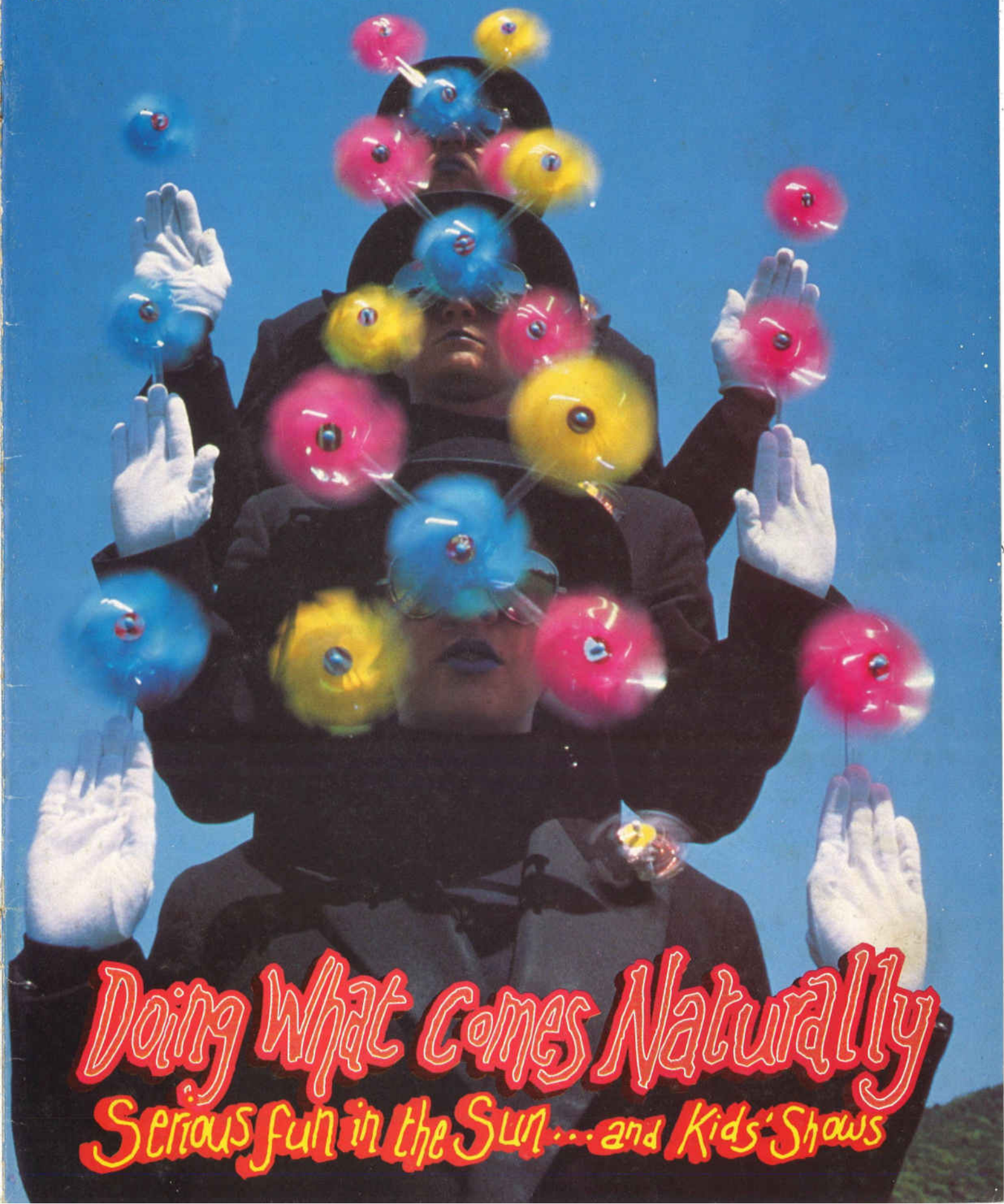


The Catch

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ISSUE 21
WINTER
1997
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NATURAL GASSES

After 28 years on the street, Britain's number 1 Sidewalk Surrealism Syndicate get a place to call their own. Ralph Oswick tells Steve Henwood how it all started with Cider.

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THE EC LIFE

Our real common currency - big laffs, mouths agape in wonder, big-time foreign weirdos. Phil Cass and Steve Henwood vote Yes for Europe at Chalon, Aurillac & Tàrraga Festivals.

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ANOTHER LAOS-Y CONVENTION

No wonder Mr Jules never picks up his mail. He's never in the country! The Far East is far out, he reckons.

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Ball-spinning without head-spinning - or getting your lycra in a twist - with Richard Taylor.

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So The Boggle Brothers tell us, and if you'll just sit still for a moment they'll tell you too. Formative principles of those formative shows, with photos from Uncle Luke Danniells.

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Join us in our campaign to eradicate humour. Pests win prizes.

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It's definitely the latest and we're definitely in there first. The complete thingummy on the Gummichummik®.

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A view through the huge pile of leaflets & flyers that inveigle themselves to the Catch office. All you needed to know and quite a lot you didn't.

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You could have bought all these books for Christmas, I suppose. Wouldn't have got round to reading them before now, anyway.

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As if we hadn't seen enough shows at the festivals, here's some more we really need to tell you about. Plus: Snakeyhips goes legit!

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Brat control without poison, with Jenny Swan. Plus: "Pof!" browses through Atlas.

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These people are all too cheapskate to buy a proper advert. It's their fault the mag is late, then.

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Lots of important stuff (i'm sure) we didn't have room for anywhere else.

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DROP BACK LINES

We've been off the streets for a while, but you still haven't managed to come up with any better letters (except Norman, of course). You should be ashamed. Read these and you will be.

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So you've been juggling in the park and on the beach in this weather, and you wonder why you haven't seen anyone else in months. We know where they've been hiding.

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THE FAT FOOL

It's Busker Gut! Got more sense in his butt! Thank gawd for the mutt! Robbie draws unwarranted conclusions.

Another
Catch
Page
Three
Lovely!

Pic.
Doc.
Paul



ISSUE TWENTY-ONE WINTER 1996/7

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As we get closer to an understanding of the very nature of time itself (and coincidentally, the date of the millennium - spooky!) certain anomalies are developing. We think we can predict that the next Catch deadline date for news/dates/articles/adverts/attraction buy-out offers will be April 1st (oh yeah?) for the Spring '97 issue. As with many technologies, a massive cash injection might help us to stretch that a little further, but not too far. Due to the cyclic nature of your reality, we have already decided your fate: it's you that has to find out. Oracles at the usual rates.

It's time to say our tili on the rights issue. Most of the material in this magazine has not been paid for, but used by permission (sometimes we - ah - forget the last bit due to pressure of - ah - pressure). This means most importantly that all contributors, artwork and photography remain the copyright of the originators, who can in most cases be contacted through the Catch office, unless it's one of those nasty official-ish things, in which case, by a remarkable coincidence, they left for Tite yesterday.

Although we already know what's in next issue, you don't - and it could be you isn't that a fascinating thought? The only way of finding out is to send us your contributions (on disc is nice), photography, cartoons, confessions, credit card numbers, inside leg measurements. And the rest. And wait until our temporal realities coincide again. Maybe if you're thinking of something big/expensive you could find out what we think before you start (we know already, of course). Naturally all our opinions are illuminated by the superior judgement of hindsight, but considering that not all of you are that practised in time-travel we have provided simple but illusory reply/complaint facilities in the letters page, and *Dog's* (aka: *Controversy Corner*). If you want a real time-wrap, we will return documents, discs, photos via My Little Pony Express, but only when accompanied by an SAE. Several very complicated non-Euclidean loops are involved, and the process, though decided instantaneously (and already) in our reality, can take a considerable time in yours. Be patient. Watch the skies. The truth is out there.

We accept no responsibility for the ability or otherwise of beings on your reality-level to understand some of these communications from our more developed Time Zone. The problem's in the translation. Those words have evolved a different meaning in our Omniverse. Of course it didn't mean that. And if it did, I'm afraid the contributor in question died several of your 501-centuries ago.

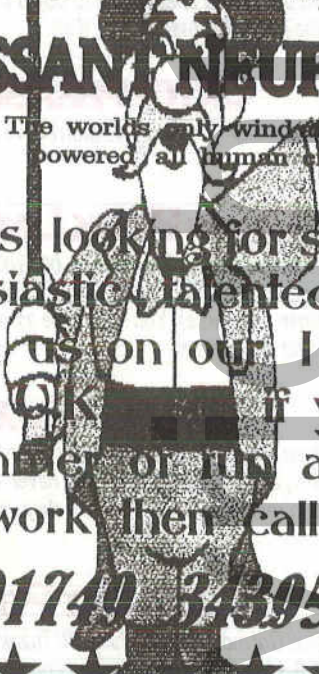
The Catch was pushed through into this reality through the Dr Who-like exploits of Stuart & Jan and various trusty henchpersons. The actors have changed but the sets are the same. And we always win in the end.

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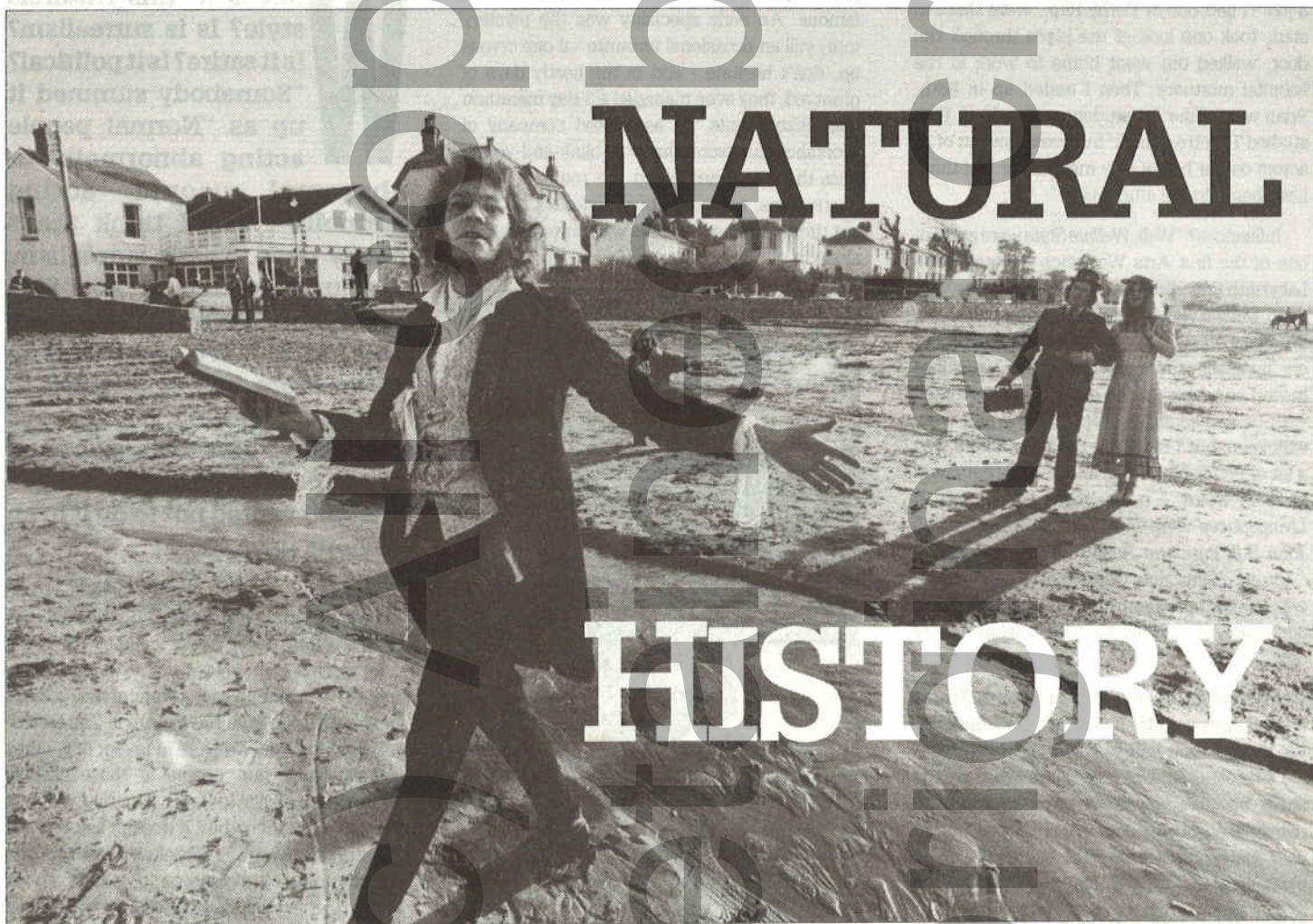
It's 1969. The city of Bath isn't the tourist-mecca it is nowadays; neither is it full of jugglers and buskers. What it does have going for it is an arts 'scene' (OK as a '60s word) who are riding the wave of polymorphous experimentation and engagement with more enthusiasm than most. The 'happenings' that had begun in the local art college (stately home Corsham Court) spilled into town and onto the streets. Bath Arts Workshop attracted inspired insurrectionists like they were *The Beatles* handing out their money. It would take a book to document: permanent parties in liberated Georgian hotel premises; cementing a car into the middle of the new shopping precinct; festivals featuring the wildest rock groups and performance artists that Europe could produce

(including the memorable year they declared Independence for boho-quarter Walcot); cabaret every week and the beginnings of 'Alternative Comedy'; political protest ...and Christmas Dinners for lonely Old Folk.

Elaborate put-ons, immaculately-conceived costumes and on-the-hoof improvisation were an integral part of all these events; it's difficult to tell where the Arts Workshop ended and the Naturals began, except that gradually the performers managed to get work that took them outside Bath, and 7 or 8 years later when the Arts Workshop dissolved, as such precious things invariably do, The Natural Theatre was one of the parts left alive.

Ralph Oswick, Brian Popay, Jackie Popay, all three still involved on a day-to-day basis with Naturals work, had been there from the very beginning, picking up Pavel Douglas, Rick Jerrom and others with a history in workshop days. "Where did we find these people?" Ralph wonders... "In the gutter, probably. *The Hat & Feather* [notorious festival-culture pub, now featuring a pair of kissing jugglers on its sign, where the Nats were named for their devotion to Natch cider -d]. Very few were actors. I'd been trained

The definitive British Street Performance group - even the Arts Council think so, and who are we to argue? - ***The Natural Theatre*** of Bath have endured 28 years (and counting) of misunderstanding, marginalisation, and people borrowing their routines, all with sense of humour intact. Late last year they moved into £1½million-worth of purpose-built rehearsal/storage premises, giving us the hint it's time to tell the story. **Ralph Oswick** was there at the beginning, and, more importantly, remembers it too. **Steve Henwood** takes notes. Pics from Naturals archives.



Who says the Naturals aren't High Art? Mystery Tour reaches Devon.



The Usual Suspects... no one *really* looks like this, do they?

in theatre design and costume, but never took a job - I had one at Derby Rep., went there to start, took one look at the place through the door, walked on; went home to work in the hospital mortuary. Then I ended up in Bath. Brian was a Fine Art student at Corsham. Rick studied Theatre, I think; but even now out of 25 actors on our books only maybe 6 or 7 of them have been drama students."

Influences? "Well, *Welfare State* were around, one of the first Arts Workshop events was a Labyrinth they did. We thought they were very good, but we wanted to do something different. We went off all that masses-of-props-&-scenery business and went the other way, into having *no* scenery. A lot of people who worked with us had seen *The People Show* and were very keen, but I hadn't at the time. There was a lot of Performance Art about, and that could be *really* weird. A group called *Landscapes & Livingspaces* were pretty influential, and *The John Bull Puncture Repair Kit* (Mick Banks & Corrinne d'Cruz, now working as *British Events*), who ended up joining us. Groups that didn't necessarily *do a show*, or explain what they're doing."

"We ended up on the street because I think one felt one ought to. It was sort of the fashion. We thought you had to shove Art down people's throats. And of course we were on the street because we didn't have anywhere to rehearse. We used to rehearse in Abbey Churchyard [now Bath's prime busking spot -d]. In black leotards." Early Naturals stand-alone shows included clown characters, but the red nose wasn't as close to their hearts as the

surreal juxtapositions that have made them famous. An early speciality was the mystery tour, still an occasional favourite - if one comes up, don't hesitate - and in the heady days of grant aid, they even managed a 3-day marathon one; Bike Events, an associated company of Workshop survivors, throw in blink-and-you'll-miss-them tableaux along the routes of their charity runs; nowadays they prefer not to bring out the emergency services with surprise explosions in rural locations.



Brian Popay - a couple of years ago.

What is it, this Naturals style? Is it surrealism? Is it satire? Is it political? "Somebody summed it up as "Normal people acting abnormally or abnormal people acting normally", and I think that's pretty good. That's surrealism, the juxtaposition, if you like. Workshop events were often political, but we were there to make them fun, or strange, or photographable. We always thought of ourselves as one of those political groups, but we always wanted not to do it in an obvious way.

Recently, when Bel Mooney asked us to do something up at the Bypass [*Batheaston Bypass, Solisbury Hill*, cause célèbre for roads campaigners for many months a couple of years ago -d], we went up as in favour of the road. As far as we know, from the picture in *The Guardian*, they thought we were in favour of it - they actually think that people in those horrible outfits *really* do live in Bath... Not that we were trying to trick them, but, it doesn't say *Natural Theatre* anywhere... We often try to be the opposite of what's going on, of what's a good thing to be, it makes people think. If we went on a protest rally we'd be there to make it fun, to

cheer it up. When there are people who think you really *are* against it, it's funny [except maybe for the team who got beaten up at Glastonbury Festival for being, well, too convincing, I suppose -d] and you're making fun of people who moan about everything. It wouldn't be funny if we went up dressed as real road protesters; the difference is that we stand in the mud with our immaculate town clothes on, and it's funny. It's mischief more than anything else."

The key to the Naturals style itself is *detail*. Any street appearance is treated just like a stage show (Nats stage shows are famous too, but that's another topic for another day), especially when it comes to the costume, which is treated with great care, and from whence comes the character. Ralph's background in design really comes through here, as he describes how important it is for everything down to the shoes to be *right*. "The characters are based on reality. Most people, however casual, have chosen what they look like so we try to put as much thought in. That's part of the safety-net for our actors - whatever else goes wrong, you know you *look right*. Once you're in public, you do everything in character, that's important; it's interesting to watch the experienced performers changing into character in the dressing room as they put the costume on. Sometimes we have to do a sort of half-character; if I'm travelling in a taxi as Lady Margaret [batty/battered Aristo - definitely a Bath Type - also heard on Radio 4 -d], there's no reason why the driver has to pretend I'm someone else; if you go in to see the organisers or something, if you're on local TV and have to wait in the studios, it would be really awful with a group like the Pink Suitcases people, who are really noisy, loud voices. Then you have to shut up, but you still have to stand and look good. We take lots of snapshots of shows to look at the details of what people are doing, to see if there's any slack points."



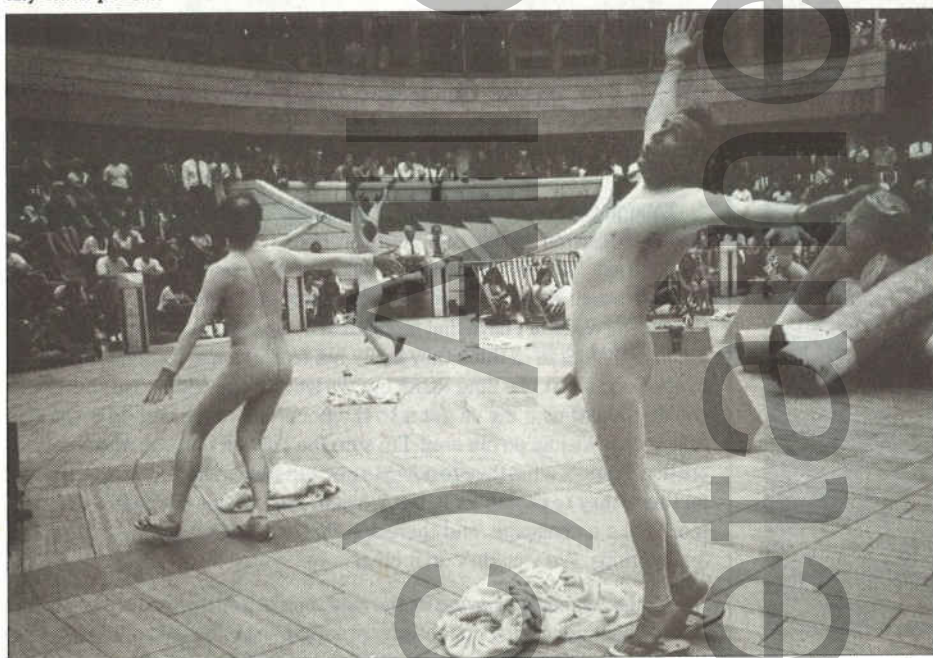
Walcot National - The Cabinet.

Details which can easily come to a single costume costing a couple of hundred pounds, often multiplied by four (the standard street 'team') or more for a popular routine. Details which anyone who has watched a lot of street interventionists will agree that not every company takes the time on, to the detriment of their effect.

The number of Naturals lookalike acts on the agency catalogues is growing - though of course there are other well-established groups, and influences can be mutual - but few are anything like as good or professional.

That character list now numbers something like 120, all different, though probably only about 30 are up and running at any time. "If someone picked something off the list, it wouldn't take long to get together. And there are always new ones. We do reports after every gig, and sometimes I'll look at it and think "What the hell is that?". Groups that are away for a long time generally invent something new that's suitable for where they are, and if it works well, then the others will start doing it."

Regular Training Weeks are the forum for checking out material of this sort; they're also the time for new recruits. Ralph picks out a huge box-file of letters. "People write in, and the interesting ones we keep on file. If they say they've been in 'Oliver!' we don't use them... We don't mind if they've been in it, we just don't like them saying it... and if they don't put a stamped addressed envelope... When there's a training course we write to some of them I think would like to be on it, then after we all vote about how well they've done, whether we could work with them... I don't advertise vacancies, because last time I did I got 850 replies, but we're not allowed just to give our mates jobs, either."



City workers noticed nothing unusual this lunchtime.

Courses can produce 25-strong teams of temporary flowerpotmen, though otherwise the biggest Nats team is the 17-odd who do their annual City of London Festival show every lunchtime for a week.

"That's 1½ hours solid work, it's the only thing we do like that, and it's got to be new every time. It's another source of new material, in fact. It can be really strange, there's 4000 people there, a sort of amphitheatre, and maybe 50 of them are just sitting there reading a book or something.

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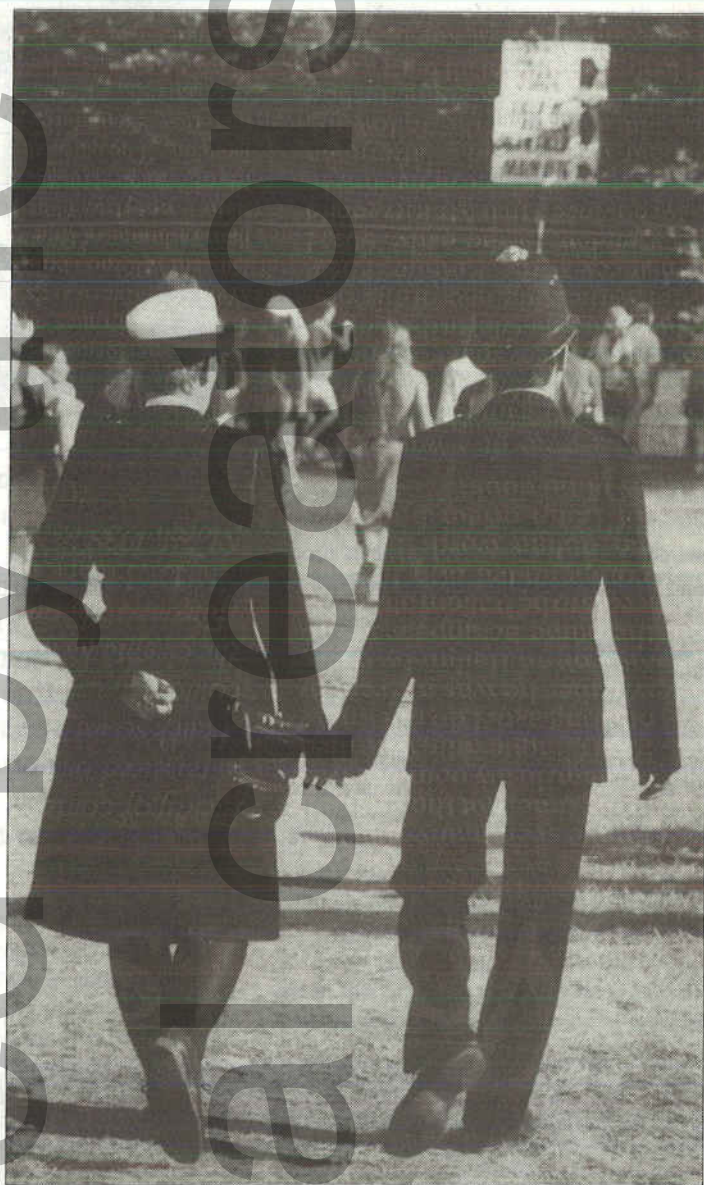
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Very odd." Otherwise the group of four, or multiples thereof, is the standard - "It depends how much people can afford, and we are quite expensive. Sometimes we're free, of course, but generally we're trying to make it so we can give actors long-term contracts, so we create proper jobs. The difference in scale can be strange when we're doing the same events as the big Continental companies: we did the Channel Tunnel opening (both ends) and we were there with our macs and brollies and everyone else was massive, but we could be a foil to that. We cause almost as much of a sensation with our little things... very well-thought-out-little things..."



Copping off - the *Love Fest* vibe.

Though Corporate work pays the bills nowadays - they've just taken 30 pieces to Taiwan for six months for a bank - Ralph insists the spirit is undamaged. "We've done stuff for the Army. I mean, people are people... British Nuclear Fuels were going to ask us to do something, but didn't in the end, so we didn't have that problem. It's rare to be asked by anyone that far out - that *far in* - I think they know not to ring here. Someone asked us to open some sort of a Ring Road, but we let that one slide... we knew they couldn't afford us... We've got it to the point where we can do it *without* selling out. We just do our stuff. I'm sure the Taiwan Bank or whoever they are don't expect what they're going to get, but they'll like it. It has to be good for them, they're paying for it, but it has to be good for the people doing it, too. That's a challenge, and there are challenges like that every time the 'phone rings. We wouldn't do it otherwise.

Frankly, whoever's paying for the next bunch of snogging Policecouples, insatiably-curious alien coneheads, or men-behaving-badly on leads that we see, we reckon that kind of behaviour needs encouraging.

Mr Major wants us all to stay low-paid on long hours. This summer's Euro-Festivals had the long hours, OK, but had the money too: as always, the essential diary dates of **Chalon, Aurillac & Tàrraga** showed the best of European street performance (including of course some big-name Brits) to crowds of thousands, including our chaps with the litre bottle of local plonk and the unusable Spanish cigarette papers. **Steve Henwood** and **Phil Cass**. Shows from the crowd by **Wendy Matthews**.

European Social Chapter



Graffiti Chalon style.

10th Chalon dans la Rue

Burrowing back through the mega-molehill (for a mountain of shows and Himalayan talents) of street group publicity to prepare this review was an emotional experience: we had such a good time! I'd like to personally take you all by the hand to this year's (1997) edition of what might just be the world's best street festival [might be the best? watch for our friends at the others! Let's just say the three in this feature are the best and leave it at that -d]. Little chance of that, I suppose, but I can bore you with snapshots from '96.

Chalon dans la Rue was 10 years old this year, so what do they do? Not make the thing bigger - it's just about right size-wise, there's already too much on even for someone as dedicated [hahaha -d] as me to keep up with, but, *Archaeos*-like, you still get the impression of the whole carrying on just out of the corner of your eye, and at least it's possible to *get to everything*, just not all at once - but they made *everything free!* To see some of these shows for nowt was the best birthday present the city or the country could get.

To start with the big stuff, then: this festival featured three of the best shows *ever*. I don't mean best shows that I've ever seen, I mean best shows *ever*, OK?

Royal DeLuxe. I've heard so much about this company, invariably in terms of serious respect if not awe. Now I know why. For *Péplum*, in homage to Hollywood Egyptian epics, they built a pyramid, maybe 30' high; just over-topping a sphinx, maybe 20-25', whose head moved, eyes rolled, and who spoke with a voice like thunder; below that they'd scatter a model city of temples and houses, only to have it trampled into the dust by a siege machine sporting a huge pair of Roman sandals. Around this set they played out a drama of epic proportions: royal incest, collapse of dynasties, huge battles, heroism, and hilarious anachronisms like filling the Queen's bath from a pallet-load of milk-cartons. Affectionate parody and genuine drama, special effects of Cecil B De Mille proportions...dropped down into a carpark. This is the state of the art of outdoor performance and it's jaw-dropping stuff.

As were *Transe Express*, whose *Maudits Sonnants* some Brits were lucky enough to see in Manchester. Something like a mobile with bells on, that's the best description I could do, a carillon come to life: but the bells are being struck by six people, circling on a star-shaped rig which folds up and down within itself, and is suspended - who knows how high? 70'? 100? - from an enormous crane. It's a thing of beauty and danger, something pretty close to the heart of where circus & theatre comes from, and if this is what it takes to generate that effect in this era, well... just give me more of it!

Collectif 26000 Couverts specialise in doing very odd things indeed. We're out on the fringes of the city, a tatty Council estate. Who'd want to do a show here? It's a matter of politics, of course: yer man wants to get elected and he's commissioned this promenade theatre piece about the history of this part of town. People come out of houses to admonish us (they're all inbred & paranoid if you ask me), and a series of bizarre tableaux tell stories with increasingly-

worrying undertones. The cracks begin to creak, effects collapse, performers get out of control, argue, leave the show to hang around shouting insults. Come the set-piece finale, some local has stolen all the props. The company want to quit, but M. le Politicien sees his vote evaporating and threatens to withhold payment. The *coup de grace* comes with the most pathetic firework finale ever. To simultaneously bite all the hands that feed them (municipal money and the tolerance of local communities) while producing great theatre is something that only an art-form and a festival this strong would have the gall to do. *Vive la France!*

AAARGH! That leaves me about a quarter of a page for four days of other blindingly-brilliant companies. Apologies to all those halo-ed last year, then, we're skipping through, but you need to know that **Les Obsessionnels**, **SDF**, the brilliant **Pyramide**, the manic-hilarious **Alama's Givrés**, the rivetingly incompetent **Buno**, all these are still improving (have to, the competition's fierce). Both **Iris** and **Marco Carolei** (conducting *corridos* and races among moving traffic - he'd get lynched in Britain!) translate perfectly cross-countries; **The Natural Theatre** and their gently bizarre walkabouts were sometimes a bit more subtle than the rest, but managed to confuse people even *here*, and more than keep the British flag flying; ditto gadget-addicts **Avanti Display**.

Deviation starts as a huge packing-case in the middle of an empty square, which (some hours later) starts to gradually unpack itself from the inside to reveal a bizarre (and loud) percussion ensemble. **Musica Brass** take the walkabout band to new heights of musical experimentation, **Duc Le Juke** is the best human jukebox yet, and **Barnaby Bear With Me** brought British rave-circus (whatever happened to...?) into the performance arena. While we're on music, there was a healthy shot of contemporary French mayhem, the *turbo-musette* of the sardine-obsessed **Clupes**, and **Les Costards** brought the performing R'n'B band chestnut into another league entirely.

Street Circus is getting more common, and tho' I still wouldn't rate most of it by decent back-in-Blighty standards, they're catching up fast; classy groups like **les Cousins** or the oddball **Bris de Banane** have performance characters as strong as anything I've seen offstage or out-ringing anywhere.

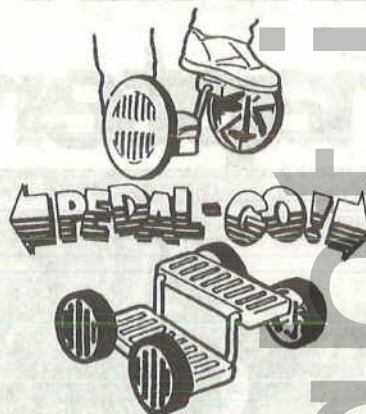
A lot of what's best in Chalon is installation-style (**OPUS**'s fridges were particularly odd), and a special feature are the decorated gardens where you can eat and drink surrounded by not-always-comfortable performances. Lunch at the **Cabaret Voltaire**, anyone? Shows in buses, under bridges, on far-flung islands in the river; **The Abattoir** is the destination of choice when the rest have shut down, where you can dance to not-bad-at-all rock (often of a theatrical bent) on two stages, then DJs, and drink yerself awake all night. Saves a hotel bill. Maybe.

Maybe the best isn't a show at all. It's wandering the streets to see what you might find, coming upon stray still monsters, firework-fixated drummers, the odd bit of gratuitous nudity... the shows pouring their heart out off the beaten track to half-a-dozen and a dog, or no-one at all (the clown archetype in one of its less-celebrated aspects).

To paraphrase a song that dates me: *Une Nuit à Chalon* is worth a lifetime of clichéd street jugglers, precious stage theatre, shopping-centre walkabout, and experimental drama students. But all of those are along for the ride too. Move heaven and earth - dangit, even move your holidays - to see it one time.

Steve Henwood

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11th Aurillac

"It's Sunday, and that's ketamine day right?"

Er, right then Dave - Special K for breakfast anyone?

Dave is one of the many Anglo/French crusties here in Aurillac. They come every year to lurk on street corners or up at the thoroughly dodgy free campsite - well each to their own of course, but I'm here to see some of the best street theatre Europe and indeed the world has to offer (as well as being here to perform with the mighty *Captain Bob's* - but that's another tale entirely).

This year has seen some major changes at Aurillac. The organisers have dropped the old «Eclat» name, moved the festival forward a week in the hope of better weather - hmm, well it only rained 3/4 of the time rather than all of the time - but more importantly they've gone fully international with companies from Argentina, Australia, Bolivia & Ethiopia to name but a few, all of which firmly puts Aurillac on the world festival map.

Like most of these events it's divided into «Compagnies Officielles» and «Festival Off» (*Fringe* to you and me mate), which means whilst there are tons of free acts to watch, you will have to fork out around £13 if you want to see some of those big official shows.

I was lucky enough to get a couple of free tickets courtesy of the lovely Delphine Altesleben in the press office. The first of these shows was the very fabulous «De La Guarda» from Argentina. Blimey it's been a long time since I've seen something this fresh and good (early *Archaos* days?) Danger! Excitement! Latin American weirdness! Most of the action happens directly overhead; scary bungee madness, indoor rainstorms, pounding beats and loads of good old sex'n'violence. You never know where the next aerial assault is coming from, which keeps the standing audience quite literally on its toes as people are being grabbed out of the crowd and catapulted up to the ceiling. The performers were all in business suits and smart dresses and I think the plot revolved around Argentine politics, but I could be quite wrong. Either way it's stunning stuff and definitely worth seeing if you get the chance - an intense experience is guaranteed!

On a considerably calmer but no less bizarre level was «Cirque Ici», Johan Le Guillern's one-man (plus four musicians) show. The stage is lit by a single bulb hanging 1 foot from the floor. The musicians stand at the corners on boxes, playing a curious set with hand-drums and brass instruments. M. Le Guillern arrives, hair bound into two impossibly long plaits (anyone remember his sword-balance/plait-catching-in-the-mouth routine from, again, early *Archaos* days?) His costume seems to suggest something out of *Gormenghast* and indeed his whole performance is like that of some mad king, alone in his chambers, setting himself near-impossible tasks. He proceeds through about 20 routines, everything from tea towel twirling and totally mental slack rope, through to walking, in clogs, on the tops of *Jenlain* beer bottles right across the ring, making it harder for himself as he went on. These acts were interspersed with all manner of curious objects rolling, tumbling and driving themselves across the floor, most of which had to be seen to be believed let alone understood. Johan works incredibly hard throughout, maintaining his character and peculiar stage presence and if you can get on (or at least near) his wavelength it makes for a very bizarre but entertaining spectacle.

Back on the streets my top prize goes to «The Primitives» from Belgium, three very strangely shaped and dungareed aliens(?) who are presumably covered in contact mics and speakers as they create music and rhythms from everything they touch. From dustbins to icecreams via shopping bags and babies in prams they create a playful subversion - really funny to watch and listen to, I could've followed them around all day.

Other street notables were *Roger Pinguin* and his one man *Tour de France* - full yellow jersey and a bicycle mounted on his "support car". I still don't know how the bike drove that car, but he was greeted like a true hero wherever he went.

Mention must also be made of the *Bourgeois de Calais*, living statues doing a bit of history in the middle of the river; the very splendid *Concert Hydrophonique*; *le Compagnie Heros Multicartes* who have the best drive-by superhero rock band in France today (as well as having a 30' opera singer). Who else? Well, *Les Grenouilles Bleu* have a very attractive and original fire silhouette music show (tho' a couple of singing lessons wouldn't go amiss - whoops!) and of course *Capt. Bob's* jolly knockabout poolside special (well I would say that wouldn't I?)

Also, Linda sez that «*Mauvais Esprit*» were well worth the ticket money if you're into dynamic tragi-comical chair and buttock action, er, I suspect there was somewhat more to it than that however.

Finally, for spontaneous live street theatre Lee reported an excellent show featuring a drug-addled nutter trying to do hippy Kung Fu on a battle-trained CRS policeman, ie. getting totally walloped then getting up and trying again - and getting totally walloped again. They really should get a grant for it - top stuff. So if you're wondering where to go next summer, I can highly recommend Aurillac - take a raincoat, play dodge the crusty crew, and prepare yourself to charge around town trying to see all 350+ companies - it's a pretty good way to spend a few days. And if it all gets too much by Sunday, well you could always give Dave a shout. Or then again...

Phil Cass

16th Fira de Tàrraga

After that little lot (and the hilarious drunken mess of the **Ferrara Buskers' Festival** in Italy, must tell you more about that one sometime) you might be forgiven for thinking we'd collapse in a heap for the rest of the year. Not so. If God had meant us to stop there, She wouldn't have put the wildest of the season right at the end...

The *Fira de Tàrraga* is the easiest to get round in terms of space (it's a small town that simply *couldn't* get much more in) but just as hard to get a grip on as the others, mostly because *everyone* (including all the hippy anarcho yooof in Barcelona and all the grannies in Lleda province) comes out to play, to drink and dance all night; and it specialises in shows that shatter whatever sanity you might have hung onto with a combination of big gestures and bigger fireworks.

King of these was **Pa Lo Q-Sea**, all the way from Colombia: superficially like a lot of the Spanish still processional set-pieces, but somehow more mediaeval, darker, sexier, all-round dangerous: big *papier-mâché* characters waving swords around like something out of a Mystery Play turned street riot. And that's just about it. Not a moment after you'd drawn breath again, you'd be set upon by **Amilma**, members of the *National Ballet of Togo*, no less, more secure on bamboo stilts taller and more precarious than any Euro group I've ever seen. All this plus expected pyromaniacs like **Trilavia**, **Gog i Magog**, keeping the standards high. **Visitants**, who had landed one of the primo set-piece slots, were dull in comparison: great models, loads of pyro, next-to-nowt going on with it: could do better. Certainly **Xarxa** did: *Vels e Vents*, spectacle created for the opening of the Channel Tunnel, while it was all big stuff and nothing to miss in 'plotting', managed a sequence of striking moments, an evolving painting/sculpture in light and fire, that sums up the unique aspects of this kind of work and pisses on any Brit municipal firework show, however expensive.

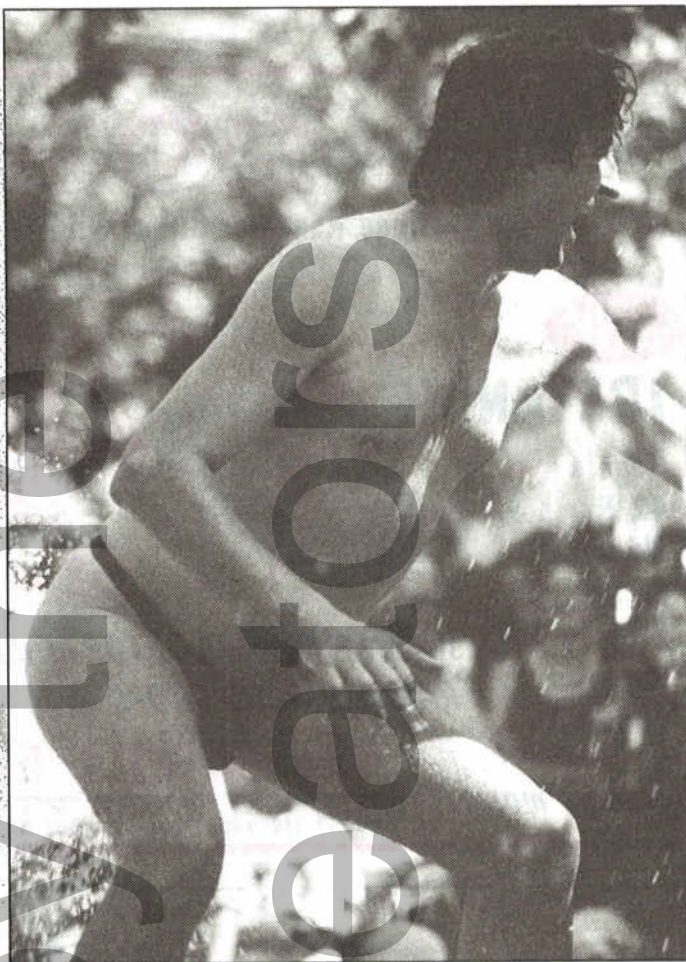
Same shortage of space for me means I have to scoot though (like I was super-mean **Frank Baruk** with his skates & half-motorbike) the familiar names: **Primitives**, **Pyramide**, both of which are still in our top twenty best acts on the circuit; the jugglers, represented from all sides of the art (**Iris**, the bizarre; **Lee Hayes**, the classic mouthy streetie; **Jeff Bradley**, stage-style smart stuff; **Malabar-Los**, a characteristic contemporary Spanish show with much spark & originality); **Le La Les** scoring high on the demanding Euro-circuit.

Also on the small show front, **Leandre** was highly rated for character by all the other pros, and **Stefan Bielefeld** did a fire breathing (etc.) act that for a change wasn't in the slightest crusty or crazed. **Mr Jules** and **Just Dave** had showed up from nowhere in particular and were showing the locals a thing or two about crowd work. **Alex Navarro**, I'd actually avoided before, thinking his *el Babé* would be naff - actually it's a laff riot, very well-observed, dead cheeky, and appealing right across the age spectrum; highly recommended to any festival promoter out there. Antipodean visitors **Bedlam Oz** did some good stuff with some silvery ducting. New Yorkers **Pink Inc.**, tho' kitsch as anything, just didn't measure up on a Euro-

scale, which, dunno, I feel pretty good about! **Hors Strate** did a fine line in architectural creatures & human chameleons (as did **Urgence Enfer...** at Chalon; while I remember), an increasingly-popular style.

Best thing on the streets, tho', had to be **Cacahuète**, another one of those internationally-famed companies who justify every word you've heard. Their *Mother's Funeral* (they also had a most entertaining exhibition of toilets) recalls in turn the *Naturals*, *Apex Moving*, and *Les Hommes en Noir*, but is far more cruel than any of these.

Your show's a bit infantile, Alex.



His pants were black - perfectly respectable, then!

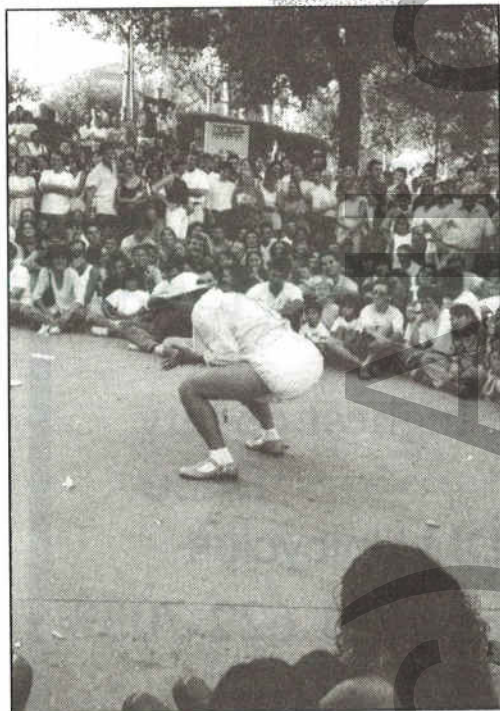
Mama's to be buried, but they can't afford the funeral or a hearse. They stop the traffic and load the coffin (and wheelchair-bound Papa) into passing cars. They bang on church doors. They get tired and go off for a beer or to bathe in a fountain. One cousin tries to throw himself in the river, two others grope each other unashamedly, Papa throws himself at any young girl within reach, they all argue. Eventually they abandon her on a building-site. I laughed until I gagged. Beside that, other surrealist walkabouts, like **Las Calíguas' Goat Cheese** (¿why?), were just plain bizarre.

Hey! Forget it, let's go to the Circus! **Los Galindos** (was there a *Circus Hazzard* connection?) are good knockabout clown/acro/etc., enjoyable on several levels, still feels unfinished but I'd like to see them again. **Pocheros** (aka. *Cirque D'Images*) is one of those French Circus School graduate shows, visually stunning with some rare props - a bit long-winded in places (stronger direction please) but very promising, bring 'em over, someone. **Captain Bob's** were on the end of a long run and very together, collectively cheery but still unpredictable. I think some of the humour passed the people by, but the only Spanish competition spent far too much time haranguing the audience so we score again there. **Chantier Mobil** had very similar costumes to the Bobs and spread a 'theatre of embarrassment' show a bit thin. It takes **Marceline i Sylvestre**, a genuinely classic clown show with lots of individual touches, to provide the only fully-realised contemporary circus tradition piece, lovely lovely stuff with serious guffaw factor.

Tàrraga has a whole other side (well, several, but...) which is more 'arty'. There's loads of dance, a lot of which is genuinely street/outdoor-shaped, and plenty of serious contemporary theatre. Among the more arts-pages orientated stuff that grabbed me was **Joan Baixas**, sort of action-painting with a light/projector aspect and monologue (lost me there, but...), and **Marcel.li Antúnez Roca's Epizoo**, a curiosity mapping torture and anatomical oddities onto computer tech., but *live* (I don't actually think it hurt), which could only come from Barça (or New York). Too serious? Take a walk down the locals' special, street transformed into ghost train with obligatory firecrackers, **Carreró de la Por**. Or go to one of the punk bars, nearly as frightening as either of the preceding!

It's the perfect end to the summer, the town itself is conveniently placed 'twixt Barcelona & the Pyrenees for moving on, it's unlike anything at home (Pilton Circus/Theatre, only in a town, with more bars, running later, better weather?), and I expect to see a few more of you there next year, OK?

Steve Henwood



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The platform and the station hummed with the smell of bodies, belongings, bicycles, baggage. The night sleeper to Laos was late, which was a relief as it gave a little time to assemble thoughts, check bags, eat and say hello to old friends and new friends and to juggle. After the first half hour of the delay it started to become frustrating - is the train coming? - ah, western lack of patience. Patience is the key to living in the east, so they say; so there on platform five, a heap of baggage patiently waited as the 1st Laos International Juggling Festival began to form up.

At last the train arrived and carriage number 14 was inundated with props, bags, food parcels, banners and papers, slabs of beer, cases of wine and whisky and a half-ton-heavy ice-packed metal cold-box filled with cold beer; in through the doors and windows it went. All 28 jugglers aboard and settling to go when the conductor comes along and changes the number of the carriage to 15 (just to try our patience with some good old bureaucratic logic). What? Move one carriage down?! No way! Here switch the numbers back, oh, er, no? oh go on! its dumb to move us all when you... ah, alright, alright, keep your hair on. I looked into the porters eyes. *That* ice-box through the window again? I looked at the jugglers sweating, and then helped to form a chain and we moved; we worked, we sweated, we sat down, we had a cold beer.

That kind of sums up the formula for serious fun in Laos: the only festival I've been to where the main sponsors were booze companies - so the registration included parties and free beer for a week. Dangerous stuff. And I should say right now, that just because I'm ranting like an alcoholic it doesn't mean that everyone on the trip was a piss head, just most of the British, French and Kiwis. Okay.

Early morning at the frontier we disembarked (the ice-box a lot lighter) and strolled to have coffee overlooking the Mekong. There is a drink in Thailand and Laos on sale everywhere, a kind of insta-caffeine hit, and it was just what was needed. So, suddenly energetic, we coaxed it to the *Friendship Bridge* which spans the Mekong, the frontier between Thailand and The Peoples' Republic of Laos. Immigration tourist style on the way out - and immigration circus style on the way in. We were greeted by a marching band and the Laos National Circus in costume at

the line and crossed into Laos to music and clapping and smiles, waving and holding festival banners. Afterwards a few of us confessed that we felt like crying it was so touching. It was certainly the first time I've been welcomed into a country, usually it's "What are these? You're going to work aren't you? How much money do you have? Passport please". This festival suddenly looked very happening and bright (or was it that drink that made us feel that, no! it was definitely reality). A coach proclaiming "*Welcome International Jugglers*" (clearer than any of the signs to the Euro Juggling Conventions). We were big in Laos, Jude had said; well, definitely in the capital.

Nice clean guest house, settle, lunch, visit the circus in the afternoon. The big circus building (built 7 years ago by the Russians) is a delight - oh for one in the UK. Lots of performers and staff and facilities, a practice room and a performance ring with seats for near-on a thousand. A juggle broke loose and the space was filled with props. *Beardies* will be pleased to hear that the Laos National Circus use *Radical Fish!* The clubs were left behind by the French group *Les Arts Sauts* who came to Vientiane earlier this year to train in the building.

The welcoming party was something we all awaited with anticipation, mostly because there would be food and we were all starving and beginning to flake out. We had to drink the local rice whisky first, however, as custom dictated, and then experience a *Basi* ceremony: white cotton strings are tied around our wrists by our new friends from the circus, fellow performers; as each string is tied on the giver whispers to you messages of greeting, good fortune, and protection. These friendship bands protect you during your stay in Laos, and are supposed to be left on until they fall off; weeks later they are still blessing wrists around the world. A feeling of honoured-guest-ness came upon us. Now where is that food?! We ate sandwiches, drank beer and danced to the circus band who played their best selection - mostly from the 70's; it was cheesy disco at best and plain tacky at others, but they can play and love it loud. Yeah! Fight for your right to party! - in a country which is nearly all Party.

LAO LIFE

Mr Jules joined the international set, went to Laos, lost his bowler, lost his glasses but managed not to lose it altogether. Please note all ingratiating reviews of performers bear no resemblance to any show seen, unseen, living or dead and may be purely fictional or just made up, like.

LAO LIFE continued...

A great thing happened to me that night: I caught a cultural event in full swing. I have a habit of missing events - this time I was lucky. I went wandering around and followed the crowds into a temple grounds. This was *Wat Si Muang*, the temple nearest the guest house. It is the site of the city pillar around which the city and its fortunes revolve, and tonight was the blessing of the pillar. The celebration is a *wien thien* - a circumambulation (this is the start of the *That Luang* festival) procession, dancing, chanting, musicians and fireworks. Big fireworks. Take a canister twice the height and width of a metal kilo size tin of instant coffee, put it on the floor, light blue touch paper and retire a lot. Like a rocket that is going nowhere, trying to dig itself into the ground, it fires a flame into the air, roaring in its rage at not moving. A funnel of white flame 6 foot high, surrounded by a cone of blue for another 5 foot, in turn surrounded by orange flames 20 foot high, and beyond that sparks shooting up to 40 feet, spraying all around and carried high away by the heat to burn up on their return to earth. Huge cheers, screams, and applause from the crowd. Move on to the next station, passing the still glowing canister shell; kids daring to peer into the mouth of this exhausted (hopefully) static jet engine. There were at least six stations with other fireworks rigged and bigger and bigger monster fire cones. This is how Laos do a fire show: what kind of fire show would we make by comparison?

Our fire show at *That Luang* happened on our second night giving us only one afternoon to create and rehearse, with haste.

A short club swinging piece, a longer club juggling bit, some fakir fire eating from Sira and Ali, high unicycle and shoulder stands, and a big finale. The Laos circus did an hour of tremendous balancing and manipulation and clowning while we, a gang of black clad westerners led by Merlijn (courtesy of Lee Hayes & Mariella Productions) in his push-chair snaked our way through the heavy crowds. Well, the Laos National Circus don't drop - the funny westerners did. (That's what happens with not enough practice - excuse no. 326). The crowd was so big and the music on stage so loud you really couldn't tell if they cared or not, although the applause at the end was strong. Show over, phew. Eventually back at the guest house, pretty contented, tired, beer, sleep. All was fine except that the parade was due to start at 8am. in the morning! 7.30 start! Wake me up with a caffeine drink! It happened (what service!) and so did the parade. Short and sweet, it was on the same stage as the fire show. Quite a big crowd and a half hour of television coverage (no there isn't much to put on TV out here). Games as games go, went. There was a mixture of Laos Circus and westerners in each game, the Laos winning handstand, club balance and gladiators (perhaps an engi-

neered result there, Brian). The five balls, long distance passing, diabolo high toss, taken by the European team. The beautiful locally-hand-made medals are much treasured. The much-talked-about elephant did go on the parade but it was rather a small elephant and not very happy at that time of day (guess elephants don't get that caffeine drink).

At 6pm I found myself introducing "First on stage please welcome" *Florence et Jacob*, down at the French Cultural Centre. A fun show with Ali Yaon (from Thailand) demonstrating his mime skills, Florence (F) her diabolos, Haggis & Ken gobbling water at each other (just like the fountains of Strasbourg apparently) and Jo & Jake (UK) balancing and trying to (not) hit children with clubs. After this, another beer and then, at last, sleep. Lots.



The evening saw a flurry and a fluster of energy as we attempted to put together the *1st Laos International Circus Show* for guests, government officials, bigwigs, smallwigs, minor toupees and general public, Laos and foreigners - paying audience!

Jude Smith (aka. queenpin of the *Serious Fun* committee) enters the ring and gets out her mobile and is heard in Laos inviting all the jugglers to come for a festival. They come, out of the seating, from the entrances, on a bicycle, a rickshaw and in a big *tuk-tuk*, much to the delight of the audience. A feast of processions, flags, juggling and dancing around followed. There was a lot in the show, but probably *Florence's* clown took the prize for comedy and outrage by climbing onto the shoulders of a Lao volunteer (and juggling knives - though that was irrelevant compared to the transgression of social norms involved already) and then getting him to try to kiss her on the lips by a quick turn of the head as he tried to kiss her cheek. Roars and screaming (of laughter) from the public. Only a clown could get a way with stuff like this; only in Circus. Laos National Television recorded live and they have broadcast it. *Flip & Flop* also managed to get past the censor and onto TV. Who? Well two well-known performers who have been described as "a human recreation of the display Fountains of Strasbourg to music" and also as "two old geezers gobbling water at each other". Very funny but dropped from the show on the second night by request of the circus boss. Could have been getting the floor wet, could have been not skillful enough: could have been the lack of jockstraps or just that spitting lots of water into the face of another is a social taboo. We may well never know. But available in the UK for children's parties, street and hen nights.

Jools' account then degenerates into an attempt to plug all his mates' shows as usual. Let it be known that the following appeared: Ali Yaon, Dan, Ken's 'The Pretentious Juggler', Lee Hayes, Ms. Minetti (Queen of the Street), Mr Jules, Jo & Jake (Jake & Jo) [uh? - d], Haggis McLeod, Florence. Now back to the interesting stuff.

Laos Circus' Hula Hoop girl did versatile and difficult hula things with hoops, including being hoisted into the air by a mouth grip whilst twiddling; and doing the one where you hula 30+ hoops and look like a Slinky for a few seconds. The Laos Circus' club passing routines were great. Preceded by traditional dance and top spinning, the four girls pass several patterns slickly and then feed to two guys who are standing out at right angles on vertical poles. Funky stuff, no drops, very professional. The Laos Circus are a solid team, several trained in Moscow for years. I still don't know quite what they made of our brand of juggling and performance.

The two-hour show was a success, hands were shaken and flowers given - Jude received them from the Deputy President of the House of Representatives - the festival was actually a major cultural event in Laos and the show a big part of the image. Thanks should go to Haggis for making lots of organisational and directorial noises [that is what he does, isn't it? - d] to get the show up and running, and beyond the immediate, the *Serious Fun* committee had spent many hours finding sponsorship to fund the repairs to the circus building. A strong circus is important here as elsewhere, especially now as you can hear television getting an insidious grip on the people and culture. Dangerous times ahead: hopefully the festival will give circus a profile boost.

Friday, the second show; no TV, more relaxed and sweeter audience, almost all Laos. Fun.

Last night party at the circus, a very merry occasion. We presented the Circus with gifts of clubs donated by *Beard* and by *Medium Air* from Oz. Thanks. Many beers were drunk, food eaten, whisky won in dancing competitions, and in the pursuit of cultural exchange we played statues, musical chairs, and taught the *Okey Cokey*. I suffer several flashbacks to parties when I was five, but eventually recovered. At the party after the party back at the guest house many toasts were quaffed to one and all, etc., well... you had to be there.

Where next? China, Burma, Cambodia, Madagascar? Stay tuned to these pages for information. Or if you have a suggestion, location, a plan or a dream, contact the *Serious Fun* Committee; nothing is beyond the realms of possibility with these folks. Thanks: Jude, Phil, Alain, Yannick, Chris, Virginia, Yetain for boldly going where no juggler... (cue Star Trek theme)



TYPE OF BALL

Many types of ball can be spun on the finger. At the lower end of the scale, stage balls are often used: Francis Brunn can spin a tennis ball. Footballs come in a range of sizes and are probably a good starting point; I prefer to use size 4 plastic footballs. If you can hold the ball comfortably in one hand then you should be able to spin it. Gymnastics balls are good for smaller hands or you can buy specially-made balls for spinning. It is very impressive to spin a basketball; for larger balls, a two handed start is probably needed.

Your spinning ball should be fairly heavy, have a grippy surface and be slightly deflated [*i know how you feel -d*]. You can use sandpaper if it is too smooth. Try to find one that doesn't wobble too much - try them out in the shop!

THE SPIN

The direction is important when you come to more advanced tricks. Looking down on a ball spinning on your right hand, it should be going anti-clockwise. On the left hand it goes clockwise. A ball will spin in either direction, but this is the most common way. However, you will find it hard to transfer a spinning ball between hands because you have just learnt to spin in opposite directions!

You have to twist your wrist around as far as you can. Then with a quick flick the ball flies up a few inches before settling on your fingertip. Make sure that it spins about the vertical axis so you can catch it at the pole. Practise this until you can catch it and hold it steady. A faster spin makes the ball more stable. You can make it spin longer by bending your finger so that the ball is on your nail, but for the initial spin it is easier to catch the ball on the pad of your finger. My football will spin for more than 30 seconds. An audience will be surprised because you don't have to look at the ball, or do anything, and you can make it look easy. It is worthwhile learning to strike the ball with your other hand in order to increase the spin - it looks better than starting again.

A simple trick is throwing and catching a spinning ball. Try small throws at first. With practice you can turn pirouettes or throw behind your back or under the leg.

ARM CURLS

A classic trick. Take the ball under your arm, and then away from you with the wrist twisted. Wait until the arm is outstretched before you start to straighten the wrist, bringing the ball back round in front of you. The reverse curl is just what you would expect. An interesting variation is the backwards roll with a spinning ball. Cock your head on one side when you roll and try to go over smoothly. You should find yourself halfway through a reverse curl. This is very uncomfortable on a hard surface such as a tennis court or a motorway - be warned! [*there's some story here you're not telling us, isn't there? -d*].

TRANSFERRING

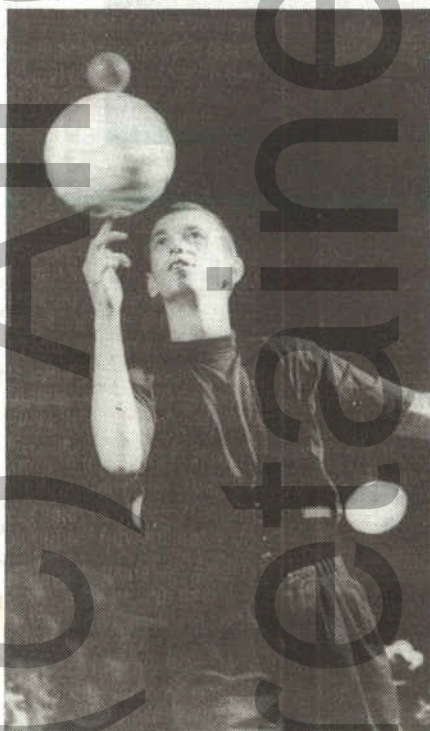
It takes some practice to pass the spinning ball from hand to hand. You have to be accurate and find some point of contact. Try passing under the leg or behind the head or the back. The latter is more difficult because you can't see what you are doing. If you bend to the side it will be easier. You can also run the ball from finger to finger on the same hand or put it on a stick or somebody else's finger.

TWO BALLS

Try to learn everything with your weaker side. I make a very big effort to do this, but still favour the right. An impressive trick that one-sided people can do is called *ball on a ball*. The idea is to put a second ball on top of a spinning ball, and then let the top one spin in the same direction. It is helpful to give the top one a bit of a spin as you place it on, but do this gently. It should speed up and become more stable. The problem is with the bottom one which will then slow down; you can use your other hand to strike the lower ball or use a lighter ball to put on top - otherwise the trick won't last very long.

If you learn to spin two balls at once, you can move on to doing arm curls on both sides. The balls can be curled on- or off-sync, or you can curl one ball while reverse-curling the other. Try curling one ball while turning around once to that side. You can make a big circle with it as you move. Now have the other ball follow it close behind - the second ball doesn't curl.

Only a small number of people learn ball-spinning. At conventions there are many good jugglers but not many ball-spinners. That's surprising, since once you master the basics there are loads of things you can try. If you perform, there is enough material for a routine. Ball-spinning is good to use in combination tricks, eg. combined with juggling or balancing.



be tops at spinning

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PASSED

World's Greatest?

PASSED...PASSED

I have seen many jugglers in my time, but the greatest of them, in my opinion, was Paul Cinquevalli, who died not long ago. I do not know whether he was a Frenchman or an Italian by birth, but the name he appeared under seems to be Italian, although it is compounded of a French and an Italian word. That he was of Latin origin however, admits of no doubt.

Plenty of contenders for that title (see Karl Heinz Ziethen's book - reviewed on p.31 - from which we nicked the pic - love the suit, Paul): so we thought we'd start at the beginning, or as near as we could get, with Cinquevalli, darling of the Victorian stage - before the cinema kicked the jugglers back into the gutter. The following fanzine-style rave is another excerpt from 'Jugglers and Juggling' by Dr. Henry R Evans, published originally in the February and March 1938 issues of the *Linking Ring* magazine. Thanks as usual to Pearse Halfpenny and his magic books.

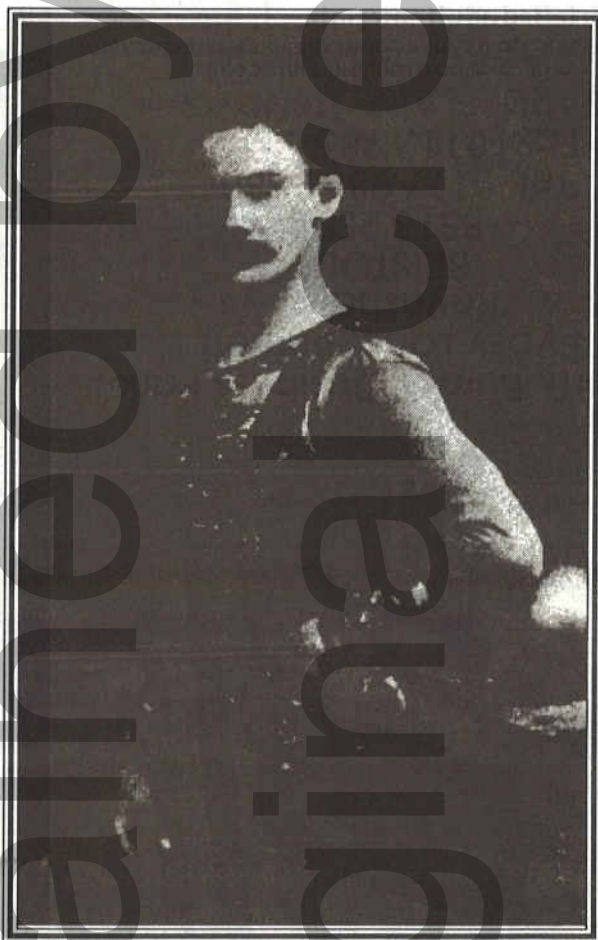
His feats were of a remarkable character. William G Fitzgerald, in the *Strand Magazine*, London, some years ago, spoke of him as "the greatest juggler in the world". After witnessing one of his performances at the Empire Theatre, London, in the early '90s, I was convinced that Mr Fitzgerald was correct in his designation. In honour of England's 'afternoon tea', he invented the following, described by a foregoing author: "He juggles first of all with a cup, a saucer, a lump of sugar, and a teapot half full of tea. Suddenly the cup descends as if by magic into the saucer, the laggard sugar joins the cup a second later, and before you can count three, Mr Cinquevalli is gallantly pouring out a 'nice hot cup' - not indeed for one fair lady, but for a mixed multitude.



In 1886, the celebrated equilibrist gave a performance before the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, and a brilliant gathering of English nobility at Marlborough House, London. The special feat that excited the admiration of the Prince is thus described by Mr Fitzgerald:

"Mr Cinquevalli's assistant holds two open razors, and from these are suspended a couple of loops of twisted paper, made before the audience. In the loops is hung a broom-handle. The juggler then takes a heavy oak stick and sharply strikes the broom handle, breaking it in halves, but without in any way injuring the paper loops that are hung on the razors' edges. Sometimes the trick is varied by placing the broom-handle on two clay pipes, these pipes being smoked, more or less placidly, by a couple of assistants."

When the above feat was exhibited before the Prince of Wales, he



was greatly struck with it, and asked the juggler to repeat it again and again, in order that he might himself select razors, broom-handle and striking stick, and also make the paper loops.

The foregoing experiment is something of a physical phenomenon, and has enlisted the attention of scientists.

Kids' entertainment? Well it's easy isn't it? -all you've got to do is bend over and get kicked up the bum, and all the kids fall about in hysterics. That sort of thing keeps them happy for hours. It must be easy, I mean just look at the people that do it - sad old men dressing up as clowns to make their retirement pass more quickly, reject redcoats desperate to be in showbiz, social misfits trying to find someone who's impressed by their second-rate magic tricks, jugglers who think that a 3-club cascade is what kids want to see, a-hundred-and-one "look behind you" puppeteers; at best, drama-school graduates doing it as an easy way to get an Equity card; failed adult entertainers the lot of them. Anyone could do kids' stuff, it's a piece of cake.

Let's face it, in every branch of entertainment there is good and bad, but why is it that children's entertainment usually brings to mind (an adult's mind) the bad rather than the good? Is it that a children's show is necessarily not entertaining to an adult? If adults do enjoy it, then is that to the

detriment of the children's enjoyment? Could it be that most children don't much like the majority of entertainment aimed at them?

The main reason that so much children's entertainment is second-rate stems from our attitude towards children. In Western culture we tend to have very little respect for the young and the old. Consequently an attitude of "Well, it's only kids, it'll do" is apparent, both from the persons booking the act, which is bad enough, but also (and unforgivably) from far too many performers. How many of you have done children's shows with a (low) level of forethought and preparation that you wouldn't dream of for an adult show? If you've lost that respect for your audience, whoever they may be, then you are on very thin ice indeed.

The problem is, though, that almost regardless of how bad a show appears to be, the kids still seem to be enjoying themselves. If they are enjoying it, surely it can't be that bad? This isn't unique to children: a lot of people watch 'Home and Away' but that doesn't mean that it's good [different kinds of 'good', cf. 'effective', Elementary Course in Aesthetics part 3 - smug ex-philosophy-student ed]. The fact is that kids love to enjoy them-

There was i quietly minding someone else's business in the pub, when i find myself on the receiving end of a major league rant on the subject of Children's Entertainment. Problem shared & all that, i thought i'd share it with you lot. The Boggle Brothers (age 29 1/2 & 26 3/4) exercise their persecution complex and manage to fit in the odd plug for their own style of show - but what the heck, they're excellent and every one of these points worth making. The perpetrators were shot by Luke Danniells (age 36mm.). Pay attention at the back there!



THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT



Just because *your* audience is too young to remember Morecambe & Wise...

selves: regardless of how bad the show is they will still find something to enjoy because they want to. They also enjoy it because there are so few really good shows for them that they have become conditioned to assume that the bad shows are what you are supposed to enjoy. This then becomes circular because the kids are seen to be enjoying themselves, so it is assumed by both the adults and the performer that it *must* be a good kids' show, regardless of how crass it all is.

It's this lack of respect for children and consequently children's performers that is the killer. Almost everywhere that you perform to children you become acutely aware that you are way down the status ladder. If you play in a band then people fall over themselves to help you unload and set up and so on, and always want to know what you've done and where you've been, because most people have secret ambitions to be a rock star [oh yeah? - *PA humper ed*]. The same is true of comedy, theatre, dance, almost any art-form you wish to mention; there is a reverence in people's attitudes because you're doing what they would really like to be doing. Not so children's performance. People don't have any ambition to entertain kids and generally can't understand why you would want to either.

Because few people see the joy that comes from entertaining children, society is very suspicious of the motives of anyone who works closely with children and enjoys it. This again becomes circular because people are unwilling to pay well for children's shows. As a consequence many performers find themselves having to do five or six shows a day just to make a living. If you are having to do that many shows, how can you put in enough energy to make any of them any good? Unfortunately children's performers can get away with doing this, so it is self-propagating. There is actually quite a lot of money spent on kids' shows, mostly because of there being a lot of cheap jobs to be had. It looks like there is a better living to be made doing a large number of bad shows

than from shows which are recognised as being good, which are by necessity more expensive. The thing that keeps us firmly with the latter is our belief and respect for what we are doing and our audience, and our conviction of the importance of it. If you work with children, either by performing or teaching, you are having a very direct influence on the future of society and shouldn't take on that responsibility lightly. Surely our children deserve the best possible!

Most people have a very poor understanding of how hard it is to entertain children. We often have parents who haven't seen our show come up to us and say thanks because the child has obviously enjoyed itself and nagged them to do so. However you can usually detect lip-service in it, you get a feeling of "Well you only made a couple of kids laugh, how hard can that be?" The truth is that it is easy to make a child laugh, superficially anyway. Children are



...and don't take lifts from strange men, either.

very joyous beings and so *will* laugh at someone being kicked up the bum; a 4-year-old will laugh at that for hours, and far too many acts exploit this. But a 9-year-old is going to get bored with it pretty quickly. In fact it is very difficult to make children laugh continually and from their hearts if what you are doing is only using one type of comedy and only evoking one type of emotion.

In order to do a good children's show you must understand children, and recognise the differences between different audiences. Too many performers will churn out the same show regardless of the ages involved, and assume that you can group them into pre-school and 5-11 year old ranges. This seems absurd to us, at the very least you should look at bands of no more than two years separation; a 5-year-old has nothing like the understanding of status and characterisation that a 7-year-old will show, similarly between 7 and 9, and so on.

You must also understand their emotional nature. Children love to indulge and experiment with their emotions, this is why they can be crying their eyes out one moment but be in fits of laughter the next. Adults often find this hard to relate to as it threatens their own emotional stability - consequently many people are scared of kids and see them as somewhat alien. But this is the nature of their learning process and forms much of their beauty. A good show should take the audience through the

entire emotional range; if it does, the children love it. We see kids at the end of our shows emotionally exhausted and with a sense of "what the hell was that?" - because they are generally used to "look behind you" shows. As a performer you have the chance to create something truly magical and memorable. Isn't it your responsibility to do exactly that?

You must never lose sight of your artistic integrity. This is a mistake that is all-too-often made in children's theatre productions. Obviously you have to simplify what you are doing compared to a production aimed at adults or else the kids won't understand what is happening, but *never at the expense of patronising the audience*. As a piece of acting it should be taken just as seriously. Children are a good deal more perceptive than they are given credit for. If the performer is embarrassed at what they are doing the audience know about it straight away, whether they are children or adults. The same is true of clowning: if you don't think your material is funny, the kids will see right through you. To us the greatest crime is to patronise the audience, you really have to push your own imagination; after all, children have the greatest imaginative capability of anyone, it is up to you to keep up with them, not the other way round. If you retain your integrity you also stand the best chance of releasing the child in adult members of the audience, and you find that it is entirely possible for adults and children to enjoy a show together, as with a good pantomime. To achieve this, and to really connect with both the children and their parents, is one of the greatest rewards of children's performance.

A problem that is common to most children's performers is that of material. If you are working on an adult show you can do what you like, on the basis that if people don't like it then they don't have to book it,

and there are very few taboos left in adult entertainment. But everyone seems to have an opinion about what is and isn't suitable for children: the result being that too many performers tend towards extreme caution and avoid any possible controversy. Unfortunately, with children, the audiences' opinion of what is appropriate and that of the person booking the show are very far removed, and it becomes a question of censorship.

We are both very much against censorship in general, but as parents there are things that we wouldn't want our children to see, whilst at the same time not wanting to wrap them in cotton wool and deny them the experience of life. As a performer you are acting as the censor by deciding what is in your show and what is not, along with the general tone of the performance, and in order to keep working you have to pander to the opinion of the general public. The problem is that most people don't know children very well, and often have a totally outdated idea of what is or isn't appropriate.

We had an example this year of a woman who complained to us because during the show one character said to the other "Oh, shut your fat mouth!" James pointed out that the innocent-looking 7-year-old next to him probably knew about six swear words, at which the woman was aghast. The child in question thought for a couple of minutes and then proudly announced that he knew at least fifteen. Shortly after she had left someone else came up to us to say that he thought we had hit exactly the right level, and thanked us profoundly for not patronising his children. The moral of this is that you can't please all the people all the time, but if you're not upsetting any then you're not pushing hard enough at the boundaries and you're selling the children short! In fact a lot of our appeal to a family audience is that we do push these boundaries in a cheeky vaudeville style, and once you've connected with the child in the adult members of the audience then they love you for it.

If you're thinking of entertaining children or a family audience, don't go into it lightly. If you see it as a soft option or an easy living, you are only conning yourself and the children. To do the job well you will need both talent and hard work to no less of an extent than a good adult entertainer, if not more, and a conviction of the worth of what you're doing coupled with a pretty thick skin. If you already do it, and do it well, be proud of what you do.

After all, our job is to make children laugh and feel good about being alive. What job is more important than that?

JUST SAY NO!

In honour of our distinguished cover stars, this issue we at *The Catch* are instituting an Anti-Laughing Campaign. Perhaps this true story will help you see why.

Mr H. Dumpty of Bromley was an ordinary high-pressure salesman of 55 years and 22 stone. One day, while relaxing on his garden wall between bouts of spying on his neighbour's new lawnmower and shouting at the kids for causing noise-pollution (...and do they pay road tax to use the street for kiss-chase? I think not!), a passing King's Soldier told a joke he'd heard on the Jim Davidson Show (something about brassières and bra-ziers - the details are still *sub judice*). Mr Dumpty laughed so much he fell off his wall and died of a heart attack. Davidson was indicted (a surprisingly popular move - perhaps the public at large knows the justice of our cause already) but millions of people every week persist in putting themselves and their loved ones to the same risk.

One of these days, *you too* could regret telling that last joke. Before it's too late, quit the pernicious vice of humour. It does you no good. Look at the Prime Minister: he's never cracked a genuine joke in his life, and has risen to the very top. If he'd suffered from a sense of humour, he'd never have become leader of the Conservative Party.

Last issue's Caption Contest is the sort of thing that will be banned under legislation already planned for the next session of Parliament. Not only was its author discredited for being too clever by half and on too good terms with children - but the picture was *funny in itself* (it would have no place on the cartoons page of a reputable tabloid newspaper for that very reason). Look at the 'Tiger Economies' of the Far East. How many Taiwanese comedians do you know? The correlation is obvious: there is no place for the evils of humour in our modern competitive world.

In such cases, the only recourse is to do what several of the more courageous entrants to our competition did: submit captions that *aren't funny in the slightest*. Congratulations are in order for **Mark Rushworth** of Leeds, **Wavve Davey** BA of Rugby, who surely knows how to spoil a good story (his own, in fact), good boy **Jamie Fletcher** of Fareham, Hampshire, and responsible children's entertainer **Luke Jugglestruck** of somewhere benighted in Wildest Wales. The Government will be looking for you to lead the crusade in the months to come.

It has been argued that for some people humour is an easy retreat from the everyday pressures of earning a living, keeping the house and car clean, and so on. One so-called popular entertainer has even advanced the theory that cracking a joke is as natural to some people as having a cup of tea. This argument carries little weight with us, or sorrowing Mrs Dumpty, who we interviewed on her sorrowing way to the Bahamas with her sorrowing emotional adviser Mr. Keanu Gigolo. "Just say no for a Joke!" they chorused, somewhat ungrammatically. It must have been the grief.



We're certainly saying no to the following:

Tony Dolan of Spook City Cheltenham. He's a man with the beginning of a serious problem: two perfectly adequate unfunny captions spoiled by a knowing "By the look of your hat, mate, I'd try knocking it on the head!". **Danny Colyer** of Crowborough, Sussex, is nearly as badly off, 2 out of 9 captions infected with humour: "OK - now kick your hat up and catch it on the eel." and "Sebastian was determined to prove that pollution from the nearby plant was resulting in stiffer fish". I think we detect a bit of an undercover green subversive there too. Danny's friends (if he has any) would be well advised to keep an eye on him. There is still some hope, however, for our continental chum **Barry Homan** of Tübingen, Germany, of whose 7 entries only 1 of which betrayed the tell-tale signs of the dissolute humorist: "The volunteer edged forward guardedly, still having doubts about this 3 Man High attempt". Almost imperceptibly worse-off (but you never suspect the trouble till too late, it's always like that on 'You and Yours') with a 1/6 taint is the curiously monickered **R. Mark Stark** of New Milton, also in Hampshire (bit of an epidemic in progress?) - "I don't think you picked the best spot to start busking, do you?". Of course, we know where the epidemic started, don't we? Portsmouth, that's where. Why? 'Cos that's where **Pete Rayner** lives, this time proving himself to be one step further down the slippery slope (a 1/5 danger rating): "Due to excessive protesting, traditional circus artists are forced to perform in the depths of the countryside." And what was it you were doing with your other hand, Pete? **Simon Farrow** of Scarborough is too clever by half - picking up the verse taunt that I believe I was using to discourage humour, he turned in a worrying 1/3 humour ratio with "Standing firm and well balanced / Old Father William shows off his talents / Legs astride and head well back / as Tommy Cooper said, 'Just like that'" - observational, too, you'll notice. I'd watch that, it's the first stage of Alternative Comedy, a potentially-imprisonable offence. You know we're in really desperate company, though, when the next letter I pick up is from one **Frankie** "Don't call me Branson" of the planet *Qualatex*, who is pretty close to irredeemable with a shocking 2/3 of his entry suffering from a degree of humour detected by our expert advisory forensic committee: "What did I tell you - E'll get right up your nose" compounded by "If you look behind me, you will see the remains of the world's largest snail, made extinct by a previous shortsighted bypass scheme".

CAPTION CONTEST

I'm afraid to say there are still worse examples. But it's only by laying the perpetrators open to the full fury of public opprobrium that we really make our point. You might say that the above were "only doing it for a laugh" - that's no longer any defence. These people are sick. And none more so than the shocking examples we had to save for last.

Gavin Darby of gingerbread-man-land Hucknall, Nottinghamshire, will be receiving a summons the first chance we get for a shocking *four* funny captions: if you are of a nervous disposition, avert your eyes from "With the advance in the bank, Mr Hartley began work on his second book.... 'Suddenly it dawned on Bill. A more attractive assistant would help to pull in the crowd.'... 'Bill was so embarrassed when he realised he should have danced the conga' and the utterly reprehensible 'Remember, a pickpocket can strike at any time'". What's more, we'll have him up for corruption of minors, as Jennifer (aged 6) chipped in with "But my Daddy can juggle". We'll have her slapped into care before you can say "Orkney".

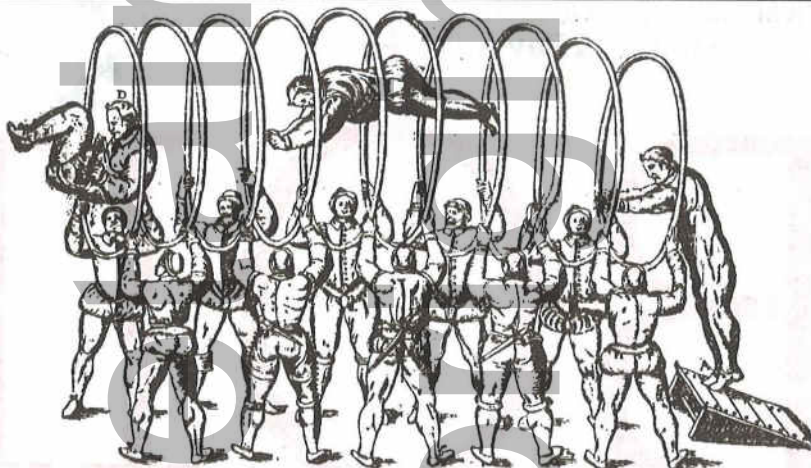
John Campbell of Morecambe, we thought he was OK. Unfunny toilet humour, stuff about geezers off the telly only Stuart has heard of, then suddenly half-way through he gets struck by a bout of the deadly humorous self-reference. "Thin man: 'Hold that pose, someone's drawing us for a Caption Contest'", given the *coup de grace* by "It's the latest prop: it's luminous, has two bright red LEDs (for the moment and other colours coming), it's very robust and you can balance it underwater apparently!". There is no hope for these people.

There's certainly no hope for **Angus Lamond** of Wormit, Fife (I'm not making this up). He'll be out of trouble for a very long time if he persists with the likes of "Old man: 'Keep whistling or he'll go back down the other nostril!'".

As a gesture towards the therapy brigade (these chaps would be locked away for the rest of their natural if I had my way, I can tell you) with the initial charge-sheets we will also be forwarding some new devices the Home Secretary heard of the other day, **ASTRO BALLS**. Apparently the criminals are attached to these devices - to such a degree that if they're tempted to think of jokes, or anything much, really, the thought of improving their pattern will pull them back from the brink. It's probably got something to do with the electronics: they are the latest prop, luminous, with two bright red LEDs (for the moment and other colours coming), very robust and you can even use them underwater, apparently. Now where have I heard that before? They're made by **The Cosmic Ball Company** Corporation, some new subsidiary of Group 4 I hadn't heard of before. Darby & daughter get 3, Campbell 4, and hard-case Lamond the maximum security 5.

Let's see if these villains change their ways. Let's see if we can turn the evil tide of humour that is threatening to overcome our glorious country.

The place to start, to show your determination, is of course the next caption contest. This picture, nicked without a by-your-leave from the rather fabularious book *Le Cirque* reviewed on pages 31/2, dates from 1599 and runs into great danger of being funny unless handled carefully. Caption it without an ounce of humour, *negative* humour even, and see where that gets you in winning goodies like the utterly brill **Writers & Readers** 'History of Clowns for Beginners', also raved about in a review sort of a way in the 'Balls' section of this very magazine. Runners-up will get some covetable items from the encyclopædically bulging shelves of the splendid and enormous **BUTTERFINGERS** book warehouse, there's so much in there that we don't even know what we're going to choose yet. Get those pens scratching, and, while you do, remember poor Mr & Mrs Dumpty. S/he who laughs last, er, laughs last, I suppose. May the Right be with you.



Yes, here at *The Catch* we're always in with the latest thing! Following on from spinning ropes (why, that was last issue, old already), the newest craze to hit the juggling shops is here too. Utterly coincidentally. **Gummichummi®** is what they're calling it in Switzerland, where it was invented; Brits are preferring the onomatopoeic *Boing!!!* - a good approximation of the noise it makes - something between Mr & Mrs God's bed-springs, Zebidee ina treacle mine, and, er, flicking a very large rubber band. **ØGLI** (Official Gummichummi Licensing Institute) approved models can be obtained from *Oddsocks*, with *Astrotights* developing luminous & blacklight versions for release by the summer (acceptable substitutes can be picked up from M&S or the central reservation of any motorway).

Be sure to ask for them by name - and ring **Butterfingers** for details of the informative book from which we took this article, in which the world's foremost **Gummichummi®** exponents let you in on the details of the routine that won them first prize at last year's Maastricht Healthy Cabaret Festival. Take them away!
Translation by **Caz & Kay Adie**.

Halloo! We are **Gårta and Gússet**, he is **Hans** and I **Heidi** am, for our friends. You will us recognise no problem from we win Silver Medal 3-legged race in Helsinki Olympics. But now we would like for to show you our new favourite sport, **Gummichummi®**. The name is very fo/nny where we come from in

Gotland: it is the word for the big dollies that Hans goes to Stockholm for to buy! I do not think they know this in Switzerland. We løff very much. Then we have another warm-up and begin.

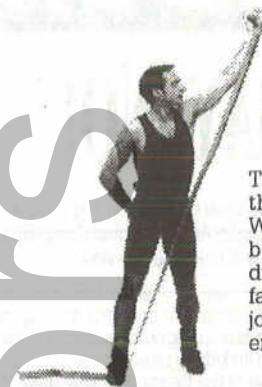
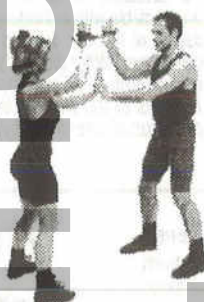


We like to start with some line-dancing, this is very popular with the young people in England, we know, we watch on CNN. And then from this we go on to our first joke:



This is our tribute to the new unification of Germany and of the Community European. In Maastricht they løff very much. Some people have to be taken from the auditorium.

«My mama told me, that she would buy me, a **Gummichummi®**»



This is where we do the balloon modelling. We haf to stretch the balloon, it is most difficult. What is your favourite animal? (this joke we learn in Vi-enna) - say **snäjke!**

This is like your **snäjkeboard**, yes? Only just the **snäjke**. It is for the snow, of course.



Now I do levitation. This is trick very difficult. First you see I haf one leg off the floor. Now to get the other one in the air!

No, Heidi, that is not for *this* show. She is so **fönnny**. She mistakes we are back in Amsterdam. But those days are behind us. Be careful Heidi or I will be behind you!



I am sensitive there is something missing in our show. I feel an empty space. Can you guess who it is?

BOING

Yes, of course, boys and girls, it is our dear friend Diana Door. She is a Stage Door, yes? Now you all løff very much at my joke English. She is very cleaver door. Together we hand-wrestle. I am champion of the Hammerfest hand-wrestle, we practise in the winter when the women are in the South. But still I cannot beat Diana. Next time, we play chess.



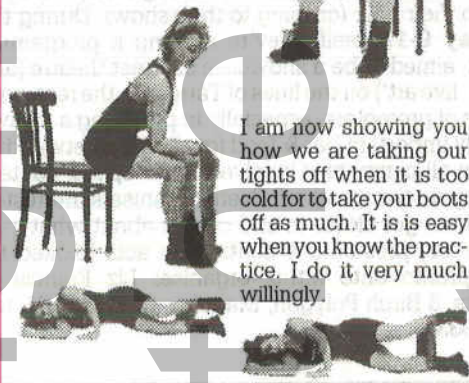
Oh, life is a cabaret, old Gummichummi@...



We always perform to the captivated crowds, is true?



I am now showing you how we are taking our tights off when it is too cold for to take your boots off as much. It is easy when you know the practice. I do it very much willingly.



This reminds us of home too. Is how we bring in the cat when it is too cold to open the door in Gotland.



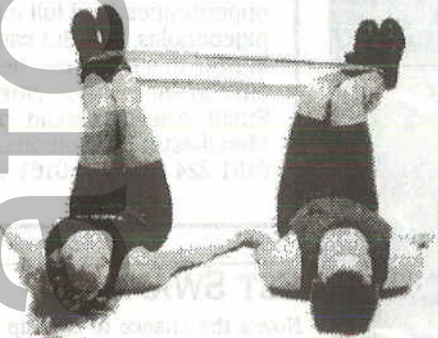
And this is a game we play from many hours when it is cold outside. There is immerways some way to keep warm with your friend, yes?



But Hans does still not want to play. Silly Hans. Du bist bratwurstlos. Now this is our game for your Convention at Nottingham. «Bisto!», as we say in Gotland.



Øch Jå! Time for another dance! It goes like this! You will sing! "You put your left leg in, your left leg out, do you the O/kji Ko/kji and you turn o-ran-j..."



And now it is the time of the climax? Are you ready to t w a n g , Hans?



Now we would like a volunteer from the audience. You will walk on our tights-ropes? Or Hans will show you how to be good audience.



No Heidi, I will not allow that you are going to the discotheque dressed like that! Don't go! It is time for your song!



«Hoop-la!» And here we are! You clap now thankyou!



Gotland!

CASE THE SHOW SHOWCASE

Streets Ahead in Manchester is the only festival we can think of that manages to take in six towns on its rampaging way through May - they're now adding another string to their bow (or thing to their show). During the Manchester weekend of **May 9-11** itself, they're running a programme modishly monickered **x.trax**, aimed to be a showcase of street theatre (and dance, drama, poetry, pyro & 'live art') on the lines of Tárrega & the rest, with special attention to the needs of promoters, especially in providing a festival centre with meeting area, jolly important bar & food for all those networking opportunities, and full info on all companies involved, tech. specs, contact pigeonholes, etc. But can they do the weather? Event organisers interested in how this event can help them get closer to and clearer about what's on offer in these fields (street-wise, presumably centred on acts booked for Street Ahead) should get pronto onto x.trax organiser Liz Francis at Manchester International Arts, 3 Birch Polygon, Manchester M14 5HX, tel. 0161 224 0020 fax 0161 248 9331.

GET SWAMPED

Now's the chance to sign up with Sheffield's pioneering and globetrotting **Swamp Circus**, whose new show *Grand Bleu* takes the eco/acro combo to new heights, ending up as one of the major foci of a spectacular new festival in Antibes, French Mediterranean coast (oh the hardship) [see *Catch This Gigs/Events*]. Auditions, for this production and their aerial dance project *Skydance* are to be held March 1/2. Call them for details (and with yours) on 0114 256 0962. They're also in pursuit of experienced tour managers with an artistic eye - big projects in formation! Join the Swampies & see the world!

THE SPORT & ART OF STAYING SOLVENT

Also news from Sheffield is that the dream-equipped but financially-struggling **Greentop Circus Centre** have fallen into the safety net of a £42,000 grant from the Foundation for Sport & The Arts. New trustees and management are moving into place - if you're in the area and want to be involved, there's no time like the present! Greentop Circus Centre, Saint Thomas Church, Holywell Rd., Brightside, Sheffield S9 1BE tel./fax 0114 281 8350.

GIRAFFE GOES MISSING

Normally we'd tuck stolen gear info away in *Multiplex*, but we were particularly concerned about this one: Rob Taylor of Warrington Community Circus had his unique uni niqued. You may have seen it (on the vid of the Edinburgh Convention if you need a reminder) - it's a one-off DM 6-footer with a joint above the forks to make it extendable to 8-foot. It's all chrome, the only one DM ever made like that (all the others are 5-foot), and Rob makes the not-

entirely-unwarranted assumption that whoever nicked it knew what they were after, 'cos [1] no petty tea-leaf would walk casually down the street with a 6' uni, [2] there were a lot of other bits that the more usual raider would have snaffled too/instead. He also lost a Pashley 24" standard uni, once blue now black with red showing through on scratches, and a pair of home-made stilts with webbing straps and kids-size Doc Marten's on the bottom. There's a **£200** reward for the return of the kit - Rob's on 01925 602544 and is waiting to hear from you.

GET A TIGER IN YOUR BOX OFFICE

One from the Blackburn news service: Italy's most famous circus, **Orfei** (seen the posters all over the country, never wanted to see the show!), dropped their animals after protests, only to see their ticket sales go down a reputed 70%. Bossman Nando Orfei took the easy way out and re-engaged 'a number of tigers and rhinos', only to be met by very high-power demonstrators in Rome including Marina Ripa di Meana -

enthusiastic eco-campaigner and wife of former EU Environment Commissioner Carlo - in a cage. Your Europhile (and Italomane) editor can only offer that, despite the lineage, New Circus isn't the power in Italy it is on the rest of the continent. Yet.

EVER-EXPANDING SPACE

Circus Space have finished building for the mo', which should please frequent users, but are currently working on a feasibility study to develop the Combustion Chamber of the old power station into a training/production space - anyone interested (you could be a user?) should have a look at the proposal as it stands and comment accordingly. Now the new reception area is finished, they're using it for fortnightly video screening of skills-based acts: details of the programmes on 11 & 25 March from them on 0171 613 4141. They also should have a web site up and running: take a look on <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/Members/thecircus.space/contents.htm>.

IDEOGRAMS & IDIOTS

Yoko Ono (the circus artist not the millionaire performance artist who used to have a famous boyfriend) sent us the results of 1996's **Daidogei World Cup** Street Performance Competition: and there weren't any British winners! ...Come on, kids! The programme did have some particularly tarty pics of *Skate Naked* from '95, and the *Kirin* advert on the back says Do! Lager, which we can't argue with much. We haven't heard of any of the winners, which says something (probably about us), but the new world champions are magic/escapologists **Paulo & Daniela** from the Czech Republic, and there were good results for Oz's **Michael Cohen** and **Justin Case**, Canadians **Pepper** and **Bar** (spice theme there, then), & **Tony Duncan** from the States. Who's going to sponsor us to review it next year, then? Yoko also sent us the Japanese *Circus Paper*, which would be jolly interesting if we could understand a word of it.

GIVE US THE GEAR

«Pof!», that nice polite girl of moderate opinions who's one of the most dedicated promoters of the traditional circus arts we've ever encountered, is putting her time where her mouth is - 'er and 'er pals are running workshops for underprivileged underfunded and underachieving kids, who can't afford to pay for sessions, let alone kit... So that's why a traditional appeal for equipment manages to find its way to the front, too. Any balls, beanbags, clubs, diabs, devilsticks, handsticks, fiddlesticks etc. etc. at a loose end should make their way in an orderly fashion to 20 Rocke Street, Belle Vue, Shrewsbury SY3 7PY.

Yet again we stress the need for safety-helmets for this particular manoeuvre and do beware of low flying ducks and old women.

It's possible to add more *backdrop* jugglers to the pattern but then you only need more hardhats. When you add more *backdrop* jugglers, the rear juggler must throw early to compensate for the longer passing distance.

In this formation it's possible for the middle juggler to pass under his legs instead of the *backdrop* throw.

The pattern in it's simplest form is performed with three people standing in an almost straight line. One is facing the other two and passes are made simultaneously. The juggler in the middle, throws the club, double spun over his right shoulder, to the juggler behind him.



The BACK DROP

for three or more jugglers.



David Faithfull



Per Nielsen

CATCH THIS - EVENTS DIARY

Feb 23 Circus Reunion, Blackpool. For the "industry", whoever they are. Allen McPherson 01253 352681.

Mar.15 Taunton Juggling Convention, Ladymead School, Taunton. Ffi. Sally, 01823 275459

Apr.10-13 10th British Juggling Convention Nottingham. There's an insert with full details in this mag, that you've probably lost already, I know you, but here's the most of it again. Held at the University (3 miles out of town, M1 junction 25, bus 38, WEST entrance), we're juggling/partying/drinking/heckling non-stop from 10am Thursday 10th to 6pm Sunday 13th, cos that's the only way we're going to fit in all the 24hr juggling (hoo! hall), wide-ranging workshops, cabarets, music, UV playroom, traders, table-football tournament, crêche, trapeze, MUNI challenge, Swamp Circus Cabaret, Croissant Neuf, Springboard Award (under 16s) & Kids' Renegade, bouncy castle, Performance Doctor, seminars, auction, have-a-go archery (remember where we are), parade, games, Public Show in the 2500-seat Royal Concert Hall... and an exhausting but inexhaustible fountain of surprise games and challenges. Don't forget to bring some old juggling kit (apart from those tatty clubs you use all the time, of course) to join the *Krap Ku Korner* to auction for BJC Oxford '97.

Accommodation is in 2 large halls-of-res on campus, right there on top of it, plus camping available, rooms are £18/night inc. brekkers (till 11am). Registration: do it now! - it saves you money and the organisers stress! Before Mar.27 it's £30 (under 16s £15), after it's £37 (£20). Send separate cheques for registration & accommodation: this is to make the accounting easier & hopefully save the poor organisers the shock of VAT registration! The accounts are respectively 'BJC Registration' and 'BJC Accommodation', cheques should be filled out appropriately!

You know very well it's the one essential rendezvous of the year: in such a major phun city it will be majorly memorable, and that's a promise!

Contact: BJC X, 151 Crompton Street, New Houghton, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8JL. Tel. 01623 811467, fax 650445. Email: WhatAPalaver@msn.com, & web-wise try <http://www.demon.co.uk/circustuff/bjc/1997/index.html>

Apr. 11-Jun.1 Peter Lavery - Circus Work Royal Photographic Society, Bath. Exhibition: see *Catch This* Gigs page.

May 3 4th Birmingham Circus Convention, Ladywood Arts and Leisure Centre, Freeth Street, Ladywood, Birmingham. This year it goes Australian with beginners and advanced didgeridoo, boomerang making and throwing, walkabout, invited special guests, Australian cultural workshop, fancy dress and more. All the usual workshops, sign language, relaxation and all sorts of weird-and-wonderfuls. Ffi. tel. The Great Raymondo, 0121 414 0113.

May 3-26 Streets Ahead Greater Manchester street entertainment festival, centred on: 3, Castlefield, Manchester; 4 Stockport; 5 Bury; 9-11 X.Tracts, Manchester (see *Catch This* News & Gigs pages); 10, Ashton; 16/17, Titanick at Castlefield, Manchester (see Gigs page); 24 Hyde; 25, Streets Ahead-music, Manchester centre; 26, Oldham & Sackville Park, Manchester. More on *Streets Ahead & X.Trav* from: Manchester International Arts, 3 Birch Polygon, Manchester M14 5HX, 0161 224 0020 fax ...248 9331.

May 8-11 2nd 12th (!) Nordic Juggling Convention Aalborg, Denmark. Sofliendalskolen,

Lange Müllersvej 18 9200 Aalborg SV Denmark. Everything you'd expect to find with those hard-partying Danes, mega-parade on Superstition/Nordic Mythology/Giant Puppets (sounds like time for those Death Metal costumes). Indoor or outdoor (Vikings only) camping, swimming pool, sauna, welcome dinner, public show, all for 150 Dkk. Details from Inger Krusegaard, Fredericagade 34 1.lv, 9000 Aalborg, tel.+45 98 12 08 51 or Jo/rgen Mortensen, Fax:+45 98 15 63 22.

May 12 Great London Unicycle Grand Prix. Ravenscroft Park, London N6. Details and entry forms from Albert & Friends, 36 Windermere Court, Lonsdale Road, London SW13 9AR. Tel: 0181 7415471, Fax: 0181 7463535

May 19-24 Children's Circus Festival, Norwich. c/o 172 Jex Road, Norwich NR5 8XH, 01603 740011, E-Mail nccff@netcom.co.uk

May 30-Jun.1 Bedlam Fair, Bath. Try 01225 480079 for details nearer the date.

Jun.20-22 11th Swiss Juggling Festival, Kantonsschule Oerlikon, Zurich, Ffi. Silvio & Luzia Hartmann, Gerenstr. 23, CH-8305 Dietlikon, Tel. +41 1 833 40 60. Acts welcome for the evening show on Saturday.

Jun.26-29 Glastonbury Festival of Performing Arts Britain's biggest circus/street bash is back in even more style than ever...

July 4-6 Fourth Wessex Juggling Convention. See ad. for details. Contact Malcolm 01373 452018

Aug.1-3 4th British Uni Convention. Gloucester. Contact Ali 01452 617825, more details to follow.

Aug.2-6 50th Anniversary IJA Festival, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Aug.9-10 Crawley Convention V. See ad for details. Lots of stars, cont: Nigel 01822 852997

Aug.20-23 Aurillac '97 See feature upfront & contact at Centre Pierre Mendès France, 37 Rue des Carmes, 15000 Aurillac, tel. +04 71 45 47 47, fax.+04 71 48 52 25. Essential international rendezvous.

Sep.1-6 (dates tbc) **20th European Juggling Convention** Torino, Italy. (aka. Turin by the higgerant Brits) Ffi. Just For Joy, Corso Marconi 26, 10125 Torino, Italy. Tel. +39 11 668 8008, Fax +39 11 6508756. Email: juggling_eja_italia@jst.it ...and no, we don't know anything else at the mo'. Try 'em or hassle the EJA!

Sep./Oct. (dates tbc.) **Festival Bleu,** Antibes, France. Environmental fest for the Med. with lots of circus/theatre input. See *Catch This* News & Gigs pages. Contact: *Terre en Fête*, 2 Rue du Docteur Rostan 06600 Antibes, France. tel.+0493346847 fax +04 93 34 48 21.

Feb.20-Mar.15 1998 Adelaide Fringe Festival. Biannual appearance of the world's second-biggest Fringe Festival (over 800,000 punters last year) loads of street & outdoor opportunities, big parade, even bigger party. A classic, by all accounts. Get in touch now if you wanna show: PO Box 3242, Rundle Mall, Adelaide SA 5000, Australia. tel.+(61 8) 8231 7760, fax ...5080, E-Mail fringe@camtech.net.au.

To be a web-slinger before the *Spiderman* movie comes out, get your info onto the JIS (Juggling Information Service) as well as *The Catch*: all you have to do is EMail Rupert.Voelcker@bt-sys.bt.co.uk or fax on 01473 644649 or phone 01394 278556. Net that sucka!

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e-mail: nccff.netcom.co.uk

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CATCH THIS NEWSEXTRA

CANNY KENNY



Fiery and multi-functional **Marion Kenny** will be training in music and dance at **Peking Opera School** from March. The trip has been made possible with the kind support of *Butterfingers*, *Beards*, *Wind Things* and *Unique Events*, to whom Marion sends warm thanks.

MAY I SEE YOUR PAPERS PLEASE?

We do a lot better, honest, with **El Ambidextro**, the journal of the Spanish *Asociación de Malabaristas*. As you'll know if you've ventured thataways (and if not, remedy that rapidol!) there's masses going on, and we don't mean in the churches. They run regular courses in Madrid too, and can be found c/o Alonso Castrillo, 18 bajo 28020 Madrid or on +570 25 47, or +479 26 02 or fax on +579 02 76

HAWAII SIX. OH.

Volcano Circus of Hawaii wrote to us too, but unfortunately it wasn't an all-expenses-paid visit they were after, rather it was to tell us about 'Naturally High', a "Drug Preventive Assembly Program" (it sez here) and also **Hiccup Circus**, a six-strong kidz (11-16) troupe. Now you know. If it's more you're after, try **Graham Ellis** at RR2 Box 4524, Pahoa, Hawaii 96778, tel. +808 965 8756.

HE'S HOT STUFF

Not only has **Tony Snakeyhips Hickson** graduated from sending us pseudonymous (but not pusillanimous) letters, he's also heading for the record books... or so he says. Making a stab at the Guinness for fire eating (had to find something, s'pose - see News ish 19) got him onto the front page of his local rag, but it won't score with us until we find out what happened. Wassamatter Snakey? Can't talk now?

one-offs

LA CUADRA DE SEVILLA

in *Carmen*

Returning to the Andalusian roots of the story, this reading merits your attention for including 4 actor/dancers, 3 fem flamenco singers, 3 gipsy guitarists, 30 traditional Andalusian cornet & drum bandspersons, 1 white horse from the Jerez riding school, and, doubtless, oceans of passion.

Siemens Theatre, RNCM, Manchester

Apr.17-19 £14.50/£12/£9 (concs. £3 off) - 0161 273 4504/5534

tours

SWAMP CIRCUS

in *Grand Bleu*

New show promising 'the Swampies' unique Eco-sensitive AcroTheatre, lotsy laffs and live music with an EastEuro feel. Touring all the way from the coast of ol' Blighty to the Med., including so far:

Apr.8-15 Nottingham BJC

May 12-18 Blyth Festival, Northumberland

May 24-28 Kingston Green Fair, Kingston-upon-Thames

Sep./Oct. Festival Bleu 1997, Antibes, France (see *Catch This Events*).

more gen on 0114 256 0962.

HEIR OF INSANITY

Good-lookin' new school aéro, impressing people wherever they go.

Feb.22/23 Shoreditch Town Hall (lbc)

Feb.29/30 Rome (lbc)

Apr.22 Lincoln's Inn, London (lbc)

May 9 Brighton Festival (lbc)

May 31 Kings Hill Festival (lbc)

Jun.7 Molesey Carnival, Surrey

Jul.5/6 Grimsthorpe International Dance Festival (lbc)

Jul.12/13 Dagenham Town Show, Essex

Jul.20 Needham Lakes, Suffolk (lbc)

Aug.2 Herne Bay Show, Kent

Aug.24/25 Chelmsford Spectacular (lbc)

Ffi. contact Julia and Simon on 01379 890690



For details on the whereabouts of trad. circuses, including some like Zippo's that are well-worth your attention, disconnect your modem and get into voice communication mode: the Kingpole (Trad. Circus mag) information line is on 0891 343341. This is a premium (that means de luxe expenses) charge line, but doesn't outchal its usefulness

CATCH THIS - GIGS

performance festivals:

STREETS AHEAD

Greater Manchester's Greater Festival of Street Performance

This year includes street music from all round Europe, 600 samba drummers & dancers, Argentinian Madman *Loca Brusca* (see *Catch Out*), the somewhat spectacular *Tealer Titanick* from Germany, who build, float and finally sink the great liner before your very eyes (with plenty water & fire) & reactivate the Trojan Horse (their new show); plus *pa-BOOM's* firework technology and lashings of 'Live Art' (performance weirdness).

From May 3-26, particularly weekend 9-11. See *Catch This Events & News* for other details. And it's all FREE!

BEDLAM FAIR

Bath's sweet little two-day. Lawd knows what's happening.

May 30-Jun.1

exhibition

PETER LAVERY - CIRCUS WORK

Apr.11-Jun.1 Royal Photographic Society, Bath. £lbc.

Brilliant so-far unpublished lifetime's-fascination work, mostly from Trad. Circus, from all points of time within the last 25 years. There's a book coming too. More details next issue.

cabaret

THE CIRCUS SPACE CABARET

Coronet Street, Hoxton, Hackney, London N1 6HD. Bookings on 0171 613 4141 Fax 0171 729 9422

Serious fun! Often sold out in advance so be sure you don't miss. 8/8.30pm start. Come in costume!

Feb.14/15 Valentines' Cabarets

Mar.22 call 'em for details

Mar.23 Try Out Cabaret: informal session to try out your stunning new material in front of a supportive audience.

THE COMEDY ZONE

The Arena, Swan's Nest Lane, Stratford-upon-Avon Tickets £5 (£6 from March): try Octopus Juggling or the Arena or 01905 351733.

Feb.26 Steve Rawlings (king of the cabaret jugglers - see him!) plus standup Noel James & other guests.

Mar.28 Dominic Holland, Man with Beard (standups) plus spesh guests.

Apr.25 Bob Dillinger, Martin Davis, you guessed.

Future stars include Noel Britten and maybe you - give Adam a call on 01905 351733 for paid slots & open mics.

NORWICH CIRCUS CENTRE CABARET

Saint Gregory's School, Norwich

Mar.1 7.30 £4 (concs.£2)



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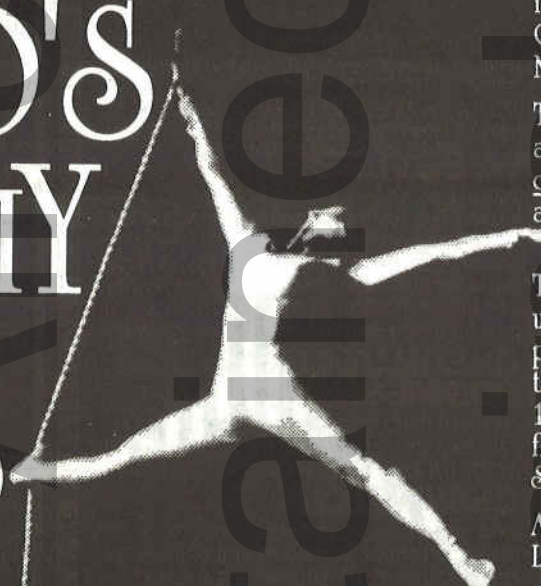
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CIRCOMEDIA

Academy of Circus Arts & Physical Theatre, Bristol.

Unit 14, The Old School House, Kingswood Foundation, Britannia Road, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 2DB, Enquiries for classes on 0117 947 7042 or write 43 Kingsway Avenue Kingswood Bristol BS15 2AN.

Based in the refurbished premises of a Victorian school in its own grounds, Circomedia offers professional training with particular emphasis on the integration of technique training with performance, attracting students from Japan, Sweden, America and Europe, as well as Britain on to their One Year Intensive and 11 Week Foundation Courses.

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Started Jan'97. Try 'em and see if they're running another. Cost £1350.

SHORT COURSES

Easter Courses

Apr.1-5 Intensive Trapeze, Intensive Tightwire

Summer School

Mid-Aug. to Mid-Sep. Dates & fee tbc.

weekly classes

Juggling with Gentleman Juggler Rod Laver, with added opportunities for a crack at Uni, RolaBola, Sillis. Equipment available. Every Wednesday 7-9 £2.50. Ring Rod on 0117 977 3028.

Acro-balance with Jörg Helms: Tuesdays 7-8.30. Pyramids, groups, doubles. Ring Jörg on 0117 985 5087.

CIRCUS MANIACS

Kids Club

Age 10+, beginner or developing. Call Jackie, 0117 947 7042 or Marc, 0117 951 7306 Hand-balancing, Web & straps, Sillis, Uni, Static Trapeze, and of course juggling. Mostly Saturdays & Sundays. Available in all sorts of combinations at every level (and price) from basic skills & skills-sharing to specialist programmes in individual skills or everything! Call them for fees and lengthy list of other benefits.

Circus Maniacs sessions for adults!

Till 23 March or get in now for next term!, Mon.-Wed. evenings & Sun.

Trapeze, Web Rope & Chinese straps, tight wire, stills, hand balancing, unicycle and juggling. The latter two are skills-shares. Do the lot (4 evenings and all Sunday) for £350 (concs.£300) a term. Fil. call 0117 947 7042.

Open weekend masterclasses

Tutors include Nigel Charnock (DVB), Sian Williams (The Kosh), Fern Smith (Volcano Theatre), Momentary Fu-

sion, Rejects Revenge Theatre Co., Gandini Juggling Project. For dancers and performers interested in developing ways of using physical skills for performance. Previous experience or training in dance and movement, mime or circus is necessary. Fil. & dates tel. 0117 947 7288

THE CIRCUS SPACE

Shoreditch Power Station - Coronet Street, Hackney, London N1 6HD, tel. 0171 613 4141. Near Old Street (Northern Line)

Lovely space, fantastic equipment (new!), top tutors & visitors

Contact them for leaflets & details & more on their constantly-developing courses. What we know is listed but there's always something new going on - get in touch or drop in...

Full-Time Professional Training Courses

2-year BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts (Circus) A-level equivalent - accredited qualification through East Berkshire College. Course starts every September. Currently free for under-19s from UK/CE, £800 a year otherwise (recommended up to mid-20s) - NB fees are in the process of revision.

All the essentials and a lot more including acro, aerial, theatrical, manipulation, movement, equilibristics, production, performance, devising, administration... With extensive performance opportunities, world-class tutors & workshops. Call 0171 729 3142 for full course brochure.

Weekly Classes

Adults:

Trampoline, Tumbling (all levels) Acro-balance, Tumbling, Juggling (Tues. 6.30-8.30, Sun. 7-10 - plus Uni & Tightwire available but not taught - £3), Tightwire, Static Trapeze (any day, evenings, plus one-on-one weekday afternoons, £21), Flying Trapeze - Petit Volant or Hi-Fly (every evening) including sessions with Pauline Palacy, Swinging Trapeze, Doubles Trapeze, Cloudswing, Cradle, Web, Corde Lisse.

Kids After-School Classes:

Monday (age 7-9, £55), Tuesday (age 10-12 £55), Thursday (12+ £50). Discounts for Income Support & local neighbourhood kids.

Specialist Classes

Mar.1 Knife-throwing, whip-cracking, lasso, with Simon Beaumont. 10.30-2.30, £25. Introduction: advanced course planned for April, get in touch.

Mar.1/2 Introduction to Clown with Bob Pearce. Excellent introduction covering play, impro, rhythm, movement... & the red nose!

...and...

Practice space most afternoons & Sundays, space & equipment for hire, unforgettable kids' parties and loads more.

You name it - they probably have a go at it sometime!

SKYLIGHT

Circus Arts Training Education Performance, Broadwater Centre, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1HE

Tel. 01706 50676 Tel./fax 01706 713638

Book early to secure places!

open courses

Feb.22/23 Cloudswing Weekend - Michelle Weaver 11-4 From Circus Space. Previous experience essential, e.g. knowledge of basic swing. 8 places £45.

Mar.2 Display Fireworks - Dave Chadwick, 11-5, theory & practice, £15 inc. materials.

Mar.9 Mask - James McPherson from *Artzani*, £14.

Mar.12 Balloon Modelling - Mike Kerr, 7-9.30. Introduction, materials provided, £8.

Mar.16 Circus Skills Intro: 11-5. All the basics, £15.

Feb.22-Mar.22 Contemporary Dance with Justine Marsh. Saturdays, 9.30-10.45. Energetic modern dance technique sessions that challenge physical and creative skills. £10 module, £2.50 session.

Regular Sessions

Circus Skills 7-9 Monday

Children's Circus 5-6 Monday (6-10 yrs.)

Youth Circus 4-6 Wednesday (10-16 yrs.)

Cloudswing Skill Share Thursday afternoon - phone first

ISCAYP - Youth Circus 7-9 Thursday (14+)

Trapeze Skill Share 7-9 Thursday - phone first

Acrobatic Skill Share TBA - phone if interested

Rehearsal/training Space is available during most weeks.

Ring First.

Membership Reduced rates for training rehearsal, plus regular info.

Projects

Integrated Schools Performance Project

Ongoing outreach, young people with and without special needs - 3 year project.

ISCAYP Project

Youth people 16-25 explore circus arts - five year project.

Jigsaws (Sponsored by Manchester Airport)

Production - collaboration of circus, dance, video, projection with community input. Gracie Fields Theatre, Apr. 97.

GREENTOP COMMUNITY CIRCUS CENTRE

Greentop Circus Centre, Saint Thomas Church, Holywell Rd., Brightside, Sheffield S9 1BE tel./fax 0114 281 8350.

Classes in Yoga, jazz dance, mime, mask, acro-balance, tumbling, juggling, rope-work, aerial and technical skills.

Write for a leaflet on courses and to join the mailing list.

In the process of pulling back from the brink of collapse with new team & new money! See *Catch This News*.

Regular Workshops:

Tuesdays 7-9 Adult juggling - serious skills for all abilities £2.50

Thursdays 6-7 Mime techniques from Lecoq and Decroix with Brett Jackson £2

Contact them for (extensive!) Weekly Classes programme including Acrobalance/physical fooling, equilibristics, trampoline, aerial.

NORWICH CIRCUS CENTRE

c/o 172 Jex Road, Norwich NR5 8XH, 01603 740011, E-Mail

nccl@netcom.co.uk

Just updating/rejigging membership & contacts list. If you're anywhere near the area, get in touch, sure they'd like to hear what you're interested in.

Mar.13&20 Two-day Club-Swinging with Julia from *Hair of Insanity*. £10 deposit

TAUNTON

Thursdays, 6.30-7.30, Ladymead School, Sports Hall, Taunton.

Youth Circus workshop sessions plus practice session from 8 - 10pm. Thursdays. Fil. Sally on 01823 275459

COSMOS

"The only residential fire/UV training in Britain," they're selling themselves a bit short there: *Cosmos* courses are also great fun, inspiring, and terrific social/holiday occasions too! Tuition to suit your level in balls/clubs/rings, passing, partners, swinging clubs/pole/ribbons, 1-ball contact, diabolo, human pyramids, balloon models, fire-sculpture, choreography. Every course includes fire-show, cabaret, UV playroom, smashing peaceful venues, yummy food, and the superb *Cosmos* Black Light Show. Big fun - or your tuition fee refunded!

Fees are split 65% (venue, accommodation, meals) - 35% (Cosmos, tuition, materials) - deposit of £30 secures place, refundable up to 1 month before.

Jun.7-12 Laurieston Hall, Castle Douglas, SW Scotland. 5 nights £175 (concs. £125), kids from £62.50. Book by 11th May from Leslie Vine, Laurieston Hall, Castle Douglas, Scotland, DG7 2NB, 01644 450632.

Aug.22-25 Lower Shaw Farm, nr. Swindon, 3 nights, £16c. Book with Lower Shaw Farm, Old Shaw Lane, Shaw, near Swindon, SN5 9PJ, 01793 771080.

More info from: Jim & Anna Semlyen, 24 Grange Street, York YO1 4BH, tel. +(0)1904 654355, fax. 450632, E-Mail aj3@york.ac.uk, jjs3@york.ac.uk, http://www.york.ac.uk/aj3/ NB. these are new addresses, change your contact books accordingly.

INSIPIDS '96

CATCH THIS - UNI

International Non Sponsored Invitational Play In Dirty Snow
Nov.25 Chopwell Woods, High Spen, England.

If you go down to the woods today... you'll find them full (-ish) of Mountain Unicycle (MUni) maniacs. Possibly. One of them was Mini.

The Met. Office had forecast snow, more snow, and a little extra snow. Well they got it almost correct: they missed out the wind. Blizzard conditions. Ambient temperatures though were fairly high... 0-1°C made for some very visible speech and that strange feeling when your nose is freezing but your arse is soaked with fresh sticky sweat.

Seven [fool-/hardy MUni riders made it to the event plus three walkers. Constance Cotter came over from the United States, with Roger Davies to hold her hand and give support, as although Connie is very good at most things unicycle, she is a beginner at snowbound hillsides. Duncan Castling, myself, Gillian the mobile hairdresser [got to be right for the photographs -d], and nephew Christopher made the numbers, with George, Norma and Chris walking and taking photos for posterity.

For two hours we rode over frozen streams and through shaded woodland with drop-lets of icy water building up speed as they fall from leaf to leaf on the way down, to land down our necks in globules as large as buck-ets. Up and down hills on which the 26" mountain bike tyres grabbed massive amounts of grip, but when we fell our boots did not, so control on the MUni meant none on our feet. Answer: stay on the Muni.

Gillian is a novice 20" uni rider, she can ride comfortably as long as there is one of us by her side for both physical and moral support; it was her first trip out of a Gymnasium and by the looks of the constant broad grin on her face it will not be the last. Nephew Christopher is one of those naturals; three months riding and he is already one-foot-idling. He turned up before the ride wearing just a pair of Levi's and a coat. Ten minutes later Duncan had equipped him for anything the northern hemisphere could possibly find to throw at us. He had fun in ways he

had never considered possible that day (his first time in padded cycling shorts).

We arrived back at Duncan's house after surprising a number of MBX & horse riders [frightening the horses again -d] and 4WD drivers, to rapidly drop our cold and wet clothes to the floor, soaked, freezing and with steam rising from our bodies from the exertion.

I for one will be there to see Connie Cotter get changed again in 97. Will you be? [what! new flavour inducements to MUni madness. I'm not falling for that. Or off... -d]

Virtual Insanity

There is now a Mountain Uni area on the World wide Web -

<http://www.demon.co.uk/circustuff/muni/>

and the Durham City Jugglers club are at -

<http://homepages.enterprise.net/mini/>



The weather was a bit fresh, apparently.



'Snow time for showing off.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST JUGGLERS

Karl-Heinz Ziethen, UK Dist.

Butterfingers £11.95

You don't just walk down the street and bump into a supreme being in the supermarket check-out queue. These are people to admire from afar, totally dedicated to their cause, with a single-minded attitude of perfection which makes them the best. We benefit because they can enrich our lives, giving us an incentive to be as great - albeit in our own small way...

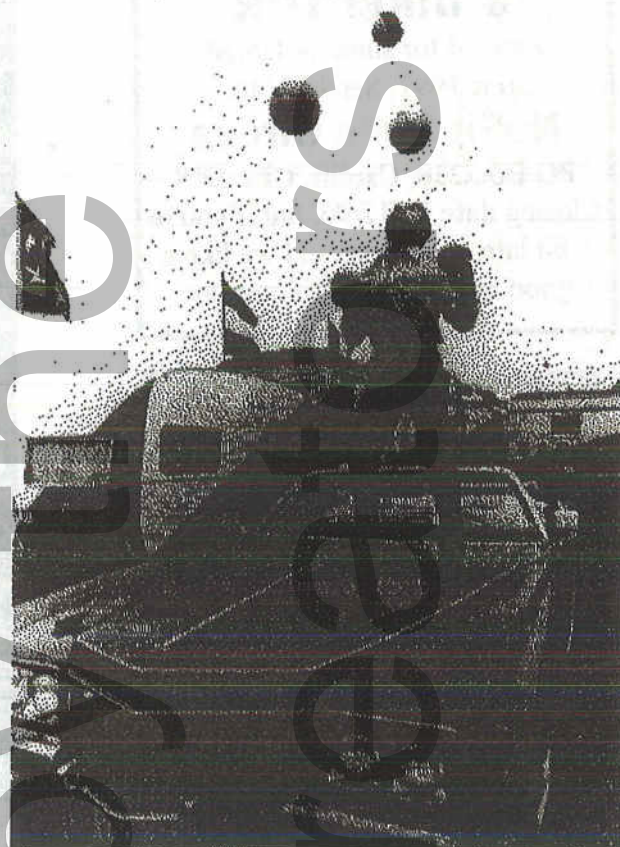
Karl-Heinz is the greatest archivist in the world of juggling. Long before the cult's popularity swept the globe he was blagging photographs and memorabilia to create a priceless and unique collection. Don't you just wish you'd thought of it? Ahh, but like me you were probably watching the telly at the time! If *The Catch* had a chat show he would be on it promoting his latest book, the stories of four jugglers who, in his opinion, (and let's face it if this is a talent show this man has the judge's casting vote) are the greatest.

Anthony Gatto the American star started young, 5 balls at 5 years, and Karl-Heinz claims he's "the most sensational young juggler of today." With several world records, including 12 rings and 8 clubs, he is the man of the moment and future. His training and tricks are explained in detail: learn the lot and travel the world!

Sergei Ignatov, the Soviet-trained genius, reached his peak in the '70s. At this time the state poured loads of money into ballet and circus, producing other fine performers like Violetta and Alexander Kiss. Good 'ol Stalin! From his work-out schedule to his injuries, the outspoken ambassador of the Moscow State Circus and numbers juggler is World's Greatest number 3.

Francis Brunn (well who else?) is runner up. Young Brunn was a German diving champion whose dad wanted him to go into the catering trade! Parents eh? Acrobat, obsessed with ring juggling, he was called "the juggler with a tornado up his back". He missed the Second World War 'cause they wanted him to entertain the troops, but, travelling through Sweden they lost him. A bit careless, and it didn't go down too well in Germany - he was branded a deserter. Francis with his sister Lottie ended up in the States touring with *Ringling*. From there his brilliant career is really interesting (buy the book) and after 55 years on stage he's still performing!

So who's the Number 1? Well it could only be, ladies and gentlemen, the juggling legend **Enrico Rastelli**. Born into a circus family, at 13 he featured in their ariel act - dressed as a girl. Parents eh? Influenced by a Japanese style his love of juggling



won over his parents and developing his own new style he captured the world. In America in the '20s his wage for a week was a cool \$6,000. He was so popular children played Rastelli in the streets, in the '30s he dressed as a soccer player, his only props footballs, but his real fame comes from numbers juggling and his world records which held for years. Karl-Heinz writes in detail of his fantastic achievements up to his premature death at 34. The whole world went into mourning, his funeral procession closed the town of Bergamo. The man was a juggler, the greatest.

The book is filled with photographs, posters and old adverts. Every performer's unique tricks are explained in detail in both English and German. It is published to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Rastelli's birth - so let's party!

The JSA

THE HISTORY OF CLOWNS - FOR BEGINNERS

Joe Lee

(Writers & Readers £6.99)

Anyone who's been an arts/humanities student for the past 15 years or so will know the *Writers & Readers* '...for Beginners' series, those ace cartoon books with a more-than-bluffer's guide to major figures of academe, never without a few laffs and strange sidelights rarely included in the originals, that got more than a few slackers through those tricky tutorials. You'll know the style, then - tho' in fact this one has a slightly lower pics-to-words ratio than some of the early classics - and the fact that there exists a book in that format should be enough to make you want one. Those who don't are advised to check it anyway.

We're talking conceptual clown archetype stuff, mostly - the thread could be familiar from classics on the fool and the likes of Rogan Taylor's *Death & Resurrection Show* - but the examples go further than any of the standard texts, and are worth it for that alone. As well as the Shaman and Trickster (Coyote, Brer Rabbit, Bugs Bunny...) he's excellent on elements from outside the mainstream Euro-American lineage: The *Heyhoka* among Native Americans, the many zany *Koshari* in the Southern continent, all kinds of *Sadhu*, Zen Clowns, Tibet's impertinent (and quite rude) *Uncle Tompa*, and the incomparable *Hodja Nasr'Eddin*. Then the classic lineage, cracked characters, anarchic anecdotes: *Satyr Play* to *Commedia Dell'Arte* & Mr Punch, Shakespearean Fool & Jester... If you don't know the history, you don't know the half of it: any performer or aficionado needs some of this background, and as always, this series provides a simple but accurate view.

The coda skips through some of the greats who have shaped today's clown; though there are many longer and still more absorbing treatments of these names, it's an excellent place to start: Joey Grimaldi, the Fratellini, Emmett Kelly & Otto Griebling, Groucho/Chico/Harpo and too many more to list, without denying a place to Michael Moschen or the Flying Karamazovs (maybe where you came in) ...and any history of clowning that has a place for Abbie Hoffman & Jerry Rubin gets my vote - except that Yippies don't vote (or not for humans).

I challenge anyone not to get something out of this book, and it's a pretty good read with fast-moving pictures to stop you getting bored (as if...) to boot - with the sole (not soul) flapping off and several sizes too big.

Steve Henwood.

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MOREBALLS

LE CIRQUE

Pascal Jacob

(Éditions Plume, Paris 185F)

In origin this was the catalogue of an exhibition of Circus Art, but it's a perfectly lovely picture book on its own (wish I'd seen the show, tho'). The principal interest will be its masses of of poster material and lithographs from the 19th Century, and engravings going back even further, though the book wraps up with a selection from four circus-inspired modern artists, and striking they are too - particularly liked Olivier Charpentier's quasi-naïve religious images. There's a section on the incomparable *Fratellini*, another on costume, and, of course, plenty of animals as well as acrobats. The text, in French, is typically florid but informative: even if you can't follow it, there's 90-odd pages of colour plates: a visual feast in the best French gourmet/gourmand style. Perfect present, but I'm not giving mine away.

Steve Henwood

PS. If you have difficulty getting hold of it, you could always try *Librarie Bonaparte*, 31, Rue Bonaparte, 75006 Paris, tel. (+)1 43 26 97 56, fax ...29 44 65, and they'll probably send you their catalogue of other gorgeous books in many languages.

JUGGLING FUN

Nick Huckleberry Beak

(Lorenz Books £4.95)

I cannot find anything bad to say about this book for children from 8-10 years old (grownups can learn a lot from it too). Hardbacked, colourful and full of photos, it is written by the master of circus skills Nick Beak and covers how to get started, making balloon balls and beanbags, and things to juggle with apart from the usual props. There are chapters on the coat-hanger swing, juggling on a string and an old favourite of mine, juggling a knot onto a piece of rope. We even have the apple eating trick [*they're going to get it from somewhere -d*]. For anyone keen to start juggling, this is the book for them [*make that another one, then -d*].

Pearse Halfpenny

BASIC JUGGLING TECHNIQUE

Bob Menary

This book first saw the light of day as a series of articles in a magic house magazine called '*Repro*'. Bob, aka. *Malibar*, is one of Ulster's finest and most informative jugglers, we were both members of the IJA over forty years ago and he is a brilliant magician and card man. This book covers a lot of sound advice, covers basic juggling, balancing, a delightful tube and balls routine, a 3-plate routine and a stick balls and goblet balance. It also covers balancing on the RolaBola, gags, and advanced work with 3 balls. Over the years we forget a lot of what we have learned about juggling. This book will always remind us. Excellent.

Pearse Halfpenny

CIRCUS MONDO

words by Nils Doon

You have been dying to know what the '*Die, Circus, Die*' troupe is up to, right? Well, your agony is over. Your intrepid reporter recently returned to Indianapolis with his daughter and, on your behalf, they made for Fountain Square. Perhaps best known internationally as the home turf of private eye Albert Samson, the resurgent area was again the location of a Halloween treat. This year '*Circus Mondo*' concentrated on the traditional circus's long-neglected sideshow.

Groups of spectators were ushered into the dark Circus Mondo interior every half hour or so. But then suddenly there is light and sound and, behold, it is the audience in the circus ring, not the performers. The theme of the twenty-minute-ish show was freaks. We saw the show twice.

Slides of famous freaks past and present were followed by short, impressive side-show acts. **Otto the Ostrich**, who swallowed swords first time round, mouthed dry ice the

second and then swallowed and regurgitated steel pins and razor blades.

You didn't have to twist **The Blockhead's** arm to get him to demonstrate how to have fun with fourteen inches of latex (in the nostril and out the mouth.) He twisted his own arm, and also showed his special nasal capacity for nails, screwdrivers and knitting needles.

Howdan escaped from a volunteer-tightened strait-jacket, while the barker intoned that while such restraints have been banned in Indiana since 1991, they are still used daily in Kentucky. (In Indiana you hear a lot about what the barbarous, in-breeding Kentuckians get up to. But, hey, let's remember which state produced Dan Quayle.)

Once she curls up in her basket **Serpentina** (the artist formerly known as *Tara, Princess of Pane*) managed to slither between four big swords and a wooden stake. And **Paco Morales** ate fire, ignited himself, and then held a burning torch in his mouth without using his hands.

Because, it was said, in Indiana it's illegal to display human remains for entertainment, it cost an extra buck for a colouring book to be allowed to view the goat baby. No doubt in Kentucky it would have been free.

From act to act the audience's attention was

moved by the barker. His continuing themes were that the side-show performers "live for your applause," and that "there are freaks among us."

Without question the show is impressive, scary and repulsive at times. The company brags about body outlines on the floor which purportedly show where previous customers have fainted. What continues to distinguish this company is its integration of theatrical values with circus skills and conventions. And the fact that it has arisen in Indianapolis. It's seriously odd that there is so little indigenous circus in Indiana's capital city these days. The state has a long circus tradition, dating from the mid-19th century. The first guy to move big circuses onto trains came from Indiana and the town of Peru (pronounced Pee'roo) is still much better known as a circus over-wintering site than as the birthplace of Cole Porter.

But the signs of Circus Past remain, even in Fountain Square. If you take a meal at *Tugboats Café*, you find the walls full of circus pictures. The owner invented 'elephant ears' [uh?-d] and travelled the country with *Ringling Brothers* offering this tasty snack on the midway, one step from the sideshows.

You wish to know more? Write to Tara Mead at 749-D Woodruff Place East Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46201, USA.

ZACA Show

Being the intergalactic circus star that I am I get invited to a lot of top notch dos and the other week I was invited to the opening night of the London International Circus Festival, where the students from Zippo's Academy were doing their acts as part of the show instead of holding a separate end-of-year show. This year there were only three students and the show opened with **Tony Romantica** [mate-of-yours, isn't he? -d] on trapeze, a truly brilliant performance with an amazing amount of strength moves and such style and presence (ooh it makes you sick) ...when he did the monkey roll to ankle drop I nearly had a heart attack - that old chestnut gets them every time, and what's more amazing is he's only been doing trapeze six months. I wouldn't be surprised if he ends up in *Soleil*, as it appears everybody and their dog auditioned (I went down to *Circus Space* to swan around and be seen anyway). 18 year old **Toby Walker** has been juggling for four years but you would think he'd been juggling for ten such is the level of skill from this young man, it makes amateurs like me

want to hang up my clubs and sod off. For his act he did a UV number: now I am always impressed by UV stuff but to see 3 clubs then 5 clubs behind the back... and how many peeps do you know that can do 7 clubs? He is definitely one to watch out for.

Next up was a student from the States, **Mary Sarah O'Hanlon**, with a stunning trapeze routine showing us why ZACA is known for its aerial training. This year the teacher was Ann Dorwin, also from the USA, the world's only female catcher on Hi Flying Trapeze, and the aero coach was Mr Sukbattar from the *Mongolian State Circus*. The show also featured that Mirthquake of a clown troupe, **Zippo, Alexis & Tweedy**, who had even the most po-faced members of the audience in stitches. After the show there was a reception which allowed me to mingle and remain popular, awards were given out and Tony Romantica got the best aerial act and Toby Walker got the best ground act [not bad out of 3 acts, eh? -d]. A bloody good show.

Tony SnakeyHips Hickson

Portuguese Juggling Convention

More participants this year, bigger big top and more class acts for them. Notable amongst them were **Loca Brusca** with his *SpeerMan* (*SpermMan!*) character. A man in superman colours but with a demonic grin that reminds me of the big blue meanie from *Yellow Submarine*. You really do not want him to approach because he's going to do something terrible to you. Very exciting, rude, outrageous, very naughty indeed.

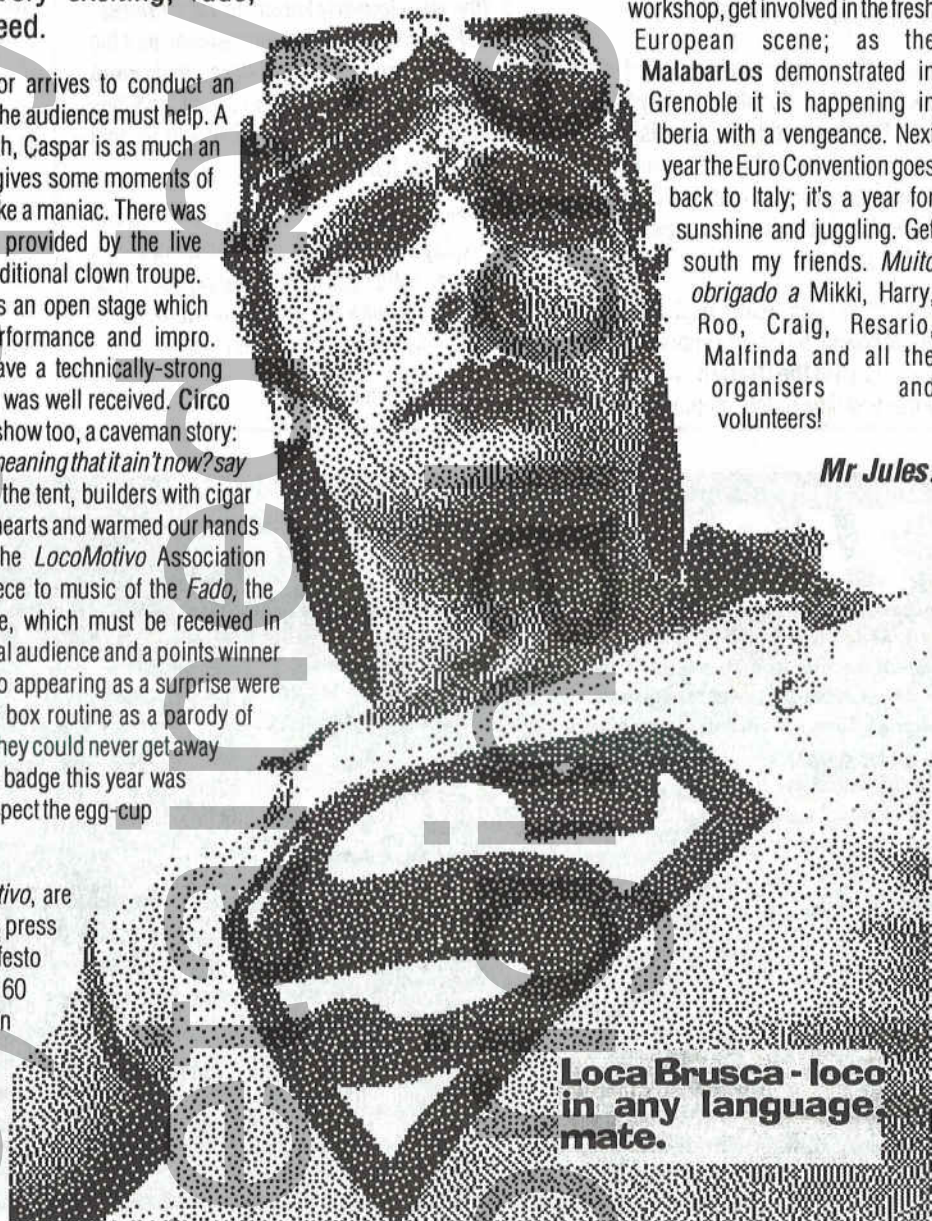
Caspar with *The Maestro* - a conductor arrives to conduct an orchestra, but they haven't turned up, so the audience must help. A simple premise beautifully carried through, Caspar is as much an actor as a circus/cabaret performer and gives some moments of great subtlety as well as leaping around like a maniac. There was a higher level of 'circus' in the shows provided by the live musicians and by *Patata* and fellows' traditional clown troupe. Apart from the two gala shows there was an open stage which threw up some great moments of performance and impro. *Concussion*, the British aerial group gave a technically-strong airborne performance, *Side Show*, which was well received. *Circo Desparados* presented their new trapeze show too, a caveman story: amusing and ready to become a tight act [meaning that it ain't now? say what you mean, Jules! -d]. Their show in the tent, builders with cigar boxes and free-standing ladder, won our hearts and warmed our hands with applause. *Resario*, president of the *LocoMotivo* Association performed a very Portuguese trapeze piece to music of the *Fado*, the classical lament song of the Portuguese, which must be received in silence. This was a big moment for the local audience and a points winner for the cultural progress of the event. Also appearing as a surprise were two jugglers from Japan who did a cigar box routine as a parody of Japanese stereotyping - notable because they could never get away with that at home. For the registration the badge this year was an egg, to go with the spoon last year. I suspect the egg-cup next year, but, shhhh don't let on.

The association of New Circus, *LocoMotivo*, are doing very well: the convention, first class press coverage; they're also promoting a manifesto for new circus in Portugal which has 160 signatures of support from very well-known and respected performers, actors, directors, artists and heads of arts organisations. This should lead to bigger and better things. There was a lot of sponsorship this year, not to everyone's taste of course (and probably be better

not - but that's a personal opinion) but it did pay for artists and many of the convention expenses, keeping the price down. The parade was much bigger and much longer. It included a small fleet of vintage cars - don't know why, but they wanted to be involved and they were...

More new stuff included morning *capoiera* classes and in particular well attended performance workshops in movement, impro, voice, character and theatre. Make it for the next one, come and teach a workshop, get involved in the fresh European scene; as the *MalabarLos* demonstrated in Grenoble it is happening in Iberia with a vengeance. Next year the Euro Convention goes back to Italy; it's a year for sunshine and juggling. Get south my friends. *Muito obrigado a Mikki, Harry, Roo, Craig, Resario, Malfinda* and all the organisers and volunteers!

Mr Jules.



Loca Brusca - loco in any language, mate.

Having worked with children for about a million years, raised my own, run playschemes and led parachute games, I feel fairly well equipped to offer some advice and especially address some of the issues raised by Mike Hindle on the *Drop Back* page of the last issue (Autumn '96) [in case you forgot -d]

Flapping the parachute with children is not that much different from juggling in front of them: you need concentration and control. Control of the parachute *and* the children. The thing about parachute games is: they don't work if everyone doesn't join in and behave *sensibly*! Similarly for a single performer putting on a show for children, the message is: "sit still, be quiet, don't move, pay attention and enjoy yourselves". Sounds awful doesn't it? So how can it be achieved and give them a fun time? Unfortunately organisers and/or mums usually expect the 'entertainer' to take on the whole group alone, when in fact they can't control them. I thought the telling phrase in Mike Hindle's letter was: "There were a small group of young parents smoking cigarettes outside the community centre, situated in the middle of playing fields!" Oh dear... stressed-out parents, chainsmoking (dramatic license!), waiting for the entertainer to arrive to take over. The whole shebang is in the middle of a field, as far from civilisation as possible. These are not children that can safely be taken to McDonalds or the cinema. The second and even more scary give-away is that the children were alone in the hall, left to entertain themselves, waiting for ... the entertainer or ... the Entertainment?! There was "no visible sign of control at all!" Well, my advice is, *adhere to the following checklist or turn and leave*. Who needs money anyway?

1. At the time of booking get the name of at least one person who will stay throughout to assist with keeping order. Explain that it is a precaution for the safety and eternal happiness of their children, which it is. On arrival, locate that person and encourage them to show you where

to set up, put your belongings, coat etc. Ask them for a glass of water (to drink), ask them where the loo is. In other words, establish a rapport with them, so that at least one of the chain-smoking stressed-out parents will be on your side when the trouble starts. Most important: take your time. Don't rush in, perform, and rush out again, exhausted. If they want you to perform at 4pm., get there at 3.30 - even if you don't get paid extra, it will be worth your investment of time.

2. Between you and your helper, gather the children round and get them to sit on the floor. You sit on a chair: slightly above them but not imposingly so. If you are not doing a 'stage show' with curtains and lights and applause, it is always worth introducing a friendly approach. If you enter centre stage as a whizzbang exciting performer with no support, no-one to keep the crowds back, then you are, quite frankly, asking for trouble.
3. Identify early on the Birthday Boy/Girl. Give them a little bit of extra attention, don't overdo it or they may collapse under the pressure of stardom. Get them to hold your balls (er, excuse me, you know what I mean) or clubs, but not knives or matches or cigarettes! Talk to the children, identify as soon as possi-

ble the Naughty Boy (or Girl, but let's be honest, it's usually a boy). Do not draw extra attention to his behaviour - never 'reward' bad behaviour. The 'naughty' one is usually the one who craves attention at home anyway, so be positive. If you drop a club or whatever, look in his direction and say something like "did you see that", make light of it and include him in the joke. OK, so you never drop your clubs... *so - pretend!*

4. The point is, you want to do the job well, give them a good time and project a positive image. Being a good grown-up carries responsibility with it. Grown-ups usually know what's good fun but children don't always. Children think chaos and aggression is good fun. But only because they see it on the telly. A well-presented display of hard-earned skill can give a lot of fun, but not amid said chaos.
5. Even you were a child once. And you survived! Treat them with confidence, respect and kindness and don't forget: Even Jesus had twelve helpers, so get the parents to help and get that said before you arrive.

Jenny Swan.

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PARTY POLITICS

ATLAS: AN OLD-WORLD CLASSIC

While I hate to follow a review last issue with another, the most astonishingly good small show debuted this season: **Circus Atlas**. I only got to see it due to the ever-present Miss Fortune and my unerring ability to back the wrong horse in any given race - which just goes to show that every clown has a silver lining (or something like that). You lot, however, should have had and will have plenty of chances.

'Atlas' is the result of a lot of hard work by Bernie Hasler and Gabi Tonnert ...and indeed, everyone else in the show, it really is a team effort. That *Roncalli* has been the benchmark for the whole operation should be obvious to anyone who knows their stuff, but for those of you who don't, let's just say it's classily pretty.

The tent catches the eye, not simply by 'being there' but by being different. A candy-stripe-free zone, it is elegant and tasteful; inside, the usual tent-plastic ring doors have been replaced by heavy velvet drapes which give a dignified air. The atmosphere was positively inviting, the vehicles and site spotless, the tidiest set-up I've seen in ages. Small shows so often beat the big boys on being generally clean and neat, but lack the funds to pull really spectacular acts. Fortunately the home team have enough talent between them to carry the show, even if they couldn't afford to employ another living soul.

Sadly, we didn't see Gabi juggling on horseback as he was injured, but we did see an excellent High School act, and a smart, pacey show which was well thought out in every detail. The Liberty Horses were fast and elegant, well-muscled and shiny, and the Big-and-Little act were delightfully cute. I love horses, and a Circus just ain't a Circus without them, but before you lot all have a go at me, there were no other animals and plenty of human talent to admire. As much as I've enjoyed living alongside exotic species, I have to say I spend far too much of my working life justifying what I do - when they're not even my bloody animals but just happen to be

attached to the same show!

A juggler and unicyclist who wasn't above having a laugh at his own expense was refreshing, and an original twist on a traditional cloud-swing presentation was nice to see. So soon after the Olympics, the Roman rings were topical - and certainly made the geezers at the Games look - well, like they were playing games really. (Look, I know the Olympic standard is all about technical stuff, but I can't help feeling that they lack Showmanship somehow they don't have fun!) The climax of the show was seeing a phenomenally-strong 19-year-old girl hand-balancer on the Washington Trapeze. I haven't seen one of these contraptions for, ooh absolutely yonks, and it was smashing! Blimey! That's three aerial acts! You really should see it, you know. Even the costumes were co-ordinated, so that the acts looked like they belonged together rather than just being linked by Ringmaster Bernie. Such attention to detail is rare, and so subtle.

Everyone worked so hard, and with a sense of humour. The clowns were sweet, and didn't scare the pants off the little ones either - and yes, just for the record, I laughed.

OK, so it's a Traditional show with a capital T, and maybe some of you *Archaos* aficionados will think that family entertainment like this is a bit staid these days - but I really enjoyed Circus Atlas, and they deserve to be successful. No stunning lighting effects or big production numbers, no choreographers or production managers - just talent, good humour, and courage. Personally, I think they're right to keep only horses on the show, and that way it should (in theory) be easier to get grounds too, as Councils are getting more and more picky about who they let on. A clean tidy show should have no problems getting the same ground next year either ... Isn't it time some of the scruffy buggers out there took note of that one?

Go and see them. I'm only sorry that I didn't get to go again.

FURTHER CRIMINAL (?) JUSTICE (?)

Leaving *Harlequin* early on account of being hospitalised before the season was out, I got the chance to put the CJA to the test with Rushcliffe Borough Council. Authorities are not supposed to be able to move us on if either we or our vehicles are unfit to travel. Backed up by letters

from two doctors, and having the land-owner's permission to stay on their land for as long as I need hospital treatment ... we're still in the middle of a site eviction! Moreover, if we do *not* move on within the specified time, the land owners will find themselves in court and facing a fine of up to twenty grand - for just two vehicles!

This law makes it impossible to do a favour for a friend any more, and that's why everyone should protest. You should be able to do what you want, within reason, on your own property, dammit! [uh - watch that one -d] Rushcliffe Borough Council are behaving as though I have moved onto my friends' land permanently, even tho' I parked up in July with the intention of staying there for a few days until I felt OK to move on. They want them to shell out £130 for a planning application for a caravan, which is not permanently sited, and which they have already said will be turned down! Leaving hospital finally on 10th October the Council gave me fourteen days to pull off or face the music.... and these days that can easily mean having your home impounded, sometimes with dire results.

I don't want to live on this planet any more. I'd like one with intelligent life on it, please....

GLOSSARY

WASHINGTON TRAPEZE:

An aerial balancing act, requiring skill levels not normally seen in humans. This outrageous contraption can be raised and lowered mechanically, and does not merely swing, but rotates also. The climax of such an act is often a head-stand while the thing whirls ever higher, rather in the manner of the chair-o-planes at Goose Fair... but with no safety chain.

CLOUD-SWING:

A single rope, hanging in a U shape from the tent roof. The artist can balance on it, twist it around his body to be 'caught' by it, and performs tricks at the fore and aft of each 'swing'.

HAUTE ÉCOLE:

High School, as in the Spanish Riding School of Vienna.

«Pof!»

diababble

Boo! That surprised you, eh? Hiding away for ages and then, suddenly... TaaRaah! There we are in frilly knickers! Got to keep you interested somehow, eh? Got to keep *us* interested...

More seriously (unfortunately), this issue of *The Catch* was delayed by factors pretty much beyond our control (just like dropping your clubs, really) and not nothing to do with the number of parties we went to over Chrsm's honest - or before - our thanks are due to all those who waited and our advertisers who continue to support us: if you're thinking of buying any new kit, do think first about the companies on these pages, they're helping us too and by helping us we help you (or something): ...and tell them where you read about it, eh?

While you were out: Timewarps and all that being what they are, there's not a lot we can do, but it's a shame we didn't get the chance to tell you about London International Mime Festival which happens every January and this year had *Les Consins*, who are very good, and French/Russian Clown supershow *Theatre le Ranelagh*. Hope some of you got to see them. There was also the Châlons Circus School Annual Show, in their home town and in Paris, always a cracker and again we missed it. Bah! Auckland NZ Juggling Festival (Feb.) has to be worth putting in your diary for next year if you're going to be down that way. The Newbury Bypass Brothers & Sisters, aka. Tot Hill Circus, had a great more-than-show called *The Dragon of Penwood*, sure it's not the last we've heard from them, either. The spirit lives on! We've worked out a scheme to be smarter on forthcoming dates in future issues, so hopefully we shouldn't have this problem again, whatever the production schedule.

Next issue is sketched in to appear just after the British Convention in April, but don't whatever you do wait until then to tell us your news, dates, last wills and testaments or the usual professions of undying love. You can hold your breath if you like. You might make *Guinness*!

diabolo

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Clowning Workshop 'Foolishness & Faith' - Feb. 19-23 - An opportunity to explore and express the connection between foolishness & faith through the Clown, led by *The Rev. Roly Bain*, 'Clown of the Year 1994'. For details apply now to The Secretary, Priory of Our Lady, Sayer's Common, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 9HT tel.01273 832901

JOBS
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Giant Blow-Up pictures of *Catch* page 3 lovelies. Apply with self-addressed plain brown envelope and used tenners. ALA.

WANTED
Video of Grenoble Convention. The organisers need it 'cos theirs didn't come out! Anyone with any footage, get in touch with Alain Brissard, *Entre Ciel et Terre*, 3 rue J.Baptiste Pradel, F-38000 Grenoble, tel./fax +33 4 76 46 22 83, E-mail jongle@alpes-net.fr
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BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES!
Swamp Circus Theatre, working internationally, wants new partner with management experience. 1/3 part share in tent, vehicles, plans, etc. Please send CV or info to Mr BA Jackson, 19 Wansfell Road, Sheffield S4 8BE, 0114 256 0962.
Someone give *The Catch* loads money and we'll be your friend forever.

MESSAGES
Congrats to Jackie Williams & Sam Welbourne for getting tightrope into so many papers: even if they had to get married to do it!
Tarim Ta! You're a >>>ARE YOU SURE YOU WISH TO DELETE THIS WORD? Yes No<<<

MULTIPLY...CLASSIFIED

CONTACT

BJF - British Juggling Foundation

Neil Hope-Collins (chairman)
2 Melbourne Street, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 6AS

JTF - Juggling Trade Federation

What juggling trade? (Sorry!)

National Association of Street Entertainers

J Arno (secretary)
221 Webb Rise, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 5QQ.

EJA - European Juggling Association

Lee Hayes
Jodenbreestr. 24-1, 1011 NK Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Jules Howarth (British Contact)
c/o PO Box EJA *Catch* Office.

Dave Meah (Scots contact)
1F1 34 Drummond Street, Edinburgh EH8 9TY

IJA - International Jugglers' Association

Jugglers' World Magazine
IJA Box 218, Montague MA 01351 USA
Year's Subscription \$35.00

Kaskade - European Juggling Magazine

Gabi & Paul Keast
Schönbergstr.92, D-Wiesbaden, Germany.
Year's Subscription £12.00

Ozjuggle

PO Box 361, Northcote 3070, Victoria, Australia
Year's Subscription \$25.00

New Zealand Juggling Association

The Flying Kiwi - Quarterly Newsletter, 42 Saint George's Bay Road, Parnell, Auckland, New Zealand
NZJA, 84 Studholme Street, Christchurch 2, New Zealand

Circus Friends' Association

The Membership Secretary
20, Foot Wood Crescent, Shawclough, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 6PB

Fairs & Festivals Federation

27 Kells Meend, Berryhill, Coleford, Gloucestershire GL16 7AD

Juggling Information Service

<http://www.hal.com/services/juggle/>
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or by fax on 01473 644649 or phone 01394 278556

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BOBBING UP AGAIN

I'm just writing to say a few things about Grenoble, albeit a bit late in the day *[even later by the time we've finished with it - dl.]*.

Firstly, as a member of *Captain Bob's Circus* this summer, I would like to thank a few people in particular for their help and support at what was, at the start, something of a tricky situation for us at this year's European Convention.

I'll spare you the juicier details (unless otherwise commissioned!) but had it not been for the enthusiasm of the following we'd have all had a far less enjoyable time. So it's a big hats off to: Edinburgh Dave, Beardy Steve Jolly, Steve 'Coxy' Kaos, Jane B, Haggis, Two Jules, Tom, Nick, Lloyd & Jenny, and of course Tarim (for eating more fried egg sandwiches at 5am. than should be humanly possible).

Of course there were loads more but they know who they are and that's quite enough name-checking already. I must however thank the rest of the Bobs for an interesting, educational and, yes, enjoyable summers' outing.

On a final note though, as a convention goer/supporter for over 10 years I have to say that whilst these events obviously need to break even, and indeed hopefully make some profit, do we really want a situation where people are encouraged to grass up their friends whose passes aren't prominently displayed at all times? All I'm really saying is if some people haven't got enough ticket money but do have something genuine to offer they should perhaps be sympathetically considered rather than just be told to fuck off. There, I've said it! Anyway, thanks to all concerned once again, and see you at the next one?!

*Phil Cass
Bristol*

Over to you - convention organisers? Must say, any events i've done have always had 'working ticket' options ('cos i'm notorious for trying to get people to work for naff all in dosh terms). Funnily enough, it often seems to be the Bobs i can turn to in a tight spot, whether it's site, security, entertainment - or egg sammies...

MORE NORMAN HISTORY

As usual, something in *The Catch* causes me to write.

In my schooldays I was into rope spinning, so the Will Rogers pages were the first thing I read. A difficult thing to do in rope spinning is keeping the rope from twisting while learning to spin it. To make it easier I used a swivel so the rope never got twisted. A few years ago I saw a family rope-spinning act where the youngest son of about eight astounded everybody by his skill. I noticed that his

rope had a swivel at the top. Suitable swivels can be found at the end of a dog lead.

I've just read a book, 'The Magic Hour' by Jack Cardigg (the film cameraman and director). He says that when he was a child actor he was in a film being made at Twickenham where Will Rogers was one of the stars. In the 1920's he was the folk hero of all Americans. He was a tall lanky cowboy with a Southern drawl who used to stand on stage making trenchant political wisecracks, at the same time tossing a piece of rope about eighteen inches into the air and making a knot, then switching the rope in the air again and untying the knot. Jack says that he had a tiny suspicion that Will's rope had a hidden weight in the end.

Will Rogers may have been good with ropes but his worldwide fame came from his humorous sayings. While doing a rope act he would pass comments on items in the news. He spoke in a very down to earth American drawl while giving home-spun truths. He was a stand-up comic. British newspapers of the '30s would often quote Will Rogers latest comment on some event. Of course Will was known to us from his films.

I found a book in the local library that has lots of interest. If you haven't read it, get a copy.

'A History of the Circus', George Speaight 1980. London: The Tantivy Press.

I took it out for the little bit on juggling, for instance: An Australian, Moritz Cronin, introduced Indian clubs (He certainly started something).

My press cutting service has come up with another gem.

A bit from the Telegraph about Monsewer Eddie Gray of the Crazy Gang (1932-62) - "with his red nose, round spectacles, fractured Cockney French and way of standing by a pillar box and saying into its mouth: "Well, how did you get in there?" before dashing off to get help, his humour was more crazy than anyone else's." [The Gang were classic stage clowns, wish we knew more about them - any fans want to write us an article? -dl.]

Monsewer Eddie Gray was a great juggler who came from a large family of jugglers. He was marvellous with the clubs that were made by his father. Most people remember Eddie for his act with hoops. Page 15 of the Autumn issue tells of hoop juggling of the sort that Eddie Gray did with his wooden cycle rims.

In case any of the younger readers haven't seen wooden cycle rims, they used to be found on racing cycles.

The other day I was reading a book about Shakespeare's Globe. In it I came across an interesting piece:-

During the reign of King James the First and

his Queen Anne of Denmark, about 1605.

A letter from Sir Walter Cope to Cecil, regarding entertainment suitable for the Queen's welcoming her brother from Denmark. "I have sent and been all this morning hunting for players, jugglers and such kind of creatures, but find them hard to find."

Also this week, I was shown a copy of an old contract, where W.C. Fields (Comedy Juggler) was to appear at a theatre in Bolton. This was 1911 and he was to receive £70 a week, with the possibility of a return week at £75.

In 1911 this was really big money.

It must be remembered that W.C. Fields was not just a juggler, he had created a very strong character. For years afterwards lots of comedians were doing W.C. Fields impressions, which were all patter. They told his jokes and forgot about the juggling. *[wonder why.. -dl]*

Norman Blackburn, Harrow.

If i was Pope (which i nearly am), i'd make Fields patron saint of jugglers (and a tad more). Anyone with such a deep abiding love of children and who made such a lasting contribution to the Temperance movement should be a lasting inspiration to us all...

STUDENT PROJECTS CORNER (part 77)

I am a final year student at Portsmouth University, studying Mechanical Engineering, and for my final year project I hope to design and make a machine that is capable of juggling three balls.

I would be grateful if you could let me know if your magazine has ever published any articles about other similar projects, and also how I would go about obtaining a copy of such an article.

Lee Barlow,

123 Talbot Rd, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO4 0HD

not us... anyone else? -dl

THOSE JUGGLERS SHOULD BE LOCKED UP

Good day!

I have been interested in and involved with juggling for almost 10 years, since I was thirteen. I am entirely self-taught and have an absolute passion for developing new skills, techniques and tricks.

I have attained four balls and three clubs or rings in the last couple of years. I have focused more on style and form rather than increasing numbers up to this point, and am very interested in more interesting and complex patterns.

Due to my present incarceration, I find myself in a difficult and trying situation which I wish to improve. One of the goals I have set for myself in order to use my time wisely, is to improve my juggling skills and

techniques. To that end, I have been able to help some of my fellow inmates learn the basic art of juggling. There are now about 20-25 of us.

We are in dire need of inspiration and fresh ideas to keep on growing! Would you please consider providing us with a few of your surplus back issues of *The Catch*? Whatever you can send would greatly be appreciated.

I can, however, share with your readers the obstacles I come across in finding and making objects to juggle in prison using very limited resources. I am doing all I can to keep the joy and spirit of juggling alive.

If you can assist me with any of these requests, the address is printed below. The numbers after my name are important and should not be left out.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation. I hope to hear from you soon, and extend my best wishes to all.

Chris Reach For The Sky, Comedy
#140371
Liberty C.I., Florida, USA
AZ-1-374, PO Box 999, Bristol, FL
32321-0999, USA

good name that... & the box number. Dunno 'bout the establishment name, tho'. Care to tell us what you're inside for, Chris?

HAPPY ENDING

Firstly I want to apologise to everyone who was at this year's Bristol juggling convention. Being woken up at an early hour on the last Sunday by an ambulance, fire engine and people shouting was not my idea, maybe the pyromaniac in my tent (ex-ten!) might be able to help as I was asleep.

I would like to thank all those responsible for the help and thoughts for my recovery, especially those people involved in putting out the fire, phoning 999 and comforting me while I waited for the ambulance, John

Carter, Mo, Pete, Buzz, Panit, Fudge and those who were present but unseen by me at the time (I was a little preoccupied).

My hands and arms are fully recovered from the burns and when I can figure out who signed the Get Well card I will thank them at next year's Bristol Convention.

Jiff
Shackleford, Surrey.

KISSES ALL ROUND

I would love to thank everybody who came to Missalload '96, and hope you all had a great time.

More thanks to all the performers, Prometheors, workshopers and everyone who helped to make my weekend less hassle.

I'm also glad to say enough of you came to cover this year's costs, still leaving enough to buy Real Chocolate for next year.

Claire Jackson, Bristol xxx
Real chocolate? Count me in!

HOW DID THIS GET IN HERE?

Ye Olde Yordik Jugglefest 97

A wicked sight: 200+ happy souls chucking stuff up... then doing their damndest to catch most of it on the way down, some more better some worse than others; the sun was shining and the 7?c seemed a whole lot warmer than it really was.

Workshops galore and two uni trips around the campus took us through the day to showtime. Houseband *'The Chebs'* were wonderfully surreal with Pete Z both singing(?) and compèring a show of two halves [like the game, you mean? -d], open stage then the Pros, with the Abba dance-along being my highlight of half numero 1.

'Feeding the Fish' threw a few Rads up, the sods mated and produced what seemed like dozens of infants that all came back down: what more can I say - wow! Heavily *Blink*-influenced glowball routine and some flash passing.

Sam I Am did his diabolo thing in a new braces and pants with a seam in [???!!!!]. *Guy* played pole-twiddling in UV with a way bright mask and glowsoles [bet that's the first time he's been called that -d] on his boots. *Ken Pretentious*, well, it's probably all been said before, nice shirt shame about the suit, impressed us [you're easily impressed, then? -d], and made us giggle. The man's probably a god in



Write to:
Diabolo
Catch's Cradle,
c/o
Moorledge
Farm Cottage,
Knowle Hill,
Chew Magna,
Bristol
BS18 8TL

some Borneo village. *Cosmos* did the ring thing in the dark. Love it to bits, as always some peeps are way too talented for their own good. They're even nice folks; if only they were evil... Jealous? Me? Never.

Roll on next year and well done all that organised it.

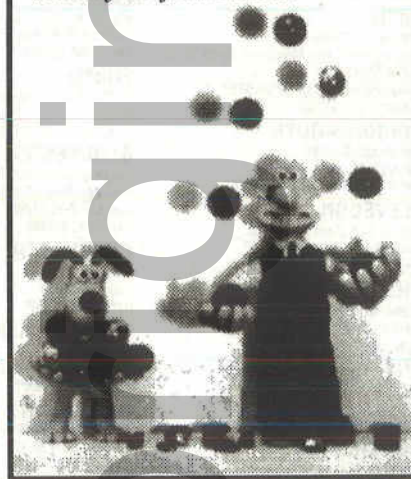
Mini

uh - i stand by my comments last issue. Isn't there a nice newsgroup you can go to?

A BIT MORE ANIMATED

Even though they have two Academy Awards in the USA, Wallace & Gromit know the only way to the Big Time in America is to juggle numbers!

Susan Kirby & Joe Murray
Stony Creek, Connecticut, USA
Well they are from Bristol...



"Yes you could say it was emblematic of today's Britain, but no, I don't think there's anything voyeuristic about wanting to watch people drop clubs and wear out expensive equipment on unsuitable floors. You might say there's a sense of relief that it's not you making such a corned beef of basic patterns, but that hardly qualifies as making mileage out of other people's misfortunes or disabilities." Controversial Juggling Workshop Director David 'Down in One' Kronenberg was yesterday trying to defend his notorious 'Clubs' list, which several MPs with small, er, majorities have demanded be withdrawn from circulation when we told them about it on the 'phone last Sunday evening during the Classic Serial. "What paper did you say you were from? Let me get this straight: just because some jugglers have been known to get romantically involved, you're peddling the tale that this is a bizarre sex cult? You're one sick puppy, mister." Kronenberg approached me with not one but four vicious looking baseball-bat-style clubs gripped in one massive fist. I made my excuses and left. We say: stamp out this perverted cult and do it now! What does your MP say?

Most workshops charge, often just to cover hall hire costs. When we know how much, we've put it in. Many have assorted equipment available, those that don't advertise kids' sessions are usually happy for juniors to come along accompanied. It's worth contacting student clubs in advance in case they've been privatised or something.

SOUTH WEST

BARNSTAPLE

moving - temporarily closed
Fri. 01237 476790

BATH

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Tad 01225 421700
Unicycling Tuesdays 8.30-10.30 £2
Herbert 01275 332655

BOURNEMOUTH

Chiropractic College
Fridays 8-11, free
Joel at Ocean Kites 01202 780185

CLEDON

Rub My Club, Saint John's Hall
Sundays 5.30-7.30
Simon / Ade 01257 342333

CHELTENHAM

Grosvenor Youth Centre
Sundays 6-9 £1/50p
Andy Clay 01452 862605

CHELTENHAM

The Rhythm Room
Alternate Sundays 3-5pm. £1.50/£1
Jem Watts 01242 519400

DORCHESTER

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EXETER

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F.A.H.A. Play schemes and workshops in schools
Vicky Taylor 01373 452018

GLOUCESTER

Juggling By Numbers, Community Resource Project, Conduit Street
Tuesdays 8-10 £1/50p
Jon 01242 521483

HIGHWORTH

Silver Threads Hall
Tuesdays 7-9 £1
Rob 01793 725206

LEIGH ON MENDIP

Memorial Hall
Wednesdays 7.30-10, £1.
Pippa 01749 840107

NAILSWORTH

Christchurch Hall, Newmarket Road
Fridays 7.30-9.30, £1
Shane 01453 765333

NEWTON ABBOT

Richard 01364 652446

PLYMOUTH

Barbican Theatre
Fridays 6-9, Sundays skillswap 3.30-6.30 £1.50/£1
Ian 01752 561357

SALISBURY

Arts Centre
Wednesdays 6.30-8.30, £1 (kids 75p)
Martin or Neil, Cunning Stunts 01722 410588

STROUD

Saint Matthew's Church Hall, Cainscross
2nd & 4th Tuesdays 7-9 £1
01453 750147

SWINDON

Fumbles Juggling Club, Clifton Street Social Hall
Thursdays 7.30-9.30, 50p
Steve 01793 432860

TAUNTON

Ladymead School Hall
Thursdays 8-10
Sally 01823 275459

TAVISTOCK

Tuesdays
Nigel 01822 852997

THORNBURY

Wednesday evenings somewhere unspecified
Shaun 01454 415345

TOTNES

St. John's Church Hall, Bridge Town
Fridays 7-8.30 kids 8.30-10 adults. £1.50/£1
Caroline 01364 73125

WEYMOUTH

Weymouth College
Lunchtimes during termtime
John MacDonald, 01305 208839

BRISTOL

HORFIELD

Dab Hands
Tuesdays 7-9
Mike Gibbons 0117 969 2145

CENTRE

University Circus, SU Building, Queens Road
Termtime Sundays 2.30-7ish, Wednesdays 7.30-10ish

HORFIELD

Altern 8 Juggling Club, United Reformed Church Hall, Muller Road/Downend Road.
Tarim 0117 977 8173
tarim@altern8.demon.co.uk

UNICYCLE HOCKEY

Stapleton Church Hall, Park Road, Stapleton
Thursdays 8-9.30
Freaks Unlimited 0117 925 0368

KINGSWOOD

Circmedia
See *Catch This* courses page.

SOUTH EAST

BRIGHTON

Kempdown Pier
Mondays 7.30-9.30 "drop in", Wednesdays 8-10 "drop in" + workshops, Sundays 2-4 beginners
Tat, Andy, Mr Fizzbang 01273 739216, Tim 01273 690737

BRIGHTON

Queens Park Road Day Nursery
Tuesdays 7.30-9.30 £2 if you've got it, £1.50 else.

CANTERBURY

University
Wednesday Evenings
Contact S.U.

CHERTSEY

Less Stress workshop, Saint Anne's Hall, Guildford Street
Tuesdays 7.30-10
Graham 01932 222063

CRAWLEY

Circuswux, Northgate Community Centre
Thursdays 7-9 £1.50
Crawley Community Arts 01293 552941

EASTBOURNE

Central Methodist Church Hall, Langney Road.
Tuesdays 7-10 £2

FARNHAM

Memorial Hall, West Street
Sundays 7.30-9.30 £2
Nick 01252 715252

GUILDFORD

The Khyber Concept, Shackleford Village Hall
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30 £2
Nick 01483 425988

HASTINGS

Scout Hall, Croft Road.
Fridays 7-9.30
Bosco Circus, Andy 01424 813144, Derek 01424 431698, Sian 01424 431214
HUG Unicycle Hockey
Sundays 10-12, phone Andy or Derek for venue

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

Gadebridge Youth Club Unicycles
Tuesdays 8-10 £2
Mick Davis 01923 269569

HERTFORD

What's got 3? Saint John's Hall
Tuesdays 7.30-9.30 £2
Pete Ambrose 01992 589424

HIGH WYCOMBE

Cascadia, Bucks College of Higher Education (I)
Mondays 7-10
Adrian 01494 537656

HORSHAM

Park Recreation Centre
Thursdays 8-10 Juggling, Uni-hoc etc.

ISLE OF WIGHT

Cowes Youth Centre Gym

Sundays 6-9 £1
Phil O'Neil 01983 294929

ISLE OF WIGHT

Jolly Juggling Club, Quay Arts Centre, Newport
2nd Friday of the Month, 7.30-9.30
James 01983 756065

ISLE OF WIGHT

The Vectis Unicycle University
11 years up - Brading Town Hall
Mondays 6.30-9, £1
4-11 years - Brading Station
Tuesdays 4-6
Stuart Allbrighton 0198 367531

LEWES

Circus Pipsqueak Youth Circus (B+)
Dr. Colin 01273 813464

MAIDSTONE

Methodist Hall, Brewer Street
Thursdays 7.30-9.30
Juggling Kite Co. 01622 682220

NEBURY

Newbury New Circus, Waterside Centre
Mondays 7-9.30
Gunter Schwarz 01635 41269

OXFORD

East Oxford Community Centre
Wednesdays 7-9, £1
Malcolm 01235 818585

OXFORD

Andrew 01293 821195

PORTSMOUTH

Lower Gym, Priory School
Wednesdays 7-9 £1.50
Martin (Avalon) 01705 293673, Clive 01705 832 966

READING

Sun Street
Mondays 7-10
Pete 01734 660430

SAINT ALBANS

Allsorts Circus, Youth Office, Alma Road
Tuesdays 7.30-10, £1
Dez Paradise 01727 855375

SAINT ALBANS

The Pioneer Club, Harpenden Road
Mondays kids 6-7.30, open 7.30-10.30 £3
Jon or Mark at Jesters 01707 268766

SOUTHAMPTON

Itchen College, Bitterne
Wednesdays 7-9.30 (Termtime) £1.50
Rut 01703 872141

STEVENAGE

Bowes Lyon House
Mondays 7-10, Thursdays 12.30-4.30
Pete 01462 673406

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Camden Centre, Market Square
Tuesdays 7.30-9.30
Kevin 01622 831918

WELWYN GARDEN CITY

Screwballs, Ludwick Family Club, Hall Grove
Thursdays 6-8 £2
Kim Byfield 01707 271001

WHITSTABLE

Kent Circus School, Whitstable Umbrella
Wednesdays 6-7 kids' open session, 7-8.30 youth circus. £1/50p.
Saint Peter's Hall, Cromwell Road
Thursday, adults 7-10, £1.
Tina/Steve 01227 772241

WOKING

United Reformed Church Hall, York Road
Fridays 7.45-9.45 £2.50
Phil Hamilton 01483 772008

WOKINGHAM

Iain Schofield 01734 760521

WORTHING

Saint Matthew's Church Hall, Tarring Road
Tuesdays 7-10 £1.50 inc. refreshments!
Laurie 01903 266236/207219

YATTENDON

Thursdays 7.30-9.30, £1.
Barney 01635 201546

LONDON

CENTRAL NORTH

Circus Space, Coronet Street, Hackney (Old Street Tube)
Courses and classes and one-off workshops in just about everything regularly available. See *Catch This* and/or ring for more details.
Circus Space 0171 613 4141

NORTH

Jackson's Lane Community Circus, Community Centre, Archway Road N6.
Thursdays 8.30-10.30 £3/£2.50
Bar & restaurant!

NORTH

All Saints' Art Centre, Whetstone
Tuesdays 7-9.30 £2
Simon 0181 449 6856

NORTH-WEST

The Shanti Shack, Lechford Mews, Harrow Road NW10
Mondays 7-9.30
Andy c/o 0181 812 1781

SOUTH

Grove Community Hall, Tooting SW17
Wednesdays 7-9, £2/hour.
All circus skills, equipment provided.

SOUTH-WEST

Saint Paul's Church, Hammersmith
Mondays 7.30-9.30
Albert & Friends 0181 741 5471

SOUTH EAST

Anerley Methodist Church, Oakfield Road SE20
Wednesdays 8.30-10.30 £2
0181 402 5184

CROYDON

Croydon Parish Church Hall
Tuesdays 8.15-10.30 £2
Keith Wood 0181 669 9685

CROYDON

John Ruskin College Juggling Club
11.15-1pm termtime only
Tim Haggis 0181 657 6882

EAST MOLESEY

Vine Hall, Vine Road
Thursdays 7-10
Juggling & Molesey Maniacs Uni Hockey, £2
Simon 0171 358 1451

HARROW & WEALDSTONE

The Clowns' Collective, Saint Joseph's & Community Centre, Graham Road
Tuesdays 9.30-11.30
Jane 0181 861 0919

TWICKENHAM

Oddballs, Union Hall, Saint Mary's College, Strawberry Hill
Tuesdays in termtime from 7, £1
Giovanni 0181 977 8688

UNICYCLES & UNI HOCKEY

Ackland Burghley School, Burghley Road NW5
Wednesdays 8-9.30, £2
Lunis 0171 985 6513, 0181 341 7587

UNICYCLE HOCKEY

Hackney Hockey-Cokeys, Daneford School
Gosset Street E2
Tuesdays 7-8.45 £2 ono.
Mr James Plungers 0171 729 5013

KIDS' UNI

Rico 0181 773 1748

EAST ANGLIA

CAMBRIDGE

Patchwork Community Circus
Cambridge Drama Centre
Sundays 5-6 (beginners), 6-8 (14+), Thursdays 4.30-5.30 Youth Circus (8-14)
Richard Green 01223 302596

CHELMSFORD

The Y's Jugglers, YMCA
Tuesdays 8-10 £1
John Hawkins 01245 263526

DEREHAM (nr. Norwich)

Justo James 01263 732888

HARWICH

Dover Court Ark Centre
Tuesdays 7.30-9.30 £1
Suzy Odball 01255 504758

IPSWICH

Murrayside Community Centre, Nacton Road
Tuesdays 7.30-9.30 £2, Beginners 6.30-7.30, 50p.
Richard 01473 281755, Joe 01206 716287

NORWICH

Saint Michael's Church, Colegate
Sundays 2.30-4.30 (under-16) £1.20,
5.7.30 (skillswap) £2/1
David 01603 486286, Will 01953
613445

NORWICH

The Amazing Bollo's
Norman Centre, Bignold Road
Sundays 3-5 £2/1.50/1
Jubilee Centre, Long John Hill
Mondays 4.30-6.30 £2/1.50/1
Ray 01603 449357

NORWICH

Norwich Circus Centre
See *Catch This* courses page.

ROMFORD

Rhythm & Balls, Century Youth House
Mondays 7-9.30, 50p
Chris Irving 01708 751656

IN THE MIDDLE

BANBURY

Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park
Mondays 8-10 £1 Wednesdays (kids)
4.30-6.30
Pete 01292 250719

BEDFORD

Bedford Circus Ring, Saint Bede's
School, Bromham Road
Thursdays 7-9
01234 328322

CHESTERFIELD

Graft, YMCA Hollywell Street
Tuesdays (termtime) 7.30-9.30
Steve Graft 01246 239245

CORBY

Balls Up Juggling Club, Connaught
Centre, Cottingham Road
Mondays 7.30-9.30
Steve 01536 516697, Andy 01536
761251

COVENTRY

Coventry Artists CoOp, Artspace Studios
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30
Circus Palava 01203 230068/448276

DERBY

Tomfoolery, Ashgate School, Ashbourne
Road
Thursdays 7-9.30, £1, 50p under 16s
Andrew Vass 01332 369581

DERBY

Normanton Community Circus, The
Madeley Centre
Wednesdays 7-9.30
Adrian Wilson, Just Another Circus,
01332 382813

DUDLEY

Drop Zone, Gornal Youth Centre
Tuesdays 8.30-10.30
Anthony Harris 01384 869360

HEREFORD

Saint John's Church Hall, Saint Owen
Street
Fridays 6-7 (kids, £1.25) 7-8.30 (adults
£1.75)
Pete 01432 760350

HITCHIN

The Zone Club, Club 85, 74 Whinbush
Road
Thursdays 7.30-10.30 Juggle, Uni, Bar
£2
Adam 01462 422302

KIDDERMINSTER

Youth House, Bromsgrove Street
Fridays 6-9 £1.50 kids, 50p
Horsefair Community Centre, Broad
Street
Sundays 6.30-9.30 £3/2/1.
UniHockey 5.30-6.30
Steve 01562 861113

LEAMINGTON SPA

Bath Place Community Venture
Mondays 7-9
Jocular James & Cath 01926 882457

LEICESTER

De Montfort University Juggling Club,
City Site S.U.
Tuesdays 6.30-9ish
Tim Too-Many 0116 282 4628

LINCOLN

Croft Street Community Centre
Thursdays 7
Barry 01673 860556

LUTON

Mad Hatter Circus, Chapel Langley,
Russell Street
Tuesdays 7-9 £1
Maggie 01582 484167 Geoff 01582
416950

MILTON KEYNES

Great Linford Memorial Hall
Wednesdays 7-10, £2
Jugglers Anonymous, Graham 01908
210264

MANSFIELD

Community Arts Centre, Leemong Street
Kids Workshop (8+), Fridays 5-7
01623 653309

NORTHAMPTON

Drop Shop Juggling Clubs
Bective Middle School, Kingshorpe
Wednesdays 7-9
Acrobalance & Trapeze Saturdays 11-1

NOTTINGHAM

The Forest School, Forest Fields
Thursdays during termtime 7-9, £1
Tony 0115 951 9061

NUNEATON

Saint Nicholas Church Hall (behind
Library)
Fridays 6.30-8.30 £1
John/Clare 01203 387579

STOKE ON TRENT

Dragon Community Circus, Booth Street
Recreation Centre
Wednesdays 7-9 £2/1.50
Dragon Youth Circus
Fridays 6.30-8.30 1-16s £1
01782 747867

STRAFORD-UPON-AVON

The Warehouse, Greenhall Street
Tuesday 7-9
Adam 01905 351733

TELFORD

Madeley Court Centre, Saturdays 5-7,
£1.50
Paul/Jayne 01952 275402

WORCESTER

Perdiswell Young People's Centre
Tuesday 7-9, £1.50
Sharon or John, 01905 23347

BIRMINGHAM

EDGBASTON

Midlands Arts Centre, Cannon Hill Park
Adults Sundays 7.30-9, Children
Wednesdays 4.30-6, £3.50
James Millar 0121 442 2469

HARBOROURNE

Martineau Centre
Wednesdays 7.30-9
£2.10, 90p concs.
James Millar 0121 442 2469

LADYWOOD

Arts Centre, Freeth Street
Mondays & Wednesdays 7-9, £1.50
Blair 0956 842702

SEELY OAK

Selly Oak Centre, 648 Bristol Road
Saturdays 10-12 noon
Mark 0121 459 6558

MANCHESTER

CENTRE

Polytechnic Gym, All Saints' Building,
Oxford Road.
Fridays 7-9, termtime.

CENTRE

UMISSED, C Floor, Reynolds Building,
UMIST
Wednesdays (sometimes Tuesdays)

CENTRE

Metropolitan University Juggling Club,
All Saint Building.
Fridays 5-7 termtime

CHORLTON

Quirkus, Saint Werburgh's Parish Hall
Mondays 7-10
Nigel 0161 862 9419

FALLOWFIELD

MUCUS Above the bar, University
Buildings, Owens Park.
Thursdays 7-9 termtime.

GORTON

Gymnastics Club, Old Gorton Baths, off
Hyde Road
Tuesdays & Thursdays 8.30-10

SALFORD

Circus & Juggling Club, University
Sports Hall
Fridays 5-7 termtime, £3 a year!
Jon 0161 792 3037

STOCKPORT

Priesthall Recreation Centre, Heaton
Moor.
Tuesdays 5-7 (children) 7-9 (adults)
Bzercus - Moni 0161 256 1838

WITTINGTON

Manchester Community Circus,
Withington Community Centre
Sundays 5-7
Winston 0161 445 5774

WORSLEY

Roe Green Juggling Club, Beesley Green
Hall, Green Leach Lane
Mondays 7.30-9.30
Matt 0161 794 0595

NORTH

AMBLESIDE

Community Juggling Club, Charlotte Mason
College
Mondays 8-10
Jack/Jimmy 015394 34243

BLACKPOOL

Jugglenuts, Grange Park Junior School
Wednesdays 7.45-10.30 Saturdays 1.30-4.30
£1 (kids 50p)
Carl 01253 304831 Alan 01253 397817

BOLTON

Higher Education Centre
Friday Evenings
Zebra cards 01204 22220

BRADFORD

Manningham Sports Centre
Fridays 7-9
Ann 01274 546196

BRADFORD

Saltire Hall,
Thursdays 7-9 £1.20
Helen 01756 795759

CLITHEROE

Roefields Leisure Centre
Thursdays 8-9
Brian Waterhouse 01200 29860

COCKERMOUTH

Juggling Club, Christchurch Rooms
Tuesdays 7.30
Dave 01900 822867

CREWE

Screwballs, Shavington Youth Club, Main
Road
Mondays 7-10 50p
Carl 01270 650204

DURHAM

University Circus Club, Vane Tempest Hall
(visible from the bridge!?)
Thursdays in termtime 8-10, all welcome

DURHAM

Durham City Jugglers, Shakespeare Hall
Tuesdays 7-9, £1.50
Mini 01642 897191

HARROGATE

Starbeck Youth & Community Centre, High
Street.
Saturdays 6.30-8.30
Pete 01423 869125, Tim 01423 567583

HEBDEN BRIDGE

The Ground Floor Centre, Holme Street
Wednesdays 7.15-9.30
Tony Webber 01422 842072

HUDDERSFIELD

Tuesdays
Del 01484 686617

HULL

Hull Community Circus
Wednesday 7-9 somewhere
01482 343926

HULL

Splat Circus,
University Students' Union, Cottingham Road
Tuesdays 7.30-11, £2 to join
Steve Pollard 01482 493463

KENDAL

Tuesdays & Wednesdays
Jem Hulbert 01229 581485

LANCASTER

University, Minor Hall (juggling) sports hall
(unis)
other details t.b.c.
contact S.U. on 01524 65201

LEEDS

Hillbabaal Community Circus, Woodhouse
Community Centre
Wednesdays 6.30-8.30
Al 0113 277 0121

LEEDS

Unicycle Hockey, Bramstan Recreation
Centre, Calverley Lane
Wednesdays 7-8
Mike 01274 669840

LIVERPOOL

Toxeth Sports Centre, Upper Hill Street
8-10, Thursday. Contribution to costs.
Max Lovius and others 0151 727 1074

LIVERPOOL

University Juggling Club, Mountford Hall
Mondays 7-10
051 420 7064

LYTHAM SAINT ANNE'S

Old School, Beaucherk Road
Tuesdays 6.30-8.30, Free!
Phil 01253 731143

MACCLESFIELD

Tythington School
Thursdays 7-9 termtime
Contact Borough Council

MIDDLESBROUGH

Cleveland Community Circus, Saint Mary's
Centre, Corporation Road.
Thursdays 6-8, £1.50 (concs £1)
Ffr 01642 861412

NELSON

Pendle Juggling Club, Barrowford
Community Centre
Thursdays 7-9.30
Ian 01282 702183

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Dockray House (formerly West End Boys
Club) Sutherland Avenue.
Thursdays 8-10, £1
Simon, Ugly Juggling Co., 0191 232
0297

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Unicycle Hockey, Leazes Park
Wednesdays at 7
Alex 0191 261 5128 or the Ugles

PRESTON

University of Central Lancashire
Wednesdays 6-9, everyone welcome
Hi S.U.

ROCHDALE

The Broadwater Centre, Smith Street
Adults Mondays 7-9, Children Tuesdays
& Wednesdays at 4
Sightlight Circus in Education, Noreen &
Jim 01706 50676
See also *Catch This* courses page for
more SkyLighting.

SCARBOROUGH

Catchstrophy, Westborough Methodist
Church
Tuesdays, kids 7-9, adults 8-10 £1
Brian Renshaw 01723 581067

SHEFFIELD

Flying Teapot Circus, Saint Andrew's
Church Hall, Hannover Way
Mondays 7-9
Rick/Tim 0114 266 3546
Sheffield
Jesters Juggling Club, Hunters Bar
Junior School
Wednesdays 6-7.30 under 13, 8-10 the
rest
Barbara Goody, Jak & Mo Hirst 0114
256 9505

SHEFFIELD

Greentop Circus Centre
See *Catch This* courses page.

WARRINGTON

Bewsey High School Gym
Wednesdays 7-10
Rob Taylor 01925 602544

WIDNES

Jugglers 'R' Us, Dilton Community
Centre
051 420 7064

WIRRAL

Hope Farm Centre, Ellesmere Port
Mondays 9-11
Keith 0151 609 0355

YORK

Cosmos Juggling Club, Priory Street
Centre
Tuesdays 7-9 (beginners' lesson 7.15),
£1.50 (£1 conc.)
Jim or Anna 01904 430472

SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH

Tollcross Community Centre
Mondays 7-9
Angelo 0131 447 7862

GLASGOW

North Kelvin Recreation Centre,
Kelbourne Street
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30 £2
James 0141 946 9332, 0976 320864

INVERNESS

Merkinch Community Centre
Mondays 7.30-10
Dave 01463 220165

LIVINGSTON

Cross Clubs Christian Juggling Club
Gary Casson 01506 411187

SHELTAND ISLES

Sandwick Junior High School
Saturdays 10.30-12
Gary Worrall 019505 501 / 01595 2114

STIRLING

Cowane Centre
Mondays 7-8.30
0786 475429

STIRLING

Balls Up Club, University
Contact Noeleen Breen, S.U.

SKYE

Skeabost Memorial Hall, Skeabost
Bridge
Wednesdays 7-9
Dave Patfield 01470 562377

WALES

BANGOR

The Greenhouse, High Street
Thursdays 7.30-9, £1.50
01248 372239

BARRY

Bryn Hafren Girls' School
Tuesdays (termtime) 7-9
Russell 01446 740520, Pete 01446 747176

CARDIFF

Yellow Kangaroo pub, Elm Street
Wednesday nights
CUT - Cardiff Unicycle Team
Russell 01446 740520

LAMPETER

Cwmman Village Hall
Thursdays 6.30-8.30
01570 480022

LLANDIDROD WELLS

Rockpark Hotel Games Room
Wednesdays 6-7 (7-12 yrs.) 13-adult 7.15-9
Chris 01597 824300, Jerry 0831 581070

LLANDUDNO

John Bright School
Tuesdays 7.30-10
Zero G, Phil/Andrea 01492 547542

NEWPORT

Alternates from Newport to Caerleon!
Thursdays 5.30-7
Kris 01633 220367, Fiona 01633 430088
x4041

PORTHMADOG

Harlequin Juggling Club, Guide Headquarters,
Hill Street
Thursdays 6-7.30 (beginners) 7.30-9 others.
£1.
Ian & Gill 01766 75763

POWYS

Community Circus School, Y-Fan Institute, near
Llanidloes
Thursdays kids 6-8, adults 8-10
Liz or Chris Panie 01650 521559

SWANSEA

Juggalar, Dynevor School, Mansell Street
Wednesdays 7-9.30, £2/£1, first week free
Sam 01792 470546

SWANSEA

Dilwyn Llewelyn School, Cocketts
Mondays 7-9, Integrated Youth Circus
Phil Burton, 01792 466231

IRELAND

BELFAST

CRAWLEY CONVENTION V
AUG 9-10

**BERNIE BERNETT
ULTRAVISION
HAGGIS**

PLUS

**MICHAEL PEARSE
PATCHWORK CIRCUS**

AND
THERE WILL BE MORE

WEEKEND: £12:50/10:00 (U16s)

SAT SHOW: £ 6:50/ 5:00 (U16s)

Phone Nigel on 01822 852997 for details

BIRMINGHAM'S

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Juggling

shop

Open : Mon - Sat
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Authorized dealer of the latest off road craze-
'OUTBACK' Mountain boards £299

KITES (INCL. FLEXIFOIL), FRISBEES, BOOMERANGS, YO-YOS,
BUBBLE MACHINES, PUZZLES, 260 Q's, HOT AIR BALLOON
AND ROCKET KITS, MAGIC, TEE-SHIRTS, SNAZEROD MAKE-UP.

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800 Bristol Road (A38)

Selly Oak

Birmingham B29 6NA

opp. J. Sainsbury

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1 minute from Circus Space)

Open Mon-Sat 10.00-18.00

Tel: 0171 250 1333

Oddballs Camden

Unit 200B Camden Lock

(3 minutes from Camden

Tube Station)

Open 7 days a week 10.00-18.00

Tel: 0171 284 4488

Oddballs Brighton

24 Kensington Gardens

Brighton BN1 4AL

Open Mon-Sat 10.00-18.00

Tel: 01273 696068

Oddballs Oxford

34 Cowley Road

Oxford OX4 1HZ

Tel: 01865 200 678

0171 2501333

[Http://ds.dial.pipex.com/oddballs](http://ds.dial.pipex.com/oddballs)

Wholesale Service

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many lovely places throughout
the world. If you have no local
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Tel: 44 (0) 171 250-1333

Fax: 44 (0) 171 250-3999

HAPPY JUGGLING!

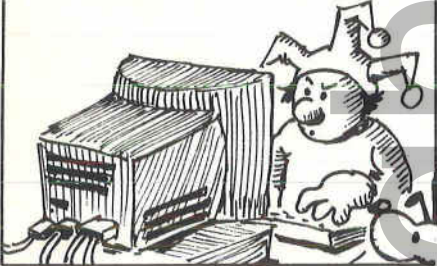


BUSKER SURFS THE NET

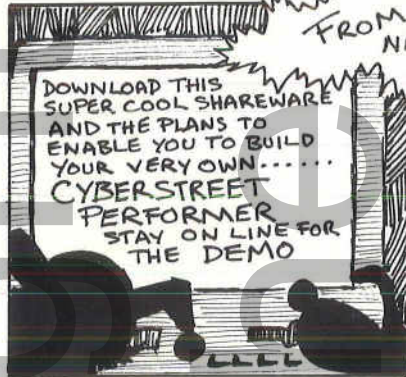
AND DOWNLOADS

A LOAD'A TROUBLE

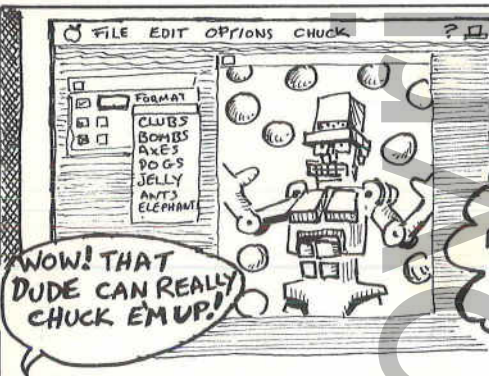
LATE ONE NIGHT SURFING
ON HIS NEW SUPER DUPER WIZ
BANG WEB VEHICLE.....



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SUPER COOL SHAREWARE
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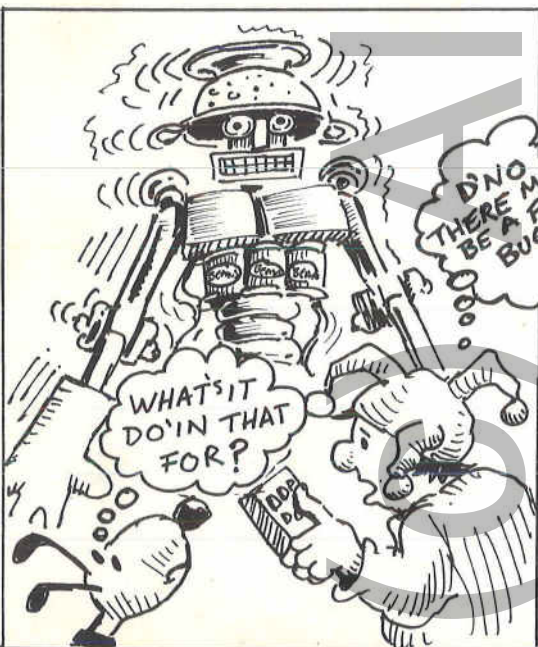
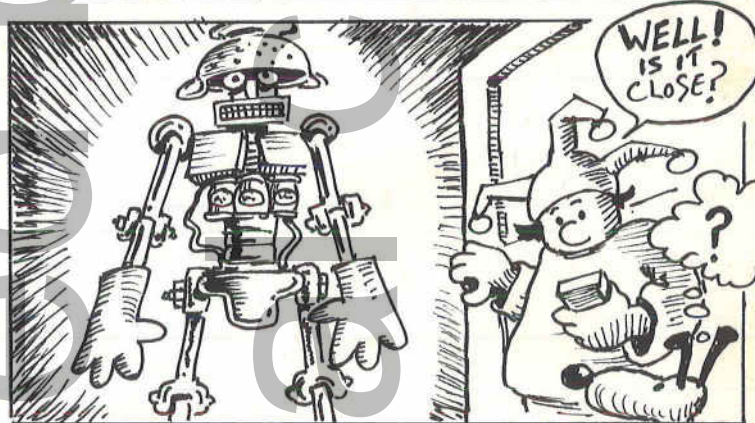
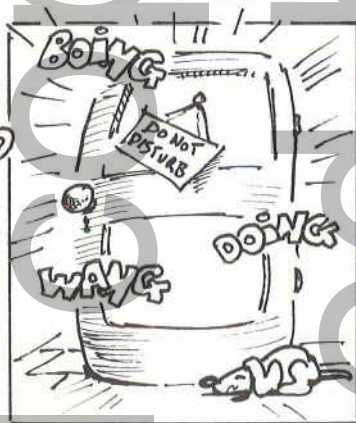
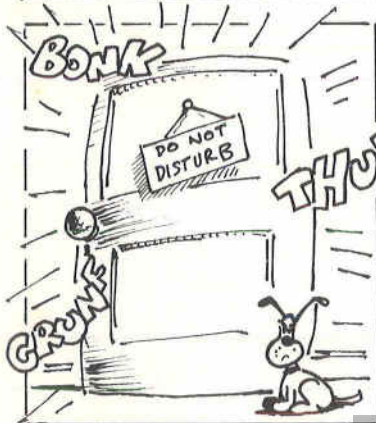


FROM AN OBSCURE WEBSITE, CODE
NAME ZOG CPT. JUGGLE E CHUCK CHUCK



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DUDE CAN REALLY
CHUCK EM UP!

HOW
MANY
BALLS
IS THAT!



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