

OVATIONS OFFSTAGE

presents

A Study Guide for the
School-Time Performance

Imago Theatre: “ZooZoo”

Friday, April 1, 2011 • 10:30 am
Merrill Auditorium, Portland



PORTLAND
OVATIONS

Study guides are also available
on the Portland Ovation website at
http://portlandovations.org/offstage/study_guides

Welcome to Portland Ovations

Each year since 1931, Portland Ovations, formerly known as the PCA Great Performances, has brought a dynamic season of exceptional performing artists to Portland, Maine, including classical music, jazz, opera, dance, theater, and Broadway.

In addition to our live performances, we bring the exhilaration of the performing arts out into our community with season-long educational and outreach programs called Ovations Offstage.

Ovations Offstage creates those magical resonating moments when artists and audiences connect. Whether it's an unexpected "art happening," a workshop or masterclass with a visiting artist, a lively community discussion, or a pre-performance lecture, Portland Ovations invites you to join us as we explore together the relevance and connection of the performing arts to our lives.

Portland Ovations...

- believes that **cultural enrichment** should be accessible to all
- provides **quality** live performances and education experiences
- **engages** our community with integrity and compassion
- **collaborates** with other arts organizations, nonprofits, education systems and the business sector to promote cultural enrichment and lifelong learning
- **celebrates** the power and virtuosity of the performing arts
- sustains a staff and board who are **thoughtful, committed, enthusiastic** and **fiscally responsible**



Imago Theatre: “ZooZoo” Study Guide

This guide includes information about the specific performance you and your students are about to see; contextual background about the art form; broader historic and cultural connections; as well as a number of resources to help you extend your exploration. Also included are connections to Maine’s Parameters for Essential Instruction. For suggested activities designed to engage and sustain your students’ interest before, during, and after the show see Imago Theatre’s study guide available online http://portlandovations.org/offstage/study_guides/

Use of this guide will help your students to anticipate, investigate, and reflect upon your live performance experience.

Attending a Performance at Merrill Auditorium and the Role of an Audience Member

Arrive at the venue well in advance of the scheduled curtain time to avoid disturbing the performers or other patrons—and to avoid missing any of the performance!

Please keep food, gum, drink, backpacks, and cameras out of the auditorium.

When you arrive at Merrill Auditorium an usher will guide you to your seats.

Chaperones play a vital role during the waiting time before the performance begins—This is often a perfect time to escort small groups of students to the restroom.

Be as quiet as possible during the performance so that you and your fellow audience members can hear everything that goes on.

Show your enthusiasm with applause at the end or, if the artists asks, with active participation.

Try to stay in your seat for the entire performance unless there is an emergency.

Turn off cell phones and other electronics before the performance begins.



Artists: Imago Theatre

Founded in 1979 by Carol Triffle and Jerry Mouawad, Imago Theatre's original productions have toured internationally for over two decades. Imago's signature work *FROGZ* appeared at the acclaimed New Victory Theater in New York in 2000 and 2002. Imago's unique, playful menagerie of creatures fill the stage in their latest productions, *ZooZoo* and *Biglittlethings*. The universal nature of Imago's world has won audience and critical acclaim in tours across Asia, Europe, Canada and the U.S. where they were awarded the New York Dance Film Award and "Best Touring Production" by Independent Reviewers of New England. Imago has been hailed by critics world-wide for their sophisticated, highly entertaining works for all ages. Working out of a large 18,000 square foot theatre laboratory in Portland, Oregon, Imago's ensemble of actors, dancers, designers, fabricators and musicians become alchemists seeking fresh perspectives of performance. The company has been honored for mask theatre pieces which have appealed to a wide age range, and for innovative works that push the boundaries of form, design and story. Imago Theatre's methodology is based on the teachings of Jacques Lecoq (1921-1999). Ms Triffle studied extensively with Mr. Lecoq completing his exclusive pedagogical program. Drawing inspiration from Mr. Lecoq, Imago Theatre aims to place form and design at the forefront of theatre creation and infuses each production with an idiosyncratic physical energy. In 2006, the company's innovative production of Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit* ran at two Tony-Award winning theatres - American Repertory Theater and The Hartford Stage Company. The United States premiere of Caryl Churchill's *A Number* was produced by Imago Theatre in 2003.



Performance: ZooZoo

In their new show *ZooZoo*, Imago presents a menagerie like no other — a giant dinosaur, fire-fly bug eyes, hungry anteaters, hitch-hiking rabbits, introverted frogs, cantankerous polar bears, insomniac hippos and tricky penguins fill the stage with wit, wonder and mesmerizing Felliniesque mayhem. Comedy, illusion, physical finesse and original music combine in Imago's wordless production hailed by critics and audiences world-wide.

ZooZoo

ELEVEN VIGNETTES MAKE UP ZOOZOO:

- Bugeyes
- Hippos
- Anteaters
- Frogs
- Paper Bag
- Polar Bears
- Rabbits
- Larvabatic
- Windbags
- Penguins
- Paper



Imago Inspirations: Jacques Lecoq (1921-1999)



Jacques Lecoq is renowned for his physical theatre, movement and mime methodology. His legacy and methods live on through his Paris school, L'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq.

Jacques Pierre Lecoq came to theatre through an interest in sports. He began gymnastics at seventeen and through work on the parallel bars and the horizontal bar he came to see and to understand the geometry of movement. Movement of the body through space as is required by gymnastics was described by Lecoq as being purely abstract. He came to understand the rhythms of athletics as a kind of physical poetry that affected him strongly.

The friendship between Lecoq and Jean Marie Conty, a basketball player of international caliber, led to an exploration of how the physicality of athletics connected to theater. This friendship and interplay between sports and performing arts greatly impacted and influence the work of Lecoq.

Lecoq taught physical education for several years. He later found himself acting and a member of the Comédiens de Grenoble. This company and his work with Commedia dell'arte in Italy (where he lived for eight years) introduced him to ideas surrounding mime, masks and the physicality of performance.

Co-founder of Imago Theatre, Carol Triffle studied extensively with Jacques Lecoq, attending his International Theatre School and completing Lecoq's rigorous pedagogical program.

For more information about Jacques Lecoq, check out:

Jacques Lecoq by Simon David Murray (London: Routledge, 2003).

The Jacques Lecoq International Theatre School teaches the control of gesture and movement through melodrama, human comedy, tragedy, buffoons and clown. Jacques Lecoq's teaching method helps artists to discover new forms of theater. The school is intended for those who have finished their drama studies and have a preliminary professional experience on stage and wish to gain more insight into their abilities as actors, directors and playwrights.

For more about the school, check out their website:

http://www.ecole-jacqueslecoq.com/index_uk.htm

Imago Inspirations: Jacques Copeau (1879-1949)

Imago Theatre cites Jacques Copeau as another inspiration.

Jacques Copeau was a French theatre director, producer, actor, and dramatist. Before he founded his famous Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier in Paris, he wrote theater reviews for several Parisian journals, worked at the Georges Petit Gallery where he organized exhibits of artists' works and helped found the Nouvelle Revue Française in 1909, along with writer friends, such as André Gide and Jean Schlumberger. He eventually organized a theater school attached to his theater and thus influenced the development of theater through the training of the actor. The theater in France during the twentieth century is marked by Copeau's outlook on the theater. It is not surprising that Albert Camus, also a man of the theater, could declare without hyperbole: "in the history of the French theater, there are two periods: before Copeau and after Copeau."



Read more about Jacques Copeau:

Jacques Copeau by John Rudlin (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

Modern French Drama, 1940–1990 by David Bradby (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Telling stories: a grand unifying theory of acting techniques by Mark Rafael (Hanover, NH: Smith and Kraus, 2008).

Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier was founded in 1913 by Jacques Copeau; today it is one of the three theatres in Paris used by the Comédie-Française.

Check out the website for the theater:

<http://vieux.colombier.free.fr/>

Imago Inspirations: Commedia dell'arte

Commedia dell'arte, the closest translation being “comedy of art”, (shortened from *commedia dell'arte all'improvviso*, or “comedy through the art of improvisation”) is a form of theatre that began in Italy in the mid-16th century characterized by masked “types,” the advent of the actress, and improvised performances based on sketches or scenarios.

Italian theatre historians believe *commedia* developed as a response to the political and economic crisis of the 16th century and, as a consequence, became the first entirely professional form of theatre.

The performers played on outside, temporary stages, and relied on various props (*robbe*) in place of extensive scenery. The better troupes were patronized by nobility, and during carnival period might be funded by the various towns or cities, in which they played. Extra funds were received by donations (essentially passing the hat) so anyone could view the performance free of charge. Key to the success of the *commedia* was the ability of the performers to travel to achieve fame and financial success. The most successful troupes performed before kings and nobility allowing individual actors, such as Isabella Andreini and Dionisio Martinelli, to become well-known.



For more information check out these resources:

Commedia dell'arte: a handbook for troupes by John Rudlin (New York: Routledge, 2001).

The Commedia Dell'Arte by Giacomo Oreglia (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1968).

The Triumph of Pierrot: The Commedia dell'Arte and the Modern Imagination by Martin Green and John Swan. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University (1993).

The Commedia dell'Arte: A Documentary History by Kenneth Richards and Laura Richards (UK: Basil Blackwell, Ltd, 1990).

Harlequin on the Moon: Commedia dell'Arte and the Visual Arts by Lynn Lawner (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998).

Imago Inspirations: Buster Keaton (1895-1966)

Buster Keaton was an American comic actor and filmmaker. He was best known for his silent films, in which his trademark was physical comedy with a consistently stoic, deadpan expression, earning him the nickname “The Great Stone Face”.

Keaton was recognized as the seventh-greatest director of all time by Entertainment Weekly. In 1999, the American Film Institute ranked Keaton the 21st-greatest male actor of all time. Orson Welles stated that Keaton’s *The General* is the greatest comedy ever made, the greatest Civil War film ever made, and perhaps the greatest film ever made.



Learn more about Buster Keaton, check out the following resources:

Keep your eye on the kid: the early years of Buster Keaton by Catherine Brighton (New York: Roaring Brook Press, 2008).

Buster Keaton: Cut to the Chase by Marion Meade (New York: HarperCollins, 1995).

The Theater and Cinema of Buster Keaton by Robert Knopf (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Buster Keaton Remembered by Eleanor Keaton (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001).

International Buster Keaton Society’s website:
<http://www.busterkeaton.com/>

Buster Keaton Museum’s website:
<http://kansastravel.org/busterkeatonmuseum.htm>

Imago Inspirations: Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977)



Sir Charles Spencer Chaplin, simply known as Charlie Chaplin, was an English comic actor and film director of the silent film era. He became one of the best-known film stars in the world before the end of the First World War. Chaplin used mime, slapstick and other visual comedy routines, and continued well into the era of the talkies, though his films decreased in frequency from the end of the 1920s. His most famous role was that of The Tramp, which he first played in the Keystone comedy *Kid Auto Races* at Venice in 1914. From the April 1914 one-reeler *Twenty Minutes of Love* onwards he was writing and directing most of his films, by 1916 he was also producing, and from 1918 composing the music. With Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and D. W. Griffith, he co-founded United Artists in 1919.

Chaplin was one of the most creative and influential personalities of the silent-film era. He was influenced by his predecessor, the French silent movie comedian Max Linder, to whom he dedicated one of his films. His working life in entertainment spanned over 75 years, from the Victorian stage and the Music Hall in the United Kingdom as a child performer, until close to his death at the age of 88. His high-profile public and private life encompassed respect, admiration, and controversy. In the early 1950s, Chaplin's leftist political leanings forced him to resettle in Europe with the left ultimately forced him to resettle in Europe during the McCarthy Era, when US Senator Joseph McCarthy pursued American citizens whom he and his followers suspected of being members or former members of, or sympathizers with, the Communist party.

Check out these resources all about Charlie Chaplin:

Chaplin's official website: <http://www.charliechaplin.com/>

Chaplin Archive's website: <http://www.charliechaplinarchive.org/>

Sir Charlie: Chaplin, the Funniest Man in the World by Sid Fleischman (New York: Greenwillow Books, 2010).

Charles Chaplin: My Autobiography by Charlie Chaplin (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964).

Chaplin: A Life by Stephen Weissman (Arcade Publishing, 2008).

In-School Workshop with Figures of Speech Theatre of Maine

Figures of Speech was founded in 1982 to explore the interplay of puppets, actors, shadows, music, movement, and masks, Figures of Speech Theatre creates work that quietly but emphatically illuminates our relationship to the earth, the inherent value of all cultures, and the balance between individual vision and community obligation. Believing that audiences experience art most vitally when they are called upon to engage their imaginations fully, the company produces visual theater that emphasizes myth, metaphor and transformation.

“Puppets, Shadows, & Light” Residency or In-school Workshop with Figures of Speech Theatre of Maine is available through Portland Ovations. In this workshop students work with artist-educator puppeteers to design and create shadow puppets and then produce a performance based on animal poems either selected by the students or the teachers.

For information, please contact Gretchen Berg at gberg@portlandovations.org or 773-3150.



Study Guide Connections to Maine's Parameters for Essential Instruction

This guide offers activities for students at multiple grade levels. In addition to the core content areas listed below, there are also Cross-Content Connections in English/Language Arts with Social Studies and Visual and Performing Arts; Physical Education/Health with Visual and Performing Arts; and Social Studies with Visual and Performing Arts and World Languages.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

A: Disciplinary Literacy—Dance

A1: Terminology— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A2: Space— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A3: Time— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A4: Energy— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A5: Locomotor and Non-Locomotor Movement— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A6: Compositional Forms: Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A: Disciplinary Literacy—Theatre

A1: Terminology— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A Disciplinary Literacy—Visual Arts

A1: Artist's Purpose— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A2: Elements of Art and Principles of Design— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A3: Media, Tools, Techniques, and Processes— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

D1: Aesthetics and Criticism— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

E2: The Arts and other Disciplines—Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-diploma.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

A1: Systems—Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

A3: Constancy and Change— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

D4: Force and Motion— Performance Indicators and Descriptors for grades 6-8, and 9-diploma.

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