

# John Turner - Curriculum Vitae

## Overview

John is a teacher/performer/clown/director/creator. He is the Founder/Artistic Director of The Clown Farm formerly known as The Manitoulin Conservatory for Creation and Performance (MCCP), a unique facility for research, training, creation and performance in all areas of the performing arts.

Situated in the heart of glorious Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada, surrounded by rolling fields, gentle forests and tranquil inland lakes, the MCCP offered students that came from Ontario, across Canada, and around the globe to explore the worlds of their creativity in a unique and exquisite environment. There they found an ideal setting for training that could be applied on a personal or professional level. While the primary focus of the program was on the development and growth of the artist, the introductory levels were enjoyed by participants from all walks of life (teachers, therapists, musicians, professors, doctors, carpenters, etcetera). The aspiring or established artist also found a strong focus on the creation and/or performance of professional works.

While the global pandemic caused the closing of the doors of the Manitoulin facility John continues with the work as an internationally sought after teacher and coach in the fields of acting, mask, clown, and movement virtually as well as having returned in person in both private institutions as well as public ones.

**John most recently directed** Mia Star van Leeuwen's exploration workshop of her "Ghost" project, Justin Miller's "Pearle Harbour in Distant Early Warning" at Buddies in Bad Time, Toronto, and was Artistic Associate and Clunic Consultant on Karen Hines' Pochsy IV at the premier at One Yellow Rabbit's High Performance Rodeo. John was also the director on Jennifer Dallas' Kemi Projects' Dora Award winning and ground-breaking dance/clown fusion piece Kittly Bender 2017, followed by *Know* in January 2020 in Toronto. Other recent/current collaborations and directing/dramaturgy activities include work with Karen Hines, Amy Lee and Heather Annis (Morro and Jasp), Jed Tomlinson and Jacqueline Russell (Sizzle and Spark), Christine Moynihan (Ethel), Alyssa Billingsley, and of course Mump & Smoot.

He is also the Co-Artistic Director and the "Smoot" half of Mump & Smoot, the award winning clown duo that have been a hit from coast to coast for the past 36 years. With Mump & Smoot he has created and performed in 8 full length shows that have been performed in major regional theatres across North America and in the middle east. These theatres include the Astor Place Theater (Off Broadway), Yale Repertory Theater, the La Jolla Playhouse, the Dallas Theater Center, the American Repertory Theater (Boston), Baltimore Center Stage, the Canadian Stage in Toronto, Alberta Theatre Projects in Calgary, and the Vancouver East Cultural Centre to name but a few.

In his twenties he had jobs as a roughneck, nursing orderly, painter, construction worker, frying pan salesman and bartender. Richard Pochinko, Ian Wallace, and Fiona Griffiths introduced him to clown, mask and movement. He also studied bouffon with Philippe Gaulier, physical comedy with John Townsen and improv at Second City.

**Mump & Smoot have won two Dora Mavor Moore Awards and two Canadian Comedy Awards and were nominated for the *Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in Theatre*, among other industry honours. John is also currently creating a solo clown show for which he has received Canada Council and Ontario Arts Council creation grants. In the past he has also served as an Arts Grant juror for the Ontario Arts Council.**

## **Career Highlights**

### **Mump & Smoot - 1987 – current**

Creator, writer, performer and producer for *Anything, Cracked, Flux, Something Else, Tense, Ferno, Caged, and Something*. Have toured extensively in Canada, United States and Israel. Please see attached resume.

### **Teaching - 1990 - current**

Most aspects of theatre creation and performance including introductory level to advanced Clown, Mask and Physical Theatre, Comedy, Acting, and Directing at several institutions including 19 years as a sessional instructor at Laurentian University.

### **Directing & Coaching - 1990 - current**

Numerous productions including director, clown coach, choreographer, Artistic Associate, and muse (creative development consultant) on all Pochsy productions.

### **Administration - 1988 – current**

Founder and Artistic Director of The Clown Farm (formerly The Manitoulin Conservatory for Creation and Performance), Co-artistic Director of Mump & Smoot, Co-Artistic Director of The S.P.A.C.E. (Studio for Physical and Clown Explorations, Toronto 1997-2003)

## **Theatre Experience (Creator/Performer/Teacher/Director)**

### **Mump & Smoot 1988 – current**

Co-Artistic Director with Michael Kennard, Creator, writer, performer and producer for *Anything, Cracked, Flux, Something Else, Tense, Ferno, Caged, and Something*. Have toured extensively in Canada, United States and Israel. Please see attached Mump & Smoot resume.

### **Theatre Resource Centre 1987 –1991**

Performer in *Elizabeth - Almost By Chance A Woman* - Director Richard Pochinko,  
Performer/Creator - *Asylum*, - Director Ian Wallace  
Performer/Creator - *Fractures & Misfits*, Director/Choreographer – Fiona Griffiths

### **The Centre For Indigenous Theatre 1997-2003**

Sessional instructor in Mask and Clown, Director of several ensemble creations

### **The S.P.A.C.E. 1997 - 2003 - Founder/Administrator/Teacher**

Theatre training specializing in physical theatre and clown. Hosting and performance of numerous short pieces in soirees and fund raisers.

### **The Clown Farm (The Manitoulin Conservatory for Creation & Performance) 2002 - 2020**

Founder, Artistic Director, Teacher. Theatre and creativity training specializing in physical theatre and clown. Hosting and performance of numerous short pieces in soirees, workshop presentations and fund raisers.

### **Laurentian University 2002-2020, sessional instructor in clown, mask, theatre creation**

**De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group 2001 – 2020, sessional instructor in clown, mask, theatre creation, director of several mainstage productions**

## **Directing/Coaching**

**Pochsy IV** – 2023, by Karen Hines, clown coach/artistic associate  
**Pearle Harbour in Distant Early Warning** – 2022, by Justin Miller, director  
**Identity Crisis** – 2022, Alyssa Billingsley, director of creation workshop  
**Inside Ethel: Outside** – 2022, by Christine Moynihan, clown coach, co-director with Susie Burpee, Richard Greenblatt, Emily Gualtieri  
**Retrograde: Another Birthday Party Cabaret** – 2022, by Alyssa Billingsley, director of creation workshop and online presentation  
**Known** – 2020, Dance/clown fusion piece by Jennifer Dallas, director of creation workshop and full production.  
**Outside Ethel: Inside** – 2019 by Christine Moynihan, director of creation workshop and full Fringe production.  
**A Disconnected Christmas** – 2019 by De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group, Director of creation workshop and full production.  
**Morro and Jasp** – 2011-2018 by Heather Marie Annis and Amy Lee, clown coach on several productions  
**Gulchmus** - 2018 by De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group, director of creation workshop and full production.  
**Kittly-Bender** - 2017, Dance/clown fusion piece by Jennifer Dallas, director of creation workshop and full production. 3 Dora Mavor Moore nominations, won for Outstanding Performance.  
**Crawlspace** – 2015, by Karen Hines, co-director with Sandra Balcovske, 5 Dora Mavor Moore award nominations including “Best Director”  
**Little Lady, Meanders** – 2015, by Sandrine Lafond, co-director with Miriam Cusson  
**Pochsy Unplugged** – 2005, by Karen Hines, co-director  
**Citizen Pochsy** – 2002, by Karen Hines, director  
**Pochsy Productions** - 1992 – current, by Karen Hines, process facilitator/clown coach/movement coach, worked in these capacities on all Pochsy Productions (1990 - current) including *Pochsy's Lips* (1992), *Oh, Baby* (1993), *La Boom* (1995), *Hello...hello* (1998), *Citizen Pochsy* and *Pochsy IV*  
**Fara Lifa** – 2012, by Miriam Cusson & Mélissa Rockburn, director  
**Little Lady** – 2012, by Sandrine Lafond,  
**Side of Dreams** – 2010-2012, by Jani Lauzon, director of 3 development workshops, Toronto & Manitoulin  
**Puzzle Me Red** – 2008, by Michael Kennard,  
**Stuff** – 2008, by Miriam Cusson & Mélissa Rockburn  
**The Gultch** – 2007, by De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group, director of creation workshop and full production.  
**Patti Fedy Uncut** – 2005, by Emelia Symington Fedy, co-director with Anita Rochon  
**Clown & Such...** - 2005, student production - Centre for Indigenous Theatre, director  
**The Hunt** – 2004, by Emelia Symington Fedy, directorial consultant and clown coach  
**A Trickster Tale** – 2003, by Tomson Highway - De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group, director  
**The Boy Scouts' Manual** – 2001, by Louis Negin, director  
**Circle of Dreams** - 2001, student production - Centre for Indigenous Theatre, co-director with Penny Couchie

## **Teaching**

**The Clown Farm/  
The MCCP/Online**  
2002 – current

Clown, Mask & Movement. Introductory to advanced.

**Germany**  
2015

5 city workshop teaching tour. Würzburg,  
Mansbach, Osnabrück, Mannheim, Hamburg

**The S.P.A.C.E.**  
1997 - 2003

Clown, Mask & Movement. Introductory to advanced.

**Equity Showcase**  
1991-1997

Clown, Mask & Movement. Introductory to advanced.

**Centre for  
Indigenous Theatre**  
2001 – 2006

Clown, Mask & Movement. Introductory to advanced.

**De-ba-jeh-mu-jig  
Theatre Group**  
(2001-2019)

Clown, Mask & Movement. Introductory to advanced.

**Workman Theatre  
Project** Centre for Addiction and Mental Health - Clown,  
Mask & Movement. Introductory to advanced.  
2000 - 2003

**Universities** A variety of workshops in clown and/or physical comedy & Colleges  
and directing, specifically geared towards time constraints  
1993 - current and institution's needs. Institutions include the Laurentian University, University of  
Calgary, Yale School of Drama (Associate Artists, 7 years), Tel Aviv University, California State  
University, Humber Comedy Centre, Michigan Tech., Bishops University.

**Other** Germany (2015), Stratford (2001), Claude Watson School of Fine Arts (Toronto - 1992-3),  
Manitoulin Secondary School (2004), Independent studios across Canada (1991-current)

## Awards and Achievements

**Dora Mavor Moore Award** Best Production – mid-size theatre, *Mump & Smoot in Flux*, Canadian Stage. This production also won the Best Director award and was nominated for Best New Play and Best Lighting Design, as well as being nominated for a Canadian Comedy Award for Best New Comedic Play  
2003

**Canadian Comedy Awards** Best Comedic Performers Theatre, *Mump & Smoot in Something Else*, Canadian Stage,  
2000  
2014 Best Comedy Variety, *Mump & Smoot in Anything*, Theatre Network, Edmonton

**Drama Logue Award** Best Actors, *Mump & Smoot in Ferno*, La Jolla Playhouse, California, USA.  
1994

**Boston Theatre Award** Outstanding Visiting Production, *Mump & Smoot in Caged and Ferno*, American Repertory Theatre, Cambridge, Mass.  
1994

**Associate Artists** Yale Repertory Theatre, New Haven, Connecticut,  
1994 – 2001 USA

## Film & Television Experience

**Mump & Smoot** *Canadian Comedy Awards, Adrienne Clarkson Presents, The Dini Petty Show, Taking The Falls, The Genie Awards, Cream Of Comedy, Friday Night Live, HBO's U.S. Comedy Arts Festival - Aspen, Midday, Edmonton Comedy Festival, Breakfast Television, Toronto After Hours.*

Appeared in the Genie award winning short film *The Fairy Who Didn't Want To Be A Fairy Anymore*, directed by Laurie Lynd.

Wrote and performed in Mump & Smoot's short film *The Princess That Wouldn't Smile*, directed by Paul Quarrington, produced by The Canadian Centre For Advanced Film Studies.

**Blue Rainbow** Writer and performer (Dirk) in 52 episodes, produced by Just Peachy Productions. Aired nationally on Global Television.  
1997 - 1999

**Other** Clown coach on Norman Jewison's short film *Soir Blue* 1994 when he and Michael Kennard led a physical comedy workshop session with Alan Arkin and Stuart Hughes. Numerous appearances in commercials, short films, videos etc. List available upon request.

## **Theatre Training**

- Scene Study** Ron Singer (1988)
- Singing** Eileen Smith (1990 - 1995), Fides Krucker (2018-present)
- Improvisation** Second City: Alan Guttman, Bruce Hunter, Deb Kimmet, Frank Macanulty, Wendy Hopkins, Sandra Balcovske (1986 – '91)
- Clown** Richard Pochinko, Ian Wallace Theatre Resource Centre (1987 – '89)
- Bouffon** Phillipe Gaulier (Paris - 1991)
- Physical Comedy** John Towsen (1990)
- Movement** Fiona Griffiths 1987 - current, Julia Winder 1999 – current, Susan Sinclair (Alexander - 2001) Seanae Sinclair (Continuum - 2001)
- Voice** David Smukler (1990 - 2002), Fides Krucker (2018-present)
- Dance** Grindl Kuchirka (clown dance - 2001)  
Pollock Dance Studio (ballroom - 1998).