



# THEATRE

## CONTEMPORARY THEATRE

### **Aging and old age, gender, intergenerational relationships, identity, love in old age, creativity in old age, sexuality, queer theories, dementia, madness, (demo)dystopia.**

In the light of the intersection between aging studies, theatre, and gender within the framework of literary gerontology, Inesa Shevchenko examines cultural representations of female aging in contemporary dramatic texts, with particular attention (though not exclusively) to the Anglo-Saxon world. Seeking works that can oppose the narrative of decline (Gullette, 2004), her research observes how gender policies interact with those of age, thus giving rise to alternative narratives of aging that intersect with themes like love, dementia, mental illness, late-life creativity, and sexuality, among others. Additionally, the researcher examines differences in the perception and experience of aging through intergenerational dialogues about old age between young characters and those of middle and old age. In this sense, one of the main lines of research considers the role of intergenerational relationships (or lack thereof, caused by some form of intergenerational disorder) in the (de)formation of elderly identity and the extreme social fragmentation through which the disassociation of younger people from the elderly becomes particularly acute. The results obtained so far demonstrate that stereotypical images of older women as infantilized, overbearing, grumpy, physically and mentally fragile coexist in balance with representations of lively and creative figures, fighters for sexual freedom, explorers of their own identity, and transgressors of socially constructed gender roles. The research tentatively suggests that the cultural visibility of older women does not necessarily imply the subversion of declinist connotations and stereotyped images attributed to old age, but it can definitely stimulate new understandings and meanings of aging, as well as contribute to the education of an age-friendly society where aging is embraced in all its complexities."

Researcher: Inesa Shevchenko.

### **Intergenerational relationships and the representation of female ageing in contemporary dramaturgies.**

General line: a) analysis of intergenerational relationships reflected in contemporary theatre, in comparative studies of works authored by both internationally and nationally acclaimed playwrights (such as Wallace Shawn, Carole Frechette, or Sergi Belbel and Pere Riera) and by new voices in current dramaturgy (such as Alexander Zeldin, Emma Adams, Nick Payne, Haley McGee, Viktoria Spunzberg or Jan Vilanova), as well as in new dramaturgies generated for productions by internationally prestigious companies (such as Complicité) or recognized at the national level (and linked to productions at the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, Teatre Lliure or Sala Beckett). Associated research sub-lines: b) the representation of female aging in contemporary dramaturgies; c) the representation of care in current theatre; d) theatre as an anti-ageist instrument of artistic expression and social action in educational and cultural environments; and e) intergenerational relationships in contemporary cinematic and audiovisual fiction.

Researcher: Núria Casado Gual.



## RENAISSANCE THEATRE

### **Study on the existentialist representations of old age in dramatic texts of the English Renaissance.**

By exploring the dramatic constructions of old age reflected in a limited corpus of English works produced between 1560 and 1625, this research aims to examine how the aging process—as well as the condition of 'being old'—can be understood from both a cultural and historical standpoint. Simultaneously, it seeks to deduce (proto-)existentialist characteristics already present in the Renaissance context, advancing what centuries later would become existentialist philosophy. Therefore, this study aims to offer a (re)reading of English Renaissance theatrical texts from this lesser-studied dual perspective (i.e., combining studies on ageing with the existentialist school of thought). Likewise, it plans to build a theoretical corpus of texts and treatises on old age in philosophical harmony, intending to facilitate the tracking and comprehension of the intellectual development of the notion of ageing throughout the history of European thought. The primary outcome of this project is, therefore, to contribute to the emerging current of ageing studies through different analyses of characters extracted from dramatic works that have been scarcely or not at all considered within this field of study. Ultimately, this research contributes to questioning and casting doubt on the stereotypical images of older people that have arisen in post-industrial societies, where productivity models have favoured a marginal and reductive view of old age.

Researcher: Guillem Mas Solé.