

Christopher Bayes words... just wanted to share!

The clown is the most expressive of all creatures and is most at home in the midst of gleeful pandemonium. Without shame or awareness of his own simplicity, the clown valiantly and courageously enters the world with the thundering cry, "It's me!" in search of pleasure: the pleasure of play, movement, sound, chaos, and the pleasure in the big noise that an audience makes all together. How do we find this clown? Which number? Which house? Which window do we call to at dusk? In whose backyard shall we meet? We are in search of the authentic playful self and an entrance into the comic world. And this search is both the most difficult and the most thrilling for the same reasons. The nature of comedy itself makes the pursuit terrifying because it either works or it does not. They laugh or they are silent. You know right away. It is important to begin to think about comedy as a kind of call and response. But what if you call and the audience does not respond? Better not to call at all? No! You must call louder and longer and softer and naughtier and more often. Find all the pleasure that can be found in just making the sound and the gesture. But you must continue to call nonetheless.

When we prepare the body and the spirit of the performer, the clown (if we are lucky) will bubble up and leap into the world. The clown will be full of fear perhaps but also will possess great enthusiasm for the moments when the pleasure is greater than the fear and the potential for delight is greater than the panic of failure and the dread of disaster. In the classes and workshops we pursue the clown together in all of its messy and hilarious beauty. As students pursue the clown through exercises in rhythm, kinesthetic response and impulse they begin to build up a musculature that allows them to be hugely expressive both physically and vocally. Through a process of rediscovering innocence in sound and movement they begin to forget the filter of the socialized body. When we can forget that we know what the body is not supposed to do then we can begin to let it do what it wants and needs to do in the moment. We can listen to it and trust it and then the playful impulse can travel freely. The voice of the body becomes louder than the voice of the critic, which lives in the head. Then we begin to see in the eyes of the actor a little clown coming to visit.

Once the clown has been discovered it will stay with you always because it lives in your personal sense of play and your relationship to all other forms of drama will be enriched by the honesty, openness and reckless abandon that the clown requires.

Clown is a rediscovery of self. The playful self. The ferocious self. The vulnerable self. The artist.