

Call for Submissions: *California Italian Studies*

Special Issue: Italian Theatre & Performance

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Since its inception, *California Italian Studies* has covered much ground, but this is the first special issue dedicated to Italian theater, suggesting that performance remains a marginalized area of study despite its importance to Italian culture as a whole. Therefore, we are extending an especially broad invitation for submissions focusing on all aspects of Italian theatre and performance, including a range of historical periods and genres. We invite papers that don't merely consider the theatrical "object" but consider the ways that theatre is – or seeks to be – integral to Italian culture, identity and society. We welcome contributions from scholars of theatre, performance studies, Italian Studies, Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages, Cultural Studies, History and related fields; we likewise welcome a variety of different research methodologies.

Thinking of theatre in broader, interdisciplinary and transnational terms encourages us to consider not only *Teatro di prosa* but also music theatre, dance, popular performance forms, puppets/puppetry, environmental and site specific work, alongside drama. Certainly, Italy holds a central place in the history and the development of theatre and performance practices. Early Modern Italy saw the "rediscovery" of the Classics amidst a flurry of innovations in scripted and improvised performances. Actors in the *commedia dell'arte* experimented with different ways of engaging fully-scripted and *all'improvviso* texts. Star actors and Divas captured the literary imagination and inspired a number of literary and theatrical works from the early-modern period to Eleanora Duse and Franca Rame. From the Risorgimento into the postwar period and beyond, theatre artists have often been politically engaged, but their relationship to the State has been extremely varied, as have been their approaches to producing propaganda and political theatre. The twentieth century saw major revolutions, from the Futurist *serate* to the drama of Luigi Pirandello to the flourishing of the *teatro di regia*. Contemporary Italian theatre blends experimental ensemble work, site-specific theatre, eco-dramaturgy, and visual innovations.

While all topics related to Italian theatre and performance are welcome, we would particularly encourage papers that reflect upon developmental arcs or questions (such as language) that explore the interrelation between historical, modern, and contemporary Italian performance.

Submission Details:

Please send preliminary contribution proposals (300-400 words) and a brief autobiographical note about yourself to Erith Jaffe-Berg (erithj@ucr.edu), Patricia Gaborik (tonguetiedmuse@gmail.com) and Alexandra Collier (alexandra.collier@gmail.com) by October 1, 2026. If your proposal is accepted, you will be expected to submit your essay for peer review by December 1, 2026, through the [portal of our journal](#). Articles can also be submitted without preliminary proposals up until the December 1st deadline.

All submissions, whether in English or Italian, must follow our [submission](#) and [formatting](#) guidelines. If the guidelines are not followed, the article will be sent back to the author for correction at the risk of not meeting the deadline for acceptance. Submissions should not exceed 30 pages of double-spaced text or 10,000 words.

Submissions should fulfill at least one of the journal's criteria for selection:

- a) an interdisciplinary scholarly study that combines the practices of multiple disciplines, making significant use of the tools of one discipline in the service of another, or that studies a cluster of scholarly works representing the approaches of various disciplines to a single topic.
- b) a comparative work that relates the history, culture, society, artistic products or languages of the Italian peninsula, islands and diasporas to other geographical, cultural and linguistic formations.
- c) a critical work that, in studying a given object, engages in theoretical or methodological reflection on its own approach and its implications within larger disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts.