Concord Academy
Theatre 2: Mask - Fall 2019

Teacher: Shelley Bolman
Office: By the Green Room, off of the hallway running from the stage right lobby into the Upper Stufac.

Course Overview:

This course is a movement/acting class introducing clowning and mask work. It includes skills for physical comedy, improvisations and understanding mask as a structure and instigator for movement.

Among the elements we will cover: character work, master/servant status, comic timing, partnering skills and using the audience. It is an opportunity to investigate generosity, specificity, simplicity, focus and the" first time mind”.

It is important in this class that you allow yourself to have an experience without judging or editing. Dare to Be Average. The pressure of doing it “right” doesn’t allow for new, fresh, and different surprises to happen. Most importantly, be yourself, have fun and break the rules.

“The biggest laughs are based on the biggest disappointments and the biggest fears.” –Kurt Vonnegut, JR.

The most difficult character in comedy is that of the fool, and he must be no simpleton that plays that part.” –Miguel de Cervantes

“It’s their seriousness that strikes me. They play everything as if it might be Macbeth or Hamlet.” –Eddi Cantor on Laurel and Hardy

“I’m essentially and entrance and exit man. Good exits and good entrances. That’s all theatre is. And punctuation. That’s all it is.” -Charlie Chaplin
**Requirements:**

**Attendance:** Class attendance is mandatory. If you are on the friend bench and arrive late, you will be marked late. If it is your Chapel, please ask for permission to be late. If you have a phone with you, please place it in the basket on the piano upon arrival.

**Movement clothing:** Flexible pants and shirt, bare feet or lightweight shoes such as jazz shoes or light weight sneakers that are not worn outdoors. No constrictive pants, boots, loose jewelry. No gum food or drink in class, except water and tea by permission.

**Full participation:** In improvisations, scene work and discussion. Openness to play.

**Promptness:** Repeated lateness is strongly discouraged. This is an ensemble class and your peers’ ability to work and perform is dependent on your presence.

**Final project:** A classroom sharing with invited guests. We will determine the structure and nature of the performance together.

**Evaluation** is based on a combination of factors:

Personal initiative.

Willingness to accept the challenges and risk inherent in personal expression and collaboration.

Completion of any homework and written assignments.

Participation, enthusiasm and attitude – towards yourself, your peers and the work you present in class.

*Individual* growth over the course of the semester, not your growth or ability compared to others.
Required Tech Work on a CA Production

You can, and must, get involved behind the scenes in the various areas of design and technical theatre: set construction and painting; props creation and organization; hanging and focusing lighting instruments; sewing and fitting costumes; box office; publicity; and so forth. **You are required to complete 3 hours of tech time for this course.** I will share the dates for the tech opportunities as soon as I know what they are. Failure to fulfill this requirement will result in your final grade being lowered by one step, i.e. an A+ becomes an A.

Required Play Attendance

If you are not in the fall mainstage production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* you are required to attend it – Fri-Sat. November 8-9 at 7:30pm. You are strongly encouraged to attend all other performances – musical concerts, poetry readings, and other creative presentations. CA also offers regular trips into Boston for dance and theatre. There will be a field trip to see Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible* in Cambridge on Friday 9/20 at 8pm. If you cannot attend a CA performance, alert me in advance and we will figure out another show for you to see.

Homework:

There will be a little bit of out of class work, sometimes in small groups. There will also be a process paper at the end of the semester reflecting on your growth and challenges in the class.

Final Project:

The final project will be an invited sharing/performance during class period for faculty/students. It is usually a small group attending. We will determine the nature of our final sharing together.

The syllabus is subject to change!

“Sell your cleverness. Buy Bewilderment.” - Jalaluddin Rumi