19 November, 2008, 5pm

The Mediterranean Heritage as an Asset in the Age of Multi-Ethnicity

Maurizio Scaparro, Director of Biennale Teatro

Discussant: Carmelo Alberti, Professor of Theater Histor at Università Ca' Foscari and President of the International Institute for Theatre Research of Casa Goldoni

Maurizio Scaparro, Director of Biennale Teatro and theater director, in 1979-82 revived the Carnival of Venice as hear of the International Theater Festival. He will talk about the main theme of the Biennale Teatro, arguing that the origins of European civilization partly lies in the contamination of Arab, Jewish and Christian cultures and that, today, there is the need to look at the Eastern Mediterranean artistic and cultural heritage, marked by the convergence of very different people, to seek new knowledge, new tolerance, new surprises and new illusions.

This lecture will be in Italian with English translation.

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26 November 2008, 5pm

The Muslim Headscarf: veiled threat or religious freedom?

Claudia Koonz, Professor of History at Duke University

Discussant: Xavier Landes Research Fellow, Center of Ethics of the University of Toronto specialized in Multiculturalism and Liberalism

Claudia Koonz, professor of History at Duke University, teaches "Europe and its strangers" in the VIU Fall 2008 Semester Program. She will argue that contemporary Europeans' reactions to Muslim women, who wear the headscarf, is a subtle prejudice common even among liberals, contributing to the formation of ethnic fears that enow the "us" with the conviction of having been summoned to rid the world of an evil "them".

The lecture series is open to the public.