



Con il patrocinio di:



→ **DAMSLab**
Piazzetta Pasolini 5/b

→ **Aule 1, 2 and 3**
Via Azzo Gardino 33

→ **Palazzo Hercolani**
Strada Maggiore 45

THE OLDER, THE BETTER!

AGEING CELEBRITY IN CONTEMPORARY MEDIA AND SPORT CONTEXTS

Organised by Ylenia Caputo, Simona Castellano, Antonella Mascio, Roy Menarini, Maurizio Merico, Sara Pesce, Mario Tirino

PRIN 2022 PNRR "CELEBR-AGE"
FINAL CONFERENCE

BOLOGNA
15 – 17 / 09 / 2025

MONDAY, SEPT 15TH

→ DAMSLAB/TEATRO
PIAZZETTA P. P. PASOLINI 5/B

14.30 – 15.00

— **Institutional Greetings**

Riccardo Brizzi, Head of Department of the Arts, Università di Bologna

Giacomo Manzoli, President of Consulta Universitaria del Cinema

Roy Menarini, PI of Prin 2022 PNRR project “Celebr-age”

15.00 – 16.30 — **Plenary Panel**

Chair: Riccardo Brizzi
(Università di Bologna)

In life, In Death, In Illness: The Representation of Sporting Celebrities in The Extreme Stages of their Journey

- Luca Bifulco (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II), Mario Tirino (Università degli Studi di Salerno) and Simona Castellano (Università degli Studi di Salerno)
The Death of a Celebrity and his Fandom: Memory, Remembrance, and Cult of Diego Armando Maradona in Online Fan Narratives
- Luca Benvenga (Unipegaso, Napoli)
From Glory to Vulnerability: Football Legends and the Social Imaginary of Disease
- Maria Frezza (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II)

Between Glory and Symbol: The Representation of Stefano Borgonovo's Illness and Death between Autobiography and Online Fans' Discourse

- Valentina Fedele (Università degli Studi Link Campus)
The Ultimate Fight: The Body and the Disease in Muhammad Ali's Heroic Journey Through Post-Career

17.00 – 18.30 — **Keynote Address**

Henry Jenkins (Provost Professor, University of Southern California)
“Just a Spoonful of Sugar”: Dick Van Dyke, Mary Poppins, and Playful Aging

Discussant: Giovanni Boccia Artieri
(Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo)

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BOLOGNA

THE OLDER, THE BETTER!

AGEING CELEBRITY IN CONTEMPORARY MEDIA AND SPORT CONTEXTS

BOLOGNA

15 – 17 / 09 / 2025

Celebrities play a pivotal role in contemporary media culture, functioning not only as commercial icons but also as cultural intermediaries who help shape public discourse. While much has been written on their social functions and audience relations, less critical attention has been given to ageing celebrities and to the shifting cultural meanings of celebrity in the post-career phase. As their presence expands across film, television, and digital media, ageing celebrities increasingly embody alternative narratives that challenge traditional associations of ageing with decline and invisibility.

This transformation mirrors broader demographic and cultural changes, as ageing becomes a prominent social factor influencing economies, lifestyles, and values. In the post-career stage, celebrity figures often engage in new forms of visibility — sharing personal stories, embracing vulnerability, or becoming advocates for social causes — which allow them to renegotiate their symbolic capital. Their trajectories invite interdisciplinary reflection on how fame, ageing, and media intersect in redefining later life within today's cultural imagination.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 17TH

→ AULA POETI | PALAZZO HERCOLANI
STRADA MAGGIORE 45

9.30 – 9.45 — Opening Remarks

Francesco Niccolò Moro, Head of
Department of Political and Social Sciences,
Università di Bologna

9.45 – 11.00 — Keynote Address

Matt Hills
(Honorary Professor, University of Bristol)
***An Ageing Celebrity "Time Lord":
The Timescapes of Foreverism and
Nostalgic Fandom***

Discussant: Antonella Mascio
(Università di Bologna)

11.00 – 12.30 — Plenary Panel

Chair: Luca Martignani
(Università di Bologna)

From Playing Fields to Media Arenas: Sporting Fame in Transition

- Ivo Germano (Università del Molise) and
Giovanna Russo (Università di Bologna)
***Football Tournament Coppa
Italia and Celebrity Culture:
Memories, Identity and the City.
The Case of BFC 1909***
- Giulio Tosi
(Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)
***Fighting Fields. Mediatized
Celebrity, Shifting Traditions and
Capital Conversion in the Post-
Fighting Career of Sumo Wrestlers***

- Marica Spalletta (Università degli Studi
Link Campus)
***Post-Career Pathways in Sport,
between Digital Self-Narratives,
Journalistic Insights and Online
Engagement. The Case of
Dorothea Wierer***

12.30 – 13.00 — Closing Remarks

13.00 — Light Lunch

→ AULA BOSCHERECCIA | PALAZZO HERCOLANI
STRADA MAGGIORE 45

TUESDAY, SEPT 16TH

→ DAMSLAB/TEATRO
PIAZZETTA P. P. PASOLINI 5/B

9.30 – 10.30 — Keynote Address

Renira Gambarato (Jönköping University)
***Unpacking Ageism in Streaming
Media: Cultural Memory and The
White Lotus***

Discussant: Sara Pesce
(Università di Bologna)

11.00 – 12.00 — Plenary Panel – PRIN Project Part I

Antonella Mascio, Roy Menarini, Sara
Pesce, Mario Tirino, Ylenia Caputo,
Simona Castellano

This panel brings together members
of the PRIN PNRR 2022 research group
"Ageing Celebrity in Contemporary
Media and Sport Contexts: a Model
of Social and Cultural Well-being",
presenting recent editorial initiatives
(Mediascapes Journal and a
forthcoming Mimesis international
volume) and discussing the qualitative
findings of the PRIN project.

12.00 – 13.00 — Plenary Panel – PRIN Project Part II

- Sara Pesce (Università di Bologna)
***Arnold Schwarzenegger. The
Perpetual Motion of Celebrity
Capital***
- Ylenia Caputo (Università di Bologna)
***The Vulnerable Body: Narratives
of Illness in Post-Career Female
Celebrity***

13.00 – 14.30 — Light Lunch

→ DAMSLAB/HALL
PIAZZETTA P. P. PASOLINI 5/B

14.30 – 16.30 — Parallel Panels

→ COMPLESSO UNIONE
VIA AZZO GARDINO 33

PANEL I — AULA 1

Chair: Stefano Marino
(Università di Bologna)

Enduring Icons: Ageing and Legacy in Musical Celebrity

- Fabio Pezzetti Tonion
(Museo Nazionale del Cinema)
***No Rest for The Wicked. Or, The
Life and Times of John Michael
"Ozzy" Osbourne***
- Marco Centorrino (Università di
Messina) and Cristiana Ferrigno
(Università di Messina)
***"Io sono (ancora) qui". Baglioni
and the Aesthetics of Nostalgia
Between Past and Present***
- Davide Persico (Università del Salento)
***Too Old to Be Sexy? Madonna,
Ageing, and the Politics of
Seduction in Contemporary
Celebrity Culture***
- Lucio Spaziante (Università di Bologna)
***Iggy Pop, Nude & Rude: A Portrait
of an Artist as an Old Man***

PANEL II — AULA 2

Chair: Michele Fadda
(Università di Bologna)

Reframing Age in the Digital Sphere: Memory, Mediation and Virtuality

- Alfonso Amendola (Università degli Studi di Salerno), Pietro Ammaturo (Università degli Studi eCampus) and Matteo Lorenzini (Università degli Studi eCampus)
Searching the (Im)Perfect Face: Ageing and AI in Contemporary Cinema
- Mael Bombaci (Università di Roma LUMSA), Simone Mulargia (Università di Roma LUMSA) and Francesca Comunello (Sapienza Università di Roma)
Challenging Norms, Creating Closeness: the Reframing of Ageing on TikTok
- Michelle Grillo (Independent Researcher)
(Non)Ageing and Celebrity of Virtual Influencers. The Lil Miquela Case
- Emilio Audissino (Università Mercatorum, Roma)
Cinema Is Death (and Ageing) at Work. Film as an Archival Mirror

PANEL III — AULA 3

Chair: Paola Brembilla
(Università di Bologna)

Diva Bodies and the Politics of Affirmative Ageing

- Noemi Petrasso (Independent Researcher)
An Other Ageing: Contradictions and Normative Transgressions in Chus Lampreave's Late-Francoist Performance
- Angela Bianca Saponari (Università di Bari A. Moro)
That Good Girl: Sandra Milo's Resistance to Ageing in Her Latest Media Performances
- Daiva Siudikienė (Vilnius University)
Constructing the Image of Ageing Female Celebrities in Lithuanian Women's Magazines Across Different Periods: An Analysis of Representations
- Camilla Zampolini (Queen's University Belfast)
Bodies of Evidence: Age, Desire, and Gender in Mare of Easttown and True Detective: Night Country

17.00 – 18.30 — Parallel Panels

→ COMPLESSO UNIONE
VIA AZZO GARDINO 33

PANEL IV — AULA 1

Chair: Luca Barra (Università di Bologna)

Gendered Power Dynamics in Ageing and Fame

- Greta Iapalucci (Università di Bologna)
Screened Out: Gendered Ageism in Italian TV Series Casting

- Mauro Colarieti (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)
"But Daddy, I Love Him You!". Navigating the Daddy Craze in Contemporary Celebrity Cultures
- Chi Zang (University of Leeds, UK)
Gender, Power, and Celebrity Ageing: The Cultural Politics of Nisu in Chinese Fan Culture
- Simona Tirocchi (Università di Torino)
Barbie beyond Agelessness: A Critical Reading of Greta Gerwig's Barbie

PANEL V — AULA 2

Chair: Ylenia Caputo (Università di Bologna) and Simona Castellano (Università degli Studi di Salerno)

Seduction and Sexual Agency Beyond Youth

- Antonio Buonansegna (Università della Basilicata)
Sorrentino's Baroness in The Hand of God: Ageing Eroticism, Initiation, and the Warholian Iconicity of 1980s Naples
- Sofia Torre (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II)
Empowerment Porn Boulevard. Nina Hartley and The Construction of Mature Performer Celebrity
- Enrico Biasin (Independent Researcher)
"How Old Are You? I Don't Know, It Depends on How Much Young and Popular I Am". Brad Pitt, Benjamin Button, and the Curious Case of Ageing Celebrity

PANEL VI — AULA 3

Chair: Marta Rocchi
(Università di Bologna)

Narratives of Resilience: Rewriting Age and Public Authority

- Lorenzo Di Paola (Université libre de Bruxelles) and Giorgio Busi Rizzi (Ghent University)
Invecchiare male: Authorial Celebrity and Generational Misalignment in the Italian Comics Field
- Paola De Rosa (Università degli Studi Link Campus) and Anne Marit Risum Waade (Aarhus University)
"Out of Her Prime?". Ageing, Celebrity, and Crisis Leadership in Borgen
- Atakan Göktepe (Marmara University, Istanbul)
The Persistence of Grande Dame Guignol: Ageing, Horror, and Female Visibility Across Decades

19.00 – 22.00 — Light Dinner in Piazzetta P. P. Pasolini