

Teaching Partneracro with focus on special need group



CIRCE project



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SUMMARIZING DOCUMENT

Photos of the training are available here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FuA82oMpAQoflOXm2v91IMRjG9tCOfof?usp=sharing>

Video of the training is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1lDs_h_-uyo&t=2s

Resources for partneracro

- Noel Spauwen's website: <https://acronoel.wordpress.com/>
- Noel Spauwen's book: *"Noël's Acrobatic elements and connections"*
<https://acronoel.wordpress.com/book/>
- acro games manual and also the acroyoga international manual:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1469254603382606/>
also from: acroyoga.org
- Acro card set to play: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/172684426161181/about/>
- Z - shaped mat, ideal to support sacrum, when participants legs arent flexible enough to L base with bone stacking: https://www.amazon.com/Therm-Rest-Camping-Mattress-Regular/dp/B00516R0WC/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1525960186&sr=8-1&keywords=thermarest+zlite

What makes a good partneracro teacher?

thoughts by the trainer Noel Spauwen

A teacher of partneracro has to have a good understanding of acrobatics – not only know the moves and the forms but understand them.

A good eye for the people, because everybody is different.

A good feeling for movement.

An interest in people

AWARNESS ON THE TOPIC – quotes by the participants

What do you know about partneracro?

...It takes some time to find a good rythm with your partner and it is really fun!

...Needs careful "listening" of the partner, for avoiding injuries as well as achieving the goal through collaboration.

...Partneracro is an acrobatic discipline between two people to work with the physical consciousness. Muscles, bones; the weight, the time, the coordination gets a real balance and a wonderfull experience to help us to discover and feel emotions to grow in our souls.

...That there are so many possibilities to it. It can be dynamic, more static, it isn't just one thing you can label. You can also do it in big groups ore just 2 people.

... It takes time to practise. You really have to cooperate it.

... A traditional circus discipline, requires at least 2 people. Usually used for performances. It puts in practice physical laws like gravity, counterbalancing, bone stacking. It applies the physiology, which plays important role in the infinite variety of poses, transitions, sequences, what two or more humans manage to do or invent.



What are the benefits of partneracro?

...It's good to get in contact and develop trust in others. I like it a lot!

...Obviously it creates a physical relation with eachother, trust, companionship; as well as it build physical strenght.

...It is good for fine tuning communication, cultivating strength, endurance, patience, movement skills, self-confidence, staying fit.

.. I had felt the benefits in myself. So the most important thing is the trust in yourself, to become more open to listen and to learn from others, you feel that you can do it. It helps to respect yourself and others. It is a way to comunicate and it could become an art of expression.

... It is a nice training for confidence. It results nice figures and good moves.

... It is a great fitness, fun, helps with body communication and balance. Both wonderful to practice and to watch.

... It empowers self-confidence, responsibility, concentration.

... It develops trust, body strengst, team work, communication... and so much more.

...It builds a sense of trust between people. Actually we trust our own life to our partner and he is willing to take this responsibility. This fact brings as very close. Is not a personal matter but is a matter of the community. It is very important to be able to trust the community and the community to be willing to support you. I believe that acro partnering is a very good way to start building this sense of trust.

...A possibility for experimenting, and working through and with others. Challenging the human limitations as a group, or just individual ones, with the possibilities that the nature's physics provide us.

... You learn how to cooperate and trust another person. But also you learn how your body works and how to use it in more efficient ways.

... You experience how to work as a team, the creative exploration and trust in each others bodies.

... You develop a sense of harmony, unity. It is a fitness and it is an art.



... I think acro partnering with a progressive teaching approach can be a powerful tool for personal development in a growing digital culture. It can create real life interaction & integration through play for individuals of all backgrounds. Living with the heritage of a schooling system based on the value of competition and personal achievement acro partnering counteracts by encouraging integration, creative thinking, physical conditioning, motoric skills and last but not least teamwork and collaboration.

... It is an opening for people, more self confidence, better coordination

...I think that partner acro give a lot of benefits because when I work with my group i see how the people must trust each other and they have a lot of fun

.. Trust, different way of communication, empathy, responsibility, physical movement, fun...

... Acro is great for teamwork, trust, fitness, fun and confidence in your ability

... You develop physical skills, determination, goal setting, communication, self esteem.

... You increase self confidence, increase health, getting people closer and more open for the others, increase mobility and strenght, increase control of your body

... It benefits the teamwork, communication, trust, relation. Improves the basic elements of a healthy community.

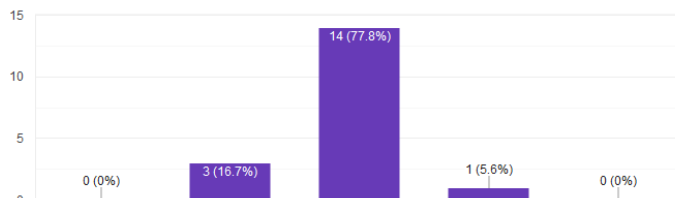
RESULTS of the workshop:

How the level of participants has changed?

before (first diagram) and after (second diagram)

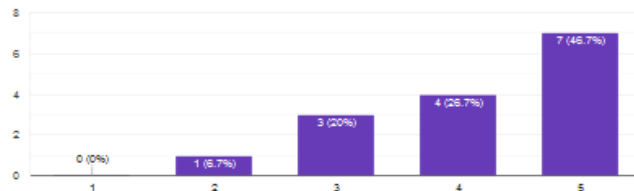
How is your skill in partneracro?

18 responses



How have you improved your knowledge by participating in this workshop?

15 responses



5=very much, 4=a lot, 3=i learned new things

2=some new information, 1=very little new information

What did participant learn?

„..it was a renewal, I was inspired.”

„I learned a lot new figures as well how to spot them and most important some golden rules for how acrobatics work in general”

„Practicing in alignment with current potential and with the guidance of great teachers are always beneficial”

The set goals, the content and the methods of the training are in partII of this documents.



Highlight of the participants' feedback on what they learnt:

- how to transmit the technique correctly to students in order to live a pleasant experience.
- how to spot the figures
- techniques and teaching methods how to demonstrate and analyze before trying
- new techniques for tempos, and flows
- safety after all
- I understood that anyone who has got a strong base skills will find in any progressive exercise flow and confidence
- experienced a training routine
- approach to advanced level tricks
- how to create a safe environment
- what are the difficulties and possible fears which can appear within doing the tricks. (by living it you can explain it better to the students and understand their mistakes)
- how to use acroyoga as a tool in training process for relaxing
- how to explain the technique to students,
- new exercises, more interesting content to use at the lessons
- deeper knowledge of pairacro
- to feel able to help yourself and others
- rewarding work for the mind and body in a group.
- the importance of tempo, in coordination, weight and support points.
- really sensible when you work with the body, so it's really important to know the technical things to use the body correctly and not to be dangerous.
- how to take care of each other,
- how you can approach a group,
- how to contemplate the cultural differences in order to be able to teach

How will they use?

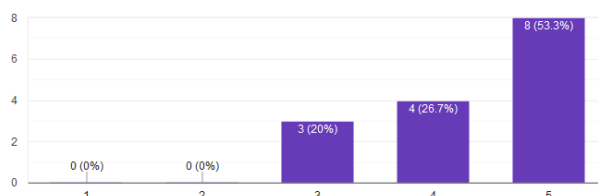
„I would like to use it to become a better teacher both in social circus and leisure circus session, I would also use it in Group building activities both for enterprises and for communities.”

From the feedback of the teachers we can see they will use this knowledge

- acrobatic classes
- partneracro trainings
- with social circus group
- with kids and with adult groups
- for teambuilding trainings

Do you think you will use partneracro in your profession?

15 responses



5=very much
4=a lot
3= yes
2=in some part
1=very little

Outcome of the workshop:

- Social circus experience

A relevant and huge impact both from human and professional point of view it was the meeting with the special need group. For the last day of training we organised a 2 hours experimental workshop where a group of 20 kids with different mental and physical disorder – mainly with low function group – came to enjoy a partneracro session with the international teachers. Most of the teachers had not had before experience with special need group. They were a bit anxious about it beforehand and very delighted afterwards. The session led by Réka Hargitay was based on a tale which guided the group through a fantasy world filled in with playful elements which made real reason to execute partner exercises and acrobatic movements. This was a great example for all participants how to incorporate commands into a tale make it enjoyable and direct on a very indirect way.



- Cooperation with Bárczi Gusztáv special need school

The project gave a reason to strengthen the on-going cooperation with this special need school. We could find in this project 3 points for close cooperation:

1. One teacher from the Bárczi Gusztáv special need school could participate in the Acroyoga sessions of this teacher training. This 3 sessions were dedicated to see this mild way of executing partneracro exercises even with people with less physical preparation. By its nature it is possible to use it with special need groups.
2. As a preparation for the teacher training the acroyoga teacher went over to the special need school to obtain experience on their characteristics and also as a preparation for the experimental session on the last day of the training.
3. More than 20 kids had the possibility to enjoy a playful circus session in Inspiral Circus space with our international group.



- **Getting to know wider community**

'Meet and greet' event created a friendly atmosphere for the participant and possibility to train with the hungarian acrobats. Also for the Hungarians it gave a picture on European situation on a friendly way.

- **Inclusion of invited countries**

We offered places at the workshop for neighbour countries, to slovak and polish circus association. We did this being aware that participation in such a training deliver such a result to the trainer, and there is a lack of this kind of training in this Central – Easter European region. We could contribute to the development of circus in the neighbour countries on this way

- **Participation in European training**

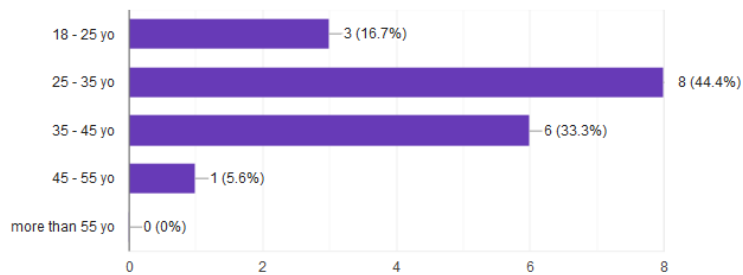
2 participants has never attended international training before it was a very new and unique experience for them.

- connection between participants
- posts in fb group

The range of participants

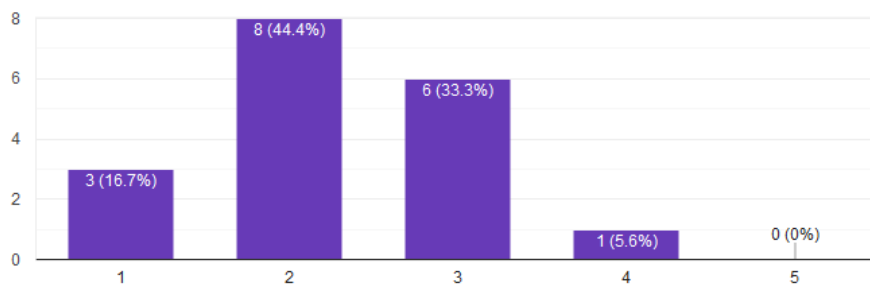
What's your age?

18 responses



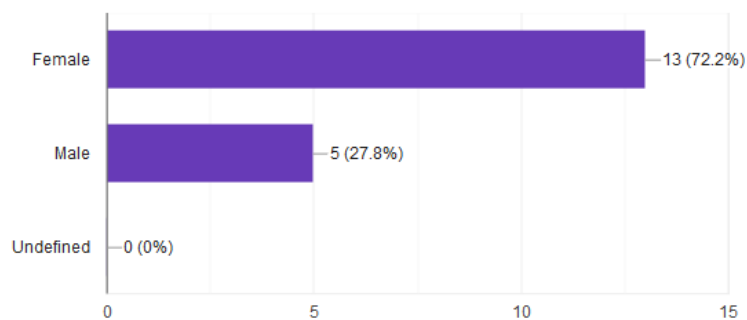
What is your experience in teaching partneracro?

18 responses



What is your gender?

18 responses



Participants' feedback on the organisation and logistics of the training

...Perfect! really, i dont have nothing to say about. Because it was really nice.

...Very caring, everything was clear and easy, no questions left unanswered

...Wonderful venue, appropriate accommodation, great food and helpful information.

...Food was amazing and very, very tasty, I already miss this :) Information was clear and on time.

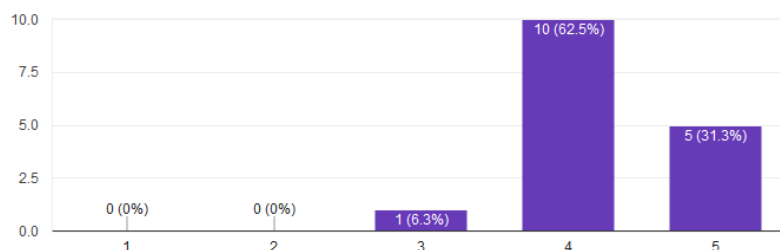
...It was everything very easy, close, well explained. The Hostel was clean, nice orgineced, with good breakfast. At the circus school, everybody was super friendly. And if we needed something there was always someone to help

...Amazing training space, accommodation was fine, and it was great to have the lunch cooked as an option and all information sent prior was very helpful.

...Everything was is amazing.

What was the quality of teaching?

16 responses



What do you think would have improved the workshop?

Even more time to try out all the tricks and experience them in all positions, especially in the spotting . there was of course a lot time for this, but still could have been more. In some exercises more attention towards the spotting in general.

More days! It felt really short. If we could work a few more days for practicing what we've learned all together, we would have reached another level.

It was great that we had 3teachers and every of them have knowlege from different kind of partner acrobatic. It was very intensive but sometimes it should be longer becouse we didn't have time for ask many questions and try to do more thongs. So maybe a bit longer or more organized, I mean not to put so many figures but do less and more exactly.

I thought the class with the children on the last day was great. One or two more such experiences with different target groups could have been useful. I didn't think that there was a lot of pedagogical knowledge shared, aside from delivering the information slowly, in stages, etc. which I already do. A little more info about various specific special needs and how to meet them could have been useful. It was a fun and energetic workshop overall. Thank you!

I really learned a lot and enjoyed it at the same time. So just to add something, maybe more paper material. But even without it was fine cause everybody had their own chance to write and write everything down at any time, it was enough!

Better time keeping and awareness of classes running over, and more breaks in the longer sessions. so we don't loose concentration and can stay focused and motivated.

According to me to train with a groups having the same level is very important. So regrouping those who are beginners apart of the advanced.

II. Content and methods of the training

Profil of the group

Number of participant is max. 20 people.

Level of participants: they should be intermediate in acrobatics. Have physically prepared for 5 hours training a day and a knowledge of basic partneracro tricks. Once they are at higher level they have to consider that the point of the workshop is not to elevate their level, but to widen their repertoire and to discover new approaches and methods of teaching.

Be open to act both as flyer as base. They do not have to arrive as partners, but we prefer them to work openly with any member of the group.

Elements of the workshop

The workshop provides 5 days learning experience where we aim to cover 3 aspects of partner acrobatics:

how to teach?

what to teach? and

how to apply it in groups with special needs?

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

Learning process

The way of learning is experimental learning and group discussions.

Experimental learning means **learning by doing** it, so learners participate in a class where they do exactly what and how they can teach it later on.

The **discussion** with the teacher serves to clear further questions about the applied methods and take the experience at a conscious level.

Other kind of **discussion** will be realized with the participants on the last day, which serves the **digestion** of what they learned during the week and an exchange of idea how they can put that into practice. This discussion is going to moderated but not led, as its objective is to realize the first step when they work autonomouse with what they learned.

Combination of different approaches

With the help of three teachers we **combine three different approach** to partneracro. Same same but different.

- **Réka Hargitay**: will help us with manners usebly with groups with no or poor physical conditioning, focusing on partneracro as a physical interaction.

- **Tibor Kőműves** will show us proper ways for physical preparation, foundation and conditioning needed for acrobatics
- **Noel Spauwen** helps us to widen the repertoire of our partner acro tricks giving on his way of teaching.

Participants are supposed to have experience in teaching partner acro, so should not be a problem for them to face explanations which seem to be contradictions, since the subject is thought by different teachers and from different aspects, but they should be able to look at them as complimentary.

Number of hours

22 hours of led sessions with the teachers and 7 hours of discussions. As it is a very physical subject, we have not more than 5 hours physical work which is always combined with intervalls and have a conclusive discussion at the end.



Content of the sessions

Three different kind of session with 3 teachers working separately, with different methods.

Session 1. foundation of acrobatics, gymnastics, physical preparation

number of hours : 3x2 hours

objective: collection of preparative excercises and conditioning

tutor of the session1:



Tibor Kőműves is currently the teacher of the Hungarian National Circus School teaching acrobacy, especially hand-to hand. On the side he is the trainer of several sport clubs and competitors of taek won do, horse riding acrobats, synchron swimmer, roller skaters - providing them further specific training in acrobatics.

His education:

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

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

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

He worked contracted in European circuses, vaudevilles – theaters, gala programs and TV shows: Tivoli Copenhagen, Circus Barum, Circus Krone, Circus Grüss, Conelli Zürich – gala, Royal Pallas etc.

Content of session 1:

Focus is to provide basic preparative training of acrobatics, excersises which gives the background of the partner acrobatic tricks. Create a good foundation by gymnastic trainings as about muscles conditioning, body conciousness and body coordination.

A collection of basic excersises which should be repeated with any kind of group (not special need) in order to have a good base to build the acrobatic tricks later on.

He features a series of preparative excersises for handstand, headstand, carthwheel, rolls and saults which are all needed partly or as a whole to execute partner acrobatic and hand-to hand figures.

He is not teaching partner-acro tricks or figures but he teaches what those figures requires to be able to do and show what and how to strenghten in order to be able to execute.

His lesson will be composed of parts like

1. warm-up of 40-50 minuits which includes individual playful acro movements and basically gymnastics to use and strenghten proper muscles and reach a good coordination.

2. 20 minutes of preparative exercises for rolls, headstand, handstand, cartwheel. Also work in pairs finding the common rhythm, and tempo, doing pair exercises
3. lifting, foundation of throwing, exercises in longes
4. stretching, calm down

Same kind of session will be repeated three times in order to imprint it also because this training could be repeated as the core preparation of an acro lesson.

In the last part of his session he is there to explain why and what certain exercises serve. Also to answer for the questions.

Session 2- acroyoga for success and enjoy and for physical contact

number of hours : 3x3 hours

objective: partneracro with beginners, with special need group, with non sportive approach

tutor of the session2:



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

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

Creating a safe and supportive environment in her classes, she offers progressive steps for each persons individual needs and current abilities to build up on: establishing contact, succeeding in acrobatic bodyshapes with ease, shifting perspectives and letting go in the therapeutic practice becomes a game!

Certifications and degrees:

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

Content of the session 2:

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

The sessions will combine partneryoga elements, games, flying (L-basing) among other exercises and finish with therapeutic practice at the end.

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

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

Building foundation will be realized through pyramids and counterbalances so to experience and deepen: dealing with weight, laws of gravity, finding one's center of weight, understanding bone stacking, assisting others to achieve their goals, first approach to spotting / safety techniques, experiencing potential of community.

Flight or flying refer to different L-basing positions. Layering the content in progressive steps and learning to break down content into further micro-steps, will enable students to adjust the content to their participants' actual needs and if desired, to take a step back in order to make learning an experience of success.

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

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

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

Session 3 – widening repertoire of positions and moves and mastering techniques of partneracro

hours: 3x3 hours

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

tutor: Noël Spauwen

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

He started his acrobatic career in the dutch "Como-Brother-School" and passed their exams in the eighties. Many other teachers had their influence too. During 1985-1995 he performed with the trio "Drie Hoog Achter" in streets and festivals in western Europe and 1996 2012 with "de Tuymelaeren van Mahou" and in various other duo's and groups and in his "acro-talk-show".

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



He has done quite some training for trainers in acrobatic and other social skills. He studied social and organisational psychology with focus on how people learn in groups. Always searching for the steering spirit that grows in and guides groups.

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

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

Content of session 3

Because of his varied background the concern in the lessons is not only the technique but also the way of working together and the fluent connection between parts. The first workshop is the most important for teaching and learning. The second for the exploring of doable trio's and the third for helping to think creative in what your body can do in coöperation with another..

3/1 Forms and movements in pairs

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

3/2 Trio intermediate:

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

3/3 Different Dynamics

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

