

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

**Italian 1086**

times: MWF 10:00-10:50

room: CL 302

FALL TERM 04-1

**Prof. F. Savoia**

ext. 4-6265; e-mail: [savoia@pitt.edu](mailto:savoia@pitt.edu)

hours: M & W 11 to 12, T 9 to 10

**Course Description**

Italy has a long and firmly rooted tradition of both popular and erudite theater. Although this course is mostly devoted to twentieth-century Italian theater, it also wants to convey the idea of how important theater has been in Italy through the centuries. Close attention will be paid, in particular, to the features and the enduring influence of *Commedia dell'Arte*, a form of theater which arose in the middle of the Sixteenth century and was most successful between the end of that century and the mid 1700s. Luigi Pirandello, Eduardo De Filippo, Dario Fo and Franca Rame are the modern and contemporary playwrights that we will study.

**Scope and Method**

We will discuss the “public” nature of the theater, identify the conventions which govern the stage and playwriting, and explore the complex relationship between playwright and spectator, and text and staging, which drama always involves. The course will stress close reading of the texts: scene-by-scene analysis of the plays will be conducted in order to understand the dramatic articulation of events; careful consideration will be given to character portrayal, choice of language, conception of “place” and treatment of “time”, as well as to the overall “message” of each work (specific and/or universal values, social attitudes, taboos etc. which the plays may represent). In our literary analysis of the texts we will never lose sight of the importance of stage enactment and the multimedial nature of drama. Where possible, we will view on tape excerpts from various productions of the works under examination. The study of the proposed theatrical texts (both scenarios and fully scripted plays) should ultimately result in a rich and thought-provoking Italian cultural experience, as well as a useful exercise in “active” reading.

**Required Texts**

De Filippo, Eduardo. *Four Plays*. Translated by Maria Tucci, with an introduction by Ronald Herdwood. Hanover, NH: Smith & Kraus, 2002.

----- *Saturday, Sunday, Monday*. Adapted by Keith Waterhouse & Willis Hall. New York: Samuel French, 1974.

Fo, Dario. *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*. Adapted by Gavin Richards from a translation by Gillian Hanna, introduced by Stuart Hood. London: Methuen, 2001.

----- *We Won't Pay! We Won't Pay! And Other Plays. The Collected Plays of Dario Fo*, vol. 1. Edited by Franca Rame, Translated by Ron Jenkins. New York: Theatre Communication Group, 2001.

Other texts will be made available in photocopied form.

## **Work Plan**

Week 1	Introduction
“ 2- 3	<i>Commedia dell'Arte</i>
“ 4- 6	Luigi Pirandello
<b>Midterm</b>	<b>Friday, October 3</b>
“ 7-10	Eduardo De Filippo
“ 11-14	Dario Fo & Franca Rame
“ 15	Conclusions/Review
<b>Final</b>	<b>Tuesday, December 10, 10:00-11:50</b>

## **Grading System**

Class attendance and participation	20%
Class presentations	20%
Midterm	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final Paper	20%

Topics for oral reports will be proposed by the instructor. Final papers should deal with plays other than those discussed in class, and preferably (but not exclusively) by one of the authors studied.

## **Matters of ethical concern**

It is expected that all work done by a student will represent his/her own accomplishment. Therefore, you will neither give nor receive help on any class assignment, examination, project etc. beyond that allowed by the instructor.

If you present the words, data, or ideas of others (whether they are published authors, fellow students, teachers, or friends), with the implication that they are your own, and without appropriate attribution, you are guilty of plagiarism. You must always acknowledge your sources and credit others' work, whether published or unpublished, and whether in written or spoken form.

## **Special accommodations**

Students with disabilities who require special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications are advised to contact the Office of Disability Resources & Services ( 216 William Pitt Union, 648-7890) which, in turn, will contact the instructor and help her address their needs.

