

EASTERN
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
THEATRE

WAKING UP!

A Devised Theatre Piece directed by Cameron Prevatte



MARCH 2023

SPONBERG THEATRE
MAR. 17 & 18 AT 7PM
MAR. 19 AT 2PM
SUGGESTED FOR AGES 8+

FOR TICKETS
734.487.2282

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Study Guide

From the Director



For Kids

You're about to watch a puppet show with large characters, who sometimes make big noises. I know what it's like to make noises. It's fun. I wish we talked more with noises than words sometimes. As you watch the show, I hope that you talk to the puppets, make noise, clap, cheer, boo, whatever you wish. I hope you will wonder what these puppets are and what they want to say to you. I hope you leave feeling like you can do anything.

We made this piece together as a group of artists and you can do that too. It's ok if some of the show doesn't make sense. Life sometimes doesn't make sense, so we make puppets about it.

You're awesome just for being in your seat.
Thank you for being you. I hope you enjoy.



For Adults

Puppets are magic because they can create an illusion that other media can't. Masks transform bodies into stories.

Everyone can make a puppet out of almost anything. We throw our focus onto the object and make it more interesting than ourselves. Others watch as the puppet teaches us something about ourselves. This tradition has largely remained unchanged over human history. We think of the puppet as something childlike, yet it contains power that few other objects possess. Puppetry is an art form where children and adults can speak on an equal playing field. The puppet doesn't judge what the puppeteer does with it, it simply reflects. I hope that as you watch this show you feel a sense of play and wonder as the puppets communicate with you. Don't judge what they say.

Please
Read



Three Stories

WAKING UP! is made up of 3 different shorts/stories. You can think of them like loosely-connected songs on a playlist or different parts to one episode of a TV show like *Sesame Street*.

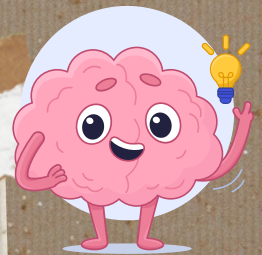


Waking Up

Eyes explore what it's like to wake up as humans.

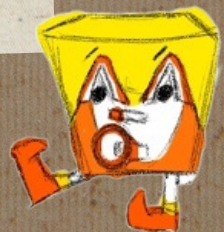
Brainstorm

A child finds a friend who needs encouragement of the heart.



Mind!

What happens when we mute our many emotions? Should we accept ourselves or silence ourselves?



Remember:

It's ok if some of the show doesn't make sense!
Life sometimes doesn't make sense,
so we make puppets about it.



Part 1: Waking Up

The first part of *Waking Up!* is also called *Waking Up*. This piece has four eyeball puppet/masks (seen here with an eyeball and lid) who explore human form and travel a full day:

- Sleeping
- Waking up
- Getting ready for the day (brushing teeth, having breakfast, putting jackets on, etc)
- Walking to work
- Working
- Driving home
- Getting/Arriving home
- And more.



At the end of the day, we also meet a very large puppet (seen below right) who tucks the people back in at night.

Questions:

- If YOU were an eyeball, what would you do to get ready for your day?
- What does the phrase "waking up" mean? (make a list)



Eyeball / lid



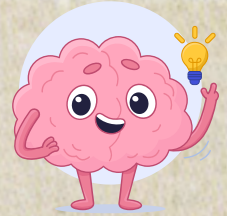
Eyeball Movement



Big Puppet

Part 2: Brainstorm

The second part of *Waking Up!*, is called *Brainstorm*. In *Brainstorm*, a child finds a friend who needs encouragement of the heart.



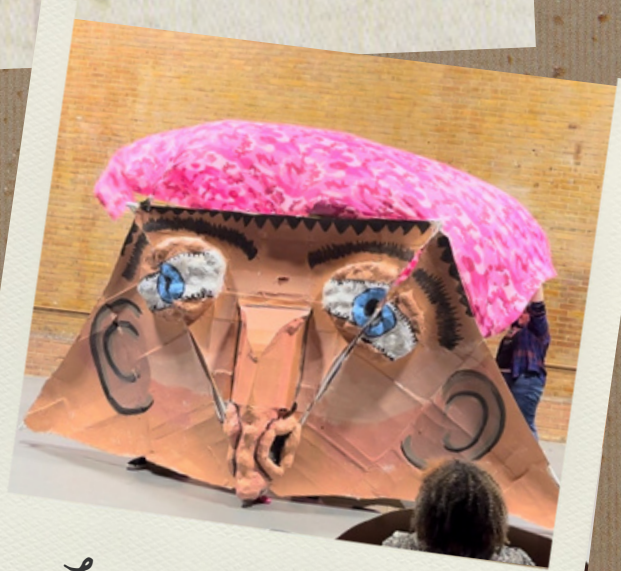
This piece includes percussive instruments, and object puppets such as sticks and material that make atmospheres, patterns, and environments. The child interacts with this environment and engages with her world. The second part of this piece has a large face/head puppet with a big pink brain. The brain shares its thoughts with us. Can we share encouragement back?

Questions:

- How do you move when you are trying to overcome something?
- If you were a thought or idea inside a brain, how would you move? (fast, slow, straight, curved, etc.) What sound would you make?
- What does it mean to encourage others?
- What does your brain say to you? What do you say to it?
- How can we be kind to our mind?



Sticks/Object Puppets



Large Brain Puppet



Part 3: Mind

The third part of *Waking Up!* is called *Mind*.

In *Mind*, a character with a four-sided box mask, explores the world through four different emotions. He discovers many things including music, friendship, and joy.



This part of the show is the oldest. It was created during both the EMU *Freshly Squeezed: A Festival of New Works* and further developed during the Spinning Dot Theatre's Artist Residency in Summer 2022.

The director, Cameron, is the main performer in this work and fully embodies different emotions and perspectives with his whole body and rotating his head. Note: There are some loud noises including a crashing metal plate in this piece.

Questions:

- When you discover something new in the world- are you excited? Curious? Fearful?
- How can you show emotions with your hands? Feet? Knees?
- What happens when we mute our many emotions? Should we accept ourselves or silence ourselves?



Emotions/Neutral



4-sided mask

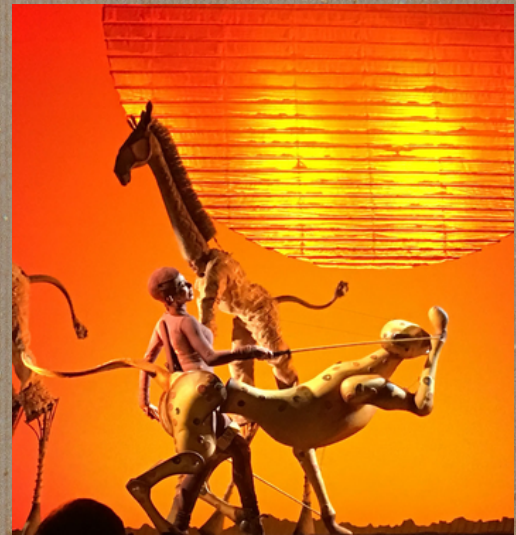
What is Puppetry?

Puppetry is a form of theatre or performance that involves the manipulation of puppets or inanimate objects, often resembling some type of human or animal figure. They are animated or manipulated by a human called a **puppeteer**.

There are a lot of kinds of puppets!
In *Waking Up!* We use large scale puppets, object puppets, and cardboard puppets.

Why use puppets?

Puppets are magic because they can create an illusion that other media can't. Everyone can make a puppet out of almost anything. We throw our focus onto the object and make it more interesting than ourselves. Others watch as the puppet teaches us something about ourselves. We think of the puppet as something childlike, yet it contains power that few other objects possess.



Disney's The Lion King



In the Heart of the Beast Puppet Theatre



Paperhand Puppet Theatre



Bread & Puppet Theatre

(Pictures are linked to web pages)

This tradition has largely remained unchanged over human history.

SOUNDS



Sometimes the actors in *Waking Up!* make vocal noises: sometimes big/loud, sometimes small. They use sounds more than words! They also use instruments and percussion instruments as well as recorded music to help tell the story.

Reminder:

"I hope you will wonder what these puppets are and what they want to say to you. I hope that you talk to the puppets, make noise, clap, cheer, boo, whatever you wish."
(Director, Cameron Prevatte)



Creativity

Everyone involved in this show used a great deal of creativity. Enjoy their artistic and creative choices!

YOUR Creativity:

As you watch the show: listen & watch, use your imagination, and create your own version of the story in your mind.

Creativity Research:

Spark Change (2021), a landmark study, reports that kids' access to and engagement with the performing arts...

- Inspires creative thinking, which encourages innovation and problem solving
- Expands perspectives and interpersonal skills that strengthen teamwork
- Nurtures hope and improves self-confidence, which fosters optimism and resilience
- Cultivates an enduring love of the performing arts

What is Devised Theatre?

Devised Theatre is a process of creating a performance collaboratively.

An ensemble comes together with a concept or a shared vocabulary and creates the work as a group. The ensemble serves as production researchers, designers, and performers rather than having more traditional set roles in the process (like assistant director, set designer, etc).

Ensemble=

A group of artists working together!
You can create an ensemble at your school/classroom.

Juwan Adams
William Clapp
Sebastian Dahlgren
Wesley Foster
Sarah Kucharek
Cassie Paige
Cameron Prevatte
Annabelle Rickert
Ember Seth

Why Devise?

- Creativity
- Sharing new ideas!
- Creating new WAYS of doing theatre
- Fun creating together
- Anything is possible

Remember:

We made this piece together as a group of artists and you can do that too.



The Ensemble

Activity - Frozen Images



What is it? Frozen Picture/Tableau is an activity that invites students to work quickly to create a visual representation of an idea, theme, text, event, or character using their own bodies. Students work collaboratively to make meaning both through their bodies and their sounds.

Focus: To explore emotions through body language and sound

Time: 15 Minutes

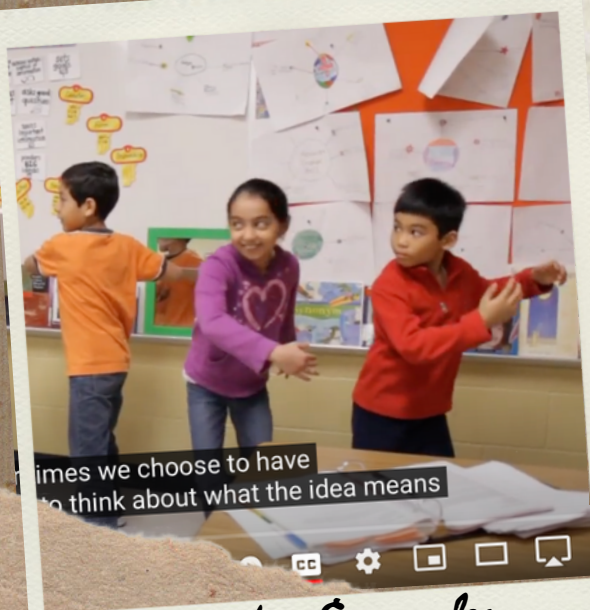
Solo: At students' own seat/ space in the room, create a frozen image with your body representing the following: frustrated, curious, exuberant, tentative.

Group: Invite students to sit on the floor or at their desks facing a small empty space. Introduce the strategy: What makes a successful Frozen Picture that involves multiple people? Invite students to generate a list of the ways actors tell a story in a frozen image without words. For example: actors use their body and face, defined point of view, imagination, levels, physical frozen action, and the relationship between bodies. Invite a group of volunteers to stage the first group image with clear characters and/or a conflict based on an interesting, accessible prompt for the group. For this show we recommend: create a frozen image with your body representing the following: frustrated, curious, exuberant, tentative as well as nervous but curious, stuck but hopeful, etc.

While the Frozen Picture is still frozen, ask the audience:

What do you see? What could be happening in this image? What about the bodies/characters that you see make you say that? What is a title for this image? What else could we title this image? The performers return the audience and new group of volunteers are selected and the process repeats itself.

Source: <https://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/content/frozen-picturestage-picture>



Video Example:
Frozen Images (link)

Possible Side-Coaching:

- Find a different way to create the image that you haven't done before (a new level or viewpoint).
- How can your elbows/knees/feet show this?
- Audience, let's think like a director: is this picture telling the story we need to tell? What suggestions might we make to strengthen or clarify the image?

Activity - Giant Puppets

Purpose: To create a puppet that can be controlled by more than one puppeteer so that they work together to introduce their puppet to the class

Materials: Creating a giant puppet can be done with found materials and recycling. This could include the following: markers, crayons, colored pencils, lined paper, construction paper, scrap paper, any type of used fabric, empty water bottles or sports drinks, Kleenex, piping, etc.) and any type of adhesive materials (i.e. tape, string, etc.).

Time: 30-40 Minutes

Students get into groups of 3 or 4. Each group will create their own "Giant" puppet. They will use their own creativity to put together a puppet with the materials available. Each person in the group must be responsible to control/move a portion of their puppet.

Questions to consider:

How does the puppet move? What sounds does the puppet make?
What is your puppet's name? Where does your puppet live?
How old is your puppet? What does your puppet do for a job?
Who are your puppet's friends? What does your puppet do for fun?
What is special about your puppet? What is your puppet's biggest goal in life?



National Theatre
(link)

Students will share their puppet and how it moves and sounds with the class. After each group presents, ask the audience: What do you notice? What movements are this puppet making? How are the puppeteers all working together?

The performers return to the audience and a new group of volunteers are selected and the process repeats itself.

Their ultimate goal is to work together in their presentation.



Share your
Thoughts



create

Ideas:

Draw or write about what you saw, heard, felt!
Write the story you saw/heard.
What do you think happens next?
Draw a puppet that you would create!

Discussion Questions



Pre-Show:

- What does the phrase "waking up" mean? (make a list)
- If YOU were an eyeball, what would you do to get ready for your day?
- If you were a thought or idea inside a brain, how would you move? (fast, slow, straight, curved, etc.) What sound would you make?
- What does it mean to encourage others?
- What does your brain say to you? What do you say to it?
- How can we be kind to our mind?
- When you discover something new in the world, are you excited? Or are you fearful? Curious?
- How can you show emotions with your hands? Feet? Knees?
- What happens when we mute our many emotions? Should we accept ourselves or silence ourselves?

Post-Show:

- What did you notice?
- What puppets do you remember? What are they? What do they say to you?
- What stories did you see/hear?
- What sounds did you hear? How did the music and sounds help to tell the stories?
- Some of the characters in the show helped and encouraged others. What does it mean to encourage others? How can we do that at our school?
- The big brain got some encouraging words from our child character. How can we be kind to our own minds?
- In MIND, the main character sometimes hides or masks his emotions. What happens when we mute our many emotions? Should we accept ourselves or silence ourselves?



Resources

Express Puppet Emotions

Materials: Random household objects

The first step—maybe the most important one—in becoming a puppeteer is understanding how to portray puppet emotion. For this activity you can use any household objects that you'd like! Follow along with New Victory Education's Siobhan Pellot as she imparts a series of different emotions to a variety of puppets. Notice how different emotions are performed more slowly or quickly!



(Pictures are linked to web pages)

Image Work

Use frozen images or tableaux to activate learning and deepen comprehension! Watch this video for several ways to implement image work that will be successful in your context and for your participants.



Today, we can show that access to and engagement with the performing arts...



Cultivates an enduring love of the performing arts

20%

greater interest in performing arts among SPARK participants versus control group after two years



Expands perspectives and interpersonal skills that strengthen teamwork

55%

larger student-selected teams among SPARK participants versus control group after two years



Inspires creative thinking, which encourages innovation and problem solving

50%

increase in improvisation skills linked to creative thinking among SPARK participants after three years



Nurtures hope and improves self-confidence, which fosters optimism and resilience

10%

increase in hope for the future after one year among SPARK participants

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