

Mime and Pantomime:

Q. Is there a difference between Mime and Pantomime?

PJC. The word Mime embraces many diverse forms of the art. It is like the word dance which covers, with equal accuracy, an Ojibway tribal celebration, the classic ballet, or the tap dancing of Buck and Bubbles. The French School uses the two terms synonymously which has generated a great deal of confusion. In the American Mime Theatre, we use the following definitions because they are useful. Pantomime is the art of creating the illusion of reality by dealing with imaginary objects or situations. Its art rests on the ability to imply weight, texture, line, rhythm and force to the air around them. Mime, on the other hand, is the art of acting silently through various kinds of theatrical movement.

MIME – Usually one artist. They can go beyond reality. They use imaginary objects but may also use their body as an object. The main goal is an expression of an idea

PANTOMIME – Still no dialogue or speech, but based in reality. Pantomiming a specific action – i.e. walking a dog. Can be comedic OR dramatic. Pantomime is more about conveying recognizable actions and less about conveying a specific theme. It can involve 1 person, a small group, or an entire ensemble.