

## Mus-Mus-Musica! Videomusic's Archive at Museo Nazionale del Cinema

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### Abstract

In 2019 Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin reached an initial agreement with Paramount Global to deposit the entire video archive of the Italian private television broadcaster Videomusic at the Museum's film archive. Founded in April 1984 and active until June 1996, it was the first Italian broadcaster to have a schedule entirely dedicated to music programming. Of that television production there remains today a haphazard archive composed of a variety of obsolete video formats, including U-Matic and Betacam, consisting of more than 30.000 cassettes containing over 5.000 hours of programming. Thanks to the inventory work currently being carried out on the collection, this vast quantity of video cassettes and hours of programming is resulting in a dramatic increase in the amount of accessible Videomusic-related material. This proposal has several objectives: to reintroduce the production history of the television broadcaster in the Italian context; to attempt to define, if they exist, the points of contact between the production of the music and film industries; to begin to define the state of the ownership rights of the audiovisual material preserved in this collection; and to introduce the preservation, cataloguing, digitisation and making available policies developed at the film archive.

**Keywords:** Cinema; Film archive; Videomusic; Videotape; Tele-archives.

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## 1 A Short Journey through Music Programming on Italian Television Channels and the Experience of Videomusic

“Now that you’ve seen what I’m really like, can you still bear to look at me?”

George Orwell

1984 represented an important historical moment for Italian television. In addition to being the thirtieth anniversary of the birth of the national TV broadcasting system, it was also a year that saw an important political intervention resulting in the arrival of new private television channels. For some time, Rai had no longer been the only TV broadcasting service; commercial television had existed since the 1970s and had rapidly been able to demonstrate the extent of its quality and initiative. Taking advantage of the lack of clear regulatory framework and the State broadcaster's growing programming difficulties, private broadcasters were able to impose their presence, and, thanks to the consensus of the political world, this led to the signing of the decree-law known as “salva private”.<sup>1</sup> The event that brought about the introduction of this law was the suspension of the Fininvest channels on 16 October in the regions of Piedmont, Abruzzo and Lazio, due to a violation of the ban on nationwide broadcasting. However, other events also helped to shape the narrative of this evocatively Orwellian year; Fininvest's purchase of Rete 4 from Mondadori, the launch of *Televideo* (an Italian teletext service), “TV to browse through”, as well as the introduction of a new audience surveying system, which, on Rai's initiative, later moved from ISTELE, Indagine Sulle Televisioni Locali, to the more reliable system known as Meter.<sup>2</sup>

This was the context into which Videomusic was born, a TV channel whose programming was dedicated exclusively to music, aimed at a still little-considered viewership group, the youth audience. The new channel, founded by Pier Luigi Stefani and Marialina Marcucci, took its example from the US channel MTV, launched just a few years earlier in 1981. The introduction of music programming to Italian TV was not exclusive to this new channel. From as early as the 1970s, Rai had been producing a variety of programmes dedicated to music and aimed at the youth audience, examples of which included *Piccolo Slam* (1977–1978) *Discoring* (1977–1989), *Mister Fantasy – Musica da vedere* (1981–1984) and *L'Orecchiocchio* (1982–1986). These were followed by commercially produced programmes such as *Superclassifica Show* (1977–2001) and *Popcorn* (1980–1984) on Canale 5. Presented by Sammy Barbot and Stefania Rotolo and designed to attract a youth audience, *Piccolo Slam* was aired on Rai 1 for two seasons between 1977 and 1978. It featured a disco dancefloor, and the studio audience was invited to dance during the transmission. The two presenters introduced five songs from which a “record of the week” was chosen. *Discoring* was created by the well-known radio presenter, song lyricist and television writer Gianni Boncompagni and aired for 15 seasons; it was modelled on the British programme *Top of the Pops* and featured live performances by Italian and international groups and artists whose songs were in the music charts. The programme was also an opportunity to introduce emerging talent. It was broadcast as part of the *Domenica In* (1976–) schedule for several years, before becoming a standalone programme in 1986 until it was taken off the air in 1992. *Mister Fantasy – Musica da vedere* was created and produced by Paolo Giaccio and was broadcast from 1981 to 1984. Its format was based on the presentation of music videos,<sup>3</sup> which for the first time found a dedicated space on Italian television. It featured a monochromatic and stripped back set design, with screens for presenting the “music to be watched” and no studio audience. The programme left ample space for the promotion of Italian music, but the cultural and musical references remained predominately American.<sup>4</sup> *L'Orecchiocchio* was broadcast from 1982 to 1986 on either Rai 3 or Tele Montecarlo; its format was based on the presentation of music videos and live studio performances by

1. 20 October 1984 – Legislative Decree No. 694, *Misure urgenti in materia di trasmissioni radiotelevisive*, signed by the President of the Council of Ministers Bettino Craxi and the seventh President of the Italian Republic Sandro Pertini.
2. For further reading on the topic, the following texts are recommended Grasso 2019; Marbach and Rizzi 2019.
3. An interesting reflection on the form of the music video is offered by the doctoral thesis: Pavoni 2018. The thesis can be downloaded from the following forum: <https://sceltatv.forumfree.it/?t=76254523> (last accessed 28-04-2025). Furthermore, the thesis in question is free to consult through the FLORE or OneSearch portals on the University of Florence website: Le istanze del videoclip. Il panorama videomusicale italiano del terzo millennio, <https://flore.unifi.it/handle/2158/1124626>.
4. Six episodes from the first season and an in-depth look at Italian singer-songwriter Franco Battiato have been available on Raipaly.it since 2021.

emerging artists. “The programme’s logo featured the stylised profile of a head, with a hollowed-out eye and an ear covered by headphones that incorporated the TV3 logo [...]” (Grasso 2019: 654).

On the private networks, Canale 5, the main music programmes were *Popcorn*, broadcast from 1980 to 1984 as an alternative to the above-mentioned *Discoring*, and *Superclassifica Show*, still fondly remembered by audiences today. Created by Maurizio Seymandi, who was also one of the presenters, it was aired from 1976 on various private channels. It moved to Canale 5 in 1980, at the same time as the merger of a few smaller networks with Reteitalia.<sup>5</sup> It subsequently made the move to Italia 1 for a few years before finally moving to Italia 2. The programme provided information about weekly record sales and presented a top ten singles chart. It was also known for its use of graphics and its iconic characters, such as Telegattone and Dj-X. Shortly before the debut of Videomusic, in February and March of 1984 Italia 1 also launched two new music programmes: *Deejay Television* (1983–1990), broadcast initially weekly and then daily, and *Be Bop a Lula* (1984–1991). Created and presented by the well-known Italian disc jockey Claudio Cecchetto, *Deejay Television* transferred the format of the radio station Radio Deejay to the small screen. Music videos were presented without interruption, except for short guest interviews. One important innovation introduced by the programme was the possibility to listen to the songs in stereo; all one had to do was lower the volume on their TV set and raise the volume on the radio. Gabriele Ansaloni, AKA “Red Ronnie”, is the name most closely associated with the programme *Be Bop a Lula*:

[...] it brought hysterical and adoring Duran Duran fans, mothers in tears whose children had run off after Renato Zero and alternative music to television [...] Over the course of five seasons [...] the music increasingly became a pretext to address social issues and explore the problems of the world of young people [...] (Grasso 2019: 694).

The first person to come up with the idea of a themed TV channel was Ted Turner, with his CNN in 1980. A similar channel was about to be launched in Italy on the Tele Elefante network, but Italian publisher Marialina Marcucci had a change of mind and instead opted for an all-music channel. Choosing the name Videomusic, she launched the channel as a late April Fools’ joke, at midnight on 1 April 1984. At the designated hour, a green “M” appeared in place of the elephant logo in the corner of the screens across the Tele Elefante frequencies, [...] Thus Videomusic was born. With a team that would fit into a Fiat Panda (Griffiths 2022: 21).

The Italian channel, among the first of its kind in Europe, was free and unencrypted. The first music video it broadcast was Lionel Ritchie’s *All Night Long* (1983). The first programme, 60 minutes of television interspersed by 12 or 13 music videos, has not yet been found in the vast collection; however, Clive Griffiths, one of the private channel’s first video jockeys, clearly recalls the first intervention by Johnny Parker and his own subsequent contribution. To give some order to this televisual phenomenon it is necessary to list the sources used, which must be impartially reordered and reread. In addition to the materials held by the film archive of Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin, which are still only partly accessible, the above-quoted text by Clive Griffiths and the internet fan site videomusicfansite.it<sup>6</sup> must also be mentioned. The site is still partly accessible and is valuable for gaining a better understanding of the wide range of programming.

The comparison of these three sources permits us to cross-check, add complementary information and, above all, declare that in this first exploratory phase it will only be possible to look at part of the story of the broadcaster. Even though today we can only attempt to describe a partial overview, at the same time certain characteristics may be identified that highlight the unique nature of this televisual experience. The precise chronological ordering of facts and important events will only be possible at a later stage, when a greater amount of broadcast hours is available than at present. This initial stage of reconstructing the timeline will be guided by the materials accessible to date. A first historical aspect to be introduced, easily traceable through the material already digitised, are the two stages of its production history; the first, which in part includes the founding period, ran from 1984 to 1995 under the Marcucci Group, and the subsequent short-lived one under the Cecchi

5. Film production and distribution company owned by Gruppo Fininvest, active from 1979 to 2002.

6. The fan site is an excellent resource for contextualisation and in-depth analysis. Deserving of particular attention are, among the various sections, the one entitled *Special*, and among the numerous in-depth analyses offered, the one concerning a degree thesis examining the communication strategy related to the broadcaster’s logo.

Gori Group. These two stages are distinguishable by the programming changes and the use of distinctively different logos, which disappeared from 1997 onwards although the programming continued to be linked to the Videomusic brand until 2001.<sup>7</sup> Another difference was the studios where the programmes were produced and from where they were broadcast; this initially reached a limited geographical area but later expanded to cover the entire country. The first production centre, and the place where the story of the private channel began, was the legendary studio known as “Il Ciocco”,<sup>8</sup> located in the Serchio Valley in northern Tuscany. From there, the channel was broadcast on the frequencies of Elefante TV, a TV network established in January 1979 by two entrepreneurs who were also active in the pharmaceutical industry, brothers Leo and Guelfo Marcucci.<sup>9</sup>

*Specials* represented a very important part of Videomusic's programming, from the first months of its broadcasting history. These consisted of in-depth analysis of artists, enriched by original interviews that alternated with clips from various sources, such as music videos, concerts and, in some cases, even backstage footage from the shooting of new music videos. The specials were typically introduced by their own characteristic graphics, which possibly varied in style depending on the production period. Examples of this can be seen by comparing the specials on Gianna Nannini and Pink Floyd to those on Queen, Roger Waters and Billy Joel.<sup>10</sup> Each special was not only an opportunity to deepen the audience's knowledge of a certain group or artist, but also to hear their opinions on a wider range of topics. There is no shortage of examples, such as the special on Billy Joel and his concerts in Russia (Moscow and Leningrad in 1987), which highlighted how music was also a means of political and social rapprochement at a time when the Cold War was about to come to an end.<sup>11</sup> In the case of the specials on Gianna Nannini and Queen, we get to see directors Rudi Dolezal (for both artists) and Hannes Rossacher (only for the Italian musician) working on the production of music videos; among the main producers and directors active in the music industry, they founded DoRo Productions and, in addition to the above-mentioned artists, also collaborated with Frank Zappa, Tom Waits and The Rolling Stones. Another iconic Videomusic programme was *Interviews*, of which at present we have only one episode: the meeting of another historic video jockey, Rick Hutton, with the Eurythmics. In the words of Clive Griffiths, during the first months of Videomusic “[...] the weekly programmes were Video Première, Top Ten, Compilation, Interviews, Easy Listening, Made in Italy, Heavy with Kleever and the Specials [...]” (Griffiths 2022: 62). Of the above-mentioned programmes of which no episodes have yet been found, it is worth mentioning *Top Ten*, a weekly broadcast that presented the chart of the best recently released songs. In contrast to similar programmes, the Videomusic *Top Ten* chart was unique in that it was compiled by the viewers themselves.

[...] We invited viewers to send us a unique letter with their own chart. Whoever sent in the most interesting one won a night's stay in Ciocco and a day with us VJs to present the Top Ten together. One of the best we received was a reproduction of the cover of The Beatles' historic LP Sgt. Pepper's, with us VJs instead of the Fab Four [...] inside, a cardboard record with their Top Ten [...]. (Grasso 2019: 37).

An important part of the channel's scheduling was reserved for concerts, divided into at least two sections, namely “LIVE” and “Great Concerts”. A comparison of the two sections does not reveal any distinctions. Aside from their different introductory graphics, both programmes leave ample space to musical and vocal performances by some of the biggest contemporary Italian and international groups and artists. Of the various episodes, one “LIVE” stands out, perhaps due to demands made by the musician in question; it is a programme dedicated to the concerts given by Bob Dylan at the Verona Arena in May 1984. The episode consists of clips of the live performances alternated with interviews with fans and excerpts from the singer's press conference,

7. The fan site contains a link to a YouTube page that features a series of videos related to the final weeks of activity and broadcasting of Videomusic, shortly before the channel was definitively shut down. Some of the broadcaster's video archive can be seen in the footage: VIDEOMUSICfansite [@VIDEOMUSICfansite]. *Youtube*. <https://www.youtube.com/VIDEOMUSICfansite> (last accessed 29-04-2025).

8. Today the premises houses a hotel and a centre for conventions, conferences and other events.

9. For further information, see Grasso 2006. Dotto and Piccinini 2006.

10. Graphic number 1 refers to the Gianna Nannini and Pink Floyd specials. Graphic number 2 refers to the other artists mentioned.

11. In this context, it is worth mentioning a recent independent film production: *Kissing Gorbaciov* (D'Alife and Mariani 2023) produced by SMK Factory.

and it closes with the lengthy music video for the song Jokerman, produced by Larry “Ratso” Sloman and directed by George Lois.

A considerable production effort is required in establishing programming for any such channel, as well as the need to reach commercial agreements with the main record labels. Although such an organisational step may seem obvious, for some time—at least until the summer of 1985—the programming of Videomusic had different defining characteristics, for example, choices that were more political than structural in nature, a preference for pre-recorded programmes as opposed to live transmissions. Another important factor was reaching an initial agreement with the record companies, essential for the use of the main product for the promotion of artists to an increasingly demanding audience: the music video. Only three months after its launch did Videomusic manage to strike a deal with several record companies: the unlimited and exclusive broadcasting rights for future music videos produced by each artist represented, at the cost of 100.000 lire. Over a short period of time, the channel managed to grow rapidly and significantly, resulting in the creation of a complex organisational structure and the need to hire technicians, staff and presenters capable of producing original and appealing audiovisual content in a sector that was experiencing the evolution of a new language. In fact, the Tuscan broadcaster quickly established contact and built relationships with other producers, in particular public television services, and soon developed the ability to organise, produce and broadcast a wide range of music-based content, such as festivals, live transmissions and concerts. Examples of this include the first Saint Tropez Music Video Festival (September 1984) and the live broadcast on Rai 1 of the World Music Video Awards and Estate Rock (1987), its first co-production with Rai (Griffiths 2022: 41–50).

Interviews also account for a significant part of the material that has already been scanned; it is largely unedited material later used on various programmes. Worth mentioning is the footage of a trip to the United States of America to interview the famous English singer-songwriter Gordon Matthew Thomas Sumner, better known as Sting. The authors of this footage were cameraman Leonardo Conti and new video jockey Claudio De Tommasi, who had arrived in 1985. De Tommasi, another well-known face of the 1980s, was also in charge of overseeing the channel's dealings with records companies.

[...] With Sting, I had to follow his American tour before filming the live concert at the Verona Arena for his Italian debut as a soloist. As a result of a strike at Fiumicino [...] we were late getting to St. Louis, Missouri, and had to go to Austin, Texas [...] On the other hand, we spent Sting's Day off playing football together, before he took us to see Roman Polanski's *Frantic* at the cinema [...]

(Griffiths 2022: 60).

Making the move to being broadcast at national level was a goal the young television channel probably set for itself over time. One it managed to achieve in the autumn of 1987, reaching over two thirds of the national territory with the programme *On the Air – la radio in televisione*: “[...] songs introduced by voice only, but instead of records we played music videos [...]” (Griffiths 2022: 165). Rupert, Marco Baldini, Alberto Lorenzini and Gianfranco Monti were the voices of this new programme that spawned numerous imitators, particularly *Telekommando*, presented by Alberto Lorenzini and Gianfranco Monti, which first aired in 1993 on Videomusic and later moved to various other channels. This new format saw two presenters turn up at the homes of famous musicians and celebrities to interview them in their private settings; it was broadcast from Monday to Friday, and the episodes lasted approximately 10 minutes. Interviews with Jovanotti, Totò Cutugno, Gianluca Grignani and Dario Fo have recently been rediscovered. We have also found traces in the collection of two other programmes from the 1990s linked to the name Wolfango Tedeschi: *Metropolis* and *Coloradio*. The former includes interviews with the artists Pierangelo Bertoli, Luciano Ligabue and Skiantos, either in the Videomusic studio in Ciocco or on tour. In the case of the latter, an interview with Pino Daniele and a selection of his live performances, in a format that is clearly an evolution of *On the Air – la radio in televisione*, with space dedicated to surveys, games and competitions, with the chance to win tickets to live events or concerts.

For Videomusic the 1990s represented a period of maturity but also one of structural difficulties, a change of ownership and the downsizing of its programming, leading to its rapid disappearance. The Cecchi Gori Group acquired the television channel in 1995 and immediately changed its organisational structure. In addition to the one in Ciocco, studios were established in Rome and Florence, and the channel was transmitted on the frequencies of Telemontecarlo. Beginning in June 1996, the programming schedule was drastically changed and reduced in size; it was no longer exclusively dedicated to music, with a significant amount of cinema, sport

and animation content. In the summer of 1997, the iconic Videomusic logo was replaced by that of TMC 2 and, notwithstanding the fact that music content continued to find space on the channel, the experience that had started out in Ciocco had come to an end. Other channels, faces and voices would become the protagonists of what was a new season in the history of music television.

In more recent years and thanks to the initiative of a few individuals, an attempt to reconstitute the TV station has been made. Or, perhaps, more accurately, to reclaim the cultural and technical experience that was such a fundamental part of its story. Evidence of this is the previously mentioned fan site and the desire to share old VHS recordings of the channel on various freely accessible internet sites, such as YouTube and the forum. This material, which has been illegally made available over the internet, is of enormous importance, because in many cases it is the only testimony of the programmes that were broadcast. This swan song ends with *Vuemme*, a music channel that has been present in the Tuscan territory for a short time which attempts to offer the same experience and above all make available footage of Videomusic privately recorded by individuals.<sup>12</sup>

## 2 The Videomusic Collection in the Film Archive of Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin. Collection Management, Agreements and Access Policies

Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin's film archive was established with the aim of conserving, preserving, restoring and making newly accessible those productions that bear witness to the frenetic cinematographic production and distribution activity that took place in Turin during the silent era. The fact that this material is today accessible in large part due to the tireless work done by its founder Maria Adriana Prolo, who over time assembled a rich collection centred primarily on local identity, but which also included elements that help to recount other important moments from the history of cinema. Thanks to fortuitous discoveries, such as nitrate prints found and purchased at the city's antiques market—still today known as Balon—donations made by important figures of the period, as well as relationships established over time with a wide range of individuals and associations, the film archive houses not only important titles from the silent and sound eras, but also rare and unique items, such as prototypes of colour systems and 3D cinema, as well as non-standard formats, such as 28mm and the multitude of other formats widely used in the field of experimental film and home movies. In short, the film archive boasts a vast collection capable of recounting the widest range of events from the history of the Seventh Art.

Museo Nazionale del Cinema's film archive has always dedicated a lot of attention to the evolution of film and audiovisual formats, and it is no coincidence that, over time, new forms of production and distribution such as magnetic tape and digital support formats were also deposited. Within this framework, in 2019, Museo Nazionale del Cinema and Viacom International Media Networks Italia,<sup>13</sup> as the rights holder, entered into a deposit agreement for the archive of the television broadcaster Videomusic. It was the first time an audiovisual collection consisting of original video tape had been deposited with the film archive. The recording of sound and later images on magnetic storage was made possible from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, thanks also to the research of American engineer Oberlin Smith, who, on 8 September 1888, published a short note entitled *Some Possible Forms of the Phonograph*<sup>14</sup> in the British journal *Electrical World*. Following those early experiments, new and varying technologies continued to be developed, leading to the introduction of the first professionally viable analogue magnetic support in 1956: the 2-inch Quadruplex video tape, produced by Ampex. Numerous other magnetic formats were developed over the subsequent decades, including ones suitable for semi-professional use and others aimed at the consumer market, until the introduction of digital recording in 1994 with Sony's Digital Betacam, and all other subsequent digital formats. Initially used in television production, over time magnetic recording was also utilised in a wide variety of contexts, from artistic

12. For additional points of observation, reference can be made to the above-mentioned internet forum: <https://sceltatv.forumfree.it/?t=76254523>.

13. Since December of the same year, the US multinational has merged with other entities and Paramount Global is the responsible party under the current agreement.

14. Museum of Magnetic Sound Recording. Preserving the history of sound recording website: <https://r2rtx.org/> (last accessed 29-04-2025).



experimentation to independent cinema to video surveillance systems. This resulted in the creation of a multitude of different magnetic support formats—more than forty in total—each of which had its own recording and reproduction system.

Only in recent decades have film archives started to reflect on the characteristics of magnetic tape and the difficulties in preserving it and making its contents newly accessible, as it is more fragile than film stock. As a result, protocols have been developed for the preservation, inspection, cataloguing, digital acquisition and making accessible of this material,<sup>15</sup> from which Museo Nazionale del Cinema's film archive began elaborating a passive preservation plan, with a view to a future inspection, inventorying and cataloguing of the Videomusic Collection.

The first major issue facing the film archive lay in taking possession of and understanding the complexity and composition of the collection. At the time of being deposited, an Excel document listing the format, duration, contents and sometimes also the state of preservation of the supports was the only existing description of the collection. The Videomusic Collection consists of over 30,000 cassettes of various format, containing more than 5,000 hours of recordings. Discussions with the rights holder allowed the clarification of a number of previously little-understood passages, each of which proved fundamental to better understanding the complex history of the collection: it was possible to establish that the paperwork related to the channel's production activity was in large part missing; that the video collection accumulated over time had never been stored in temperature- and relative humidity-controlled locations; that at least all the material broadcast by the channel during the period of the transfer of ownership to the Cecchi Gori Group had been destroyed; that the above-mentioned Excel document related only to part of the collection, and that it had probably been compiled between 2008 and 2009 by Annapaola Martin and Massimo Bertolaccini<sup>16</sup> during the early stages of a project to attempt to re-evaluate the archive. The delivery of the material resulted in a considerable reduction in storage space available to the film archive, which in turn conditioned the preservation of the material itself. To ensure the correct passive preservation conditions, new shelving units were purchased specifically for the collection, which, together with the pre-existing climate-controlled conditions for film preservation, guarantee the stabilisation of the current state of preservation and the slowing down of the degradation of the magnetic supports. Subsequently, between 2020 and 2024, some samples from the video collection were identified and their digital acquisition was attempted, to better understand and to verify both the content and the potential technical issues. For this process, video formats at a higher risk of degradation were identified, such as Betacam, Betacam SP and Digital Betacam, and a few external companies that could guarantee ideal conditions for the acquisition of the images and sound were used. Digitisation was carried out on approximately 115 hours of recordings, highlighting the good state of preservation of the supports, as well as confirming the subdivision of the collection into music videos, concerts, specials and interviews with Italian and international artists. During the acquisition phase, cassettes containing MTV Italia recordings from the period 2003/2004 were identified. They had probably been erroneously included in the Videomusic archive during the transfer of ownership to the current rights holder; given the incongruity, this material is excluded from subsequent work processes. Starting in 2025, thanks to the acquisition of this initial information, a process of inspecting, inventorying and cataloguing the collection got under way with the aim of defining the structure of an information card relative to the contents and state of preservation of every single video support, for the purpose of beginning to construct an accurate and exhaustive catalogue of the collection, which has never before been done. The information cards will be designed in such a way as to describe the support, the contents, the duration, the authors and the subjects of the audiovisual recordings. In numerous instances the cassettes are accompanied by detailed documentation related to their contents (editing sheets, lists of music videos, concert set lists, descriptions of interviews, etc.). The study of these documents makes it possible to verify the completeness of the recorded material contained therein and to identify the names of the interviewers (in this case video jockeys) and possibly also the technicians responsible for their production.

The obligations, objectives and policies for accessing the Videomusic Collection are regulated by a private

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15. For recommendations and instructions on the handling of video formats, refer to the following website: <https://memoriav.ch/it/raccomandazioni/video/> (last accessed 29-04-2025).

16. Annapaola Martin is a photographer and filmmaker who collaborates with some of the biggest rock groups on the Italian music scene. Massimo Bertolaccini was one of the main protagonists of the Videomusic story.

agreement agreed upon and signed by the stakeholders. With regard to the contract binding the two parties, it is worthwhile highlighting Articles 2 and 6. While the Depositor recognises the professional experience and expertise of Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin required to manage the deposit (the premise of the contract), Article 2 defines the commitments made by Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin to the Depositor: “The Museum undertakes to provide and carry out on behalf of the Depositor the services of review, control and duplication for the purposes of preserving, cataloguing and archiving the Audiovisual Materials [...]”. The stipulation of this contract coincided with an important technological upgrade being made to the film archive; since 2021 Museo Nazionale del Cinema has had its own digital restoration laboratory, which is also in part capable of processing video formats (Perrone 2022). Its current technological capabilities permit the film archive to verify content recorded on Betacam and Betacam SP, as well as to carry out the image and colour stabilisation processes necessary to make even those materials most affected by the degradations typical of video images newly accessible. Using specialised software, it is possible to create content suitable for the purposes of preservation and the production of reference material. Image acquisition and sound restoration operations are entrusted to external companies possessing the required technology; this stage is attentively followed by Museo Nazionale del Cinema, which remains responsible for defining the technical characteristics for the acquisition of the different video formats. Article 6 states that:

The Depositor recognises that the Museum reserves the right to allow the consultation of Audiovisual Material that has been reviewed and reproduced in a digital format both inside and outside the film archive, purely for cultural and/or research purposes (thus excluding any use or exploitation of the material, even indirectly, for commercial purposes) [...].

Furthermore, in the same article, the Depositor, when notified in advance, authorises Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin to “[...] use the Audiovisual Material for cultural events in Italy and abroad, without prejudice to eventual limitations related to the protection of copyright and image rights, as well as to property rights connected therewith or incidental thereto [...]”. Use of the material for cultural purposes under the supervision of Museo Nazionale del Cinema is permitted and encouraged. Any other use, therefore, any use linked in any way to commercial purposes, must be granted by the rights holder and authorised by the holder or holders of the rights pertaining to the music or artists in question. This latter aspect is undoubtedly the more complex one as reference cannot be made to a single legal framework; instead, an agreement must be reached between the various stakeholders. The Depositor, by expressing an interest in making this audiovisual collection newly accessible, is also responsible for finding legal solutions appropriate to individual cases.

### 3 A Brief Conclusion. What Narrative to Construct and Future Prospects for Study and Analysis

Alongside the current activities of inventorying, cataloguing and digitally acquiring the collection, the rights holder, Museo Nazionale del Cinema of Turin and IULM University – Milan (Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM) have entered into an agreement to jointly define a project to re-evaluate the collection and make it newly accessible. One of the first objectives will be to define a new narrative, which will be the subject of an exhibition in the Mole Antonelliana, Museo Nazionale del Cinema’s permanent dedicated exhibition space, as well as the publication of a catalogue. The form of this narrative is currently being elaborated. Simple, non-critical access to the contents of the material contained on the tapes cannot be the only possible narrative. The Videomusic Collection has the potential to be a source of cross-sectional study of depictions of society and the varied and potential connections that exist between the commercial and independent television, music and cinema industries. Examples of this can be found in interviews with people such as Professor of Theatre History Fernando Mastropasqua, singer-songwriter Pierangelo Bertoli and the important Japanese composer Ryūichi Sakamoto, three valuable witnesses to experiences related to, respectively: The Living Theatre, the state of the Italian record industry during the Eighties and Nineties, and collaborating with Nagisa Oshima and Bernardo Bertolucci on soundtracks to their films. In addition, there are also interesting recordings linked, for example, to the promotion of training initiatives run by institutes such as the “Roberto Rossellini” TV and Cinema State High School and to the world of festivals. This latter aspect is in line with more recent trends related to the reconstruction of the history of festivals. Some of the most relevant—



although not the only—examples of this are reports produced by Videomusic during events such as Festival dei Popoli and the Europa Cinema and Cinema Giovane festivals. Prospects for the study and analysis of the collection are not only limited to the material identified and designated as being of interest. A comparison with similar experiences in other European contexts, as well as the importance of grassroots cultures and the creation of spaces for the (not always legal) sharing of old recordings, are some of the other possible avenues of analysis through which the phenomenon in question could be studied, thereby enabling the understanding and defining of the perspective, or perspectives, through which to remember the history of a small private enterprise such as Videomusic.

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