UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Linguaggi Letterari e Poetici

2425-1-F5702R012

Course title

*Geese, horses and gorillas: fantastic fiction and the "Wandering Theater" of Giuliano Scabia **

A visionary, realistic and imaginative explorer, Giuliano Scabia was a true *performer*: playwright, actor, writer, storyteller, designer, great builder of papier-mâché objects and theatrical machines, as well as poetic-narrative devices, brought out of institutional places and taken to wander in asylums and prisons, in the woods, streets and squares; also, first great gardener of word flowers. A multifaceted personality, with a recognizable and yet eccentric voice in the Italian theater scene that he revolutionized by conceiving an idea of "dilated," "participatory" theater. Eccentric was his adventure even in the Bologna of the 1970s, that of the thrusts, of the avant-garde ruptures, of the student protest and counterculture, which one will cross a little with him to try to chase, under the naive figure, the bandole of his sabotage of authority, even that of the author, his solicitations to doubt to question, to go "outside the law and without law" to better listen to the voices of the "stage of the earth." In short, an artist-shaman who is difficult to imprison in one creative sphere.
Since the 1990s he has increasingly devoted himself to poetry and fiction. In the saga of *Nane Oca* adventures, wonders, mysteries, in the magical world of the sister forests and the Pavana city, ramp up at the pace, at the foot, at the meter of Giuliano Scabia's epic walk, constantly observing and listening to the rustles, the flickers, the glances, the gestures, the words of animals, trees and flowers, and his many characters: children and fairies, madmen and wild men, flying nuns and talking statues, angels and demons, always in turmoil between disappearances, murders, amorous amplexes. It is in this landscape that the quête takes place, the search for the "momón," the grail of this picaresque, musical, erotic, optimistic narrative, in which evil and good converse seraphically co-present in the soul of the world. An ancestral, mythical world, suspended in stuporous contemplation and at the same time concrete, very much alive, ancient enough to seem new, where the comic balances the serious, and experimentalism flourishes from the never broken root of the Italian and other literary traditions.

Topics and course structure

After a preparatory and theoretical introduction (on the concept of literature), the course will focus on the first volume of the fictional saga of *Nane Oca*, the course will then focus on two fundamental moments of the "ladder and path to Paradise" traced by Scabia with his "Teatro Vagante" in the 1970s, a decisive decade in the history of our country: the workshop with the insane in the psychiatric hospital directed by Franco Basaglia in Trieste (1973) from which emerged the great blue horse that became the symbol of asylum liberation, and the adventure of the Gorilla Quadrumàno with the students of the DAMS Drama II course in Bologna (1974-75).

Literature has always been a privileged field of inquiry for the observation of socio-cultural phenomena. In literary works, the deep tendencies of every civilization formation find expression: values, aspirations, contradictions, conflicts. Moreover, literature plays a major role in individual and collective aesthetic experience: and its nature as an art of speech makes it a particularly fertile ground for the analysis of communicative mechanisms and artistic processes.

The aim of the course is an approach to texts that highlights the educational dimension of literature. This is done through three main ways.

1. On the thematic level, the prominence given to the literary representation of educational processes, such as the Bildungsroman tradition, coming-of-age stories, images of childhood, adolescence, school, family, disability, and educational contexts in general.

2. On the aesthetic level, the enhancement of the idea of literature as a simulation and artistic projection of experience, and thus as an exceptionally copious and varied repertoire of human models, i.e., psychological constellations, paradigms of behavior, social and cultural contexts.

3. On the linguistic level, attention to the ways in which subjects (narrators, characters, poetic voices) speak about themselves and others, inner and outer events, private and public affairs, facts and ideas; recognition of the different communicative contexts represented, of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the expressive choices made by the interlocutors, and of the existential and social meaning of the different verbal interactions.

The course covers theoretical-methodological and cultural-historical topics necessary for the in-depth monographs, chosen from year to year, and dedicated to the reading and interpretation of works by one or more authors, including foreign one

The course is co-conducted in Italian.

Objectives

The aim of the teaching is to promote and consolidate the ability to read, understand and elaborate texts and works of art in general. Through the exercise of interpretation, the student will learn to grasp the formal and thematic aspects of the works, the characters of the experiences represented, and their organization; and at the same time to question the related motivations and implications, also in relation to his own personal experience. Moreover, he/she will have the opportunity to delve into major issues that are the subject of the literary works addressed from time to time: whether historical events, psychological nodes, moral problems, relational and communicative situations.

Through the exercise of interpreting literary texts and works of art, students will learn to measure the depth and complexity of the universe of discourse and the underlying dynamics of the work, and thus appreciate the potential of a conscious use of words. By this route they will be able to corroborate both their communication skills and their autonomy of judgment. Conscious and trained reading skills enable them to transform aesthetic experience into a way of extending their own existential experience, enhancing and refining their understanding of discourse,

choices, and the point of view of their fellow human beings. Ultimately, literature is a tool that aims to increase the flexibility and pliability of responses (emotional, intellectual, pragmatic) to new situations: and, consequently, to intensify social interaction skills.
With this teaching, through participatory class attendance, the following learning is intended to be promoted:

1. Knowledge and skills:

- Understand and master expressive, performative and participatory art-based languages in the field of educational professions
- Acquire knowledge regarding models of coordination of services, events, training paths
- Acquire knowledge regarding models of cultural and environmental heritage enhancement

2. Application of knowledge and understanding:

- Apply knowledge and skills for problem solving in both concrete contexts and unexpected situations, demonstrating an understanding of the relationships between theory and practice
- Design, coordinate responses to needs,using and enhancing the potential of the arts
- Apply acquired knowledge to design, implement and evaluate educational activities in cultural and artistic contexts

3. Autonomy of judgment

- Analytical, synthesis, and critical thinking skills
- Develop original thinking and planning in response to the needs of work contexts
- Promote innovative research based on the synergy between educational and artistic skills

4. Communication skills

- Development of the ability to relate and effectively communicate acquired knowledge to both professional partners in the educational, organizational and artistic-cultural sphere (colleagues, managers, principals, administrators, etc.) and non-professional partners (users, families, widespread society).
- Use of artistic-expressive languages not only as training tools, but also as fundamental means of communication.

5. Learning skills:

- Ability to rework and organize knowledge.
- Ability to use personal methods of autonomous promotion and tools to support one's own professional growth
- Reflective and metacognitive skills to monitor the adequacy of one's knowledge and skills and identify any areas that need further study.

Methodologies

Methods:
The course includes equally a part of frontal lectures, so-called didactic delivery, and a part of participatory lectures, (exercises with the support of artistic-literary materials: texts, videos, images, music, etc.), so-called interactive teaching.
During classroom work ample space will be devoted to dialogue, discussion, textual reading and commentary exercises (themes, linguistic and rhetorical aspects, narrative modes, cultural paradigms), individual, or small group exercises to promote the ability to pay attention, observe, read and acquire expressive techniques.
Therefore, each lecture includes deliverable and interactive moments: part of the lecture will be frontal didactics, to

introduce content on which to then lead discussions and/or exercises. Some initial lessons on theoretical issues and presentation of authors and works will have a longer time of frontal didactics, always maintaining, in each lesson, a part of participatory reflection on the topics addressed, also with the help of different didactic supports (video, audio, etc.). Lectures on expressive methods and techniques will involve the interactive involvement of students in the form of exercises, discussions and/or small group activities supervised by the lecturer.
Teaching activities will take place in-person, and some lectures or parts of lectures, especially of the delivery part, (the equivalent of about three lectures, depending on the situation and class context) will be recorded and made available on the course e-learning page.

Talks by outside guests from the literary-theatrical world or practitioners in the artistic-pedagogical field are also planned.

Online and offline teaching materials

Materials, resources and tools used in class are available on the course e-learning platform.
Attendees and nonattendees are advised to register, in order to access in-depth materials as well.

Programme and references

**Monographic part:

G. Scabia, *Marco Cavallo*, Einaudi, Milano 1976; ora Meltemi, Milano 2024
G. Scabia, *Il Gorilla Quadrumàno*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1974; (soon to be reprinted by Quodlibet), the pages under study will be uploaded on the e-learning page of the teaching
G. Scabia, Nane Oca*, Einaudi, Torino 1992 (and later reprints)

Critical bibliography:

Massimo Marino, *Il poeta d'oro. Il gran teatro immaginario di Giuliano Scabia*, La casa Usher, Firenze-Lucca 2022

Angela Borghesi, *I draghi di Giuliano Scabia, tra antropologia e pedagogia*, in *Giuliano Scabia*, a cura di A. Borghesi, M. Marino, L. Vallortigara, Riga 47, Quodlibet, Macerata 2023, pp. 340-346 (essay will be made available on on the e-learning page of the teaching)

Assessment methods

Type of test: oral interview in Italian language

Evaluation criteria:

The interview consists of verifying the level of knowledge, comprehension and reworking of the topics covered during the lectures, of all the items (volumes and essays) in the bibliography and the in-depth materials used in class (for frequent attendees only), as well as the ability to apply the concepts and tools used during the classroom activities and/or learned from the texts in the bibliography.
Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to answer questions in a relevant, clear, correct and argued manner, using critical terminology with ownership. Part of the interview consists of commenting on a passage,

theme or aspect of the works on the syllabus, and/or presenting exercises or in-depth studies carried out during the course (for frequent attendees only)

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)

Office hours

Student reception by appointment: contact the professor by email angela.borghesi@unimib.it

Programme validity

The programs are valid for two academic years. Upon request, the lecturer may allow an extension of the terms (contact her at the institutional address angela.borghesi@unimib.it)

Course tutors and assistants

Dott. ssa Alessandra Farina

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS