



the Lazzo of the fly

AND OTHER STORIES



lecture/performance on the
Commedia dell'Arte

directed and performed by
FABIO MANGOLINI

TWO WORDS ON THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

"Commedia degli Zanni", 'Commedia dei Buffoni', 'Commedia dell'Arte'. We are in the second half of the 16th century. Actors elevated their profession, until then considered low and infamous, to the rank of art, taking it in a few years from the squares to the places of power of the time: the European Courts.

The art of the actor was recognised, the professionalism of the theatre was recognised. The actors created types close to the characters of the people, they stole them from everyday life and made them accessible to every audience, they made them universal and for this reason they stylised them, they made them grotesque. They use masks for their purpose.

This is how the mask, the roots of which can be found in the festivals and rituals of the carnivals of the Middle Ages, becomes not only a grotesque means but also a tool, a working tool, like that of any craftsman. The Commedia dell'Arte, on the other hand, turns the actor into a theatre craftsman capable of transforming the materials of everyday life into a repertoire to be used on stage.

The Commedia dell'Arte would later go down in theatre history also as 'Impromptu Theatre'. For years, the term 'improvisation' was given a legendary meaning, as if everything that happened on stage was nothing more than the fruit of the actor's inspiration in a moment of dramatic thunderbolt. Nothing could be falsier. And nothing more studied and worked on, even chiseled, than the improvisation of the comedians of the Art. These were real partitions that actors passed on from generation to generation as if they were tools, the instruments of the art. They were handed down by 'Centoni'. These were a kind of breviary, treasured by each actor, containing extracts from scenes, jokes, comic games and songs, from which the actors could draw when improvising. And each actor's 'Centone' was enriched in the course of his career, which was inextricably linked to the life of the character he played.

Theatre of professionals united in companies, associations capable of resisting over time, such as 'I Gelosi', of which there are records for more than fifty years. This means the vitality of an artistic form as well as adaptation to different historical conditions. A professional theatre and an export theatre, since in a few years the Commedia dell'Arte, born in the triangle Bologna-Venice-Milan, was exported all over Europe with great success.

A theatre accessible to all audiences, a popular theatre that transcends language and regional barriers. If an artistic expression is born from an adaptation, from a stylization of reality, from the search for an audience and the need to cultivate its tastes, so the Commedia dell'Arte proposes universal types, simple and direct languages, a popular theatre that soon becomes universal.



The Lazzo of the Fly and other stories

An actor, alone on stage, tells and shows the secrets of the Commedia dell'Arte through his masks. A journey that starts in Padua in 1545 and arrives up to the present day amidst comedy and precious information on a theatrical form that, as we will see, still belongs to us today.

An actor alone on stage is transformed from lecturer to acrobat, from narrator of a marvellous story to incarnation of the

A lecture...

narrating the history, the popular origins of the Commedia dell'Arte and its development in Italian and European courts.

Curious anecdotes to recount a theatre of exportation made of gestures and new languages, a dynamic theatre.

A dramaturgical structure so distant yet so familiar with characters that are universal images of society, in which all human beings are mirrored.



... and a show

in which stories and classical monologues alternate with the art of improvisation and pieces from the repertoire and tradition. From the charlatan "who sings on the bench" to the "Arrival of the Zanni in Venice", "Pantalone and love" and again the monologues of the Doctor, the bravura of the Captain and the antics of Pulcinella up to Harlequin. Almost five centuries of theatre in a breath-taking hour and a half.



The Lazzo of the Fly and other stories premiered in Tōkyō in January 1994 and since then it has been performed more than eight hundred times in theatres, universities, cultural institutes, museums... in Japan, Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Russia, United States, Puerto Rico, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Colombia, El Salvador, Chile, Israel...



BIOGRAPHY

Fabio Mangolini (Rome, 1964) has dedicated his entire life to theatre as an actor, director, pedagogue, author, translator and, finally, as a manager. He graduated in Philosophy from the University of Bologna, and in 1987 he graduated from the Ecole Internationale de Mimodrame de Paris Marcel Marceau. In 1985 he joined as a young Harlequin in the international company Les Scalzacani directed by Carlo Boso, in Paris. In 1991 he left the company and continued to take the Commedia dell'Arte around the world. Between 1992 and 1994 he was a scholarship holder of the Japan Foundation and the International Theatre Institute and studied Kyōgen and Nō in Tōkyō. As an actor, he has worked with numerous directors, including Carlo Boso, Nomura Kosuke, François Cervantes, Roxanne Rizvi, Remi Barbier, Didier Doumergue, Francesco Brandi, Tim Supple, Giles Smith, performing in tours in Italy, Europe and the world. He has directed shows in Italy, France, Belgium, Spain and the United States. He has taught in prestigious Academies of Dramatic Art in Europe (among others, RESAD in Madrid, GITIS and MKAT in Moscow), in Universities in the USA and South America, in Japan. From 2004 to 2009 he taught Interpretation and Direction at the Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático (RESAD) in Madrid. He has taught in Europe, Asia, America, Africa. He was President of the Fondazione Teatro Comunale di Ferrara, President of the Associazione Scuola dell'Opera Italiana di Bologna and Board Member of the Fondazione ATER-Formazione. From

The masks in 'Il Lazzo della Mosca e altre storie' were created by Donato Sartori and Ninian Kinner Wilson.

ARLECHIN.



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