History of Performance and of Modern and Contemporary Theatre

## Prof. Roberta Carpani

[The course is borrowed from the degree courses on Financing and Managing Cultural Heritage Master's programme with the designation *History of Theatre and Contemporary Performance*]

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course will initially focus on the theoretical foundations and methods of critically analysing live performance in relation to other forms of artistic representation.

It also considers the methods and effectiveness by which theatre - the most participatory and public of the arts - in its various forms, has contributed over time to creating a unitary European identity, despite inherent differences. The issue is addressed by analysing the theatrical and festive phenomena of two epochal passages in modern and contemporary history: the decades between the second and third millennium and the 17th-18th century.

By the end of the course, students will have acquired an overview of the historical development of theatre in the modern and contemporary age; they will be able to describe and analyse theatrical performance and present their findings both orally and in writing; as well as prepare different types of texts relating to the communication of theatre (reviews, short essays and promotional texts); students will be able to describe and analyse the verbal theatrical text and to present its analysis in written and oral form. Alternatively, particularly for students on the Master's degree in Financing and Managing Cultural Heritage and Live Performance, it is possible to choose to analyse a cultural event (for example show, exhibition, celebration, festival) and the dramaturgical and performative considerations that inform its conception and design.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1 (Semester 1): European identity and performative culture between 1900 and 2000. Historical stages and case studies.

Module A (Semester 2): European identity and theatrical culture and festivities in the modern age (17th-18th century). Historical stages and case studies.

***READING LIST***

MODULE I

Course notes.

Collection of essays available in a course pack which will be able at Ufficio Fotoriproduzioni.

MODULE II

Course notes.

Collection of essays available in a course pack which will be able at Ufficio Fotoriproduzioni.

R. Carpani, *Le feste e la città in età moderna. Culture, drammaturgie e comunità a Milano nel primo Seicento*, EDUCatt, Milano, 2020.

The exam syllabus is adapted to the prior knowledge of each student; students should therefore contact the lecturer in this regard.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures; meetings with stage artists, actors, performers and directors (frontal teaching or by electronic means); video and photographic sources analysis of theatrical performances.

The course is composed of an interactive part divided into: a) a practical class on the written analysis of live performance in Module 1, and a practical class on the written analysis of a theatrical text in Module A, both supervised by the lecturer and by Dott. Maderna; b) a workshop of *Stage writing and interpretation* held by the actress-author Laura Curino on forms and techniques of applied dramaturgy; c) a programme of theatrical "outings and encounters" (frontal teaching or by electronic means).

The practical class of module I focuses on the analysis of a current performance in the 2023-2024 season (or of a performance available in the form of audiovisual recording in case of interruptions of the theatrical season due to force majeure) and on the preparation of an assignment to be submitted either in hard copy or digitally. The will be a critical essay and review written for a type of publication chosen by the students.

The practical class is mandatory, whether students are taking the 6-ECTS exam or the 12-ECTS exam. Both at the end of Module 1 and at the end of Module A, students must present the outcome of their practical sessions in class.

Students who are enrolled on the Master’s degree in Modern Philology (Performing Arts profile) are required, as per their study plan, to attend the workshop on Theatrical Writing and Interpretation held by Laura Curino. Students who are enrolled in other profiles of the Master’s degree in Modern Philology may insert the workshop into their study plan, acquiring three additional ECTS credits.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will also be assessed on their presence and participation in lectures and the supplementary activities organised during the course.

For the practical classes, students can be organised into groups of two or three, and their work produced will be presented in class. The writing classes and subsequent presentations count towards the final mark.

The workshop also counts towards the final mark.

The oral exam, of appropriate length, will assess students in terms of: information and data, method in the disciplinary approach, expressive and specific lexical skills, and their critical approach to the central issue of the course, the ability to understand and argue cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary connections. Particularly important assessment criteria will be: the ability to summarise information, formulate relevant responses and use subject-specific language.

The final mark will be calculated as follows: the oral exam will count for 50%, the practical classes 30%, the workshop 10% and active participation in the proposed initiatives a further 10%.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Given the interactive nature of the course, attendance is strongly encouraged. The course requires students to possess basic textbook-level knowledge of the history of Western theatre; This knowledge may also be acquired during the course.

The course is borrowed from the degree programme in *Economics and management of art, culture and entertainment* under the name "*History of Theatre and Contemporary Performance*".

Students are invited to refer to the notifications of the Mario Apollonius “CIT” (Università Cattolica Centre for Culture and Theatre “Mario Apolloni”). Theatrical outputs in Milanese theaters will be proposed as optional and free choice initiatives.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.