





HOMUNCULUS THEATRE

RESILIENCE THROUGH LAUGHTER

DEVELOPED BY:

CLINT BOLSTER, ANN MCLEAN & ADRIANNE JONES

FUNDED BY:

This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.



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"Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world."

- Lucille Ball -



CLINT BOLSTER
Clown & Teaching Artist

Clint Bolster is a Clown, Physical Actor, Mask Theatre Specialist, Stilt Performer & Trainer and Teaching Artist from Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. With over 18 years' committed to developing new works and training extensively, Clint regularly performs in Australia and internationally in the United Kingdom, Europe, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan. Clint's repertoire of original performance works of Homunculus Theatre Company (In Schools Programs) www.homunculustheatre.com.au Manoeuvre Roving Performers (Roving Stilt Acts) - www.manoeuvrestiltperformers.com , The Mask Family (Highly Visual and Interactive Roving Mask Theatre Acts) - www.themaskfamily.com , and HIGH TEA with BOOFF (a mischief-loving high-status impresario regal, clown) www.highteawithbooff.com, are highly active throughout Australia, New Zealand & Asia, and have extensive annual programming in regional Australia, particularly in the community, cultural and education sectors. He was recently accepted into the Cirque Du Soleil database and Slava Snow Show of potential Clowns for future productions and is a proud Queensland Member and Mentor for The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance, and Board Member for IndelAbility Arts. He has developed an incredibly reliable and robust local and international network. His unique and innovative creations are represented by over 70 international production houses and arts agencies worldwide and have amassed a live global audience in the millions.



Clint is experienced and sought after Teacher- Artist of 18 years, leading many workshops and artist in residency programs throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia & Europe for Young People, University Students, Adults and Elders.

Companies Include:

Homunculus Theatre Company (AUS), The Mask Family (AUS), Shakespeare4All (Hong Kong), Faust Theatre Company (Hong Kong), Vamos Theatre Company (UK), Queensland Theatre Company (AUS), LaBoite Theatre Company (AUS), Australian Catholic University (AUS), University of Southern Queensland (AUS), Queensland University of Technology (AUS), Pontio University, Wales (UK), Griffith University (AUS), The Queensland Conservatorium Of Music (AUS), The University of Tasmania (AUS), The Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts (AUS), Drama Queensland (AUS), Drama New South Wales (AUS), Drama Victoria (AUS), Drama Tasmania (AUS), Drama Australia (AUS), Drama New Zealand (AUS), Queensland Music Festival (AUS), Backbone Youth Arts (AUS), IZIT Entertainment (AUS), Wilde Applause (AUS), Cluster Arts (AUS), The Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (AUS) and 500 + Primary & Secondary Schools (AUS).

ADRIANNE JONES Arts Advisor

Adrianne Jones is a teacher artist who has worked in many contexts and institutions at a variety of levels. From 2007-2012 she was the teacher artist for the KITE Arts Education Program at QPAC. She has been a consultant, curriculum designer, chair, and board /committee member for the arts, education and health sectors. In 2015 she was one of the Senior Project writers for The Arts team in C2C creating and devising drama resources and programs for the national curriculum. She completed her Masters of Arts (Research) which investigated the long-term effects of arts education programs on low socio- economic communities. In 2017 - 2018 she was the YConnect Manager, a program delivering and researching arts education programs at Yeronga State High School in partnership with Griffith University Drama Department. Adrianne is a PHD candidate at Griffith University.





Ann McLean is a producer, project manager, and advocate who supports independent artists, arts workers, and companies to achieve their goals. Ann supports Clint Bolster across all his projects, bringing her life-long love of culture, and the vision to value the impact that creatives bring about. Driving successful arts and cultural organisations, she deftly manages people and projects, the results of which are felt long after they have been delivered. As General Manager, Ann built the ensemble, Topolgy's regional and metro music education program. Over 15 years, Ann has generated positive change via her influential leadership roles at Blakdance, Brisbane Writers Festival, Ausdance Queensland, and Brisbane Open House.

ANN MCLEAN Project Manager



INTRODUCTION

VIDEO LINK: https://vimeo.com/675279590

Beginning Resilience through Laughter in 2021, Clint Bolster has reached thousands of young people across Australia. Over 50 schools have enjoyed the Resilience Through Laughter program, with many repeating bookings year on year in response to the transformational effects for their students. These resources are designed to support you as a creative arts teacher, to get the most out of Clint's visit, and build resilience for your students.. through laughter.

These workshops are all about connection - connecting you to your students and community. They will enhance curiosity, bolster confidence and inspire collaboration.

Welcome to the program.

We know you will love the workshops.

CLINT:

"Its 2022, a year that has already presented some challenges to the world. Students like all others during this pandemic have had to be flexible, nimble and keeping solving the puzzles we are presented with. This project is aimed at providing some relief, distraction, aesthetics and art making for students. We thought it would be valuable to unpack the philosophy, theory and outcomes for the audience, both teachers and students.

Laughter is the best medicine! The idea that there is a connection between laughter, emotional wellbeing and mental health has been around for years. Research on the physiological health benefits on laughter has been conducted for decades and continues to happen internationally by medical physicians. There is also a growing group of researchers that are exploring the psychological benefits of laughter. This research suggests that the healing power of humour and laughter combats stress, reduces pain by releasing endorphins, boosts the immune system by increasing the level of T cells & lowering serum cortisol levels, helps promote a positive outlook, helps people to cope with difficult situations and helps to create bonds and therefore support between people, all of which aid the healing process.

"Comedy and clowning are now being used in hospitals to support children in their recovery from the trauma of medical and surgical treatment. Clown Doctors use techniques such as magic, music, storytelling and other clowning skills to empower children with doses of fun that help them deal with the range of emotions they may experience while in hospital: fear, anxiety, loneliness, boredom."

ADRIANNE:

"As we start the school year in 2022 the challenges for students and teachers is a new puzzle every day. We as educators and artists need to think creatively and carefully about how we can provide moments of energy, delight and clarity in this confusing time. Clint Bolster is a clown, artist and creator of comedy. His work in schools is to connect students to laughter and comedy through his aesthetic and a refined methodology that he has worked on for many years with teachers, students and artists. The purpose of this resource is to define his way of working, support the workshops in class and provide stimulus for students to use in their own art making.

I am part of this project because I have worked and collaborated with Clint since he was 14 years old. We have learnt form each other, grown together and our journey is part of the fabric of what we are trying to do here. We are still working it out and learning. In 2019, I had the privilege of sitting and watching his rehearsals for The Lost Balloon. It was so pleasurable to watch the ensemble rehearse, play and refine. I am not very funny, so it was exciting to watch the detail and attention to each gesture that the team gave. I learnt and it re-ignited in my love of physical comedy. This booklet will provide an insight into the work Clint is creating for schools in 2022.

Interestingly as we started to define the approach Clint takes, his methodology, what he is aiming for in the classroom we found it aligned with some fairly significant writers and research in education and humour specialists. I am going to start with the humour specialists. In their book, Studies of Laughter in Interaction Philip Glemm and Elizabeth Holt found that laughter provided physical, psychological, spiritual and relational benefits. It is a cost-free medicine that can release endorphins helping us feel good, exercise our muscles and breathing like yoga, help us lighten our mood and cope with problems more readily and strengthen social bonds. There is now significant research to take this seriously, clearly for us all and students laughing matters."



Provocation:

It is common to hear in in education circles "You have to Maslow before you Bloom".

Two famous education academics *Benjamin Bloom and Abraham Maslow* have developed key principles *and priorities for our development as human beings and as students. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs starting with the physiological: safety, belonging and esteem needs moving to self- actualisation.*

Bloom developed a taxonomy of educational objectives for students learning in the classroom and uses a list of verbs including know - comprehend, apply, analyse, synethesise and evaluate. However, there is now a lot of attention drawn to the need to establish trust, a sense of belonging in the classroom before we can expect motivated and engaged students.

Young people need to feed safe and that they are valued before they learn. his is obviously a very quick summary, but what is the best way to create safety, belonging and trust in the classroom?





Key Questions / Provocations -

Why is comedy hard?

- Curiosity
- Safe haven
- Energy as opposed to passivity use of space
- Confidence building
- Community connection
- Collaboration

- Caricature
- Slapstick
- Commedia
- Clowning
- Non Verbal Communication
- Physical Comedy

"Comedy is hard"

- Nicole Kidman

- On't be afraid to be ugly.
- What makes someone funny?
- im no good at comedy.



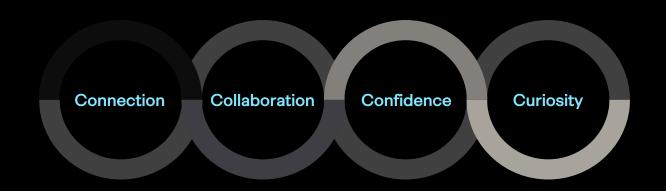
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06NuzLemIU4

Why Comedy Matters? 00

Educators, teachers, administration leaders, and students all realise the value of laughter in a school context. Building relationships, team skills and connections between students is a critical part of teaching, as important as subject content. Hence, harnessing comedy as a key tool and a strategy is highly desirable for the teacher in the drama classroom and in fact any classroom concerned with wellbeing and health. Many of us struggle to teach comedy, and an artist can help support this valuable ingredient. Many teachers admit to not feeling funny.



Research confirms what we all know instinctively, that "humor improves student performance by attracting and sustaining attention, reducing anxiety, enhancing participation, and increasing motivation." (quote) Clint Bolster's workshops and performances aim to support these findings and focus on building the four Cs:



Why Comedy Matters? 00

bell hooks in her book "Teaching Critical Thinking", argues that we "need humor as a mediating force." Humor in all its many forms allows us to reflect, diagnose and unpack the world around us and is one of the most important ways to dissect how people are thinking, allowing us to be open to new ideas. As teachers we can only endeavour to be part of the laughter, to support comedy and allow it to be a part of our regular classroom.

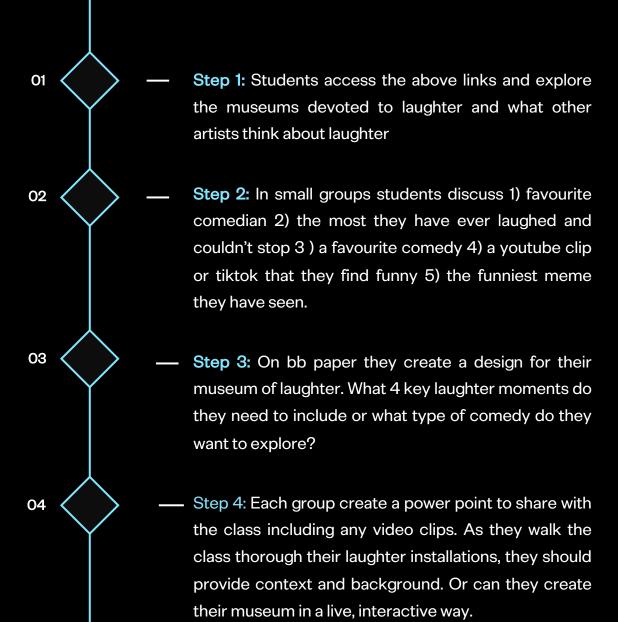
Activities for students to accompany this section

Purpose: To explore what makes us laugh and why it is important

Device: Creation of a laugh museum

Resources:

- https://www.visitpetersburg.ru/en/leisure/199730/_ " The museum of laughs -calculate your level of optimism and get acquainted with the inner fool." A small museum in the USSR devoted to exploring laughter
- http://thelaughterfoundation.org/projects/comedy-museum/ A museum being planned in San Francisco to explore our certain styles of comedy have influenced others.
- https://www.mori.art.museum/english/contents/laughter/exhibition/inde x.html_This was an exhibition in Thailand that reveals art works that explored comedy and how it helps us to be open to new experiences and ideas.



Activities to support this workshop in the classroom



Please adapt and play with these activities in the classroom. They aim to connect young people to the creative process of comedy

HOW:

The Building Blocks of Comedy



Exaggeration /Observation



Caption Comedy

(What in the caption are the people really thinking?)



Visual / Altered images



Building a sketch:
Styles and "what gets
the laugh?".

Warm Up Excercise

"Failure "Ta--Da"!!!

So many of us remain terrified of failing or of making mistakes and that prevents us from even participating in discussions.

This game builds a different relationship to failure.

Step 1 - Here, each person comes in front of the room one at a time. After "claiming" the stage, that person shares with pride a made--up failure of theirs. Something like "I put a pair of new blue jeans in with my mother's clothes and everything turned blue" is great—not completely inconsequential (like "I forgot to turn the lights off when I left home") but also not devastating or traumatic (like "I ran over my dog...twice").



Step 2 - Once they've shared the 'failure', the rest of the group gives them a wild and rousing ovation in celebration. The person on stage should take a grand and vigorous, deep "ta--da!" bow, soaking in the applause to full effect.

Step 3 - The game finishes when everyone's had the chance to celebrate having 'failed.'

Warm Up Excercise

"Failure "Ta--Da"!!!

Insider Tips:

- Make sure to explain why you're playing this game before you play it or to debrief it afterward: we're trying to create a new relationship to what we think of as failure. When we fail, it often means we're pushing ourselves to develop new skills. It means we're taking risks. And our so--called 'failures' can lead us to possibilities we never would have imagined. That's all worth celebrating.
- Again, emphasize that the failures should be made up once the person gets to the stage. You don't want to initiate a therapy session here.
 - --Often times, kids will shrink from the applause and will want to take a quick bow and run off stage. The whole point is to soak it in. What would it be like if we celebrated our failures?"
- Discuss with the class the importance of laughter for well being."

Activity 1: Exaggeration



Activity 1:

Purpose: Observation/exaggeration and for students to work as a chorus and to allow them to build confidence as the create a caricature by working in the safety of a group.

Device: Chorus

Resource: Show students the following: HIGH TEA with BOOFF

Immersive Clown Theatre

https://vimeo.com/580669926

Step 1: Ask students to consider the style of performing in High Tea with Booff. How is the character created? What does the actor do physically; movements, gestures, facial expressions. How is voice used to project tone, mood and character? How does the use of exaggeration create a comic effect? Explain to students that they will be creating a character, but working as a chorus in this activity. In groups of 3- 4 they will move and speak as one. As a group they think of a line of dialogue and three gestures to accompany but they move and speak simultaneously.

Step 2: Then in their group they think of a profession they would like to examine and present. They idea is not so much to make fun of the group, but to carefully collect their observations and hone them into a performance. Hence, they may do the drama teacher and write three key lines of dialogue they always hear and three movements they have observed. Groups rehearse, the teacher side coaching asks them to exaggerate and stylise the movements, they should make it as big as possible.

Step 3: Students then present to class with high energy and exaggeration.

Discuss later how recognisable were the characters? What made for the most successful performance?

Activity 2: Caption This!



Activity 2:

Purpose: Caption Comedy

Device: Small groups and one line each

Resources: The Mask Family - www.themaskfamily.com

- Step 1 In a small group look closely at the image. Discuss all of the characters and the sort of people they are, what's going on for them. Write up the WWWWH (who are they, where are they, what are they doing, when and how)
- Step 2: Explain that they are going to create caption comedy. Each character will have a line of dialogue, or one of the characters might step out of the picture and deliver a headline describing what's going on. The line of dialogue might also be an aside to the audience when the character says what he/ she really thinks. Encourage them to keep it quick and sharp.

Step 3: After discussing the image, students brainstorm lines of dialogue and choreograph a presentation. They bring the painting to life. Groups start frozen and then with rapid delivery speak the dialogue

Step 4: Discuss after the interpretations delivered, what worked best, and why? Ask them to find a painting or a painting they would like to use.

Activity 3: Alteration









Activity 3:

Activity 3: Visual/Altered gags

Device: Playing with familiar images

Resources: Examine the images above.

- Step 1: Discuss with students what is the intention of the altered paintings? What is the target?
- Step 2: Students think of a famous image they know and how they might integrate a symbol or prop to disrupt the meaning of the image and suggest a new meaning. Discuss how odd juxtapositions can make something every day seem funny

Step 3 : Students share their ideas and class discusses their interpretations.

Activity 4: Build A Sketch



Activity 4:

Purpose: Building a sketch

Device: Improvisation and role play

Resources: Please see resources pg. 8 and can students please view the

following link;

The Kransky Sisters

The Sound of Silence

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEQhqNNuicg

- Step 1 Discuss the scene from the Kransky sisters, who are these women? Where are they from? Why did the company create this scene? What do we learn from them? How does the music help and support the style?
- Step 2 In groups brainstorm on paper an idea for a scene. It is about curious characters, a situation, a journey by a group of characters. Students to list locations and characters and then discuss what is going wrong in the scene.

- Step 3 Ask students to include one slapstick moment in the scene (or more if they want) Remind them that slapstick is physical humour a fall, and exaggerated fight, a trip etc the emphasis is on this being highly visual and physical
- Step 4: Ask students if they can include a moment like caption comedy whereby one of the characters has an aside to the audience to explain what is going on.
- Step 5 Students rehearse and present to class discussing the dramatic meaning and the target of the comedy. What moments were most successful?





Slapstick



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qr7onP8c8q8

Watch

Mark Angel Comedy Emmanue



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eE9Dz9OROKA https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQmZ9BIYOBSkxL-eqqg5z-g





The Kransky Sisters (AUS) Stayin Alive



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnnciM_r41s

Watch

The Kransky Sisters (AUS) Pretty Woman



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyrL7fa6K5I





The Kransky Sisters (AUS)
The Sound Of Silence



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEQhqNNuicg

Watch

HIGH TEA with BOOFF (AUS)
Immersive Clown Theatre



https://vimeo.com/580669926





BOLSTER & LEE (AUS) Clown Duo



https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/662909168

Watch

Slava Snow Show (Russia)

Blue Canary - Scene

Russian Clown Production - Highlights



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ld3dAeFg-JM





Slava Polunin

This Clown Philosopher Lives in a Wonderful, Whimsical World | Short Film Showcase



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4uT3ergY04

Watch

Cirque Du Soleil (Canada)
The Best of Clowning



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbvduREHx8g





Vamos Theatre (UK)
Company Overview



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4uSYu99vcU

Watch

Strangeface Theatre Company (UK)
The Last Resort



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqKA7o6ADaA





Familie Floz (Germany)
Park Bench - Radio



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzB7LXnn0vc&t=16s

Watch

Mr Pejos Wandering Dolls (Russia) Full Street Show



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSXImZ93VLA





The Schneedles - Clown Duo (America) Melbourne Comedy Festival



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVTPAfUEJMU

Watch

The Red Balloon



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VexKSRKoWQY





The Lost Balloon
The Mask Family



https://www.thelostballoon.com/video

Watch

Commedia Dell Arte (AUS)







Tony Kishawi Ted X Talk



Watch

Phillipe Gaulier The Truth Teller







A Clowns Philosophy Laugh Clown Laugh



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kl85WS2-x0

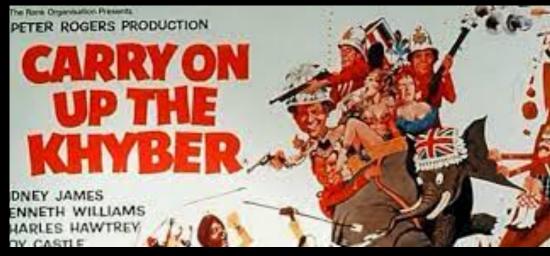
Watch

The Best Of Laurel & Hardy



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBXI0kloacl





The Party
The Making Of



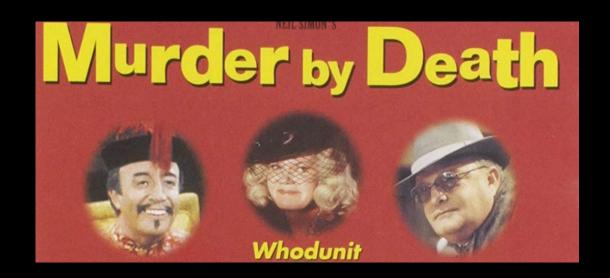
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vt2ZGKB0I5Q

Watch

The Carry On Films
Carry On Up The Khyber 1968



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6jYPURHmaQ





Murder By Death
Peter Sellars and Maggie Smith



Watch

Charlie Chaplin
The Pawnshop (1916)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anDC0JLjtfM





Charlie Chaplin
The Great Dictator (1940)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDX2tCkCM4o

Watch

Charlie Chaplin
The Gold Rush (1925)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Srnlg2b7y7M





Buster Keaton The General (1927)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHIBMKtgPOA

Watch

Buster Keaton
The Goat - Colorized (1921)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXjhVZPYYRU





Buster Keaton One Week (1920)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHo1cvbDlpA

Watch

Buster Keaton The Boat



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68coqwL9SAI





Jacques Tatti
Where to Find Visual Comedy



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AZOI6tFvgg

Watch

Jacques Tatti
The Waiting Room



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P61Sbaddcs4





Jacques Tatti Mr Hulot's Holiday - Tennis Match



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdZ5rMl1yc4

Watch

Jacques Tatti Mr Hulot's Holiday Highlights



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZGUlpdc0i4



Marcel Marceau Life & Work Documentary



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAZLDn8or3M

Watch



Rowan Atkison Mr Bean Goes On Holiday - inspired by Mr Hulot's Holiday



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhL6VpTkPfE





Rat Race - The Movie



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bRUdtiXxKM

Watch

I Love Lucy Lucille Ball & Harpo Marx



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79EnDc-Ucv8





Phyllis Diller Politically incorrect at her best! - (1973)



Watch

Phyllis Diller Fat Jokes - (1977)







The Dean Martin Roast of Lucille Ball (1975)



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNEHHNKVk_o

Watch

The Lucy Show Lucy Gets a Roommate - Carol Burnett



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xvpqXlnreY&list=PLmHgXUJ MN1TXCZbl3w_RYofN_XMCRDtdy&index=5





The Carol Burnett Show Famous Show Bloopers



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2b5C6Xp3pwA

Watch

Peter Sellers The Party - Bathroom Scene



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkrKkBhsMiA

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Maslow before Bloom

https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-maslow-bloom-all-day-long https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-maslow-bloom-all-day-long

Images - Activity 3

https://www.redbubble.com/i/greeting-card/Mona-Lisa-Corona-mask-by-Luna7/46743672.5MT14

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mona_Lisa_moustache.jpg https://www.artsy.net/artwork/alan-beck-girl-with-pearl-earring-and-face-mask





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THANK YOU

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