

GII Symposium 2019 Presenters

(In alphabetical order)



Oluwatosin Akinwande (NG) is a medical doctor with keen interest in Medical Improv. As a 21 century generation medical Practitioner in Nigeria, Oluwatosin is challenging the status quo in Nigeria medical field by using improv to break status among medical professionals and support communication, empathy, and improve bedside manner. She heads the Playback Nigerian Health Unit championing medical improv in Nigeria.



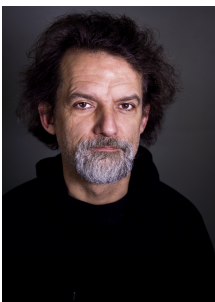
Oluwadamilola Apotieri-Abdulai (NG) is the CEO of Playback Nigeria and a member of the board of Centre for Playback Theatre (USA). He is a confidence coach and communication skills trainer dedicated to bringing effective change to individuals and organizations through theatre and improv. He is Nigeria's first Applied Drama practitioner and Playback Theatre practitioner and a member of the International Playback Theatre Network (USA), Drama for Life Africa Network, Applied Improvisation Network (USA) and an alumnus of the Centre for Playback Theatre (USA) where he trained in Playback Theatre core course and conducting. Damilola brings his effusive energy, deep compassion, creativity, and insight to his trainings and personal coaching. He teaches Improv and Playback Theatre in Nigeria and runs a weekly improv show in his small theatre space in the city of Abuja.



Christopher Bannerman (UK) had an extensive career as a dancer, choreographer and arts educator before becoming Professor of Dance at Middlesex University. He has served as Chair of Dance UK, Arts Council England's Dance Panel and Creative Partnerships London North; and as a member of the Dance Forum of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) UK. He is a Founding Director of ArtsCross/Danscross Performance Research exchange with Beijing Dance Academy and Taipei National University of the Arts. Research interests include creative practice as a knowledge domain and related policy contexts nationally and internationally; publications include editing with Joshua Sofaer and Jane Watt, *Navigating the Unknown: The creative process in contemporary performing arts* (2006) and 'Dancing Transcultural Dialogues', in *Choreographic Practices*, vol. 7:2 (2016).

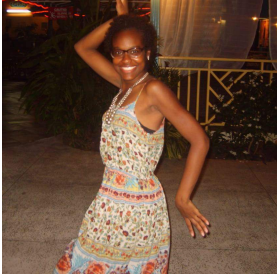


Sara Beer (SE) is one of the artistic producers at Improvisationsstudion. She also runs Improvisationsstudion Förlag which published Swedish translations of Keith Johnstone's classic *Improv* and *Keith Johnstone: A Critical Biography* by Theresa Robbins Dudeck in 2015. In "Hetero" she was part of the artistic production team that developed the themes of gender relations and heteronormativity in the show.



Remy Bertrand (UK) started teaching improvisation in the 90s and went full time in 2006. He is currently teaching at Imprology, Drama Studio London and other institutions. He is the artistic director of Zootrophic, a performing improvisation ensemble, and hosts Love Explosion a monthly improvised feast open to all. Remy is also exploring improvised cinema with co-director Peter Snowdon with so far six improvised shorts and a filmed improvised installation "The Elastic Chairs". As well as Keith Johnstone, Viola Spolin and

Del Close, his teaching is informed by Viewpoints, Playback Theatre, Action Theatre, mask making and cognitive sciences, but in the end, he has learned most of what he knows from his students. Remy teaches improvisation as a transformational process focusing on pleasure, curiosity and courage.



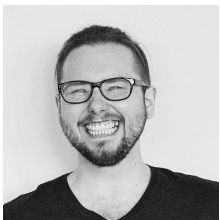
Chantelle Burley (UK) co-organizer and trustee of the All Stars Project London, is a freelance drama educator and storyteller who works with groups of children and young people throughout the UK. She earned a BA in Drama, Applied Theatre and Education at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, and a MA in Educational Theatre and English Language Arts at New York University (NYU). After her studies at NYU, she became an Activist for Social Development Fellow at the All Stars Project in New York City and afterwards worked as a Program Coordinator for their flagship Talent Show program. She currently works as an Artistic Project Leader at Haringey Shed, a Storyteller at Discover Children's Story Centre, and a Director for the Primary Shakespeare Company. She also works as a Stage Manager and Director for Shakespeare Schools Foundation, and a Drama Practitioner for The Challenge Network.



Catharine Cary (UK/FR/USA) trained as a diplomat and tossed aside a career in New York City's urban political constellation to paint and to dance in Paris. She is as present, as ever, improvising to open a schizz in our habitual meanderings and instill a new rhythm in our social interactions. Her art practice, and her current PhD research project at the Royal College of Art in London, plunge into the synaptic divide to meld the presence of improvised performance with elegant graffiti and scenographic constructions. She co-created Instant Pudding! from 2012 to 2017 to power improvisation and performance, co-creates the What IIF? Research Festival, has played in 48 countries and is concurrently revealing the Upside Down Protocol. Catharine loves cheddar cheese and nonsense (catharine-cary.com; IG: latagueuseelegante)



Hervé Charton (FR) is a French theater artist. Mostly working as an actor, he has been involved into directing, writing and teaching. In Lyon, he co-founded the LACSE (acronym for Creative, friendly and committed actors laboratory), where improv is used to deal with political and social issues, with specific audiences (prisons, high schools, reception centers for asylum seekers)... In 2013, he defended a pioneer thesis in Sorbonne-Nouvelle Paris University, where he investigated the idea of freedom within improv, published under *Alain Knapp et la liberté dans l'improvisation théâtrale. Canaliser et émanciper*, Classiques Garnier, Paris 2015. He teaches acting, improvisation, theater studies in Paris and Lyon, and has been invited by the Physical Theater Academy Dimitri (CH). He's also a dancer and a musician.



Stephen Davidson (UK) is the Artistic Director of Improvable, Love and Misinformation, QI: Queer Improv, Carmen: A gender-swapped Film Noir Fantasy, and of Zeal: The Pride Improv Festival. He currently also plays in duo The Happiest People in the World with Erick Castellan. Stephen has taught and performed improv all around the world, and in London teaches for the Nursery Theatre. He is the author of Play Like an Ally and Improvising Gender, both available at impromiscuous.com



Tina Davidson (NL) Tina Davidson is an Assistant Professor at the Rotterdam School of Management. Her research interests center on the role of culture and diversity in key phenomena in organizational behavior such as voice behavior, leadership development, and

followership. In studying these phenomena, she employs both quantitative and more qualitative, arts-based methods.



Sarah Davies (UK) is a Drama Lecturer (UAL Acting) and a Producer for arts organisation Ideas Test. She has a BA (Hons) in Drama with English, a Masters in Drama by Research and a PGCE in Post Compulsory Education. Improv experience includes Co-Artistic Direction of Improv Gym, at The Quarterhouse Theatre, Kent, and extensive performances in London, Kent and at festivals with Gym Pass, her duo Twinprov, City Impro and her own troupe Plus Support. She guests at the Edinburgh Fringe with *The Oxford Imps*, *The Cutting Room*, and previously *The Extraordinary Time Travelling Adventures of Baron Munchausen*. She taught and performed with Big Bang Improv Boston at Mount Olymprov Festival. Sarah is also a Reviewer and Awards Assessor for Total Theatre, and a commissioned Playwright.



Randy Dixon (USA) is regarded as one of the most experienced improvisational artists in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. He was a founding member of Unexpected Productions and has served as the Artistic Director since 1988. Randy founded The Orcas Island Project, an international performance group. Randy has taught, directed and performed improvisational theater in Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Italy, Germany, Austria, Holland, and all over the U.S. and Canada. Randy served on the editorial board for The Salt Journal a journal of Myth, Religion, Psychology and Ideas. His book, *Being Present* has been published in German, Slovene, soon in Swedish. Randy has B.F.A. from Seattle University and a Master's Degree in Mythological Studies with an emphasis in Jungian Depth Psychology.



John Michael DiResta (USA) is a theater director and educator. His work focuses on new work development, site-responsive theater, queer theater, community engagement, and theater for social justice. John has developed work with The Public Theater, Labyrinth Theater, York Theater, Rising Phoenix, MCC Theater, Rattlestick Theater, Hangar Theatre, Judson Church, and elsewhere. Recent credits: *The Same Day* (LaGuardia PAC), *Maybe Tomorrow*, *Maybe Next Year* (JKB Theater/Skidmore College), *From Pilgrim Landing* (Columbia Stages), *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Yale Dramat), *Lafayette* (Francis Gould Hall), *Blood on the Tracks* (Judson Church), *Oedipus*, *Hare and Tortoise* (Hangar Theatre), *The Drunken City* (Steppenwolf), *Favorites* (Rising Phoenix), and *Back to Society* (MCC/Abrons Arts Center). Readings and Workshops: *Jeanine's World* (Atlantic Theater), *Orville and Wilbur Did It* (York Theater), *Long Island Arpeggio* (Labyrinth Theatre Co/New Dramatists). Assistant Director: *Ode to Joy* (Cherry Lane), *Skylight* (Court Theater), *Judgment Day* (Bard Summerscape), *Killers and Other Family* (Rattlestick). John is artist-in-residence at Skidmore College. www.jmdiresta.com.



Theresa Robbins Dudeck (USA), PhD, is the co-founder of the Global Improvisation Initiative. She has taught improvisation all over the world in both academic and professional settings. Theresa is considered one of the foremost teachers of Keith Johnstone's Impro System and serves as his literary executor. She wrote the critically acclaimed *Keith Johnstone: A Critical Biography* (Bloomsbury 2013) and is directing Johnstone's documentary. Beyond traditional theatre practice, Theresa is an applied impro specialist who facilitates training sessions in leadership, team building, communication, change management, co-constructed learning, etc., for nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Theresa's co-edited book, *Applied Improvisation: Leading, Collaborating, and Creating Beyond the Theatre* (Methuen Drama 2018), has done so well that two

additional volumes have been green-lighted. Theresa has just been awarded a 2019 U.S. Scholar Fulbright to teach/research impro in Brazil at UFMG (www.theimprofessor.com).



Ayridn Ersöz (TR), PhD, is a dancer, choreographer, and scholar whose research focuses on the connections of dance to political ideologies and systems within historical and contemporary societies. She has been awarded a Fulbright Research Fellowship to conduct research at Rutgers University, USA. As a Fulbright Fellow, Ayridn engaged in a qualitative research project that explored the role that Islam plays in young female Muslim college students' perceptions of dance as an art form and their participation in dance as a recreational and/or artistic expression. At present, she is collaborating on an international project with dancers from Krakow Dance Theatre (Poland) exploring the current refugee crisis in Europe. Dr. Ersöz serves as an Associate Professor within the Department of Music and Performing Arts at Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul.



Moriah Flagler (USA) is a teacher, theatre maker, and scholar. Her research focuses on community-based devising, applied improvisation, and digital storytelling. Her recent scholarship examines how devising digital stories with middle school aged Spanish speakers foregrounded their community cultural wealth during moments of improvised sharing within a schooling system that often strips Latinx youth of their languages and cultures through subtractive assimilation. Flagler holds a Master of Fine Arts in Drama and Theatre for Youth and Communities from The University of Texas at Austin and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Education from The University of Arizona. She is currently artistic director of the Be the Street Discovery Theme project at The Ohio State University where she is exploring the intersections of place, identity, connection, story, and social justice.



Dan Friedman (USA), a life-long political and performance activist and grassroots educator, is the artistic director of the 37-year-old Castillo Theatre in New York City. For the past eight years, Friedman has also been the associate dean of UX, the All Stars Project's free university-like school of continuing development for people of all ages. In addition, he serves on the faculty of the East Side Institute. Friedman has a doctorate in theatre history from the University of Wisconsin. He is the editor of a number of books, including *Theatre for Working Class Audience in the United States, 1840-1980* (Greenwood Press, 1983) and *The Cultural Politics of Heiner Müller* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007). He is currently working on a book for Palgrave on the emerging performance activist movement around the world. In addition to his work at Castillo, Friedman has directed at La Mama E.T.C., the Nuyorican Poets Café and various New York City colleges.



Martin Geijer (SE) is the founder and Artistic Director of Improvisationsstudion. He is in many ways responsible for the introduction and expansion of improvisation in Sweden. From the beginning of his career when he worked at the Loose Moose Theatre with Keith Johnstone, to his position today as a top educators and directors, Martin is a vital driving force in Sweden's dynamic improv community. www.improvisationsstudion.se

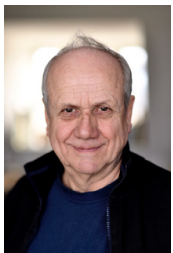


Marisa Godoy (SWT) is a dance practitioner-researcher and teacher with a background in contemporary dance, improvisation and somatics. Her creative practice involves stage productions, video installations and performances in alternative spaces. Under the label OONA project, she collaborates with the main dance and theatre venues in Zurich, performing in national and international festivals in England, France, Germany, Russia, i.a. As a dancer, she

performed in works by William Forsythe, Massimo Furlan and Michel Schröder, among others. Marisa holds an MSc in Dance Science, and is currently a PhD candidate at C-DaRE/Coventry University and a research associate at the Institute for the Performing Arts and Film/ZHdK. Received awards include the 'Kulturelle Auszeichnung' (2004) and 'Werkstipendium' (2013) granted by the City of Zurich/Cultural Department.



Ed Greenberg (USA) began improvising as an actor with San Francisco's legendary improvisational review "The Committee." He worked with Viola Spolin and Paul Sills. With his mentor Del Close, Ed worked on the early experiments in long form improv (he was on the stage the day "Harold" was born). Ed succeeded Del as director at "The Second City" Chicago, and is currently Executive Director of the non-profit Laughter for a Change (L4C) www.laughterforachange.org. In addition, Ed teaches improvisation around the world and also leads L4C's "Laugh and Think Tank" which explores current topics in cutting edge scientific research through improvisational play.



Steen Haakon Hansen (DK) was born in Copenhagen 1947. After finishing his studies at the National Theater School in Copenhagen 1977, Steen has worked as a director, teacher and actor in Denmark and abroad. In the last three decades, Steen has mainly been hosting workshops in Improvisation based on Keith Johnstone's theories and practices. In 1972, Steen met Johnstone when Keith was staging the play he had written, "The Last Bird," for the National Theater School, where Steen was working as a stagehand. When Steen studied at the theater school, Keith was several times his teacher. Currently, Steen focuses on acting in improvisation, based on Michael Chekhov, Yevgeny Vakhtangov in interaction with Keith's philosophy and techniques.



Olivia Hartle (USA) is a theatre director, improviser, facilitator, and coach. Her work has been seen at HERE Arts, Dixon Place, Teatro SEA, Castillo Theatre, The People's Improv Theatre, UCB (NY), Sarah Lawrence, NYU, St. John's University, Pace, The Klein, the All Stars Project, and others. Olivia has studied and performed improv at the UCB, PIT, and Magnet theaters, and trained with the NY Neo Futurists, the Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance, and Theatre of the Oppressed NY. Olivia is currently working on her PhD in Community Engagement at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA. She holds an M.A. from NYU, a B.A. from St. John's University, and a graduate certificate from Parsons School of Design. Learn more: oliviahartle.com



Victoria Hogg (UK) is an improv coach and consultant through her company The Offer Bank. Having studied Applied Theatre at Goldsmiths College, Vic loves to facilitate all kinds of groups, from teams within business to socially engaged groups such as elders, visually impaired adults and adults with learning disabilities. Vic also founded DDG Improv, a Brixton-based improv comedy jam that's been running every Monday for five years, and continues to run DDG's classes and workshops alongside the jam. Vic specialises in creating safe space and running low-risk, high-reward sessions for a wide range of purposes including resilience, confidence, creativity and collaboration.



Lois Holzman (USA) is the co-founder and director of the East Side Institute for Group and Short Term Psychotherapy and the founder and chair of the bi-annual Performing the World conferences. Her teaching, research and writing have developed in tandem with and in service to her community organizing work. Over forty years Holzman has built and

supported grassroots organizations that are engaging poverty and underdevelopment utilizing the transformative power of performance. She is mentor and coach to hundreds of scholars, educators, artists and community activists around the globe, and, along with them, she is helping to usher in performance activism as a new approach to community development and social change. Holzman holds a Ph.D. in developmental psychology from Columbia University and is the author/editor of ten books—the latest being *The Overweight Brain: How our obsession with knowing keeps us from getting smart enough to make a better world*—and dozens of chapters and articles. She blogs at loisholsman.org, *Psychology Today* and *Mad in America*.



Susanna Howard (UK): Susanna Howard Writer, actor and theatre maker Susanna Howard founded pioneering arts & literature charity Living Words in 2007. Living Words run residencies in care homes, working one-to-one with people experiencing a dementia, plus care home staff and relatives. In response to the work that comes from these residencies Living Words create anthologies, events and performances to challenge assumptions and tackle stigma around dementia, language and communication. Susanna is additionally team member at Created Out of Mind at Wellcome; co-curator of Normal? Festival of the Brain in Folkestone; and Visiting Research Fellow at University of Roehampton's Poetry Centre.

Improbable (UK) is led by Phelim McDermott and Lee Simpson, and uses improvisation to create spectacular shows, support and nurture artists and the arts sector, and facilitate social change. Improbable believes that art is for everyone and that our society needs a cultural shift that puts creativity at the heart of everyday life. The company creates an astonishing breadth of work, from small-scale improvised shows (like *Animo* and *The Still*) to enormous outdoor spectacles (like *Sticky*), modern operas (like *Satyagraha* and *Akhnaten*) to devised studio pieces (like *Opening Skinner's Box*), and takes this work around the UK and often the world. Alongside this, Improbable's Devoted & Disgruntled programme brings the arts community together to identify and work on shared issues; and its Participation programme takes improvisation to people and communities who have had little contact with the arts before. Improbable is currently developing an International Institute of Improvisation—the iii!—that serves as a hub for improvisational practice across the world, and furthers the development of improvisation as a tool for artistic and social engagement. Improbable was founded in 1996 and is based in London.



Petro Janse van Vuuren (ZA) has worked in the intersection between applied theatre and community/organisation development for the past 16 years. She has a PhD in Drama and Performance studies and uses her art to craft organisation training and development processes geared towards sustainable transformation. She is also an executive coach, certified by the Gordon Institute of Business Science. Petro is a researcher and PhD co-ordinator at Drama for Life, Wits university. Her research interests include the value of, and adaptation needed for, doing embodiment processes online; the characteristics and challenges of creative research practices – specifically engaging in applied theatre and drama as research enquiry; and the effectiveness of strategic narrative embodiment (SNE) for designing sustainable social change interventions in organisational settings. Petro has published a number of articles and book chapters on her work and has presented at various conferences on applied theatre and organisation development locally and internationally.



Ma Jiaolong (CN) is one of China's most acclaimed Chinese classical dancers as well as being a teacher and choreographer/movement director. He has excelled in a wide range of dance categories, coming in first place at the 2015 Hehua Dance Competition and third place at the Tao Li Bei Dance Competitions of 2006 and 2009. He is a skilled performer and

teacher of Chinese classical dance, contemporary dance, the Shen Yun dance technique and tai chi. He is also a specialist in theoretical dance pedagogy having published research papers on such topics as 'The Value of Strength in Dance Performance'.



Nathan Keates (UK) Nathan is a qualified teacher and has taught all ages and abilities over the years. He began in special educational needs schools in 2009. After his experience of delivering improvisation and comedy to young autistic people in 2007, he knew he would continue developing this career path. He has worked as a freelance facilitator with his own teaching, outside of a school setting, since 2008. Nathan is currently pursuing a PhD in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at the University of Kent with a focus on conducting improv comedy classes with autistic adults. His supervisors are Prof. Julie Beadle-Brown and Dr. Shaun May. Both supervisors have been involved in autism research with a theatre-based element. Prof. Beadle-Brown is a part of the Tizard Centre and was an integral part of the 'Imagining Autism' project. Dr. May is part of the School of Arts and has an interest in comedy and autism.



Chloe Kennedy (UK) is an improviser and theatre maker from Aberdeen. She trained at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, where she received a Distinction MFA in Actor Training and Coaching. She has taught, mentored and assistant directed at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, as well as The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Her research covers Narcissism, Complaints Procedures, Sexual Harassment, Alternative Academia, Intersectional Approaches to Improvisation and Acting. She readily draws from queer narratives, abstract writing and improv for her directing style. She has a close relationship with *Houselights*, *Wolab*, *Dirty Rascals* and *RCSSD* - where she has been invited back to research and teach.



Yuri Kinugawa (JP) Actor, Improvisor, Director, Author and Researcher. Winner Best Actress (Stockholm) and Best Foreign Performer (New Zealand) in 1998. She's performed and taught improv for 20 years in 12 countries. The founder of Impro Works Ltd (1994) the longest running improv company in Japan; Japanese team captain, International Theatresports Championship, Germany (2006); boardmember (Asia) of the International Theatresports Institute. In 2017 she directed "Theatresports™" for The League of Tokyo Theatrical Arts University. Seen by a 1000 people it was the biggest show of its kind in Japan. She is also a PhD student at the University of Tokyo. Her research topic is improvisation, acting, interaction and creativity from a Biomechanics and Cognitive Science approach.

Publication: *Impro Game*, Bansei Shobo Ltd., 2002. Translation, *The Audition*, Film Art Ltd., 2003.



Kat Koppett (USA) is the Co-director of the Mopco Improv Theatre and the Eponymous Founder of *Koppett* a consultancy specializing in the use of improv to enhance individual and organizational performance. She is the author of *Training to Imagine: Practical Improvisational Theatre Techniques to Enhance Creativity, Teamwork, Leadership and Learning*. Kat's clients include Apple, NASA, Prezi, the Clinton Global Initiative, GE, St. Peters Hospital, JPMorgan, RPI, and Havas Health. Kat is a founding and board member of the Applied Improvisation Network and a previous member of BATS Improv and Freestyle

Repertory Theatre where *TheatreWeek Magazine* named Kat one of their annual "Unsung Heroes" for her creation of the improvised musical format, "Spontaneous Broadway." Kat hosts the podcast "Dare to be Human" with her Mopco compatriots (www.Daretobehumanpodcast.com; www.koppett.com; www.mopco.org)



Rosemary Lee (UK) Known for working in a variety of contexts and media, Rosemary has created large-scale site-specific works with cross-generational casts, solos for herself and other performers as well as video installations and short films. Her work is characterised by an interest in creating a moving portraiture of the close performing communities she brings together, whilst also exploring and highlighting our relationship with our environment, be it urban or rural. Rosemary is an Artsadmin Artist, a Work Place artist, Senior Research Fellow at C-DaRE Coventry University, ResCen Research Associate Artist (Middlesex University), she holds an honorary doctorate from Roehampton University and is a Fellow of Trinity Laban (Photo credit: Shaun Armstrong)



Gunter Lösel (SWT) has been publishing on the theme of improvisation since 2004. He is an accomplished impro-player, a member of the German National Team of Theatresports (2006), founder of the “Improtheater Bremen” and member of the price-winning duo “Stupid Lovers”. He holds a PHD in Theatre Studies as well as a diploma in psychology and is heading the Research Focus Performative Practice at the Zurich University of the Arts since 2014. In English available is his book *The Play of Archetypes* – *Basic Forms of Human Encounter*.



Lotta Malmhester (SE) has worked with improvisational processes and theatre for over 20 years in different contexts and with various improvisational formats. Today she is head of education and training and a cast member in several of the shows at Improvisationsstudion. In the show Hetero she was part of the artistic production team that developed the themes of gender relations and the exploration of heteronormativity.



Holly Mandel (USA) *GOOD GIRLS AREN'T FUNNY* creator; founder of Improvolution Improv School in New York City; *The Groundlings Theater Company* alumna and Senior Instructor and Director; Pace University professor; founder and Executive Director of iMergence. Holly has worked extensively with both groups of women and individuals in both the classrooms of improv schools over the last 10 years, as well as in the corporate sector on leadership training, accessing authentic confidence, team dynamics, and creating the conditions for greater autonomy, creativity, ownership, & innovation. From this work and her own inquiry into these topics specifically around gender, she discovered what would become the basis for her talk and book, *GOOD GIRLS AREN'T FUNNY*. Holly's degree is in both Psychology and Sociology (UCLA); she has studied organizational development, collective creativity, and leadership development - for women especially. Holly has also spent many years within the corporate world: at Disney Pictures in feature development; at ABC television in the marketing and advertising department; and at Comedy Central as a writer/producer.



Kory Mathewson (CA) is a PhD candidate in Reinforcement Learning at the University of Alberta with the [Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute](#). His research interests include interactive machine learning, human-in-the-loop deep reinforcement learning, human-robot interfaces (prosthetic robotics), and conversational dialog systems. Before his PhD, he completed his Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and his Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering. Kory has interned at [Twitter Cortex](#), at Google Brain [Magenta](#), and

at [Apple Special Projects Group](#). His PhD research is funded by the National Science and Engineering Research Council. Kory is a [Lab Scientist \(Machine Learning\)](#) at the Creative Destruction Lab at the University of Toronto. He is also an accomplished [improvisational theatre performance artist](#) with [Rapid Fire Theatre](#) and [HumanMachine](#). He is currently fusing his interests by developing an [artificial intelligence to perform comedy](#) alongside.



Mel McCree (UK) is a senior lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at Bath Spa University, England, and Director of Free Range Creativity. Her background is in environmental education, outdoor arts, play and learning. Mel researches eco-social justice, such as multi species relations through playful nature-based practice and how children and families participate in making our worlds as citizens. Prior to academia, Mel taught cross-arts improv and developed outdoor, feral processes. She trained and performed with Augusto Boal, Adrian Jackson, Cardboard Citizens, Scott Kelman, Goat Island, Maggie Nicholls, Phil Minton and David Eskenazy. Mel's feralosophy supports creative participatory approaches and provocative thinking on our place in the world. Her consultancy supports practitioners to set up and work outdoors. <http://melmccree.com/> / <http://freerangecreativity.org/>



Regina Mendes (UK) *'I am a body filled with dreams and a heart just like all of us. I am also a mother and an artist. I close my eyes, sleep and dream. I see the world.'* Regina Mendes created the community art work for peace Dreams and a Heart and have been running it since 2011. She is a theatre-dance deviser, performer and director, a visual artist including photography and painting and a psychologist specialised in play therapy. Some of her shows travelled abroad and received some prizes. She had worked with children for over ten years and for the last thirty years she has been working as a psychological astrologer. In her experience all these areas, theatre, dance, visual and healing arts, complement each other.



Vida L. Midgelow (UK) Professor in Choreographic Practices at Middlesex University (UK), Vida is an artist scholar who works on PaR methodologies, improvisation and articulation processes. Her practice includes somatically informed improvisation (as pedagogy and in performance), performative lectures, installation/experiential performance and video works. She is currently editing the Oxford Handbook on Dance in Improvisation and is principal researcher for the Artistic Doctorates in Europe project (EU funded). With Prof Jane Bacon, Midgelow co-edits the hybrid peer reviewed journal, *Choreographic Practices* and co-directs the Choreographic Lab www.choreographiclab.com.



Piotr Mirowski (UK) is the co-founder of HumanMachine (<https://humanmachine.live>) and Improbotics (<https://improbotics.org>), world's first AI-enabled improv and theatre companies. He trained as an improviser in Toulouse (Cédille, LUDI), New York (QUICKTHINKING! Improv, Cherub Improv) and London (Nursery Theatre, Hoopla Improv, Showstoppers, City Academy, Imprology), and as actor at London School of Dramatic Art. Stage credits include *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Moose Hall Inwood, New York Fringe 2006), *Playing with Grown-Ups* (LSDA, London Fringe 2017), *Medea* (Wretched Strangers, Brighton and Camden Fringe 2018) and *Earthbound* (Wretched Strangers, Brighton Fringe 2019). By day, Dr. Piotr Mirowski is a Senior Research Scientist at DeepMind in artificial intelligence and robotics. He graduated with a PhD in computer science at New York University in 2011.



Brian Mullin (UK) co-organizer and trustee of the All Stars Project London is a playwright and dramaturg, who also has a long history of work in grassroots and community-based contexts. Born in the United States, he worked from 2004-2009 with the All Stars Project Inc. in New York City, helping to build Youth Onstage!, a free theatre program for young people based out of the ASP headquarters on 42nd Street. In the UK, his work as a writer and dramaturg has been developed and presented at leading venues including Battersea Arts Centre, High Tide Theatre Festival, the Orange Tree and Theatre 503 (where he was a writer-in-residence from 2015-16). Brian teaches writing at the City Literary Institute, St. Mary's University and on the National Theatre's New Views program. He has led drama-based workshops for companies like Shakespeare Schools Foundation, the Tricycle Theatre's Minding the Gap project and Synergy Theatre Company. He holds a BA in Theatre Studies from Yale, an MA Writing for Performance from Goldsmiths and was a 2001 Rhodes Scholar.



Jules Munns (UK) At the Guildhall School, improv classes terrified me, so I joined an improv group. It went from self-improvement to passion to profession and soon after graduating I co-founded the Nursery. The next year, I joined the Maydays and was later involved in the creation of Impromptu Shakespeare, Ten Thousand Million Love Stories, Concept: the Improvised Concept Album and many other shows. I travel the world teaching and performing. Over the last decade, I have been to festivals and theatres in Finland, Portugal, Romania, Canada, the US, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Pakistan, Poland and more, as well as across the UK. In London, most of my time is spent as artistic director of the Nursery, which runs weekly improv shows and jams.



Dan O'Connor (USA) is co-founder and Producing Artistic Director of Impro Theatre as well as a co-founder of Los Angeles Theatresports and BATS Improv in San Francisco. He is an actor, writer, director, producer and improviser. For Impro Theatre he is the co-director for *Jane Austen UnScripted*, *Fairytales UnScripted*, *The Western UnScripted*, *Shakespeare UnScripted*, and he is the Director for *Chekhov UnScripted*. Impro Theatre's shows have been produced at Impro Studio, The Broad Stage, Carrie Hamilton Theatre at The Pasadena Playhouse, North Coast Rep., Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Lewis Family Playhouse, The Falcon Theatre, Laguna Playhouse, The Odyssey Theatre, and Theatre Asylum. Dan's TV directing credits include the critically acclaimed ABC hybrid sit-com *Sons and Daughters* and *Campus Ladies* for the Oxygen Network. He was a writer and the improv director for *The Wayne Brady Show*. He co-created the NBC improv show *World Cup Comedy* on PAX. TV acting credits include *Seinfeld*, *VEGAS*, *Raising Hope*, *Campus Ladies*, *Malcolm In the Middle*, *The Tonight Show*, *The Newz*, *Life Game*, *Quick Witz*, *Law and Order LA*, *Little Britain USA* and the *Middle*. Theatre credits include Improbable theatre's production of Keith Johnstone's *Life Game* (Off-Broadway); work with the American Conservatory Theatre, A Noise Within, Shakespeare Santa Cruz and the Taper Too. Dan has been a guest director and instructor at improv festivals around the globe. He has taught at UCSB, DUKE, USC, and the UT's McCoombs School of Business. He has coached six Cirque du Soleil casts. Dan's training includes the American Conservatory Theater and extensive work with Keith Johnstone. He is a graduate of Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art in London. His book *Life UnScripted* was just published by North Atlantic Books. (www.danoconnor.net).



Jon Oram (UK) is an internationally known leader in the field of community plays. He taught for a number of years whilst training in mime and theatre. He was Drama Advisor for Norfolk, Director of Community Arts for Norwich Arts Centre, the founder of theatre-in-education company Tie Break and theatre animator for South West Arts before becoming

Artistic Director of Colway Theatre Trust, now Claque, in 1985. Since then, he has extensively developed the process and performance of community plays, especially in issue based plays and the concept of the Social Actor. Jon is presently working on the first fully devised community play based on the concept of following the 'group mind'.



John Pekkari (SE) is one of Sweden's most appreciated improvisers and is head of education of Improverket, Gothenburg. He revised and changed the company's teaching of improvised theatre from having a technical point of view to a more philosophical perspective and found that it changed the attitudes in his students, as well as making him a better improviser.



Duška Radosavljevic (UK) is a writer, dramaturg and academic based at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. She is the author of *Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century* (2013) and editor of *The Contemporary Ensemble* (2013) and *Theatre Criticism: Changing Landscapes* (2016). She has contributed numerous academic articles to journals and edited collections and regularly writes for *The Stage*, *Exeunt* and *The Theatre Times*.



Marian Rich (USA) is a comic educator and improvisational performer. Trained as an actress, improviser and theatrical director, Marian has spent over 30 years building innovative educational environments where people from all walks of life come together to grow and develop. A performance activist with a strong belief in the power of play, Marian creates learning environments that unleash participants' innate creativity through her company, Career Play, Inc. As faculty at the East Side Institute she trains educators, scholars and activists from around the world who are looking for ways to infuse their work with the power of performance. She has a BA from Sarah Lawrence College.



Julia Ritter (USA) MFA, PhD, is a dance artist and scholar whose work is informed by 30 years of training in dance, voice, and theater techniques. She is the recipient of two awards for her research on dance and immersive performance: the 2016 Selma Jeanne Cohen Lecture Award and the 2014 Prix André G. Bourassa from Le Société Québécoise D'Etudes Théâtrales, and three Fulbright fellowships for choreographic research. Her forthcoming book, *Tandem Dances: Choreographing Immersive Performance*, is under contract with Oxford University Press. As chair of Dance at Rutgers University, Julia's dedication to interdisciplinary, inclusive collaboration has resulted in partnerships with the Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities, the Center for Women in Arts and Humanities, and the Center for Latino Arts and Culture, amongst others.



Simo Routarinne (FI) is an Interaction Designer and Creative Director at IMPROVment.fi. He works as a professional improviser, facilitator, trainer, author and keynote speaker. He is one of the world's leaders in status training. In the last 20 years he has trained people to apply improv skills and constructive interaction to their professional contexts. He has given inspirational keynotes, training and facilitating sessions in corporate settings and lectured in several universities in Finland and abroad. He has studied improvisation under the guidance of Keith Johnstone and has translated his book *Impro* in 1996 and written two books of his own since then,

Improvise! in 2004 and *Power in Interaction* in 2007. In 2011 he launched the Status Games card deck, a powerful learning tool of body language.



Catherine Ryan (AUS) Catherine is an early stage PhD student at the University of Melbourne, exploring how improvisational theatre might be useful in everyday parenting. Previously she has worked as a writer, dramaturg, director, community artist, producer and performer. Her practice is inspired by questions around the dynamics of relationships, interconnectedness and empathy. Over the past twenty years Catherine has created award-winning plays and been affiliated with several of Australia's leading theatre companies. She also co-founded the collaborative Barking Owl Theatre (2001-2009), who co-created original and community works in their small, vibrant regional community. She lives with her family on Dja Dja Wurrung country (Central Victoria, Australia). Catherine holds a B.A. (Drama and Sociology), a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts (Theatremaking – Animateur) and a Graduate Certificate in Educational Research.



Cathy Salit (USA) is the CEO of [Performance of a Lifetime](#), an award winning consulting firm based in NYC. Using the art and science of theater, impro, and performative psychology, Cathy and her global team of coaches, actors, improvisers, and facilitators create and deliver leadership and team effectiveness programs for American Express, IBM, ArcelorMittal, Gallup, Twitter, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Johns Hopkins Hospital. She is also a longtime social activist, innovating the use of performance and impro to bring together people who “don’t belong together” through her work with the [All Stars Project](#), and the [East Side Institute](#). Cathy is the author of [Performance Breakthrough: A Radical Approach to Success at Work](#), and her thought leadership has been featured in the Harvard Business Review, Fast Company, Forbes, and Inc.com



Amy Seham (USA) is a director, author, professor, and improviser whose book, *Whose Improv Is It, Anyway?* is a ground-breaking study of race, gender, and power in Chicago improv-comedy. Her writing on has been published in *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies* and in *Radical Acts: Theatre and Pedagogies of Change*. In the last 20 years, Seham has created improv workshops for social workers and professional actors in India, college students in China, and children in the Dominican Republic. She has offered classes at Second City in Toronto, Fringe Benefits in LA, and the Playwrights Center in Minneapolis; taught for Funny Woman Festivals in Minneapolis and Chicago, and given workshops for colleges and universities across the country. Her 2016 keynote address for the Mellon Foundation Series on Comedy and Gender at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, provides the foundation for her new book on improv (Working title: *Yes, and . . . Me Too!*) to be published by Northwestern UP. Seham was a co-founder/performer in the improv troupe, Snazz ‘n’ Guffaw, which flourished in the late 1980s/early 1990s in New Haven, CT. She then earned a PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where her dissertation drew on that experience. Now a Professor of Theatre and Dance at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, she teaches directing, playwriting, and performance—with a focus on improvisation, Theatre of the Oppressed, and devised theatre.



Oliver Senton (UK): Oliver started learning improvisation in 2005 with Ken Campbell and members of Showstopper!The Improvised Musical, of which he is a founding member. He has taught improvisation at Drama Studio London for the past ten years and run many other courses in London, Kuala Lumpur and Texas, with all kinds of people. He is also a founder member of The School of Night, whose unique brand of literary extemporising has been seen

all over the world, and has taken part in many London Improvathons as well as the original Soapathon in Edmonton, Alberta. His work with Living Words has reapplied all the skills of improvisation in many intense and exciting ways. He has also worked in the West End, with the RSC, and is an associate artist of Slung Low.



Johan Siebers (UK) Johan Siebers is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Middlesex University. His main research interests are in process philosophy, philosophy of communication and rhetoric, critical theory and utopian thought. He has published widely about creativity, anticipation and futurity. He is founding editor of *Empedocles: European Journal for Philosophy of Communication*. He holds that the real is indeterminate and that it happens in spontaneous, creative novelty. This explains his interest in improvisation.



Maria-Eleni Sitaropoulou (GR) is a performer-director-choreographer from Greece and her work identifies as devised, physical theatre. Her background is in contemporary and classical ballet dance. In 2017 she completed her BA in the Theatre Arts Department of The American College of Greece with a minor in Dance. She is currently doing the MFA Advanced Theatre Practice at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. She debuted her first Solo Show ‘‘Night Out’’ in London last July 2018 which she devised and performed.



Patti Stiles (AUS) Patti Stiles (Australia): Patti is an actor, improviser, director, instructor, and playwright who has been working professionally in theatre since 1983. She served her theatre apprenticeship at the world renowned Loose Moose Theatre and was trained by Keith Johnstone. Her understanding and interpretation of Johnstone’s work and philosophy, combined with a wealth of experience on the world stage, has made her a ‘‘must have’’ teacher. Patti has taught and performed in all corners of the world for impro companies, theatre schools, and in the corporate arena. The Canadian press has given her the titles of ‘‘Impro Doyen’’ and ‘‘Queen of Improvisation’’! For more information, please visit her

website: <http://pattistiles.com/>



Frida Sundstrom (SE) has a role in Swedish improvised theatre that is unquestioned. She came from a masculine improv world, which left her feeling (and literally being) pushed off the stage. Her talent was too provocative - but talent being a fierce weapon in itself and she was able to cling on and eventually change the Swedish improv scene. She is the founder and Artistic Director of Improverket, the biggest improv theatre in Gothenburg.

www.improverket.se



Barbara Tint (USA) PhD, has over 30 years of experience as a psychologist, university professor, consultant and global trainer. She has been improvising and applying improvisation for over ten years and is currently the President of the Applied Improvisation Network. Her areas of expertise include conflict resolution, power and status, gender dynamics, intercultural relations, leadership, dialogue, resilience, humanitarian intervention, reconciliation processes, refugee engagement and transition

and change. She is a published author with books, journal articles and book chapters on a wide range of these topics. She has lived and worked on every continent (ok, not Antarctica) and draws deeply from these diverse experiences. When she has time and courage, she performs at every opportunity she can.



Koray Bülent Tarhan (TR) graduated from Ankara University Theater Department. In 2000, he co-founded one of the first improv groups in Turkey. He works as an actor, instructor, musician and project coordinator at [Istanbulimpro](http://Istanbulimpro.com). He also works with children, teenagers, and adults in different foundations and organizations. He wrote the first handbook on Improv in Turkish, *Dogaclama Icin Elkitabı* (2013) and designed the first Impro App in Turkish in 2018. He is the coordinator of Istanbul International Improv Festival. Tarhan participated as a workshop leader/presenter at the AIN World Conferences in Portland, San Francisco and Berlin. He was also a presenter at the GII Symposium in L.A. in 2017. Tarhan has participated as an actor and workshop leader in Amsterdam, Berlin, Belgrade, Chicago, Beijing, Ljubljana, Tallinn International Improv Festivals, and Conferences.



Frank Totino (CA) Canadian director, actor, improviser, teacher, producer, designer and musician. Appears in feature film and television. Produces, directs and edits films and videos. Engaged by theatre companies, universities and drama schools worldwide. Directed plays in Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, France and Brazil. Former student (1976-80), friend, colleague and collaborator to Keith Johnstone. Recommended by Johnstone for his knowledge and expertise in Impro and actor training methods and for an experimental approach to theatre. Founding member of Johnstone's Loose Moose Theatre Company. Developed new scripts there for production and publication and was the first to experiment with live broadcast of Improvisation for television. Part of the first series of workshops with Johnstone that became LifeGame©. MFA in directing. Director of Keith Johnstone Workshops Inc. www.franktotino.com, www.keithjohnstone.com



Blessin Varkey (IND) is an Accessibility researcher and the Artistic Director (Improvisation) at the Playground Comedy Studio, New Delhi, India. He is currently exploring applied improvisational theatre in mental health and leadership in India and also teaches & performs improvisation. His improvisational techniques and pedagogy are influenced by Keith Johnstone's 'impro system'. Blessin is also a NASSCOM recognized Social Innovator, and has been working on accessibility and developmental disabilities since 2013.



Francis Jasson Z. Villanueva (PH): Teaches Disaster Readiness Education at the Senior High School of La Salle Green Hills. He completed his Master of Arts degree in Basic Education Teaching at the Ateneo de Manila University and his Bachelor in Secondary Education in General Science degree from the Philippine Normal University. Aside from being a textbook author, he also gives workshops for teachers and students in different areas the Philippines. He has trained under the Philippine Educational Theater Association and Third World Improv. He is a member of One and A Half Men and Is It Wednesday Yet?, both active improv groups in Manila. He is co-founder of Crammers Collective, an all-male, Filipino youth improv group, and Schrodinger's Act, the first High School Improv Group in the Philippines.



Don Waisanen (USA) is an Associate Professor in the Baruch College, CUNY Marxe School of Public and International Affairs, where he teaches courses and workshops in public communication—including executive speech training, communication strategy, and seminars on leadership, storytelling, and improvisation. All his research projects seek to understand how communication works to promote or hinder the force of citizens' voices. Previously,

Don worked in broadcast journalism, as a speechwriter, and on political campaigns. He is the founder of [Communication Upward](#), an adjunct lecturer at Columbia University and New York University, and received a Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Southern California's Annenberg School.



The Wardrobe Ensemble (UK) are a group of theatre artists working together to make new plays that dissect the twenty-first century experience. We consist of nine core members, one producer and a constantly growing community of associate artists. We are based in Bristol. Our work has been performed at theatres and festivals all over the UK and US including The National Theatre, Almeida Theatre, Soho Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith and Bristol Old Vic. We are winners of a Fringe First award and two-time winners of The Stage Award for Acting Excellence.



Ralf Wetzel (NL) began his career as an electrician. He joined Vlerick Business School as a Professor of Organization and Management after extensive experience in management and organization research and after being a head of a joint research and consulting group in Switzerland. He is passionate about the fields of societal and organizational dynamics, of organizational and individual change, of organizational as much as individual bliss. He is unique in the way he explores the territory beyond the trodden paths of management science to provide inspiring insights enabling his clients to excel in today's VUCA world. Training and coaching formats employ different art forms like improvisation theatre, movement & dance, surreal painting and clowning to bring leaders and organizations safely and playfully in new contact with themselves to allow for transformational change. Aside of his academic writing, he loves to turn research results into art-based forms like fiction, accessible for non-academic readers. He is a passionate improvisation theatre player himself and loves to give his own clown all the space he needs. He is very excited about his own solo mask show "Absolutely reliable!" (directed by Lee DeLong, Paris), which premiered in Brighton in 2018.



Nick Wood (UK) After Oxford University, Nick first worked as Playground Leader with Ed Berman in North Kensington, and as Assistant Director with Lindsay Anderson at the Royal Court. Writing credits include Hampstead Theatre, Orange Tree, Kings Head, BAC and radio and television. He was a Founder Member of the Equality Group (ICA). Directing credits include a UK tour with the improvisation group 'Theatre Machine'. Appointed Lecturer in Dramaturgy at the Central School of Speech and Drama in 1994, for much of the last twenty years he has been Course Leader of the MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice, devising developmental experiences for emerging theatre-makers.



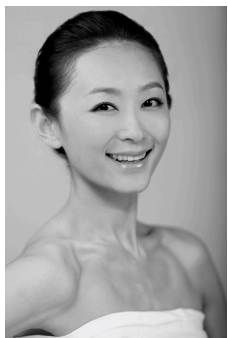
Victoria Worsley (UK) MA, studied movement and performance with Monika Pagneux and Philippe Gaulier in Paris and gained a degree from Oxford University. She worked widely as an actor, theatre maker and movement director for twenty years. Having discovered the Feldenkrais Method via Monika Pagneux, she trained as professional practitioner in Lewes 2003-7. Since then she has built a busy general practice in North London and taught in a number of drama schools including Mountview and Oxford School of Drama. She teaches workshops and seminars for a variety of arts organisations including the Actors Centre and Royal Ballet School and coaches individual actors. Her book, *Feldenkrais For Actors*, was published by Nick Hern in 2016. She also holds a black belt in Goju Ryu karate and teaches barefoot running.



Marcus Young (USA) 楊墨 makes participatory work at the intersection of art, spirit, and social movement, challenging current paradigms of who is an artist, how to live mindfully, and what is social action. He is founder of *Don't You Feel It Too?*—an ongoing street dance practice of social healing and inner-life liberation. (DYFIT.org) From 2006 to 2015, he was City Artist in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he redefined the role of the artist as daily collaborator in government. He is currently Art for Social Change Program Director at HECUA, Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs; stage director for Ananya Dance Theatre; and artist in the creative collaborations program at the Weisman Art Museum. He is a recipient of awards from the McKnight, Bush, and Jerome Foundations.



Xana (UK) is a live loop musician, sound designer, installation artist, poet and creative techie. Xana has worked on a number of plays including *Hive City Legacy* (Roundhouse, 2018), *Obama and Me* (Camden Peoples Theatre, 2018), *Black Holes* (Cambridge Junction, 2018), *Half-breed* (Soho Theatre, 2018). Their film credits include *A Journey Of Our Own* (Xana, Windrush project, 2018), *the ancestors came* (Cecile Emeke, 2017) and *how was your day* (Tal Iungman, 2016). Xana is involved in a number of community projects focusing on archives, technological resistance, consent, accessibility and sustainability for underrepresented people. Xana is a co-organiser for Afrotech Fest, has designed the new gal-dem magazine site, is designing the Black Cultural Activism Map for the Stuart Hall Foundation, is featured on the upcoming Seed Ensemble album and runs music hack label soulcase.live (Photo credit: Rohan Ayinde)



Zhao Zhibo (CN) received BFA and MFA degrees from Beijing Dance Academy (BDA). Since 2003 she has been a leading dancer and choreographer/rehearsal director in the Resident Dance Company of BDA as well as teaching in the BDA's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as an associate professor. Recent publications include her autobiography, *The Dancer at Thirty* and her translation into Chinese of Blom and Chaplin's seminal 1988 work *The Moment of Movement: Dance Improvisation*. She has received a number of awards including the title of Beijing Outstanding Talent and funding from Beijing Municipal Education Commission's dance research fund and the China National Arts fund. She is currently undertaking a PhD at Middlesex University.