

Magnetic Encounters: Listening to Carla Lonzi's Tape Recordings

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Tape Recording as Means and Method

Lucio Fontana: What do you want me to tell you if you don't tell me what I need to talk about.... what I need to say, more or less...? You have to ask me questions, more or less, to get answers.

Carla Lonzi: Let's start from a random point, because I only desire...

Pino Pascali: I would prefer something like an essay title. Ha!... Ha!...

Mario Nigro: I could quit being a painter, a plastic producer and do other things... I don't know, an explorer, a warrior, a Franciscan monk, I don't know.

Enrico Castellani: I have forgotten what I told you last year and I don't know what to tell you this year.

Giulio Paolini: I seem to have spoken about some works already, but, out of courtesy, I'm happy to repeat myself.

Getulio Alviani: Here, let's just do it this way, easy for everyone.

Lonzi: Rome, 13...

Luciano Fabro: ... September. Early afternoon. Try to listen if the recording and volume are fine. So: Carla, tell me something. Excite me.

Salvatore Scarpitta: You who are so beautiful...

Pietro Consagra: I would like to say this here.

Giulio Turcato: You should do something like this, but discursive, which doesn't involve you asking questions.

Lonzi: Yeah yeah... no no... in fact, I have always...

Mimmo Rotella: Really..... Can you repeat? I did not understand.

Lonzi: You give your pictures very specific titles, *The School of Athens*, *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, *Eros and Psyche*, which recall the subjects of the authors of the Renaissance. Besides, the world of antiquity and its myths have gained new interest since psychoanalysis. Have you made this connection?

Cy Twombly: (silence)

Carla Accardi: I am so instinctive, these days, that if I lose interest for a moment the thought goes away.

Fabro: I will tell you that later because that comes later.

Lonzi: Ah, that later... So tell me in order of time.

Fabro: In order of time?

Lonzi: In order of stimulation.ⁱ

From its very first lines, Carla Lonzi's *Autoritratto* announces itself as a book that is both startling and captivating. The text, which derives from a transcription of conversations that Lonzi recorded with 14 artists working in Italy after the war, is strongly marked by the colloquialism of oral speech. Some of the artists' sentences sound ungrammatical, and readers gain a strong sense of the rhythm of their conversation, animated by anaphora and an abundance of ellipses that literally punctuate the field of the page. It is not immediately obvious what they are talking about, nor who is speaking to whom. Where are they? They appear to be chatting, but do not seem to make sense to one another. Are they playing games with each other? Or is it the reader they are playing with?

Lonzi carefully reorganised the transcriptions using an arbitrary editing method that eludes the contingencies of time and place captured by the original tapes. Thus the artists are artificially brought together in a symposium that never really took place. We could easily define *Autoritratto* as a collage – not only for the unexpected effects of the editing on the legibility of the text, but also because the flow of the book is interspersed with 105 illustrations seemingly unrelated to what we read on the page.ⁱⁱ These opening exchanges are accompanied by a reproduction of Giulio Paolini's *174* (1965), itself a reproduction of Kurt Kranz's diagram explaining the development of modern art

from 1900 to 1970, which appeared on page 174 of the Italian translation of his *Capire l'arte moderna* (Fig. 2.1).ⁱⁱⁱ With this juxtaposition Lonzi seemingly announces her aim to replace the chronologies of art history with the tempos of life. “I wanted to make a book of digressions,” she says early in the book.^{iv} The resonances created by the reorientations of two texts, therefore, offer useful material for reflection on the function of criticism and academic knowledge for life, the relationship between freedom and creativity and, above else, the rapport between self and writing.

Ostensibly, this is a book of interviews, a compilation of audio recordings which disrupt the linearity of time while also splitting the positions of the subject in front of its own voice. In her compelling analysis of oral history in the visual arts, Linda Sandino stresses the importance of the artist interview in overcoming the solipsism of critical hermeneutics: “Interviews provide the circumstance and opportunity for retrospective reflection, and a means of closing the gap between the self-that-was, the current speaking self, and the projected self”.^v Sandino proposes a fruitful comparison between the genre of life writing and the artist interview, in which another identity is created from the encounters between people, objects and artworks that are captured on tape: the self abandons its assumed original space to enter the space of another.^{vi} In the field of the visual arts, the audio-recorded interview is often used to explore the private aspects of an artist’s life behind the work. But the possibility of capturing the intimacy of an artist on the tape should perhaps be considered as the ultimate fantasy of a dated modernist myth.

By the mid-1960s, recorded interviews with artists had become a common practice in the international art world. The mythology of Jackson Pollock was created through this medium, and from 1964 audio and video interviews were instrumental in helping Andy Warhol to performatively fabricate his artistic persona.^{vii} Warhol’s founding of the magazine *Interview* in 1969 was part of the making of a celebrity culture that capitalised on gossip as a mode of queer world making.^{viii} Yet, the confessional mode of the interview ultimately satisfied the growing voyeurism of postwar mass culture which distinguished the “interview society” that, according to Paul Atkinson and David Silverman, put great value and emphasis on lived experience. For them, the interview embodies “a

pervasive device for the production of selves, biographies, and experiences. It furnishes the viewer/reader/hearer with the promise of privileged – however fleeting – glimpses into the private domain of the speaker.”^{ix} The emergence of this confessional mode signalled the rise of new forms of audio-visual voyeurism also in a type of art writing increasingly committed to the exposure of the artist’s true self in public.

However, these effects are not bound to the technology of audio recording, but derive from a certain use of the recorded interview within the parameters established by the mythologisation of the artist’s life that feeds the cultural fantasies of art history, the museum, and the art market.^x Within the field of the visual arts, another use of the audio-recorded interview is in fact possible – one in which the tape is cherished not for its high fidelity to the private domain of the artist, but because it opens up a space for the transformation of the speakers through a split of representation. What kinds of changes are triggered by the potential, implicit in a recording, to listen and listen again, but also to rewind and erase? As a mode of voice inscription, audio recording is at once permanent and mutable, as the tape can accommodate new audio grafts that radically change the form and meaning of a previous track. Taking into account the splitting of the self that is afforded by the technology of audio recording, rather than assuming that the main value of the medium lies in its ability to document reality, is a crucial starting point to reconceptualise the tape-recorded artist interview as an experimental space for the disidentification of selves.

“A mechanical means is totally useless if we attribute powers to it that should belong to us,”

Lonzi writes in an unpublished manuscript from 1980:

I hate the collection of materials in any form, plus it would seem to me an abuse of power to reduce someone to the object of my study. I need to feel that the act of stopping something in another person does not give me more rights than what he can take for himself. Which in a sense can mean that he is convinced of being powerful: which is to say, a conscience. As for the rest, the tape recorder is completely foreign to me: it collects useless trash. It gives the

illusion that one can grasp what is, without having any effect. It deceives you about the possibility that you can capture it without intervention.^{xi}

Lonzi's position here seems consistent with that of the oral historian Alessandro Portelli, according to whom the use of the audio-recorded interview does not imply that the interviewer is automatically giving a voice to the interviewee.^{xii} Lonzi turned to the tape recorder because she wanted to move away from what she regarded as the arrogance of the art critic to speak for the artist. Yet, she did not conceive of audio recording as a concession to the artist; instead, as I suggest below, she used it to upset the power relation between artist and critic, but also find a different space for her self to resonate with another.

Published in 1969, at the apex of Lonzi's career in the art world, *Autoritratto* also assumes the function of a letter of resignation from art criticism, which Lonzi found inauthentic and, in her own words, “*un mestiere fasullo*” (a phoney profession).^{xiii} It was after the publication of this book that Lonzi, freed from the interference of professional work, dedicated herself fully to feminism. Many scholars have already written about the impact of *Autoritratto* both within art history and on the feminist movement in postwar Italy. Particular emphasis has been placed on the way in which Lonzi engaged with a radical critique of spectatorship as a model of passive participation that could be found in both art criticism and the structure of sexual difference. As Giovanna Zapperi points out, if in *Autoritratto* the act of looking is identified with the power of art criticism, throughout the 1970s, Lonzi came to identify the exclusion of woman with her role as a spectator of male culture.^{xiv}

In the following passage from a text published by Rivolta Femminile in 1971, entitled ‘Assenza della donna dai momenti celebrativi della manifestazione creativa maschile’ (On woman's absence from the celebratory moments of male creative manifestation), Lonzi's voice on this issue comes through clearly: “The creativity of men speaks to the creativity of other men while woman, as client and spectator of that dialogue, is assigned a status which excludes competition.”^{xv} In a patriarchal culture, woman becomes the neutral witness of a male version of history. Based on this

realisation, the text radically suggests that in withdrawing from the celebration of male creativity, women also refuse to be defined by it as passive receivers: “The artist depends upon woman to glorify his work and she, until she begins her own liberation, is happy to oblige. The work of art cannot afford to lose the security inherent in her exclusively receptive role.”^{xvi} Lonzi had already started to delineate an analysis of the passive role of the spectator with regard to the position of the art critic as a spectator. Writing in her diary in 1973, she muses on *Autoritratto* with some regrets: “My disappointment with artists was this, that they didn’t reciprocate, they let me remain a spectator.”^{xvii} Despite quitting art criticism in 1970, Lonzi carried on thinking about how to nourish the fragile entanglement between self, writing, and life that had first been revealed to her by working on the audio-recorded interviews. Another passage from her diary, dated 18 August 1972, sheds light on how she saw the artist as uniquely placed to reflect on the complex geometry of sexual difference:

The fact that the artist expects an increasingly adequate spectator reveals the impasse of knowledge confined to a particular role. For this reason it is incorrect to speak of creativity in feminism or it must be understood that it is not a patriarchal type of creativity: the self-consciousness of one is incomplete and freezes if it is not reflected in the self-consciousness of another.^{xviii}

In this essay I maintain that the tape recorder helped Lonzi with thinking how to break the binary structure of spectatorship that upholds patriarchal culture. I am therefore interested in the tape recorder as both *means* and *method*, affording her the possibility to disidentify, as art critic and woman, from the passive position expected by male culture. At the same time, the magnetic tape offered more than a metaphor for resonance among speakers, as it created the possibility to share a form of speech that remained in the space of a separate conversation. While most Lonzi scholars focus on the discourse of orality inherent to the dialogical essence of the artist interview, here I wish to turn to the aurality embedded in audio recording to

reimagine new forms of relations that may occur *in spite of* the self that is fixed on the magnetic tape.

N. Katherine Hayles draws an important distinction between orality (capturing the voice) and aurality (listening to the voice) when she thinks about the revolution implicated by audio recording in the technological reconfiguration of modernist literature. The first lines of *Autoritatto* that I have quoted are obviously a transcription of orality into print. We know that story and its such transcriptions that make the voice immediately legible. However, Hayles suggests, “there is another story to be told, one that would see aurality and writing not as indicating separate domains but suggesting a bodily response to certain literary possibilities.”^{xxix}

Many groups in the transnational feminist movement of the 1970s put the body at the centre of their discussions – not only as a subject of political and aesthetic discussion, but as a literal conduit to develop new forms of relation among women.^{xx} The presence of the tape recorder in the room indeed registered the emphasis on the physicality and self-expression that was essential to the group practice of *autocoscienza* in Italy and beyond.^{xxi} Maria Gabriella Frabotta comments on the habit of recording and faithfully transcribing the words of each member in the groups as the mark of a commitment to resolve the problem between writing and practice.^{xxii} Audio recordings and transcriptions are part of a whole *letteratura grigia* (grey literature) of 1970s feminism, alongside diaries, letters and flyers.^{xxiii} Hence, in telling the history of feminism, it is impossible to impose a chronology on a type of speech that in fact refused a consideration of time that was external to the groups.

Paola di Cori illuminates this important difference: “If external, social time is a time of duration, chronology and succession, the time of *autocoscienza* is placed in disagreement with it.”^{xxiv} Feminism is not a historical decade, but a transformative experience. Thus, one way of speaking about the new speech that entered the space of the everyday thanks to the advent of feminism is to embrace discontinuity, repetition and asynchronicity – all modes of temporality that I try to derive from the tape recording as means and method.

Magnetic Encounters

The patenting of a magnetic recording machine that replaced steel tape with the cheaper film tape after World War II made this technology more widely available in the general market. The affordability of tape recording on film also presented the consumer with the opportunity to become a producer, a freedom that was not accommodated by the old phonograph.^{xxv} In 1964, Philips publicised the EL3551 magnetophone, which was then available for purchase in France for 695 francs (**Fig. 2.2 and 2.3**). A model similar to the one used by Lonzi to record her conversations with artists, this magnetophone was the first commercialised by Philips for the use of the general public, as opposed to specialised users. The adverts illustrate two domestic interiors in two very specific moments of middle-class life. The tape recorder in the foreground stands in front of two family gatherings: one around the table at a wedding, and the other around the presents under the Christmas tree. The message of the ads only reinforces the meaning of the images for the domestic use of the tape recorder: “Make the family sound album!” The democratisation of a technology of recording and reproduction is thus entangled with a representation of the everyday that contributed to the social reproduction of gender norms after the war. Firmly associated with the key moments in the life of a white middle-class family, the Philips magnetophone was as much a marker of social status as an instrument of the privatisation of personal relations.

Lonzi’s magnetophone appears in one photograph included in *Autoritratto*, dating from the time she was in Minneapolis with Consagra, which shows her engrossed in the work of transcribing the conversations (**Fig. 2.4**). Interestingly, Lonzi does not chose a representation of the magnetophone in action while recording her meetings with the artists. In this photo, instead, the artists are only present as an absence, as we see Lonzi intently listening to their voices on the reel. This photograph does not reproduce the assumed destination of the tape recorder championed by the image in the Philips ads.^{xxvi} Here the magnetophone appears to be only in replaying mode, not in recording mode.

Today you can be close to the artists by listening to them and then listening to them again, if you did not understand them the first time ... But, how can you, after you've done a gesture like this, which is a gesture of absolute impotence on the part of the critic, because if you take a tape recorder it means that, as a critic, you no longer exist in the traditional sense. How can you do that again 'this one yes, the other not ...'. You cannot do it.^{xxvii}

If the tape recorder helped Lonzi to explore the everyday in the proximity of the artists, this only became meaningful to her as an attempt to "start from herself" (*partire da sé*).^{xxviii} At the same time, she shows that the implementation of audio recording in the praxis of art writing obviously interferes with the power of the critic to validate and discriminate – a function that has been socially attributed to the profession since the eighteenth-century salons.^{xxix} Confronted with a "gesture of impotence," the art critic is almost emasculated by the loss of that authority which the recorder takes away. We need to turn to the words of the only other woman in *Autoritratto*, the artist Carla Accardi, to start gauging the implications of Lonzi's handling of the tape recorder as also, and indeed foremost, an exercise in listening and self-transformation.

"When one wants to make a book like this, they should arrive to even put so much of themselves, to be a part of their life, you know what I mean?" Accardi says.^{xxx} The artist thought that the critic had given herself an impossible task to achieve. Nonetheless, she recognised her friend's aspirations to feel close to the creativity that she found among the artists. "Hence, precisely the effort that you do in making a book which you are editing with some disordered pieces... you want to get as close as possible, as possible, right? To save about others but, in the end, to save about yourself, in the end, right?"^{xxxi} Accardi understood that Lonzi was primarily trying to bridge the gap between life and writing in ways that were totally unexpected.

When we read *Autoritratto* we notice that the medium is never concealed; on the contrary, its materiality is part of the artists' speech. In a few instances, the tape recorder reveals itself by pointing to the inscription of the body. Its mnemotechnics seem to give Accardi particular anxiety.

When she struggles to remember something that Lonzi had told her earlier, she confesses that “I’ll remember it for sure, but it is now that I have this recorder here that I agonise.”^{xxxii} Meanwhile, Getulio Alviani belabours the relationship between technology, form and use by indicating the microphone that stands in front of him but remains invisible to us readers.^{xxxiii} Irreverently, Lonzi’s eight-year-old son Tita (Battista Lena) at one point blows raspberries into the microphone: “Oh... Prrr! So we can record it, and I’ll be famous too...”^{xxxiv} Tita’s intromission is interesting not only because it interrupts the conversation among adults, but also because it fragments the social identity of the art critic by handing down a rare image of Lonzi as a working mother.

All of these instances alert the reader to the text’s surrounds of sound, while also exposing audio recording as a technology of presence. A certain tangibility of the body is one of the most prominent hallmarks of these conversations, as Lonzi decided not to smooth out “the grain of the voice” once transferred onto the page.^{xxxv} Our reading is thus marked by the presence of onomatopoeia, exclamations, ellipses, vocalisations and other guttural performances that convey a variety of effects, from laughter to accent. Fabro tries to emulate the sound of an electric fan: “fu-fu-fu-fu-fu-fu-fu-fu-fu-fu-f...,” or expresses his excitement with “ih!... ih!...”^{xxxvi} Accardi emits sounds like “iiih!” whenever she needs to convey a sense of exaggeration.^{xxxvii} Giulio Paolini mumbles at the beginning of his sentence: “Ehm... ehm...”^{xxxviii} Salvatore Scarpitta tests the recorder with “One, two, three, four... Scarpida... Scarpida...,” and Lonzi reproduces his American accent when pronouncing the dental in his surname.^{xxxix} As I argue elsewhere, in her attempt to maintain the authenticity sound in her transcriptions, Lonzi not only pointed to a continuity between life and speech, but also sought to explore the capacity of the voice to exceed its use only as a verbal medium. In this way, these vocal expressions show that the voice has an aesthetic, which is to say sensory, dimension that exists in spite of language, as an excess of the body.^{xl}

Adriana Cavarero elaborates on this essential difference by stressing that the voice should not be considered only as support for the word, because, before being symbolised, the voice is first and foremost sound: somatic charges, affects that are not bound to fixed meanings. The scope of the

voice, she explains, is constitutively broader than that of the word. For Cavarero, the voice is not only a means of communication and oral transmission, but also a record of the economy of the drives linked to an intersubjective rhythm of bodies that destabilises the rational order upon which the phallogocentric system of communication is built. Both unique and relational, voices are always embodied and touched – contact that occurs physically through the vibration of the larynx in the mouth and tympanum in the ear.^{xli}

However, the use of the tape recorder also seems to offer a method for rethinking art criticism and art history. Thus, in the foreword of *Autoritratto* Lonzi challenges her readers with a striking question about one of the fathers of the discipline: “If it had been possible to record what the artist used to say in their everyday conversations, would we still need to read Vasari’s *Lives* to find a contact with them?”^{xlii} The question throws a dart in the very centre of the historiographical infrastructure of art history, and, by means of an anachronism, exposes the very capacity of tape recording to redefine the order of time. At the same time, Lonzi openly undoes the biographical model of art history that revolves around the coupling of the artist and his work, epitomised in the modernist project of the artist’s monograph.^{xliii} “Artists live for what others make them live,” she muses further on, but if Vasari’s profession could be justified in his own time, contemporary critics have become an anachronism, “because this is no longer about making one live, but rendering sterile.”^{xliv} Lonzi believed that an artist’s work already contained more life than the summary provided by an art historian, and her fanciful positioning of a tape recorder in the time of the Renaissance invites us to interrogate the very aims of art writing. Vasari’s *Lives*, Lonzi points out, would be more useful in connecting us with the author, “and his personal charge.”^{xlv} By means of magnetic polarisation, Lonzi seems to capitalise on the technological imagination of the medium to capture the presence of the body of the art historian. Lonzi found ridiculous the idea that an art critic learns about art and artists at university, and turned to audio recording as a means to obviate that paradox. The use of audio recording, therefore, was never meant as an enhancement of the biographical model of Vasari with the confessional mode of the artist interview. What her

reflections on the magnetophone slowly unfold is a fundamental rethinking of the relationship between what is vital (*vitale*) and what is lived (*vissuto*) in the matter of art history, which ultimately ties art history to life writing.

According to Michael Davidson, audio recording is a technology through which “the voice achieves enough autonomy to regard itself as present unto itself.”^{xlvi} It is thanks to this shift that recording can activate a new path of discovery for the self. Reflecting ten years later in a diary entry, Lonzi writes that “in *Autoritratto*, by getting them to speak, I wanted to bring them back to a concept of themselves, and to give effect to my presence in a different way.”^{xlvii} *Autoritratto* might have had little impact on the academic and critical scene of the late 1960s, but it changed Lonzi’s life radically.^{xlviii}

Broadcasting, Recording and Listening

In 1963, Lonzi engaged in a direct polemic against the omniscience of the art critic in an article titled ‘La solitudine del critico’ [The critic’s solitude], a relentless analysis of the solipsism of art writing bound to the “habit to devolve to the authority of the *patres*.”^{xlix} While the explicit target of her piece was the Marxist art historian Giulio Carlo Argan, I take the object of her critique to be an ideal male critic who maintains his authority by distancing or, in her own words, isolating himself from both artists and audience. Writing in support of the artists’ contestation at the 1963 Congress of Verrucchio,¹ Lonzi concludes that art criticism, like art itself, should not depend on values and ideals that could not be verified: “An experiencing of life somehow parallel to that seizing of freedom determined by contemporary artworks should be for the critic the only means to establish a *contact* with them.”^{li} By emphasising the semantics of touch, Lonzi seems to anticipate one of the key motivations that led her to embrace the magnetic technology of the tape recorder as a material means – as opposed to the abstraction of ideology – to get closer to the artists. It was arguably to overcome the remoteness of the position of the art critic that she started to experiment with the magnetophone – to converse with the artists, instead of speaking on their behalf.

Lonzi's use of the audio-recorded interview was therefore a means to overcome the division of creative labour established by the institution of art criticism in which one side makes things that the other feels entitled to comment on. I do not seek to suggest that the tape recorder represented for Lonzi a panacea to all of the wrongs of the "phoney profession." It may be more plausible to say that it represented "*uno sbocco*," a way out:

Because what really annoys me... no, what I like a lot in the artists and annoys me in the art critics, where there is none of that, is this sense of measure, this moving from one topic to another. Instead, the art critic is always a dogged person (*una persona accanita*). To me... I cannot bear the feeling of the mind that rages on one thing (*la mente che si accanisce su una cosa*).^{lii}

Lonzi's choice of words suggests that the art critic is animalised by his profession. This almost pathological characterisation of the art critic seems to return in the conversation recorded with Accardi, which offers interesting material for analysis of the germs of a feminist critique of the debilitating relationship between men and knowledge within the institutions they have created to maintain their power. Accardi is the most in tune with Lonzi's critique of writing, pointing out in one spirited passage that "in many of these books there's the anxiety of the man, of the male scholar, the sage, the philosopher of not resolving, of not being able to give definitive answers."^{liii} A specific type of writer, the art critic in Lonzi's imagination is a little bureaucrat and an arriviste who appropriates the work of artists without sharing their way of life:

Because I cannot understand how some critics can speak of artists and then conduct a life such that they're either phoney when they speak of the artists or phoney when they live their life, because one cannot understand how one person can be this dissociated.^{liv}

Lonzi's frustration with the hypocrisy of art criticism went beyond an act of moralising judgement to encompass an entire social system in which the art critic becomes an agent. As she announces in the foreword of *Autoritratto*, the recorded conversations with the artists respond less to the need to understand their practice than to the need to spend time with someone else in a manner that could be

wholly satisfying: “I have felt the work of art as the possibility of an encounter and an invitation to partake addressed by the artist directly to each one of us.”^{lv} Lonzi was aware of the implications of the tape recorder for the institution of art criticism in general, and for her authority as an art critic in particular. In her quest to move away from the solipsism of the art critic, she turned to the capacity of the tape recorder to get closer to the vital moments of creativity that she had found among the artists, but also to produce a transformation. “I think that, when one does the art critic, he should examine of himself, experience and absorb from this sector of activity,” Lonzi says in *Autoritratto*, “you must enter in the thing, go down in this thing, you absorb it, and you transform yourself while you live, isn’t it?”^{lvi} While she becomes aware that the tape recording has taken away from her the authority necessary to the profession, she starts to wonder if she has become an artist herself. “I am no longer a stranger,” she answers indirectly.^{lvii}

A certain familiarity with the translation of the voice into text also came from her ongoing collaboration with the radio show *L’Approdo* aired by RAI. A broad selection of Lonzi’s reviews for the programme made it into a trimestral publication by the same name. However, the conservative position of the editorial board, under the influence of Roberto Longhi, Lonzi’s former tutor at the University of Florence, and the commitment of the magazine to the middlebrow meant that Lonzi often had limited agency in determining the themes and tone of her writing.^{lviii}

Writing for a radio broadcast must have tuned Lonzi in to the complexities not only of the translation of visual experience into words, but also, and most importantly, of writing a text that could be read out. In the very first issue of *L’Approdo*, Riccardo Bacchelli mused that the radio demanded a different kind of verbal exposition, a different kind of voice: “a measured and discreet style, more like the *conversation* person to person, rather than the oration to a crowd or the recite for an audience.”^{lix} On the challenges that radio posed specifically to the treatment of the visual arts, Longhi elaborated in another short but dense essay, which also appeared in the first issue of the magazine.^{lx} Entitled ‘Sinopia per le arti figurative’ (Underdrawing for the figurative arts), the essay pointed out that, compared with a commentator on a literary work, an art critic on the radio has to

confront different problems, starting from the fact that a work of visual art needs to be translated, using a different art, into words. Once on air, the speech of the art critic resembles the underdrawing of a fresco, that the listener can use like a ‘track’ to join the dots of a path towards the original text, which is the work of art. Longhi imagined the role of the art critic on the radio to be about training, almost jogging the visual memory of listeners to make them better appreciate the “rapport” between one work and another indicated by the words of the art critic.^{lxi} In agreement with the aims of similar radio programmes abroad, like the BBC’s *The Listener*, which also appeared as a weekly publication, Longhi hoped that mass media would contribute to the social improvement of public taste.^{lxii} It is in this direction that *L’Approdo* ultimately aspired to become a platform of cultural regeneration in postwar Italy.^{lxiii}

Interestingly, in his essay Longhi also suggests that the radio gives artists of the past and the present the opportunity to speak for themselves, or engage with critics whose writing has become an art in and of itself. However, one need only glance at the list of names advanced by Longhi – Cellini, Vasari, Carrà, De Pisis, Baudelaire, Ruskin – to gauge the limitations of such a proposition. Longhi never gave up the connoisseurial preoccupation with quality and tradition, concluding that “in a radio, and that is in an *auditory* programme, one would still need to make use of some *literature*.”^{lxiv} In his view, if the radio could make room for artists’ voices, it was only insofar as those voices (Longhi lists only male names) echoed that of the institution they were called on to represent.

In the same essay, Longhi continually stresses the physicality of art writing, and explains that the peculiarity of the art critic working for *L’Approdo* lies in the need to travel and report back on works or exhibitions that they have actually seen: “the art critic will never dismiss, and rightly so, the sporty and touristic take of the traveller, the explorer, the pioneer.”^{lxv} In describing the task of the art critic on the radio, Longhi therefore also prescribed a set of approaches to the job that Longhi was about to take up in a few months. However, while Longhi engaged with the potential of the new means of communication only to endorse the traditional values of academic art history, I

suggest that the challenges posed by writing for the radio oriented Lonzi's critical imagination in a dramatically different direction. Indeed, when she started to record her conversations with artists in the mid-1960s, she arguably revolutionised the intuitions of her former tutor by pushing the possibility of letting the artists speak for themselves to the limits of art criticism itself. By turning to the tape recorder, Lonzi showed concern not so much with improving her own critical voice as with finding a novel way of being with artists.

At around the time that Lonzi started to use the magnetophone, Lonzi also embarked on a collaboration with *marcatré*, the avant-garde magazine founded in 1963 by the art historian Eugenio Battisti. This new cultural magazine stood out among others of its time for its interdisciplinary approach, captivating design and short but incisive critical insights into contemporary culture. Lonzi's position at *marcatré*, however, was relatively marginal: she printed only one article, five transcripts of conversations and a few excerpts from exhibition catalogues that she had published elsewhere. Nevertheless, this magazine provided her with an open platform to experiment with a different kind of writing. *marcatré* was particularly committed to giving space to a plurality of voices often gleaned from round tables and questionnaires, thus familiarising its readers with a colloquial style in which different writing registers alternated.^{lxvi} As Laura Iamurri has already noticed, beyond the commitment to capture and disseminate contemporary debates as they happened, the editorial board of *marcatré* was particularly interested in the use of new recording media to broadcast and disseminate sound and the human voice. The magazine welcomed contemporary studies in folk and ethnomusicology associated with the research team of the Nuovo Canzoniere Italiano.^{lxvii} Indeed, following in the footsteps of the anthropologist Ernesto de Martino, new research in both sociology and ethno-anthropology in Italy was transformed by amply reassessing oral culture to counter the hegemonic traditions of written historical sources and narration. Thus, in the years following the war, the tape recording of rhymes and popular songs and, above all, the use of the recorded interview to reach out to underrepresented fringes of Italian society became radical means of investigation.^{lxviii}

Between 1966 and 1967, five conversations with Luciano Fabro, Carla Accardi, Jannis Kounellis, Philip King and Pino Pascali appeared on *marcatré* in a special section of the magazine aptly called ‘Discorsi’. By this time, Lonzi had already started to use transcripts of recorded conversations instead of the single-authored essays traditionally expected of an art critic in exhibition catalogues.^{lxix} Taking up the tape recorder must therefore be interpreted as a symptom of Lonzi’s desire to find a new language and jettison traditional forms of art writing that opposed the artist and the critic, in favour of the creation of a space for the encounter between the two.

The Subject Beside Itself

Lonzi considered writing as the primary site of her critical intervention to dismantle the myth of male creativity, in the Hegelian traditions of art, literature and religion, that men have created to mirror their own power. In the opening lines of her ground-breaking essay ‘Let’s Spit on Hegel’ (1970) she states that “[t]he feminine problem is the relationship of any woman – deprived as she is of power, of history, of culture, of a role of her own – to any man: his power, his history, his culture, his absolute role.”^{lxx} For Lonzi, the advent of feminism not only shattered the chronological continuity of history, but also demolished the monologue of patriarchal history. Yet such a revolution could not come simply from achieving equality with men; it had to be built on woman’s difference, which Lonzi identified in “her millennial absence from history.”^{lxxi} Lonzi openly invited women to profit from this absence, steeped in the epistemologies of sexual difference; she famously thought that women’s recognition of each other, not their equality to men, was the authentic project of a feminine revolt.

Rethinking women’s position in history as a cultural void requires a different form of engagement to experiment with living in the absence of a predetermined identity. As Annarosa Buttarelli beautifully puts it, Lonzi’s writing sought to establish “a lack of definitive identification with something that has been internally constructed with the help and complacency of the culture that speaks of women.”^{lxxii} Thus, Lonzi invited women to sabotage every aspect of culture that

ignored their oppression. Deculturation, she famously states, is a feminist action.^{lxxiii} But how does writing become a tool of deculturation? Neither a refuge nor an escape from life, as in the male tradition of the modern romantic genius, the need to make books was for Lonzi an attempt to interrupt the same old repetitive script of male culture, while creating the possibility of a new subject that is no longer the projection of someone else's fantasy.

Arguably, writing became for Lonzi a technology of the self, recorded via a particular engagement with the tape recorder, but also, I contend, the montage of telephone conversations, old poems, unsent letters, and photographs. In their biography of Lonzi, Anna Jaquinta and Marta Lonzi recall that she “used to record talks with the people close to her, but also the phone calls or conversations with her friends” (**Fig. 2.5 and 2.6**).^{lxxiv} When we look at her publications, it is impossible not to notice the composite nature of her writing practice, which constantly challenge the monolithic assumptions of the authorial voice. At the same time, writing represented for Lonzi the possibility and necessity of forming a different kind of relations, as she explained in interviews. Discussing the meaning of the book series *Scritti di Rivolta Femminile* with radical lesbian feminist Michèle Causse, Lonzi states that: “[t]he fact of writing allows you to change the way you read, removing much of this myth value from writing, which is the value that is attributed to something by those who do not engage in it.”^{lxxv} Here, by granting writing the capacity to transform reading and readers, she indicates a path of *autocoscienza* by which books are written to find resonance with the experience of another. For Lonzi, writing was far from a private, individual act: every feminist reader was potentially a feminist writer.^{lxxvi}

While still writing about art, the processes of recording, transcribing and editing the interviews revealed to her a novel set of questions about the raw stuff of life that could no longer be kept aside. Lonzi thus reflected on the use of the tape recorder as an alternative to overcome the impasse of a type of writing that already presented itself as a script:

To me, personally, what is attractive in recording? I am attracted to precisely an elementary thing: being able to move from sounds to punctuation, to a writing, *and find a page that is*

not a written page, but is a page that... In short, like in some chemical processes, when there's condensation... that from a sound condensed into a sign, there, like a gas turns into liquid. This I like a lot, I wouldn't know why... and I like a lot being able to read something that is different from anything that you usually read, which is the outcome of an effort of the brain, which is so tiring now, even thinking about it. A person who sits at the table and jots down some ideas... It seems to me that his effort is so unnatural, his test so fatiguing, that I already feel the neurosis and... yes, and the raging on it.^{lxxvii}

There seems to be something toxic about the academic production of knowledge epitomised by the table in this passage. Lonzi renders clearly legible the exhaustion of the body made passive, literally broken under the burden of knowledge that strikes us as unauthentic. The neurosis of the author characterised in this paragraph seems to derive from the fact that he has forgotten that he has a body. We can feel the fatigue of scholars who would do anything to see confirmed what they already know; that is, to produce a page that mirrors rather than transforms them. In opposition to this unwholesome mode of writing, the tape recorder represents a way out that is attached to the possibility of creating and reading another kind of page in a book.

Several literary critics speak of audio recording as a revolution in modernist literature.^{lxxviii} Through audio recording, the literary avant-garde not only jettisoned the modernist myth of originality, but also reconstituted the very positionalities of the voice of and in the text. After the war, experiments with audio recording became interesting not so much as a form of automatism but as a means to rethink the production of knowledge and the power relation between speaker and listener. Between 1952 and 1961, Guy Debord recorded five lectures that he then replayed in front of a conference audience. Each time, Debord positioned the on the desk, while he sat among the audience. With this dramatic gesture, he intended to mechanically induce a shift within the structures of spectatorship that bind the form of the conference delivery to the separation essential to academic knowledge production. Intriguingly, Jean-Louis Rancon writes that while Giuseppe Pinot Gallizio invented "industrial painting" in 1958 as a way to move beyond easel painting, Guy

Debord experimented with a type of “industrial conference” as a mode of critiquing the hierarchies of knowledge within academia.^{lxxix} But industrial painting and industrial conference are also two modes of cultural production which, during the postwar era, contributed to the resignification of the dialectic between the vital (*vitale*) and the lived (*vissuto*) in artistic practices – a dialectic that interested Lonzi enormously.^{lxxx}

Debord’s fifth magnetic recording is especially interesting in this respect, because it was played at the CNRS before the Research Group on Everyday Life led by Henry Lefebvre. The title, ‘Perspectives de modifications conscientes dans la vie quotidienne’ [Perspectives of consciousness modification in everyday life], illuminates yet another use of the magnetophone that challenges the privatisation of the everyday epitomised by the Philips advert. When the tape recorder played his voice to the audience, it ultimately disrupted the boundaries between private and public that maintain capitalist society, founded on consumerism. Debord’s study of lived experience aimed not to document the everyday, but to transform it. His main point of criticism was methodological, concerning academic habits that mask the division of labour within the work of research:

It is thus desirable to demonstrate, by a slight alteration of the usual procedures, that everyday life is right here. These words are being communicated by way of a tape recorder, not, of course, in order to illustrate the integration of technology into this everyday life on the margin of the technological world, but in order to seize the simplest opportunity to break with the appearance of pseudo-collaboration, of artificial dialogue, established between the lecturer ‘in person’ and his spectator.^{lxxxi}

These words highlight that although modern technologies such as the telephone, television and the tape-recorder privatise everyday experience, they can also be used to expose this privatisation. While critiquing the way in which technology turns people into consumers, he also proposed a “liberation of the everyday” from the interference of spectacle that is reproduced in sociological research. Debord’s recorded lectures performatively realised the disidentification of the scholar and the academic as the omniscient source of knowledge. By pivoting the conference around the shared

experience of listening, rather than on the virtuosic performance of the speaker, the audio recorded conference undoes the separation between those who impart knowledge and those who receive it, even if only by means of a performative *coup de théâtre*.

In 1968, that is four years after Lonzi had started to employ recorded conversations for her art writing, Germano Celant directly re-enacted Debord's recorded conference in a public event at the Carabaga art club in Genoa. Whereas the invite announced the critic in dialogue with a group of artists, once at the venue, the public found only a tape recorder that played the voices of Celant in conversation with the artists, while he sat in the audience.^{lxxxii} By being the first art critic to use the magnetophone in Italy, therefore, Lonzi's practice participated in the international rethinking of the voice and role of the art critic. In her case too, the tape recorder helped to overcome the virtuosic performance of the art critic who no longer owns the measure of the spectacle of the history of art, in which one is the spectator to another's show, without any possibility of participation. Only, unlike Debord and Celant, Lonzi did not solely observe the impact of a recorded conversation only on the public, but also on herself.

The first time I used the tape recorder I said, 'What's going on here?'. I did not understand it very well, I just felt strange with this recorder, it's not an obvious thing, and then I said 'Well, it's logical that it means this', which is that I want to stay close to the artists and free myself, as a person who may have some academic culturalism...^{lxxxiii}

Obviously, Lonzi was aware of the risk of romanticising the capacity of the machine to effect a complete change:

Even if it is not automatic that the tape recording technique, in itself, sufficiently produces a transformation in the critic, for which many interviews are nothing but judgments in the form of dialogue, it seems to me that this discourse is born of an observation: the complete and verifiable critical act is that which is part of the artistic creation.^{lxxxiv}

Lonzi thus insisted on establishing a comparison between art criticism and artistic creation. Her art criticism, as it was conceived at the time, did not need to be different, but it needed to become

something else, a different mode of experience; a transformation of the self in the vicinity of others. It is from this standpoint that ten years later, when she rethought the meaning of the tape recorder in light of the conversation she was recording between herself and her partner, the sculptor Consagra, Lonzi concluded that “until I was not posing the problem of my own recognition I could not but be subject to the authoritativeness of the other’s consciousness that is recognised within culture.”^{lxxxv} Lonzi was intrigued by the magnetophone because it seemed to allow her to “find a page that is not a written page, but is a page that...”^{lxxxvi} The ellipses open up a space to breathe, a void pregnant with possibilities. Lonzi’s preoccupation with the relationship between audio recording and writing finally participated in a moment, around 1970, characterised by a radical rethinking of interpersonal relations. And it is in this direction which, I think, her legacy must be explored.

Future Resonances

Autoritratto was received with some reservations by some art critics in Italy, ignored by others, but not all. As Iamurri argues, “what must have seemed like a book of art criticism was in fact a radical interrogation of the very necessity of that form of cultural mediation and of the system upon which it was founded.”^{lxxxvii} One year after the publication of the book, *NAC* magazine launched a discussion platform to make space for some pressing exchanges about the state of contemporary art criticism in the country. If, on the one hand, this debate has been interpreted as a record of the crisis of the profession in Italian art history, on the other it allows us to see how Lonzi’s book was being registered by those who used to be her fellow professionals.^{lxxxviii} In his contribution to the debate, Tommaso Trini shows his support by literally absorbing Lonzi’s words in a 1971 article composed solely of quotations, which also included a long passage from the foreword of *Autoritratto*.^{lxxxix} More complicated, instead, are Celant’s appropriation and repackaging of some of Lonzi’s practices in the new vocabulary of the Arte Povera movement which he was defining in those very years.

In the article entitled ‘Per una critica acritica’ (For an acritical criticism), Celant notably argues against the “linguistic violence” imposed on the work of art by contemporary art criticism,

and instead makes a plea for the critic's "complicity" with the work of art. Thus he proposes that art criticism should maintain its autonomy by becoming an archival practice of conservation and documentation of the residues of artistic production. This new kind of art criticism, he writes,

stimulates art and makes it speak, it renders it in all its phonetic, visual, motor, sensorial and informational expressions and it makes them interact dialectically with the work in art, without imposing nor mediating, through a deforming fashion, the contemporary discourse of art.^{xc}

Celant is adamant that art criticism not turn into art, but must remain separate from it – a position on which, as I have showed above, Lonzi faltered. Thus Celant separates the new mission of contemporary art criticism into two waves. The first he defines "criticism as event," in which he enlists Harold Rosenberg, Lucy Lippard and himself. The other is "criticism as conservation and cataloguing of the residues or traces by the artists or their artistic products," which categorises the work of Seth Sieglaub, Gregory Battcock, Carla Lonzi, Lippard and, again, Celant himself.^{xci}

Although, on the surface, Celant might seem to be in agreement with Lonzi, his argument is actually very different from hers, for a number of important reasons.

First, although Celant never doubts that the practice of art criticism might change, its function remains unquestioned, as he leaves out any discussion of the new figure of the curator-archivist in the inevitable selection of materials he is impelled to document. Unlike Lonzi, Celant remains uncritical of the fidelity of an audio-recorded interview and does not seem concerned with the way in which the medium transforms the speakers' consciousness, for instance, due to the splitting that occurs with the redoubling of the voice on tape. As many post-war multimedia artists and cultural theorists have demonstrated, any theory of documentation must also be a critique of realism.^{xcii} But Celant's position appears quite naïve on this matter. Second, Celant's text organises into a codified theory a set of practices with which Lonzi engaged in terms of a transformation of the consciousness instead. In an article for *NAC* that represents her last intervention in the field of art criticism, entitled 'La critica è potere' (Criticism is power), Lonzi peremptorily clarifies that:

By positioning himself in front of the work of art as spectator and interpret the art critic turns it into an object of knowledge, thus demonstrating the opposite of what he originally assumed: that he has a point of view that is external to society. This may represent for him a way of salvation, but the way to salvation is not transmissible: as it is a raising of consciousness, you cannot conquer it through knowledge, that is it cannot be conquered. The chain of intellectual domination is thus interrupted.^{xciii}

Finally, Celant's position also appears dissonant with the conclusions reached by Lonzi in the foreword of *Autoritratto*, in which she sees herself transformed and asks if she has become an artist. Celant, therefore, seemingly echoes Lonzi's proposition, but only to the extent of a re-enchantment of art criticism within the boundaries of patriarchal culture. As Michele Dantini also suggests, "Celant interprets with determination his own critic-curatorial role in the guise of the producer of patriarchal myths," among which that of the shaman-artist is perhaps the most prominent.^{xciv}

Lonzi's legacy was received differently by artist women during the 1970s. Although, as is well known, Lonzi never supported feminist art, echoes of the critical positions that she developed in *Autoritratto* and her writings with *Rivolta Femminile* seeped into group discussions about feminism and art, especially with regard to the way in which the movement had started to unpick the complicated category of the woman's art exhibition. In 1974, the feminist magazine *Effe* dedicates a whole section on the topic of female creativity. Excerpts from Kate Millet, Eva Figes and Valerie Solanas are compiled together by the magazine editors to represent different positions on the relationship between women and creativity. A passage on deculturation from Lonzi's essay 'Let's spit on Hegel' is also included, which prepares the editors' conclusion: "yes, women want to be protagonist but not of the usual old drama."^{xcv}

In the same section, a short article by artist Cloti Riccardi interrogates the social construction of the male genius. Rather than questioning the institutions that administer art education and manage the tradition of the fine arts, Ricciardi turns to the

form of a Lonzian dialogue to discuss the separation between those who make art and those who are excluded from it:

Question: But why do we prefer to stimulate, enrich, honour a group of big and small geniuses instead of letting the people express themselves freely?

Answer: Because while you can easily control a group of artists, you certainly cannot foresee what the people could pull out if they were free to express themselves.

Question: But then, given that they have burnt out our ability for expression, and even if we had been left one, we wouldn't know how to use it, where do we start to change something?

Answer: What if we started from feminism?^{xvii}

Ricciardi's proposition does not rest on art historical labels, but locates women's creativity firmly within the space of feminism. Expressed colloquially, the fictive conversation on the position of the woman's art exhibition in male culture sounds like an ongoing discussion between two women. The to and fro evoked by the unravelling of question and answer emulates the group transcriptions disseminated in feminist press of those years. By this time, the form of the dialogue that Ricciardi recast in her captivating articles was associated no longer with the transcriptions that Lonzi used in *Autoritratto*, but with the conversations that women were having within the various feminist groups, especially through the practice of *autocoscienza*.

In another article for *Effe* in 1975, Ricciardi was again to engage with the role of the woman artist within the feminist movement. She points to the problematic separation between "who makes culture and who is affected by it," which women artist should instead challenge. "Every artist," Ricciardi states, "is a collaborationist. Us women have always been kept outside this Olympus due to the sexist reasons that we all know, but also because they could not rightly trust us."^{xviii} Thus Ricciardi directly addresses women and those who would like to recreate, within a feminist art movement, the separation between "minds" and "hands" that the movement has fought to overcome. Her point seems to follow Lonzi's critique of the flawed cultural systems that place women in the passive role of receivers of someone else's show. It is in order to eschew that

position, which women occupy in the spectacle of male culture, that she turned to the relationship between *autocoscienza* and writing to create a space in which women could be recognised each other instead.

In one of her most lucid texts on the problematic position that women occupy within the *mito della proposta culturale* (myth of the cultural proposition),^{xcviii} Lonzi gives us a compelling definition of writing as resonance:

Writing is a public act. We write to express ourselves and to resonate, so that someone else can express herself and give resonance. Every other method of writing is a manifestation of cultural insertion. If we do not recognize each other, the male is the one recognized: his culture is thus confirmed.^{xcix}

The resonance often mentioned by Lonzi is above all a listening space, perhaps an effect of the replay mode embedded in the technology of the tape recorder. Although I do not wish to claim that the tape recorder was a vehicle for women's *autocoscienza*, it nonetheless registered the effects of a transformative experience. As Paola di Cori notes, the squares and the streets in which women spoke in public were not the only setting for the feminism of the seventies. Alongside different manners of speaking, feminism also took place in small groups, like Rivolta Femminile. It was in these small groups that women experimented with different possibilities of listening: "Among the new uses attributed to listening, privilege was given to unexpected data, the fact of having to face completely unexpected things without knowing how to react properly."^c

These unexpected things Lonzi had already started to examine when transcribing her conversations with the artists, even if only to find her disappointment with them.^{ci} But rather than leaving unquestioned her use of the tape recorder as a high-fidelity means to capture what happens behind the work, here I stress that it enabled her to explore creative forms of being together in which the self is no longer identified by the discourse of another, but derives from recognition with another. By splitting the speaking subject and putting it beside itself, the tape recorder not only became a means of disidentification from the role of the critic and woman, but also opened a new

method of resonance in which creativity appears as continuous with, rather than separate from, feminism.

*Unless otherwise stated in the footnotes, all translations by the author. I have aimed to maintain the colloquialism of the original text, thus attempting to reproduce certain grammatical inconsistencies for the ear of an English reader.

ⁱ Carla Lonzi, *Autoritratto. Accardi, Alviani, Castellani, Consagra, Fabro, Fontana, Kounellis, Nigro, Paolini, Pascali, Rotella, Scarpitta, Turcato, Twombly* [1968] (Milan: Et al./Edizioni, 2010), 7-8. All further references are from the second edition.

ⁱⁱ On the use juxtaposition of photos and text in *Autoritratto*, see Teresa Kittler's essay in this volume.

ⁱⁱⁱ Kraus Kranz, *Capire l'arte moderna* (Milan: Edizioni di Comunità, 1964). On Paolini's work, see Denis Viva, 'L'immagine rimediata. Diagrammi e riproduzioni di opera pittoriche come fonti visive negli anni sessanta', *Palinsesti* 1 (2011), 77-78.

^{iv} 'Volevo fare un libro un po' divagato'. Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 16.

^v Linda Sandino, 'Introduction. Oral History In and About Art, Craft, and Design,' in Linda Sandino and Matthew Partington, eds, *Oral History in the Visual Arts* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 3.

^{vi} Here I paraphrase from Molly Andrews, *Shaping History: Narratives of Political Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 15; quoted in Sandino, 'Introduction,' 3.

^{vii} Kenneth Goldsmith, ed., *I'll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews* (Boston: De Capo Press: 2004).

^{viii} On gossip as queer mode of world making, see Gavin Butt, *Between You and Me. Queer Disclosures in the New York Art World, 1948-1963* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

^{ix} Paul Atkinson and David Silverman, 'Kundera's Immortality: The Interview Society and the Invention of the Self,' *Qualitative Inquiry* 3 (1997): 314-315.

^x On the modernist myth of the artist, see Griselda Pollock, 'Artists, Mythologies and Media Genius, Madness and Art History,' *Screen* 21, 3 (1980): 57-96.

^{xi} Carla Lonzi, 'Manoscritto A19/1', s. d. [1980], 42. Fondo Rivolta Femminile, Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz/Bruno Danese, Milan. I am grateful to Giovanna Zapperi for sharing this document with me. These comments are jotted down in relation to an audio-recorded conversation with her partner, the artist Pietro Consagra, which Lonzi transcribed and published in 1980. Carla Lonzi, *Vai pure. Dialogo con Pietro Consagra [1980]* (Milan: Et al./Edizioni, 2011). On the conversation between Lonzi and Consagra see Giovanna Zapperi, *Carla Lonzi. Un'arte della vita*, DeriveApprodi, Roma: 2017, 232-240. See also Leslie Cozzi's essay in this volume.

^{xii} Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different [1979]', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds, *The Oral History Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 32-42

^{xiii} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 33; See also Laura Iamurri, "'Un mesitare fasullo': Note su *Autoritratto* di Carla Lonzi', in Maria Antonietta Trasforini, ed., *Donne d'arte. Storie e generazioni* (Rome: Meltemi, 2006), 113-132.

^{xiv} Zapperi, *Un'arte della vita*, 208.

^{xv} Rivolta Femminile, 'On Woman's Refusal to Celebrate Male Creativity', trans. Arlene Ladden, *Heresies* 1, 1 (1977): 101. See also, Rivolta Femminile, 'Assenza della donna dai momenti celebrative della manifestazione creativa femminile' [1971], in Carla Lonzi, *Sputiamo su Hegel. E altri scritti* (Milan: et al. Edizioni, 2010), 115-120.

^{xvi} Rivolta Femminile, 'On Woman's Refusal', 101.

^{xvii} Carla Lonzi, *Taci, anzi parla. Diario di una femminista* [1978], vol. 1 (Milan: et al./Edizioni, 2010), 204. (8 February 1973).

^{xviii} *Ibid.*, 35.

^{xix} N. Katherine Hayles, 'Voices Out of Bodies, Bodies Out of Voices. Audiotape and the Production of Subjectivity', in Adalaide Morris, ed., *Sound States. Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* (Chapel Hill: The University of Carolina Press, 1997), 74.

^{xx} On the relationship between *autocoscienza* and the body in women's groups in Italy, see Luisa Passerini, 'Corpi e corpo collettivo. Rapporti internazionali del primo femminismo radicale italiano,' in Teresa Bertilotti and Anna

Scattigno, *Il femminismo degli anni Settanta* (Rome: Viella, 2005), 181-197. Passerini also remarks the presence of the tape recorder.

^{xxi} See, for instance, Sottosopra, 'Dalla registrazione di una discussione collettiva', *Sottosopra. Esperienze dei gruppi femministi in Italia* 1 (1973), 30-38. For other uses of the tape recorder within Rivolta Femminile see Carla Accardi, *Superiore e inferiore. Conversazioni fra le ragazzine delle Scuole Medie* (Milan: Scritti di Rivolta Femminile, 1972). Accardi recorded the conversations between adolescent schoolgirls about sexuality, an expedient which costed her the job as teacher. A later conversation between Lonzi and Anna Piva was distributed as an audiocassette to accompany the posthumous publication of her poems. See Carla Lonzi, *Armande sono io!*, eds, Marta Lonzi, Angela De Carlo and Maria Delfino (Milan: Scritti di Rivolta Femminile, 1992).

^{xxii} Maria Gabriella Frabotta, 'Pratica dell'autocoscienza', in Manuela Fraire, *Lessico politico delle donne: teorie del femminismo* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2002), 100.

^{xxiii} Teresa Bertilotti and Anna Scattigno, 'Introduzione', Teresa Bertilotti and Anna Scattigno, *Il femminismo degli anni Settanta* (Rome: Viella, 2005), vii.

^{xxiv} Paola di Cori, *Asincronie del femminismo. Scritti 1986-2011* (Pisa: ETS, 2012), 42.

^{xxv} Marvin Camras, *Magnetic Tape Recording* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985).

^{xxvi} For a discussion of how the montage of *Autoritratto* creates a horizontal dialogue among siblings that challenges the Oedipal family romance of art history, see Francesco Ventrella, 'Carla Lonzi e la disfatta della critica d'arte: registrazione, scrittura e risonanza', *Studi Culturali* 12, 1 (2015): 96-98.

^{xxvii} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 60.

^{xxviii} On the importance of the everyday to the practice of *partire da sé* in Italian feminism, see Carmen Leccardi, 'La reinvenzione della vita quotidiana', in Bertilotti and Scattigno, eds, *Il femminismo degli anni Settanta*, 99-117.

^{xxix} On the intellectual formation of art criticism, see Francesco Ventrella, 'Art History and Aesthetics', in Richard Whatmore and Brian Young, eds, *A Companion to Intellectual History* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 358-376.

^{xxx} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 16-17.

^{xxxi} *Ibid.*, 30.

^{xxxii} *Ibid.*, 248.

^{xxxiii} *Ibid.*, 42.

^{xxxiv} *Ibid.*, 165.

^{xxxv} Roland Barthes, 'The Grain of the Voice' [1972], in *Image/Music/Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 179-189.

^{xxxvi} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 164; 274.

^{xxxvii} *Ibid.*, 116.

^{xxxviii} *Ibid.*, 250.

^{xxxix} *Ibid.*, 26-27. Born in New York to a Sicilian father and Polish-Russian mother, Scarpitta admittedly spoke fluent Italian with an American accent.

^{xl} Here I summarise points I have made elsewhere to show how they are inherent to my reading of Lonzi's audio recording as a transformative practice of self-listening. See Ventrella, 'Carla Lonzi e la disfatta della critica d'arte', 83-100.

^{xli} Adriana Cavarero, *For More Than One Voice: Toward a Philosophy of Vocal Expression* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

^{xlii} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 4.

^{xliii} See Gabriele Guercio, *Art as Existence. The Artist's Monograph and its Project* (Boston: MIT Press, 2006).

^{xliv} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 4.

^{xlv} *Ibid.*, 4.

^{xlvi} Michael Davidson, 'Technologies of Presence: Orality and the Tapevoice of Contemporary Poetics', in Morris, *Sound States*, 99.

^{xlvii} Carla Lonzi, *Taci, anzi parla*, 35.

^{xlviii} For a discussion of the reception of *Autoritratto* among other Italian art critics, see Laura Iamurri, *Un margine che sfugge. Carla Lonzi e l'arte in Italia, 1955-1970* (Macerata: Quodlibet, 2016), 207-213.

^{xlix} Carla Lonzi, 'La solitudine del critico' [1963], in Carla Lonzi, *Scritti sull'arte*, ed. Lara Conte, Laura Iamurri, Vanessa Martini (Milan: et al./Edizioni), 355.

^l On the Congress of Verrucchio, see Federica Boragina, 'Il convegno di Verucchio del 1963 e il dibattito critico nel mondo dell'arte contemporanea', in Flavio Fergonzi and Francesco Todeschi, eds, *Arte Italiana 1960-1964: identità culturale, confronti internazionali, modelli americani* (Milan: Museo del Novecento/Scalpendi, 2017), 151-163.

^{li} Lonzi, 'La solitudine del critico', 356. My italics.

^{lii} Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 16.

^{liii} *Ibid.*, 116.

^{liiv} *Ibid.*, 35-36.

^{liv} *Ibid.*, 3.

^{lv} 'Io credo che, quando uno fa il critico, dovrebbe esaminare di se stesso, fare esperinza, assorbire di questo settore di attività, cioè fare questa iniziazione – mi è venuta la parola e ci tengo – perchè l'iniziazione significa che tu entri nella cosa, scendi in questa cosa, la assorbi, ti trasformi e vivi, intanto, no?'. *Ibid.*, 62.

^{lvii} *Ibid.*, 5.

- lviii Michela Baldini, 'Le arti figurative all' "Approdo". Carla Lonzi: Un'allieva dissidente di Roberto Longhi', *Italianistica* 38, 3 (2009): 115-130. Longhi sat in the editorial board alongside Roberto Bacchelli, Emilio Cecchi, Giuseppe de Robertis, Nicola Lisi, Roberto Longhi, Giuseppe Ungaretti and Diego Valeri.
- lix Roberto Bacchelli, 'L'oratoria alla radio', *L'Approdo* 1, 1 (January-March, 1952): 30. Also cited in Baldini, 'Le arti figurative', 117.
- lx The essay was broadcasted on 26 January 1952. Roberto Longhi, 'Sinopia per l'arte figurativa,' *L'Approdo*, 1: 1 (January-March 1952), 23-24.
- lxi Longhi suggestively defines the work of art as a "rapport which gives necessity to a critical response." Roberto Longhi, 'Proposte per una critica d'arte', *Paragone* 1: 1 (1950), 5-19; reprinted in Roberto Longhi, *Proposte per una critica d'arte* (Pesaro: Portatori d'Acqua, 2014), 45.
- lxii Sam Rose, 'The Visual Arts in the BBC's *The Listener*, 1929-39', *The Burlington Magazine*, 155 (September 2013), 606-611.
- lxiii Anna Dolfi and Maria Carla Papini, eds, "*L'Approdo*." *Storia di un'avventura mediatica* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2006).
- lxiv Longhi, 'Sinopia per l'arte figurativa', 24. Italics in the original.
- lxv *Ibid.*, 24.
- lxvi Laura Iamurri, 'Carla Lonzi sul *marcatré*', in Lonzi, *Scritti sull'arte*, 708.
- lxvii Laura Iamurri, 'Intorno a *Autoritratto*: fonti, ipotesi, riflessioni', in Lara Conte, Vinzia Fiorino, Vanessa Martini, eds, *Carla Lonzi: la duplice radicalità: Dalla critica militante al femminismo di Rivolta* (Pisa: ETS, 2011), 75. See also Iamurri, *Un margine che sfugge*, 128-129.
- lxviii Davide Forgacs, 'Intellectuals and Subaltern Groups between Structure and Discourse: The Difficult Politics of Cultural Studies', in Graziella Parati, ed., *New Perspectives in Italian Cultural Studies. Vol. 1: Definitions, Theory, and Accented Practices* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2012), 17. On the relationship between these methods and Lonzi's audio recordings, see Francesco Ventrella, 'Carla Lonzi e la disfatta della critica d'arte: registrazione, scrittura e risonanza', *Studi Culturali* 12, 1 (2015): 90-91.
- lxix For instance, a conversation with Kounellis in *marcatré* had already been used in the catalogue of his show at La Tartaruga Gallery in Rome (10 June 1966), while another recorded conversation with Pietro Consagra appeared only in the exhibition catalogue of his show at Galleria dell'Ariete in Milan (8 June 1967). I owe this information to the invaluable work of Laura Iamurri, who has reconstructed the publication history of these conversations. Iamurri, *Un margine che sfugge*, 122-149.
- lxx Carla Lonzi, 'Let's Spit on Hegel' [1970], in Paola Bono and Sandra Kemp, eds, *Italian Feminist Thought. A Reader* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA.: Blackwell, 1991), 40.
- lxxi Lonzi, 'Let's Spit on Hegel', 41.
- lxxii Annarosa Buttarelli, 'Tabula rasa', in Diotima, ed., *Approfitte dell'assenza* (Napoli: Liguori, 2002), 156.
- lxxiii Lonzi, *Sputiamo su Hegel*, 37. For a discussion of the meaning of "deculturation" in Lonzi's thought, see Giovanna Zapperi, 'Challenging Feminist Art History: Carla Lonzi's Divergent Paths', in Lara Perry and Victoria Horne, eds., *Feminist Art History Now: Radical Critiques of Theory and Practice* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2017), 104-123.
- lxxiv Anna Jaquinta and Marta Lonzi, 'Biografia di Carla Lonzi', in Carla Lonzi, *Scacco ragionato. Poesie dal 58 al 63* (Milan: Scritti di Rivolta Femminile, 1985), 62.
- lxxv Interview with Michèle Causse by Carla Lonzi, in Mariagrazia Chinese, Carla Lonzi, Marta Lonzi, Anna Jaquinta, eds, *È già politica* (Milan: Scritti di Rivolta Femminile, 1977), 107.
- lxxvi On the topic of resonance, see also Francesco Ventrella, 'Carla Lonzi's Art Writing and the Resonance of Separatism', *European Journal of Women's Studies* 21: 3(2014), 282-287.
- lxxvii Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 29. Italics mine.
- lxxviii See Adalaide Morris, 'Introduction: Sound States,' in Morris, ed., *Sound States*, 1-19.
- lxxix Jean-Louis Rancon, 'Introduction', in Guy Debord, *Enregistrements magnétiques: 1952-1961* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010), 10.
- lxxx It is possible that Lonzi was aware of Debord's recorded conferences through Gallizio, who was involved in the Situationist International. However, in this essay I am not interested in establishing influences or derivations. On the collaboration between Gallizio and Lonzi, see Iamurri, *Un'arte della vita*, 81-85.
- lxxxi Debord, *Enregistrements magnétiques*, 101-102.
- lxxxii This episode is described in Lara Conte, ' "La critica è potere". Percorsi e momenti della critica italiana', in Conte, Fiorino, Martini, eds, *Carla Lonzi: la duplice radicalità*, 105.
- lxxxiii Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 60.
- lxxxiv *Ibid.*, 3.
- lxxxv Carla Lonzi, Manoscritto A19/1, s. d. [1980], 43. Fondo Rivolta Femminile, Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz/Bruno Danese, Milano.
- lxxxvi Lonzi, *Autoritratto*, 29.
- lxxxvii Iamurri, *Un margine che sfugge*, 210.
- lxxxviii For a discussion of art criticism in Italy, see Michele Dantini, 'Ytalia Subjecta. Narrazioni identitarie e critica d'arte, 1963-2009', in Gabriele Guercio and Anna Mattioli, eds, *Il confine evanescente. Arte italiana 1960-2010* (Mondadori Electa: Milan, 2010), 262-307.

^{lxxxix} Tommaso Trini, 'Deflorilegio: Critica, ultime battute', *NAC* (October 1970), 31.

^{xc} Germano Celant, 'Per una critica acritica', *NAC* 1 (October 1970), 29.

^{xc} *Ibid.*, 30.

^{xcii} Martha Rosler, *Decoys and Disruptions. Selected Writings, 1975–2001* (Boston, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

^{xciii} Carla Lonzi, 'La critica è potere', *NAC* (December 1970), 6.

^{xciv} Michele Dantini, *Geopolitiche dell'arte. Arte e critica d'arte italiana nel contesto internazionale dalle neoavanguardie a oggi* (Milan: Marinotti, 2012), 156.

^{xcv} Editorial, 'Che cosa hanno detto', *Effe* (July 1974), 6.

^{xcvi} Cloti Ricciardi, 'Ma il genio chi è?', *Effe* (July 1974), 11.

^{xcvii} Cloti Ricciardi, '... e-to-cche-re-bbe-pre-ci-sa-me-nte-a-TE!!', *Effe* (July 1975), 25. Also this article was included in the 'Creatività' section of the magazine. Interestingly, in the table of content the title of this article appears as: 'Un altro modo per dividerci' (Another way to divide us).

^{xcviii} For a discussion of how Lonzi must have derived the term 'myth' from Roland Barthes, see Ventrella, 'La disfatta della critica d'arte', 87-88.

^{xcix} Carla Lonzi, 'Mito della porposta culturale', in Lonzi, M., Jaquinta, A. and Lonzi, C., eds, *La presenza dell'uomo nel femminismo* (Milan: Scritti di Rivolta Femminile, 1978), 137.

^c Cori, Paola Di, 'Listening and Silencing. Italian Feminists in the 1970s: Between *autocoscienza* and Terrorism', in Anna Cento Bull and Adalgisa Giorgio, eds, *Speaking Out and Silencing: Culture, Society and Politics in Italy in the 1970s, Italian Perspectives*, 12 (Cambridge: Legenda, 2006), 30-41; 189.

^{ci} Ester de Miro, 'Il femminismo radicale di Carla Lonzi', *Il Manifesto*, 25 November 2017. Available at: <https://ilmanifesto.it/il-femminismo-radiale-di-carla-lonzi/> [9/8/19].

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