

# UNGA KLARA



Director Gustav Deinoff  
On Tour 2019

**UNGA KLARA**

## Educational material

Elin Unnerman and Gunhild Aubert Opdal, 2011  
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## About this Material

This material is aimed at educators who have been or are going to attend the show My True Selves. It is our intention that you see this material as an inspiration, where you can choose the parts that work well for you. This educational material also contains suggestions for pre- and post-work, linked to your theater experience. Through exercises and questions, this material wants to stimulate the children to bring forward their own stories and identities. By meeting and discussing life issues together, you gain a view of yourself and others from new perspectives. This material is meant to inspire you in that practice.

The material is divided into two parts:

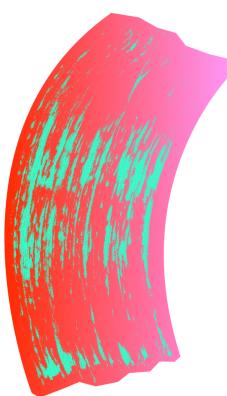
### Part 1 - Exercises

Here you will find discussion topics and exercises that you and our class can work with.

### Part 2 – About the performance

Here is an interview with the show's director, Gustav Deinoff and writer, Erik Uddenberg and some literature tips.

We hope you find the material inspirational!



## Before your theater visit

The performance *My True Selves* will be played in your classroom. You will sit in a circle on chairs and the actors will play inside the ring. There are two actors in the show.

### Mindmap

Purpose: To see what children think and like about theater. And what expectations they have before the show.

What is needed: Pencil, black / white board or large paper.

Suggestions:

1. Write THEATER in the middle of the white / blackboard.
2. Ask the children what they think theater is.
3. Write on the white / blackboard what the children answers

Talk about what you wrote on the board.

Suggestion questions:

- Ask the children if they have seen any theater performance before and how they experienced it.
- Ask if they have any expectations of the show they are about to see.
- Explain that it is a performance that is being played in the classroom.

You have now created a common picture of what theater can be. Those who had not seen theater before have now gained an insight into the experiences of others and you have been able to talk jointly about the students' expectations and hopes for this theater experience.

### Conversation about identity

Purpose: To start thinking about what identity is.

What is needed: Pencil, black / white board or large paper.

Identity can be tricky to describe. Quickly explained, identity is "who you are." When you start thinking about who you really are it can get quite



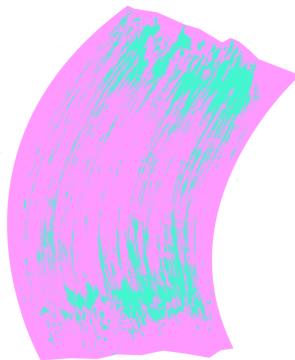
difficult. There are so many factors that make you into your true self. It's about friends, society, school, upbringing..... Children in the age of 9–12 are in the midst of their identity creation. It's great to pause reality for a while, watch the show and talk about how it feels afterwards. Some responds strongly and have a lot of emotions and thoughts, others feel nothing (at least so they say).

Here's how:

1. Talk about what identity is and how to become who you are. Please write on the board.
2. Talk freely or use the questions below.

Suggested questions:

- What is identity?
- What makes you who you are?
- Can you change?
- How?
- How are you influenced by others?
- When is it good and when is it bad?
- Can you be different people? For example, one person at school and another at home with your family?



## After the theater experience

Before you start working on the different parts of this material it may be good to do a memory round and after-talk where students are allowed to describe and share their different interpretations of the theater experience.

Here's how:

Sit in a circle and let everyone in turn get the opportunity to express themselves about what they remember from the show. See below examples of questions that you as the teacher can ask:

- Which scene do you remember most?



- Why was that the scene that distinguished / stuck with you?  
Why do you think the show is called My True Selves?
- What is the show about?
- Did you think / feel anything special when you saw the show?

**Assignment:**

Instruct students to write about what they remember from the performance. If available play some quiet music in the room when doing the task. If you like, please send the students' texts to me. We would be so happy to see this!

## **Exercises**

Think of the exercises that follow as a tutorial. Not like a rulebook. Pick among the exercises you want or do them in the order they are in. You are free to change and modify the exercises as you see fit.

### **Draw pictures - Who am I?**

This is a task you can do both before or during the performance.

Purpose: The children can think about who they are or who they want to be and what makes them unique.

What is needed: Pen, paper and something to color with (crayons, ink pens, watercolor paint).

Here's how:

1. Ask the children to draw and paint each picture showing who they are.
2. Display the pictures as an art exhibition.

Tip: If someone needs more instructions, you can ask the child to think about their characteristics, appearance, things he / she likes, interests, etc.



## Name games

There are many variations of name games. Here are some suggestions you can use:

Here's how:

Sit in a circle and let each student:

- ... say their name and something they like to do.
- ... say their name and the name of a person they admire.
- ... say their name and the name they wished they were called instead of their real one.
- ... say their name and a superpower they wished they had.

## Shake hands

Purpose: A fun exercise where kids can try what it might feel like to be someone else for a short while.

What is needed: A room large enough to allow everyone to be able to move around

Here's how:

1. Spread out in the room
2. Students will now greet each other by shaking hands and saying their name to the one they greet.
3. After they've greeted each other they will exchange names and move on to a new friend using their "new name".
4. They now greet a new friend with their "new name" and change names with them as well. The game ends when all student regains his/her real name.
5. The students who have regained their real names stand aside and the game is over when everyone has regained their real names.

Tip! Instead of using their real name, you can try to replace it and instead use the name of an idol or character from, for example, a movie or a game.



## The mirror image

Purpose: A fun exercise where you can train to see others and be seen.

Here's how:

1. Ask students to spread out in the room and find a place that feels comfortable.
2. Explain to the students that this is an exercise that takes place in silence. Feel free to put some quiet music in the background.
3. Ask students, where they stand, to find one of their peers that they are trying to be a mirror image of. Instruct them to look at how the other stands, their facial expressions etc.
4. Ask them to find a new person to be a mirror image for.
5. Talk about what it felt like to be a mirror image / to see someone else be your mirror image.

## Around the Circle

Purpose: Everyone get an opportunity to speak and express their opinion.

What is needed: Pencil, black / white board or large paper.

Here's how:

1. Let each child say one thing they thought about during the performance. Anything. Write everything on the board / paper.
2. Talk about what is on the board / paper. Talk freely or use the questions below.

Suggested questions:

- Was there anything in the show that you particularly liked? What made you like it?
- Was there something in the show that you didn't understand? What? Think together about what the students have not understood.

Let everyone have their say without anyone else commenting. Tell the children that there are no right or wrong opinions about the performance. It is an art experience and you can interpret an art experience in many ways.



## Which scene do you remember?

Purpose: To talk about what happened in the show and what the kids think about it.

Things you need: Pen, paper.

This is how: Let the children work in smaller groups and interpret scenes as they remember.

Choose one of the following options to make divide the students into groups:

1. Let the children say what scenes they remember and group them accordingly.
2. Divide the children into groups and let them in the groups talk about a scene they want to work with.
3. Write the scenes below on a paper and place the papers in the room. Ask the children to stand by the piece that represents the scene they liked best. Those who stand by the same piece form a group.

Examples of scenes to work with:

- Christiano Ronaldo greets a child
- Fishing site online (Ove 55) (The child pretending to be a 55-year-old man to ask questions about fly fishing on a community\* on the net.)

\*Community = online meeting place

- The dream that became true: about having friends (The child who had a dream come true. The child had no friends but dreamed it had. When the family moved, the child made friends.)

- The escape

Let the groups talk about what's going on in the scene. Let the groups make a statue of their scene. Show the statues for each other. Talk about what the statues show.



## Alter Egos – statues

Goal: to express one's thoughts.

Materials: none

This is how: ask the student to reflect on the following: Have you ever pretended to be someone else? If yes, who did you pretend to be? Let the students make a statue of their other selves.

Tip 1: The students making the statue can imagine themselves as a picture.

Tip 2: For some, this might be a scary exercise. They may not want to tell or show who they pretended to be. Ask the students to portray someone they admire instead.



Illustration: Suzanne Osten



## Interview with Erik Uddenberg and Gustav Deinoff

### Why is it important for the play to be played?

**Gustav:** First, it is always important to be able to act and experience theatre. Since many students have not found the theater for various reasons it is especially important that they meet it through their school. This piece is important because it deals with important topics. In the text and through exercises we tell the children that it is okay to be all that you are and everything you want to be.

**Erik:** Hopefully, we give the children confidence in their imaginations, and give them the opportunity to reflect on how different and great life is. And an experience of being very involved in the performance.

### Is there anything else that you think those who see the show should know?

**Erik:** It's not a classic story. There are two people who tell many different stories.

**Gustav:** You should also know that the audience will participate in the performance. The actors do games and exercises with the audience. But it is not demanding and done in a playful way.

### What kind of story is being told?

**Gustav:** Simply described, it is a story of two twelve-year-olds telling each other about their alter egos.

### What is the theme of the play?

**Gustav:** The performance revolves around identity. But there are more topics that are raised. Imagination is one.

**Erik:** Storytelling and playfulness also have a large part in the performance.

### Why was the piece written?

**Erik:** I wrote the play because I was fascinated by the theme of identity. I was thinking about alter egos and who you are. I thought a lot about what alter egos you have at that age ... when you are nine to thirteen. And then I wondered if you could work on a theme like identity in a theater. And how to do that?

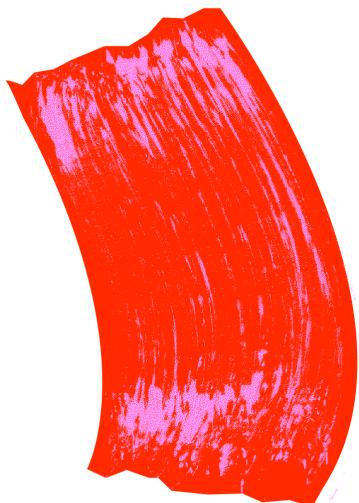


**What inspired you when you wrote the play?**

**Erik:** I interviewed the actors about what kinds of fantasy characters and figures when they were younger. And I used my own memories from that age. Then I also had children's culture as inspiration: films, books, Maria Gripe, X-men and Spiderman. Not because everything is so clearly visible in the play, but it has been inspiration.

**What inspiration did you have for the set of the play?**

**Gustav:** I was thinking about possible identities one might have. And the playfulness that all identities provide. And I wanted the kids who see the show to feel that they are there. They should feel that they are involved in the performance through good theater storytelling, games and exercises.



## About Unga Klara

Since 1975, Unga Klara has been a unique theatre company in Sweden and in the world. With our focus on children's perspective, constant artistic renewal and research, we strive to present the highest quality of art about what really matters to and for children and young people.

On January 1 2018, Unga Klara was appointed by the Swedish government to be the national stage for children's and youth theatre. This is a historic recognition and acknowledgement of the significance of high quality art for young people and Unga Klara's accomplishments over the years.

Farnaz Arbabi and Gustav Deinoff, has been Unga Klara's artistic leaders since 2014, constantly in dialogue with society and the public in the artistic process.

