

# Artists on Tour

Intuition Theatre

*Chicken Fishing in America*  
*Stand in My Shoes*  
*We're in Wonderland*



## STUDY GUIDE

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## INTUITION THEATRE

**Our Educational Goal:** To create theatre for and with students in an exciting, innovative way that illuminates curriculum, aids in learning, and raises confidence!

### ARTIST BIO

Bet Stewart, solo and ensemble performer and Artistic Director of Intuition Theatre, has been teaching and performing professional theatre for more than 25 years. Bet creates a unique style of original theatre with her blend of drama, comedy, mime, music and theatrical clowning. She has performed in numerous theatres, museums, universities, festivals, and community centers, throughout the country and internationally. Her colorful characters and one-woman shows have delighted audiences on stages in Mexico, the former Soviet Union, and 17 states including Alaska. She has studied with theatre masters around the world, and is a graduate of University of Cincinnati. She teaches at the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and at schools, correctional centers, colleges, and conferences. She is on the roster of Ohio Artists on Tour and the Kentucky Arts Council. Ms. Stewart also sings and plays banjo, Irish whistle, bones, piano and washboard. Ms. Stewart teaches Professional Development seminars for teachers: Integrated Curriculum; Drama as Classroom Management; & more...

# THREE PERFORMANCES

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## CHICKEN FISHING IN AMERICA

(Stories, Songs and Humor from America and Beyond)

This magnetic mix of world-class stories with a strong dash of chicken humor appeals to all ages. There's plenty to amuse, inform, and tickle the funny bone, with musical snapshots selected from diverse cultures, mountain tales, and barnyard capers. The ring of a 5-string banjo and the wail of a washboard are the backdrop for a custom-spun show for your audience.

### **Related Workshops:**

- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ Clowning
- ◆ Improvisation

## STAND IN MY SHOES (Creating Harmony and Understanding)

In a frame full of discovery, audience members are guided to enact scenes from real life, experiencing conflict resolution in a real way. A world-altering use of drama, this powerful experience in peace-making will stick better than books, writing, or lectures. See how “standing in each other’s shoes” can alter the harmony factor in your community.

### **Related Workshops:**

- ◆ Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Improvisation
- ◆ Songwriting

## WE’RE IN WONDERLAND (Exploring Great Literature and Stretching Imagination)

Slide down the Rabbit Hole to a world of grinning cats and mad hatters, not to mention the Evil Queen. You and Alice will experience powerful imagination, changing point of view, and “situations that are not always as they seem.” Classic literature shines with new wrinkles with Bet, a seasoned actress, clown, mime and theatre artist.

### **Related Workshops:**

- ◆ Building Original Theatre
- ◆ Mime, Mask & Movement
- ◆ Commedia dell’Arte

# DESCRIPTION OF WORKSHOPS & RESIDENCY TOPICS

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1. **BUILDING ORIGINAL THEATRE** – Exploring the steps that Intuition Theatre follows when creating a play. The group makes their ideas into theatre!
2. **THEATRE CLOWN** – Using ancient scenarios and clown gags, each person develops a clown character and develops simple scenes and clown turns.
3. **MIME AND MOVEMENT** – 70% of all communication is non-verbal. We teach mime techniques, illusions and character through movement, making simple skits.
4. **IMPROVISATION** – Spontaneous theatre in a structured setting. Learning to “think on your feet” to create character and plot on the spot.
5. **MASK** – Developing clarity of movement and character through the use of masks is an ancient theatrical art. We create masks with you OR bring them for your use.
6. **BOOKS ON STAGE** – Creating skits and songs from age appropriate literature, pulling ideas from books. Ideal for libraries, “Young Authors.”
7. **SHEROES AND HEROES** – Examining new and old heroes to empower people through stories, rituals, and drama.
8. **STORY WEAVERS** – Jump start the writing process by weaving drama and writing together. Techniques to integrate creative thinking, writing, and performing.
9. **COMMEDIA DELL’ARTE** – From the Italian comedy in Europe during the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, explore stock characters and scenes that still live today in modern movies.
10. **SONGWRITING** – How to put a song together from your own ideas; perhaps it is something to go with a play or curriculum topic.
11. **CONFLICT RESOLUTION** – Specific strategies to use in real life to avoid and resolve conflict, using role playing and improvisation from the Strategy Wheel®.

## ETIQUETTE AND EXPECTATIONS

**SET-UP:** A center aisle for performances is helpful. For classroom activities, nametags and clean clear space is ideal.

**STUDENTS:** Your job as an audience member is to focus on what the performer(s) are doing. To enjoy it best, respect yourself and your neighbors by not talking or making noise. Applause and laughter are accepted behaviors in the performing arts. If you have been asked to participate, you may be making noise or moving, but you still need to focus on the activity at hand!!

**FOR TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STAFF:** Theatre is a team effort. Setting a model of behavior for students by staying focused is the best way to encourage stellar behavior from them. Your participation in the experience sets the stage for them to get the most out of the show or workshop. Please remain with students and quietly redirect or remove students who may disturb. If you talk to other adults, grade papers or leave the room during the activity, a message is sent to students that this experience is not important, and they don’t need to focus on it. This makes our job and yours much harder! Thank you for your great work with the students and your partnership with the artists!!

# MISSION/GOALS OF PROGRAMS

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The MISSION of Intuition Theatre is to create and perform high quality original theatre for all ages that will help people see the world in a new way.

GOALS when working in the classroom: The discovery that YOU CAN DO ANYTHING THROUGH THE USE OF DRAMA and above all: TO HAVE FUN WHILE LEARNING.

Since its founding in the early 1980s, Intuition Theatre has performed and created theatre for and with many kinds of people: thousands of children, teenagers, persons with disabilities, incarcerated adults, homeless people, business executives, artists, teachers, and seekers. Our style blends drama, comedy, physical theatre/mime, stilt-walking, music (often original), clowning, puppetry, and storytelling.

## CREATIVE PROCESS

We have developed a Creative Process that has stood the test of time in creating our own material as well as with our students:

- ◆ The first idea
- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ Researching/Interviewing
- ◆ Improvisation
- ◆ Revision (see below: the 2-step feedback process)
- ◆ Outline
- ◆ More improvisation and revision – lots of repetitions!
- ◆ First Draft
- ◆ More and More Revision
- ◆ Performance
- ◆ More Revision and More Performance

## FEEDBACK PROCESS

The TWO-Step Feedback Process for Critiquing Work  
(Simple but important)

1. Ask what worked well about the improv or scene.
2. Ask what suggestions could be tried to make it even better.

NOTE: NEVER DO STEP TWO BEFORE STEP ONE

# PRE & POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

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## BEFORE A PERFORMANCE OR WORKSHOP:

- ♦ Take a look at the Guide to Etiquette & Expectations paragraph (page 4)
- ♦ Visit [www.intuitiontheatre.com](http://www.intuitiontheatre.com) to get an idea of what to expect!
- ♦ Try the Sample Lesson Plan (page 8). You can collect the objects from the classroom (a hanger, a shoe, an eraser, and a magazine) or have students bring things from home.
- ♦ Explore some of the resources listed (page 9)
- ♦ Other activities to try for each of the performances offered:
  - ♦ **CHICKEN FISHING IN AMERICA** – Practice storytelling: Ask each student to tell about a time when they had a dream, went on a trip, or experienced something new or exciting. Stories always have a who, where and what (character, setting and plot)
  - ♦ **STAND IN MY SHOES** – Have students write about a time when there was a conflict between him/her and a friend, family member or someone at school. Describe what happened, and how it was or wasn't resolved. Also describe the feelings involved.
  - ♦ **WE'RE IN WONDERLAND** – Read an appropriate version of *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. Discuss the characters, the setting, and the plot of the story.

## AFTER A PERFORMANCE OR WORKSHOP:

- ♦ Discuss and/or write about the experience in two steps:
  1. What we liked (specifically)
  2. What we found confusing or challenging, and why
- ♦ Practice some of the activities learned in the workshop (Teacher handouts available on request for many of the games and exercises!)
- ♦ Write a letter or Email to [bet@intuitiontheatre.com](mailto:bet@intuitiontheatre.com) about your experience

# CURRICULUM TIES

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- ♦ DRAMA!
- ♦ HISTORY
- ♦ LITERATURE
- ♦ SOCIAL STUDIES
- ♦ LANGUAGE ARTS
- ♦ PRACTICAL LIVING

## EXAMPLES OF INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

**Social Studies:** The use of *role playing* to understand how various groups and family situations can interact (conflict resolution etc).

**Drama:** There is no better way to learn about theatre than to create *original skits* using your own ideas, a solid group process, and a *positive critiquing model*.

**History:** Studying the *Bill of Rights* (or other historical event) through the use of short skits ending in frozen pictures or “*tableau*.”

**Science:** We can explore *simple machines as moving sculptures* in small groups.

**Grammar:** A theatre game (zip-zap-zop) that helps students learn any series of words or letters through play and repetition: *making rote learning fun*.

**Language Arts/Writing:** We can write a *cube poem* together that later becomes a *movement performance*.

# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

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## CLOWN PROPS: A PUSH-UP FOR THE IMAGINATION

**PURPOSE/GOALS** – To foster creativity. To see the world in a new way. To help students think on their feet. To have FUN with IMAGINATION!!

**SET-UP** – Ask students to bring in an object (or several) from home. It should be something with an INTERESTING SHAPE. It should NOT be a toy, and it should NOT be “breathing” (no kittens, sisters or gerbils!). As a size guide, tell them it should be too big to fit in their pockets, but small enough to fit in a backpack. It should NOT be a family heirloom, as it will be handled by many students.

- ◆ Students make a large circle, standing up. Put all the objects in the middle of the circle, on the floor. Instruct them as a group that this is a playful exercise, and that adult actors use it in comedy improv (short for improvisation).

**DESCRIPTION** – Encourage the group to see the objects through the eyes of a clown, who does not see things the way the rest of the world sees them. Each person takes a turn selecting an object, looking at its shape and function, and using it in the spirit of the clown. In this way, a banana becomes a telephone, a lotion bottle becomes an electric razor, and a shoe becomes a race car. You should demonstrate first and allow the first go-round in the circle be voluntary.

**RULES** – The actor can talk or make sound effects while using the object, but not to say, “This is a flower.” Instead, talk in the character and context of the scene: “This is the latest fashion from Paris, ladies and gentlemen,” you say with a colander on your head. It’s okay to involve other people in the clown’s game, such as throwing a paper plate as if it were a frisbee, to another student.

*You CANNOT use the object as what it IS. It MUST be something else.*

**TIPS** – The first time or two around the circle, allow them to use only one prop at a time. After that, anything goes. When demonstrating, encourage them to look carefully and creatively at the objects. They can get ideas especially from the SHAPE and the FUNCTIONALITY of the object. In this way, a pair of tongs becomes an alligator’s mouth, opening and closing, and a coat hanger becomes an earring. If things start to get stale and ideas are slow in coming, look around the room and add some common objects you see.

- ◆ Being TOTALLY committed to “believing” the toothbrush is an alien or a fire poker makes it much funnier and more believable. If a student hesitates in coming up with an idea, be patient. Allow them to come up with their own ideas, reminding them to look carefully at the shape and functionality of the object. If a shoe has strings, it can become a swing or a yo-yo. If an individual becomes stuck, allow them to pass and raise their hand when they get an idea. “Giving” them an idea should be a last resort as it can create the feeling that that person cannot get a good idea on their own. Most importantly: HAVE FUN!

# RESOURCES

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<i>101 Drama Games for Children</i> (Hunter House)	Paul Rooyackers
<i>Arts with the Brain in Mind</i>	Eric Jensen
<i>The Art and Craft of Playwriting</i> (Story Press)	Jeffrey Hatcher
<i>The Italian Comedy</i> (Dole Press)	Ducharte
<i>Kids Take the Stage</i> (Backstage Books)	Peterson and O'Connor
<i>The Mime Book</i>	Claude Kipnis
<i>The Physical Comedy Handbook</i> (Heinemann Books)	Davis Rider Robinson
<i>Tatterhood and Other Tales</i> (Feminist Press)	edited by Ethel Johnston Phelps
<i>The Uses of Enchantment</i> (Knopf, 1976)	Bruno Bettelheim
<i>A Whack on the Side of the Head</i> (Warner Books) <i>(How You Can be More Creative)</i>	Roger von Oech

<http://www.novelguide.com/aliceinwonderland/summaries/chap5.html>

<http://www.storytellingcenter.net>

<http://www.lessonsongs.com> (Paulette Meier CD *Come Join the Circle*)

[www.PeaceGames.org](http://www.PeaceGames.org)

[www.WherePeaceLives.org](http://www.WherePeaceLives.org)

[www.peace-ed.org](http://www.peace-ed.org) (Peace Education Foundation/Strategy Wheel®)

# GLOSSARY OF DRAMA TERMS

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**BLOCKING** – The way the actors are placed, faced, and where they move on stage

**CHARACTER** – A person, animal, creature or entity from whom the action of a play or story arises

**COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE** – 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian comedy, originally improvisational, but eventually using set bits of business called “lazzi.” Each troupe of players developed and jealously guarded its own lazzi and passed them down from parents to children. The basic plots were derived from Roman comedy and the cast of stock characters often wore half-masks.

**CONFLICT** – The opposition to the protagonist in a play. The opposition may be outward, as in a villain or enemy, or inward, as in a person in conflict with the inner self.

**DIALOGUE** – Conversation between two or more actors onstage

**IMPROVISATION** – A scene which may have a structure but is largely created on the spot with little or no planning ahead of time

**MIME** – From the Greek word ‘mimos,’ meaning “representation.” Mime is derived from commedia dell’arte, but in modern times was taken to new popularity by Marcel Marceau, Etienne DeCroux, and Jean-Louis Barrault. In America it is taken to mean silent styles of mime, but in fact many mimes uphold a strong physical style without keeping to the silence.

**MONOLOGUE** – Speeches made by one actor, talking to another, the audience or to self

**PANTOMIME** – A type of solo performer in ancient Rome (or later in England in a traditional Christmas entertainment) who used movement and gesture to convey a series of characters in a retelling of a Greek legend

**PLOT** – The events of a play or story; what happens, as opposed to the theme

**SETTING** – The surroundings and time frame in which the action of a play develops; also, the units of scenery that combine to suggest a particular time/place

**SKIT** – A short scene telling a simple story

**STAGE DIRECTIONS** – As the actors stands in the middle of the stage facing the audience: stage right is to their right; stage left is to their left; upstage is behind them; and downstage is in front of them

**TABLEAU** – A grouping of silent, motionless actors representing an incident, often historical, and presenting an artistic spectacle

**THEME** – What the play means, or its underlying message, as opposed to what happens (the plot); sometimes it is clearly stated, sometimes not