

*Abstract*

Marion Chénetier-Alev e Sophie Lucet, «*L'Album comique*», 1907-1908: *l'attore preso in trappola dall'ideologia*

Between 1908 and 1909 was published an ephemeral and original little theatre magazine, entitled *L'Album comique*. Amongst the numerous theatre magazines distributed in Paris at the time, it appeared quite different and innovative, as it was totally dedicated to the actors and the actresses, both in the dramatic and lyrical fields : each issue developed a monography of one of the most renowned artist of the time, presenting the artist's formation, his beginnings on stage, his great successes, the recall of his performances, and detailing his specific ways of working parts and interpreting characters. Directed par young and ambitious Gabriel Boissy, a writer and journalist, *L'Album comique* promised a « serious » method to analyze the art of interpretation and a rich iconographic documentation. Indeed, Boissy was associated to publisher and printer Louis Geisler, an inventive industrial who discovered new technologies to print and reproduce color photographs.

Did the *Album comique* keep its promises? Only twelve issues were published, and the reasons of this short-lasting destiny remain partly unexplained. But Boissy, in spite of his claims, wasn't trully interested in the actor or actress. Rather, supporter of the « fin-de-siècle » neo-classicism, he used the actor and the theatre as a vector or medium to promote his will to regenerate the mediterranean and latin culture, to stir his ideology of the « perfect beauty » and of the « race des pur-sang » (thoroughbred race) which was to be embodied in the art of the antic or classical tragegy, and in the « true » tragic actor such as Paul Mounet, Mounet-Sully or Eugénie Segond-Weber. As for the art of the actor, he merely recycled the material provided by the other contemporary theatre magazines. Nevertheless, the *Album comique* remains today a precious and rare, though still unknown, historical source of information and documentation upon the actors. It gives a precise image of the actor's lives from the professional, social and economical point of view ; it informs about the actors repertoire, about the way theatres were managed, about the public's attitudes and the esthetic debates of the time ; it also mirrors the types of speeches and images which gave shape to the actor's representations.