sight, that fabulous on incredible motorbikes blazing lights, a volcanic seemed to find its natural to be mine in the sudden such subtle, uninstructed and that fantastic audience has own personal sensibility, in though he has to interpret the Satyricon, and he has access. Having chosen to indenos the shy winks and a, returning to the of the Spirits, almost as if this time more required a special attitude of world cannot be poor you shall shoot the dream of a icon taken from the

22, all of Fellini’s nome Satyricon – a negative put an important component of his genius. It is the ideal way to express the precarious feelings of an epoch, the cognitive anxiety condensed in experimentalism which, in turn, creating a break with the limits of form and space, brings on complex geometries whose points multiply into a dynamic background. These points are Petronius’s fragments ‘replayed’ in the director’s figurative imagination who, within the missing sections – the dark zones between one episode and the next – creates his Satyricon in Fellini’s Satyricon (a title chosen to distinguish it from that of Giallupi Poldo), a movie of the Scarya quality and success, shot in competition.

When choosing which dreams fragments to reconstruct on awakening, Fellini avoids the extreme situations and avoids himself of Luca Cardinali’s advice (the Latinist who now, some thirty years later, is writing a new translation of Petronius, considering it to be unquestionably modern, thus confirming that Fellini’s prevision had hit the mark). Stating in several interviews that he is creating historical fiction, the director intends to create historical fiction out of that remote past without excessive respect for the original text, immersing the fragments in an unhealthy atmosphere, the same atmosphere, with different facets, as he had created in Fellini’s Roma and would create in Casanova. In so doing, he opened a phase of his cinema that could certainly not be called sunny, and which would continue, more or less, until The Voice of the Moon. Thus, over the next twenty years, he portrays the mysterious, gloomy atmosphere of his totem work Il Viaggio di G. Mastorna.

The hardest work lay in the preparations: Fellini worked incessantly for seven months in preparing it, and another seven in shooting it. His producer, Gudinato, in partnership with United Artists for the guarantied success and givng him free rein to choose his actors with non-modern faces, monstrous, matronly, a series of “masks which do not immediately display their characters, faces occupied with other thoughts, type that seem to have breathed a different air.”

In fact, the parts of Encolpius and Asculypus are given to the two almost unknown actors, Martin Potter and Hiram Keller. Max Born is the ephebus Giton, while he chooses Mario Romagnoli, a Roman restaurant owner, as Trimalchio, after having tried to sign Boris Karloff, whose health would not allow him to accept, and having ignored Aldo Fabrizi, who badly wanted the part, and was essential about it ever after. Salvo Randone plays Eumolpus, and Asculypus, an invented character, is the comic Fanufalo, while Lica was only later given to Alain Cuny. Constantly surrounding everything are new faces that are sometimes changed within a single scene in order to make the atmosphere more anguishing and upsetting.

Encolpius is a state of despair, because the ephebus Giton has been abducted. He meets his friend Asculypus, who confesses to having lost Giton in a dice game with the actor Eumolpus. Encolpius searches for Giton in the slums, where Eumolpus is presenting a lewd farce in a run-down theater. During the play, a criminal’s hand is cut off, butEncolpius grows back with the intervention of an actor called Cesare. Meanwhile, Giton jumps down on the stage from above in the part of Eros, and Encolpius redeems possession of him. During a fight at the theater, which is judged by someone who is present at the show tries to calm down, the two boys fight and pass through the slum area, which is overflowing with vice and human monsters, so the poet takes refuge in the Inns. The like spend the night together and, when Asculypus finds them, Giton, after a discussion, decides he prefers to go with him. A sudden earthquake destroys the Inns and Encolpius finds himself alone and despairing once again.

The old poet Eumolpus gives Encolpius a long fable against riches, which brought about the death of art; then invites him along to the home of Trimalchio, a freed slave who has become rich and turns it into a poet. At the Inns, there are many guests, grouped according to their importance. After their abductions, the pair stretch out on divans. A sumptuous banquet is served. Then Eumolpus reads some of his poetry, but the guests prefer the verse of Trimalchio. Eumolpus calls Trimalchio the ‘new Horace’. Flattered, Trimalchio recites another poem, but this time Eumolpus puts aside the folly and accuses him of having copied Lucan. He is beaten bloody for his pains. Trimalchio’s wife donates and then abandons herself to the embraces of a woman friend. The large company is led on a tour to Trimalchio’s tomb, where a fake funeral rite is celebrated. Genius tells the story of the matron of Ephesus, a widow who consorts herself with a guardian on duty guarding the corpse of a hung man. When the body is stolen, the soldier is in despair, but the woman suggests hanging her husband’s body on the rope so as not to lose her new lover. Meanwhile, Encolpius and Eumolpus find each other again and, before falling asleep, the poet predicts his imminent death.

On a beach, Encolpius sees Asculypus and Giton again, who have been captured. Encolpius, too, is seized, and all are taken to Lica’s ship, a proconsul out to find new amusements for the emperor. After having challenged Encolpius, Lica falls in love with him and, dressed up as a bride, celebrates his wedding night with the boy. The sailors catch an enormous fish. Caesar’s ship is attacked, as is Lica’s, the emperor dies and the proconsul is deposed. A new emperor takes over in Rome.

Two nobles, faithful to Caesar, decide to kill themselves, after having liberated the slaves and having placed their children in safety. Encolpius and Asculypus reach their villa and discover the corpses, but, heedless, they spend the night with a black slave woman who has not fled the villa. At dawn they flee, while the corpses of the suicides burn, set on fire by the new masters.

During their wanderings, the boys encounter a small cottage conducting a nymphomaniac to the hermaphroditic oracle. Asculypus pays the woman for her favors, but does not succeed in curing her. A crowd of supplicants kneels before the altar and pharmakos. Many have brought gifts, which are handled by two elderly assistants. Asculypus and Encolpius, together with a prophet, about the oracle, who dies along the way, needing to be kept continually moist and unable to bear the sunlight.
Thrown into the center of an arena, Encolyus must enter the labyrinth and encounter the Minotaur in order to win Ariadne. The boy is defeated, begs the monster for mercy who, laughing, pulls off his mask and reveals human features: the festival of the God Loutar has begun. Encolyus is obliged to satisfy Ariadne in public and is unable to do so. The arrival of Asculus announces Eumolpus.

The old poet has become rich, and takes his young friend to the garden of delights in order to revitalize his virility. Before leaving, he gives him an appointment aboard a ship that is going to weigh anchor off Africa. The brothel owner tells the story of the witch Enecos, who had captured a would-be sorcerer. As revenge, the sorcerer made fire disappear from the earth, and told men to look for it between the legs of Enecos, who is obliged to light all the torches in the village. Encolyus is not cured; and Asculus takes him to her. The witch, old, fat and ugly, manages to accomplish the miracle.

The two friends are back on the road, but Asculus dies in a fight. Eumolpus dies too, making his heirs those who agree to eat his body. While many are preparing for the macabre banquet, Encolyus who is opposed... it becomes a piece of a Pompeian fresco only decipherable in some parts.

As we have said, so complex a story requires an unprecedented effort, which negates once and for all the unmented fame Fellini has always had of being an improviser. In fact, it would have been an impossibility to improvise 89 newly constructed sets and a multitude of extras. This was also a challenge for Fellini’s collaborators: Piero Tosi for the sets, and Danilo Donati for the costumes, “the great expert of art integrated in a variety show property man” (who,

As the very time he was working on this, received an Oscar for his costumes for Franco Zeffirelli’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’.

Because the figurative rather than architectural aspects are fundamental to Fellini’s Satyricon, the sets are made of light, as in dreams. The demand for the figurative element’s continuous, inventive capacity – dark colors and tones – meant that the few open, clear spaces (the villa of the suicides, the flight with the hermaphrodite, the sea episodes, but little else), require “a constant, enigmatic, unchanging light, or rather, the vertiginous, annihilating darkness of the night.”

Within the disorder of that ancient civilization, called to mind by the murky atmosphere, the mixture of races, the absence of the usual rubbish of ‘Roman’ cinema, Fellini feels himself to be “like a chameleon that must always be harmonizing with the colors around it”, and, at a certain point, this search for harmonization begins to nauseate him, also because, as he goes along, he is progressively editing the movie. With his fussy perfectionism, he makes that dream world come true, particularly in the falsification of the false, which is to say in the invented episodes, the truly Fellini/Petruccio ones, perfectly balanced within the
Enochlius must enter in order to win Ariadne. The boy who, laughing, pulls off his festival of the God Laughter has Ariadne in public and is unable

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Fellini's irreplaceable inventive genius creates a cozy, yet strangely futuristic femininity.
story as a whole. Avoiding every least trace of vulgarity, which furthermore is also missing in the original text (while still having a distinct commercial impact), the truculent effects of Trimalchio's orgy are cut in an attempt to rehabilitate these feats, because movies have accustomed us to "seeing the usual fat men dripping with sweat who bite into lamb legs and dangle bunches of grapes into their throats, the usual greasy mouths kissing lasciviously and only detaching long enough from each other to gulp down wine." The freed slave Trimalchio, in fact, "is no fat man with a carefree, festive air, but an elderly, thin, tall, pigeon-breasted man, with the mean face of an ex-slave", while the ambience of the banquets, somewhere between wildness and melancholy perturbation, call up images of peasant wedding feasts in Romagna.

The ancient world, Fellini suggests, possibly never existed, possibly posteriorly only dreamed that it did, and the details of this dream have therefore remained isolated, inflated and rendered hideously beautiful, that is to say, sublime: its surroundings are dark, the sun pale, the circumscribed spaces tendentially framed at a distance. The clothes themselves are opaquely colored, as if covered with the dust of those pagan times. Everything seems to be played out within the duality of counterpositioning. Just as Encolpius and Acisctus are the two faces of the same coin, so are Trimalchio and Eumolpo: one the rich, trivial, aspiring poet who organizes his own bogus funeral; the other poor, cultivated, finally becoming rich and organizing his own real funeral, a macabre and poetic ritual because his body is the body of poetry.

Alongside the invented episodes, Fellini enlarges the characters of Eumolpo and Lica of Taranto (the invented episodes are those about Vernacchio, the suicides of the nobles, the emperor's assassination, the Hermaphrodite, the nymphomaniac, Ariadne and the Minotaur). Lica, in particular, the last character to be developed through extensive changes to the original script, is turned from Petronius's rich merchant into an imperial envoy, neurotic, cruel and effeminate, who desperately loves beauty, almost as if his glass eye, besides making him harder and more disdainful, wants to snatch away everything of beauty and youth that appears before his eye. Lica concludes the panoply of characters who are closer to us in their alienation the more fantastically far away they are, the protagonists of an intensely dreamed fresco.
When the Summing up Results in Poetry

The Clowns • Roma • Amarcord

Right from the time of his emergence, Fellini never ceased making reference to the motley world of the circus until finally, in 1970, he devoted an entire movie to it with 'The Clowns', made for Italian television. This came between the successful American project Fellini: a Director's Notebook and some others which fell through: Experimental Hour (an interview for NBC, another project by Peter Goldfarb) and a series of contemporary portraits which would have included Pappo, Rimini, Mino, a Tibetan convent and a U.S. factory. These works would have meant travelling, abandoning Rome and, above all, would not have taken into account America was truly another world for the busy singer of the Romanopolo countyside: "I have been invited to go away for twelve to fifteen weeks in order to get some ideas from this visit. My American friends, kind and generous, want to be my hosts, put their homes at my disposal, give me their time, their shows, their writers and coast-to-coast trips. And they tell me that I can visit the big cities and the provinces, and tell me to see everything I want to, because all my desires will be met. Once again, there would be meetings with artists, people of culture, all those who indicate that you would be happy to meet me, from Molière to Woody Allen, from Caruso to that fascinating, gentle规格 that is Andy Warhol. They would certainly show me their homes, the places and people that they consider to be the most 'Fellinian', and who would make me feel totally encompassed." A stimulating offer, but inferior to his artistic awareness of the differences. "I would not know how to make a movie in America, because even if their country fascinates me, seduces me and appears to be an immense set very congealed to my view of things, I would never know how to portray it on film. New York: it is stupendous, it is immense space set loose in the cosmos, without roots, depth, but suspended over an infinite crystal plate. Nizza, Venice, Sardegna, Mars, Benevente, all the cities of the world fused together in a brilliant set, futuristic and decadent, New York is sweet, violent, very beautiful, terrifying: but how could I portray all that?"

Torn between his fascination with this great place so different from his fantasies, and the uncertainties, the sense of being lost that assails him as soon as he leaves Italy, Fellini, with the ever convenient excuse of working on the Viaggio di G. Mazzola, gobbles at a clause in the contract to wriggle out of the American commitment. He proposes something quite different to Rai (Italian National Radio and Television): "Let's make The Clowns, the ambassadors of my vacation." And without using Teatro S, his invented circus, he organizes the movie, together with Bernardino Zappoli, like a draft for a research paper, an essay 'La Fellini' on the circus and, in particular, about the human figures of the clown.

In his imagination, the ideal circus-clown-Gesamtkino-cinema sequence enabled him to avoid abandoning the circus ambience and its aura which, together with the wind of dreams, had pretty well characterized the universe of his childhood. It was enough for him to apply the peculiarities of the circus world to the movie camera and the thing was done, the trick had worked once again: the clowns become actors, the ring becomes the set, the people a group, while the performances, the shows, become the episodes, the plots, the stories, the cinematic representations. This goes on for an entire career, until the death of that circus and that cinema ordain the death of the clown, taking with it the fictional departure of the funeral at the end of The Clowns and of Ginger and Fred, prior to the arrival of the movies of lucid pessimism, of old age and death, even for the director of the Fellini Circus-Cinema. All this is found in The Clowns (1970) and, as is well known, this juxtaposition of clown and death is not at all out of keeping with the ambience, inasmuch as the dramatic atmosphere, the irony, the fantastic realism of Fellini's cinema is immersed in melancholy and a sense of anguish equal to his declared intention of finally freeing himself from that love, of 'liquidating' the circus.

So then, for Fellini, whom by now we have seen to be a lover in small details but not in fundamental things - where, on the contrary, he deals in high artistic mystification - the cinema is nothing other than a metaphor of the circus, "The clowns, aberrant, grotesque, large-shoed, ragged, in their
total irrationality, in their violence, in their abnormal whimsicality, seemed to me like the drunken, delirious apparition of a movable and inebriated vocation, the pronouncement, the prophecy, the announcement of Federico. And the cinema, I mean the making of movies, living with a troupe that is shooting a movie, is this not like the life of the circus? Extravagant artists, muscular workers, technicians, extravagant performers, women so beautiful as to make you faint, tailors, hairdressers, people who come from every part of the world, and nevertheless understand each other in a babel of languages, and the invasion of that shadowy army from the streets and squares in a chaos of shouts and calls and angry fights and the sudden silence that can sometimes be obtained by a loud howl. And underlying this apparent disorder, a schedule that has never been abandoned, a drumbeat miraculously respected, and then the pleasure of being together, working together, moving and travelling like an enormous family, realizing the ideal of a harmonious living together, of a Utopian society... all of this is what happens prodigiously during the shooting of a movie—is it not a circus life?

With the two halves fused together, the clown becomes the image of Federico as a child, filtered through his spectacles, mixed with the figures of clowns, mediums, and sorcerers, right up to the 'lunatics' of his final movie. This hybrid, resulting from the two forms of mas entertainment found in Fellini's work, takes a leap in quality with the amount of the vital, the stirring, and the compassionate magically contained in it. But perhaps one should say 'how much there was', because in The Clowns, the sense of something finished and past is most intimate.

Awakened one night by the noise of the circus folk setting up their tent, Fellini the child cannot resist the fascination of the deserted ring, and goes out to encounter the biggest surprise of his life. That evening, there is a show with the fire-eater, the strong woman, the dwarfs, the knife thrower and other performers, including the tiger, the false buried alive for forty days, the mermaid eating little fish, the Siamese twins under glass and, finally, the clown. The sad memory of the evening introduces, in Fellini's voice, a small anthology of provincial characters: Gromovorvo, a slightly amateurish vagabond who watches the farm-hands work; the dwarf nun absorbed in her mission of salvation, who constantly commutes between the two sides of the house and convent; and once again the face of the designer of the wine house, one of whose wife goes to fetch him with a wheelbarrow because he cannot make it home on his own; the invalid of the Great War and Signorina Isabella who knows all of Musso's speeches by heart. Finally, the railway conductors constantly fighting among themselves, and the station-master, Cutichino, who calls the Fascist police chief to protect him from the decision and the raspberries of the kids on the train; and Giudice who, whenever he goes into a crazy mood, puts on his uniform, takes up his rifle and, thinking a war is on, mimics a military attack.

The scene changes to Fellini's office as the director dictates to Majo, his muddled secretary, a text about the world of the circus, a world gone by whose almost invisible traces he has decided to follow with his small troupe (Roy, the English cameraman, the sound man Alvano and his mother, soundman, and hairdresser, and Gasparino, the set's director). The first visit is to one of the most important Italian circuses, that of Lanna, Riccobaldi and Nando Orfini, where Fellini witnesses some moments at the end of the show with the clowns and the elephants—a prelude to the appearance of the 'pippo', Amleto Ellberg, before the communal dinner, with its recollections of those melancholy masks and their stories.

Next comes a trip to Paris to interview some glorious old clowns. The heart of this whole tribe is Guillaume, the true creator of the drunken clown, extremely talented at covering his nose with his lower lip. He discharges himself from hospital in order to watch Fouitte and Chocolat's performance, two colleagues whom he had never seen, and he dies at the circus.

In Paris, which has elevated the circus to an art form with the Cirque d'Hiver, IL Nouveau Cirque and the Medrano, the troupe goes in search of the best and most famous clowns, together with the circus historian Tristan Remy. A few of them are still alive: Alex, Nino, Ludo—the only dwarf white clown—and Malois. In a bistro, these old artists discuss who had been the best clowns of the past. They talk about the famous Antoonet, recalling his transformation of the white clown (the one with the sugar-salt hat), and remember, in a wealth of detail, the fabulous costumes of their careers. It is an apt occasion for performing a sketch and to parade their gorgeous stage costumes.

The search goes on, with a few short visits to other personalities: the ex animal trainer Buglioni, previous circus directors like Hugue, and several clowns who, by now elderly, live in retirement homes, or modest houses in the center of town, or in the Parisian banlieues. These old people recall the good old days, anecdotes, a few show numbers and their great nostalgia for the ring, or for their home towns. They bring out photographs, posters from the golden age, and talk about the human affairs hidden behind those heavily made up faces.

During an evening with Pierre Bataille—fifi director, actor and husband of Annie Girardot—as the time comes to show a rare movie about the famous frontiselle, the projector acts up, the film breaks, catches fire and gets stuck. To honor the magnificent art of Paul Albert and Francois, Fellini rewrites the little show they put on free of charge in hospitals, asylums and the trenches.

Then it is Pierre Lortet's turn. All 68 years of comedians 28 of them spent in the circus. He worked with the most famous clowns, among them Porte, Rihm and Barlo, a Viennese whom the troupe goes to visit, where they shoot pictures of the room where he spends his days assailed by nostalgia for the circus and for Italy.

Trying to track down traces of Rihm, the clown who Remy calls the greatest of them all, the director watches a film made by French television, which is too short to document the greatness of this artist. It is the moment of the clowns, most of them Italian, who perform the funeral of Franchetto, a crescendo of gags, somersaults, absurd mimicry and verbal numbers, the clowns say their goodbyes to their departed companions.

At a certain moment, the horses and horses arrive, a snapshot is taken, the workers put together the casket, the orchestra director and
In their abnormal drunken, delicious state, Florentine and Federico. And the movie, living with a troupe that is the life of the circus, bearers, technicians, beautiful as you make them; every part understand each other, in a confusion of that ribald army of shouts and calls, sense that can sometimes be enduring this fire, has been abandoned, a bond, and then the pleasure of moving, and travelling like the ideal of a harmonious society... all of this is what a shooting of a movie is — it all together, the clown becomes filtered through his spirit of clown, mediums, clowns of his final movie. It works, takes a leap in vital, the stirring and the gained within it. But perhaps the "bear," because in The Clowns, and past is most intense.

Voice of the circus folk setting up not resist the fascination of the encounter the biggest surprise, the tired, the strong, the other performances alive for forty days, the mermaid under glass and, finally, the clowns, in Fellini's voice, a small Gianinni, a slightly idioticard work, this run absorbed instantly commutes between the faces of the dozen to the dozen of Kohacs to fetch him with a... Take it home on his own, the invalid who knows all of Mussellini's conductionists constantly fighting madness, Catinato, who calls on the derision and the raspberries zio who, whenever he goes into takes up his rifle and, thinking a war.
In search of the first images of Rome, Fellini displays a large, ancient stone on the road to town (Rimini), and the notions learned at school: the crossing of the Rubicon, the armless statue of Julius Caesar, his death at the theater, the headmaster’s lessons about the genes of the Capitoline, the monuments and churches of the capital being projected for the children of the boarding school, among which, by mistake, the image of the lovely bottom of a seated girl.

To complete the identity marks of Fellini’s Rome, one must add the pope’s Sunday benediction on the radio, the silent film screening, and the Luca novellas that portrays a gymnastic celebration of Fascism. But the Roman way of being in those days is also the simple evocation of a name, Messalina, which is enough to conjure up the image of the pharisaic’s wife thirsting for sex.

The picture of Rome seen by someone far away is consummated by the comments of the people in the cafes, and the train stopping on its way to Urbe in Rimini’s small station under the gaze of a small boy dressed in a soldier’s suit (Fellini).

The same gaze observes its own arrival by train in Rome in 1939. The terminus station is jam-packed with people vacillating in big-city confusion. The twenty-year-old who plays the part of Fellini goes to the boarding house for artists in Via Alibertana, run by a big, big lady. There, he takes a room and gets to know its special guests (a seasoned actor, a prostitute, someone who resembles Mussolini, a Japanese, etc.).

It is summer and, in the evening, one eats outdoors at the trattoria below the house amidst small family events, wine-drinks, pleasant slangs, singers and beggars. One makes the most of the abundant food and the typical Roman dislikes, until night empties the streets, brings out the squads to repair the tram lines, the shepherds lead their sheep across town, the prostitutes stand like wild beasts among the remains of the past.

After the encounter with Rome at the end of the Thirties, Fellini and his small troupe attack the city from the Cinecittà studios. Traffic is chaotic and noisy on a flooded road, narrow and full of holes, with accidents, student protests, sirens, trucks of every variety, cars, motorcycles, Neapolitan soccer fans, prostitutes, hitch-hikers, small factories, industrial buildings, historical sites and ruins in a crescendo that ends with a gigantic traffic jam in the Colosseum, and thousands of flashing lights.

A third approach from above, with the camera mounted on a crane, shows the panorama on a beautiful sunny morning. A bus full of American tourists, the incomparable Roman “Latin lover”, a group of students talking with the director, while several people comment on how the city is going to hell. The handing out of lunch boxes puts an end to this scene, but not before the director, convinced that everyone must only do what he finds congenial, introduces the long episodes to follow, the “teatrazione della Baracchina during the war.”

During the variety show, there are performances by mediocre artists, risk-taking amateurs, mimics, singers and dancers, all confronting the impossible, terrible audience of common people, so...
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cardinal, a high representative of the clergy, diplomats and nobles, with their hairs, waiting to see a demonstration of religious habits, in an accumulation of images and escatological stories, culminating with the figure of the pope bathed in light.

The tour in search of the real Rome moves to the 'Festa di Natale in Trastevere,' perhaps the most 'Roman' quarter of all. The camera rooms among trattorie, tables in the street, pizzerias, taverns and stands full of porcheata (whole pigs roasted on the spit), of candy and

Above: In the modern day episode about the construction of the underground subway, the journey through the underground tunnels leads to the discovery of ancient frescoes, which are completely covered to dust by the air they let in.
watermelon, shouting Romans and many tourists strolling around the narrow streets, the characteristic carriage, a boxing match, and wondering musicians. It catches salacious comments, snippets of often incomprehensible dialogue, while the youths of Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere are chased by the police. In this lively confusion, Fellini, off camera, interviews Marcello Mastroianni, the American writer Gore Vidal, Alberto Sordi, and Anna Magnani. Each of them relates his own experience of Rome from his own personal point of view.

At the end of the Festa, a hefty group of motorcyclists depart from Ponte Garibaldi for a tour of Imperial, Seventeenth Century Rome, illuminated by the reflected light of the summer evening and by the evocative artificial lights. Filing in front of the baroque churches and some of the most beautiful and famous spots – the Castel Sant’Angelo, the Piazza di Spagna and Trinita dei Monti, the Piazza del Popolo and its gate, the Mura Torta, the Quirinale square and palace, the Teatro di Marcello, the temple of Vesta and the Colosseum – the rumbling motors leave the ancient walls behind them and head out via Cristoforo Colombo for the new EUR quarter.

"The intellectuals and artists who always live in a state of friction between two different dimensions – reality and fantasy – find here [in Rome] the impetus needed to free their mental activity with the comfort of an umbilical cord that keeps them attached to solid ground. Because Rome is a mother, and she is the ideal mother, because she is indifferent. She is a mother with too many children, and so is unable to give you her whole attention. She asks nothing of you and expects nothing from you. She welcomes you when you come, and lets you go when you depart, like Kafka’s court. In this there is very ancient wisdom: African, almost prehistorical. We know that Rome is a city haunted by history, but her evocative power lies in something prehistoric, something primordial which is clearly demonstrated in some of her boundless, desolate aspects, in certain ruins that seem like fossils, bony like mammoth skeletons." These few lines contain all of Rome’s attractions for Fellini, an intuition of the real influence that also affected other cineastes – from Pasolini to Greenaway, from Aldo Fabrizi to Verdone, from Luigi Zampa to Ettore Scola and Nanni Moretti – and autobiographically breathed in, metabolized and returned by Fellini’s sponge in the form of poetic images.

Whether it is a question of the ill-manured, greedy, generously plebeian Rome, or the middling Rome of clerks, the petit bourgeois and the sated mediocrities, or of imperial, papal, fascist, aristocratic Rome (not to mention the artistic, cinematographic, governmental and political, joy, religious, bureaucratic, commercial, alternative, slum Rome, or the Rome outside the city and even outside the province) – to whatever Rome you may refer, in short, the special thing about Fellini is that he has depicted almost all of them – either directly or obliquely, with characters or with a face, with real places or constructed sets, with a quotation, a single name, the summoning of more or less historical figures, in the use of dialect, in a hundred other narrative and visual ways, his Eternal City is the true representation of the Shadow of the Great Mother in whose opulent womb all find hospitality.

In many aspects, Rome is the irreconcilable opposite of New York, the Big Apple, the crucible that makes everything possible as long as it reflects the future of the “magnificent destiny and progress” of the New World. In Fellini’s Rome, the embryo of the Old World, the first, there is no need to do, everything has already been said, done, seen; all that is left is to observe with the inner eye or the eye of the camera, to be a witness and travelling companion of a piece of the past, of history, of time. But one must be a lucid and disinterested witness, motivated by love, but disenchanted and ironic, otherwise that shadow will be dispelled in the exploited stereotype of a chaotic, lazy Rome, suffocated by traffic and environmental, as well as human, degradation, aspects which Fellini always felt as foreign to him.

Fellini’s Roma (1972) is Fellini’s point of arrival, the place where he lives and works, where the presence of the city is figuratively strong and decisive for the narrative, as the context for the Cinecittà sets within the folds of his imagination. In a word, his cinematic subconscious is Roman, and composed of progressive stratifications like the seven layers of earth below it.

Already In The White Sheik, the arrival by train portrayed the Rome of the Holy Year, disenchantment and distracted by the vicissitudes of Ivo and his bride. In I Vitelloni, Fausto and Sandrina go to Rome on their honeymoon, Alberto’s city, on whose outskirts the circus of La Strada is camped. The whole of I Bidone would be meaningless outside the Roman context, in the same way as the ‘slum hut’ reality of Cabiria would be between the Passeggiata Archeologica and Via Veneto. Not to mention La Dolce Vita, the prototype throughout the world of Fellini’s Rome, and all subsequent movies up until Amarcord, a moment of transition and preparation for the mature, concluding phase. This homage to a particular Rome, and Marcello’s journey through its splendors and shame, is metaphorically an act of love in order to possess its ambiguous fascination, a charm which has been extended beyond the center of town to the modern EUR residential quarter, where the moralist Mazzuolo lives, or the psychoanalystic Fregone of Juliet of the Spirits, not to mention the nocturnal and Gothic Castelli Romani of Toby Dammit, and the imaginary city of Fellini’s Satyricon.

In Fellini’s accounting, Fellini’s Roma closes the books on the debt to Rome, just as The Clowns liquidated the circus and Amarcord will liquidate the provinces. So then, the last liberating show for seeing the Roman circus, according to Fellini, is in these episodes, which are to be thumbed page by page like a precious illustrated art catalog.
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with cheese and pepper, penne all’arrabbiata, macaroni...
rigatoni with anchovies, schiavoni ai nocciore, fettuccine
with chicken gizzards, brazen alici carbonara, carots, oculus,
facial ce ‘e cathe, ch’a saccio, tripe, snails, la pappata...
” an alimentary orgy, a coarse, elemental exaggeration of the
good life (”as you eat, so you shit”, or the assimilation of
the food-sex-death chain) that the young Fellini gets to
know, along with the indolent and only seemingly gross
character of the Roman. A paradox that closes with the fine
scene of the proud prostitute-wolf among the ruins, a
symbolic image of synecdochic eloquence for the indolent
contrast which, in Rome, takes on the fracture – or the
continuity – between past and present.
The big outdoor dinner is the favorite collective ritual for
advancing the choral action within the group, while
detailing here and there a few close-ups or minor characters
in Fellini’s mosaic bestiary, for the purpose of creating
“confusion”. It is the mise en espace of the many artistic
rehearsals preceding Fellini’s cinema, the many drawings
created while pondering the movies still to be made. If one
were not to consider the preparatory phase, the visual truces
and the surrealistic automatic writing of the sketches and
drawings in which Fellini’s bizarre creative imagination
discharges itself, his movies would simply not contain that
cause and that chaos which is indispensable to
reconstructing the sense. It would be like a dead body
without veins, blood or members. “This almost
subconscious, involuntary doodling, making caricature
notes, interminably drawing puppets that stare at me from
every corner of the page, this automatic sketching of
obessively hyper-sexual female anatomy, the decrepit faces
of cardinals, candle flames, and again breasts and
backsides and an infinity of other hieroglyphics,
constellated with telephone numbers, addresses, delirious
verses, tax figures, appointments – in short, this spreading
and indestructible graphic rubbish heap which would
delight any psychiatrist, may be a kind of track, a thread, at
the end of which I find myself on the set, lights blazing, for
the first day of filming.”
Fellini’s sketches are independent, pre-filming
expressions, which also serve to communicate with his
colaborators in the preparation of everything necessary for
making the movie. They represent characters, moral
likenesses, and are expressions of his avid curiosity, of his
not wanting to lose anything of what passes before his eyes
and through his mind. Images of cultured people in all their
crude reality, their habits, their ways of speech and, in the
specific details which become the seasoning of the movie:
“If it is true that, in Rome, there are very few neurotics, it is
also true, as the psychoanalyst maintains, that neuroses are
providential in that they are a way to make deep discoveries
about ourselves. It is like diving into the sea to find the
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When the Summing Up Results in Poetry

Subconscious, involuntary doodling, making cartoon notes, intuitively drawing puppets that stare at me from every corner of the page. This automatic sketching of obsessively hyper-sexual female anatomy, the deceptively faces of cardinals, candle flames, and again breasts and backside and an infinity of other hieroglyphics, constellated with telephone numbers, addresses, delicious verses, tax figures, appointments— in short, this spreading and indescribable rubbish heap which would delight any psychiatrist, may be a kind of troika, a thread, a trick of the end of which I find myself set, lights blazing, for the first day of filming.

Fellini's sketches are independent, pre-filming expressions, which also serve to communicate with his collaborators in the preparation of everything necessary for making the movie. They represent characters, mental likenesses, and any expressions of his avid curiosity, of his not wanting to lose any hint of what precess before his eyes and through his mind. Images of cultured people in all their crude reality, their habits, their ways of speech and, in the specific details which constitute the seasoning of the movie:

"If it is true that, in Rome, there are very few neurotics, it is also true, as the psychoanalyst maintains, that neuroses are providential in that they are a way to make deep discoveries about ourselves. It is like diving into the sea to find the hidden treasures of fairy tales, they oblige the child to become an adult. Rome does not do this. With its big belly like a placenta, and its maternal aspect, it avoids neuroses, but it also hulks development, true maturing. There are no neurotics here, but neither are there any adults. It is a city of unambitious, skeptical, nude children. They are also a little psychically deformed, because it is unnatural to block development. This is also one reason why, in Rome, there is such a strong attachment to the typography. I have seen no other city in the world where one speaks so much about reliefs. Let me introduce my brother-in-law. This is Lillo, my cousin's son. It is a vicious circle: one lives among a circumscribed number of people, immediately recognizable for sharing a common biological element. They live like nestlings, in a brood [...]. There is even comfort in the very common phrase: 'Who the hell are you? You're nobody!' because it is not only disdainful, but also liberating. [...] Becoming insulted is no longer a city in the world where one speaks so much about reliefs. The Roman says: 'Rome sure isn't my responsibility.' This invalidation of reality, which is the Roman when he says, 'So what the hell do you care?' comes perhaps from the fact that he has something to fear, other than from the pope, the gendarmes or the nobility. He encloses himself within a gastro-sexual circle. His interests are extremely limited. [...] Certain Romans say: 'I am going to visit pope, or I am going to visit uncle,' and then one discovers they mean they are going to the cemetery. [...] This takes the anxiety out of death, the neurotic anxiety: it is enough to remember that Romans call death 'la comune secco' (the dry body), trunco. [...] Pity the Sicilian. And then other certain finer expressions: 'andato agli arbori pizziu, sta a far del pe' coci' (more or less 'pushing up daisies').

And if anyone should think that this snapshot of the Roman mentality, as unfolded by Fellini, is only reducible only to the first post-war years or the Fifties, all he needs is to go and trace the last phase of the careers of Roman personalities from the Italian comedy to verify the full reality of a symbolic description somewhere between tales, the religious habit and the sleeveless undergarment which, deep down, does not change, or only changes very slowly.

And if it is true that Fellini's Roman cannot be of any help to him on an individual level because he is an ignoramus who does not want to be bothered, and is the most exact product of the Church; and if there is also truth in his "heavy" image: quite gloomy, dull and suggestive of a leader, postmodern view of things, downward looking, asleep, disappproving, uncaring, or rather not believing that curiosity is of any use", Fellini's love for the city of the Romans is still undeniable, which, once it reaches you with its "ancient enchantment, all the negative judgments you may have made of it disappear, and all you know is that it is a great fortune to live there." Feeding on its defects and decadence, it becomes a necessity for Fellini to portray through a movie how things are going to be in a year's time for the loved and hated Rimini of Amarcord.

Fellini had four other parts in mind for Fellini's Roma: the circule patterns (the night train that circles Rome), the, the Roma-Luzio soccer game where the two local teams play each other, Roman women, and lastly the peninto evening wind and clouds. Cut from the script, these elements make their way into the movie in a different way. The circule, a two-car train that once called at many metropolitan quarters, is turned into the choric ring road. An army of steel plowing and noise, of auto vehicles, people and objects squeezed into a space that could reasonably only hold cars and trucks.

In his excited and exaggerated vision of traffic there is, on the one hand, a prophetic intuition of the round cage which that peripheral race-track circle was to become and, on the other hand, the presence of a rich variety of fauna, from those boxed inside their cars (similar to the 'mannequins' of Eight and a Half), to a horse, to the calves spread out on the ground after an accident, to the chained dog that barks while another, presumably a thoroughbred, slips away in its luxury car. And then there is the man pulling his cart, the prostitutes with their bonfires beyond the guard-rail, the hitch-hikers, and all the other unidentified figures on the outer edge of the confusion. Finally, there is a shot of the crowd motif, the Fellini crowd, made up of small assemblies that fill the frame, often subverting its function in such a way as to exponentially increase the effect. For example, one of the termini train station, the main floor of the vaselique theater, the people at night in Trastevere.

The confusion of the ring road approaches the image of what we could call the Fellini finale, a great decadent fissure rather than a total disaster, as the words of Corelli Vidal confirm when interviewed at the film's presentation: "You ask me why an American writer lives in Rome? It's not for all, because I like the Romans, who don't give a damn whether you are rich or poor. They are neutral, like the cats. Rome is the city of illusions. It is no accident that the Church is here, the government and the movies, all things that produce illusions, as you do to (Fellini), as do I... The more the world approaches its end from overpopulation, too many cars, pollution... and what quieter place from which to wait for the end than from Rome? From overpopulation. It is the ideal point from which to observe, whether everything ends or not.

At the time of La Dolce Vita, Marcello was content to hide inside Rome. Now, everyone, the common people, intellectuals, and the bourgeoisie, can stand at the window and look, also through the grand illusion which is cinema, at the rubble of a dying civilization, wait without anxiety to
see... one never knows. The other people interviewed are almost like guest stars representing a golden frame for the picture of a Rome which, the longer one observes it, the more it seems to be, slip out of one's grasp like Mastrocena's city. At the same time, hiding behind its robust entrance door is Anna Magnani, "symbol... of the city. A Rome seen as a wolf and a sexual virgin, aristocrat and bag lady, glossy, human...", who does not trust Fellini and sets the movie off towards its epilogue.

The ecclesiastical fashion show is a true jour de force, a synthesis between the analogous scene of the white clowns (in The Clowns), and the illuminated pit of the television studio (in Ginger and Fred). This is a moment of great cinema in which Fellini optimally expresses the ironic/ visionary aspect of the sets (with the masterful collaboration of Danilo Donati and Carlo Ludini), supported by Nina Rota's original music. The Church and the Roman aristocrats - "a cemetery full of cadavers who don't know they are dead" - are gathered together for the fashion show. The show is clear and vital in displaying the styles in a rhythmic crescendo, vaguely macabre and sublime, up until the papal emperors: from the creation called 'Petite sourc de la terre' and 'Pigtail', to the red 'Au Paradis toujours plus vaste' for prelates on roller-skates. But it is also dark, old, dead and mummified in the dust of centuries, represented by the audience, a pathetic, infantile funeral choir that accompanies that magnificent agony, very slow and sumptuous, lugubriously eternal, to which Rome seems destined by the circularity of time and the history of progress.

The irreversible destiny of some pre-modern symbols will characterize Fellini's project for a movie about Venice. the city par excellence of the much-invoked 'East'. This movie was never made, but was at least partially sublimated in the world of Fellini's Casanova. However, there do exist some quite beautiful pages written by the director on a subject rich in ideas, where the city seems to present fascinating figurative and pictorial seductions that are most congenial to a certain way I have of looking at cinema, or better, cinematographic narration. This would be a series of pieces that, as in a mosaic, separate and disintegrate the movie narrative, the situations, the characters, in a molecular decomposition that is continually unmasked by even further fragmentation, but which, in its entirety, offers a montage of unity of vision, of a panorama and, in this case, of a city which can appear even more to shimmer and shake because mirrored in water and pulsating with lights and reflections. Perhaps Fellini's Roma is really to Fellini's Venice what Amarcord is to the city of Mastrocena.

That the director always likes the less showy aspects is exemplified in the fading away of the frescoes in the ancient Roman house. That wind which usually stuns Fellini's men/children, brings on dreams and fantasies, flush-backs or surprising flash-forwards, now unconsciously liberated, soars, destroying those who brutally 'break' the sign of the past with the horror of the movie camera. The frescoes of the Roman house, opened after who knows how long, are other shadows that vanish before the impotent eye of an acutal progress, just as the brothels vanished. Always in a condition of semi-destruction, these are the sites where female faces and symbolism are concentrated. Thus, they do not intend to represent the world of commercial sex, as much as a cinematic imagining of the Body of Rome, a variation in the idea of the prostitute. Just as Sylvia was Woman and Calzina a prostitute/clown, the prostitutes of Fellini's Roma are Rome, vulgar and protective, 'maternal' and aggressive. They incarnate the other mother, the tolerant one who does not put obligations on you, does not create duties, does not sit in judgement. She is not jealous or possessive. She welcomes you when you arrive and lets you leave whenever you like. The brothel and the prostitute "have been a surrogate which, in the straight jacket of our education, helped to smuggle in at least a part of what had been forbidden to us."

The Bussomoso Theatre, a world apart, reflected in the world of its own: show business, another microcosm of Rome in a re-invention of the historical site of vaudeville, the Ambra-Jovinelli theater. Fellini is fascinated by the audience rather than with the show itself. That is where the real act is, a place loaded with cruel remarks made in Roman dialect, that the director depicts with the swift strokes of a master. Moments, situations, characters and jokes that reach the stage from the audience in the auditorium, and return again to the hall. A cocktail of cynicism and gaiety in the fight between the 'mob' and clamor, amateur artists, which reflects events that have been occurring for centuries in the streets and squares of the real world, comments on them in low linguistic forms, in the improvised gags, in the caricatures and belly-laugh, rather than with the brain. A teucherese and grotesque exhibition of improvisations, therefore, a show of extroverted spectators, of decidedly ball-breaking hecklers which, while it places the vaudeville show somewhere "between the Circus Maximus and the brothel", reverses to the two crude qualities of cynicism and ruddiness, and would be able to reveal the movie to its opening slots. There, among the aphorisms of the cutting language of the people which had already accompanied the young Fellini's initiation as he was about to become a paying guest in the Folletta family, the young author hears a scene played out on the stair landing which, in itself, subsumes the Roman character, fugitive and wise, mocking and lazy, good-natured and irreverent. An intermezzo suitable for making the curtain fall.
for people interviewed are making a grand finale for the anger one observes it, the anger one observes it, the one's guilt like Mastorna's classic behind its robust enhance. ...of the city. A Rome seen distant and bag lady, but not trust Fellini and sets the scene in a scene of the white cloaks and the pit of the television is a moment of great cinema versus the ironic one. The collaboration of Danilo studied by Ninna Rotoli's original from aristocrats - "a cemetery they are dead" - an in show. The show is clear in a rhythmic crescendo, up until the papal called "Pietro ser de la red 'At Pasado toujours plus noir. But it is also dark, old, dead centuries, represented by the solemn stained glass that allegory, very slow and slow, to which Rome seems near and the history of progress. One pro-modern symbol will create a movie about Venice, the envoked 'End'. This movie is partially sublimated in the power. the place of the director on a subject seems to present fascinating ones that are most congruent ing at cinema, or better, this would be a series of pieces and disintegrate the characters, in a molecular fully materialized by even further its entirety, offers a montage of a and, in this case, of a day to shimmer and shake. The palpitations with lights and smoke, Fellini's Roma is really to Fellini's Venice Mastorna. ...the less showy aspects is the joy of the frescoes in the ancient church usually stuns Fellini's men/children, brings on dreams and fantasies, flashbacks or surprising flash-forward, now unconsciously liberated, soughing, destroys those who brutally 'awaken' the sign of the past with the horror of the movie camera. The frescoes of the Roman house, opened after who knows how long, are other shadows that vanish before the impatient eye of an achtful progress, just as the brooches vanished. Always in a condition of semi-destruction, these are the sites where female faces and symbols are more prominent. They do not pretend to represent the world of commercial sex, as much as a cinematic imagining of the Body of Rome, a variation in the idea of the prostitute. Just as Sylvia was Woman and Cabiria a prostitute/clown, the prostitute of Fellini's Roma is Rome, vulgar and protective, 'maternal' and aggressive. They incarnate the mother, the tolerant one who does not put obligations on you, does not create duties, does not sit in judgement, She is not jealous or possessive. She welcomes you when you arrive and lets you leave whenever you like. The brothel and the prostitute "have been a surrogate which, in the straight jacket of our education, helped to smugle in at least a part of what had been forbidden to us."

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The changing of the seasons sets the rhythm for the life of the small suburban town on the Romagna coast during the Thirties. The beginning of spring, like the 'Opera', the winter boredom, is an occasion for a festival for the various characters that, one by one, introduce themselves into the story. In order of appearance, they are: Giudizio, a trouble-maker who is always hanging around, and prepares the fog and old wood for burning; the barber/musician, the beautiful Grisogno, and Tito's family, the messenger boy in the events to follow. The owner of the Palazzo (a double for Clark Gable) is present, Biscione the pedlar, and the people in the piazza who greet the end of the cold with a brass band and fireworks. Ivan Caneo Loriganova celebrates the same picturesque city with his small family in the courtyard of his villa. During the final events of the evening, Contente the blind accordion player, Valerio the nymphomaniac, the Venetian veteran and Lilla, brother of Miranda, who is Tito's mother, all arrive on the scene. A motorcyclist riding over the embankment ends the festivities.

The lawyer, devoted to local history, gives information about the town, its people and its province, in spite of having to deal with a mysterious, witty heckler who interrupts his learned discourse. Tito's class, together with the principle, Zeno, and all the teachers, are gathered for the school photograph. Then, one at a time and according

Fellini with the eccentric Lifeline (Germaine Duhau), the incredible storyteller in Amarcord.
"It's the year of the snow". The village youths bombarded an amused Gracidso (Magali Nelli).

to their subjects, the teachers come up to the lectern and demonstrate all their defects during the explanations and the questioning.

Titta's family life is introduced by Valpina, who goes to Aurelio's workplace, the head of the family and chief engineer of a small construction company. Everyone is at home for dinner, including uncle Lallo, Gino the maid, and the lively grandfather, Aurelio's father.

Amidst the sizzling soup, chicken and cabbage are consumed, interrupted by a quarrel between father and mother because Titta pissed on the hat of the distinguished Mr. Blondi from the movie theater balcony.

During the evening walk, the kids do not miss the chance of a bit of fun by molesting Gracidso, while the other characters are immersed in the routine of provincial life. The lawyer continues his discourse on architecture, the Fascists march up and down the main street, as do the principle and the teachers. The end of the evening is marked by the arrival of the new "film noir" – the change of shift at the local brothel – the closing of the movie theater and the turning off of the lights.

Just to give vent to his arctic thoughts, Titta confesses to the priest Don Baldo: the tobacco woman with her overflowing breasts, the mathematics teacher, the bottoms of the farm girls on their bicycles, the chance meeting with Valpina, the clumsy pass made at Gracidso in the deserted movie theater. The distracted priest absolves all the boys who, at the end of the episode, masturbate together in the car parked in the garage.

The festivities for the foundation of Rome, on April 21, are held in euphoric adherence by the Fascists, including races, ceremonies and gymnastic exercises. Cicco even imagines that the Duke is personally presiding over his marriage to Aldina, his haughty comrade who prefers someone else. Aurelio, who is an anarchist sympathizer, remains at home because Miranda will not let him out. But, when a gramophone in the ball tower begins to play the "Internationale", he is seized by the Fascists for interrogation. He will return home at two in the morning full of castor oil, which has its rapid and inevitable effect.

The elegant world of the Grand Hotel announces the arrival of summer, the sun and amorous adventures. It starts by recalling the affair of Gracidso and the prince, which changed the girl's new name, Cinco, after the girl freely offered her favors. There follows the odd little scene, and Biscain shooting off his mouth with a lie about having had each one of the thirty highly-guarded wives of the emir. In the evening, on the terrace, uncle Lallo and his good-for-nothing friends pick up some foreign women for love and sex adventures that will fill their winter tales.

A hot summer day favors an outing by Titta's family to their country home. They take along Aurelio's brother Tito, who lives in a mental
hospital. According to the doctors, he is basically quite well, but, in the carriage, he displays the stones he keeps in his pocket, and then, after asking them for a stop to relieve himself, he wets his pants. After lunch at the farm house, too profits from the others' distraction to climb a tree and shout that he wants a woman. Then he throws stones at anyone who tries to approach him. In desperation, Aurelio organizes a false death notice and other noises to make him come out of the tree, but only when a dwarf runs from the hospital arrives too convinced to come down and return to the institution.

The Rex, a large ocean liner on its way from America, is going to pass by in the night, and all kinds of boats take to the water during the late afternoon, taking the whole town to see its sudden, swift passing. The great ocean mist makes everything unrecognizable, packed in wading and unsettling. The grandfather and the youngest grandchild get the worst of it. But Titta and his friends get up on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, closed for the winter, dancing around in order to shake off their melancholy. Then there is the 'Thousand Miles' autochthonous race. Titta and Ciccio imagine that they are famous racing drivers, and that they have won the heart of the mini-skirted Gradisca, for the former, and have snubbed the haggard Altina, for the latter.

The adventure with the tobacco woman at closing time results in useless attempts by Titta to demonstrate his strength, who ends up in bed with a fever for his efforts.

A heavy snowfall arrives - the year of the 'big snow' - to the delight of the boys, but Aurelio's displeasure, and changes the appearance of the town's streets and squares. The mysterious motorcyclist, however, continues to appear out of the blue with a loud rumble. The young, and not-so-young, throw snowballs at each other and at Gradisca.

Mirando is taken ill, and receives a visit from his husband and eldest son, who does not realize how seriously ill she is. At the funeral, Lella faints when Aurelio criticizes him and is about to take revenge for having kept him all these years. Now, with the house silent and empty, Titta goes to the sea, and as he stands on the wharf, the strong breezes appear once again.

It is the season of beginnings, and also a good time for the wedding of Gradisca to the police officer, Matteo. At the wedding banquet, amidst hymn recitals, mimicked exclamations by the kids, and the inevitable photographs, a very brief downpour soakots the blind accordion player, Cantare, who is accompanying the dancing on the meadow. As the melancholy music plays, goodbyes are said, and the married couple leave. A few people remain to finish off the party. There is a fade out in block, the sound of the wind and the surf, and the title of the movie appears - Amarcord.

After La Strada, The Nights of Cabiria, and Eight and a Half, Amarcord (1973) also won the Academy Award the following year as the best foreign film, immediately gaining unanimous international critical acclaim, as well as public favor. In fact, it has all the ingredients to please both the professional press, the intelligentsia and ordinary movie-goers of all ages. For his part, the critic can perceive in it the director's third and definitive liberation. After the circus and Rome, Fellini finally puts the provinces behind him with Amarcord, those of his origins, and the other, broader provinces of the movies of the early Thirties, in which his movie is intuitively set. Intuitively, because those years are not entirely reconcilable and, if we did not know Fellini's habit of intentionally covering his tracks, there would be some question marks, which are fortunately resolved in Tati's Keo's (the actor's) thorough biography ("It could be 1932, the year of the Villaggio Miglio and the maiden voyage of the transatlantic steamer, The Rex, cited in the movie. It could also be 1938, when, with the war in Ethiopia, one began to sing 'Faccetta nera'; or 1937, when Shall We Dance? came out with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, of which we see a poster")

In one of these years, or perhaps more plausibly in the chronological anthology subsumed in those five years, the same process occurs as in Eight and a Half, when real and cinema personalities freely came to the (double) director's mind, who could do nothing but welcome them all in the confused universe of his fantasy. The characters of Amarcord create a similar illusion for the artist to deal with. And, if one remembers that here too I am another, and that one of the titles considered for the movie - along with Hammer, Vite! (That's Life), Romagnoli, and Il Bango - was L'Ulisse Invincibile (The Invincible Ulysses), one understands the intentional direction and the symbolic presence of the personalities and masks of this suburban town.

Entirely constructed at Cinecittà (including the scene of
the passing translucent Rex), the Rimini of Amarcord is similar to the Rimini of Ortia reinvented for Il Vietlone; truer than the real thing, and thus cinematographically and superlatively true, realistic and convincing, an aggregate of obsessions that had always pursued the director, filtered through the scornful, ironic loudmouths of Fellini's Roma, and sifted through the real characters and clowns of the circus essay. Through this process, Fellini finally manages to clear away the "deceptive and ever contagious little theater of Rimini", whose marionettes, despite their different roles, all work together to compose a "roast of dusty samples", a village fair in which the style and the group story respect the rules of choral works, except, naturally, for the subjective invention of memory, precisely a mirror.

Like an animal tamer who both loves and fears his animals, the director uses sugar and the whip, feeling and gritting in sending his camera wandering through the streets, the psychology and behavior of a typical town bound to local history — "the mocking character of such populations, which have Roman and Celtic blood in their veins, and a character that is exuberant, generous, loyal and tenacious..." — and, because of this strong identity (also negative), recognizable within other realities outside of Romagna.

In fact, the movie brushes up against several primary units of society, from the small to the large. The family: Titta (inspired by his friend Titta Benussi), Aurelio, master clown, Miranda the housewife, the lively little grandfather, with his unforgettable erotic gesturing 'little lord' Lello, good-for-nothing Fascist. The school: represented in the delicious vignettes involving the teachers of the Fourth Latin School, in hierarchical order from gloomy principle Zevi to the religious studies teacher and parish priest Don Balora, who alternates the scholastic catechism with rapid sextupolish confessions. These, and many others, typologically inserted with all the curtailedtics deriving from their profession: the physics professor protected by photos of the king, the pope and Mussolini, who explains the laws governing the pendulum by the use of a rock; the history professor who questions Titta about Tiberius and Agrippina, but is only interested in keeping the ash of his cigarette from dropping; the sullen Alberi, who is tested by the balloon teacher in a stormy atmosphere; the philosophy professor who moves excitedly around the classroom trying to reconcile the ideas of the State with those of the Church; the mathematics teacher and the Greek teacher, who are dreadfully afraid of the students' pranks. And finally, the most delightful character of all, the little art teacher, who explains Giotto speaking rhythmically of "perspec-tive".

Within these tables, there are fluctuating sensations of memory, an affectionate look taken at a time when life was serene and unproblematic, but, at the same time, the wresting awareness of the ideological/political, authoritarian, obsolete and fundamentally anti-educational elements behind it all. With regard to ignorance and adolescence in particular — fertile ground for what the movie has to say — Fellini insists on the historical responsibility of "personal" fascism, thus making of Amarcord a movie that is attentive to the social and political realities, as well as an explicit warning about the significance to be attributed to this. "Politics — I mean to say, a political view of life where the problems of living are stated and confronted only in collective terms — seems to me to be a limitation. Everything which risks diluting, hiding or altering the individual and his very personal story, turning it into abstract, schematic reality, confounding itself among 'categories', 'classes' and 'mores', instinctively repels me. I must confess [...] it, on the other hand, by politics one means the possibility of living together, to function in a society of individuals who
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One can, as Fellini does very well, portray Fascism using the truth of simple language within a single episode, that of the Christmas festivities in Rome, with the rhetoric and the 'Roman' destiny of Fascist Italy reduced to a few salient moments: the late arrival at the train station, the hierarchy on the flight of steps, authorizes, teachers, various VIPs and, finally, the gramophone and the cooker oil. Moments which, all on their own — "Of all the sea, the Adriatic has always been the most Fascist"— pungently depict a "psychological, emotional way of being Fascist, a sort of block, an arrested development in the adolescent phase." When then the author states that "I seem to discern the eternal premises of Fascism precisely in being provincial," one cannot help having before one's eyes the suburban Fascists, the good-for-nothing friends of Lallo, and Lallo himself, youths who are already old, and whose jokes, wine, hair nets and snowballs are a substitution for the awareness that comes with growth, causing them to remain as eternal children, seeing that "Fascism and adolescence continue in some degree to be permanent historical stages of our lives."

More eloquently than a documentary, the connections in Amarcord between ignorance, adolescence, the provincial and Fascist are developed into something like a radical cure for that kind of thing. Thus Amarcord is another of the countless therapy movies against something, a satirical wringing out of Fellini's sponge in order to liberate mental space and leave the door open for the equally critical Casanova and, in particular, Orchestra Rehearsal, the stage where those castrating historical bonds are absent and are recklessly replaced by the unreasonable, debilitating confusion of contemporary chaos.

In this family scene, Titta, who has been up to all sorts of tricks, tries to hide from Aurelio's anger.
To free himself of these burdensome traditions, a director like Fellini, constitutionally unsuited to following the schemes of the old political movies, must necessarily unveil himself of irony and the structure of the funny story, because he is too attentive to details, irrelevant, trivial, submissive and unusual facts. Therefore, descending, as it were, the hierarchical social order of Amarcord, after Fascism, the church, the school, there are the family, the coffee bar, the movie theater, the class photograph, the piazza, the community, including the closing meal at the Paradiso trattoria.

In these moments, like the blind man's accoutrements, the movie elongates itself into broad frescoes - the bonfire, the passage of the Rex, the Grand Hotel in autumn, the 'year of the big snow' (which was, after all, in 1929), the count's peacock, the wedding banquet - only to narrow down again by focusing on (self)portraits, scenes and incomparable personalities. From Titta himself, uncertainly moving between carefree and emotional states, to Uncle Teo with his cry of "I want a woman!", to Ninola 'Gradasca' and the prince, to the grandfather with his mortal fear of the silent mist ("I feel like I'm no place: if that's the way death is, it's a bad job. Shove it!"). And the grandfather again: "My pa's pa used to say that, to stay healthy, you have to piss a lot, like dogs do!", and you had to believe him, because at 106 his sex life was still going strong.

The sketches of Titta and his parents are also exemplary. Aurelio, the farrier, with that circus clown's head of his, slaps himself hard across the face when angry. While Miranda (Pupella Maggio) seems to be very sensitively playing her role again as housewife Concetta in Eduardo De Filippo's play Christmas at the Cupidello's. And, furthermore: the south Italian lawyer who takes his bicycle along on the boat, the priest who sniffs at his fingers during confession, Cicco and the other kids, the tobacco woman - emblem, quotation and premise for the gallery of City of Women in gestation - and all the other actions, present, past and future of the Amarcord Circus, the little adolescent hot-air balloon that came from a sleepy provincial town.

Several sequences were excluded from this closed world of Fellini's youth and nostalgia, including the one of the man, Colonia, cleaning out the cesspools and searching for the countess's diamond ring (eliminated because it would be incomprehensible in the United States where, Fellini thought, this kind of scavenger would be unheard of); the tornado that was meant to come between the Uncle Teo sequence and the passing of the Rex, but not shot for financial reasons; and finally the Chinese tie seller (a scene that ended
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television special Fellini nel Cestino (Fellini's Waste Basket).
In a reduced world where, however, Fellini's oblique
resentment is unable to leave out the pleasant group
feeling, the life of comedely relations, where others are like
oneself, one can more easily feel at home in the same
places: at the coffee bar where they tell the same old stories, at
the Fulgor movie theater where everyone waits for the
snow to come, where Titta pursues love, Gradsca dreams of
a husband like Gary Cooper in Beau Geste (a movie that the
faker Fellini has run passing off as the non-existent La Valle
dell'Amore). And in the piazza, too, where there is a place for
everyone, from the mysterious horseman to Biscen's tall
stories; in the 'exotic' Grand Hotel between the elegance of
the 'vecchia signora' and the closed, deserted atrium; in the
nocturnal wait for the transatlantic steamer, with the idea
of the always possible, but never actual, adventure, like the
painted sea of the false liner; and finally, in the two
collective moments of the ending, Miranda's funeral and
Gradisca's wedding.

In the rites of death and of life, analogous to what he did
at the end of Eight and a Half, Fellini once again presents the
whole cast in order to close this anthology of faces and
characters that his imagination – and particularly the
poetic imagination of Tonino Guerra, the Riminese of the
suburbs – have bestowed upon cinema comedy.
The melancholy motif of the story fades out splendidly, a
little at a time, in the light of the equally melancholy finale,
in the fleeting merriment of a party that has ended and
only just begun. The tone is almost subdued, suggested by
the wide-angle shots of the toastings, of the photograph and
the continuation of the movie after Biscen's goodbye, the
unconscious desire to avoid the words 'the end', which
Fellini never attached to his pictures. The movements of the
camera, corresponding to those of the director in the town
set, and the atmosphere created by the music, untringly
depict impressions and memories solicited by the never-
absent wind which, at the opening, brings the springtime
and, at the end, together with the sound of the sea, suggests
once more the maternal character – enveloping, fecund,
unstable and deep – of the basic elements of the cinema of
memory, of his Great World Theater.
The Wind Blows Where It Will

Fellini’s Casanova • Orchestra Rehearsal • City of Women • And the Ship Sails On

It is easier for a person to change his deep convictions than to change his clichés," Fellini remarked with regard to Casanova (1976), the movie that possibly caused him the most suffering and turned him into the protagonist of "one of the most dreadful cliches in the history of cinema" (Bernardino Zapponi). The dual-name Fellini’s Casanova could be considered the classical producer’s coup, a really big deal, because the director’s name appeared alongside that of the most legendary seducer, which, almost by chance, Fellini had proposed to Dino De Laurentiis. The idea, as had happened with Marnell, came to nothing for many reasons, among them the director’s refusal to cast an American actor (Robert Redford or Dustin Hoffman) in the title role.

The project was taken up by Andrea Rizzoli for Cineriz, who eventually dropped it for being too expensive to produce, as well as for its weak cover funding on the foreign market. Finally, in 1975, Alberto Grimaldi entered the scene, on the strict condition that, in order to keep down the costs, it had to be filmed in London studios and in the English language. Director and producer finally reached a compromise: it will be shot in English, but at Cineticà, and the lead is to be Donald Sutherland, closer in appearance to the physical type Fellini had drawn in many sketches. Three years passed from the first negotiations until the movie was finished.

Casanova is another ‘stop-gap’ movie, like the Satyricon and the hypothetical projects for a Decameron or Orlando Furioso – "a protective system of intentions, excuses, desires and convictions whose sole purpose is to allow me to make the movies that I need to make at that moment in time."

One of those movies in which the producer must, as often happens with Fellini, do nothing but believe in the project and accept everything the director wants. Grimaldi is not accepting enough, and the work is plagued by friction, mostly due to an increase in costs, which was not actually very great.

Fellini takes up Casanova’s Memoirs only after having signed the contract and, from this moment, the trouble begins: “I waded into the endless paper ocean of the Memoirs, into that arid catalogue of a quantity of facts amassed with the statistical rigor of a file clerk, finicky, meticulous, cramped, not even much of a liar, and annoyance, alienation, disgust, boredom, were the only variants in my state of mind, depressed, disconsolate. It was this rejection, this nausea, which suggested the approach to the movie.”

The project proceeds punctually, the director feels less and less emotion on reading the Venetian’s ponderous diary, and the same goes for the Eighteenth Century, “the most empty, exhausted, drained of centuries. What was European society on the eve of the French Revolution if not a cemetery?” It is this very funereal atmosphere that is taken as a paradigm, to accentuate the eternal juxtaposition of love and death, or better, love and non-life, a constant in the melancholy progress of a man who is a prisoner of his origins. In effect, the historical Casanova, overwhelming male, great seducer, immoderate in all his ways, holds as little interest for the director as does Casanova the writer. Fellini shares out the boring task of reading the diaries with Bernardino Zapponi and Tonino Guerra, filling his pages with acid comments, noting all of antipathy for the character, an antipathy that will lead the director to portray him as an unfeeling marionette, a strange vampire who “never dies because he was never born, an aquarium fish”, in short, an eighteenth century Nosferatu whose life is “a demonic, mechanical dance without any purpose, something out of an electric wax museum.”

Using his beloved law of opposites, the director begins to overturn even the hero’s physical traits: for the tall, robust and vital Giacomo Casanova, he substitutes Fellini’s Casanova, a smooth gigolo and unctuous sexual athlete, constantly and futilely searching for public recognition of his qualities as economist, philosopher, alchemist and what you will; a search constantly frustrated by the demand for that one and only thing: his sexual services, which conclude every scene. Subsequently, a Casanova who is the victim of an ineluctable destiny, made by his own hands, a solitary
anti-hero, a romantic misunderstood by the immoral humanity with which he comes into contact, from the lowest to the highest ranks. A neurotic Casanova who finds his raison d'être not so much in sex as in reveries, in fantasizing, not a woman's body, but a single great intellectual opportunity.

Be that as it may, from the memories of an old embittered man, the director distils what, in his opinion, is the very essence of the man, who possibly never was the victim of a mother complex, as suggested by the false clue thrown up during the meeting with his mother in Dresden – an expedient for making him more human, after the antipathies and reservations aroused on every occasion. One can accept or reject this psychoanalytic interpretation, but there is no doubt that Fellini, with his capacities as a 'medium', has sucked out the best to be found in his subject, targeting his sensibilities as an old good-for-nothing, as a smoke vendor, or as an Italian man conditioned by the woman-mother-lover figure, having little credibility with his cumbersome fame and yet modern, a man greatly curious about the world, born in the wrong century.

Casanova's anti-hero, a romantic misunderstood by the immoral humanity with which he comes into contact, from the lowest to the highest ranks. A neurotic Casanova who finds his raison d'être not so much in sex as in reveries, in fantasizing, not a woman's body, but a single great intellectual opportunity.

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Madonna, is to realize the Great Work: to die and be reborn as a man who will live forever. This will be possible after cornal union with an initiate of her own pyramidal sign, such as Casanova, who, with the help of Manzoni, his temporary bed companion, succeeds in making love to the wittered countess.

Two years later in Fête, he meets Henriette, a French girl travelling with a Hungarian officer who, having obtained to continue north, entreats her to him. Giacomo falls madly in love, and goes with her to the fête organized by the hunchback Count Du Bois, on an arts patron and homoseux. There, after discussions about the female soul, the guests hear a short metaphysical opera on love, entitled La Mantra della Religione (The Praying Mantis), composed and sung by their host himself and his lover, Gianbruno.

The sudden clandestine departure of Henriette, indissolubly bound to a great, mysterious European personage who has total power over her, throws Casanova into the blackest depression, and he considers becoming a monk or even killing himself. This despair will be equalled only by a despair he feels many years later in London, due to two

A woman, "the infamous Chérillon and her daughter, who is completely worthy of her." These two, after inflicting him with syphilis and robbing him, abandon him with his few bags to the adverse destiny of wretched, miserable spirits. Determined this time as well to kill himself, he puts on his best clothes and wades into the river. But upon seeing a very tall lady in the company of two dwarfs on the opposite shore, his lifelong curiosity is attracted and he desists from his intention.

In his search for the giantess, he arrives at a circus where, amidst shows, rides, masks, human jigs and tattoos, he also witnesses the presentation of the Great Mouna, a kind of beast whose belly, symbolic cavern in whose depths everything originates and can be found. A friend unexpectedly comes to the rescue, and informs him that there is also a giant woman at the circus, young and from the mountains of Veneto, very tall, very strong, but also fair and gentle. Sold to the circus by her wicked husband, the woman now puts on a show of feasts and circuses, beating the most robust men at arm wrestling. Two Neapolitan dwarfs take care of her and, under Casanova's discrete gaze, they bathe her lovingly and are moved when

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One at heart, narrow cell, Casanova remembers his earlier life freedom, the erotic encounter with the woman who loved being whippet from behind, and of the episode with the amoral ambassador, Amoroso, whom the intuitive Casanova had saved from debilitating blood-taints and had 'cured' after a night of love.

The nocturnal escape from Fête, which Casanova himself calls "a masterpiece of intelligence, of exact calculation, intuition and courage, all of which qualities were rewarded with good luck," leads the Venetian to Paris, and the erotic salon of the Manzoni d'Ur, surrounded by magicians, occultists, clairvoyants and mediums — among them Cogliastro — whose one and only purpose, apart from magical or philosophical disquisitions on the conception of the
she sings a little dialect song, the dirge of her hometown. The following day, the circus has folded its tents and Casanova leaves London.

One of his unforgettable days was one spent in Rome, first in the presence of the smiling pope, whose hand he could finally kiss over and over again, and then, in the evening, at the party of the English ambassador to the Holy See. In the ancient palace of Prince Del Brando, some rather lusty, primitive games are played, such as a wine contest. Casanova's fame as a tireless lover leads the host to organize a contest between Casanova's more 'intellectual' approach, and the brute instincts of the prince's courtmen, to see who can publicly make love the most times in one hour. The couples are formed. Casanova chooses the Roman model, while a noble lady puts herself at the disposition of the servant. After some respiratory exercises and drinking eighteen eggs mixed with spiced Spanish wine, Giacomo wins the contest and is carried around in triumph.

The travelling Giacomo experiences his most sexual encounter between Bérne and Dresden. In the latter city, as guest of the entomologist Moebius, he is taken ill, perhaps because of witnessing the insects being pinned down alive by the scholar's two young daughters. Feeling better, thanks to their loving care, he falls in love with Isabelle, and makes an appointment with her in Dresden so that they may live together for the rest of their lives. The girl never shows up at the inn of the Moors, but Casanova still has a night of unbridled sex with the singer Astrild, an old lover from Venice, and the insatiable little German hunchback.

The following evening, at the end of the opera Orpheus and Eurydice, when the theater is deserted and the great candelabras extinguished, Casanova happens to meet his mother, who, now almost paralyzed, lives in the country. He carries her to her carriage on his back, and tries to find a way of remaining with her for a while, but the carriage goes off into the snowy night.

During the years that follow, he finds himself in Holland, Belgium, Spain and Norway, where he is taken seriously ill, but finally ends up at the brilliant court of Württemberg. There, he tries to convince the duchess to intervene for him with her brother, but the latter is extremely noisy and full of unexpected surprises, the atmosphere tipsy and
the insects being pinned down alive by the scholar's two young daughters. Feeling better, thanks to their loving care, he falls in love with Isabelle, and makes an appointment with her in Dresden so that they may live together for the rest of their lives. The girl never shows up at the inn of the Moors, but Casanova still has a night of unbridled sex with the singer Asteria, an old lover from Venice, and the insatiable little German hunchback.

The following evening, at the end of the opera Orpheus and Eurydice, when the theater is deserted and the great condottiero extinguished, Casanova happens to meet his mother, who, now already paralysed, lives in the country. He carries her to her carriage on his back, and tries to find a way of remaining with her for a while, but the carriage goes off into the snowy night.

During the years that follow, he lives first in Holland, Belgium, Spain and Norway, where he is taken seriously ill, but finally ends up at the brilliant court of Wurtemberg. There, he tries to convince the duchess to intervene for him with her brother, but the letter is extremely noisy and full of unexpected surprises, the atmosphere tippy and military, and the music deafening, played by organists roasting on high stools, which make it impossible for him to be taken seriously, and the same is true for the projects he proposes. The court sings the melancholy, patriotic ditty "The Hunter of Wurtemberg", and, seeing the mechanical doll Rosalba, his disappointment is transformed into the most lively interest for the magnificent automation.

Unable to resist temptation, he goes down into the salon during the night when, to the playing of a music box, he embraces Rosalba and dances with her. The doll with a porcelain face moves jerkily, but Giacomo, excited, uses it to make love.

The memories of his last years relate to his life in Dux, and its long Bohemian writers. There, Casanova has been librarian to Count Waldstein for a long time, a job which he holds very dear, because it allows him to save his unexhausted thirst for knowledge. But his indignation is roused for two reasons: the necessity of having his meals in the kitchen with the servants, where he does not always find "maccaroni", and the dishonest behavior of the mayor-don, Faulkner, and his mistress. These two take their revenge on the old man by smearing his portrait, and the first page of his novel Icosameron, with excrement.

During a fête in honor of the young count, Casanova recites a passage from his beloved Ariosto, which is not appreciated by some, who furthermore thought he was long dead. Offended, he retires to his rooms and the conclusion of his book. Thinking about Venice, where he now feels he will never be able to return, he remembers a dream... It is right. On the gray and gelid waters of the moonlit Grand Canal, a young Casanova goes to meet Rosalba, while several of his women run towards the Rialto Bridge. On the other side, very brightly lit, a golden carriage arrives, drawn by four horses. It stops, the door opens, and inside there is the pope, smiling and nodding to him. Half hidden at the pope's side is his mother, whom he saw for the last time in Dresden many years ago. Once again with the Rialto as a background, in the half light of the moon and the sighing of the wind, Giacomo Casanova dances once more with the genteel automation to the sound of a music box... The red and puffy eyes of the old Venetian are dissolved in the last romantic embrace of the two waxy figures, who slowly rotate round themselves.

Of all Fellini's movies, Casanova is the one that is most inspired by painting. It is as if the director, in his supposed antipathy for the character, had turned all his inventive inspiration to creating vast pictures – the episodes of the role's life taken from his memoirs – drawing upon the heritage of eighteenth century Figurative art. During the early stages of preparation, he appears to be very busy, keeping himself amused by drawing, making little models, studying costumes and details to be constructed in the studios of Cineteca. Everything in Casanova is clearly fake, and yet true to life, a product of the mind and hands of the artist of genius, who wraps his creations in an aura of melancholy.

And so, these claustrophobic sets are created, which
remind one of the interiors of Pietro Longhi’s paintings, the papier-mâché Venice and the plastic lagoon, the exact opposite of Camus’ radiance, the opening of space and light that, whilst exploring the lagoon city, had seemed to Fellini to be too ‘sunny’, even during the darkest hours, so that he rejected the idea of shooting the film in its natural setting. For the director, the colors and light had to complement the dark wedding of Eros and Thamos, the sadness of love without feelings, underscored by the example of the bed/ coffins that host Giacomo’s virtuoso performances. As in Fellini’s Satyricon then, crepuscular tones prevail, which open to the light only in the Henriette episode, true love, the only woman to whom Giacomo says ‘forever’. Dark gray, brown, deep green, black and red, these are the colors of a century that was dirty, and is shown to be such in the bad smells of the inns and taverns, and the courts swarming with crude and vulgar personages.

Casanova himself is often in underwear and consorts of an indefinable color, rather than white, and in sharp contrast to his highly colored, rich clothes: velvet waistcoats, lace collars, golden buttons and powdered wig.

At this point, it is worth remarking on the complicated business of casting Donald Sutherland as the lead and, above all, his edgy relationship with the director. A skilled, professional actor, Sutherland’s looks and sensibilities were still far from Fellini’s idea of Casanova. Imprisoned in a ‘sea-horse’ mask with a protruding chin, a humped nose, shaven head and eyebrows personally designed by the director, the actor underwent a daily crisis, until Fellini explained that he had to let himself go, give up the stereotype and put himself at the disposition of the dream Casanova.

In his long career as a lover, Giacomo never excluded any type of woman. A champion of love even without feeling, he chooses women who can complete him, without concern for their beauty, except in Henriette’s case. Fellini therefore accentuates the crossed eyes of Maddalena at the paroxysm of pleasure, Annamaria’s hysteria, and the daughter of Moebius the entomologist, who enjoys the erotic/intellectual game between Giacomo and her sister Isabelle. She is beautiful, but it is a funeral kind of beauty, as slick as that of Rosalba, the inexpressive and obedient mechanical doll. Angelina has the same characteristics, an enormous doll with a body as large as her brain is small, an inaccessible myth whom Giacomo does not even try to touch. The other women in the movie are horrid: from the old, libidinous Marquise d’Urf, to Marcolina, shapely but disfigured by a block eye. Then there are the hags like Chapillon or Astrod, the prostitute and the princess of the sexual contest in the Roman episode.

If Casanova – half poet, half adventurer – really loved every woman, Fellini does not believe it and turns that love
remember one of the interiors of Pietro Longhi's paintings, the papier-mâché Venice and the plastic lagoon, the exact opposite of Canaletto's radiance, the opening of space and light that, whilst exploring the lagoon city, had seemed to Fellini to be too 'sunny', even during the darkest hours, so that he rejected the idea of shooting the film in its natural setting. For the director, the colors and light had to complement the dark wedding of Eros and Thamos, the sadness of love without feelings, underscored by the example of the bed/coffins that host Giacomo's virtuoso performances. As in Fellini's Satyricon then, crepuscular tones prevail, which open to the light only in the Henriette episode, true love, the only woman to whom Giacomo says 'forever'. Dark gray, brown, deep green, black and red, these are the colors of a century that was dirty, and is shown to be such in the bad smells of the inns and taverns, and the courts swarming with crude and vulgar personages. Casanova himself is often in underwear and cons of an indefinable color, rather than white, and in sharp contrast to his highly colored, rich clothes: velvet waistcoats, lace collars, golden buttons and powdered wig.

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If Casanova - half poet, half adventurer - really loved every woman, Fellini does not believe it and turns that love into dark misogyny, even taking care to provide a psychoanalytical justification: through his mother's fault, Giacomo cannot have a real woman. And he demonstrates that woman is a symbol of pedantry by inserting the drawings of his friend Roland Topor into the magic lantern at the London circus.

Fellini's gallery is enriched by Hogarth's style in the London adventure, and the encounter with the great whale, one of the most symbolic and pictorial in the movie. In his monograph on Fellini, Mario Verdone remembers having met him at an exhibition of circus posters, standing in front of one entitled 'The Whale Theater with the Magic Lantern', that he was to use exactly as it was in his movie. In the long line of people waiting to enter the whale's stomach, there is also Giacomo who, in front of Topor's disquieting images, will fall back into his nightmare and, physically, fall among the human variety of monstrous circus charlatans who populate the tavern, and is redeemed by the presence of Angelina, a victim like himself, and therefore part of his inner world.

The Dresden scene is divided into two parts, with the common background of the Italian opera. It is the occasion for the chance meeting with his mother and Astrodi, mother and mistress, that is to say the two faces of woman, broken into pieces, which Casanova does not succeed in recomposing. And if Astrodi will further exalt his love-making capacity, his superficial side, his mother will make him once more compare himself with hisphantoms, his condition as victim of the woman who got him his first refusal. With the infinite tenderness of a child looking for affection and petting, Giacomo announces his successes (not sexual ones) at European courts, and receives only indifference in return. At this point, Fellini can no longer lie, and bitterly reveals a wave of sympathy - and fraternity - with the unfortunate chap. In short, his exterior opposition dissolves in the images of that lake of solitude and intense humanity reflected in the glance of his personage, in a cul-de-sac.

From this moment on, ever gloomier colors and events accompany the Venetian on his road towards old age and death, which has been all too often announced. When sexual athletics no longer sustain him, he will become painfully aware that not even his fame as a scholar will be enough to earn him consideration. He is no longer credible, no longer believed, but only just tolerated. Old, irritable, isolated, dirty and unshaved, his mechanical bird out of order like himself, he will live, forgotten, in his study in Bohemia, keeping his last amorous thought for the doll Rosalia, the only one who cannot judge him.

At the gloomy court of Dux, Fellini's wind will begin to sour again - and forcefully - when the dream of the old Casanova is recounted. That same breath of wind will carry him back to his beloved Venice, to the frozen Grand Canal,
The first romantic encounter in Casanova takes place during the Venice Carnival, when Gino and meets up with Sister Maddalena (Margarita Clementi) in order to satisfy his voyeuristic tendencies of the Ambassador of France.
in the company of the automaton, before closing his eyes and returning to that mother who, from her carriage, finally sends him a benevolent gesture.

From the Venetian adventurer's large, prolix diary emerges a reckless combination of cavalier and genius, and Federico Fellini extracts a most beautiful, complex film, in which he contemplates himself non-narcissistically in the mirror. A mirror visually rich, pictorial, dream-like, to express the autobiographical solitude of Casanova, and his own artist's melancholy in seeing his creative energy frustrated, almost foreseeing the events. Precisely what will happen in Orchestra Rehearsal

The sonority commentary to the great ring road episode of Fellini's Roma is dissonant and unpleasant, to the point of visual saturation in the emblematic Colosseum traffic jam. For the title of Orchestra Rehearsal (1979), Fellini reverts to that sound-track once again, as an introduction to the movie. And so, in this musical prova (rehearsal, trial, trans.), one finds once again the theme of accumulation, of baroque exaggeration, of clairvoyance, of contemporary chaos according to Federico Fellini. It is an apocalyptic/ironic picture of social life and politics, a prelude to those sketched in Ginger and Fred and The Voice of the Moon. Anologically to what occurs in Ingmar Bergman's movies -- to which, sometimes in an instrumental manner, his movies have been compared -- Fellini's prova intends to direct itself elsewhere. He is interested in nosing around, digging into the before, primarily among the folds, but also in the after (a little like in Bergman's theater piece After the Rehearsal) in order to analyze the effects produced in the individual and the collective by the conductor and the orchestra, by the pretext of a performance to be tested, rehearsed, modified.

In the same way that he had tried out elsewhere, Fellini assumes the fictitious and discrete role of the interviewer, interested in showing what lies behind or ahead (of a personage, event or context). He is interested in the surroundings as well as the inside, being aware that the internal dimension is implicit, acquired. This, too, is the reason why he repeatedly shows the movie camera, the mode in which cinema images are made, because he has always known and felt -- and with him the spectator -- that the fascinating thing is not the what but the how. With regard to what there is of the political in the folie behind Amarcord, it would be equally reductive to trace back the political 'message' in Orchestra Rehearsal to the collapse of general order in the system, to the annulling of some rules of behavior, to the confusion and uncertainty of an epoch (for Italy, 1978 means the year of Aldo Moro's kidnapping and assassination by the Red Brigades, and the first government the Italian Communist Party voted for).

Fellini is an artistic thermometer, apparently superficial, but deep in substance: deep because, with the objective eye of the camera, he analyzes the small daily gestures of the musician-personages, and their behavior due to being part of a cohesive group, or what is supposed to be such, bound together by music; superficial because, in refusing didacticism, he places the observer both within and without the business, through the acting out of a senseless, provoking musical rehearsal.

An old Anatomy that holds the tombs of no less than three papas and seven bishops has been turned into a concerto hall. The old carpenter, who is putting the parts on the music stands, is explaining things to the television crew that has come to interview the orchestra and conductor. He talks about the different stages of transformation of the place, its marvelous acoustics and his own imminent pension.

The concert master arrives, a Piedmontese who wants to relate the history of the oratory. Then Miralles, the pianist, enters with two other musicians and, a few at a time, others arrive and begin taking their places in front of their music stands, arranging the chairs and tuning up their instruments.

There is a lot of the usual talk about everyday life, about sex, the characters you meet in heavy traffic, and, while the players are finishing their preparations, various things take place. Some are listening to the ball game on the radio and others, like the concert master, check the humidity on the barometer before starting to quarrel with another neurotic violinist. A few are still eating sandwiches: one trombonist finds a balloon in his instrument, which inflates as he blows and explodes... in short, a series of jokes and scenarios.

The orchestra manager comes in, as does the Sardinian union delegate, and officially announces the presence of the television crew [which not everyone is happy about]. Immediately after, two muffled knocks are heard from a distance, and Clara the hospital arrives.

A series of interviews begins with the musicians talking about their own instruments: the piano is the most difficult; a young, slightly eccentric, Tuscan lady shows off her flute and, like many of the others, compares her instrument to the human voice. There follow the trombone and the percussion instruments -- almost isolated because the violin and flute treat them with detachment and condensation -- the violoncello, the violin again, the basoon, the clarinet, the trumpet. Behind every instrument there is obviously not only the musician, but the human being as well, whose job it is to describe the qualities, defects and betrayals which each one experiences in his professional, artistic and personal relationship with his instrument.

During the preliminary doodling of the musicians, the union delegate expresses his own ideas, and while the small organizational details are being settled, the German conductor arrives, the preliminaries are ended and the sonority arrangements for the rehearsal begin.

The music is interrupted and repeated various times in order to correct rhythmic, intonation and dynamic errors. The rehearsal proceeds as best it can, while those who are not playing continue speaking, giggling and chatting, and some still listening to the radio.

The conductor is not at all happy with the situation -- he complains and throws away the score, while the musicians regard him with annoyance, sarcasm or mockery -- and wants to start again at a
different passage, introduced by the piano. It is necessary to begin again several times do cope, because the sound is not compact enough. The constant incitement of the conductor’s harsh words, emphasized by his German accent, finally causes some of the musicians to remove their jackets and shirts, or fan themselves and take a handkerchief to mop up the sweat induced by the hard work.

When the conductor asks for the clarinet to play a passage by himself, the situation, already tense, becomes really problematic: the clarinet player refuses, saying that the contract and the union agreement do not call for such services. Offensive remarks are made by both sides, which are interrupted by a new noise, distant and disturbing.

The horn is not present at the rehearsal which, meanwhile, is suspended for a double pause of twenty minutes, unilaterally called.

During this break, some of the players go to the bar, while others remain in their places, and the interviewed musicians comment on the conductor, the joys and pains of the profession, the value of music and the instruments, the obsessions and vices, vices and other extra-musical topics.

While the above insists on his absolutely determining role in the orchestra, the old copyist takes the television crew to the conductor, concluding his remarks with a criticism of modern methods compared to the rigor and respect of the past.

Now it is the conductor’s turn, concluding the series of interviews with a mixture of exultant memories about his beginnings and completely negative judgments about the state of music, the law and musicians.

As he is about to resume the podium, a blackout occurs, and the conductor wants to continue the rehearsal by candlelight. Looking into the hall, he discovers that a rebellion has broken out against him, and the supposedly dictatorial powers and arrogance that the musicians believe that he represents. His role, function and usefulness are contested, inlets thrown against the portraits of the great composers of the past, and the walls covered with insulting, offensive graffiti of
Under the roof of an ancient audiobahn decorated by the musicians' protest slogans, we find the closet, surrounded by a cloud of dust created by the scaffolding. Different passage, introduced by the piano. It is necessary to begin again several times de capo, because the sound is not compact enough. The constant incitement of the conductor's harsh words, emphasized by his German accent, finally causes some of the musicians to remove their jackets and shirts, or fan themselves and take a handkerchief to mop up the sweat induced by the hard work.

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Confusion and rebellion increase and, under the conductor's rule, imposture grows, the musicians give way to vendetta, sex under the piano, quarrels and vindictive slogans, stoppage. Meanwhile, plaster begins to fall from the ceiling and the drums beat the rhythms of the devastation in full sway.

Struck by a violist, the harpist, who was the only one not to give an interview, now expounds her poetical views on the harp — a devoted friend and not merely an instrument to play for a living. "Orchestra, Terror. Death to the conductor. " Orchestra. Terror. Anyone who plays is a traitor." These are the slogans that accompany the entrance of the "new conductor," a giant mezonome, disguised by many. Groups of dissenters form, verbal and physical violence take place, no holds barred, and then an elderly violinist, who until that moment had been silent and looking lost and dozed, pulls out a pistol and begins shooting into the air...

Silence ensues, except for the muffled noises that are now closer at hand. On the wall opposite the podium, deep cracks appear, and a steel ball, a very heavy wrecking ball, creates an enormous hole in the wall.

Everyone is paralyzed, pale with terror, speechless amidst the dense dust, and sorrow for the dead harpist buried under the rubble.

The conductor brings the situation back under control, restoring faith in music, in the work of each individual and the love for each one's instrument. The podium is restored to its place, the musicians all return more or less to their places, the rehearsal begins anew, while the dust settles and the faces of the musicians are more recognizable.

The music of the strings move some of the players, others smile as if in peace, recovered and fused in music... But the conductor begins...
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The rehearsal begins, and the slightly anonymous, depressed faces of the members of the orchestra register boredom, ill feeling and frustration with the "real world"...at a time like an orchestra conductor, to criticize, harshly, to mistrust the musicians with that Germanic Italian of his, hard and metallic. The picture fades and his sternness voice gives way to the music and the end titles.

Contrary to the norm, Nino Rota wrote the music for Orchestra Rehearsal before the filming to be used in playback: Gemelli allo Specchio, Piccolo Raro Melanconico, Piccolo Attivo e Grande Gogol - a quartet of anticipatory compositions, creating a crescendo alongside the events of the movie, and a 'prora' of its nightmare. However, it is not simply an anticipation, as it is flanked by Fellini's pre- vision of the great uncertainties of the end of the decade.

If art serves to interpret the past and to scrutinize the unknowable future, and even though the director concluded the interview in Costanzo Costantini's book by saying: "I foresew nothing. What happened had to happen, it was in the nature of things. We are all subject to a kind of fatal predetermination", it is still true that the presence of Fellini's genius in the art and society of the Twentieth Century, allows anyone who knows how to, and actually wants to do so, to read the cultural veils, to instinctively sense and reveal the changes. Fellini opened up views of things which it was not incumbent upon him to enter and gaze upon: the rot, the corruption and the stupid intolerance; nor was it his place to find solutions. Fellini was a director and with a movie, the most you can do is open an abyss in the concert halls – in the political headquarters? – with heavier sledgehammers than the enormous weight of obtuse collective behavior, foolish greediness and the imposition of the judgment and privileged position of the uncultured – those same uncultured whose hosts is insensitivity and incapacity for moral order and the understanding of the beautiful.

This describes that little movie that was made while awaiting financing for City of Women. A little movie in length (lasting hardly seventy minutes), but great in the nobility of its non-partisan conception of politics. A picture dedicated to the search for simple and collective harmony, which is reached for a moment towards the end after the self-destructive catastrophe, when the conductor manages to scratch up a patch of individual dignity and bring the agitated back to their senses. More shocked than satisfied for having unleashed their frustrations and their ignorable rage at the conductor and the podium (symbols of power without which art cannot exist), they return to their places and exert themselves to seek some justification and consolation, and approach the maestro to get his consensus, his responsibility and guidance. But it only lasts for a moment. As often happens in Fellini's work, here too an overly desperate or excessively 'happy ending' conclusion would be superficial, and easily irritating or exploitative.
(should we not say unrealistic?). The harmony is splintered again by generational and cultural immaturity. And the stereotype of the German 'commander' who uses his harsh, bellowing tongue, a messenger of disdain and poetry with that strident 'da capo', annuls the lovely moment of music's victory over the banal and fragile quotidian.

A wrestling match sustained for the whole of the film, from Nino Rota's music in the interruptions of the musicians, in their airs of self-sufficiency, in their disdain for musical quality and love of their instruments - a love which, on an individual level, does not come through here and there during the interviews, amidst frustrations, mediocrity, wrong choices and senile delusions. Some of the orchestra musicians play as if they were going to the office, attempt to open contractual negotiations and even let themselves be convinced to put their welfare in the hands of defectors who guarantee such a degree of conflict that will alienate them from their true nature as musicians. The refusal of the clarinet player to play for a third time not stipulated in the contract is perhaps one of the most evident examples: he was saved from the eternal mists of his home town on the Po thanks to his instrument; he is proud because the maestro told him: 'Bravo, young man. Finally I get to hear a clarinet with a beautiful sound', and yet he refuses to play a passage solo, particularly after the conductor had corrected a dramatic passage which he considered comical. Perhaps on a point like this, one could have established a different kind of contract, rather than bet on the introduction of a metronome to fictitiously settle all problems.

And so, Fellini's metaphor in Orchestra Rehearsal would no longer address only the feeling of a progressive collapse, announced by revealing signs that were ignored until it was too late even for short respite. "Maestro, but how did this happen? When?" some of the musicians, who do not know how to explain events to themselves, ask of the conductor. And their chief reacts to scornful vulgarity and the musical ignorance of the masses and the lack of ice in the champagne bucket by buying houses all around the world.
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So then, Fellini’s metaphorical Orchestra Rehearsal would no longer seem to need television to accentuate the chasm that, within a short time, the very language of television would become part of the orchestra musicians take advantage of television to speak ill of the conductor and the union delegate (who takes bribes under the counter), and the latter provokes a rebellion that leaves things as they are. Little does it matter that he will have the death of the poor harpist on his conscience, who had the premonitory dream of a man in her room (the enormous demolition ball in the oratory).

So then, Fellini’s fable in Orchestra Rehearsal will have to show other emblems of epoch-making rubble and of their looming apocalyptic pessimism, and, for this, one will only need to await the forthcoming movies. The general climate of Fellini’s cinema is worsening, the circus-ornery is getting uglier, with nastier, colder, more aloof faces. By pure luck, there still remain some modest moments of alienation and unessential realism: the invisible waving of the threads in the spider web when the trombones vibrate, the stolen gesture of comfort for the cellist’s homoroids, the former Greek professor in Amarcord and, most of all, the old copyst.

He speaks to the scores that play tricks on him and, with a leap, manages to get clear of the falling manor. Even if Fellini’s scenarios are turning ever darker in color, one will find it again in City of Women, in the guise of a memory magician, and in And the Ship Sails On as the singing teacher who makes music with water glasses, a trait d’union in the new and pessimistic discourse initiated by Casanova, the lover of women.

With a great metallic noise, a train enters a tunnel. Marcello, Snoparoz has dozed off in a compartment and, upon wakening, finds a lady wearing a bonnet and boots seated in front of him by the window. Struck by her charm, he meets her in the restaurant where, after an intense kiss, he immediately tries to have sex with her, but is frustrated by a sudden halt in open countryside. She gets off and Snoparozz, because of his sexual excitement, follows her into the fragile pine wood, and there, for the second time, the mysterious, headstrong woman leads him to believe that she consents, only to leave him with closed eyes leaning against a tree like a fool. Seeing her enter the Hotel Amaramore, he decides to continue following her, and he discovers that there is a crowded feminist congress being held there. Looking for his woman, Snoparozz rooms through the rooms full of girls, attends anti-masculine seminars, ironic shows about the exploitation of housewives, collective liberation rallies, and slides against usurpation by masculine power. He is observed with
great suspicion and hostility, made the butt of jokes, derided, threatened quite openly and forced to leave the rooms where the congress is being held.

Inexplicably, two girls help him find the elevator, and together they reach the gymnasium. Putting on roller-skates, he may manage to make a getaway, and after wobbling around a bit he rolls down the stairs and finds himself in the boiler room, where the robust boiler woman offers to take him to the train station on her motor scooter.

As they travel through the countryside, the girl stops at some greenhouses covered with plastic openings. On the pretext of wanting to get seeds for the stationmaster, the girl leads him inside to make love with him. Snorozza, who has no desire, is saved by the providential arrival of the boiler woman's elderly mother, who kicks the girl around for her uncontrollable lustfulness, which allows Snorozza to make for the station, again in the company of a girl.

He gets into a car full of punk girls, dazed by music and drugs and, when night comes, finds himself near an airport landing strip, where the group watches planes land, and one of the girls wants to shoot at them with a pistol. Snorozza leaves the punks, whose number has now grown so that they require three cars, which chase him threateningly.

He arrives at the home of Sante Katzone, an ex-schoolmate and symbol of masculine virility, who lives in a villa with three large dogs, and defends himself from the women with rifle fire. Sante asks Snorozza to stay for the party, held in celebration of the ten thousand women he has had so far. While waiting for the guests to arrive, Marcello discovers some erotic objects that Katzone keeps around to enhance his consideration for the phallic and, in particular, admires the gallery/cemetery of his female conquests, accompanied by a loud commentary on the most successful performances.

Before the extremely exhausting ceremony of extinguishing all the little candles (Katzone deals with those placed on high with a jet of pee), Snorozza runs into his wife Elena, who shamelessly exposes him for the crisis in their relationship and the passing of the years. In a trance, Katzone's last mistress stuffs coins and pearls into her pussy and, a little later, the policewomen break in: they have killed one of his beloved dogs and destroyed the laboratory where he was making his
The butt of jokes, derided, and left to rot in the attic, the girl waits for the elevator to arrive. Together they rush to the train, into the train, and then into the cinema. Inside, the girl sits at the back, watching the movie and waiting for the moment to pass. At the cinema, the girl waits for the moment to pass, and then, slowly, she begins to move. The movie ends, and she is left alone in the dark, waiting for the moment to pass. At home, she waits for the moment to pass, and then she begins to move. The moment passes, and she is left alone in the dark, waiting for the moment to pass. And so it goes, over and over again, the moment passing, and the girl waiting for the moment to pass.
The dynamics of memory, of an infinitile and adolescent amarcord, a little curious and more vague in its anxiety. Like a tireless, never-ending wave, it possesses a slow-motion inner rhythm (the unnatural pace of the dream and the story), and an external rhythm that depends upon other things (the rhythmic language of cinema, the energy of social or vitalistic moments). And, of course, it is an incoherent, wave-vague movie, cold deep inside (in the gallery/cemetery of women/tombs) and hot on the surface of events (the train, the feminist congress, the Katzone episode, the slide).

Naturally, the wave does not exclude the dream, on the contrary, it exalts it, presents more symbols to be elaborated, invented, imagined, explored. All of these are aspects of which, as we know, Fellini’s pictures have always completely revolved. And yet, in City of Women, the outcome is, in some ways, much more familiar than usual, encountered if not exhausted in the earlier works. In the female characters – completed in the social chronicles and history by the ‘feminist’ ones – as in the character of Marcello/Snapcraz/Fellini, and his other half, Katzme, or the internal dramatic settings, metaphorical, congenial to the idea of swamps, of labyrinths, of aspirations to sinking and thus to its opposite, flight: in all of this, one can find the sense of the movie. If there is a staircase, or else a wave – and even in City of Women there are several – one can try to go up, stride over it, go down, fall, drown, sink into it. To laugh grotesquely under the scourge of dreams when one is low is a sublimation – completed by illusion – of elevation of penetration (the tunnel) and the woman on the train), of the revitalisation of the male, of what there is between earth and heaven, man and woman, down and the anxiety of passing time. The final slide completes the transformation of the incoherence of the wave: only immutable on the surface, it is actually Fellini’s creative shuttlecock which insist on the dream dimension.

Attempts to understand the other half of oneself and the female universe having turned out to be sterile or obsolete, the ‘old Snapcraz’ – and, with him, the sixty-year-old director who, after the fall of Orchestra Rehearsal, is no
Marcello/napoleone/fellini, and his other half, katzine, or the internal dramatic settings, metaphorical, congenital to the idea of swamps, of labyrinths, of aspirations to sinking and thus to its opposite, flight in all of this, one can find the sense of the movie. if there is a stairway, or else a wave - and even in city of women there are several - one can try to go up, stride over it, go down, fall, drown, sink into it. to laugh grotesquely under the scum of dreams when one is low is a sublimation - completed by illusion - of elevation, of penetration (the tunnel and the woman on the train), of the reviviscence of the male, of what there is between earth and heaven, man and woman, down and the anxiety of passing time. the final slide completes the transformation of the incoherence of the wave: only immutable on the surface, it is actually fellini's creative shuttlecock which insists on the dream dimension.

attempts to understand the other half of oneself and the female universe having turned out to be sterile or obsolete, the 'old napoleone' - and, with him, the sixty-year-old director who, after the fable of orchestra rehearsal, is no
longer on the same wavelength as the 'in crowd' (the young punks, music, feminism) — once more takes refuge in the
maternal, reassuring circus of thought, of memory, of time past. Among the déjá vu parade of women: a hausfrau from
Kremnica (one imagines one can smell freshly washed
laundry, together with the sweetly potato-peel odour so often
recalled by Fellini); an excited, fetching fish seller; one of the
nurses from the spa in Light and a Half; and the blonde
motorcycle riders. So then, we have once again the circus
and popular shows, the soubrette in a bikini who is a kind
of anticipation of Ginger and Fred and, to close, the balloon,
for a moment a Woman/Madonna who might give him the
illusion of having overcome the macho complex of Santo
Katazne and of forgetting the movies.

But it is not possible. The dream wakes the dreamer of the
moment of the fall — has the anxiety of Gido returned in the
opening of Light and a Half — and the wave, with its
rhythmic, magnetic, erotic flow (the boiler woman, the
slide; the balloon), replaces the manifestations of the
incongruous political context, moves it away and returns to
the opening dream image — the lucid intoxication of the
cinema. In the train compartment, Snaporaz sees the dream
take on the recognisable contours of reality: his wife
instead of the mysterious woman (she wears her buny), his
eyelashes which had fallen and lost one lens in the dream
adventure, the two seat-bettes sitting in the vacant seats.
The locks exchanged are almost of astute complicity for a
dream. Which Snaporaz, happy and euphoric, prepares to
rejoin in reality in the darkness of the tunnel, a block hole
where one glimpses a little light (which anticipates the
dawning light of the moving reflections in The Voice of the
Moon).

Rather like the end of Hitchcock's North by Northwest,
which makes the ascendancy in the metaphor for the
end of the action and the marriage to be consummated,
the circle of City of Women is the last of Fellini's innumerable
crescendos "into the body of woman". Keitel, the first to use
the Hitchcock ending, has noted that the Italian director
"does not succeed in being equally consolatory. This is not
entirely true; since consolation would have given
continuance to the flight of the subconscious and of eros
over the blessed fields of Fellini's nocturnal imagination.
The poet Andrea Zanzotto, Fellini's friend and amused
collaborator on some previous occasions, recalls in the
introductory pages to the text of the movie that "walking
around in the city of women, everyone, even while noticing
that they had been placed in the center of a spinning top
moved by a delicate rod, finally feels, after the appearance
of a balloon destined to disintegrate, that they have gone
into a free fall that may be true liberty."

But if Fellini the dream magician were as consolatory as
Hitchcock the thrill magician, it would be taken as
complementary to his refusal to flirt with the public in a
film where masculine psychosomatic incidences into the
mysterious sphere of the feminine come into play, and the
variations of a statistical age that make one see things in a
different, darker light. This is also due to events such as the
sudden deaths of Nino Rota, of his friend and prefect
Francesca, and of Offre Monni, the portrait of Santo
Katazne. And yet, in spite of all this, as always with Fellini,
the dream of the imagination is what generates cinema.
Furthermore, one should not forget that, for Fellini, Jung's
words about the female image are totally valid: a man
cannot know her because he projects onto her the dark and
unknown side of himself (and so if that dark side is
unknown, how can woman be known?). Just as there is no
difference in the comparison between the cinema and
women, inasmuch as "in the alternation of light and dark,
of images which appear and disappear, the cinema is itself
woman. As in the maternal womb, one sits still and focused
at the cinema, immersed in darkness, waiting for life to be
given to you from the screen... One ought to visit the
cinema in the innocent condition of a fetus... My movie is
the after dinner gabbering of someone who is slightly drunk.
It is a fairy tale about the women of today and yesterday, as
told by a man who cannot know women because they are
inside of him: like Little Red Riding Hood lost in the woods.
It is a dream, and it speaks the symbolic language of
dreams. It would please me if one could watch it without
being blinded by the temptation to understand: there is
nothing to understand."

And with this declaration, we can, for now, take leave of
City of Women, because a gust of that strong wind that
Snaporaz felt strike him while going down the slide, will
gradually lift us to The Voice of the Moon, the film-testament of
listening as opposed to understanding. "Give to those who
try to understand", the poet of images continues to implore.
Contemporary mediocrity could, at this point, agree with
him, but perhaps it still needs some other ineffable, deadly
support to convince itself of this. And Fellini is a director
who is very attentive and helpful to everyone, as patience is
certainly one of his best qualities. He will wait. He will wait
until his other films of the Eighties get through, the last
decade of his very fertile productive life.

"Making a movie today is like taking off in a plane
without knowing where, how and when you are going to
land. Since the purpose, route and end of the trip are
unknown, there is nothing left but to tell about the trip for
its own sake." And this will be And the Ship Sails On. Between
City of Women and the preparation of this movie, more than
three very long, inactive years pass by, in which Fellini lives
through and comments on what he had portrayed in
as the ‘in crowd’ (the young more takes refuge in the thought of memory, of time, of women: a housemaid from an smell freshly washed potato peel odour so often exciting fish seller; one of the La Habi and the blonde novel once again the circus a bikini who is a kind and, close, the balloon, woman who might give him the same complex of Sante’s moves. A man wakes the dreamer at the anxiety of Gido returned in the and the wave, with its new the boiler woman, the same manifestations of the moves it away and returns to the lucid intoxication of the moment. Snaporaz sees the dream portraits of reality: his wife (she wears her busby), his son lost one lens in the dream sitting in the vacant seat. The nature or complicity for a happy and languid, prepares of the tunnel, a blank hole (which anticipates the reflections in The Voice of the

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“Making a movie today is like taking off in a plane without knowing where, how and when you are going to land. Since the purpose, route and end of the trip are unknown, there is nothing left but to tell about the trip for its own sake.” And this will be And the Ship Sails On. Between City of Women and the preparation of this movie, more than three very long, inactive years pass by, in which Fellini lives through and comments on what he had portrayed in
Orchestra Rehearsal - that is, collapses, modifications and a sort of inevitable lack of preparation, both personal and generational. The recognized master of international cinema has (the usual) difficulties in making a movie, finding the right producers and coming to terms with them. In the end, he begins to find himself in the condition of someone who had given a lot and is now left to one side - regally - a little in the shade, by himself. The one exception is receiving the Golden Lion for his career at the 1985 Venice Festival, a prize that its beneficiaries generally consider to be midway between a golden handshake and an artistic gravestone. So then, during these three years, between the ironic, the poisonous and the melancholy, Fellini recalls himself as "standing at the street corner to watch how the world and the movies were changing. If you place yourself at the street corner, you meet everyone: the tramp, the thief, the prophet, the assassin, the mystic, the apocalyptic preacher, the bankrupt, the suicide. It is the only way of knowing how the world is changing, what direction things are taking. Thus, as I was standing at the street corner, I understood that movies were changing, that it was no longer what I used to be, had nothing to do with pictures as we used to make them, while all around I heard the drumbeats of the invaders, the Attilas, the Genghis Khans, the Star Wars, the electronic directors, who shoot for the maximum while demanding the minimum. To satisfy a spectator molded by television, the movies must make as much noise as possible: once the firecracker explodes, it no longer exists, just like fireworks. And if bitterness for the missing workplaces - the studios of Cinecittà - synthesizes with "where churches stood, they now open brothels", one must certainly not think of those constructed from his images, but rather of the idea that the Great Demolition of the Imagination was working at full speed with tremendous damage. This pessimism, while keeping him from falling into the trap of making a movie against the current, is a contradictory fluid which, capably and laboriously, Fellini transforms into a creative proposal. And the Ship Sails On (1983) expresses an evident nostalgia, since metaphorically the funeral that is being celebrated in the memory of the singer is also that of the (old) cinema, an art that is disappearing or already gone, a traditional author's way of turning images into a narrative, and not vice versa, an artistic philosophy of which Federico Fellini had been one of the great voices.