# History of Theatre and Entertainment

## Prof. Roberta Carpani; Prof. Laura Peja

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

The aim of the general section of the course is to teach students the basic notions required for understanding and a critical interpretation of the history of theatre in the West and the role of theatre in Western history. Students will show they have mastered the skills needed for understanding a wide range of theatrical phenomena, setting them in their historical context. Phenomena related to the enduring nature or changes to spaces, temporal settings, dramaturgical writing and composition practices, the profiles of stage artists, forms of patronage and organisational and theatrical production, possible forms of interaction with audiences. The methodology for studying the history of theatre will be outlined by studying certain chosen key moments in greater depth.

At the end of the course, students will:

– have learned the essential historical developments of theatre in the West;

– have taken awareness of the main cultural and methodological issues related to theatrical historiography

– be able to describe, analyse and understand a work of theatre;

– be able to historically contextualise performance-related phenomena, identifying the theatrical forms that developed and the related cultural, political, economic and social elements.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Module 1 (*Prof. Roberta Carpani*)

– The elements of theatre: text, actor, spectator, space and time; ritual and theatre; celebration and theatre; theatre and the other arts; theatrical philology.

– Overview of the history of theatre from the classical era to the 17th century.

Module II (*Prof. Laura Peja*)

– Problems of theatrical historiography: themes and examples

– Lines of history of theatre from the 18th to the 21st century: the evolution of public theatres; the issue of the actor; the Masters of the 900; views on the contemporary Italian scene.

***READING LIST***

For the first module

L. Allegri, F. Cotticelli (a cura di), *Alle fonti del teatro*, Carocci, Roma 2022 (parts to be defined);

C. Bernardi-C. Susa, *Storia essenziale del teatro,* Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2005 (chapters VI- VIII), or alternatively,

L. Allegri (edited by), *Storia del teatro.* *Le idee e le forme dello spettacolo dall’antichità a oggi,* Carocci Editore, Rome, 2017, (chapters 1-5).

Reading of three theatrical works chosen by the student from those referred to in lectures.

For the second module

M. De Marinis, *In cerca dell'attore : un bilancio del Novecento teatrale*, Bulzoni, Rome, 2000, pp. 9-126.

C. Bernardi, *Eros. Sull’antropologia della rappresent-azione,* EDUCatt, Milano, 2015 (chap. 1 and 2)

*Storia della comunicazione e dello spettacolo in Italia.* Vol I: *I media alla sfida della modernità (1900-1944)*, edited by C. Bernardi -E. Mosconi, Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2018, pp. 41-69

*Storia della comunicazione e dello spettacolo in Italia.* Vol II: *I media alla sfida della democrazia (1945-1978)*, edited by F. Colombo – R. Eugeni, Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2015, pp. 43-71

*Storia della comunicazione e dello spettacolo in Italia*, edited by Dipartimento di Scienze della comunicazione e dello spettacolo, 3 voll., Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2015-2018(chosen pages: vol I, pp. 41-69; vol II, pp. 43-71, *v*ol III pp. 247-271)

Students are invited to choose a list of readings among the ones presented in class

***TEACHING METHOD***

For both modules, lectures will involve reading and commenting on texts and iconographic sources, viewing video and photographic material and participating in live events, including those organised with other courses. The teaching material may be made available online too.

The course may also include talks (either in person or online) with playwrights, actors, directors and theatrical troops.

Lessons provide a space analysis of theatrical phenomena open to the participation of students.

Interested students could agree with lecturers on a short paper in replacement of part of the reading list.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students will be assessed by means of an oral exam of suitable length. The exam will verify that students have learned the content presented in lectures and contained in the texts on the reading list. Assessment will take into account also the participation of students in the interactive segments of lectures.

The oral exam will verify information mastery, methodological correctness and autonomous re-elaboration of course content; these elements will determine the final mark (70%) along with the communicative and argumentative skills shown during the oral examination (30%).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for attending this course. However, students should ideally have a basic knowledge of Western history, which will be used as a framework for the study of the history of theatre.

All the students who want to take the exam on Module 1 (4 or 6 ECTS) are expected to watch at least three plays in Milan or anywhere else, during the season 2023-2024, and they will be invited to discuss them during the exam. If this is not possible because of a possible medical emergency, this activity will be redefined according to the real possibilities offered by the situation (e.g. recorded plays uploaded online or by watching recorded shows available in the University Media library).

For students enrolled in the 8 ECTS course, the reading list will be defined as follows: for the first module, they will not have to study L. Allegri, F. Cotticelli (edited by), *Alle fonti del teatro*, Carocci, Roma 2022 (parts to be defined); for the second module, they will not have to study a selection of pages of the textbook *Storia della comunicazione e dello spettacolo in Italia.*

Students are invited to attend at least one of the Faculty’s theatre study workshops. Attendance of these workshops does not contribute to the final assessment for this course; instead, students’ contributions to the workshops will be assessed separately and awarded with specific ECTS credits. Students for whom the workshops are not part of their *piano di studi* (curriculum) may also attend out of personal interest. The workshops may also be taken as elective credits in various *piani di studio*, and incorporated into students’ *piano di studio* as supernumerary credits.

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.