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## From Stage to Screen: the enduring influence of Commedia dell'Arte.

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**Bio:**

Dr Corinna Di Niro is a leading researcher/director of Commedia dell'Arte in Australia, and an interdisciplinary creative researcher across theatre, film, and digital technology. Her research can be found in top-tier journals, edited texts and online videos including her 2019 TEDx talk that explored virtual reality in theatre. She has created impactful immersive theatre experiences that respond to domestic violence, and challenges women face in academia. She is the Acting National Course Director of Design and Creative Industries at SAE University College.

**From Stage to Screen: the enduring influence of Commedia dell'Arte in Hollywood.**

This presentation discusses how the principles of Commedia dell'Arte (*henceforth Commedia*), a vibrant 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian theatre form, have seamlessly transitioned into film, leaving an enduring impact on the silver screen.

During the silent film era, renowned stars Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton showcased Commedia through their exaggerated physicality and gestures, inspired by iconic characters such as Arlecchino and Pierrot. The frantic pace and chaotic energy in Keystone comedies also echoed the Commedia spirit, with improvisation and slapstick the key to provoking laughter (Scheide, 2012).

The popularity of 'Rom-Coms' overtime can be attributed to its use of Commedia's archetypal characters, narrative structures, and themes where love triumphs over worldly troubles and personal challenges. Further, the intricate character dynamics and humorous plot twists of Commedia continue to captivate global audiences today, often without their awareness. In films like *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006), Meryl Streep's portrayal of Miranda Priestly embodies traits akin to the domineering and authoritative La Signora, while Stanley Tucci's character, Nigel, channels the flamboyant and witty spirit of the first servant, Pedrolino (Di Niro, 2021).

Whether overt or subtle, the principles of Commedia continue to shape and enrich cinematic storytelling, bridging the gap between historical theatrical traditions and modern cinema.

**References:**

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