

## Scared of clowns? Professional clown explains why

Kara Spak



I had a lengthy and fascinating interview last night with [Dean Evans](#), a professional clown and mime who teaches clowning at [The Second City](#) and [Columbia College](#). Evans will be playing the role of a dunce in the [Actor's Gymnasium's](#) upcoming show "Skooled."

I asked Evans the question everyone wants to know about clowns – why are they so scary? Evans, 35, explained that at the heart of clowning is vulnerability and connecting with the audience. If you try too hard to clown around, or just dress up in a wig, red nose and big shoes, you aren't really clowning in the theatrical sense, he said.

"The reason people are afraid of clowns is that you take a human shape and what you are pushing out there is not humanity," Evans said. "It is a monster."

When he was an undergraduate theater major at Ohio State University, Evans signed up for a mime class as a joke. Looks like the joke is on him. He pays the bills working as a clown and mime.

"I don't put on a white face and pretend I'm trapped in a box," he said. "I love tricks. I love pranks. I love manipulation in a fun way."

"Skooled: A Study in Circus," opens Feb. 16.