

Decolonize!



Cultural practices and events are an occasion to reflect on the space they come to occupy and inhabit—even if temporarily. As it is often the case in Rome, the architecture becomes an overwhelming element to deal with. This year the new location granted by the Region to the performative art festival [Short Theatre](#) was the rationalist building of the [ExGil](#)—literally former Fascist Youth. After its restoration and reopening the space was renamed as WeGil by the Regione Lazio administration, and is currently used as polyvalent cultural space and venue for exhibitions, arts and culture. Luigi Moretti's building was inaugurated in 1937, as the space for the fascist organization Gioventù Italiana del Littorio, and used as such until the end of WWII. This cohabitation couldn't but trigger a reflection about the building itself and the city at large, their symbols and history. The artistic production of today has the power—and duty—of reshaping and resignifying the matter of collective memory, through its contemporary theories, influences and gestures. Indeed, the considerations that came about necessarily tackled the colonial fascist past of Italian history and geography inasmuch as their tendency to remain incomplete, often laboriously countered by feminist decolonial artistic and educational practices.

This issue unfolds through the words and personal experience of writer and journalist Igiaba

Scego, who in her piece *For WeGil* takes Rome as an emblematic case of historical indifference; followed by researcher and curator Simone Frangi's *The Crime of Innocence*, a focus on “harmless” monumentality and neocolonial continuum; through their collective intervention (*We*) *are not Gil*, Ilenia Caleo, Isabella Pinto, Federica Giardini and Serena Fiorletta attempt to “complete” the historical traces embedded in the ExGil building; the continuous work done at the Master in Gender politics and studies, especially around its [Arts Module](#), as witnessed and recounted by Paola Granato in *Entanglements*; and it overall attempts to follow the traces of a decolonial feminism, as put in practice by the collective [Décolonizer les Arts](#) (active in Paris since 2015) and theorized by Françoise Vergès, here interviewed by Giulia Crispiani. Special thanks to Short Theatre for making the effort and not remaining indifferent.

The contributions by Igiaba Scego and Simone Frangi and the intervention by Ilenia Caleo, Federica Giardini, Serena Fiorella and Isabella Pinto were commissioned by Short Theatre.