

Call for Papers for the International Colloquium

**“Passing on the Commedia dell’Arte Tradition:
Past and Present Training and Pedagogical Approaches”**

18 February 2012, Toronto.

Event organized by the Drama Studies Programme, Glendon College, York University,
in collaboration with the University College Drama Programme
and the Graduate Centre for Study of Drama at the University of Toronto



“A famous Spanish comedian named Adriano, who came to Naples with other [actors] to put on their comedies, could not understand how one could produce a comedy by simply coordinating several characters and staging it in less than an hour. An undertaking as fascinating as it is difficult and risky, it should not be attempted except by qualified and competent people...”

Andrea Perrucci’s quote raises the issue of the training of the Commedia dell’Arte performers. While the success of Commedia dell’Arte troupes throughout the centuries is well documented, the performers’ training practices often remain elusive. Today, various teaching approaches have been devised to recreate the Commedia dell’Arte. This colloquium proposes to explore the transmission of performance knowledge from the Golden Age of the Commedia dell’Arte to current practices inspired by this tradition.

Paper topics may include, but are not limited to:

- The transmission of performance knowledge in the Golden Age of the Commedia dell'Arte;
- Deducing practices from Commedia scenarios;
- Interpreting Commedia dell'Arte treatises;
- Commedia dell'Arte training trends in the 20th and 21st centuries;
- Specific training approaches: Meyerhold, Giorgio Strehler and the Piccolo Teatro of Milan, Dario Fo, Jacques Lecoq, etc.
- Commedia dell'Arte training in various countries;
- Specific aspects of training: rhythm and musicality, improvisation, grammalet, masked performance techniques, dialects, etc.;
- Commedia dell'Arte training and the other performing arts: circus, opera, puppetry, etc.;
- Commedia dell'Arte training and interculturalism.

Dr. **Robert Henke**, Professor of Comparative Literature and Drama, Washington University in St Louis is the confirmed key-note speaker of the conference. He is the author of *Performance and Literature in the Commedia dell'Arte* (Cambridge UP, 2002), a groundbreaking book that examines the interplay between oral and literary cultures in the Commedia dell'Arte.

We are open to various presentation formats; from academic presentations with a historical focus to lecture-demonstrations. Presentations may be in English or French and should be 20 minutes in length. Proposals should include the following items:

- Your name, title (student, faculty, independent scholar), and academic affiliation.
- Your contact information (particularly email) and a short bio.
- The title and abstract for your paper. Please limit abstracts to 250 words.
- Any special requests for your presentation.

Please direct queries and proposals in Word format to the colloquium co-chairs: Guillaume Bernardi (Coordinator, Drama Studies Programme, Glendon College, York University) and Gabrielle Houle (PhD candidate, Graduate Centre for Study of Drama, University of Toronto), at the following address:
commedia2012@glendon.yorku.ca

All proposals must be received by October 31, 2011. Emails of acceptance will be sent by November 15, 2011. We intend to publish selected papers in a peer-reviewed publication.

In parallel with the colloquium, Carlos Garcia Estevez, internationally acclaimed Commedia performer, educator and co-founder of Amsterdam based Teatro Punto, <www.teatropunto.net>, will be leading a Commedia dell'Arte workshop at the University College Drama Program (University of Toronto). For more information on this workshop and to enroll in it, please contact the workshop organizer, Lester Trips Theatre, at <lestertrips.theatre@gmail.com>.