

## The contemporary art of Commedia dell'arte

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### SYNOPSIS

*from a workshop at Athens Conference 2001*

It's still difficult for us, actors, directors, writers, and theatre people to understand the origin of the "Commedia dell'arte". Few are the records left, that can testify to the reason for of its origin. We have assumed a certain technique of using the mask and the costume, studying the ancient iconography, the historical-social context in which the stock character was acting, and the scenarios, that the comedians have suddenly left in memory of their activity.

From the renowned work of Maurice Sand *Masques et buffons* (1856) onwards, the ground has been widely dug, and in the last decades plenty of large monographies concerning the influence exerted by the "Commedia dell'arte" on several European countries has been published; nevertheless major historical questions concerning the subject have not been answered yet and they will still remain unanswered until a miraculous discovery of new documents takes place.

I think we need to discover the memory of this wonderful Art, through practice and direct discussion with contemporary theatre: we need to discover its utility in our society, to understand its pedagogic, social and political meaning, to acquire new knowledge for an individual and social growth, that will allow the man, the actor and the teacher, to relate himself once more to others. First of all, the theatre (and in this case the Commedia dell'Arte) has to meet the school on several fronts, planning together with the teachers, according to the difficulties of the school and its territory, as regards their social context, and offering its experience to approach the theatre language correctly without perverting the search between form and subject that is inherent in theatre.

Projects for the school, in which pedagogy and didactics provide pupils and teachers with proper tools to tackle the problem of incommunicability between people, should be organized. We have to give a social sense to theatrical activity in school, and believe that, beyond theatre, the reconstruction of human relations, of spaces on a human scale, and a human nature that allows us to communicate actually exist.



Mario Gallo

*Athens, December 2001*