

SPLASH

Jam.Shenanigans

Batist Van Baekel & Henri Kangas

General info

Length: +/- 40 minutes

Language: Non-verbal

Location: Outdoor

Target audience: family (school shows: 6+ / 2nd grade)

Min. stage measurements: 8x6 meter

Min. height: 5 meters

Crew: 2 artists + 1 technician + 1 chargée de diff

Première: May 2025



SPLASH

With *Splash*, Jam.Shenanigans aims to share their love for comically absurd circus with the public.

Splash invites the audience on a journey towards an absurd dream world far away from everyday reality, where a swimming pool filled with 25,000 balls stands in the center, and where water activities form the starting point for a juggling feast.

Jam.Shenanigans wants to promote healthy craziness as a counterbalance to a polarizing and self-deprecating society. With *splash*, they want to stimulate the audience's imagination and push forward the beauty of a youthful spirit. This is all through object manipulation, physical theater and visual illusions, topped with a good dose of humor and silliness.

Splash is a full-length family show that is made for outdoor settings. The show will go into production in January 2024 and premiere in May 2025.



About Jam.Shenanigans

Splash is created and performed by Henri Kangas and Batist Van Baekel. After graduating from Codarts Circus Arts in 2021 and 2022 respectively, they created *Jam.Shenanigans*, a circus company with the focus of object manipulation, theater and movement. *Jam.Shenanigans* creates circus shows for indoor and outdoor locations with the focus for family audiences.



Batist van Baekel 's artistic passion is driven by a love for the circus tent and a fresh take on physical and contemporary circus. Born in Belgium (2000), Batist participated in Circusatelier Circolito's summer camp in 2007 and has been in love with the warmth and magic of circus ever since. During his studies, Batist specialized in juggling and object manipulation, influenced by acrobatics, dance and physical theater. After graduation, he gained experience with companies such as Alexander VanTournhout and Gandini Juggling.



Henri Kangas, a circus performer born May 30, 1998, is one of an estimated 350,000 babies born in the world that Saturday. Born and raised in Tampere, Finland, he grew up in a vibrant, colorful city full of adventures. In 2012, he joined the local youth circus Sorin Sirkus and later applied to Codarts Circus Arts in Rotterdam, Netherlands. He graduated in 2021 with a Bachelor of Circus Arts in object manipulation. Henri's style with the diabolo is described as unexpected and full of surprises in the mix with hints of Finnish dry humor.

About 'SPLASH'

In *Splash* we follow two characters oppressed by the outside world to revert to their survival mechanism, **juggling**. From their boundless fantasy full of creativity, emerges an unlikely attempt to reach the juggling paradise.

Reaching the pool through their own path and journey, awkwardness sets in when the two strangers have to crawl into the pool half-naked. But once in, they lose themselves in the endless creative possibilities of the pool.

A swimming pool is often associated with diving, splashing, and snorkeling. The characters eagerly capitalize on this association and perform the activities minutely, in new and creative ways.

What does water ballet look like in a pool full of balls instead of water?
Does synchronized diving work in a pool full of 25000 balls?
Can one drown in a pool full of balls?

Splash becomes a sequence of recognizable activities where rhythmic juggling fountains are set in motion.

When the quantity of objects exceeds the mass of the human body, a new view of the art of throwing and catching emerges. In this new reality every simple movement is transformed into juggling and even "the drop" (in everyday life the juggler's longtime enemy) pays homage to the absurd dream world.

Completely submerged among the balls, juggling becomes oh so simple, but everyday activities like walking become the new discomfort. The performers explore the challenge of finding a balance between easy/hard and serious/playful. When juggling suddenly becomes easier than walking, how do the performers relate themselves into this? *Splash* explores the idea of setting regular activities into obscure settings and through it brings into light the beauty of youthful playfulness.

Jam.Shenanigans wants to convey to the audience that being youthful and having a healthy mindset towards playfulness is something one does not have to lose while growing up. *Splash* wants to break this stereotype by showing that age and position in society should not define whether or not one expresses youthful playfulness and crazy imaginative ideas.

Splash is an approachable performance with humor and contemporary juggling in a neoclassical setting, where clownish scenes on a springboard deserve their place next to fresh juggling routines with 25,000 balls.

The stage

The performers believe that the absurdity and juggling is already present in the stage itself and only needs to be brought to the surface through fresh playfulness and a dose of creativity.

The pool and platform are specially designed to make performers and objects disappear into the balls. This allows for a variety of scenes, like solo or duo performances, magical illusions, and different characters, to be a part of the show. Permitting the performance to consist of an assortment of discrete scenes, initially appearing unconnected, yet collectively contributing to the abstract dramaturgical narrative that binds them together.

The scenography and the collection of associations that can be made with the pool (water) and the ball (juggling), create an absurd universe where a diverse mix of scenes can exist next to each other. For example, a clownish diving board scene might be followed by leaf blowers creating fountains of balls, suddenly transforming into a contact juggling scene with a melting bath bomb ball.

The full length of the structure is 2 meters by 5 meters.

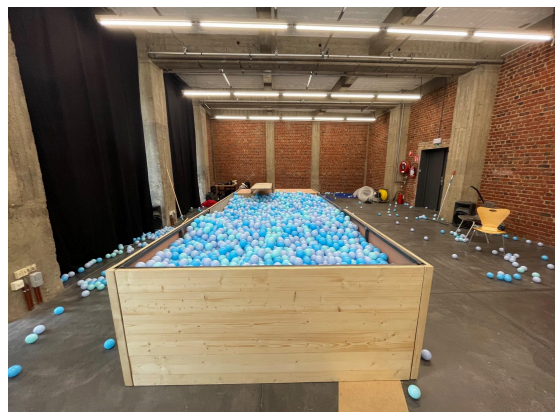
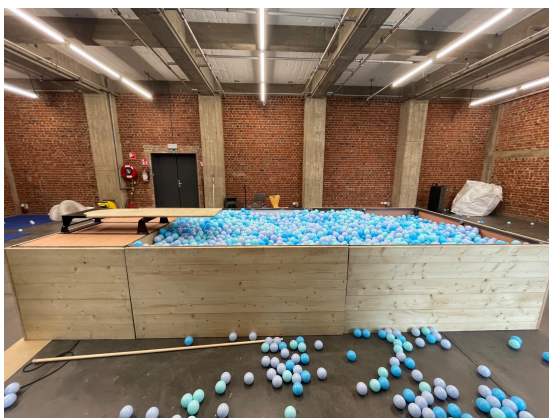
The pool measures 4 meters by 2 meters and has a maximum depth of 1.2 meters.

The construction is built with uneven depths to allow for play at different heights.

Next to the pool will be placed a platform flush with the edge of the pool of 1 meter by 2 meters, including a springboard, to present scenes both in and out of the pool.

Finally, at the front of the pool is another secret transparent hatch, through which even the underwater world can be shared with the audience.

The audience will be seated frontally, this can be either on tribune or on chairs and/or benches in a 1/3 circle on location.



The team

Artists: Batist Van Baekel & Henri Kangas

Dramaturgical support: Thom Monckton

Outside eye: Wes Peden

Podium designer and builders: Kurt Van Baekel & Arne Sabbe/De Machinerie

Distribution: Emma Ketels (JE BURO)

Supported by: Miramiro & The Flemish Authorities

Co-produced by: PERPLX, Circuswerkplaats Dommelhof & Cirklabo

This project is selected as a finalist for Circusnext 2024.

If you are interested in supporting this project, contact info@jamshenanigans.com

Creation timeline

The show will go into creation from Jan. 2024 through Spring 2025.

September/November 2023

January 2024

February 2024

March 2024

April 2024

May 2024

June 2024

July - November 2024

December 2024

January/February

April 2025

April/May 2025

May 2025

Production planning, organization & promotion

Stage construction in BE

First labo week, Circus Kapel (NL)

2 creation weeks, PEPRLX (BE)

2 creation weeks, PEPRLX (BE)

Residency in Tollhaus (DE) + Circusnext selection week

Outside residency, location tbd

Splash on break, Jam.Shenanigans on tour with *Shenanigans*

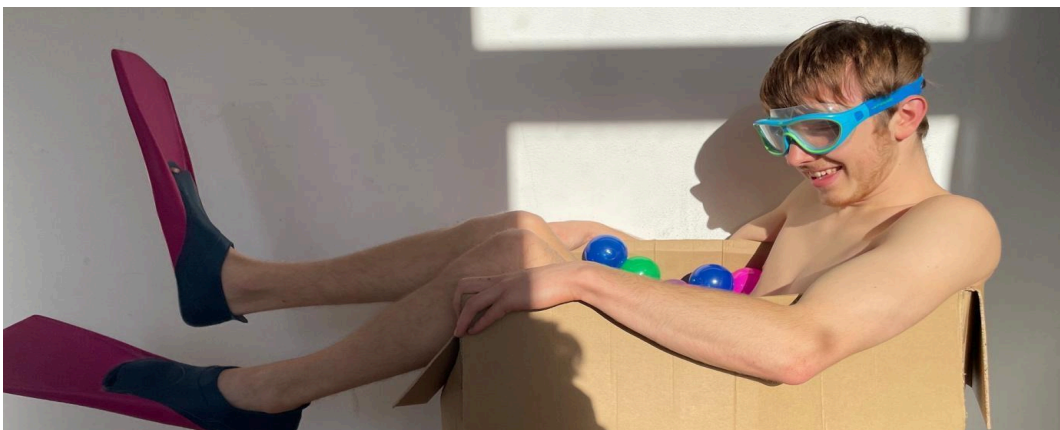
2 creation weeks, Dommelhof (BE)

Splash on break, Jam.Shenanigans on tour with *Shenanigans*

2 creation weeks Miramiro (BE)

2 creation weeks, Cirklabo (BE)

Première



Creation dossier January '24

Contact & booking info@jamshenanigans.com & www.jamshenanigans.com