

labor@irque



## Circus Laboratory

### Exploring the limits of New Circus

New Circus is gaining a firm foothold in the city of Cologne, and one of its breeding grounds is the circus and performing center ZAK ([www.zak-koeln.com](http://www.zak-koeln.com)), which functions as performing venue, promoter and co-operation partner for New Circus productions. In the collaboration with the Cologne based association "Atemzug" ("breath") ([www.atemzug-ev.de](http://www.atemzug-ev.de)) and the "Initiative Neuer Zirkus" ([www.initiative-neuerzirkus.de](http://www.initiative-neuerzirkus.de)), ZAK now has long-term plans to expand its involvement in the development of New Circus and to provide a space for that art form evolve.

### The research project

The most exciting innovation is the research project "Labor Cirque" ("circus laboratory"). This is intended as a forum for experimentation and exploration of the artistic forms that together make up New Circus. The focal point of the research will be the genre-transcending aspect of New Circus, or the interface between circus and dance, theater and music.

Specifically, the "Laboratory" will address the question of how the different genres of New Circus can enrich each other. What exactly happens when circus skills are combined with dance, theater or music? When does it really make sense to combine spoken language with physical performance, and when does it not make sense? How does a thought change if we express it through the medium of spoken theater, dance, music or circus? What is the role of space, object and performer in the various genres? How do I get from the pure technique of circus to expression, from the handstand or the 3-ball cascade to an emotion?

### Practical Research in the Laboratory

Together with professional artists, musicians and dancers, the aim is to develop a platform for experimentation without the pressure to achieve commercial success. There will be three phases of research in which the participants work, train, try things out together and ask each other questions. They will be accompanied by qualified artists from the various genres. The first research block is scheduled for May 2013 and covers the subjects of dance and circus skills; the second block in June will focus on acting/voice and music; and finally, there will be a synthesis phase in which the results of the individual laboratories are brought together. The research component will be rounded off with a symposium where the results will be shown and discussed. International experts including artist, performers and circus researchers will be invited to attend.

It is also hoped that the laboratory will lay the foundations for collaboration between the artists which may end in a public presentation.

### Motivation

One of the aims is to stimulate exchange between the genres. Another is to encourage a theoretical and practical examination of the art form New Circus. A key question here is: how can circus techniques be used to convey meaning, as a medium of expressions? The long term objective is to develop theoretical foundations for the New Circus genre. For this reason, Labor Cirque will be accompanied by theoretical reflection and will be documented on film. The results will be published in the hope of encouraging artists to work conceptually, especially in Germany, where this kind of research into New Circus has never been tried before.

## “Labor Cirque” on tour

As well as appealing to New Circus insiders, the aim of the research is to make New Circus accessible to a broader public. To this end, existing New Circus companies from Germany are invited to appear at the ZAK and other venues in the region. It will also be possible to present the results of the research project in the context of these performances. But for now this possibility is deliberately being left open, allowing the participants to research without the pressure of having to meet a performing deadline.

## Final Symposium

Interested Artists, performers and circus enthusiasts are warmly invited to attend the final symposium on **22 June 2013**, where the results of the research will be presented and questions raised by the laboratory will be discussed. Following, a podium discussion, with invited international guests from the fields of dance, music and circus, will be held over the theme: „Interdisciplinary creation: at what compromise? – A contrast of various artist positions about artistic creation in contemporary circus“ Referring to the research of the „Labor Cirque“ project the question of how contemporary circus can be adequately directed, choreographed and developed will be brought into focus and scrutinized.

### Invited guests:

- Stephanie Thiersch (Cologne, DE) : Choreograph, currently develops a production with dancers and acrobats; [www.mouvoir.de](http://www.mouvoir.de)
- Dietmar Kobboldt (Cologne, DE): Leiter der studiobühne köln und Vorsitzender der Kölner Theaterkonferenz e.V; [www.studiobuehnekoeln.de](http://www.studiobuehnekoeln.de)
- Bauke Lievens (Gent, BE): Circus dramaturge and writer
- Nancy Fürst Pouilly (Verscio, CH): Teacher and research fellow of the Scuola Teatro Dimitri [www.teatrodimitri.ch/scuola/Forschung](http://www.teatrodimitri.ch/scuola/Forschung)
- Moderation: Claudius Bensch, Director, organiser, part of ensemble Circus Quantenschaum, Bremen

**For more information or registration for the symposium please contact Jenny Patschovsky [Laborcirque@zak-koeln.com](mailto:Laborcirque@zak-koeln.com)**



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