

Tracing the Disappeared Videodance Festivals of Italy

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Abstract

The focus of this short paper is on Italy's first videodance festivals that emerged in the beginning of the 1990s and contributed to the flourishing of screendance, known in Italian as *videodanza* (videodance). Pioneers of this kind of audiovisual curation have been the Naples-based festival known as *Il Coreografo Elettronico* (1990); the *Danza & Video* festival (1991) -- later transformed into an open archive known as *Cro.me*. -- and the recently “resurrected” festival *Teatro Televisione Video TTVV* (1985) in the region of Riccione in the Adriatic part of Italy. Employing web research in combination with bibliographic material and oral testimonies, this research looks at the reasons that instigated the emergence of these festivals, their modes of survival and resistance in time prior to their disappearance or evolution and the practice of curation before the rise of web and digital facilities. In this way, this preliminary inquiry hopes to inform the current ways of screendance curation, dissemination and appreciation across Italy and abroad.

keywords: videodanza, festivalisation, audiovisual curation, audiovisual archive

Introduction

According to recent research (Payri, 2018), Italy is one of the European countries with the most numerous and in some cases long-existing videodance festivals. With a curatorial activity that officially began in the 1990s, videodance festivals have enabled the relationship between dance as an ephemeral act and its capture initially in analogue audiovisual media to gradually flourish into the hybrid art form known in Italian as *videodanza*¹ (videodance). Considering that festivals usually inspire artistic experimentation and as social events may incite collaborations and promote creative exchanges, we may assume that videodance festivals played a crucial role in the growth of dance on screen in Italy.

Festivals usually offer support to artists, if not economical at least symbolic, by augmenting their visibility and recognition that in turn may generate for them possibilities for funding. Festivals are also a gate to artistic and cultural production and may offer a lens to navigate a specific field and help to create a community of supporters of an artform. The circulation of capital, bodies and ideas enabled by ‘festivalisation’ (Cudny 2016; Taylor and Bennett 2016) and the subsequent increase of local tourism contribute to the social and economic growth of a region. Despite their cultural and economic values, festivals are living organisms and as such, they get born and die. The festivals and projects dedicated to dance on screen that I am trying to outline in this paper have disappeared; thus, they have ceased to operate as festivals. Nevertheless, they have left invaluable archives to trace the evolution of the artform as well as the undertaken curatorial activities or they have shifted their focus to other forms of supporting the field of dance on screen.

¹ The *videodanza* is a wide term that is not only translated into videodance but is probably closer to the concept of screendance as it embraces dance documentation, dance (on) film and dance animation, thus experimentations of dance with cinema and digital technologies.



Within the Italian borders, pioneers² in the curatorial endeavour of *videodanza* have been the Naples-based festival known as *Il Coreografo Elettronico* (1990–2017); *Premio TTVV* held in the city of Riccione in the Adriatic part of Italy and the Milan-based *Danza & Video* festival (1992–1996) -- later transformed into an open archive known as *Cro.me*. that is currently operating in collaboration with different partners for the curation of a variety of programmes and events for dance on screen. The screendance festival activity in Italy has also been supported by plenty of usually enthusiastic cultural associations³. Artist scholar Blas Payri (2018: 28) has identified the following ‘discontinued’ short-lived festivals that co-existed along with ongoing initiatives: *VideoDanza Film Fest* (Catania, 2005), *MILANO DOC FESTIVAL - VIDEODANCE SECTION* (Milan, 2007), *Movingwalls - Urban Videodance Festival* (Ferrara, 2010–2013), and *Wallpaper Dance* (Trieste, 2010–2012). In this list, it should also be added *Video Dance Italy – Moving Virtual Bodies* (2006–2014), an international dance film project curated by Roberto Casarotto and Gitta Wigro that was supported by the Italian dance network *Anticorpi XL*. As the focus of this paper is not exhaustive⁴, the following analysis concentrates on the disappeared screendance festivals with the longest life span enabling us to observe better their evolution and survival strategies. Therefore, the chronological frame that this paper examines begins approximately in the 90s with the establishment of the first initiatives of screenance dissemination in the format of competitions and exhibitions.

Employing web research in combination with bibliographic material and oral testimonies, this research focuses on the reasons that instigated the appearance of the three festival structures that emerged in the 1990s (*Premio TTVV Riccione*, *Il Coreografo Elettronico*, *Danza & Video*). The paper also examines their modes of survival and resistance in time, the practice of curation that coincided with the period before the rise of web and digital facilities and finally the impact of these festivals’ activities on the recent ways of screendance production and dissemination. How did these festivals help to scaffold the field during their lifespan and how did they inform the present festivalisation through their disappearance or transformation? Looking at the reasons for their longevity may help to build better and sustainable supporting frames for curatorial and artistic practices, which is one of the reasons that motivates this research.

My perspective is informed by my work that straddles artistic practice, writing and curatorship. As part of the collective futuremellon/NOT YET ART I had the chance to curate together with

² As part of the book *Festivaliana. Festival, culture e politiche di danza al tempo del 'miracolo italiano'* (2020), Italian scholar Giulia Taddeo explores the cultural politics of Italian dance festivals in the middle of twentieth century and reveals information about the *Festival Internazionale del Balletto di Nervi* that curated dance film programmes between 1957–1969. The programme presented a high-quality of experimental dance films and dance documentations originating from Europe, USA, the former USSR and Africa.

³ In the co-authored paper “Screendance Narratives from around the Mediterranean Sea” published at the *International Journal of Screendance* (2020, Vol. 11), I have attempted to map the active screendance festivals across the European Mediterranean during 2020. For Italy, these are: *La Danza in 1 minuto* (Torino, active since 2010), *Breaking 8 International Dance Film Festival* (Cagliari since 2013), *Fuori Formato Festival Internazionale di danza contemporanea, performance e videodanza / Stories We Dance* (Genova since 2016), *Cinematica* (Ancona since 2017), *Cinema è Danza* (Arezzo and Perugia since 2014), *Cinedanza* (Modena since 2019), *ZED Festival Internazionale Videodanza* (Bologna since 2019).

⁴ Screendance scholar Xiao Huang also lists the majority of the Italian screendance festivals and initiatives that emerged from 1985 to the present in her chapter *I festival di videodanza. Una panoramica della situazione italiana* (Cervellati and Garzarella 2024). Some of them include *T*Danse – Festival internazionale della Nuova Danza* (Aosta since 2016); *Premio Roma Danza – International Choreography and Dance-Video Competition* (Rome since 2018); *Videobox – Festival di videodanza* (Pesaro since 2021).

VeNe cultural association *[SET.mefree] Dance and Movement on Screen*, a short-lived platform for the curation, education and mentoring on screendance. In *[SET.mefree] Dance and Movement on Screen*, we adapted a mixed curatorial approach based on inviting artists to show their films through open calls and creating allies with other screendance festivals, notably Dance on Film Festival in Austria, Festival International de Vidéodanse de Bourgogne in France and Lago Film Festival in Italy, by asking them to curate short programmes as part of our events. Occasionally we were also invited to curate guest programmes for their festivals as well. A major event along our path has been *Screendance Landscapes. Due Giorni su Danza e Schermo* which was supported by IUAV University of Venice and aimed to bridge theory with practice by connecting artists, curators, producers and scholars.

After two years of non-stop and non-paid, yet enthusiastic, nomadic work mainly in Italy, our latest event took place in September 2019 on the occasion of the first and what seems for now the last edition of *Dance and Performing Arts Festival for Urban Regeneration* (Mestre, Italy). Although the pandemic brought the suspension of our curatorial practice, my close collaborator Elisa Frasson and I contributed to the visibility of screendance in Europe by writing two short papers published in the International Journal of Screendance. One of them⁵, the most relevant to the current research, was based on one-to-one interviews with curators of the major screendance festivals from the European Mediterranean and it examined the pre-pandemic infrastructures for enabling the production of screendance and the tools for audience development in Italy, France, Greece and Spain; it also offered speculations on the evolution of the form. This publication under the title “Screendance Narratives from around the Mediterranean Sea” (Mikou 2020) that looked at the active screendance festivals in the European Mediterranean may serve as an introduction to the current research. Considering that our curatorial activities have been suspended, I became motivated on a personal level to explore what happened at other screendance festivals in Italy and question how they managed to survive through time or why they stopped their activities.

1. Parallel & Interlaced Histories

Although the history of dance on screen is interlaced with the histories of cinema, video art and documentation, digital technologies, and the industries of music, advertising and broadcasting, the *videodanza* in Italy gradually gained popularity mostly through the Italian state television and the home videos available at local newsstands, such as the video collections *I Grandi Protagonisti Della Danza* and *I Grandi Balletti* (Guzzo Vaccarino 1996: 108). The Italian dance critic Elisa Guzzo Vaccarino in her book *La Musa dello Schermo Freddo* (hence, The Muse of the Cold Screen) mentions Rai (especially Rai Uno, Due, Tre), Fininvest, Videomusic, Telemontecarlo, and Tele+ as the Italian TV channels that in the 1980s and 1990s included in their programmes, initially sporadically but with an augmented frequency, documentations of dance performances or remakes recasted for the screen predominantly from abroad, thematic broadcasts or episodes dedicated to acclaimed choreographers (video portraits) and rarely international experimental dance works made for the screen. *Maratona d'Estate* (Summer Marathon) with the Italian dance critic Vittoria Ottolenghi in Rai Uno succeeded in reaching the record number of 18 summer editions (with the first edition in 1978 and the last one in 1995) and transmitted predominantly classical, neo-classical and modern dance repertory, and selected videodance works in collaboration with the festival *Il Coreografo Elettronico*.

⁵ The second contribution co-authored with Elisa Frasson, Marisa C. Hayes, Marco Longo and Katja Vaghi aimed to question the shift of the spectatorship of screendance and the educational and creation processes during the first lockdown in Europe by articulating a series of rhetoric yet urgent questions.

According to Vaccarino the production of videodanza in Italy received little support from the Italian TV in comparison, for instance, to France and Great Britain where the videodance boom stimulated diverse collaborations between TV channels and production companies (such as Dancelines-BBC channel for the UK) for the creation of original dance creations for the screen. Another element to keep in mind is that broadcasting of full-length dance performances, thus video documentations, is a very important aspect of the history of videodance in Italy, and not only, and it has been one of the routes from which videodance emerged. The motivation behind video documentation did not only respond to archival necessities but most importantly to the possibility that it gave for promoting and disseminating to large audiences choreographic works conceived for the stage. The observation of the role of video documentation in the growth of screendance and the development of its audience reveals the oxymoron of this research: exploring the disappearance of festival structures that were created as a response to support an art form (screendance) that initially emerged from the necessity to capture an art form (dance) that disappears as soon as it is performed, or to be more precise, that remains differently.

Videodance creation in Italy – dance works created to be seen only on screen – began independently around the end of 1980s, for instance *Dolcemente* (1989) by Enzo Cosimi and Italo Pesce Delfino; *Tuffo nell'acqua e tonfi del cuore* (1989) by Cinzia Romiti and Laura Balis Giambrocono, winner of the first edition of *Il Coreografo Elettronico*. Although the Italian dance scene has been enjoying a dance boom since the late 1970s (Poesio 2000), the videodance creations were few and the first videodance festivals initially presented works originating from abroad.

1.1 Premio Riccione TTVV and Coreografo Elettronico

Premio Riccione TTVV (Teatro TeleVisione Video), established in 1947 and today simplified as TTV, first dedicated space to videoteatro (videotheatre) in 1985 under the initiative of Franco Quadri. Since the second year of this initiative, the general category of videoteatro that used to embrace works of ‘theatre’ on screen and ranged from performance documentations to experimental video works, included video creations by acclaimed choreographers such as Pina Bausch (*Blaubart*), Jean-Claude Gallotta and Raul Ruiz (*Mammame*) who also won the Sole d’Oro award in the 1986 edition. In 1994, the first official videodance programme was presented as part of *Panorama Videodanza* and made a clear distinction between videoteatro and videodanza (hence videotheatre and videodance). The catalogue of the audiovisual archive of *Premio Riccione TTVV* is available online thanks to the project *ACT! Archivi del Teatro Contemporaneo* and contains the titles of more than 4000 audio-visual works (theatre, opera, dance, performance on screen) that were presented at the festival. The festival as an interdisciplinary event combining theatre, video and experimental practices continues to run until today and it concluded its 27th edition in autumn 2024. Although it is a very rich case to examine further – especially due to its longevity – it deserves a separate investigation that goes beyond the purposes of this research.

Il Coreografo Elettronico, one of the most well-known videodance festivals and competitions in Italy, was found by Marilena Riccio (Associazione Napolidanza), a former dancer of Teatro di San Carlo. The festival was active from 1990 until 2015 under her artistic direction that was passed to Laura Valente, who served as director until 2017, the year that the festival ceased its activities. During its lifespan, *Il Coreografo Elettronico* played an important role in the promotion and dissemination of screendance practice and culture in Italy and beyond⁶ (Massari

⁶ “La manifestazione divenne, fin da subito, uno strumento per monitorare le realtà produttive esistenti, la circuitazione delle nuove opere, la creazione di una rete di collegamento tra operatori di diversi paesi e confronto di esperienze diverse” (Massari 2020: 288).

2020: 288) and it served as a venue to present to the Italian audience works from Italy and most predominantly from across the globe – for instance, Canada, USA and Europe among other places. *Il Coreografo Elettronico* has screened dance documentations or dance adaptations for the screen, promotional videos of dance performances, dance (on) films, videodance works and dance documentaries. Indicatively, some of the winners of the competition have been Sasha Waltz with *Allee der Kosmonauten* (2000), Wim Vandekeybus with *Here After* (2007) and *Nora* (2008) directed by Alla Kovgan and David Hinton and choreographed by Nora Chipaumire. Italian pioneers such as N+N Corsino, Ariella Vidach and Claudio Prati found a welcoming space to develop and present their own distinct artistic language⁷ (Riccio 2018). As Riccio recalls, the festival's international partners among others included the international videodance festival DanceScreen in Vienna curated by International Music+Media Centre, Channel 4 from BBC and Spanish video director and dance on screen curator [Nuria Font](#). At a national level, *Premio TTVV Riccione* and *Romaeuropa Festival*, especially the programme [Mondi Riflessi](#) (1991–1992) by Colette Veautre and Carlo Infante, often meta-programmed several of the works that were first presented as part of *Il Coreografo Elettronico* (Massari: 2020) indicating that there was a tendency to create a network at a national and international level among the active cultural associations and institutions of the time.

The audio-visual archive of the festival that gathers approximately 2000 works (Monda 2020) has been donated at Donnaregina Foundation of Contemporary Arts / Museo Madre in Naples in 2019. Although the festival no longer operates as a venue for presenting contemporary screendance practice, its long survival along with its high standard quality that contributed to its visibility beyond the Italian borders attracted the interest of many scholars. Indeed, there is a growing bibliography (Massari: 2020; Monda: 2020) and research activity focusing exclusively on *Il Coreografo Elettronico* such as an initiative from Sapienza University of Rome to set its archive in motion. Dance History Professor Vito Di Bernardi has been the principal curator of *Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive* with the support of Letizia Gioia Monda among others. Sapienza's two-year research project (2017–2018) aimed to explore the development of choreographic thinking and interdisciplinary collaboration through the years with the hope of expanding “the understanding of dance history, by designing renovated interdisciplinary constellations that can have an important impact on teaching and research programs, as much as in the development of exhibition itineraries” (Monda 2020: 325). *Il Coreografo Elettronico* is a festival turned into an archive that resists its disappearance through a process based on the future construction of an open-source digital archive and “an interactive conceptual map” (Monda 2020: 327) that will allow the user to re-arrange its contents (and metadata) according to diverse parameters and aspects⁸.

1.2 Danza & Video and Cronaca e Memoria dello Spettacolo (Cro.me.)

Danza & Video was curated in 1992 by dance critic Sergio Trombetta and Paola Calvetti, an Italian writer and back then a dance journalist for the Italian journal *La Republica* and whose brainchilds among others include the TV video portraits *Danza un Personaggio, una Città*, and

⁷ For instance, the 1991 competition included works by Elsa Piperno, Enzo Cosimi, Michele Abbondanza, Antonella Bertoni, Sosta Palmizi, Virgilio Sieni, Italo Pesce Delfino, Roberto Castello and gruppo Corte Sconta, the winners of the first edition that shaped the Italian videodance (Massari 2020: 292–295).

⁸ For the study of the *Coreografo Elettronico Archive*, Monda suggests the following keywords that could be applicable but also expanded for the study of other archives: creator, country of origin, themes, periods, experimentation types, digital technologies applied, relation with other artistic disciplines such as music and theatre (2020: 325).

the home video collection *I Grandi Protagonisti Della Danza*⁹. The first edition of *Danza & Video* was presented as part of MILANO LTRE, a currently active performing arts festival in Milan that was born in 1986. The next editions were supported by the Municipality of Milano and were organised in collaboration with Enrico Coffetti, the actual president of the cultural association Cro.me. (CROnaca e MEmoria dello Spettacolo), and the initiative ceased to operate in 1996 after five monthly-long exhibitions in Milan and several nomadic events across Italy.

It is important to clarify that the initiative of *Danza & Video* did not appear as a festival but rather as an exhibition or showcase of dance works mediated through the screen that gradually created a community around the artform and a pole of attraction of a new audience¹⁰, curious for what was at that time in Italy a revolutionary artform, yet imported from France and the USA and promising to open dance to new possibilities. During the exhibition month, a video wall (maxi schermo) and giant promotional dance images could be seen on the front of Palazzo dell'Arengario, currently the Museo del Novecento, in Piazza del Duomo in Milan, that used to build the curiosity of citizens and tourists. Eighteen exhibition screening stations equipped with monitors, VHS players and headphones were installed at the principal venue of the exhibition at Palazzo dell'Arengario and could be visited during flexible exhibition times such as from lunchtime until late at night. The exhibition included special screenings, guest programmes curated by partners such as La Cinémathèque de la Danse in Paris, discussions with dance artists working with new technologies, such as Ariella Vidach, and press conferences of dance artists from La Scala di Milano Foundation or dance companies that were passing from the city to perform in other venues during the specific month. These opportunities contributed to building a mutual supporting ecosystem between artists and 'archivists'/videographers.

Through its involvement in *Danza & Video*, Cro.me. gradually discovered its *raison d'être* as a living archive – a 'historical memory' – for dance works on screen. *Cro.me.* was established in 1994 firstly to organise *Danza & Video* and gradually its mission was directed "to collect, preserve, restore, disseminate and promote the history of dance" through its mediation on screen (Giardino ZED online). It received its first financial support from the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities in 1999, two years after a significant change in the Italian system¹¹ of public funding. *Cro.me.*'s archive that has been almost entirely digitised includes around 2000 files in the form of: documentations of all styles and genres of dance performances for the stage and the studio (not only contemporary, but also ballet, folkloric and butoh, that

⁹ In 1988, *Danza un Personaggio, una Città* was co-produced by Rai Due, the second state channel in Italy, and was designed to create video portraits of great dance artists in the cities where they were based, for instance Alvin Ailey in New York, Roland Petit in Paris and Carolyn Carlson in Venice. This material later served for the home video collection (composed of twenty VHS tapes) *I Grandi Protagonisti Della Danza* that was dedicated to 20th century ballet and contemporary choreographers and was available for purchase on the newsstands of the Italian cities of that time; the collection produced around 20.000 copies (Guzzo Vaccarino 1996).

¹⁰ In the writings of this era (e.g. Vaccarino 1996: 8), there is very vivid the angst of contemporaneity and the fear of the death of performing arts due to the advent of video technologies. This fact shares parallels with some of the fears expressed during the lockdown regarding the relationship of the screen with the performing arts. Although during the pandemic the web-connected screen has literally given increased visibility to the performing arts through a variety of classes and performances available online, fears about the death of dance as live art and its live audience were among the several voices expressed.

¹¹ "In 1997, the appointment of a committee of dance experts in charge of the distribution of government funds to dance companies was hailed as the first step towards a new political and administrative regulation of Italian theatre dance" (Poesio, 2000: 100).

were presented in Milan through the years), documentaries, animations and most importantly original works made for the screen. This archive was also a ‘nomadic archive’ (Giardino ZED online) carrying tapes, video players and monitors inside a van to create in situ exhibitions across Italy (*Video Dance Moving*). It still maintains its ‘living’ character by allowing it to be accessed through various thematic programmes curated upon request or re-arranged and re-associated through video-editing of extracts for different occasions.

As a cultural organisation, Cro.me. has collaborated with festivals for special and often thematic screenings and supported academic training and educational events through additional dance on screen programmes such as *Le Storie della Danza* (The Stories of Dance) and *Danzare la Performance*, both curated by Anna Lea Antolini. Coffetti (Cro.me.) together with Fabio Bruschi (*Premio Riccione TTVV*), associazione NapoliDanza (*Il Coreografo Elettronico*) and IBACN (Istituto dei beni artistici, culturali e naturali della Regione Emilia-Romagna) participated in the European project *Terpsychore: European Network for the Preservation of the Audiovisual Dance Heritage* (1999–2002)¹² that aimed to map and disseminate to a general public the European archives for the memory of dance. According to Riccio¹³, the project was about “the systematic integration and cataloguing of European video dance collections, the creation of a common method for the restoration and preservation of audiovisual material, and the search for an appropriate communication and promotion strategy” (Riccio 2018: 172). As part of this project, Coffetti proposed a multimedia archive with two screens next to each other suitable for a museum visitor: one with the performance documented on screen and the other including clickable screen buttons with information for instance about the choreographer, the performers, the director of photography and reviews by critics. This installation was a sort of an analogue configuration of today’s multimedia web pages that the fast evolution of the internet rendered obsolete. Cro.me. also initiated the digital project *M.house - Multimedia Archive of Dance and Performing arts* (1997–1999) and currently curates the downloadable *Danza Dove* App in order to inform users about the dance events across Italy.

Cro.me. is currently operating in collaboration with different partners for the curation of a variety of programmes for dance on screen. It is a founding member of the project RiSiCo (Rete Interativa per Sistemi Coreografici, hence Interactive Network for Choreographic Systems) – that is supported by the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities. RiSiCo’s partners include the Turin-based cultural association COORPI and Perypezye Urbane, a cultural organisation in Milan that was founded in 2005 and conducts research and educational activities between digital culture and performing arts, with particular emphasis on dance production. Cro.me.’s mission of archiving and its dissemination through innovative practices has met COORPI’s three axes of activities outlined as cross-media production, promotion / distribution and programming/curation, enabling in this way a complementary relationship between them since 2015. This alliance has been further reinforced through a collaboration with the Compagnia della Quarta, the curators of the Bologna-based ZED Festival Internazionale Videodanza, which is a festival established in 2019 that presents videodance works along with projects of virtual and augmented reality.

¹² The rest of the European partners were Deutsches Tanzfilminsitut (Germany), Vlaams Theater Instituut, Carina Ari Stiftelsen (Sweden), Magyar Tancremesek Szovetsge (Hungary), Polski Osrodek Miedzyarodowego Instytutu Teatralnego (Poland), Video Place (Great Britain).

¹³ ‘Il progetto riguardava la sistematica integrazione e catalogazione delle collezioni europee di videodanza, la creazione di un metodo comune per il restauro e la conservazione del materiale audiovisivo, la ricerca di una appropriata strategia di comunicazione e promozione’ (Riccio 2018: 172).

COORPI (COORdinamento Danza Piemonte) was established in 2002 by Cristiana Candellero and Lucia De Rienzo in the region of Piemonte with the aim to promote and distribute creative story-telling through the body (and the moving image); in other words, to support locally the contemporary dance production, distribute it and at the same time build a local audience for dance on screen. In a format similar to the Amsterdam-based *One Minute Dance Film Contest*, *La Danza in 1 minuto* (ongoing since 2011 and addressed also to international artists since 2018) is COORPI's longest project in the form of an online competition enabled through mobile devices. *La Danza in 1 minuto* gathers through an open call short works of dance on screen, maximum 60 seconds long, that may narrate creatively the urgencies of our contemporary world. One of the most acclaimed and award-winning productions by COORPI in collaboration with Scenario Pubblico – recognised since 2022 by the Italian Ministry of Culture as Crid (Centro di Rilevante Interesse Nazionale nell'Ambito della Danza –, has been Alain el Sakhawi's *Nouns n'attendros plus les barbares* (2016), which was purchased and subsequently screened at the prestigious European channel ARTE from July to October 2018 (Giardino ZED online). COORPI's activities expand into the support of videodance and multimedia residencies (Campo Largo 2015–2017) and the production of (dance) films in 4D, such as *Ben* (2019) by Teresa Sala, Ilaria Vergani Bassi, Mattia Parisotto, and Gabriel Beddoes. They have recently oriented their efforts towards the production of transmedia and immersive projects such as re-FLOW and Zona Martiska, a project uniting dance performance, architecture and interactive digital technologies. In cooperation with other European partners, COORPI co-led *Migrating Artists Project* (mAPs, 2020–2022), a Creative Europe project aiming to recognise dance film as a legitimate genre and hoping to leave a strong imprint in the film industry.

Observations and Future Steps

Looking at the festival structures described in this paper (*Premio TTVV Riccione, Il Coreografo Elettronico, Danza & Video*) we can observe that their life span depends on co-dependence between funding availability, curatorial commitment, networking and adaptability to the fast-changing conditions that shape our digitally oriented world. Openness to collaboration across different associations, festivals and institutions and an interest in working together in order to obtain more are cultural signs of a changing mentality that is often trapped in isolation. Payri has observed that “festivals in Italy are scattered around different cities and seem to ignore each other” and this can be partially proven true when looking at short-lived initiatives that did not manage to build strong networks. The longer-lived festivals have survived thanks to exchanges with other like-minded entities and structures and often the issue turns out to be about how to access them.

This research has also revealed that the disappeared festivals have been transformed into invaluable archives that if studied together may help to expand our awareness of the past and grasp the evolution of dance in relation to the screen in a specific country, in this case Italy, or a broader region such as the (European) Mediterranean. As a subsequent step in this research, studying these archives all together is crucial due to the fact that selection and evaluation criteria (curation and appreciation) on behalf of a jury or a festival organisation shape inclusions and exclusions of artistic practices – creating differentiation between ‘good’/ ‘worth seeing’ and ‘bad’/ ‘not worth seeing’ works. For this reason, it is important to look at a plurality of festivals and their archives in order to comprehend more holistically the evolution of an artform during a specific era and a geographical region. To this end, Enrico Coffetti (Cro.me.) suggests inviting different experts or even curious minds to curate navigation paths within these archives by offering diverse entrance points to the study of the past of dance on screen, for instance, thematic, aesthetic or historical.

By looking at the moving body through dance and the working modes and conditions manifested through choreographic, cross- and interdisciplinary making, we may comprehend which are the social views and political and economic parameters that shape an era, in this case from the 1990s and after. The mediation of the body through the screen also allows for examining its visual representation and therefore screendance may offer a combined lens between performance and the screen to examine the past and the present. Through this lens, how is the body and its relation to other bodies and the environment depicted or represented on screen? Are there any recurrent themes, obsessions or aesthetics across the archived works? What can the technology used tell us about the modes of production and funding? These are questions among others that can be answered only through in situ visits and meticulous study and exploration of these archives which may constitute a future development of this research.

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