THE WORTH OF WOMEN:

WHEREIN IS CLEARLY REVEALED THEIR NOBILITY AND SUPERIORITY TO MEN

BY Moderata Fonte **TRANSLATED BY** Virginia Cox
DIRECTED BY Jay Stern in collaboration with Laura Caparrotti

Seven women debate gender equality, the true worth of women and the responsibility of husbands, fathers, sons and lovers. From a 1600 book written by a Venetian noblewoman.

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY Erato Kremmida **LYRICS BY** Maggie-Kate Coleman

STARRING Carlotta Brentan, Laura Caparrotti, Tali Custer, Marta Mondelli, Caterina Nonis, Irene Turri, and Annie Watkins

INFO AT KITHEATER.COM

A Kairos Italy Theater production

KIT KAIROS ITALY THEATER

CASA ITALIANA ZERILLI-MARIMO` NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

ISTITUTO italiano DI CULTURA NEW YORK

materials for the arts

SINOPSIS

Published in 1600, The worth of women takes the form of the latter, with Fonte creating a conversation among seven Venetian noblewomen. The dialogue explores nearly every aspect of women's experience in both theoretical and practical terms. These women, who differ in age and experience, take as their broad theme men's curious hostility toward women and possible cures for it.

THE SHOW

The show has been presented at L'Eredita' delle Donne (Florence, Italy) (October 2019), at the Embassy of Italy in Washington DC and at the University of Buffalo (October 2018), the Gallery at Access Theater in New York (April 2017), Bernie Wohl center (March 2017), Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimo' at NYU (February 2017).

Read about the show on I-Italy:
https://www.iitaly.org/magazine/focus/art-culture/article/all-female-cast-revitalizes-worth-women

THE BOOK

Through this witty and ambitious work, Fonte seeks to elevate women's status to that of men, arguing that women have the same innate abilities as men and, when similarly educated, prove their equals. Through this dialogue, Fonte provides a picture of the private and public lives of Renaissance women, ruminating on their roles in the home, in society, and in the arts.

A fine example of Renaissance vernacular literature, this book is also a testament to the enduring issues that women face, including the attempt to reconcile femininity with ambition.

THE BOOK'S TRANSLATOR

Virginia Cox graduated with a PhD from Cambridge and worked at the University of Edinburgh, UCL, Cambridge, and New York University, before returning to Cambridge as Senior Research Fellow at Trinity College in 2021. Her research focuses on Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italian literature (especially dialogue and lyric poetry), on the history of the reception of classical rhetorical theory in Italy between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries, and on the history of Italian early modern women's writing. Her main current works in progress are a co-edited book for UCL Press (Poetry, Drama, and Music in Late-Renaissance Italy: The Life and Works of Leonora Bernardi, ed. with Lisa Sampson, with contributions by Eric Nicholson, Eugenio Refini, and Anna Wainwright), the Renaissance volume of the Cambridge History of Rhetoric, co-edited with Jennifer Richards, and a monograph on Renaissance lyric poetry and its paratexts, provisionally entitled The Social World of Italian Renaissance Lyric.

MODERATA FONTE

Moderata Fonte was the pseudonym of Modesta Pozzo (1555–92), a Venetian woman who was something of an anomaly. Neither cloistered in a convent nor as liberated from prevailing codes of decorum as a courtesan might be, Pozzo was a respectable, married mother who produced literature in genres that were commonly considered "masculine"—the chivalric romance and the literary dialogue.

DIRECTORS' NOTES

In "The Worth of Women" seven women of different ages debate two questions: why have women throughout history been relegated to second-class status by men? And why, knowing all the horrors afflicted by men upon women, do women continue to love them? This lively and passionate conversation in Moderate Fonte's text easily lends itself to a theatrical adaptation, as the women share stories, challenge each other, laugh and cry together, fight, and make up. Shielded from the judgment of men in an opulent Venetian garden, the women are able to speak honestly - for a while - before they must return to their lives as mothers, wives, and lovers to their oppressors.

"The Worth of Women" feels surprisingly contemporary, or, perhaps not so surprisingly, since the issues of gender inequality that Moderate Fonte was exploring are yet unresolved.

“I remember after the first time I read the book, I immediately had to talk to the women in my life about it (and in some cases apologize to them). We hope the play will inspire audiences with the stories of these women and foster larger conversation.” - Jay Stern

CAST

Laura Caparrotti

Adaptor, Co-Director, Actress - ADRIANA

Laura Caparrotti is a director, actress, journalist, lecturer, consultant, dialect-coach, grant panelist, curator with an Italian accent. She has a degree from the University in Rome and studied independently with Nobel Prize winner Dario Fo. After ten years of professional theatre in Italy, she relocated to the US, where she continues to direct and perform. Laura is the Founding Artistic Director of the Italian Theater Company in NY Kairos Italy Theater and of In Scena! Italian Theater Festival NY, a Festival that takes place in all 5 NY Boroughs. She is member of the Director's Lab at Lincoln Center, of SDC, of LPTW, of LIT and the co-founder of the international directors' collective the World Wide Lab. Laura is the recipient of the Dante Award 2016 from the Association of Teachers of Italian and in 2021 of the DC Italian Cultural Society for her work and dedication in spreading the Italian culture in the States. In 2019 Laura cofounded OnStage! the first American Theater Festival in Italy. In 2021 Laura directed her first documentary Tutti In Scena on the history of Italian theater in NY. The documentary was one of the three finalists at The Russo Brothers Film Forum.

Jay Stern

Adaptor, Co-Director

Jay Stern is a film and theater director based in New York City. His theater work, from classical theater to new musicals, has been staged in New York, Chicago, Italy and Greece, and his films have played at film festivals across North America and Europe. Jay's is currently developing a feature film to be shot next year. He is currently a professor of filmmaking at Rider University.

Carlotta Brentan

Actress - CORINNA

CARLOTTA BRENTAN is a bilingual theater artist specializing in new play development as an actor, producer, director and translator. Stage highlights: World Premieres of Frank J. Avella's Lured (also co-directed, Theater for The New City and OnStage! Festival in Rome), Paolo Bignami's The Journey I Never Made (also translated from the original Italian, Cherry Lane Theatre), Erik Ehn's Clover (La MaMa E.T.C.) A proud member of Kairos Italy Theater, Carlotta is also a film actor, prolific voiceover artist & award-winning audiobook narrator.

Tali Custer

Actrees - VIRGINIA

TALI CUSTER is an NYC-based actress with a BFA Acting and Dance degree from Pace University. Tali regularly collaborates with the World Wide Lab, an international director's collective of Lincoln Center Director's Lab directors who experiment with different models of co-directing. Tali has developed and performed with the company at Brooklyn's respected Irondale Theater, on the island of Syros, Greece, and in Taipei, Taiwan where she also led and assisted in workshops with students from the National Taiwan University of the Arts. She has performed twice at the renowned La MaMa ETC, first as the fiery hen Red in Mrozek's Serenade and most recently in Pioneers Go East's Hildegard (vision). She has been featured in the NYC theatrical premieres of Box, Listen and Shrewd at IRT Theater and Rough Draft at the Wild Project with Improbable Stage, a movement-based company of which she is the Artistic Director, I most notably in the title role of Titus in That Which Remains, Improbable Stage's devised adaptation of Titus Andronicus. Tali performs with Italian theatre company Kairos Italy Theater both in NYC and outside of the City, most recently on an adapted 16th century Venetian text Worth of Women which had an Off-Broadway run at Access Theater and a featured evening at the Italian Embassy in Washington, DC. Tali has developed and produced her own theatre-dance works in the City, is a regular student of the Movement Theatre Studio of NYC, and has starred and been featured in numerous feature films, short films, web series and commercials.

Marta Mondelli

Actress - LUCREZIA

Marta was born and raised in Italy, where she worked as an actress both in theater and movies. She lived in New York City for 17 years before moving back to Italy, where she keeps acting and writing. Her first novel in Italian, Occhi di cane, cuore di cervo was published in Italy in 2011. Her first script, Eve's Story, was finalist in the competition Screenplay Festival 2005. In 2010 she wrote and directed her first feature film, The Contenders, which won the Aloha Accolade Award for Excellence in Filmmaking at the Honolulu International Film Festival that same year. Her third screenplay, A Small Accident, received an Honorable Mention at the "Table Read My Screenplay" Contest during the Sundance Film Festival 2011. The Window, her first play, had a 11-show run at the Cherry Lane Theater Studio in January 2014. Toscana, her second play, had a three-week run at the Cherry Lane Theater in September 2016.

Caterina Nonis

Actress - ELENA

Caterina is a director and actor living and working in Milan, Italy and New York. Theatre work: Page 73, The Habitat, Biennale di Venezia, NYMadness, Shotz! Amios, Theatre East, Modern Shakespeare Project, Match: Lit, as well as tours and projects across the US and Italy with The In[HEIR]itance Project and Kairos Italy Theatre. Film includes the documentary Mario (co-directed with Andrea Bagnasco; CinemAmbiente Festival 2021, Moviemmece Napoli 2022), Running Local (Amazon Prime), The Hyperglot (directed by Michael Urie). She is an SDCF 2018 observership class member, a participant in the Venezia Biennale Teatro 2019 and 2018 (Thom Luz, Jakop Ahlbom), and a collaborating artist with The In[HEIR]itance Project. BFA: NYU Tisch, Stella Adler Studio & RADA.

Irene Turri

Actress - CORNELIA

Irene Turri was born in Verona, Italy, and graduated in Acting at the Accademia dei Filodrammatici, Milan. After training with various internationally renowed teachers and directors, Irene collected a vast working experience in the Italian theater circuit.
She also worked at the Avignon Theatre Festival in Romeo Castellucci's production of Dante's "Paradiso".Since her arrival in New York, Irene has appeared in two short movies for NYFA, a nationwide TV commercial and two fashion-videos for SVA. Also she loves to be the black swan of Stand-up Comedy as the only Italian stand-up comedienne on the NYC comedy scene.
She is a proud member of Kairos Italy Theater for many years now.

Annie Watkins

Actress - LEONORA

Annie Watkins graduated from Circle in the Square, and made her NYC debut with the role of Jan in award winning role production of the “The Bardy Bunch: The War of the Families Partridge and Brady”, a role which she reprised at the Mercury Theater in Chicago. Other favorites include originating the role of Leonora in “The Worth Of Women” (NYC, tour), and various roles in the devised production “20th Century Photograph”, plus performances at 54 Below. Annie has appeared on screen in “Submissions Only,” “Housesitters,” and the upcoming feature film “Faking Real.” She is a yoga as well as stage-combat instructor,

KAIROS ITALY THEATER

THE COMPANY

KIT-Kairos Italy Theater is internationally recognized as the Italian Theater Company in NY. KIT's mission is to spread Italian Culture and to create an Italian Culture Network to maintain the knowledge of Italy in the United States. KIT offers never-before-translated works by major Italian playwrights, the Double Theatre Experience (One-Act plays performed in English and then in Italian in the same evening, by different casts), and workshops. KIT is the creator of In Scena! Italian Theater Festival NY, the first Italian Theater festival to take place in all 5 New York City Boroughs and partner of OnStage! the first American Theater Festival in Rome, Italy. KIT is the Theater Company in residence at Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimo' at NYU. www.kitheater.com

TECH SHEET

RUN: 75 MINUTES NO INTERMISSION

SET: 9 CHAIRS NO ARMS AND ONE LITTLE TABLE

SPACE: THE SHOW HAS NO SPECIAL NEEDS, IT ADAPTS EASILY AND CAN BE PRESENTED INDOORS OR OUTDOORS. IT DOES NOT NEED A PROPER STAGE, IT CAN ALSO BE EFFECTIVELY PRESENTED IN A SALON OR GARDEN. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO HAVE ENOUGH SPACE IN WHICH TO MOVE.

LIGHTS: AWASHE WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF TWO SPECIALS OR JUST CANDLES (EVEN FAKE ONES) OR DIFFUSED LIGHTS THAT ILLUMINATE THE SPACE, CREATING AN INTIMATE AND COZY ATMOSPHERE.

NO NEED OF MICROPHONES OR OF AUDIO SYSTEM