

PARTNER ACRO IN BUDAPEST # CIRCE PROJECT

2-6 April 2018 in Inspiral Circus Centre

by Hungarian Juggling Association and Educircation Network



Profile of the group

Number of participants: maximum 20 people.

Technical level of participants: learner-teachers should be at a minimum of intermediate level in acrobatics. They should be physically prepared for 5 hours training a day and have a knowledge of basic partner acro tricks. If they are at a higher level than this they should consider that the point of the workshop is not to elevate their level, but to widen their repertoire and to discover new approaches and methods of teaching.

They should be open to act both as flyer and base. The participants do not need to arrive as acro partners, as we prefer them to work openly with any member of the group.

Elements of the workshop

The workshop will provide 5 days of learning, where we aim to cover 3 aspects of partner acrobatics:

- How to teach
- What to teach
- How to apply it in groups with special needs

The answers to these questions will be incorporated in experimental learning and discussions.

Learning process

The teaching methodology is by experimental learning and group discussions.

Experimental learning means **learning by doing**, so learners participate in a class where they will actively learn what to do with their students, and thus understand how they can teach it to their students in the future.

The **discussions** with the teachers serve to clear further questions about the applied methods and help to absorb the experience at a conscious level.

Other types of **discussions** will be realized with the participants on the last day, which serves to help **digest** what they learnt during the week. There will be an exchange of ideas in how others can put them in to practice. This discussion will be moderated but not led, as its objective is to realize how to work autonomously using the new methods of teaching.



Combination of different approaches

With the help of three teachers we **combine three different approaches** to partner acro.

- **Réka Hargitay**: will help us learn usable teaching methodologies for groups with limited or poor physical conditioning, focusing on partner acro as a physical interaction.
- **Tibor Kőműves** will show us professional ways to teach physical preparation, foundation and conditioning needed for acrobatics
- **Noel Spauwen** helps us to widen the repertoire of our partner acro tricks, sharing his way of teaching.

It is useful for teachers of circus skills to be shown varying methods of teaching (as will be demonstrated by the three teachers outlined above) so they can add new ideas to their 'tool belt'.

Number of hours

22 hours of led sessions with the teachers and 7 hours of discussions. As it is a very physical subject, we will hold 5 hours physical work combined with breaks, and a conclusive discussion to end each day.

Content of the sessions

Three different types of sessions with 3 teachers working separately, showing different methodologies.

Session 1. foundation of acrobatics, gymnastics, physical preparation

number of hours : 3x2 hours

objective: collection of preparative exercises and conditioning

Tutor of session 1:

Tibor Kőműves is a current teacher at the Hungarian National Circus School, teaching acrobatics, specialising in hand-to hand. On the side he is a trainer at several sports clubs and competitors of taek won do, horse riding acrobats, synchronised swimming, and roller skating- providing them further specific training in acrobatics.

His education:

Central Sport School (1972-1981) – gymnastics, rep player



Hungaria Circus Institute and Hungarian Ballet Institute (1981-1987) – professional training and artist diploma

Performer Operating Licence – professional qualification of the Hungarian Circus and Varieté Company (1988)

He has worked on contracts in European circuses, vaudevilles – theatres, gala programmes and TV shows: Tivoli Copenhagen, Circus Barum, Circus Krone, Circus Grüss, Conelli Zürich – gala, Royal Pallas etc.

Content of session 1:

Focus is to provide basic preparative training of acrobatics, using exercises which give the background of the partner acrobatic tricks. To create a strong foundation using gymnastic trainings about muscle conditioning, body consciousness and body coordination.

Learner teachers will be taught a collection of basic exercises which can be used to teach student groups in order to have a good base to build acrobatic tricks.

He features a series of preparative exercises for handstands, headstands, cartwheels, rolls and saults which are all necessary to execute partner acrobatics and hand-to hand figures.

He will not teach partner-acro tricks or figures, but rather the basis of what is required physically to be able to perform partner acro safely and strongly.

His lesson will be composed of parts such as:

1. warm-up of 40-50 minutes which includes individual playful acro movements and gymnastic methods to use and strengthen the correct muscles and reach good coordination.
2. 20 minutes of preparative exercises for rolls, headstands, handstands, cartwheels, work in pairs to find the common rhythm, and tempo, doing partnered exercises
3. lifting, foundation of throwing, exercises in lunges
4. stretching, cool down

A similar session will be repeated three times in order to imprint it as this training can be used as the core preparation of an acro lesson.

In the last part of his session he will explain why and what purpose certain exercises serve in teaching partner acro, and answer any questions from the group.

Session 2- acro yoga for success and enjoyment of physical contact

number of hours : 3 x 3 hours

objective: partner acro with beginners, groups with special needs, using a non-sportive approach

Tutor of session 2:



Reka Hargitay dedicated her professional career to spreading internationally the ideas and practices she feels passionate about. Her yoga journey started in 1999 with Hatha Yoga, and soon she discovered many other yoga styles. She sticks mostly to Vinyasa Flow, Hot Yoga styles and Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga in her own practice.

Since 2008 Acro Yoga keeps elevating her yoga and sharing practice in a whole new dimension: Trust, Balance & Joy - a playful celebration of caring human connection.

Creating a safe and supportive environment in her classes, she offers progressive steps for each person's individual needs and current abilities to build upon: establishing contact, succeeding in acrobatic bodyshapes with ease, shifting perspectives and letting go in the therapeutic practice to create a game.

Certifications and degrees:

Reka is internationally certified in Flow-Nuad, Hatha Yoga, Agni Jóga, Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga (2 certificates), AcroYoga International, AcroFIT, Permaculture design, Lomi-lomi hawaiian massage, Wúo Tai – Osteodance, Aromatherapy and has a Magistrate degree in communication sciences (focus on health communication - special focus on communication towards complementary healing methods).

Content of session 2:

In order to establish connection and sensitivity we will work in a circle as symbol for community, equality and integration of members. We work towards the awareness of self as part of a whole, a higher level of body consciousness, precise in the direction of focus and towards connecting awareness of breath and motion.

The sessions will combine partner yoga elements, games and flying (L-basing) among other exercises, and will finish with learning therapeutic practices.

Partner yoga encourages interaction, establishing physical connection, creating mutual benefits by synchronized movement patterns (static or dynamic), finding agreement in non-verbal communication "codes", giving feedback by asking for one's needs and by being receptive.

Games are the playful way to build trust and to train several further skills: reaction and focus, interacting with playfulness, effective and empathic communication, awareness of space, embodiment of body positions, gradual weight-shifting, increase in spontaneity and creativity, and to sense community in laughter and joy.

Building foundation will be realized through pyramids and counterbalances, to experience and deepen the knowledge in dealing with weight, laws of gravity, finding one's centre of weight, understanding bonestacking, assisting others to achieve their goals, first approach to spotting / safety techniques, experiencing potential of community.

Flight or flying refer to different L-basing positions. Layering the content in progressive steps and learning to break down content into further micro-steps, will enable students to adjust



the content to their participant's actual needs and if desired, to take a step back in order to make learning an experience of success.

Discovering the benefits of working in teams of 3 or more will allow to understand the importance of prioritizing safety in any situation. This work invites accurate self-assessment of the practitioners and the courage of communicating of one's needs and desired adjustments. The students of the training will learn to consider their participants body/ mental/ emotional or energy-level conditions and existing skill-sets while designing the class and splitting the groups into smaller teams. Addressing the emotional body, encouraging self expression of individual experience and celebrating success in community offers space for liberation of self-limiting beliefs and personal growth to happen.

Cool down and massage will be an important part of the session. This is for learning about self-care and care for others. Giving and receiving healing touch allows us to understand and communicate one's own needs, to understand and accept the needs of others, to open up for listening on several levels, to be sensitive and to make individual adjustments when needed.

Massage techniques also serve to create passive traction of articulations and elongation of the spine as healthy counteract for compression and strengthening in acrobatics. It is the ultimate way of grounding by calming the nervous system.

Session 3 – widening repertoire of positions and moves and mastering techniques of partner acro

hours: 3 x 3 hours

Objective: to learn a series of acrobatic forms and movements and the way of teaching them

Tutor: Noël Spauwen

Noel has been teaching acrobatics for more than 30 years in various settings and levels of weekly groups, festivals and special groups in over 15 countries across Europe, in the USA and Israël.

He started his acrobatic career in the dutch "Como-Brother-School" and passed their exams in the eighties. Over the years he has been taught by many different teachers. During 1985-1995 he performed with the trio "Drie Hoog Achter" in streets and festivals in Western Europe and 1996- 2012 with "de Tuymelaeren van Mahou" and in various other duos and groups, and in his "acro-talk-show".

In the long history of teaching and performing a lot of new movements and technical details emerged, that are more and more spread in the world of partner acrobatics. And they appeared in 2012 in his book: "Noël's Acrobatic Elements and Connections" (www.acronoel.wordpress.com).



He has taught many trainings for teachers in acrobatics and other social skills. He studied social and organisational psychology with focus on how people learn in groups. He is always searching for the steering spirit that grows in and guides groups.

„The seventies, when I studied at the university, was the decade of sensitivity- and interaction- training with biodynamics, drama and gestalt techniques to grow, meditation and other spiritual help to find the own way in life. I took it with me in my work as communication-trainer and process-mentor in profit- and non-profit-companies and in my acrobatic lessons as well”

In Mikofalva (Hungary) he has a place since 2004 where he annually organizes acro-building holidays and conventions. (www.acrofalva.wordpress.com)

Content of session 3

Because of his varied background the concern in the lessons is not only the technique but also the way of working together and the fluent connection between parts. The first workshop is the most important for teaching and learning. The second for the exploration of doubles and trios, and the third for helping to think creatively in what your body can do in cooperation with another.

3/1 Forms and movements in pairs

In this workshop we discover a series of forms and movements of partner acro, basic figures and their variations. These you can teach to beginner or intermediate level classes. The focus is on how to develop a group of figures modifying the basic one. In this way we can look at different families of figures. We will work in four steps from absolute beginner to advanced level on main acro-techniques.

3/2 Trio intermediate:

In this workshop we do the basic play with the three possibilities of trio: one base with two flyers, one base with one middle and one flyer, two bases and one flyer. A wide variety of positions and movements, carefully and safely built up to let you experience the complexity and joy of being in contact with two others. Learning to feel and "read" your partner through the body of the third. You can join if you have only done the first partner-acrobatic-techniques. You are very welcome if you have more acro-experience but have not explored much trio-work, as it is always possible to practice techniques at different levels. It is not a power game, but about contact, coordination, timing, full concentration and taking care of your partners.



3/3 Different Dynamics

We will do surprising movements in which unusual and often subtle movements can enhance speed, height or direction. When you do acrobatics for a year or two, you learn lifts and accelerations to make simple movements that help to go to standing on shoulders etc. In this workshop we will extend this range of dynamics with techniques that are pretty unusual and often funny and unexpected. Both whilst L-basing and standing. Meanwhile we will refine the techniques and principles that are underlying lifts etc.

Other professional programmes during the week

'Meet and Greet' events during the week

These meetings give an opportunity for participants to get in contact with the wider Hungarian circus community.

We organised two different events:

- On the evening of arrival, 1st April there is the Birthday of the Inspiral Circus Space which is a reunion with all members, the crew and our circus partners.
- On Thursday there is usually the Acro Jam meeting in Inspiral, which this time is going to be dedicated for making acro-friendships. The first hours 6pm-7pm is especially for that, and then the whole evening is free for practice until 10pm.