

Adventure Cabaret

MC Intro

[1:05]

Timpani roll. The Mistress of Ceremonies strides on stage. She is wearing a top hat, and twirling a black cane.

Timpani snap. Silence.

The MC is holding the cane on the floor in front of her and leaning forward on it, bracing herself with both hands, looking down, so you only see the top of her top hat. She suddenly looks up.

MC: Guten Abend, meine Damen und Herren! Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, etc! The year is 1924, and the beginning of Adolph Hitler's reign of terror is a mere nine years away.

Pause.

MC: Or is it 2024, one hundred years later? Where exactly *are* we in the greater arc of human history, and *supposed* societal development? Have we actually progressed, or not?

A quote appears on the screen behind the MC.

Screen: "No snowflake in an avalanche ever feels responsible."
— Voltaire (1694-1778)

MC: So my question to you, dear members of the audience, meine Damen und Herren, is this:

Do you feel responsible?

No one in the audience responds.

Screen: [fade in slowly: Earth in space]

MC: I ask you again, this time imploring you:

Do...you...feel...responsible?

Some audience members respond with "Yes!" but others with "No!"

The drums begin a steady beat, gradually growing in volume, complexity and intensity. The MC may have to improv what follows, depending on what the audience does.

MC: Ladies and gentlemen, we need unity in this matter. And so I ask you one final time, and ask for unity:

Drums build to maximum intensity. The music is loud, insistent.

DO...YOU...FEEL...RESPONSIBLE?

Adulterated / Unadulterated

[1:45]

Screen: [Earth fades to a black screen.]

MC: Responsibility, true responsibility, is a challenging topic, so we'll get back to it later in the show.

Complete change of mood.

Screen: [images of children]

MC: Do you remember what it was like when you were a child? You were full of curiosity, excitement, fascination. You laughed freely (*the entire cast laughs with childish glee from offstage*), and every day was new, full of wonder, and you exercised your imagination without hesitation or inhibition.

Transition to downer mood.

Screen: [much less happy images of children]

MC: Then gradually life, but most all other human beings, wore you down. You became disappointed, jaded. Your sense of possibility narrowed. You found less and less to be excited about.

Two actors dressed in full body hazmat suits appear on stage, and during the following they pick the MC up by the arms while she is talking, and move her directly stage left by about four feet, as though she were just an object that must be moved. They set her down just before she says the word "adulterated."

MC: Your imagination became less and less active. You were once a wonderful child, full of hope and excitement and wonder and imagination...

...but then, in a word, you became...

Screen: adulterated

MC: ...adulterated.

The actors in hazmat suits move to where the MC had been standing, and mime repairing an invisible object, at ground level.

MC: Aren't you sick of it? Aren't you just completely fed up with being adulterated? Tell me honestly. Don't you want something much better than being constantly and forever...adulterated?

Two members of the cast call out enthusiastically, and line up beside the MC, clearly ready for a fun time.

MC: So tonight we are going to make the conscious choice to return to the best of childhood: the boundless curiosity, the excitement, the open mindedness, the enthusiasm.

The actors in hazmat suits finish their work, and remove their masks and head coverings.

MC: We are going to consider new ideas, new outlooks, deeply exercise our imaginations, and have lots and lots of fun together. For the next hour, we are going to be...

The actors in hazmat suits pick up the MC by the arms again, and move her back to her original position, so that she is back in her original position exactly when she says "Completely unadulterated."

Screen: unadulterated

MC and cast: Completely unadulterated!

The two actors dance The Linky Pinky briefly together, and so do the two actors in the hazmat suits.

MC: Who's with me? Great! We'll have stories—happy stories, sad stories, scary stories, silly gags, more stories, fun fun fun, and then we'll get serious again.

At this point an actor walks slowly in front of the stage, reading a book.

MC: But what have we here? Look, it's some silly guy reading a book! How pretentious. What an elitist! He probably goes home and reads the dictionary. Ha!

The actor reading a book walks off, lost in his book.

Away with words!

[1:30]

The actors in hazmat suits exit, having a mimed professional discussion.

MC: Away with words! Away with them, I say! We need some truly mindless physical entertainment, and to give us that mindless entertainment is our own Lola de Campa. Lola, can we get you out here please?

[NEW SECTION]

Professor Finlay Clinkscapes

[1:22]

MC: And now we have another special guest, but a very different kind of guest.

(She cups her hand by her mouth and whispers.)

This one's a *professor*! Uh oh! *(Ooh la la gesture.)*

Direct from Fargo, North Dakota, Professor Finlay Clinkscapes, world expert! Come on out, Professor!

Professor Clinkscales enters. He appears quite jolly. In his vest pocket is a laser pointer.

MC: Professor Clinkscales, thank you so much for being with us tonight.

Professor Clinkscales: My pleasure indeed.

MC: Professor, could you tell us a bit about your area of study?

Screen: Professor Finlay Clinkscales, PhD, HHS
World expert in Horrific Human Stupidity

Professor Clinkscales: Why yes, certainly. I study stupidity.

MC: Stupidity? You have a PhD in stupidity?

Professor Clinkscales: Yes. I specialize in the study of Horrific Human Stupidity.

MC: But humans are intelligent! Your field must be very narrow.

Professor Clinkscales: Not at all. Horrific Human Stupidity encompasses most major fields: physics, biology, cosmetics, psychology, sociology, scientology, diet, nutrition and grocery shopping, linguistics, sports, the media, celebrities, breast and butt implants, politics of course, but most of all religion.

MC: I see. Professor, what will you be speaking to us about this evening?

Professor Clinkscales: Horrific Human Stupidity, of course. Didn't you hear me the first time?

MC: Sorry, professor.

The MC is taken aback by the professor's snappishness, and exits backwards, bowing.

[NEW SECTION]

Why A Cabaret?

[3:12]

The Mistress of Ceremonies enters quickly, taken aback by the bad temper of Professor Clinkscapes.

MC: Well, that was certainly...interesting. Ask a professor, get an answer...yikes! But we'd like to explain to you why we're here tonight. Why are we here tonight?

Professor Clinkscapes: *(offstage, shouting)* Because we're not dead yet, that's why!

MC: Again, good point! *(She makes the "ooh la la" gesture again.)* But why a cabaret? To answer this question, let's listen to a true story from Greece, but not ancient Greece, no...Greece from the 1950's, even before the word "sexism" begins to be used in English.

The MC again exits backwards, bowing.

[NEW SECTION]

The Talking Dog #1

[0:43]

MC: So you see just how important a cabaret can be! A matter of life and death! But now for some more fun. Are you ready for The Talking Dog? The Talking Dog is about to...

A stagehand motions from the side.

MC: Excuse me for a moment.

A brief conference ensues between the MC and the stagehand. The MC returns.

MC: I have just been informed that The Talking Dog is feeling a bit shy about his vocabulary, and wants a bit more time to learn some more words.

Sorry about that! We'll check back with the doggie later. But in the mean time, let's return to the world of words for a moment.

The MC bows deeply, and exits backwards.

[NEW SECTION]

The MC Introduces the First Message

[0:46]

MC: Now it's time for some truly special guests. These next guests are just *some* of the amazing creatures with whom we share this beautiful planet called Earth. These friends of ours are of unparalleled beauty and variety. They first began to appear on Earth 480 million years ago, which is about 479 million years before humans ever did. Without these guests, there would be no flowering plants at all. There would never have been flowers anywhere at all on Earth. Let's listen to what these truly important guests have to say to us.

[NEW SECTION]

The Talking Dog #2

[00:32]

MC: Well, it's finally time for us to hear from that fabulous Talking Dog! I'm really looking forward to hearing from him!

A stagehand motions to her from the side.

Excuse me for a moment.

A brief, slightly frantic conference ensues, and the MC returns to downstage center a bit annoyed.

I have just been informed that The Talking Dog has become more ambitious, and now wants to study the dictionary a bit before making his historic appearance. Well, a doggie's gotta do what a doggie's gotta do. Oh, that sounds kinda bad. Anyway, on with the show!

The MC exits backward, bowing in her customary way.

[NEW SECTION]

The Talking Dog #3

[0:40]

MC: Well, we've waited long enough for The Talking Dog, and now we're ready for his big, big moment! He should be truly amazing by now, having spent time studying the dictionary...

Once again, a stagehand gestures from the side. The MC now openly expresses annoyance in her gestures. Another brief conference ensues, this time full of obvious irritation. The MC returns to downstage center, shaking her head in exasperation.

Ok, I gotta tell you I'm getting kind of fed up with this darn Talking Dog. Now he's become rather egotistical about his conversational abilities, and is showing off to everyone backstage, distracting the entire cast. He's becoming a real problem.

The Talking Dog: (from offstage, in a voice that is half like barking) No I'm not!

MC: Yes, you are!

The Talking Dog: Am not!

MC: So annoying! Well, on with the show!

The MC exits backwards bowing, in her customary way, but this time with clear agitation.

[NEW SECTION]

MC: Adolph Hitler came to power ninety one years ago this year, and it's as though we've made no actual progress at all. We keep choosing horrible leaders, and doing horrible things to each other, and horrible things to all the other creatures on the planet. We are just making a horrible mess of absolutely everything, and we ourselves are not getting better in any way at all.

Screen: The Worst Species Ever

We just plain suck.

Actor 1: We really are a shitty species.

Actor 2: Man, we absolutely suck.

Actor 3: We are just the fucking worst.

Actor 1: I've never said this before, but I am ashamed to be a human being.

Actor 3: So am I.

Actor 2: Me too. Man, this hurts.

Actor 1: Why do we continue to be so horrible?

Actor 3: What can we do?

The three actors move toward Lola and the professor, and join in the sad embrace. The actors eventually are all holding hands in a way that will later unfurl to form a line across the stage.

The Mistress of Ceremonies is a bit off to the side of the group embrace, lost in thought.

On the screen, the abstract image of a brain that opened The Empire of the Mind segment slowly fades in.

Screen: [abstract image of a brain]

After a while, the Mistress of Ceremonies notices what is on the screen, and is puzzled by it. Something begins to happen in her mind. She gradually moves downstage center, occasionally looking back at the brain. One of the cast members notices the MC looking at the screen, and he looks up at the screen.

Actor 1: Hey, what's that?

Actor 2: I don't know. It looks like a brain.

MC: It's not just a brain, it's The Empire of the Mind. It's *the answer*.

Actor 3: The answer to what?

MC: What is the most important issue in the world?

During the following, the group of five actors gradually unfurls, so that they are all holding hands in a line across the stage.

Metanoia

[0:37]

Screen: metanoia

A realization so profound that you are quickly transformed.

MC: Our friend the professor had a good answer, but not the *real* answer, not the *deeper* answer. The most important issue in the world is humanity improving itself. Without that, planetary suicide is inevitable. We must work to become better, first individually, then in groups, then as a species. There is no valid alternative. We must work to become better as a species. Our entire future depends on it.

Metamorphosis

[0:10]

Screen: metamorphosis

A better future is already available.

We just need to adopt it.

The low opening note of the symphonic music of the overture begins. The MC joins the line holding hands, toward the middle.

Finale

[3:55]

Cast: We are all in this together.

Actor: We must work together toward solutions.

Actor: We must cooperate.

Actor: We must change.

Actor: We must become much better than we have been.

The actors release each other's hands.

Screen: metahuman

Do you have what it takes to turn this mess around?

Are you willing to try?

An actor steps forward. For each line below, and actor steps forward. Thus the entire line gradually moves downstage.

Actor: There is no such thing as (*air quotes*) “human nature.”

Actor: We can become as good as we want to become.

Actor: There is nothing stopping us except ourselves.

Actor: How can we start?

Pause. An actors steps forward strongly.

Actor: I have a suggestion. We need to become much, much more honest with ourselves, even if it’s painful.

Another actor steps forward.

Actor: Definitely. True honesty with ourselves is the only way to start.

One by one, the cast members step forward, with positive ideas and suggestions and ideals, until the cast is toward the edge of the stage, and then steps down into the audience area, as described below.

On the screen, a beautiful video collage of Earth’s biodiversity begins to play, timed to the music.

Actor: We can adopt much better ideas, and put those ideas into action.

Actor: We can work every day to improve our minds.

Actor: We can delete outdated and defective software in ourselves.

Actor: We can install much better software in our minds, and use it for good.

Actor: Always be ready to adopt new and better ideas, attitudes and outlooks.

Actor: Deepen our curiosity.

Actor: Choose truly important subjects, and study them deeply.

Actor: Learn much more about the glories of nature.

Actor: Develop and strengthen our courage, and always apply it toward the good.

Actor: Make lists of our faults, and do everything we can to correct them.

Actor: Always be ready to admit openly *that we were wrong*.

Actor: Aspire to be superior to only one person, and that is our previous self.

Actor: Tell someone that you love them, because you do.

Actor: Apologize to someone you have harmed.

Gradually the members of the cast move into the audience area, and continue expressing positive ideals from the audience area, mingling with the audience, occasionally offering a pinky handshake to an audience member.

Actor: Give someone who needs your attention your absolutely full and complete attention.

Actor: Learn some wonderful new words and share them with other people.

Actor: Choose understanding before judgment.

Actor: Choose natural solutions first.

Actor: Fall in love with your local and regional ecosystems, and learn much more about them.

Actor: Work every day to improve yourself in every way.

Actor: As much as possible, pay attention only to what is truly important.

Actor: Wherever you are walking, pick up some litter.

Actor: Cultivate productive openness.

Actor: Every day, do something that surprises even you.

Actor: Choose wonderful ways to be an inspiration to others.

Actor: Make friends with a new species every week.

Actor: A tree...

Actor: A bird...

Actor: An amphibian...

Actor: A fish...

Actor: An insect.

Actor: Imagine every day how great life could be, then go out and do it.

Actor: Read inspiring books, and pass them on to other people.

Actor: Get some fun exercise, and try to couple it with something else that's good.

Actor: Evaluate your diet, and improve it.

Actor: Become your own most perceptive and accurate critic.

Actor: Choose walking more.

Actor: Develop views that are truly your own, based on evidence and reason.

Actor: Become a citizen of the entire planet.

Actor: A much better future is already available.

Actor: We just have to adopt it.

Actor: As much as possible...

Actor: ...in every situation...

Actor:...and with every person...

Cast: Choose love!

Actor: And whoever you meet...

Cast: ...do the Linky Pinky with them!

Each cast member chooses a member of the audience, and brings them on stage to dance the Linky Pinky together in front of the rest of the audience. The cast members can choose to "cut in" with another pair, and dance with a different audience member on stage, depending on the timing.

On the final chord of the symphonic music, the entire cast puts their arms forward as though to hug the audience and says loudly:

Cast: We love you!

The Earth appears on the video screen. The cast turns around and says loudly to the Earth:

Cast: We love you!

The cast turns around to face the audience again, and bows.

A dog is brought on stage, and is greeted by the cast. Is that The Talking Dog? He sure looks friendly.

Outro

[1:30]

Screen: Adventure Cabaret
SEATBELTS

The SEATBELTS sign blinks off, but remains on screen.

Announcer: At this time the captain has turned off the seatbelt sign and you are free to disembark. We thank you once again for flying Adventure Cabaret, and we hope you will join us on future journeys to other exciting destinations of the mind, the spirit and the imagination.

Together, we can create a much better reality.

The cast thanks their dancing partners from the audience, walks again into the audience area with their dancing partners, mingling with the audience as they get up to leave.

Audio: Empire of the Mind music

Screen: End credits

THE END

The cast continues out into the lobby with the audience, completely open and kind and loving with them. If a hug is offered or requested, a hug is given. If a smile is sent, another smile is returned. If a question is asked, an honest answer is given.