

The Catch

JUGGLING • NEW CIRCUS • STREET THEATRE

ISSUE 20
AUTUMN
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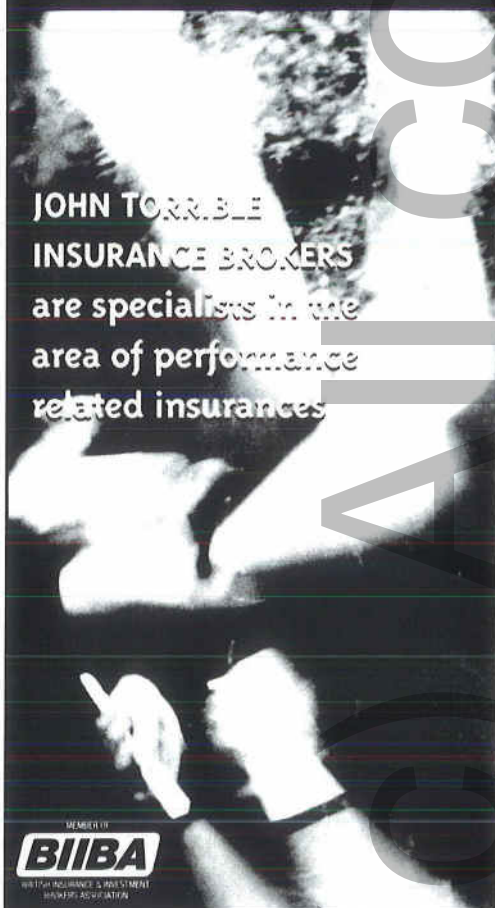
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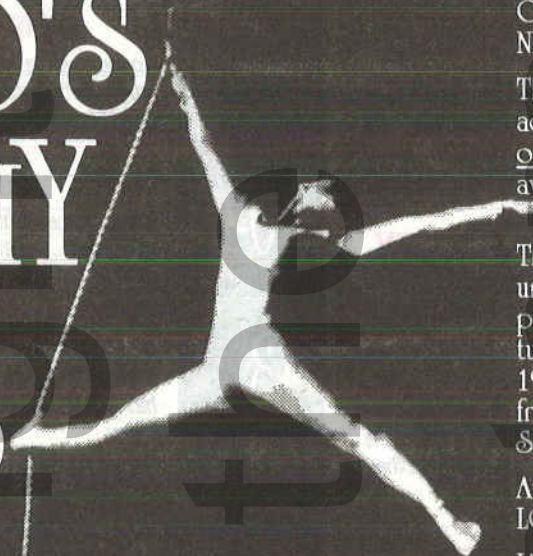
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Much to the editor's disgust, not only do computers juggle better than S/He does, but now there's a bloody puppet that does as well. The creature in question is on our front cover, belongs to *Parachute Theatre*, and here *Lynne* of that ilk sticks her hand up the bum of that and other related street acts. Pics by *David Partner*.



"Gaston" - the art of puppetry.

Delighted to read yet another extract from Walter Wilkinson's 1927 tale of a Punch and Judy showman, *'The Peep Show'*, and even more delighted that the *Catch* team still have faculties enough to remember that far back! I have been reading *The Catch* since its inception and although I thoroughly enjoy reading of astounding juggling, exhilarating circus and wild street theatre, where oh where (apart from dear old Walter) is the dolly waving?

My own introduction to the grand old art of puppetry came by way of a luvvie interest some twelve years ago. The boyfriend (Nik) was en route to mime school and wanted to build a portable *Punch and Judy* show to scrounge extra Francs outside that big pipe building in Paris. He asked me, a sculptor/

Hello Dolly Waving

Hello Dolly Waving

writer of no repute whatsoever, to make the heads, and drawn together as we were through a common love of 2000AD comics, Punch started to bear an uncanny resemblance to *Rogue Trooper* and became 'Punk'. Judy in most traditional shows is a rather downtrodden put-upon old bag and well, we couldn't be having that now could we? So our Judy developed into a pointy-titted bitch in a fab outfit.

Up until this point my interest in *Punch and Judy* and puppets in general had been nil, but now we had to bang out some sort of storyboard so it was time to do a bit of research. First thing we discovered was that Punch has a long and colourful history that, from an Italian origin, has spread to many European countries, all with their own version. But the point that fascinated us both was that during Oliver Cromwell's ban on theatre, puppet theatre was not deemed important enough and as a result, puppets became the satirical 'spokespersons' of the people.

This information coloured the outcome of our own show and although we kept faithfullish to the

trad. show, we went overboard with vegetarian ovens, Judy's liberation and a large dollop of modern-day [??-d] toilet humour. The problem was we had so much fun building wild & wacky puppets & props we could not fit them in a traditional puppet booth, and ended up building a 6-metre-wide stage set with all the trims. "Oh bugger!" said Nick, "No chance of extra Francs outside that big pipe building in Paris with this lot." (Nik did actually go to mime school for a spell but decided he was far happier making the tree rather than being one!) Some twelve years, more kids and another seven different shows later, we are still performing 'Punk...'. It just seems that folks, whether they love or hate Punch, deride him for his violence, or adore him for his noisy traditional appearance at do's large and small, are still fascinated by the characters



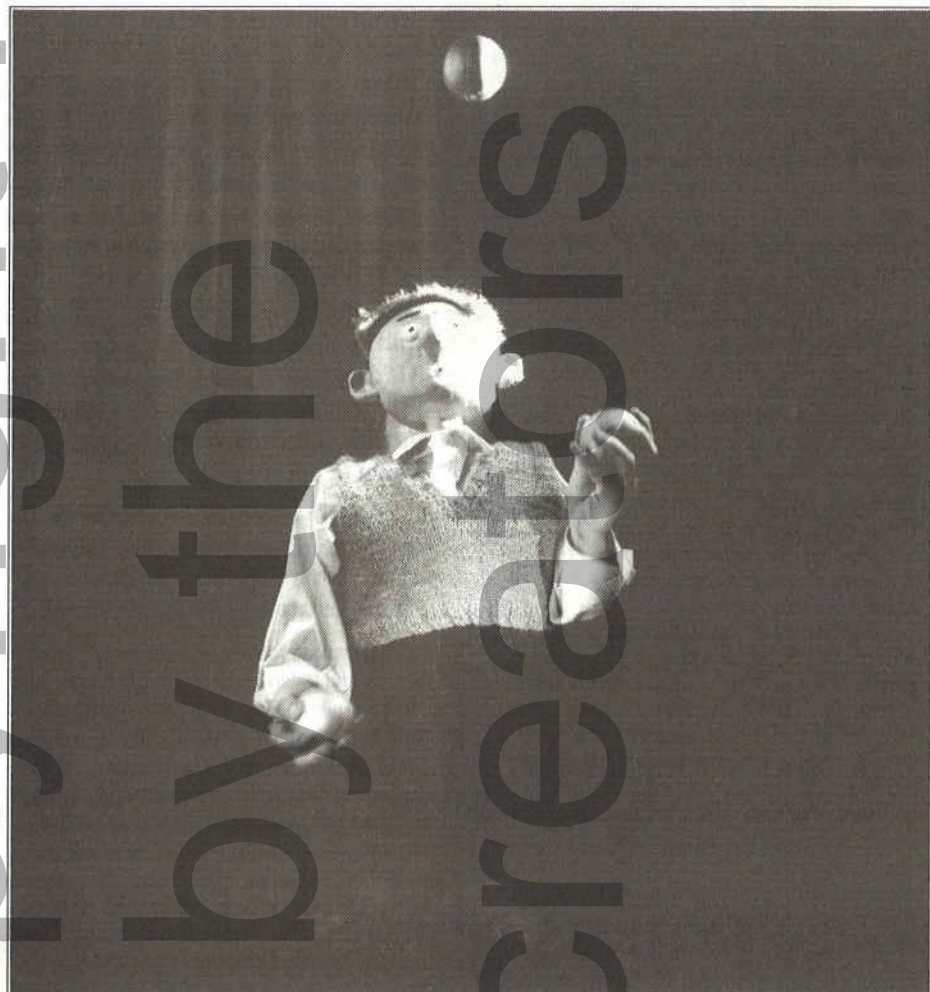
She's behind you! - *Harolds' Horrible Day*

either in a modern version such as ours or the traditional booth.

Ours is not the only 'different' version of the old story; some years ago, we saw several at the international *Jan Klassen* festival in Amsterdam. *Jan Klassen* is the Dutch Punch and we remember a rollicking performance by Wim Kerhove which features Judy in the main role, dealing with a nuclear bomb and eviction, amongst other social issues that Wim managed to get off his chest whilst entertaining delightfully at the same time. The other show we shall never forget was Paolo Conentail from *Granteatrino Puppet Theatre*, Italy. You could say that the social issue were on a slightly different level: Pulcinella consumes a carafe of wine, urinates over the audience, eats with great relish a whole chicken, grows fatter and fatter, then gives birth to a baby Pulcinella: wonderful stuff!

Nowadays of course there is a lot more than just Punch and Judy on the streets, from small booth shows to large spectacles, huge processional stuff to the marvellous *No Strings Puppet Theatre's* *'Robin Hood and the Monk'* that is simply a tray-like stage hung around the puppeteer's neck with small glove puppets operated inside, the puppeteer providing the voices and sound effects as he goes - and very entertaining it is too. Last year we saw *Green Ginger's* wonderful *Gaston*, a French portrait painter operated by two puppeteers that use their own hands for the puppet's hands. The puppet keeps up a running dialogue with the audience half in French and half in English, while drawing a credible portrait of the poor punter pulled out of the audience for that purpose. It's a great piece of street theatre that gives the audience a real situation to gawp at and/or heckle as they wish.

We use a similar style of puppet, in as much as it's our own hands for the puppet's hands, not in this instance to be able to draw but be able to juggle. Juggling puppets have also been around for a long time, mainly as trick marionettes where the balls as well as the puppets are operated by strings, or as glove puppets. Most notable are the Chinese plate-spinning puppets. These honour the golden rule of puppetry: do with the puppet what an actor, or in this case a juggler,



Parachutes' Handy Harold.

cannot do; the piece ends with the stick for the plate through the puppet's head and the puppet itself spinning. The Chinese master puppeteer, Yang Feng, also performs a circus piece where the glove puppets *themselves* are juggled with great dexterity. The puppeteer throws the puppets from hand to hand in front of the audience, maintaining all the small movements that give the puppets life, and yet turning the characters into the most mobile and believable acrobats. Very skilful and totally beyond us.

Looking to create our own juggling puppets, marionettes were out (we're not together enough to keep the strings untangled) and glove puppets were too small (and not too clever) for our purpose. We like working on waist-high stage-tops with full figure characters on top, with us behind in black, set against a black backdrop. This style helped us to create our

ten-minute piece *The British Tourist*, a rather sad be-anoraked character who, on refusing to share his lunch with a duck, gets shat upon (amazing what you can do with a bit of felt fabric and a can of shaving foam); dries the said anorak on a makeshift washing line, tightrope-walks the washing line, discovers the performer within, all very profound... not... and then into juggling routine. This is all helped enormously by the fact that it's Nik's own hands for the puppet and he's been juggling round the back of marquees for years. Simple 3-ball tricks aren't too much of a problem (although you try it with a black bag over your head) and our character can just about turn 5 around for the finale, but one of the best bits is when he rotates his head right around and sticks it between his legs while still juggling (give it a whirl, Haggis).

So enthused we are with this type of puppet that we have used the style and the juggling in our latest show, and continue to haul our puppets out of the van at weird and wonderful venues up and down the country, theatres, festivals, shopping centres, the odd juggling convention and the most fun of all, the street itself...

Not so different, eh Walter!!

Rope tricks are the newest thing everyone wants to do (apparently), and all of a sudden there are books and vids aplenty on the subject (see *Balls!*, the review section). The editor's fave, at least because of the numerous entertaining movie stills, is **Frank Dean's Will Rogers' Rope Tricks**, from which the following is edited. If the following makes no sense, or lots and you want to learn more, you're going to have to get hold of it, aren't you? Will Rogers was, you guessed it, a famous movie & wild west show rope-man. As most of us have no idea at all, it seems sensible to start at the beginning - so this is how you make an ordinary rope into a trick rope, and the basic spinning technique, derived from cowboy work, at the heart of 90% of the tricks.

First you need 15 feet of 3/8" rope, good rope from a saddlery or chandlery, not sash cord...

...The next step is to make a *honda*. This honda is the cowboy term [*Spanish for 'sling' - smartass d*] for what a sailor would normally call an 'eye'. It is simply a small loop formed in one end of your rope through which the other end is passed to form the noose. The easiest way to put one in your rope is to tape it in. This simple fastening of the folded back end is just a temporary one made with friction tape and does not last long. It is only good if you want to experiment with different weights or lengths of hondas, all of which affect the size and shape of the spinning loops.

Centrifugal force is responsible for the opening or control of the circle, and this is affected by the weight of the honda. Therefore, the rope must be balanced to perform properly.

Rogers would double back about 2 1/2" of this 3/8" rope and fasten it with lightweight copper wire. The 20-gauge size handles nicely. The wire is sewn through the two parts three or four times, by making holes with an ice pick or shoemaker's straight sewing awl. These stitches are pulled tight and then wrapped with about eight or ten turns of the wire. Don't wrap on a lot for you don't want the added weight on this honda. Some ropers like either a lightweight piece of wear leather for a *burner*, or they wrap copper wire round the wearing part [*the bottom of the loop where the running rope will be burning against the loop*]. Plain or leather-burner hondas will *slow down* the slipping of the rope and be an added advantage for the beginning roper attempting the simple tricks. The professionals need this feature too for some of the more difficult manoeuvres they put the loops through.

After finishing the honda, the other end of the rope is run through the hole and you have your first trick rope.

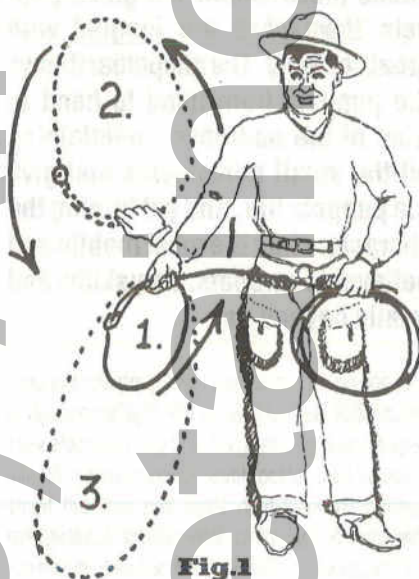


Fig.1

Before you attempt to do the flat spin you will have to shake out, or *build*, a loop. You won't use your two hands to pull the rope out of the honda to make it, because ropers just don't do it this way. Here is one method to use. Grasp the rope close behind the honda in your right hand with the sliding part on top, the honda pointing outward (fig.1). Give a fast counterclockwise flip to the small loop, off to your right side, and as you do let the top part of the rope slip through the honda. The proper flip will cause the weight of the rope to pull the loosely held portion through your hand. A few practise flips will give you the idea. If you have the major portion of the rope coiled in your left hand, drop off the number of coils needed as they are drawn into the loop. Another common way of building a loop is to grasp the rope just back of the honda and pull it back towards the coils, dropping these off as they are fed through the honda into the loop.

.....

You should now have a loop approximately three feet in diameter [*make sure the rope isn't twisted or kinked as this will make life difficult very soon*]. For the time being we will compare the loop to a wheel and the roper's hand will be the hub. The *spoke* is the length of rope between the roper's hub hand and the honda.

Spread the loop you intend to use on the ground in a circle, like a wheel, with the rope continuing from the honda straight across to the hub. Pick it up at this centre and cross it back from the honda to where the spoke length will reach. This is a suitable distance for your handhold.

The wheel-and-spoke principle makes it much simpler to describe the next step. Hold your four-foot

hanging loop in your right hand, palm up. The thumb and last two fingers hold the spoke, the first two fingers curl over the loop. The honda hangs on the right side. The left hand is now used, palm down, to grasp both the rope and loop about two feet below the right hand (fig.2). Ordinarily you don't reach below, but instead place the left hand close to the right on the

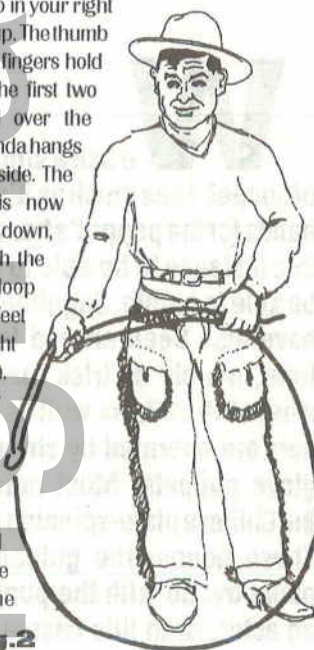


Fig.2

Don't get your HONDAS in a twist

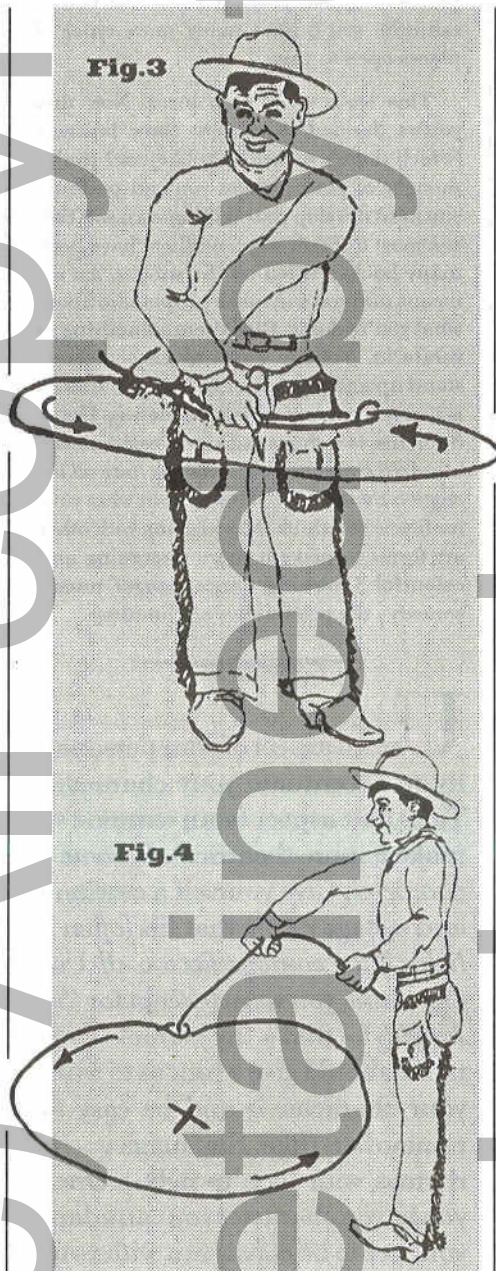
rope and then slide it along toward the left, to the proper distance. Here the left grip is changed; only the thumb and forefinger hold the loop.

.....

Both hands are now held at about waist level close to the body. Together the hands go out, the left going to the right beneath the other arm (fig 3). The right hand and arm start to describe a large 'O' approximately two feet in diameter, counterclockwise, and parallel with the ground.

Actually all you should have done so far is to turn the loop over and spread it out in a horizontal circle ready to be dropped. Drop it (fig 4). Don't hesitate but continue the big circle being described by the right hand (the hub, holding the spoke). If everything goes right the loop should be spinning and kinks should be forming in the tightly held spoke. This is another one of the things that has to be compensated for from the start. Each circle the right hand makes requires a finger twist of the rope by *both hands* equal to one complete turn. Try holding a pencil in your closed fist, then open the fingers enough for them to turn the pencil around and around. It's easy. And that's all there is to keeping the kinks moving down this rope from hand to hand and out. This is a counterclockwise twist too, and if you forget, the twisting rope will remind you.

Sometimes it helps to have something for a guide or a target. In this case, a pivot point on the ground or floor will do. A small pebble in the dust, or a thumb tack in the wood will provide a centre to draw the big 'O' around. First the loop is laid over and released in the air in almost a perfect circle over the marker. As it is dropped the spoke is whirled around and around, horizontally, first in the big 'O' to open and start the loop; then as it spins under control, this full



arm movement can be reduced to almost a wrist and finger motion.

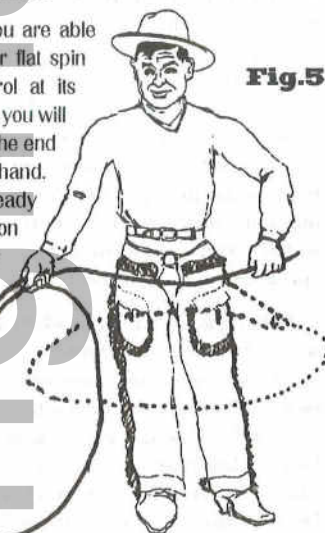
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Experienced ropers seldom use this two-handed beginning but instead, holding the hanging loop in their right hand, cast it out in a horizontal circle and start their spin (fig 5).

To increase the size of the 'wheel' just build up speed and make a larger 'O', letting the rope out as it is needed. If it starts getting smaller, shorten the spoke by pulling the rope through the right hand with the left and speed up. Sometimes you will get out of time. That is, your motions will be either ahead or behind the honda and it will not respond as it should. Learn to keep your eye on the honda and spoke until the time arrives when you don't have to watch; you can *feel* where they are.

When you want to make the large 'wheel' small, just reverse the procedure. Shorten the spoke and slow up the turns.

When you are able to keep your flat spin under control at its biggest size, you will be holding the end in your right hand. You are ready then to go on to many more tricks...



Juggling and performing are two entirely separate artforms. You can be a great juggler but you might be a horrible performer. Or you could be a mediocre juggler but a dynamite performer. If you juggle as a hobby, purely for the love of the art, it doesn't matter what other people think. But if you're also interested in making some spare change, being a professional performer, then you've got to start thinking about how to develop your skills into an act. Many jugglers are show-offs anyway *[just many? -d]* and love to gladden and amaze others. But how do you go from knowing tricks, to showing off, to creating an act that people are willing to pay for? And then how do you get people to pay for it? How does one break into show business?

First of all you must decide if you want to do such a thing. Are you willing to get up in front of other people and risk having rotten tomatoes thrown at you? If you're not sure, then don't begin. If you stand in front of folks with the attitude 'I'm not really doing a show, I'm just standing here doing a few tricks', then start ducking!

Secondly, think of where you are going to perform. Start gradually. Nobody starts at the top. Many people start with street performing and children's birthday parties, easy formats to begin with. In street performing, you don't have a boss who's paying you and to whom you have to answer if the show flops. You get immediate feedback as to how your show is received and how you handle a crowd. The first few times you stand in front of a crowd you can count on being nervous, possibly shaking and certainly missing even your easiest tricks. The more you perform the less a problem stage-fright becomes. In fact, the more you perform, eventually a crowd will help you to perform and get you psyched and ready to do your best.

Other gigs often come when playing the street. Someone likes your show and afterwards asks you if you can come to a birthday party, variety show, night-club, etc. *[i think night-clubs are different in Britain, Raph -d]* Have a business card ready to hand out. Always say, 'Yes, I can do that' immediately. Have a price ready to quote and say it with

confidence. At first, be prepared to let them talk you down in price. People will ask you to do gigs for free. In the beginning, go ahead and do some freebies. You need the experience and exposure. As your show improves and you learn to control an audience, stop doing freebies and stick to your price. But that's for later. Now, you need the experience.

Be versatile. Be able to adapt your act to different situations. Ten minutes on a club stage is one act, and forty minutes at a party is another. At a party you have to talk a lot and relate to people. On stage you might only juggle to music and never even see the audience. Have as long an act as possible so that you can work more types of places and cut it down when necessary. If you have ten minutes on stage you'll have a certain number of places you can play. If you have twenty minutes, you'll have many more types of places open to you.

This leads us to step three. Now that you've decided to go into show business (which there's no business like) and you've thought of places where you can perform, you must develop your skills into an act. This is a most difficult step and there have been many books written on the subject. An act means that you can make people care about what you're doing. Give them something to relate to. Nobody wants to see somebody stand up and juggle 7 balls for 5 minutes. It is a superhuman feat but it's boring. Doing 3 torches is a thousand times easier and a hundred times more interesting *[pity all the jugglers think that -d]*. Think about what your audience will think. Mix juggling with other art forms to make it more interesting and colourful. Clowning, dance, danger, music, comedy - the possibilities are limitless.

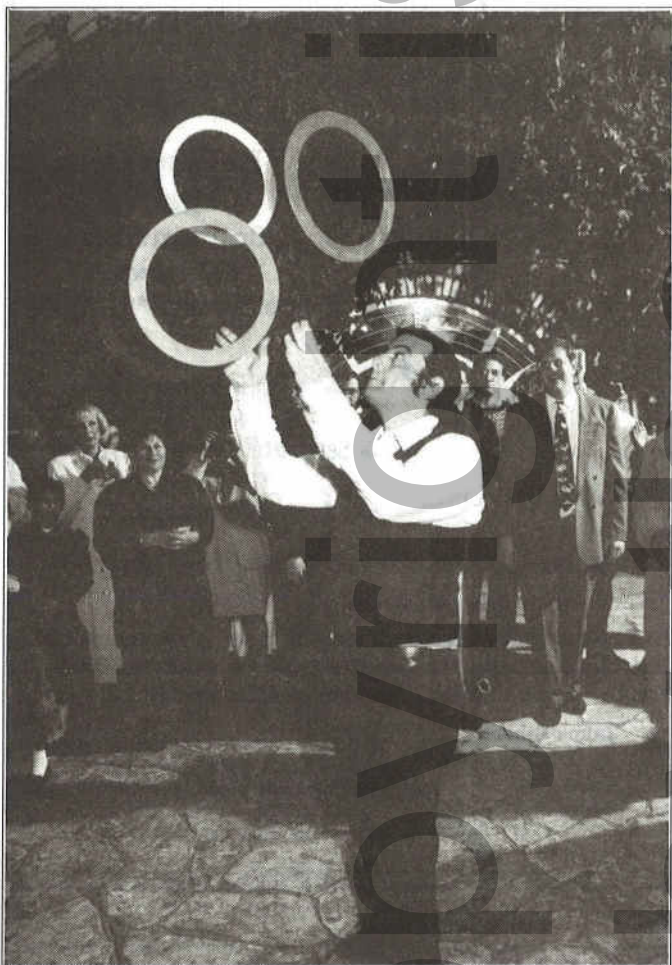
Use an aspect of your personality to accentuate your character. Take that aspect to an extreme to make it more theatrical. Become a character. Give yourself a costume and a stage name that fits *[often it helps if the costume fits too -d]*. Use any name you want (except for 'Sir Juggley' - that's my name). Your name should give a hint as to what your character is and be easy to remember (like Sir Juggley - it rhymes with 'you're ugly'). Once you have a character you can adapt your act to be consistent with your

stage personality. All this takes time but don't be afraid to start. Start somewhere, anywhere, then be flexible and change. It takes time to develop a style that is all your own. Think of a great painter. See how their early works are similar to other artists but the later paintings are unique. As they develop their style, the creations become more distinct. Watch other performers. Gain inspiration, let them help you develop ideas of your own. Allow them to influence you but don't copy their ideas. Soon you'll have ideas of your own which will inspire others.

Step Four - You've decided to perform, you've thought of places to play and you've begun to develop an act. The next step is to go out and perform! If you've decided to start on the streets then it's fairly simple. Just do it! Choose a place where you have plenty of room and where many people pass by regularly but may stop if they wish. In some cities street performers are looked upon as little more than beggars. But in many places street performing is considered a high art form. Antwerp, Florence, Boston, Jerusalem and others are enlightened and artistic and have a deep love of street artists. Special places can be found where they go to perform. If you find yourself in a place that's not so tolerant don't be afraid to try and change things. Besides, there are always tourists around looking for something interesting to see and willing to pay for it.

Be prepared for all kinds of stuff to go wrong. Every show is a little different and any street performer will tell you of his adventures. Fights break out, lunatics try and get into the act, hecklers heckle, police are unpredictable. Stay alert and always be prepared to stop a show in the middle, pick up your props and split. See trouble brewing before it begins. Learn Karate! Street performers love their work, travel the world, meet interesting people, have lots of fun and many adventures.

If you don't think the street is for you, then you'll have to market your act. Place ads in local newspapers as an Entertainer for Children's Parties. Go to cabaret clubs



Wedding gig? - rings of course.

Back home in Jerusalem, **Raphael Harris (aka. Sir Juggley)** is a very famous juggler, and it's always nice to get letters from him. He sent us an article about "How to Break In", and though the raving @narchist faction on the **Catch** staff were disappointed to discover it had nothing to do with breaking and entering and everything to do with entering showbizniz, the advice is all good basic stuff which those of you without performing experience could profitably peruse, so here it is... the easy way to all the Children's parties you could ever wish for!

PREMIER PERFORMER PRIMER

and audition. Go to hospitals around holiday times and do free shows in a children's ward for exposure and experience. It's very rewarding to brighten the unfortunate children's day. You've done your good deed, and you'll make friends who will remember you. Ask the management if you can use them as a reference in the future. Get a letter of recommendation - they'll be happy to give it to you. Word of mouth is the best

form of advertisement. Don't ask for favours. If they like you they will remember you.

If you're going to perform on a stage, organise beforehand how the music and lights will be arranged. Tell the management how you prefer it so you don't find yourself blinded by the spot lights. Sit in the audience seats and look at the stage. Imagine how you'll look, think about where to stand, how to exit. Get the big picture. How will you look to folks in the front row? How will you look to folks in the back row or on the sides? Don't turn your back on the audience when leaving the stage. Stand up straight and smile. Know what your act

looks like. Video your act and look at it. What can you do to improve it? Enjoy yourself on stage. Project your personality and give it your all at every show. Don't wait for that 'lucky break'. Make your own luck by giving a dynamite show at every performance.

This is how anyone can break into show business. There are many other ways as well. You can develop an original and impressive act for ten years in secret then reveal yourself at a convention and walk away with a gold medal. But most people can't do that. So work into it gradually. Have patience. Have fun. Pray for a blessing and be worthy to receive it!

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Don't Snore, Just INSURE

INSURANCE - the very word causes the eyes to droop and the onset of a severe case of drowsiness.

However, in 1996 it is necessary for everyone to consider what they would rather forget. This year the local councils and event organisers are on a major 'cover their backsides' trip. Unprecedented indemnity limits are being called for from performers - up to £2 million, even £5 million. Entertainers posing no, or little, risk are being required to hold Public Liability Insurance.

In fact this year, whether you are a fire-eater or a story-teller, you are going to need Public Liability Insurance if you want to perform. The reason for this epidemic is the rise in American-style litigation in England. Brandon Tool Hire recently paid out over half a million after a person was paralysed whilst playing at 3am, in a partially deflated, unsupervised bouncy castle. There has understandably been a rush for the possible targets of such actions to protect themselves - or could we say pass the buck? This is done by requiring performers to insure themselves for Public Liability.

Public Liability Insurance provides cover for

costs arising from an action taken by a member of public for personal injury or damage to property caused by the insured. The insurance is active whether the action is successful or not, and covers costs for legal representation and damages should they be awarded.

By insisting on Public Liability Insurance the local councils and other organising bodies avoid potentially-costly court battles, the performer is insured and so everybody wins.

But the bitter pill - the premium must be swallowed by the performer.

Public Liability Insurance to an indemnity limit of £1 million costs around £95 for annual cover. For a high indemnity of £2 million, the premium is around £125. If a greater indemnity limit is required to secure an engagement, it is advisable to increase your insurance cover on a temporary basis rather than pay out for insurance at a level you will only require once or twice in a year.

That is probably just about enough insurance talk. Just remember - at least you only have to do it once a year.

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A friend of **Reginald Roobarb** had a near miss over the summer whilst practising his fire blowing. He, along with the doctors that treated him, considers himself a very lucky man after hiccupping during a fire blow - allowing the residual barbecue lighter fluid to trickle into his lungs.

He was taken to Accident and Emergency four times, twice in an ambulance. He couldn't eat because of the pain across his chest and back - and simple tasks, such as breathing, became literally impossible. The fluid, along with signs of an infection, could be clearly seen on chest X-rays. He suffered more pain than he had ever done before. He had an E.C.G., pain killing jabs in his bottom, nebulisers, blood tests, given ventolin, volterol and co-dydromol antibiotics. Suffering pneumonia, he vomited, starved, could hardly walk because of short breath and didn't drive his car for ten days. He missed work for a fortnight. The doctors were so shocked by his fortunate recovery that he is to be the subject of an article in *The British Medical Journal* and guess what? He'll never blow fire again.

What's the latest craze to travel across the moat from the US? Well it could be rope tricks (see reviews and workshop elsewhere in the mag), or possibly line dancing, the blue rinse, net curtain brigades' idea of a grand night out. Surely whatever it is it can't be as bad as wearing your cap back to front and spending £70 on a pair of designer trainers. OK brace yourselves because, if you perform in any way, just practice in public or run a workshop this one is going to hit you hard whether you like it or not. It's that brave US public tradition of...

An advert on the radio recently ran something like "Have you fallen down a hole left by some workmen, or think that an accident wasn't your fault then phone us, we'll sort out any compensation due to you". Fact: It has been around in the commercial world for a while. In the US a person was successful against a fast food chain because the MacCoffee that landed in their lap was too hot. Try performing in Ireland, the punters there have taken to the new craze big time. Someone had both their arms bitten off by a tiger when they were put through it's feeding hatch. It's true... Well it was Ireland and accidents do happen your Honour... But the tiger is suing because it's food wasn't cooked properly (sorry this is a serious subject!).

So when, in the UK not far from our office, a bloke gets pissed and plays on a bouncy castle at 3am and is crippled for life, you sympathise don't you. Hey, let's face

ring his solicitor because he was used as a volunteer in your show and you damaged his ego for life in front his mates - well you know what I'm trying to say - the more the claims the higher the premiums. We need that policy, not just to get work from Councils but to cover our backs from the latest craze and the solicitors who suck blood from it.

People do claim for the strangest things. Recently a physical theatre group unfortunately lost control of a false leg which hit someone in the front row - well in the face to be precise - it caused some bruising, while another had a member of the audience up on stage who promptly went walkies backwards off the 3 foot drop. Don't laugh at the back - you lot are at home up there and know your way around. It resulted in a claim and, worst of all, maybe a riot on Beadle!

Using members of the audience in hazardous activities

...suing for damages.

"Yes but it will never happen here", I hear you cry, "It's just not British". Well look-out 'cause before you can say "Sorry mate but you walked into my unicycle" there will be a writ from some grey suited solicitor, still damp from his sweaty hand as he excitedly contemplates all the new business he is getting from this growth market, perhaps the wife can have her own Porche after all.

it, it was his choice, poor bugger, and if he'd only broken his arm the worse he would have got was a ribbing from his mates down the local. Wrong! 1/2 million quid compensation from the insurers said the court and an important precedent was set.

OK it's here, I'm insured (better check it's not run out) so what's the problem? Well as a group of jugglers, stiltwalkers, face-painters and workshop wallers we get our insurance cheap. Small groups would not be financially viable for cover.

However, so far claims are quite low, and therefore the premiums are reasonable. When Joe Punter decides to

is covered as long as you use a 'bit of common'. It's alright, say, to knock a stick out of 'a-completely-sane-stable-person's' mouth while passing clubs as long as the stick is not burning at the end. "Which end?" you ask... See, that's the trouble you would have to get into so much detail no one is going to insure you!

So: Cover your backs, get insurance, the more of us the merrier and the lower the premiums.

Be careful. Try not to let anyone have the opportunity to claim.

Keep the fun and anarchy on the streets but remember, the craze is here to stay.

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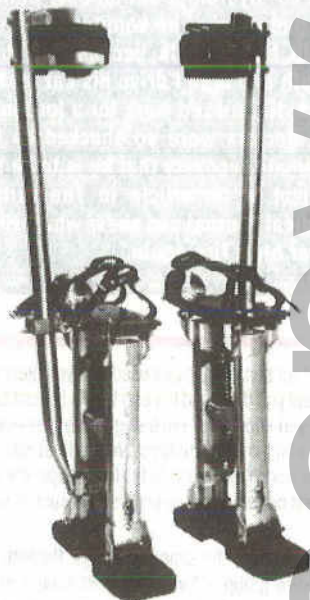


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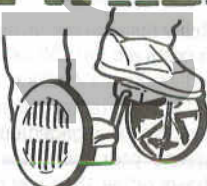
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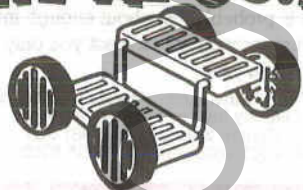
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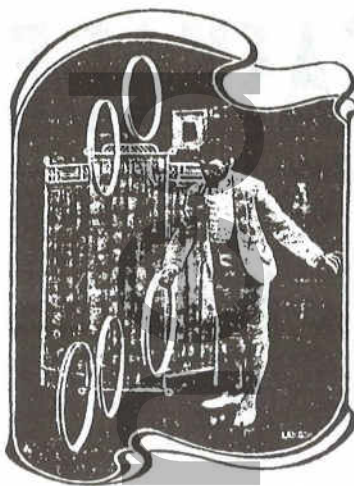
The stage jugglers of 100+ years ago were obsessed with out-doing each other to devise new props and new things to do with them - mass-produced quality equipment has changed a lot of things. The following is excerpted from 'Jugglers and Juggling' by Dr. Henry R Evans, published originally in the February and March 1938 issues of the Linking Ring magazine, and delivered into our hands by a man with a lot of the classic gentleman performer in him still, Pearse Halfpenny...

Among the list of jugglers whom I have seen, I must mention William Everhart, of Columbus, Ohio, who achieved especial fame as a 'hoop rolling expert', in addition to his juggling tricks with balls and a lighted lamp. Chicot, in the 'New York Telegraph', described the feat as follows: "Everhart calls his act 'hoop rolling', but he might, with truthfulness, announce a flying ring act, since he distributes his hoops pretty well all over the stage. He applies the familiar principle by which a forward and retrograde motion is given the hoop at the same time.

This results in the return of the ring when its initial momentum is exhausted and in the same principle, he throws hoops all over the stage, assured that he will not have to run after them or give undue exercise to the small boy in red plush, who is there to act as his caddy."

Everhart would send seven hoops to the other end of the stage, one by one, and they would return to him, roll around him, pass

between his legs, crawl up his back and then down his extended arms to be caught and sent out again, twisting, spinning and bounding. He used, if I remember correctly, the wooden rings of bicycle wheels instead of the conventional hoops, once propelled along the streets



of our cities and towns by little children in the seventies and eighties. Everhart when playing in England was commanded to appear before Edward VII and Queen Alexandra at Buckingham Palace. He acquired a considerable fortune, and retired to his home in Ohio, where he built a pretentious residence. I do not know whether he is still in the land of the living or not, but if he is, I should like to hear from him.

And who among the old-time theatre goers can forget the picturesque personality of D'Alvini, the juggler, whose real name was

William Peppercorn? He was born in London in 1847, and was a cousin of the celebrated clown Governelli. Although calling himself by an Italian name, he made up like a Japanese, and was known as the 'Jap of Japs'. In fact, he had a strongly marked Japanese physiognomy, which lent reality to his assumption of Japanese costumes and *mise en scene*. He brought over the first company of Japanese jugglers that ever exhibited in this country or in Europe. It was while performing in Japan that D'Alvini decided to abandon the conventional attire of a Western juggler and conjurer. He gave entertainments before Queen Victoria of England, Napoleon III of France, the Mikado of Japan, the Sultan of Turkey, Emperor William of Germany, and Czar Alexander of Russia. One of his feats, the 'Fairy Fountain', was a triumph of balancing. In this act, "he built a species of Japanese pagoda out of blocks of wood, resting the foundation on his chin.



THE GREAT EVERHART and HOOP ROLLING.

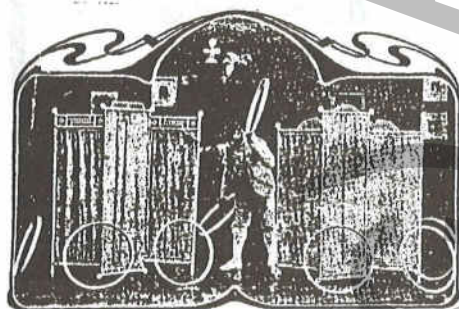


When the pagoda was finished, a stream of water gushed out of it, the structure revolving all the time. The climax was reached when in place of water, streams of ribbon and showers of paper issued out of the fountain". He also performed with great skill the 'Magic Portfolio', which was invented by Robert-Houdin's method. After showing the portfolio empty, he placed it on an ordinary table and produced from it ladies' bonnets, shopping bags, bouquets, four large trunks, ducks, doves, canary birds in cages, rabbits, and last but not least, a small boy. I very much admired his presentation of the 'Magic Portfolio'.

It is perhaps needless to remark to my sophisticated readers that the bonnets, shopping bags, bird cages and trunks were of the collapsible variety, being concealed in the body of the trick table and cleverly introduced into the portfolio by the magician. Everything D'Alvini touched proclaimed his originality; he invented most of his feats. He was the first juggler I ever saw who combined sleight of hand tricks with feats of balancing etc.

D'Alvini had a curious play-bill, at the top of which he depicted his rivals performing the same old tricks, while he, the 'Jap of Japs', occupied the rest of the picture doing the most impossible things.

D'Alvini died in Chigago, Illinois, on July 3, 1891.



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Taking (To) The Streets

Motivation to perform in the rough-edged street environment is always the first hurdle to overcome.

The human preoccupation with fear of failure is most immediately realised when you are standing on the street trying to gather crowd.

Only the strongest and bravest survive, for the street is the most vulnerable place that a performer can place themselves. It is the tendency of the passer-by to regard you as a weirdo or anomaly of society. The first task of the street performer is to accept, unconditionally, that, yes, indeed, you are a weirdo and that this is a good thing. If you were not a weirdo then you would not possess that which enables you to undertake your second task.

The second task of the street performer is to generate an audience by convincing the passer-by that you are not a beggar, a whore, a leper, a drug addict or a homicidal maniac; but, instead, a weirdo that has something of incredible value to offer the world. The third task is to come up with the goods.

anchors

What motivates a passer-by to stop and watch a street show? Before this can be assessed it must be recognised that there are two kinds of potential audience members: those which stop to watch because they have been invited, 'Guests', and those which stop because they are curious, 'Crashers'. Those that have been invited have decided to stop because they have been touched by the performer's charisma. The most successful performers cultivate their ability to relate instantaneously to total strangers like some sort of urban social convener. They take an interest in the passer-by which moves beyond the mundane. In a matter of seconds the performer has to identify something which will alter the primary intention of the passer-by, which is to continue on their pre-planned journey from point A to point B. If the performer is successful at tempo-

rarily *detouring* the journey of their subject [ah, love that Situationist jargon!-d], they must then engage that audience member so that they continue to feel involved in the event; the performer must develop a relationship with that individual or group of individuals. In a sense these people become 'anchors'; no matter how large the circle gets, the performer continues to relate to those original audience members. It makes the guests feel special and in turn they invest more energy into the performance. It also creates a certain amount of desire on the part of Crashers to be included in the same manner. There is an unconscious respect among a street audience for someone who has become an anchor during a performance because it shows that that person has been able to emerge from their shell, take a risk, and contribute to the community's well-being by allowing a total stranger to relate to them outside, in front of an audience. This is not an easy thing to do unless you are an extrovert, which very few non-performers are. Nurturing the guests during a performance also means having a more reliable volunteer base should such resources be required. Someone who has been made to feel welcome is much more likely to come onto stage than a Crasher who is plucked from the back of a crowd before they really know what is going on.

The Crasher arrives after the initial performer-guest relationship has been established. They watch, usually out of curiosity, because it is unusual to see someone present a relationship outdoors in such a theatrical fashion. They watch because they are interested in whether or not the relationship will prove satisfactory from an observational point of view. The Crasher wants to see an entertaining situation, but they do not wish to be involved personally. They are curious to know how it will be resolved, whether or not the performer will maintain the interest of the guest. As long as the performer can hold the attention of the guests, the Crashers will usually tag along, benefiting from what may be considered as another's potential misfortune.

The Science of Assemblage

If no-one else is about to cramp my style, I can take my time and start when it feels right. Of course, ultimately any performer

The Pavement Stage, by Hotch, aka. David Cassel, (Oz resident but very familiar with & to performers/performance in North America & Europe also) is a fine book on street performing (and, Bim Mason's book aside, there aren't many of these with a contemporary slant) - opinionated, controversial, entertaining, pertinent, impertinent, just like a good show; scooting through places, personalities, techniques, etiquette; any street performer would find something that would at least make them smile somewhere. Strangely enough he hasn't managed to publish it properly; so, as a public service and nothing at all to do with getting quality writing for free, we're printing one of the most informative sections, on the practical business of getting a street show started - firstly 'cos it's one of the most detailed treatments of the subject we've seen (not that we necessarily agree with all of it), and secondly 'cos it might just stir someone into making the book better available... Thanks to Haggis for lending us his copy.

Taking (To) The Streets *continued*

has to act on their gut feeling, but when I first arrive at a pitch I sit down with a cup of coffee and count people. 52 people a minute passing my intended pitch is the formula that I have always used when deciding whether or not to do a show. Peer pressure also aids the motivation to start a show. It's one thing for a performer to be out on their own, alone on the street, staring whenever they feel like it, but this is often *not* the prevalent circumstance. A queue will form and each performer will often have to make whatever time and spot they get work for them, usually with all the other acts looking on in various forms of judgement.

Crowd Gathering is the most important skill to be developed by a street performer and is an art unto itself. Performers such as Peppe the Mime, Lee Ross and Danny Lord have excelled at attracting the attention of the passer-by and sculpting them into a willing audience. There are specific qualities that the performer must cultivate in order to be successful in this area: Confidence, Presence, Status, Charisma, Charm and Physical Skill.

Nobody can teach performer presence. It is a deeply personal and lonely tool that only the performer can discover. Confidence begets presence. Presence enables the performer to command attention. The best use of presence is stillness in a high place. This creates a sense of status. Once status has been achieved, then the performer must engage the audience through the use of charm and charisma and finally physical skill. Skills alone do not a performer make. The most delicate transition in the performance is when a performer takes the focus off themselves and puts it onto their skills. If the performer is not able to maintain the previously-attained level of personality, they will lose a portion of their audience and, in turn, the energy they possess. The best performances are those wherein the performer never actually *does* anything, but, instead, focuses on the presentation.

A fundamental truth that I live by when gathering a crowd is that, ultimately, there are NO bad audiences, only different audiences. An audience is only as good as the performer. Many street performers will dispute this dictum and I will concede that some extenuating circumstances exist wherein the audience has been drawn from a difficult source, eg. late night drinking crowds, football fans on the way home from a game or religious fanatics [how about satiated festival audiences? -d]. However, in standard street terms, the performer is constantly dealing with an ever-changing cross-

section of the demographic. Every type of person is represented on the street no matter where you go.

The Psychology of the Pedestrian

When selecting a pitch there are a few factors to consider. Deciding to set up near a transit centre is probably not a good idea. People getting off trains or buses have built up a considerable internal momentum while travelling and so when they disembark from their recent mode of transport their first impulse is to continue moving. Rule of survival: stay away.

Once a performer has attracted attention to themselves, it is important to remember that the public wants them to succeed. They are on the performer's side, that is why they have stopped to watch, stopping is an investment of time. Time is valuable. Even hecklers love the performer. Some performers develop a style which simply does not incorporate the possibility of being heckled, they are hoping that the world will be a good and kind place that will listen to their message without folly and give them money when they ask for it. Not so. The performer must earn the accolades of the audience. The street is the world and any performer who wishes to embrace it must make provision for the potential nastiness that it harbours if they wish to survive.

There are an endless number of ways to sculpt an audience from the ever-moving faceless population and the show will only be a total success if the performer can form that elusive first row of onlookers, something we affectionately refer to as an 'edge'.

CROWD BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The Invitation

A technique that I favour wherein the performer invites potential audience members into the performance by making eye contact and speaking to them with a normal voice about normal things. The idea here is not to scare them away but to win them over with your charm and charisma while simultaneously tuning into their particular head space.

Mimicry

Mimicry is a technique which knows no origins, it has been around as long as tribes

have roamed the earth. Those who have excelled at this particular approach to crowd-gathering include San Francisco's Shield & Yarnell and Peppe Mime of Covent Garden. There are many other performers who use it, but it can be honestly said that Peppe is considered the king of the hill. Other performers have even gone so far as to steal Pep's routines move for move, but none have ever mastered it as he has. I have seen him stop a crowd the length of the Covent Garden Market, perhaps 2000 people plus, simply by aping the passer-by and drawing attention to those aspects of each person he finds humorous. Through this technique, the Peppe fulfils his role as the community 'medicine man' by drawing attention to people's physical shortcomings and showing that there is nothing to be ashamed of. This technique is often performed at the expense of the individual being mimicked and can often result in the performer being physically assaulted by their subject if they do not address the situation with the humour it deserves.

Spontaneous Interaction

The performer confronts unsuspecting pedestrians with situations that demand a response. For example: a hug or a handshake, the swapping of hats, the tying together of ties, or, more dramatically, the pulling down of trousers. Peppe Mime will have a heart attack directly in some-one's path of travel. Lee Ross targets a beautiful woman and begs with her not to leave him, crying and screaming, holding her hand all the while and finally releasing her telling her 'Go away! Leave! Fine, see if I care!' The spontaneous interaction technique is a brilliant vehicle because through it the performer can present a multitude of capsule dramas and short stories with a beginning, middle, and end in the span of twenty seconds. The success of this style is largely based on how daring, outlandish and sensitive the performer is. The city of Brisbane, Australia, has banned Mimicry and Spontaneous Interaction, because they feel that these techniques jeopardise the decency of the citizens. On a more fundamental level it indicates that the city has lost its sense of adventure and playfulness and takes itself too seriously.

Commentary

Lee Ross and Anthony Livingstone have kept crowds in hysterics for up to an hour by making third party observations of the passers-by over a microphone. The magic of this technique is that the subject may never

know that the performer was using them as a visual aid for the performance.

Cacophony

Almost everyone I have ever seen makes noise of some kind or another, be it whistles, bugles, airhorns, chainsaws, squeaky toys, or live human specimens; every performer acknowledges the effective use of noise in attracting attention to themselves.

Defining the Performance Area

Pulling an edge is the most crucial aspect of performing on the street. The definition of the playing space indicates where the audience should stand, and turns a disorganised scattering of undecided onlookers into a *bona fide* concert audience if you can convince them to move up to the line... please! Ropes are good because they can be seen, chalk lines have the same effect. Andrew Elliot, a traditional Indian Fakir, uses his 'magic powers' by pointing his bamboo wand and essentially willing his front row to stand in a 'neat and tidy line, thank you very much.' Andrew is not one to put up with a 'messy audience'. His feeling is that an evenly distributed audience will be a more focussed audience; the viewer who is closer will respond better than the viewer who is far away.

Shouting, Screaming, Big Gestures

Herein the performer does everything possible to attract attention to himself.

Signage

I have taken to saying nothing and simply pointing arrows at myself with the hopes that people, who are conditioned to follow signs anyway, will look at me until I do something spectacular.

Presentation of Dangerous Articles

The Performer waves about big knives, flaming torches, or takes off his clothes. [dangerous articles indeed -d]

Music

A good entrance to a good piece of music always seems to attract attention, it also raises the stakes somewhat as whatever comes

afterward has to be pretty damn good.

Create an event

First rule of Crowd Gathering: members of the public only gather outdoors on the street for two things: spectacular street theatre events and accidents. If an accident happens during your show it's only good if it's part of your show.

I was performing in a group show in Christchurch, New Zealand, just outside the *Dux de Lux* café. Tash Wesp had just finished and it was my job to introduce Jonathan Park. All of a sudden people began to quietly spill out of the theatre which formed the back of our performance area and I looked around to notice that smoke was pouring out of the roof of the building. Our audience, which had been about 300 and quite spontaneously grown to about 450, had fantastic front-row seats in which to view the unfolding situation.

At that point the show could have gone two ways: we could have stopped and been upstaged by the fire; or we could somehow use it as part of the show. Jonathan, with his particularly dry sense of humour and immaculate comic timing said "What's the matter? Why aren't you introducing me?" The audience erupted with laughter. The fire truck pulled up just at the back of our stage, close enough to be a wonderful set-piece but far enough away not to overwhelm the space. I immediately grabbed my plastic cartoon arrows and aided the firemen by directing them to the billowing plumes of smoke. Our next task was to move our newly-acquired audience members out of the way of the firemen, so Tash pulled out her whacking club and started to whack people on the backside to hurry them along. Everything we did seemed to elicit gales of laughter from the audience. Eventually, perhaps some fifteen minutes later, we continued with our show and the fire became unimportant.

The performer should keep the accident theory in their mind at all times. It is possible that they could very well lure an audience by allowing themselves to be hit by a car, or perhaps by setting themselves on fire; however these are not techniques I suggest as their long-term possibilities are rather limited.

Public Health Warning

No matter what techniques are used it goes without saying that no member of the general public should be physically or psychologically harmed in any way.

Edinburgh Fringe Festival

Slava 'Snowstorm'

Slava Polunin, Russian clowning genius, provided the Fringe with a tour de force. Every show was a sellout and rightly so.

A simple- yet stunning- set, colourful costumes, excellent clowning artistry and an original sound-track produced a sublime and exhilarating experience giving adults a chance to become children once more. Several special effects and subtle lighting changes combined to close the show in a savage storm-wind, light and snow blasted in a furious stream over a startled audience. Slava & Co. received a standing ovation for a magnificent performance.

Hic Hoc' - Jerome Thomas

Jerome (ex *Archaos*) [pictured backdrop] has produced a fun, thought provoking show displaying fine juggling skills and brilliant comedy. In the first half (*Hic*) four juggler/dancers create a world defying the laws of gravity. In the second half (*Hoc*) unfolds as Jerome and pianist, *Pascal Lloret*, duel with each other in a fiery dialogue between juggler and musician involving plastic bags and flippers. It's perfectly choreographed leaving you beaming with pleasure at the humour and artistry. Catch them at the 2nd Festival of Improvised Juggling, Malakoff nr. Paris- 6-8 June 1997.

The Edinburgh Circus School

A collaboration between the Fringe, the City Council Arts Outreach Dept and Philip Gandey. Co ordinator, Sarah Jean Couzens. This project started in April to involve local 10- 16 year old deprived youngsters in learning skills from professional tutors and perform at the Festival. Did it all work? Well it appears to have had some problems, sometimes the pro's weren't happy other times the kids got the hump.... BUT, it all ended happily ever after and the shows were a great success. An ambitious project all the same, but if you end up with smiley performers and happy punters then you have achieved more than some at Edinburgh in August.

PIXTRIX by Circustuff

- Fliktriks on disk for your PC

Collections 1-4, each containing six animated juggling patterns - £8.00 each.

Compendium 1 - all 24 of the original Fliktriks animations on disk - £26.00

You will need a PC with either Windows 3.1 or Windows 95.

In the beginning there were some tatty (but nevertheless popular) flick books on sale in the juggling shops. They had been made by filming real jugglers (none of whom bothered to dress up particularly for the occasion) and then hand-tracing each frame. The result was hilarious - the jugglers looked like they were being electrocuted and eyebrows and noses danced and twitched in time to the patterns. One day the two mighty publishing giants of the UK's thriving juggling scene got together and had an idea for a complete revamp: get some new film shot and hire in cartoonist Martin Bedford to do the drawing this time. Legend has it that Martin completed the nine million frames required in one long weekend. The new Fliktriks hit the shelves with technicolour covers, more tricks, less wobble, and no tatty costume since most of Martin's characters work naked, apart from silly hats and shoes. The latest development is the arrival of Pixtrix - Fliktriks for your PC!

Pixtrix are an improvement on the old flick book format for three very good reasons; they are now in full glorious colour - they keep going (something only skilled card magicians could do with Fliktriks) - and they are cheaper, especially if you buy the 'Compendium' set of all 24 tricks. The tricks are fun to watch and most of them are clear enough to be used as serious self-teaching aids. One or two, however, have failed to get through the production process intact.

Somewhere on the cutting room floor lies the missing sixteen frames of Martin Bedford's original animation of Rubenstein's Revenge. Let me explain: in the brand new 'Blather Notation' that I've just invented, Rube's incredible pattern is neatly transcribed as «right-choppity-orbit-over-left-choppity-orbit-over». However, when you check out the Fliktriks version you get «right-choppity-something-left-orb-orbit-something-twiddle». This may be an impressive trick in its own right but is unfortunately both wrong and impossible to juggle. This mistake from the original Fliktriks has been faithfully transcribed into the new Pixtrix computer format along with every other comic wobble, intentional or otherwise, of the originals.

I'll give full marks to the software people, because Pixtrix installed on my PC first time with no problems at all. Once installed, I could load and run the animations at will. For the technically-minded, the animations are in Autodesk Animator format and the disk includes a small application that allows you to run these files. The player supports freeze-frame and single-step but not, as far as I could discover, running in reverse. A bit of a shame really, since all these patterns could be run backwards. You can also set up Pixtrix as a 'screen saver' - in other words, a great way of getting your machine to look like it's doing something useful when you can't be bothered to actually operate it. People that sell you screen savers like to tell you that they are good for your machine because they prevent 'phosphor burnout'. This is something that used to happen to the old 'Pong' video games and cash dispenser screens. In fact there is no such thing as 'phosphor burnout' any longer - your machine will be utterly obsolete long before it wears out.

Comparing Pixtrix to mainstream software products on price would be unfair, since the juggling market is a very low volume market indeed and this inevitably means higher prices. In any case, as I said before, the 'Compendium' set is much cheaper than buying a full set of Fliktriks and it's in colour and it's easier to watch. There are still a few wobbles and giggles but this is classic juggling fun.

Look at it this way. You are a juggler and you have only yourself to blame for that. You are therefore morally obliged to spend your spare cash on colourful, fun, and friendly things like Juffe Bags, Lazydaze trousers, luminous beanbags, polkadot diabolos and all the wonderful stuff that makes juggling conventions so nice to look at. So what have you done? You chucked a thousand quid at a suit who sold you a PC, didn't you? Do you realise that that is

more money than our very own ace cartoonist Martin Bedford has seen in his entire life? And what is your PC doing to make it a nicer world to live in? Not a lot. Get the beast juggling I say!

Charlie Dancey

BJC '96 Edinburgh- The Official Convention Video

50 mins PAL/VHS Taken by Alan Plotkin

Available from Circustuff, 83 Uist Rd., Glenrothes, KY7 6RE. £16.50 plus £1.50 p&p. See their advert.

It's cold, damp and snowing - yes Christmas is coming, oh no it's not, oh yes it is! No it's just the video of Scotland in April. Were you there, will you be in it? Or were you left basking on the cutting room floor in sunny Texas?

This vid is a pro job to blow your mind better than going to a drive-in movie with Hugh Grant. As always Alan captures the atmosphere using fast cuts to music from the convention (remember the ceilidh) and stuff from his own collection. The action in the gym and workshops from all angles mixed in with a voyeur's view of the organisers' party, it's true they didn't make any money or they would have paid to keep that out. The three person Gay Gordons was more to do with whisky than gin methinks!

Fans of the diabolos, get your order in now, all the best of the British were there just trying to impress each other. Fritz and Laurent: Spectacular stuff along with Sam's double bounce the ultimate, unrepeatable finish to any diabolos routine.

If you want a photographic record of the UV shows the video is the best way to get it, spoilt only by the nerds with flash cameras. If you are one of these people and are disappointed with your pics send them into The Catch so we can publish them (anonymously of course) and, hopefully, future nerds can get better results when they pick up their prints at Boots.

Bits of Springboard, bits of camping and Renegade along with Devil Stick Pete's bits: if your nerves made you jump at the scary scene in 'Independence Day' this will give you nightmares.

Here's a tip if you want to be seen in the vid, do the Parade on a giraffe/stilts/bright costume/or actually juggle! Or you could have entered the 'fun below the castle' games. There are some good hints on how to win at gladiators and the big toss-up is better on video than stills.

The Public Show includes: Haggis and Charlie, Ben Jennings, Jay-rock-juggling-to-weep-for-Gilligan, Sam I Am, Stretch People and Blink followed by a welcome dose of their Renegade mates Blim.

Christmas is coming will you be watching those sad old movies on the telly? Oh no you won't, oh yes you will!

The JSA

Will Rogers' Epic Film: "The Roping Fool", Mark Allen Productions

Video distributed by Butterfingers, £16.95

What's the latest juggling skill that's literally hitting the streets? Well would you believe it's roping! So those up-to-date-finger-on-the-pulse people at Butterfingers from the Wild West of England have polished their spurs and blown the dust off another archive video fresh from the land that gave us MacEverything and Renegade.

Will Rogers, not to be confused with Roy, was a vaudeville comedian and Wild West Show performer and made this film in 1925; it can be seen in its original uncut form. In silent movie style (you have to be able to read, but that's OK 'cause I see you can) Will throws a bondage demonstration that would make even Paul Daniels curl at the toes. The warning at the beginning states «This picture is a demonstration of what years of practice and application of one thing will accomplish.» He's good, and nothing, but nothing, is safe from this dude. Mad cows, goats, ducks, dogs, hats, rats, cats (animal rights people look the other way) and even some poor sod minding his own business sitting at the side of the street gets to feel the lash of his loop. Of course he even gets his girl by roping her wedding finger, how's that for

a sad but original intro down the local disco. Please, if you try it don't blame me!

Loads of tricks, most are in the book, done in the then new slow-motion gizmo which includes the Will Rogers 'three rope catch' all done to Dixieland music, the heckler-from-hell Medicine Man and his Mystic Meg sidekick predicting each trick.

Who is the stranger in town and will the hangman's noose be a fitting end for the man who ropes in his sleep or will there be a twist in the plot?

If you're looking for something different to annoy those kids on that boring shopping precinct wandering gig then Roy can help you.

Yee Hah!

SA

Will Rogers Rope Tricks

A Western Horseman Book by Frank Dean

Distributed by Butterfingers, £7.50

So you've seen the film, or should have, now read the book. That's the order to do it, see the action by the expert then read how it's done. Many of the photographs are stills from the film 'The Roping Fool' while good drawings demonstrate the arm and rope movements. Taking you from making your honda (the loop through which the rope slides, not a Japanese form of transport) and the flat loop to body loop variations, two-rope tricks and the butterfly, not an opera thank you madam. For those advanced cowhands there's multiple rope catches, ocean waves and for those people who spend a lot of time in queues for buses, ice-cream and festival toilets there's a section on knots.

I have to say that this is a skill I have yet to try, so the first thought that comes to mind is, «why?» Perhaps it's because I don't have anything to catch. Even mounted on my uni the idea of roping some steer (who is not going to be pleased to say the least) that drags me to the nearest china shop worries me as much as meeting Lee Jellyhead in the final of uni-gladiators. I suppose it's a good way to stop those people who walk away from your crowd when you come out with the bottle lines, but it is the latest thing so I must have a go. See you at the next convention, rope in one hand, my old and trusty cap-gun in the other.

How To Trick Rope by Clare Johnson

Published by Wild West Arts Club in USA

Distributed by Butterfingers, £19.95

Clare is one of the famous American trick ropers and finished this book at the grand age of 87, that according to the inside cover should make Clare 89 now. To be that good in the macho world of Wild West Arts is no mean feat so it's a good job that Clare is a bloke. Maybe he was the inspiration for the Country and Western hit 'A Boy Named Sue' but whatever, I suppose, he had to be good. Whether this book is as good as Frank's I don't feel qualified to judge, at the time of going to press we were fresh out of rope experts on hand to do the reviews, although as a novice/non-starter there is a lot of interesting folklore and stuff to make it a good read (like letting your friend «burn in the horn» by doing piales on your new saddle. Sounds very matey to me!). One thing I do know Clare is not the worlds best illustrator as the stick men are very basic. But hey, lets not be too hard on the old feller, hot dang, it seems to cover everything and more in its 320 pages (compared to the 52 of Frank's) so your best bet is to buy both and then you're well sorted. There's a good section for you history buffs showing that the art didn't originate from the new world, as some claim - mentioning no names Will Rogers Jr - but from the middle eastern nomads. Well strike me down in Texan oil! Actually in Clare's favour the book was edited, type set, photos taken of, and by, his trick roping mates so I bet it is a more comprehensive read. Oh god I must get a length and have a go..... Now will nylon, dacron, polyethylene or maguery rope be best? Well all I've got here is a bit of diabolos string.....!

SA



FEEDS...CAPTION.CONTEST

It was all doing so well, too. The plot was it'd be so persistently rude to caption contest entrants they'd be humiliated out of entering. This would in time allow me to keep all the prizes and supplement my income by undercutting the big juggling multiples on price. No-one would ever know 'cos i'd just make up a stream of imaginary insane balloon modellers and the like to people the page (some of them might even get popular) and paper it with low-level humour - and of course i could save loads of time by judging it myself.

All quite swimmingly, then, until the publishers were investigated by one of these Commissions for Probity in Public Life (sounds dirty but isn't), and needed to draw attention away from their massive Share Option Scheme and Monopoly in the Geriatric Unicycle market. And as usual it's me that suffers. We had a *big meeting*. Allegations were made. Photographs were brandished, no, well graphs were brandished, and the Circulation Manager proved definitively that people's attention (we film you reading this in the shop and see where your eyes linger so stop that *right now!*) was severely reduced by the time they got to the middle of the mag, which is where we concentrate all the subliminal advertising (Vote Green! Fnord!), and that won't do no not at all Mr. Hoover no sir.

So thereby, hereby, a change of heart. I'm going to be nice to you - or at least to those of you who remain and whose crabbed writing I can actually read, no, sorry, those of you who have so kindly deigned to share their wit and wisdom with us on the conscious plane. Doesn't matter whether you could actually work out what was happening in that there Hogarth or just decided to wring the usual toilet humour (yeuchh) out of the obvious figures, oh no, oh yes... You're all marvellous, and let me tell you why...

Simon Farrow of Houghton-le-Spring (whata lovely place!) has a *simply marvellous* turn of phrase, as you will see: '*Little Tommy's weak bladder was a welcome contribution to the rich diversity of mosses and lichens on the railings*' - ah, such poetry, such a perspicacious evocation of micturation, i'm sorry we can't give you a prize, Simon, but have a go at the Laureate any time old son.

Ice Nog (don't say that quickly) of fragrant Erdington, the sophisticated end of the cultural wonderland that is Birmingham: '*That's a flute, not an ear trumpet!*' You can tell that Mr Dragon has made a commitment to engage his humour with the problems of the differently-gifted in matters auditory, something of a paragon in the difficult field of politically forward-thinking humour, you must deliver us a lecture from your immense reflections on the subject some time soon.

And then there's the subtle skill of Sally Lister of Gloucester (ah! what vistas that name inspires!). Sally sees so clearly that the man in the window is doing the old Jim Rose-style sword-through-the-head-routine, but she's afraid of frightening us with the obvious, or hurting ourselves by laughing too much, that she sensitively clothes the joke in levels of subtle wordplay so as to reduce its impact while still letting the heart of the laugh through. No, i'm not going to reprint it, i'm saving it for my next after-dinner speaking engagement.

Ah! Pete Noffitt from that fair city by the bay, Cardiff of course, it's most desirable quarter, in fact, Splott itself! What a pleasure it is to read his elegant handwriting! *The Guy in the window is saying* (thanks for helping us there, Pete) '*Not another bunch of Circus Performers thinking they can play music as well!*'. That touched us deeply. It's almost as though the dear boy was writing from personal experience. I can feel a prizewinner coming on.

But what's this? Surely it can't be 'Wavey' Dave Downes? Not the one from Rugby? He of the famous exploding trousers? What joy! And look! He's written us loads! Oh goodie! '*Not to be outdone by the travelling musicians, George shows 'em his sword-through-the-head trick*' - such originality! But there's more! *Three monkeys on the roof?* How clever of you to spot that, it's a running motif in Hogarth, don't you

know... '*With sophisticated flair* [just like yours, David] *Galen reloads his supergun peashooter and takes aim at the small child's head*'. Political commentary married to a reference which will warm the heart of every festival performer in the country. You really know your audience. perhaps you should be writing the whole of this magazine. '*Hey missie, your dog's pooped on my plate!*' - how did he spot that? That incident was painted out by order of the National Gallery in 1817. You must have an original at home. '*Your baby's a bit stiff, love*' - such talent for observation, we must surely award some prizes and substantial advances on your next novel here...

But no competition would be complete, of course, without that prince of humorists, dear old Pete Rayner of dear old Pompey. You don't know how much we look forward to his letters...

Oh sod it. I can't keep this up any longer. This kind of thing just goes so far against the grain. These bastards stopped me running off with the Devilsticks from heaven, those manufactured by no less than *Absolute*, of course, the Multi-lens decos, that's what always gets me, not to mention the *LWANNOUS* model, i've wanted one of those since i pressed my nose on the *Boggle* window as a small child. And to think that they'll be winging their way to Wales & Warwickshire respectively. It's almost bad enough to take my mind off the thought of sending those *Beard Ball Sticks*, the toy of tomorrow they are too, to such a persistent correspondent as Rayner. I ask you! Just 'cos the blighter makes us *laugh!*

I was almost not going to repeat the best ones out of spite, but then i realised i have to keep the small-print levels up to standard, so here goes. '*All this noise is killing me, i'm de-composing*' nice handle on the Handel there, Pete. '*Has any of you kids got any chewing-gum? my wig keeps falling off*', creative anachronism, oh yes, '*Hello, hello, William Hogarth?*'... Good... I'm going mad here, please can you draw in a Policeman? Ah, nothing beats a good running joke two years in... '*For God's sake dear, what's the point of me buying you a new hat if you keep it in the box?*'. You get the picture. No, we keep the picture, you get the prizes. Bastard. Let's be seeing you all in the next Convention Renegade, then.

Keeping the cultural standards up to our new-found high, then, this illustration is from the illustrious (yuss!) Sir John Tenniel, and i, at least, recognised it as being '*You are old, Father William*', which probably makes me old, but... Find us a caption (if this was *The New Statesman* or something clever we'd be asking for verse) and you'll be in with the most popular kids on the block with the new **ASTRO BALLS!!!**

What the Rubenstein's are *Astro Balls*? you may well ask. Well i've been asked to tell you, as it happens... They're quite the newest thing in luminous props, two bright red LEDs (for the moment, other colours coming) to get the best out of your night-time juggling, especially with fast moves and fakes, go down at a Rave like free E they will. And the big advantage with these is that they're very robust (1 year guarantee), don't mind getting wet or dirty (will juggle underwater, apparently?), and run off batteries rather than having to be recharged themselves - which still gives you the option of being green but also means you can keep a spare power set for those long sessions. Useful, eh? Desirable indeed! All you have to do is get a caption off to us by the end of November and some of these bouncing babies could be yours, courtesy of the manufacturers, **The Cosmic Ball Company**. Three for third prize, four for second, and a whopping five for the funniest of folk. On your marks, get set...



19th European Juggling Convention, Grenoble : 12 - 18 August 1996

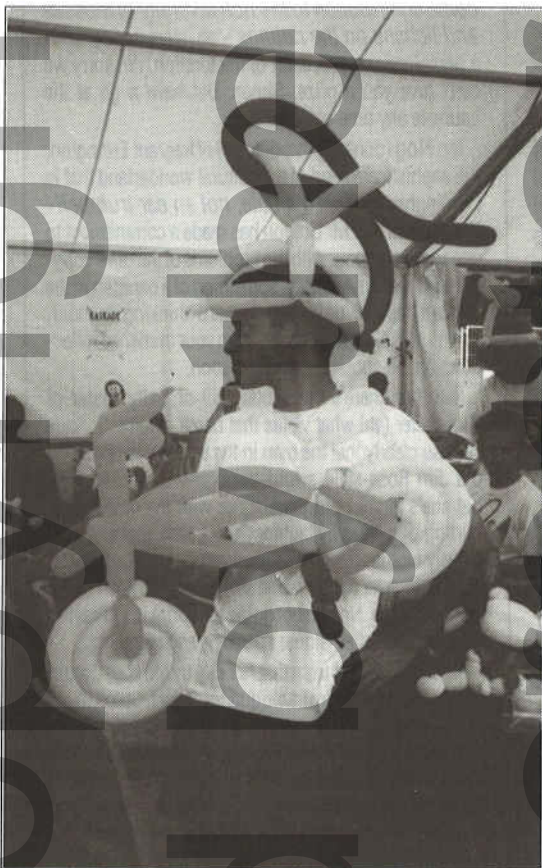
WORDS + PICTURES = DAVE MEAH

The magnificent site in the *Parc de Isle d'Amour* (Love Island) on the outskirts of Grenoble and situated in a valley with huge cliffs on one side was a veritable sun-trap. There were lots of organisers in *Entre Ciel et Terre* and things seemed to be going well, even in Friday's temperature of a whopping 28°C, the tented village was taking shape. The renegade held 650 people. This turned out to be too small and the sides had to be rolled up to accommodate people. Another for workshops/practice area, 3 traders tents, a bar and a caterers tent.

Saturday, a hot humid day, saw quite a few people turning up so registration had to be set up a day early, many spent the time adding the final touches to the venue, putting up signs, and testing the beer and wine - well someone had to do it! Saturday night saw a fantastic 4 hour wind, thunder and lightning show which sent out lots of people to hold down the big tents.

Sunday and things kicked off in full swing - someone worked for an Aids Awareness Programme and had acquired a couple of thousand fancy packaged condoms and everyone who registered was issued with one - a nice touch, although it was fun telling some people that they were the Convention pass and had to be worn and shown at badge control points - yeah I know we're sick but we thought it was funny at the time.

Lots of Brits arrived stressed out having had delays by trains and planes, missed connections, lost luggage etc. The accommodation block was a 20 minute walk from the site adjacent to the train stop, so people got off the train and walked to the site to be told that the accommodation was back the way they'd come - double lugging of bags in the heat - we took a bit of (deserved) abuse for not sorting a registration point out near the train stop.



What is that on his head?

Nic and Andy, of *Gothenberg ABBA* fame, rigged up a 24 hour Convention Swimming Pool - well a paddling pool actually. Unfortunately no pictures survive of Nic skinny dipping and playing at statues, legs and arms akimbo and spouting water from his mouth (and he didn't appear to be wearing his Convention Pass!). The official pass was a small jigsaw-type puzzle which most people were quite happy to wear. Not too many people sneaked in although there were a few thefts until the security was stepped up - security all looked like rugby players and their dogs looked the same - it did cure the thefts though.

Acts (mostly French) had been booked to do a turn every night prior to the renegades and these seemed to go down well, some of them circus skills, some musical. Top shows were Spectral FX who put on a stunning show and got a standing ovation from the crowd, they just get better and better. Barbarins Fourchus - a 15 man band played a gig to rapturous applause too.

There were two gyms - one 24 hour - adjacent to the camp-site and another about 20 minutes walk away although a shuttle bus had been put on for this.

Sean Gandini despite the very recent loss of a close relative who lived nearby managed to put on a brilliant show on Wednesday at *Gym Buclos* but had to withdraw from the Public Show.

Tuesday was parade day and a few performers were invited along to the Mayor's Office for a press conference prior to the parade. After an impressive display on the ground floor - with Jules doing slack rope, Jeremy James with his amazing rings, John Nations performing his magic, Peter Weiss on giraffe and accordion getting the office staff dancing on the balcony, and *Les Quatre Quarts* doing some impressive passing routines - we went into the *Press Conference* which seemed to last far too long. However, they fed us with many glasses of champagne and magnificent pastries. Peter Weiss set the unbelievable record of eating 17 cream filled cakes - well, we didn't want to let the Mayor down (hic).

Coming out of the Mayor's Office and seeing the assembled parade was an uplifting sight. The Parade was the best I've ever been on and went through some of the back streets of Grenoble with fantastic costumes, clubs and balls being thrown up to appreciative people in apartments to throw back down again, and tops of bus shelters were well utilised for club passing. It was good seeing another side to Grenoble other than its concrete monstrosities. A very good turnout made the parade long and slow, but ideal for popping into sidewalk cafes for a refresher along the way. It finished in an old square where the Stromboli Brothers gave an excellent musical show to round things off. Over 4 hours from start to finish and people were ready to go back to site However, the police on duty ignored any of the pre-planning and refused to allow the buses into the square unless they paid a penalty fee for entering a restricted access area. The bus company refused to pay and it all ended in chaos as hundreds of jugglers wandered the streets looking for their buses.

Unfortunately no one knew - the bus company, the police or the organisers! Lots of people made their own way back to the site, others just hijacked buses, but eventually they were found, purely by chance, and everyone returned safely, but late, back to site.

The Public Show was held in a 1200 seater theatre necessitating two shows, both the same. The show

GREAT in GRENOBLE

wasn't bad, but considering the skills on display at the Convention should have been better and perhaps longer.

Sem and Theresa started with their well polished uni routine, always a crowd pleaser and a good opener. Next was Aurelion Bory doing some nice devil stick. Star of the show was Francoise Rochais, IJA gold medal winner 1995, who did some beautiful baton juggling with 4, 5 and 6 batons- very graceful, very skilful, totally captivating and enchanted the audience. Marcus Brouard did a UV spot centred around the story of the Phoenix which was reasonably well done but went on far too long- sorry Marcus. Edward Skwinsky from Israel did some impressive football juggling followed by the Quatre Quarts- very impressive club passing routines which held everyone spellbound by their artistry- I would have liked to have seen more of them.

Georges Cibola - beautiful sensuous diabolo stuff followed by Jorg Helms, recently graduated from *Circomedia*, who did an interesting cigar box routine centred around the forces of good and evil and involving lots of graceful movement around stage.

Takao Iwai, another *Circomedia* person, who did a short but good hat manipulation routine. Rounding the show off was Jochen Schell with a beautifully skilful and visual ring routine.

There were 2,600 jugglers from 22 countries in Grenoble with about 600 pre-registering, an impressive number of people to cater for.

Speaking of catering- there had been problems in finding caterers as all of them wanted to have exclusive rights. The one who finally set up didn't have a clue what vegetarian food was so after negotiation another trader catering solely for veggies was allowed to come on site and open only when the other trader closed. Fortunately 'SLOW FOOD' did open earlier every night and supplied some absolutely delicious food to appreciative customers. Doody and Jill who are 'SLOW FOOD' both come from a circus background and are a superb double act with hearts of gold. They fed people who had no money, accepted bartered goods for food, and looked after the Crew magnificently - hopefully they'll be in Turin.

Captain Bob's were there too- offering their own brand of hospitality to those who needed a chill out zone (Scott and Jackie were superb as ice cream vendors and suppliers of iced lemonade, they also did a really good show on the last night) - a talented and popular group who should be a must at every Convention too.

The on site bar run by *Entre Ciel et Terre* was a big hit with all sorts of fun and antics going on from Sabines Oompah Band playing through the night, to the bar staff serving in 'pinnies' and their underwear and making people order drinks through a loud-hailer to offering the 'Golden Bollocks Postal Service' - a letter box on the bar for mail to be posted out. The licence had been granted on the condition that no



Mountains and mountains of fun.

strong liquors were sold or displayed. However, I do have a dim recollection of Tequila Slammers, lots of pastis and the mysterious intriguing 'Purple Club' appearing rather a lot! The bar also offered free loan on Kangaroo boots- a kind of ski boot with an eye shaped spring on the bottom- enabling people to bounce around, bizarre to watch and great fun to play with.

Other problems were not enough toilets and not in the right places, same with showers too. Too many dogs wandering loose on site, and there was no information desk for a lot of the time, but on the whole the Convention was really well organised. One of the funniest things that happened was some English people mistakenly buying packaged sausage type dog food, cooking and eating it. There were several dogs hanging around them and they eventually discovered their *faux pas* when a French girl translated the packaging. We Brits have never been much good at languages.

The Games went well once they'd been set up although it took longer to compere, having to do it in both French and English. Haggis, Jules and Florence worked hard to make the games work although I don't think they will have another limbo contest ever again.

It was a scorching afternoon and well attended by both public and jugglers. Michel Arret from Belgium won the blindfold unicycle race easily, whilst Francoise Rochais won the five club endurance beating John Nations, lasting over 2 minutes. All winners received a bottle of *vin rouge* and a half dozen baguettes - well I'm sure they have

enough clubs and silicons already!

The Convention Meeting heard suggestions that future dates wouldn't be confirmed until six months beforehand- greeted with disbelief by some- do they have any idea how hard it is to find and confirm a site with local authorities?

The next two years have been decided - the 20th European will be in Torino (Turin) Italy, coming in with an unchallenged bid! Sounds as though it'll be good especially for those travelling overland through the *Mont Blanc* region and the *Val d'Aosta* - beautiful scenery.

The 21st European in 1998 will be in Edinburgh, Scotland the first week in August 1998 ending just as a Fringe Festival starts. I know it snowed and was cold when you came here in April but we already have a few special things lined up for you (none of which involve cold or snow you'll be pleased to know!) We are looking for volunteers to help on a regular basis and even take control of some day to day site duties. If anyone has any skills to offer - particularly languages - then we'd be delighted to hear from you.

A lot of people worked really hard to put Grenoble on - many thanks to them and all who made the journey. Traders all did well and people were terrific in helping clear and clean the site at the end.

Special thanks to *Entre Ciel et Terre* and Alain for coping with the pressures, financial and otherwise, of organising such a big, fabulous event.

FAIRY GODMOTHERS ARE REAL!

Circumedia won the lottery, or at least some of it, £49,500 to be precise. And sensible types they are, they're not spend spend spending it on beer, but buying extra teaching/training equipment, a van (so as to set up a touring production company), office equipment and more computer bits so they can go on the dread internet. Time for another party yet, guys?

BJORN & BENNY TOO!

Also in the money money money recently are **Broll Cymraeg** (does that mean Welsh Umbrella?) in North Wales, scoring a cool £1million off Camelot & Brussels combined, to refurbish a historic building in Mostyn as a centre for masterclasses and performance (including an outdoor performing area) in Circus, theatre, music, dance and street entertainment. If you live in Flint, Denbigh or Wrexham you'll hear all about the new Robert Davies Memorial Hall, aka. The Clocktower, soon enough. The rest of us can just sigh enviously and ring up David Alexander (the One Man Showman) the new director, until he invites us out to lunch.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SPACE

Not to be outdone, the Londoners are spending money like they've just worked a credit-card scam: building work on the Coronet Street building to give them better reception area, staff room, more classroom and office space, due to be finished by early December. They've also been awarded substantial sponds creamed off the Lottery profits for the conversion of the old power-

station's erstwhile combustion chamber into more training facilities and a mid-size venue, plans for which are well on the way.

Incidentally, if you own or even work for an expansive and aware company in the London area who fancy something a little different for their Christmas Party, ring Andy Hill about their special bespoke Cabaret evenings. He and they are on 0171 729 9522, fax 9422.

BARKERING MAD

Those canny **Circustuff** chaps are moving into the WebPage biz bigtime (following Jellyhead, mind you...): first up is a site of their own entitled **BARKERS** - not after Ronnie, of course, but following those blokes & blokesses who used to 'talk up' or advertise a show before it arrived, or more likely in competition with others on a crowded fairground. Anyways the idea of the site is to list every circus-related show anywhere in the world, be that big or small top, street, cabaret, festival, TV or even probably VR.

Of course they aren't going to go out there looking for it, they rely on you to tell'em, but it's free, and easy to search and to post information; in fact for simple events you can enter them via Email and watch them appear on screen. You do get some degree of security, however, before the more despicable aspects of trad. circus rivalry clone themselves into cyberspace [wot?] - there's a password so the system knows it's you and no-one else can change your details. It's all virtually exciting and you can be sure Master Hutton would love to fill your ear (even if just electronically) about how good it will be for you: find it and him on Email barkers@circustuff.co.uk, or see it for real on <http://www.demon.co.uk/circustuff/barkers/>

Ah, but it's not as collectable as print, is it?

NO BAH HUMBBUG, BUD

That piece of paper that fell out of your copy of *The Catch* and you can't find any more is all about a **Dickensian Busking Competition** to be held in Rochester (-upon-Medway), that charming little city in Kent, on the 7th & 8th December. They're trying all sorts of tricks to induce tourists and happy shoppers to flock to town that weekend, billed as a 'Dickensian Christmas' with parades, bands, costumed processions, so the organisers assure us that hats will be 'excellent', and they'd like the buskers of Europe to flock to join in. You need to know more about it than we can tell you here, which can to be achieved by phoning 01634 72777x2250.

EXTRA-LEGGY KIWIS

New Zealand Stilt Company *Don't Look Down* sent us some blurb and since we don't know what else to do with it we're mentioning it here - they're after gigs in the 1997 summer season. Their shows combine stilt work with puppetry & stage combat as well as acro, juggling & whathaveyou, but since we haven't seen them we can't tell you any more. If it sounds like your cuppa geyser and you run a suitable event i suggest you get hold of them c/o PO Box 11-203 Wellington Aotearoa / New Zealand tel. +64 4 385 6697. And good luck to 'em too.

EY! MEESTER!

More Damn foreigners invading our pages, this time in a different mode, but another good story... Seems some bright spark



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CATCH THIS - EVENTS DIARY

from Spain introduced juggling & the like to some chums he met in **Uruguay**. As you might expect, it caught on faster than a bottle of the local firewater (the intended-to-be-drinkable variety), and before you know it they had a group, a circus workshop in fact, in downtown Montevideo, had attracted everyone in the country who knew the slightest thing about circus skills (not very many) out of the woodwork, were developing a UV show, etc. All going club-swingingly apart from one thing. They're all not of the wealthiest (Uruguay, remember) and there isn't anywhere they could go and buy gear even if they were... They're after basic workshop equipment or even a few more advanced bits, and they'd love to hear from you, oh yes... Find them through Guillermo Hill (not a bookmaker's) Lucas Obes 1269, C.P. 11700, Montevideo, Uruguay, tel. 00 598 2 296441, or Alejandro Garcia, RUMBOS, Rio Branco 1377, piso 7, C.P. 11100, Montevideo, Uruguay tel. ...902407, or even fax them on 983700. / Oh yes, and they're called **Los Juglares**.

FLY WITH THE CHICKENS

Wishing they were (still) abroad are *The Battery Chickens* & clockwork pals from the **Lanzarote Juggling Convention**. They had the cheek to send us a note about a reunion, verging on the smug, I'd say, but it did include the useful information that 15 people went to Lanzarote #2, it sounds like a lot of fun (bastards) and they're seriously thinking of doing it again in the coldest part of January (funny that, I went to Yorkshire where they live in the coldest part of January), and also maybe somewhere else even more exotic. You can get more jealousy-inspiring details from them c/o Buffalo Chickens, 23 Saint Leonard's Road, Gillington, Bradford BD8 9QE.

JUDGE COMMENDS 'NORMAL' JUGGLING

Another kind of warming story comes nicked out of *The Scottish Daily Record* by David Powell of Belfast (¿huh?), concerning a fireblower/juggler in Grangemouth who ended up threatening his neighbour with immolation, or somesuch, and blowing (and 'pointing', which sounds dangerous, not) a bit of lit paraffin his way after a bit of a slanging match between them. Then the feller has the cheek to round off in mitigation with «I'm now going to give up on the fire-juggling business and concentrate on normal juggling.» You mean it's safer?

ORANJEBOOMBOOM!

Our mates, let's face it, *everybody's* mates **Stickleback Plasticus** (the irrepressible PeeWee & Emma) won the big prize at the **Oranjeboom Straatfestival** in Rotterdam. Now I'm pretty certain that at least *that* would have involved some beer somewhere on the way...

Oct.6 5th East Midlands Juggling Convention Connaughty Centre, Corby, 10am-10pm. After a year's layoff, the Ballsup boys & girls are back with a bang (and without a cabaret) - more workshops than your stupidest dreams and a special **3-Ball Convention** with unimaginable treats for all levels of the non-numbers majority. The whole thing for only £6 (£3 under-16) and it usually sells out so you'd better get onto them soon. Cheques payable to Corby Youth Centre & sae. to East Midlands Juggling Convention, Connaughty centre, Cottingham Road, Corby, Northamptonshire, NN17 1SY. Tel. 01536 204258 fax 403360.

Oct.11-13 Lodi Juggling Festival Mickle Grove Park & Zoo, Californiy US

Oct.18-20 5th Channel Islands Juggling Convention Alderney. Wondered what had happened to this one. Everything you want and more, beautiful (beach!) surroundings, extra-friendly people, excellent experience all round. Jane on 01481 822809, fax 823484.

Oct.sometime Hay-on-Fire Hay-on-Wye, on a Busby Berkeley *Stairway to Heaven* Hollywood theme!

Nov.8-10, Quad Cities Jugglefest Bettendorf, Iowa US.

Nov.23-29 1st Laos International Juggling Festival National Circus of Lao PDR, Vientiane, Laos. The National Circus is 30 years old and is holding a party in their 1-Ring Russian-style Circus Building with guests from Vietnam, China & Cambodia. Elephant juggling contest (that's juggling *on* an elephant), street shows, fire extravaganza, Mekhong River cruise. Only costs £37 (\$60 or 1500 Bhat) plus £10 train from Bangkok (but of course you have to get there first...). Pre-registration is mandatory for visas, etc. so get in touch *now* (at least before Oct.16) with *Serious Fun*, 114 Aree Samphan 2, Phaholyothin Soi 5, Bangkok 10400 Thailand. Tel: 66-2 279 6042 or 613 6914 (which is also a fax), Email Jude_Smith@sala.icn.net WOW!

Dec.7-8 MissalToad Convention Bath College of Further Education, Window Art Centre, 9am.Sat-9pm.Sun. £15 adv (£10 kids) lots more on the day. Cheques and declarations of undying love redeemable only by C.Jackson to Shambles, 12 Norman Road, Warmley, Bristol, BS15 5JA. Bath's buggery for parking, better to use Newbridge Park & Ride (Upper Bristol Road). Accommodation on hall floor Sat night (only). Bar, nice & cheap veggie caff, ace show (as long as Flash isn't in it), exceptionally silly games, some unlikely workshops (Chocolate Fondue? Femidoms? Heckling?) and all the

likely ones as well, and, doubtless some MissalToad about the place. Enquiries, workshop/show offers & scams, and the usual declarations to Claire on 0117 961 5529.

Dec.7-8 Dickensian Bussing Competition Rochester-on-Medway, Kent. See news and ring 01634 727777x2250 for entry form. Saturday's a parade with costumes, bands, etc.

Feb.9-16 13th Hawaiian Vaudeville Festival Big Island. Full details including transportation tips from Tom Kidwell, 145 Surfside (!) Santa Cruz, California 95060 USA, tel. +408 425 7996 or try Stevie G & Susi Q, Lerchenrain 14, 8046 Zürich, Switzerland tel: +01-371 7808.

Apr.10-13 10th British Juggling Convention Nottingham. Workshops & Acts wanted NOW! No time like the present, as me old da used to say, etc. Also your ideas of what/who/when you want to see what/who/why, etc. Who's up for a crack at the **World 3-ball Endurance record** (over 11 hours!)? Media attention, etc., guaranteed; or Gatto's 45min2sec 5 clubs? Well, if not, you might have some old juggling kit you've got lying around to auction for BJC Oxford '97. BJC X, 151 Crompton Street, New Houghton, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG19 8TJ. Tel. 01623 811467, fax 650445, Email: WhatAPalaver@msn.com, & web-wise try <http://www.demon.co.uk/circustuff/bjc/1997/>

May 3 4th Birmingham Circus Convention staking the date out early!

May 8-11 2nd 12th (?) Nordic Juggling Convention Aalborg, Denmark. Sofiendalskolen, Lange Müllersvej 18 9200 Aalborg SV Denmark, details from Inger Krusegaard, Fredericagade 34 I.IV, 9000 Aalborg, tel.+45 98 12 08 51 or Jo/rgen Mortensen, Fax:+45 98 15 63 22.

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

To get netted & have yer stuff on 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. Virtually done it already?

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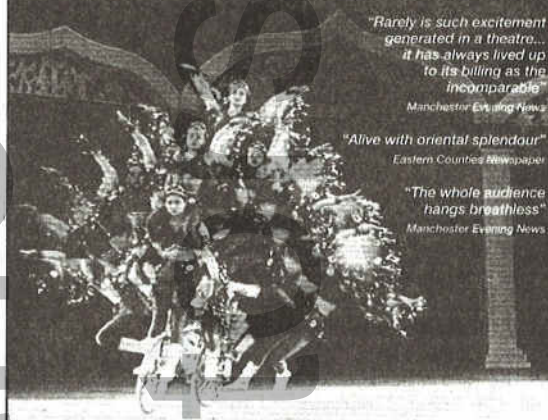
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Booking hotline 0171 589 8212 (many sellouts last visit)

one-offs

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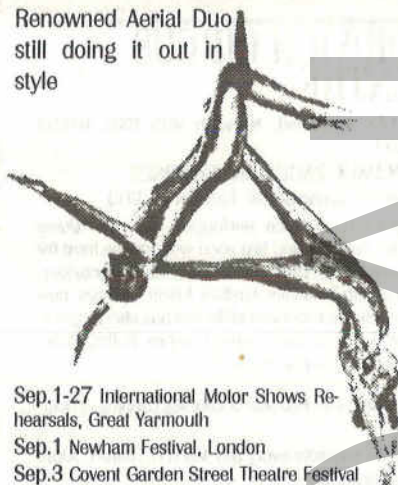
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Sep.1-27 International Motor Shows Rehearsals, Great Yarmouth

Sep.1 Newham Festival, London

Sep.3 Covent Garden Street Theatre Festival

Sep.6 Guildhall, London

Sep.12 Covent Garden Street Theatre Festival

Oct.1-13 Ford Motor Show, Paris

Oct.14-27 Ford Motor Show, Birmingham

Oct.31 Halloween, Suffolk

Dec.16-20 Circus Space Corporate Cabaret

Dec.21 The Circus Space Cabaret

Dec.23 Circus Space Corporate Cabaret

FFI, please contact Julia and Simon on 0181 348 3292

THE RIGHT SIZE

in *Stop Calling me Vernon*

«Visionary Nonsense», said The Economic Times of India (and they should know about that sort of thing) - renowned physical comedians cross vaudeville with surrealism and serious bits, and, whaddya know, it's directed by Josef Houben of *Complicité*. Sounds pretty essential.

Nov.15/16 Cambridge Drama Centre, Covent Garden

Nov.19 The Drama Studio, Exeter College

Nov.21 Widnes Queen's Hall

Nov.26-28 St.Heller Jersey Arts Centre

Nov.30 Kendal Brewery Arts Centre

Dec.5 Bonnington Theatre, Nottingham

Dec.6/7 Liverpool Unity Theatre

Dec.11/12 Leeds Metropolitan University, Studio Theatre

Dec.14 Salisbury Arts Centre.

The Moscow State Circus Information line is 0421 565557/8/9

REJECTS' REVENGE

in *Peasouper*

Bim Mason-directed and an utter 300% HOOT! Plenty bits of physical biz to keep you lot happy too. One of those you spend the whole of the following three evenings trying to tell people the whole story 'cos it's so good. Avoid being a victim of this syndrome - go yourself.

Nov.7 The Met, Bury.

Nov.8 Library Theatre, Darwen, Lancashire

Nov.16 Pegasus Theatre, Oxford

Nov.19 Arts Centre, New Milton, Hampshire

Nov.20 Wilde Theatre, South Hill Park, Bracknell

Nov.21-23 Norfolk Rural Tour (Venues TBC) 01603 507197

Nov.28 Accrington and Rossendale College, Rawtenstall

Nov.29/30 Grand Theatre Studio, Blackpool

Dec.2-6, 9-11 Cheshire Rural Tour (Venues TBC) 01244 602 836

Dec.12 Village Hall, South Otterington, Yorkshire

Dec.13 Village Hall, East Cowton, Yorkshire

Dec.14 Marsden Mechanics, Marsden, West Yorkshire

Dec.18 Town Hall, High Wycombe

Dec.19 Arts Centre, Portsmouth

To be confirmed..... (phone us for details)

Rural Tour of Warwickshire and Rural Tour of Lancashire.

Rejects Revenge Theatre Company. Tel/Fax: 0151 708 8480

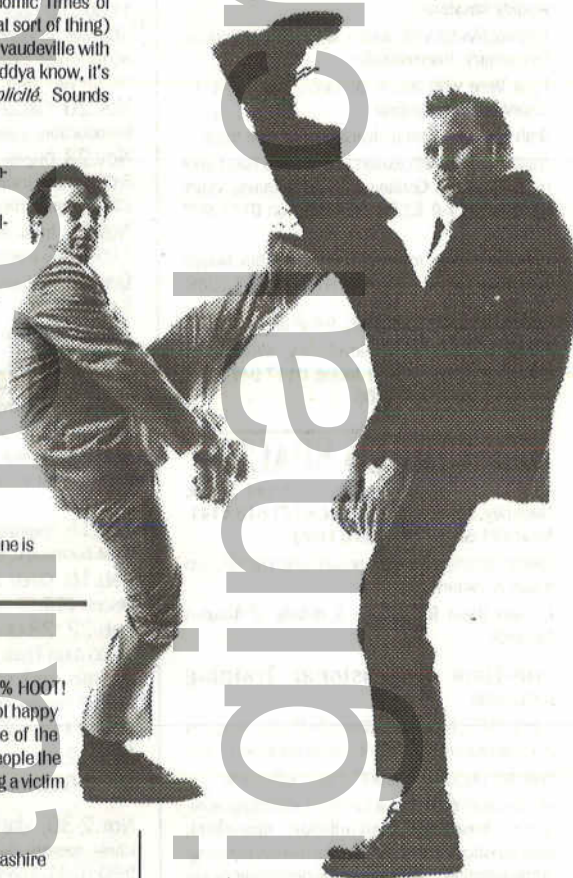
cabaret

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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!

Full details not confirmed (& see *Catch this News*) but probably Dec.21. By the time they've sent us the full details they'll have run out, so enquire now!



For details on the whereabouts of trad. circuses, including some like *Zippo's* that are well-worth your attention, get that Bob Hoskins off the line and ring the *Kingpole* (Trad. Circus mag)

information line on 0891 343341. This is a premium (that means expensive in BT-talk) charge line, but doesn't waste time like *my* answerphone.

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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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Weekly Classes

Trampoline, Tumbling (all levels) Acro-balance, Tumbling, Juggling (Tues 7-10pm £3), Juggling/

Uni/Tightwire (Sun 7-10 £3), Static Trapeze (3 week blocks, Sunday afternoons, £21), Flying Trapeze - Petit Volant or Hi-Fly (3 week blocks £24) including sessions with Pauline Palace, Swinging Trapeze, Cloudswing, Web, Corde. Kids After-School Classes. You name it - they probably have a go at it sometime.

Specialist Classes

We always seem to miss their leaflet (Charlie...), must try harder, etc. Ring 'em for details.

SKYLIGHT

Circus Arts Training Education Performance, Broadwater Centre, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1HE Tel. 01706 50676 Tel./fax 01706 713638

Skylight Courses are subsidised - book early to secure places!

Oct.19 Club Swinging - Anna Jillings 11:30-5:00 plus pole and ring spinning. Not for beginners. 12 places £18.

Oct.20 Trapeze - basic - Cath Rushton 11:00-5:00 8 places £18.

Oct.25/27 Clown: Bouffon - Gerry Flanagan Fri 1-6, Sat 11-5 Three day course on bouffon the alter ego of the clown - by Gerry from *Commotion*. 14 places. £14.

Nov.3 Mask - James Macpherson 11:00-5:00 James from Artizan runs Physical Theatre training at the Arden School of Theatre. 12 places £14.

Nov.9 Trapeze - Deb Pope 11:00-5:00 Static trapeze doubles and singles. Experience necessary. 8 places £25.

Nov.10 *Corde Lisse* - Deb Pope 11:00-5:00 A first for Skylight. 8 places. £25.

Nov.16/17 Acro balance weekend - Jeremy Robins 11:00-5:00 Floor work and balances taught by Jeremy who was in *Gandini* Project and was Jacky Sysum's acro partner. Experience necessary. Let us know if you are on your own. 10 places. £50.

Nov.20 Balloon Modelling - Mike Kerr 7-9:30pm Introduction, materials provided. 14 places £8.

Nov.23 Display Fireworks - Dave Chadwick 11:00-5:00 Theory inside and practise outdoors. 12 places £25 inc. materials.

Nov.24 Intro. to Circus Skills SkyLight Staff 11:00-5:00 All the basics available. 14 places £15 (adults).

Dec.1 Cloudswing - Basic - Cath Rushton 11:00-5:00 8 places £18

Jan.26 Trapeze - basic - Cath Rushton 11:00-5:00 8 places £18.

Jan.21-Feb.25 Contemporary Dance Justine Marsh 7:00-8:30 An exploration of dance with circus 14 places £18. Six sessions.

Feb.8/9 Teeter board - Roger Robinson 1:00-5:00 It's the latest thing, don't you know. 6 places per day £22

Feb.15 Trapeze tbc. Deb Pope 11:00-5:00 Experience necessary. 8 places £25.

Feb.16 *Corde Lisse* tbc. Deb Pope 11:00-5:00 8 places. £25.

Feb.22/23 Cloudswing Weekend - Michelle Weaver 11:00-4:00 From Circus Space. Previous experience essential, e.g. knowledge of basic swing. 8 places £45.

Mar.2 Display Fireworks - see Nov.23

Mar.9 Mask - see Nov.3.

Mar.12 Balloon Modelling - See Nov.20.

Mar.16 Circus Skills intro. See Nov.24

Nov.2-30, Jan.11-Feb.8, 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 at Skylight

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 Thurs afternoon - phone first
ISCAYP - Yth 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

Swings and Roundabouts

Skylight youth circus production, performances Dec.

Dance Stands

Indian dance and circus arts project, all female Sep.-Dec.

Integrated Schools Performance Project

Residency with 2 schools - one a special school, Jan-Mar.

Circus City (tottery funded)

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

Greenlop 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.

Regular Workshops:

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

Thursdays 6-7 Mime techniques from Lecoq and Decroux 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

JOHN PAUL ZACCARINI COURSES

Studio 29, Vyner Street, London E2 9DQ

Polyglot circus/dance performer, aka. the *Queer Trapeze Terrorist* and last seen working the intro for *Archaeos* and as a centrepiece of the *Mamaloucostour*. Trained with Pete Lilly, Lindsay Kemp & others, now sharing his considerable skills (he has also taught at *Circus Space* in rope, trapeze, Impro, Ballet, Mime, Tap, Acro, Voice and more).

Sep.23-Dec.13 - Two sets of courses running concurrently

one more intensive every day Mon-Fri 10am-1.30pm for £450/£350

the other Mon,Wed,Fri evenings 7.30-9.30 £160/£120

Fil. Ruth Glaser, *Mundania*, 63 East Dulwich Grove, London SE22 8PR 0181 693 2026.

UNICON VIII

words by **Duncan Castling**

My family have grown to love Juggling conventions. Well they had to, driven by my obsessive addiction with jiggling and press-ganged during a summer hol 'just to see what went on'.

What surprised me was they came back asking for more. But by then my affliction had spread to the kids and although my wife was vaccinated against jiggling early on (observing the married bliss of a couple passing clubs and fighting about the quality of returns). Provided the kids are happy and the weather is OK, she tolerates our fixation. As a family we agree however, that the one thing conventions have in common is that they're all different-but still the same if you know what I mean and for us, this is their attraction. Hmmm. Let me explain;

Our baptism was the first Scottish Jigglecon in a (still) unsurpassed setting surrounded by grey granite with purple heather topped mountains, deep black Loughs and the calm tranquillity of Stirling campus. At Stirling we discovered the classic convention recipe of activities we now know and love vis; informal games, parades, the show, workshops, and renegade stage, but most importantly the people. All those laid-back mellow folk who give the events their extra spesh buzz by finding the time to try to teach a family of total klutz beginners 'cos they could remember how they once started upon a time-ago. At that time I was the only one who could do anything vaguely jiggish (uni riding with arms flailing like a drunken dervish dancer).

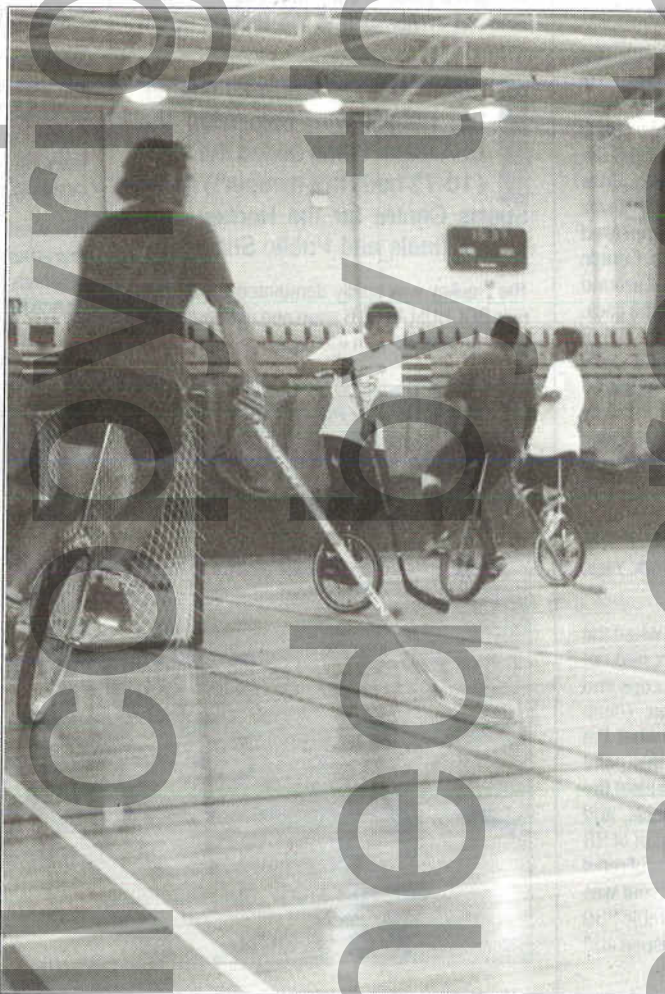
Well, after the recent UNICON VIII I now know what can be done when you can really ride a uni properly and how little my unicycling has improved since I started. But somehow being a novice didn't seem to matter at Stirling, it was just good fun. So when we went to the World Unicycle Convention in Guildford why did we feel that we were struggling to find the mellow vibes and laid back folk that make conventions so interesting for us? Why did we feel that the UNICON possibly wasn't a convention as such, because it was just so competitive. More importantly, why oh-why did I agree to organise the biggest MUni mayhem Challenge to-date?

In retrospect you could spot some clues early on. The first was in the alt. name "World

Unicycle Championships" and the fact that pre-registration was organised for the 'games'.

OK, so we arrived late. On Wednesday morning, 2am to be exact and after a wee bit of a hassle to park/pitch the camper. We settled down to watch a bit of the artistic freestyle competition. This turned out to be a bit of an eye opener to say the least. Particularly if you're blissfully ignorant of the current level of international unicycling skills. We were gob smacked as we watched competitors contort

Congratulations to Danny Crispen, was he really the UK's sole representative in the artistic class, and if so Why? It was also interesting to see the outfits- surely sequin up-the-bum leotards can't be that comfortable on a uni, or do they make you learn faster? It would certainly impress the guys at the club if I turned out like that. Seriously though, the level of professionalism in presentation was scary, could it be the main reason for the lack of UK competitors? We all felt that performers from the USA and Europe were bloody good, but staged. While the Japanese seemed to have the edge on most tricks and seemed to exude total enjoyment and fun no-matter what they were attempting.



Spot the Ball? pic. Russel Wells

themselves in ever more complicated poses and ride using unimaginable bits of anatomy while any surplus body bits were used to balance on and around a uni. I was left with the impression that unless you can wheel walk forwards/backwards seated and standing, pogo on the wheel and spin the uni 360° and ride off, glide (both feet off pedals) seated and standing, crank idle/ride (one legged 1/h foot on r/h crank) all in time to music, you won't even get near the mark. Could someone tell me how much practice it takes to get that good? And were we watching an Olympic sport in the making? It certainly stuffs ballroom dancing in terms of skill.

The visit to the track (when we eventually found it) was also a surprise. Especially when I discovered to my horror that riding a uni on a 400m track is taken seriously and I mean VERY SERIOUSLY, like the modified 24" with narrowed stays and tiny high pressure tyre and the PB (personal best) lap timers lining up trackside.

Special thanks also to Roger for setting up my borrowed 24" uni for the 1500m. Just shows how crap I am when I couldn't finish on one leg when the left hand crank fell off. To tell the truth I was glad 'cos it meant I could retire with a bit of pride intact. I still had the feeling that track racing on a unicycles is a bit too sad to take seriously. I mean track racing was one of the reasons I stopped training with our local running club. I kept thinking of hamsters on those luvly little wheels that go round and round and round..... that's why I'm jus' an offroad addict at heart.

We seemed to spend quite a bit of time practising uni Frisbee which seemed like more fun and doesn't have any rules (yet?) I did however notice one mellow moment on the track when some very young competitors gamely continued to complete their distance after the winners crossed the line, accompanied by Mexican waves from the crowd reflecting beaming smiles from the track. Meanwhile at another bit of the field lots of bods were attempting uni skill grades. This caused me to ponder on the 'Championship' title and the attraction of collecting gongs or badges in recognition of achievement. Kinda worrying if you extend that to Jigglecons, or is that the way forward via NVQ's? Black belt 3rd Dan Street

UNICON VIII CONTINUED

CATCH THIS - UNI

Performer, specialising in obtaining money with menaces.

Thursday was the Pashley Muni Challenge and we had about 50ish teams registered. Teams had already marked their maps in their favourite language at the track where we explained the outline of the event i.e., 60mins to do the biz in the berm, find the checkpoints, then back to the start or lose y're points.

So it was all home and dry when the reigning <40 1500m champion AKA Roger and I returned from putting out the checkpoints. Then everything went down the pan when two coach loads of riders appeared all wanting to ride. Oh-shit, quick, Panic. Time for a cunning plan.....Two starts and lots of teams. (I think the biggest was about eight) But suddenly mellow folk appeared from every where to help, Roger, Chris, Connie and others representing nationalities all around the globe rallied round and dug us out the cack. Bliss, this was what I was searching for. "What are the rules" they cried Just remember it's only 60mins we said. Then everyone disappeared into the sun dappled woods to frolic in leafy glades. Did they listen? Did they bollix. 15mins overtime 70% were still frolicking. But gradually they returned (driven by hunger/thirst?) and suddenly we were surrounded by MUni riders, sweating, joking, smiling, laughing. That was when we realised that it was going to work. Yass, Yass, Yassssss.

Two hours later and a change of mood when the shit hit the fan. Three Japanese riders had not returned, no English spoken. Contact cops and prepare to call out search & rescue. (deep personal embarrassment 'cos that's what I'm involved in) Peter Phillip was not at this point looking best pleased. Then out of the sunset the wanderers reappear. Returned by locals, and pissed as crickets to boot, after a session of RR and lager in a local pub. Phew, big sighs of relief all round and the smiles return. The event was won by Lars Hommen with an unbelievable 330 points and the UK superstar Danny Crispen and partner came close second.

That night, just before the school hall was cleared for the renegade show, the floor was alive with bods performing some most amazing and interesting stunts.

Yet as soon as the renegade started in trad stage/seating format there was a distinct lack of punters willing to strut their stuff. Weird. Possibly a symptom of the UNICONS sports bias and a lack of entertainer/performers or were they all just too tired to bother. I was particularly impressed by Lee's ability to leap on/off the stage and accost/bribe/threaten to get anyone and anything to perform including a solo spot for a musical mobile phone.

On Friday the weather changed. The evening was supposed to be track events, but the intermittent rain became a fixture and it poured, I mean even the Laughing Buddha got his smile washed off. So we waited while the faithful tried to restructure the events program. At this point we were also starting to get just a little bit tired of the location being split between a slightly run down school and Guildford University campus. I did feel that this made the activities harder to co-ordinate and it offends me personally that greater recognition is not given in our country to the importance of events such as the UNICON, as an international event.

I spent most of Saturday compiling results with help from the USA team. I then taxied the team (10-12 bods in a camper!) to the Sports Centre for the Hockey/Basketball finals and Public Show.

The Hockey was totally dominated by Germany's BOCHUM A and B team and although I still don't know who won the basketball. I'm kinda

harmony was slightly overshadowed by the previous act. But still very impressive nevertheless.

The high point of the next day for us was the mornings impromptu tag game with everyone just joining in and having fun. Forget the obstacle and slalom races. The informal action acted like a magnet for everyone in the school, just to ride and smile and let off steam, great.

Then the rain started and by this time the outdoor program was rapidly becoming shot to hell and Peter was looking totally stressed out. Somehow I didn't think that this was due to him learning to ride his kangaroo unicycle either. It certainly did however look very very weird.

The weather didn't improve much for the 10k marathon either the next day. Nine laps of a business park. This was certainly a novel experience for me. Particularly when I did eight then had to go back for more pain in the rain, Yukk. The awards ceremony took place on Sunday



Basket Cases in court. Pic - Russel Wells

certain Sem Abrahams team will have featured in the top rankings. The public show started with a draw for prizes which included four unicycles (one a new generation Pashley MUni, which was the last to go!) and an ultimate wheel. The show contained a mix of acrobatic/juggling acts and some bloody impressive unicycling. The USA team and John Foss did their stage routines which were very good, but for me, the show was completely stolen by the two Japanese performers. Who did all the impossible tricks and more besides, including gliding standing off the saddle and impressive jump exchanges between uni/ultimate wheel/two wheel giraffe. In a way, it was a shame that Sem and Teresa followed as their beautifully flowing routine and polished

night and was billed as a 'party' but I wasn't fooled for a minute what the priority of the evening was. Having said that, I do feel slightly guilty due to the wonderful response we got from everyone for organising the MUni event. The cups for first prizes were bloody enormous and the medals handed out to looked so professional I thought for a minute that I was in Atlanta. After the awards a very very tired Peter Phillip and team were given a rousing reception for their superhuman efforts and for managing to go the distance without collapsing through nervous exhaustion. I think Peter said something about taking a year out to recover. That should prepare him for the event in Germany in 1998. I wonder who's going to be stupid enough to organise the MUni event? Hmmmm.

HAT FAIR WINCHESTER

CATCH OUT

I don't want to be political (no?) but... At the same time as this year's Hat Fair, in a field down by the camping in fact, there was this other event, *The Winchester Show* I think it was, all *Rotary Club* and a hefty Army display team presence. And tho' it cost money to go in & of course Hat is (sort-of) free or at least *ad-lib*, this other one wasn't as well attended.

What gets me, then, is that it must have had a massive injection of subsidy, probably by council & business, and certainly on the Army front - I mean those highly-skilled (whatever else you think of them) blokes don't come for free. Basically what that comes down to is the taxpayer, national & local, subsidising a festival that was basically crap & under-attended, when Britain's national festival of street entertainers still struggles by on begging, acts playing for free and even collecting for the festival, not to mention acts of extreme generosity like *The Catch* actually paying to get into the cabaret. Makes yer bloody think, it does...



Still it soldiers (sorry) on, because basically it's a lot of fun, everyone likes being there and we'll be back next year for more of the same. It rained a lot, and tho' this spoiled quite a lot of people's shows, it really didn't dampen the spirit of the event, plus it was a good excuse to duck into *The Eclipse* for a moment or two, as rather a lot of people noticed.

I'm not going to plough through everyone who was there, besides I can't remember them all, but here's a drive-by killing of the memorable stuff... **Mark Vis** is a very odd young man, both in walk-about and cabaret - bizarrely nerdy in a contemporary comedy style, but with the charisma to carry it off, and I thoroughly recommend him to all you organisers out there. Wish he'd gone the whole way with the banana in 'My way', tho'... Sprayed it all over the audience, I mean. No, hang on, that sounds just as bad...

Margot (as in *George &*) has been working solo in Oz and it shows, she's so much more *commanding* nowadays (oooh...): but that's the last time I make a helpful suggestion when asked by someone on stage, really it is. **Dave Pickens** has been in Oz too and comes back with a really good solo street juggling etc. routine; nothing new maybe but well executed, very watchable, and he has the potential to be still better. Good to see bike-boy **Shaun Bridges** back in the country too; his chat, always the least effective bit of an otherwise excellent act, has sharpened up considerably - one day he's going to be great...

Noel Britten one more time showed himself to be probably the very best street comic in the country - don't know how many times I've seen his act, and it doesn't change much, but still I laugh every time. Character, timing, delivery - all tyro talkie acts should go see Noel as a workshop exercise... If you can do that without picking up the lines too...

Haggis & Charlie will probably end up with a statue of them in Winchester city centre, sometimes it really seems like the festival is, well, *theirs*. And of course they deserve this pre-eminence. I don't need to tell you how good they are, but, like Noel, it's sometimes easy to forget where a reputation that big comes from.

Stevie Spangle has come with honours through the school of *Captain Bob*'s into a very confident & competent act with a nice line in his own humour; Jackie was a thrill as always; but, really, it's Henry you'll have to watch - star of the future if ever I saw, etc. Even if he doesn't actually do much yet. All these Bath/Bristol performers, oh shit, nearly forgot **Stickleback Plasticus**, they'll kill me: it's a very attractive act, an instant curiosity,

I'm sure you know, and as much of a good laugh in front of an unprimed crowd as one of other performers. And then of course there's his honorary westcountryman **Kwabana Lindsey**, whose solo act has sheer professionalism written down the middle like a stick of rock: he's not doing anything that hasn't been done before, either (tho' of course quite a lot is quite difficult!) but he too has built himself a ready-recognisable character of an original slant, which is often the most difficult of all...

Amy Rose struggled sometimes, her flying act (I think she's the only one doing it over here) seems to go over the head (hahaha) of the slower type of audience even more readily than those silly hats she puts on the boys. **Kate the Great** has greater weight of personality helping her through a not-completely-dissimilar act and hers works better as a result. But there's nothing tokenistic about these two ladies - perhaps we can understand why there aren't so many fems on the street, but when the ones that are this good I can only call for more. **Sandy Beaches** is a familiar Naturals-meets-Mel & Sue tour guide from hell, but so effective I didn't dare go near her for fear of getting involved (after my



traumatic experience on the first night, you understand). The Red Man & Blue Man (whatever the company is called) were all a bit Naturals-ish too, but it worked so we won't complain too much.

Fudge is still as maniac, and this was pretty much a kids' show on closer examination, but I do love his props... **Stompy** becomes less comprehensible (and more of his own man) every time out - he's at his best at Glastonbury with a more surreally-inclined crowd, but personally I'd forgive him anything for that guitar routine. Everyone loves the **Whalley Range Allstars** headless people, & their new music box is an item of fairytale mystery, if not always that forcefully displayed. And I wish I'd seen those girls with the chairs everyone was on about.

Am I there yet? Well yes, except that I haven't mentioned the other big hit of the festival, the only act apart from the first-mentioned **Mark V** (*Gas Mark V, we assume -d*) that I hadn't seen before but really really enjoyed: **Roxy's Toolbox**. Stefan, last year a *Splott Brother*, has brought into being *ex nihilo* a streetband that's nearly up there with the mighty *Cosmic Sausages* (ah, but to see them again in Italy this summer, well... but another story), or the sadly-defunct *Lost T-Shirts* of *Atlantis*: excellent bits of business around a tackily-twisted set of familiar tunes, and some great sidelines - East Anglia's answer to *The Monkees* but in some '50s alternate reality warp...

So I didn't go a bundle on the bands on the street night, (**Heathens All** were better, as usual) and there really should be a performers' bar [what makes you think they'd let you in, then? -d] after hours - I did make it up to Oram's Arbour for the park day, however, and that was sweet, the best way to see the acts in a way, tho' the street is more authentic, of course, and the ever-changing crowds make for better shows.

Anyway, whatever way you want it, these shows just shows again...
Hat's it!
Steve Henwood



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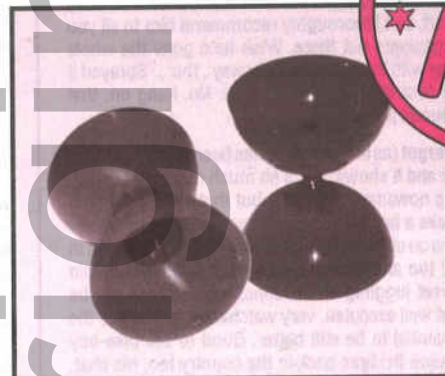
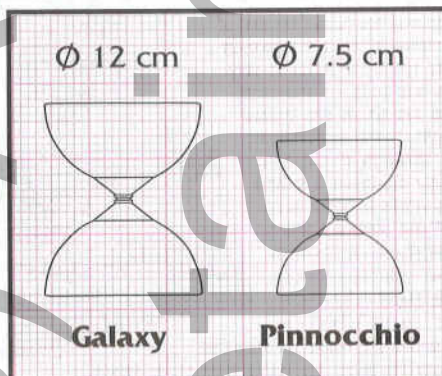


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49TH IJA FESTIVAL

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA, USA

CATCH OUT

Think BIG, think BEST

Some people say it's the little things that make for a great festival, some say it's the big things, and I suppose some would say it's the medium things in between. Well, I'm here to observe everything. Let's start with the biggest thing. The Public Show. Quite magnificent. Directed by Dick Franco, who did a spot with daughter Noelle, the whole line-up was about as top class as you can get. Bob Bramson (now retired), Albert Lucas, Peter Davison, need I say more? There was more of course, but you had to be there. Special mention here for Vince Bruce the cowboy, whip-cracking and lassoing like you wouldn't believe - ironically all the way from Great Britain.

But what about Renegade?

Well, considering they kind of invented the concept all those years ago, I have to say, well, er... is that it? They seem to have lost the spirit, become too organised, compared to the way we Europeans do it. Thank God Mark Faje was there, a guy who not only embodies the true essence of *Renegade*, but is also very funny. And dangerous.

There was nothing on the Tuesday night, on Wednesday I asked someone what time it was likely to get going. "Midnight", here replied, in a manner suggesting I was stupid for asking - it always starts at midnight. "Hmmm" that got me thinking, "Predictable?". The venue was the bandstand in the gardens of the convention centre. Good stage, good lighting, good weather, good compere, altogether good, just good. The next night, same time, different venue - The Firehouse Bar, downtown, my third visit there in two days - decent (proper) beer, right kind of ambience (some said too small - I say it was cosy). Apart from Mark Faje, the highlight of the evening was Arthur passing out in the bar. Nothing Friday night, but Saturday, last night, back at the bandstand for the farewell.

To be fair, a lot of people said the Renegade shows had suffered from the lower than usual attendance, and the absence of the usual "crazy characters". I wouldn't know, I'm just trying to compare and contrast.

The educational aspect

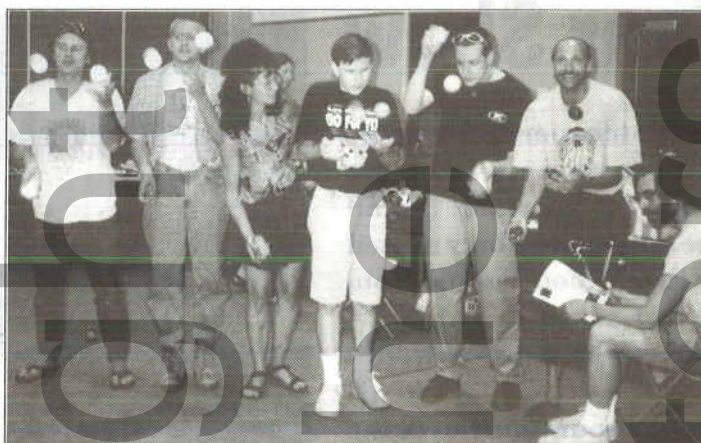
Workshops, workshops, and more workshops. Apparently less than usual, but I still counted 75 of them, with many repeated 3 or 4 times. It can be a strain on the brain just working out your own personal timetable, not to mention the physical demands - hence the workshop for first-time festival-goers, which I missed, but I presume the message was "Take it easy". I did make it to Bill Giduz's workshop on how to write a review of a juggling convention - well, I had to really. The award for the "nicest" workshop must go to Deena Frooman for her smile workshop in the rose garden. Sweet.

Tuesday 16th July

The opening night party, at *The Flying T* just out of town, cowboy country. It's a barn, and they boast they can serve 1500 people in 30 minutes. An authentic tin plate of authentically uninspiring beans, meat and spud, and lemonade. We knew what kind of place it was, we knew what to expect, but when a bunch of Good Ol' Boys took to the stage, whooping and a-hollering, the jugglers reconvened in the car park. Eventually the show got under way, 3 or 4 acts interspersed with various awards for various jugglers for various juggling-related achievements. All pretty tiresome really. The general consensus is "not off to a flying start - but things can only get better."

Thursday 18th July

My head hurts. Combination of hangover, sunburn, Dick Franco's headroll workshop, and that club/cigar box/unicycle/whatever that landed on me at the big toss-up at Mount Rushmore. The media event. The mass pose, 'Juggling for 4



Some jugglers. Photo by Ian

presidents'. \$15 for a bus ticket and \$10 for a copy of the photo, with presentation folder. What a damn fine souvenir.

So, what's the big difference?

Oh, I dunno. I spent far too long analysing, comparing and contrasting, only to decide "Yes, they are different, but they're both a lot of fun", which may not be very incisive, but it's true. I suppose the major difference is the Americans' emphasis on competition. This culminates with, or is exemplified by, the championships on the Friday night. You get 8 minutes to impress the team of judges. All entrants must first get through the 'preliminaries' the previous day, a sort of quality control exercise to keep the numbers down. The result is a very slick and entertaining show, though the juniors section is all very samey - 3,4,5,6 objects, take a bow. Won by Casey Boehmer, 17, because he probably deserved it most (I think six rings in one hand means he's as good as Albert Lucas). The grown-ups section was much more interesting and varied. Jay Gilligan was wonderful, but only got the silver medal, coming second to Greg Kennedy's piece entitled 'Hemisphere'. Lots of balls in a big perspex bowl with a huge mirror above, so different and original he had to win. And he did, but it was fun overhearing murmurings later of "but is it juggling?"

Saturday afternoon in the gym, it's the games. No, actually, they're more competitions, and they go on for about five hours. Friday morning, the 'numbers challenge'. I missed it because a) it was in the morning, and b) I'm not that bothered, really. I heard several new world records were set. Thursday evening was the ping pong tourney. A bit of fun, but with big trophies for the winners - the biggest table tennis tournament ever held in South Dakota, according to the guy from the SDTTA, or SDPPC, or whatever. Don't ask me who won.

If anyone wants to know all about exactly who did what with how many, when, where, how, etc, etc, then read the review in *Jugglers' World*.

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If anyone wants to know all about exactly who did what with how many, when, where, how, etc, etc, then read the review in *Jugglers' World*.

Albert Lucas

Thursday afternoon, Albert Lucas held court in the gym, and talked at length about his career, his father, his life, and *juggling*. He'd been training with the British Olympic squad in Florida, which I thought might be good for him, but not so good for the morale of our top athletes, when they've got this bloody American guy doing times probably close to theirs, whilst juggling! Anyway, after a few attempts, he flashed twelve rings, just to prove he can, and then unfortunately couldn't do the same with ten balls... but he *did* keep trying, again and again and again, until you could feel the tension in the air (or was it embarrassment?) and eventually gave up. It's not just me, most of the Americans agreed that Albert Lucas is a bit too, well, American.

There is also a growing feeling amongst the membership, and indeed the leadership, that *the IJA itself is too American*, should actually be re-named the AJA, and then perhaps we could all join hands under a whole new entity, say, the WJA. But it's all politics and stuff that most jugglers don't care about. Do you?

Any kind of conclusion, then?

Still dunno. Let's just look at the figures (approximate figures, that is): IJA festival - 700 people, £240, 5 days; European Convention - 1800 people, £90, 6 days; British Convention - 1300 people, £70, 4 days. What does that tell you? The further you go, the longer you stay, the more you pay. But when it comes to value for money, for all round fun and stuff, then if you're only going to make it to one bash in 1997, it has to be Nottingham, April 10-13. See you there.

Ian Adcock (of 'What A Palaver!!' & Nottingham BJC)

CIRCOMEDIA

End of Year Show

The lifestyle of a 'Catch person' can be hectic, so wot I'm trying to say is, I suppose - well... we were late for the show. But all is not lost, because although we only missed some of the first half, those good people from Circomedia had the good sense to video the performance so we could review it properly. But we're the sort of saprogenic saddos that when a bird shits on us it just makes our hair smell, the sound didn't work for 'just' the bit we missed.

Enough! The performers had put in 32 weeks of effort that would make their mothers proud, let alone course director Bim Mason. 32 weeks of: yes I know I'm supposed to enjoy the course, but what routine am I going to do in the bloody end of year show! So I could have got there on time, after a few minutes I felt deep guilt. It was a good night. I think it's all that friendship or energy, something makes me want to sign up for next year there and then, but watching I realise that I would be a mature student in the land of lycra so I put the pen away.

Of the sixteen or so students some were on stage more than others, apparently because their routines were good enough for the show-case. Learn about the real world before you flickflack into it I

suppose. Set in a sleazy Chicago nightclub, at least leading lady Shana from the US didn't have to put on a false accent, she played the detective, played on the *corde lisse* and with the boys in a fine bit of five-person club passing where she finds herself with some patronising workmen showing her their trade. Zed, the MCP boss, also the show's MC, gave us a larf 'staying alive' while camping - loved the hair brush / tooth brush swinging.

Takao (thinks: he's from Japan so I bet he'll do a brilliant hat routine) did a brill hat routine and was funny in his naked rola bola tube bit. You just had to be there really. Ludger and his slick diabolo will set conventions alight, while Jorg's cigar box with mask is refreshingly original, subtle and surreal. Ailsa and Tony Tango'ed to the trapeze; it flowed, it was fun, it was full of slick tricks and everything you come to expect from a Circomedia aerial act.

The show had lots of variety and skill but most of all you felt at one with the performers, they were there having fun so we all did. Here endeth the end of year lesson from Circomedia.

The JSA



Blankety-Plank. Photo: Sally Mundy



3rd Wessex Convention

Magic Formula: just invite the people who came last year and had such a good time - over 200 of them. Leigh-on-Mendip workshop, the European Community of Stones (doesn't every town have one?), *Annie & PJ*, *Sardine Circus*... Also memorable: *The 'Juggling Environment'* that played a note every time an object passed through, *Jork* (pronounced *Yerk* (pictured), you saw him here first, *John-Lee*, *Donald Grant* signing autographs in strange places for young ladies from Bideford, blind unicycling in the games, the baby and the giant gas cylinder in the throw-up... Book the first weekend in July and watch this space for details...

ALL GROWN UP & NO PLACE TO GO?

If anyone reading this is looking for a new legal high then you evidently have yet to visit the Moscow State Circus, currently on the last leg of its gruelling two-year tour of Great Britain. I saw the show twice (yup!) and still don't know where to begin. It's slick and beautiful, and the Clowns are hilariously funny. (I've spent so much time slagging tired old clown routines that I wanted to get that in first, in big letters please). The music, presentation, choreography and costumes are superb. The whole is sympathetically and elegantly lit (by Kaz and Jimmy who do a grand job) and the showfront and wagons make the sort of first impression that other shows should at least be aiming for... full marks to Patrick Austen and take note the rest of you! The staff are smart, courteous, and without exception manage to pull off the most important trick of all - they look like they're having a good time, too (not always easy, believe me).

As this is a juggling mag, I'm going to have to tell you about the three juggling routines, aren't I? Aren't I? Look, I'm not much of a juggler, so... The first set, performed by company manager Victor Pilipovich, opens with some pretty nifty stuff with glow-in-the-dark aerobics. As the lights come up to reveal a geezer armed with a fistful of Radical Fish you might just be fooled into thinking you're going to see something that would be at home on a good night down at your local club...until he turns out to be an acrobat too - and still he's only breaking you in gently. By the time the second set is announced, you think you have an idea of the skill levels in this show; then just one move, oh-so-casually executed, proves how phenomenally you have under-

estimated them. The last routine is visually stunning, technically without equal, and nothing else in the entire programme can possibly prepare you for the Flying Hats. Describe it? I wouldn't dare! A routine that good has no business being possible.

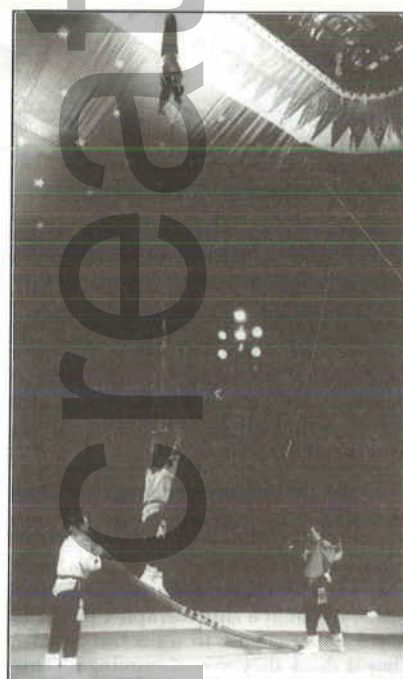
In all this I've left out the aerialists and acrobats, and I really shouldn't do that. The aerial straps will make you wince in imagined pain, and the high wire is a fine bum-clencher of the first order performed with gentle humour and a sense of fun which I found refreshing. There's a slightly surreal and dark side to the delightfully vaudevillian magician which I also enjoyed, because quite frankly it's about time Circus caught up with modernity and grew up a bit (think French, then - *du*). Circuses never were meant for children - they've merely been bastardised into kids' shows by, well, hard times I suppose. Speaking of grown-up - check out the hula-hoop girl! The first night I saw here she wore a costume straight out of a bondage fetishist's fantasy and was brilliantly slutty - but with just enough humour to keep it within the bounds of good taste. Loved it!

This is Circus at its best. You must see it - I exhort you to see it. I want everyone in the whole wide world to see it! I want every Arts funding body in this blinkered little collection of islands to see it and then tell me it isn't Art; I want every cretin who ever told me they didn't go to Circuses any longer because their kids were 'too big' to see it, and then tell me it's for children! I want everyone who ever thought he was a Clown to see it! I want all the other showmen to see it (it's only the up-your-manship that keeps everyone striving to do better, isn't it?).

Have I laboured my point enough? The fact is, you see, I was prepared not to fully approve of this show - not just because I'm a rancid old bag in sequins, either. I had reasons.

OK - I admit it. *I was jealous.* This show has had so much free publicity, on regional

Once in a blue moon, «Pof!» is lost for words. Strangely enough she still seems to expend a lot of them on the subject of **The Moscow State Circus** - utterly justifiably, we hasten to add. **Adrian John** did the KGB secret camera act.

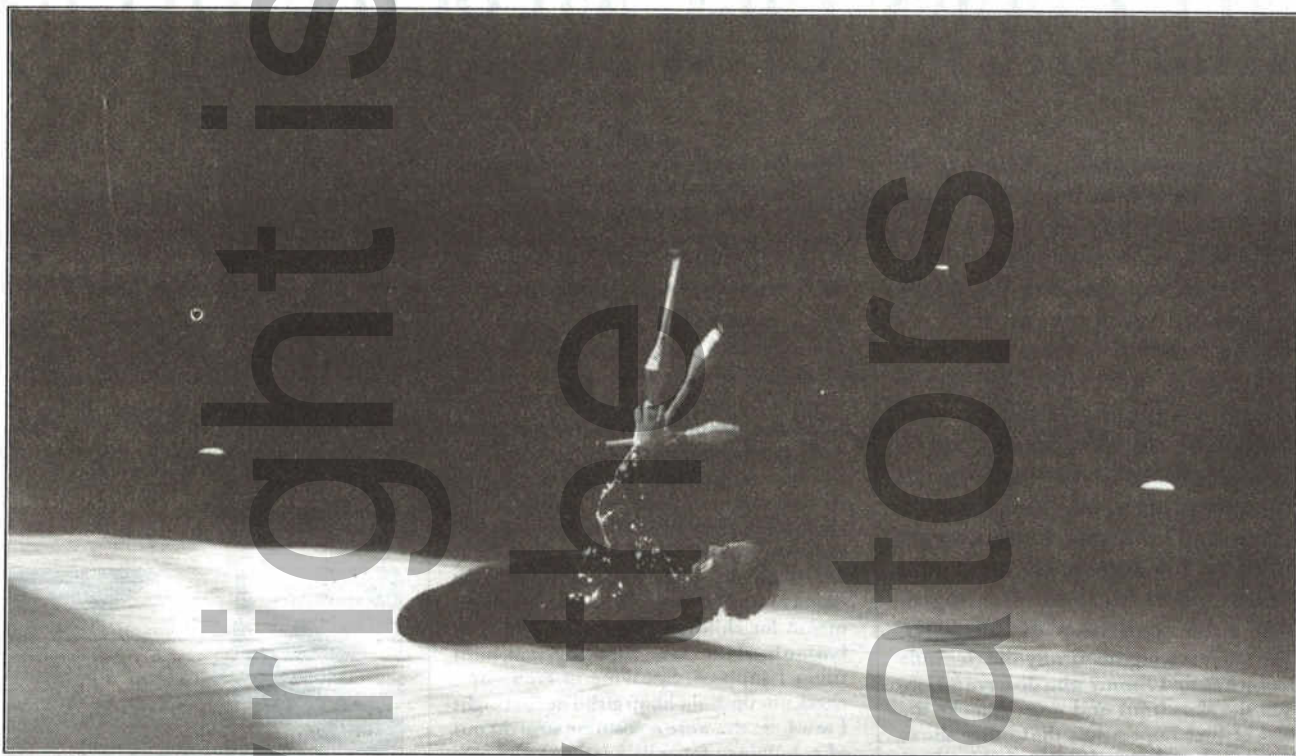


Ta-dahh!

news programmes as well as on national telly, not because they are the best (which they undoubtedly are), but because they have to earn a living. Even Blue Peter were there, exhorting their young audience to bully their parents into taking them: for no better reason, it seemed, than that Moscow State Circus had, in the demise of the Soviet Union, lost its State funding. It worked, too. I have never in my life seen a tent so full of paying punters. As far as I could see - and I advise you all to make the most of this because it's not often that «Pof!» admits to being as blinkered as the rest of this un-thinking and mainly fascist nation - this merely put them in the same boat as the rest of us, and when did anyone ever say to a kid «Oh! You must go to a Circus, because they don't get funding!»? I felt, in short, that they were being promoted for the wrong reasons. Not only that, but they were allowed to fly-post in towns where other shows are not; they got to put arrows on lamp standards in towns where other shows have them returned to



Cone Hotline, Russian style.



Russians in Limbo

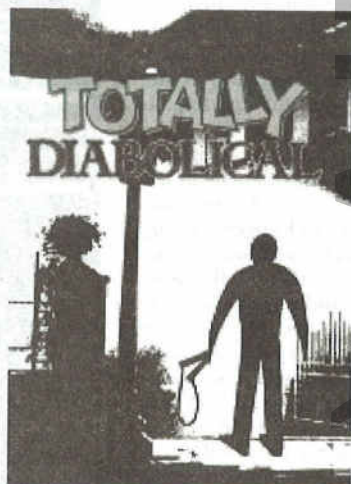
them by large policemen in RangeRovers; they even had RAC signs to direct people to their grounds - and got better grounds than most of the rest of us can expect. I was jealous, and cross. Of course, they are Pavarotti to our Local Operatic Society, but that's not entirely our own fault, and anyway, I was feeling self-righteous enough to overlook that detail.

Under the old Soviet regime, Circus was as highly valued as the Ballet and the Opera. Indeed, in Russia, they interact with one another: Circus is not seen as the 'poor relation' which is so much the case in this country. Would a choreographer from the Royal Ballet choose to train Circus acts? They'd think they were slumming it! This show is choreographed by a former member of the Moscow Ballet; for her, it's not seen as a step-down. No-one asks why she doesn't get a 'proper job', and why should they? In a country where artistes were sala-

ried, were guaranteed a pension when they retired, were given grants for props and costumes... I can't imagine any of them trying to cobble a prop together out of whatever they could find in the scrapmerchant's yard... and, come to think of it, neither can they. They were not expected to live in caravans, but had hotel accommodation wherever they went - although, to be fair, they didn't 'tour' in the same sense that we do. From what I can gather, the Circus in Russia operated on similar lines to the Armed Forces, and an artiste simply received a posting to a show and was presented with a travel warrant to the appropriate town where they would remain for three months or so. They were also respected for what they did - the world over - and, again, I was jealous. I couldn't see why the same people who are so scathing of English performers simply for being what we are, were prepared to welcome this

lot with open arms simply because they weren't us. At the end of the day, accomplished as they undoubtedly are, they are still Circus performers and being the Moscow State Circus shouldn't make them more socially acceptable in this country than the rest of us. More skilled, yes - but more worthy of good manners? Oh! puh-leez!

Now, the Soviet Union has crumbled, and the Circus is a luxury which the State cannot afford. No longer a nationalised industry, the Circus is suddenly faced with the same harsh realities as the rest of us - they have to earn their own living, maybe taking other work to make ends meet. Some people will possibly



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leave the Circus altogether, taking more profitable employment in order to support families and pay for little luxuries like food, rent, heat and light.

Those who remain will lose the freedom to experiment, and training for young performers will fall to their parents rather than the Circus schools - or, rather, 'school'. For, of Russia's three Circus schools, only the old circus school in Moscow now remains. This can only lead to a young performer being influenced by fewer people, which in turn leads to a degree of insularity, and less imaginative work...

In Russia, there are no tenting shows as we know them. Every major town - seventy of them - had its own permanent Circus building. Towns which could not afford to build had a tent for the Summer. Now many are closed, or are working only half weeks, which means that the performers and staff are struggling on half pay. Seat prices have gone up because they are no longer subsidised and have been pushed up further still by the galloping inflation which continues to spiral. People are afraid to spend money on entertainment since work - and therefore income - is no longer guaranteed, and in any case, other commodities must take precedence.

I asked many people what will happen when they return to Russia in November, but no-one seems to know. What they are certain of is that the high standards will begin to slip; that the seriously good will find work elsewhere in Europe, leaving only the older, more staid performers to pass on skills. Unsettling it surely is, for while we are used to crap conditions, crap pay - or none at all, and taking crap from almost anyone who thinks they'll give it - these people are not. On the plus side, they have a lot behind them - nearly eighty years of Soviet support and encouragement for one thing, and the respect of their countrymen, which can't be such a bad place from which to start afresh, even in a dodgy economy.

The Moscow is a fine example - the very finest - of what Circus can be with support and encouragement. All Circus could be good with encouragement, though I can't imagine a take-over bid by Virginia Bottomly. Everyone should see this show, because, sadly, you might not get another chance - quite apart from which, it's bloody fantastic! Now do as you're told...

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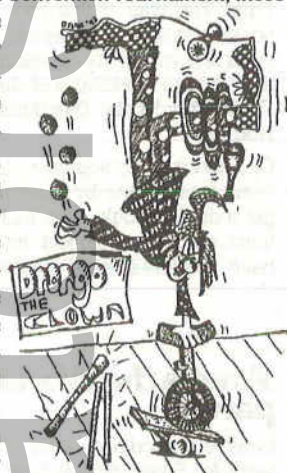
NOGGIN OF ICE DRAGON would like to thank the BRUISED FRUITS and their crew for the 3rd Brum Convention, especially the boomerang making workshop, and workshops for didgeridoo & magic, Donald Grant, Mark Vis, Charlie Cheese and 'Tim too many diabolos'.

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DYLAN CHALKER - AGED 24

It is with much sadness that we at *The Catch* have to tell of the death of our good friend and colleague Dylan. Many will remember his brilliant 'Drongo' cartoons in the early issues. He was the leading goal scorer in *The Catch* uni-hockey team's success in reaching the semi-final at the Birmingham Convention Tournament, those there will remember the cheer as he scored our only goal as losing underdogs! Dylan was also present on many occasions, with his mum Di, to judge the caption competition; his dry sense of humour will be missed by us all. A competent juggler (he achieved the elusive seven balls), an accomplished musician and all round nice guy. Thanks Dylan, the team will always remember you.



CONTACT

BJF - BRITISH JUGGLING FOUNDATION

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EJA - EUROPEAN JUGGLING ASSOCIATION

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AUTUMN 1996 ISSUE 20 VOL 2

CATCHPHRASES / MULTIPLEX / X CONTACT

PULP FRICTION

Dear Jarvis,

Thank you so much for a day off. Well, I turned up at 'V96', a 2 day festival at Hylands Park, Chelmsford, ready to do two days Workshoping, only to find: SHOCK! HORROR! - that you'd faxed the organisers specifying "NO CIRCUS SKILLS WORKSHOPS", "NO STILT-WALKERS" and only "SPECIFIED WALKABOUTS" (specified by Pulp). This was 'Pulps' Day', apparently, so no distractions. Please let me know of other festivals you're appearing at, so I can apply to run workshops at them. You play *Disco 2000*; I'll play Dire Straits' *Money for Nothing*!

Oh, I didn't really appreciate the other two beer tents closing by 9.00pm. In order to get a drink I would have had to go to the main stage and subject myself to your band. Sobriety seemed a better alternative!

Chris
London

What's the Worst Gig? part 97

I was requested to entertain at a children's party for 5-year-olds at 5pm on Tuesday [get on with it -d]... then run a workshop for local teenagers in the same venue at 7pm. It was my first-ever solo performance and I was attempting to look confident despite feeling nervous. I chose a white T-Shirt which read 'Radical Fish - Serious Juggling' and a white pair of trousers. I felt very professional.

There were a small group of young parents smoking cigarettes outside the community centre, situated in the middle of playing fields. High grass banks edged one side of the field and rows of houses the other three. It was 4.30pm. when I arrived and I went to take a peek at my audience-to-be. The inside of the building was a bubbling mass of manic 5-year-olds with no visible sign of control at all! I went through to a second room to work out what I was going to do as I of course had absolutely nothing prepared, I just knew a few clever tricks [like retreating at the right time -d]. I practised for half an hour before marching forward and announcing to the mob of short people before me that I was 'THE JUGGLER' being paid vast quantities of hard cash to entertain them. With the help of two loud-speaking parents we managed to assemble the rowdy bunch outside and told them to sit down. I opened my suitcase and began...

"Hello Children. I am THE JUGGLER. I would like to start with my favourite trick, the head trick." As I began the trick the children began shouting abusive language at me. I began juggling faster and harder, bigger and better; their attention was regained for perhaps seven, eight or even nine seconds before they all followed the example of the cheekiest ones and ran forward for my equipment. "Get back, get back!" I screamed, regaining slight control. "These kids want blood," I thought. I had to do something impressive. I grabbed my knives. [Ah. Blood, knives, children. Excellent! -d]

"These juggling knives are sharp and dangerous so it is extremely important that

while I am juggling you must all stay back and remain with your bums firmly attached to the ground, or someone could lose an arm, a leg or even your head!" I said, ending with a gaze directed at the naughtiest-looking boy. I was professional, I had control again; one deep breath and I began throwing my knives, double spins, onto my chin, under my leg, behind my back and finally one of the knives high above my head. When the knife came down I completely missed the catch, of course, and before I could do or say anything I was mobbed. It seemed like a thousand little hands grabbed my equipment, started throwing it and hitting each other with it. At least I had the knives. There was only one thing I could do [Yeah! yeah! go for it! -d] I found the bubble aeroplane [boo! spoilsport!! -d], it was my only hope. The bubble aeroplane was held on a length of string and swung around my head - and showered thousands of bubbles down on the chaos around me. The mob of now-deranged children were jumping for the plane spinning around above them, if I let it come down it was bound to hit one of them, I had to create some space around me; I began to run away from the mob. The mob laughed and chased me but only three of the naughtiest boys were keeping up. I turned to see my enemy and accelerated my backwards run without checking my direction. I hit the grassy bank, fell down and slid into a patch of wet mud.

Picking myself up I slowly walked back to the chaos still in full flow around my equipment, and noticed that one of the three who had caused my fall had grabbed another bubble toy from my suitcase; a bubble stick with a length of material soaked in washing-up liquid attached to one end. He swung the stick at a smaller child and hit him hard on the side of the face, the material then wrapped itself around the back of the small child's head before the end flicked him in the eyes; he immediately screamed. I ran over and snatched the stick out of the enemy's hands, shook him by the shoulders as I told him off; he also began to cry. It was of course his birthday.

I left the scene, approached the parents standing by the community centre perplexed by my performance, and requested a cigarette. I had not smoked in three years.

I was wearing all white covered in mud, I had no change of clothing, and in less than half an hour I had to run a workshop for the teenage brothers and sisters of the mob I had just been defeated by. I have never worn white since.

Mike Hindle
Falmouth

Well done Mike, your letter wins you this issue's Star Prize, the wisdom not to do that again. More seriously, it's astonishing how little preparation both organisers and performers put into something as potentially-troublesome: more helpfully we'll be running an article or maybe more on the subject of dealing with kids and the special skills of the children's entertainer in next issue. In the meantime, stay away from the little horrors!

Is that marmite, egg, or chocolate?

Firstly may I complement you on a very good mag? So much easier to read than the 'Kaskade' !!!

Let me get to the point. I am a juggler of 3 years. I am currently teaching a juggling night class which is very successful. I have been urged to form a workshop which I have done. I would like you to help to advertise it. However, as you can see I am in the Army currently serving in Paderborn, W.Germany. So our workshop will not fit into one of your regional categories. May I suggest you have a new category for 'BFPO'? Obviously for security reasons the advert should not include my name or telephone number so here are the details:

1. Workshop begins 22nd July 96
2. Held at Community Centre, Barker Barracks, BFPO 22
3. Every Monday 18:00 - 20:00
4. Entry fee DM5 for adults and half, DM2.50, for under-16's.
5. All ages/standards welcome

I realise this is probably a very strange and awkward request but juggling is a fast growing pastime for soldiers and we would all be grateful for your help.

PS Sorry about the handwriting and the spelling mistakes but I've been on duty for 48 hours with 0 sleep, so I feel a bit tired.

The Unknown Soldier (one assumes)

Welcome bro! Well, there you are, mentioned in dispatches: our 'clubs' section is really for Brit workshops and ones that are easily accessible to the public, and i'm not sure about yours from what you say... p'raps we'll think of something. How about doing a piece on the joys of juggling with live ammunition?

Education? Tourism? Needs a good whipping!

I owe an enormous debt to Juggling [it's OK - you can owe an enormous debt to me -d] as I know as a fact that it was my involvement in the Barry Juggling and Circus Skills Club, that tipped the selection scales in my favour when I applied for a new career as a college lecturer. So I am please to announce that with the help and support of the head of Department Cheryl Davies, Juggling and Circus Skills are officially on the course curriculum for our foundation courses in leisure and tourism and the Overseas Tour Reps. Course. (FE Gold Award, FEFC approved). Needless to say I also include it on all our other courses just for the fun of it.

If any other Jugglers out there are in FE know of any other way I can include it on Leisure and Tourism Courses with FEFC approval please get in touch.

Is it possible to ask whether anyone can recommend any books, videos or classes in Bullwhip? Plus suppliers of quality whips? I went to Circus Space's workshop last Feb., and it was excellent, and I would now like to progress from paper tearing and Cigar out of the Mouth. A word of thanks to my partners in crime, Russell 'Wells on One Wheel', Andy 'Quality' Street and Ross 'The Gentleman Juggler' Cowley for all the blood spilt and their bloody silly faith in me!

Peter The silly bugger in the fireproof trousers that freaked Skate Naked at Norwich Gamble.

They were only humouring you

Let them eat cake

In the latest summer issue I counted five mentions of someone called Norman Blackburn. FIVE, I don't know how you can afford his rates of pay!

Mine's an old act that still features 'Eating an Apple'. Now, with my teeth, I have got it down to a 'Eating a Cake'.

The basket-work clubs mentioned by Brett Jackson on page 7 are not a new idea, they were advertised in 1921... The professional clubs in the advertisement you will notice weigh 16 oz. The clubs I use weigh 6 oz. Old jugglers have told me that in those days you needed to be strong. Until the modern light clubs were available, juggling four clubs was considered to be the limit.

Philip Astley certainly started something when he set up the first circus ring for his horses in Waterloo in London. The 1768 ring was a temporary affair. Circuses in London have always been temporary although there have been several attempts to start a permanent circus building. The Palladium, I believe started at Hengler's Circus. My parents told me about visits they made to the Hippodrome when it opened as a circus, with spectacular shows that was a cross between circus and theatre.

I wonder what killed them? Was it a question of bums on seats or the high costs of the shows?

Philip Astley chose a good site for his circus at Waterloo on the South Bank. The area now houses the National Theatre, the Festival Hall, the National Film Theatre, the Museum of the Moving Image and an Art Gallery, a list of attractions that is to be added to. It is also the best place in London for skateboarding. [you'd know, Norm -d]

In the early 1930's we were taken to see Maskelyne's magic shows. Maskelyne always had a different act as stated on page 17, as a foil. I can remember one long juggling act where a cannon ball was caught on the back of the shoulders, a tablecloth was pulled off a laid table, tricks with plates, tissue paper etc. I wish I could remember his name.

Matt Barnard's letter page 39. Matt comes from Stoke Newington near South Tottenham where I was born. Matt is young or he would know that the 1940's were the war years. Rationing went on till the 1950's. Not a time to be looking for street entertainments. In those days we had full employment and lots of entertainers took the opportunity of regular

safe work in industry.

In 1949 I recall seeing two men at several country fairs, they played accordion and banjo. In about 1930 every high street had a violinist with a card which said 'out of work because of the talkies'. In 1939 theatre queues were entertained by musicians, singers, Shakespearean speeches and a tap dancer who had his tap mat and an accordion player. As I have said before, I never saw a juggler busking. In many people's minds busking is equated with unemployment, they think it degrading that men should be reduced to it. It is only in the past few years that street entertainment has become welcomed in an area.

*Black Norm
Anburnharrow*

Norman's press-cuttings service also revealed that Tory MP John Butcher has suggested that the 14-mile stretch of M6 between junctions 5-10 north of Birmingham have their central reservations converted for jugglers and acrobats to perform, to prevent road rage. What a good idea - we don't think (nice to hear from Juggling Frank quoted in support, tho'). Of course the atmosphere you'd breathe in from a 14-mile traffic jam would be well worth the pennies chucked by commuters shut up in their cars. Join the real world, buddy...

What do we do with this unsolicited convention review?

Arosa is a winter ski resort. Now (deserted) during the summer it is a rest place for sick people [and sick jugglers? -d].

It's also host to the fantastic 10ième Festival Suisse De Jonglerie, 30 km up from the last town and as near to a lunar convention as your average hippie will ever get to. You also need a good 1st gear and ability to endure a good thorough German search/defence/tackle on the way through.

On Friday we had a telepherique workshop at the top of Mount Weisshorn, juggling with the elements. Saturday saw the parade and four hundred jugglers are glad it did.

Arosa was a real summer holiday (esp. for Heyes) so much so that more pressing issues took precedence over the public show and bands, which though started on time played throughout the night, as I did.

On Sunday the games ended the convention with a bang.

Pour example the five ball endurance finished, play was shortened by a water pistol.

*Heyes Hay
Planet Illegible*

Look guys, it's really hard to know what to do with all these Convention reviews and greetings you keep sending in. We think we ought to cover the Brit & the Euro, sometimes the IJA, shows/events that feature performers that we all might have a chance to see somewhere else, and already we've got too many. Most convention 'reviews' rarely say anything more interesting than: 'We were there. It was very good. My friend did some tricks and we all got drunk. We all said we'd like to go again. The end.' Boring reading. My position is we'll put little comments about conventions on the letters page and organisers' thanks usually amongst ads/notices or news. Any more just isn't interesting. Of course we like to know how conventions went so we know what to say

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

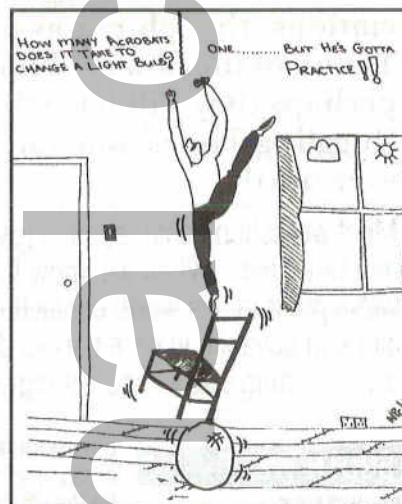
about them next year, but that's when the information is most useful. OK got that off my chest. What do you think? Write (never stop writing) and say...

Thought for the day

"A clown does nothing but live for others - like a PRIEST or a COP."

- *Pogo the Clown*
aka. John Wayne Gacy

Thanks donald. Thanks a lot



Wavey's the Word

I represent the children of Wavey, a cult dedicated to the great on Dave Downes. We are not happy about you and your offhand remarks about our great Guru's wisdom and Salvador's exploding trouser trick. It is plain that you have no molecules. We therefore demand a formal apology: or your balls will rise and never descend, and we'll send Tufty the squirrel round.

Beware the Custard !!!

Disciple Semi Colon

See 'feeds'. I rest my case, m'lud

Dear Sir, today I happened to glance out of my taxi window and observed some young people in gaily coloured clothes. I feel certain they are a new phenomenon as I have seen no mention of them elsewhere in your columns. Perhaps this is a discovery worth noting. Thinking they were a new religious cult to complain to my MP about, I questioned them, only to discover that they were in fact jugglers. How quaint! I can't say I've seen jugglers since Mater hired some from a circus for my 6th birthday, some time ago, I can tell you. It's a pleasure to see such simple crafts revived among the lower classes in times such as these. And, do you know? they get together diligently in village halls and places of education, solely to improve themselves. Today's youth are not always as despicable as one might be led to think. There are apparently quite a large number of these Juggling Associations, though not as many as Tennis or the Rotary. Who knows, perhaps they will have their own 'Juggling Times' one day. Whatever next!

Most workshops charge, often just to cover hall hire costs. When we know how much, we've put it in. It's worth contacting student clubs in advance in case they've decided to do something else without telling us. Or you.

SOUTH WEST

BARNSTAPLE

moving - temporarily closed
Fri. 01237 476790

BATH

Window Arts Centre
Juggling & UV room Mondays 6.30-10.30 £2
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

BRIDGWATER

Arts Centre
Thursdays 7-9
Pand 01823 322213

CLEVEDON

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

Groves Arts Centre
Tuesdays 8-10.30 £2
Ark & Mule 0831 753328, Dan 01305 268977

EXETER

University Circus Skills, Devonshire House
Tuesdays 8-10

EXMOUTH

Jug'U'L like, Cranford Sports Club
Wednesdays 4.45-6.45 £1.50 (under-16s £1)
Paul 01395 222341

FROME

F.A.H.A. Playschemes 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 Geoff 01242 519832

HIGHWORTH

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

LEIGH ON MENDIP

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

NEWTON ABBOT

Richard 01364 652446

PLYMOUTH

Barbican Theatre
Fridays 6-9, Sundays skillswap 3.30-6.30 £1.50/£1
Ian 01752 581357

SALISBURY

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

STREET

Fiasco Productions, Crispin Hall
Wednesdays 7-9
Hannah 01460 240082

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

Bishop Fox's School
Wednesdays 7-10
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

REDLAND

U.W.E. - juggling, Uni, acro-balance
Wednesdays 5-7 (termtime)
Paul 0117 924 8722

UNICYCLE HOCKEY

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

SOUTH EAST

BRIGHTON

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

BRIGHTON

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

CANTERBURY

University
Wednesday Evenings
Contact S.U.

CHICHESTER

Girls' High School
Thursdays 7-9 £1
Ball Space, Iain/Steve 01243 788052

CHERTSEY

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

CRAWLEY

Circuswurz, 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, Shakerford Village Hall
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30 £2
Nick 01483 827256

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

Boxmoor Art Centre Saint John's Road
Thursdays 8-10 £2
Julian Mount 01923 262306 / 0378 526469

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

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

HERTFORD

What's got 37 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 6.30-9.30, £1
4-11 years - Brading Station
Tuesdays 4-6
Stuart Albrighton 0198 367531

LEWES

Circus Pipsqueak Youth Circus (8+)
Dr. Colin 01273 813464

MAIDSTONE

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

NEWBURY

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

OXFORD

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

OXTED

Bletchingley Adult Education Centre
Sundays 7-9 £1
Andrew 01293 821195

PORTSMOUTH

Lower Gym, Priory School
Wednesdays 7.00-9.00 £1.50
Clive 01705 832966
Martin (Avalon) 01705 293673

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

SOUTHAMPTON

Ichen 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

WICKHAM (nr FAREHAM)

Long Room, Community Centre
Thursdays 8-10
Steve 01329 834210

WOKINGHAM

Iain Scholfield 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

Bouverie Road Scout Hall, Stoke Newington
Thursdays 7.30-10.15, £2.50/1.50
Steve Richards 0181 442 4816

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

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 6862

EAST MOLEYSEY

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 8-11
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
Mondays 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

COLCHESTER

Little Devils, Arts Centre
Sundays 2-5 £1.50
Tel 01206 844213

DEREHAM (nr. Norwich)

Justo James 01263 732888

HARWICH

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

IPSWICH

Suffolk College Gym
Tuesdays 7-9 £2
Dave 01473 255082

NORWICH

Saint Michael's Church, Colegate
Sundays 2.30-4.30 (under-16) £1.20,
5.7.30 (skilwap) £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

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
Neil Phoenix 01384 250068

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
Horselair 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
0116 255 5576

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, Leeming Street
Kids Workshop (&+), Fridays 5-7
01623 653309

NORTHAMPTON

Drop Shop Juggling Clubs
Beckie 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 9081

NUNEATON

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

SHREWSBURY

Jugglespace, Artscape, 5 Belmont
Thursdays 7.30-10 £1.50 (kids £1)
Robin 01743 884175, Fiona 01952
727230

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

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

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

TELFORD

Madely 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

HARBOURNE

Marineau 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, 64B Bristol Road
Saturdays 10-12 noon
Kevin 0121 414 0094

MANCHESTER

CENTRE

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

CENTRE

UNISEED, 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

WITHINGTON

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
Malt 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 546198

BRADFORD

Saltair Hall,
Thursdays 7-9 £1.20
Helen 01756 795759.

CLITHEROE

Roelelds 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, Dunelm House, New
Elvet
Thursday Evenings in termtime, all welcome

DURHAM

Durham City Jugglers, Shakespeare Hall
Tuesdays 7-9, £1.50
Scott 0191 384 6077

HARROGATE

Starbeck Youth & Community Centre, High
Street
Saturdays 6.30-8.30
Pete 01423 889125, Tim 01423 567583

HEDDEN 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

Hullabaloo Community Circus, Woodhouse
Community Centre
Wednesdays 6.30-8.30
Ali 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, Beauchlerk 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)
Flt: 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
in S.U.

ROCHDALE

The Broadwater Centre, Smith Street
Adults Mondays 7-9, Children Tuesdays
& Wednesdays at 4
Skylight Circus in Education, Noreen &
Jim 01706 50676.

SCARBOROUGH

Calcastroph, 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

WARRINGTON

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

WIDNES

Jugglers R'Us, Ditton 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

DUNDEE

University Juggling & Circus Skills
Society
Main Hall, Students' Association, Airlie
Place
Wednesdays 4-7pm (term time)
Mark Richards 01382 204244

EDINBURGH

Tallicross Community Centre
Mondays 7-9
Angelo 0131 447 7862

GLASGOW

The Firhill Complex, Hopehill Road,
Maryhill
Thursdays at 7
Mark 0141 945 2641

GLASGOW

Co-motion, Maryhill Community Central
Halls, Maryhill Road
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30
Chris 0141 427 3581

GLASGOW

University Juggling Club
Meets in OM Union, University Gardens
Most Tuesdays 7-9. Membership £2
OMU 0141 339 9784

INVERNESS

Merkinch Community Centre
Mondays 7.30-10
Dave 01463 220165

LIVINGSTON

Cross Clubs Christian Juggling Club
Gary Casson 01506 411187

SHETLAND ISLES

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

STIRLING

Cowan Centre
Mondays 7-8.30
0766 475429

STIRLING

Balls Up Club, University

Contact Noleen 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

LLANDUDRO 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
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Zero G, Phil/Andrea 01492 547542

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x4041

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Harlequin Juggling Club, Guide Headquarters,
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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 Panic 01650 521559

SWANSEA

Juggular, Dynevor School, Mansell Street
Wednesdays 7.30-9.30, £2/£1, first week free
Sam 01792 470546

SWANSEA

Dillwin Llewellyn School, Cocketts
Mondays 7-9, integrated Youth Circus
Phill Burton, 01792 466231

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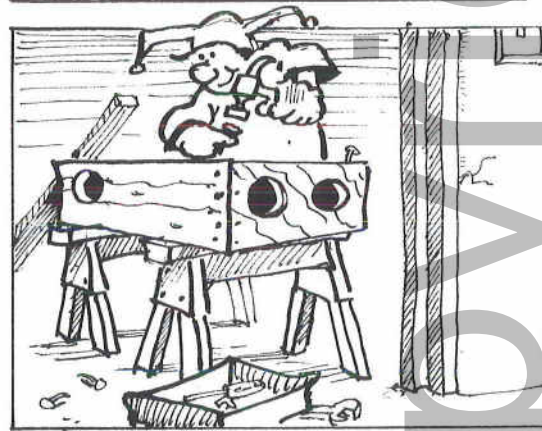
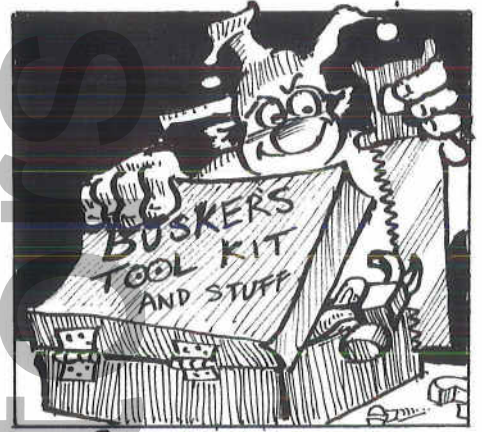
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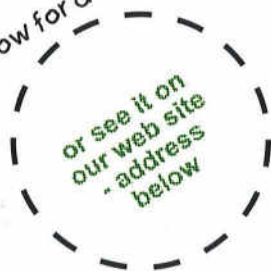
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