From Truth and Beauty Media!

16th Century Lazzi

Lecture and Group Discussion about the Lazzi in 16th Century Plays

There are about 400 play outlines (scenarios) still extant from before about 1620. Within the scene descriptions of these plays are thousands of mentions of lazzi being performed. The descriptions of the lazzi are often terse, or non-existent. If you want to perform these plays you need some sense of what these lazzi are.

Lazzi are practiced bits that the actors perform in the middle of their improvisations. Often, they are just simply the characteristic actions of a character as portrayed by an actor, such as his happy dance, or what he does in a panic. Other times they are elaborate physical stunts with props. They can also be lengthy pieces that touch on tricks from stories in ancient literature. The scope of what they can be is huge.

In this workshop we talk about a representative sample of the lazzi that are mentioned in this historic works, including a few that are well explained, and we explore them with ideas and acting from the participants.