

CLAUDIA CONTIN ARLECCHINO - A LIFE FOR THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

1 - THE COMMEDIA OF ARLECCHINO

The Commedia dell'Arte of Arlecchino Claudia Contin comes as an effective set of didactic fables where technical and historical precision and the fluid and direct communication pass through the exploration of the power of the mask and its archetypes, comparing the Italian culture of the Commedia dell'Arte with all those other cultures in the world, which use masks to express their rituals.

Her rebuilding of the Commedia dell'Arte deepens the historical sources, the iconographic and anthropological research on behavioral languages, redefining the character and the behavior of the most known masks, and renewing the repertoire for the Commedia dell'Arte today.

From 1987 she was invited to rebuild on her own body of actress the masculine character of Harlequin and since then, it continuously becomes the stage name by which she's publicly known by critics and press releases since 1990.

In 2008 is consolidated the need to make effective the use of the stage name Arlecchino for practical and international relational reasons in 2012 is therefore instituted the request form for adding the second surname, approved in August 2013. Since January 2014, is now on registry records and in all certificates, the complete form "Claudia Contin Arlecchino".

2 - THE REFOUNDATION OF THE HARLEQUIN

In 1987 and 1988 Claudia Contin Arlecchino brings on stage in Venice a series of interventions with the character of Harlequin, taken from ancient zibaldoni and the anthology "La Commedia dell'Arte - Storia e testo" edited by Vito Pandolfi. Since 1989, the actress begins the accurate codification of the postures and behaviours of the most famous Italian masks, defining specific training techniques for actors and students. In 1990 she founded the Scuola Sperimentale dell'Attore in Pordenone, where the teaching of her Commedia dell'Arte became the basic discipline for the training of the complete actor until 2016, the year in which the pedagogical actress left the association.

In January 1991 she was invited by Professor Clelia Falletti Cruciani at the Teatro Ateneo of La Sapienza University in Rome to give her first official public lecture on the characters of the Commedia dell'Arte, and so the first version of her comic lecture "Gli Abitanti di Arlecchinia" debuted, considered today her show with the highest number of performances all over the world. In April 1991, with the advice of Professor Fabrizio Cruciani, the show "Il Mondologo di Arlecchino", considered the manifesto and at the same time a sort of testament of her mask of Harlequin, made debut in Venice.

It is in this moment that the figure of Harlequin becomes the character that identifies her in the Italian theatre and that makes her recognized as the first woman to wear professionally the role of the famous Mask.

Since 1999 the texts of her shows and her didactics begin to be published and spread in different languages.

3 - UNIVERSITY RESEARCHES

Since 1994 Claudia Contin Arlecchino has been invited to the CIMES of the University of Bologna by Professor Gerardo Guccini and Professor Eugenia Casini-Ropa for a series of didactic collaborations. In 1995, at the request of Gerardo Guccini, she released her first essay: "Journey in the Commedia dell'Arte", published in the first issue of the new CIMES magazine "Prove di Drammaturgia". The collaboration will continue until 1998 with workshops, conference-shows and theatrical essays for university students. The themes of the didactic paths concern, in that period, both the Commedia dell'Arte and her new technique of Tragedy of Art and their connections with the oriental theatre from India, Indonesia and China.

Since then there have been many Commedia dell'Arte productions inspired, written or performed by Claudia Contin Arlecchino and many graduation theses that have followed its development. In particular, the project "Profano Ordine della Maschera" which, since 1997, has constituted a permanent laboratory for the training and production of new performances in the streets, squares and alternative spaces. In this context, in addition to the rewriting of new dramaturgies for the Commedia dell'Arte, a wide research space has been dedicated to improvisation techniques in unprotected situations and outside traditional theatres.

4 - L'ARLECCHINO ERRANTE

From 1997 to 2018 Claudia Contin Arlecchino was the symbolic character and artistic co-director of the international workshop of Commedia dell'Arte called "L'Arlecchino Errante" which took place annually for 22 editions between August and September in Pordenone in Italy, with students, actors, masters and artists from all over the world. "L'Arlecchino Errante" was a long intensive workshop and a flourishing festival at the turn of the 20th and 21st century, in which the Commedia dell'Arte was carefully compared with the most refined techniques and performing arts from various cultures.

The specific teaching of L'ARLECCHINO ERRANTE is still exported all over the world, with study trips, internships and workshops in different languages.

Claudia Contin Arlecchino is also the only one among the actors to use on stage, for herself and her colleagues, only leather masks made in her own artisan workshop "Porto Arlecchino", where she also holds courses in mask making, covering the entire artisan cycle from plaster casts to neutral masks, from the sculpture of the wooden matrices to the final moulding of the cow leather for the making of the masks in the ancient way used in the 16th century tradition, proposing today new figures of Zanni, Arlecchino, Pantalone, Balanzone, Brighella, Capitano, Pulcinella and all the other characters that have made the history of Italian popular theatre.

5 - PORTO ARLECCHINO

Porto Arlecchino is a laboratory of theatre, art and crafts founded by Claudia Contin Arlecchino on 7th April 2007, on the 450th anniversary of the birth of Tristano Martinelli (1557-1630), the first theatrical Harlequin in the history of the Commedia dell'Arte. Porto Arlecchino is a workshop-residence in an old and charming restored country house, of eighteenth-century origin, located in the historic district of Borgo Meduna in Pordenone. Porto Arlecchino is part of a cultural project that elaborates and hosts iconographic and bibliographic researches, writings of texts, theatre scripts, art catalogues. Porto Arlecchino is the headquarter of all the new theatre productions and educational researches by Claudia Contin Arlecchino and the musician Luca Fantinutti, educational director and multimedia manager of the project.

The documentaristic website portoarlecchino.com was "launched" on February 25th 2015 on the occasion of the VI World Day of Commedia dell'Arte and the 470th anniversary of the Notarial Foundation of the Prima Fraternal Compagnia di Comici (1545).

For research and activities on the Commedia dell'Arte, Porto Arlecchino actively collaborates with the Ortoteatro di Pordenone cooperative, ConfArtigianato and ConfCooperative of Pordenone, the Pordenonelegge Foundation, Edizioni Forme Libere of the Gruppo Editoriale Tangram of Trento, the National KHM Theatermuseum of Vienna.

6 - THE SHOWS DEDICATED TO THE COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

1991 - The Inhabitants of Arlecchinia

1991 - The Mondologue of Harlequin

1993 - By boat with Adriano Banchieri's madrigals

1997 - The Zanni Circus

1998 - Profane Order of the Mask

2002 - Masks in White

2004 - Harlequin and his Double

2011 - Capitan Don Calzerotte e Arlecchin senza Panza

2015 - Neither Maid nor Mistress

2017 - The Human Comedy of Harlequin

2018 - The Comedy by Boat

2019 - Ancestors of Harlequin

2020 - Harlequin Disguises

www.portoarlecchino.com

www.lucafantinutti.com