

International Symposium

Giovanni Grasso (1873-1930)

How a myth was born and evolved

Catania, 27 and 28 of July 2017

Scientific Committee:

Marcello Cappelli (Stage Director, Associazione Mandara Ke, Catania), Franco La Magna (historian of cinema, Catania), Denis Lotti (historian of cinema, Università di Padova), Bernadette Majorana (historian of theatre, Università di Bergamo), Stefania Rimini (historian of theatre, Università di Catania), Gabriele Sofia (historian of theatre, Université Grenoble Alpes).

CALL FOR PAPERS

In the framework of the European ERASMUS+ Project “Art to be actor. The experience of Giovanni Grasso”, coordinated by the Mandara Ke Cultural Association, we are organizing the International Symposium "Giovanni Grasso (1873-1930). How a myth was born and evolved" in collaboration with The University of Catania and the University of Grenoble Alpes. The Symposium has a twofold purpose: on one hand, an in-depth understanding of Giovanni Grasso, as theatre and cinema actor, with the time he lived in as background; on the other hand, a reflection on this great actor aimed at making light of the various cultural universes which his performances represented and those he contributed to define through his artistic experience.

The Symposium will be articulated into four research themes:

1. Theatre contexts in the 20th Century. This theme explores the relations and influences developed by Giovanni Grasso with the different theatre contexts of his era: the Opera dei Pupi in Catania, the theatre in dialect and the popular theatre, the theatre of the bourgeoisie, the theatre of the great Directors who met with him (Craig, Stanislavskij, Mejerchol'd, Copeau, etc.), the theatre worlds of the great European, South American and North American capitals.

2. Circulation, promotion, paradigms of success, iconography and reception. The second research area wants to stimulate a reflection on the circulation and promotion of theatre companies at the beginning of the 1900's, in order to identify some of the strategies which marked the success of Grasso and other actors and actresses of the same era. How did the press follow artists on their tours? Which aspects of their private and "star" image celebrated them in the mass media? Which poses were "frozen" by the iconographic reports of the time? These are but some of the questions we will try to answer.

3. Stardom in theatre, photography and cinema. Giovanni Grasso's true legend, which started since his debut, is along the lines of the cinema and theatre stardom system of the beginning of the 20th Century. At the same time, though, it also shows specific traits, linked to stereotypical Italian attributes, to the appearance of unconventional celebrity expressions, and to the originality of roles and characters. A comparison with other legendary theatre and movie stars will allow to deepen our understanding of the sources of Grasso's artistic talent, while at the same time producing a new map of this great actor's styles and iconography.

4. Supporting actors and actresses: In both theatre and movie productions, Grasso was also a catalyst for several other great names like Angelo Musco who took part in the theatre company's activities and the first tours. A mandatory mention is also reserved for female performers such as Mimi' Aguglia and Marinella Bragaglia.

Proposals must contain:

- Title
- Between 3 and 5 keywords.
- Abstract of the topic and the research methodology (300 words maximum).

- Short biography of the author.

Deadlines:

- All proposals must be sent via email by April 30th, 2017. The email address is: convegnograsso2017@gmail.com
- Selected candidates will be notified via email by May 15th, 2017.

Languages:

- Proposals must be drafted in Italian, English, French or Spanish.
- Proposals in other languages will be accepted as long as a written translation, in Italian or English, is also provided.

Practical Information:

- The symposium will be held at the University of Catania.
- Speakers will cover their own expenses for transport, food and accommodation.

More info here:

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