

Insight into the Pochinko Technique:

warming up the mythology of your clown

Richard Pochinko was a Canadian clown master who studied at Ecole Jaques Lecoq in 1971. Lecoq encouraged Pochinko to return to Canada to establish his own clown school in his unique style. During his travels in the U.S. and Canada, Pochinko learned about the Native culture and its own form of clown through working with masks.

In the 1980s Pochinko established his clown school in Toronto called The Theatre Resource Centre. Students from all across Canada and around the world came there to learn what became known as the *Pochinko Technique*. The work was carried on by his students after his death in 1989 and continues today.

His teaching has had an enduring impact on countless clown artists. Many teachers of this technique have taught all over the world. It is unique in that it is informed by the figure of the Native American trickster. Its mask work and focus on the individual journey makes it invaluable to clown artists.

In this workshop, we will explore specific techniques that allow the clown artist new ways to connect with the 'inner workings' of their clown. It is an opportunity to see the world through the eyes of their clown, to explore the clown's images and desires, and focus and listen to its deeper impulses. These exercises are valuable for those working therapeutically with clients in healthcare.

*"What we need is a clown for our time. A clown that...celebrates our humanness, our animalness, and the times that we can touch each other in a moment of laughter."
-Richard Pochinko*

ABOUT HELEN DONNELLY

Helen is a professional circus, theatrical and therapeutic clown.

She is program coordinator and trainer of the Therapeutic Clown Program at the acclaimed Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital; the largest pediatric rehab hospital in Canada.

She also performs her duties there as lead therapeutic clown 'Dr Flap'.

She has performed with Cirque du Soleil and currently with Zero Gravity Circus and Circus Orange.

She has been teaching clown workshops and physical theatre in North America for over 14 years, including at University of Toronto, Second City (Toronto) and the prestigious Haliburton School of the Arts. Her independent workshops are offered several times a year.

Helen is a graduate from the University of Toronto with an Honours B.A., Specialist in Drama. Helen has studied clown with Francine Cote (Cirque du Soleil, international scene), David Shiner (Fool Moon, Cirque du Soliel), Roch Jutras (Cirque du Soleil, Cirque Eloize), John Turner and Mike Kennard (of Mump and Smoot fame), Theatre Smith-Gilmour and Grindl Kurchirka. She has received teacher training in the Pochinko Technique through John Turner.

Helen has been clowning and acting for over 20 years. She continues to perform her own theatrical clown shows through her company Foo Productions and to clown for special events worldwide.