

Call for international conference paper:

Theatre and Public Space

4-5 December 2020

**Free University of Bozen-Bolzano and
Teatro Stabile di Bolzano**



Theatre is a powerful and radical manifestation of the relationship between creativity and society. In ancient Greece, the theatre was the place where philosophical speculation, practised along Athens' Peripatos, married the majesty of the Acropolis with its temples dedicated to the gods. Also geographically speaking, the Theatre of Dionysus, the very first in Ancient Greece, lies at the foot of the Parthenon. It was dedicated to Zeus and later to Athena – his daughter born from his head – also known as the Goddess of Wisdom. Wisdom, therefore, as the zenith of a journey that begins from the theatre, from a collective experience, the catharsis, where the community becomes aware of itself, seeing representations of all the darkest and most unutterable aspects of existence, passing via philosophical speculation, the Greek logos, through which to form the ethos of a people, their identity. Through the theatrical experience, the throng of spectators becomes a collective body that resonates in unison and incorporates the affective and emotional dimensions of shared social values.

In today's interlinked digital society, theatre still upholds its role thanks to its quality as a dynamic live art which reproduces the experience of being here now. Additionally, in an age when the use of digital technology in daily life is becoming consolidated, theatre can still enjoy a season of renewed vitality and the greatest social interest:

it offers that space for creativity which the contemporary individual can no longer dispense in many small everyday actions with work cramped by the rigidities of digital technology; increasingly, the spectator is involved in constructing the collective meaning of the event while being transformed through the first-hand relationship, a key element which already distinguishes theatre from the other arts. In social terms, the impact of the theatrical action can therefore be divided into various aspects: theatre as a public space, therefore a political re-appropriation of a social presence; theatre and collective wellbeing; theatre as a pedagogical and socialization tool to foster prosocial behaviour among the new generations; a creative place of expression for the development of the imaginary; poetic theatre for recovery of the symbolic, the theatre as a cultural centre for both towns and cities, the beating heart of a community. The theatre is all these aspects given that it is the affirmation and recovery of public space, a place to educate society and at the same time for personal reflection, always in the individual's relationship with the other. The inspiration for this reflection on theatre and society is offered by sociological research carried out at the Teatro Stabile in Bolzano from 2018 to 2020, with its history, its particular relationship with the public, and consequently also in a dialogue with politics and territorial cultural diversity.

Areas of interest for the conference include:

- theatre and sociological theory
- dramaturgic choice and collective symbolism
 - theatre and community
 - dynamic and political arts
 - body and public space
 - theatre and immigration
 - theatre and digital media
 - theatre and social wellbeing
- theatre as a tool of socialization

Date and venue of the conference:

4-5 December 2020 at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano and the Teatro Stabile di Bolzano. (Due to Covid measures there will be the possibility of streaming presentations for international speakers). Proceedings of the conference will be published.

Call for papers:

Please send an abstract of max. 800 words to ilaria.riccioni@unibz.it **by and no later than 30 July 2020**

Scientific Committee:

Franco Ferrarotti (University of Rome “La Sapienza”), Mariselda Tessarolo (University of Padua), Ana Lucia Texeira (Universidade Federal de São Paulo, Brazil), Roberto Prestigiacomo (Trinity University – San Antonio, Texas, USA), Marisol Facuse (Universidad de Chile, Santiago de Chile), Jeffrey A. Halley (University of Texas at San Antonio, UTSA, USA), Iliara Riccioni (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano) ISA President RC37 Sociology of Arts.

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