

The Mitten

A warm winter tale



Teachers'
Pack



Transformations Theatre Company
Maison des associations, Box H6, 67, r
st François de Sales, 73000
Chambéry, France

Email:
contact@theatretransformations.com
Tel.: (+33)(0)7 60 66 28 59

SIRET No.: 40969048400020 | License:
2-117090 and 3-1028279 NAF Code:
9001Z Performing arts

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1. What is Mask?

Masks are not only beautiful objects to look at, they are exceptional tools. A mask can entertain, soothe, heal, protect or hide the wearer. It always has an impact on the public that it never leaves indifferent.

A mask is:

- Protection: A mask can hide or protect its wearer, allowing them to develop, explore and express questions and feelings more easily than they might usually do.
- A resource: the mask contains all the information to allow the user to develop his personality and acts as a catalyst for imagination
- A mirror: A mask can be a mirror of society, helping us understand the roles we play and those we could certainly play: leaders, followers, diplomats...
- Liberation: Changing roles with a mask is quick and easy, and gender contingency is no longer an issue.

These few pages will provide you with some information (books, videos, addresses, etc.) about the show and the masks.

Hoping that this information meets your expectations, we assure you of our consideration and wish you a very profitable learning period.

Tracey Boot – Artistic Director



Tracey Boot, Mask Maker



Half masks for workshops

2. A theatrical and musical tale

"It was on a cold winter day that a mitten was lost in the snow...

Lost, but not for long because one after the other shivering animals will share this little refuge.

The animals talk about the difficulties they encounter, the harshness of winter, their snowy forest... One after the other, discovering the mitten, they experience sharing, tolerance and above all solidarity.

The artistic style

Theatre Transformations makes its own masks... from these masks come stories. They can be happy, sad, burlesque or poetic stories.

This charming encounter with animals in winter is staged in a dynamic and poetic way. The half-masks, created by Tracey Boot, bring touches of color to a forest with clean, white and contemporary decor, painted by the artist Geneviève Joannin.

The music and the actress's beautiful voice add a touch of magic and highlight the character traits of each animal.



Duration: 45 minutes

Audience: 3 to 8 years old

Team: Hélène Lenoir and Tracey Boot

Mask Creation: Tracey Boot

Puppet creation: Murielle Dussolliet

Decor: Tracey Boot, Geneviève Joannin and Denis Faure

3. The Masked Characters of the Show



Mouse



Frog



Owl

The Mitten



Rabbit



Fox

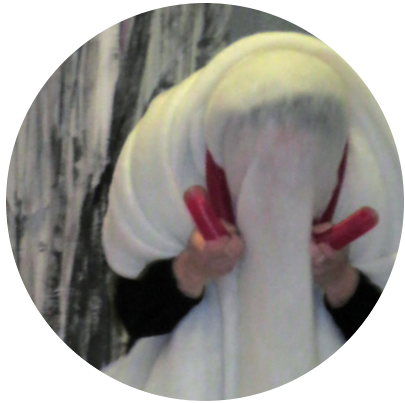


Bear



Zoya

4. Other Characters in the Show



Wild boar



Ant



Narrator

5. Some questions

1. In what season does the story take place?
2. Who is the character mentioned at the beginning?
3. What did she forget to do?
4. Where does she lose her mitten?
5. Why does a stitch make a “crack” sound?
6. What does the owl say in English?
7. How are the animals in the mitten?
8. What happens when the ant jumps into the mitten?
9. Where do the animals land?



6. Some avenues of work

Structuring of time and space:

Sequential images to be put in order. (4 or 5) (2 – 4 years)

Sequential images to be put in order. (7) (4 – 6 years)

Creation of a strip and sticking of the animals in the order in which they appear (it will be attached to the mitten made in the plastic workshop). (2 – 4 years) (4 – 6 years)

Numbering:

Numerical correspondence from 1 to 3 (2 – 4 years) and 1 to 7 (4 – 6 years)

Shapes and sizes:

Colour the animals from the story. (2 – 4 years)

Sort the mittens by size (5 objects) (4 – 6 years)

The living:

Match an image and a photo of each animal. (4 – 6 years)

Collective poster of each animal: place of life/food. (2 – 4 years) (4 – 6 years)

Perceive, feel, imagine, create:

The mitten:

Decorate your mitten with paint. Make regular holes all around and pass a wool thread or glue cotton. (2 – 4 years) (4 – 6 years)

Winter tree:

Make a winter tree with a stencil (2 – 4 years) and without a stencil (4 – 6 years).

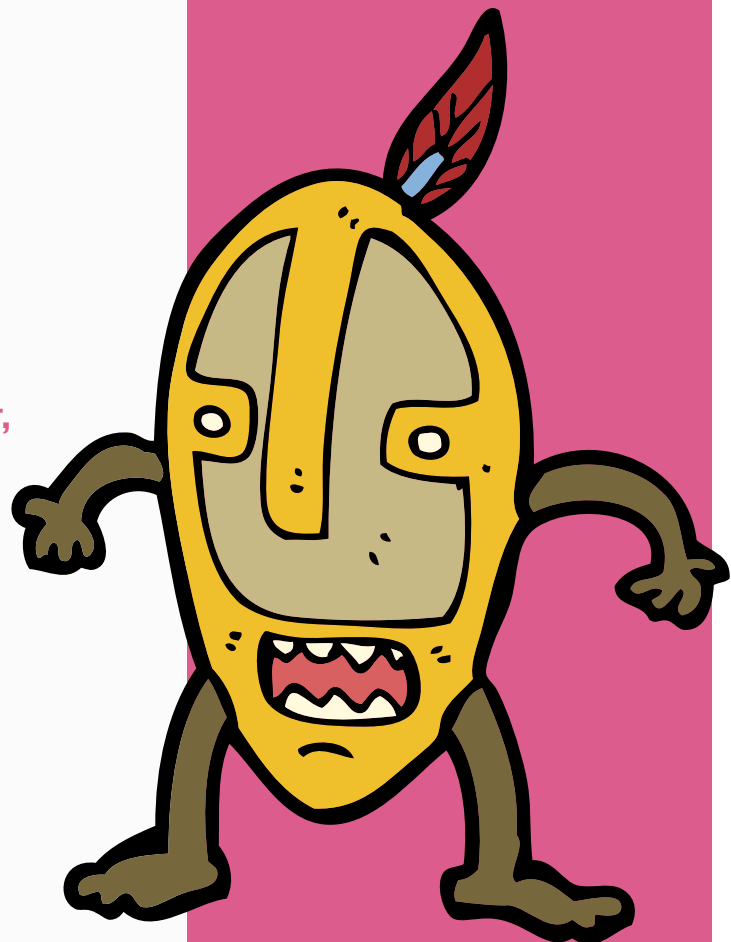
Make a frame with squares of shiny paper around it (2-color algorithm) (2 – 4 years) and (3-color algorithm) (4 – 6 years)

7. A history of the mask

Functions of masks in different civilizations

All civilizations, for thousands of years, have used ritual masks for various festivals and ceremonies, religious or not, intended to ward off spirits, mark the different stages of the year, for dances, or for protection. The forces of evil, power and love have always been symbolized by masks. In the East, the symbolism of the mask varies according to its uses. Its main types are the theater mask, the carnival mask, the funeral mask, used in particular by the Egyptians.

The theatrical mask – which is also that of sacred dances – is a modality of the manifestation of the universal Self. The personality of the wearer is generally not modified; which means that the Self is immutable, that it is not affected by its contingent manifestations. The mask sometimes externalizes demonic tendencies, as is the case in carnival masks, where the inferior, satanic aspect is exclusively manifested, with a view to its expulsion; it is liberating; it was also so during the Chinese Noh festivals, corresponding to the renewal of the year. It then operates as a catharsis. The mask does not hide, but on the contrary reveals inferior tendencies, which must be put to flight.



The funerary mask is the immutable archetype, in which the dead are supposed to reintegrate. It also tends to retain in the mummy the breath of the bones, a subtle inferior modality of man. The mask intended to fix the wandering soul was used in China before the use of the funerary tablet.

In the dualistic thinking of the Iroquois, masked dances all belong to the second Creator Twin, the Bad Brother, who reigns over the Darkness. The function of the masks is essentially medical. In the rites practiced, masked men, in spring and autumn, chase away diseases from the villages. These masked dances would originally come from hunting rites. They would have become healing dances, due to the belief that animals would send diseases to take revenge on the hunters.

In Africa, the institution of masks is associated with agrarian and initiatory rites. Masked procession dances evoke, at the end of seasonal work (plowing, sowing, harvesting), the events of the origins and the organization of the world, as well as society. These are truly cathartic spectacles, during which man becomes aware of his place in the universe, sees his life and death inscribed in a collective drama that gives them meaning.

Greek traditions, as well as the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations, have known ritual masks of sacred ceremonies and dances, funerary masks, votive masks, disguise masks, theater masks. These theater masks, generally stereotyped (as in Japanese theater), emphasize the characteristic features of a character: king, old man, woman, servant, etc.

Masks sometimes reflect a magical power: they protect those who wear them against evildoers and sorcerers; conversely, they also serve members of secret societies to impose their will by frightening.

Carnivals:

In many countries, the mixture of Christianity and older customs has given rise to carnival masks. Carnival comes from the Latin *carnavale*, which means "farewell" (*vale*) and "to meat" (*carne*). It was forbidden to eat meat during Lent, and the week before its arrival was a pretext for rejoicing.

The Venetian carnival has the *Commedia dell'arte*, a theatrical style dating back to the 16th century. Each character wears a half-mask that allows the spectator to see the expressions of the lower part of the face.

Pre-Lenten carnivals are also important in New Orleans, Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil – especially Rio. In Britain, the carnival of the Caribbean community in the Notting Hill area of West London lasts for three days at the end of August.

Other “masks”

Any concealment of the face, even partial, modifies a person's appearance, is in some way a mask: makeup, moustache, beard, glasses, wig...



8 Some avenues of work based on the masks

Oral /written expression

Observation of masks from different civilizations

(photos of ritual, theater or carnival masks) =>description: what are they made of? what do they inspire?

Face observations (photos): different physiognomies, different emotions
=>imagine biographies, stories, possible relationships between these different “masks”

Discovery of caricatures

(Daumier – B.D. – T.V. “les Guignols” etc.) =>what fault or quality is highlighted?

Handicrafts

Drawing faces: happy, sad, angry, shy...

Making masks: they are true works of art.

You can make simple masks out of paper or cardboard or more elaborate masks out of papier-mâché. (You could also use: makeup, mustache, beard, glasses, wig...)

Dramatic Play

Choosing a mask =>observation: which mask do children spontaneously go towards?

Wearing a mask means finding a gesture that suits it, it means inventing a character.

9. Books on the mask

Walk with a neutral mask by Georges Bonnaud Paperback

Masks for theaters & legends by Francis Debeyre

Party masks by Ann Rocard Paperback

Paper puppet theater by Véra Brody Paperback

Festival and popular beliefs in Europe: Throughout the seasons by Yvonne de Sike

Masks – rites and symbols in Europe by Yvonne de Sike

The Book of Masks by Michel Revelard

The Mask: from rite to theater by Odette Aslan Paperback

The masks by Lommel Andréas

Feasts of fools and carnivals by Jacques Heers Paperback

The carnival by Michel Feuille

Carnival or The Party in reverse by Fabre Daniel Paperback

Sacré Carnival by Bernard Coussée

El Carnaval /The Carnaval: Analisis Historico-culturalby Julio Ca Baroja Paperback

Canavals and Mascarades (Old Edition) by Ayola

The Mask by Genevieve Allard Paperback

Masks: Masterpieces of the Musée du quai Branly by Yves Le Fur

Making masks (for children):

Masks in celebration, BRODY (Vera), DOLARD (Marie), ed. Le Temps Apprivoisé, Pierre Zech, 1994

Masks of celebration, ROCARD (Ann), ed. Dessain et Tolra, 1986

Masks, manufacture and games, Clement (Line) Paperback – May 26, 1999

Other :

The Poetic Body, Jacques Lecoq

10. Mask Videos

Shows by the Theatre Transformation company:

The Mitten

<https://vimeo.com/270341411>

Hop, Hop <https://vimeo.com/392932015>

The Inseparables

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhm_aYA5DI4

Juliet and her Romeo

<https://vimeo.com/297036787>

Other videos:

Mummenschanz Mask

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAa_GvLnQik

Etienne Decroux presents: The Factory, 1961

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=preoY7QDouk>

The Tribal Eye: Behind The Mask (wood carving excerpt)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6wshtbq9WA>

Basel Mask Performance by Year 7 Drama Class

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMoNJmehQyE>

Jacques Lecoq

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koExYifqFRo>

11. Other references

Theater Transformations

<https://www.theatretransformations.com/nos-masques.html>

Mask – wikipedia

<https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masque>

International Carnival and Mask Museum

<http://www.museedumasque.be>

Quai Branly Museum

<http://www.quaibranly.fr/fr/expositions-evenements/au-musee/expositions/>

International Museum of the Amleto and Donato Sartori Mask of Abano Terme

<https://www.visitabanomontegrotto.com/fr/territoire/musees-expositions/musee-international-du-masque-amleto-donato-sartori-abano-terme/>

Mask Collective

www.lescreateursdemasques.fr/wp/

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Maison des associations, Box H6, 67, rue Saint François de Sales, 73000 Chambéry, France

E-mail: contact@theatretransformations.com Tel.: (+33) (0)7 60 66 28 59

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Other Shows

