

entertainer and should fit into just about any environment. Always remember that clowns are appreciated by all age groups and what is entertaining to a five year old child could also be entertaining to an eighty-five year old person. Clowns are truly for children of all ages.

Who can become a clown? Just about anyone who cares for other people can become a clown. You don't have to be the life of the party or a quick wit. There is no restriction on age or physical condition. You need some skills in eye-hand coordination in order to put on your make-up, but otherwise it is creating or finding a personality that fits you or that you can fit into. So whether you are a doctor, manager, lawyer, police officer, dish washer, cook, minister, student, college professor, or a motor mechanic you can become an entertaining clown if you apply yourself to it.

What do clowns do? At one time, especially in the circus, clowns were used to fill in between the other acts. A short group skit or solo routine was all that was necessary, but today clowns are doing just about anything that will entertain people. Balloon sculpturing is one of the most popular ways of entertaining all ages. Give an eighty-five year old senior a balloon dog or some other sculptured balloon and he or she will appreciate it as much as any child would. Balancing, juggling, walking on stilts, riding a unicycle, tumbling, performing magic, ventriloquism and puppetry, in fact anything proper that will entertain your audience, are all things you can do as a clown. Remember avoid vulgarity, and do not, and I stress the do not, do anything that will embarrass any member of your audience. Whatever you decide to do, practice it so that you will become proficient in it. It is better to develop two or three skills so that you can vary your performances.

What types of clowns are there? I am not going to elaborate on the types of clowns but only mention them. Further on in other sessions you will learn more about them. The basic ones are whiteface, auguste, tramp, hobo and character. Which ever type you decide to be, put your best effort in it and give your best performance, be it for three or four people or for a large audience.

Here are a few rules that you should follow:

- 1) Avoid vulgarity in your speech and actions.
- 2) Never downgrade or slant any of your jokes or gags at any religious, minority or nationality group or individual.
- 3) Never do anything or say anything that will embarrass any member of your audience.
- 4) Make sure you do not do anything that will injure any member of your audience.
- 5) Do not push yourself on someone who is trying to avoid you, pass them up as soon as this fact is evident.
- 6) If a child cries or appears frightened, (never mention the word scared in front of a child) leave the area if possible, if it is not possible ignore the child, do not try to win him or her over.
- 7) If an older child is rowdy and does things to annoy you, take evasive action but do not touch him or her in any manner.
- 8) Never appear with the smell of alcohol on your breath.

9) Don't smoke in public while in costume.
As you go along you will likely find some rules of your own you wish to add to this list.

To get the most out of this Institute, it is necessary for you to attend all the sessions. So, please attend and enjoy.

Horace "BUMPS" Brown

