



## CURRICULUM OF TEATROIMMAGINE COMPANY

The Venetian Company *Teatroimmagine* was born in 1989 on the initiative of a small group of young artists who had different experiences in the Venetian Popular Theatre.

A common urge to acknowledge and respect the *Commedia dell'Arte* (Comedy of the Art of Improvisation), a long tradition genre in the Italian culture, particularly in the Venetian one, led the staff to a constant study on the method of improvisation and dramatic interpretation of the historically handed down “canovacci” (plot summaries, upon which the improvisation was based), on the pantomime and on the use of masks.

The first performance on the stage, *Il Bugiardo* (The Liar) by C. Goldoni, was put on in 1989 and was based on this method. It earned a great success among critics and enjoyed the praise of the audience.

In 1990 the company had the honour to collaborate with Pino Costalunga, actor and director from Vicenza and esteemed expert on the “teatro ruzzantiano” (Ruzzante Comedies) and on the 16th-century drama.

In 1991, *Teatroimmagine*, though always remaining faithful to the *Commedia dell'Arte*, left the classical stage-sceneries in order to experiment with a comical version of a well-known thriller of 19th-century English Literature, *Il Mastino dei Baskerville* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, produced by Pino Costalunga.

Lo *Zanni Azzannato* comes thus into being, an exhilarating succession of scenes unravelled through a whole series of quotations from Boccaccio to Ruzzante and Goldoni, and performed following the paths of acrobatic expressiveness and of the clichés already established by the former art of comedy actors.

The further success all around the Veneto region and even wider (Venetian Representation at the National Festival of the Comedy of Art) led the group to follow this artistic path.

Meanwhile, the members of the staff have personally strengthened their own artistic knowledge, confronting themselves and working with actors and companies of European fame. Their meeting with professional realities like TAG Teatro of Venice and the Ensemble Vicenza Teatro (Staff: Stefano Perocco - Mask-characters; Antonia Munaretti - Costumes; Paolo Coin - Music; Nelly Quette -Choreography) and especially with celebrities such as Carlo Boso, Roberto Cuppone, Giovanni Perelda and lately Marco Paolini, made it possible for the group to face the staging of *I Pirati della Laguna* (*The Pirates of the Lagoon*) in 1993, which was inspired by the famous adventure book *L'Isola del Tesoro* (*The Treasure Island*) by Robert Luis Stevenson. Produced by the skilful Costalunga, the story talks about unrestrained pirates and lovers in the clouds, and it is enriched by the brilliant atmosphere of the Popular Venetian Theatre with its flashes of jester-like pantomime. This play, largely performed and winner of some prestigious national prizes, led the Venetian group

to a further experimentation: an audacious translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The plot, dealing with the love affair between the two young lovers of Verona, does not change, although it has a comical frame thanks to a mixture of jokes and different idioms in a series of grotesque situations. The striking success has been particularly confirmed by the participation in several European tournées in countries such as Greece, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Poland and also in the extra European ones such as Egypt, Tunisia, Malta and Lebanon, everywhere with enthusiastic results. *Teatroimmagine* was the Representative of Italy to many editions of the International Festival of Theatre, in Cairo (Egypt) and the Spring Theatre Festival of Thessaloniki (Greece) obtaining in both cases the official award by the critics and the public.

In 1996 the Company created a new play, the title of which is *Pantalone all'Inferno* (*Pantaloone in Hell*). Following again the tradition of the Italian comedians, the play gained success among the audience with a new tale stirring up happiness and fun. It is a very fascinating tale which takes the audience through fantastic places, where the Masks of the Comedy give life to a myriad of jokes, plays, duels, ballets..... and surprises.

In 1997 the Company undertook an ambitious and artistically very charming project: a pantomime for music and actors by W.A. Mozart entitled *Pantaloone and Columbine*. The official international debut took place during an exciting series of performances at the Cairo Opera House.

In the 1999 - 2000 season the Company staged *Amleto* (Hamlet), a farcical remake in two acts of Shakespeare's most performed play. Irony and the grotesque often replace tragedy, without, in any case, depriving the play of its intense dramatic force.

In July 2000 *Teatroimmagine* came back to Italy for inspiration, precisely to the Venetian author Carlo Gozzi. His tale *L'Amore delle tre Melarance* (*The Love of the three Sweet Oranges*) was successfully staged in a new exhilarating version all based on the masks' interplay and fantasy.

In 2001 a new project, *Hansel e Gretel*, was created specifically for the youngsters. Even if it was the first experience in this field, the participation and enjoyment of Italian and foreign children was very satisfactory.

In 2002 the loved Shakespeare inspired the Company again with another masterpiece: *Il Mercante di Venezia* (*The Merchant of Venice*). The play had its premiere in Nice (FR) at "Les Baroquiales" Festival, one of the most important cultural events in Europe.

A. Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi* (*The Betrothed*) was put on stage by the Venetian Company in 2004. Being one of the most famous and widely read novels in the Italian literature, it represented an unprecedented challenge for the group and the beginning of an enthusiastic collaboration with the Belgian director Benoit Roland, who promoted the play in several international happenings.

In 2005 *Teatroimmagine* put on scene the second play for youngsters. *Il Mago di Oz* (*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*), brilliantly directed by Matteo Destro, was based mostly on mimicry, on the actor's skill to tell a story and to make people imagine through his body.

*Il Mastino dei Baskerville* (*The Hound of the Baskerville* by Arthur Conan Doyle) was firstly staged in 1991 and it was so a successful production to lead the Company to put it on scene again in 2007. The play keeps all its fresh and comic aspects and it does not ignore the absorbing plot dealing with Sherlock Holmes, even if it is transposed into Italian "Pianura Padana" (Padan Plain).

In 2009 the performance *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*) suggested a comparison with the great classic Opera again, transposing one of the best known operas in the world into comedy. The Company, in this case, try to honour and interpret one of the masterpieces in Italian Melodrama, maintaining its lightness and exalting its burlesque aspect, as it is usual for a group led by a deep motivation of having fun and entertaining the audience.

2011: The Company attends an intensive internship given by the renowned Carlo Boso, so refreshing its techniques and foundations, in order to face up to a new project: in fact it is the turn of the great Umberto Eco's best-seller, with its 12th-century French chivalrous inspiration, that gives life to *Il Romanzo della Rosa* (*The Romance of the Rose*). It is a crisp and enjoyable comedy, where the glorious Tradition of the Italian Comedians, mixed with techniques of the theatre from different times and cultures, ends up full of a list of names with an evocative flavour... with the aim not so much to laugh by means of a common parody... as to write Poetry while laughing!

2013: Twenty-five years of Commedia dell'Arte and passion for the theatre. Many celebrations for the new production of *Robin Hood - a Venetian legend* (*Robin Hood - una leggenda veneziana*) ... oh yes, because our hero moves to the lagoon in order to support the people who fight against the tyranny of the Magnificent usurper. Working always with comedy, irony and music, to give a message of positivity, hope and joy of living!

#### **INTERNATIONAL AWARDS**

- 1995 - Award of the critics and the audience at 7<sup>th</sup> CIFET (Cairo, Egypt)
- 1996 - Winner of the International Comedy Festival in Hamburg (Germany)
- 1997 - Best play at the European Theater Festival in Stockholm (Sweden)
- 1998 - Winner of the Spring Theater Festival in Salonika (Greece)
- 1999 - Winner of the IFIT Festival in Istanbul (Turkey)
- 2000 - First Award at the International Shakespeare festival in Hvar (Croatia)
- 2002 - Best award at Les Baroquiales festival in Nice (France)
- 2003 - Winner of the Welcome Festival in Bruxelles (Belgium)
- 2005 - Best Company and best performance in the Theater Mediterranean Days in La Valletta (Malta)
- 2006 - Award of the audience at the Month of Italian Culture in Nicosia (Cyprus)

#### **... AND LAST NATIONAL AWARDS**

- 2006 - Winner of the National Festival of Theatre Dialect "La Guglia d'Oro" of Agugliano (AN) with "The Betrothed"
- 2007 - Winner of the National Festival of Theatre Dialect "La Guglia d'Oro" of Agugliano (AN) with "The Merchant of Venice"
- 2008 - Winner of the National Festival "Francesco Lieti" of Carosino (TA) with "The Merchant of Venice"
- 2009 - Winner of the National Festival "Francesco Lieti" of Carosino (TA) with "The Betrothed"
- 2009 - Winner of the National Festival "Sipario d'Oro" of Rovereto (TN) with "The Merchant of Venice"
- 2010 - Winner of the National Traveling Festival "Premio Marcello Mascherini" of Pordenone with "The Barber of Seville;
- 2010 - Winner of the 42nd National Festival Macerata Teatro "A. Perugini Award" with "The Betrothed"
- 2011 - Winner of the National Festival "Theatre XS" of Salerno (SA) with "The Betrothed".
- 2012 - Winner of the National Theatre Award "G. Mellano" - FOLLE D'ORO - City of Fossano - IV Edition with "The Barber of Seville;
- 2013 - Winner of the National Drama Festival of Imperia with "The Betrothed".
- 2014 - Winner of the 24th International Theatre Festival Castello di Gorizia - Francesco Macedonio Award with "The Betrothed"
- 2015 - Winner of the 1st Theatre Festival Veneto - Award Confcommercio San Donà-Jesolo "The Betrothed".