

Comedy, Play and Theory

Annual Workshop of the Research Committee on Literary Theory
of the International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA)
University of Helsinki, 1-2 June 2026
Venue: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies (HCAS)

Monday, 1 June

10.00 Welcome
Hanne Appelqvist (HCAS)
Natalya Bekhta & Karin Kukkonen

10.15-11.45 Panel I
Chair: Karin Kukkonen
Anne Duprat (Amiens) Aristotle's Lost Marble, or: Did Literary Theory
Really Miss the Joke?
Davide Giuriato (Zurich) Laughing at/as theory. On the praise of the fly
Ábel Tamás (Budapest) Laughing Signs: Theorising Acrostics and
Telestichs

12.00-14.00 Lunch ([Restaurant Bank](#))

14.00-15.30 Panel II
Chair: Natalya Bekhta
Karin Kukkonen (Oslo) Choose your game: The Theoretical Potential
of Gameplay in the Salons
Enrica Zanin (Strasbourg) Theory at play: What happens to dramatic
theory when, instead of commenting on a play to students, we
play it with them?
Susanne Strätling (Berlin) Knight's Move: Formalism at Play with

Literary Theory

15.30-15.45 Coffee

15.45-17.15 Panel III

Chair: Karin Kukkonen

Ivana Perica (Berlin) Can the political novel produce a cheerful fart?
Marco Caracciolo (Ghent) Humor and Bad Environmentalism in
Nonhuman Narration
Mengchen Lang (Shanghai) Contemporary Hybrid (Non)Fiction: A
Playful Exercise of Fictionality Literacy

17.30-18.30 Business meeting

20.15 Dinner ([Restaurant Kuurna](#))

Tuesday, 2 June

Chair: Natalya Bekhta

10.30-12.00 **Keynote: Academy Professor Sari Kivistö** (Tampere)
Gently Biting Sheep: The Ethics of Humour in Early Modern
Satirical Poetics

12.00-13.00 Lunch (Restaurant Bank)

13.00-14.00 Panel IV

Chair: Karin Kukkonen

Luciana Villas Boas (Rio de Janeiro) Greek Nonsense for Debate.
Contemporary Reflections on Thomas More's *Utopia*
Natalya Bekhta (Tampere) Utopia for Dark Times