

## La Commedia dell'Arte

### Arlecchino

<b>Name:</b>	Diminutive ending - therefore signifies "little brother".
<b>Status:</b>	Servant, usually of Pantalone
<b>Origin:</b>	Probably created in France
<b>Costume:</b>	A tight-fitting long jacket & trousers sewn with random coloured patches
<b>Mask:</b>	A black stocking wound round the lower face and over the head – full Carnival mask
<b>Props:</b>	Always carries a <i>bastocchio</i> (the clapper inside a bell)
<b>Stance:</b>	Continually lowered position
<b>Walk:</b>	Like the Zanni but with some ballet movements often with tiptoe steps
<b>Movement:</b>	Mask moves first
<b>Gesture:</b>	Quick physically and slow mentally
<b>Speech:</b>	Guttural, Bergamese dialect – speaks continuously or is completely silent
<b>Animal:</b>	Cat/monkey
<b>Relationship:</b>	In love with Colombina

### Zanni

### Pantalone

<b>Name:</b>	Origins are unknown but may have something to do with the Venetian symbol/standard, the lion
<b>Status:</b>	Top of the pecking order
<b>Origin:</b>	Venice – god of the dying year of Carnevale
<b>Costume:</b>	Lean and scrawny, short – wears ancient Venetian costume
<b>Mask:</b>	Long hooked nose with bushy eyebrows
<b>Props:</b>	Gold chain around his neck, money purse, dagger
<b>Stance:</b>	Old man's stoop protecting his purse
<b>Walk:</b>	Whatever his feet do, his legs cannot go any faster
<b>Movement:</b>	Can mimic those of any other character but as an old man
<b>Gesture:</b>	Hands flutter continuously – stops them by putting them behind his back
<b>Speech:</b>	High-pitched chicken squawks
<b>Animal:</b>	Chicken or turkey
<b>Relationship:</b>	Mean to his servants, narrow minded with his children, fawning to <i>il Dottore</i> , scheming with <i>il Capitano</i> , lecherous with <i>Colombina</i> and indulgent to himself

### Old man

## Il Dottore

## Old man

**Name:** Also known as: Dott. Balanzone (balance scale), Dott. Boloardo (dolt)  
**Status:** Bachelor – when he does marry he is immediately cuckolded  
**Origin:** Bologna – a gross Carnival figure  
**Costume:** Black academic dress  
**Mask:** Covers nose and forehead only, cheeks reddened (fond of a drink)  
**Props:** White handkerchief  
**Stance:** Weight back on heels and belly forward  
**Walk:** Walks round and round in a figure 8  
**Movement:** Quite static  
**Gesture:** Gestures out from his body like sewing seeds  
**Speech:** Like a trombone and his “S” is more like a “Sh” – speaks a mixture of Bolognese dialect, Latin and Italian  
**Animal:** Pig  
**Relationship:** Neighbour and friend of Pantalone

## Il Capitano

**Name:** Self-appointed – has many other names all of which are derogatory  
**Status:** A loner  
**Origin:** Fake Spanish mercenary  
**Costume:** Satire on military profession – costume changes with period  
**Mask:** Extremely long nose  
**Props:** Long sword  
**Stance:** Feet planted apart, chest forward, back straight  
**Walk:** Heels down first, big strides, head up  
**Movement:** Drops everything and runs at the hint of danger but only succeeds in running on the spot with his head down  
**Gesture:** Extravagant  
**Speech:** Loud and deep turning to a squeak when frightened  
**Animal:** Peacock  
**Relationship:** Employed by Pantalone to do his dirty work

## Colombina

<b>Name:</b>	The role was first called <i>sobretta</i> (servant)
<b>Status:</b>	Personal maid to the prima donna <i>innamorata</i>
<b>Origin:</b>	Before women were allowed to perform on stage, <i>le ballerine</i> and <i>le cantarine</i> provided entertainment for the breaks between each act.
<b>Costume:</b>	Lady's maid with mob cap, apron and a 'folly' dress
<b>Mask:</b>	Unmasked
<b>Props:</b>	Carries a basket
<b>Stance:</b>	One knee bent, the other leg extended
<b>Walk:</b>	Like flick of foot
<b>Movement:</b>	Shifts balance from one foot to the other
<b>Gesture:</b>	Hands on hips – throws hands up in the air when excited
<b>Speech:</b>	Sharp and gossipy
<b>Animal:</b>	Dove
<b>Relationship:</b>	Loves Arlecchino – feels need to protect him

## Scapino

<b>Name:</b>	From <i>scappare</i> (to flee)
<b>Status:</b>	First Zanni
<b>Origin:</b>	Created by Francesco Gabrielli (1588 –1636)
<b>Costume:</b>	Shovel hat with long feathers
<b>Mask:</b>	No mask
<b>Props:</b>	Carries a swagbag
<b>Stance:</b>	
<b>Walk:</b>	Light-footed
<b>Movement:</b>	Skims away and swoops back like a bird moves quickly right and left, runs away but always returns
<b>Gesture:</b>	Holds his hand out for gratuity
<b>Speech:</b>	Makes little sense and tells lies that are of little consequence
<b>Animal:</b>	A bird
<b>Relationship:</b>	

## Tartaglia

- Name:** Means 'to stammer'
- Status:** Usually a lawyer or a minor official of some sort
- Origin:** Created by Beltrani (Verona) around 1630
- Costume:** Green and yellow striped tunic, grey cloth cap – completely bald and pot-bellied
- Mask:** Huge thick round green spectacles covering most of his face
- Props:**
- Stance:** Weight on heels, belly protruding
- Walk:** Waddles
- Movement:**
- Gesture:** Flies into perpetual rages with himself and others when he can't communicate
- Speech:** Stammers and tries to get past the block by using alternatives that are hysterical and equally tricky
- Animal:** Cross between a duck and an owl
- Relationship:** A friend of *il Dottore*