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Host: Torien Cafferata

Producer: Torien Cafferata and Stephanie Werner

TITLE: Clowning, Failing, and Re-enchanting the Everyday with June Fukumura

DESCRIPTION:

What does it mean to fail and succeed at the same time? How can one offer joy as a form of activism? What is the purpose of comedy in 2024? Host Torien Cafferata explores these questions with SFU School for the Contemporary Arts alum June Fukumura, a multidisciplinary theatre artist, clown, and comedian. She has appeared on the Arts Club stage, in film and TV, and an award-winning Fringe

success

INTRO VO: Welcome to FCAT After School, a podcast from SFU's Faculty of Communication, Art, and Technology. In each episode, we join student hosts in conversation with alumni as they explore career journeys since graduation, and gather advice for the next generation.

In this episode, host Torien Cafferata, MFA graduate at the School for Contemporary Arts, sits down with BFA graduate June Fukumura, an interdisciplinary theatre artist, clown, and comedian. She has

June Fukumura: Mm hmm.

Torien Cafferata: Yeah.

June Fukumura: And I found a lot of pleasure in, you know, meeting different artists from different disciplines and the different artistic forms and how, you know, we can each be sort of in a, in a relational process, you can evolve and you can push boundaries of form.

Torien Cafferata: Yeah.

June Fukumura: I think that's sort of the most interesting thing that I found at SFU is trying to challenge the conventions of theatre, particularly at that time, I was studying with, you know, teachers like Steven Hill who continues to question form and convention. And so a lot of his teachings have been filtered through my time there. And I've really incorporated his practices into my own. And, you know, someone like David McMurray Smith, who's a clown teacher, really impacted me in a significant way through his clown work; was something that I had no idea would have any interest in up until, you know, I went to SFU. And then I ended up taking David's class, even after I graduated through my own studying with him, so yeah, branching off into different fields.

Torien Cafferata: Wow. Yeah, I love okay, I love the we've come to clown now. Because for listeners out there, who maybe have a very, a very particular or very limited perspective of what clown is and what it's like, what do you do? What do we do with clown school?

June Fukumura: Yeah, when I first started taking clown, the only reason I took it is was

superpowers as someone who thinks and acts and perceives the world differently, rather than concentrating on the setbacks like what are the opportunities that you bring? For example, I think the reason why my career and my artistic practice looks so kind of like a mosaic is because I'm dyslexic.

Torien Cafferata: Mmm.

June Fukumura: And the ability probably for you to be able to study all these disparate ideas into one podcast is because you also have some sort of neurodivergence too that allows you to see kind of a holistic bigger picture,

Torien Cafferata: Oh, I feel seen.

June Fukumura: And that you don't have and you feel comfortable and I feel comfortable not necessarily going from A to be to see that it can be nonlinear and nonlinear sequential. And I live very comfortably in that space. And so of course, the work that I create, has those qualities within it is a nonlinear sequential, very divergent, kind of pushes up against institutions, subversive, playful, and full of neurodivergent joy, because that's just how I operate. And so for me, I keep thinking about like, okay, what are the things that we can do in order to enable all of these things that lay dormant inside of us? And of course, accommodations are very important, but like, what are the things that we can do to like, enhance, and even feature, illuminate all of those differences that actually help everyone in the end?

Torien Cafferata: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that resonates so strongly with me, like this understanding that disability, if it's a, if we see it as this, like, the social model like that, it's a social construction.

June Fukumura: Yeah, I've been thinking a lot about pleasure activism, and just the role of pleasure in making art in general and relating to people.

