



Developing a circus classification system

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German wheel, clown

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Lyra, sling, rope, silks

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Agenda

- Why organize circus?
- Extant major circus organizational systems
- Questions to guide use of circus organizational systems
- Case study – Gatewood System

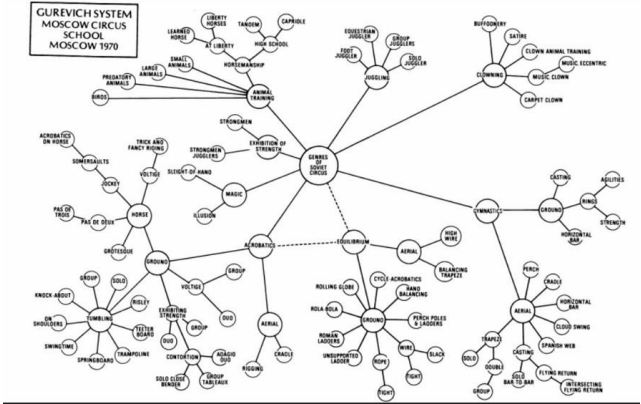




Why organize circus?

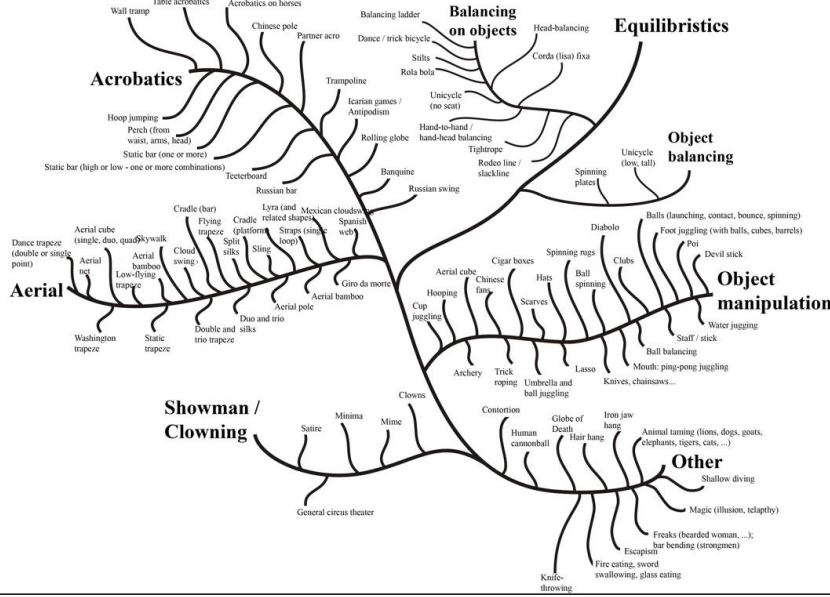
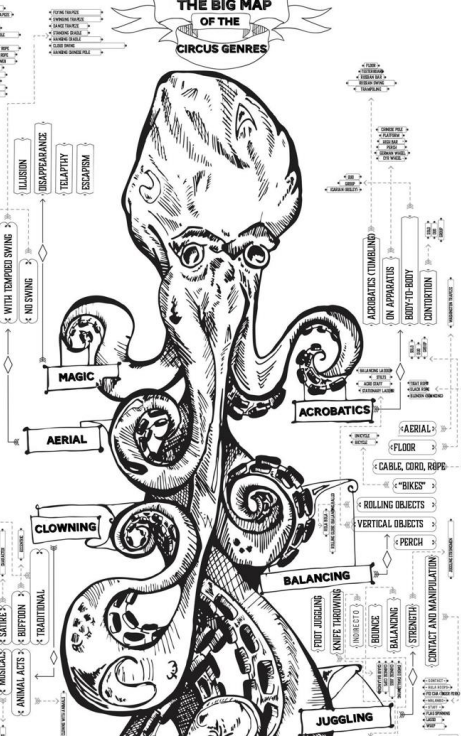
- Create a comprehensive list
- Record physical cultural practices
- Encourage novel combinations and developments
- Provide common language and concepts
- Describe steps necessary to learn a skill
- As school curriculum, book organization, exhibit or show curation

Extant systems

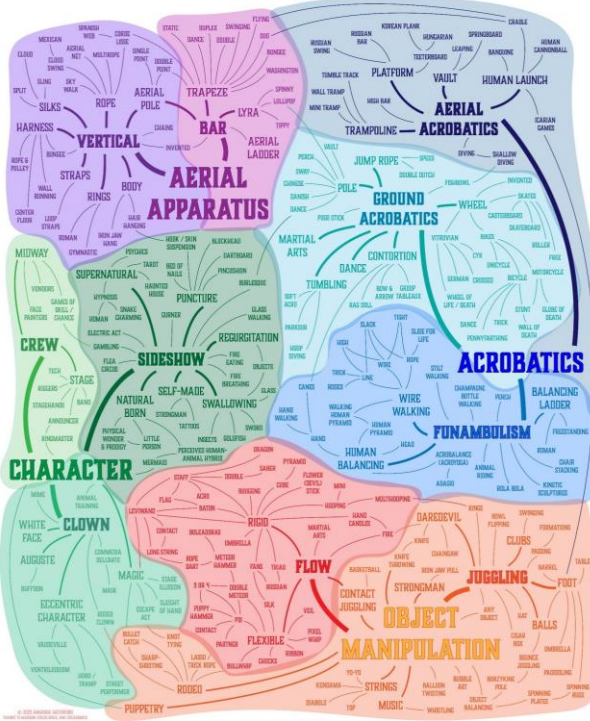


CIRCUS TECHNIQUE		
Equilibrium	Aerial activities	Acrobatic/Stunt
Without accessories Hand-to-hand (static)	Silks: split, sling	On the ground: Contortion
With accessories	Trampoline	Dynamic handstand
Bola	Perch	With accessories:
Chairs	Rope: corde lisse (single, double, triple, cloudswing)	Hoop
Stilts	Flying trapeze	Chairs
Unicycle	Static trapeze	Ladder
Ladder	Washington trapeze	Russian bar
Perch	Rings	Russian swing
Rola bola	Straps	Chinese pole or mast
High wire	Hoop	Teeterboard
Tight rope		Springboard
		Trampoline
Manipulation	Circus actor	Bicycle
Juggling	Clown	“Corredores elasticos”
Lasso	Theatrical:	
Devil stick	Dance	
Diabolo	Mime	
Whip	Mask	
	Commedia dell'arte	
	Jester	

Category	Preliminary	Essential	Diversified
Juggling	Balancing objects	Toss juggling: balls, rings clubs	Gyroscopic Juggling: Devil sticks, Diabolo, plate spinning, etc
Equilibratics	Headstands and hand balancing	Balancing: on rolling objects (unicycle, rolla bola, etc), on "stifling" objects (stilts, unsupported ladder, etc) and human columns.	Rigging: Trapeze, horizontal bar, slackwire, tight wire, etc
Vaulting	Jumping	Turning the body along its long, medium and short axes	Catapults



MODERN CIRCUS ARTS



System	Origin	Year	Goal(s)	Type of system
Gurevich System	Soviet Union	1950s-1970s	Basis for curriculum for Russian Circus School in 1950s-1970s	Pedagogical
CNAC System	France	1980s	Curriculum and basis of school pedagogy	Pedagogical
Circus school curriculum	International	N/A	Describe a school's pedagogy, interests, or organizational structure	Pedagogical
Hovey Burgess System	United States	1974	Uncover the "essence of circus" and a basis for teaching through analysis of movements that are universal to all circus performers (including animals)	Academic-practitioner
Bortoleto	Brazil	2017	Pedogogical for practitioners	Academic-practitioner
Dokucirco	Mexico	2016	Broadly categorize modern circus areas	Academic-practitioner
Gatewood	United States	2020-2023	Serve as a reference of all modern circus apparatus and skills; To aid circus practitioners in diversifying their skills	Academic-practitioner
Circus books	International	N/A	To organize the contents in the book	Implicit or explicit

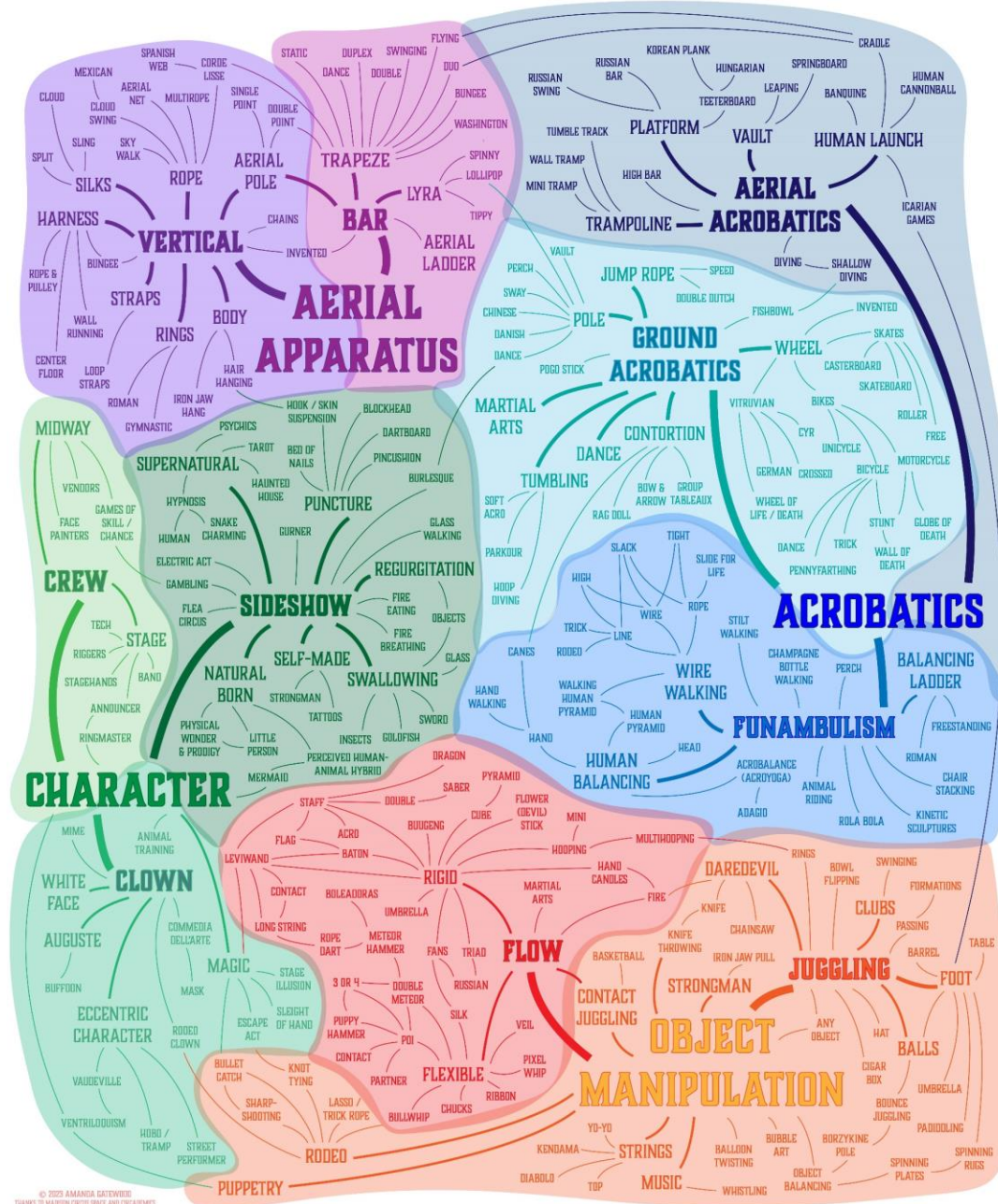


“All models are wrong, but some are useful.”

- George Box, statistician

Case study

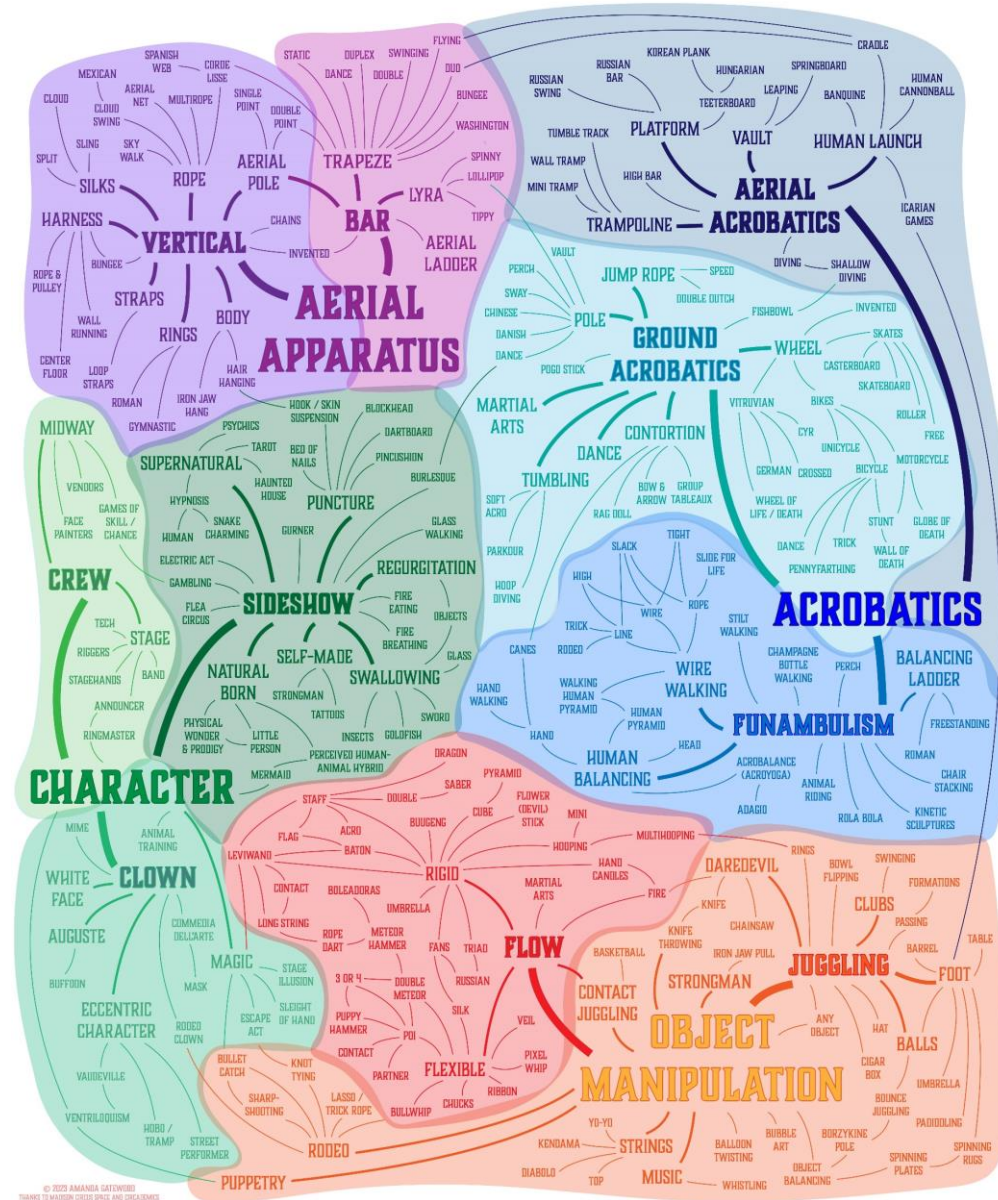
MODERN CIRCUS ARTS



Gatewood system

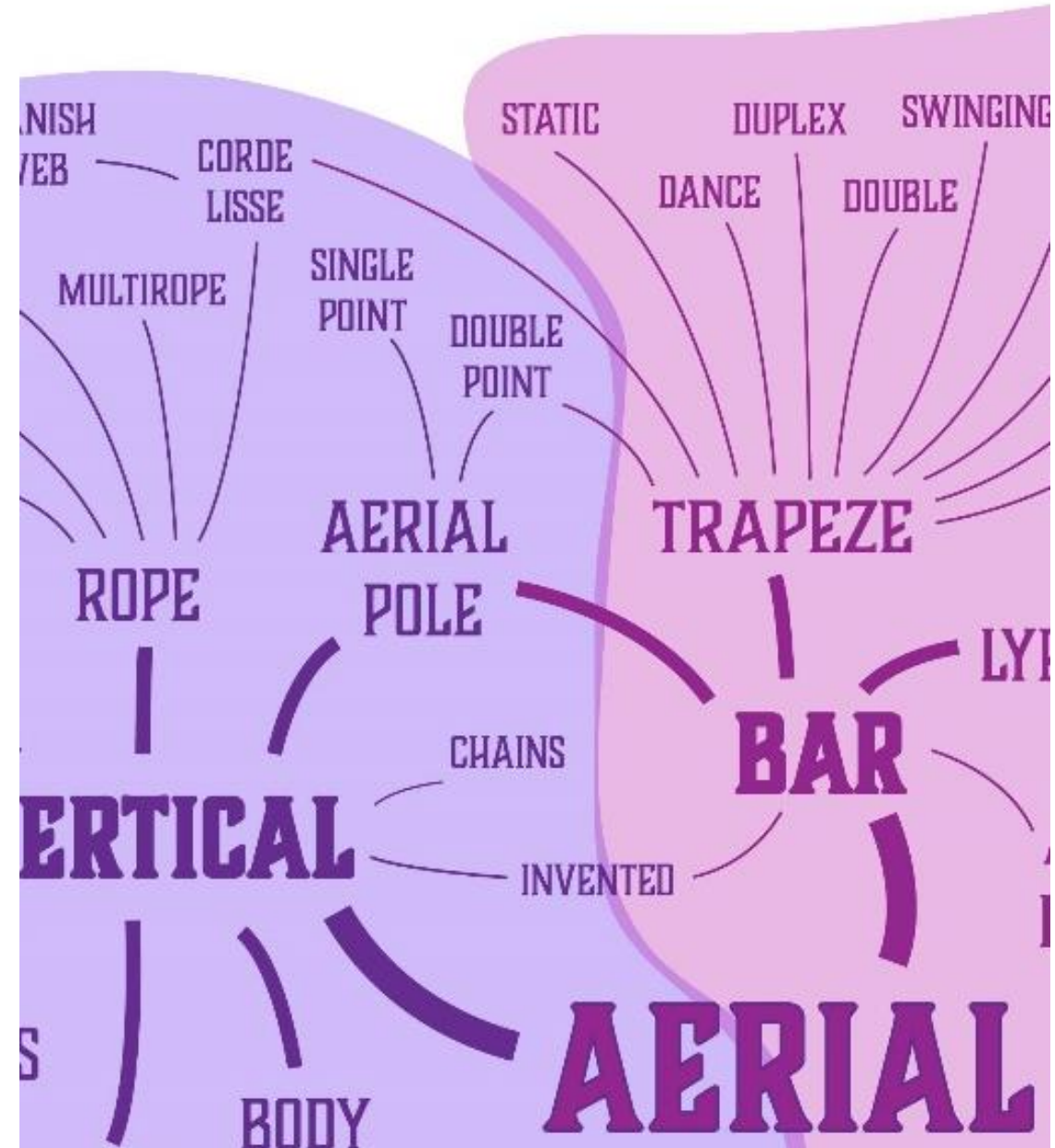
- What is included in a classification?
 - Comprehensive (>300)
 - Major areas:
 - Aerial apparatus
 - Vertical apparatus
 - Bar apparatus
 - Acrobatics
 - Aerial acrobatics
 - Ground acrobatics
 - Funambulism
 - Object manipulation
 - Juggling
 - Flow
 - Character
 - Clown
 - Sideshow
 - Crew

MODERN CIRCUS ARTS



Gatewood system

- How are relationships represented?
 - Parent – child
 - Spatial
 - Multiple relationships represented
 - Font sizing



Citations

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