



Art by Committee: A Guide to Advanced Improvisation

By Charna Halpern

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This sequel to the "improv bible" *Truth in Comedy* delves deeper into the mindset and history of improvisational theatre, and the accompanying DVD provides clear examples of these principles in action. The DVD includes performances by four influential improv groups: Upright Citizens Brigade (with Tina Fey and Amy Poehler), Beer Shark Mice (with Neil Flynn of *Scrubs*), Armando Diaz Theatrical Experience, and The Reckoning, along with additional short clips featuring Peter Hulne. The disc also contains interviews with many celebrity improv artists including Tina Fey, Rachel Dratch, Amy Poehler, Stephanie Weir, Tim Meadows, Andy Dick, and Adam McKay. The book expands on many of the ideas from *Truth in Comedy* as it explores the evolution of long-form improv into the New Harold and provides expanded thoughts on what makes improvisation effective. Readers also get an insider's perspective of Del Close, who many consider to be the father of modern improv along with book author Charna Halpern, as together they established the famous iO theatres.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

This sequel to the "improv bible" *Truth in Comedy* delves deeper into the mindset and history of improvisational theatre, and the accompanying DVD provides clear examples of these principles in action. The DVD includes performances by four influential improv groups: Upright Citizens Brigade (with Tina Fey and Amy Poehler), Beer Shark Mice (with Neil Flynn of *Scrubs*), Armando Diaz Theatrical Experience, and The Reckoning, along with additional short clips featuring Peter Hulne. The disc also contains interviews with many celebrity improv artists including Tina Fey, Rachel Dratch, Amy Poehler, Stephnie Weir, Tim Meadows, Andy Dick, and Adam McKay. The book expands on many of the ideas from *Truth in Comedy* as it explores the evolution of long-form improv into the New Harold and provides expanded thoughts on what makes improvisation effective. Readers also get an insider's perspective of Del Close, who many consider to be the father of modern improv along with book author Charna Halpern, as together they established the famous iO theatres.

About the Author

Variety called her one of the top ten women to watch in entertainment. Mike Myers named her the Uta Hagen of Comedy. **Charna Halpern**, the co-creator of long-form improvisation with her partner, the late Del Close, has changed the face of improvisational comedy forever. Halpern and Close created their famous signature long-form piece, the Harold, a meta-game that "ate" short-form improvisation and became popular worldwide. Halpern and Close have been responsible for creating the talents and sensibilities of some of the biggest comedic stars in show business. Together and apart, their alumni include John Belushi, Bill Murray, Gilda Radner, Mike Myers, Chris Farley, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Andy Dick, Andy Richter, Adam McKay, David Koechner and many other illustrious cast members and writers of *Saturday Night Live*, *MADtv*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*. As director of i.O. in Chicago (formerly *ImprovOlympic*), and i.O. West in Los Angeles, Halpern recently celebrated her twenty-fifth year in business with the return of all of her alumni in a star-studded celebration in Chicago that will soon yield a DVD and a television special. Under Halpern's guidance, i.O. is producing the next generation of artistic geniuses.

In addition to directing and teaching at i.O., Halpern travels the world teaching seminars in improvisation. She was hired by The American Embassy in Cyprus to teach her philosophy of agreement to the Greek and Turkish Cypriots in an effort to bridge their communication gap.

Her first book, *Truth in Comedy*, is considered the bible for improvisation in the entertainment industry and is mandatory reading in theatre departments on most college campuses.

She is not just a leader in the entertainment industry. She also has a reputation as the premier provider of corporate comedy and corporate training. Her workshops for corporations are customized to teach techniques in communication, team building and creative thinking. Her methods of teaching agreement, building upon ideas and turning a negative into a positive make for great sales tools and draw the parallels that exist between the improv world and the corporate work environment.

She currently lives in Chicago with her two dogs, Chief and Mia, and travels back and forth to her theatre in L.A.

Users Review

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Ronald Castaneda:

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