The Female Voice in the Twentieth Century:
Material, Symbolic and Aesthetic Dimensions

Coordinated by
Serena Facci and Michela Garda

Over recent decades, the theoretical discourse on the voice has shifted between opposite poles that hardly satisfy the complexity of the phenomenon: vocalic vs. semantic, oral vs. written, presence vs. absence. Investigations on the musical creativity of the twentieth century show the centrality of the female voice; its material, symbolic and cultural dimensions require a multidisciplinary approach. Thus, inquiries about music may help to clarify the controversial stances in the fields of philosophy and anthropology. From Schoenberg to Berio, on the technical compositional level, the feminine voice has been set up as a catalyst for innovations and a source of new expressivity. Furthermore, it has shown its potential of becoming an object of experimentation and self-reflection, in the live dimension as well as in technological mediations. In many areas of popular music, jazz and urban folk the push towards emancipation and innovation is manifested in the construction and promotion of an individual vocal technique and, more recently, in the research of balancing between vocal and authorial qualities. In the grain of the female voice and its musical configurations one can grasp something of the complex cultural, psychic and social process, which marked the last century.

The first session is devoted to theoretical reflections about the voice, the pleasure it may arouse, as well as its cultural function in defining and challenging models of individual and collective subjectivity. The second session investigates the role of the voice on stage, both from the points of view of composition and performance. The focus of the third session is about vocal experimentation and its symbolic and cultural values, the transformation of the singer’s role and the use of technology. Finally, the fourth session deals with the “grain” of the voice, vocal styles and features from different genres and cultures, that have established a fundamental crossroads in the history of vocality and a turning point in the discursive, social and political transformation of the conduct of genders.

INFO
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The Female Voice in the Twentieth Century:
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Fondazione Giorgio Cini | 16 – 18 March 2018
Friday 16 March
Sala Barbantini

2.30 pm WELCOME ADDRESS
Gianmario Borio
Giorgio Cini Foundation / University of Pavia
Serena Facci
University of Rome, Tor Vergata
Michela Garda
University of Pavia

3 pm SESSION I
Women’s Voices: Theoretical Perspectives
Chair: Gianmario Borio
Giorgio Cini Foundation / University of Pavia

9.30 am SESSION 2
Vocal Music and Female Singers on Stage
Chair: Wendy Heller
Princeton University

2.30 pm SESSION 3
Technological Mediation and Vocal Performance
Chair: Michela Garda
University of Pavia

Saturday 17 March
Sala Barbantini

9.30 am SESSION 4
The “Grain” of the Voices and Vocal Subjectivity
Chair: Serena Facci
University of Rome, Tor Vergata

3 pm Adriaana Cavaro
University of Verona
The Voice and the Pleasure of Honey

2.30 pm Michael Edward Edgerton
Guangxi Arts University
The Extra-Normal Voice

9.30 am Julian Johnson
Royal Holloway, University of London
Music, Voice, and Language: From Debussy to Boulez

3 pm Marco Beghelli
University of Bologna
Maria Callas and the Recovery of an Operatic Vocal Subjectivity

10 am Sybille Krämer
Free Universität Berlin
What Does it Mean “to Have” a Voice? Philosophical Reflections on Vocality

4 pm COFFEE BREAK

11 am Michal Grover Friedlander
Tel Aviv University
“Being Dead is Something I Had to Learn”

4 pm Venero Rizzardi
University of Venice
“Hear What I Feel”: A New Convergence of Research, Composition and Performance in the Practices of Joan La Barbara and Diamanda Galás.

5 pm DISCUSSION

11.30 am DISCUSSION

Sunday 18 March
Sala Barbantini

2.30 pm SESSION 1
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Giorgio Cini Foundation / University of Pavia

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Tel Aviv University
“Being Dead is Something I Had to Learn”

11.30 am DISCUSSION

3 pm COSERT CONCERT
Stefano La Via
University of Pavia
in Conversation with Maria Pia De Vito

CONCERT
Dialektos
Maria Pia De Vito
voice
Huw Warren
piano