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1. Salvator Rosa, *Figurine*, (Bartsch 61), 1656–57,
Etching, 14.7 x 9.4 cm
London, British Museum

Tiepolo and Punchinello: Venice, Magic and Commedia Dell'arte

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At the height of his productive career in the middle of the eighteenth-century, the Venetian artist Giambattista Tiepolo completed a series of 33 etchings which were originally referred to as *Capricci*. In 1775, after Tiepolo's death, his son Domenico published 23 prints from this group under the title of *Scherzi di fantasia*.¹ The images of the *Scherzi* prints, as distinct from the original *Capricci*, are more elaborate and diverse, tempting viewers to search for some overriding iconographic sequence. Indeed, since their publication, scholars have consistently attempted to divine some coherent narrative structure which would explain these elaborate inventions. While any specific reading remains inadequate and futile, these powerfully evocative images cannot simply be dismissed as mere 'mental relaxations,' as some authors have done. If considered within the context of Tiepolo's culture and time, they can offer some intriguing insights into the interactions of high art and popular culture in eighteenth-century Venice.

An understanding of the imagery of these etching series begins with an examination of the significance of the titles, *Capricci* and *Scherzi di fantasia*. 'Capriccio' originally referred to a musical form which appeared in the seventeenth-century. Praetorius in 1608 defines a capriccio as a 'type of improvised fantasy, in which one passes from one theme to another.'² The term, then, connoted thematic freedom which allows the artist to express his fantasy and virtuosity in an improvisatory fashion.

By the middle of the seventeenth-century, *capricci* became a well-known and popular form among artists as well, denoting, as Baldinucci stated in 1681, 'a work of art born of a fantastic improvisation by the author.'³ In its artistic form, the term further implied a representation of the unusual, exotic, and extraordinary, without intervention of traditional subject matter. Of primary importance in the *capriccio* genre was the manner in which the artist chose to combine artistic elements in a new and fanciful way; these poetic inventions revealed his innate creative initiative and imagination. As examples of an artist's personal expression, *capricci* were highly prized by connoisseurs throughout the seventeenth-century, and became even more popular in the eighteenth-century. By this time, the term 'scherzo' –

referring in music to the freest and most playful of movements – was sometimes used instead of 'capriccio' to describe fanciful artistic forms, an evocation certainly intended in Domenico's choice of title for his father's most elaborate inventions.⁴

Since the *capriccio's* purpose was to demonstrate the individual artist's *invenzione*, his creative invention, the subject matter of a piece depended on the artist's chosen genre. As a figure painter, Tiepolo's *capricci* centred on figural subjects and motifs. Within this genre, several earlier artists who worked within the tradition were certainly sources of inspiration for him. One of the first major artists to master this genre was Jacques Callot (1592-1635). In 1617, he produced a set of prints in Florence for Lorenzo de' Medici entitled *Capricci di varie figure*. These etchings portrayed a seemingly unrelated assemblage of peasants, aristocrats and figures from the *commedia dell'arte* engaged in normal activities and occasionally set in festive environments. In 1621, Callot produced another group of etchings known as the *Balli di Sfessania*, which represented the various characters of the Italian vernacular theatre.⁵

Callot's *Capricci* and *Balli* series were well-known throughout Italy, appearing in numerous collections and eventually in popular prints. These images, with their fanciful portrayals of masks, costumes, and figural types prevalent in seventeenth-century Italy, were by the mid-eighteenth-century readily available to artists interested in similar themes and expressive motifs. Callot's depiction of theatrical themes mirrors the Italian fascination for their popular comedic tradition, a fascination that becomes even more prevalent by Tiepolo's time in Venice.

A more immediate source of inspiration for Tiepolo's *Capricci* are the works of Salvator Rosa (1615-1673). Rosa's fiercely independent and dramatic temperament attracted him to what Wallace calls the 'bacchic qualities'⁶ inherent in the concept of the *capriccio*. In 1656-57, Rosa produced 62 small etchings of soldiers, male genre figures and women which were simply called *figurine*.

What is most striking about Rosa's *figurine* is the narrative quality that clings to these images (fig. 1). Cut off from any comprehensible setting, his figures appear to be participating in some unidentifiable and incomplete conversation or drama. These figures, clothed in armour and exotic robes, and characterized by extravagant gestures, are removed from the world of everyday experience. It is the notion of deliberate obscurity, the mood of implied conspiracy, that most strongly suggests Rosa's contribution to Tiepolo's artistic vision in his *Capricci*.⁷

Just as Rosa's *figurine* are unconnected by any central theme, Tiepolo's *Capricci* as well as his *Scherzi* present a variety of seemingly disparate motifs combined in unexpected fashion to form highly unusual compositions. Even if one chooses to see these works as nothing more than 'skittish exercises

into fantasy,⁸ one is still curious about how Tiepolo arrived at his choice of the specific images dominating both sets.

As already suggested, the *Capricci* contain enough thematic affinities with the *Scherzi* to propose that both groups of prints grow out of the same artistic intention. The *Scherzi*, however, portray more complex imagery and more baffling combinations of motifs. While it is evident here as in the *Capricci* that Tiepolo knew of Rosa and other early *capriccio* artists, one has the sense in the *Scherzi* that Tiepolo's elaborate compositions stem from a more specific iconographic source.

The etchings of Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (c. 1610-c.1665) provide that source.⁹ Castiglione was primarily an animal painter until he went to Rome in the 1630s. There contact with Poussin's work led him to concentrate on mythological and arcadian subjects. Castiglione's drawings and prints begun during this period indicate his enthusiastic interpretation of bacchanalian and primitive sentiment. He portrays river-gods, pan-pipes and carved altars, and exhibits a preoccupation with the idea of the transience of life and the ephemeral nature of human accomplishment. He fills his prints with heaps of animal remains and classical paraphernalia, evoking a mood of decay and melancholy.

Of central importance in Castiglione's imagery were his representations of figures contemplating tombs and examining the tablets of ruined monuments. The feeling is, as in Rosa's works, of some unknown calamity or fear. What is especially intriguing about Castiglione's studies is his ability to convey an atmosphere of mystery and anxiety by placing classical imagery and symbols in purposefully enigmatic settings. His intention was to evoke a mood, to suggest narrative, rather than to provide specific meanings in his use of a symbolic vocabulary.

Tiepolo knew of Castiglione's work at least by the 1740s. In the early years of the decade, he helped draw up an inventory of the collection of Zaccaria Sagredo, a Venetian collector whose holdings were rich in Castiglione prints. The artist's association with the great collector Algarotti, moreover, who was an ardent admirer of Castiglione, substantiates this intimate knowledge of the older artist's prints.¹⁰

Castiglione's effect on Tiepolo's etchings is more than stylistic. Tiepolo was particularly attracted to Castiglione's use of figural types – the plethora of satyrs, robed maidens, and oriental philosophers. Clearly, these types mirrored Tiepolo's own aesthetic preferences.

Most significantly, Tiepolo in the *Scherzi* shares Castiglione's fascination with magic. The earlier artist's conception of magic stems from a learned tradition of witchcraft and sorcery as interpreted in a framework of antiquity and Renaissance poetry. This tradition, in which an understanding of magic was connected to unravelling the mysterious writings of pagan philosophers and Oriental scholars such as Zoroaster, was prevalent throughout

Renaissance Europe. Neoplatonic writers such as Ficino and Giordano Bruno exemplified this attitude in such syncretic conceptions as Hermes Trimegistus, an elaborate and eclectic belief in which Christian thought is connected to classical and Egyptian sources through the figure of Hermes.¹¹

The Hermetic thesis, along with other commonly held ideas about Eastern magical practices, were no doubt familiar to Castiglione. He injected the theme of magic into his prints by including the objects and animals associated with pagan ritual and sorcery. As is evident in a comparison of Castiglione's *Diogenes* (fig. 2) and Tiepolo's *Scherzi* philosophers, these same elements appear in the later prints: snakes, owls, skulls and bones, altars, herms and oriental figures are strewn throughout the etchings, creating an atmosphere evocative of magical practice and mysterious calculation.

Castiglione's imagery, then, informs Tiepolo's prints consistently; but this fact only begins to clarify the final appearance of these elusive compositions. As already noted, one cannot assume that Tiepolo's purpose in these images was to convey a specific and coherent philosophic attitude toward magic, although many earlier writers attempted to establish an elaborate system of magical symbolism to explain the artist's cryptic iconography.¹² Closer examination, however, refutes any such claim, for Tiepolo's use of symbols is both ambivalent and inconsistent, if interpreted as having specific signifi-



2. Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, *Diogenes*, 1648, Etching, 21.5 x 30.7 cm
London, British Museum

cance within a Neoplatonic or Hermetic framework.

This attitude gains additional strength when one learns of the artist's well-known disinterest in scholarly concerns.¹³ Although Algarotti, in his efforts to promote Tiepolo's art, tried to convince his patrons of the artist's 'pictorial scholarship,' Tiepolo himself was by all accounts more concerned with decorative effect and colour.¹⁴ A perusal of Tiepolo's letters indicates that, while he had access to a wide range of classical learning, especially after his acquaintance with Algarotti, the artist continued to manifest a popular Venetian preference for fanciful invention and brilliant colour. He was, as one author has noted, 'not an artist misunderstood by his own time.'¹⁵ He was an artist at home in his own culture, and one apparently comfortable in the streets and among the people of his city.

Indeed, the inspiration Tiepolo derived from popular and folk culture reveals a facet of his creative development largely overlooked in discussions of his work. The vernacular culture of Venice in the eighteenth-century is particularly cogent to a discussion of the ideas expressed in his *Scherzi*. Of particular interest in this consideration is the appearance in two of the *Scherzi* prints of Punchinello figures (figs. 3 & 4). As a performer in the *commedia dell'arte*, Punchinello's inclusion leads to an examination of the comedic theatre and specifically of this character in the popular imagination of Tiepolo's day.

The Punchinello character originated, according to some scholars, in the ancient Roman theatrical figures, Maccus and Bucco.¹⁶ This dual origin would account for Punchinello's flexible personality in his stage characterizations. In one role, he played a quick and witty improviser, as Maccus had been; in his other guise, he was, like Bucco, a self-sufficient thief who was extremely reserved in his movements and speech. After centuries in which Punchinello's character was kept alive among the peasant traditions of the Italian countryside, the figure reappeared on the stage in the sixteenth-century as one of the masked performers of the *commedia dell'arte*.

These improvisational troupes of players roamed throughout Italy, developing standard masked characters and performing a repertoire of plays that were concentrated on recognisable themes. Emphasis was placed on comedic stylisation and mastery of innovative buffoonery rather than on the development of plot or unusual characters. By the seventeenth-century, the *commedia dell'arte* was the dominant form of theatre and entertainment, operating on every level of Italian society. Among the courtly and aristocratic circles, the best masked troupes found lucrative patrons. Removed from their popular origins, these comedies began to take on the attitudes of established theatre, requiring new plays with complicated effects and elaborate stage settings. But the characters essentially grew out of stock figures of the original comedies; indeed, these are the characters evident in Callot's *Balli de Sfessania*.



3. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Figures with Punchinello*, (*Scherzi di fantasia*, pl. 19),
c. 1757,
Etching, 23.0 x 17.5 cm
Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art



4. Giambattista Tiepolo, *Figures Regarding an Effigy of Punchinello*, (*Scherzi di fantasia*, pl. 19), c. 1757, Etching, 23.1 x 17.9 cm
Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art

Masked players, however, still wandered through rural Italy, performing at festivals and providing an immensely successful form of popular entertainment for the masses. The comedy retained its peasant nature, eschewing the elegant pretensions that began to dominate theatre in the larger cities. In the countryside, the actors continued to emphasise the slapstick qualities inherent in these spoofs, a tradition kept alive even today in the Punch and Judy shows in most European countries.¹⁷

Within a few years of his appearance on the legitimate stage in the early seventeenth-century, Punchinello exhibited the physical characteristics with which he would be forever identified.¹⁸ He appeared as a hunchbacked labourer with baggy pants, a belted white blouse and a prominently peaked cap. His enormous belly accentuated his other hump and alluded to his gluttony. His mask included a beaked nose, signifying his well-known licentiousness, as well as his legendary descent from a chicken, from which his name is said to derive.

Mention has already been made of Punchinello's flexible character. As Marcia Vetrocq writes in her remarkable essay on this figure:

Punchinello's character...escaped that rigid determination which forever bound the other masks to a single motivating quality. Unlike Pantalone, the misanthropic merchant of Venice, or Dottore, the pedantic academician of Bologna, Punchinello remained mercurial and versatile. He could play a libidinous servant in one scenario and a cuckolded husband in the next.¹⁹

In all his guises, however, Punchinello remains a roguish clown, a vulgar and irreverent representative of the common people who thumbs his nose at elegant hypocrisy.

By Tiepolo's time, the halcyon days of the *commedia dell'arte* were over. Moves by playwrights such as Goldoni and Gozzi – goaded by the influx of French theatre and ideas – to reform the standards of masked theater indicate a decline in the popularity and effectiveness of the theatre.²⁰ This decline, however, in no way diminished Punchinello's popularity, for unlike the other masks, he had always been primarily a street entertainer. This role was especially evident in Venice, where, as Vetrocq states, 'outside the theater he was virtually ubiquitous, amusing the *popolo* and outraging the gentry.'²¹

As public buffoons, Punchinelli crowded the Venetian squares. In a letter to a friend in 1762, Denis Diderot provided a vivid picture of the scenes on the *piazze* of the city:

in a single square you can see on one side a stage with mountebanks performing merry but monstrously indecent farces, and on the other another stage with priests performing farces of a different complexion and shouting out: 'Take no notice of those wretches, gentlemen; the Pulcinelli you are flocking to is a feeble fool; here (displaying the crucifix) is the genuine Pulcinello, the great Pulcinello.'²²

Punchinello by Tiepolo's time, then, was a common folk-figure in the

Venetian streets, with recognizable features and attributes. It is not surprising that such a colourful and prevalent character became a popular subject for Italian artists, especially those painters who captured views of Venice, a city fascinated with its own image. Punchinelli appear in the piazza scenes of Guardi²³ and mingle with society in the *petit bourgeois* visions of Pietro Longhi. (fig. 5) Tiepolo himself made 20 drawings of the figure beside those in his *Scherzi* prints, and his son Domenico elaborated on the themes in his brilliant narrative sequence depicting Punchinello's life. The Tiepolos, both father and son, are in spirit closer to the works of Alessandro Magnasco (1667-1749), who portrayed Punchinello families, and P.L. Ghezzi, who created a special peasant class inhabited by these figures. (fig. 6)²⁴

In his earlier depictions of Punchinello, such as his *School of Pulcinellas*, Giambattista's figures seem almost an extension of his caricatures.²⁵ The chaotic humour of the scene emphasises the physical deformity of this dwarf-like creature. Some of the figures appear to be lifeless, as if they were dummies waiting to play their part. This popular figure, then, was for Tiepolo a versatile emblem, rich in satiric connotations readily understood by his audience.

In light of Tiepolo's depiction of Punchinello in his other works, the appearance of the character in two of his *Scherzi* prints gains a more precise explanation. (figs. 3 & 4) In the first print, two magicians sit raptly attentive as the Punchinello sits across from them. Behind the magician stands a naked youth in classical stance, and around them are the familiar implements: an urn with satyr's head, an owl, a sword, sacrificial pans and altar-like ruins. Between the magicians and the buffoon cluster several figures gazing in awe at the magicians.

The other composition including a Punchinello is even more baffling. Here a group of standing figures – including a semi-nude man, a magician, a death-like figure, and a woman – are looking at a tomb on which one sees a Punchinello figure carved in relief; he is either an effigy, or this is meant to be his tomb. The nude man is pointing at the figure with great excitement and curiosity. Next to the tomb sits an artistically draped woman wearing a large belt with satyr's head and holding an owl. In the foreground a snake appears coiled around a staff; on a mound at the rear are an hourglass and a tibia.

The appearance of these contemporary buffoons in compositions rife with the magical connotations and attributes so common to this series of etchings is particularly striking. It is difficult to deny that Tiepolo may have intended to express a satirical message, but it is important to consider how this message would have appeared to his contemporaries. In such a context, Tiepolo's motivations in the *Scherzi* can indeed be linked to the presence of the Punchinello figures. Most specifically, these figures are important as representations of their popular function in Tiepolo's day, that is, as



5. Pietro Longhi, *The Quack*, 1757,
Oil on canvas, 62.0 x 50.0 cm
Venice, Ca' Rezzonico

counterparts and assistants to those masters of spurious magic, the charlatans.

After the Renaissance, the eighteenth-century was the great age of charlatanry. Stemming from the Italian *ciarlatano*, which means 'to speak in a boastful manner...with the intention of confusing others,' the charlatan was defined as 'one who sells salves or other drugs in public places, pulls teeth and exhibits tricks of legerdemain'.²⁶ Eventually, the term was broadened to include any huckster, quack or self-styled miracle-worker who duped superstitious audiences through tricks, fast talk and magical performances. Playing on mankind's basic desire for mystery, the charlatan thrived in periods when, as deFrancesco states, 'the secure foundations of life seemed shaken and old values, economic and spiritual, long accepted as certainties could no longer be relied upon'.²⁷

Such a time was the eighteenth-century, for as Voltaire noted about the Age of Enlightenment, 'the more civilization advances, the more noise does superstition make'.²⁸ The prevalence of charlatans throughout eighteenth-century Europe sparked an abundance of treatises denouncing these practices. Tiepolo's contemporary and compatriot Scipione Maffei published in 1750 *Arte magica dileguata*, a fulmination against magical practices, charlatanry, and quackery. The German J.B. Mencken's learned speeches on the themes of charlatanry in learning, *De charlataneria eruditorum*, were



6. P.L. Ghezzi, *Punchinello Rising From His Bier*, c. 1735, Arthur M. Knapp Fund, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

published in 1716 and became widely known and quoted throughout Europe. Perhaps the most curious source of information on eighteenth-century hucksterism is the anonymous three-volume work published in Leipzig in 1785, *Die Geschichte der menschlichen Narrheit*, or to translate its full title, *A History of Human Folly, or Lives of Famous Adepts of the Black Arts, Goldmakers, Exorcisers of Devils, Interpreters of Omens and Palmists, Enthusiasts, Soothsayers and Other Philosophic Fiends*.²⁹ Clearly, attitudes towards charlatanry of every source informed intellectual discussion in the eighteenth-century and provided stimulus for writers and artists of the day. Indeed, two of the most renowned literary figures of the century, the German writers Schiller and Goethe, were fascinated with this subject. Schiller's *Geisterseher* and Goethe's *Grosskophtha* both portray the figure of Cagliostro, the most famous charlatan of all.³⁰

Just as Castiglione and Tiepolo sought in their *capricci* to create a visual mood of mystery, so did the methods of the charlatan centre on the creation of an atmosphere of terror and illusion. As de Francesco points out, 'What the quack offers is not a mere private nostrum, but Mystery itself, the Unattainable, ready brewed and bottled'.³¹ An important part of the impostor's bag of tricks was his use of exotic clothes, hats, and magical paraphernalia. By appearing in the robes of an Arab or a Hindu, the charlatan implied that he was linked to the mysterious East and thereby knowledgeable of the secret powers and magical wisdom associated with these regions. Upon seeing his oriental attire, 'the people were to realise immediately that he did not belong to them and become curious about his origin'.³² Cagliostro was a master of such disguises; in Schiller's *Geisterseher*, for example, his first appearance is as an elusive Armenian.

In his attempts to dupe the public, the charlatan also depended upon his ability to play on the spectator's emotions of dread, horror and thrill-seeking. An engraving by Pollanzini, done in 1735 after a painting by Bernardino Mei of 1636, vividly illustrates this notion.³³ (fig. 7) A down-in-the-heels impostor, draped in a white Eastern robe, balances his flask of medicine on his fist while the audience watches. De Francesco's description is particularly cogent:

how cleverly he forces the multitude to look at him! How cleverly he has erected his platform so they must crane their necks to see him and the mysterious phials he has arranged at his feet...! Horrified amazement, a shudder of fear, runs through the audience...For the benefit of all those present, the old magician is balancing his little bottle of medicine working with the twin mediums of mysticism and dexterity, the former borrowed from foreign lands and the latter from his colleague of the market place, the juggler.³⁴

This last point leads to the charlatan's connection to Punchinello, for the most common variety of huckster was the one associated with the buffoon's popular haunts, the fairground and the public square. While illustrious impostors such as Cagliostro enchanted the aristocratic circles, his cousin the



7. Giovanni Battista Pollanzani, *The Charlatan*, 1735,
Engraving after a painting by Barnardino Mei, 1636

mountebank attended to the simpler superstitions of the folk. The name mountebank derives from his practice of erecting a platform above the spectators in order to attract a crowd. In an attempt to hold the audience, the mountebank often used a Punchinello to entertain them before he gave his presentation.³⁵ This practice eventually led to the creation of a kind of medicine show, in which little distinction was made between entertainment and the tooth-pulling medicine man. This curious mixture of buffoonery and surgery is depicted in several illustrations of the time, alluding to the widespread existence of such shows (fig. 8). Punchinello, as part of this world of the street, became a charlatan himself, taking nothing seriously and consciously playing to people's desire for novelty and titillation.³⁶

Punchinello's relation to the charlatan and the prevalence of such perpetrators of popular magic are central factors in an interpretation of Tiepolo's *Scherzi* images. In this interpretation, two quotations from de Francesco are cogent. When speaking of Mitelli, an eighteenth-century broadsheet artist who satirized the charlatans' claims, she states 'the whole performance is a travesty upon the enigmatic airs which the quacks loved to give themselves'.³⁷



8. Guiseppe Maria Mitelli, *Charlatan on His Stage, Holding a Snake*, (from *Arte per Via*, Varignana 25), 28.1 x 19.5 cm, Source: *The Illustrated Bartsch*, New York 1981, vol. 19, pt. 2, p. 395.

The author also describes the effect that the mountebank had on the crowds surrounding him:

the bystanders wear a curious expression, compounded of disgust and distraction...All those present feel a pleasant prickle of anxiety; they crowd about their humbug like a frightened herd of animals, forgetting that it was he who first raised their alarm with his pictures and tales.³⁸

Both of these descriptions could easily refer to Tiepolo's etchings. The compositions in general are characterised by their 'enigmatic airs,' their ability to create a mood of anxious ambivalence. Further, the horror-stricken attitude of the figures so frequently clustered around Tiepolo's Oriental necromancers directly reflect descriptions of the charlatans' spectators. This connection comes closest to explaining Tiepolo's intentions. It is certainly in keeping with the artist's boisterous personality, a temperament that coincided with the decadent and light-hearted culture of his native Venice. By including Punchinello in the *Scherzi*, each time making the buffoon the center of attention, Tiepolo conveyed to his contemporaries an attitude of bemused scepticism for which the Venetians were noted. As a symbol of iconoclasm and charlatanry, a beloved character of the street, Punchinello strengthens the satirical message which underlies all of the *Scherzi* prints.

Tiepolo's satire, however, is not one of ridicule nor does it mean to express any comment on society. Unlike the moralistic works of Goya, whose *Caprichos* were indebted stylistically to Tiepolo's work,³⁹ the Venetian's satire is sympathetic. His portrayals of magicians, philosophers and classical figures express on the one hand his artistic invention and demonstrate his admiration for the artistic spirit of Salvator Rosa, Castiglione and others who worked within the *capriccio* mode. The etchings, however, also convey a humorous irony and understanding of the popular culture in which he enthusiastically participated. By including Punchinello – the most pervasive and popular of all the commedia dell'arte characters – Tiepolo conveys in the *Scherzi di fantasia* the lighthearted scepticism of his Venetian society and the theatrical life of its streets.

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NOTES

- 1 The group of etchings known as *Capricci* comprise ten prints of nearly uniform size (ca. 14 x 17.5 cm.). The *Scherzi di fantasia* include 23 prints ranging in size from 23.2 x 18.2 cm. to 14 x 188.8 cm. Questions about the commissioning of these prints abound; there are no records to indicate whether they were commissioned at all.

Documents, however, do suggest the approximate period in which Tiepolo worked on the prints. Maria Santifaller has conclusively demonstrated that the *Capricci*

were finished and included in an album of prints in the Dresden Kupferstichkabinett bearing the date 1743. (Santifaller, Maria, 'Carl Heinrich von Heineken e le acquaforti di Giovanni Battista Tiepolo a Dresda,' *Arte Veneta*, XXVI [1972]: 146.) The only fixed point of reference for the *Scherzi* is 1757, when Tiepolo's patron, the great collector and bookman Anton Maria Zanetti sent a set of 20 prints to the famous French collector P.-J. Mariette. Included in this set were the *Scherzi* series (op. cit., p. 151.). This fact, however, does not establish the precedence of the *Capricci*, since it is still conceivable that Tiepolo worked on the *Scherzi* before 1743. The prevailing scholarly sentiment is that Tiepolo worked on the *Capricci* in the years immediately before 1743, and that the *Scherzi* were done in intervals from 1740 to 1757. This thesis would explain the variations in technique within the *Scherzi* prints, as Tiepolo's experimentation with etching developed throughout his career. Such a time-frame would also clarify the occasional similarities of motifs found between the *Capricci* and *Scherzi*; perhaps specific prints that became part of the second series were made at the time Tiepolo was preparing the *Capricci*, while others appeared at various later intervals.

- 2 In *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Kassel 1952, vol. 2, col. 808.
- 3 Quoted in *Enciclopedia italiana*, vol. VIII, p. 909.
- 4 For a discussion of the scherzo form in music, see *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London 1980, vol. 16, p. 634.
- 5 See Gerald Kahan, *Jacques Callot: Artist of the Theatre*, Athens, Georgia, 1976.
- 6 Richard W. Wallace, *The Etchings of Salvator Rosa*, Princeton, 1969, p. 19.
- 7 Tiepolo was certainly acquainted with Rosa's prints as early as the 1720s, when he would have seen them in Marco Ricci's collection. Upon Tiepolo's death, moreover, his son Domenico recorded that his father owned several Rosa prints. See Michael Levey, *Giambattista Tiepolo: His Life and Art*, New Haven, 1986, p. 99.
- 8 M.P. Merriman, *The Etchings of Giambattista Tiepolo*, M.A. Thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1963, p.34.
- 9 For discussion of Castiglione's influence on Tiepolo, see Maria Santifaller, 'Zur Graphik Giambattista Tiepolos,' *Pantheon* 43 (1975): 327-34; and Ann Percy, *Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, Master Draughtsman of the Baroque*, Philadelphia 1971.
- 10 On Algarotti and Tiepolo, see F. Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, New Haven 1980, pp. 351-355; and H. Posse, 'Die Briefe des F. Algarotti an den sächsischen Hof,' *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlung*, 1931 (Beiheft).
- 11 For discussion of Hermetic concepts, see Frances A. Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, Chicago 1964; Grete de Francesco, *The Power of the Charlatan*, New Haven 1939, pp. 33-34; W. Shumaker, *The occult sciences in the Renaissance*, Berkeley 1972; and K.H. Dannenfeldt, 'The Pseudo-Zoroastrian Oracles in the Renaissance,' *Studies in the Renaissance* 4 (1957): 7-30.
- 12 See, for example, L. R. Metcalfe, 'The etchings of G.B. Tiepolo,' *Print Connoisseur* 1 (1920-21): 344-379.
- 13 P. Molmenti, *Tiepolo: la vie et l'oeuvre du peintre*, Paris 1911, p. 32.
- 14 F. Haskell, op.cit., p. 354.
- 15 A. Morassi, 'Tiepolo, Giambattista,' in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, vol. XIV, col. 89.
- 16 For a discussion of arguments for and against this thesis, see P.L. Duchartre, *The Italian Comedy*, New York 1966, p. 208-230.

- 17 It is interesting to note that Salvator Rosa often joined these groups, acting the part of Corviello, a buffoon peripherally related to Punchinello. See K.M. Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy*, New York 1962, vol. 1, p. 213.
- 18 Benedetto Croce was the first scholar to maintain that the establishment of the character in the theatre began in 1620 with the Neapolitan actor, Silvio Florillo. See his 'Pulcinella e la relazioni della commedia dell'arte con la commedia popolare romana,' first published in 1898, reprinted in *Saggi sulla letteratura italiana nell seicento*, 3d ed. Bari, 1948, pp. 187-250.
- 19 Marcia Vetrocq, *Domenico Tiepolo's Punchinello drawings*, Bloomington, Indiana 1979, p. 28.
- 20 See Jaroslav Pokorný, *Goldoni und das venezianische Theater*, Berlin 1968; and M. Bonicatti, 'Il problema dei rapporti fra Domenico e Gianbattista Tiepolo,' in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di studi sul Tiepolo*, Milan 1971, p. 28.
- 21 Vetrocq, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
- 22 In *Diderot's letters to Sophie Volland*, London 1972, p. 119; quoted in Vetrocq, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- 23 Bonicatti, 'Precedenti di Francesco Guardi nella tradizione settecentesca del 'capriccio',' in *Problemi guardeschi*, Venice 1966.
- 24 See B. Lanata and D. Sartori, *Maschere*, Milan 1984, pp. 26-27.
- 25 M. Kozloff, 'Caricatures of G.B. Tiepolo,' *Marsyas* 10 (1960-61): 16.
- 26 De Francesco, *op. cit.*, p. 4; see also *Enciclopedia della Spettacolo*, Rome 1954, vol. III, pp. 729-730.
- 27 De Francesco, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
- 28 Quoted in Diane Russell, *Rare etchings by Giambattista and Gian Domenico Tiepolo*, Washington, D.C., 1972, p. 26.
- 29 De Francesco discusses Mencken and *Geschichte der menschlichen Narrheit* in fascinating detail. See De Francesco, *op. cit.* For Maffei, see Roberta Turchi, *La commedia italiana del settecento*, Florence 1985; and *Enciclopedia italiana*, vol. XXI, p. 862.
- 30 De Francesco, *op. cit.*, p. 222.
- 31 *op. cit.*, p. 5.
- 32 *op. cit.*, p. 23.
- 33 *op. cit.*, p. 25.
- 34 *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.
- 35 See John H. McDowell, 'Some pictorial aspects of early mountebank stages,' in *Publications of the Modern Language Association* (March 1946): 84-96.
- 36 See R. Tessari, 'Nell'antimondo dei ciarlatani e dei buffoni,' in *Commedia dell'Arte: La maschera d'ombra*, Milan 1981, pp. 31-47.
- 37 De Francesco, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
- 38 *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.
- 39 On Goya's appreciation of Tiepolo, see Michelangelo Muraro, 'Tiepolo e Goya,' in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di studi sul Tiepolo*, Udine, 1970, pp. 68-80.