

Doug Berky

*"an inspiring breath of joy and wonder!
The masks were fabulous
and Doug's manipulations
of the masks transformed
them from inanimate
objects to totally
mesmerizing
characters
with a life
of their
own."*

*It was a pleasure to watch a solo performer portray a
small army in one hour." Ed Allan – Founder and
Managing Director, Fantasy Theatre, Miami, Florida*

Doug Berky has been creating and evolving his own brand of physical theater for over thirty years. His original performances are an intricately woven fabric of Commedia Del Arte, physical comedy, mime, mask theatre, clowning, circus arts, and storytelling. Doug is known internationally for his mask construction. He designs and constructs the masks for his own performances as well as creating all of the sets, choreography, scripts and many of the costumes.

Doug began his professional training at the Dell'Arte School of Mime and Comedy in Blue Lake, California. He toured for eight years with established companies such as The Montanaro Mime Theatre, (South Paris, ME) The Two Penny Circus, (Barre, VT) and Sunshine Too, the touring theatre of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, NY).

Doug has performed nationally and internationally in places as varied as Fletcher, NC and Matanzas, Cuba. He appeared in the award-winning NBC children's television series, "See-Saw," in Portland, ME, and in four television specials for Swedish National Television

in Stockholm, Sweden. He has been the featured performer at events as diverse as The Eugene O'Neill Theater Cabaret Symposium and a national gathering of the National Council of Churches. Doug has performed and taught as Artist-In-Residence at numerous schools and colleges including schools for the deaf, The Commedia School (Copenhagen, Denmark), Roanoke College (Salem, VA), Furman University (Greenville, SC), and the University of Wisconsin, Racine.



As a mask maker, Doug's creations are in use in schools and theaters from Stockholm to Seattle. He has designed masks and puppet heads for numerous Shakespearean productions including "Midsummers Nights Dream" at Centennial High School, Franklin, TN, and The Nashville Shakespeare Festival, Nashville, TN, and "The Tempest" at Furman University, Greenville, SC. He has also designed Commedia Dell'Arte masks for a number of college and summer stock productions. Other mask design and constructions include professional ballet productions, music video productions, television production, individual

performing artists, and his original theatre productions.

Doug has performed and taught throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe in schools, colleges, and festivals. He is known internationally for his design and construction of masks.

Doug Berky Quotes

The Link Centre, Tupelo, MS

"Most of all, it was an honor and a privilege to witness your amazing artistry. Thank you for the effort you gave to educate, entertain, and heal our students, teachers, and other community members. You shared lessons of encouragement, kindness, love, partnership, diversity, literacy, joy, service to others, and respect for a higher power. Just as "no act of kindness is ever wasted", the messages you brought will not be wasted but will influence lives all over Tupelo."

The Carnegie Visual and Performing Arts Center, Covington, KY

"I found working with this artist to be a wonderful experience. I can't say enough about how creative, sensitive, funny and professional his work is. The audience was enthralled and would return in a flash to experience Doug Berky again!"

Anderson County Libray, SC

"Doug was wonderful, magificent, brilliant! People's mouths were hanging open!"

The Chatauqua Institution

"As a person, and as a performer, he epitomizes what a Family Entertainment Series is all about."

Pike Performing Arts Center

"...you are one of the rare performers who has the ability to capture the attention (and imagination) of an entire audience in a big room (1,400+ seats) as soon as you open your mouth!"

Darke County Center for the Arts

Doug Berky's performance awakened imaginations, inspired creativity, instilled appreciation for theatre arts, and increased knowledge of our shared cultural history, while also reinforcing the value of thoughtful study and hard work. Wow! No Show is quite a show, indeed!"

Gaston County Library, Gastonia, NC - on NO SHOW

"He was absolutely delightful! Our family program audience (from preschoolers to senior citizens) loved him. I laughed so hard that by the conclusion of his performance, my ribs ached! Not only is Doug an extraordinarily talented performer, but he's also a complete pleasure with which to work. I only wish that every person in our Greater Gaston area could have seen him; he certainly can bring a smile – if not a huge bellylaugh – to every audience member. And we all can always use a laugh or two."

Great Neck Library, Great Neck, NY

"We were mesmerized by his storytelling, artistry and winning personality."

The News and Observer, Raleigh, NC

"A thinking man's fool."

United Arts of Raleigh//Wake County, NC - Teacher/Cultural Arts Representative Evaluations:

"He understands what it takes to keep middle school students engaged and is very talented and should be invited to any school that can have him. One of the best performances I have ever seen with the groups of kids we have! Doug Berky was a huge hit!"

"He was engaging and a fantastic storyteller."

"Everything Doug did was a grand surprise and the students, teachers and faculty at the school truly loved his performance and the information learned."

Reviews/Articles

**NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI
DAILY JOURNAL
COMMUNITY COLUMNIST
Shawn Brevard**

The arts heal, educate, inspire, and unite

The title grabbed me: “Art Heals.” This was the theme of a recent pre-conference in Nashville, Tennessee, held in conjunction with the annual Americans for the Arts convention. The brochure advertising this event came across my desk in mid-April. It struck a resounding chord.

Tupelo Community Theatre’s Spring Education Event, showcasing professional mime and mask theatre artist Doug Berky, had just ended. As an organizer of the four-day event I had seen first-hand the positive reactions of various audiences to Doug’s gentle humor, vaudevillian skill, and practiced timing.

To witness the transformative power of performance for a group of patients from the North Mississippi State Hospital, a 50-bed psychiatric unit on Briar Ridge Road, was the most touching experience of the week. Upon arriving for the show the patients seem distracted, nervous, passive. As the performance began their postures shifted, eyes opened attentively, smiles of wonder and merriment spread across their faces. When the audience rose to leave one patient stated emphatically, “He made me glad!” Doug’s gift had reflected a bit of light into a troubled soul.

Theatre heals.

Dear Doug,

As I was saying at the conference this past September, I have always been filled with trepidation when presenting a “one-man-show” for my 1,449 seat PAC. I know that others feel this way with their programming search also, but I am pleased to note that you are one of the rare performers who has the ability to capture the attention (and imagination) of an entire audience in a big room as soon as you open your mouth! I have been impressed during both of the occasions that I have booked your Gems performance at how a group of a thousand rowdy kids quiets and stays rapt with attention when you’re on stage. Even more, I am impressed that you are able to do this with little in the way of fancy lighting and video effects, big staging elements or loud music. It is so gratifying to watch a performance by someone with those unique abilities. Anyone looking to book worthwhile family or youth shows will be delighted by the content and enthralled by your performance. I am looking ahead at your availability for the coming season!

Sincerely,

*Jared Duymovic
Director
Pike Performing Arts Center*

“The Tiger’s Whisker”
(from FOIBLES, FABLES & OTHER IMASKINATIONS)
Review

From Nuvo newspaper 11/21/12, “Celebrating Kurt Vonnegut’s Birthday and Armistice Day”

“...But it’s not the vet who does all the giving. As Shay noted, families can help facilitate sleep. Mime and puppetry expert Doug Berky offered a lesson on patient support.

Berky moved from character to character, animating physically beyond-life-sized puppets: a tiger, a clouded Japanese soldier home from a taxing war, his wife and an old mountain sage, who offered “The Tiger’s Whisker,” a moral about the power of patient, loving, courage when handling men (or women) who went off to war but never came home in spirit. The wife, distraught over the irresponsive stranger glowering in isolation within her home, finds the courage, over a series of patient months, to tame a tiger to the point that she can take a whisker - the same courage, she discovers, that is necessary to help her husband emerge from his traumatized shell.

The audience sees the woman apply the gentle wisdom she learned: just setting out a meal and inviting the husband to join. He does not leap from the table; neither had the tiger. But his brow, furrowed so deeply at the beginning of the tale, eased ever so slightly, suggesting that it may take him a while to join the table. But with patient support, he just may get there - just like the tiger did. Berky deserves credit for a nice use of puppet making in the case of the traumatized soldier. At first the soldier seemed rooted and impossible to animate, but with that unexpected brow lift conveyed a weight beginning to lift from his soul.”