. Just as Virgil portrays Dido as a lusty, unfaithful widow in his *Aeneid*, so does Dante in his *Inferno*. Mangiacapre breaks from Virgil and Dante in her representation of the Queen of Carthage as a savvy, compassionate leader who never died. Mangiacapre's Dido lies dormant, like the awe-inspiring volcanic landscape on which she rests, laying in wait of her reawakening. Anna sees her sister from afar and approaches. Kneeling before Dido briefly, Anna assesses the situation and signals for help. Three women come to her aid and together they lift Dido's body off the tuff shelf. They carry her with great care, not without effort, over uneven terrain and lay her down in her nearby nursemaid's lap. As Barce holds a motionless Dido in her arms and strokes the statuesque naked beauty's eyelids, Dido comes to. Though her body remains still, her eyes open in response to her caretaker's tender touch. Dido opens her eyes and gazes into Barce's eyes, with a look of wonder. After returning the gaze of her mother figure with intensity, Barce

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232. Alighieri, *Inferno*, 94-95.

positions dear Dido's head on her shoulder with as much as care as one would handle a newborn babe. A sequence full of tenderness, Dido's reawakening begins with her motionless body laying in her mother's arms. A sort of feminist pietà in which the body of the beloved child has not perished, Dido's reawakening presents a powerful revision on the Catholic icon which connotes sorrow and loss. Mangiacapre's pietà is full of life and care and demonstrates that a mother's loving arms are meant for more than mourning. Furthermore, it showcases that the love of a mother need not be reserved for children whom she herself has birthed. By featuring a daughter figure and her caretaker in her pietà, Mangiacapre paints a picture of familial relations unfettered by sanguinity or heteropatriarchy. Barce's tender touch helps the motionless Dido reawaken. While the father, son, and holy spirit of the Catholic tradition allow for Christ to rise again, it is the bond of love among women that wakes Dido. Neither resurrected by a male divinity nor awakened by an errant prince charming, Mangiacapre's female protagonist is brought to consciousness by women: sought by her sister, carried by her feminist companions, held lovingly by her female caretaker, and awoken by sororal tenderness.

4. Practicing a Politics of Counterhegemony and Care

In the Hollow of the Sibyl, with the helping hands of two women, our newly conscious protagonist is derobed and subsequently dressed in royal attire: a pink tunic, a golden kufi crown and mesh headdress, a golden gorget, a golden belt, a red feather armor apron, and chunky, golden, geometric earrings. Handing her sister a golden scepter, Anna announces: "Non più Elissa ma Didone, regina di Cartagine."[233] ["No longer Elissa but Dido, queen of Carthage."]

233. *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

Dido accepts the scepter from her sister and becomes queen. A full shot of a near-naked Elissa is followed by two medium closeups: the first of a bare-chested Elissa, the second of Dido decked out in pink and gold. Mangiacapre uses a defocusing transition between the medium closeups, evoking the idea of continuity. Rather than a straight cut, which calls to mind separation or division, Mangiacapre uses a transition that emphasizes continuity and points of contact between one image and the next. Although the protagonist is stylized in two distinct fashions before and after the defocusing, the transition points to a potential commingling of Elissa and Dido. As signaled by the cinematography, Dido does not divorce herself from Elissa. Despite her new regal attire, the protagonist does not leave all vestiges of her former self behind. She accepts a new title and adopts a new role, yet her former identity and strong stance against tyranny live on and resurface from time to time.

Elissa/Dido practices a politics of counterhegemony and care. Her political agenda privileges liberty, peace, and partnership and promotes multiculturalism and inclusion. By denouncing her brother's tyrannical reign, fleeing across the Mediterranean with a diverse cohort of women, and bargaining for a tract of land on which to build a society in which women are free to engage sexually as they see fit, Mangiacapre's "dux femmina"[234] takes a strong stance against heteropatriarchal violence and champions a politics of peace. Mangiacapre's Elissa becomes a fierce opponent of tyranny when her brother informs her that he has assassinated her husband. Elissa resolves to leave her native Tyre in search of a new space, a new place in which to build a peaceful, anti-tyrannical society. Elissa hatches a plan to flee across the Mediterranean and, in pursuit of peace and liberty, organizes her voyage in collaboration with Barce and Anna.

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234. Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, 12.

As princess of Tyre, Elissa arranges a fugitive voyage and offers to lead fellow Phoenicians to a new land where they would no longer be subjected to Pygmalion's tyrannical rule. As queen of Carthage, Dido continues her promotion of personal and political autonomy. Queen Dido's radical program of peace provides care and asylum for exiled peoples hailing from nations and cultures differing from her own. It also privileges partnership and shared governance and promotes liberty for all – including those who do not conform to societal norms. A society that promotes liberty for deviant women is a radical one indeed. Women deemed sexually or socially deviant have faced harsh punishment for centuries across Italy and Europe. From Medieval to Early Modern times, women who did not conform to the role of wife and mother were labeled witches or whores and hunted down, tortured, "muzzled like dogs and paraded in the streets [. . .] whipped, or caged and subjected to fake drownings,"[235] lynched, or burnt at the stake. As noted by Silvia Federici, it is estimated that approximately 200,000 women were accused of witchcraft in Europe and at least half of them were executed. Many of these women had born no children. As the witch-hunts subsided in the seventeenth century, the terrorization of women exhibiting non-natalist or non-heteronormative behavior took on new forms, including institutionalization. While women have been targeted, labeled, and sifted out of society for a failure to conform to heteropatriarchal norms for centuries, Mangiacapre envisions a new sort of society: a society in which women may practice non-procreative sex as they please without being punished. In *Didone non è morta*, Queen Dido brings such a feminist society to fruition.

Before setting eyes on the shores of Qart Ḥadasht, purchasing a tract of land on which to build a new society, and becoming Dido, Mangiacapre's royal refugee had already began

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235. For more on the persecution of deviant women who practiced early forms of birth control and resisted the social and sexual roles prescribed by patriarchy, see Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2004), 101.

practicing a politics of counterhegemony and care. While sailing across the Mediterranean toward freedom, Elissa and Anna stop over in Cyprus. In Cyprus, the Phoenician refugees encounter three Cypriot women dressed for the rite of sacred prostitution. In some parts of Cyprus, women were required by law to practice sacred prostitution at least once in the course of their lives. Indigent and affluent, young and old, all women were mandated to make their way to the temple to fulfill their duty to Aphrodite.[236] Each woman was compelled to stay in the temple until a strange man selected her by throwing "a silver coin into her lap."[237] As noted by Herodotus, "The woman has no privilege of choice - she must go with the first man who throws her the money."[238] Only after having sex with the stranger who desired her was she allowed to go home. Herodotus concludes his remarks on sacred prostitution throwing the length of time women could be legally detained in the temple into relief: "Tall, handsome women soon manage to get home again, but the ugly ones stay a long time before they can fulfil[l] the condition which the law demands, some of them, indeed, as much as three or four years."[239] Had Princess Elissa not crossed paths with the three Cypriot women, they likely would have made their way to the temple and waited for state-sanctioned violence to be enacted upon them. As Elissa intercepts the priestesses before they reach their final destination, she is able to offer them an alternative to each of the three women. The use of medium closeups and montage showcases the individuality of each Cypriot woman, thereby emphasizing the cruelty of the rite, which strips women of their

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236. As outlined by Hesiod in "Theogony," Aphrodite (Latin *Venus*) is a motherless goddess who formed in the foam of the sea. After Kronos cut off his father's genitals and threw them into the sea, Ouranos (Latin *Caelus*)'s severed member transformed into the "modest and beautiful goddess." See Hesiod, "Theogony," 12-13.

237. Herodotus, *The Histories*, ed. John Marincola, trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 79.

238. Herodotus, *The Histories*, 79.

239. Ibid., 79.

personhood and treats them as erotic objects. The sacred prostitution sequence in Mangiacapre's film begins with a very long shot of Elissa and Anna walking with purpose, haste, and spunk across a crater, the former in a pink costume, her left breast bared, the latter in a lavender tunic. While Elissa and Anna sport different colors and styles of dress, the Cypriot women don identical long white dresses and pearl-embroidered veils. The montage shifts from the shot of Elissa and her sister to three medium closeups of the priestesses standing in place on the craggy slope of the crater. Not only are the women dressed alike but they also hold identical bouquets of bay leaves in their hands. Although displaying one uniform costume, the medium closeup shots showcase the personality and individuality of the three women in white. The first priestess, played by Claudia Aglione/Helena, has long, frizzy, wild, auburn hair. She stares at the camera, perplexed, with a hint of a smile, adjusting her veil. The next, played by Silvana Campese/ Medea, has long, black, wavy hair. She gazes off into the distance with a look of foreboding. The last, played by Anna Grieco/Dafne, has long, dark brown, curly hair. She looks down at her bouquet, strokes it, and looks off into the distance. Three distinct women clothed in a uniform determined by heteropatriarchy are put on view. The singular white habit that the three women don in addition to the succession of images calls attention to the differences in the faces and bodies of the women. Although the habit is meant to erase the personhood of the wearer and mark her as a nondescript target for state-sanctioned heteropatriarchal violence, the costume does not succeed in erasing what Hannah Arendt refers to as the *whoness*[240] of each of these women,

240. As defined by Hannah Arendt, *who* someone is equates to the "living essence of the person as it shows itself in the flux of action and speech," while *what* someone is is the equivalent of a list of qualities that the individual shares with others like him or her. While the *whatness* of an individual is essentially a list of attributes describing a mold or character (e.g., white, middle-class, straight, cis, woman), the *whoness* of a person encompasses the uniqueness of vocal, facial, and bodily expressions, which is not something that can be captured or communicated in words. See Hannah Arendt, *The human condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 181.

that is, the unique facial expressions, gestures, bodily movements, voices, and other ineffable qualities that make them them. Dressed alike and yet still utterly unique, the three women begin to descend the craggy slope, slowly. A long shot shows the three carefully making their way down the slope, barefoot, two of them holding hands to make sure they not lose their balance and take a tumble. A champion of personal and political autonomy, Elissa approaches the three women and, with enthusiasm and assurance in her voice, propositions them: "Venite con noi attraverso il mare. Fonderemo la città nuova dove la prostituzione sacra non esisterà più."[241] ["Come journey with us across the sea. We are founding a new city where sacred prostitution will no longer exist."] Elissa offers the Cypriot women a place among her people and invites them to take part in the creation of a society in which women are no longer treated as erotic objects. The three women accept, embracing the alternate, more harmonious way-of-being proposed by the princess. Elissa takes the first priestess by hand and the women all walk off together with purpose, heading toward the ship and the promise of a better tomorrow, a tomorrow that will not force them to perform acts that violate their personal or political autonomy. Princess Elissa, soon to be Queen Dido, offers the Cypriots asylum and partnership: freedom from the threat of state-sanctioned violence and a part in building a new anti-tyrannical, anti-heteropatriarchal, counterhegemonic society.

Elissa and her fellow asylum-seekers journey across the Mediterranean. When they arrive, Princess Elissa disembarks and seeks the local sovereign. After tracking down King Hiarbas, she explains her plight and makes a plea:

> Io sono Elissa, moglie di Sicheo, profugo di mio fratello Pigmalione che mi ha rubato l'amore e il potere. Ti prego, difendimi da quest'oltraggio. Non

241. *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

> abbandonarmi. Non mi lasciare per l'alto mare e io ti giuro per tuo padre il dio Ammone e per tua madre la ninfa Garamantide che il tuo nome e il tuo onore saranno eterni, la tua fama risplenderà nei secoli.[242]
>
> [I am Elissa, wife of Acherbas. I come to you as a refugee, forced to take flight by my brother Pygmalion, a man who stripped me of both love and power. Please, I beg of you, help me in this my hour of need. Don't abandon me to the high seas. Don't leave me to face this atrocity alone. Grant me asylum. Help me and I swear – on your divine father Hammon and your nymph mother Garamantis – that your name, honor, and fame will ring out for all of eternity.]

After hearing of Pygmalion's atrocities and Elissa's dilemma, Hiarbas neither expels her from his lands nor grants her asylum. Because he holds "la vita, la libertà, la bellezza"[243] ["life, liberty, and beauty"] in high regard, he permits the fugitive princess and her fellow asylum-seekers to build on a small parcel of land. A later scene reveals that before coming to this accord, Hiarbas offered to take Elissa's hand in marriage. Elissa declined the proposal as she did not wish not to forego personal and political autonomy, submit to the will of another, or join a pre-established potentially patriarchal society. Elissa's interest in voyaging across the Mediterranean and seeking out Hiarbas is to establish a new, antirannical, antihierarchical society. After fleeing the tyranny of Pygmalion and declining to live under the sovereignty of Hiarbas, Elissa adroitly negotiates an alternate solution: in exchange for land on which to build a new city, Qart Ḥadasht, Hiarbas will receive riches belonging to her late husband. When not offered sanctuary by Hiarbas, Elissa artfully pivots and arranges to buy her freedom, freedom for her people, and a tract of land on which to establish a free, feminist, antihierarchical society.

Although not granted asylum upon her arrival, Queen Dido embraces and practices a politics of peace and inclusion. When refugees wash upon the shores of her new city, Qart

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242. Ibid.

243. Ibid.

Ḥadasht, she offers them empathy, asylum, sustenance, and shared governance. Dido, draped in her pink and gold regal attire, first hears of the arrival of asylum-seekers from a companion who seeks her out in the Hollow of the Sibyl. Sofonisba enters the Hollow and addresses her queen with a sense of urgency: "Didone, Didone! Nel nostro parto sono sbarcate navi straniere."[244] ["Dido, Dido! Foreign ships have landed on our shores!"] Dido asks Sofonisba to bring the new arrivals to her and reminds her that foreigners are to be looked after and treated hospitably: "Gli stranieri vanno sorvegliati."[245] ["Foreigners are to be looked after."] Dido receives the Trojan refugees and offers empathy, asylum, shared governance, and care. Though she herself had no choice but to barter for a parcel of land and the freedom of her people, she asks the Trojans for nothing in return: not to barter for land, pay for their freedom, work for their keep, swear allegiance to Carthage, assimilate, erase their traditions, or forget their roots. Rather than casting the Trojan refugees as inferior and assigning them a lower rank in Carthaginian society, Dido offers them a place at the table, a hand in building and shaping the culture of Carthage. Former refugee of Tyre now queen of Carthage offers Prince Aeneas passion, compassion, and political partnership.

By casting Dido as a savvy, compassionate leader as well as a desiring subject, Mangiacapre represents the queen of Carthage in a way that transcends the stereotypical dichotomy of the Didos. Mangiacapre's Dido is neither a sinner nor a saint: neither the lusty, emotional, unstable, out-of-her-depths sovereign who kills herself out of desperation, nor the chaste, cool, calm, collected, logical one who sacrifices herself for the good of the state.

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244. Ibid.

245. Ibid.

Mangiacapre's "dux femmina"[246] rules with logic and compassion, is powerful and vulnerable, suffers yet endures. In the face of pain, she does not forfeit her life or political agenda. When forsaken by her beloved, she and her politics of peace persist. While Mangiacapre's protagonist is a desiring subject who – not unlike the Dido of Virgil, Dante, and Marlowe – consummates her passion for Aeneas, she is neither predominated nor undone by sexual impulse like Dido the sinner. Mangiacapre's Dido is extremely taken by Aeneas. Shortly after the scene in which Dido is dressed by her companions in regal garb in the Hollow of the Sibyl, Sophonisba fetches the fugitive prince and introduces him. When Dido first sets eyes on Aeneas, she is noticeably discountenanced. In the medium closeup shot, Dido's facial expression reveals that she is deeply moved. After introductions, Dido leads Aeneas to the Temple of Tanit, a sacred space with walls covered in murals depicting the fall of Troy. Before long, Aeneas too reveals that he too is moved by Dido. After recounting the sack of his city and massacre of its people and a brief apparition of the spirit of his deceased wife Creusa, Aeneas loses consciousness and collapses onto an animal hyde on the temple floor. When he comes to, Dido is at his side, stroking his hand. He gazes at her with intensity and his breathing quickens. While gazing at one another, Dido offers him words of empathy, sharing that she too has suffered exile and a long journey across the sea: "Una identica sorte vuole che anch'io scagliata dalle onde giungessi a questa cara terra"[247] ["Our fate is one and the same. I too was swept by the sea all the way to this dear land."] As Dido comforts Aeneas, describing their fates as one and the same, Aeneas's ardor for Dido becomes clear. Neither Dido nor Aeneas shy away from the attraction that they feel for one another. They lean in: Dido bends over, drawing closer to Aeneas, and Aeneas puts his hand around her shoulder,

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246. Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, 12.

247. *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

pulling her closer to his prostrate body. In a later scene, Dido and Aeneas take refuge in a secluded hollow. After a bit of rough-and-tumble play and a few prolonged amatory embraces, Aeneas tells Dido that he loves her and calls her his "amante e sposa" [248] ["lover and consort"]. Later yet, in a grove, Barce performs a ceremony uniting the two lovers by tying a string around their thumbs. Mangiacapre's Dido and Aeneas are bound to one another by custom and word, and yet Dido's consort ultimately abandons her. On his way to relay his decision to Dido, Aeneas stops in his tracks, torn. As evidenced by Aeneas's arduous glances, amorous embraces, participation in the nuptials, declaration of love for Dido, and proclamation that he considered Dido as his wife, the bond between the two was more than mere infatuation. Aeneas changes his mind and decides to stay in Carthage. Then he wavers once more and ultimately resolves to follow Mercury's instruction, sail to Italy, and found a new nation. After hearing from Barce that, despite their union, Aeneas was on the verge of abandoning her, Dido seeks Aeneas. In a heated exchange, Aeneas claims to never have entertained the thought of marrying Dido. After hurling the insults "perfido"[249] ["traitor"] and "malvagio"[250] ["contemptible"] Aeneas's way, Dido wonders aloud why she ever granted the treacherous Trojans asylum in the first place. Vulnerable in the face of treachery, Dido tells Aeneas that she envisioned having children with him and that she fears her enemies will descend upon Carthage if he departs. Dido's passionate pleas fall on deaf ears. Aeneas rejects Dido's offer of peace, love, and partnership and declares that her Phoenicians shall never integrate or unite with his Trojans. Dido curses Aeneas and his shipmates, briefly blames her own sister for her heartbreak, and prays that Aeneas and his

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248. Ibid.

249. Ibid.

250. Ibid.

progeny be haunted by sword and flame evermore. Devastated by both the gaslighting and loss of the man she pledged her life to, Dido lashes out. Although in agony, Mangiacapre's Dido does not decide to off herself nor does she hold a grudge against Aeneas for all of eternity. In the end, despite the uncertainty surrounding the future of Carthage, Dido holds true to her convictions and continues her pursuit of a peace-driven, counterhegemonic, multicultural, cooperative society. In the wake of desertion, under threat of attack, Mangiacapre's Dido lives on: her politics of peace and she persist.

While the majority of the *Didone non è morta* takes place in one of two pasts, the present comes back in – as the tide inevitably does – as Mangiacapre's film comes to a close. The film finishes with three consecutive endings: one ending in the past followed by two alternate endings in the present. While the first and second endings depict a desperate Dido, in the throes of heartache, bent on revenge, offing herself with a blade, the third and final ending portrays a cool, calm, collected modern-day Dido standing tall, no dagger in sight. The alternate present ending begins with a shot of an unkempt, disoriented modern-day Aeneas donning an American military uniform at a Neapolitan subway station. A provocative costume choice by Mangiacapre, the uniform links state-sanctioned violence enacted by global hegemons across time and space, thereby underlining the ongoing nature of the threat posed by hierarchical regimes.[251] Mangiacapre laments the continuing violence of hegemonic regimes bent on division, stratification, subordination, and exclusion. Following in the pacifist footsteps of Simone Weil, Mangiacapre denounces the use of force in the name of justice. For Weil, "Where force is

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251. By dressing the prince of Troy and king of Latium in an American military uniform, Mangiacapre accentuates the chronic wars and mass murders carried out by hegemonic regimes. As Aeneas's legacy is tied to that of Rome, Mangiacapre's costume choice links Trojan, Roman, and American military aggression. For another artistic linkage between violence committed by Romans and Americans, see Mangiacapre's free-verse poem, "Cartago delenda est" in *Amazzoni e minotauri* (Rimini: Raffaelli Editore, 2008), 85.

absolutely sovereign, justice is absolutely unreal."[252] Mangiacapre agrees with Weil on this point and affirms that the infliction of state-sanctioned violence is neither a path to peace nor just reward. In *Didone non è morta*, rather than hunting Aeneas down and bringing down the full force of her state upon him, Dido ultimately chooses peace. Instead of pursuing a policy of elimination or exclusion, she champions a politics of compassion, inclusivity, and multiculturalism. Although global hegemons continue to enact violence, for Mangiacapre, the impulse for peace also persists. Those who resist hierarchy, like Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist network, for example, continue to work toward a more peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world. As reflected in the third and final ending, Dido and her radical politics do not perish. Dido and her politics of peace live on. Before the appearance of modern-day Dido in the third and final ending, modern-day Aeneas steps apprehensively toward the tracks. A train approaches the platform carrying a lone passenger: Anchises. After Aeneas exchanges a few words with his father, the train car pulls away, leaving him on his own, staring longingly down the tracks. When Aeneas turns to face the platform across the way, he spies modern-day Dido standing tall, donning black sunglasses, black pumps, black pants, a shiny leather trench, a large golden pendant, an oversized ring, and pink lip gloss. Another provocative costume choice by Mangiacapre, modern-day Dido is dressed in her own likeness. Dido's accessories and black garb mirror the director's own signature look: sunglasses, black pants, and a black leather jacket. Dido, like Mangiacapre, demonstrates an understanding that suffering inflicted cannot be uninflicted, pain done cannot be undone. Revenge is not a possible path to peace. Dressed as

252. Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots*, trans. Arthur Wills (New York: Routledge, 2002), 240.

Neapolitan Nemesis,[253] the protagonist fulfills the role of porter of peace (not punishment). Rather than curse Aeneas for rejecting her offer of partnership or attempt to seek revenge, in the end, modern-day Dido pursues cosmic harmony,[254] or, in other words, a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world, in the Neapolitan underground.

When Aeneas spies his former lover and calls out her name, Dido takes note. She removes her sunglasses and meets his gaze, this time, unlike the very first time she laid eyes on him, unperturbed by his presence. Dido exudes confidence, facing her former lover head on, her body square to the camera, not hiding or cowering. With a hint of a smile, Dido listens to Aeneas reason with himself that his absence must have caused her such agony that she did herself in, that she couldn't possibly have gone on without him. As she listens to the solipsistic monologue, Dido bears a look of indifference, bordering on exasperation. As the next train pulls into the station, intermittently obscuring our view of the platform across the way, Dido turns her gaze upward, as if rolling her eyes, looks up the staircase, and marches off toward the rest of her life. In the end, Dido leaves Aeneas along with the pain he caused behind. She kills neither Elissa (the joyous, affectionate, passionate, fiery part of herself) nor Dido (the determined, strategic, counterhegemonic, benevolent leader) in the process. Modern-day Dido opts for life, sistership of the self, and peace despite the pain. *Didone non è morta* is the story of Dido and try as he might, Aeneas may not narrate her life or death. Although Dido meets Aeneas's gaze when he hails her, she does not recognize his authority or allow him to define or contain her. When Aeneas attempts to cast Dido as a mere shade whose life and death revolve around his desires,

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253. For the Nemesiache, the concept of nemesis is not divorced from the flesh but rather embodied knowledge, situated in the body of Lina Mangiacapre. For this reason, *nemesis* refers to a particular idea (nemesis = a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world), a hyrmythical figure (Nemesis = the restorer of cosmic harmony), and a flesh and blood individual: Lina Mangiacapre. For more on Neapolitan Nemesis, see chapter 1.

254. See note 225.

words, and actions, he quickly finds himself alone in the subway station, calling out in vain. Dido departs, leaving the military man with no audience, no one left to interpellate, no one for him to attempt to exert his authority over. Despite Aeneas's attempt to suture false meaning to Dido, the protagonist refuses to be subjected by an administrator of state-sanctioned violence. Instead of a mutual recognition of subjects, in an Althusserian sense,[255] there is a misrecognition on the part of Aeneas and a nonrecognition on the part of Dido. In the end, modern-day Dido leaves behind her former lover, the pain he caused, and his attempt to subject her. The fate of Mangiacapre's Dido is not decided by Aeneas and his desires but by Dido and hers. Mangiacapre places her protagonist's future in her own hands: she may choose to kill herself, as comes to pass in the second ending, or to leave her ex-lover behind and march toward a brighter tomorrow, as comes to pass in the third ending. Her future is not decided, fixed, determined, or finite. It is equivocal, open, and unwritten. As the future is shifting and multiple for Mangiacapre, she leaves modern-day Dido's fate in her own hands and ends her film with a new beginning.

While concluding a film with three conflicting, consecutive endings leaves room for interpretation, Mangiacapre's title along with her penchant for nonlinearity invite a reading of the final final sequence as Dido's new beginning. Mangiacapre privileges curves, the circular, and

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255. In Louis Althusser's essay on ideology and the state, he delineates how certain realities which present themselves as institutions (churches, schools, et al.) interpellate concrete individuals as subjects in order to function and perpetuate themselves. Althusser argues that ideology hails the individual like a police officer who shouts " 'Hey, you there!' " The Althusserian subject recognizes that he is the individual being addressed by the officer and that he is subjected to the authority of the police. When Aeneas, a military man – not unlike Althusser's armed agent of the state, attempts to hail Dido, however, he fails. Dido hears him call out to her and opts to meet his gaze but ultimately does not recognize him as a figure of authority and shrugs off his orders to stay put and not abandon him. Mangiacapre's protagonist subscribes to a very particular brand of feminism that privileges peace and shared governance. For Dido and those who endorse Mangiacapran feminism, those who excel at performing state-sanctioned violence are not to be revered or obeyed. In the end, the ideological framework of Mangiacapre's film does not grant Aeneas authority (narrative or otherwise) and allows Dido, the protagonist, to follow her own ideological agenda. For more on ideology and the interpellation of the subject, see Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 127-186, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 174.

the cyclical in her philosophical and artistic works.[256] For example, as a painter, Mangiacapre tended toward tondi, canvases with lines recalling the curves of the breast or waist of the female form rather than straight lines of the aroused male sex. In eschewing the linear in her storytelling and painting, Mangiacapre vindicates a shape that has been stripped of all meaning across time and civilization. After all, the first signifiers in the Arabic, Greek, and Roman numeral schemes that signify *something* are straight lines, not curved. In these phallocentric number systems, the circle, the shape inextricably linked to the female body and female sex, is made to signify lack. In other words, while 1 or I signifies the beginning of something, 0 signifies nothing. Mangiacapre affirms that despite the zero having been "ridotto al nulla"[257] [reduced to nothingness] it truly "è tutto"[258] [is everything] for shapes that are curved approach perfect symmetry and are therefore harmonious. Circularity and harmony are key concepts for Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache and feature prominently in Mangiacapran theory and praxis. In creating paintings on circular canvases and films in which narration is nonlinear, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache create avant-garde art that serves as an homage to curves and the female form. As Mangiacapre does not tell stories in a linear fashion with a beginning, middle, and end, neither the final sequence of *Didone non è morta* (1987) nor that of *Faust/Fausta* (1991) conveys a sense of finality. After the three endings unfold in *Didone non è morta* and Dido is displayed disappearing up the stairs to get on with her life, a shot of Aeneas in desperation is briefly shown, followed by a close-up of steam rising from the fumaroles, which continues on through the credits. The film comes full circle, beginning and ending with landscape shots in the Campi

256. For more on the nemesian feminist privileging of circularity and the circle, which evoke the female body, over linearity and straight lines, which recall the male body, see note 296.

257. Lina Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta* (Florence: L'Autore Libri, 1990), 115.

258. Ibid.

Flegrei. If the last frame at the end of the 35 mm film strip were to be cemented to the beginning of the first reel, the credits would lead quite seamlessly back to the beginning. After the final frame of the steam rising, a sunrise would be displayed, then more steam rising from the same fumaroles. Next, would come Anna's avant-garde art exhibition at which she informs Hannibal that he is mistaken and that Dido never died. Having just seen the alternate present ending, Anna's words would ring true to spectators, reinforcing the idea that Dido lives on. Furthermore, Aeneas's mistake would be made clear.[259] As Hannibal was mistaken, so too was Aeneas. Dido never died. She and her politics of peace and care live on.

The last sequence of Mangiacapre's film takes place in the underground, specifically in a subway station. Although associated with the death and the afterlife in Virgil's *Aeneid*, the Neapolitan underground is linked to sistership and persistence in Mangiacapre's film. Mangiacapre's subversive feminist underground is far from Virgil's epic one. In the *Aeneid*, after Aeneas abandons Dido, a frenzied, desperate queen of Carthage overwhelmed by lust for Aeneas and vendetta kills herself with the aim of enacting revenge upon Aeneas. The dynastic hero encounters his ex-lover's shade in the Underworld:

> talibus Aeneas ardentem et torva tuentem
> lenibat dictis animum lacrimasque ciebat.
> illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat
> nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur
> quam si dura silex aut stet Marpesia cautes.

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259. Dido's persistence is not the only situation Aeneas misjudges in *Didone non è morta*. In the first scene in which Aeneas appears, he casts his eyes upon Sofonisba and calls out "Pentesilea, è il tuo fantasma che mi chiama" ["Penthesilea, it's you. It's your ghost calling from beyond the grave."] Although Aeneas believes that he is gazing at a shade, he has actually cast his eyes upon a mortal. Like Aeneas's first words, his utterances in the underground are of misunderstanding and misrecognition: "Didone, Didone! Mia infelice Didone. Dunque è vero che sei morta e io, io sono stato la causa della tua morte. Non avrei mai creduto di darti un simile dolore." ["Dido! Dido! My unhappy dearest Dido. So it's true that you took your own life. I could have never imagined you would do such a thing on account of losing me."] Twice over, Aeneas misreads life as death. Despite the fugitive prince's attempt to suture false meaning onto the two female figures, saying the words do not make it so. Both Sophonisba and Dido live on.

> tandem corripuit sese atque inimica refugit
> in nemus umbriferum, coniunx ubi pristinus illi
> respondet curis aequatque Sychaeus amorem[260] (Book 6, vv. 467-474)

> In vain he thus attempts her Mind to move,
> With Tears, and Pray'rs, and late repenting Love.
> Disdainfully she look'd; then turning round,
> But fix'd her Eyes unmov'd upon the Ground:
> And, what he says, and swears, regards no more
> Than the deaf Rocks, when the loud Billows roar:
> But whirl'd away, to shun his hateful sight,
> Hid in the Forest, and the Shades of Night:
> Then sought *Sicheus*, thro' the shady Grove,
> Who answer'd all her Cares, and equal'd all her Love.[261] (Book 6, vv. 631-640)

In the *Aeneid*, despite her former lover's attempts at reconciliation, Dido's shade declines to meet his gaze. She looks away and retreats into the forest, seeking the shade another man: her consort. In Virgil's epic underground, Dido holds fast to her disdain for Aeneas, the man that denied her a heterosexual union, and seeks comfort in Acherbas (Latin *Sychaeus*),[262] the man who provided her with one. Heterosexuality is of critical importance in Virgil's epic world and is presented as the *sine qua non* of Dido's life and afterlife. Indeed, the epic underground, in which Aeneas is paraded past his glorious forbearers and future progeny, is a space in which heterosexuality, procreative sex, and ancestry by blood are paramount. Mangiacapre's subversive, feminist underground, on the other hand, is an altogether different space in which relations and relationships are not bound by heteronormativity. In Mangiacapre's feminist revision, Dido, the protagonist, finds herself standing tall in a subversive underground space in which

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260. Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 139.

261. Virgil, "The Sixth Book of the Aeneis" in *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Alan Roper, 526-568, Vol. 5, ed. William Frost, trans. John Dryden (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 549-550.

262. Elissa's husband was known as Acherbas (Latin *Sychaeus*, Phoenician *Sicharbas*, *Sicherbas*, or *Zakarbaal*). See Haegemans, "Elissa, the First Queen of Carthage," 277-291.

heterosexuality and bloodline are not the keys to making kin. In the same vein as Donna Haraway, who later calls for the unraveling of ties that bind "genealogy and kin, and kin and species,"[263] Lina Mangiacapre advocates for bonds of kinship that transcend conventional ancestry-based family units. For Haraway and Mangiacapre, one need not make babies to make kin. As such, Mangiacapre's feminist underground is not a space that shackles kinship to heterosexuality or procreation. It is rather a space in which non-natal bonds of kinship and sistership may be forged. Since kinship is not dictated by biology, Mangiacapre's Dido need not lament her childless state, for the lack of a child does not condemn her to walk through life alone. She does not dwell on her prior desire to bear a child, because making babies is not a requisite for making kin. Mangiacapre's Dido is renewed and sustained by her network of kinship, creativity, and care. With the knowledge that her sister Anna and feminist kin await her aboveground, modern-day Dido carries on. Owing to bonds among women and a metaphysically fertile, subversive space, Mangiacapre's Elissa/Didone finds her way back to herself and then forward.

The Neapolitan underground from which Dido emerges is largely composed of volcanic tuff, a great deal of which has been excavated and used to construct the city of Naples. Just as the dark, generative hollows left behind after excavation are a site of prosperity, the body of the mythical founder of Naples, Parthenope, is believed to serve as a source of fertility and good fortune for the locals. Some claim the stunning siren Parthenope failed to seduce Ulysses, threw herself off a cliff, washed ashore, and metamorphosed into the Islet of Megaride. Others say that while being pursued by the centaur Vesuvius, she transformed into a most beautiful city. Others

263. Donna Haraway calls for the forging of bonds among and across species and elaborates the conception of non-natal "oddkin." For more, see Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 102.

yet, including Matilde Serao, claim that "Parthenope non è morta. Ella vive, splendida, giovane e bella, da cinquemila anni."[264] ["Parthenope never died. She lives on. Young, beautiful, and splendid, she has been with us for the past five thousand years."] While in the dark, fertile Neapolitan underground, that is, in the mythical presence of – or, perhaps, womb of – Parthenope, Mangiacapre's Didone decides her own fate and walks toward her future.

For the past two millennia, artists and historians have defined Dido in relation to the men in her life. Rather than represent the daughter of a king, the sister of a tyrant, a steadfast wife and childless widow, or an unwedded lover and woman scorned, Lina Mangiacapre opts to present a complex female character who is neither androcentric nor hackneyed. Mangiacapre's protagonist looks, perceives, analyzes, plans, strategizes, negotiates, hopes, dreams, desires, expresses, and communicates. She is an intrepid voyager, a savvy strategist, a cunning leader, a feminist, a pacifist, a desiring subject, and a passionate and compassionate soul. By denouncing her brother's atrocious acts and tyrannical rule, leading a fugitive voyage with the aim of building a new, antihierarchical society, traversing the Mediterranean with a diverse cohort of women, bargaining for land on which to establish a society in which women are free to engage sexually as they see fit, and offering asylum and shared governance to Cypriots and Trojans alike, Mangiacapre's "dux femina"[265] champions a politics of peace and inclusion and advances a counterhegemonic society centered around multiculturalism and care. Dido's political agenda and life come to a violent end in Virgil's epic, Marlowe and Nash's tragedy, and a number of other retellings of the Dido Myth. In Mangiacapre's feminist film, Elissa/Dido's political prowess and will to live do not wane. Though History would have us believe that Dido's Qart

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264. Matilde Serao, *Leggende napoletane* (Modena: E. Sarasino Editore, 1891), 19.

265. Virgil, *The Aeneid of Virgil*, 12.

Ḥadasht and she met same fate and were eventually reduced to ashes, Mangiacapre tells a different tale. In Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist revision on the Dido Myth, Dido, queen of Carthage and her politics of peace live on. Thanks to Anna's persistence, Barce's tender touch, and the steadfast support of her network of kinship and care, Elissa/Dido does not abandon her convictions or end her own life. In the face of adversity, she resists, rests, and rises again. She chooses to continue her life and political agenda. Mangiacapre's Dido and her politics of counterhegemony and care persist. With her first feature film, *Didone non è morta* (1987), Mangiacapre puts the beauty and strength of kinship and care on view. In addition, she showcases and promotes a profoundly peaceful world order in which feminists lift one other up, resist, and persist together. With her second feature film, *Faust/Fausta* (1991),[266] Mangiacapre continues to promote a counterhegemonic world in which there are fewer borders, boundaries, binaries, and controls.

266. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1991; Naples: Le Nemesiache / L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee).

Chapter 3

Beyond the Binary:
Androgyny and Self-Reflexivity in Mangiacapre's Transfeminist Faust

With roots stretching back to Medieval and Renaissance times, the Myth[267] of Faust has captured the imagination of storytellers, readers, writers, and filmmakers across the ages. The Faust Myth first emerged as an amalgam of two tales: the first, a legend from the Middle Ages concerning a scholar who dealt with the devil, the second, a tale from the early sixteenth century apropos an alchemist and thaumaturge who wandered about Germany.[268] Despite the cloak of uncertainty surrounding the actual existence of either of these occult Faustian figures, the Myth of the learned conjuror has proven a fruitful impetus for authors, playwrights, composers, and filmmakers for the past five centuries: from Christopher Marlowe to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Hector Berlioz to Charles Gounod, Arrigo Boito to Franz Liszt, Oscar Wilde to Georges Méliès, Robert Dinesen to Robert Johnson , Gertrude Stein to Mikhail Bulgakov, Thomas Mann to Hélène Cixous, Klaus Mann to Stan Brakhage, Lina Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache to Elizabeth LeCompte and the Wooster Group. A source of inspiration across time, space, and place, the Faust Myth has precipitated the creation of scores of renowned literary, theatrical, operatic, symphonic, and cinematic works in England Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and the United States: from tragedy to symphony, opera to ballet, waltz to poem,

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267. When using the term *Mythology* or *Myth* with a capital *M*, this dissertation refers to a concept that I have elaborated based on that of History with a capital H (i.e., the official narrative of great men, great wars, domination, and death). For more, see chapter 1.

268. For more on the hypothetical real-life original Doctor Faustus, see Charles E. Passage, Introduction to *Faust I & II*, xiii-xxxvii (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), xiii-xv; Simon Trussler, "Doctor Faustus: a Critical Commentary," in *Dr Faustus*, ix-xviii (London: Methuen Drama, 1989).

novel to film. [269] The outpouring of artistic renderings inspired by the Myth of Faust include two avant-garde works by Lina Mangiacapre: a transfeminist[270] antinovel, which came out in 1990, and its filmic adaptation, which made its debut a year later, in 1991.

In *Faust/Fausta*, Mangiacapre's recasting of the Myth of Faust, the struggle of the protagonist shifts from the dogged desire for pleasure and knowledge to a quest for harmony of body and soul. No longer the Faust of Marlowe,[271] eager to embrace eternal damnation for

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269. The following is a partial list of works that attest to the artistic fecundity of the Faust Myth: the anonymous *Historia von Doktor Johan Fausteñ* [*The History of Doctor John Faustus*] (1587); Christopher Marlowe's tragedy *Dr Faustus* (1604); Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's dramatic fragment *Doktor Faust* (1759); Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's tragedies *Faust*: *eine Tragödie*. *Erster Teil*. [*Faust*: *A Tragedy*. *Part I*.] (1808) and *Faust*: *eine Tragödie*. *Erster und Zweiter Teil*. [*Faust: A Tragedy*. *Part II*.] (1832); Nikolaus Lenau's *Faust*: *ein Gedicht* [*Faust*: *a Poem*] (1836); Hector Berlioz's semi-opera *La damnation de Faust* [*The Damnation of Faust*] (1846); Heinrich Heine's ballet scenario *Der Doktor Faust: ein Tanzpoem*. [*Doctor Faust: A Ballet Poem*] (1851); Richard Wagner's *Eine Faust-Ouvertüre* [*A Faust Overture*] (1855); Franz Liszt's *Eine Faust-Symphonie* [*A Faust Symphony*] (1857); Charles Gounod's eponymous operatic adaptation of Goethe's *Faust* (1859); Liszt's *Zwei Episoden aus Lenau's Faust* [*Two Episodes from Lenau's Faust*] (1861); Arrigo Boito's avant-garde opera *Mefistofele* [*Mephistopheles*] (1868); Liszt's *Mephisto-Walzer* [*Mephisto Waltzes*] and *Mephisto-Polka* [*Mephisto Polka*] (early 1880s); Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* [1891]; Georges Méliès's short films *La Damnation de Faust* [*The Damnation of Faust*] (1898), *Faust et Marguerite* [*Faust and Marguerite*] (1904), *Les Quatre Cents Farces du Diable* [*The 400 Frolics of Satan*] (1906), and more; Gustav Mahler's *Achte Symphonie* [*Eighth Symphony*] (1910); Hanns Heinz Ewers; Stellan Rye and Paul Wegener's film *Der Student von Prag* [*The Student of Prague*] (1913); Robert Dinesen's film *Dr. X* [*The Folly of Sin*] (1915); Marcel L'Herbier's film *Don Juan et Faust* [*Don Juan and Faust*] (1922); Friedrich W. Murnau's film *Faust* (1925-26); Stephen Vincent Benét's *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (1937); Robert Johnson's blues songs "Me and the Devil Blues" and "Hellhound on My Trail (1937); Gertrude Stein's play *Doctor Faustus Light the Lights* (1938); Mikhail Bulgakov's novel *Мастер и Маргарита* [*The Master and Margarita*] (1940); Thomas Mann's novel *Doctor Faustus* (1947); René Clair's film *La Beauté du Diable* [*The Beauty of the Devil*] (1950); Aleksander Petrovic's eponymous filmic adaptation of Bulgakov's *Majstor i Margarita* [*The Master and Margaret*] (1972); Hélène Cixous's theoretical work *Révolutions pour plus d'un Faust* [*Revolutions for More than One Faust*] (1975); Klaus Mann's novel *Mephisto* (1977); Charlie Daniels's country song "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" (1979); Istaván Szabó's eponymous filmic adaptation of Mann's *Mephisto* (1981); Franz Seitz's filmic adaptation of Thomas Mann's novel *Doktor Faustus* (1982); Marco Poma's film *Mephisto Funk* (1986); Stan Brakhage's four-part Faustfilm: Part I: *Faustfilm: An Opera* (1987), Part II: *Faust's Other: An Idyll* (1988), *Faust III: Candida Arbacore* (1988), *Faust IV* (1989); Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis's transfeminist novel *Faust/Fausta* (1990) and her eponymous filmic adaptation *Faust/Fausta* (1991); and Elizabeth LeCompte and The Wooster Group's avant-garde theatrical work *House/Lights* (1999).

270. Mangiacapre's transfeminist philosophy of sexuality and gender is centered around the concept of fluidity. "A skeptic of sexual difference theory, Mangiacapre postulated what she calls a transfeminist theory of sexuality and gender in the early 1990s. According to Mangiacapre's transfeminist philosophy, the self is multiple and forever in flux in terms of both gender identity and sexual desire." Hilary Althea Emerson, "Reframing Madness with Avant-Garde Film: Lina Mangiacapre's Feminist Collaboration at the Asylum," *The Italianist* 41, 2 (2021): 323-337, doi: 10.1080/02614340.2021.1967645, 334. See also chapter 1, p. 30.

271. While Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* was published in 1604, the first performance dates back to the late sixteenth century and took place in England. See Trussler, "Doctor Faustus: a Critical Commentary," ix.

twenty-four years of youthful delight, no longer the Faust of Goethe,[272] willing to wager that no show of sorcery could divert him from his goal of decrypting the divine secrets of nature, the Faust of Mangiacapre strikes no deal with the devil at all. It is female-bodied Fausta, rather, who seeks out Mefistofele [Mephistopheles] on the slopes of Mount Vesuvia[273] with a proposal to put forth. Fausta, the enigmatic, androgynous, nonbinary, protagonist of Mangiacapre's transfeminist antinovel and eponymous film, seeks to push beyond the bounds of her sex and transcend the ostensible constraints of her female body. While Fausta does share the impulse to reach beyond the reachable with prior Faustian figures, she is driven by the longing for balance rather than sexual or epistemological domination and appeals to Mephistopheles in pursuit of cosmic harmony.[274] Neither striving toward superhuman sexual consumption, like the Faust of Marlowe, nor the mastery of knowledge transcending the epistemological bounds of mortality, like that of Goethe, Fausta the androgyne seeks to go beyond in a way that is not domineering: she seeks equilibrium of body and soul, or, in other words, inner and outer peace. Fausta pursues

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272. A hundred years or so later, purportedly without having read Marlowe, Goethe elaborated his two tragedies. Faust Part I, which is in fact a completed theatrical work and not half of one, was published in 1808. *Faust* Part II, which serves as a sequel to Part I and is also a completed work came out post-mortem in 1832. See Jacques Barzun, Introduction to *Faust*, v-xxv, trans. Alice Raphael (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1963), xxiii.

273. While volcanic lore is oft associated with the masculine, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache refer to the dangerous beauty on the southern side of the Bay of Naples as a she: la Vesuvia. Like the female body, la Vesuvia exists in a state of continual metamorphosis, its creative potential dormant for some time and then periodically active: always capable and sometime secreting steam, smoke, magma, milk, menstrual blood, vaginal or amniotic fluid, et al. In Mangiacapre's film *Faust/Fausta*, the protagonist declares, "No, non sei il Vesuvio tu tenero come il seno bianco di Elena. Per te 'Vesuvia,' la mia poesia." ["You are no Vesuvius. 'Vesuvia' not Vesuvius. Tender and white as Helen's bosom, you are my inspiration."] As the Nemesiache refer to this metamorphic beauty as a she, I use the feminine form, *la Vesuvia*, in this dissertation. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1991; Naples: Le Nemesiache / L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee).

274. As elaborated by Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, the concept of *cosmic harmony* refers to individual and collective harmony, or, in other words, balance and wellbeing for women and for all. What begins as a fresh, harmonious sense of self has ramifications beyond the individual's inner world. As thought turns to action and action to reaction, inner peace becomes outer peace and the sense of harmony achieved within spreads to the outer world of animate and inanimate objects.

nemesis,[275] a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world, through the contemplation, imagination, and embodiment of a hyrmythical[276] figure. Questing for a profound sense of inner and outer peace, Mangiacapre's transfeminist Faust puts Mangiacapran metaphysics on view, demonstrating that the metaphysical process leading up to the realization of nemesis hinges upon the interplay of mythos, creativity, performance, and selfhood. In infusing her 1990 avant-garde antinovel and 1991 filmic adaptation with androgyny, self-reflexivity, and her own particular brand of feminism, Mangiacapre creates a subversive and fertile space for the artistic exploration of self and engenders a literary and cinematic illustration of her new metaphysics.

First, the chapter addresses female-bodied Fausta's decision to deal with the devil and become Faust. After delineating Fausta's motivations for trading away her female body – her desire to embody her inner masculinity and experience a "felt sense" [277] of self, make love to her

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275. Mangiacapre and her fellow feminists conceive of *nemesis* as a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world. Reaching and living in this harmonious metaphysical dimension involves the contemplation, creative revision, and embodiment of a mythical female figure. The trajectory of nemesian metaphysics begins with the consideration of a mythical female figure as characterized by the canon. Rather than accept the orthodox representation of this female figure, the character is reimagined and recast as one that challenges rather than upholds dominant ideology. In meditating on a canonical Myth and then bringing a feminist revisionist myth into existence, the nemesian feminist artist comes to reconsider her own story and the potential revision of her own reality. Journeying inward, to the metaphysical core of her being, the feminist artist comes to recognize resonances between her life and that of the mythical female figure of her own creation. Through contemplation, and in many cases artistic creation, she fathoms that this mythical figure is and always has been a part of her and she begins to live her life with a newfound sense of harmony. Embracing and embodying the mythical within, the feminist artist achieves a new consciousness of self and profound sense of equilibrium. In other words, she accomplishes nemesis, entering into the nemesian metaphysical dimension, a reality steeped in harmony, art, and feminism.

276. The term *hyrmyth* refers to a concept I elaborated in reference to a particular type of tale that foregrounds power dynamics at play within the canon of Mythology. A Mangiacapran hyrmyth is a feminist or transfeminist revisionist myth that makes room for characters who subvert and derail rather than uphold cisheteropatriarchy. I refer to such characters as *hyrmythical* figures. Hyrmythical characters subvert hegemonic social and sexual codes and give voice to those who may or may not conform to the gender role assigned to them at birth. For more, see chapter 1.

277. As delineated by Gayle Salamon, *trans* or *transgender* people experience a "disjunction between the 'felt sense' of the body and the body's corporeal contours." *Cisgender* people experience a "felt sense" of their body that corresponds to the sex (i.e., intersex, female, male) assigned to them at birth. See Gayle Salamon, *Assuming a Body: Transgender and Rhetorics of Materiality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 2.

beloved Primula[278] [Primrose], and rid herself of the fear of persecution – the chapter examines Mephistopheles' false promises and the conditions of the cursed pact. Next, the chapter analyzes the consequences of Fausta's decision to banish every last trace of her former self and fully embrace heteromasculinity. The chapter argues that Fausta's elimination of her gender nonconforming self does not yield the harmony of body and soul she seeks. The chapter finds that the protagonist's attempt to navigate gender as a binary impedes her quest for equilibrium and Faust/Fausta's path to peace lies beyond the binary. Second, the chapter delineates the lengths to which the female-to-male trans protagonist will go to recover that which he has lost: his artistic prowess and appreciation for beauty. Drawing upon Mangiacapran metaphysics, the chapter argues that Faust's attempt to get back in touch with his inner beauty by dominating the beauty of another was bound to fail because his quest can only succeed if he looks within himself. Through an interdisciplinary analysis of music, cinematography, and sound the chapter draws attention to a turning point in the filmic text. The chapter demonstrates that Mangiacapre's use of rack focus and extradiegetic sound connote a sense of instability. Next, the chapter argues

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278. While Fausta's love interest is named Anita in the novel, she is called Primula [Primrose] in the filmic adaptation. Primrose, signifying first youth; hope; the mystery of the heart; as well as painting, is one of the first flowers to bloom each spring. Several of the multifarious meanings attributed to the blossom by the Language of the Flowers relate to the character: Primrose is a first for Fausta, the first to captivate her heart; Fausta and she do carry on for a time in the throws of young love, with all the hope and promise of tomorrow; and Fausta does paint her beloved in her studio. Played by Nemesian Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa, the character of Primrose loosely corresponds to the figure of the beloved in Goethe's first Faustian tragedy: Margarete (also referred to by the German diminutive of Margarete: Gretchen). In both Goethe and Mangiacapre's works, Mephistopheles enables the seduction of the beloved. In Goethe, Faust seduces Margarete, impregnates her, abandons her, dispatches of her brother, and only expresses remorse upon finding out that as a result of inseminating and forsaking her, the townspeople scorned and condemned her: falsely accusing her of the murders of her mother and child and sentencing her to death. While Faust's solipsistic behavior in Goethe's tragedy brings about Margarete's demise, in Mangiacapre's feminist revision, the protagonist does not opt to seduce his beloved. Despite having the opportunity to make love to Primrose, when she comes to visit him in his studio and comes onto him, Mangiacapre's male protagonist elects not to engage sexually with his beloved. Mangiacapre's male protagonist demonstrates knowledge of the female anatomy and considers the potential effects of his actions on his beloved before deciding to make love to her or not. Knowing that with his newly male anatomy he could cause Primrose unwanted "parti e aborti" [births and abortions], Faust ultimately resolves not to engage with her sexually. See Lina Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta* (Florence: L'Autore Libri, 1990), 20. See also Beverly Seaton, *The Language of Flowers* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1955), 188-189.

that although Mangiacapre's use of fluctuating major and minor triads and rack focus point to instability, her musical and cinematographic fluctuation resolve into unison and unity, foreshadowing a potential future in which the protagonist finds peace and harmony. Third, the chapter turns its attention to the arrival of an alluring, talented male-to-female trans musician within the diegesis. Drawing upon archival material, visual culture, and interviews, the chapter analyzes the significance of the enigmatic artist being dressed in Mangiacapre's signature look: black boots, black pants, a black shirt, and a black top hat. The chapter explores Mangiacapre's use of self-reflexivity as well as the role of this character in the protagonist's quest. Fourth, the chapter examines the conclusion of the antinovel and argues that Faust/Fausta succeeds in accomplishing cosmic harmony in the novel. Since Faust/Fausta's fate is left hanging in ambiguity in the filmic adaptation, the chapter provides two possible readings of the final sequence: one in which the gender nonconforming protagonist achieves equilibrium of body and soul, another in which Faust/Fausta is eternally damned and, like the celluloid in the final frame of the film, burns.

1. Dealing with the Devil and Becoming Faust

In Mangiacapre's avant-garde transfeminist antinovel and filmic adaptation, the enthralling, androgynous protagonist seeks both liberty and harmony of sex and gender. Fausta[279] the androgyne yearns for an embodied existence that would allow her to express her inner masculinity and make love to her beloved Primula, thereby sating their reciprocal desire. The desire to transform the body from female to male in order to unite with a beloved is not without

279. Fausta is referred to by her nickname, Occhi d'oro [Golden Eyed Girl], in the filmic adaptation until the final sequence during which Mephistopheles calls her by her given name.

literary precedent. In fact, Fausta's desire to metamorphose her body in order to take Primrose as her partner is echoed in Book IX of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Just as Fausta yearns to pursue Primrose without provoking the scorn of society, so too does Iphis wish to take her beloved Ianthe in "Iphis and Isis." Although born female, Iphis is raised as a boy and betrothed to female-bodied Ianthe. Iphis perceives her own desire as preposterous because no other female animal lusts after another female animal: "Cows do not burn for cows, nor mares for mares; the ram will have his sheep, the stag his does, and birds will do the same when they assemble; there are no animals whose females lust for other females!"[280] As the wedding approaches, Iphis's mother prays to the goddess Isis and the deity transforms Iphis from female to male. Once male, Iphis is married to Ianthe and his yearning for his beloved is resolved. The outlooks, transformations, and fates of Iphis and Fausta differ considerably.[281] Unlike Iphis, Fausta does not consider her sexual desire as absurd. What does unnerve the protagonist, however, is the threat of violence that her beloved and she could face if they were to show affection to one another in public. Fausta seeks relief from the physical and societal constraints that she faces as a nonbinary lesbian in a Catholic, cisheteropatriarchal society. Fausta yearns "[p]otere camminare per le strade, non

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280. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, translated by Charles Martin (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 334.

281. While Iphis's metamorphosis brings sexual satisfaction and narrative resolution, Fausta's yields neither. Before Fausta's transformation, her beloved breaks off the engagement and forsakes her. Once male, Faust chooses to no longer pursue Primrose, however, as he realizes he could bring her harm: with his new anatomy he could cause his beloved unwanted pregnancies. Further diverging from the tale of Iphis, Fausta goes through two metamorphoses. The first transformation, from Fausta to Faust, is carried out by Mephistopheles, a demon who takes delight in the protagonist's despair; the second, from Faust to Fausta, is aided by the goddess-like figure of the Cumean Sibyl. While, on the one hand, the Sibyl, like Isis, uses her mystical powers to help the protagonist reach an equilibrium of body and soul, Mephistopheles acts without the ability or intention to indulge the protagonist's desires. Since the storyline concludes shortly after the protagonist's second transformation, the novel ends with a new beginning of sorts: a reconciliation and reunion of Faust and Fausta. Female-bodied Fausta, having reached equilibrium of body and soul and recovered her artistic inspiration, can return to making art and live her life in harmony evermore. Rather than provide narrative closure in the form of a social and sexual union, Mangiacapre concludes her novel with narrative aperture and authorizes her protagonist to find satisfaction outside of the institution of marriage: Fausta finds fulfillment not by wedding another but by establishing a sense of unity within herself. As such, *Faust/Fausta* comes to a close with peace and possibility, with a harmonious reconstitution and acceptance of the self and with creative promise for the protagonist's future artistic endeavors.

essere guardata, toccata come oggetto; potere uscire la notte senza la paura"[282] ["[t]o be able to walk the streets, without being stared at and touched like an object; to be able to go out at night without fear"]. She longs to walk the streets without fear of injury or abuse. Fausta seeks liberation from "tutti i demoni, i peccati, le colpe che [ci si] attribuivano e [libera] della maledizione tremenda di essere donna: di dover crescere, partorire, morire"[283] ["all the malevolence, sinfulness, and culpability ascribed to the female body and from the tremendous burden of being a Woman: being born, giving birth, and dying"]. Fausta, weary of the weight of the rigid role cast for her by society, in pursuit of "la libertà"[284] ["liberty"], mounts her motorcycle and tears off in search of the supernatural.

After climbing the slopes of Mount Vesuvia and reaching her craggy peak, Fausta comes upon Mephistopheles, a demon with surgical skills who is capable of performing transmogrification. The two face off and begin to bargain. Mephistopheles promises Fausta a life of luxury and the opportunity to possess al the most beautiful women in exchange for her body. Unlike Marlowe's and Goethe's demons, who are both after the protagonist's soul, Mangiacapre's demands the protagonist's body – her female body – as collateral for his services. Mangiacapre's Mephistopheles informs Fausta that if she desires to embody her masculinity, sate Primrose, and walk the streets without being harassed, she may do so but must tender payment in the form of her female body "perché le donne non hanno anima"[285] ["for women have no souls"]. The protagonist counters the false claim that women have no souls with self-assured laughter.

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282. Ibid., 15.

283. Ibid., 12.

284. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 11.

285. Ibid., 15. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

Despite the demon's axiomatic tone, Fausta is not convinced that women have no souls and therefore rejects his attempt to suture[286] false meaning to her. Mephistopheles proceeds to warn Fausta that if she agrees there could be no turning back. While the demon does inform Fausta that she will become the property of Lucifer for all of eternity if she fails to totally and completely embrace her masculinity, he fails to mention, the risk of attempting to navigate sex, gender, and sexuality on a binary. With the aim of pushing beyond the bounds of her sex, Fausta agrees to the pact, unaware that the adoption of heteronormative masculinity would result in neither liberty nor cosmic harmony. Despite being utterly unfit to guide Fausta in her quest for harmony, Mephistopheles forges the deal all the same and delights in the desperation that ensues.

Before the transformation, Fausta's physique was androgynous and alluring: "poteva essere paragonata ad un androgino, ma disceso da Afrodite"[287] ["she resembled an androgyne, not just any androgyne but one who descended from Aphrodite"]. Her mythical and metamorphic beauty enthralled those around her. "Sembrava possedere un fluido quel suo corpo, il suo sguardo. E nessuno restava immune. [. . .] Diventava sempre più bella."[288] ["Her body and gaze seemed to have a metamorphic quality about them. And no one could escape being captivated by

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286. As conceived of by Jacques-Alain Miller and later elaborated upon by Louis Althusser, the Althusserian concept of *suturing* refers to the interpellation of individuals as subjects by certain institutions in order for said institutions to reinforce and reproduce themselves. In his essay on ideology and the state, Althusser delineates how certain realities which present themselves as institutions (churches, schools, et al.) interpellate concrete individuals as subjects in order to function and perpetuate themselves. Althusser argues that ideology hails the individual like a police officer who shouts " 'Hey, you there!' " The Althusserian subject recognizes that he is the individual being addressed by the officer and that he is subjected to the authority of the police. When Mephistopheles attempts to interpellate Fausta and define her as a soulless wretch of a subject, he fails. While Fausta recognizes that Mephistopheles has transmogrificatory abilities, she does not recognize his as an absolute authority of her. For more on interpellation (suturing) of the subject, see Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 127-186, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 174. See also Jacques-Alain Miller, "La suture: Éléments de la logique du signifiant," *Cahiers pour l'analyse* 1 (1966): 37-49.

287. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 13.

288. Ibid.

her beauty. [. . .] She became more and more beautiful."] Ever more enchanting, Fausta's "occhi d'oro"[289] ["golden eyes"] and melodious voice were in constant flux. Her eye color shifted from the azure of the sea to the green of the grass, the raven of the deep night to the marigold of the sun at first rise. The tone of her voice modulated from a flute-like, dulcet timbre to a deep, percussive rasp. Even with her "grande capacità di mutare"[290] ["considerable aptitude for metamorphosis"], Fausta felt trapped, confined, and imprisoned: no matter how she altered her voice or appearance she could not manage to feel at home in her androgyny. Rather than embrace her unique androgynous beauty, Fausta resisted, rejecting her outward appearance. In fact, female-bodied Fausta "non si guardava mai allo specchio"[291] ["never looked at herself in the mirror"]. She refused to meet her own gaze in the looking glass.

After the transformation, the protagonist's attitude toward looking glasses intensifies from aversion to abhorrence. In the first scene of the film in which male-bodied Faust appears, his head hangs in desperation, eyes cast downward, face covered in shadow. Exasperated, with labored breathing, Faust turns on his electric razor and begrudgingly starts to shave off his facial hair, without the use of his upright mirror. Aggravated, Faust declares: "Se non taglio questi peli divento un mostro!"[292] ["If I don't shave off this beard I'll become a monster!"] and abruptly turns off the buzzing razor. Resentful and unnerved by the presence of facial hair on his face, a markedly male physical feature, Faust becomes more and more agitated. As an aftereffect of the pact with Mephisto, Faust's ability to grow facial hair serves as an unwelcome reminder of his

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289. Ibid.

290. Ibid.

291. Ibid.

292. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

eager renunciation of his former female body and current state of desperation. Faust reaches for the cognac bottle,[293] seeking to escape his dismay, only to catch a glimpse of himself in the reflective yellow glass. Confronted with his own reflection, Faust completely loses his composure and catapults the now empty bottle of liquor into his mirror, shattering one looking glass with another. The sight of his body, which bears marks of the cursed exchange, unhinges him. Faust is haunted by the hair that grows on his chin as well as the color of his eyes and color of his hair, which darkened upon relinquishing his gender fluid identity and androgynous body. Consumed by darkness, both inside and out, "Faust inizia il cammino maledetto; perde la melodia della voce; i suoi capelli teneri e ricchi d'oro diventano opachi davanti agli occhi una sola strada - Il cupo e il nero tingono, unico colore, interno ed esterno."[294] ["Faust begins his cursed journey; he loses his sing-song voice; his luscious golden locks become unrecognizably dark; and he sees only one path laid out before him, steeped in darkness, the only color, the tint covering up all others both inside and out."] Faust's darkness, physically and metaphysically speaking, reflect back at him in the mirror. The visual reminders of his willingness to take part in the exchange of a metamorphic, nonconformist female body for a fixed male one repel and enrage him.

Mangiacapre's Faustian protagonist initially relinquishes her body with the aim of escaping the "strano destino di vivere al maschile e al femminile"[295] ["strange fate of being part-

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293. In the novel, Mangiacapre specifies that the bottle that Faust hurls at the mirror is a bottle of cognac: "Che cosa mi accade, se non mi taglio questi peli sul viso, sul mio viso angelico, divento un mostro, Faust gettò la bottiglia di cognac ormai vuota e ruppe l'ultimo specchio." [What will happen to me if I don't shave off this facial hair on my angelic face, I'll become a monster, Faust hurled the now empty bottle of cognac and shattered the mirror.] See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 16.

294. Ibid., 15.

295. Ibid., 14.

man, part-woman"] and achieving "una vera identità"[296] ["a true sense of identity"]. On the slopes of Mount Vesuvia, Fausta succeeds in stripping herself of the gender ambiguity that she longed to be rid of and starts presenting as a cis man, no longer plagued by the bewilderment of being "[n]é donna, né uomo"[297] ["[n]either fully-woman nor fully-man"]. While the protagonist successfully manages to leave her gender fluid identity and female body behind, the exchange does not yield the state of equilibrium that she seeks. Fausta's adoption of a fixed gender identity (Man) and her performance of that gender in the body deemed appropriate by society (male) do not result in a sense of oneness for the protagonist. In fact, once the deal is done, the protagonist stops emoting entirely and cannot manage to feel "una briciola di desiderio, una emozione, la follia della libertà, niente più poesia"[298] ["even a smidgen of desire, emotion, the joy of freedom, or a single trace of artistic inspiration"[299]]. In banishing her feminine traits and dispatching her female body, Fausta casts aside a big part of who she is, in terms of both gender and sex identity, and cannot reach a state of equilibrium by repressing certain parts of herself. If she is to achieve harmony of body and soul, Fausta must embrace herself for who she is: gender fluidity, androgynous body, metamorphic sexuality and all.

In extinguishing Fausta and becoming Faust, the protagonist not only loses touch with her androgynous beauty but also forfeits her artistic inspiration. Like the Faustian figures in Mikhail

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296. Ibid., 15.

297. Ibid.

298. Ibid., 16.

299. As expounded in the introduction, as a painter, poet, composer, and cinematographer, Mangiacapre pushed the limits and redefined the making of art in a way that broke down the traditional barriers separating various artistic disciplines. In her reconceptualization of painting as the art of painting poetry and of filmmaking as the art painting beauty, Mangiacapre broke barriers between poetry and painting and between painting and filmmaking. For Mangiacapre, the term poesia does not refer to one specific artistic discipline but to that which inspires and drives the making of art. It is for this reason that I translate "poesia" not as "poetry" but as "artistic inspiration."

Bulgakov's, Thomas Mann's, and Klaus Mann's novels, Lina Mangiacapre's protagonist is an artist. Rather than an aspiring author like the Master, a composer like Adrian Leverkühn, or an actor like Hendrik Höfgen, Fausta – like Mangiacapre – is a painter.[300] Female-bodied Fausta seldom appears in the filmic adaptation, however the beautiful blonde androgyne does appear in one of Faust's flashbacks in which she paints her beloved Primrose. Faust's flashbacks occur while gazing into, or, better yet, beyond the shards of his shattered looking glass. Staring beyond the bits of glass that remain in the mirror frame and beyond the fractured image of self reflecting back at him, Faust remembers a time when his body and soul were not splintered and calls out to his former self in anguish: "Occhi d'oro! Occhi d'oro dove sei!?" ["Golden Eyed Girl! Golden Eyed Girl, where are you!?"] The shot directly preceding the flashback is filmed from behind the broken mirror looking back at Faust. Rather than a point of view shot showing the back of Faust's head and his face reflected in the mirror, spectators view Faust's face directly and do not

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300. Before Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis's novel *Faust/Fausta* came out in 1990, several other novelistic renderings of the Faust Myth had already been published, including *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov, published in 1940, *Doctor Faustus* by Thomas Mann, published in 1947, and *Mephisto* by Klaus Mann, published in 1977. In their novels on Faust, Thomas Mann, Klaus Mann, and Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis all deviate from the Myth as told by Marlowe and Goethe, a vein in which Faust is an alchemist as well as a scholar and in which Faust's final fate is explicit. In Thomas Mann's novel, set in contemporary Germany, his protagonist Adrian Leverkühn is a musician: a child prodigy who becomes an acclaimed composer. The Faustian figure himself does not engage in the practice of medicine, law, or alchemy. Leverkühn's father is admittedly an alchemist-like figure, running experiments in his lab and trying to decode the spirals of shellfish and patterns in the frost lining the window panes. As the story is told from the point of view of Leverkühn's childhood friend Dr. Serenus Zeitblom, a narrator who is certainly not omniscient, the metaphysical fate of the Faustian figure after his death is unknowable. In *Mephisto*, a satirical novel written by Thomas Mann's son Klaus Mann, also set in contemporary Germany, his protagonist Hendrik Höfgen is an aspiring actor who rises to fame and fortune with the support of a powerful National Socialist general. Klaus Mann based his protagonist on his brother-in-law Gustaf Gründgens, an actor who did rise to greatness due to the patronage of Nazi Field Marshall Hermann Göring during World War II. As thespian and Theater Director Höfgen does not explicitly expire in the pages of Klaus Mann's novel nor on screen in Istaván Szabó's eponymous filmic adaptation, both the physical and metaphysical fate of the Faustian figure hang in the void. One last point of contact between Klaus Mann's work and Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis's is the non-sequentiality of the first chapter of *Mephisto* the novel and of the entirety of *Faust/Fausta* the film. Interestingly, while Klaus Mann begins his novel with the final chapter of Höfgen's tale, Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis ends her film with, perhaps not the first scene, but the one scene that is critical for spectators' to make sense of the entire film. See Mikhail Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita*, trans. Diana Burgin and Katherine Tiernan O'Connor (New York: Vintage Books, 1996); Klaus Mann, *Mephisto*, trans. Robin Smyth (New York: Random House, 1977); Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, trans. John E. Woods (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997); and *Mephisto*, directed by Istaván Szabó (1981; Hungary: Analysis Film Releasing Corporation, 1982).

see what it is that Faust is looking at. The shot displays jagged bits of mirror in the foreground and Faust facing the camera, partially blocked out by the bits of glass that remains in the mirror frame, in the background. The image of Faust's fractured body, blocked by the foregrounded shards, quickly cuts to the flashback, an episode containing a contrasting image of the poised, unbroken body of Fausta painting her beloved on a round canvas.[301] This abstruse, nonconventional shot reverse shot sequence intimates that Faust sees Fausta just beyond the looking glass and that despite the agony he feels over his self-mutilation, a trace of his former self persists: a part of Fausta remains dormant within. Further evidence that Fausta lays dormant within, repressed and out of reach, surfaces in the novel when Faust stands before the looking glass examining his male body: "Faust si guardò allo specchio e vide nella sua parte maschile, l'uomo, la sua cecità la sua stupidità: lavorare e sudare, l'incapacità a esistere per paura della morte, per secoli nascere e morire inutilmente, stupidamente. [. . .] Fausta faceva smorfie dallo specchio"[302] [Faust gazed at his male self in the mirror and saw within him the blindness and stupidity of Man: the incessant working and toiling away, the failure to embrace life due to the paralyzing fear of death, century after century, being born into the world, living foolishly, and

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301. The cool blues and grays used in Occhi d'oro's painting of Primrose are the same color palette used by Faust in his painting of Helen. Both of these tondi are works by Mangiacapre/Màlina. Mangiacapre signed her paintings as Màlina and tended toward canvases with curves, that resemble the female body, rather than straight lines, that recall the male one. For more on the pseudonym, see Ingeborg Bachmann, *Malina*, trans. Philip Boehm (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1990). In creating art with circular canvases, Mangiacapre/Màlina vindicates a shape that has been stripped of all importance and reduced to nothingness. After all, the first signifiers in the Arabic, Greek, and Roman numeral scheme that signify *something* as opposed to *nothing* are straight lines, not curved. In these phallocentric number systems, the circle, the shape inextricably linked to the female body, is made to signify lack. In other words, while 1 or I = the beginning of something, 0 = nothing. Toward the end of *Faust/Fausta*, Mangiacapre specifies that despite the zero having been "ridotto al nulla" [reduced to nothingness] it truly "è tutto" [is everything], for shapes that are curved and approaching circularity are harmonious. See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 115. Circularity is a central concept of Nemesian feminist philosophy, evidenced by the atemporal, non-linear endings of both *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1987; Naples: Le Nemesiache / L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee) and *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre. For more on Mangiacapre's paintings, see Lina Mangiacapre, *Dipingere la poesia*.

302. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 44-45.

perishing in futility [. . .] Fausta gazed back at him from the mirror with a smirk on her face"]. Fausta momentarily materializes before Faust's eyes, showing a smirk in response to his pondering, before withdrawing and returning to the recesses of his mind. A part of Fausta has most certainly survived the metamorphosis and persists, emerging and re-submerging several times before Mangiacapre brings the narration to a close.

As evidenced by the smirk in the mirror in the novel and the flashback in the film, Faust remembers a time when his body and soul were harmonious, when he painted Primrose with respect and admiration, neither attempting to capture nor dominate her beauty. Once Mephistopheles grants Fausta's wish to inhabit a male body, the protagonist continues to paint and, owing to the demon's black magic, becomes famous. Despite his continuing production of art, "Fausta ora Faust"[303] ["Fausta now Faust"] no longer recognizes his inner beauty and suffers a loss of inspiration. "Piano piano Faust dimenticava le origini della sua storia e della sua lotta. Le passioni che l'avevano spinto: la bellezza, la libertà, l'arte."[304] ["Slowly but surely his memory of his own story fades away. Faust forgets his struggle, where he came from, and the passions that drove him: beauty, freedom, art."] As Fausta fades from his memory and becomes more and more foreign, the protagonist's quest shifts slightly: Faust aims to capture and repossess that which has been lost – beauty. Having "ucciso"[305] ["killed"] Fausta – or, at the very least having banished her to the recesses of his mind – and having lost touch with his inner beauty, Faust desperately seeks to recover his artistic drive and penchant for freedom by means of painting so that he may live in peace and harmony with himself and the world around him.

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303. Ibid., 16.

304. Ibid., 34.

305. Ibid., 16.

In seeking harmony and oneness by making art, rather than by seeking Christ, Faust throws light on the Mangiacapran metaphysical teleology at play in *Faust/Fausta*. The source of harmony in Mangiacapran metaphysics is art, not apotheosis. For this reason, Faust does not follow the fold in the hope of salvation being bestowed upon him, but rather, works toward achieving unity of the self and the cosmos by making art. While the catabactic fate of Marlowe's Faust, who was forcibly wrested from his home and dragged down to the depths of hell, and the beatific destiny of Goethe's, who was ultimately redeemed and flown up to heaven by angels, are contingent upon Christian teleology, the fate of the protagonist in Mangiacapre's Faustian works is not posed in terms of rising and being with or falling and being without Christ. The protagonist's journey to oneness does not coincide with a metaphysical union with the markedly male father, son, and holy spirit of the Catholic tradition, but, on the contrary, the reunion of Faust with his repressed feminine side and rejected female body, aided by mythical female figures from a distant past: Elena [Helen]and the Sibyl.

2. Seeking Beauty in Another and Letting it Burn

Yearning for the recovery of Fausta, the wayward Faust and his splintered soul encounter Helen, a seraphic and restorative beauty. Appearing solid in some scenes and spectral in others, Helen serves as a source of inspiration and renewal for Faust. Like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Faustian figure, Lina Mangiacapre's proves "overwhelmed"[306] by Helen's beauty, so utterly enthralled by her that he is temporarily distracted from his desolation. While Helen seems to provoke identical reactions in the two Faustian figures, they are overcome by emotion in

306. Alice Raphael, *Goethe and the Philosophers' Stone* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 150.

different ways. On the one hand, Mangiacapre's Faust, whose quest is to regain that which he has lost in order to find peace, is overwhelmed by Helen's resemblance to his forsaken female self. In this case, Faust yearns to reclaim that which he renounced: Fausta. On the other hand, Goethe's Faust, whose priority is epistemological domination, views Helen of Troy as a beautiful manifestation of the Other and is aroused by the spectral figure conjured by Mephistopheles. Here Faust's desire is not equilibrium or harmony within, seduction and exploitation of the Other. He desires Helena, as he did Margarete, for his own sexual gratification. Although Alice Raphael contends that Goethe's "Faust's deepest need and desire is to unite with the feminine side of his nature, in order to recover the inner world of feelings, his lost values," [307] his pact with Mephistopheles is not geared at equilibrium of body and soul but rather at obtaining knowledge that reaches beyond the bounds of mortality. The underlying quests of the two Faustian figures are distinct as are the manners in which their fates are decided.[308] When Mangiacapre's Faust is enthralled by Helen's beauty, he longs to capture her splendor with paint. Helen gazes at Faust, smiles, laughs, embraces him but does not utter a single word. Rather than a character in her own right, Mangiacapre's Helen appears as an emblem of beauty and a looking glass of Fausta's forgone beauty. While Helen does kiss and caress Faust and seem tangible at times, her symbolic status becomes clear when her physical appearance is juxtaposed with that of

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307. Raphael, *Goethe and the Philosophers' Stone*, 152.

308. In Goethe's tragedies, Faust's means of salvation is through Christ, not through a potential union with his ostensible feminine side. When considering the Christian teleology at work in Goethe, the protagonist's "deepest need and desire" cannot be anything but apotheosis. Faust's relations with neither Helena nor Margarete served to further him on his quest for the mastery of transcendental knowledge, a quest he does accomplish in the end when he repudiates Mephistopheles and rises up to be with God, the only one capable of bestowing the knowledge that he seeks. In Mangiacapre's antinovel and filmic adaptation, on the other hand, deliverance is possible for Faust through a union of the self, in other words, through a recovery and reunion with his repressed feminine traits. It is in Mangiacapre's Faustian work rather than in Goethe's that the protagonist longs to recover and fuse with that which he has forsaken: his inner feminine side and androgynous female body. See Raphael, *Goethe and the Philosophers' Stone*, 152.

Fausta: Helen, like Fausta, has luminous, metamorphic eyes and a light, flute-like quality to her voice.[309] In listening to Helen's "voce flautata"[310] ["flute-like voice"] and gazing into her "occhi di luce, profondi, luminosi"[311] ["her bright eyes: deep and full of light"], Faust is essentially face to face with a manifestation of his former female self.

In both Mangiacapre's *Faust/Fausta* and Gertrude Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*[312] the Helen figures serve as reflections of the Faust figures. With her luminous eyes and sing-song voice, Mangiacapre's Helen greatly resembles the androgynous, metamorphic beauty Fausta, which prompts the protagonist to yearn for a union with his forsaken nonconformist female self. Likewise, in Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*,[313] Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel (who is one character) proves a reflection of Faustus (who is another character). In Elizabeth LeCompte and the Wooster Group's avant-garde take on Gertrude Stein's cubist drama,[314] they elect to have the same female actor play both Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel

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309. The resemblance between the two female figures in the novel is, in fact, even more pronounced: in addition to the luminosity of Helen's eyes and the timbre of her voice corresponding to Fausta's, the color of both her eyes and hair also mirror the protagonist's. While, in the novel, Helen has luscious blonde locks and bright blue eyes, like Fausta, in the filmic adaptation, she has reddish-brown curls and deep brown eyes. In casting Nemesian Claudia Aglione/Helena for this role, Mangiacapre demonstrates that her character did not necessarily have to be "bionda" with "occhi di luce, azzurri e profondi, luminosi" in order to qualify as an emblem of beauty. For Mangiacapre, beauty and desire do not come in one fixed form but rather are in constant metamorphosis. See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 21.

310. Ibid.

311. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

312. Gertrude Stein, "Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights" in *The Last Operas and Plays*, 88-119 (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1949).

313. Stein, "Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights."

314. Elizabeth LeCompte and The Wooster Group call their avant-garde mash-up of Gertrude Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights* and Joseph Mawra's film *Olga's House of Shame*: *House / Lights*. Stein's, Mangiacapre's, and LeCompte and The Wooster Group's Faustian revisions merit more critical attention. A study on the complex relationship between Faustus and Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel and among Faust, Fausta, Margherita, and Helen could prove compelling. See *Olga's House of Shame*, directed by Joseph Mawra (1964; Los Angeles: American Film Distributing Corporation, 1964); Alice Raphael, *Goethe and the Philosophers' Stone* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965); Stein, "Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights," xii; and Elizabeth LeCompte and the Wooster Group, *House / Lights* (New York: The Wooster Group, 2000).

(one character) and Faustus (another character). While the two characters do converse and address one another on stage, due to casting, they may never lay eyes on one another. Because one actor is playing both parts, the characters can never occupy the same space. The Wooster Group's fascinating representation of Stein's work intimates that Faustus and Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel may indeed be two parts of one psyche. Just as Stein's Helen figures reflects her Faust figure, Mangiacapre's serves as a looking glass of Fausta and for Faust.

Exposure to Helen, an emblem of beauty and striking mirror image of his former self, brings back Faust's memory of Fausta, or in other words, "la memoria della bellezza che [ha] perduto"[315] ["the memory of his lost beauty"]. In awe, Faust addresses his muse: "Tu Elena hai trasformato l'inferno come notte, hai portato la luce nelle tenebre [. . .]"[316] ["Helen, you have banished the infernal night. You have turned darkness into light."] Faust's contact with beauty alleviates his pain and serves as a source of renewal, allowing for the resurgence of his artistic drive. The blank canvases in Faust's abode leaning up against the wall in a state of neglect do not remain bare for long after his encounter with the enchanting emblem of beauty. After a brief time with his muse, Faust returns to painting and begins marking up his blank canvases, venturing to capture Helen's beauty on canvas and turn her into a piece of art. Faust does not succeed in his domineering, objectificatory artistic aim, however, for Helen's beauty is boundless and not reducible to brushwork. Shortly before Helen abandons Faust, condemning his art, the non-viability of his desire to dominate indomitable beauty is put on display. Following an extreme close-up of Faust's eyes gazing just beyond the camera into the distance, a striking overlay appears, composed of a partially see-through Helen gracefully moving in a dance-like fashion

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315. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

316. Ibid.

atop a frescoed surface.[317] At first, the spectral image of Helen is aligned with the figure of a red-headed angel donning white. The diaphanous Helen then pans to the right of the frescoed female figure, resulting in the detachment of the photographic from the figurative. The beauty of Helen in motion, of her graceful dance-like movement, is juxtaposed with the inanimate pulchritude of the fresco: while the angel is immobile and still, Helen moves with grace, her hair flows in the wind. Helen's gaze shifts, at times cast downward and other times directly at the camera. The superimposition and subsequent separation of the two red-headed female figures emphasizes the non-congruence of painted and recorded reproductions, thereby bringing the artistic impotence of the possessive protagonist to the fore. Although the painted angel has red hair and bears some resemblance to Helen, the figurative and photographic images do not match up. Despite similarities in hair color and attire, not a single one of the contours of Helen's face or body perfectly aligns with the brushstrokes of the fresco. The angelic figure may remind Faust of his muse, however, as a figurative representation, she is not and could never be Helen's double in perfect likeness. The female figure rendered in paint pales in comparison to the photographic overlay of a living, breathing, dancing female human, or more specifically, to the indexical image of Claudia Aglione/Helena, the Nemesiaca who appears as Helen in *Faust/Fausta*. As Aglione's beauty cannot be enveloped by paint or captured on a canvas, Faust's desired result is bound to fail.

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317. Mangiacapre uses this technique in her 1985 avant-garde short *Eliogabalo*, or *La caduta dell'androgino* [*Heliogabalus* or *The Fall of the Androgyne*] as well. In *Eliogabalo*, Mangiacapre bends and breaks both filmmaking and gender conventions. Perhaps the most experimental of Mangiacapre's films, *Eliogabalo* makes use of superimposed motion pictures for the majority of the film. While the motion picture plays, one, two, or even three shrunken, discolored copies of the footage unfolding appear layered on top of it. Mangiacapre displays a double, triple, sometimes quadruple image of Eliogabalo and co. Mangiacapre appears as Eliogabalo the Androgyne and Capobianco as Eliogabalo's interest. Some shots of Capobianco are overlaid with a feminist expressionist painting of a blue face, others are overlaid with a photographic image of her own face tinted blue. In this avant-garde short, Mangiacapre experiments with superimposition, thereby blurring the lines between painting, photography, and filmmaking. See *Eliogabalo* o *La caduta dell'androgino*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1985; Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee).

Though Helen provides Faust a brief reprieve from his agony, her overwhelming and restorative effect is only temporary in nature. Contact with a reflection of his lost inner beauty does prevent Faust's mind from wandering back to Mephistopheles for a time, however, when Helen abandons him, leaving him for "un'altra donna"[318] ["another woman"], darkness sets in and dominates Faust's existence once more. While Faust is sleeping, Helen rises from bed and prepares to leave. Before she slips away, she picks up a large unbound canvas tarp and unfurls it over the bed, leaving a canvas covered in brushstrokes in place of her body. She then lifts a tondo [round painting], on which Faust had painted her face, and props it where her head lay just moments before. By physically replacing herself with works of art, Helen draws attention to the contrast between a real, female human being and the artistic reproduction of one. Moreover, as the paintings are the fruits of labor of the protagonist, Helen's provocative substitution throws light on Faust's failure to capture her beauty and grace on canvas. When Faust awakens to find a painted female figure laying next to him instead of the living, breathing body of his muse, he very quickly feels the impact of her absence and begins to slide back into his prior state of desolation. In a futile attempt to hold onto Helen, who is, in fact, already beyond his reach, Faust despondently latches onto the sheer white costume that Helen once donned, the painted canvas tarp she left sprawled on top of him, and the tondo she left propped up by his pillow. After successively clutching the last three objects that Helen had contact with, Faust devolves into a fit of desperation, hurling each of the objects across the room. Having propelled the objects away from him and stripped his bed of its covers, Faust curls up into a ball, whimpering in agony and grasping onto the only thing that remains within reach: his own body. Rejected and deserted,

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318. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 23.

Faust realizes that his artistic production is no substitute for the real thing and that his attempt to possess Helen's beauty through art had utterly and completely failed. "Elena, Elena!" Faust cries, "Mi ha lasciato, condannato la mia arte."[319] ["She's left me, condemning my work."] Left grasping at forsaken frocks and condemned canvases, Faust flounders in the wake of his failed attempt to penetrate the "impenetrabile"[320] ["impenetrable"], that is, to dominate the indomitable beauty of his muse by capturing it on canvas.

After Helen has left and denounced his work, Faust grieves the loss of his muse as well as his failure as an artist. Lamenting one loss, Faust flashes back to a memory of another moment of desperation: the loss of his beloved Primrose. In his prior flashback involving Primrose, Fausta is painting a tondo of her beloved, when Primrose suggests they run away together: "Occhi d'oro, Occhi d'oro, fuggiamo insieme. Voglio vivere con te."[321] ["Golden Eyed Girl, Golden Eyed Girl, let's run away together. I want to be with you."] Unable to fathom the possibility of living together and loving one another without being plagued by intimidation and harassment in the public sphere, Fausta replies: "Dove andare, Primula? La bellezza e la libertà sono oppresse ovunque. Non è la famiglia l'ostacolo ma il mondo intero. Cosa potrei io offrirti?"[322] ["Where are we to go, Primrose? Beauty and freedom are oppressed all over the place. It's not just our families who are against us but the entire world. What kind of life could I offer you?"] Despite

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319. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

320. While painting in a fury in his lair, Faust attempts to capture Helen on canvas while she rather inertly sprawled across the bed like a rag doll. In astonishment, Faust professes to his muse: "Tu, Elena, mi sei impenetrabile. Io ho scoperto le leggi dell'universo, ho creato macchine per andare nel cosmo, ho conosciuto e posseduto la natura, ma la tua bellezza, Elena, mi sfugge." [You, Helen, are impenetrable. I have uncovered the laws of the universe, created machines capable of reaching the cosmos, and come to know and possess nature, but you, Helen, your beauty eludes me.] Confounded at his failure to decode, master, and reproduce Helen on canvas, Faust is at a loss. Despite his best efforts to dominate and manipulate his muse, Helen and her beauty ever evade his apprehension, domination, and representation. See *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

321. Ibid.

322. Ibid.

Fausta's fatalistic outlook, she does not give up on the love affair. She proceeds with caution, fearing the threat of persecution and violence her beloved and she would face if she were to passionately embrace her in public. Considering the consequences of being openly intimate with another woman in a Catholic, cisheteropatriarchal society, Fausta takes care to only caresses Primrose behind closed doors, in the privacy of her villa. Unfortunately, Fausta's hesitancy to show affection for her beloved in public wears on Primrose. Toward the end of the second flashback, Primrose becomes increasingly irritated by Fausta's reluctance to be close to her in the public sphere. Standing by the seaside, the sky showing the first hint of sunset, Fausta and Primrose exchange words. Despite having accepted a ring from Fausta, Primrose, fed up, declares: "Tu sei fatta d'aria. Io ho bisogno di realtà. Ho bisogno di essere stretta. Ho bisogno di essere stretta. Tu non sai baciare, mi sfiori appena. Non cercarmi più."[323] ["It's like you're made of air. I need something real. I need you to pull me close. I need you to hold me tight. You can't even kiss. You barely touch your lips to mine. Don't bother coming by or seeking me out anymore."] Primrose takes off the ring, gives it back to female-bodied Fausta, and walks away, abandoning the protagonist. Remembering and reliving the agony of losing Primrose, male-bodied Faust steeps in suffering. Having been forsaken by both his beloved as well as his muse, Faust resolves to turn his back on beauty. In Primrose's absence, Faust declares: "Ho stretto tra le mie mani la mia sete di bellezza e ne ho fatto tele. La mia maledetta solitudine e voglia di ucciderti sono i poemi che scriverò e brucerò."[324] ["I produced paintings out of my thirst for beauty, a thirst which I have held in my own two hands. Now, fueled by the accursed state of solitude I find myself in coupled with my desire to destroy you, I shall compose epic works and

323. Ibid.

324. Ibid.

then consume them with flame."] Still reeling from his recent loss of Helen, Faust lashes out, unleashing bitterness and animosity. After pinpointing beauty as the root cause of his suffering, Faust vows to burn each and every beautiful work of art that he can get his hands on. Consumed by rancor and despondency, "Faust decide di bruciare tutte le opere che rappresentano la bellezza."[325] ["Faust resolves to burn every single work of art that portrays beauty."] In his endeavor to rid the world of beauty, Faust is joined by "un pugno di coraggiosi divorati dall'odio e dall'invidia, al grido di: 'A morte la bellezza.' "[326] ["a handful of followers devoured by hate and resentment, followers who respond to Faust's call: 'Death to beauty!' "] Having decided to wage war against beauty, Faust and his disciples carry armfuls of artwork down a darkened side street and dump them on the ground in a heap. Fervently proclaiming "Bruciamo la bellezza!"[327] ["Let beauty burn!"] and then "Bruciamo l'arte! Bruciamo Elena!"[328] ["Let us set art alight! Let Helen burn!"], Faust sets the heap of art ablaze and his followers and he rejoice in their acts of annihilation: laughing, imbibing liquor, and smoking while watching beautiful works of art that they themselves created turn to ash.

Accompanying the bacchanalian frenzy and bonfire is a mix of synchronous and asynchronous sound: on the one hand, unsettling, atonal violin music played by Mephistopheles,

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325. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 23.

326. Ibid.

327. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

328. Ibid.

and on the other, an aria from Arrigo Boito's avant-garde opera *Mefistofele* [*Mephistopheles*].[329] In the second act of Boito's unorthodox opera, while Mephistopheles sings "Ecco il mondo, vuoto e tondo" ["Here is the World, Empty and Round"], the fiendish protagonist holds the attention of a crowd of streghe [witches] and stregoni [wizards] and serves as their source of entertainment and incitement. Mephistopheles and his aria rouse and enthrall Boito's rabble of enchanters, who pipe in to conclude the song: "Ridiamo! Ridiamo! Ridiamo! Ridiamo!"[330] ["Let us laugh! Let us laugh! Let us laugh! Let us laugh!"] Just as Mephistopheles's music enraptures the witches and wizards onstage in Boito's opera, it also stimulates and delights Faust's followers on screen in Mangiacapre's film. As the asynchronous chorus rings out and the aria accelerates in the soundtrack, Faust's disciples and he become more and more intoxicated, both physically and metaphysically. When "Ecco il mondo, vuoto e tondo" concludes and the jarring yet mesmerizing musical overlay comes to an end, Mangiacapre's Faust throws down his cigarette and his face loses any trace of elation. The synchronous, atonal cacophony persists, however. As Mephistopheles slows his bowing, the atonal cacophony starts to fade away, and the flames die down, Faust is overcome with anguish. Setting fire to beauty does not yield satisfaction for Faust, for, while Mephistopheles's rousing music and the bonfire briefly succeed in distracting

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329. Debuting in Milan in 1868, the original version of Arrigo Boito's avant-garde opera was more than five hours long. Due to the unusual length and other unconventional qualities of the original, Boito received a great deal of criticism and so opted to drastically rework his *Mefistofele* in order to render it canon-worthy. The second version of Boito's work was first performed in Bologna in 1875 and was received with critical acclaim. While Boito shortened his opera and modified it in order to more closely conform to melodramatic conventions of his day, he managed to maintain the avant-garde spirit of his work, which is based on both Part I and Part II of Goethe's *Faust*. For more on the treatment of Faust in symphonic, choral, operatic, and ballet works, see Lorna Fitzsimmons and Charles McKnight, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Faust in Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). See also Arrigo Boito, *Mefistofele: opera di Arrigo Boito, rappresentata al Teatro Comunitativo di Bologna il 4 ottobre 1875* (Milan: R. Stabilimento Ricordi, 1875.

330. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

him from his despondency, they do little to advance him toward his goal of recovering his foregone inner beauty and achieving harmony of body and soul.

Although it seems that Faust has unequivocally turned his back on beauty, hope remains. The protagonist does not find satisfaction in beauty alight and comes to realize that despite his pain over losing Helen, he still reveres the beautiful. In the novel, Faust becomes cognizant of his continued dedication to Helen only after he is inadvertently killed at the hands of his frenzied followers and subsequently reborn. While Faust and his disciples are about to begin rampaging across Rome, they stumble upon a particular painting in the Church of Saint Louis of the French. The beauty of the painting strikes Faust to his core and he no longer is driven to decimate beauty and wage this war.

> Ma arrivato di fronte ad un quadro di Caravaggio nella chiesa di San Luigi dei Francesi, Faust si inginocchia e piange. Potere dell'arte. Non può, non potrà mai distruggere, deturpare, uccidere un'opera d'arte. Faust cerca di impedire il delitto. Ha potuto negare, sfigurare la bellezza del suo corpo di donna ma non potrà mai violare la bellezza fuori di sé [. . .][331]
>
> [Happening upon one of Caravaggio's paintings in the Church of Saint Louis of the French, Faust kneels down and begins to sob. The power of art. He cannot and could not ever disfigure, debilitate, or destroy such a beautiful work of art. Faust attempts to prevent the trespass. Despite having denied his beauty and mutilated his female body, Faust is not capable of committing violence against beauty that is not his own [. . .]]

Bowing down before beauty, face stained with tears, Faust experiences the awe-inspiring, restorative power of Caravaggio's work of art and as a result regrets the error in his ways. Resolving to halt the rioters that he himself incited, Faust first implores them to turn back: "Lasciatelo stare, tornate indietro." ["Forget about it, get out of here."] He then resorts to using his body as a shield for the canvas. And then, "Faust nel tentativo di salvare il quadro è

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331. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 23.

massacrato. Ma la morte lo raggiunge distratto dal suo corpo; il suo corpo è lì nella tela del Caravaggio, nel tentativo di salvarla, di impedire il delitto."[332] ["In his attempt to save the Caravaggio painting and prevent the trespass, Faust is slain. Since his body lays entangled with the canvas, Faust finds himself distracted from his mangled body when death finds him."] While his body expires, Faust's mind wanders to his former object of desire and source of inspiration: Helen. As Faust slips away, he comes to realize that even had his band of followers and he succeeded in burning each and every beautiful work of art in Rome, traces of Helen would have endured. In his final moments, Faust manages to fathom the indestructible, everlasting nature of beauty. In spite of the fact that his muse abandoned him and that her beautiful body is no longer within his reach, Faust realizes that traces of Helen persist and that beauty is boundless, present not only in the physical realm but also "oltre il visibile"[333] ["beyond the visible"]. Extending beyond the bounds of material, the magnificence of Helen (or, in other words, beauty) cannot be confined nor dominated.

> Elena non sta scritta sui libri, non sta confinata nei musei, Elena vola e ride ancora sulla scopa ed esce dalla finestra, passa attraverso le pareti, Elena non conosce soffitti, Elena apre la miseria dandole ricchezze dalle nature che mai saranno esaurite. Elena è contro il potere, il possesso, il denaro. Elena non si può comprare, Elena non si potrà mai dominare, Elena è eterna.[334]

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332. Ibid., 24.

333. Ibid.

334. Mangiacapre's description of Helen, confined neither by walls nor ceilings, laughing with joy while darting in and out of windows on her broomstick, recalls the figure of Mikhail Bulgakov's Margarita Nikolayevna in his Faustian novel. After making a pact with Azazello, one of the devil's henchmen, in the hope of getting her beloved the Master back, Azazello provides her with a supernatural salve to spread across her entire body. Once Margarita covers herself in ointment, she becomes: "Invisible and free! Invisible and free!" After a broomstick appears at her door, Margarita mounts it and zooms about Moscow, flying past open windows and commenting on their conversations and then flying into an apartment to take revenge on a literary critic who rejected her beloved Master's manuscript and wreaking havoc on Latunsky's property. Invisible and free, flying in and out of windows, Margarita, like Helen is unconstrained. See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 24. See also See Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita*, 201.

> [Helen cannot be captured by the written word. She cannot be confined in museums. Helen can be found flying on her broom, laughing, coming in and out of windows, passing through walls. Helen knows not the bounds of ceilings. Helen opens the door for despair, providing it with a fountain of resources to draw from that will never run dry. Helen is against power, possession, and money. Helen cannot be purchased. Helen can never be dominated. Helen is eternal.]

An emblem of beauty, Helen is both boundless and timeless: she cannot be contained by words on a page nor by brushstrokes on a canvas. It is for this reason that Faust fails in his many attempts to paint Helen. Beauty defies representation and cannot be held captive by any artist or artistic medium. As an indomitable and ubiquitous force, beauty cannot be caged in nor eradicated. As Faust fades away, he apprehends the impenetrable, indomitable, enduring nature of beauty and in his epiphany rededicates himself to his muse. Death takes him, however Faust reawakens, owing to his renewed devotion to Helen. Roused by beauty and born again, Faust finds new purpose and commits himself to "distruggere miseria da questa terra e prenderla per [. . .] Elena."[335] ["banishing wretchedness from the face of the earth and eradicating it in the name of [. . .] Helen."] In resolving to rid the world of anguish and despair and to dedicate himself to beauty without seeking mastery over it, Faust distances himself from his infernal fate. Assured in his devotion to Helen and no longer attempting to appropriate and dominate that which is not his own – the beauty of others – Faust acknowledges more readily beauty in nature and even encounters a faint resurgence of his own inner beauty. Faust divulges that foreign feelings of desire and inspiration – forfeited long ago along with his female body – seem to reawaken within him: "E ancora risorgo e rinasco come la primavera, ancora porto la mia musica con me nella testa sempre aperta del mio desiderio di libertà."[336] ["And yet, I am born again. I

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335. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 25.

336. Ibid.

come back to life, like the spring. Reborn, I rise. I feel artistic inspiration surge within me and yearn for freedom once more."] Faust begins to feel that which he treasured most as Fausta: the desire to create and the yearning to be unbound. Faust's rededication of himself to Helen precipitates in the resurgence of his long-forgotten, forfeited female self: Fausta. Through his reconsideration of and renewed commitment to beauty, Faust is put back in touch with his, or better yet, Fausta's sense of artistic inspiration and desire for freedom.

While the cinematic adaptation does not incorporate Faust bowing down in veneration to the Caravaggio and attempting to shield the painting from his followers, the butchering of his body and its fusion with the canvas, or his recommitment to Helen during his demise and subsequent resurrection, Faust's renewed devotion to beauty is present in the filmic text. His reintroduction and rededication to beauty occurs shortly after the bonfire, when he encounters Margherita[337] for the first time. Margherita and Faust's meeting is engineered by Mephistopheles, with the cruelest of intentions. Mephistopheles calls Faust on his landline and lures the protagonist, who is alone and adrift in his lair, to the piano performance of an extraordinary female artist. During the phone conversation, while Faust desperately clutches the phone and stares into the shattered mirror in his bedroom, Mephistopheles sits like royalty on a

337. While Mangiacapre's Margherita bears the same name as the figure of Faust's beloved in Goethe's tragedy, she is not a revision of this character. There is a character included in the film who is comparable to Goethe's Margarete and that is Primrose (not Margherita). Faust's beloved is named Primrose in the filmic adaptation of *Faust/Fausta* and Anita in the novel. Mangiacapre's Margherita is not a figure that Faust yearns to conquest. Rather, she serves as a source of inspiration for him. He desires her company for in the presence of her beauty and artistry he feels complete, or in other words, at harmony once more. Margherita's character in Mangiacapre's novel is named *Fausta* and is, in fact, a manifestation of Faust's inner beauty that he has repressed. While Margherita, an extraordinary artist from Paris, cannot be likened to Margerete, an ingenuous provincial maiden, a connection can be made between the two Faust figures in terms of why they seek female companionship. Both Goethe's and Mangiacapre's Fausts perceive female characters as a means by which to regain a sense of wholeness they lack. As Alice Raphael affirms, Goethe's Faust yearns "to unite with the feminine side of his nature, in order to recover the inner world of feelings, his lost values." Mangiacapre's Faust is also searching for that which he has forsaken: Fausta and her artistic inspiration and appreciation for beauty. Thus, despite the disparate quests of Goethe's Faust for transcendent knowledge and Mangiacapre's Faust for harmony of body and soul, the protagonists are linked in their conviction that peace and wholeness may be possible through one sort of female companionship or another. See Raphael, *Goethe and the Philosophers' Stone*, 152.

throne-like sculpture[338] in the center of his laboratory. Donning a white surgical coat and a doctor's headgear, Mephistopheles describes the female artist to Faust over the phone: the woman is "bella"[339] ["gorgeous"], "sexy,"[340] and "di un'intelligenza . . ."[341] ["ingenious. . . "]. After boasting of Margherita's exceptional beauty and erudition, Mephistopheles specifies that although many men think all women are alike, she is not like the others: "Questa è speciale"[342] ["This one is special"]. With a hint of derisive compassion in his voice, Mephistopheles warns the protagonist: "Povero Faust, ti sentirai complessato. Vieni al suo concerto e questa volta incrocerai il tuo vero inferno."[343] ["Poor Faust, you'll find yourself in agony. Come to her concert. Come and you shall cross paths with your own personal hell."] In portending the protagonist's agony, Mephistopheles not only forewarns Faust of his impending anguish but also peaks his curiosity, ensnaring him and ensuring that he will attend Margherita's piano performance.

In this sequence, an overlay of synchronous and asynchronous sound is employed once more: while Faust's telephone rings and Mephistopheles and he speak within the diegesis, the prelude to the "Prologo in cielo" ["Prologue in the Heavens"] of Boito's unorthodox opera booms triumphantly, beyond of the bounds of the narrative world. The momentous prelude

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338. Award-winning sculptor, photographer, actor, novelist, and poet Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe (1948-2018) was an accomplished Neapolitan artist. Mangiacapra was deeply inspired by mythos and involved with the Nemesiache since the inception of the feminist dimension in 1970. Teresa Mangiacapra acted in many of her sister Lina Mangiacapre's films, featuring as La Strega in *Biancaneve/La Strega* (1982), Anna in *Didone non è morta* (1987), and Margherita in *Faust/Fausta* (1991).

339. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

340. Ibid.

341. Ibid.

342. Ibid.

343. Ibid.

playing during this sequence incorporates a number of pronounced notes in unison as well as intriguing shifts from minor ascending to major descending triads. The tenuto notes played in unison evoke a concept central to the quest of the protagonist: oneness. As the second lengthy note in unison reverberates extradiegetically, within the narrative, Faust approaches his broken mirror, telephone in hand. A medium long shot of Faust staggering toward the mirror is followed by two close-ups of the looking glass itself, reflecting back Faust's face: while the first shot displays the cracks in the mirror and Faust's face in fragments, the second is blurred, effectively erasing the dividing lines and featuring a reflection of the protagonist's face that is no longer fractured. Mangiacapre's shift in depth of field through the use of rack focus visually unites a divided Faust, evoking the concept of unity. Elicited sonically and reinforced visually, the notion of oneness proves recurrent in this sequence. As Faust picks up the ringing telephone and holds it to his face, uttering Mephistopheles's name, however, the focus abruptly shifts back, putting the shards of glass and a fragmented Faust on view once more. Throughout the sequence, there are a few more changes in focus: back to unity, back to fragmentation, and back to unity yet again. The back and forth in the depth of field echoes the continual shifting of major to minor in Boito's prelude. As noted by Michele Girardi, in the momentous prelude to the prologue of Boito's opera, "the alternation between major and minor mode is used almost obsessively."[344] Such incessant variation booming in asynchrony as Faust speaks with Mephistopheles results in a

344. Michele Girardi, "*Mefistofele* Triumphant - From the Real to the Ideal," trans. Allan Altman, in *The Oxford Handbook of Faust in Music*, ed. Lorna Fitzsimmons and Charles McKnight, 283-308 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 294.

sense of duality. The triads, ascending in a minor key (first in B-flat minor, later in E minor)[345] and descending in a major one (first in B-flat major, later in E major) serve as a paragon of Boito's persistent modulation in the prelude. Rather than one symmetrical set of triads going up and coming down in the same key, Boito writes two variations: the notes take one way up and a slightly different way back down. This shift from an ascending minor chord to a descending major one signals a partitioning, or more specifically, a bifurcation. The sense of division that emanates from the bifurcated arpeggios lies at the heart of Faust/Fausta's struggle, for, like the triads, the protagonist is split in two. In addition to signaling the notion of bifurcation, since the triads are repeated twofold, the music fluctuates, evoking a sense of instability: first in minor, then in major, back to minor, back to major. The wavering back and forth is resolved with the common root of the triads (B-flat, later E) played tenuto and in unison. Only after both the minor and major triads are played does the melody sound in unison. For both the melody and the protagonist, oneness only enters within the bounds of possibility subsequent to the union of the variations: on the one hand, the marriage of the major and minor arpeggios, and on the other, the fusion of Faust and Fausta. Perhaps a harbinger for what is to come, the prelude fluctuates back and forth and back and forth and yet concludes in unison.

3. Recovering Fausta and Reuniting the Self

As a prelude is an introductory passage of music, Faust's introduction to Margherita serves as a sort of a new beginning for him. Upon hearing Margherita play the piano with her

345. The musical phrase begins with an ascending triad, proceeds to a descending one, and concludes with the root of the chord. The first time this phrase surfaces in Boito's prelude to the prologue, the triad ascends in B-flat minor (i.e. B-flat, D-flat, F), descends in B-flat major (i.e. F, D, B-flat), and concludes with the root (i.e B-flat) sustained in unison. Later on in the piece, the same musical phrase surfaces, however in a different key: the triad ascends in E minor (i.e. E, G, B), descends in E major (i.e. B, G-sharp, E), and concludes with the root (i.e. E) played sostenuto in unison.

very unique and unorthodox style, Faust feels esteem for beauty rise within him. In awe of Margherita's artistic genius, Faust experiences a resurgence in inspiration and resolves to recommit himself to his quest to reunite himself with beauty and accomplish nemesis. Faust realizes that although his attempt at a union with Helen did not lead to cosmic harmony, he may still have a chance at reaching an equilibrium of body and soul by connecting with Margherita. Overjoyed, Faust professes: "Esiste un altro sole. Esiste un altro inferno. Esiste l'altra."[346] ["There *is* another source of light. There *is* another source of darkness. The Other, she really exists."] Beside himself with ardor and elation, Faust ponders the potential bliss that could ensue should his union with Margherita succeed. Unsure of whether or not connecting with Margherita will ultimately prove beatific or not, Faust considers the brilliant female artist as a potential source of brightness or of darkness deep as hell, that is, as a catalyst of joy or agony. Completely mesmerized, Faust watches Margherita pluck the strings of the baby grand with her fingers, play and clank the keys with fingers, hands, and feet all the while whipping about her full head of long, dark-brown hair. Fully liberated in her performance, unconcerned with her top hat toppling off her head, Margherita remains totally engrossed in her music-making until she concludes her concert. Also riveted is Faust, who finds himself so enthralled by Margherita and her artistic genius that he feels complete once more. Faust feels at peace in the presence of the extraordinary

346. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

female artist, a character who is, in fact, called *Fausta*[347] rather than Margherita in the novel. The talented, enigmatic female artist in the top hat, called *Fausta* in the antinovel and Margherita in the film, is ultimately a manifestation of Faust's repressed inner beauty, brilliance that he has managed to douse but not extinguish.

Purportedly born in Paris to Italian emigrant parents, Margherita has a "fascino, un magnetismo che sconvolg[e]"[348] ["a disconcerting yet compelling allure, a sort of perplexing magnetism"] about her. An allure which recalls that of the golden eyed, androgynous beauty, Fausta as well as that of the dynamic, androgynous director herself: Lina Mangiacapre. Many were drawn to and captivated by Mangiacapre: whether by her striking appearance, remarkable presence, philosophical acuity, or unique ability to connect with people. Journalist Alessandra Pigliaru describes Mangiacapre's presence as "straordinaria"[349] ["extraordinary"] and specifies that while physically she may have been petite, metaphysically she was mighty. Pigliaru affirms that Mangiacapre had "un corpo esile e una potenza formidabile"[350] ["a delicate body and yet formidable strength"]. In addition to the potency of her presence, Mangiacapre's ability to inspire

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347. In order to distinguish between pre-Faust Fausta with blonde hair and golden eyes and concurrent-Faust Fausta with a top hat, dressed in black, I will refer to the former as Fausta and the latter as *Fausta* in italics. Second, the name change from *Fausta* to Margherita in the filmic adaptation may be linked to a discussion that takes place between Faust and *Fausta*, shortly before he begins his sojourn in the asylum. In the novel, in an attempt to convince *Fausta* that he was indeed once female-bodied, Faust becomes increasing incoherent: "Faust si avvicina tremante a *Fausta* 'Io - il maschile è Margherita; io sono una donna, io, Margherita, immagine inventata, Faust nascosto, io, taciuta.' " ["Trembling, Faust approaches *Fausta*: 'I - the male it's Margherita; I am a woman, I, Margherita, a vision dreamt up, Faust hidden, I, silent.' "] (Italics are mine.) See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 60. Faust's linguistic incoherence furthers hand in hand with his emotional distress until he reaches an apex and ends up in a mental institution. Earlier in the text, Faust refers to a relatively impalpable female character who overwhelms him with tenderness and ends up committing suicide by throwing herself in the Seine. He calls this character Margherita as well. Faust describes Margherita largely the same way he does Fausta: both were beautiful, caring, inspiring female figures who, due to his rejection, have met their end. Whether the two names are meant to refer to one single character or not, the overlap is unmistakable. By naming *Fausta* Margherita in the filmic adaptation, Mangiacapre concretizes the connection between the two, suggesting that perhaps the incorporeal Margherita mentioned every now and again in the novel really does refer to disembodied golden eyed girl, Fausta.

348. Ibid., 51.

349. Alessandra Pigliaru, "Regina delle Amazzoni postumana," *il manifesto*, March 7, 2015.

350. Pigliaru, "Regina delle Amazzoni postumana."

spiritual renewal contributed to her magnetism. Silvana Campese, a fellow Nemesiaca, attests to Mangiacapre's "capacità di provocare una sorta di risveglio spirituale, soprattutto nelle donne, tal che in molti casi riusciva a stimolarne una nuova o accresciuta consapevolezza interiore"[351] ["capacity to rouse a sort of spiritual rebirth, in most cases in women, an awakening that more often than not gave rise to a new consciousness or expanded knowledge of the inner-self"]. Campese affirms that Mangiacapre connected with many on a deep level and inspired metaphysical renewal in almost "tutte/i coloro che ebbero l'opportunità di starle accanto"[352] ["everyone who had the chance to spend time with and become close to her"]. Nemesiache Conni Capobianco, Fausta Base, and Bruna Felletti,[353] all of whom had the opportunity to spend a substantial amount of time with Mangiacapre and become close with her, corroborate Campese's account of Mangiacapre's metaphysical acuity, that is, of her ability to connect with and inspire women on a spiritual level.[354] Along with women, Mangiacapre had especially close philosophical relationships with members of the proletariat. As a college student majoring in Philosophy, Mangiacapre spent a considerable amount of time at a café by the sea in Mergellina "fare filosofia con i pescatori e camerieri di Mergellina che [si] chiamavano Socrate. Appena arrivav[a] si radunavano attorno a [lei], cominciava[n]o a parlare, a ridere di questioni

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351. Silvana Campese, *La Nemesi di Medea* (Naples: L'Inedito, 2019), 22.

352. Campese, *La Nemesi di Medea*, 22.

353. In conversation with Fausta Base via Skype on October 29, 2019, she confirmed that Fausta is indeed her given name and that there is no strict relation between Mangiacapre's protagonist and her own life.

354. In conversation with Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa at a café in Naples on May 11, 2019; with Fausta Base at Solfatara in the Phlegraean Fields in Cuma on May 15, 2019; and with Bruna Felletti/Karma at the Casa Internazionale delle Donne [The International Women's House] in Rome on May, 24 2019, all three Nemesians brought up and discussed Mangiacapre's extraordinary metaphysical acuity, that is, her remarkable ability to see what lies within.

filosofiche."[355] ["philosophizing with fishermen and waiters who would call her Socrates. As soon as she would arrive, they would gather around her and everyone would start talking Philosophy and laughing."] A philosophical magnet for many, Mangiacapre shone bright: intellectually, spiritually, and physically. Just as many were mesmerized by and drawn to Mangiacapre, Faust is fascinated with Margherita. Margherita, like Mangiacapre, is a brilliant and alluring artist. From musical aptitude to unconventional artistry, from enigmatic demeanor to theatrical attire, Margherita is dressed in the likeness of Mangiacapre. In fact, the dynamic filmmaker is not only aesthetically but also genetically related to the actor on screen, as Margherita is played by her sister Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe. A spitting image of her older sister, Teresa Mangiacapra dons all black: "i suoi pantaloni e stivali neri, con la sua tuba e degli enormi occhiali scuri"[356] ["her black pants, black boots, dark top hat, and enormous, dark sunglasses"]. Her accessories and costume mirror her sister's signature look: "[o]cchiali colorati e grandi che tuttavia non coprivano il volto solare, minuto e sorridente, un cilindro nero inconfondibile e stivali da cavallerizza"[357] ["[l]arge, colorful sunglasses that did not manage to block out the radiance emanating from her petite, smiling face; an unmistakable black top hat; and riding boots"]. Donning the black pants, the boots, and the top hat, Margherita appears on screen as Mangiacapre incarnate. On top of apparel, Margherita's performance style emulates that of Mangiacapre. Margherita's concert during which she moves her entire body, playing the piano

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355. Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache began printing their feminist art and culture zine *Manifesta* in 1988 and put out issues for eight consecutive years, from 1988-1995. They did not publish the zine in 1996, however, and when they resumed printing in 1997, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache labelled the 1997 issues of *Manifesta* as "*Anno 1*" ["Year 1"]. See Nadia Nappo, "Napoli Frontale: Intervista a Lina Mangiacapre," *Manifesta*: *Il diverso della scrittura*, July 1998, 4.

356. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 50.

357. Pigliaru, "Regina delle Amazzoni postumana."

with her hands and feet, is a simulation of one of Mangiacapre's piano performances, during which she mixes dance and music, erasing the ostensible bounds between the artistic disciplines.[358] Further, like Mangiacapre, Margherita makes art and discusses philosophy with a number of women. Margherita and her cohort pass the time together dancing, playing music, taking photos, reading poetry, etc. Margherita, like Mangiacapre, is a source of hope for those seeking oneness. Mangiacapre, as the pioneer of the profoundly harmonious way-of-being otherwise known as the Nemesiache had the unique ability to assist those seeking nemesis. Just as Mangiacapre served as a source of inspiration for many Nemesiache, opening the gateway and showing them the way to reach cosmic harmony, Margherita is, in fact, Faust's only hope for achieving nemesis. To reach an equilibrium of body and soul, Faust must metaphysically embrace and physically fuse with Margherita, who is the embodiment of his repressed feminine side and rejected female body.

Notwithstanding the fact that a union with Margherita is Faust's only hope to accomplish nemesis, the enigmatic artist does not embrace Faust forthwith. Although consistently convivial in her interactions with him, Margherita is wary of Faust and his fascination with her. When Margherita finishes her piano performance, Faust retrieves her top hat from the floor and approaches the extraordinary artist in awe. After handing her the top hat, Faust introduces himself with trepidation. He entreats Margherita to grant him the pleasure of walking her home and when she replies with geniality and a few chuckles that she is perfectly capable of walking home on her own, Faust pleads with her: "Un tuo sguardo, una sola parola vale più di tutto il

358. *Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo*, directed by Nadia Pizzuti (2015; Italy: FogliadiLimone, 2015).

sapere del mondo."[359] ["A mere glance from you, one word from your lips is more meaningful than all earthly knowledge."] Margherita permits Faust to accompany her to a dance club, where she heads to the dance floor, moving with grace. Margherita dances by herself, as liberated as ever. Faust watches her in euphoria and later, when they part ways, feels discordance creep back in. Faust yearns to dispel the feeling of fragmentation and seeks Margherita out again, finding her among her female friends in serene garden, a locus amoenus of sorts, out of time and full of palm trees. While Margherita plays the recorder, one of her companions recites poetry, another sketches, and yet another takes photographs. Making art together in harmony, Margherita's mates and she sense Faust's presence and halt their creation to address him. Faust assures the cohort that he only wants a word with their leader: "Per me, miserabile mortale di sesso maschile chiaramente non c'è posto. Calma, calma. Non sono venuto per voi ma per la vostra dea. È solo da lei che accetto ordini."[360] ["Obviously there is no place for me here, miserable male mortal that I am. Relax, relax everyone. I haven't come for any of you, I only seek a moment of your goddess's time. I accept orders from her alone."] Margherita acquiesces to Faust's request and they begin to converse, expressing similar sentiments: both feel lost and adrift and that they do not quite belong. Faust asks Margherita if she too finds herself "sola"[361] ["alone"], lost "nei fiumi di ipocrisia e di durezza"[362] ["in the torrential hypocrisy and arduousness of life"]. In a bit of a daze, Margherita responds: "Non so più se cerco di essere capita. Capita, perché? Amata, perché? Chi sono io? Io non sono niente, niente di definito, niente da stringere, niente da comprendere.

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359. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

360. Ibid.

361. Ibid.

362. Ibid.

Sola [. . .]"[363] ["I'm not sure if I'm really even trying to be understood anymore. To be understood? Why seek understanding? And to be loved? Why seek love? Who am I after all? I'm no one. I'm nothing: not definable, embraceable, or comprehensible. What I am is alone [. . .]"] Impossible to fathom or define, Margherita is utterly unique. She defies categorization and is therefore profoundly alone. In the novel, she goes as far as to say that she feels " '[s]ola con il rifiuto e l'impossibilità di agire per [sé], il [se] è per le altre; altre indefinite che si definiscono per definir[la]. Non più l'uomo né la donna. Nessuna relazione, non più questo essere umano.' "[364] [" '[a]lone, without the possibility of acting for [her] own sake. Existing on behalf of others; others who are not defined but define themselves in order to define [her]. No longer considered a man or a woman. Not relating to anyone in any way, no longer even considered a human being.' "] Despite experiencing a profound sense of estrangement from herself and others, Margherita comes to sense that "Faust è una parte di sé"[365] ["Faust is a part of her"] and that the two of them have "un destino comune"[366] ["a shared fate"]. In spite of the perplexing intuition that Faust's destiny and her own are somehow entwined, Margherita is not entirely convinced when Faust apprehensively conveys to her that he was once, in fact, female-bodied. When Faust reveals his truth with trepidation: " 'Io - [. . .] io sono una donna, io, [. . .]' "[367] [" 'I - [. . .] I am a woman, I, [. . .]' "], Margherita bemusedly dismisses the profession: " 'È inutile che cerchi di confondermi, tu sei Faust.' "[368] [" 'It's no use to try and confuse me about who you are, Faust, you're a man.'

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363. Ibid.

364. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 56.

365. Ibid., 59.

366. Ibid.

367. Ibid., 60.

368. Ibid., 61.

”] Margherita’s wry smile and refusal to give credence to Faust’s avowal push him to the psychological brink and over the edge: Faust’s linguistic incoherence intensifies hand in hand with his emotional distress, reaching an apex and resulting in his institutionalization. Like the protagonist of *Faust/Fausta*, the Faustian figure with the “anxious-looking brown eyes”[369] in Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita* also ends up in a psychiatric facility. After pouring his heart and soul into the writing of a novel on Pontius Pilate and being lambasted by literary critics, the Master loses his grip on reality. Brought on by the profound humiliation of his failed attempt at publishing, the Master begins to experience bouts of paranoia and depression and institutionalizes himself, deserting his beloved Margarita Nikolayevna. Neither Mangiacapre’s Faust nor Bulgakov’s Master remain in the institution in perpetuity, however. While in Bulgakov’s version the Master’s beloved makes a deal with the devil to get him out, in Mangiacapre’s novel Margherita, a manifestation of Faust’s repressed feminine, comes to fetch him and leads him to the fated Grotto of the Sybil. Both Faustian figures are driven mad by others’ denial or refusal of their realities. On the one hand, the Master pours himself into his novel and shares this cherished creation with the critic Latunsky only to receive rejection in return. On the other, Faust divulges an intimate truth, central to the core of his being, with Margherita and is met with skepticism rather than acceptance. While there are few parallels to be drawn between Bulgakov’s and Mangiacapre’s novels, the psychological fragility of the male artist out on a limb, seeking understanding and approval is a point of contact. Admitted and

369. Bulgakov, *The Master and Margarita*, 110.

interned in the Frullone Facility,[370] Mangiacapre's Faust remains confined within the bounds of the asylum until Margherita pays him a visit to extricate and lead him to a truly therapeutic environment: the arcane yet restorative Grotta della Sibilla [Grotto of the Sibyl] in nearby Cuma.[371]

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370. The name of the fictional asylum in Mangiacapre's antinovel is also the name of a real-life one: L'Ospedale psichiatrico Frullone. Local women were "shipped off to the asylum for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to pregnancy out of wedlock, exhibition of androgyny or masculinity, rejection of heterosexuality in favour of pansexuality or lesbianism, postpartum or other types of depression, post-traumatic stress, psychosis, or the refusal to conform to the stereotypical gender roles of daughter, wife, and mother." In protest of women being sentenced without appeal, confined, deprived of liberty and property, isolated, and subjected to torturous treatment from coma-inducing insulin shock to brain-damaging electroshock, "Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took to the asylum with costumes, musical instruments, and their Super 8 mm camera in tow. [. . .] Owing to outcries from anti-institutional psychiatrists, photographers, and filmmakers denouncing the domination and suppression of madness in the late 1960s, a decade later the Italian Parliament passed Law 180, rendering treatment of the mentally ill voluntary. Even though the so-called Basaglia Law overwhelmingly passed in 1978, the Frullone Facility in Naples remained open and operational for nearly two decades longer, until 1996. During their two-year artistic occupation of the Frullone Asylum, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took a creative approach to interacting with the institutionalised women: they donned costumes and painted faces, played music and moved to the beat, and performed and made an avant-garde film with them. While Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache did direct the film, woman the camera, bring the costumes, provide the musical instruments, and encourage the collaborative making of art, they did so with the aim of collectively exploring [. . .] Rather than pressuring the [. . .] nonconformist women – to bridle and quash their purported madness, Mangiacapre encouraged them to express it and themselves for all of who they were – normative and nonnormative parts alike – by engaging in artistic acts of creation." For more, see Emerson, "Reframing Madness with Avant-Garde Film: Lina Mangiacapre's Feminist Collaboration at the Asylum," 324-325. During Faust's stay at the fictional Frullone, he regrettably does not have the chance to get in touch with his nonconformist side. Faust's hiatus from the narrative world is represented formally in the text with an abrupt shift from prose to terse, visual poetry. While the novel is largely composed of fluent prose, leading up to Faust's institutionalization there is a breakdown in Faust's ability to communicate. The break from prose to poetry signals an interruption in Faust's rational capacity and his state of turmoil. Once Faust leaves the Frullone Facility, the prose resumes, formally distinguishing the period of Faust's internment from much of the rest of the novel. See also M. Colluci, B. Norcio, and C. Sindici, "De-institutionalisation in Italy: between ethics and politics" (paper presented at the European Conference on Mental Health, Rotterdam, March 7-10, 2000), 6; Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 68-85; Lina Mangiacapre, "Follia come poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare," *Rassegna del cinema femminista* 3-4, ed. Lina Mangiacapre, 9-11 (Naples: So.gra.me, 1978-1979); Paolo Russo, "Chiude il manicomio 'Così uccidono il nostro amore,' " *Repubblica*, Dec. 29, 1996.

371. The Grotto of the Sibyl is the ancient hollow from which the Cumean Sibyl once forecast the future. Despite being called Demo by Hyperocus and Deiphobe by Virgil, "her proper name seems to have been Amalthea." From the chambers and passages of her arcane and expansive hollow, Amalthea prophesied either with the spoken or written word. Still in existence, the grotto itself can be found alongside Lake Avernus in Cuma. Cuma (in Italian or English), *Cumae* (in Latin), or *Κύμη* (in Greek) was the first Greek settlement on the Italian peninsula. Approximately twenty-five years after establishing a Greek trading-post of *Pithecusae* (in Latin) or *Pithēkoũssai* (in Greek) on the island of Ischia, the Greeks crossed over to the mainland and inaugurated Cuma. Founded in c. 725 BC, Cuma rests on the Campi Flegrei [Phlegraean Fields], one of two volcanic epicenters in the Campania Region. As spaces of indomitable beauty endowed with metamorphic might, both epicenters of volcanic activity in the region, i.e., the Phlegraean Fields and the slopes of Mount Vesuvia, are of profound interest to the Nemesians. See Giuseppe Consoli Fiego, *Cumae and the Phlegraean Fields*, ed. Alma Reed, trans. Alma Reed (Naples: Mary E. Raiola, 1927), 190; Colin McEvedy, "Cumae" in *Cities of the Classical World*, ed. Douglas Stuart Oles, 128-131 (New York: Allen Lane, 2011).

On their journey through the Cumean Campi Flegrei [Phlegraean Fields][372] to the Grotto of the Sibyl, Faust and his "guida"[373] ["guide"] Margherita make their way by car and then by foot to the mysterious hollow by the Lake of Avernus. Margherita shares with Faust that within her " 'c'è una dualità fortissima' "[374] [" 'lies a profound sense of duality' "]. The doubleness that Margherita feels coupled with Faust's subsequent statement underscoring his own sense of duality prompt Margherita to lay faith in his professions. Faust proclaims that, until the day he dies, he will remember his double, Fausta, who lies dormant within. He further avows that he will not succeed in accomplishing nemesis unless Fausta learns to accept and embrace herself for all of who she is: metamorphic eyes, modulating voice, androgynous, nonconformist female body, and all. Addressing Margherita, Faust proclaims:

> io Faust non posso dimenticare [Fausta][375] [. . .] [Finché] non amerà la sua immagine e la sua testa e il suo ventre non ricomporranno il centro della nostra origine. Voi mi vedete pazzo perché di fronte all'incomprensibile razionale bruttezza, io porto bellezza indifesa incontaminata fragile e forte di questa sua fragile bianca fronte, [Fausta]-Faust, [Fausta] bianca, [Fausta] senza peccato senza alienazione.[376]
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> [I, Faust, could never forget [Fausta] [. . .] [Until] she manages to love herself on the inside and out: her appearance, her intellectual acuity, her body, womb and all,

372. Founded in c. 725 BC, Cuma rests on the Campi Flegrei [Phlegraean Fields], one of two volcanic epicenters in the Campania Region. As spaces of indomitable beauty endowed with metamorphic might, both epicenters of volcanic activity in the region, i.e., the Phlegraean Fields and the slopes of Mount Vesuvia, are of profound interest to the Nemesiache. See Giuseppe Consoli Fiego, *Cumae and the Phlegraean Fields*, ed. Alma Reed, trans. Alma Reed (Naples: Mary E. Raiola, 1927), 190.

373. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 122.

374. Ibid., 117.

375. While the original quote in the novel does not use Fausta here, I elect to in order to clarify that Faust is referring to that which he renounced: his nonconformist androgynous female body and artistic drive. In the novel, when Faust makes the profession he is addressing *Fausta* and says "finché Margherita non amerà" rather than "finché [Fausta] non amerà." Since *Fausta*'s character is named Margherita in the film, the original quote from the novel becomes abstruse, especially considering I refer to this character almost exclusively by the name used in the filmic adaptation: Margherita. See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 121.

376. Ibid., 121.

> however, we will not reach the core of our origin. You must think me crazy, for, on top of my rationality and baffling brutishness, I hold beauty within me: beauty that is unshielded, unadulterated, full of grace and might.]

As Margherita leads Faust through Cuma, toward the Acropolis, she realizes that she may have miscalculated and that perhaps the dark and desperate Faust had once been the graceful and inspired Fausta. Once they reach the entrance to the Grotto of the Sibyl, the enigmatic female artist encourages Faust: ‘‘Ricordati! Sei ancora in tempo! La Sibilla è la verità. Una volta dentro non potrai più vedere, non sapere. Uno di noi due ha sbagliato o forse entrambi. Sei disposto a rischiare?**'** ”[377] [“Listen to me, you can still make it in time! The Sibyl will reveal the truth. Once inside the grotto, you won’t have to stand it anymore: the not knowing. One of us has made a mistake or perhaps both of us have. Are you willing to risk it?”] Faust fails to grasp the underlying implications of Margherita’s query and cannot quite understand what exactly he would be risking by entering the Grotto. Mirthful and laughing, Margherita lets him in on her secret, that is, on the source of her division and duality: “ ‘Ma non hai ancora capito dunque, caro Faust che io ero un uomo?...’ ”[378] [“ ‘So, dear Faust, you haven’t gotten it yet, have you, that I was once a man?...’ ”] Astonished, Faust expresses his utter disbelief. Margherita, in turn, reminds Faust that the Cumean Sibyl will reveal the truth and all that he need do to confirm her claim would be to enter the Grotto. After crossing the threshold together, Margherita and Faust “scompa[iono] nella profondità della Grotta”[379] [“disappear into the depths of the Grotto”] and there they wait, bathed in moonlight, for dawn to come. The moon, a cyclical celestial body that

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377. Ibid., 122.

378. Ibid., 123.

379. Ibid.

slowly vanishes from the night sky only to be born again, shining and bright, is revelatory for those mortals gazing up in existential angst. As Mircea Eliade explicates,

> It was lunar symbolism that enabled man to relate and connect such heterogeneous things as: birth, becoming, death, and resurrection; the waters, plants, woman, fecundity, and immortality; the cosmic darkness, prenatal existence, and life after death, followed by a rebirth of lunar type ("light coming out of darkness"); weaving, the symbol of the "thread of life," fate, temporality, and death; and yet others. In most of the ideas of cycle, dualism, polarity, opposition, conflict, but also of reconciliation of contraries, of *coincidentia oppositorum*, were either discovered or clarified by virtue of lunar symbolism. We may even speak of a metaphysics of the moon, in the sense of a consistent system of "truths" relating to the mode of being peculiar to living creatures, to everything in the cosmos that shares in life, that is, in becoming, growth and waning, death and resurrection."[380]

Waning and waxing, the moon dematerializes and rematerializes in a circular, cyclical fashion. A source of shining light in the darkness, the moon and its beams bring the promise of renewal or new life. In the Grotto of the Sybil, bathed in rays of renewal, Faust and Margherita await a new beginning, or, in other words, the eclipse of their current state of existence and commencement of the next phase.

During the long night, "Le voci evoca[no] l'antico richiamo d'amore del femminile."[381] ["Their voices beckon and restore the age-old love for the female sex."] Whether the whispers that resound within the Grotto belong to the Cumean Sibyl herself, to Faust and Margherita, or to Faust and the newly revived Fausta, the voices in question echo their way through the passages and chambers of the arcane hollow, a space permeated by the mystical power of the oracle. Aided

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380. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), 156-157.

381. Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 123.

by the aura of the goddess-like female figure of Amalthea,[382] the Sibyl of Cuma, the echoing voices, steeped in the supernatural, transform Faust, ridding him of his resentment for and compunction concerning his repressed female self. Faust's rancor over his ambiguous, androgynous female body dissipates into acceptance and his remorse over dealing with the devil dissolves, along with the pact itself. Metaphysical contact with the mystical aura of Amalthea allows Faust to get in touch with a part of himself that he has pushed and traded away: the androgynous golden eyed beauty and enigmatic extraordinary artist. Within him, admiration and compassion for Fausta are ontologically awakened and rekindled. As Faust allows Fausta to resurface within, nemesis is close at hand. The protagonist only reaches an equilibrium of body and soul, however, when he both reintegrates Fausta and fuses with Margherita, who is, after all, a manifestation of his former female self.

Before extracting Faust from the asylum and leading him to Cuma, unsure of her fate, Margherita informed her female companions that she had to leave them for a time. Distraught and concerned, her comrades follow the instructions left to them by the enigmatic artist: to await her coming at dawn by the entrance of the Grotto of the Sibyl. While two enter the Grotto, are bathed in moonlight, and steeped in the supernatural, only one emerges at dawn's first light: a united protagonist at harmony emerges. When the companions see the protagonist emerge from

382. Despite being called Demo by Hyperocus and Deiphobe by Virgil, "her proper name seems to have been Amalthea." From the chambers and passages of her arcane and expansive hollow, Amalthea prophesied either with the spoken or written word. Still in existence, the Grotto of the Sibyl itself can be found alongside Lake Avernus in Cuma. See Fiego, *Cumae and the Phlegraean Fields*, 190.

the Grotto, they cry out " 'È lei! Sta tornando a noi' urlano 'Fausta! Fausta...' "[383] [" 'It's her! She's coming back to us' they yell 'Fausta! Fausta...' "] No longer bifurcated nor fractured, female-bodied Fausta mystically returns in post-Faust form and is embraced by her companions. Aided by the mystical power of the goddess-like figure of the Sibyl, the protagonist's metaphysical journey deep within results in a deeper and more harmonious sense of self. In delving into the depths of his spirit, Faust recognized Fausta as a part of himself, embraced her, and emerged at peace, with a new state of consciousness. From fractured and afflicted to balanced and creative, Mangiacapre's protagonist, Faust/Fausta, follows the stages of the Mangiacapran metaphysical trajectory and succeeds in reaching a deeper and more harmonious sense of self: first, the protagonist contemplates a canonical Myth (that of Faust); second, meditates on a feminist revision of that Myth (the hyrmyth[384] of Fausta); third, connects with this mythically recast female figure on a deep, metaphysical level for she, in fact, already lies within; and finally emerges with a new harmonious consciousness, ready to live life and make art in a peaceful, balanced dimension. The protagonist's journey inward and union with the mythical figure deep within leads to nemesis, that is, to a harmonious sense of the self, equilibrium of

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383. As previously noted, the character of the extraordinary artist with a top hat is named *Fausta* in the novel and Margherita in the film. While I elect to replace *Fausta* with Margherita in several other quotes from the novel that, in fact, do not surface in the filmic adaptation for the purpose of clarity, in this particular case the name change would prove nonsensical. The figure who emerges from the Grotto at the end of the novel is not Faust, a character who suffered from feeling fragmented, nor *Fausta*, a character who was afflicted by a profound sense of isolation, but an altogether new character who is a united and harmonious being. This balanced being cannot be *Fausta*, for the enigmatic artist in black is a part of a divided self. When the female companions cry out to the protagonist who has reached nemesis, they call her "Fausta." This emergent Fausta signals the return of pre-Faust Fausta (the united self) but in post-Faust form: the protagonist is a new and harmonious version of the golden eyed girl. Since the protagonist at the end of the novel is a complete, balanced being, and Margherita is not, I do not change Fausta to Margherita in this case. See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 123.

384. The term *hyrmyth* refers to a concept I elaborated in reference to particular type of tale that foregrounds power dynamics at play within the canon of Mythology. A Mangiacapran hyrmyth is a feminist or transfeminist revisionist myth that makes room for characters who subvert and derail rather than uphold cisheteropatriarchy. Mangiacapran hyrmyths call attention to the dominance of cisgender straight male language and power relations within the realm of Mythology, pointing to the patriarchal representation of both male and female figures within the canon. Hyrmythical characters subvert hegemonic social and sexual codes and give voice to those who may or may not conform to the gender role assigned to them at birth. For more, see chapter 1.

body and soul, and boundless creativity. Since the storyline concludes shortly after the protagonist's metamorphosis, the novel ends with a new beginning of sorts: a reconciliation and reunion of Faust and Fausta. At harmony at long last, having reached equilibrium of body and soul and recovered her appreciation for beauty, Faust/Fausta can now proceed to make art and live their life in harmony. Rather than finish her Faustian work with narrative closure, Mangiacapre concludes it with peaceful possibility: with a harmonious reconstitution and acceptance of self and creative promise for the protagonist's future endeavors.

4. Death, Damnation, or . . .?

While the protagonist clearly achieves cosmic harmony at the conclusion of the novel, Faust/Fausta's fate is left hanging in ambiguity in the filmic adaptation. Leading up to the equivocal final sequence of the film, Faust is neither institutionalized nor accompanied to the Grotto of the Sibyl by Margherita. Although he is not interned in the film, he does lose touch with reality. In addition, although he is not accompanied to the Grotto of the Sibyl in the Phlegraean Fields, Faust does head for the other volcanic epicenter of the region, Mount Vesuvia,[385] with Margherita in his wake. The series of events that that sends Faust into a fury begins when Faust seeks out Mephistopheles to enlist his help in securing a union with Margherita. The demon advises Faust to sleep on it. Faust dozes off, however, mid-nap he is awakened by the sound of Margherita's recorder out in the courtyard, beckoning him. He follows the sound of the recorder and once he spies Margherita, he approaches and propositions her with a ring: "Ma il tuo Margherita è un vero concerto d'amore. Potrebbe essere il nostro eterno

385. For more on of the use of the term Vesuvia, see note 68.

concerto."[386] ["Well, Margherita, yours is truly a concert of love. It could be ours to share: our eternal concert."] Margherita taps Faust on the head with her recorder, however, does not take the ring he is offering, the same ring Fausta once offered Primrose. Turned down by Margherita and desperate to spend more time with her, Faust enlists the help of Mephistopheles once more, entreating him to find her and arrange another meeting. Mephistopheles tracks Margherita down and advances toward her while she is dancing gracefully among her female companions in the club. Although taken aback and repelled by the demon, Margherita defiantly addresses Mephistopheles nonetheless, proclaiming:

> Tra noi non sarà mai possibile alcun patto perché mai io e te ci siamo incontrati. Va' e riporta al tuo schiavo che nessun diavolo potrà vincere Margherita. Io non so quale patto ci sia tra Faust e il tuo padrone ma la mia anima, il mio destino non vi appartengono. Tu non puoi portare me da Faust, ma solo io posso ricondurre a me Faust annullando te e distruggendo ogni patto.[387]
>
> [Considering the fact that you and I have never had a meeting before, there never has been nor will be any pact between us. Get going and report back to your slave that no demon shall ever triumph over Margherita. I don't know the nature of the pact between Faust and your boss but my soul and my fate do not belong to you. You do not have the power to deliver me to Faust; it is I and only I with the capacity to draw Faust in and in doing so eliminate you and destroy the pact.]

Margherita informs Mephistopheles that he holds no power over her. As Margherita's allegiance lies with the Sibyl alone, her destiny is neither owned nor dictated by the devil. Margherita further declares that bringing Faust and herself closer together has the potential to overturn the demon's pact with the protagonist altogether. Mephistopheles seemingly backs down, however, before long seeks Faust out in order to tell him cutting news with the capacity to unhinge him. Mephistopheles finds Faust crouching down in villa courtyard, already suffering agonizing pain

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386. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

387. Ibid.

reminiscing over his forlorn love for Primrose and what he abnegated in her name: “Ho gettato nel mare la mia tenerezza, creazioni uniche, le mie poesie, i miei gesti per te, cadavere coperto da un nome che non ha nome.”[388] [“I cast my tenderness, my unique creations, my poems, my gesturality into the sea for you, unspeakable cadaver.”] Tormented, yet again, by the memory of his eager renunciation of Fausta, his androgynous female body, and creative drive, Faust can barely endure the pain. While on the brink, Faust sees Mephistopheles approach, descending the outdoor staircase toward him. It is in this moment that Mephistopheles delivers a cruel blow: cutting news about the extraordinary artist by whom he is enthralled. Mephistopheles disdainfully taunts Faust, already buckled over in agony: “Ma lo vuoi capre imbecille? Apri gli occhi. Lei ama solo le donne.”[389] [“Don’t you get it, you fool? Open your blind eyes. She’s only interested in women.”] Afflicted beyond belief, searing with pain, Faust reacts with force, striking Mephistopheles in the gut. Faust heads for his motorcycle cursing and muttering to himself: “Nessuna crudeltà potrà toccarmi ormai. I tuoi occhi, Margherita, le tue carezze per tutte le altre, per tutte le donne. E io pazzo, vile, non ho saputo aspettare, non ho creduto e ora è troppo tardi. Tu, mio unico desiderio mi rifiuti e disprezzi.”[390] [“At this point, nothing could cause more pain than I’m already in. Your eyes, Margherita, your touch are for others, other women. And me, I’m a lunatic, a disgrace, a deserter, I didn’t know I should have waited for you, I didn’t have faith in the future, and now it’s too late. You, my one and only desire, refuse my company and brush me aside.”] Under the impression that all hope is lost, Faust mounts, dons his helmet, puts on his sunglasses, and tears off.

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388. Ibid.

389. Ibid.

390. Ibid.

The protagonist passes the nearby Margherita on his flight, and she hops on her own bike and follows, pursuing Faust, hoping to alleviate his agony. When the Faustian figure reaches the upper slopes of Mount Vesuvia, however, it is the golden eyed girl and not Faust who dismounts and removes her helmet. Fausta approaches Mephisto who greets her with gusto: "Finalmente posso vedere i tuoi occhi d'oro. Fausta, ti aspettavamo da tanto tempo."[391] ["Finally I get to see those golden eyes of yours. Fausta, we've been waiting for you for a long time."] Margherita arrives, throws down her bike alongside the protagonist's and sprints up the slope to try and catch up. Driven by her desire for harmony between body and soul, Fausta propositions the demon: "Voglio vivere il mio maschile senza essere essere oppressa da quest'androginia che mi impedisce una vera identità. Voglio diventare uomo, voglio amare liberamente la donna che amo."[392] ["I long to embody my masculinity and no longer be afflicted by this oppressive androgyny, preventing me from having a true sense of identity. I want to be a man, I desire to love the woman that I love freely."] Despite considering Mephisto "un diavolo un po' arretrato"[393] ["a rather backward sort of demon"], based on his contention that women have no souls, Fausta forges the pact, promising her androgynous female body in exchange for one with which she can ostensibly achieve a true sense of balance and freedom. The demon starts cackling triumphantly as the clock begins to chime. After a medium shot of the chair-like clock

391. Ibid.

392. Ibid.

393. Ibid.

sculpture[394] appears a close-up of Margherita, pleading: "No, Faust-, fermati!"[395] ["No Faust-, don't do it!"] The montage immediately cuts from a close-up of the golden eyed girl's partially see-through face layered on top of Faust's, to an extreme close-up of Margherita's alarmed eyes, and then back to the overlay of faces. As the overlay dissolves, Faust's face comes into focus and the transformation is complete. Mangiacapre's film ends with medium shots of Faust losing consciousness and collapsing and Margherita grasping at him in desperation, sobbing. The medium shot of Margherita weeping and holding Faust morphs into a negative image, dominated by darkness, in which Faust and Margherita's bodies become near indistinguishable. The negative then appears to spontaneously burst into flame and the celluloid recedes to the edges of the frame, curling up into shrivels.[396]

While the close of the film does shed light on the relationship between Faust and the golden eyed girl (Fausta), it is extremely equivocal in nature. On the one hand, it is possible that Faust's fall forward represents his death and the celluloid alight connotes his final descent into infernal flames. On the other, it is possible, and perhaps more likely, that the ending is not an

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394. This sculpture was crafted by Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe, the female actor who plays Margherita. For more on Mangiacapra and her acclaimed work as a sculptor, see note 37.

395. Gazing at Fausta as she metamorphoses into Faust, Margherita cries out imploring her to stop before it is too late. Instead of shouting the golden eyed girl's name, however, it sounds as though Margherita suppresses the final vowel of her name, yelling out "Faust-*"* instead of Fausta. While Fausta is called by her nickname, Occhi d'oro [Golden Eyed Girl], for the majority of the film, female-bodied Faust often goes by Faust in the novel even before she makes the pact with Mephisto: "Molte volte Fausta si presentava sopprimendo la finale del suo nome: Faust: perché no?... Sentiva il diritto di chiamarsi Faust, corrispondeva molto meglio questo nome maledetto al suo strano destino di vivere al maschile e al femminile." ["Often Fausta introduced herself suppressing the last vowel of her name: Faust: why not? ... She felt it her right to call herself Faust, especially considering that the accursed name corresponded to her strange fate of being as part-man and part-woman so well."] See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 14. As such, the instance of Margherita calling Fausta a truncated version of her name is not a narratological aberrance, nor does it imply that Margherita was necessarily addressing male-bodied Faust.

396. Like Faust, who set his paintings ablaze and watched them burn, Mangiacapre too set her art alight and watched it burn. Both her protagonist and she set fire to art they themselves created and watched as it was consumed by flame. The inspiration behind Mangiacapre's decision to end her film with burning celluloid may be Jutta Brückner. Brückner used this same technique to end a film which featured at the fifth annual Sorrento International Feminist Film Festival organized by Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. See Jutta Brückner, *Hungerjahre – in einem reichen Land* [*The Hunger Years: In a Land of Plenty*], directed by Jutta Brückner (1980; West Berlin: Basis-Film-Verleih GmbH, 1980).

ending at all for Faust but rather a beginning. Certainly the celluloid consumed by flame with which the film concludes calls to mind the fires of hell. In addition to the incineration of the indexical image of Faust and Margherita, evidence in support of the first interpretation includes mysterious lyrics sung twice during the course of the film: "Fermate il vostro faticato giro, sfere celesti, che si fermi il tempo e mai non venga mai la mezzanotte."[397] ["Put an end to your arduous revolution, heavenly bodies, so that time stops and midnight never comes to pass."] First sung a cappella by a male actor in the company of a crystal ball and later by Faust while riding blissfully on his motorcycle with Margherita's arms wrapped around him, the mysterious lyrics seem to entreat Faust and the manifestation of his former female self to put an end to the runaround and to come together as one. While on his motorcycle reciting the lyrics in a sing-song voice, Faust does not stop at la mezzanotte [midnight] but rather continues on to sing: "Ma passano le stelle, corre il tempo, suonerà l'ora il diavolo verrà e io sarò dannato."[398] ["The stars and time pass on by until the clock chimes, the devil shall come and I shall be damned."] Although sung merrily by Faust, a palpable sense of foreboding permeates the lyrics and the presence of the clock sculpture and the chiming of the hour in the final sequence recalls the ditty. If one were to insist upon a linear reading of Mangiacapre's filmic text and foist a traditional narrative structure into the film, one could argue that the conclusion of the film signals not only Fausta's end, in her transformation into Faust, but also Faust's end, in death. While it is feasible to construe the ending as male-bodied Faust meeting his doom, as Mangiacapre and the

397. As indicated in the credits, the lyrics are from Vittorio Brioni's song "L'Attesa" ["The Wait"] and the song is sung a cappella by actor Gerard Geraldine. See *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

398. Ibid.

Nemesiache categorically eschew linearity in favor of circularity,[399] a linear reading of the final sequence of *Faust/Fausta* would not be apt.

Like the ending of *Didone non è morta* (1987)[400] [*Dido Never Died*], the final sequence of *Faust/Fausta* is composed of multiple timelines plaited together. While *Didone non è morta* comes to a close interlacing three different scenarios, *Faust/Fausta* intertwines two: female-bodied Fausta riding her motorcycle to Mount Vesuvia to deal with the devil (purportedly in the past) and male-bodied Faust taking the same motorcycle up the same path (in the present). When Faust mounts his motorcycle and kicks off, in agony, an eerie sound effect signals either a flashback or a convergence of two moments in time. During the eerie crash of the cymbals there is a fleeting overlay of two near identical riders shot in the same place. Faust hears "Fermati, torna indietro."[401] ["Stop, come back."] in a distorted, unidentified voice from the past. After an extreme close-up of the motorcycle's rearview mirror reflecting the helmeted figure of the barely discernible Faust, the overlay of the two riders returns. Eerie sound effects and faint voices continue as one of the two Faustian figures (Fausta) rides off screen, leaving the other (Faust) behind, and then crosses the courtyard, heading for the gate. The warped cymbal sounds a second time and the voices disappear. Time flashes forward and the montage cuts to Faust's hands clenching in agony. Faust proceeds to ride off screen, leaving no one behind, taking the same ride across the courtyard on his motorcycle. As the protagonist turns a corner, the cymbal sounds again and the eerie soundtrack with faint distorted voices returns, signaling a change in time. The spooky soundtrack plays as Fausta rides past the nearby Margherita and exits out onto the street.

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399. For more on Mangiacapre's privileging of circularity and the circle, which evoke the female form, over linearity and straight lines, which recall the male form, see note 296.

400. *Didone non è morta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

401. *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre.

The cymbal sounds yet again, signaling another shift in time, and Faust turns the corner completing a near identical ride past Margherita and out the gate. Set to the soundtrack of Franz Liszt's "Mephisto Waltz No. 1," Faust climbs the slopes of Mount Vesuvia, tailed by Margherita. Faust spies Mephistopheles on the slope just ahead and as he approaches his destination, the warped cymbal sounds, time shifts, and it is not Faust but Fausta, Golden Eyed Girl, who arrives and dismounts her motorcycle and falls from the bike onto the rocky, volcanic ground. As Fausta removes her sunglasses and helmet, climbs her way up to Mephisto, makes the pact, and transforms "Mephisto Waltz No. 1" continues to play. The cymbals do not sound again, which indicates that there are no additional shifts in time and that the conclusion of the film is the end of Fausta's tale, not Faust's. When considered separately, only one of the two timelines in the final sequence of Mangiacapre's film has a concrete ending: that of Fausta. After being abandoned by her beloved Primula, the golden eyed girl rides up the slopes of Vesuvia, forsakes her androgynous female body, and transforms into Faust. Faust's storyline has no end, only a beginning. What happens to male-bodied Faust after he looses all hope, tears off on his motorcycle, and climbs the slopes of Mount Vesuvia is not shown on screen. His fate is left unwritten, hanging in ambiguity.

Mangiacapre's novel and eponymous film come to a close with ambiguity and aperture. The film ends with a beginning: the beginning of the story of male-bodied Faust. Rather than providing narrative closure, Mangiacapre's filmic text leaves Faust's future unwritten, inviting spectators to consider the different possible paths he could walk. The end of the film also signals a beginning of sorts for spectators: the beginning of narrative comprehension. As Mangiacapre does not reveal the nature of the connection between the golden eyed girl and Faust until the

final sequence of the film, the extant relationship between the two painters is abstruse for spectators. Once privy to the information that the golden eyed painter's name is Fausta and that Faust was once female-bodied, the spectators may begin the process of making sense of the filmic text. Like the film, the novel finishes with a new beginning: the protagonist successfully reaches equilibrium of body and soul, recovering his repressed feminine side and banished female body, with the assistance of the mystical, goddess-like figures of Helen and Amalthea. While Faust's initial attempts at regaining contact with his inner self through the mastery and domination of Helen's beauty are unsuccessful, once Faust turns his efforts away from capturing another's beauty on canvas and focuses on finding beauty and balance within, the metaphysical journey to cosmic harmony becomes a viable one. Faust makes his way along the Mangiacapran trajectory: first contemplating the well-known, canonical Myth of Faust; then meditating on, or in this particular case remembering, the hyrmyth of Fausta; next allowing the revised hyrmythical figure deep within to surface; and finally reaching a balanced, more complex consciousness of self. As a result of the Mangiacapran metaphysical trajectory and contact with the mystical aura of Amalthea within the Grotto of the Sibyl, Faust/Fausta emerges from the hollow at peace, leaving the physical and metaphysical darkness behind. In the filmic adaptation, while Faust and Margherita do blend together to an extent in the negative image in the final frame, there is no clear reconciliation between Faust and his repressed gender fluid female self on screen. Despite the omission of Faust's embrace of Fausta and fusion with Margherita in the filmic adaptation, the teleology of the work is still very much governed by Mangiacapran philosophy. In both the novel and filmic adaptation, rather than seek salvation through Christ and attempt to reach peace by means of apotheosis with the male father, son, and holy spirit, the

protagonist pursues cosmic harmony through art and strives to achieve balance through a metaphysical union with a mythical female figure who lies within. Regardless of the epistemological uncertainty surrounding Faust's fate in the filmic adaptation, both of Mangiacapre's Faustian works are steeped in Mangiacapran metaphysics. In her avant-garde transfeminist revisions on the Faust Myth, by recasting the protagonist as an alluring androgyne who forsakes her feminine side and androgynous female body for a male one; redefining the Faustian quest as one centered around transgression with the aim of accomplishing harmony of body and soul; establishing beauty, artistic creation, and mythical female figures as sources of restoration and redemption; and determining Faust's fate in terms of his metaphysical ability to come to know, embrace, and become one with his mythical inner female self; Mangiacapre crafts a filmic and a literary illustration of her new feminist metaphysics.

Chapter 4

Conclusions

Avant-garde painter and philosopher, poet and composer, musician and performer, film theorist and filmmaker, Lina Mangiacapre promotes a world with fewer borders, boundaries, and controls in which harmony reigns supreme and beauty in its many forms – including the nonnormative ones – can flourish. Like other avant-gardes, Mangiacapre has a particular vision of the world and ventures to bring that vision to fruition by means of making of art. By collectively making avant-garde films, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache aim to transform dominant culture and make room for a new, counterhegemonic, profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world. Like Dido, Mangiacapre challenges tyrannical ideals and champions a feminist politics of inclusion and care. Like Fausta, Mangiacapre wishes for a world in which women are free to express themselves without facing harassment, threats, or institutionalization. Mangiacapre and co. envision a world in which beauty is neither bridled nor put down and cosmic harmony reigns supreme. Making music with the institutionalized, talking philosophy with fisherman, dancing with the cast of *Didone non è morta* [*Dido Never Died*] (1987) in a local spot, Mangiacapre pioneers new modes of feminist relations. Blurring the lines between the working class and intellectuals, women and men, those who are interned and those who are not, Mangiacapre presents a mode of relations that transcends mainstream understandings of madness, sex, and class. Endeavoring to erase what Virginia Woolf describes as "chalk marks"[402] carved into "the floor of the earth"[403] and transcend artificial ideological dividing lines intent on

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402. Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt Inc., 1938), 105.

403. Woolf, *Three Guineas*, 105.

cleaving human beings into stratified groups, Mangiacapre and co. engage in various philosophical and artistic ventures. Mangiacapre's multi-faceted project with the Nemesiache uses artistic expression in order to destabilize norms and redefine art and filmmaking and as such is an avant-garde one. By making avant-garde feminist art, Mangiacapre pursues a fresh harmonious sense of self and profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world for herself, her companions, her collaborators, the world, and beyond.

First, this chapter examines the attributes of Mangiacapre's œuvre that distinguish her work from that of other Italian feminist filmmakers and film collectives active at the time. The chapter argues that Mangiacapre's mix of avant-garde and narrative techniques in *Didone non è morta* and *Faust/Fausta* (1990) calls attention to cracks in the narratives, inviting spectators to reflect on the unwritten, potential futures of her protagonists and other moments of rupture. Second, the chapter further elaborates the concept of indomitable beauty and argues that stunning yet precarious landscapes are ripe with liberatory potential for Mangiacapre and co. Third, the chapter puts British, American, and Neapolitan feminist film and gaze theory in dialogue, demonstrating that Mangiacapre does not consider the spectator as unavoidably male or female. After underlining the specularity of the spectatorship of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, the chapter turns its attention to the power of performance on screen and spectatorship off screen for Mangiacapre and co. Fourth, the chapter concludes that Mangiacapre's collaborative filmic praxis constitutes an artistic apparatus for self-actualization: the performative is political for Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. In sum, this dissertation investigates Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist recasting of Myth and refashioning of self through collaborative filmmaking, thereby throwing light on the political and artistic prowess of an understudied feminist and

transfeminist artist, philosopher, and filmmaker from the mythical, porous, stunning city of Naples.

1. Mangiacapre's Avant-Garde Feminist Art Film

While the majority of her contemporaries take a documentarian or feminist constructivist approach, Mangiacapre embraces an avant-garde one. Among the pioneering Italian feminist filmmakers who take a constructivist approach to filmmaking are Cecilia Mangini and Annabella Miscuglio and the Feminist Film Collective. In Mangini's *Essere donne* [*Being Women*] (1965) and Miscuglio and co.'s *La lotta non è finita!...* [*The Fight Never Ended!...*] (1973), fragments of archival material, found footage, original documentary footage, interviews, advertisements, fotoromanzi, and more are folded together to make new meaning. A number of trailblazing Italian feminist filmmakers draw upon documentary footage from yesterday and today in order to underline the injustices marginalized peoples have and continue to face in a Catholic, capitalist, heteropatriarchal society. While incorporating archival footage is one way to connect past to present and demonstrate the ongoing harm inflicted by the established order, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache take an alternate, art-centered approach. Mangiacapre and co. are not documentarians and do not produce documentaries. They are avant-garde artists who advance an alternate vision of the world, particular to the director and her network of feminist creativity, kinship, and care. Art is politics, for Mangiacapre, and her art film promotes a particular agenda: the re-establishment of a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world in which women and the world can celebrate beauty in its many forms, make art, and express themselves without fear of violence or incarceration. Rather than dealing strictly in the desert of the real, Mangiacapre

and co. tend toward creativity, imagination, and feminist revisionist myth. Exploring the bounds of mythos, narrativity, performance, and selfhood, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache direct, shoot, design, sculpt, paint, perform, and compose in the process of making their avant-garde feminist films.

Unlike documentary filmmakers who endorse a certain critical distance between the filmmaker and subject, Mangiacapre and co. do not aim for objectivity. In fact, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache appear behind the camera, in front of the camera, off screen, on screen, and in the audience. Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesi[404] directs, womans the camera, makes a brief appearance on screen in both *Didone non è morta* (1987) and *Faust/Fausta* (1991), composes and instrumentalizes the score for *Didone non è morta*, creates paintings that feature in *Faust/ Fausta*, and more. Teresa Mangiacapra/Niobe appears as Anna in *Didone non è morta* as well as Margherita in *Faust/Fausta*, creates sculptures that feature in both films, and more. Bruna Felletti/Karma serves as production manager for both *Didone non è morta* and *Faust/Fausta*, womans the camera,[405] appears as a barista in *Faust/Fausta*, and more. Conni Capobianco/ Nausicaa appears as Primula in *Faust/Fausta*, serves as production secretary for *Didone non è morta* as well as a set manager for *Faust/Fausta*, and more. Claudia Aglione/Helena appears as

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404. Far from random, the mythical identities of the Nemesiache are entwined with their life stories and sense of being. It was Mangiacapre who established the pairings. After recognizing parallels between the life stories of her fellow feminists and certain mythological (or hyrmthological) tales, Mangiacapre bestowed anonyms upon a number of Nemesiache. While not all Nemesiache received anonyms, for those who did, their mythical identities were by no means an imposition. According to Silvana Campese/Medea, Conni Capobianco/Nausicaa, Bruna Felletti/Karma, et al., their mythical selves dwelled within them even before they were revealed to them. As their nemesian identities were already a part of them, laying dormant, when the Nemesiache embrace and embody their mythical selves, in an act of sistership, they unite the known and unknown, in other words, the familiar and the fantastic parts of themselves. For more on the mythical names of the Nemesiache and Mangiacapre's maieutic method, see chapter 1.

405. In conversation with Bruna Felletti in Rome in May 2019, she specified that when Mangiacapre was in front of the camera, especially in her early work, in *Antistrip* (1976) for example, Felletti was behind it. Felletti served as a camerawoman for a number of Mangiacapre's avant-garde shorts, including *Follia come poesia* (1979) and, in fact, the very first Super 8 mm camera Mangiacapre used was hers.

First Bride in *Didone non è morta* as well as Helen in *Faust/Fausta*. Anna Grieco/Dafne appears as Salambò (Second Bride) in *Didione non è morta* and Mephistopheles' Assistant in *Faust/ Fausta*. Consuelo Campone/Coca designs costumes for *Didone non è morta* and appears in *Faust/Fausta*. Silvana Campese appears as Third Bride in *Didone non è morta* and collaborates on both feature films. Rosa Sannino, Maria Matteucci/Marea, and other Nemesiache contribute to the making of the films as well. Before, behind, and beside the camera, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are involved in all aspects of the making of their films. While Miscuglio and the Feminist Film Collective also involved in front of and behind the camera, the majority of the footage they utilize to make their documentaries and docufilms is archival material or original documentary footage in which they aim to minimize their own presence. In contrast with her contemporaries, Mangiacapre relies almost exclusively on her own original footage, with the exception of a few seconds of archival footage used in the opening sequence of *Faust/Fausta*. After the credits roll, Mangiacapre shows footage of the 1944 eruption of Mount Vesuvia[406] tinted blue and green. The archival footage is overlaid with a pair of hands, likely those of Mangiacapra, dancing gracefully and is accompanied by original music and the reading of a

406. While volcanic lore is oft associated with the masculine, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache refer to the dangerous beauty on the Bay of Naples as a she: la Vesuvia. Like the female body, la Vesuvia is capable of creation and exists in a state of constant metamorphosis. Lying dormant for a time and then violently giving birth to new terrain, la Vesuvia erupts, discharging red hot fluid, not unlike blood shed by women during childbirth. Female human beings and la Vesuvia are equip with the power of creation and their bodies are constantly shifting and changing: capable but not always actively secreting steam, smoke, magma, milk, menstrual blood, vaginal or amniotic fluid. As the Nemesiache refer to this metamorphic beauty as a she, I use the feminine form, *la Vesuvia*, in this dissertation. For more on the association of volcanic myth with the masculine, see Elena Past, "Volcanic Matters," *L'analisi linguistica e letteraria* 24, 2 (2016): 135-146.

passage nearly identical to the beginning of the novel *Faust/Fausta*.[407] By making films with original footage and incorporating nontraditional, nonlinear narrative threads in her short and feature films, Mangiacapre's approach to filmmaking distinguishes itself from that of her contemporaries.

Nonlinear, achronological narrativity is one the characteristics of avant-garde short and feature films. According to William E.B. Verrone, any given avant-garde feature film can be characterized by two or more of the following attributes:

1. an experimental style of form
2. a non-linear, achronological, or non-narrative story
3. an unusual manner of representation (of reality or otherwise)
4. a particular voice/vision of the director
5. poetic or lyrical flourishes
6. the mixing of styles/genres
7. ambiguity, in terms of characterization or narrative or thematic closure
8. a decidedly different kind of demand for contrary spectatorial expectations
9. when available/known, alternative production/distribution/exhibition practices
10. an appearance that signifies an "other."[408]

In Verrone's view, avant-garde feature films are marked by experimental form and content. Mangiacapre's *Didone non è morta* and *Faust/Fausta* conform to several of Verrone's criteria. First, the two films have nonlinear, achronological narrative threads. In the former, Dido's story is not told in a chronological, linear fashion: Dido lies dormant then reawakens, then Elissa becomes Dido, Dido remembers Elissa, Dido dies, Dido dies again, and Dido lives on. The story

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407. While the novel begins in third person, the film begins in first person: "Nascevo, finalmente uscivo da quello stretto corridoio in cui mi avevano rinchiusa catturandomi alle stelle. Immersa nell'acqua, inchiodata all'immobilità, nascevo - per ascoltare di nuovo la musica del cosmo - da sola, più da vicino. Le mie care limpide libere note. Ma una volta fuori, la musica si è tramutata in rumore e le stelle sono scomparse." ["About to come into the world, about to leave that tight passageway of confinement behind, I was paralyzed, submerged in water. Desiring to hear the limpid notes of the cosmos with my own ears once more, I surfaced. But when I came forth and was born, the rambling melodies turned to noise and the stars faded away."] *Faust/Fausta*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1991; Naples: Le Nemesiache / L'Associazione Culturale Le Tre Ghinee).

408. William E.B. Verrone, *The Avant-Garde Feature Film* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2012), 18-19.

does not begin with Elissa of Tyre discovering her brother's treachery. It does not proceed to her flight across the Mediterranean, transformation to Dido of Carthage, then encounter with Aeneas. It does not end with her suicide. The story neither begins with a beginning nor ends with an ending. In the latter, Faust/Fausta's story does not move along chronologically. At the beginning, Faust is in misery, then he is rejuvenated but abandoned by Helen, then he remembers his former female self, then Post-Faust *Fausta*[409] materializes before his own eyes, then Faust hops on his motorbike to meet Mephistopheles, then his former self Fausta hops on her motorbike to meet the same demon years before, Fausta becomes Faust, Post-Faust *Fausta* collapses on the newly formed Faust, and Faust, arguably, meets no end whatsoever. The story does not begin with Fausta, the Golden Eyed Girl, painting her beloved Primrose. It does not proceed to Fausta's deal with the damned to become Faust. It does not follow that Faust is tormented by his decision and only feels relieve when reunited with *Fausta*. And it does not end with the damnation or salvation of Faust. The final sequence stitches together two timelines: female-bodied Fausta's initial trek up the slopes of Vesuvia and male-bodied Faust's later trek, both of which take place on the same motorbike. Lines between times, spaces, and places blur in Mangiacapre's avant-garde features: the past and present intermingle and the future lies hanging in ambiguity,

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409. In order to distinguish between pre-Faust Fausta with blonde hair and golden eyes and concurrent-Faust Fausta with a top hat, dressed in black, I will refer to the former as Fausta and the latter as *Fausta* in italics. Second, the name change from *Fausta* to Margherita in the filmic adaptation may be linked to a discussion that takes place between Faust and *Fausta*, shortly before he begins his sojourn in the asylum. In the novel, in an attempt to convince *Fausta* that he was indeed once female-bodied, Faust becomes increasing incoherent: "Faust si avvicina tremante a *Fausta* 'Io - il maschile è Margherita; io sono una donna, io, Margherita, immagine inventata, Faust nascosto, io, taciuta.' " ["Trembling, Faust approaches *Fausta*: 'I - the male it's Margherita; I am a woman, I, Margherita, a vision dreamt up, Faust hidden, I, silent.' "] (Italics are mine.) See Mangiacapre, *Faust/Fausta*, 60. Faust's linguistic incoherence furthers hand in hand with his emotional distress until he reaches an apex and ends up in a mental institution. Earlier in the text, Faust refers to a relatively impalpable female character who overwhelms him with tenderness and ends up committing suicide by throwing herself in the Seine. He calls this character Margherita as well. Faust describes Margherita largely the same way he does Fausta: both were beautiful, caring, inspiring female figures who, due to his rejection, have met their end. Whether the two names are meant to refer to one single character or not, the overlap is unmistakable. By naming *Fausta* Margherita in the filmic adaptation, Mangiacapre concretizes the connection between the two, suggesting that perhaps the incorporeal Margherita mentioned every now and again in the novel really does refer to disembodied golden eyed girl, Fausta.

unwritten, ripe with possibility. Rather than ending with a sense of finality or closure, Mangiacapre brings *Didone non è morta* and *Faust/Fausta* to a close with aperture and ambiguity, another of Verrone's criteria.

While narrative and avant-garde form may seem at odds to a number of feminist film theorists and filmmakers, Mangiacapre does not draw an ideological dividing line between the two cinematic approaches. Mangiacapre, in the same vein as Teresa de Lauretis, considers the potential generative attributes of narrative cinema, a filmic form spurned by pioneering British feminist film theorists Claire Johnston and Laura Mulvey. For Johnston, a revolutionary women's cinema requires the eschewing of traditional narrative technique in favor of an avant-garde, constructivist approach. Johnston affirms that the tools and techniques employed to produce narrative cinema are steeped in dominant ideology and therefore incapable of depicting a reality capable of unveiling hidden truths. In order to make the unknown known and the invisible visible to spectators, new meaning "has to be constructed/manufactured"[410] by the filmmaker within the film text. Like Johnston, Mulvey takes a strong stance against narrative cinema, asserting that the magic of the narrative cinema of the Classical Hollywood Tradition is nothing more than "a skilled and satisfying manipulation of visual pleasure. Unchallenged, mainstream film coded the erotic into the language of the dominant patriarchal order."[411] Mulvey takes issue with narrative cinema's enablement of the male gaze of the spectator, a gaze that both objectifies and fetishizes Woman, treating her as an erotic spectacle. The male gaze of the spectator, as explicated by Mulvey, is both voyeuristic and narcissistic in nature. As the spectator

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410. Claire Johnston, "Women's Cinema as Counter-Cinema," in *Notes on Women's Cinema*, 24-31 (London: Society for Education in Film and Television, 1973), 28.

411. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, 3 (1975), 8.

gazes at Woman on screen from a distance with both a controlling and curious look, he aligns with Freud's conception of voyeuristic scopophile. Watching from afar, the male spectator treats the female figure on screen as an object meanwhile looking upon man on screen as his alter-ego. The gaze of the male spectator is therefore part narcissistic, as he imagines himself as the movie star in a film, or, in other words, a more perfect version of himself. In identifying with the male hero who also objectifies Woman through his gaze, the male spectator's look is sutured to that of the hero, reinforcing his objectification and fetishization of the female figure on screen. Mulvey characterizes the female form on screen as "to-be-looked-at-ness,"[412] as her body is offered up as an erotic spectacle, designed to be looked at and objectified by the male hero within the diegesis, the male director behind the camera, and the male spectator in the audience. Rejecting the objectification and fetishization of the heroine by the male gaze, Mulvey disavows narrative cinema of the Hollywood Tradition and advocates for avant-garde filmmaking. She identifies avant-garde formalist technique as a manner in which to negate and counter dominant ideology in film. Mulvey specifies that "feminist formalism is based on rejection of the past and on giving priority to challenging the spectator's place in cinema."[413] She affirms that avant-garde form has the capacity to negate the voyeuristic-narcissistic male gaze of the spectator and to represent the female figure on screen detached from dominant, patriarchal ideology. Like Johnston, Mulvey identifies formalism as central to the creation of feminist film. While on the one hand Johnston focuses on the revolutionary potential of constructivism, on the other Mulvey insists that feminist film must be radical in terms of both form and content. She affirms that feminist filmmakers "cannot be satisfied with an aesthetic that restricts counter-cinema to work on form alone.

412. Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 11.

413. Laura Mulvey, "Feminism, Film and the Avant-Garde," Framework 10 (1979): 3-10.

Feminism is bound to its politics; its experimentation cannot exclude work on content."[414] For Mulvey, neither radical form nor content alone is enough for the elaboration of feminist film: the combination of revolutionary form and politicized content are what constitute feminist cinema.

Unlike Claire Johnston and Laura Mulvey, American film theorist Teresa de Lauretis does not identify narrative form as unfit for women's cinema. She does not privilege the methods of avant-gardes over those of Classical Hollywood. While Johnston juxtaposes narrative cinema with avant-garde filmmaking, de Lauretis takes exception to the binary nature of such a division. Following her problematization of the binary categorization between narrative and non-narrative cinema, de Lauretis rehabilitates narrative form, elucidating its possible utility for women's cinema. While there are many points of contact between de Lauretis's thinking and that of foundational feminist film theorists Mulvey and Johnston, de Lauretis unravels key assertions made about spectatorship and style and in doing so opens avenues for both women spectators and directors alike. Departing from Mulvey's conception of the spectator as unavoidably male, de Lauretis argues that the spectator may be addressed as female, however is careful to not create a dichotomy in making such a claim. De Lauretis does not dichotomize spectatorship into part male part female but rather discontinues the male monopolization of spectatorship, opening possibilities for a multiplicity of women to look.

While a number of new wave Italian feminist filmmakers make use of the avant-garde, constructivist approach prescribed by Johnston and Mulvey, not all have renounced the use of narrative. Antonietta De Lillo, Alina Marazzi, and Stefania Sandrelli have, on occasion, incorporated narrative conventions into their films. As such, some of their work falls in line with

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414. Mulvey, "Feminism, Film and the Avant-Garde," 9.

De Lauretis's film theory, which condemns neither narrative nor non-narrative film because the use of avant-garde meaning making in no way guarantees the production of a non-scopophilic work. Marazzi's *Tutto parla di te* [*Everything Reminds Me of You*] (2013) is an exemplar of a new wave Italian feminist docufilm that employs narrative. Utilizing a fictional, narrative arc and folding in fragments of interviews, photography, and claymation, Marazzi's film proves an intriguing hybrid that combines conventions of Italian feminist docufilm and narrative film. In her hybrid feminist docu-narrative-film, Marazzi explores motherhood without rose-colored glasses and puts the strength of female friendship on view. Innovative in form, Marazzi's hybrid film merits more scholarly attention.

Mangiacapre, like Marazzi, does not condemn narrativity altogether. In creating feminist revisionist films, Mangiacapre, in the words of de Lauretis, works both "with and against narrative."[415] In other words, Mangiacapre engages in storytelling and narrativity but in her own way. Mangiacapre's achronological hyrmythical storytelling calls attention to gaps in the story and the suspension of narrative closure. When the forward-propelling force of narrative is suspended and closure is either delayed or denied, moments of rupture invite spectators to engage in a symptomatic reading and examine the gaps. Cracks in Mangiacapre's narrativity point in at least two directions. First, to her intertextual dialogue involving Virgil, Dante, Marlowe, and Goethe. Scenes like Anna caressing her face with a switchblade may recall Marlowe and Nash's Anna and her ultimate act. Perhaps Dido's encounter Aeneas in the Neapolitan subway station may conjure to mind the meeting of Virgil's epic hero and woman scorned in his Underworld. Mangiacapre reaches across time and space and calls to mind a

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415. Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 96.

number of masterful renditions of the Dido and Faust Myths with her films. After reminding viewers how others have told the tale, she carries on and shows her own take. Mangiacapre's Anna does not meet the same fate as Marlowe and Nash's. Her Dido does not follow in the footsteps of Virgil's. The way is not shut to Mangiacapre's porous, volcanic, Neapolitan underground. Her Dido does not die. She emerges from the subway station to join her network of creativity, kinship, and care. She persists and carries on. There is a chasm between Mangiacapre's hyrmythical events and the ones that come to pass in the more familiar cisheteropatriarchal canon. The fissures between hyrmythical and canonical narration invite the spectator to examine the gaps and what is absent or different in Mangiacapre's texts. Second, the cracks point to the different possibilities the future may hold. By leaving her characters' fates unwritten, Mangiacapre leaves gaps for spectators to fill in. Did Mangiacapre's Dido choose to end her own life out of spite and despair or to stay true to her politics of peace and herself and march toward her future? Was Mangiacapre's Faust damned for all of eternity or did he manage to reunite with his former androgynous gender nonconforming self, accomplishing harmony of body and soul? Spectators are left to ponder the multiple futures each protagonist has before them. Perhaps familiar with Virgil's or Dante's take on Dido, Marlowe's or Goethe's takes on Faust, spectators are invited to ask themselves: Is Mangiacapre's ending any different? If so, how? If so, why? How could Dido persist in the face of perfidy and pain? Could I manage the same? How could Faust break free from cisheteropatriarchy? How could he come to embrace a part of himself shunned by society? Could I embrace the nonnormative within? How did Dido and Faust break free from the boundaries and borders meant to control them? How can I break free from the rules and controls meant to contain me? For Mangiacapre's Dido, Faust, Cenerella,

and others, there is an alternative to ending one's own life. Mangiacapre affirms that "esiste un'altra strada ed è nel risveglio nell'unità tra le donne."[416] ["there is another way and that way forward is through feminist reawakening and sistership.] Mangiacapre opens possibilities for viewers to consider the support and revitalization a network of kinship and care can bring, the highly prized liberty and harmony sought by Faust/Fausta, the politics of peace and inclusion practiced by Dido, and the levity and wonder that stunning volcanic and maritime landscapes inspire.

2. Landscapes of Indomitable Beauty

Naples is a city steeped in and surrounded by indomitable beauty and metamorphic might. It is encircled by la Solfatara and the Campi Flegrei to the North, the Bay of Naples to the West, and la Vesuvia to the South. Magnificent and striking, these maritime and volcanic landscapes are perilous and untamable, in other words, indomitable. No manmade structures are perched on the highest peak of Vesuvia or nestled in the craggy, steamy crater of Solfatara. Neither Man nor his social conventions can take root there. Craggy and hostile, these volcanic spaces are free, free from the rules and regulations that come with a town square, church, courthouse, asylum, and other institutions built to uphold the established order. Landscapes of indomitable beauty are subversive spaces. For Dido, la Solfatara proved a space of sistership, care, and feminist reawakening. After all, it was there that she lay dormant, covered in green gray mud, there where her sister Anna found her, there where her network of kinship and care removed her from the craggy shelf, and there where she came to. For Faust/Fausta, la Vesuvia

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416. Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile* (Padua: Mastogiacomo, 1980), 43.

was a place of transition and transformation. Both stunning and precarious, la Vesuvia constitutes a space apart, detached from human civilization, in both a physical and metaphysical sense. Geographically, la Vesuvia is situated among the clouds, perched high above the domain of men. Her perilous nature discourages men from inhabiting her craggy slopes and peak, stunting the spread of cisheteropatriarchal norms on her terrain. La Vesuvia is an indomitable beauty, a space where stunning otherworldly crags are not subject to social conventions and beauty can neither be dictated nor dominated by men. An ecological embodiment of Mangiacapre's conception of nemesis, la Vesuvia offers a metaphysical refuge from the strains of cisheteropatriarchy and a taste of absolute freedom. Landscapes of indomitable beauty prove fertile and subversive spaces of self-discovery, metamorphosis, and sistership in Mangiacapre's filmworks. Stunning and precarious, the Bay of Naples features in a few of Mangiacapre's shorts: *Le Sibille* [*The Sibyls*] (1977), *Il mare ci ha chiamate* [*The Sea Called Us*] (1978), and *Biancaneve/La Strega* [*Snow White/The Witch*] (1982). The seaside also features prominently in Mangiacapre's featurette *Follia come poesia* [*Madness Is Poetry*] (1979). Approaching crashing waves, wading in, splashing about with other women, engaging in creative movement in the water while weaving in and out of a tangled tree, moving gracefully to and fro while sitting on a rock formation by the sea shore, and more, Mangiacapre and co. perform and express themselves in the presence of great beauty and precarity. Splashing in the Bay of Naples and filming in the Campi Flegrei, the Nemesiache come to consciousness surrounded by indomitable beauty.

Mangiacapre's conception of the sea as an indomitable space of beauty, or, an untouchable space apart may call to mind the work of another avant-garde: Maya Deren. Deren, who was born in Kiev, emigrated to America in 1922, and is considered one of the pillars of the

American Avant-Garde, incorporated footage of the ocean waves crashing ashore in more than one of her surrealistic films.[417] In Deren's black-and-white silent short *At Land* (1944),[418] the protagonist washes ashore in the first few frames. The protagonist, played by Deren, moves in both forward and backward motion. She moves about in a dreamlike world: she finds herself on the sandy shore, proceeds to climb up a piece of driftwood, and then finds herself beneath a dinner table. She crawls down the long rectangular table toward a chess board and then chases a chess piece caught in a current of a small stream of water. She strolls down a country road, then finds herself crawling her way up into a dilapidated wooden structure. She finds herself on a cliff, falls down from the rock formation, and more. Deren's surrealist emulation of a dream comes to a close with a static long shot of the protagonist running into the distance at the water's edge. By shifting from heavy editing and rapid cutting to a long shot at the very end of the film, Deren creates a feeling of stability and closure. As the protagonist runs farther and farther into the distance, it becomes more and more clear that she is running toward freedom. In this final shot, the protagonist is allowed to run. She is not suddenly dropped into another dinner party or onto another country road. She is allowed to continue on in the direction she is heading uninterrupted. The farther she gets, the more the water's edge proves a space of freedom, escape, and relief. Deren and Mangiacapre share an interest in the ocean and other spaces of indomitable beauty. They also both make use of negative images and explore multiple iterations of the self on screen. While there are points of contact between Deren's and Mangiacapre's work, their ideological approaches are far from aligned. As a surrealist, Deren engages in avant-garde

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417. See P. Adams Sitney, *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde 1943-2000*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

418. See *Experimental Films*, directed by Maya Deren (2002; New York: Mystic Fire Video, 2002).

filmmaking with the aim of crossing a threshold into the world of the unconscious. Deren uses art to explore dreams, the illogical, and the irrational, not to promote cosmic harmony, sistership, or a feminist politics of creativity and care. While both avant-gardes share the impulse to work against social norms and lines drawn between the real and the imaginary, Deren and Mangiacapre make art with two very different objectives: the former to cross over and access the irrational, instinctual, unknown world of the unconscious and the latter to promote inner and outer peace for women and the world. Mangiacapre's art is political. It is feminist. It is geared toward challenging the established order and promoting a pacifist feminist politics. Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache do not spend time in and around the Bay of Naples with the aim of cracking the code of the unconscious. Rather, they do so to advance a profoundly peaceful way-of-being-in-the-world for women and for all.

Making avant-garde film by the sea and in other spaces of indomitable beauty, Mangiacapre and co. work towards and achieve cosmic harmony, restoring a sense of peace within themselves, among one other, and with Sister Nature. The concept of Sister Nature, as elaborated by Linda Vance,[419] reframes nature as a sisterly collaborator. Vance calls for a rejection of the longstanding definition of nature as a nurturer, or in other words, as a resource to be used by men as they see fit. She further denounces the man vs. wild trope which casts nature as a force to be reckoned with. For Vance, nature is neither a foe to be conquered nor a resource to be squeezed dry but "a wild and rowdy woman, a bad and unruly broad with no concern for her children, and no use to anyone but herself."[420] In reconceptualizing nature as a sister rather

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419. Linda Vance, "Ecofeminism and the Politics of Reality," in *Ecofeminism*: *Women, Animals, Nature*, ed. Greta Gaard (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 118-145.

420. Vance, "Ecofeminism and the Politics of Reality," 132.

than a mother, Vance defines her as more than mere fertile ground to be tilled or fracked by men. Like Vance, Mangiacapre affirms that both the beauty of nature and women is not to be exploited. In light of Mangiacapre's philosophical musings on motherhood, Vance's concept aptly relays Mangiacapre's notion of nature. For Mangiacapre, carrying a child to term and giving birth must be considered relationally: the experience belongs not only to the embryo that develops and child who enters the world but also to the mother who faces physical and mental discomfiture throughout pregnancy and pain as her body is ripped apart during childbirth. Since Mangiacapre understands giving birth relationally and refuses to discount the point of view of the mother in defining motherhood, being a mother means more than fulfilling the role of protectress for Mangiacapre: it also means undergoing physical trauma and disfiguration while bringing new life into the world. Not wishing to inflict further pain on the body of Parthenope (i.e., Naples), Mangiacapre does not project the role of mother onto nature. Neither a foe to be conquered nor a resource to be bled dry, nature is a beautiful friend and collaborator for Mangiacapre and Vance. Spending time with their unruly sister, in awe of her indomitable beauty, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache come to consciousness and accomplish a fresh, harmonious sense of self. For the Nemesiache and friends, stunning, untamable landscapes in and around Naples are ripe with liberatory potential.

Mangiacapre celebrates landscapes of indomitable beauty as well as individuality and personality with a Super 8 or 35 mm camera. One way that Mangiacapre shines the spotlight on the originality of collaborators is by celebrating their "whoness."[421] Following Hannah Arendt, the whoness of a person is the uniqueness of that individual's vocal, facial, and bodily

421. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 181.

expressions. While whoness cannot be captured with words it can be captured on camera. Not unlike the opening sequence of Annabella Miscuglio and the Feminist Film Collective's docufilm *La lotta non è finita!...* (1973), Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache showcase the individuality and personality of women on screen in *Cenerella*: *Psicofavola di Nemesi* [*Cinderella: Nemesis' Psychofairytale*] (1974) and *Follia come poesia*. In the opening sequence of Miscuglio and co.'s feminist constructivist film, self-stylization of the faces and bodies of members of the Feminist Film Collective are put on view: each woman chooses what makeup to wear, what costume to don, and what personality to convey. The clothing and accessories worn by the women are full of personality – from the cowgirl hat to the feather boa, from the top hat to the striped shirt. By exhibiting the self-stylization, facial expressions, and bodily movements of each woman, Miscuglio spotlights and celebrates the originality and creativity of her fellow feminists.

Like Miscuglio, Mangiacapre showcases individuality and personality in her first short as well as her featurette. While *Cenerella* exhibits the whoness of her fellow feminist artists through close-ups, showcasing the uniquely beautiful facial features of each Nemesiaca, *Follia come poesia* celebrates the unique, nonnormative beauty of local women interned at the Frullone Asylum[422] through costume and montage. During the third episode of Mangiacapre's avant-garde

422. L'Ospedale psichiatrico Frullone is a local asylum that Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache artistically occupied from 1977-1979. Mangiacapre and co. visited and made avant-garde art with the women, who were interned for a variety of reasons. In protest of local women being sentenced without appeal, confined, deprived of liberty and property, isolated, and subjected to torturous treatment from coma-inducing insulin shock to brain-damaging electroshock, "Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took to the asylum with costumes, musical instruments, and their Super 8 mm camera in tow. [. . .] During their two-year artistic occupation of the Frullone Asylum, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache took a creative approach to interacting with the institutionalised women: they donned costumes and painted faces, played music and moved to the beat, and performed and made an avant-garde film with them. While Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache did direct the film, woman the camera, bring the costumes, provide the musical instruments, and encourage the collaborative making of art, they did so with the aim of collectively exploring [. . .] Rather than pressuring the [. . .] nonconformist women – to bridle and quash their purported madness, Mangiacapre encouraged them to express it and themselves for all of who they were – normative and nonnormative parts alike – by engaging in artistic acts of creation." See Emerson, "Reframing Madness with Avant-Garde Film: Lina Mangiacapre's Feminist Collaboration at the Asylum," 324-325. See also Lina Mangiacapre, "Follia come Poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare," *Rassegna del Cinema Femminista* 3-4, ed. Lina Mangiacapre, 9-11 (Naples: So.gra.me, 1978-1979).

featurette, *Follia come poesia,* institutionalized women and Nemesiache collaboratively explore and express themselves through costume in the yard of the Frullone Facility. Each woman selects beads to don and a costume to wear. An institutionalized woman with short gray hair is shown picking out a strand of coral beads and putting it on. A few frames later, the woman struts her stuff with the coral beads prominently displayed. By showing the woman strutting her stuff shortly after donning the beads, Mangiacapre's montage spotlights the woman's active participation in crafting and exhibiting her own image. The relationship between the two images is not to spectators, despite the rapid cutting from one image to the next. Another woman with short brown hair helps to drape herself in chartreuse. As she tucks the fabric in at her chin, she realizes that her strand of white beads is no longer visible. With the helping hands of a nearby Nemesiaca, the woman adjusts the fabric and pulls out the beads for all to see. Here again, Mangiacapre's montage calls attention to the woman's active involvement in her own self-stylization. The medium shot of the woman in chartreuse adjusting the fabric to show her beads lasts for twice as long as the average shot in the avant-garde featurette. In addition, it is followed by two consecutive close-ups of the woman in chartreuse, each lingering for a second or two. By means of heavy editing and montage, Mangiacapre showcases a woman fashioning her own look. A third woman with short brown hair is smiling. This woman, draped in blue, meets the gaze of spectators straight on. She stares into the camera, beaming. Shortly thereafter, she is shown mirthfully twirling about with a blue veil fastened to her head. Mangiacapre shines the spotlight on the whoness of each of these incarcerated women and portrays them as active, creative subjects who participate in their own self-stylization. Like the women in Miscuglio's docufilm, those in Mangiacapre's avant-garde art film select a costume to don and a personality

to convey. Through costume, heavy editing, rapid cutting, and montage, Mangiacapre puts the institutionalized women's creativity and individuality on display. By making avant-garde feminist art films at the Frullone Facility, by the sea, in the Grotto of the Sibyl, and elsewhere in and around Naples, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache open possibilities for women in front of the camera and in the audience.

3. Specular Spectatorship

Mangiacapre's films open the door to spectatorial consideration of beauty, liberty, harmony, peace, inclusion, pain, rejection, sistership, and persistence. Mangiacapre's films have been shown on a number of occasions over the years. Screenings have taken place in Sorrento, Naples, Rome, Florence, and Paris. At the 1977, 1979, and 1981 Sorrento International Feminist Film Festivals, Mangiacapre's *Le Sibille, Follia come poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare* [*Let's Take Back the Body of the Sea*] (the original full-length feature film),[423] and *Ricciocapriccio* were screened. At the 1997 Myth of Faust Romaeuropa Festival, Mangiacapre's *Faust/Fausta* was shown. In addition, Mangiacapre's featurette *Follia come poesia* (the shortened version) has been screened in Naples, Paris, and, more recently, Florence at the 2019 the International Festival of Women's Cinema. Toward the beginning of the COVID19 pandemic, in March 2020, Mangiacapre's *Didone non è morta* was slated to be shown at the Colosseum as a part of the "Carthago: Il mito immortale" ["Carthage: The Immortal Myth"] exhibition in Rome, however was canceled for global health concerns. Spectators who have viewed Mangiacapre's films at

423. There are two distinct versions of Mangiacapre's *Follia come poesia*. The original version, shown at the Sorrento International Feminist Film Festival, was a 60-minute feature shot on Super 8 mm film entitled *Follia come poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare*. The second version came about while converting the original to Sony 3/4 inch U-Matic Videotape. It is a 40-minute featurette rebaptised *Follia come poesia*, which has been screened in Paris and Naples and was purchased by RAI 2 in 1980.

festivals or in the archives[424] are undoubtably a heterogenous group of individuals of varying nationalities, backgrounds, identities, and experiences. Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache value multiple differences and are of the mind that each and every human being is one-of-a-kind. In fact, in a 1990 interview on Rai 2, Mangiacapre affirms that "ogni essere è unico"[425] ["every being is unique."] Regarding her spectators, Mangiacapre indicates that some of these unique individuals may engage more than others with her avant-garde films and new feminist metaphysics:

> I miei film sono più comprensibili a quelle donne che non sono state recuperate da ideologie più o meno dominanti, o che hanno conservato il territorio della loro fantasia incontaminato, ascoltando con attenzione il ritmo del proprio respiro, un livello di sensitività e un interesse per ciò che è sospeso, che non intende essere rinchiuso in una interpretazione scientifica del reale (sociologia-antropologia-psicanalisi ecc...).[426]
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> [My films are more accessible to women who have not fully bought into dominant ideologies, possess a certain level of metaphysical awareness, have preserved the terrain of their imagination, listen to the rhythm of the breath flowing in and out, and are interested in the moments in between. My films are more accessible to those who have not closed themselves off to understandings of the world that stretch beyond the scientific and real (sociological-anthropological-psychoanalytical, etc...)]

Mangiacapre acknowledges that not all spectators are a tabula rasa and that, while she gives all viewers a glimpse into her mythical feminist dimension, some will appreciate and comprehend it more than others. Mangiacapre specifies that spectators who do not have both feet firmly planted in the realm of the real may glean more about her feminist metaphysics. Those who question dividing lines drawn by dominant ideology – like the line between real and imaginary or the line

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424. Mangiacapre's feature films – *Didone non è morta* (1987); *Faust/Fausta* (1991); and *Donna di cuori* (1994) – can be found at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome.

425. Lina Mangiacapre, interview by Alberto Castagna, *Duemattina: Attualità*, *Rai 2*, 1990.

426. Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile*, 43.

between physical and metaphysical – are more apt to fathom the mythical feminist dimension in which Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache operate.

Mangiacapre recognizes the heterogeneity of her spectatorship and does not presume to address a homogenous mass. As such, her stance diverges from that of Mulvey and de Lauretis. For Mulvey, the gaze of the spectator, like that of the director, camera, and protagonist, is unavoidably male. While for Mulvey the gaze of the cinema is markedly male, de Lauretis argues that "a film may address the spectator as female."[427] As such, for de Lauretis, the gaze of the spectator may be female. For Mangiacapre, the gaze of the spectator varies and depending on the particular spectator, that which is gleaned from the film will vary too. Mangiacapre suggests that women who are metaphysically-inclined and critically examine the hierarchies governing our lives may be in the best position to grasp her film and film theory. Mangiacapre makes one distinction very clear: not every woman is a feminist. As such, not every film made by a woman is a feminist one.

> Bisogna fare una differenza tra film di donne e film femministi; questa differenza è importante come la differenza che può esistere tra la donna che per quanto oppressa cerca l'integrazione e l'adattamento al sistema dominante maschile e la donna in lotta in un movimento collettivo di donne per cambiare la propria condizione di oppressa e tutto il sistema di valori sessisti e razzisti esistenti. Esiste un cinema delle donne che è fatto da donne ma ripete una serie di schemi e di comportamenti esistenti nel cinema maschile, senza porsi il problema di decodificare, di denunciare tutta la falsificazione dell'immagine della donna: un cinema che continua a vedere in termini unici di una femminilità biologica definita.[428]
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> [It is imperative to differentiate between women's cinema and feminist cinema. This distinction is important because it is the difference between an oppressed woman seeking integration and acceptance by the dominant male order and an

427. Teresa de Lauretis, "Aesthetic and Feminist Theory: Rethinking Women's Cinema," *New German Critique* 34 (1985): 154-175, 163.

428. Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile*, 3.

> activist who has joined the collective fight to overcome the oppression of women and dismantle the racist, sexist hierarchies at play. There are, in fact, films made by women that reproduce the behaviors and dynamics of men's cinema without critically examining or denouncing the false, stereotype of Woman, in other words, there are films made by women that continues to represent Woman in terms of biological determinism."]

One dividing line that Mangiacapre does not eschew is the one between those who accept the established order and those who do not. Mangiacapre distinguishes those who uphold and reinforce hierarchies of oppression from those who band together to work toward a better, more equitable, more harmonious tomorrow. Mangiacapre makes clear that not every woman filmmaker is a feminist one. It follows that not every woman spectator is a feminist one. This is why Mangiacapre does not address the spectator as male or female: some female spectators stand against the established order, others do not. Some female spectators are feminist, others are not. Mangiacapre does not conceive of or address all spectators as one because she views the viewers as a group of diverse individuals with varying identities and ideologies. What Mangiacapre does do is address all spectators in their heterogeneity with the expectation that some viewers will appreciate her work more than others. Mangiacapre contends that metaphysically-inclined activists working to dismantle hierarchy and establish a profoundly peaceful order in which women can show and express themselves without facing violence or incarceration will fathom a great deal from her films.

Among the metaphysically-inclined who have viewed Mangiacapre's films are the Nemesiache themselves. Spectating is a specular sort of sport for Mangiacapre and co. Since Lina Mangiacapre, Teresa Mangiacapra, Conni Capobianco, Claudia Aglione, Anna Grieco, Silvana Campese, Bruna Felletti and others feature in the films, the act of watching takes on new meaning here. Attending and watching a film in which you yourself appear is a profoundly self-

reflexive act. For example, Lina Mangiacapre/Nemesis appears in *Didone non è morta*. She leaps into the frame wearing her signature look: a black top hat, black leather pants, black leather jacket, black leather boots, and funky eyewear. She jumps onto the dance floor and joins the cast and crew as the song "Joy Time" rings out. Mangiacapre moves with energy and flair, engaging with both women and men. Her presence visibly energizes and rejuvenates the cast and crew. As Mangiacapre views this cameo as a spectator, she sees herself in her signature look. She sees the creative movement of her bodymind and unique facial expressions. She is confronted with a motion picture of her own whoness. Mangiacapre sees the costume she chose to don, the accessories she chose to wear. She is the one who crafted the image of herself she is now watching back. Moreover, Mangiacapre sees herself fulfill her hyrmythical role. In the brief cameo, Mangiacapre brings people together, animates and enlivens them: she is a porter of peace and harmony. She plays Nemesis. Another example, Claudia Aglione/Helena appears in *Faust/ Fausta* as Helen. She does not play a random role but rather appears as her mythical self, as Helen. Aglione performs her personality and originality on screen. With her vibrant long red hair flowing in the wind, facial features, and graceful creative movement, Aglione puts her whoness on view. While Aglione may not have selected her costume in this case, her unique grace and beauty shine through. Her whoness can be seen in her facial expressions and graceful arm movements. Mangiacapre's crafting of characters and casting adds another dimension to the specular spectatorship of the Nemesiache.

Mangiacapre often cast individuals who had something in common with the characters for parts in her films. Since Mangiacapre's characters are complex artists, musicians, sisters, leaders, hyrmythical figures, and desiring subjects with connections to real women, it was

possible for her to do so. Mangiacapre and co. took a strong stance against using the bodies of actors to represent one-dimensional, basic characters who serve to perpetuate cisheteropatriarchy. In their fourth manifesto, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache proclaim: "Siamo stufe di essere considerate più ricche come personaggi che come persone"[429] ["We have had it with female characters being considered more interesting than the humans beings on which the characters are supposedly based."] Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache lament that female characters have fallen short over the years and suggest that this is because they are not rooted in reality. Complex, diverse, female characters on screen would reflect interest and attention to real women. Mangiacapre and co. contend that perhaps those who continue to project Woman time and time again are more interested in their own creation than in living, breathing female human beings. As they demonstrate with their filmmaking and film festivals, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache are invested in representing and dialoging with women in heterogeneity. Mangiacapre featured Japanese, Australian, Algerian, Lebanese, Senegalese, Swiss, German, Belgian, British, French, and Italian films at the Sorrento International Feminist Film Festival. Mangiacapre made room for voices and perspectives from around the world in Sorrento and critically analyzed a number of the films shown at the festival in her film studies: *Cinema al femminile*[430] and *Cinema al femminile 2*.[431] Mangiacapre promotes and creates films that represent complex, counterhegemonic characters who share strengths, struggles, dreams, or aptitudes with real women in her life – often the Nemesiache.

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429. Le Nemesiache, *Manifesto della creatività: Manifestazione per la riappropriazione della nostra creatività* (Naples: 1977).

430. Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile* (Padova: Mastogiacomo, 1980).

431. Lina Mangiacapre, *Cinema al femminile 2* (Naples: Le Tre Ghinee, 1994)

Mangiacapre represents multidimensional artists, journalists, musicians, performers, leaders, collaborators, sister, caregivers, and companions on screen. Some such characters are artistically embodied by Nemesiache. In Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist films, the Nemesiache perform their originality. The filmed performances, showcasing individual personality and the strength of sistership, have the potential to be watched over and over again by the feminist artists. The registration of the Nemesiache renders an audiovisual tool for self-contemplation and actualization, as they have the ability to watch the performance of their very own *whoness* again and again. Therefore they can reflect upon the exhibition of their own personal uniqueness and the communal strength of the network of kinship and care. As a filmic recording, the potentiality of replaying the scenes or sequences in which they appear and re-confronting one's image is unlimited. As established by Judith Butler, reiteration is a critical element of the process of forming the self. Butler affirms that identity is "instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts* [. . .] through the stylization of the body."[432] In Mangiacapre's films, especially her short films, the Nemesiache stylize, show, and present themselves by means of costume, makeup, facial expression, gesture, and movement. By recording performances of the self, Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache create a specular tool of autocoscienza allowing for the viewing and re-viewing of the stylized self. Through the filming of performance art and hyrmyth, Mangiacapre and co. render possible reflection and re-reflection upon their whoness in perpetuity.

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432. Performative identity is explored by Judith Butler specifically with regards to gender. Butler affirms that "gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self." In applying Butler's theory of gender performativity to the performance of the self on screen, this dissertation slackens it to encompass a broader conception of identity. See Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" in *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1988), 519.

4. A Feminist Imprint *On* Reality

By making, watching, and re-watching their avant-garde films together, Mangiacapre and co. come to consciousness, accomplish nemesis, and spread inner and outer peace for women and for all. Mangiacapre's collaborative praxis of making avant-garde art, music, and film is what prompted Silvana Campese/Medea to come to consciousness and establish a fresh, harmonious sense of self. While making music, moving to the beat, and shooting an avant-garde feminist art film in collaboration with local women interned at the Frullone Asylum, Campese came to consciousness and achieved nemesis, in other words, inner and outer peace. Campese's transformation is the focus of the first episode of *Follia come poesia*, which was filmed over the course of two years, from 1977-1979.

In the first episode, Mangiacapre and co. play music and move to the beat, Felletti womans the Super 8 mm camera, and Campese comes to consciousness in the chapel of the Frullone Facility. The episode begins with a still shot of an unidentified young woman's face. The high angle freeze-frame is dominated by darkness. By using a freeze-frame, Mangiacapre marks the beginning of the episode which centers around the story of one woman who comes out of the ontological darkness into the light. The lone figure in the freeze-frame evokes the idea of a personal or individual journey. The dark background points to the metaphysical state Campese found herself in prior to her transformation. After about six seconds, the camera and montage kick into motion and the episode of Campese's nemesis commences.

The montage cuts from a closeup of a woman's hands playing the accordion to a closeup of Mangiacapre's hands clanging on the piano, from a closeup of another woman's hands playing the piano to a medium shot of Campese behind a drum set hesitantly tapping the high hat. First

appearing in an underexposed portion of the shot, Campese is then illuminated as the camera zooms in. Photographically and ontologically speaking, Campese transitions from darkness into the light. The montage continues, cutting from an institutionalized woman in plaid rocking back and forth to a woman's fingers playing the piano, from Mangiacapra and an institutionalized woman gently touching hands to Campese sitting behind the drum set glancing out the window away from the concert and tapping the cymbal lightly. Mangiacapre emphasizes Campese's initial isolation and hesitancy to join in on the music-making through editing and sound. The voiceover, written by Campese and recited by Mangiacapra, recounts Campese's feeling of "disagio"[433] ["unease"]. The montage redoubles her difficulty by juxtaposing images of Campese behind the drum set on her own, hesitantly tapping the high hat. In foregrounding Campese's discomfort by means of audiovisual display, Mangiacapre adeptly creates a counterpoint for what is to come: Campese's achievement of inner and outer peace. While the institutionalized women strike drums and move to the beat, Mangiacapre clangs on the piano (practicing la psicomusica), and Felletti womans the Super 8 (practicing lo psicocinema), Campese comes to consciousness and achieves a fresh, harmonious sense of self, moving out of the darkness and into the light and leaving her initial discomfort behind.

By folding together fragments of audiovisual material – original footage, original music, and voiceover – Mangiacapre shows and tells the story of Campese's nemesis.[434] As the atonal psicomusica plays, Campese's testimonial unfolds. After describing the concert in the chapel as

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433. *Follia come poesia*, directed by Lina Mangiacapre (1979; Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee).

434. For more on Campese's nemesis, see Silvana Campese's feminist docu-memoir, *La Nemesi di Medea*: *Una storia femminista lungo mezzo secolo* (Naples: L'Inedito, 2019).

"un momento di grossa crescita"[435] ["a moment of significant growth"], the testimonial focuses on a particular moment in which institutionalized women go over to Campese and interact with her. The voiceover and footage work together to tell the story of her transformation. As the voiceover plays, Campese is shown sitting on the ground with bongos in her lap. A woman with short brown hair energetically approaches Campese, demonstrating a desire to communicate through creativity. With the interned woman by her side, Campese begins playing music with more vigor and moving to the beat with more confidence. Campese finds her stride and takes part in the music-making comfortably. As the voiceover makes plain, practicing Mangiacapre's method of autocoscienza with her new companion is what prompted Campese to feel accepted for the first time in her life: Campese experienced "qualcosa liberarsi, sciogliersi"[436] ["something give way, come undone"] deep within her and from that moment on the demons that had been weighing on her disbanded: "I mostri che erano dentro di me si sono sciolti. Non ci sono più. Erano dentro di me." [437] ["My inner demons melted away. They were deep within me, but they're not there anymore."] As the last words of the testimonial ring out, Campese is shown behind the drum set once more. This time, however, she is not alone in a dimly lit frame: she is playing with enthusiasm in the company of companions and friends. From a still shot of a woman on her own, enveloped by darkness to a motion picture of a woman in the company of friends, lit up and engaged in collaborative music-making, the montage redoubles Campese's transformation. Campese's emergence from metaphysical darkness is mirrored in the montage. Before coming to consciousness, she was in the dark – just as the woman in the freeze-frame is – and after, she

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435. *Follia come poesia*, directed by Mangiacapre.

436. Ibid.

437. Ibid.

joins the Nemesiache in their harmonious, joyful, avant-garde practice of art and life – just as the woman in the motion picture, Campese herself, is shown doing. Campese is put on view joyfully playing avant-garde music among women at the end of the episode.

Mangiacapre's performative autocoscienza stimulates Campese and co. to express their bodyminds, banish their inner demons, and achieve a profoundly harmonious feminist consciousness, or, in the words of Felletti, "un senso di libertà totale."[438] ["a feeling of complete and utter freedom."] Promoting liberty and harmony, the Nemesiache make avant-garde art together and cross metaphysical and physical boundaries. In *Follia come poesia* and other films, Mangiacapre and Felletti capture a powerful feminist transformation in action: the accomplishment of nemesis by means of performative autocoscienza. As the process of filmmaking participates in the shaping of the psychic and social realities of the women captured on camera, rather than an imprint *of* reality in the Bazinian sense,[439] Mangiacapre's filmmaking is more of an imprint *on* reality. Bazin conceives of cinema as an imprint of reality, or, in other words, an indexical reproduction forever approaching "une représentation totale et intégrale de la réalité"[440] ["a total and complete representation of reality]. Bazin relates cinema to reality as he does a footprint to a foot or smoke to fire. For Bazin, fire is the exact stuff from which smoke is made, a foot is the exact stuff from which a footprint is made, and reality is the exact stuff from which cinema is made. While neither footprints nor smoke have the capacity to metamorphose the object from whence they came, Mangiacapre's psicocinema does. By crafting still and

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438. Bruna Felletti, "Bruna Felletti," in *Interpreti e protagoniste del movimento femminista napoletano 1970-1990*, ed. Capobianco, 69–75 (Naples: Le Tre Ghinee - Nemesiache, 1994), 70.

439. See André Bazin, "Le mythe du cinéma total," in *Qu'est ce que le cinéma?*, vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1958-1962), 21-26.

440. Bazin, "Le mythe du cinéma total," 24.

motion pictures, Mangiacapre does not produce a record of reality, she transforms it. If the process of creating smoke were to somehow participate in the transmutation of the fire or the pressing of a foot into sand were to somehow alter the nature of the foot itself, then the relationship between the signifier and the signified would reflect the rapport between Mangiacapre's psicocinema and reality, specifically, the reality of Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache. As the registration process itself participates in the actualization of the subjects captured on camera, Mangiacapre's avant-garde feminist filmmaking does more than produce an indexical record of the reality: it gives rise to nemesis. It transforms the realities of the feminist artists in front of and behind the camera, thereby leaving a Neapolitan feminist imprint *on* reality. Rather than an indexical copy of reality, Mangiacapre's films alter the state of consciousness and way-of-being of feminist artists in front of the camera, thereby transforming the very reality that Bazin's camera seeks to capture. For Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache, film is not a documentarian means of replicating reality but rather an artistic apparatus for the exploration and realization of self.

Blurring the lines between narrative and avant-garde, performance and selfhood, hyrmyth and reality, Mangiacapre and co. define themselves by their own creation. By reimagining, performing, and filming hyrmyths, the Nemesiache complete the Mangiacapran metaphysical trajectory, accomplish sistership of the self, and achieve a fresh, harmonious sense of self. As thought turns to action and action to reaction inner peace becomes outer peace and the sense of harmony within has manifestations and repercussions in the outer world as well. This dissertation investigates Mangiacapran theory, praxis, myth-making, art, politics, and film. Practicing a politics of counterhegemony and care by making avant-garde art, Mangiacapre promotes a world

with fewer borders, boundaries, and controls in which harmony reigns supreme and pursues inner peace and outer peace for women and the world. The impact of Mangiacapre's artistic and philosophical work reaches beyond the Nemesiache and Naples: from the fishermen in Mergellina to the women at the Frullone Asylum, from the filmmakers featured at the Sorrento International Feminist Film Festival to the readers of her feminist art and culture zine *Manifesta*, Mangiacapre's organization, art, and theory have touched many lives. Mangiacapre and her filmic body of work continue to leave a pacifist feminist imprint on reality. By bringing together an avant-garde network of creativity, kinship, and care, by writing and performing hyrmythical tales, by postulating theories of art, sexuality, and self that challenge mainstream binaries and categorizations, by dreaming up a feminist Dido who champions a politics of counterhegemony and care, by filming a transfeminist Faust whose path to peace lies beyond the binary, by practicing psicomusica and psicocinema with the interned women at the asylum, by practicing politics by making art, Mangiacapre proposes an alternative to the established order and lays the groundwork for a new way of relating to one another. With her avant-garde feminist œuvre, Lina Mangiacapre promotes and advances a world with fewer borders, boundaries, and controls in which practicing politics means performing art, women and the world may express their creativity, individuality, and sexuality freely, beauty in its normative and nonnormative forms are celebrated, and peace, harmony, and sistership abound.

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Io amo tu ami. Dir. Armenia Balducci. 1978; Italy.

Io/il mistero/le S. Dir. Lina Mangiacapre. 1986; Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee.

Io sono Li. Dir. Andrea Segre. Perf. Tao Zhao, Rade Serbedzija, and Marco Paolini. 2011; Venice: Parthenos, 2011.

Io sono mia. Dir. Sofia Scandurra. 1977; Italy.

Jin Nian Xia Tian [*Fish and Elephant*]. Dir. Yu Li. Perf. Yi Pan, Tou Shi, and Pengcheng So. 2001; Venice.

L'Aggettivo Donna. Dir. Maria Grazia Belmonti, Anna Carini, Rony Daopoulo, Paola De Martiis, Annabella Miscuglio, and Loredana Rotondo – Il Collettivo Femminista Cinema. 1971; Rome: Collettivo Femminista Cinema.

La Beauté du Diable [*The Beauty of the Devil*]. Dir. René Clair. 1950; France: Les Films Corona, 1950.

La cavia. Dir. Isabella Bruno, Loredana Fanigliulo, Manuela e Susanna Garroni, Alida Giardina, Liliana Ginanneschi, Federica Giulietti, and Enza Tolla – Il Collettivo Alice Guy. 1976.

La certezza è il dubbio. Dir. Teresa Mangiacapra and Ginny Sykes. Perf. Teresa Mangiacapra, Anna Bocchino, Clara Bocchino, Luigi Montefoschi, and Teresa Raiano. 2017; Naples.

La donna è cambiata l'Italia deve cambiare. Dir. Rosalia Polizzi. 1976; Italy.

La lotta non è finita!... Dir. Annabella Miscuglio, Loredana Rotondo, Rony Daopoulo, Maria Grazia Belmonti, Anna Carini, and Paola De Martiis – Il Collettivo Femminista Cinema. 1973; Rome: Collettivo Femminista Cinema.

La nouba des femmes du Mont Chenouan [*The Nouba of the Women of Mount Chenoua*]. Dir. Assia Djebbar. 1979; Sorrento.

La vida secreta de las palabras [*The Secret Life of Words*]. Dir. Isabel Coixet. Perf. Sarah Polley, Tim Robbins, and Sverre Anker Ousdal. 2005; Venice: Odeon, 2006.

Le casalinghe del via Plinio. Dir. Adriana Monti. 1976; Italy.

Le Damnation de Faust [*The Damnation of Faust*]. Dir. Georges Méliès. 1898; France: Star-Film, 1898.

Le ragazze di Capo Verde. Dir. Dacia Maraini. 1976; Italy.

Le Sibille. Dir. Lina Mangiacapre. 1977; Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee.

Les Bienheureux [*The Blessed*]. Dir. Sofia Djama. Perf. Sami Bouajila, Nadia Kaci, and Faouzi Bensaïdi. 2017; Venice: Bac Films, 2017.

Les Quatre Cents Farces du Diable [*The 400 Tricks of the Devil*]. Dir. Georges Méliès. 1906; France: Star-Film, 1906 .

Lettre de Beyrouth [*A Letter from Beirut*]. Dir. Jocelyne Saab. 1979; France.

Lina Mangiacapre: Artista del femminismo. Dir. Nadia Pizzuti. 2015; Italy: FogliadiLimone, 2015.

Lo spazio bianco. Dir. Francesca Comencini. Perf. Margherita Buy, Getano Bruno, and Giovanni Ludeno. 2009; Venice: 01 Distribution, 2009.

Lost in Translation. Dir. Sofia Coppola. Perf. Bill Murray, Scarlett Johansson, and Giovanni Ribisi. 2003; Telluride: Focus Features, 2003.

Maddalena, pescatrice di anime. Dir. Teresa Mangiacapra and Ginny Sykes. Perf. Teresa Mangiacapra, Anna Bocchino, Clara Bocchino, Luigi Montefoschi, and Teresa Raiano. 2019; Venice.

Madre, ma come? Dir. Rosalia Polizzi. 1977; Italy.

Madri e figli. Dir. Rosalia Polizzi. 1977; Italy.

Majstor i Margarita [*The Master and Margaret*]. Dir. Aleksander Petrović. Perf. Ugo Tognazzi, Mimsy Farmer, and Alain Cuny. 1972; Yugoslavia: Euro International Film, 1972.

Marisa della Magliana. Dir. Maricla Boggio. 1976; Italy.

Melancholian 3 huonetta [*The Three Rooms of Melancholy*]. Dir. Pirjo Honkasalo. Perf. Pirkko Saisio. 2004; Venice: Finnkino, 2005.

Mephisto. Dir. Istaván Szabó. Perf. Klaus Maria Brandauer, Krystyna Janda, Ildikó Bánsági. 1981; Hungary: Analysis Film Releasing Corporation, 1982.

Mephisto Funk. Dir. Marco Poma. 1986; Milan.

Mur Murs [*Wall Walls*]. Dir Agnès Varda. Perf. Juliet Berto, Judy Baca, Richard Bennett. 1981; Toronto.

Муж и дочь Тамары Александровны [*Tamara Aleksandrovna's Husband and Daughter*]. Dir. Olga Naruckaja. Perf. Aleksandr Galibin, Anna Bazhenova, Valentina Malyavina. 1988; Soviet Union.

Non ci regalano niente Dir. Rosalia Polizzi. 1977; Italy.

Olga's House of Shame. Dir. Joseph Mawra. Perf. Audrey Campbell, Judy Young, W.B. Parker. 1964; Los Angeles.

Oriana. Dir. Fina Torres. Perf. Doris Wells, Daniela Silverio, Rafael Briceño. 1985; Figueira da Foz: Neuf de Coeur, 1986.

Orlando. Dir. Sally Potter. Perf. Tilda Swinton, Billy Zane, Quentin Crisp. 1992; Venice: Sony Pictures International, 1992.

Pasti, Pasti, Pastičky [*Traps*]. Dir. Vera Chytilová. Perf. Zuzana Stivínová, Miroslav Donutil, and Tomás Hanák 1998; Czech Republic: Asociace Ceských Filmových Klubu.

Poesia che mi guardi. Dir. Marina Spada. 2009; Italy.

Prima del tradimento e dell'abbandono. Dir. Maurizia Giusti and Antonietta Laterza. 1974-1975; Italy.

Processo per stupro. Dir. Annabella Miscuglio, Loredana Rotondo, Rony Daopoulo, Maria Grazia Belmonti, Anna Carini, and Paola De Martiis – Il Collettivo Femminista Cinema. Aired April 26, 1979, on Rai 2.

Queen of Montreuil. Dir. Sòlveig Anspech. Perf. Florence Loiret Caille, Didda Jónsdóttir, and Úlfur Ægisson. 2012; Paris: Diaphana Films, 2012.

Ragazze la vita trema. Dir. Paola Sangiovanni. 2009; Italy.

Ricciocapriccio. Dir. Lina Mangiacapre. 1981; Naples: Le Nemesiache/La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee.

Ricostruzione di mio padre amore mio. Dir. Dacia Maraini. 1979; Italy.

Scuola senza fine. Dir. Adriana Monti. 1979-1983; Italy.

Secret Storm. Dir. Martha Ansara. Perf. Diana Fuller, Kay Self, Jeni Thornley. 1978; Sydney.

Siamo tante, siamo donne, siamo stufe! Dir. Adriana Monti, Grazia Zerman, Franca Barda, and Chiara Gamba. 1974; Italy.

Siren-Eiland [*Siren Island*]. Dir. Isa Hesse-Rabinovitch. Perf. Julie Goel, Manon, Antionette Novak. 1981; Venice.

Stella. Dir. Sylvie Verheyde. Perf. Léora Barbara, Mélissa Rodriguès, and Laëtitia Guerard. 2008; Diaphana Films, 2008.

Storia del movimento femminista in Italia. Dir. Lorella Reale. 2006; Italy.

The Age of Innocence. Dir. Martin Scorsese. Perf. Daniel Day-Lewis, Michel Pfeiffer, Winona Ryder. 1993; Venice: Columbia Pictures, 1993.

The Tale of Ruby Rose. Dir. Roger Scholes. Perf. Melita Jurisic, Chris Haywood. 1987; Venice: Hemdale, 1987.

Toi ippon no michi [*The Far Road*]. Dir. Sachiko Hidari. Perf. Sachiko Hidari, Yoshie Ichige, and Hisashi Igawa. 1978; Berlin.

Tres Irmaos [*Two Brothers, My Sister*]. Dir. Teresa Villaverde. Perf. Maria de Medeiros, Marcello Urgeghe, Evgeniy Sidikhin. 1994; Toronto; Costa do Castelo Filmes, 1994.

Tutto parla di te. Dir. Alina Marazzi. Perf. Charlotte Rampling, Elena Radonicich, and Maria Grazia Mandruzzato. 2012; Rome: BIM Distribuzione, 2013.

Un'ora sola ti vorrei. Dir. Alina Marazzi. Perf. Luisa Marazzi Hoepli and Alina Marazzi. 2002; Locarno: Dolmen Home Video, 2005.

Vanessa e le bambole. Dir. Maurizia Giusti and Antonietta Laterza. 1974-1975; Italy.

Via Castellana Bandiera. Dir. Emma Dante. Perf. Emma Dante, Alba Rohrwacher, and Elena Cotta. 2013; Venice: Istituto Luce Cinecittà, 2013.

Videocracy. Dir. Erik Gandini. 2009; Sweden: Folkets Bio, 2009.

Vogliamo anche le rose. Dir. Alina Marazzi. Perf. Anita Caprioli, Teresa Saponangelo, and Valentina Carnelutti. 2007; Locarno: Mikado Film, 2007.

Appendix A

Chronology

1946	Lina Mangiacapre is born in Naples, Italy.
1948	Teresa Mangiacapra is born in Naples, Italy.
1970	Mangiacapre founds Le Nemesiache – a feminist network of kinship, creativity, and care.
1970	Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache compose *Manifesto delle Nemesiache*.
1973	Mangiacapre and co. (the Nemesiache) compose *Manifesto metaspaziale*.
1973	Mangiacapre and co. compose "Cicli lunari."
1973	Mangiacapre publishes *Il diverso*.
c. 1973-5	Mangiacapre and co. compose a manifesto on theatre.
1974	Mangiacapre and co. film *Cenerella: Psicofavola di Nemesi*.
1975	Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache perform *La Cenerella* in Amalfi
1975	The Nemesiache compose "Cicli lunari"
1976	Mangiacapre and co. film *Antistrip.*
1976	Mangiacapre and co. film *Autocoscienza.*
1976	Mangiacapre and co. film *Il rito segreto di Nemesi.*
1976-1991	Mangiacapre ideated and organized the first international feminist film festival in Europe: *La Rassegna del Cinema Femminista*: "L'altro sguardo."
1977	*La Cooperativa Le Tre Ghinee / Le Nemesiache* is established.
1977	Mangiacapre and co. compose *Manifesto della Creatività*.
1977	*Le Sibille* is screened in Sorrento at the second annual international feminist film festival organized by Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache.

1977-79	Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache occupy the local Ospedale Psichiatrico Frullone and spent time making art with the interned women there.
1979	Featurette *Follia come poesia*, originally a full-length feature entitled *Follia come poesia: Riprendiamoci il corpo mare* is screened in Sorrento at the fourth annual international feminist film festival organized by Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache.
1978	Theatrical works *Spazio libero* and *Prigioniere politiche* are performed in Naples and in reduced form in Mestre and Palermo.
1978	Mangiacapre and co. lead the "Festa della poesia alla Gaiola e Discesa della Gaiola" on June 11, 1978.
1978	Mangiacapre and co. film *Il Mare ci ha chiamate*.
1980	"Follia come poesia" is acquired by RAI 2.
1981	Mangiacapre and co. compose *Manifesto femminista nazionale*.
1981	*Ricciocapriccio* is screened in Sorrento at the sixth annual international feminist film festival organized by Mangiacapre and the Nemesiache.
1987	Mangiacapre's *Didone non è morta* comes out.
1990	Mangiacapre publishes the novel *Faust/Fausta*.
1991	Mangiacapre's *Faust/Fausta* comes out.
1991	Teresa Mangiacapra publishes a catalogue of her sculptures: *Il tempo e gli angeli. Sculture di Niobe*
1993	Mangiacapre publishes the novel *Il mare sarà solo*.
1993	Mangiacapre publishes the novel *Pentesilea*.
1994	Conni Capobianco publishes *Interpreti e protagoniste del movimento femminista napoletano 1970-1990*.
1994	Mangiacapre's *Donna di cuori* comes out.

1996	Mangiacapre creates a commercial entitled *Da elettrici a elette* for the Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of women's suffrage in Italy.
2002	Silvana Campese publishes novel *Prisma*.
2002	Silvana Campese publishes collection of short stories *Strada facendo*.
2002	Lina Mangiacapre dies at age 56.
2004	A catalogue of Mangiacapre's paintings, drawings, poetry, and photos is published post-mortem: *Dipingere la poesia*.
2005	Mangiacapra publishes a second catalogue of her sculptures: *L'antro degli Angeli*.
2008	A collection of Mangiacapre's poetry is published post-mortem: *Amazzoni e minotauri*.
2010	Campese and Lello Agretti co-publish epistles *Contrappunto per soli timpani e oboe*.
2012	Campese publishes fantapolitical novel *Il ritorno di Cisarò*.
2013	Conni Capobianco publishes novel *Talismano*.
2014	Mangiacapra and Vincenzo Abate co-publish collection of poetry *UmOrI*.
2016	Theatrical work, *Lilith l'Origine*, written by Campese and directed be Mangiacapra, is performed in Naples.
2018	Mangiacapra publishes novel *Domenica 20 luglio 2008 confessioni di un ex killer*.
2018	Teresa Mangiacapra dies at age 69.
2019	Campese publishes feminist docunovel *La Nemesi di Medea: Una storia femminista lunga mezzo secolo.*
2020	Campese publishes *Parthenope Inferno Celeste: I molteplici volti dell'umanità.*
2021	Campese publishes fantapolitical novel *Memorie dal futuro: Il mondo dopo l'apocalisse*.

Appendix B

The “Lina Mangiacapre Award” is conferred on a yearly basis at the Venice Film Festival to films that render the invisible visible by portraying women as protagonists of their own stories. Conceived of and brought to fruition by Mangiacapre, the prize was originally named for Elvira Notari, the trailblazing turn-of-the-century Campanian filmmaker, and was awarded for the first time in 1987. Over the past thirty years, the award has honored films from across the globe that explore femininity, masculinity, desire, sexuality, violence, domination, despair, solitude, friendship, sisterhood, beauty, and love. In the case of a year in which the films screened at the Venice Film Festival do not meet the criteria of the award, it is not given. In addition, the award was suspended in 2002 and 2018 to memorialize the loss of Lina Mangiacapre and Teresa Mangiacapra, respectively.

Elvira Notari Award Recipients

1987	*The Tale of Ruby Rose* by Roger Scholes (Australia)
1988	*Codice privato* [*Secret Access*] by Francesco Maselli (Italy)
1989	*Муж и дочь Тамары Александровны* [*Tamara Aleksandrovna's Husband and Daughter*] by Olga Naruckaja (Soviet Union)
1990	*An Angel at My Table* by Jane Campion (New Zealand)
1991	*Dahong Denglong Gaogao Gua* [*Raise the Red Lantern*] by Yimou Zhang (China)
1992	*Orlando* by Sally Potter (England)
1993	*The Age of Innocence* by Martin Scorsese (United States of America)
1994	*Tres Irmaos* [*Two Brothers, My Sister*] by Teresa Villaverde (Portugal)
1996	*Fistful of Flies* by Monica Pellizzari (Italy)
1997	*Bent familia* by Nouri Bouzid (Tunisia)
1998	*Pasti, Pasti, Pastičky* [*Traps*] by Vera Chytilová (Czech Republic)
1999	*Holy Smoke* by Jane Campion (New Zealand)
2000	*Jin Nian Xia Tian* [*Fish and Elephant*] by Yu Li (China)

Lina Mangiacapre Award Recipients

2003	*Lost in Translation* by Sofia Coppola (United States of America)
2004	*Melancholian 3 huonetta* [*The Three Rooms of Melancholy*] by Pirjo Honkasalo (Finland)
2005	*La vida secreta de las palabras* [*The Secret Life of Words*] by Isabel Coixet (Spain)
2007	*Geomen Tangyi Sonyeo Oi* [*With the Girl of Black Soil*] by Soo-il Jeon (South Korea)
2008	*Stella* by Sylvie Verheyde (France)
2009	*Ehky ya Schahrazad* [*Scheherazade, Tell Me a Story*] by Yousry Nasrallah (Egypt)
2010	*Attenberg* by Athina Rachel Tsangari (Greece)
2011	*Io sono Li* [*Shun Li and the Poet*] by Andrea Segre (Italy)
2012	*Queen of Montreuil* by Sòlveig Anspech (Iceland)
2013	*Via Castellana Bandiera* [*A Street in Palermo*] by Emma Dante (Italy)
2015	*Heart of a Dog* by Laurie Anderson (United States of America)
2016	*Indivisibili* [*Indivisible*] by Edoardo De Angelis (Italy)
2017	*Les Bienheureux* [*The Blessed*] by Sofia Djama (Algeria)