



**WORKSHOP:
CLOWN SKILLS
PHYSICAL COMEDY, SLAPSTICK, JUGGLING, MAGIC, AND MORE!**

This workshop will focus on teaching students how to use mime and movement techniques to develop physical characters and perform basic elements of slapstick or physical comedy. Students are also instructed in various performance skills including juggling, magic, balance board, and stage combat. Some of the elements of the workshop are as follows.

PHYSICAL COMEDY AND SLAPSTICK. Each class begins with a series of simple rolls on the mats. The objectives are: to warm up the body; make students familiar with the many ways their bodies can contact the ground; and insure the safety of the students while performing the various falls. The rolls are the foundation for any tumbling and falling that the students learn in the workshop. For example, Students are taught the proper method for doing a back shoulder roll from a sitting position, followed by a back shoulder roll from a standing position, a back shoulder roll with a flop, a banana peel slip, then eventually a banana-peel-slip-fall-back-shoulder-roll-with-a-flop.

JUGGLING. Students will learn a variety of drills that will help them develop good technique for juggling a variety of items. I think of juggling not just as three balls in the air, but as object manipulation. We will work on one, two, and eventually three ball juggling, scarves, plates, rings, and clubs.

BALANCING. We will work on many aspects of balance and balancing. Students are taught to balance a stick on various parts of the body, balancing other objects (plates, hats, rings, etc.), and balancing themselves on the Rola-Bola or Balance Board, and on the large rolling tube (like walking on a log that rolls).

MAGIC. The basics of sleight-of-hand magic depend on fine motor control and mime skills. Again, the students are taught the building blocks for learning good technique, which can be used to create and develop a variety of illusions.

TIME AND TIMING. Use of varying rhythms to find and show attitudes and emotions. Also, exploring the great secret of comedy – timing.

IMPROVISATION. Many of the movement exercises are improvisational in nature. We will make use of additional theater games and improvisation exercises in exploring the creation of routines.

COOPERATION. Teaching students to work together in to find creative solutions to tasks.

RESEARCH. Building a foundation for further creativity.

