

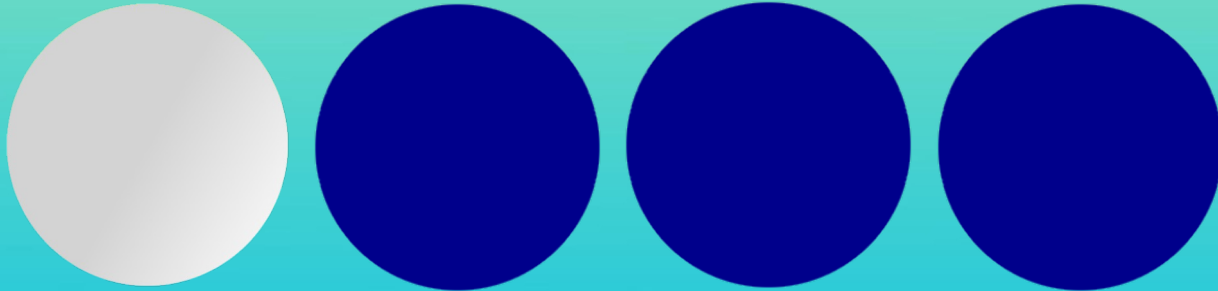
Speak OUT

TOGETHER FOR A SAFER CIRCUS

TRAINING 3: RECRUITMENT & AUDITIONS IN CIRCUS ARTS

3 - 5 september 2024

Aike Roodenburg



FEDEC
International network for
professional circus education



ENGAGEMENT

TODAY'S GOALS

TUESDAY 3/09

We'll work on:

1. **Setting the stage:** concrete framework on how we work together:
 - Inclusive rules for a safer training
 - Practical conditions and consent
1. **Getting to know each other:** *CHECK-IN* with names, organisation, pronouns + how you are feeling today. *CHECK-OUT* with one word!
1. **Starting to think about the topics of these three days:** short keynote, overview of the programm + formulating your own questions.

INTRODUCTION

WHO AM I?

- White, able, cis, bi woman (she/her)
- Music teacher & conductor (Conservatorium Utrecht)
→ *The Netherlands* 2015/16
- Kunstwetenschappen (UGent)
→ *Belgium* 2020
- Production, coordination, finances
- **Engagement** volunteer (2019)
+ part of the board (2021)
- Certified trust person (IDEWE)
- Yearly supervision + peer-reviews
- Sector trustee in the circus field (BE)

WHAT IS ENGAGEMENT?

- in the wake of #MeToo (2017)
- artist-led movement
- tackling sexual harassment, sexism and abuse of power in the arts field.
- in the professional as well as the educational sphere
- awareness, criticism, action
- intersectional feminism

speak OUT ANGELS

GENERAL INFO

- Functionality
- Mandate
- Procedures
- How to contact
- Separate place

📍 La Central del Circ,
Barcelona (ESP)

LYNN

+35 3892 270

English/Spanish



MARTHA

+44 7946 846
732

English



SARAH / FEDEC

+33 6 67 25 57 08

- *French, English* (Sarah & Isabel)
- *Spanish, Italian* (Lorenzo)
- Production, Logistics, Programme

AIKE

+ 316 105 85 402

- *Dutch, English, French*
- Programme
- Content
- Methodology

INCLUSIVE RULES FOR A SAFER TRAINING

SPEAK OUT engages for a safer circus, in this way the participants agree on the following rules by being part of the project:

- **Respect:** be conscious of respecting the people around you through your words, gestures and behavior. We all have different cultures, backgrounds and experiences, and everyone has their place in the group, free to express their truth while respecting others.
- **Listen:** listening is the first step towards making changes, thinking differently and opening up to the realities of others. Be aware of letting others express themselves and give them space to listen.
- **Accept:** if someone does not feel respected by what you are saying/doing, please try to have an open attitude to constructive feedback in order to evolve.
- **Question "like a child":** we are all in a continuous learning process and are composed of unconscious biases and "bad" habits. Let's play like a child to be better and accept that nobody is perfect. If mistakes are done, be kind to yourself and others when possible.

We don't accept: racism, sexism, agism, and all kind of discrimination and non-inclusive behavior. The disrespect of these rules may result in exclusion from the course.

PRACTICAL CONDITIONS

Village news, check-in / check-out

- *Confidentiality!*
 - = talk about *your* experiences while leaving out sensitive information of others.
- Try to be aware of your own *speaking time*
- We listen to each other *sympathetically*
- We're open to *learn* from each other
- No one is obliged to *share* anything
- Say "I" when you *mean* "I": fact versus opinion
- We are allowed to *disagree* with each other
- Feel free to *leave* the space anytime you want for drinks, toilet, smoke...
- Feel free to *move around*

To not say 'sorry', when there is really no need!

Questions? Ideas? Consent?

CHECK-IN

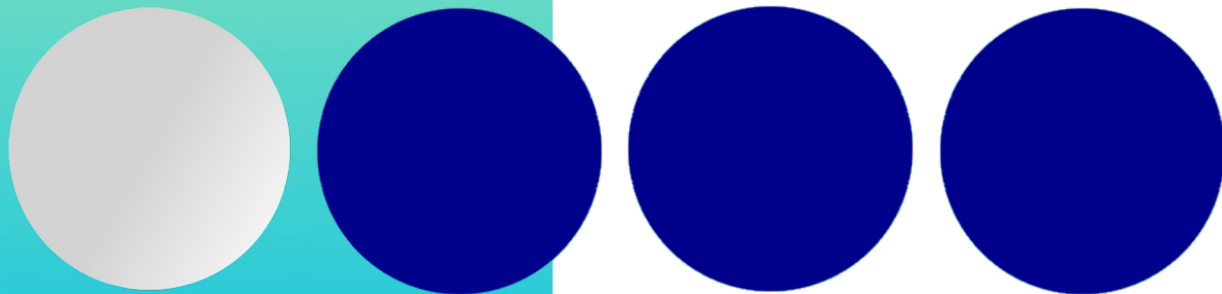
Name and pronouns, organisation & mandate
+ how are are feeling today?

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KEYNOTE

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LACK OF DIVERSITY ON STAGE

- **CORE:** (new) focus on schools (leisure and professional), as well as:
 - Budget cuts and professionalization at the same time
 - Ever-increasing number of applicants
 - Recruitment of teachers, risk of lowering standards
 - “Sticky myths of art” (ideal circus performer)
- Objective: information from experts, peer exchange and collaborative development of tools / checklists
- Question our unconscious biases!

DISCLAIMER: General input and added sources

RECRUITMENT & AUDITIONS

DAY 1

INTRODUCTION

- Setting the stage
- Warm-up of the topics of today
- Getting to know each other
- Getting to know La Central del Circ

DAY 2

DEEP DIVE

- Circus of Inclusion - Amanda Homa
- Round table moderated by Noemi De Clercq
- *Conversation time!*

DAY 3

HANDS-ON

- Groupwork on spotting, auditions and recruitment
- Presentation and Feedback
- Collective harvesting

DIVERSITY & REPRESENTATION MATTERS

“When we want to analyse a structural problem, we need to analyse it on all levels: this includes listening to different voices and approaching the issues from different angles. Solutions are never singular and a plan of action will need to be implied on different levels in order for change to happen. Often this includes a much-needed shift in mentality or norms; a reconsidering of what is seen as ‘normal’.”

(Ilse Ghekiere)

DIVERSITY & REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Pillar of democracy: every community has the right to see itself represented in public institutions.

Circus = microcosm of society

Where do we want to go?

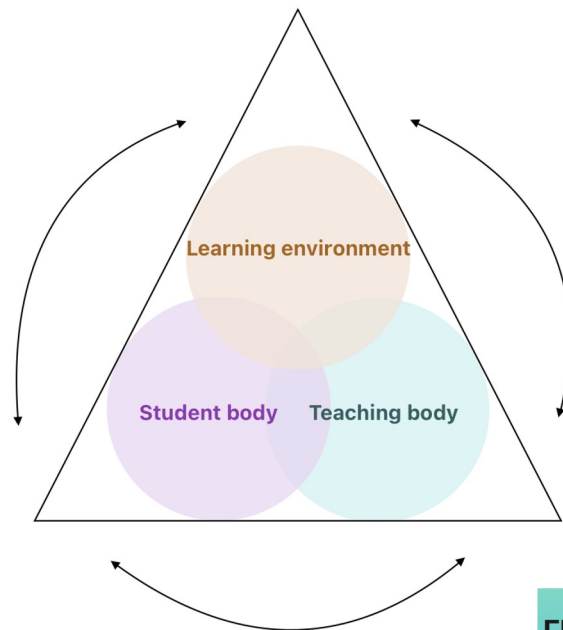
1. Learning environment

- Explicit and implicit learning
- Code of conduct, implementing rules of care
- Feedback culture (constructive, two-way)
- Curriculum, programme, references (canon)

2. Teacher body (recruitment)

3. Student body (auditioning)

*→ Change in one, will change the others
new challenges*



I. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

“Education is not a preparation for the real world, but a world as real as any other, consisting of social interactions that are not set by unchangeable laws but products of a culture. We create values, norms, practices and attitudes, and are therefore creators of ‘real worlds’.

(Engage D-ARCH)

I. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Dismantle your myths (& stereotypes)!*

- **Break the canon, make the canon** (+ focus on local talent)
- **Invest in transparent and honest evaluation methods**
(+ constructive, two-way feedback)
- **Establish an environment of trust for *all* students:** question norms, be culturally responsive.
- **Establish a code of conduct*:** in conversation with the students and teachers.
- **Reevaluate the current complaint procedures*** (+ make them clearly known and visible)
- **Make a diversity plan that tackles all levels of the institution:** including at the very top!

* DISMANTLE YOUR MYTHS

Petra Van Brabandt (moral philosopher and head of research at Sint Lucas Antwerp)

- **Myth 1:** The female Nude celebrates Women's Beauty
- **Myth 2:** We are Not Racist
- **Myth 3:** The Genius Artist
- **Myth 4:** Absolute Freedom of Expression
- **Myth 5:** Truth nor Beauty without Transgression
- **Myth 6:** Art = Progressive
- **Myth 7:** There ain't no power in this room

* CODE OF CONDUCT

- **Experimental context:** be attentive to situations that may endanger individuals and groups
- **Definitions:** tools & shared valuation (awareness and possibility of action)
- **Institutional responsibility:** zero tolerance policy and ultimate responsibility
- **Horizontality:** everyone signs, everyone is addressed (including e.g. bystanders or third parties), everyone can make adjustments (open document)
- **Protective AND educational tool**

* COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

‘Thank You for Your Complaint’ by Anneleen Lemmens & Jacopo Buccini in ‘School of Equals’ (red. Stijn Van Dorpe & Sarah Késenne)

An analysis and attempted dismantling of non-arguments in conversations with art school directions and staff

1. You are the only one complaining
2. We don’t have official complaints: we need those to do sth
3. Your generation only comes with criticism, not with solutions
4. We will have this conversation in this tone and at this speed...
5. We have to protect the pedagogical identity of the school...
6. Your traumatic experience is part of the learning process...
7. I can only teach about what I know.

II. TEACHING BODY

Recruitment, representation, cultural sensitivity...

- Conscious effort
- Diversity matrix (quota?)
- Clear view on profiles you want to attract
- Positive/affirmative actions - tokenization
- Transparant recruitment procedures:
 - (External) communication
 - Expectations, timing, feedback.
 - Vacancy: "We are looking for someone..."
 - Head-hunting / sharing of vacancies
- Diversifying management

II. TEACHING BODY

Fighting your unconscious biases

- Critically analyse your (pre)selection criteria
- No name / no CV -> motivation as core selection criteria
- External eye:
 - Young panel
 - Student involvement
 - External experts (with lived experience)

“What if we did the maximum of effort, instead of the bare minimum” (Róise Goan, Artsadmin)

II. TEACHING BODY

Warm welcome

- Context in which different profiles can thrive
- Buddy-system / mentor programs
- Implementing rules of behavior right from the start
- Hidden biases (test)
- Work boundaries: *How do we work together**
- Recognize and acknowledge position of power as teachers

“Power comes with responsibility and the awareness that you are in charge of people, of their physical and mental well-being.” (Hanna Mampuy, THERE THERE Company)

III. STUDENT BODY

- First impression for both the school and the candidate
- Transparent auditioning procedures: (online) preselections expectations, criteria, timing
- **Feedback**

“Clear criteria and written feedback; participatory, conversational and peer-to-peer evaluation methodologies that create productive learning environments instead of monological performances of psychological terror and abuse; pre-crit meetings to set common ground and values.”

- Written feedback
- On parts that you can change (NOT: “You don’t have the right look”) / gendered feedback.
- Recommendations to other schools (this might be sth for you)

III. STUDENT BODY

“[...] tackling systemic oppressions is a long-term process which requires active ongoing focus across the organisation” (Artsadmin)

→ Active recruitment?

- Research on the “ones that didn’t make it”
 - Applicants who do not come a second time.
 - Students who drop out of school early
 - Alumni who do not make it to stage
- Define potential risk zones
- Act on them more constructively

THANK YOU

Are there any questions?

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- Learning for Justice. *TEST YOURSELF FOR HIDDEN BIAS*. [Online](#)

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

- In the room you find 6 posters, around recruitment, auditions and other... (free space).
- Think of questions you want to work on / solve / develop during these three days
- Write them down on post-its
- Stick your post-its to the different posters (categorize)
- If you meet someone at a poster, introduce yourself and your question!
- *These posters will stay during the entire training, so feel free to adjust and add onto them at any time.*

GUIDED TOUR AFTERWARDS (16h30)

CHECK-OUT

With only one word...

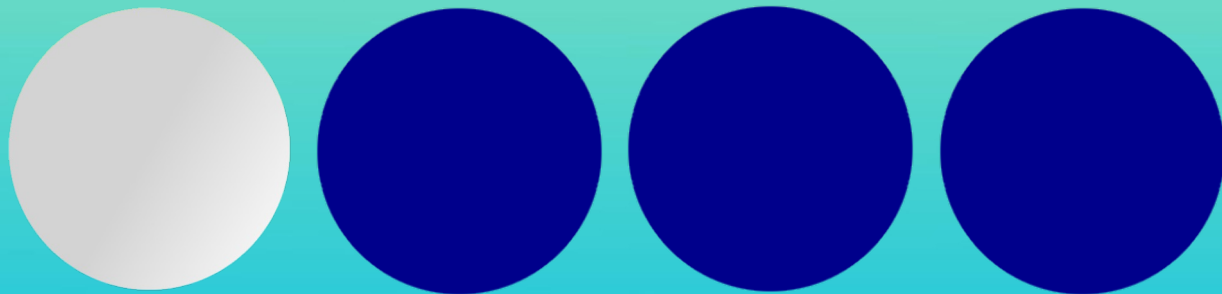
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TODAY'S PROGRAM WEDNESDAY 4/09

We'll work on:

- Setting the stage (recap)
- **Workshop “Circus of Inclusion: Confronting Racism and Cultural Bias in Circus” / Amanda Homa**
- **Let's open the conversation!**
- Lunch Break 📍 La Central del Circ
- **Roundtable on Auditions & Selections in Circus Arts**
- **Let's open the conversation!**
- Check-out & Logistic info
- Artistic presentation
- Dinner

COMMUNICATIVE TOOLS

Use nonverbal communication symbols (hand motions) through which you can show what you think about something and/or you want to add something to the discussion (these are suggestions, new hand motions can be added):

- ***Do you agree with the point being made?*** Move both hands up and turn with your hands.
- ***Do you disagree with something?*** Then move your hands down.
- ***Want to say something in response to the person speaking now?*** Then raise one finger. You will be the first to respond.
- ***Do you also want to add something?*** Then raise two fingers. You will be the second to respond.
- ***Do you want to interrupt briefly?*** Then wrap both fingers around each other.
- ***Need a break?*** Make a "T" with both your hands.

CHECK-IN

Name + pronouns

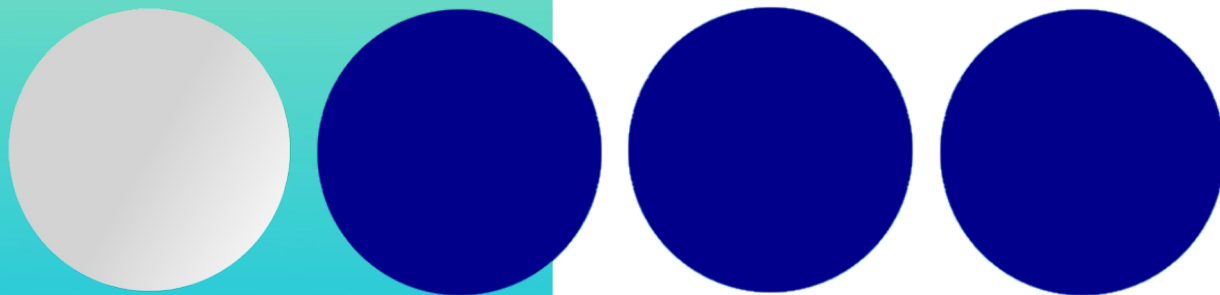
How you have slept & “If you were an icecream flavour, which one would it be and why?”

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LET'S OPEN THE CONVERSATION

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CIRCUS OF INCLUSION

Form groups of 4-5 people and discuss your experiences with the workshop. Questions to help you get started:

- *What sparked your interest?*
- *What was new?*
- *Are there moments/comments/opinions you disagreed with?*
- *What do you want to work on further?*

ROUNDTABLE

- Every panel member will get a different table.
- Want to talk further to that panel-member?
 - Go to the table and ask your questions.
- Feel like you cannot contribute anymore?
 - Go to a different table!
- Make this your own “marketspace” where you find AND share information.
- Discuss the different aspects of what has been mentioned during the roundtable session.

CHECK-OUT

“I feel...”

In your most comfortable language!

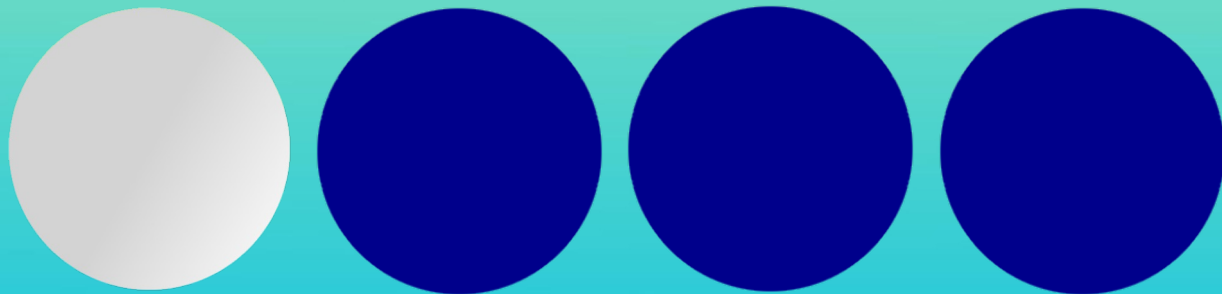
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TODAY'S PROGRAM

THURSDAY 5/09

We'll work on:

- Setting the stage (recap)
- **SPEAK OUT Update: The spotting protocol / Rosa Matthis**
- **Groupwork**
- Lunch Break 📍 La Central del Circ
- **Presentations & feedback**
- **Collective harvesting**
- **Evaluation and next steps**
- Bus to Tàrraga

CHECK-IN

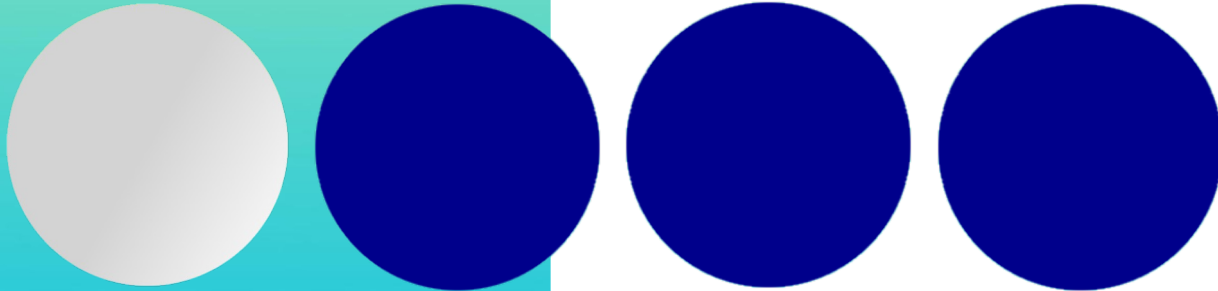
A little game to get the energy a bit higher...

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GROUPWORK

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GROUPWORK (90-120 min)

1. Choose your topic:
 - **5 groups according to the POSTERS!**
 - **1 group of spotting:** creating videos - with Rosa
2. Decide how you want to approach your topic, *ideas*:
 - Make a thorough **analysis** of your topic
 - Use (one of) the **post-its** as a starting point
 - Try to find an “answer” to (one of) the **post-its**
 - Draft a **checklist** (of principles)
 - Create a **utopia** of your topic
3. Decide how to organize yourselves (smaller groups, different roles etc.)
4. Work on the task + prepare a way of presenting to others

1. RECRUITMENT:
vacancies
2. RECRUITMENT:
job interviews
3. RECRUITMENT:
warm welcome
4. AUDITIONS:
practical
5. AUDITIONS:
feedback
6. OTHER...

ROLES TO CONSIDER

A group-setting CAN have these tasks/roles:

1. **Chair:** the one who keeps focussing on the task/endgoal
2. **Timekeeper:** the one who keeps an eye on the time (1,5 hours)
3. **Mediator:** the person who makes sure everyone is heard and has their say (*maybe more than one?*)
4. **Note taker:** online / offline
5. **Dreamer:** who isn't inhibited by practical objections
6. **Summarizer:** Someone who makes sure that every conversation is finalized with a (sort of) conclusion/summary
7.

PRESENTATIONS & FEEDBACK (30 min)

- **7 minutes presentation time per group:**
 - Spotting (1)
 - Auditions (2)
 - Recruitment (3)
- **3 min feedback per group:**
 - Person 1: *What sparked your interest the most?*
 - Person 2: *What do you want to (see) develop(ed) further?*
 - There are only 12 people that can give some feedback, so feel free to SHOW your feedback non-verbally.

(60 min)

COLLECTIVE HARVESTING & CHECK- OUT

one MAGIC or “AHA!” MOMENT

one of the things that you want to learn more about

We ended up doing this in duo's

THANK YOU

For your openness, generosity, critical questions, multiple languages, cultural backgrounds, expertise, experience...