REFLect

REFLections and Exchanges for Circus arts Teachers project

FFEC
Fédération Française
des Écoles de Cirque

FEDEC
FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE
DES ÉCOLES DE CIRQUE
PROFESSIONNELLES
EUROPEAN FEDERATION
OF PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

Circus teachers play a key role in passing on this multiple art form. Not only do they possess technical and artistic expertise, they also convey interpersonal skills and good manners which will help students find and develop their style and identity, each young artist's own specific universe.

These skills were originally passed down verbally through generations of families, but this changed with the emergence of circus schools in the 1970s. Disciplines are taught by specialists from the circus, top-level sport, dance and theatre, mainly with one teacher per student providing one-on-one instruction.

However, there is still no recognised definition of the profession of circus teacher within the context of vocational training and higher education, nor a definition of the pathways into the profession. This is an occupation for which, at this moment in time, there is no initial training. Today's teachers are sportsmen and women or former artists (circus, dance, theatre, etc.) who wanted to pursue their career in teaching. A generation of younger teachers is emerging, perhaps recent graduates from a school. The generation change is creating a need to document the methodologies and techniques developed by pioneers and at the same time, the innovations and mechanisms introduced by the teachers to adapt their lessons to the developments in circus arts, disciplines, apparatus and training frameworks.

So not only is there a need to identify the skills of the professionals and develop them, but also to train the young generation of teachers. Continuing professional development for teachers is actually one of the requirements for providing students with richer and more progressive initial training.

The need to further develop existing skills and anticipate future skills led FFEC (the French Federation of Circus Schools) and FEDEC (the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools)

to develop the European project REFLECT (2017-2019), funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Following on from the INTENTS project (2014-2017)[1], REFLECT promotes the circulation and informal sharing of best practice among circus school teachers to explore innovative teaching methods, document existing practices and open up opportunities for initiatives and innovation in terms of defining skills, engineering and networking.

REFLECT aimed to:
- reflect artistic excellence and aesthetic diversity and create a shared and evolving legacy;
- support high-quality artistic teaching methods and greater creativity through interactions with other sectors (music/dance/theatre);
- offer a programme of informal exchanges on best practice among peers on a European level based on cross-disciplinary themes;
- encourage, as a sector, the development of the profession and its recognition through long-term collaborations with decision-making bodies at national/European level;
- contribute to European professional training policies.

This publication is for everyone interested in learning about the outcomes of the discussions between circus schools' teachers which took place within the framework of the European project REFLECT. It therefore aims to summarise all the themes addressed, presenting the key outcomes produced.
It includes the main conclusions and recommendations made during the REFLECT Labs.

The outcomes presented here are by no means prescriptive or comprehensive. They arise from accounts of a broad range of experiences, in a variety of contexts.

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[1]Aimed at gaining recognition for circus teachers' skills and upgrading them, INTENTS brought together 33 partners from 12 countries, including 29 circus schools and 2 research organisations. It was centred around three continuing training sessions organised on the themes of verticality, weight and gravity, propulsions, and balance and support. At each session, around twenty teachers of different circus disciplines from all over Europe came together to further develop their skills and discuss teaching methods with their peers. More details at: http://www.fedec.eu/en/articles/?c=186

REFLECT IN A NUTSHELL

The REFLECT project was led by the French Federation of Circus Schools (FFEC), in close collaboration with the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC), and involved 27 partners from 12 different countries. It began in September 2017 and focused primarily on training teachers in professional circus arts schools.

PROJECT	**27** partners	**12** different **countries**	**27** months
4 LABS	**78** participants from 25 écoles Lab 1: 27 Lab 2: 9 Lab 3: 25 Lab 4: 17	**12** different **countries** (Europe & Canada)	**117** training hours & exchanges
	3 pedagogical coordinators	**3** training venues: • FLIC (Turin, IT) • Codarts (Rotterdam, NL) • Festival CIRCa with ESAC-TO Lido (Auch, FR)	
16 MEETINGS		**6** venues: • CDAC Balthazar (Montpellier, FR) • Samovar (Bagnolet, FR) • FEDEC (Brussels, BE) • FFEC (Paris, FR) • SAB (Berlin, DE) • Festival CIRCa with ESAC-TO Lido (Auch, FR)	• **10** meetings of the REFLECT **steering committee** • **6 meetings** with the **partners**

REFLECT PROJECT PRESENTATION

The REFLECT project focuses on consulting the network and the circus teachers on their continuing education needs through the organisation of peer-to-peer exchanges; the creation of a network of European professionals; the dissemination and use of the resources produced within the framework of the INTENTS project and the reflection on the new documentation needs for circus education.

The main objectives of the project are:
− To consult the network and the teachers on continuing education needs and the related themes, types of training and participation in the sessions as well as continuing training engineering,
− To organise 4 laboratories for circus teachers,
− To disseminate and use the INTENTS resources that were published and launch a reflection on the needs for documentation and heritage in order to enrich the teaching of circus.

The project includes a consortium of:
- **27** partners from **12** European countries, namely:
  o **2** networks (FEDEC and FFEC)
  o **25** circus arts schools/training centres/higher education institutions

The REFLECT ommittee, in charge of monitoring project activities and decision-making, met 10 times during the project, it was composed of: Pascal Croain, director of CRAC Lomme ; Gérard Fasoli, director of CNAC ; Florent Fodella, director of Piste d'Azur and treasurer of FFEC ; Martine Leroy, artistic director of CDAC Balthazar ; Anne Morin, co-director of Centre de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel ; Stéphane Simonin, director of l'Académie Fratellini and president of FEDEC ; Alain Taillard, director of FFEC ; Isabel Joly, director of FEDEC ; Gaëlle Le Breton, then Lorenzo Albiero, REFLECT project manager.

The Committee members were selected on the basis of the school representativeness (secondary, vocational, higher education), expertise in adult continuing training and scenic and pedagogical experience as a teacher. A pedagogical or thematic "sub-committee" (per exchange) was in charge of the REFLECT Labs (training content, communication, evaluation).

REFLECT LABS

During the 27 months of the project, 4 peer exchange laboratories were organised, aiming to improve, question and discuss about teaching and circus pedagogy on transversal themes.

Lab #1: "The role of the teacher in a creative process of the student's personal project"

Lab #2: "Creation processes with students: observation, analysis and testimonies based on the CIRCLE project"

Lab #3: "The role of the teacher in a creative process of the collective project of students"


Lab #4: "Creation process with professionals: observation, analysis and exchanges"

The meetings raised awareness of the problem of documenting teaching practices and the evolution of the professional teacher profiles. It was an opportunity to organise a network consultation on the teacher needs in terms of training and on the school expectations in terms of continuing education offer.

PARTNERS AND ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

Partners

1. Fédération française des écoles de cirque (FFEC)
2. Fédération européenne des écoles de cirque professionnelles (FEDEC)
3. Centre de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel
4. Codarts Circus arts Rotterdam
5. Centre des arts du cirque Balthazar
6. Ecole Nationale de cirque de Châtellerault
7. Akademiet For Utaemmet Kreativitet
8. Ecole Nationale des Arts du Cirque de Rosny-sous-Bois
9. Samovar
10. Circomedia
11. Centre des arts du cirque Le Lido
12. Staatliche Artistenschule Berlin
13. Scuola di Cirko Vertigo
14. Flic Scuola di Circo
15. Escola de Circo Carampa
16. National Centre for Circus Arts
17. Dans Och Cirkushögskolan/ Stockholms Konstnärliga Högskola
18. ACaPA | Fontys - Academy of Circus and Performance Art
19. Turku University of Applied Sciences
20. Escola Profissional de Artes e Ofícios do Espectáculo Chapitô
21. Ecole de Cirque de Bordeaux
22. Centre régional des arts du cirque de Lomme
23. Piste d'Azur Centre régional des arts du cirque
24. Institut National du Music-Hall
25. Die Etage
26. Baross Imre Artistaképző Intézet Előadó-Művészeti Szakgimnázium
27. Cirkus Cirkör / Nycirkusprogrammet
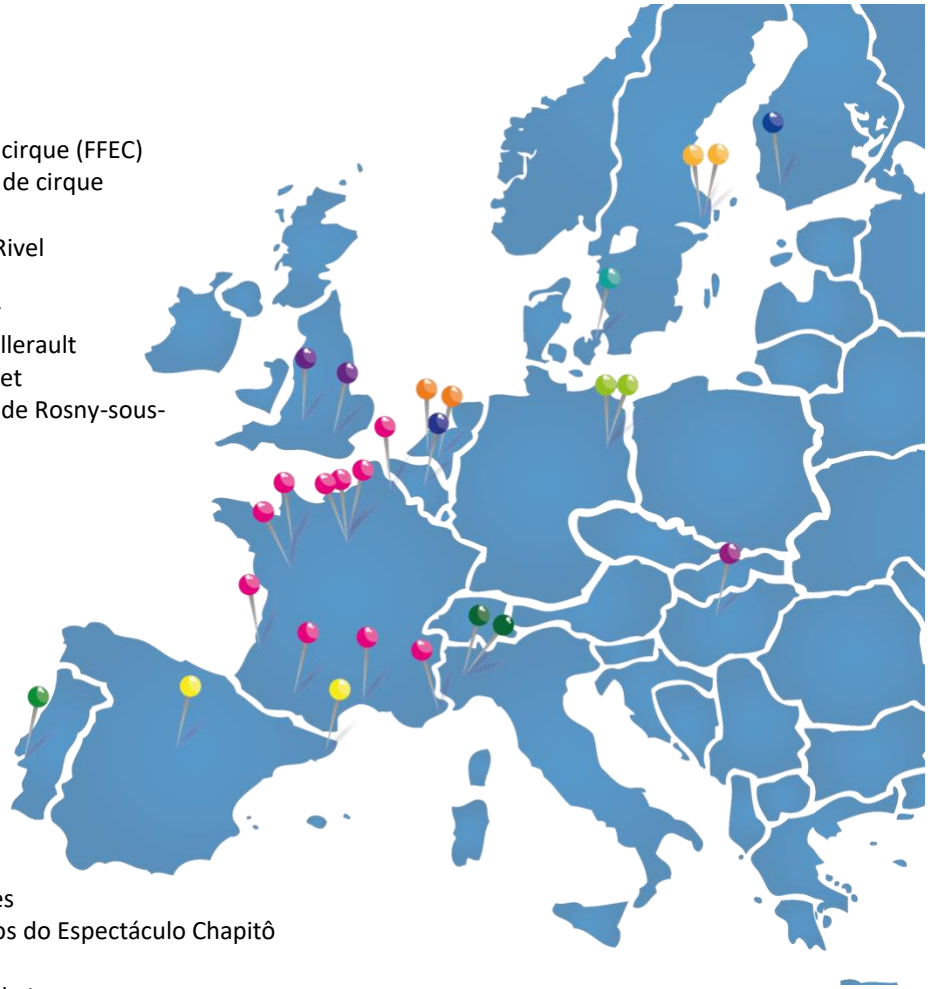
Associate partners

- Financial Partner: Centre national des arts du cirque (CNAC)
- All other FEDEC members
- CIRCa Festival
- Université of Reims: Vincent Grosstephan, Lecturer at University of Reims, Researcher in CEREP Lab (research Lab on employements and professionalisations/Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Emplois et les Professionnalisations), pedagogical coordinator of REFLECT Labs 1-3
- Agathe Dumont, independent teacher-researcher and dancer, doctor in performing arts

PRESENTATION OF THE 4 LABS

Lab #1: The role of the circus teacher in a creation process around the individual project of the student

Dates: 12-16 March 2018
Place: Scuola di Circo Flic, Turin

Participants: 27 participants (from **15** FEDEC schools) with **11** different nationalities.

This first Lab allowed to establish a work methodology, aiming to promote exchanges between European professors.

Every day, 2 presentations were made by participants in the Lab, allowing to enrich the debate and to compare the different contexts in Europe, by analysing the similarities and divergences of the situations and questions presented by the speakers.

The participants were then divided into focus groups in which they could share their points of view, their reflections, and experiences about the different aspects of the guidance of an individual creation project in a professional circus school.

This Lab represents a base for the rest of the REFLECT project since it targets the needs in continuing training for the participant teachers.

All the participants were satisfied of their experience and enthusiastic about the discussions and brainstorming.

Lab #2: Creation processes with students: observation, analysis and testimonies based on the CIRCLE project

Dates: 21-25 October 2018
Place: Festival CIRCa, Auch

Participants: **9** participants (from **5** FEDEC schools) with **6** different nationalities

The theme proposed for this second exchange between peers-laboratory, focuses on a reflection around the role of the teacher in supporting the project of collective creation of students. It was mainly for the participants to debate, to share their points of view, their reflections, their experiences on this theme. The reflection was carried out based on the observation of performances by FEDEC CIRCLE students, and discussions around this process between CIRCLE participants and REFLECT participants. On this occasion CNAC and FEDEC carried out video interviews of the CIRCLE project participants. The videos are available free online here.

Every year since 2007, CIRCLE has been hosted by the CIRCa Festival in Auch and gathers, over 4 days, about 50 students and their supervisors from FEDEC network schools. The participants present short performances lasting 20 to 30 minutes in professional conditions, and take part in one of the largest European gatherings dedicated to contemporary circus. Each performance is followed by a discussion meeting between the students, the educational teams, sector professionals and the audience, providing them with the opportunity to share the creative process, their artistic approaches, their inspirations and ambitions.

CIRCLE is incorporated in the pedagogical programme of participating schools. It is meant to be both an experience of free creation, without any themes or aesthetic restrictions, and an experience away from school which supplements the vocational training programmes. By participating in CIRCLE, students are given the chance to experiment with new forms, new associations, to learn from each other and prepare for work in a restricted group within a timeframe, with an original form of exercise which complements those developed in current pedagogical programmes. The Lab #2, organised around CIRCLE, has thus made it possible to develop a reflection on the student collective projects accompaniment based on a concrete case.

Lab #3: A week of reflection on the collective creation of circus students

Dates: 30 April - 03 May 2019
Place: Codarts, Rotterdam

Participants: 25 participants (from **15** FEDEC schools) with **10** different nationalities

This Lab allowed participants to discuss and share their experiences on the role that teachers can play in supporting the creative process of student groups.

The topic was connected to the Lab #2 (Auch October 2018) and participants enjoyed the video-interviews recorded by CNAC and FEDEC during the CIRCa Festival 2018. The interviews concern the CIRCLE project and provide the viewers with different points of view (of students, teachers and artistic/pedagogical directors) about the CIRCLE project and the process of collective creation.

The videos were used as "food for thoughts" to sparkle the Lab reflection on the role of the circus teacher in supporting the collective creative process of students.

In the following days, 5 different participants further contributed to the Lab by giving presentations about their own experiences with collective creation. Each presentation was followed by a collective discussion and a workshop related to the topics arisen during the presentation and the discussion.

The main event of the week was the circus show by Codarts 2nd year students: *Cyborg 2.* Participants had the chance to assist to the show during the Rotterdam Circusstad Festival. They have then met the students and the director of *Cyborg 2,* with whom they could discuss and exchange their observations.

Lab #4: Exchanges on the creation process during a collective project by circus professional artists

Dates: 20-25 October 2019
Place: CIRCa Festival, Auch

Participants: 17 participants (from **13** FEDEC schools) with **9** different nationalities

The theme proposed for this last exchange between peers focused on a reflection around the collective creation process of professionals.

The Lab programme gave time and space to the participants to take part in as much events and performances of the CIRCa festival as possible. The aim was to let the participants explore the festival and later use their observations and reflections to nourish the discussion with their peers.

All along the week participants had the chance to meet and discuss about collective creation with several professional circus companies and to watch their performances: *Circus I Love You* by Circus I Love You, *Möbius* by Compagnie XY, *Monstro* by Collectif Sous le Manteau and *Born to be circus* by Circo Zoé.

The objective was to learn from different professional creation processes and to enrich themselves through the exchange of practices between peers, in order to develop teaching methodologies in schools.

The official closing of the REFLECT project was organised on Thursday evening, October 24, by FEDEC and FFEC, in collaboration with the CIRCa festival.

METHODOLOGIES, ISSUES AND TOOLS EXPLORED

A. Contributions from professionals

On the emergence of the artistic process

(Martine Leroy)

1)   Issues and contextualisation of young people, future artists

The first challenge the teaching team needs to address in order to design the educational programme is to take into account the situation of incoming students:
-   The **change in their environment**
-   The fact that they have to **manage on their own**
-   The fact that they have to **adjust to a steady pace**

These changes require a certain amount of **internal psychological investment**. Besides which, they are also being asked to undertake **a great deal of physical and artistic exertion**. This may lead to **psychological paradoxes**. They may be overwhelmed by having to think and having to do.

E.g.: on the one hand, the school is asking them to make choices, understand and reflect on the issues of their professional project, and on the other hand they are being asked to let go somewhat and enjoy themselves without thinking about it.

2) Issues encountered by teachers

Martine Leroy listened to the **teachers** and asked them questions because **they do not always understand**:
- The **technical "barriers"**
- The **creative "blocks"** students may face, especially at the very beginning of the creation process for individual projects

Teachers have **conflicting requirements** depending on whether they are:
- **Technical teachers** (sport or circus) who guarantee technical quality: they are caught up in a motivational need for progression, levels and achievement and talk about substantial demands of the young people from a relationship standpoint (crying, explanations, anger, etc.)
- **Artistic teachers** (circus, dance, acting) who guarantee artistic quality: they regret not often managing to get young people to "let go" and talk about attitudes, behaviour, attendance tendencies, unwillingness or bad atmospheres which do not allow them to.

Students and teachers can feel vulnerable: kindness is needed. These problems cannot be avoided and need to be tackled so that young adults can choose the person they want to be (without their parents or another resource person).

3) Tools used with the students

Psychological tools and specialist creativity teachers

- "Observation / Association / Expression" *(inspired by Ovide Decroly)*
  3 phases:
  - **Observation**: watching, feeling, etc.
  - **Association**: imagining, comparing, classifying, etc.
  - **Expression**: drawing, moving, saying words if they manage to

- "Feeling / Imagination / Thought" (inspired by psycho-phenomenology)
  - **Feelings** come first
  - Then **images**
  - Finally **thought / words**
  → N.B.: In that order!
  E.g.: When students have an idea, Martine Leroy asks them to take it further because they may get caught up in her creativity: the body is not always aligned with the idea. Comparison with a fish swimming upstream in a river to get back to the origin of the idea.

- "Confidence / Play / Look" (inspired by Donald Winnicott)
  - **Confidence** leads to **spontaneous play**
  - The **pleasure of play** leads to **"strokes of inspiration"** (creativity, improvisation, research),
  - If these are seen and approved, they **build self-esteem.**
  → E.g.: This takes place in childhood and afterwards, too: "Look what I can do!"

- "Pull / Push / Support"
  Support is possible in 3 positions:
  - I can **pull**
  - I can **push**
  - But the best thing to do is **walk side by side** (like on a walk).

All of these tools have influenced Martine Leroy's work as they are simple things which those supporting and the team agree with.

4) Exercises: stimulating the creative process and developing corporeality

- The news: **from the personal to the universal**
    - An article is chosen: impro 1 "This must be made known" and observation from Martine Leroy
    - Reflection on this choice: impro 2 "Why that particular article?"
    - → Generally, the response is that it has touched them. A dance, dramatized or circus version may be added.

- Work on sources and/or themes: awareness verbalisation
    - **Improvisations on memories**, "child's bedroom", simple sensation
    - In parallel, the students are asked to some **fine art**: treasure box or do a collage on the individual project (anything that comes to mind) and an **interview** about this work
    - **Personal artistic chronological fresco**

- Go elsewhere: learn, be inspired, take risks
    - They are given advice on:
        o **Lectures**
        o **Exhibitions**
        o **Films**
        o Other artists or other artistic movements as regards form (style, genre) and substance (subjects)

Once confidence has been instilled, the students can take risks: go out onto the streets, perform in museums.
E.g.: the girls and boys went into town wearing dresses. The fact that they had been in contact a lot with the LGBT community helped them to be more sensitive and eccentric.

- Progressive feedback: shared identification, directions in which to go
    - Offer an **outsider's perspective**:
        o **Empty your mind** (do not come with your problems)
        o **Be a mirror**
        o **Accept everything**
E.g.: One of Balthazar students wanted to adopt the gait of a crab on a trapeze. This bore fruit as she found her own corporeality in this way. This can work depending on the profiles and specialisations.
→ The **person supporting** must create **a climate of trust with the student** during the **research stage** and require **quality** during the **creative stage**.

5) Cases, limitations and mistakes

Sometimes the construction of the young student's artistic identity does not work because of:

- The **timing**:
    o It is not the right moment for the student at this point is his/her life
    o The student is **not used to doing artistic research** (in addition to technical research, outcomes and achievement)
    o The student is very self-judgemental which prevents him/her from expressing him/herself
      E.g.: sometimes 1 year in a school is not long enough

- **External pressures** (relationships with partners, family, friends):
    o The question of freedom vs being **stifled**
    E.g.: When the person is **influenced by someone** (jealousy, investment, security, exclusivity, emotional blackmail) which prevents them from taking artistic risks.

- **Internal pressures** (functioning, experience, event):
    o The question of **balance**
E.g.: When the person is under too much internal pressure which causes a fragility incompatible with the training (whereas it was possible on an amateur basis).

From autobiography to circus creation

(Alessandra Simone)

Alessandra Simone trained professionally as a social theatre facilitator as part of the Teatro Comunità project in Turin. There she learnt how to use the biographical interviewing of students to support them in the creation of their personal project (more info here). She would like to transpose this tool into the world of contemporary circus. To use this tool, she works in partnership with a psychologist.

- Concept of **biographical interviewing**: Students are invited to speak freely about their past to stimulate their creativity.

- Steps:
    - **Interview 1**, followed-up by:
        o a **recording**
        o a **transcription**
        o a **reading**
        o the identification of **key themes** and 2-3 **pieces of biographical information**

    - The **teacher as a mirror**:
        o do not convey your own emotions
        o reflect the student's thinking

    - **Interview 2,** more in-depth on the chosen pieces of biographical information, followed up by:
        o a **recording**
        o a **transcription**
        o a **reading**
        o the identification of **images** and **memories**

E.g.: A student has chosen to work on a memory related to his grandfather. The accompanying teacher will help him work on recovering his memory.
→ The students are invited to go and find any object related to this memory, objects, clothes, photos, videos, cards, etc.
N.B.: Alessandra encourages them to explore garage or car boot sales rather than use Google images.

- The teacher asks the student to do some **improvisation exercises** in order to produce a large amount of material for the performance. The teacher asks the student to **incorporate elements of dance and drama and circus techniques**. **Video** is used to keep a record of this improvisation.

- **Cultural enrichment** with other cultural worlds:
    o Music
    o Literature
    o Performing arts
    o Films and visual arts

→ For Alessandra, autobiographical interviewing is an artistic transposition of reality (but is not reality in itself). What counts is the connection to this memory.

⚠ The **psychologist** is involved to avoid creating/reviving psychological problems for the student. The artistic form also protects the student by creating a framework.

- **Writing**: **the teacher supports** the student with writing his/her performance and identifying his/her strengths in technique and expression. The teacher may **involve other students** to make suggestions according to what they feel.
- **Timing:** the teacher helps the student give his/her performance a **time frame**

Developing a unique style and preparing the future artistic practice

(Bim Mason)

Bim's presentation focused on the final stages of a training programme. In the 2nd year at Circomedia, there are 2 stages in the creation project for students: a research stage and a final performance stage. Bim focused on the **documentation/research** aspect to talk about this issue**.**

- Whose is the performance after all?
  At this stage in the training programme, the students are semi-autonomous. The question therefore arises of who the performance produced by the student belongs to: does it belong to the student or the audience?
    - Maintain a balance between encouraging unique artistic styles and responding to the demands of the **market/context**
    - The dual **role** of **schools**:
        o To train and prepare students for existing markets
        o To develop circus arts and performing arts in general
  → **Engage pupils in the research process**: **encourage discovery** without thinking about whether or not it is a seller. Do not apply a top-down approach starting with the market and working down to the product.
    - Encourage originality and following your own path by combining circus with:
        o **other artistic forms** (puppetry, stand-up/humour, installations, etc.)
        o **other artistic styles** (clown, grotesque, burlesque, etc.).
        o and by not being afraid to explore profound subjects and **performing frequently** (every week?) to prepare yourself for criticism and receiving it.

- What are the problems in developing the artist as a creator?
    - **Cultural horizons** may be limited by training inside a circus bubble: importance of studying genres and styles related to the circus.
    - **Maturity**: identity is formed, anxiety over finding one's place in the world, justification of career choices, successes and failures:
        o Frequent presentations of work help:
            • to identify strengths and weaknesses
            • to build confidence
            • to take risks
    - **Introversion**: lack of knowledge about the world, the student is unable to deal with many subjects:
        o Identify what is present
        o The artist as the starting point of the narration, but avoiding withdrawing into oneself or navel-gazing

- What is the teacher's role at this level of the pupil's creative autonomy?
    - Questioning:
        o Style
        o Humour
        o Communicate what?
        o To which audience?
    - **Dramaturgy**: identify the founding ideas and the tools/skills to be used:
    E.g.: With a pair, having a small person and a big person or a man and a woman already tells a story
    - **Providing an outsider's perspective**: you have little responsibility and control → the mirror you represent is not perfect, but you can provide your point of view (distorting mirror) "I've seen that in you, I didn't understand that, etc."
    - **A mentor** who :
        o briefly takes part
        o pushes the student to go further
        o supports and gives general long-term objectives/directions
        o identifies shortcomings and strengths
        o asks demanding questions about the development of the artist/company

- suggests tools, but leaves the student/company to choose which ones to use: "You could resolve this problem like this or like that..."
        - helps identify a style
        - considers the potential market

- Should we train pupils to be artistically autonomous?
    - Does the creative model offered in schools reflect the "actor/director" relationship **they will come across in the profession?**
    - Under the direction of a **director**, the student can still have **artistic freedom** through knowledge of:
        - his/her own capabilities
        - his/her partners
        - the equipment
        - the collaboration with the director → who does the work belong to – the director or the student?
    - The **creator has more control** and **responsibilities**. He/She is therefore also the most difficult.

- What takes priority between artistic vision and virtuosity? Is it a binary mode?
  Two models:
    - The circus as a physical expression for an idea
    - The circus as a kinetic sculpture, a choreography: circus for circus' sake
  This is not a binary model but a range which may have a **variety of possible accents/emphases.**

  Examples of techniques: Third-year students must produce a performance based on a theoretical concept. To do so, they experiment with "Practice as Research" which requires pupils to study:
    - a question
    - a problem
    - a concern
    - a passion that has emerged during their technical circus practice.
  From there, they carry out both practical and theoretical research by referring to artistic practices and/or theoretical texts already in existence.

    - When students link up their circus practices with research, they encounter very specific problems:
        - As an aerial rope artist, the moves that hurt the most are not necessarily the most impressive ones. Should I show or hide my pain?
        - The paradox of aerial disciplines: Do I feel at ease in the air and how does that influence my practice?
        - How does applying relaxation techniques affect my physical reality, my voice and my body language on a trapeze?
        - As an antipodist/foot juggler, what can I do so that the audience gets a better view?

  Development of this concept into a show performed for a general audience (videos used to illustrate):
    - 1st video: A student exploring juggling with water:
        - Use of the Siteswap juggling notation for exploring the Affordance Theory which leads to juggling with water
      → The cup handle suggests how to use the cup precisely.
        - Incorporation of previously learned creative tools: clown and burlesque comedy techniques
    - 2nd video: A student exploring juggling with table tennis bats
        - "Criticism reception theory": the audience watches attentively and has expectations in regards to female trapeze artists
    - Another example (not shown): A student started juggling with table tennis bats and found his own high-level technique in 3 weeks.

  The videos serve to demonstrate **the importance of theoretical work** for leading to something tangible and concrete afterwards for the market. The student juggling with the table tennis bats is touring Europe with this act and has won a prize. This is a good example of creative research which reaches an 'accessible' outcome rather than unrealistic research. Obviously enjoying the research is important, but the student should not forget that he/she is also conducting research in order to integrate and prepare his/her career.

(Adrian Porter)

The Lab theme "The teacher's role in a creation process for the student's personal project" is a major concern with respect to the way it is dealt with by students and teachers. Historically, teachers are classified into two categories: "technical" and "artistic".

This is a presentation based on conversations and suggestions made to the NCCA on the **question of the circus arts teacher's role in the creative process** and as such:
1) How is the teacher influenced to look upon the student as a creation? By incorporating creativity in the teaching, by bridging the gap between techniques and the creative process.
2) Building a relationship between the "technical" and "artistic" teachers.
3) Building a culture of research at the NCCA and how this may be useful to the student in the industry.
4) Student autonomy with regard to the creation process.

Clarification of the expressions used by Adrian Porter:
- **The teacher** = the teacher of a circus arts discipline
- **The creation process** = process through which a student devises a piece of work for a project within the school or for commercial purposes.
- **The individual project** = project specific to the circus discipline, time-related (to the overall learning pathway) and including as many students as is necessary for the project.

- The teacher's position:
  - According to Adrian, all teachers are inextricably involved in student support mechanisms, without creating dependency, found more in the didactic approach.
    → The autocratic approach to student learning has been examined very carefully by the NCCA, but has proved to be less rewarding than the teacher/student relationship, which is mutually beneficial in terms of reflective practice, research and creativity, through play and innovation.

  - A **philosophical distinction** should be made **between the technique of the circus discipline and the creativity in circus**.
    → From a classical/traditional perspective, **students should learn the fundamental basics of their discipline without any distractions and by giving it their full attention**. This is the strategy adopted by several forms of traditional performing arts and by sport. Although it has a place in the history of circus and has created technical prowess and incredible performances, this strategy is based on **clear, specific and repeatable knowledge handed down and executed to a high standard with demanding requirements.** The NCCA requires its teachers to pass on specific knowledge, but this is neither the only nor the most important task of the circus teacher.

A specific example:
In handstands, James Mc Cambridge (NCCA) thinks that the brain has several mechanisms for identifying where our bodies are spatially. The neuromuscular spindles and joint mechanoreceptors constantly respond to movements that occur, while the vestibular system and the eyes help identify where the head is in relation to its surroundings. The combination of both of these information flows means the brain can predict where the body is in relation to the head and the external surroundings. By repeating certain movements, our brain begins to construct a more permanent "map" for future location markers. Without this "map", James thinks that technique and expression are severely affected. Even with that, our capacity for expressing ourselves may be restrictive, due to the students' lack of understanding regarding these neural pathways which are malleable and changeable. The more complex and malleable the "map", the more malleable the student is and the more opportunities he/she has for working.

→ As teachers, we want to increase these **"mapping" capabilities** in every student, so that the technical/creative process can have as many opportunities for exploration as possible. **This means not teaching technique in order to repeat the same sensations and the same outcomes, but teaching technique by observing the thousands of different permutations which can be attributed to one element**.

Anecdotally and historically, much can be said about the fact that circus technique is shrouded in mystery, an in-depth knowledge that takes decades to master. The notion of technique passed down from generation to generation is a nostalgic notion which still exists to some extent.

The question then is "**When does the circus teacher's role start being creative?**"
- For some, creativity cannot exist without a basic technical level.
- For others, creativity can happen anywhere and at any time. As a director in higher education, Adrian believes creativity begins from the very first classes.

- What is creativity?
    - Creativity is:
        - perceiving the world in a new way
        - finding new hidden patterns
        - creating links between apparently unrelated phenomena
        - coming up with solutions or reconfiguring what has been done previously into a new format which creates significant changes
    - Each student is different:
        - physically
        - neurologically
        - and emotionally.
    - Different levels of intelligence come into play:
        - IQ (Intellectual Quotient)
        - EI (Emotional Intelligence)

According to Adrian, this suggests that no 2 students will react to the same stimulus in the same way.
→A student's capability to bring together processes and use enormous quantities of information to obtain replication depends on the individual's make up.
→If this is the case, the teacher's first task is creative and consists of creating a strategy for student learning. This includes how we consider technique as a comprehensive format.

- Training tools/strategies for student learning

    - Cognitive load and activities based on tasks (games) watching those that involve:
        - unnecessary movements
        - expression
        - resolving mental problems
        - tempo/speed
        - reaction time
        - sequencing arising from random determination
        - tasks based on restriction.
    - **The teachers' role** is to **stimulate the student's imagination** so that he/she is capable of overcoming the technical and creative challenges:
        - Break away from teaching in order to get the student to do something correctly.
        - Teachers should aim to move towards the students by viewing their practice as a series of experiments designed to make the student trust his/her instincts.
        - The complexity of the task should change as the students' capability changes; this is the key which makes it possible to bring creativity to every level of student development as an integral tool for learning physical boundaries and research.
    - The teacher's role is to bridge the gap between the student's need to understand the technique and the need to express him or herself through the physical aspect of the circus discipline.
    - Move students from the field of biomechanical understanding to the place where biomechanics helps them begin to express their:
        - needs
        - desires
        - imagination
        - vision

E.g.: If students are asked to climb a Chinese pole, they will climb according to their feelings. If their natural way of climbing is not challenged, they will only climb it in the way they learnt how.

- Further the understanding of proprioception and vestibular orientation to a deeper, broader level which encompasses environment and intention. (To disengage and help re-wire a nervous system which is capable of more than simple execution).
- Develop physical language.
- Share creative teaching with the student: pass on creative openness to the student.
- Show empathy whilst challenging and questioning the students' own perception of their capabilities and how they can achieve what is in their imagination.
- Change/enhance the student's perception of accomplishment:
    o of time (flexible)
    o of space.
- Ask the student questions about:
    o the content
    o the quality
    o the intention
    o the structure
- Question a student's self-understanding and provide a positive feedback loop to do so with questions such as:
    o Who are they?
    o Where do they come from?
    o Where are they going?
    o Who/What are they interested in?

- **Learn our own limits** in relation to understanding a student's creative journey
- **Cultivate the concept of research** as a means of stimulating creativity and technique
- **Don't be afraid of creativity in our work** and pass it on to the students in their research
- Have an understanding of the strategies/languages used in the fields of theatre and movement
- **Offer** and also **receive** suggestions
- **Encourage reflection and documentation** in the name of research and the iterative process
- Offer constructive feedback which supports creative ideas
- **Encourage the students to leave their comfort zone** creatively
- **Use imagination** and skills to transform what has already been done

- Implementing these tools

In order to do this, teachers must think creatively and the system must encourage these ideas. The NCCA sets up a team of teachers to make sure that the technical/creative mixture is constantly questioned and that all **the teaching in the school** is consistent with this philosophy.

- Get teachers of different circus disciplines and/or drama or movement to jointly teach creative workshops with students from all years. This makes it possible to:
    o Have a discussion about language
    o Have a discussion about knowledge
    o Set the tone for the student

- Implement tools such as training arcs
    o Enables the core principles of the discipline and the complexity of these principles to be analysed for a given period of the students' time here against what the student knows in all the other fields of the programme such as theory, drama or movement.
    o The theory is the construction of a study programme for the discipline, carried out by the teacher, armed with knowledge, ideas and concepts found outside just the circus sector.

- The school engages in research practice during the three years of the programme. The NCCA devises research tasks alongside existing modules which become increasingly in-depth from one year to the next, as part of a comprehensive three-week research project during the final year before graduation.

The DasArts Feedback Method

(Daniela Arendasova)

The DasArts feedback method has been piloted at the National Circus School in Montreal. Daniela Arendasova, Director of Studies, shares her experience of it after having used it for 2 years.

The DasArts feedback method has mainly proved its worth in theatre and dance. It is **valued** by the teachers, **but the ENC** has also noticed **a few drawbacks**:
- At first, the teachers applied the method by trial and error: the 1st feedback session lasted 3 hours instead of 1 hour. The ENC then reduced it to 30-40 minutes.
- The person responsible for the feedback should set everything up so that everyone feels secure. However, it became apparent that if you wanted to say something in a direct or head-on way and give **negative feedback**, **this method can twist your words a bit**.
- The method is **well-suited to advanced students, but not so much to beginners**: you have to prepare students for receiving feedback.
- The people who use this method should have **minimum training** so that it is more robust.
- There must be a **balance between the participants** so that the message is not distorted.

Julie Lachance (ENC Montréal) set out the **main stages** of the feedback method: each stage is **timed**. Anyone (student, team) from the school can take part.
1) First of all, the student explains where they are in their creation and what they would like the person in front of them to observe.
2) The student presents their act and withdraws.
3) The participants share their **feedback** on the presentation **among themselves** and share their opinions freely (7-10 minutes)
4) Begin feedback with**: "For me, what worked was…."** If anyone else agrees, they raise their hand and say "plus 1". Next you state your viewpoint according to your role: "as a teacher, artistic director…. I would have needed you to…"
5) **On a board, you put what works and what does not work**. The artist sees it. The ENC added an 'on the grill' activity aimed at asking the artist directly: "Why did you do that, choose that …?" This is the only activity where the student answers questions.
6) On a board, the main issue raised by the artist at the start is noted and the participants note down words on post-its. The student then brings together the post-its which have had an effect on them or which tie up with their issue.

Vincent Grosstephan's critical view: Daniela Arendasova mentioned "that there were pitfalls…" It is **therefore important to ask yourselves where the tool comes from: it is only a means to an end. If you do not do this, mistakes may be made and the tool may not be used properly**. This is not about making value judgements on the quality or otherwise of the tool, but **asking yourself why and how it is used**. The question to be asked regarding the DasArts method is as follows: is this a method for helping to build students' confidence or for helping them develop a critical sense of their practice?
These questions are fundamental for adapting and implementing a new tool:

1) **For what purpose?** Daniela Arendasova: "to build confidence, but what message?"

2) **For who?** Daniela Arendasova: "advanced students", "if you want to use it for beginner students, perhaps it should be adapted further."

3) **Who with?** With the creator? The choreographer? The director? Or without anyone external?

(Anne Morin)

- Using other performing arts

Using other performing arts in circus education makes it possible to diversify the students' creative and technical vocabulary. Contemporary dance is the field most widely used (almost exclusively) for providing keys to the expression of movement. **Dance** is actually the discipline closest to circus, as it works with the body and movement; its interest **lies in learning body language in one's own space and the stage space:**
   - Contemporary dance exercises enable the circus artist to cultivate their body improvisation work
   - Classical dance exercises enable the circus artist to improve their control of leg direction, hip axis and body line

However, there are other fields where people can express themselves in movement, such as martial arts, other types of dance and physical theatre. Very often, the school limits the broadening of perspectives so that students can develop creative tools. However, experimenting with various practices also helps in the **search for a circus language all of one's own**. Each student develops from their unique background and their sensitivity. Similarly, teachers are inspired by the disciplines they themselves have gone through:
   - Some participants use the **field** they come from to find their own methods.
     E.g.: contemporary dance for rhythm, tempo and stage presence.
   - For some, **tapping into methods, exercises and tools in other artistic disciplines** is an integral part of the circus, a multiple art in itself.
   - For others, students have **past experience** (physiological or biomechanical) within themselves and already have **"natural" tools**. The aim is to make them aware of that so that they can express themselves.

→ The sector has genuine tools: the real need lies in sharing skills to reacquire these methods and go further. How do we give these methods credibility as circus tools?
These tools are accessible, but **the sector is not taking the initiative and using them**. Something else should be pointed out as well: the **issue of the marketplace**.
E.g.: Chloé Moglia is highly creative, but to write her performance dossier, she had to include a playwright and a choreographer in order to be accepted.
The circus also lacks institutional recognition compared to the "major arts".
E.g.: The institutional contact people for circus performers will be those for the theatre or dance.

- Preparatory training: "technical" or "artistic" training?

A distinction is often made in schools between "technical" and "artistic" training. However, according to Anne Morin, 2 years of preparatory school to train graduate school students does not seem enough time to develop both of these aspects. The participants have several points of view on this subject:
   - The preparatory school entry level has been raised which means one can go further at this stage.
   - It is impossible to bring all students up to a high level of virtuosity, but each school's mission is to bring students up to their maximum artistic and technical capabilities and help them with where they want to go and can go. The school should steer them and enable them to make their own choices: the student may surprise everyone and undergo a real transformation in their creativity or technique.
   - The school should pay attention to each student's singularity: When the teacher knows the student, he/she can provide them with individual advice and lead them to "think outside the box".

- Identity: dissemination

The circus is searching for its own identity. Although supported by public institutions in some European countries, it is still often placed under the umbrella of dance or the theatre. The circus sector is still tending to consolidate its position, both in terms of its legitimacy and establishing specific tools and methodologies. Anne Morin presented a **number of circus-specific practical tools (videos and publications), produced by FEDEC,** which teachers can use to support students in their creative process:

- INTENTS video Chapter 1 Creative training Roberto Magro video from 0 to 7:16, 45:18 to 49:36
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLVdCpIcWeY&t=285s
- + Instruction Manual on Verticality p. 54 the imagination
  http://www.fedec.eu/fr/articles/514-verticalite-pesanteur-et-gravite
- INTENTS video Chapter 3 Marie Céline + feedback issue: 2:08+4:08
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tFAXy91-5w
- + Instruction Manual on Verticality + p.55 in the research workshop
  http://www.fedec.eu/fr/articles/514-verticalite-pesanteur-et-gravite
- DasArts method
- INTENTS video Chapter 4 Chloé Moglia: presence 12:47, space 16:09, singularity: 18:15
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUXW9RSwL7M
- + Instruction Manual on Verticality + p.57: a field for exploration…
  http://www.fedec.eu/fr/articles/514-verticalite-pesanteur-et-gravite
- Adrian Porter: biomechanics, see INTENTS video Chapter 2 Clare Anderson verticality
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcL6WG4Xwb4
- Instruction Manual From technical movement to artistic gesture, the trampoline
  http://www.fedec.eu/fr/articles/1750-du-geste-technique-au-geste-artistique
  - Definition of creativity p.54-55
  - In summary. p.44
  - Teaching practices p.50
- Instruction Manual Balance, James Mac Cambridge (Adrian's talk)
  http://www.fedec.eu/fr/articles/2116-s-appuyer-s-aligner-a-la-recherche-de-l-equilibre

B. Collective reflections

Creation processes / Teachers' tools

- ▪ <u>Importance of group work in the 1st year</u>

- ▪ Initial personalised contact with the student based on:
    - **Questioning**
    - **Wishes**
    - **Aspirations**
    - What they **enjoy**
    - What they **fear**
    - Their **inspiration** with respect to the creation of the act
    - Their **confidence**

- ▪ Process:
    - **Context**
    - **Tools** (flexible)
        - ○ Skill
        - ○ Sensitivity
        - ○ Research tools
        - ○ Exploration tools
        - ○ Validation tools
        → Ensure the student knows how to use these tools

N.B.: The **context** in which the students find themselves **will affect the creation process**. Different tools should be used depending on the individual and the context: students need to learn how to use these tools they are given.
E.g.: How can improvisation be used constructively? There is more than just one method that can be applied.

Furthermore, this creation process can involve other people apart from the teacher, such as the artistic advisor or an outside perspective.
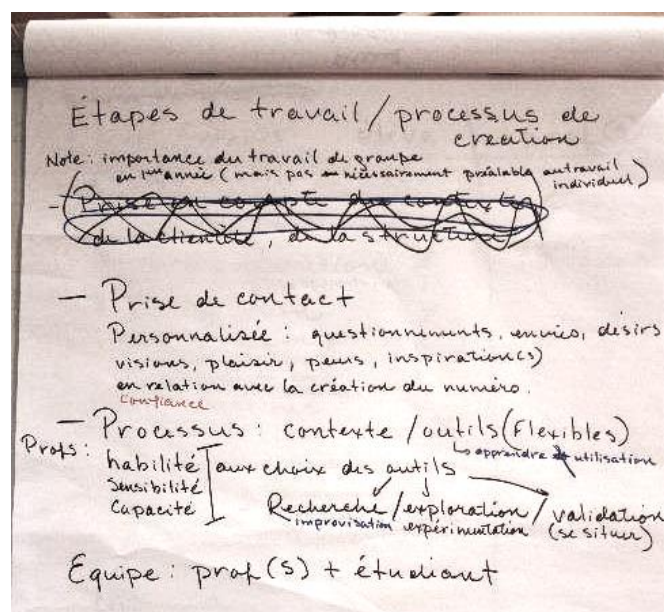
Detailed list of work stages in the creative process: the student and the teachers form a team

Work stages	Students	Teachers
Desire to create	X	
Initial contact	X	X
Documentation* o sources of inspiration o materials o other	X	X
Planning / Organisation of work o timetable o work sessions o production o production management o website o technical data sheet	X	
Improvisation o free o guided o in the discipline o around the discipline o feedback	X	X
Experimentation / Research o from the abstract to corporeality o exploration of components and possibilities	X	X
Validation / Feedback o Presentation o Feedback o Comments	X	X
Make choices / Archive	X	X
Composition o de-composition o re-composition	X	X
Validation / Feedback o Presentation o Feedback o Comments	X	X

⚠ Pay attention to **safety** throughout the process:
   o technical attainment
   o rigging

*Documentation: according to the teacher's profile, who will be **either a mirror or a guide**.

9 tools were documented (according to the schools of the teachers participating in the Lab):

- Holding **workshops with different teachers** and in different places for the same workshop:
    - Workshops with clowns
    - Improvisation workshops
    - Workshops in theatres
    - Dance workshops

- Giving the student the opportunity to present their work – **reproduction in various forms**:
    - closed stage with students from the school
    - open stage with a wide audience
    - at the school
    - outside the school

- Giving **feedback** (supervised):
    - among students
    - with the teachers
    - with the teaching team
    - with the external audience

- What the student gives the teacher as regards their inspirations, wishes and motivations:
    - video tools
    - documentation
  This exchange is important in order to consolidate the student's project

- Setting aside specific moments devoted to creation time (duration to be decided)

- Creating video archives:
    - film presentations of the early stages of the act
    - film certain moments in workshops in order to come back to them and use this material in the creation development process

- Organising regular meetings with:
    - The teaching team
    - Or with the tutor or the person in charge of the student
  → The student decides, depending on the person they trust the most

- Creative sessions in specific places:
    - In the forest
    - At the museum
    - In the street
  According to the teacher's choice

- Having a strong, close-knit, coherent team which is moving in the same direction – being open to the student's suggestions.
  Difficulties affecting the teacher's work:
    - Lack of time
    - Lack of money
    - Lack of space
  → Teachers cannot always meet each other and work together
  → Each school has its specific problems.

Trust

Throughout the REFLECT workshops, focus groups were formed, enabling further discussion in small groups based on specific topics. Here, the topic is trust.

When students join a school, they will place a degree of trust in the people who will be training them. It is important both for the school and the students to establish this climate of trust because this will play a part in creating the student's identity as an artist. It is also important to help students have confidence in themselves. Here are the key measures for doing so:

- Group work:
  Create a **group dynamic** so that everyone trusts each other.
  E.g.: Propose 'icebreaker' activities

- **The teacher's attitude** towards the student:
    - Kindness
    - Empathy
    - Help the student overcome their fears (vertigo) or stagnation with regard to their apparatus
    → Teachers must discuss students so that they have a consistent approach vis-à-vis the student. This provides a caring environment for the student.

- The **connection with the school**:
  The school builds up all the support processes and mechanisms:
    - **Safety**
    - **Health** (prevention of injury)
    - **Social setting**.
    → Everything that makes it possible for the school to support students in this demanding circus training.

- **Arrangements** put in place by the school:
    - **Fairness** with regard to each student
    - The **framework** given to teachers: cf [FEDEC Charter on Ethics and Deontology](#)
    - **Staff meetings** with the teachers to talk about the students' projects
    - **Project monitoring** and student support mechanisms:
        - **Meetings**
        - **"Implicit contract"** between the school and the student to be respected: make sure it fits in with the school's initiative.

E.g.: a juggling student wants to join a school which does not have a teacher who specialises in juggling. The school has promised to arrange times when the student can meet external teachers. The school must abide by this "contract".

Practices implemented by some schools relating to trust:
At the National Circus School of Montreal, the teaching team uses team building activities with students who do not know each other to begin with.

- Distinction of 2 concepts

  The two concepts are distinguished by the **degree of responsibility and distance of the person providing the feedback**:
  - **The outsider's perspective** infers that the person providing feedback on the creation process has **overall responsibility for the whole creative project** and is **quite a long distance away from it**.
  - **The artistic advisor** brings with him/her a responsibility linked to the outcome of the creation project and the distance between him/her and the creation is slight.

  Schools do not necessarily use such terms, but adopt the stance/position related to them.
  E.g.: In the 2nd year at the NCCA (National Centre for Circus Arts), teachers take the 'outsider's perspective' when they have to analyse a project, whereas at DOCH the artistic advisor position is used first instead.
  Both terms have in common the fact that **feedback** is given. It will be different depending on the stance adopted:
  - Feedback from the outsider's perspective will have a lighter touch and will make it possible to give the student the autonomy they need
  - Feedback from the artistic advisor will involve the student justifying their artistic choices and will enable them to build up resilience (ability to know how to receive feedback).

- Teachers and feedback

  Feedback can be positive, constructive, negative or even destructive. Students are generally in their bubble so the teachers' role is to make them face what will happen afterwards.
  Students must learn that feedback is constructive, i.e. **know how to receive feedback**. The more proactive the student, the more they will know how to take feedback on board.

  1) How to evaluate the feedback to be provided
  E.g.: At the NCCA, there is a **Moderation Board**: if the feedback is written down, it goes through this Board. The Board meets the teaching team to evaluate the quality of the feedback and whether or not it is appropriate. Then, if it is validated, the feedback can be given to the student.

  2) Outsider's perspective and artistic advisor: prioritise 2 different people
  The participants also concluded that it was better for the student if the person providing the outsider's perspective and the artistic advisor are not the same person. If this is the case, these 2 people must meet up to **give the student comprehensive and relevant critical feedback**.

  3) Differences according to the level of training (preparatory or higher)
  E.g.: At the NCCA, the role of the preparatory training is to **introduce the students to the outsider's perspective and artistic advisor roles**. These roles are taken seriously by the NCCA because the University of Kent, which evaluates the NCCA, designs the educational programme and awards the degree, monitors them at this level.

As a teacher in a school, **how can you manage that tension** between the students, the school and the professional world with regard to the student's creative/artistic project?

- The **student**'s expectations regarding the training programme, as it does have a cost:
    - must produce **results**
    - must strike a balance between:
        - doing interesting work
        - exploring
        - producing something saleable on the market

- The research/experimentation notion must be polished in the creation phase so that something saleable can be produced:
  Issues to be raised:
    - who is this work being done for: the marketplace?
    - we want students to be aware that the marketplace is dynamic and can be influenced by their work.

- Pay attention to student expectations:
  Students may have a romanticised vision of the school and the professional world: the transition from school to the marketplace can be a shock:
    - Introduce what can be called **vocationally-oriented modules**:
        - to help students understand the various aspects of the labour market
        - to motivate students to explain the relevance of the projects they are undertaking: use a different language depending on the audience they are addressing (business world and artistic world)

- **Schools** must have objectives in relation to what the student expects:
  It is up to the **teachers** to dictate an artistic taste in spite of industry trends. These objectives are based on:
    - Being inclusive in relation to the marketplace
    - Being open-minded if we want students to be open to the professional world diversity
  E.g.: working on projects like cruises is not well-regarded, so what to do to cultivate this work just needs to be established. Like in any type of occupation, it has to be done professionally and creative work in commercial projects should not be under-estimated.
    - The importance of communication between school directors and teachers:
        - There must be a **central vision of the school's development plan** so that every member of the teaching staff can position themselves on it (agreements/disagreements, discussion)
        - Schools must take responsibility regarding the employment opportunities they offer: be clear about this with students.

- Research process in the creation in 3 steps (adaptable according to events and influences):
    - **Research**: the student is free to explore
    - **Creation**: decide on the audience they will be addressing
    - **Finalization**

→ A school should be prepared to respect and adapt to the student's initial choice even though some appropriate training may not be included in the teaching programme. Nevertheless, the student is required to complete the whole training programme in its entirety.
→ Differentiating products according to market expectations is not an end in itself. Creativity and artistic flair remain paramount.

The creative support process in technique

- Differences between preparatory training students and those preparing for professional certification:
  - the preparatory school students are rather lax as they are mostly glad to have been selected
  - school students preparing for professional certification are more conscientious and industrious

- At the beginning of their training, how do you prepare the students in this process?
  - "Why wait?" **From the start, set up**:
    - Interdisciplinary weeks
    - Artistic projects
    - Educational outings

  - "Why?", **shared objectives:**
    - To do something **together**
    - To form a group
    - To go into the unknown
    - To take a step sideways in relation to their specialisation, get them to discover something else
    - **To open up opportunities** beyond what they are used to doing

  - Try to ensure as soon as possible that they avoid comparing themselves with the others (comparison brings distress):
    - Ensure they develop their **singularity**
    - Feel unique
    - **Make progress** and are appreciated for that
    - Confidence as the foundation for creativity

- What should be done next? **Developing your imagination and stopping comparing yourself** is not enough for creativity: "Being a gourmet doesn't make you a good cook"
  - Notion of challenge:
    - give instructions
    - have restrictions in the work
  - Develop the student's receptiveness and their movement in the specialisation.
    E.g.: the way they move their hands on the Chinese pole
  - Develop the student's plasticity: the student's and the teacher's shared objective

  → Technique is not necessary for creativity, but it can develop it, too.
  → Should teachers give priority to know-how over interpersonal skills?

- Ways of achieving autonomy or semi-autonomy:
  - Consider this to be on a **case-by-case basis**
  - As we are asking the student to be receptive, the teacher should demonstrate their adaptability
  - Do these qualities function through action/reaction between students/teachers?
    - Confidence
    - Receptiveness
    - Creativity
  - In the research interplay, teachers may find themselves in a different relationship with students:
    - May lead to a game as if the research problem were a Chinese puzzle: how should this problem be solved in the creation process?
    - Even though the teacher has more experience, perhaps semi-autonomy lies in being side-by-side.
  - The problem is that the student may just see the teacher like that.
  → How can the teacher be seen **as a working partner or collaborator?**

Division of labour **leads to a division of roles, tasks and skills**.
- 3 main actors/positions are identified:
  - **The students**
  - **The teachers** (artistic and technical)
  - **The leadership/teaching team**
- Important points:
  - **Communication** between all stakeholders
  - **Consistency**/cohesion as regards approach, framework and functioning
  - **Adaptability**
  - **Mutual trust** and respect (kindness).
- Responsibilities:
  - The student must be **eager to learn** and grow
  - The teacher **assists the student's development**
  - The teaching team supports both stakeholders and facilitates this development, this environment

The 3 actors are interlinked like a **molecule**: the student is at the centre and the poles are linked together.
The school needs to pay attention to these various positions and these connections between the various stakeholders.

The molecule is not rigid. Everything may move according to the dynamic, the energy, etc.: **the parties should feed off each other.**
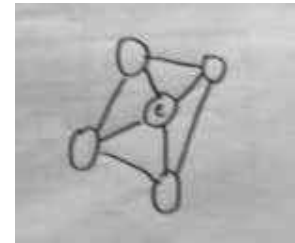
Vincent Grosstephan revisited this group's reflection process: the participants started with columns separating the positions/stakeholders, then, the more they put forward, the more they discovered things that these stakeholders shared (a co-activity), to arrive at a systemic approach with the molecule. That led it to the **activity system diagram developed by Finnish scientist Yrjö Engeström which is particularly relevant to the sector:**
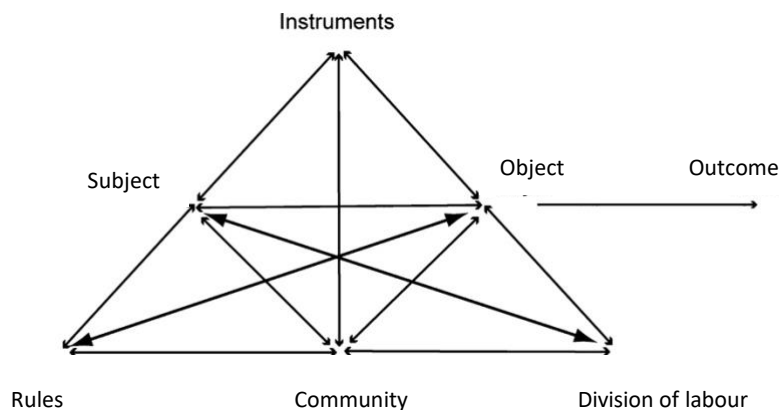
Vincent made it clear that students are not at the centre but part of a system: they have objectives to fulfil and need tools to achieve them. They are also part of a community, presupposing rules governing this community. In it, there is a division of tasks to achieve the objectives as well as a division of labour.
The participants succeeded in creating an activity system, which may compete with other activity systems. That is why the division of labour - "who is responsible for what?" - will impact the other parts of the activity system.

Supporting collective creation processes (the CIRCLEs)

CIRCLE is a unique project organised every year since 2007 by FEDEC as part of the CIRCa Festival (Auch, France), specially designed for promoting European and international student creation in circus arts. It encourages discussion and the exchange of views on educational and artistic approaches, and provides the opportunity for a wide audience to discover the creativity of students from circus schools all over the world. During the Lab #2, the REFLECT project participants were invited to ask the students questions during the post-CIRCLE discussions. These questions were aimed at indirectly getting a sense of the support work for the process by the teacher and the other contributors, through the students' testimony. This allowed the participants to develop their thinking on support for creation processes during students' collective projects.

Topical questions	Which aspect of the activity do these questions refer to?
THE INTENTION - What was the **starting point** of the project: what did you want to **do or show** in this production? What was **the initial idea**? - **Where and who** did this initial idea come from? Did it **evolve** during the process? If so, **how and through whom did it evolve**?	- The **object** of the students' (and the teachers'?) activity - The working community and the division of labour
THE CREATION PROCESS - Who was **involved in supporting** the CIRCLE creation process (closely or from afar; from within or outside)? How did these different people **divide up the support work**? - What did you find **difficult** in the creation process? What did you find **easy**? - How did you manage to **integrate or adapt the technique** to the creation project? - Did the prospect of a first performance **away from your home** and your family **affect** the way you experienced this process?	- The working **community** and the **division** of labour - Open question on **different aspects of the activity** (object, instruments, working rules, other people…) - **Instruments** used (methods…)

Other questions for discussions between participants at the Lab

Topical questions	Which aspect of the activity do these questions refer to?
- When watching the performance, is it possible to detect **signs of a collaborative dynamic, a complicity** between the artists? Can these signs inform us about the creation process?	- The **outcome** as an indicator of the collaborative process

4 topics emerged from these discussions and resulted in the identification of other questions:

- **Topic 1. The significance of the specific context and environment on the process**

  - Putting on a performance in the context of the CIRCa Festival is very different to putting on a performance with no particular challenges, within the school or near your home, in a familiar and secure environment. The emotional impact in particular is not the same
  - The physical conditions are not exactly the same (e.g. voice adjustment, different lighting, roles you have to play, etc.)

  Questions :
  - What presents the most difficulties in these differing contexts?
  - What is the teachers' role in supporting students facing these difficulties?
  - What do you do in practical terms?
  - What tools do you use?

- **Topic 2. Autonomy vs Directivity**

  Initial finding: Adrian Porter (NCCA) finds that today's students are less independent and more emotionally vulnerable.
  - Do those of you who have supervised a CIRCLE (Katherine, NCCA - Javier, Carampa - Yannick, École de Cirque du Québec) share this point of view?
  - If so, what is it that shows that the students are less independent and/or more emotionally vulnerable than previous generations? Give specific examples in the context of the CIRCLE creation process (or other), how does this manifest itself?
  - How does the teacher go about dealing with this vulnerability and lack of independence?

  The CIRCLE process

- Who had the initial idea? A teacher? If so, which teacher? A group of teachers? The educational leadership? The students? - How was this idea put to work with the students? How free were they really to make suggestions? With which tools?

- **Topic 3. Collaborative work**

  Collaborative work can be analysed in terms of the following points:
  - What really is **the object of the collaborative work**?
  - Who is involved in the collaborative work in the context of this CIRCLE process (whatever the aspect of the project: educational, logistical, creative, etc.)? - question of the **working community**
  - How is the **division of labour** organised among the different stakeholders in the process (including the students)?
  - What are the **conditions** necessary for this collaborative work to proceed effectively?

  For example, in a piece of work undertaken by a stage director and the students, what can be classed as the director's own work and what can be classed as the students' own work? In other words, what is each of the stakeholders responsible for? Similarly, **what can be classed as work actually shared during the creation process**? Generally speaking, the participants said that this can vary greatly from one context to another, from one collective to another and from one stage director to another. Similarly, the example of the **choice of students able to participate in** the **CIRCLE** shows a wide range of collaborative practices: from the choice made by the director alone to a wide consultation of all the teachers. To try and clarify things, we have decided to start by listing all the people involved, closely or from afar, in the CIRCLE process, specifying what each of them has to do:

- o the students
- o the specialist teachers
- o the coordinator or the stage director/ringmaster for the project
- o the educational director
- o the artistic director (if the school has one)
- o the school's director general
- o Administration (logistics and financial management, registrations, etc.)
- o the technicians (from the school and from CIRCa) for the sound, lighting, rigging, etc.
- o family, friends and the other students at the school
- o FEDEC which determines the call for projects and the expectations

The discussion then focused on two points:

- the **areas where work items overlap** each other.

The Lab participants thought it important to note that each of the stakeholders had specific skills and that no-one could do everything. The division of labour based on skills is therefore an initial point to be respected. But some work items, for example the deliberation process for choosing students for the CIRCLE or choosing the technical equipment for the creation, can be shared and involve firstly not just the director but all the teachers as well and secondly the students, the ringmaster and the specialisation teachers. Identifying the different areas of overlap would enable an initial mapping of items to be drawn up, for each creation project, on which the various stakeholders might collaborate[2]. Such mapping would obviously be specific to each project, according to the selected options: greater or lesser student independence, a project aimed primarily at training or aiming to give a good image of the school, etc.

- **the decision chain**

The way the different decisions throughout the project are linked together was also addressed. From FEDEC's call for projects to the decision to take part in the CIRCLE project; the decision on the choice of students and the supervising arrangements for the group; from the choices of the direction of the performance to its implementation… André Borges (INAC) presented a model of various forms of school organisation from which the participants tried to place their school. This resource provided an opportunity to question various aspects of the work within the school which could affect creation processes like CIRCLE.

How is the division of labour organised among the different stakeholders in the process (including the students)? These exchanges meant contextual, cultural and even historical aspects could be brought back into the discussion, which would lead to a better understanding of the conditions in which this process takes place.

What are the **conditions** necessary for this collaborative work to be able to proceed effectively?
- o Physical conditions: opening hours of the school and the facilities (availability of apparatus)
- o Time available and freed up for working on the project
- o Work organisation planning
- o External factors: various things can happen during the process (injuries, illness, withdrawal, etc.). The obligation to adapt and be flexible is a job requirement for an artist. Therefore, when things happen, this is not a hindrance to the successful completion of the process, but an opportunity to develop one's adaptability.

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[2] A distinction can be made here between collaborating and cooperating. Collaborating implies working together on the same item (e.g. choice of selected students; technical equipment to be chosen for the creation, etc.) whereas cooperating implies that everyone does their bit on their own items (logistics is not artistic creation, etc.).

- **Topic 4. The outsider's perspective**

  - **What** is this view **external to**? The CIRCLE process? The school? The circus disciplines? …
  - **What is expected** from this external view?
  - **Who** is it for? The teachers? The students? …
  - **What** can this view examine which would bring added value to the process?

Two types of external views were mentioned:

- That of the **audience**: layman and/or professional.

Based on the finished product, it raises issues for the students, the managers and the school: what is expected of this audience view: for it to confirm our wish to be proud of our performance (it did or did not like it)? For it to understand the meaning of the work undertaken (a singular process, an experience expected to be useful for the students and/or the teachers in the future or a good image of the school)? So what role do the post-CIRCLE discussions play? Is it about giving students and the people in charge of them feedback on how the audience "received" the performance, i.e. an overall feeling (I liked it/I didn't like it) or a kind of critical opinion on the quality of the show, of the finished product? Or is it about enabling the students to question their creation process? The discussions within the group concluded that the last suggestion is what is important. The external view embodied by the questions raised during these post-CIRCLE discussions should elicit and/or develop the students' reflexivity, their objective view and critical analysis of the process they have just experienced. Not every type of question elicits this reflexivity. The questioning on the process can sometimes also provoke defensive reactions and justifications. However, if the audience is left free to ask questions, we might get more anecdotal questions, or in any case ones which are less related to the objectives of this reflexive questioning exercise.

- That of **professionals** elicited during the creation process.

Yannick (École de Cirque du Québec) mentioned the case of a student who was very unsettled by improvisation work to the point of tears and finding herself in real difficulty. As this was a recurring difficulty for this student, it was suggested to her, independently of CIRCLE, that she should see a **psychologist**. Which she has been doing for some time (well before this project). This external view seems useful as it can address much deeper and more private problems than those a teacher is able to address. A discussion then took place on the line separating what falls within the purview of the teacher, other stakeholders and students on the one hand, and the psychologist on the other hand. Empathetic listening, accepting the legitimacy of the difficulty, moral support, encouragement and positive feedback seem to be the main aspects of a teacher's role in those cases. When the problem runs deeper and is to do with the student's private background, the psychologist should take over.
Apart from this individual case, there are various specific cases. The first specific case is where students have a high level of independence, like at Carampa and CRAC Lomme. At Carampa for example, it was up to them to request a view or assistance outside the process when they felt it was necessary. These views therefore play the role of a resource for the needs felt by the students or the role of validating proposals. At CRAC Lomme, the role of the choreographer artist they called upon was to embellish the students' proposals: *"there was a little bit of her in everything, but it stayed in our world"* (Pablo). In other cases, no external view was requested during the process.

The Lab group thought that the primary recipients of the external view are the students. This view should benefit them. Nevertheless, in some cases, including those where the director or ringmaster has played an important role, the external view may be for the person who has supervised the process. Finally, this external view may concern the director who wishes to give their school a good image. Actually, depending on who this feedback is mainly aimed at, the issues are not the same. This is why the Lab participants felt that the priority was really to address the students to enable them to question the process they have experienced and learn lessons from it for the future.
The questioning during the post-CIRCLE discussions mainly focused on the creation process, its development, the difficulties or obstacles encountered, how they were overcome, the level of student involvement in the artistic choices, etc. A few questions were about other aspects such as the students' pathways and plans, etc. There was very little judgement, either negative or positive.
During the process, the external view seems to focus mainly on the students' proposals and their relevance, to prevent them going down a dead end, to help them choose the most promising proposals or to suggest ways and means of improving them.

How is risk defined? There are always risks to be taken in creation, both mental and physical. It is easier to take a physical risk, but that also means stepping out of your comfort zone. There is a balance to be found between confidence and risk: without taking risks, you cannot build confidence.

Creation is a risky area, which is why you need to learn how to understand risk. For example, AFUK students have to make mistakes in their process. Having the chance to fail and take risks is part of the curriculum: setbacks are essential and necessary. Making mistakes means taking responsibility for yourself. If teachers take risks instead of students, the students will never learn how to take risks by themselves. If students are afraid of failure, they will never take risks and will never learn. That is why they must be encouraged to try things out, experiment, fail and start again, so that they are not afraid of taking the risk of being wrong. A secure environment is thereby created.

→ For example, at DOCH, 1st year students learn how to receive feedback on their work. It is a process they go through in which they learn how to take risks and see the results. This is how **confidence is built in the work**, encouragement being important in this evolutionary process. The feedback methodology will therefore need to be adjusted according to the students' needs, to maintain a confidence-building space. But being lenient is just as big a risk for teachers as being too strict. Indulgence is not the solution. The teacher should understand what each student needs in order to make progress.
The teacher can point out different pathways which the student can choose to follow or not. Feedback can also be given in the form of questions, in order to raise student awareness. Students can also give their opinion amongst themselves, using existing feedback methods.

In this context, we must **watch out for conflicts** that may arise in a group. Teachers themselves may have to deal with internal conflicts: "How can I help?" But is the creative process relevant without conflict? Conflict provides an opportunity for reflecting and learning. It is even possible to create conflict to obtain something from the group. In the creation process, conflict may be beneficial and spark discussions. Each time there is a conflict, there is an opportunity, but communicating effectively over the conflict is always critical.

For students, conflict may be difficult to experience as they are friends. This is where compromise comes into play, but it can dissolve the quality of the creation which loses its passion. Therefore, it is not always necessary to look for conflict. The important thing is to **create tension**, conflict being extreme tension. Here, it is important to distinguish between interpersonal conflict (non-productive) and conflict of ideas.
→ E.g.: one student wants a soft floor, the other a hard floor. The students learn how to deal with this conflict. The teacher, as facilitator, can then make a creative suggestion to find a successful outcome.

Student support and student freedom

- How is it possible to coordinate the creation process work among students, teachers, the artistic director and the school director? What is the priority in the work? This is different for each stakeholder. There are various processes, approaches and points of view. It is interesting to understand how the various schools operate, to **identify the degree of direction and creative freedom the students have**.

  - **Alessandra Simone (Cirko Vertigo) describes her experience of participating in the CIRCLE project**, organised by FEDEC as part of the CIRCa Festival in Auch. The first step of selecting 5 students was not easy. Next came the creation stage. At that time, there was an exhibition on Abramovic in Florence, which she and Luisella Tamietto, the artistic director at Cirko Vertigo and teacher, visited with the students. One of the students, a Fine Art graduate, had a lot of ideas to share with the group. Then there were 2 weeks of rehearsals during which Luisella and Alessandra really supported the students. It was very intense.
  → Other schools had a different experience of the CIRCLE creation process: some students had a lot of freedom. This led to the teachers reflecting on their own teaching method.
  → How should students be supported? The class the 5 students come from is made up of very good students at an individual level, but they cannot manage to work in groups, which affects the process. The teachers' role was therefore to support the collective creation without destroying the others' ideas.

  - The participants also value **the students' creative freedom in the process**, which leads them to the notion of both responsibility and ownership.

- How can **value criteria** be defined **in the creation**?

  - Some participants are **against the concepts of "good" or "bad"** for students, because that brings the notion of competition. Video analysis of what does or does not "work" can be successful, however.

  - For others, the value of a work is **the students' honesty on stage** by not distancing themselves from what they are in the process of doing. Form and technique take second place.

  - **The emotion transmitted to the spectators** may also guarantee some sort of quality. Gregor Kiock (Codarts) mentioned an exercise he uses with his students. First, he asks them to "make the audience laugh", then to "make the audience cry". The students must do this in front of a real audience and then receive feedback on their performance. In all cases, it is important to make it clear to the students that the external view and the judgement made is always subjective.

  - Teachers must themselves constantly question what they do and do not like, in order to **be open to their students' proposals**. They are also there to help the students transmit and communicate what they want to "get across" on stage and help them become aware of the image and meaning (physical, aesthetic, dramaturgic, emotional, etc.) they are giving to the audience.

- How is it possible to grasp the **tension between the student's project, the school's vision of the art, and the marketplace**?

    - Alessandra used the **case of Cirko Vertigo in Italy** as an example. The school receives funding from the ESF (European Social Fund) and must set up 360 hours/year of professional productions for the students. This is beneficial to the students who experience working within companies. However, in Italy, the circus market is not ready for contemporary circus. So, for some students, there is a huge discrepancy between their personal project and the project in which they have to perform. Many discussions take place with the students because often, after they leave the school, they find work, but most of the time it is a performance in a shopping centre or a discotheque. So, there is a real contrast with what they would like to do. **There is an imbalance between artistic work, which is meant to be creative, and 'bread and butter' work, which provides financial security: a balance needs to be struck.** There are several ways of being an artist, but that might go against the students' main aspirations.
    → Sometimes it is possible to use your artistic approach to move towards the popular and mass culture, making it possible to have an income and continue creating, even though these are not ideal conditions.

    - **Some students are in a bubble during their studies in circus schools,** which can last a long time when they go through preparatory and graduate schools. When they graduate, they are not always prepared for "real life". **The school's role is to support them in this transition**. So some schools set up entrepreneurship and management modules to help them prepare for the real world and the labour market: how to put together an entrepreneurial project, where to find funding, etc. The important thing is to make students aware of the reality of employment and help them with their career plans.

- How **can students be supported in the creation process**?

    - Support for students in the creation process can vary from one school to the next. Working with people in other disciplines can, for example, be very valuable for the students, in order to cultivate their work and open up their perspectives. **Experimenting with new techniques** (e.g.: breakdance, capoeira, etc.) is enriching.

    - In some schools, the students have a **great deal of autonomy**, rehearsing in open spaces, for example. It is up to them to organise their time during the rehearsal months. The participants question the teacher's role in supporting students in their journey towards autonomy.

    - The circus can be very prescriptive. There are clear stages and methodologies for developing a technique. It is through mastering the technique that the students will be able to move beyond it and develop their creativity. It is more effective to learn the rules before breaking them, but without getting trapped in one single way of performing the movement. **A balance must be struck between mastery and creativity**.

Defining a common vocabulary

The participants attempted to define a **common collective creation glossary**. The reflection was started using a drawing of a **tree**:

- o **Trunk**: communication
- o **Roots**: opening, starting point
- o **Branches**: responsibility
- o **Leaves**: words, connected with the game
- o **Wind**: risks, accept not knowing, trust

- **Self-assertiveness and patience**: being able to take the plunge and start a course of action to achieve an objective. Have the patience required to reach the outcome: be actively patient. The teacher supports the students by giving them the necessary confidence to help them through the process.

- **Compromise**: includes communication, conflict, frustration and tolerance. It is a goal to be achieved to streamline creative processes. There are good and bad compromises: ask yourself why you are making them.

- **Trust**: between the teaching teams and the students, trust in the group, self-trust (self-trust can be obtained by the group, but sometimes students are more solitary).

- **Creativity**: finding a new solution to an old problem and/or finding an old solution to a new problem. New avenues can be found through movement, taking risks and experiencing failure.

- **Mistake/Failure**: An attempt to do something with an expectation which is not fulfilled. Therefore, a mistake is not necessarily something negative, but an unfulfilled expectation.
  → Are there good and bad mistakes? Yes: a distinction should be made between technical risk (dangerous) and creative risk (productive). The teacher can make mistakes too by requesting an action. The responsibility is shared with the students.
  → The teacher's role is to support students in their projects, see their potential and help them find solutions. In this sense, the teacher provides the problem, without the solution directly, or the process. The teacher helps the students find the way out by themselves, by giving them tools and teaching them how to use them and move forward.

- **Improvisation**: a tool for developing creativity and creating material; method of creation through spontaneity; use and creation of scores in an instant. The teacher must adapt the rules or directions throughout the improvisation (guide's significant expertise for adapting his or her teaching). Feedback and improvisation methodology to be understood.

- **Pedagogical**: the collective creation process is a pedagogical tool. The teacher's role is to create a safe space and provide an outsider's perspective to the group. How to act according to the situation (interpersonal skills), how to conduct oneself. Pedagogy is a tool, not an objective.

- **Responsibility**: artistic, physical, logistical, technical, etc. There are many types of responsibility in creation. The teacher's role is to identify just how far the students can go and give them a form of responsibility, depending on their level, to support them in their journey towards autonomy.

▪ Creativity

- **What is creativity?**
  o Mental and physical creativity.
  o Imagination connecting ideas / different perspectives / transformations / new creations.
  o Discipline and presence.

→ Each student has different ways of expressing their creativity. Where do the boundaries of creativity lie and how far can we let them go as teachers? What are the research processes for being creative? How can creativity be created/generated? What is the relationship between the teacher's creativity and the group's creativity?
→ One avenue is to cultivate one's own creativity and the students' creativity. Develop curiosity and confidence.

- **Nature *vs* learning creativity.**

→ There is a myth that you are either born an artist or you are not. There is also tension between discipline and creativity. Creativity is a tool, but our brains are lazy and try to save energy. It is about training the brain to find new ideas. Most people continue to do what they are good at, but to move forward we must try to do things we do not do well. For example, through daily tasks to stimulate creativity and challenge ourselves.
→ Knowing how to organise your ideas and shape them is part of creativity. This also works for improvisation: "Don't do your first idea, do your second one". It is when you do not know what to do anymore that you achieve creativity: practising and making room for what emerges. Creativity = ideas/inspiration (10%); sweat (90%): creativity includes the way ideas are developed.
E.g.: At the École de Cirque de Québec, each student has to write down an act on paper which will be performed by another student one year later.

▪ **Division of labour**

The division of labour should involve not just the students and the teachers but the whole school, so that everyone is involved, in a horizontal manner.
→ How can students be helped to find their place in the creative process? What room is left for students in the creation process?
Example of someone external coming to direct the creation: it is not often easy to find a balance so that students have the experience of creating whilst working with a director. The other difficulty working with external people is that they may ask for things which are impossible for the students to do, not knowing their capabilities. The students will then try to please the director without respecting their own limitations, which may pose a significant risk. The technical teacher may be swept aside during the creation process whereas it is often this teacher who knows the students the best. For the students, there is real tension between performer and creator, in which they have to find their way. The school's role is to offer different experiences to help the students find their place.

- **Creating a favourable environment**

  - The environment and context of the creation are made up of various factors:
    The space, the students' maturity, the relationship between the teaching teams and the students, the preparation of the students, personal tastes, the financial environment, the timetable, the ownership of stage materials, internal and external motivation, the stage director and how he or she likes to work.
  - To create a favourable environment, the educational provision must be in line with what was stated when the students enrolled, in order to match their expectations. This is part of the educational contract.
  - To encourage creation, it is vital to bring students into the present moment, to be genuinely present, here, in this moment, with no mental distractions.

- **From the collective of individuals to the collective dynamic**

  What do we want students to learn and how is it possible to teach it to them?

  - Various individual factors: expectations, confidence, maturity, culture, status / external factors: space, time. All of these elements combine with each other and students must learn how to manage them in order to enter into a group dynamic. It is important that they learn how to collaborate with a group, to experience the value of their contribution in the collective and to be able to respond to the different dynamics within the group: 'Make choices, accept or negotiate, communicate'.
  - Support individuals in the group.
  - Create with a stable group (which stays the same from session to session) to generate a group dynamic.
  - Find a balance in the management of the group. Sometimes when no-one is leading and it is too democratic, it does not work. In some cases, leadership is necessary. It depends on the expectations: is it to have a good product or a good learning process? Do we want to encourage the students to create by themselves?

- **Authority**

  How do we lead students towards what we believe is beneficial for them?
  How do we assume this authority? Indeed, students sense when the teacher is insecure. How do you handle a situation where the student goes against authority?

  → Be transparent with the students, call them to order, guide them, set an example and communicate.
  As a teacher, it is vital to follow the rules as laid down to gain this authority. It is also important to find the time to explain things to the students so that they understand why they are being asked to do this or that. Sometimes it is possible to be flexible and make exceptions. If you can, then explain why there are special rules in this particular case.
  Giving students your best means being able to adapt to each student's needs.

From professional circus artists collective creation process to teaching practice

The collective creation process of, and with, professionals, was questioned in this way: how can teachers be inspired by the collective work of professionals and adapt it to their work with students?

The reflection focused on 3 main axes:

- **Methodologies** in the professional collective creation process.
- The **application of professional creative practice** to day-to-day teaching practice.
- **Guiding and facilitating students** in independent group work.

To do this, each participant in the REFLECT Lab was invited to find an image / flyer of a show or a company that inspires them, and to share it with the group by answering the following questions:

- **In what way do they inspire you?**
- **How do they reflect your values?**
- **How do they reflect or contrast your aesthetic and artistic concerns?**
- **How do they reflect your preferred ways of working?**

The participants defined questions to ask the four professional companies met during the CIRCa Festival in Auch:

1. Please give us a brief overview of the company members' backgrounds/specialisations/schools/ work experience.
2. How do you organise your work/how does your company function?
   a. How do you choose the artists that you work with?
   b. Do you work with directors?
   c. Is there a hierarchy in the company?
   d. How do you divide/who undertakes the administrative and technical roles within the company?
3. How do you make choices?
4. How do you deal with conflict?

The group then further explored the contexts in which each teacher is working.
Among the teachers present at this Lab, there were:
- 4 dance and/or creative movement teachers
- 2 acrobatics teachers
- 7 aerial teachers
- 1 theatre teacher
→ Each teacher not being dedicated to a single discipline, but having a transversal practice.

Catherine Boot, the pedagogical coordinator, proposed the following questions to structure the exchange:
- **Exploring who are we inspired by and why?**
- Individual writing time :
  o What's on your mind about your practice?
  o Why did you apply for the lab?
  o What are you struggling with at the moment?
  o What do you feel you are lacking in your teaching?

From this exercise, 1-3 questions were formulated by each of the participants, to go further in the discussion.
Results:

- **How do we prepare student expectations** of the industry by the time they graduate?
- **How do we work with ever more fragile students?**
- **How do we create the time and space to think** when working just to try and keep up? What is time for us?
- **Are we curious?** Why? Which way?
- **What is circus supposed to be?**
- **What is the future of circus?** What could it look like?
- How we as a school can help to get more variations/innovations to discipline? **How do we get more different disciplines?**
- **How might we reboot/embed creativity/artistry in our students** (and industry) in the current climate (financial, social, etc)?
- **How do we combat/manage digital society** and its impact on our students?
- **How should circus collaborate?**
- **What is the journey from the words to the action?**
- **Who inspires who?** Do students inspire teachers or is it the other way around?
- **Do we care about the notions of "re-writing" students?** And what are the most important factors? How do we equip students?
- **How can we deal with paradox?**
- **What is circus research?**
- **How does difference operate within defined boundaries** (real or imagined)?
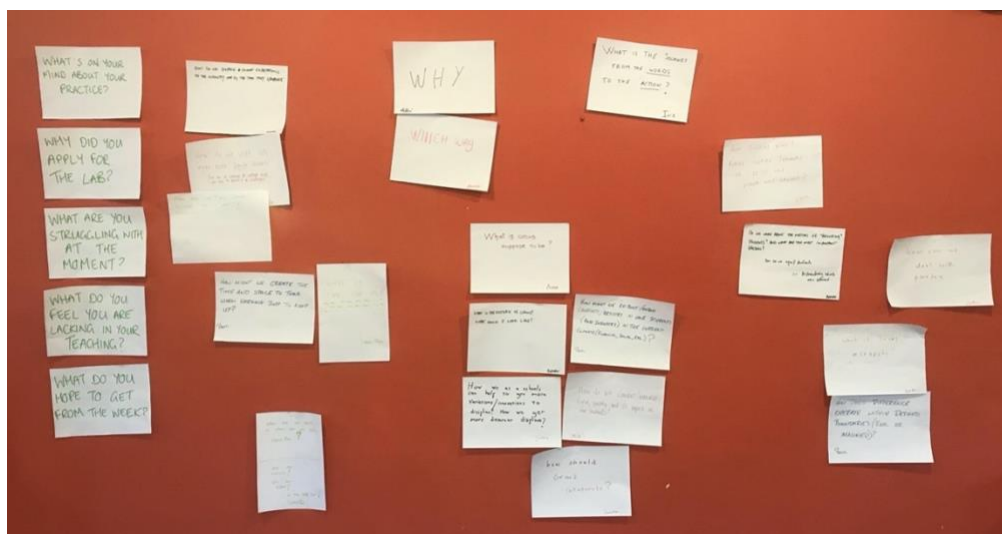
C. Encounters

The Codarts students and Joris Schoenmaekers

(on the Cyborg 2 show)

Participants in the REFLECT 3 Lab attended the *Cyborg 2* show put on by 17 2nd year students at the Codarts Circus School (Rotterdam, Netherlands). A discussion was organised with the students and the director Joris Schoenmaekers, an artist and external contributor invited by the school for this creation.

This was a special exercise, as Joris Schoenmaekers comes from a theatrical background, not a circus one. He was invited to Codarts, but was unfamiliar with how it operates. He was therefore able to observe a big difference in the work process with professionals – people he is used to working with – and with students. Joris Schoenmaekers was interested in the students' various techniques, being unfamiliar with all of the particular features of circus (e.g.: what is acro dance?). The challenge for Joris Schoenmaekers was therefore twofold: putting on a theatre performance with circus artists and creating with students. The play's general theme was suggested by Joris Schoenmaekers, because the name of the show had to be defined before work started, but this remained very broad and enabled various avenues to be explored. This topic arose because when Joris Schoenmaekers sees circus artists on stage, they make him think of cyborgs, being able to push themselves to the extremes of their physical capabilities.

➢ If you were to start the process again, what would you do differently?

Joris Schoenmaekers: We started off from theatre and then brought in the circus. We if had to start again, we would incorporate the circus earlier by trying to find a genuine fluidity between the two disciplines and not distinguishing between technique on the one hand and speech on the other. I would also have liked to be able to involve the students earlier in the creation process, in order to delve more deeply and quickly into the subject. One mistake was to regard the students as creators and not as performers. I used improvisation guidelines a lot in my work, adopting working methods I use with professionals. However, it is important to be aware of the process the students are going through and the framework they need.

The working method was as follows: improvisation proposals (often in small groups) which were then re-assessed in order to decide what to incorporate as and when. There was also a research session at the museum to find inspiration in a new setting. Every Friday, the group looked through the material produced during the week to identify what would be useful to keep. Rehearsals were also an important stage in the work, for everyone to be sure about what they were doing on stage, without thinking about how.

The technical teachers were not involved in the creation, but technical classes took place in parallel with the creation weeks, which meant the students could be helped by the specialisation teacher. Some of the students valued the freedom of working with an external stage director and deciding for themselves what they wanted to incorporate in the show. Others would have liked more technical support.

The use of speech was quite well incorporated by the students, because there were only two dialogues in the whole play. There were no words to learn to represent a character either, but the words of the students themselves. Also, as the audience was coming to see a circus show, they were not under any pressure regarding the words and did not only have to concentrate on their voices but on their movements as well, which made speaking easier.

By experiencing the creative process, the students were able to realise their own theatrical capabilities, what they could actually do on stage and all the work involved. For example, some students say they know how to do things in training sessions which they are not capable of doing or do not like doing on stage. So playing a character can influence the way they move around and take circus artists further forward.

- Meeting and discussion with **Circo Zoé.**

    - Main points raised at this meeting:
        ○ There is real collaboration within the company.
        ○ They are all very easy going, with laid back personalities.
        ○ They have never had a company member leave because they felt they couldn't get on with the company or the process.
        ○ They value the voice of the collective over the individual.
        ○ The economic structure in France allows them to take a long time to develop their shows and their way of working together.
        ○ They try out every option suggested - often in front of a real audience. After this it becomes clear which is the right direction.
        ○ The show is always developing, and opening night is just the start of the process.
        ○ The have a simple theme - that they all love circus!

- Meeting and discussion with **Circus I Love You.**

    - Main points raised at this meeting:
        ○ CILY have been working together for 2 years and are of 6 nationalities.
        ○ There are 8 performers, a technician, a cook, an administrator and a coordinator as part of the touring company.
        ○ The concept for this show is that it is a non-stop circus and music concert. They were looking at the show as a piece of composition, as in music, rather than using circus dramaturgy, that they felt belonged to theatre.
        ○ The two founders of CILY are responsible for the concept and the standard. They also instigate a 5-question methodology that begins the process. The questions are:
            • What do you need to do to fulfill your ego in this show?
            • Do you have wishes to collaborate within the group?
            • Is there something you don't want to happen in the show?
            • Does someone have a clear direction/vision of a scene in their head?
            • What is your personal statement of life in this world today?
        ○ CILY consider themselves to be merging careers and life in a healthy way, but think that many students now don't want to work in this way -they want to be 'superstar' performers.
        ○ CILY encouraged the REFLECT group to make students crash with reality. They felt we should expose them to true audience feedback, which was subjective and not constructive. We should let students deal with troublesome knowledge (such as how hard the industry is).
        ○ CILY make clear contracts at the start with every person with whom they work. These are agreed with the company based on skills and needs.
        ○ They don't make decisions collectively, but allow the best people for the job to make the choices.
        ○ A transparent hierarchy does not mean power or fighting
        ○ They wish to push against the phrase 'circus art'. Why do we need to validate circus with the word 'art'? They Feel it should stand alone.
        ○ They wish for honesty and authenticity on their aesthetic.

- Meeting and discussion with **Compagnie XY** and **Collectif Sous le Manteau.**

    - Main points raised at this meeting:
        - CSLM are a new company (3 years old), and are trying to apply many of Compagnie XY's principles to creation solely on Chinese Pole. They are 7 acrobats from different schools.
        - They are trying to find their identity as a collective.
        - Each member also takes an offstage role.
        - They also work with technicians and administrators.
        - For the artistic process they will usually make decision through a majority vote. For the production choices are made by the individual who has responsibility for that element.

        - XY have been in existence for 15 years. They grew from Lomme school and now people join by association, through their open training time.
        - For XY's new creation they formed a pilot group of 6 people who were responsible for decision making, with input from the rest of the company.
        - They chose this structure because in their previous creation *Il y n'est encore pas minuit*, the horizontal structure they aspire to wasn't truly felt and left some people feeling disengaged and frustrated.
        - They also operate a godmother/godfather system for new company members.
        - The aim is to dissolve the pilot group once the show is established - they hope there will no longer be a need for a separate group.

- Following discussions with the companies, Catherine Boot invited the participants to ask themselves the following questions:
    - How do we prepare our students to work in this way?
    - Can this process inspire our day to day teaching processes? How?

The reflection was structured in this way:
        - In groups of three, each person takes on the role of either speaker, questioner or observer.
        - Speaker talks for 5 minutes about reflections based on meeting the two companies.
        - Questioner has 5 minutes to ask the speaker questions. The purpose of this is to help the speaker become clearer in their thoughts.
        - Observer has 5 minutes to give their observations about the speaker. These may be based on body language and emotive aspects present in the speaker, as well as the content of the reflection. The speaker isn't allowed to respond during this time.
        - Everybody changes role.
        - Summary with the whole group.

- Summary of results and feedback:

1.   Methodologies in the professional collective creation process

The diversity of the creation processes was inspiring to many teachers, and it was noted that schools and teachers need to maintain a strong and up-to-date connection between education and the profession.
The artists within each professional company generally came from a mixture of schools, countries and backgrounds. This helped teachers to see the value of international collaboration also during the education process. They desire more cooperation between schools and exchanges of teachers, so that the different kind of organisations can evolve together and nourish themselves.

2.   The application of professional creative practice to day-to-day teaching practice

Many teachers felt that they need to re-engage with the importance of direct and truthful communication with students, and not try to cosset them too much.
Soren told us about how at AFUK students are involved in financial decision making. This enables them to work more in the way championed by CILY. Some schools were interested in trying this approach with their students.
In this way, some schools wish to favor group work, to foster autonomy and collaboration; or to encourage the students to go into the street, to meet directly the audience and deal with varied feedbacks, without filters.

3.   Guiding and facilitating students in independent group work

Teachers wanted to try some of the pedagogical coordination methods used during the lab, in particular the triadic approach to 'question time' (Speaker / Questioner / Observer).
Teachers from NCCA were keen to organise more seminars and lectures around making work at the school
Many teachers wanted to share CILY's 5 question process this with students for use in students guided creation processes.
It was felt that teachers should involve students with more decision making and responsibility. One school plans to instigate a new student led collective creation process unit.

SUMMARY OF THE LABORATORIES

1) Personal goals before the Labs
   - Listen to the other participants and their experiences
   - Open up your perspectives for reflection
   - Update your information on the creative approach with students

2) The Labs' "surprises"
   - A clearer overall picture of the issues
   - Tools were shared for helping teachers in their creative approach with students
   - **The reflections went beyond the Laboratory themes**

3) What the participants took away with them
   For some, the Labs sparked off or triggered:
   - Questions: "I came with questions and I'm going to leave with even more questions"; "I'm not going home with formulas or anything tangible, but with avenues to explore, lines of thought, etc."
   - A click: "the examples in the presentations spark something off, something clicks in me which I want to take back to my school"
   - Inspiration: "It gave me a lot of inspiration. It exceeded my expectations"
   - Challenges: "I'm going home with some challenges"
   - A stimulus
   - More tools and motivation to share with the rest of the colleagues
   - Real clarity on the issues
   - A desire to continue the reflection

Several themes emerged during the REFLECT project for moving pedagogical practices forward. Here is a summary of the Labs' key findings and training development requirements:

Have more exchange sessions and gain more knowledge:

- **Workshops**:
  - for creation writing
  - where **artistic** and **technical teachers** work in **collaboration** with the student on the creation of an act: examine the problems and solutions proposed by colleagues
  - involving **reflections** and **exchanges** on creation tools and their implementation
  - with guest **speakers** specialising in the creation process
  - involving **young graduates** (particular view)
- A **workshop on contemporary thought applied to the circus** / **Discussions** on the fundamental circus creation issues: an inquiry **into what creativity in the circus is**
- More knowledge of:
  - **the history of the circus**
  - **dramaturgy in the circus**
  - **analysis of the circus**
  - **criticism in the circus**
  - **the circus and physiology** (the field of propulsion for women)
- More **case studies with videos**
- **Tools** for delivering a **better education** to the students
- **Round-table discussions** on **problems** encountered **on a daily basis** in schools
- Training courses on feedback
- Organise **exchanges among teachers** (within or outside the school) **with contributors from other artistic circles on creative approaches**:
  - **More coordination** between all the teachers involved in the creation
  - Some **technical teachers** would like to have **more knowledge** so that they can **become involved in the creation process**

- o Some **artistic teachers** would like to **be part of the technical education** to **find new creation methods**
- **Organise exchanges/observation visits among teachers in different schools**:
  - o during key moments in a creation
  - o the technical teachers **would be in the place of students** and must achieve a creation with a creation guide
  - o get the technical teachers, artistic teachers and students to work together

Have more time for:

- **Interactions among teachers** (within and/or outside the schools):
  - o Some technical teachers would like to have more time to become involved in the creation process
- Teachers to **have one-to-one conversations with the students**
- T**eachers to individually seek new methods** for **improving the creation process**
- **Thinking of how to organise the timetable so that technical teachers are more involved in the creative process**
- Devoting time to **managing teachers' cultural differences**

Free up time so that circus teachers can **conduct research**:
  - o Pedagogical, scientific and theoretical research
    - Look into **new developments in the sector**
    - **Go and watch shows** for inspiration

Take into account each student's needs:

- **Support today's students**, who are less independent and more emotionally vulnerable: **prepare them for leaving school, facing the public, receiving criticism and the current marketplace.**
- **Listen to the students' expectations**: respect the "educational contract" and make them aware of the realities of the sector, **to avoid disappointment in the transition to employment.**
- **Help the students become more responsible and independent** through mutual trust, creativity, creating a favourable environment and adapting to the student's needs.
- **Support the students in the necessary risk-taking in creation**.
- **Foster creativity and vary the disciplines practised**: move towards the currently unknown.
- **Transform conflict into productive material and new perspectives.**
- **Encourage collaborative work,** to get students used to working in a company/ for a director
- **Be transparent with the students**: move forward side by side with a common goal, the student's progression.
- **Offer opportunities for self-development** and artistic definition, so that students can find their identity and place as an artist: creator and/or performer.

The exchanges on practices and views on common issues were very fruitful for the teachers, enabling them to experience new educational approaches other than those practised in their school. It was a genuine opening up of perspectives and possibilities, through the comparison of situations in Europe and the sharing of unique experiences. New solutions were provided for the participants' everyday work, in a creative and interactive way:

It was inspiring, challenging, made me think deeply and was fantastic to collaborate with other teachers and practitioners from around the world.

Meeting with teachers of different schools and horizons, sharing our approaches and reflecting on them was stimulating and gave me a lot of energy to pursue the work!

The REFLECT Laboratories gave participants the opportunity to discuss contemporary themes, which formed the basis of other reflections that emerged, with a more global picture of the issues of circus pedagogy. Using personal accounts as a starting point fuelled the discussion and allowed participants to delve further into current European challenges. The teachers who took part in the Labs each received training attestation, awarded by FEDEC, enabling them to valorise their learning during the REFLECT project. Furthermore, they conveyed the outcomes of the exchanges to the teaching teams in their respective schools. REFLECT will therefore develop the practices, the schools and the sector in a wider sense.

CONCLUSION

During the 4 REFLECT Laboratories, the issue of the creation process (collective/individual – of students/professionals) was covered during exchanges between circus arts teachers from various European and international schools.

These exchanges enabled the teachers to compare their practices in order to develop new pedagogical methods, because you need to know more than just how to perform circus acts in order to be able to teach them. Yet there is no initial training for circus arts teachers today. Circus teachers' experience and development come about through practice, feedback on the practice and their own reflection on their teaching methods.

Knowledge of teaching is therefore developed on the job: **the profession** of circus arts teacher **is not set in stone:** practices change. **SAVOIRS 01** shows the profession as it appears at a given moment, but it is constantly changing. That is why these exchanges represented real added value for the sector, according to the participants, enabling them to meet each other and discuss current and future pedagogical practices, in order to provide students with the best support in their creative processes and their entry into the labour market.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Educational coordinators and speakers

Educational Coordinator Labs 1-3

Vincent Grosstephan, Researcher, lecturer, CEREP / University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne (FR)
Holder of a Doctorate in Educational Sciences (2010), he has been working since 2012 on circus teaching practices exploring everyday work situations from an ergonomic and didactic standpoint. Alongside this topic, he has also been working on the professionalization processes in the field of training, involving the analysis of training devices and their implementation through the development of professional abilities and competencies. He is also the author of a publication for supporting the development of the continuing training offer for circus arts teachers: "Continuing training for circus arts teachers: Designing, facilitating and assessing", produced as part of the European INTENTS project.

Educational Coordinator Lab 4 – Speaker Lab 3

Catherine Boot, Movement/Physical Theatre/Reflective Practice Tutor, Circomedia (UK)
Circus-theatre director, Catherine is Artistic Director of Can't Sit Still, a company who work with unusual audiences in unusual locations to tells stories, start conversations and change the world. She also works regularly with Hubbub Theatre, a company of professional adult performers with learning disabilities, and assisted Matilda Leyser in the creation of 'Me, Mother' at the Roundhouse, London, as part of CircusFest 2016.
Catherine is a lecturer in creative movement at Circomedia, UK.

Educational Coordinator Lab 4 – Speaker Lab 3

Birgit Haberkamp, Improvisation/composition teacher, Codarts (NL)
Birgit Haberkamp studied at the Rotterdam Dance Academy dance improvisation and modern dance. After she graduated in 1987, she worked with multiple target groups in improvisation and creative development: children of all ages, teachers, adults in leisure sector, artists and industrial designers at the Design Academy Eindhoven. In 1991 she started teaching didactics in improvisation at the Rotterdam Dance Academy and from 2002 she teaches methods for creation and reflection for dancers at the Codarts Dance department. Since 2007 she is a permanent member of the Codarts Circus Arts team, where she teaches improvisation/composition modules.
She also developed her own business, Taoworks, by teaching Qi gong and Taoist meditation techniques.

### Educational Co-Facilitator Lab 1

Martine Leroy, Artistic director and head of vocational training, Centre des Arts du Cirque Balthazar (FR)
Before becoming artistic director and head of vocational training at the CDAC Balthazar, Martine was an aerial clown at the Cirque Bidon (1978/80), then formed the Cirque Constance with Pierrot Bidon (1981/85) and after that created Archaos, once again with Pierrot Bidon (1986/90). Trained in Education Sciences, she has a Master's degree in psychology, specialised in body and artistic practices. Following her thesis on supporting young circus artists, she continued her research regarding the links between artistic approach and identity construction.
She is also an active member of the steering committee for the REFLECT project, and of the FEDEC focus groups on teachers and educational directors.

Educational Co-Facilitator Lab 1
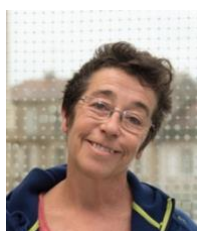
Anne Morin, Co-director, educational manager and dance teacher, Centre de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel (ES)
Originally a dancer and circus artist, Anne left the stage in 2004 to devote herself entirely to teaching. She is currently a teacher (dance, body awareness and creation workshops) and member of the management and educational coordination team of the Center de les Arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel.
In Catalonia, she collaborated as an expert in the drafting of the circus artist professional qualifications and of the content of 2 cycles of professional training: published in the form of a decree at the BOC.
She is also an active member of the REFLECT steering committee and of the FEDEC Board of Directors and Teachers focus group

Speaker Lab 1 – participant Lab 3

Alessandra Simone, Teacher and circus artist, Scuola di Cirko Vertigo (IT)
Graduated from the Bologna Galante-Garrone drama school and Vertigo Circus School. She specialised in aerial acrobatics at the Rio de Janeiro National Circus School.
In 2009, she took part in a workshop with Ariane Mnouchkine. She took the social theatre course led by Maria Grazia Agricola and Duccio Bellugi Vannuccini from the Théâtre du Soleil.
She has worked in traditional circus shows (Cirque Maccheroni of the Togni brothers) and contemporary circus shows, in theatre productions (Teatro Minimo, Teatro della Tosse) and operatic productions (Teatro Regio di Torino).
She works at the Fondazione Cirko Vertigo as a vocational training course tutor.

Speaker Lab 1 – Participant Labs 2 & 4

Adrian Porter, Director of Higher Education and teacher, National Centre for Circus Arts (UK)
Adrian has been Director of Higher Education NCCA since 2017 after having been responsible for higher education at the school. Previously, he developed a career as an artist and circus educator. He notably trained the Cirque du Soleil artists from 2001 to 2010.
Personal Performances: Solo trampoline piece created for the Royal Festival Hall "Ballroom blitz" season. Fashion Circus at the Birmingham NEC, directed by Micha Bergese. (Group acrobat) TV, advertisements, corporate workshops, promotions, and launches.
He is also an active member of the FEDEC Board of Directors.

Speaker Lab 1

Bim Mason, Co-founder, artistic director and teacher, Circomedia (UK)
Bim Mason is the co-founder of Circomedia, the Centre for Contemporary Circus and Physical Performance based in Bristol. He has been working professionally in circus theatre since 1978. After training with Jacques Lecoq, he worked as creator-performer in physical comedy and founded Mummer&Dada circus-theatre company in 1985. He was one of the original tutors at Fool Time, the first full time circus school in the UK. He is now Artistic and Education Director of Circomedia and leading on the world's first MA course in Directing Circus. His published writing work includes the seminal book Street Theatre (1992) and Provocation in Popular Culture (2015).

Speaker Lab 1

Daniela Arendasova, Director of Studies, École Nationale de Cirque de Montréal (CA)
Member of the Slovakian national rhythmic gymnastics team from an early age, Daniela took part in many national and international competitions. She studied at the Dance Faculty of the University of Fine Arts in Bratislava and became a choreographer and coach of the national rhythmic gymnastics team. In 1988, she taught at the École supérieure de danse du Québec and the École nationale de cirque. In 1990, she created an act for *Nouvelle Expérience*, a Cirque du Soleil show directed by Franco Dragone, which won a gold medal at the 13th Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain. She became director of studies for the National Circus School of Montreal in 1992. Daniela has also been a member of the Board of Directors of FEDEC since 2016.

Speaker Lab 3

Hernán Gené, Actor, dramatist, theatre director and teacher, Carampa (ES)
Founding member of the El Clu del Claun, a theatrical clown company that raised an aesthetic innovation in the Argentinian theatre of the '80s, he directed his first play in 1985. Since 1991, he began to move away from the exclusively humor theatre, and he participated in various activities with Odin Teatre company, based in Denmark.
Based in Madrid since 1997, where he founded his own theatre school: Estudio Hernán Gené, Hernán is working as a teacher of theatre clown, theatre comedy, actors training and theatrical anthropology. He is teaching theatre, Clown, Dramaturgy, Staging and History of Contemporary Theatre at the Carampa Circus School and collaborates regularly with different specialized magazines writing articles and books about theatre, circus and teaching.

Speaker Lab 3– participant Labs 2 & 4
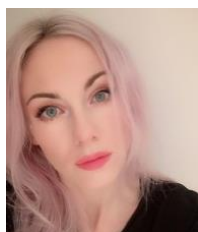
Katharine Arnold, Aerialist, choreographer and circus consultant, National Centre for Circus Arts (UK)
Katharine regularly works internationally across live events, cabaret, theatre, film and tv. She has just made Disney's new *Dumbo* with Tim Burton, as the main female character's stunt double. She tours regularly with *Take That*, and is a longstanding artist with Olivier award winning show *La Soirée*. Other shows include: BBC's Tumble, the Brit Awards, Olympics Opening Ceremony and Paralympics Closing Ceremony (for which she also choreographed the aerial show).
She was a finalist on France Has Got Talent with aerial partner Hugo Desmarais.
She teaches at the NCCA, and consults for various agencies and production companies

Speaker Lab 3– participant Lab 1

Michaela O'Connor, Physical actor/aerialist and teacher, National Centre for Circus Arts (UK)
Michaela training began at NCCA (formerly Circus Space). She was a founding member of the Generating Company devising and she then left for Las Vegas to be an original cast member of Franco Dragone's epic water show *Le Rêve*. She has performed in numerous corporate events and festivals in Europe, USA, India and UK including *Mary Poppins* in the Opening Ceremony for the 2012 Olympics Games and Cameron Mackintosh's *Barnum* in Chichester. She toured Europe as a clown with Cirque du Soleil's *Kooza*. She also freelancers as an aerial consultant, clients include X Factor and Katie Perry. Currently she is developing her own aerial theatre show *Hattie* and is a core teacher and Course Manager for the NCCA.

Participants
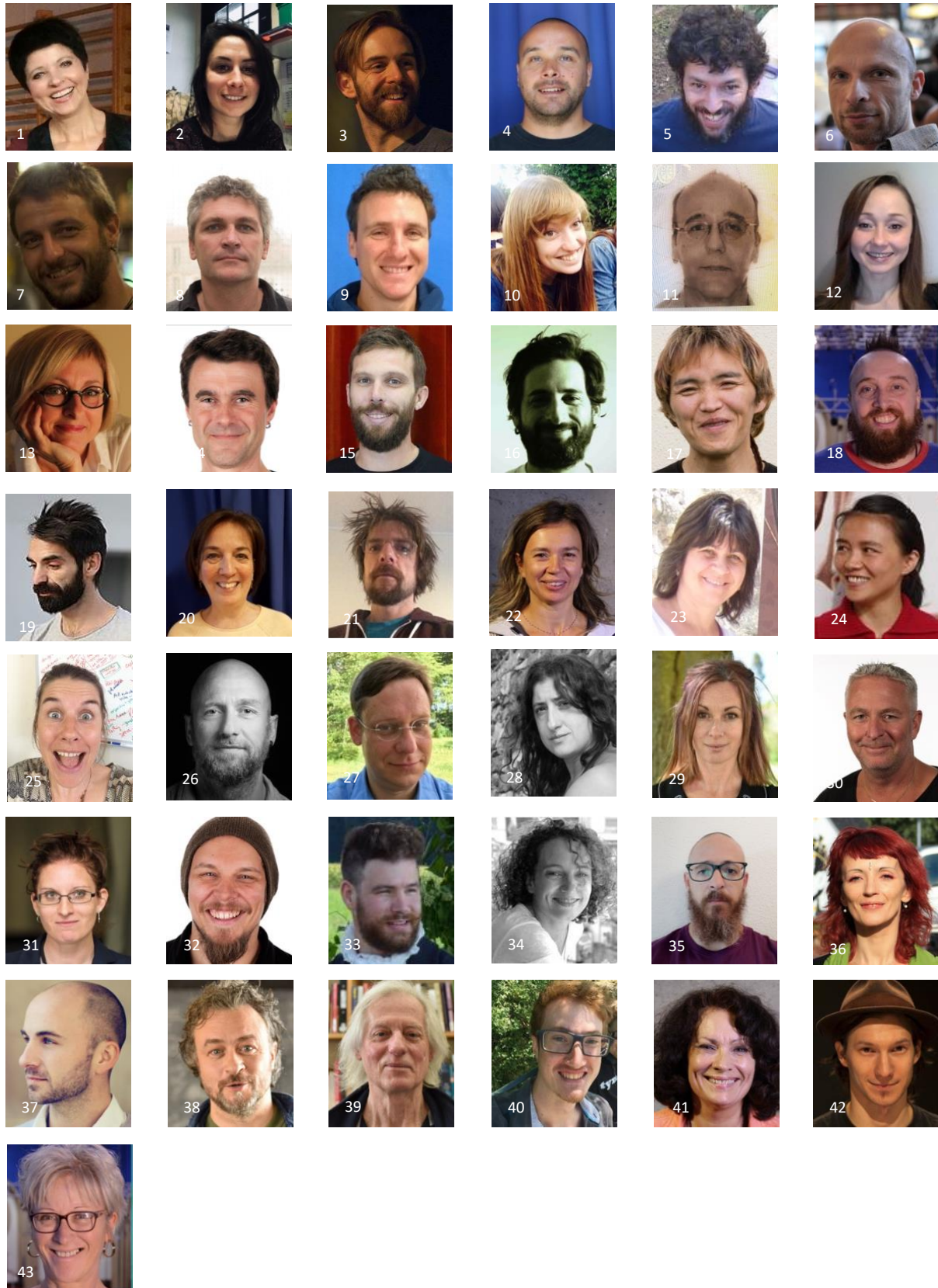
1. **Sophie Albasini,** *Artistic director/Circus arts teacher/Actress (Ecole de cirque Zôfy, Swiss)* = *LABS 1 & 2*
2. **Adeline Avenel,** *Coordinator of training of artists/Circus initiator, dancer, director (CRAC Lomme, France)* = *LABS 1 & 4*
3. **Stevie Boyd,** *Circus artist/Teacher of aerial disciplines (FLIC, Italy)* = *LAB 1 (+host)*
4. **Francis Caron,** *Acrobatics coach, flying trapeze/Circus artist (École de Cirque de Québec, Canada)* = *LAB 1*
5. **Pablo Domichovsky,** *Teacher of vertical disciplines/Circus artist (Centre de les arts del Circ Rogelio Rivel, Spain)* = *LAB 1*
6. **Thomas Falk,** *Teacher of contemporary dance, coaching, programme coordinator, dramatic art/Artistic director (Codarts, The Netherlands)* = *LAB 1*
7. **Alberto Feliciate Ordóñez,** *Teacher of acrobatics, technical/Artistic director (DOCH, Sweden)* = *LAB 1*
8. **Martin Gerbier,** *Director, psychologist and circus arts trainer/Teacher of hand-to-hand, banquine (CDAC Balthazar, France)* = *LAB 1*
9. **Guillermo Hunter,** *Teacher of physical fitness, acrobatics and the trapeze/Circus artist (Scuola di Cirko Vertigo, Italy)* = *LABS 1 & 3*
10. **Alice Jackson,** *Teacher of acrobatics (NCCA, United-Kingdom)* = *LAB 1*
11. **Javier Jimenez Fernández,** *President of Carampa Circus School/Teacher of the history of the circus, artistic director/Artist (Escuela de Circo Carampa, Spain)* = *LABS 1 & 2*
12. **Evgeniya Kalugina,** *Circus artist, teacher of aerial disciplines (Codarts, The Netherlands)* = *LAB 1*
13. **Julie Lachance,** *Choreographer, artistic director, stage director and teacher (École Nationale de Cirque, Canada)* = *LAB 1*
14. **Thierry Meussier,** *University lecturer, teacher (DOCH, Sweden)* = *LAB 1*
15. **Romain Peters,** *Educational coordinator and teacher of physical fitness, circus entertainer (Piste d'Azur, France)* = *LABS 1 & 3*
16. **Alex Torregrosa,** *Teacher of acting/Actor, producer, creator (Escuela de Circo Carampa, Spain)* = *LAB 1*
17. **Batsugar Tsendjav,** *Teacher of acrobatics (DOCH, Sweden)* = *LAB 1*
18. **Yannick Blackburn,** *(École de cirque du Québec, Canada)* = *LAB 2*
19. **Jorge Filipe Teixeira Santos,** *(INAC, Portugal)* = *LAB 2*
20. **Danielle Barbeau,** *Artistic coordinator (École de cirque de Québec, Canada)* = *LAB 3*
21. **Raphaël Beretti,** *Teacher of acrobatics, partner acrobatics and handstand (Nycirkusprogrammet, Sweden)* = *LAB 3*
22. **Estelle Clareton,** *Choreographer, artistic advisor, art director, teacher (École Nationale de Cirque de Montréal, Canada)* = *LAB 3*
23. **Marusia Coman,** *Teacher of aerial disciplines, wire and handstand (École Nationale de Cirque de Châtellerault, France)* = *LABS 3 & 4*
24. **Yaqin Deng,** *Circus teacher: discipline of contortion and balance (CRAC Lomme, France)* = *LAB 3*
25. **Louisa Fearnley,** *Producer, practitioner and drama teacher (Circomedia, United-Kingdom)* = *LAB 3*
26. **Soren Flor,** *Head Teacher: Hand-to-hand, Handstand, Chinese pole. Responsible for International relations, Rigging, Safety (AFUK, Denmark)* = *LAB 3*
27. **Gregor Kiock,** *Teacher of Object Manipulation (Codarts, The Netherlands)* = *LAB 3*
28. **Daniela Paci,** *Dance teacher (Scuola di Cirko Vertigo, Italy)* = *LAB 3*
29. **Lex Rooney,** *Head of Movement Course leader for the FdA in Contemporary Circus and Physical Theatre (Circomedia, United-Kingdom)* = *LABS 3 & 4*
30. **Jan Rosén,** *Head teacher/head coach specialized in Acrobatics, teeterboard and trampoline (DOCH, Sweden)* = *LAB 3*
31. **Sarah Simili,** *Art & Production Director (Axé Cirque, Swiss)* = *LAB 3*
32. **Christian Villpola,** *Teacher and course manager for circus discipline (DOCH, Sweden)* = *LAB 3*
33. **David Widmer,** *Acrobatics, balance & juggling teacher (École de Cirque Zôfy, Swiss)* = *LAB 3*
34. **Iris Muñoz,** *Teacher of Contemporary Dance and Creation (Escuela de Circo Carampa, Spain)* = *LAB 4*
35. **Rafael Martín Blanco,** *Hand to hand Physical Conditioning Creation Teacher (Escuela de Circo Carampa, Spain)* = *LAB 4*
36. **Tao Maury,** *Professional Trainings Director, Pedagogical & Art Director (CRAC Lomme, France)* = *LAB 4*
37. **Paul Evans,** *Choreographer/Director/Dramaturge (NCCA, United-Kingdom)* = *LAB 4*
38. **Jonathan Priest,** *Teacher of Aerial Discipline, Module Coordinator: Practice as Research, Professional Collaboration and Final Major Project in Directing Circus (Circomedia, United-Kingdom)* = *LAB 4*
39. **Michael Wright,** *Aerials teacher (Circomedia, United-Kingdom)* = *LAB 4*
40. **Pontus Wallin,** *Teacher of acrobatics and Chinese pole (Nycirkusprogrammet, Sweden)* = *LAB 4*
41. **Marie-Josée Gauthier,** *Artistic counselor for circus acts and collective creations, acting teacher, director, actress (École national de cirque de Montréal, Canada)* = *LAB 4*
42. **Jukka Juntti,** *Teacher of Aerial acrobatics (Salpaus Circus Artist Education, Finland)* = *LAB 4*
43. **Anne Lepage,** *Training Coordinator, Aerials teacher, artistic advisor (École de Cirque de Québec, Canada)* = *LAB 4*

FEDEC Team

Labs 1 & 2	Lab 1	Lab 2	Lab 3	Labs 3 & 4
Gaëlle Le Breton REFLECT Coordinator	**Nicolas Lefebvre** Project manager	**Juliette Macotta** Project manager	**Noémie Schreiber** Project manager	**Lorenzo Albiero** REFLECT Coordinator

THANKS

FFEC (Fédération Française des Écoles de Cirque) and FEDEC (the European Federation of Professional Circus Schools) especially thank:

- The REFLECT Committee* for the steering work carried out throughout the project;
- Vincent Grosstephan for the pedagogical coordination of the Labs #1, #2 and #3 and the drafting and evaluation work for the REFLECT project publication;
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