

# *COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE*

## INTRODUCTORY

## WORKSHOP



by

**José Gabriel Campos**

## INTRODUCTION

Commedia dell'Arte began in Italy in the 16th century and with it professional theater. Actors use masks, fixed types, and specific gestures to portray a variety of characters. It begins with a canovaccio, a series of specific events, the structure from which actors improvise the text using their character, a lazzo (comic idea or gag), songs, acrobatics, etc. Some well-known characters of this genre are: Arlecchino, Pulcinella, the old Pantalone, etc. Its influence is visible in the works of great authors such as Shakespeare, Moliere, Goldoni, Lope de Rueda, Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina and Cervantes, among others.



# THE WORKSHOP

*Commedia dell'Arte* as presented nowadays, is an exacting discipline where practical ability and know-how are essential for those who intend to make the Theatre their career. The work with masks, fix types, gestus, improvisation and rhythm will help us to discover this genre. The lessons will have three parts: technique, improvisation and *canovaccio*. During the course the different characters from *Commedia dell'Arte* will be studied with their physical mask and particular behavior. Conflicts between characters will also be studied with funny improvisations. Improvisation will be used as method of study of *Commedia dell'Arte*. At the end groups will work a final *canovaccio* (short story) with all characters. We will work always trying to develop actor's listening, alert and complicity with the partner, working always from the pleasure of playing. As it is an introductory course no previous knowledge is necessary. The workshop is totally practical. It will be necessary to wear comfortable clothes and a belt. All languages are welcome to the workshop, since it is one of the basic pillars of *Commedia dell'Arte*: multilingualism.

## COURSE SUBJECTS

The Mask: use and meaning  
Fixed types and character parts: Old People, Lovers, the Zanni and Captains  
The functions of the characters  
Gestures and behavior of the characters  
The Lazzi

## Number of participants:

Minimum 10 / Maximum 18.

## The workshop can be developed in two modalities:

- One weekend (14 hours). Seven hours per day divided in lessons of three hours in the morning and four in the evening.
- One week (15 hours). From Monday to Friday, three hours per day. With a small open performance at the end.



# JOSÉ GABRIEL CAMPOS



Spanish actor, BA/MA in Acting (Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático of Murcia) with a specialization in **Commedia dell'Arte and Physical Comedy**. He has also significant screen acting experience: 5 years ( 1.100 episodes) in the Spanish TV series '**El secreto de Puente Viejo**'. His latest works are '**There will be Monsters**' (Carlota Pereda) and **Modelo 77** (Alberto

Rodríguez).

His Comedia dell'Arte teacher and mentor is **Antonio Fava**. He studied with him in Italy and later worked with him in his company and taught in his school for five years (*Scuola Internazionale dell'Attore Comico*). He's also trained in **clown** and improvisation by **Antón Valén** (Clown Cirque du Soleil), **Vladimir Olshansky** and Carles Castillo, and in physical theater with Gemma Galiana and Matej Matejka (Teatr Zar) , among others. He studied also with **Norman Taylor**, Claudia Contin, Andrés del Bosque, José Carlos Plaza, etc.

He holds a BA in Translation and Interpreting (2005) and translated the book “Les Masques Comiques d'Antonio Fava” (Arscomica, October 2011) into Spanish. He speaks Spanish, Catalan, English, Italian and German. He has run several **Commedia dell'Arte workshops** in Italy, Belgium, Germany, Spain and Brazil.

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