These fourteen graduates came to the Bachelor Programme in Circus at Stockholm University of the Arts, SKH (formerly DOCH) in search of knowledge – knowledge that would get them closer to achieving their dream of becoming a circus artist. Our task has been to supply them with that knowledge, but more importantly to give them the tools for acquiring knowledge on their own and thus empowering them with the understanding and ability to evolve, to keep a forward motion. Closing Acts is the fruition of these three years of collaboration between a team of educators, administrators and the students themselves.

Driven by SKH’s mission of educating artists who construct and re-imagine their artistic fields through the tools of artistic research, these graduates received intensive and reflective disciplinary training with our core team of circus professors. Guest artists from many different specialties and regions worked with the students in sessions to deepen their knowledge in different types of arts, practices, and ideas. A list of these fantastic people can be found on the following pages. These elements are organized by our Head of the Bachelor Programme, who also works directly with the students. In this year of many changes, we take a moment to recognize that the program has been successfully developed and guided by Marie-Andree Robitaille. Her care and dedication to her students is matched only by her commitment to the art of circus. We wish her the best in her doctoral studies and we are pleased that she will remain part of our educational team. In 2019, the role of directing the Bachelor Programme was taken on by Alisan Funk, a former circus artist and now scholar in circus education. We are excited to welcome her to the team and we look forward to the projects and perspectives that we will develop together.

All changes are bittersweet, the end of something and the beginning of another. It is with great pleasure and of course some sadness that we say goodbye to this wonderful bunch of students.

We are collectively proud of what they have achieved and look forward to seeing them accomplish their dreams, may that be in circus tents, theaters, cabarets, established circus companies, festivals, film etc…

We are happy to welcome you to the graduating class of 2020 and their “Closing Acts”.

Walter Ferrero, head of Circus Department and the Circus Department team

THE BACHELOR PROGRAMME IN CIRCUS (first cycle) supports students to develop a personal artistic language and disciplinary style. With courses in circus disciplines, artistic processes, career sustainability, performance, interpretation, improvisation, artistic research methods, and circus contexts, our students continuously explore, create, practice and present artistic projects in different formats. Students are mentored and nourished on this journey by working consistently with their discipline teachers and through intensive provocations from visiting professionals in performing arts. Closing Acts is our chance to share these explorations with you and celebrate our graduating class as they take their works from the shelter of university into the professional world.

THE CIRCUS DEPARTMENT includes three distinct educational programmes – a bachelor of circus, a master’s degree in contemporary circus practices, and independent courses for circus professionals. Research with and about circus arts is conducted by our doctoral students, professors and teachers, whose research can be found on our website. Through each program and project, our department offers opportunities for building knowledge and reflection about the many forms of expression in circus. For more information about our programmes, please visit www.uniarts.se.

STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH) provides education and conducts research in the fields of circus, dance, dance pedagogy, film, media, opera, performing arts and acting. With our unique composition of education and artistic research, we want to create new opportunities for societal development and knowledge of tomorrow. With the flourishing environment for artistic research, we have unique opportunities of deepening the study programmes and creating collaborative trans-disciplinary projects. Together we create dynamic meeting places for independent artists, educators and researchers in dialogue with society around us, both nationally and internationally.
GOOD EVENING and welcome to my Closing Act. Here I would like to show you... BALANCE is possible if the vertical line that passes through the centre of the object (in this case my body) is also passing through the area of the base of... TONY is an Italian guy that loves training handstand, hand balancing training, making pizza, eating pizza, #onearmhandstand, figa (the handstand shape) and... the TRICK (is the thing that makes the essence of circus?)... So! This text and this act are probably the best and the worst way to describe myself as a person and as a circus artist. Of course, there are some things that can’t be missed in it: handstands. What a beautiful thing! An exercise, an art form, a body shape, a TRICK, an obsession, a passion... consistently different from day to day... in a way exactly like me, TONY, handBALANCEr.

tony.panaro.handbalance@gmail.com
Pauliina Mutka
»Little talks about interaction«
Unicycle

Early mornings, late nights; a few sleepless nights. I have spent thousands of hours next to a unicycle. I practice curiosity, and unicycle continues to be my muse. Objects have a lot to say to us about nature, especially about motion. Every day they silently shape our behavior, our bodies. You can try to imagine how the world would look like if we didn’t discover a wheel. When I look around me, there is no such thing as a still object. Within every object, I experience unique movement that asks to be revealed. I discover my treasures by observing situations I get myself into, creating grounds for future exploration. In a performance, I share what I find inspiring and relatable.

pauliina.mutka@gmail.com
Mahé Nithardt and Rémi De Carvalho
Chinese Pole duo

Everything begins with a body, two bodies, two strong and living presences. From there anything can happen. Light as a breeze and rhythmic as a drum solo, living becomes a game of childlike simplicity as if life was on a beige background and blinking is your challenge. Rémi and Mahé have shared the same journey for a few years. They were hoping to head south but circus is slowly leading them north. Starting from the snowy mountains of Switzerland they made a little stop along the way in the rainy north of France and landed here in the eternal nights of Sweden. Coldness matured their work and they developed a circus vocabulary very specific to their duo. They are delighted to discover multiple facets of circus and to share their work in different forms.

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Benjamin Beaujard
«Limites»
Juggling

The stage is empty, lights are low, silence. From the left corner, a figure enters, walking diagonally towards the right. With each slow step the lights brighten a little. The figure becomes a young man. His body emerges in the light, his skin, his muscles and his face. In centre of the stage, he looks down at his left arm, his arm reaching out, still moving across the stage; in his hand, three white balls. A juggler.

His muscles are stretching as his left arm is reaching out, we see the fibers and the tension of his body. Is the show about to start? We wait, with the juggler, for the juggler to start juggling. One ball is ejected, the body follows and reacts, reaching to recover the object. Lights are bright, it’s not silent anymore, the stage is not empty anymore, the juggler is juggling. Later,

Final trick. On stage, a young man is looking up. Lights are fading out. When the act is over, the only thing left to remember are the moments limits have been reached.

benijonglage@gmail.com
»Safety First«

Safety?
Are we safe?
Why are we safe?
When are we safe?
When we were young, we wore a helmet when we learned how to ride a bike. When we drive a car, we wear seatbelts for safety. The world is a dangerous place; we need to protect ourselves so we don’t get hurt. But does putting on a helmet really make us safe…?

We are 4onBoard.
We are a group with four guys, a lot of different opinions, a teeterboard called Ella, and ten mats that are supposed to keep us safe. However, our safety is not determined by the equipment that we use. It relies on us and our capabilities. Using a mix of Russian bar, teeterboard, acrobatics, partner acrobatics and fun, we explore the paradoxes in the perceptions of circus and safety.
And always remember
Safety first

info.4onboard@gmail.com
In this aligned world, there is no one.
In this vertical world, there is no one.
In this strange world, there is still no one.
In this still world, there is still no one.
In this shadow world, someone will enter.
In this delicate world, someone enters.
In this turquoise world, someone entered.
In this small world, someone entered.
Someone lives.
Someone breathes.
Someone moves.
Someone explores what this aligned, vertical, strange, still, shadow, delicate, turquoise and small world can offer.
Going with, and against, going inside, or on the very highest top, going upside down; going through this world.
Someone will leave the place as they found it.
But, wait, something has changed.

elaine.briant@hotmail.com
Aki Haikonen

»Depicted«

Juggling

What is your favorite color? The theme for my act came out of the blue after realizing that most of the jugglers don't put so much value on the color of their props. Hence, I decided to harness my passion for colorful socks by composing a piece where colors are used to enhance the accessibility of my ring juggling for an audience.

Juggling involves several aspects of visual arts and it's strong enough to stand on its own in terms of expression. Besides, I love the great freedom inherent in the circus discipline: I can create fresh material without fear of injury. On the other hand juggling is still physical enough to provide me with a necessary contrast to my studies of six different languages. After several years of constantly creating new material I have made a flawless collage using virtuosic ring juggling techniques. In addition, I use the props as a scenography, creating a colorful ring gallery. I feel very satisfied with the result and I'm tickled pink to share it with you. Varsågoda!

haikonen.aki@hotmail.com
Angélique Cabanes and Katherina Dzialas
»Esperluette«
Duo Trapeze

Two women side by side, ready for the journey that will take place by meeting each other on eye level in their trapeze with empathy, listening, care and love. Their relationship is the core tool to communicate to the outside. With their four hands they feel, grip, carry and create with each other. You are invited to their universe of trust, fragility and daring that opens up a dynamic relationship.

katherina.angelique@gmail.com
Chinese pole is my main discipline

I use this word to talk about the pole: He

In my life, I am indecisive

But when He and I are connected, indecision disappears.

Twisting, sliding, going upside down are my daily actions.

Softness or smoothness are our goals;

Even if it doesn’t always work.

Up, up up

Our intention.

He is vertical

Even if sometimes a bit too much...

romain.chinesepole@gmail.com
SKH CIRCUS DEPARTMENT
(Alphabetical order)
Alberto Feliciate Ordóñez, assistant lecturer of circus
Alisan Funk, head of bachelor of arts in circus (Oct 2019-present), assistant professor of circus
Batsugar Tsendjav, assistant lecturer of circus
Christian Vilppola, assistant professor of circus
Chloé de Buyl-Pisco, student representative
Gunilla Egevi, coordinator
Jan Rosén, head coach, assistant professor of circus
John-Paul Zaccarini, head of master programme contemporary circus practices, associate professor of circus
Karl Wiberg, student representative
Marie-Andrée Robitaille, PhD candidate in circus, assistant professor of circus, head of bachelor of arts in circus (July 2016-April 2019)
Marie Nilsson, technical coordinator
Peter Skoglund, senior administrative officer
Thierry Maussier, assistant professor of circus
Viktoria Dalborg, head of independent courses, assistant lecturer of circus, acting head of bachelor of arts in circus (Sep 2016-May 2017)
William Cleary, rigger

COLLABORATORS FOR CLOSING ACTS
(Alphabetical order)
Producer: Louise Rich
Light design: Lina Benneth, Lumination of Sweden
Light and sound technicians: Lumination of Sweden
Photo: Einar Kling Odencrants
Graphic design: Pompe Hedengren, Stockholm Graphics
Filming: Martin Leonard

GUEST TEACHERS
(Alphabetical order)
Aedin Walsh, acting head of bachelor of arts in circus (Jan-June 2019), Sweden
Aino Ihanainen, Finland
Albin Warette, France
Amanda Lund, Sweden
Annika Boholm, Sweden
Axel Ahl, Sweden
Bengt Ahlin, Sweden
Benn Harradine, Australia
Bodil Persson, Sweden
Bryan Donaldson, Ireland
Chloé de Buyl-Pisco, Australia
Carl-Axel Holmes, Sweden
Elon Höglund, Sweden
Emil Dah, Sweden
Emile Pineault, Canada
Emma Lindbiom, Sweden
Emma Norin, Sweden
Emmanuelle LePhan, Canada
Erik Åberg, Sweden
Esmeralda Nikolajeff, Sweden
Francesco Sgroi, Italy
Fredrik Weibull, Sweden
Henrik Agger, Sweden
Iona Kewney, Scotland
Ivar Hecksher, Sweden
James Wellington, United Kingdom
Jay Gilligan, USA
Jesse Dryden, Canada
Johan Bodin, Sweden
Josa Kölbl, Germany
Kaja Balkfors, Sweden
Kajsa Bohlin, Sweden
Kate Kavanagh, United Kingdom
Kiki Muukkonen, Sweden
Kim Ceyensens, Belgium
Laura Murphy, United Kingdom
Lina B. Frank, Sweden
Louise Rich, Sweden
Maria Geber, Sweden
Maria Öller, Scotland/Sweden
Martin Blaus, Sweden
Matthew Horton, United Kingdom
Mele Brooms, United Kingdom
Michelle Man, United Kingdom
Mikael Wahlbeck, Sweden
Mira Leonard, Sweden
Mira Unde, Sweden
Mirja Jauhiainen, Finland
Mishanock Ferrero, Sweden
Nalle Laanela, Sweden
Olle Strandberg, Sweden
Roberto Magro, Italy
Roberto Olivan, Spain
Saara Ahola, Finland
Sara Lett, Canada
Sara Runsten, Sweden
Simon Wilborn, Sweden
Sky de Sela, France
Slava Volkov, Russia
Stephen Rappaport, Sweden
Susannah Rickman, Sweden
Tiide Björnfors, Sweden
Tom Brand, Germany
Tom Stone, Sweden
Ulrich Hirzel, Switzerland
Uuve Jansson, Sweden
Vicki Amedume, United Kingdom
Viktoria Dalborg, Sweden
Yared Cederlund, Sweden
CLOSING
ACTS

STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS
STOCKHOLMS KONSTNÄRLIGA HÖGSKOLA