The mask and the puppet in performance.

A two day masterclass

led by Mark Pitman
Garlic Theatre
www.garlictheatre.org.uk

Exploring the dynamic relationship between the mask and the puppet

This course is for performers, puppeteers, students, teachers and anyone with an interest in masks and puppets.

In this 2 day course, Mark Pitman will investigate the dynamic relationship between playing a mask and manipulating a puppet.

How do masks work and what can they teach us about performance? How does a puppet come to life and what does manipulating a puppet teach us about the study of movement?

In each session participants will play with neutral, metaphysical and laval masks and explore how the quality of movements relate to a specially designed neutral puppet to be operated on a table top.

The course will explore how playing a mask and operating a puppet can develop the qualities of

• breath
• stillness
• focus
• rhythm
• balance

The sessions will be relaxed and fun, learning through improvisation and observation.
'This was a fantastic masterclass, Mark is an amazing teacher, very encouraging and supportive with a wealth of knowledge!'
Joints & Mechanisms Norwich Puppet Theatre October 2015

Neutral Mask

You will be led on a journey to discover and develop your physical awareness. We will explore the forces of nature, elements and colour. The neutral mask is the foundation of all mask work, and allows us to study how the body moves in the space we inhabit, it teaches us about silence, stillness and breath. It is a reference point of departure and calm, but at the same time a state of energy in the body.

Metaphysical Mask

Using visualization, we will explore the freedom of the Metaphysical mask drawing on the discoveries made from the neutral mask. The metaphysical mask was originally developed by Carlo Mazzone-Clementi, in his teachings with the Neutral Mask; he found actors were trying to impose characters onto the Neutral mask. Being a mask with no human characteristics, it allows the wearer of the mask a greater freedom in their body and strips away any preconceived ideas they may have.
Larval Masks

Using the larval mask we will focus on improvisation, timing, fixed point and rhythm using everyday situations. In these sessions we will move towards performance techniques of playing a mask. The larval mask, which is also known as the naive mask or Basel Mask, is a wonderfully comic mask with simple expressions and clear features. Exploring these masks will enable you to find out how to react and play with the audience.

The Puppet

Using this specially designed neutral puppet we will discover breath, focus, stillness and balance. We will look at how playing the mask has increased our awareness of how we can control movement in our own bodies and how this can translate to the rhythm, stillness and dynamic tension in the puppet.
At the end of the course you will have a deeper understanding of:

- Body control and how the mask and puppet highlights your own movements in the space you inhabit.
- Exercises that will enhance your performance techniques.
- The different kinds of masks in rehearsal and performance.
- Techniques of how to play the mask and puppet and react with an audience.

**Mark Pitman**

*Mark Pitman is co-director of Garlic Theatre.*  
*His passion and commitment to mask and puppet making and performing spans 30 years. Mark trained in mime and movement at Desmond Jones school in London and at Jacques Lecoq in Paris. He studied leather mask making with Donato Sartori in Italy and has developed his own equivocal masks for teaching.*

*From 1995 - 2003 Mark was tutor for puppetry manipulation and construction at The Royal Central School for Speech and Drama in London. For the last 20 years Mark has been the co artistic director for Garlic Theatre, touring both nationally and internationally performing in international festivals in 18 countries outside the UK including Romania, Brazil, Singapore and Taiwan and winning 5 awards.*