



Pedagogical booklet

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1- IN BRIEF

Cartoon is a 50-minute solo clowning performance for a family audience or for children aged 4 to 12.

Pronounced in the French language, Cartoon refers to the fibrous material that is all cardboard, but also to the language of cartoons, so characterized by rhythm, fantasy, unbridled imagination and astonishment.

Through physical play, acrobatics and clowning, Cartoon tackles the issues of recycling with simplicity by relying on the themes of imagination, love and resilience.

Touching, naïve and optimistic, Frak is in charge of handling waste in a large company and creates epic frescoes or comical parodies with cardboard.

He creates laughter with the poetry of the ephemeral, the clowning engine of the Cartoon universe.

Show : Cartoon

Co-writer / performer / representative : François Isabelle

Co-writer / director : Yves Dagenais

Lighting design / control / photos : Rodolphe St-Arneault

Set and props: Lysandra Denis-Breault

Costumes : Carole-Anne Turcotte



Hello and welcome!

I am François Isabelle, a multidisciplinary artist or rather a circus artist. I have been a professional actor, dancer and acrobat for over 25 years. My strength has always been physical acting and in the last few years I have focused on clowning to create the show Cartoon that you will see today.

For me, Cartoon pays tribute to a circus tradition, by the fact that the artist-acrobat that I used to be, now becomes an artist-clown. Moreover, the scenaristic structure of Cartoon is based on that of circus shows by presenting a succession of lively, colorful and poetic numbers.

Through Frak, my character, Cartoon invites you to discover the humanism and resilience of the clown, the power of the imagination to calm fears and anxieties, and to nourish dreams and hope.

It was during improvisation workshops and periods of observation of children (my son was six at the time) during the holiday season that cardboard became the main focus of my work. There is often, on your part, more interest in the container than in the content. Cardboard, available in disconcerting quantities in the recycling bins, imposed a reflection on environmental issues.

Cartoon, pronounced in French, refers to this fibrous material, but also to the language of cartoons so characterized by rhythm, fantasy, unbridled imagination and astonishment.

The Cartoon show reduces its ecological footprint to a minimum. The set, props and costumes are designed to be easily maintained, reusable and recyclable.

I am happy to offer you a moment of laughter and clownish lightness by addressing the theme of recycling with simplicity.

Thank you and enjoy the show!

3- SYNOPSIS

Frak is in charge of the waste handling in a big company and carries out the orders of his boss, whom he calls Chief. He is proud of this and wants to accomplish his task with a lot of professionalism, but above all with a lot of fun and can't help but play with the cardboard that Chef asks him to throw into the dumpster.

Aware of environmental issues, Frak quickly understands that the dumpster, like the planet, cannot be filled indefinitely and adopts the 3 R's strategy: Reduce, Recycle but above all Reuse and creates with the cardboard large epic frescoes or comic parodies.

Naïve, he will seize the love in the passage of a letter found by chance. Full of hope, he will prepare himself for the ultimate encounter.

With his resilience, his positive approach to life and his contagious imagination, Frak will inspire everyone to help the planet... by playing with cardboard.



4 - THE CLOWN

The clown is a comic character from the circus world. Today, they are used in the theater, the circus, television, movies, children's parties and hospitals. Since the mid-1980s, there has been a revival of clowning time. The aesthetic and language of clowning have been transformed by a more poetic interpretation of reality.



4.1 - QUOTES FROM MICHEL DALLAIRE (Great Quebec clown and founder of Cirque du Soleil)

- The clown seeks pleasure and conveys an optimistic vision of life.
- The clown's generosity stems from his ability to take risks, especially the risk of being ridiculous.
- It is often said that clowns can't do anything. This is completely false! Clowns don't know how to do anything like other people!
- The clown represents the exploited who find a way to be happy.
- The clown is a naive person who unconsciously builds a defense system based on openness.
- The clown doesn't try to tell anything, he shares his life and leaves it to us to find meaning in ours.
- The clown turns his fears into games. Like children, the unknown attracts him and the forbidden stimulates him.
- The clown never lectures, but rather looks after his morale.

4.2 - THE LAUGHTER

Laughter has more to offer than just physical relaxation. Indeed, laughing is a playful and beneficial way to explore one's emotions or blockages. Laughter is a real therapy that reduces the perception of pain and allows the immune system to function properly. It also improves respiratory function, especially for asthmatics, anxious people, and nervous people and is excellent for the elderly. When we are young, we laugh about 300 times a day and of course very often with real pleasure, but without any real reason. The older we get, the more we lose the ability to laugh simply.

Ask yourself the following questions:

When was the last time you had a good laugh?

Do you want to keep your spontaneous childhood laughter?

When you look in the mirror... do you laugh at yourself?

What makes you laugh or who makes you laugh?



"Laughter and joy are essential because they are two keys to reducing anxiety and angst in both children and older adults. The third audience, the caregivers, also benefits," says Audrey Vincent, communications advisor at the Dr Clown Foundation.

5- PERFORMANCE DISCIPLINE

5.1 - CLOWNING



Contemporary clowning rejects the conventional postures and gags of the circus and relies more on emotion, naivety, the present moment, feeling, spontaneity and imagination. Clowning is a work of dramatic acting, mime, farce and burlesque to achieve scenes that make the audience laugh.

Acting Techniques:

Physical acting, word play, acrobatics, mime, singing...

Scenic approaches :

Imitation, situation reversal, parody, problem solving...

Interpretation :

Exaggeration, amplitude in the mimics and the body. The clown plays for the audience. He

He often looks at them and interacts with them. Fixed point when he does something...

5.2 - PHYSICAL THEATER

"Physical theater" is a current designating a theater where the body and movement are at the center of a process integrating theater, dance, object manipulation, music, writing, etc. It is a non-verbal way of transmitting a story. It is a non-verbal way of conveying a story. The physical actor follows certain rules to support his message. He uses a precise gesture that he uses in chosen rhythms.



5.3 - BREAKDANCE

Breakdance, also called break dance, break, breaking, breakdancing, b-boying is a dance style developed in New York in the 1970s, characterized by its jerky body movements, its acrobatic aspect and its figures on the ground. A breakdancer is called a breakdancer, bboy or b-boy (for a man), bgirl or b-girl (for a woman).

Although it is believed to have originated in the United States, records show that a form of breakdancing was danced in Africa, specifically in Kaduna, Nigeria, in 1959.



5.4 - ILLUSIONISM

Illusionism is most often practiced by artists in the entertainment world. The magician has trained himself to create illusions that lure our senses: he makes various things appear and disappear, he defies gravity, transforms matter, reads thoughts, sees into the future. With his tricks and skills, his address and his pitch, a theatrical setting, subtle lighting or a musical background, the magician creates a context thanks to which his trick - sometimes very simple but clever - becomes amazing to the point of creating the illusion that a mystery has just occurred before our eyes.



5.5 - JUGGLING

The devil stick, also known as the flower stick, is a circus arts discipline that is part of juggling. It consists of a biconical stick that is manipulated with two sticks. The goal is to keep the stick in the air and to make it perform various tricks such as tic-tac, sword, somersault and helicopter.



6.1 - PHYSICAL PLAY (understanding rhythms)

The physical game can be based on three rhythms:

- fast: the gestures are faster than in normal time
- slow : the movements are slower than in normal time
- fixed point : nothing moves, the actor is immobile

*The average speed being the speed of everyday life, is generally to be avoided on stage.

The participants go to the front one at a time.
They all perform the same scenario.
(The only props are the chair, the table and the rest is mimed).

Each action in the scenario must be performed with a chosen speed, i.e. fast or slow, but never at medium speed.

The actions can be chained one after the other, but the actor must find some places to make fixed points.

The emphasis should be on slow when the actor chooses to do slow. And on the speed when the actor chooses to do fast. The still points can have an indefinite indefinite duration as long as they are fixed.

You will notice between each participant that the choice of rhythms offers the audience a different spectators a different reading of the scenario or the actor's emotional journey. the actor.

Scenario:

I turn a door handle

I open the door

I enter the room

I close the door

I look at the chair

I walk towards the chair

I sit down

I look at the tea cup

I take the cup with one hand

I drink the tea

I find an end

6.2 - Developing your theatrical imagination

6.2.1 - Game 1: What's the point? (dare to have an idea!)

The game can be played in a circle or by passing one after the other in front of the class.

-You take an object from the classroom in your hands and invent a new function for it.

function. Example:

"This is not a pencil! This is a toy rocket!"
(...manipulating the pencil as if it were a toy rocket.)

-Then you pass the object to the next person who must find a new function by starting his sentence with :

"this is not a toy rocket! It's a blowpipe dart!"
(...mimicking a blowgun.)

"It's not a blowgun dart! It's a spyglass!"
(...manipulating the pencil like a spyglass.)

"It's not a spyglass! It's a hair clip!"
(...sliding it through his hair.)
ETC...

The idea can be very concrete as it can be "far-fetched", the important thing is to have the courage to say something in front of others even if sometimes it doesn't really make sense.

6.2.2 - Game 2: the illustrated story

On a table you place five to six objects of different kinds. For example: a ruler, white sheets of paper, a shoe, some paper clips, a spoon, rubber bands, a box of tissues...

- In teams of two
- One person sits behind the table, with the objects in front of him, facing the spectators. He will be the manipulator of the objects.
- The other sits in front of the table, facing the audience, so as not to see his partner or the objects. He will be the narrator of the short story featuring 2 characters.

Example :

A black cat and a white cat
A dragon and a knight
A sick person and a doctor
A school principal and a student
A policeman and a bandit
...

- The narrator will start the story. He will make short pauses after each sentence to allow his partner, the object manipulator, to figure out how to the story with what is in front of him.

Example:

"Once upon a time there was a knight who had to fight a dragon..." (pause)

- The manipulator takes the ruler to personify the knight and with the other hand simply shows the audience the shoe as the dragon.

"the knight began to attack the dragon with a catapult..." (pause)

- The manipulator makes paper balls and throws them with the spoon to illustrate the movement seen from a catapult.

"etc."

The manipulator can use the concepts of fast, slow, and fixed point seen in the previous exercise in the execution of his gestures.

The goal is not to recreate the story perfectly, but to illustrate in a rough way the characters, props and actions.

Often, the more absurd is the illustration, the more it triggers laughter from the audience, but it can also be but it can also be well conceived, charming us with the accuracy and poetry of the illustration.

