

WHY COMMEDIA AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Commedia dell'arte is a theatre form, practice and way of life; one that demands immediate engagement and interaction from the audience. Touted as a base-comedic style ranging from knee slapping entertainment to social-political commentary, commedia with its stock masked characters is theatre for the people by the people. In today's social climate where 30second sound or image bites seem to satisfy the public's desire for connection be it in a "safe" non- confrontational or non-physical way, commedia is the antidote to connecting physically with our community through communal storytelling and humour. Commedia originated on the streets in Europe back in the mid 1600s; a time when the local town community was comprised of those immediately around you and one shared, more or less, a similar class structure. This common ground allowed for the emergence of an entertainment that ultimately united its people through raging against the injustices delivered by those 'above' and it's when Commedia punched up! It was performed by skilled theatre artisans, "dell arte", meaning the art of the professional performer. Commedia dell'arte's impact on our modern society cannot be lost. Its stylistic format with recognizable stock characters, simple plots, regional and local settings along with highly exaggerated actions and text form the basis for the situational comedies (sit coms) we see today on Netflix and TV.

Commedia truly is the best theatre practice to engage with our community!