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GRADUATE STUDEN

Beginner's Mind: Teaching From Not Knowing

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Abstract

Most students believe that their teachers are experts in all aspects of their subject. In April of 2009 my drama students asked me to teach Commedia dell'arte for the upcoming school year. I did not have a strong knowledge of the subject, so I approached the project with a beginner's mind and took a risk that I did not know I was taking. Over the course of the school year, my students and I researched the history, movement, and production elements of Commedia. The end result was a Commedia inspired performance where Juliet collided with A Midsummer Night's Dream. While studying Commedia, students learned how to take risks, work together, write a show, and enjoy the journey to an end result. I discovered that it is not only about the end result, but everything I teach. All it takes is a willingness to risk and approach things with a mind open to possibilities.

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