Théâtre Organic & Happy to be Happy
Present

1ST EDITION

In Barcelona, Spain
From October 13-31, 2014
1. Historical Overview

In 1986, **Michael Christensen** founded the **Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit**, a program that integrates professional performing artists into leading pediatric hospitals in the United States. The program has inspired a worldwide profession, hospital clowning. In the past 27 years, the profession of Hospital Clowning has exploded. In Brazil alone there are 350 separate hospital clowning programs. At the first International Conference on Hospital Clowning held in Jerusalem in October of 2011, over 200 professional hospital clowns from 22 countries convened to share experiences, participate in workshops and hear research studies that support the positive effects humor has on ill children, their parents and caregivers.

In 2001, **Sophie Gazel** and **Pablo Contesabile** founded **Theatre Organic**, a French/Argentine theater company. As well as producing plays, Theatre Organic also creates intensive training conferences and workshops in a variety of theatrical disciplines including acting, mask, dance, music, movement, voice, improvisation, clowning for the stage and the hospital.
2. The Workshop

In October, 2014, Michael Christensen and Sophie Gazel will partner to create an International Workshop for Hospital Clowning in Barcelona, Spain. They will select 24 professional hospital clowns from a variety of professional hospital clowning programs around the world to participate in an intensive three week long workshop. The instructors will be selected from a handful of international teachers experienced in various aspects of hospital clowning.

It is fitting that the International Workshop for Hospital Clowning be held in Barcelona! It is also the embodiment of the dynamic energy and cultural diversity of the profession and the workshop. Cultural diversity! Do artists from different countries perform the work differently? Yes, they do. Each culture has its own unique sense of humor. In some cultures, music is much more integrated into the work than in other cultures. In some cultures, the approach is extraverted and energetic while in others internal and soft. In some cultures, artists rely on speech much more than in other cultures. This workshop will give artists from around the world the opportunity to learn from each other, to share and celebrate their distinct cultural differences. The participants will not only learn from the instructors but also from each other! The finest teachers and the finest tools will result in valuable experiences and insights that will enable the artists to perform their jobs as hospital clowns better and will inspire their colleagues no matter what their country of origin.

Yes, cultures vary. Humor varies. Artists may do the work differently but we are all committed to the same purpose: to bring the very best of who we are as professional artists to the bedsides of hospitalized children, their parents and caregivers.
3. The program

TEACHERS

Michael Christensen (USA)
Sophie Gazel (France)
Haim Isaacs (USA / France)
Jean-Claude Cotillard (France)
Eric de Sarria (France)

HUMAN FIRST! EVERYTHING ELSE, NEXT!
Michael Christensen

Authentic presence: Through a series of playful exercises, participants will gain confidence in their ability to simply “BE,” to be authentically present. From this place, artists can move in any direction that is required, from assisting in a medical procedure to stumbling into doors!

Medical Parody: The art of medical parody opens a world of material to the hospital clown. The idea of a clown doctor is in itself parody. Every action that a doctor, nurse or hospital staff makes can be a delightful source of parody.

Sublime moments: Slapstick, physical comedy, pratfalls, high-energy action have their appropriate places in hospital clowning. So do soft, lyrical, and sublime moments as well.

The musical wash: This is a highly useful tool for the artists. They can use it to introduce themselves into a clinic. It can be their traveling musical signature. It gives them an immediate structure and can become a beginning and an end to an improvisation. This is a very useful tool.

Michael Christensen For 45 years, he has been a performing artist, lecturer, workshop leader and innovator in integrating humor into healthcare, most notably pediatric hospitals worldwide. In 1977, he co-founded the Big Apple Circus and in 1986 founded Big Apple Circus Clown Care. Michael has been a guest lecturer at the University of Tel Aviv, the Italian Federation of Hospital Clowning and the Scandinavian Humor Conference. He has presented at Medical Grand Rounds at Children's Hospital Boston and Children's National Medical Center. He was designated a NY Living Landmark. He was the recipient of the Raoul Wallenberg Humanitarian Award, Red Skelton Community Service Award, Parenting Magazine Achievement Award and is an Ambassador David Waters Pediatric Hall of Fame inductee. Michael has conducted hospital clowning workshops all over the world and is considered the “Father of Hospital Clowing”.

IMPROVISING IN DUOS TO CREATE WORLDS OF WONDER
Sophie Gazel

**Working together**: *Saying YES before saying NO*. We know that the clown’s nature is to find conflicts and problems but before creating conflict, it’s important to create harmony, balance and equilibrium.

**Speak less! Live more! Keep it simple!**: Making one proposal and developing it, instead of making several proposals without developing any of them. Living in the situations instead of speaking about the situation.

**Dramaturgy and Improvisational structure**: Writing a story at the same time you are playing it. Improvisation must follow some rules of dramaturgy to successfully tell a story, even a very short story. A story structure is based on a beginning, middle and an end. This structure has to be the same for an improvisation. I propose five steps that can help to facilitate this form of improvisational writing: 1. *The entrance of the clowns*, 2. *The objective / wish and goal*, 3. *The development, the strategies and the obstacles*, 4. *The resolution*, 5. *The exit*.

**Identifying your duo’s unique characteristics**: Two individuals working together express a specific complicity and dynamic, a special comic universe. This makes this duo unique. It is important to identify these characteristics to better understand the poetic and comic potential of the duo, to be able to work on it and to nurture it.

**Creating a world of wonder**: Assuming that the universe of the clown is not necessarily a realistic universe, we will explore ways to move out of the world of realism and into the world of wonder, fantasy and poetry! We will transform the spaces. We will invent many things that do not literally exist. We will create such an amazing world of magic and fantasy and poetry and wonder that for a few minutes the child will forget he is in the hospital. A child’s hospital room can become anywhere. The adventure begins!

**Sophie Gazel** has been a prominent director and acting teacher since 1997. She graduated from the London International School of Philine Gaulier in 2001. She also trained during this time with members of “Theatre Complicite” and John Wright. In France, she worked with Norman Taylor, Alain Mollot, Jos Houben, Paola Rizza, Tapa Sudana, and Mas Soeng. In 2001, with Pablo Contestabile, Ms. Gazel founded the Theatre Organic company. Theatre Organic created the first International Workshops Festival for Actors in 2001 in France and then in 2006 in Buenos Aires. Since 2009, she has regularly coached hospital clowning groups including Pallapupas in Barcelona. She has developed specialized training for improvisational work in medical settings. Since 2012, she has worked with CliniClowns Austria, Kliniclown Bayern and various other groups in Germany.
Musically enhance the theatrical aspect of his work. Create purely musical moments. Relate to a musical partner. The clown sings a song. Invent a song on the spot. Create soundscapes.

Rhythm: The clown hinges on it as a soloist, with his partner, with the space and with the public. Through different exercises we will develop musical, physical and theatrical applications. (Rhythmic coordination of hands, feet and voice, improvise within rhythmic structures, use silence as one’s partner, regular pulse / chaotic time.) Musical improvisation: Understanding roles and functions. (Melodic, rhythmic, soundscape, ranges (bass, soprano, etc), volume (piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo, simultaneously contrasting volumes), choose between entering closely into your partner’s proposal or creating a complimentary or opposing proposal, roles (who has the lead, who’s supporting)?, move between spoken and sung voice, develop a sense of form and architecture within the improvisation: repetition, themes, an overall view of the unfolding music.)

Soundscapes (beyond language, beyond traditional music): Develop the non-lyrical aspect of the human voice. This can be an important element for clowning in general and for the hospital room in particular: what is the sound of the thermometer? The bed? The monitors? (Create illustrative sounds (animal, industrial, nature—wind, water, a burnt tree, sunshine), create abstract vocal textures.) How does the clown interpret a song? A very thorny question. Often the response is to sing “badly” or belittle the song. Time needs to be given to try different solutions according to the dramatic situation at hand. Invent a song: Create a real song on the spot with words and melody. With or without rhymes / based or not based on an existing song. Musical objects: Transform daily objects into instruments, exploring hidden sound. Vocal technique: Given the limited time and the specific wish to enhance the clown’s instinctual tools, vocal technique (i.e., breathing, resonance) will be addressed, but not be given priority. It will also vary according to the participants’ levels.

Haim Isaacs is born in New York in 1957, Haim grew up in Jerusalem. After a formal education in music, Haim met and was deeply influenced by the Roy Hart Theatre, a group of vocal explorers in the south of France. After living and working with the Roy Hart Theater for 4 years, Haim moved to Paris where he composes, sings, improvises, writes fiction and teaches voice. Haim designs his workshops for professional singers, musicians, storytellers, dancers, acrobats and clowns. He has collaborated with Rire Medecin in France, Samovar school for clowns, Ami Hattab, Lori Lesson, Fred Robbe, Buzzing Red Clowns in Holland, Payasospital, Pallapupas in Spain. He has also led voice and music workshops for Theatre Organic in Argentina, School of Dramatic Arts in Spain, Ferme de Trielle and Theatre in Savoie in France. Haim has done vocal direction for various musical theatre productions including Philippe Genty Company, Comédie Poitou—Charentes (Yves Beauesne), Theatre du Temps Pluriel, Sheiikles, Tram des Balkans. Music in all its forms is an essential aspect of hospital clowning. Haim brings a lifetime of experience in this field to the workshop.
Medical staff usually walk through the doorway to enter a hospital room. Hospital clowns have been known to walk into the door when attempting to enter a hospital room! Participants will learn how basic mime techniques can support a world of silent acting and ACTION! Topics include exploring the transformation of burlesque into poetry and poetry into burlesque, exploring the effect silence has on timing, character, emotions and rhythm.

Jean-Claude Cotillard  Medical staff usually walk through the doorway to enter a hospital room. Hospital clowns have been known to walk into the door when attempting to enter a hospital room! Jean-Claude Cotillard brings a lifetime of experience as an actor, director, mime and most importantly for the International Workshop on Hospital Clowning, as a specialist in slapstick and burlesque. In 2006, he received the Molière Award- for Moi Aussi Je Suis Catherine Deneuve. He has written and directed several successful works including “Jouissance Burlesque: Le Travail”, “La Vie en Rose”, “Occupe-Toi de Moi”, Trekking et “Les hommes Naissent tous EGO”.

AND GOD CREATED... THE OBJECT!
Eric de Sarria

For clowns, considering objects as partners while improvising offers them a huge variety of ways to transform reality. Utilizing objects as metaphors, turning them this way and that, transforming them or regathering them are opportunities to reconsider, rediscover and redefine our environment and its components. Elevating the status of an object from prop to partner unlocks a magical world in which objects have souls. We will approach the relationships with objects as partners through the discipline of manipulation, puppetry, touching the collective and individual consciousness and the singularity and universality of any object. In collaboration with Haim Isaacs, we will explore the musicality of objects, their sounds, rhythms, unique noises. After this workshop, you may use objects to create a story or a simple image. And if you already do it, you will do it with more relevance!

Eric de Sarria  has primarily worked as actor since 1988 with the international Philippe Genty Company. His training is in visual theatre in the craft of puppetry and the manipulation of materials. Between 1989 and 2002, Eric toured all over the world with Philippe Genty’s company performing the show, Drifting, Dedalus from 1998 to 2000. Since 2000 he has been touring with Zigmund Follies, a finger puppet show. He has led workshops in visual theatre and puppetry in France, South Africa, Japan, Australia, Brazil, and Egypt. Eric has also directed several plays: in France, a play for children with a sculptor, a monologue and a cabaret about a French writer, Henry Michaux. In Catalunia, he worked as a manipulation consultant for Playground Company. He was assistant on The Giant Match-meet my in-laws (giant puppets), in Russia, he wrote and directed Commune Empreinte. Most recently, adapted and directed The Noze from Gogol. He has worked as clown in a circus, as an actor in several street theatre companies and in the conventional theatre company, Burattini, Theatre de l’Unité. For several years, he has assisted Philippe Genty.
## 4. SCHEDULES

### Week One

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<tr>
<th>Monday 13th October</th>
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<td>Specific exercises designed to cultivate group trust, playfulness, safety, openness, positive spirit, freedom and authentic presence.</td>
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<td>Burlesque routines and movement</td>
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<td>Objects, Music, Voice &amp; Rhythm</td>
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<td>Hospital Clowning Tools: Improvisation, musical wash, medical parody and sublime moments. Music, Voice and Rhythm</td>
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<td>Eric</td>
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### Week Three

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INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON HOSPITAL CLOWNING
1st EDITION

90 HOURS OF TRAINING

To participate, please email us your CV and photo.

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