



## *Encounters with Circus and its Others*

An international conference exploring questions  
of difference in contemporary circus

## *À la rencontre du cirque et de ses altérités*

Un colloque international qui explore les questions  
de différence dans le cirque contemporain

**15-17 July/juillet 2016**

at various locations in Montréal, in the context  
of the Festival Complètement Cirque  
à divers endroits à Montréal, dans le cadre  
du Festival Complètement Cirque

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Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada.  
Partners: Brock University, Concordia University, Union College (New York), École nationale de  
cirque de Montréal, Montreal Working Group on Circus Research, Cirque du Soleil, Montréal Complètement Cirque

The contemporary circus is taking up ever more space on the world stage, and new academic research is looking to examine its impulses and implications. This three-day conference explores questions of difference in contemporary circus. It asks how the mainstreaming of the field may be affecting circus's historic status as a site for the celebration and exploitation of differences, from stagings of exceptional performing bodies to the display of "freakery." Discussions will touch on gender, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, social class, and race.

Le cirque contemporain prend de l'envergure sur les scènes du monde, et de nouvelles recherches scientifiques cherchent à en examiner les pulsions et les implications. Ces rencontres axées sur "Le cirque et ses altérités" explore la problématique de ceux, et ce, qui se voient désignés comme différents ou autres, dans le cirque contemporain. Un thème qui touche au genre, à la sexualité, aux handicaps, à l'ethnicité, aux classes sociales, et à l'espèce.

### Conference schedule

#### Friday July 15

**12:30-1:30 Lunch** Jarry 2e, 2590 Rue Jarry E, Montréal, H1Z 0A3  
The table d'hôte menu costs 27.25\$ CDN and requires pre-registration.

#### **1:15-3:15 Roundtable: International Perspectives on Social Circus**

1) Shay Erlich, York University  
"Liberations and Limitations: A Semi Auto-Ethnographical Exploration of a Disabled, Genderqueer's Experiences in Circus Arts"

2) Jon Burt, Macquarie University, Sydney

“Cirqiniq – social circus in the Artic”

3) Olga Lucia Sorzano, City University London  
“Social Circus - the other of professional circus?”

4) Jessica Hentoff, Circus Harmony, St. Louis  
“Teaching the art of life through circus education”

5) Amy Cohen, American Youth Circus Organization

6) Karine Lavoie, Cirque Hors Piste, Montréal

7) Emmanuel Bouchud, Cirque du Soleil, Montréal

**4:30 – 7:00**

**Plenary session**

Montreal Complètement Cirque Headquarters  
1564 St. Denis, Montréal, H2X 3K3

Chairs: Charles Batson, Karen Fricker, L. Patrick Leroux,

Jennifer Miller, The Pratt Institute  
“Circus Amok: Queer Utopia”

**Saturday July 16**

**Concordia University, Library Building (LB), 1400 Maisonneuve Blvd. W, Montréal,  
H3G 1M8**

**8:30-9:00 Registration**

Room LB 619

**9:00-10:30 Panel 1: Gender and Difference**

Room LB 619

Chair: Karen Fricker

Alisan Funk, Concordia University

Gender in Circus Education: The institutionalization of stereotype

Marion Guyez, University of Toulouse-Jean Jaurès

Are Acrobats ordinary heroes? Underman, by Olle Stradberg.

Ante Ursic, University of California, Davis,

Horsepower: Animality and Race in *Odysseo* by Cavalia

Kristy Seymour, Griffith University

Briefs: Gender bending in Australian Contemporary Circus

**10:30-10:50 Coffee**

Room LB 619

**10:50-12:20 Panel 2: Location/dislocation/globalization, Histories and Presences**

Room LB 619

Illaria Bessone, University of Milan – University of Turin  
Circus practice, alternative or mainstream? An Italian case study

Christabelle Sethna, University of Ottawa  
The Circus of the Afterlife: Colonial Circuits and the Commodification of Jumbo the Elephant

Emma Stenström, Stockholm School of Economics  
The business of circus

Elena Kreutsch, University of Vienna  
Circus mobilities/mobile others

**12:20 – 2:00 Lunch**

English Department faculty lounge, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, Library Building

**2:00 – 3:30 Panel 3: Reading Circus Bodies and Signs**

Room LB 619

Chair: L. Patrick Leroux

Michael Eigtved, University of Copenhagen  
From Civilization to Regulation: Neander's *Airport* as Showcase for the battle with civilized control

Magali Sizorn, Université de Rouen  
Blanche Neige et la Femme à barbe  
(Snow White and the Bearded Lady)

Franciska Trapp, University of Münster  
Narrating the others

Marcos Nery, Université du Québec à Montréal  
Le corps-acrobate sur la scène interartistique  
(Theorizing the acrobat-body)

**3:30-4:00 Coffee**

Room LB 619

**4:00-5:00 Panel 4: Reading Others**

Room LB 619

Chair: Charles Batson

Aastha Gandhi, independent scholar and artist, India

Reading Performer and the Performative: Increasing presence of multiple racial bodies in Indian circus

Katie Lavers, independent scholar and artist, Australia

BLAKflip and Beyond

**6:00 – 8:00 Book Launch**

*Cirque Global: Québec's Expanding Circus Boundaries*,  
eds. Leroux and Batson

Librairie Port de Tête, 262 Av. Mont-Royal E, Montréal, H2T 1P6

**Sunday July 17 Concordia University, Library Building (LB), 1400 Maisonneuve Blvd. W, Montréal, H3G 1M8**

**10:30-12:00 Contemporary Problematics of “freak” and queer**

Room LB 619

Tina Carter, Airhedz.co.uk

Is the 21<sup>st</sup> century disabled artiste un-freaking or re-freaking circus?

David Fancy, Brock University

Disability, Circus, and Freakery

Katie Lynn Gardner, University of Oxford

Circus Aesthetics in Non-Circus Entertainments: Reinforcing the Queer and Freak of the Circus Body in Mainstream Opera Performance Practices

Kelly Richmond, McGill University

Burlesque in the Circus: Teasing Out Queer Performance

**12:00 – 12:30 Closing discussion**

Room LB 619