

SUMMARIES

DOSSIER ADELAIDE RISTORI. PARTE PRIMA

GENEALOGIE E GENERAZIONI

Laura Mariani

Sull'utilità della Storia delle donne per rileggere il protagonismo di Adelaide Ristori

I propose to rethink Adelaide Ristori in a hitherto unconsidered context: a History of the actor that places the category of gender at the centre, not as an add-on but as a problematic function, in order to investigate the specificity – if it exists and how it is configured – of the experience and acting of theatre actresses, starting with the body. Ristori plays a central role in this perspective, in particular in relation to the following aspects: work on the character, definition of repertoire, construction of celebrity. On the one hand, the choice and performance of exceptional female characters must be investigated, since they strike the audience on an emotional level and are fixed in the memory by emblematic images, as well as they propose non-masculine models of strength and authority to female spectators. And, on the other hand, the intelligence, originality, and tenacity with which Ristori represents herself should be analysed, such as to configure an early divine construction, before Sarah Bernhardt and Eleonora Duse and the cinema itself. A construction that cannot take advantage of the possibility of films to reach large masses, but which cleverly links the public and private spheres, almost evoking the horizontal action of the present-day media.

Keywords: History of the actor, History of women, body, acting, public image.

Roberto Cuppone

Adelaide, 'born a dramatic gipsy'

Many acting careers have a T_0 , that is a first time that corresponds neither to the simple chronology nor to any anecdotes, but events in which the theatre clearly manifests itself to them in the form of alignment between the represented reality and their own biography. In this sense, the beginnings of Ristori's career are very little investigated. Instead, her condition as a *figlia d'Arte* ('daughter of Art'; the imprinting of her grandmother Teresa Canossa Ristori), the debut in companies (Cavicchi, Rosa-Tranquilli and Moncalvo), and comic roles were decisive facts, as well as the approach to the leading role with Francesca da Rimini, to whom she lended her youth (14 years) and that exposed her to culture, Europe and personal independence. Thanks to some ge-

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neological and biographical checks, by crossing a new 0–14 theatrography, the biographical profiles published before her death and the anecdotal self-narration of the actress, we try to identify the artistic legacy of these early years in the form of a personal dramaturgy of actor (realism, art of ‘transition’, intelligence of stage entrance).

Keywords: Adelaide Ristori, ‘son of Art’, Venetian theatre, debut.

GIULIA BRAVI

Le ‘maestre’ di Adelaide Ristori: tracce di una trasmissione generazionale del mestiere

This paper proposes a comparison between Adelaide Ristori and the actresses of the previous generation searching for traces of an unwritten transmission of the theatrical craft. The research focuses particularly on the relationship between Ristori and Carolina Internari, which is less investigated than the relationship with Carlotta Marchionni, recognized by Ristori as a real teacher. Internari plays with Ristori several times since 1852, supporting her in the interpretations of Mirra, Maria Stuarda and other ‘warhorses’ impacting the construction of some tragic heroines. The documents preserved in the Museo Biblioteca dell’Attore in Genoa, integrated with sources found in other documentary deposits, are the foundation of this historical analysis which recounts the human and artistic exchange between these great actresses in the 19th century.

Keywords: Italian theatre, 19th century, actresses, tragedy, Adelaide Ristori.

FRANCESCA SIMONCINI

Generazioni di attori. Il carteggio di Adelaide con Maddalena Ristori e gli affanni della capocomica

This essay aims to submit a first survey of the substantial correspondence between Antonio and Maddalena Ristori, both actors, with their daughter Adelaide. The letters, preserved in the Museo Biblioteca dell’Attore in Genoa, allow us to reconstruct the private narrative of the great artist who tells about her travel adventures, her artistic and economic successes and her troubles as a woman, an actress and a *capocomica*. Her parents’ craft knowledge and ‘art’ relationships allow the actress to have information on actors and actresses to be hired in the company and updates on the performances’ trends staged in Florence where they live. The sequential consultation of the manuscripts finds out the Great Actress at the centre of a generational transmission of the craft and highlights the transformations that she introduced into the tradition. The correspondence, currently in the course of complete transcription, will be the subject of a forthcoming publication.

Keywords: Adelaide Ristori, Maddalena Ristori, Italian theatre, Great Actress, *capocomica*.

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RAFFAELLA DI TIZIO

Fanny Sadowski: una rivale della Ristori

This essay investigates the actress Fanny Sadowski, whose style was opposite to that of Ristori and who was highly considered by her contemporaries. Her career is compared to that of Ristori starting from the portrait offered by Leone Fortis in the 1888 introduction to his *Cuore ed arte*, written in 1852 for Sadowski. Born a few years apart, both married to aristocrats, both died in 1906, they developed their careers in the opposite directions of a new internationalism (Ristori) and a stabilisation in a precise cultural context (Naples for Sadowski). This context, crossed by Ristori in three successive tours, is chosen to set in motion the canonical image of the actress-marquise, observing her in contrast to her rival, Queen of Naples as she was within and beyond Europe. The basis of this essay is the documentation collected for an entry on Sadowski for the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, combined with research in the *Fondo Ristori* in the Museo Biblioteca dell'Attore in Genoa, about direct and indirect encounters between the two actresses. Fanny Sadowski, whose style would mirror in Eleonora Duse, reveals to be an important actress of her time, capable of exerting profound and lasting influences.

Keywords: Fanny Sadowski, Adelaide Ristori, Gustavo Modena, Eleonora Duse, Giacinta Pezzana.

MIRELLA SCHINO

Studio per due attrici: Adelaide Ristori ed Eleonora Duse

This essay investigates the relationship between two outstanding actresses, Adelaide Ristori and Eleonora Duse. They are the reference points for two opposing generations, and very different models in terms of art, repertoire choices, leadership. But they are linked by a surprising personal relationship. Dealing with these figures and their relationship also opens a gateway to other issues: the physiognomy of the two generations involved; the change, not only stylistic, between them; the kind of gaze of the older on the younger; women's issue in theatre. In order to study 19th century theater, we have to take into account the presence of female artists of excellence, women directors, women in charge, women at the top. The situation of women in theatre is highly anomalous, both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is an important phenomenon, which affects all of Europe and Russia, and it is particularly significant in Italy. Within this anomaly the two great women artists choose two diametrically opposed paths: the strength of Ristori is to be in harmony with her times, and this is also confirmed in the management of marriage, declined in the conventional manner whereby the woman relies on and is supported by her spouse. Duse makes very different choices. And with her it becomes more difficult to deal.

Keywords: Eleonora Duse, Adelaide Ristori, acting, 19th century theatre, European theatre.

COSTRUZIONE DEL PERSONAGGIO E DELL'IMMAGINE DI SÉ

FRANCESCO PUCCIO

Medea sulla scena moderna. La tragedia di Ernest Legouvé nell'allestimento parigino di Adelaide Ristori

After composing *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, a drama co-written with Eugène Scribe and starring Rachel, Ernest Legouvé wrote a *Médée* for her. But the great actress, although she had already agreed to play the part of the protagonist, decided to give it up. The tragedy was then made famous by Adelaide Ristori who, in 1856, staged it at the Théâtre des Italiens in Paris in a translation by the poet Giuseppe Montanelli. The drama, taken on tour to the major international theatres, was repeated for many years, gaining an extraordinary consensus of public and critics and becoming, as Ristori herself noted in *Ricordi*, a veritable «workhorse» of her repertoire. In writing the text, in fact, Legouvé had chosen a dramaturgical key that would give life to a character far from the Euripidean model: her Medea, despite being guilty of a terrible infanticide, would not have to appear as a negative heroine, but rather as a woman betrayed and abandoned, and above all as a mother forced to renounce the love of her children. The aim of this contribution is to analyse the performance of the tragedy in its Parisian debut, as a specific case study and as an opportunity to reflect on Ristori's work as an actress on her character, in the perspective of an accentuation of the maternal dimension.

Keywords: Medea, Ristori, Legouvé, modern stage, tragedy.

MICHELA ZACCARIA

Celebrità e metateatro: 'Adriana Lecouvreur' per Adelaide Ristori

In the first half of the 18th century, Adrienne Lecouvreur, diva of the Comédie-Française, brought about a profound change in the French recitative style. Triumphs with the public, rivalries, unhappy love affairs, mysterious circumstances of death and excommunication made her a myth. In 1849, Eugène Scribe and Ernest Legouvé wrote a successful drama for the famous actress Rachel, whose biography resembled that of her 18th century colleague. Adelaide Ristori played Adriana Lecouvreur for fifteen years from 1852. Just as Lecouvreur, who came from humble beginnings, was able to build up a public persona thanks to her talent and high-ranking acquaintances, Ristori, coming from the world of the guitti, had the same fierce ambition and was only recently able to bear the official title of Marquise Capranica del Grillo. Through contemporary printed sources and unpublished documents, mainly from her big archive (correspondence, administrative papers, and scripts), this essay has a twofold aim: on the one hand, to examine the instrumental use that Ristori made of the Lecouvreur character to consolidate her fame among Italian and international

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audiences; on the other, to identify the peculiarities of her interpretation, the stage evolution, the textual variants.

Keywords: Lecouvreur, celebrity, Legouvé, Rachel.

ANDREA SIMONE

Adelaide Ristori sublime declamatrice dantesca sulla scena italiana e internazionale del secondo Ottocento

This essay examines the presence of Alighieri's poetry in the repertory and the self-promotion of Adelaide Ristori. During her career the exceptional tragic performer showed a clear interest in recitals where she used to combine excerpts from famous tragedies and Italian classics. Among others the *Divina Commedia's* episodes were accurately selected to please the European public. The format conception was influenced by the collaboration with the young actor Ernesto Rossi, her scene partner in Paris with the Compagnia Reale Sarda between the months of June and August 1855, who was an excellent Dantean reciter. Reviews, reports, and playbills testify that over the years Ristori assimilated and re-elaborated the practice by way of an original dramaturgical operation. Her ability to recite the poem, particularly the *Inferno's* fifth *canto*, emerged several times between 1856 and 1865, when she acted in London and in Paris. According to a consolidated bibliography, the Ristori's international triumphs launched the season of the Italian *Grande Attore*. The recitation of Dante's popular plots contributed to the success of the actress outside and inside Italian borders, and it represented both a typical brand of 'Italianness' and a masterpiece of her theatrical creations.

Keywords: *Divina Commedia*, Grait Actor, recital, Risorgimento.

MARIANNA ZANNONI

La regina del teatro italiano e il 'Napoleone della fotografia'. L'incontro tra Adelaide Ristori e Napoleon Sarony

This essay aims to provide a cross-section of the 19th century photography through the lucky encounter between Adelaide Ristori and the American Napoleon Sarony, who portrayed the actress on various occasions years apart. This historical reconstruction begins with an analysis of the photographs of the actress as Marie Antoinette, the protagonist of Paolo Giacometti's historical drama of the same name. The prints, thoroughly preserved by Ristori in her archive, bear the signature of one of the most esteemed authors of international photography, who has gone down in history as the 'Napoleon of photography'.

Keywords: Adelaide Ristori, Napoleon Sarony, teatrical photography.

RELAZIONI INTERNAZIONALI

RUI PINA COELHO

«Tragedy and Ristori will die the same day». Contributions on the death of Romantic tragedy and the birth of art theatre in Portugal

«Tragedy and Ristori will die the same day». This is how António Feliciano de Castilho, the infamous ultra-Romantic Portuguese writer and polemist, refers to the great Adelaide Ristori, in an inflated article published in the «Revista Contemporanea de Portugal e Brazil» in 1859. Ristori was in Lisbon – for her premiere in Portugal – to present Montabelli's adaptation of *Medea* at the National Theatre of São Carlos. Castilho, in eight full pages, depicts an elegant, hyperbolic short biography of the Italian actress, portrayed emphatically as the great muse Melpômene. This Romantic way to address the art of acting – exaggerated, elusive, emotional, immensely subjective – was standard in 19th century theatre criticism. Ristori was received in Portugal with the same ardour. This essay examines the way Ristori was received by some Portuguese press, in 1859; and evaluates the critical discourse that encapsulates the way the 'Grande Attore' was perceived. This exercise will help to characterize the emergent Portuguese theatre criticism at the mid nineteenth century; as well as to compare the way other Portuguese actresses and Ristori were 'criticised' and elaborate on the way we can understand this anti-academism and the non-scientific approach to theatre as reasons to the death of Romantic tragedy and the birth of the *Théâtre d'Art* in Portugal.

Keywords: António Feliciano de Castilho, Adelaide Ristori, theatre criticism, Portuguese theatre history, Romanticism.

ALEXIA ALTOUVA

Le rôle d'Adelaide Ristori dans la formation de la scène nationale grecque

Adelaide Ristori travelled to Athens in 1865, during her tour of the Eastern Mediterranean, which included major economic and cultural centres in the region. She was the first major actress of the time to travel to the Greek capital to present part of her repertoire. Her theatrical presence, her production on stage as well as her personality as a whole marked the theatre audience, the intellectual elite, even the Athenian bourgeoisie who were lucky enough to admire the great artist's dramatic art. Being an eminent personality of European theatre, she had a profound influence on the style of performances, from an aesthetic point of view, but also on public opinion regarding dramatic art in general and especially the presence of women on the theatre stage. The presentation will focus on the different areas that she marked in the most pregnant and effective way, contributing to the formation of the Greek national theatre. The data presented here comes from primary research and is based on scientific studies, press of the time and relevant bibliography.

Keywords: Greek theatre, great actor, drama, national theatre.

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FRANCO PERRELLI

Signe Hebbe. Un'amicizia svedese di Adelaide Ristori

Signe Hebbe (1837–1925) was one of the most prominent Swedish actresses and singers. Since her stays in Paris, in the mid-1960s, having a deep admiration for Adelaide Ristori, she became her friend and pupil. Around this intimate friendship, in 1880, there was a possibility that Ristori could act a historical drama by Ibsen, which unfortunately did not happen. Following the teachings of Ristori, as well as of Lamperti and Ernesto Rossi, Hebbe introduced an acting style considered more realistic for the categories of the time and as a pedagogue, between 1877 and 1925, contributed to form a generation of important Swedish artists, transmitting the fundamental lesson of her Italian teachers to the mid-20th century.

Keywords: Scandinavian theatre, opera singing, acting, great actors.

SIGNE HEBBE

Su Adelaide Ristori

traduzione di GIOVANNI ZA

This essay publishes the translation of Signe Hebbe's letter to Wendela Hebbe, written on 20 February 1856, as well as his remarks on Adelaide Ristori, published in «Öresundsposten», 1st November 1879, pp. 4–5.

MATTEO PAOLETTI

«Il più efficace cooperatore dei negozi diplomatici»? Adelaide Ristori e il conte Cavour

In April 1861, just one month after the proclamation of the Unification of Italy, Prime Minister Cavour defined Adelaide Ristori «the most effective co-operator of diplomatic negotiations», praising her work at the court of the Czar in the winter of 1860. The letter is well-known since the 19th century and has been the key for creating the myth of the *Grande Attore* as a tool for cultural diplomacy. During her career, Ristori undoubtedly fascinated international audiences and kings, and thus acted as an effective tool for soft power. However, it is unclear to what extent her action was the result of aware foreign policies by the rising Kingdom of Italy. Drawing upon partially uncharted archival documentation, this essay reconstructs Ristori's activity at the court of Alexander II, framing her Russian tour in the turbulent context of the Russian-Sardinian relations in the aftermath of Garibaldi's expedition. In fact, Ristori left for Saint Petersburg during a diplomatic crisis: the Czar had recalled his Ambassador in Turin after the Piedmont army had invaded Naples; Cavour had recalled his delegation. The bilateral relationships were interrupted, although theatrical companies kept on moving across borders. Cavour asked Ristori to 'convert' the Russian minister of Foreign affairs, Prince Gorčakov: the fascination for the celeb-

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rity could sustain Italy's cause. Between ceremonial and theatre stages, the peculiar affair imposes a new reflection on the relationship between theatre, celebrity, and influence in the 19th century.

Keywords: Adelaide Ristori, cultural diplomacy, soft power, influence, Cavour.

RICERCHE IN CORSO

NATALIA GOZZANO

Scaramuccia nel teatro di strada. Una proposta di 'attribuzionismo teatrale'

In the Museo di Roma at Palazzo Braschi there is a painting attributed to an anonymous Flemish painter of the 17th century depicting a theatre scene in Piazza Pasquino, whose iconography differs from the usual depiction of this subject spread by bamboozling painters in the 17th century.

Instead of being crowded at the foot of a raised stage – as was typical in works depicting charlatans accompanied by the comedians of the *Commedia dell'arte* – the spectators are arranged in a circle around them. And, above all, the character in the centre of the scene has the physiognomy and costume typical of the actor Tiberio Fiorilli (1608–1694) as Scaramuccia. This identification is based on iconographic comparisons with printed works and two paintings by Pietro Paolini.

Fiorilli's presence in Rome and the social context in which he is documented are intertwined with the history of the urban space depicted in the painting, taking into account architectural, iconographic, and literary elements. On the basis of these elements, the work can be dated to between the 1630s and 1640s, a little-known period in Fiorilli's life. Before conquering the stages frequented by the aristocracy and kings, the young actor may have begun to build his character in the street theatre made up of *Commedia dell'Arte* masks and charlatans with which the city was teeming.

Keywords: Scaramuccia, Painting, Bambocciate, Rome, Charlatans.

FRANCESCA SIMONCINI

Archivio Multimediale degli Attori Italiani. Attori-autori nell'Italia postunitaria: Edoardo Ferravilla e Eduardo Scarpetta

The section is devoted to the biographical profiles of Edoardo Ferravilla (1846–1915) and Eduardo Scarpetta (1853–1925).

Keywords: biography, actors, repertory, performance.

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EMANUELA AGOSTINI
Edoardo Ferravilla

Actor, playwright and *capocomico*, Edoardo Ferravilla is the most original personality of Milanese dialect theatre and, in the comic repertoire, one of the greatest exponents of Italian scene between 19th and 20th centuries. Creator of a series of lucky characters, such as Sûr Pedrin and Tecoppa, between 1872 and 1880 is a very prolific author.

Keywords: biography, actors, repertory, performance.

ISABELLA INNAMORATI
Eduardo Scarpetta

Neapolitan comic actor and prolific author, he was famous with the name of Felice Sciosciammocca. He gained fame as a theatrical reformer for removing traditional masks. He is an essential, sometimes conflicting, reference point in the theatrical formation of his legitimate and illegitimate children: Domenico, Vincenzo, and Maria Scarpetta, as well as Titina, Eduardo, and Peppino De Filippo.

Keywords: biography, actors, repertory, performance.