

BOUFFONS

the ecstasy of Mocking

A lecture-presentation
with
Giovanni Fusetti

Where do Bouffons come from?

What is their relationship with Clown and comic theater?

What is their dramatic potentials?

What is the duality between tragedy and bouffons?



The word *Bouffons* come from a latin verb: *buffare*, to puff, to fill the cheeks with air and it seems to be a very old practice of humans. To deform oneself, to swell in order to provoke laughter. In fact, bouffons are direct descendants of the satyrs of ancient greek Satyric Drama

The actual word *Bouffons* comes from French *bouffon* and has entered the English theatrical language through the work of Jacques Lecoq.

The essence of Bouffon is mocking: a specific role, existing in all human societies. The Bouffons represents elements of their society in an amplified, distorted, exaggerated way, therefore provoking laughter and outrage.

Bouffons don't have opinions, and don't protect any side from their mocking. Their purpose is to have fun mocking humans and therefore they use everything they find. This is their power: they see and play with everything. Bouffons never touch on individual or private themes, but always big collective movements: themes that involve the very essence of society in its social complexity. Politics, religion, economy, power, money and finances, morality, war and the army, science, gender and race, ecology, family, education and school....institutions...etc.

Usually everybody in the audience gets scrambled by a bouffon piece, which can be often a bit difficult and or even unbearable. It's not the Bouffons who are unbearable but the truth that they reveal about humanity, what is hidden, what lies underneath, on the other side (*grotesque* comes from greek *cryptos* = hidden).

As a theatre style is often very provoking, because of its very nature of bringing hidden things to the surface and unmasking the collective games that lie behind events. This often includes the fact that the role of oppressor and victim are always intertwined.

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