

# Homunculus' 20 lazzis in a hat – an exciting journey into the heart of commedia d...

[Literature](#), [Drama](#)



Homunculus' 20 Lazzis in a Hat, successfully provides audiences with an entertaining Commedia' dell' Arte performance as it effectively uses the dramatic languages to convey dramatic meaning that everyone should laugh and have fun in their everyday life. It effectively gives audiences a basic insight into how some of the Commedia D'elle Arte characters behave. Homunculus set out to create a production which entertained young audiences with ' pure entertainment' and ' non-stop fun and excitement'. The audience highly enjoyed the performance and willingly participated in the activities set by the performers which suggest that the performance was successful in its goal to keep the audience entertained.

The actors successfully used different physical features and vocal techniques to create interesting and thought out characters that kept an audience's attention. The roles of the characters were showed by changes in the actors' body movement, the language they used and the tone and pitch of their voice. This is prominent during the second scene when Il Capitano was trying to tell a story about how brave he is with the help of his Zanni servants. As Il Capitano is a master, he had a higher status over his Zanni servants, this was made clear by his voice being deeper and louder and his body movements being much bigger and more fluid than the Zannis' whom only communicated by making small, high-pitched noises and shuffled around instead of walking. The master-servant relationship was also shown as, when the Zannis would mess up the story, often by accident, he would scold them or glare at them for doing so. The Zannis had a romantic relationship as shown by them holding hands at the start of the scene as well as them giving each other loving looks and the female Zanni looking at the other's

bottom as she walked past. The actors set the scene up so that the master would scold this relationship knowing that the audience would be on the Zannis' side therefore they would have a strong reaction to the tension between them.

There were many different forms of tension created throughout the performance. The most notable tension was created during the second act when Il Capitano tried to complete the task of telling his story to the audience. The Zannis would make this difficult for him by messing up; forcing him to pause the story while one of them fixed something so that he could continue. When the Zannis would mess up, Il Capitano would punish them by yelling at them and even firing one of them, creating conflict between him and the audience resulting in the audience booing him for doing so. The audience enjoyed shouting at Il Capitano how they felt about him which kept them interested in what was going on in the performance. As the performance involved audience interaction, tension was created when people were picked to participate in activities. When they were picking people it was a mystery as to who they were going to pick and after they had picked someone it was a surprise as to who they had picked. This tension kept the audience engaged in what was happening as it was entertaining and they wanted to know if they were going to get picked.

Using minimal set and props, Commedia conventions and allowing the audience to interact allowed the audience to connect with the characters and focus on what was going on stage. Minimal set and props meant that imagination had to be used when the characters were doing certain things

which added to the comedy, such as, when Punchinello and Arlecchino were heating up food in the microwave or making a hot beverage for the volunteer on stage. They would make noises and do actions as if they were actually doing the thing which the audience found funny therefore keeping the attention on stage. The main convention of Commedia is the use of imagination to create humor. This was evident after the make believe beverage was made, the characters would pretend that the beverage is hot as it had just been made or heated up but the volunteer didn't pick up on it so when they gave it to them they didn't play along and Il Dottore said the line " and it is no longer hot" both times the volunteer didn't play along which made the audience laugh. The first time because it was unexpected that the character acknowledged it and the second time because the repetition was funny. The microwave and coffee machine were also contemporary references which added to the amusement as it is familiar so the audience were able to follow along with what they were doing as opposed to if they were using something that was not part of the audience's culture. The audience interaction was one of the main reasons the performance was successful; by breaking the traditional way an audience has to act during a performance of silently sitting and watching actors play out a story on stage. As there was this break in tradition, the audience was able to input what happened during the performance in an informal and fun way which made them a lot more focused and were able to discuss what was happening.

For centuries, Commedia' dell' Arte has enticed audience with its wacky characters and hilarious stunts. Homunculus' 20 Lazzis in a Hat, successfully uses the Commedia and drama conventions to entertain audiences while, at the same time, getting out the message that everyone should laugh and have fun in their everyday life. The performance effectively shows an audience the basics of D'elle Arte and its characters. Homunculus achieved their goal to create a production which entertained young audiences with ' pure entertainment' and ' non-stop fun and excitement' as the audience thoroughly enjoyed every part of the performance and most people was willing to participate in the activities and interact with the characters.