



O'Rawe, C. (2021). Italian Neorealism and the 'Woman's Film': Selznick, De Sica, and Stazione Termini. *Screen*, 61(4), 505-524. <https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/hjaa050>

Peer reviewed version

Link to published version (if available):
[10.1093/screen/hjaa050](https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/hjaa050)

[Link to publication record in Explore Bristol Research](#)
PDF-document

This is the author accepted manuscript (AAM). The final published version (version of record) is available online via Oxford University Press at <https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/hjaa050> . Please refer to any applicable terms of use of the publisher.

University of Bristol - Explore Bristol Research

General rights

This document is made available in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite only the published version using the reference above. Full terms of use are available: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-policy/pure/user-guides/ebr-terms/>

Italian Neorealism and the ‘Woman’s Film’: Selznick, De Sica, and *Stazione Termini*

As a screenwriter, I don’t consider *Stazione Termini* a document of my neorealist career, because the Italian-American co-production watered down whatever neorealist seed there was in it (the examination of a very restricted space and time).

Cesare Zavattini, ‘A Thesis on Neorealism’¹

Introduction

The above quotation, from Cesare Zavattini, theoretician of neorealism and screenwriter on Vittorio De Sica’s acclaimed films, can usefully be read alongside a memo sent by the American producer David O. Selznick to De Sica, after the filming of De Sica’s *Stazione Termini/Terminal Station* in 1953, a film co-produced by Selznick and starring Montgomery Clift and Selznick’s wife, Jennifer Jones: in the memo Selznick lamented the ‘distortion of Jennifer’s face and figure into a monstrosity because of what I regarded and still regard, as the almost irrational insistence upon giving superior consideration to photography of buildings’.²

Stazione Termini is a film which is actually two films: based on an original screenplay by Zavattini, and shot on location in Rome’s Termini station, the film was co-produced by Selznick and Vittorio De Sica’s production company. It was heavily cut by Selznick and released in the US in 1954 under the title *Indiscretion of an American Wife*; Italian critics generally regard it as anomalous in the context of De Sica’s career and in the Italian neorealist canon, coming as it does after neorealist classics such as *Sciuscià/Shoeshine* (1946), *Ladri di biciclette/Bicycle Thieves* (1948), *Miracolo a Milano/Miracle in Milan* (1950), and *Umberto D.* (1952). As we will see, it is not even regarded by some critics as a

‘De Sica film’ because of the compromises involved in its production and distribution and the involvement of Hollywood stars and crew. The tension indicated in the statement quoted above, between the cinematic focus on the star’s face in close-up, and the material environment shot in deep focus, highlights the competing conceptions of cinema on the parts of both De Sica and Selznick, and the extraordinary emphasis Selznick placed on the close-up as a way of safeguarding the star image of Jones. At the same time, Zavattini’s observation of a neorealist idea that is betrayed or diluted in the film is significant, as it invokes the importance of the film’s spatial representation, manifest in its ‘clash’ of cinematographic practices.

However, investigating the terms of the film’s supposed ‘failure’ is instructive: a close analysis of its production history reveals the specific sites of conflict between Selznick and De Sica. Going beyond accounts of the film that read it in terms of an opposition between the artistic purity of Italian neorealism and the commercialism of Hollywood, we can understand how the film raises a more complex set of questions relating to gender, stardom, and genre, which function in different ways in different national cinematic contexts. This article focuses primarily on the way that the generic tensions of the film, between neo-realism and the Hollywood ‘woman’s film’, are embodied in the cinematography and *mise-en-scène*; it examines the critical and visual association of public space in the film with neorealist aesthetics, and its problematic accommodation of the private and domestic space, associated with melodrama and the woman’s film.

The article argues that by focusing on one specific area of the film’s production in which the conflict between De Sica and Selznick was negotiated, cinematography (and in particular the close-ups of Selznick’s wife, Jennifer Jones, for which he hired a replacement cameraman), it is possible to go beyond a simple polar opposition between ‘neorealism’ and ‘Hollywood’, to a more complex interrogation of the value of the female star and of the

‘woman’s film’ in post-war Italy and Hollywood. Through examination of the disputes over cinematography, and over close-ups in particular, laid out in the voluminous memos written by Selznick, I suggest that the battle for control of the film between De Sica and Selznick is ultimately a struggle over the imbrication of space, stars and gender. This battle is also made visible in the short musical film that Selznick made to accompany *Indiscretion*’s American release. Beyond a critical narrative of compromise, *Stazione Termini/Indiscretion*, a ‘lost film [...] fallen out of time’, is a film which, in asking how we can tell a woman’s story in a neorealist style, ultimately marks out some of the limitations and contradictions of the neorealist project itself, and its inability to come to terms with the woman’s film, a genre alien to Italian cinema.³

Selznick and Italian Cinema: the Background

The perceived polarity between American and Italian filmmaking underpins much of the critical discourse around the film in both the US and Italy, and is synthesized in David Thomson’s quote in his Selznick biography: ‘[Selznick] wanted art, prestige, Continental sophistication; the Italians wanted American money, big stars, and a chance of getting to Hollywood.’⁴ By the time he made *Stazione Termini*, De Sica’s reputation as one of the great directors of neorealism (along with Roberto Rossellini and Luchino Visconti) had been secured via Academy Awards for *Shoeshine* and *Bicycle Thieves*. De Sica’s collaborations with screenwriter Cesare Zavattini were informed by Zavattini’s theorization of neorealist practice as radically anti-Hollywood and anti-star: ‘the audience should be able to liberate itself from the inferiority complex caused by the mythic idea of the “star”’.⁵ Despite the fairly widespread use of professional actors and stars within Italian neorealist filmmaking, the ‘amalgam’ of stars and non-actors, and the broad rejection of stardom and of the professional

actor have become part of the supposed precepts of neorealism, and underpin what criticism there is on this collaboration.⁶

The backstory between Selznick and De Sica confirms these complex entanglements around stardom: Selznick, impressed by Italian neorealist films such as *Roma città aperta/Rome Open City* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945), *Paisà/Paisan* (Rossellini, 1946), and *Shoeshine*, which had achieved critical success in the USA (and box-office success on the arthouse circuit), was interested in bringing De Sica to Hollywood, and proposed to him in 1947 an English-language version of *Bicycle Thieves*. As is well known, Selznick wanted the film to feature not non-professionals but Hollywood stars, proposing first Cary Grant, then a series of other leading men including Danny Kaye, Edward G. Robinson, and Bing Crosby.⁷ De Sica's objection to this is equally well known, and he cast in the leading role factory worker Lamberto Maggiorani (although he actually suggested Henry Fonda if an American actor were absolutely necessary).⁸ The project (plus Selznick's attempt to secure a distribution deal for the film) fell through, and a similar attempted distribution arrangement with Rossellini foundered in 1949. It is clear that in this period Selznick was attracted by the prestige of these European exports: 'I continue to hear that *Bicycle Thief* is one of the best films ever made in Europe'. He argued that failure to tie up a distribution deal for it was 'losing us multiple opportunities for distribution fees and product we need here badly plus prestige on the continent'.⁹

Selznick's interest in European co-production is evidenced by his earlier venture into this field via a co-production agreement with Alexander Korda, which realized *The Third Man* (Carol Reed, 1949) and *Gone to Earth* (Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, 1950), the latter of which starred Jennifer Jones.¹⁰ Selznick's acknowledgement of the necessity of 'a world viewpoint in the making of Hollywood films' was evident in his attempt to make Italian actress Alida Valli a Hollywood star when he signed her in 1946.¹¹ It was also

informed by his relationship with Roberto Rossellini, forged partly through Rossellini's partnership with Selznick's former star Ingrid Bergman, and partly through his admiration of Rossellini's post-war neorealist films. Despite Selznick's reservations about Bergman's role in Rossellini's *Stromboli* (1950), in which she acted with non-professionals,¹² and the damage that her extra-marital relationship with Rossellini caused to her star image in the US, he was still attracted to the critical acclaim that Italian neorealism had acquired in the US.¹³

Bergman was an important example of the female Hollywood star whose persona was renegotiated through working with an Italian neorealist director: as Ora Gelley notes, *Stromboli* 'stages [...] an encounter [...] between two seemingly incommensurable cinematic languages – that of the classical Hollywood style (and specifically, the female star's figuration in classical Hollywood) and that of neorealism'.¹⁴ However, while Gelley has argued that 'only in *Stromboli* could the revolutionary potential of Bergman's star persona' be revealed, through Rossellini's modernist framing of her, this was not what Selznick wanted for Jones, whose star image he carefully curated.¹⁵ Rossellini had reconfigured Bergman's image through an alignment with non-professionals and an idiosyncratic use of the close-up, which deliberately juxtaposed her with the harsh island landscape in *Stromboli*; Selznick, meanwhile, wanted the Italian backdrop and aura of seriousness bestowed by neorealism, but ultimately in a form that would both enhance Jones' 'intense emotionality', and satisfy her desire for prestige projects, as well as his own.¹⁶

Italian cinema had been key to the development of the post-war arthouse boom in the United States.¹⁷ The success of films such as *Rome Open City* and *Bicycle Thieves* depended, significantly, upon both the cultural capital they offered to the urban intelligentsia, and the 'exploitation thrills' they contained: they were often marketed for their sexual content and the 'natural' sexiness of female stars such as Silvana Mangano, star of *Riso amaro/Bitter Rice* (De Santis, 1949), who became a sensation when the film was released in the USA.¹⁸ Female

sexuality and star appeal were thus imbricated in the relationship that the US already had with Italian neorealism and its prestige.

Europe for Selznick represented not only a source and destination of cultural capital, but a site of economic benefit: in the post-war period, Europe operated as a profitable location for runaway productions, saving costs, and allowing for studios' blocked profits to be spent overseas.¹⁹ With the success of *Quo Vadis?* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1951), produced in Rome by MGM, the city became known as 'Hollywood on the Tiber', attracting producers, directors, and stars for the next ten years.²⁰ But Rome, and Italy, were also, in this precise moment, a filmic site of romantic fantasy and adventure, through the success of films such as *Roman Holiday* (William Wyler, 1953) and *Three Coins in the Fountain* (Jean Negulesco, 1954). This cycle of films, which also included *September Affair* (William Dieterle, 1950), set mainly in Florence, and *Summertime* (David Lean, 1955), set in Venice, established 'a set of narrative assumptions about Europe [...] creating an imaginary geography of Europe as an amorous playground'.²¹ These narratives of female (mainly) American travellers to Italy function both to code it as a destination for 'hetero-touristic experience'²² and to reflect the rise of American tourism to western Europe as part of a programme of consumer diplomacy to fight the Cold War.²³ As Carolyn Anderson notes, women represented half of the American tourists flying to Europe,²⁴ and this growing market, like the female protagonist of *Stazione Termini*, was the audience for film's modelling of 'second-order consumption' of Europe, via romance.²⁵

Stazione/Indiscretion stars Jones as a Philadelphia housewife, Mary, who has fallen in love with Italian professor Giovanni (Clift) on a trip to visit her sister in Rome, and who is now returning to the States. The film's playing time covers the last meeting of the lovers at Rome's Termini station, and Giovanni's desperate (and doomed) attempts to convince Mary to abandon her husband and child and stay with him in Italy.²⁶ The focus on the station

environment endures throughout the film: in the midst of the booming production of ‘Hollywood on the Tiber’, it is interesting to note that Selznick was one of the few American producers to engage with neorealism in Italy, rather than using Rome as an epic space or space of fantasy, avoiding either the grandiose scale of *Quo Vadis?* or the tourist gaze of *Roman Holiday*.

‘Two Ways of Understanding Cinema’: Neorealism, Melodrama, and the Woman’s Film

Stazione Termini has been regarded with puzzlement by Italian critics: it has been described as ‘a surrender’ or ‘a compromise’ with Hollywood values, a ‘fracture’ in De Sica’s production, or a ‘turning point’ marking the transition from De Sica’s neo-realism proper to his later comic filmmaking.²⁷ The film has been widely seen as a clash between competing cinematographic practices or competing conceptions of cinema: a ‘compromise between two ways of conceptualizing cinema: between Italian realism and Hollywood escapism’,²⁸ and ‘a compromise between two different mentalities and ways of thinking of cinema’.²⁹

The critical language often emphasizes the film’s confused nature: Gian Piero Brunetta calls it ‘a hybrid film’,³⁰ and Tino Ranieri talks of the De Sica/Selznick coupling as a ‘frightening pairing’.³¹ Forgacs and Gundle term it ‘something of a hodge-podge’,³² while Gundle calls it a ‘hapless compromise between Hollywood spectacle and Italian neo-realism’.³³ Significantly, many critics exclude the film altogether from overviews of De Sica’s *oeuvre*, while Brunetta pronounces that it does not bear the director’s signature.³⁴ De Sica himself described it as a ‘pause’ or respite from his serious output;³⁵ in a similar vein, leading Marxist critic Guido Aristarco more severely termed the film a ‘holiday’ from the politically committed neorealist cinema that De Sica should have been making after *Umberto*

D.³⁶ De Sica did in fact go on to make *Il tetto/The Roof* (1955), using non-professional actors shot on location.

Kogonada, in his video essay on the film, continues the clash discourse, referring to a ‘clash of sensibilities so great’ and ‘two worlds of cinema’ that meet. Central to this opposition is a reification of neorealism, exemplified by his voice-over statement: ‘To ask “what is neorealism?” is to ask “what is cinema?”’³⁷ The tautologous dichotomy that reifies and simplifies both ‘Hollywood’ and ‘neorealism’, however, obscures neorealism’s complexities, contradictions and impurities, as well as Selznick’s anomalous status as a ‘creative auteur’, who intervened intensely in all his productions. Selznick’s position as a ‘creative producer’, as an auteur, or as he referred to himself to De Sica, as a ‘film creator’, functioned to justify his incessant meddling in his productions;³⁸ such positioning calls into question the limits of the director’s authorial power, and the limits of the producer’s creative agency.³⁹ In addition, Selznick’s career as a ‘semi-independent’ producer complicates the notion of him as standing unproblematically for Hollywood in the cultural imaginary.⁴⁰

It might be more useful instead to consider the film as marking out the limitations and contradictions of the neorealist project itself. 1953, in fact, was the year in which the perceived crisis or ‘involution’ of neorealism preoccupied Italian critics on the left; this involution was due to multiple factors, such as the expansion of the Italian film industry, its development of a star system and the emergence of popular female stars such as Sophia Loren and Gina Lollobrigida, who featured in very popular Italian melodramas and iscomedies.⁴¹ The crisis was also precipitated by changing political conditions in Italy, and attacks by the centre-right government on neorealist filmmaking.⁴² *Stazione Termini* became known among neorealism’s left-wing defenders partly as an emblem of that crisis or involution.⁴³

The critical topos of the foundational status of neorealism for post-war Italian cinema is a much-repeated one, despite ongoing attempts to contest the myth of a rupture between neorealism and cinema under fascism.⁴⁴ Millicent Marcus influentially argued that neorealism was ‘the *via maestra* of Italian film [...] the point of departure for all serious cinematic post-war practice’.⁴⁵ This critical obsession with neorealism, however, has obscured the complexity of Italian cinema’s engagement with other modes such as melodrama, and, as we shall see, its lack of engagement with the woman’s film.

In fact, since the 1970s, Italian critics have attempted to problematize the privileged status of neorealism, its coherence, and its status as Italian ‘national’ cinema.⁴⁶ Yet it is clear that neorealism still possesses an enduring critical attraction, whether as foundational story or simply in terms of the body of renowned films associated with it.⁴⁷ In addition, the tendency to construct chronological narratives about the careers of individual auteur figures of so-called “‘high” neorealism’⁴⁸ represents a kind of polarized film history, in which authorial art cinema and popular production have often been, until quite recently, fairly rigidly segregated in English-language criticism.⁴⁹ The critical priority of neorealism (and of its undisputed auteurs) thanks partly to its consolidation in France, firstly by André Bazin, and later by Gilles Deleuze, has remained relatively unchallenged.⁵⁰

Moreover, I would argue that Bazin’s words in relation to neorealist films, that ‘unfortunately the demon of melodrama that Italian filmmakers seem incapable of exorcising takes over every so often, thus imposing a dramatic necessity on strictly foreseeable events’, have had the effect of creating an opposition between realism and melodrama, which obscures their deep imbrication in the period.⁵¹ Reconsidering the opposition between these two filmic modes allows us to recognize, as Louis Bayman argues, the ‘centrality of melodrama to post-war Italian cinema’.⁵² These more complex rethinkings of neorealism,

(which include uncovering its absorption of Hollywood and American influence),⁵³ reveal it to be a slippery critical construction, and a discursive category, rather than a ‘movement’.⁵⁴

Although the critical commonplace of neorealist cinema as characterized by location shooting has been strongly challenged in recent years, with critics recognizing the hybrid nature of much shooting (which often used both real locations and studio sets), cityscapes and rural landscapes have been extensively discussed as conventional elements of neorealist *mise-en-scène*.⁵⁵ Giuseppe De Santis’s 1941 essay, ‘Towards an Italian Landscape’, which argued for a new type of cinematic relation between man and the material environment, whether that be the house, the street or the countryside, was fundamental to the centrality in neorealism of the urban or rural setting as a place of human encounter.⁵⁶ The interaction of human beings in public spaces in neo-realism also formed part of Zavattini’s poetics of a ‘cinema of encounter’;⁵⁷ this human(ist) experience was taken up most notably by André Bazin in 1948:

the actors will take care never to disassociate their performance from the décor or from the performance of their fellow actors. [...] That is why Italian film makers alone know how to shoot successful scenes in buses, trucks or trains, namely because these scenes combine to create a special density within the framework of which they know how to portray an action without separating it from its material context [...]. The subtlety and suppleness of movement within these cluttered spaces, the naturalness of the behaviour of everyone in the shooting area, makes of these scenes supreme bravura moments of the Italian cinema.⁵⁸

Bazin’s naturalization of the relationship between Italians and their material habitat has fed into a widespread understanding of neorealism as a specifically urban genre. The ‘embodied city’ of neorealism was also theorized by Zavattini, whose theory of ‘*pedinamento*’ or ‘shadowing’ involved following the ordinary man on the street in order to observe his daily experiences *in loco* and register the ‘real duration of man’s pain and his daily presence, not a metaphysical man, but the man we meet on the street corner’.⁵⁹

Zavattini's 'materialist embracing of the real'⁶⁰ was picking up on earlier ideas, such as that of De Santis, mentioned earlier, as well as Luchino Visconti in his 1943 essay 'Anthropomorphic Cinema', which advocated for a filmmaking practice that might imbricate the non-professional, with his 'living presence' and 'weight of being human' within the 'bare mise-en-scene'.⁶¹ The street as the place of the accidental and contingent is thus intimately tied to the poetics of the non-professional actor: the street becomes the semi-mythical site of the encounter with the non-professional – the place where s/he is often spotted and discovered - and enables, in theory at least, the end of the professional actor.⁶²

The gendering of Zavattini's theory – focused as it is on 'man' - is not accidental: the 'universal' address of neorealism, with its focus on the institutional and the national, left little discursive space for the specific experience of women.⁶³ The 'real duration of suffering' that Zavattini mentions is caused in neorealist films by the socio-political and economic conditions of Italy's difficult postwar; romance and its torments are rather absent.⁶⁴ Despite the contribution of a female screenwriter, Suso Cecchi D'Amico, to some of the neorealist films, and of course the involvement of female stars in several neorealist films, from Clara Calamai in Visconti's *Ossessione/Obsession* (1943) to Anna Magnani in *Rome Open City*, a gendered viewpoint was generally marginalized by hegemonic left-wing Italian criticism, which also showed a distaste for melodrama. It is no coincidence, perhaps, that *Ossession*, along with *Bitter Rice*, and the Magnani vehicle *L'Onorevole Angelina/Angelina* (Luigi Zampa, 1947), have a somewhat contested status with regard to the critical canon of 'high neorealism'.⁶⁵

In particular, the 'woman's film', in the sense that classical readings of it have offered in Hollywood cinema, with a focus on female protagonists, female point-of-view, and, crucially, a female address, did not exist in Italian cinema, due to Italy's less standardized, more flexible genre system.⁶⁶ The woman's film's female authorship, marketing and

audience work to embed it in a ‘circuit of female discourse by and for women’.⁶⁷ This circuit of female discourse was decidedly lacking in Italy. Hipkins’ argument that neorealism represents a ‘turning away from women’ and a putative female audience is in tune with Robert Rushing’s claim that ‘women and girls are all treated with suspicion, if not outright hostility, in De Sica and Zavattini’s films’.⁶⁸ By the late 1940s, in addition, the Italian cinema audience had become predominantly male, consolidating this lack of a female address.⁶⁹

The many popular post-war Italian films that did centre women’s experiences in melodramatic style were often dismissed and marginalized. However, even these films, such as the extremely popular Raffaello Matarazzo-directed series of weepies, are addressed to a national-popular audience, rather than a female one.⁷⁰ Significantly, one mention of *Stazione Termini*, in a survey of provincial audiences’ tastes, notes that the spectators would have liked it to be more in the Matarazzo style, and that only the local girls were moved by the film.⁷¹ Therefore we can note that while melodrama as a fundamental mode, in Christine Gledhill’s terms, which aims to ‘render everyday life morally legible’, is omnipresent in postwar Italian cinema, both in ‘neorealist’ films, and in popular weepies, the woman’s film as a category is distinctly absent.⁷² The polemic around *Stazione Termini/Indiscretion* reveals how the negotiation of romance and romantic suffering around women’s place in the world is seen as problematic to neorealism, but central to the woman’s film, so dear to Selznick, who declared that:

on the pictures I have personally produced, I have been much more mindful of women’s reactions than of men’s. [...] Emotional love stories are the things I like best to make; I am aware that a big women’s picture is inevitably a success since women determine the far greater proportion of ticket buying’.⁷³

Cinematography, and the Female Star

Selznick, as was his habit, supervised the film shoot very closely. Unlike Rossellini's use of Bergman, where proximity to non-professionals and the presentation of Bergman as an alien figure in the mise-en-scène would destroy and radically reconfigure her star image, Selznick's constant aim was the protection of his wife's image. The site of confrontation was primarily, but not exclusively, the close-ups shot by De Sica's cinematographer, G.R. Aldo, in line with Selznick's longstanding view of the cinematographer as a 'visual caretaker'.⁷⁴

Aldo was one of the leading cinematographers of post-war Italy: he had worked with De Sica on *Miracle in Milan* (1950) and *Umberto D.*, and with Visconti on 1948's *La terra trema/The Earth Trembles* (as well as with Orson Welles on his *Othello* (1951)). Having trained in France with Carné and L'Herbier, he was celebrated for his use of chiaroscuro, apparently modelled on Caravaggio's paintings, and was also compared by Italian critics to Eduard Tisse, Eisenstein's cinematographer.⁷⁵ Aldo's painterly compositions aimed to emphasize the space of Termini Station through depth of focus and a judicious play of light and shadow: as critic Luigi Chiarini notes, 'he has managed to highlight the qualities of space and dimension, generating depth through a careful use of light and shade, and creating a skilful relationship between the building and the human figures'.⁷⁶

Aldo's preference for lighting shots was for key and backlighting only, eschewing fill lighting. Thus he created stark shots, using only one lens, without diffused lighting, an effect praised by Italian critics, but detested by Selznick when he saw the rushes.⁷⁷ Selznick began to send increasingly anguished memos, first expressing concern about Aldo on 21 October:

Despite our shortage of money, despite the awful difficulties of working all night every night in this freezing cold station, with the result that everyone has colds and some of us are probably going to get pneumonia, nothing at all is being permitted by De Sica to interfere with getting the last ounce of quality, and even as to photography. He and everyone else realizes that Aldo, the cameraman, who is reputed to be the best on the continent, is as slow as molasses, probably the slowest cameraman I have ever

seen, yet De Sica is extremely patient, having used Aldo on his past pictures, and insists that the quality is worth it, and certainly I am not going to argue.⁷⁸

Despite this praise, concern about the extent of long shots featuring the station interior had already crept in: ‘There is not a single shot in the picture that doesn’t have the background of the station that just wouldn’t be tolerated by a Hollywood production department because of the cost’.

The anxiety about the quality of the cinematography, and the excessive focus on the background, continued in a memo to assistant producer Marcello Girosi:

You are spending a great deal of money lighting up things that do not even appear on the screen – very distant windows and heaven knows what else. I greatly appreciate the attempts to get first-class photography [...] but I just cannot figure out how it is even common sense to spend hours and a large amount of money lighting up some distant window, in some cases literally an eighth of a mile away from the camera.⁷⁹

By 11 November, Selznick’s anxieties about Aldo’s work were at fever pitch and focused on the way that photography of Jones (and Clift) was allegedly being compromised by Aldo’s technique:

their performances are being inhibited by the ridiculous procedures of Aldo and his insisting that they be held in a vise [*sic*], as though they were making passport photos instead of giving performances. In my opinion, they are being photographed horribly. In my opinion they are being sacrificed to the lighting of buildings ¼ of a mile away, because I don’t see how a cameraman can possibly get good photography on actors in the foreground if he is concerned with justifying his use of lights ¼ of a mile away on buildings.⁸⁰

Selznick makes it clear that it is the presentation of the star that is at stake here:

you must remember that you are not dealing with amateurs, picked up from the streets, and discarded after one picture, as the man in *Bicycle Thief*. You are dealing with very successful actors, into whose careers and positions have gone many, many years of hard work on their parts [...] Nor should their careers be sacrificed to Aldo’s

photography of a railroad station, as though he were making the pic himself, for the Tourist Bureau'.⁸¹

It is clear, though, that Selznick had no great investment in the presentation of Clift as his memos barely mention his photography.⁸² On the same day, Selznick solicited advice from Lee Garmes, the cinematographer who had shot Jones for him on *Since You Went Away* (John Cromwell, 1944), and *Duel in the Sun* (King Vidor, 1946), as well as photographing Valli in *The Paradine Case* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1947). Garmes recommended for Jones Rembrandt lighting and Eastman diffusers, rather than the Mitchell diffusers Aldo was using, which in his view produced a flat image lacking in definition.⁸³

This external advice was not sufficient to placate Selznick's anxieties about Jones' image, however: by the next day he had decided to bring in another cameraman to work alongside Aldo.⁸⁴ He engaged Oswald 'Ossie' Morris, who had just finished work on John Huston's *Moulin Rouge*, announcing: 'in all the photography of Jennifer, Clift, and of the boy – in fact in all close angles of the picture – Morris' authority will be final and absolute.'⁸⁵ De Sica reluctantly agreed.⁸⁶ Selznick framed his hiring of Morris explicitly in terms of protection of Jones' career: 'if there is the slightest objection on Aldo's part .. we will have to face the situation that I cannot jeopardize Jennifer's career by having Aldo photograph her'.⁸⁷

The conditions of the location shooting were exacerbating the problems with the cinematography: as we saw, Selznick complained about the 'freezing cold of the station' during the night shoots, and Jennifer's dressing room being too cold.

Morris has sent me word that part of the photography problems are growing out of the fact that the cold is changing her face in the course of each evening, and is causing her cheeks to become distorted and is also causing her skin to become blotched in the course of the evening.

Selznick appealed at this point to the experience of Ingrid Bergman in her Italian location shooting with Rossellini: ‘Ingrid talked to him about this [...] said that when she worked in the streets her face became so cold that it was distorted and blotchy and bad photographically’.⁸⁸ The suffering of (female) stars was thus part and parcel of the neorealist experience.

Despite Selznick’s optimistic view that the combination of Aldo’s long shots and Morris’s close-ups was working perfectly (expressed on 20 November), by 5 December he again decries the ‘wretched’ close-up photography of Jennifer: he cites two specific instances, one in the station toy shop (““passport-photo” type photography’), and the other in the underpass when Mary is confronted by her nephew. In the latter scene, he praises Aldo’s long shot (‘as always with Aldo, the photography of the long shot [...] is excellent’) [Figure 1], but argues that the close-up is terrible, again due to Aldo’s preoccupation with background and setting.⁸⁹



Figure 1

In these two scenes, Selznick argues, Jennifer's close-up 'tells the entire story and relationship' of the lovers. Interestingly, he suggests that De Sica and Morris watch *The Paradine Case*, and see what Garmes did with Alida Valli's close-ups: 'The audience was spellbound by this complete portrait of a woman, as a consequence of the extraordinarily beautiful photography and the remarkable and original camera treatment and movement that really sought out a woman's face and character'.⁹⁰

Selznick insisted on retakes in January 1953 of key scenes, and blamed this necessity on Aldo's photography, 'which of course should not have been tolerated by any other director I know, in featuring the background at the expense of the artists, to the extent of using a 30 or 40[mm] lens on the principals, which is unheard of, and which means a wide-angle lens on people, thereby making them look like rhinoceroses.'⁹¹ He began to recut the film in January, eventually cutting De Sica's 89 minutes down to 72: his cutting notes refer to the 'slander' of Jones' photography,⁹² and in a 12-page memo to De Sica in February, he lays out at great length his dissatisfaction.⁹³

Much of what Selznick cut was the 'business' of the station, scenes of extras, ordinary Italians which do not advance the plot, but which show the background and environment of the action, the 'anthropomorphic cinema' which neorealism privileged. What Kogonada calls 'in-between moments' – or 'moments of boredom'⁹⁴ as Selznick termed them - decentre the primary characters; for example, Selznick cut the opening sequence, which had Jones cross Rome's Piazza Navona, go to knock on Giovanni's door and then exit his building quickly, recross the square, and catch a bus to Termini. His cut opens with Jones' figure recrossing the square against a caption that reads: 'ROME Eternal City of Culture, of Legend... and of Love'. Under the image fades up a letter being written by Mary to Giovanni explaining why she has had to leave, intercut with a single shot of Mary at his door. 'I am heartsick, but..' the letter reads, before she tears it up, then the action moves to the station. Coding Rome as the

space of romance via the caption and the letter, Selznick undoes a little *Stazione Termini*'s rejection of the tourist gaze: 'Instead of presenting the sights of Rome as sites/places pictured in guidebooks, in the original (Italian) cut of the film, De Sica continues a neo-realist aesthetic in picturing the black-and-white sights of Rome as the compelling variety of people who move through the capacious terminal'.⁹⁵

Interestingly, Selznick did not cut the scenes where Mary helps a sick pregnant woman and her husband: this is probably because they function to point up Mary's choice between domesticity and passion. The couple's three young children, to whom Mary also tends, are used by De Sica in the same way that he used the child non-professionals in *Shoeshine* and *Bicycle Thieves*, as figures of pathos. As Mary feeds them chocolate she smiles at their innocent pleasure, but then quickly succumbs to tears, presumably at the memory of her own child. The woman's husband repeats to Mary that his wife has sacrificed her comfort for their children because she is a 'good wife.. good mother'. The code of female self-sacrifice here contained in his words 'always her family.. never her' clearly resonates with Mary as the camera lingers on her pained face. The continuities between the disparate female experiences here suggest a rhetoric of female self-sacrifice that actually connects De Sican neorealism and the Hollywood woman's film: the fact that the actress playing the wife, Liliana Gerace, had previously played a prostitute in the melodrama *Persiane chiuse/Behind Closed Shutters* (Luigi Comencini, 1951) and had had a small part in the popular Matarazzo weepie *Chi è senza peccato/Who is Without Sin* (1952) makes the scene a point both of productive generic hybridity and of tension. The Italian woman's story is gestured towards through the good wife and mother, but the notional opposition between the neorealist mode and that of melodrama is also modulated and bridged by the presence of Gerace, and her knowing diegetic look towards Mary. As we will see, where *Stazione*

Termini is most interesting in its presentation of the woman and her relationship to public space and to the cinematic apparatus.

Space, Melodrama, Gender

Significantly, in his now-habitual opposition of Aldo and Morris, Selznick, while recutting, again returned to Jones' face in close-up as the site of his distress, in typically hyperbolic style, lamenting, as we have already seen, 'the distortion of Jennifer's face and figure into a monstrosity'. He warned De Sica in a furious twelve-page letter that De Sica's own career was at stake over his inability to light and shoot the female star:

the subsequent revelations of the lenses used by Aldo so shocked the entire film community that it became a matter of public debate, and I am afraid that you too would suffer, and would find yourself up against all sorts of photographic controls by any star, and particularly any female star, that you desire to use in the future.⁹⁶

Leonard Lef points out that Morris's close-ups and medium close-ups differ from the rest of the film's visual scheme: 'Morris was lighting the stars, and Aldo was lighting the sets and atmosphere'.⁹⁷ He singles out the carriage scene, in which Mary and Giovanni finally give in to their passion in an empty train: as reshot by Morris, it offered 'a catalogue of Hollywood cinematic effects', with backlights to create halo effects, soft focus and diffusion, and heads crowding the edge of frame.⁹⁸ [Figure 2] Leff reads these this in binary terms: the 'Hollywood story' is the stars in close-up, while the 'Italian story' was the station itself.⁹⁹



Figure 2

In a similar vein, Aldo's lighting of the background and 'very distant windows' alludes to the other stories that neorealism wants to tell, pointing to characters and events that the principal characters are not aware of, and which do not occur onscreen. This 'expanded sense of what was tellable' pits the everyday against the emotionally heightened drama, and orchestrates, via lighting and cinematography, a narrative clash with Selznick's suggestion that the close-up tells the love story, and that it can reveal the woman's character.¹⁰⁰ The 'uncontainable excess' of the close-up presents the ecstatic suffering of Jones' character, while also of course framing and showcasing Jones.¹⁰¹ Jones' close-ups thus have several functions: they 'establish the recognizability' of the star,¹⁰² and they isolate her and Clift and become their own 'story'. They are 'allied with possession, possessiveness, the desire to get hold of something', in this case Selznick's possession of Jones as wife and star commodity.¹⁰³ Similarly, the language of 'damage' and 'protection' speaks of Jones as property, while Selznick's repeated use of the word 'scandal' to describe Aldo's close-ups of his wife also

speaks to the perceived sacredness of the female image.¹⁰⁴ The close-ups also function to directly reinforce Jones' star image, which was one of 'overly intense emotionality' and 'melodramatic expressivity'.¹⁰⁵ As we have seen, Selznick did not seem to care much, in the memos at least, about Clift's star image, which rather matched Jones', as it revolved around emotional intensity and an ideal of masculine beauty, but was augmented by a reputation for acting prestige.¹⁰⁶

Further, against Zavattini's neorealist ideal of the duration of the ordinary experience, the close-ups articulate a fetishistic 'rhetoric of stasis';¹⁰⁷ these moments of ecstatic or epiphanic contemplation which can 'transcend spatio-temporal categories'¹⁰⁸ are also embedded in a melodramatic time that is always 'too late' – Mary gives in to passion only when the film has already made clear the impossibility of this being happily realized, and the consequence of it is her shame and punishment, the 'Calvary walk', as Selznick termed it, when she and Giovanni are discovered and escorted to the station police.

As Studlar argues, Jones had often played young women for whom romantic love and sexuality proved traumatic.¹⁰⁹ Here, though, she is a more mature character, no longer girlish. In fact, she cuts a rather old-fashioned figure: her suit, supplied by Dior, with its heavy fabric, seems pre-New Look, and the fur tippet and mink coat she wears also seem out of time, when compared to, for example, the youthful modern costume designed by Edith Head for Audrey Hepburn in *Roman Holiday*.¹¹⁰ [Figure 3]



Figure 3

The emphasis both on Jones' face and, in the relatively few full-length shots of her, on the concealment of her figure in its heavy suit, is also out of step with Italian cinema's popular female stars of the time: Sophia Loren, Silvana Mangano and Gina Lollobrigida played lower-class curvaceous girls who dressed enticingly.¹¹¹ The narrative changes also do nothing to mitigate this sense of Jones' character as out of time: Selznick, fearful both of the Production Code and of anything that might taint Jones with vulgarity, removed some of the sexual allusions when recutting the film, and changed two key scenes.¹¹² When Jones and Clift are discovered in the empty carriage, they are now detained for kissing rather than making love, which has the effect of making the entire climax of the film inexplicable, and Jones' humiliation and suffering seem overdetermined.¹¹³

It is no coincidence that the battleground for control over this film is the representation of the female figure and face, and the representation of public space. Gender and space are a faultline in neorealist cinema, because they raise the question of what women

do in the public sphere. In *Stazione Termini*, the public or exterior is erased for the sake of romance (in the claustrophobic carriage scene, reshot in the studio); its transformation of the interior into exterior in the characteristic deep-focus long shots of the station does not suggest a place for women, nor a resolution to the bourgeois triangle other than that of melodrama's impossible choice, and the return of the woman to the home. Despite her economic mobility, there is nowhere that Mary can safely be alone with Giovanni, and the station itself works against them. However, we should note that Selznick was also worried about potential comparisons to *Brief Encounter* (David Lean, 1945), a reminder that the train station is also a potent space of cinematic melodrama.¹¹⁴

The association of the melodramatic mode with the 'woman's film', with the family, and with female protagonists is reflected in its mise-en-scène. Scholars of Hollywood melodrama of the 1940s and '50s have of course pointed to the claustrophobia and excess of interior mise-en-scène which becomes an outer symbolization of excessive emotion.¹¹⁵ In the Italian context, Danielle Hipkins has analysed Rossellini's use of the melodramatic mode and of claustrophobic interiors in the prostitute sequence of *Paisan* because it is 'the site of ideological failure', most often associated with 'the private sphere, family life and inevitably gender relations.'¹¹⁶

Selznick's initial attraction to the project as something 'in the tradition of the best Italian films including *Bicycle Thieves*', needing a 'Zavattini-type treatment' suggests a desire for that film's wandering through the profilmic space of Rome.¹¹⁷ This male neorealist wandering (significantly, the wife and mother is left at home in *Bicycle Thieves*) becomes, as noted, a short touristic moment in *Indiscretion*, and a search for a safe space in which to give in to desire.¹¹⁸ If the success of *Roman Holiday* shows the appetite for narratives of female mobility through a tourist gaze on Rome, the 'failure' of *Stazione Termini* is nonetheless telling: the reinstatement of the status quo that melodrama often demands in its rehearsal of

transgression, the erasure of the woman at the end of the film, and her reintegration into the home, tie in with neorealism's failure to identify a public space for women.

Selznick as a 'Woman's Producer'

As Thomas Schatz notes, Selznick's reputation had been consolidated in the 1940s after the triumph of *Gone With the Wind* via a 'long-standing fascination with ill-fated love affairs' which 'favored the woman's point of view', through films such as the Hitchcock-directed *Rebecca* (1940), *Spellbound* (1945), and *Notorious* (1946).¹¹⁹ His investment in and grooming of female stars – Bergman, Valli, Joan Fontaine, and of course Jones – was matched by his fondness for adapting female writers: Daphne Du Maurier, Margaret Mitchell, Charlotte Brontë, and Margaret Buell Wilder were among the female novelists whose work Selznick adapted for his 'prestige productions'.¹²⁰

Memos and other communications reflect Selznick's strong desire for a woman writer to work on Zavattini's screenplay, specifically to 'write an American woman'.¹²¹ He suggested a long list of female writers, including Du Maurier, Rebecca West, Rumer Godden, Kay Boyle, and Carson McCullers, stating that 'we need a woman on the job to keep Jennifer's role from being written conventionally or from a strictly masculine viewpoint'.¹²² Selznick's comment on Zavattini that 'for all his gifts he is unable to comprehend this kind of a romantic relationship' is extremely telling:¹²³ the inability of Zavattini, the core theoretician of neorealism, to address romance, is of a piece with what we might consider neorealism's failure to negotiate the 'traumatic rupture' of adult sexuality and sexual difference, or the female point of view.¹²⁴

While the film itself fails to effectively negotiate romance and urbanity, these themes are, however, articulated in an important and hitherto overlooked way, via the 'jukebox short' Selznick devised and produced to precede *Indiscretion* in the US (and to compensate for its

truncated running time).¹²⁵ Called *Autumn in Rome*, and financed by the US distribution deal Selznick had secured for the film with Columbia, it consists of two songs sung by singer Patti Page, and was shot by James Wong Howe and designed and directed by William Cameron Menzies.¹²⁶ Both songs, ‘Autumn in Rome’ and ‘Indiscretion’, were written by Paul Weston and Sammy Cahn, using motifs from Alessandro Cicognini’s original score.¹²⁷ The short (seven minutes in total) was shot in New York, and has two significant points of interest: the presentation of Page against a New York City backdrop, and the specific musical theme employed. While Page sings ‘Autumn in Rome’, she moves around the apartment set, where a classical bust is positioned against the view of New York skyscrapers to connote a fusion of European and American cultures. She is wearing a heavy silk dress which, like Jones’ outfit in the film, has a fur collar, and her style is consistent with the ‘Philadelphia matron’ Selznick wanted to evoke [Figure 4].



Figure 4

Yet the transition into the beginning of the song ‘Autumn in Rome’, which opens with a motif from Cicognicini’s score, is suddenly marked by a snippet of a score that will be very familiar to American audiences: Alfred Newman’s ‘Street Scene’. ‘Street Scene’ was the title theme to the eponymous King Vidor film of 1931, and had been re-used many times in different films.¹²⁸

The use of ‘Street Scene’ functions as a ‘recapitulation of the entirety of the classical Hollywood sound era’, and with its Gershwin-infused sound, and connotations of the ‘city symphony’, it forms part of Hollywood’s filmic repertoire of urban modernity.¹²⁹ The snippet of ‘Street Scene’ recycled and juxtaposed with Cicognicini’s score, and with the Cahn song, points to the attempt to bridge European and American tastes: but it also speaks to the attempt to find a female point of view through a piece of music that, as Matthew Malsky argues, had often been used to articulate and mediate female characters’ relationships with the American city and with changing social structures. It is no coincidence, I would argue, that Selznick prefaced Jennifer Jones’ Mary, torn between duty and romantic fulfilment abroad, with Patti Page, in her apartment crammed with busts and objects, and shot in close-up and medium close-up, but also with the urban backdrop outside. Although Selznick tried to minimize the urban space in De Sica’s version of the film, and rejected the codes of neorealism’s space-time, he brought the city back here as a tasteful backdrop to a story that is notionally about the place of female agency and desire, in order to position the film as a ‘woman’s film’.

Selznick was convinced of the importance of female audiences to the success of *Indiscretion* in the US, saying of preview screenings: ‘I want to emphasize again the importance of always having as many women as possible present at screenings. We know the picture is liked enormously by women, whereas with men the reaction ranges all the way from enthusiasm to indifference’.¹³⁰ He also wrote that critics should bring their wives, and that it should be reviewed by female critics, who should also bring along woman friends.¹³¹

A number of reviews in trade papers when the film opened in the US in May 1954 emphasized the qualities that made it a ‘woman’s film’, declaring it ideal for ‘femmes’ and ‘distaffers’.¹³² Radio promoter Terry Turner wrote to Selznick distribution chief Frank Davis that ‘this is 100% a woman’s picture’ – relevant to every American woman, and would be promoted as such on his stations.¹³³ Amongst other aspects of promotional ‘ballyhoo’, Selznick’s team planted fake letters in newspapers, fake personal adverts, and radio advertisements and lobby cards that all placed emphasis on the romantic dilemma, asking women ‘what would you do in this situation?’. In addition, Selznick successfully pressed for the US theatrical trailer to describe De Sica, somewhat absurdly, as ‘the world’s most romantic director’.

While Selznick’s promotional strategies for the film centred on female audiences, including a mooted tie-in with a perfume company,¹³⁴ there was strangely little attention to Montgomery Clift, despite his status as the bobby soxers’ favourite since the late 1940s.¹³⁵ The emphasis, directed by Selznick, was on promoting the film to mature women.¹³⁶ He was also acutely aware of the danger of it being labelled an ‘art theatre film’ and although he was happy to promote to Italian-American audiences in New York City and to promote De Sica in ‘certain metro markets’, he was adamant that the film’s ‘adult realism’ was not suitable for the mass market.¹³⁷

Conclusion

As has been made clear, the conventional narrative that accompanies *Stazione Termini* – that of a clash between Hollywood and neorealism – both reifies and simplifies these critical terms and their synecdochal function in relation to the film. As noted, *Stazione Termini* was far from the only film in which Selznick interfered, so should be looked at as consistent with his practice, rather than as an anomaly.¹³⁸ Selznick’s self-positioning as a quasi-auteur

obsessed with quality via the memos, while complicating the art/commerce opposition beloved of critics, should also be read in a nuanced way: recent work in production studies has emphasized how ‘embedded deep texts’ like internal memos are still part of a cultural self-performance and self-ethnography. Studying the memos allows to understand Selznick’s theorizing of his interventions as a way of contributing to the myth of himself as uniquely equipped with a narrative vision, visual sense, and understanding of audience tastes, especially female audiences.¹³⁹

Further, we must consider that any clash exists on two intertwined levels. The first is that of the representation of time and space: Selznick’s rejection of the ontological space-time of neorealism in favour of Rome as a city of romance is more in tune with contemporary films about Europe as an ‘amorous playground’ such as *Roman Holiday* and *Three Coins in the Fountain* than with neorealism. Further, his intense and obsessive focus on the suspended time of the close-up goes hand-in-hand with an enhanced attention to interior space via the reshot carriage scene, more consistent with the aesthetics of melodrama and the woman’s film.¹⁴⁰

Thus the clash is also, and very clearly, a clash of genre address: a telling moment that Selznick also cut was a brief scene where a young bride and her husband get off the train while Giovanni is searching for Mary. The girl offers Giovanni some of her wedding candy, which he dazedly takes while she looks at him in concern. She is played by Maria Pia Casilio, the non-professional actress who had come to fame as the pregnant serving girl in De Sica’s *Umberto D*. Casilio’s appearance seems to be offered to us as part of the repertoire of neorealism, which, by late 1952, was already almost exhausted.¹⁴¹ Similarly, Selznick’s vision of the woman’s film, a genre that did not exist in Italy, was also somewhat outdated, as costumes and promos suggested. Thomas Schatz supports this with his observation that Selznick’s commercial and artistic decline by the early 1950s was connected to his

attachment to a studio system that was now a thing of the past: ‘his conception of prestige filmmaking was shaped during the studio era and his sense of dramatic qualities and production values, and of marketing and exhibition practices, had been very much in line with the industry’s’.¹⁴²

Selznick’s obsession with visual propriety and safeguarding Jones did collide with De Sica and Zavattini’s conception of the station as a space of the accidental and contingent, where stars rub shoulders with non-professionals. While this seems in line with the ‘clash’ discourse that this article has sought to question, it is essential to remember Selznick’s enthusiasm for the *idea* of Zavattinian neorealism and his abandonment of it only when he felt that Jones’ image was threatened. This oscillation between modes shows how central the photography of the US female star was to his opposition to neorealism. The critical focus on Selznick’s overbearing interference has occluded the fact that he did try to articulate a kind of romantic suffering that was missing from canonical neorealism. He also, importantly, offered a vision of the urban that was marked not just by postwar trauma or by alienation from the state and its institutions, but by an embrace of female desire and (frustrated) choice, designed to appeal to female spectators.¹⁴³ The commercial and artistic failure of the film was thus due not so much to its ‘betrayal’ of neorealism, as to its failure to understand changing models of stardom and femininity, something that *Roman Holiday*, released four months after De Sica’s film, successfully grasped. Nevertheless, the film, even in its supposed failure, attempted to open neorealism up to the woman’s story, and allow us to trace the gendered ideological faultlines that underlie the ‘collision’ of modes, faultlines that the use of the female star uncovers.

¹ Cesare Zavattini, 'Tesi sul neorealismo' (1953). The essay is translated as 'A thesis on neorealism', in David Overbey (ed), *Springtime in Italy: a Reader on Neorealism* (London: Talisman, 1978), pp. 67-78. Overbey's translation of the quotation, which I have preferred not to use, is on p. 73.

² Letter from Selznick to De Sica, 23 February 1953. Harry Ransom Center, David O. Selznick Collection, Files 1951-1958 Indiscretion/Stazione Termini (File 1799.3).

³ Amy Lawrence, *The Passion of Montgomery Clift* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), p. 277.

⁴ David Thomson, *Showman: the Life of David O. Selznick* (London: Abacus, 1993), p. 603. The review of *Indiscretion* by *Time* continues this opposition between commerce and art: 'Selznick supplied the stars, script and money, De Sica the unblinking eye for "neorealism"', *Time*, 26 April 1954.

⁵ Zavattini, 'A thesis', p. 73.

⁶ On the 'amalgam', see André Bazin, 'An aesthetic of reality: neorealism', in *What is Cinema? Vol II*, trans. Hugh Gray (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 16-40 (pp. 22-25).

⁷ See on this David Forgacs and Stephen Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society from Fascism to the Cold War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), p. 139.

⁸ De Sica recounted: 'I dared to reply that if he really insisted on an American actor, my preference was for Henry Fonda, who was the most down-to-earth and sincere of the Americans. But he told me that Henry Fonda would not work. Box office = zero'. In Vittorio De Sica, *La porta del cielo. Memorie 1901-1952* (Cava de' Tirreni: Avagliano, 2004), p. 97.

⁹ Memo from DOS to Jenia Reissar, 2 March 1949. HRC DOS Collection, Consolidated Files 1936-1954 De Sica, Vittorio (File 866.6). The film was originally slated for production with Salvo D'Angelo's Universalialia company, with Claude Autant-Lara directing, before D'Angelo sold it to the French producer Paul Graetz, who then sold the rights to Selznick. See Barbara Corsi, 'Salvo D'Angelo produttore europeo', in Raffaella De Berti (ed), *I cattolici nella fabbrica del cinema e dei media: produzione, opere, protagonisti (1940-1970)* (Milan: Università degli Studi di Milano, 2017), pp. 47-63.

¹⁰ See Charles Drazin, *Korda: Britain's Movie Mogul* (London: IB Tauris, 2011), pp. 320-27. Drazin details Selznick's 'heavy and persistent interference' in these collaborations, particularly with regard to the presentation of Jones (p. 320). Selznick had *Gone to Earth* recut and partially reshot, releasing it in the USA as *The Wild Heart*.

¹¹ Selznick, quoted in Rudy Behlmer (ed), *Memo from David O. Selznick* (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), p. 424.

¹² See memo of 13 June 1950 from DOS to Jenia Reissar in which Selznick announced that Bergman was finished 'with Rossellini type of pictures' and wanted 'professional actors and conventional production methods'. Quoted in Behlmer, p. 433.

¹³ Rossellini was considered, in fact, as a director for *Stazione Termini*, but ultimately Selznick chose De Sica for his superior ability to keep to scripts. Memo from DOS to Jenia Reissar, 12 August 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Production Files 1946-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion (File 670.5).

¹⁴ Ora Gelley, *Stardom and the Aesthetics of Neorealism: Ingrid Bergman in Rossellini's Italy* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012), p. 15. James Damico talks of 'two diametrically opposed cinematic worlds – the Hollywood glossy and the Italian neorealistic'. 'Ingrid from Lorraine to Stromboli', in Jeremy G. Butler (ed), *Star Texts: Image and Performance in Film and Television* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), pp. 242-53 (p. 242).

¹⁵ Gelley, p. 15.

¹⁶ On the intensity and emotionality of Jones' star image, see Gaylyn Studlar, *Precocious Charms: Stars Performing Girlhood in Classical Hollywood Cinema* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013), pp. 162ff. On Jones' 'yearning for prestige roles', see J.E. Smyth, 'The organization woman behind *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*', *Camera Obscura*, vol. 80, no. 27 (2012), pp. 61-88 (p. 63).

¹⁷ On the importance of Italian neorealism to the arthouse boom, see Barbara Wilinsky, *Sure Seaters: the Emergence of Art House Cinemas* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 11-40; Tino Balio, *The Foreign Film Renaissance on American Screens, 1946-1973* (Madison: University of

Wisconsin Press, 2010), especially pp. 40-61; Nathaniel Brennan, 'Marketing meaning: branding neorealism', in Saverio Giovacchini and Robert Sklar (eds), *Global Neorealism: the Transnational History of a Film Style* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012), pp. 87-102.

¹⁸ On the combination of 'sex and naturalism which is the trademark of the postwar Italian film', see 'Italian film invasion', *Life*, 20 October 1952, pp. 107-13 (p. 107). See also Karl Schoonover on the North American reception of neorealism's 'cosmopolitan humanism', allied with its exploitation thrills. *Brutal Vision: the Neorealist Body in Postwar Italian Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), pp. 76-77. On the US reception of *Bitter Rice*, see Balio, pp. 59-61.

¹⁹ Forgacs and Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, p. 137. Selznick mentions the lower shooting costs in Italy as an incentive in a memo of 12 July 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Production Files 1946-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion (File 670.6).

²⁰ See Barbara Corsi, *Con qualche dollaro di meno: storia economica del cinema italiano* (Rome: Riuniti, 2001), pp. 66-70. See also Paul Thomas, 'Runaways', *Film Quarterly*, vol. 63, no. 2 (2009), pp. 86-87.

²¹ Robert Shandley, *Runaway Romances: Hollywood's Postwar Tour of Europe* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), p. 46. The later *The Roman Spring of Mrs Stone* (José Quintero, 1961) can also be included in this grouping.

²² Dom Holdaway and Filippo Trentin, 'Roman fever: anarchiving eternal Rome from *Roman Holiday* to *Petrolia*', *Journal of Romance Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2014), pp. 5-22 (p. 13).

²³ On this, see Carolyn Anderson, 'Cold war consumer diplomacy and movie-induced Roman holidays', *Journal of Tourism History*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2011), pp. 1-19.

²⁴ Anderson, p. 5.

²⁵ Anderson, p. 19. Italian cinema also staged its own female tourist gaze on the national landscape, with an example being *La ragazza del Palio/The Love Specialist* (Luigi Zampa, 1957), in which Diana Dors plays a Texan tourist in Siena. See Valerio Coladonato and Paolo Noto, 'In the eyes of the beholder: the tourist gaze and gender in 1950s Italian comedies', *La Valle dell'Eden*, no. 31 (2018), pp. 117-25.

²⁶ In the original idea by Zavattini, the film ambitiously would contain 'not a single fade-out or fade-in, or dissolve, and plays within its own time'. Selznick memo to Jay Kantner of MCA, 28 May 1952, HRC DOS Collection, Production Files 1946-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion (File 670.6).

²⁷ Guido Aristarco's review of the film in *Cinema nuovo* describes it as 'a surrender' and 'an (albeit honourable) compromise'. 'Stazione Termini', *Cinema nuovo*, vol. 2, no. 3 (15 April 1953), pp. 249-50 (p. 249). Gian Piero Brunetta talks of a 'stylistic fracture' in his *Storia del cinema italiano*, vol. 3 (Rome: Riuniti, 1998), p. 438. Dario Tomasi calls *Stazione Termini* a 'turning point', in 'Vittorio De Sica e Cesare Zavattini, verso la svolta', in Luciano De Giusti (ed), *Storia del cinema italiano*, vol. 8 (Venice: Marsilio, 2003), pp. 419-30 (p. 427).

²⁸ Aristarco, p. 249.

²⁹ Braccio Agnoletti, 'Il codice Hayes li guarda', *Cinema nuovo*, vol. 2, no 3 (15 January 1953), p. 46. Dave Kehr, in his liner notes on the Criterion DVD, notes a contrast between 'Hollywood and European sensibilities', which push the material in 'two radically different directions'. 'Indiscretion of an American Producer', *Indiscretion of an American Wife and Terminal Station*, Criterion DVD, 2003. In their article on the film, *Life* magazine discussed how 'Italian and US movie styles clash successfully in Rome station'. Anon., 'Temperament in a terminal', *Life*, 9 March 1953, p. 135.

³⁰ Gian Piero Brunetta, *Cent'anni di cinema italiano*, vol. 2 (Bari: Laterza, 1998), p. 74.

³¹ Tino Ranieri, 'De Sica neorealista', in Lino Micciché (ed), *Il neorealismo cinematografico italiano* (Venice: Marsilio, 1999), pp. 300-07 (p. 305).

³² David Forgacs and Stephen Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, p. 140. Elisabetta Girelli remarks on the film's 'visual and narrative chaos' in *Montgomery Clift, Queer Star* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2014), p. 103.

³³ Stephen Gundle, 'Hollywood, Italy and the First World War: Italian reactions to film versions of Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*', in Guido Bonsaver and Robert Gordon (eds), *Culture, Censorship and the State in Twentieth-Century Italy* (Oxford: Legenda, 2005), pp. 98-108 (p. 105).

³⁴ Brunetta, *Storia del cinema italiano*, p. 438.

³⁵ De Sica, 'Mi sono fermato alla Stazione Termini', *Cinema nuovo*, vol 2, no. 3 (15 January 1953), p. 47. Interestingly, here De Sica who had worked with stars and professional actors in his films made

under Fascism, asserted that it was easier to direct consummate professionals like Jones and Clift than non-professionals, and this was thus a ‘rest’ after his neorealist ‘exertions’.

³⁶ Guido Aristarco, *Neorealismo e nuova critica cinematografica* (Florence: Guaraldi, 1980), p. 12. Some less ideologically rigid Italian critics did appreciate the film: in the mainstream newspaper *Milano Sera* the review described its realism as ‘dignified’ (3 April 1953), and in *Corriere della Sera* Arturo Lanocita called it ‘poetic’ and compared it to *Brief Encounter* (3 April 1953).

³⁷ Kogonada, ‘What is neorealism?’ (2013), <https://vimeo.com/68514760>.

³⁸ Selznick referred to himself as a ‘film creator’ in a memo to De Sica of 22 January 1954. HRC DOS Collection, Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (File 1759.5). Alan Vertrees calls Selznick a ‘creative producer’, whose memo writing was crucial to his success. *Selznick’s Vision: Gone with the Wind and Hollywood Filmmaking* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), p. 210. See Andrew Spicer, A.T. McKenna and Christopher Meir on Selznick as ‘creative producer’ and ‘auteur’. ‘Introduction’ to *Beyond the Bottom Line: the Producer in Film and Television Studies* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 1-23 (p. 10 and p. 12).

³⁹ Kyle Dawson Edwards argues that Selznick’s self-conscious construction of an image of authorial presence aimed to act as a guarantee of quality. ‘Constructing the image of authorial presence: David O. Selznick and *Since You Went Away*’, *Journal of Film and Video*, vol. 41, no. 1 (1989), pp. 36-51 (p. 46).

⁴⁰ See Matthew Bernstein, ‘Hollywood’s semi-independent production’, *Cinema Journal*, vol. 32, no. 3 (1993), pp. 41-54, and the debate between Bernstein and Janet Staiger on the term ‘semi-independent’ and the producer-unit system in *Cinema Journal*, vol. 33, no. 2 (1993), pp. 56-63.

⁴¹ The top Italian film at the domestic box-office in 1953 was Luigi Comencini’s ‘pink neorealist’ comedy *Pane, amore e fantasia/Bread, Love, and Dreams*, starring De Sica and Gina Lollobrigida.

⁴² On the Andreotti law of 1949 which made state subsidies difficult for neorealist films, and Minister for Entertainment Giulio Andreotti’s attack on De Sica in 1952, see Howard Curle and Stephen Snyder, ‘Introduction’ to *Vittorio De Sica: Contemporary Perspectives* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 3-21 (p. 11).

⁴³ ‘The fact is that the crisis of Italian cinema officially began with the polite “advice” given by Andreotti to De Sica after *Umberto D.* And it is right after *Umberto D.* that De Sica gives up on making [the documentary-style] *My Italy for Stazione Termini*’. Aristarco, *Neorealismo e nuova critica cinematografica*, p. 12.

⁴⁴ See works re-evaluating Italian cinema under Fascism, which problematize easy periodizations, such as Jacqueline Reich and Piero Garofalo (eds), *Re-Viewing Fascism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002) and Steven Ricci, *Cinema and Fascism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008).

⁴⁵ Millicent Marcus, *Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. xvii. See the critique of this view by O’Leary and O’Rawe, who write that ‘neorealism has come to be perceived as the ineluctable centre of Italian cinema for reasons that are as much ideological as aesthetic’. Alan O’Leary and Catherine O’Rawe, ‘Against realism: on a “certain tendency” in Italian film criticism’, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2011), pp. 107-28 (p. 110). Rosalind Galt has also taken issue with this ‘master narrative’ of Italian cinema, in *The New European Cinema: Redrawing the Map* (Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 74.

⁴⁶ See in particular Lino Micciché (ed), *Il neorealismo cinematografico italiano* (Venice: Marsilio, 1975). An overview of relevant scholarship and debates in Italy can be found in Catherine O’Rawe, “‘I padri e i maestri’: genre, auteurs and absences in Italian film studies’, *Italian Studies*, vol. 63, no. 2 (2008), pp. 173-94.

⁴⁷ The enduring hegemony of neorealism has seen at least eight English-language monographs or collections published in the last few years on the topic by American and UK-based scholars: see Torunn Haaland, *Italian Neorealist Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012); Giovacchini and Sklar, *Global Neorealism*; Schoonover, *Brutal Vision*; Gelley, *Stardom and the Aesthetics of Neorealism*; Giuliana Minghelli, *Landscape and Memory in Post-Fascist Italian Film: Cinema Year Zero* (New York and London: Routledge, 2013); Carmela Scala and Antonio Rossini (eds), *New Trends in Italian Cinema: ‘New’ Neorealism* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2013); Donatella Spinelli Coleman, *Filming the Nation: Jung, Film, Neo-Realism and Italian*

National Identity (New York and London: Routledge, 2012); Simonetta Milli Konewko, *Neorealism and the "New" Italy: Compassion in the Development of Italian Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); these are in addition to multiple Italian volumes, of which the most significant is Stefania Parigi's *Neorealismo* (Venice: Marsilio, 2014).

⁴⁸ Christopher Wagstaff, *Italian Neorealist Cinema: an Aesthetic Approach* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), p. 5.

⁴⁹ For example, the rich analyses by Giuliana Minghelli and Noa Steimatsky of neorealism's landscapes are organized according to auteur: Steimatsky's *Italian Locations: Reinhabiting the Past in Postwar Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008) looks at Antonioni, Visconti, Rossellini, and Pasolini, while Minghelli's *Landscape and Memory in Post-Fascist Italian Film* addresses films by Rossellini, De Sica, and Visconti.

⁵⁰ In her article on the French idealization of neorealism, Alessia Ricciardi perceptively discusses how the writings of Bazin and Deleuze 'made neorealism into a phenomenological and ontological turning point'. 'Italian redemption of cinema: neorealism from Bazin to Godard', *Romanic Review*, vol. 97 (2006), pp. 483-500 (p. 485). See also Lorenzo Fabbri, 'Neorealism as ideology: Bazin, Deleuze, and the avoidance of fascism', *The Italianist*, vol. 35, no. 2 (2015), pp. 182-201.

⁵¹ Bazin, 'An aesthetic of reality', p. 30. On the importance of melodrama to this period, see Mary Wood, "'Pink" neorealism and the rehearsal of gender roles', in Phil Powrie, Ann Davies, Bruce Babington (eds), *The Trouble With Men: Masculinities in European and Hollywood Cinema* (London: Wallflower Press, 2004), pp. 134-43; Louis Bayman, *The Operatic and the Everyday in Postwar Italian Film Melodrama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

⁵² Bayman, *The Operatic and the Everyday*, p. 7. He also argues that melodrama should be positioned as 'the emotional and expressive centre of the authenticating dramatic function of realism' (p. 81).

⁵³ Karl Schoonover has argued that neorealism was constituted partly through an address to the USA. *Brutal Vision*, pp. 69-108.

⁵⁴ Julia Hallam and Margaret Marshment argue that neorealism is 'a flexible container for a range of non-classical variations found in many Italian films of the day', *Realism and Popular Cinema* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 41. The 'discourse of neorealism' has taken on an apodictic function within Italian film studies: it is 'a set of prescriptive conditions, exclusions and institutions that circumscribe as well as generate utterances about Italian film.' O'Leary and O'Rawe, 'Against realism', pp. 107-08.

⁵⁵ According to Minghelli, 'the profilmic landscape of neorealism' is a 'privileged document' not just of the war and reconstruction, but of its unspoken and unseen trauma. *Landscape and Memory in Post-Fascist Italian Film*, p. 10. Parigi notes that 'the entire nation becomes a set', *Neorealismo*, p. 61.

⁵⁶ 'Towards an Italian landscape', in *Springtime in Italy*, pp. 125-29.

⁵⁷ Zavattini, 'A thesis', p. 79.

⁵⁸ Bazin, 'An aesthetic of reality', p. 38.

⁵⁹ Zavattini, 'Cinema italiano domani' (1950), in Valentina Fortichiari and Mino Argentieri (eds), *Opere di Cesare Zavattini. Cinema. Diario cinematografico. Neorealismo ecc* (Milan: Bompiani, 2002), pp. 693-96 (p. 695). The term 'embodied city' is used by David Brancaleone in 'Framing the real: Lefèbvre and neo-realist cinematic space as practice', *Architecture_media_politics_society*, vol. 5, no. 4 (2014), pp. 1-23 (p. 11).

⁶⁰ Brancaleone, p. 7.

⁶¹ Visconti, 'Il cinema antropomorfo', in Massimo Mida and Lorenzo Quaglietti (eds), *Dai telefoni bianchi al neorealismo* (Bari: Laterza, 1980), pp. 177-79 (p. 179).

⁶² For Stefania Parigi the street is 'the real and symbolic place where the camera places itself in order to construct a relationship with a collective that is at once both anonymous and epic, a social body that is colonizing the movie screen'. *Neorealismo*, p. 73.

⁶³ See Lesley Caldwell, 'What About women? Italian films and their concerns', in Ulrike Sieglöhr (ed), *Heroines Without Heroes* (London: Cassell, 2000), pp.131-46. Vittorio Spinazzola argued that 'in neorealist films the female presence was always tangential for obvious reasons: the horizon the films were gazing towards was the institutional one of the State'. *Cinema e pubblico* (Milan: Bompiani, 1975), p. 75.

⁶⁴ See Danielle Hipkins on the critical dismissal of the romance/melodrama plot strand of Rossellini's *Paisan*: 'Francesca's salvation or damnation?: resisting recognition of the prostitute in Roberto Rossellini's *Paisà* (1946)', *Studies in European Cinema*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2006), pp. 153-68; for Schoonover, neorealism's 'spectacular display of suffering' focuses on the imperilled (but ungendered) Italian body. *Brutal Vision*, p. 7.

⁶⁵ See Elena Mosconi on how Magnani's female-centred films such as *Angelina* (written by Cecchi D'Amico), *Abbasso la miseria/Down with Misery* (Gennaro Righelli, 1946) and *Abbasso la ricchezza/Peddlin' in Society* (Gennaro Righelli, 1946) are only tenuously attached by critics to neorealism. 'L'onorevole *Angelina* e la breve stagione della repubblica (cinematografica) delle donne', *Comunicazioni sociali*, vol 29, no. 2 (2007), pp. 228-34.

⁶⁶ See Paolo Noto on the postwar Italian film industry's weaker genre system, which allowed for flexibility of address than Hollywood's genres. *Dal bozzetto ai generi. Il cinema italiano dei primi anni Cinquanta* (Turin: Kaplan, 2011), pp. 40-43. See also Elena Mosconi, 'Il genere conteso: i film che parlano al vostro cuore', *Comunicazioni sociali*, vol 24, no. 2 (2002), pp. 223-31, and Federica Villa, 'Consumo cinematografico e identità italiana', in Mariagrazia Fanchi and Elena Mosconi (eds), *Spettatori: forme di consumo e pubblici del cinema in Italia 1930-1960* (Venice: Marsilio, 2002), pp. 189-203, on Italian postwar genres' attempts to widen and unify the public they addressed.

⁶⁷ Maria LaPlace, 'Producing and consuming the woman's film: discursive struggle in *Now, Voyager*', in Christine Gledhill (ed), *Home is Where the Heart Is: Essays on Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (London: BFI, 1987), pp. 138-66 (p. 139).

⁶⁸ Danielle Hipkins, *Italy's Other Women: Gender and Prostitution in Italian Cinema, 1940-1965* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 31-32. Robert Rushing, 'De Sica's *The Children are Watching Us*: neorealist cinema and sexual difference', *Studies in European Cinema*, vol. 6: no. 2-3 (2009), pp. 97-112 (p. 102).

⁶⁹ See the empirical audience research by Mariagrazia Fanchi, "'Tra donne sole": cinema, cultural consumption, and the female condition in post-war Italy', in Irmbert Schenk, Margrit Tröhler, Yvonne Zimmermann (eds), *Film-Kino-Zuschauer: Filmrezeption. Film-Cinema-Spectator: Film Reception* (Marburg, Schüren, 2010), pp. 305-18.

⁷⁰ Adriano Aprà described Matarazzo's films as 'masterpieces for the masses': 'Capolavori di massa', in Aprà and Claudio Carabba (eds), *Neorealismo d'appendice. Per un dibattito sul cinema popolare: il caso Matarazzo* (Rimini: Guaraldi, 1976), pp. 9-37.

⁷¹ Nino Cacia, 'Piccoli bilanci della stagione 1953-54', *Rassegna del film*, no. 23, September 1954, p. 46.

⁷² Christine Gledhill, 'The melodramatic field: an investigation', in Gledhill (ed), *Home is Where the Heart Is*, pp. 1-39 (p. 236); in particular, see pp. 33-36 on the problems of distinguishing between melodrama and the 'women's picture', and the importance of recognizing women as cultural producers and consumers.

⁷³ DOS letter to Paul Lazarus and Abe Montague, 8 April 1954. Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (File 1759.6).

⁷⁴ Patrick Keating, 'Shooting for Selznick: craft and collaboration in Hollywood cinematography', in Steve Neale (ed), *The Classical Hollywood Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 280-95 (p. 284)

⁷⁵ See Roberto Ellero, 'Protagonista di una stagione indimenticabile', in Roberto Ellero, Michele Gottardi, and Alessandro Marzo (eds), *Aldò: tra cinema e fotografia* (Venice: Comune di Venezia. Assessorato alla Cultura, 1987), pp. 8-9 on the Caravaggio comparison. See also Luigi Chiarini, 'Il Tisse italiano', *Cinema nuovo*, vol. 2, n. 25 (15 December 1953), pp. 78-79. Aldo (often called Aldo by critics) was killed in a car accident not long after the release of *Stazione Termini*, while shooting Visconti's *Senso*.

⁷⁶ Chiarini, p. 79.

⁷⁷ See Gottardi and Marzo, 'Itinerario di un artista', in *Aldò: tra cinema e fotografia*, pp. 10-20.

⁷⁸ Memo from DOS to Frank Davis, 21 October 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Distribution Files 1948-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion of an American Wife (File 781.6).

⁷⁹ Memo from DOS to Marcello Giroi, 31 October 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Files 1951-1958 *Indiscretion/Stazione Termini* (1798.6).

⁸⁰ Memo from DOS to Giroi and De Sica, 1 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection: Files 1951-1958 *Indiscretion/Stazione Termini* (File 1799.1). Selznick also complained to Hitchcock about 'passport—

style photography' of Valli during shooting of *The Paradine Case*. See Stephen Gundle, 'Alida Valli in Hollywood: from star of fascist cinema to "Selznick siren"', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol. 32, no. 4 (2012), pp. 559-87 (p. 572).

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Most of the Selznick memos that mention Clift discuss only his erratic on-set behaviour.

⁸³ Memo from Tom Walker to DOS, 11 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection: Files 1951-1958 Indiscretion/Stazione Termini (File 1799.1).

⁸⁴ This was not the first time Selznick had replaced or substituted a cinematographer mid-shoot: on *The Prisoner of Zenda* (John Cromwell, 1937), Bert Glennon was unceremoniously replaced by James Wong Howe after Selznick criticized the quality of the photography. See Keating, pp. 286-87.

⁸⁵ Memo from DOS to Giroi, 2 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Distribution Files 1948-1953 *Stazione Termini/Indiscretion of an American Wife* (File 781.6). 'The boy' was Mary's nephew Paul, played by Richard Beymer.

⁸⁶ De Sica replied that 'if any credit can be so worded as to make it clear that Mr Morris's contribution to the picture is the lighting and the photography of Jennifer's close-ups, I believe I can induce Aldo to accept such credit arrangements'. Memo from De Sica to DOS, 13 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Distribution Files 1948-1953 *Stazione Termini/Indiscretion of an American Wife* (File 781.6). Morris' contract stated that he was 'adviser on the photography' and was 'to be responsible, if so requested by us, either for the close shots of the principal members of the cast or for the entire photography of the said motion picture' (dated 13 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection, *Stazione Termini Contracts* (File 753.5). The contract states that Morris was not obliged to receive any credit for the work, and he did not. Morris wrote that he was treated like a 'leper' by the crew, and described Jones as Selznick's 'magnificent obsession'. Oswald Morris with Geoffrey Bull, *Huston, We Have a Problem: a Kaleidoscope of Filmmaking Memories* (Lanham: Scarecrow, 2006), p. 183 and p. 181.

⁸⁷ Memo from DOS to Giroi, 12 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Distribution Files 1948-1953 *Stazione Termini/Indiscretion of an American Wife* (File 781.6).

⁸⁸ Memo from DOS to Frank Davis, 17 November 1952. HRC DOS Collection, *Stazione Termini Correspondence* (File 781.6).

⁸⁹ Leonard Leff notes Aldo's exquisite use of diagonals in the long shot, and here and elsewhere in the film his creation of an exquisite infinity shot. Commentary to the Criterion DVD of *Indiscretion of an American Wife* (2003).

⁹⁰ Memo from DOS to Giroi, 5 December 1952. Coproductions, Loanouts 1950-1958 Terminal Station (*Stazione Termini*) (File 3330.7).

⁹¹ Memo from DOS to Victor Hoare and Frank Davis, 19 January 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Terminal Station Correspondence (File 782.1). Selznick writes that Morris has switched to a 75mm lens. Ossie Morris in his autobiography wrote that when he arrived on set 'after viewing the available material I had to agree with David that Jennifer had been made to look pretty awful. [...] De Sica always filmed with a 30mm lens, and without diffusion, because it suited his style of stark realism, but this was too harsh for a softer female face'. *Huston, We Have a Problem*, p. 183.

⁹² DOS cutting notes from 29 January 1953. HRC DOS Collection, Terminal Station Dubbing (File 3730.15).

⁹³ This is in response to De Sica's letter that future communication go through his lawyer.

⁹⁴ Selznick memo to De Sica 1 July 1953. HRC DOS Collection Files 1951 - 1958 Indiscretion /*Stazione Termini* (File 1800.1).

⁹⁵ Anderson, p. 14. Selznick justified the cutting of such 'little incidents' through his desire for the film to reach a mainstream audience, and not just 'a handful of lovers of art films' – memo of 1 July 1953, in HRC DOS Collection Files 1951 - 1958 Indiscretion /*Stazione Termini* (File 1800.1).

⁹⁶ DOS letter to De Sica, 23 February 1953. HRC DOS Collection, Files 1951-1958 Indiscretion/*Stazione Termini* (File 1799.3).

⁹⁷ Leff, commentary to the Criterion DVD. Morris wrote that 'De Sica considered people on the streets as important as the principals, while David concentrated on the stars'. *Huston, We Have a Problem*, p. 181.

⁹⁸ See Lawrence, *The Passion of Montgomery Clift* (p. 278) on comparison of these close-ups to *A Place in the Sun* (George Stevens, 1951), starring Clift and Elizabeth Taylor. Shandley says that *Indiscretion* is a film 'dominated by close-ups of faces' (*Runaway Romances*, p. 60).

⁹⁹ Leff says that the close-ups ‘are uneasily grafted onto the “Italian style”’.

¹⁰⁰ Patrick Keating, ‘Time, storytelling and lighting: the case of neorealism’, paper presented at the Screen Studies Conference, Glasgow, 30 June 2018.

¹⁰¹ Mary Ann Doane, ‘The close-up: scale and detail in the cinema’, *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2003), pp. 89-111 (p. 105).

¹⁰² Doane, ‘The close-up’, p. 92.

¹⁰³ Doane, p. 92.

¹⁰⁴ There is an unmentionable subtext in Selznick’s memos, which is that of Jones’ ageing – she was thirty-three during filming. The closest Selznick perhaps gets to this topic is in several mentions of her hands being ‘bad’. Morris also mentions the need to conceal Jones’ ‘double chin’ (p. 191).

¹⁰⁵ Studlar, *Precocious Charms*, p. 162. According to Studlar, Jones was ‘closely identified with Hollywood melodrama’, and her films ‘emphasized a rhetoric of desire played out in melodramatic terms across the star’s body’ (pp. 160-01).

¹⁰⁶ Amy Lawrence points to both Clift’s theatrical training and his experience with the Actors Studio to argue that this film proves Clift’s ability to ‘transcend suffering through acting’ (p. 9). Keri Walsh calls Clift an ‘artist of yearnings and sufferings’. *Mickey Rourke* (London: BFI/Palgrave, 2014), p. 105. Clift also brought experience working on neorealist-style films filmed in Europe such as *The Search* (Fred Zinneman, 1948), and *The Big Lift* (George Seaton, 1950), both shot in Germany. Selznick had originally wanted Marlon Brando for the role of Giovanni.

¹⁰⁷ Laura Mulvey, *Fetishism and Curiosity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 41.

¹⁰⁸ Noa Steimatsky, *The Face on Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 31.

¹⁰⁹ Studlar, p. 161.

¹¹⁰ Hepburn’s style had a huge influence on Italian women at the time: see Réka Buckley, ‘Elsa Martinelli: Italy’s Audrey Hepburn’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol. 26, no. 3 (2006), pp. 327-40.

¹¹¹ See Stephen Gundle on the emphasis on the female body in postwar Italy. *Bellissima: Feminine Beauty and the Idea of Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 142-69. Réka Buckley discusses the glamour of Lucia Bosé, who represented an alternative to Loren et al, but whose youthful figure is also at odds with Jennifer Jones’ more matronly appearance. ‘Dressing the part: ‘Made in Italy’ goes to the movies with Lucia Bosé in *Chronicle of a Love Affair*’, in Louis Bayman and Sergio Rigoletto (eds), *Popular Italian Cinema* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

¹¹² See Lawrence, pp. 278-82 on changes to the restaurant scene and how Selznick removed signs of adult sexuality. Zavattini’s objections to the changes and the lessening of realism they cause can be read in notes from October-November 1952, in HRC DOS Collection, Terminal Station – Story Files – Zavattini (File 3147.6).

¹¹³ Before filming, Selznick made a telling statement not only on the equation of realism and sex, but on how he would protect his wife from ‘European realism’: ‘European censors will permit more realism than American or English audiences and censors.’ Proposed producer Salvo D’Angelo ‘wants a free hand. He can’t have it – not with my wife or with my star!’ Memo from DOS to Jenia Reissar and Frank Davis, 14 March 1951. HRC DOS Collection, Distribution Files 1948-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion of an American Wife (File 781.1).

¹¹⁴ ‘So many people are referring to *Terminal Station* as “a *Brief Encounter*” type of story that I am beginning to worry whether anyone will see in it more than that. Because of this type of comment we left out a suicide attempt by the woman’. Memo from DOS to Frank Davis, 1 December 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Files 1951-1958 Indiscretion/Stazione Termini (File 1799.2). However, many of the reviews comment on the film as a poor copy of Lean’s film.

¹¹⁵ See John Mercer and Martin Shingler, *Melodrama: Genre, Style, Sensibility* (London: Wallflower, 2004), pp. 21-24.

¹¹⁶ Hipkins, ‘Francesca’s salvation or damnation?’, p. 159. Hipkins is drawing on Geoffrey Nowell-Smith’s influential piece, ‘Minnelli and melodrama’, *Screen*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1977), pp. 113-18.

¹¹⁷ DOS memo to Jenia Reissar and Frank Davis, 14 March 1951. HRC DOS Collection, Distribution Files 1948-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion of an American Wife (File 781.1).

¹¹⁸ It is interesting that a story of traumatic female wandering, the ‘Story of Caterina’, written by Zavattini for the portmanteau film *L’amore in città/Love in the City* (1953), and featuring non-

professional Caterina Rigoglioso, has had relatively little critical attention from scholars of neorealism.

¹¹⁹ Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (New York : Pantheon Books, 1988), p. 382.

¹²⁰ Helen Hanson, *Hollywood Heroines: Women in Film Noir and the Female Gothic Film* (London: IB Tauris, 2007), pp. 44-45.

¹²¹ DOS to Jenia Reissar, 17 September 1952. HRC DOS Collection, Production Files 1946-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion (File 670.5).

¹²² DOS to Nancy Stern, 23 September 1952, in *ibid.* McCullers was hired but Selznick quickly deemed her work ‘unsatisfactory’ (cable to Reissar, 16 October 1952, in *ibid.*). He then hired Truman Capote, who is credited with writing some of the English dialogue.

¹²³ Memo from DOS to Giroi and De Sica, 13 November 1953. HRC DOS Collection, Production Files 1946-1953 Stazione Termini/Indiscretion (File 670.5).

¹²⁴ Rushing, ‘De Sica’s *The Children are Watching Us*’, p. 105. Despite Selznick’s early enthusiasm for Zavattini’s work which he described as a crucial factor in his interest in the project, his take on Zavattini swiftly curdled. Even before filming, while praising Zavattini’s ‘unmelodramatic approach’, Selznick criticizes Zavattini’s jealousy of the other writers who may be considered. DOS memos to Giroi and Reissar, 11 September 1952, HRC DOS Collection, Correspondence Indiscretion (formerly TS) Sept-Oct 1952 (File 1798.5).

¹²⁵ DOS memo to Giroi, 190 February 1954. ‘It will have established a mood for the audience which should be very helpful, as well as giving the extra length’. HRC DOS Collection, Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (File 1759.4).

¹²⁶ Menzies of course had worked with Selznick on *Gone With the Wind*, while Howe’s collaboration with Selznick dated back to *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1937), where he had been hired, interestingly, to reshoot close-ups. See note 84.

¹²⁷ At the same time Cahn was also writing the hit song ‘Three Coins in the Fountain’. ‘Autumn in Rome’ and ‘Indiscretion’ were recorded and released as singles by Peggy Lee and Jo Stafford respectively. Another movie tie-in that DOS persuaded Columbia to finance was the Paul Weston album, *Songs for Jennifer*, which featured instrumental versions of the two songs along with others from Jones’ filmography.

¹²⁸ It featured in urban noirs such as *I Wake Up Screaming* (H. Bruce Humberstone, 1941), *The Dark Corner* (Henry Hathaway, 1946), *Kiss of Death* (Henry Hathaway, 1947) and *Cry of the City* (Robert Siodmak, 1948), but also in *How to Marry a Millionaire* (Jean Negulesco, 1953), which opened while Selznick was planning the short. See Matthew Malsky, ‘Sounds of the city: Alfred Newman’s “Street Scene” and urban modernity’, in Jay Beck and Tony Grajeda (eds), *Lowering the Boom: Critical Studies in Film Sound* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008), pp. 105-22.

¹²⁹ Malsky, p. 106. In fact, one of the titles mooted by Selznick for the film’s American release was the Gershwin-esque *Rhapsody in Rome*.

¹³⁰ Memo from DOS to publicist Arthur Jacobs, 9 February 1954. HRC DOS Collection, Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (File 1759.4).

¹³¹ DOS memo to Bob Ferguson, 2 April 1954. HRC DOS Collection, Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (1759.6).

¹³² *Indiscretion* ‘should find its strongest appeal with the distaff side of the audience’, wrote *Motion Picture Daily*, 21 April 1954. *Film Bulletin* said that the ‘soap-opera overtones will appeal to female audiences’ (3 May 1954); it ‘likely will be a tear-jerker for distaffers [...] the film is aimed directly at feminine emotion’, review in *Motion Picture Exhibitor*, 21 April 1954.

¹³³ Turner memo to Frank Davis, 17 February 1954. HRC DOS Collection, Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (File 1759.4).

¹³⁴ This did not materialize, however. See memo of 22 January 1954 in *ibid.*

¹³⁵ See Lawrence, pp. 50-51. Both Jones and Clift refused to do publicity interviews for the film.

¹³⁶ For the plot synopsis in magazine promotions he did not want ‘young girl’ to be used to describe Mary, but ‘young Philadelphia matron’ or ‘young matron’. Another title considered by Selznick was *A Philadelphia Housewife in Rome*.

¹³⁷ Memo of 27 February 1954. HRC DOS Collection, Coproductions, Loanouts 1950 - 1954 Portrait of a Lady, Terminal Station/Stazione Termini (File 1759.4). *Film Bulletin*'s review said that the film should play in 'better-class houses'.

¹³⁸ Keating notes the tensions generated by Selznick's tendency to always hire top-class artisans and professionals and then micromanage them: 'Shooting for Selznick', p. 280.

¹³⁹ See John Thornton Caldwell, *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 1-36.

¹⁴⁰ Ironically one of the complaints in the audience preview cards Selznick commissioned is 'too many close-ups', as well as 'one-note melodrama'. HRC DOS Collection: Preview Cards 1954 Terminal Station (Box 4591).

¹⁴¹ See Mino Argentieri on *Stazione Termini* as 'a neorealism reduced to mimicking itself, to a simulacrum, a commonplace' and as 'a new rhetoric'. 'De Sica "metteur en scène"', in Lino Micciché (ed), *De Sica: autore, regista, attore* (Venice: Marsilio, 1992), pp. 55-69 (p. 61 and p. 62).

¹⁴² Schatz, *The Genius of the System*, pp. 406-07.

¹⁴³ Although the film was not a critical or commercial success in Italy, a 'referendum' on it was conducted by the magazine *Cinema* in April 1953: the film was shown in a cinema in Milan and the audience filled in response cards. The film was generally liked, and female spectators in particular said they enjoyed its sentimental aspects. '*Stazione Termini è piaciuto al pubblico*', *Cinema*, no. 108, (30 April 1953), pp. 222-23.