



Social Justice Education
Through Theatre
in Universities & Colleges
2021

What We Do

At **Mixed Company Theatre**, we create presentations and facilitate workshops of **Forum Theatre**, an interactive approach rooted in Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed methodology. It **actively involves students** in developing real-time strategies for dealing with social and personal issues.

Forum Theatre **creates a safe space** for students to experiment, ask questions, take risks, and imagine creative solutions to challenging situations they recognize from their lives. This year we have **virtual options for all our programming**.



LIGHTNING FORUM THEATRE PRESENTATIONS

75 mins | 350-400 students | \$1750 + HST

Description

In our Lightning Forum Theatre presentations, **we create a short play for you that depicts a worst case scenario** of your chosen topic. This story will be presented by actors as the "first act" of the presentation. Then, audience members will be invited onto the stage by a trained facilitator to enact an "intervention" where they can either **replace a character or suggest a change to the story for the better**. A trained Forum Theatre facilitator (the Joker) prepares and encourages participants to replace the actors on the stage and to change the story in a constructive way.

This participatory nature of our presentations allows students the chance to test out their strategies in a safe environment, **finding solutions that are realistic, actionable, and effective for them in combatting challenging situations** they may encounter in their lives.



LIGHTNING FORUM THEATRE PRESENTATIONS

Presentation A: Sexual Violence + Consent

Themes

- Substance use
- Victim-blaming
- Gender discrimination
- Harassment based on race and sexuality
- Emotional manipulation
- Allyship
- Rape culture
- The importance of ongoing and enthusiastic consent

This presentation will address these key themes in the **context of the COVID-19 pandemic**. It will highlight how issues of sexual violence and consent can manifest during this time of physical distancing.

Key Questions Addressed

- What does ongoing, enthusiastic **consent look, feel, and sound like?**
- **When can a person give consent**, and when can they not?
- How can we **identify and intervene in non-consensual situations?**
- How can you **support a peer who has experienced sexual violence?**
- How does sexual violence **intersect with gender, race, and sexuality?**
- What can we do to **mitigate rape culture and victim-blaming** in post-secondary communities?



LIGHTNING FORUM THEATRE PRESENTATIONS

Presentation B: Student Mental Wellbeing

Themes

- Mental health stigma
- Burn-out
- Normalization of poor mental health
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Isolation
- Loneliness
- FOMO
- Mental health allyship

This presentation will address these key themes in the **context of the COVID-19 pandemic**. It will highlight how mental health can be affected by developments in the crisis - physical distancing measures, health concerns, and more.

Key Questions Addressed

- How can you **prevent burnout and fatigue** during this time of increased stress and virtual interactions?
- What are the **signs of poor or deteriorating mental wellbeing**?
- How can you **be an ally to peers who seem to be struggling with mental health** during this difficult time?
- What can we do to **reduce stigma around mental wellness** in our post-secondary communities?
- Where can we **go to seek and receive support** from our University/College?



LIGHTNING FORUM THEATRE PRESENTATIONS

Presentation Itinerary

1. We **introduce ourselves** as Mixed Company Theatre and explain our Forum Theatre methodology to the audience along with our virtual protocols.
2. We **perform the scenes** which engage with the chosen social issue.
3. We **prepare students** for "interventions" using vocal and physical exercises.
4. Students **take the virtual stage** - they have the opportunity to say "stop," replace an actor in a role of their choice, and attempt to "intervene" or positively change the scene's outcome.
5. In dialogue with students, we **unpack and discuss** the intentions behind, outcomes of, and challenges evident in each student's intervention.
6. At the end of the presentation, we **reiterate the learning moments** arising from the session and - importantly - ensure key resources and **avenues for support** within the post-secondary community are identified.

FORUM THEATRE WORKSHOPS

60-75 min | 30 students | \$500 + HST per workshop

Description

In this programming option, you choose the topic(s) you want addressed and **one of our experienced facilitators will design a theatre-based workshop** that prompts participants **to identify, engage with, and find actionable solutions to address those challenges**. You can choose from a variety of **social justice, mental health, and equity-related topics**. This option differs from our presentations in that students will not be viewing an already created presentation, but will instead be participating in various improvisational theatre games and exercises.

These workshops **start with fun theatre games** designed to help students feel comfortable participating. Then, they will be led through various activities where they **use body language to represent different ideas, experiences, and challenges involved in the overall topic(s)** they are exploring. Participants may be guided to **improvise and present short scenes with each other** that reflect the ideas shared in the previous exercises. Throughout the workshop there will be plenty of opportunities to unpack the perspectives presented, and **discuss possible ways of combatting these challenges** in the real world.

Topics we can address include...

- Mental health allyship
- Sexual violence and consent
- Anti-racism
- Harassment
- Homophobia and transphobia
- Inclusion, diversity, and equity
- Conflict resolution
- And many more!

FORUM THEATRE WORKSHOPS

Workshop Itinerary

1. We **introduce ourselves** as Mixed Company Theatre and explain our Forum Theatre methodology to the audience along with our virtual protocols.
2. We lead students through **introductory games designed to promote participation and communication**, creating a safe space for exploration.
3. **Students participate in exercises** where they physically embody the chosen topic(s).
4. In dialogue with students, we **unpack and discuss** the images created in relation to the principles of Forum Theatre and/or finding solutions to the chosen social justice topic(s).
5. Some **short scenes may be created** deriving from the exercises that prompt students to consider the elements of oppression and how they might combat them.
6. At the end of the workshop, we **reiterate the learning moments** arising from the session and - importantly - ensure key resources and **avenues for support** within the post-secondary community are identified.

LOOKING TO COVER A DIFFERENT TOPIC?

Write to us and we can talk about customizing a presentation or workshop for you!

communications@mixedcompanytheatre.com

WHAT EDUCATORS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

"...It was such a great intro to Forum Theatre with my students. It was **lively, engaging**, and **high-stakes**. It was well-performed and well joked. It **gave students a sense that this work was challenging and important**. It catapulted us into the unit. I was thrilled, and I'd love to work with Mixed Company again..."

- **Elliot Leffler**, Assistant Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies at University of Toronto - Scarborough

This was said in response to a presentation MCT conducted with his students on the topic of sexual assault and harassment, designed to teach the principles of Forum Theatre.



WE TOUR POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS **YEAR-ROUND.**

Mixed Company will bring our interactive and educational programming to **your campus virtually**.

With questions or to book, write to:
communications@mixedcompanytheatre.com

Mixed Company Theatre

157 Carlton St, Suite 206, Toronto ON



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educate • engage • empower