

BIOGRAPHY OF CLAUDIA CONTIN ARLECCHINO

1 - PRESENTATION

Claudia Contin Arlecchino

actress, author, artist, known in the world as the first woman who reinterpreted the male character of Harlequin, one of the most intriguing characters of the Commedia dell'Arte.

Since 1987 she is also the only one in Europe to build all her own Masks and those for her Company, as is still the case only in the East.

Her creative versatility ranges from theatre to figurative art, from the acting dimension to the artisan one, in a renewed recovery of the homo faber in the contemporary artistic research.

Trainer and researcher of international fame, in her omnivorous poetics she comes to the personal care of projects, accessory costumes, scenes, behaviors and dramaturgy, in a seamless journey between artist and character, in the artistic world as in the real world, with the assumption of Harlequin identity also in all her personal documents.

2 - SKILLS

Claudia Contin Arlecchino is an Italian actress, director, set designer, figurative artist and theatre teacher, writer of essays and author of theatre texts published in several languages.

She is a researcher of Theatrical Anthropology applied to the Italian Commedia dell'Arte and its connections and comparisons with other cultures from around the world. She is also involved in Social Theatre, in the field of disabilities, social hardship and ethnic differences.

To her we owe the intuitions and experiments that are the basis of one of the most modern and innovative reconstructions of the Commedia dell'Arte, also concerning the redefinition of all the main characters and masks. She is the creator and curator of the new technique for contemporary theatre called Tragedia dell'Arte, inspired by the contemporary art of Egon Schiele.

Founder in 1990 of the Scuola Sperimentale dell'Attore, until 2015 she was the director of its educational programs. From 1997 to 2018 she was founder, symbolic image and artistic co-director of the International Actor's Art Meeting known worldwide as " L'Arlecchino Errante".

Since 2007 she has been founder and artistic director of the Porto Arlecchino atelier, which includes: editorial projects in collaboration with Edizioni Forme Libere of Trento, new theatrical productions and professional training workshops in the field of artistic handicraft for the theatre (masks, costumes, sets, staging) in collaboration with the Ortoteatro cooperative of Pordenone, historical theatre archive for the Commedia dell'Arte and Tragedy of Art in collaboration with the Theatermuseum of Vienna.

3 - STUDIES AND FIGURATIVE EDUCATION

Claudia Contin Arlecchino is born in Montereale Valcellina (PN) in 1965.

Graduated at the State Institute of Art "Giovanni Sello" in Udine, and graduated in History and Restoration of Architecture at the IUAV University of Venice with Professor Manfredo Tafuri, she attended courses in artistic anatomy and architectural decoration at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice.

She exhibited graphics, paintings and sculptures in Udine, Rome, Bologna and Venice from 1979 to 1986. This figurative activity strongly influenced and guided all her next path of redesigning the actor's behaviour on the stage.

Since 1987 she has dedicated herself to the study of various techniques for the theatre, as a graphic artist-pictorial-performer, as an architect and set designer, and in the specialist craft for the theatre as a costume designer and mask-maker.

Since 2000 her many exhibitions of art and crafts for the theatre include various techniques shared with several collaborators: from theatre and film make-up to body art, from drawing to digital graphics, from photography to multimedia techniques, from painting to engraving techniques, from sculpture to home decoration, from room decoration to artistic gardening, from architecture to scenography for indoor and outdoor events, from design to the creation of masks, costumes, sets, props, portraits dedicated to the history of Comedy and Tragedy.

4 - THEATRICAL STUDIES AND TRAINING

The theatrical formation of Claudia Contin Arlecchino starts at the age of 14 in Udine, while she attends the Art Institute and in the same time participates for three years in the Palio Teatrale Studentesco Città di Udine directed by Rodolfo Castiglione. In those early years she trained and collaborated with various professional groups in the theatre world of Udine: the Teatro all'Aria directed by Claudio de Maglio, the Scuola d'Arte directed by Clown Gelindo La Targia with whom she also collaborated in the organization of the Comicudine festival, she followed the first contemporary theatre programs of the Teatro Contatto of the Centro Servizi e Spettacoli (CSS). Although very

young, she meets, attends and collaborates with masters of actor and figure comic-grotesque theatre, such as Gardi Hutter, Antonio Catalano, Paolo Papparotto, Paolo Rossi.

In 1984 she founded her first theatre company called Teatro a Specchi in Udine, with which she staged her first independent shows and began teaching theatre for children and young people.

She then continued her training at the Alessandra Galante Garrone School of Theatre in Bologna until 1986, where she studied the techniques of Mime and Neutral Mask according to the discipline of Master Jacques Lecoq, and met the first rudiments of Commedia dell'Arte.

5 - THE MASTERS OF COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

In 1987 Claudia Contin Arlecchino moved to Venice where she attended the Theatre School in L'Avogaria, founded by Giovanni Poli and directed by his wife Carla Poli.

In 1987 she also began her first appearances as Harlequin, as part of some assignments for the Teatro all'Avogaria and in some Venetian cultural festivals. Also in Venice she met, among the various experts, the Masters of Commedia dell'Arte, of whom she worked mainly with Renzo Fabris, Tommaso Todesca, Enrico Bonavera and the director Ferruccio Merisi for the connections with the so called Third Theatre.

A dedication by Claudia Contin Arlecchino to these Masters is contained in her essay "Viaggio nella Commedia dell'Arte" (Journey in the Commedia dell'Arte), published in 1995 in the magazine "Prove di Drammaturgia" of CIMES - University of Bologna.

Since 1996 she collaborated with Benvenuto Cuminetti at the Teatro Donizzetti in Bergamo and then with the director Tato Russo at the Accademia Bellini in Naples for a new diffusion of Commedia dell'Arte techniques on the national territory for the training of contemporary actors.

Since 2003 she has collaborated with Master Pepe Barra for the diffusion of Neapolitan culture and Mediterranean music in relation to the Commedia dell'Arte and the mask of Pulcinella.

In 2014 she has the opportunity to work on stage alongside Master Ferruccio Soleri on the occasion of the Milan CRT project "Arlecchini e Arlecchini" by Paolo Rossi. The collaborations with Ferruccio Soleri continue in the following years for the diffusion of the Commedia dell'Arte in the culture of the Third Millennium.

6 - INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHES

The training of Claudia Contin Arlecchino continued (and still continues) in correspondence with the evolution of her profession, especially through numerous study trips around the world, combined with her tours. During her travels in India, Indonesia, China, Africa, South America, Russia, Europe she had the opportunity to meet many of the great masters of theatre, dance and martial arts.

Thanks to her preparation and many years of experience, she has an international reputation now consolidated, from Europe to Russia, from the Mediterranean to Africa, from the Far East to South America, especially for the anthropological rigor of her research on behavior in situations of "performance" (in the field of theater, dance, voice and singing) that make her a recognized Master in Italy and abroad both for the training of professionals and for the cultural training of spectators.

7 - THE TRAGEDY OF ART

Always engaged also in contemporary dramaturgy, the most important experiment of Claudia Contin Arlecchino is the gestural language obtained, since 1987, from the works of the Austrian painter Egon Schiele (1890-1918). An innovative path of scenic creation that has been followed with interest, since 1989, by several Italian universities and international researchers.

This technique of physical, gestural and vocal behaviour, which the actress has cultivated inspired by the extreme anatomies and body expressions of Egon Schiele's works, has been carefully codified by her and today constitutes the research structure of the Tragedy of Art project.

This project, besides defining the style of Claudia Contin Arlecchino's contemporary productions and performances, is now also a consolidated training technique for the actor.

8 - THEATRICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Since 1989 Claudia Contin Arlecchino has had frequent contacts and exchanges with the major national and international protagonists of the Theatrical Anthropology research. Since that year, in fact, her company Attori & Cantori is also in close collaboration with the Teatro Tascabile of Bergamo with which, in addition to co-producing some of her shows, she has shared the organization of many of her study trips to the East and the hospitality in Italy of great Masters of Indian Dance, Beijing Opera and Balinese Theatre. In 1994 she came into contact with Odin Teatret participating as Harlequin in the event Masques et Bouffons in Bergamo introduced by Eugenio Barba. She then published the essay Chasing Harlequin for the magazine The Open Page by Odin Teatret, and later she was hosted in Denmark in 2004 with her didactics for the Commedia dell'Arte and her solo

Harlequin and his Double within the Magdalena Project directed by Julia Varley, a collaboration that continued in Brazil in 2010 at the Brazil Summit meeting and is still online with Magdalena projects. From 1999 to 2008 numerous tours, workshops and productions in Beijing, China. From 2010 to 2012 the tours of her shows and workshops for Comedy and Tragedy of Art reached Eastern Siberia, where she conducted studies on the origin of Siberian shamanism around the area of Lake Baykal and designed and directed the production of sets, interethnic masks and costumes for "The Deer King" by Carlo Gozzi at the Vampilov Theatre in Irkutsk. From 2012 to 2018 Claudia Contin Arlecchino's tours intensify between Moscow and St. Petersburg.

9 - PRODUCTIONS AND PERFORMANCES

In the wide theatrical production, the solos: "Il MonDologo di Arlecchino" (1991), "The inhabitants of Arlecchinia" (1991), "Schiele: the Behavior Redrawn" (1996), "Harlequin and his Double" (2004), "Neither maid nor mistress" (2015), "The Human Comedy of Harlequin" (2017), "Ancestors of Harlequin" (2019), are her best known shows, which have toured the world, have been published in several editions also multilingual and remain always in distribution in the repertoire of the stainless Arlecchino Claudia Contin.

There are many other collective productions of which Claudia Contin Arlecchino is the author, dramaturge and at last director; for example: "In Barca con i madrigali del Banchieri" (1993), "Profano Ordine della Maschera" (1997), "The Circus of the Zannis" (1998), "Maschere in Bianco" (2002), "The Comedy by Boat" (2017).

From 1994 to 2009 she also directed and curated the Shaman Project dedicated to the Theatre of Differences, an initiative that has seen the accumulation over the years of many productions and a whole series of educational and documentary books. In 2012 she is also co-author and inspirer of the show "Captain Don Calzerotte and Arlecchin Senza Panza" (which has also become a book), a story that "rewrites" disability in a universal sense.

10 - PORTO ARLECCHINO DOCUMENTATION AND GRAPHICS

Starting from 2007 Claudia Contin Arlecchino has elected her residence as a house-laboratory of Art in the historic Borgomeduna district in Pordenone, with the registered trademark Porto Arlecchino, where she creates her figurative and literary works and follows the advanced training of her students. Since 2012 Claudia Contin Arlecchino, collaborates permanently with the graphic designer, photographer and musician Luca Fantinutti for all the documentation and research of Porto Arlecchino.

Luca Fantinutti is the graphic and multimedia manager of the Porto Arlecchino studio, he is responsible for the graphics and diffusion of the activities, the photographic and video shooting of the performance activities of Claudia Contin Arlecchino, the quality control of the publications of books and information materials, the editing and post-production of new documentaries, the new soundtracks of videos and live shows, and is the web-designer of the official Porto Arlecchino website.

www.portoarlecchino.com