



The Great Black Spider on Its Knock-Kneed Tripod: Reflections of Cinema in Early Twentieth-Century Italy (Toronto Italian Studies)

Michael Syrimis

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The emergence of cinema as a predominant form of mass entertainment in the 1910s inspired intellectuals to rethink their definitions of art. *The Great Black Spider on Its Knock-Kneed Tripod* traces the encounter of Italy's writers with cinema, and in doing so offers vibrant new perspectives on the country's early twentieth-century culture.

This comparative study focuses on the immediate responses to this cultural phenomenon of three highly influential intellectuals, each with a competing aesthetic vision – Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, founder of Futurism; Gabriele D'Annunzio, leader of Italian Decadentism; and Luigi Pirandello, a father of modern European theatre and theorist of humour. Along with demonstrating how the popularization of the feature-length narrative influenced each author's outlook and theories, Michael Syrimis unravels the extent to which cinema enforced or neutralized the ideological and aesthetic differences between them.



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