

## PROGRAMME

*Centro Maschere e Strutture Gestuali of Abano Terme*

*with the Amleto and Donato Sartori International Mask Museum*

*and the director Fabio Mangolini with the Teatro Punto of Amsterdam*

present the first edition of

the International Masterclass Festival

***The way of the masks: the art of the Masters***

**from 14 to 18 July 2010**

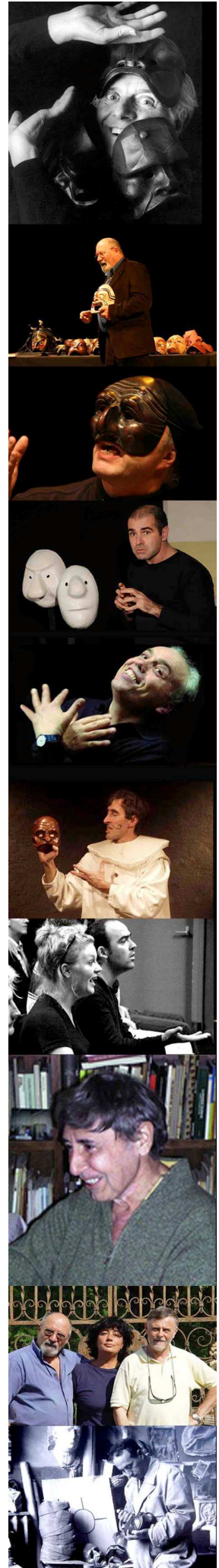
**in Abano Terme, Capital of the Mask / Italy**

Abano, a spa known since Roman times, is a busy tourist destination just a few kilometres from Padua and Venice. This area of the Veneto is a land of ancient theatrical culture, home of the Commedia dell'Arte masks.

Abano was the birthplace of the great doctor and philosopher, Pietro D'Abano (1257 – 1316/1317), who was the first to reveal the secrets of physiognomy, translating and publishing the works of Aristotle. Padua was the birthplace of Angelo Beolco, known as Ruzzante, an actor and playwright, forerunner of the Commedia dell'Arte, who lived in the first half of the sixteenth century. Items of extraordinary importance for the world history of the theatre are kept in the State Archives in Padua, such as the deed of foundation of the *Fraternal Compagnia* of 1545, the very first document demonstrating the existence of the Commedia, defined *all'Improvvisa*, or Impromptu. Also kept in Padua are the birth certificates of Isabella Andreini (1562 – 1604) - the first woman to lead the famous *Compagnia dei Gelosi* which performed in the principal Courts of Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century - and of Carlo Goldoni, the great Venetian playwright of the eighteenth century. He knew Abano Terme well and often stayed there, considering it a pleasant place to spend a relaxing holiday and even find inspiration, for in 1753 he wrote the play *I bagni di Abano*.

The sculptors Amleto and Donato Sartori are also from Padua. In 1928, at the early age of thirteen, the young Amleto (1915-1962) already showed signs of being attracted by the mask as an object of art and sculpture; his first masks inspired by *black poetry* were produced in 1946. In 1948, when he had been invited to teach the art of the mask at the Padua University Theatre, directed at that time by the young Gianfranco De Bosio, Amleto Sartori met Jacques Lecoq, who taught theatrical movement at the same University: their partnership resulted in the *neutral mask*, now used by the most important theatre schools in the world, and in the rebirth of the art of the mask of the Commedia dell'Arte. Since 1948, the Sartori family masks, made first by Amleto and then by his son Donato, have been created for famous European theatre directors and worn by actors known all over the world.

Amleto died at the early age of 46, at the peak of his career: his son Donato, also a sculptor, inherited his cultural and artistic legacy, continuing and extending research on the theatrical mask. During his own prestigious career, Donato



Sartori collaborated with groups of avant-garde artists, creating the famous *gestural structures*, a kind of total sculpture, and *urban masking*, or the mask of the town.

In 1979 Donato Sartori founded the *Centro Maschere e Strutture Gestuali* in Abano Terme with the architect Paola Piizzi and the stage designer Paolo Trombetta, creating a multidisciplinary group and opening the International Workshop *Art of the Mask in the Commedia dell'Arte*, which today reaches its 25<sup>th</sup> edition, a summer school that has become a fundamental international crossroads in the art of the mask.

Why this Festival?

To be able to transmit the living knowledge of a craft to new generations and above all the memory of artistic values of which every generation feels the need. The Masters who will honour us with their presence have this ability, we only have to know how to take advantage of this opportunity and put it to good use.

This year, as usual, the International Workshop Art of the Mask in the Commedia dell'Arte (25th edition) welcomes professionals from different countries, following the research, methods and techniques that the Sartori have experimented from 1947 right up to the present day. At least two students from the Veneto Region can attend the workshop free of charge; for this reason, the various Art Schools have already been contacted to create scholarships.

This year we had the idea of linking our International Workshop simultaneously with two other Workshops directed by Carlos Garcia Estevez and Fabio Mangolini and, at the end, there will be five days (from 14 to 18 July) of intense artistic activity with the presence of the leading contemporary artists in this field.

The Festival aims to provide an intense meeting and exchange between different generations, to foster the skills of the theatre.

Today Abano Terme can boast the first International Museum of the Theatrical Mask in Europe. This has been accomplished thanks to the enthusiastic work of the Sartori family, the *Centro Maschere e Strutture Gestuali* and the Town Council of Abano Terme, which owns Villa Trevisan Savioli, restored it and granted it on free loan to Centro Maschere e Strutture Gestuali . The Museum holds part of the art work produced by the two sculptors Amleto and Donato Sartori (to whom the Museum is dedicated) in over 80 years of activity, as well as part of the family's extensive historic and anthropological documentation, allowing the creation of temporary themed exhibitions.

*The Amleto and Donato Sartori International Mask Museum* was inaugurated in 2004. Dario Fo and Franca Rame were the godparents with a world-premier performance of the show *Maschere, pupazzi e uomini dipinti*, written for the occasion, filmed and broadcast by RAI.

