

The **ACCADEMIA TEATRALE DI FIRENZE** is a school of dramatic arts founded in 1992 and directed by Pietro Bartolini under the patronage of the Municipality of Florence. It offers courses in the performing arts for adults and children; the four-year programme of study includes seminars for the study of diction, classic texts, theatre in English, directing, dance, and singing as well as film-making laboratories. Every year, end-of-course performances are staged; these include plays and musicals fusing artistic and classical cultural elements inspired by the distinct and rich local, regional and national history. Dance, Music and the visual arts along with video and advanced digital performance technologies are added to the mix enhance audience experience and inform directions for 21st Century actor training. In recent years the Academy has achieved excellent results preparing young actors for professional careers with graduates participating in theatre, advertising and films.

PIETRO BARTOLINI studied at Vittorio Gassman's Bottega and under Orazio Costa. As an actor, he has worked in European tours with Gabriele Lavia, Mariangela Melato, Peter Stein, Giancarlo Sepe among others. He also directed numerous plays, many of which at Teatro della Pergola in Florence. As author and dramatist Pietro has created documentaries and plays. Currently Pietro teaches acting and directing at the Accademia Teatrale di Firenze, which he founded together with Ludovica Sanalitra in 1992. In 2015 he was the first to apply Immersive Virtual Reality and new technologies to actor training, initiating innovative projects together with the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna of Pisa and later with other universities and research institutes including Laboratorio Geco DICEA Università degli Studi di Firenze, directed by Prof. Grazia Tucci with which he has published scientific articles in the field of research on new technologies applied to theatre. These collaborations have informed many productions using new systems and virtual settings.

TO ATTEND THE MEETING
IT IS NECESSARY TO BE REGISTERED

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under the patronage and contribution of



TIZIANA ACOMANNI embraces many forms of artistic expression: she is a stage designer, make-up artist and painter. After graduating from the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Florence, since 1994 she has been teaching drawing and painting for courses organized by the Municipality of Florence. She has collaborated with the Accademia Teatrale di Firenze as a stage designer for video and theatre productions and also teaches make-up for actors. She has participated in numerous exhibitions in Italy and abroad, and her works are included in both public and private collections. She specialized in special effects for the theatre and cinema at the Teatro della Scala in Milan.

EMANUELE DE LUCA is an Associate Professor of Theatre Studies at Côte d'Azur University: PhD in History of Visual and Performing Arts from Pisa University and PhD in Italian Studies from Sorbonne Université. He is a Member of CTELA, Université Côte d'Azur, Associate Scholar of ELCI, Sorbonne Université and of CMBV, Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles. His research and teaching interests focus on exchanges among Italian, French and European Theatre in the early modern period, and on the theory of acting from the ancient world to the contemporary. He works as a director and dramaturge and organizes events that bring together academic research and artistic work.

CONSERVATOIRE ROYAL DE BRUXELLES founded in 1932, the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, Graduate School of Arts of the French Community, is one of the oldest art education institutions in Belgium. Bringing together the fields of music (early music, classical music and jazz sections) and the field of speech the Royal Conservatory of Brussels is a pool of talent drawing its forces in a prestigious musical and theatrical past but looking to the future. The fields of theatre and spoken arts distinguish themselves for an approach promoting the diversity of processes and perspectives, around two major axes: tradition and creation. The courses of interpretation, declined around dramatic and non-dramatic works and free form, are based on courses focused on technical knowledge and directly related to the practice of theatrical art. Moreover, the conservatory offers courses in general education and humanistic education. The Conservatory is currently led by Olivia Wahnou de Oliveira

JEAN-FRANCOIS BRION is an actor and director and today mainly a teacher. A defender of popular theatre but also of a theatre that gives its rightful place to the beauty of language, he alternates working around boulevard or tragedy authors with the same appetite. A lover of music, he leaves a strong place for it in his theatrical approach. Strongly interested in pedagogy and vocal work, he is a professor of methodology and vocal training for actors at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. A lover of travel, he also leads master classes abroad, linking theatrical acting and voice.

RIDER UNIVERSITY is a private university founded in 1865. The school is conveniently located in Lawrence Township, New Jersey, which is only 1.5 hours away from New York City. The acclaimed Department of Performing Arts offers a dynamic mix of programs to train actors, musical theatre actors, dancers, designers, directors, producers, and managers. Many of Rider graduates find their paths to Broadway, TV & films, and many other creative venues.

C. RYANNE DOMINGUES teaches acting, directing, and devising as an Assistant Professor at Rider University. From 2017-2024, she was the Artistic Director of Passage Theatre, a professional, regional theatre found in the heart of Trenton, NJ. Prior to her time at Passage, she worked at a variety of theatres on

both coasts, with most of her work being for Simpatico Theatre (which she co-founded in 2004) and the Wilma Theatre in Philadelphia. She received her MFA in Directing from the University of California, Irvine and was a participant in the 2008 Lincoln Center Director's Lab.

DR. SEAN MCCARTHER serves as Professor of Musical Theater Voice at Rider University in the United States. In addition to his work as a voice teacher, he is an advanced actor combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors and the Academy of Fight Directors Canada and has trained with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators and Theatrical Intimacy Education. Dr. McCarther's research interests span the fields of performance psychology, the acquisition of expertise, motor learning, theatrical emotion, and consent-based rehearsal processes. His research appears in several peer-reviewed publications, and he is a frequent lecturer and workshop presenter nationally and internationally.

MEGAN MAZARICK is a performer, choreographer, and teacher working in dance theater and contemporary movement vocabularies. Her dances have been presented throughout the USA and in Singapore, Egypt, Bulgaria, Hungary, Mexico, Australia, and Poland. She has also curated and performed abroad, co-producing The 2015 By Chance Festival in Cairo, Egypt and winning an Audience Award for her solo performance at the 2022 Gdansk Solo Dance Contest in Poland. In 2024-2025 she has been a resident artist at Klub Zac (Poland), Performance Garage (Philadelphia), and American Dance Festival (North Carolina). She received her MFA in Choreography from Temple University in 2007 and is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Rider University.

SHARJAH PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY (SPAA) is a world-class facility galvanising communities, showcasing local and international creative talent, and leading the way in higher education for performing and production arts in the MENA region. SPAA offers the opportunity for candidates to study full-time Bachelor degrees in Acting, Production Arts and Musical Theatre, in addition to the Trinity Level 6 Diploma in Professional Dance, and this year now offers postgraduate studies, Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Live Performance Creation. Their programmes are led by highly qualified professionals and educators using intensive, practice-based training. Opened in 2019 and born from the vision of His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah, SPAA is the only Academy of its kind in the Middle East and through the generosity of HH, Ruler of Sharjah, fully funded scholarships are available for eligible students each academic year for all programmes.

KIT LESSNER is SPAA's Lead voice tutor with several academic qualifications, including a Master's degree in Voice Studies (Teaching and Coaching) from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, BA (Hons) Acting from Arts Educational Schools, London.

BENEDICT AYRTON was Assistant Director at the Everyman Theatre and Salisbury Playhouse (1989-1991) Associate Director for the Gateway and Contact Theatres (1992-1999), Artistic Director for Theatre Venture (2000-2004) and Chief Executive for NAYT (2004-2006). Ben rejoined the RSC as Associate Practitioner in 2007 and in 2009 became Executive Producer for NE-Generation, the North East England cultural programme for the London 2012 Olympic Games, receiving the NCVYS Award for Arts and Culture 2013. Ben's writing career has seen him work across theatre, television and film, working with

BBC Drama and Continuing Drama, Channel 4 and a range of independent companies. He holds a Master's Degree (Distinction) in Creative Writing from Northumbria at Newcastle University and is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (UK).

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART (RADA) is a world-leading centre of training for performance and technical stagecraft. Through exceptional teaching its graduates have an enviable employment record in theatre, film, and television and are regularly in receipt of international awards and accolades. It is undoubtedly one of the jewels in both British Higher Education and its cultural life, as well as a significant contributor to the thriving British creative economy. RADA provides the most talented students with very best training and facilities regardless of their circumstances. They are proud to select their students on talent alone, and to have been the first drama school to commit to a 50-50 balance of male to female on their BA (Hons) in Acting. Distinguished alumni include David Harewood, Sir Kenneth Branagh, Fiona Shaw, Ralph Fiennes, Sir Antony Hopkins, Oona Chaplin, Clive Owen to name just a few. The principal is Niamh Dowling.

ELIZABETH BALLINGER is Lead Movement Tutor at RADA. She has taught extensively at various drama schools including LAMDA, GSMD, Mountview, Drama Centre and MMU School of Theatre. She has worked for the Vienna Kindertheater and run several workshops at art festivals in Southern Austria. Lizzie runs her own private practice, leading workshops, mentoring the next generation of movement practitioners, and offering one-to-one teaching for professionals from a range of backgrounds inside and outside the arts. As a Movement Director she has worked with Cheek By Jowl, The Royal Court, National Theatre Studio, Watford Palace, Barons Court Theatre and Soho Theatre, among others. Her first book *Trish Arnold: The Legacy of Her Movement Training for Actors* is available from Bloomsbury.

JOE WINDLEY, Voice & Speech Teacher/Coach and actor. Trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama. He has held head of voice positions at GSA Conservatoire (UniS), Manchester School of Theatre (MMU) and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (King's College). Prior to a period at Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama Pittsburgh Joe was Principal Lecturer and Head of Course for RCSSD's prestigious MA Voice Studies programme. Most recently Joe returned from a guest residency on voice faculty at SPAA, UAE. His current professional production work includes being on the creative team for Than Hussain Clark's "Mother Has Arrived" opening September in London. He is co-founder of Shakespeare In English international workshops with long term colleague Paul Brennen. In August he will make a first appearance at European Forum Alpbach, Austria co-hosting seminars on sung and spoken voice. After contributing to the inaugural META and all subsequent editions Joe was invited to become Honorary Ambassador for the event and with founders Pietro Bartolini and Ludovica Sanalitra is happy to welcome all participants.

ESCUELA SUPERIOR DE ARTE DRAMÁTICO DEL PRINCIPADO DE ASTURIAS (ESAD), founded in 2005, is a public institution of higher education dedicated to training stage performers. It is located in Gijón, in northern Spain, within the monumental complex of Laboral Ciudad de la Cultura, at the heart of Asturias — a region often described as a "natural paradise."

ESAD Asturias offers a Bachelor's Degree in Dramatic Art focused entirely on Acting, with a curriculum that ranges from contemporary realism to experimental stage creation. Its educational approach combines intensive practical training with a solid theoretical foundation, encouraging artistic research, physical and vocal expression, and collaborative work. With a highly experienced faculty and strong connections to festivals, theatre companies, and international networks, ESAD stands as a dynamic, creative learning space rooted in the present and open to the world.

ALFONSO RIVERA is an actor, director, and theatre pedagogue specializing in physical and gesture-based performance. He holds a degree in Acting from RESAD (Madrid), a European Doctorate from the University of Santiago de Compostela, and a Master's in Movement and Directing Pedagogy from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (London). He trained in Corporeal Mime under the legacy of Etienne Decroux and in Lecoq-based pedagogy at LISPA (Berlin). He currently teaches movement at ESAD Asturias. Alfonso has been a guest lecturer at institutions such as Rose Bruford College (UK), JAMU (Czech Republic), Anadolu University (Turkey), and Kunstuniversität Graz (Austria), among others. He is the author of *The Actor's Path through Psycho-physical Training* (2017) and *Physical Theatre: The Revolution of Forms* (2019).

JAVIER NORIEGA Professor at the Higher School of Dramatic Arts of Asturias, PhD candidate in Fine Arts and Education at the Complutense University of Madrid. Holds a Master's Degree in Teacher Training and Bachelor's Degrees in Set Design and Fashion Design, with advanced training at Central Saint Martins (London) and the Saga Furs I+D Center (Copenhagen). Extensive experience in costume design for audiovisual media and performing arts, with collaborations for Lee Films, Mediapro, and Fight Films on campaigns such as La Liga Santander, the Spanish Christmas Lottery, and the DGT (Spanish Traffic Authority).

FRANCISCO PARDO graduate in Dramatic Arts from ESAD Murcia and holder of a Master's Degree in Advanced Theatre Studies (Stage Direction) from UNIR, he is currently a professor of Acting at the Higher School of Dramatic Arts of Asturias (ESAD Asturias). He has also taught at the dubbing school La Habitación con una cama. As an actor, he has received two Best Actor awards, with standout roles in *Masculino Plural*, *Ada Byron: The Weaver of Numbers* (as Lord Byron), and *The Price by Arthur Miller*. As a director, he has led productions for *Luz de Gas Teatro* (Llamémoslo X, Voces) and *La Westia Producciones* (Abre el ojo, The Law of the Jungle, Champions), earning nominations at the Oh! Awards for Performing Arts for Best Direction and Best Lighting Design.

GERRY GRENDEL is one of the world's most in demand Acting Coaches. He designed the training program at The National Screen Acting School of Ireland (Bow Street Academy) where he also teaches. He has also collaborated extensively with Heath Ledger on numerous projects including *Batman: The Dark Knight*, and has worked frequently with Johnny Depp, Bruce Willis, Oscar Isaac, Joel Edgerton, Abbie Cornish, Natalie Portman, Tom Cruise, Marlon Brando, Sean Penn, Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Matt Damon, Kate Hudson, Ewan McGregor, Orlando Bloom, and many more. Gerry trained at the Central School of Speech and Drama, Constructive Teaching Centre London (Alexander Technique) and Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hannover (Music).

META

MEETING OF EUROPEAN THEATRE ACADEMIES

directed by Pietro Bartolini

9th Edition



5/10 July 2025

TEATRO DELLA PERGOLA

Florence | Italy

Accademia Teatrale di Firenze
Florence

Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático
del Principado de Asturias
Gijón

Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles
Brussels

Rider University Department of Performing Arts
Lawrenceville NJ - U.S.

Sharjah Performing Arts Academy (SPAA)
Sharjah - United Arab Emirates

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art RADA
London

in collaboration with

FONDAZIONE
TEATRO DELLA
TOSCANA

MEETING ON METHODS FOR TEACHING DRAMA

Saturday, 5th July

10.00 a.m. - 10.30 a.m. *Saloncino*
Presentation of the shows and the Academies participating in META

10.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.
***Acting Workshop** held by Joe Windley *Honourary Ambassador META*

1.00 p.m. - 2.00 p.m. *Lunch break*

2.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. *Saloncino*

"Character and interiority, creativity and study of emotions"

***Workshop** held by Tiziana Acomanni

Monday, 7th July

8.45 p.m. *Sala Grande*

THE LOVING MOTHER

by Carlo Goldoni

directed by Pietro Bartolini and Antonietta Paulozza

voice tutor Joe Windley

make up artist Tiziana Acomanni

cast Sofia Manara, Anita Altilio, Elisa Cinarelli, Damiano Falsini, Matteo Campostrini, Bernardo Salmeri, Gabriele D'Andrade Corsa, Matteo Vannacci, Luca Babini, Pietro Fondelli

"Una madre amorevole" by Carlo Goldoni is a classic 18th-century Italian comedy that explores the deep bond between a devoted mother and her daughter. Through witty dialogue and emotional depth, the play highlights themes of love, sacrifice, and family duty.



This show is in Italian

Tuesday, 8th July

9.00 a.m. - 10.00 a.m. *Saloncino*
Opening ceremony and greetings of the representatives of the Regional Council of Tuscany Stefano Ciuoffo Councillor for Digital Infrastructure and Innovation

***Seminar "AI-Driven Acting"** held by Pietro Bartolini

10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop "Core Training Rhythm & Stealth"** held by Kit Lessner and Benedict Ayrton, Sharjah Performing Arts Academy

1.00 p.m. - 1.30 p.m. *Lunch break*

1.30 p.m. - 2.00 p.m. *Visit to the citadel of the Pergola Theatre*

2.00 p.m. - 5.00 p.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop "Evoking feeling through the moving body"** held by Elizabeth Ballinger, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art RADA London

8.00 p.m. *Saloncino*

LIVE PAINTINGS

directed by Alfonso Rivera

Sound and Lighting by Francisco de Asis Pardo

Makeup and Body Painting by Javier Noriega

cast Irene García Guerra, Indira García Landera, Jara Sorrosal Giménez, Camilla Antonella Pallota, Martina Rudolf Figueroa, Mario Rodríguez Sánchez, Hugo Ruiz González, Fernando Tibil Brumar

This work is the result of a process of physical and creative research, where the body is permeated by action painting, emotional abstraction, chromatic explosion, and the automatism of the unconscious. A physical exploration of plastic freedom, where the non-figurative comes alive on stage.



8.45 p.m. *Sala Grande*

A TALL TALE

Artistic coordination by Jean-François Brion

cast Tazio Bouffardin, Leandro Caruso, Clément Dintilhac, Alexandre Moxhet, Naomi Pecher, Adele Paravano, Maroussia Picq, Ambre Orban, Esther Waters



Collective creation based on "La reine des glaces", a Belgian comic strip by Bernard Hislaire and on the Andersen's fairy tale. An initiatory tale, an existential quest about our passage into the world of adults, about the place we accept or refuse to take in it, about affirming our identities.

This show is in French

Wednesday, 9th July

9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop "Screen Acting in the Age of AI"** held by Gerry Grennel, Bow Street Academy Dublin

12.30 p.m. - 1.30 p.m. *Lunch break*

1.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop "The Seagull" from Anton Chekhov.**

Voice (and movement) approach of one scene

held by Jean François Brion, Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles

8.00 p.m. *Saloncino*

BENT, NOT BROKEN

Directed by RYANNE DOMINGUES, MEGAN MAZARICK, and SEAN MCCARTHER
cast Bianca D'anton, Sarah Hyman, Avery Nurzia, Skyler O'Kelley, Sophia Ramos, Maddy Reilly, Phillip Schneller, Jaiden Shaw, Lucas Vitale



This show is in English

9.30 p.m. *Sala Grande*

HEART OF A DOG

adapted and directed by Fady Gerges

production manager Ibrahim Alaawaj

sound designer Bahr Farha

video designer Heidi Faraj

cast Aliaa Razeen, Arwa Hezzah, Amr Afifi, Omar Rashed

An adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's novel Heart of a Dog, this surreal satire explores identity, power, and transformation in a post-revolutionary world where a dog becomes human - and humanity is questioned.



This show is in Arabic with English subtitles

Thursday, 10th July

9.00 a.m. - 11.00 a.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop "Falling, Lifting, and Moving with Intention"** held by Sean Mc Carther and Megan Mazarick, Rider University U.S.

11.15 a.m. - 1.15 p.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop "Embodying Light and Shadow"**

held by Alfonso Rivera, Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático del Principado de Asturias

1.15 p.m. - 2.15 p.m. *Lunch break*

2.15 p.m. - 5.15 p.m. *Saloncino*

***Acting Workshop** held by Pietro Bartolini and Emanuele De Luca, Accademia Teatrale di Firenze - Università Cote d'Azur

5.15 p.m. - 5.30 p.m. *Saloncino*

Round Table

Methods for teaching theatre: final considerations and ceremony with delivery of final certificates to participants

8.45 p.m. *Sala Grande*

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

by William Shakespeare

directed by Robbie Bowman

technician Amelia Barrett

cast Henry Chappell, Mia Thompson-Semack, Bibi MacDougall, Afi Princess Okaidja, Patrick Cunningham, Ava Dodsworth, Isaac O'Connor-Adekoya, Abdul Jalloh, Nicholas O'Kane

"Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps".

Following years of war, a glamorous Italian town returns to peace and the good times. But sparring singletons Beatrice and Benedick are not in the mood for love, and young lovers Claudio and Hero find their much anticipated union marred in deception and trickery.

Second year RADA students tackle Shakespeare's savagely funny and tender battle of wits.



This show is in English

An interpreter (English - Italian) will be present