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# HELEN DONNELLY

THEATRE, CIRCUS AND HEALTHCARE CLOWN  
CLOWN INSTRUCTOR / DIRECTOR  
HEALTHCARE WORKSHOP LEADER / PRESENTER

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital  
150 Kilgour Road, Toronto, ON, Canada  
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416-425-6220 x3009

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## OVERVIEW

To joyfully and artfully serve children, adults and elders in healthcare and beyond  
To offer artistic clowning to attendees of festivals, circus and theatre.  
To train clown students to the highest standards, preparing them for healthcare, theatre and circus

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## SKILLS

Internationally-experienced healthcare, theatre and circus clown  
Advanced trainer and director of clowns (health care, theatre, circus)  
International presenter and workshop leader for healthcare professionals and caregivers

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## EDUCATION

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### HONS. BA

1987-1992 University of Toronto  
Specialist Degree in Theatre, Minor Degree in English (University College Drama Program)

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## ADDITIONAL TRAINING

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### CLOWN AND MASK TRAINING

1994-present  
Trainers include Michael Kennard, Francine Cote, James Keylon, Roch Jutras, Fiona Griffiths, Grindl Kurchirka, Michel Laprise, David Shiner, Sonia Norris, Martha Ross, Pig Iron Theatre

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

2014  
Certificate in 'Achieve Leadership' offered by Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

### CLOWN TEACHER TRAINING

2010  
Manitoulin Centre for Creation and Performance  
Pochinko method teacher training course  
John Turner, facilitator

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## RECOGNITION, AWARDS & GRANTS

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### **SPIRIT OF EDUCATION AWARD**

2016

Awarded by the Teaching and Learning Institute at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

### **THEATRE GRANTS (PEER-REVIEWED)**

Toronto Arts Council, 2004

*Posey's Wig* (Foo Productions)

Total amount: \$7,500

Ontario Arts Council, 2004

*Posey's Wig* (Foo Productions)

Total amount: \$8,000

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## CURRENT APPOINTMENTS

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### *THERAPEUTIC CLOWN & HEALTHCARE SETTINGS*

#### **PRINCIPAL/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR - THERAPEUTIC CLOWN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

2018/19 - ongoing

George Brown College

Developed and leading a new therapeutic clown training program at George Brown College to commence September 2018. This is the first therapeutic clown certificate program specifically geared to the training of therapeutic clowns in North America and the second in the world

#### **THERAPEUTIC CLOWN PRACTITIONER**

2007-present

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Therapeutic Clown Practitioner with inpatients on 3 inpatient units (BIRT, SODR, CCC).

Team lead for fundraising initiatives, education and training, research participation and ongoing development, related to Holland Bloorview's Therapeutic Clown Program

Developed 3 Standards of Care between 2014 and 2017: 1) The responsibilities, 2) the initiation training and 3) the ongoing continued professional development of the Therapeutic Clowns at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

International presenter of artistic workshops with healthcare clown colleagues

#### **INDEPENDENT HEALTHCARE/ARTS FACILITATOR**

2012-present

Leading workshops and offering talks on topics including humour in healthcare, Therapeutic Clowning and its benefits, resiliency, communication and connection to healthcare workers and caregivers

#### **DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER**

2018

'A Therapeutic Clown Emerges: Our story of recruitment and training'

Full-length documentary film by Donnelly-Vanden Kroonenberg in association with Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Link to trailer: <https://youtu.be/L2JT-73g5SM>

*THEATRICAL & CIRCUS CLOWN*

**THEATRICAL CLOWN INSTRUCTOR**

1998-present

Clown Workshop facilitator at various facilities including Haliburton School of the Arts, University of Toronto, Ryerson University, George Brown College and independently

**THEATRE CLOWN: ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, PERFORMER**

2001-present

Writer, producer, performer of theatre production company Foo Productions offering theatrical clown shows in theatre and clowning at special events to audiences of all ages.

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**PAST EXPERIENCE**

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*THERAPEUTIC CLOWN*

**DR CLOWN TORONTO DIVISION**

2008-2011

Program co-ordinator, artistic trainer and Therapeutic Clown Practitioner for Therapeutic Clowning services in Toronto serving elders with dementia

**THERAPEUTIC CLOWN PRACTITIONER**

2004-2006 Hospital for Sick Children

Therapeutic Clown Practitioner with inpatients on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor  
(Infectious Disease, Respiratory Meds, Oncology)

*THEATRICAL & CIRCUS CLOWN*

**CIRCUS CLOWN**

1999-2017

Circus clown with various companies including Cirque du Soleil, Circus Orange, Zero Gravity Circus, Femmes du Feu

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**PRESENTATIONS**

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**INTERNATIONAL**

**Spontaneous Song and Sound:** artistic workshop,  
Healthcare Clowning International Meeting, Vienna, Austria 2018  
Healthy Humor Conference, Ashford, CT USA 2017

**Playful Hearts: the Road to Resiliency**

Ontario Association of Children's Rehabilitation Services conference, Toronto, Canada 2017

**Supervision and Evaluation of Healthcare Clowns,** international panel discussion about best practice  
Healthcare Clowning International Meeting, Lisbon, Portugal 2016

**Hello In There:** artistic workshop

Healthcare Clowning International Meeting, Lisbon, Portugal 2016

**Too Cool:** artistic workshop

Healthcare Clowning International Meeting, Lisbon, Portugal 2016

**Insight into the Pochinko Technique:** artistic workshop,  
The Dream Doctors Annual Training, Jerusalem, Israel 2014

**Creativity in Healthcare:** interactive workshop  
A Palpable Thrill Healthcare Conference, Hamilton, Canada 2016

**The Joy of Rhythm, Movement and Sound**  
Therapeutic Recreation of Ontario conference, Toronto, Canada 2015

#### **NATIONAL**

##### **A One and A Two**

Former Canadian Association of Therapeutic Clowns conference, Calgary, Canada 2008

##### **Best Practice presentation (Continued Professional Development)**

Former Canadian Association of Therapeutic Clowns conference, Montreal, Canada 2009

#### **LOCAL**

**A Fool Speaks Out:** interactive workshop  
North York Arts, Toronto, Canada 2017

##### **Interprofessional Education in Creativity**

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital & Sunnybrook Hospital, Toronto, Canada 2015-2017

##### **Presenting...YOU!** Presentation workshop

York University, Toronto, Canada 2013

##### **The Art of Therapeutic Clowning**

Mohawk College, Hamilton, Canada 2013

##### **Under the Red Nose: Towards a Deeper Understanding of Therapeutic Clown in Elder Care**

Sunnybrook Palliative Care Conference, Toronto, Canada 2010

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## SCHOLARLY PUBLICATIONS

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Gray, J., Donnelly, H. & Gibson, B. (In preparation) Seriously foolish and foolishly serious: The art and practice of clowns in children's rehabilitation. *Journal of Medical Humanities*. (submitting August 2018)

Gray, J., Setchell, J. with Donnelly, H. (In preparation) Applied performance practices of therapeutic clowns: A curated conversation with Helen Donnelly. A. Breed & T. Prentki (Eds) *The Routledge Companion to Applied Performance*. London, UK: Routledge.

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## MEDIA

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#### *MEDIA INTERVIEWS, FILMING AND ARTICLES*

##### **1999-present**

CBC Metro Morning (2017)

CBC Ontario Morning (2017)

Hamilton Spectator (2016, 2001)

## DONNELLY

CBC Here and Now (1999)  
CIUT (2005, '11)  
NOW Magazine (1999, 2005, '06, 11)  
FAB Magazine (2011)  
CTV News (2008)  
The Toronto Star (2001)  
View Magazine (2006)  
City TV Breakfast Television (1999)

### *SOCIAL MEDIA and ON-LINE COVERAGE*

**"Lean On Your Fools"** U of T Med Magazine-University of Toronto The Humour Issue:  
<https://uoftmedmagazine.utoronto.ca/2018/winter/>

**'A Mask That Reveals'** BLOOM (Holland Bloorview Blog), by Louise Kinross, 2017

**'A Clown Is The best Medicine'** BLOOM (Holland Bloorview Blog), by Louise Kinross, 2015

**'Embracing Failures: Lessons from Clowns'** The Curiouser PhD (blog) by Julia Gray, 2017

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## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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McMaster Hospital (1984-'86) inpatient transfer, meals delivery  
CNIB Hamilton (1987) elder companion/ events assistant  
Elizabeth Fry Society (1998-'99), events assistant