



“Rural Circus Perspectives”

**A 10-day exploration & show creation
with partner acrobatics,
collective improvisation
and circus related disciplines.**

2023 Jonglirium e.V.



introduction

We organized this project to explore how partner acrobatics, stage presence, collective improvisation and circus related disciplines can contribute to the empowerment of disadvantaged groups. We aimed to involve youth workers and artists from various parts of Europe as well as local residents into this collaborative experience and show creation. We've prepared input from partner acrobatics, physical theatre, group improvisation, social circus, handstand, dance and floorwork. Through exploration of movement, performance and play we developed skills which are extremely valuable when working with disadvantaged youth.

The training was designed for youth workers, volunteers, activists and other people who work with people.

There were participants from the following countries: Germany, France, Spain, Slovenia, Italy, Sweden and Poland.



The training course was led by **Bruno Morera, Maxi Schreier, Felix Fischer & Marta Witecka**, who guided the group into exploration of movement & creative expressions such as stage play, or physical games,

The participants were invited to move, play, create & explore as well as exchange on their own experiences.



about this booklet

This e-book was created by the participants and the Jonglirium team to collect tools, methods and impressions of this project. We hope it gives you inspiration to apply some of them in your work.

We've included lots of creative expressions by the participants in this booklet that were inspired by our surroundings and activities in the outdoor space.





SWING
THE FLYER

CORE
ENGAGED

RAVE
WARM
UP

PEOPLE
PIRAMID

INVERSION
FOREST

SHOULDER
STANDS

GETTING
UP

HEAD
STANDS

CLOUD

ACRO

MELTED
CHEESE

COUNTER
BALANCE

PIZZA
PARTY



GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER:

NAME GAMES

“Brilliant Bruno”

Find an adjective with the same starting letter as your name. The first person presents his*her name together with the movement and everyone repeats.

“Zombie with names”

In a circle, one person moves like a zombie towards another person, who has to say another name before the zombie catches them, The zombie goes towards the new person. If you get caught before saying a name you become the zombie!



MORE NAME GAMES

“Hey You” - game in a circle

First version: One person starts walking towards another person blinking at them, and the person who is being blinked at starts moving towards a next person.

Second version: In a circle, one person speaks a name and moves in a way they want towards a person. The next person does the same - saying the name, and going to another person of the circle.

Third version: We add a ball. Before the ball is being passed we speak the name of the person we intend to go towards. We pass a ball in one direction or throw it to someone. then we start walking to the person we chose. Progression - we add more balls.

Fourth: Make it as complicated as you want to! Be creative ;)



INTEGRATION GAMES

“Evolution Game”

Everyone starts as a Ameba, with Ameba sound and gesture (you know their gestures, right? :)). Amebas meet, have a short discussion and play “rock, paper, scissors”. The winner evolves to the next stage of evolution while the loser does not. Evolution stages: Ameba, Fly, Rabbit, Monkey and Human. Once you become Human, you go to the outside circle, and watch the evolution process. If there is one person in an evolution stage left, he/she spontaneously evolves (*you’ve heard about spontaneous evolution, right? :) Crazy thing!*).

“Limbs Game”

Walk around, in different speeds from 1 to 10 (slowest to fastest). Keep walking and someone says “5 elbows”. In this moment 5 elbows have to come together. Repeat with different numbers, and body parts.



CONNECTION GAMES (TO ONESELF & TO ONE ANOTHER)

“Photocamera”

We divide in pairs. One is the Tourist, and the other is a Photocamera with eyes closed. The tourist is guiding the photocamera into space and taps their head to open the eyes in different moments to take a picture and capture the moment. Then taps again to close the eyes and continue the tour.



Mapping

Imagine a place as a map and stand where you are born. Next, stand where is your home now.

Imagine a place as a range. For example: “Yes & No”, “Little / A lot of experience”

Then, participants map themselves according to the question asked.

One example: *Do you have acrobatics experience?*

Point A : expert acrobat and teacher

Point B : I am afraid of acrobatics.



ACROBATICS SAFETY AND TECHNIQUE INTRODUCTION

“Astronaut”

Participants form teams of 5. One of them is the astronaut, and the other four are supporting the astronaut's weight by holding his legs and arms, and supporting where needed. The astronaut can walk, do small jumps and explore moves in every direction while the rest are lifting in a way so that it feels that there is no gravity, so that moves can last longer and be more expanded. The goal is to get familiar with holding and supporting a person from different body parts while doing various movements. Swap afterwards, so everyone tries to be an astronaut!



ACROBATICS SAFETY AND TECHNIQUE INTRODUCTION

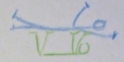
“On the spot”

Participants are split into teams of 5-6 people, and form a circle. One of them enters the center of the circle and closes the eyes while holding a tight upstanding body position. Then slowly the person in the center gets out of axis and starts falling to any direction. The rest of the people in the circle are catching the person, absorbing the fall, and slowly returning them to the center of the circle for the next fall.

ACRO[YOGA] INTRODUCTION

- DAY 2

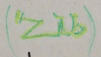
① BIRD



② Foot to shin



③ SHOULDER STEP



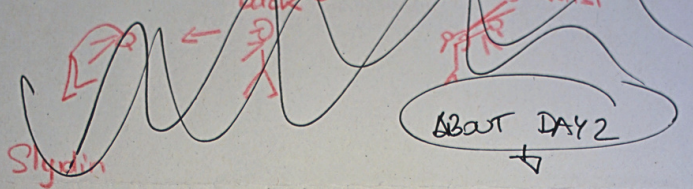
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To be relax
but not useFull

ACROBATICS SAFETY AND TECHNIQUE INTRODUCTION

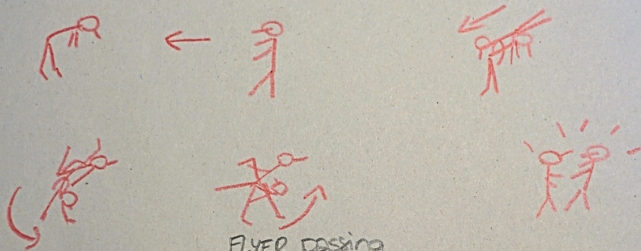
“Acroyoga basic moves and spotting”

During this activity there were introduced some basic acro yoga poses along with the guidelines for spotting, and safe practice. Participants were working into groups of 3 where one was spotting, and the other two were practicing the pose. The roles were changing until every one had the chance to practice basing, flying and spotting.





FLYER Jump / Climb on the back → Holding base waist by catching his/her wrist



FLYER Sliding with 1 leg folded
BASE catch this leg behind the knee

FLYER passing between legs catching BASE thighs

BASE catching the neck



" THE CLEANING BUTT TRICK " [with consent]



ACROBATICS SAFETY AND TECHNIQUE INTRODUCTION

“Timber”

Participants move into space, walking in all directions, and when someone shouts "Timber" everybody catches that person before she/he falls to the ground, and move them out of the area of the activity. It is an activity for participants to get familiar with how to spot a person who is falling from standing, and how to transfer someone in an efficient and safe way.



SHARE AND CARE SYSTEM

In order to keep up with the necessary tasks to make the space clean and habitable, and keep the community functioning, we introduced a rotating responsibility system. Through a set of games we ended up dividing in groups. In the game we would all run around and the game moderator says "5 elbows", 5 elbows have to come together. Finally you can create a group in the size you want with an number and bodypart. **The last round of the game would actually be our final group.** This way the groups were randomly allocated and we had the chance to work with new people, we didn't meet so far. Each team had some time to think of a group name, logo and a small choreography. This choreography would be a short action or pose that represents the group and its name. We were divided in 5 groups and the following names were chosen.

Each group wrote their name on a colored paper and we placed them on the share and care wheel and turned it hazardously. At that point the share and care system was introduced. (The System is explained on www.jonglirium.com under « Into the wild »)

Small ("post-it") papers of every group are placed on the task-board besides the groups task for that day. Each group rotates to a different task every day, and most tasks are performed from 9 am to 10 am, however « dishes », « documentation » and possibly « group care » are daylong tasks.

Share & Care System consists of five different tasks to take care of the community:

1. Cleaning
2. Dishes
3. Group and self care
4. Documentation
5. Cutting (help for the cook)



DAY 2 – Slowly Getting Into The Matter

Handstands

- We learned how to spot properly (*always stand behind the person so they don't fall on their backs*)
- We learned how to use our fingers to balance our handstand (*think of how your toes stop you from falling to the front front if you stand completely straight - it's the same on your hands!*)
- We worked in pairs, each holding a handstand for a few seconds while being assisted (*pull your partner up a bit, to encourage lengthening and shoulder elevation!*)
- We learned to do a kick-up jump (*jumping from one leg on the ground, the other is in the air*)
- We jumped up in tuck (*knees bent, legs together*) and straddle (*legs parallel to the floor, wide open and straight*).



DAY 2 – Slowly Getting Into The Matter

“The Thing”

- Songs (group singing: one person sings something, and the group responds with the same)
- Samurai...
- Walking as samurai in the space...
- Passing the clap in a circle – passing the message – Passing a HAH!
- STOP: All people stop
- UNO: one person (and only one) runs through the forest (=people standing still), sending an important message (“the enemies are here!”)
- DOS: now two people start to run in the “forest”, one chasing the other, chaser following the exact path of the chased
- CAMBIO: chaser and chased switch roles when someone claps the hands.
- Slowmotion – you meet someone – friend or enemy. If it's a friend – give a hug; it's an enemy – take out your weapons. Establish what's the weapon (make it real) and start the slowmotion fight.





Day 3 – Understanding and building the routine

Getting deeper into partner acrobatics, carrying weight, synchronising tempos, focusing on the group awareness .



Day 3 – Understanding and building the routine

The Thing II

- same as day before with focus on the group

New additions:

- THE CLOUD: tight mass of people, moving – one person in the front leads, the others follows. Then the group turns, and someone else is leading. You can add singing (call and response).
- Dividing the Cloud in smaller clouds, then all clouds melting into the imaginary river, and evaporating into a big CLOUD again...







DAY 4: GETTING MORE AUTONOMOUS AND AWARE OF EACH OTHER AT THE SAME TIME

Warm ups – Yoga

- massaging the whole body and the skin
- waking up with gently tapping your body parts with hands
- stretching and exploring different yoga poses

Active handstand warm ups

-Everyone is on one side of the movement space. We make a few rows. First, bunny hopping (hands on the floor, and you hop your feet forward, lifting the hips up). When you feet land, you move the hands forward again, and hop again forward. And so on...

You can add: foot clapping, polar bear walking (*walking in all four, but with knees lifted*), leg swaps in the air. Basically keeping weight on arms, and adding some cardio movements.

Handstand practice

5x tuck jump, 5x straddle jumps, 5x kick up jumps, and one minute handstand hold

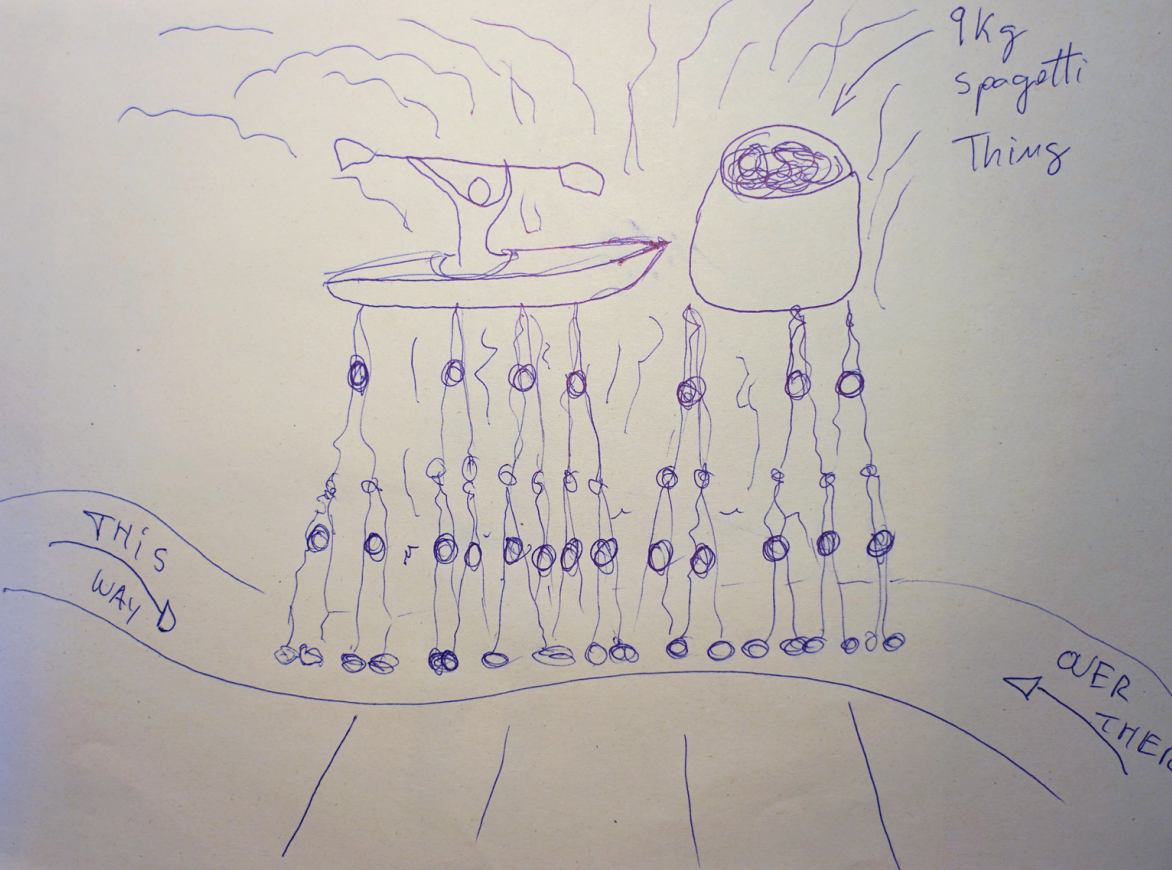
Relaxing: squeezing the wrists between the thighs and calves, in a squat position (from the inside of the knee joint) in a squat position to relieve the stress from the wrists.

Partner acrobatics

Tryin our some basic standing poses.

Pyramids

Trying different pyramid structures with differing numbers of participants and loads of spotters :) learning to work with bigger groups of people!



9kg
spaghetti
Thing

THIS
WAY

OVER
THERE

DAY 4: GETTING MORE AUTONOMOUS AND AWARE OF EACH OTHER AT THE SAME TIME

The Thing III

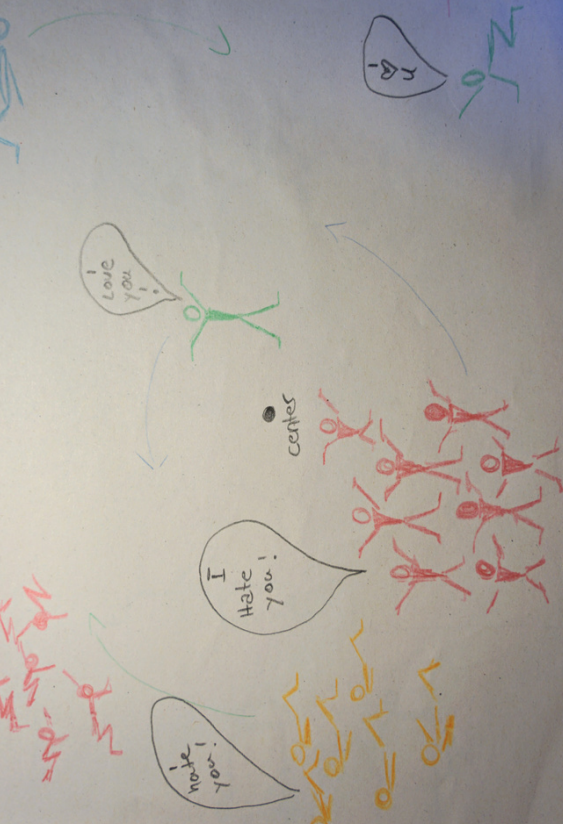
Starting the session with classic group singings including
- *L'es ou mon poulet ?* - *azae achomi vaa* - *ambassador amador*
dor-name it yourself! :)

Classic Samurai game with all the UNO's, DOS's, CAMBIO's, slow motion hugs and fights, awareness on the body, of the group, of the space, and the environment one is in. Slow motion fight with all kinds of real (*take it easy ;*) or fantasy weapons.

Cloud game with Hero

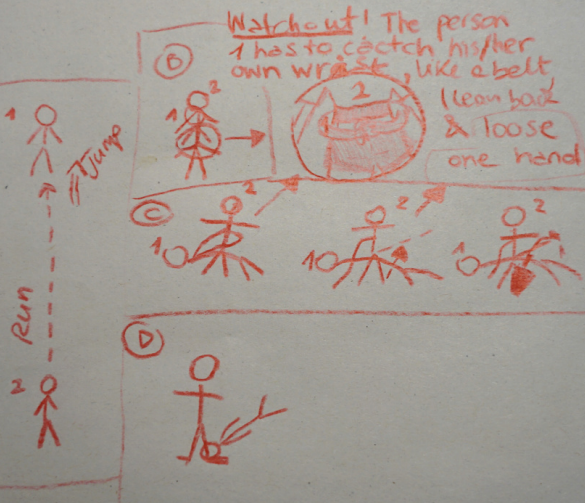
The mirroring of the cloud game with a more theatrical and active touch. One hero choses oneself and divides from the group to enact famous Shakespeare pieces. A center of mirror is established, and group is arranging itself according to the movements, and spaces that the hero is creating according to the center. Hero goes: "I love you!", and the groups responds with "I hate you!". The lines are non changing, but anything else is open to free improvisation. Including choosing landscapes, and themes that shape the acts and movements.

The same game with two separate groups, one group enacting the hero, other group enacts the CLOUD. (Titanic and the Iceberg, Gangstas and 80's disco, calm beaches and dramatic operas were some of the themes that were chosen by us.)



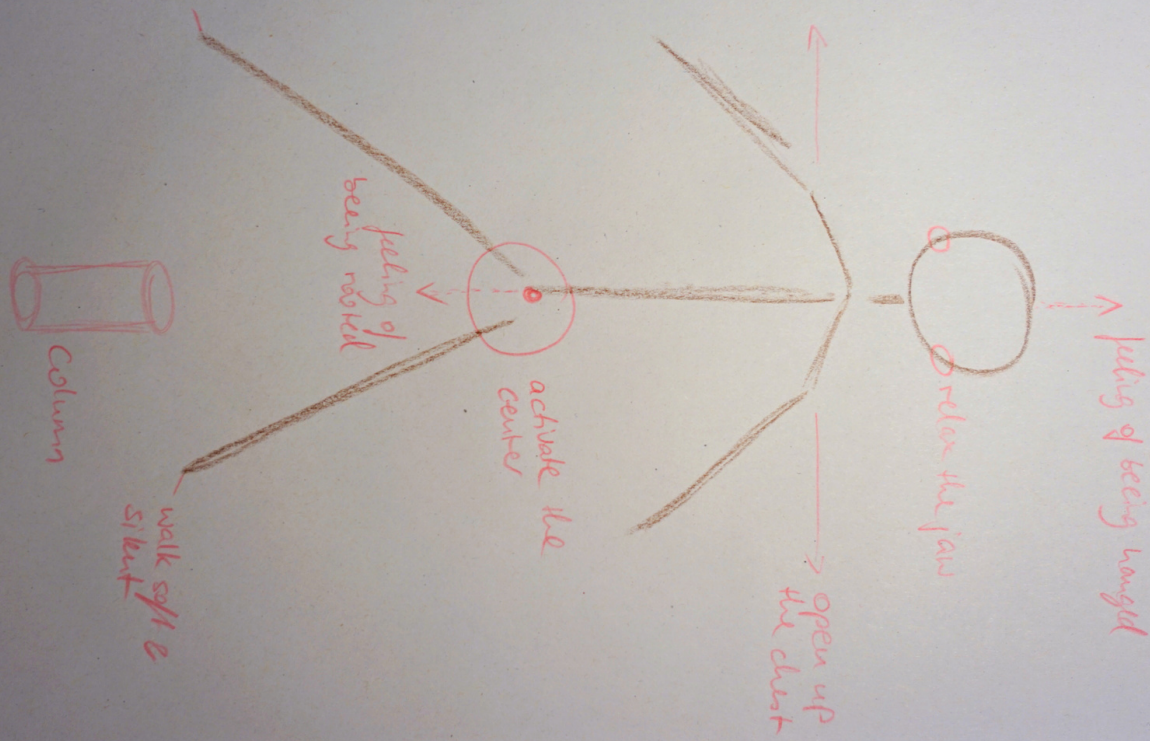
A black and white photograph capturing a moment of play in a grassy field. In the foreground, a young child with short hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, is walking barefoot while holding a baseball bat horizontally. In the background, an adult stands barefoot, also holding a baseball bat. The scene is set outdoors with tall grass and a wooden fence visible on the left. The text "Day 5: REST DAY." is overlaid in the center of the image in a white, serif font.

Day 5: REST DAY.



Day 6: DEEPENING AND SPREADING OUT

After a good resting day, we came back to our handstand practice to further and deepen it. We also came back to The Thing, adding new variations to the work, and enjoyed new domains through participant workshops, with participants teaching us Icarian Acrobatics and Floorwork.





Day 6: DEEPENING AND SPREADING OUT

The Thing III

Cloud game with Hero

Yes let's do that

One person is suggesting that we play something like "let's play that we are starfish in a tsunami" and the group is answering all together "Yeah let's do that" and they play. After a while someone suggests something new and the game keeps going.

Introduction to Icarians Acrobatics

- Warm up related to Icarians so that the needed coordination is understood and developed.
- Basic Icarian pops with a spotting where demonstrated, and the group in teams of 3 where practicing
 1. Pop from Bird back to Bird with only the feet of the base losing contact.
 2. Pop from Throne to Standing on hands and back to Throne.
 3. Pop from Throne to Bird and back to Throne.

The session ended with stretching exercises

1.2.3 workshop

We remembered some of the acrobatics and dance movement we already learned, with the aim of putting them together into a little flow that we later show to the group. We make couple for it, although it was also possible to do bigger groups.



Sharing circle

We finished the day with a sharing circle, where everyone had one minute to tell to the whole group how they feel, what the experience is for them so far, and what they expect from the last days of the training.



DAY 7

Morning session:

Handstand workshop

Warm up. With spotting, we keep going with the different variations of the handstand, kick up and one leg joins another (straight handstand), tuck, straddle, pike etc. In the end, staying in handstand for one minute.

Physical theater – sequence of touches

In pairs, each one is doing a move, and touch on the other one - 6 touches in total. We repeat the sequences with more details each time, adding tempo, change of rhythm, using more space, more reactions, more acro etc.

Afternoon session:

The thing...

Variation in the Samurai game, without moving in the space. A new version of the cloud with 2 people out, and the rest of the cloud is doing a echo of this, and then improvisation with all the ingredients of the past days!

Acrobatics

Three-Man-High 🤘





DAY 8: It's raining swings, Pizzaluja!

Handstand rave and inversion forest (=everyone upside down, in a group!), some partner get ups from the floor, free training, the thing and toss and swing the flyer....

...but most of all, it's a PIZZA day!



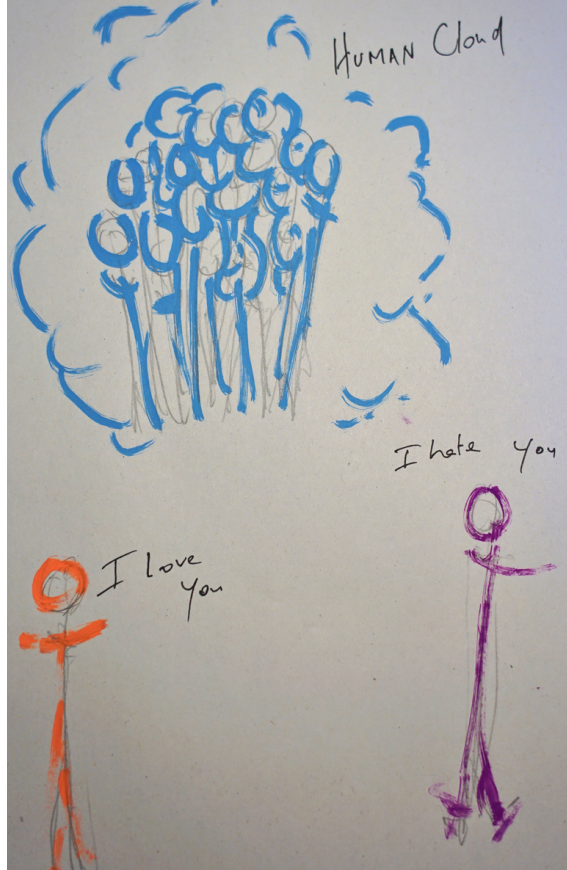
Workshop 1 : Getting up from the floor

(Different ways of getting up with a partner)

- One person laying down, one standing. Standing one is grabbing the arms of the lying down person, and pulling them straight up. the person down is very active helping up & reverse
- One person on the back, knees bent, heel close to the hips. Another person comes from the front and they grab each others forearms (strong grip). The standing person slowly stands on top of the base's knees. They create a counterbalance, so eventually the laying person starts standing up too! Eventually, the flyer is standing on the thighs of the base, arms connected, they both lean back to maintain the balance.

Workshop 3: The Thing Continued

Variation in the samurai game, without moving in the space. Inclusion of more samurai principles into the cloud (DOS, CHASING). Focussing on contrasts: When we change things, change at least on thing into an opposite: e.g.: Start slow, tight and quiet *into* slow, spread out and noisy. And then improvisation with all the ingredients of the past days (Duos, Titanic, nice pictures....).



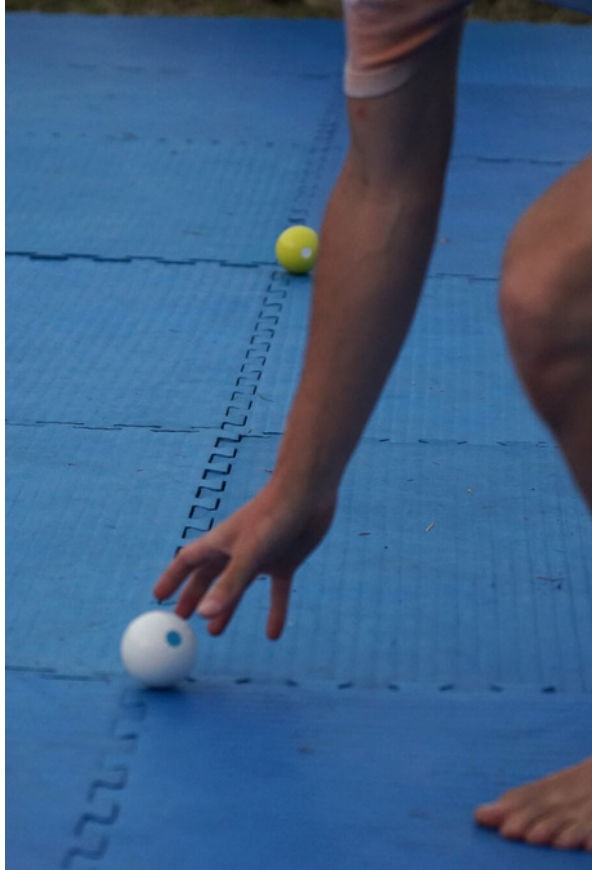


DAY 9: THE PARTY

One-Ball-Jugglin workshop

“Moving through space with(out) a ball”

People start moving through the space with music. Exploring different levels and movement qualities. Then you imagine to have a ball that you can juggle with while moving. As it is an imaginary ball it can not be dropped and you can move freely with it. After some time every person takes a real juggling ball and continues to explore moving through the space while playing with the ball. The aim is to get people comfortable with the idea of moving freely whilst they juggle.



“Puppet Juggling”

One person is the puppet. The other person is the manipulator. The manipulator makes the puppet juggle by putting the ball in their hands, or on the hands, or even between other parts of the body, trying to make the puppet throw and catch etc. The manipulator explores what is possible with one ball and one body through the puppet. After some time the roles are being switched.

After some minutes of getting comfortable with this concept the switching can happen inside the game. As the manipulator freezes they become the puppet and the puppet comes to life and is now the manipulator.

“Run Throw Catch Game”

One person has the ball, runs away from the other person, and throws the ball up high or low. The other person has to run after and catch the ball before it touches the floor. Then this person runs away with the ball.

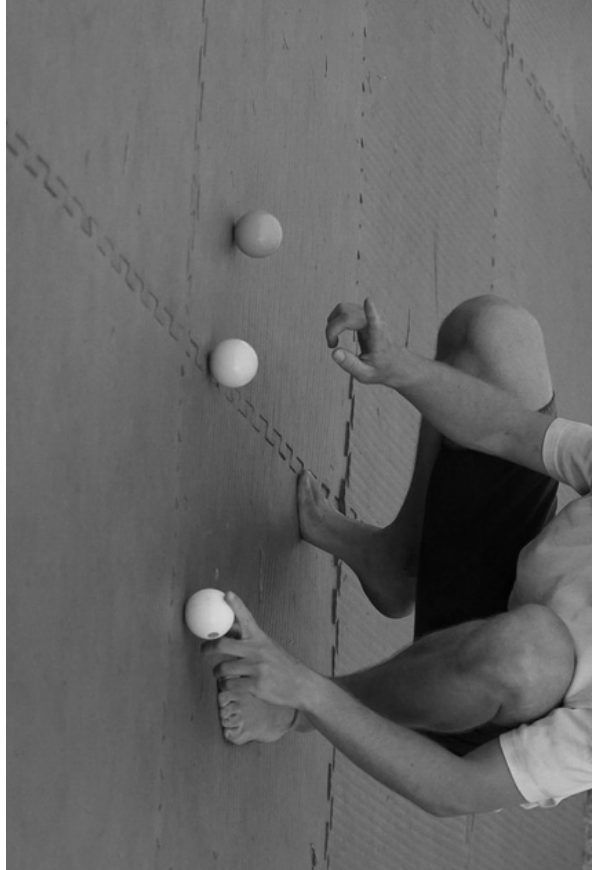


“Building a Sequence”

The Group or the workshop facilitator decides on 5 Elements. Those elements can be juggling movement elements or similar. For example: Slowmotion, High throw, Clapping, Balance, Floor Level, Speech... Now everyone has 10 minutes to build a sequenz with one juggling ball that involves all the five elements at some point.

“Melting Sequences”

In pairs you show each other your personal one ball sequence. Now you melt them together into one new sequence. You can get inspired by the moves of your partner, you can mirror, create new, synchronise, use negative space. There is no limit. After the given time you make a little show of the new sequences.



DAY 10: THE SHOW

Final structure is hard to explain. We created, expressed, repeated, put together all we did before. It was a party. It was a show. It was us! the description below is like a sketch of a book, that only the writer can understand! Show is creation, and creation is art. Enjoy!

Show begins with a short speech, to explain who we are, what we did, and why.

- > People come to the Speech person @ make a Cloud, talking stuff in their language and then go into the head forest
- > back together for the pyramid
- > Duo : Serim Rocio and Bruno Elena
- > Folle Fontaine : Nina, Noura, Anou, Stefania
- > Zombie Party : everyone joins playing zombie and slow motion killing eachothers with clubs so that the only ones remaining standing are the clubs jugglers.
- > Passing and singing : Greta, Anou, Mitoz, Gala juggling while the others are singing "Tumba pararapa tumba..."
- > Mountain climbing
- > Duos Felix/Maxie and Lily/Mike : Accros and bragging, end both Lily and Maxie on the guys shoulders
- > Titanic scene : The boat of two highs crushs against the iceberg made of everyone else
- > Acro yoga forest : everyone finds a partner and does accro tricks with him/her for a few minutes as a moving bamboo forest with wind going through it
- > Edge of the universe : Everyone is pulled as far as they can, behind the audience and they are struggling to not be pulled even more far away, some people try to cross.
- > Duos Mike/Elena, (Micha/Elie), Naomie/Nikos
- > Everyone comes back to the cloud and three high is coming out from underneath . Micha, Nikos, Anna
- > Everyone goes running playing timber, last one is Greta
- > Duo Greta and Doukas with the orthopadietechnik
- > Duos Gala/Noura and Nina/Elena
- > Mitoz music juggling (percussions with balls) with Felix and Maxie playing violin, Bruno clarinette, Serim guitar
- > Puppet : Anou appears with strings attached to her wrists and hair, some people take the strings and start playing with the crazy puppet who wants to escape. The puppet players go into two highs and try to catch her.
- > Then everyone carries her like it was a funeral singing "Tule tule bariba tule tule..." and getting out pf the stage.
- > Then everyone comes back to take a bow, everyone moves to take a bow in various directions and then the music is put on and it's a rave party with the audience





**why we
created
this
booklet?**



this booklet was created for everyone who is interested in creative way of getting to know each other and working with groups in a creative, mind-opening way.

Please share it with everyone who might benefit from it and let us know what are your reflections on it!



“The whole difference between construction and creation is exactly this: that a thing constructed can only be loved after it is constructed; but a thing created is loved before it exists.”

– Charles Dickens

"Rural Circus Perspectives" Erasmus+ Training Course organized by Jonglirium e.V.

Trainers: Felix Fischer, Bruno Morera, Maxi Schreier, Marta Witecka

Created by: Marta Witecka

Drawings, text, photos: All of us together



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