

Craig Quat's Juggling Boards

18-20 February, Prague, Czech Republic

Organizer: Cirqueon

Implemented by Visegrad Standard Grant

Based on report of Adam Jarchovsky.



In the week from February 18 to February 20, 2017 Cirqueon, the Center for the New Circus, was proud to host the American juggler Craig Quat. His concept of juggling differs in many respects from other jugglers around the world. Jugglers usually aim to control as many objects as possible in the air or to train a number of trick variations. Craig does not even try to trick or juggle with as many balls as possible. He dreams of juggling as many people as possible. His project, which began about six years ago, bears the name "Juggling for the masses," Juggling for the Masses. It is apparent from the title that it is not intended to teach juggling only in circus centers or schools. He wants to go much further, wants to juggle everyone!

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Craig is aware that juggling can be a challenging challenge. Many people, after the initial frustration of failure from intention or spontaneous thoughts of juggling, will drop. This is seen as a huge mistake by Craig Quat's optics, which he confirms without any hint of irony or exaggeration. Juggling is, in his opinion, an opportunity for self-development, self-actualization, just the way

to be better, perhaps in all respects. Believe or not, Craig will persuade you with his enthusiasm, fervour, and faith.

He was in Prague to lead a workshop for circus educators from the Social Circus without Borders project, which was attended by participants from the Visegrad Four countries. Here it was a bit easier to convince about the beneficial effects of juggling, because most of them knew Craig Quat's work. The workshop was not only to introduce the practical principles of working with its special aids, but also to develop a number of theories. Craig presented juggling in the context of studies in the fields of neurology, mathematics, psychology, special pedagogy, social work through philosophy and theology. With a bit of exaggeration, after a while, he came to the absolute conviction that juggling would not only save but literally save the word!



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The theory was alternately interlaced with practical exercises. For example, those that coincided with Craig's definition of juggling: "Juggling is an ordered sequence of orbital events." In one of them, the participants in groups or themselves intensively sought different orbital events (Pendulum from the scarf, movement of the cylinder, reflection of a rubber ball, etc.) and then inserted them into sequences and attempted to

organize them. The result was a lot of completely original juggling "micro performances" or tricks. He managed to show to everyone that juggling can also be seen from a different perspective and its principles are everywhere. As a joke of juggling under its definition, it was the universe itself - lots of balls in organized movement.

When working with QUAT PROPS, juggling can be avoided from performance standards and is much more about the process itself than the outcome. The QUAT PROPS flagship is a Juggle Board utility, which is a set of five parallel tracks, after which balls are sent. Working with the Juggle Board offers a number of patterns for both jugglers and not-jugglers. Craig's sophisticated methodology includes a process from elementary moves to



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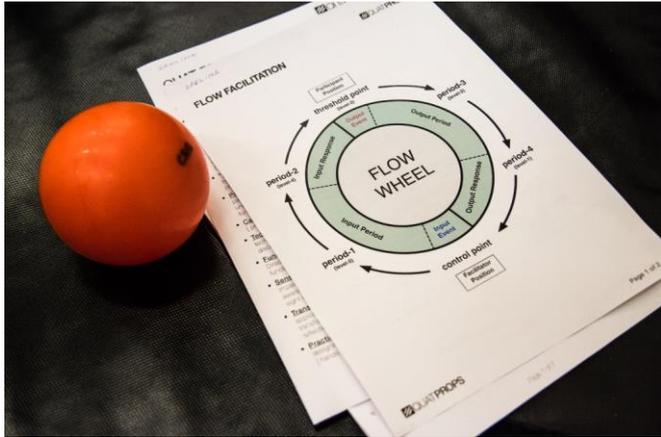


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complicated, brain-wracking for experienced jugglers. Especially when working in pairs, the Juggle Board becomes a communication platform. One as a facilitator gradually leads his partner and responds in real time to his pace and leads the whole process. The facilitator's capabilities are then a critical transformation for making the most of the Juggle Board's potential. It was these skills that Craig Quat taught participants throughout the weekend in Cirqueon.



An important part of the workshop was a Monday visit to Jedlička's Institute and schools. For Cirqueon and "EAT", this was not the first collaboration. Previously they cooperated with circus workshops with international participation. This time we brought Juggle Boards to the gym in Visegrad in Prague and we tried out our freshly acquired facilitation skills. We did not

choose Jedlik's Institute for the practical part of the workshop by accident. The Juggle Board principle enables active participation in people with severe physical disabilities. Craig Quat's method is a complement to the traditional physiotherapy exercises. This was also confirmed by the workshops for local children from the Jedlik Institute.

It does not mean to write here, how the Juggle Boards worked, because each student had specific needs and limits. However, it can be said, that each student managed to control the Juggle Board, often to the surprise of their teachers. Even one student who sent balls only with a stick in his mouth was able to handle complex juggling patterns. The greatest benefit was the already mentioned process and shared physical activity, the common joy of overcoming challenges. Create non-verbal communication, establish a relationship and systematically increase self-confidence to encourage new challenges.

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