

Smells Like Dialogue: A Circus Symposium

— *by The Circus Dialogues*



15.01.20
16.01.20

10:00 – 18:30

*Vooruit, Theaterfayer &
Antiekzolder*
Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 23,
9000 Ghent

17.01.20

10:00 – 18:30

*KASK School of Arts,
Zwarte Zaal*
Louis Pasteurlaan 2,
9000 Gent

The Circus Dialogues invites you to a dynamic, open-minded gathering at the junction of artistic circus practice and critical theory. **Smells Like Dialogue: A Circus Symposium** is a three-day symposium with two exciting guest speakers, a book presentation of the brand new *Thinking Through Circus* and lots of room for polyphonic dialogue. How and what does circus think? In what way is circus (also) a practice of thought? With these questions as a point of departure, let's get talking!

Smells Like Dialogue: A Circus Symposium is a free event, but a reservation is required. Because the capacity of the symposium is limited, please sign up at circusdialogue@gmail.com. The language of the symposium will be English.

Smells Like Dialogue: A Circus Symposium takes place during *Smells Like Circus*, a cross-disciplinary festival hosted by Vooruit and Circuscentrum. It will be possible to both attend the symposium and to see most of the shows playing at the festival. Buy your tickets via www.vooruit.be



15.01.20

How does circus think?

09:30

Walk in, coffee and tea

10:00 – 12:30

Maaïke Bleeker (NL)
Foyer Theaterzaal

14:00 – 17:30

Round tables—how does circus think
tradition, exhaustion, otherness,
violence, work and love?

Moderated by John-Paul Zaccarini
(UK/SE), Sebastian Kann (US/BE),
Bauke Lievens (BE), Dana Dugan (US),
Quintijn Ketels (BE), Elena Zanzu (ES)

Antiekszolder

17:30

Book launch **Thinking Through Circus**
Foyer Theaterzaal

17:30

Doors

18:00

Launch

18:30

Reception

Thinking Through Circus gathers ten dialogues with and between circus artists. Each entry bears witness to how a specific circus practice is (also) a practice of critical thinking, revealing how feminism, queerness, dramaturgy, love, disobedience, posthumanism and the aesthetico-political imaginary are rethought in and through contemporary circus practice. With this book, *The Circus Dialogues* wants to tend to the embodied relationships between contemporary circus and today's world, defending circus as a field in which experimental thinking is already happening and can continue to happen. Doing so, we hope to contribute to a more sustainable circus, expanding both accountability and agency within our field.

Please reserve your spot for the book launch at circusdialogue@gmail.com!

16.01.20

Norm, experiment and agency of the self, of human and more-than-human others

09:30

Walk in, coffee and tea

10:00 – 12:30

Angélique Willkie (CA)
Foyer Theaterzaal

14:00 – 16:00

Panel on agency and creative process
with Angélique Willkie (CA), Maaïke
Bleeker (NL), Alexandre Fray (FR),
John-Paul Zaccarini (UK/SE), Camille
Paycha (FR/BE), Francesca Hyde (UK)
Moderated by Sebastian Kann (US/BE)
Foyer Theaterzaal

16:00 – 16:30

Break

16:30 – 18:00

Dialogical wrap-up
Foyer Theaterzaal

Maaïke Bleeker (NL) is a professor of Theatre Studies at the Department of Media & Culture Studies of the University of Utrecht (NL). Embodiment, movement and cognition feature as central components in her work. She wrote *Visuality in Theatre* (2008) and is co-editor of the recent *Thinking Through Theatre and Performance* (2019). Next to her academic practice, Bleeker is also active as a dramaturg. Her ideas around embodied thinking and thinking through media serve as core notions for the whole symposium.

Angélique Willkie (CA) is a singer, performer, dramaturg and pedagogue. As a performer, she was active with, amongst others, les ballets C de la B, Wim Vandekeybus and Helena Waldmann. Alongside this, she took care of the dramaturgy for makers like the trapeze artist Mélissa Von Vépy and was Pedagogical Coordinator at ESAC (BE) for eight years. In the context of Concordia University Montreal (CA), she is currently working on the notion of 'personal dramaturgy', inspired by the work of Josephine Baker and Phia Ménard.

17.01.20

Research week — open studio

09:30

Walk in, coffee and tea

10:00 – 12:30

Research week: open studio

KASK Zwarte Zaal

14:00 – 18:00

Research week: open studio

KASK Zwarte Zaal

Research week: open studio

In the week preceding the symposium, at Zwarte Zaal (KASK), six circus artists/makers will research how and what their circus practice thinks. On the last day of the symposium, we'll come together around their performative proposals as Emily Aoibheann, Dana Dugan, Francesca Hyde, Iona Kewney, Basile Philippe, and Elena Zanzu share a glimpse into the experimental thinking practices they've developed.

Emily Aoibheann (IE) imagines aerial dance as the dance of industrial technology. Her recent performances *Sorry Gold* (2019) and *Mother of Pearl* (2019) work from within this imaginary. This leads her to ask: where to go from here? What kind of futures can aerial dance propose?

Dana Dugan (US) professionally builds bridges between academic and artistic research. Her work can be seen as a fruitful feedback loop between practice and theory. Currently, her thinking

body is pointing its arrows at norms surrounding gender, subjectivity and circus. She dwells on the question of hierarchies of thinking by insisting on the centrality of the body.

Francesca Hyde (UK) has been working with her circus company Collectif and then... for the past decade. She is currently taking part in the MA Contemporary Circus Practices at DOCH, Stockholm where she works with a 20 litre water container who goes by the name Tank. Fran researches what it could mean to perform and create together with a nonhuman partner like Tank.

Iona Kewney (UK) moves smoothly between the fields of contemporary dance, visual arts performance art and circus. Next to creating her own hybrid work, she performed for many years with Ultima Vez and les ballets C de la B. In her research, Iona thinks through movement and physicality.

Basile Philippe (FR/CA) pursued his circus education at the École nationale de cirque in Montreal (CA). Next to various collective performances, he authored *Moi Acrobate / Beignade I* (2018), a piece made for himself, a doughnut and its centre. Basile researches the confluence of the positions of creator and performer through various media.

Elena Zanzu (ES) is an artist, researcher and activist. Her practical and theoretical interests revolve around gender, disability, and other axes of vulnerability. Holding an MA in Philosophy, she is also particularly interested in the intersections between artistic practice and ethics. Her current project, *Manipulaciones*, is a deep examination of pain, fear and consent.



Smells Like Dialogue: A Circus Symposium is a co-production of KASK School of Arts and I knew these people VZW. It takes place in the context of *The Circus Dialogues* (2018–2020), an artistic research project lead by Bauke Lievens, Quintijn Ketels, and Sebastian Kann, accompanied by Vincent Focquet.

The Circus Dialogues is financed by the Arts Research Fund of University College Ghent (BE). *Smells Like Dialogue: A Circus Symposium* takes place with the support of KASK School of Arts, Circuscentrum, Vooruit, UGent, S:PAM, and the Flemish Government.

www.circusdialogue.com