

## PUPPETRY WORKSHOPS



We offer workshops for companies and schools, of various lengths and for a varied experience levels.

If you do not see an option that suits you then please get in touch and we will happily look at how we accommodate you best.

### DAY WORKSHOP

Our basic workshop covers the basics of puppetry. Looking at the core elements that are used to manipulate any object or puppet. Flabbergast have a particular interest in Bunraku puppetry, an art that finds its origins in Japan. A Bunraku puppet uses three people to operate it. It is becoming an increasingly popular technique and one that many performers are likely to come across in a puppetry job/audition.

All participants in this workshop will leave with a strong understanding of puppetry and its relationship to the puppeteer. The day starts with puppetry exercises and group work then moves into object manipulation. After lunch we progress to operating puppets and looking at short improvisations.

### THREE SESSION WORKSHOP

Our second option is aimed at larger groups or for those wishing to progress from the rudimentary principals to a more comprehensive understanding of puppetry. Flabbergast take this workshop to the next level and begin to look at what it takes to put on a puppetry show.

We explore how companies devise puppetry shows and how that may differ from other theatrical productions.

After our first day of fundamentals we then begin to assign roles that most suit our participants, we examine the role of improvisation and develop the fundamentals of puppetry - breath, focus and fixed point further progressing to how to change the 'physics' of the puppets' world.

We bring in a number of professional puppeteers so that everyone benefits from a one to one experience whilst operating. Small excerpts of current productions will be performed, giving participants a chance to observe a practised team working in unison, they are then invited to have a go themselves both within an existing team and by forming one of their own amongst peers.

The group will leave the course with an advanced understanding of puppetry having enjoyed a more extensive and personal training on all the different aspects of the Bunraku/tabletop puppet. Each member of the group will have addressed the common problems that are presented by this style of puppetry - Moving around a stage and each other with the puppet, working with music, 'performing' as a puppeteer, combining puppetry and object manipulation and working together in improvisation.

# FLABBERGAST THEATRE

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### FULL WEEK COURSE

Over the course of the session the group will look at all the skills that are involved in the previous options and use this knowledge to create and perform their own show. The performance can be a showing to peers/colleagues in an informal environment or on a more professional level if you have a suitable space.

The show will be devised by the group whilst guidance is supplied by Flabbergast theatre, we will be with them every step of the way, giving direction and advise about the puppetry and format of the show. This is a great chance to gain a full understanding of what it is like to be a puppeteer and part of a company that work in puppetry/physical theatre.

The use of lights, music and other technical aspects will be considered and how these can enhance the audiences experience. A variety of puppets can be used as well as objects.

After the week long course everyone will be confident in their use of puppets through improvisation, choreography and have a good understanding on what makes a good puppetry piece.



### BOOK A PERFORMANCE WITH THE COURSE

Flabbergast have a number shows under their belt. No matter what workshop you are interested in booking, a show alongside it will boost your experience and give you a chance to see the skills and techniques explored in the workshop(s).

All of our shows involve improvisation, set pieces and the two loveable brothers...Boris & Sergey.

In recent years we have had runs at Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Arcola Tent, Little Angel Theatre, Soho Theatre, Old Vic Tunnels and Theatre503.

*'Profanely hilarious...shows this excellent don't stay secret for long'*  
**Fest**

*'mesmerising complexity and mind-boggling hilarity... as funny as it is awe-inspiring'*  
**Three Weeks**

If you would like to book a show along with your workshop please contact us directly and we will be happy to discuss details.

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## PUPPERTY WORKSHOPS

### FLABBERGAST THEATRE

Formed in 2010 Flabbergast was set up to make uncompromising and exciting physical theatre in a belief that all theatre should be engaging and sweaty. We are particularly interested in puppetry and its application in both devised theatre and work on existing texts, our leaning is currently towards Bunraku Puppetry and exploring puppetry for adult audiences, we are keen to continue working on breaking the preconception prevalent in the UK that puppetry is a children's medium.



In devising we consider that our creative's are our greatest resource and as such endeavour to create theatre through an extensive and collaborative research and development process using performers from many disciplines including acting, dance, clowning, circus arts and puppetry, we hope to bring an innovative and unpretentious approach to the work.

Our first piece was Puppet Poker Pit which ran at 25 minutes and was commissioned by Theatre Delicatessen for their pop up festival Theatre Souk just off Bond Street, it ran for five weeks and we performed it between three and five times a night meaning that we had done over 90 performances by the end of the run. The piece had no formalised script but rather ran in the form of a Commedia Dell A'arte performance . It was this show that gave birth to Boris & Sergey and as a result we were asked to perform at the Old Vic Tunnels and Latitude festivals. We began to develop the show into an hour long cabaret show and performed at various cabarets around London a notable highlight being a 12 minute version of The Elephant Man performed at the RR club.