

# BIEN WELCOME A ITALIA!

*Humor: a collective language to tell about ourselves and understand each other. Experiments on the mental process of the average Italian, for the use of the host.*

Can humor facilitate understanding between people of different culture, religion, age, political orientation, ethnicity, origin, gender, social class, education or even football faith? Following the example of the Italians and their language, made up of original words and words borrowed from other languages (and often never returned) but, above all, of glances, gestures and non-verbal and paraverbal expressions... probably yes.

With its polymorphic and multi-expressive language, Italian people have been able, over the centuries, to talk about everything: love and death, poverty and wealth, war, hunger, immigration and emigration, beauty, horror, fashion and, of course, cooking, with results in many cases exalted. Even in the darkest moments of their history, Italians have managed to understand each other in some way, to tell each other and laugh at themselves, alternating gestures and facial expressions and mixing words from every Italian region and every European country that has spread the own language and culture in Italy.

All this has generated humor: a humor that is sometimes uncontrollable and sometimes composed and refined, sometimes self-ironic to the point of excess and sometimes farcical, mocking, cruelly sarcastic against power and those who represented it. And it is precisely humor that has been one of the elements around which Italians have most recognized and found themselves, a style of communication, both light and passionate, which has become a lifestyle of which every Italian is ashamed in public but is proud in private. It is no coincidence that the most important and celebrated Italian cinema was created by comic actors and authors, the last Nobel Prize for Italian literature was awarded to a comic actor and the most acclaimed and contested politician in Italy, in the last 50 years, was a comedian (Berlusconi). The same founding text of the Italian language is called *Divina Commedia* (Divine Comedy).

For this reason, the Italian language could be, at least for once, a model to be inspired by, a ground on which to work in search of a free language, capable of welcoming, without fear, new words, new syntactic constructions, unheard-of expressions and gestures representative of every mood and every culture.

## The aim of this workshop

... is to discover some mechanisms and mental processes that are the basis of humor in the "Bel Paese", studying its approach to life and experimenting with the most used and recognizable forms of interpersonal communication. Through a little theory and a little more practice we will look together for a language without borders, made up of words, gestures and expressions that come from very far away and that, perhaps, will allow us to go just as far, beyond any obstacle to communication, to reach, through humor, a channel of connection, understanding, harmony and exchange.

## During the workshop

... we will try to answer some questions. How do Italians think, how do they express themselves, what are they laughing for at and what is the meaning of their compulsive gesticulation? How can they identify perfectly, and equally, with the *commedia dell'arte* and with the tragedy of *melodrama*? How is it possible to go from the cinema of *neorealism* to the *Italian comedy* cinema, and go back, without ever losing the sense of the story? Is there a relationship between humor, beauty, love and good food? What is the relationship, in Italy, between humor and politics, religion, business?

## What will be done

- Theory: From the theater of the *commedia dell'arte* to the cinema of the Italian comedy
- Practice: Linguistic creation exercises, starting with the words of each language
- Practice: Exercises of expressive creation, through the gestures typical of each culture
- Theory: From comedy to life
- Practice: Exercises of creative observation and humorous re-positioning
- Theory: Conclusions and de-briefing
- Comedians and Sommeliers: a humorous wine tasting

## This workshop is aimed at

... every representative of the human race who, with his strengths and weaknesses, is the only, true, original, irreplaceable and involuntary comic character in the world. With the hope that in these two hours together you can try, even if only for a moment, to think like a *maestro*, to express yourself with *estro*, to enjoy the *Dolce Vita* with your *mamma*, eating *Pizza* in *Venezia*, dressed in *fashion*, in riding your *Vespa* or eating *spaghetti* with *Nutella* and drinking *cappuccino* in a *Ferrari*, listening to the *opera* under the *Tower of Pisa* or playing *Bella Ciao* with the *mandolin*, together with your *mafia's* friends... and maybe laughing at every cliché.

## MATTEO ANDREONE



Writer, playwright, director and comedy teacher, Matteo Andreone is also a humor scholar and a professional coach, specialized in humorous-intelligence as a useful tool for the development of creativity and improving communication. In 2001 he was one of the founders of the Italian National Academy of Comedy (*Accademia Nazionale del Comico*). Film actor (last production: *Slaughterhouse*, in competition at the 60th *Venice International Film Festival*) and theatre director (last production: *Wstawach!*, with original music composed and conducted by *Ennio Morricone*), as playwright he wrote 14 plays, 6 musicals, 7 monologues for voice and piano and 2 monologues for voice and orchestra. He published *Una risata vi promuoverà* (A laugh will promote you: theory and practice of humor for corporate wellbeing and professional growth), *Pubblichiamoli a casa loro* (Let's publish them at their home: literary proofs of migrant humor) and *Lezioni di comicità* (Lessons of comedy: practical guide to train personal humorous creativity and comic language), the official study book for the Academy school program, and he edited the Italian edition of *The new comedy writer*, by the American comic author *Gene Perret*.