

7. The trained flea

Learning Objectives:

- Look for tension in improvisation
- Seek precision and attention
- Train imagination and creativity
- Experience the pleasure of being with the public, working on your insecurities

Materials: music

Description:

The game recalls a circus "number" and shows to be useful and fun in many ways. We have trained a flea to do what we order it to do.

The flea is so small that the spectator cannot see if the flea is really there or not: the trainer will make him see it through his own eyes!

Basic exercise.

The trainer puts himself in a support posture: legs open slightly bent, back straight, arms soft forward (as if they were resting on a bench), fists closed, back of the hands upwards.

With the fingers of his right hand he/she takes the flea (from where he/she wants) and places it on the back of his left hand. Looking at the spectators, he announces that the flea will jump to the back of his right hand. He/She looks at the flea on the left hand and makes a small movement with his wrist to make the flea jump. He follows the flight of the flea with his eyes until it lands on the back of his right hand. "Et voilà!" He/She looks at the spectators satisfied and announces the next performance: "the somersault!". He/She gives a small blow with his right wrist and follows with his eyes the evolution of the flea in the air until it lands on the back of the left hand. He/She looks at the spectators satisfied and with his right hand indicates the flea. He/She picks up the flea with his right hand and puts it back where he had taken it at the beginning.

In order for the game to work, it is necessary to "give substance to the imagination". How? Scrupulously following with the eyes (and seeing!) the flea. If the trainer does not see his flea, he cannot expect the spectators to see it. Another important element to engage the viewers is watching them, particularly at the beginning when he announces the performance, and immediately after the performance is over. The subjects of the event are three: trainer, flea and public.

Development:

Once this basic exercise has been done and repeated all together, the participants can be asked to develop it into a real "comic circus act".

The workshop leader will explain that it is not so important what you do, but rather the "how". Jackets, skirts and some accessories (bags, hats) can help.



The workshop leader can propose the following "game scheme" to facilitate the creation of the number:

- 1) "Entrance" with presentation with invented name and personal greeting
- 2) Presentation of the flea (or fleas) with the name
- 3) Brief announcement of the performance (let's remember that we are at the circus!)
- 4) Exhibition of the flea (e.g. "the jump")
- 5) Announcement of the development of the number
- 6) Exhibition (e.g. "somersault")
- 7) Announcement of further development "more and more difficult!" (e.g. "double somersault")
- 8) Surprise/problem/accident (e.g. falling flea or jumping among spectators, ...)
- 9) Acceptance of the problem and its resolution (or worsening...)
- 10) Conclusion, farewell and exit.

