

Institution: Queen's University, Belfast		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 33		
Title of case study: Producers and production practices in the history of Italian cinema, 1949-75		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016 - 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Dr Stefano Baschiera	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Senior Lecturer in Film Studies	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2010 -
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2018 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Dr Stefano Baschiera was one of three researchers who led a groundbreaking archival study into the role of the film producer in mid-twentieth-century Italian cinema; a role which has been overlooked by scholars. The project also examined the ways in which Italian production practices of that era helped to propel the country's film industry onto the global stage. The project's research has had a considerable impact on public perceptions and knowledge of the Italian film industry in the twentieth century, engaging the interest of both film-lovers and the wider public. It has also had a lasting impact on the archival practice of one of the world's foremost film libraries, the Cineteca di Bologna, and has provided new insights for some key figures connected to that era.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Baschiera has employed original archival research to document the role played by distributors and international co-production agreements in the development of the so-called "Italian genre factory". His work has helped to shed new light on the global significance of popular Italian cinema and its transnational dimension.</p> <p>Since 2016, he has drawn on his expertise in this field to collaborate with colleagues at the University of Warwick on an AHRC-funded project, 'Producers and Production Practices in the History of Italian Cinema, 1949-1975'. This study has examined how Italian producers shaped global film production and distribution between the late 1940s and the mid-1970s. The importance of the role of the film producer has not been recognised in conventional film studies scholarship, and this project has helped to correct the balance by examining previously unexplored archival resources (1).</p> <p>The project has been led by Professor Stephen Gundle from the University of Warwick. Baschiera has been one of two Co-Is (the other being Dr Karl Schoonover, also from the University of Warwick). The team also featured three research assistants based at Warwick: Barbara Corsi, Marina Nicoli and Vanessa Roghi. The study has been carried out in partnership with the Cineteca di Bologna, one of the world's leading film archives, and with the umbrella Italian film industry organisation, ANICA. Baschiera's contribution to the work of the project has focused on transnationalism and distribution. He has also led the project's examination of Italo Zingarelli, a lesser-known but crucial producer of Italian popular cinema. Zingarelli was directly responsible for the production of two of the most popular films in Italy, <i>Lo chiamavano Trinità</i>, and <i>Continuavano a chiamarlo Trinità</i>.</p> <p>In 2019, Gundle, Schoonover and Baschiera co-edited a special edition of the Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television which outlined some key findings from the project (1). The special issue included an article on Zingarelli by Baschiera, where he presented an analysis of Zingarelli's insightful perception that there was a market for family films that combined comedy and the popular Western genre. Baschiera highlights how this realisation</p>		

and the success of *Trinità* films helped lead to a resurgence of the 'Spaghetti Western' which had previously been in decline (2). Moreover, Baschiera's research revealed the role played by regional distribution in financing popular cinema (2).

The project has employed primarily archival research, supplementing this with contextual analysis and oral history. The aim has been to chart and analyse the conduct of production companies which operated in both a domestic and an international context. The study has drawn on a number of archives, including archives at the Cineteca di Bologna, and at the Cineteca Lucana in Basilicata. One key aspect of the project has been the cataloguing and digitisation of an important archive, relating to the leading twentieth century Italian film producer, Franco Cristaldi, which is held by Cineteca di Bologna. This work, to which Baschiera contributed, has created a publicly accessible resource of considerable value to scholars and others (3).

The project has shed new light on the close relations between film production and other economic activities, including property, distribution, land, banking and publishing. The team has also been able to investigate various ways in which Italian cinema engaged in international productions and co-productions to win a prominent place in the global market.

The team, including Baschiera, has drawn on its research to co-curate, with Cineteca di Bologna, a major exhibition, 'Dream Makers: Italian Cinema and Its Great Producers' (4,5,6). This was staged in the Biblioteca Salaborsa in Bologna over a two-month period in the summer of 2018. It featured the production histories of a number of seminal Italian films, illustrated by copies of archival documents, photographs and media coverage. It also outlined the contributions of twelve prominent Italian film producers, examining their economic and cultural role, and their public image (6). In addition to his role in co-curating the whole exhibition and the catalogue, Baschiera drew on his own research to curate the section of the exhibition which focused on the film *Lo Chiamavano Trinità*, highlighting with original artifacts and documents its role in the history of Italian cinema.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. AHRC funded project [Producers and Production Practices in the History of Italian Cinema 1949-75](#), funded period March 2016- August 2019, funded value £718,491.
2. Stephen Gundle, Karl Schoonover & Stefano Baschiera (2020) '[Practices and Contexts of the Italian Film Industry: An Introduction](#)', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 40:1, 1-5, DOI: 10.1080/01439685.2020.1715588. Peer-reviewed international journal.
3. Stefano Baschiera (2020) [Another Kind of Spaghetti Western: Italo Zingarelli and The Production of The TRINITÀ FILMS](#), *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 40:1, 108-128, DOI: 10.1080/01439685.2020.1715599. peer-reviewed international journal.
4. Stephen Gundle et al. [Archivio CristaldiFilm, launched in June 2018.](#)
5. Gundle et al. (2018) [Dream Makers: Italian Cinema and Its Great Producers](#) exhibition, Biblioteca Salaborsa, Bologna. This was held between 22nd June and 15th September, with a two-week break from 1st to 15th August when the building was closed. A programme was written by the team, published by the Cineteca and sold at the exhibition venue.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The project's research has had considerable impact on public perceptions and knowledge of the Italian film industry in the twentieth century. It has also had a significant beneficial impact on the practice of one of the world's foremost film archives, the Cineteca di Bologna, and has provided new insights for key figures connected to Italian cinema during the era in question.

Impact on public perceptions and knowledge

The reach of the project team's research has been considerable. Their exhibition, 'Dream Makers: Italian Cinema and Its Great Producers' was held in a prominent position in the central atrium area of the Biblioteca Salaborsa, the largest public library in Bologna. 'Dream Makers' ran over a period of two months in the summer of 2018; it is estimated by Biblioteca Salaborsa that, during this period, 103,000 people visited the library, and at least 10,000 visitors proactively engaged with the whole exhibition, with others viewing parts of it (A).

However, many more people were able to engage with the research through media coverage; the exhibition was featured at least twice on one of the main regional TV news programmes in the Emilia Romagna region of Italy (which includes Bologna), TG Emilia Romagna; the report, which went into some detail about the content and themes of the exhibition, would have reached between 130,000 to 190,000 people (B). 'Dream Makers' was also reviewed in some detail in the Italian daily newspaper, *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, and by the Italian film aficionados' website, CineOn (B). At the time, *Il Fatto Quotidiano* had a daily print circulation of 82,000 and a monthly digital reach of 11,000,000 (B).

The opening of 'Dream Makers' coincided with and formed part of a major annual international film festival, *Il Cinema Ritrovato*, which was staged in Bologna during the first week of the exhibition. References to the exhibition were present in the festival catalogue and in its website. Moreover, the choice to screen *Divorce Italian Style* (introduced by Giuseppe Tornatore) was made with the project team as a homage to its producer, Cristaldi. *Il Cinema Ritrovato* is widely regarded as one of the world's leading festival of restored films and is the largest international festival in Bologna. It draws around 130,000 attendees, including approximately 4,500 visitors from some 70 countries (2019 figures) (C).

For this reason, the exhibition attracted festival attendees from many countries and different parts of Italy, including film critics, film industry professionals, students and other film-lovers. For the remainder of the exhibition's run, it was visited by many local people, students and tourists (A). The exhibition also attracted many people who would never have made a journey specifically to view it; these were people who entered the Biblioteca Salaborsa to visit the library or the library's café but, on seeing the exhibition, took time out to examine the exhibition's displays (A).

The exhibition had a profound impact on both the perceptions and knowledge of many of those who saw it. Cineteca di Bologna's Director described the exhibition as "... a significant moment in raising public interest in the role of film producers ...". (D). The President of ANICA, the film industry trade body which was a project partner Francesco Rutelli states:

We believe that the project was an important step to advance knowledge of the history of the Italian film industry and that it has generated the attention of scholars and the public on this matter. (E)

A review on the Italian film lovers' website, CineOn, stated:

Dream Makers has the merit of making, for the first time, a figure that generally remains hidden and "behind the scenes" of a film recognizable to the general public [i.e. the producer]. It is also a great historical testimony of a very particular industry that had its peak in the sixties and seventies..... those interested should not miss a visit to this interesting exhibition ...(B)

The exhibition's impact on public perceptions is further illustrated by the results of an exhibition visitor survey, administered by staff from Cineteca, which was carried out in July 2018. Staff interviewed a sample of 143 exhibition visitors, using a short, structured questionnaire (F).

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of respondents said that, after seeing the exhibition, their knowledge about the role of producers in Italian cinema had improved. The impact of the exhibition on visitors' perceptions is demonstrated by the fact that almost three-fifths (57%) of respondents said the exhibition had changed their perception of the history of Italian cinema, with just over a third (22%) saying that it had considerably altered their perception (F).

Moreover, 111 (78%) respondents elaborated on their survey answers by providing additional comments; this suggests that they had a considerable degree of engagement with the content of the exhibition. Many (55) used this opportunity to talk about how the exhibition had altered their understanding of the role of film producers. Comments included the following:

I found really interesting how the producer, pictured like the one who invests money in cinemas, actually is also the creative mind. Thanks to the exhibition I would like to re-evaluate films through the history of producers.

I think that now I have a more complete perspective on Italian cinema which does not only refer to actors or to the importance of directors, but which enlightens the producer's role which is often not taken into account (F).

Impact on film producers and their families

The research has also had significant beneficial impact for some key figures connected to the era of Italian film covered by the project. The exhibition was supported by the families and heirs of several former producers, who lent material and who attended the opening of 'Dream Makers'. The veteran film producer, Fulvio Lucisano, who was then 90 years old, made the 374km journey from Rome to Bologna to formally open the exhibition (A, G). At the launch were also present Sandra Zingarelli, the daughter of the film producer Italo Zingarelli; the photographer Uliano Lucas; and Maria Amato (daughter of the producer of *La Dolce Vita*, Giuseppe Amato). In response to the exhibition, the daughter of Italo Zingarelli Sandra stated:

The title of the exhibition contains all its profound meaning: finally, the focus is on the main figures of filmmaking: THE PRODUCER. without them goodbye cinema. As a daughter, it was a very emotional experience, you realize that your father, with his intuitions and recklessness, was the maker of a film genre [...] (I).

Additionally, in June 2018, family members alongside the research team and Italian film critics were involved in a roundtable discussion which took place at the Museum of Modern Art of Bologna. (J)

Impact on archival practice

The research has had a significant impact on the work of Cineteca Di Bologna, which is recognised as one of the most important film libraries in Europe (H). Cineteca Di Bologna preserves over 46,000 films. It is internationally renowned for its work in conserving, restoring and digitising films. The research project has enabled Cineteca to make significant progress with cataloguing and digitising the Cristaldi archive which provides an important resource for scholars, students and others interested in his films (D). It has enabled Cineteca Di Bologna to achieve a new and enhanced standard in making industry-related documents available to the general public and to professional filmmakers. As Cineteca's Director states, in a letter to the researchers written in December 2019:

Through the work with your team, we were able to develop an original way of organising and presenting the archive. This follows a production narrative, with some case studies which highlight important documents and situate them in an industrial context. This innovative presentation constitutes a model and will influence the way in which the Cineteca will treat archival resources online in the future (D).

This new archival standard organises materials in a sequence that mirrors the different steps of the film production process, creating in this way a series of 'itineraries' that the user can follow, experiencing step by step the different procedures implemented by the producers.

A further lasting impact of the project has been the restoration, by Cineteca di Bologna, of Italo Zingarelli's 1970 Italian 'Spaghetti Western' film, *Lo chiamavano Trinità*. It was the project's research on this movie, led by Baschiera, which inspired Cineteca to restore it (D).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- A. Letter, dated 6th April 2020, from Head of Paper Archives, Cineteca di Bologna.
- B. Collated impact source document – Media Coverage. This provides full references and links for the above-mentioned report on TG Emilia Romagna, and the articles in Il Fatto Quotidiano, and on CineOn. Evidence of print and digital circulation for Il Fatto Quotidiano is also provided.
- C. Information on the Il Cinema Ritrovato and its attendance figures (for 2019) is available on the Università di Bologna here: <https://corsi.unibo.it/2cycle/gioca/notice-board/2018-04-seminar-il-cinema-ritrovato-festival-inside-the-bologna-film-archive>
- D. Letter, dated 3rd December, 2019, from the Director, Cineteca di Bologna.
- E. Letter from President, ANICA, dated 2nd April, 2020.
- F. Report containing summary of survey findings and respondent comments.
- G. Video of the opening of the 'Dream Makers' exhibition on 26th June, 2018, available here: <https://it-it.facebook.com/CinetecaBologna/videos/accadevapocofa-alla-biblioteca-salaborsainaugurazione-della-mostra-dream-makers-/10157150582938132/> Lucisano starts speaking at approx. 8'20".
- H. For more information on Cineteca di Bologna and its significance, see: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cineteca_di_Bologna
- I. Email from Italo Zingarelli's daughter, dated 21st January 2021.
- J. Il Cinema Ritrovato, Dream Makers presentation and roundtable discussion, Museum of Modern Art of Bologna, 25th June, 2018. Information available at: <https://festival.ilcinemaritrovato.it/en/evento/dream-makers/>