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Farse

(_drama, _sjanger) Undersjanger av komedie. Farser er vanligvis relativt korte skuespill. Både situasjonene, personene og dialogene er latterlige. Det er ofte en innviklet og ganske usammenhengende intrige, og sjangerbetegnelsen brukes av noen synonymt med forviklingskomedie. Spillestilen innen sjangeren er preget av overtydelige typer og store fakter, med overdrivelser både når det gjelder personene og situasjonene. En farse inneholder vanligvis uforutsette sammentreff, misforståelser og plutselige avsløringer. Humoren kan være burlesk (grovkornet) og skal vekke latterbrøl hos publikum. Det som har blitt kalt “the lively amorality of pure farce” (Howarth 1978 s. 37), kan sjokkere tilskuerne.

Farser dreier seg om “bantering, tomfoolery and every kind of idiocy that can give rise to laughter and amusement” (Thomas Sebillet i 1548; sitert fra Davis 2001).

En farse er “a comic dramatic piece that uses highly improbable situations, stereotyped characters, extravagant exaggeration, and violent horseplay. The term also refers to the class or form of drama made up of such compositions. Farce is generally regarded as intellectually and aesthetically inferior to comedy in its crude characterizations and implausible plots, but it has been sustained by its popularity in performance and has persisted throughout the Western world to the present.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/farce>; lesedato 12.01.23)

“A light, boisterous form of comedy in which the characters are exaggerated stereotypes, the action improbable to the point of being ludicrous, and the verbal and visual humor lacking in subtlety (example: Charley’s Aunt by Brandon Thomas). Farce bears the same relationship to “high” comedy as melodrama to tragedy.” (Joan M. Reitz i http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm; lesedato 30.08.05)

“[F]arce is characterized by a comic spirit which “delights in taboo-violation, but which avoids implied moral comment or social criticism and which tends to debar empathy for its victims” (Davis 1978:86) [...] As distinct from high comedy of manners and romantic comedy, farce-plots tend to be short; they are not peopled by complex, sympathetic characters, but by simplified comic types. The humour favours direct, visual and physical jokes over pyrotechnics of verbal wit and declares an open season for aggression, animal high spirits, self-indulgence and

rudeness. In contrast to satire and black humour (which can be equally licentious and violent), the humour of farce is essentially conservative: it has little reforming zeal – or even despair – at the ways of the world. It tends to restore conventional authority, or at least to save authority's face, at the end of its comic upheavals.” (Davis 2001)

På slutten har farsens “one-dimensional types [...] suffered little and learned little: there will be no changes to their motivation and behaviour. [...] these comic types brought to life by gifted actors are not fully rounded individuals aware of their own motivation and capable of questioning their own behavior.” (Davis 2001)

“Farce makes use of techniques such as burlesque (referential mockery of characters and situations known to the audience from outside the farce itself), and slapstick (physical but stylized beatings and the humiliation of agelastic [humørløse] targets); but it does so without seeking to point any particular lesson for its audiences. The fundamental jokes of a farce-plot are probably the inescapable fact that all human dignity is at the mercy of the human body and its appetites and needs; and the acknowledgement that those human bodies themselves are imprisoned by the space/time continuum. If there is a meta-message or a moral here, it is that we are all leveled down by our common humanity. No airs and pretences allowed.” (Davis 2001)

“Jessica Milner Davis distinguishes the two types of farce as “Humiliation-farces” and “Deception-farces,” depending on the degree to which a victim is openly degraded” (Jeffery Alan Triggs i <http://triggs.djvu.org/global-language.com/triggs/Rascals.html>; lesedato 22.12.22).

Farsens handling kan “rase framover med eskalering av tilfeldigheter”, der den ene overraskelsen avløser den andre og leder til stadig nye turbulente situasjoner (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 315). “[T]he action possesses the distinct advantage that its mechanics definitely displace responsibility for disastrous events to coincidence and incongruous mischance.” (Davis 2001)

“Maurice Charney argues that “farce may be the purest, quintessential comedy ... with energetic, dream-like characters pursuing their impulses and gratifications with amazing singleness of purpose.” Thus, consideration even of unsophisticated works that partake of this quintessence may yield significant insights into the nature of the comic response. [...] farce is governed by unreason, and is therefore characterized in varying degrees by aggression, anarchic subversion, wish-fulfilling spontaneity, and festivity. Underlying this supposition is Freud's sense of comedy as an unconscious activity venting hostility and circumventing social taboos.” (Jeffery Alan Triggs i <http://triggs.djvu.org/global-language.com/triggs/Rascals.html>; lesedato 22.12.22)

“Significantly, the word ‘farce’ can be used as both a noun and a verb; most scholars agree that the word derives from the Old French *farcir*, meaning to stuff, particularly with materials foreign to the casing in a natural state. There are many conceptual permutations of this etymology, and though most are fairly intuitive, a precise meaning has been very difficult to produce; for instance, the word has been used to refer to activities as diverse as the embalming process and face-painting. The word also connotes a vague sense of aggression, pressure both physical and ideological. It may be important, particularly given the negative or illegitimate aesthetic valence of the genre, to recognize the domestic sphere invoked by the word *farce*; the word is still used today in culinary vocabularies (i.e. *champignons farcis*, meaning *stuffed mushrooms*). Farce is a very physical and mechanised form of performance, and it relies heavily for its effect on visual absurdity piled high atop visual absurdity, just to the point at which it seems the entire pile is about to come toppling down. For this reason, farce throughout the years has been linked to pantomime, vaudeville, and the far reaches of comedy both irrepressibly light-hearted and irredeemably despairing. Ionesco, for instance, has referred to many of his works as farces” (http://websites.umich.edu/~ece/student_projects/hypertext_samples/Fielding/info/farce2.htm; lesedato 12.01.23).

“Samuel Johnson, in his *Dictionary*, cites an alternative French origin as *farcer*, to mock, though this has no counterpart in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. He defines the term specifically in reference to performance: “A dramattick representation written without regularity, and stuffed with wild and ludicrous conceits.” In Johnson-speak, ‘regularity’ seems to mean formal consistency, perhaps in line with an idealized sense of classical composition; however, it also has the connotation of normal and conventional. Farce relies on inversion – the world upside-down or topsy-turvy – for the laughter it excites.” (http://websites.umich.edu/~ece/student_projects/hypertext_samples/Fielding/info/farce2.htm; lesedato 12.01.23).

I essayet “The Psychology of Farce” (1958) oppfatter Eric Bentley farser som “practical joking turned theatrical [...] and he elaborates the extraordinary violence and mayhem that characterizes the genre. It is not just a matter of custard pies in the face nor even a barrel of night-soil broken over the clown’s head. (This memorable scene concludes one popular eighteenth century fair-ground *parade*, or street-theatre performance, called *Le Marchand de Merde*. [...]) [...] Farce plots celebrate the fact that people actually enjoy the thrill and the shock of escaping “the rules” of polite civilization. As Bentley puts it, “Man, says farce, may or may not be one of the more intelligent animals, he is certainly an animal, and not one of the least violent, and one of the chief uses to which he puts his intelligence, such as it is, is to think aggression when he is not committing it”. (Bentley 1958: xix) And woman too of course, if theatre, film and TV audiences can be trusted. The parallels with dream violence and its customary taboo-violations are striking. Bentley points to many apparent structural similarities (sequences of actions, such as chases; “routines” of dressing, packing; stereotypical characterization of threatening bullies, the dependent child, the “stud-muffin” who isn’t, and so on;

and even the style of performance – large gesticulation emphasized by distortions of time and space). But dreams are (frequently) unpleasant: in pleasurable farce, says Bentley, “one is permitted the outrage, but is spared the consequences” (Bentley 1958: xiii)” (Davis 2001).

“Violence is omni-present in farce, but often it is more sound and fury, than actual; more symbolic gesture than potent action; often deflected to unwitting third parties rather than to the true psychological object of resentment; frequently minimized in its consequences; justified with rationalisations; and mocked with parallel sub-plots and repetitions. The targets of aggression and violence are presented as largely responsible for inviting their own fate (as being misfits, killjoys, selfish, mean, hypocritical, exploitative and/or just plain stupid enough to fall for being fooled). They are iconic figures, representative of general groups (such as parents, members of the opposite sex, country yokels lacking civilized manners, unsympathetic guardians, rival lovers of both sexes, self-invited visitors, over-educated, boring pedants and professionals, masters and bosses, or just plain annoying wimps). They receive their punishment on behalf of a much wider set of offences than those they present personally. And always they lack self consciousness, being totally unaware of their own limitations. Over their fluid humanity is plastered the restrictive plating of self-absorption. Communication with them only takes place on their own terms and warnings go unheeded.” (Davis 2001)

“With such basic, unidirectional plots, there is a strong element of *Schadenfreude* (or pleasure in the pain of others), but it is balanced for the audience by the appealing vivacity of the pranksters and by the inability of their targets to justify their conventionally bestowed power and authority.” (Davis 2001)

Litteraturhistorikere regner 1200-tallet som det århundret da farsesjangeren oppstod, dvs. korte skuespill (ca. 500 verselinjer) med fra to til seks personer, noen ganger med innlagte sanger (Brix 2014). I middelalderen var hovedpersonen vanligvis en naiv person som var hvitpudret med mel, med en nyfødts kyse, og dermed latterliggjort (Brix 2014). Middelalderens farsere spottet menneskelige svakheter og latterliggjorde dumheter i privatlivet og det offentlige liv (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 315). En farse fra middelalderen er den franske *Gutten og den blinde*, som ble spilt i 1266 og 1282 og sikkert flere ganger, om en blind mann som blir svindlet av sin tjener (Saulnier 1948 s. 94-95). På denne tiden var det ikke uvanlig å latterliggjøre blinde personer.

“English farce of the period [1500-tallet] (much indebted to Chaucer and French medieval tradition) centers on comic grotesque treatments of violence and suffering among disreputable types. John Heywood’s “enterludes,” published in 1533, deal with disorderly clerics, corrupt humanity, and the fool-jester-vice type. Flying contests, an old English tradition, are arranged so that abusive wit may be displayed, along with raucous physical violence. In Heywood’s farcical *Pardoner and the Friar*, grotesque comedy is provided by the scurrilous clergymen who

preach simultaneous sermons and end up in uproarious stage conflict. Other Heywood plays build on execrations in which figurative violations of the body are as common as base comparisons between humans and their creatural functions.” (Frances K. Barasch i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3194488.pdf>; lesedato 04.03.23)

“Farce, a comic dramatic piece that uses highly improbable situations, stereotyped characters, extravagant exaggeration, and violent horseplay [dvs. kranglete lek]. The term also refers to the class or form of drama made up of such compositions. Farce is generally regarded as intellectually and aesthetically inferior to comedy in its crude characterizations and implausible plots, but it has been sustained by its popularity in performance and has persisted throughout the Western world to the present.” (<https://global.britannica.com/art/farce>; lesedato 24.11.16) Det er “a form of comedy that uses highly improbable situations and crude characters” (Torner 2016).

Hendelsene utgjør ofte en rullende snøball av forviklinger, med overdrivelser av alle slag (Florence March i <https://episteme.revues.org/958>; lesedato 02.06.16). En farse kan ta i bruk “a device identified and named by Bergson as “*la boule de neige*” (the snowball) (Bergson 1910: 81-84). This is a rolling ball of co-incidence and misunderstandings which, from small beginnings, grows in size and speed to envelope every bystander in its final explosion and disintegration. It is a levelling device, true to the spirit of folly, which reveals to the audience (if not to the characters on stage) that all are equally culpable. [...] Then the snowball machine creates a kind of “closed *mental* system, a world of its own lit by its own lurid and unnatural sun”, as Bentley puts it. “Danger”, he says, “is omnipresent. One touch, we feel, and we shall be sent spinning in space” (Bentley 1958: xx).” (Davis 2001)

“Symmetrical patterns created by the exchange or reversal of comic roles between the joker and his/her butt are actually more common than humiliation- or deception-farces. Thus, a rebellious or mischievous practical joke produces a counter-attack, so that the rebels are either check-mated, or suffer humiliation in their turn. These I label “reversal-farces” (Davis 1978: 43-49). One group features variations on the theme of “the robber robbed”, a term made famous by the Shrovetide playlets (*Fastnachtspielen*) of Hans Sachs, written and performed in sixteenth century Germany when the festivities inherited from the Feast of Fools still held sway on that one night of the year. It is a pattern which successfully allows for the restoration of challenged authority to conclude the farce, even if it is clear that this is only a temporary halt to hostilities. A second group however tends to a more balanced outcome. Focusing more narrowly upon repeated oscillations between the quarrelling or counter-plotting parties, rather than upon the broad sweep of a single overall reversal, they can be conveniently categorised as “quarrel-farces” (Davis 1978: 50-60). Their underlying structural device was identified by Barbara Bowen in her study of French medieval farce and termed “le balancier” (the pendulum). She suggests that the satisfaction for its audience do not come so

much from an innate sense of justice (as in the robber robbed), but “from a profound and unconscious desire to see two elements oscillate and return to equilibrium. To begin with, the first element gains ascendancy – and it is irrelevant whether this is just or not – and then the second” (Bowen 1964: 37-38). [...] oscillation may be verbal, physical or metaphorical in nature; or all three together, as in the inspired marital quarrel-farces of both Chekhov and Feydeau [...] *The Bear*, *The Proposal*, *The Anniversary*, etc in Chekhov” (Davis 2001).

“A temporary truce is enough to conclude a quarrel-farce (it is all the funnier if the type-characters are threatening to start off again as the curtain falls). But some plot-structures overlay the basic oscillations with a larger, circular movement. The effect of this is to emphasise the common status of all characters as victims, whether they realise it or not.” (Davis 2001)

Robert C. Stephenson's artikel “Farce as Method” (1961) definerer sjangeren slik: “farce is the explosion that comes of compressing *vis comica* [= den komiske kraft] within narrow limits” (siteret fra <https://episteme.revues.org/958>; lesedato 12.01.17). Leo Hughes' bok *A Century of English Farce* (1956) hevder at “the essence of farce is its dependence upon mere laughter, as opposed to comedy and its treatment of moral problems [...]. Laughter is by its very nature transient, even fitful. The hearty, unreflective variety is especially dependent upon surprise and cannot therefore be long sustained. Correspondingly, the kind of drama which has as its chief aim the eliciting of this sort of laughter must itself be fitful, full of shifts and surprises, in terms of structure, episodic. [...] While farce as a distinct genre was gaining its hold on audiences – a hold it has never relinquished – it had no success in winning the esteem of critical writers. Only rarely was a voice raised in defense of so “low” a form of entertainment” (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt183q2fn>; lesedato 05.01.17).

“George Bernard Shaw claimed that the public’s interest in farce was akin to its interest in “the public flogging of a criminal,” and that farce appealed to “the deliberate indulgence of that horrible, derisive joy in humiliation and suffering which is the beastliest element in human nature” [...] According to Shaw, “to laugh without sympathy [which farce encourages] is a ruinous abuse of a noble function” [...] Shaw is right, of course, in pointing up farce’s intimate connection with the darker, anarchic constituents of the human personality. Many critics have noted that farce is in close association with the irrational and that it typically celebrates unreason’s revolt against the strictures of reason. Shaw’s own reasonableness was bound to set him against this. What he neglects to consider is that in farce aggressiveness and festivity go hand in hand. According to Jessica Milner Davis, “at its heart is the eternal comic conflict between the forces of conventional authority and the forces of rebellion” (Davis 24). Davis believes that farce may be more prone to aggression than other forms of comedy simply because it depends more directly on the “dramatic enactment of its jokes and humiliations” (Davis 24). Farce is not so much different from other forms of comedy as more primitive in

kind.” (Jeffery Alan Triggs i <http://triggs.djvu.org/global-language.com/triggs/Rascals.html>; lesedato 22.12.22)

En farse er “et kort teaterstykke med lav, triviell, burlesk og oftest svært uanstendig humor som først og fremst skal skape latterbrøl hos folket” (Arthur Pougin i <http://www.droz.org/eur/fr/1986-9782600014625.html>; lesedato 30.01.17). Men det kan være innslag/elementer av farse i tekster som langt fra kan kalles farser. I den engelske forfatteren Charles Dickens’ roman *Bleak House* (1853) er det “an interval of farce as we are made to visualize Guster projecting herself into the kitchen ‘preceded by a flying Dutch cheese’.” (Smith 1974 s. 60)

Dickens’ *The Strange Gentleman* (1836) “is essentially a farce on the theme of mistaken identity, in which the prospect of a duel so frightens a young man that he sends a letter to the mayor in order to prevent it. Most of the action takes place in the room of an inn; doors open and close; various personages make their exits and entrances; the finale suggests the importance of those twin deities, marriage and money” (Ackroyd 1991 s. 198). Dickens skrev også farsen *Is She His Wife? or, Something Singular!* (1837), der “allusions to bigamy, seduction and adultery place it in the eighteenth-century tradition of broad humour” (Ackroyd 1991 s. 233).

Dickens’ “experiments with mesmerism belonged to a period in which the scientific understanding of the phenomena by experimental investigators began to diffuse into popular forms. [...] Dickens’s involvement with the mesmeric engine of identifications is given an extra turn later in his life by the role he took in 1857 in Elizabeth Inchbald’s *Animal Magnetism*, which he performed in a double bill with Collins’s *The Frozen Deep*, in the writing of which Dickens has substantially collaborated. The farce can be regarded as a comic counterweight to the first play of the evening, in which clairvoyance is taken very seriously, as well as poking fun at Dickens’s own mesmero-medical pretensions. It shows the gulling of an elderly quack Doctor (played by Dickens), who is keeping imprisoned his young ward Constance with a view to making her his wife. The Doctor is persuaded by Constance’s disguised suitor that he is able to cure any ailment and induce amorous fascination in any woman by the exercise of a magnetic wand. After the wand has brought about a series of misdirected adorations, and the Doctor has been tricked into thinking he has accidentally killed a patient by his bungling application of the magnetic influence, he agrees to sign a contract giving over his ward to her lover in exchange for protection from exposure and professional ruin. Here, the fictional fluid of animal magnetism flows together with the fluid fiction of influence, as the fluid becomes a metaphor for the mobile machinery of farcical deceptions and dissimulations.” (Steven Connor i <https://19.bbk.ac.uk/article/id/1521/>; lesedato 07.05.22) Dickens’ *Animal Magnetism* (1857) er “a not entirely negligible or unamusing piece in which a doctor, played by Dickens, is fooled into thinking that he can “magnetise” the people around him [...] another farce, *Used Up*, in which Dickens played the part of an aristocrat whose ennui is eventually cured by the realities of simple farm life.” (Ackroyd 1991 s. 575)

“In 1851 Dickens toured with the amateur production of Lytton’s play *Not So Bad as We Seem* and the short farce co-written with Mark Lemon, *Mr. Nightingale’s Diary*. Dickens starred in both, and directed both” (Andrews 2006 s. 27). *Mr Nightingale’s Diary* “concerns a hypochondriac who goes down to take the cold-water cure at Malvern” (Ackroyd 1991 s. 664). I James Kenneys *Love, Law and Physic* “Dickens had an opportunity to play, of all things, a benevolent lawyer, who engineers a series of hoaxes so that his friend can rescue his sweetheart from a forced engagement to a rich and objectionable rival.” (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/44364559.pdf>; lesedato 16.05.22)

“Det folk har ledd mest av er kontrasten mellom folk som later som de har kontroll, mens det er åpenbart at de ikke har det. Det er en erfaring like gammel som komedien selv, og det er selve drivverket i enhver farse” (Andreas Wiese i *Dagbladet* 29. januar 2012 s. 2). Farsesjangeren har blitt oppfattet som et forsøk på å forstå verden fra “jeg’ets loppeperspektiv” (Kamper og Wulf 1986 s. 12).

“Farce is one of the oldest forms of comedy. The word farce is used to describe the elements of a type of comedy, as well as a form of drama itself. Theatrical farce can trace its roots to Greek and Roman times, where examples can be found in the plays of the Greek Aristophanes and the Roman Plautus. Plautus’ works contain many of the elements – broad comedy, exaggerated characters and humorous misunderstandings – that would become the trademarks of theatrical farce for many centuries to come. The word farce itself has an interesting history. It is derived from the Old Latin word “farsus” meaning “to stuff.” In the Middle Ages, a “farse” referred to the expansion or elaboration of church liturgy by the clergy. In 15th century France, the Old French word “farce” which means stuffing, began to be used to refer to the jokes, gags, or buffoonery that were inserted by actors into the texts of religious dramas. Eventually, these “stuffings” or asides would take on a life of their own and be performed independently.” (<http://www.sctheatre.org/lessons/farce.pdf>; lesedato 08.11.16)

Farse er “a form of entertainment usually scheduled between acts” (Joan Hawkins i Mathijs og Mendik 2008 s. 123-124). “Stemming from the French word meaning ‘stuffing,’ or ‘padding’, farce has been a source of theatrical comedy entertaining audiences for generations. The first farces were short comic sketches to pad the short breaks in long, often very sombre plays – a welcome respite from five hours of serious drama. These farces were usually performances of one act in length but towards the end of the 18th century, any piece that closed a play bill was labelled as farce and soon the definition of this comic genre became blurred until actor manager David Garrick began to revolutionise farce on stage. 18th century farce often revolved around the arranged marriages of the old school and the romantic love-matches of the new, thriving on social upheaval. These stock plotlines and stock characters were being developed throughout European Theatre at this time. In Renaissance Italy, a very physical and acrobatic style developed, incorporating old

performance traditions that dated from the Roman Empire and the comedies of Plautus. This became known as Commedia dell'Arte. The professional touring troupes of Commedia performed outdoors at fairs and markets on makeshift stages. The style was broad, exaggerated, burlesqued, as it had to be to be seen and heard over the noise of a market fair. The dialogue was improvised around a short sketch whilst the physical action was a series of well-rehearsed, often acrobatic comic moments.” (Rosie Field i <https://loversandliarsmedley.wordpress.com/about/a-dramaturgs-perspective/the-origins-of-farce>; lesedato 21.11.16)

“A farce is basically an exaggerated comedy that invites an audience to laugh at absurd or highly improbable situations. Farce is generally considered to be a lower form of comedy. It is less sophisticated, for instance, than a comedy of ideas that incorporates moral or philosophical issues into the humor. Farces were designed as light entertainment, they were the sitcoms of their day. To that end, farces demand little from an audience other than a willingness to laugh. Unlike other forms of dramatic comedy, farce does not rely on sophisticated plots or especially well-developed characters; it relies on comic actions and events. Farce is also more physically oriented than other types of comedy and its accompanying pratfalls, double-takes and other exaggerated facial expressions demand split-second timing from actors to be effective. Although farce is often considered to be an intellectually inferior form of comedy, many great writers have written farces or been influenced by the genre. In the late 1600s, the great French comic actor Molière earned the favor of King Louis XIV while performing in a farce with his acting troupe.” (<http://www.sctheatre.org/lessons/farce.pdf>; lesedato 02.02.17)

“What makes a farce, a farce? While it can be difficult to separate farce from other forms of comedy, there are a number of elements that are trademarks of the genre:

- highly exaggerated fast paced plots
- absurd situations
- physical buffoonery
- complicated misunderstandings
- mistaken or disguised identities of the characters
- scheming or secrecy on the part of the characters
- violent horseplay
- wordplay and puns, often rude
- stereotypical or stock characters
- a chain reaction of events that escalate and get beyond the control of the characters

As a form of comedy, farce has had a lasting tradition in theater and other forms of entertainment. In the 20th century, farce would find new expression in the work of comic entertainers such as Charlie Chaplin, the Keystone Cops, and the Marx Brothers. Farce became a staple of the vaudeville tradition in France, England and the U.S. Today, farce remains the stock in trade of many television situation

comedies and theatrical films. The English comic actor John Cleese is a modern day master of farce; his over-the-top performances on *Monty Python's Flying Circus* and the classic television series *Fawlty Towers*, incorporate all the trademark elements of farce. The comedies of Mel Brooks and Jim Carrey owe much of their humor to the traditions of farce.” (<http://www.sctheatre.org/lessons/farce.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.16) På fransk er en vaudeville “an entertaining, skilfully constructed comedy with farcical effects” (Davis 2001).

“Besides melodrama, farce and burlesque were the reigning forms in the nineteenth-century theatre. [Oscar] Wilde was very much aware of the possibilities in these forms for modern subversiveness: ‘Delightful work may be produced under burlesque and farcical conditions, and in work of this kind the artist in England is allowed very great freedom.’ ” (Worth 1983 s. 20) “With *The Importance of Being Earnest* Wilde anticipated a major development in the twentieth century, the use of farce to make fundamentally serious (not earnest!) explorations into the realm of the irrational.” (Worth 1983 s. 179)

Farsene skrevet av Pomponius og Novius i antikken var basert på eksisterende folkelige farser kalt “fabula Atellana” (Kowzan 1975 s. 72-73). “Fabula Atellana, (Latin: “Atellan play”), the earliest native Italian farce, presumably rustic improvisational comedy featuring masked stock characters. The farces derived their name from the town of Atella in the Campania region of southern Italy and seem to have originated among Italians speaking the Oscan dialect. They became a popular entertainment in ancient republican and early imperial Rome, by which time they were performed in Latin but possibly spiced with Oscan words and place-names. Originally based on scenarios handed down by oral tradition, they became a literary genre in the 1st century bc, but only a few fragments survive” (<https://global.britannica.com/art/fabula-Atellana>; lesedato 31.01.17).

Farsen har fra middelalderen vært kjennetegnet av kyniske narrestreker (Lanson og Tuffrau 1953 s. 94). Farsen frir til folkelig, populær smak og skal framkalle “fordervet latter” (Lanson og Tuffrau 1953 s. 97). Verk innen sjangeren kan ha noe destruktivt eller nihilistisk ved seg: “Being a destroyer and detractor, farce is a negating force” (Albert Bermel sitert fra Brisset 2012 s. 60).

“Scholars of the fifteenth century have shown convincingly that farces were performed during festivals, at fairs and carnivals, and in the marketplace. This genre belongs to a world of popular culture imposing laughter as its underlying principle. Although the farce was intended to entertain and amuse a popular audience composed of all social classes (“nobles, bourgeois, gens du peuple”), one should not underestimate its subversive potential. Its unstated purpose was to release tensions and social frustrations and to present, in a vivid and pungent manner, some of the evils of contemporary society. Laughter is at the hub of its creation, constructing, as it were, a “second world” in which social hierarchies were overthrown. The *Pathelin*, no exception to the rule, participates in this ambiance

and constitutes an unofficial world which proposes a vertical reorganization of society. It authorizes the inversion of social hierarchy by which the rich draper, defeated, is situated at the bottom and the poor shepherd at the top.” (Carol J. Chase og Marie-Sol Ortolá i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3194894.pdf>; lesedato 12.01.23).

Mester Pathelin består av 1599 verselinjer og ble framført først gang på 1460-tallet i Paris (Brix 2014). Forfatteren er ikke kjent. Mester Pathelin er en advokat som ikke har tjent penger på en stund, og som derfor bebreides og mases på av sin kone. Han kjøper et tøyestykke til kona på kreditt for å blidgjøre henne. Da kjøpmannen Guillaume Joceaulme kommer for å få betalingen, later Pathelin som han er syk og halvgal for å slippe unna å betale. Kona prøver å overbevise tøyhandleren om at ektemannen har vært syk lenge, og derfor ikke kan ha vært på torget for å kjøpe tøy. Kjøpmannen forlater huset mens han lurar på om han selv har gått fra forstanden. Deretter dukker sauegjeteren Thibaud Agnelet opp i advokatens hus. Han blir plaget av sin herre, som er tøyhandleren, som anklager gjeteren for å ha stjålet sauer og spist dem. Derfor vil Thibaud ha advokatens hjelp. Pathelin anbefaler sin klient å besvare alle spørsmål under rettssaken med å si “bæææ” som en sau. Under rettssaken blir Pathelin gjenkjent av tøyhandleren Guillaume, som blander sammen sakene med tøykjøpet og sauene, og derfor taper rettssaken. Men da Pathelin til slutt ber gjeteren om betaling, får han “bæææ” til svar.

I *Mester Pathelin* “Guillaume Joceaulme, the merchant, is caught in two intertwined duperies: Pathelin’s purchase of cloth without payment and the shepherd’s killing of his sheep. This leads to the final climactic confusion in the courtroom, as Guillaume attempts to bring his shepherd to justice, while Pathelin, the lawyer, defends him. Located at the center of both Pathelin’s and the shepherd’s actions, Joceaulme, the individual, suffers the total loss of his social status, for not only does he lose his economic credibility, but he is also deprived of his dignity. By the rules of the farcical play, the law ridicules him and absolves Agnelet, the shepherd; the downfall of the rich and powerful is the source of laughter and contentment. The hierarchical reversal is thus made absolute when the draper’s servant tricks him under the protection of the law. The farce’s structural unity relies on an interlacing of actions, based on verbal games and prowess, and culminating in the final act where Agnelet outwits his lawyer, Pathelin. Its efficacy stems from a creative use of language, which is used to break away from established norms, and is translated into outwitting or tromperie on the level of the action.” (Carol J. Chase og Marie-Sol Ortolá i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/3194894.pdf>; lesedato 12.01.23)

Mester Pathelin har “its focus upon legal quibbling [...] It exemplifies the common pattern (although in an abnormally extended form, being one of the more elaborate farces of this period): a short uproarious plot presenting a comically balanced struggle for power between two opposing forces – husband and wife, or parent and child, master and thief, or judge and cheeky lawyer — whose characterizations are

convincingly realistic and down-to-earth, but whose sufferings do not make large calls upon our sympathies nor invoke the censor in us. The actors of the farces did not dress as sots, but as the recognizably real (if caricatured) people of contemporary town and villages society.” (Davis 2001)

Shakespeares komedie *The Merry Wives of Windsor* har farse-preg. Den sentrale personen er John Falstaff, som er i økonomiske vanskeligheter og har en strategi for å få raske penger ved å sende kjærlighetserklæringer til to velhavende, gifte kvinner i Windsor. En av deres ektemenn kler seg ut og driver manipulasjoner for å unngå å bli lurt av Falstaffs plan. Og de to fruene slår seg sammen for å straffe Falstaff. Blant annet lokker de han ned i en vasketøykurv som de skyver ut på Themsen.

Sjangerbetegnelsen farse var ny i England i siste halvdel av 1600-tallet, og det var uklart for mange hva som utgjorde en farse. Den engelske forfatteren Aphra Behns *The Emperor of the Moon: A Farce* (1687) harselerer med tidens nye astronomiske vitenskap. Det oppsiktsvekkende ved denne vitenskapen blir overdrevet, f.eks. ved at et teleskop er over seks meter langt – “twenty (or more) Foot long” (Behn sitert fra <https://episteme.revues.org/958>; lesedato 02.06.16). Behns farse er svært satirisk. Den lærde Baliardo i hennes skuespill (navnet ligner “balordo”, som betyr “dum, tåpelig” på italiensk) er overbevist om at månen er bebodd, og han nekter sin datter og niese å gifte seg på jorda fordi han vil ha månemenn som brudgommer. Det er typisk for Baliardo at han roter bort nøkkelen til sitt eget laboratorium, det eneste som symboliserer hans autoritet (Florence March i <https://episteme.revues.org/958>; lesedato 02.06.16). I en av aktene prøver en av personene å begå selvmord ved å kile seg selv til døde, og altså bokstavelig talt “dø av latter”. Det lekes dessuten med ord i Behn skuespill: “hans mikroskop, hans horoskop, hans teleskop og alle hans skop”. Humoren rammer flere forhold utenfor teksten, f.eks. at noen av de lærde i det britiske The Royal Society var overtroiske. Joseph Glanvil og Henry More trodde på trolldom, Elias Ashmole trodde på astrologi og Robert Boyle interesserte seg for alkymi (Florence March i <https://episteme.revues.org/958>; lesedato 02.06.16).

I Paris var 1600-tallsdramatikerens Molière først og fremst kjent som farseforfatter og -skuespiller, og de fleste tilskuerne likte hans farser bedre enn hans karakterkomedier (Duchêne 1998 s. 524). Kong Ludvig 14. og hans hoff i Versailles ville primært underholdes, og lavkomikk ble også akseptert der, f.eks. i Molières *Den innbilte syke* (1673). Kongen så dette stykket i Versailles i 1674, utendørs foran Apollon-grotten. Kongens hoffkomponist Jean-Baptiste Lully var en nær samarbeidspartner for Molière. Lully hadde skuespillertalent, og en fransk Molière-kjenner forteller om en scene der Lully opptrådte i rollen som lege. Molière løp foran for å slippe unna klystéret, Lully etter mens han sang i falsett. Kongen moret seg storlig (Duchêne 1998 s. 548).

“By the end of the 17th century, France had developed the two principal styles of comedic farce that we still have today: the older Italian style, very broad and physical and acrobatic, and the newer French style, where the acrobatics are verbal, and quick wit dominates over slapstick. This amalgamation continued to evolve until the end of the 19th century, when they were brought to their ultimate form by Eugene Labiche, and then Georges Feydeau up to and including Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter, whose plays are indebted to another inheritor of Commedia – the British music hall. The fashion of criticizing and laughing at the political establishment was seeping into British theatres at this time as well, but of course, did not go on forever. The Walpole administration initiated the infamous Theatrical Licensing Act of 1737 heavily censoring British stages. After the Act had been passed, all plays were censored and adapted before they could be staged in one of the only two ‘licensed’ playhouses, Drury Lane Theatre or Covent Garden Theatre. Both *Miss in Her Teens* and *The Lying Valet* were first performed in these establishments after the act was passed; a suggestion as to why any ‘debauchery’ within the text is coquettish and discreet, left instead to actors to extract then heighten through physicality on stage.” (Rosie Field i *loversandliarsmedley*. wordpress.com/about/a-dramaturgs-perspective/the-origins-of-farce; lesedato 21.11.16)

Den tyske dikteren Johann Wolfgang von Goethe skrev i sin ungdom farser der han latterliggjorde kjente forfattere, blant annet *Guder, helter og Wieland* om dikteren og oversetteren Christoph Martin Wieland (Boerner 1964 s. 39 og 46).

En av Henrik Wergelands farser er *Vinægers Fjeldeventyr* (1841). Litteraturforskeren Rolf Nyboe Nettum har skrevet boka *Fantasiens regnbuebro: Siful Sifaddas farser og andre essays om Henrik Wergeland* (1992). Wergelands farser inneholder mye satire, bl.a. mot dikteren Johan Sebastian Welhaven og andre konservative krefter i Norge. I *Papegøien: Et Fastelavnsriis* (1835) blir mesteparten av handlingen framstilt som om det er en drøm, og en komisk karikert Welhaven er en av personene.

“I en lesebok Wergeland utgav mot slutten av sitt liv, definerer han farse-genren slik: “Mindre satiriske Stykker, hvori Forfatteren tager mindre Hensyn til Scenen end til at slippe sit Lune løs, kaldes Farcer”. Farsen er en gammel teaterform, kjent helt fra middelalderen. Den preges av grovkomiske virkemidler, men handling og konflikt kunne også ha seriøs betydning (f.eks. en rekke av Wergelands farser). Farsen regnes gjerne som den “laveste” teaterformen innenfor komisk diktning. Den danske dramatiker og kritiker Johan Ludvig Heiberg omtalte i samtiden farsen som “Det, som er beregnet paa en Kunsten uværdig Effect, frembragt ved Midler som ligge udenfor dens [dvs. Kunstens] Sphære”. Men samtidig legger han til at “Ordet Farce er tvetydigt. Dette Ord tages nemlig ogsaa i en god Bemerkelse, og betegner de burleske Stykker”. [...] Wergelands mange farser, skrevet under pseudonymet Siful Sifadda, kunne være forsynt med en rekke ulike undertitler som ofte antydte noe om innholdet: *Farce, Et somdetbehagereder, Fastelavnsriis*,

*Syttende-Mai-Stykke, Nissespil, Fugle- og Blomsterstykk*e osv. Undertitlene antyder også at dagsaktuell satire var et vesentlig element i Wergelands farsediktnig. Siful Sifadda forsvarte seg tidlig mot beskyldninger om at hans farser skulle oppfattes som personlige angrep på navngitte personer. I *Morgenbladet* 27. oktober 1829 skrev han: “under dette Pseudonym [dvs. Siful Sifadda] fremtræder en retsindig norsk Yngling, talende sin Sjæls Tanker til sine landsmænd [med] Iver for den gode Sag og Afsky for Alt hvad der er denne fordærvende!” Nærmere ti år og en rekke farser senere leverer han 7. november 1838 et nytt forsvar i avisen *Christiania Intelligenssedler*, der han peker på at det er umulig å være alle til lags, men han vet allikevel at “Sifuls Farcer” har hatt god virkning.” (Vigdis Ystad i <http://www.wergeland2008.no/wergelands-liv-og-verk/mangfoldige-wergeland/dramatikerens/farser/farcer/>; lesedato 30.10.18)

I første halvdel av 1800-tallet fantes det i Østerrike en dramatisk sjanger kalt “Staberliade”, en slags farse, oppkalt etter paraplymakeren Chrysostomos Staberl i Adolf Bäuerles farse *Wiens borgere* (Basil 1967 s. 26 og 41). Den østerrikske skuespilleren og dramatikerens Johann Nestroy skrev mange farser i samme periode.

En av farse-mestrene i Frankrike var Georges Feydeau. Han skrev fram til 1. verdenskrig en lang rekke farser, og er kjent for humor av typen elskerens som gjemmer seg i et skap når ektemannen kommer hjem. Hans landsmann Eugène Labiche skrev farsen *Den italienske stråhatten* (1851) der forviklingene blant annet skyldes at en hest spiser en kvinnes stråhatt. Tempoet i handlingen er stort, og forviklingene øker som en spiral eller rullende snøball. Jakten på en ny stråhatt blir dramatisk blant annet fordi kvinnens ektemann er voldsomt sjalu. Mange franske farser på 1800-tallet dreide seg om (forsøk på) ekteskapsbrudd i besteborgerlige miljøer (Arnold og Sinemus 1983 s. 315).

“*Box and Cox* is a mid-19th century one-act farce. It was written by English playwright John Maddison Morton and first produced in London in 1847 at the Royal Lyceum Theater. *Box and Cox* is the story of two men who unknowingly share the same lodging. Since one works at night and the other by day and thus never see each other, their greedy landlady has rented them both the same room. An unexpected holiday, however, brings them both together and thus begins a chain reaction of silliness that escalates until the final surprise. [...] Interestingly, *Box and Cox* has made its way into the English lexicon. The phrase (as in “a *Box and Cox* situation”) is used to describe two people who are always in the same place, but never at the same time; or it is used to refer to some kind of a shared arrangement.” (<http://www.sctheatre.org/lessons/farce.pdf>; lesedato 07.11.16)

“When it comes to a farce play, it’s all about playing with the plot. In *Charley’s Aunt* [1892] by Brandon Thomas, two boys get a friend to impersonate Charley’s aunt at a luncheon. However, when the real aunt shows up incognito, things get a bit out of hand. Mistaken identities and ludicrous situations make this the typical farce.” (<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/what-is-a-farce-common-examples->

in-literature.html; lesedato 27.01.23). “It would be easy to fixate only on the play’s broad comedy and wind up with only fluff and silliness on stage. But no matter how high a level of preposterousness the play can rise to, at the heart of the play is one powerful theme that grounds it in reality – a force that has at one time or another, made us all do some very foolish things: love. What are the lengths we will go to for love? What are the sacrifices we will make and the indignities we will suffer for it? And in the end, it is love that makes all the trouble worth it.” (https://shakespearenj.org/OnStage/2018/Charleys_Aunt/; lesedato 12.01.23)

Hulda Garborgs skuespill *Rationelt fjøsstell* (1896) er en farse. “I *Rationelt Fjøsstell* heidrar ho grannekonene med skjemt og ironi. Stykket gjekk sin sigersgang i Kristiania.” (<http://old.dagotid.no/arkiv/2001/14/hulda/hbiografi.html>; lesedato 19.12.16)

I franskmannen Georges Courtelines *Familien Boulingrin* (1898) “Monsieur des Rillettes (“Mr Mince-meat”), a parasitical visitor who ingratiates himself into being invited to dinner, drops into the middle of a vicious domestic squabble. The audience witnesses his increasing discomfiture, as an assiduous host and hostess press their competing attentions upon him. Politely springing to the lady’s defence when her husband criticizes her arrangements for his comfort, des Rillettes becomes himself the target of escalating violence. He suffers direct (unintentional of course) physical harm from blows, kicks, hair-pullings, with his chair snatched from beneath him to accommodate a better one. Badly corked wine is forced between his reluctant teeth in an effort to demonstrate the incompetence of one spouse; undrinkable soup – “genuine ratsbane” – is pressed upon him by the other; he is splashed with food and wine, and seized as a shield when Monsieur threatens Madame with a revolver. The lights are shot out, blows and insults are traded in the darkness; he is wounded in the calf, and falls heavily to the floor while a crescendo of noise and destruction ensues: plates, windows, the clock and all are smashed, and finally the house is set on fire. In the growing red light and to the realistic sound of the fire-engine’s galloping horses, the guest is drenched with a bucket of water as the maid attempts to douse the blaze. As the curtain falls Monsieur Boulingrin appears silhouetted in the door-way, reminding his guest: “But you mustn’t go, M. des Rillettes! You’re going to drink a glass of champagne with us!”” (Davis 2001)

“*How the Vote Was Won*, written by Cicely Hamilton and Christopher St. John, was one of the movement’s [kvinnebevegelsens] best-known suffrage comedies. The piece achieved a great deal of critical acclaim and was immensely popular among pro-suffrage audiences. The one-act farce was originally written as a short story before being adapted as a play by the WWSL [Women Writers’ Suffrage League] in 1909 (Stowell 58). It premiered at London’s Royalty Theatre on April 13 of the same year and – due to the popularity of its first performance – was selected by Inez Bensusan for an extended run that included twelve more performances at suffrage meetings throughout the United Kingdom

(Hollidge 67). *How the Vote Was Won* employs conventions of farce, reversing gender dynamics through the correction of anti-suffrage principles. In doing so, Hamilton and St. John adapted traditional comic form, staging a celebration of women's enfranchisement instead of marriage. *How the Vote Was Won* takes place in the home of adamant anti-suffragist Horace Cole. The play opens on a discussion between Horace's wife Ethel and her militant sister, Winifred. As they discuss the impending women's general strike, Winifred warns Ethel about the imminent arrival of Horace's female relatives. Stating that women across the country will soon be seeking immediate refuge and support from their closest male relative, Winifred states: "Every man, either in a public capacity or a private one, will find himself face to face with the appalling problem of maintaining millions of women in idleness" (8). To the couple's disbelief, Winifred's prediction comes to fruition. Moments after Winifred's exit, the home is bombarded with Horace's female relatives, who have abandoned their various jobs to take up residence with the Coles. Faced with the impossibility of supporting all five women that come parading into his household, Horace is given no other choice but to support the suffrage cause." (Rebecca Flynn i http://theses.ucalgary.ca/bitstream/11023/2326/2/ucalgary_2015_flynn_rebecca%20.pdf; lesedato 08.02.17)

Den spanske forfatteren Miguel de Unamuno som "wrote an essay to demonstrate that the best way to reach the people was through a revival of the popular techniques of Spanish Golden Age drama, managed to get eight of the eleven plays which he wrote performed, but with scant acclaim. Even when he attempted farce as a means to inculcate a serious message (*La Princesa doña Lambra* and *La difunta* (*The Deceased*), both 1909)" ble det ingen suksess (Howarth 1978 s. 100).

Briten Franz Arnold og østerrikeren Ernst Bach skrev i 1914 *Den spanske flue*, et skuespill som har blitt kalt "farsenes farse". "Handlingen foregår i sennepsfabrikant Heinrich Klinkes dagligstue [...] Replikken "Gled deg pappa – her er jeg" er også stykkets undertittel. Sennepsfabrikant Klinke hadde nemlig en gang en luftig forbindelse med danserinnen på restauranten Den Røde Mølle. Hun ble kalt Den spanske flue, og nærkontakten fikk uante følger." (<http://arkiv.nrk.no/program/oversikt/avansert/index7af5.html>; lesedato 06.02.17) Idyllen av anstendighet og høy moral slår sprekker etter 25 år med hemmelighold. I hele denne perioden har Klinke betalt bidrag til barnets mor, men nå blir Klinke utpuppet fordi flere har fått kjennskap til hans erotiske affære med Den spanske flue. Det oppstår tallrike komiske forvekslinger i løpet av skuespillet. Og flere menn enn Klinke kan vise seg å være barnets far.

Det finnes undersjangrer, f.eks. "slapstick farce" og "bedroom farce" (Howarth 1978 s. 120). På 1920-tallet "suddenly a new form of farce, the bedroom farce, began to emerge. This brought the comedy of too many doors, hidden onlookers and lots of sexual innuendo to match the new morality, (or lack thereof) of the Jazz Age. Many argue that this was mainly due to one particular playwright: Ben Travers. His famous series at the Aldwych Theatre: *Rookery Nook*, *Turkey Time*,

Thark, A Cup of Kindness, A Cuckoo in The Nest, these plays set the tone for British farce for the next 50 years, including Alan Ayckbourn, Noel Coward and many more” (Rosie Field i loversandliarsmedley.wordpress.com/about/a-dramaturgs-perspective/the-origins-of-farce; lesedato 21.11.16).

Julia Listengartens bok *Russian Tragifarce: Its Cultural and Political Roots* (2000) “explores the genre of Russian tragifarce (an extreme form of tragicomedy) that emerged as a phenomenon in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian theater and drama, yet still remains an essentially uninvestigated literary and theatrical form in Western dramatic criticism. It traces the development of tragifarce in Russian theater, focusing on dramatic works written by Gogol, Sukhovo-Kobylin, Chekhov, Erdman, Bulgakov, and others, as well as theatrical productions staged by Vakhtangov and Meyerhold. This study emphasizes the dualistic character of this genre that embodies the ambivalent spirit of Russian culture and politics.” (<https://www.amazon.com/Russian-Tragifarce-Cultural-Political-Roots/dp/1575910330>; lesedato 16.01.17)

“The dualistic character of Russian tragifarce embodied the ambivalent spirit of Russian culture and politics. [...] Gogol and Sukhovo-Kobylin were the first nineteenth-century Russian dramatists to discover a new depth in the genre of farce by imbuing it with a tragic vision at the same time as they approached tragedy itself as an ambivalent genre, existing on the edge of the farcical. In their plays the old form of knockabout farce, filled with physical action, mistaken identities, and love intrigue, received a new philosophical base that dwelled on the futility of characters’ aspirations and the foolishness of their condition. In the late nineteenth century Chekhov continued the tragifarcical tradition in his one-act and full-length plays. In 1906 Blok wrote *The Fairground Booth*, a tragifarcical form of commedia dell’arte that toys with the principles of Symbolist theatre. In the post-revolutionary period such tragifarcical plays as Erdman’s *The Mandate* (1924) and *The Suicide* (1928) and Bulgakov’s *Zovka’s Apartment* (1926), *The Crimson Island* (1927), and *Flight* (1928) reflected the ambivalence of Soviet reality; tragifarce perfectly captured the uncertainties in the political and cultural life of this period. The post-revolutionary period of the 1920s and 1930s also initiated the Absurdist movement in Russian drama: Kharms’s and Vvedensky’s plays prefigured the spirit of Beckett’s and Ionesco’s tragifarces, which inaugurated the Theatre of the Absurd in the rest of Europe. [...] Meyerhold’s tragic-grotesque staging of *The Fairground Booth* in 1906 and culminated in Meyerhold’s 1926 staging of Gogol’s *The Inspector General*. In its urge to combine dramatic opposites and present a unified picture of reality, however grotesquely exaggerated and absurd, tragifarce has provided numerous possibilities for theatrical production in Russia and simultaneously developed into an intellectually refined and politically ambiguous dramatic form.” (<https://deep blue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/130049>; lesedato 23.01.17)

Den sveitsiske forfatteren Friedrich Dürrenmatts *Fysikerne* er en “classic European farce [...] about three theoretical physicists who believe they are Einstein, Newton and Möbius. They are locked in a lunatic asylum and each gets tangled in vicious murders. Amidst all the jokes is a real relationship between a scientist who may or may not be mad and his nurse who wants to save him. The Physicists was first performed in 1962 at the height of the Cold War. The serious subject behind the farce is what to do with the knowledge of weapons of mass destruction once let out of the genie’s bottle. Who controls that knowledge? Can scientists remain free, even in the free world?” (<http://stagevoices.com/2016/09/05/friedrich-durrenmatt-the-physicists-listen-now-on-bbc-radio-3link-below/>; lesedato 28.12.16)

Den italienske teatermannen Dario Fos skuespill *En anarkists tilfældige død* (1970) “starts off with a back story of a bomb going off at a railway station and the only anarchist was the suspect. After interrogation the anarchist committed suicide in the police station by jumping out of a window. The play begins in a police station with a character called Maniac who is convicted of impersonation. After this, he gets out and pretends to be a judge, and the play then develops from here. [...] Fo even makes a joke about the cast being very small – ‘Maniac: Remind me not to appear in these cheap touring productions again. Can’t even afford a decent-sized cast’. [...] when he was pretending to be the judge and ‘helping’ the Superintendent and Pissani to write another transcript, he ended up getting the Superintendent and Pissani into more trouble than before which then unravelled the truth. As this is a comedic play, farce is presented throughout it for the entertainment for the audience. [...] This is farce as the Maniac is being deliberately absurd by suggesting that they sang after interrogation. This is effective, because it gets the audience to laugh at the ludicrousness of this.” (Ritu Vadgama i <http://rituvadgama.weebly.com/the-farce-of-dario-fo.html>; 10.01.17)

Den rumensk-franske forfatteren Eugène Ionesco skrev en rekke absurde skuespill, og noen av dem har blitt kalt farser. “Over the past thirty years, Ionesco has been called a “tragic clown,” the “Shakespeare of the Absurd,” the “Enfant Terrible of the Avant-Garde,” and the “Inventor of the Metaphysical Farce” ” (<http://www.the-parisreview.org/interviews/2956/eugene-ionesco-the-art-of-theater-no-6-eugene-ionesco>; lesedato 07.12.16). “There is, of course, more to his work than tragedy. There is much comedy, what critics have characterized as metaphysical farce. “There is farce because the world is farcical,” he said. “The world is a joke that God has played on man. We enter His game, we join His game.” ” (<http://www.nytimes.com/1988/06/15/theater/the-arts-festival-eugene-ionesco-in-defense-of-the-absurd.html>; lesedato 12.12.16)

“I provinsbyen Brandenburg [i Øst-Tyskland], bak jernteppet på slutten av syttitallet, regisserte [Frank] Castorf et sosialistisk stykke som farse. Regimet tvangsforflyttet ham derfor langt uti gokk, til Anklam, en enda mindre og ubetydeligere by. De håpet at kunstneren, som sjef for et lite teater, ville visne i den

“ærefulle” provinsielle stillingen. Råtne bort.” (*Morgenbladet* 5.–11. august 2016 s. 34)

Den amerikanske forfatteren William Kotzwinkles roman *The Midnight Examiner* (1990) har blitt kalt “an affectionate slapstick farce” (Boxall 2006 s. 782). Et eksempel på en film-farse er Joel og Ethal Coens *Burn after Reading* (2008) – en film der “den ene karakteren er dummere enn den andre, tempoet er høyt, og der pengeutpressing, verbal humor og løssluppen vold er viktige ingredienser” (*Dagbladet* 16. oktober 2008 s. 57).

“Det er en undervurdert kunstform å få alt til å gå galt, samtidig. Det er også hemmeligheten bak enhver god farse. [...] Steve Carell bruker til fulle sin sjeldne evne til å spille tafatte, talentløse menn uten noen gang å bli slem eller utleverende. Den tilsynelatende overdådige Barry er et produkt av et finstemt komediemaskineri i arbeid.” (Inger Merete Hobbestad i *Dagbladet* 2. september 2010 s. 46 om filmen *Dinner for Schmucks*, 2010)

Den svenske TV-serien *Solsidan* (2010 og senere; skapt av Felix Herngren m.fl.) består av farselignende episoder/sketsjer som hovedsakelig gjelder tre par: Alex og Anna, Frede og Mickan, og Ove og Anette, og forholdet mellom alle disse.

Albert Bermels bok *Farce: A History from Aristophanes to Woody Allen* (1990) “describes the art form rather than defines it. Part 1 illustrates the nature of farce and its relationship to tragedy, comedy, and melodrama. Part 2 is a cumulative biography of farce, beginning with Greek and Roman writers and continuing through Shakespeare, Moliere, and into the Dadaists, Surrealists, and others of the twentieth century. The book reviews a Hollywood-inspired resurgence of farce, which has seeped into such diverse artistic categories as painting, fiction, poetry, dance, and music. The book also discusses the works of such modern masters of farce as Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, the Marx Brothers, Woody Allen, Mel Brooks, Sid Caesar, and Monty Python.” (<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED332177>; lesedato 03.02.17)

Noe som blir skandaløst eller komisk dårlig gjennomført, blir ofte kalt en farse, f.eks. en politisk eller byråkratisk sak.

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