

Workshop: The Improvised Play

The improvisation process is very different from writing a play, so how can we hope to create something that looks like a well-written work?

While some improvisers are bothered if the audience doesn't believe it's improvised, I think there's nothing more satisfying than having the audience believe that what they just saw couldn't possibly have been created on the spot.

Description

This workshop looks at the differences between a pre-written piece of theatre and one created in the moment. It focuses on how we can use tension to affect the audience, how we can give meaning to what is happening on stage, and how to “trick” the audience into believing “it must be scripted”.

What You Will Learn

Stage picture

One of the hallmarks of scripted theatre is that the use of space is pre-planned and well thought out. We'll look at how we can create a stage picture that has impact and meaning in an improvised piece.

Meaning

A well written play is economical in its use of dialogue and movement. A skillful playwright includes nothing unless it has meaning. We can emulate this by being attentive to what we say and do, being thrifty in our words and actions, and applying meaning retrospectively.

Tension and release

Learn how tension impacts the audience. This will help you elicit emotional responses from the audience (including laughter).

Production techniques

We'll look at how we can make our production feel more like a scripted piece, to fully immerse our audience in a theatrical experience.

Experience Level

Intermediate and above.

This workshop is generally best for intermediate and experienced improvisers or those with a background in theatre. I.e. An experienced actor who is new to improv, will get a lot from this workshop.

Participants

Number of participants: 6 to 16

Workshop Length

3 hours to 2 full days or more.

There is a lot of material to cover. A 3 hour workshop provides a good overall introduction to the skills. A longer workshop allows us to go much deeper.

Workshop Requirements

Can be taught in a multi-purpose space, but if possible a theatre - or at least a space with some theatre-style lighting - is ideal.

Performance

This workshop can be used as preparation for a performance, but will require more than the minimum (3 hours) in order to prepare a cast for a show structure. If you want to include a performance, please be sure to mention this early in discussions.