Syllabus: ***Theater, Spectacle and the City in Italy***, ***1440-1595*** Italian Studies 1436

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***Backgrounds***.

1/27 Week 1: Introductory: Spectacle, Scene, Theater, City: the idea of the theater in the West, 400-1400 A.D. Preliminary Readings: Livy, Augustine, Isidore, Boccaccio.

2/3 Week 2. The Roman legacy of comedy. Plautus: *Menaechmi*, *Curculio*; Terence: *Andria*, *Eunuchus*.

2/10 Week 3. Recovering antique ideas of the stage and of the theater: Vitruvius, Alberti, Prisciani, Cesariano, Serlio, (Palladio); and: the vernacular legacy: Boccaccio’s *novelle*.

2/31 Week 4. The *sacra rappresentazione* in Florence (*Abraham and Isaac*, the *Annunciation*, the *Ascension*); visualizing the Bible, social structure, and stage machinery.

***Court theater***:

3/7 Week 5 Poliziano’s Mantuan *Orfeo*, Publio Mantovani’s *Formicone*, Ariosto’s *Suppositi*.

3/14 Week 6 Urbino, the Rome *Palilia* and Bibbiena’s *Calandra*.

3/21 Week 7: Machiavelli’s exile: Florence, and *Mandragola*.

3/28 Week 8Satire in Ferrara and Padua*:* Ariosto’s *Lena* and Ruzante’ s *Moscheta*.

***Reformation and Reaction:***

4/7 Week 9: Caro’s *Straccioni* and Paul III’s Rome, 1543.

Counter-reformation. Aristotle’s *Poetics* and the quest for “correct” generic forms; Giraldi Cinzio on comedy and tragedy.

4/14 Week 10: Pastoral and Tragicomedy; Tasso, *Aminta*; Campiglia, *Flori*, a pastoral drama.

4/21 Week 11. Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* in Italian translation at the Palladian Teatro Olimpico (1595): closing an era.

4/28 Week 12. *Commedia dell’Arte* and the virtuosic performer (Isabella Andreini, *Mirtilla*, and *La pazzia di Isabella*).

Written and oral work: several short papers (5-6 pp.), regular class presentations (this is a once-a-week seminar), and final research paper **or** multimedia final project including discussion of a dramatic text, its spatial setting, and its relation to the city and/or court in which it was written and/or produced.

This is a simplified syllabus. A more detailed syllabus, listing additional readings, visual materials, and further bibliography, will be distributed on the first day of class.